HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS

Section Two

Specific non-Auschwitz Studies

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HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS

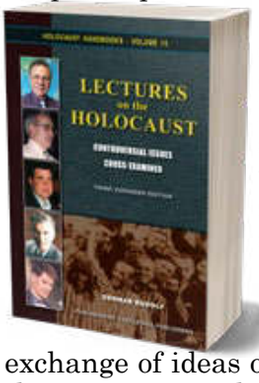
This ambitious, growing series addresses various aspects of the "Holocaust" of the WWII era. Most of them are based on decades of research from archives all over the world. They are heavily referenced. In contrast to most other works on this issue, the tomes of this series approach its topic with profound academic scrutiny and a critical attitude. Any Holocaust researcher ignoring this series will remain oblivious to some of the most important research in the field. These books are designed to both convince the common reader as well as academics. The following books have appeared so far, or are about to be released.

SECTION ONE:
General Overviews of the Holocaust

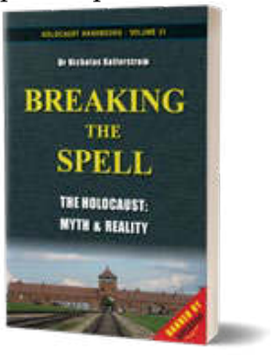
Pictured above are the first 50 volumes of scientific studies that comprise the series *Holocaust Handbooks*. More volumes and new editions are constantly in the works. Check www.HolocaustHandbooks.com for updates.

The First Holocaust. The Surprising Origin of the Six-Million Figure. By Don Heddesheimer. This compact but substantive study documents propaganda spread prior to, during and after the FIRST World War that claimed East European Jewry was on the brink of annihilation. The magic number of suffering and dying Jews was 6 million back then as well. The book details how these Jewish fund-raising operations in America raised vast sums in the name of feeding suffering Polish and Russian Jews but actually funneled much of the money to Zionist and Communist groups. 5th ed., 200 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#6)

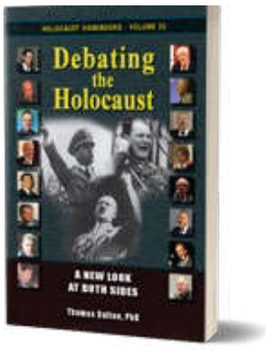
Lectures on the Holocaust. Controversial Issues Cross Examined. By Germar Rudolf. This book first explains why "the Holocaust" is an important topic, and that it is essential to keep an open mind about it. It then tells how many mainstream scholars expressed doubts and subsequently fell from grace. Next, the physical traces and documents about the various claimed crime scenes and murder weapons are discussed. After that, the reliability of witness testimony is examined. Finally, the author argues for a free exchange of ideas on this topic. This book gives the most-comprehensive and up-to-date overview of the critical research into the Holocaust. With its dialogue style, it is easy to read, and it can even be used as an encyclopedic compendium. 4th ed., 597 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index.(#15)



Breaking the Spell. The Holocaust, Myth & Reality. By Nicholas Kollerstrom. In 1941, British Intelligence analysts cracked the German "Enigma" code. Hence, in 1942 and 1943, encrypted radio communications between German concentration camps and the Berlin headquarters were decrypted. The intercepted data refutes the orthodox "Holocaust" narrative. It reveals that the Germans were desperate to reduce the death rate in their labor camps, which was caused by catastrophic typhus epidemics. Dr. Kollerstrom, a science historian, has taken these intercepts and a wide array of mostly unchallenged corroborating evidence to show that "witness statements" supporting the human gas chamber narrative clearly clash with the available scientific data. Kollerstrom concludes that the history of the Nazi "Holocaust" has been written by the victors with ulterior motives. It is distorted, exaggerated and largely wrong. With a foreword by Prof. Dr. James Fetzer. 6th ed., 285 pages, b&w ill., bibl., index. (#31)



Debating the Holocaust. A New Look at Both Sides. By Thomas Dalton. Mainstream historians insist that there cannot be, may not be, any debate about the Holocaust. But ignoring it does not make this controversy go away. Traditional scholars admit that there was neither a budget, a plan, nor an order for the Holocaust; that the key camps have all but vanished, and so have any human remains; that material and unequivocal documentary evidence is absent; and that there are serious problems with survivor testimonies. Dalton juxtaposes the traditional Holocaust narrative with revisionist challenges and then analyzes the mainstream's responses to them. He reveals the weaknesses of both sides, while declaring revisionism the winner of the current state of the debate.



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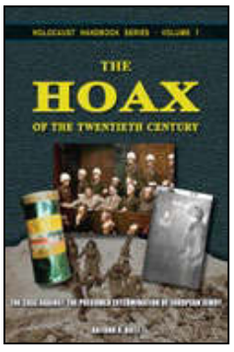
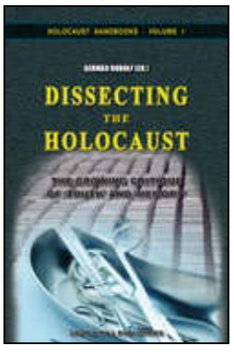
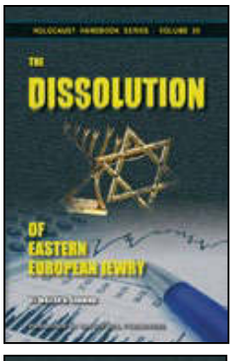
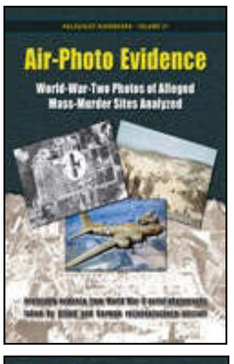
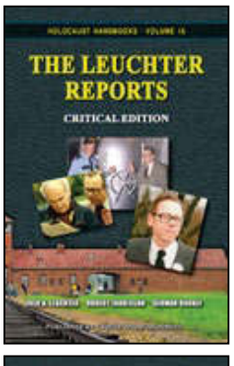










4th ed., 342 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#32)

The Hoax of the Twentieth Century. The Case against the Presumed Extermination of European Jewry. By Arthur R. Butz. The first writer to analyze the entire Holocaust complex in a precise scientific manner. This book exhibits the overwhelming force of arguments accumulated by the mid-1970s. Butz's two main arguments are: 1. All major entities hostile to Germany must have known what was happening to the Jews under German authority. They acted during the war as if no mass slaughter was occurring. 2. All the evidence adduced to prove any mass slaughter has a dual interpretation, while only the innocuous one can be proven to be correct. This book continues to be a major historical reference work, frequently cited by prominent personalities. This edition has numerous supplements with new information gathered over the last 35 years. 4th ed., 524 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#7)

Dissecting the Holocaust. The Growing Critique of 'Truth' and 'Memory.' Edited by Germar Rudolf. *Dissecting the Holocaust* applies state-of-the-art scientific techniques and classic methods of detection to investigate the alleged murder of millions of Jews by Germans during World War II. In 22 contributions—each of some 30 pages—the 17 authors dissect generally accepted paradigms of the "Holocaust." It reads as excitingly as a crime novel: so many lies, forgeries and deceptions by politicians, historians and scientists are proven. This is the intellectual adventure of the 21st Century. Be part of it! 3rd ed., 635 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#1)

The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry. By Walter N. Sanning. Six Million Jews died in the Holocaust. Sanning did not take that number at face value, but thoroughly explored European population developments and shifts mainly caused by emigration as well as deportations and evacuations conducted by both Nazis and the Soviets, among other things. The book is based mainly on Jewish, Zionist and mainstream sources. It concludes that a sizeable share of the Jews found missing during local censuses after the Second World War, which were so far counted as "Holocaust victims," had either emigrated (mainly to Israel or the U.S.) or had been deported by Stalin to Siberian labor camps. 3rd ed., foreword by A.R. Butz, epilogue by Germar Rudolf, and an update by the author containing new insights; 264 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography (#29).

Air-Photo Evidence: World-War-Two Photos of Alleged Mass-Murder Sites Analyzed. By Germar Rudolf (editor). During World War Two both German and Allied reconnaissance aircraft took countless air photos of places of tactical and strategic interest in Europe. These photos are prime evidence for the investigation of the Holocaust. Air photos of locations like Auschwitz, Majdanek, Treblinka, Babi Yar etc. permit an insight into what did or did not happen there. The author has unearthed many pertinent photos and has thoroughly analyzed them. This book is full of air-photo reproductions and schematic drawings explaining them. According to the author, these images refute many of the atrocity claims made by witnesses in connection with events in the German sphere of influence. 6th edition; with a contribution by Carlo Mattogno. 167 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index (#27).

The Leuchter Reports: Critical Edition. By Fred Leuchter, Robert Faurisson and Germar Rudolf. Between 1988 and 1991, U.S. expert on execution technologies Fred Leuchter wrote four reports on whether the Third Reich operated homicidal gas chambers. The first on Auschwitz and Majdanek became world-famous. Based on various arguments, Leuchter concluded that the locations investigated could never have been "utilized or seriously considered to function as execution gas chambers." The second report deals with gas-chamber claims for the camps Dachau, Mauthausen and Hartheim, while the third reviews design criteria and operation procedures of execution gas chambers in the U.S. The fourth report reviews Pressac's 1989 tome about Auschwitz. 4th ed., 252 pages, b&w illustrations. (#16)

Bungled: "The Destruction of the European Jews". Raul Hilberg's Failure to Prove National-Socialist "Killing Centers." By Carlo Mattogno. Raul Hilberg's magnum opus *The Destruction of the European Jews* is an orthodox standard work on the Holocaust. But how does Hilberg support his thesis that Jews were murdered *en masse*? He rips documents out of their context, distorts their content, misinterprets their meaning, and ignores entire archives. He only refers to "useful" witnesses, quotes fragments out of context, and conceals the fact that his witnesses are lying through their teeth. Lies and deceits permeate Hil-

berg's book, 302 pages, bibliography, index. (#3)

Jewish Emigration from the Third Reich. By Ingrid Weckert. Current historical writings about the Third Reich claim state it was difficult for Jews to flee from Nazi persecution. The truth is that Jewish emigration was welcomed by the German authorities. Emigration was not some kind of wild flight, but rather a lawfully determined and regulated matter. Weckert's booklet elucidates the emigration process in law and policy. She shows that German and Jewish authorities worked closely together. Jews interested in emigrating received detailed advice and offers of help from both sides. 2nd ed., 130 pages, index. (#12)

Inside the Gas Chambers: The Extermination of Mainstream Holocaust Historiography. By Carlo Mattogno. Neither increased media propaganda or political pressure nor judicial persecution can stifle revisionism. Hence, in early 2011, the Holocaust Orthodoxy published a 400-page book (in German) claiming to refute "revisionist propaganda," trying again to prove "once and for all" that there were homicidal gas chambers at the camps of Dachau, Natzweiler, Sachsenhausen, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück, Neuengamme, Stutthof… you name them. Mattogno shows with his detailed analysis of this work of propaganda that mainstream Holocaust hagiography is beating around the bush rather than addressing revisionist research results. He exposes their myths, distortions and lies. 2nd ed., 280 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#25)

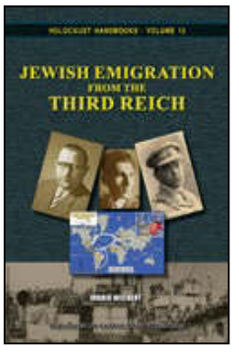
SECTION TWO:
Specific non-Auschwitz Studies

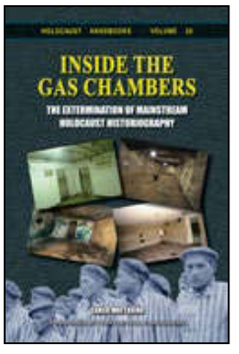
The Dachau Gas Chamber. By Carlo Mattogno. This study investigates whether the alleged homicidal gas chamber at the infamous Dachau Camp could have been operational. Could these gas chambers have fulfilled their alleged function to kill people as assumed by mainstream historians? Or does the evidence point to an entirely different purpose? This study reviews witness reports and finds that many claims are nonsense or technically impossible. As many layers of confounding misunderstandings and misrepresentations are peeled away, we discover the core of what the truth was concerning the existence of these gas chambers. 154 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#49)

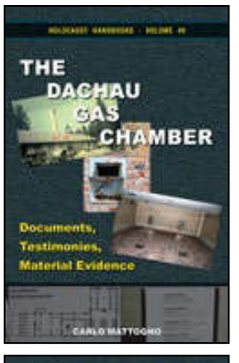
Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp? By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. It is alleged that at Treblinka in East Poland between 700,000 and 3,000,000 persons were murdered in 1942 and 1943. The weapons used were said to have been stationary and/or mobile gas chambers, fast-acting or slow-acting poison gas, unslaked lime, superheated steam, electricity, Diesel-exhaust fumes etc. Holocaust historians alleged that bodies were piled as high as multi-storied buildings and burned without a trace, using little or no fuel at all. Graf and Mattogno have now analyzed the origins, logic and technical feasibility of the official version of Treblinka. On the basis of numerous documents they reveal Treblinka's true identity as a mere transit camp. 3rd ed., 384 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#8)

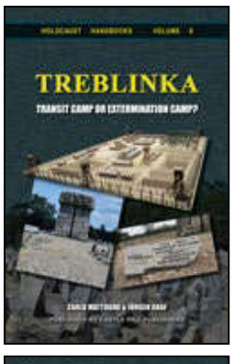
Belzec: Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research and History. By Carlo Mattogno. Witnesses report that between 600,000 and 3 million Jews were murdered in the Belzec Camp, located in Poland. Various murder weapons are claimed to have been used: Diesel-exhaust gas; unslaked lime in trains; high voltage; vacuum chambers; etc. The corpses were incinerated on huge pyres without leaving a trace. For those who know the stories about Treblinka this sounds familiar. Thus, the author has restricted this study to the aspects which are new compared to Treblinka. In contrast to Treblinka, forensic drillings and excavations were performed at Belzec, the results of which are critically reviewed. 142 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#9)

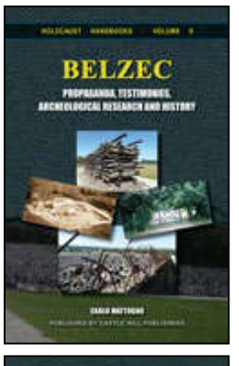
Sobibor: Holocaust Propaganda and Reality. By Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues and Carlo Mattogno. Between 25,000 and 2 million Jews are said to have been killed in gas chambers in the Sobibór camp in Poland. The corpses were allegedly buried in mass graves and later incinerated on pyres. This book investigates these claims and shows that they are based on the selective use of contradictory eyewitness testimony. Archeological surveys of the camp are analyzed that started in 2000-2001 and carried on until 2018. The book also documents the general National-Socialist policy toward Jews, which never included a genocidal "final solution." In conclusion, Sobibór emerges not as a "pure extermination camp", but as a transit camp from where Jews were deported to the occupied eastern territories. 2nd ed., 456 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#19)

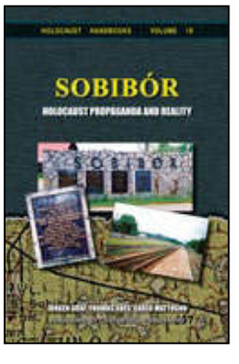


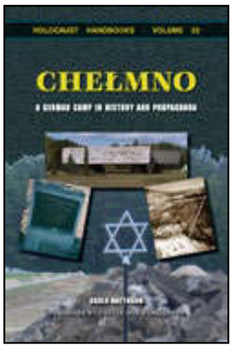


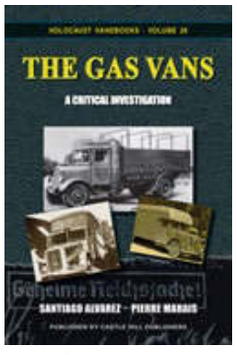


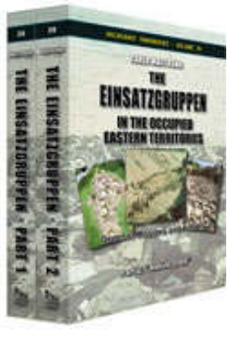


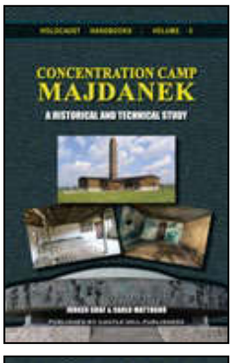


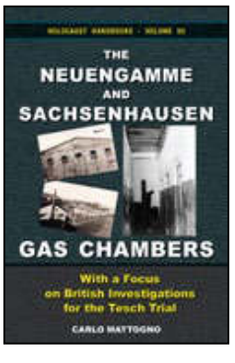












The "Operation Reinhardt" Camps Treblinka, Sobibór, Bełżec. By Carlo Mattogno. This study has its first focus on witness testimonies recorded during World War II and the immediate post-war era, many of them discussed here for the first time, thus demonstrating how the myth of the "extermination camps" was created. The second part of this book brings us up to speed with the various archeological efforts made by mainstream scholars in their attempt to prove that the myth is true. The third part compares the findings of the second part with what we ought to expect, and reveals the chasm between facts and myth. 402 pages, illustrations, bibliography, index. (#28)

Chelmno: A Camp in History & Propaganda. By Carlo Mattogno. At Chełmno, huge masses of Jewish prisoners are said to have been gassed in "gas vans" or shot (claims vary from 10,000 to 1.3 million victims). This study covers the subject from every angle, undermining the orthodox claims about the camp with an overwhelmingly effective body of evidence. Eyewitness statements, gas wagons as extermination weapons, forensics reports and excavations, German documents – all come under Mattogno's scrutiny. Here are the uncensored facts about Chełmno, not the propaganda. This is a complementary volume to the book on *The Gas Vans* (#26). 2nd ed., 188 pages, indexed, illustrated, bibliography. (#23)

The Gas Vans: A Critical Investigation. By Santiago Alvarez and Pierre Marais. Did the Nazis use mobile gas chambers to exterminate 700,000 people? Are witness statements believable? Are documents genuine? Where are the murder weapons? Could they have operated as claimed? Where are the corpses? In order to get to the truth of the matter, Alvarez has scrutinized all known wartime documents and photos about this topic; he has analyzed a huge amount of witness statements as published in the literature and as presented in more than 30 trials held over the decades in Germany, Poland and Israel; and he has examined the claims made in the pertinent mainstream literature. The result of his research is mind-boggling. Note: This book and Mattogno's book on Chelmno were edited in parallel to make sure they are consistent and not repetitive. 2nd ed., 412 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#26)

The Einsatzgruppen in the Occupied Eastern Territories: Genesis, Missions and Actions. By C. Mattogno. Before invading the Soviet Union, the German authorities set up special units meant to secure the area behind the German front. Orthodox historians claim that these units called *Einsatzgruppen* primarily engaged in rounding up and mass-murdering Jews. This study sheds a critical light onto this topic by reviewing all the pertinent sources as well as material traces. It reveals on the one hand that original war-time documents do not fully support the orthodox genocidal narrative, and on the other that most post-"liberation" sources such as testimonies and forensic reports are steeped in Soviet atrocity propaganda and are thus utterly unreliable. In addition, material traces of the claimed massacres are rare due to an attitude of collusion by governments and Jewish lobby groups. 2nd ed.., 2 vols., 864 pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#39)

Concentration Camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. At war's end, the Soviets claimed that up to two million Jews were murdered at the Majdanek Camp in seven gas chambers. Over the decades, however, the Majdanek Museum reduced the death toll three times to currently 78,000, and admitted that there were "only" two gas chambers. By exhaustively researching primary sources, the authors expertly dissect and repudiate the myth of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. They also critically investigated the legend of mass executions of Jews in tank trenches and prove it groundless. Again they have produced a standard work of methodical investigation which authentic historiography cannot ignore. 3rd ed., 358 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#5)

The Neuengamme and Sachsenhausen Gas Chambers. By Carlo Mattogno. The Neuengamme Camp near Hamburg, and the Sachsenhausen Camp north of Berlin allegedly had homicidal gas chambers for the mass gassing of inmates. The evaluation of many postwar interrogation protocols on this topic exposes inconsistencies, discrepancies and contradictions. British interrogating techniques are revealed as manipulative, threatening and mendacious. Finally, technical absurdities of gas-chambers and mass-gassing claims unmask these tales as a mere regurgitation of hearsay stories from other camps, among

them foremost Auschwitz. 178 pages, b&w ill., bibliography, index. (#50)

Concentration Camp Stutthof and Its Function in National Socialist Jewish Policy. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. Orthodox historians claim that the Stutthof Camp near Danzig, East Prussia, served as a "makeshift" extermination camp in 1944, where inmates were killed in a gas chamber. Based mainly on archival resources, this study thoroughly debunks this view and shows that Stutthof was in fact a center for the organization of German forced labor toward the end of World War II. The claimed gas chamber was a mere delousing facility. 4th ed., 170 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#4)

SECTION THREE: Auschwitz Studies

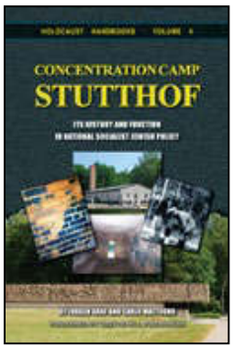
The Making of the Auschwitz Myth: Auschwitz in British Intercepts, Polish Underground Reports and Postwar Testimonies (1941-1947). By Carlo Mattogno. Using messages sent by the Polish underground to London, SS radio messages sent to and from Auschwitz that were intercepted and decrypted by the British, and a plethora of witness statements made during the war and in the immediate postwar period, the author shows how exactly the myth of mass murder in Auschwitz gas chambers was created, and how it was turned subsequently into "history" by intellectually corrupt scholars who cherry-picked claims that fit into their agenda and ignored or actively covered up literally thousands of lies of "witnesses" to make their narrative look credible. 2nd edition, 514 pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#41)

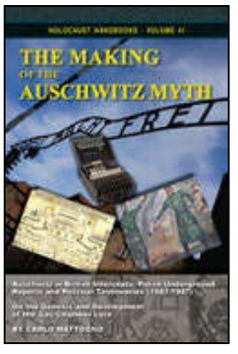
The Real Case of Auschwitz: Robert van Pelt's Evidence from the Irving Trial Critically Reviewed. By Carlo Mattogno. Prof. Robert van Pelt, a mainstream expert on Auschwitz, became famous when appearing as an expert during the London libel trial of David Irving against Deborah Lipstadt. From it resulted a book titled *The Case for Auschwitz*, in which van Pelt laid out his case for the existence of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. This book is a scholarly response to Prof. van Pelt—and Jean-Claude Pressac, upon whose books van Pelt's study is largely based. Mattogno lists all the evidence van Pelt adduces, and shows one by one that van Pelt misrepresented and misinterpreted every single one of them. This is a book of prime political and scholarly importance to those looking for the truth about Auschwitz. 3rd ed., 692 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. (#22)

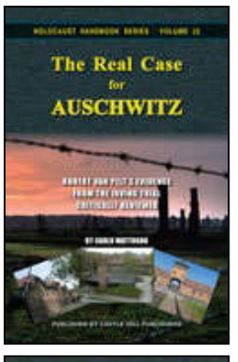
Auschwitz: Plain Facts: A Response to Jean-Claude Pressac. Edited by Germar Rudolf, with contributions by Serge Thion, Robert Faurisson and Carlo Mattogno. French pharmacist Jean-Claude Pressac tried to refute revisionist findings with the "technical" method. For this he was praised by the mainstream, and they proclaimed victory over the "revisionists." In his book, Pressac's works and claims are shown to be unscientific in nature, as he never substantiates what he claims, and historically false, because he systematically misrepresents, misinterprets and misunderstands German wartime documents. 2nd ed., 226 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary bibliography, index. (#14)

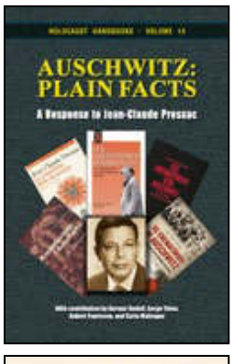
Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers: An Introduction and Update. By Germar Rudolf. Pressac's 1989 oversize book of the same title was a trail blazer. Its many document repros are valuable, but Pressac's annotations are now outdated. This book summarizes the most pertinent research results on Auschwitz gained during the past 30 years. With many references to Pressac's epic tome, it serves as an update and correction to it, whether you own an original hard copy of it, read it online, borrow it from a library, purchase a reprint, or are just interested in such a summary in general. 144 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography. (#42)

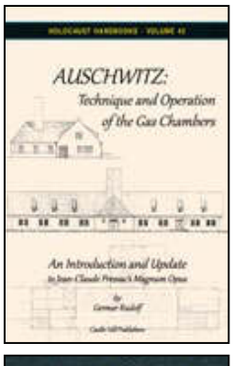
The Chemistry of Auschwitz: The Technology and Toxicology of Zyklon B and the Gas Chambers – A Crime-Scene Investigation. By Germar Rudolf. This study documents forensic research on Auschwitz, where material traces reign supreme. Most of the claimed crime scenes – the claimed homicidal gas chambers – are still accessible to forensic examination to some degree. This book addresses questions such as: How were these gas chambers configured? How did they operate? In addition, the infamous Zyklon B is examined in detail. What exactly was it? How did it kill? Did it leave traces in masonry that can be found still today? Indeed, it should have, the author concludes, but several sets of analyses show no trace of it. The author also discusses in depth similar forensic research conducted by other scholars. 4th ed., 454 pages, more than 120 color and over 100 b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#2)

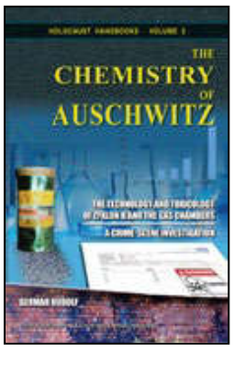


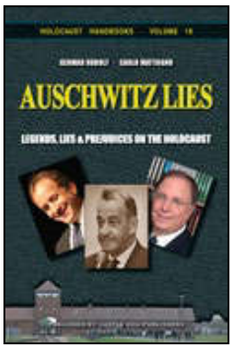


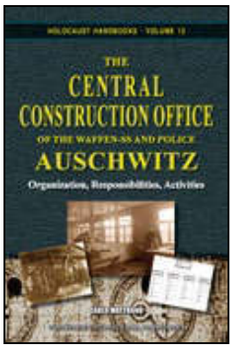


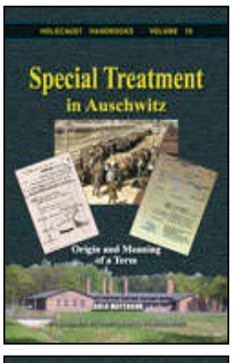


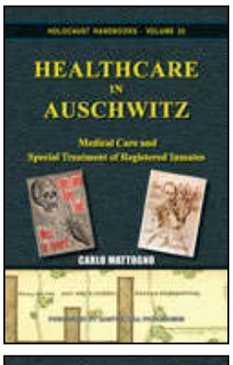


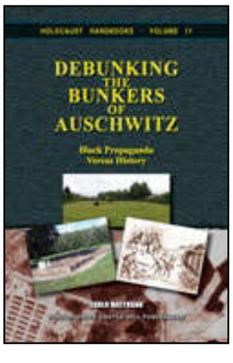












Auschwitz Lies: Legends, Lies and Prejudices on the Holocaust. By Carlo Mattogno and Germar Rudolf. The fallacious research and alleged "refutation" of revisionist scholars by French biochemist G. Wellers (attacking Leuchter's famous report, #16), Polish chemist Dr. J. Markiewicz and U.S. chemist Dr. Richard Green (taking on Rudolf's chemical research), Dr. John Zimmerman (tackling Mattogno on cremation issues), Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman (trying to prove it all), as well as researchers Keren, McCarthy and Mazal (who turned cracks into architectural features), are exposed for what they are: blatant and easily exposed political lies created to ostracize dissident historians. 4th ed., 420 pages, b&w illustrations, index. (#18)

Auschwitz: The Central Construction Office. By Carlo Mattogno. When Russian authorities granted access to their archives in the early 1990s, the files of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office, stored in Moscow, attracted the attention of scholars researching the history of this camp. This important office was responsible for the planning and construction of the Auschwitz camp complex, including the crematories which are said to have contained the "gas chambers." This study sheds light into this hitherto hidden aspect of this camp's history, but also provides a deep understanding of the organization, tasks, and procedures of this office. 2nd ed., 188 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, index. (#13)

Garrison and Headquarters Orders of the Auschwitz Camp. By Germar Rudolf and Ernst Böhm. A large number of the orders issued by the various commanders of the Auschwitz Camp have been preserved. They reveal the true nature of the camp with all its daily events. There is not a trace in them pointing at anything sinister going on. Quite to the contrary, many orders are in insurmountable contradiction to claims that prisoners were mass murdered, such as the children of SS men playing with inmates, SS men taking friends for a sight-seeing tour through the camp, or having a romantic stroll with their lovers around the camp grounds. This is a selection of the most pertinent of these orders together with comments putting them into their proper historical context. 185 pages, b&w ill., bibl., index (#34)

Special Treatment in Auschwitz: Origin and Meaning of a Term. By Carlo Mattogno. When appearing in German wartime documents, terms like "special treatment," "special action," and others have been interpreted as code words for mass murder. But that is not always true. This study focuses on documents about Auschwitz, showing that, while "special" had many different meanings, not a single one meant "execution." Hence the practice of deciphering an alleged "code language" by assigning homicidal meaning to harmless documents – a key component of mainstream historiography – is untenable. 2nd ed., 166 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#10)

Healthcare at Auschwitz. By Carlo Mattogno. In extension of the above study on *Special Treatment in Auschwitz*, this study proves the extent to which the German authorities at Auschwitz tried to provide health care for the inmates. Part 1 of this book analyzes the inmates' living conditions and the various sanitary and medical measures implemented. It documents the vast construction efforts to build a huge inmate hospital insinde the Auschwity-Birkenau Camp. Part 2 explores what happened to registered inmates who were "selected" or subject to "special treatment" while disabled or sick. This study shows that a lot was tried to cure these inmates, especially under the aegis of Garrison Physician Dr. Wirths. Part 3 is dedicated to this very Dr. Wirths. The reality of this caring philanthropist refutes the current stereotype of SS officers. 398 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#33)

Debunking the Bunkers of Auschwitz: Black Propaganda vs. History. By Carlo Mattogno. The "bunkers" at Auschwitz-Birkenau, two former farmhouses just outside the camp's perimeter, are claimed to have been the first homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz specifically equipped for this purpose. They supposedly went into operation during the first half of 1942, with thousands of Jews sent straight from deportation trains to these "gas chambers." However, documents clearly show that all inmates sent to Auschwity during that time were properly admitted to the camp. No mass murder on arrival can have happened. With the help of other wartime files as well as air photos taken by Allied reconnaissance aircraft in 1944, this study shows that these homicidal "bunkers" never existed, how the rumors about them evolved as black propaganda created by resistance groups in the camp, and how this propaganda was transformed into a false reality by "historians." 2nd ed.,

292 pages, b&w ill., bibliography, index. (#11)

Auschwitz: The First Gassing. Rumor and Reality. By Carlo Mattogno. The first gassing in Auschwitz is claimed to have occurred on Sept. 3, 1941 in a basement. The accounts reporting it are the archetypes for all later gassing accounts. This study analyzes all available sources about this alleged event. It shows that these sources contradict each other about the event's location, date, the kind of victims and their number, and many more aspects, which makes it impossible to extract a consistent story. Original wartime documents inflict a final blow to this legend and prove without a shadow of a doubt that this legendary event never happened. 4th ed., 262 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#20)

Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassings. By Carlo Mattogno. The morgue of Crematorium I in Auschwitz is said to be the first homicidal gas chamber there. This study analyzes witness statements and hundreds of wartime documents to accurately write a history of that building. Where witnesses speak of gassings, they are either very vague or, if specific, contradict one another and are refuted by documented and material facts. The author also exposes the fraudulent attempts of mainstream historians to convert the witnesses' black propaganda into "truth" by means of selective quotes, omissions, and distortions. Mattogno proves that this building's morgue was never a homicidal gas chamber, nor could it have worked as such. 2nd ed., 152 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#21)

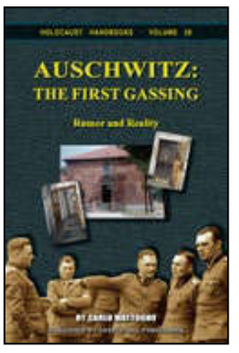
Auschwitz: Open-Air Incinerations. By Carlo Mattogno. In 1944, 400,000 Hungarian Jews were deported to Auschwitz and allegedly murdered in gas chambers. The camp crematoria were unable to cope with so many corpses. Therefore, every single day thousands of corpses are claimed to have been incinerated on huge pyres lit in trenches. The sky was filled with thick smoke, if we believe witnesses. This book examines many testimonies regarding these incinerations and establishes whether these claims were even possible. Using air photos, physical evidence and wartime documents, the author shows that these claims are fiction. A new Appendix contains 3 papers on groundwater levels and cattle mass burnings. 2nd ed., 202 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#17)

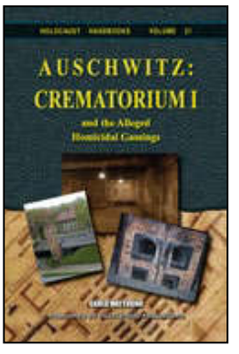
The Cremation Furnaces of Auschwitz. By Carlo Mattogno & Franco Deana. An exhaustive study of the early history and technology of cremation in general and of the cremation furnaces of Auschwitz in particular. On a vast base of technical literature, extant wartime documents and material traces, the authors establish the nature and capacity of these cremation furnaces, showing that these devices were inferior makeshift versions, and that their capacity was lower than normal. The Auschwitz crematoria were not facilities of mass destruction, but installations barely managing to handle the victims among the inmates who died of various epidemics. 2nd ed., 3 vols., 1201 pages, b&w and color illustrations (vols 2 & 3), bibliography, index, glossary. (#24)

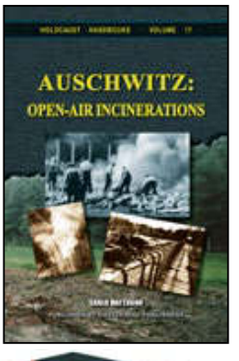
Curated Lies: The Auschwitz Museum's Misrepresentations, Distortions and Deceptions. By Carlo Mattogno. Revisionist research results have put the Polish Auschwitz Museum under enormous pressure to answer this challenge. They've answered. This book analyzes their answer. It first exposes the many tricks and lies used by the museum to bamboozle millions of visitors every year regarding its most valued asset, the "gas chamber" in the Main Camp. Next, it reveals how the museum's historians mislead and lie through their teeth about documents in their archives. A long string of completely innocuous documents is mistranslated and misrepresented to make it look like they prove the existence of homicidal gas chambers. 2nd ed., 259 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#38)

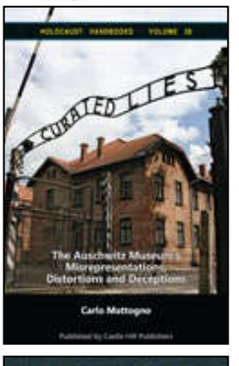
Deliveries of Coke, Wood and Zyklon B to Auschwitz: Neither Proof Nor Trace for the Holocaust. By Carlo Mattogno. Researchers from the Auschwitz Museum tried to prove the reality of mass extermination by pointing to documents about deliveries of wood and coke as well as Zyklon B to the Auschwitz Camp. If put into the actual historical and technical context, however, as is done by this study, these documents prove the exact opposite of what those orthodox researchers claim. This study exposes the mendacious tricks with which these museum officials once more deceive the trusting public. 184 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (#40)

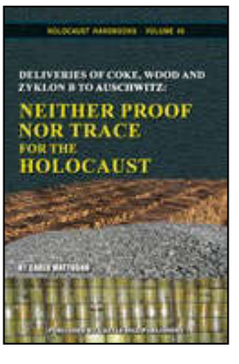
Mis-Chronicling Auschwitz. Danuta Czech's Flawed Methods, Lies and Deceptions in Her "Auschwitz Chronicle". By Carlo Mattogno. The *Auschwitz Chronicle* is a reference book for the history of the Auschwitz

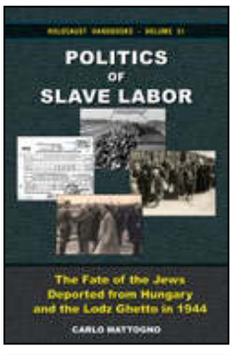


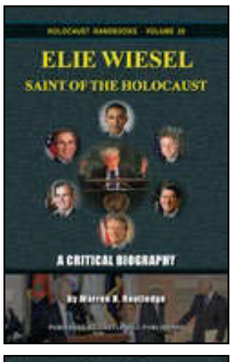


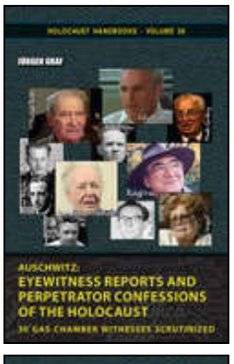


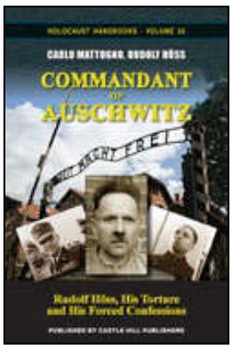












Camp. It was published in 1990 by Danuta Czech, one of the Auschwitz Museum's most prolific and impactful historians. Analyzing this almost 1,000-page long tome one entry at a time, Mattogno has compiled a long list of misrepresentations, outright lies and deceptions contained in it. They all aim at creating the otherwise unsubstantiated claim that homicidal gas chambers and lethal injections were used at Auschwitz for mass-murdering inmates. This literary mega-fraud needs to be retired from the ranks of Auschwitz sources. 324 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#47)

The Real Auschwitz Chronicle. By Carlo Mattogno. Nagging is easy. We actually did a better job! That which is missing in Czech's *Chronicle* is included here: day after day of the camp's history, documents are presented showing that it could not have been an extermination camp: tens of thousands of sick and injured inmates were cared for medically with huge efforts, and the camp authorities tried hard to improve the initially catastrophic hygienic conditions. Part Two contains data on transports, camp occupancy and mortality figures. For the first time, we find out what this camps' real death toll was. 2 vols., 906 pp., b&w illustrations (Vol. 2), bibliography, index. (#48)

Politics of Slave Labor: The Fate of the Jews Deported from Hungary and the Lodz Ghetto in 1944. By Carlo Mattogno. The deportation of the Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz in May-July 1944 is said to have been the pinnacle of this camp's extermination frenzy, topped off in August of that year by the extermination of Jews deported from the Lodz Ghetto. This book gathers and explains all the evidence available on both events. In painstaking research, the author proves almost on a person-by-person level what the fate was of many of the Jews deported from Hungary or the Lodz Ghetto. He demonstrates that these Jews were deported to serve as slave laborers in the Third Reich's collapsing war economy. There is no trace of any extermination of any of these Jews. 338 pp., b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#51)

SECTION FOUR:
Witness Critique

Elie Wiesel, Saint of the Holocaust: A Critical Biography. By Warren B. Routledge. This book analyzes several of Wiesel's texts, foremost his camp autobiography Night. The author proves that much of what Wiesel claims can never have happened. It shows how Zionist control has allowed Wiesel and his fellow extremists to force leaders of many nations, the U.N. and even popes to genuflect before Wiesel as symbolic acts of subordination to World Jewry, while at the same time forcing school children to submit to Holocaust brainwashing. This study also shows how parallel to this abuse of power, critical reactions to it also increased: Holocaust revisionism. While Catholics jumped on the Holocaust band wagon, the number of Jews rejecting certain aspect of the Holocaust narrative and its abuse grew as well. This first unauthorized biography of Wiesel exposes both his personal deceits and the whole myth of "the six million." 3rd ed., 458 pages, b&w illustration, bibliography, index. (#30)

Auschwitz: Eyewitness Reports and Perpetrator Confessions. By Jürgen Graf. The traditional narrative of what transpired at the infamous Auschwitz camp during WWII rests almost exclusively on witness testimony from former inmates as well as erstwhile camp officials. This study critically scrutinizes the 30 most important of these witness statements by checking them for internal coherence, and by comparing them with one another as well as with other evidence such as wartime documents, air photos, forensic research results, and material traces. The result is devastating for the traditional narrative. 372 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (#36)

Commandant of Auschwitz: Rudolf Höss, His Torture and His Forced Confessions. By Carlo Mattogno & Rudolf Höss. From 1940 to 1943, Rudolf Höss was the commandant of the infamous Auschwitz Camp. After the war, he was captured by the British. In the following 13 months until his execution, he made 85 depositions of various kinds in which he confessed his involvement in the "Holocaust." This study first reveals how the British tortured him to extract various "confessions." Next, all of Höss's depositions are analyzed by checking his claims for internal consistency and comparing them with established historical facts. The results are eye-opening… 2nd ed., 411 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#35)

An Auschwitz Doctor's Eyewitness Account: The Tall Tales of Dr. Mengele's Assistant Analyzed. By Miklos Nyiszli & Carlo Mattogno.

Nyiszli, a Hungarian physician, ended up at Auschwitz in 1944 as Dr. Mengele's assistant. After the war he wrote a book and several other writings describing what he claimed to have experienced. To this day some traditional historians take his accounts seriously, while others reject them as grotesque lies and exaggerations. This study presents and analyzes Nyiszli's writings and skillfully separates truth from fabulous fabrication. 2nd ed., 484 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#37)

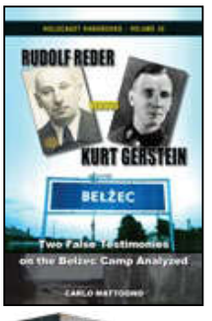
Rudolf Reder versus Kurt Gerstein: Two False Testimonies on the Bełżec Camp Analyzed. By Carlo Mattogno. Only two witnesses have ever testified substantially about the alleged Belzec Extermination Camp: The survivor Rudolf Reder and the SS officer Kurt Gerstein. Gerstein's testimonies have been a hotspot of revisionist critique for decades. It is now discredited even among orthodox historians. They use Reder's testimony to fill the void, yet his testimonies are just as absurd. This study thoroughly scrutinizes Reder's various statements, critically revisits Gerstein's various depositions, and then compares these two testimonies which are at once similar in some respects, but incompatible in others. 216 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#43)

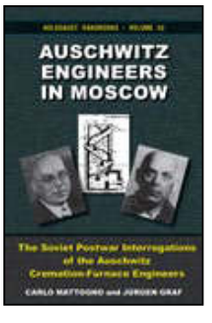
Sonderkommando Auschwitz I: Nine Eyewitness Testimonies Analyzed. By Carlo Mattogno. The 1979 book *Auschwitz Inferno* by alleged former Auschwitz "Sonderkommando" member Filip Müller has a great influence on the perception of Auschwitz by the public and by historians. This book critically analyzes Müller's various post-war statements, which are full of exaggerations, falsehoods and plagiarized text passages. Also scrutinized are the testimonies of eight other claimed former *Sonderkommando* members: D. Paisikovic, S. Jankowski, H. Mandelbaum, L. Nagraba, J. Rosenblum, A. Pilo, D. Fliamenbaum and S. Karolinskij. 304 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#44)

Sonderkommando Auschwitz II: The False Testimonies by Henryk Tauber and Szlama Dragon. By Carlo Mattogno. Auschwitz survivor and former member of the so-called "Sonderkommando" Henryk Tauber is one of the most important witnesses about the alleged gas chambers inside the crematoria at Auschwitz, because right at the war's end, he made several extremely detailed depositions about it. The same is true for Szlama Dragon, only he claims to have worked at the so-called "bunkers" of Birkenau, two makeshift gas chambers just outside the camp perimeter. This study thoroughly scrutinizes these two key testimonies. 254 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#45)

Sonderkommando Auschwitz III: They Wept Crocodile Tears. A Critical Analysis of Late Witness Testimonies. By Carlo Mattogno. This book focuses on the critical analysis of witness testimonies on the alleged Auschwitz gas chambers recorded or published in the 1990s and early 2000s, such as J. Sackar, A. Dragon, J. Gabai, S. Chasan, L. Cohen and S. Venezia, among others. 232 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#46)

Auschwitz Engineers in Moscow: The Soviet Postwar Interrogations of the Auschwitz Cremation-Furnace Engineers. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. After the war, the Soviets arrested four leading engineers of the Topf Company. Among other things, they had planned and supervised the construction of the Auschwitz cremation furnaces and the ventilation systems of the rooms said to have served as homicidal gas chambers. Between 1946 and 1948, Soviet officials conducted numerous interrogations with them. This work analyzes them by putting them into the context of the vast documentation on these and related facilities. The appendix contains all translated interrogation protocols. 254 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#52)





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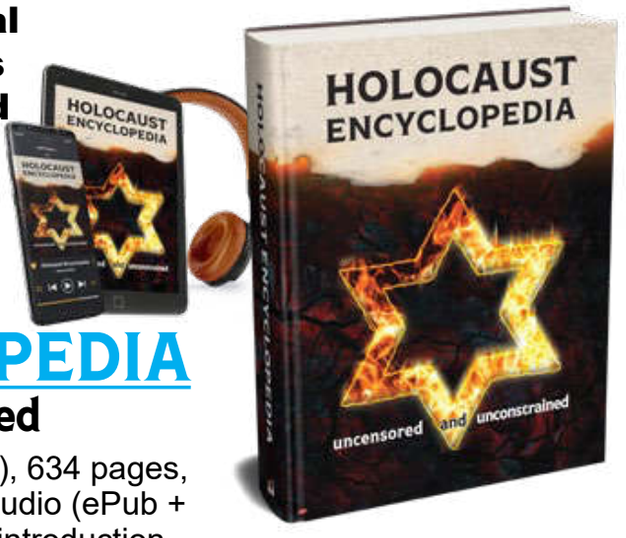

HOLOCAUST ENCYCLOPEDIA

uncensored and unconstrained

Available as paperback (b&w) or hardcover (color), 634 pages, 8.5"×11"; as eBook (ePub or PDF) and eBook + audio (ePub + mp3); more than 350 illustrations in 579 entries; introduction, bibliography, index. **Online at www.NukeBook.org**

We all know the basics of "The Holocaust." But what about the details? Websites and printed encyclopedias can help us there. Take the 4-volume encyclopedia by Israel's Yad Vashem Center: *The Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (1990). For every significant crime scene, it presents a condensed narrative of Israel's finest Holocaust scholars. However, it contains not one entry about witnesses and their stories, even though they are the foundation of our knowledge. When a murder is committed, the murder weapon and the crime's traces are of crucial importance. Yet Yad Vashem's encyclopedia has no entries explaining scientific findings on these matters – not one.

This is where the present encyclopedia steps in. It not only summarizes and explains the many pieces that make up the larger Holocaust picture. It also reveals the evidence that confirms or contradicts certain notions. Nearly 300 entries present the essence of important witness accounts, and they are subjected to source criticism. This enables us to decide which witness claims are credible.

For all major crime scenes, the sometimes-conflicting claims are presented. We learn how our knowledge has changed over time, and what evidence shores up the currently valid narrative of places such as Auschwitz, Belzec, Sobibór, Treblinka, Dachau and Bergen-Belsen and many more.

Other entries discuss tools and mechanisms allegedly used for the mass murders, and how the crimes' traces were erased, if at all. A few entries discuss toxicological issues surrounding the various lethal gases claimed to have been used.

This encyclopedia has multiple entries on some common claims about aspects of the Holocaust, including a list of "Who said it?" This way we can quickly find proof for these claims.

Finally, several entries address factors that have influenced the creation of the Holocaust narrative, and how we perceive it today. This includes entries on psychological warfare and wartime propaganda; on conditions prevailing during investigations and trials of alleged Holocaust perpetrators; on censorship against historical dissidents; on the religious dimension of the Holocaust narrative; and on motives of all sides involved in creating and spreading their diverse Holocaust narratives.

In this important volume, now with 579 entries, you will discover many astounding aspects of the Holocaust narrative that you did not even know exist.

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2) 66 Q&A on the Holocaust: Pamplet + Zundel v Nizkor Debate (presenting debates/ rebuttals on Holocaust Revisionism between Ernst Zundel etal and Holocaust promotion group Nizkor Project in the mid 90s) compiled into a single pdf.

Changes made to original pdf volumes:
• Most volumes had images compresssed, reducing total file size by around 40%.
• The brochures at the end of each volume where removed, saving around ~80MB.
• Bookmarks where cleaned, FitPage markers removed, broken links fixed/removed etc.
• All volumes where resized to display at A4 width, when set to 100%;
• References where added to cover pages where volumes are updated editions since first publication - for future reference when checking for latest edition.
• The Holocaust Encyclopedia was converted from epub to pdf and had a few changes made: removing the multiple instances of Holocaust Handbooks ads, enlarging a few of the images and using image compression to reduce file size, etal.

Other notes:
• The single file compilation has dual bookmarks showing by order and by category.
• 32 pages of brochures on the Holocaust Handbooks & a summary of Revisionism are added to the start of the compilations, and the end of the 66 Q&A pdf.
• Volume 32 is only a sample of chapter 1. The full book can be purchased in pdf format, and there's a link to it on the cover.
• Disclaimer: Some pdf viewers may stutter when scrolling the single file compilation. I've tested it on half a dozen desktop and browser readers, and found it only occurs with Foxit portable.
• The main programs used to combine and edit these pdfs were PDF24 Tools and PDF-XChange Editor.

Lastly this series will probably have new volumes added in the next few years, and some existing volumes will probably be updated, so check holocausthandbooks.com after a while to see what's new.

Available at: https://archive.org/details/holocaust-handbooks-combined-2024

Holocaust Skepticism

20 Questions and Answers about Holocaust Revisionism

Info Holocaust

CODOH

Welcome
to our Introduction to Holocaust Revisionism!

This pamphlet gives succinct answers to questions which are most frequently asked about Holocaust revisionism. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch: **Academic Research Media Review Education Group LTD, 86-90 Paul Street, London, EC2A 4NE, UK,** sales@armreg.co.uk; www.armreg.co.uk

20 Questions and Answers

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1. What is revisionism?

The word "revisionism" is derived from the Latin word "*revidere*," which means to look at something again. The revision of long-held theories is entirely normal. It occurs in the natural sciences as well as the social sciences, to which the discipline of history belongs. Science is not a static condition. It is a process, specifically the creating of knowledge by searching for evidence. When ongoing research finds new evidence, or when critical researchers discover mistakes in old explanations, it often happens that old theories have to be changed or even abandoned. By "revisionism" we mean critically examining established theories and hypotheses in order to test their validity. Scientists need to know when new evidence modifies or contradicts old theories; indeed, one of their obligations is to test time-honored conceptions and attempt to refute them. Only in an open society in which individuals are free to challenge prevailing theories can we ascertain the validity of these theories, and be confident that we are approaching the truth.

The famous science philosopher Sir Karl Popper once expressed it as follows:[1]

> *"The demand for scientific objectivity makes it inevitable that every scientific statement must remain* tentative forever. *It may indeed be corroborated, but every corroboration is relative.* […] *it is not his* possession *of knowledge, of irrefutable truth, that makes the man a scientist, but his persistent and reckless critical* quest *for truth.* […] *Those among us who are unwilling to expose their ideas to the hazard of refutation do not take part in the scientific game."*

2. Why is historical revisionism important?

Like other scientific concepts, our historical concepts deserve critical scrutiny, especially when new evidence is discovered. A re-examination of historical narratives is particularly due if:

1. We are dealing with events which occurred in the far distant past. In this case our problem is that we often have very little evidence on which to base our theories.
2. We are dealing with events which occurred in the recent past. In this case, our problem is that we must contend with political influence deriving from these events.

When we are dealing with the distant past, even a small piece of new evidence can profoundly change our view. As for the recent past, the truism "the victor writes the history" still holds; victors are hardly ever objective. Revising a victor's narrative of history is usually not possible until the confrontation between victor and vanquished has ceased to exist. Sometimes these confrontations last for centuries. Since historical research is rarely a profitable enterprise, almost all historical institutes are financed by their respective governments. Free and independent historical institutes are practically nonexistent. In contemporary history, in which individual governments have huge political interests, we must be skeptical toward the official narrative. Another truism reminds us that "he who pays the piper, calls the tune." These reasons explain why historical revisionism is important and why the rulers of the world tend to oppose it.

3. Why is Holocaust revisionism necessary?

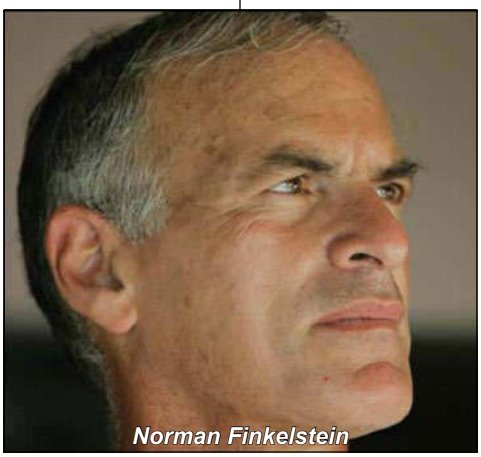
The Holocaust is – or should be – a historical event and not a matter of religion. As such, it is subject to the same kind of research and scrutiny as other past events, and so our conceptions of the Holocaust must be subjected to critical investigation. If new evidence necessitates a change of our view of the Holocaust, then a change must take place. The same holds true when old assumptions are proven false. There is nothing reprehensible about questioning the accuracy of scientific assertions and attempting to deny their validity. Therefore, it is not reprehensible to approach prevailing conceptions of the Holocaust with skepticism, as long as it is done objectively and we have valid reasons to be skeptical.

Most people know that the powers existing today, particularly in German-speaking countries, are opposed to any critical approach to the orthodox Holocaust narrative. In fact, many European governments prosecute such approaches. Here then is an answer to the question of why revisionism as such is important (Question 2): Governments outlawing Holocaust skepticism obviously intend to maintain the present narrative of the Holocaust with all the official power at their command. One reason for this is the massive political and financial interests of those religious groups so meticulously described by the political scientist Dr. Norman G. Finkelstein in his book *The Holocaust Industry* that we strongly recommend to everyone (t.ly/STZ5S). Because of common exaggerations, inventions and distortions of the Holocaust, Prof. Finkelstein laments the fact that there aren't more Holocaust skeptics:

> *"Given the nonsense churned out daily by the Holocaust industry, the wonder is that there are so few skeptics."* (p. 68)

And the late Prof. Raul Hilberg, during his lifetime the leading Holocaust scholar, repeatedly stated that superficiality and inadequate quality control are the greatest problems in the field of Holocaust research.[2] Hence, Holocaust skeptics are badly needed.

When challenging the orthodox Holocaust narrative, we are inevitably forced to contend with the entire postwar order, which was created by the victorious Allies. The very credibility of the victors' version of history is at risk, as the Holocaust is the moral cornerstone of their version of World-War-II history. But this is not just a matter of maintaining a worldwide pecking order of nations or spheres of political influence. For instance, if we look into the war propaganda put forth by the U.S. before and during the wars against Serbia in 1999 and against Iraq in 1991 and 2003, plus when we look into how certain lobby groups have been pushing for a war against Iran


Norman Finkelstein

since 2005, we recognize a pattern: Slobodan Milosevic, in 1999 leader of tiny Serbia, as well as Saddam Hussein and now the various presidents of Iran (most notably Mahmoud Ahmadinejad) were compared with... Adolf Hitler. Milosevic and Hussein were even accused of having committed similar crimes of genocide – against the Kosovo Albanians here or the Kurds there. These claims, among others, were used to justify the wars. And there is no better justification for a war than to prevent a new Hitler – or a new threat to exterminate the Jewish people, an accusation later leveled against Ahmadinejad.

Gilad Atzmon

We know today that the claims about weapons of mass destruction raised against Hussein were false. But they served their purpose well, because the world is so conditioned to react with automatic, Pavlovian-style reflexes to such claims. One reason why these accusations work so well and why the world is so gullible as to believe them, no matter how often they have been revealed to be wrong in the past, is because of that giant bogeyman called Hitler. Once his name is dropped and successfully put into the "right" context, there seems to be no stopping. War is the only solution to stop Hitler, Slobo-Hitler, Saddam-Hitler, Mahmoud-Hitler, or whatever their names may be. It has come to the point where summoning the evil spirits of Adolf Hitler and "his" über-genocide – the Holocaust – is the trump card needed to start just about any war the Powers That Be want to wage.

Norman G. Finkelstein agreed with this when he stated in an interview in the 2009 documentary *Defamation* by Israeli documentary filmmaker Yoav Shamir:[3]

> *"The irony is that the Nazi holocaust has now become the main ideological weapon for launching wars of aggression. Every time you want to launch a war of aggression, drag in the Nazi holocaust."*

Wasn't one of the primary lessons of the world wars supposed to be that wars are evil? And wasn't another lesson that governments use propaganda tricks to drive people into discriminating against minorities, into ethnic cleansing, into genocide, and into wars? And yet, after World War II the Powers That Be have been very successful in driving their people into one war after another by referring to this "mother-of-all-wars." Pacifists are dumbfounded at how good those warmongers are in using the horrors of this greatest war ever to instigate even more wars. And so have some of us been for the past decade or so. Holocaust revisionism throws a monkey wrench into this mechanism of "Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace." It challenges the core of the dogma which serves today's imperialists so well. Famous British Jewish musician and writer Gilad Atzmon wrapped it up nicely in a blog entry on March 13, 2010 (t.ly/pQUrO):

> *"What is the holocaust religion there to conceal? As long as we fail to ask questions, we will be subjected to Zionists and their Neocon agents' plots. We will continue killing in the name of Jewish suffering. We will maintain our complicity in Western imperialist crimes against humanity.* [...] *The holocaust became the new Western religion. Unfortunately, it is the most sinister religion known to man. It is a license to kill, to flatten, to nuke, to wipe [out], to rape, to loot and to ethnically cleanse. It made vengeance and revenge into a Western value.* [...] *Holocaust religion robs humanity of its humanism. For the sake of peace and future generations, the holocaust must be stripped of its exceptional status immediately. It must be subjected to thorough historical scrutiny. Truth and truth seeking is an elementary human experience. It must prevail."*

Hence, critically verifying what our leaders claim is the key to peace. And this is what revisionism stands for: Be critical! Don't take for granted what those militant Powers want you to believe in justification of their deeds! Instead, look again (Latin: *revidere*) into their claims! Review their evidence! Revise your opinion, if needed. This definition of revisionism is the opposite of what those warmongers want you to believe, isn't it? And for a good reason: because they want to prevent by all means that we obtain and entertain a critical mind.

The Catholic priest Viktor R. Knirsch of Kahlenbergerdorf in Austria has given us some insightful remarks on this subject:[4]

> *"It is the right and the duty of everyone who seeks the truth to doubt, investigate and consider all available evidence. Wherever this doubting and investigating is forbidden; wherever authorities demand unquestioning belief – there is evidence of a profane arrogance, which arouses our suspicions. If those whose con-*

tentions are questioned had truth on their side, they would patiently answer all questions. Certainly they would not continue to conceal evidence and documents which pertain to the controversy. If those who demand belief are lying, however, they will call for a judge. By this ye shall know them. He who tells the truth is calm and composed, but he who lies demands worldly justice."

4. What is meant by "The Holocaust" or "Shoah"?

By "Holocaust" (the Greek word for sacrifice of a burnt offering) as well as "Shoah," which is the Hebrew word for "Catastrophe," we mean the near-total extermination of a distinct group of persons through violence. Here we are referring to Jews who lived in areas controlled by the Third Reich. Loss of citizenship, deportation, and incarceration with forced labor, things which have always existed and exist today, should not be included since they do not result in the physical destruction of these groups. In the public's mind, the opinion is often created that simply depriving Jews of civil rights during the Third Reich was part of the Holocaust. But if this were true, then depriving blacks in South Africa until the end of last century, Palestinians in Israel and the territories occupied by it, or the (partial) deprivation of the civil rights of Blacks and Native Americans in the USA until the middle of the 20th century would also have to be described as part of a Holocaust. Hence, this cannot be correct.

The common historical narrative of the Holocaust against the Jews is postulated on the following specific points:

1. An intention on the part of the National Socialist government to physically exterminate Jews.
2. An actual plan of the National Socialist government to physically exterminate the Jews.
3. A governmental agency and a budget to carry out this plan.
4. Technically refined methods of mass killing to achieve this goal, whereby homicidal gas chambers as well as mass shootings behind the Russian front would play a major role.
5. Techniques for disposing of millions of bodies; that is, crematories or pyres with adequate capacity and fuel.

Such allegations of mass murder in fast-acting homicidal gas chambers followed by disposal of the bodies in adjoining crematoria, that is to say, expertly planned and efficiently functioning assembly lines for homicide, are described as having been "unique" in human history. They distinguish the Holocaust from all atrocities that have ever happened.

5. What does Holocaust revisionism claim?

First of all, because of misrepresentations by the media, it is necessary that we first clarify what Holocaust revisionism does ***not*** maintain:

– it does ***not*** deny that Jews were persecuted by the Third Reich;
– it does ***not*** deny that Jews were deprived of civil rights;
– it does ***not*** deny that Jews were deported;
– it does ***not*** deny the existence of Jewish ghettos;
– it does ***not*** deny the existence of concentration camps;
– it does ***not*** deny the existence of crematoria in concentration camps;
– it does ***not*** deny that Jews died for a great number of reasons;
– it does ***not*** deny that other minorities were also persecuted such as gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, and political dissidents;
– and finally, it does ***not*** deny that all the above mentioned things were unjust.

None of these crimes of the National Socialist regime is doubted by Holocaust revisionists. Revisionists maintain, however, that all these injustices have nothing to do with the Holocaust, which is defined as planned and organized mass murder, carried out specifically in homicidal gas chambers (see Question 4).

Holocaust revisionists believe the following to be correct:

1. There was no National Socialist order or plan for the physical extermination of Jews (t.ly/siDXC);
2. There was no German organization and no budget for carrying out the alleged extermination plan. Consider the statement by Professor Dr. Raul Hilberg:[5]

   "But what began in 1941 was a process of destruction not planned in advance, not organized centrally by any agency. There was no blueprint and there was no budget for destructive measures [of the Jews]. *They* [the measures] *were taken step by step. Thus came about not so much a plan being*

carried out but an incredible meeting of minds, a consensus mind-reading by a far-flung [German] *bureaucracy."*

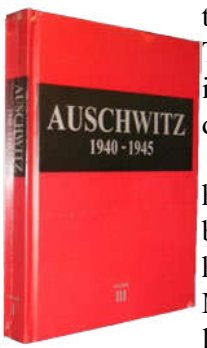
3. In detailed investigations of former German concentration camps, expert researchers have established: No documentation or physical evidence for the existence of homicidal gas chambers or other methods of mass murder exists, and material traces of the victims are lacking as well.[6] Furthermore, the reports of mass shootings were greatly exaggerated and taken out of context,[7] and the infamous "gas vans," the so-called mobile gas chambers, are a product of wartime propaganda.[8]
4. There were neither adequate industrial facilities nor sufficient fuel to cremate such a huge number of corpses. In fact, the capacity of the crematoria was barely enough to cremate the bodies of those who died from starvation and epidemics.[9]
5. Mass-murder claims rely almost exclusively on eyewitness accounts, whose unreliability is legendary and widely acknowledged (see Question 12).[10]
6. Despite massive surveillance by spies and resistance groups active in the vicinity of, and inside German labor, concentration and alleged extermination camps, all of Germany's wartime enemies and adversaries conducted themselves as if no exterminations of Jews were taking place. The charges of genocide were not seriously raised until after Germany's defeat, when there was no German government to dispute them.[11]
7. Statistical investigations of living Jews worldwide show clearly that the losses of this ethnic group during the Second World War were nowhere near six million. Although attempts were made to establish a somewhat more accurate figure,[12] the truth is that we simply don't know for certain, as a comparison of revisionist and mainstream research has shown.[13] In fact, the six-million figure, together with extermination and Holocaust claims, has been bandied about mainly by Jewish media outlets since the late 1800s![14]

To find out more, please read the answer to the last Question.

6. Does Holocaust revisionism ignore important evidence?

This imputation is quite ironic, considering that revisionism is a reaction to orthodox historians ignoring vast amounts of evidence.

Take, for example, the infamous Auschwitz Camp. While orthodox and revisionist historians agree to a large degree about aspects of the camp's history not related to mass murder, their views diverge drastically from each other in this latter regard. The best effort mainstream historians have mustered so far to document mass-murder claims is a 270-page volume.[15] Each mass-murder location and method is covered in it with only a few pages. On the other hand, revisionist scholar Carlo Mattogno and his colleagues have published seventeen studies of altogether more than 4,400 pages (see some in the illustration at the right-hand side), each one of which examines in detail these various aspects of extermination claims made about Auschwitz.[16]



The evidence presented in these studies greatly surpasses that of the orthodoxy both in quantity and quality.

Or take the so-called "Aktion Reinhardt" Camps (Belzec, Chelmno, Sobibor, Treblinka), which are said to have been pure extermination centers. Mainstream books on them are mainly based on selected quotations from cherry-picked testimonies[17] that they never subject to any source criticism, which is the Alpha and Omega of any historical scholarship worthy of that term. Compare this with revisionist studies on these camps that critically verify what witnesses have testified in a broader context.[18] By so doing, these studies also determine the trustworthiness of these witnesses, a factor assiduously avoided by the orthodoxy.[19]

Hence, revisionist studies on the Holocaust are actually the only ones meeting scholarly standards. The others? They play to popular – and legally mandated – renditions of the subject matters. They may be reassuring to the many, but they are disquieting to the discerning few.

7. Does Holocaust revisionism just deny what is said about what happened?

Mostly, it must be admitted, we contest and refute, or at least question on grounds which we disclose in exhaustive detail. If sheer effort, ingenuity and integrity could get The Past to give up her secrets, revisionists would win the day with a clear, complete and factual account of What Happened.

As it is, the past in its totality is vouchsafed to no one – each of us is at best one of the six blind men feeling merely parts of the elephant, as the ancient Indian parable goes – and this ironically applies to "eyewitnesses" even more than to others. All of us, as eyewitnesses, can barely understand what we see, to say nothing of what we hear from others who claim to have seen.

"War criminals" have been hanged, and a people (the Germans) condemned and even expelled from their ancestral homes on the strength of disprovable testimony by selected parties eager to wreak revenge and receive compensation for wrongs committed, or not committed, against them by a dictatorial German government that never told the German people what it was doing, let alone asked them to approve of it.

Revisionists are troubled by such developments, if only because anyone, after the next war, might find themselves on the receiving end of such a process themselves.

Thus, it is on the score of a concern for justice that we concentrate so on debunking unfounded and false claims of cruelty and murder leveled against the losers of the last world war.

Ask not for whom the bell tolls …

8. Is Holocaust revisionism an anti-Semitic ideology?

Holocaust revisionism is a scholarly, fact-seeking method based on the critical review of evidence, not an ideology. It simply reviews the prevailing historical narrative that has been influenced mainly by Soviet, British and American wartime propaganda. We need to keep in mind that this propaganda was *not* the result of any ideology, but of the most-atrocious war ever fought among the nations of the world. The more atrocious a war, the more atrocious and distorted we can expect the accompanying propaganda to be. Critically reviewing these propaganda claims is neither anti-American, anti-democratic, anti-communist, anti-Russian, anti-Polish etc., nor is it anti-Jewish. It is simply directed against false claims made by all sides in the heat of this conflict.

These claims furthermore do not concern just the fate of Jews during the Third Reich but also that of Slavs, Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), Jehovah's Witnesses and homosexuals.[20] Importantly, recent mainstream scholarship has confirmed that Revisionists are correct on several critical points of Holocaust history and probably correct on many more (see the back cover of this brochure on the Majdanek Camp).

Questioning what we are told by government authorities, orthodox scholars or mainstream media may be anti-establishment, but it is not directed against any ideology, religion or ethnic group. Presenting evidence from thorough archival studies and forensic research, however, is directed only against false and at times irrational beliefs.

In fact, the shoe is on the other foot. To explain this, here is a less-contested example: Just because some Christians detest certain research results on biological evolution doesn't make the results anti-Christian; it only makes these Christians anti-scientific. And in the same vein: Just because certain people detest certain research results on the Holocaust doesn't make the results anti-Semitic; it only makes these people anti-scientific. While belief in the Holocaust is understandably important to many Jewish groups, not believing in the impossible tales of human-soap factories or steam chambers of death is no more anti-Semitic than not believing in the transubstantiation of the flesh is anti-Catholic.

It is true that revisionist findings are sometimes cited by individuals or groups with certain religious or ideological agendas that many find contemptible. But the use (or abuse) of research results for political agendas happens potentially in every field of study that has any bearing on current issues. The problem then lies in those citing research results to support ideological or political agendas, not with the research results. The same, of course, holds for those opposing such results on any grounds other than scientific ones, because let's face it: Most people opposing revisionism do it for political reasons, because they have the irrational fear that widespread acceptance of revisionist persuasions will have some demonic political repercussions.

9. Why should I take Holocaust revisionism more seriously than the claim that the earth is flat?

There is no topic where dissent is taken more seriously than when it comes to the Holocaust. The United Nations have issued a number of resolutions against it,[21] and an increasing number of nations prosecute Holocaust revisionism as a crime, punished with up to 20 years in prison (see Question 19). The comparison is therefore wrong. In fact, the shoe is on the other foot. It was once a sin to proclaim the truth that the earth is a sphere and revolves around the sun, a crime punished by the Catholic Church with imprisonment or even death, as Giordano Bruno and Galileo Galilei found out the hard way. Today, flat-earthers may be laughed at, but they are not persecuted beyond that. Holocaust revisionism, however, is being taken very seriously, because if it were not suppressed, it would spread like a wildfire and threaten the Powers That Be, just as Bruno's and Galilei's theories did.

Whether an unusual claim ought to be looked into and maybe taken seriously should be judged by what is at stake. Let me give a few examples:

1. What would be the repercussions if it turned out the earth is flat? I cannot see any. So why bother? And why do millions of scientists, technicians and global logistics people, working daily with satellites, GPS technology, global(!) navigation techniques etc., successfully rely on the assumption that the earth is spherical, if that were not so?
2. Take, on the other hand, the events of 9/11/2001. What would be the repercussion if it wasn't a Muslim terror act, but a false-flag operation by government authorities? (See www.ae911truth.org) It would have enormous effects, so it's worth our time looking into the arguments of both sides.
3. Or take the claim that no man ever landed on the moon. Other than leaving the LB Johnson and Nixon administrations with egg in their faces, and a dent in the U.S.'s self-confidence and credibility, the issue is more academic than impactful. Although it is an admittedly interesting challenge.
4. Last but not least we have the climate-change debate. What if climate change is – rightly or wrongly – assumed real, and we implement drastic measures to counter it? Then worldwide carbon-emission limits might cause a major economic crisis at worst. On the other hand, what if climate change is erroneously assumed a hoax, and we keep spewing carbon dioxide into the atmosphere? Then a mass extinction event might happen on earth, wiping out most life as we know it, including all humans. Which brings up the issue of risk assessment. Any side in any debate can be wrong. The question then is: what is at stake? If the matter is merely academic in nature, there is no need to get involved, but when world peace or even the survival of humanity is at risk, one should get informed and get involved.

Coming back to the Holocaust, the question is what is at stake here. Some of it was touched upon in the answer to Question 3. This is not the place for a thorough political and sociological analysis of the Holocaust's place in modern western society. Suffice it to say that the Powers That Be prove ultimately with their unparalleled and unprecedented persecution and suppression that this is THE MOST IMPORTANT TOPIC about which they are hell-bent on keeping an absolute control over our minds. That's fishy enough to warrant a closer look.

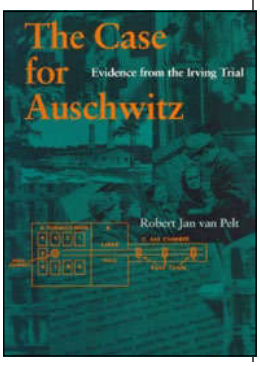
In addition to this, here are a few observations highlighting the importance of this greatest of all taboos:

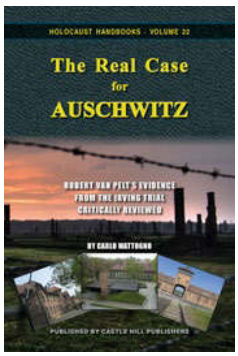
– The Holocaust was *and is* the justification for the creation of Israel, and the ethnic cleansing of Arab Palestinians from territories under its control.
– The Holocaust is the most important aspect of modern, predominantly secularized Jewish identity (t.ly/vTATq).
– The Holocaust is abused as a justification for human-rights violations and violations of international law by Israel.
– The Holocaust is the moral justification for the special relationship between the US and other western nations on the one hand and Israel on the other, resulting in almost unanimous and unconditional support for whatever Israel does.
– The Holocaust is in extension used to support and justify the "war on terror," which is to a large degree a war of the West against the Arab and Muslim world as Israel's potentially most-dangerous opponent and enemy.
– The Holocaust is by a great margin the most important aspect of modern, predominantly secularized German identity. It makes the German nation defenseless against many claims usually resisted by self-confident nations. Germany's Holocaust cult is a suicidal death cult. This has become crystal clear with the 2015 refu-

gee crisis.
– The Holocaust is abused to undermine any attempt at self-preservation by any European nation, or by Europe in general, thus jeopardizing European civilization as we know it and threatening all European countries to be turned into an assembly of failed third-world countries.

10. Why should I take Holocaust revisionism seriously, if mainstream scholars don't?

They do take it seriously. Some orthodox Holocaust scholars have dedicated entire books trying in vain to refute revisionist arguments (they usually avoid the core revisionist points and focus on straw-man arguments or side issues), while many other mainstream scholars are simply mortally afraid to address the issue, because they either have to lie (regurgitate the orthodox narrative uncritically), which most scholars refuse to do, or have their careers ruined and their social life upended, which is not a pleasant prospect either. So they stay out of trouble by not getting involved and paying lip service to the taboo.





Book and counter-book: van Pelt's* The Case for Auschwitz *and Mattogno's* The Real Case for Auschwitz *(Holocaust Handbooks, Volumes 22)

Here are some of the attempts at refutation by orthodox scholars as discussed by revisionists (find out more about them at armreg.co.uk; some are available as free eBooks):
– *Bungled: "The Destruction of the European Jews": R. Hilberg's Failure to Prove Nazi "Killing Centers"*
– *Auschwitz: Plain Facts. A Response to J.-C. Pressac*
– *Auschwitz Lies: Legends, Lies, and Prejudices on the Holocaust*
– *Inside the Gas Chambers: The Extermination of Mainstream Holocaust Historiography*
– *The Real Case for Auschwitz: R. van Pelt's Evidence from the Irving Trial Critically Reviewed*
– *Bungled: "Denying the Holocaust." How D. Lipstadt Botched Her Attempt to Demonstrate the Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*
– *Bungled: "Denying History." How M. Shermer and A. Grobman Botched Their Attempt to Refute Those Who Say the Holocaust Never Happened.*
– *Bungled: "Debunking Holocaust Denial Theories." How J. & L. Morcan Botched Their Attempt to Affirm the Historicity of the Nazi Genocide*
– *Mis-Chronicling Auschwitz: Danuta Czech's Flawed Methods, Lies and Deceptions in Her "Auschwitz Chronicle"*

11. What about the pictures of corpse piles in the camps?

To the right we see a photograph of victims of the typhus epidemic in a mass grave at the Bergen-Belsen Camp as taken by the British Army in May 1945.

This photo is typical of a large number of such photos often shown on Holocaust documentaries either without commentary or else with allegations that the dead are victims of the Holocaust. In fact, it is a photograph of victims of an epidemic which occurred at war's end. The cause of death is evident from the condition of the corpses and was also demonstrated by thousands of autopsies performed after the camps' liberation by Allied forensic experts.[22] If they had been gassed, they would not be emaciated, and if they had died of starvation, they would have swollen joints and stomachs.

All photographs of heaps of corpses were taken in camps located in west and central Germany around the end of the war, such as Dachau, Bergen-Belsen, and Buchenwald, where historians now agree no mass murders took place. Significantly, there are no such photographs

Photo of victims of the typhus epidemic in a mass grave at the Bergen-Belsen Camp, taken by the British Army.

taken at the camps in which mass murder is alleged to have occurred (such as Auschwitz, Treblinka, Belzec, Sobibor, Chelmno, Majdanek.) These eastern camps were all in areas which came under Soviet control at war's end. It is very telling that the Soviets released no pictures of mass graves or heaps of corpses, and allowed no journalists, medical professionals, or other experts to examine the camps.

Since the end of the 1980s, revisionists have been investigating these sites for evidence of mass murder, but government authorities have obstructed their efforts by all possible means.

In the absence of authentic photographs documenting mass murder, it frequently happens that photographs of those who died of malnutrition and typhus in the western camps at war's end are presented as evidence of deliberate mass murder. To be sure, the hellish conditions in these camps at war's end convinced many Allied observers that mass murder had taken place, as initial reports indicate.

In reality, however, these conditions resulted from a situation for which the German government was not solely responsible. Toward the end of the war, Himmler illogically ordered the evacuation of the eastern camps as the Red Army approached, which led to hopeless overcrowding in the western camps. By that time, Allied bombing had completely destroyed the German infrastructure, making it impossible to supply the camps with food, medical and sanitation supplies.

Misunderstandings about the causes of the subsequent massive die-off continue to this day, especially among Americans. The respected leftist historian Norbert Frei has given the following reason for misinterpretation, (t.ly/2f30K, p. 400):

> *"The shock of these discoveries* [piles of corpses] *often led to false conclusions which turned out to be enduring."*

There is no denying that a government which imprisons people in camps is responsible for them, and so those unjustly imprisoned were therefore victims of the Third Reich, even if they died "only" of disease.[23] However, one should not overlook the fact that by war's end, mountains of corpses had become commonplace throughout Germany. In German cities there were 600,000 victims of Allied terror bombings. Millions more died of starvation and disease, which continued rampant through 1949. In Eastern Europe some two million Germans were murdered by Serbs, Czechs, Poles, and Russians in the course of history's bloodiest ethnic cleansing. In the POW camps of the western Allies, a million young German men died and millions more vegetated. Hundreds of thousands more were shipped to the labor camps of the Soviet GULag never to be seen again. But the media show only one variety of corpse piles, those in the concentration camps. We should all ask ourselves why this is so. Should the dignity and respect, which we owe the victims of atrocities, depend on their nationality or religious affiliation?

12. How about the testimonies by survivors and confessions by perpetrators?

Let's talk about perpetrator confessions first, as they seem most compelling. After all, why would *they* lie? These testimonies can be divided into roughly three groups:

1. confessions under duress
2. tactical court room confessions
3. uncoerced, voluntary confessions

On 1: Right after World War II, the Soviet, British and US forces maintained torture centers where they systematically tortured and abused hundreds, if not thousands of German defendants (see for instance Ian Cobain's book *Cruel Britannia*[24]). Some of the most "important" confessions resulted from this, for instance that of Rudolf Höss, former commandant of the Auschwitz camp, whose family was threatened on top of it.[25]

On 2: As the archives of the Holy Inquisition prove, tens of thousands of defendants confessed voluntarily during centuries of witch trials that they were witches and had intercourse with the devil. The vast majority of them were never put under duress. What has that to do with the Holocaust? Challenging the doctrines of the Catholic Church was as futile back then as challenging the doctrine of the Holocaust has been since the end of World War II. In both cases, any defendant put on trial could expect a mild sentence only if he confirmed the general story but tried to minimize his own involvement and responsibility. This is the exact pattern one finds with many modern defendants. Some, of course, didn't get the message and stubbornly denied, and they were the ones who frequently were treated harshly.

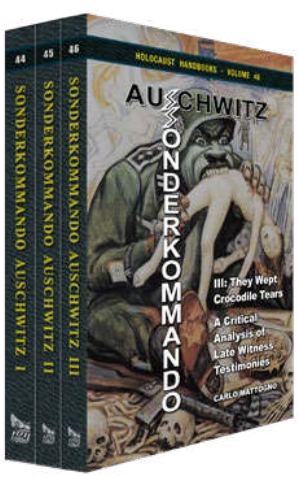
On 3: These are similar to depositions by survivors, treated below. Uncoerced testimonies by survivors, bystanders or alleged perpetrators can be wrong for many reasons. When it comes to survivors, the obvious one is

that some of them might exaggerate or lie resulting from a desire for revenge. But that can explain only some of the testimony. Other possible reasons are:

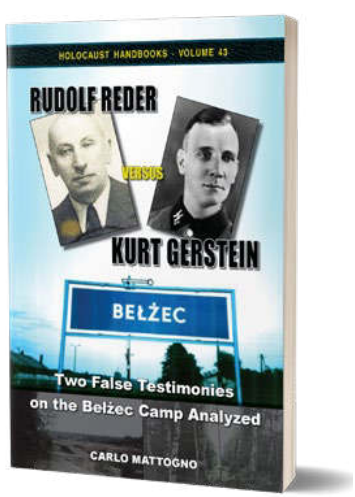
– Rumors – especially during times of war and unrest, any kind of prisoner camp is a hotbed for the creation and spreading of rumors.
– Misunderstandings – partial information about events are frequently misinterpreted to fit into preconceived notions, feeding on rumors and anxieties.
– Hearsay – information not experienced directly but imparted orally has the tendency of getting distorted quickly.
– Interpolation – the human brain abhors uncertainty. We all consciously and even more so subconsciously fill the lack of data by making assumptions and jumping to conclusions, which we then perceive as "data."
– Manipulating the human memory – research has shown that many people tend to integrate information and disinformation they receive from others into their memory in such a way that they wrongly assume it stems from their own first-hand experience. That tendency increases with increased exposure to such information and with increased expectations by others to "remember."
– Disease – typhus was a widespread epidemic raging in many German camps. One of its symptoms resembles meningitis in that the patient experiences nightmarish horror delusions expressing his deepest fears. Many inmates survived the disease but were unable to process the memories from their hallucinatory episodes.
– Pressure – almost everybody in the world expects survivors to "remember." That pressure is huge, in particular for Jewish survivors, who are considered traitors if they don't remember the "right" things.
– Fear and threats – anyone failing to remember the "right" things, or even contesting certain things, must fear negative social and sometimes even legal repercussions. After all, there is nothing viler in this world than to deny that "it" happened, whatever "it" means.
– Impunity – no matter what camp survivors say, they will be believed. The more fantastic their stories, the more riveted the audience, the more fame and money can be reaped. If they are ever caught lying, there is no repercussion. In fact, criticizing survivors is considered blasphemous and can lead to social persecution and in many countries even prosecution. There is simply no incentive to tell the truth, but lots of incentives to lie and exaggerate.

In the end, whether we think a witness tells the truth or not should not depend on how likable or trustworthy we think he is, but on whether his or her statement is plausible, physically possible, and supported by other, verifiable evidence. After all, the unreliability of testimonies by persons who are party to a crime (victims and perpetrators) is legendary.[26]

Three trail-blazing critiques of "eyewitness" testimony: Rudolf Höss, Elie Wiesel and Miklós Nyiszli. (Holocaust Handbooks, Volumes 35, 30 and 37)



Three volumes critically analyzing the testimonies of some 20 former Auschwitz inmates claiming to have been members of the so-called Sonderkommando presumably assisting the SS with mass-gassings and cremations. (Holocaust Handbooks, Volumes 44-46)



Only two witnesses testified substantially about Belzec: Rudolf Reder and Kurt Gerstein. Both accounts are presented, thoroughly analyzed and exposed. (Holocaust Handbooks, Volume 43)

13. What does it matter whether prisoners died from disease or poison gas?

From the point of view of each victim and their personal suffering, there is no difference. One could even make the point that it would be preferable to die quickly from poison than to die slowly from an epidemic disease.

However, in the present discussion we are not focusing on the intensity of the victims' suffering, which no one questions. Here we are concerned with the historical accuracy of certain allegations and the moral guilt of the so-called German "nation of perpetrators" as well as the consequences which resulted from these allegations.

Considered from the historian's as well as the perpetrators' point of view, there is a tremendous difference between being victims of raging epidemics and victims of planned industrial mass murder in chemical slaughterhouses designed specifically for homicide. Epidemics, starvation and other catastrophes resulting from poor treatment, political mistakes and military defeats are recurrent in the history of mankind.

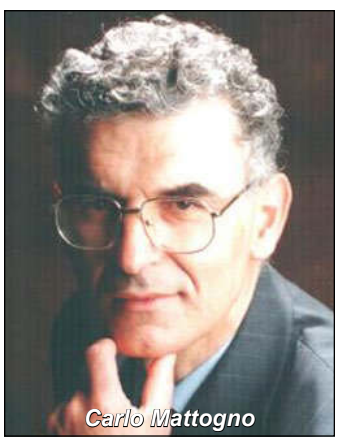
Here we are concerned with the historical and moral uniqueness of industrial mass annihilation of a specific subgroup of a population. The entire German nation has been held responsible for this unique crime, not just individual perpetrators. This is the source of occasional discrimination against Germans ("collective responsibility" and "hereditary guilt"), and of privileged treatment of Jews as the main targets of this claimed genocide.

We strongly suggest you read what Dr. Finkelstein had to say on this subject. (*The Holocaust Industry*, t.ly/STZ5S).

14. Why does it matter how many Jews were killed by the Nazis, since even 1,000 would have been too many?

It is doubtlessly correct that even one is one too many, and really one must go even farther than that: even those measures of Third Reich persecution which did not result in outright deaths were in every respect unacceptable. But this is not a valid argument against the statistical investigation of the "whether" and "how" of the destruction of the Jews, and for three reasons.

First, this objection does not satisfy simply for the reason that it is precisely the number of victims that has been considered sacrosanct for decades. If the number of victims did not matter, it would not be necessary to protect it as a social and even criminal taboo. Evidently there really is more to the six-million figure than merely the fact that it includes a great many individual fates: What is at stake is a symbol not to be easily relinquished, since justified doubts about the number might quickly lead to further undesirable skepticism about further subsections of the Holocaust narrative. While not denying the tragedy of the victims' individual fates in any way, science must nevertheless insist that numbers always be open to discussion. It is downright irrational that, on the one hand, those who doubt the six-million figure are socially persecuted or even subjected to criminal prosecution, while society and the justice system, on the other hand, react to valid arguments against this selfsame six-million figure by suddenly declaring it irrelevant and insisting instead on the dignity of even the very first victim. Is the six-million figure a standard deserving of protection by criminal law, or is it irrelevant? It cannot be both at once.


Carlo Mattogno

The second and also most important argument goes as follows: The ethically correct evaluation that even one victim would be too many must not be a pretext for prohibiting scientific research. This is intolerable for the simple reason that science must always be allowed to find precise answers. What would we think of an official who demanded that an engineer not be allowed to conduct thorough risk assessments of construction projects, because even a low risk value would be intolerable? An engineer subjected to such an absurd demand would quickly arrive at incorrect results and

Arthur R. Butz

would be a threat to any company that hired him. The same is true for historians. If a historian is forbidden to conduct critical investigations because they are considered morally unacceptable, then we have to assume that the results of such skewed historiography are unreliable. And since our knowledge of contemporary history exerts a direct influence on politics, our public policies are mistaken and unreliable as well.

It is the key function and responsibility of every branch of science to provide accurate figures and values. The principles applying to engineering, physics, and chemistry cannot suddenly be abandoned in historiography for political reasons – unless one is intellectually prepared to retreat deep into the darkest middle ages.

Third, the morally correct view that even one victim is one too many cannot on principle be a barrier to the scientific investigation of a crime which is generally called so morally reprehensible as to be unique and unparalleled in the history of mankind. An allegedly uniquely reprehensible crime must be open to a procedure that is standard for any other crime as well, namely that it is – and must be – investigated in detail.

Further still: anyone who postulates a crime to be unique must be prepared for a uniquely thorough investigation of this alleged crime before its uniqueness is accepted as fact. If a person or group blocks investigation of an allegedly unique crime on grounds of moral outrage, then that person or group is guilty of a unique crime itself. This unique crime consists of first denying defense against preposterous allegations, then preventing criticism of such tyrannical methods on the pretext of unusual guilt. This was the precise fate of Germany following World War II, with the result that Germans were first brutalized, then slandered and denied opportunity to defend themselves. The treatment of vanquished Germany by the victorious Allies has been truly unique in modern times, since the same Allies otherwise give even the most notorious serial murderers an opportunity to defend themselves in court.

15. Whatever the circumstances, don't Jewish victims deserve respect and compensation?

Everyone who is treated unjustly is entitled to reparations, and every victim of crime deserves respect commensurate with human dignity. Revisionism is concerned solely with determination of objective historic fact and has no aim to deny either respect or restitution to anyone who has suffered injustice. In case the evidence shows that a particular historical event did not have anywhere near as many victims as was previously believed, this is simply a historical determination that has no effect on the fate of anyone. Objective evidence could even be of assistance to newly discovered victims.

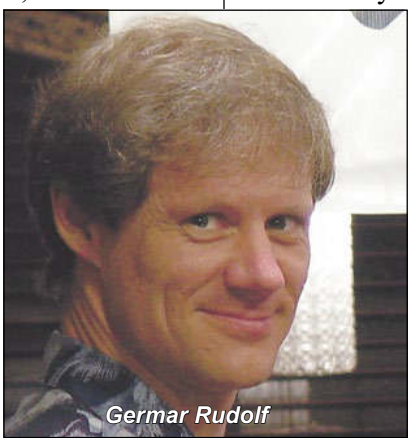
As of end of 2022, the German government had paid some 82 billion Euros (some 90 billion U.S. dollars) in reparations to those "persecuted by the Nazi regime" (t.ly/eOlEr). But as large as these sums seem to be, the main issue isn't even financial in nature, which can be demonstrated with just one example. According to Wikipedia, in just the year 2010, the Germans collectively spent 120 billion euros (almost 150 billion U.S. dollars) on their vacations![27] This makes Germany the world leader in per-capita tourism expenditures. It is therefore obvious that the Germans spend on their vacation *every single year* more than they have ever paid to victims of the Holocaust and other (alleged or real) persecution committed during World War II. This shows clearly that the burden on the Germans cannot be all that high, financially speaking. So this is not primarily a financial issue. The real issue is moral and legal in nature. Perhaps you remember a basic principle which is the law in every constitutional state: accountability does not extend to convicts' relatives. There should therefore be a time limit for claims made against the German people, as the wartime generation is dying out. In addition, this is also a matter or fairness, as the Germans weren't the only ones inflicting pain and suffering on others. For instance, wouldn't it be interesting to know when the four million Germans who were exploited as slave laborers by France, the UK, Norway, the United States, the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia… for years and sometimes even decades after the end of WWII (goo.gl/tEBaFd) may finally be allowed to claim reparations? When will the 12 million eastern German victims of ethnic cleansing and the survivors of the two million who were murdered or died in the process (goo.gl/3Q98Z7), the six hundred thousand victims of Allied terror bombings (goo.gl/Yng7GA), the millions of Germans who died of starvation under Allied postwar blockade and de-industrialization and Eisenhower's withholding of food to them, be given proper recompense?[28]

Do not all victims of injustice deserve the same respect and reparations? Or are some victims more equal than others?

16. Who are the Holocaust revisionists?

Holocaust revisionists are not a homogenous group. They include Jews (defined by heritage: Josef G. Burg, Roger Guy Dommergue, David Cole, Joel Hayward, Gerard Menuhin, Paul Eisen, Gilad Atzmon, Henry Herskovitz); Christians (Michael A. Hoffman, Robert Countess); Muslims (Ibrahim Alloush, Ahmed Rami, Roger Garaudy) as well as agnostics and atheists (Germar Rudolf, Bradley Smith, Robert Faurisson)

Some revisionists suffered persecution by the National Socialist regime as well as internment in concentration camps (Paul Rassinier, Josef G. Burg). Others are veterans of World War II, from both the German and Allied armed forces (Willy Wallwey, Wilhelm Stäglich, Douglas Collins.). Some revisionists are professors (Prof. Robert Faurisson, Prof. Arthur R. Butz, Prof. Thomas Dalton, Prof. Costas Zaverdinos) and some have PhD degrees (Dr. Wilhelm Stäglich, Dr. Robert Countess, Dr. Herbert Tiedemann. Dr. Nicholas Kollerstrom). Some have masters degrees in chemistry, physics or engineering (Willy Wallwey, Walter Lüftl, Germar Rudolf, Arnulf Neumaier, Friedrich Berg); there are historians (Mark Weber, Robert Countess, Carlo Mattogno, Jean Plantin, Nicholas Kollerstrom) as well as teachers in other fields, such as Jürgen Graf.


Germar Rudolf

The ranks of Holocaust revisionists include Communists and Socialists (Paul Rassinier, Roger Garaudy), moderate Leftists (Pierre Guillaume, Serge Thion), Libertarians (Andrew Allen, Germar Rudolf, David Cole, Bradley Smith, Richard Widmann), Conservatives (Carlo Mattogno, Willy Wallwey), Rightists (Udo Walendy, Mark Weber) and National Socialists (Ernst Zündel, Vincent Reynouard).

Since we don't consider it important to classify revisionists according to political orientation, we cannot vouch for the correctness of these designations, though.

Among our ranks are Frenchmen (Robert Faurisson, Pierre Guillaume, Roger Garaudy, Paul Rassinier, Vincent Reynouard, Jean Plantin), Americans (Bradley Smith, Thomas Dalton, Mark Weber, Arthur Butz, Richard Widmann, Fred Leuchter), Germans (Germar Rudolf, Walter Lüftl, Willy Wallwey, Arnulf Neumaier, Wilhelm Stäglich), Swiss (Jürgen Graf, Arthur Vogt), Italians (Carlo Mattogno), Spaniards (Enrique Aynat), Jordanians (Ibrahim Alloush), Moroccans (Ahmed Rami), Swedes, Danes, Britons (Nicholas Kollerstrom), Poles, and Russians, to name just a few.[29]

17. Do Holocaust revisionists want to exonerate Hitler?

Historians must not pay attention to what effect their research has on anyone's reputation, even and especially their own. Hence, whatever the effects of revisionist findings are on Hitler's or anyone else's reputation, it simply is of no moment. Let's quote Germar Rudolf on this point:[30]

> *"Revisionists are repeatedly accused of wanting to whitewash National Socialism, redeem it, or even resurrect nationalistic-authoritarian political systems, or assist in a breakthrough of nationalism. That may be true for some revisionists, but certainly not for all of them. But be that as it may, the fact is that political suspicions do not contribute anything to the factual debate, as they cannot refute factual arguments. When it comes to discussing facts, it is therefore irrelevant both what the revisionists want and what others accuse them of wanting.*
>
> *While researching, our highest goal must at all times be to discover how historical events actually occurred – as the 19th-Century German historian Leopold Ranke maintained. For example, historians should not place research in the service of making criminal accusations against Genghis Khan and the Mongol hordes, nor to whitewash any of their wrong-doings. Anybody insisting that research be barred from exonerating Genghis Khan of criminal accusations would be the object of ridicule and would be subject to the suspicion that he was, in fact, acting out of political motives. If this were not so, why would anyone insist that our historical view of Genghis Khan forever be defined solely by Khan's victims and enemies?*
>
> *The same reasoning applies to Hitler and the Third Reich. Both revisionists and their adversaries are entitled to their political views. The accusation, how-*

ever, that revisionists are only interested in exonerating National Socialism and that such an effort is reprehensible or even criminal, is a boomerang: This accusation implies that it is deemed unacceptable to partially exonerate National Socialism historically, and by so doing, always also morally. But by declaring any hypothetical exoneration based on possible facts as unacceptable, one admits openly not to be interested in the quest for the truth, but in incriminating National Socialism historically and morally under any circumstances and at all costs. And the motivation behind this can only be political. Hence, those accusing revisionists of misusing their research for political ends have themselves been proven guilty of exactly this offense. It is therefore not necessarily the revisionists who are guided by political motives – though quite a few of them certainly are – but with absolute certainty all those who accuse the revisionists of harboring reprehensible motives. Although many consider the anti-fascist motives of those combatting revisionism as morally worthwhile, they remain political motives that are hostile to discovering and evaluating the factual issues at hand.

In short, our research must never be concerned with the possible 'moral' spin-off effects of our findings in relation to politicians or regimes of the past or present, but solely with the facts. Anyone who argues otherwise is the enemy of knowledge."

What is more important: Vilifying Hitler or finding out the truth?

Again, it may be true that some individuals or groups sometimes cite revisionist findings to support their religious or ideological agendas. But let us be very clear here: We Holocaust revisionists depend more than anyone else on the protection of our inalienable rights to freedom of information and freedom of expression. Hence, we oppose any measure limiting these rights, be they in the past, the present or the future.

In the spring of 1933, the German government under Hitler decided to suspend and later effectively revoke most Germans' civil rights as they were enshrined in the German constitution of the time. Anyone decrying similar acts happening today in many European countries (see Question 19) must also condemn Hitler's acts as unacceptable. We can't have it both ways.

Moreover, when Hitler decided in the summer of 1934 to execute without due process several leaders of the SA for allegedly planning a putsch, rather than handing them over to the court system for prosecution, they committed murder, plain and simple. Anyone decrying arsons, bomb attacks, physical assaults and murder perpetrated against revisionists as unacceptable acts of (attempted) murder[31] must also condemn Hitler's acts as unacceptable. We can't have it both ways.

Finally, after the infamous 1938 "Night of Broken Glass" pogroms against Jews in Germany, Hitler and his government decided to make matters worse by prohibiting insurance companies from paying indemnifications to Jews for damages incurred during these acts of vandalism, and by collectively *punishing* all the Jews in Germany with a fine of *one billion Reichsmarks*! Anyone decrying that we revisionists as victims of societal persecution get fined and imprisoned on top of this must also condemn Hitler's acts of blaming and punishing the victims. We can't have it both ways.

And we won't even start with incarcerating people with or without due process merely because of their peacefully expressed views or religious and ethnic affiliations. Anyone decrying that we revisionists are incarcerated for our peacefully expressed views – and we are – must also condemn Hitler's acts along the same lines. We can't have it both ways.

We cannot stop certain people from applauding, condoning, justifying or defending these and other criminal acts of the Hitler government. But we can show that we condemn them wholeheartedly, on our own behalf, as peaceful dissidents.

Our guiding principle is that freedom of speech is unlimited, as long as it does not advocate, promote, justify or condone the violation of anyone's civil rights in the past, present or future – because those who work to deny others their civil rights or justify it when it happened in the past cannot expect to have their own civil rights protected. But there is no civil right to a certain version of history.

18. What do Holocaust revisionists want?

I would like to turn that question around: What do our detractors want who declare an irreproachable intention – the critical review of one chapter in history – to be taboo, and who ostracize, persecute and even incarcerate any offenders? These are frequently the same people who impute all sorts of evil intentions to us revisionists. But we are not the ones persecuting and incarcerating peaceful, innocent people! It is therefore much more conducive and important to ask about the motives of those who mercilessly persecute the revisionists with their worldwide power. Why do they do that?

And if you, dear reader, are unwilling to pursue the question about their motives, but keep wondering about ours, then maybe you should start questioning your own bias.

Since the revisionists comprise such a heterogeneous group (see Question 16), it is impossible to state what "the" revisionists hope to accomplish. Obviously, any cliché about revisionists must therefore be false and misleading. However, revisionists do have one thing in common: determination to expose the lack of evidence for the conventional Holocaust narrative and to convince others of it.

Revisionists would probably quarrel endlessly about everything else, particularly if they tried to seek common political ground. It is, therefore, false and misleading to ascribe a uniform political agenda to them. The political views of revisionists are indeed varied and incongruous. In contrast to that, the governments and media of most western societies spread the cliché that all revisionists are right-wing extremists who are attempting to rehabilitate the National Socialist regime in order to usher in a new authoritarian government of the right. This may be true for some revisionists, but they are a minority within revisionist ranks.

Perhaps a few prominent examples will illustrate the political variety of revisionists' political leanings, which makes it inconceivable that they harbor the sinister intentions often ascribed to them:

Paul Rassinier: What would have motivated a French Communist, who was interned in a German concentration camp on account of his activities in the Resistance in helping Jews to escape the Nazis, to rehabilitate National Socialism?

Josef G. Burg: What would have motivated a Jew who suffered under the occupation of both the Germans and Russians during the Second World War?

Fred Leuchter: What would have motivated an entirely apolitical American expert in execution technology?

Pierre Guillaume, Serge Thion: What would have motivated leftist-anarchist Frenchmen to rehabilitate National Socialism in Germany?

Roger Garaudy: What would have motivated a longtime prominent French Communist?

Bradley Smith, Richard Widmann: What would have motivated American libertarians?

Jean Plantin, Germar Rudolf: What would motivate these liberal and conservative European professionals, born in the mid-1960s, to rehabilitate National Socialism?

Does it really matter what a revisionist is trying to achieve with his political or other ideas? After all, the proof for someone's claim lies in the evidence adduced, not in their political agenda.

19. Is Holocaust revisionism illegal?

In the United States, it is covered by the First Amendment, like a peaceful, scholarly speech, which means that it is perfectly legal to voice, write, publish revisionist views. Things are quite different, however, when we turn to Canada, Australia, or even many countries in Europe and to Israel (see goo.gl/8Tpbiq).

The reason for this persecution is the claim that revisionist theories insult Jews, and that it is illegitimate to heap insult upon those who have been injured during World War II. Although Holocaust revisionism does not address anything about Jews as such (although some supporters of revisionism might), the leaders of most Jewish communities feel heavily offended by it, because revisionism directly or indirectly comes to the conclusion that several Jewish personalities were not always truthful when testifying about their experiences in World War II.

Of course, it would be surprising if Jews were the only identifiable group of humanity who never lie, distort, exaggerate or are simply mistaken, but apparently leading Jewish representatives feel, and the authorities in numerous western countries agree, that nobody should ever be allowed to claim that certain Jews made untrue statements about the Holocaust.

However, if we look into the legal situation, we must insist that theoretically speaking Holocaust revisionism should be perfectly legal in all these countries. This is so because all these nations signed the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, which makes these Human Rights binding on all these nations. Freedom of speech can be limited only in cases of insult or incitement to criminal acts, but freedom of scientific research and peaceful speech can never be limited – theoretically.

For this reason, a comprehensive German PhD thesis on *The Punishability of the Auschwitz Lie* (*Die Strafbarkeit des Auschwitz-Leugnens*) came to the conclusion that Holocaust revisionism itself cannot be legally repressed, as this violates basic human rights.[32] The facts are different, however. So how is that discrepancy between ideal and reality justified?

As a justification for this blatant violation of civil rights, it is often claimed that revisionist views, even if presented soberly and without any inflammatory words, could instigate people to commit illegal acts against others (mainly Jews) or could even threaten "public peace." Purely factual, soberly presented and substantiated claims, however, can never cause such acts, no matter how controversial and taboo-breaking they might be. If people overreact to such texts, the problem lies within those people – their upbringing or social conditioning – or within society itself for having created a taboo in the first place.

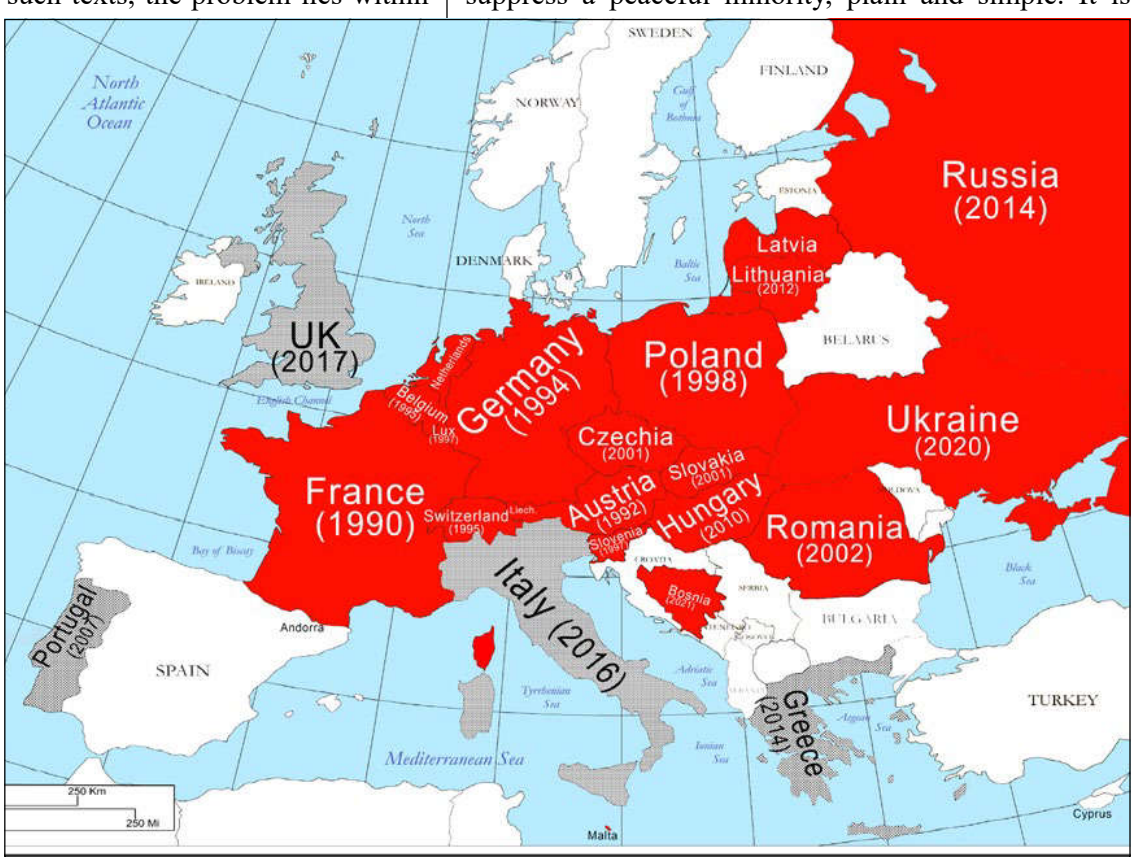
The claim that matter-of-factual views about the persecution of the Jews itself could be inflammatory is therefore a simple lie. If that method were to be applied universally, it could be misused for the prohibition of each and everything, if only some influential group can be found that feels sufficiently upset or unsettled by it. In fact, the concept of "public peace" is a perfect authoritarian tool to suppress any controversial view, no matter how legitimate.

The only rule needed for governing free speech is this: Everything is permitted, as long as one does not call for, promote, condone or justify the violation of the civil rights of others. Since all acts that really threaten the public peace, like calls for a violent revolution, insurrection, putsch, riot, pogrom, ethnic cleansing, etc., are at once calls for the violation of the civil rights of others, the concept of "public peace" becomes obsolete and can no longer be misused by the authorities to stifle legitimate peaceful yet controversial views.

Another justification for anti-revisionist oppressive laws, in particular in the German-speaking countries, goes roughly as follows:

> *In order to prevent that minorities will again be persecuted, dissidents imprisoned and books burned, as has happened in the* [Nazi] *past, we must for a change persecute some other minorities, imprison other kinds of dissidents and burn their books.*

This perversion of logic does not require any further comment. Hence, we are dealing with "democratically" enacted, yet tyrannical laws permitting the majority to suppress a peaceful minority, plain and simple. It is



Map of Europe, with countries outlawing dissent on the orthodox Holocaust narrative in red, with the year given when each country introduced its law. (Grey: dissent conditionally illegal.)

therefore not Holocaust revisionism which is unlawful, but the laws that outlaw it. U.S. American Henry David Thoreau wrapped it up nicely when he wrote some 160 years ago (in opposition to war and slavery):[33]

> *"Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally, under such a government as this, think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. It makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and do better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus and Luther, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?* […]
>
> *A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison, or give up war and slavery, the State will not hesitate which to choose.* […]
>
> *Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also in prison."*

Or to put it as did Mahatma Gandhi, who was inspired by Thoreau's essay some 70 years later:[34]

> *"So long as the superstition that men should obey unjust laws exists, so long will their slavery exist."*

20. Where can I learn more about Holocaust revisionism?

The best, fastest, cheapest place for this is the Internet and, especially for English-language readers, the websites www.codoh.com and www.HolocaustHandbooks.com. If your service provider blocks these pages (obvious proof of censorship), you can circumvent Big Brother by getting a subscription to a Virtual Private Network, VPN, which hides your whereabouts, or with anonymizing services, which hide the content you are receiving from your Internet service provider.

Don't Know Where to Start? Start with a Movie

To ease you into the subject, we recommend that you sit back, relax and watch an introductory documentary. There are several choices we recommend. You can find them all for watching and downloading free of charge at www.HolocaustHandbooks.com:

Holocaust, Hate Speech & Were the Germans So Stupid?

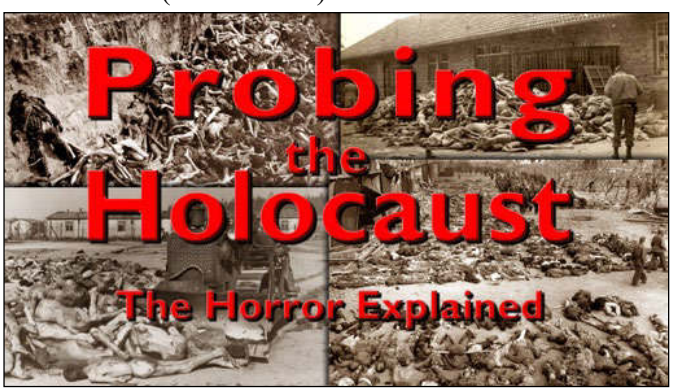
The late British video-journalist Anthony Lawson, a retired international-prize-winning commercials director, cameraman, ad agency creative director and voice-over artist, expertly introduces the viewer to the basic concepts and consequences of skepticism about the orthodox Holocaust narrative. (35 min.)

The First Holocaust: The Surprising Origin of the Six-Million Figure

This documentary reveals how the myth of six million persecuted Jews threatened by a holocaust was created in the late eighteen-hundreds (yes 1800s!), became a popular theme during and after the FIRST World War (not the Second), and has stayed with us ever since. (1 hr 10 min.)

Probing the Holocaust: The Horror Explained, Part 1

This documentary shows with a few pertinent, well-documented examples – the cases of the Dachau, Nordhausen and Bergen-Belsen Camps – why it is important to distrust wartime propaganda about claimed Nazi atrocities, not least because much of this propaganda has been admitted by mainstream historians to have been mendacious. (1 hr 36 min.)



Read Our Books

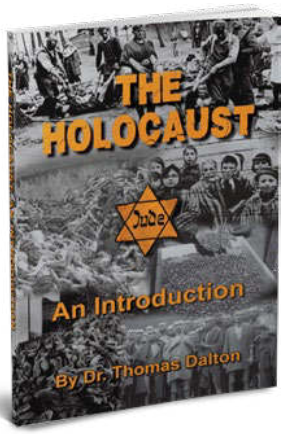
If you're hungry for more, you can browse any of our growing roster of documentaries, or, if you want to delve into the matter even deeper, you may want to start reading our books, whose information density is easily tenfold that of a documentary.

As introductory reads I recommend one of the fol-

lowing books, depending on how many pages you want to go through, and which level of immersion you are looking for (find out more about them at armreg.co.uk):

Thomas Dalton, *The Holocaust: An Introduction*

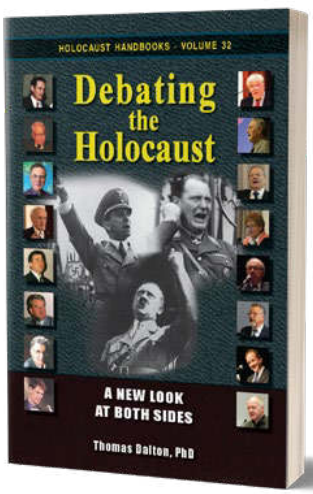
This book has only 115 pages of text in a handy, small paperback format of 5×8 inches, and it available at a very affordable price as a hard copy. Amazon customer E.J. Peterson, a verified buyer of the book, wrote the following brief review about it (on March 6, 2017, Amazon blocked all our books and deleted all associated book reviews, so you can't find the reviews quoted here anymore – so much for freedom of speech...):



"Phenomenal. A fantastic starting point.
For a 115-page book, it is a truly shocking and eye-opening work. I cannot recommend this highly enough. Honestly, subject your accepted opinion on the matter to this 1-hour read and see where you sit after that."

T. Dalton, *Debating the Holocaust: A New Look at Both Sides*

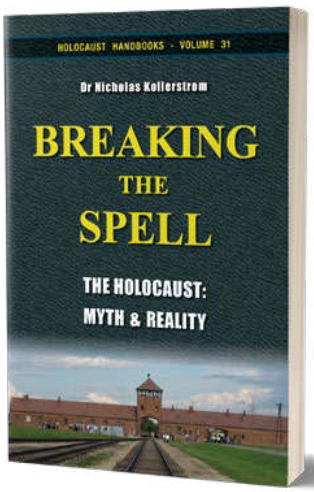
The above-mentioned brief introduction into the topic is a condensation of this more-encompassing study, in which Dalton studies the topic more thoroughly by juxtaposing the most important arguments of the two contending sides in the raging debate about the "Holocaust," which, some say, should not be debated in the first place. The book has some 300 pages of text of a larger format (6×9 inches). Amazon customer "patito," a verified buyer of the book, wrote this brief review about it:



"Most important Holocaust book in this moment
The updates to the 2015 edition are especially important as the author corrects and forwards a proposal towards the end. A very good compilation of the real state of affairs regarding the actual evidence for one argument or the other. The Epilogue is especially critical to understanding the whole picture."

Nicholas Kollerstrom, *Breaking the Spell: The Holocaust – Myth & Reality*

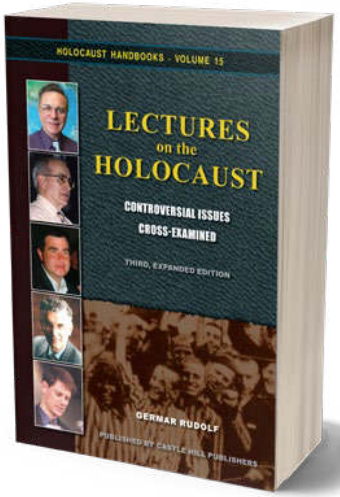
Science historian Dr. Kollerstrom explains the Holocaust issue for the common reader from a scientific, but also from a societal point of view. This paperback book has some 220 pages of text (6×9 inches). This has been our best-selling book ever since it was first published. Amazon customer "Giordano Bruno," an Amazon-verified buyer of the book, wrote this brief review about it:



"Myth Busting
An interesting and informative book, particularly how it expresses that the "Holocaust" has basically become a sacred religion that cannot be challenged even by science. Anyone who dares to criticise or explain that certain narratives of the holocaust are physically impossible is instantly branded as a heretic and excommunicated. Would definitely recommend reading it!"

Germar Rudolf, *Lectures on the Holocaust: Controversial Issues Cross-Examined*

At 530 pages of text, this book has been characterized as encyclopedic in its coverage of the topic, yet at the same time as a truly riveting read. Written in an unusual dialogue form, it draws you right into the debate the author engages in. This is a brand-new edition issued in February 2023, which is greatly improved by new material. It can be downloaded as an eBook (PDF and ePub) free of charge at www.Holocausthandbooks.com. Amazon customer "HolocaustHistory channel," a verified buyer of the book (he bought it from us, not from Amazon), wrote this brief review about it:



"Outstanding
This is without doubt one of the best treatments of the holocaust debate. Rudolf is judicious and moderate throughout, and packs in a great deal of information. By writing dialogues, he gives himself the opportunity to give clear answers to

many questions that will occur to the reader. If you are at all interested in the holocaust, you have to read this book."

…and more

If you want to have answers to even deeper-penetrating questions, we highly recommend you familiarize yourself with our prestigious series Holocaust Handbooks, which has many studies on highly specialized topics. Most of these books can be downloaded as eBooks (PDF and ePub formats) free of charge at www.HolocaustHandbooks.com.

For readers who are interested in papers on certain topics, the following revisionist periodicals are recommended:

– *Inconvenient History* (ongoing since 2009): www.InconvenientHistory.org
– *The Revisionist* (1999-2005; defunct since my arrest in Oct. 2005): t.ly/SXU5M
– *The Journal of Historical Review* (1980-2002; defunct): t.ly/6A5ch

Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung (1997-2006; defunct shortly after my arrest in Oct. 2005, German language): www.vho.org/VffG

You can also visit our revisionist bookstores selling some of these items in hardcopy: armreg.co.uk

References

For sources on Majdanek as summarized on the back cover see goo.gl/n2Bz3B.

1 Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, Hutchinson & Co., London 1968, p. 280.
2 In an interview with the Berlin daily *Berliner Zeitung* on Sept. 4, 2000 (t.ly/IP-xd); and in a private letter, J. Graf, *The Giant with Feet of Clay*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Capshaw, Alab., 2001, p. 118 (t.ly/5C_FQ).
3 https://archive.org/details/Defamation; starting at 1:15:46 into the movie.
4 In a letter to revisionist Gerd Honsik, in: *idem*, *Freispruch für Hitler?*, Burgenländischer Kulturverband, Vienna 1988, p. 7 (t.ly/Pj_K8).
5 George De Wan, "The Holocaust in Perspective," *Newsday*, New York, Feb. 23, 1983, p. II/3.
6 See the studies on various camps as published in our series *Holocaust Handbooks* (subsequently HH): www.HolocaustHandbooks.com; in particular Volumes 2, 10, 11, 17, 20, 21, 22 (Auschwitz), 4 (Stutthof), 5 (Majdanek), 8 (Treblinka), 9 (Belzec), 19 (Sobibor), 23 (Chelmno), 25 (Dachau, Mauthausen, Neuengamme, Ravensbrück, Sachsenhausen).
7 See Volume 39 of HH.
8 See Volume 26 of HH.
9 See esp. Volumes 24 and 40 of HH re. Auschwitz.
10 See Rudolf in Volume 1, pp. 83-127, plus Volumes 30, 35, 36, 37, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 52 of HH; Section 4.2. in Volume 15; and the ubiquitous critique of testimonies in almost all of these volumes.
11 See esp. Volume 7 of HH.
12 See Volume 29 of HH.
13 Rudolf in Volume 1 of HH, pp. 175-206.
14 See Volume 6 of HH and the documentary posted there.
15 Franciszek Piper, "Mass Murder," Volume 3 of: Wacław Długoborski, Franciszek Piper (eds.), *Auschwitz 1940-1945: Central Issues in the History of the Camp*, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Auschwitz 2000.
16 HH Vols. 10,11,13,17,20,21,22,24,33,40,41,47,48,51; Vol. 34 by Rudolf/Böhm.
17 Most notably Yitzhak Arad, *Bełżec. Sobibór, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington/Indianapolis 1987; Alexander Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka*, Holocaust Library, New York 1979; Jules Schelvis, *Sobibór: A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, Berg Publishers, Oxford 2007.
18 HH Volumes 8, 9, 19, 23, 28.
19 See HH Volumes 30, 35, 36, 37, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 52 for some detailed studies on the trustworthiness of certain witnesses.
20 See *e.g.* Guenter Lewy's book *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies*.
21 11 January 2005 (t.ly/wlCP6); 26 January 2007 (t.ly/3OGoI); 27 January 2009 (t.ly/gbqmA); 20 January 2022 (tinyurl.com/2arrtd5n).
22 See the documentary *Probing the Holocaust, Part 1* at t.ly/U6S6o, with its footnoted transcript for more information.
23 See next to the documentary mentioned in the previous note: Graf in Volume 1 of HH, pp. 279-304; plus Weber at t.ly/MSeOb.
24 See also Cobain's articles at goo.gl/pnaCus; goo.gl/4dFJUF; goo.gl/5acDjA.
25 See Volume 35 of HH.
26 See Rudolf in Volume 1, pp. 83-127.
27 http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourismus
28 See James Bacque's books *Other Losses* and *Crimes and Mercies*.
29 To learn about their views, see these individuals' entries in the CODOH library at www.codoh.com.
30 Volume 2 of HH, pp. 41f.
31 On violent acts perpetrated against revisionists see HH Volume 15, Chapter 5.2. "Violence," pp. 497-501.
32 Thomas Wandres, *Die Strafbarkeit des Auschwitz-Leugnens*, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin 2000.
33 *Walden and Other Writings*, Bantam, Toronto 1981, pp. 92, 94.
34 Shriman Narayan (ed.), *The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 4, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad 1969, p. 174.

HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS

This ambitious series addresses numerous aspects of the "Holocaust." Most books are based on thorough archival research. In contrast to most other works, the tomes of this series approach their topic with profound academic scrutiny and a critical attitude. The following 51 volumes have appeared so far; except for #32, all are available as free eBooks.

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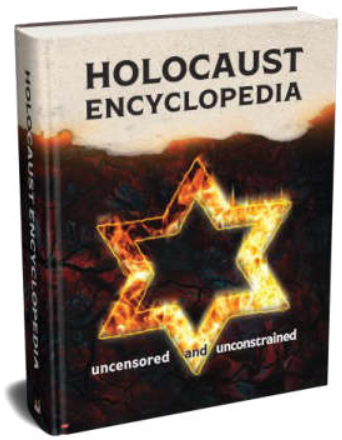

This encyclopedia gives readers an uncensored and unconstrained look at all the pertinent evidence that upholds the orthodox Holocaust narrative: the true, the false, and the mendacious. It also exposes the various forces and influences that have dictated how this narrative was formed, and how it is protected from skeptical prying eyes. If you ever wanted to understand the postwar world we live in, this is a good starting point. Learn about the biggest propaganda campaign mankind has ever seen, and how it braced the postwar world psychologically. This encyclopedia gives readers all the information they ever wanted, and information they didn't even know exists, right at their fingertips.

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The Holocaust is a topic whose public discourse is tightly controlled by powerful groups. Only their side of the story is permitted to be discussed. In fact, they insist that there is no other side. They guard the West's last taboo, and enforce swift punishment for those who dare to violate the taboo by asking prohibited questions, and by unearthing evidence leading to unwelcome answers.

Undaunted by this threat, and for the first time in history, a team of critical scholars has produced an encyclopedic compendium of cutting-edge information on this topic that pays no tribute to any power; respects no taboo; poses all the questions worth asking; and gives answers exclusively based on where the evidence leads. Its contents have not been censored by any legal authority, and they are not constrained to "acceptable" questions and answers.

The lead editor of this encyclopedia made sure that all contributors to this project are truly independent, and will defend what they consider to be true and accurate, even when threatened with imprisonment, due to laws in many countries that don't allow to question the Holocaust.

In this encyclopedia, you are not lectured in so many entries what we think the Holocaust was. Rather, you find the many pieces summarized and explained that make up the larger picture: Nearly three hundred entries present the essence of the most-pertinent witness accounts. They are the mainstay on which the Holocaust narrative rests. All of them are subjected to painstaking source criticism, which is one of the most important tools of a historian. This enables the reader to assess which witness is trustworthy, if any.

This encyclopedia addresses all the major Holocaust crime scenes, such as Auschwitz, Belzec, Sobibór and Treblinka; Dachau, Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald and Mauthausen; Babi Yar, Ponary, Janowska and Maly Trostinets, to name but a few. But their entries do not just summarize what today's narrative is. They explain how this narrative was formed, how it has changed over time, what the reasons for these changes are, and which aspects of this narrative lack credibility and why.

Forensics is the most important tool to investigate any murder case. Therefore, this encyclopedia contains many entries discussing the many tools said to have been employed to commit the mass murders, and to erase the traces: execution chambers, gas vans, mass graves, crematoria, cremation pyres. It discusses toxicological issues surrounding the various lethal gases claimed to have been used: gasoline and diesel exhaust gases, carbon monoxide, Zyklon B/hydrogen cyanide, to name only the most important ones. How did these tools work, if at all? What traces can we expect to find, if any? And ultimately: which traces were actually found during forensic investigations undertaken since war's end?

This encyclopedia also has multiple entries on certain more-or-less common claims about aspects of the Holocaust, including a list of "Who said it?" These cover topics such as "flames shooting out of chimneys, "fat extracted from burning corpses," "blood geysers erupting from mass graves," "soap and towels issued to gassing victims," to name only a few.

Finally, several entries address factors that have influenced the creation of the Holocaust narrative, and how we perceive it today. This includes, among others, entries on psychological warfare and propaganda during the war, on conditions prevailing during criminal investigations and trials of alleged Holocaust perpetrators, on censorship against historical dissidents, on the religious dimension of the Holocaust narrative, and on motives of all sides involved in this debate that refuses to go away.

In this important volume with 579 entries, you will discover – for the very first time uncensored and unconstrained – the bare bones of this skeleton in the West's historical closet. Be prepared to be mind-boggled and amazed!

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Who in Their Right Mind Would Doubt the Holocaust Happened?

To ask that question means to have misunderstood the issue. The question is not whether "the Holocaust" happened, but rather what exactly happened during the events usually referred to as "the Holocaust." After all, there is no such place or single event as "the Holocaust." It consists of many individual events and locations spread out over an entire continent during a time span of some four years.

Let us take as one example the Majdanek Camp near the Polish city of Lublin. What happened there during its existence between the summer of 1941 and the summer of 1944? How many inmates died in that concentration camp for what reasons and in which ways?

If we consult mainstream sources, we get different answers, depending on when they were published.

Shortly after the capture of the camp, the Soviets claimed a death toll of some two million for that camp during a press conference in Lublin on August 25th, 1944. During the Polish trial in late 1944 against six former camp guards, the Majdanek death toll was set to 1.7 million. Roughly a year later, during the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal, the Soviets introduced an investigation report claiming that up to 1.5 million inmates had been killed in that camp using seven different gas chambers, among other methods.

This figure, however, was significantly reduced three years after the war, when Polish judge Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz, a member of the Polish "Commission to Investigate German Crimes in Poland," published the commission's findings about Majdanek, which set that camp's death toll at 360,000.

The next downgrading came after the collapse of the communist Eastern Bloc, when Polish historian Czesław Rajca reduced the death toll down to 235,000. But that was still not the end of the death-toll deflation, because in a detailed research paper of 2005, Tomasz Kranz, then head of the Majdanek Museum, decided to streamline the official narrative by reducing the death toll down to 78,000, and to ditch five of the seven initially claimed gas chambers.

We learn from this that for many decades the official narrative of that camp was filled with exaggerations and inventions caused by wartime propaganda and hysteria. Much of what was initially claimed "never happened," so to say.

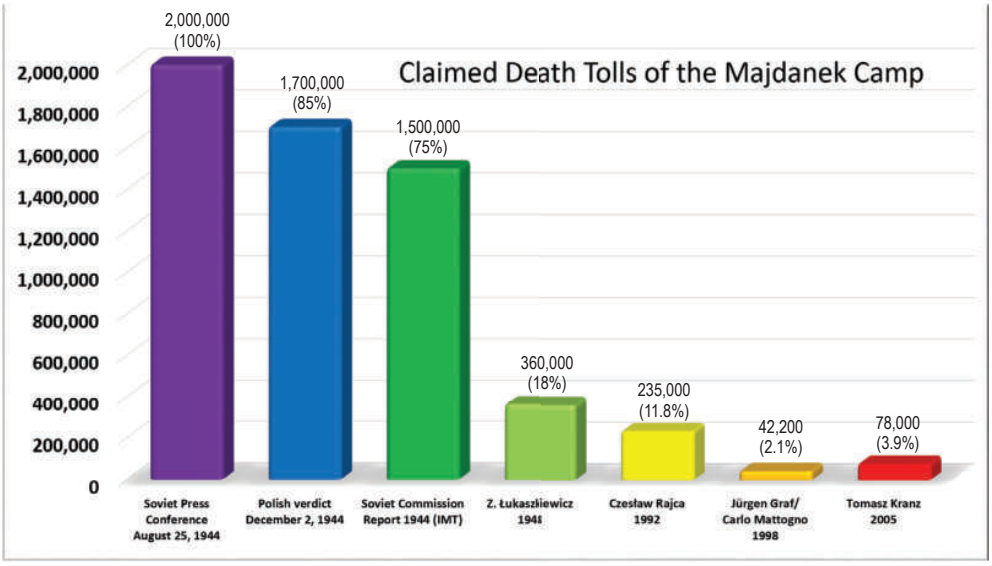
And how can we be sure that today's narrative is accurate? We cannot, because "denying the Holocaust" is a crime in Poland, so there is a limit to what historians are allowed to say and write.

The question is: how can one get to the bottom of this, if relying on mainstream sources seems to be a bad idea? Well, why not start with research results published by non-governmental, independent historians? These "revisionist" historians are usually and wrongly vilified as "deniers," but their thoroughly researched book on Majdanek, first published in 1998, proves them right. In it, they meticulously documented a total of some 42,000 victims of the Majdanek Camp, and the absence of any execution gas chambers. Hence, today's officially sanctioned Majdanek narrative is much closer to what revisionists have found out than to the initial propaganda-infested version, see the chart below.

Anyone with a skeptical mind should rightfully ask: And what else did they get wrong?

This brochure introduces the novice to the concept of Holocaust revisionism, and answers some tough questions that may come to the reader's mind, such as:

- What does Holocaust revisionism claim?
- Why should I take Holocaust revisionism more seriously than the claim that the earth is flat?
- What about the pictures of corpse piles in the camps?
- How about the testimonies by survivors and confessions by perpetrators?
- What does it matter whether prisoners died from disease or poison gas?
- Why does it matter how many Jews were killed by the Nazis, since even 1,000 would have been too many?
- Whatever the circumstances, don't Jewish victims deserve respect and compensation?



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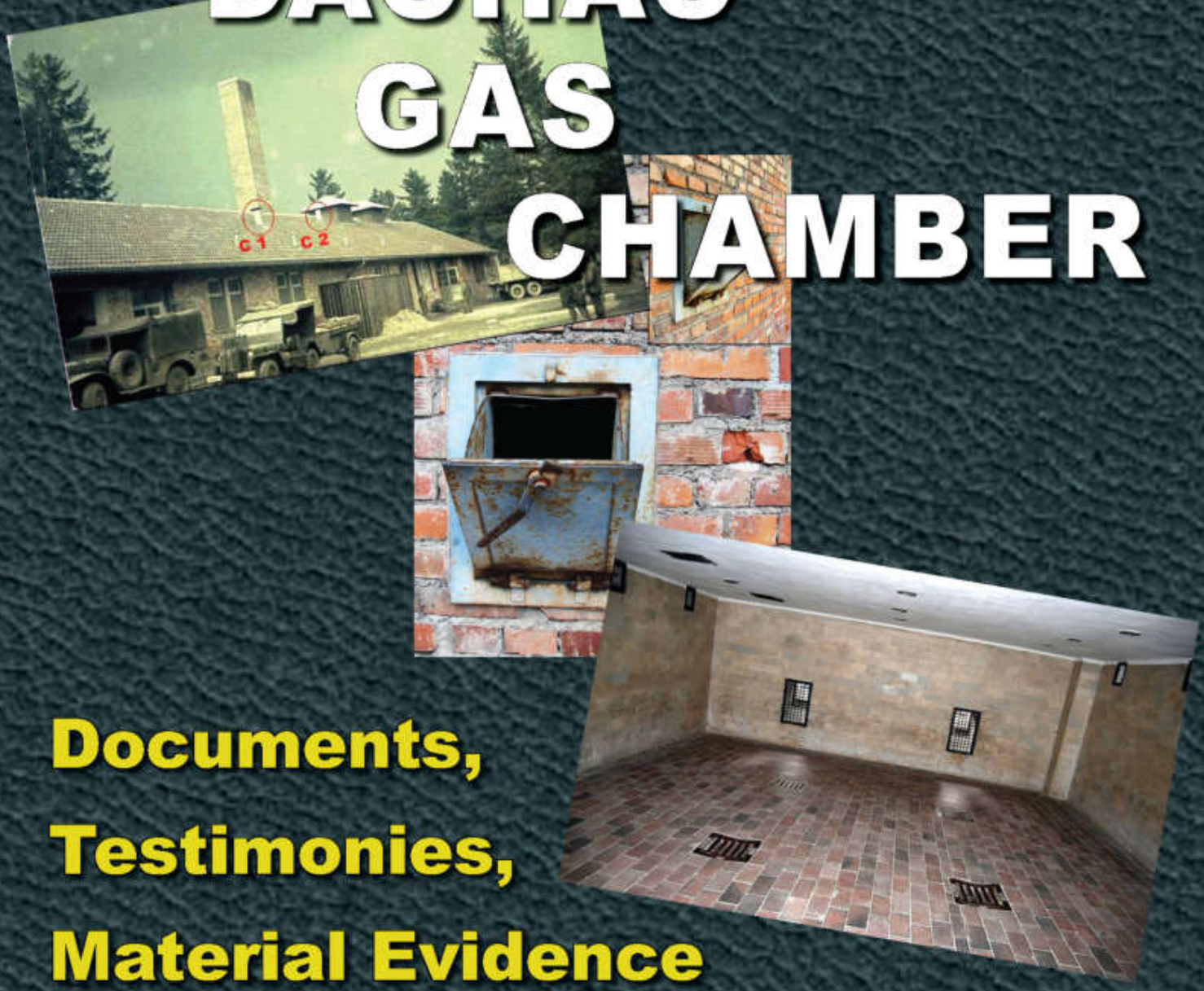

Documents, Testimonies, Material Evidence

CARLO MATTOGNO

THE DACHAU GAS CHAMBER

The Dachau Gas Chamber

Documents, Testimonies, Material Evidence

Carlo Mattogno

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1. An American Forgery?

In 2011, two important articles appeared on the alleged gas chamber at Dachau Concentration Camp, one by the Orthodoxy, the other by a revisionist. The first, authored by Barbara Distel with the (translated) title "The Gas Chamber in 'Baracke X' of the Dachau Concentration Camp and the 'Dachau Lie'," was published in the proceedings of an international historical conference held in Oranienburg, Germany, in 2008. The other was written by Thomas Dalton and appeared in the journal *Inconvenient History* under the title "Reexamining the 'Gas Chamber' of Dachau" (Dalton 2011).

I have discussed orthodox writings on this topic earlier ("The Mysterious Gas Chamber at Dachau," in Mattogno 2016, pp. 222-227). Before I expand on my earlier elaborations, I reiterate what I wrote earlier about what the orthodoxy knows on this topic, which is still valid today.

In her paper, Barbara Distel states (Distel, p. 337):

> *"In the spring of 1942, the construction of a new crematory in line with the plans of the SS was started at Dachau – designated as 'Baracke X' by the SS, because the capacity of the crematorium erected in 1940 was no longer sufficient in view of the high mortality in the camp, caused in particular by the execution of thousands of Soviet PoWs. The new crematorium was equipped with a gas chamber."*

Distel then continues (p. 338):

> *"The question of whether people were actually murdered by poison gas in the gas chamber installed in this crematorium has not yet been answered with certainty; the sources in this respect are poor, and this has not changed in the 25 years which have passed since the first scientific inventory on 'Nazi Mass Murders.'"*

For this reason, Distel tells us, the "date of the termination and/or the start-up of the gas chamber is still unclear" (footnote 8 on p. 338), in spite of the fact that, at Dachau, "in the early 1960s an intensive search for reliable sources was carried out in the area of the former camp as part of the creation of a memorial" (footnote 6 on p. 338).

Distel states that, in the opinion of orthodox historians B. Siebert, the alleged gas chamber was built in connection with the execution of Soviet PoWs, but she adds (pp. 339f.):

> *"The question as to why the gas chamber, presumably finalized in the spring of 1943, was not used for executions according to what we know today must remain unresolved just like the question whether the gas chamber was possibly used for individual killing actions."*

While evidence is said to exist to the effect that "during the construction of Baracke X" the infamous Dr. Siegmund Rascher considered using "the gas chamber for the testing of deadly combat gases," this has "not been ascertained unambiguously to the present day," although it "could not be excluded" either (p. 339).

In this regard there is the well-known statement by former camp inmate František (Franz) Bláha of January 9, 1946 (PS-3249) – to which I will return later – which another historian, Stanislav Zámečník, "considers credible, despite its contradictions, or for not improbable with respect to a use of the gas chamber as suggested by Rascher." but Distel then admits that "evidence for the killing of people in the Dachau gas chamber does not exist in this case either" (p. 340).

Just as unresolved, in her opinion, is the question why the alleged gas chamber "was not used during the last months of the war for the murder of the sick and the weak, as was the case in other camps which possessed such killing installations" (*ibid.*).

As in the case of other camps, the gas-chamber story at Dachau was born out of the tragic situation the Americans found and filmed when they entered the camp. At the Dachau Trial (November 15 – December 13, 1945) it was explicitly admitted (United Nations…, p. 5):

> *"A typhus epidemic was raging at the camp from December, 1944, until the liberation of the camp by American troops in April, 1945. Approximately 15,000 prisoners died of typhus during this period."*

Distel writes (p. 337):

> *"In front of the* [crematorium] *building, as well as in the so-called morgue, there were piles of naked corpses that it had been impossible to throw into*

> *the mass grave near-by. That is where the dead had been taken in the last weeks before the liberation, as there was no longer any fuel for the incineration of the corpses in the cremation furnaces."*

It was clear to the U.S. propaganda staff that these poor people must have been murdered in a gas chamber. This version was all the easier to sell as there existed – in front of the crematorium – four genuine Zyklon B circulation disinfestation chambers (plus an empty one, without any equipment, which was probably used for the storage of the Zyklon B cans). As we will see later, these chambers would be presented as homicidal gas chambers in the official American report on Dachau prepared in May of 1945.

To complete the propaganda picture, the Americans had a sign placed in front of the crematorium in 1945 that spoke of "238000 individuals who were cremated here" (Distel, p. 340).

Paul Rassinier, who published a photograph of this sign ("This area is being retained as shrine to the 238.000 individuals who were cremated here. Please don't destroy"), added (Rassinier 1961, p. 334):

> *"In a lecture presented on 3 January 1946 and published in Stuttgart by Franz M. Hellbach under the title 'The road to freedom,' Pastor Niemöller asserted that '238,756 people were burnt' at Dachau, more than had ever been interned there."*

This is correct, except that this was not Niemöller's claim, but another sign placed in front of the crematorium that said (Niemöller, p. 19):

> *"In the years between 1933 and 1945, 238,756 people were burnt here."*

Distel then briefly reviews several postwar publications that mention the alleged Dachau gas chamber; some claimed that only a few experimental gassings were performed there, while others maintain that it "never really worked properly."

In the 1960s, the Dachau Memorial placed a sign in several languages on the premises in question that read: "Gas Chamber disguised as a 'shower room' – never used as a gas chamber." It was still there in 1990, when I visited the camp (see Document 27).

Also in 1960, the first protests began. The German right-wing tabloid *Deutsche National-Zeitung und Soldaten-Zeitung* began to speak of the "Gas Chamber Hoax of Dachau." The critics went so far as to claim that the furnaces of the new crematorium had been built after the war,[1] and they

[1] The crematorium chimney was shortened by several meters at an unspecified date, probably in the 1950s, in the course of museum work. This may have given rise to the story of the furnaces built by the Americans.

merged the gas-chamber and cremation themes into the term "gas oven." Distel then writes about Martin Broszat's much-cited letter to the editor of the German weekly *Die Zeit*, published on 19 August 1960 under the title "No gassing at Dachau," and adds that "the revisionists" (it would have been better to say "*some* revisionists") had distorted its contents and had claimed falsely that Martin Broszat had contested in a general way the existence of gas chambers on the territory of the *Altreich*, *i.e.* Germany in the borders of 1937 (which, in fact, he did not do).

All this is well known. What is less well known is that Martin Broszat wrote his letter "in reaction to an article written by Robert Strobel on the front page of 'Die Zeit,' in which he implicitly painted as a fact the assertion that mass killings by poison gas had been carried out in the Dachau gas chamber and moreover created the impression that the victims had been Jewish" (Distel, p. 341).

In this article, Robert Strobel had attacked the former Wehrmacht general Martin Unrein, a "proto-denier" who had labeled the gas chamber as an ordinary shower room. The meaningless notion of "gas ovens" was introduced into the discussion by Robert Strobel himself:

> *"For him* [General Unrein]*, it was not Hitler's victims who were burned in the Dachau gas ovens but the corpses of the German SS-soldiers who had died at Dachau."*

The article mentioned by Distel actually appeared only on 7 January 1966 (since 1963 the title of the newspaper has simply been *Deutsche Nationalzeitung*). It was written by H. Berger and was headlined "Rumors about Dachau." It stated that the SS guards, interned at Dachau, had been forced by the Americans to build "new and larger gas ovens" – which, of course, is incorrect.

Distel concludes by asserting that the revisionists have not changed their arguments since that time (Distel, p. 342).

In fact, a major change in the way revisionists argue occurred precisely in 2011, thanks to Thomas Dalton's article mentioned earlier, which followed his visit to Dachau in the middle of that year. He first notes contradictions in the official literature that seem to support the accusation that the alleged gas chamber was set up by the Americans: on the one hand, the gassing system described is at odds with the current state of the place, and on the other hand, a report dated May 15, 1945, states that the ceiling of the alleged gas chamber was "some 10 feet" (about 3 meters) high, so the ceiling must have been lowered after the Americans arrived in Dachau (Dalton, p. 327):

> *"Indeed the gas chamber ceiling today is 2.15 meters high, but the adjacent room height is 2.9 meters – a full 75 cm (30 inch) differential. Whoever lowered the ceiling and installed the 'fake showerheads' did a remarkably crude job. Today it appears as a poured concrete ceiling, smooth and white, into which someone roughly chiseled several funnel-shaped holes. Of the 15 such holes, 13 have an open metal funnel, one is complete with perforated head, and the last is fully exposed* […]. *In most cases one can see, faintly, evidence of rework to the ceiling after the 'shower heads' were installed."*

The author then lays out pertinent observations based on the current state of the alleged gas chamber.

The evidence in favor of the American forgery seemed convincing, and I too assumed its validity in my paper cited earlier (first published in German: Mattogno 2011, pp. 258-264), but I soon renounced this explanation in the article "The Dachau 'Gas Chamber': New Perspectives," which appeared in 2015 on the Olodogma website, of which the present study is a radical reworking.

The May 15, 1945 report mentioned by Dalton is Nuremberg Document L-159, which was published in the court records with the following explanation (IMT, Vol. 37, p. 615):

> *"Report of a special Congressional Committee to the Congress of the United States, 15 May 1945, following a personal inspection of Buchenwald, Nordhausen, and Dachau concentration camp: conditions in the camps. Particularly atrocities which had been committed there (Exhibit USA-222)"*

In the section on Dachau, we read the following:

> *"The gas chamber was located in the center of a large room in the crematory building. It was built of concrete. Its dimensions were about 20 by 20 feet, and the ceiling was some 10 feet in height! In two opposite walls of the chamber were airtight doors through which condemned prisoners could be taken into the chamber for execution and removed after execution. The supply of gas into the chamber was controlled by means of two valves on one of the outer walls, and beneath the valves was a small glass-covered peephole through which the operator could watch the victims die. The gas was let into the chamber through pipes terminating in perforated brass fixtures set into the ceiling. The chamber was of size sufficient to execute probably a hundred men at one time."*

To this description can be added the account by former camp inmate Eugen Seibold recorded in a statement dated November 10, 1945:

> *"I have never seen any person killed by gas in the gas chamber. The gas chamber was originally differently arranged than it looks now. Ranges* [shower heads] *like in a shower-room which ran parallel to the ground were supposed to spray the gas. Only later on, about a year ago, the ceiling with the false shower-heads was built in. The reason was that the gas to be used came in grains. Steam heated from the furnaces was supposed to enter the chamber on the top of the false ceiling where the gas grains would be dissolved by the steam which then would come out through the shower heads and kill the people.*
>
> *We had 10 boxes of this gas called cyclon in our office for half a year, but they were never used. An engineer from Berlin who is right now at Dachau and at large was in charge of the construction* [sic]. *The gas arrangement was never finished, and we prisoners can say that we helped to sabotage its completion. When in 1944 the construction dump was damaged by bombs, we took a few parts from our steam dump in the basement which could not be replaced and made sure that there was never a chance to use the devilly* [sic] *system as planned by the SS High Command. I know, however, that people were very anxious to get the gas chamber going."*

Dr. Hintermeyer, the witness continues, visited the crematorium twice. The second time, on February 1, 1944, he told SS Oberscharführer Bongartz that the gas chamber absolutely had to be finished because 500 Jews from Berlin were to be gassed there.[2]

While the claimed original system of real showers could theoretically have worked with a gas such as carbon monoxide in pressurized cylinders, the one purportedly made afterwards is absurd. The "gas grains" had to be poured, it is not known how, into a cavity that had been created between the original ceiling and the one built later (which was made of concrete). Through the original real showers, water vapor was injected into the cavity, which "dissolved" the granules, generating the gas. But since the showers in the new ceiling were "fake," the gas vapors could not enter the room, hence would have remained in the cavity!

The witness, who was in charge of cremating corpses, uttered glaring absurdities in this area as well: the furnaces allegedly operated at a temperature of 1,800°C – twice the probably actual temperature – and seven to eight corpses were put into each muffle that was designed to contain only one corpse – and if the corpses were emaciated, even nine were allegedly

---

2 Archives of the Dachau Memorial, 767, pp. 87f.

introduced! This impossible load presumably burned within two hours; after two hours, another similar load is said to have been introduced.[3]

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

2. Testimonies and Trial Results

The first official U.S. report on Dachau, written in May 1945 by Colonel William W. Quinn of the 7th Army, stated in the section titled "Executions":[4]

> *"GAS CHAMBERS* [plural]*: the internees who were brought to Camp Dachau for the sole purpose of being executed were in most cases Jews and Russians. They were brought into the compound, lined up near the gas chambers, and were screened in a similar manner as internees who came to Dachau for imprisonment. Then they were marched to a room and told to undress. Everyone was given a towel and a piece of soap, as though they were about to take a shower. During this whole screening process, no hint was ever given that they were to be executed, for the routine was similar upon the arrival of all internees at the camp. Then they entered the gas chamber. Over the entrance, in large black letters, was written 'Brause Bad' (showers). There were about 15 shower faucets suspended from the ceiling from which gas was then released. There was one large chamber, capacity of which was 200, and five smaller gas chambers, capacity of each being 50. It took approximately 10 minutes for the execution. From the gas chamber, the door led to the Krematory* [sic] *to which the bodies were removed by internees who were selected for the job. The dead bodies were then placed in 5 furnaces, two or three bodies at a time."*

It is not known what this fanciful description was based on, but it is a certain fact that U.S. "knowledge" in this regard decreased dramatically as the investigation progressed.

---

[4] Brochure titled *Dachau.* GARF, 7021-115.17, p. 33; cf. www.scribd.com/book/293580561/Dachau.

During the trial against Martin Weiss (the last commandant of the Dachau Camp) and thirty-nine others (the Dachau Trial), which was held by the Americans from November 15 to December 13, 1945, Seibold (in court documents spelled "Seybold") testified during the hearings on November 19 and 20, 1945, but no one asked him anything about the alleged gas chamber (Trial..., Vols. 3 & 4, pp. 321-345; continuous pagination). Only the following laconic mention appeared in the summary of the "Evidence for Prosecution" (*ibid*., Vol. 1, p. 4):

> *"The gas chamber had a sign over its entrance which read 'Shower Bath', although in fact there were no bath facilities."*

Throughout the trial, only one witness spoke about the alleged gas chamber, the well-known Franz Blaha (František Bláha), a Czech physician who had been deported to Dachau on April 30, 1941. He was subjected to a very long interrogation during the hearings of November 16 and 17, 1945 (*ibid*., Vol. 3, pp. 98-216), of which I quote the most important part (*ibid*., Vol. 3, pp. 128-132):

> *"Q. Now you mentioned this crematory. Will you describe, Doctor, the construction of this crematorium?*
>
> *A. There were two crematories, it was the old crematory with two furnaces. There was the new crematory with five ovens.*[5] *I think the new crematory was put into use in 1944, in the beginning of 1944.*
>
> *Q. Do you know who constructed the new crematory?*
>
> *A. The Polish Preists* [sic] *built that. It was called the 'X bunker' detail.*
>
> *Q. Were these Polish Priests prisoners at that time?*
>
> *A. Yes.*
>
> *Q. How many rooms did they have down at this new crematory?*
>
> *A. There is a big hall for the bodies, then a passageway, the room with the furnaces, then there is a preparation room, the gas chamber, and then there is another hallway, and then the disinfectant chambers.*
>
> *Q. You mentioned the gas chamber; did that gas chamber have any sign over the top of it?*
>
> *A. Yes, 'shower bath.'*
>
> *Q. I hand you a photograph marked, Prosecution's Exhibit number 37, and ask you to state what that is?*
>
> *A. That is the shower bath, the gas chamber, in the new crematory.*

---

5 The new crematorium was equipped with four Kori furnaces.

Q. Was that ever used for taking shower baths, Doctor?

A. I was in there once in the beginning of 1944 with Doctor Rasher; at that time he experimented with gas on prisoners.

Q. Was it ever used for the purpose of being a shower bath?

A. I don't know about that.

Q. Did they ever have facilities in there for using it as a shower bath?

A. I don't believe so.

Q. Is that photograph, Doctor, a true an accurate photograph of the scene it depicts?

A. Yes.

Prosecution: May it please the court, I offer into evidence Prosecution's Exhibit number 37.

President: The photograph itself is received in evidence.

Q. Now, Doctor, you stated that you went to the gas chamber with Doctor Rasher in 1944; who was Doctor Rasher?

A. Doctor Rasher was at first a Captain and then a Major of the Luftwaffe. He was the leader of the experimental station in the hospital on the fifth block.

Q. When you went there with Doctor Rasher what did you do?

A. He came to Headquarters with a car, and then we went over to the crematory by car.

Q. What did you do at the crematory?

A. We went to the so-called 'shower bath' around 8:00 o'clock in the evening. We opened up the gas chamber, and he ordered me to go inside, and I was to determine if the people were living or dead already.

Q. You mean people who had been in this gas chamber when you went there?

A. Yes.

Q. How many people did you find in this gas chamber when you went there?

A. I think eight or ten people; three were still living.

Q. What was the condition of the rest of them?

A. They were half poisoned.

Q. Were any of them dead?

A. The other ones were dead.

Q. You say they were half poisoned; half poisoned with what?

A. With the gas which was in that shower room.

Q. Did you have occasion to determine what kind of gas that was?

A. When I stepped in, certainly I ran out again as fast as possible.

Q. Did you detect any odor?

A. It smelled of chlorine.

Q. Did you have occasion to perform any autopsy on those prisoners who you examined there in the gas chamber?

A. No.

Q. Who else was present there at the gas chamber besides you and Doctor Rasher?

A. Pabst, my assistant was there, he was a porter in the death chamber.

Q. You said, 'death chamber,' what do you-mean by, 'death chamber'?

A. It was a department of the hospital where dissections took place and pathologies prepared.

Q. And, that was used if the people were already dead?

A. Yes; sometimes the people got there while they were still living.

Q. Who brought them there from the transports? Who would bring them to this room?

A. From the detail the dead bodies were piled up on the cars; as we brought down individual bodies from the cars, there were also some living ones in between them.

Q. These eight or ten prisoners in the gas chamber, were they prisoners in Camp Dachau?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you know the nationalities of any of these prisoners that were in the gas chamber?

A. I don't know that because at that time I just wanted to get out fast; I couldn't stand it in there.

Q. You mentioned, Doctor, that Doctor Rasher was in charge of the experiments for the Luftwaffe; what was the nature of these experiments?

A. There were two groups of experiments; one with air pressure, and one with cold water."

On January 9, 1946, Blaha made a well-known affidavit for the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal, in which he stated in Paragraph 12:[6]

> *"Affidavit of Franz Blaha*
>
> *12. Many executions by gas, shootings and injections took place in the camp. The gas chamber was completed in 1944, I was called by Dr. Rascher to examine the first victims. Of the 8 to 9 people who were in the chamber, three were still alive, and the others appeared to be dead. Their eyes were red, and their faces were puffy. Many prisoners were later killed in this way. Afterwards they were taken to the crematorium, where I had to examine their teeth for gold. If they contained gold, they were pulled out."*

During the tribunal, Blaha testified during the hearings on January 11 and 14, 1946 (IMT, Vol. 5, pp. 167-199), but first his January 9 affidavit was read in court. Thomas Dodd, one of the U.S. Executive Trial Counsel, was especially interested in the visits of high German dignitaries to the camp. Deputy Chief Prosecutor for the USSR Pokrovsky misled the witness, suggesting to him that Dachau was in fact an "extermination camp," and Blaha immediately took up this nonsensical suggestion. He claimed that "Until the year 1943 it was really an extermination camp," then various industries were established there, but Dachau remained an extermination camp; only the manner of killing changed (*ibid.*, p. 178).

Charles Dubost, French Deputy Chief Prosecutor, was the only one who asked the witness questions about Rascher (*ibid.*, p. 185):

> *"Dubost: Were you informed of the purpose of the medical and biological experiments made by Dr. Rascher in the camp?*
>
> *Blaha: Well, Dr. Rascher made exclusively so-called Air Force experiments in the camp. He was a major in the Air Force and was assigned to investigate the conditions to which parachutists were subjected and, secondly, the conditions of those people who had to make an emergency landing on the sea or had fallen into the sea."*

At the Dachau Trial, the prosecution had already charged the camp SS with carrying out two types of experiments on prisoners: with air pressure experiments and with cold-water experiments (Trial..., Vol. I, p. 4), which were aimed at testing the condition of pilots at high altitude and those who had fallen into the icy waters of the Atlantic. These were the only types of experiments that were established during the subsequent Doctors Trial (Dec. 9, 1946 to Aug. 20, 1947; Mitscherlich/Mielke, pp. 27-93). Experi-

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6 "Eidesstattliche Erklaerung von Franz Blaha," 9 January 1946. PS-3249. IMT, Vol. 32, pp. 56-64, here 62.

ments with gases were allegedly carried out only at the Sachsenhausen and Natzweiler-Struthof camps, and only with mustard gas and phosgene (*ibid*., pp. 215-224).

The Americans classified over 70 documents relating directly or indirectly to Dr. Rascher and the medical experiments at Dachau, which I list below indicating their number and date:

DOC.	DATE (D.M.Y)	DOC.	DATE (D.M.Y)	DOC.	DATE (D.M.Y)
NO-1331	26.5.1939	PS-1610	9.10.1942	NO-240	11.4.1943
NO-263	24.2.1942	NO-293	13.10.1942	NO-241	16.4.1943
PS-1971a	5.4.1942	NO-225	16.10.1942	NO-230	17.5.1943
PS-1581b	13.4.1942	PS-1613	16.10.1942	NO-231	17.5.1943
PS-1571c	13.4.1942	PS-1971d	20.10.1942	NO-267	22.5.1943
NO-218	16.4.1942	PS-1571e	21.10.1942	NO-232	11.6.1943
NO-318	16.4.1942	NO-226	21.10.1942	NO-611	15.9.1943
NO-219	27.4.1942	PS-1609	24.10.1942	NO-432	21.10.1943
NO-296	27.4.1942	NO-288	6.11.1942	NO-758	10.12.1943
NO-264	28.4.1942	NO-319	6.11.1942	PS-1612	12.12.1943
NO-220	11.5.1942	PS-1579	6.11.1942	NO-616	10.2.1944
NO-261	4.6.1942	NO-431	12.11.1942	NO-615	16.2.1944
NO-283	15.6.1942	NO-287	20.11.1942	NO-614	17.2.1944
NO-284	25.6.1942	NO-269	29.11.1942	NO-290	21.3.1944
NO-221	26.8.1942	NO-236	12.1.1943	PS-2428	13.5.1945
NO-222	29.8.1942	NO-243	28.1.1943	NO-242	9.9.1946
NO-223	6.9.1942	NO-320	28.1.1943	NO-1424	31.12.1946
NO-234	10.9.1942	NO-238	4.2.1943	PS-1578	?
PS-1618	10.9.1942	NO-237	6.2.1943	PS-1582	?
PS-1611	22.9.1942	PS-1616	12.2.1943	PS-1617	?
NO-229	27.9.1943	NO-268	19.2.1943	NO-610	? photo
NO-285	3.10.1942	PS-1580	23.2.1943	NO-224	?
PS-1619	7.10.1942	PS-1615	3.3.1943	NO-217	?
NO-295	8.10.1942	NO-270	14.3.1943		
NO-286	8.10.1942	NO-292	4.4.1943		

None of these documents mention gassing experiments.

Rascher himself, in the curriculum of his professional training (*Ausbildungsverlauf*) that he drafted on May 17, 1943, summarized his assignments as follows (NO-230):

> *"Since February 1942, experimental activities in Dachau Concentration Camp: 1.) On the orders of the Reichsführer SS as well as the General Chief of Staff, Prof. Dr. Hippke, 'Experiments for the rescue of humans from great heights' in cooperation with Dr. med. S. Ruff and Dr. Romberg,*

> *DVL Berlin. The results of this work are laid down in the form of a secret command document and two long experimental films.*
>
> *2) By order of the Reichsführer SS and the Generaloberstabarzt Prof. Dr. Hippke 'Experiments for the rescue of hypothermic people' (start on Aug. 15, 1942); four months in cooperation with University-Prof. Dr. Holzlöhner, Kiel, and Dr. Finke, Universität Kiel."*

Rascher's name also appears in a British intercept of a German radio message that conveyed the following message:[7]

> *"To SS Brigadeführer Glücks, Oranienburg. The Reichsführer SS has authorized SS Untersturmführer Dr. Rascher, who is conducting the experiments in Dachau, to produce color photographs related to his experiments. I request that the appropriate arrangements be made. Sgd. Brandt, SS Sturmbannführer."*

Among the trial testimonies, one of the most important is undoubtedly that of Anton Pacholegg, a former camp inmates who claims to have been an employee at the Dachau experimental station, in close contact with Dr. Rascher, but even he knew nothing about experiments with gas. In his detailed statement of May 13, 1945, he made only one reference to the alleged Dachau gas chamber (PS-2428):

> *"Another experiment as told to me by NEFF personally was done in the following manner. The prisoner would be taken into the gas chamber at the new crematorium and extremities of the body amputated without the use if anaesthetics, i.e., living bodies were used to simulate battle field condition wounds and shell fire wounds. The coagulation tests were being conducted during this time. Dr. RASCHER conducted this experiment and would later dictate this* [sic; *his*] *findings for the official report."*

This is blatant fantasy. Walter Neff, called in by the witness, was a former political prisoner who had been interned at Dachau in 1938. On February 1, 1942, he was appointed ward supervisor of the camp's experimental station, which began operations on February 22. He knew only about high altitude and refrigeration experiments, and made no mention of the alleged Dachau gas chamber.[8]

Virtually no one knew of gas experiments conducted by Dr. Rascher at Dachau, beginning with Blaha himself. His evanescent statements on the subject therefore remain unconfirmed.

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[7] TNA, German Police Decodes No. 3, Traffic: 20.4.42. ZIP/GPDD 2/30.4.42, n. 17/18.

[8] NOKW-450, 452 (two excerpts from witness interrogations during the Doctors' Trial, hearing of Dec. 17, 1946); NOKW-426, Affidavit of 23 Dec. 1946.

3. Floor Plans of the New Crematorium

The plans for the new Dachau crematorium date back to March 1942. Four floor plans have been preserved, all designated "Preliminary and Construction Plans for Barrack 'X' in Dachau Concentration Camp": the floor plan (NO-3887), the drawing of the building with two sections (NO-3886), the floor plan showing the electrical system (NO-3885), and the foundation plan (NO-3884). These drawings were classified as court documents only for the Nuremberg Tribunal. Strangely, none of them were presented as evidence during the Dachau Trial, for which the Americans presented only a single "Photograph showing gas chamber (shower bath)," which was introduced as Exhibit No. 37 (Trial..., Vol. III, p. 34).

The drawings of the new crematorium allow us to answer the initial question: was the current ceiling of the alleged gas chamber originally higher and then lowered by the Americans only in 1945?

Document 1 (Dalton, p. 323) shows the current floor plan of the crematorium. Room No. 5 is the alleged gas chamber, which is preceded by a disrobing room (No. 4) and followed by a morgue ("Death room," No. 7) and the incinerator (cremation) room and an execution site (No. 8). In front of the crematorium are the disinfecting chambers, meaning disinfestation chambers (No. 1).

On the original floor plan (NO-3887; Documents 2, 2a, 2b), the alleged gas chamber corresponds to Room No. 8. It measures 7.12 m × 5.50 m (39.16 m²) and has two pairs of doors (*T1*-*T2* and *T3*-*T4*), two of which open outward (*T1* and *T4*), the other two inward (*T2* and *T3*). The wall separating it from Room 9 has a spyhole (S) with the section of a truncated cone. The left wall separating Room 8 from Room 6 has a gap *I* along its entire length. There are six drain covers (1-6) in the floor (Document 2c).

The floor plan showing the electrical system (NO-3885) indicates the presence of tiled walls, two light points on the ceiling in the center of the room (represented by the symbol *X*), and a 0.75-hp motor; a similar motor is shown in the adjacent room (No. 11; see Document 3).

Section *A-B* (Document 4) cuts through Rooms 3 and 4. Here the attic is 3 meters high. Section *C-D* (Document 5) shows two rooms, one smaller, on the left, with the attic 3 meters high, the other larger, on the right, with the attic 2 meters high, forming a gap of about 90 centimeters to the height of the attic ceiling. The measurement shown in the plan (115 cm) also includes the height of the attic floor, which therefore should be 25 cm thick.

In the room on the left, a window opens on the outer wall, while the outer wall on the right has no opening. This section is reversed from Section *A-B*, that is, the left wall of this one corresponds to the right wall of Section *C-D* and vice versa. Thus, turning the plan around, it appears that the room on the left of Section *C-D* can only correspond to Rooms 9 and 10, and the room on the right only to Rooms 8 (the "gas chamber") and 11. However, Room 11 has a window that is almost level with that of Room 10, while Room 8 has a windowless outer wall; Room 9, on the other hand, has a window. From this, it can be inferred that Section *C-D* cuts through Room 8 more or less along the line drawn to indicate the room's width of 7.42 meters.

The "Explanatory Report" on the new crematorium dated April 23, 1942 confirms (NO-3862):

"Room No. 8 has an intermediate reinforced-concrete ceiling"

Therefore, it is clear that the crematorium design called for a two-meter-high ceiling for this room. It remains to be clarified whether the room was actually built according to this plan, *i.e.*, whether the Americans found a 3-meter-high ceiling and built the present 2-meter high false ceiling, in which they placed the fake showers, or whether they found it already this way.

It should be noted that the well-known photograph of May 2, 1945, taken in the "gas chamber" by Illinois Senator Charles Wayland Brooks shows the ceiling of the room in its present state, so that the Americans, who had arrived on April 29, would not have had time to do the work. There is also the American film *Nazi Concentration and Prisoner-of-War Camps* submitted to Nuremberg as Document PS-2430 (to which I will return later) showing the interior of the crematorium, apparently dating from May 3. If the dates are accurate, there is no doubt that the current ceiling of the alleged gas chamber is original.

However, the U.S. Congressional Report of May 15, 1945, indicates the ceiling height of the "gas chamber" to be about 3 meters; it is claimed that this is a simple error, but this is bizarre to say the least: how could one, upon entering from a room with a ceiling 3 meters high into another with a ceiling of about only 2.15 meters high, attribute to the latter room a height of also 3 meters?

And what about Eugen Seibold's statement? He attributed the construction of the false ceiling with the false showers to "about a year ago," i.e. – since he made that statement in November 1945 – more or less to November 1944, and, according to him, the present false ceiling did not exist originally.

In 1995, a certain R. Müller took photographs of the attic above Room 8; three are known, on which I will dwell several times and in detail later. In one of them (Document 6) a fan with pipes can be seen, to which I will return later. In the present context, we are interested in the masonry ceiling of Room 8 (the "gas chamber"), which is about 40 cm lower than the wooden floor joist that runs at the bottom of the photo from the left to the right. There is no doubt that this is the original attic, but it cannot be the ceiling of the "gas chamber," which would be considerably lower than that. This means that between these two ceilings there may be a cavity, and we have no idea what it contains.

What was the function of this Room 8?

4. Jean-Claude Pressac's Interpretation

In an unpublished paper on the "gas chambers" of German concentration camps dated November 9, 1994, French historian Jean-Claude Pressac, addressed, among other things, the camp in question with a paragraph titled "The gas chamber for medical experiments in Dachau." He notes:[9]

> *"Indeed, the SS, evidently having nothing to reproach themselves for, had abandoned the construction files of the camp's many buildings without destroying them. All of these archives having been seized by the Americans, it did not take them long to find the crematorium file. A big surprise awaited them. The first-floor plan of the new crematorium – to differentiate it from the first, makeshift crematorium containing a furnace with two mobile Topf cremation muffles, immobilized and heated by two lateral coke hearths – was designated 'X' (Document NO-3887). Each of the rooms was labeled with a number from 1 to 21. The number 8 on the location of the gas chamber indicated that it was a… morgue. The Americans, instead of trying to understand, preferred to proceed by elimination. The title of the file, Barrack 'X', was promising, worthy of a detective story, and it fired the imagination. Such a designation could only conceal the worst kind of turpitude. They left it. The rest of the documents were more embarrassing, because the gas chamber was uniformly referred to as the morgue. All of the documents so labeled were discarded. The 'streamlined' file contained only six letters or reports exchanged between the SS Economic Main Office in Berlin and the Construction Office in Dachau from March 17 to May 9, 1942*

[9] J.-C. Pressac, "La chambre à gaz d'expérimentation médicale de Dachau." Archives of the Dachau Memorial, Folder *Krematorium Baracke X*, pp. 4f. of the typescript. All page numbers in the text from there, unless stated otherwise.

> *(NO 3859 to 3864), accompanied by seven plans of the crematorium (NO 3884 to 3890).”*

In practice, Pressac claims that the Americans “discarded” most of the documents related to the crematorium which were back then required by law for every official construction site, especially those documenting the handover of the finished building to the camp headquarters, which contained all the plans and especially the description of the building, as shown, for instance, in the documentation related to the Auschwitz-Birkenau crematoria. The aforementioned set of surviving documents, beginning with NO-3859, is accompanied by an unclassified photocopy of the back of the relevant binder, which bears the inscriptions, from top to bottom: BW [*Bauwerk* = Construction Project] 14; Baracke X. Kap.[itel] 21/7b (Bau) 7; a stamp, and finally the total cost of the project “RM: 200000.” This suggests that the folder contained many more documents than those released by the Americans, so that Pressac’s hypothesis is probably true.

He then presents a floor plan with his reconstruction of the function of the various rooms. In his opinion, Room 6 was planned for receiving and registering the corpses, while Room 8 (the alleged “gas chamber”) was a “morgue,” and Room 11 was for autopsies. Here is his description of the room that interests us (pp. 7f.):

> *“The morgue had no windows, and its lighting came from two central lamps. To ensure good ventilation, the volume of the room was reduced with a ceiling height of 2 m (3 m for the other rooms). This is shown in Section C-D (at the level of the morgue) of the section and facade plan (NO 3886). Its walls were covered with ochre tiles (‘Wände verkachelt’). A ventilator was built into the southeast wall of the building. A third door was set into the northwest wall to facilitate the passage to the southwest entrance, where an electric switch was installed next to this additional door.”*

Pressac’s intuition is undoubtedly correct, but his mania for always wanting to explain everything down to the minutest details led him astray at times.

In fact, his detailed explanations of the morgue’s structure seem rather drawn out, if not downright fanciful. In particular, the opening of an additional door and the fan in the wall are not supported by any evidence.

As I have shown earlier, the attic that appears in Document 6 is definitely original, and this is also true of the fan that used to be installed in this now-empty location. Most likely, the concrete slab served to support the weight of the fan, its associated piping and the heat exchanger, which was even heavier. The fan, therefore, was not located in the outer wall, but

on the attic floor. Since the room had no windows, a fan was essential for ventilation. I will return later to this issue.

Later, Pressac continues, the morgue was converted into a gas chamber. Dr. Sigmund Rascher, who conducted experiments on inmates at Dachau, wrote to Himmler on August 9, 1942:[10]

> *"As you know, the same facility as in Linz is being built in Dachau Concentration Camp. Since the 'transports of invalids' end up in certain chambers anyway, I ask whether the effect of our various war gases can be tested in these chambers on the persons designated for this purpose anyway? Up to now, there are only animal experiments and reports about accidents during the production of these gases. Because of this paragraph, I send the letter as a 'secret matter.'"*

According to Pressac, Rascher was referring to the Degesch forced-circulation disinfestation chambers that were being installed at the far end of the crematorium building, and it was in them that he wanted to test German war gases. Pressac continues:

> *"However, although the structural work on the delousing facility was completed, the Degesch equipment, which was difficult to obtain, was still missing (as was the case for the delousing facility in the Auschwitz reception building). Rascher had to postpone his 'gassing' project indefinitely."*

Rascher then allegedly decided to build his own gas chamber.

> *"Since the Degesch equipment had not yet been delivered, Rascher probably appealed, through the camp's Construction Office, to Heinrich Kori of Berlin, which, in addition to its specialty of waste-incineration furnaces, had an office and a workshop for manufacturing central heating and ventilation systems. It is well known that the SS construction offices dealt preferably with firms with which they already had contracts. The deal was conducted with great enthusiasm, and Kori benefitted from it."* (p. 10)

Pressac then ventures a very meticulous reconstruction of the alleged "gas chambers." Before examining it, however, it should be noted that already these premises are purely conjectural. First, Himmler's response to Rascher's letter is unknown, so there is no certainty that the Reichsführer gave him the permission he requested.

Second, nothing is known about the installation of the Degesch devices, so all of Pressac's related discussion is hypothetical. The same applies to

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[10] Archives of the Dachau Memorial, Folder *Krematorium Baracke X*. The excerpt from the letter I quoted is also quoted by B. Distel with reference Bundesarchiv NS 21/319 (Distel, p. 339).

the Hans (not Heinrich) Kori Company, since no evidence exists suggesting that they were involved in equipping the "gas chamber."

Here, then, is how and why, according to Pressac, the morgue was turned into a "gas chamber" (p. 11):

> *"It was a question of converting the crematorium morgue into an efficient gas chamber, capable of being heated or cooled quickly and of being ventilated in the same way. In early 1944, two separate circuits were installed above the ceiling of the morgue and were organized as follows:* [Document 7].
>
> *Rascher explained to Kori that this room was to become a medical experimentation gas chamber, that the Reichsführer had agreed to this, and that the test subjects were all volunteers, happy to sacrifice themselves for the fatherland."*

Pressac then explains (pp. 11-13):

> *"The morgue underwent the following structural modifications;*
>
> *– replacement of the four* [sic] *wooden doors at the two main entrances with two sealed metal doors without peepholes, opening to the outside;*
>
> *– filling in of the third door and neutralization of the exterior electrical switch (still visible today);*
>
> *– removal of the two central lamps and replacement by eight recessed lamps (four each located high on the northeast and southwest walls, on either side of the entries);*
>
> *– piercing in the north-west wall of a hot-air inlet, a slanting pouring duct, closed in the corridor by a safety device (a kind of small porthole protected by a mobile cover), and installation at man's height of a recessed niche closed by a metal door;*
>
> *– filling in of the fan opening in the south-east wall and breaking through of two ventilation openings with closing flaps (A1 and A2);*
>
> *– two ventilation holes in the ceiling (B).*
>
> *The technical data of the deaeration circuit and the heating circuit are provided by the manufacturing plates fixed on the remaining casing of the blower and on a support foot (north-east side) of the heat exchanger (still existing today):*

Extraction blower characteristics:		*Heat exchanger characteristics:*	
Order number	*91 967*	*Order number*	*91 967*
Manufacturing no.	*148 994*	*Manufacturing no.*	*148 995*
Type	*NE 400*	*Air heater*	*12 R 925 2 E*
Air throughput	*4180 m³/h*	*Air throughput*	*32 000 m³/h*
Air temperature	*°C*	*Air temperature*	*°C*
Steady pressure	*20 mm wc**	*Final air temperature*	*+ 0°C*
Total pressure	*25 mm wc*	*Heating steam*	*0.1 Atm*
Speed of rotation	*930 rpm*	*Heating water*	*°C*
Power input	*0.7 hp*	*Heating power*	*calories/h*
Performance	*Abb. 4*	*Air resistance*	*mm water*
Position	*Pos. 3*		
Year of construction	*1944*	** water column*	

Each circuit, deaeration and heating, after splitting into two ducts, is led into the corridor, where they are equipped with two closing valves for each circuit. It seems that the diameter of the conduits (40 cm) was divided in two in order to allow the installation of valves of a smaller section (20 cm), who are less heavy than one whose zinc-coated sheet metal duct could not support the weight. Each valve could be opened or closed by a hand wheel, operated from the corridor. The heating circuit did not have its own blower, and could only work by the deaeration blower sucking air through it. In the small cellar of the crematorium, there was a boiler for the central heating of the building (hot water). To supply the heat exchanger with steam, a second boiler was installed there. The gas chamber was 7.18 m long, 5.50 m wide and 2 m high, with a surface area of 40 m² and a volume of 80 m³. Its deaeration was three times more powerful than that of the morgues used in the gas chambers of crematoria II and III at Birkenau. In five minutes, its atmosphere was purified.

Once the doors were closed, the operation of the gas chamber went through different phases:

1/ bringing the room to the outside temperature: closing the heat-insulated valves and opening those for ventilation, opening the two ventilation openings, turning on the blower (by a switch installed in the corridor) until the desired temperature was reached (controlled by a thermometer in the recessed interior).

2/ heating of the room: opening of the heat-insulated and ventilation valves; activation of the blower until the desired temperature is reached.

3/ introduction of the gas: after closing the heat-insulated and ventilation valves, an ampoule of liquid gas was introduced through the pouring duct,

and the porthole closed. The ampoule broke on the ground, the gas evaporated.

4/ ventilation of the gas chamber: opening of the two ventilation openings, opening of the ventilation valves (the heat-insulated valves remaining closed), starting of the blower until complete evacuation of the gas."

Pressac then ventures even more detailed explanations (p. 14):

"Contrary to what has been said, the gas chamber did not have a peephole, because 'observing the victims' agony' was not Rascher's goal. He wanted to expose the subjects to the influence of three variable factors: the nature of the gas, the temperature of the room (from 0 to 30°C) and the duration of the action. The experiment required the presence of four people, Rascher and three assistants. During his shift, the doctor stood in the corridor and directed it from there by means of a panel (T1) with three control buttons allowing to light up corresponding indicator lights on three other panels, set in each of the external façades of the room (T2, T3 and T4) and in front of which the assistants were waiting. Depending on the color displayed, the helpers performed a specific task:

Organization of the Light Signals (based on Captain Fribourg):

T1: Four control buttons [o] and two indicator lights [●].

The white button controlled the lighting of the gas chamber.

o● pink	*T2, T3 and T4: with three indicator lights, controlled by the corresponding buttons of T1 and distributed as follows:*
o● orange	*● red (gas chamber in operation: no entry)*
o white	*● orange (end of experiment: opening of air intakes)*
o red	*● pink (end of ventilation: opening of doors)."*

As for the actual use of the "gas chamber," Pressac states (p. 14):

"The construction work was carried out in January and February 1944 and was completed in the first half of March. Only one deportee, the Czech physician Frantisek Bláha, correctly stated after the war that the gas chamber was completed in 1944. He witnessed the first experimental gassing by Rascher. According to Blàha, seven prisoners were gassed. At the end of the gassing, three were still alive, two were unconscious and the last two appeared dead. 'Their eyes were red, and their faces were swollen,' he reported. He did not specify the nature of the gas tested."

Pressac finally adds that "Rascher's career was cut short on March 28, 1944, probably just after this first experimental gassing" (p. 15).

After that, "the experimental gas chamber was left untouched and returned to its original function as a morgue. In the summer of 1944, four de-

lousing cells were finally equipped with their Degesch devices and went into operation in October. They were in operation until the liberation" (p. 15).

This lengthy reconstruction requires further remarks, in addition to those already stated regarding its premises. It should be pointed out immediately, however, that as far as the modifications made to the "gas chamber" are concerned, of those listed by Pressac, the only ones that are documented are the replacement of the two doors leaves measuring 90 cm × 190 cm installed on the outer and inner side of the two entrances to Room 8 with metal doors normally used in air-raid shelters (Documents 8-10), and the replacement of the two central lamps with lateral lamps recessed in the wall.

As for the two ventilation openings and the heat exchanger, it is very difficult to believe that they were installed only in 1944, as I will explain later.

5. The Experimental-Gas-Chamber Thesis

First of all, it cannot be sensibly asserted that Franz Blaha is a witness (moreover, the only one) to the use of the "gas chamber" for one medical experiment by Dr. Rascher for the purpose of testing some kind of aggressive chemical.

It is true that Blaha stated at the Dachau trial that Dr. Rascher "at that time he experimented with gas on prisoners," but this omniscient witness was unable to specify anything in this regard except that he had smelled chlorine in the alleged gas chamber!

In the January 9, 1946 affidavit mentioned above, Blaha spoke at length about the medical experiments carried out at Dachau. He mentions Dr. Claus Schilling's malaria experiments (Point 3 of the affidavit), Dr. Rascher's experiments from 1942-1943 concerning air pressure (Point 4) and the effects of cold water on humans (Point 5), Dr. Brachtel's experiments of inoculating bacilli into the liver (Point 6), phlegmon experiments of four other doctors (Point 7), and salt-water ingestion experiments (Point 8), then he went on to other topics. In Point 12, which I have already quoted earlier, he related Dr. Rascher's alleged activities to the "[m]any executions by gas, shootings and injections" that were perpetrated at the camp, specified that "[m]any prisoners were later killed in this way," and he concluded by asserting that

> *"Mentally insane persons were liquidated by being led to the gas chamber and either given injections or shot."*[6]

The alleged gassing described by Blaha is thus completely outside of Pressac's logic, precisely because, for the witness, it was an execution, not an experiment, and Dr. Rascher would certainly not have delegated the examination of its outcome of an execution to a camp inmate.

Moreover, according to Pressac, the morgue was turned into a "gas chamber" from January to mid-March 1944. I recall that Rascher's letter to Himmler is dated August 9, 1942, so this very long delay of 16 or 17 months remains completely unexplained.

It seems that Pressac chose the indicated period by exclusion: the final limit is March 28, when Rascher received a visit from the criminal police because, together with his wife, he had illegitimately acquired children, passing them off as natural offspring. The initial limit is January 1, 1944, because the fan installed in the attic of the Dachau crematorium was manufactured (according to Pressac) in 1944. Assuming this to be correct, the air heater would also have been manufactured in 1944, since, interestingly, the two devices would both correspond to order 91967, but the fan would have the manufacture number 148994, the air heater the one immediately following, 148995. Thus, in two and a half months, the two devices would be fabricated, installed, and tested.

While it is true that the devices for the Degesch delousing chambers were ready in the summer of 1944, and were undoubtedly much more urgent than contraptions for Rascher's personal "medical experimental gas chamber," serious doubts can be entertained about this story. To begin with and curiously enough, all kinds of data are said to be embossed on these devices – except that of the manufacturer! In practice, nothing indicates that the devices were requested from the Kori firm and manufactured and installed by them. I this regard, Pressac's claim is just foggy conjecture. I will return to this issue in Chapter 14.

But even if we took the fan's year of manufacture for granted, the inescapable conclusion that it was for a "gas chamber" does not flow from it. Such a fan is by no means incompatible with equipping a morgue. Finally, Pressac completely overlooks the six floor drains in Room 8 and the alleged fake shower heads, which would make sense as camouflage only for a homicidal gas chamber in order to deceive unsuspecting victims, but they make no sense at all for an experimental gas chamber, where the victims were inmates, often sentenced to death,[11] whom there was no need to deceive with fake shower heads.

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[11] In a letter dated April 18, 1942, Himmler had arranged that Dachau inmates sentenced to death were to be pardoned if they survived the medical experiments. On October 20, 1942, the office of the Reichsführer's aide-de-camp (Adjutantur) in Munich asked Rudolf Brandt by telegram if Russians and Poles were also to be pardoned (PS-1971d). The next day Brandt replied that the pardon did not apply to Russian and Polish prisoners (PS-1971e). In a letter written on November 27, 1942, by Karl Wolff to Erhard Milch, it is noted that Himmler had personally assumed the responsibility "to provide for these

I have already pointed out earlier the fact that in none of the trials held by the Americans was it established that Rascher experimented with gas on inmates. Another omniscient prisoner with a hot quill, Eugen Kogon, devoted a few pages of his well-known book to the question of German medical experiments, and elaborated particularly on those conducted by Rascher, but even he knew nothing about gas experiments (Kogon, pp. 141f.).

The experimental gas chamber hypothesis is therefore untenable.

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experiments death-worthy anti-socials and criminals from the concentration camps" (NO-269).

6. The Morgue Thesis

In his plan of "Baracke X," Pressac provides detailed explanations of the function of the various rooms; I quote the most important ones (p. 7, based on numbers on Document 2):

No. 6: "Reception and registration of corpses"
No. 8: "Morgue"
No. 11: "Autopsy room"
No. 18: "Coke room"

However, access to the alleged reception room could only be through the entrance door of Room 3,[12] which had three steps, as can be seen both in the floor plan,[13] and, even more clearly, in the front-view drawing (NO-3886), and was certainly not the best entrance for transporting corpses into the crematorium. It is more logical that the morgue was room No. 18, which was quite large (9.50 m × 5.50 m) and had an access opening of 2.70 m × 2.70 m with a double-leaf door that opened outward; in front of it, the drawing shows an inclined plane rising from the street level to the floor level of the crematorium (NO-3886).

This, moreover, is the layout of the rooms indicated by F. Blaha at the Dachau Trial during the interrogation I quoted earlier: " There is a big hall for the bodies [No. 18], then a passageway [?], the room with the furnaces [No. 13], then there is a preparation room [No. 11], the gas chamber [No.

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[12] Excluding the access door to Room 4, which opened from Area 2, which was the "uncontaminated" area where the disinfected clothes were extracted from the four disinfestation chambers.

[13] In Document 2, the door is indicated by the arrow, at the bottom, in the center of the image, below the number 3.

8], and then there is another hallway [?] and then the disinfectant chambers."

However, could Room 8 have originally been a special morgue with access from Room 11? The concrete slab above the alleged gas chamber seen in Document 6 is certainly original, so right from the design stage on, this room was planned to be used to be equipped with the devices I will describe in detail later. The fact that the fan may possibly have been installed only in 1944 does not change anything about this initial this design, as I will explain immediately.

First, it must be established what the function of a fan in a morgue was. The answer is provided by Pressac himself when explaining Plan 932 of the new Auschwitz crematorium (the future Birkenau Crematorium II). In this regard, he states (Pressac 1989, p. 284):

> *"Leichenkeller* [Morgue] *1 was to take corpses several days old, beginning to decompose and thus requiring the room to be well-ventilated, to be incinerated as soon as possible."*

Looking at this from Pressac's perspective, if a ventilation fan was planned from the beginning, one may ask why the ventilation vents currently existing in the outer wall of the "gas chamber" do not appear in the crematorium floor plan. The answer is that the logic of the floor plan and sections of the crematorium, of photographs and architectural findings of the crematorium dictate the presence of *two* ventilators, one for air induction, the other for air extraction, both of which should have been located in the attic. Financial problems or limited metal allocation may have led the Dachau Central Construction Office to dispense with the air induction fan later by simply breaking two ventilation holes through the outer walls of the room. However, this hypothesis assumes that the ventilator whose empty housing appears in Document 6 was an air extraction fan and not one for air induction, but that is by no means certain.

On the ground-floor plan (NO-3887), Room 8 is the only one with double doors, which were definitely not gas-tight, but "stench-tight" for normal cadaveric miasmas; for the same reason, the separating wall between Rooms 8 and 6 had a gap. The floor plan of the crematorium (NO-3887) also gives indications of the type of floor in the rooms: in Room 5 it was of concrete, in Room 6 of wood, and in Rooms 8 and 11 of tiles.

The Topf Company's Drawing D 57999 dated November 30, 1940 for the Auschwitz crematorium shows an L-shaped morgue, separated from the furnace room by a 38-cm-thick wall with a 14-cm-thick interior gap for insulation. The connecting door to the furnace room was double (one

opened toward the furnace room, the other toward the morgue), with dimensions of 120 cm × 200 cm.[14] The width of 120 cm likely provided for the easy passage of a trolley for moving corpses. In contrast to this, Room 8 of the Dachau crematorium has doors merely 90 cm wide, while Corridor 12, which connects the furnace room (No. 13) to Room 11, has two double doors 120 cm wide. This suggests the circulation of trolleys with corpses between these two rooms, but the circulation of living people between Rooms 6, 8 and 11.

Based on the floor plan, Room 11 was functionally connected to Room 13 (furnace room). The tile floor and the two floor drains hint at Room 11 having been an autopsy room; Room 8, on the other hand, was connected to Room 6, which was the only one with a wooden floor and also had two large windows, suggesting a locker room for a shower room (Room 8), as suggested by the presence of six large floor drains.

Considering all the known elements, the original design of Room 8 is compatible with both a morgue and a shower room.

[14] Floor plan of the Auschwitz crematorium, Topf Drawing D 57999, 30 November 1940. RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 135.

7. The Gassing Technique According to Pressac

Pressac's relative reconstruction – even under the untenable assumption (as I will clarify later) that the heating and ventilation devices were installed in 1944 – has two weaknesses that invalidate it. The first is the claimed gas-introduction device. He mentions a "pouring duct" in the wall separating the "gas chamber " from the corridor behind it, through which "an ampoule of liquid gas was introduced." However, Captain Fribourg, on whose expert report Pressac partly relies (which I will discuss later), explicitly stated that this was indeed a spy hole.

The second weakness is the operating mode of the devices, which Pressac describes as follows (p. 13; see Documents 7, 7a):

> *"1/ bringing the room to the outside temperature: closing the heat-insulated valves* [V3 and V4] *and opening those for ventilation* [V1 and V2]*, opening the two ventilation openings* [B1 and B2]*, turning on the blower (by a switch installed in the corridor) until the desired temperature was reached (controlled by a thermometer in the recessed interior)."*

This is the normal operation of the air-extraction system, but it is not clear why the first "gassing" phase should have involved establishing the outside temperature inside the room (p. 13).

> *"2/ heating of the room: opening of the heat-insulated* [V3 and V4] *and ventilation valves* [V1 and V2]*; activation of the blower until the desired temperature is reached."*

By starting the fan and opening the galvanized pipe valves V1 and V2, the air in the room would have been sucked through the two air-extraction openings E1 and E2 located in its ceiling and expelled from chimney E. Opening of the insulated pipe valves (V2 and V3) would theoretically have allowed air from the ventilation stack B to pass through the heat exchanger,

down the duct to the "gas chamber" through opening B3 (but, as I will explain below, in practice the matter is not so simple); this air would have been sucked in by the blower through the two air-extraction openings E1 and E2, and precisely this suction, according to Pressac, would have created enough pressure difference to provide the air with enough energy to pass through the heat exchanger and go all the way through the described path. However, even if the blower had been able to make the air overcome all the resistance along this path, the ultimate result would inevitably have been the expulsion of hot air from chimney E. In practice, since it was not possible to recirculate the hot air in the room through the heat exchanger, the room would have warmed very little. This system would therefore have been as complicated as it was inefficient.

Finally, the story of the various-colored buttons in the room adjoining the "gas chamber" is patently conjectural and moreover not very credible, because the three colors (red, orange, pink) are similar and could have been confusing. Strangely, the color green is missing, which without any doubt would have been the best color to signal a "go-ahead" for opening the doors.

Therefore, Pressac's hypothesis of an experimental gas chamber also appears very doubtful from a technical point of view.

8. Captain Fribourg's Expert Report

This expert report, which is dated May 25, 1945, was written by Captain Fribourg in his capacity as officer of the French Military Mission of the 6th Army Group, "Chemical Warfare," following an inspection, carried out on May 5, of Room 8 and the attic above it. He described and drew a sketch of the devices he found there. I quote the most significant elements of his report:[15]

"[*INTERIOR OF THE ROOM*]

About 75 cm above the floor [there are] *two hoppers that make the shower room communicate with the outside (palisade side). Each hopper is closed on the inside by a grating and on the outside by a movable filling system.* [...]

Approximately 75 cm from the floor and in the axis of the shower room is the flap that closes a cylindrical spyhole, directed outwardly upward, which allows one to look into the shower room from the corridor. [...]

At the left corner, almost at floor level, there is the mouth of a duct closed by a grille (40 x 50 cm). [...]

The showerheads are set directly into the ceiling. The 2 ventilation (?) inlets (or outlets?) are covered by grating. [...]

Above the shower room.

In the attic are the two groups of pipes reported above.

(a) Uninsulated group.

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[15] Archives of the Dachau Memorial, Folder *Krematorium Baracke X*, "Chambre à gaz de Dachau. Rapports du capitain Fribourg," 25 May 1945, pp. 2-4 of the report.

One of the two elements communicates in 2 places with the shower room to the right of the two openings with ceiling grids.

The other element is connected to an electric fan from which a pipe runs through the roof.

In one of the elements of this system, access to which is not easy, a black pipe of about 2 cm in diameter penetrates, the origin of which could not be found due to lack of means of access.

(b) Insulated group.

The piping from this group reaches some kind of humidifier (?) from which a similarly insulated pipe runs through the roof.

A steam or hot water connection is connected to the humidifier.

No penetration of the insulated piping into the shower room or its ceiling was discovered. [...]

Conclusions:

[...] *it is likely to be a gas chamber.*

A second visit is needed to discover the toxic gas circuit and possible communication with the disinfection chambers. Survey of all walls is necessary."

In order to understand this description, it is necessary to gather all useful elements, starting with Fribourg's drawings.

His Drawing 1 shows the section of the "gas chamber," the corridor behind it and the attic above it (Document 11). In the attic, an exhaust fan is installed with the vertical venting duct running through the roof; the horizontal duct is connected to the two air-extraction openings located in the ceiling of the "gas chamber." The part of the duct that goes through the wall and out into the adjacent corridor is depicted more clearly in Drawing 5 (Document 12). The top part of the top sketch in Document 12 depicts a schematic of a fan with its associated piping. From the fan, the pipe runs horizontally to the adjacent room, forks before crossing the wall, re-crosses it in the opposite direction, and exits into the room below through the two air-extraction openings.

Shown below this is another pipe, which passes through a device (Fribourg thought of a "humidifier") and runs horizontally into the adjacent room, parallel to the pipe described earlier; it too has a double bifurcation.

The first pipe, the one connected to the fan, is part of the "gas chamber" air-extraction system; the other belongs to the heating system.

Captain Fribourg calls the first a galvanized sheet-metal pipe, the second and insulated pipe.

The captions say (from top to bottom and left to right):

pipe through the roof
electric fan
galvanized sheet-metal pipe
double opening into the "Shower Room"
top, roof removed [?]

At the bottom, the sketch on the left bears the inscriptions:

small pipe of undetermined origin
galvanized sheet-metal pipe
corridor
"shower room"
section e-f

And the sketch to the right:

pipe (steam or hot water) along the building
insulated pipe
humidifier
shower room
section n-c

In order to explain what is above the ceiling of the alleged gas chamber, I label and comment on the relevant Müller photographs, beginning with the one already presented as Document 6, which I present again with labels added as Documents 13 and 13a. There one can see the fan housing (from which the fan itself was dismantled at an unspecified time; No. 1), from which emanates a galvanized pipe running horizontally close to the attic floor in the direction of the furnace room (No. 2). To the left, one can see another inclined, unconnected pipe resting on a base (No. 3). In the foreground is another pipe, also galvanized, bifurcating (No. 4): the upper, shorter part penetrates the ceiling with an elbow turn, the lower, longer part definitely penetrates the ceiling just outside the photo. Also in the foreground, in the lower right corner, an oblique plate appears (No. 5), which is the left oblique side of the device that Fribourg called a humidifier. The photograph has several concordances with Fribourg's drawing: fan and left tube match; the vertical tube is beyond wall E of Document 13a. The other elements I will discuss immediately.

Another photograph of the attic (Document 14) shows what was to the left of the field of view of the previous photograph (Document 13). Next to the low brick wall, one notices the galvanized pipe that to the right ends in

front of the fan housing (Document 14a, No. 3). As reported by Fribourg, the pipe forks and enters the wall. In front of it appears a second galvanized pipe (No. 4); it too forks and enters the wall. This corresponds to the pipe in the foreground of Document 13 (No. 4). Finally, in the foreground, an insulated pipe is observed that likewise enters the wall (No. 5a). Based on the distance from the brick wall seen on the right, it should come from the device with the slanted sheet metal in Document 13 (No. 5). Above, under the rafters, an insulated pipe runs through the attic lengthwise (No. 6). The left side runs into the direction of the boiler room, the right side runs toward the furnace room. In Document 13, on the left side, this pipe (No. 6) enters the back wall, and also on the right side, at the top, under the rafters, another pipe of the same type (Doc. 13, No. 7) runs between the back wall and the device with the slanted sheet metal.

In the corridor adjacent to the "gas chamber" (No. 9 on the floor plan; Document 2a), as shown in Documents 15-18, are the 180° bends and valves of the galvanized and insulated pipes. These photographs show what is to the bottom left of Document 13, on the side of the corridor adjacent to the "gas chamber," immediately below the ceiling made of wooden beams, which in Document 14a appears on the left (No. 9). It is clear from these photographs that Pipe 3 located in the attic forks into two smaller Pipes 3a and 3b, which enter the wall, exit under the ceiling of the adjacent corridor, bend 180°, re-enter the wall and merge into Pipe 4, which is connected to the ventilation openings of the "gas chamber."

Since two insulated pipes (5b, 5c) also exit into the corridor next to the "gas chamber" (Room 9 on the floor plan), while only one pipe (5a) appears on the attic, it could be assumed that this one, with a rather large cross section, also forks into the above two pipes, but the is also possible that thick layer of insulation contains two separate pipes. The two Pipes 5b and 5c also bend 180° and run back into the attic floor area. I will dwell below on their subsequent path.

As for the aforementioned bifurcation of the pipes, Pressac's explanation is reasonable: the purpose was undoubtedly to avoid a single large valve for Pipe 3, which would have been too heavy, and the same thing was done with Pipe 5a. However, as can be seen in Documents 13 and 14, Pipe 3, after re-entering the attic (No. 4 in Documents 13 and 14a), bifurcates again on the opposite side into Pipes 4a and 4b (Document 13). While Pipe 4a is intact, while 4a is missing a part that went, in the direction of the red line, to an opening made between the floor and the side wall. Most likely, both pipes 4a and 4b descended through two special openings

in the cavity, and were each connected to one of the two ventilation grills located in the ceiling of the alleged gas chamber.

For the sake of clarity, I have named the closure valves in Pressac's drawing V1 & V2 and V3 & V4 (Document 7a), and in the relevant photographs 3c-3d and 5d-5e (Documents 15-18).

There is no doubt about the galvanized pipes, which were, as Captain Fribourg stated correctly, part of the air-extraction system equipped with a suction fan that pulled air out of the "gas chamber" and expelled it through the roof.

Fribourg's relevant drawing (Document 11) shows a vertical pipe directly connected to the fan. In Document 13, the pipe exiting the fan (No. 2) runs horizontally across the attic in the direction of the furnace room. The vertical pipe connected to the chimney, as I mentioned earlier, is located behind the back wall E, hence no visible in the photos.

Looking at the roof of the crematorium, one notices two ventilation chimneys, which I referred to as C1 and C2 in Document 19. They were also present in 1945, as shown in various period photographs, such as Document 20. Chimney C1 is located a little higher than the center of the roof slope, between the two small trap doors installed in the wall, so it is positioned above the alleged gas chamber. Chimney C2 is located higher up, closer to the top of the roof, at Room 12 on the floor plan (NO-3887). It is therefore undoubtedly the outlet of Pipe 2 in Document 13.

The attic above the "gas chamber," as shown by vertical sections A-B and C-D (Documents 4 and 5) and especially Document 6, consisted of a roof truss, the essential elements of which I illustrate in Document 13a: crossbeam A, vertical support beam B and longitudinal beams between crossbeams A and D. Crossbeam D divides the attic into two sectors (a, b), each consisting of 9 rectangles, 4 to the right (Nos. 1-4) and 4 to the left of support beam B, which rises from the center of the central rectangle (No. 5). The wall in the background (E) is on top of the one separating Room 11 from Room 12. The width of the crematorium, according to the plan, is 10.76 m, so 5.38 m from the center of support beam B to the end of the perimeter walls. However, the outer rafters F (the oblique beams) join with their respective crossbeams A and D before the wall at point G; as also shown in Document 5, the distance from the center of the support beam B to the end of the attic is in fact about 4.5 meters. Therefore, the longitudinal beams are at a distance of about 1 meter from each other. This makes it possible to determine with sufficient accuracy the position of the fan outlet pipe (T), which cuts Rectangle No. 4 in half: approximately 1 meter from

the support beam, i.e., from the apex of the roof. This is precisely the position of Chimney C2. The width of Room 11 according to the plan is 5 meters, so the longitudinal beams in Sectors a and b, are about 2.5 meters long.

Chimney C1 is probably located on the opposite side, on the extension of Rectangle No. 4 of the attic, somewhere behind Device No. 5 in Document 13. According to Pressac, this was the ventilation chimney of the steam-heated heat exchanger.

It is therefore necessary to look more closely at the heating system. Documents 6 and 13 provide very little useful information in this regard, so it is necessary to start with Captain Fribourg's drawing. The relevant vertical section (Document 21) shows the heat exchanger R whose left inclined plane 5 appears in Document 13. Outlet Pipe 5a is the same as that seen in this document, as is Pipe 7, from which another Pipe 8 (not visible in Document 13) descends into the heat exchanger. Pipe 9 exits the heat exchanger from the opposite side, bends upward and emerges from the roof into chimney C1.

The horizontal section (Document 22) shows heat exchanger R, chimney C1, air inlet Pipe 9 into the heat exchanger and outlet Pipe 5a. The steam inlet pipe is perpendicular to the heat exchanger, and goes directly down into it through pipe 8. Therefore, this device should contain a heat exchanger whose principle is shown in Document 23: steam enters at the top (top-left arrow), flows through the device, thus heating the two pipes, and exits at the bottom (bottom-left arrow). Hot air flows through the radiator transversely and exits it with increased temperature (right-hand arrows).

Obviously, some kind of fan was needed to force the air through the heat exchanger, but neither Captain Fribourg nor expert Kohlhofer, whose report I will discuss later, nor Pressac mention such a fan.

Another problem is the condensate coming out of the heat exchanger. The device described assumes the presence of four pipes, one air-inlet and -outlet pipe, and the other two for steam intake and steam/condensate outlet. However, Fribourg's drawing shows only three tubes.

But there is another, far more serious problem. In Captain Fribourg's drawing of the "gas chamber" ceiling (Document 24), I have added the hot-air outlet B into the room; C is the adjacent corridor; E1 and E2 are the two air-extraction openings; the lines indicate the path of the air from the inlet B to the outlets E1 and E2, which appears quite turbulent and therefore ef-

ficient. Exit B is protected by a grate (Document 25), which is connected to a duct that leads into the attic. As seen above, Captain Fribourg wrote:

> *"No penetration of the insulated piping into the shower room or its ceiling was discovered."*

It can be assumed that the hot-air pipe, possibly contained in insulated pipe 5a, enters the hot air inflow duct by entering it from Room 6, as seen in Document 30, which I describe later. However, as I have already anticipated and will make clearer later, a heating system so designed is technically ineffective.

9. Otto Kohlhofer's Expert Report

On July 24, 1967, a certain Otto Kohlhofer, a heating engineer, drafted a kind of expert report on the operation of the "gas chamber," with special reference to the heating aspect, of which I quote the essential part:[16]

> *"The function of the gas chamber would have been very simple. After closing the steel doors, Zyklon B would have been thrown through the two introduction hatches located on the south side of the gas chamber (grated, with iron lids that could be closed from the outside, and bottom surfaces sloping downward into the interior of the gas chamber). At normal temperature – increased by the body heat of the people – the poison would have evaporated, and death would have occurred by inhalation.*
>
> *After killing the people, the gas was to be extracted into the open by an exhaust system.*
>
> *In case of insufficient outside temperature during winter, the vaporization of the poison was to be done by warm air.*
>
> *Although partly strongly damaged, the technical equipment of the warm-air preparation and supply duct, as well as the exhauster device, is still completely present, except for some parts, which were either exchanged or stolen. Therefore, a reconstruction of the function of this plant is easily possible.*
>
> *According to Mrs. Hortsch (gardener at the Dachau Castle and Parks administration), the replacement of the original boiler for the preparation of warm air with a smaller boiler was arranged in about 1950 by Mr. Preuss*

[16] Archives of the Dachau Memorial, Folder *Krematorium Baracke X*, Comité Internationale de Dachau, Büro München. Aktennotiz: Betreff: Überprüfung der technischen Anlage der Gaskammer durch einen Heizungsfachmann Juli 1967.

(representative of the then State Commissioner for Reparations in Bavaria).

The small boiler was used to heat some rooms in the museum at that time (about 1950), which was operated by Preuss. The pipes present for this purpose have no significance in connection with the installation for the preparation of warm air for the gas chamber.

In addition to the pipe system of the normal central-heating system of the crematorium, which is not described here, a steam pipe leads from the basement (west side), where the boiler was located, along the chimney into the attic area, and from there to a condenser above the gas chamber. At this point, the fresh-air supplied is heated by the steam, and fed via a regulator (north behind the gas chamber) through a shaft into the gas chamber (shaft opening in the northwest side of the gas chamber).

The pipe returning from the condenser is for the condensed water.

The exhaust system starts with two grilled openings located at the ceiling, to which two pipes are connected above the gas chamber (still existing but partially destroyed), which lead via two gate valves (north behind the gas chamber, on the left side) to a blower. From here, a pipe goes directly into the open air.

The shower heads attached to the ceiling are only dummies. They were intended to deceive the victims, as was the inscription 'Brausebad' above the entrance door (west side)."

This explanation does not help much in unraveling the issue: Kohlhofer conjectures that Pipe 5a (Document 14a) enters the wall, but the "pipe returning from the condenser" – which, as I noted above, was not drawn by Captain Fribourg (Document 21), so it may not have existed in 1945 – must be considered another conjecture. Pressac had posed the problem and had in turn conjectured an outlet pipe, which I have labeled as S in his drawing (Document 7a; R being the heat exchanger, A the water vapor inlet).

According to the plan, a masonry chimney measuring 0.60 m × 2.20 m rose from the boiler room, containing three ducts; the central, larger flue with a cross-section of about 0.25 m², the other two about 1.5 m². This suggests a plan to install three boilers/heating devices.

It is unknown whether, and if so how, the work carried out in 1950 also involved any change in the piping system.

10. The Original Layout of Room 8

The structure of the original wooden double-doors of Room 8 leads to the exclusion that it was designed as a homicidal gas chamber, either experimental (because Rascher's aforementioned request to Himmler is later than the crematorium's design) or homicidal, because the two inner doors were not gas-tight, and moreover opened inward into the room, so corpses piled in front of them would have obstructed access after gassing.

The question of whether there is a connection between the heat exchanger's outlet Pipe 5a (Document 14a) and the vertical duct ending in a grate-covered opening inside Room 8 (Document 25) leads to useful observations for understanding the original structure of Room 8.

This duct is located inside the 38-cm-thick wall separating Room No. 8 from Room No. 9, the corridor behind it. The dimensions of the grate that closes the opening, according to Leuchter (Document 26) are 50 cm (width) × 66 cm (height). If one follows Pressac's hypothesis, the Dachau Central Construction Office, in 1944, must have carved out a solid wall for a width of at least 50 cm and for the entire height of the room in order to place the heating duct for the alleged gas chamber in that spot. Stalling this duct moreover would have required breaking through the reinforced concrete ceiling, the lower part of which currently constitutes the ceiling of the alleged gas chamber (the second, higher slab supporting the fan and the heat exchanger does not show any sign of the hot-air duct).

The construction of this duct would have required cutting or removing the tiles in that approximately 2 m × 0.5 m section of wall, and it had to be retiled afterwards, but a 1990 photograph of mine shows no signs of connecting old tiles to new ones (Document 27). Of course, this work would have been greatly simplified by constructing a duct on the wall's surface

inside this corner of Room 8, such as the one that appears in Document 28 at the right corner of the room, whose function is unknown.

From this it can be deduced that the duct in question is original, and thus was part of the original layout of Room 8. But then, it could not have been a hot-air supply duct, since, according to Pressac, this room was originally planned as a mortuary, and the hot air would have aided the decomposition of corpses.

While it can certainly be argued, as I have pointed out myself in another context, that Prof. Ernst Neufert's construction manual dictated the following for morgues:[17]

> *"The temperature in the morgue ≤2° – ≥12°, never below, because frost can expand and crack the corpses. This level of heat must be maintained by collective heating and cooling, with constant ventilation, especially during summer."*

However, to maintain a temperature of at least +2°C in Room 8, a simple radiator, such as the one seen in Room 6 next to Room 8, would have sufficed (see Document 30). Such a complex (alleged) heating system was evidently serving a different purpose, which might have had a relation to the six outflow grates on the floor.

In this context, it should also be noted that one of the two pipes branching off from Pipe 5a coming from the heat exchanger (Document 13a), most likely Pipe 5b (Documents 14-17), enters the cavity between the attic floor and the ceiling of Room 8 (as I will clarify right away), so this system was also planned from the beginning.

A drawing by Captain Fribourg reports the presence of a "small pipes of undetermined origin," 2 cm in diameter, which enters Pipe 5a or one of its branches (Document 12, No. 6), which was apparently later disassembled; it was compatible with a cold-water supply pipe.

All these elements lead to the conclusion that the original design included a heat exchanger that was used to produce hot water for sixteen showers, arranged symmetrically on the ceiling of the room above the six outflow grates on the floor.

Pipe 5a contained the two Pipes 5b and 5c, which, as they re-entered the wall behind it, bent downward and returned horizontally again with a double bend (Documents 14a and 17). One of the two pipes fed the pipes of real showers, which could be opened or closed by means of the special

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[17] Neufert, p. 271. A copy of this book was found in the archives of the *Zentralbauleitung* Auschwitz Central Construction Office. RGVA, 502-2-87.

damper located in the corridor. The other, if it was not also a pipe feeding the showers (e.g., divided into two groups), was the condensate pipe of the heat exchanger. Document 29 is a photograph taken in Room 7, where B is the wall separating Rooms 7 and 9, D is the wall dividing Rooms 7 and 6, S is the ceiling, I is the space corresponding to the cavity above the "gas chamber," T is probably a part of Pipe 5b, which exits the cavity according to the route schematized by the thin angled line on the top left. Document 30 shows Room 6, in front of the "gas chamber." The wall D in the background is the same as in Document 29, but seen from the opposite side, as is the door P. From wall D comes pipe T, which is an extension of the section of the same pipe visible in Document 29, and enters the cavity I over the alleged gas chamber.

I recall that real showers are unequivocally alluded to by the statement of former inmate Eugen Seibold (Nov. 10, 1945):

> *"Ranges* [shower heads] *like in a shower-room which ran parallel to the ground were supposed to spray the gas."*

Hence, according to this, there were originally rows of showers in the "gas chamber" that were connected to pipes running along the ceiling. The presence of as many as six outflow grates in the floor of this room measuring 40 cm × 40 cm testifies to the fact that there was an abundant use of water there, compatible with a real shower facility. The initial design is thus compatible with a dual function of the room, that of a ventilated morgue and that of a shower facility. This could have been intended for the crematorium staff, particularly those in charge of the cremation furnaces and the Degesch disinfestation chambers.

The operation of the showers was probably as follows (cf. (Documents 13 and 14a): Cold water flowed to the heat exchanger 5, where it was heated by steam from tube 7, flowed into the two tubes 5b and 5c, contained in tube 5a, which exit into Room 9, bend in a U-shape and return back (Document 17), one of them (5b) bends downward again at 90°, exits as tube T into Room 7 (Document 29), and from there flows into the cavity above Room 8; the other pipe (5a) enters directly into the cavity of Room 8; here, each pipe is connected to a group of 8 showers (according to drawing no. 6 by Captain Fribourg, there were 16 showers on the ceiling of the alleged gas chamber). Valves 5d and 5e were used to open the water for the above two groups of showers, and to regulate the inflow of water. There remains the drainage problem of heat exchanger's condensate water. In the original design, there must have been an outlet pipe from the heat exchanger like the one drawn by Pressac (Pipe S in Document 7a) that bent at 90° and

connected to a perpendicular pipe (Document 7b) that ran on the ceiling slab parallel to the outer wall of the crematorium to a location above the boiler room, into which it descended vertically.

The only element that contrasts with the design of showers is the presence, in the plan, of two normal lamps on the ceiling of Room 8. This is probably a carelessness on the part of the electrical designer, which was corrected during construction by installing 8 lamps in niches in the walls protected by grating and certainly by glass, to protect them from water splashes.

The original ventilation system, as mentioned earlier, included two fans, one for fresh-air supply, the other for air-extraction. Captain Fribourg and Pressac assume as an undisputed fact that the fan installed in the attic served to extract air from the "gas chamber": it sucked in air through the two air-extraction openings located on the ceiling of Room 8 and expelled it through Chimney 2.

According to Pressac, this system was installed at the beginning of 1944. While it would not have been very difficult to create two air-extraction openings in the concrete ceiling, it would certainly have been impossible to install the relevant pipes (Pipes 4a and 4b in Document 13) in a cavity about 90 cm high with no access. Therefore, this ventilation system was undoubtedly already planned in the original design.

Regarding the operation of the ventilation system, it seems more likely that the aforementioned fan served to bring fresh air into the room. In morgues, the supply of fresh air was usually from above, and air extraction from below. Document 31 shows the section of the morgue of the Berlin-Wedding crematorium: cold air came in from above (*Kaltfluft*) and went out from below (*Abluft*).

Plan D 59366 of the Topf Company dated March 10, 1942 shows the ventilation system of the new Auschwitz crematorium (the future Crematorium II). I reproduce its two most significant sections (Documents 32 and 32a) The "B-Raum" (the future Morgue 1) has an aeration system with a fan (1) in the attic and a fresh-air duct (*Frischluftkanal*, 2). Fresh air enters the room from above through two ducts (2) and exits from below through two air-extraction ducts located behind the outer walls (4), sucked in by the extraction fan (3) placed in the attic.

In the design of the Dachau crematorium, which bears the date of March 1942, a ventilation arrangement similar to this one is more than likely.

It is then conceivable that the initial design included an air-supply fan, which drew fresh air through Chimney 2 and ducted it into the morgue through the two ventilation openings in the ceiling, and an air-extraction fan, which drew stale air in from the grated opening at the bottom of one corner of the room (Document 25), and expelled it through Chimney 1.

There was also a more important motivation for this arrangement. The four Degesch disinfestation chambers discharged hydrogen-cyanide vapors upward, according to the diagram in Document 33. The four ventilation pipes went through the ceiling and out onto the roof through as many chimneys. Document 34 shows the attic above Area 2 on the floor plan (NO-3887). The masonry wall C in the background is the three-flue chimney structure of the boiler room. Vertical pipes 1-4 are the drains of the four pest control rooms below. Document 35 shows the first three pipes (1-3) coming out of the roof in the form of chimneys, the boiler room chimney (C) and the attic chimney 1 above the "gas chamber" (C1). It appears intuitive from this photograph that chimney C1 could not be an air-intake chimney, because it would have risked sucking in the hydrocyanic acid vapors expelled from the two chimneys of the pest-control rooms located on the same roof slope – especially when the wind blew from the northwest.

The two valves 3c and 3d installed in Pipes 3a and 3b (Document 15) could have served to regulate the flow of air from the fan.

11. The Restructuring of Room 8 in 1944

In May 1945, the situation of Room 8 was undoubtedly different from the original one, and it can be considered likely that the SS in Dachau had transformed it during 1944. Transformed into what?

The prevailing Holocaust thesis is that this transformation aimed at creating a homicidal gas chamber, either experimental (for Pressac) or for executions, by introducing the following new elements:

1. dummy showerheads
2. two steel doors
3. two openings on the outer wall

I have already shown earlier that Pressac's thesis is untenable; it remains to verify the other.

Shockingly, the gassing technique described by the Americans is the puerile propaganda version *en vogue* in those years: the introduction of gas through the showers. The aforementioned U.S. Congressional report of May 15, 1945 said:

> *"The gas was let into the chamber through pipes terminating in perforated brass fixtures set into the ceiling."*

The same nonsense was spread by the official U.S. report of Colonel William W. Quinn of May 1945:[18]

> *"Then they entered the gas chamber. Over the entrance, in large black letters, was written 'Brause Bad' (showers). There were about 15 shower faucets suspended from the ceiling from which gas was then released."*

[18] Pamphlet titled "Dachau." GARF, 7021-115-17, p. 33.

To this, we can add the U.S. report titled "Nazi Concentration and Prisoner of War Camps." It is an authentication and explanation of photographs shown in a film made by the U.S. Army after the liberation of the camps:[19]

> *"This is what the liberators found inside the buildings.*
>
> *Hanging in orderly rows were the clothes of prisoners who had been suffocated in the lethal gas chamber. They had been persuaded to re-move their clothing under the pretext of taking a shower for which towels and soap were provided.*
>
> *This is the Brausebad – the showerbath.*
>
> *Inside the showerbath – the gas vents.*
>
> *On the ceiling – the dummy shower heads.*
>
> *In the engineers' room – the intake and outlet pipes.*
>
> *Push buttons to control inflow and outtake of gas. A hand-valve to regulate pressure.*
>
> *Cyanide powder was used to generate the lethal smoke.*
>
> *From the gas chamber, the bodies were removed to the crematory."*

How, then, could the Americans seriously believe that gas could flow into the premises through fake showerheads?

This description also contains a truly blatant misrepresentation of reality. The clothes hanging in neat rows were in front of the disinfestation chambers (Documents 36 and 37), so they were fumigated clothes, not of gassed inmates!

Former Dachau inmate Willy Furlan-Horst, who entered the crematorium soon after the Americans arrived at Dachau, gave the following description:[20]

> *"We continue walking and arrive in front of a steel door with an airtight seal, above which is written in large black letters: 'shower bath.' With unnoticeable shivers I enter the room; it is the infamous gas chamber. A windowless room 30 square-meters in size, tiled up to a man's height. On the ceiling, 4 ventilation flaps, in each of which a gas supply pipe is hidden. Another 12 showerheads completely embedded in the ceiling. On the floor, again 4 exhaust grilles, with cleverly installed exhausters. On one lateral wall a peephole, through which one could observe the dying of the 'bathing*

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19 PS-2430, IMT, Vol. 30, p. 470.

20 "Das Krematorium in Dachau. Augenzeugenbericht von Willy Furlan-Horst, Filmaufnahmeleiter in Wien. Schutzhäftling Nr. 45086." YVA, O.33-3139, p. 2. This testimony is undated, but undoubtedly dates back to 1945.

> *guests,' on the other, all the way on the ground, two heavily barred embrasures, similar to windows, to support the gas discharge after the execution. – How many were gassed there for the FREEDOM OF GERMANY is unknown, but the number is probably fantastic."*

According to this even more fanciful version, the gas flowed from the four (actually two) grates placed on the ceiling of the room.[21]

It is unknown when the version still claimed today – of gassing by Zyklon B thrown through the two wall hatches – was conjured up, but in 1980 the fable of gas flowing from the showers was still circulating, as reflected in an article that appeared in the Polish periodical *Tydzień* (*The Week*), on April 27, 1980. The author was a former deportee, Edmund Zboralski, who, during a visit to the former camp in June 1980, met another former inmate he knew, Karl Wagner, to whom he handed a copy of the Polish newspaper. Wagner then had a translation of the text made into German, from which I draw the following quotations.

It states first that the crematoria were put into operation in the late summer or early fall of 1944, and then continues as follows:[22]

> *"On the other hand, the gas chamber was not put into operation, because when in October 1944 the long-awaited boxes with the devices for the bronzen gas syringes arrived, which were to be installed in the chamber, the prisoners performed a heroic act.*
>
> *Despite it being prohibited, they opened the boxes, emptied them out, and took the contents out of the camp. The boxes were filled with stones and closed again. In Dachau, the mass production of the death factory was not started.*
>
> *Nevertheless, before the liberation of the camp, a gas chamber that resembled a shower bath was put into operation. Its walls were lined with small tiles. It had an area of about 30 ccm* [m²]. *There were 4 ventilators on the ceiling. The lethal gas was introduced through 12 showers.*
>
> *In the walls of the* [followed by 18 spaces] *were glassed openings, through which the interior could be observed. The chamber had a hermetically sealed steel door, with the words 'shower bath' above the door. And in front of the chamber was an undressing room. The SS officer, Dr. med. Sigmund Rascher, performed pseudo-medical experiments on the prisoners there."*

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[21] The number of floor drains is also incorrect: there were 6, not 4 of them.

[22] "Übersetzung eines Artikels in der polnischen Zeitung *Tydzień* über die 'Baracke X' vom 27.4.1980." Archives of the Dachau Memorial, Folder *Krematorium Baracke X*.

Three years later, the important collective work *National Socialist Mass Killings by Toxic Gas* was published, with an English translation titled Nazi Mass Murder following only ten yar later. It contains a brief article on Dachau by Barbara Distel (in Kogon *et al*., "Building X at Dachau: A Special Case," pp. 202-204). In it, she explains nothing, and concludes with the following words (*ibid.*, p. 202):

> *"Visitors to the commemorative monument erected in 1964 and 1965 on the site of the former camp are warned that it has not been proved that the gas chamber was ever used."*

In the 1978 official history of the camp (Italian edition), this terse sentence appears (Comitato…, p. 173):

> *"The gas chamber, disguised as a shower, was not put into operation."*

With such premises, it is not surprising that no one at the Dachau Museum was interested in knowing how a gas chamber that had never been in operation might have operated. It was no doubt thanks to Pressac that the current version was developed. His paper mentioned earlier, dated Nov. 9, 1994, was addressed with gratitude to Barbara Distel, as noted in an accompanying sheet written in Pressac's own handwriting. He had visited the camp some time earlier, carefully studied the documents in the archives and inspected the sites. Among other things, he apparently was even granted access to the attic of the crematorium. It can be considered certain that the Museum historians took up Pressac's exposition and modified it at those points that appeared unconvincing to them.

From this, the present version developed.

12. The Zyklon-B Homicidal-Gas-Chamber Thesis

At a later date in 2011, a large panel describing the operation of the "gas chambers" was placed in the antechamber of the "shower bath" next to the entrance door on the right wall (Document 38). It is also reproduced in a PDF file, from which I draw the relevant image (Document 39).

The inscription (in German and English) appears at the top:

> *"The center for potential mass murder was located in the next room. The gas chamber was disguised as 'showers' and equipped with fake shower spouts to mislead the victims and prevent them from refusing to enter. During a period of 15 to 20 minutes up to 150 persons at a time could be suffocated to death through prussic acid poison gas (Zyklon B).*
>
> *But the gas chamber was not used for mass murder. Survivors have testified that the SS did, however, murder individual prisoners and small groups here using poison gas."*

At the bottom are, in order, Drawing No. 5 by Captain Fribourg (= my Document 11), a photograph of the attic taken by Müller in 1995 (= my Document 6), Drawing No. 2 by Captain Fribourg (my Document 40), and two photographs of the pipes I have referred to as 5b and 5c, with their valves and electrical instrumentation. These pictures are aid to document the alleged operation of the "gas chamber," which is explained in the central drawing (Document 41). The numbers are found in the drawing and refer to the following explanations:

> *"1 An influx of warm air from a condenser in the attic was supposed to accelerate the evaporation of the poison pellets*
>
> *2 Water supply to clean the room after the dead had removed*
>
> *3 Peephole from left corridor to look into the gas chamber*

4 Flaps where prussic acid poison gas pellets (Zyklon B) could be inserted from the outside

5 Openings to a ventilator in the attic used to air out the gas chamber

6 Fake shower spouts."

First, two basic elements of the gassing technique described must be examined, drawing attention to the fact that the question examined here is not whether the room could function as a homicidal gas chamber, but whether the transformations carried out by the SS in 1944 aimed at creating a homicidal gas chamber. In what follows I comment on Document 41.

A. The idea of the inflow of hot air through the bottom grate is taken from Pressac's writing. As I explained earlier, this presupposes the presence of a specific fan, which does not exist in the attic (as of the situation after the 1944 restructuring). The fan that was later dismantled, and of which only the sheet-metal housing exists, could only have served for extracting air from the room, if it actually served as a homicidal gas chamber. From the claimed heat exchanger, hot air could not have flowed down into the alleged gas chamber without a dedicated fan, even if the relevant pipe running inside the cavity had been connected in some way with the vertical duct running to the bottom grate.

Second, the alleged hot-air outlet at the bottom grate is located on the opposite side of the two alleged Zyklon-B introduction hatches. The evaporation of hydrogen cyanide for Zyklon B's inert carrier would have been accelerated noticeably only, if the Zyklon B had been poured out in front of the hot-air grate – leaving aside the normal evaporation due to the heating of the whole room, which would have been equally well ensured by the heat emanating from the bodies of the 150 victims, or from installing a simple radiator.

B. The other problematic element is the two small hatches. Were they built specifically to pour out a can of Zyklon B into the room from the outside? For now, I only analyze their functionality as introduction hatches for Zyklon B.

According to Leuchter's floor plan (Document 26), these little hatches measure about 40 cm × 70 cm. Inside, they are protected by a solid grating. The outer wall, 38 cm thick, has been perforated obliquely so as to form a plane sloping downward to the inside (Document 42). On the outside, these openings are closed by a movable metal hopper, equipped with a locking handle, and they were probably gas-tight (Document 43).

Although these small hatches could, in principle, serve as Zyklon-B introduction devices, several reservations can be expressed about whether they were designed for this purpose:

1. The size is disproportionate for the alleged function. The 500-g can of Zyklon B had a diameter of 15.4 cm and a height of 12.5; the 1,500 g can had the same diameter, but was 31.5 cm high.[23] If they were so relatively small, why break through a 38-cm-thick, solid brick wall an opening of 40 cm × 70 cm, when a much smaller opening of, say, 20 cm × 20 cm would have sufficed?

2. The device is rather crude, compared to the cumbersome set-up of the alleged "gas chamber": Zyklon-B granules were poured directly onto the floor. Document 28 shows that in front of the two small hatches, on the floor, at a distance of 1.5 to 2 meters, there are two floor drains. Since the Zyklon B, falling onto the floor, which was certainly not heated, would not immediately release their hydrogen-cyanide vapors, the inmates destined for gassing could have pushed the granules into the two drains with their feet.

3. Another problem is the number of hatches: why two? In the Holocaust perspective, given that in the Birkenau gas chambers (Morgue 1 of Crematoria II and III) four 1 or 1.5 kg cans of Zyklon B were allegedly used per gassing, in the much-smaller Dachau gas chamber just one 1-kg can would have been more than sufficient (but probably also a smaller 200-g can),[24] so only one introduction hatch would have sufficed.

4. The sophisticated "engineers' room," with its colorful buttons and massive control valves, which, if we follow Pressac, allowed for centralized control of the entire gassing procedure from the corridor behind the room, strongly clashes with this crude introduction system, which involved an attendant leaving the crematorium in the open, when it would have been of almost puerile logic to place the two little hatches in the wall to this same corridor, in the part separating it from the "gas chamber": then the gassing procedure would have been entirely centralized. Or easier still, an introduction mechanism could have been integrated into the vertical metal duct which is said to have fed warm air into the chamber. This would have led a stream of warm air over the Zyklon-B granules, quickly evaporating its hydrogen-cyanide content and blowing the resulting vapors into the chamber.

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[23] See Graf/Mattogno, pp. 124f. (measurements by the Polish-Soviet Investigative Commission on the Majdanek Camp).

[24] The size used in the Degesch circulation devices.

Document 44 illustrates the illogical (A, B) and logical (C, D) location of two possible introduction hatches for Zyklon B.

Document 45 shows the most efficient solution for setting up Room 8 as a "gas chamber": a Degesch circulation device, as shown in Document 46, installed in the wall of the "gas chamber" abutting the corridor. Three small round openings in the ceiling would have sufficed to operate the device (Document 47). The fan and circulation pipe could be conveniently placed in the attic; the air-extraction pipe could easily have come out of the roof as an additional chimney. Beyond that, two gas-tight doors would have sufficed. Simple, straightforward, functional and effective! If there was a need for "camouflage," the device could have been protected by a grating and panel, leaving only the opening of the gas outlet pipe uncovered, and inmates to be gassed could be entered from Room 11, so that they would not see the four-way control switch peeking out from the "gas-chamber" wall.

On the other hand, if these hatches simply served the purpose of fresh-air intakes during ventilation, as Pressac surmised, this explains everything: number, size, location and shape; the two metal hoppers would have served as adjustable air dampers.

In conclusion, the room may have been able to serve as a homicidal gas chamber, but it was most certainly not restructured by the SS for this purpose.

13. The Elements of the Restructuring of Room 8

This chapter will examine the essential elements of the restructuring of Room 8 to ascertain whether they were actually carried out by the SS in 1944 or whether they date from after the arrival of the Americans in Dachau.

1) The current doors of the alleged gas chamber are similar to those used for air-raid shelters, but much lighter than those of the four Degesch-circulation disinfestation chambers. According to Pressac, they were installed by the SS in Dachau to create a gas-tight room.

Thomas Dalton noted that the exit door "hits on the locking pin; it cannot close and cannot seal 'gas tight." In fact, the door is about half an inch [a little more than an inch] wider than the pin," and formulated the hypothesis that the two doors constituted an American modification in 1945 or a modification by the museum in the early 1960s (Dalton, p. 332).

However, it is certain that these two doors were already there when the Americans arrived. Film footage showing them contains an image in which the top of the entrance door can be seen (Document 48). Comparison with the present state (Document 10) leaves no doubt that it is the same door.[25] The only difference is that originally it was lined along the entire outer edge with a rubber gasket that made the closure airtight. In the present door, the groove that contained the gasket is clearly seen.

There is also the statement of the aforementioned Willy Furlan-Horst:[20]

> *"We continue walking and arrive in front of a steel door with an airtight seal, above which is written in large black letters: 'shower bath.'"*

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[25] "Dachau Concentration Camp," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH98iTYLrv4 (2015).

These doors were therefore undoubtedly installed by the camp SS, but the reason is not known. Such doors are undoubtedly compatible with a homicidal gas chamber, but also with other uses. It should be recalled, for example, that in the shower, disinfection and disinfestation facilities BW 5a and 5b at Birkenau, two gas-tight doors of 1 m × 2 m were also provided for the sauna (Mattogno 2016a, pp. 48f.).

2) The holes for the two exterior hatches, as Dalton noted (p. 337) and Germar Rudolf reiterated (2017), were broken through a pre-existing wall, so they were not part of the original design; in fact, in the crematorium plans, as I noted above, they do not appear at all. The question is whether these hatches were installed by the Americans or by the SS.

The Dachau film shot by the Americans (Document 35) shows a wooden board fence or a small shed on the outside of the "gas chamber," covering up the area where the two aforementioned hatches would be located. A huge pile of corpses is piled up in front of that fence/shed. This corresponds to Captain Fribourg's description, who mentioned on May 25, 1945 precisely a "fence/palisade," the area behind of which was inaccessible because of the corpses piled up in front of it.

The corpses were removed as short while later, but the fence was left, as seen in a photograph (Document 50) which shows from a different angle the field of view of Document 35.

A later photograph shows the same side of the crematorium (Document 51). Here, the view is slightly obscured by a podium, evidently built for a Christian church service (indicated by the cross on what may be a makeshift altar), but the fence evidently has been removed. On the wall, to the right of the downspout, an object can be distinguished, which is undoubtedly the metal hopper of the right-hand hatch.

Mainstream scholars claim that the fence served to conceal from view the introduction of Zyklon B through the two hatches, which is not impossible. On the other hand, the gassing technique claimed by the Americans in their various reports consisted of forcing an undefined kind of gas through showerheads, so from their perspective it would not have made any sense to create two openings for introducing Zyklon B after their arrival.

It may therefore be assumed that the two small hatches were also added by the SS in Dachau, but as a structural change after the building had been finished.

3) This leads us to the main problem: the dummy showerheads. First, one must examine why these showers are considered dummies. The Amer-

ican report of May 15, 1945 cited above speaks of "pipes terminating in perforated brass fixtures set into the ceiling," but the shower knobs currently existing in the room are made of sheet metal. This could be a gross error, but former inmate Seibold, in his statement of November 10, 1945, explicitly mentioned real showers:

> *"Ranges* [shower heads] *like in a shower-room which ran parallel to the ground were supposed to spray the gas. Only later on, about a year ago, the ceiling with the* ***false*** *shower-heads was built in."*

Since the current ceiling is of the original design, it must be assumed that the room, even after the 1944 restructuring, still had real showers, if we follow the reconstruction I set out earlier.

Document 52 is a photograph taken by me in 1990 that shows a shower head in the ceiling with the spray cover removed. The funnel-shaped sheet is set into the concrete, with the water-pipe opening obstructed. A photograph I take from G. Rudolf's video (Document 53) depicts the recess in the ceiling that contained a shower head. In the center, embedded in the concrete, is a semicircular sheet metal ferrule at the top (A in Document 53a) that extends downward into two barely protruding roughly cut sheets (B and C); at the bottom the concrete still retains a circular outline (D). The funnel-shaped masonry opening still has part of the smooth concrete in which the showerhead was embedded (L). In Document 53b I have highlighted the metal cross section with a circle, representing the section of the pipe connected to the showerhead.

Document 54, which represents Document 53 schematically in vertical section, shows the system of inserting the showerhead pipe into the concrete ceiling. In this drawing, S is the ceiling, T is the pipe cross section ABCD of Document 53a, T1 and T2 are the sections of the showerhead pipe, and C is the concrete that fills the pipe cross section ABCD.

However, and this is the essential point, there is nothing to show that the material C now filling showerhead pipe was added by the SS in 1944, and this is also true of the seal of this pipe in Document 52, which may be a simple piece of tin soldered in place with an ordinary soldering iron, or even merely a simple metal plug.

This shower arrangement assumes an outer round excavation as a recess for the showerhead and an inner round excavation for the pipe, but it is not clear how the showerhead, once inserted from underneath into the opening, could be held in place.

This work of creating these 16 holes in an already poured concrete ceiling would have had to be repeated manually, with hammer and chisel, 16

times (as many as there are showerheads in the ceiling). This is unlikely. The most probable scenario, then, is that the showers are real, were connected to a pipe located in the crawl space, as I have illustrated in Document 55, where the connecting pipe Tc of the showerhead P crosses the ceiling S and connects to the main hot water pipe Tp in the crawl space I.

It can be inferred from Document 53 that the shower system was installed before the ceiling slab was poured. The wood planking was made so that the lower surface of the showerheads was left free, and concrete was poured from above, which submerged the whole and left the smooth footprint, which can also be discerned in the surface of the opening (labeled L, Document 53a).

The inscription "Brausebad" was thus not deceptive, but reflected the function of the room.

To verify this explanation, one would have to access the gap between the attic floor and the showerhead-containing ceiling. This scenario is, however, much more reasonable than that of the fake showers inserted from below into an already existing concrete ceiling of the room.

It is unknown whether all the pipes of the still-existing showerheads are clogged like the one in Document 52. It is likely that, at an indeterminable time – but when the showerheads had already been officially declared fake – someone (in museum circles) wanted to check whether the showers were really fake, and detached one of them, twisting it with a suitable tool with strong clockwise and counterclockwise movements, so that it caused the pipe to rupture at the point visible in Document 53. If, according to my hypothesis, the pipe was hollow, that is, it was a real connecting pipe, the opening was closed by pressing some cement mortar into it.

4) The heat exchanger installed in the attic of the crematorium, in its present state, if it is an air heater, is an incomprehensible and useless device. The Museum's explanatory panel placed in the antechamber of the "shower bath" explains – following Pressac's interpretation – that it is precisely an air heater, whose heated air then flowed into the room below through the bottom grille (Document 25). Drawing 5 by Captain Fribourg shows the right side of the heat exchanger, hence the part to the right of the heat exchanger's small part visible in Document 13 (no. 5). According to this drawing, a tube came out of the heater which then bent upward and exited the roof as chimney C1.

This is contrary to the laws of physics, as I illustrate in my visual commentary on the drawing in question (Document 56), where I have indicated in light grey the path of the cold air, and in dark grey that of the hot air. If

the heat-exchange coil inside the heat exchanger is heated by water vapor, the air heats up, becomes lighter than the cold air, flows up and out of the chimney, drawing in cold air from the room below, and this drawing in is the stronger the higher the temperature of the hot air. The device practically ends up acting as an air-extraction system, with the heated air wasted to the outside.

Heating a room with the air-heater system presupposes two imperative elements:

1. the recirculation of the heated air
2. a fan

This is clear from the description of the structure and operation of a real air heater, such as the one built in the 1940s by the firm Theodor Klein of Ludwigshafen (Document 57).[26] One of them was installed next to the outside wall of the disinfestation chamber of barrack 41 in KL Majdanek. Polish experts drew its operating diagram (Documents 58 and 59).

The Heißluftapparat Klein was a coke- or wood-fired air heater consisting of a hearth (*Feuerung*, 4 in Document 58) above which was a heating chamber (*Heizkammer*, 3) in which was installed a recuperator formed by a series of vertical tubes equipped with fins and connected with the hearth at the bottom, and with the smoke-exhaust pipe at the top (8). A blower (1: motor; 2: fan) was mounted in the heating chamber, below which was a chamber adjacent to the hearth from which the pipe with the heated air exited. Opposite the fan was the opening of the cold-air supply pipe (5), equipped with a regulating butterfly valve (6). Both tubes – air intake and outlet, with a diameter of 31 cm – were connected via two round openings to the room for which the air heater was intended, since the device was precisely designed for air circulation. The operation was as follows: the fumes from the hearth passed through the tubes of the recuperator, yielding part of their heat to them, then exited through the chimney tube. By operating the fan, the air coming from the room, through the air-intake pipe, ran across the heated tubes of the recuperator, heated up, and was blown by the fan into the room through the outlet pipe. In this manner, a continuous circulation of the room's air was achieved. At each cycle the air passed through the heating chamber, its temperature increased, up to the desired temperature. The air heater could provide a heat output of 80,000 Kcal/h with an air temperature of 120°C (for disinfestation by hot air). The air

[26] RGVA, 502-1-332, p. 97.

temperature could be adjusted by means of the throttle valve and through special air intakes, through which fresh outside air circulated.[27]

The described alleged heat exchanger in the attic of Barracke X at Dachau had neither any means of circulation the room's warm air nor even any means of feeding any warm air into Room 8, if we take Fribourg's drawing seriously.

The actual device, which was certainly quite heavy, with its connection to the steam pipe and its tubes running in and out of the walls of the rooms, was undoubtedly installed during the construction work of the crematorium. If, in 1944, it had been necessary for any reason to heat Room 8, it would have been sufficient to install a radiator there.

It can be concluded that the heat exchanger was part of the original layout of the crematorium. I will resume and conclude this issue in the following chapter.

5) The electrical switchboard and switchbox in Room 9 were described as follows by Captain Fribourg:[28]

> *"To the right of the door is a panel with 3 lights: Red, orange, pink, and a switch."*

The location of the switchboard was depicted by him in his Drawing 2 (Document 40), although the words "*contacteur à huile*," oil switch, appear there with two buttons, one red, "*aus*," off, the other green, "*ein*," on. Switchbox and switchboard are clearly visible in a frame of the American film (Document 60).

A switchbox in that position was already provided for in the original design. I have referred to it as U in Document 3. According to Engineer Neufert's manual, the circled symbol represents a single-pole switch (*Umschalter, einpolig*, Neufert, p. 18). There is no evidence as to when the switchboard with the three indicator lights was installed and what it was for.

In the wall that separated Room 8 from Room 9, the crematorium's floor plan (NO-3887) shows an opening with the cross section of a truncated cone. The wall is 38 cm thick, the opening about 40 cm (Room 8) × 20 cm (Room 9). This opening allowed a view from Room 9 to the two oppo-

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[27] Instytut Techniki Cieplnej, "Ekspertyza dotyczaca konstrukcji i przeznaczenia pieców zainstalowanych przy komorach gazowych w Obozie na Majdanku w Lublinie," (Institute of Heat Engineering, "Expert opinion on the construction and purpose of the furnaces installed at the gas chambers in the Majdanek Camp at Lublin"), Lódz 1968; APMM, Lublin.

[28] "Rapports du capitain Fribourg" *op. cit.* (note 15), pp. 2f.

site corners of Room 8. The opening was drawn by Captain Fribourg and named "cylindrical viewport" (*regard cylindrique*, Document 40), which, in section, crosses the wall at an angle from top to bottom. As mentioned earlier, he described it in his report with a perspective from Room 8:

> *"Approximately 75 cm from the floor and in the axis of the shower room is the flap that closes a cylindrical spyhole, directed outwardly upward, which allows one to look into the shower room from the corridor."*

However, the slope of the opening in Captain Fribourg's drawing is too steep, as shown in a photograph of its circular opening in the wall of Room 9 that appears in G. Rudolf's video (Document 62). Here, the opening on the inside is bricked up. As G. Rudolf points out, the location of the two ends of the opening shown by Captain Fribourg in his Drawing 2 (Document 40) does not correspond to the current state. In particular, the outlet in Room 8 could not have been the "viewport" but the "closed rusty door" above it. In fact, the center of the alleged "viewport" is about 60 cm above the floor – an unreasonable placement for a peephole. Moreover, it has the outlet of a water pipe on the inside, while the upper opening, closed by a door with a metal grating, still shows the round conformation of the peephole (Document 64). It constitutes the opposite side to what is seen in Document 62: the solid brick walled in with white mortar, and the pipe coming out at the top are the obvious evidence of this. It is unknown when and why the opening was walled up.

The function of the peephole was in general for inspection (the double doors in Room 8 did not allow for the installation of the usual peepholes), and in particular for control to adequately regulate the flow of hot water into the showers by operating valves 5d and 5e that were located in Room 9, next to the opening in question.

14. The Purpose of Restructuring Room 8

In the absence of documents, it is not easy to determine the purpose of the restructuring of Room 8. One might think, as Pressac did, of an experimental station for Dr. Rascher or other doctors, but as I noted earlier, no mention of this appears in the numerous existing documents on medical experiments at Dachau.

Based on the museum's post-war renovation to the current state, the room could be sealed and could be ventilated through the two ventilation grids in the ceiling connected to the fan in the attic. But how was air fed into the room without an air intake? The simplest solution was for this to be done by means of the two exterior hatches, according to the drawing in Document 61.

Alternatively, so as not to omit any possibilities, assuming that the heat exchanger is connected in some way to the lateral duct and its outlet grille at the bottom, one might think that the air sucked out of the room by the extraction fan sucks in fresh air through the heat exchanger, as I have illustrated schematically in Document 63, although it is not certain that this system would have worked, at least efficiently. However, only a feeble mind would have come up with such a harebrained system. Consequently, the two hatches were definitely ventilation openings.

It can be argued that the hatches had a dual purpose: introducing Zyklon B and air intake, for the just-stated reasons. This is certainly possible, but the problem remains that the introduction of Zyklon B would have occurred from outside the building. The architecturally more rational solution would have been the one shown in Document 44, but in the sense that A and B were only air-intake hatches, while C and D served to introduce

Zyklon B, so that this could take place from Room 9 away from prying eyes.

There is also the possibility that the hatches were used for introducing Zyklon B after all, and that, in order to accomplish the operation without being seen, the SS built the board fence in front of the hatches as clearly visible in Document 35. While this is possible, it clashes conspicuously with the sophisticated, if not to say extravagantly complex engineering devices examined earlier.

Pressac's claims are highly puzzling both because of his transcripts of the device labels and because of the alleged involvement of the Hans Kori company.

Is it really to be believed that the fan, 400 mm in diameter, with a motor of 0.7 hp, and against a total pressure of 25 mm water column, had a capacity of 4,180 cubic meters of air per hour? Assuming an empty-room volume of about 85 m³, this would correspond to (4180 m³/h ÷ 85 m³ =) 49 air changes per hour! While it is true that 72 air changes per hour were provided for the Degesch circulation chambers, the alleged gas chambers of Crematoria II and III at Birkenau were built with only 9.5 air exchanges per hour (and 11 for the "undressing room"! See Mattogno 2019, pp. 45-47). Morgue 1 (the alleged gas chamber) was equipped with two fans, one for suction and one for pressure. Both had an outlet pipe of 450 mm in diameter, were driven by a 2-hp motor, and had a capacity of 4,800 m³/h against a pressure of 40 mm water column.

It is furthermore incomprehensible that the heat exchanger is sai to have had a capacity of 32,000 m³/h of air. This is undoubtedly a misreading of a probably rusty label that read kcal/hour. In fact, heater manufacturers, in their technical specifications, gave the hourly output of heat, not hot-air volume. The figure is also beyond doubt, because 32,000 kcal is equivalent to the heating 2,580 m³ of air from 0°C to 40°C,[29] while the alleged gas chamber has a volume of about 85 m³.

The Kori Company had a very advanced department dealing with "central-heating and ventilation systems" (*Zentralheizungs- und Lüftungsanlagen*) that had an incredibly large clientele. On February 2, 1943, the firm responded to a request from Main Office CIII (technical subjects) of the SS Main Economic and Administrative Office (*Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt, WVHA*) concerning a quote for a "Hot-Air Disinfestation Facili-

[29] 2,580 m³ × 40°C × 0.310 kcal/(m³ °C), with the latter being the energy required to heat one cubic meter of air by one degree Celsius (at room temperature and sea-level pressure).

ty" for the Auschwitz Camp. To this letter, which has as its subject "Delousing Facility for Auschwitz CC,"[30] the Kori Company enclosed a "List of quantities of iron required for a hot-air disinfestation facility, Auschwitz Concentration Camp," totaling 4. 152 kilograms of metal,[31] and a "Cost Estimate for a Hot-Air Disinfestation Facility for the Auschwitz Concentration Camp" for a total of 4.960,40 reichsmark.[32]

In its response, the company recommended two "Kori-Kalorifere Type Gr. No. 6e," which each had a heating surface of 22 square meters and a capacity of 40,000 WE (*Wärmeeinheiten* = Kcal) per hour, for heating air to about 100°C.

In the cost estimate, the Kori Company offered 2 Type II No. 6e calorifiers with a heat output per hour of 85,000 WE [Kcal], in addition to 2 "turbine blowers… each for an [hourly] capacity of 5,500 cubic meters."[33]

This confirms that the heat exchanger at Dachau could not have had a capacity of 32,000 m³/hour.

A four-page advertising brochure from the 1930s/40s titled "The latest Kori Type II calorifiers"[34] presents the relevant products. Page 2 (Technical details about the Kori Type II calorifiers) informs that the Kori Company produced ten models of the Typus II calorifier, of increasing size and capacity, which were named: 5b, 5c, 5e, 5f, 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d, 6e, 6f. The smallest model (5b) had a heating area of 14.5 m², a height of 1.95 m, a capacity with natural air of 38,000-40,000 Kcal, and 50,000-64,000 with ventilated air, and a weight of 830 kg. The data for the largest model (6f) were: area: 24 m²; height 2.5 m; capacity: 76,000-80,000 and 105,000-115,000, respectively; weight: 1,515 kg. The technical drawings of models 6b and 5b are also shown there (Document 65). Page 1 presents photos of models 5b, 6a and 6c (Document 66). Page 4 ("Some Installations among Thousands") lists more than 200 installations for every environment (conference rooms, gymnasiums, garages, factory rooms and sheds, dance halls, theaters, churches) in Germany alone. A final note states that the company had built more than 2,000 heating systems for churches in Germany and abroad. Page 3 ("Kori heatings of large rooms with and without fan drive") shows three examples of heating-system realizations; the middle one refers

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30 RGVA, 502-1-332, pp. 15-15a.
31 RGVA, 502-1-332, p. 18
32 RGVA, 502-1-332, pp. 20f.
33 RGVA, 502-1-332, p. 21.
34 "Kori's neueste Kalorifere Typus II." APMM, Sygn. VI-9a, Vol. 1. Similar documentation also in: RGVA, 502-1-332, pp. 22-26.

to a 1,650-m³ ballroom that was heated with "caloriferous stoves Type II No. 6" with a capacity of 36,000 kcal/h (Document 67).

This confirms that the device installed in the attic of the Dachau Crematorium could not have been an air heater with a capacity of 32,000 kcal/h for an 85-m³ room, unless it was intended for hot-air disinfestation, but the four Degesch circulation chambers operating with Zyklon B were already planned for the building's disinfestation wing.

The most obvious conclusion is that the heater was not heating air, but water for real showers, which also explains the presence of insulated pipes.

15. The Non-Use of the "Gas Chamber" and the Probable Function of Room 8

One of the fundamental problems with the Dachau "gas chamber" is the fact that it allegedly was never used, although it purportedly had been completed and was functional. I anticipated earlier that the crowning glory of this facility's engineering ingenuity, from the orthodoxy's point of view, was the fence covering the two hatches so that prying eyes would not see how Zyklon B was introduced using the metal hoppers. If this were true, the "gas chamber" was ready for use after the board fence had been put in place. Why then was such a sophisticated and cumbersome "gas chamber," which had no doubt cost a lot of money and labor to build, never used?

So far, the most ingenious conjectures have been given (the "sabotage" of the inmates, the fear of the population of the town of Dachau, etc.), but no one has given a convincing answer.

Johann Neuhäusler, author of a booklet that constitutes perhaps the first official history of the camp, adduces explanations that completely demolish the homicidal-gas-chamber hypothesis. After noting that (Neuhäusler, p. 16):

> *"The Dachau 'gas chamber' was never put into operation. Only dead people came to the crematorium for 'burning', no living people for 'gassing'."*

A few pages later, he adds the following remark:

> *"As mentioned earlier, Dachau had its own gas chamber during the last year. However, its 'showers' were never used. Instead, all the more Dachau concentration-camp inmates were sent to Hartheim near Linz/Austria for gassing, and closer to home, to Domagala, from 1942-1944 onward."*

This is followed by a list of 32 transports of allegedly gassed inmates, listed chronologically by day, month and year, for a total of 3,166 inmates, ranging from Jan. 2, 1942 to Nov. 9, 1944; 31 transports cover 1942; the last with 150 inmates is assigned to Nov. 9, 1944 (*ibid*., p. 30).

From this it follows first of all that, when the booklet was written, the Dachau Museum still believed that the showers were real, since "they were never used" to gas inmates; second, that a gas chamber at Dachau was entirely superfluous, because if a gassing facility was needed, the one claimed for Hartheim Castle was allegedly used.

From this perspective, the complicated restructuring of Room 8 of the new crematorium, presumably undertaken to create a homicidal gas chamber in Dachau itself, appears to be completely pointless, because such a facility would have been designed and built as homicidal gas chambers from the very beginning. Rascher's letter to Himmler dated August 9, 1942, which I quoted earlier, leaves no doubt about this. Indeed, it says there that in Dachau "the same facility as in Linz is being built," a reference to the alleged gas chamber at Hartheim Castle. The reference to the "transports of invalids" is reminiscent of the so-called "Special Treatment 14f13," the killing of inmates unfit for work or sick that is said to have been practiced since August 11, 1941. Since January 2, 1942, inmates from the Dachau Camp are also said to have been sent there on a regular basis. According to Rascher, therefore, a gas chamber (with carbon monoxide cylinders, if it was indeed "the same" as in Linz) intended for dispatching invalids was already under construction in Dachau in August 1942, and Himmler was fully aware of this.

Walter Neff made explicit reference to transports of invalid being sent from Dachau to Linz – more than 5,000 in 1942, and about 2,400 from October 1941 to February 1942 – but he knew nothing about the alleged plan to establish a homicidal gas chamber at Dachau.[35]

British radio intercepts provide some information, but do not allow the matter to be clarified. In a radio message dated August 24, 1942, the commandant of the Buchenwald Camp informed WVHA Office Group DIII that 300 invalids had been transferred to Dachau on July 6.[36]

On October 29, 1942, SS-Sturmbannführer Gerhard Maurer sent the following radio message to the commandant of the Dachau Camp:[37]

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[35] NO-2637, Excerpt from W. Neff's testimony at the Doctors' Trial, hearing of December 17, 1946.

[36] TNA, German Police Decodes Nr 3 Traffic: 24.8.42. ZIP/GPDD 215b/19.3.43, n. 53/54.

[37] German Police Decodes Nr 3 Traffic: 29.10.42. ZIP/GPDD 281b/14.11.42, n. 61/62.

> *"For Action 14 F 13 in Dachau, I intend to have most of the inpatients from all camps transported there. I would therefore be grateful if you could let me know which numbers of this kind can be taken there immediately and possibly at a later date. I expect to be informed by telex as soon as possible. Sgd. Maurer."*

Maurer was at the time head of the WVHA's Office DII, which dealt with "Labor Employment of Inmates," and in that capacity he had no authority to order the death of concentration camp inmates. Here, moreover, these were not even invalids, but inpatients who, together with the invalids, regularly figured in the camp's occupancy reports, including at Auschwitz.[38] It is, moreover, well known that from December 1943 to March 1944 from many camps in the Reich – Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dachau, Dora-Mittelbau, Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Neuengamme, Ravensbrück, Sachsenhausen – 20,850 sick or invalid inmates were transferred to the Majdanek Camp, including 1,000 from Dachau in the first days of January 1944 (Leszczyńska, pp. 203-208). All this indicates that the aforementioned "Action 14 f 13" could not have been an extermination operation.

Consequently, the homicidal-gas-chamber thesis is historically unfounded both in terms of its alleged design in 1942 and its alleged set-up in 1944.

What Pressac says about the behavior of the Americans is more than plausible. They entered Dachau with the preconception that homicidal gas chambers have to exist there, and staged a documentary showing the disinfestation chambers with clothes hanging in front of them, and the local "Brausebad." Later, sifting through the Central Construction Office's documentation on the crematorium, they realized that their presentation was unfounded, and then they "liberated" the documentation of exonerating evidence by "discarding" documents that shed light on the real history and background of the alleged "gas chamber."

The most convincing answer to the initial question is therefore that the "gas chamber" was never used, simply because it was not a "gas chamber."

It remains then to determine what it was. In order to provide a reasonable and plausible explanation, one must abandon Pressac's idea (based on the fantasies of the mythomaniac Blaha) that the restructuring of Room 8 was carried out in early 1944, because this dating is precisely undermined by the unfounded conjecture that Room 8 was turned into an experimental

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[38] In Mattogno 2016b, pp. 76-78, I listed the number of inpatient inmates and invalids resulting from the 1944 Auschwitz occupancy reports that have been preserved.

gas chamber for Dr. Rascher. One must instead stick to the statements of Eugen Seibold, who dated the restructuring to the fall of 1944.

During on working day, the four Kori furnaces of the new Dachau crematorium could cremate a maximum of about 100 bodies, while the two Topf furnaces of the old crematorium (by virtue of the different structure of their muffle grate) could cremate a maximum of 75 bodies,[39] hence altogether both facilities could process 175 bodies per day. This figure, which was already rather limited, began to be increasingly exceeded during the second half of 1944, when the following mortality was recorded for the Dachau Camp (Neuhäusler, 1980, p. 27):

January	53	July	107
February	101	August	225
March	362	September	325
April	144	October	403
May	84	November	997
June	78	December	1915

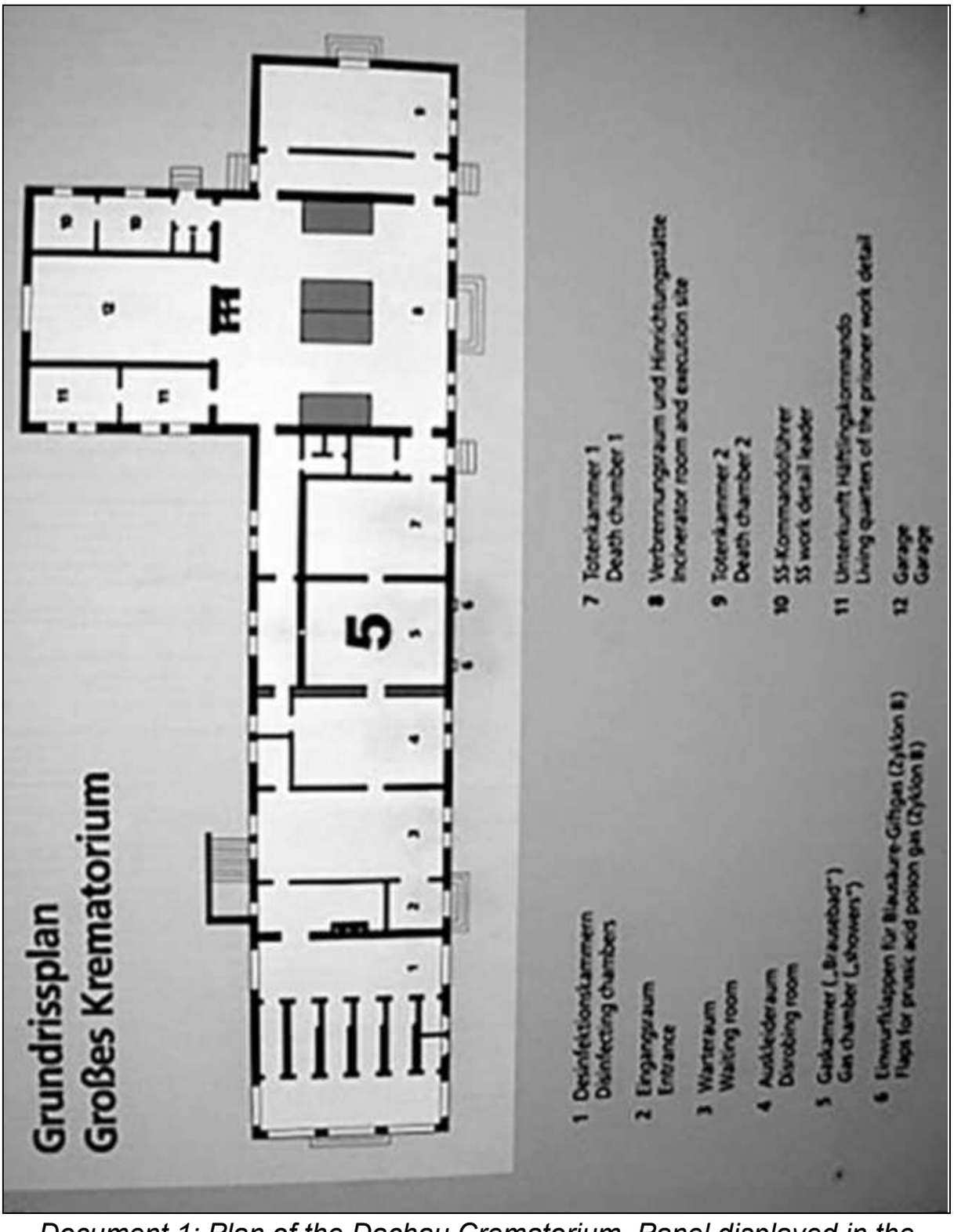
The lack of coke supplies for the crematoria further complicated the situation. The corpses piled up in the morgue (Room 18) remained there for several days awaiting cremation and created an unbearable stench. The SS decided therefore to deposit them in Room 8 instead, which had been designed as a special morgue. Since a huge pile of bodies must have developed an enormous stench, creating an excess amount of pestilential gas, the old double doors were replaced with two gas-tight steel doors. To make it possible to ventilate the room, two hatches, fitted with a gas-tight flap, were broken through the outer wall. The could be closed to prevent the escape of foul-reeking gases during periods when the ventilation system was stopped for whatever reason (blackouts, overheated motors etc.).

Room 8 was neither designed as a homicidal gas chamber, nor was it later converted into a homicidal gas chamber, but it really became a stench chamber resulting from the foul gases exuding from decomposing corpses.

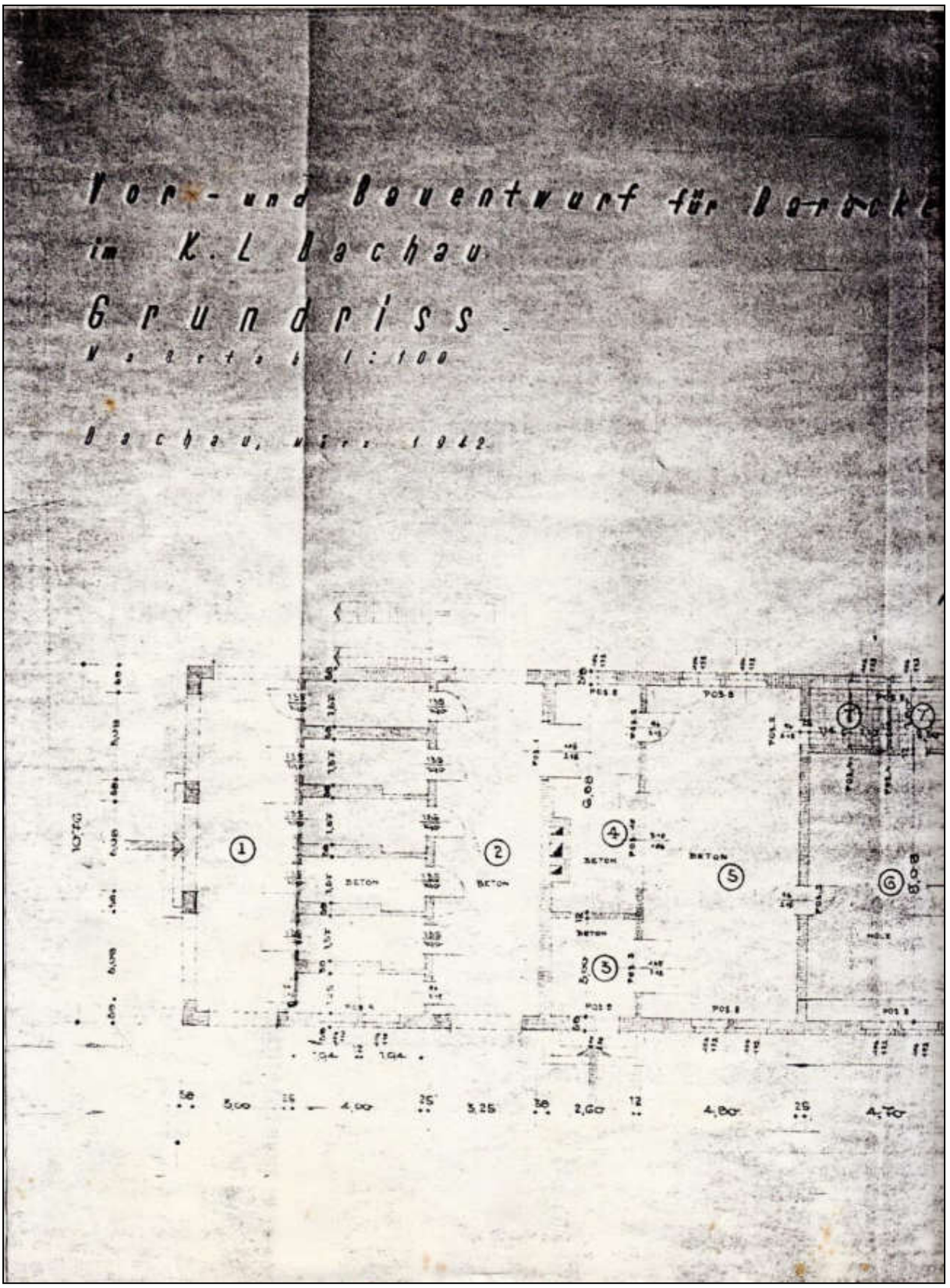
[39] For specific data on these facilities see Mattogno/Deana, Vol. I.

Appendices

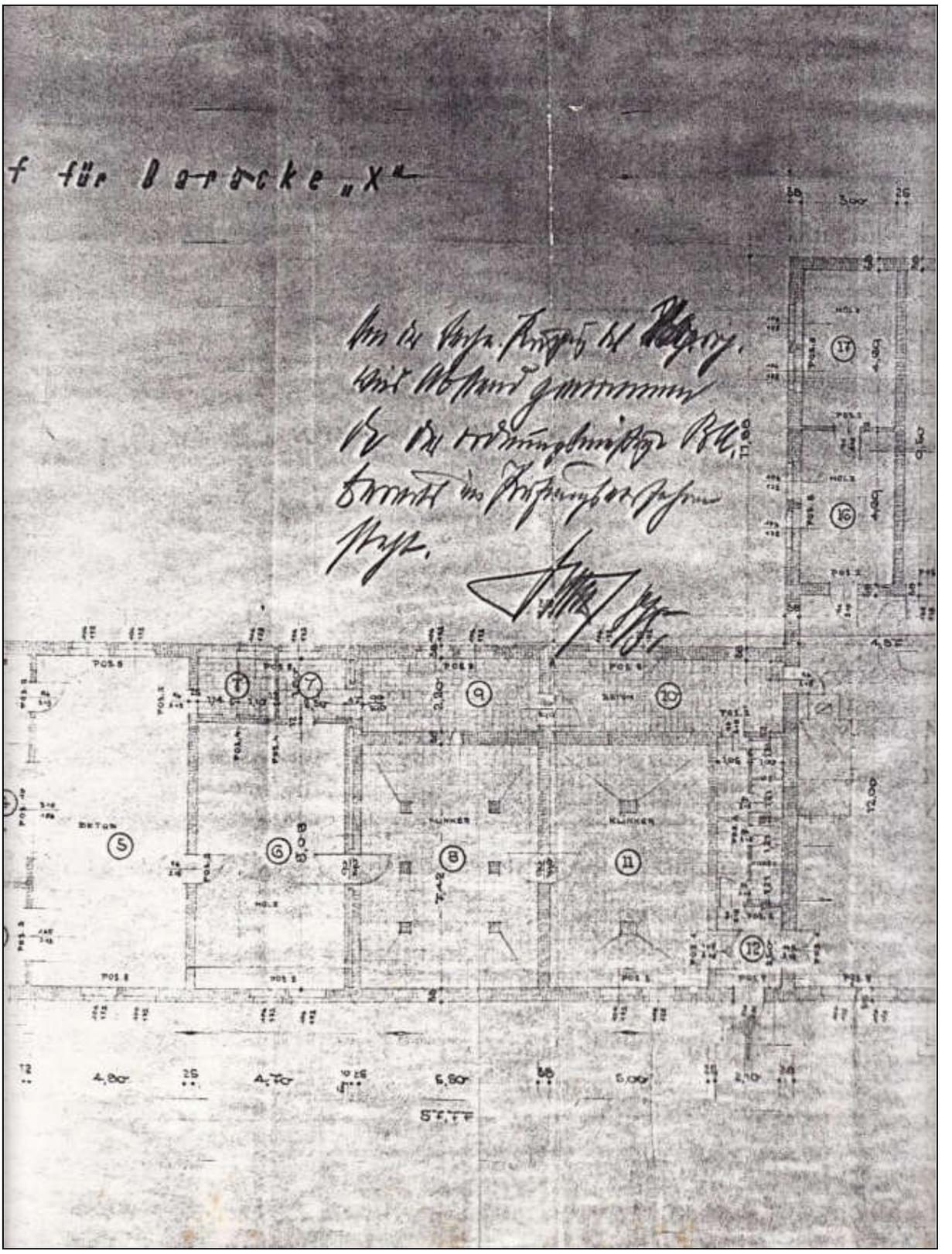
Documents



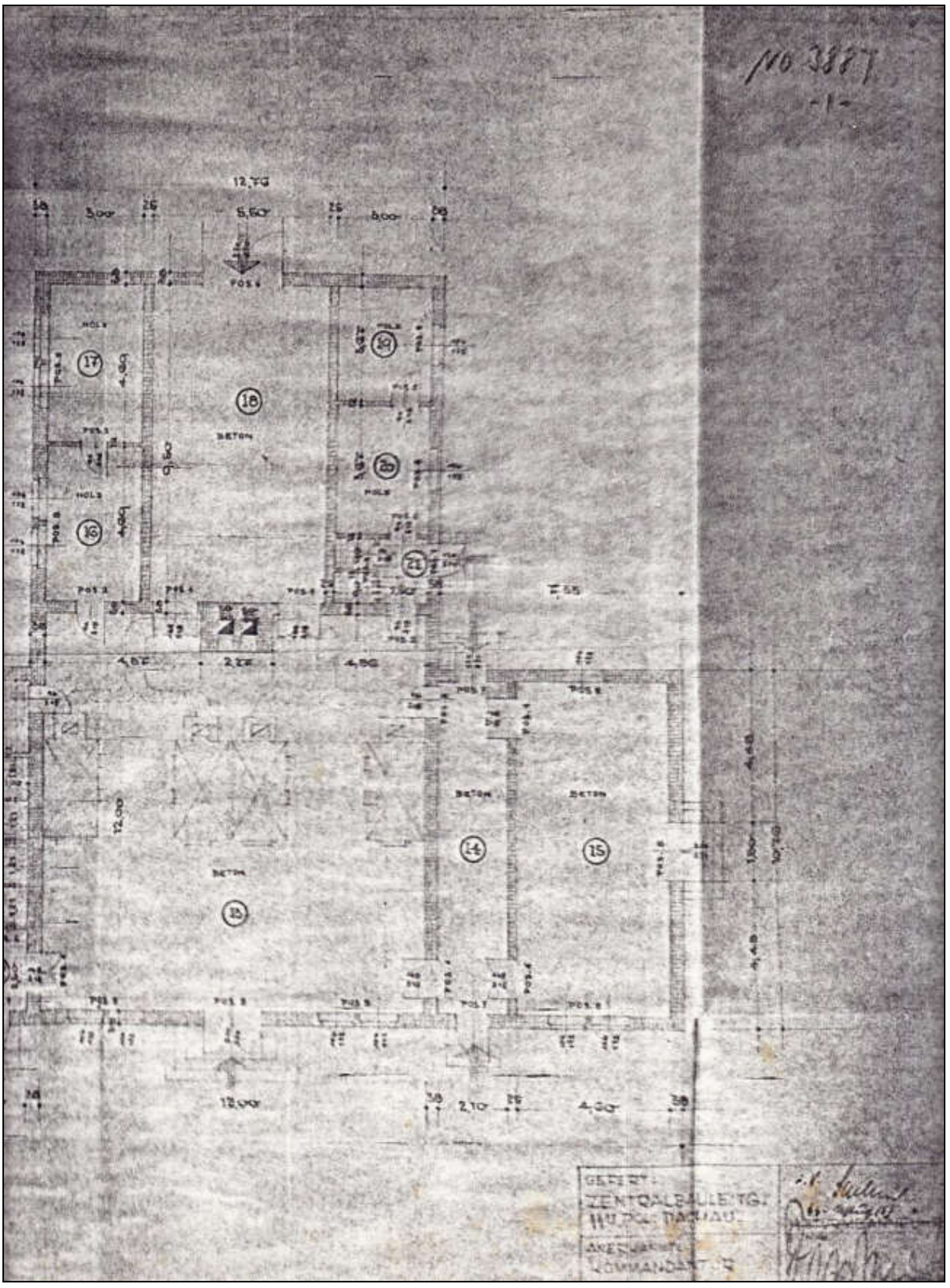
Document 1: Plan of the Dachau Crematorium. Panel displayed in the crematorium. Source: Dalton, p. 323.



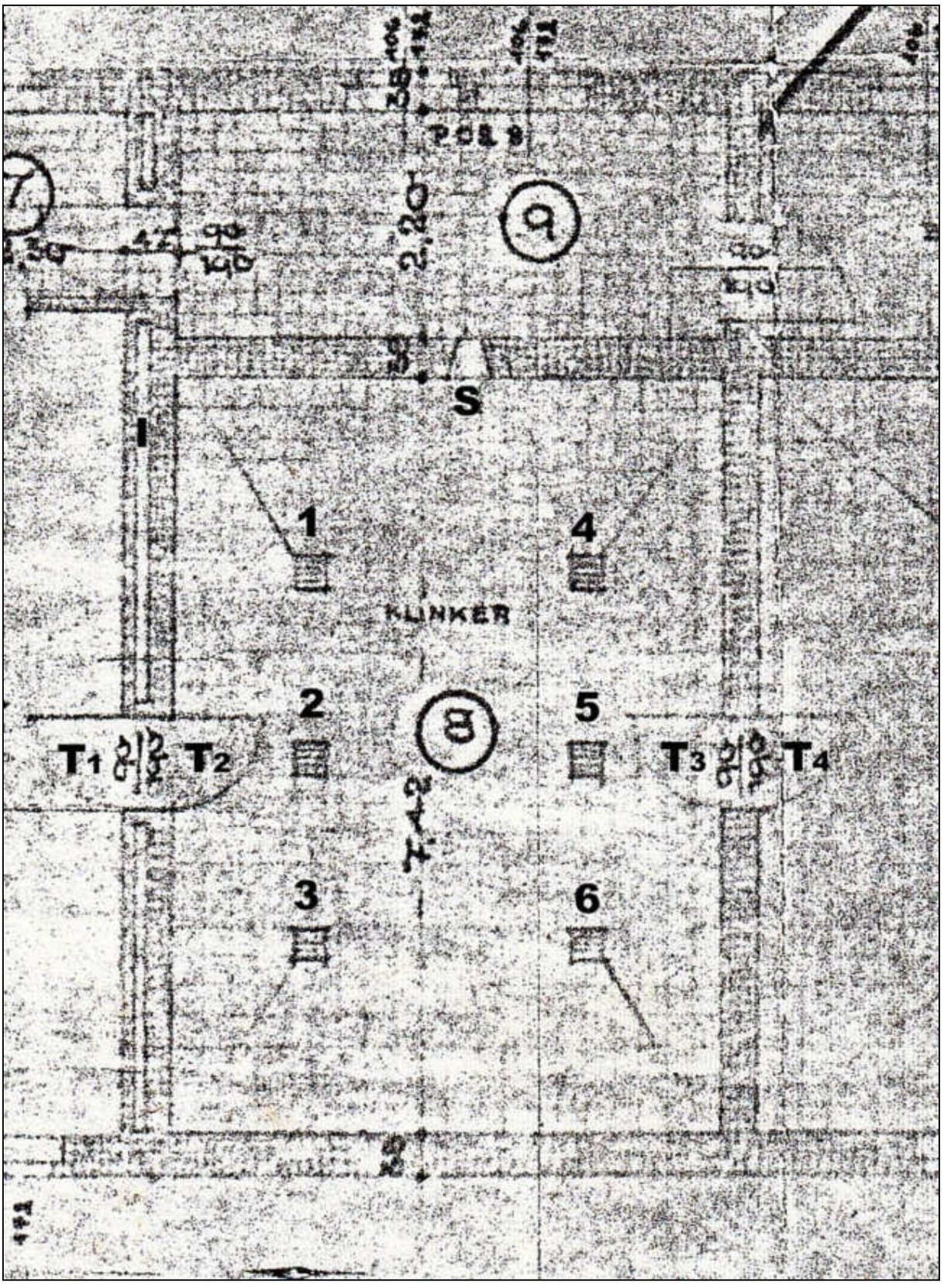
Documents 2 (left), 2a (center), 2b (right): Original plan of the Dachau Crematorium. Source: NO-3887.



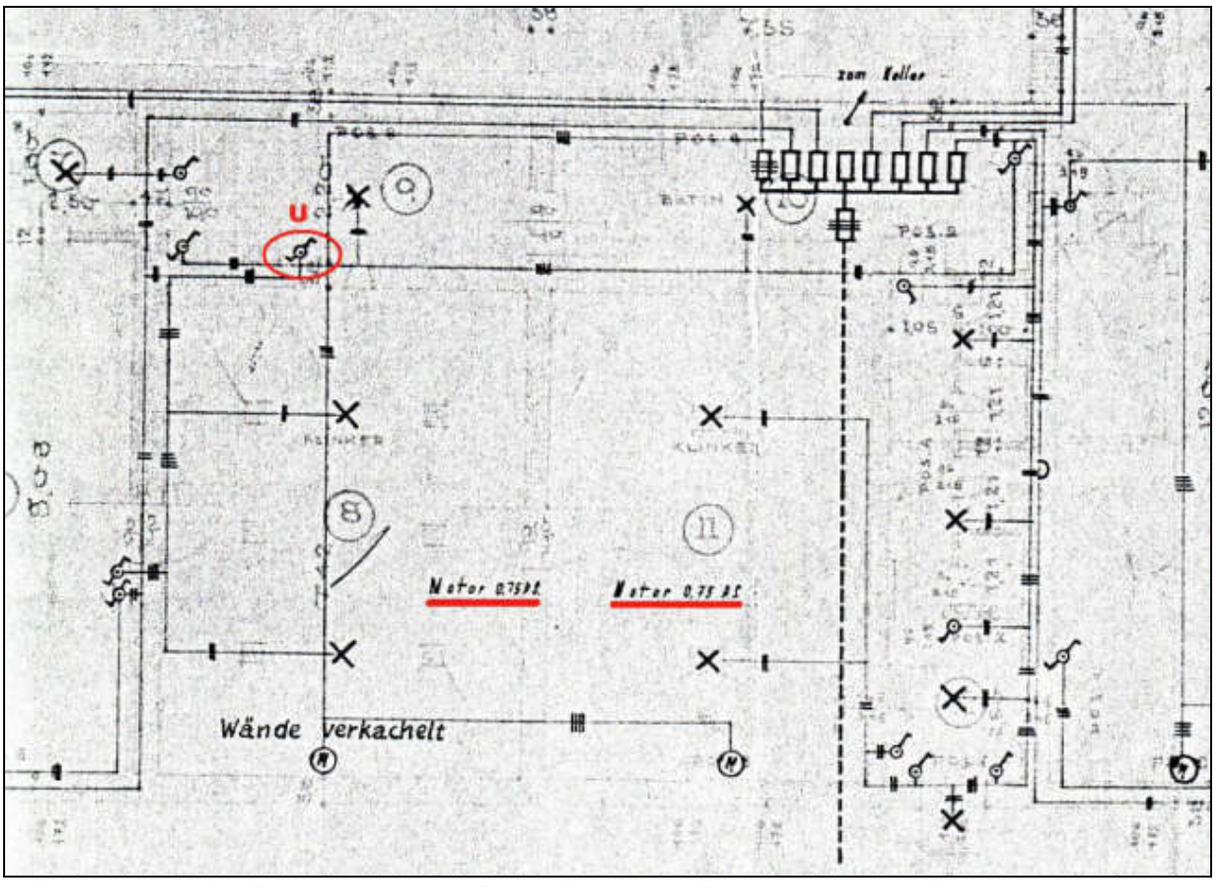
Document 2a: as before



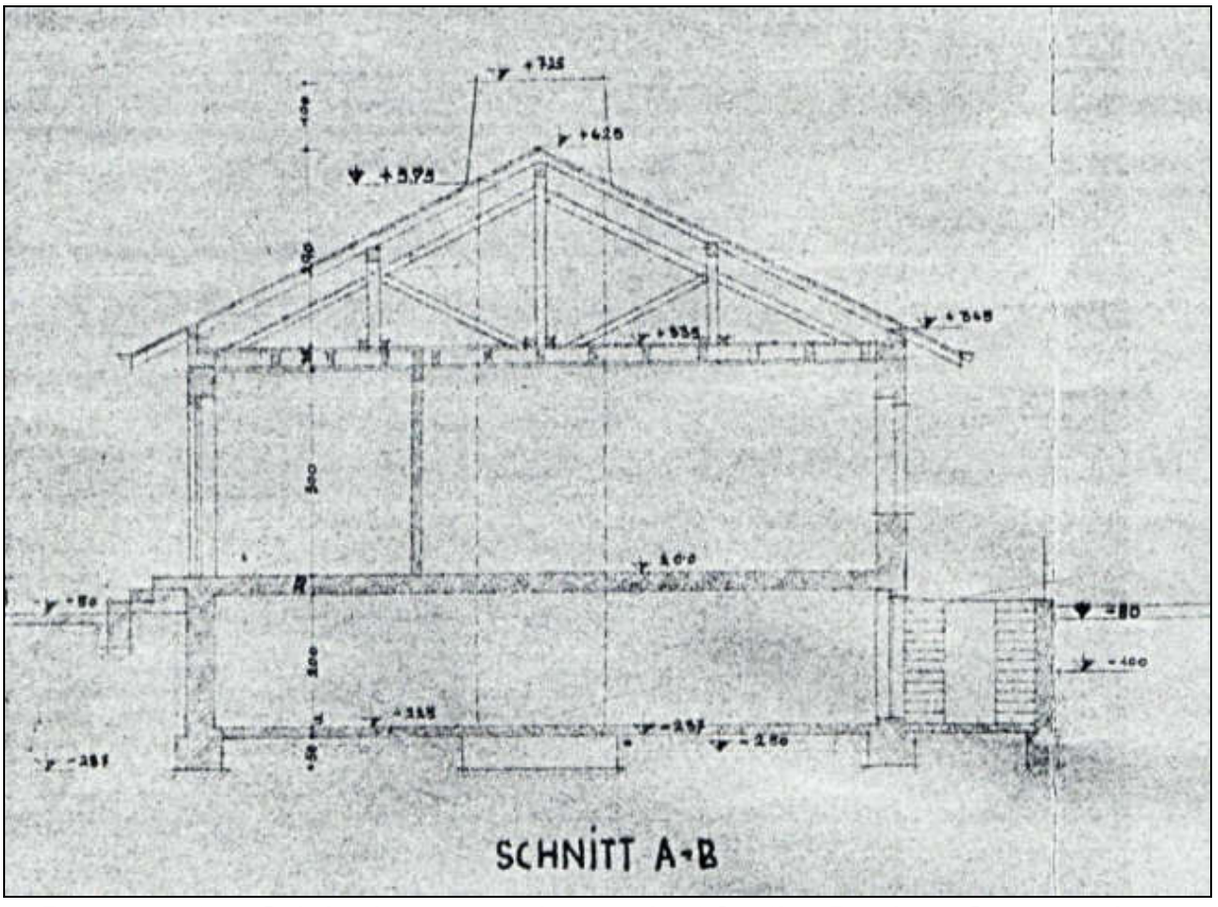
Document 2b: as before



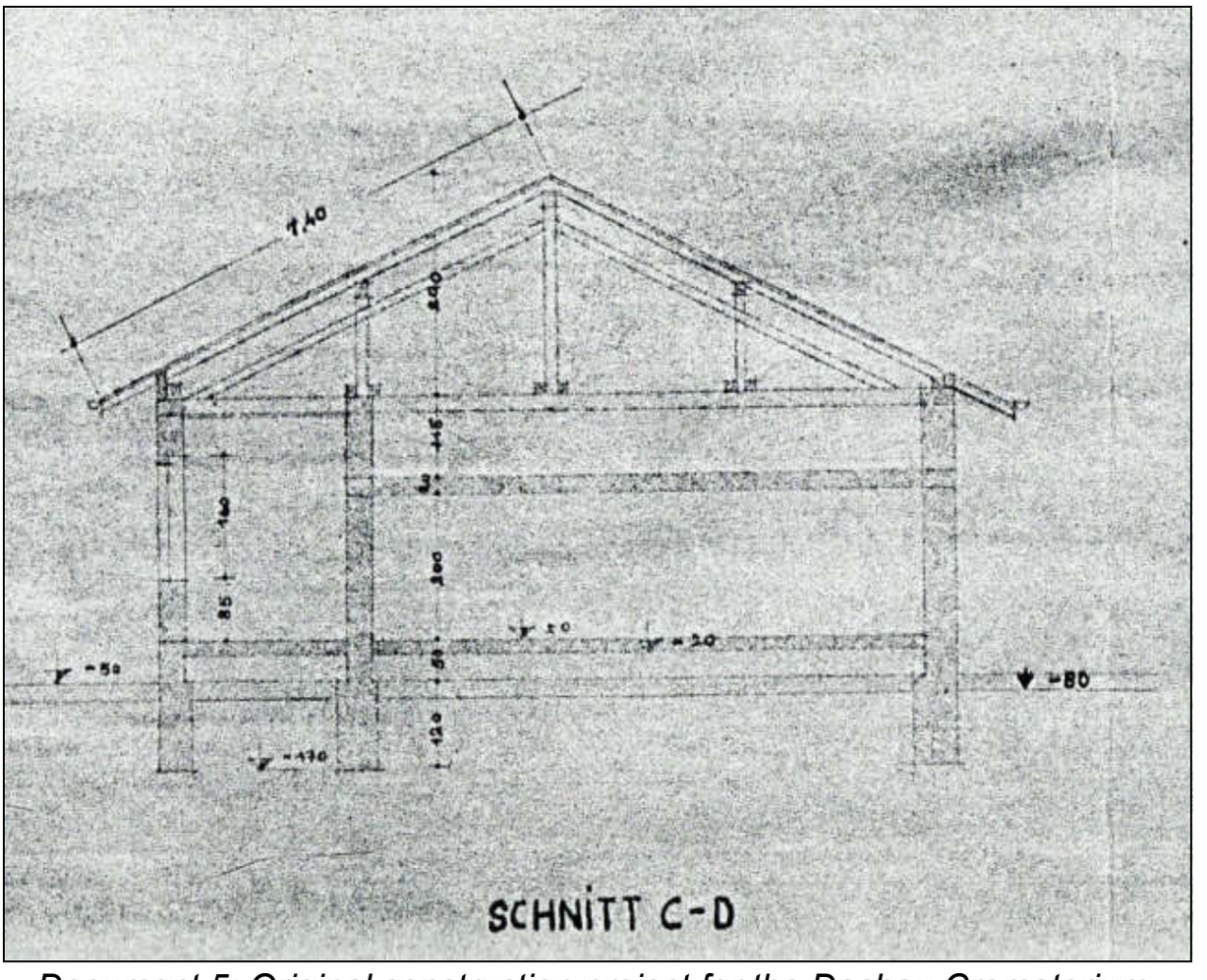
Document 2c: As Document 2. Section enlargement with Rooms 8 and 9.



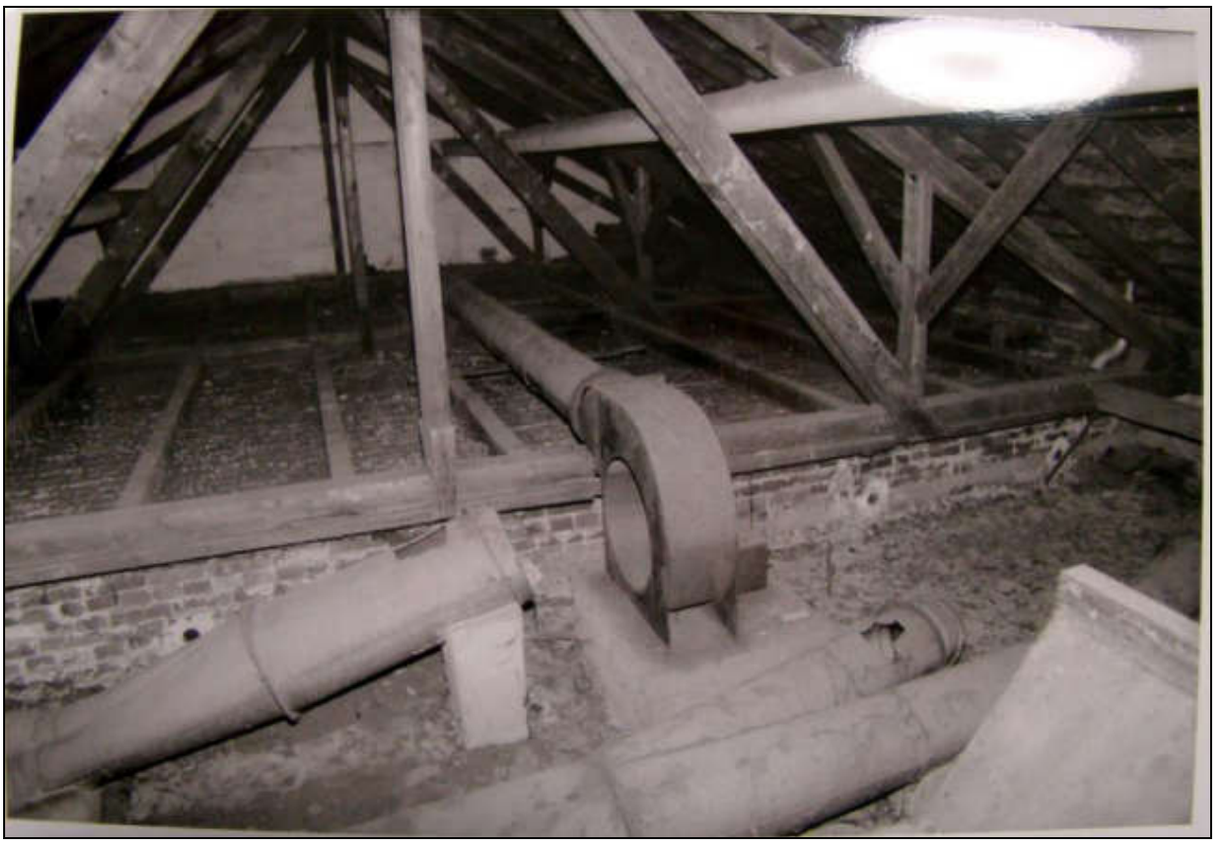
Document 3: Original plan of the Dachau Crematorium. Electrical system on Rooms 8 and 9. Source: NO-3885.



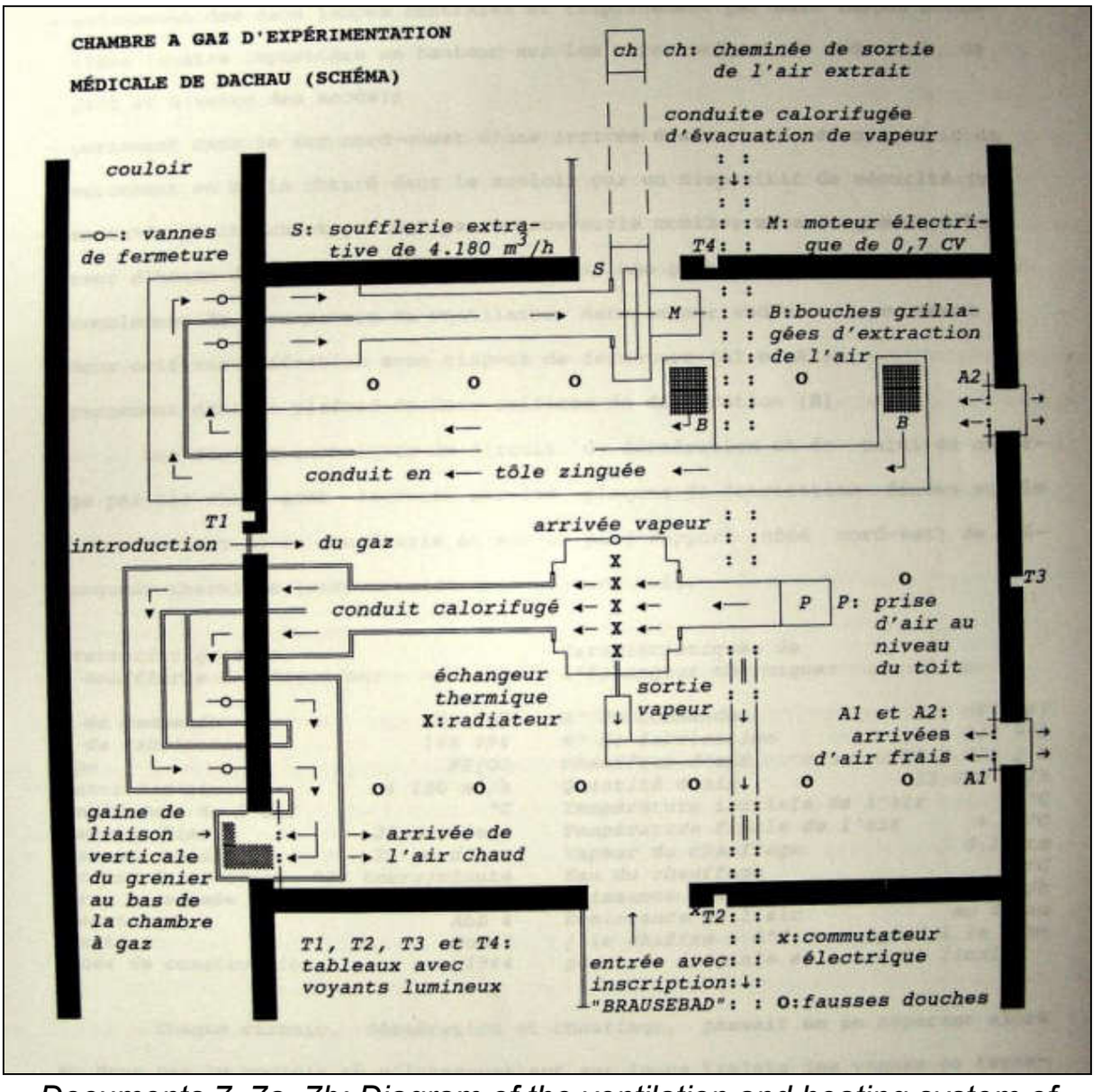
Document 4: Original construction project for the Dachau Crematorium. Vertical Section A-B. Source: NO-3886.



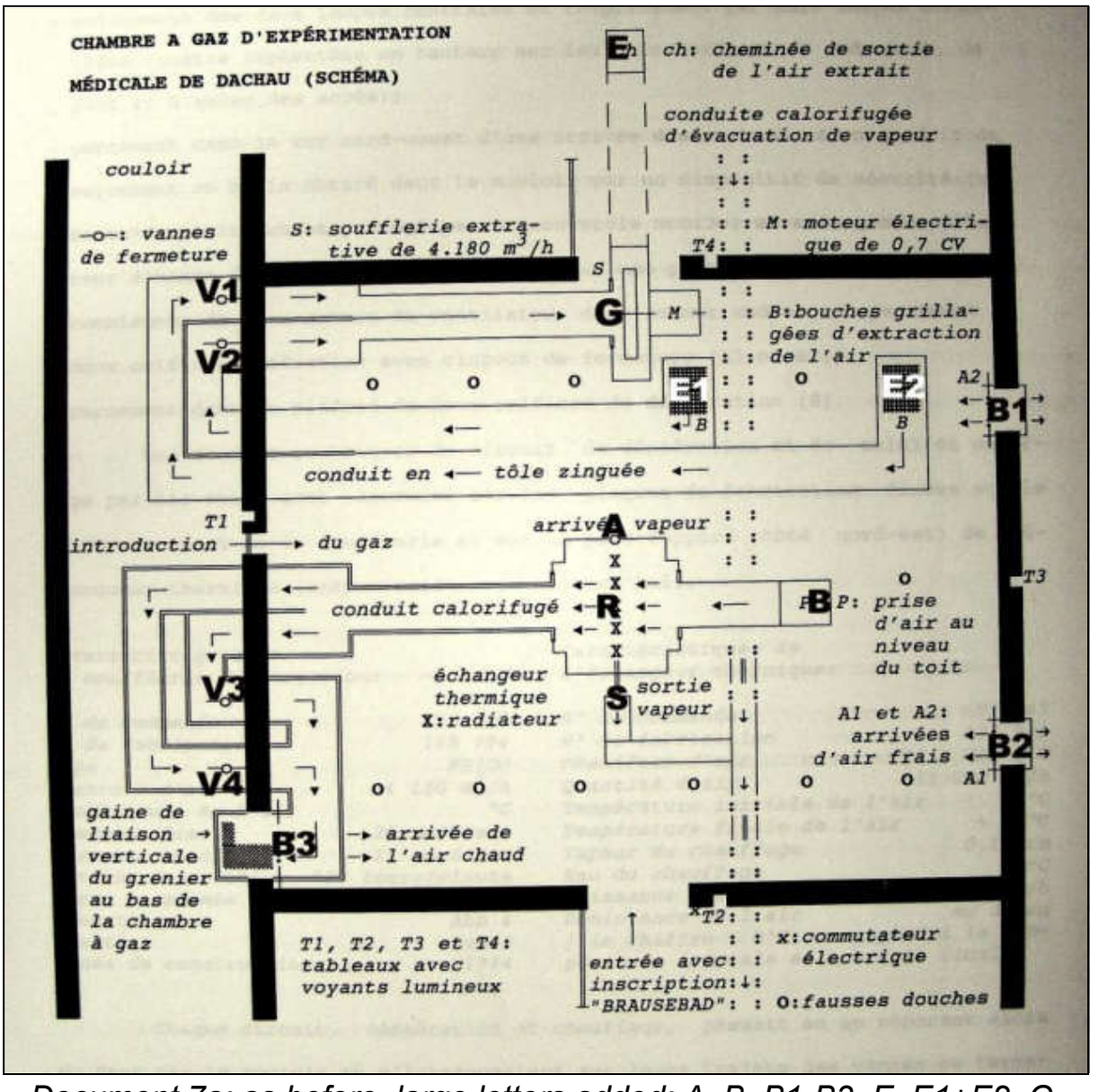
Document 5: Original construction project for the Dachau Crematorium. Vertical Section C-D. Source: NO-3886.



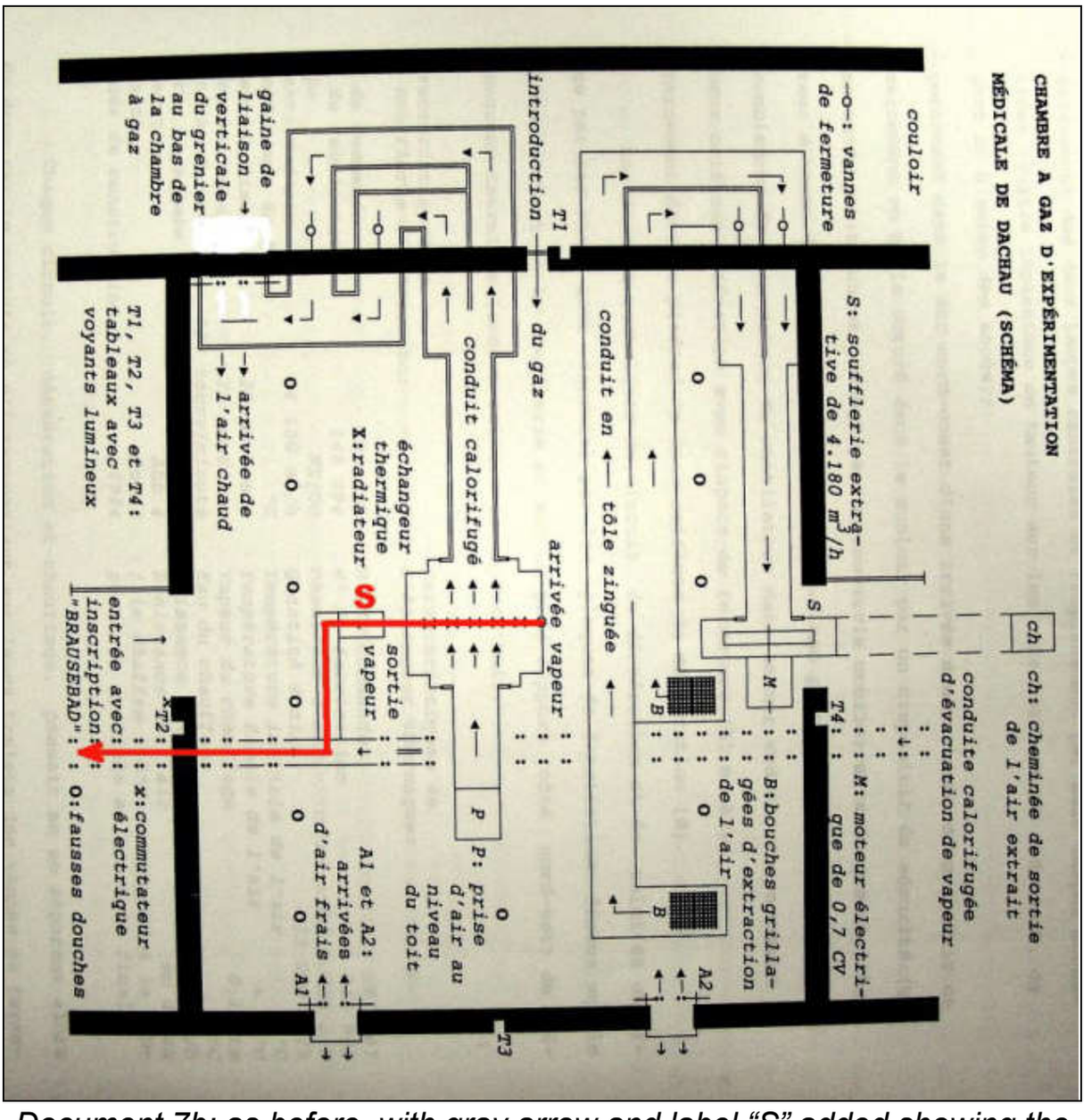
Document 6: Photo by R. Müller showing the attic of the Dachau Crematorium above Rooms 8 and 9 (1995). Source: Archives of the Dachau Museum, Folder Krematorium Baracke X.



Documents 7, 7a, 7b: Diagram of the ventilation and heating system of the Dachau "gas chamber." Source: J.-C. Pressac, "La chambre à gaz d'expérimentation médicale de Dachau," p. 11, Archives of the Dachau Museum, Folder Krematorium Baracke X.



Document 7a: as before, large letters added: A, B, B1-B3, E, E1+E2, G, R, S, V1-V4.

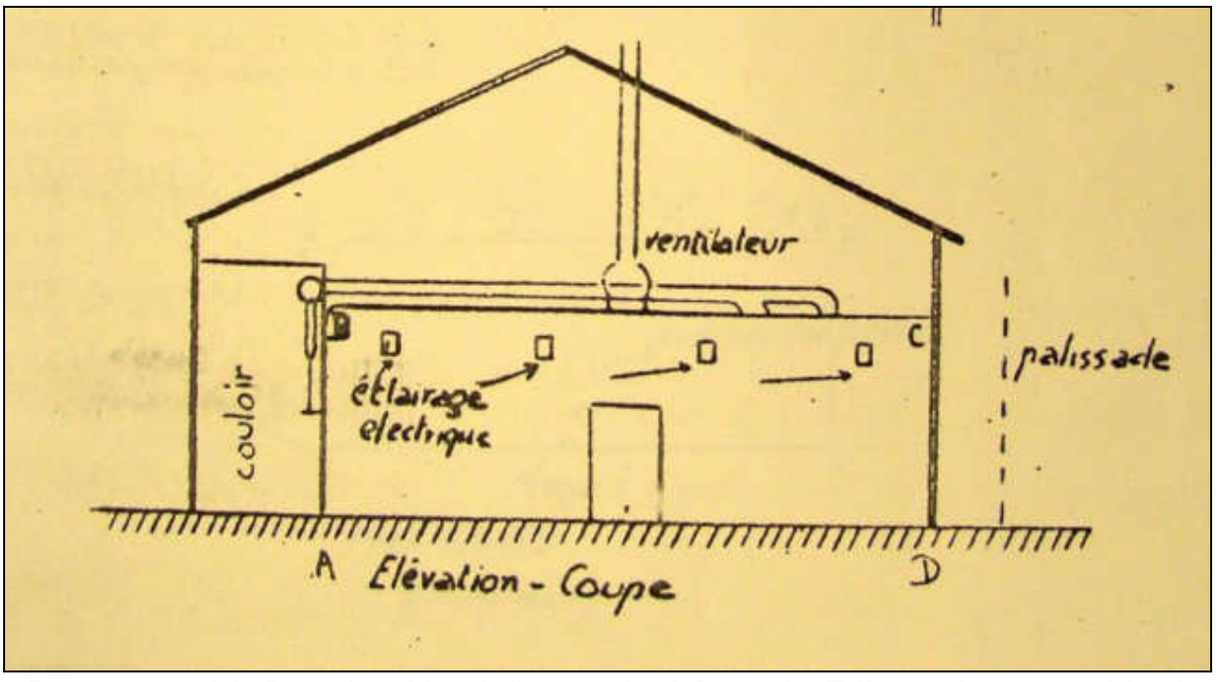


Document 7b: as before, with gray arrow and label "S" added showing the direction of the exiting vapor.

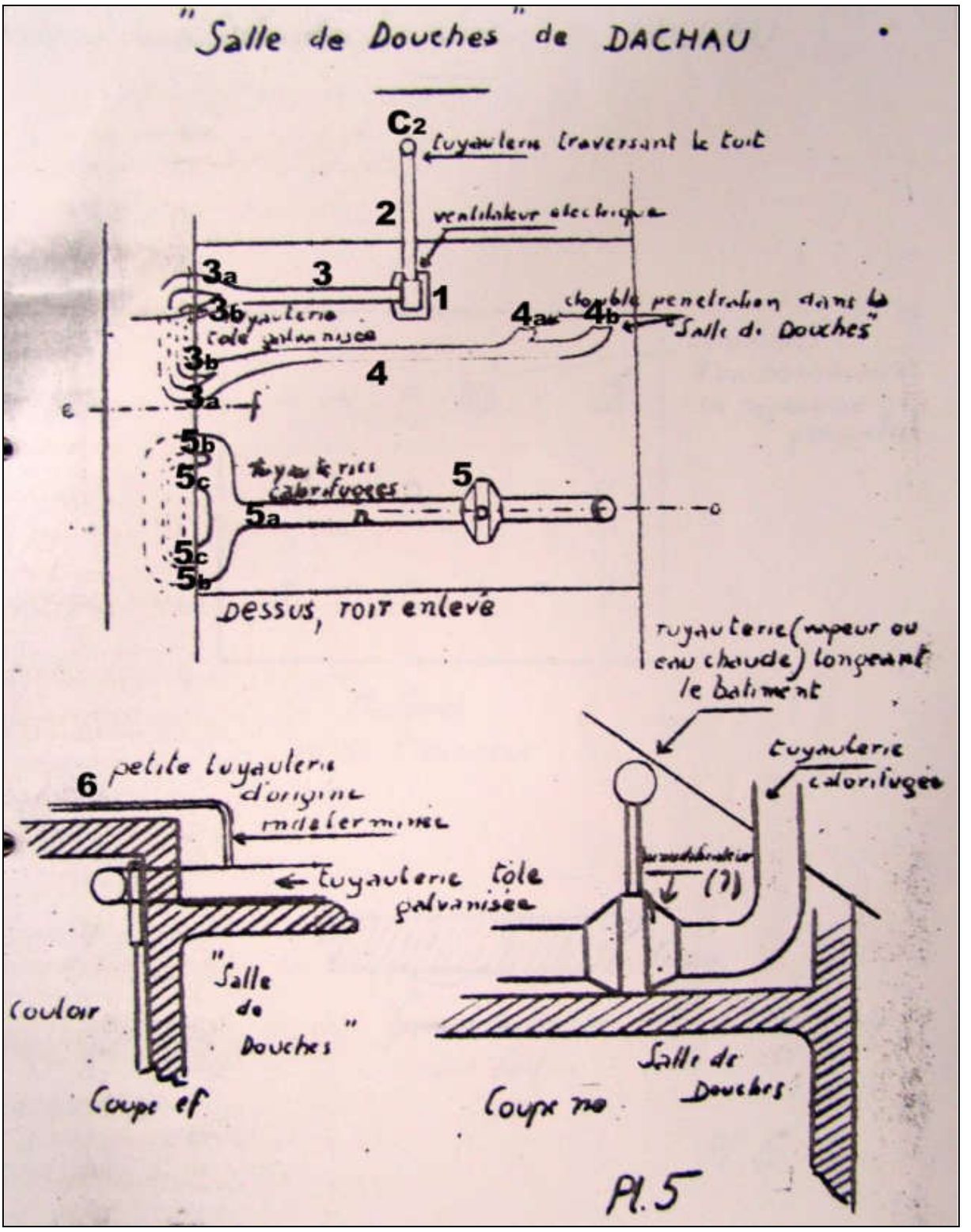
Document 8: The entrance door of the Dachau "gas chamber" in 1990. © Carlo Mattogno.

Document 9: The exit door of the Dachau "gas chamber" in the 1990. © Carlo Mattogno.

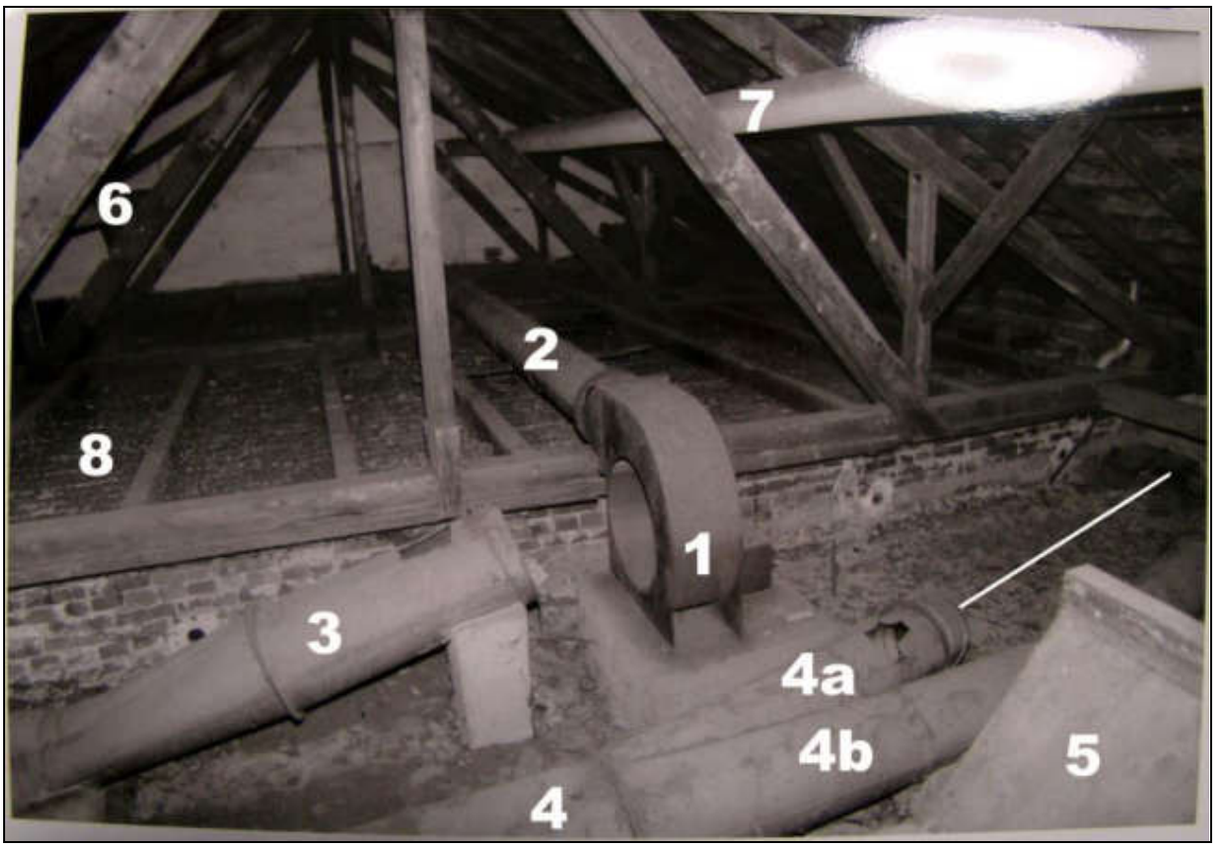
Document 10: The entrance door of the Dachau "gas chamber" in 2007. Source: https://furtherglory.wordpress.com/2011/03/23/the-brausebad-sign-over-the-door-to-the-dachau-gas-chamber/



Document 11: Drawing No. 1 (bottom) of Captain Fribourg's report. Vertical section of the Dachau "gas chamber." Source: Archives of the Dachau Museum, Folder Krematorium Baracke X.

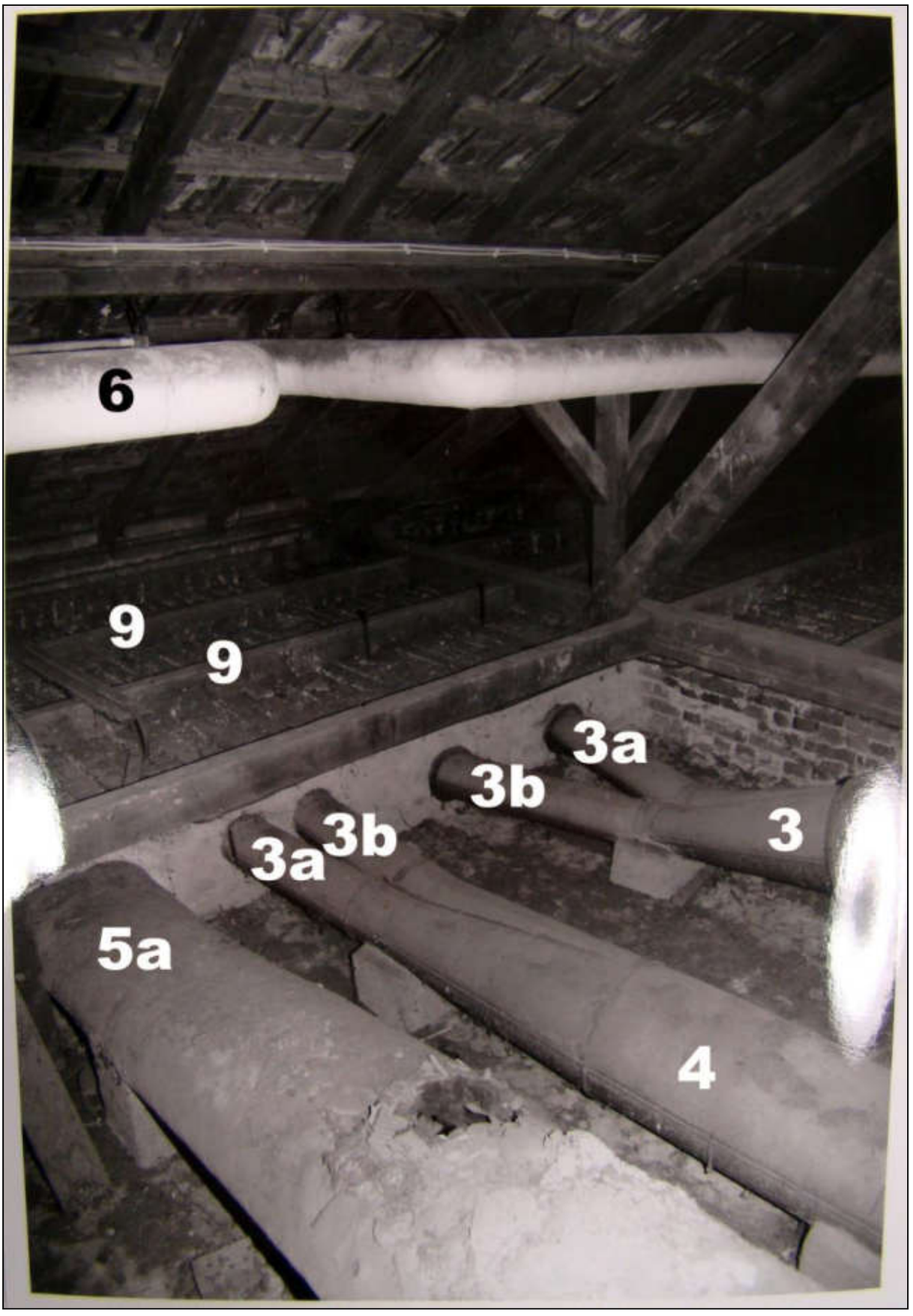


Document 12: Drawing No. 5 of Captain Fribourg's expert report. Diagram of the ventilation and heating system of the Dachau "gas chamber." Source: Archives of the Dachau Museum, Folder Krematorium Baracke X.

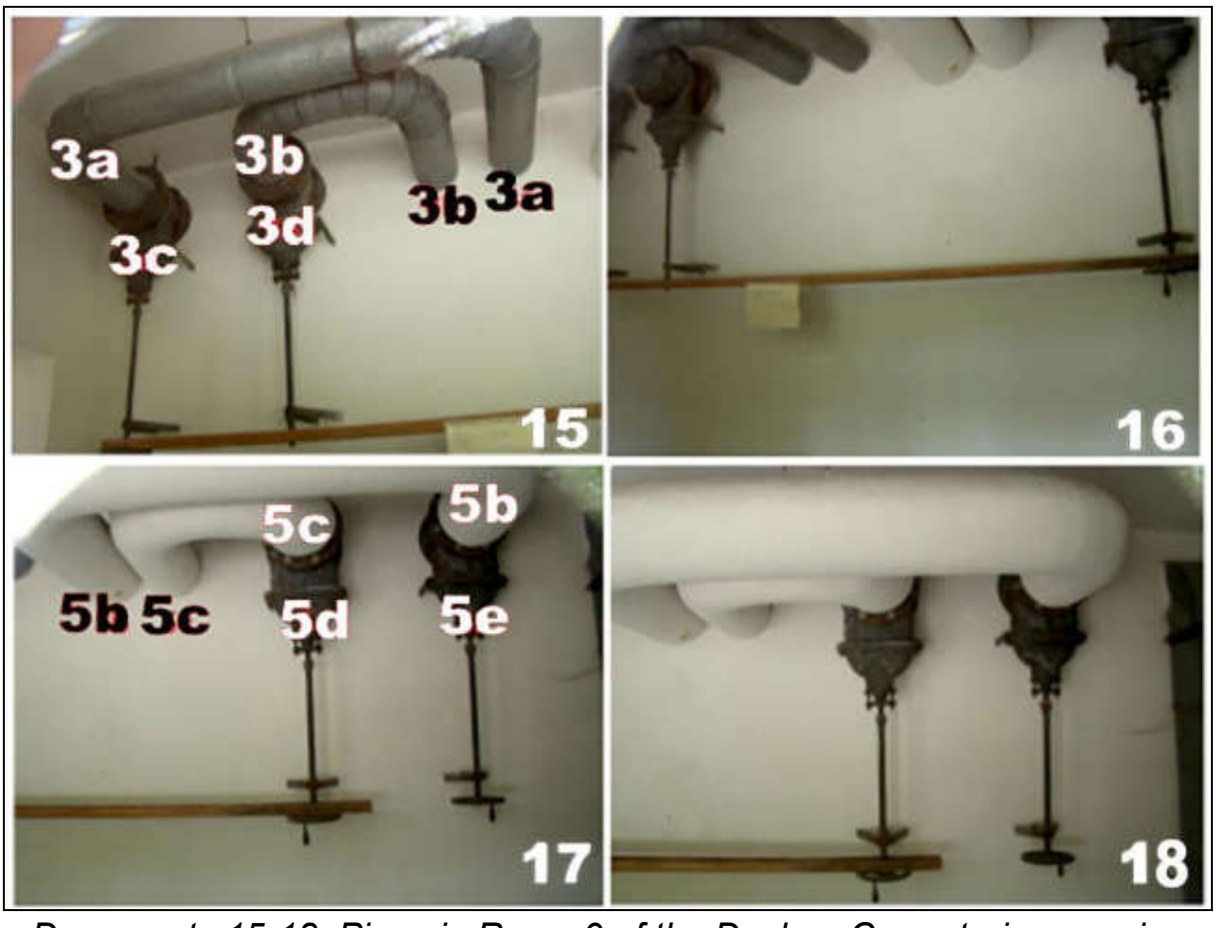


Documents 13 (top), 13a (below): See Document 6.

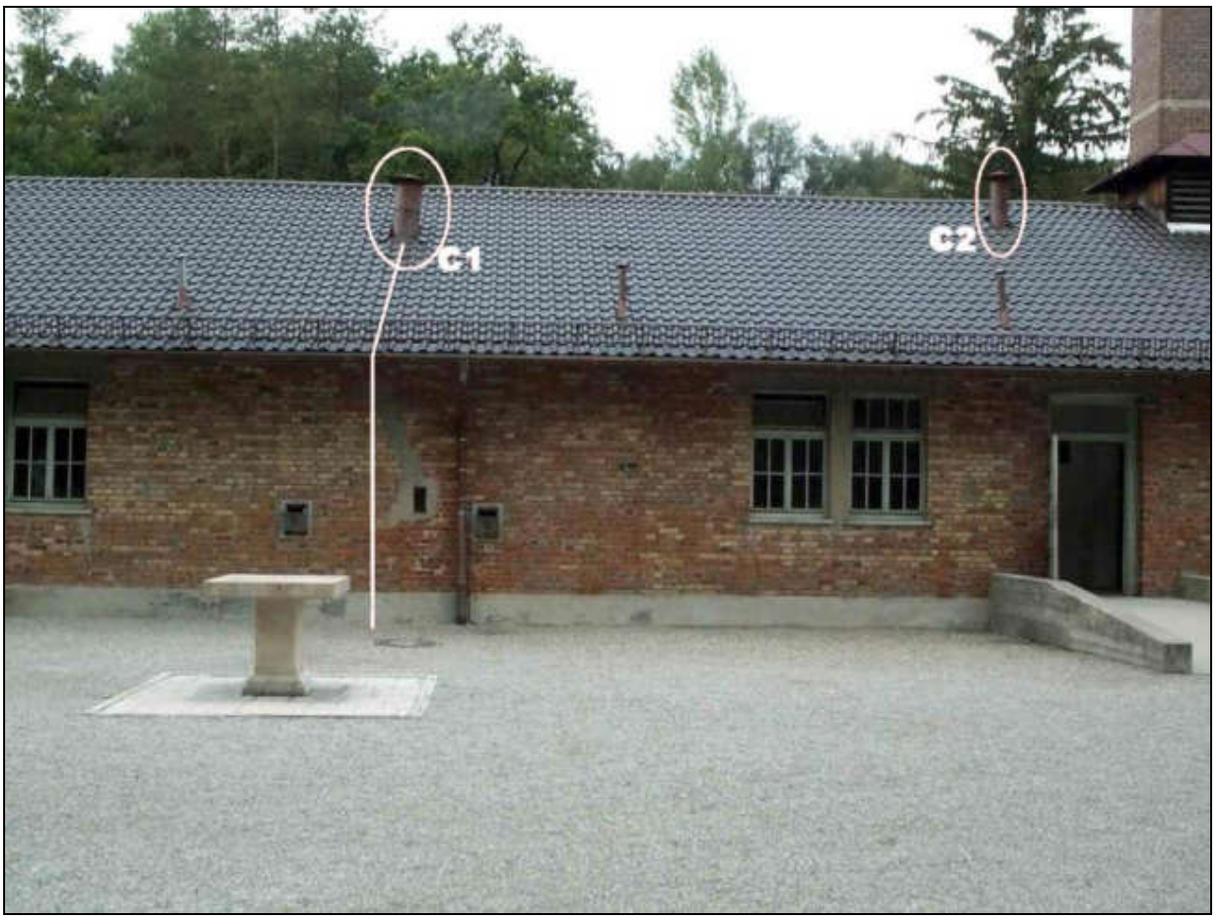
Documents 14, 14a (labeled): Photo by R. Müller showing the attic of the Dachau Crematorium above Room 8 and 9 (1995). Source: Archives of the Dachau Museum, Folder Krematorium Baracke X.



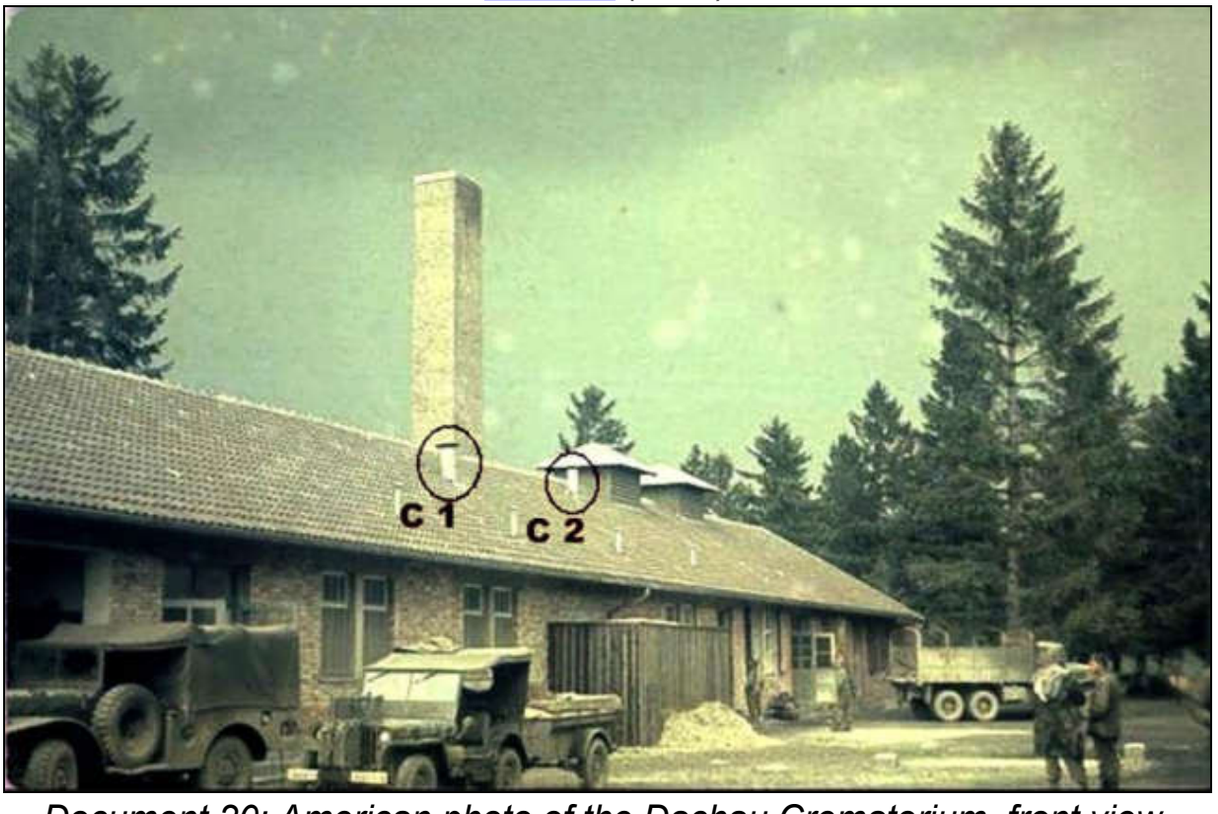
Documents 14a: as before, labeled.



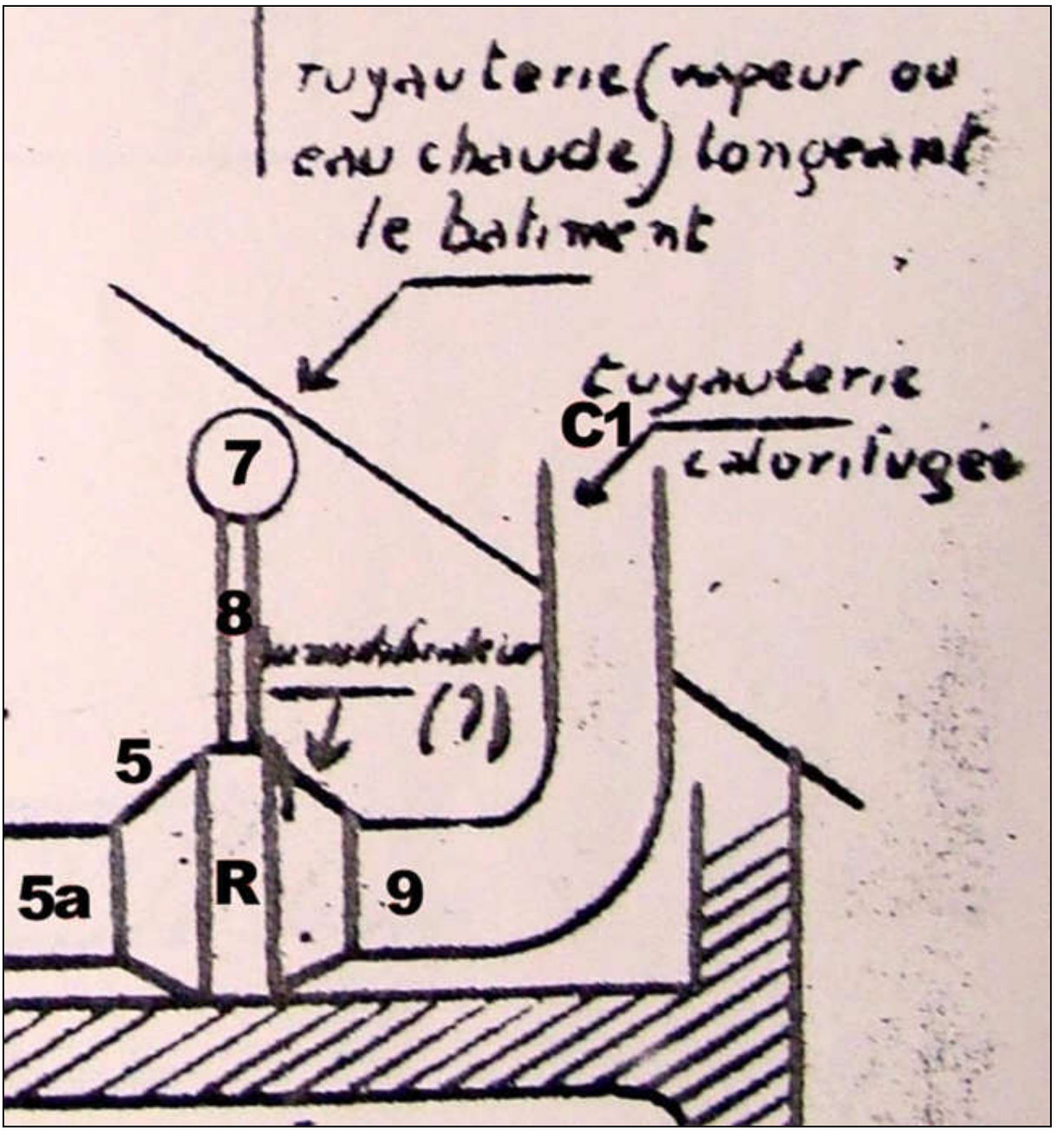
Documents 15-18: Pipes in Room 9 of the Dachau Crematorium coming from the attic and associated valves. Public domain images available online.



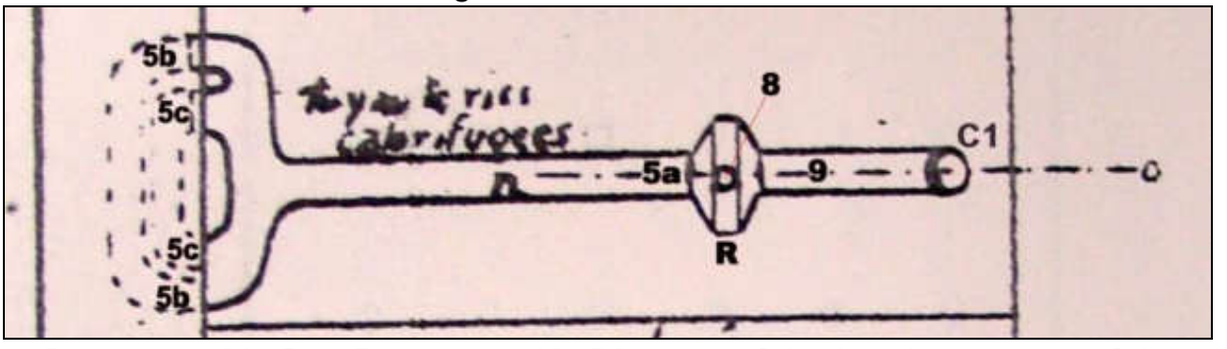
Document 19: Dachau Crematorium, front view, east side. Source: http://www.scrapbookpages.com/DachauScrapbook/GasChamber/Exterior01.html (2015)



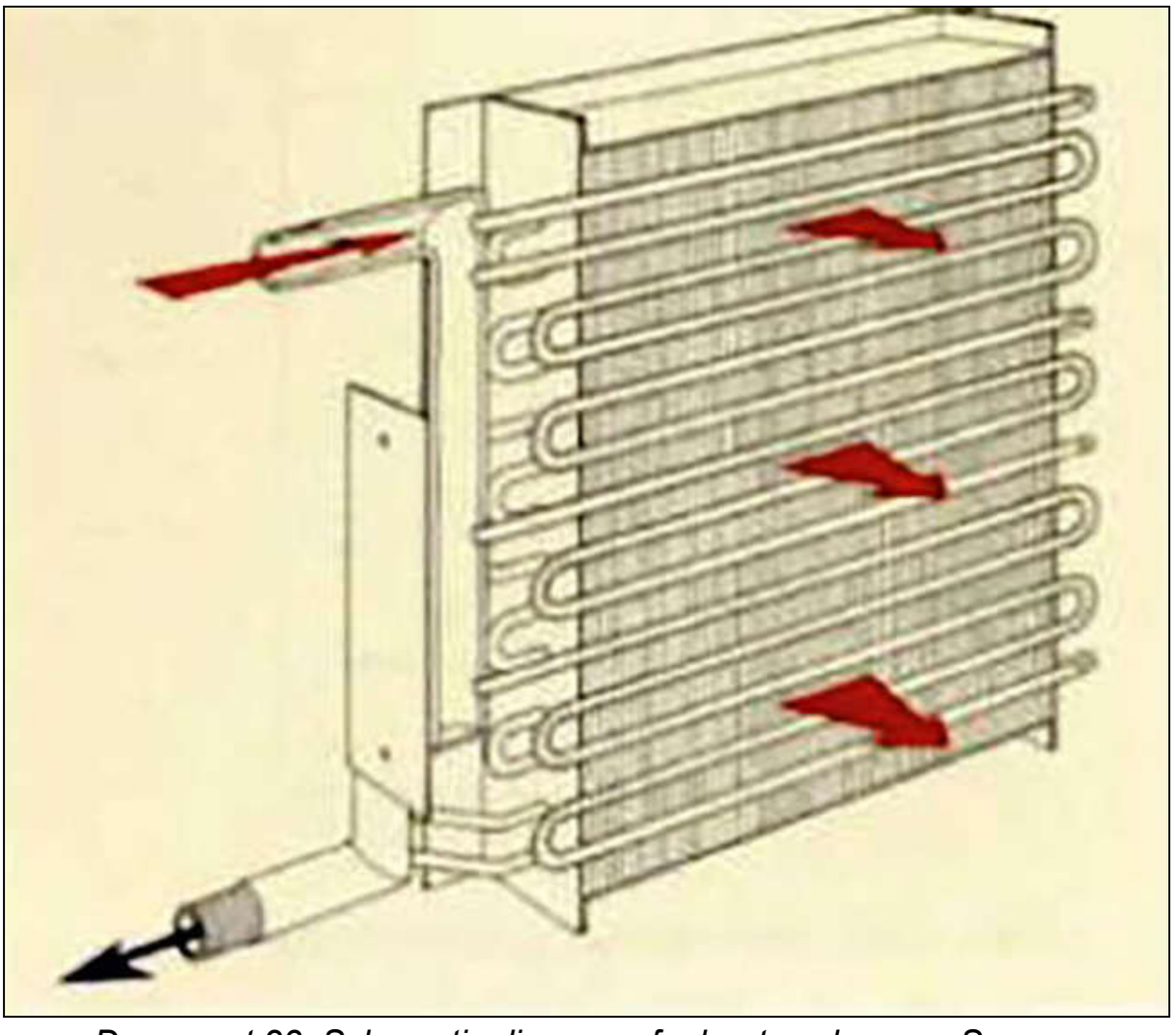
Document 20: American photo of the Dachau Crematorium, front view, east side (1945). Source: http://uainfo.org/heading/public/14948-fotografii-iz-osvobozhdennogo-konclagerya-dahau-may-1945-goda.html (2015).



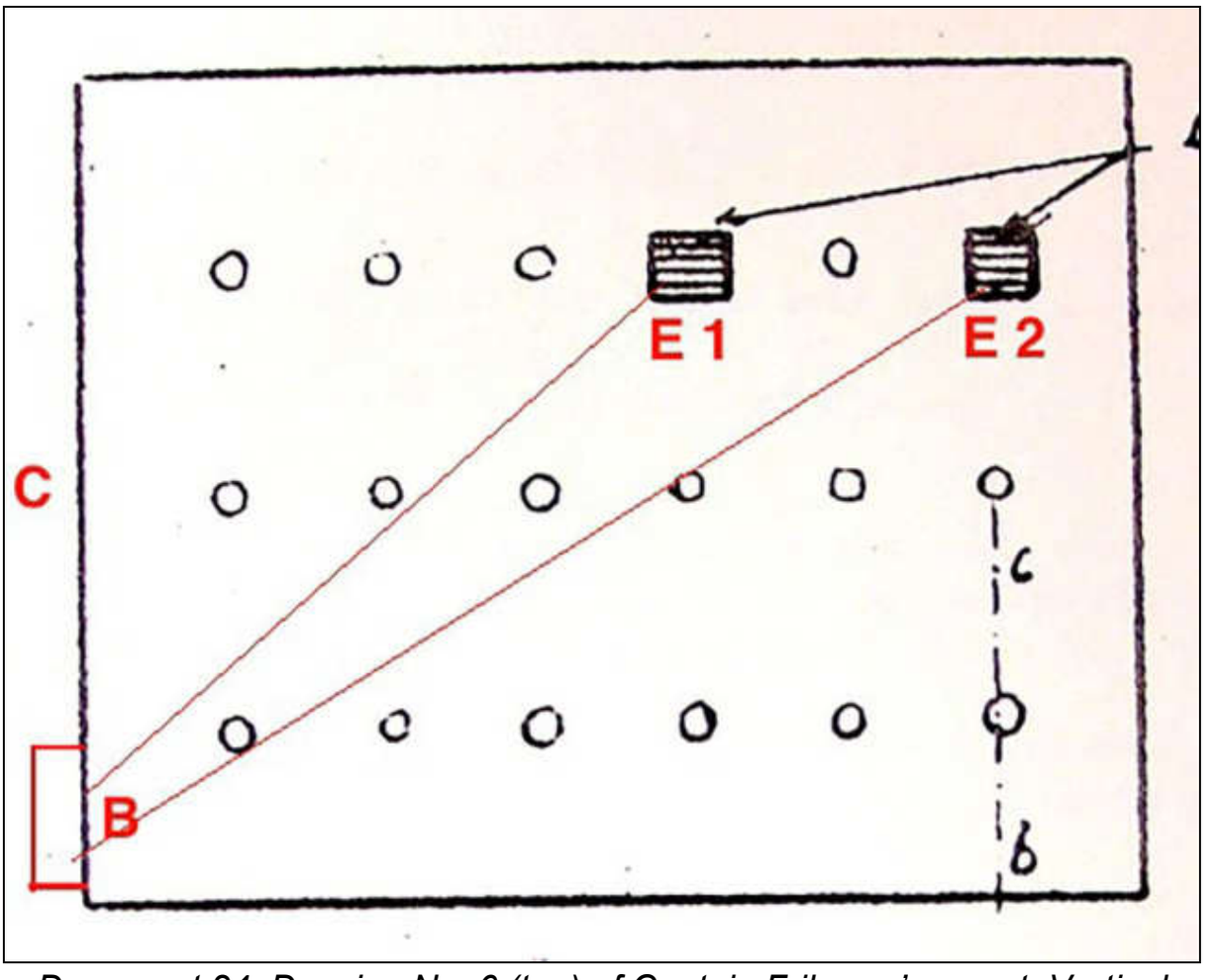
Document 21: See Document 12. Diagram of the heating system of the Dachau "gas chamber." Vertical view.



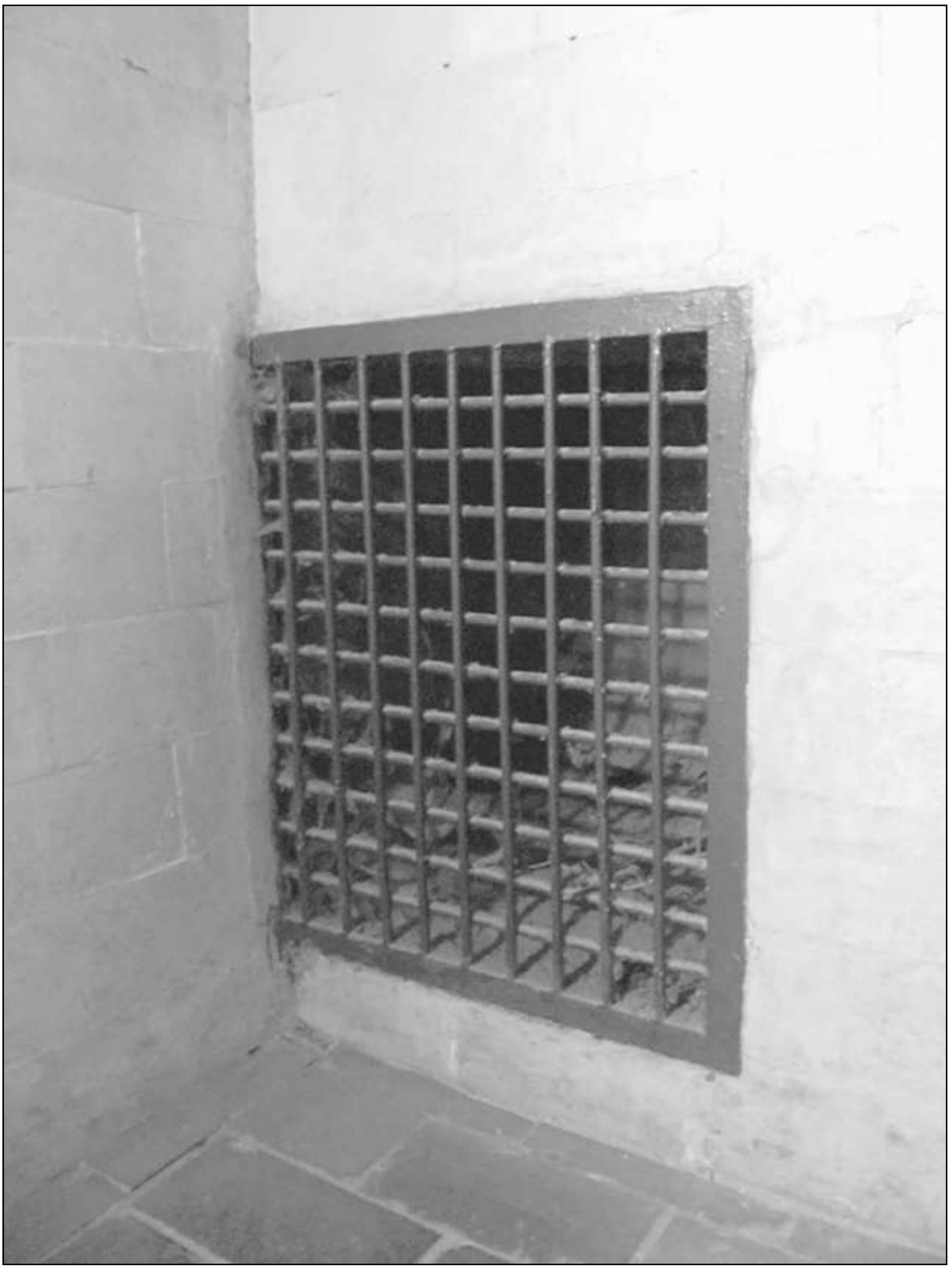
Document 22: See Document 12. Diagram of the heating system of the Dachau "gas chamber." View from above.



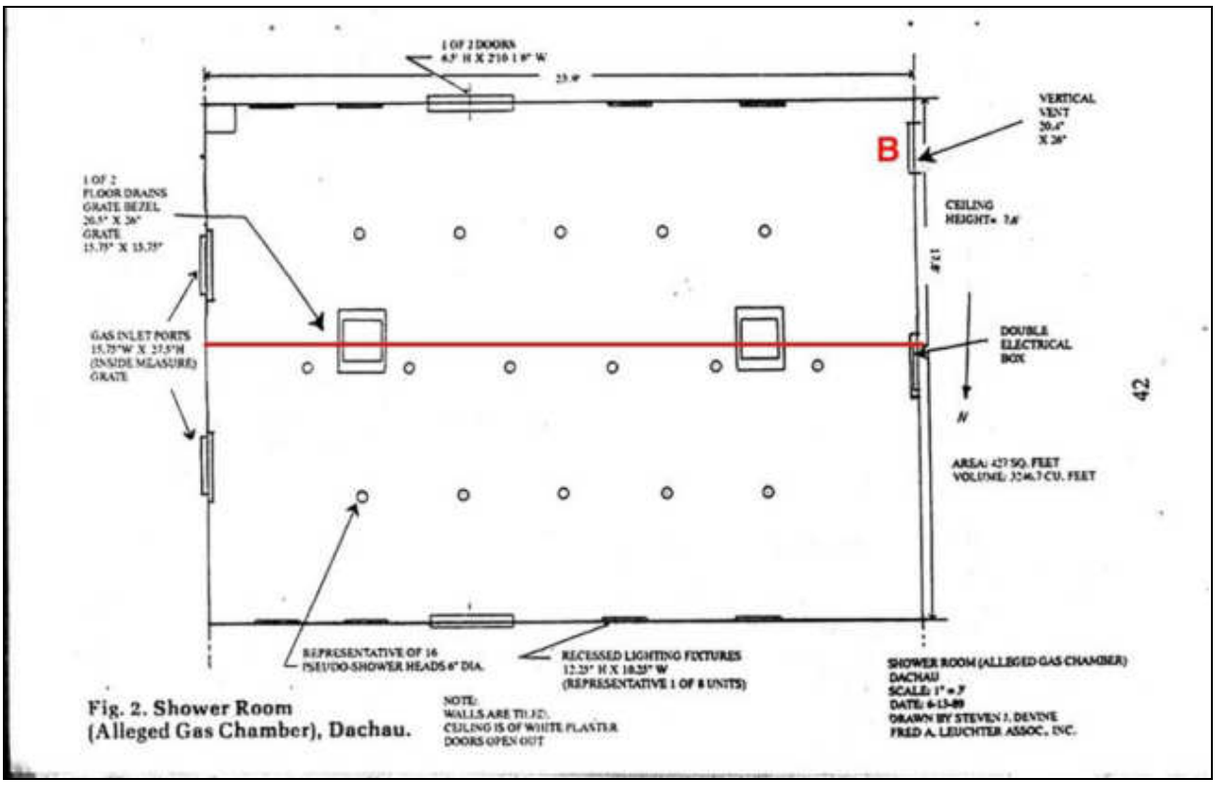
Document 23: Schematic diagram of a heat exchanger. Source: http://www.haustechnikdialog.de/shkwissen/Showimage.aspx?ID=41 (2015).



Document 24: Drawing No. 6 (top) of Captain Fribourg's report. Vertical section. The ceiling of the Dachau "gas chamber" seen from below. Source: Archives of the Dachau Museum, Folder Krematorium Baracke X.



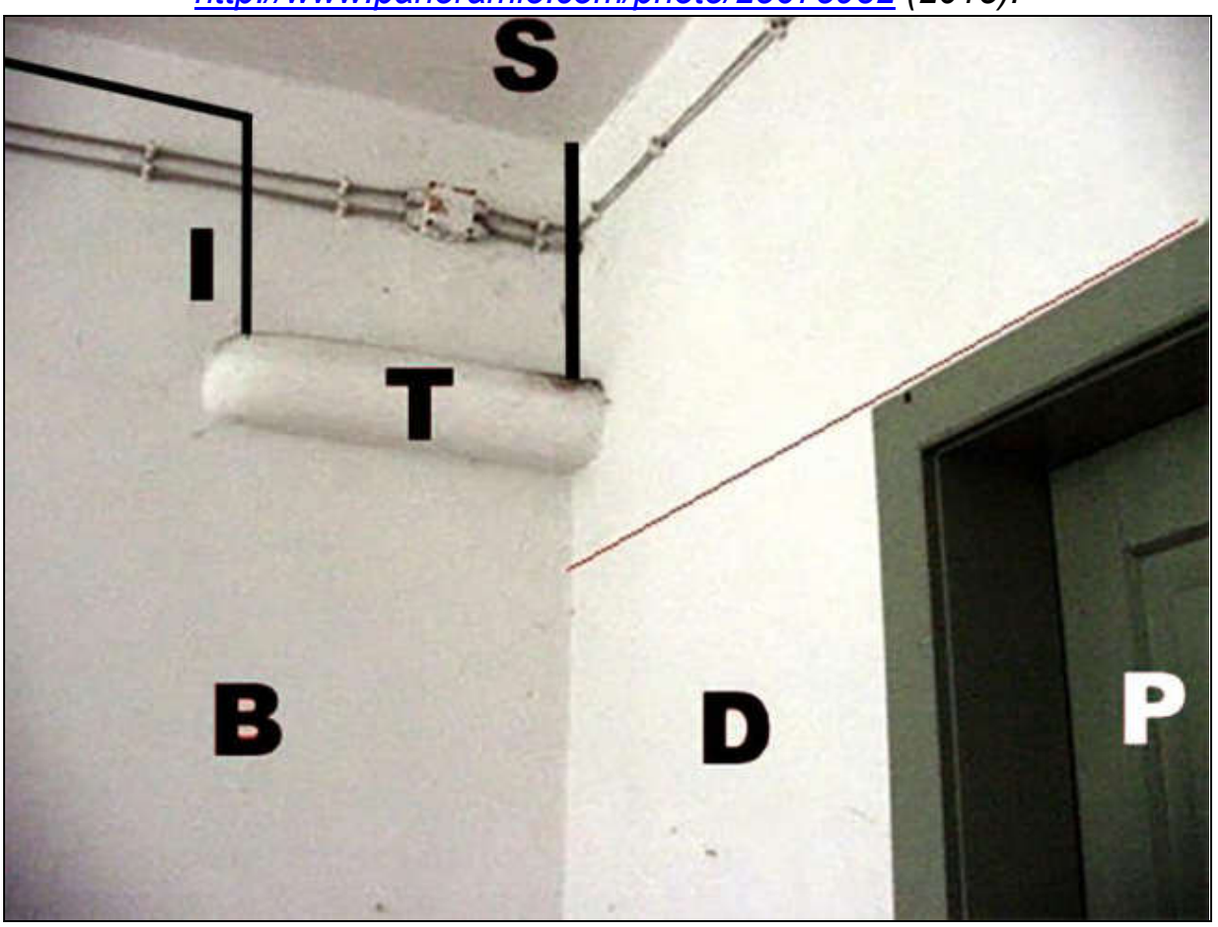
Document 25: Grate of the alleged ventilation duct set into the wall, coming out in a bottom corner. From the film "Dachau Concentration Camp," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH98iTYLrv4 (2015).



Document 26: Diagram of the Dachau "gas chamber." Source: Leuchter et al., p. 147.

Document 27: Sign placed in the Dachau "gas chamber" in 1990. © Carlo Mattogno.

Document 28: Interior of the Dachau "gas chamber." Source: http://www.panoramio.com/photo/25675982 (2015).



Document 29: Corner between Rooms 6, 7 and 9 of the Dachau Crematorium. Photograph taken in Room 7. Source: http://www.scrapbookpages.com/DachauScrapbook/GasChamber/UndressingRoom.html (2015)

Document 30: Room 6 of the Dachau crematorium. Photo taken in an east-west direction. Source: http://www.obletim.ru/germany/munich_9/ (2015).

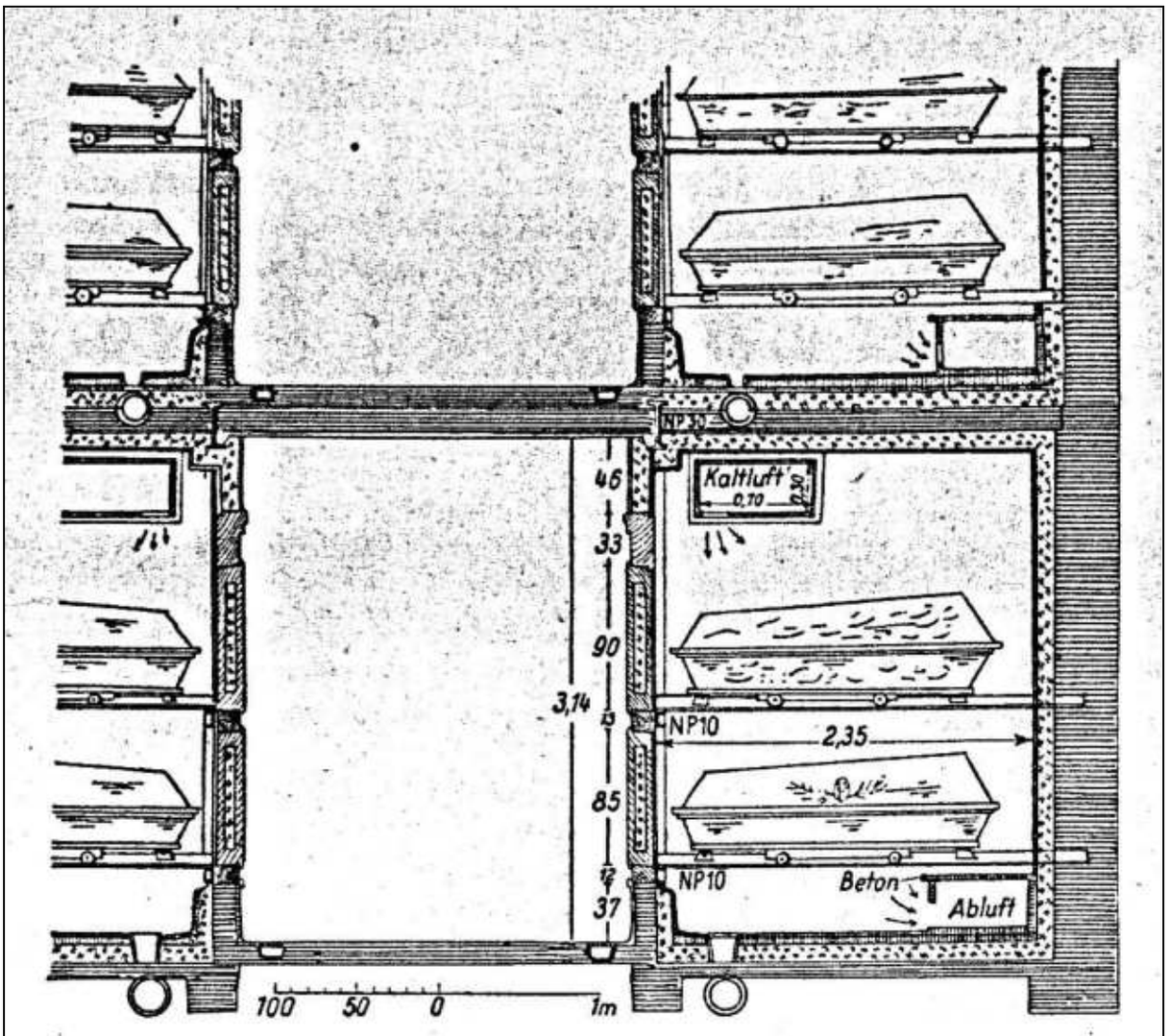
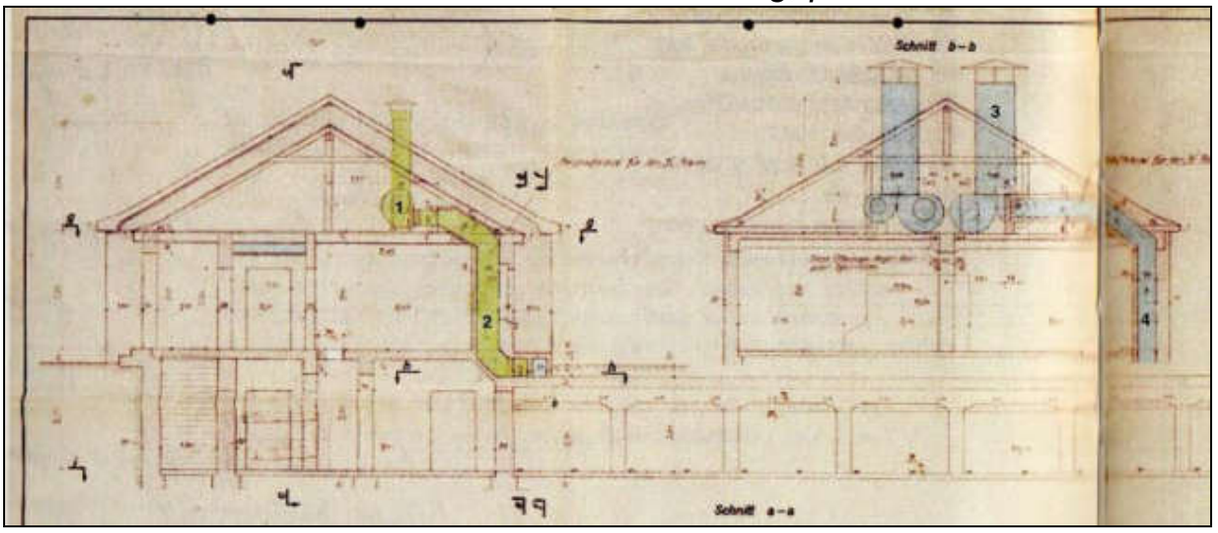
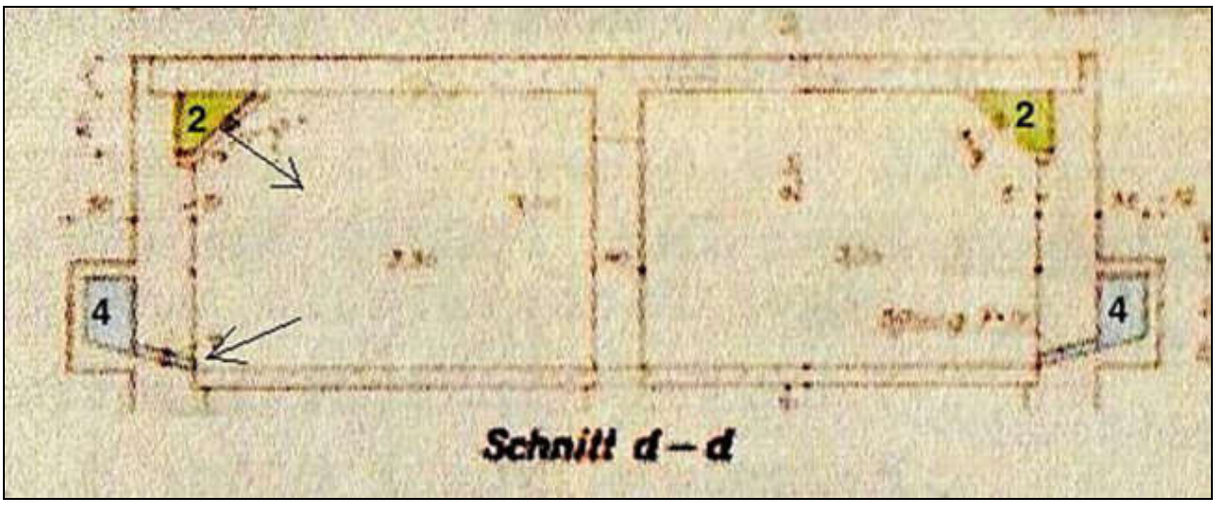


Abb. 3. Querschnitt durch die Leichenkammern im Krematorium Berlin-Wedding.

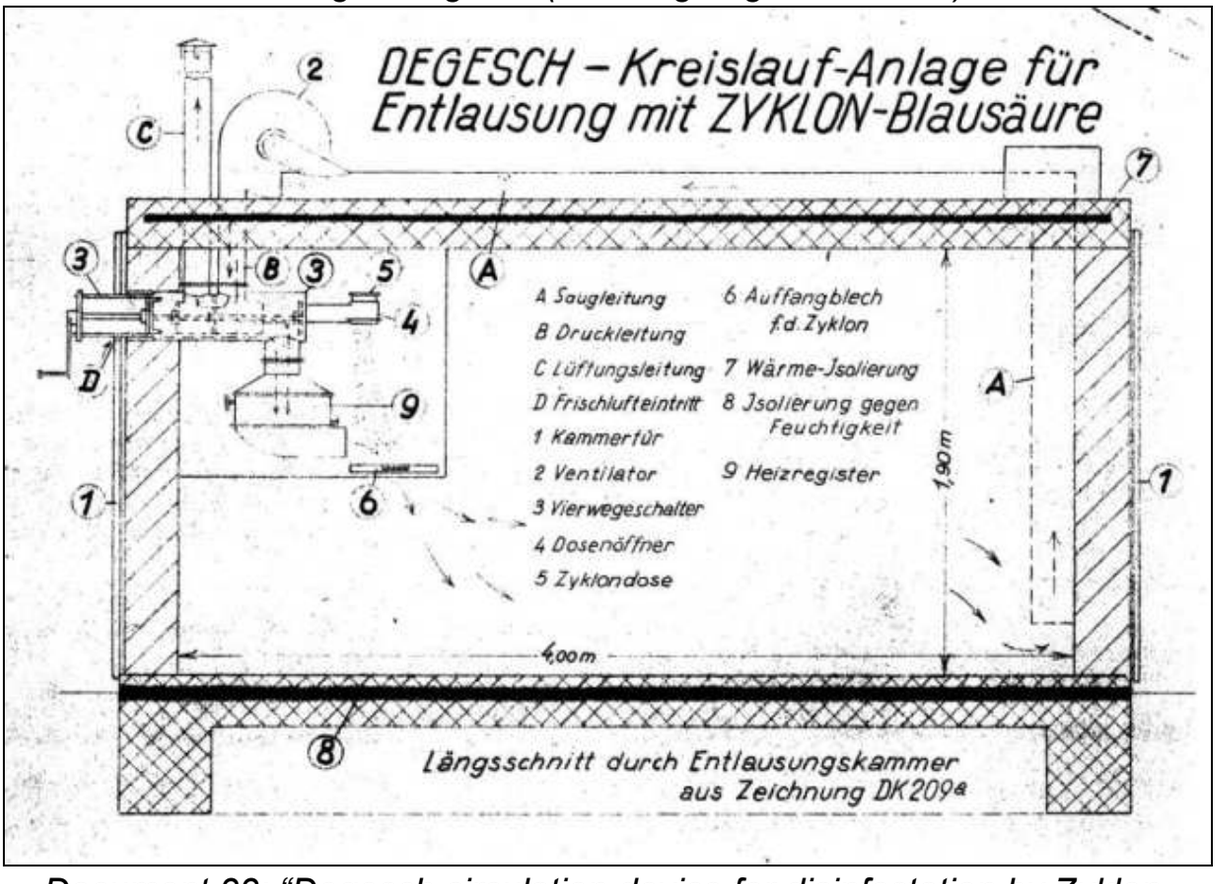
Document 31: "Section of the mortuary chambers of the Berlin-Wedding crematorium.." Source: Hellwig, p. 369.



Documents 32, 32a: Topf Plan D 59366 dated March 10, 1942 showing the ventilation system of the new Auschwitz crematorium. Source: Schüle, pp. 438f.



Documents 32a: as before, section enlargement of the cross section through Morgue 1 (the alleged gas chamber)



Document 33: "Degesch circulation device for disinfestation by Zyklon-cyanide." Source: APMM, VI, 9a, vol. 2, pp. 1.

Document 34: Photo by R. Müller showing the attic of the Dachau crematorium above the boiler room (1995). Source: Archives of the Dachau Museum, Folder Krematorium Baracke X.

Document 35: American photograph of Dachau Crematorium, front view, east side (1945). Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH98iTYLrv4 (2015).

Document 36: Clothes hanging in front of the disinfestation chambers of the Dachau crematorium, 1945. Source: From the film "Dachau Concentration Camp," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH98iTYLrv4 (2015).

Document 37: Clothes hanging in front of the disinfestation chambers of the Dachau crematorium, 1945. Source: https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/american-soldiers-inspect-disinfected-uniforms-at-dachau.

Document 38: The entrance to the "gas chamber" at Dachau. Public domain photograph (2015).

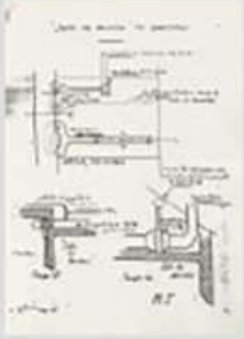
3406 Gaskammer

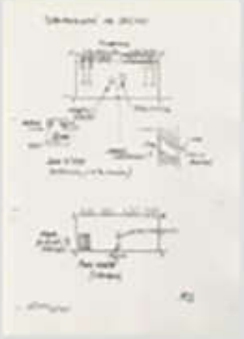
Im nächsten Raum befand sich das Zentrum des möglichen Massenmords. Die Gaskammer wurde zur Tarnung als „Brausebad" bezeichnet und mit Duschköpfen ausgestattet, die Attrappen waren. Damit wollte man die Opfer irreführen und verhindern, dass sie sich weigerten, den Raum zu betreten.
Bis zu 150 Menschen konnten gleichzeitig in einem Zeitraum von 15 bis 20 Minuten mit Blausäure-Giftgas (Zyklon B) erstickt werden.
Die Gaskammer wurde allerdings nicht zum Massenmord benutzt. Überlebende haben jedoch bezeugt, dass die SS dort einzelne Häftlinge und kleinere Gruppen durch Giftgas ermordete.

Gas chamber

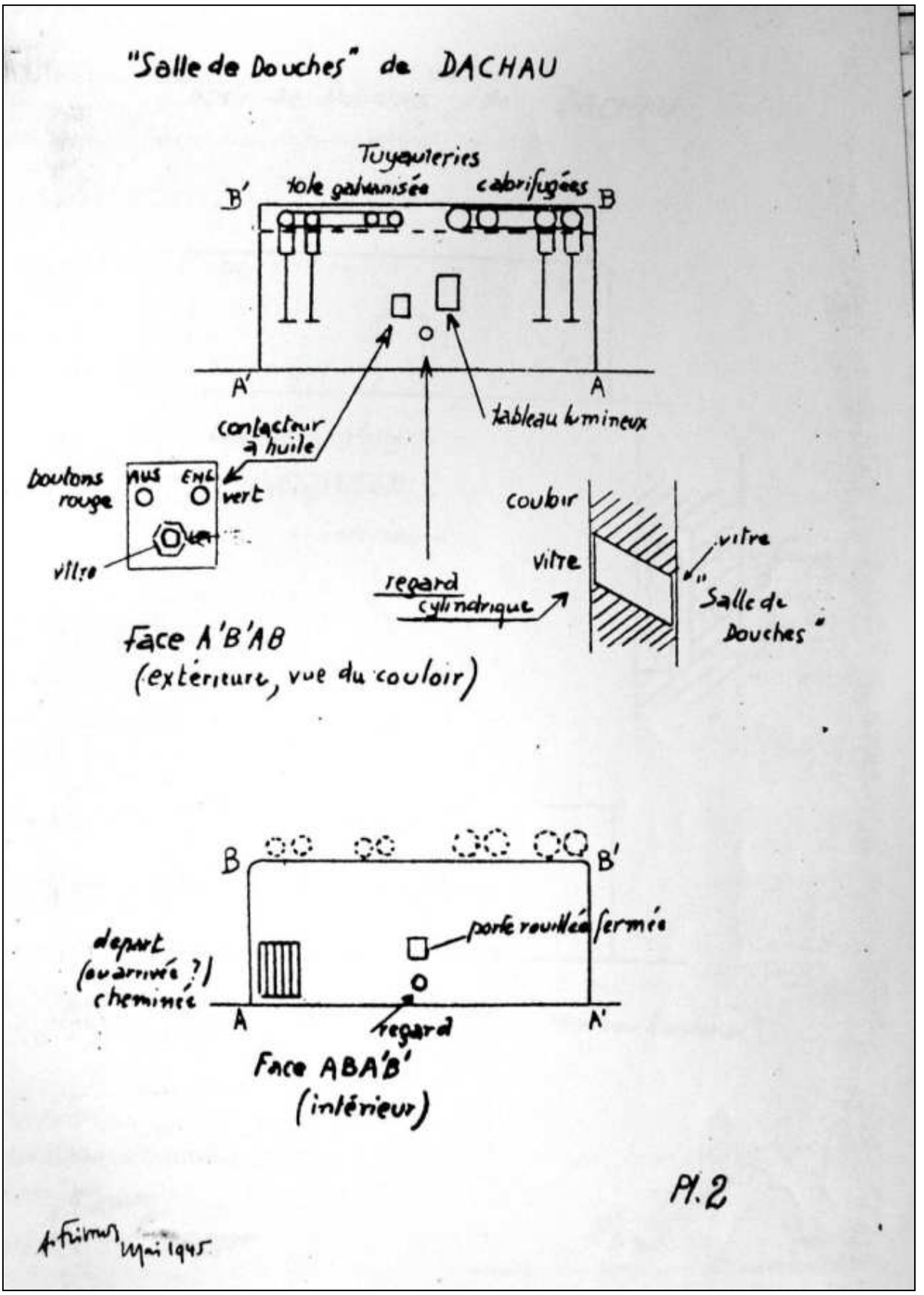
The center for potential mass murder was located in the next room. The gas chamber was disguised as "showers" and equipped with fake shower spouts to mislead the victims and prevent them from refusing to enter. During a period of 15 to 20 minutes up to 150 people at a time could be suffocated to death through prussic acid poison gas (Zyklon B).
But the gas chamber was not used for mass murder. Survivors have testified that the SS did, however, murder individual prisoners and small groups here using poison gas.

Betrieb- und Bedienungseinrichtungen außerhalb der Gaskammer
Operating facilities outside of the gas chamber

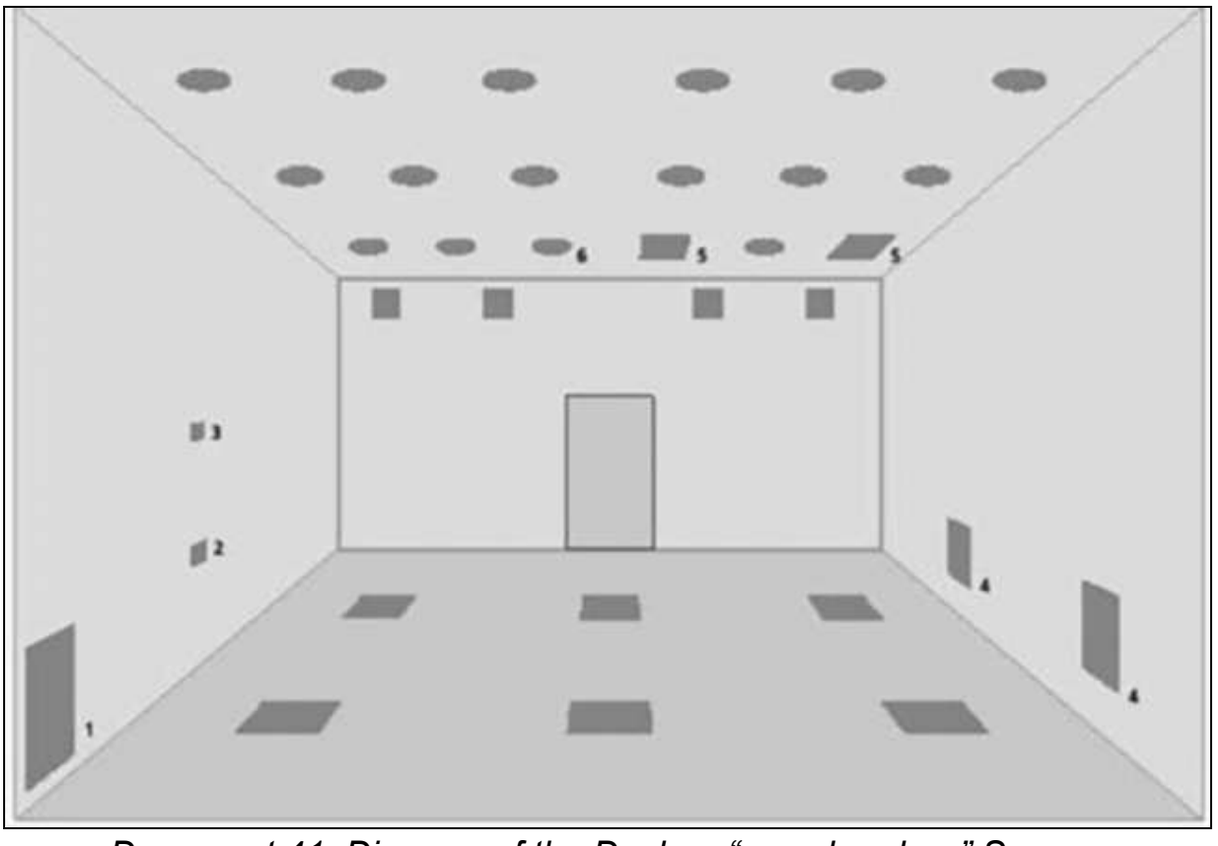




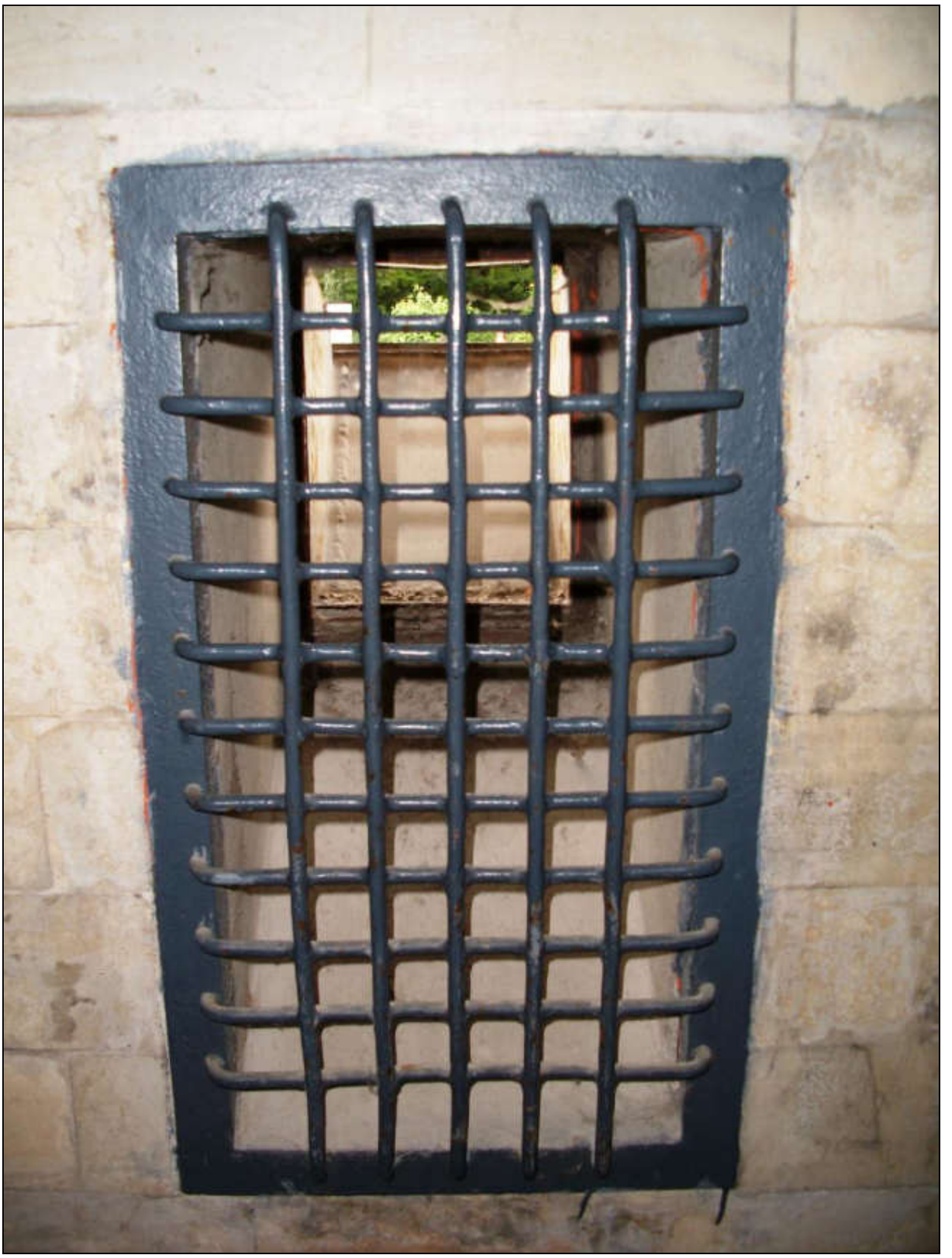
Document 39: Panel explaining the operation of the Dachau "gas chamber." Source: http://www.hdbg.de/dachau/pdfs/16/16_01_05.PDF.



Document 40: Drawing No. 2 of Captain Fribourg's report. The corridor-side (above) and inside (below) of the wall separating Rooms 8 and 9 of the Dachau Crematorium. Source: Archives of the Dachau Museum, Folder Krematorium Baracke X.

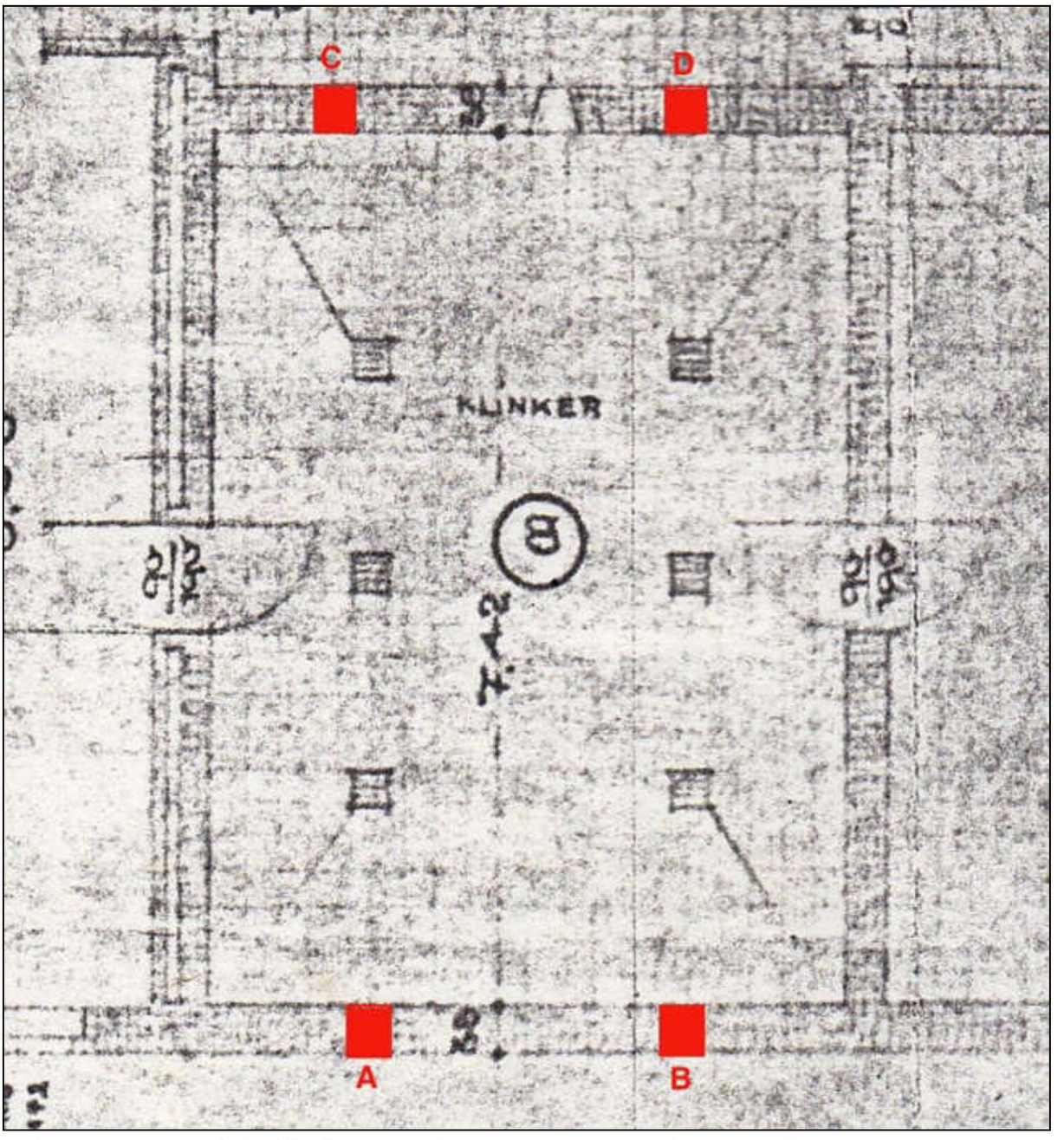


Document 41: Diagram of the Dachau "gas chamber." Source: http://www.hdbg.de/dachau/pdfs/16/16_01_05.PDF.

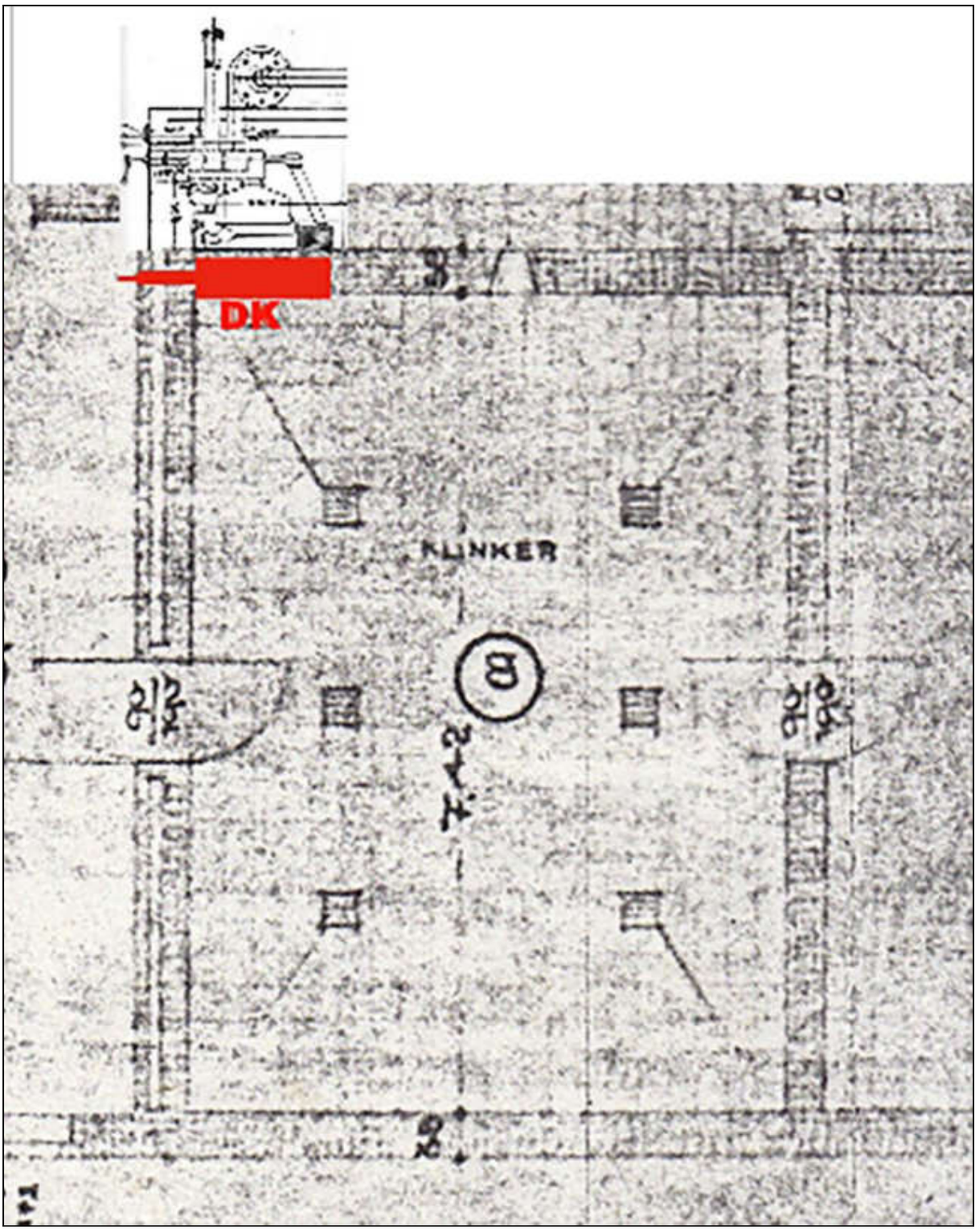


Document 42: One of the two hatches of the Dachau "gas chamber." Interior side. Source: http://www.scrapbookpages.com/DachauScrapbook/GasChamber/Exterior02.html.

Document 43: Closing flap of one of the two hatches of the Dachau "gas chamber." Outer side. Source: http://www.scrapbookpages.com/DachauScrapbook/GasChamber/Exterior02.html.

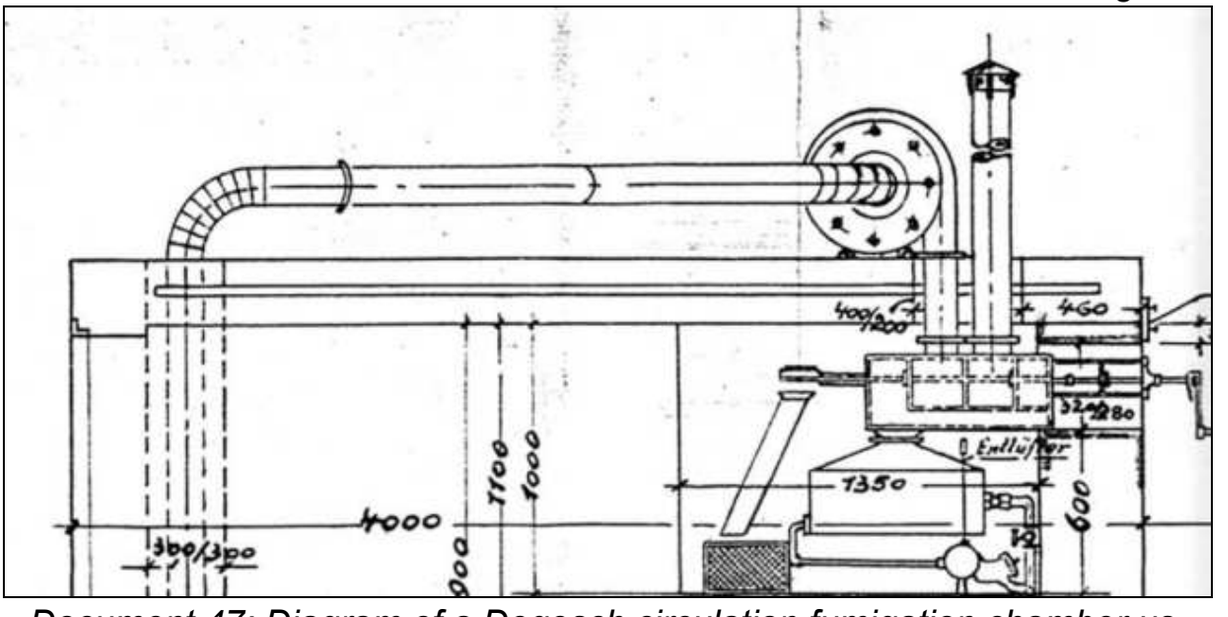


Documents 44 & 45: Original floor plan of the Dachau Crematorium, section enlargement with Room 8. A&B: position of actual hatches; C&D: logical place of Zyklon-introduction hatches. Source: NO-3887.



Document 45: as before, with diagram of Degesch circulation device added.

Document 46: Degesch circulation device in one of four Zyklon-B disinfestation chambers at the Dachau Crematorium in 1990. © Carlo Mattogno.



Document 47: Diagram of a Degesch circulation fumigation chamber using Zyklon B/hydrogen cyanide. Source: RGVA, 502-2-100, p. 19.

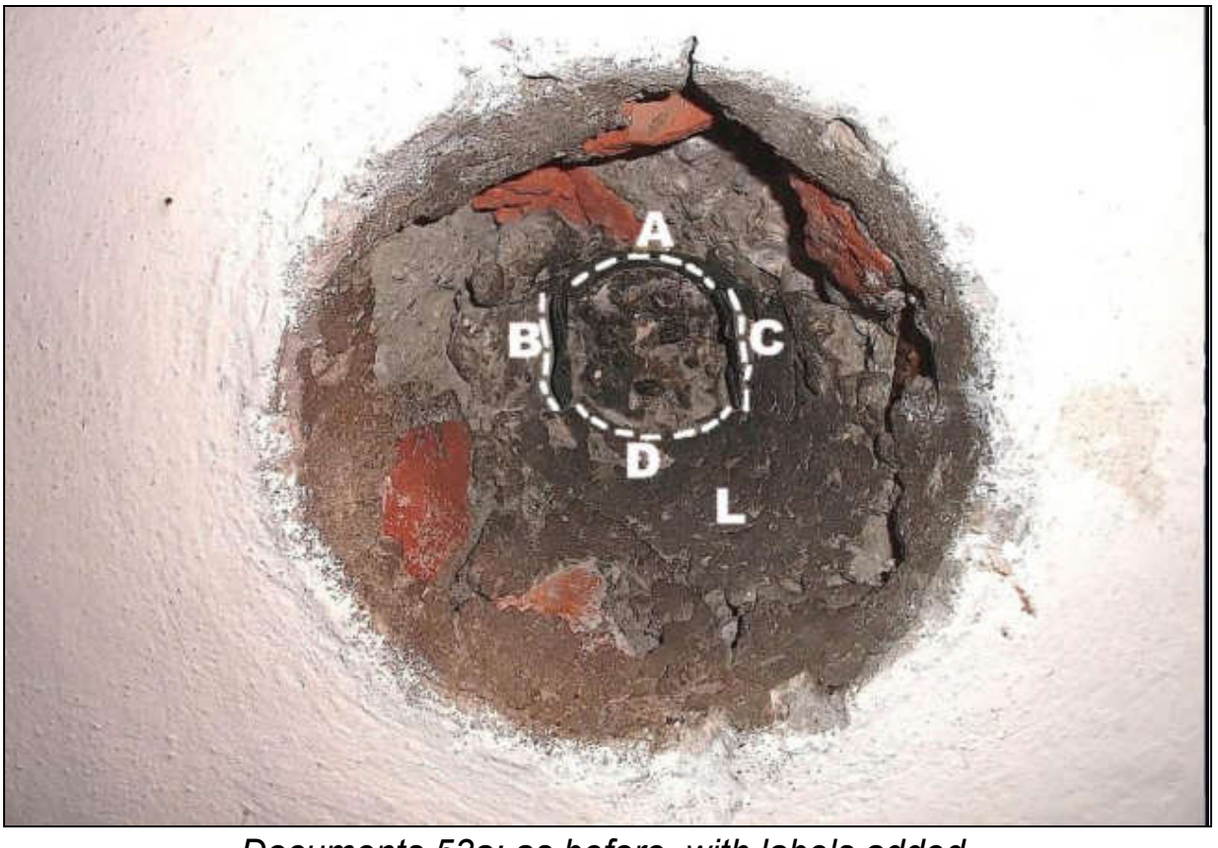
Document 48: Entrance to the Dachau "gas chamber." Source: From the film "Dachau Concentration Camp," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH98iTYLrv4 (2015).

Document 50: Dachau Crematorium, east side, 1945. Source: http://rodoh.info/forum/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=2064&start=70.
(Document 49 is identical with Document 35)

Document 51: Dachau Crematorium, east side, 1945. Source: http://war2.name/daxau-lager/.

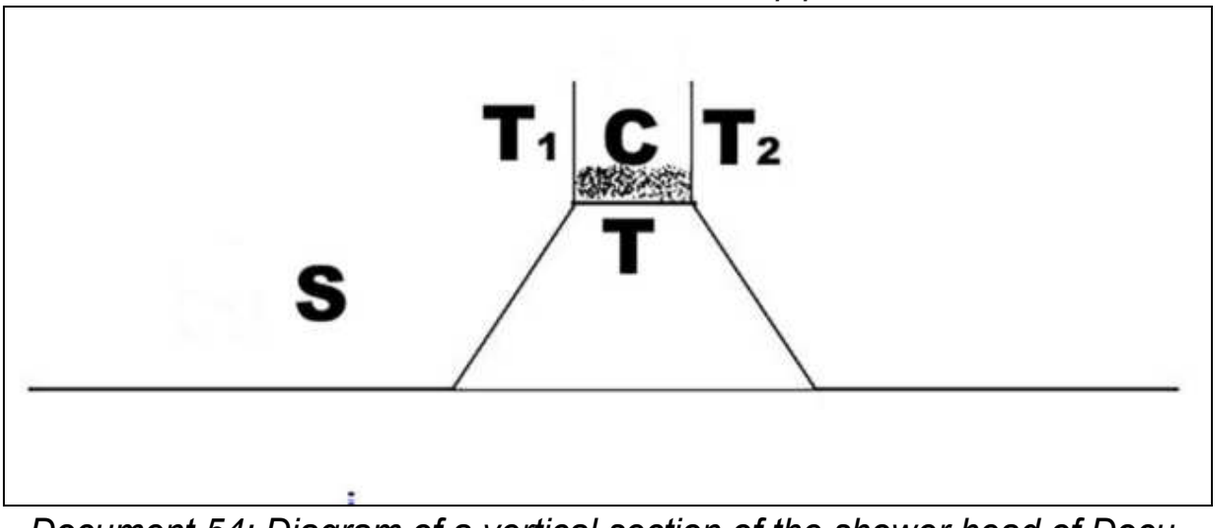
Document 52: Dachau "gas chamber," ceiling. Photo of a showerhead with spray lid removed, 1990. © Carlo Mattogno.

Documents 53, 53a, 53b: Dachau "gas chamber," ceiling. Photograph of the seat of a removed showerhead. Source: Rudolf.

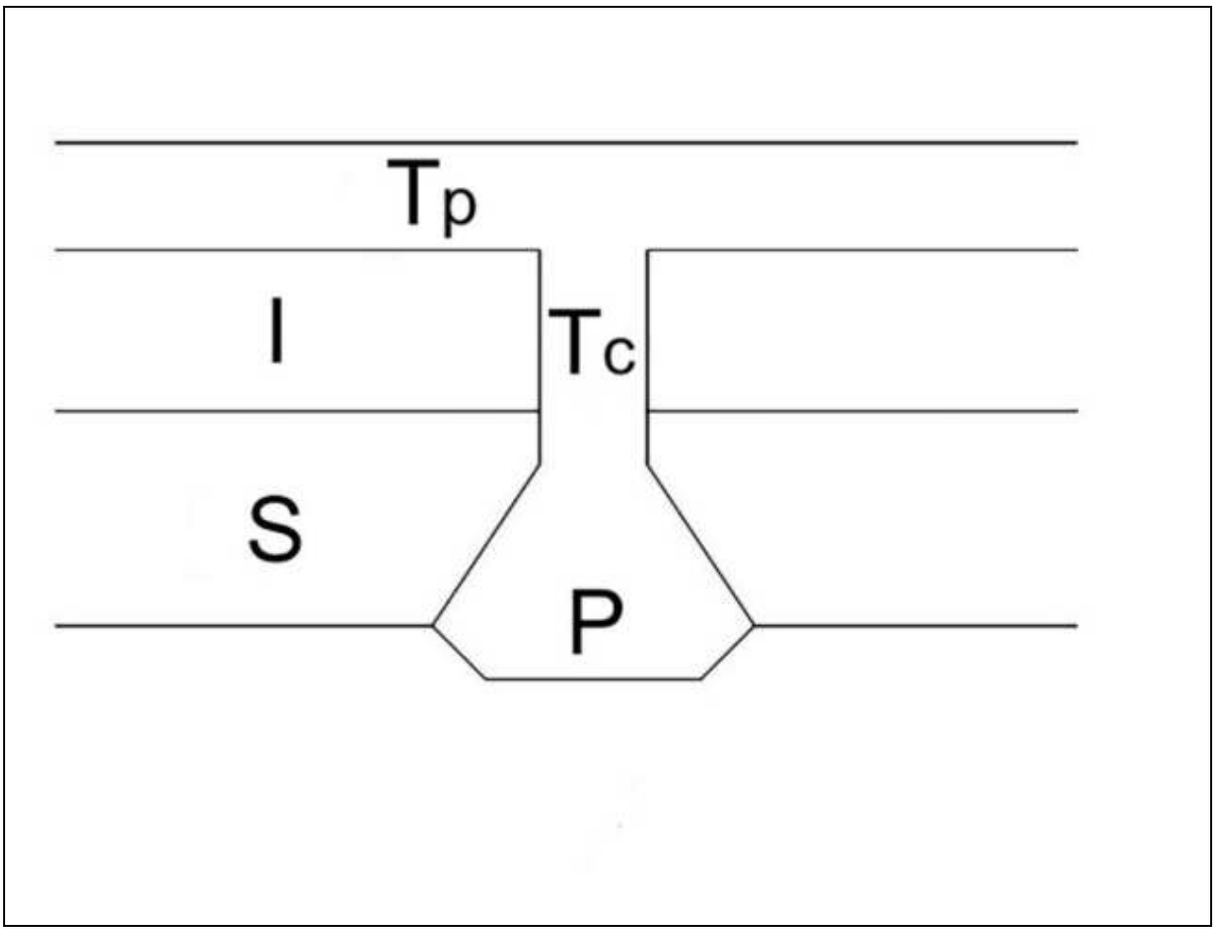


Documents 53a: as before, with labels added.

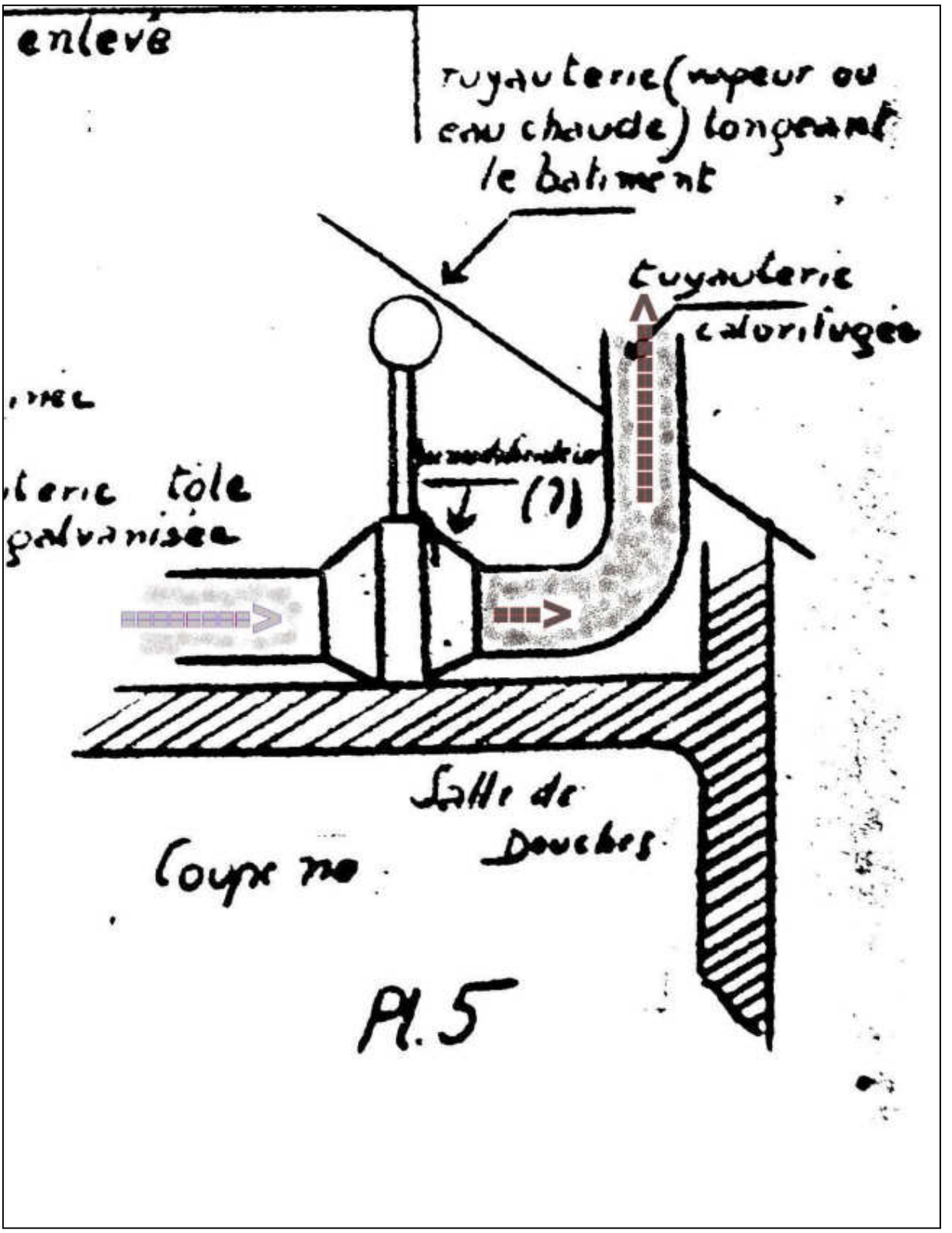
Documents 53b: as before, with water-pipe circle added.



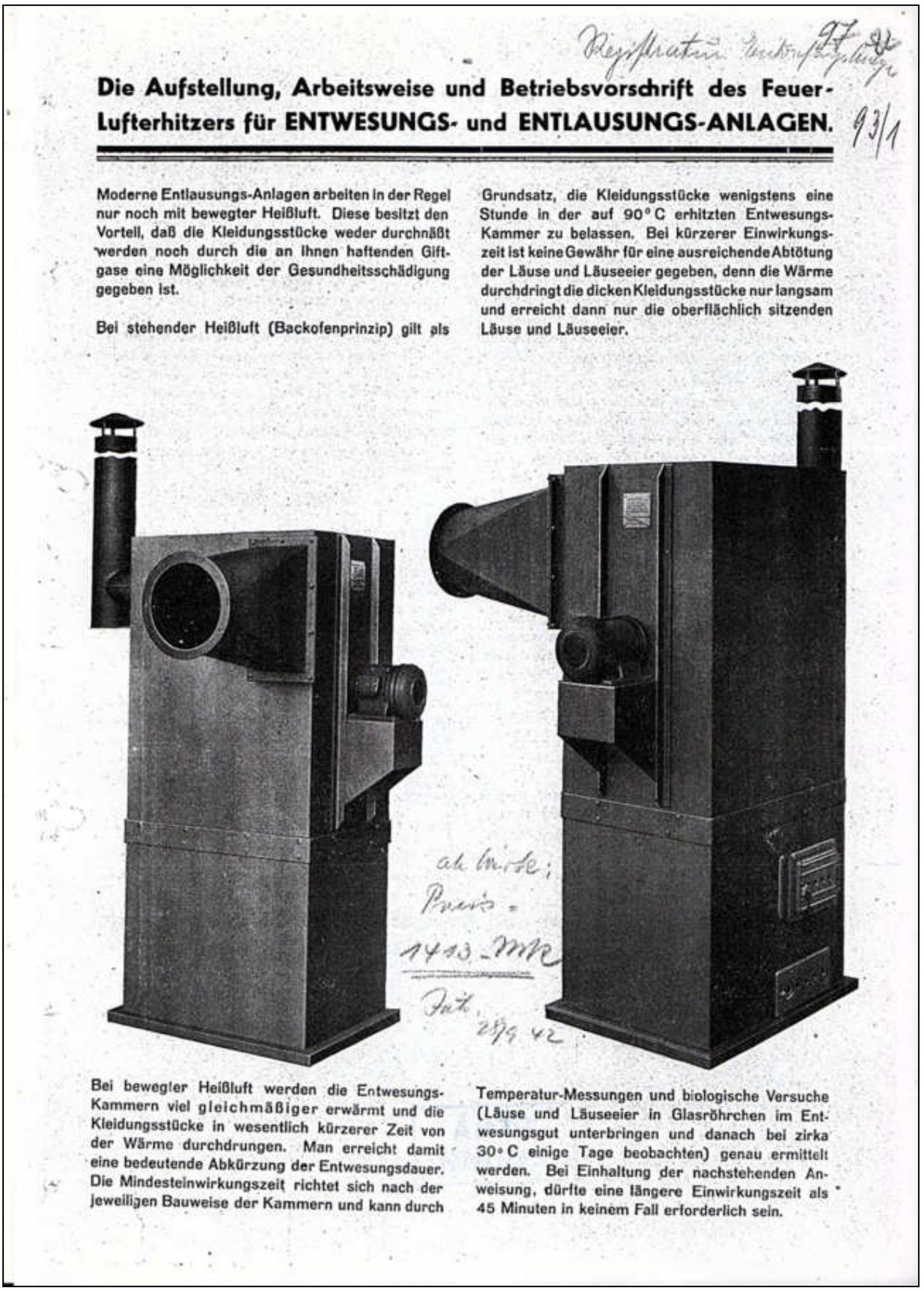
Document 54: Diagram of a vertical section of the shower head of Document 53. Author's drawing.



Document 55: Diagram of a vertical section of a showerhead with hypothetical plumbing above the ceiling of the Dachau "gas chamber." Author's reconstruction.



Document 56: Drawing No. 5 of Captain Fribourg's report, used to show the uselessness of the apparatus as an air heater. Source: as Document 12.



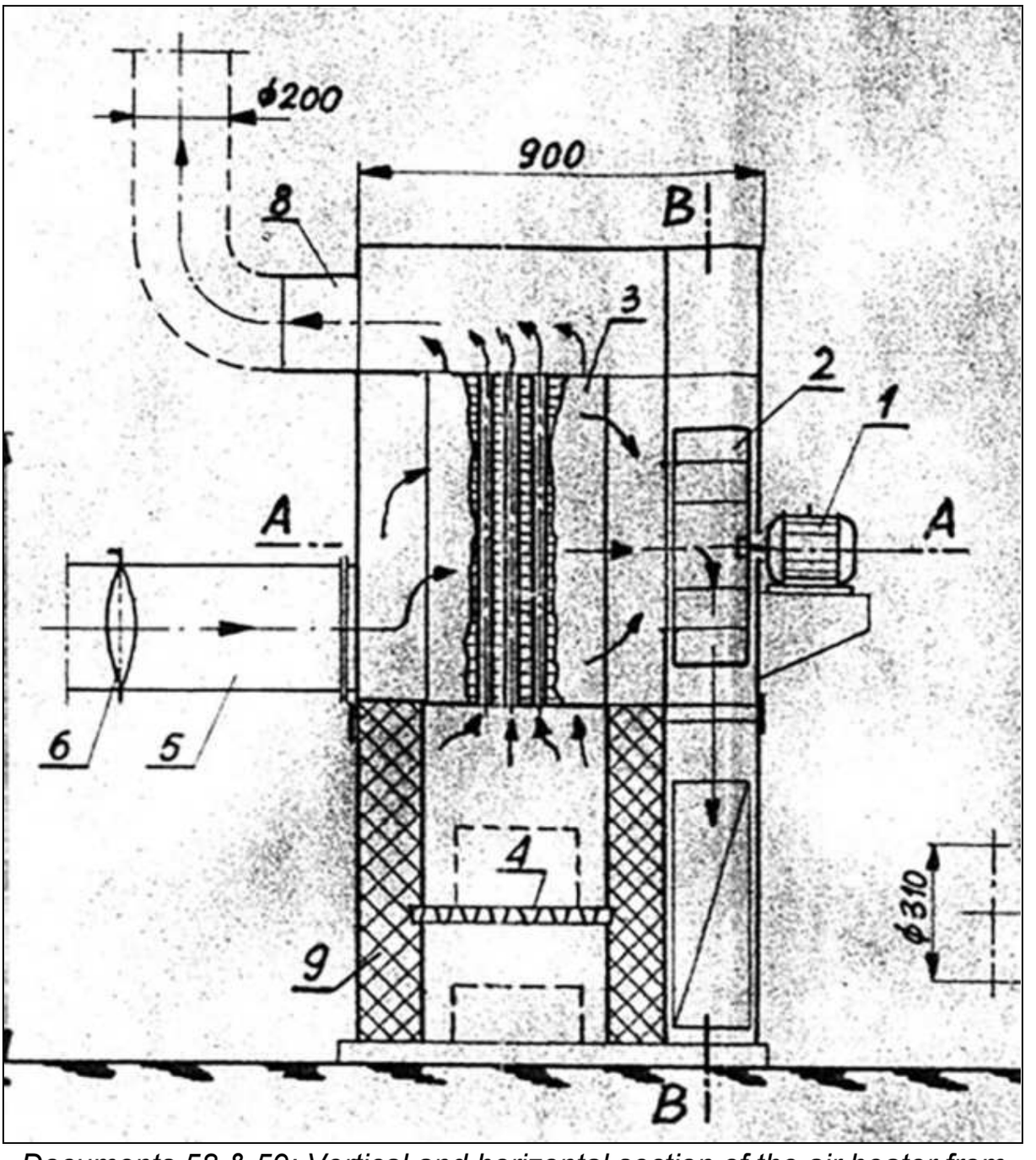
Die Aufstellung, Arbeitsweise und Betriebsvorschrift des Feuer-Lufterhitzers für ENTWESUNGS- und ENTLAUSUNGS-ANLAGEN.

Moderne Entlausungs-Anlagen arbeiten in der Regel nur noch mit bewegter Heißluft. Diese besitzt den Vortell, daß die Kleidungsstücke weder durchnäßt werden noch durch die an Ihnen haftenden Giftgase eine Möglichkeit der Gesundheitsschädigung gegeben ist.

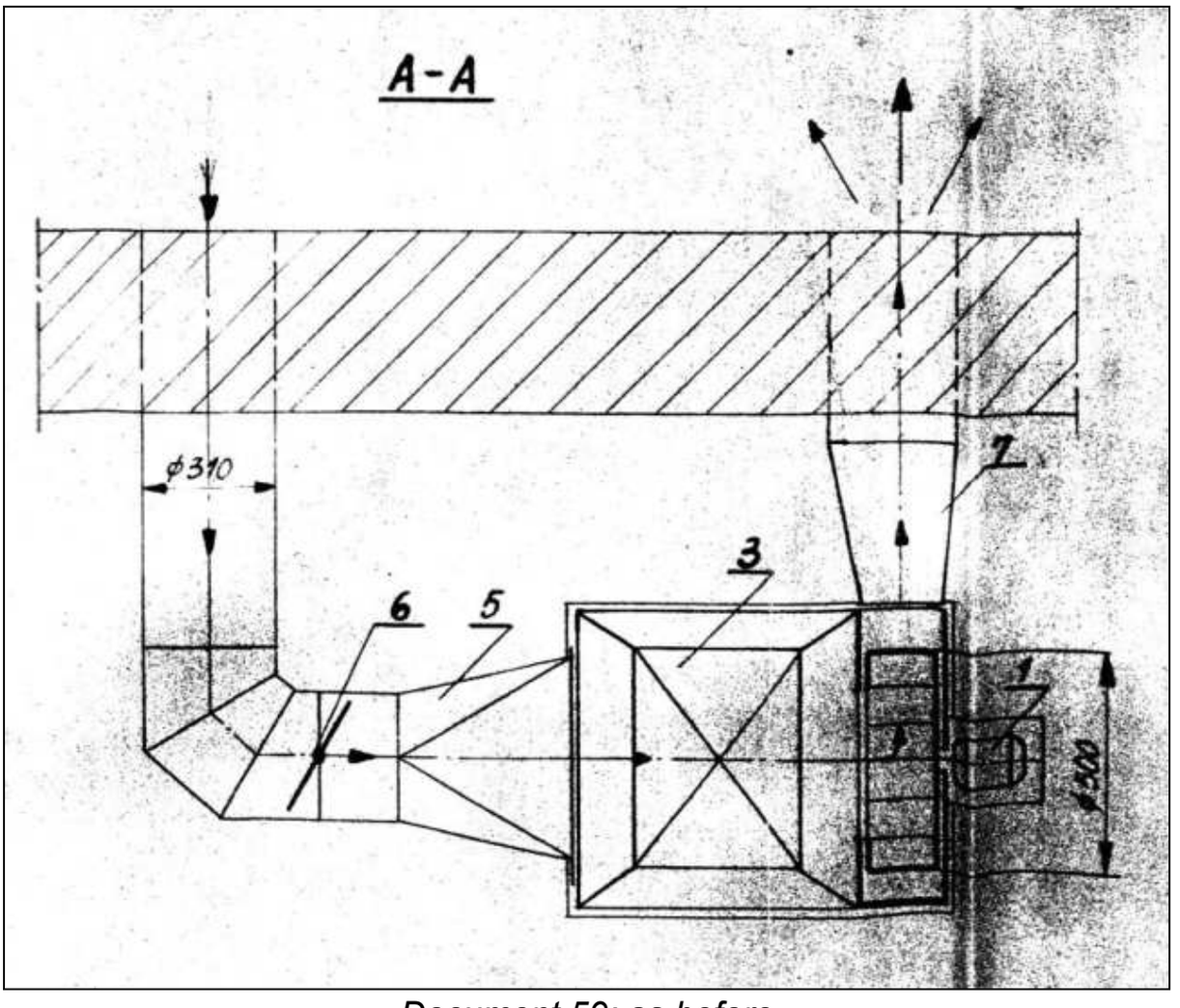
Bei stehender Heißluft (Backofenprinzip) gilt als Grundsatz, die Kleidungsstücke wenigstens eine Stunde in der auf 90° C erhitzten Entwesungs-Kammer zu belassen. Bei kürzerer Einwirkungszeit ist keine Gewähr für eine ausreichende Abtötung der Läuse und Läuseeier gegeben, denn die Wärme durchdringt die dicken Kleidungsstücke nur langsam und erreicht dann nur die oberflächlich sitzenden Läuse und Läuseeier.

Bei bewegter Heißluft werden die Entwesungs-Kammern viel gleichmäßiger erwärmt und die Kleidungsstücke in wesentlich kürzerer Zeit von der Wärme durchdrungen. Man erreicht damit eine bedeutende Abkürzung der Entwesungsdauer. Die Mindesteinwirkungszeit richtet sich nach der jeweiligen Bauweise der Kammern und kann durch Temperatur-Messungen und biologische Versuche (Läuse und Läuseeier in Glasröhrchen im Entwesungsgut unterbringen und danach bei zirka 30° C einige Tage beobachten) genau ermittelt werden. Bei Einhaltung der nachstehenden Anweisung, dürfte eine längere Einwirkungszeit als 45 Minuten in keinem Fall erforderlich sein.

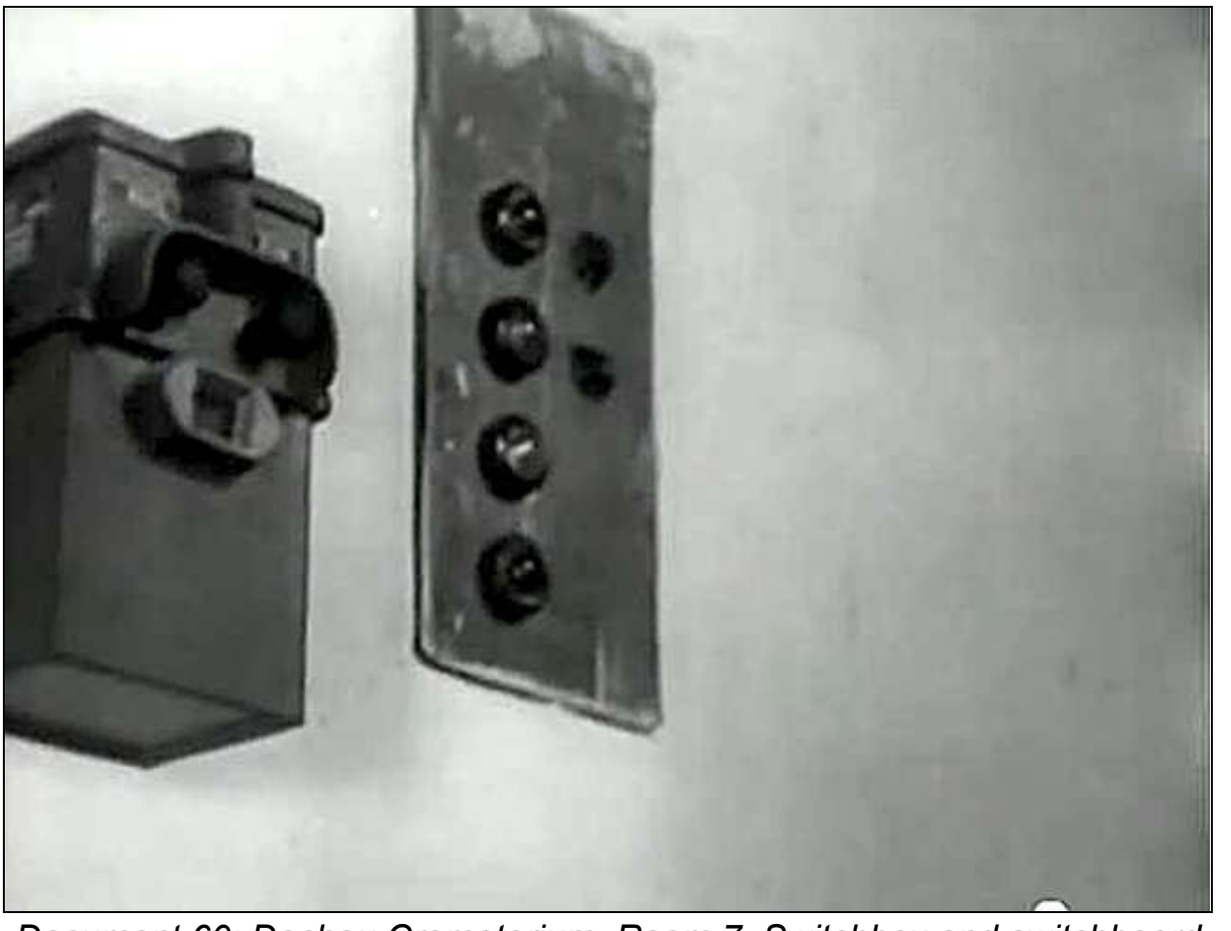
Document 57: Air heater from the Theodor Klein Company of Ludwigshafen, 1940s. Source: RGVA, 502-1-332, p. 97.



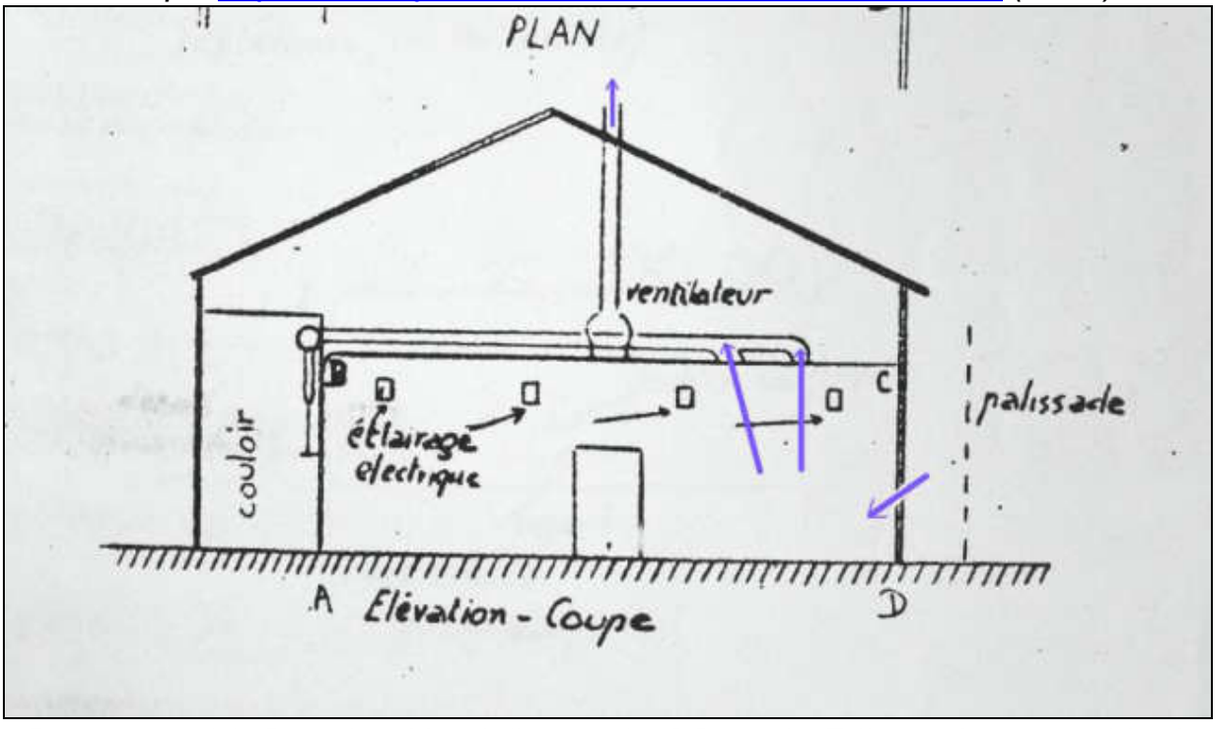
Documents 58 & 59: Vertical and horizontal section of the air heater from the Theodor Klein Company of Ludwigshafen. Source: see note 27.



Document 59: as before

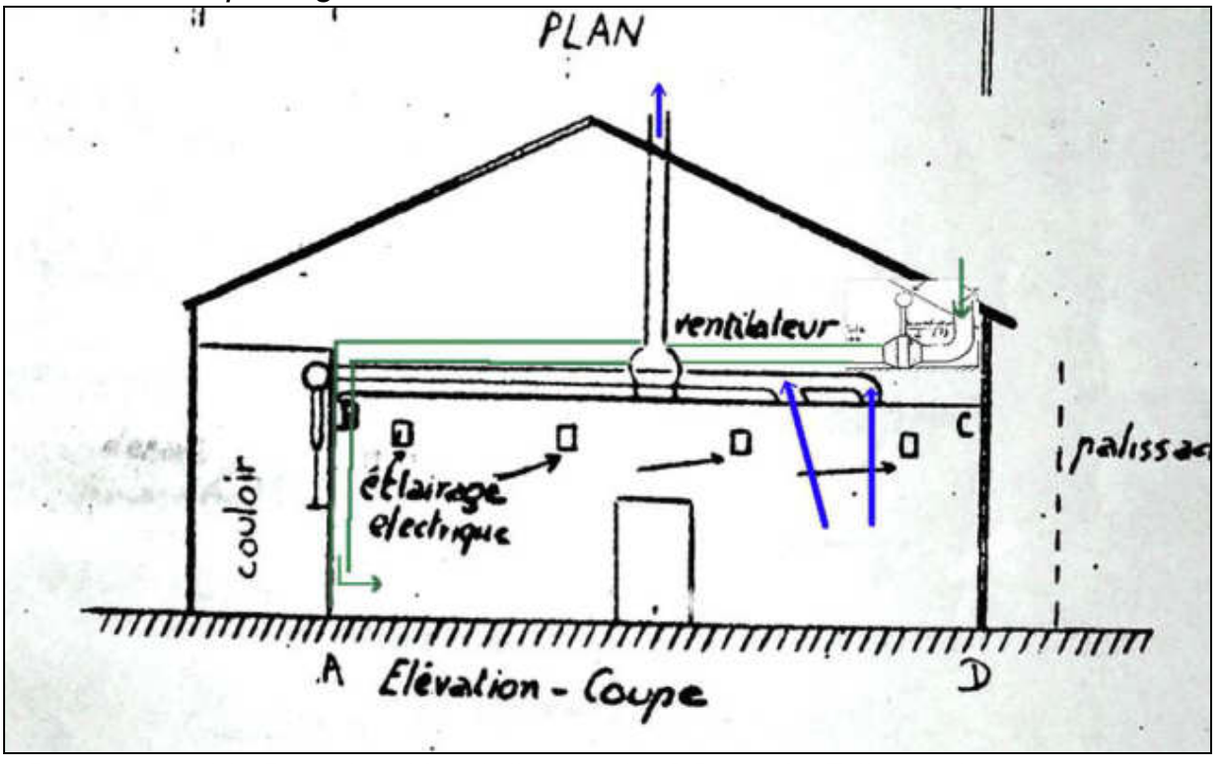


Document 60: Dachau Crematorium, Room 7. Switchbox and switchboard with four indicator lights. Source: From the film "Dachau Concentration Camp," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH98iTYLrv4 (2015).

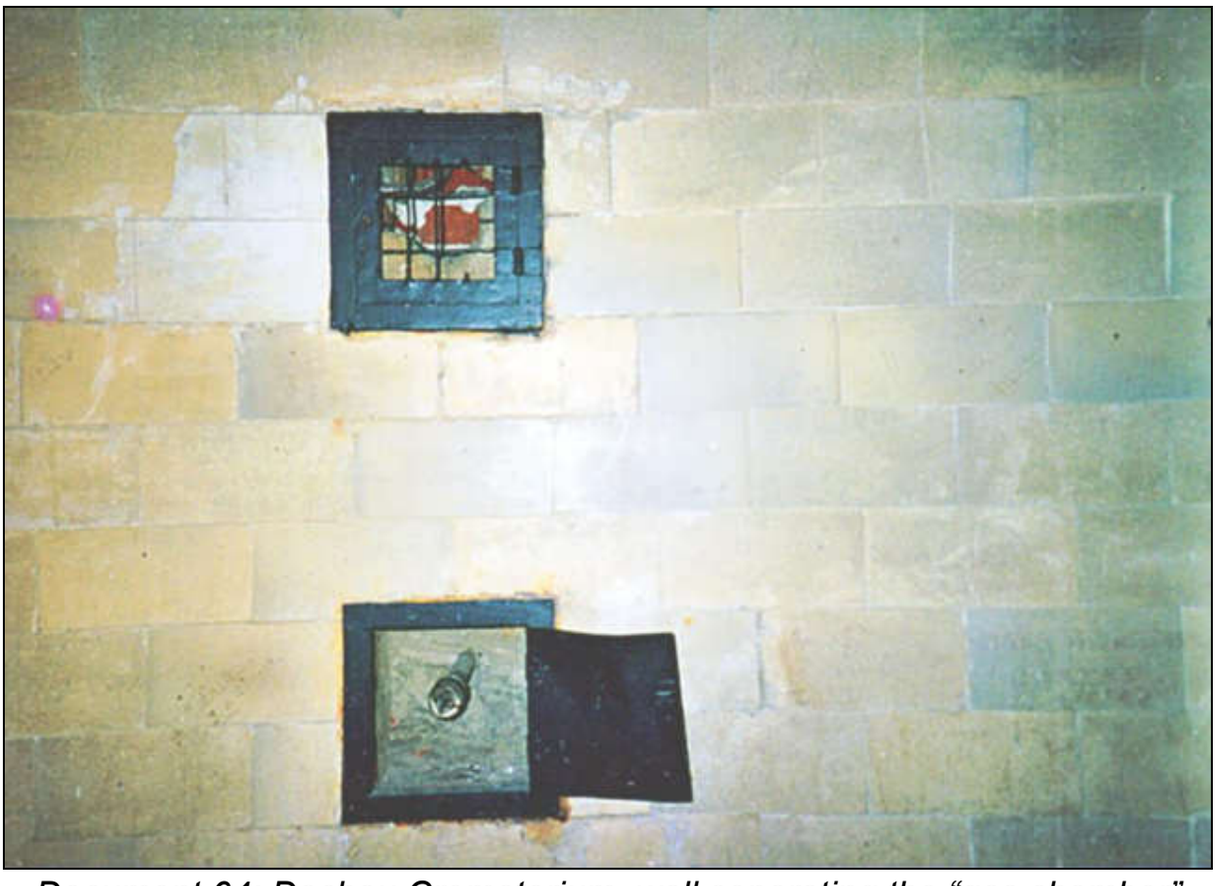


Document 61: Drawing No. 1 (bottom) of Captain Fribourg's report. Vertical section of the Dachau "gas chamber." Air movement indicated by arrows added. Source: as Document 11

Document 62: Dachau Crematorium, Room 7, remains of the observation opening between Rooms 7 and 8. Source: Rudolf.



Document 63: Drawing No. 1 (bottom) of Captain Fribourg's report. Vertical section of the Dachau "gas chamber," showing an operable layout of a ventilation system, with heated-air intake and air-extraction. Source: as Document 11)



Document 64: Dachau Crematorium, wall separating the "gas chamber" from Room 7. At the top the outlet of the observation opening, with the other side shown in Document 62.

Technische Einzelheiten über die Kori'schen Kalorifere Typus II

Diese werden in 10 Größen hergestellt mit Leistungen von 38000 bis 115000 WE. Für **Großraumheizungen** vereinigt man gewöhnlich zwei oder mehrere Apparate zu einer Heizgruppe und erreicht damit Leistungen bis zu 1 000 000 WE. Es lassen sich aber auch mehrere Heizgruppen innerhalb eines **großen Hallenkomplexes** zusammenstellen unter Beanspruchung des denkbar kleinsten Raumes für die Heizkammern. Dadurch eignen sich die **Typus II-Öfen** ganz besonders für **Druckluftheizungen** mit dem Vorzug einer verkürzten Anheizzeit und gesteigerter Wärmeabgabe.

Die Abbildungen nach Fig. 4 und 5 zeigen die innere Bauart der Öfen Typus II. Im Feuerherd erhalten diese ein starkes Schamottefutter aus Formsteinen; nur die Öfen Nr. 6 e und 6 f besitzen ausgemauerte Feuerherde. Gemeinsam für alle Ofengrößen ist aber der obere Aufbau mit der Übergangsrolle UR, dem inneren Heizzylinder H, dem Kopfstück mit den Heizkästen K und dem Ringkanal RK. Am letzteren befindet sich der Rauchabgangsstutzen RR.

Die geschickte Anordnung der einzelnen Ofenteile beschleunigt den Auftrieb der Feuerungsgase vom Feuerherd durch den Heizzylinder nach den strahlenförmig angeordneten Heizkästen. Auf diesem Wege erhöhen sich, besonders durch die starke Abstrahlung vom Zylinder auf den Ringkanal, die Abzugstemperaturen gleich beim Anheizen des Ofens und bewirken die Verstärkung des Schornsteinzuges derartig, daß der Apparat schon nach kurzer Anheizzeit seine **normale Heizkraft** entwickelt. Aber auch die im Innern der Heizkammer höchziehenden Luftmengen müssen zwangsläufig die gesamte Kalorifer-Heizfläche bestreichen, im besonderen die einzelnen Heiztaschen, so daß auch hier sofort der **volle Heizeffekt** eintritt.

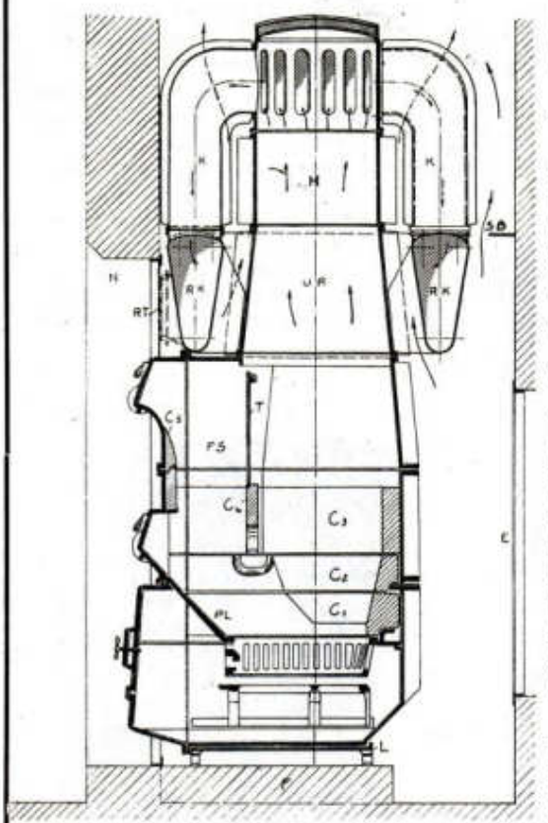


Fig. 4 = Längsschnitt von Größe Nr. 6 b

Buchstaben-Erklärung:

a) für Ofenteile:

L = guß. Lagerring
PL = Abschlußplatte
C 1 = untere Formsteine
C 2 = mittlere Formsteine
C 3 = obere Formsteine
C 4 = Trennplatte für Ofen Nr. 6
C 4 = Abdeckplatte für Ofen Nr. 5
C 5 = Schutzplatte für Ofen Nr. 6
C 6 = Abschlußplatte für Ofen Nr. 5
FS = Füllschacht
T = Trennungsplatte
RT = Reinigungstür
RK = Sammelkanal
UR = Übergangsrolle
H = Heizzylinder
K = Heizkästen
KR = Korbrost
PR = Planrost
Sch = Schlitten
A = Aschkasten

b) für Heizkammer:

F = Fundament
E = Einsteigetür
N = Bedienungsnische
SB = Schnürbleche

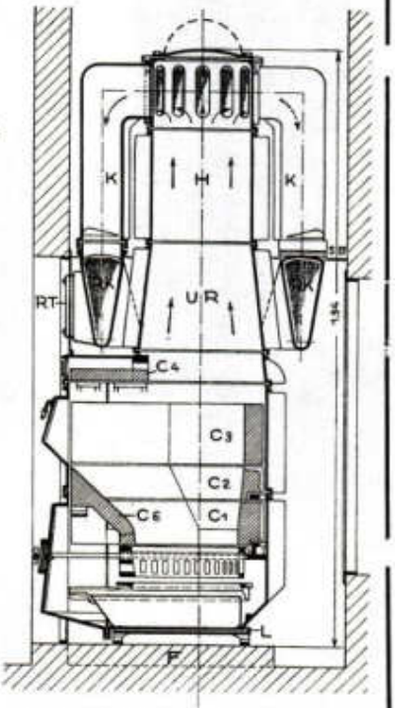


Fig. 5 = Längsschnitt von Größe Nr. 5 b

Größe Nr.	Heizfläche qm	Bauhöhe m	Heizkammer-Grundfläche	Leistung WE stdl. bei natürlichem Luftauftrieb	Leistung WE stdl. bei Ventilatorbetrieb	Gewichte in kg			Gesamtgewicht kg	Preise in RM.
						gußeis. Teile	Formsteine	Verpackung		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
5 b	14,50	1,95	92 × 92	38 000—40 000	50 000— 54 000	690	110	30	830	
5 c	15,50	2,20	92 × 92	43 000—45 000	54 000— 58 000	780	110	30	920	
5 e	16,50	1,95	110 × 110	48 000—52 000	58 000— 62 000	865	130	30	1025	
5 f	17,50	2,16	110 × 110	54 000—57 000	62 000— 66 000	915	130	30	1075	
6 a,n	18,90	1,97	120 × 120	60 000—63 000	67 000 — 71 000	1020	140	30	1190	
6 b/n	19,90	2,30	120 × 120	63 000—66 000	71 000— 75 000	1120	140	30	1290	
6 c/n	22,00	2,30	120 × 120	66 000—69 000	75 000— 79 000	1125	140	30	1295	
6 d/n	22,60	2,58	120 × 120	69 000—73 000	79 000— 83 000	1160	140	30	1330	
6 e	21,00	2,20	120 × 120	73 000—76 000	90 000—105 000	1255	125	25	1405	
6 f	24,00	2,50	120 × 120	76 000—80 000	105 000—115 000	1365	125	25	1515	

ARCHIWUM PAŃSTWOWEGO MUZEUM

Documents 65-67: Brochure titled "The Newest Kori Type II Heaters." Source: APMM, Sygn. VI-9a, Vol. 1.

H. KORI G.M.B.H.

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KORI'S neueste KALORIFERE

TYPUS II

Fig. 1 – Typus II Nr. 5b

sind die bewährtesten **Luftheizapparate** für **Klein- und Großraumheizungen** mit und ohne **Ventilatorbetrieb,** verwendbar wie nebenstehend für:

Fig. 2 – Typus II Nr. 6a n

Fabrik-, Turn- und Sporthallen, Ateliers, Festräume, Vereins- und Tanzsäle, **Lichtspieltheater, Kinos,** Maschinenhallen, Werkstätten, Lokschuppen, Flugzeughallen, Exerzierhäuser, Reitbahnen, **Klein- und Großgaragen,** Ausstellungsbauten und Messehallen, Lagerhäuser und Baracken, Treppenhäuser, Vorhallen, Aborträume, Unterkunfts-, Übernachtungs- und Wochenendhäuser, Einfamilienhäuser und kleine Villen, **Dome, Kirchen und Friedhofskapellen**

Fig. 3 – Typus II Nr. 6c

Die besten Apparate für **Heizungs-, Lüftungs-** und **Klima-Anlagen,** immer betriebsbereit und geräuschlos arbeitend, stets zuverlässig in der Funktion und können nicht einfrieren.

Sie lassen sich auf dem denkbar kleinsten Raum anordnen und besitzen, **weil nur aus Gußeisen hergestellt,** im Gegensatz zu schmiedeeisernen Kaloriferen eine unverwüstliche Stabilität. Einfache Bedienung, gute Reinigungsmöglichkeit.

Fachgemäße Beratung und Ausführung durch:

KORI

Die älteste Spezialfirma für Bau und vollständige Lieferung von **Kalorifer-Luftheizungs-, Lüftungs- und Klima-Anlagen**

Documents 66: as before

Kori'sche Großraumheizungen mit und ohne Ventilatorbetrieb!

Die Kori'schen Kalorifere Typus II gehören zu den Allesbrennern. Außer hochwertigen Brennstoffen wie Koks, Anthrazit, Öl usw. können auch Holz und Fabrikationsabfälle aller Art verfeuert werden. Der Minderverbrauch an Brennstoffen bei Anlagen mit Ventilatorbetrieb beträgt im **Durchschnitt – 20 %.**

Die Anschaffungskosten der Luftheizungen für Großräume mit **Kori'schen Kaloriferen** betragen für 1 cbm Raum:
a) bei natürlichem Luftauftrieb RM 0,60
b) bei Ventilatorbetrieb RM 0,80
Demgegenüber kosten Dampfheizungen je nach Umfang und Ausstattung der Anlagen RM 1,50 bis 2,50 je 1 cbm Raum.

Zur Beheizung der 1600 cbm großen Garage werden bei Ventilatorbetrieb stdl. 4800 cbm Warmluft gebraucht. Der Warmluftverteilungskanal liegt im Fußboden. Der Warmluftaustritt erfolgt in 1 m Höhe gegen den Kühler. Beim Stillstand des Ventilators entweicht die warme Luft durch die Hilfsöffnungen bei 8.

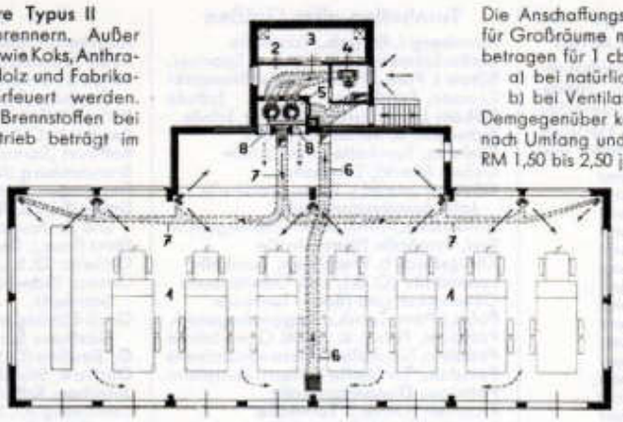
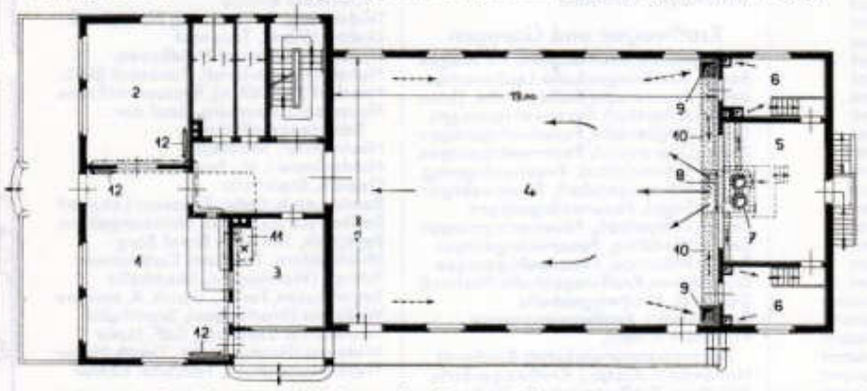


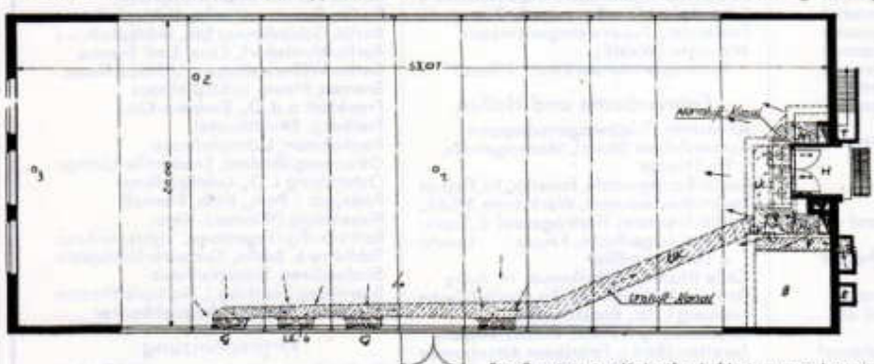
Fig. 6 zeigt eine Garage oder Kraftfahrzeughalle **für 7 Wagen.**

Bedeutung der Zahlen in Fig. 6:
1 = Garage
2 = Heizraum
3 = Kohlenbunker
4 = Gebläsekammer
5 = Heizkammer m. Ofen
6 = Umluft- und Frischluftkammer
7 = Warmluft-Rohrleitung
8 = Hilfsöffnungen für Warmluft



Bedeutung der Zahlen in Fig. 7:
1 = Gastzimmer
2 = Vereinszimmer
3 = Wirtschaftsküche
4 = großer Saal
5 = Bühne 5 × 6 ½ m
6 = Ankleideraum
7 = Heizkammer mit Kalorifer u. d. Bühne
8 = Warmluftaustritt
9 = Umluftgitter
10 = Umluftkanal
11 = Küchenherdkessel
12 = Heizkörper

Fig. 7 zeigt eine Kalorifer-Luftheizungsanlage mit natürlichem Auftrieb für einen 1650 cbm großen Tanz- und Festsaal mit Bühne und Nebenräumen. Die Heizkammer liegt unter der erhöhten Bühne, das Warmluftaustrittsgitter innerhalb der Bühnenbrüstung und der Umluftkanal in der Raumecke. **Leistung 36000 WE mit Kalorifer-Ofen Typus II Nr. 6.** Die Nebenräume 1, 2 und 3 erhalten eine eigene Etagen-Warmwasserheizung.



Bedeutung der Buchstaben in Fig. 8:
O 1 = Exerzierhaus oder Sporthalle 53 × 20 m
H = Vorraum darunter Heizkeller
B = Brennstoffraum
T = Treppe z. Heizraum
F = Frischluftkanal
E = Schacht f. Brennstoff
V = Ventilator
W 1 = Warmluftschächtem.
W 2 = oberem Luftaustritt
UK = Umluftkanal
LK = Luftkammer
G = Umluftgitter

Fig. 8 zeigt eine Kalorifer-Luftheizungsanlage mit Ventilatorbetrieb für ein 6100 cbm großes Exerzierhaus, welches auch als Sporthalle dient, sowie für Großkundgebungen. Innentemperatur bis + 15° C. Wärmebedarf bis 286000 WE. Eingebaut wurden **3 Kalorifere Typus II Nr. 6d mit 71 qm Heizfläche.** Die Heizkammer liegt unter der Vorhalle, der Umluftkanal im Hallenfußboden. Die Warmluft entströmt aus den Schächten W 1 und W 2 in Kopfhöhe.

Vorzüge:	Vorzüge:	Vorzüge:	Vorzüge:
1. Kräftige, gedrängte Bauart des Ofens aus Gußeisen. 2. Niedrigste Bauhöhe. 3. Starkwandige Feuerherde mit Chamotteausfütterung. 4. Anordnung der Rauchstutzen nach 4 Seiten. 5. Schnell und leicht auswechselbare Rostanlage.	6. Kürzeste Anheizdauer auch nach Betriebsunterbrechung. 7. Sofortige Betriebsbereitschaft. 8. Einfachste Handhabung und Bedienung. 9. Stärkste Heizwirkung weil Heizkästen vertikal stehen. 10. Beste Raudhgasausnutzung.	11. Leichte Reinigung aller Ofenzüge und Teile. 12. Anpassung an alle Raumverhältnisse. 13. Geringster Platzbedarf. 14. Anordnung frei im Raum, m. Ofenschirm od. i. Heizkamm. 15. Höchstleistung bei schwachem Schornsteinzug.	16. Anpassung an jeden Brennstoff, auch, wenn minderwertig. 17. Keine Zugerscheinungen. 18. Keine unnöt. Verteuerung. 19. Niedrigste Anschaffungskosten, kürz. Amortisation. 20. Billigster Betrieb trotz Höchstleistungen.

Documents 67: as before

Archive Abbreviations

APMM: *Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum na Majdanku*, Archives of the Majdanek State Museum, Lublin

GARF: *Gosudarstvenny Arkhiv Rossiyskoy Federatsii*, State Archive of the Russian Federation, Moscow

RGVA: *Rossiysky Gosudarstvenny Voyenny Arkhiv*, Russian State Military (War) Archive, Moscow

YVA: *Yad Vashem Archives*, Jerusalem

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Slightly revised 4th edition

HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS · VOLUME 8

TREBLINKA

EXTERMINATION CAMP OR TRANSIT CAMP?

CARLO MATTOGNO & JÜRGEN GRAF

Treblinka

Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?

CAVEAT: The first two editions of the present book appeared in 2004 and 2005. Since that time, the authors have found a wealth of additional documents and testimonies. Many of them are discussed in the 2021 study *The "Operation Reinhardt" Camps Treblinka, Sobibór, Bełżec: Black Propaganda, Archeological Research, Expected Material Evidence* by Carlo Mattogno. Readers interested in a more-thorough study of the present topic are advised to also consult this study, which can be downloaded as a PDF file free of charge at www.HolocaustHandbooks.com (Volume 28). Most of the new insights presented in that book were not included in the present slightly expanded edition. However, we have included an update on "Modern Forensics at Treblinka" starting on page 311.

Castle Hill Publishers

Treblinka

Extermination Camp
or
Transit Camp?

Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf

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Cover illustrations: top: Treblinka model by Yaakov Wiernik, located in the Ghetto Fighters' House Museum, Israel (Dr. Avishai Teicher, 7 May 2013, https://commons.wikimedia.org, museum surroundings removed); bottom left: Treblinka Memorial, close-up (Adrian Grycuk, 29 June 2013, *ibid.*); bottom right: Treblinka Memorial plaque; background: Treblinka memorial, from a distance (Adrian Grycuk, *ibid.*, sky removed) – a large portion of the campgrounds has been paved over with concrete, and 17,000 rocks, reminiscent of tombstones, have been placed there.

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Introduction

According to official historiography, several million Jews were killed by poison gas in six National-Socialist camps during the Second World War.

Two of these camps, Auschwitz and Majdanek, are supposed to have originally been established as normal concentration camps, but later served as 'extermination camps'[1] as well, in which the able-bodied Jews were used in forced labor, while those unable to work were gassed. Furthermore, as the official historical version would have it, there were four 'pure extermination camps,' namely Treblinka, Sobibór, Bełżec, and Chełmno (Kulmhof), serving the exclusive purpose of annihilating Jews. Except for a handful of 'labor Jews,' who were necessary for keeping the camp in operation, all Jews transported there, regardless of age or state of health, were murdered without any record being made of them.

Treblinka, Sobibór, and Bełżec, often designated in the literature as "camps of Operation Reinhardt,"[2] were located in the east of the General Gouvernement, thus in German-occupied Poland. In these three camps, mass murder was supposedly committed in stationary gas chambers by means of exhaust gasses from diesel engines. On the other hand, in Chełmno, situated northwest of Lodz, gas vehicles were supposed to have served as murder weapons. According to the official version of history, in all four 'pure extermination camps' the corpses of the murdered were initially buried in enormous mass graves, but later, when it became clear that the military defeat of the German Reich was impending, exhumed and burned in the open air.

The claims regarding mass murder and the disposal of bodies are based entirely and exclusively upon eyewitness testimony. Documents from these camps are almost completely missing, which the official version of history explains by saying that either the National Socialists did not compile any or – in the case that documents did exist – they destroyed them in time, enough not to leave behind any proof of their atrocities. For the same reason, it is claimed, Treblinka, Sobibór, Bełżec, and Chełmno were also totally destroyed before the German retreat. In fact, the visitor finds almost no tangible traces at the sites where these camps once were.

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1 The German equivalent of this term – *Vernichtungslager* – does not appear in a single German document of the war period.

2 The original of this term, sometimes spelled Reinhardt and sometimes Reinhard, is not clear. This operation, whose purpose consisted, in part, of the confiscation of Jewish property, may owe its name to the State Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, Fritz Reinhardt, or to Reinhardt Heydrich, both spelled with dt.

Under these circumstances, an historian who wishes to check the picture of the four 'pure extermination camps' outlined here with scientific methods sees himself confronting a far more difficult task than a researcher who has set himself the same goal with respect to Auschwitz or Majdanek. The latter can study the documents of the camp administration, which are available in great number; he can examine the facilities – some of them preserved in undamaged condition, others in ruins – which according to the prevailing notion served as gas chambers for killing human beings, to see whether their structure was suited for such a function and whether the crematoria were capable of turning into ashes the number of bodies claimed. All of these possibilities are denied to the historian of the 'pure extermination camps.'

The theme of the present study is Treblinka, which was situated not far from the hamlet of the same name, approximately 80 km northeast of Warsaw. Treblinka is without a doubt the best known of the four 'pure extermination camps'; in public consciousness, imprinted by media reports, it has become one of the darkest hallmarks of the 'Holocaust,' second only to Auschwitz.

The Treblinka Camp consisted of two camps, Treblinka I and Treblinka II. It is undisputed that Treblinka I served purely as a labor camp. The alleged 'extermination camp' bore the designation Treblinka II. This was about 4 km distant from the village of the same name, less than 2 km from the Bug River; it was on the train line running from Ostrów Mazowiecki to Siedlce, which intersected with the more important railway line from Warsaw to Białystok at the Małkinia Station. All three of the alleged 'eastern extermination camps' were erected in a border zone: Treblinka near the border between the General Gouvernement and the Białystok region, Sobibór not far from the border between the General Gouvernement and the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine, and Bełżec between the district of Lublin and the district of Galicia.

Treblinka II was situated in an area that was by no means particularly remote, and it concealed few secrets. The train line leading from the village of Treblinka to Siedlce ran at a distance of only 300 meters from the camp, parallel to the nearby road; a branch of this train line led to the camp, and from there to the labor camp Treblinka I. Scarcely two kilometers farther on is the village of Wólka Okrąglik; in the opposite direction, approximately 2 km distant from Treblinka I, were the hamlets of Grady and Poniatowo.[3]

If one believes the testimony of eyewitnesses, lively contacts existed between the camp inmates and the local populace, with whom a barter trade flourished. The Polish peasants "came with the aim of doing business";[4] they brought the prisoners all kinds of food, which they exchanged for gold:[5]

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3 See Document 1 in Appendix.

4 Witness statement by Samuel Willenberg, in Alexander Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka*, Holocaust Library, New York 1979, p. 192.

5 Witness statement by Abraham Krzepicki, in A. Donat, *ibid*., p. 125.

"And so it came to pass that baskets filled with rolls, roasted chickens, cheese, butter, cream, and so forth began to arrive each day at Treblinka."

A little more than 2 km away from Treblinka II, the Germans had established the Treblinka I Camp, where prisoners were occupied chiefly in the production of gravel from an enormous pit.

The few material traces of Treblinka II,[6] which still existed at the arrival of the Soviets in August 1944, were completely removed during the course of the years and no longer exist today. From 1959 until 1964, Treblinka attained its present form: a large sector of the camp ground was embedded in concrete and 17,000 cement blocks reminiscent of grave monuments[7] were erected there. In the center, a gigantic monument of stone[8] was built. At the entrance to the camp, stones proclaim in several languages that here "more than 800,000 Jews" were killed between July 1942 and August 1943.[9] Concrete railroad ties, flanked by a platform likewise made of concrete, symbolize the train tracks and the train platform of the camp.[10] Otherwise there is nothing for the eye to see but a meadow rimmed by fir trees.[11]

One reaches the area where Treblinka I once stood by a forest path of some two kilometers length, and along the way one can see the old gravel pit.[12] Shortly before this, one comes upon a small cemetery where Polish prisoners rest who died in the labor camp.[13] In an area of the former camp ground, surrounded by a forest of fir trees,[14] concrete foundations can be found, approximately 12 m × 60 m in dimension, upon which former camp barracks stood.[15]

In Section 3 of Chapter III, the reader will find a detailed description of the area in which Treblinka I and Treblinka II were located.

From time to time during the immediate postwar period, there was talk of up to three million people having been murdered in Treblinka II.[16] The two most important standard works of contemporary 'Holocaust' historiography mention the number of victims as 750,000 (Raul Hilberg),[17] or as 870,000 (*Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*).[18]

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6 See Chapter III.
7 See Photo 1 in the Appendix.
8 See Photo 2 in the Appendix.
9 See Photo 3 in the Appendix.
10 See Photo 4 in the Appendix.
11 See Photo 5 in the Appendix.
12 See Photo 6 in the Appendix.
13 See Photo 7 in the Appendix.
14 See Photo 8 in the Appendix.
15 See Photo 9 in the Appendix.
16 This number was given by, for example, Wassili Grossmann in *Die Hölle von Treblinka*, Verlag für fremdspachige Literatur, Moscow 1946 (see Chapter 1).
17 Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, 3 vols., Holmes & Meier, New York 1985, p. 893, 1219.
18 Israel Gutman (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, 4 vols., Macmillan, New York 1990,

The last named standard work, the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, contains a summary of the official picture of the Treblinka Camp, which we reproduce in the following excerpt:[19]

> *"*[Treblinka] *was situated in a sparsely populated area near Malkinia, a railway station on the main Warsaw-Białystok line; the camp's precise location was 2.5 miles (4 km) northwest of the village and railway stop of Treblinka. The site selected was heavily wooded and well hidden from view. A penal camp, known as Treblinka I, had been set up nearby in 1941; Poles and Jews were imprisoned there, working in quarries*[20] *from which they extracted materials used in the construction of fortifications on the German-Soviet border.*[21] *The extermination camp was established as part of AKTION REINHARD* [Operation Reinhardt]*; work on it began in late May and early June of 1942 and was completed on July 22 of that year. The project was carried out by German firms, using inmates of Treblinka I and Jews brought in from neighboring towns. In addition to the camp structures and gas chambers, a branch railway track, leading from the camp to the nearby railway station, was constructed. Huge pits were dug within the camp grounds to be used as mass graves.*
>
> *The camp was laid out in a rectangle 1,312 feet wide by 1,968 feet long (400 x 600 m),* […].
>
> *The extermination area, called the 'upper camp' by the Germans, was in the southeastern part. Covering an area of 656 by 820 feet (200 x 250 m), it was completely fenced in and separated from the rest of the camp. In this area was a brick building containing three gas chambers, each measuring 13 by 13 feet (4 x 4 m). An adjoining shed housed a diesel engine that produced the carbon monoxide for the chambers. The gas was introduced by way of pipes attached to the ceilings of the gas chambers that ended in what looked like shower heads, to create the impression that the chambers were merely bathhouses. In the building a hallway led to each of the three gas chambers; inside each, facing the entrance, was a second door through which the dead bodies were removed. At a distance of 492 to 656 feet (150-200 m) from the gas chambers, to the east of the building, lay the huge trenches in which the bodies were interred. A narrow path, fenced in on each side and camouflaged with tree branches, led from the reception area to the extermination area. It was along this path, nicknamed the 'pipe,' or 'tube' (*Schlauch*), that the Jews, now naked, were driven to the gas chambers.*

Vol. 4, p. 1486.

19 *Ibid*., pp. 1481-87.

20 More correct would be: 'In a gravel pit.'

21 The last half sentence was omitted in the German version, Vol. 1, p. 1427, as there was no German-Soviet border during that time. The German version also correctly states that the camp was built under the aegis of the "*SS-Zentralbauleitung Warschau*."

The camp's first commander was SS-Obersturmführer Irmfried Eberl. In August 1942 he was replaced by SS-Obersturmfuhrer Franz STANGL, the former commander of Sobibór. The German staff, numbering between 20 and 30 SS men, all of whom had taken part in the EUTHANASIA PROGRAM, held the command and administrative positions in the camp. A Ukrainian company consisting of 90 to 120 men served as camp guards and security personnel. They had the tasks of ensuring that no Jews would escape and of quashing any attempt at resistance. Some of the Ukrainians were given other duties, including the operation of the gas chambers. Most of them were Soviet prisoners of war who had volunteered to serve the Germans and had been enlisted and trained for their duties at the TRAWNIKI camp. [[22]…]

Groups of Jewish prisoners were employed on construction work as well, which proceeded even while the extermination process was in operation. They were also kept busy cutting tree branches in the adjoining woods and using them for camouflage, as well as on other jobs. These prisoners were taken from the incoming transports, put to work for a few days or weeks at the most, and then selected out and killed, their places taken by new arrivals. […]

The Treblinka extermination process was based on experience the Germans had gained in the BEŁŻEC and Sobibór camps. An incoming train, generally consisting of fifty to sixty cars (containing a total of six thousand to seven thousand persons), first came to a stop in the Treblinka village railway station. Twenty of the cars were brought into the camp, while the rest waited behind in the station. As each part of a transport was due to enter the camp, reinforced Ukrainian guard detachments took up position on the camp railway platform and in the reception area. When the cars came to a stop, the doors were opened and SS men ordered the Jews to get out.

A camp officer then announced to the arrivals that they had come to a transit camp from which they were going to be dispersed to various labor camps; for hygienic reasons, they would now take showers and have their clothes disinfected. Any money and valuables in their possession were to be handed over for safekeeping and would be returned to them after they had been to the showers. Following this announcement, the Jews were ordered into the 'deportation square.'

At the entrance to the square, the men were ordered into a barrack on the right and the women and children to the left. This had to be done on the run, with the guards shouting at them, driving them on, and beating them. The women and children were made to enter a barrack on the left side of the square, where they had to undress. Beginning in the fall of 1942, the

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[22] The Trawniki Camp, situated southeast of Lublin, served among other purposes as a training site for the concentration camp personnel.

women's hair was shorn at this point, behind a partition that was put up for this purpose. From the barrack, they entered, naked, the 'pipe' that led to the gas chambers. Women and children were gassed first, while the men were kept in the deportation square, standing naked and waiting until their turn came to enter the 'pipe.' Once the victims were locked inside the gas chambers, which had the appearance of shower rooms, the diesel engine was started and the carbon monoxide poured in. In less than thirty minutes, all had died of asphyxiation. Their bodies were removed and taken to the trenches for burial. […]

A group of two hundred to three hundred, kept apart from the other Jewish prisoners, was employed in the extermination area, on such tasks as removing the corpses from the gas chambers, cleaning the chambers, extracting the victims' gold teeth, and burying their bodies. When the practice of cremating the bodies was introduced in the spring of 1943, with the aim of removing all traces of the mass murder that had been committed in Treblinka, this group of prisoners was charged with the task.

The Germans soon realized – as they previously had at Bełżec and Sobibór – that the bottleneck in the extermination process at Treblinka was the limited capacity of the gas chambers, which covered an area of no more than 57 square yards (48 sq m). It was therefore decided to increase the number of gas chambers, and ten more were built between the end of August and the beginning of October 1942, with a total area of 383 square yards (320 sq m). They were inside a brick building that had a hallway down the center and five doors on each side, each door leading to a gas chamber. A second door in each chamber could be opened only from the outside and was used to remove the corpses. The capacity of the new gas chambers was more than sufficient for the entire human load of twenty railway cars at one time. […]

The mass extermination program at Treblinka went into effect on July 23, 1942, and the first transports to reach the camp were made up of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto. Between that date and September 21, 254,000 Jews from Warsaw and 112,000 from other places in the Warsaw district were murdered at Treblinka, making a total of 366,000 from the district. From the Radom district 337,000 Jews were murdered, and from the Lublin district 35,000, most of them before the winter of 1942-1943. […] *From the Białystok district, over 107,000 Jews were taken to Treblinka to be killed, most of them between November 1942 and January 1943.*

Jews from outside Poland were also killed at Treblinka. From Slovakia, 7,000 Jews who had first been deported to ghettos in the Generalgouvernement were murdered in the summer and fall of 1942; from THERESIENSTADT*, five transports brought 8,000 Jews in the period from October 5 to October 25, 1942. From* GREECE*, over 4,000 Jews who had first been deported from their homes in* THRACE *to Bulgaria came in the latter half of*

March 1943; and from MACEDONIA, the part of Yugoslavia that Bulgaria had annexed, 7,000 Jews were murdered in Treblinka at the end of March and the beginning of April 1943. From Salonika, at least one transport of 2,800 Jews came at the end of March 1943.

A total of 29,000 Jews from countries other than Poland were murdered at Treblinka. Two thousand GYPSIES as well were among the victims there. The mass extermination program continued until April 1943, after which only a few isolated transports arrived; the camp had fulfilled its function.

In late February and early March of 1943, Heinrich HIMMLER visited Treblinka; following this visit, in accordance with his orders, an operation was launched to burn the bodies of the victims. The mass graves were opened and the corpses were taken out, to be consumed by the flames of huge pyres (the 'roasts'). The bones were crushed and, together with the ashes, were reburied in the same graves. This burning of corpses in an effort to obliterate traces of the killings was continued until the end of July 1943. On its completion, the camp was shut down, in the fall of 1943. A total of 870,000 people had been murdered there. […]

Several efforts at resistance were made in Treblinka, both by individuals and by entire transports, […] *At the beginning of 1943, a resistance group was formed among the inmates.* […]

When the burning of the bodies was nearing completion and it was clear that both the camp and the prisoners were about to be liquidated, the leaders of the underground resolved that the uprising must not be postponed any longer. A date and time were fixed: the afternoon of August 2, 1943. […] *those resistance members who had arms in their hands opened fire at the SS men and set some of the camp buildings on fire. Masses of prisoners now tried to storm the fence and escape from the camp; they were fired at from all the watchtowers and most of them were hit, falling in or near the fence area. Those who succeeded in getting out of the camp were apprehended and shot by additional German security forces who had been alerted to the scene and, pursuing the escaped prisoners, combed the surrounding area. Of the approximately seven hundred and fifty prisoners who had tried to make their escape, seventy survived to see liberation.*

Most of the camp structures, except for the gas chambers, were made of wood and went up in flames. Of the prisoners who were left, some were killed on the spot, while the rest were made to demolish the remaining structures and fences and obliterate the traces of the activities that had taken place at the camp. When this work was over, these prisoners too were shot. The grounds were plowed under and trees were planted; the camp was turned into a farm, and a Ukrainian peasant family was settled there."

Such is the account of the Encyclopedia of the Holocaust.

We have set ourselves the task of subjecting the portrait of the 'extermination camp' of Treblinka as summarized above to a critical examination, and should it not stand up to this examination, of offering an alternative thesis regarding the real function of the camp.

Jürgen Graf is responsible for the Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 5, and the Conclusions. Carlo Mattogno bears responsibility for all of the remaining chapters.

We express our sincere gratitude to Prof. Robert Faurisson, Mark Weber, and Dr. Miroslav Dragan for sending important material and/or suggestions regarding publications germane to our subject.

It was originally planned to include the results of the ground radar investigations in this book as carried out at Treblinka by Engineer Richard Krege16. However, in view of the significance of the subject as well as the expansion of the ground radar investigations to the camps Bełżec and Auschwitz, it was decided to treat this topic in a work of its own, which will be published by the same publishers as this work.

Our book is dedicated to our late friend, certified engineer Arnulf Neumaier, a tireless fighter for the historical truth, whose article "The Treblinka Holocaust," published in the anthology *Dissecting the Holocaust*, represents a milestone in the scientific research of this camp.

Part 1:
Treblinka: A Critical Analysis of the Official Version

Chapter I:
The Description of Treblinka in Historiography

1. Treblinka in Orthodox 'Holocaust' Literature

An historian normally makes a sharp distinction between books of non-fiction and novels. In the case of the orthodox literature on Treblinka, *i.e.*, that supporting the thesis of the mass extermination in gas chambers, this distinction is hardly possible: even advocates of the official account of Treblinka who lay claim to scholarship must, in view of the total absence of material and documentary evidence, necessarily rely upon witness testimony, the value of which will be dramatically demonstrated to the reader by the following examples. For this reason, we have forsworn any attempt at making such a distinction in our chronological overview of the most important works, which have appeared since 1945 and are dedicated entirely or in part to the Treblinka Camp.

a. Vassili Grossmann

We begin with the publication *Treblinka Ad* (The Hell of Treblinka) by the Soviet-Jewish author Vassili Grossmann (also spelled Vassili Grossman), which appeared in 1945. The work was not available to us in book form, but rather in the form of a marked-up manuscript that we found in a Russian archive.[23] It is not dated, but it emerges from the context that it must have originated at the end of 1944 or beginning of 1945. A French[24] as well as a Polish[25] version appeared in 1945 under the titles *L'enfer de Treblinka* and *Piekło Treblinki*, respectively. Likewise, a German version followed in 1945 in a book, which also contained a report by Konstantin Simonov on Majdanek;[26] a sec-

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[23] GARF 7021-115-8, pp. 168-203.

[24] V. Grossman, *L'enfer de Treblinka*, B. Arthaud, Grenoble and Paris 1945. The text is also found in: *Le Livre Noir, Textes et témoignages*, Ilja Ehrenburg, Vassili Grossman (eds.), Actes Sudes, Arles 1995, pp. 868-903. The latter book represents the translation of a Russian original, the publication of which was prohibited by the Soviet government in 1947 and which was first published in 1993 in Vilnius (Lithuania).

[25] Published by Wydawnictwo Literatura Polska, Kattowitz 1945.

[26] *Die Vernichtungslager Maidanek und Treblinka*, Stern-Verlag, Vienna 1945.

ond German edition, reproduced in part by Udo Walendy in No. 44 of his *Historische Tatsachen*,[27] was published in 1946.[16]

A comparison of the Russian manuscript with the foreign-language translations shows that the latter are somewhat longer. Thus the Russian book version, upon which these translations are based, is an expansion of the manuscript in question.

Grossmann's work represents a classic example of atrocity propaganda. We now cite some excerpts from the German 1945 edition:[26]

> *"In Treblinka there were two camps: the labor camp No. 1, in which prisoners of various nationalities, above all Poles, worked, and camp No. 2, the Jewish camp.*
>
> *Camp No. 1 – the work or concentration camp – was located directly next to the sand pit, at the edge of the forest. It was a camp like those, which were established by the hundreds and thousands in the occupied eastern territories by the Gestapo. It began in 1941. As if reduced to one common denominator, the traits of the German character, grotesquely disfigured by the frightful fun house mirror of the Hitler regime, are combined in it.* [p. 27f…]
>
> *The No. 1 Camp existed from autumn of 1941* [until] *July 23, 1944. It was completely liquidated while the prisoners were already in earshot of the dull boom of the Soviet artillery. Early in the morning of July 23, the guard unit and the SS people proceeded to exterminate the camp after they had fortified themselves with schnapps. By the evening all of the prisoners had been murdered – murdered and buried. The Warsaw cabinetmaker Max Lewit was able to save himself, because lying wounded underneath the corpses of his comrades, he had waited for the darkness and crept into the forest. He told how he heard the singing of thirty boys in the pit who struck up the tune 'Song of the Fatherland' before being shot to death; he heard one of the youngsters yell: 'Stalin will avenge us!' He heard the camp favorite Leib, who had led the boys, get up again after falling down into the pit after the volley hit him, and ask: 'Pan*[28] *Guard, they missed; please, once more Pan Guard, once more!'* [p. 29…]
>
> *We know the names of the camp SS men, their characters, idiosyncrasies, we know the camp commander van Eipen, a half-Dutch German, who is an insane murderer, an insatiable libertine, a lover of good horses and fast riding jaunts.* […]
>
> *We know the one-eyed German Swiderski from Odessa, the 'Master Hammerer,' who was regarded as the unsurpassable specialist of 'dry murder,' because within a few minutes he killed with a hammer fifteen children between the ages of eight and thirteen years, who had been designated as un-*

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27 "Der Fall Treblinka," Verlag für Volkstum und Zeitgeschichtsforschung, Vlotho 1990.

28 Polish form of address corresponding to English "Sir" or "Mister" – Translator's note.

fit for labor. We know the skinny, gypsy-like SS man Preifi, nicknamed 'the Old Man,' a taciturn grouch. He sought to dispel his melancholy by sitting behind the place where the camp slops were dumped; he stalked the prisoners who sneaked back there to secretly eat potato peels and forced them to open their mouths and then shot into those widely opened mouths. We know the names of the professional murderers Schwarz and Ledecke. They took delight in shooting at the prisoners returning home in the twilight and murdered twenty of them a day. Thirty, forty men. [p. 29f.]

Such was life in this camp, similar to a miniature Majdanek, and it might seem that there could be nothing worse in the world. But the inmates of Camp No. 1 knew quite well that there was something worse, something a hundred times more horrible than their own camp. Three kilometers from the labor camp, the Germans began in May 1942 the construction of the Jewish camp – the human slaughterhouse. [p. 31…]

For thirteen months the trains came to Treblinka, each train consisting of sixty cars, and on each car a number was written with chalk: one hundred fifty – one hundred eighty – two hundred. These figures indicated the number of people who were in the car. Train workers and peasants secretly counted the trains. One peasant from the village of Wulka (the community situated closest to the camp), the sixty-two-year-old Kazimierz Skarzinski, told me that there were days when six trains ran past Wulka alone, over the Siedlce railway, and that there wasn't one day during the course of these thirteen months that at least one of these trains didn't come through. But the Siedlce line is just one of the four train lines which supplied Treblinka. Lucian Cukowa, a railway repair worker, who the Germans had mobilized for work on the branch line that goes from Treblinka to Camp No. 2, relates that during his work from June 15, 1942, until August 1943, one to three trains came every day from Treblinka Station to the camp over this secondary line. Every train consisted of sixty cars and in each car were no fewer than one hundred fifty persons. We have collected dozens of such statements. Even if we reduced all the numbers, as given by the witnesses, of all those who were on the trains to Treblinka by about a factor of two, the number of people brought to Treblinka within thirteen months nevertheless amounts to approximately three million. [p. 31f.]

In the report on this last tragic train, all witnesses mention the atrocities of an anthropoid creature, the SS man Zepf. He specialized in the murder of children. This creature, who had at his disposal enormous strength, suddenly grabbed a child from out of the crowd and, after he had swung him through the air like a club, smashed in his skull on the ground or tore him right in two. When I heard of this monster, obviously born of a woman, it seemed to me unthinkable and improbable that the acts that were told of him could be true. But after I had personally heard these reports repeatedly from direct eyewitnesses, I saw that they spoke of them as of details,

which were neither unusual nor inconsistent with the entire structure of the Hell of Treblinka, and I believed in the possibility of such a creature. [p. 43…]

The dimensions of the first three chambers were only five by five meters, which means that each had twenty-five square meters. Each chamber was one hundred ninety centimeters high. It had two doors; one admitted the living, the other served for bringing out the gassed corpses. This second door was very wide, approximately two and a half meters. The chambers were mounted upon a common foundation. These three chambers did not correspond to the productive capacity demanded by Berlin in assembly-line murder. […]

The seven hundred prisoners worked five weeks long on the structure of the new large-scale murder business. When the work had reached its peak, an expert came with his staff from Germany and took care of setting things up. The new chambers, ten in all, were symmetrically arranged on either side of a concrete corridor. […]

The new chambers were each seven by eight meters, or fifty-six square meters in area. The total surface area of these ten chambers amounted to five hundred sixty square meters, and if one added to this the area of the three old chambers, which were put into service at the arrival of small parties, then Treblinka had at its disposal a total of usable lethal surface area of six hundred thirty-five square meters. Four hundred sixty to five hundred people were squeezed into one chamber at a time. When fully loaded, therefore, the ten chambers during one operation annihilated an average of four thousand five hundred people. At their most typical loading, the chambers of the Hell of Treblinka were filled at least two or three times every day (there were days when this happened five times). If we intentionally reduce the figures, we are able to calculate that, with a usage of only twice per day of just the new chambers, approximately ten thousand people were murdered in Treblinka on a single day, and about three hundred thousand in a month. Treblinka operated for thirteen months, day after day, but if we allow even ninety days to be deducted for repairs, idleness, untypical transports, there are ten full months of operation. If in one month an average of three hundred thousand people arrive, then within ten months Treblinka exterminated three million people. [p. 47f…]

The duty of the writer is to report a terrible truth, and the citizen's duty as a reader is to learn it. Anyone who turns away, closes his eyes and walks by, desecrates the memory of the murdered. Whoever does not know the whole truth can never grasp against what foe, what monstrosity, the great Red Army took up the deadly struggle. [p. 55…]

We entered the camp of Treblinka at the beginning of September [1944]*, which was thirteen months after the day of the revolt. For thirteen months the Germans had tried to erase the traces of their work.* […]. *And the*

> *earth, giving way under one's feet, is fatty and swollen, as if it had been soaked in a surfeit of linseed oil; the unsolid earth of Treblinka wells up like an eddying sea. This wasteland, surrounded by barbed wire fencing, has consumed more human lives than entire oceans and seas of the globe since the existence of the human race."* (p. 61f.)

In his edifying report Grossmann writes that there were three methods of mass killing: gassing, scalding with hot steam, and suffocation by evacuation of the death chamber by means of vacuum pumps. We shall return to this theme in the following chapter. In any case, the second as well as the third murder method very soon took their leave from history; only the gas chambers have remained. The number of Treblinka victims, postulated several times by Grossmann as three million, was also dropped at that time as being obviously all too incredible, and in the publications that followed writers contented themselves with significantly lower numbers of victims.

b. Rachel Auerbach

In 1946, the Polish Jewess Rachel Auerbach, who had not been interned in Treblinka herself but had supposedly received her information from former inmates, wrote a work in the Yiddish language about the camp, which was published in 1979 in English by Alexander Donat under the title *In the Fields of Treblinka*.[29] Auerbach attacked Grossmann on the basis of the number of three million victims claimed by him. She gives the number of victims with precision as 1,074,000 and writes:

> *"Such places as Treblinka, with their huge mass graves, do not need that sort of odd local patriotism which is expressed by exaggerating the number of victims in order to depict the monstrosity of the mass murders committed there. Believe me, over a million people killed in the course of one year in one little place is a million times more than a million human brains could grasp. And even half a million would be much more than enough."* (p. 55)

This praiseworthy refusal to indulge in any kind of exaggeration aside, the authoress reports, among other things, the following concerning Treblinka:

> *"The floor of the gas chambers was sloping and slippery. The first ones in would slip and fall, never to rise again. Those who followed would topple over them. The chamber was packed to the brim. The people were jammed together so closely that they pushed each other into a standing position. Some witnesses report that the people inside the chambers had to raise their arms and pull in their stomachs so that more could be fitted in. And then, when they stood pressed together, little children were slipped in above their heads like so many bundles.*
>
> *Gas was costly and therefore had to be used economically.*
>
> *At last, the doors were slammed shut.*

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[29] Rachel Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka," in: A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 19-73.

> *The shift was ready to die.*
> *The motor, installed in a workshop near the bathhouse, could be started now. First, a suction pump was brought into play to draw the pure air from the chamber. After that, the pipes to the reservoir of exhaust gas from the motor could be opened.*
> *'A few minutes later,' Jews who had worked in that part of the camp recalled, 'we would hear terrible screams from that building.' The screams of human pain, terror and despair. At the last moment, it seems, when the pumps started to suck out breathable air, all self-control broke, and there was an outbreak of collective hysteria inside the gas chamber.*
> *Later… in due time… all was quiet again…*
> *Perhaps 25 to 45 minutes later, the chutes on the other side could be opened and the corpses tumbled out. The bodies were naked; some of them were white, others were blue and bloated.* [p. 35f…]
> *Therefore, in Treblinka as in other places, children were often thrown live into the fire, or into the regular mass grave. The most important consideration was to conserve bullets or gas whenever possible. It was also believed that children did not die as easily and quickly from a bullet or from gas as adults did. Doctors had given some thought to this matter, and they had concluded that children have better circulation because their blood vessels were not yet hardened."* (p. 38f.)

Auerbach surprises her readers with trail-blazing scientific findings such as the discovery that blood "was found to be a first-class combustion material" (p. 38), and imparts the information that the gassing of many thousands of Jews per day was conducted by "30 to 40 SS-men, and 200 to 300 Ukrainian guards,"[30] by which she provides a record not especially flattering to her co-religionists. Concerning the artistic events and other diversions in Treblinka, she has the following to say:

> *"In order to enliven the monotony of their murderous work, the Germans installed at Treblinka a Jewish orchestra. This was in keeping with the established procedure in other camps. This orchestra had a twofold purpose: first, to drown out, as much as that was possible, the screams and moans of the people being driven to their death in the gas chambers; the second, to provide musical entertainment for the camp staff, who represented two music-loving nations – Germany and the Ukraine! A band was needed also for the frequent entertainments, which were arranged here. In time, a choir was organized, and there were even amateur theater performances, but unfortunately the outbreak of the uprising frustrated the great plans for the advancement of culture and art, which had been concocted for Treblinka.* [p. 44…]

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30 *Ibid*., p. 40.

> *It is said that when Himmler visited Treblinka late in February, 1943 a special 'attraction' should be prepared for him: a party of young women, who had been specially selected for this purpose so that the supreme SS and police chief of the Reich could take aesthetic pleasure in looking at their nude bodies as they demonstrated the workings of the camp, being driven into the 'bathhouse' and then dumped out as corpses…*
> *As the Italian saying goes: '*Se non è vero, è ben trovato*.'"* (p. 48)

The last sentence means: "Even if it's not true, it's well invented." This applies in full compass to Rachel Auerbach's 'factual report' about Treblinka.

c. Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz

Likewise in the year 1946, there appeared in the bulletin of the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland[31] a thirty-page article by Judge Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz under the title "*Obóz zagłady Treblinka*"[32] (The Extermination Camp Treblinka). In the introduction to this work, in which the "preliminary investigations" are described, the author states:

> *"The basis of the evidentiary material, upon which the preliminary investigations rest as represented in the following, is above all the witness statements of thirteen Jews, former prisoners of the camp Treblinka, who managed to escape death by the fact that during the armed revolt of August 2, 1943, they fled the camp. The following are the witnesses: Jankiel Wiernik, Henryk Poswolski, Aron Czechowicz, Abe Kon, Oskar Strawczyński, Samuel Reisman*[33]*, Aleksander Kudlik, Hejnoch Brenner, Stanisław Kon, Eugeniusz Turowski, Henryk Reichman*[34]*, Szyja Warszawski and Leon Finkelsztejn."*

As supplementary evidence, Łukaszkiewicz mentions the statements of eleven Polish railway workers as well as railroad records, from which the number of prisoners brought to Treblinka supposedly derive, and coins and documents excavated from the grounds of the camp as well as the results of forensic investigations and land surveys.[35] But the declarations of the thirteen Jewish witnesses are the sole basis of proof for the claimed mass extermination.

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31 Out of consideration for the allied Communist East German state later renamed 'Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitler Crimes in Poland' and, after the collapse of the Communist regime, 'Main Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish People.'

32 Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz, "Obóz zagłady Treblinka," in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, No. 1, Posen 1946, pp. 133-144.

33 More often spelled as Rajman.

34 This witness later called himself Yehiel Reichman(n). He appeared as a prosecution witness against John Demjanjuk at the Jerusalem trial. Cf. Chapter V.

35 Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *op. cit.* (note 32), p. 133.

According to Łukaszkiewicz, there were *two*[36] gas chambers in Treblinka in the beginning, to which ten more were added later. The murders were committed with engine exhaust gas. The bodies were burned under the open sky; 2,500 were placed upon open grates at a time and turned into ashes. In the camp hospital, the Germans and their Ukrainian assistants killed large numbers of prisoners by a shot in the back of the neck; old people, the infirm, and children without relatives were led off directly after their arrival at the hospital and shot. At least 731,600 people were murdered in Treblinka, but the total number of victims was in reality higher.[37]

In the same year, therefore still in 1946, Z. Łukaszkiewicz compiled a significantly more detailed report about the camp under the title "*Obóz straceń w Treblince*" (The Execution Camp in Treblinka), which to some extent marked the transition from pure atrocity propaganda à la Grossmann and Auerbach to an account, which purported to be scientific.[38] Accordingly, the style is also much more sober than is the case with Grossmann and Auerbach, and descriptions of patent impossibilities are rarer. Nevertheless, this work also bears the quite unmistakable stamp of propaganda and possesses but slight scientific value. Łukaszkiewicz tersely gives the number of victims of the camp as 800,000; nearly all of the murdered were Jews, but a certain number of Poles and Gypsies were also killed.

The details given by Łukaszkiewicz correspond in all essential points to the Treblinka version endorsed by the Western orthodox 'Holocaust' historians.

d. Nachman Blumental

An eighteen-page report about Treblinka also appeared in Poland in 1946, part of a collection of documents titled *Dokumenty i Materiały* and edited by N. Blumental, a member of the Jewish Central Historical Commission.[39] The report consists of an introduction as well as reports of two former Jewish prisoners of the camp, Szymon Goldberg and Samuel Rajzman. We will later cite excerpts from these reports.

e. Marian Muszkat

In 1948, one Marian Muszkat prepared a 'documentation' in Poland for the UN Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes, in which Treblinka was mentioned and in which several former inmates of the camp were quoted.[40] As

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[36] Later *three* gas chambers were spoken of at first.

[37] Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *op. cit.* (note 32), p. 142.

[38] Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *Obóz straceń w Treblince*, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warsaw 1946.

[39] "Treblinka," in: Wydawnictwo Centralnej Żydowskiej Komisji Historycznej (ed.), *Dokumenty i Materiały*. Tom I: *Obozy*, revised by N. Blumental, Lodz 1946, pp. 173-195.

[40] *Polish Charges against German War Criminals*, submitted to the United Nations War Crimes Commission by Dr. Marian Muszkat, Warsaw 1948. Treblinka is discussed on pp.

a sample we quote here an excerpt from the 'experience report' by witness Jan Sułkowski:[41]

> *"The Germans built a so-called 'death-bridge' which consisted of a scaffold 3-4 metres high. The German* [Lampert] *picked out some Jews and ordered them to climb on to the bridge. During the climbing the Jews were shot at. If there was a Jew who, by some miracle, succeeded in climbing right to the top he would be ordered to take off the shoes and to hold them over his head. This acrobatic trick was very difficult to perform as the whole scaffold was rocking. Then the Jew would be shot. I saw myself the SS men indulging in this 'innocent' game."*

Eyewitness Leon Finkelsztejn relates:[42]

> *"Bilitz Alfred and Gens Adolf stood at the entrance to the gas chambers and cut women's breasts off with long knives."*

Two further eyewitnesses, Hejnoch Brenner and Zygmunt Blacherski, had also seen how Bilitz cut off women's breasts.[42] – At the Jerusalem trial of John Demjanjuk, there was no more mention of Alfred Bilitz and Adolf Gens; it was the defendant Demjanjuk who was accused of having stood at the entrance of the gas chamber(s) and hacking off the breasts of women by choice with a dagger or a sword whenever he pleased.[43]

After the appearance of this 'documentation,' there was a long period of silence insofar as the topic of Treblinka was concerned, and for a full 18 years indeed, no book, not even a noteworthy article, appeared about the camp. It was not until 1966, after the great Frankfurt Auschwitz trial, that eyewitnesses and chroniclers again announced their intention to be heard.

f. Jean-François Steiner

In 1966, the French-Jewish author Jean-François Steiner – with the assistance of the ghost-writer Gilles Perrault – published a novel[44] allegedly based upon the statements of former prisoners with the title *Treblinka*,[45] which represents a most particularly repulsive example of the copious gutter literature shaped by pathological fantasies about National Socialist concentration camps, but which has nonetheless been highly rated by prominent figures like Simone de Beauvoir.

187-196.

41 *Ibid*., p. 194.

42 *Ibid*., p. 195.

43 See Chapter V.

44 Steiner admitted 20 years after the first publication of *Treblinka* that his book amounts to a novel and that the novelist Gilles Perrault helped him with his written record (*Le journal du dimanche*, March 30, 1986). Reference from Robert Faurisson.

45 Published by Librairie Arthème Fayard, Paris.

An English translation was published the following year under the title *Treblinka*.[46] A passage, in which Steiner describes the burning of bodies in Treblinka, may serve as a sample:[47]

> *"Blonde and slight, with a gentle face and a retiring manner, he arrived one fine morning with his little suitcase at the gates of the kingdom of death. His name was Herbert Floss, and he was a specialist in the cremation of bodies.* […]
>
> *The first bonfire was prepared the next day. Herbert Floss then revealed his secret: all the bodies did not burn at the same rate; there were good bodies and bad bodies, fire-resistant bodies and inflammable bodies. The art consisted in using the good ones to burn the bad ones. According to his investigations – and judging from the results, they were very thorough – the old bodies burned better than the new ones, the fat ones better than the thin ones, the women better than the men, and the children not as well as the women but better than the men. It was evident that the ideal body was the old body of a fat woman. Floss had these put aside. Then he had the men and children sorted too. When a thousand bodies had been dug up and sorted in this way, he proceeded to the loading, with the good fuel underneath and the bad above. He refused gasoline and sent for wood. His demonstration was going to be perfect. The wood was arranged under the grill of the pyre in little piles which resembled camp fires. The moment of truth had come. He was solemnly handed a box of matches. He bent down, lit the first fire, then the others, and as the wood began to catch fire he walked back with his odd gait to the group of officials who were waiting a little way away.*
>
> *The mounting flames began to lick at the bodies, gently at first, then with a steady force like the flame of a blow torch. Everyone held his breath, the Germans anxious and impatient, the prisoners dismayed and terrified. Only Floss seemed relaxed; very sure of himself, he was muttering abstractedly, 'Tadellos, tadellos…' The bodies burst into flames. Suddenly the flames shot up, releasing a cloud of smoke, a deep roar arose, the faces of the dead twisted with pain and the flesh crackled. The spectacle had an infernal quality and even the S.S. men remained petrified for a few moments, contemplating the marvel. Floss beamed. This fire was the finest day of his life.*
>
> *When they had recovered from their stupor, the Germans gave expression to their joy and gratitude. Herbert Floss became a hero. An event like this had to be celebrated in a worthy manner. The Germans sent for tables, which were set up opposite the funeral pyre and covered with dozens of bottles of liquor, wine and beer. The dying day reflected the high flames of*

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46 Jean-François Steiner, *Treblinka*, Simon and Schuster, New York 1967.

47 *Ibid*., pp. 352-355.

> *the funeral pyre, the sky glowed at the end of the plain where the sun was disappearing with a show of fire.*
> *At a nod from Lalka, the corks popped. An extraordinary party began. The first toast was made to the* Führer. *The operators of the excavators had returned to their machines. When the S.S. men raised their glasses noisily, the excavators seemed to come to life and suddenly flung their long jointed arms toward the sky in a throbbing and jolting Nazi salute. It was like a signal; ten times the men raised their arms, each time shouting* 'Heil Hitler.' *The manlike machines returned the salute of the machinelike men, and the air rang with shouts of glory to the Führer. The party lasted until the funeral pyre was entirely consumed. After the toasts came the songs, savage and cruel, songs of hatred, songs of fury, songs of glory to Germany the eternal."*

Even one hundred percent loyal advocates of the orthodox 'Holocaust' image have grasped that this sort of statement undermines the credibility of their position. Thus fourteen years later, the French Jew Pierre Vidal-Naquet, who in the beginning had expressed his "admiration" for Steiner's book,[48] suddenly spoke of "sub-literature" appealing to sadism and admitted that he had "walked into the snare set by J.-F. Steiner."[49] Another French critic, Didier Daeningckx, devastatingly described Steiner's book as "a false novel, which is presented as true" and which makes use of the "technique of parallel montage."[50]

g. Krystyna Marczewska/Władysław Ważniewski

In 1968, an article appeared from the pens of two Polish historians, K. Marczewska and W. Ważniewski, on the Polish resistance movement's knowledge regarding Treblinka during the war.[51] The reports of the resistance published here are most valuable indeed, as they help us in reconstructing how the official image of Treblinka evolved. We shall continuously refer to this in Chapter II.

h. Martin Gray

In 1971, the Polish-born French Jew Martin Gray published a book entitled *Au nom de tous les miens*[52] (In the name of all of mine), in which he describes, *in-*

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48 "Treblinka et l'Honneur des Juifs," *Le Monde*, May 2, 1966. Reference from R. Faurisson.

49 *Esprit*, September 1980. Reference from R. Faurisson.

50 "De Treblinka à Bordeaux," *Revue de la Shoa*, May-August 1999. Reference from R. Faurisson.

51 Krystyna Marczewska, Władysław Ważniewski, "Treblinka w swietle Akt Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraji" (Treblinka in Light of the Documents of the Home Government Delegation of the Polish Republic) in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce*, Vol. XIX, Warsaw 1968, pp. 129-164.

52 Editions Robert Laffont, Paris. English translation: *For Those I Loved*, Boston, Little, Brown

ter alia, an alleged stay in Treblinka. Gray's ghostwriter was his co-religionist Max Gallo, who interviewed this 'Treblinka survivor' and put his statements down on paper. In his introduction, Gallo wrote:[53]

> *"We saw each other every day for months.* […] *I questioned him; I made tape recordings; I observed him; I verified things; I listened to his voice and to his silences. I discovered the modesty of this man and his indomitable determination. I measured in his flesh the savagery and barbarism of the century that had produced Treblinka.* […] *I rewrote, confronted the facts, sketched in the background, attempted to re-create the atmosphere."*

As fruit of the collaboration between Gallo and Gray, a book emerged with passages such as the following:[54]

> *"Sometimes we found living children among the warm bodies. Little children, still alive, clinging to their mothers' bodies. We strangled them with our own hands before throwing them into the grave. And we risked our lives doing it because we were wasting time. The butchers wanted everything to happen fast."*

After Gray had survived Treblinka and the war in a miraculous manner, he emigrated to the USA, where, as he relates in his book, he became wealthy from the sale of fake antiques. After the publication of the English version of his book, he was – according to Robert Faurisson – "suspected of fabricating false memoirs, just as he had produced false antiques, in both instances not without the help of others and naturally for money."[55] Even anti-revisionist authors like the French Jew Eric Conan, who speaks of a work "well-known to all historians of this epoch as fraudulent,"[56] have castigated M. Gray's hackwork as a blatant falsification, but this does not change the fact that this unspeakable piece of trash – exactly like that of J.-F. Steiner – keeps reappearing in new editions in France and Germany.

i. Gitta Sereny

In 1974, the Hungarian-born British journalist Gitta Sereny published a book entitled *Into That Darkness*,[57] which is lauded to the present day as the standard work dealing with Treblinka.[58] Sereny visited the second commandant of Treblinka, Franz Stangl, in prison, interviewing him several times between April and June of 1971. Stangl had been sentenced to life imprisonment by a Düsseldorf court in 1970. Sereny's book is largely based on these interviews

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1972. The English edition is cited subsequently.

53 *Ibid*., Max Gallo's Foreword, pp. ixf.;

54 *Ibid*., p. 139.

55 Robert Faurisson, *Ecrits révisionnistes (1974-1998)*, private edition, 1999, Vol. I, p. 376.

56 *L'Express*, February 27, 1997. Reference from R. Faurisson.

57 McGraw-Hill, New York.

58 As in the latest German version, *Am Abgrund*, Piper, Munich 1995.

(as well as on those with three other SS men who served at Treblinka during the war and with some former Jewish prisoners of the camp).

According to Gitta Sereny, Stangl confirmed the official picture of Treblinka in his conversations with her. But her book is totally worthless as an historical source, since the author cannot produce a trace of proof that Stangl actually made the statements ascribed to him; that is to say, a recorded protocol of the talks does not exist. On June 28, 1971, one day after Sereny's final visit, Stangl suddenly died under unexplained circumstances, and because no denial was to be expected from a dead man, the author of *Into That Darkness* was able to put into his mouth whatever pleased her.

The French revisionist Pierre Guillaume recalls a discussion conducted with G. Sereny, which he described as follows:[59]

> *"After we had seated ourselves at the table, ordered drinks, and exchanged the usual empty civilities, this is the gist of what I said to Gitta Sereny: 'I have read your book more than once, and many passages even several times. On the first reading, one cannot doubt the truth of the statements as well as the reality of the confessions of Stangl. But the more often I went through the text, the greater became my amazement, first of all, less on the basis of what I was reading than on the basis of the obvious absence of that, which one would have expected to find. Lastly, with the repeated and very precise readings of the passages where Stangl 'confesses,' my amazement increased even more, for without exception they were written in indirect or ambiguous style, so that it became impossible to distinguish in these passages between what Stangl had said and what Gitta Sereny had said.'*
>
> *I made some significant facial expressions and then, quietly looking my conversational partner in the eye and giving emphasis to every single word, I said:*
>
> *'In brief: he did not confess!'*
>
> *'But of course not… he couldn't do it!'*
>
> *Gitta Sereny was of the opinion that she had served a therapeutic and wholesome function with respect to Stangl, in that she was helping him to relieve his conscience by a confession, which was too terrible for him to have been able to make entirely alone.* […] *Stangl, in fact, died suddenly in prison, very soon indeed after his 'confessions,' although he clearly enjoyed good health and had constantly denied the crimes imputed to him. He was awaiting his* [appeal] *trial, from which he – and his wife – were hoping for a favorable outcome."*

We agree with Guillaume, word for word. On reading Gitta Sereny's book one does indeed feel "amazement on the basis of the obvious absence of that, which one would have expected to find": In this poor work of over 400 pages,

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[59] Pierre Guillaume, "Les bonnes intentions dont l'enfer est pavé," in *Annales d'Histoire Révisionniste*, No. 5, Summer/Fall 1988, pp. 189f.

there is, to be sure, an abundance of stupefying psychological ruminations, yet not the slightest suggestion as to the practical process of the claimed mass murders in Treblinka, such as how the gas chambers functioned or how approximately 800,000 bodies were destroyed without a trace. How can one even imagine that a prisoner hoping for a successful appeal of his verdict would suddenly 'admit' to a journalist everything that he is denying in his application for appeal and which must inevitably destroy his hopes for a favorable ruling? The much-vaunted 'standard work' about Treblinka therefore turns out to be a brazen fraud!

j. Stanisław Wojtczak

In 1975, the Pole Stanisław Wojtczak wrote a long article, the English title of which is "The Penal and Labor Camp Treblinka I and the Extermination Center Treblinka II" and which contains a comprehensive collection of texts about this camp.[60] The work presents a detailed summary of the investigations performed by the Polish authorities. The author had entry to the archives of the Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitler Crimes in Poland, which represents the approximate counterpart to the *Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen* (Central Office of the State Justice Administrations) in Ludwigsburg, Germany, and consolidates the entire documentation concerning various local judicial proceedings.

k. Adalbert Rückerl

A documentation with the title *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutschen Strafprozesse* (National Socialist Extermination Camps in the Light of German Criminal Trials) appeared in 1977 in Germany,[61] in which the criminal trials conducted by West German penal courts against former members of the camp staff of Treblinka, Sobibór, Bełżec, and Chełmno are described. It was authored by Adalbert Rückerl, former director of the *Zentrale Stelle*. We will refer to this book several times.

l. Alexander Donat

In 1979 in the United States, Alexander Donat edited the anthology *The Death Camp Treblinka*. In addition to the aforementioned text by Rachel Auerbach already mentioned, which had appeared in 1946 in Yiddish and was now published for the first time in English as "The Fields of Treblinka", this book also contained contributions by six other authors (Abraham Krzepicki, Jankiel

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[60] Stanisław Wojtczak, "Karny obóz pracy Treblinka I i osrodek zagłady Treblinka II," in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce*, Warsaw 1975, XXVI, pp. 117-185.

[61] Adalbert Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse*, German version, Frankfurt 1977.

Wiernik, Samuel Willenberg, Tanhum Grinberg, Shalom Cohen, and Samuel Rajzman). According to the introduction written by Donat himself, these reports were composed "without dramatization, embellishments, inventions, and hollow phrases."[4] Just how seriously this promise is to be taken is shown not only by the fact that the impossible horror report by R. Auerbach is reproduced without commentary; additionally and *inter alia*, a text of Jankiel Wiernik, which we shall discuss in detail later, is cited as a serious source. It claims:[62]

> *"When corpses of pregnant women were cremated, their bellies would burst open. The fetus would be exposed and could be seen burning inside the mother's womb."*

In a review that appeared in 1981 in the *Journal of Historical Review*, Horst Kehl had this to say about Donat's anthology:[63]

> *"If it is impossible to tear a child in half;* […] *if it is impossible to cram people into half a square foot each; if it is impossible to use women as kindling and scoop up buckets of human fat; if it is impossible to leap over a 9 foot high fence; just what other parts of this saga are true?"*

m. The Main Commission's *Encyclopedic Informer*

Also in 1979, the Polish Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitler Crimes published an *Encyclopedic informer* on the camps and prisons existing on Polish soil during the German occupation. With respect to the camp Treblinka II, only the works of Wiernik, Grossmann, and Łukaszkiewicz are cited in the bibliography, aside from trial files, archive documents, and an article about the reports of the underground movement by Marczewska/Ważniewski.[64] This indicates that no book on Treblinka with any claim to a scientific method appeared between 1946 and 1979 in Poland, either.

n. Eugen Kogon, Hermann Langbein, Adalbert Rückerl *et al.*

In 1983, an authors' collective directed by E. Kogon, H. Langbein, and A. Rückerl published *Nazi Mass Murder*. In the introduction, the authors rail against "those who […] deny the killing of millions of victims by gas" and their alleged "desire to defend the Nazi system," but specify neither authors nor titles. The fact that such deniers exist, the introduction goes on to say, "is sufficient to justify our intention to set down, in a precise and indisputable

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62 In: A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 170.

63 Horst Kehl, "'Holocaust' Pharmacology vs. Scientific Pharmacology," in: *Journal of Historical Review*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 1981, p. 95.

64 Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polce (ed.), *Obozy hitlerowski na ziemiach polskich 1939-1945. Informator encyklopedyczny*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warsaw 1979, p. 528.

manner, the historical truth."[65] This "historical truth" is "set down, in a precise and indisputable manner" mainly by means of eyewitness testimony and confessions of alleged perpetrators. One Abraham Goldfarb is a leading witness for the claimed mass murders in Treblinka, and the editors cite him as follows:[66]

> *"On the way to the gas chambers Germans with dogs stood along the fence on both sides. The dogs had been trained to attack people; they bit the men's genitals and the women's breasts, ripping off pieces of flesh. The Germans hit the people with whips and iron bars to spur them on, so that they would press forward into the 'showers' as quickly as possible. The screams of the women could be heard far away, even in the other parts of the camp. The Germans drove the running victims on with shouts of 'Faster, faster, the water is getting cold, and others still have to take a shower!' To escape from the blows, the victims ran to the gas chambers as quickly as they could, the stronger ones pushing the weaker ones aside. At the entrance to the gas chambers stood the two Ukrainians, Ivan Demaniuk*[67] *and Nikolai, one of them armed with an iron bar, the other with a sword. Even they drove the people inside with blows…*
>
> *As soon as the gas chambers were full, the Ukrainians closed the doors and started the engine. Some twenty to twenty-five minutes later an SS man or a Ukrainian looked through a window in the door. When he had made sure that everyone had been asphyxiated, the Jewish prisoners had to open the doors and remove the corpses. Because the chambers were overcrowded and the victims had held on to one another, they were all standing upright and were like one single mass of flesh."*

Since witness statements like that clearly satisfied the authors, they did not make the least attempt to furnish material or documentary evidence for the claimed mass murder in Treblinka (or the other 'extermination camps').

o. Claude Lanzmann

In 1985, the nine-and-a-half-hour film *Shoah* debuted, shot by the French-Jewish director Claude Lanzmann. It sought to prove, on the basis of eyewitness narratives of 'Holocaust survivors,' the annihilation of the Jews in 'extermination camps,' among them also Treblinka. In the introductory note to the book of the same name, which contains the entire spoken text of the film, Simone de Beauvoir wrote:[68]

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65 E. Kogon, H. Langbein, A. Rückerl, *et al.* (eds.), *Nazi Mass Murder*, Yale University Press, New Haven 1993, pp. 1f.

66 *Ibid*., p. 126f.

67 Correct spelling: Demjanjuk. See Chapter V.

68 Claude Lanzmann, *Shoa*, éditions Fayard, Paris 1985; English edition, *Shoah*, DaCapo Press, New York 1995, Foreword, p. vii.

> *"After the war we read masses of accounts of the ghettos and the extermination camps, and we were devastated. But when, today, we see Claude Lanzmann's extraordinary film, we realize we have understood nothing. In spite of everything we knew, the ghastly experience remained remote from us. Now, for the first time, we live it in our minds, hearts and flesh. It becomes our experience."*

In order to gain a notion of the standard of this film and of the book of the same title, we now reproduce an excerpt from the conversation in it between the director and his star eyewitness, the Treblinka barber Abraham Bomba. We are quoting here from the English translation:[69]

> *"*[Lanzmann:] How did it look, the gas chamber?
>
> [Bomba] *It was not a big room, around twelve feet by twelve feet.* […] *And then one of the kapos came in and said: 'Barbers, you have to do a job to make all those women coming in believe that they are just taking a haircut and going in to take a shower, and from there they go out from this place.' We know already that there is no way of going out from this room* […]*'*
>
> And suddenly you saw the women coming?
>
> *Yes, they came in.*
>
> How were they?
>
> *They were undressed, naked, without clothes, without anything else* […]
>
> There were no mirrors?
>
> *No, there were no mirrors. There were just benches – not chairs, just benches – where we worked, about sixteen or seventeen barbers* […]
>
> You said there were about sixteen barbers? You cut the hair of how many women in one batch?
>
> *In one day there was about, I would say, going into that place between sixty and seventy women in the same room at one time. After we were finished with this party, another party came in* […]*"*

Robert Faurisson comments about this:[70]

> *"This part of the witness account of Bomba can be summarized as follows: In a room of 16 square meters, there are sixteen (or seventeen?) barbers as well as benches; sixty or seventy naked women, along with children whose number is not more closely given, enter the room.* […] *This is impossible. This is even pure nonsense.* […] *Human gullibility knows no limits. Due to the brainwashing, the generations-long propaganda conducted against German or Nazi barbarism, one can swallow everything, one can succeed in having everything swallowed."*

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69 *Shoah*, English edition, pp. 112-116.

70 R. Faurisson, *Ecrits révisionnistes*, *op. cit.* (note 55), Vol. II, pp. 558f.

p. Yitzhak Arad

In 1987, the Israeli 'Holocaust expert' Yitzhak Arad made an attempt to scientifically document the extermination of the Jews in Treblinka as well as in the other 'eastern extermination camps' in the book *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*. But even many footnotes are unable to disguise the fact that Arad's claims of exterminations are based *exclusively* upon those eyewitness narratives whose worth we can easily appraise from the examples, which have been cited up to this point. Arad's book, which today is generally considered to be the standard work about Treblinka as well as the other two 'camps of Operation Reinhardt,' contains blatant impossibilities. For example, Arad writes about the "old gas chambers" of the camp in this manner:[71]

> *"At the entrance to the gas chambers stood two Ukrainians, Ivan Demianuk and Nikolai, one armed with an iron bar and the other with a sword, and they, too, urged the people on with blows to push their way in – 200-250 in a chamber of 16 square meters.* […]
> *There were instances when the gas chambers were opened too early and the victims were still alive; the doors would have to be closed again. The engines that produced and fed the gas into the chambers also broke down, causing stoppages in the extermination operation. Breakdowns of this nature also occurred when the victims were already inside the gas chambers, and they would then be held there for long hours until the engines had been repaired."*

Under the unrealistic assumption that it was possible to pen up 200 to 250 people in a chamber sixteen square meters in size (and 2.6 m high[72]) without fresh air, the pitiable victims would certainly not have had to wait out "long hours" when there were engine breakdowns, since they would have suffocated a long time before that; one would therefore have been able to do without the engine.

We will return to this and to other technical impossibilities in another chapter.[73] We will also discuss the brazen falsification of source material undertaken by Arad.[74]

q. Ryszard Czarkowski

In 1989, a book appeared in Poland entitled *Cieniom Treblinki* ([dedicated to] The Shadows of Treblinka). The author, a Ryszard Czarkowski, had been interned in the labor camp Treblinka I during the war, barely three kilometers

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71 Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1987, p. 86f.
72 According to Arad, the gas chambers were that high (*ibid*., p. 42).
73 See Chapter IV.
74 See Chapter II.

from the 'extermination camp' Treblinka II. According to the introduction to this work, the prisoners of the labor camp were able to observe the process of mass murders in the adjacent 'extermination camp,' since "there were contacts of labor between the two centers."[75]

Czarkowski criticizes Z. Łukaszkiewicz because of the number of Treblinka victims, 800,000, given by the latter; by means of eyewitness narratives as well as some counts of the deportation trains, he determines the number of murdered to be 1,582,000.[76]

The question of how 1,582,000 bodies might have been disposed of without a trace evidently gives him as little occasion for reflection as does the question of why Stalinist Polish historiography and judiciary during the postwar years should have reduced the number of Treblinka victims to half of what he claims to be true, and thus scandalously minimized National Socialist crimes.

r. J. Gumkowski and A. Rutkowski

The work *Treblinka*,[77] written by J. Gumkowski and A. Rutkowski, has no date, but it can be said with certainty that it appeared after the aforementioned books by Y. Arad and R. Czarkowski. It is of definite value, since it contains a selection of documents and photographs from the archives of the Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish People (formerly the Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitler Crimes in Poland).

s. Wolfgang Benz

In 1991, an authors' collective directed by Wolfgang Benz published the anthology *Dimension des Völkermords* (Dimension of Genocide) in response to the demographic study *The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry* by Walter Sanning,[78] which had appeared eight years earlier and according to which the total losses of Jewry in the areas controlled by Germany during the Second World War amounted only to several hundred thousands. Benz and his coauthors defend the usual figure of about six million Jewish victims. With respect to Treblinka, Benz repeats the number of victims given by Rachel Auerbach in 1946 – 1,074,000 – since this "seems more realistic to us than the demonstrable minimum number."[79] That the authors' collective classifies Rachel

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[75] Ryszard Czarkowski, *Cieniom Treblinki*, Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Oborony Narodowey, Warsaw 1989, p. 5.

[76] See Chapter III.

[77] J. Gumkowski, A. Rutkowski, *Treblinka*, published by the Council for Protection of Fight and Martyrdom Monuments, Warsaw, without date.

[78] Walter Sanning, *The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry*, I.H.R., Torrance 1983 (2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2015).

[79] Wolfgang Benz (ed.), *Dimension des Völkermords. Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, R. Oldenbourg Verlag, Munch 1991, p. 468.

Auerbach's work, according to which blood in Treblinka proved to be "first-class combustion material," as a serious source, already says much about the quality of this collection. Germar Rudolf, who compared the works of Sanning and Benz and has demonstrated the blatant demographic manipulations of the Benz team, comments in this regard:[80]

> *"Thus, Treblinka with its more than one million victims is weighted more heavily in Benz's analysis than Auschwitz is – a completely new trend in Holocaust studies."*

As Rudolf correctly points out, this elevation of the number of Treblinka victims serves the purpose of enabling the sacrosanct six million figure to be maintained despite the drastic lowering of the number of victims of Auschwitz that has occurred in recent years.

t. Richard Glazar

In 1992, forty-nine years after the dissolution of Treblinka, the Jew Richard Glazar published his 'eyewitness narrative' *Trap with a Green Fence*. Although, according to the official version of Treblinka summarized in the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, the Jewish prisoners "were killed after working in the camps for several weeks or months, to be replaced by new arrivals from the transports,"[81] Glazar by his own account spent a full ten months in that camp, from October 1942 until August 1943. His account of his 'personal experiences' is a plagiarism cobbled together from diverse tales of other 'Treblinka survivors.' One of the sources, from which he took his inspiration, is a 1986 book by Samuel Willenberg, first published in Hebrew and then in English in 1989. There, for example, one reads about the Greek Jews who arrived in Treblinka in the spring of 1943:[82]

> *"Early in spring of 1943 the whistle of a train heralded the arrival of a new shipment. A slightly strange crowd spilled out – people with dark faces, curly, raven-black hair, and a foreign tongue on their lips. The suitcases taken out of the wagons bore labels reading 'Saloniki'. Word that Jews from Greece had arrived spread around the camp like lightning.* […] *Every last one of them exited the cars in a state of total calm.* [… The SS man] *Mitte found three Greeks with a command of German and drafted them as interpreters."*

In Glazar's book, this is described as follows:[83]

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[80] Germar Rudolf, "Holocaust Victims: A Statistical Analysis · W. Benz and W. N. Sanning – A Comparison," in: Germar Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, 3rd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2019, pp. 175-206, here p. 196.

[81] *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 18), as cited on p. 16.

[82] Samuel Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, Żydówski Instytut Historyczny, Warsaw 1989, pp. 104f. Almost identical (the SS man is called Miete, though): Samuel Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford/New York 1989, p. 113.

[83] Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, IL,

> *"People climb calmly out of the cars, without pushing, without crowding.* […] *Apparently they have been in quarantine too.* […] *Their faces look healthy, and they have an unusual dark complexion. Black hair – all I see black to pitch-black hair.* […] *I can hear that the people are speaking a completely foreign language."*
>
> *"Three were chosen from this transport.* […] *They can speak a little, a very little German. Through them the others were informed that everything had to be disinfected, that they would go to a bath to be disinfected, and then they would be sent to work."*

The author makes two colossal blunders: First he has the burning of the bodies begin "one overcast November afternoon" in 1942,[84] although the standard literature unanimously claims that the incineration of corpses did not start before March/April 1943. Next he claims that he was part of Treblinka's "camouflage commando":[85]

> *"There are a few here, until now the only ones, who have been allowed to work in contact with nature, to see the camp of death from the outside,* […] *when they are driven out of the camp and into the forest, when they break branches off pine trees and collect them,* […]. *But in the camouflage commando they only keep workers who are fit enough to climb high up into the trees and trot back to camp carrying heavy bundles of branches. They weave these branches into strands of barbed wire, thus maintaining the camouflage green around the entire perimeter of the camp."*
>
> *"The camouflage unit is the only one of the old work squads that still has enough real work to do. There is so much exterior and interior fencing that there are always repairs to be made. And if there are no repairs, then the camouflage unit is well suited for the forestry work in the vicinity of the camp – for clearing and cutting. Several times a day* […] *some part of the twenty-five man unit has to go out into the forest, climb into the trees, harvest large branches, and carry them back into the camp, where they will be used for repairs. The other part of the unit straightens and firms up the posts, tightens the barbed wire, and weaves the new pine boughs into the fence until there are no longer any gaps in the dense green wall.* […] *We are the camouflage unit.* […]
>
> *From climbing into the trees and breaking off branches, Karl and I have scratches on our hands and faces."*[86]

Thus, according to Richard Glazar, 25 inmates were the only ones in Treblinka who were able to leave the camp, to work in the forests, to do real hard work, and to supply the camp with its needs of wood. If there had ever been a

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1995, p. 89, 93.

84 *Ibid*., p. 29.

85 *Ibid*., p. 56.

86 *Ibid*., pp. 127f.

massive need for firewood in Treblinka to cremate corpses, filled by inmates sent into the forests to fell trees, these activities would have yielded millions of branches, which would have rendered the tree-climbing activities of the camouflage unit obsolete.[87] But apparently Glazar opines that no such tree-felling occurred during his time in the camp. All Glazar, the lumberjack of Treblinka, knows about how the corpses were allegedly incinerated is the following:[84]

> *"You have to build big bonfires and put a lot of kindling in among the corpses, and then douse the whole thing in something very flammable."*

u. Jean-Claude Pressac

In 1995, the French magazine *Historama* published an article by Jean-Claude Pressac,[88] a researcher who, to be sure, considered the gas chambers to be an historical fact but who – in comparison with the other representatives of the official version of history – clearly maintained a relatively critical attitude toward witness testimonies. In his contribution, Pressac was chiefly concerned with Auschwitz, but he also looked into the subject of Treblinka, Sobibór, and Bełżec. In contrast to the conventional historiography, according to which these camps were set up exclusively for the extermination of Jews, Pressac opines that they were originally established as transit or as delousing camps and were only later converted into extermination camps. We shall examine this thesis of Pressac more closely in another chapter.[89]

Likewise in 1995, Pressac granted an interview to Valérie Igounet, which was not published until 2000, with changes made according to Pressac's wishes. In it, Pressac denounced the official account of the concentrations camps as being distinguished by "bungling, exaggeration, omission, and lies,"[90] and he determined that to call the National Socialist policy against the Jews 'genocide' is erroneous.[91] He also posited a drastic reduction in the number of victims in the 'pure extermination camps,' among them Treblinka.[92]

v. Assessment

After what has been said to this point, our judgment with respect to the picture of the camp drawn by the orthodox historians must be a devastating one: the few works that proceed scientifically support their claims, without exception, with unreliable sources; the bunglings of brazen liars are accepted as classics

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87 See Chapter IV.12.f. for details. Even if such a camouflage unit had existed, it surely would have chopped down the trees, then cut the branches off, rather than shinnying up the tree trunks. Such an activity is ridiculous.

88 J.-C. Pressac, "Enquête sur les camps de la morte," in: *Historama*, No. 34, 1995.

89 See Chapter IX.

90 Valérie Igounet, *Histoire du négationnisme en France*, Editions du Seuil, Paris 2000.

91 *Ibid*., p. 641.

92 See Chapter III.

of the Treblinka literature. In short: the value of the official historiography on the camp is pitifully small!

2. Treblinka in Revisionist Literature

a. Treblinka and the Gerstein Report

Because the official historiography of the 'Holocaust' has from the very beginning focused upon Auschwitz, the revisionists, who had to confront their opponents on the field chosen by the latter, have likewise concentrated quite predominantly upon the concentration camp Auschwitz and devoted significantly less attention to Treblinka.

Treblinka was at least touched upon by some revisionist authors in connection with the so-called 'Gerstein Report.' The alleged confessions of the SS officer Kurt Gerstein, who according to his 'confessions' visited Bełżec and Treblinka in the year 1942, are considered to be one of the supporting pillars of the 'Holocaust.' In Bełżec, Gerstein purports to have attended a mass gassing, the description of which, however, abounds in impossibilities: thus, he claims that in the gas chamber 700 to 800 victims were crammed together in "25 square meters, in 45 cubic meters"!

The Frenchman Paul Rassinier, former resistance fighter, prisoner in the concentration camps Buchenwald and Dora-Mittelbau, and the founder of Revisionism, pointed out the unreliability of the Gerstein Report in his 1964 book *Le Drame des Juifs Européens*[93] and stressed its worthlessness as an historical source. Another French researcher, Henri Roques, has proved in his 1989 doctoral dissertation that not fewer than six versions of the Gerstein Report exist, differing substantially from one another.[94] However, since Gerstein described a gassing event in Bełżec and not in Treblinka, the studies of Rassinier and Roques demolish above all the credibility of his statements about the former camp. In contrast to the two French historians, Carlo Mattogno has dealt more in depth with Treblinka in his 1985 work *Il rapporto Gerstein, Anatomia di un falso*, which is also devoted to the Gerstein Report. In it, Mattogno suggested that "the myth of the gas chambers prevailed only somewhat" regarding Treblinka, because in 1943, in the *Black Book of Polish Jewry*, steam chambers for the extermination of the Jews were spoken of, and the same method of killing was still mentioned in the December 1945 Nuremberg Document PS-3311, produced by the Polish government. Only in Febru-

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93 Paul Rassinier, *Le drame des juifs européens*, Les sept couleurs, Paris 1964.

94 Henri Roques, "Les confessions de Kurt Gerstein, étude comparative des six versions," in: André Chelain, *La thèse de Nantes et l'affaire Roques*, Polémiques, Paris 1988.

ary 1946, according to Mattogno, did the Jewish witness Samuel Rajzman speak of gas chambers before the Nuremberg Court.[95]

To date, four revisionist authors have led a massive assault against the foundations of the official picture of Treblinka: Friedrich P. Berg, John C. Ball, Udo Walendy, and Arnulf Neumaier, of whom the first two authors have investigated important individual aspects of the question, while the latter two have made a comprehensive attack upon the current version of Treblinka.

b. Friedrich P. Berg

In 1984, the graduate engineer F.P. Berg published a pioneering article in the *Journal of Historical Review* entitled: "The Diesel Gas Chambers: Myth within a Myth,"[96] in which he subjected the diesel engine, claimed as a murder weapon for Treblinka, Sobibór, and Bełżec, to technical and toxicological examination. An expanded German translation appeared in 1994 in the anthology *Grundlagen zur Zeitgeschichte*.[97] In the English edition of that work, *Dissecting the Holocaust*, (latest edition: 2019), Berg's contribution appeared in a further revised and improved version.[98]

In his study, Berg proved that diesel exhaust gases are appallingly ill adapted for the mass killing of human beings due to their high oxygen content and their very low carbon monoxide (CO) content; a gasoline engine would be far more efficient. We shall return to this topic in connection with the critique of witness testimonies in Chapter IV.

Berg's study shook the current version of Treblinka, Sobibór, and Bełżec to its very foundations. If the Germans had really succeeded in gassing approximately 1.72 million Jews[99] in these three camps in record time and in removing all trace of their bodies, they would have to have been technical geniuses, and such geniuses would certainly not have resorted to so inefficient a murder weapon. The objection that perhaps the instrument of the crime was a gasoline engine is untenable, for the witnesses to the gassing claim that the exhaust gases had been produced by the engines of captured Russian tanks, and most Russian tanks of the Second World War were driven by diesel engines. The updated German edition of the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* maintains, plainly and clearly:[100]

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95 Carlo Mattogno, *Il rapporto Gerstein, Anatomia di un falso*, Sentinella d'Italia, Monfalcone 1985, pp. 167ff.

96 *Journal of Historical Review* 5 (1), 1984, pp. 15-46.

97 Friedrich P. Berg, "Die Diesel-Gaskammern: Mythos im Mythos" in: E. Gauss (ed.), *Grundlagen zur Zeitgeschichte*, Grabert Verlag, Tübingen 1994, pp. 321-345.

98 Friedrich P. Berg, "Diesel Gas Chambers: Ideal for Torture – Absurd for Murder," in: G. Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 80), pp. 431-475.

99 According to the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (note 18) 870,000 in Treblinka, 600,000 in Bełżec and 250,000 in Sobibór.

100 Eberhard Jäckel, Peter Longerich, Julius H. Schoeps (eds.), *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust. Die*

> *"Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka were built within the framework of the Operation Reinhardt*[sic!] *(so called from June of 1942) of the murder campaign against, above all, the Jews from the General Gouvernement. These extermination camps used carbon monoxide gas, which was produced by diesel engines."*

Whoever may object that the witnesses might have erred in regard to the weapon of the crime is simultaneously discrediting, along with the credibility of the witness testimony, the entire picture of the 'eastern extermination camps,' which is based *exclusively* upon just these witness statements!

c. John C. Ball

No less important than the technical and toxicological investigations of Berg are the analyses of Allied and German photographs taken during the war over the 'extermination camps,' among them Treblinka. These analyses were performed by the Canadian mineral-exploration geologist John C. Ball and presented in 1992 in his book *Air Photo Evidence*.[101] We will also return to these photographs.

d. Udo Walendy

The German political scientist Udo Walendy, editor and publisher of the German historiographical series *Historische Tatsachen* (Historical Facts), has dealt with Treblinka in two issues of this periodical. No. 12 (1982) analyzes, *inter alia*, the 1964–1965 Düsseldorf trial of former members of the staff of

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Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden, 3 vols., Argon Verlag, Berlin 1993, entries for "Aktion Reinhard," Vol. 1, p. 15: "Benzin oder Dieselmotoren" (gasoline or diesel engines); "Bełżec", Vol. 1, p. 176: "Dieselmotor mit 250 PS" (diesel engine with 250 hp); "Sobibor", Vol. 3, p. 1332: "200 PS-Motor" (200 hp engine); "Treblinka", Vol. 3, p. 1428: "Dieselmotor" (diesel engine); "Gaskammer" (gas chamber), Vol. 1, p. 505: "Dieselauspuffgas [...] in den Vernichtungslagern im Generalgouvernement" (diesel exhaust gas... in the extermination camps in the General Gouvernement); and "Vernichtungslager" (extermination camps), Vol. 3, p. 1496: "These extermination camps [Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka] used carbon monoxide gas produced by Diesel engines." According to this source, the Sobibór Camp (250,000 victims) is the only case where there is any uncertainty regarding the engine type. In Bełżec (600,000 victims) and Treblinka (700,000 to 1,200,000 victims) they were definitely diesel engines; the entries of English version of this *Encyclopedia* are identical for the individual camps, for "gas chamber," and for "Aktion Reinhard" (AR: Vol. 1, p. 16; B: Vol. 1, p. 175; GC: Vol. 2, p. 540; S: Vol. 3, p. 1375; T: Vol. 3, p. 1483), but the entry for "extermination camps" says "gasoline or diesel engine", Vol. 2, p. 462. The gasoline engine was apparently edited out by the German editors to conform to witness statements and court findings, but they neglected to remove it from the "Aktion Reinhard" entry.

[101] John C. Ball, *Air Photo Evidence*, Ball Resource Services, Delta, B.C. 1992; more recently: Rudolf, Germar (ed.), *Air-Photo Evidence*, 6th ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2020. An abridged version appeared in: Germar Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 80), pp. 263-277.

the Treblinka Camp.[102] In it, Walendy pointedly attacks the legal basis of this trial and exposes numerous absurdities in the arguments supporting the verdict. We reproduce an excerpt from his commentary here:[103]

> *"50 SS men manage, with the assistance of a tank engine, to kill approximately 700,000 people within a year and to remove all traces. That is 14,000 per SS guard, or just 40 per day, a total for all 50 of 2,000 per day. But wait: according to other claims* […]*, it was supposed to be 8,000 or 30,000 daily! Note well: per day!*
>
> *With all this, these people still had time to pause for sadistic atrocities and continually invent new ones, with or without riding crops. To be sure, the normal life of the camp broke down, but obviously everything functioned, from the disinfection of the women's shorn hair, to the separation of the Stars of David from the clothing, from the burning of the bodies, which had already been buried in large mass pits, to the total elimination of all traces, including sifting the ashes, crushing of the bones, and mixing the ashes with the soil as well as leveling the whole camp.* […] *Neither attorneys nor experts, jurors, judges, 'historians,' or newspaper writers have burdened themselves with worrying about any of the technical impossibilities that are becoming obvious here – and add to this in the midst of war with a 50-man German guard detachment ."*

Issue No. 44 of the *Historische Tatsachen*, which appeared eight years later, was devoted exclusively to the Treblinka Camp and thus was titled "Der Fall Treblinka" (The Case of Treblinka).[104] Walendy began by citing passages from W. Grossmann's grotesque writing *Die Hölle von Treblinka* (The Hell of Treblinka) and subsequently dealt with the following topics:

– the claims of the *Black Book*, published in 1946 by the World Jewish Congress, that three million people had been murdered in Treblinka by means of "assembly-line execution";
– the contradictions in the standard literature regarding the topographical information given about Treblinka, as well as between the various sketches produced by 'eyewitnesses';
– the lack of credibility of witness statements;
– an analysis of air photographs refuting extermination claims.

No. 44 of the *Historische Tatsachen* represented the most thorough and comprehensive critique of the orthodox Treblinka version to that point. In gratitude for his efforts to discover the historical truth, Walendy was later locked up for over two years in a German jail.[105]

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[102] "'NSG-Prozeß' Treblinka" in: *Historische Tatsachen* No. 12 ("Das Recht, in dem wir leben"), Vlotho 1982, pp. 28-32.
[103] *Ibid*., p. 30.
[104] *Historische Tatsachen* No. 44, "Der Fall Treblinka", Vlotho 1990.
[105] Cf. *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, 1(2) (1997), p. 126, and 2(4) (1998), p.

e. Arnulf Neumaier

Since the official Treblinka version stands or falls with the possibility of the elimination of the bodies without a trace in the method and manner asserted by the witnesses, Neumaier's calculations in this regard are especially important.

In 1994, in the anthology *Grundlagen zur Zeitgeschichte*, appeared an outstanding article entitled "Der Treblinka-Holocaust," written by the graduate engineer Arnulf Neumaier.[106] A translation with the title "The Treblinka Holocaust" is included in the English version of the same book.[107] In his article Neumaier subjected the technical prerequisites for the claimed extermination of Jews in Treblinka to a comprehensive examination. He raised Berg's arguments against the viability of the alleged mass murder by means of diesel exhaust, and advanced additional points; demonstrated the massive contradictions of the witness statements, which name several entirely different methods of killing; and, in particular, considered the question of how the bodies were disposed.

f. The Thesis of the Transit Camp

The revisionist studies mentioned to this point have restricted themselves exclusively to refuting the official picture of Treblinka as an "extermination camp." An alternative interpretation of its function has not appeared in these studies, which of course is the direct consequence of the complete lack of contemporary documents. Yet some notable revisionist authors have proposed the thesis that Treblinka was a transit camp for Jews. The American scholar Prof. Dr. Arthur R. Butz suggested in his revisionist classic *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, first published in 1976, that Treblinka simultaneously served as a labor camp as well as a transit camp for Jews resettled to the east;[108] Prof. Dr. Robert Faurisson also supports the transit camp thesis.[109]

Finally, the American historian Mark Weber, together with the U.S. lawyer Andrew Allen, wrote an excellent article about Treblinka in 1992, in which the two authors summarized all known arguments to that date against the 'extermination camp' thesis, introduced new viewpoints, and wrote concerning the actual nature of the camp:[110]

327; all in all, U. Walendy spent 29 months in prison.

[106] Arnulf Neumaier, "Der Treblinka-Holocaust," in: Ernst Gauss (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 97), p. 347-374.

[107] In: Germar Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 80), pp. 475-508.

[108] Arthur R. Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, 4th ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2015, pp. 279f.

[109] Robert Faurisson, *Ecrits révisionnistes*, *op. cit.* (note 55), pp. 754f. (Vol. II).

[110] Mark Weber, Andrew Allen, "Treblinka," in: *Journal Historical Review*, 12(2), Summer 1992, p. 139.

> *"If Treblinka was not an extermination center, what was it?* […] *the balance of evidence indicates that Treblinka II – along with Belzec and Sobibor – was a transit camp, where Jewish deportees were stripped of their property and valuables before being transferred eastwards into German-occupied Soviet territories."*

Since Treblinka was much too small to be able to accommodate the large number of Jews deported there at the same time, the transit camp thesis is, in fact, the single plausible alternative to the conventional picture of the extermination camp. *Tertium non datur* – there is no third possibility.

Chapter II:
The Development of the Idea of Treblinka as an Extermination Camp

1. The Secondary Killing Methods

As we have seen in the introduction, there was little secret about Treblinka. In fact, detailed reports about this camp were reaching Warsaw as early as August 1942. These were essentially coming from Jews who had fled from Treblinka, from people residing in the area surrounding the camp, and from the Polish railway workers who operated the trains with the deportees. In these reports the version of the mass murders adopted shortly after the war by the official historiography and still accepted today – gassing by means of the exhaust fumes of diesel engines – played a very negligible role. It appears in only two reports, which, moreover, mention undefined "toxic fluids" supposedly mixed with the exhaust gases.

On October 5, 1942, the Polish underground newspaper *Informacja bieżąca* (Current Information) circulated the following report:[111]

> *"Treblinka. The death camp is once more in operation. Transports arrive from the entire country (most recently Radom, Siedlce, Międzyrzec). At present 10 trains, rather than 20, are allowed to approach at a time, for it takes a long time until the bodies of those who died on the way (20-30%) have been unloaded. The gas chambers function as follows: Outside of the barracks is a 20 HP internal combustion engine, which is in operation around the clock. The end of its exhaust pipe is mounted in a wall of the barracks; the exhaust gases, with the admixture of toxic fluids,*[112] *which have been specially mixed into the fuel of the engine, kill the people locked up in the barracks. Besides the Jewish workers, there is a Jewish orchestra as well as a group of Jewish women in the camp area with whom the staff enjoys itself.*
>
> *Up to the end of August, 320,000 Jews were exterminated in Treblinka."*

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[111] Krystyna Marczewska, Władysław Waźniewski, *op. cit.* (note 51), pp. 138f.

[112] In the original: "z domieszka plynow trujacych."

The killing method described here also surfaces in a report, which was forwarded to the Polish exile government in London as part of a series of reports about Treblinka:[113]

> *"After the arrival in the camp, the Jews receive the order to completely undress, under the pretext that they are being led to a bath. They are brought into a sealed chamber, a barrack, approximately 100 people at a time. Outside of the barrack stands an internal combustion engine of 20 HP, which runs around the clock. The mouth of the engine's exhaust leads through the barrack's wall, and the people locked up in the barrack are killed by exhaust gases channeled through it that contain toxic fluid additives, which have been especially mixed with the engine fuel."*

Other murder techniques are also described in the reports of the Polish underground movement. Thus, in an edition of *Informacja Bieżąca* dated August 17, 1942, a mobile gas chamber is discussed:[114]

> *"After the departure of the steam engines, the Jews are forced to undress, supposedly for the bath; then they are led into the gas chamber and executed, whereupon they – sometimes still living – are buried in excavated pits. The pits are excavated by machine; the gas chamber is mobile and moves back and forth over the pits. The camp strength amounted to 40,000 Jews on August 5, about 5,000 are executed daily. The liquidation is carried out by Ukrainians under the leadership of SS men. The operation in the Warsaw Ghetto is supposed to be completed by September of this year."*

On September 8, 1942, the *Informacja Bieżąca* reported on the deployment of an undefined gas with a delayed effect:[115]

> *"The extermination of the Jews takes place entirely independently from the events in the camp. The steam engine pushes the cars with the Jews under the ramp, all in sequence. The Ukrainians pull the Jews out of the cars and lead them to the 'bath' in the bathhouse. This is a building surrounded by barbed wire. They enter in groups of 300 to 500 persons. Each group is immediately locked up hermetically and gassed. Of course, this gas is not immediately effective, for the Jews have to walk to the pits afterwards, which are about ten to twenty meters away and 30 m deep. There they lose consciousness and fall into the pits, and the excavator sprinkles a thin layer of earth upon them. Then the next group follows."*

A further method was a gas – again without further description – with immediate effect. A Polish officer reported this: he had been sent to Treblinka with his Jewish wife on September 6, 1942, but escaped from there a few days af-

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[113] Krystyna Marczewska, Władysław Ważniewski, *op. cit.* (note 51), p. 153.
[114] *Ibid*., pp. 136f.
[115] *Ibid*., pp. 137f.

terward. His report belongs to the series of reports, which was sent to the Polish government-in-exile in London on March 31, 1943:[116]

> *"Outside of the barracks the women undressed completely, and together with the naked children they were led to the huge barracks of 'Treblinka II' through a side exit on a path, which was surrounded on both sides by a wire net. One supposedly takes a bath in these barracks, but in reality a sudden death by gas occurs. I do not know what kind of gas is used, but I know from a colleague who worked three weeks in 'Treblinka II' that the corpses have a bluish color.* […] *I do not know how many people have been killed in Treblinka; the piles of clothes and shoes are enormous and attain a height of two stories; they take up a huge surface.* […] *At the head of the group of Jewish workers are a Jew, the commandant of the camp, and his deputy.* [sic!]*"*

In the same series of reports, one reached London that likewise spoke of an extermination of Jews in "gas chambers." Information about what sort of gas was in use was not provided, but there are supposed to have been "about a hundred gas chambers" (!):[117]

> *"In this gigantic wooden house, where there were approximately 10,000 people in standing positions, an SS officer greeted them very politely and said the following, word for word: 'You have worked too little up to now for the German State, and because of this the German Reich has decided to resettle you in the Ukraine, so that you work more. You are in a transit camp here. You will proceed directly to the bath.'* […] *They finally reach their destination – apparently baths, but in reality gas chambers. They walk, a few of them at a time, into one chamber, and there are certainly about a hundred of these chambers.* […] *The bodies are piled up in even layers, a hundred at a time, and chlorine is sprinkled on them."*

Among the reports delivered to London on March 31, 1943, was one entitled "*Charakterystyka metód Treblinki*" (Characteristic of the Methods of Treblinka), in which three further murder methods were listed: shooting, trains with unslaked lime, and water vapor:[118]

> *"At the beginning of the so-called resettlement operation, when the technical preparations of the machinery of death were still not perfected, the Germans killed their victims in Treblinka in an extremely simple manner: a machine gun opened fire upon a crowd of men, women, and children who were brought forward, and they were shot down, each and every one of them. A crew of gravediggers threw all – the bodies of those killed, the critically wounded, as well as those lightly wounded – into the pits prepared up to that time and strew them over with earth.*

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[116] *Ibid*., p. 148.
[117] *Ibid*., p. 151.
[118] *Ibid*., pp. 153f.

In August as well as the following months, as the acceleration of the campaign exceeded the possibilities of the steam chambers, the transports were loaded into cars, which were sprinkled with a layer of lime and chlorine, so that after the arrival in Treblinka, only corpses of a violet-blue color were tossed out of the cars. All had suffocated under torment in the cars. For these transports (for example from Międzyrzec Podl., Kielce) Treblinka was but the place of burial. From this information it emerges that a punctual and precise execution of the determined plan was important to the Germans. The methods described above were practiced when the capacity of the machinery of death in Treblinka was faltering. The teeth of the corpses pulled out of the steam chambers in Treblinka were examined. Gold teeth and bridges were extracted by means of dental instruments."

In 1946, Eugen Kogon cited in his well-known book *Der SS-Staat* the eyewitness narrative – originating from the previous year – of one Oskar Berger, who, according to his own statements, had been deported in July 1942 from the ghetto of Kielce to Treblinka and had escaped in September of the same year. He stated *inter alia*:[119]

"Sometimes there were shipments that held only corpses. I believe these people must have been gassed in the cars, for I never noticed any wounds."

He added that in the beginning the Jews who had arrived in the camp were shot. During his stay in Treblinka, the Germans had built "a small brick building."[120] From then on, according to the witness, "new arrivals were gassed rather than shot."

These killing techniques – engine exhaust fumes from fuel mixed with toxic fluids, stationary gas chambers, a mobile gas chamber, gas with a delayed effect, gas with immediate effect, shootings, train cars strewn with unslaked lime, electric current[121] – were mentioned in the reports about Treblinka only sporadically and without further details. The murder method that occupied the foreground, which was described most often as well as in the most detail, was scalding with steam.

2. The Main Killing Method: Steam Chambers

On October 15, 1942, Emmanuel Ringelblum noted in his "ghetto chronicle":[122]

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[119] Eugen Kogon, *Der SS-Staat. Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager*, Karl Alber Verlag, Munich 1946, p. 170; we quoted from the English translation: E. Kogon, *The Theory and Practice of Hell*, Secker & Warburg, London 1950, p. 170.

[120] According to other witnesses, this building already existed in July 1942.

[121] See following section.

[122] Emmanuel Ringelblum, *Kronika getta warszawskiego*, ed. by Arthur Eisenbach, Cztelnik, Warsaw 1983, p. 416.

> *"Information from the gravediggers (Jakob Rabinowicz), the Jews from Stoczek, who have escaped from the trains loaded with objects, gold, and cash. Congruent description of the 'bath,' the gravediggers with golden patches on the knees.*
> *Method of killing: gas, steam, electricity."*[123]

Until April 1943, the journalist Eugenia Szajn-Lewin lived in the Warsaw Ghetto and kept a diary during this time. She recorded what was said about Treblinka in the ghetto until the end of 1942:[124]

> *"The worst thing is death in Treblinka. By now, all know of Treblinka. There they cook people alive. They know by now that Bigan has escaped from Treblinka.* […]
> *He* [Bigan] *will build halls like the ones in Treblinka. Everything will be modern: the boilers that are heated by current, the steam-gas in there, the floor movable and sloping. 'There I will drive in the Germans, all naked. Many, many Germans, so that every corner is made use of, every centimeter.' And from the boilers the gaseous steam is conducted through the pipes, the boilers are red, and the steam… a hellish boiling bath. Four minutes suffice, then the floor flap automatically drops down, and the slimy mass of red, curled bodies flows away into the cesspit. And finished, the pits are simply filled with chlorine, and there is no more trace of what was once alive. 'All this lasts only seven minutes, you hear me?'"*

On November 15, 1942, the resistance movement of the Warsaw Ghetto, operating in the underground, composed a long article entitled "*Likwidacja żydowskiej Warszawy*" (Liquidation of Jewish Warsaw), which contained a detailed description of Treblinka[125] together with a sketch of the camp.[126] Due to the importance of this article,[127] it deserves to be reproduced here in its entirety despite its length. It was sent to the Polish government-in-exile in London on January 6, 1943.[128] This report was widely disseminated. A complete English translation had already appeared in 1943 in the anthology *The Black Book of Polish Jewry* with the subtitle *Treblinka. Official Report Submitted to the Polish Government*[129] and reads as follows:

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[123] Deaths due to electric current were generally imputed at that time to the Bełżec Camp.

[124] Eugenia Szajn-Lewin, *Aufzeichnungen aus dem Warschauer Ghetto. Juli 1942 bis April 1943*, Reclam Verlag, Leipzig 1994, pp. 83f.

[125] "Likwidacja żydowskiej Warszawy," in: *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, Warsaw, January-June 1951, No. 1, pp. 59-126.

[126] This sketch is not found in the article listed in the preceding note.

[127] The author of this chapter pointed out this report in 1985, translating the most essential passages concerning Treblinka. See Carlo Mattogno, *Il rapporto Gerstein*, *op. cit.* (note 95), pp. 167-170.

[128] The editors of the *Biuletyn* erroneously give the date of the transmittal of this report to London as November 15, 1942, the day which the text is dated. It was published in Polish by K. Marczewska, W. Ważniewski, *op. cit.* (note 51), pp. 139-145.

[129] Jacob Apenszlak (ed.), *The Black Book of Polish Jewry*, American Federation for Polish

"The village of Treblinka is situated near the Warsaw-Bialystok railroad line, a few kilometers from Malkinia, in a sandy and wooded area. The population consists of Polish peasant-farmers and forest workers. In 1940, [correct: 1941] *the Germans established a penitentiary concentration camp, Treblinka A, on the sandy stretches near the village, for Poles who were guilty of transgressions against the occupant, of not supplying the demanded amounts of agricultural produce, or who were caught smuggling. The discipline at the camp is very strict; prisoners are shot on any pretext. The camp is as notorious as the penitentiary camp at Oswiecim.*

In March, 1942, the Germans began the construction of another camp, Treblinka B, in the vicinity. That camp has become the slaughter-house for the Jews of Poland and of other European countries. Poles from the nearby Treblinka A, as well as Jews caught in the neighboring villages, were put to work at the preparatory construction. That work lasted until the end of April when the central building of the camp, death-house No. 1, was built. (14).[130]

Treblinka B is situated on the sandy hills among woodland. The area of the camp is comparatively small, some 5,000 hectares (about 12,500 acres).[131] *It is entirely surrounded by a green fence interwoven with barbed wire entanglements (3). Part of the fence runs through a young forest in the north (25). At the four corners of the camp, observation points were placed for the* Lagerschutz *(Camp Guard). The* Lagerschutz *consists mostly of Ukrainians armed with machine-guns. At the observation points strong searchlights have been placed to light the entire place at night. Observation posts are also set in the middle of the camp and on the hills in the woodlands. The western border of Treblinka B is formed by the rail embankment along which runs a side-track that connects the camp with the main railroad-line (1). The side-line (2) was constructed in recent months, in order that the trains of transports might be delivered directly to the slaughter-house. The northern border of the camp is formed in the forest; east and south the border cuts through sandy hills. In the area of the camp, bushes form a long stretch parallel to the railroad tracks starting in the north (25).*

A railroad-crossing (4) is adjacent to the side-track; trains with transports halt there.

From that barrier there is an entrance to a square which holds two to three thousand persons. The square is fenced in with barbed-wire. On the square, not far from the northern border, there is a wooden barracks. In

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Jews, New York 1943, pp. 141-147.

130 The numbers in parentheses, not included in the English translation, are from the Polish original and refer to the sketches appended to the report. See Document 2 in the Appendix.

131 The size of Treblinka amounted to 13.45 hectares. See the following chapter.

*the south-western corner of the square there is a guard-house with a military post on 24-hour duty (7). South of the square, outside of the fence, there is a cloth-sorting place (*Lumpensortierungsplatz*), and further south, there is the execution place of the camp-commandant and the graves of the victims murdered by him (22). The arrival square (6) is connected with the rest of the area by an entrance in the north-eastern corner of the fence (8). From there, a path runs through the woods for about 200 meters eastwards (9) and then turns at right angles to the south and runs along the forest, parallel to the western limit of the arrival-square. This road stops at a large building of an unusual shape; it is an unfinished one-story brick-construction, about 40 meters long and 15 meters wide. (When we received the information concerning Treblinka B in the first half of September, this building was about to be finished.) The Germans began the construction of that building after the action started, probably in the middle of August, with the help of Jewish artisans picked out from among the Jews brought to Treblinka for slaughter. It is significant that the bricks for the construction had been brought from as far as Warsaw, in trucks attached to each transport. The bricks were loaded in the Warsaw* Umschlagplatz *by Jewish workers. According to the report of an eyewitness, the interior of the building is as follows; a corridor 3 meters wide runs through the middle; there are five chambers on each side; the height of each chamber is about 2 meters; the area is about 35 square meters. The execution chambers are without windows, but they have doors opening on the corridor and a type of valve on the outside walls. Next to these valves there are large scoops (they remind one of large vessels). In the walls pipes were installed from which water-steam is supposed to pour into the chambers. This was to have been death-house No. 2.*

A path (9) skirts the building and runs along its western wall finally ending at the next building (12) near death-house No. 1 (14). This building is at right-angles to the death-house No. 2. It is a brick construction much smaller than the other. It consists of only three chambers and a steam-room. Along the northern wall of this house runs a corridor from which there are doors to the chambers. The outside walls of the chambers have valves (until recently doors which had been changed into valves for utility reasons). Also here a scoop in the shape of a shallow vessel is placed at the height of the valves (15). The steam-room (15a) is adjacent to the building. Inside the steam-room there is a large vat which produces the steam. The hot steam comes in to the chambers through pipes installed there, each having a prescribed number of vents. While this machinery of death is in action, the doors and valves are hermetically closed. The floor in the chambers has a terra-cotta inlay which becomes very slippery when water is poured over it. There is a well next to the steam-room, the only well in the whole area of Treblinka B. Not far from the death-house, south

of the barbed-wire and wooden fences, there is a grave-diggers' camp. The grave-diggers live in barracks (19) next to which are the kitchen buildings. On both sides of the camp there are two guard-houses (17-20). The remaining area of Treblinka B is destined for the murdered victims. A part of that area is already a large cemetery (22, 23, 24). At first, Poles employed in the camps dug the graves; later, as the slaughter was intensified and the need for more ditches grew, special digging-machines (bulldozers) were brought, which ran day and night at grave-digging. A Diesel-motor supplies the energy and its rattle is a characteristic sound at Treblinka B.

The supervisors and execution-staff are small in numbers. The slaughterhouse is commanded by an S.S. man of the rank of major (his name is Sauer). The German staff, consisting of S.S. men, are in terror of their chief. The moment they see him from the distance they drive the Jewish workers as well as the victims on their way to death with even greater energy. Altogether, there are ten Germans and thirty Ukrainians.

The German crew changes from time to time; sometimes S.S. men from various towns of the General Government who were active at the deportations there, arrive at the camp.

In addition to the German-Ukrainian Lagerschutz*, there is also the Jewish auxiliary, part of whom are busy at the sorting place for the clothing of the victims (*Lumpensortierungsplatz*), and part of whom act as grave-diggers. They empty the execution chambers and bury the dead; the rest work at the arrival-square. The groups of the Jewish auxiliary service are headed by group-leaders whom the Germans call '*kapos*.' They are relatively better fed than the rest and wear a triangular yellow patch at their knees to distinguish them from the others.*

The personnel of the Jewish auxiliary service undergoes almost daily changes. Rarely can a Jew stand that service for more than two weeks, due to the inhuman treatment they receive at the hands of the Germans. They are constantly tortured and whipped; corporal punishment (25 strokes) is very frequent as well as the shooting of the weak ones who lose their fitness to work. This is done mostly by the chief himself. Every day there is a roll-call. The German asks who does not feel strong enough to carry on with the work? A few men step out of the row, report their unfitness and beg him – as though for a favor – to be shot. The executions take place at a special spot; the victim himself stands erect over a grave while the chief shoots at the back of the victim's head. The next victim has to step nearer and throw the body of the murdered one into the ditch, and then a few moments later, share the fate of his predecessor. These young Jews are so overworked that all will to resist is gone; on the other hand, the German terror is so atrocious that it makes them even want to die so as not to suffer further inhuman tortures. In one of the first days of September, the chief of Treblinka thus murdered 500 young Jews by shooting them one after an-

other with his gun; what is startling is that not one of this group of a few hundred men attempted to resist death. The execution lasted from 7:30 to 3 p.m.

The relatively lightest work in the death in the death camp is the sorting of the clothing of victims. While assigned that work, one can eat to one's heart's content, for the 'deported' Jews took along large food-stocks: bread, marmalade, fat, sugar. But the chief does not leave the men at this work for any length of time; after a few days, he transfers them to grave-digging.

The gaps in the Jewish auxiliary service are supplemented from among the transports arriving in Treblinka. As a rule, two transports arrive daily: one in the morning and one toward evening. In the period of greatest of the action a few transports arrive daily. Each train consists of a few score of freight cars. Some of the cars halt at the side-track straight across from the arrival-square, while the remaining cars are shifted to the side to wait until the first part is taken care of. The cars are quickly emptied. The tortured and excited throng breathes with relief when let out on the square. They are immediately taken over by the Jewish auxiliary guard headed by the 'kapos.' *These give orders in Yiddish. The women and children are ordered to enter the barracks immediately while the men remain in the square. Looking around, they see a high pillar with a poster bearing a large inscription:* Achtung Warschauer *(Attention, natives of Warsaw) despite the fact that transports of Jews from many other towns of the General Government, from Germany and the states of Western Europe are also brought to Treblinka. 'Do not worry about your fate,' continues the poster. 'You are all going eastward for work; you will work and your wives will take care of your households. Before leaving, however, you have to take a bath and your clothing must be disinfected. You have to deposit your valuables and money with the cashier (of Treblinka) for which you will get receipts. After the bath and disinfection, you will receive everything back unharmed.'*

In the first period of murder in Treblinka an S.S. officer with a kind, confidence-inspiring face used to come to the square and hold a speech along the same lines. However, when in the course of action ever larger transports arrived from the various parts and the crowds had to be quickly liquidated, the Germans cancelled the speech as superfluous.

To make the Jews believe that actual classification according to trades would take place at the arrival-square in order to send occupational groups for labor, they placed small signs with the inscriptions: Tailors, Shoemakers, Carpenters, etc. It goes without saying that such segregation never took place.

The 'kapos' *quickly put the men in rows of ten, ordering them to take off their shoes, undress completely and prepare for a bath. Everybody is per-*

mitted to take along a piece of soap and his documents [sic]. *In the meantime the sorting-service men take away the clothing to the sorting-place. Women and children also have to undress completely. Now comes the last act of the Treblinka tragedy. The terrorized mass of men, women and children starts on its last road to death. At the head a group of women and children is driven, beaten by the accompanying Germans, whips in their hands. The group is driven ever quicker; ever heavier blows fall upon the heads of the women who are mad with fear and suffering. The cries and laments of the women together with the shouts and curses of the Germans interrupt the silence of the forest. The people finally realize that they are going to their death. At the entrance of death-house No.1 the chief himself stands, a whip in his hand; beating them in cold blood, he drives the women into the chambers. The floors of the chambers are slippery. The victims slip and fall, and they cannot get up for new numbers of forcibly driven victims fall upon them. The chief throws small children into the chambers over the heads of the women. When the execution chambers are filled the doors are hermetically closed and the slow suffocation of leaving people begins, brought about by the steam issuing from the numerous vents in the pipes. At the beginning, stifled cries penetrate to the outside; gradually they quiet down and 15 minutes later the execution is complete.*
Now comes the turn of the grave diggers. Shouting and cursing, the German overseers drive the diggers to their work, which consists of getting the bodies out of the execution chambers. The grave-diggers stand at the scoop, near the valves. The valves open but not a body falls out. Due to the steam all the bodies have become a homogenous mass stuck together with the perspiration of the victims. In their death agonies, arms, legs, trunks are intertwined into a gigantic macabre entanglement. To make it possible for the grave-diggers to get out single bodies, cold water from the near-by well is poured over the mass. Then the bodies separate and may be taken out. As a rule the surfaces of the bodies are not defaced; only the faces and buttocks are purple. The grave-diggers, constantly beaten and driven by the Germans, place the corpses on the scoops until the chambers are empty. The bodies lie piled up like slaughtered cattle. Now the burying takes place. Formerly (during the first half of August), the Jewish grave-diggers had handcarts to convey the bodies to the ditches, which had to be done at top speed. Lately, however, the chief did away with them. 'Ein Mann – zwei Leichen' *(one man, two corpses), meaning that each grave-digger has to bury two corpses. He ties the legs or the arms of the body with his belt and running, pulls it from the scoop to the ditches, throws it in and, again running, returns for the next load. Formerly the graves were right at the death-house so that the burying of corpses could take place quickly. As new victims were added, the grave-line moved ever further to the east and the pulling of the corpses to the graves takes longer and longer. After the*

ditch is filled, the grave-diggers quickly cover the bodies with earth and the digging-machine nearby prepares the next grave.
The execution of the men is identical. They also are driven through the road in the woods to their death. The victims react differently while being driven in the direction of the death-house; some repeat loudly psalms of penitence, confess their sins; others curse God; but a sudden shout of the Germans and the blows falling upon the backs of the doomed men immediately brings silence on the whole crowd. Sometimes all the victims cannot get into the overcrowded chambers; then the Germans keep the rest in the woods near the slaughter-house. These people see and hear everything but there is no attempt at self-preservation.
This is irrefutable proof of the atrocious terror wielded over their victims by the Germans.
The new death-house provides for the liquidation of 8,000 to 10,000 victims. If we consider that right now 2,000,000 murdered Jews, or the greater part of Polish Jewry, are already buried in the area of Treblinka, the disturbing question arises: for whom do the S.S. intend that new house of death; who are to utter their last breath in the slaughter-house? Most probably the death-machine, once started, will not limit itself to murdering Jews. At present, the specter of death in steam chambers rises before the Polish population; there have already been some signs of it: according to a report of an eyewitness, the Germans exterminated a group of Poles in death-house No.1, in the second half of August."

On August 8, 1943, The New York Times reported, referring to an article that appeared in a London newspaper: "2,000,000 Murders by Nazis Charged. Polish Paper in London Says Jews Are Exterminated in Treblinka Death House." The subtitle reads: "According to report, steam is used to kill men, women and children at a place in the woods." The article was based upon a contribution published on August 7 in the magazine Polish Labor Fights, which was nothing other than the report of November 15, 1942. This is indubitably clear from the quotes in the NYT article.[132]

In 1944, Rabbi Silberschein published an eight-page report about the camp "Tremblinki" (a garbling of Treblinka). Although many features suggest that the source for this report is mainly the same as the one of November 15, 1942, it also contains many new elements, especially in relation to the killing technique, which probably stem from a different source. On the grounds of its importance, the document,[133] which is as good as unknown to specialists, deserves to be cited *in toto*. On the one hand, Silberschein speaks of "gas chambers" and of "gas, which flows out of pipes," while on the other hand he says

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[132] *The New York Times*, August 8, 1943, p. 11.

[133] In his book *Belzec, Treblinka, Sobibor* (note 71), which is accepted as the standard work, Yitzhak Arad does not devote one word to this report.

that the bodies had been clumped together "under the influence of the water vapor." Thus, either Silberschein (correctly) regarded water vapor as a gas or he was not certain of the killing technique.

The occurrence of many improper linguistic expressions is explained by the fact that it has been translated from the French by a person not fully in command of German. It reads as follows:[134]

"Tremblinki – The Main Extermination Camp

The small village of Tremblinki lies on the Warsaw-Bialostock [sic] *rail line. The main extermination camp, three times as large as that of Lublin, was located not far from the village. It was at first set up as a concentration camp for Jews and Poles; but in March 1942, the Germans transformed it into an extermination camp for Jews only. They reconstructed the camp expressly for this and equipped it with gas experimental rooms and ovens.*

The Camp

The camp was situated in the midst of dense forests, entirely cut off from the outside world, and was reachable by means of a railway track with the Warsaw-Bialostock main line. It encompassed an area of 100 acres and is surrounded by the thickest barbed wire.

It consisted of three sections: the actual camp; the extermination camp, and an open square. The actual camp has three blocks: a men's camp, a women's camp, and between these two a children's camp.[135]

A three-meter wide anteroom divides the inside of each block into two parts. From the anteroom doors open into the cells. Each cell measures 36 m^2 with a height of no more than two meters […[136]]. *Each structure was 40 × 50 m in size. Aside from this, two more elongated buildings, each about 120 × 150 m in size, were constructed later as a men's camp (not shown in the plan).*

The extermination facilities took up approximately the same space as the accommodation spaces and contained a dressing room (see plan). The dressing room contained a reception room for the camp administration, an anteroom, and the actual undressing room. The entrance to the dressing room was from the open square. A door led from the dressing room to the baths, from here a door led to the experimental chamber for gases for suffocation, and from there a door to the ovens. The ovens were connected with a railway, which led to the cemetery (see plan).

A large pedestal had been erected on the open square. There were almost no workshops and only a few job positions in this camp.

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[134] A. Silberschein, *Die Judenausrottung in Polen*, Geneva 1944, third series, pp. 33-20.

[135] See Document 3 in the Appendix.

[136] Two illegible words follow.

The Guard Service – The Treatment

An SS detachment under the command of Hauptmann Sauer supplied the guard service in the extermination camp of Tremblinki. The composition of the staff of the detachment changed frequently.

The inmates performed various tasks in connection with the requirements of the camp. They were terribly maltreated and abused at this and had to endure the most inhuman punishments imaginable for every petty violation of the house rules or other mistake. Not all worked, most of them waited in the cells only as long until the gassing facility was able to take them. But sometimes they were killed even sooner in another manner. The Germans shot several Jews on a daily basis, above all the commandant Sauer himself. Every afternoon he had his executioners assemble the Jews who still remained alive. Then he asked: 'Who is weak, who can no longer work?' The Jews made no answer at all to this: whoever had had enough simply stepped forward from the line – and was shot down. In this manner, Hauptmann Sauer had murdered 500 Jewish youths, one after the other, on a single day in the beginning of September 1942.

The 'Kapus'

The 'Kapus' occupied a special position. It was these Jews upon whom many important mechanisms of the camp were imposed. Most Kapus had sorted through the clothing of those who had been transported out of this life. They did this task at a place called the 'rag sorting place.'

Others were also working at the railway station with the reception of those freshly arriving. Others, again, had to work as gravediggers. It happened not rarely that the Jews so occupied lasted no longer than two weeks and committed suicide.

The Delivery

Day after day two trains arrived in Tremblinki, completely filled with Jews. Jews were carried off from all parts of Europe to this place; but the main contingent was made up of the Jews from Warsaw, north Poland, and the Baltic.

Every train was 30 to 50 cars long. The emptying of the cars proceeded at lightning pace. Then the Kapus received the arrivals and read to them the camp regulations in the Jewish language. At the station building, the following appeal was displayed: 'Have no concern about your fate! You are all traveling only to work in the east. You yourselves will perform the work and your women will do the housework. Before traveling on, you have to bathe and remove the germs from your clothes. Gold and other valuables are to be deposited at the counter, where you will get a receipt for them.' And really, in order to lull the belief in these promises into a feeling of se-

curity, the Germans had established an office at the train station, where each new arrival had to turn up and report his professional training. After fulfillment of these 'statistics,' the people were brought into the camp and at first only sent into the disinfection baths. After the bath they were temporarily sent to the individual cells. There they were supposed to wait until it was their turn. But for the most part, those instructed didn't know what fate awaited them. They still believed that they would soon be traveling on to a place of work. This belief was even strengthened by the fact that there were no large factory facilities in the camp and that it had all seemed as if it were only a transit station.

<u>The Murder Work</u>
But when the rooms could no longer accept new arrivals, the oldest inmates were gassed. Every day groups of a thousand people each were brought into the gas and oven chambers. At first, as at their arrival, they were led into the bath by the Kapus. Everyone had to take off clothing and shoes and remained naked. For the further deception of the victims, each was handed a little piece of soap. In the meantime, the work of putting the discarded clothing and shoes in order was performed. Hauptmann Sauer took them over in the reception room of the extermination facilities. He did not miss any opportunity to flog every single person. Then the Germans drove the women and children as the first ones into the extermination cells. Now the final act of the extermination began:
Men and women, old people and children, all naked, take their last walk into death. At the fore stride the women and children, then the men, old and young, follow behind. To impel them to run faster, the Germans strike them on head and body. Now the victims are running, tormented by fear: their cries of dread, especially those of the women and children, ascend to the sky. Now everybody knows where this is leading – to death. The floor is slippery, one slips and falls. But those fallen can no longer even stand up; for continually new victims are flung over them. The children are thrown into the room, above the heads of their mothers. The extermination cells fill up. When they are full, then they are hermetically sealed, from every side the pipes open, out of which flows gas. The death of asphyxiation reaps a quick harvest. Within a quarter hour it is all over. Then the Kapus must go to work. With pitiless blows, the guard personnel force them to perform their work.
The gates of death open – but the dead bodies somehow cannot be pulled out individually: for they have all clumped together with one another and stiffened under the influence of the water vapor.
Water is fetched from a nearby well and the bodies are sprinkled with it so the gravediggers can carry away the corpses. These are loosened by it, one

from the other, and it is easier to remove them. Their appearance has not changed, aside from a violet coloration of the head and the back side [sic]. *Now the dead are loaded onto the ramp, conducted over a railway to the cemetery in the mass graves, where the Kapus bring their task to an end. (See the almost identical description in the article by Tymon Terlecki 'Alle Juden raus,' cited by us on page 18 in 'L'extermination des Juifs polonais IV').*[137]

By many hundred thousands, Jews from all regions of Europe have been exterminated in this way in Tremblinki alone.

The Camp Orchestra

But the camp of Tremblinki had another 'specialty.' To wit, the Jewish Arthur Gold Orchestra (see plan) gave concerts there, and it had the duty of playing for those who were being led to their death!!!! At the same moment as thousands of Jews were perishing in the gas chambers, the musicians had to play cheerful melodies. Whichever of them refused to do it was hanged up by his feet with his head down. Several of the musicians were seized by madness in the middle of playing. The artists, one after the other, jumped willy-nilly amongst the crowd of people who were waiting for their turn, and they bellowed with voice breaking and face madly distorted 'Frait och, yidelach, ir got zum tot mit klezemer!' (Enjoy yourselves, you Jews, you are going to death with music). Then the German bullets whizzed, and they sank under them to become a lifeless lump on the ground. After this the orchestra was brought up to strength again and the performance was repeated every time."

In a report dealing with alleged German crimes in Poland, authored by the Polish government for the Nuremberg Court and presented by the Soviets as Document USSR-93, the following is written regarding Treblinka:[138]

"When the process of exterminating Jews was initiated, Treblinka became one of the first camps to which victims were brought. They were put to death in gas chambers, by steam and electric current" (Emphasis added.)

Charge No. 6 of the Polish government against Hans Frank, according to which "The German authorities acting under the authority of Governor General Dr. Hans Frank established in March 1942 [sic!] the extermination-camp at Treblinka, intended for mass killing of Jews by suffocating them in steam-

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[137] This article appeared on November 7, 1943, in No. 45 of the political newspaper *Wiadomosci Polskie*, published in London, in which Tymon Terlecki quoted longer sections from the already cited report of November 15, 1942.

[138] USSR-93, English version. The Republic of Poland in the case against: 1. German war criminals. 2. Their corporate bodies and organizations, designated under Charge No. 1 before the International War Court, p. 44. An indication as to the report's credibility is given by the inclusion of a chapter entitled "A Soap Factory of Human Fat" following the section on Treblinka!

filled chambers," is based in essence on the report of November 15, 1942, from which large excerpts were cited. In these the description of the structure of the two "death-houses" as well as the alleged system of killing is given particular attention.[139]

As late as 1961, a witness in Düsseldorf testified in a deposition – presumably in the preliminary stage of the trial against the (alleged) last Treblinka Commandant Kurt Franz[140] – that the victims had been killed with steam in Treblinka.[141]

3. Significance of the Report of November 15, 1942, for Historiography

The report of November 15, 1942, is the most important historical source for the Treblinka Camp during the time of its existence, and the entire subsequent official historiography relies on this report, beginning with the description of the alleged 'gas chambers.' Nevertheless, it has been such a headache for the official historians that they occasionally cite it with blatant falsification.

The Israeli historian Yitzhak Arad summarizes it as follows:[142]

"In this document there is a description of the construction of the Treblinka extermination camp, its location, its size, and a detailed plan, including a sketch of the area. This report also includes a description of the dozens [sic] *of new gas chambers and other structures in the camp. With regard to the camp staff, it states that, in addition to the Germans and Ukrainians there are also Jews, whom the document calls 'Jewish auxiliaries', who are employed at ancillary works, in sorting of clothes of the murdered and removing the corpses from the gas chambers and burying them. The document mentions the extremely difficult conditions under which the prisoners are kept, the daily killings among these Jews, and that their life expectancy in this camp was no more than two weeks. In the description of the way the transports were treated, there is reference to the deceptive ploys of the Germans and a description of the extermination process from the moment the people disembarked on the platform – the way they were tortured – until they were led into the gas chambers, as well as the system of burying the corpses. In conclusion, it stated that by then two million Jews had been murdered in Treblinka – the majority of Polish Jewry. The report con-*

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[139] PS-3311, *IMT*, Vol. XXXII, pp. 154-158. On December 5, 1945, the document was sanctioned by its author, Dr. Tadeusz Cyprian, the Polish deputy representative at the War Crime Commission of the United Nations in London, through his signature.

[140] See Chapter V.

[141] K. Marczewska, W. Waźniewski, *op. cit.* (note 51), p. 134.

[142] Yitzhak Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), pp. 354f.

cludes by asking why the new gas chambers were built, since indeed the majority of Polish Jewry had already been killed, and states that, according to one eyewitness, the Germans had already killed a group of Poles in the middle of August.

This report is the first in which there is a comprehensive description of the Treblinka extermination camp. The facts are, for the most part, correct. Their source is escapees from the camp who reached the Warsaw ghetto and who gave testimony for the Ringelblum Archive and to Jewish underground groups in the Warsaw ghetto. This report is based therefore on the descriptions of witnesses who had seen for themselves the process of extermination, who had lived in the camp for days or weeks as prisoners, who had been employed at various jobs, and who had succeeded in escaping. The facts that they related on the basis of what they had seen were accurate, but the reference to two million Jews murdered was incorrect. In the period to which this report refers, one-fourth to one-third of the number cited in the report had been murdered. Also the detail about the murder of a group of Poles in Treblinka was incorrect."

The coarse falsifications, of which Arad, regarded by the official historiography as the most renowned Treblinka expert, is guilty here, make one imagine his mortal embarrassment in the face of this historical source of such unusual importance. The source, however, contradicts one of the main pillars of precisely this official historiography by the fact that it mentions, not diesel gas chambers, but instead water vapor chambers as the murder weapon.

Arad claims, however, that the report contains "a description of the dozens of new gas chambers" as well as a description of the "process of extermination," but he doesn't write a single syllable about the steam chambers: instead he shamelessly transforms them into "gas chambers"! Furthermore, he asserts that the facts are "for the most part, correct" and that the witness testimony was "accurate," although the official historiography had long since banished the steam chambers to the realm of myths.

The Polish historian Józef Marszałek furnishes a summary no less dishonest when he writes:[143]

"In this section [of the report] *the site and topography of the camp are shown exactly, and the number of the gas chambers*[144] *as well as their*

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[143] Józef Marszałek, "Rozpoznanie obozów Śmierci w Bełzcu, Sobiborze, e Treblince przez wywiad Armii Krajowej i Delegatury Rządu Rzeczyspolitej Polskiej na Ktaju" (The Reconnaissance of the Death Camps Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka by the Intelligence Service of the Homeland Army and the Delegation of the Government of the Republic of Poland in the Homeland), in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko narodowi polskiemu / Instytutu Pamięci Narodowe*, Vol. XXXV, Warsaw 1993, p. 42.

[144] "komór gazowych"

structure with the facilities for the gassing[145] *of the victims are described."*

We now turn to the question of how the miraculous transformation of the steam chambers into gas chambers occurred.

4. From Steam Chambers to Carbon Monoxide Chambers

In August 1944, the Soviets occupied the area around Treblinka and conducted a military forensic investigation with examination of the camp grounds as well as witness interviews.[146] The murder method most frequently mentioned by the witnesses differed from those already mentioned and consisted of the evacuation of air from hermetically sealed rooms by means of a vacuum pump driven by an engine. This engine, which at first was merely said to have been used to run the pump, was to gradually transmogrify into a murder weapon – at first, in connection with the evacuation of air, then becoming, thanks above all to Jankiel Wiernik, the only murder instrument, by which the victims were killed with carbon monoxide gas.

The murder technique of suffocation by pumping out air was described by two witnesses in particular. Abe Kon, a former Treblinka prisoner, stated on August 17, 1944:[147]

"I was sent into the Treblinka Camp in October 1942 with my relatives – father, mother, two sisters, a brother. […] *The naked people walking by were struck by whips. They were walking to a building, which had been nicely built with cement. A Jewish symbol, the 'Star of David,' was attached to the house. At the entrance to the 'bath' stood a Ukrainian with a knife and whip. He stabbed those who did not want to enter with the knife and dragged them into the building. The service staff named this Ukrainian 'Ivan the Terrible.'*

Plan of the 'Bath': the bath consisted of 12 cabins. Each cabin measured 6 × 6 m. The height amounted to 2.5 m. They drove 600 people in each cabin. They threw the children on their heads. The cabins had two doors, which could be sealed hermetically. In the corner between ceiling and wall two openings were connected with hoses. Behind the 'bath' stood a machine. It pumped the air out of the chambers. The people suffocated within 6 to 15 minutes. The second door was opened and the people were dragged out. Their teeth were examined and golden teeth were ripped out. From there the bodies were carried away on stretchers and were buried in the

145 "do gazowania"

146 See following chapter.

147 GARF, 7021-115-11, pp. 33f.

ground. They weren't buried any farther than 100 m away from the 'bath.' People were driven into the 'bath' three times a day. In this way 15,000 to 18,000 persons were destroyed each day. That's how it went for two months. Later, machines dug these bodies up and they were cremated in ovens. There were no fewer than one million burned.

Later, the extermination process proceeded as follows: suffocation and burning. They were incinerated in a specially manufactured oven, which could hold up to 6,000 bodies. The oven was filled with corpses. Gasoline or petroleum was poured over them and burned. The cremation lasted up to an hour. […] *Those who could not walk to the 'bath' – invalids, old people – were sent to the 'hospital'; they went there. They were placed at the edge of a deep pit on the bottom of which was a pyre made up of human beings. The victims were shot in the back of the neck, whereupon they fell into the pit and burned. So it went, day after day."*

On August 22, 1944, the Pole Kazmierz Skarzyński gave the following statement:[148]

"Incarcerated Jews in the camp reported that many hundreds of prisoners at a time were penned in hermetically sealed chambers and were asphyxiated by pumping out the air. The people died very quickly – in 10 or 12 minutes. According to the stories of the Jews, the oven [sic] *was a pit of 25 m in length, 20 m wide and 5-6 m deep, with a grate made out of train rails on the bottom of the pit, which served as an air vent. The bodies were piled on the rails and burned. The glow from the fire was visible at a distance of 15 km. During the day a black smoke spread. In a strong wind, the smell of burning was still perceptible 30 km from the camp."*

The air evacuation technique of killing also turns up in the first official Soviet report concerning Treblinka I and II. It originates from August 24, 1944. Regarding Treblinka it reports:[149]

"The 'bath' was a house that consisted of 12 cabins each 6 × 6m in size. They drove 400 to 500 people into one cabin at the same time. They had two doors, which could be hermetically sealed. In the corner, between ceiling and wall, there were two openings connected with hoses. Behind the 'bath' stood a machine. It pumped the air out of the room. The people suffocated in 6 to 10 minutes. The second door was opened and the dead were brought in wheel barrows to the special ovens."

On September 15, 1944, a Polish-Soviet commission issued a "protocol of a provisional preliminary investigation and inquiry into the former concentration camp Tremblinka" [sic], where we read:[150]

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[148] GARF, 7021-115-11, p. 16.
[149] GARF, 7021-115-9, p. 108.
[150] GARF, 7021-115-11, p. 44.

> *"In the beginning, the method employed was to pump the air out of the room by means of a small car engine. Then, as a result of the large number of the doomed, a chemical substance began to be used."*

Vassili Grossmann entered Treblinka in September and spoke with the witnesses, who were also questioned by the Soviet investigative commission at that time. As he relates in his book, he reconstructed the picture of Treblinka "according to the stories of living witnesses," the "statements of people who worked in Treblinka from the first day of the establishment of the camp until August 2, 1943."[151] Grossmann, however, declared that he was not satisfied with repeating the contradictory statements of these witnesses, but in attempting to connect them into a coherent historical portrayal:[152]

> *"In the beginning, even the pressure and suction devices functioned poorly; at that time, the suffering of the unfortunates dragged on for eight to ten hours. The most diverse means were employed for killing: the exhaust gases of a heavy armored tank engine, which served the power station of Treblinka, were forced in.* […]
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> *The second most commonly used procedure in Treblinka was to pump the air out of the chambers with the help of special suction equipment – the causes of death were approximately similar to those in the poisoning with carbon monoxide gas: the oxygen supply for the people was blocked. And, finally, the third method, rarer but likewise employed, the murdering by steam, which was also based on denying oxygen to the organism: the steam forced the air out of the room. Various toxic gases were also used, but merely for experimental purposes; the factory-scale mass murder was carried out in the manner described in the first two procedures mentioned."*

At the end of 1945, on the occasion of their questioning by the Polish examining judge Z. Łukaszkiewicz, the Treblinka witnesses were still uncertain about which of the various extermination techniques they should give preference to. In a statement given between October and December, witness Szymon Goldberg described the following method of killing in the "gassing cabins" of Treblinka:[153]

> *"The Jews were poisoned in that the air was pumped out – there was a machine for pumping out the air – and gas* [*i.e.*, exhaust fumes] *of a vehicle were introduced. Ether was burned and this vapor introduced inside. Then there was also chlorine."*
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> On October 12, 1945, witness Henryk Reichmann put on the record:[41]
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> *"The killings were carried out either by pumping out of the air or by introduction of CO. Once, when fewer transports were arriving, the Germans*

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[151] Wassili Grossmann, *Die Hölle von Treblinka*, in: *Die Vernichtungslager Maidanek und Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 33.

[152] *Ibid*., p. 49f.

[153] Wydawnictwo Centralnej Żydowskiej Komisji Historycznej (ed.), *Dokumenty i Materiały*, *op. cit.* (note 39), p. 179.

> *conducted an experiment: They pumped out the air without introducing poison. When the doors were opened after 48 hours, we found some living people inside."*

The statement of the witness Stanisław Kon of October 7, 1945, was similar in content:[154]

> *"The killing took place by means of pumping out the air or by the introduction of engine exhaust gases."*

In January 1946, Rachel Auerbach, a member of the Jewish Central Historical Commission, published her aforementioned book, which was later issued in English under the title *In the Fields of Treblinka* in 1979 by Alexander Donat. There, the way the gas chambers worked is described as follows:[155]

> *"The motor, installed in a workshop near the bathhouse, could be started now. First, a suction pump was brought into play to draw the pure air from the chamber. After that, the pipe to the reservoir of exhaust gas from the motor could be opened.*
>
> […] *At the last moment, it seems, when the pump started to suck out breathable air, all self-control broke and there was an outbreak of collective hysteria inside the gas chamber."*

A succinct example of the hopeless confusion, which then prevailed among the eyewitnesses as to the method employed in Treblinka for the extermination of Jews, is the testimony of Samuel Rajzman. Rajzman, characterized by A. Donat the "Nestor of the Treblinka survivors,"[156] was questioned on September 26, 1944, by the military examining judge of the military prosecutor's office of the 65th Soviet Army, First Lieutenant of Justice Jurowski. He stated that he had arrived in Treblinka on September 27, 1942, and remained there until August 2, 1943. Therefore, according to his statement, he spent more than ten months in the camp and must have known all about the gas chambers and their function, if there were any. Yet he reported the following:[157]

> *"Dr. Horonschitzki likewise had no admittance into the cabins, but of what was known to him, he told me the following: the people were driven in large parties into the cabins of the so-called 'baths.' These cabins were hermetically sealed. In the first period, the killing occurred by means of pumping out the air from the cabins; then one resorted to other methods – poisoning by chlorine gas and Cylon-gas. On the camp territory there was a special store of materials with a large amount (up to 15 tons) of so-called Chloren. Chloren came in blocks, white in color. I saw barrels of this Chloren were carried into the second division every day. I did not see containers with of, but rarely and periodically various crates arrived with*

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[154] Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *op. cit.* (note 32), p. 47.
[155] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 35f.
[156] *Ibid*., "Acknowledgements," p. 5.
[157] USSR-337, p. 9 of the German version.

> *the transports, which were taken over by the guard staff of the 2nd division without delay. The engines in the 'bath rooms' ran 24 hours without interruption. Whether poisoning by means of gas mist occurred, I have not heard."*

A month earlier, in August, Rajzman had written a 16-page report entitled *Kombinat Smerti v Treblinke* (death factory in Treblinka),[158] in which he depicts the method of extermination in Treblinka as follows:[159]

> *"After being sheared, the women were sent into the 'bathing establishment,' which consisted of a row of chambers, each of which could hold 700 persons. In the chambers towels were hanging, and there was a sign posted with the inscription 'Rules for using the bath'! The people were led in, and the doors were hermetically sealed. In the beginning, the method of pumping out the air was employed: the people died the death of asphyxiation under frightful torments. As time went by, the Germans switched to poisoning with gas, which went more rapidly. Each group stayed in the chamber from 12 to 20 minutes, no longer, for masses of new arrivals were waiting for their turn in the 'bath.' After twenty minutes, the bodies were already afire on an enormous pyre. Sometimes desperate lamentation sounded from the fire. The Germans paid no attention to it – an expression of the 'extraordinary German tenderheartedness.' There were instances when one of the Germans delivered the coup de grâce to one of those thrown alive into the fire. Before the bodies fell into the fire, they were examined by a group of 'dentists', who checked whether perhaps there were teeth, crowns, or fillings of gold present; all of it was torn from the mouths of the dead by pliers.*
>
> *The corpses were burned in a huge construction pit. Cement foundations were erected on its bottom, upon which grills made from railway rails were fixed. Under the grills burned a strong fire, into which some kind of fluid was poured. The workers at the ovens* [sic] *were changed every few days, and only rarely did one remain more than a week long at this 'work.' They were replaced by a fresh labor force, which came in with the new trains day after day. In 'reward' for their days of labor, these prisoners were not sent into the 'bath,' but were killed instead by a shot to the back of the neck."*

At the Nuremberg Trial, where he took the witness stand on February 27, 1946, Rajzman merely spoke of the "gas chambers," without going into any closer detail about their structure or the type of gas used.[160]

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[158] This notice is mentioned in the report, which was written on August 24, 1944, by representatives of the 65th Soviet Army. It was adopted by the Soviets as a piece of evidence for their documentation.

[159] S. Rajzman, *Kombinat Smerti v Treblinke*, GARF, 7021-115-8, pp. 7f.

[160] *IMT*, Vol. VIII, pp. 324-329.

In the same year 1946, Rajzman composed an eight-page report with the title *Mój pobyt w Treblince* (My Stay in Treblinka).[161] Here, he claimed that 25,000 people per day had been murdered in Treblinka,[162] but did not elaborate on the means of killing.

By the 1950s, Rajzman had happily associated himself with the official version of the 'gas chambers,' but he remained perfectly silent about the details. In his report, published in English by Donat, he contents himself with the following remarks:[163]

> *"The women had to line up, and all their hair was clipped off. It was destined for use in German mattresses. Naked, they went the road of no return, into the gas chambers. While they undressed and walked into the gas chambers, the Germans hit them very hard; many died from the beatings alone. Everybody was pushing to get to the gas chamber fast, because the Ukrainians and the Germans were beating them so hard. Everybody was stampeding forward. The whole place was covered with blood. People didn't know that it would be the end there; the idea was simply to get out of the place where they were beating you. And in doing that, they went straight into the gas chambers."*

In these few sentences, Rajzman thus mentions the 'gas chambers' four times, but spares not a word as to their structure and manner of functioning.

5. Origin of the Carbon Monoxide Version

Let us summarize: at the end of 1945, three different methods of mass murder were still contending for first place: steam, evacuation of air, and engine exhaust. As mentioned, the Polish government gave preference to steam at the Nuremberg Trial and thereby conferred upon this method the official consecration of 'historical fact.'

In what came next, this 'historical fact' was declared a myth, and the steam had to give way to the exhaust gases of a diesel engine.

What was the origin of this version? And why did the latter ultimately prevail?

The claim that in Treblinka murder was committed by engine exhaust was surfacing (with no indication of the type of engine) here and there as early as 1942, but soon vanished into oblivion again. It was picked up anew and enlarged on by Jankiel Wiernik. By his own testimony, Wiernik was deported to

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[161] Wydawnictwo Centralnej Żydowskiej Komisji Historycznej (ed.), *Dokumenty i Materiały*, *op. cit.* (note 39), pp. 182-190.

[162] *Ibid*., p. 186.

[163] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 232. Donat states that this text is based upon an English translation, by one Howard Roiter, of an eyewitness report given by Rajzman in the Yiddish language and recorded on tape (p. 251).

Treblinka on August 23, 1942, and remained there until August 2, 1943, the day of the prisoner uprising. In May 1944 he published a report about Treblinka in the Polish language, which was published in English translation in the United States that same year.[164] Wiernik has the following to report about the first gassing facilities:[165]

> *"When I arrived at the camp, three gas chambers were already in operation; another ten were added while I was there. A gas chamber measured 5 × 5 meters and was about 1.90 meters high. The outlet on the roof had a hermetic cap. The chamber was equipped with a gas pipe inlet and a baked tile floor slanting towards the platform. The brick building which housed the gas chambers was separated from Camp No. 1 by a wooden wall. This wood wall and the brick wall of the building together formed a corridor, which was 80 centimeters taller than the building. The chambers were connected with the corridor by a hermetically fitted iron door leading into each of the chambers. On the side of Camp No. 2 the chambers were connected by a platform four meters wide, which ran alongside all three chambers. The platform was about 80 centimeters above ground level. There was also a hermetically fitted wooden door on this side.*
>
> *Each chamber had a door facing Camp No. 2 (1.80 by 2.50 meters), which could be opened only from the outside by lifting it with iron supports and was closed by iron hooks set into the sash frames, and by wooden bolts. The victims were led into the chambers through the doors leading from the corridor, while the remains of the gassed victims were dragged out through the doors facing Camp No. 2. The power plant operated alongside these chambers, supplying Camps 1 and 2 with electric current. A motor taken from a dismantled Soviet tank stood in the power plant. This motor was used to pump the gas into the chambers by connecting the motor with the inflow pipes. The speed with which death overcame the helpless victims depended on the quantity of combustion gas admitted into the chamber at one time.* […]
>
> *Between 450 and 500 persons were crowded into a chamber measuring 25 square meters.* [[166]…] *The chamber was filled, the motor turned on and connected with the inflow pipes, and, within 25 minutes at the most, all lay stretched out dead or, to be more accurate, were standing up dead."*

There is no mention in any other witness testimony of the two additional gas chambers, and official historiography knows nothing of them either.

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[164] R. Czarkowski, *Cieniom Treblinki*, *op. cit.* (note 75), p. 30; Yankel (sic) Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, published by American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland, New York 1944. The text can also be found in A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4).

[165] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 157-159.

[166] That would be 18 to 20 victims per square meter!

A few pages later, Wiernik gets into the details of the new gassing facilities:[167]

> *"The new construction job between Camp No. 1 and Camp No. 2, on which I had been working, was completed in a very short time. It turned out that we were building ten additional gas chambers, more spacious than the old ones, 7 by 7 meters or about 50 square meters.*[168] *As many as 1,000 to 1,200 persons could be crowded into one gas chamber. The building was laid out according to the corridor system, with five chambers on each side of the corridor. Each chamber had two doors, one door leading into the corridor through which the victims were admitted; the other door, facing the camp, was used for the removal of the corpses. The construction of both doors was the same as that of the doors in the old chambers. The building, when viewed from Camp No. 1, showed five wide concrete steps with bowls of flowers on either side. Next came a long corridor. There was a Star of David on top of the roof facing the camp, so that the building looked like an old-fashioned synagogue.* […]
>
> *The motor that generated the gas in the new chambers was defective, and so the helpless victims had to suffer for hours on end before they died.* […] *When the chambers were opened again, many of the victims were only half dead and had to be finished off with rifle butts, bullets or powerful kicks."*

Two important elements make it possible for us to penetrate to the origin of this version of the extermination method in Treblinka: the camp plan published by Wiernik and his reference to the "power plant" which "operated alongside these chambers" and supplied "Camps 1 and 2 with electric current."

Document 4 in the Appendix shows the plan of Treblinka, which Wiernik has published in order to lend credibility to his claims. In reality, he quite simply copied the plan enclosed with the report about the steam chambers dating from November 15, 1942 (see Document 2 in the Appendix). Both plans bear the same designation: "*Treblinka. Szkic orientacyjny*" (Treblinka, orientation sketch);[169] both depict the same map legends;[170] and, on both, the facilities are numbered 1 through 26, which is explained in the report of November 15, 1942, but not in Wiernik's exposition. The first three "extermination chambers," called "steam chambers" in the report of November 15, 1942, but "gas chambers" in Wiernik's report, are designated by the number 14 in both plans. Similarly, a boiler room for the production of steam is represented by number 15a in the November 15, 1942, report, while on Wiernik's plan it is a gassing engine. In addition, the description of the two gassing installations –

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[167] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 161f., 164.

[168] In this case, 20 to 24 persons would have stood on one square meter!

[169] On both plans the word Treblinka is underlined by a broken line.

[170] In the map legend of Wiernik, under Point 3 is printed, instead of "parkan" (fence) the synonym "plot."

the first with three and the second with ten chambers – fully and completely corresponds to the report of November 15, 1942, and to the camp plan which was enclosed with it!

Precisely for the reason that it is the product of plagiarism, Wiernik's sketch has a paucity of features of this kind: not only are many buildings of the camp missing, but also the cremation grills, although he wrote his report in the year 1944. Wiernik only 'rectified' his error in 1945 by furnishing a new, 'corrected' plan of Treblinka. If one compares this with that of the year before, the plagiarism shows up even more glaringly.[171]

During Session 66 of the Jerusalem Eichmann Trial, Wiernik produced the 1945 plan, which entered the records as Document T-1300, yet mendaciously claimed to have drawn it in the year 1943.[172]

Thus it is clear that Wiernik simply plagiarized the plan from the report of November 15, 1942, and in so doing replaced the word "steam chambers" with "gas chambers". Why did he do this? Presumably he was of the opinion – to be sure with good reason – that the versions of mass murders in Treblinka then current were too simpleminded. On the other hand, the idea of the engine all but clamored for acceptance.

That there was an electrical power supply in Treblinka is not only probable, it is certain. Every concentration camp had such facilities. Even camps connected to the local electrical supply were equipped with an emergency power supply. This was all the more true of those which – like Treblinka – were not connected to the local electric supply. In Treblinka, the electric power supply was no emergency device, but rather the camp's own plant for supplying it with the electricity necessary for its functioning; consequently it had to be in operation 24 hours a day. The generator of such a power supply was usually driven by a diesel engine. In view of the importance of this engine, a special engine – naturally new – was normally employed. How technologically complex such an installation was regarded emerges from, for example, the "*Kostenvoranschlag über Notstromanlage*" (cost estimate for back-up power plant) which was prepared for the concentration camp Auschwitz on November 10, 1940, by the firm of Georg Grabarz, Master Electrician, from Gleiwitz.[173] We shall return to this later.

Where was the power plant located in Treblinka? As we have seen, Wiernik claimed that it had been installed by the first "gassing house." This is also claimed by Rajzman, who reports:

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[171] See Document 5 in the Appendix. The plan was published by Filip Friedman in his book *To jest Oświęcim!* (*This Is Auschwitz!*), Krakow 1945. An English translation followed in the year 1946, under the title *This Was Oświęcim!*, the United Jewish Relief Appeal, London 1946. The plan appears there on pp. 82f.

[172] State of Israel. Ministry of Justice, *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann. Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem*, Jerusalem 1993. Vol. III, pp. 1201-1203.

[173] RGVA, 502-1-128, pp. 45-49, see Document 21 in the Appendix.

"The engines in the 'bath rooms' ran 24 hours without interruption."

By the "bath rooms" the supposed homicidal chambers are meant. That one or more engines are supposed to have been in operation "24 hours without interruption" cannot be explained on the basis of the requirements for an extermination program, in which such engines would have run only a few hours a day, but solely by the necessity of producing electricity for the camp around the clock.

That the story of the engine exhaust gas chambers lacks any kind of basis in reality and is nothing else but a propaganda fairy tale is shown beyond doubt by Wiernik's description of the corpses of the alleged gassing victims:[174]

"All were equal. There was no longer any beauty or ugliness, for they all were yellow from the gas."

Relying upon the statements of three eyewitnesses, Rachel Auerbach writes:[175]

"The bodies were naked; some of them were white, others were blue and bloated."

As a matter of fact, the victims of carbon monoxide poisoning exhibit a cherry-red or rosy red coloring.[176] This is caused by carboxy hemoglobin, which forms as a reaction of carbon monoxide with hemoglobin in the blood.

What happened next is extremely odd:

The Polish government was acquainted with Wiernik's writing and even mentioned it in its official report, submitted to the Nuremberg Tribunal, concerning the alleged German crimes in Poland, which was presented by the Soviets as Document USSR-93. It states:[177]

"As in other cases, so also in this one, a document is produced first-hand, which describes the conditions and crimes in Treblinka. It originates from one who had been a prisoner, who succeeded in escaping from the camp. This was Yankiel Wieznik [sic]*, a Jewish master builder, who spent a year in Treblinka. He produced a report about Treblinka which, as he suggests in his preface, comprises the sole meaning of his continuing to live on."*[178]

In this report, however, the Polish government does not mention the killing method described by Wiernik – engine exhaust gases – with a single word, but speaks merely of steam and electricity. This means, of course, that they did not credit the gassings, but all the same did not want to dispense with a 'first-class' prosecution witness. Thus this strange compromise.

At the Nuremberg Trial, Chief Counsel L.N. Smirnov, assistant prosecutor for the Soviet Union, took up this point of the Polish report at the presentation of document USSR-93 (and garbled Wiernik's name even more badly):

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[174] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 159.
[175] *Ibid.* (note 4), p. 36.
[176] Friedrich P. Berg, *op. cit.* (note 98), p. 439 as well as his footnote 22.
[177] USSR-93, p. 45 of the German version.
[178] Two citations follow from Wiernik's introduction to his book, *op. cit.* (note 164).

> *"On page 70 of the Russian text of this report, you find a passage from the statement of a carpenter from Warsaw, Jakob Vernik* [sic]*, a carpenter from Warsaw, who spent a year in the extermination camp of Treblinka 2.* […] *This is what Vernik said in presenting a report on Treblinka to the Polish Government; a report which, as he stressed in his foreword, was his only reason 'to continue his pitiful life.'"*

But in reality, no 'report' follows in the Soviet folder of documents, merely the two citations from Wiernik's report which appeared in the Polish document and which had been copied by Smirnov.[179]

6. Triumph of the Carbon Monoxide Version

Finally, the following question needs to be addressed: why and when did the carbon monoxide gas chambers prevail over the steam chambers? The reason for this was twofold and cogent. First of all, not even those of mediocre education could take seriously the fable of extermination by steam. The British-Jewish historian Gerald Reitlinger rightly comments:[180]

> *"It is difficult to see how people could be exterminated by steam,* […]*"*

In fact, any kind of sauna would then be a 'steam extermination chamber'! This was doubtlessly the reason Examining Judge Z. Łukaszkiewicz, in his report about Treblinka of December 29, 1945, jettisoned the most foolish of the diverse murder methods claimed by the witnesses and retained only those, which seemed most credible to him: namely, the engine exhaust gases.[181] Yet at first his report found little resonance.

On the other hand, the so-called 'Gerstein Report' attracted the interest of historians directly after its publication and became at once the 'proof' *par excellence* for the existence of the alleged 'extermination camp' Bełżec (as well as, secondarily, of the 'extermination camp' Treblinka). The Gerstein Report proved to be decisive for historiography regarding the choice of the murder weapon – diesel exhaust gases – for the three alleged 'extermination camps' of Bełżec, Treblinka, and Sobibór.

Thus, the report of the Polish government was seen as totally unworthy of belief, for this mentioned a killing method for Bełżec, which was scarcely less absurd than the 'steam chambers' of Treblinka: electric current:[182]

> *"Under the pretext that they were being led into the bath, the Jews were completely undressed and herded into the building. Through the floor of*

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[179] *IMT*, Vol. VIII, pp. 239f.
[180] Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution. Hitler's Attempt to Exterminate the Jews of Europe 1939-1945*, J. Aronson, Northvale, N.J., 1987, p. 149, footnote.
[181] USSR-344, p. 321 (p. 5 of the report).
[182] USSR-93, pp. 41f. of the German version.

> *this building flowed a strong electric current; thousands of human beings were killed here."*

In the session of February 19, 1946, Smirnov recited the following passage from the report of the Polish government (Document USSR-93):[183]

> *"*[…] *in the last paragraph on Page 136 of the document book, we may read that Camp Belsen*[184] *was founded in 1940; but it was in 1942 that the special electrical appliances were built in for mass extermination of people. Under the pretext that the people were being led to the bath-house, the doomed were undressed and then driven to the building where the floor was electrified in a special way; there they were killed."*

In its official report, the Polish government also dealt with the Sobibór Camp, but only in passing in just nine lines; the Jews, it reads there, had been killed in Sobibór in "gas chambers," but no particulars were given.[185]

In December 1947, Elias Rosenberg, who later called himself Eli(y)ahu Rosenberg, wrote a report about Treblinka, which was obviously influenced by the 'Gerstein Report,' in which the version of the killing by "exhaust fumes of a single diesel engine" now felicitously appeared. Yet this text yellowed for decades in an archive[186] and emerged into the spotlight only during the Demjanjuk Trial.[187]

In 1951, Léon Poliakov used the 'Gerstein Report'[188] in order to give substance to the rumor of the 'extermination camps' in Poland. He quoted a long excerpt from it and concluded as follows:[189]

> *"There is little to add to this description, which holds good for Treblinka and Sobibor as well as for the Belzec camp. The latter installations were constructed in almost the very same way, and also used the exhaust carbon monoxide gases from Diesel motors as the death agent."*

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[183] *IMT*, Vol. VII, pp. 576f.

[184] Transcription error of the Russian name "Белжец" (so in the original Russian document) for Bełżec, transcribed for its part from the Polish. In the German version of the protocol, the spelling is "Beldjitze", *IMG*, Vol. VII, p. 633f.

[185] USSR-93, p. 42. At the Nuremberg Trial, Sobibór was mentioned only once in context with Bełżec (*IMT*, Vol. VII, pp. 576).

[186] Eliahu Rosenberg appeared as a witness at the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem (Session 66 of June 6, 1961), but in his testimony did not touch on his report of December 24, 1947, in any way. State of Israel. Ministry of Justice, *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann. Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem*, Jerusalem 1993. Vol. III, pp. 1212-1215. The report in question is also not mentioned by A. Donat in his biographical notes to E. Rosenberg (*op. cit.* (note 4), p. 289).

[187] Elias Rosenberg, *Tatsachenbericht. Das Todeslager Treblinka*, Vienna, December 24, 1947. The document was printed on p. 133f. in facsimile by Hans Peter Rullmann in *Der Fall Demjanjuk. Unschuldiger oder Massenmörder?*, Verlag für ganzheitliche Forschung und Kultur, Viöl 1987. The passage cited appears there on p. 136 (p. 4 of the report).

[188] The 'report' of April 25, 1945. PS-1553.

[189] Léon Poliakov, *Harvest of Hate*, Holocaust Library, New York 1979, p. 196.

Two years later, Gerald Reitlinger took up Poliakov's claims in his work *The Final Solution*,[190] which rapidly became the classic of official historiography and thereby ultimately asserted diesel exhaust gases as *the* extermination method in the 'eastern extermination camps.'[191]

Therefore it owes mainly to the 'Gerstein Report' that Treblinka, just like Bełżec and Sobibór, received its diesel engine, and the steam chambers were banished to the junk yard of history.

By means of this propaganda maneuver, official historiography raised the carbon monoxide chambers of Treblinka (as well as of the two other 'eastern extermination camps') at last to the status of 'certain historical fact.'

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[190] G. Reitlinger, *The Final Solution. Hitler's Attempt to Exterminate the Jews of Europe 1939-1945*, Vallentine, Mitchell, London 1953, pp. 140-142; p. 148f. in the 1987 edition, note 180.

[191] This clearly did not prevent Lord Russell of Liverpool from writing even in 1954 that in Treblinka there had been committed "massacres by means of two methods, steam and gassing": *The Scourge of the Swastika*, Cassel & Company Ltd., London 1954, p. 242.

Chapter III:
Investigations, Camp Plans, Statistics

1. Soviet Investigations and Forensic Examinations

In the middle of August 1944, the 65th Soviet Army conquered the region around Treblinka. The Military Examining Judge of the Military Office of Prosecution, First Lieutenant of Justice Jurowski, went to work immediately, supported by other officers – Major Kononyuk, Major V.S. Apresian, First Lieutenant F.A. Rodionov, Major M.E. Golovan, and Lieutenant N.V. Kadalo – and conducted investigations on the grounds of the camps Treblinka I and Treblinka II between August 15 and 23. He furthermore questioned witnesses: Samuel Rajzman, Lucjan Puchała, Marianna Kobus, Stanisław Zdonek, Barbara Zemkiewicz, Józef Pukaszek, Stanisław Kon, Mieczysław Anyszkiewicz, Tadeusz Kann, Franciszek Wesolowski, Max Lewit, and Kazimierz Skarzyński.[192]

On August 22 and 23, the Soviet investigative committee, accompanied by local Polish officials, went to Treblinka to carry out investigations on the spot. Three mass graves and 13 individual graves were discovered. The exhumation of the bodies yielded the following picture:

1. Grave 10 m × 5 m × 2 m in dimension, with 105 bodies, which had been buried in layers of 5 to 7 each. Upon each layer of bodies, a layer of earth 45 to 50 cm thick had been piled.[193]

2. Grave 10 m × 5 m × 1.9 m in dimension, with 97 bodies in layers of 5 to 6 bodies respectively, with layers of earth 50 cm thick interposed.[194]

3. Grave 10 m × 5 m × 2.5 m in dimension, with 103 bodies in layers of 5 to 6 each, with layers of earth 50 cm thick interposed.[195]

On August 24, 1944, a commission composed of the Soviet officers previously named as well as representatives of the local Polish authorities produced the first official report concerning the camps Treblinka I and II. Regarding Treblinka II it states:[196]

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[192] GARF, 7021-115-11, pp. 15-43.
[193] Document No. 1, undated but clearly compiled on August 22 or 23, 1944. GARF, 7021-115-11, p. 1.
[194] Document No. 2, August 23, 1944. GARF, 7021-115-11, p. 2.
[195] Document No. 3, August 23, 1944. GARF, 7021-115-11, p. 3.
[196] Document, August 24, 1944. GARF, 7021-115-9, pp. 103-110.

"The camp Treblinka II was an enormous death combine. The entire Jewish population of all the nations of Europe occupied by the Germans, was brought here for burning, besides many 'unfit' people of other nationalities. The death factory in which the SS men ruthlessly and zealously exterminated millions of people was in operation around the clock for 13 months, from July 1942 until September 1943. This diabolical undertaking ceased to exist only after the prisoner revolt in the Jewish camp.
Dozens of witnesses attest to having seen how up to three transports of Jews, with 60 cars each, arrived in the camp on a daily basis. The trains left the camp either loaded with sand or empty.
Martyrs of the camp who survived recount that they were delivered in railway cars in which there were 150, 180, or even 200 persons each. While traveling they were dying of hunger. There was no water. They drank urine. […]
At the railway branch line at Treblinka there was something in the camp which resembled a fine train station; the length of the platform was reckoned for 20 cars. All special buildings, where people were murdered, were carefully camouflaged on the outside as beautiful facilities. The avenues were sprinkled with sand and bordered by flowers, garden beds and fir trees – all this in order to deceive the 'passengers.' […]
Some persons, who escaped the pyre through a miracle, have portrayed the nightmarish images of the incineration of people:
The Jews delivered to the camp were received by the SS unit. The men were led to a special square, but the women and children were taken to the barracks. Beautiful and young Jewesses were taken by the Germans for themselves for a night. All men, women, and children were told to undress. The women's hair was shorn and it was sent to Germany as raw material. The clothes were sorted and likewise sent to Germany. The victims were ordered to take along valuables – gold, paper money, documents. The naked people were shown to a cashier's counter one by one, and they were told to deposit everything. After they had done this, they were allowed to go on and were led along the sand-strewn, flower-bordered avenue into the 'bath,' where they were given soap, a towel and underclothing. After depositing of the valuables, already on the way to the 'bath,' the polite tone gave way to roughness. Those who were walking were urged on by rods and beaten with canes.
The 'bath' was a house, which consisted of 12 cabins, each 6 × 6 m in size. 400 to 500 people were driven at a time into one cabin. It had two doors, which could be sealed hermetically. In the corner, between ceiling and wall, were two openings connected with hoses. Behind the 'bath' stood a machine. It pumped the air out of the room. The people suffocated within 6 to 10 minutes. The second door was opened and the dead were brought on wheelbarrows to the special ovens.

In these, important scholars, physicians, teachers, musicians, the relatives of noted personalities were cremated. In such a way the sister of the famous psychiatrist Sigmund Freud, the brother of the French Minister Sourez [?] *and others were incinerated. (Witness testimony of Abe Kon, Hejnoch Brenner, Samuel Rajzman).*

A huge area of the camp was covered with cinders and ashes. The road, which connected the two camps and is three kilometers long, was covered with cinders and ashes to a height of 7 - 10 cm. One could recognize the presence of lime in large pieces of cinder with the naked eye. It is well known that lime is a product of burning bones. There were no production sites in the camp, but cinders and ashes were brought out of the camp every day by the ton. This freight was loaded onto railroad cars, and 20 to 30 peasant carts distributed them and poured them onto the road. (Witness testimony of Lucjan Puchała, Kazimierz Skarzinski. Stanisław Krym inter alia).

The statements of the witnesses, the book 'A Year in Treblinka' [by Jankiel Wiernik]*, the presence of a large quantity of ashes and cinders, the presence of personal belongings and documents strewn on the grounds as well as excavated from the pits confirm that there were ovens in the camp where people were cremated. In the beginning, the Germans buried the bodies of the murdered. After Himmler had visited the camp, the bodies were dug up with an excavator and cremated.*

At present it is difficult to uncover the traces and secrets of this oven for the cremation of people, but based upon the available data, one can picture it.

The oven – this was a large trench 250-300 m in length, 20-25 m in width and 5-6 m deep, excavated by an excavator. Driven into the bottom of the ditch were three rows of reinforced concrete posts, one-and-a-half m in height each. The posts were connected to one another by cross-beams. On these cross-beams rails were placed at intervals of 5 to 7 cm. That was a gigantic oven grill. A narrow-gauge spur track led down to the edge of the trench. (Witness testimony of Abe Kon, Hejnoch Brenner, Samuel Rajzman, and the content of the book 'One Year in Treblinka'). […]

The Germans attempted to delete the traces of their atrocities. After the revolt of the Jews they destroyed all camp buildings, which were still intact after the fire. Oats, rye, and lupines were now planted on the grounds of the former 'death camp.' What remains are the walls of the burned residential building and of the cattle stall of the colonist Strebel, who was settled on the territory of the camp. Remaining as marks of the existence of the camp are: an abatis of barbed wire, ashes, cinders, and a great number of pits, where household possessions of the cremated Jews have been buried."

The report ends with six "conclusions," of which the most important is the first:

> *"On the basis of the preliminary facts, the cremation of people has been determined beyond a doubt. The extent of the extermination of human beings was monstrous: about three million."*

On September 11, a "Report of the front-line press TASS" was issued, bearing the title "The Death Camp in Tremblinka" (sic). We reproduce the most significant excerpts:[197]

> *"Tremblinka! At this word people tremble and look fearfully sideways. People who lived in the vicinity of Tremblinka could not sleep at night: the screams of the men, women, and children whom they were murdering ripped through the darkness. The stench penetrated from there. They were burning people there.* […]
>
> *Tremblinka – that is the same as Majdanek. It is one of the numerous factories of death, with which the Germans thickly covered Polish soil.*
>
> *The 'Tod-Lager',*[198] *as the Germans themselves officially called it,*[199] *was established close to Tremblinka sometime in June 1942.* […] *By the beginning of July, the first transport arrived, filled to bursting with people – with 'living raw material,' as the doomed were officially called. The camp gate opened to the sound of a lively march, and the stream of living people poured inside. From this point on, this stream was uninterrupted for two years. The voracious gate consumed up to two thousand people daily.* […[200]] *A fat Unterscharführer sent the human chain into the 'bath.' This was a low square room without windows, with a heavy entrance door. A large hose, through which gas was carried, led into the 'bath.' The people were forcibly pushed into the 'bath,' the door was tightly closed with a steel bar, the Unterscharführer gave a signal, and the 'bath-master' switched on the machinery of death.*
>
> *In the beginning, the 'bath' had three compartments and could hold 1,200 people. The Germans, however, were not satisfied with this capacity, and they quickly constructed a new building three times as large. Here there were 8 chambers, and the bath could accommodate 4,800 people at a time.*
>
> *The people in the 'bath' died under horrible tortures after ten minutes. The 'bath-master' recorded this by means of a small glass window in the door. Here, every minute was costly – after all, thousands of other people were waiting their turn. For this reason, the 'bath' functioned with German thoroughness. Those for whom there was no room were beaten dead or flung onto the pyre alive.*

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197 GARF, 7021-115-8, pp. 217-221.

198 In the German language.

199 Even if this had been so, the Germans would have called it "Todeslager," as "Tod-Lager" is a construction which would never be used by a German speaker.

200 In the manuscript "up to 7,000 people" originally appeared, but this was corrected by hand.

The corpses were retrieved from the 'bath' by a special squad; they were stacked upon rails which ran across wide pits. In the pits a fire burned that was never extinguished. This was the final stage of the 'processing.' The corpses were cremated and the human ashes were brought to Germany to fertilize fields. Even the roads inside the camp were sprinkled with it. […]
K. Egrov
1. Byelo-Russian Front
September 12
Tass Special Correspondent"

On the 15th of September, a Polish-Soviet commission, consisting of Magister P. Sobolevski, the Secretary of the Polish-Soviet Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, M. Chodzko, the representative of the information and propaganda department of a Polish institute, as well as G.E. Levakov, the representative of the War Soviet of the 2nd Byelorussian Front, authored a "protocol of a provisional preliminary investigation and reconnaissance in the former concentration camp Tremblinka," in which the recent investigations of Soviet military justice were summarized, and from which we cite several excerpts:[201]

"[…]*The site of Tremblinka lies 7 km from the railway junction of Małkinia in the Sokolowski district. The German bandits built a railway line to the place where the camp was located, in order to be able to bring the transports of prisoners directly and unobserved into the concentration camp.*[…]

The concentration camp Tremblinka consisted of two sections, which were at a distance of one-and-a-half kilometers from each other. The first section was named 'Death Camp No. 2.' This camp itself, on whose grounds two burned-down farm buildings can now be found, was divided into two parts, and a railroad track led to this Camp No. 2. Here, something along the lines of a train station was constructed in order to disguise the actual mission – the extermination. A three-fold barbed wire entanglement was camouflaged with tree branches. For this reason the people taken here believed initially that they were at a transit point on their journey to the east.

In the first section of Death Camp No. 2, the prisoners who had been delivered there had to undress. They were instructed to deposit their clothing at a certain place, and then forced to run naked with arms raised in the direction of the so-called bath. This was only a sham bath; it was actually a gas chamber consisting of three rooms. In the beginning, the method of pumping the air out of rooms by means of a small auto engine was employed. Then, as a result of the great number of those destined for death, they began to use chemicals. About 400 people could be crowded into this space at a time. On the roof of this – hermetically sealable – building was a small

[201] GARF, 7021-115-11, pp. 43-47.

window, through which the death struggle of the dying could be observed. […] *Approximately 400 Jews worked at this chamber; they dragged out the corpses of the asphyxiated and threw them into enormous trenches which were located in the area of Death Camp No. 2 and which had been prepared beforehand and dug out by an excavator.*

In the winter of 1943, the German murderers proceeded to exhume and burn the corpses. For this purpose they also used an excavator. The personal documents found here, torn into pieces and thrown away, prove that citizens of Poland, of the Soviet Union, of Czechoslovakia and other nations, members of the intelligentsia as well as simple workers, were killed here.

The second section of the concentration camp was named 'Camp No. 1' and was located one-and-a-half kilometers away from the Death Camp. […]

The objects found bear witness to the fact that here men, women, and children of every age were interned in entire families. The things found, such as violin parts, children's toys, devices for waving the hair [hair curlers]*, books and the like, show that many came to this place who did not suspect their journey's destination. Pieces of burned and destroyed passports confirm that citizens from Poland, the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and other nations occupied by the Germans were interned here."*

On September 24, the Soviet investigative commission drew up the first official plan of the camp Treblinka.[202]

2. Polish Investigations and Forensic Examinations

After the conclusion of the previously described investigations, the Treblinka matter was allowed to rest for more than a year. But the preparations for the Nuremberg Trial awakened the interest of the Jewish Central Historical Commission as well as of the Polish State Prosecutor's office in that camp. On November 6, 1945, the latter carried out an inspection trip to Treblinka, which included: Rachel Auerbach and Józef Kermisz as representatives of the said Jewish Commission, Judge Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz, State Prosecutor J. Maciejewski, surveyor K. Trautsolt, the witnesses Samuel Rajzman, Tanhum Grinberg, Szimon Friedman, and M. Mittelberg – all members of the Association of Former Treblinka Inmates – J. Slebczak, president of the district council of Siedlce, Major Jucharek from the neighboring village of Wólka Okrąg-

[202] See section 4.

lik, and finally photographer Jakob Byk.[203] In January 1946, R. Auerbach described the inspection as follows:[204]

> *"Our car came to a stop. We got out: this was where the camp area began. According to our measurements, it is 15 hectares. A well-paved road runs parallel to the railroad tracks for about 1½ kilometers and then comes to a dead end. Another road branches out from it and comes to an end even sooner. The surface of both roads contains a weird mixture of coal and ashes from the pyres where the corpses of the inmates were cremated. The second road leads in the same direction as the 'Road to Heaven' of which no trace is now left. Just a bit of the concrete foundations of a horses' stable – this is all that is left today of the camp buildings, the barbed wire fences, the barracks, the watchtowers, the gas chambers. Some of the buildings were burned down by the uprising, and the rest were carried off by human scavengers from neighboring villages after the arrival of the Red Army.*
>
> *While the Germans were still here, the whole area had been plowed up and sown with lupine grass. And the lupine grass really grew and covered the whole surface with a green mask. It looked as if all the traces of the crimes had been wiped away. But since then, during the past year, the human jackals and hyenas have been coming to the burial ground and here is the picture that we saw:*
>
> *Here and there, like patches of grass near the seashore, half-covered by the shifting sands, there were still little clumps of withered lupine. Not one level place in the whole area. Everything had been torn up and dug up, little hills and holes. And upon them, beneath them and among them, all sorts of objects. Aluminum kettles and pans, enameled tin pots – blackened, dented, full of holes. Combs with teeth broken off, half-rotted soles from ladies' summer sandals, broken mirrors, leather briefcases. All this is near the station platform where the camp's first barbed wire fences had been.*
>
> *We began our tour at the place where the transports had been unloaded and we continued on the road which the Jews who were brought here had followed. What we saw here was the remnants of the Treblinka 'Werterfassung'. Remnants of the huge piles of Jewish property, which had been packed up and sent away, incinerated, cleared off, and yet still could not be completely cleared away. It was not possible to clear away every trace of what the hundreds of thousands of people who had passed through here had experienced. Here was the* physical evidence*, here were the* corpora delicti […]

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[203] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 19.

[204] R. Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka," *op. cit.* (note 29), pp. 70-72. according to A. Donat, the trip took place on November 7, 1945, while Judge Łukaszkiewicz names November 6 as the date (see below).

But the physical evidence was not limited to objects. As we moved farther into the grounds, we walked over a field which was sown with human bones.
The bombs had revealed the contents of the desecrated soil. Leg bones, ribs, pieces of the spine, skulls big and small, short and long, round and flat.
Skulls!…
If only we could get an ethnologist to come here!
He could have made the most accurate anthropological measurements on the racial features of the Jewish people. […]
We were now standing where the gas chambers had been, the huge mass graves and the pyres. In some places, the smell of death was still mingled with the odor of fire. Indeed, here and there we could see little piles of white ashes along with blackened bones, heaps of soot. All this had been buried several meters deep in the soil, mixed with sand and covered with more sand, but the explosions had brought it to the surface again. In one place the simultaneous explosion of several bombs had created a huge crater. Deep down in the hole, some outlines could be dimly seen through the fog.
'Those aren't just bones,' explained the District Attorney. 'There are still pieces of half-rotted corpses lying there, bunches of intestines.'
By now, the district attorney and the judge knew every nook and cranny here. They had been conducting their investigations for some time. They had examined both Jewish and non-Jewish witnesses, taken measurements and carried out minor excavations."

Judge Łukaszkiewicz had gone to Treblinka in order to perform an official investigation of the scene of the crime. As he later explained, he acted[205]

"[…] *at the request of the State Prosecutor of the District Court in Siedlce of September 24, 1945, further induced by a letter of September 18, 1945, of the Main Commission for the Investigation of the German Murders in Poland."*

After bidding farewell to the visitors, Łukaszkiewicz set to work with a group of workers. Between November 9 and 13, he undertook a thorough examination of the grounds as well as a series of excavations. Afterwards he composed an official protocol, which in view of its significance we reproduce in full:[206]

"Protocol of the tasks performed on the grounds of the death camp Treblinka, which forms the object of the judicial examination.
From November 9 to 13, 1945, the examining magistrate of Siedlce, Z. Łukaszkiewicz, together with the State Attorney for the District Court of

[205] USSR-344. GARF, 7445-2-126, p. 319 (p. 1 of the report).
[206] Reproduction of the document in S. Wojtczak, *op. cit.* (note 60), pp. 183-185.

Siedlce, J. Maciejewski, performed the following tasks on the camp grounds:

November 9, 1945
Excavations were begun on the grounds using the services of 20 workers who had been mustered by the village administration for carrying out roadwork. The excavations began at the location described by the witness Rajzman on November 6, where the so-called 'camp hospital' had stood and where, according to the witness, a mass grave is supposed to exist. Since a bomb crater 4 to 5 meters deep is present at the said location – two bombs still lie at a slight distance from this crater – the digging was begun in this crater. In the course of this work numerous Polish, as well as Russian, German, Austrian, and Czech coins and broken pieces of various kinds of containers were discovered. At the end of the work, at approximately 3 pm, at a depth of 6 meters, we encountered a layer which had not been reached previously. No human remains were found.

November 10, 1945
The work was continued, with 36 workers who had been commandeered for roadwork. At a depth of 6 meters begins a layer which has never before been uncovered by anyone. It consists partly of all sorts of kitchen utensils and different kinds of household objects; there are also pieces of clothing. At a depth of 7 meters, we reached the bottom of the pit – a layer of yellow sand which is not mixed with gravel. By additional digging we succeeded in determining the shape of the pit. It has sloping walls, and the bottom measures about 1.5 meters [sic!]. *The pit was presumably dug out with an excavator. During the course of the excavations, numerous more or less badly damaged Polish documents were discovered, in addition the badly damaged personal identity card of a German Jew, as well as several more coins: Polish, German, Russian, Belgian, and even American. After we had made certain that this pit, filled with broken pieces of the containers already mentioned, ran in a north-south direction on the grounds of the camp area – 2 meters more* [in a northerly direction] *had been excavated – the workers started work at this location.*

November 11, 1945
A series of test excavations was performed at the place where the [gas] *chambers had to have been located, in order to find their foundation walls if possible. Pits 10 - 15 meters in length and 1.5 meters deep were dug, uncovering undisturbed layers of earth.*
The largest of the craters produced by explosions (numerous fragments attest to the fact that these explosions were set off by bombs), which is at maximum 6 meters deep and has a diameter of about 25 meters – its walls

give recognizable evidence of the presence of a large quantity of ashes as well as human remains – was further excavated in order to discover the depth of the pit in this part of the camp. Numerous human remains were found by these excavations, still partially in a state of decomposition.[207] *The soil consists of ashes interspersed with sand, and is of a dark gray color, granulous in form. During the excavations, the soil gave off an intense odor of burning and decay. At a depth of 7.5 meters the bottom was reached, which consisted of layers of unmixed sand. At this point the digging was stopped.*

November 13, 1945
With the assistance of 30 workers employed for roadwork, the opening of a pit was begun – a site where refuse was deposited in the northeastern section of the camp. In this location, as the workers from the nearby hamlets explained, a very large number of documents had been found so far. Work was begun at this location, where the people [of that area] *had dug a three-meter-deep pit in a search for gold. During the course of the digging, broken pieces of all sorts of kitchen containers as well as a large number of rags were found. Aside from the coins discovered so far, Greek, Slovakian, and French ones were found, as well as documents in Hebrew and Polish and remnants of a Soviet passport. At a depth of 5 meters the work was stopped due to the steadily worsening weather conditions.*

The Examining Judge *The State Attorney*
Łukaszkiewicz *Maciejewski*

Decision:
The Examining Judge of Siedlce, on November 13, 1945, rules in consideration of the fact that with great probability no mass graves are any longer to be found on the grounds of the former camp today, as is to be concluded from the witness testimonies examined so far and from the results of the work carried out at the site, and in consideration of the oncoming autumn, the present rainfall and the necessity of a rapid conclusion of the judicial preliminary investigations, in view of all these facts that work on the territory of the former death camp Treblinka is to stop.

The Examining Judge
Łukaszkiewicz."

On December 29, 1945, after the conclusion of his preliminary investigations, Łukaszkiewicz issued a protocol with 14 paragraphs, which – as already mentioned – was presented by the Soviets at the Nuremberg Trial as Document

207 "stanie rozkladu"

USSR-344. In the third paragraph, which bears the title "Current condition of the camp terrain", it says the following:[208]

> *"With the assistance of an expert surveyor and witnesses, I made an exact inspection of the terrain. According to the measurements, the area of the camp is approximately 13.45 hectares and had the shape of an irregular quadrilateral. No remnants of facilities of the former death camp exist any longer. The only things that remain of the structures are: a ditch with remains of burned wooden poles protruding up, which lead into the cellar, wall bricks from the foundations of the camp's domestic economics building and the site of the well. Here and there one finds traces of the burned-out wooden poles of the fence and remains of barbed wire. There are still a few sections of paved walks. Nonetheless, there are still other traces that hint at the existence and functions of the camp. In the northwestern section of the area, the surface is covered for about 2 hectares by a mixture of ashes and sand. In this mixture, one finds countless human bones, often still covered with tissue remains, which are in a condition of decomposition. During the inspection, which I made with the assistance of an expert in forensic medicine, it was determined that the ashes are without any doubt of human origin (remains of cremated human bones). The examination of human skulls could discover no trace of wounding. At a distance of some 100 m, there is now an unpleasant odor of burning and decay. In the southwestern direction, a portion of the camp terrain is covered by aluminum – enamel – glass and porcelain dishes – kitchen utensils – hand luggage – rucksacks – pieces of clothing, etc. There are innumerable holes and craters on the property."*

Łukaszkiewicz summarized the investigations carried out a month earlier at that location as follows:[209]

> *"During the work on the terrain, I found no mass graves, which, in connection with the statements by the witnesses Romanowski and Wiernik, leads to the conclusion that nearly all of the bodies of the victims were burned, all the more so since the camp was liquidated early and the murderers had much time. The ground of the camp was ploughed and sown. Ukrainians were settled there; they fled before the arrival of the Red Army (witnesses Kucharek and Lopuszyński)."*

On August 9 and 10, 1946, Łukaszkiewicz, along with the surveyor Trautsolt and the court physician Wakulicz, searched for mass graves in the area of the camp Treblinka I. In the forest by the village of Maliszewa, about 500 m south of the camp, a total of 41 mass graves were found, of which 40 had been desecrated; many bodies were strewn around them. One grave was only partially violated, and from it 10 corpses were able to be recovered. The court physi-

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[208] USSR-344. GARF, 7445-2-126, pp. 19a-20 (pp. 3f of the report).
[209] *Ibid*., p. 324a (p. 12).

cian examined 112 skulls and determined that in only two cases had a shot in the head been the cause of death. The entire surface area of the graves amounted to 1,607 m^2. Concerning the number of the bodies discovered, Łukaszkiewicz wrote:[210]

> *"Due to the destruction of the graves, it is not possible to count the bodies which have been there. The medical expert Mieczysław Piotrowski affirms, however, that one grave of 2 × 1 × 1 m (without taking into consideration the upper level of earth which covers the bodies) contains at least 6 nude bodies. Considering the size of all 41 graves, and under the assumption that the levels of corpses reach only up to 1.5 m in depth (the depth of the graves is up to 3 m), one can calculate that at least 6,500 people were buried there."*

On this occasion, the surveyor Trautsolt drew a map of the area of Treblinka I, on which he indicated the exact position of the graves.[211] Of these, 17 were aligned in a row in a north-south direction; their total length was approximately 510 m.

This report provokes the following reflections:

1. It may well be that a grave of 2 m × 1 m × 1 m *can* hold up to six bodies, but these measurements correspond to an entirely normal single grave. If one wished to dig mass graves, these would not have been merely one meter wide. Until evidence to the contrary, it is therefore to be assumed that such a grave contained only one body.
2. These (mass) graves could have been violated only in the period between October 1944 and August 1946, thus by the Poles, the Soviets, or by both simultaneously – but why?
3. If merely the remains of 122 people were found there, as the Polish judge remarks, where, then, were those of the other ca. 6,400?

The likeliest supposition would be that the bodies were dug up by the local authorities and buried at the cemetery of the nearby village, possibly also in the vicinity of the camp, where there is still a cemetery today. In this case, it would of course have been strange that Łukaszkiewicz had heard nothing of it. But there is yet another, more disturbing explanation, to which we shall later return: the alleged violation was presumably done in order to be able to exaggerate the number of victims of Treblinka I. If one takes the three mass graves found by the Soviets in August 1944 by way of comparison, then the 41 graves, at the same density, would have been able to hold at most 3,000 bodies. On the other hand, Łukaszkiewicz carelessly wrote in his report of December 29, 1945, that[212]

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[210] Z. Łukaszkiewicz, "Obóz pracy w Treblince," in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, III, 1947, p. 120. Cf. also S. Wojtczak, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 135. Wojtczak claims that according to the expert Piotrowski the graves contain 10,000 bodies.

[211] See Document 6 in the Appendix.

[212] USSR-344. GARF, 7445-2-126.

> *"in this camp* [Treblinka I] *approximately 50,000 Poles and Jews were killed."*

One further question suggests itself: Who were the dead in Treblinka I? It is known with certainty that a typhus epidemic was raging in that camp in the fall of 1943. In fact, a list was kept with the names of 148 prisoners, most of whom had succumbed to this illness from November 12 to December 20, 1943.[213] The epidemic had broken out some months before, and for this reason a car with 11 tons of calcium hypochlorite was sent to Treblinka I on September 20 from the concentration camp at Lublin (Majdanek), which obviously was to be scattered on the layers of bodies.[214]

Since around 10,000 prisoners were interned in Treblinka I during the time of its existence,[215] one can assume that the mass graves uncovered by the Soviets and Poles contained the bodies of all – or nearly all – who died there. That is, further graves or traces of mass cremations were not found.

3. Assessment of the Investigations

In her previously cited report, Rachel Auerbach spoke pompously of "physical evidence" and "*corpora delicti*." But in fact neither the Soviets nor the Poles uncovered even the slightest scrap of proof that Treblinka II operated as an extermination camp. The Soviets, in their report of August 24, 1944 – cited in section 1 of this chapter – were compelled to make the following admission:

> *"At the present it is difficult to uncover the traces and secrets of this oven for the cremation of people, but based upon the available data, one can picture it."*

Even the investigations performed by Łukaszkiewicz proved to be a complete failure in terms of this central question. He arranged excavation at a definite spot in the camp where, according to the witness S. Rajzman, a mass grave was located, but discovered nothing of the kind. He had trenches dug, 10 to 15 m long and 1.5 m deep, at the places where, according to witnesses, the two alleged gassing buildings had stood, yet merely encountered "undisturbed layers of earth." To be sure, he did find skulls, but without gunshot wounds. All the evidence he examined (coins, documents, rags, containers, remnants of various objects) show merely that there was a camp at that place, and the human remains as well as the ashes prove only that bodies were buried or cremated in the camp. Nothing produced even a trace of evidence for mass murder, to say nothing of such a crime against *several hundred thousand* people.

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[213] Reproduction of the document in S. Wojtczak, *op. cit.* (note 60), pp. 159-164.
[214] J. Gumkowski, A. Rutkowski, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 77), reproduction on unnumbered page.
[215] *Informator encyclopedyczny*, *op. cit.* (note 64), p. 528.

Among the objects discovered, the skulls as well as the human body parts found in a state of decomposition deserve particular attention. From whom did they come? If we subscribe to the official historiography, this question remains unanswered. According to the official version, the cremation of the bodies exhumed from the mass graves was finished by August 2, 1943, the day of the prisoner revolt. During this revolt, at least 300 to 400 prisoners are supposed to have been killed within the camp or in the vicinity of the wire fence,[216] and in the following three weeks, allegedly more than 30,000 Jews from the ghetto of Białystok were gassed, whose bodies neither the Soviets nor the Poles discovered. If there were such killings, these victims therefore must have been cremated. The same is true for the bodies of those killed in the revolt. The surviving prisoners were not killed on the spot, rather they were transferred to Sobibór on December 20, 1943, as can be gathered from a corresponding Wehrmacht bill of lading.[217] If decomposing body parts were found in November 1945, this discovery is also inconsistent with the thesis that the victims involved had been murdered more than two years before. Finally, it is strikingly problematic that no single *complete* body was discovered.

From whom, therefore, did the skulls and body parts come? Were they perhaps taken from the mass graves of Treblinka I? Could these have been the remains of victims of the typhus epidemic, which had raged in the camp at the end of 1943? This hypothesis seems all the more plausible in that none of the skulls exhibited gunshot wounds. It could also furnish an explanation for the odd circumstance that Treblinka II was bombed: the bombs destroyed not only the two buildings, which in all probability had been left intact by the Germans,[218] but also scattered rotted body parts over a wide area and thus increased the horrible effect of the ‘extermination camp’. In fact, the discovered body parts were thoroughly exploited for propaganda.

4. Plans of Treblinka

On his inspection of the area of the former camp Treblinka II of November 9 to 13, 1945, Łukaszkiewicz was accompanied by the sworn surveyor K. Trautsolt. With the help of witnesses, Trautsolt drew an accurate plan of Treblinka II as it was at that time.[219] The plan, whose directional axes are trans-

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[216] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 298.

[217] Reproduced in Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *Obóz straceń w Treblince*, *op. cit.* (note 38), p. 61.

[218] Both buildings are clearly visible on an aerial photograph of November 1944, thus after the occupation of the area by the Red Army, but it is not clear whether they are intact or partially burned out: U.S. National Archives, Ref. No. GX 12225 SG, exp. 259; the exact date of the photograph, which was published by John C. Ball for the first time, is unknown, cf. Photograph 11 in the Appendix.

[219] See Document 7 in the Appendix. A similar, simplified plan was reproduced by A. Neu-

posed,[220] shows an irregular quadrilateral whose sides have the following lengths:

– north side (actually the east side): 376.5 m
– east side (actually the south side): 471.5 m
– south side (actually the west side): 490 m
– west side (actually the north side): 240 m

Thus, the overall area of the Treblinka II camp was approximately 134,500 m^2 (13.45 hectares).

On the plan the ruins, which existed in the camp area, are also entered: a burned out cellar ("*piwnica spalona*"), designated by the letter 'e', as well as the destroyed house of a settler ("*dom burzony kolonisty*"), marked with the letter 'l'.

On another, typographically identical map, surveyor Trautsolt added the facilities that had allegedly been located in the camp area according to witness testimony. Łukaszkiewicz published two versions of this map, of which the first is quite poor,[221] the second of a higher quality.[222] On the latter, the (alleged) extermination zone, also referred to by many witnesses as 'Camp II' within Treblinka II, is exactly shown. It is an irregular quadrilateral. If one uses the sides of the camp for scale, the length of the sides of the cremation zone can be calculated:

– north side (east): 188 m
– east side (south): 110 m
– south side (west): 174 m
– west side (north): 52 m

Thus, the surface area of this zone would have been some 14,000 m^2 (1.4 hectares), that is, a tenth of the entire camp Treblinka II. This zone, Camp II, was the alleged death camp, the area of Treblinka II, in which the two gassing installations, the mass graves, and the incineration pits are supposed to have been located. The rest of Treblinka II, also referred to as Camp I, allegedly housed the guards, camp administration, rag sorting and collecting locations, etc.

Regarding the shape and the size of the entire camp, this plan conforms quite accurately to the aerial photographs produced over Treblinka II in May and November 1944. On the other hand, the results of the forensic examina-

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maier, "The Treblinka Holocaust", in: G. Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 80), p. 489; cf. Document 8. As is obvious from the plan, it originates from the archive of the Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitler Crimes in Poland (Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce).

[220] The north-south line on the map actually corresponds to the east-west line.

[221] See Document 9 in the Appendix.

[222] See Document 10 in the Appendix.

tions have significantly less correspondence with what can be seen in these aerial photographs.

The air photo of May 15, 1944, shows five buildings in the northwest sector of the camp, in a trapezoidal zone of approximately 60 m × 100 m in size.[223] In the south and east, it is bordered by a grove, in the west by the road then leading into the camp as well as by the fence existing at that time. Quite obviously, these buildings have nothing to do with the 'farmhouse,' which the SS is supposed to have constructed after the liquidation of the camp and in which it is supposed to have left behind a Ukrainian to watch over the zone.[224]

In the air photo of November 1944, one sees only two buildings still there; the three others have apparently been destroyed.[225]

The camp Treblinka I was evacuated on July 23, 1944,[226] and the German troops withdrew from the area around Treblinka at the end of July. Thus, when the Soviets took over the camp area in August 1944, they must have found the two buildings still intact, but, as already determined, they wrote in the report of September 15, 1944, that only "two burned-down farm buildings" were still standing on the camp area. In November 1945, when Łukaszkiewicz came on his tour of inspection, the two buildings no longer existed. Thus they had to have been destroyed by the Soviets or the Poles between September 1944 and November 1945. For what reason? It is highly probable that the other three houses were also destroyed by the Soviets or Poles. The SS in particular would have, in any event, destroyed all five instead of leaving two of them standing. For what purpose would it have done otherwise? In order to leave behind one lonesome Ukrainian in enemy territory? What could his mission possibly have been? The story is fishy.

Nor do the anomalies end here. Łukaszkiewicz found several bomb craters on the camp grounds, even a couple of unexploded bombs. The largest crater was 6 m deep and possessed a diameter of approximately 25 m. Therefore the camp must have been bombed, and most surely not in error. The Germans, who according to official historiography had erased all traces of their crimes by dismantling the barracks, tearing down the walled structures, leveling and plowing the terrain and planting it with lupines, would have had no interest in bombing the camp. In the first place there was nothing left to destroy, and in the second, the craters produced by the bombs would have revealed the traces of the alleged mass murders. An aerial photograph of the camp Treblinka II taken in November 1944 further reveals that the camp at that time – after the area was taken by the Red Army – had not yet been bombed.[218]

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[223] See Photograph 10 in the Appendix.

[224] A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 240. This settler, who, as we have seen, was allegedly named Strebel, is supposed to have fled shortly before the arrival of the Red Army, according to the Soviet report of August 24, 1944.

[225] See Photograph 11 in the Appendix.

[226] S. Wojtczak, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 130.

Thus, the bombardment must have been the work of the Soviets. But the Treblinka Camp had already been liquidated in November 1943, and there were no military targets in its immediate vicinity. Treblinka I, which was still in operation in May 1944, was *not* bombed. Why, therefore, did the Soviets drop bombs on Treblinka II? Perhaps in order to obliterate the many traces left behind by the SS, traces which could in no way be made to jibe with the thesis of mass extermination, and to lay false tracks that seemed to confirm this thesis?[227]

As far as the shape and size of the camp is concerned, one may regard the plans of the camp mentioned above as reliable, since they were drawn by a professional surveyor on the basis of measurements done at the site, and because they correspond well to the aerial photographs. One can therefore accept them as a standard for comparison for all plans drawn earlier or later by ex-prisoners of the camp or based upon their descriptions. With one exception, which will be discussed later, the camp continually shows the shape of an irregular quadrilateral.

On the other hand, with regard to the buildings in the camp and other facilities we are dependent entirely upon the statements of the witnesses, since not a single German camp plan has been preserved. The differences between the plans produced by former inmates are less revealing than the graphical development of the so-called 'Camp II', thus of the alleged extermination camp.

On the plan, which was included with the report of November 15, 1942,[228] the entire camp is dominated by the two extermination facilities, as if the 'Camp I', the administrative sector with quarters, kitchens, storehouses etc., did not exist at all. The two steam execution installations with three or, respectively, ten chambers, which were then transformed into engine exhaust gas execution facilities by J. Wiernik on the map published in his writings of 1944,[229] appear in all later plans with the same shape and in the same location.[230] Thus, in the beginning, 'Camp I' was not depicted at all, and 'Camp II' consisted exclusively of the two death houses.

The first official plan of Treblinka was produced by the Soviet investigative commission on September 24, 1944. It has the shape of an irregular quadrilateral, which corresponds to the actual form of the camp only in rough features. On this plan 'Camp I' possesses a clearly outlined structure, which was later adopted by the drafters of many other plans. But 'Camp II' is still dominated by the two extermination facilities (this time with air evacuation chambers), which are called 'Bath No. 1' and 'Bath No. 2' and which correspond to the steam execution facilities of the plan of November 15, 1942. The Soviets

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[227] The body parts found on the camp grounds by the Poles are rationally explainable only by bomb explosions.

[228] See Document 2 in the Appendix.

[229] Cf. Chapter II, Section 5.

[230] See Document 4 in the Appendix.

have added two further, repeatedly recurring facilities: the undressing-barracks (60 m × 12 m) as well as the path surrounded by barbed wire, which leads to the execution facility and was later baptized the 'hose'. On his plan from 1945, J. Wiernik adopted the Soviet representation of 'Camp I' and augmented 'Camp II' with two cremation grates, two watchtowers, a gallows, several workshops (for cabinetmakers, shoemakers, metal workers), quarters for the guard detachment, prisoners' kitchens, prisoners' barracks, a laboratory, women's quarters, a laundry as well as prisoners' showers.[231] On this plan the mass graves are not yet shown individually. That first occurred at the Düsseldorf Treblinka Trial of 1964f., when State Prosecutor A. Spieß had an official camp plan drawn, which auspiciously displayed four "corpse pits."[232]

The path to this 'official' plan was obviously very tortuous. Some plans, which arose in the immediate postwar period, show quite substantial deviations even from the copies previously described. In 1946, Arie (Aleksander) Kudlik drew a plan, in which merely the second of the two extermination facilities is to be seen in 'Camp II', but there are five circles designated as "crematoria."[233] The plan produced by the witnesses Laks and Płatkiewicz deviates even more drastically from those more familiar.[234] N. Blumental, who published this drawing in 1946, described its origin as follows:[235]

> *"The copy of the plan 'Death Camp Treblinka,' together with the explanation relating to it, was sent to the Jewish Central Historical Commission by Moszek Laks, who was called 'Mietek' in Treblinka. He arrived in the camp from Suchedniów (Kielce district) on September 22, 1942. According to the statement of the witness, the plan was made by him and by Mr. Płatkiewicz during his stay in the camp. The witness took part in the revolt and then escaped into the woods with the plan. From August 2 until January 17, 1945, Herr Laks remained in hiding. His credibility is confirmed by: Maniek Płatkiewicz, who participated in the Treblinka revolt. They drew the plan while peeling potatoes in the cellar during their stay in Treblinka. The witnesses have produced the original made in Treblinka, on which basis a corresponding copy was made."*

If this is correct, the plan would have to be the most accurate of any drawn by the witnesses, for it is based not upon unaided memory, but instead upon direct observation of the camp. It is in fact the only one that depicts the form of the buildings and installations, which are numbered 1 to 53 and show diverse sub-numerations. The plan's legend explains these buildings and installations, with short anecdotes from the camp history inserted now and then. The two

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[231] See Document 11 in the Appendix.
[232] See Document 12 in the Appendix.
[233] See Document 13 in the Appendix.
[234] See Document 14 in the Appendix.
[235] Wydawnictwo Centralnej Żydowskiej Komisji Historycznej (ed.), *Dokumenty i Materiały*, *op. cit.* (note 39), p. 190.

authors mention installations, which are missing from the other plans, for example the sports field for the Ukrainian guard detachment (17), the recreational space with parasols and chairs for the SS men (10), an armored vehicle always ready for action (12), the bicycle parking place (11), the gas station (15), the projecting roof for protection of the fuel containers (16), the vegetable gardens (4), the extinguishing basin (39, a water reserve for fire-fighting – ed.), the space for trucks to maneuver (44), the coal supplies (45), a false train station, consisting of a barracks with the inscription "Obermajdanki," a clock and a placard with the inscription "Wołkowysk–Białystok Train Station," ticket room, time table, doors to the waiting rooms of the first, second, and third class with bar, all of it phony (50/1-6), four placards with information about the type of clothing, which the Jews had to deposit there when they had undressed (wool, silk etc.), and last of all some statues: of a Ukrainian assault group advancing into battle (21), of a shepherd pasturing his animals (32), of Jews who are going to work with shovels and picks beneath the sign "To the Ghetto" (36). In the legend to the plan, there also appears an explicit reference to the mass killings – "Road to the Death Camp" – but it is the strangest thing that even this 'Death Camp', the 'Camp No. II', doesn't appear at all on this plan, as if it were an unimportant detail. Perhaps the two artists did not yet know how many extermination facilities they were to show or how to represent them.

Samuel Willenberg rectified this deficiency more than forty years later by publishing a plan of the camp in his memoirs on Treblinka,[236] in which the camp has the shape drawn by the surveyor Trautsolt, and the buildings are represented corresponding to the technique employed by Laks and Płatkiewicz. Of course 'Camp II' possesses those installations, which are supposed to have existed there according to the official version, *i.e.* the two alleged killing facilities, three mass graves, a cremation grate and a barrack for the Jewish prisoners.[237]

As we shall see in the last chapter of this book, in all probability 'Camp II' contained facilities of quite a different kind.

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[236] See Document 15 in the Appendix.
[237] S. Willenberg, *Revolt*…, *op. cit.* (note 82), p. 6.

5. Number of Victims of Treblinka: Origin of the Official Figure

In the preceding chapter we have seen that the report of November 15, 1942, was already speaking of two million murdered in Treblinka to date. In his 1944 account, J. Wiernik gave no exact number, but spoke merely of "millions of people."[238] On April 24, 1944, the Soviet investigative commission placed the number of victims at three million.[239] S. Rajzman, the chief witness, subdivided the number of victims by national origin. In his interview of September 26, 1944, he stated the following (the linguistic flaws here, as well, are the fault of the Soviet translator):[240]

> *"Daily, 3-4 transports arrived in the camp. There were, of course, days on which 1-2 transports arrived, but that was an exception, not the rule. In each transport 6,000-7,000 people of Jewish nationality arrived. Our illegal groups, as I have already said, kept careful record of all contingents that arrived in the camp. Jews from various countries of Europe were brought into the camp. 120,000 arrived from Germany itself, and among them:*
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | *Austria* | *40,000* |
> | [Additionally:] | |
> | *Poland* | *1,500,000* |
> | *Czechoslovakia* | *100,000* |
> | *Russia* | *1,000,000* |
> | *Bulgaria and Greece* | *15,000* |
>
> *Thus, during the time the records were kept, and indeed from October 1, 1940 to August 2, 1943* [sic!] *– there was a total of 2,775,000 men, women, old people and children, of Jewish nationality brought into the camp."*

Naturally Vassili Grossmann adopted the Soviets' figure, three million figure.[241] In December 1945, Łukaszkiewicz attempted the first detailed accounting of the claimed alleged Treblinka victims, and in so doing introduced methods, which were to become standard procedure for the official historiography:[242]

> *"It is clear that as of now an exact statement of the number of victims is still not possible. One should take care to note that the camp in Treblinka was no longer active from the fall of 1943 and that the murderers had sufficient time to obliterate all traces. The best procedure, in my opinion, would be to determine the number of transports as accurately as possible.*

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[238] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 185.
[239] See Section 1 of this chapter.
[240] USSR-337. GARF, 7445-2-126, p. 240.
[241] W. Grossmann, *Die Hölle von Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 32.
[242] USSR-344. GARF, 7445-2-126, pp. 323-323a (p. 9f. of the report).

Enumerations based on the capacity of the chambers would not have been accurate, since it is of course unknown how frequently they were filled and to what degree. In determining the number of transports, I have referred to the testimony of witnesses, in particular train workers, and documents of the Treblinka station. In the time span from August 1942 until the middle of December 1942, the transports were extremely numerous. In this period I am assuming, with very conservative calculations, one transport per day. (Jewish witnesses declare that most of the time there were 3 transports daily, while Polish railway workers say 2). Afterward, in the period of time from the middle of January until the middle of May 1943, the average number of transports was one per week (witnesses: Reisman [sic] *and Abe Kohn* [sic] *even say that there were 3 transports weekly). The number of cars in one transport was determined to be 50. (It emerges from the documents that many transports consisted of 50 cars.) The number of days in a month – 30; the number of weeks in a month – 4. In this way, we arrive at the total number of 7,500 cars from August 1, 1942, to May 15, 1943."*

The author then cites some German railway documents, to which we shall return later and from which it can be seen that, from August 17 to August 23, 1943, 266 cars left Białystok for Treblinka. He continues:

"A total of 266 cars. I assume an average of 100 persons in a car. However, most of the witnesses say the number was 200. Thus, without any exaggeration, we must set the number of victims at 781,000. For illustration I add that I am able, on the basis of objective documents: telegrams, railway time-tables, bills of lading etc., to determine with complete accuracy the shipment of over 2,000 cars with Jews, although the documents mentioned represent only a small fraction of the railway documents. In my opinion, this proves that the above mentioned calculation is very conservative."

However, the Polish judge's claim that, according to which 2,000 railroad cars have been documented, does not correspond to reality. In the second of his two writings from in 1946, he mentions the railway documents in his possession, to wit:

– railway schedule no. 548 of August 3, 1942;
– railway schedule no. 562 of August 25, 1942;
– railway schedule no. 594 of September 21, 1942;
– railway schedule no. 552 of February 1, 1943;
– railway schedule no. 567 of March 26, 1943;
– railway schedule no. 290 of August 7, 1943;

Further:

– railway travel sheet of August 17, 1943.
– telegram of August 18, 1943.

From these documents a total of 809 cars can be counted. Two items are uncertain: the railway schedule no. 548 of August 3, 1942, in which one train per

day with 58 cars is announced, and the railway schedule no. 552 of February 1, 1943, in which 6 transports with 12,000 persons are mentioned, but with no indication as to the number of cars. Assuming a passenger density of 100 per car, as Łukaszkiewicz does, these 6 transports, with an average of 2,000 occupants each, had an average of 20 cars per transport, so that the total number of cars was not 2,000, but (809+ [6×20]=) 929.

In the work under consideration, Łukaszkiewicz retains his previously cited number of victims, with certain modifications. For the period of August 1, 1942, until December 15, 1942, he starts with 135 transports, which corresponds to one transport per day for 135 days. For the period from January 15, 1943 (he claims that no transports arrived between December 16, 1942, and January 14, 1943) until May 15, 1943, he assumes 16 transports (that is, 1 transport per week × 4 months × 4 weeks per month = 16 transports), thus a weekly transport for 16 weeks. He adds in the transports that arrived in August 1943, which he enumerates as follows:

– August 17 and 18: 2 trains with 39 cars each = 78 cars
– August 18: 1 train with 35 cars
– August 21-23: 5 trains with 38 cars each = 190 cars.

Since Łukaszkiewicz assumes that each train had an average of 50 cars with 100 occupants per car, the (135+16=) 151 transports equal (151×5,000=) 755,000 deportees. The 303 cars of August 1943 yield 30,300 deportees, so that a total number of persons sent to Treblinka would have been (755,000 + 30,300 =) 785,000; the author rounds this figure to 800,000.[243]

In the December 1945 report, he had written that on August 17, 1943, a single train of 41 cars arrived at Treblinka, but now he speaks of two trains with 39 cars each, which is surely more correct. We will return to this question in chapter nine.

While the Jewish Central Historical Commission accepted Łukaszkiewicz's drastic reduction from the Soviet number of three million, it considered the Polish judge's figure (800,000) too low. In her 1946 work, which has already been cited several times, Rachel Auerbach writes:[244]

> *"On the basis of the commission's findings and of our own calculations, we believe that the figure of over 3,000,000 Jews killed in Treblinka, which has been cited by various authors, is definitely too high. The true figure was probably a little over one million.*
>
> *The mass executions in Treblinka began on July 23, 1942, which that year happened to be the date of Tisha b'Av (the traditional Jewish day of mourning and fasting for the Temple in Jerusalem), and definitely ended in the middle of September, 1943. The largest number of transports were brought in during the months of August, September, October, November,*

[243] Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *Obóz straceń w Treblince*, *op. cit.* (note 38), pp. 36-39.
[244] R. Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka," *op. cit.* (note 29), pp. 52ff.

and the first half of December, 1942. At the end of August there was a hiatus of one week because too many corpses and too much clothing had accumulated and the camp staff was unable to cope with the workload. Subtracting that one week, there still remain four and one half months, with 144 days of full 'production,' in the gas chambers. According to all the testimony that has been heard, one to three transports would arrive at Treblinka each day. Each transport consisted of an average of 60 boxcars, and each boxcar held between 80 and 150 people. According to a number of witnesses, there were days when the transports had above-average passenger loads, and the number of transports arriving was more than three. On such days the gas chambers were in operation until 1 a.m. and finished off more than 20,000 corpses within 24 hours. But on the other hand there were days when the transports were much smaller, particularly those from Germany, Czechoslovakia, and other West European countries, with the deportees arriving in passenger cars which were not so crowded (except that there were many trunks and special baggage cars). Besides, we must take into account the possibility that the witnesses might have counted each 20-car section which was brought onto the camp siding from the Treblinka station as a separate transport. […]

Thus, we are assuming an average of one transport daily with 60 boxcars each, and 100 people in each car, for the 'busy season' of Treblinka 'production.' This would be equivalent to an average of 6,000 persons per day. Multiplied by 144 days this would yield a total of 864,000 souls.

From the middle of December, 1942 until the middle of January, 1943 – the Gentile holiday season – there was a pause in transports, a vacation of sorts. After this pause, the shipments became much less frequent. Two, or at most three, transports arrived each week. During March and April hardly any transports arrived. The last transport seen by the Jewish witnesses arrived in mid-May, 1943; it consisted mainly of people deported from Warsaw after the Warsaw ghetto uprising.

[…] *We know for certainty that transports of Jews from Białystok arrived during that period. Taking into account all the information available to us, we figure that at least 25 transports of Jews perished in Treblinka between mid-January and September, 1943 (or about the time of the uprising) and about 10 transports after the uprising – or about 35 transports in all. According to our previous estimate of average number of cars per train and deportees per car, this makes a total number of 210,000 souls. Added to the total for the 'busy season' of transports, this would yield a grand total of 1,074,000; in other words, just over one million Jews."*

The verdict of the Düsseldorf Court of Assizes of September 3, 1965, devoted a separate paragraph to the question of the number of victims of Treblinka:[245]

[245] A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 197f.

> *"In the extermination camp Treblinka at least 700,000 persons were killed, predominantly Jews but also to a lesser extent Gypsies. These findings are based upon the expert report presented by Dr. Helmut Krausnick, the Director of the Institute for Contemporary History in Munich, to the Court of Assizes. In his expert report, the expert has utilized all the resources customary in historical science and accessible to him in the German and foreign archives, among them the so-called Stroop Report* […]*, the protocols of the Trial of Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, and the incomplete official railway documents found after the war (schedules, telegrams, and travel sheets) about the transports to Treblinka, which have been the subject of the main proceedings and which the Court of Assizes has placed at the disposal of the expert.*
> *The expert Dr. Krausnick stated the following, inter alia:*
> *According to the Stroop Report, in the period from July 22, 1942, to October 3, 1942, approximately 310,000 and in the period from January to mid-May 1943 approximately 19,000 Jews were brought in freight trains from the Warsaw Ghetto to Treblinka."*

However, the Stroop Report actually reads as follows:[246]

> *"The first large resettlement action took place in the period from 22 July to 3 October 1942. In this action 310,322 Jews were removed. In January 1943 a second resettlement action was carried out by which altogether 6,500 Jews were affected."*

Thus, Treblinka is not even mentioned in this passage of the Stroop Report. The verdict further states that from August 21, 1942, to August 23, 1943, transports arrived in Treblinka with Jews (but also Gypsies) from many other Polish cities as well as Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Greece. The judges go on to cite Krausnick as follows:

> *"An exact number of the persons taken to Treblinka in this manner, however, cannot be determined, since in regard to the rail transports in particular only a portion of the documents is available. Nevertheless, one may estimate the number of persons brought to Treblinka by freight and passenger trains – disregarding the approximately 329,000 Warsaw Jews – at about 271,000, if one assumes an average number of 60 boxcars per train, an average occupancy of 100 persons per boxcar and of 50 persons per passenger car, so that a freight train would have transported about 6,000 and a passenger train about 3,000 Jews to Treblinka."*

Since, according to Krausnick, the numbers were often higher (why, then, were they taken as average figures?), and since thousands of Jews and Gypsies are supposed to have arrived by other means of transport, according to him the total number of victims had to be higher.[247]

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[246] PS-1061. IMT, Vol. XXVI, pp. 634f.
[247] A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*…, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 198f.

> *"For all of these reasons it would be scientifically admissible to estimate the number of the persons killed in Treblinka as at least 700,000."*

There is, however, not a lot of substance to the pompously invoked 'science' of this estimate. Aside from the fact that deportees are still a long way from being 'people killed', the number of 329,000 people deported from the Warsaw Ghetto to Treblinka, although plausible in terms of the order of magnitude, is not documented at all, while the figure of 271,000 people brought from other places into the camp is a number plucked entirely from thin air. Using the number and occupancy of cars of a deportation train serves only to simulate a basis for calculation which in reality does not exist, because the number of the deportation trains is simply not known. The figures stated by Krausnick were obviously invented, every single one of them, in order to reach the result of (329,000 + 271,000 =) 600,000. Krausnick simply adds 100,000 invented deportees, but provides no source at all for them, not even a fictitious one!

At the end of the citation from the Düsseldorf verdict quoted above, Rückerl furnishes the following reference in a footnote:[248]

> *"In an expert opinion given at the second Treblinka trial in the fall of 1969, the expert Dr. Scheffler came to the conclusion, based upon more recent research, that in the extermination camp of Treblinka a total of more than 900,000 people were killed, almost exclusively of Jewish descent."*

As far as we know, this expert opinion of Wolfgang Scheffler has never been published. In 1976 Scheffler wrote an article in collaboration with one Ino Arndt, in which one finds the following succinct prose:[249]

> *"According to the findings of the Court of Assizes in the first Düsseldorf Treblinka trial (1964-1965), which are based upon (incomplete) documents (time-tables, telegrams, railroad car travel sheet) evaluated by the specialist rendering his expert opinion, on the so-called Stroop Report, on the literature, and on witness testimony, in Treblinka at least 700,000 people, predominantly Jews but also Gypsies (approximately 1,000), were killed. The expert in the second Treblinka trial (1969/70) arrived at a number, based upon the most recent research, of 900,000 victims."*

The two authors refer in a footnote to an earlier Rückerl book,[250] in which, however – here as well in a modest footnote! – the same exact thing appears! Thus, it is clear that the reference to "the most recent results of research" does not refer to any discovery of previously unknown documents – such are in fact not mentioned – but rather exclusively to new arithmetical acrobatics with

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[248] *Ibid*., p. 199.

[249] Ino Arndt, Wolfgang Scheffler, "Organisierter Massenmord an Juden in nationalsozialistischen Vernichtungslagern" in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, Vol. 2, 1976, pp. 127f.

[250] Adalbert Rückerl, *NS-Prozesse*, Verlag C.f. Müller, Karlsruhe 1971, p. 38.

large unknown factors (number and capacity of trains, period of the deportations).

In dealing with the number of victims, nothing better occurred to Stanisław Wojtczak, the author of the most substantially documented summary of the Treblinka literature (1975), than to accept Judge Łukaszkiewicz's hypothesis. He divides the history of the camp into three periods: during the first (July 23 to mid-December 1942), 640,000 people were murdered; during the second (January to mid-May 1943), 80,000; and during the third (August 2, 1943, to the closing of the camp), a further 30,000, therefore a total of 750,000.[251]

In 1982, Uwe Dietrich Adam divided the camp history into two periods, that from July 23, 1942, to August 28, 1942, with 215,000 victims, and that from September 1942 to October 1943 with 485,000 victims, so that the total number of victims amounts to 700,000.[252]

In his 1987 book, Yitzhak Arad provides a detailed list of the transports to Treblinka; he is the only one to have done so.[253] Since his list is very long, we restrict ourselves here to reproducing the districts of origin and the numbers:

District	Number Deported
Warsaw	365,720
Radom	364,400
Lublin	33,300
Białystok	117,970
Total	881,390

Divided according to year, Arad's data give the following picture:

1942:	824,170
1943:	57,220

An accurate classification of these numbers by month is not possible, since the waves of deportation often began during one month and ended during the next. But the following picture emerges as an approximation:

1942		1943	
July and August:	314,000	January:	28,220
September:	177,000	February:	14,400
October:	203,000	April:	3,500
November:	98,000	May:	3,500
December:	32,170	August:	7,600

[251] S. Wojtczak, *op. cit.* (note 60), pp. 151f.

[252] Uwe Dietrich Adam, "Les chambres à gaz," in: Colloque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, *Allemagne nazie et le génocide juif*, Gallimard-Le Seuil, Paris 1985, pp. 248f.

[253] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), pp. 392-397.

Arad names about 140 localities, from which deportations to Treblinka are supposed to have left, and supplies in each case the exact number of the deported. Upon what source does he rely in doing this? He refers to censuses of the Jewish Councils in general, to memoirs and diaries of survivors, some Jewish studies and "documents of the German railway administration", concerning which he explains:[254]

> *"If we consider that each fully loaded boxcar transported 100 to 150 people, we are able to determine the approximate number of the Jews taken along in each transport."*

With this we wind up once again with Judge Łukaszkiewicz's method!

In fact Arad – without admitting it – relies principally on Anglo-Jewish historian Martin Gilbert's *Atlas of the Holocaust,* first published in London in 1982. This work contains an abundance of numerical data about the deportation of Jews but maintains a total silence on the sources. Gilbert's figures for Poland – and, in particular, the deportations to Treblinka – are for the most part the product of fantasy: he has done nothing more than assign numbers snatched out of thin air to individual locations from which real and imagined transports departed; numbers whose total adds up to the predetermined figure, 840,000![255] Even a fleeting glance at the tables shows this beyond a doubt. For example, table 168 shows approximately sixty locations of the Białystok district, from which transports are supposed to have departed for Treblinka on November 2, 1942. To this endless column of mostly unknown small country towns Gilbert allots extremely exact numbers of deportations.[256] If there had really been precise figures for these small towns, they would naturally have been cited first and foremost by the Polish researchers and historians; but, as we have seen, the latter had to confine themselves to hypothetical enumerations of trains and cars.

This means Gilbert's data on the transports to Treblinka were for the most part products of his fantasy and are devoid of scientific value. Exactly the same thing applies to Arad's transport lists, which are based upon Gilbert's book.

In 1995, a little book appeared from the pen of one Manfred Burba, which contained statistics and a bar graph indicating the number of Treblinka victims. Arranged by district and nation of origin, the numerical portion appears as follows:[257]

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[254] *Ibid*., p. 381.

[255] M. Gilbert, *Atlas of the Holocaust*, William Morrow and Company, New York, 1993, map No. 217, p. 167.

[256] *Ibid*., p. 133. Here a few examples: Wasosz: 50; Gonadz: 1,280; Lubotyn: 174; Wasilków: 1,180; Mocki: 756; Kłukówo: 68, etc. For some places he gives much higher numbers: Bielsk: 5,000; Suchowola: 5,100; Krynki: 5,000; Siematyce: 6,000, etc.

[257] Manfred Burba, *Treblinka. Ein NS-Vernichtungslager im Rahmen der "Aktion Reinhard"*, Göttingen 1995, p. 18.

Warsaw:	254,000		
District Warsaw:	110,000	Slovakia:	7,000
District Radom:	364,000	Theresienstadt:	8,000
District Lublin	33,000	Greece:	14,000
District Białystok:	122,000	Total (other nations):	29,000
Poland total:	883,000		

SUM OF VICTIMS		ALL VICTIMS
1942	837,000	912,000
1943	75,000	

Burba's bar graph refers to the monthly number of victims. Though it contains no figures, these can be derived without difficulty from the bars, which reflect the numbers:

1942		1943	
		January:	28,000
July:	67,000	February:	14,000
August:	246,000	March:	14,000
September:	200,000	April:	7,000
October:	203,000	May:	3,500
November:	82,000	June/July:	0
December:	39,000	August:	8,500
TOTAL 1942:	837,000	TOTAL 1943:	75,000

Thus, according to M. Burba, 912,000 people were killed in Treblinka. Concerning his sources, the author writes:[258]

> *"The calculation of the number of victims is essentially based upon documents of the German Reichsbahn* [German rail system] *and upon surveys and censuses of the most diverse kind in the ghettos in occupied Poland as well as eyewitness narratives."*

Yet, in reality, Burba's figures are based upon the previously mentioned lists of Arad, whose numbers (881,390) he raised to 883,000, adding to this 29,000 deportees from Slovakia, Theresienstadt, and Greece not mentioned by Arad.

The arbitrariness, with which such statistics are produced, is even more blatantly evident in the calculations of Ryszard Czarkowski, who devotes an entire chapter to them in his 1989 book on Treblinka. He divides the history of the camp into five periods:

First Period:	June 25 to July 23, 1942
Second Period:	July 23 to December 15, 1942
Third Period:	December 15, 1942, to January 9, 1943
Fourth Period:	January 15 to August 2, 1943
Fifth Period:	August 2 to August 23, 1943

[258] *Ibid*., p. 17.

For the first period, Czarkowski relies upon the testimony of Jan Sułkowski, according to whom the gas chambers of the first killing facilities were put into operation on June 25, 1942, and from then on one transport of Jews daily arrived at Treblinka. Czarkowski, accepting the figures given by Łukaszkiewicz (50 cars per train, 100 persons per car), for a period of 30 days (June 25 to July 23[259]) gets (30 × 50 × 100 =) 150,000 people deported to Treblinka and murdered there, even before the camp was opened!

For the second period, Czarkowski arbitrarily assumes 125 days of operation and 2 transports per day, so that in this time span not fewer than (125 × 2 × 50 × 100 =) 1,250,000 people are to be recorded as having been deported and murdered!

The figure for the third period he calculates in the following fashion: according to an issue of the newspaper *Wiadomosc*, 120,000 Jews were sent to Treblinka from August 19, 1942, to January 9, 1943. Czarkowski divides this number by the number of days contained in the time span involved, multiplies the result by the number of days between December 15 and January 9 and rounds the product to 22,000, and in so doing shows no concern whatever about the fact that the information appearing in the newspaper boldly contradicts his assumption for the second time period: if, from July 23 to December 15, 1942, 1,250,000 Jews were really deported to Treblinka and 22,000 from December 15, 1942, to January 9, 1943, then, from August 19 to December 15, 1942 (120,000–22,000=) 98,000, and from July 23 to August 19, 1942, (1,250,000–98,000=) 1,152,000 Jews had to have been taken to Treblinka, which gives an average of 41,000 per day for the period just named!

For the fourth period Czarkowski accepts Łukaszkiewicz's hypothesis of one transport per week, but he arbitrarily lengthens the time period of deportations by 6.5 weeks and by means of this artifice using 26 weeks, gets (26 × 50 × 100 =) 130,000 deportees.

For the fifth and final period, he adopts without reservation the 303 cars reckoned by Łukaszkiewicz; this corresponds to 30,300 deportees, which Czarkowski rounds to 30,000. Thus he comes up with (150,000 + 1,250,000 + 22,000 + 30,000=) 1,582,000 victims![260]

To be sure, this result is clearly pure insanity, yet the method employed by Czarkowski is exactly the same as that used by the other authors previously cited, with the exception of Gilbert and Arad, who proceed more subtly in that – as demonstrated – they parcel out to a certain number of locations, according to utterly arbitrary criteria, a predetermined number of victims in order to create the illusion that the total number of those deported to Treblinka, along with their places of origin, is accurately known.

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[259] In actuality, this was 29 days, including June 25.
[260] R. Czarkowski, *op. cit.* (note 75), pp. 189-202.

Even more remarkably, not one of these authors refers to the report made by the statistician Richard Korherr at the beginning of 1943 at the instruction of Heinrich Himmler, although very accurate numbers of the Jews deported to the supposed extermination camps are given in this. In his overview concerning the "*Evakuierung der Juden*" (evacuation of the Jews, part 4 of the fifth chapter of his report), Korherr wrote:[261]

"Transportation of Jews from the Eastern provinces to the Russian east: 1,449,692
Processed through the camps in the General Gouvernement area: 1,274,166
through the camps in the Warthegau: 145,302"

The camps considered to be located "in the General Gouvernement area" are Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka; the camp in the Warthegau was Chełmno.[262] The number given, 1,274,166, is the very number of victims, according to this historiography, of the three camps in the General Gouvernement up to the end of 1942. If this had been true,[263] the following would have been the result of this: since Bełżec, to which usually 600,000 victims are ascribed, was closed in December 1942,[264] and since Herr Dr. Scheffler himself postulates for Sobibór 180,000 as the total number of victims for the whole year of 1942,[265] then (1,274,166 - 600,000 - 180,000 =) approximately 494,000 people would have to have been killed in Treblinka in 1942, and with the addition of a maximum number of 75,000 for the following year of 1943, one would arrive at 569,000. How can Herr Dr. Scheffler, who assumes for Bełżec not the usual 600,000, but 800,000 victims,[266] speak seriously of 900,000 Treblinka victims? According to his numbers, in the year 1942 a total of 1,880,000 people had to have been 'gassed' in the three camps of the General Gouvernement area, thus 600,000 more than were 'processed' according to the Korherr Report!

In this section we wish to demonstrate not so much the differences in the numerical data of the various authors as the incredible superficiality and illogic of their method. Since they are all speaking not just of deportees, but of people murdered – therefore of people supposed to have been killed by means of exactly described techniques – the shocking method of their calculations is coupled with an astonishing lack of critical intellect, often verging on stupidi-

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[261] NO-5194, p. 9.

[262] The following is unclear in the Korherr Report: the sum of the two lower numbers is not 1,449,692, but 1,419,467, so that 30,225 persons are missing, and the category to which they belong is unknown.

[263] Here we are discussing not the numbers given by Korherr, but their interpretation, *i.e.* the claim that the Jews in question were not 'processed through' the camps involved, but were 'gassed.'

[264] *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 18), Vol. I, p. 178.

[265] A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 151.

[266] A. Rückerl, *NS-Prozesse*, *op. cit.* (note 250), p. 36.

ty, which is strikingly apparent in comparison with the two isolated representatives of official historiography who have brought at least a modicum of critical thinking to this field.

In 1953, Gerald Reitlinger was already writing:[267]

> *"It would in any case have been impossible to gas the greater part of the 310,000 Jews who were deported from Warsaw, together with an unknown proportion from other ghettos, in three gas chambers, each measuring fifteen feet square, in no more than seventy-five working days."*

Faced with salvaging what could be salvaged in light of this impossibility, he deduced:[267]

> *"Therefore a large proportion must have died in the trains."*

This is likewise an untenable claim: according to train schedule no. 548 of August 3, 1942, the trip from Warsaw to Treblinka lasted only 3 hours and 55 minutes,[268] and even if the conditions in the overcrowded trains were execrable, under no circumstances could they have resulted in mass deaths among the occupants.

In an interview granted by Jean-Claude Pressac in 1995, published for the first time in 2000 with changes made according his wishes, Jean-Claude Pressac proposed his own original statistics for the alleged victims of the eastern camps, in which he started from the basis of these camps' attested capacity for extermination:[269]

> *"I have attempted to determine the number of victims of the camps designated as extermination camps on the basis of material facts: the surface area of the gas chambers and number of the persons which they could hold; time for a gassing; number of gassings daily; number of transports arriving daily with consideration of the actual capacity of the chambers, etc. In comparison with the numbers of Hilberg, which are based upon Polish sources, I arrive at the following figures:*
>
> | | | |
> |---|---|---|
> | *Chełmno:* | *80,000 to 85,000* | *instead of 150,000;* |
> | *Belzec:* | *100,000 to 150,000* | *instead of 550,000;* |
> | *Sobibor:* | *30,000 to 35,000* | *instead of 200,000;* |
> | *Treblinka:* | *200,000 to 250,000* | *instead of 750,000;* |
> | *Majdanek:* | *fewer than 100,000* | *instead of 360,000."*[270] |

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[267] G. Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, *op. cit.* (note 180), p. 149.

[268] Reproduction of the document in: Raul Hilberg, *Sonderzüge nach Auschwitz*, Dumjahn, Munich 1981, p. 178.

[269] "Entretien avec Jean-Claude Pressac réalisé par Valérie Igounet, à la Ville-du-bois, le jeudi 15 juin 1995," in: V. Igounet, *op. cit.* (note 90), pp. 640f.

[270] The number of 360,000 Majdanek victims is not postulated by Hilberg, but was accepted in Poland at the beginning of the 1990s as obligatory; meanwhile, the figure has been reduced by Polish historians first to 230,000, then to 78,000. Hilberg speaks of 50,000 Jewish victims of Majdanek (note 17); he does not deal with non-Jewish victims. Cf. in this regard J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *Concentration Camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study*, reprint of 3rd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, 2016, Chapter 4 and Supplements.

If we take the lowest of his estimates, Pressac therefore reduces the total number of victims of these five 'extermination camps' (Auschwitz is not considered in the statistics) from 2,010,000 to 510,000. But the number given by him for Majdanek – the only one of these camps from which documentary data were obtained – is still more than double the actual number, for the documents reveal that in Majdanek about 42,300 (Jewish and non-Jewish) prisoners died.[271] One page later Pressac adds:

> *"Concerning the massacre of the Jews, several fundamental notions must be questioned. The numbers arrived at* [by official historiography] *are to be thoroughly revised. The expression 'genocide' is no longer suitable."*

Since Pressac does not rely upon documents, but merely upon the theoretical maximum capacity of extermination facilities, the existence of which remains unproven, his numbers are of course very contestable, but one thing is certain: whoever speaks of a mass extermination in Treblinka – to confine ourselves here to this camp – cannot blindly accept the monstrosities claimed by the witnesses and is not released from the duty of soberly taking into consideration what Pressac calls "material facts." We shall return to this point in the following chapter.

Finally, the reader's attention may be directed to one more grotesque statistical detail, which arises out of the claim that because of the overloading of the first 'gas chamber' building with only three killing chambers another large building with ten more chambers was constructed.[272]

According to the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, construction on this new building was completed in October 1942.[273] Consequently, we assume that this installation began operations in November 1942. According to the same *Encyclopedia*, the chambers in the old building had a total area of about ($3 \times 4 \times 4$ m^2 =) 48 m^2, but the new ones had a total area of 320 m^2. From November 1942, therefore, (48 m^2 + 320 m^2 =) 368 m^2 were available in the camp for mass killing. The ratio of the areas before and after November 1942 was thus 48 m^2 ÷ 368 m^2 = 1:7.67.[274]

As already stated, according to Y. Arad, 694,000 people are supposed to have been murdered in Treblinka up to the end of October 1942, but after that 'only' 187,390 more.[253] The ratio of the killings in the time intervals up to the end of October 1942 and after that is therefore 1:0.27. If one assumes that the original three small 'gas chambers' were used at 100% of their capacity up to the end of October 1942 – otherwise there would have been no reason to build the new, larger building – for the thirteen gas chambers which were available

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[271] J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *ibid*.

[272] This section is from the publisher G. Rudolf.

[273] *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, op. cit. (note 18), p. 1485.

[274] During the Düsseldorf Treblinka Trial, to be sure, other measurements were given for the chambers (16 m^2 old, 32 m^2 new), whose surface proportions, however, were roughly the same, cf. pp. 145f. in this book.

from November 1942, there was a utilization factor of only (0.27÷7.67=) 3.5%!

The question that occurs in light of this statistical fact is obvious: Why are the ten new, larger 'gas chambers' supposed to have been built, if afterwards they were not needed at all? The grotesque contradiction between mass killings claimed for the respective time periods and the massive expansion of extermination capacity maintained by the witnesses is strong evidence that the latter claim is based not upon facts but rather has an origin in propaganda: three 'gas chambers' were simply not monstrous enough. The demonic nature of the German had to be undergirded with ever escalating 'facts.'

TIME SPAN	# OF CHAMBERS	AREA	NUMBER MURDERED	UTILIZATION CLAIMED
Until the end of October '42	3	48 m^2	694,000	100%
From November 1942	10+3	368 m^2	187,390	3.5%

Chapter IV: The Alleged Extermination Facilities in Treblinka: An Historical and Technical Analysis

1. Planning and Construction of the Eastern 'Extermination Camps'

The planning and construction of the so-called 'extermination camps' Treblinka, Sobibór, and Bełżec, as reconstructed by the official historiography, raises serious problems, which have remained unsolved to the present. The chief problem consists in the absence of rational planning and in the unbelievably primitive architectural and technical structure of these camps, which stands in the strongest contrast to that of the others, especially of the so-called 'extermination camp' Auschwitz. Raul Hilberg is one of the very few representatives of the orthodox historiography who have brought up the problem and sought to solve it. He explains:[275]

> *"Why three camps and not one? Why were they built one after the other, first Belzec, then Sobibor, and lastly Treblinka? Why in the beginning in each camp only three gas chambers, if they did not then suffice? One could be inclined to answer that the planners did not know the entire extent of their task, that they were groping their way toward the goal without having it in sight. That is not totally unimaginable, but it is certainly not the whole explanation and perhaps not even the most important. It was a matter of, in short, a difficult administrative problem.*
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> *The Third Reich had neither a particular central authority nor its own budgetary title for a 'Final Solution to the Jewish Problem.' The construction of the camps, the positions for guard staff, and the management of transports all had to be financed in a complex manner. Auschwitz II and Lublin, for example, were designated in the beginning as camps for prisoners of war of the SS, and indeed not only for camouflage but for budgetary reasons. Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka, on the other hand, were plain and simple killing camps. But they could not be operated that way under any*

[275] Raul Hilberg, "Die Aktion Reinhard," in: Eberhard Jäckel, Jürgen Rohwer (eds.), *Der Mord an den Juden im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart 1985, pp. 129f.

> *economic role, and there is much to show that the means for their construction and operation were fragmentary and minimal. That is probably the reason why they did not grow into a fully developed building complex. They probably had to be built in sequence and step by step, in order to remain financially inconspicuous."*

These theses, proposed by a scholar who devoted his *magnum opus*[276] largely to an exposition of the bureaucratic-administrative structure of the Third Reich, are quite simply absurd.

No one who knows the complex structure and manner of functioning of the National Socialist economic-administrative offices[277] can seriously believe that camps of any sort whatever would have been able to originate and develop in the General Gouvernement without precise planning and a specific budget.

Insofar as construction was concerned, the General Governor of occupied Poland was, via several intermediates, ultimately subject to *Reichsminister* Albert Speer, who was the German plenipotentiary for the regulation of all construction. Speer instructed his local deputy, the SS Administrator at the office of the *Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer* (Senior SS and Police Chief) in the General Gouvernement, who, in turn, instructed the plenipotentiary for the regulation of all constructions in the General Gouvernement.[278]

The SS Administrators appointed to each Senior SS and Police Chief (HSSPF)[279] were responsible "for administration of all economic affairs of the SS departments and SS units in the sphere of their respective HSSPF", and indeed specifically "for budgetary, treasury, and accountancy, legal affairs [such as leases, insurance, and the like], preliminary examination, financial commitments, engine transport, management of raw materials, building, economic undertakings, and concentration camps."[280]

In practice, the SS Administrator represented simultaneously *Reichsminister* Speer and the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt* (WVHA, Economic

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[276] R. Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 17). Hilberg deals with the core of the 'Holocaust' theme, the process of extermination in the death camps, on all of 19 pages of the 1300 pages of his three-volume work! Cf. regarding this Jürgen Graf, *The Giant with Feet of Clay*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2015.

[277] On this cf. Carlo Mattogno, *The Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Auschwitz: Organization, Responsibilities, Activities*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2015.

[278] WAPL, 268, pp. 81f.

[279] The HSSPF were those from *Ostland*, Central Russia, Russia-South and North as well as Serbia. *Ostland* was the war-time term for the northeastern territories of the USSR occupied by German forces, running north of the Ukraine up to the Baltic Sea and included what is now Belarus (White Russia), Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and parts of Russia itself.

[280] Hans Buchheim, "Die SS – das Herrschaftsinstrument", in: Hans Buchheim, Martin Broszat, Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, Helmut Krausnick, *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, DTV, Munich 1982, Vol. 1, p. 139; Engl.: *Anatomy of the SS State*, Collins, London 1968.

Administrative Main Office). In accord with the structure of this office, the scope of the work of the SS Administrator was subdivided into five groups, of which Group C – Construction bore the responsibility for construction.

Finally, four SS and Police Chiefs, one for each district: Warsaw (Arpad Wigand), Lublin (Odilo Globocnik), Radom (Carl-Albrecht Oberg), and Lemberg (Fritz Katzmann) were under the Senior SS and Police Chief in the General Gouvernement.

In November 1941, Amt II "*Bauten*" (Bureau II "Buildings") of the *Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten* (HHB, Main Office Budget and Buildings) encompassed seven construction inspection units of the Waffen-SS and Police with the Senior SS and Police Chiefs. The jurisdiction over the General Gouvernement, upon whose territory the camps of Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka were situated, was exercised by the *Bauinspektion der Waffen-SS und Polizei Reich Generalgouvernement* (Construction Inspection of the Waffen-SS and Police Reich General Gouvernement), which was composed of five *Zentralbauleitungen* (Central Construction Offices) with nine Construction Offices of the Waffen-SS and Police. The Construction Inspection Office had its seat in Krakow, while the Central Construction Offices were located in Krakow, Warsaw, Lublin, Dębica, and Lemberg (the last belonged administratively to the General Gouvernement).[281] The Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police at Warsaw was thus subject to both the Construction Inspection Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Reich General Gouvernement and also to the SS Administrator at the Senior SS and Police Chief in the General Gouvernement.

All construction work carried out in the General Gouvernement in the year 1942 followed normal bureaucratic practice, which appears to be as follows: instructions from the Department Group C "Constructions" of the SS WVHA, in correspondence with the directives of *Reichsminister* Speer, went through the SS Administrator to the Central Construction Offices and Construction Units, which were in charge with accomplishing the actual constructions.

Insofar as Treblinka was concerned, this practice is fully confirmed by the single known document dealing with the construction of the camp. It is a work certificate for June 1, 1942, about which the Polish judge Z. Łukaszkiewicz reports the following:[282]

> *"The witness Lucjan Puchała, railway technician, has produced a very interesting document: a certification to begin work from the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police, issued on June 1, 1942. According to the information in it, on this day the construction of a spur line, which was supposed to lead from the branch line to the camp, was delegat-*

[281] WAPL, 3, pp. 12, 24.
[282] USSR-344. GARF, 7445-2-126, p. 320 (p. 3 of the report).

ed to him. This certificate is valid until the 15th of June 1942,[283] *and on this day the construction ended, according to the statement of the witness."*

Łukaszkiewicz later completely transcribed the document involved. Its text reads as follows:[284]

"Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police, Warsaw.
Warsaw, June 1, 1942, Koszykowa 8, Post Office Box 214
Tel. 9-21-83
Certificate No. 684
The Pole Lucjan Puchała, born on ..., is employed as technician at the local administrative office of Koszykowa. It is requested that the said person be allowed to pass unhindered and that he not be called in for other work. This certificate is valid until the 15th of June 1942 and can be extended only by the local administrative office. The card is to be voluntarily returned on its expiration day.
Director of the Central Construction Office.
(Signature illegible) SS-Scharführer."

This document proves that the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police at Warsaw was responsible for the construction of the Treblinka Camp and thus was following common practice. According to Arad, two German firms had contracts for the establishment of the camp: Schönbronn in Leipzig and Schmidt-Münstermann.[285] These firms – besides them, still others doubtlessly participated in the construction – received their commissions from the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police at Warsaw, just as did Lucjan Puchała. Thus, this office functioned as principal, and all the norms, including financial, that applied in the intercourse between the Central Construction Office and the civilian firms acting on its commission, were in force here as well. Surely the accounting department of the construction inspection unit of the Waffen-SS and Police Reich General Gouvernement regulated the latter, just as the accounting office of the construction inspection unit of the Waffen-SS and Police of *Reich-'Ost'* (east) was responsible for Auschwitz.[286] This means that Treblinka (and, logically, also Bełżec and Sobibór) must have been specifically budgeted for, and that the camp came into being on the basis of a precise plan.

This applies also to the labor camp Treblinka I. Viewed politically and administratively, the labor camp Treblinka I was subordinate to the SS and Police Chief in the Warsaw district, Arpad Wiegand, who had been assigned to construct this camp. This is clear from three documents concerning the delivery of various materials – pipes, nails etc. – for the camp Treblinka I.

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[283] In the text "1945" appears by error.
[284] Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *Obóz straceń w Treblince*, *op. cit.* (note 38), p. 51.
[285] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 37; Arad gives no sources for his information.
[286] For this, see Carlo Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 277), pp. 43-45.

The first of these three documents is a letter dated June 19, 1942, by the *SS Unterscharführer* (sergeant) Dr. Irmfried Eberl at the office of the SS and Police Chief in the Warsaw district. The letter is addressed to the Commissioner for the Jewish residential district and begins with the sentence:[287]

> *"For the Treblinka Camp the following are still required* […]*."*

The second of these documents is a letter whose date is illegible, but which probably likewise falls in June of 1942. It was sent by Heinz Auerswald, commissioner for the Jewish residential district in the office of the Governor of the Warsaw district, "to the Chairman of the Jewish Council of Warsaw" and begins as follows:[288]

> *"The following objects are required for the construction of the Treblinka Camp* […]*."*

The third of these documents, a letter of June 26, 1942, from Dr. Eberl to the commissioner for the Jewish residential district, Auerswald, on the subject "Work Camp Treblinka", reads at the beginning:[289]

> *"For the construction of the labor camp Treblinka the following objects are urgently required* […]*."*

The "labor camp Treblinka" was established by ordinance of the Governor of the Warsaw district of November 15, 1941. The order to construct the camp, in which its purpose is also stated, was published on December 16, 1941, in the *Amtsblatt für den Distrikt Warschau Generalgouvernement* (Official Gazette for the Warsaw district of the General Gouvernement) No. 11-12 on p. 116.[290]

The mining of gravel from the pits at Treblinka I was directed by the "*SS-Sonderkommando Treblinka*" (SS Special Command Treblinka),[291] which according to Łukaszkiewicz was the official designation of the alleged 'Death Camp' (therefore of Treblinka II).[292] This is confirmed by the fact that the mining of gravel was an operation conducted on the site by a corresponding firm, namely the Deutsche Herd- und Steinwerk GmbH Kieswerk Treblinka (German Hearth- and Masonry Works, Inc., Gravel Works Treblinka).[293]

Thus the "*Sonderkommando Treblinka*" had a perfectly institutional identity and consequently was a component of the administrative structure of the General Gouvernement. Politically, it was subordinate to the SS and Police Chief in the Warsaw district and to the Senior SS and Police Chief in the Gen-

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[287] Document reproduced in Stanisław Wojtczak, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 167.
[288] *Ibid*., p. 168.
[289] Document reproduced in *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord. Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkriegs*, Röderberg Verlag, Frankfurt/Main 1960, p. 304.
[290] Document reproduced in S. Wojtczak, *op. cit.* (note 60), pp. 155f.
[291] See Document 16 in Appendix.
[292] USSR-344. GARF, 7445-2-126, p. 319 a (p. 2 of the report).
[293] See Document 17 in the Appendix.

eral Gouvernement (Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger), administratively to the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police at Warsaw as well as to the SS Administrator.

In short: the claim according to which the camps Treblinka, Bełżec, and Sobibór are supposed to have been constructed without any sort of budgetary entries is historically false and plainly absurd to anyone familiar with the bureaucratic conventions of the Third Reich.

How is the rather rudimentary character of these camps to be explained? In reality, this question is incorrectly formulated, for the primitiveness of the three camps is not supported by any kind of documentation, but merely from witness statements. We have learned abundantly from the preceding chapters what sort of value ought to be attached to these. Thus, the primitive character of the camps is no objectively proven fact, but simply a subjective reconstruction. On the contrary: since the camps were constructed in conformity with the usual economic and administrative standards, as applied to the other camps as well, they could not have been primitive in any way, and one comes inevitably to the conclusion that the subjective reconstructions based upon testimonies of witnesses cannot reflect the reality.

In these unreal reconstructions of Treblinka, the unspeakably primitive character of the *crucially important* buildings, for which the camps are alleged to have been built – namely the killing and corpse cremation facilities – is glaringly obvious. We begin with the killing installations, and we will confine ourselves strictly to Treblinka.

2. The Alleged Killing Installations in Treblinka

In the following, we will dispense with any discussion of the many technical fantasies, like the steam and vacuum chambers, described by many witnesses. We confine ourselves to those extermination techniques which, according to today's official historiography, are supposed to have been employed in Treblinka. As the starting point for this, we choose the verdict of the Court of Assizes of Düsseldorf[294] of September 3, 1965, against Kurt Franz:[295]

> *"The gas chambers, in which the Jews were killed by means of exhaust fumes of a diesel engine, formed the center of the death camp. At the beginning of the mass killings there was only the so-called 'old gas house.' The building, solidly constructed out of brick upon a concrete foundation, contained 3 gas chambers, which were approximately 4 × 4 m in area and about 2.6 m high, as well as a machine room for the diesel engine and the lighting plant of the camp. All of the rooms were situated on a wooden cor-*

[294] See Chapter V on this.
[295] A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 203f., 224, 226.

ridor which was built out from the masonry structure and which one reached by climbing several steps. From this corridor, doors led into the gas chambers. These doors were about 1.80 m in height and 90 cm wide and were made somewhat in the way that air-raid doors are, so that they sealed off the chambers nearly airtight. Across from these, on the exterior wall in each gas chamber, were flap doors made from thick wooden planks. These were approximately 2.50 m wide and about 1.80 meters high and could be tilted upwards when opened in the manner of modern garage doors. They led to a wide concrete ramp, situated about 0.70 m above the level of the ground, which ran around the entire building. The floor of the gas chambers was tiled and was tilted toward the ramp. The walls were likewise tiled, at least to a certain height. On the ceiling of the individual chambers there were several pipes and showerheads. Due to this, the gas chambers were supposed to evoke the impression of shower rooms. However, the piping really served for the introduction of exhaust gases produced by the diesel engine in the machine room. There was no special lighting installation in the chambers.

Very soon after the inception of operations, the capacity of the old gas house proved to be insufficient for smoothly liquidating the daily arriving transports of Jews. For that reason, at the end of August/beginning of September 1942, the construction of a new large gas house was started, which contained more and larger gas chambers and was able to be put in operation after a construction period of about one month.

This building, which was built between the junction of the hose [=Schlauch, a nickname for the path to alleged "gas houses"–ed.] *and the old gas house, was also solidly built out of brick on a concrete foundation. Five wide stone steps, decorated with flower bowls at the sides, led to the entrance at the front of the building and opened into a wide corridor, on both of whose sides lay the new gas chambers. Their exact measurements cannot be determined, since neither the defendant L. nor his co-defendants nor even the Jewish witnesses can give precise details about this. All are merely in agreement that the new gas chambers had a holding capacity approximately double that of the chambers in the old building. The new gas chambers were probably about 8 m long, 4 m wide, and 2 m high.* […]

The process of extermination itself lasted approximately 30 to 40 minutes. […]

An accepted holding capacity of approximately 200 to 350 people per gas chamber in the old house and approximately 400 to 700 people per gas chamber in the new house might safely be said to be most probable according to all [information]*."*

This description basically corresponds to that given by Łukaszkiewicz, based upon the witness testimonies of Wiernik, Reichmann, Czechowicz, and Finkelsztejn:

> *"Both structures were built according to the corridor system, in which the entrance to the chambers in the 1st building was on both sides of the corridor, while in the small building the entry to the chambers was only on one side. The entrance was relatively small and closed with exactly fitting doors. On the exterior wall of the chamber was a large flap, which opened upward and which served for removal of bodies. The chambers were tiled; the floor sloped toward the exterior, which facilitated the removal of bodies. In the ceiling there were openings for the exhaust pipes of the engines that were located in annexes. These openings served to supply the exhaust gas, from which the victims suffocated. Witness Wiernik, who was employed as a master carpenter during all of his stay at the camp and had relative freedom of movement, gives the following dimensions of the chamber: in the small building 5 × 5 m, in the large 7 × 7 m."* [296]

The data given by the official historiography is, in reality, based almost entirely upon the witness testimony of Jankiel Wiernik, who for his part, as we explained in the second chapter, appropriated his description of the steam chambers from the report of November 15, 1942.

But even with respect to the structure, indeed, even with respect to the number of the alleged gas chambers of the second installation – likewise based upon witness statements – there are variations, which receive no mention whatsoever in the official historiography.

In Chapter III we cited the witness testimony of Abe Kon, according to whom the second killing facility contained 12 gas chambers. The Soviet report on Treblinka of August 24, 1944, in which 12 gas chambers are correspondingly mentioned, is based upon this testimony.[297] As already seen, the current official version speaks of 10 chambers. The witnesses Willi Metz and Otto Horn, who had worked in 'Camp II', declared that the installation had 6 gas chambers.[298] Jankiel Wiernik wrote that at his arrival in Treblinka there had been three gas chambers and that two more were added during his stay in the camp even before the construction of the second extermination facility,[299] so that there were 15 and not 13 gas chambers in total.

According to the witnesses cited by W. Grossmann, the gas chambers in the second facility measured 7 m × 8 m,[300] according to the witnesses questioned by Łukaszkiewicz, 7 m × 7 m,[301] according to the witness Abe Kon, 6

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[296] USSR-344. GARF, 7445-2-126, p. 321 (p. 5 of the report).
[297] See Chapter III, Section 1.
[298] Michael Tregenza, "Christian Wirth. Inspekteur der SS-Sonderkommandos "Aktion Reinhard" in: *Zeszyty Majdanka* (Majdanek Notebooks), Vol. XV, 1993, p. 11.
[299] See Chapter II, Section 5.
[300] V. Grossmann, *Treblinski Ad*, *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 186; V. Grossmann: *Die Hölle von Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 26), pp. 47f.
[301] USSR-344. GARF, 7445-2-126, p. 321 (p. 5 of the report).

m × 6 m,[302] and according to the version accepted today, 8 m × 4 m. The maximum capacity of these chambers varies between 600 (Abe Kon) and 1,000 to 1,200 (Jankiel Wiernik).[303] Last, Elias Rosenberg claims that the second killing facility was not constructed between August and October 1942, but rather in March of 1943.[304]

The witnesses also disagree about the location of the small observation windows in the gas chambers. In the front-line report of TASS of September 11, 1944, it says:[305]

> *"The people in the 'bath' died under horrible tortures after ten minutes. The 'bath-master' recorded this by means of a small glass window in the door."*

On the other had, the Polish-Soviet protocol of September 15, 1944, asserted:[306]

> *"On the roof of this – hermetically sealable – building was a small window, through which the death struggle of the dying could be observed."*

E. Rosenberg also claims that this little window was located on the roof of the gas chambers.[307]

At the same time, the military examining judge of the military administration of the 65th Soviet Army, First Lieutenant of Justice Jurowski, was drawing plans of the first as well as the second alleged killing facilities of Treblinka. The first bears the inscription "Plan of the Building No. 1 of the Treblinka Camp 2, in which the killing of people of Jewish nationality occurred."[308] The drawing is furnished with numbers from one to seven and further with the Cyrillic letters 'а', 'б', 'в'.

According to the key of the illustration, the figures and letters show the following facilities:

1:	Annex
2:	Room in which the engine was located
3, 4, 5:	Chambers
6:	Room for employees
7:	Ramp
а:	Pipeline from engine
б:	Window (= opening) through which gas was drawn off to the roof
в:	Door

In addition, there is a note without number or letter on the drawing: "Gas pipe into the chambers."

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[302] See Chapter II, 1.
[303] J. Wiernik, in A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 161.
[304] E. Rosenberg, *op. cit.* (note 187), p. 139 (p. 7 of the report).
[305] GARF, 7021-115-8, p. 218.
[306] GARF, 7021-115-11, p. 44.
[307] See below, Section 8.
[308] See Document 18 in the Appendix.

There is a drawing of a small tractor in Room 2. The measurements for Room 3 are also entered – m 4 × 5 – which are the same for Room 1 and 2. The annex (пристроика=pristroika) is almost certainly a corridor, which one can enter by a two-step stairs (toward the left of the drawing); the ramp can also be reached from both sides by way of two steps. The 'windows' on the ceiling measure approximately 0.5 m × 0.5 m according to the plan, and are supplied with grates.

The second drawing bears the description "Plan of Building No. 2 of the Treblinka Camp, in which the killing of people of Jewish nationality occurred."[309]

The picture legend furnishes the following designations:

1-10: Chambers
11: Corridor
12: Place where the engine was installed
а: Introduction of the gas
б: Removal of the gas from the chamber
в: Door

A note without number or letter also appears in this drawing: "Pipe which led from the engine to the chambers." A small tractor is here likewise drawn in Room 12.

These two drawings without a doubt depict two facilities with gas chambers, which are fed by engine exhaust gases (or, to put it more accurately, by the exhaust gases from a tractor). But none of the witnesses questioned by Judge Jurowski mentioned such a version of killing. As we pointed out in Chapter II, they did speak of an engine, but this served merely to operate the pump, by which the air was said to have been sucked out of the chambers, rather than for filling the chambers with exhaust fumes. This vacuum version was then officially voiced in the Soviet report on Treblinka of August 24, 1944, as well as in the Polish-Soviet protocol of September 15, 1944. What, therefore, was Judge Jurowski's source?

The answer is simple: Jankiel Wiernik's statements of May 1944, because the Soviet investigating judges were in possession of a copy of his text, which is explicitly mentioned in the Soviet report of August 24, 1944. As will be recalled, Wiernik had simply transformed the steam chambers of the report of November 15, 1942, into engine exhaust gas chambers, and even copied the drawing of the camp enclosed with that report. On this plan[310] the two alleged killing installations are drawn in, the first with three and the second with ten chambers, whose structure is practically identical with those of the two drawings of Judge Jurowski. But because Wiernik had forgotten to add to the ten gas chambers of his second drawing an eleventh room, in which the engine

[309] See Document 19 in the Appendix.
[310] See Document 4 in the Appendix.

was installed, Judge Jurowski felt himself constrained to draw in the tractor (engine) at the end of the corridor, between chambers 5 and 10. He painstakingly adopted Wiernik's drawings, yet nonetheless attempted to bring a minimum of order to them and in doing so drew equipment within the installations, which Wiernik had not mentioned. Since the Soviet judge understood significantly more about engineering than the witness, he enhanced the drawing with another element, which would have been indispensable for a hypothetical mass killing with engine exhaust fumes, but of whose necessity Wiernik had not been aware: the openings for the removal of the gas, *i.e.* of the air-gas mixture. We will come back to this important point in Section 8.

It is clear from all this that Judge Jurowski was technically too well-versed to swallow the nonsense reported by the witnesses, but as Soviet military judge he accepted the story of the mass extermination in engine exhaust gas chambers and imbued it with a certain degree of plausibility by virtue of his drawings.[311]

3. Diesel Engine or Gasoline Engine?

In his excellent study *The Diesel Gas Chambers: Ideal for Torture – Absurd for Murder*,[98] Friedrich P. Berg investigated the present version of the mass murder in the alleged eastern extermination camps – gassing by means of diesel engine exhaust gases – from a technical standpoint. He particularly emphasizes that according to the laws of toxicology, a person who is exposed to a concentration of 0.4% carbon monoxide (CO) (*i.e.* 4,000 parts CO per million parts of air), dies in less than one hour. Since the time, in which death occurs, is directly proportional to the percentage of CO, it requires a concentration at least twice as high, thus 0.8%, in order to bring about death within half an hour or less. Of the two main types of diesel engines, which existed in the forties, Berg examines the one whose exhaust gases contain a larger percentage of CO, that is, the engine with an undivided combustion chamber. While running at idle, this engine produces about 0.03% CO, but under full load approximately 0.4%. Berg says in this regard:[312]

> *"In other words, here we have a Diesel which looks as if it could have been used to commit mass murder in half an hour."*

But a diesel engine cannot continually run at full load, since it would soon break down due to the accumulation of solid compounds on the cylinder walls. On the other hand, a diesel normally operates with a large air surplus. At idle, with an air-fuel ratio of 100:1, the engine emits 18% oxygen, which is only

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[311] At this point in time, all references were to an "engine"; the version of a diesel engine had not yet triumphed.

[312] Friedrich P. Berg, *op. cit.* (note 98), p. 447.

slightly less than the oxygen content of the air (21%) and suffices for survival. During a homicidal gassing, the oxygen content of the air must be so low that the victims suffocate from lack of oxygen, *i.e.*, at a level of approximately 9%. This is attained by producing an air-fuel ratio of 25:1, which is reached at about ¾ of full load.

According to the witnesses, the diesel engine of a Russian armored tank was employed at the gas chambers of Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka. The strongest Soviet tank engine was found in the tank type T34: a V12-cylinder diesel with undivided combustion chamber, a maximum performance of 550 HP, a total cylinder volume of 38,860 cm^3 = 38.86 liters, and a maximum of 1,900 revolutions per minute.

If the second gassing installation of Treblinka measured a total of 640 m^3 and was able to accommodate 3,200 people, Berg concludes from his calculations that the effective volume of air contained in it amounted to 400 m^3, if assuming a body volume of 75 liters per person.

If one rounds the maximum number of revolutions per minute to 2,000, since a four-stroke engine empties its piston chamber only every second revolution, it emitted (1,000 × 38.86 =) 38,860 liters or 38.86 m^3 of exhaust gases in one minute. Thus, the engine would have exchanged the entire content of air of the gas chambers in (400 ÷ 38.86 =) in something under 10 minutes. The gas chambers had to have openings for the removal of the air-gas mixture; otherwise they would have collapsed from the increased pressure. Berg begins by assuming that it requires 20 minutes under these circumstances until roughly the same percentage of CO is reached in the gas chambers as in the exhaust gases themselves, *i.e.*, realistically, 0.22 vol.% at full load and an air-fuel ratio of 20:1.

As Berg stresses, experiments with guinea-pigs showed the following:[313]

> *"In the animal experiment previously described with a real CO concentration of 0.22%/vol.,* which was already established before the test animals were even introduced *and which, because of the reduced oxygen content of 11.4%/vol., corresponded to an effective CO concentration of (0.22×21÷ 11.4=) 0.4%/vol., it still took more than three hours to kill* all *of the test animals. It is, therefore, perfectly reasonable and even quite conservative to say that in a similar gassing attempt with humans and with only a gradually increasing CO concentration, the majority of people in the alleged gas chamber would still be alive after one or even two hours. Such a result would have been an utter fiasco."*

Had the SS men wished to carry out mass gassings with engine exhaust gases, Berg argues, they would surely have resorted to a gasoline engine, the exhaust gases of which normally contain 7% by volume of carbon monoxide and 1% by volume of oxygen. With proper adjustment of the carburetor, the carbon

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[313] *Ibid*., p. 458.

monoxide content can be increased up to 12%. But that would have by no means been the 'best' source of CO available during World War II: due to a lack of gasoline, the German government passed laws that made it compulsory to equip all diesel-driven vehicles with producer gas generators, which generate a gas with up to 35% of CO from wood or coke. Hundreds of thousands of these truly poisonous generators operated in wartime Germany and in the occupied territories, and this technology was well-known to all major German politicians at that time, as Berg shows. Berg's conclusion is thus more than justified:[314]

> *"How absurd to believe anyone with even a minimum of technical understanding would even try to use the exhaust from* [diesel engines] *for murder, when the* [producer gas] *fuel itself was a thousand times more lethal!"*

The next question is, whether the Germans in 1941 would have known that a gasoline engine would have been far more efficient for the mass killing of human beings in gas chambers. The answer is unequivocally yes. We present a single example.

In 1930, the Reich Office of Health and the company I.G. Farbenindustrie joined forces to perform a series of toxicological and hygienic experiments with combustion products of engines. E. Keeser, Professor and Doctor of Medicine; V. Froboese, Ph.D.; and R. Turnau, Ph.D., from the Reich Office of Health, participated in the research project, as did representatives from the I.G. Farbenindustrie of Oppau and Ludwigshafen; E. Gross, Professor and M.D.; E. Kuss, Ph.D.; G. Ritter, Ph.D.; and Professor W. Wilke, with a doctorate in engineering. The result of the study was published as a monograph under the title *Toxikologie und Hygiene des Kraftfahrwesens*.[315]

The experiments were performed exclusively with gasoline engines because their exhaust gases were regarded as far more harmful than those of diesel engines. First, the scientists conducted preliminary experiments with three different engine types: Hanomag 2/10 HP, Adler 6/25 HP, and Benz 10/30 HP. The average composition of the exhaust gases was as follows:[316]

Conditions	Engine	Carbon Dioxide [% CO_2]	Carbon Monoxide [% CO]	Oxygen [% O_2]	Hydrogen [% H_2]	Methane [% CH_4]
Idle	Hanomag	7.7	5.2	1.6	-	-
[1,000 RPM]	Adler	8.5	8.5	1.1	3.7	1.0
	Benz	9.2	6.3	1.0	3.4	0.1
Full Load	Hanomag	3.2	0.2	1.4	-	-
[1,500 RPM]	Adler	13.3	0.2	2.3	0.1	0.1
	Benz	13.5	1.7	1.1	0.5	0.1

[314] *Ibid*., p. 464.
[315] *Toxikologie und Hygiene des Kraftfahrwesens*, Julius Springer Verlag, Berlin 1930.
[316] *Ibid*., p. 4.

In subsequent experiments, the researchers chose the Adler engine. Regarding the working conditions of this engine they remarked:[317]

> *"A special throttle device was attached to the air supply line of the carburetor, which permitted modifying the amount of fresh air sucked in by the machine within certain limits. By means of reducing the air supply, a rise in the content of unburned substance, and thus of the CO content in the exhaust gas, could be achieved, while just the opposite, a reduction of CO content, resulted from an increased air supply."*

After an analysis of six different kinds of gasoline, the scientists performed twelve main experiments. With respect to the emission of CO, the highest values were recorded at idle:[318]

ANALYSIS OF GAS IN DIFFERENT EXPERIMENTAL SERIES[319]

CO_2 %	O_2 %	CO %	H_2 %	CH_4 %	N_2 %
8.20	1.12	9.08	4.70	0.60	76.28
8.20	2.07	8.30	5.37	0.23	75.63
9.10	0.73	8.55	2.61	2.10	76.98
9.10	0.89	7.64	3.32	0.53	78.15
8.90	1.35	8.06	3.99	0.17	77.54
8.90	1.24	8.10	4.33	0.22	77.16
7.50	1.35	10.01	4.42	1.36	75.36
7.50	1.99	8.08	4.48	0.18	77.40
8.80	1.05	8.00	3.85	0.82	77.49
8.80	1.03	8.17	3.64	0.28	77.78
9.90	2.70	7.40	2.50	0.26	77.30
9.90	3.47	7.95	2.14	0.11	76.27

The technique employed in conducting the experiments was very advanced for that time.[320] The researchers were carrying out toxicological tests, in which they constructed sophisticated miniature gas chambers. In particular, they performed preliminary tests, about which they wrote:[321]

> *"The tests show that neither guinea pigs nor white mice showed severe symptoms of poisoning during a test duration of two hours with a CO concentration of 0.3%, but that any increase of the CO content beyond 0.3% led to seizure attacks, ataxia or narcosis, and that from these symptoms the increase of CO concentration in the air could be determined."*

The actual experiments were conducted with five types of gasoline and lasted 120 minutes each. White mice and guinea pigs served as experimental animals. The researchers explained:

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[317] *Ibid*., p. 5.
[318] *Ibid*., Table I, p. 26.
[319] Chart is a slightly simplified representation.
[320] See Document 20 in the Appendix.
[321] *Toxikologie und Hygiene des Kraftfahrwesens*, *op. cit.* (note 315), p. 45.

> *"After the first analysis data from the Orsat exhaust gas analyses*[322] *had been obtained, the air supply of the carburetor was restricted to the point where the CO content of the exhaust gases climbed to 6.7%."*

Thus the experiments began with an air/exhaust gas mixture with a CO content of 0.3%. In these experiments, which lasted 120 minutes, ataxia and narcosis appeared in the guinea pigs, but none died.[323]

This study, the findings of which we have severely condensed, has an impressive bibliography of no less than 240 expert papers.[324] It is now easy to conclude that the story of the diesel engine exhaust gas chambers is not only incredible, but borders on the absurd: whoever seriously defends it is like someone who wishes to claim that during the Second World War the Reich government preferred fighting with stone age weapons, although it had at its disposal a broadly diversified arsenal of the most modern weapons available!

This comparison is by no means a weak one, since according to the official historiography, the planning and construction of the alleged extermination camps in eastern Poland was state policy, and the extermination of the Jews in these camps is supposed to have been one of the chief goals of the Third Reich.

4. The 'Struggle' between Engine Exhaust Gases and Hydrogen Cyanide Gas

Among the many absurdities of the so-called 'Gerstein Report', a very important one concerns his alleged mission, which Yitzhak Arad summarizes as follows:[325]

> *"The gassing system that had been developed and introduced by Wirth in the Operation Reinhard death camps proved only partially satisfactory. The frequent engine breakdowns caused disturbances and delays in the entire extermination process. Globocnik was aware of these shortcomings and, in coordination with the higher authorities of the SS, decided to look into the possibility of introducing an alternative gassing system. The prevailing opinion among the higher SS authorities in charge of the extermination of the Jews was that Zyklon B was more suitable for this task.*
> *Obersturmführer Kurt Gerstein, the chief disinfection officer in the Main Hygienic Office of the Waffen SS,*[326] *and SS-Obersturmbannführer Wil-*

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322 Orsat = apparatus for the analysis of combustion gases.
323 *Ibid*., pp. 46-48.
324 *Ibid*., pp. 96-103.
325 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 100.
326 According to Gerstein: SS Main Operations Office, Office Group D, Sanitation Office of the SS, Hygiene Department. PS-2170, p. 2.

> *helm Pfannenstiel, professor and director of the Hygienic Institute at the University of Marburg/Lahn, who also had served as hygienic adviser to the Waffen-SS, were sent to Lublin in the middle of August 1942.*[327] *Gerstein's main mission was to check the possibility of introducing the gas Zyklon B*[328] *into the gas chambers. Zyklon B had already been successfully used in Auschwitz, instead of the engines that were still supplying the monoxide gas in the death camps of Operation Reinhard."*

Later, Arad explains that Gerstein had "submitted a written report of his mission when he was incarcerated in an American[329] army prison at the end of the war in April-July 1945",[325] cites an excerpt from this 'report', and concludes:[330]

> *"Gerstein's mission did not bring about any changes in the gassing system in the Operation Reinhard death camps. Carbon monoxide, supplied by truck or tank engine, as introduced by Wirth, remained the means of killing used in these camps. The fact that in Belzec Gerstein witnessed a breakdown of the diesel engine that supplied the gas and during which people were locked inside the gas chamber for almost three hours until the engine started working did not cause any change in the procedure. Wirth refused to give up the gassing system he had developed. His professional pride did not permit him to admit that the use of Zyklon B for mass killings, as developed by Rudolf Höss, the commander of Auschwitz, was preferable to carbon monoxide. He asked and subsequently persuaded Gerstein not to propose any other gas chamber type for Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka to Berlin. Gerstein did not even carry out any killing experiments with the Zyklon B he had brought with him from Kolin.*[331] *The gas was buried on the pretext that it had been spoiled in transit."*

5. The 'Mission' of Kurt Gerstein

The tale related by Arad is totally absurd. First of all, let us summarize Gerstein's mission in the way he described it:

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[327] In reality, Pfannenstiel had nothing to do with Gerstein's mission and accompanied him "by accident" (see section which follows).

[328] Zyklon B was not gaseous, but rather liquid hydrogen cyanide absorbed on a porous carrier-substance. The gross error committed by Arad here frequently surfaces in the official historiography.

[329] In reality, this was a French military prison, that of Cherche-Midi: Document T-1306, report of the prison physician Dr. Trouillet of July 25, 1945.

[330] Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 104.

[331] According to his own statements, Gerstein had taken along no Zyklon B, but rather liquid prussic acid. See following section.

On March 10, 1941, Gerstein joined the SS[332] and was assigned to the *SS-Führungshauptamt* (SS Main Operations Office), *Amtsgruppe D, Sanitätswesen* (Office Group D, Sanitation) of the Waffen-SS, Hygiene Department.[333] Owing to his success in the field of hygiene, he was soon promoted to *Leutnant* and then to *Oberleutnant*[334] – two ranks, which did not exist in the Waffen-SS.[335] In January[336] or February[337] of 1942, he was named head of the Technical Disinfection Service of the Waffen-SS. In this capacity, Gerstein received a visit on June 8, 1942, from *SS-Sturmbannführer* Günther of Department IV B 4 of the *SS-Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (RSHA, SS Main Office of Imperial Security),[338] who entrusted him with the task, a mission for the German Reich under utmost secrecy, of taking charge of 100 kg[339] – no, 260 kg[340] – of a substance which at the same time was prussic acid (HCN)[341] and potassium cyanide (KCN),[342] and of bringing this by car[343] – no, by a truck[344] – to a location that only the driver knew.

Günther's assignment offered Gerstein the opportunity of inspecting the alleged eastern extermination camps. But according to the document "Killing Institutions in Poland,"[345] Gerstein had not been selected unsuspectingly for his super-secret mission by the RSHA, but instead had taken the initiative on his own: by making himself useful to SS officers in Poland, he won their confidence and succeeded in obtaining permission to visit the 'killing institutions.'[346]

On June 8, therefore, Gerstein is given a mission by Günther orally, which 48 hours later, on June 10, is confirmed in writing.[347] Nine weeks later, Gerstein and the driver leave for Kolin, near Prague, in order to load the toxic

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[332] T-1310.
[333] PS-2170, p. 2.
[334] T-1310, p. 5.
[335] PS-2164, *Dienstababzeichen der Schutzstaffeln*, IMT, Vol. XXIX, pp. 276f. (Table without pagination). The ranks of *Leutnant* and *Oberleutnant* (first lieutenant) existed only in the Wehrmacht. The according SS ranks were *Hauptscharführer* and *Sturmscharführer*.
[336] PS-1553, p. 4; T-1310, p. 5.
[337] PS-2170, p. 2.
[338] Günther was Eichmann's deputy.
[339] T-1310, p. 5; PS-1553, p. 5.
[340] PS-2170; George Wellers, "Encore sur le Témoignage Gerstein," in: *Le Monde Juif*, January to March 1980, No. 97, p. 28.
[341] T-1310, p. 5; PS-1553, p. 5, PS-2170, p. 2.
[342] G. Wellers, *op. cit.* (note 340), p. 28; T-1313-b, p. 2.
[343] T-1310, p. 5.
[344] PS-1553, p. 5.
[345] Anonymous manuscript in the Dutch language, dated March 25, 1943. This is in all probability the translation of a text originating from Gerstein.
[346] *Tötungsanstalten in Polen*, published without pagination by L. De Jong, *Een sterfgeval te Auswitz*, Amsterdam 1970, p. 1 of the report.
[347] G. Wellers, *op. cit.* (note 340), p. 29.

substance. "By accident,"[348] Gerstein takes along Prof. Pfannenstiel, an *SS-Sturmbannführer*[349] – no, an *Obersturmbannführer*[350] – which means that Pfannenstiel had nothing to do with Gerstein's mission.

Now things begin to get complicated. Gerstein has to pick up[351] – no, deliver[352] – 100 or 260 kg of prussic acid/potassium cyanide. The location of the pickup – or delivery – is specified to Gerstein[353] – no, selected by Gerstein himself;[354] the amount of the toxic material is communicated to Gerstein by the RSHA[354] – no, determined by Gerstein himself.[355]

It is worth suggesting here that the working methods of the RSHA in regard to the extermination of the Jews were extremely bizarre, to say the least: Günther entrusted Gerstein with the task of "immediately" taking charge of the toxic substance "for an extremely secret mission for the Reich,"[356] but Gerstein permits himself an unusually long time and only gets around to making the trip more than two months later, without any RSHA official having objected. But that's not all: even stranger, the RSHA revealed the alleged secret to an ordinary driver and to an outsider (Pfannenstiel), but not to the person directly concerned, namely Gerstein!

The goal of Gerstein's mission was to convert the operational method of the gas chambers from diesel exhaust gases to prussic acid,[357] but in blatant contradiction to this Gerstein explained:[358]

> *"I understood my mission.* […] *It was required of me to discover a more rapid and more effective means of killing than this extermination of primitive type. I proposed the employment of more toxic gases, especially those which give off prussic acid."*

Consequently, he discovered the killing method that the RSHA had told him about earlier, and was proposing precisely the same substance that the RSHA had already selected itself!

In Kolin, however, Gerstein did not pick up Zyklon B – which was produced there – but instead liquid prussic acid in 45 bottles, "after showing an order from the RSHA",[359] in other words, at the command of the RSHA, which is strikingly odd, since liquid prussic acid, a rather dangerous chemical,

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348 T-1310.
349 PS-1553, p. 6.
350 PS-1553, p. 7.
351 PS-1553, p.5; PS-2170, p. 2; T-1310, p. 6.
352 T-1313-b, p. 2.
353 G. Wellers, *op. cit.* (note 340), p. 28.
354 *Ibid*., p. 29.
355 *Ibid*., p. 30.
356 T-1310, p. 5.
357 T-1310, p. 9.
358 G. Kelber, "Un bourreau des camps nazis avoue: 'J'ai exterminé jusqu' à 11,000 personnes par jour'," in: *France Soir*, July 4, 1945, pp. 1f.
359 G. Wellers, *op. cit.* (note 340), p. 29.

had not been used in Germany for extermination of vermin since the introduction of the 'tub procedure' after World War One, and later of Zyklon B.[360]

Why did the RSHA order Gerstein to take along such an enormous quantity of prussic acid? If one keeps in mind that – according to the verdict of the 1965 Munich Court of Assizes – the six alleged gas chambers of Bełżec are supposed to have had an effective volume of 145 m^3, if one subtracts the space taken up by the approximately 1,500 victims,[361] then 500 g of prussic acid would have been sufficient to theoretically reach over ten times the instantly lethal concentration in every gas chamber. Under these circumstances, the 100 kg of prussic acid, which Gerstein says he brought with him, would have sufficed to kill 300,000 people in 200 gassings! This quantity was obviously too large for a few simple experiments. For these, about a dozen canisters of Zyklon B would have been enough and, if he was going to Lublin anyway, Gerstein would have easily been able to pick these up at the Majdanek Camp, where the Tesch & Stabenow firm had just delivered 360 Zyklon B canisters of 1.5 kg each, thus 540 kg total, two weeks before, on July 30, 1942.[362]

In Lublin, Gerstein was received by *SS-Brigadeführer* Odilo Globocnik, who disclosed the existence of the extermination camps of Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka to him:[363]

> *"This secret Reich matter is currently one of the most secret, one might say the most secret that there is."*

Thereupon Globocnik explained to him what his main mission was:[364]

> *"Your other – even far more important – mission is the conversion of our gas chambers, which are now working with diesel exhaust, to a better and quicker way. I am mainly thinking of prussic acid."*

Thus Gerstein went to Bełżec with his death-dealing cargo but did not carry out his mission, and then he coolly returned to Berlin, without having to report to anyone about that mission, which had been an urgent, top secret matter.

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[360] O. Lenz, L. Gassner, *Schädlingsbekämpfung mit hochgiftigen Stoffen*, Number 1: "Blausäure". Richard Schoetz, Berlin 1934, pp. 8-10. The 'tub procedure' developed HCN by pouring semi-concentrated sulfuric acid over potassium cyanide in a tub. Liquid prussic acid tends to explosively polymerize and was therefore permitted to be transported only in its frozen state, at night, and with a special vehicle: Frankfurt/Main Court of Assizes, session of March 28, 1949, in: C.F. Rüter, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen. Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen, 1945-1966*, Amsterdam 1968-1981, Vol. XIII, p. 137.

[361] The number 1500 at one gassing of people crammed into the 'gas chambers' was given in the verdict at the trial of Josef Oberhauser (January 1965). A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 133.

[362] J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 270), p. 202.

[363] PS-2170, p. 3.

[364] T-1310, p. 9.

This story seemed suspicious to the French Examining Magistrate Mattei, who interrogated Gerstein on July 19, 1945:[365]

> *"Question: 'To whom did you give an account of the execution of your mission?'*
> *Answer: 'After my return to Berlin from a journey, which had lasted about two weeks, I gave no one a report about the execution of my mission. No one asked me anything.'"*

The absurd answer did not satisfy Mattei, and he probed further:[366]

> *"Therefore, according to your own admission, you received an important mission in Berlin in your capacity as technician, a mission which was so important that you had to carry it out as a state secret, you visited three camps and were given an audience by a general, who, in view of the purpose of your mission, considered it necessary to communicate to you the remark of the two great Nazi leaders.*[367] *How can you persist in wanting to convince us that you:*
> *1) Did not fulfill the goal of your mission at all;*
> *2) Reported to no one;*
> *3) No one put any sort of questions to you concerning this?"*

Gerstein answered:

> *"Hauptmann* [Captain] *Wirth was so close to Himmler that he could say to me that I didn't have to trouble myself about this matter any more, and I obeyed him in this."*

This defensive strategy was demolished by Gerstein himself when he stated:[368]

> *"Wirth asked me to propose no change in the gas chambers and killing methods used up to now, since everything had worked out and proved most effective. Remarkably, I was never asked about that sort of thing in Berlin."*

Thus, Christian Wirth did not have such great influence with Himmler after all! This is also 'confirmed' by the allegation that Wirth was afraid of Gerstein:[369]

> *"Hauptmann Wirth comes in. One sees that he is afraid because I see the disaster."*

Gerstein's tale is based upon three premises:

1. The extermination of Jews in the eastern camps was a Reich secret; indeed, it was the most secret matter of all.

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[365] G. Wellers, *op. cit.* (note 340), p. 29.
[366] *Ibid*., p. 32.
[367] Hitler and Himmler, who according to Gerstein are supposed to have visited the eastern 'extermination camps' on August 16, which is, however, historically untrue.
[368] PS-2170, p. 7.
[369] PS-1553, p. 6. The "disaster" was the breakdown of the diesel engine at the alleged gassing of people, which Gerstein claims he attended.

2. It had therefore been planned at the level of Himmler, through Department IV B 4 of the RSHA (Eichmann).
3. The implementation of the extermination plan had been entrusted to Globocnik, who was directly responsible to Himmler for it.

The RSHA allegedly gave Gerstein the job of changing the way the gas chambers functioned. Therefore, the order had to have been issued by Himmler. Himmler had supposedly done so because the system employed at that time – diesel engine exhaust gases – was unsatisfactory. Globocnik had been in full agreement with this, and only he would have been able to inform Himmler about the inefficiency of this method of extermination.

According to Michael Tregenza, Globocnik ordered the restructuring of Treblinka after inspecting it on August 19, 1942, and entrusted this task to Christian Wirth as "Inspector of the SS-Sonderkommando 'Operation Reinhard.'"[370]

We therefore return to our earlier question: How can so inefficient a technique for carrying out the Reich's secret extermination program have been okayed at the highest governmental level?

Gerstein belonged to the SS Main Operations Office, Office Group D, Sanitation, of the Waffen-SS, Hygiene Department. Why did the RSHA turn to this office in order to change the killing system then in operation, yet not inquire about a more effective one? If the use of engine exhaust gases had been planned, why hadn't the RSHA contacted the *Reichsgesundheitsamt* (Reich Office of Health) in Berlin and the research laboratories of I.G. Farbenindustrie, which, as we have seen, had substantial experience in this field at its disposal?

If the RSHA had decided to use prussic acid in the gas chambers, why did it commission Gerstein to pick up liquid prussic acid instead of Zyklon B?

And finally, if the diesel exhaust gas chambers proved to be so inefficient, why had their method of operating not been changed?

Thus, although the killing method allegedly used in Bełżec had been proven to be inefficient and the RSHA – *i.e.* Himmler – is supposed to have decided to modify it at the beginning of June 1942, the construction of the second gassing installation in Treblinka at the end of August/beginning of September 1942 is supposed to have begun using exactly the same inefficient diesel principle! And who – apart from Himmler – could have issued the order for the construction of this second installation?

Thus, the 'Gerstein Report', which Arad describes as "one of the first and most important documents relating to Operation Reinhard" (sic),[371] is not only devoid of any sort of evidentiary weight, but on the contrary, it also sheds ad-

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[370] M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 298), pp. 9f.
[371] Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 102.

ditional light upon the complete absurdity inherent in the entire story of the 'eastern extermination camps.'

6. Russian Engines or German Engines?

Yet we have not reached the end of absurdities. How can one believe, in all seriousness, that for the implementation of such an important government program as that of a 'secret Reich matter' old Russian diesel engines would have been used?[372] Where did the SS intend to procure spare parts for repairs when the inevitable wear and tear occurred?

But there is an even more basic problem. In Chapter II we spoke of the electric power supply of Treblinka, which consisted of an engine and an electric generator driven by it. We have further seen how, according to the witness Wiernik, the alleged gas chambers were operated by the exhaust gases of this engine.

Aside from the ludicrousness of a mass killing by means of diesel exhaust gases, just how plausible it is is shown by Friedrich Berg:[373]

> *"The only way to realistically impose a significant load on any engine is by coupling to the engine some kind of brake dynamometer or other load, such as a generator with an electrical load, a fan, pump, or the like."*

According to the witness Wiernik, it was the engine that supplied Treblinka's electric power that was used for the gassings there. This engine was thus doubly important; first, because it had to produce carbon monoxide for the gassings, and second, because it generated the electrical energy indispensable for the needs of the camp. In fulfilling the second function, the engine had to be in operation 24 hours every day. How can one conceive of the notion that the RSHA and the *SS-WVHA* could have been satisfied with a Russian engine for the fulfillment of this double function? The whole story sounds all the sillier in view of the fact that the emergency electric supply of the Auschwitz Camp had been equipped with a new German diesel engine since November 1940. The firm of Georg Grabarz compiled a detailed cost estimate, of which we have photocopied the first page, for the local SS Central Construction Office.[374] The costs for the engine amounted to 28,140 RM, that for the generator 24,464 RM, and the entire costs, including accessories and costs of transport, 56,218 RM.[375]

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[372] Auerbach mentions a "Russian tank engine" (*op. cit.* (note 29), p. 49) for Treblinka. Wiernik speaks of a "dismantled Soviet tank" (in A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 157). According to Gerstein, in Bełżec the exhaust gases "from an old Russian diesel engine" were used (PS-2170, p. 3).

[373] F. P. Berg, *op. cit.* (note 98), p. 455.

[374] See Document 21 in the Appendix.

[375] About $500,000 in present value.

7. Gas Chambers or Asphyxiation Chambers?

According to the verdict of the Düsseldorf Court of Assizes of September 3, 1965, already cited, the gas chambers of the first killing installation measured 4 m × 4 m × 2.60 m each, thus 16 m^2 and 41.6 m^3, and could each hold 200 to 350 people. Those of the second killing installation were 8 m × 4 m × 2 m, thus 32 m^2 and 64 m^3 in size, and could accommodate 400 to 700 persons.[376]

The time period, during which one can be enclosed in a gas-tight air-raid shelter (equipped with neither ventilation nor an air-exchange system) without danger to health and life, can be calculated on the basis of the following equation:

$$t = v/20n\ (10–0.4) = 0.48\ (v/n)$$

in which t stands for the time spent in the shelter, v for the volume of the room in cubic meters, n is the number of occupants of the room. The constant 20 designates the number of liters of carbon dioxide exhaled by a person within an hour, and 0.4 refers to the liters of carbon dioxide present per cubic meter of air. Lastly, 10 is the highest possible permissible concentration of carbon dioxide (per m^3) in the shelter.

By using this equation, the suffocation of the occupants of the shelter can be avoided. It is well known that an adult normally exhales 4% carbon dioxide (CO_2). Though this gas is not toxic, a concentration beyond a certain point leads to death through asphyxiation. On average, a standing adult breathes eight liters of air per minute and in doing so uses 0.360 liters of oxygen; during slow walking, however, his consumption of oxygen climbs to 0.65 liters per minute, and the air exhaled during the same period is increased to 14 liters. Since in respiration four parts of carbon dioxide are produced for 5 parts of oxygen, the person in the first instance produces

– (0.36 × 4/5 =) 0.288 liters of carbon dioxide per minute,

and in the second case

– (0.65 × 4/5 =) 0.520 liters of carbon dioxide per minute.[377]

In regard to the effects of carbon dioxide upon people in relation to its concentration, two specialists, Flury and Zernik, write:[378]

> *"With 8-10%, corresponding to 144-180 mg/liter, loss of consciousness rapidly ensues and death follows from cessation of breathing with cyanosis. Convulsions are insignificant or entirely absent. The heart continues to beat after cessation of breathing. A concentration of 20%, or approximately 360 mg/liter, leads within a few seconds to complete paralysis of the vital centers."*

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[376] This corresponds up to 22 persons per square meter – an absolute impossibility!

[377] F. Flury and F. Zernik, *Schädliche Gase, Nebel, Rauch- und Staubarten*, Publishing House of Julius Springer, Berlin 1931, pp. 26f., 29.

[378] *Ibid*., p. 219.

Thus a carbon dioxide concentration of 10% leads to death in a few minutes, while at the same time the oxygen content has fallen to 8.5% (21%–[10%×(5÷4)]). In what time period would there have been such a concentration in the alleged gas chambers of Treblinka?

Since there were also children among the alleged victims – perhaps a third of the entire number[379] – and since the rate of respiration of the hypothetical victims would naturally have been accelerated by excitement, fear, and terror, we start our calculations with the assumption of an average carbon dioxide volume of 0.300 liters per person per minute[380] or 18 liters per person per hour, and with the average weight of each victim assumed to be 55 kg.[381]

Gassing Installation 1:
The number of victims per gas chamber amounted to 200 to 300, thus an average of 275. The volume occupied by the bodies of the victims amounted to ((275×550)÷1,000=) 15.1 m^3; therefore, there was a volume of (41.6–15.1=) 26.5 m^3 of air available. In one minute the victims produced (275×0.3=) approximately 82.5 liters or 0.0825 m^3 carbon dioxide.

The lethal concentration lies at 10% carbon dioxide, which corresponds to (26.5×0.1=) 2.65 m^3 or 2,650 liters. This thus occurs in (2,650÷82.5=) about 32 minutes.

Gassing Installation 2:
The number of victims per gas chamber amounted to 400 to 700, therefore an average of 550. The volume occupied by the bodies of the victims is (550×550÷1,000=) 30.2 m^3; thus a volume of (64–30.2=) approximately 34 m^3 is available. In one minute the victims produce (550×0.3=) approximately 156 liters or 0.165 m^3 carbon dioxide. The lethal concentration of 10% carbon dioxide, that is, (34×0.1=) 3.4 m^3 or 3,400 liters, is consequently attained in (3,400 ÷ 165 =) about 21 minutes.

Conclusion:
According to the witnesses, the victims are supposed to have died from the gas after approximately 30 to 40 minutes, but death from asphyxiation would have already occurred after about 20 or 30 minutes. What good purpose, therefore, was served by the construction of diesel gas chambers?

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[379] According to the statistician Jakob Leszczyński, in the year 1931 children made up 29.6% of the population in Poland. L. Poliakov, J. Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden. Dokumente und Aufsätze*, Arani Verlag, Berlin-Grunewald 1955, p. 231.

[380] This value is based upon the average of the above stated values for the number of respirations: (0.288+0.520)÷2 = approx. 0.400 liters per minute for an adult and (0.4+0.4+0.2)÷3 = approx. 0.300 liters per minute for each person (this assumes that children make up about a third of the total).

[381] We assume a weight of 70 kg for adults and of 25 kg for children, in which the number of the latter is three times less numerous.

But we still are not yet done with the absurdities. Rachel Auerbach writes:[382]

> *"For instance, we had believed for a long time that the final agony in the gas chambers, where most of our relatives and friends were asphyxiated, lasted just 20 to 25 minutes, or half an hour at the most. We have now learned from Jankiel Wiernik's account that the death throes in the new, larger gas chambers (in Treblinka) took longer than it had in the old chambers. In fact, they often went on for as long as one hour because the Russian tank motor which supplied the chambers with exhaust fumes did not put out gas sufficient to fill the larger space and the wider pipes. The output was not sufficiently large and effective."*

This illuminates a gross error in planning, which would have been committed by the SS if these claims were correct. The second gassing installation allegedly had 10 gas chambers with a total volume of 640 m^3, while the first had merely three gas chambers with a total volume of 124.8 m^3. Therefore the volume of the second installation was approximately five times greater than that of the first. In order to kill the victims in the same time as in the first installation, the SS would consequently have had to install five engines in the second instead of a single one.

In his report published in 1944, Wiernik had only written:[383]

> *"The motor which generated the gas in the new chambers was defective, and so the helpless victims had to suffer for hours on end before they died. Satan himself could not have devised a more fiendish torture."*

Quite clearly, Wiernik's claim was pure atrocity propaganda: he wanted to create the notion that death in the new facility was even more cruel than in the old one, because the SS was using a defective engine (or perhaps even had intentionally damaged it!), and on that account the victims had to endure a torture that the Devil incarnate could not have improved on!

If, as Wiernik maintains on the other hand, 10,000 to 12,000 people per day were gassed in Treblinka,[384] – or even, at times, 20,000[385] – then this certainly does not jibe with the inefficiency of the gas chambers as described by the same witness.

Who can seriously believe that the RSHA, after its decision to change the killing system of the first gassing facility of Treblinka because it had proven too inefficient (as was likewise the case with Bełżec and Sobibór), would have allowed a new installation to be built, which functioned on the same system but was even less efficient? As always in such cases, the stupidity lies not with the SS, but rather with the eyewitnesses.

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[382] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 49.
[383] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 164; J. Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 164), p. 20.
[384] *Ibid*., p. 16.
[385] *Ibid*., p. 21.

8. The Problem of Air Pressure in Gas Chambers

According to the official historiography, the gas chambers possessed no vent for removal of gas. As we have seen in Section 2, the Soviet Examining Judge Jurowski drew in an opening for gas outflow in the ceiling in both of his drawings of the gas chambers of Treblinka. In 1947, Elias Rosenberg stated for the record:[386]

> *"A small window, sealed air-tight, was fitted to the ceiling, which could not be opened and through which the man who regulated the gas supply was able to observe."*

This small window, therefore, had nothing to do with any system for gas removal. But such a window, or, to be more exact, such an opening, for the purging of the air-gas mixture would have been absolutely indispensable for a mass killing employing the exhaust gases of a powerful engine. Graduate engineer Arnulf Neumaier emphasizes that diesel engines emit their combustion gases with a pressure of 0.5 atmospheres (which corresponds to 500 g/cm^2), and explains:[387]

> *"*[…] *this means that there would have been a force equivalent to the weight of 5 metric tons pushing outward against each square meter of surface area."*

In the first installation, such a pressure would have exerted a force corresponding to the weight of 80 metric tons upon the ceiling of each chamber, of 52 metric tons on each of the walls, of 8.1 metric tons upon the entrance door and of 22.5 metric tons upon the door serving for the removal of the bodies. If the masonry of the walls had withstood this powerful pressure, then the engine, approaching a state of equilibrium between the pressure of the interior of the chambers and the pressure of the engine exhaust gases, would have broken down.

When would this equilibrium have been reached? The gas pressure in a hermetically sealed container or room doubles if the amount of gas in it is doubled (provided the temperature is constant).

A diesel engine works like a compressor. Within the parameters of the data given previously, an engine of 38,860 cubic centimeters (38.86 liters) at 2,000 RPM emits 38.86 m^3 of gas per minute with an outlet pressure of 0.5 atmospheres.

The effective air volume amounts to (26.5×3=) 79.5 m^3 in the first and (34×10=) 340 m^3 in the second installation. Under these conditions, a pressure of 0.5 atmospheres would be attained if a volume of exhaust gas had been blown into the rooms that corresponded to half of their effective volume, therefore (79.5÷2=) 39.75 m^3 in the first and (340÷2 =) 170 m^3 in the second

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386 E. Rosenberg, *op. cit.* (note 187), p. 136 (p. 4 of the report).
387 A. Neumaier, *op. cit.* (note 219), p. 485.

installation. This would have taken (38.25÷38.86=) less than a minute in the first installation, but (170÷38.86=) a little more than four minutes in the second.

If the alleged gas chambers were actually hermetically sealed, the gassing procedure under the circumstances described by the witnesses would therefore have come to a standstill through breakdown of the engine after scarcely a minute in the first facility, and after a little over four minutes in the second facility, if the walls of the building had not already collapsed. But probably the doors would not have withstood the pressure and been blown off their hinges.

9. The Burning of Bodies: The Mass Graves

a. Number and Size of the Graves

According to official historiography, about 860,000 of the 870,000 Treblinka victims were buried before their cremation.[388]

On the basis of his investigations of the mass graves of Hamburg (Anglo-American terror-bombardment of July 1943), Katyn (Soviet mass murder of Polish officers, 1940) and Bergen-Belsen (mass deaths from typhus in spring 1945), John Ball came to the conclusion that one could assume a maximum of six bodies per cubic meter in a mass grave.[389] This number seems quite high if one keeps in mind that in Treblinka I, the work camp, the Soviets found 105 bodies in a grave with an effective volume of 75 m^3 – therefore 1.4 bodies per cubic meter, and that the medical expert Piotrowski, in his first calculation of the content of the mass graves, set a figure of six bodies per 2 cubic meters, thus 3 bodies per cubic meter, half the density proposed by Ball.[390] However, in order to take into account the hypothetical existence of children as comprising one-third of the victims, we assume a density of a maximum of 8 bodies per cubic meter.

How many graves were there, and how large were they? The Düsseldorf Court of Assizes conceded at the trial of 1964-1965 that it had discovered no accurate information about this. In its verdict it says:[391]

> *"The details determined in the main trial concerning the number and size of the body pits likewise differ very widely from one another. Nevertheless, one can form an idea of the extent of the pits when one hears that, accord-*

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[388] According to Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 396, 7,600 people were gassed in August 1943 and directly cremated without an intervening period of burial.

[389] John Ball, in: Germar Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 80), p. 264.

[390] See Chapter III. In the two other mass graves, the number of bodies per cubic meter was even lower.

[391] A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 204f.

ing to the statement of defendant S., one of the pits contained no less than approximately 80,000 corpses."

But according to the witness E. Rosenberg, who is the sole person to give 'exact' details, the mass graves measured 120 m × 15 m × 6 m,[392] which, if one assumes a top layer of 0.5 m, gives an effective volume of (120×15×5.5=) 9,900 m^3. Consequently, each grave could contain (9,900×8=) 79,200 bodies, which agrees almost exactly with the comment above of the Düsseldorf Court.

In accordance with this, if 860,000 bodies were really buried in Treblinka before their cremation, there must have been (860,000÷79,200=) 11 graves of this size, the total surface area of which amounted to (120 × 15 × 11 =) 19,800 m^2.

b. Site of the Mass Graves

According to the plan of Treblinka produced at the Düsseldorf trial of 1964-1965, the mass graves were located without exception inside of 'Camp II,' where there were, besides, the following facilities: the old gassing installation, the new gassing installation, the two cremation grates and the barracks for the Jewish *Sonderkommandos*. But, as pointed out in Chapter II, the whole of 'Camp II' had an area much smaller than the theoretical area of the graves, that is, 14,000 m^2.

'Camp II' had the shape of an irregular quadrilateral; its sides measured 188, 110, 174, and 52 meters. It therefore could theoretically accommodate merely three graves of the dimensions given above. Due to the presence of the five facilities mentioned, however, of which three (the two cremation grates and the new gassing installation) were allegedly lined up with one another on an east-west axis, 'Camp II' could barely have contained a single one such mass grave for 79,200 bodies. Where, then, were the remaining 780,800 bodies buried?

In the plan mentioned, just five mass graves are drawn in 'Camp II,' which further complicates things, since each grave would then have to have had a far greater area than stated above.

c. The Excavated Earth

In excavating a pit or a grave, the extract has a volume which is normally around 10 to 25% greater than the volume of the excavated pit itself.[393] From each of the 11 mass graves of Treblinka, (120×15×6=) 1,088 cubic meters of earth would have been excavated, thus in all (10,800×11=) 118,800 cubic meters. If we set the minimum of 10 % for the additional volume of the extracted earth, then the latter would have had a volume of (118,800×1.1=) approx.

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[392] E. Rosenberg, *op. cit.* (note 187), p. 137 (p. 5 of the report).

[393] G. Colombo, *Manuale dell'ingegnere civile e industriale*, Enrico Hoepli Editore, Milan 1926, p. 237.

130,700 cubic meters. For purposes of illustration, let it be said that this enormous quantity of earth would have been able to cover the entire surface area of the Treblinka II camp with a layer nearly one meter high! If this mass were arranged in the form of a pile 6 m high, with sides each having an angle of 30 degrees and a width of 10 m, then its length would have amounted to (130,700÷30≅) 4.4 kilometers, covering some 44,000 m^2! If one constructed such a pile of soil next to each grave, then each pile would be some 390 m long each!

d. A Comparison with the Mass Graves of Treblinka I

As shown in Chapter III, in the year 1944 the Soviets found three mass graves in the proximity of Treblinka I, and the Poles a further 41 in 1946. The latter possessed a total area of 1,607 m^2. Not a single mass grave was discovered on the camp area itself, although this had a greater area than Treblinka II: approximately 18 hectares.[394]

The graves were located in the forest of Maliszewa, about 500 m away from the camp. This was due to obvious considerations of hygiene and sanitation.

The pollution of water, air, and soil by decomposing corpses had been proven scientifically a long time before the 1940s. Studies performed in the nineteenth century had shown that the ground water in the vicinity of cemeteries was often so severely contaminated that the water in the wells was putrid, murky, and permeated by organic substances. In 1878, F. Selmi, Professor of Pharmaceutical and Toxicological Chemistry at the University of Bologna, discovered that in addition to ammonia, sulfuric acid, carbonic acid, and gaseous hydrocarbons, a toxic alkaloid is also generated through the decomposition of corpses, which he named 'ptomaine.' At about the same time, other scientists proved that cadavers develop yet another volatile toxic substance, 'sepsin.' Moreover, it had already long been experimentally proven that many pathogenic microorganisms in the soil – the cause of typhus fever being among them – are very capable of resisting atmospheric effects.[395] In Treblinka, according to S. Rajzman, typhus fever constituted "the main plague."[396]

The water supply of the camp was secured by wells. On the plan of Treblinka drawn by Moszek Laks and Maniek Płatkiewicz,[397] four wells can be recognized, one for the German guard unit, one for the Ukrainian guard unit, one for the Jewish prisoners, and a fourth, which was surely located in 'Camp

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[394] S. Wojtczak, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 120.

[395] Luigi Maccone, *Storia documentata della cremazione presso i popoli antichi ed i moderni con particolare riferimento all' igiene*, Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafichi, Bologna 1932, Part Three, Chapter II, "Infezioni e cimiteri," pp. 148-157; M. Pauly, *Die Feuerbestattung*, Leipzig 1904, pp. 21-25.

[396] USSR-337. GARF, 7445-2-12, p. 239.

[397] See Document 14 in the Appendix.

II.' There can therefore be no doubt that hundreds of thousands of bodies allegedly buried in 'Camp II' would have completely poisoned the ground water, which supplied the wells. Yet not a single witness mentions a thing about this critical problem.

e. The Excavators of Treblinka

According to the official version of history, the existence of huge mass graves is confirmed by the presence of three excavators in the camp, which at first are supposed to have been employed for the excavation of the graves and later for exhuming the corpses. Two photos are often published in support of this claim, in which excavators – allegedly at a location in Treblinka II – can be recognized. One of these photos is reproduced in Arad's book with the caption:[398]

> *"An excavator used in Treblinka to remove dead bodies to be burned, and the SS men who operated the excavator."*

The other, better-known photograph appeared, inter alia, in the work of Gitta Sereny, where the caption claims that the excavator served to transport the corpses out of the trenches onto the grates.[399] This photo was also published in the book *The Good Old Days* with the caption:[400]

> *"Excavator used for corpses in Treblinka."*

Samuel Willenberg's book contains a picture of said excavator in action, dumping a load of – soil. The picture bears the caption:[401]

> *"Crane lifting corpses for cremation. Photographed by SS man Kurt Franz, nicknamed 'Lalka' (Doll)."*

R. Czarkowski has published the same snapshot with the comment "Excavator for the excavation of the graves for the victims."[402] Furthermore, it is supposed to follow from German documents – never published, however – that on June 29, 1943, an excavator from Treblinka was sent to the Adam Lamczak firm in Berlin; two more excavators were supposedly shipped to Lublin or Poniatowa or Trawniki in November 1943 (the exact date and exact place of destination are not named).[403] It apparently occurred to nobody that in reality these excavators could have been stationed in Treblinka I, where they found employment in the mining of gravel in the pit there. The sole 'proof' for the presence of these machines in Treblinka II is two drawings produced by S.

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[398] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 95.
[399] G. Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, McGraw-Hill, New York 1974, photo on unnumbered page.
[400] Ernst Klee, Willi Dreßen, Volker Rieß, *The Good Old Days*, New York: Free Press, 1991, p. 246.
[401] S. Willenberg, *Surviving…*, *op. cit.* (note 82), Plate 4, unnumbered page.
[402] R. Czarkowski, *op. cit.* (note 75), photo on unnumbered page.
[403] S. Wojtczak, *op. cit.* (note 60), pp. 149f.

Willenberg in the 1980s, in which one sees a part of the camp with an excavator in the background![404]

10. Early Cremations

Arad describes the early history of the alleged burning of bodies in Treblinka as follows:[405]

> *"During Himmler's visit to the camp at the end of February/beginning of March 1943, he was surprised to find that in Treblinka the corpses of over 700,000 Jews who had been killed there had not yet been cremated. The very fact that the cremation began immediately after his visit makes it more than possible that Himmler, who was very sensitive about the erasure of the crimes committed by Nazi Germany, personally ordered the cremating of the corpses there. A cremation site was erected for this purpose in the extermination area of the camp."*

Here Arad is simply repeating what Łukaszkiewicz had written in 1945:[406]

> *"In February or March 1943, Himmler visited the camp (witnesses: Poswolski, Stanisław Kon, Wiernik, Kudlik, Reisszmann* [sic]. *After this visit the bodies were cremated in mass."*

This claim is untenable just as much from the standpoint of the witness testimony as it is historically invalid. Rajzman had stated in particular at his first interrogation on September 26, 1944:[407]

> *"In the first months – as I was told – the bodies were buried and covered with a layer of earth, at which point the dentists extracted the gold teeth as soon as the bodies were dragged out of the chambers.*
>
> *At my arrival in the camp, the bodies were being burned in primitive furnaces, the pyres blazed day and night. Clouds of smoke covered the sky over the camp to the point that we entered into a constant zone of darkness."*

Rajzman came to Treblinka on September 27, 1942, which means that the cremation of bodies must have already begun in September of that year and not first in March 1943.

On the other hand, the story of the Himmler visit to Treblinka is devoid of any sort of historical basis and is not even supported by a vague documentary reference. It is a simple invention of the witnesses in order to make their tales of enormous cremations in Treblinka appear credible, which tales are then

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[404] S. Willenberg, *Revolt*…, *op. cit.* (note 82), drawings on unnumbered pages.
[405] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), pp. 173f.
[406] USSR-344. GARF, 7445-2-126, p. 320a (p. 4 of the report).
[407] USSR-337. GARF, 7445-2-126, p. 242.

supposed to lend credibility to their description of a gigantic mass extermination in the camp. But historically viewed it is all sheer nonsense.

According to official historiography, Himmler, at a point in time when Auschwitz, allegedly the largest of the German 'extermination camps,' began its murderous activity, had not yet thought of building crematoria for the incineration of corpses: the victims of the so-called 'bunkers' of Birkenau are supposed to have simply been buried in mass graves, which had been dug in the '*Birkenwald'* (birch forest). Himmler is supposed to have ordered the cremation of bodies in Auschwitz after his second visit there on July 17 and 18, 1942.[408] As a result of this alleged Himmler order, the incineration of the bodies under the open sky is supposed to have begun on September 21, 1942.[409]

But during the month before his visit to Auschwitz, Himmler is supposed to have ordered the *SS-Standartenführer* Paul Blobel, through the chief of the Gestapo, Heinrich Müller, to eradicate all traces of the mass graves:[410]

> *"In June 1942 SS-Gruppenführer Müller, chief of the Gestapo, charged SS-Standartenführer Blobel with removing all traces of the mass executions carried out in the east by the Einsatzgruppen. This order was considered a state secret, and Blobel was instructed to refrain from any written correspondence on the subject. The operation was given the code name 'Sonderaktion (special operation) 1005.'"*[411]

Given the above, it is incomprehensible that corpses were buried in Auschwitz up until September 20, 1942, and in Treblinka up to March 1943; it is similarly inexplicable that cremations in Sobibór are supposed to have begun in the summer of 1942,[412] those in Bełżec in the middle of December 1942,[413] and those in Treblinka in March 1943.

Or, to put it differently, we understand all too well: the witnesses of the different camps did not manage to get together to agree on an identical starting date for Himmler's decision to eradicate all traces by cremation!

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[408] Franciszek Piper, "Gas Chambers and Crematoria," in: Israel Gutman, Michael Berenbaum (eds.), *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1994, p. 163.
[409] D. Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939-1945*, H. Holt, New York 1990, p. 242.
[410] E. Kogon *et al.* (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 65), p. 187.
[411] We will return to this claim in Chapter VII.
[412] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 171.
[413] *Ibid*., p. 172.

11. Cremation Facility

Łukaszkiewicz writes:[414]

> *"In Treblinka there were no crematoria in the form of ovens, only primitive facilities in the form of grates."*

Had Treblinka been a 'pure extermination camp,' then it would have been the sheerest insanity *not* to construct crematoria. All important concentration camps – Dachau, Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Flossenbürg, Neuengamme, Groß-Rosen, Niederhagen, Ravensbrück – were equipped with stationary or mobile crematorium furnaces. Lublin/Majdanek and Auschwitz-Birkenau, which supposedly functioned simultaneously as concentration and extermination camps, possessed several crematoria: the former camp had two of them with seven muffles altogether,[415] the latter, five crematoria with a total of 52 muffles (although not all functioning in the same time period).[416] Why did Himmler not provide for the building of even a single furnace for an alleged *pure* extermination camp?

It gets even crazier: on December 4, 1941, Himmler himself had ordered through the SS Main Office for Budget and Buildings "4 pieces of Topf 4-muffled double cremation furnaces" from the Topf firm in Erfurt for the White Russian city of Mogilev, which was then under German military administration[417] and where the transit camp for POWs No. 185 under the command of Major Wittmer was located.[418] But on December 30, 1941, merely half a furnace (four muffles) was shipped to Mogilev; two others were then installed in crematoria IV and V of Auschwitz-Birkenau, and 1½ more ovens (12 muffles) remained temporarily in storage at the Topf firm at Himmler's disposal.[419] On August 16, 1943, the SS Administrator at the Senior SS and Police Chief's office in the General Gouvernement delivered a memo to all Central Construction Offices of the General Gouvernement (occupied Poland) as well as to the Construction Office of Radom, in which they were informed that Office CIII of the *SS-WVHA* had available "1½ cremation furnaces = 12 muffles" and asked that notification be given by September 1, if the officials named required them.[420] We know only the response of the construction director of Trawniki, a subcamp to Majdanek, who wrote:[421]

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[414] USSR-344. GARF, 7445-2-126, p. 321 (p. 5 of the report).
[415] See J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 270), Chapter V.
[416] See C. Mattogno, "The Cremation Furnaces of Auschwitz" in: G. Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 80), pp. 367-407.
[417] Letter from the Head Office of Budget and Construction to the Topf firm, dated December 4, 1941, RGVA, 501-1-328, pp. 347f.
[418] Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, Hamburger Edition, Hamburg 1999, p. 510.
[419] Letter of the Topf firm to the Central Construction Office unit of Auschwitz, RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 43-45.
[420] WAPL, Central Construction Office, 268, p, 132.
[421] WAPL, Central Construction Office, 268, p. 147.

> *"There is no crematorium in the local camp. This situation has repeatedly been the cause of complaints. The installation of a crematorium would be urgently needed."*

Because there had been confusion about payments of invoices from the Topf firm, the SS Administrator of Group C/Construction also contacted the office of the Senior SS and Police Chief of Central Russia, since the ordering of the "4 pieces of Topf 4-muffled double cremation furnaces" was intended for the Construction Inspection Office of Central Russia.[422]

This affair is quite typical. Above all, it allows us to see that as early as December 1941 Himmler had ordered the installation of crematorium furnaces in one camp, which was located in the occupied territories under military administration. It also shows that the highest SS authorities of the General Gouvernement and of the Soviet territories under military administration were interested in the installation of crematorium furnaces. Next, it proves that the SS work camp Trawniki, in which never more than 10,000 prisoners were interned, had several times requested the construction of a crematorium, but such a request was never made for Treblinka, Bełżec, or Sobibór, where such a thing would have been much more necessary, provided the official history is correct. Finally, not even the SS Administrator at the Senior SS and Police Chief's office in the General Gouvernement had ever ordered cremation furnaces for the three last-named camps, for he could have immediately received the 12 muffles that awaited their buyer in storage at the Topf firm.

Let us summarize: By December 1941, the problem of cremating corpses had emerged in the concentration and prisoner-of-war camps. Crematoria were built in Mogilev, in Majdanek, and in all the larger concentration camps, but not in the three allegedly pure extermination camps!

The SS paid the sum of 1,400,000 RM for the four crematoria of Birkenau,[423] but for crematoria in the camps allegedly devoted exclusively to the extermination of Jews, the SS spent not a single penny, although exterminating the Jews is supposed to have been one of the main goals, if not *the* main goal, of NS policy!

Can anyone really take such nonsense seriously?

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[422] Letter of the SS Administrator of June 2, 1943 to the *Bauinspektion* (Construction Inspection Office) of the Waffen-SS and Police Reich-East, RGVA, 502-1-314, pp. 36-36a.

[423] Inventory of the building project of the war prisoner camp Auschwitz of October 28, 1942, VHA, Foundation OT 31 (2) 8; present value (2002) approximately $12.5 million.

12. Cremation

a. Complexity of the Problem

The matter of the missing crematoria is all the more grotesque in that the problem of cremating the corpses would have been tremendous, if the official version of Treblinka corresponded to the facts. The American Jewish historian Konnilyn G. Feig comments the following in this regard:[424]

> *"The incredible complexity of the mass-grave problem frustrated the Germans. Their dismay was legitimate. Treblinka's soil contained 700,000 bodies – a volume of 69,000 cubic meters weighing 35,000 tons, the same as a medium size battleship. Even if 1,000 bodies could be burned each day, 700 days would elapse before Himmler's order had been obeyed.*
>
> *Franz and Lalka* [nickname of an SS officer] *tried many approaches to the problem. They poured buckets of gasoline on the bodies in one ditch – producing huge flames and slightly singed corpses. They piled one hundred bodies into wide but shallow ditches, and dumped in gasoline again. The resulting fire did not destroy the corpses. They experimented with varying sizes of piles and quantities of gasoline – to no avail. At the end of the first testing period they concluded that Himmler's request would take 140 years to fulfill.*
>
> *As a second experiment, they built huge pyres – alternating bodies and wood and soaking the whole with gasoline. The fire destroyed the bodies but the test could not be repeated, for it was wartime and gasoline and tree trunks were not available in the quantities necessary to burn 700,000 corpses."*

Before we continue, we must correct the figures given here. If 700,000 bodies weighed 35,000 tons, then the average weight of a body was 50 kg and it occupied a volume of approximately 0.05 m^3; thus, the entire volume was 35,000 m^3 and not 69,000 m^3.

In our calculations, we are assuming the number of bodies to be 870,000 as given by Arad and the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust,* and assume the average weight to be 45 kg, since the corpses would have been buried for many months, leading to a loss of weight by desiccation. Thus, the total weight of the bodies would have amounted to 39,150,000 kg and the volume occupied by them would have been 39,150 m^3.

Feig goes on to say:[425]

> *"Finally, the planners were forced to bring an expert, Herbert Floss.* […] *Floss had the prisoners erect four cement pillars, 76 centimeters high, forming a rectangle 19 meters long and 1 meter wide. On top they laid*

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[424] Konnilyn G. Feig, *Hitler's Death Camps. The Sanity of Madness*, Holmes & Meier Publishers, New York-London 1981, pp. 306f.

[425] *Ibid*., p. 307.

> *railroad rails, and on the rails they piled several hundred bodies. Inmates called the two huge iron pyres 'Roasts'. A witness suggested that primitive grills could hold 2,600 bodies."*

In order to increase the efficiency of the grates, Floss introduced an important innovation. As Jean-François Steiner, whom Feig quotes, claims, during his experiments Floss had discovered, in particular, that

> *"the old bodies burned better than the new ones, the fat ones better than the thin ones, the women better than the men, and the children not as well as the women but better than the men."*

Therefore, "it was evident that the ideal body was the old body of a fat woman," and Floss had the bodies distributed according to these criteria.[425]

Feig is thus not embarrassed to repeat the crackpot claims of some witnesses that women's bodies burned spontaneously and served as fuel for the cremation of the rest of the bodies.[426] Hardly less ridiculous is the claim that the bodies of old men burn better than those of young men. In actuality, the truth is exactly the opposite: in the bodies of men weakened by age the combustible materials – fats and proteins – are already partly used up by the process of aging.

But this is essentially a secondary issue. The main problem lies in the primitiveness of the burning technique. Can anyone in possession of his senses actually accept the scenario that the commandant of Treblinka, disregarding the experiences with cremation accumulated by the SS in Auschwitz, engaged in amateurish experiments while executing an order personally issued by Himmler himself, as though the cremation of 870,000 were a local problem, to be solved by makeshift methods?

No less abstruse is the notion that Himmler, who had at his disposal the best German engineers and technicians in the field of cremation – those of the firm of J.A. Topf & Söhne (Erfurt), Hans Kori (Berlin) and Didier Werke (Berlin), who had supplied the crematoria furnaces to all the German concentration camps – sent a nobody by the name of Herbert Floss to Treblinka!

b. Number and Structure of the Cremation Facilities

The technique of cremation employed in Treblinka was described as follows in the verdict of the Düsseldorf Court of Assizes at the trial of 1964-1965:[427]

> *"After the most diverse cremation attempts had been employed for this purpose, a large cremation facility was constructed. It consisted of a concrete base approximately 70 cm thick, upon which 5 to 6 railroad rails of perhaps 25 to 30 m length lay at small intervals. Under the rails burned a fire, while 2,000 to 3,000 of the bodies of the Jews killed in the gas chambers were loaded on the grate and then burned. When it was seen that this*

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[426] For this see A. Neumaier, *op. cit.* (note 219), pp. 490-492.
[427] A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 205.

> *system worked, the corpses, which had been put into the body pits in the preceding months, were also retrieved, again with the help of a large excavator, and then likewise incinerated in the manner described."*

According to the plan Jankiel Wiernik drew in 1945, as well as that presented at the trial in Düsseldorf,[428] two such cremation facilities were in fact constructed. The cremation is supposed to have taken place between April and the end of July 1943,[429] so that nearly all 860,000 bodies are supposed to have been incinerated within 122 days, *i.e.* 7,000 per day on two grates, or 3,500 per day per grate.

How large was such a grate? In the version of Wiernik's work *One Year in Treblinka,* published by A. Donat, one reads:[430]

> *"This is the way in which he*[431] *got the Inferno started: He put into operation an excavator which could dig up 3,000 corpses at one time. A fire grate made from railroad tracks was placed on concrete foundations 100 to 150 meters in length. The workers piled the corpses on the grate and set them on fire."*

The particulars given here are clearly the fruit of a later insertion, since the American English translation of Wiernik's 1944 account simply reads:[432]

> *"This is the way he got the hell started. He put a machine for exhuming the corpses into operation, which could, in one motion, dig up many, many dead bodies. A fire grate made of railway ties was laid out on cement foundations, and workmen had to pile the corpses on the grating and set them on fire."*

If one takes into consideration the fact that 3,000 bodies take up a volume of about (3,000×0.045 =) 135 m^3, the claim, according to which the shovel of the excavator could be loaded with 3,000 bodies at a time, will evoke only amusement. The length of the grate (100 to 150 m) contradicts the trial documents. According to Arad, the grate was 30 m wide,[433] but this too contradicts the verdict of the Düsseldorf Court of Assizes, according to which the grate consisted of "5 to 6 train rails of about 25 to 30 m in length." Since emaciated bodies, which easily disintegrated, were burned on both grates, the gap between two rails had to be small and could at most be permitted to amount to 50 to 60 cm, so that one can assume a width of the grate of approximately three meters. The width given by Feig – one meter – is obviously impossible.

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[428] See Documents 5 and 12 in the Appendix.

[429] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 177. According to Arad, 7600 people were gassed and cremated in Treblinka in August 1943.

[430] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 170f.

[431] An *Oberscharführer* not mentioned by name, who is probably supposed to be the phantom figure of Herbert Floss.

[432] J. Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 164), p. 29.

[433] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 174.

Thus, the two grates cannot have been larger than 30 × 3 × 0.76 m each. As already explained, each grate must have burned 3,500 bodies every single day for 122 days. Let us now examine the consequences of this.

c. Arrangement of the Corpses on the Cremation Grates

The surface area of one grate amounted to 90 m^2. In view of its structure, the bodies could only be placed crosswise on it; it is therefore to be assumed that for one meter of length of the grate – which corresponds to three square meters – four bodies can be placed, two respectively to the right and left of the central axis. We are assuming, however, for each body a theoretical average surface area of the size of a rectangle of 1.75 m × 0.50 m, which also includes the necessary intervening space for the passage of the products of combustion. On the entire grate, then, there is space for a layer of (4 × 30 =) 120 bodies. If we start with a height of 30 cm per layer of bodies, and if one placed 3,500 bodies at the same time on the grate, the result would be (3,500÷120=) 29 layers of bodies with a total height of (29×0.3=) 8.7 m!

According to the witness Henryk Reichmann, five to six grates were built, each of which was able to accommodate 2,500 bodies at a time.[434] The witness Szyja Warszawski specified that each grate measured 10 m × 4 m.[435] It follows from this that one could accommodate a layer of 46 bodies on each grate, and those 2,500 bodies – picture this – would result in 54 layers, or a hill of bodies 16 m high!

Even if the SS had managed the feat of piling up 29 or even 54 layers of bodies on the grate, the train rails would have bent under the load, as well as from the heat, and the body-mountain would have soon caved in.

d. Wood Requirement

The space available beneath the grate was (0.76 m × 90 m^2 =) 68.4 m^3. The weight of a cubic meter of normally stacked firewood lies between 340 and 450 kg. Let us assume the highest value here; then (68.4×450 =) 30,780 kg of wood can fit in the 68.4 m^3. Arnulf Neumaier refers to an article, which appeared in the November 27, 1986, *Schenectady* [New York] *Gazette*, according to which 6,433 tons of wood is required for the daily cremation of 21,000 bodies in India, which corresponds to a wood requirement of 306 kg per body.[436] The author of the present chapter (Carlo Mattogno) has performed cremation experiments with animal flesh, which produced the following results:[437]

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[434] Statement of October 9, 1945, in: *Obóz straceń w Treblince*, *op. cit.* (note 38), pp. 31f.
[435] *Ibid*., p. 32.
[436] Arnulf Neumaier, *op. cit.* (note 219), p. 495.
[437] See C. Mattogno, "Combustion Experiments with Flesh and Animal Fat", *The Revisionist* 2(1) (2004), pp. 64-72.

– Quantity of wood needed for the cremation of one kilogram of animal flesh: 3.5 kg of seasoned wood (plus 0.1 liter of ethyl alcohol).
– Time required for the incineration of one kilogram of animal flesh: approximately 6 minutes.
– Amount of wood burned per square meter per one hour (until flames extinguish): approximately 80 kg.
– Wood ashes resulting: approximately 8% of the total weight.
– Specific gravity of wood ashes: approximately 0.34 g/cm^3.

On the basis of this data one can calculate that the cremation of one body of 45 kg requires approximately 160 kg of seasoned wood. Consequently, in order to incinerate 3,500 bodies, (3,500×160=) 560,000 kg of wood is necessary, but there was room for merely 30.780 kg under the grate, therefore one seventh of that required. Therefore, no more than (30,780÷3,500=) 8.8 kg of wood would have been allotted to one body, a ridiculously insufficient amount.

Let us even suppose that it were feasible in some way or other to constantly pack new wood under the grate. In what period of time would the 560,000 kg of wood have been consumed by burning?

In fires with fixed grate and more natural ventilation, 150 to 190 kg of seasoned, chopped wood can be burned per square meter of grate per hour.[438] But this applies only to an actual cremation apparatus with burning chamber, grate, a more adjustable air supply for burning, and chimney. With a pyre in the open, these values decline markedly. We therefore assume a sustainable value of 80 kg per square meter in our experiment.

This means that (90×80=) 7,200 kg of wood could be burned under the pile of bodies in one hour. In order to burn the 560,000 kg of wood necessary for incineration of the bodies, (560,000÷7,200=) approximately 78 hours is required, thus more than three days. If one adds the time needed for cooling down of the pyre, one cremation session can take place every five days. Therefore, the 122 cremation sessions of 7,000 bodies each – the prerequisite for the disposal of 860,000 bodies using two grates – requires a time period of (122×5=) 610 days.

The burning time computed here corresponds to (78÷29=) 2.5 hours per layer of bodies. In the case of a pyre with 29 layers of bodies, however, this time period is not sufficient, as a comparison with the crematorium furnace of the Gorini type shows: with this furnace from the nineteenth century, the body lay upon a grate, beneath which a wood fire of 100 to 150 kg burned. With this type of furnace, a cremation lasted from one-and-a-half to two hours.[439]

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[438] *Enciclopedia Curcio di Scienza e Tecnica*, Curcio Editore, Rome 1973, Vol. 5, p. 1916.
[439] G. Pini, *La crémation en Italie et à l'étranger de 1774 à nos jours*, Ulrico Hoepli, Milan 1885, p. 151. In the Brunetti apparatus, in which the body lay on an iron sheet over a wood fire, the cremation process lasted six whole hours; *ibid*., p. 132.

In the case of the pyre previously described, the flames and the products of combustion come in direct contact only with the layer of corpses lying directly on the grate and exert their effects upon any layer lying above that with an intensity quickly dwindling toward the vanishing point, so that a burning-time of 2.5 hours per level is totally unrealizable.

Therefore, had the cremation of 860,000 bodies in Treblinka been initiated at the beginning of April 1943, then under the most favorable conditions it would have ended in December 1945, and the Soviets as well as His Honor Judge Łukaszkiewicz would have been able to personally attend the performance!

e. Ashes

If we assume the value determined in our experiment of 160 kg of wood per 45 kg of organic substance, the quantity of wood necessary for the incineration of all bodies amounts to (870,000×160=) 139,200,000 kg or 139,200 metric tons. The ashes from combustion resulting from this would have been (139,200×0.08=) approximately 11,100 metric tons and occupied a volume of (11,100÷0.34 =) approximately 32,600 m^3.

The ashes resulting from cremation of a body weigh approximately 5% of the body weight and have a specific weight of approximately 0.5 g/cm^3.[440] Thus, from 870,000 bodies having an average weight of 45 kg, a mass of (870,000×45×0.05÷1,000=) approximately 1,950 tons of ashes results, which has a volume of (1,950÷0.5=) 3,900 m^3. The total weight of the wood ashes and the ashes from incineration of the bodies therefore amounts to (11,100+1,950=), approximately 13,000 metric tons, which occupy a volume of (32,600+3,900=) 36,500 m^3. To what location was this enormous quantity of ashes brought?

Arad writes:[441]

> *"Ultimately it was decided to dump the ash and bits of bone into the ditches that had previously held the bodies and to cover them with a thick layer of sand and dirt. The ash was scattered in the pits in several layers, interspersed with layers of sand. The top 2 meters of the pit were filled with earth."*

As explained in Section 9, the excavated earth from the pits took up 130,700 m^3 of space. Had the pits really been filled with ashes – a total of (130,700 m^3 + 36,500 m^3 =) 167,200 m^3 – then there would still remain (167,200 - 118,800 =) approximately 48,400 m^3 of earth-ash mixture, which could not have disappeared in smoke: where was this mass put? The claim of the Polish-Soviet

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[440] *Enciclopedia Italiana*, Rome 1949, under the entry "Cremazione," Vol. XI, p. 5. Cf. also W. Huber, *Die Feuerbestattung – ein Postulat kultureller Entwicklung, und das St. Galler Krematorium*, self-published by the author. St. Gallen 1903, p. 17.

[441] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 176.

commission of September 1944, according to whom the single connecting road between Treblinka I and Treblinka II "was covered with cinders and ashes to a height of 7-10 cm," would result in a maximum volume of (3,000m×4m×0.1m =)[442] 1,200 m^3. But Łukaszkiewicz made no statement referring to this, and it would have been a rather stupid attempt to 'eradicate' the traces on the part of the SS men of Treblinka anyway. Finally, this claim contradicts even the witness testimony, according to which the ashes were poured into the mass graves *in toto*. Thus, for example, Wiernik writes:[443]

> *"It was our job to fill in the empty ditches with the ashes of the cremated victims, mixed with soil, in order to obliterate all traces of the mass graves."*

f. Wood Supply

Where did the administration of the Treblinka Camp obtain the 139,200 metric tons of wood required for the incineration of the bodies?

According to the witnesses, trees in the nearby forest were felled for the wood supply. The work was performed by a "*Holzfällerkommando*" (wood-felling unit).[444] But the witness reports are extremely vague about the details, which one can well understand. During a period of 122 days, this party would have had to cut down, saw up and haul into the camp (139,200÷122=) 1,140 tons of wood *every day*! This means that every day it had to fell and saw up at least 760 trees and transport the load on 76 trucks carrying 15 metric tons each. This is decidedly too much, especially if one considers that this wood-felling party is supposed to have consisted, according to R. Glazar, of merely 25 men.[86]

The environs of Treblinka are today overgrown with fir trees. A 50-year-old fir forest yields 496 tons of wood per hectare.[445] For the sake of simplicity, we round this number to 500 tons. In order to obtain 139,200 tons of wood, the SS would therefore have had to cut down (139,200÷500=) 278.4 hectares of forest, which corresponds to 2.7 square kilometers! But such a large deforested zone would naturally have not gone unnoticed by the local Poles, who were questioned by Judge Łukaszkiewicz in his investigations. On the other hand, in the aerial photographs of May and November 1944 a thick forest of approximately 100 hectares can be recognized on the north and east side of the camp, of which at least one hectare is located on the camp area itself.[446] The forest stretches beyond the Wólka Okrąglik-Treblinka road, and borders on it

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[442] Length of the road: 3,000 m. Width of the road: 4 m. Depth of the layer: 0.10 m.
[443] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 181.
[444] *Ibid*., p. 97.
[445] G. Colombo, *Manuale dell'ingegnere civile e industriale*, *op. cit.* (note 393), p. 161.
[446] U. Walendy, "Der Fall Treblinka," *op. cit.* (note 104), p. 33.

for over 2 kilometers. There is no trace of any area where trees have been felled.

The plan drawn by Jankiel Wiernik in 1945 shows a large forested zone in the northeast sector, not far from the two grates in the southeast sector. From whence came, then, the 139,200 tons of wood, the acquisition of which required approximately 92,800 trees?

g. Lack of Documentary Evidence for Cremations

These kinds of enormous pyres, had they actually existed, would obviously have been immediately conspicuous in the area surrounding Treblinka. In reference to this, the witness Kazimierz Skarzyński explained:[447]

> *"The bodies were piled on the rails and burned. The glow of the fire was visible at a distance of 15 km. During the day, black smoke spread. With a strong wind, the smell of burning was still perceptible 30 km away from the camp."*

As pointed out in our introduction, the Treblinka Camp was surrounded by quite a number of villages and hamlets. Within a radius of 10 km were the small towns of Wólka Ogrąlik, Poniatowo, Grady, Treblinka, Małkinia, Zawisty Dzikie, Rostki Wlk., Rytele, Świeckie, Olechny, Wszołki, Jakubiki, Tosie, Kosów Lacki, Dębe, Żochy, Rostki, Maliszewa, Guty, Bojewo, Brzózka, Kołodziaż, Orzełek, Złotki, Prostyń, Kiełczew.

From every single one of these villages and hamlets one would have seen the glow of the flames from Treblinka for 122 days – how does it happen that there is no mention of this in any of the reports of the Polish resistance movement?

And how is it that Soviet reconnaissance planes discovered no trace of this gigantic cremation operation? Jankiel Wiernik supplies the following explanation for this:[62]

> *"Whenever an airplane was sighted overhead, all work was stopped, the corpses were covered with foliage as camouflage against aerial observation."*

This, of course, is outrageous nonsense: in the first place, the planes would already have noticed the smoke from the grates long before they reached the camp, and in the second place, thanks to the great amount of smoke it would have produced, covering the grates with foliage would have been the best method to make them even more visible!

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[447] GARF, 7021-115-11, p. 16.

13. Witness Testimonies about Cremations

That such a mass cremation of many hundreds of thousands of bodies was not a real event follows, finally, from the glaring contradictions between the different eyewitness narratives.

As already mentioned, according to the official version of Treblinka ultimately agreed upon, there were supposedly two cremation grates of 30 m × 3 m in size, which were located on the grounds of the camp and which could each incinerate up to 3,500 bodies. However, in the original version, the witnesses placed the grates in the trenches. According to Szyja Warszawski, the cremation facility, which was incorrectly termed by him a "furnace," was[447]

> *"*[…] *a pit 25 m in length, 20 m wide, and 5-6 m deep, with a grate out of rails on the bottom of the pit, which constituted an air vent."*

Abe Kon stated for the record:[448]

> *"*[The bodies] *were burned in a specially manufactured furnace, which could hold up to 6,000 bodies. The furnace was filled with bodies. These had gasoline and petroleum poured over them and were burned. The cremation lasted up to an hour."*

Apart from Abe Kon himself, the witnesses Hejnoch Brenner and Samuel Rajzman agreed on the following version:[449]

> *"The furnace – that was a large trench 200-300 m long and 5-6 m deep, excavated with an excavator. Three rows of reinforced concrete poles one-and-a-half meters high each were driven into the bottom of the trench. The poles were connected with one another by crossbeams. On these crossbeams were laid rails at intervals of 5 to 7 cm. This was a giant furnace grate. Narrow-gauge tracks were brought up to the edges of the trench."*

This variation was also adopted by Vassili Grossmann, who made his courtesy visit to Treblinka in September 1944 and was able to speak with the witnesses already questioned by the Soviets.[450]

But there would not have been room for such an enormous grate on the property of 'Camp II' of Treblinka II, whose longest side was only 188 m.

Subsequently, in the Polish investigative protocols, the grates migrated in wondrous fashion from out of the pits to the surface of the ground, and their dimensions shrank severely.

According to the witness Henryk Reichmann, five to six grates were installed, each of which was able to hold 2,500 bodies at a time.[451] Witness

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[448] Statement of August 1944, GARF, 7021-115-9, p. 33.

[449] Report of August 24, 1944, GARF, 7021-115-9, p. 109.

[450] W. Grossmann, *Treblinski Ad*, *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 191. Likewise the German version, *Die Hölle von Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 33.

[451] Statement of December 1945, in: Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *Obóz straceń w Treblince*, *op. cit.* (note 38), pp. 31f.

Szyja Warszawski maintained that each grate measured 10 m × 4 m.[452] We have already underlined the fact that under these conditions 46 layers of bodies would have to have been piled on one grate; with 2,500 bodies, 54 layers, or a mountain of bodies 16 m high, would have been necessary!

Jankiel Wiernik writes that each grate – all were presumably located on the camp grounds – could burn 3,000 bodies at one time.[430] The total capacity of all grates amounted, according to him, to 10,000 to 12,000 bodies.[453] This obviously contradicts the camp plan drawn by the same witness, in which merely two grates are to be seen.[454] At the end of July 1943 – once again according to Wiernik – 75% of the bodies from the mass graves are supposed to have been cremated, with 25% still remaining. Wiernik was not embarrassed to claim:[443]

> *"Within a few days work was begun to empty the remaining 25 per cent of the graves and the bodies were cremated."*

In view of the fact that on the 2nd of August, the day of the revolt, the cremation is already supposed to have been finished, this means that a quarter of the bodies must have been cremated within a maximum of ten days. Wiernik maintains silence about the exact number of victims of the camp, but speaks of "millions of people,"[455] which corresponds to a minimum of two million; in the report of November 15, 1942, which he brazenly plagiarized, there was also mention of two million who had allegedly been exterminated in Treblinka up to then. According to his claims, therefore, in no more than ten days 500,000 bodies – a quarter of these two million – were transformed into ashes, although the grates could manage at most, according to his own statements, 12,000 bodies per day or 120,000 in ten days!

The idiocies served up by this witness are really beyond description. Wiernik gives every indication of being the author of the story of the spontaneous combustion of bodies, later continued by his cronies:[62]

> *"It turned out that bodies of women burned more easily than those of men. Accordingly, the bodies of women were used for kindling the fires."*

Let us remind ourselves once again that the entire story of Treblinka accepted today was promulgated by none other than Jankiel Wiernik!

14. Number Gassed Daily

In Chapter III, we have shown the official historiography's unbelievable lack of capacity for critical judgment regarding the enormous technical problems, which exterminating the alleged number of Jews in Treblinka would have en-

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[452] Statement of October 9, 1945, in: *ibid.*, p. 32.
[453] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 171.
[454] See Chapter III.
[455] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 185.

tailed. Here the claims of the witnesses verge on pure insanity. For instance, Abe Kon had the nerve to make the following statement:[456]

> *"In this way, they exterminated 15,000 to 18,000 persons a day. It went on like that for two months."*

Stainslaw sings the same tune:[457]

> *"Within 13 months they killed 15,000 to 18,000 people there."*

At his interrogation of September 26, 1944, Samuel Rajzman stated:[458]

> *"Every day 5-6 transports with 60 boxcars each arrived in the camp. Of course, there were days on which 1-2 trains arrived, but that was an exception, not the rule. Six to seven thousand people arrived with each transport."*

This corresponds to 24,000, even 28,000, people daily! In 1946, Rajzman gave figures on the same order of magnitude:[459]

> *"Every day there were about 20,000 corpses.* […] *There were days on which up to 25,000 people were killed."*

A further witness, Stanisław Borowy, testified that 12,000 to 18,000 deportees arrived daily in trains with 60 boxcars with 150 to 200 occupants each.[460]

Jankiel Wiernik wrote:[461]

> *"Between ten and twelve thousand people were gassed each day.* […] *There were periods when as many as 20,000 people were gassed in one day."*

Incredibly, these insanities were accepted by the court of a Western European nation as the unvarnished truth! In the verdict of the Düsseldorf Court of Assizes, ref. 8 I Ks 2/64, p. 88, one Manfred Blank declared:[462]

> *"In Treblinka many times up to 5 transports with an average of 6,000 people each arrived in one day."*

According to this, up to 30,000 people were reaching Treblinka daily! According to the transport lists provided by Arad, from July 22 to September 30, 1942, thus within a period of 70 days, approximately 500,000 Jews were deported to Treblinka and murdered there, although at that time only the first of the two gassing installations is supposed to have existed. This corresponds to a figure of more than 7,100 persons gassed per day! Since, according to the verdict of the abovementioned Düsseldorf trial, each of the three gas chambers

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[456] GARF, 7021-115-11, p. 33.
[457] GARF, 7021-115-11, p. 35.
[458] GARF, 7445-2-126, p. 240.
[459] Wydawnictwo Centralnej Żydowskiej Komisji Historycznej (ed.), *Dokumenty i Materiały*, *op. cit.* (note 39), pp. 183, 186.
[460] Statement of November 21, 1945, in: Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *Obóz straceń w Treblince*, *op. cit.* (note 38), p. 50.
[461] J. Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, *op. cit*. (note 164), pp. 16, 21; A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 159, 164.
[462] A. Rückerl, *NS-Prozesse*, *op. cit.* (note 250), p. 38.

could hold a maximum of 350 persons, and thus the total capacity of the three chambers amounted to 1,050 persons, that would have meant no less than seven gassing operations per day per chamber, each of which is supposed to have taken less than three-and-a-half hours. According to the witnesses, however, the chambers were never in operation 24 hours a day, not even when 20,000 victims per day were coming in! In A. Donat's anthology, we read:[463]

> *"On such days the gas chambers were in operation until 1 a.m. and finished off more than 20,000 corpses within 24 hours."*

The number of persons assumed by the Düsseldorf Court of Assizes to have been gassed at one time (21 to 22 people per square meter) is of course unrealistic and was only adopted because otherwise the astronomical number of people gassed given by the witnesses would never have been reached. Even the Soviets, famed as masters of exaggeration, assumed a density of no more than 6 persons per square meter in their calculation of the capacity of the rooms alleged to have been 'gas chambers' in the Majdanek Camp.[464] Even if one assumes the highest density theoretically possible – 10 people per square meter – the three 'gas chambers' of the first installation would have been able to hold a maximum of 480 persons per process, so that 15 gassings would have been necessary to kill 7,100 people or more. Under these conditions, one gassing procedure, including all the accompanying steps, such as filling and emptying the chambers, would have had to have been completed in something over an hour and a half, and this would have to be done day in and day out for a period of 70 days!

This sort of thing should have been greeted with roars of contemptuous laughter, but Gerald Reitlinger and Jean-Claude Pressac are the only representatives of the official historiography who mustered the minimum of courage needed to reject this insult to ordinary common sense!

15. Property of Deportees as Material Evidence for their Extermination

J. Gumkowski and A. Rutkowski published two documents, which supposedly supply documentary evidence for the alleged mass extermination in Treblinka. These consist of a Wehrmacht bill of lading with the date "Treblinka, the 13th of September 1942," which references the dispatch of 50 train cars to Lublin with "articles of clothing of the Waffen-SS," and a Wehrmacht bill of lading with the date "Treblinka, the 10th of September 1943," which relates to the sending of a train car to Lublin with 5,200 kg of shoes.[465] There is nothing in

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[463] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 52.
[464] J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 270), p. 123.
[465] J. Gumkowski, A. Rutkowski, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 77), reproductions of documents on

the documents themselves to indicate that this material was actually the property of deported Jews. This is particularly improbable in the case of the "articles of clothing of the Waffen-SS," since the Waffen-SS had no relationship to the Treblinka Camp, and furthermore it is not clear what use the Waffen-SS would have for a collection of used civilian clothing. Perhaps the articles of clothing mentioned are simply Waffen-SS uniforms, which were being reloaded on their return from the eastern front for the purpose of cleaning/delousing/sorting.

Samuel Rajzman furnished very exact information concerning the quantity of Jewish property taken by the Germans in another camp. He writes:[466]

> *"One of our organizers was the overseer of the detachment, in which 12-15 men were employed in the sorting of money and valuables, in determining the worth of objects of value and in packing them. In doing this, he had to submit a report to the Germans daily. He informed us about the weekly inventories. Approximately once a week we compared the entries of each worker. From October 1, 1942 - August 2, 1943, the following were transported to Germany:*
> *25 railroad cars with women's hair*
> *248 cars of various clothing*
> *100 cars of shoes*
> *22 cars of textiles*
> *46 cars of pharmaceutical and chemical preparations*
> *4 cars of surgical and medical instruments*
> *260 cars of blankets, pillows, carpets and traveling-rugs*
> *400 cars with various objects (spectacles, gold fountain pens, fountain pens, combs, dishes, cases, umbrellas etc.)."*

In a "classification of the quantity of used textiles delivered from the Lublin and Auschwitz camps by order of the Main Administrative Office of SS Economics unit," which was appended as a supplement to a letter dated February 6, 1943, from the SS-Obergruppenführer Oswald Pohl, 825 cars are mentioned, which contained, among other things, the following:[467]

"Rags	*400 cars*	*2,700,000 kg*
Bed feathers	*130 cars*	*270,000 kg*
women's hair	*1 car*	*3,000 kg*
used material	*5 cars*	*19,000 kg"*

Arad comments on this document:[468]

> *"This report relates to the textile materials transferred during 1942. That year the majority of deported Jews were sent to the death camps of Opera-*

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unnumbered pages.

[466] USSR-337. GARF, 7445-2-126, pp. 243f.

[467] NO-1257.

[468] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 160.

tion Reinhard rather than to Auschwitz; therefore, these camps were the main source of the textiles mentioned in Pohl's report."

In order to convince his readers even further, Arad publishes a photograph, which shows an enormous pile of shoes and is deceptively captioned "A pile of shoes and boots in Belzec."[469] In reality, the photo shows a barracks of the stored personal effects in Birkenau![470]

Let us quickly examine:

a. Hair

Regarding the document mentioned above, Georges Wellers remarks:[471]

"At the beginning of February 1943, a railway car with textile goods was sent from the Belzec camp to the Economics Ministry of the Reich (doc. no. 1257 and U.S.S.R. 511). The weight of the women's hair alone corresponds to the hair from 200,000 women."

Thus Wellers makes the same misleading statements about the point of origin of the car, as did Arad later on. Were his claim correct, then the hair of one woman would weigh 15 grams. The twenty-five cars mentioned by Rajzman would then have carried the hair of (25×3.000/0.015 =) five million women! But Wellers' assumption is erroneous, because the hair of male and female prisoners was continually recut in all German concentration camps for hygienic reasons. For example, on October 11, 1944, Anton Kaindl, commandant of the concentration camp Sachsenhausen, found it necessary to call the entire camp, particularly the infirmary building, to order because

"the hair-cutting in the camp, and also on the part of the infirmary, has not been performed according to regulations."

He therefore ordered "under threat of the harshest punishment":

"The hair of Reich German, Flemings, Dutch, Norwegians is to be cut to a length of 2 cm.

All members of the remaining nations are to receive close haircuts."

Kaindl complained in particular "that a large portion of the infirmary staff believes that they need not execute the orders of the camp" and reminded them that "this important war-economy camp regulation" was to be enforced "without a single exception." How large the quantity of cut hair was is evident from the last cargo, which weighed 275 kg.[472]

These 3,000 kg of hair, which was transported in the railway car mentioned above, therefore came from many haircuts given to prisoners at Auschwitz and Lublin in 1942.

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469 *Ibid*., p. 156.

470 *KL Auschwitz. Fotografie dokumentalne*, Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, Warsaw 1980, p. 267.

471 G. Wellers, *La Solution finale et la mythomanie néo-nazie*, edited by Beate and Serge Klarsfeld, Paris 1979, p. 35.

472 GARF, 7021-104-8, p. 1.

b. Shoes

The September 10, 1943, Wehrmacht bill of lading cited by Gumkowski and Rutkowski mentions the dispatch of a railway car with 5,200 kg of shoes of unknown origin to Lublin. To how many pairs does this correspond? If one assumes an average weight of 260 grams for each pair of shoes, then 5,200 kg amount to 20,000 pairs of shoes. If one had taken the shoes from all the Jews (allegedly) deported to Treblinka, then the 870,000 pairs of shoes would have had a weight of (870,000×0.260=) 226,200 kg, and (226,200÷5,200=) 43.5 railway cars would have been required!

It is known that the Soviets found about 800,000 pairs of shoes in the Lublin/Majdanek Camp. The Polish historian Czesław Rajca, who is on the staff of the Majdanek Museum, wrote about this:[473]

> *"It was assumed that this* [the quantity of shoes] *came from prisoners killed in the camp. From documents, which later came to light, we know that in Majdanek there was a depot, to which shoes were sent from other camps."*

c. Articles of Clothing

As for the 50 railway cars with "articles of clothing of the Waffen-SS" mentioned in the Wehrmacht bill of lading dated "Treblinka, the 13th of September 1942," they would have contained 337.5 metric tons of clothes altogether, or 6¾ in each boxcar, if we assume the same amount per railway car as listed above for the rags (2,700t/400). However, if each of the (allegedly) 870,000 Jews deported to Treblinka had worn or (along with extra clothing, pillows, and blankets) brought along 10 kg worth of article of clothing, and had these mountains of clothing been collected after the murder of the victims, then this would have amounted to 8,700 metric tons. For their transport nearly 1,300 railway cars would have been needed!

In comparison with this enormous amount, the railway cars with shoes of unknown origin and the 50 cars with Waffen-SS clothing, the existence of which is supported by documents, sound almost ridiculous. They furnish not the least bit of proof for a mass extermination in Treblinka.

In Lublin, incidentally, there were still other facilities for the collection and recycling of textiles. The most important of these were the "Lublin Fur and Clothing Workshops," which took in clothing from various camps.

If the documents detailed above actually report on confiscated Jewish property, then they prove at most that the SS, within the framework of Operation Reinhardt, confiscated a small portion of Jewish belongings in Treblinka either arbitrarily or because the maximum permissible luggage weight was ex-

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[473] C. Rajca, *Problem liczby ofiar w obozie na Majdanku*, Tom XIV, Zeszyty Majdanka, Lublin 1992, p. 127.

ceeded. Moreover, there is no proof that at least a part of this material did *not* come from Treblinka I instead of from Treblinka II.

Finally, the list produced by S. Rajzman cannot be documented and is the product of pure fantasy.

Chapter V:
Treblinka Trials

1. Confessions as a Basis for Historiography

In 1979, Gitta Sereny mounted a furious attack against revisionists, particularly against Arthur R. Butz. She made reference to her conversations conducted in 1971 with former Treblinka commandant Franz Stangl, who was incarcerated in a Düsseldorf jail and who, according to her claims, had admitted the mass murders in that camp; she wrote:[474]

> *"Stangl is dead. But if* […] *Butz* […] *actually had been interested in the truth, Stangl's wife and many others would have been at his disposal to bear witness."*

Butz could have indicated in his response that Sereny was unable to prove what Stangl had actually said, due to the lack of a taped record, but he argued from an entirely different perspective:[475]

> *"We do not need 'confessions' or 'trials' to determine that the bombings of Dresden and Hiroshima, or the reprisals at Lidice following Heydrich's assassination, really took place. Now, the extermination legend does not claim a few instances of homicide, but alleges events continental in geographical scope, of three years in temporal scope, and of several million in scope of victims. How ludicrous, then, is the position of the bearers of the legend, who in the last analysis will attempt to 'prove' such events on the basis of 'confessions' delivered under the fabric of hysteria, censorship, intimidation, persecution, and blatant illegality that has been shrouding this subject for 35 years.* […]
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> […] *Sereny was arguing the reality of the colossal events alleged by reporting what a tired old man recently told her in prison. One might as well argue that the gypsies burned down New York City in 1950, on the basis of confessions of gypsies who were living there at the time.* […] *She was taking a great deal of space in a prominent journal in presenting arguments that in 1979 were wildly incommensurate with the allegation in question. If*

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[474] "The Men Who Whitewash Hitler," *New Statesman*, November 2, 1979.

[475] Butz's reply to G. Sereny was not printed in the *New Statesman*. Its text can be found in the lecture given by Butz in 1982 at the conference of the Institute for Historical Review, which was published in a paper with the title "Context and Perspective in the Holocaust Controversy", reprinted in A. R. Butz, *op. cit.* (note 108), pp. 401-431, here p. 404.

> *the Jews of Europe really had been exterminated, such arguments would not be offered."*

The indefensibility of an historical view that relies entirely on confessions from alleged perpetrators and eyewitness testimony could not have been better described! In what follows we will explain how the legal systems of the Federal Republic of Germany and of Israel have sought to strengthen the traditional image of Treblinka by means of trials, at which confessions by alleged offenders and eyewitness narratives comprised the sole basis of evidence.

2. West German Treblinka Trials

In a trial conducted in Düsseldorf from October 1964 to September 1965, ten persons, among them Kurt Franz, who was described as the last commandant of the camp,[476] were charged with participation in the alleged mass killing of Jews in Treblinka. Four of the defendants, Franz among them, were sentenced to life imprisonment for the collective murder of 300,000 persons and for a number of individual murders; a fifth defendant received the same punishment for the collective murder of at least 100,000 people; prison sentences of twelve, seven, six, four, and three years were imposed on five others accused for assisting in the collective murder of 300,000 or 100,000 persons, respectively.

At a later Treblinka trial, which took place from May to December 1970, also in Düsseldorf, only one defendant appeared before the court, namely the former *SS-Hauptsturmführer* and second Treblinka commandant Franz Stangl. The latter was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder, committed together with others, of at least 400,000 Jews, but he died in 1971 before the German Federal Supreme Court had ruled on his appeal.

At the first of these two proceedings more than 100, at the second over 50 witnesses were heard in and outside of Germany. Adalbert Rückerl, at that time director of the Ludwigsburg Central Office for the investigation of National Socialist crimes, documented these trials as well as those of the members of the camp staff of Bełżec, Sobibór, and Chełmno in his aforementioned

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[476] In a letter written on January 3, 1976, Kurt Franz, who continually protested his innocence, strongly denied having been camp commandant. He wrote:

> "*I served in Treblinka with the military rank of Oberscharführer of the Waffen-SS responsible exclusively only for the guard detachment and the men guarding the camp. An Oberscharführer is a Technical Sergeant and not an officer!*"

The letter is printed in No. 44 of the *Historische Tatsachen* (note 104) on p. 23. Kurt Franz, who was charged with participation in the murder of 300,139 Jews, had lived in Düsseldorf under his own name up to 1959. (A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 44f.); therefore he obviously had a good conscience and it had never occurred to him that he could be accused of anything! Only in 1993 was he released, a gravely ill and broken man, after decades of imprisonment.

book *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse* (NS Extermination Camps as Reflected in German Criminal Trials), which was published in 1977. This book cites long passages from the verdicts. In his introduction to Rückerl's work, Martin Broszat, director of the Munich Institute for Contemporary History, wrote[477]

> *"Without wishing to anticipate an historical investigation and assessment of the role of the German justice system in the prosecution of NS crimes, so far one thing can be said to have resulted from it, and also from the activity of the Central Office* [in Ludwigsburg]*: the significance of the extensive prosecutorial and judicial investigations, which began in this area at the end of the 1950s in the Federal Republic* [of Germany]*, cannot be measured only by their – often low – number of sentences. In regard to the investigations and proceedings dealing with mass killings of Jews* […] *in particular, the systematic clearing up of the aggregate of crimes had a general public and historical relevance extending considerably beyond criminal prosecution.* […] *Although the fact of the 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question' is noted in nearly all history and textbooks on the NS period, the individual modalities of this horrible event have scarcely been systematically documented until now. Their methodical concealment by the administrative departments of the regime and the thorough eradication of the traces after the conclusion of the operations, above all in the carefully hidden large extermination camps in the occupied Polish territories, have made it difficult or have hindered an exact reconstruction of the events. Despite an unfavorable point of departure, the years of painstaking work of judicial investigation have finally made the facts and context very clear."*

First of all, it ought to be stressed that Broszat's claim that "the large extermination camps in the occupied Polish territories" were "carefully hidden" is blatant nonsense. Auschwitz was situated in an industrial zone swarming with civilian workers, and the prisoners were in constant contact with them; Majdanek directly bordered on the city of Lublin, so that people were able to look into the camp from their houses at the edge of the city; in Treblinka, the farmers cultivated their fields nearly up to the camp fence, and the brisk trade between the prisoners and the civilian population described by former inmates, as noted above,[478] guaranteed a steady flow of information from the camp to the outside world.

Let us move on to the "historical relevance" of the trials, as emphasized by Broszat. When he writes that the "individual modalities of this horrible event" have "scarcely been systematically documented up until now," but that "years of painstaking work of judicial investigation have finally made the facts and

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[477] Adalbert Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 7f.
[478] See Introduction.

context very clear," this obviously means that until then historiography had *not* investigated the events in Treblinka and the other 'pure extermination camps,' but had left that task up to the courts.

Now, it is by no means the task of the judge to write history; his duty is to make a finding on the guilt or innocence of a defendant. The mission of the judge is therefore a fundamentally different one from that of the historian.

Yet whoever studies the 'Holocaust' literature very soon recognizes the decisive importance of court verdicts: for example, in the chapter devoted to the 'extermination centers,' in his three-volume 'standard work' *The Destruction of the European Jews*, R. Hilberg cites Adalbert Rückerl's *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse* as a source no fewer than forty-one times.[479] Under these circumstances, the actual purpose of the countless trials of the 'Nazi criminals' conducted in West Germany emerges quite clearly: they served to conjure up the desired evidence for million-fold murder in gas chambers on the basis of eyewitness narratives and confessions by alleged culprits, evidence, which historiography was unable to produce and has been unable to provide to the present day, for lack of documentary and material evidence. Hilberg and his consorts were then able to refer to the results of these criminal trials in their accounts of the 'Holocaust.'

In view of the major political significance of the trials as outlined here, a former SS man sitting in the dock who hoped for the chance of an acquittal, or at least a lenient sentence, would of course dare not dispute the image of the concentration camp portrayed in the charges, but could only deny his own guilt or, if the witnesses had heavily incriminated him, claim that he had had to follow orders. Even if what Rückerl has written (on p. 25 of his *NS-Vernichtungslager*), that the defendants "without exception admitted their participation in the killing of Jewish men, women, and children, conducted on an industrial scale in the camps named," were correct, [480] this could easily be explained as having been done for opportunistic reasons: if an accused defendant did not do so, his conduct was interpreted as 'obstinate denial' and resulted in a harsher sentence. On the other hand, if a defendant went along with the prosecutors, he or she could hope for leniency, however terrible the charges against him might be.

An instructive example of this is furnished by a case mentioned by Rückerl: the former *SS-Hauptscharführer* Josef Oberhauser, stationed during the war in Bełżec, was put on trial in Munich in 1965. Although he was found guilty of assisting in the collective murder of 300,000 people during this trial,

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[479] With regard to this cf. Jürgen Graf, *op. cit.* (note 276), p. 89.

[480] Kurt Franz, the main defendant at the trial of 1964-1965, repudiated any guilt on his own part, so that Rückerl's claim, at least in Franz's case, is invalid.

which lasted only four days, he nevertheless got away with the incredibly lenient sentence of merely four and a half years imprisonment:[481]

> *"In the main proceedings, Oberhauser refused to testify. He referred to the necessity of following orders."*

This meant that he was not contesting the extermination of Jews in Bełżec; thus once again, the West German justice administration could triumphantly point out that the defendant had not in no way denied the mass murder. Since Oberhauser, as Rückerl informs us,[482] had been taken into investigative custody in 1960, in 1965 his sentence was considered served and he was probably released shortly after the verdict was announced. Had he 'obstinately denied' the alleged crimes, he probably would have faced a life sentence![483]

The witness testimony and confessions of defendants, the sole basis on which the West German justice administration could support its case in these trials, were accepted as 'credible' in all cases where they jibed with the charges. Thus, with regard to an 'expert opinion' from historian Helmut Krausnick, who had estimated the number of victims of the camp as at least 700,000, the verdict of the first Treblinka trial reads:[484]

> *"The Court of Assizes has no reservations in following the expert, who is well-known as a scholar due to his research into the National Socialist persecution of the Jews, since his expert opinion is detailed, thorough, and persuasive. This is all the more so when several defendants, among them the defendant S., who is gifted with an especially good memory, figured the number of victims at far more than 500,000. On what scale Treblinka operated, emerges from a characteristic description of the defendant S. concerning the opening of one of the body pits. As he plausibly tells, in the beginning of 1943, he once was in the upper camp just as one of the enormous body pits was being opened there, because the bodies now had to be burned.*[485] *On this occasion, so S. relates, his comrade P., the deputy head of the death camp, explained that this one body pit alone contained approximately 80,000 dead. Since there were several body pits, and since the extermination operation by no means was ended in the beginning of 1943,*

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481 Adalbert Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 86.

482 *Ibid*., p. 45.

483 Another striking example of the tactic, successfully employed by many defendants in NS trials, of purchasing a lenient sentence by confirming the picture of the extermination of Jews as described in the charges is furnished in the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial (1963-1965) by the defendant Robert Mulka. Such horrific atrocities were imputed to him that many objected to his sentence of 14 years imprisonment as inappropriate. Yet only four months later, Mulka was released without any fuss: G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, (note 180), p. 551.

484 A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 199; during the second West German Treblinka trial, the number of Treblinka victims mentioned by another expert report compiled by Wolfgang Scheffler rose to 900,000 "on the basis of new research".

485 In the same verdict we read that the cremation of the bodies began "in the spring of 1943" (p. 205).

> *one can see in this description by S. nothing but a confirmation of the expert opinion, which assumes a minimum of 700,000 persons killed."*

What is to be thought of a judiciary that relies upon rumors and hearsay in a trial dealing with the murder of at least 700,000 – "S. relates that his comrade explained to him" – instead of proposing an investigation of the scene of the crime and suggesting to the Polish authorities that joint excavations to determine the size and position of the mass graves?

With what small mental endowment the Düsseldorf judges were graced may be seen from the following passage of their verdict:[295]

> *"The building, solidly constructed out of brick upon a concrete foundation, contained 3 gas chambers, which were approximately 4 × 4 m in area and about 2.6 m high.* […]
>
> *Very soon after the inception of operations, the capacity of the old gas house proved to be insufficient for smoothly liquidating the daily arriving transports of Jews. For that reason, at the end of August/beginning of September 1942, construction was started on a large new gas house, which contained more and larger gas chambers and was able to be put in operation after a construction period of about one month.* […] *All are in agreement that the new gas chambers had a holding capacity approximately double that of the chambers in the old building. The new gas chambers were probably about 8 m long, 4 m wide, and 2 m high.* [p. 203f.] *How many people respectively were included in one gassing operation has not been determined with certainty in the main proceedings.* […] *An accepted holding capacity of approximately 200 to 350 people per gas chamber in the old house and approximately 400 to 700 people per gas chamber in the new house might safely be said to be most probable according to all* [information]*."* (p. 226)

Therefore, according to this eminent jurist, up to 22 people per square meter could have been crammed into the old as well as into the new gas chambers!

As to the number of the German and Ukrainian guards, the verdict says:[486]

> *"The camp staff in Treblinka, which was responsible for the smooth execution of the mass extermination, consisted of about 35 to 40 Germans who all wore the field-gray uniforms of the Waffen-SS and all of whom had the rank of at least SS-Unterscharführer.* […] *Besides this group of German camp personnel there were about 90 to 120 Ukrainian volunteer auxiliaries, who mainly had to perform guard duties but were also used to a certain extent in the killing operations."*

These – at most – 40 Germans and 120 Ukrainians, according to the Düsseldorf Court, had to deal with up to 1,000 Jewish workers[487] and thousands of Jewish deportees with every arriving transport:

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[486] *Ibid*., pp. 206f.
[487] *Ibid*., p. 212.

> *"The accommodations of the Jewish workers, whose number was continually changing, but which on average might be put at between 500 and 1,000, were very primitive.* […]*"*

Not only did these up to 1,000 Jewish workers have to experience how the Germans and Ukrainians drove their co-religionists into the gas day after day, but they themselves always hovered on the brink of death:[488]

> *"At their work, the Jews were driven to hurry by insults and blows from a whip.* […] *For the least cause but often without any sort of reason, Jewish workers in both parts of the camp were reviled, abused, slain, or shot day after day. It sufficed that a Jew, according to the notion of his overseer, was working too slowly or not carefully enough, for him to be whipped half-dead and subsequently to be shot in the infirmary."*

However, it never occurred to the Jewish workers (at least until August 2, 1943) to mount a resistance against their tormentors and murderers, who were far inferior to them in numbers!

The verdict has this to say concerning the measures taken to deceive the victims at their arrival:[489]

> *"In order to strengthen the impression in those arriving that Treblinka was merely a transfer station for further transportation to the east for work, large signs in German and Polish were posted on the platform or in its direct vicinity, the gist of which read: 'Attention Warsaw Jews! You are in a transit camp here, from which there will be further transport to work camps.* […] *For purposes of bodily hygiene, all those arriving must bathe before further transport.'*
>
> *In addition – at least in the first period of the mass killings – a member of the German camp staff often addressed the people assembled at the train station square and explained the same thing which was on the signs."*

Exactly one page before quoting the above passage from this verdict, Rückerl cites the Jewish witness "Str." as follows:[490]

> *"I then remember the terrible confusion when the doors were flung open in Treblinka. There were shouts from the Germans and Ukrainians, 'get off, out.' Even the members of the so-called Red Jewish Commandos shouted and yelled. Then the people arriving also began to yell and complain. I still remember that we were struck with whips. Then we were told: 'Men to the right, women to the left and undress.'"*

Naturally, under these circumstances a panic would have broken out immediately among the approximately 2,000 new arrivals[491] each time, and the 35 to

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[488] *Ibid*., p. 214.

[489] *Ibid*., p. 219.

[490] *Ibid*., p. 218.

[491] Of the 50 to 60 railway cars, which each of the freight trains used in the deportations comprised, 20 at a time are supposed to have been unloaded, while the rest remained at the station (A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 217). There was an average

40 Germans as well as the 90 to 120 Ukrainians would not have been able to prevent their running off in every direction. The measures of deception allegedly taken by the SS would have been entirely in vain. And why did the 500 to 1,000 Jewish workers never warn their doomed co-religionists?

No atrocity fairy tale from Jewish or Polish sources was too silly to be faithfully parroted by the Düsseldorf judges:[492]

> *"During the first weeks after the camp had started operations, the orchestra played lively operetta melodies near the hose in order to drown out the sound of the screams of the victims in the gas chambers."*

Since in every normal murder trial an expert opinion on the weapon used in the crime must be presented , and, if no body has been recovered, its absence must be explained, an unbiased observer would perhaps assume that the West German judiciary consulted a diesel engineer and an expert on cremation in order to learn whether the mass gassings and mass cremations described by the witnesses were technically feasible. But of all things, the Düsseldorf judges trotted out as an expert witness – a canine psychiatrist! From the original verdict of the first Treblinka trial:[493]

> *"Either at the end of 1942 or the beginning of 1943, the dog Barry was brought into the extermination camp Treblinka. This was a black-and-white spotted mixed-breed dog as large as a calf with predominantly the characteristic traits of a St. Bernard. In the camp he associated himself with the defendant Franz and regarded him as his master.*
>
> *On his patrols through the upper and the lower camp, Franz was accustomed to having Barry with him most of the time. He always delighted in setting the dog on the prisoners who had drawn his attention in some way, with the words 'man, catch the dog!'* […] *Barry always bit the targeted person indiscriminately. Since he was the size of a calf and the height of his shoulders – in contrast to smaller dogs – reached the buttocks and the abdomen of an average person, he frequently bit into the buttocks, into the abdomen, and several times into the genital area of male prisoners, which he even partially bit off in some cases.* […] *When, during the absence of the defendant Franz, Barry was not under his influence, he was not the same dog. One could pet him and even tease him without him doing anything to anyone.* […]
>
> *As to the question of whether Barry was sometimes a vicious beast but at others a good-tempered and playful house pet, the Court of Assizes has heard under oath the Director of the Max Planck Institute for Behavioral Research in Seewiesen/Oberbayern, the internationally known researcher*

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of 100 deportees to a car.

[492] A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 215.

[493] *Ibid*., pp. 234ff.

> *Professor Dr. L. In his persuasive expert report, Professor Dr. L. has stated, among other things, the following:*
> *From the photographs of Barry shown to him by the Court of Assizes, he notes that this was not a purebred St. Bernard but a mixed-breed dog, which clearly predominantly showed the traits of a St. Bernard. Mixed-breed dogs are much more sensitive than purebred animals. If they have become attached to a master and have entered into a so-called dog-master bond, they would virtually anticipate their master's wishes; for a dog is 'the reflection of the subconscious of its master,' and that is especially true of mixed-breed dogs.* […] *After the convincing exposition of Professor Dr. L., there therefore exists no logical contradiction between the findings that Barry on the one hand was dangerous when he was incited to attack Jews by Franz, and that on the other hand, during the absence of Franz,* […] *he was indolent, good-tempered, and harmless on the camp property."*

Adalbert Rückerl had this comment concerning these sagacious findings:[494]

> *"The* [….] *statements give an idea of what effort and care the judges expended in resolving individual details of the crime."*

Gegen Dummheit kämpfen Götter selbst vergebens. (German proverb)
Even the Gods struggle in vain against stupidity.

3. The Demjanjuk Trial in Jerusalem

On April 25, 1988, John (Ivan) Demjanjuk, a Ukrainian extradited two years earlier from the United States to Israel, was sentenced to death by hanging in Jerusalem. The court, consisting of the judges Dov Levin, Zvi A. Tal, and Dalia Dorner, had found him guilty of the murder of several hundred thousand persons. He had been – so the verdict claimed – the sadistic Ukrainian guard who had been called 'Ivan the Terrible' and who had operated the gas chambers of Treblinka. But this wasn't enough: according to the Israeli judges, Demjanjuk had hardly been satisfied with gassing the Jews, but tortured many of his victims beforehand in an outrageously bestial fashion. In its verdict, the Jerusalem court quoted the former Treblinka prisoner Pinchas Epstein, who 'recognized' his former tormentor in Demjanjuk during the trial, as follows:[495]

> *"I saw this man of vast proportions, well built, solid, and he was operating the motor, he was performing some action and pressing on something which activated the motor. After that, we would wait for twenty minutes to half an hour, and then they ordered the doors to be opened, these were*

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494 *Ibid*., p. 234.

495 *Criminal Case No. 373/86, State of Israel vs. Ivan (John) Demjanjuk, Verdict*, pp. 180, 182f. We heartily thank Dr. Miroslav Dragan for having made this important document available to us.

very wide doors, and the corpses to be taken out. Ivan would come out of this room and would rain murderous blows on us with the pipe. Sometimes he would come with a dagger, sometimes with a bayonet, and he would crack skulls, he would cut off ears, he would brutalize the prisoners, it is absolutely unbelievable, unbelievable, and he would stand next to the corpses and gaze upon them. I want to say, honorable court, that it was horrible to look at the corpses when they took them out of the cabins. People with crushed faces, people with stab wounds, pregnant women with stab wounds in their bellies, women with the fetuses hanging half out, young girls with stab wounds on the breast, with eyes gouged out. […] *He would stand and gaze upon the results, what he had done, the stabbing of the girls, the gouging out of the eyes, the severing of the girls' breasts… he stood there like that, enjoying the scene… He was always near me, a few meters away.* […] *And he would brutalize the prisoners, cut off a nose, injure somebody in the head,* […] *Almost one million human beings, souls, were slaughtered, children, old people and little children.* […] *Because they were Jews. This Ivan was a monster from another planet…"*

The testimony of the witness Eliyahu Rosenberg, who likewise had identified Demjanjuk as the Satan of Treblinka, was recapitulated in the Jerusalem verdict as follows:[496]

"I saw him especially when I was working on the ramp every day, whenever consignments of Jews arrived for extermination. I saw him when he stood next to the gas chambers at the entrance to the corridor with a destructive instrument in his possession, such as a small short iron pipe, and a whip. He also wore a belt with his pistol. This shouldn't be so, all the destructive instruments together… I also saw that he had a dagger, I saw him with these destructive instruments, and how he would strike, lash, cut… these victims at the entrance to the gas chambers…. […] *They knew how to strike, to strike. We were already there, at that place, and we got used to the beatings. But not to the tortures. God almighty, why tortures? Why cut living flesh from people? Nobody ordered them to do so, no one, he did it alone, on his own initiative. I never heard any German telling him to do that…* […]

I was there on the ramp. We had removed the bodies from the gas chambers, Ivan came out of his cabin, he saw how I was standing there, the place was full of corpses, he said to me… lower your trousers… lay down on them… I saw this incident, and in a second I understood: this was it, I was finished, either by the pipe in his hand or in another manner. Lefler (one of the German S.S. men) was standing there. He was standing and looking. I ran to him, I stood to attention and said to him (in German): Ivan wants me to have sexual relations with a dead woman. So then he

[496] *Ibid*., pp. 184f.

> *went up to him and reprimanded him. Ivan only said to me (in Russian), I'll give it to you. He gave it to me and he found the opportunity."*

Another witness, Yehiel Reichmann, testified as follows, according to the Jerusalem verdict:[497]

> *"I want to tell what took place next to the well with my friend Finkelstein. While I was still washing teeth together with him, with Finkelstein, this Ashmadai (devil) Ivan came with a drilling machine for drilling holes. And he rotated this drilling machine for making holes on Finkelstein's buttocks and said to him, if you scream I'll shoot you… He injured that Finkelstein, he was bleeding and suffering great pain, intense pain, but he was not permitted to scream, because Ivan had given him an order – 'If you scream, I'll shoot you'... Ivan was a super-devil, a super destroyer from Treblinka."*

Thus went the witness testimony during a trial, which from the very beginning was intended to once again, more than four decades after the end of the war, graphically conjure up the horror of the 'Holocaust' before the eyes of the world in general and of the Israeli populace in particular. The trial had originally been planned to be conducted in a soccer stadium (!), but since its show-trial character would than have appeared all too evident, this notion was abandoned and a movie theater was chosen as the courtroom. The Israeli media relentlessly stoked the hysteria, and the trial was a mandatory topic in the nation's schools. But then things went much differently from the way they were planned: The trial became a colossal fiasco for the State of Israel and its judiciary.

The two most important books about the Demjanjuk trial are Hans Peter Rullmann's outstanding 1987 *Der Fall Demjanjuk. Unschuldiger oder Massenmörder?* (The Demjanjuk Case: Innocent Man or Mass Murderer?)[498] and Yoram Sheftel's *Defending "Ivan the Terrible." The Conspiracy to Convict John Demjanjuk*. H. P. Rullmann, former Yugoslavia correspondent of the German left-wing news magazine *Der Spiegel* and chairman of the German-Croatian Society, throws light not only on the background and early stages of the Demjanjuk trial (the trial was still underway when the book appeared), but also goes into the historical context, in particular the tension-laden relations between Jews and Ukrainians; several times the author expresses doubts as to the correctness of the official version of Treblinka. On the other hand, the Israeli attorney Y. Sheftel, Demjanjuk's defense counsel, by his own admission an ardent Zionist, accepts this version without reservation and insists merely on the personal innocence of his client, who has been the victim of a conspiracy. Thanks to the committed efforts of Sheftel, the death sentence was

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[497] *Ibid*., p. 186.

[498] Yoram Sheftel, *Defending "Ivan the Terrible." The Conspiracy to Convict John Demjanjuk*, Regnery Publishing, Washington 1996.

quashed by the Israeli Appeals Court, and Demjanjuk was able to return to the USA after seven years of innocent imprisonment.

In the following account of the Demjanjuk case, we are relying for the most part on Rullmann's documentation for events before 1987, the year his book was published; for the following period, we rely upon the Sheftel book.

Ivan Demjanjuk, born in 1920 in the Ukraine, fell into German hands as a soldier of the Red Army in 1942. He was at first employed in the repair of railroad tracks, and then was sent to the prisoner of war camp of Chełm in eastern Poland, where he was held until the beginning of 1944. In order to escape the hunger in the camp, he put himself at the disposal of the Germans as an auxiliary volunteer and was assigned to a Ukrainian National Guard unit under General Shandruk, which fought side by side with the Wehrmacht against the Soviets. In 1945, Demjanjuk escaped the fate of many of his countrymen, who were delivered by the British to the Bolsheviks, then shipped off to the camps of the Gulag Archipelago. After living for a few years in Germany, where he married a Ukrainian woman, he emigrated to the U.S. in 1952, and made a life for himself there as an auto worker, receiving citizenship in 1958.

The fact that Demjanjuk was active in the Ukrainian community in his new residence of Cleveland, Ohio, spelled disaster for him. A certain Michael Hanusiak, staff member of the Communist newspaper *Ukrainian News*, published one article after another, in which the anti-Communist Ukrainian exiles supporting the independence of their homeland were smeared as 'Nazi collaborators.' According to Hanusiak, seventy of these sinister figures were living in Cleveland. In 1975, Demjanjuk came into the crosshairs of the *Ukrainian News*. Hanusiak claims that he had found the testimony of a certain Danilchenko in a Soviet archive, according to which the latter had gotten to know an Ivan Demjanjuk in Sobibór in March 1943. There – according to Danilchenko – that Demjanjuk had driven Jewish prisoners into the gas chambers as an executioner's assistant of the Germans; in the spring of the same year, he was allegedly sent, together with Danilchenko, to the Flossenbürg concentration camp, where he again was employed as a guard.

Now the battue against the autoworker could begin. The Cleveland newspaper *Plain Dealer* identified him as 'Ivan the Terrible,' and starting in 1976, U.S. immigration authorities sought information against him. They requested the Jewish World Congress to find former Sobibór inmates who could incriminate the suspect. There were no prosecution witnesses, and the mysterious Danilchenko himself had vanished without a trace. In a search for witnesses, a U.S. investigative group traveled to Israel, where seven former Treblinka prisoners 'recognized' Demjanjuk as the evil Ivan of Treblinka on the basis of a photograph. These statements of course contradicted Danilchenko's information, according to which the Ukrainian had not been in Treblinka but in Sobibór and Flossenbürg, but the ball was already rolling.

Next the Moscow-directed *Ukrainian News* published an incriminating 'document' in facsimile; once again the Soviet information was clearly not reconcilable with the testimony of the seven Israeli witnesses. The document was allegedly Demjanjuk's service ID card from the training camp Trawniki, where many Ukrainians had been trained as concentration camp guards during the war. According to this ID card, Demjanjuk had been detailed to Sobibór on March 27, 1943; Treblinka was not mentioned on it. The document was an obvious and clumsy forgery, for it displayed neither a date of issue nor an expiration date. (In mid-1987 it was subjected to a chemical analysis by the McCrone Institute in the USA, which proved that titanium oxide was a component of the photographic paper – a chemical used in black-and-white photography only since the end of the sixties.[499]) The 'original document' was made available to the Israeli justice administration by the Soviets at the end of 1986, ten months after Demjanjuk's extradition.

Up to that point US immigration authorities had only the facsimile of the ID card as evidence, which in any case offered no evidence of Demjanjuk's presence in Treblinka; yet the document was accepted as conclusive. Demjanjuk was deprived of his U.S. citizenship and in February 1986, under breach of constitutional principles, was extradited to Israel, a nation, which did not even exist at the time of the alleged mass murders in Treblinka. A substantial role in this scandalous violation of law was played by the 'Nazi-hunting' OSI, established under President Jimmy Carter and for many years led by a Jewish lawyer, Neil Sher,[500] which specialized – using perjured testimony and forged documents – in stripping innocent old men of German or eastern European descent of their U.S. citizenship and deporting or extraditing them to prosecuting nations.[501]

One year after this, the Jerusalem trial began, and five former Jewish Treblinka prisoners who claimed that they saw the accused in that camp in 1942/1943 recited their unspeakable tales of horror to the best of their ability. An obviously embarrassing detail was that one of these witnesses, Eliyahu Rosenberg, had in 1947 in Vienna stated the following:[502]

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[499] Cf. also the analysis by Dieter Lehner, *Du sollst nicht falsch Zeugnis geben*, Berg, n.d. [1988].

[500] In 2003, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals ordered Sher disbarred from the Bar Association of the District of Columbia for misappropriating funds earmarked for Holocaust survivors; cf. *Forward*, September 5, 2003; editor's remark.

[501] Through the example of one case (the prosecution of Martin Bartesch), Andrew Allen documents the murky machinations of the OSI in "Die US-Nazijäger vom OSI und der Holocaust-Mythos", *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, 5(4) (2001), pp. 428-430; English online: *idem*, "The Office of Special Investigations and the Holocaust Myth," https://codoh.com/library/document/the-office-of-special-investigations-and-the/.

[502] This explanation of Rosenberg has been reproduced in full by H. P. Rullmann, *op. cit.* (note 187), on pp. 133f.

> *"The second of August 1943 was set as the day of the revolt.* […] *About three-thirty in the afternoon everything was prepared for the revolt.* […] *Then one of the water-carriers right then dashed into the barracks and yelled: 'Revolution in Berlin.' This was the signal. Thereupon some people rushed into the barracks of the Ukrainian guard detachment, where among others also the Ukrainian Ivan was sleeping, and killed the Ukrainians with shovels."*

During the trial, however, Rosenberg offered the excuse that he was only repeating what he had heard and had not actually witnessed the death of Ivan.

In April 1988, as everyone had expected, the Jerusalem Court passed the death sentence but it was not carried out. By then all too many embarrassing mistakes had occurred, and defense counsel Sheftel (who had acid sprayed in his face by a criminal at the end of 1988, a few days after a second Demjanjuk attorney, Dov Eitan, had fallen to his death from a high-rise building) thoroughly exploited these errors in his appeal. Finally, Sheftel pointed to one Ivan Marchenko – missing without a trace – as the actual Ivan the Terrible.

This name had first been mentioned by a former prostitute living in the hamlet of Treblinka, who had numbered among her clientele several Ukrainian guards from the camp during the war, among them Marchenko, but Sheftel soon found more evidence of him in the USSR. According to Soviet court documents, a Ukrainian by the name of Nikolai Shelaiev, who had been condemned to death and shot in 1952 due to alleged crimes in Treblinka, had identified this Ivan Marchenko as operator of the gas chambers of Treblinka. Shelaiev's testimony was confirmed by several other former Treblinka guards, and a personal ID card of Marchenko from Trawniki also came to light.

The Israeli judiciary now had to grit its teeth and concede that Demjanjuk, despite all the oaths of the five eyewitnesses, had not been 'Ivan the Terrible', but first undertook yet another weak attempt to charge him with crimes, this time in Sobibór and Flossenbürg. But there were no witnesses to such crimes, and according to the Israeli-American extradition treaty Demjanjuk could not be tried for offenses in these two camps, since his extradition had been predicated solely on his alleged atrocities in Treblinka. Thus he was finally able to return to the United States in September of 1993. To date this innocent man has not received a single dollar of compensation for the shameful injustice done to him. On the contrary: his persecution began anew in February 2002, this time for his alleged service in the camps Sobibór, Majdanek, and Flossenbürg.[503]

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[503] In that month, Demjanjuk was once more deprived of American citizenship on the initiative of the U.S. government; cf. "In Kürze", *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, 6(2) (2002), p. 239.

As do so many legends, that of ‘Ivan the Terrible’ may contain a kernel of truth: presumably a brutal Ukrainian guard feared by the prisoners, who was called Ivan or the like, did serve in Treblinka. All else is pure fantasy.

The Demjanjuk trial, in which all five Jewish ‘eyewitnesses’ proved to be perjured liars and swindlers, dealt a frightful blow to the credibility of such witnesses. In fact, since that trial no more ‘gas chamber witnesses’ have dared to testify in court.

Part 2:
The Function of Treblinka:
An Alternative Interpretation

Chapter VI:
National Socialist Policy of Jewish Emigration

1. Emigration

From the time Adolf Hitler assumed power, the National Socialist policy toward the Jews aimed consistently at their 'removal' from Germany.[504]

On August 28, 1933, the Reich Economics Ministry concluded the so-called 'Haavara Agreement' with the Jewish Agency for Palestine, an economic accord that was intended to lay the basis for the emigration of approximately 52,000 German Jews to Palestine by the year 1942.[505] Until the outbreak of the Second World War and indeed even for some time afterward – as long as circumstances permitted – the emigration of Jews to all nations prepared to accept them was the leitmotif of the National Socialist policy. This is confirmed by a report of the Foreign Ministry of January 25, 1939, which bore the title: "*Die Judenfrage als Faktor der Außenpolitik im Jahre 1938*" (The Jewish question as a factor of foreign policy in 1938):[506]

> *"The final goal of German policy regarding the Jews is the emigration of all Jews living in the territory of the Reich."*

On the previous day, the 24th of January 1939, Hermann Göring had issued a decree, which approved the establishment of a 'Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration.' Reinhardt Heydrich was put in charge of it. In the first line, Göring summarized the basic principle of the NS policy vis-à-vis the Jews:

> *"The emigration of the Jews out of Germany is to be promoted by all means."*

The Reich Central Office had the mission of "effecting all measures for the preparation of an intensified emigration of the Jews," of promoting preferen-

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[504] Hitler had already expressed this intention in the first written document of his political career, a letter to his friend Gemlich on September 16, 1919 (a), and later in his speech "Warum sind wir Antisemiten?" (b).
a) E. Deuerlein, "Hitlers Eintritt in die Politik und die Reichswehr", in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1959, p. 204.
b) R. H. Phelps, "Hitler's 'grundlegende' Rede über den Antisemitismus" in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1968, p. 417.

[505] R. Vogel, *Ein Stempel hat gefehlt. Dokumente zur Emigration deutscher Juden*, Droemer Knaur, Munich/Zürich 1977, pp. 46 and 107-109.

[506] PS-3358.

tial emigration of poor Jews and, lastly, of facilitating bureaucratic procedure for individuals.[507]

On June 24, 1940, Heydrich asked Foreign Minister Joachim Ribbentrop to inform him of possible ministerial meetings regarding the 'final solution of the Jewish question.' The German wording of this phrase, upon which so much print has been expended and about which so much disinformation has been propagated, is "*Endlösung der Judenfrage*." Heydrich gave these reasons for his request:[508]

> *"The Herr General Field Marshall, in his capacity as delegate for the Four Year Plan, charged me in the year 1939 with the execution of Jewish emigration from the entire territory of the Reich. In the period that followed we have managed, despite great difficulties even during the war, in successfully continuing the Jewish emigration.*
> *Since my administrative office assumed the task on January 1, 1939, more than 200,000 Jews have emigrated from the territory of the Reich. The whole problem – there are already approximately 3¼ million Jews in the territories subject to German sovereignty today – can, however, no longer be solved by emigration.*
> *A territorial final solution is thus becoming necessary."*

As a result of this letter, the Foreign Ministry devised the so-called Madagascar Plan. On July 3, 1940, Franz Rademacher, director of the Jewish Department in the Foreign Ministry, composed a report entitled "Die Judenfrage im Friedensvertrage" (The Jewish Question in the Peace Treaty), which begins with the following declaration:

> *"The approaching victory gives Germany the possibility and, in my opinion, also the duty of solving the Jewish problem in Europe. The most desirable solution of all is: all Jews out of Europe."*

Rademacher explained that by the peace treaty – regarded as imminent – with France, Germany would receive the island of Madagascar as a mandate, to which all European Jews would be deported and which would form an autonomous state under the control of Germany:[509]

> *"The island will be transferred to Germany as a mandate.* […] *Other than that, the Jews receive self-government in this territory: their own mayors, their own police, their own post office and rail administration etc. The Jews will be liable as co-debtors for the value of the whole island."*

The project was approved by Ribbentrop and was referred to the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt*, which was to be responsible for the technical preparations for

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[507] NG-2586-A.
[508] T-173.
[509] NG-2586-B.

the resettlement of the Jews to the east African island and the supervision of the evacuated Jews.[510]

This, then, was the "territorial final solution" of the Jewish question that Heydrich had in mind.

2. The Madagascar Plan[511]

On August 30, 1940, Rademacher prepared the note "*Madagaskar-Projekt*," in which the section "*Finanzierung*" (Financing) begins with the following words:[512]

> *"The execution of the proposed final solution requires substantial means."*

The 'final solution of the Jewish question' therefore meant nothing other than the resettlement of the European Jews to Madagascar. On July 12, 1940, Hans Frank, Governor General of Poland, gave a speech, in which he announced the decision[513]

> *"to deport the entire Jewish tribe in the German Reich, in the General Gouvernement, and in the Protectorate within the shortest time imaginable after the conclusion of peace to an African or American colony. Madagascar, which is supposed to be ceded by France for this purpose, is under consideration."*

On July 25, Frank repeated that the Führer had decided to deport the Jews,[514]

> *"as soon as the overseas traffic permits the possibility of the transportation of the Jews."*

In October 1940, Alfred Rosenberg wrote an article entitled "*Juden auf Madagaskar*" (Jews to Madagascar), in which he recalled that as early as the anti-Jewish Congress of Budapest in 1927

> "[…] *the question of a future forced evacuation of the Jews out of Europe* [was] *discussed, and there for the first time surfaced the proposal of promoting Madagascar as the future home of the Jews."*

Rosenberg took up the proposal and expressed his wish that "Jewish high-finance" of the USA and Great Britain might also contribute to the establishment of a 'Jewish reservation' on Madagascar, which in his opinion constituted "a world problem."[515]

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[510] NG-2586-J.

[511] A detailed complete study of this question is Magnus Brechtken's *"Madagaskar für die Juden": Antisemitische Idee und politische Praxis 1895-1945*, R. Oldenbourg Verlag, Munich 1998.

[512] NG-2586-D.

[513] PS-2233. IMT, Vol. XXIX, p. 378.

[514] PS-2233. IMT, Vol. XXIX, p. 405.

[515] CDJC, CXLVI-51, pp. 4, 7, 9.

At the conference, the theme of which was "The Jewish Question as World Problem," which took place on March 29, 1941, Rosenberg declared:

> *"For Germany, the Jewish issue will be solved only when the last Jew has departed the territory of greater Germany."*

He mentioned in this connection a "Jewish reservation," which – even though Rosenberg did not expressly say it – was obviously supposed to be located on Madagascar.[516]

According to the testimony of Moritz von Schirmeister, a former official in the Propaganda Ministry, Josef Goebbels spoke about the Madagascar Plan several times,[517] and Ribbentrop recalled the decision of the Führer to deport the European Jews to north Africa or Madagascar.[518] This was no idle pipe dream, but rather a very real and concrete project. Parallel to this, the authorities of the Reich kept promoting Jewish emigration, mainly out of Germany, by all means.

On May 20, 1941, in expectation of the implementation of the Madagascar Plan, which, so it was thought, was imminent, Heydrich prohibited Jewish emigration from France and Belgium "in view of the final solution of the Jewish problem, which is undoubtedly approaching."[519] But Heydrich nevertheless repeated the central principle of the NS policy toward the Jews:[520]

> *"In accordance with a communication from the Reichsmarschall of the Greater German Reich* [Göring]*, the emigration of the Jews from the territory of the Reich, including the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, is to be carried out and even intensified during the war within the limits of the existing possibilities in compliance with the guidelines established for the emigration of the Jews."*

Heydrich then unambiguously explained the reasons for the prohibition of Jewish emigration from France and Belgium:[519]

> *"Since there exist, for example, only insufficient travel possibilities for the Jews out of the Reich territory, chiefly across Spain and Portugal, an emigration of Jews from France and Belgium would mean a renewed decrease of the same."*

Two months after that, on July 31, Göring entrusted Heydrich with the mission to effect all necessary preparations for the 'final solution,' *i.e.* the emigration or evacuation of all Jews in the German sphere of influence, to Madagascar. In his letter we read:[521]

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[516] CDJC, CXLVI-23, pp. 6 and 82.
[517] IMT, Vol. XVII, pp. 250.
[518] IMT, Vol. X, p. 398.
[519] NG-3104.
[520] NG-2586-E. PS-710.
[521] The legal emigration into other states or the deportation to the east (Poland: October 1939 to March 1940) or to the West (unoccupied France: October 1940).

> *"Supplementary to the task already delegated to you with the order of Jan. 14, '39, of bringing the Jewish problem to the most favorable solution consistent with the circumstances and in the form of the emigration or evacuation, I hereby charge you to effect all necessary organizational, practical, and material preparations for a total solution of the Jewish question within the German sphere of influence in Europe. Insofar as the responsibilities of other central authorities are involved in this, they are to participate.*
> *I further charge you to present me shortly with a comprehensive plan for the organizational, practical, and material prerequisites for the execution of our goal, the final solution of the Jewish question."*

This document is in full conformity with the Madagascar Plan. The instructions from Göring issued as "[s]upplementary" to those already given to Heydrich in the order of January 14, 1939, in fact consisted exclusively in the accomplishment of the solution of the Jewish problem "in the form of emigration or evacuation"[522] of the Jews from the Reich, while at the same time a territorial 'final solution' for all Jews in the German-occupied European nations, by means of forced resettlement to Madagascar, was the aim. Precisely because it included all Jews of the occupied European nations, this solution was designated as the "*Gesamtlösung*" (complete solution).

By virtue of the fact that Heydrich wrote on November 6, 1941, that he had already been charged for years with the preparation for the 'final solution' in Europe,[523] he himself was clearly referring to the task assigned to him by the order of January 14, 1939, and identified the 'final solution' with the "solution in form of an emigration or evacuation," which Göring had specified as the goal in the letter of July 31, 1941. In the same context belongs an order, which was transmitted to the Foreign Office by Adolf Eichmann on August 28, 1941, and which prohibited "an emigration of Jews out of the territories occupied by us, in consideration of the final solution of the issue of European Jews, which is in preparation and is approaching."[524]

3. From Madagascar Plan to Deportation to the East

In the following months, after the start of the Russian campaign, the prospect of large territorial gains became realistic so that new perspectives developed, which led to a significant change of course in the NS Jewish policy. In place of the 'final solution' by forced resettlement to Madagascar, a 'territorial final solution' emerged, by which the European Jews were to be deported to the eastern territories conquered by the Germans.

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[522] PS-1624.
[523] PA, Inland II A/B, AZ 83-85 Sdh. 4, Bd. 59/3.
[524] CDJC, V-15.

This change in course was announced on August 22, 1941, by *SS-Sturmbannführer* Carltheo Zeitschel, an advisor at the German embassy in Paris, who wrote a note to the attention of ambassador Otto Abetz:[525]

> *"The progressive conquest and occupation of the far eastern territories can presently bring the Jewish problem in all of Europe to a final satisfactory solution within a very short time. As is seen from the cries for assistance by all the Jews of Palestine in their press to the American Jews, over 6 million Jews reside in the territories occupied by us during the last weeks, especially Bessarabia – that is, one-third of World Jewry. During the new organization of the eastern lands, these 6 million Jews would have to be collected anyhow and a special territory presumably marked off for them. It shouldn't be too big a problem, at this opportunity, if the Jews from all the other European countries are added to this and the Jews presently crammed into ghettos in Warsaw, Litzmannstadt, Lublin, etc. are also deported there.*
>
> *Regarding the occupied territories, such as Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg, Norway, Yugoslavia, Greece, the Jews can simply be transported by military order in mass-transports into the new territory, and it can be suggested to the remaining states that they follow this example and get rid of their Jews by sending them to this territory. We could then have Europe free of Jews within a very short time.*
>
> *The idea, which has recurred for years and which was aired once again by Admiral Darlan a few months ago, of transporting all the Jews of Europe to Madagascar, is, to be sure, not bad in itself, but would run up against insurmountable transportation difficulties directly after the war, since world tonnage, seriously decimated by the war, will surely be needed for other things more important than taking large numbers of Jews for a ride on the oceans of the world. Not to mention that transportation of nearly 10 million would require years, even if there were numerous ships available.*
>
> *For this reason, I propose to present this question to the Reich Foreign Ministry at the next opportunity, and to ask to meet for discussion with the aforementioned future minister for the eastern territories, Reichsleiter Rosenberg, and with the Reichsführer-SS with such a regulation in mind and to examine the matter in the manner I have suggested. The problem of transporting the Jews to the eastern territories could even be dealt with during the war and would not encounter insurmountable difficulties after the war, especially since all the Jews in the General Gouvernement would be able to cover the distance into the newly delineated territory, of course, with their automobiles on country roads."*

After Zeitschel had alluded to the situation of French Jewry, he concluded:

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[525] PS-1017.

> *"Furthermore, I would propose suggesting this idea at the next opportunity to the Reichsmarschall as well; he is currently quite receptive to the Jewish problem and, given his present attitude and his experiences, could surely be an extraordinarily strong supporter in the execution of the idea developed above."*

The plan of deporting the Jews into the eastern territories had already been considered several times earlier. On April 2, 1941, even before the start of the eastern campaign, Reichsminister Rosenberg had toyed with the thought[526]

> *"of making use to a greater extent of Muscovite Russia as a disposal region for undesirable elements of the population."*

On July 17, 1941, General Governor Frank made the following entry in his work diary:[527]

> *"The Herr Governor General wants no further ghetto formation, since according to an express declaration of the Führer of June 19 of this year, the Jews would be removed from the General Gouvernement within a foreseeable time, and the General Gouvernement is supposed to be only a sort of transit camp."*

On August 20, 1941, after a visit to the headquarters of the Führer, Goebbels confided the following to his diary:[528]

> *"Beyond this, however, the Führer has promised me that I can deport the Jews out of Berlin into the east directly after the end of the eastern campaign.* […]*"*

On September 24, 1941, Goebbels had a conversation with Heydrich in the Führer's headquarters; on the day after, he wrote in his diary that the Jews in the east

> *"in the end are all supposed to be transported* […] *into the camps built by the Bolsheviks."*[528]

Likewise, on September 28, he wrote that the Führer held the view that one must push the Jews step by step out of all of Germany, and he expressed the following desire:[528]

> *"Berlin is first in line, and it is my hope that we succeed during the course of this year in transporting a substantial part of the Berlin Jews to the east."*

In a note of October 7, 1941, Werner Koeppen, a liaison of Rosenberg's, wrote that on the previous day Hitler had declared the following on the Protectorate:[528]

> *"All Jews must be removed from the Protectorate, and indeed not just into the General Gouvernement, but farther on to the east. The great need for*

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[526] Citation by Martin Broszat, "Hitler und die Genesis der "Endlösung." Aus Anlaß der Thesen von David Irving", in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, No. 25/4, 1977, pp. 748f.
[527] *Ibid*., p. 750.
[528] *Ibid*., p. 751.

> *means of transportation is the only reason why this cannot be executed at the moment. Along with the Protectorate Jews, all Jews should disappear from Berlin and Vienna at the same time."*

On October 13, 1941, Frank and Rosenberg had a conversation, during which they discussed the deportation of the Jews from the General Gouvernement:[529]

> *"The Governor General then came to speak about the possibility of deporting the Jewish population of the General Gouvernement into the occupied territories of the east. Reichsminister Rosenberg remarked that similar requests were already being brought to him from the military administration in Paris.*[530] *At the moment, however, he saw no possibility as yet for the carrying out of these kinds of resettlement plans. But he announced himself ready to promote the emigration of Jews to the east in the future, especially since the intention existed anyhow of sending off asocial elements within the territory of the Reich into the sparsely settled territories of the east."*

Zeitschel's proposal was thus accepted some months later by Hitler himself, who resolved to temporarily shelve the Madagascar Plan and to deport all Jews living in the occupied territories to the east. This decision of the Führer was probably made in September 1941. On October 23, 1941, Himmler prohibited Jewish emigration, effective at once,[531] and on the following day the evacuation of 50,000 western Jews to the east was ordered. On October 24, Kurt Daluege, chief of the *Ordnungspolizei* (the regular police force responsible for keeping public order), issued a decree that dealt with "Evacuations of Jews from the Old Reich and the Protectorate":[532]

> *"In the period from November 1 to December 4, 1941, 50,000 Jews will be deported by the Sicherheitspolizei* [Security Police] *from the Old Reich, the Ostmark* [Austria] *and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia to the east, into the region around Riga and Minsk. The evacuations will take place in transport trains of the Reichsbahn* [German railway] *for 1,000 persons at a time. The transport trains will assemble in Berlin, Hamburg, Hanover, Dortmund, Münster, Düsseldorf, Cologne, Frankfurt/M., Kassel, Stuttgart, Nuremberg, Munich, Vienna, Breslau, Prague, and Brünn* [Brno]*."*

On October 25, 1941, Franz Rademacher, legation counselor at the Foreign Office, composed a note, in which, after recording the shooting of 8,000 male Jews in Serbia, he added the following:[533]

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[529] *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), p. 252.

[530] A clear allusion to the proposal of *SS-Sturmbannführer* Carltheo Zeitschel.

[531] T-394: "The Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police has ordered that the emigration of Jews is to be prohibited effective immediately."

[532] PS-3921.

[533] Robert Kempner, *Eichmann und Komplizen*, Europe Verlag, Zürich-Stuttgart-Vienna 1961, p. 293.

> *"The rest of the approximately 20,000 Jews (women, children, and old people) and about 1,500 Gypsies, whose men were likewise also shot,*[534] *were to be collected into the so-called Gypsy Quarter of the city of Belgrade as a ghetto. Food for the winter could be secured in scanty amounts.*
> […]
> *As soon as the technical possibility exists within the scope of the total solution of the Jewish question, the Jews will be deported by sea to the reception camps in the east."*

If, according to this, a portion of these Serbian Jews (the adult males) were shot and the rest were subject to the "total solution to the Jewish problem," it is clear that the physical destruction of the Jews could not have been meant by the latter phrase, but merely the deportation into "reception camps in the east," which served to accept Jews incapable of working.

The new course of the NS policy toward the Jews was officially announced to the senior party ranks at the Wannsee Conference, called expressly for this purpose. The conference, originally planned for December 9, 1941,[535] but then postponed, took place on January 20, 1942, at Großer Wannsee 56/58 in Berlin. The speaker was Reinhardt Heydrich. The conference protocol begins with a broad retrospective on the National Socialist Jewish policy up to that point:[536]

> *"At the beginning of the discussion Chief of the Security Police and of the SD* [Sicherheitsdienst = Security Service]*, SS-Obergruppenführer Heydrich, reported that the Reichsmarschall had appointed him delegate for the preparation of the final solution of the Jewish question in Europe and pointed out that this discussion had been called for the purpose of clarifying fundamental questions. The wish of the Reich Marshal to have a draft sent to him concerning organizational, practical and material interests in relation to the final solution of the Jewish question in Europe necessitates the initial joint action of all central offices immediately concerned with these questions in order to bring their general activities into line. The Reichsführer-SS and the Chief of the German Police (Chief of the Security*

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534 The male Jews were supposed to have been deported, since they had taken part in "numerous acts of sabotage and revolt." At first it was intended to deport them "to the General Gouvernement or Russia," but because "difficulties with transportation" intervened and the Germans rated these Jews as a direct security threat, they were shot. *ibid*., pp. 288-292.

535 PS-709.

536 NG-2586-G. It should be pointed out that there is well-founded doubt as to the authenticity of the Wannsee Protocol, cf. Roland Bohlinger, Johannes P. Ney, *Zur Frage der Echtheit des Wannsee-Protokolls*, 2nd ed., Verlag für ganzheitliche Forschung und Kultur, Viöl 1994; Roland Bohlinger (ed.), *Die Stellungnahme der Leitung der Gedenkstätte Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz zu dem von Bohlinger und Ney verfaßten Gutachten zur Frage der Echtheit des sogenannten Wannsee-Protokolls und der dazugehörigen Schriftstücke*, Verlag für ganzheitliche Forschung, Viöl 1995; J. P. Ney, "Das Wannsee-Protokoll – Anatomie einer Fälschung", in: E. Gauss (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 97), pp. 169-191.

> *Police and the SD) was entrusted with the official central handling of the final solution of the Jewish question without regard to geographic borders.*
> *The Chief of the Security Police and the SD then gave a short report of the struggle which has been carried on thus far against this enemy, the essential points being the following:*
> *a/ the expulsion of the Jews from every sphere of life of the German people,*
> *b/ the expulsion of the Jews from the living space of the German people.*
> *In carrying out these efforts, an increased and planned acceleration of the emigration of the Jews from Reich territory was started, as the only possible present solution.*
> *By order of the Reich Marshal, a Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration was set up in January 1939 and the Chief of the Security Police and SD was entrusted with its management. Its most important tasks were:*
> *a/ to make all necessary arrangements for the preparation for an increased emigration of the Jews,*
> *b/ to direct the flow of emigration,*
> *c/ to speed the procedure of emigration in each individual case.*
> *The aim of all this was to cleanse German living space of Jews in a legal manner."*

Heydrich emphasized that as a result of this policy and despite various difficulties, up to October 31, 1941, approximately 537,000 Jews had emigrated:

– approximately 360,000 from the Old Reich, borders of January 30, 1933.
– approximately 147,000 from the Ostmark, borders of March 15, 1938.
– approximately 30,000 from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, borders of March 15, 1939.

The protocol continues:

> *"In the meantime the Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police had prohibited emigration of Jews due to the dangers of an emigration in wartime and due to the possibilities of the east.*
> *Another possible solution of the problem has now taken the place of emigration, i.e. the evacuation of the Jews to the East, provided that the Führer gives the appropriate approval in advance.*
> *These actions are, however, only to be considered provisional, but practical experience is already being collected, which is of the greatest importance in relation to the future final solution of the Jewish question."*

Thus, on Hitler's order, the deportation of Jews into the occupied territories of the east replaced the emigration or expulsion of all European Jews to Madagascar, though merely as a "provisional" solution pending a 'final solution' of this issue after the war's end.

In August 1940, Hitler announced his intention to evacuate all the Jews of Europe after the war.[537] According to a note of the Reich Chancellery from

[537] Memorandum of Luther for Rademacher of August 15, 1940, in: *Documents on German*

March or April 1942, he had repeatedly informed Lammers, the chief of this Chancellery, "that he wanted to defer the solution of the Jewish problem until after the war."[538] On July 24, 1942, the Führer confirmed this intention with pithy words:[539]

> *"After finishing the war he will take the rigorous position that he will crush city after city, if the Jews would not come out and migrate to Madagascar or some other Jewish national state."*

The intention of the National Socialists to deal with the solution of the Jewish problem after the war is also apparent from the so-called 'Brown Portfolio,' which was outlined by Rosenberg on June 20, 1941, and integrated into the 'Green Portfolio' of September 1942. There, the section "*Richtlinien für die Behandlung der Judenfrage*" (Guidelines for the handling of the Jewish question) begins with the following words:[540]

> *"All measures for the Jewish problem in the occupied eastern territories must be executed from the perspective that the Jewish problem will be solved for all of Europe in general after the war. For this reason they are to be applied as preparatory partial measures and must be in harmony with the decisions otherwise affecting this area. On the other hand, the experiences gained in the handling of the Jewish question in the occupied eastern territories can point the way to the solution of the whole problem, since the Jews in these regions, together with the Jews of the General Gouvernement, comprise the strongest contingent of European Jewry. Measures, which are of a purely harassing nature, are to be refrained from under any circumstances as being unworthy of a German."*

In a copy of these "Guidelines for the Handling of the Jewish Problem," which bears no date but which nevertheless certainly comes from this period, an additional sentence was inserted after the sentence ending with "decisions otherwise affecting this area":[541]

> *"This applies with particular urgency to the creation of at least temporary possibilities for the reception of Jews from the Reich territory."*

In connection with Jews of Spanish nationality residing in occupied France, a note by Luther of October 17, 1941, likewise mentions

> *"measures to be taken after the war's end for the fundamental solution of the Jewish question."*[542]

Foreign Policy 1918-1945, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Series D, Vol. X, London 1957, p. 484.

538 PS-4025.

539 Henry Picker, *Hitler's Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier*, Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, Munich 1981, p. 456.

540 "Richtlinien für die Führung der Wirtschaft in den besetzten Ostgebieten" (Grüne Mappe), Berlin, September 1942. EC-347. IMT, Vol. XXXVI, p. 348.

541 PS-212. IMT, Vol. XXV, p. 302.

542 PA, Politische Abteilung III 245, AZ Po 36, Bd. I.

Therefore, the Wannsee Conference had been called for the sole purpose of announcing to the authorities concerned the shelving of the emigration policy and the Madagascar Plan as well as the start of a policy of extensive deportation of Jews to the east and the discussion of the problems thereby generated. The Madagascar Plan was officially abandoned on February 10, 1942. A letter from Rademacher to Bielfeld, a diplomat in the Foreign Ministry, dated February 10, 1942, explains why:[543]

> *"In August 1940, I passed on to you for your files the plan devised by my department for the final solution of the Jewish question, for which the island of Madagascar was supposed to be demanded from France in the peace treaty, but the practical execution of the task was to be handed over to the Reichssicherheitshauptamt. In accordance with this plan, Gruppenführer Heydrich was put charged by the Führer with carrying out the solution to the Jewish problem in Europe.*
>
> *In the meantime, the war against the Soviet Union has provided the possibility of making other territories available for the final solution. The Führer has consequently decided that the Jews will not be deported to Madagascar, but to the east instead. Thus, Madagascar no longer needs to be designated for the final solution."*

The 'final solution' was therefore of a territorial nature and consisted of the deportation of the Jews from territories governed by Germany to the east. This is fully consistent with another important document, the Luther Memorandum of August 1942. In it Luther above all summarized the essential points of the NS policy with respect to the Jews:[544]

> *"The basis of the German Jewish policy after the* [first world] *war, after the assumption of power, consisted of promoting Jewish emigration by every means. For this purpose a Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration was created in the year 1939 by General Field Marshall Göring in his capacity as delegate for the Four Year Plan, and the administration was handed over to Gruppenführer Heydrich as Chief of the Security Police."*

After he had explained the genesis and development of the Madagascar Plan, which in the meantime had been overtaken by events, Luther stressed that Göring's letter of July 31, 1941, resulted from Heydrich's letter of June 24, 1940, according to which the Jewish question was no longer to be solved by emigration, but required "a territorial final solution." Luther continues:

> *"After this realization, Reich Marshal Göring charged Gruppenführer Heydrich on July 31, 1941, to make all necessary preparations for a complete solution of the Jewish question in the German sphere of influence in Europe with the participation of the German central authorities involved in the issue.* […] *On the basis of this directive, Gruppenführer Heydrich ar-*

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[543] NG-5770.
[544] NG-2586-J.

ranged a meeting on January 20, 1942, of all participating German administrative departments, which the secretaries of state of the remaining ministries and I myself, from the Foreign Office, had attended. At the meeting, Gruppenführer Heydrich explained that the Reich Marshal had ordered him by the directive of the Führer, and that the Führer had now approved the evacuation of the Jews to the east instead of emigration."

On the basis of this order, Luther added, the evacuation of the Jews from Germany had been implemented. Their destination was the eastern territories, to which they would be deported via the General Gouvernement:

"The transportation to the General Gouvernement is a temporary measure. The Jews will be transported onward to the eastern territories as soon as the technical prerequisites for this are in place."

A circular of October 9, 1942, entitled "Rumors concerning the situation of the Jews in the east," intended for party functionaries, explains the measures taken against the Jews as follows:[545]

"In the course of the work on the final solution of the Jewish question, discussions concerning 'very harsh measures' taken against the Jews, particularly in the eastern territories, are currently arising amongst the population in various parts of the Reich territory. It has been determined that such accounts – mostly in distorted and exaggerated form – are being passed on by those on leave from various units employed in the east, who themselves have had occasion to observe such measures.

It is conceivable that not all fellow countrymen are able to muster adequate understanding for the necessity of such measures, especially not that part of the populace, which has had no opportunity to form its own opinion of the Bolshevist atrocities.

In order to be able to counter any creation of rumors in this connection, which frequently bears an intentionally tendentious character, the exposition set out below is given for instruction about the present situation:

For approximately 2,000 years, a struggle has been fought against Jewry, which has so far been in vain. It is only since 1933 have we started to seek ways and means, which permit a complete separation of Jewry from the body of the German people. The work toward the solution accomplished to date can basically be subdivided as follows:

1. Expulsion of the Jews from various areas of life of the German people. Here, the laws enacted by the legislators should form a foundation, which also offers the guarantee of protecting future generations from a possible new inundation by the enemy.

2. The aim of completely expelling the enemy from the territory of the Reich. Considering the highly limited living-space available to the German

[545] PS-3244.

people, it was hoped that this problem would be essentially solved through acceleration of emigration of the Jews.
Since the beginning of the war in 1939, these possibilities for emigration have become increasingly reduced; on the other hand, the economic domain of the German people steadily increased in comparison with its living-space, so that today, considering the large number of the Jews residing in these territories, a complete expulsion by means of emigration is no longer possible. Since our next generation will no longer see this problem as realistically and, on the basis of past experiences, will no longer see it clearly enough, and because the matter, once it has started rolling, makes a settlement urgent, the whole problem must be solved by the present generation.
For that reason, the complete expulsion or separation of the millions of Jews residing in the European economic domain is a compelling commandment in the struggle to secure the existence of the German people.
Beginning with the territory of the Reich and leading to the rest of the European nations included in the final solution, the Jews will be continuously transported to the east into large camps, some existing, some still to be constructed, from whence they will either be put to work or be taken still farther to the east. The old Jews, as well as the Jews with high war decorations (Iron Cross, First Class; Golden Medal for Bravery etc.) will continue to be resettled in the city of Theresienstadt located in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.
It lies in the nature of things that these in part very difficult problems can be solved only with ruthless severity in the interests of the ultimate security of our people."

In a report entitled "Financing the Measures for the Solution of the Jewish Problem" of December 14, 1942, Ministerial Counselor Maedel summed up the National Socialist policy toward the Jews as follows:[546]

"The Reich Marshal charged the Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police a long time ago with preparing the measures, which will serve the final solution of the European Jewish question. The Reichsführer-SS has entrusted the execution of these tasks to the Chief of the Security Police and of the SD. Initially, the latter promoted the legal emigration of the Jews overseas by special measures. When, on the outbreak of the war, the emigration overseas was no longer possible, he initiated the gradual clearing of the Reich territory of Jews by their deportation to the east. Moreover, in more recent times old peoples' homes (old peoples' ghettos) have been established within Reich territory for the admission of Jews, e.g. in Theresienstadt. Indications as to the particulars are found in the note of

[546] NG-4583.

August 21, 1942. The establishment of additional old peoples' homes in the eastern territories is imminent."

4. Results of the NS Policy of Promoting Jewish Emigration

The National Socialist policy for the promotion of Jewish emigration conformed to a concrete goal of the Reich leadership and was accordingly carried out earnestly and successfully. In April of 1943, Richard Korherr, Inspector for Statistics at the office of the Reichsführer SS, wrote a report entitled "The Final Solution to the European Jewish Question,"[547] in which the following figures are given:

Region	Start of Period ending Dec. 31, 1942	Emigration	Mortality Surplus
Altreich (Germany proper, with Sudetenland)	January 31, 1933 (Sept. 29, 1938)	–382,534	–61,193
Ostmark (Austria)	March 13, 1938	–149,124	–14,509
Bohemia and Moravia	March 16, 1939	–25,699	–7,074
Eastern Territories (with Białystok)	September 1939 (June 1940)	–334,673	
General Gouvernement (Poland, with Lemberg)	September 1939 (June 1940)	–427,920	
Combined Total		–1,402,726	

Thus, 557,357 Jews emigrated from the Altreich (Germany proper), Austria, and Bohemia and Moravia, to which more than half of the 762,593 Jews from the General Gouvernement and the eastern territories can be added,[548] a figure from the categories "Emigration" and "Mortality Surplus" combined by Korherr for those two areas. Consequently, the NS government stimulated the emigration of approximately one million Jews out of the territories controlled by it from 1933 to 1942.

[547] NO-5193.

[548] Approximately 300,000 Jews emigrated from Poland alone in 1939-1941. G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 180), p. 542.

5. The Start of Deportation of Jews to the East

The policy of deportation of Jews to the east, which was decided upon by Hitler himself in September 1941, received its official blessing in a letter, which Himmler wrote to Gauleiter Arthur Greiser on September 18, 1941:[549]

> *"The Führer desires that the Altreich* [Germany proper] *and the Protectorate be emptied and freed of Jews as soon as possible, from the west to the east. It is therefore my intention, if possible this year, to initially transport the Jews from the Altreich and the Protectorate into the eastern territories newly incorporated into the Reich two years ago, as a first stage, in order to deport them still farther to the east next spring.*
> *I am planning to bring about 60,000 Jews of the Altreich and the Protectorate into the Litzmannstadt Ghetto for the winter, which, as I understand, has space to accept them. In the interests of the Reich as a whole, I am asking you not only to understand, but to exert all your powers in supporting this measure, which surely will cause difficulties for your district.*
> *SS-Gruppenführer Heydrich, who has the task of carrying out this migration of Jews, will be turning to you in due course, directly or through SS-Gruppenführer Koppe."*

At a meeting held in Prague on October 10, 1941, in which Heydrich also took part, the solution of the Jewish problem in the Protectorate as well as the partial solution of the Jewish problem in the Altreich was discussed. The start of the deportations was fixed for October 15, and it was decided to deport 50,000 Jews to Minsk and Riga:[550]

> *"It was planned to begin with it on October 15, 1941, in order to get the transports started gradually until November 15, up to an amount of about 5,000 Jews – from Prague only. For the time being, much consideration must still be shown to the Litzmannstadt authorities. Minsk and Riga are supposed to get 50,000."*

In regard to the accommodation of the future deportees, we read:

> *"SS-Brif.* [Brigadeführer] *Nebe and Rasch can take Jews into the camps for Communist prisoners in the zone of operations."*

As already mentioned, the deportation order was issued on October 24, 1941. The eastern territories were the destination of these deportations. At that time, the eastern territories under civilian administration were the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* and the *Reichskommissariat Ukraine*, both subject to the authority of Alfred Rosenberg, the Reichsminister for the occupied territo-

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[549] Himmler letter to Greiser of 18 September 1941, Bundesarchiv Koblenz, NS 19/2655, p. 3. Reproduction of the document in Peter Witte, "Zwei Entscheidungen in der 'Endlösung der Judenfrage': Deportationen nach Lodz und Vernichtung in Chełmno" in: *Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente*, Verlag Academia, Prague 1995, p. 50.

[550] T-37/299.

ries of the east. The *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, administered by *Reichskommissar* Hinrich Lohse, was subdivided into the four general districts or *Generalkommissariate* of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and White Russia, while the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine was governed by *Reichskommissar* Erich Koch.

The first orders with respect to the Jews in the eastern territories were harsh, but in no way aimed at extermination. The paragraph "Guidelines for the handling of the Jewish question" in the 'Brown Portfolio' dating from June 20, 1941, intended the isolation of the local Jews from the rest of the population and their exclusion from economic, social, and cultural life by means of ghettoization:[551]

> *"Freedom of movement is immediately abolished for all Jews. A transfer to ghettos is intended, which is facilitated in White Russia and in the Ukraine by the presence of numerous more or less closed Jewish settlements. A Jewish self-government with Jewish police can be given to these ghettos under supervision."*

The "Temporary guidelines for the treatment of the Jews in the territory of the Reichskommissariat Ostland", which were presented to Rosenberg on August 13, 1941, also planned strict measures for the exclusion of Jews from public life and their concentration in ghettos:[552]

> *"The Jews are to be concentrated as far as is practicable in cities or sections of cities, which already have a predominantly Jewish populace. Ghettos are to be established there. The Jews are to be prohibited from leaving the ghettos. In the ghettos, they are to be allowed to have as much food as the rest of the populace can do without, but not more than necessary for a scanty nutrition of the occupants. The same applies to supplying them with essential goods."*

After a reference to the self-government in the ghettos, the "Guidelines" deal with deployment of the Jews for labor:

> *"The Jews who are capable of working are to be conscripted for forced labor according to the need for labor. The economic interests of residents who are worthy of advancement, are not to be permitted to be injured by the Jewish forced labor. The forced labor can be performed in work parties outside of the ghettos, inside the ghetto, or, where ghettos have not yet been established, also individually outside of the ghettos (e.g. in the workshops of the Jews)."*

These orders went into effect in the general district of Latvia on September 1, 1941.[553]

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[551] "Richtlinien für die Führung der Wirtschaft in den neubesetzten Ostgebieten" (Grüne Mappe), Berlin, September 1942. EC-347. IMT, Vol. XXXVI, p. 349.

[552] PS-1138.

[553] "Orders for the treatment of Jews in the region of the former Free State of Latvia," issued by the Generalkommissar in Riga on August 30, 1941. GARF, 7445-2-145, pp. 29f.

On September 12 of that year, Wilhelm Keitel, commander of the General Headquarters of the Wehrmacht, issued a directive dealing with the subject "Jews in the newly occupied territories of the east," which begins as follows:[554]

> *"The struggle against Bolshevism demands ruthless and energetic measures above all also against the Jews, the main sponsors of Bolshevism."*

This struggle did not mean, however, the extermination of the Jews, but merely the prohibition of collaboration with the Jewish populace as well as of the entry of individual Jews into the auxiliary services of the Wehrmacht. The employment of Jews was permitted exclusively "in specially collected labor crews" under German supervision.

On October 1, 1941, *SS-Sturmbannführer* Ehrlinger, with permission of his superior Franz Stahlecker, head of *Einsatzgruppe* A, composed a note on the subject "Establishment of a Concentration Camp in Latvia." It proposed the formation of a camp in the vicinity of Riga for approximately 3,000 prisoners in jails and for approximately 23,000 Jews living in the ghetto of Riga. The prisoners were supposed to be employed at the cutting of peat and the production of tiles. As to the Jews, it said:[555]

> *"It can now be said that the intended space offers many possibilities of this sort, which can enable all Jews still in Riga and in Latvia in general to be collected there. In doing so, the Jews must be separated from the Jewesses from the start, in order to prevent further reproduction. Children under 14 years of age must remain with the women."*

The proposal was approved by Reichsminister Rosenberg. On December 4, 1941, he wrote a letter to *Reichskommissar* Lohse on the subject of "Solution of the Jewish Question," in which he reported the following:[556]

> *"The suggestions of Herr Generalkommissar in Riga with regard to the transportation of Jews from the Altreich to Riga and the establishment of Jewish camps have been passed on to me. As SS-Obergruppenführer Heydrich reported at a meeting a few days ago, the Jewish camp whose construction was planned at Riga is supposed to go into the Plaskau region."*

6. Direct Transports of Jews to the Eastern Territories

The deportation of 50,000 Jews from the Protectorate and the Altreich to Minsk and Riga, decided upon during the meeting of October 10, 1941, began a month later. However, it represented only the first step of the deportations, since the deportees were supposed to be taken even farther east. One of the

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[554] GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 34.
[555] RGVA, 504-2-8, pp. 148-150.
[556] GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 64.

first reports concerning the deportations into the *Ostland* is a telegram of November 9, 1941, directed to Rosenberg by Lohse, which reads as follows:[557]

> *"Security Police reports implementation of the transport of 50,000 Jews into the Ostland. Arrival of the 1st transport at Minsk, November 10, in Riga, November 19. Urgently request to prevent transports, since Jewish camps must be shifted considerably farther to the east."*

On the same day, Dr. Leibbrand, head of the office at the Rosenberg Ministry, sent the following telegram to Lohse:[558]

> *"Regarding transports of Jews into the Ostland.*
> *Precise message on its way. Jews are coming farther east. Camps in Riga and Minsk only temporary measures, no objections on that account here."*

The local authorities were anything but delighted about the influx of these western Jews and lodged protests against it several times. On November 20, 1941, the Wehrmacht commander of the *Ostland* wrote a letter to Lohse on the subject "Transportation of Jews from Germany to White Russia," in which he explained:[559]

> *"According to a report of the 707th Division, 25,000 Jews are supposed to be transported out of Germany to White Russia, of which 3,000 are allegedly intended for Minsk and 1,500 have already arrived from Hamburg. The immigration of German Jews, who are far superior in intelligence to the masses of the White Russian population, means a great danger to the pacification of White Russia."*

The Jewish population of White Russia, the letter continued, was "Bolshevist and capable of every attitude hostile to Germany" as well as active in the resistance. Therefore, the German-Jewish new arrivals would make contact with Communist organizations. For this reason as well as because the deportations would hinder the transports for the Wehrmacht, the Wehrmacht commander asked that

> *"arrangements be made that no Jews come from Germany to White Russia."*

But the protests faded away unheard. On November 20, 1941, Stahlecker reported to Lohse:[560]

> *"The transports of Jews are at present arriving in Minsk as planned.*
> *Of the 25 transports which originally were destined for Riga, the first 5 were diverted to Kauen*[561]*."*

A note of January 13, 1942, from Lohse's office reiterated:[562]

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[557] GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 52.
[558] GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 54 and p. 51 (transcription of the telegram).
[559] GARF, 7445-2-145, pp. 60f.
[560] GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 62.
[561] German name for Kaunas.
[562] GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 67.

> *"Presented to Herr Reichskommissar* [Lohse] *with the request that he take note of the report of the City Commissioner in Minsk concerning the evacuation of reportedly 50,000 Jews from Germany to Minsk.*
> *If not ordered otherwise by Herr Reichskommissar, the order of November 28 remains in force, according to which no objections are to be raised against any kind of transports from the Reich."*

On January 5, 1942, the City Commissioner of Minsk, Janetzke, who opposed the deportations into this city, turned directly to Rosenberg. He wrote the latter a letter in re "Evacuation of Jews from Germany to Minsk," in which he explained that he had heard that the central authorities had the intention

> *"of bringing approximately 50,000 more Jews from Germany to Minsk in the next weeks and months."*

About 100,000 civilians lived in that city, which literally lay in ruins, and also "about 7,000 Jews from Germany" as well as "roughly from 15,000 to 18,000 Russian Jews" as prisoners. Thus, no possibility existed of accommodating any more people. To these difficulties, "the very serious problem of feeding the population (including the Jews)" was added. For these reasons, Janetzke asked for the cessation of the Jewish transports to Minsk.[563]

District Court Judge Wetzel responded on behalf of Rosenberg in a letter dated January 16, 1942, which was directed to Reich Commissioner Lohse:[564]

> *"Re: Evacuation of Jews from Germany to Minsk.*
> *The letter of January 5, 1942, from the Herr City Commissioner of Minsk, copy enclosed, of which I ask you to take note, was sent to me.*
> *According to a communication of the Reich Security Headquarters imparted to me, it was planned to send 25,000 Jews from the Reich to Minsk, who were supposed to be accommodated in the ghetto there. Of these, 7-8,000 Jews have reached Minsk. The rest who remained behind cannot be transferred to Minsk at this time due to transportation difficulties. As soon as these difficulties are removed, however, the arrival of these Jews in Minsk must be reckoned with. I ask to instruct the City Commissioner of Minsk in this regard and I further request him to contact the Senior Police Chief in charge with regard to the question of accommodating and feeding the Jews. I ask to suggest to him further that he adhere to the chain of command in future."*

However, on February 6, 1942, in a letter to Lohse, the Generalkommissar for White Russia, William Kube, supported Janetzke's request. He pointed out how impossible it was in a city like Minsk, 80 percent of which lay in ruins, to

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563 GARF, 7445-2-145, pp. 65f.
564 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 68.

accommodate yet an additional 25,000 Jews.[565] On June 26, 1942, the Chief of the Security Police and of the SD reported:[566]

> *"Also in White Russia, the measures taken by the Security Police and the SD have to cause fundamental changes in the area of the Jewish question. In order first to bring the Jews under effective supervision, independent of later measures yet to be taken, Jewish Councils of Elders were employed, which are responsible to the Security Police and the SD for the attitude of their racial comrades. Above and beyond this, the registration of the Jews and their consolidation in ghettos has been started. Lastly, the Jews have been made recognizable by a yellow badge to be worn on the chest and back, after the manner of the Jewish star introduced in the Reich territory. In order to evaluate the labor potential of the Jews, they are generally being taken into the private labor assignments and employed in cleaning up. With these measures, the foundations for the later intended final solution of the European Jewish question have been created for the White Russian territory as well."*

The measures were nothing other than the concrete implementation of the policy as laid out in the 'Brown Portfolio,' which intended a future solution of the Jewish problem "for all of Europe after the war."

7. Numerical Data on Direct Transports to the Eastern Territories

The existing railway documents[567] make it possible for us to draw only a part of the entire picture of the transports of Jews directly into the eastern territories. The transports arriving from the territory of the Reich were organized by the German *Reichsbahn* (Reichsbahndirektion in Königsberg), whose duty was to inform all departments involved. The transports received the abbreviation 'Da'[568] and were numbered consecutively. The empty trains, designated by 'Lp,' were assigned numbers above 1,000.

The following transports are known:[569]

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[565] GARF, 7445-2-145, pp. 72f.

[566] "Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten Nr. 9", Berlin, June 26, 1942, RGVA, 500-1-755, p. 190.

[567] Some documents concerning the transports to Minsk are found in the National Archive of the Republic of White Russia (Natsionalni Archiv Republiki Belarus, NARB) under the inventory number 378-1-784.

[568] According to many authors this stands for David.

[569] Raul Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 268). Heiner Lichtenstein, *Mit der Reichsbahn in den Tod*, Bund-Verlag, Düsseldorf 1985. Raisa A. Chernoglazova, *Judenfrei! Svobodno ot Evreev! Istoria Minskogo Getto v dokumentach*, Minsk 1999, pp. 223f. Christian Gerlach, *op. cit.* (note 418), pp. 758f. Wolfgang Benz, *Dimension des Völkermords*, *op. cit.* (note 79), pp. 46f and

Train #	Departure Date	Departure	Destination	Deportees
?	November 4, 1941	Berlin	Riga	?
?	November 8, 1941	Hamburg	Minsk	990
?	November 10, 1941	Düsseldorf	Minsk	993
?	November 11, 1941	Frankfurt/M.	Minsk	1042
?	November 14, 1941	Berlin	Minsk	1,030
?	November 15, 1941	Munich	Riga	?
?	November 16, 1941	Brünn	Minsk	1,000
?	November 17, 1941	Berlin	Kaunas	?
?	November 18, 1941	Hamburg	Minsk	398[570]
?	November 22, 1941	Frankfurt/M.	Riga	?
?	November 23, 1941	Vienna	Kaunas	995
?	November 27, 1941	Berlin	Riga	?
?	November 27, 1941	Munich	Riga	?
?	November 29, 1941	Nuremberg	Riga	820
?	December 1, 1941	Stuttgart	Riga	980
?	December 3, 1941	Vienna	Riga	995
?	December 6, 1941	Hamburg	Riga	765
?	December 6, 1941	Cologne	Riga	1,000
?	December 9, 1941	Kassel	Riga	991
?	December 11, 1941	Düsseldorf	Riga	1,020
?	December 15, 1941	Hanover	Riga	1,000
?	January 9, 1942	Theresienstadt	Riga	1,000
?	January 11, 1942	Vienna	Riga	1,000
?	January 13, 1942	Berlin	Riga	?
?	January 15, 1942	Theresienstadt	Riga	1,000
?	January 19, 1942	Berlin	Riga	?
?	January 21, 1942	Leipzig	Riga	1,000
?	January 25, 1942	Riga	Riga	1,350
?	January 25, 1942	Berlin	Riga	?
?	January 25, 1942	Vienna	Riga	1,196
?	February 6, 1942	Vienna	Riga	997
Da-201	May 6, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-202	May 12, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-203	May 20, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,016
?	May 26, 1942[571]	Germany	Minsk	998
Da-204	May 27, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	998
Da-205	June 2, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-206	June 9, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,006
Da-207	June 16, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-208	June 23, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-40	June 24, 1942	Königsberg	Minsk	770

78. Miroslav Kárný, *Terezinská pametni kniha*. Terezinská Iniciativa, Melantrich 1995, Vol. I, 63-67; Robert Kempner, *Eichmann und Komplizen*, *op. cit.* (note 533), p. 116.

[570] Deportation list 3. Transport. NARB, 738-1-784.

[571] Arrival date.

Train #	Departure Date	Departure	Destination	Deportees
Da-209	June 30, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-210	July 7, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-211	July 14, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-220	July 14, 1942	Theresienstadt	M. Trostinec	1,000
Da-212	July 21, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-219	July 22, 1942	Cologne	Minsk	?
Da-213	July 28, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-221	July 28, 1942	Theresienstadt	Baranovici	1,000
Da-214	August 4, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-222	August 4, 1942	Theresienstadt	M. Trostinec	1,000
Da-215	August 11, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-223	August 17, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,003
Da-216	August 18, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
?	August 20, 1942	Theresienstadt	Riga	1,000
Da-217	August 25, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-224	August 25, 1942	Theresienstadt	M. Trostinec	1,000
?	August 31, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	967
Da-218	September 1, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
?	September 1, 1942	Theresienstadt	Raasiku	1,000
Da-226	September 8, 1942	Theresienstadt	M. Trostinec	1,000
?	September 14, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	992
Da-228	September 22, 1942	Theresienstadt	M. Trostinec	1,000
Da-229	September 30, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
Da-230	October 7, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	1,000
?	November 18, 1942	Hamburg	Minsk	908
?	November 28, 1942	Vienna	Minsk	999
			Total:	56,221

The four transports that left Berlin for Riga on November 4, 1941, and on January 13, 19, and 25, 1942, included approximately 5,000 persons.[572] In the period from November 17, 1941,[573] to February 6, 1942, a total of 25,103 Jews in 25 transports were brought to Riga,[574] but only 15,114 are on the list. Thus, the total number of deportees increases to (5,000 + 56,221 + [25,103-15,114] =) 71,210. The Korherr Report helps us to close the gaps in documentation and to draw a more complete picture of the transports of Jews to the east in the year 1942. We shall address this question in Chapter VIII.

[572] W. Benz, *Dimension des Völkermords*, *op. cit.* (note 79).

[573] This transport arrived in Riga on November 19.

[574] Enclosure with the "Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten" No. 10 from July 3, 1942. RGVA, 500-1-775, p. 233.

Chapter VII:
The Role of the *Einsatzgruppen* in the Occupied Eastern Territories

1. Initial Situation

Since, according to orthodox historians, the Germans in the occupied Soviet territories are supposed to have pursued a policy of systematic extermination of Jews, we must deal with the objection that at the end of the day it does not matter whether the Jews were gassed in Poland in extermination camps or, after their deportation to the east, were shot there. For this reason we will now turn to the question of whether this systematic extermination of Jews in the eastern territories actually occurred. In clarifying this question, the examination of the *Einsatzgruppen* and their missions will play a central role.

Soon after the German invasion into the USSR, four *Einsatzgruppen* altogether numbering 3,000 men – including non-combat troops such as drivers, interpreters, and radiomen[575] – became operational in the conquered regions. One of their missions indisputably consisted of securing the rear, *i.e.*, fighting against partisans. According to the official historiography, however, other, more sinister tasks were assigned to the *Einsatzgruppen*. By referring to a postwar affidavit by Otto Ohlendorf,[576] leader of *Einsatzgruppe* D, Raul Hilberg summarizes as follows:[577]

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[575] Raul Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 289. From October 15, 1941, to February 1, 1942, the strength of *Einsatzgruppe* A sank from 990 to 909 men; the percentage of combat troops fell from 725 men (= 73.2% of the total strength) to 588 (64.7%). *Ibid*. (Oct. 15, 1941), and RVA, 500-4-92, p. 183, "Total Strength of Einsatzgruppe A on 1 February 1942."

[576] PS-3710. – However, Alfred Streim, Director of the Ludwigsburg Central Office for the Resolution of NS Crimes, wrote regarding this:

> *"Ohlendorf's testimony and submissions concerning the inauguration of the 'Führer Order'* […] *are false. In the Einsatzgruppen Trial the former Head of Einsatzgruppe D was able to get his co-defendants to submit to a line of defense put forward by him with the suggestion that if one had, from the very beginning, carried out the extermination operations against the Jews on 'order of the Führer,' one could count upon a more lenient sentence."*

(A. Streim, "Zur Eröffnung des allgemeinen Judenvernichtungsbefehls gegenüber den Einsatzgruppen", in: E. Jäckel, J. Rohwer, *op. cit.* (note 275), p. 303.)

[577] Raul Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 290.

> *"According to Ohlendorf, the commanders of the Einsatzgruppen were briefed by Himmler personally. They were informed that an important part of their task was the elimination* (Beseitigung) *of Jews – women, men, and children – and of Communist functionaries."*

According to Hilberg, the *Einsatzgruppen* killed over 900,000 Soviet Jews, which corresponded to approximately "two-thirds" of the Jewish victims in the territories conquered by the Germans; the rest were killed by Wehrmacht, SS, police units, as well as by Romanians allied with the Germans, or died in camps and ghettos.[578]

As proof for the several hundred thousand murders committed by the *Einsatzgruppen*, first and foremost are cited the so-called "*Ereignismeldungen"* (event reports), which fall into the period from June 1941 to May 1942 and mention numerous massacres, with victims occasionally numbering in five digit figures. The documents are supposed to have been found by the Allies in the offices of the Berlin Reichssicherheitshauptamt. That the Germans let this sort of incriminating material fall into the hands of their enemies, although they could have easily burned the few stacks of papers in time, is strikingly odd. In fact, some revisionist researchers have expressed doubt as to the authenticity of the event reports and are of the opinion that at least in part we are dealing with manipulated documents. The main argument for this thesis lies in the absence of evidence for mass killings of the scope claimed; we shall return to this question. Further grounds are advanced by Arthur Butz:[579]

> *"They* [the documents] *were mimeographed, and signatures are most rare and, when they occur, appear on non-incriminating pages. Document NO-3159, for example, has a signature of a R. R. Strauch, but only on a covering page giving the locations of various units of the* Einsatzgruppen*. There is also NO-1128, allegedly from Himmler to Hitler reporting, among other things, the execution of 363,211 Russian Jews in August-November 1942. This claim occurs on page 4 of NO-1128, while initials said to be Himmler's occur on the irrelevant page 1. Moreover, Himmler's initials were easy to forge: three vertical lines with a horizontal line drawn through them."*

Udo Walendy adds:[580]

> *"As the American military court in the OKW Trial* [Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, General Headquarters] *already stated, even this court was surprised at how conspicuously vague the existing 'USSR Event Reports' were with respect to location, point in time, units, and other details such as troop strength, armaments, auxiliary forces, logistics etc. Merely the num-*

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[578] *Ibid*., p. 390.

[579] Arthur Butz, *op. cit.* (note 108), p. 260.

[580] Udo Walendy, "Einsatzgruppen im Verband des Heeres. 1. Teil", in: *Historische Tatsachen* No. 16, Vlotho 1983, p. 5. The second part of this study appeared in No. 17 of the same journal (1983).

> *ber on a piece of paper, which was written or is supposed to have been written in Berlin, is too little proof for an historian, even if the report itself is possibly authentic and only the number legible today on this piece of paper may have been manipulated, which at a closer examination of the documents seems to be the case."*

An even stronger argument is that a policy of mass extermination in the occupied Soviet territories would have stood in glaring contrast not only to the National Socialist policy of resettlement of the Jews to the east (cf. Chapters VI and VIII), but also to several reports of the *Einsatzgruppen* themselves. We have already determined that the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories" No. 9 of June 26, 1942, following a description of the ghettoization measures taken by the Security Police and the steps toward exploitation of the work force of the Ruthenian Jews, conclude as follows:[581]

> *"With these measures, the foundations for the later intended final solution of the European Jewish question have been created for the White Russian territory as well."*

Event Report No. 52, of August 14, 1941, proposed employing the great mass of the Jews in the following project:[582]

> *"Cultivation of the Pripyet marshes and the marshes on the northern Dnieper as well as the Volga."*

In the following, we refrain from taking any position regarding the authenticity of the event reports, and merely examine the question of whether the content of the documents, independent of their authenticity, reflects historical facts.

It can hardly be seriously contested that the *Einsatzgruppen* committed numerous mass shootings. For our subject, however, there are only two issues of decisive significance:

Were the *Einsatzgruppen* assigned the task of systematically exterminating the Soviet Jews?

Were the western Jews, which had been deported into the eastern territories, treated like the Soviet Jews?

2. Reasons for Mass Shootings

With regard to the first of the two questions we have raised, it can be validly affirmed that the policy of the shooting of Jews was not directed against all eastern Jews and was not generally directed against Jews as such. In a memorandum written on April 29, 1941, Alfred Rosenberg had specified:[583]

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[581] See Chapter VI, Section 6.
[582] See Chapter VIII, Section 5.
[583] PS-1024.

> *"The Jewish problem demands a general treatment, the interim solution of which must be determined (compulsory labor of the Jews, ghettoization, etc.)."*

On May 7, 1941, Rosenberg established in his "Instructions for a Reichskommissar in the Ukraine":[584]

> *"After the removal of the Jews from all public positions, which will occur as a matter of course, the Jewish problem will experience a crucial solution through the establishment of ghettos or labor gangs. Compulsory labor is to be introduced."*

The 'Brown Portfolio,' in the paragraph "Social stratum," distinguished two categories of eastern Jews:[585]

> *"In the individual Reich Kommissariats and within these in the General Kommissariats, Jewry comprises a variously large portion of the general population. For example, in White Russia and in the Ukraine there are millions of Jews who have been resident here for generations. In the central territories of the USSR, on the other hand, a far greater portion of the Jews has moved there only during the Bolshevist era. A special group is formed by Soviet Jews who have intruded into eastern Poland, western Ukraine, western White Ruthenia, the Baltic countries, Bessarabia, and Bukovina in the train of the Red Army in 1939 and 1940. To some extent varied manners of handling these different groups are in place.*
>
> *First and foremost, the Jews who have moved into the territories newly occupied by the Soviets in the past two years, insofar as they have not fled, are to be removed with severe measures. Since these groups have made themselves hated to a great degree due to their terrorizing of the populace, their elimination has already been taken care of for the most part by the populace itself at the appearance of German troops. These sorts of retaliatory measures are not to be opposed. The rest of the resident Jewish population is first of all to be registered by the introduction of the obligation to report. All Jews are being marked by visible symbols (yellow Jewish stars)."*

The "Soviet Jews" were shot, while the great majority of the remaining resident Jewish population was ghettoized. But many other eastern Jews were killed as well: on account of sabotage, anti-German activities, as carriers of diseases, and above all in retaliatory measures for partisan attacks.

This emerges clearly from the first reports of the *Einsatzgruppen*. Here is an excerpt from one of these reports:[586]

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[584] PS-1028.

[585] In: *Grüne Mappe*, *op. cit.* (note 540), pp. 348f.

[586] Activity and Situation Report No. 6 of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the Security Police and the SD in the USSR (period of report from October 1 to 31, 1941). RGVA, 500-1-25/1, pp. 221f.

> *"*[White Russia.] *In Gorodnia, 165 Jewish terrorists and in Chernigov 19 Jewish Communists were liquidated; another 8 Jewish Communists were shot in Beresna.*
> *It was frequently found that Jewish women displayed especially rebellious behavior. For this reason, 28 Jewesses in Krugloye and 337 Jewesses in Mogilev had to be shot.*
> *In Borissov 331 Jewish saboteurs and 118 Jewish looters were executed.*
> *In Bobruisk 380 Jews who had been conducting, right up to the end, defamatory and atrocity propaganda against the German occupation troops were shot.*
> *In Tatarsk the Jews had arbitrarily left the ghetto and returned to their old quarter, where they were attempting to drive out the Russians billeted there in the meantime. All male Jews and 3 Jewesses were shot. On the establishment of a ghetto in Sandrudubs the Jews in part resisted, so that 272 Jews had to be shot. Among them was a political commissar.*
> *The Jews in Mogilev also tried to sabotage their resettlement into the ghetto. 113 Jews were liquidated.*
> *In addition 4 Jews were shot for refusal to work, and 2 Jews because they mistreated wounded German soldiers and had not put on the prescribed symbol.*
> *222 Jews were shot in Talka on account of anti-German propaganda, and 996 Jews in Marina Gorka because they were sabotaging orders issued by the German occupation authorities.*
> *Another 627 Jews were shot at Shklov because they took part in acts of sabotage.*
> *Due to extreme danger of infection, the liquidation of Jews lodged in the ghetto in Vitebsk was begun. There were approximately 3,000 Jews."*

As we shall see in the following section, there are good reasons to doubt the preceding figures. But the text does prove that the *Einsatzgruppen* were not given the mission of the complete extermination of the Jews, since otherwise the distinction between the Jews executed for specific reasons and the rest of the Jews would of course have been totally superfluous.

The most logical argument for the mass shootings actually carried out by the *Einsatzgruppen* might therefore be that, which the Jewish historian Arno Mayer summarizes as follows:[587]

> *"Even so, and notwithstanding the unparalleled magnitude of the Jewish suffering, the extermination of eastern Jewry never became the chief objective of Barbarossa. The fight for* Lebensraum *and against bolshevism was neither a pretext nor an expedient for the killing of Jews. Nor was it a mere smoke screen to disguise the Jewish massacres as reprisals against parti-*

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[587] Arno Mayer, *Why Did the Heavens Not Darken? The "Final Solution" in History*, Pantheon Books, New York 1988, p. 270.

> *sans. The assault on the Jews was unquestionably intertwined with the assault on bolshevism from the very outset. But this is not to say that it was the dominant strand in the hybrid 'Judeobolshevism' that Barbarossa targeted for destruction. In fact, the war against the Jews was a graft onto or a parasite upon the eastern campaign, which always remained its host, even or especially once it became mired deep in Russia.*
> *When they set forth on their mission, Einsatzgruppen and the RSHA were not given the extermination of Jews as their principal, let alone their only, assignment."*

According to Mayer, the massacres of the eastern Jews were not part of a comprehensive plan of extermination, but occurred as the result of the inexorable radicalization of the war in the east and because the eastern Jews were classified by the SS as carriers of Bolshevism.

3. The Scale of the Shootings

The shootings carried out by the SS were in no way as extensive as claimed by the orthodox historians, for the numbers mentioned in the relevant reports cannot be confirmed objectively and in many cases are demonstrably wrong. We now cite some examples:

a. The Number of Jews Killed in Latvia

In a long general report concerning the activity of *Einsatzgruppe* A the following data were given:[588]

> *"The total number of Jews in Latvia in the year 1935 was: 93,479 or 4.7% of the whole population.* […]
> *At the entry of German troops there were still 70,000 Jews in Latvia. The rest had fled with the Bolshevists.* […]
> *Up until October 1941, about 30,000 Jews were executed by this Sonderkommando. The remaining Jews, still indispensable due to economic importance, were collected in ghettos. In the course of dealing with criminal cases involving not wearing the Jewish star, black marketing, theft, fraud, but also on account of preventing danger of epidemics in the ghettos, further executions were carried out afterwards. Thus, on November 9, 1941, 11,034 were executed in Dünaburg, 27,800 in Riga at the beginning of December 1941 by an operation ordered and carried out by the Senior SS- and Police Chief, and 2,350 in Libau in mid-December 1941. At this time there are Latvian Jews in the ghettos (aside from the Jews from the Reich) in:*

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[588] "Einsatzgruppe A, Gesamtbericht vom 16 Oktober 1941 bis 31 Januar 1942", RGVA, 500-4-92, pp. 57-59.

Riga approximately 2,500
Dünaburg " 950
Libau " 3,000."

Let us summarize:

– Jews present at the entry of German troops: 70,000
– Jews shot up to October 1941: 30,000
– Ghetto Jews shot (11,034+27,800+2,350=): 41,184
– Ghetto Jews still living (2,500+950+300=): 3,750

But if we add together the numbers of those shot (30,000 + 41,184 =) 71,184 and those still living in the ghettos (3,750), we get 74,934 Jews, a number which is higher than the number allegedly present at the entry of the Germans into Latvia. In a table that summarizes the report and bears the title "Number of executions carried out by Einsatzgruppe A up to February 1, 1942," the number of those shot is stated as 35,238, to which are added 5,500 Jews killed "by pogroms," but "from December 1, 1941";[589] we therefore have 40,738 Jewish victims. Although this figure includes an additional 5,500 Jews killed in pogroms not mentioned in the report, the total number of those shot is far lower: 40,738 as opposed to 71,184.

b. The Number of Jews Killed in Lithuania

No less strange are the corresponding figures for Lithuania:[590]

"According to one census, up until the entry of the Bolshevists 153,743 Jews were living in Lithuania in the year 1929, which thus constituted 7.58% of the entire population. […]
In many single actions a total of 136,421 Jews were liquidated. […]
Jews in the ghettos:
Kaunas approximately 15,000 Jews
Vilnius " 15,000 Jews
Šiauliai " 4,500 Jews."

In adding the numbers of those shot (136,421) and those still living in the ghettos (34,500), we arrive at a figure, which is once again higher than the initial number (153,743). If, however, one assumes that, as in the case of Latvia, approximately 25% of the Jewish population had fled with the Bolshevists, then the number of Jews still present in Lithuania at the entry of the Germans would have been far lower: approximately 115,000.

c. Lithuanian Jews in Territories Annexed by the Reich

Gerald Reitlinger writes that up to the point in time when Franz Stahlecker, head of *Einsatzgruppe* A, composed his report, 50,000 Jews had been living in

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589 *Ibid*., p. 184.
590 *Ibid*., pp. 59-61.

Latvia and Lithuania (as opposed to the 38,250 mentioned by Stahlecker), but that the number of surviving Jews was significantly higher because some Lithuanian areas – Memelland and the region around Suwałki and Grodno – had been incorporated into the *Reich*. Approximately 40,000 Jews lived in the two ghettos of Grodno, and 18,435 Jews were still living in the Königsberg district, to which Memel and Suwałki belonged, at the end of 1942, consisting almost exclusively of "Soviet Russian Jews,"[591] according to the Korherr Report.

d. Simferopol and the Manstein Trial

General Field Marshall Erich von Manstein was commander of the Eleventh Army, fighting on the Black Sea and in the Crimea. In 1949, he was tried by a British military court in Hamburg on charges of complicity in the massacres committed by *Einsatzgruppe* D. His defense counsel was the Englishman Reginald T. Paget, who wrote a book – translated into German the year after – about the trial in 1951.[592] In it, he reports the following concerning the activities of *Einsatzgruppe* D in the Crimea:[593]

> *"It seemed to me that the S.D. claims were quite impossible. Single companies of about 100 with about 8 vehicles were reporting the killing of up to 10,000 and 12,000 Jews in two or three days. They could not have got more than about 20 or 30 Jews who, be it remembered, thought they were being resettled and had their traps with them, into a single truck. Loading, travelling at least 10 kilometres, unloading and returning trucks would have taken nearer two hours than one. The Russian winter day is short and there was no travelling by night. Killing 10,000 Jews would have taken at least three weeks.*
>
> *In one instance we were able to check their figures. The S.D. claimed that they had killed 10,000 in Simferopol during November and in December they reported Simferopol clear of Jews. By a series of cross checks we were able to establish that the execution of the Jews in Simferopol had taken place on a single day, 16th November. Only one company of S.D. were in Simferopol. The place of execution was 15 kilometres from the town. The numbers involved could not have been more than about 300. These 300 were probably not exclusively Jews but a miscellaneous collection of people who were being held on suspicion of resistance activity. The Simferopol incident received a good deal of publicity because it was spoken of by the prosecution's only witness, an Austrian corporal called Gaffa who said*

[591] G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 180), p. 233f., as well as NO-5194.

[592] Von Manstein was acquitted of the charge of complicity in the massacre of Jews but was found guilty of not having protected the lives of the civilian population, and on December 19 was sentenced to 18 years in prison. The length of sentence was later decreased to 12 years and von Manstein was released in May 1953.

[593] Reginald T. Paget, *Manstein. His Campaigns and his Trial*, Collins, London 1951, p. 170f.

that he heard anti-Jewish activities mentioned on an engineers' mess when he was oderly and had passed the scene of the Simferopol execution. As a result we received a large number of letters, and where able to call several witnesses who had been billeted with Jewish families and also spoke of the functioning of the local synagogue and of a Jewish market where they bought icons and similar bric-a-brac right up to the time that Manstein left the Crimea and after.

It was indeed clear that the Jewish community had continued to function quite openly in Simferopol and although several of our witnesses had heard rumours about an S.D. excess committed against Jews in Simferopol, it certainly appeared that this Jewish community was unaware of any special danger.

Ohlendorf had reported that not only Simferopol but the whole Crimea was cleared of Jews. He was clearly a man who was prepared to say anything that would please his employers. The Americans found him a perfect witness."

e. Babi Yar

In "Activity and Situation Report No. 6 of the Einsatzgruppen of the Security Police and the SD in the USSR," we read this concerning the time period from October 1 to 31, 1941:[594]

"In Kiev all the Jews were arrested and on September 29 and 30, a total of 33,771 Jews were executed."

This pertains to the (in)famous 'Massacre of Babi Yar.' However, as Udo Walendy and Herbert Tiedemann have proved, the massacre never happened, at least not remotely in the scope claimed.[595] Presumably several hundred people were shot near Kiev, as at Simferopol. We will come back to the case of Babi Yar.

f. Jews in Lithuanian Ghettos and Camps Who Were Unfit for Work

The reports of the *Einsatzgruppen* are not only questionable as to the number of Jews shot, but also with respect to their classification.

In the "General Report from October 16 to January 31, 1942," the presence of (allegedly) 34,500 Jews in the ghettos of Kaunus, Vilnius, and Šiauliai is explained as follows:[596]

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[594] 102-R. IMT, Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 292f.

[595] Udo Walendy, "Babi Jar – Die Schlucht 'mit 33,771 murdered Jews'?", in: *Historische Tatsachen* No. 51, Verlag für Volkstum und Zeitgeschichtsforschung, Vlotho 1992. Herbert Tiedemann, "Babi Jar: Critical Questions and Comments", in: Germar Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 80), pp. 509-538.

[596] *Einsatzgruppe* A. General Report from October 16 to January 31, 1942, RGVA, 500-4-92,

> *"Since the complete liquidation of the Jews was not to be carried out for reasons of work assignment, the ghettos were formed, which are presently filled as follows* [the numbers cited above are given here]. *These Jews are employed in work essential for defense purposes."*

According to this, only Jews still fit for work had been permitted to live in the three ghettos named; by this logic, those unfit for labor, especially the children, would have all had to be killed. But according to a census carried out at the end of May 1942, 14,545 Jews whose names (together with date of birth, occupation, and address) have been published by the Jewish Museum of Vilnius were living in Vilnius. It emerges from these documents that of these 14,545 Jews, no fewer than 3,693 were children of 15 years of age or less. The number of children per age group is shown in the following table:[597]

YEAR OF BIRTH	AGE	NUMBER OF CHILDREN
1927	15	567
1928	14	346
1929	13	265
1930	12	291
1931	11	279
1932	10	216
1933	9	226
1934	8	195
1935	7	227
1936	6	229
1937	5	182
1938	4	188
1939	3	181
1940	2	117
1941	1	172
1942	a few months	12
	Total:	3,693

Furthermore, among the Jews registered by the census there were also 59 persons 65 years of age or older. The eldest was the 90-year-old Chana Stamleriene, born in 1852.

The children lived with their families in the ghetto. For example, the Michalowski family, which lived in Dysnos house 5-10, consisted of Nachman, born 1905, Fruma, born 1907, Pesia, born 1928, Niusia, born 1932, Sonia, born 1935, Mane, born 1904, Sonia, born 1903, Motel, born 1930 and Chana, born 1933.[598] The Kacew family, residence at Ligonines house 11-8, included the following members: Chaim, born 1909, Chava, born 1921, and

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pp. 60f.

[597] *Vilnius Ghetto: List of Prisoners*, Vol. 1. Vilnius 1996, p. 212, No. 163. (Text in Lithuanian, Russian, and English.)

[598] *Ibid*., p. 85.

Sloma, born 1941.[599] The Schimelevitsch family, living at Rudninku house 7-12, consisted of Abram, born 1896, Chawa, born 1909, Sora, born 1938, and Riva, born 1941.[600] Finally, the Cukerman family, residence at Stasuno house 12, had the following members: Kosel, born 1916, Sima, born 1912, Kusia, born 1932, Malka, born 1934, Abram, born 1904, Syfra, born 1909, and Bluma, born 1930.[601]

Since the 3,693 children were living with their families, it is clear that the number of those unfit for work and those not able to be employed (mothers who had to care for their children) was even higher.

If the *Einsatzgruppen* had to liquidate all Jews or at least all Jews unfit for labor, then how is it that these 3,693 children were not murdered at the (alleged) dissolution of Ghetto No. 2 in October 1942?

How little the threat of death was hovering over these children can be gathered from the following description of the school system in the ghetto of Vilnius, furnished by Abraham Foxman:[602]

> *"Some days after the establishment of the ghetto, in 1941, a group of teachers founded a 'Farein,'* [Verein = association/club] *which later organized the educational system of the ghetto. At the first enrollment for the school, 3,000 children were registered. In the beginning, participation in classes was voluntary. In April 1943, it then became obligatory:*
>
> *'Directive No. 3, issued by the ghetto deputies on April 28, 1943, announces the attendance at the ghetto schools to be obligatory. All children from five to thirteen must attend the ghetto schools, which are free of cost.* […] *The block chief is responsible for seeing that all children of obligatory school age take part in classes.'*
>
> *In the first year of the ghetto, more than twenty educational units were founded, which comprised over 80% of the school-age children of the ghetto. Schools as well as H.K.P. – work institutions – were also founded in Kauen. Gens*[603] *received permission from the Germans to fence-in an area in the woods outside of the ghetto. The teachers walked with groups of 100 to 150 children into the woods four times a week. Due to the outbreak of a scarlet fever epidemic, there was a delay in opening the schools in 1942. In October they resumed operation, and 1,500 to 1,800 children took part in classes. Apparently there were 60 teachers who gave 42 hours each week. The remaining 18 hours were devoted to work in the kitchen, visiting students and parents in their home, the repair of books and notebooks, as well as the conducting of various assemblies."*

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599 *Ibid*., p. 150.
600 *Ibid*., p. 213.
601 *Ibid*., p. 329.
602 Abraham Foxman, "Vilna – Story of a Ghetto," in: Jacob Glatstein, Israel Knox, Samuel Margoshes (eds.), *Anthology of Holocaust Literature*, Atheneum, New York 1968, pp. 90f.
603 Jacob Gens, Chief of the Jewish Council of Vilnius.

On May 12, 1944, 'Russian bandits' attacked several institutions in Lithuania and looted them, among them:[604]

> *"At the Bohumelischki Jewish camp – 1592 – approx. 300 women, men and children, 5 to 6 MPI, some rifles."*

g. Jews Unfit for Work in the Ghetto of Brest

There are also other cases of ghettos, in which only Jews fit for work are supposed to have been permitted to live, but where quite a high percentage of old people and children resided as well. In the ghetto of Brest, among the somewhat more than 9,000 Jews whose ages are known, there were 932 persons over 65 years of age in the following age groups:

Year of Birth	Age	Number of Persons
1872-1876	66-70 years	397
1867-1871	71-75 "	309
1862-1866	76-80 "	152
1857-1861	81-85 "	57
1852-1856	86-90 "	14
1850-1851	91-92 "	3
	Total:	932

The ghetto also housed 380 children 15 years of age (birth year 1927), 128 of 14 years (1928), 4 of 13 years (1929), one of 12 years (1930), one of 10 years (1932), and two of nine years (1933).[605]

h. Jews Unfit for Work in the Ghetto of Minsk

In a list from 1943 (month not given) of 878 Jews from the ghetto of Minsk, there are no fewer than 227 children of the following age groups:

Year of Birth	Age	Number of Children
1928	15 years	45
1929	14 "	28
1930	13 "	28
1931	12 "	17
1932	11 "	23
1933	10 "	10
1934	9 "	4
1935	8 "	9
1936	7 "	11
1937	6 "	17

[604] "Report of the Kauen Sipo" of May 12, 1944. RGVA, 504-1-7, p. 41.

[605] Raissa A. Tschernoglasova, *Tragedja Evreev Belorussi v 1941-1944 godach*, Minsk 1997, pp. 274-378.

YEAR OF BIRTH	AGE	NUMBER OF CHILDREN
1938	5 "	12
1939	4 "	17
1940	3 "	4
1941	2 "	2
	Total:	227

The list also contains about a dozen elderly persons, of whom the oldest was born in 1857 and thus was 86 years of age.[606]

i. Transfers of Baltic Jewish Children to Stutthof

In the summer of 1944, numerous transports of Jews traveled from the former ghetto of Kaunas (Lithuania) – transformed into a concentration camp in fall 1943 – and from the ghetto of Riga (Latvia) to Stutthof. From July 12 to October 14, ten transports with a total of 10,458 Jews from Kaunas and six transports with a total of 14,585 Jews from Riga[607] arrived at the Stutthof camp, located east of Danzig (today called Gdansk). As has already been established, in these transports, whose lists of names are fragmentarily preserved, there was quite a number of Baltic Jews (but others as well) of 15 years of age and under, who were designated on the lists as boys or girls. In the transport of July 12, 1944, which included 3,098 deportees (510 of them are known by name), there were 80 children (fifteen years old or younger). On the list of July 19, there are 88 children among 1,097 deportees (all but two identified by name). The following table gives information about the number of children and their respective age groups.

AGE	TRANSPORT OF JULY 13, 1944	TRANSPORT OF JULY 19, 1944
15 years	3	-
14 years	7	4
13 years	4	28
12 years	8	13
11 years	2	6
10 years	4	9
9 years	10	2
8 years	4	6
7 years	5	7
6 years	9	8
5 years	7	-

606 R.A. Chernoglazova, *Judenfrei! Svobodno ot Evreev!*, *op. cit.* (note 569), pp. 289-310.

607 Cf. the transport lists in: Jürgen Graf, C. Mattogno, *Concentration Camp Stutthof and Its Function in National Socialist Jewish Policy*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, IL, 2003, p. 97.

AGE	TRANSPORT OF JULY 13, 1944	TRANSPORT OF JULY 19, 1944
4 years	8	3
3 years	8	2
2 years	1	-
Total:	80	88

On July 26, 1944, 1,983 prisoners, for the most part Lithuanian Jews, were transferred to Auschwitz from Stutthof. Among them were 546 girls and 546 boys as well as 801 "women who were the mothers of the children."[608] A considerable portion of the list of names of this transport has been preserved. Of 1,488 prisoners whose age is known, 850 were children of the following age groups:[609]

YEAR OF BIRTH	AGE	NUMBER OF CHILDREN
1929	15 years	31
1930	14 "	117
1931	13 "	146
1932	12 "	94
1933	11 "	36
1934	10 "	61
1935	9 "	26
1936	8 "	58
1937	7 "	44
1938	6 "	61
1939	5 "	54
1940	4 "	60
1941	3 "	52
1942	2 "	8
1943	1 year	2
	Total:	850

Twenty-four of the 80 children mentioned in the transport of July 13 are recorded, as well as 84 of the 88 children mentioned in the transport of July 19.

On the transport, which departed Stutthof for Auschwitz on September 10, whose list of names can be partially reconstructed on the basis of the registration book,[610] there were at least 345 predominantly Lithuanian Jewish children and youths between the ages of 12 and 17, whose age distribution was as follows:

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[608] Telephone conversation of the commandant of Stutthof, Paul Hoppe, with the commandant of Auschwitz on July 26, 1944. AMS, I-IIC4, p. 94. 'Procedure for taking charge' of the transport of July 26 and 27, 1944. AMS, I-IIC-3, p. 43.

[609] AMS, I-IIC-3, list of names of the transport of July 26, 1944.

[610] AMS, transport list, microfilm 262.

YEAR OF BIRTH	AGE	NUMBER OF CHILDREN
1927	17 years[611]	56
1928	16 "	136
1929	15 "	119
1930	14 "	26
1931	13 "	6
1932	12 "	2
	Total:	345

Since the transport lists are incomplete, the number of the boys and girls transferred from Kaunas and Riga must actually have been significantly larger than the approximately 1,250 documented cases. That these children were still in Kaunas and Riga in the summer of 1944 categorically refutes the claim that the *Einsatzgruppen* had been conducting a total extermination of the Jews or at least of those Jews unfit for labor.

But there is a still more compelling objection to the claims of mass extermination: the lack of material traces.

4. Operation 1005

After the discovery of the mass graves of Katyn and Vinnitsa by the Germans, Soviet propaganda went on the counterattack, principally by using two ploys: it attempted to place the blame for atrocities committed by the Soviet secret service, the NKVD (predecessor of the KGB), on the Germans, and it claimed that mass graves of victims of the Germans had been discovered.

As is well known, on April 13, 1943, in the forest of Katyn, not far from Smolensk, the Germans, following directions from the local populace, found seven mass graves with a total of 4,143 bodies of Polish officers who had been shot. Between April and June 1943 these remains were examined by a commission, which included medical doctors from 12 European nations, and further by a commission of the Polish Red Cross and by American, British, and Canadian officers who were prisoners of war. The Germans published an extraordinarily well-documented official dossier afterwards, which contained all the forensic results of the investigation, 80 photographs, and the names of the victims identified.[612]

The massacre of Vinnitsa (Ukraine) was uncovered by the Germans at the beginning of June 1943. At three different discovery sites, a total of 97 mass graves, they found the mortal remains of 9,432 Ukrainians who had been murdered by the Soviets. No fewer than 14 commissions, 6 foreign ones

[611] The 17-year-olds were 14 years old when the *Einsatzgruppen* advanced into Lithuania.
[612] Auswärtiges Amt (ed.), *Amtliches Material zum Massenmord von Katyn*, Berlin 1943.

among them, examined the graves in the period from June 24 to August 25. In this case, too, the Germans publicized the results of the examinations in a substantial documentary study of 282 pages with 151 illustrations, forensic expert opinions, and identifications of the victims by names.[613]

After the Soviets had retaken the area around Smolensk, they exhumed the bodies of Katyn a second time and summoned an investigative commission consisting exclusively of Soviet citizens (the Burdenko Commission), which then charged the Germans with the massacre. On January 15, 1944, this commission also invited in a group of Western journalists.

This attempt, heavily freighted with propaganda, at falsifying history is also betrayed by 38 dossiers of documents dealing with the Katyn case, which can be found today in the archives of the Russian Federation in Moscow.[614] At the Nuremberg Trial, where the Soviets brazenly blamed the Germans for the crime, the subject of Katyn came up at several sessions,[615] while the mass murder of Vinnitsa was mentioned only a single time, and then only tangentially, by the Bulgarian court doctor Marko A. Markov, a member of the Katyn investigative commission called by the Germans three years before.[616]

In order to consign the crimes of Katyn and Vinnitsa to oblivion, or at least to suppress them, the Soviets carried out a thorough investigation of all crimes, actual or invented, which the Germans had committed in the territory reconquered by the Red Army. For this purpose, an investigative commission was established at literally every small town. Since the Soviets had learned from Katyn the enormous propaganda effect of pictures, these commissions photographed all mass graves and bodies found. If, however, the bodies were too few, then the Soviets resorted to the trick of photographing them several times from different angles in order to create the impression that their number was greater.

The case of Osarichi is especially telling for this manipulative technique.

On March 12, 1944, the commander of the 35th Infantry Division of the Wehrmacht, Lieutenant General Richter, ordered the White Russian populace of that area to be interned in two camps not far from the village of Osarichi. There was no infrastructure in these camps and those confined there had to hold out under the open sky until March 18, the day of their liberation. The German historian Hans-Heinrich Nolte reports:[617]

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[613] Auswärtiges Amt (ed.), *Amtliches Material zum Massenmord von Winniza*, Berlin 1944.

[614] GARF, 7021-114-1/38.

[615] Cf. for example IMT, Vol. VII, p. 425-428 (Conclusions of the Soviet Investigative Commission), and Document USSR-54. Cf. also Robert Faurisson, "Katyn à Nuremberg," *Revue d'Histoire Révisionniste*, August-September-October 1990, pp. 138-144.

[616] IMT, Vol. XVII, p. 357. Markov was interrogated by the Soviet Chief State Counsel Smirnov and gave the desired testimony, which was supposed to weaken the results of the German investigative commission.

[617] *Geiseln der Wehrmacht. Osaritschi, das Todeslager. Dokumente und Beleg*, National Ar-

> *"The camps were snatched up by Soviet propaganda; several newspaper articles reported on them. The 'Extraordinary State Commission for the Determination of the Crimes of the German Fascist Conquerors' dispatched an investigative group."*

Military correspondents, who took numerous photographs after the liberation of the two camps,[618] belonged to this investigative group. The numbers of victims bruited about by diverse Soviet commissions diverge wildly and range from 8,000,[619] over 9,000[620] and up to 20,800,[621] 30,000,[622] 37,526,[623] and even 49,000.[624]

600 bodies were supposedly discovered lying on the ground;[625] moreover, a mass grave 100 m long and 1.5 to 2 m wide, in which "a large number of bodies" was lying, is supposed to have been discovered in Camp 1,[626] but in another report it says that the prisoners were forced by the Germans[627]

> *"to dig enormous trenches of 6 × 3 × 2 m, in which 14 bodies that had been shot had already been thrown."*

The committee for the planning of a memorial monument to Osarichi maintained that the bodies had either been left lying on the ground or had been heaped up in open pits:[628]

> *"The dead were not buried: those who still lived had no strength for it. At first the guards forced them to throw or to stack the bodies into pits especially excavated for that purpose near the fence. But with each day there were more and more bodies, and they remained lying among the living."*

Thus, the bodies were neither removed nor concealed, but could be seen by anyone. When the Army photographers arrived at the scene, they certainly found an awful horrible tableau, yet not quite awful enough. The heart-rending sight was that of a group of seven bodies – four children and three adults – who were lying a short distance from one another on the ground. This sad find was excellently suited for purposes of propaganda, but the number of bodies was too small. Therefore the photographers resorted to a trick: they photographed the bodies from nine different angles, so that photos gave the impression that one was looking at several dozen corpses.[629] A single body, which

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chives of the Republic of Belarus, Minsk 1999 (book in Russian and German), p. 272.

[618] *Ibid*., p. 14.

[619] *Ibid*., p. 36.

[620] *Ibid*., p. 34.

[621] *Ibid*., p. 146. Here it says that of 52,000 internees, 40% were killed.

[622] *Ibid*., p. 154.

[623] *Ibid*., p. 38. Here it says that of 70,960 internees, 33,434 survived.

[624] *Ibid*., pp. 148-150. Here it says that of 70,000 internees, 70% died.

[625] *Ibid*., p. 50.

[626] *Ibid*., p. 34.

[627] *Ibid*., p. 44.

[628] *Ibid*., p. 8.

[629] *Ibid*., photos 1-8 and 11, photo documents on unnumbered pages.

was lying somewhat off to the side of the rest, was photographed four times.[630] In four other photos, an additional seven bodies not far distant from the rest can be recognized.[631] In all, the first 15 photographs, which surely constitute the most terrible scenes to be found in the camp, show 15 bodies. Another horrible view was that of a ditch, only one end of which can be seen in the photo; it is essentially empty in the rear, and in the foreground are 7 or 8 bodies. The picture is a good fit for the 6 m × 3 m × 2 m pit previously described and shows 15 bodies.[632] A further 14 photos show a total of 16 bodies.[633]

Doubtless this photographic documentation is rather too meager to confirm the deaths of between 8,000 and 49,000 human beings or – in flat contradiction to those numbers – the presence of even 600 bodies on the camp property!

A no less typical case is Babi Yar. As we have already emphasized, an *Einsatzgruppen* report speaks of 33,771 Jews shot there. According to the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, the bodies were exhumed and burned by a 327-man 'Sonderkommando' between August 18 and September 19, 1943.[634]

On November 9, 1944, Major Lavrenko, of the Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Kiev, questioned the Jewish witness Vladimir K. Davidov. The latter stated that on August 18, 1943, he, along with 99 other prisoners, for the most part also Jewish, had been selected from the Siretzki concentration camp 5 km from Kiev. The 100 prisoners were taken to Babi Yar and forced to dig up the bodies of the Jews shot in 1941. According to him, 70,000 bodies had been in the mass graves of Babi Yar. The prisoners had exhumed these and afterwards burned them on 'ovens,' which consisted of granite blocks – procured from the Jewish cemetery of Kiev – with train rails laid upon them. On these a layer of wood was piled and on top of this the bodies, so that an enormous stack of bodies 10 to 12 m high resulted! In the beginning there was merely a single 'oven,' but then 75 of them (literally seventy-five) were built.

The bones did not completely burn; they were ground up and tossed into the trenches, from which the bodies had been taken. The witness reports:

> *"On September 25 and 26,*[635] *when the work was nearly finished, the construction of another oven was ordered, upon which we ourselves were sup-*

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630 *Ibid*., photos 8-11.
631 *Ibid*., photos 12-15.
632 *Ibid*., photo 22.
633 *Ibid*., photos 16-21, 22-26, 28, 31f. In Photo 18, "Leiche eines unbekannten Mädchens", a body laid out on straw is recognizable; its face is in an advanced state of decomposition. In the background one sees the first two beams of a wooden barracks. This photograph has nothing to do with Osarichi: in the first place, a body does not decay within one week in the still cold White Russian March (nearly all photographs show snow), and in the second place there were no barracks in the two camps of Osarichi.
634 *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 18), Vol. I, p. 134f.
635 The word "August" appears in the text, which however is an obvious error. Four lines later

posed to be cremated. We deduced this from the fact that there were no more corpses in Babi Yar, but we had built an oven nevertheless."

In order to escape their own murder, Davidov and a number of his comrades (35 to 40) escaped during the night of September 29, in which attempt at least ten of them were killed.[636]

The *Black Book* of Ilya Ehrenburg and Vassili Grossman summarizes this witness testimony, but alters a few numbers.[637] The statements made in the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* quite obviously have their origin in this source.

This Vladimir K. Davidov is apparently the only witness who claims to have participated in the cremation of bodies of Babi Yar. His tale is wholly unbelievable. The number of bodies – 70,000 – is more than double the number shot according to the event report, which in itself is already hugely excessive. The tale of the 10 to 12 m tall mountain of bodies is technically absurd, as we pointed out in the fourth chapter. The claim that 75 'ovens' of the kind first described by the witness are supposed to have been built stands in contradiction to the number of victims given by him, since in that case there would have been (75 × 3,000 =) 225,000 bodies to be burned!

As for the date, the witness maintains that the cremation of the bodies was finished on September 25 or 26. On this day, the prisoners had built the last 'oven' for themselves. On September 26, the *Luftwaffe* took an aerial photograph of the area, in which Babi Yar was located. John Ball has published it with the following commentary:[638]

"Photo 2 – September 26th, 1943:

This photo was taken one week after the end of the supposed mass cremations in the ravine.[639] *If 33,000 people were exhumed and burned evidence of vehicles and foot traffic to supply the fuel should be evident in the area where the Jewish cemetery meets Babi Yar ravine, however there is no evidence of traffic either on the end of the narrow road that proceeds to the*

September is mentioned in connection with the escape of the prisoners.

636 GARF, 7021-65-6.

637 I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *Le Livre Noir*, *op. cit.* (note 24), pp. 80f. According to the *Black Book*, not 100 but 300 prisoners were employed in excavating the bodies; the 'ovens' held 2,000 bodies instead of 3,000; not 10 but 280 escapees were killed.

638 John Ball, *Air Photo Evidence*, *op. cit.* (note 101), p. 107. In G. Rudolf, *Air-Photo Evidence*, *ibid.* (p. 154), the photo has been replaced with one of higher resolution. The text now reads:

"This photo was taken when the supposed mass excavations with subsequent cremations in the ravine, which are said to have started around August 20, 1943, were just coming to an end. If 33,771 corpses were exhumed and burned on huge pyres (or even more, if more people were executed after September 1941, as is claimed), evidence of still smoking pyres, of massive soil movements, of vehicle and foot traffic to supply fuel should be evident in the area where the mass graves are said to have been located: in the ravine branches west of the Christian and Jewish cemeteries."*

The asteriks points to a footnote referring the reader to Mattogno's book on *The Einsatzgruppen* (Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2018).

639 "Yar" is Russian for ravine.

> *ravine from the end of Melnik Street, or on the grass and shrubbery within or on the sides of the cemetery."*

Regarding an enlarged section of the same photograph, Ball writes:[640]

> *"Photo 3 – September 26th, 1943:*
> *An enlargement reveals no evidence that 325 people were working in the ravine finishing the cremation of 33,000 bodies just one week earlier, for many truckloads of fuel would have had to be brought in, and there are no scars from vehicle traffic either on the grass and shrubs at the side of the Jewish cemetery or in the ravine where the bodies were supposedly burned."*

Ball deduces from this:[640]

> *"1943 air photos of Babi Yar ravine and the adjoining Jewish cemetery in Kiev reveal that neither the soil nor the vegetation is disturbed as would be expected if materials and fuel had been transported one week earlier to hundreds of workers who had dug up and burned tens of thousands of bodies in one month."*

These findings are all the more valuable since, according to the sole witness, the cremation of the bodies in Babi Yar is supposed to have been completed on September 25 or 26, corresponding to the same day or the day before the air photos were taken. The *Black Book* mentions an even later date:[641]

> *"On September 28, when the work was just completed, the Germans ordered the prisoners to light the fire."*

According to the data specified in the fourth chapter, the cremation of 33,771 bodies would have required approximately 4,500 tons of firewood and approximately 430 tons of wood ashes and about 190 tons of human ashes would have been generated by the process. Moreover, several dozen tons of granite (gravestones and monuments) would have had to have been transported from the Jewish cemetery to Babi Yar and back again in order to construct the sup-

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[640] John Ball, *Air Photo Evidence*, *op. cit.* (note 101), p. 108. In G. Rudolf, *ibid.* (Photo 4, p. 156), the section enlargement has been replaced with one showing the area where, according to current orthodox consensus, the actions is said to have been. The text now reads:

> *"Orthodox historiography currently assumes that the first batch of 33,771 Jews killed in September 1941 were burried and later exhumed and cremated in the ravine section encircled with a dotted ellipse. Later on, several more batches of up to almost 100,000 more victims are said to have been driven into the ravine following a path indicated by the white arrows, leading to their mass burrial and later exhumation and cremation in that area of the ravine (cf. Kruglov)."*

And as a conclusion (*ibid.*):

> *"1943 air photos of Babi Yar Ravine reveal that neither the soil nor the vegetation is disturbed as would be expected on a massive scale, if mass graves for 33,771 or even up to – and more than – 100,000 victims had recently been excavated and pyres were burning up to that date, and if materials and many thousands of metric tons of fuel wood had been transported to the site."*

[641] I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *Le Livre Noir*, *op. cit.* (note 24), p. 81.

ports for the 75 'ovens.' If the claims put forward about Babi Yar were true, all of this would have had to leave behind unmistakable traces on the air photo of September 26, 1943.

After the Soviets had reconquered Kiev, an investigative commission made its way to Babi Yar and took some photographs, which were immortalized in an album. Three of the photos supposedly show a first and a second "zone where the bodies were burned."[642] In another, the "remnants of the ovens and the grotto, into which the prisoners who had cremated the bodies had escaped" are allegedly shown.[642] The captions to these pictures are absurd; the only actual, clearly recognizable objects are a few rotted shoes and some rags, which were painstakingly photographed by the Soviets and described as follows:[642]

> *"Remnants of shoes and pieces of clothing from Soviet citizens shot by the Germans."*

Thus, the most important material evidence for the shooting of 33,771 (or 70,000) Jews, and the later excavation and cremation of their bodies, to be discovered by the Soviets at the scene of the crime consisted of a few shoes and some rags! If, however, the Soviets took such great pains to document things, which had no connection with the charges, what a propaganda circus would they have put on if they had really discovered mass graves with a total of far more than a million murdered Jews (as well as countless non-Jews)? Yet such a propaganda circus failed to occur, since the Soviets found nothing comparable to the discoveries made by the Germans in Katyn and Vinnitsa! The objection that they had not been in the position to locate the murder sites would be wholly untenable. Finally, the Germans, with the assistance of the civilian populace, had discovered 97 mass graves of murdered Ukrainians. As we saw in the third chapter, the Soviets pinpointed three mass graves and 13 individual graves in the area around Treblinka I, and the Poles found 41 mass graves of victims of an epidemic.

If, therefore – to take the number given by Raul Hilberg – the bodies of the barely one-and-a-half million Soviet Jews – killed chiefly by the *Einsatzgruppen*, but also by Wehrmacht, SS, police units, and Romanians – as well as of the countless non-Jewish victims were not able to be found, they must have been eliminated, *i.e.* cremated. For that reason, the legal system and historiography needed the '*Aktion* 1005' (Operation 1005) or '*Sonderaktion* 1005' (Special Operation 1005), about which we have written briefly in the fourth chapter. This is implicitly conceded even by the official historiography:[643]

> *"Although burning the bodies from the mass graves did not efface the Nazi crimes, it did cause difficulties in determining the facts of the crimes and in drawing up statistics on the numbers of victims. In many cases, the commissions investigating Nazi crimes in the USSR and in Poland found no*

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[642] GARF, 128-132. Photo album without pagination.
[643] *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 18), p. 14.

> *trace of the mass graves, and they encountered difficulty in reaching estimates."*

In other words: material evidence for the mass murder of an enormous number of people, the '*corpus delicti*,' was not found, but this is a mere 'detail'!

If traces of mass graves are discovered after prolongued searches, no efforts are usually made to determine how many victims they contain, who the victims are and how they died. Here is an example. According to a report of December 1, 1941, of the Commander of the Security Police and the SD *Einsatzkommando* 3, the following persons were shot in Mariampole (Lithuanian: Mariyampol) on September 1, 1941:[644]

> *"1,763 Jews, 1,812 Jewesses, 1,404 Jewish children, 109 mentally ill, 1 German female national who had married a Jew, 1 Russian female."*

When a local initiative was launched in 1996 to build a memorial on site for these presumably murdered Jews, the responsible authorites wanted to find out first where exactly the victims had been buried. Excavations in places identified by witnesses were initially unsuccessful,[645] but when the search was widened, this eventually resulted in a discovery of human remains which were assumed to be the victims. Further investigations were not conducted, however. The reason for this was explained by the archaeologist in charge, Dr. Algimantas Merkevicius:[646]

> *"The purpose was to finde exact place of the graves. The supposed burrial place was em*[p]*ty and I found the mass graves about 100 m outside of this supposed territory. People were kil*[l]*ed and burried in a big dich. But after finding the exact place, my work was over. I don't know how* [many] *people were kil*[l]*ed and how big the mass grave territory* [is]*."*

This is a deplorable indifference on the part of those responsible who are not interested to determine the number and identity of the victims, their probable cause and time of death as well as their potential murderers, for this is all self-evident anyway.

Every time the Soviets discovered bodies of victims of the Germans, they photographed them, even in little-known places like the camp Siretzki in the Ukraine.[647] In Auschwitz-Birkenau they found 536 bodies, which were all au-

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644 RGVA, 500-1-25/1, p. 151.

645 *Lietuvos Rytas* (Litauen), 21.8.1996.

646 In einem Brief an Roberto Muehlenkamp vom 17.6.2003; http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/04/thats-why-it-is-denial-not-revisionism_06.html (Zugriff am 13.4.2017).

647 GARF, 128-132, photo album without pagination. Three of the photographs show a few dozen bodies spread out on the ground, another permits a "ditch partly filled with bodies" to be recognized.

topsied.[648] The dead were solemnly interred in the presence of numerous people. Photos were taken of this and many scenes were filmed.[649]

Let us now turn to the question of what the official historiography tells us about the alleged 'Operation 1005' and upon what sources this is based. An article in the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* states:[650]

> *"Operation 1005, code name for a large-scale activity that aimed to obliterate the traces of the murder of millions of human beings by the Nazis in occupied Europe."*

The decision to begin this operation is supposed to have been made in Berlin at the beginning of 1942. A letter of February 20, 1942, from the chief of the Gestapo, Heinrich Müller, to Martin Luther of the Foreign Office,[651] in which the subject of the unsatisfactory burial of corpses is raised and which is supposed to have been written after Müller "had received an anonymous letter complaining about the corpses flooding the WARTHEGAU area," is cited as proof.[650] This letter bears the file designation "IV B 4 43/42 gRs (1005),"[652] and the alleged 'Operation 1005' is supposed to have gotten its name from this document!

But Alfred Streim, who cites the relevant letter based on first-hand knowledge, writes:

> *"On November 20, 1942, Himmler ordered SS-Gruppenführer Müller, Chief of Department IV in the RSHA, in writing (Zst. Dok. Slg. Ordner 3, Bl. 583): '…You must give me a guarantee that the bodies of these deceased Jews will either be burned or buried in every location, and that nowhere can anything else of any kind happen with these bodies…"*

He does not say that this letter bore the heading "IV B 4 43/42 gRs (1005)," does not assign to it the designation '1005,' and confines himself to the following comment:[653]

> *"The undertaking received – in accord with a nomenclature procedure of the RSHA – the designation '1005.'"*

Thus, the letter in question dates from November 20, 1942, and not from February 20. This would mean that the designation '1005' for the operation would have been assigned a full five months after its start! On the other hand, in the letter the Jews are referred to as "dead," not 'shot' or 'killed.' Moreover, the

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[648] GARF, 7021-108-21. Collection of individual autopsy reports.

[649] Cf. for this the photos in *KL Auschwitz. op. cit*. (note 470), pp. 228f.

[650] *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 18), article "Aktion 1005," Vol. I, p. 11.

[651] According to C. Gerlach, this letter was written by Himmler to Müller! (*op. cit.* (note 418), p. 773.)

[652] Thomas Sandkühler, *Endlösung in Galizien. Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941-1944*, Verlag H. J. V. Dietz Nachfolger, Bonn 1996, p. 277.

[653] A. Streim, "Die Verbrechen der Einsatzgruppen in der Sowjetunion", in: A. Rückerl (ed.), *NS-Prozesse*, *op. cit.* (note 250), p. 78.

disposal of the bodies could take place by cremation *or burial*, which means that the Himmler letter need have no connection with the excavation and cremation of corpses of Jews who had been shot, and that what we are dealing with here is a primitive hoax.

According to official historiography,[650] *SS-Standartenführer* Paul Blobel took charge of 'Operation 1005' and "The operation commenced in June 1942 with attempts to burn the corpses in the CHEŁMNO extermination camp."[650] In the initial phase, the bodies in the alleged eastern extermination camps are supposed to have been exhumed and cremated. We have dealt with this issue in detail in Chapter IV, in the prototypical case of Treblinka.

The second phase is supposed to have lasted from the beginning of June 1943 until the end of July 1944. During its course, the mass graves on Soviet and Polish territory are supposed to have been emptied and the traces of the massacres eradicated.

The *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* shows a map with the most important locations, at which these activities are supposed to have transpired. It is a huge area, which extends from north to south across approximately 1,500 km (from the North Sea to the Black Sea) and from west to east across about 1,300 km (from west Poland to the German-Soviet front).[654] Beginning with the camp Janowska at Lemberg, each region is supposed to have been assigned its own '*Sonderkommado* 1005,' which consisted of officers of the *Sicherheitsdienst* (Security Service) and from the *Sicherheitspolizei* (SIPO, Security Police), of men from the *Ordnungspolizei* (regular police) and of dozens or hundreds of – mostly Jewish – prisoners, whose task was the hands-on accomplishment of the work. 'Sonderkommando 1005-A' and 'Sonderkommando 1005-B' are supposed to have been active in Kiev. Both, so it is said, were then transferred. 'Sonderkommando 1005-Mitte' supposedly began its work in Minsk. Other 'Sonderkommandos 1005' were allegedly deployed in Lithuania, in Estonia, in the Białystok district, in the General Gouvernement and in Yugoslavia.[655]

Now, if one considers that, according to the most comprehensive studies on this subject that exist, the *Einsatzgruppen* alone are supposed to have shot 2,200,000 people (Jews and non-Jews),[656] that Wehrmacht, SS, and police units are also accused of hundreds of thousands of murders, and that – as already emphasized – neither the Soviets nor the Poles have found any mass graves with as many as a few thousand bodies, the 'Sonderkommandos 1005' must have exhumed and burned between one-and-a-half and three million bodies. This means that within a period of 13 months they had to have emp-

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654 *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 18), article "Aktion 1005," Vol. I, p. 12.
655 *Ibid*., pp. 11-14.
656 H. Krausnick, Hans Heinrich Wilhelm, *Die Truppe des Weltanschauungskrieges*. Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart 1981, p. 621.

tied thousands of graves at hundreds of locations, which were scattered over an enormous area – all of this without leaving behind any material or documentary traces!

Without thousands of maps, on which the graves were marked, it would quite obviously have been impossible to locate those thousands of mass graves in a territory of more than 1.2 million square kilometers, but no such maps are mentioned in even a single *Einsatzgruppe* report or any other document, or have any such maps ever been found among the German documents captured by the victors of World War II. And if – as the witnesses report – thousands of pyres were burning during the night despite blackout regulations, no Soviet reconnaissance plane discovered and photographed them – for otherwise the photographs would have been exploited at once for propaganda purposes.

Thomas Sandkühler plays this down:[657]

> *"Due to the extreme secrecy of the 'Operation 1005,' written sources on it are very rare."*

In other words, there are none! Sandkühler's statement reflects the total embarrassment, which orthodox historians feel in the face of this outrage, while simultaneously serving up the customary stale explanation: the documents do not exist "due to the strict secrecy"! This *hypothesis* stands in glaring contrast to a *fact*, which Gerald Reitlinger describes:[658]

> *"The original series* [of Einsatzgruppen reports] *consisted of nearly two hundred reports with a circulation list of sixty to a hundred copies each.* […]
> *It is not easy to see why the murderers left such an abundant testimony behind them,* […]*"*

The Event Reports USSR comprise a total of "over 2,900 typewritten pages,"[659] and each of them was distributed with a minimum circulation of 30 copies. The Germans are therefore supposed to have distributed tens of thousands of pages of documents concerning the mass shootings committed by the *Einsatzgruppen*, then quite suddenly have grasped the necessity of exhuming and burning the bodies, but have forgotten to destroy the incriminating documents!

In fact, the story of 'Operation 1005' is based upon several completely unreliable witness statements. The first of them were collected by Soviet commissions or journalists and printed in the *Black Book* edited by Ilya Ehrenburg and Wassili Grossman. This is a propagandistic collection of tales from alleged eyewitnesses. Aside from the Vladimir K. Davidov already mentioned, one finds here the (hearsay) testimony of Shimon Ariel and Zalma Edelman

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[657] T. Sandkühler, *op. cit.* (note 652), p. 278.
[658] G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 180), p. 213.
[659] H. Krausnick, H. H. Wilhelm, *op. cit.* (note 656), p. 333.

on Białystok,[660] that of a few (according to their own statements) escapees from Kaunas,[661] and that of a Y. Farber on Ponari (Lithuania).[662] These witnesses know nothing to report about any 'Operation 1005' or a 'Sonderkommando 1005.'

The designation 'Sonderkommando 1005' was invented by the Soviets. At the proceedings of February 9, 1946, at the Nuremberg Trial, Chief Counsel Smirnov read out excerpts from the protocol "of the interrogation of Gerhard Adametz (Exhibit USSR-80, Document Number USSR-80), taken by an American army lieutenant, Patrick McMahon," in which there was talk of the activities of the "*Sonderkommando 1005-A*" and "*1005-B*."[663]

In 1946, the work written by Leon Weliczker, *Brygada Śmierci* (The Death Brigade), the longest and most detailed witness report on the 'Brigade 1005,' appeared in Lodz, which Thomas Sandkühler, once again using polite understatement, evaluates as follows:[664]

> *"The horrifying notes of Weliczker have only insignificant evidentiary value."*

Or, to put it another way, they have none!

The *SS-Standartenführer* Paul Blobel was, however, unknown to this witness. He was connected to the 'Operation 1005' by an Erwin Schulz, who had been the leader of *Einsatzkommando* V of the *Einsatzgruppe* C of the *Sicherheitspolizei* from the beginning of the Russian campaign until September 1941 and served under *SS-Brigadeführer* Rasch. But Schulz did not know the name of the alleged huge operation for the excavation and cremation of the bodies, since this was first settled upon in 1947. On December 20, 1945, he stated:[665]

> *"About 1943 I learned during my activity as Chief of Department I of the RSHA that at this time the SS-Standartenführer Blobel had to render the mass graves of those who had been shot and liquidated in the territories to be evacuated by the Wehrmacht unrecognizable. If I recall correctly, the cover-name for these mass graves was 'water sites.'"*

Now all that remained was to put the individual parts together.

In November 1946, Rudolf Höss wrote in the Krakow prison:[666]

> *"Standartenführer Blobel had been authorized to seek out and obliterate all the mass graves in the whole of the eastern districts. His department was given the code number '1005.'"*

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[660] I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *Le Livre Noir*, *op. cit.* (note 24), pp. 434-439.
[661] *Ibid*., pp. 634-636.
[662] *Ibid*., pp. 827-851.
[663] IMT, Vol. VII, pp. 593-596, Document USSR-80.
[664] T. Sandkühler, *op. cit.* (note 652), p. 522.
[665] NO-3841.
[666] Rudolf Höss, *The Commandant of Auschwitz*, Phoenix Press, London 2000, p. 188. The relevant section was presented as Document NO–4498b in Nuremberg.

Finally, during the preliminary examinations of the trial against the *Einsatzgruppen*, which took place in Nuremberg from September 29, 1947, to February 12, 1948, Paul Blobel judged it expedient to 'confess' what had already become 'facts determined by virtue of official authority' for the prosecutors. In a 'statutory declaration' made at Nuremberg on June 6, 1947, he stated for the record:[667]

> *"In June 1941, I became Chief of Sonderkommando 4 A. This Sonderkommando was assigned to Einsatzgruppe C, the latter was under the command of Dr. Rasch. The special region assigned to me was located in the area of the 6th Army, which was commanded by Field Marshal von Reichenau. In January 1942, I was relieved as Chief of Sonderkommando 4 A and was transferred to Berlin for disciplinary reasons. I remained there for some time with no work. I was under the supervision of Department IV, under the former Gruppenführer Müller.*
>
> *In the fall of 1942, I was given the mission as Müller's deputy to drive into the occupied eastern territories and eradicate the traces of the mass graves which came about from the executions of the Einsatzgruppen. This was my mission up to the summer of 1944."*

The American inquisitors gave every appearance of being unsatisfied with this 'confession' and forced Blobel to give a further 'statutory declaration.' This time he expressed himself in more detail:[668]

> *"After I had been relieved from this assignment, I had to report in Berlin to SS Obergruppenführer Heydrich and Gruppenführer Müller and in June 1942 was entrusted by Gruppenführer Müller with the mission of eradicating the traces of executions of the Einsatzgruppen in the east. My orders were to report personally to the commander of the Sicherheitspolizei and SD and to orally pass on to them Müller's order and to supervise its performance. This order was a secret Reich matter, and it was ordered by Müller that due to the strictest secrecy of this mission, no kind of written exchanges are to be permitted."*

This version, with the new date ("in June 1942" instead of "in the fall of 1942") was elevated to the pivotal point of official historiography. That Blobel in neither of his two declarations spoke of an 'Operation 1005' or a 'Sonderkommando 1005' played no role, for these little gaps were naturally closed by the historians!

It should be well understood that we do not wish to claim by what has been said here that there was no opening of mass graves and cremation of bodies, any more than we are claiming that there were no shootings of Jews. But we very much question the enormous scale that the official historiography attributes to these occurrences.

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667 NO-3842.
668 NO-3947.

5. The Fate of the Western Jews in the East

The western Jews deported into the occupied eastern territories did not share, at least in the beginning, the fate of the 'Soviet Jews.' Christopher R. Browning concedes:[669]

> *"By the very fact that Hitler decided to kill all Russian Jews,*[670] *he broke through the vicious circle, which consisted of the fact that with every new military success a continually increasing number of Jews fell under German control. But the Jewish policy of the Nazis in the rest of Europe experienced thereby no direct alteration. They continued speaking of emigration, deportation, and plans for a future Jewish homeland."*

In the "General Report of October 16, 1941, to January 31, 1942," already mentioned, there is a section on the topic "Jews from the Reich," which notes:[671]

> *"Since December 1940* [the correct year is 1941]*, transports of Jews have been arriving from the Reich at short intervals. Of these, 20,000 Jews were directed to Riga and 7,000 to Minsk. The first 10,000 Jews evacuated to Riga were accommodated partly in a provisional reception camp, partly in a newly established hut-camp in the vicinity of Riga. The remaining transports were at first sent into a detached section of the Riga ghetto.*
>
> *The construction of the camp is being managed using all Jews fit for labor, so that in the spring all deported Jews who live through the winter can be sent to this camp.*
>
> *Of the Jews from the Reich, only a small portion is fit for labor. Approximately 70-80% are women and children as well as old persons not able to work. The mortality figures are climbing all the time, with the unusually harsh winter also a factor.*
>
> *The output of the few Jews from the Reich who are fit for work is satisfactory. As a work force they are more desirable than the Russian Jews on account of their German language and their relatively greater cleanliness. The adaptability is remarkable, with which the Jews attempt to shape their life to conform to their circumstances.*
>
> *The present crowding together of the Jews into the minimum space in all ghettos naturally causes a greater danger of epidemics, which is most effectively countered by the employment of Jewish physicians. In special cases, Jews who have become contagiously ill have been isolated under the pretext of sending them to a Jewish old people's home or hospital and then executed."*

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669 Christopher R. Browning, "La décision concernant la solution finale," in: *L'Allemagne nazie et le génocide juif*, *op. cit.* (note 252), p. 198.

670 As already stressed, there is no evidence of any kind for such a decision.

671 RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 64.

In a letter of July 21, 1942, from *Reichskommissar* Lohse to the *Standartenführer* Siegert of the RSHA, it says regarding a "work training camp" in Latvia:[672]

> *"Of the Jews evacuated from the Reich there are at present still 400 in the camp and employed in transportation and excavation work. The rest of the Jews deported to Riga have been accommodated elsewhere."*

These western Jews were therefore by no means systematically killed, although the majority of them were unfit for labor. This is in striking contrast to the alleged mass liquidations described in the report on indigenous Jews in Latvia mentioned earlier.

No doubt, the natural mortality among these Jews was very high, and occasionally they also ran the danger of being killed, but a portion of them survived the war. On the fragmentary lists of names of the Jews deported from Kaunas and Riga to Stutthof in the summer of 1944, there are at least 959 German Jews. One of them, Berthold Neufeldt, was born on June 17, 1936;[673] he therefore had been deported at the age of 5 or 6 and was still alive in the summer of 1944.

In addition, at least 102 survivors are known from the Jewish deportations from Theresienstadt to Riga of January 9, 1942, and 15 survivors of the deportation of January 15 of the same year, besides 40 from the deportation of September 1, 1942, to Estonian Raasiku. These Jews were liberated at the following locations:

Bergen-Belsen, Bratislava, Bromberg, Buchenwald, Burggraben, Bydhost, Dachau, Danzig, Gottendorf, Gottenhof, Hamburg, Jagala, Kaiserswald, Kattowitz, Kaufering, Kieblasse, Kiel, Langenstein, Lauenburg, Libau, Magdeburg, Neuengamme, Neustadt, Raasiku, Raguhn, Riga, Sachsenhausen, Salaspis, Sophienwalde, Straßenhof, Stutthof, Terezin (Theresienstadt), Torun (Thorn). In addition, 7 survivors of the transport from Theresienstadt of November 16, 1941, to Minsk were liberated in Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, Dachau, Flossenbürg, and Theresienstadt.[674] The transports had included not isolated individuals but entire groups who must have exhibited a certain strength, since for example in Magdeburg 5 Jews from the transport of January 15, 1942, and 5 from that of January 9 were liberated, as were 3 Jews from the transport of January 15 and 7 from that of January 9 in Buchenwald.

These people had also survived the catastrophic hygienic and sanitary conditions, which prevailed in the German camps in 1945. Thus, the number of those surviving in 1944 must have been significantly higher.

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[672] RGVA, 504-2-8, p. 192.

[673] AMS, I-IIB-10, p. 176.

[674] These details are taken from the book already cited, M. Kárný, *Terezinská pametni kniha*, *op. cit.* (note 569), p. 569).

Chapter VIII: Indirect Transports of Jews to the Eastern Territories

1. The 'Jewish Reservation' of Lublin

In September of 1939, directly after the military collapse of Poland, a project was developed to create a reservation for Jews on conquered Polish territory, into which all Jews living under German control were supposed to be deported. The idea of establishing "a Jewish state near Krakow under German administration" was broached by Heydrich on September 22 in a conversation with Walter von Brauchitsch, the Supreme Commander of the Army, and then taken up by Alfred Rosenberg at a meeting on September 28 and 29 with the Gauleiters in the east. Rosenberg mentioned the plan to settle "the whole of Jewry" together with all undesirable elements "between Vistula and Bug."

In an official speech on September 29, Heydrich spoke of the establishment of a "*Reichsghetto*" in the region east of Warsaw and Lublin.[675] The Jewish reservation was to be set up in the zone south of Lublin, lying between the Vistula and the Bug. One of the most important railway junctions in that region was Nisko, and for that reason it was referred to as the Nisko Plan or Nisko Operation. The Jewish transports into that region began in October 1939 and went on until March 1940. On March 23, 1940, Göring ordered the cessation of all deportations into the General Gouvernement.

A total of approximately 34,520 Jews were deported from the Reich to the incorporated Polish territories,[676] and 6,615 Viennese Jews were deported into the 'Reservation.'[677] Mainly because of its competition with the Madagascar Plan, upon which all hopes of the Reich for the solution of the Jewish problem were focused at that time, the project came to a standstill soon after it began. Nevertheless, further Polish Jews were resettled in the Lublin 'Reservation': 9,451 from the Radom district from August 14 to September 25, 1940,[678]

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[675] Seev Goshen, "Eichmann und die Nisko-Aktion im Oktober 1939", in: *Viertelsjahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1981, pp. 78f.

[676] Janina Kiełboń, "Deportacja Żydów do dystryktu lubelskiego (1939-1943)," in: *Zeszyty Majdanka*, XIV, 1992, p. 73.

[677] W. Benz (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 79), p. 76.

[678] J. Kiełboń, *op. cit.* (note 676), pp. 68f.

3,436 from the Krakow ghetto from November 29, 1940, to April 2, 1941.[679] In addition, in 1940, 1,200 Jews were deported into that area from Stettin, 5,570 from prison camps, 5,250 from the Warsaw district, and 1,020 from Krakow. In 1941, 6,280 Jews were sent into the 'Reservation' from the incorporated Polish territories, 1,530 Jews from prison camps, 2,200 from the Warsaw district, and 2,520 from Krakow.[680] Therefore, from 1939 to 1941, a total of approximately 79,600 Jews arrived in that zone. The transportation of western Jews into the Lublin district started again in March 1942, but this time within the framework of a new policy.

2. Transports of Jews into the Lublin District in 1942

At the beginning of 1942, the Germans began to concentrate the Polish Jews in the district of Lublin and then subsequently to deport them farther to the east in order to make room for the Jews from the *Altreich*, from the *Ostmark*, from Slovenia, and from the Protectorate. These evacuations were arranged by an office of the government of the General Gouvernement, the "*Hauptabteilung innere Verwaltung Abteilung Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge*" (Main Department of Internal Administration, Department of Population and Welfare), to which the sub-departmental manager Richard Türk as well as the local authorities delivered the corresponding reports.

One of the first of these reports dates from January 6, 1942, and concerns the "Evacuation of 2,000 Jews from Mielec." There it says:[681]

> *"1,000 Jews are coming to the administrative district of Hrubieszow, their final destination Hrubieszow station. 1,000 Jews are coming to the administrative district of Cholm; the destination of 400 of them is the Włodawa station, Parczew station is the final destination of 600. Date after which these places will be ready to accept them is January 15, 1942."*

The next report dealing with this transfer warned the authorities:[682]

> *"I am asking you to absolutely see to it that the Jews are received at the station of their destination and are properly directed to locations as determined by you; so that it does not happen, as it has in other cases, that the Jews arrive at their station of destination without supervision and are now dispersed all across the country."*

On January 21, 1942, the number of Jews being evacuated from Mielec was increased to 4,500.[683] The evacuation began on March 11, 1942. The 4,500 Jews were distributed as follows:[684]

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[679] *Ibid*., pp. 71f.
[680] *Ibid*., p. 73.
[681] Józef Kermisz, *Dokumenty i Materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce, Tom II, "Akce" i "Wysiedlenia*," Warsaw-Lodz-Krakow 1946, p. 10.
[682] *Ibid*., p. 11.

"1,500 to admin. dist. of Cholm, with the stations of destination being Włodawa and Parczew .
1,000 to admin. distr. Radzyn with station of destination Międzyrzec.
500 to the admin. dist. Zamość with destination station Susiec.
1,500 to the admin. dist. of Hruebieszow."

The direct train to Parczew arrived there on March 13, 1942; 800 Jews were accommodated in Włodawa, 200 in Sosnowiec (or Sosnowica, a hamlet 35 km west of Włodawa). The evacuation of Jews from Mielec ended on March 16. The rest of the Jews were "accommodated in the Krakow district."[685]

On February 9, 1942, the "resettlement of 1,500 Jews with the destination station Włodawa (900 Jews) and Parczew (600 Jews)" was announced. The directives of the government office charged with the resettlement, which were forwarded to the local authorities as supplements by *Oberlandesverwaltungsrat* (Senior provincial administrative counselor) Weirauch, prescribe the following:[686]

"The office of the District of Lublin, Department of Internal Administration and Department of Population and Welfare, remains responsible to me for seeing to it that the Jews, who are to settle in, get assigned sufficient lodging according to what is possible. The resettling Jews are to be allowed to take along their bedding. With respect to other baggage and household effects, 25 kg per person is allowed to be taken along. The Jews are to be medically monitored after their arrival in their new areas of settlement for 3 weeks. Every case, in which there is a suspicion of illness or typhus, is to be reported to the district physician without delay."

On March 22, 1942, there was a resettlement of Jews from Bilgoraj to Tarnogrod, a village 20 km south of that city. The report that deals with this it reads:[687]

"On March 22, 1942, an evacuation from Bilgoraj to Tarnogrod of 57 Jewish families with a total of 221 persons took place. Each family received a vehicle in order to take along the necessary pieces of furniture and beds. The Polish police and the special services unit took care of control and supervision. The operation went as planned without mishaps. The evacuees were accommodated in Tarnogrod on the same day."

On March 17, 1942, Fritz Reuter, an employee of the Department of Population and Welfare of the Office of the General Gouvernement of the district of Lublin, wrote a note, in which he referred to a talk conducted on the previous

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683 *Ibid*., p. 14.
684 *Ibid*., p. 27.
685 *Ibid*., p. 28.
686 *Ibid*., p. 15.
687 *Ibid*., p. 46.

day with *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Hermann Höfle, the delegate for the resettlement of Jews in the Lublin district:[688]

> *"I arranged for a talk with Hstuf. Höfle for Monday, the 16th of March 1942, namely at 17:30 hours. In the course of the discussion the following was explained by Hstuf. Höfle:*
> *It would be expedient to divide the transports of Jews to the Lublin district into employable and unemployable Jews at the station of origin. If it is not possible to make this distinction at the station of origin, it will be necessary for the division of the transport into unemployables and unemployables to be done at Lublin.*
> *Unemployable Jews are all to come to Bezec* [Bełżec]*, the outermost border station in the Zamosz district.*
> *Hstuf. Höfle is thinking of building a large camp, in which the employable Jews can be registered in a file system according to their occupations and requested from there.*
> *Piaski is being made Jew-free and will be the collection point for the Jews coming out of the Reich.*
> *Trawnicki* [Trawniki] *for the present time is quartering no Jews.*
> *H. asks where on the Dęblin-Trawnicki route 60,000 Jews can be unloaded. Informed about the Jewish transports now running as far as we are concerned, H. explained that of the 500 Jews arriving in Susiec, those who were unemployable could be sorted out and sent to Bezec. According to a teletype of the government of March 4, 1942, a Jewish transport, whose destination was the Trawnicki station, is rolling out of the Protectorate. These Jews are not unloaded in Trawnicki, but have been brought to Izbica. An inquiry of the Zamosz district, asking to be able to request 200 Jews from there for work, was answered in the affirmative by H.*
> *In conclusion he stated that he could accept 4-5 transports daily, of 1,000 Jews with the destination station of Bezec. These Jews would go across the border and would never come back into the General Gouvernement."*

This document is of capital significance for two reasons. First, Höfle was the deputy *Stabführer* (staff leader) of the SS and Police Chief for the Lublin district (Otto Globocnik). According to official historiography, he coordinated in this capacity "the construction of the extermination camp Belzec and the deportations to there from the Lublin district."[689] Second, Bełżec is supposed to have started its homicidal activity subsequent to the talk reported, on March 17, 1942. According to official historiography, it was (like Treblinka, Sobibór, and Chełmno) a pure extermination camp, where there was no separation of those fit and those unfit for labor. Yet according to the cited document:

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[688] *Ibid*., pp. 32f.

[689] *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 100), Vol. 2, p. 619. Not included in the English edition *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, op. cit.* (note 18).

A subdivision of the Jews into those able to work and those not able to work was planned. The Jews able to work should be used for labor assignments. Bełżec was supposed to become a camp, in which the Jews fit to work were "registered in a file system according to their occupation." This does not conform in the least to a 'pure extermination camp.'

The Jews unable to work were all supposed to go to Bełżec. The camp was supposed "to accept 4-5 transports daily, of 1,000 Jews with the destination station of Be[l]zec," clearly Jews unable to work, who are deported "across the border" and are allowed never to return to the General Gouvernement. For that reason, Bełżec was designated as "the outermost border station in the Zamosz district." This sentence makes sense only in connection with a resettlement beyond the border.

Piaski was supposed to become the "collection point for the Jews coming out of the Reich." If one uses the road, it is another 24 km to Lublin, located to the northwest of Piaski, and 91 km to Bełżec. With the train, the distance to Bełżec is even greater (about 130 km). This contradicts the thesis, according to which Bełżec was a pure extermination camp, since in this case the collection point would have been the camp itself.

It was intended to unload 60,000 Jews at a point on the Dęblin-Trawniki route. The former locale is 76 km northwest of Lublin (in the direction of Warsaw); Trawniki is 13 km east of Piaski (which it serves as rail station) on the Lublin-Rejowiec-Chełm/Lublin-Bełżec railroad line (before the Rejowiec station, a junction of the rail line turns off south toward Bełżec). This project, too, fails to jibe with the claim that Bełżec is supposed to have been a pure extermination camp.

This fact is completely confirmed by a report of April 7, 1942. Its author is *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Richard Türk, director of the Department for Population and Welfare in the Office of the Governor of the Lublin district. The report refers to the month of March and contains a paragraph with the heading "Jewish Resettlement Operation of the SS and Police Chief," in which Türk reports:

> *"The possibilities of accommodation were and are currently being discussed with the delegate of the SS and Police Chief, that is, restricted to those stretching along the Dęblin-Rejowiec-Belzec railway line. Alternative possibilities were determined.*
>
> *Due to my proposal, there is a basic understanding that, to the same degree as Jews from the west are being settled here, local Jews are to be evacuated, if possible. The current situation of the settling movement is that approximately 6,000 were settled here from the Reich, approximately 7,500 have been evacuated from the district and 18,000 from the city of Lublin.*
>
> *Individually, 3,400 have been evacuated from Piaski, Lublin district, and 2,000 Reich Jews have come in so far; 2,000 from Izbica, Krasnystaw dis-*

trict, and 4,000 Reich Jews arriving in it; from Opole and Wawolbnica, Puławy district, 1,950 have been evacuated […]*"*

The report later mentions the resettlement of Jews from Mielec and Bilgoraj, which has already been discussed, and makes clear that the majority of the evacuees were unfit for labor:[690]

"On March 13, '42, the Cholm district received approximately 1,000 Jews, of whom 200 were accommodated in Sosnowica and 800 in Włodawa.

On March 14, 1942, Międzyrzec, Radzyn district, received 750 Jews. On March 16, '42, the Hrubieszow district received 1,343 Jews, 843 of whom have been accommodated in Dubienka and 500 in Belz. The majority were women and children and only a minority of men fit for labor. On March 16, '42, the Zamosz district received 500 Jews, all of whom have been lodged in Cieszanow.

On March 22, '42, 57 Jewish families with 221 persons were shifted from Bilgoraj to Tarnogrod."

The influx of western Jews into the Lublin district began in the middle of March 1942. The first transports routed there departed from the Protectorate on March 11, 1942, from the *Altreich* on March 13, from Slovakia on March 27, from the *Ostmark* on April 9. The transports included numerous people unfit for labor, who were lodged in the villages of the district together with those able to work.

On April 12, 1942, the chairman of the Jewish Council in Lublin posted a letter to Jewish Social Self-Assistance in Krakow, in which the "numbers of those resettled in the individual towns" were given for Mielec:[691]

"Bełz 460 persons
Cieszanów 465 persons
Dubienka 787 persons
Sosnowica 210 persons
Międzyrzec 740 persons
Włodawa 770 persons"

The letter continues:

"In Izbica two transports arrived from the Protectorate with 1,000 persons.

In Izbica 1,871 arrived from the Rhineland.

In Piaski, Lu., 1,008 persons arrived from the Protectorate.

Moreover, in the last few days further transports arrived, the number of which varies between 2,500 and 3,000 persons. Yesterday he[692] *received an unofficial – at any rate so far unconfirmed – piece of news that a passenger train of 19 cars, which allegedly was traveling to Izbica and con-*

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690 *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), p. 271.

691 *Ibid*., pp. 275f.

692 Dr. Marek Alter, Advisor for Jewish Affairs to the Governor of the Lublin District.

tained evacuees from Vienna, was supposed to go past Lublin. So far nothing has been able to be determined from official sources. With regard to Lublin itself, an insignificant number of Jews has remained in the city up to now, who are supposed to be resettled from the city into its environs according to unofficial information."

On April 16, 1942, *Landkommissar* (provincial commissioner) Lubartów sent the following letter to the District Chief of the Lublin district:[693]

"Yesterday afternoon at 18:00 hours, without any prior announcement, another transport of approximately 800 Jews arrived. About half were women and children under 14 years of age. There were no men at all in the transport. The Jews were from Slovakia as well. On Monday and Wednesday, altogether over 1,600 Jews arrived, among them hardly any fit for work. 200 Jews were transported onward to Kamionka, 300 to Ostrow, 80 to Firlej."

On May 9, 1942, the *Landkommissar* informed the District Chief:[694]

"Re: Evacuation of Jews from Slovakia.

As I already reported by telephone, the governor of the district for population and welfare informed me last Wednesday that on Thursday 1,000 Jews would be arriving from Slovakia; they would be transported farther in about 14 days. On Thursday, the 7th of May, the transport arrived here in the late evening; there were 841 persons, older men and women with children; 199 men were kept behind in Lublin. This transport was better equipped with baggage and food than the earlier ones. The direction of the evacuation from Lublin was under the control of SS-Obstf. Pohl, who was also present on the occasion of the evacuation of the local Jews on April 9. The Jews are at first lodged in the former high school. Whether and when the transport onward is to take place is not yet clear."

In another letter from May 13, 1942, one reads:[695]

"Herr District Chief of Cholm was present here personally yesterday and requested that those of the next transport, who are fit for labor also be sent to him, since he is in urgent need of a work force. Furthermore, he complained about the fact that the food supplied for the transport trains is always taken off in Lublin. I am asking that the food be sent along to Cholm with the next transports."

A similar complaint was also heard from the delegation of Rejowiec:[695]

"The delegation informed me that on April 17, '42, 2 transports of evacuees from Slovakia and the Protectorate arrived. The baggage of the evacuees has remained in Lublin, and the delegation requests that the baggage, which for the most part contains bed linens, be released."

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693 J. Kermisz, *op. cit.* (note 681), p. 48.

694 *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), p. 276.

695 J. Kermisz, *op. cit.* (note 681), p. 49.

In order to create room for the new arrivals, Polish Jews residing in the Lublin district were gradually deported farther east. These evacuations were initiated by the SS and Police Chief of Lublin in collaboration with the "Sub-Department of Population and Welfare" of the governor of the district of Lublin, on the proposal of the local authorities. For example, a certain Lenk, a subordinate of the district chief of Janów-Lubelsk, wrote to the SS and Police Chief of Lublin:[696]

"I ask you to evacuate Jews in the following locations:

Radomysl	*500*
Zaklikow	*1,500*
Annopol	*500*
Ulanow I	*500*
Modliborzyce	*1,000*
Janów-Lubelski	*400*
Krasnik	*1,000"*

Lenk added:

"Only old people, unfit for labor, women and children might be included by these evacuation operations, and such men who are not employed at German positions. Craftsmen, however, might still remain here for the time being."

On May 13, 1942, the district chief in Puławy sent a letter to the governor of the district of Lublin, which stated under Point 5:[697]

"In Opole the ghetto consists of Jews from Slovakia who were sent here a short time ago. All Slovakian Jews who are fit to work have for the most part already been procured for the above named projects. Therefore, in the Opole ghetto there is merely a remnant of old and sick Jews who are not employable."

On May 19, the district chief of Lublin reported to the Sub-Department for Population and Welfare:[698]

"On the questionnaire of the 12th of this month I recommended, when opportunity arises, that the following Jews, whose evacuation is required first, be deported:

Lubartów	*2,737*
Ostrow-City	*3,062*
Piaski	*6,166*
Bełżyce	*3,639*
Bychawa	*2,733*
Chodel	*1,398*
	19,735."

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[696] *Ibid*., p. 54.
[697] *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), p. 438.
[698] J. Kermisz, *op. cit.* (note 681), p. 53.

In a letter of May 22, the district chief of Hrubieszow stated:[699]

"The number and place of residence of those Jews whose evacuation appears to be necessary first, is as follows:

1) in Hrubieszow 5,690 Jews
2) " Uchanie 2,025 Jews
3) " Grabowiec 2,026 Jews
4) " Dubienka 2,907 Jews
5) " Bełz 1,540 Jews."

There is no doubt at all that these transfers were serving the purpose of creating room for the western Jews deported into the Lublin district. Later, the latter would then also be evacuated again in stages. A report of October 5, 1942, of the district chief in Lublin to the governor of the Lublin district sets out the following information regarding this:[700]

"Reference: Dispositions of August 18, 1942, and September 28, 1942
With regard to the above dispositions I am reporting that since the first of January 1942, 8,009 Jews from the Reich have been resettled into my district. 3,692 of these have already been resettled again. Expenditures or outlays have not been incurred due to these evacuations, the Piaski community merely put 400 vehicles at their disposal without cost for the transportation of the sick, children, and baggage."

The 8,009 Jews mentioned were accommodated in the following locales according to this report:

– 1,200 Jews from Germany in Bełżyce
– 5,466 Jews from Germany in Piaski
– 54 Jews from Germany in Luszawa
– 652 Jews from Germany in Kamionka
– 125 Jews from Slovakia in Firlej
– 512 Jews from Slovakia in Ostrow Lub.

The German policy of resettlement of the Jews was also echoed in the German press. On October 17, 1942, an article appeared in the *Lemberger Zeitung* with the headline "The first Jew-free city in the GG" (GG = General Gouvernement), in which the following appeared:[701]

"Lublin is the first city in the General Gouvernement, which has become Jew-free, and the process now begins of liberating the territories of the individual administrative districts from Jews, who were bringing the economic life of this nation into considerable disorder. The first district, which no longer has Jews, is Biala Podlaska. The process is carried out as follows: the district people determine some location as the area of residence for the Jews of the entire administrative district. In clearing up [their dis-

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[699] *Ibid*., p. 55.
[700] *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), p. 336.
[701] *Lemberger Zeitung*, No. 246, 17 October 1942, p. 5.

trict]*, the two districts of Biala Podlaska and Radzin have jointly selected one city as a Jewish living area, namely Miendzyrzec. Since this place lies in the territory of the administrative district of Radzin, however, Biala Podlaska no longer has any Jews.* […] *In order to bring about order in the part of the country around Lubatow* [Lubartów]*, the district chief of Lublin-Land decided upon the ghetto of Lubatow as the Jewish residential area for the Jews of the communities of Tysmieniec, Uscimov, Firlej, Kamionka, Luszawa, Lucka, Samokleski, Tarlo, and Ostrow as a city including Niemce. All Jews of the communities named must leave the communities no longer than 24 hours after publication of this police order of the district chief and set out for the Jewish living area of the city. The Jews who are found outside of Lubatow after that period has elapsed are punished with death. The Jewish Council of the city of Lubatow is under obligation to accommodate, to register, and if necessary provide room and board for the Jews moving to Lubatow from the above cited communities."*

It is clear from this article that if an area was declared to be 'Jew-free,' this in no way had to mean the extermination of the Jewish population concerned!

3. Numerical Analysis of the Transports into the Lublin District

In an article published in 1992, the Polish historian Janina Kiełboń drew a nearly complete picture of the deportation of Jews to the district of Lublin between 1939 and 1942.[702] We reproduce the data for 1942 in table form:

Date	From	To	Deportees
Mar. 11, 1942	Theresienstadt	Izbica	1,001
Mar. 13, 1942	Altreich (Germany proper)	Izbica	1,003
Mar. 17, 1942	Theresienstadt	Izbica	1,000
Mar. 19, 1942	Altreich	Izbica	1,000
Mar. 25, 1942	Altreich	Izbica	426
Mar. 27, 1942	Slovakia	Lublin	1,000
Mar. 27, 1942	Altreich	Izbica	1,008
Mar. 28, 1942	Altreich	Trawniki	985
Mar. 30, 1942	Slovakia	Lublin	1,000
Mar. 31, 1942	Slovakia	Lublin	1,003
Apr. 1, 1942	Theresienstadt	Piaski	1,000
Apr. 5, 1942	Slovakia	Lublin	1,495
Apr. 9, 1942	Vienna	Izbica	998
Apr. 12, 1942	Slovakia	Lubartów	1,040
Apr. 14, 1942	Slovakia	Lubartów	1,038

[702] J. Kiełboń, *op. cit.* (note 676), pp. 61-91.

Date	From	To	Deportees
Apr. 14, 1942	Altreich	Trawniki	659
Apr. 16, 1942	Slovakia	Rejowiec	1,040
Apr. 18, 1942	Theresienstadt	Rejowiec	1,000
Apr. 20, 1942	Slovakia	Rejowiec	1,030
Apr. 22, 1942	Slovakia	Nałęczów	1,001
Apr. 22, 1942	Altreich	Izbica	949
Apr. 23, 1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	1,000
Apr. 23, 1942	Altreich	Kraśniczyn	12
Apr. 25, 1942	Altreich	Izbica	175
Apr. 25, 1942	Altreich	Izbica	963
Apr. 25, 1942	Altreich	Izbica	856
Apr. 27, 1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	1,000
Apr. 27, 1942	Slovakia	Nałęczów	1,251
Apr. 27, 1942	Vienna	Włodawa	998
Apr. 28, 1942	Theresienstadt	Zamość	1,000
Apr. 30, 1942	Theresienstadt	Zamość	1,000
May 5, 1942	Slovakia	Lubartów	1,040
May 6, 1942	Slovakia	Łuków	1,038
May 7, 1942	Slovakia	Łuków	1,040
May 8, 1942	Slovakia	Międzyrzec Podl.	1,001
May 9, 1942	Theresienstadt	Sobibór/Osowa	1,000
May 11, 1942	Slovakia	Chełm	1,001
May 12, 1942	Slovakia	Chełm	1,002
May 12, 1942	Vienna	Izbica	1,001
May 12, 1942	Altreich	Bełżyce	1,000
Apr 13, 1942	Slovakia	Dęblin	1,040
May 14, 1942	Slovakia	Dęblin	1,040
May 14, 1942	Vienna	Izbica	1,006
May 17, 1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	1,000
May 17, 1942	Slovakia	Puławy	1,028
May 18, 1942	Slovakia	Nałęczów	1,025
May 19, 1942	Slovakia	Nałęczów	1,005
May 20, 1942	Slovakia	Puławy	1,001
May 23, 1942	Slovakia	Rejowiec	1,630
May 24, 1942	Slovakia	Rejowiec	1,022
May 25, 1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	1,000
May 25, 1942	Slovakia	Rejowiec	1,000
May 26, 1942	Slovakia	Rejowiec	1,000
May 29, 1942	Slovakia	Izbica	1,052
May 30, 1942	Slovakia	Izbica	1,000
June 1, 1942	Slovakia	Sobibór	1,000
June 2, 1942	Slovakia	Sobibór	1,014
June 5, 1942	Vienna	Izbica	1,001
June 5, 1942	Slovakia	Sobibór	1,000
June 6, 1942	Slovakia	Sobibór	1,001
June 8, 1942	Slovakia	Sobibór	1,000

Date	From	To	Deportees
June 9, 1942	Slovakia	Sobibór	1,010
June 10, 1942	Prague	Ujazdów	1,000
June 11, 1942	Slovakia	Sobibór	1,000
June 12, 1942	Theresienstadt	Trawniki	1,000
June 12, 1942	Slovakia	Sobibór	1,000
June 13, 1942	Theresienstadt	Majdanek	1,000
June 13, 1942	Slovakia	Sobibór	1,000
June 14, 1942	Slovakia	Sobibór	1,000
June 14, 1942	Vienna	Sobibór	996
June 15, 1942	Altreich	Izbica	145
July 15, 1942	Altreich 1942	Izbica	13
		Total:	69,084

According to the Korherr Report, the following evacuations of Jews from the territory of the Reich were carried out up to January 1, 1943:

from the Altreich (Germany proper) and Sudetenland: 100,516
from the Ostmark (Austria): 47,555
from the Protectorate (Bohemia and Moravia): 69,677
Total: 217,748.[703]

A total of 87,193 Jews, broken down as follows, arrived in the *Altersghetto* (old age ghetto) of Theresienstadt: 33,249 from the Altreich, 14,222 from the Ostmark and 39,722 from the Protectorate.[704]

9,431 Jews were deported into the ghetto of Litzmannstadt (Lodz) from the Altreich, 5,002 from the Ostmark, and 5,000 from the Protectorate (Prague), a total therefore of 19,433 between October 16 and November 4, 1941.[705]

9,194 Jews were sent into the Lublin district from the Altreich (March 13 to July 15, 1942), 6,000 from the Ostmark (April 9 to June 14, 1942), and 14,001 from the Protectorate (March 11 to June 13, 1942), thus a total of 29,195.

Finally, 6,615 Jews came to Nisko and other zones of the General Gouvernement from the Ostmark between October 20, 1939, and March 12, 1941.[706]

This results in the following picture:

[703] NO-5194, p. 9.
[704] NO-5194, p. 10.
[705] List of the new settlers. APL, PSZ 19, p. 195.
[706] W. Benz, *Dimension des Völkermords*, *op. cit.* (note 79), p. 76.

	Evacuation	Theresien-stadt	Litzmann-stadt	General Gouverne-ment	Eastern territories
Altreich:	100,516	33,249	9,431	9,194	48,642
Ostmark:	47,555	14,222	5,002	12,615	15,716
Protectorate:	69,677	39,722	5,000	14,001	10,954
Totals:	217,748	87,193	19,433	35,810	75,312

Therefore, of the 217,748 Jews evacuated, 35,810 came to the Lublin district and 75,312 to the eastern territories. Nearly half of the total – 106,626 Jews – were lodged in the ghettos of Theresienstadt and Litzmannstadt.

Do the deportations into the eastern territories and the Lublin district constitute the prelude to a policy of extermination? The transport lists cited permit us to answer the question with an unequivocal *no*. Even after the opening of the so-called eastern extermination camps, most transports were sent into regions, in which there were Jewish residential settlements. For example, after the commencement of operations in Bełżec, approximately 30 transports arrived in such areas. Similarly, between the opening of Sobibór and the arrival of the first transports in that camp (June 1, 1942), many transports reached these areas, and a further six after that date. Furthermore, after the opening of Sobibór, at least 20 transports had as their destination locales situated farther to the east of it. And not only that: after Treblinka began operations on July 23, 1942, at least 15 transports were headed for zones located farther eastward. It is valid to suggest that the direct transports to Minsk arrived first in Warsaw and ran over the Siedlce-Czeremcha-Wolkowusk line, so that they were traveling past Treblinka at a distance of approximately 80 km (Siedlce railway station) and about 140 km from Sobibór.

What purpose could it really serve to let Jews destined for extermination travel for several hundred kilometers past two ‘extermination camps’? And if these camps actually possessed the incredible killing capacity, which the official version of history attributes to them, why in the world, then, did dozens and dozens of transports take doomed Jews and have them settled in the district of Lublin instead of taking them directly into this camp?

4. Beginning of the Transports of Jews to Auschwitz

The first transports of Jews to Auschwitz that can be documented are to be seen within the framework of an extended program for the exploitation of the Jewish work force. Those transports came from France and Slovakia.[707]

[707] In this section the author (Carlo Mattogno) summarizes the pertinent results of his study *Special Treatment in Auschwitz*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, 2016, pp. 29-36, and adds some new elements. – See also Enrique Aynat, *Estudios sobre el “Holocaustio*,”

On September 16, 1942, Martin Luther, director of the German Department in the Foreign Ministry, sent a telegram to the German embassy in Bratislava (Pressburg) stating that "in the process of taking the measures for the final solution of the European Jewish problem" the Reich government was prepared to immediately send "20,000 young strong Slovakian Jews" to the east, where there existed "need for deployment of labor."[708] The Slovakian government accepted the German proposal "with eagerness,"[709] and the preparations for the deportations could begin. The program for deporting the Jews was decided upon on March 13, 1942, and provided for the dispatching of 10 trains each to Auschwitz and Lublin according to the following scheme:[710]

NO.	TRAIN NO.	DEPARTING	FROM	ARRIVING	DESTINATION
1	Da 66	3/25/1942	Poprad	3/26/1942	Auschwitz
2	Da 67	3/27/1942	Žilina	3/27/1942	Lublin
3	Da 68	3/27/1942	Lamać (Patrónka)	3/28/1942	Auschwitz
4	Da 69	3/29/1942	Sered	30/3/1942	Lublin
5	Da 70	3/30/1942	Nováky	3/31/1942	Lublin
6	Da 71	4/1/1942	Lamać	4/2/1942	Auschwitz
7	Da 72	4/2/1942	Poprad	4/3/1942	Auschwitz
8	Da 73	4/5/1942	Žilina	4/5/1942	Lublin
9	Da 74	4/7/1942	Nováky	4/8/1942	Lublin
10	Da 75	4/7/1942	Poprad	4/8/1942	Auschwitz
11	Da 76	4/8/1942	Sered	4/9/1942	Lublin
12	Da 77	4/11/1942	Žilina	4/11/1942	Lublin
13	Da 78	4/11/1942	Lamać	4/12/1942	Auschwitz
14	Da 79	4/13/1942	Poprad	4/14/1942	Auschwitz
15	Da 80	4/14/1942	Sered	4/15/1942	Lublin
16	Da 81	4/16/1942	Nováky	4/17/1942	Lublin
17	Da 82	4/17/1942	Poprad	4/18/1942	Auschwitz
18	Da 83	4/18/1942	Lamać	4/19/1942	Auschwitz
19	Da 84	4/20/1942	Poprad	4/21/1942	Auschwitz
20	Da 85	4/21/1942	Nováky	4/22/1942	Lublin

Each transport was supposed to consist of 1,000 persons.[711]

Valencia 1994.

[708] T-1078.

[709] NG-2586-J, p. 6.

[710] *Riešenie židowskiej otázky na Slovensku (1939-1945). Dokumenty*, Part 2, Edicia Judaica Slovaca, Bratislava 1994, pp. 59f. Engel, Štefan, Lev Haas, Bedřich Steiner, *Tragédia slovenských Židov: Fotografie a dokumenty*, Dokumentačná akcia pri ÚSŽNO, Bratislava 1949, p. 91 (reproduction of the transport plan). Dezider Tóth *et al*. (eds.), *Tragédia slovenských Zidov. Fotografie a dokumenty*, Datei, Banská Bystrica 1992, p. 161 (reproduction of the transport plan from March 26 to April 7, 1942).

[711] *Riešenie…*, *op. cit.* (note 710), pp. 38f.

As we have seen in the preceding section, the Jews included in the direct deportations to Lublin were distributed throughout the surrounding towns.

On April 29, 1942, the German embassy in Bratislava (Pressburg) sent the Slovakian government a verbal note containing the following:

> *"The Jews who have been transported out and those yet to be transported out of the territory of Slovakia into Reich territory will be coming into the General Gouvernement and into the occupied eastern territories after preparation and retraining for work assignment. The accommodation, feeding, clothing, and retraining of the Jews, including their relatives, is incurring expenses, which cannot presently be covered from the initially small labor output of the Jews, because the retraining bears results only after some time and because only a portion of the Jews who have been and who are going to be transported is capable of working."*

In order to cover these expenses, the Reich government required a sum of 500 Reichsmark per person of the Slovakian government.[712]

On May 11, 1942, *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Dieter Wisliceny, Eichmann's deputy in Slovakia, informed the Slovakian Minister of the Interior that, according to information from the RSHA, there was a possibility of intensifying the transports of Slovakian Jews to Auschwitz, but he qualified this with:[713]

> *"However, these transports are allowed to contain only Jews and Jewesses who are fit for labor, no children."*

The proposal was not adopted, and for this reason all 19 Jewish transports from Slovakia in May 1942 went into the Lublin district.

A total of 57,752 Jews in 57 transports were deported from Slovakia in the year 1942. Of these, 38 transports, or a total of 39,006 persons, were brought to the Lublin district,[714] the 19 remaining transports comprising 18,746 persons were sent to Auschwitz.

The first transports of Jews from France are also to be seen within the framework of this program for the exploitation of the Jewish work force, since the first transports comprised exclusively Jews able to work. In March 1942, *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Theodor Dannecker, representative for Jewish affairs in France, reported that preparatory talks "with regard to the expulsion of approx. 5,000 Jews to the east" could be conducted with the French authorities. Dannecker made clear that those involved would have to be "male Jews able to work, not over 55 years of age."[715] The mass deportation of the Jews living in France, but also of those in Holland and Belgium, was decided in June of 1942. At that time, the Germans were conducting first and foremost a policy for the exploitation of the Jewish labor force in Auschwitz, so that the prob-

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[712] *Ibid*., p. 105.
[713] *Ibid*., pp. 108f.
[714] According to the transport lists cited in the preceding section, the 38 transports into the Lublin District comprised a total of 39,899 persons.
[715] RF-1216.

lem of those who were unfit for work was only a peripheral one. On June 15, 1942, Dannecker wrote a note, in which he summarized the results of a talk conducted on the 11th of that month in Department IV B 4 of the RSHA:[716]

> *"For military reasons, an expulsion of Jews from Germany into the eastern deportation area can no longer take place during the summer.*
> *RFSS* [Reichsführer SS = Himmler] *has therefore ordered that greater numbers of Jews will be transferred either from the southeastern (Romania) or from the western occupied regions to KL Auschwitz for the purpose of performing work.*
> *The basic condition is that the Jews (of both sexes) are to be between 16 and 40 years of age. 10% of the Jews sent along can be unfit for labor."*

On June 22, 1942, Eichmann wrote a letter to the legation counselor Franz Rademacher on the topic "Labor assignment of Jews from France, Belgium, and the Netherlands," in which he explained:[717]

> *"For the time being, it is planned to initially deport to the Auschwitz Camp approximately 40,000 Jews from the occupied French regions, 40,000 Jews from the Netherlands, and 10,000 Jews from Belgium in special trains running daily with 1,000 persons each, from mid-July or the beginning of August of this year."*

The search for persons to deport, according to Eichmann's instructions to Rademacher, should be restricted first of all "to Jews fit for labor."

On June 26, 1942, *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Dannecker wrote a circular on "Guidelines for the Evacuation of Jews." The deportations were supposed to be restricted to "Jews able to work of both sexes from 16 to 45 years of age." Under point 21 the guidelines prescribe the following:[718]

> *"The following must be taken along by each person:*
> *a) 1 pair of sturdy work boots, 2 pairs of socks, 2 shirts, 2 pairs of underpants, 1 work suit, 2 wool blankets, 2 sets of bedding (pillow cases and sheets), 1 bowl, 1 drinking cup, 1 spoon and 1 sweater, and also the toilet articles necessary.*
> *b) Each Jew has to take a food supply with him for a 3-day march. Only 1 piece of baggage is allowed to be taken along (1 suitcase or backpack)."*

Under points 6 and 7 are the instructions:

> *"A food supply for a total of 14 days (bread, flour, barley, beans etc. in bags) is to be added to the transport in a special freight car.* […]
> *One Jew, who is responsible for keeping order during the trip and for the cleaning of the car at the end of the trip, is to be in charge of each car. This Jew is to also bring cleaning materials with him."*

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716 CDJC, XXVI-29.
717 NG-183.
718 RF-1221.

In July, discussions started about the problem of the deportation of children. On July 10, Dannecker inquired at the RSHA as to

> *"whether the children of the Jews being deported can be included in the deportation starting with perhaps the 10th* [719] *transport."*[720]

On July 21, 1942, Dannecker wrote in a note in reference to a telephone discussion of the day before:[721]

> *"The question of the deportation of children was discussed with SS-Sturmbannführer Eichmann. He decided that, as soon as transportation into the General Gouvernement is again possible, transports of children can start rolling. SS-Obersturmführer Nowak promised to make about 6 transports possible to the General Gouvernement at the end of August/beginning of September, which can contain Jews of every kind (also Jews unfit for work and old Jews)."*

These six transports could not have had Auschwitz as a destination, for first of all Auschwitz was not located within the General Gouvernement but in the territory of the Reich (from the German point of view at that time), and second because during that period deportations to Auschwitz ran along a mountain route. Therefore the sentence "as soon as transportation into the General Gouvernement is again possible" cannot have referred to Auschwitz.

On August 13, 1942, *SS-Sturmbannführer* Günther sent a telegram to the SS authorities in charge in Paris on the subject of "Transportation of Jews to Auschwitz. Deportation there of the Jewish children," in which he informed them that the Jewish children could "gradually be deported to Auschwitz in the planned transports."[722] Transports purely of children, however, would not be permissible. (This was clearly to prevent the enemy from exploiting this in propaganda.)

On the day after this, in accordance with these orders, a transport with 1,000 persons departed from France for Auschwitz, "among them for the first time children."[723]

In conformance with the instructions cited above, the first trains to Auschwitz carried only Jews fit to work, who were then normally included in the camp's inmate registry. The following table summarizes the data relating to the first 18 transports:[724]

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719 The 10th transport departed on July 24, 1942.

720 T-441.

721 RF-1233.

722 CJC, XXVb-126. A reproduction of the document can be found in E. Aynat, *op. cit.* (note 707), p. 87.

723 T-444.

724 The transports allegedly taken completely into the gas before July 4, 1942, are a pure invention. Cf. C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 707), pp. 34-36.

DATE	DEPORTEES	ORIGIN
March 26	999	Slovakia
March 28	798	Slovakia
March 30	1,112	Compiègne
April 2	965	Slovakia
April 3	997	Slovakia
April 13	1,077	Slovakia
April 17	1,000	Slovakia
April 19	1,000	Slovakia
April 23	1,000	Slovakia
April 24	1,000	Slovakia
April 29	723	Slovakia
May 22	1,000	Lublin KL
June 7	1,000	Compiègne
June 20	659	Slovakia
June 24	999	Drancy
June 27	1,000	Pithiviers
June 30	1,038	Beaune-La R.
June 30	400	Lublin KL
Total:	16,767	

5. Auschwitz as a Transit Camp for Western Jews

On September 5, 1942, *SS-Untersturmführer* Horst Ahnert, member of the SIPO and of the SD in Paris, wrote a note on the "Evacuation of Jews," which begins as follows:[725]

> *"At the beginning of July 1942, the Reichssicherheitshauptamt ordered that, for the purpose of the final solution of the Jewish problem, the transportation of Jews out of the territories occupied by Germany for the goal of labor assignment should be begun on a greater scale."*

On September 12, there was a meeting between Reich Minister Albert Speer, *SS-Obergruppenführer* Oswald Pohl, the director of the *SS-WVHA*, and other functionaries. On the following day, Pohl handed a detailed report to Himmler. The discussion had concentrated on four points, the first of which was the "Enlargement of the barracks-camp of Auschwitz as a result of the eastern migration."

Pohl wrote on this point:[726]

> *"In this manner, Reichsminister Prof. Speer wants to guarantee the deployment at short notice of approximately 50,000 Jews fit for work in closed companies with existing possibilities for lodging. We will skim off*

[725] CDJC, XXVI-61.

[726] Pohl Report to Himmler of 16 September 1942 on the subject: a) Armament work. b) Bomb damage. BAK, NS 19/14, pp. 131-133.

> *the labor force necessary for this purpose from the migration to the east, chiefly at Auschwitz, so that our existing company facilities are not disturbed in their output and their structure. The Jews destined for migration to the east will therefore have to interrupt their journey and perform armament work.*"

By "migration to the east" was meant the deportation of the Jews to the eastern territories. In this context the last sentence clearly means that the Jews who were not fit to work did not interrupt their journey, thus did not stop in Auschwitz, but continued onward. Where at least a portion of these people was sent emerges from a report, which *SS-Untersturmführer* Ahnert wrote about a meeting held on August 28, 1942, at Department IV B 4 of the RSHA. This meeting had been called for the purpose of discussing the Jewish problem and in particular the evacuation of Jews in foreign occupied territories, as well as to address transportation problems. The evacuation of Jews to the east was supposed to take place via Auschwitz. In regard to the points discussed, the report noted under point c):[727]

> *"Inclusion of blankets, shoes, and eating utensils for the transport participants. It was demanded by the commandant of the internment camp Auschwitz that the necessary blankets, work shoes, and eating utensils are absolutely to be included in the transports. Insofar as this has not been done so far, they are immediately to be sent on to the camp."*

Point e) related to the purchase of barracks:

> *"SS-Obersturmbannführer Eichmann requested that the purchase of the barracks ordered by the Commander of the Security Police Den Haag be undertaken immediately. The camp is supposed to be set up in Russia. The transporting of the barracks can be handled so that in every train transport 3-5 barracks are carried along."*

In the draft of an agreement between the Jewish Council of Slovakia and the *SS-Sonderstab SS Führungshauptamt* (SS special staff, SS administrative main office) about the exchange of Jews for various goods, the following request of the Jewish Council is mentioned:[728]

> *"No further deportations from the General Gouvernement and Auschwitz, 15 days after the conclusion of the agreement."*

What could the deportation from Auschwitz mean if not the continuation of the migration to the east?

In a letter dated March 24, 1943, Gisi Fleischmann, a leading Zionist in Slovakia, wrote:[729]

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[727] Report of the *SS-Untersturmführer* Horst Ahnert of 1 September 1942. CDJC, XXVI-59.

[728] Dov Weissmandel, *Min-hammetsar*, Emunah, New York 1950, Document 8 (outside of the text). The title of the book (*In Distress*) is taken from Psalm 118: 5.

[729] *Ibid*., Document 23 (outside of the text).

> *"These days, however, brought us the schlichtim* [Deported People] *reports, which justified a little hope that small remnants can still be found there. We received approximately 200 letters from Dęblin-Irena and Końskowala, Lublin district, where in addition to our Jews also Belgian Jews reside, who arrived there during the last weeks."*

But all of the transports leaving from Belgium up to the end of March 1943 had been taken to Auschwitz,[730] so that the Belgian Jews to be found in Dęblin-Irena[731] and Końskowala – a village 6 km from Puławy – must have reached there from Auschwitz, in fact within the framework of the migration east previously described.

Other Jews were deported to the ghetto of Grodno (White Russia). They, too, had to have arrived there via Auschwitz. In a report entitled "*Warunki materialne bytu Żydów*" (Material living conditions of the Jews), from the second half of the year 1942, one reads in regard to the ghetto of Lodz:[732]

> *"There is a factor, which is causing the number of Jews to increase. This factor consists of the evacuations from the regions occupied by the Germans. Information about such evacuations arrives in succession. It is known that 23,000 Jews from Berlin, Vienna, and Prague have been transferred to Lodz; similar instances are also known in Warsaw; recently, a certain number of Jews was transferred from Belgium to Grodno."*

The documents just cited prove that a considerable portion of the Jewish population of western Europe (namely of France, Belgium, and the Netherlands) was deported to the east from the second half of 1942 on, and, in fact, via Auschwitz, which served as a transit camp. The immediate destination of these Jews was the General Gouvernement or Riga, from which the transports traveled farther on to the east.

This policy was still is effect on May 5, 1943. On that day *SS-Gruppenführer* Wilhelm Harster, commander of the Security Police and SD in Holland, wrote a note, in which he summarized the orders from the RSHA for the following months:[733]

> *"1.) General lines:*
> *The RFSS desires that as many Jews as humanly possible be deported to the east in this year.*
> *2.) The next trains to the east:*
> *Since a new synthetic rubber plant, which was destroyed in the west by air attacks, is supposed to be built in Auschwitz, above all a maximum number*

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730 Serge Klarsfeld and Maxime Steinberg, *Mémorial de la déportation des Juifs de Belgique*, The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York 1994, pp. 42-45.

731 Irena is a suburb of Dęblin.

732 Maria Tyszkowa, "Eksterminacja Żydów w latach 1941-1943. Dokumenty Biura Informacji i Propagandy KG AK w zbiorach oddziału rękopisów BUW," in: *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce*, No. 4 (1964), 1992, p. 49.

733 T-544.

> *of Jews from the west is needed in the months of May and June. It was agreed that at first the Jews made available for transportation will be shipped, if possible by the first half of the month, by means of combining several trains; the Westerbork Camp* [in Holland] *is therefore being emptied quickly. The figure of 8,000 is the goal for the month of May. Train arrangements are being taken care of by the BdS, Den Haag, with the RSHA.*
> *3.) The Hertogenbusch Camp:*
> *Since the RSHA requires a further 15,000 Jews in June, the point in time at which the inmates of the Hertogenbusch Camp* [in Holland] *can also be called upon must be reached as quickly as possible."*

A report produced at the beginning of 1944 and delivered to the Warsaw Delegation – that is, the representation of the government-in-exile residing in London – states with respect to the Jewish population of the General Gouvernement in December 1943:[734]

> *"According to information received, at the end of December there were approximately 150,000 Jews on Polish territory, in legal groupings, half of them foreign Jews."*

Who could these "foreign Jews" on Polish territory be, if not western Jews processed into the General Gouvernement via Auschwitz?

6. Final Destination of Jews Deported to the East

The deportations of Jews to the east therefore took place in two stages: the Jews were first temporarily settled or lodged in transit camps, and then deported farther east. In view of the paucity of existing documentation, we cannot determine with certainty what the final destination of this deportation was, but there exist various pieces of evidence, which make it possible for us to draw plausible conclusions.

In the "Guidelines for handling of the Jewish question," which go back to the summer of 1941, the following paragraph appears:[735]

> *"The goal is a transfer into ghettos with simultaneous separation of the sexes. The existence of numerous more or less closed Jewish communities in White Russia and in the Ukraine facilitates this task. For the rest, locations are to be chosen, which, due to pending work projects, make possible the full utilization of the Jewish labor force."*

On August 14, 1942, *SS-Brigadeführer* Otto Rasch, Leader of *Einsatzgruppe* C, proposed to Berlin the following solution of the Jewish problem:[736]

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[734] *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), p. 286.
[735] PS-212. IMT, Vol. XXV, p. 304.
[736] The Chief of the Sicherheitspolizei and of the SD. Event Report USSR No. 52 of August 14, 1941. NO-4540.

> *"The surplus Jewish masses can be expended and put to excellent use particularly in the cultivation of the great Pripjet marshes and the marshes on the northern Dnieper as well as on the Volga."*

As already mentioned,[737] in a letter to Gauleiter Arthur Greiser on September 18, 1941, Himmler wrote that, in accord with the wishes of the Führer, the Jews were supposed to have been transported out of the Altreich and the Protectorate "into the eastern territories newly incorporated into the Reich two years ago," but merely "as a first stage," in expectation of a deportation "still farther to the east."

A secret telegram of November 9, 1941, sent by Lohse to Rosenberg, reads with regard to Riga that the

> *"Jewish camps must be shifted considerably farther to the east."*[738]

On the same day, Dr. Leibbrandt reiterated in a telegram to the *Reichskommissar* for the *Ostland*, Hinrich Lohse, that "with regard to the transports of Jews into the Ostland":[738]

> *"Jews are coming farther eastward. Camps in Riga and Minsk are only temporary measures."*

There is no reason whatsoever to doubt that the evidence for a program of renewed deportation of the Jews to the east corresponds to the truth. This is incidentally confirmed by an article of October 16, 1942, in the *Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz* (Jewish Weekly for Switzerland). The paper reported:[739]

> *"For some time there has been a trend toward dissolution of the ghettos in Poland. That was the case with Lublin, then it was Warsaw's turn. It is not known how far the plan has being carried out already. The former residents of the ghetto are going farther to the east into occupied Russian territory; Jews from Germany were brought into the ghetto partly to take their place.* […] *an eyewitness who was in Riga a short time ago and was able to flee, reports that 32,000 Jews are still in the ghetto of Riga now. Since the occupation, thousands of Jews have been killed. In the morning, the Jews are said to have to line up outside the city for forced labor. They are said to not receive salaries but only permissions for food supply. Compared to the rest of the populace, they are said to receive only severely short rations: they are said to receive only 100 g of bread daily and 2 kg of potatoes per week. Recently, transports of Jews from Belgium and other nations of western Europe were noted in Riga, which, however, immediately traveled on again toward unknown destinations. In the ghetto of Riga, so it is said, there were pogroms on the 30th of November and the 8th of December, to which a great many Jews fell victim."*

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[737] See Chapter VI.
[738] GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 52.
[739] *Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz*, No. 42, October 16, 1942, pp. 10f.

On May 23, 1942, Karol Sidor, representative of the Republic of Slovakia at the Holy See, handed a note to Secretary of State Luigi Maglione concerning the solution of the Jewish question. It was dated May 8th of the same year and was the answer to a letter of November 12, 1941, prepared by the Holy See to request information on this subject. After an explanation of the reasons for the delayed answer, the note continued:[740]

> *"But in this period of time*[741] *there was a silence about the solution of the Jewish question. Long negotiations dealing with the solution to the Jewish problem in Europe took place between the Slovakian and German governments, and the view was offered that the emigration of the Slovakian Jews represents only one component of a much larger overall program. In the near future, half a million Jews from* [western and central] *Europe will be sent to eastern Europe. Slovakia will be the first state whose Jewish inhabitants are taken by Germany. At the same time, the emigration of Jews from France (the occupied part), Holland, Belgium, the Protectorate, and Reich territory is supposed to follow. Hungary has also expressed its desire to send off 800,000 Jews, as the head of government, Dr. Kállay, said in his speech on April 20 of this year.*
>
> *The Slovakian Jews are being accommodated at various locations in the area of Lublin, where they will definitely remain. The Aryan population will be evacuated from these territories, and an exclusively Jewish district with its own administration will arise in its place, where the Jews can live as a community and can secure their existence by their own labor. The families will stay together."*

In a speech in Bad Tölz, before SS-Junkers[742] on November 23, 1942, Himmler said:[743]

> *"The Jewish question in Europe has also completely changed. In a Reichstag speech the Führer once said: Should Jewry instigate an international war to the extermination of the Aryan peoples, then it is not the Aryan peoples who will be exterminated but Jewry. The Jew is evacuated from Germany; today he lives in the east and works on our roads, railroads, and so on. This process has been carried out consistently, but without cruelty."*

On November 18, 1943, in a speech given in Krakow before SS leaders and officials of the General Gouvernement, Himmler spoke of:

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[740] *Actes et documents du Saint Siège relatifs à la seconde guerre mondiale. Le Saint Siège et les victimes de la guerre. Janvier 1941-Décembre 1942*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City 1975, Vol. 8, pp. 542f.

[741] From November 1941 to January 1942.

[742] The Junkers were members of the German squirearchy, young noblemen who partook of a long tradition of military service. Translator's note.

[743] Bradley F. Smith and Agnes Peterson (eds.), *Heinrich Himmler. Geheimreden 1933 bis 1943*, Propyläen Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1974, p. 200.

> *"*[…] *these 16 million foreign peoples, whose numbers were once made even larger by an enormous number of Jews, who of course now have emigrated or been brought to the east.* […]*"*[744]

On December 16, 1943, in a speech in Weimar given before the commanders of the *Kriegsmarine* (German navy), Himmler maintained that:[745]

> *"Such and so many Jews were brought to the east. Migrations of peoples that we have given great names to in history have taken place at this breakneck speed.* […]*"*

On July 29, 1942, the Papal Nuncio in France, Monsignore Valerio Valeri, wrote from Vichy to the Secretary of State, Cardinal Luigi Maglione:[746]

> *"Around the twentieth of this month the occupation authorities in Paris, using the French police, arrested approximately 12,000 Jews. These were then for the most part temporarily interned in Vélodrome*[747] *d'Hiver. The majority of these are non-Aryans of foreign origin, above all Poles, Czechs, etc., who are designated for deportation into the Ukraine."*

On September 7, 1942, the "Kommandeur No. 12" of the *Einsatzkommando* 12 of *Einsatzgruppe* D in Kislovodsk, Ukraine, issued the following order:[748]

> *"To all Jews. For the purpose of settlement in the less populated regions of the Ukraine, all Jews who live in the city of Kislovodsk and those Jews who have no fixed residence are obliged to report on Wednesday, the 9th of September 1942, at 5 o'clock in the morning, Berlin time (6 o'clock according to Moscow time) to the freight train station.*
>
> *Each Jew is to take along a package of 20 kg or under of food for 2 days. Additional food will be secured at the stations by the German authorities. It is suggested that only the most necessary things be taken along: valuables, money, clothing, and blankets. Each family is to seal up its apartment, and on the key a slip of paper should be fastened, on which the first name, family name, the occupation, and the address of the family members are stated. This key with the slip of paper is to be handed over to the German detachment at the freight station. Due to the difficulties in transportation, bringing freight over 20 kg and furniture is impossible. For better preparation and transportation, each family is to pack up and seal its property, its linens etc. and in doing so declare the name of the owner. The Kommandantur* [headquarters] *No. 12 is responsible for maintaining the materials in undamaged condition.*
>
> *Whoever makes an attack on the property of these Jews or attempts to force his way into a Jewish apartment will be shot immediately.*

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[744] *Ibid*., p. 201. Originals: notes: NARA, RG 242, T-175, Roll 91, Frames 3195-3198; audio recording: NARA, Tape 242-193 and Tape 242-218.

[745] *Ibid*., p. 201. Original notes: NARA, RG 242, T-175, Roll 91, Frames 3331-3335.

[746] *Actes et Documents…*, *op. cit.* (note 740), Vol. 8, p. 610.

[747] Bicycle racing stadium.

[748] USSR 1A.

Baptized Jews are also subject to evacuation.
Those families, in which one of the parents is a Jew but the other is a Russian, a Ukrainian, or member of another nationality, are not subject to evacuation.
Furthermore, members of mixed blood are not subject to emigration. A voluntary emigration of the families of mixed blood, of half-breeds of groups I and II, is to be carried out at further opportunity.
At the station, all Jews are to form into lines of 45 to 50, in which individual families are to stay together.
The assembly should be completed about 5:45 (Berlin time), 6:45 o'clock (Moscow time). The Jewish committee is responsible for the execution of this order according to plan. Those Jews who impede the execution of this order will be severely punished."

This decree dovetails very well with a general plan for the resettlement of the Jews and for the deportation of western Jews into the Ukraine.[749]

According to Radio Moscow, several thousand French Jews were resettled in the Ukraine. In its issue number 71 of April 1944, the Jewish underground paper *Notre Voix* had the following news to report:[750]

"Thank you! A news item that will delight all Jews of France was broadcast by Radio Moscow. Which of us does not have a brother, a sister, or relatives among those deported from Paris? And who will not feel profound joy when he thinks about the fact that 8,000 Parisian Jews have been rescued from death by the glorious Red Army! One of them told Radio Moscow how he had been saved from death, and likewise 8,000 other Parisian Jews. They were all in the Ukraine when the last Soviet offensive began, and the SS bandits wanted to shoot them before they left the country.

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[749] R. Hilberg claims the Jews of Kislovodsk were not transferred, but were shot (*op. cit.* (note 17), Vol. 3, p. 1315). But in his footnote 38 he refers to an extremely dubious source, namely the *Black Book* of I. Ehrenburg and V. Grossman (*op. cit.* (note 24). In this book, in which propaganda outweighs truth many times over, the alleged massacre is mentioned by a supposed eyewitness, the Jewish journalist Moissei Samoilowitsch Evenson, whose statements are supposed to have been jotted down by another journalist, Viktor Chklovski (I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *Le Livre Noir*, *op. cit.* (note 24), pp. 460f.). The Soviet Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in the Stavropol Region claimed that on September 9, 1942, 2,000 Jews left the Kislovodsk railway station, but the train halted at a nearby site and the Jews were shot in an anti-tank ditch. Later, thousands of Jews from Essentuki were shot in the same trench. On July 10, 1943, it claimed, 6,300 bodies were found there. (GARF, 7445-2-93, pp. 31f.) But this sensational discovery left behind no documentary traces, and the alleged mass murder is not mentioned in any of the *Einsatzgruppen* reports. In the standard work by Helmut Krausnick and Hans-Heinrich Wilhelm (*op. cit.*, note 656), the name of the city of Kislovodsk surfaces only one time (p. 202), and even there not in connection with a shooting of Jews.

[750] Reproduced in: Union des juifs pour la résistance et l'entraide (ed.), *La presse antiraciste sous l'occupation hitlérienne*, self-published, Paris 1950, p. 179. We are indebted to Jean-Marie Boisdefeu for sending a photocopy of this page.

> *But since they knew what fate was in store for them and since they had learned that the Soviet troops were no longer far away, the deported Jews decided to escape. They were immediately welcomed by the Red Army and are presently all in the Soviet Union. The heroic Red Army has thus once again earned a claim on the gratitude of the Jewish community of France."*

After the evacuation of the Jewish Council of Mielec, health cost arrears in the amount of 2,260.80 zlotys resulted. On June 22, 1942, the State Sanatorium and Nursing facility of Kobierzyn demanded this sum from the chief of the district of Lublin. Inquiries were made, and on September 4, the SS and Police Chief reported

> *"that the Jewish Council was evacuated from Mielec to Russia."*

The exact location, however, no one knew.[751]

On May 13, 1942, the District Chief of Puławy sent a report to the Governor of the Lublin district, in which it was stated:[752]

> *"In the period between May 6 to May 12 inclusive, 16,822 Jews were expelled from the Puławy district across the Bug by the directive of the SS and Police Chief."*

According to official historiography, these Jews were deported to Sobibór and murdered there. The Sobibór Camp was located some kilometers from the River Bug, which forms the border between Poland and the Ukraine. One could cross the Bug by the Włodawa-Tamaszouka road (about 15 km north of the camp) as well as by rail (the Brest-Litovsk line). There is no valid reason why these Jews should not actually have been transported across the Bug, all the more so as Sobibór is not mentioned at all in this report. The destination of Sobibór was by no means a secret one, and it surfaces, for example, in the following report of August 4, 1942, from the chief of the Radom district:[753]

> *"I am hereby reporting that 69 Jews have been transported by a Sonderdienstkommando* [Special Service Unit] *from Rzczywol to the Sobibor Camp of the SS and Police Chief in the Lublin district."*

If one considers the small number of deportees (69 persons), their place of origin (a location which was less than 80 km from Warsaw), as well as the fact that they had been mustered by a Special Service Unit, then this leads to the conclusion that they were skilled workers who were supposed to be employed in Sobibór as camp personnel.

Incidentally, it is known that on July 5, 1943, Himmler personally gave the following order:[754]

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[751] J. Kermisz, *op. cit.* (note 681), pp. 35 and 39.

[752] *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), p. 438.

[753] J. Kermisz, *op. cit.* (note 681), p. 438.

[754] Reproduction of the document in: Thomas (Tovi) Blatt: *Sobibor. The Forgotten Revolt. A Survivor's Report*. H.E.P., Issaquah, 1998, documentation without pagination. Cf. also Pohl's letter to Himmler of July 15 and the reply of the Office of the *Reichsführer*-SS of July 24, 1943, both on the subject "Transit Camp Sobibór".

> *"The transit camp Sobibór is to be converted into a concentration camp. In the concentration camp a plant for the repair of captured munitions is to be established."*

This instruction, directed to officials who could not have been unclear about the actual character of the Sobibór Camp, was a Reich secret: for what reason should Himmler have used the expression *Durchgangslager* (transit camp)? In order to pull the wool over the eyes of his underlings – who knew all about it for a long time?

Deportations of Dutch Jews to Sobibór took place around the time of Himmler's order: on July 2, a transport with 2,397 persons arrived, on July 9 another with 2,417.[755] That Sobibór had the function of a transit camp also emerges from the statements of several former Dutch-Jewish deportees:

Cato Polak, deported on March 10, 1943, remained in Sobibór one or two hours and was then transferred to Lublin with 30 women and 12 men. They returned home to Holland by way of Trawniki – Auschwitz – Bergen-Belsen – Theresienstadt.[756]

Bertha Jansen-Ensel and Judith Eliazar, who had arrived in Sobibór on March 10, 1943, were likewise transferred to Lublin. Both returned to their homeland via Auschwitz. Although they had alluded to gas chambers and cremations, they declared:[757]

> *"Sobibor was no camp, rather a transit camp."*

Jules Schelvis, deported to Sobibór on June 1, 1943, was transferred to Trawniki three hours after his arrival there and returned to Holland via Auschwitz.[758]

Mirjam Penha-Blitz gave a statement that was summarized as follows:[759]

> *"Deported by train from Westerbork on March 10, 1943. Arrival in Sobibor about March 13, 1943 (via Birkenau – without a stop – to Sobibor)."*

Four or five hours after arrival at the camp, the witness was deported to Lublin. Her return home occurred via Birkenau.

Sientje and Jetje Veterman, sent to Sobibór on April 6, 1943, were sorted out together with 28 other women for work and transferred to Trawniki with them. They returned to the Netherlands by way of Auschwitz-Birkenau.[760]

Elias Alex Cohen, deported to Sobibór on March 17, 1943, spent only a few hours in the camp and was sent to Lublin with 35 other Jews.[761] Sophie Verduin, deported on March 10, 1943, was transferred to Lublin after a few

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[755] Het Nederlandsche Roode Kruis. Afwikkelingsbureau Concentratiekampen. Sobibór. ROD, c[23.62.]09, p. 1

[756] *Ibid*., 's-Gravenhage, Nov. 4, 1945, Verklaring 49, ROD, c[23.62.]09, p. 10.

[757] *Ibid*., Verklaring 134, pp. 13f.

[758] *Ibid*., Verklaring 177, p. 15.

[759] *Ibid*., Verklaring 178, p. 16.

[760] *Ibid*., Verklaring 180, p. 17.

[761] *Ibid*., Verklaring 186, p. 18.

hours; her return home to Holland took place by way of Auschwitz-Birkenau.[762]

Jozef Wins de Heer, deported on May 11, 1943, went from Sobibór to Doruhucza. He returned home to the Netherlands by way of Lublin-Majdanek.[763]

In a well-documented book, which was published in Dutch in 1993 and was later translated into German, Jules Schelvis writes that "in Sobibor, after the arrival of transports, the fresh work forces for Dorohucza" were "selected."[764] At Dorohucza, 5 km from Trawniki, was a labor camp where peat was cut. According to Schelvis, at least 700 Dutch Jews were transferred there directly after their arrival in Sobibór, but he claims that only two of them are supposed to have survived the war.[764] There is certain knowledge of 171 of these persons – 147 men and 24 women – since they sent postcards home from Dorohucza.[765]

Dorohucza was only one of many Jewish labor camps, which overlay the Lublin district like a dense network. Edward Dziadosz and Józef Marszałek count no fewer than 110 of them.[766] As can be gathered from the statements of former deportees summarized above, other Dutch Jews were transferred from Sobibór to Lublin and then onward to these labor camps. Schelvis has documented a total of 89 postcards sent by Dutch Jews from Sobibór, 171 from Dorohucza, 52 from Lublin and 9 from Upper Silesia.[767]

It also happened that a portion of the Jews fit to work were sorted out from the rail cars before the train reached its final destination. This was the case for a transport that departed Vienna on June 14, 1942. After the train had arrived in Lublin, 51 Jews between 15 and 50 years of age had to get off; the remaining 949 continued their trip to the "labor camp" Sobibór, where it took an hour to unload the train. The original destination of the trip had been Izbica.[768]

It is characteristic that nearly all the Dutch Jews, who had been transferred from Sobibór to another camp, returned home by way of Auschwitz-Birkenau; instead of being liquidated as bearers of top-secret knowledge, they survived even this 'extermination camp.'

From what has been established here, it emerges that a portion of the Jews deported to the Lublin district were deported across the Bug into the Ukraine. Dutch, French, and Czech Jews reached Minsk.[769] The deportation of Polish

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[762] *Ibid*., Verklaring 188, p. 19.
[763] *Ibid*., Verklaring 192, p. 20.
[764] Jules Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibor*, Metropol Verlag, Berlin 1998, p. 137.
[765] *Ibid*., p. 140.
[766] Edward Dziadosz, Józef Marszałek, "Wiezienia i obozy w dystrykcie lubelskim w latach 1939-1944," in: *Zeszyty Majdanka*, III, 1969, pp. 109-120.
[767] J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 764), p. 160.
[768] "Erfahrungsbericht" of the transport leader Josef Frischmann; *ibid*., pp. 70f.
[769] C. Gerlach, *op. cit.* (note 418), p. 761.

Jews to White Russia was, according to C. Gerlach, "extremely extensive"[770] and they were "taken to Minsk by railway".[771]

7. Transfers into the District of Galicia

A further portion of the Jews deported to the Lublin district was shunted on to Galicia.

Some former French prisoners of war who had been interned in the front line POW camp *Stalag* 325 at Rava-Russka (17 km from Bełżec on the road to Lemberg/Lviv), were questioned by Belgian researcher Jean-Marie Boisdefeu. They claimed to have seen western, mainly French, Jews in that zone.[772] As Boisdefeu stresses, declarations made by other prisoners of war in the year 1945 confirm this. Thus, one Paul Roser testified at Nuremberg:[773]

> *"The Germans had transformed the area of Lemberg-Rawa Ruska into a giant ghetto."*

A Dr. Guérin wrote:[774]

> *"The province, situated in gloomiest Galicia, on the border of the Ukraine, had been transformed into a giant ghetto, in which Jews deported from the whole of occupied Europe were staying. They were guarded by brutal Ukrainians, who were in the pay of the Germans."*

There was also a ghetto in Rava-Russka, where 18,000 Jews were living in the summer of 1942. Of these, 14,000 were allegedly murdered between December 7, 1942, and January 10, 1943, and another 2,000 sent into the 'death factory' of Bełżec.[775] It is not clear why this ghetto still existed several months after the opening of Bełżec, which was all of 17 km away from it, and why the alleged 14,000 victims were not sent directly into the 'death factory.' Not to mention the fact that on November 10, 1942, the Rava-Russka ghetto officially became one of the numerous 'Jewish residential districts' of Galicia.[776]

Jews from Belgium, Holland, Germany, the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and Slovakia arrived also in the camp of Janowski at Lemberg.[777] I. Hertz and Naftali Nacht report:[778]

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[770] *Ibid*., p. 762.
[771] *Ibid*., p. 763.
[772] Jean-Marie Boisdefeu, *La controverse sur l'extermination des Juifs par les Allemands, Tome 2: Réalités de la "solution finale*", Vrij Historisch Onderzoek, Antwerp 1996, pp. 65-71; Jean-Marie Boisdefeu, *La controverse sur l'extermination des Juifs par les Allemands. Corrigenda et addenda*, Vrij Historisch Onderzoek, Antwerp 1998, pp. 10-18.
[773] IMT, Vol. VI, p. 291.
[774] Dr. Guérin, *Rawa Ruska*, Editions Oris, Paris 1945, p. 13.
[775] Protocol of the Soviet Investigative Commission for Rava-Russka of September 26-30, 1944. GARF, 7021-67-78, pp. 138f.
[776] See lists in Notes 796f., pp. 266.
[777] P. Friedman, *Roads to Extinction. Essays on the Holocaust*, The Jewish Publication Society

> *"All trains with Jews from Brussels, Paris, and Amsterdam go through Rava-Russkaya. Transports from Tarnopol, Kolomyya, Sambor, Brezany, and other cities in the West Ukraine came to them."*

On July 22, 1941, East Galicia was incorporated into the General Gouvernement; on August 1 of the same year, the district of Galicia was established.

The massacres of Jews committed by Ukrainians and SS men in July 1941 in Lemberg and other Galician towns were to a great extent retaliations for the mass murders of Ukrainians committed by the Soviets between June 22 and July 2, 1941, before the retreat of the Red Army. In fact, in the eyes of the SS and the civilian population, the 'Soviet Jews' were regarded as responsible for the Communist acts of violence or at least considered accomplices of the perpetrators. The reports of the *Einsatzgruppen* furnish detailed examples of this. Here are some typical instances:[779]

> *"In Tarnopol 5,000 Ukrainians kidnapped, 2,000 murdered. As counter measures arrest operation initiated against Jewish intellectuals, who shared responsibility for the murder and besides were informers for the NKVD. Number estimated at about 1,000. On July 5, approximately 70 Jews rounded up by Ukrainians and shot. Another 20 Jews killed on the road by military and Ukrainians, as response to the murder of three soldiers who were found chained in jail, with tongues cut out and eyes gouged out."*

After the discovery of Soviet torture chambers, other Jews were shot in retaliatory measures. For example, after the discovery of the torture chamber in the courthouse of Tarnopol, the Germans reacted as follows:[780]

> *"The troops marching through who had the opportunity to see these atrocities, above all the bodies of the murdered German soldiers, killed all of the approximately 600 Jews and set their houses on fire."*

Even the massacre of (allegedly!) 33,771 Jews in Babi Yar at Kiev was represented as an act of punishment:[781]

> *"The animosity of the Ukrainian populace against the Jews is extraordinarily great, since they hold them guilty of the explosions in Kiev. Also, they are seen as the carriers and agents of the NKVD, who have brought terror down upon the Ukrainian people. In retaliation for the arsons in Kiev, all Jews were arrested, and on September 29 and 30, 33,771 Jews were executed in total."*

In the entire district of Galicia in July 1941, approximately 10,000 Jews are supposed to have been shot, and another 20,000 up to December, but these

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of America, New York and Philadelphia 1980, p. 305.

[778] I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *Le Livre Noir*, *op. cit.* (note 24), p. 213.

[779] Event Report USSR No. 14 of July 6, 1941, PGVA, 500-2-229, pp. 5f.

[780] Event Report USSR No. 28 of July 20, 1942, PGVA, 500-2-229, pp. 113f.

[781] Activity and Situation Report No. 6 of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the Sicherheitspolizei and of the SD in the USSR (Report period from October 1-31, 1941). RGVA, 500-1-25/1, p. 151.

figures are highly dubious. The claimed mass killings contradict, in particular, the anti-Jewish measures of the civilian government of Galicia, which had replaced the military administration on August 1, 1941.

Barely two weeks after the convening of the civilian government on August 14, 1941, units of the security police in Lemberg, Tarnopol, and Stanisław received an order from Colonel Worm with respect to the "Jewish compulsory labor camps," which began as follows:[782]

> *"In nearly all the larger towns of the district of Galicia, prisoner of war camps are supposed to have been prepared by the Russians. They are supposed to be equipped with all necessary stock and are especially well suited for the establishment of Jewish compulsory labor camps. All existing camps are to be investigated and reported immediately. At the same time, the holding capacity and condition are to be determined."*

On September 20, forced labor was introduced in the entire district for Jews "from the end of their 14th year to 60."[783] On November 6, 1941, procedures and deadlines were set for the establishment of a Jewish quarter in Lemberg, the administration of which was entrusted to a Jewish Council of Elders. This was obliged to establish, without delay, an office of nutrition, a security office, a system of justice, a health department, a welfare office, a burial system, a housing office, and a Jewish cemetery.[784]

The first two ghettos were formed in November and December of 1941 in Tarnopol (approx. 18,000 Jews) and Stanisław (about 30,000 Jews).[785]

In January 1942, the Medical Bureau of the Jewish community in Lemberg was established. The Jewish Council described it as follows:[786]

> *"The Medical Bureau of the Jewish community is the central administration and office of control for the entire hygiene system of the Jewish population of the city of Lemberg.*
>
> *Today it supports general outpatient clinics for adults, 1 children's outpatient clinic with an infant welfare and mothers' consultation office, 1 lung clinic, 1 first aid post, 1 general hospital with outpatient clinics and 1 hospital for chronic diseases, both with 250 beds each. The department for hygiene control (Physikat), which has just established 8 sanitation posts in the Jewish quarter, has the mission of checking and examining the sanitary*

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[782] RGVA, 1323-2-292b, pp. 158-158a.

[783] "Announcement. Re: Compulsory Labor for the Jewish Population in the District of Galicia." Reproduction of the document in: *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), p. 228.

[784] "Besprechung über die Bildung eines jüdischen Wohnbezirk in der Stadt Lemberg, unter dem Vorsitz des Governors". Lemberg, November 6, 1941, DAL, R 35-2-155, pp. 33-36.

[785] Tatiana Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludnosci zydoskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941-1943)," in: *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce*, No. 61, 1967, p. 17.

[786] "Mitteilungen des Judenrats in Lemberg für die Jüdische Gemeinde, Nr. 1. Jänner 1942", p. 6 DAL, R 35-12-5-, p. 5.

> *condition of the apartments, yards, public places, alleys in the Jewish residential quarter, to issue instructions and orders, and even to impose penalties in the case of non-compliance.*
> *Two hospitals for infectious diseases are being organized and will open shortly. Throughout the rayon* [a Russian administrative district–ed.]*, 60 Jewish physicians and Jewish sanitary personnel have been delegated for the fighting of epidemics, and further doctors will be following them successively. In Kleparow and Zniesienie, 2 outpatient clinics for adults and in addition further outpatient clinics for children and pulmonary cases are being established in the Jewish quarter.*
> *Finally, sanitation crews and 'block doctors' are being organized for the control and supervision of the hygienic situation for every 250 apartments.*
> *The General Jewish Hospital at Kuszewiczagasse 5, with its departments for internal, surgical, gynecological, and pediatric diseases, for urology, laryngology, dermatological diseases, neurology, and the outpatient clinics affiliated with them, receives patients throughout the entire day.* […]
> *The children's outpatient clinic at Schleichergasse 5 and Bernsteingasse 5, with its consultation and welfare services for mothers and health clinic, receives sick children up to 14 years of age all through the day. Distribution of milk supplies for infants is done only at Schleichergasse 5."*

At the beginning of June 1942, a large delousing facility for 1,500 persons per day, in which there was a boiler room, a hot air chamber, and steam heating facilities, was put in operation in the Lemberg Jewish quarter. The facility was intended for the Jews. By means of it

> *"*[…] *the Jews who are resettled within the city are processed through in the shortest time."* [787]

According to the Polish-Jewish author Aleksander Krugłow, between March 19 and December 8, 1942, 251,000 Jews in 71 trains were brought to Bełżec,[788] a figure which corresponds to nearly half of the alleged total number of victims of that camp. As is well known, Bełżec is supposed to have been an extermination camp established especially for the Jews in this area. In a report of June 30, 1943, *SS-Gruppenführer* Fritz Katzmann stated that the "evacuation from the district of Galicia" had been in operation "since April 1942" and explained:[789]

> *"When the Senior SS and Police Chief intervened once again with his police regulation of November 10, 1942, concerning the formation of Jewish*

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[787] "Fleckfiebergefahr in Lemberg gebannt. Neue Entwesungsanstalt – Täglich werden 1500 Personen durchgeschleust", in: *Lemberger Zeitung*, July 9, 1942, p. 5

[788] Aleksander Krugłow, "Deportacja ludnosci żydowskiej z dytryktu Galicja do obozu zagłady w Bełzcu w 1943 r.," in: *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce*, No. 3 (151), 1989, p. 107.

[789] L-018. IMT, Vol. XXXVII, p. 398.

residential districts, 254,989 Jews had already been evacuated or resettled."

A few pages later he adds:

"In the meantime, further evacuation was energetically pursued, so that effective of June 23, 1943, all Jewish quarters could be dissolved. The district of Galicia is, therefore, free of Jews, aside from the Jews who are in the camps under control of the SS and Police Chief. The occasional Jews who were picked up were specially treated by the respective Ordnungspolizei and Gendarmerie men. A total of 434,329 Jews had emigrated up to June 27, 1943."

At that point in time, there were still 21,156 Jews in 21 Jewish camps.[790]

T. Sandkühler interprets the expression "*aus- bzw. umgesiedelt*" as code words for "gassed or shot,"[791] but this is completely untenable, because the designation used by Katzmann for those who were shot is "*sonderbehandelt*" (specially treated), just as in the section cited above, as well as in the two following:[792]

"[…] *in the process, the whole bunch of Jewish shirkers and anti-social riff-raff was caught and specially treated.* […] *These Jews, too, were dealt a special treatment."*

On October 31, 1942, the "government district north *Einsatzkommando* 5th Komp. Pol. Rgt. 24," stationed at Rava-Russka, reported:

– "8 Jews handled according to orders" with the reason given "escaped from transport train;"
– 20 Jews "arrested" with the reason given "left resettlement district without permission and jumped off transport trains;"
– 5 Jews "handed over to the SS-Sonderkommando Bełżec;"
– 1 Jew "evacuated;"
– "1,023 Jews were evacuated in Kamionka-Strumilowa on October 28, 1942. Thus Kam.-Strum. is free of Jews"[793]

In all likelihood the expression "handled according to orders" is to be understood to mean shooting. With respect to the other formulations: "evacuated" is not the same as "resettled," and the two designations do not have the same meaning as "handed over to the *SS-Sonderkommando*." Nonetheless the 1,023 'resettled' Jews are regarded by orthodox historians as 'gassed in Bełżec.'[794] Finally, there is an indication that there was a 'resettlement quarter' in Rava-

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[790] IMT, Vol. XXXVII, p. 401.
[791] T. Sandkühler, *op. cit.* (note 652), p. 460.
[792] L-018. IMT, Vol. XXXVII, pp. 393f.
[793] RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 29.
[794] A. Krugłow, *op. cit.* (note 788, p. 106), speaks of 2,500 deported to Bełżec on October 28, 1942, while Y. Arad contents himself with "hundreds," *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 385.

Russka even before a 'Jewish residential district' was established in the local ghetto.

The guidelines of the Jewish policy in the entire General Gouvernement were made known to the authorities of Lemberg by *Brigadeführer* Katzmann on August 6, 1942:[795]

> *"Brigadeführer* [Brigadier General] *Katzmann announced that within half a year there will no longer be any Jews at large in the General Gouvernement. The people are in part being evacuated, in part are taken to camps. Isolated Jews living in the country are killed by the Einsatzkommandos. Jews concentrated in the cities are in part liquidated in large operations, partly evacuated, partly collected in labor camps."*

These orders make a clear distinction between "evacuated," "taken to camps," and "killed" in the one case as well as "liquidated," "evacuated," and "collected into labor camps" in the other case. In no instance would "evacuated" allow anyone to understand it as synonymous for "killed" or "liquidated"; the expression is therefore to be taken quite literally.

It is unknown by what criteria the classification of the Jews into these three groups was performed and how large their respective percentages were, but it should be permissible to assume that the 'Soviet Jews' (*i.e.*, Jews that moved to eastern Poland after its annexation by the Soviet Union in 1939) as well as those Jews who had committed anti-German acts or who were suspected of such, were supposed to be liquidated. On October 28, 1942, *SS-Obergruppenführer* Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, in his capacity as Senior SS and Police Chief in the General Gouvernement and Secretary of State for the Security Services, issued a "Police regulation concerning the formation of Jewish living quarters in the districts of Warsaw and Lublin," by which the establishment of 14 Jewish residential districts was prescribed.[796] Also included was the Konskowola area, in which, according to the Slovakian Zionist Gisi Fleischmann, Belgian Jews were found in March 1943 (who obviously had arrived there via Auschwitz).

On November 10, 1942, Krüger also ordered the establishment of 41 Jewish quarters in the districts of Radom, Krakow, and Galicia.[797]

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[795] DAL, R-35-12-42, p. 70.

[796] *Verordnungsblatt für das Generalgouvernement*. Issued at Krakow, November 1, 1942. No. 94, p. 665: a) in the District of Warsaw in: city of Warsaw (ghetto), Kaluszyn (*Kreishauptmannschaft* Minsk), Sobolew (Administrative District Garwolin), Kossów (Administrative District Sokolow), Rembertów (Administrative District Warsaw-Land), Siedlce (Administrative District Siedlce); b) in the District of Lublin in: Łuków Parczew and Międzyrzec (Administrative District Radzyn), Włodawa (Administrative District Chom), Konskowola (Administrative District Puławy), Piaski (Administrative District Lublin-Land), Zaklików (Administrative District Krasnik), Izbica (Administrative District Krasnystaw).

[797] *Verordnungsblatt für das Generalgouvernement* Issued at Krakow, November 14, 1942, No. 98, pp. 683f.: a) in the Radom District in: Sandowmierz (Administrative District Opatow), Szydlowice (Administrative District Radom), Radomsko (Administrative District Radoms-

These measures are not compatible with a policy of extermination. If, as official historiography has it, the establishment of these Jewish residential districts was aimed at concentrating the Jews in order to be able to liquidate them more easily, then why did the Bełżec Camp, allegedly founded for the purpose of just this liquidation, terminate its 'extermination activity' in December of 1942, although 161,514 Jews were still living in the district of Galicia on December 31, 1942?[798]

8. National Socialist Policy of Resettlement of Jews in the East According to Demographer Eugene M. Kulischer

Our expositions in the preceding chapters of the National Socialist policy of Jewish resettlement in the east find enormously important support in the demographic studies of Professor Eugene M. Kulischer, who was a member of the International Labour Office in Montreal, Canada, during the Second World War. His book bears the title *The Displacement of Population in Europe*[799] and was published in 1943. In compiling his notes, the author made use of the assistance of 24 institutions that he lists painstakingly.[800]

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ko), Ujazd (Administrative District Tomaszow); b) in the Krakow district in: Przemysl (Administrative District Przemysl), Reichshof (Administrative District Reichshof), Tarnow (Administrative District Tarnow), Bochnia (Administrative District Krakow-Land), Krakow City (ghetto); c) in the District of Galicia in: Lemberg-City (ghetto), Bóbrka (Administrative District Lemberg-Land), Jaryczów Nowy (Administrative District Lemberg-Land), Gródek (Administrative District Lemberg-Land), Rudki (Administrative District Lemberg-Land), Jaworów (Lemberg-Land), Zloczów (Administrative District Lemberg-Land), Przemyslany (Administrative District Zloczów), Brody (Administrative District Zloczów), Rava-Russka (ghetto), Administrative District Rava-Russka, Lubaczów (Administrative District Rava-Russka), Busk (Administrative District Kamionka-Strumilowa), Sokal (Administrative District Kamionka-Strumilowa), Brzezany (ghetto), Administrative District Brzezany, Bukaczowce (Administrative District Brzezany), Podhajce (Administrative District Brzezany), Rohatyn (Administrative District Brzezany), Tarnopol (Administrative District Tarnopol), Skalat (Administrative District Tarnopol), Trembola (Administrative District Tarnopol), Zborów (Administrative District Tarnopol), Zbaraz (Administrative District Tarnopol), Czortków (ghetto) Administrative District Czortków, Buczacz (Administrative District Czortków), Borszczów (Administrative District Czortków), Kopyczynce (Administrative District Czortków), Tluste-City (Administrative District Czortków), Stanisław City (ghetto) Administrative District Stanisław Stryj City (Administrative District Stryj), Drohobycz (ghetto) Administrative District Drohobycz, Boryslaw (ghetto) Administrative District Drohobycz, Sambor (ghetto) Administrative District Sambor.

[798] NO-5194, p. 11.

[799] Eugene M. Kulischer, *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, International Labour Office, Montreal 1943.

[800] *Ibid*., p. 5: The American Friends Service, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; the American Na-

Each of these institutions had at its disposal a dense network of channels of information in the various European nations, so that Kulischer was able to base his work upon the best existing sources. In his book, he devotes a highly interesting section to the problem of the expulsion and evacuation of Jews by the German government, which is written with scientific exactitude and is undergirded by a copious documentation. For this reason, this book constitutes probably the most reliable information about what Germany's enemies knew in 1943, despite all of the treacherous atrocity propaganda concerning the NS Jewish policy. With rare precision, Kulischer explains above all the beginning phases of this policy:[801]

"Until the outbreak of war, emigration was ostensibly encouraged; Chancellor Hitler said that he would willingly give a thousand mark note to every Jew who would leave. In practice, however, less humane and more effective methods of promoting Jewish emigration were adopted. Life in Germany was made impossible for Jews in order to induce them to leave, and when they left they had to abandon almost all their property. At the same time, a moral obligation to receive the Jews was imposed on other nations.

With the extension of German conquests, the aims of Germany's Jewish policy were widened to embrace the 'liberation of all Europe from the Jewish yoke'. Not only the deportation and segregation of the Jews, but also their extermination was an openly proclaimed objective of German policy.[802] *But the main factor which changed the character of the anti-Jewish measures lay in the changed conditions themselves. With the progress of the war, emigration possibilities became more and more restricted. On the other hand, Germany was now able to send the Jews to non-German territories under German control, so that as stimulated emigration declined, deportation increased. The Jews were either expelled to 'purge' a given*

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tional Red Cross, Washington; the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, New York; the American Jewish Committee Research Institute on Peace and Post-War Problems, New York; the Belgian Information Center, New York; the Board of Economic Warfare, Washington; the Central and Eastern European Planning Board, New York; the Czechoslovak Information Service, New York; the United States Department of Commerce, Washington; the Finnish Legation, Washington; the French Information Center, New York; the French National Committee, Delegation to the United States, New York; the Greek Office of Information, Washington; the Hias-Ica Emigration Association (Hicem), New York; the International Red Cross, Washington; the Institute of Jewish Affairs, New York; the Latvian Legation, Washington; the Lithuanian Consulate-General, New York; the Office of Population Research, Princeton, New Jersey; the ORT Economic Research Committee, New York; the Polish Information Center, New York; the Turkish Embassy, Washington; the Young Men's Christian Association, New York; the Royal Yugoslav Government Information Center, New York.

801 *Ibid.*, p. 95.

802 Directly after this, Kulischer speaks of "economic extermination," which proves that he does not mean physical liquidation but rather disempowerment when using the term "extermination".

> *country or city of its Jewish element, or they were concentrated in specific regions, cities or parts of cities to 'purge' the rest of the locality.*
> *It must be emphasised that the wholesale and recurrent removal of Jews is at the same time an effective method of securing their economic extermination. There is no regard for their prospects of earning livelihood; on the contrary, the transfer is carried out in such a way as to make it impossible for the Jew to reorganise his economic life."* (Emphasis added)

One of the methods for the realization of this economic extermination was the following:[803]

> *"First they* [the Jews] *are sent to the General Gouvernment. Then the town in which they were settled is 'purged'. In their new place of residence a ghetto is established. But even the ghetto does not give the Jews the security of a permanent residence, and they are again removed further east."*

Kulischer then presents a little-known historical fact, which found its confirmation decades later:

> *"In many cases the immediate motive for expulsion or deportation was to make room for Germans. The first victims of expulsion on a grand scale were the Jews of the incorporated western Polish provinces, who were expelled along with the Polish inhabitants, in both cases to make room for the 'repatriated' Germans. Later, Jews were deported because, according the official statements, they owned apartments suitable for refugees from cities subject to air-raids."*

In fact, Peter Witte has cited several examples of this German policy – approved by Hitler himself.[804]

Afterwards Kulischer dedicates much space to the "Countries and Territories of Expulsion and Deportation" and furnishes figures, some of which exceed, others of which are below, but all of which fall within the same order of magnitude as those of the Korherr Report. For example, for the period up until the end of December 1942, he assumes 120,000 Jewish deportees from the territory of the Reich[805] (compared to 100,516 given in the Korherr Report); for Austria he speaks of 40,000[805] (compared to Korherr's 47,555)), for the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia of 50,000 to 60,000[805] (compared to 69,677 in Korherr) and of 62,444 for Slovakia[806] (compared to Korherr's figure of 56,691).

On France, Kulischer writes:[807]

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[803] *Ibid.*, p. 96.
[804] Peter Witte, *op. cit.* (note 549), pp. 43-46.
[805] Eugene Kulischer, *op. cit.* (note 799), p. 101.
[806] *Ibid*., p. 102.
[807] *Ibid*. Kulischer overestimates the number of the Jews deported from France up to the summer of 1943: he speaks of 70,000, while the actual figure was approximately 54,000. (Serge Klarsfeld, *Mémorial de la Déportation des Juifs de France*, Paris 1978.)

> *"In midsummer 1942 a drive against foreign Jewish refugees in Paris marked the beginning of mass deportation from France to the ghettos and concentration camps of eastern Europe."*

Regarding Belgium, he stresses:[808]

> *"In the summer of 1942 deportation was resumed and from October onward it was on a larger scale. It may be estimated that up to December 1942 about 25,000 foreign Jews had been deported from Belgium, partly to eastern Europe and partly to France for fortification building."*

On Romania, he cites the *Krakauer Zeitung* (Krakow Times) of August 13, 1942:[809]

> *"According to a German source, '185,000 Jews have been evacuated since October of last year (i.e. 1941) into Transnistria, where they were housed in large ghettos until an opportunity arose for their removal further east. Today there still remain 272,409 Jews in the country… Both the provinces of Bessarabia and Bukovina can now be considered as free of Jews, excepting Czernowitz, where there are still about 16,000… It may be assumed that even during the present year a further 80,000 Jews could be removed to the eastern territories'. However, according to later reports, the Rumanian Government announced in October 1942 that there would be no more 'evacuations' to Transnistria."*

Kulischer subsequently devotes a section to the question of the "Territories of Destination and Methods of Confinement." He stresses in particular the basic principle of the deportations of Jews:[810]

> *"Some of the Jews from Belgium were sent to a neighbouring part of Western Europe for forced labour, but generally speaking the tendency has been to remove the Jews to the east. Many Western European Jews were reported to have been sent to the mines of Silesia. The great majority were sent to the General Government and, in ever growing numbers, to the eastern area, that is, to the territories which had been under Soviet rule since September 1939 and to the other occupied areas of the Soviet Union. During the early period, deportation meant removal to the General Government, but since 1940 the deported Jews have tended more and more to be sent exclusively to ghettos and labour camps."*

Kulischer then moves on to the ghettos:[811]

> *"The first ghettos were set up in Lodz in the winter 1939-1940. Since spring 1940 they have been introduced in a number of cities and towns in the Warthegau and the General Government. In the summer of 1940 the Germans segregated the district of Warsaw inhabited mainly by Jews un-*

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[808] E. Kulischer, *ibid*., p. 104.
[809] *Ibid*., p. 106.
[810] *Ibid*., p. 107.
[811] *Ibid*., pp. 107f.

der the pretext that it was a breeding-place of contagious diseases, and in the autumn of the same year a ghetto was formally established. All Jews living outside its confines were ordered to move into the ghetto and all Poles living inside to leave the ghetto area. Many Jews were also brought there from abroad. In the first half of 1942 about 500,000 persons were crowded into the Warsaw ghetto.

The growth of the ghettos is illustrated by the following estimates. In November 1941 the Institute of Jewish Affairs estimated the number of Jews confined in the ghettos 'at no less than 1,000,000'. In December 1941 figures released by Polish Jewish circles in London showed that about 1,300,000 Jews had been herded into eleven ghettos in various parts of the country. For the early summer 1942 the Institute of Jewish Affairs gave the number as 1,500,000. On October 28 and November 10, 1942, the Secretary of State for Security in the General Government issued regulations about Jewish ghettos in the five districts of the General Government (Warsaw, Lublin, Krakow, Radom and Galicia), proving that from November 30, 1942, all General Government Jews must live in confined areas. Jews employed in armament and other war industries and living in closed camps are exempted. The confined areas are of two kinds: ghettos inside the larger towns, and purely Jewish towns, cleared of their non-Jewish population. In the whole of the General Government there are 13 ghettos, the largest being the Warsaw ghetto, and 42 Jewish towns.

Since the invasion of the U.S.S.R., ghettos have been established in western Bielorussia, western Ukraine and Baltic States, and also in occupied Russia.

The primary purpose of the ghettos and special Jewish towns is the segregation of the local Jewish population. This consists of the former inhabitants of the area which was turned into a ghetto or a Jewish town, the inhabitants of the same town who are removed to the ghetto, and Jews removed from other localities of the same country. For the second and third categories segregation in the ghetto meant compulsory removal, and for the third category forced migration also. The number of persons affected by this internal forced migration may have numbered many hundreds of thousands in the General Government alone.

The ghettos of the General Government or the eastern territories are also the usual destination of the Jews deported from the west by the German authorities or by the authorities of other countries allied to Germany."

Finally, Kulischer comes to the subject of the compulsory labor camps. He notes in this regard:[812]

[812] *Ibid*., p. 110.

> *"Up to the summer of 1941, at least 85 Jewish labour camps were known to exist in the General Government. Of the 35 camps the position of which was known, two-thirds were located on the eastern frontier.*
> *Forced labour for Jews expanded rapidly, having developed from a subsidiary measure into an essential feature of the treatment of Jews.* […]
> *During 1942, forced labour became the common fate of the Jews in Poland and German-occupied Soviet territory. The period for which Jews fit to work are liable for forced labour is no longer limited. Their removal to the east was largely motivated by the wish to make use of them as forced labour, and as Germany's need of manpower grew, deportation for adults of working age was tantamount to assignment to forced labour. In contrast with the other inhabitants of German-occupied countries, Jews are not sent to work in the Reich, because Jewish immigration would run counter to the policy of making Germany 'free of Jews'. The needs of the war economy are, of course, compelling the German authorities to deviate from this rule to some extent, and indeed some exceptions have been reported.*[813] *But, generally speaking, deportation to the east is for the Jews the equivalent of the recruitment for work in the Reich to which the rest of the population of German-controlled Europe is subject, and their removal further and further eastward is doubtless connected with the need for supplying the army's requirements near the front."*

The author reckons the number of the "deported and expelled and … otherwise displaced" Jews to be 3,150,000, but makes this more precise:[814]

> *"This does not include: (a) the hundreds of thousands of Polish Jews deported eastward from the General Government, and (b) hundreds of thousands of Jews transferred by compulsion within the limits of the same country or territory to be segregated in ghettos and special Jewish towns, in particular in the General Government and in the German-occupied Eastern Territories. Assuming that only a third of the resident Jews who remained in these territories were affected by (a) and (b), nearly 1,000,000 Jews must have been compulsorily removed eastward or from one town to another."*

Nowhere does Kulischer speak of 'extermination camps' or of a German policy of the physical extermination of the Jews!

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[813] Kulischer gives as an example the deportation of 200 Jews from the Ukrainian Poltava to Vienna. *Ibid*., p. 110, his note 1.
[814] *Ibid*., p. 113.

Chapter IX:
Transit Camp Treblinka

1. Deportations of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto (1942)

The facts and circumstantial evidence assembled so far lead to the conclusion that Treblinka was mainly a transit camp established for the Jewish population of the Warsaw district, which fits within the framework of National Socialist policy of the resettlement of Jews to the east. The verifiable deportations to Treblinka can be explained in this sense. Let us begin with those from the Warsaw Ghetto.

According to the files of the Jewish Council of Warsaw, the following Jews were evacuated from the ghetto in the summer of 1942:[815]

Date	Transfers	DuLag[816]	Unfit for work	Total
7/22/1942	6,250	17	22	6,289
7/23/1942	7,300	490	25	7,815
5/24/1942	7,400	0	44	7,444
7/25/1942	7,350	130	50	7,530
7/26/1942	6,400	250	41	6,691
7/27/1942	6,320	130	74	6,524
7/28/1942	5,020	291	70	5,381
7/29/1942	5,480	225	17	5,722
7/30/1942	6,430	181	40	6,651
7/31/1942	6,756	98		6,854
8/1/1942	6,220	45		6,265
8/2/1942	6,276	49		6,325
8/3/1942	6,458	99		6,557
8/4/1942	6,568	140		6,708
8/5/1942	6,623	160		6,783
8/6/1942	10,085	1,369		11,454
8/7/1942	10,672	154		10,826
8/8/1942	7,304	351		7,655
8/9/1942	6,292	1,920		8,212
8/10/1942	2,158	1,531		3,689
8/11/1942	7,725	452		8,177

[815] "Likwidacja Żydowskiej Warszawy," *op. cit.* (note 125), pp. 81, 86, 90.
[816] Durchgangslager. Transit camp.

Date	Transfers	DuLag[816]	Unfit for work	Total
8/12/1942	4,688			4,688
8/13/1942	4,313			4,313
8/14/1942	5,168	331		5,499
8/15/1942	3,633	174		3,807
8/16/1942	4,095	408		4,503
8/17/1942	4,160			4,160
8/18/1942	3,976	220		4,196
8/19-24/42	20,000			20,000
8/25/1942	3,002			3,002
8/26/1942	3,000			3,000
8/27/1942	2,454			2,454
9/3/1942	4,609			4,609
9/4/1942	1,669			1,669
9/6/1942	3,634			3,634
9/7/1942	6,840			6,840
9/8/1942	13,596			13,596
9/9/1942	6,616			6,616
9/10/1942	5,199			5,199
9/11/1942	5,000			5,000
9/12/1942	4,806	2,100		6,906
Totals:	251,545	11,315	383	263,243

Thus, 251,545 Jews are supposed to have been deported to Treblinka and murdered there; another 11,315 Jews, however, are supposed to have been deported to the ghetto transit camp and put to work there. Are these figures reliable?

First, we emphasize the enormous discrepancy between the number of those fit and those unfit for labor: the former were supposed to have comprised 4.5%, the latter 95.5% of the deportees! Compared to this, on June 30, 1942, in the ghetto of Lodz, 68,896 Jews were employed, *i.e.* fit for work,[817] of a total population of 102,546 Jews,[818] therefore 67.2%!

Railway documents dealing with the deportation of Jews from Warsaw are unfortunately extremely rare. For the period of interest to us only a single schedule exists. It was issued on August 3, 1942, by the General Management of the Eastern Railway in Krakow, and reads:

> *"From August 6, 1942, until further notice, a special train with resettlers is running from Warsaw Danz BF* [Danzig railway station] *to Treblinka and running empty as follows* […]*"*

The departure of one train per day was scheduled: "1/. P Kr 9085 / 9.30 / Warsaw Danz Bf – Małkinia – Treblinka," with departure at 12:25 PM, arrival at

[817] APL, PSZ, 174, p. 26.
[818] *Kronika getta łódzkiego*, Wydawnictwo lódzkie, Lodz 1965, Vol. 2, p. 100.

4:20 PM, and return "2/. Ln Kr 9086 / 11.30 / Treblinka – Małkinia – Warsaw Danz Bf" with departure at 7:00 PM and arrival at 11:19 PM.[819]

Moreover, Albert Ganzenmüller, Secretary of State in the *Reichsverkehrsministerium* (Ministry of Transport) and Deputy General Director of the German *Reichsbahn* (National Railway), made the following report to *SS-Gruppenführer* Wolff on July 28, 1942:[820]

"Since July 22, a train with 5,000 Jews makes a daily trip from Warsaw to Treblinka via Małkinia, in addition to a train with 5,000 Jews traveling twice a week from Przemysl to Belzec."

On August 13, Wolff responded:[821]

> *"I have noted with especial pleasure your report that a train with 5,000 members of the Chosen People has already been running for 14 days to Treblinka every day, and we are thus indeed in a position to carry out this movement of population at an accelerated tempo."*

On April 11, 1962, Wolff was confronted with this letter during questioning as a witness at the preliminary investigations for the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial. Wolff made the following statement in reply to this:[822]

> *"At the time I did not connect the notion of a mass extermination camp with the name of Treblinka. I assumed it was a Jewish reservation* [sic]*, as Himmler had explained it to me."*

Incredibly, not a single German report concerning such a large-scale displacement of population has been preserved. The only numerical information available to us comes from a terse excerpt from the Stroop Report:[246]

> *"The first large resettlement action took place in the period from 22 July to 3 October 1942. In this action 310,322 Jews were removed."*

This figure is definitely reliable and on the whole it corresponds to the table cited above, so that this may be taken to reflect actual numbers. It is also quite probable that most of the transports went to Treblinka. It is clear as well from the few train schedules extant that the trains were emptied at Treblinka and returned to their departure point without passengers. Of course, none of this proves that the deportees were murdered in Treblinka. The "Disclosures and Conditions for the Jewish Council" of July 22, 1943, prescribed:[823]

> *"All Jewish persons who live in Warsaw, of whatever age and sex, are to be resettled to the east."*

Exempted from the resettlement were, among others:

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[819] Reproduced in Raul Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 268), pp. 178f.
[820] *Ibid*., p. 177.
[821] *Ibid*., p. 181.
[822] State Office of Prosecution at the Frankfurt (Main) District Court criminal proceedings against Baer and others at the Frankfurt Court of Assizes, Ref. 4 Js 444/59 Vol. 65, pp. 12, 100.
[823] *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), p. 305.

> *"*[…] *all Jewish persons who, on the first day of the evacuation, are in one of the Jewish hospitals and unable to be discharged. Whether a patient is able to be released is to be determined by a physician to be selected by the Jewish Council."*

The following regulation pertains to the baggage:

> *"Each Jewish resettler is allowed to bring along 15 kg of his property as baggage for the trip. All valuables: gold, jewelry, money, etc., can be taken along. A food supply for 3 days should be brought along."*

The announcement of the Jewish Council – likewise dated July 22, 1942 – contained the same instructions but began as follows:[824]

> *"By order of the German authorities all Jewish persons who live in Warsaw, of whatever age and sex, are to be resettled to the east."*

The instructions in regard to baggage contained the following warning:[825]

> *"Baggage of more than 15 kg will be confiscated."*

In an announcement of July 24, 1942, the Jewish Council proclaimed:[826]

> *"As a result of incorrect information, which is circulating in the Jewish quarter of Warsaw in connection with the evacuation, the Jewish Council in Warsaw was given permission by the authorities to announce that the evacuation of the populace not productively active in the Jewish quarter of Warsaw will, in fact, occur."*

On July 29, 1942, the director of the Jewish *Ordnungsdienst* (constabulary) issued the following summons:[827]

> *"I am hereby announcing that all persons who will be resettled according to the instruction of the authorities will voluntarily report for the journey on the 29th, 30th, and 31st of July of this year, will receive 3 kg of bread and 1 kg of jam. Place of assembly for distribution of the products – Stawikiplatz at the Wildstraße corner."*

The German authorities were providing 180,000 kg of bread and 36,000 kg of jam for the volunteers.[828]

Let us summarize: The Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto were supposed "to be resettled to the east"; sick persons in the hospitals who were "unable to be discharged" were exempt from the evacuation; every person ready for resettlement received 3 kg of bread and 1 kg of jam – all of this does not conform to a policy of extermination.

It is worthwhile to quote what Eugene Kulischer wrote in this regard:[829]

> *"For the Polish ghettos are not the last stage in the forced eastward migration of the Jewish people. On 20 November 1941, the Governor Gen-*

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[824] *Ibid*., p. 110.
[825] *Ibid*., p. 111.
[826] *Ibid*., p. 115.
[827] *Ibid*., p. 309.
[828] "Likwidacja żydowskiej Warszawy," *op. cit.* (note 125), p. 80.
[829] E. Kulischer, *op. cit.* (note 799), pp. 110f.

> *eral, Hans Frank, broadcast the information that the Polish Jews would ultimately be transferred further east. Since the summer of 1942 the ghettos and labour camps in the German-occupied Eastern Territories have become the destination of deportees both from Poland and from western and central Europe; in particular, a new large-scale transfer from the Warsaw ghetto has been reported. Many of the deportees have been sent to the labour camps on the Russian front; others to work in the marshes of Pinsk, or to the ghettos of the Baltic countries, Bielorussia and Ukraine."*

Kulischer was even aware that

> *"on 22 July 1942, the Jewish Council of Warsaw received an order to prepare 6,000 persons to be sent away daily."*[830]

In the months that followed, letters and post cards were addressed to their relatives by deported Jews arrived in the Warsaw Ghetto from Białystok, Pinsk, Bobruisk, Brzezc, Smolensk, Brest Litovsk, and Minsk.[831] The resistance organizations in the ghetto, who at that time were already peddling the atrocity stories of the steam chambers, were of course making wild claims that these letters and cards were forgeries fabricated by the Germans to deceive the Jews. On December 4, 1942, this charge was made in an announcement of the Jewish resistance organization.[832] And an appeal of January 1943 by the Jewish resistance organization of the Warsaw Ghetto reported:[833]

> *"In the course of the last weeks, people of certain circles have been spreading news about letters, which supposedly came from Jews who were evacuated from Warsaw and who are now supposed to be in labor camps at Pinsk or Bobruisk."*

The authors of the appeal were alleging that such news was being spread by people "who are working for the Gestapo." The official historiography later abandoned this simple-minded assertion and has supported the thesis that the letters and post cards had been "written under duress at Treblinka,"[834] but not a single one of the self-described survivors of Treblinka has made claims of this kind. In fact, this information confirms – however fragmentarily – the picture drawn by E. Kulischer.

On May 30, 1943, a transport was sent to Bobruisk with 960 Jews who had been arrested in the Warsaw Ghetto. On July 28 of the same year, another transport of Jews from Warsaw arrived in Bobruisk; a portion of the deportees were sent on to Smolensk.[835]

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[830] *Ibid*., p. 110, his note 2.
[831] Mark Weber and Andrew Allen referred to this fact in their article "Treblinka," *op. cit.* (note 110), pp. 139f.
[832] Lucy Dawidowicz, *The Holocaust Reader*, Berman House, New York 1976, p. 356.
[833] *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), p. 496.
[834] Lucy Dawidowicz, *The War against the Jews 1933-1945*, Bantam, New York 1976, p. 414.
[835] C. Gerlach, *op. cit.* (note 418), p. 762.

In the *Informacja Bieżąca* No. 30 of August 17, 1942, is a reference to 2,000 "skilled workers" on a transport of August 1 from the Warsaw Ghetto to Smolensk. Another transport with 2,000 craftsmen departed for Malaszewicz,[836] a town at the border to White Russia, about 12 km from Brest. The report of September 7, 1942, "Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto" mentioned earlier confirmed:[837]

> *"Two small transports with 4,000 persons were sent for labor at installations important for the war in Brzesc and Malachowicze."*

Finally, the arrival of at least one transport from the Warsaw Ghetto at a location east of Treblinka has been documented beyond any question. On 31 July 1942, the *Reichskommissar* for White Russia, Wilhelm Kube, sent a telegram to the *Reichskommissar* for the Ostland, Hinrich Lohse, in which he protested the dispatching of a transport of "1,000 Jews from Warsaw to work at Minsk," because this would lead to danger of epidemics and an increase in partisan activity.[838]

On August 5, 1942, Lohse responded in a letter with the subject "Import of 1,000 Jews from Warsaw," in which he indicated that

> *"the practical realization of the solution of the Jewish problem is exclusively a matter for the police."*

The responsibility "for the orderly realization of the measures," was also that of the police, so that protests were not permissible.[839]

Kube raised the problem anew in a letter written on August 17, 1942, to Lohse (under the same rubric, "Import of 1,000 Jews from Warsaw") and requested further instructions, since he wished to make "fundamental decisions concerning the acceptance of further Jews into White Russia as a police matter."[840]

At least one Jewish transport "with workers" (P KR 9130) arrived in Treblinka on August 25, 1942, from Międzyrzec Podlanski,[841] but there is no reference that it was for the labor camp Treblinka I.

Deportations of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto to ghettos of the Baltic countries Latvia and Lithuania find additional confirmation in the deportation lists of Jewish transports, already mentioned, from Kaunas and Riga to Stutthof in the summer of 1944. These lists, although only fragmentarily preserved, include the names of approximately 1,200 Polish Jews, among them 112 boys and girls of up to 15 years of age.

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836 K. Marczewska, W. Waźniewski, *op. cit.* (note 51), p. 137.
837 HI, Report on conditions in Poland. Annex No. 7, HI, Box 29.
838 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 80. Cf. Document 22 in the Appendix.
839 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 81. Cf. Document 23 in the Appendix.
840 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 85.
841 Railway schedule no. 562 of August 22, 1942. Reproduction in R. Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 268), p. 183.

Furthermore, sources already cited earlier mention the transfer of Jews from Polish ghettos to the Ukraine by way of Bełżec at the end of March 1942. G. Reitlinger writes regarding this:[842]

> *"The reports, which reached the Polish Exile Government in London, that Jews were resettled in Russia from Belzec camp, should be discounted as part of the camouflage that Heydrich had been creating since the Wannsee conference. In fact, the allusions to the Krivoi Rog Jewish colonies and the Pinsk land reclamation camps may derive from fake field postcards."*

Therefore, while the *Einsatzgruppen* were allegedly shooting Jews in the broad light of day with no attempt at secrecy, other SS personnel were taking pains to forge postcards in order to cover up their alleged mass murders in 'extermination camps'!

2. Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and the Stroop Report

In his well-known report of May 16, 1943, on the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto, *SS-Brigadeführer* Jürgen Stroop emphasized:[843]

> *"When the Reichsführer SS visited Warsaw in January 1943 he ordered the SS and Police Leader for the District of Warsaw to transfer to Lublin the armament factories and other enterprises of military importance which were installed within the Ghetto including their personnel and machines."*

According to Yitzhak Arad, 6,000 Jews were deported from the Warsaw Ghetto to Treblinka between the 18th and the 22nd of January 1943.[844] In fact, on January 9, 1943, Himmler had ordered SS *Obergruppenführer* Krüger to transfer 8,000 Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto into the camps in the area around Lublin and to deport another 15,000 by the 15th of February.[845] On February 2, 1943, SS *Oberführer* Ferdinand von Sammern, SS and Police Chief in the Warsaw district, sent a secret letter to Himmler, in which he wrote regarding the firms in the Warsaw Ghetto:[846]

> *"Not only the firm of Többen and Schulz & Co., but also all the rest, 8 firms altogether with approximately 20,000 Jewish workers, are being relocated into the concentration camp at Lublin."*

According to the Stroop Report, the number of deported Jews amounted to 6,500.[843]

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[842] G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 180), p. 270.
[843] PS-1061. IMT, Vol. XXXVI, p. 635.
[844] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 71), p. 392.
[845] *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), p. 349.
[846] *Ibid*., pp. 449f.

On March 31, 1943, Dr. Max Horn, together with Odilo Globocnik, the director of the firm Ostindustrie GmbH (Osti), informed the Director of the Central Construction Office of Lublin-Majdanek:[847]

> *"Due to the order of the Reichsführer SS, for police reasons and in the interests of increasing the Jewish labor assignment, the important armament firms located in the Warsaw Ghetto that have a Jewish work force must be moved as quickly as possible. The move will be to Poniatowa, Trawniki, and Lublin into buildings that are already there."*

The Jews resisted voluntary evacuation, and on April 19, Stroop advanced into the ghetto with his troops, after which the armed struggle began.

The Stroop Report is cited by official historiography as proof that Treblinka was an extermination camp. For example, G. Reitlinger claims that "7,000 Jews had officially been killed in the ghetto and 7,000 'taken to T 2.'"[848] R. Hilberg picks up this number:[849]

> *"Several thousand Jews had been buried in the debris, and 56,065 had surrendered. Seven thousand of the captured Jews were shot; another 7,000 were transported to the death camp at Treblinka, 15,000 were shipped to the concentration camp and killing center at Lublin, and the remainder were sent to labor camps."*

Neither Reitlinger nor Hilberg gives the sources for these figures. This turns out to be a teletype of May 24, 1943, in which Stroop reported:[850]

> *"Of the total of 56,065 Jews registered, approximately 7,000 were wiped out as a result of the major action in the former Jewish quarter itself. By transport to T. II, 6,929 Jews were destroyed, so that in all 13,929 Jews were annihilated. Beyond the figure of 56,065, an estimated 5-6,000 Jews were destroyed by explosions and by fire."*

This teletype is not contained in the Stroop Report, which bears the title "There Is No Longer a Jewish Residential District in Warsaw!" and was presented as document PS-1061 during the Nuremberg Trial.[851] The Stroop Report actually ends with a teletype of May 16, 1943. L. Poliakov and J. Wulf say in a footnote:[852]

> *"Document PS-1061 also contains a copy of the Stroop Report with a report of the day from May 24, 1943 (see facsimile), which is missing from the original report."*

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[847] WAPL, ZBL, 268, p. 1.
[848] G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 180), p. 298.
[849] R. Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 17), Vol. 2, pp. 512.
[850] Teletype of Stroop of May 24, 1943. Reproduction in: L. Poliakov, J. Wulf, *op. cit.* (note 379), pp. 168f.
[851] IMT, Vol. XXVI, pp. 628-694.
[852] L. Poliakov, J. Wulf, *op. cit.* (note 379), p. 159.

The passage involved was cited at the Nuremberg Trial at the proceedings of December 14, 1945.[853]

Stroop gave three different versions of the fate of the 56,065 registered Jews. We are already familiar with the one contained in the teletype of May 24 and taken up by R. Hilberg. In the teletype of May 16 he reported:[854]

> *"The total number of Jews registered and proven killed amounts to a total of 56,065"* (Emphasis added)

Yet it is obviously false that 56,065 Jews were "proven killed"!

In a statement of February 24, 1946, made under oath, Stroop finally gave the following testimony:[855]

> *"After the people were taken out of the ghetto, 50 to 60,000 in number, they were taken to the railroad station. The security police had absolute control over these people and had the transportation to Lublin under their* [authority]*."*

According to this, the 56,065 registered Jews were deported to Lublin.

The Stroop Report raises still other problems. Its author presents statistics, in which two categories of Jews are named: those killed and those 'registered,' but those killed also belong to the latter. Stroop gives the total number of the Jews who were "already evacuated or registered for relocation" from the 23rd of April on: 19,450.[856]

In the following table we reproduce the figures of the Stroop Report. We have separated the number of those killed from that of those 'registered' when they are given together,[857] so that the respective column lists only the Jews held alive. One arrives at the total number by adding to the total of the previous day the figures of the day after, for example (for the 24th and 25th of April) 25,500 + 1,964 + 27,464. The single exception is the numbers for the 23rd and 24th of April, since 19,450 + 1,990 = 21,440 and not 25,500, so that (25,500 – 21,440 =) 4,060 persons are missing. In the report of April 24, Stroop mentions also 1,814 Jews who were "pulled out of bunkers" and who had to be added to the "1,660 Jews [who] were seized for relocation," so that the total number missing is (4,060 – 1,814 =) 2,246. These Jews presumably belong to the 3,500 'registered' on the previous day, as in the report for May 6, in which the 2,850 Jews "registered for the relocation" were included in the total number of the day before,[858] although Stroop reports a figure of 1,070 as the total number for the day.

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[853] IMT, Vol. III, p. 557.
[854] PS-1061. IMT, Vol. XXVI, p. 693.
[855] PS-3841. IMT, Vol. XXXIII, p. 202.
[856] *Ibid*., p. 653.
[857] For example, it says in the report of April 27: "2,560 Jews caught, 547 of them shot." Our calculation therefore looks like this: (2560–547=) 2013 taken alive as prisoners.
[858] Obviously these Jews had been taken prisoner on the day before.

PAGE[859]	DATE	KILLED	REGIST.	TOTAL FOR THE DAY	TOTAL
650	22 Apr. 1943	230[860]	1,100	1,330	[861]
652	23 Apr. 1943	800	2,700	3,500	19,450
655	24 Apr. 1943	330	1,660	1,990	25,500
656	25 Apr. 1943	274	1,690	1,964	27,464
659	26 Apr. 1943	1,692	30	1,722	29,186
661	27 Apr. 1943	547	2,013	2,560	31,746
664	28 Apr. 1943	110	1,545	1,655	33,401
665	29 Apr. 1943	106	2,253	2,359	35,760
667	30 Apr. 1943	179	1,420	1,599	37,359
668	1 May 1943	245	781	1,026	38,385
670	2 May 1943	235	1,617	1,852	40,237
672	3 May 1943	95	1,474	1,569	41,806
674	4 May 1943	204	2,079	2,283	44,089
676	5 May 1943	126	944	1,070	45,159
677	6 May 1943	356	1,553	1,909	47,068
679	7 May 1943	255	1,019	1,274	48,342
680	8 May 1943	280	1,091	1,371	49,713[862]
682	9 May 1943	573	1,037	1,610	51,313
683	10 May 1943	187	1,183	1,370	52,683
685	11 May 1943	51	931	982	53,667
686	12 May 1943	133	663	796	54,463
687f.	13 May 1943	155	561	716	55,179
691	14 May 1943	154	398	552	55,731
692	15 May 1943	67	87	154	55,885
693	16 May 1943	180	0	180	56,065
	Totals:	7,564	29,829		

The total number of Jews killed is 7,564. Insofar as Treblinka is concerned, this camp is abbreviated to "T II" four times in the Stroop Report. The first time it is mentioned is in the teletype of April 25. The relevant text, which we reproduce below, is often cited in the official literature as proof that Treblinka is supposed to have been an extermination camp:[863]

> *"Today's action came to an end for almost every shock troop, in that huge fires broke out and thereby caused the Jews to leave their hiding places and bolt holes. There were 1,690 Jews captured alive. According to the tales the Jews relate, among them there are certainly some who were para-*

[859] IMT, Vol. XXVI, on the page cited.

[860] The text reads 203, but in another report, which refers to the same day (p. 647), the figures given are for 150 shot, 80 killed in a bunker explosion, so that a total of 230 Jews were killed.

[861] The total number for April 22 and the previous day is not given.

[862] The erroneous figure of 49,712 appears in the text.

[863] PS-1061. IMT, Vol. XXVI, p. 656.

chuted in and bandits who were supplied with weapons from an unknown location. 274 Jews were shot and, as on every day, countless Jews buried alive and burned in blown-up bunkers, as can be discovered time after time. With the Jews who have been bagged today, in my opinion a very large part of the bandits and lowest elements of the ghetto have been captured. Due to the onset of darkness, their immediate liquidation was no longer carried out. I will try to get a train to T II for tomorrow, otherwise the liquidation will be carried out tomorrow."

One day after this, Stroop noted in his teletype:[864]

"At present there are no more of the registered Jews in Warsaw. The prescribed transport to T II took place."

The next mention of Treblinka occurs in the teletype of May 12:[865]

"The transports of Jews now leaving from here are being taken to T II for the first time today."

Finally, the teletype of May 13 reads:[866]

"Today 327 Jews were captured in a Wehrmacht operation. The Jews now captured are taken only to T II."

The Stroop Report gives rise to three questions in this connection:

1. How many Jews were deported to 'T II'?
2. Were the Jews deported to Treblinka gassed?
3. Where did the majority of the Jews from the ghetto go?

We will now address the first of these questions. On April 25, 1943, a total of 1,990 Jews were taken prisoner, of whom 274 were shot. The shooting operation was interrupted by the onset of twilight. The transport to Treblinka thus could include only the remaining (1,990 – 274 =) 1,716 persons. But this is the largest number deported to Treblinka in a single day. This is confirmed by the fact that on the next day, 1,722 Jews were taken prisoner, of whom 1,692 were killed; the total number for the 26th of April corresponds to that of April 25 plus those 1,722 Jews: 27,460 + 1,722 = 29,182.

The report of May 12 states that the Jewish transports leaving from Warsaw were sent to "T II for the first time" on that day. It is not clear how this jibes with the transport of April 25, the first to Treblinka. In any case, it is clear from the May 13 teletype that only the Jews who were taken prisoner were sent to Treblinka.

According to the above table, on May 12, 1,709 Jews were taken prisoner.

The maximum number of Jews deported to Treblinka during this period therefore amounts to (1,660 + 1,709 =) 3,369. Thus it is not clear how Stroop arrived at a figure of 6,929 in his teletype of May 24. More important, though, is another problem: if these Jews were destroyed in 'T II,' does this mean that

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[864] *Ibid*., p. 660.
[865] *Ibid*., p. 686.
[866] *Ibid*., p. 688.

Treblinka was a camp established for the purpose of killing people? In our view, the 'liquidation' there of a few thousand Jews, whom the SS classified as "bandits and lowest elements of the ghetto," proves neither that they were gassed, nor that Treblinka was operated as an 'extermination camp.' If one bears in mind that the camp was only 80 km from Warsaw, then it would not be surprising if the SS had shot a few thousand people there whom they were unable or unwilling to execute in the city. But another problem arises. In the introduction to his report Stroop writes:[867]

> *"During the major operation, Jews were captured who already had been shifted to Lublin or Treblinka, broke out of there and returned to the ghetto supplied with weapons and munitions."*

There is thus reason to doubt that the (according to Stroop) 6,929 Jews deported to Treblinka were all 'annihilated.' One of these Jews, a Samuel Zylbersztajn, was in fact deported to Majdanek on April 30, 1943, from the alleged extermination camp Treblinka as a member of a transport of 308 Jews.[868] The title of his memoir translates as "The Memoirs of an Inmate of Ten Camps." After the 'extermination camp' Treblinka, Zylbersztajn survived the 'extermination camp' Majdanek and eight 'ordinary' concentration camps; he is thus living proof of the fact that the Germans did not systematically exterminate their Jewish prisoners.

Another 356 Jews were transferred from Treblinka to Majdanek on May 13, 1943.[869] The Jewish historians Tatiana Berenstein and Adam Rutkowski write:[870]

> *"Some of the transports from Warsaw reached Lublin by way of Treblinka, where the selection of the deportees took place."*

This fact is confirmed by some witnesses who were interrogated during the extradition proceedings against John Demjanjuk. In the official compilation of the interrogations,[871] which we have in our possession, the names of the witnesses have been rendered unreadable, so that we refer to the interrogations by the dates, on which they occurred.

Interrogation of December 12, 1979: The witness was deported in April 1943 from Warsaw to Treblinka. On the next day he was transferred to Maj-

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867 *Ibid*., p. 638.

868 Samuel Zylbersztajn, "Pamiętnik więznia dziesięciu obozów," in: *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce*, No. 68, 1968, pp. 53-56. The author expressly cites April 30, 1943, as the date of his deportation to Treblinka.

869 T. Mencel (ed.), *Majdanek 1941-1944*, Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, Lublin 1991, p. 448.

870 Tatiana Berenstein, Adam Rutkowski, "Zydzi w obozie koncentracijnym Majdanek (1941-1944)," *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce*, No. 58, 1966, p. 16.

871 *U.S. Department of Justice. Criminal Division. Office of Investigation. Report of Investigation. Subject "Demjanjuk Ivan, Fedorenko Feodor*." These protocols were enclosed with the documents in the Jerusalem Demjanjuk Trial (State of Israel vs. Ivan [John] Demjanjuk. Criminal Case No. 373/86 in the Jerusalem District Court; cf. Chapter V). Our thanks to Dr. Miroslav Dragan, who made these documents available to us.

danek, where he spent 6-7 days; afterward he went to Budzyn for approximately a year. From Budzyn he was sent to Wieliczka (in the vicinity of Krakow), from there to Flossenbürg in mid-1944, and finally to Leitmeritz.

Interrogation of December 17, 1979: the witness was deported from Krakow to Płaszów, and from there to Auschwitz. After that he went to Oranienburg and finally to Flossenbürg. He stated that he spent a single day in Treblinka without giving details.

Interrogation of January 3, 1980: the witness was taken prisoner in May 1943 in Warsaw and sent directly to Majdanek, from where he was later transferred to Budzyn.

Interrogation of March 7, 1980: The witness was deported in April 1943 from Warsaw to Treblinka, where he stayed for only one day; then he was transferred along with 180 other prisoners to Majdanek. After two days his trip continued to Budzyn, where he spent two years. He was liberated by the Soviets from an unnamed German concentration camp.

Interrogation of March 11, 1980: the witness was sent to Treblinka in April 1943, where he spent only a day. Transfer to Majdanek, thence to Budzyn, where he was interned for about a year. Liberated on May 5, 1945, from Mauthausen.

Interrogation of July 18, 1980: the witness was deported on April 18, 1943, from Warsaw to Majdanek. After 5 weeks he went to Auschwitz and then – toward the end of 1944 – to Gusen (a subcamp of Mauthausen) where he was liberated.

The verdict of the Court of Assizes of Düsseldorf determined, plainly and clearly, on September 3, 1965, that

> *"several thousand people from Treblinka are said to have arrived at other camps."*[872]

To conclude, we turn to the question of the location/s to which the majority of the deportees were sent. According to T. Berenstein and A. Rutkowski, 30,000 to 40,000 Jews were deported from the Warsaw Ghetto to Lublin, where several transports arrived by way of Treblinka, where a selection of those able to work had already been conducted.[873] The Polish historian Zofia Leszczyńska writes that the Jews from Warsaw were distributed as follows: 14,000 to Poniatowo, 6,000 to Trawniki, 800 to Budzyn, and 16,000 to Majdanek.[874] According to her chronology of the transports, which contains large gaps, the following transports of Jews arrived in the Lublin-Majdanek Camp from Warsaw:

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[872] A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager…*, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 198.

[873] T. Berenstein, A. Rutkowski, *op. cit.* (note 870), p. 16.

[874] Zofia Leszczyńska, "Transporty więzniów do obozu w Majdanku," in: *Zeszyty Majdanka*, IV, 1969, p. 194.

April 27: 3,496 persons including children
April 28: number unknown, including children
April 30: number unknown, including children
May 1: number unknown, including children
May 2: number unknown, including children
May 3: number unknown, including children
May 8: 861 men
May 9: 895 men
May 10: 875 men
May 14: number unknown, including children.[875]

3. Deportations from the Ghetto of Białystok and the Transit Camp Małkinia

The clearing out of the ghetto of Białystok was planned for August 16, 1943. The Jews in the ghetto put up a weak resistance, and from the 16th to the 20th of August there were clashes until the inhabitants were subdued by the Germans. As to the fate of the Jews taken prisoner, the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* reports:[876]

> *"The deportations from the ghetto began on August 18 and went on for three days, in the course of which the greater part of Białystok's Jews were deported. Some were sent to Treblinka, where they were murdered, and others to MAJDANEK, where they went through a* Selektion*. Those who were found fit were taken to the PONIATOWA camp, the Bliżyn camp, or to AUSCHWITZ. A train with 1,200 Białystok children aboard was sent to THERESIENSTADT; a month later, these children too ended up in Auschwitz."*

The author of this article,[877] however, does not cite the important arguments already put forth by Gerald Reitlinger. The latter writes:[878]

> *"A chance survival of way-bills in the Königsberg office of the German State Railways reveals the fact that five special trains left Bialystok for Treblinka between August 21st and 27th, 1943. 266 wagons were sent. On such a journey, occupying normally two-and-a-half hours, a box-car would hold from eighty to a hundred Jews. Thus there was room for all 25,000 survivors."*

According to Reitlinger, these 25,000 Jews were all 'gassed.' The source cited by him is the English translation of an article written by Z. Łukaszkiewicz,

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[875] T. Mencel, *Majdanek 1941-1944*, *op. cit.* (note 869), pp. 447f.
[876] *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 18), Vol. I, pp. 213.
[877] See the entry "Białystok" in the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, *ibid*.
[878] G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 180), p. 306.

which we cited in Chapter III.[879] There, a "*wykaz wagonów*" (railway carriage label), a telegram of August 18, as well as "railway schedule no. 290"[880] from the railway administration of Königsberg are mentioned, in which we find the order:

> *"The following special trains for the transport of resettlers are running from Białystok to Małkinia, destination Treblinka."*

As we have already seen, the schedule in the documents cited by Łukaszkiewicz looks like this:

17 August:[881]	39 cars
18 August:	39 cars
19 August:	35 cars
21 August:	38 cars
21 August:	38 cars
22 August:	38 cars
22 August:	38 cars
23 August:	38 cars

In all: 8 trains and 303 cars.

It is nonetheless certain that the Jews from the ghetto of Białystok were for the most part deported to the area of Lublin. According to T. Berenstein and A. Rutkowski, 24,000 of these Jews were brought to Majdanek.[882]

On August 20, 1943, a transport with 2,031 persons arrived in Majdanek from Białystok.[883] It contained men, women, and children,[884] so that no kind of selection could have taken place in Treblinka. On the same day, at least one other transport arrived in Majdanek with approximately 2,000 Jews (men, women, and children).[885] Also, the transport with 1,200 children (originally intended for Palestine[886]) between 6 and 12 years of age, which arrived in Theresienstadt on August 24,[887] traveled by way of Treblinka, which therefore served as a transit camp for these transports.

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[879] "The Treblinka extermination camp," in: Central Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland (ed.), *German Crimes in Poland*, Warsaw 1946, pp. 103f.

[880] Cited in German in the text: "Fahrplananordnung Nr. 290".

[881] The text erroneously has August 27. The date of August 17 appears in the German translation of the article concerned (USSR-344).

[882] T. Berenstein, A. Rutkowski, *op. cit.* (note 870), p. 450.

[883] GARF, 7021-107-3, p. 258. See Document 24 in the Appendix.

[884] Z. Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 874), p. 227.

[885] T. Mencel, *Majdanek 1941-1944*, *op. cit.* (note 869), p. 450.

[886] Brona Klibanski, "Kinder aus dem Ghetto Białystok in Teresienstadt", in: *Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente*, 1995, p. 93.

[887] *Terezisnká pametni kniha*, *op. cit.* (note 569), p. 70. There a figure of 1220 Jews who arrived in Theresienstadt from Białystok is given. Obviously 20 adults who accompanied the children are included in this.

According to Danuta Czech, on December 10, 1942, a transport with 2,500 persons, from which 524 men were registered with the numbers 81,400 to 81,923, arrived in Auschwitz from the transit camp Małkinia. The remaining 1,976 are supposed to have been gassed. On December 12 of the same year, again according to Danuta Czech, a transport from the transit camp Małkinia also arrived in Auschwitz with 2,000 Polish Jews, of whom 416 men, assigned the numbers 82,047 to 82,462, and six women, assigned the numbers 26,800 to 26,805, became part of the regular camp population; this time, too, Danuta Czech claims that the rest were gassed.[888]

If one consults the *Informator enzycklopedyczny* of the 'Main Commission for the Investigation of the Hitler Crimes in Poland,' in which all camps and prisons on Polish soil during the German occupation are listed, one finds no camp of either kind under the heading of Małkinia.[889] But on the air photo of May 15, one clearly recognizes a camp there, along the road to Ostroleka, which quite remarkably runs through this camp and about 5 km from Treblinka. Its function is not known.[890]

In the first German edition of her "Kalendarium," D. Czech had written that the two transports arrived from the ghetto of Ciechanów.[891]

These two transports are to be seen in the context of the Jewish transports from Kielbasin (called Lososna by the Germans), which took place between November 9 and December 20, 1942. This is a site about 50 km northeast of Białystok on the road to Grodno. During the course of this operation, further transports are supposed to have been directed to Treblinka: one with 7,000 Jews on December 14, the last on the 20th of the same month.[892]

Since the alleged 'extermination camp' Treblinka is supposed to have been in operation at that time, it makes no sense that these more than 3,500 Jews unfit for labor are supposed to have been dispatched for 'gassing' to the more than 500 km distant Auschwitz rather than to nearby Treblinka. But if there were transports to Treblinka in addition to those, the conclusion is almost inescapable that those sent to Auschwitz also arrived there by way of Treblinka, as did those from the Białystok ghetto.

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[888] D. Czech, *op. cit.* (note 409), p. 283, 284.

[889] *Obozy hitlerowskie…*, *op. cit.* (note 64), p. 314. Malomice comes after Malki there.

[890] John C. Ball, *Air Photo Evidence*, *op. cit.* (note 101), p. 79 and 88; pp. 122, 132 in Rudolf's 2020 edition.

[891] D. Czech, "Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz- Birkenau", Issue 3, Wydawnictwo Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimu, 1960, pp. 106f.

[892] C. Gerlach, *op. cit.* (note 418), p. 727.

4. Treblinka: Gas Chambers or Delousing Chambers?

If one assumes that Treblinka was a transit camp, then one can also interpret the description of the witnesses' alleged extermination facilities. In his 1995 article, mentioned in the first chapter, J.-C. Pressac advanced a very interesting hypothesis with regard to the supposed extermination camps. He wrote:[893]

> *"Only one Polish witness, Stanisław Kosak,*[894] *has described the construction of the extermination camp Belzec from November 1941. There were three barracks built next to one another: the first served as a waiting room for the Jews, in the second they bathed and in the third they were gassed in three rooms. Railway cars making a circuit on a narrow-gauge track took care of transporting the bodies to a pit located at the edge of the camp. Kosak adds that three ovens connected with the water supply system were installed in the gas chambers.*
>
> *In this homicidal installation two elements do not make sense: the baths (why should the deportees have been allowed to bathe before their gassing?) and the three ovens connected to water pipes (carbon monoxide of course was used for the killing).*
>
> *For Treblinka, the witnesses described in different words exactly the same sequence: entry into the undressing room, then into the bath, after that into a room for testing asphyxiation gases, which was next to a furnace room, from whence the tracks led to a 'cemetery.' They mention the use of steam in the gas chambers. This 'death-house' has more bizarre aspects than that of Belzec: bath, steam, and ovens, whose purpose cannot have been that of incinerating the bodies, since these of course were buried in the 'cemetery.' A report of November 1942, which was sent to London, confirms that the suffocation chambers consisted of three rooms 4 × 4 m in dimension with a heating room, where there was a boiler for the production of steam, which was then conducted into the three chambers. These contradictions prove that the statements of the witnesses have not been 'arranged,' but rather correctly represent the words of the witnesses.*
>
> *Instead of starting with the assumption of a facility for killing people, the hypothesis must be accepted that from the end of 1941 until mid-1942, three delousing facilities were established in Belzec, Sobibór, and Treblinka. The fact that places were chosen for this at a border, which had become obsolete, can be explained if one recalls the concepts of prophylactic hygiene and the battle against typhus by means of killing the insects carrying it, the lice, and if one considers that the Germans had typhus more or less under control in their zone of occupation, but not in the conquered Soviet territories. Thus, the program for the deportation of the Jews to the*

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[893] J.-C. Pressac, "Enquête…," *op. cit.* (note 88), pp. 120f.
[894] Correct: Kozak.

> *east, as decided upon at the Wannsee Conference of January 20, 1942, was adhered to by processing the deportees through these three hygiene facilities. That Belzec was established prior to the Wannsee Conference can be explained by the postponement of this conference or also by the possibility that the witness Kosak has given a false date for the establishment of the delousing facility."*

A whole array of arguments points to the fact that Pressac has hit the nail on the head. In the second chapter we saw that according to the testimony of the witnesses the alleged extermination installations of Treblinka were camouflaged as a 'bath.' This point merits a closer analysis.

Rachel Auerbach mentions "a whole list of instructions about bathing and disinfection, about what to do with money, jewels and documents." In some cases the new arrivals were actually handed receipts after they had deposited their valuables at the check-in counter.[895] She writes that the women were often asked to take towels with them into the bathhouse,[896] and explains:[897]

> *"*[…] *this door led to the 'bathing establishment.' This was a gray-white building with all the accoutrements of a regular public bath in the inside: 'cabins,' plus a few chimneys protruding from the roof.* […] *The floor sloped down to wide, hermetically sealed chutes facing the entrance gate. Real shower heads were set in the ceilings of the rooms, but they were not connected to any water pipe."*

Later she says:[898]

> *"*[…] *in the early days the Jews were told as they undressed and turned in their money to keep 1 złoty in order to pay 'for the bath.' A Ukrainian guard would sit in a wooden hut at the entrance to the 'Road to Heaven' and collect the złotys."*

The report of November 15, 1942, adds one further important piece of circumstantial evidence: the boiler room for the production of steam, which makes total sense in a disinfection and delousing facility, but which in an installation for extermination has no function whatsoever. Steam was in fact one of the methods at that time for disinfecting and delousing.[899] The Silberschein Report completes the picture of the evidence: directly after their arrival, the deportees were informed they would be continuing their journey "to work in the east." According to the verdict of the Düsseldorf Court of Assizes of 1965, the Warsaw Jews were greeted with the following address:[900]

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[895] A. Donat, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 30.
[896] *Ibid*., p. 31.
[897] *Ibid*., p. 34.
[898] *Ibid*., p. 54.
[899] Walter Dötzer, *Entkeimung, Entwesung*. Operational instructions for the clinic and laboratory of the Institute of Hygiene of the Waffen-SS, Berlin, Urban and Schwarzenberg Publishers, Berlin and Vienna 1943, pp. 16-21 and 87f.
[900] A. Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*…, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 219.

> *"Attention Warsaw Jews!*
> *You are in transit camp here, from which further transport to a labor camp will occur.*
> *For the prevention of epidemics, clothing as well as articles of baggage are to be handed over for disinfection. Gold, money, foreign currency, and jewelry are to be surrendered in exchange for a receipt at the counter. They will be returned later, upon presentation of the receipt.*
> *All those arriving have to bathe for bodily cleanliness before traveling on."*

According to the November 15, 1942, report, after this speech the deportees were subdivided according to their occupations. In fact, the SS had established a bureau at the camp train station "where every new arrival had to go and report his professional training."

The report continues:

> *"the people were taken into the camp and at first only sent into the baths for disinfection. After the bath they were temporarily sent into the single cells. There they were supposed to wait until it was their turn."*

The sketch enclosed with the Silberschein Report[901] shows a men's camp, a children's camp, and a women's camp; the deportees would have gone there following their bath. The *Informacja bieżąca* of August 17, 1942, claimed that in Treblinka "the camp was at a strength of 40,000 Jews on August 5,"[902] which indicates internment of the deportees after the bath.

The report then states that the Jews were sent "into the gas- and oven-chambers" and killed there – but why on earth were they ordered to bathe beforehand? The alleged extermination facility, as it is represented in the sketch, is revealing in other ways: the building consisted of a dressing room, a bathing room, a "room for testing asphyxiation gases," as well as a furnace or oven room, from where a railway track led to the cemetery. What purpose, then, did the ovens serve?

On the other hand, was not the bathing room identical to the room for testing asphyxiation gases (why, actually, a 'testing room'?) and therefore necessarily a real bath, through which the deportees walked before they were lodged in one of the three camps mentioned above? But the dressing room, as well as the ovens, is not compatible with the extermination thesis, and indeed even less so with the version accepted today, for on the one hand the doomed are supposed to have undressed in the open, and on the other hand no historian claims that there were crematoria in Treblinka. If one views the entire facility within another context, a medical-hygienic one, then the description proves to be a completely logical one. In a facility, which includes a dressing room and a bathing room, a furnace (or oven) room can contain nothing but a delousing

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[901] See Document 3 in the Appendix.
[902] See Chapter II.

furnace, but then the adjacent room was definitely not a "room for testing asphyxiation gases," but rather a disinfection/hot-air chamber. (In this connection, it is worth mentioning that the supposed 'extermination camp' of Chełmno was also equipped with a delousing furnace.)[903]

Such disinfection furnaces were produced by several firms, among them the Topf firm in Erfurt, which installed two of them (with four hot-air chambers) in the central sauna in Birkenau,[904] and the firm of H. Kori in Berlin, which produced less well-built ovens.[905] One other firm, which produced hot air, steam, and steam/formalin delousing chambers as well as similar installations, was the Ing. C. Klobukowski & Co., located in Warsaw.[906]

The description and drawing contained in the Silberschein Report are reminiscent of the plan of the provisional delousing facility of the K.G.L. Lublin. This facility had rooms for dressing and undressing, a boiler house (boiler room), a room with showers (bath), and a room for delousing ("room for testing asphyxiation gases").

Reitlinger writes that some children transferred in August 1943 from the ghetto of Białystok to Theresienstadt

> *"had seen their parents led away to a 'bath-house'."*[907]

Since these children were processed through the transit camp Treblinka – the same was true for the other Jews, adults, and children who were transferred to Lublin/Majdanek and other camps – this bathhouse was obviously a genuine bathhouse!

The structure of the two alleged gassing installations, however, which has been accepted by official historiography, seems to have been more suited for hydrocyanic delousing chambers. In both, the chambers have two doors on the two opposing sides of the room, so that there is a 'clean' and 'unclean' side. In this connection, Kurt Gerstein's mission acquires an obvious meaning. Gerstein was no expert in mass killings, but he was one in the field of disinfection, and indeed so well qualified in such matters that in the foreword to his book on disinfection, published by the Waffen-SS Hygiene Institute, the *SS-Hauptsturmführer* d. Res. Walter Dötzer expressed his gratitude to him:[908]

> *"I should express my thanks to SS-Obersturmführer (F) Dipl.-Ing.* [graduate engineer] *Gerstein at this point for his advice in all technical questions."*

This furnishes an uncontrived explanation for Samuel Rajzman's reference to "Cyklon-Gas" – Zyklon B gas – in Treblinka. As Mieczysław Chodzko re-

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[903] T-1298.
[904] RGVA, 502-2-27, pp. 24-24a. Final account statement No. 1792 of October 19, 1943.
[905] See J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 270), Document 29, p. 320.
[906] Undated advertising brochure. DAL, R-35-9-443, pp. 1-12.
[907] G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 180), p. 307, footnote.
[908] W. Dötzer, *op. cit.* (note 899), p. II.

ports, a public health commission brought disinfection equipment and mobile ovens for heating water for the showers to Treblinka in November 1942.[909]

In January 1942, there was already great anxiety concerning sanitation and hygienic conditions in the district of Galicia.[910] Cases of typhus fever had appeared in the district of Kolomyya,[911] but other districts were probably also afflicted, so that the governor instructed all district physicians to answer a "questionnaire concerning bathing and delousing facilities."[912] Among the various delousing facilities was even a "fumigation booth for scabrous horses."[913] The situation was becoming critical to the point that placards in German, Ukrainian, and Polish were posted, warning about typhus fever. These had been designed by the "District Administrator in Tarnopol. Dept. of Health" and explained the type and danger of the epidemic and the necessity of combating its carriers: "Without lice there is no typhus fever. Fight lice infestation!" Then it warned:

> *"A large part of the population, but most of all the Jews, is infested with lice!"*

The text of the placard closed with the admonition to see a physician at the first sign of symptoms of the disease.[914]

The resettlement to the east of the Jewish population of the General Gouvernement, which had been living in the ghettos under difficult hygienic circumstances, therefore required transit camps with bathing facilities, disinfection, and delousing.

5. What Was the Fate of the Deportees?

The fate of the Jews deported to the east is one of those questions for which there is no sure answer, due to the lack of documents. It is closely bound up with the even more complex problem of Jewish population losses during World War II, which is not the subject of the present study.[915]

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[909] Wydawnictwo Centralnej Żydowskiej Komisji Historycznej (ed.), *Dokumenty i Materiały*, *op. cit.* (note 39), p. 176.

[910] Letter of January 19, 1942, of the Kreishauptmann of Horodenka on the subject of "Delousing Facilities". DAL, R-35-9-313, p. 3.

[911] Letter of 5 February 1942 of the *District Physician* in Kolomyya on the subject of "Typhus Fever in the District". DAL, R-35-9-313, p. 1.

[912] DAL, R-35-9-320, pp. 1, 5. R-35-9-313, p. 16.

[913] DAL, R-35-10-452, page number illegible.

[914] Poster "Fleckfieber!" (typhus) DAL, R-35-9-444, p. 2.

[915] The most comprehensive studies on this question are: on the side of the orthodox historians, the anthology *Dimension des Völkermords*, edited by W. Benz, *op. cit.* (note 79), and, from the revisionist side, W. Sanning's *The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry*, *op. cit.* (note 78). A comparison of the two works has been understaken by Germar Rudolf: "Holocaust Victims: A Statistical Analysis. W. Benz and W. N. Sanning – A Comparison", *op. cit.* (note

As we have seen in Chapter VII, the figures for Jews killed by the *Einsatzgruppen* according to the 'Event Reports' – or other sources – are vastly exaggerated, so that the number of Jews who either were evacuated by the Soviets or who survived in the German occupation zone must have been far larger than the 700,000, of which G. Reitlinger speaks.[916] A Soviet source is emphatic on the evacuation of large numbers of Jews to safety within the USSR:[917]

> *"When Hitler invaded Poland in the year 1939, tens of thousands of Polish Jews fled to eastern Poland, from where they later reached the Soviet Union. Together with the population of the Ukraine and White Russia, these Jews were the first who were evacuated to the east. Since the authorities knew that the Jews were the most critically threatened portion of the populace, they made thousands of trains available for their evacuation. In Zhitomir 88% of the Jews left the city, even before the Nazis arrived there. Special effort was expended to save the Jewish kolkhoze peasants; many of them were evacuated in the Crimea under circumstances, which permitted them to take along all their cattle, together with farm implements. In an article that appeared in 1942 in 'Congress Weekly,' a New York Zionist paper, the Palestinian Jew Solomon Itzhaki gave the grateful account of a Polish-Jewish journalist about his own evacuation. During a five or six week journey, food, clothing, and special help for children and the ill were made available by the Soviet government. According to this journalist, millions of evacuees, Jews and non-Jews, were quickly accommodated after arrival at their destination, received a profitable job in the war industry, and were assigned to agricultural operations. While a large number of Polish Jews performed splendid work in the Soviet war industry, the Polish-Jewish youth attended the Soviet schools by the thousands. Hundreds studied at the University of Leningrad – shifted to Saratov during the war – where they slept in dormitories provided by the government and were fed in special canteens. All 'Yeshivas' (Talmud seminaries) were moved from eastern Poland to central Asia at the cost of the Soviet government. The refugee rabbis carried on their clerical activity, and Michail Kusevitski, master cantor of the Great Synagogue of Warsaw, went on a concert tour through the Soviet Union, in which he profoundly moved soldiers as well as civilians with his singing of 'Kol Nidre,' a solemn prayer for the Jewish Day of Atonement. The majority of the Jews evacuated from the zones occupied by Germany went to Uzbekistan. Many other Jewish families were taken in by the autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Bashkiria in the Urals. According to Abdul Akhmetov, the Bashkirian vice-*

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916 G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 180), p. 542f.

917 *Rassenga sovietica*, August-September 1951, pp. 77f.

commissar for Agriculture, the evacuees worked side by side with the Bashkirians on the kolkhoz fields and performed 'outstanding labor.' A certain portion of Jewish kolkhoz peasants from the Ukraine settled in the area of Saratov in their own kolkhoz. Thousands of other Jews, among them many elderly people from Vitebsk, Kiev, and Riga, found employment in the factories and textile industries of the same region."

Kulischer reckons the number of the Jews who fled from the eastern Polish provinces into Soviet territories, which never came under German control, at 500,000; to this are to be added 30,000 Jews from the Baltic states and 1,100,000 Jews from the Soviet territories who left before the Germans conquered these areas.[918]

In an Italian study entitled "The Jews in the USSR," one reads:[919]

"The Baltic states, White Russia, and the Ukraine suffered especially severe losses. A certain number of refugees of the war period settled in central Asia, so that the present [1966] *Jewish population of Uzbekistan consists of old Jewish inhabitants of Bukhara and immigrants from the European territories. Others settled in various cities of the Urals as well as Siberia or were evacuated there. Of the refugees, some returned to their former place of residence after the war, others stayed, which explains the large number of Jews in towns like Sverdlovsk and Cheliabinsk."*

The Jewish journalist Louis Rapoport draws a decidedly more pessimistic picture; he writes:[920]

"Of the approximately one million Polish Jews sent into the Urals and Siberia – the journey lasted four to six weeks and proceeded under horrific conditions – a fifth to a third died, according to a news sheet of the Joint Distribution Committee from the year 1943."

For the period from March to September 1946, "when the homeward trek from the deep interior had only begun," Reitlinger supplies Jewish population figures for five Soviet cities, which are not too far below the pre-war numbers. Reitlinger took these figures from an article in the Soviet Yiddish language newspaper *Ainikeit*, whose date of appearance he does not give:

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[918] E. Kulischer, *op. cit.* (note 799), tables entitled "General survey of population displacements in Europe since the beginning of the war", outside the text.

[919] *Gli Ebrei nell'USSR*, Milan 1966, p. 51.

[920] Louis Rapoport, *La guerra di Stalin contro gli Ebrei*, Rizzoli, Milan 1991, p. 87.

City	Jewish Pre-War Population[921]	Jewish Postwar Population[922]
Kiev	140,000	100,000
Odessa	153,000	80,000
Dniepropetrovsk	62,000	50,000
Vinnitsa	21,800	14,000
Shitomir	30,000	6,000
Totals:	406,800	250,000

There is no doubt that a large percentage of the Jews in the Soviet territories, which came under German control during the war, died, not only in massacres, but also due to military action, sickness, exhaustion, and privation. A tragedy – in view of the fact that most of these Jews were elderly, children, or infirm – of which there is no doubt.

Germar Rudolf subdivides the Jewish losses into the following categories:[923]

– death from Soviet deportation and imprisonment;[924]
– death due to pogroms by non-Germans, without German collaboration or sanction;
– death due to effects of war (labor service, bombing victims);
– death as a soldier (*i.e.*, in military service);
– death as a partisan (in combat or by execution);
– natural mortality surplus;[925]
– religious conversions;
– unregistered emigration during and after the war;
– Jews presently not recorded or statistically documented;
– unresolved cases;
– death (for the most part natural) in ghettos[926] and camps (several hundred thousand);
– registered emigration during and after the war.

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[921] Friedrich Zander, *Die Vertreibung der Juden in der Welt*, Robert Kämmerer Verlag, Berlin 1937, p. 68.
[922] G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 180), p. 545.
[923] G. Rudolf, "Holocaust Victims: A Statistical Analysis," *op. cit.* (note 80), p. 205.
[924] As we have seen, according to L. Rapoport 200,000 to 300,000 evacuated Polish Jews met their death in the USSR.
[925] According to the Korherr Report, in Germany proper, the Sudetenland, Austria, and Bohemia and Moravia, the Jewish surplus mortality up to December 31, 1942, amounted to 82,775. NO-5193, p. 4.
[926] During the war 33,430 Jews died in Theresienstadt. *Das Ghetto Museum Theresienstadt*, edited by the Gedenkstätte Terezin (Terezin Memorial), undated, p. 37 (our own page enumeration). – In the ghetto of Lodz 47,372 Jews met their death. Julian Baranowski, *The Lodz Ghetto 1940-1944. Vademecum*. Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi, Lodz 1999, pp. 86f. – In the Warsaw Ghetto the number of those who died from January 1942 to June 1942 was 69,355. *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *op. cit.* (note 289), pp. 138f.

Of course, the Jews shot by the *Einsatzgruppen*, the Wehrmacht, etc. are to be added to this. It is an impossibility to assign exact numbers to each of these categories, but the few examples cited here do provide a notion of how high were Jewish losses from causes other than German killing measures.

The official population statistics of the postwar period give no additional help. First of all because they come from the Jewish and Stalinist side and thus were inevitably influenced by the demands of ideology and propaganda, second because they do not allow for substantial factors such as emigration to other countries, assimilation, or simply the desire of many Jews not to be registered as such.

In 1984, an Italian Communist newspaper explained the reduction of the Jewish population in the Soviet Union, which had been reflected in the censuses of 1926, 1970, and 1976, as follows:[927]

> *"The decrease of the Jewish population in comparison with the year 1926 is in part the result of the Nazi policy of extermination, partly traceable to the natural process of assimilation in a country, which numbers more than a hundred different nationalities and where there is no impediment to mixed marriage. The shrinkage of the Jewish population in the decade 1970-1979 is the result of the same assimilation process (in the USSR citizens declare their nationality by their own choice by choosing one of the two nationalities of their parents), but also the emigration of those Jews who have gone abroad within the framework of the Soviet policy, which favors the reuniting of families separated by the most diverse sorts of circumstances."*

Insofar as the first postwar census, that of 1959, is concerned, citizens could declare their nationality without having to produce their ID, on which their nationality was officially registered. For this reason, numerous citizens preferred, for various reasons, to assume a different nationality.[928] Together the other factors already mentioned, this has contributed to producing a distorted picture of the numerical strength of the Jews in the USSR.

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[927] *Calendario del popolo*, No. 468, July 1984, pp. 10247.
[928] *Gli Ebrei nell'USSR*, Milan 1966, pp. 55f.

Chapter X:
Conclusion

In 1987, Robert Faurisson wrote the following noteworthy lines:[929]

> *"'*Shoah*'-business will continue to prosper. The Holocaust Museums are going to multiply and Holocaust propaganda will continue to invade the high schools and universities. The concentration camps will become attractions comparable to Disneyland.* […] *Tour operators are beginning to calculate the profit they can derive from these places, at which there is in reality nothing to see but where, as a result, they will fill the void with 'symbols.' The less there is to see with your eyes, the more they will give you to see in your imagination. From that point of view, Treblinka is an ideal place. Everything there is symbolic: the entrance to the camp, its boundaries, the railway line, the access ramp, the path to the 'gas chambers,' the 'open air funeral pyres,' and the sites of the 'chambers' and 'funeral pyres.'"*

Yes, Treblinka is, in fact, the most fitting landmark of the 'Holocaust,' a mirage of a million-fold genocide in gas chambers, of which not the slightest documentary or material trace exists and about which we would know nothing without the tales of a handful of 'eyewitnesses' – in sharp contrast to the real, irrefutable suffering of the Jewish people during the Second World War.

It is deeply symbolic that the most important Treblinka 'eyewitness' by far, Jankiel Wiernik, and the most prominent representative of all of the orthodox historiography about that camp, Yitzhak Arad, are blatant falsifiers. By means of a bold manipulation of the November 15, 1942, report produced by the resistance movement of the Warsaw Ghetto, in 1944 Wiernik converted the embarrassing 'steam chambers,' which characterize the first phase of the Treblinka atrocity propaganda, into 'gas chambers,' and thereby laid the cornerstone for the legend of the 'gas chambers of Treblinka,' which were subsequently transmogrified by orthodox historiography into 'established historical fact.' But compared to this harsh judgment on the Jewish cabinetmaker from the Warsaw Ghetto, we must come to an even harsher judgment on the Israeli Professor Arad, who is guilty of the gravest of all offenses against the commandments of scientific ethics: the conscious falsification of source material.

That Jewish circles, above all others, defend the historically and technically absurd story of 'extermination camp' Treblinka with tooth and claw can be

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[929] Robert Faurisson, "My Life as a Revisionist," *The Journal of Historical Review*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 5-63, here p. 58.

explained without difficulty by the pressures, to which these people are subjected.

From the beginning of the 'Holocaust' propaganda, Auschwitz has had first rank and Treblinka second; there has always been far less discussion of the other four 'extermination camps.' Since the end of the sixties, the flagship of the Holocaust Armada, Auschwitz, has been under an uninterrupted barrage from revisionist researchers. Due to this pressure – invisible to the public but enormous – the advocates of the orthodox version of history have been constrained to keep reducing the number of victims of this camp. In 1990, the administration of the Auschwitz Museum withdrew the four million figure of Auschwitz victims – which had in any case never been accepted by Western historians – and replaced it with one and a half million; in 1994, Jean-Claude Pressac, celebrated by the media as the leading Auschwitz expert, again reduced the number drastically, to between 631,000 and 711,000.[930] The latest retrenchment of the front in this ongoing retreat came in May of 2002, when Fritjof Meyer, one of the editors of Germany's largest news magazine, *Der Spiegel*, wrote in the geopolitical German magazine *Osteuropa,* with reference to allegedly new research results, that 'only' half a million died in Auschwitz, which is still an exaggeration by at least a factor of three.[931]

An even more drastic revision has been achieved for Majdanek: in 1944, the figure of one and a half million murdered was given for that camp; in 1948, Polish historiography set the total number of victims at 360,000; but at the beginning of the nineties, the number was reduced to 230,000;[932] Raul Hilberg assumes in his standard work that only 50,000 Jewish prisoners were killed in Majdanek.[933]

According to the laws of mathematics and sound human reasoning, this massive reduction in the number of victims for Auschwitz and Majdanek should have resulted in a corresponding reduction in the total number of 'Holocaust' victims, but no: the mythical six million figure must be upheld at all cost!

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[930] Jean-Claude Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz*, Piper Verlag, Munich/Zürich 1994, p. 202. Cf. also the overview concerning the number of dead of Auschwitz by Robert Faurisson, "How Many Deaths at Auschwitz?", *The Revisionist*, 1(1) (2003), pp. 17-23.

[931] Fritjof Meyer, "Die Zahl der Opfer von Auschwitz. Neue Erkenntnisse durch neue Archivfunden," *Osteuropa. Zeitschrift für Gegenwartsfragen des Ostens*, No. 5, May 2002, pp. 631-641; cf. Germar Rudolf, "Cautious Mainstream Revisionism", *The Revisionist*, 1(1) (2003), pp. 23-30; Carlo Mattogno, "Auschwitz. The New Revisions by Fritjof Meyer," *ibid.*, pp. 30-37.

[932] Cf. for this Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 270), Chapter IV.

[933] Raul Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 17). If one subtracts from this figure the confabulated 18,000 victims of the alleged mass shooting of November 3, 1943 ("Harvest Festival," cf. with regard to this Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Concentration Camp Majdanek*, *op. cit.* (note 270), Chapter IX), Hilberg's number for the Jews killed in Majdanek is only slightly exaggerated.

Under these circumstances, the proponents and beneficiaries of the official historiography can never give up the 'extermination camp' Treblinka, with its 750,000 to 870,000 people 'gassed,' since to do so would amount to a final dismantling of the current version of the fate of the Jews during World War II. And the other 'pure extermination camps'– Bełżec, Sobibór, and Chełmno – for which the evidentiary material presented is of similar 'quality,' would have to take their leave from real history together with Treblinka.

That the official view of Treblinka increases respect for the Jewish people can be justly questioned, for one of the cornerstones of this picture is the slavish cooperation of the victims with their executioners. Does it really do credit to Jewish honor if their fathers and grandfathers marched into the gas chambers of Treblinka like a herd of sheep, without giving a thought to escaping or resisting? Can one feel respect for the 1,000 Jewish workers of Treblinka, who – always according to the orthodox version of history – assisted the 30 to 40 SS people and 120 Ukrainians day after day in murdering many thousands of their co-religionists, never warned them of the fate awaiting them, and acted as loyal accomplices to their tormentors to the very end, in full awareness of their own impending death?

The American revisionist Bradley R. Smith has commented upon the appearance of the barber Abraham Bomba in Claude Lanzmann's film *Shoah*, in which Bomba describes how he cut the hair of 60 to 70 naked women in the 16-square-meter large gas chamber of Treblinka. After Lanzmann had asked Bomba what he felt when he saw all these naked women for the first time, the barber replied:[934]

> *"I felt that accordingly I got to do what they ...* [Germans] *... told me, to cut their hair."*

Smith says in response to this:

> *"There you have in a nutshell how eyewitnesses to the gas chamber atrocities typically describe their behavior. They did whatever the Germans or anyone else requested of them.* […] *In the neighborhood where I grew up men who behaved like Bomba claims he behaved would have been spit on. In the upside-down world of Holocaust survivordom, however, the Abraham Bombas are seen as martyrs and even heroes."*

Historians who are interested in facts will not allow themselves to be deterred from pursuing the many still open questions of Treblinka by Bomba's monstrous fantasies. Above all, it is entirely unclear where the Jews deported to Treblinka ultimately wound up. That Treblinka served as a transit camp is proven, but for the most part we are still in the dark as to the details (the number of those resettled, their destinations, and their fate during the war and afterwards). In coming years, it is to be hoped that the improving access to ar-

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[934] Bradley R. Smith, "Abraham Bomba, the Barber of Treblinka", in: *The Revisionist*, 1(2) (2003), pp. 170-176.

chives in the successor states of the Soviet Union will make it possible for researchers to shed more and more light into this darkness. When we speak of researchers, we of course mean the revisionists, for their opponents will hardly be doing such work.

Epilogue

By Germar Rudolf

> *"How can anybody seriously believe that the Holocaust did* not *happen? Considering all the witnesses, all these pictures, all the documents, how could all this be lies and forgeries? And how could anybody with all his senses believe that such a thing could be made up? Thousands of historians and other researchers, hundreds of prosecutors, judges, and jurors – are they all wrong? Or did they all conspire in an incredible meeting of minds, a consensus of mind-reading?"*

These or similar questions will pop up in most people's minds when they are confronted with revisionist theories for the first time. In fact, most revisionists posed these questions at the beginning of their journey from exterminationist Sauls to revisionist Pauls.

Even I, as the editor of this series of revisionist books that I started several years ago, catch myself doubting my revisionist convictions every once in a while. I find myself asking questions similar to those above. But among my professional duties (and intellectual pleasures) is editing books written by fine revisionist scholars – like the authors of the present book. In 2002 I first edited it in the German language, and now, some 18 months later, a second time for the English language edition. Though this book was not specifically written to answer the questions of the Doubting Thomases, which at times we all are, and gladly so, it caused me, once again, to ask quite different questions, and I hope that the reader has had a similar experience while reading this fine work:

> *"How can anybody seriously believe that the Holocaust* did *happen? Considering all the absurdities, impossibilities, contradictions, how could all these witness tales ever be believed? And how could anybody with all his senses believe that such a thing could have happened? Thousands of historians and other researchers, hundreds of prosecutors, judges, and jurors – have they all lost their minds? Or were they all so brainwashed by wartime propaganda or trembling in fear of the Jews that they did not dare rock the boat?"*

Of course, reading this book need not lead to such a reaction. Fritjof Meyer, for example, reacted quite differently. For many years, he was a leading editor of Germany's biggest weekly news magazine, *Der Spiegel*, a dedicated left-wing medium that has always promoted the orthodox version of the Holocaust with verve, and still does. Meyer can perhaps be described as one of Germa-

ny's media experts on this topic. He is also a dedicated purchaser and reader of all revisionist publications, as Castle Hill Publisher's database indicates. Meyer attracted some attention in 2002, when he published an article in a small German geopolitical magazine, in which he reduced the Auschwitz death toll considerably, to about 500,000, based on a strange mixture of revisionist and exterminationist arguments.[931]

Several weeks after the German version of the present books was sent to Meyer, he reacted with a short email, as always indicating that his statements were not for publication. I therefore will quote them only indirectly. I do this, because it is necessary to show that:

a. mainstream scholars do pay attention to revisionist research;
b. they dare to enter into exchanges with revisionists;
c. they are not courageous enough to do so in public.

In his statement, Meyer says that it was time that finally somebody gathered all the information about a topic, which had been neglected for a long time, and he praises the industry, with which the two authors added interesting discoveries from Polish archives. He regrets, however, that in his eyes this book serves only to support the authors' dogma instead of balancing the pros and cons in an unbiased way. He then claims that the authors omitted everything that would not fit into their image of Treblinka.

First of all, I would like to address the harsh accusation that the authors sought only to confirm their own dogma. If Meyer cared to define what a dogma is, then he would have to admit that the official version of Holocaust bears *all* the characteristics of a dogma: all dissenters are severely punished by the society at large and in many countries, particularly in Europe, even by the authorities, by means of political show trials. The dissenting view presented in this volume is the opposite of the dogma: it is a challenge to the dogma.

It is also incorrect that the authors have ignored everything that contradicts their thesis. How can anybody claim that a book, which dedicates most of its pages to discussing the 'orthodox,' dogmatic version and most of its arguments, is omitting contradictory evidence? To be sure, no author is omniscient, hence no book is perfect. But in contrast to Meyer, who has never discussed opposing arguments and publications in his papers, Mattogno and Graf made an honest attempt to cover all the existing material.

Let me now address some of the points Meyer raised.

1. Use of Euthanasia Staff during Operation Reinhardt

In discussing the postulated murder of the Jews in the so-called Operation Reinhardt camps, of which Treblinka was the largest, historians of the status quo locate the technical and organizational origins of this mass murder in the euthanasia program, which was instituted at the beginning of World War Two – the killing of so-called 'life not worthy of life,' in other words, mentally

and/or severely physically disabled people. The reason for this assumption is the considerable overlap, *i.e.*, continuity, of staff in both areas.[935] However, it seems to me a very dubious practice to attempt to construe this continuity as evidence for mass murder, since it may very well mean only that the leadership had wished to retain staff, which had previously proven loyal in one socially extremely controversial operation, for a subsequent, no less controversial purpose. But whether this controversial purpose was the resettlement, ghettoization, or mass murder of the Jews is still an open question.[936]

There is, of course, an answer to this question, and it lies in the fate of many of the staff members involved in Operation Reinhardt after the eastern camps were closed.[937] Globocnik and the major part of his team of Operation Reinhardt were transferred to the Adriatic coast of northern Italy in late 1943. Globocnik became "*Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer in der Operationszone Adriatisches Küstenland*" (Higher SS and police leader in the operational zone Adriatic coast) under direct orders of the Führer Chancellery.[938] His staff was turned into a unit called "*R*" (probably for Reinhardt) engaged mainly in anti-partisan warfare, but to a minor degree also in the organization and deportation of Italian Jews to forced labor assignments in Germany. In this connection, a transit camp for the deportation of Jews was established in Risiera di San Sabba. Liliana Picciotto-Fargion writes in the regard:[939]

> *"The mechanism* [of deportation] *is not very different at the Adriatic coast: the prison of Coroneo di Trieste acted as a collection point for the deportations between December 1943 and March 1944 and was then replaced by the collection and transit camp located in Risiera di San Sabba (Polizeihaftlager)."*

The author adds that one convoy of deportees from Italy included on average 500-600 persons,[939]

> *"while those coming from the Nazi operational zone Adriatic coast (Operationszone Adriatisches Küstenland), with 'capital' Trieste, had on average only around 60-80 persons per convoy."*

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[935] K. A. Schleunes, in E. Jäckel, J. Rohwer, *op. cit.* (note 275), p. 70ff., esp. p. 78. For a list of personnel who served in the Operation Reinhardt camps, their prior deployment in the euthanasia program, as well as their military ranks, see www.deathcamps.org/reinhard/completestaff.htm.

[936] If Meyer had paid attention, he would have found this observation in my 1994 book *Grundlagen zur Zeitgeschichte*, *op. cit.* (note 97), p. 25, Engl.: Germar Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 80), p. 33.

[937] I owe the following information to my dear friend Carlo Mattogno.

[938] Pier Arrigo Carnier, *Lo sterminio mancato. La dominazione nazista nel Veneto orientale 1943-1945*. Mursia, Milano 1982, pp. 55, 66; see pp. 400f. for some members of the staff.

[939] L. Picciotto-Fargion, *Il libro della memoria. Gli Ebrei deportati dall'Italia (1943-1945)*, Mursia, Milano 1995, p. 35.

23 such convoys with a total of 1,173 Jews departed from this zone, most of them with the destination of Auschwitz.[940]

There is no doubt that the camp at Risiera di San Sabba was *not* an 'extermination camp,' and it is also clear that the main activity of Globocnik's unit "*R*" was to fight partisans. Therefore, we have clear proof of deployment of the former staff of both euthanasia and Operation Reinhardt in a task that had nothing to do with the extermination of Jews. Thus, the fact of partial continuity of the personnel employed in the euthanasia with that employed in the Operation Reinhardt does *not* permit the conclusion that Jews were summarily exterminated in the Operation Reinhardt camps.

Moreover, Meyer's claim that not only the euthanasia staff was transferred, but also their methods and equipment (gassing with carbon monoxide), is simply wrong. There is no evidence that the method used for killings during the euthanasia program – mainly bottled carbon monoxide – was ever used during the alleged Holocaust. Here we find claims to all sorts of methods, *except* the one used during euthanasia, which had proven to be highly effective. Today, Meyer and his fellow dogmatists claim that the exhaust of diesel engines was used to kill people in Treblinka and Bełżec. Fritz Berg has shown in detail how absurd this claim is, indeed.[98] It is not only absurd because diesel exhaust gases hardly contain any carbon monoxide, but even more so because the Germans had an overabundance of extremely poisonous devices available: hundred thousands of wood and coke gas generators, which were cheap and easy to operate and delivered a gas just as lethal as bottled carbon monoxide.

Considering that some of the staff of Operation Reinhardt had knowledge of homicidal techniques from the euthanasia program, this *lack* of transfer of method is strong circumstantial evidence that the Operation Reinhardt did *not* mean the killing of people.

2. Archaeological Findings

Meyer criticizes the alleged lack of discussion of archaeological findings, such as the fact that today the rain still rinses bone fragments to the surface. Since archaeological findings are discussed in detail in Chapter III.2. of the present book, one wonders if Meyer really read this book thoroughly. Also, when talking about archaeology, Meyer should first ask why the huge mass graves attested to by the witnesses were never found *despite* archaeological research. Bone fragments rinsed to the surface prove that people died in Treblinka and were buried, a fact that nobody denies, but such findings do not prove a mass murder with the methods and the order of magnitude claimed. Unless Meyer has established the extent and nature of bone fragments and of the area, in which they can be found, his statement cannot be called an archaeological finding, but merely an unfounded claim.

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[940] *Ibid*., pp. 60-63. The average would thus be 51, not 60-80.

The more-recent investigations by Caroline Stury Colls, as they are discussed in the next contribution by Thomas Kues, haven't changed anything about this either. Finding disturbances in the soil with ground-penetrating radar merely proves that the soil has been disturbed there. Whether these were ever mass graves can be determined only by extended core drillings and excavations.

3. Testimonies of SS Witnesses and of Prof. Pfannenstiel

Meyer criticizes the authors for dismissing the testimonies of SS personnel and of Prof. Pfannenstiel as mere tactical lies. It seems that it is Meyer who needs to be straightened out here: If a forensic blood analysis shows that a defendant was drunk at the time of a car crash, one million witness statements and one million confessions of the defendant, all claiming that the defendant was, in fact, not drunk, cannot change the fact that he *was* drunk. Thus, if one hundred witnesses and one hundred confessions state that the moon is made of green cheese or that 870,000 corpses can be burned within a few months without fuel and without leaving traces, both assertions being of a similar intellectual quality, then we have to conclude – in light of all the forensic evidence – that the witnesses and the defendants are wrong. Like it or not! Thus, unless Meyer proves that the factual claims of the witnesses were physically possible, we do not have to discuss whether such witness statements are correct, only *why* they are *in*correct. To the solution of this question Meyer contributes nothing.

In this context, I may add one point that is often forgotten today: When the German Army invaded the Soviet Union with the Christian crosses of the Wehrmacht as their emblem, the population greeted them enthusiastically – and naively – as God's own soldiers come to liberate them from the devilish Soviet mass murderers. Even the NKVD admitted, in secret reports, that vast parts of the local population of many regions viewed the Germans as liberators from Stalinist oppression, that the Germans treated the local populace well and turned many of the younger people into dedicated National Socialists eager for close collaboration with the Germans.[941] It can thus come as no surprise that the largest volunteer army that ever fought for a foreign nation was that which, consisting of over one million young people mainly from Eastern Europe, fought alongside the Wehrmacht, because these young people saw the German war against the Soviet Union as a cause worth sacrificing their lives for. However, when the Germans started to retreat in 1943, many among the local population, knowing what awaited them, tried to move west with the Germans, and were prevented from doing so only by drastic German measures. After the Red Army reconquered those temporarily liberated territo-

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[941] Cf. Alexander E. Epifanow, Hein Mayer, *Die Tragödie der deutschen Kriegsgefangenen in Stalingrad von 1942 bis 1956 nach russischen Archivunterlagen*, Biblio, Osnabrück 1996.

ries, the Soviets conducted draconian purges against the local population, conducting show trials of uncounted individuals for actual or alleged collaboration with the Germans. In some regions, where collaboration was very intensive, in particular in the Baltic states, the Caucasus region, and the Ukraine, considerable portions of the population were deported to Siberia as a collective punishment.[942] Not even those who had been incarcerated in various German camps were safe from this kind of treatment, especially if former co-inmates accused them of having aided the Germans in running the camp.

The only way to prevent deportation to a Siberian labor camp – an almost certain death sentence – was to bend over backwards to comply with Soviet demands by denouncing the former German occupiers and helping in manufacturing evidence for actual or alleged German atrocities and war crimes. It is more than likely that many of the 'eyewitness' accounts collected by Soviet Russian or Polish commissions have their origin in this hysterical atmosphere of postwar purges.

A similar atmosphere was prevalent in the areas occupied by American and British troops, although not as intense, and whereas this atmosphere subsided by the end of the 1940s/early 1950s in the West – only to be gradually substituted with a hysterical 'Holocaust' atmosphere created by media and courtroom propaganda – it remained a permanent background theme in the communist East as a tool, with which to denounce and destabilize the 'revanchist,' 'fascist' West, especially its client state West Germany, as NATO's most crucial and also most vulnerable member during the Cold War.[943]

4. Deportation Data

Meyer claims that the Jewish Historical Institute (Żydowski Institut Historyczny) of Warsaw has precise data about the deportation of Jews to the Operation Reinhardt camps. This institute published a *Biuletyn* (bulletin) that has included archival material on the alleged extermination of Jews. The first issue appeared in 1951. Jürgen Graf and Carlo Mattogno have examined all the issues of this bulletin in search of archival material, above all deportation lists, useful for their research on Majdanek and on the eastern camps. Mattogno claims that the bulletin does not contain a single such list, nor is any to be found in the Institute's archive. Articles published in its bulletin that are important in the context of this topic are listed in the bibliography of this book. Not even the book *Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord*,[289] which was published by the same institute and which contains the better part of the documentation pre-

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[942] See, for example, the treatment of the Caucasian peoples: Ataullah B. Kopanski, "North Caucasia's Anno Horribilis, 1944," *The Barnes Review*, 4(4) (1998), pp. 37-40.

[943] To learn more about the circumstances, under which testimonies and confessions were made, cf. G. Rudolf, "The Value of Testimony and Confessions Concerning the Holocaust," in: G. Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 80), pp. 83-127.

served in its archives, includes any deportation lists. While in Moscow, Graf and Mattogno verified the sources of Tatiana Berenstein's article "*Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrikcie Galicja*".[785] Her article turned out to be based entirely on testimonies – confirming that the archive of the Jewish Historical Institute contains no deportation lists to the eastern camps.

5. Conclusions

Meyer makes a few other points, which I cannot address here because I either do not know what he refers to or why he thinks certain arguments put forward by the authors are flawed. Meyer has not yet elaborated on his criticism, but he has promised to publish his own paper on this topic and to inform us about it. So far, however, we have not heard back from him.

It is encouraging that finally at least one scholar of the other side of this debate takes scientific standards seriously and takes notice of the need to address the many urgent questions raised by books like the present one. We can only hope for historiography in general that this will not be an isolated case, but that other scholars will be encouraged thereby to dare to voice their own doubts and opinions, because exactitude is the only certain way to the truth, and exactitude can only be achieved when we make each other aware of the mistakes we all make.

In closing, I may point the reader's attention to an article by Prof. Dr. Robert Faurisson, which he wrote after reading the German edition of the present book: "Treblinka: An Exceptional Guide."[944] In it Dr. Faurisson describes his own visit to Treblinka in 1988 and the interviews he conducted with two local witnesses. Since neither witness signed an affidavit, and no other record of their testimony seems to exist, and because their testimony was given some 35 years after the fact, it was decided not to include Dr. Faurisson's hearsay report of eyewitness accounts in this book, because its evidentiary value is rather low. But the interested reader might nevertheless enjoy reading what Dr. Faurisson learned and experienced with those two witnesses.

[944] R. Faurisson, "Treblinka: An Exceptional Guide," *The Revisionist*, 2(1) (2004), pp. 78-82.

Supplement: Modern Forensics at Treblinka

Comments on Caroline Sturdy Colls's Treblinka Research

By Thomas Kues

In November 2010, I published a blog entry on an online video concerning the research activity of a young British archaeologist from the University of Birmingham, Caroline Sturdy Colls, who had set out to refute "Holocaust Deniers" by locating the mass graves at the Treblinka "extermination camp" using "the most up-to-date scientific techniques."[945] Recently, a news report was published boldly stating that "mass graves at Nazi death camp Treblinka prove Holocaust deniers wrong." In this we read:[946]

> *"A British forensic archaeologist has unearthed fresh evidence to prove the existence of mass graves at the Nazi death camp Treblinka. Some 800,000 Jews were killed at the site, in north east Poland, during the Second World War but a lack of physical evidence at the site has been exploited by Holocaust deniers. Forensic archaeologist Caroline Sturdy Colls has now undertaken the first co-ordinated scientific attempt to locate the graves."*

It is worth recalling that the same triumphant claim that the "Holocaust deniers" finally and once and for all had been "refuted" was heard in connection with Dr. Andrzej Kola's surveys at Belzec and Sobibór, which in reality turned out to refute the official version of events relating to these two camps. (For this see the two books of the series "Holocaust Handbooks" on Belzec and Sobibor as advertised in the back of the book).

The above-quoted news item was more or less a push for a radio program, "Hidden Graves of the Holocaust" by Jonathan Charles featuring Sturdy Colls as well as Yitzhak Arad and former Treblinka inmate Kalman Taigman, which was broadcast by BBC Radio 4 on 23 January 2012, 20:00 GMT.[947] In anticipation of this radio program, on the same date, a podcast interview was up-

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[945] Thomas Kues, "UK Forensic Archeologist Sets Out to Refute Treblinka 'Deniers'," 13. Nov. 2010, http://revblog.codoh.com/2010/11/uk-forensic-archeologist-sets-out-to-refute-treblinka-deniers/

[946] "Mass Graves at Nazi Death Camp Treblinka Prove Holocaust Deniers Wrong," *Huffington Post*, UK, 16 Jan. 2012; http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2012/01/16/mass-graves-at-nazi-death-camp-treblinka-holocaust_n_1208814.html

[947] This radio program was temporarily available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b019rlns/The_Hidden_Graves_of_the_Holocaust/

loaded by the University of Birmingham "Ideas Lab."[948] In this we can listen to the following description of the methods employed by Sturdy Colls and her team, as well as some vague descriptions of their findings:

> *"Interviewer: What technology have you used to investigate the site?*
> *Sturdy Colls: I used a number of non-invasive techniques at Treblinka and what this means is, as you quite rightly pointed out, the ground wasn't disturbed due to Jewish burial law so the methods used didn't involve any form of ground disturbance or excavation and this allowed us to investigate the historic and scientific potential of Treblinka but obviously it was very important that we recognised its religious and commemorative significance as well. So the techniques that were used, there was a process of archival research which involved looking at documentary records, revisiting historical data if you like, looking at known data and assessing it with an archaeological eye, so looking for information about the landscape. Then there was a process of looking for aerial photographs of the site, any ground based photography, accounts by the witnesses, plans that had been created, etc., to build up a database of information so that when I did do the survey all of that could be corroborated against my results. So in the field this involved field walking, so assessing the landscape, topographic survey which used advanced GPS and total station surveying to demarcate features on a plan of the site allowed us to record micro-topographic change which may be indicative of buried features. And also to assess the visibility of other features such as a number of artefacts that were actually identified in quite a remote part of the site. Then moving on from that to look below the ground I used a number of geophysical techniques, so quite often mentioned is ground penetrating radar and this was one of the methods used but this was also corroborated with other methods that detect other physical properties in the soil. So I also used resistance survey and an extension of that which allows 3D imaging of buried remains as well, to ensure that all of the properties of the buried remains could be characterised accurately.*
> *Interviewer: And what have you discovered?*
> *Sturdy Colls: Well the survey results when corroborated with historical information have indicated that there are a number of surviving building foundations at Treblinka just below the surface and also a considerable amount of obviously structural debris which the Nazis would have been simply unable to have removed from the site, and this supports accounts written by post-war investigators which commented upon the visibility of*

[948] http://www.ideaslab.bham.ac.uk/MP3s/Caroline_Sturdy_Colls_Treblinka_podcast.mp3. A transcript of this podcast could once be found at http://www.ideaslab.bham.ac.uk/MP3s/Transcript_Predictor_Podcast_40.doc; now archived at https://archive.org/web/.

artefactual remains, structural remains, at the camp. We've also identified a number of pits at the site. Again, all these pits have been mapped and corroborated with witness plans and this is indicative of a number of probable graves at the site. It is recognised as part of the survey that the history of Treblinka didn't end with its abandonment by the Nazis. Issues such as post-war looting and the construction of the memorial itself and a number of other forms of landscape change that have taken place at the site, you know, could confuse interpretation so it was essential that all of these were considered when the results from the geophysical survey in particular were being assessed. So then all of this data was married up with historical information so we seem to have a situation here where it's been commonly believed that all of the victims at Treblinka were cremated, they were destroyed without trace, however, the research has revealed a much more complex picture of the disposal patterns used by the Nazis. Looking at it from an offender profiling perspective, so a slightly more forensic point of view, the Nazis worked on, as do most offenders, this principle of least effort where they would actually have a burial method that very much matched the nature of their victims or their locations within the camp and there are a number of photographs and physical evidence that we observed on the ground at Treblinka that demonstrates that these bodies were not reduced to ash, that some survive as mass graves in the truest sense and that also the ashes of the victims were redeposited into the pits that they were originally exhumed from upon Himmler's order in 1943. Also with the topographic survey we've demonstrated that the camp as it's marked currently on the ground by the modern memorial was actually much larger, that the boundaries of the camp should have been 50 metres further north and this has a knock-on effect for a number of structures within the camp itself. So we can examine it from a spatial point of view and look at all of these features in relation to each other and hopefully eventually start to build up a more detailed map of the camp as it existed during its operation.

<u>Interviewer:</u> So you've now presented your findings to the authorities responsible for the memorial at Treblinka. Does this conclude investigations at the Treblinka site or is it sort of an ongoing project?

<u>Sturdy Colls:</u> It's absolutely an ongoing project. The survey demonstrated that the site has got huge potential in terms of what we can learn from the application of archaeological method and very much was the tip of the iceberg in terms of being the first survey of what I hope will be many more to come. I hope to return to the site later on this year and there will be subsequent seasons of fieldwork in coming years. As I mentioned, at the moment what we've got is a map of what survived at the camp as a result of my findings. However, in order to build up a map of the camp as it existed we need to do more work, we need to survey the site. Only a small proportion

of the site has actually been surveyed so there's huge potential to find out more about the history of this camp in the future."

Somewhat more on the findings of Sturdy Colls could be gleaned from the BBC 4 radio documentary "Hidden Graves of the Holocaust." Starting at the mark 23:20 minutes we hear:

"Caroline Sturdy Colls: All the history books states that Treblinka was destroyed by the Nazis, in summary, the survey demonstrated that this simply isn't the case. I have identified a number of buried [sic] *pits using geophysical techniques. These are considerable. One in particular is 26 meters by 17 meters.*

Jonathan Charles: That's huge.

Sturdy Colls: It is huge. We are talking about a considerable number of bodies [which] *could have been contained within pits of that size.*

Charles: That could have contained hundreds, perhaps thousands of bodies, we don't know how deep it is, or do you know how deep it is?

Sturdy Colls: Unfortunately no. The survey technology does not allow us to go to certain depths. I know that it is over 4 meters, that was the extent of this [inaudible]. *It's a considerable pit.*

Charles: There are quite a few pits that you have discovered?

Sturdy Colls: Absolutely, there were a number of pits, in particular to the rear of what of what is now the current memorial, five that are actually in a row, again of a considerable size, in an area where witnesses state this was the main body disposal area, this is behind the gas chambers, it was where the majority of victims who were sent there were then subsequently buried, and later where the cremative remains of the victims were also placed.

Charles: It's not just pits that you found, there's also what look like buildings.

Sturdy Colls: There are, and again, the Nazis claimed they destroyed Treblinka, they certainly levelled the site, but it's not really possible when buildings have been on a site to actually sterilize the ground, so what I've identified is that solid structural remains, we're talking building foundations, do survive, but in particular two sort of structures that I've identified are likely to be the old and new gas chambers at Treblinka."

While here we learn virtually nothing about the supposed remains of the Treblinka "gas chambers," we are provided with some tantalizing information on the camp's burial pits. Needless to say, a critical assessment of the findings made by Sturdy Colls can only be made after she has published at least a preliminary report or a detailed article on the same, but we may nonetheless with appropriate caution note down some preliminary observations on what has been revealed so far. The most-interesting information, however, is not to be found in the radio interviews, but in a short article by Sturdy Colls herself

which was published on the website of the BBC on 23 January.[949] In this we read:

> *"The existence of mass graves was known about from witness testimony, but the failure to provide persuasive physical evidence led some to question whether it could really be true that hundreds of thousands of Jews were killed here.*
> *Although they lasted only a few days, those post-war investigations* [in 1945-1946] *remained the most complete studies of the camp until I began my work at Treblinka in 2010.*
> *This revealed the existence of a number of pits across the site.*
> *Some may be the result of post-war looting, prompted by myths of buried Jewish gold, but several larger pits were recorded in areas suggested by witnesses as the locations of mass graves and cremation sites.*
> *One is 26m long, 17m wide and at least four metres deep, with a ramp at the west end and a vertical edge to the east.*
> *Another five pits of varying sizes and also at least this deep are located nearby. Given their size and location, there is a strong case for arguing that they represent burial areas.* [...]
> *As well as the pits, the survey has located features that appear to be structural, and two of these are likely to be the remains of the gas chambers.*
> *According to witnesses, these were the only structures in the death camp made of brick."*

Even more important is the fact that this article is illustrated with two composite maps on which the outlines of the findings made by Sturdy Colls have been superimposed on a modern-day aerial photograph of the former camp site and on a 1944 aerial photograph of the same area. In the figure to the right I have placed these two composite maps side by side, moved the main legend and the scale, and slightly increased the picture size in order to allow for easier comparison of scale. On the map to the left I have also arbitrarily numbered the "probable burial/cremation pits" from 1 to 10. (Click on the picture to view it in full size).

The information furnished by the two interviews, the article and the maps allow us to make the following observations:

1. The pit which Sturdy Colls mentions "in particular" and which is stated to have a surface area of "26 meters by 17 meters," that is a total of 442 square meters, is, judging by the dimensions, most likely identical with the rather irregular Pit #3, located some 25 m south of the large cenotaph. This is clearly the largest in surface area of the 10 pits identified.
2. As far as the surface area is concerned, two of the 33 mass graves identified by Andrzej Kola at Belzec (pits #1 and 27) were larger (with 480 and

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[949] "Treblinka: Revealing the Hidden Graves of the Holocaust," *BBC Magazine*, 23 Jan. 2012; www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-16657363

540 square meters respectively), whereas two more (#7 and 14) were almost of the same size (364.5 and 370 square meters respectively).[950] Of the six burial pits identified by Kola at Sobibór, two (Pits #2 and 4) were larger or even significantly larger (with surface areas of 500 and 1,575 square meters respectively), whereas two other graves were nearly of the same surface size (Pits #1 and 6, with 400 and 375 square meters respectively).[951] Yet whereas at Belzec some 435,000 and at Sobibór some 80,000 corpses are alleged to have been interred,[952] the number of uncremated bodies buried at Treblinka is supposed to have amounted to at least some 700,000. Would it then not make sense for the Germans to use mass graves of a larger size at Treblinka than at the other two Reinhardt camps?

3. The eyewitnesses Eliahu Rosenberg and Chil Rajchman, who to the knowledge of this author are the only witnesses to have provided detailed statements on the dimensions of the mass graves in the "death camp proper," claim pits of sizes vastly larger than the largest pit mapped by Sturdy Colls. Eliahu Rosenberg claimed in 1947 that the mass graves measured 120 m × 15 m × 6 m, giving a surface area of 1,800 square meters and a total volume of 9,900 cubic meters.[953] Chil Rajchman, whose 1944 testimony[954] is prominently featured in the "Hidden Graves of the Holocaust" radio program – including a particularly bizarre passage from it concerning burning blood – states:[955]

   > *"The pits were enormous, about 50 metres long, about 30 wide and several storeys deep. I estimate that the pits could contain about four storeys."*

   The burial pits thus measured 1,500 square meters according to the witness Rajchman and maybe as much as (1,500 × 12 =) 18,000 cubic meters in volume! How come that the largest of the pits discovered by Sturdy Colls corresponds to less than one third of the surface size claimed by Rajchman and to one fourth of the surface area claimed by Rosenberg?
4. It is indeed unfortunate that the top modern equipment used by Sturdy Colls for some reason or other was not able to detect depths exceeding 4 meters. Perhaps it would have been wise of her to dispense of some of the piety with regards to "Jewish burial laws" and utilize probe drillings to

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[950] Cf. Carlo Mattogno, *Belzec: Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research, and History*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, p. 73.
[951] Cf. Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues, Carlo Mattogno, *Sobibór: Holocaust Propaganda and Reality*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2020, p. 128.
[952] Cf. *ibid*., p. 125.
[953] Cf. Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Treblinka*, the present book, p. 138.
[954] Discussed in detail in my article "Chil Rajchman's Treblinka Memoirs," *Inconvenient History*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2010; www.inconvenienthistory.com/2/1/1916
[955] Chil Rajchman, *Treblinka. A Survivor's Memory 1942–1943*, MacLehose Press, London 2011, p. 60.

measure the depths of the pits, as was done by Kola at both Belzec and Sobibór. Of the pits identified by Kola in these two camps, the deepest pit (#3 at Sobibór) measured 5.80 m, whereas the depths of the remaining pits averaged some 4 m.

Generously assuming Rosenberg's estimate of 6 meters (Rajchman's estimate of some 12 meters can be safely dismissed as an exaggeration), and even more generously assuming (for the sake of argument) 6 meters to be the effective depth, with the pit walls being vertical instead of sloping (an obviously unrealistic assumption, which is moreover contradicted by Sturdy Colls's statement that this pit had a "ramp" at the west end and a "vertical edge to the east," implying that three out of four side walls were oblique – but again, for the sake of argument...) Pit #3 would have a volume of (26 × 17 × 6 =) 2,652 cubic meters. Assuming an average capacity of 8 corpses per cubic meter,[956] this means that the pit in question could have contained in total (2,652 × 8 =) 21,216 corpses. Since the so-called Höfle document *from an exterminationist viewpoint* shows that nearly 713,555 were murdered at Treblinka up until the end of 1942 – in reality this document only proves that this number of Jews was *deported* to the camp up until that time – and since virtually all sources maintain that non-experimental cremations on a significant scale did not commence at Treblinka until 1943, at least 700,000 corpses would have to have been interred in the camp, necessitating no less than (700,000/21,216 =) 33 pits of the same size as Pit #3, with a total surface area of 14,586 square meters, or nearly 1.5 hectares. Needless to say, the mass graves would have had to be separated by soil walls of considerable thickness, thereby increasing the surface area required by the graves.

5. Pits #1 and 2, which together appear to have a surface area of some 600-700 square meters, are located in the western part of the camp site, near the torn-up railroad siding, clearly outside of the "death camp proper." These may be identical with the mass graves mentioned by the witness Abraham Kszepicki, in which the bodies of Jews who had died *en route* to the camp were buried during the first months of operation.[957]
6. The four Pits #5-8 are placed in a (not-very-straight) row. Sturdy Colls states in the radio documentary that there are "five" pits of "considerable size" "in a row" and in the area which witnesses state "was the main body-disposal area, [...] behind the gas chambers." Either Sturdy Colls mistakenly said five when she meant four, or maybe she counted one of the other pits, perhaps Pit #6, with its "neck" in the middle, as two separate pits. Re-

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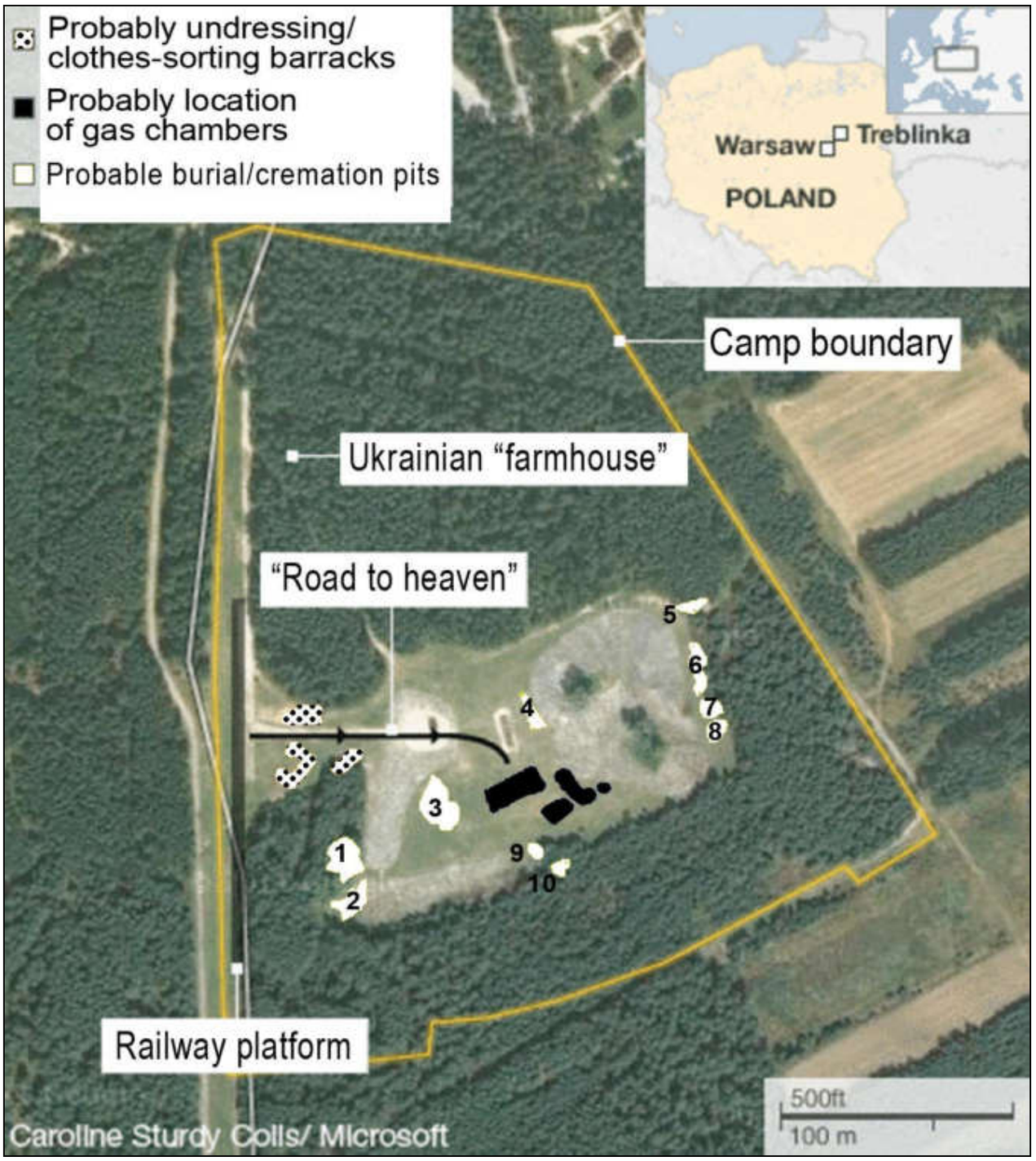
[956] Cf. Carlo Mattogno, "Belzec or the Holocaust Controversy of Roberto Muehlenkamp," Section 4.1., Jan. 2009, https://codoh.com/library/document/975/

[957] Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1987, p. 85.



Overlay of air photos by Caroline Sturdy Colls (top) and by the German air force of November 1944 (next page) with the objects found by C. Sturdy Colls.

gardless of which, it is clear that the Pits #5-8 cover a surface area which corresponds to roughly 175-200% that of #3, that is, somewhere in the range of 750-900 square meters.

7. Altogether, Pits #3-10 as mapped by Sturdy Colls cover a surface hardly exceeding 1,800 square meters. If we assume, again for the sake of argument, the no-doubt-overly generous average effective depth of 6 meters with vertical pit walls – and once more I want to remind my readers that the pits identified at Belzec and Sobibór averaged some 4 m in depth – this

would mean that the "probable burial/cremation pits" in the "death camp proper"/"upper camp"/"camp 2"[958] had a total volume of some (1,800 × 6 =) 10,800 cubic meters.

The pits at Belzec as identified by Kola have a total estimated volume of 21,310 cubic meters,[959] whereas those at Sobibór have a total estimated volume of 14,718 cubic meters.[951] The no-doubt-greatly exaggerated esti-

[958] Judging by some of the early maps of the camp, Pit #3 would have been located outside of this part of the camp, whereas some later exterminationist efforts to reconstruct the topography of the camp place it within the "death camp proper," cf. *Mapping Treblinka*, http://www.deathcamps.org/treblinka/maps.html

[959] C. Mattogno, *Belzec...*, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

mate of 10,800 cubic meters could have contained at most some (10,800 × 8 =) 86,400 corpses (assuming instead a more-realistic average effective depth of 5 m this figure would change to 72,000 – and this still disregards the likely enlargement of the original grave volumes due to clandestine diggings and other causes). According to Yitzhak Arad, some 312,500 Jews were murdered in Treblinka merely "during the first five weeks of the killing operation."[960]According to the files of the Jewish Council in Warsaw, 251,545 Jews from the ghetto in that city were deported to Treblinka between 22 July 1942 and 12 September 1942.[961] And as already mentioned, the Höfle document states that 713,555 were deported to Treblinka up until the end of 1942. Judging by the information revealed, only a small fraction of this enormous number of people could have been buried in the identified "probable burial/cremation pits," even taking into account the two pits in the reception camp, which, given the reported structure of the camp, could not have been used for any hypothetical "gas-chamber" victims.

8. Sturdy Colls's statement that "the failure to provide persuasive physical evidence [of mass graves] led some to question whether it could really be true that hundreds of thousands of Jews were killed here" implies that the presence of mass graves itself would be enough to refute the "deniers." However, it is clear that mass graves of considerable size must have existed at Treblinka, even if it was in fact only a transit camp. Holocaust historian Dieter Pohl estimates that up to 5 % of the deportees to the Reinhardt camps perished *en route* due to suffocation, dehydration, crushing caused by panicking deportees etc.[962] Considering that the reception of transports at Treblinka during the intense initial months of operation is claimed to have been grossly mismanaged by the first camp commandant, Dr. Irmfried Eberl (who, apparently because of this reason, was fired and replaced by Franz Stangl), which led to the delay of transports at way stations[963] – and this in the summer heat of July and August – there is little reason to doubt this estimate with regard to Treblinka. Since some 800,000 Jews in total were deported to Treblinka during the camp's period of operation (July 1942 – August 1943), this would mean a total of some 40,000 *en route* deaths. Moreover, there are reasons to assume that a smaller percentage of the deportees were subjected to "euthanasia" due to contagious or mental diseases, or for being too weak for further transport. To this should be add-

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[960] Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
[961] *Ibid*., pp. 275f.
[962] Dieter Pohl, "Massentötungen durch Giftgas im Rahmen der 'Aktion Reinhardt': Aufgaben der Forschung" in: Günter Morsch, Betrand Perz (eds.), *Neue Studien zu nationalsozialistischen Massentötungen durch Giftgas: Historische Bedeutung, technische Entwicklung, revisionistische Leugnung*, Metropol, Berlin 2011, p. 194.
[963] Cf. Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, *op. cit.*, pp. 87f.

ed a smaller number of deaths among the camp inmates caused by epidemics etc., as well as those killed by guards in connection with attempts at escape or uprisings.

9. The vague mention of a "more complex picture of the disposal patterns used by the Nazis" is interesting. Were uncremated corpses also detected by the survey, and if so, how many?
10. Sturdy Colls labeled the pits "probable burial/cremation pits," indicating that one or more of the pits may have been used for cremations and not for interment (at Sobibór Kola identified such a pit with an area of 10 × 3 m and a depth of up to 90 cm). In this context the smaller, more-rectangular Pits #4 and 5 may be the most likely candidates. The dimensions of an identified cremation pit could give important hints about the actual cremation capacity at Treblinka.
11. It is noteworthy that none of the pits or structural remains are located under the stone/concrete covered memorial areas (cf. the map to the left, where these areas are visible as a bluish gray). Sturdy Colls did not mention whether or not she was able to map these area with her geophysics equipment.[964] This issue, like many others, will have to await further clarification. The covered area inside the "death camp proper" appears to correspond to roughly 1 hectare.
12. It may be worth making a quick comparison of the maps furnished by Sturdy Colls with the "reconstruction" of Treblinka proposed by exterminationist air-photo analyst Alex Bay.[965] Concerning the mass graves Bay writes:[966]

> *"Unfortunately, the aerial photography does not contain enough information to delineate the boundaries of the graves. The May* [1944] *coverage is sufficient only for crudely identifying the places where deep disturbances in general are probable, but the exact boundaries cannot be established.*
>
> *In Figure 42 aerial photography is presented in which nine 50 by 25 meter* [164 × 82 feet] *pits have been drawn to scale along the east and west sides. The positioning and size of these pits is purely speculative."*

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[964] According to the English-language Wikipedia article on Ground Penetrating Radar (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ground-penetrating_radar) "Dry sandy soils or massive dry materials such as granite, limestone, and concrete tend to be resistive rather than conductive, and the depth of penetration could be up to 15 metres (49 ft)," implying that the concrete slabs of the memorial in themselves should pose little problem for a GPR survey. There may of course be other, unrevealed occluding factors.

[965] *The Reconstruction of Treblinka*, https://web.archive.org/web/20110702170758/http://www.holocaust-history.org/Treblinka/

[966] https://web.archive.org/web/20110717054059/http://www.holocaust-history.org/Treblinka/deathcampinternet/deathcampp7.shtml

The dimensions of 50 × 25 m for the pits are taken from Bay's Number One eyewitness, Jankiel Wiernik, and his 1944 publication *A Year in Treblinka*. Wiernik writes indeed that "The dimensions of each ditch were 50 by 25 by 10 meters"[967] but this almost certainly refers to ditches located not in the "death camp proper," but in the reception camp. The scene wherein Wiernik provides the above-mentioned dimensions takes place on the second day after his arrival in the camp, and the following chapters imply that he first visited the "death camp proper" or Camp II, as he calls it, only several days later.

In the figure to the right I have placed Bay's Figure 42 side-by-side with the Sturdy Colls composite map based on the 1944 air photo. (Click on it to open a full-size version.) The scales of the two maps have been harmonized. To Bay's map I have also added the letters A and B to indicate the solid-black outlines drawn by Bay to mark out the two alleged gas-chamber buildings. Even considering Bay's admission that the positioning and size of his mass graves "is purely speculative," it is clear that his vision of what the "death camp proper" might have looked like differs considerably from Sturdy Colls' map. As for the locations of the two alleged gas chamber buildings, which Bay goes to painstaking length to identify (based on the aerial photos and witness statements), the four structures marked out by Sturdy Colls (in blue) and designated "probable location of gas chambers" are located some 100 m south of the sites pinpointed by Bay. The alignment of these structures is also rather different from that asserted by Bay. Together with the considerable difference in surface size between the mass graves posited by Bay and the pits identified by Sturdy Colls, this says something of the competence of Bay as well as the reliability of his star witness Wiernik.

13. As for the "probable location of gas chambers" we learn virtually nothing other than that Sturdy Colls has identified two brick structures. On the composite maps, however, four structures are marked out, of which the largest (near the eastern exit of the "Road to heaven") is likely to be the one identified by Sturdy Colls as the "new gas-chamber building." The three other structures, two of which are relatively large, are located close to each other. One must suppose that one of the two larger structures has been identified by Sturdy Colls as the "old gas-chamber building." According to the most elaborate exterminationist effort to map Treblinka based on aerial photos and eyewitness testimony – the 2004 map by Peter Laponder (who also refers to ground photos taken inside the "death camp proper" as found in Kurt Franz's photo album "Schöne Zeiten")[968] – the only structures lo-

[967] Y. Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, Chapter 3, online: http://www.zchor.org/treblink/wiernik.htm

[968] http://www.deathcamps.org/treblinka/pic/bmap9.jpg

cated adjacent to the "old gas chamber building" were a water-pump shelter, a tiny guardhouse, and a watchtower. Yet on the composite map we have two larger structures next to each other. We will have to wait and see if the geophysical survey has revealed anything about the layout of these structures. If that is not the case, we can only hope that Sturdy Colls soon returns to the camp site to excavate the detected structural remains.

All in all, the information revealed by these interviews about the findings of the 2011 geophysical survey at Treblinka provides us with more questions than answers. We can only wait and hope that a preliminary report on the research results is not too long in coming. One thing is sure, however, namely that little indicates that the findings of Caroline Sturdy Colls have actually "proven Holocaust deniers wrong" with regard to Treblinka. On the contrary: the information revealed seems to hint that the findings of Caroline Sturdy Colls may well spell doom for the official historiography on Treblinka.

Editor's Addendum

As I write these remarks in early 2020, it looks like Dr. Sturdy Colls still hasn't published any more specific details about her forensic investigations on the grounds of the former Treblinka Camp. In her published PhD thesis she cites herself as "Sturdy Colls, C. (2014b). *Finding Treblinka: Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished Fieldwork Report. Stoke on Trent: Centre of Archaeology, Staffordshire University."[969] It would be nice if she cleaned up that report and published it, but that's probably never going to happen.

Her website cites a 2015 work with the title *Finding Treblinka: An Exhibition of Forensic Archaeological Research* as a mere exhibition catalogue, which contains no further details either.[970] A chapter she says she contributed to an anthology on modern-day genocides is eternally "in press" and hasn't appeared to this day.[971]

In other papers, she at best refers to her PhD thesis, which does not go into any specifics of her Treblinka research:

– Caroline Sturdy Colls, "Gone but not Forgotten: Archaeological approaches to the site of the former Treblinka Extermination Camp in Poland," *Holocaust Studies and Materials* (English edition), 3 (2013), pp. 253-289. This paper refers the reader to her PhD thesis.
– Caroline Sturdy Colls, "Une cartographie de la terreur nazie: études archéologiques dans les camps de travail et d'extermination de Treblinka,"

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[969] Caroline Sturdy Colls, *Holocaust Archaeologies: Approaches and Future Directions*, Springer, Cham, 2015, pp. 51, 83.

[970] https://www.staffs.ac.uk/people/caroline-sturdy-colls#publications

[971] On her website quoted as "Sturdy Colls, C. 2018 (In Press). Unearthing Treblinka?: Archaeological Investigations at Treblinka Extermination and Labour Camps. In: Vareka, P. and Symonds, J. *Dark Modernities*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan."

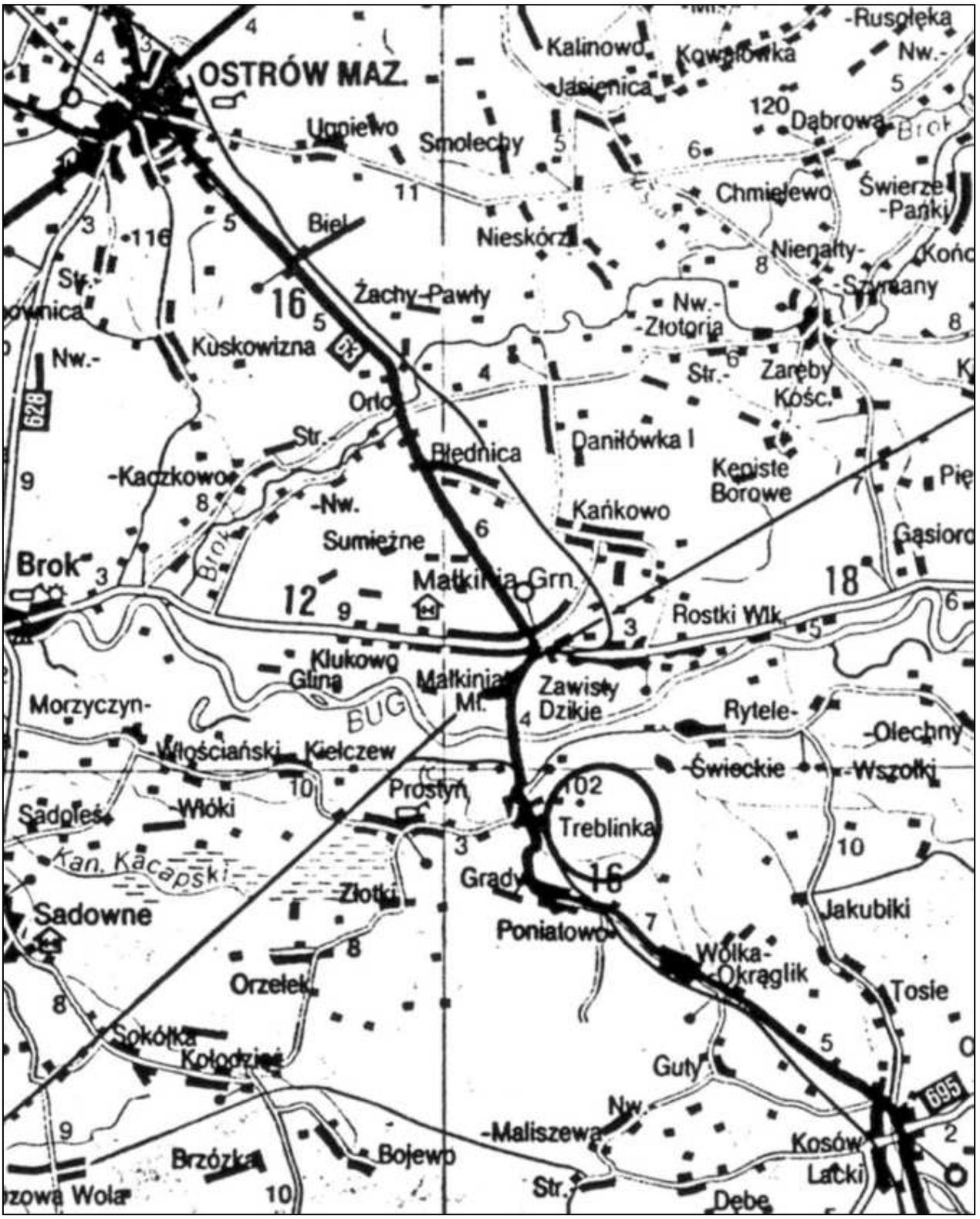
in: Jean Guilaine, Jacques Sémelin (eds.), *Violences de guerre, violences de masse*, La Découverte, Paris 2016, pp. 261-274. This one refers to her PhD thesis and the previous paper.

– Dante Abate, Caroline Sturdy-Colls, "A multi-level and multi-sensor documentation approach of the Treblinka extermination and labor camps," *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, Vol. 34 (2018), pp. 129-135. This paper is almost exclusively dedicated to forensic methods without revealing any results. In just one sentence, she claims that locating "the camp boundaries, mass graves, and gas chambers […] were successfully achieved" (p. 130), but she gives no proof for it.
– Caroline Sturdy Colls, Michael Branthwaite, "'This is Proof'? Forensic Evidence and Ambiguous Material Culture at Treblinka Extermination Camp." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, 22(2) (2018), pp. 430-453. In this paper she reports how she found some tiles and building material next to a lot of personal items (such as jewelry, hair clips, coins) in a small pit of 1 m × 1 m she excavated, claiming that this "confirmed the location of the old gas chamber…" (p. 441, also p. 434). Again, no proof for this is given at all. Quite to the contrary, she has to admit that finding personal belongings near what she thinks was a gas chamber, and finding traces of unburnt human remains "appears to challenge the accepted history of the site", because all victims are said to have had to get undressed long before getting anywhere near the gas chambers, and all victims are said to have been cremated more or less "without a trace".

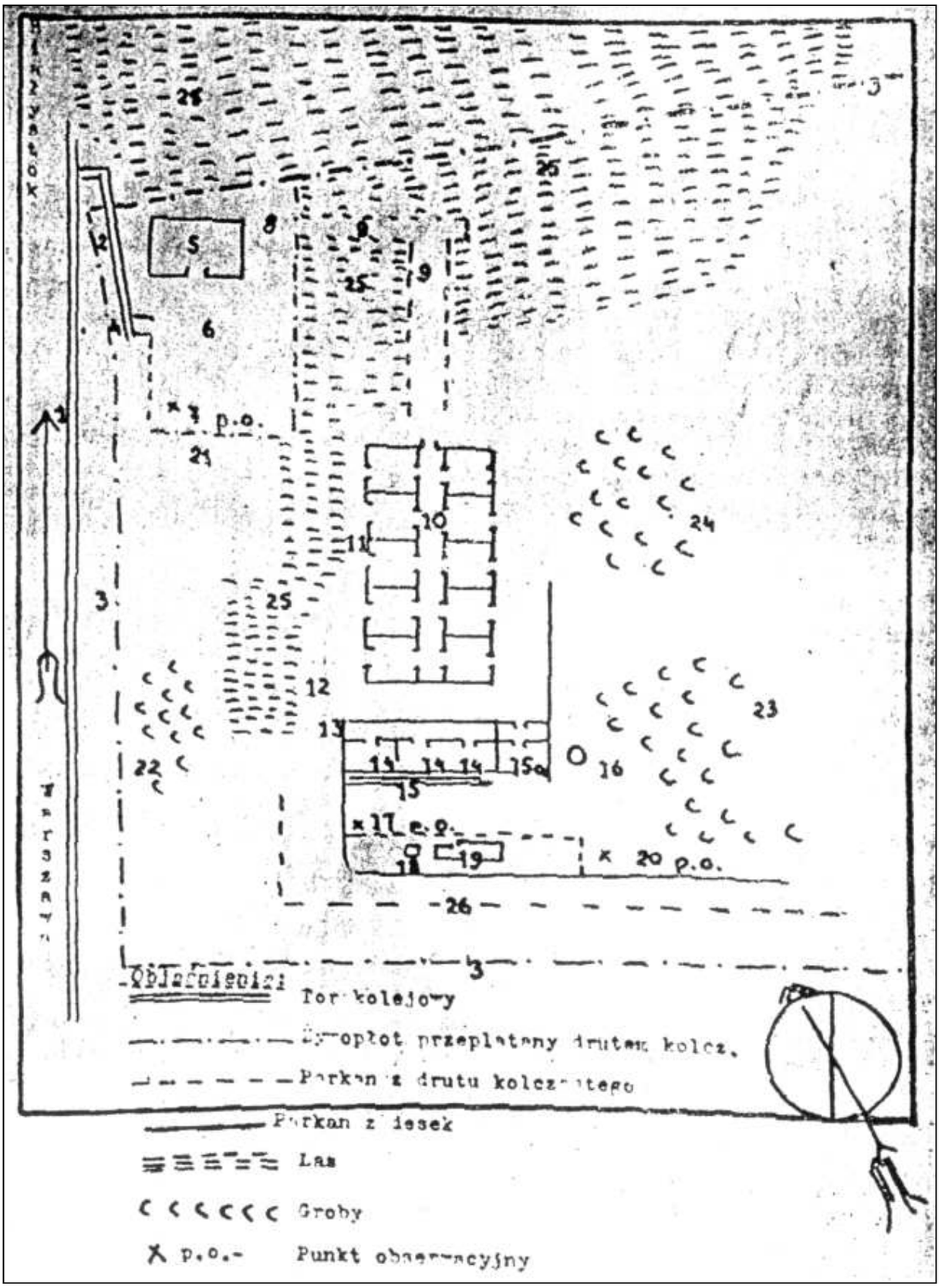
Once more, orthodox historiography on the Holocaust faces a crippling disaster. Realizing this, Sturdy Colls beats around the bush by saying that her research results allow for "many truths" regarding Treblinka: "multiple interpretations and 'many truths' can be a more appropriate approach" to understand her ambiguous results (p. 448). Does she seriously mean to say that both the orthodox and the revisionist narrative are true? She admits that the many inconsistencies within the orthodox narrative and between this narrative and her results "may provide further opportunities for those who seek to deny the Holocaust," which is the last thing she wants to happen. Since admitting defeat is no option for her, she offers her meagre results as something that "should be viewed as providing insight into conflicting historical narratives" offering "various lineages." If you have trouble understanding this academic pseudo-intellectual gibberish, that's because it makes no sense. She is simply trying to hide that she came back empty-handed. No proof of real gas chambers, no proof of the needed mass graves, no proof of the required piles of ash, teeth, bone fragments, nothing. And yet, this young forensic archaeologist is trying to salvage a piggyback ride on the crumbling Holocaust narrative in order to give her career a jump-start. That's all there is to it.

Appendices

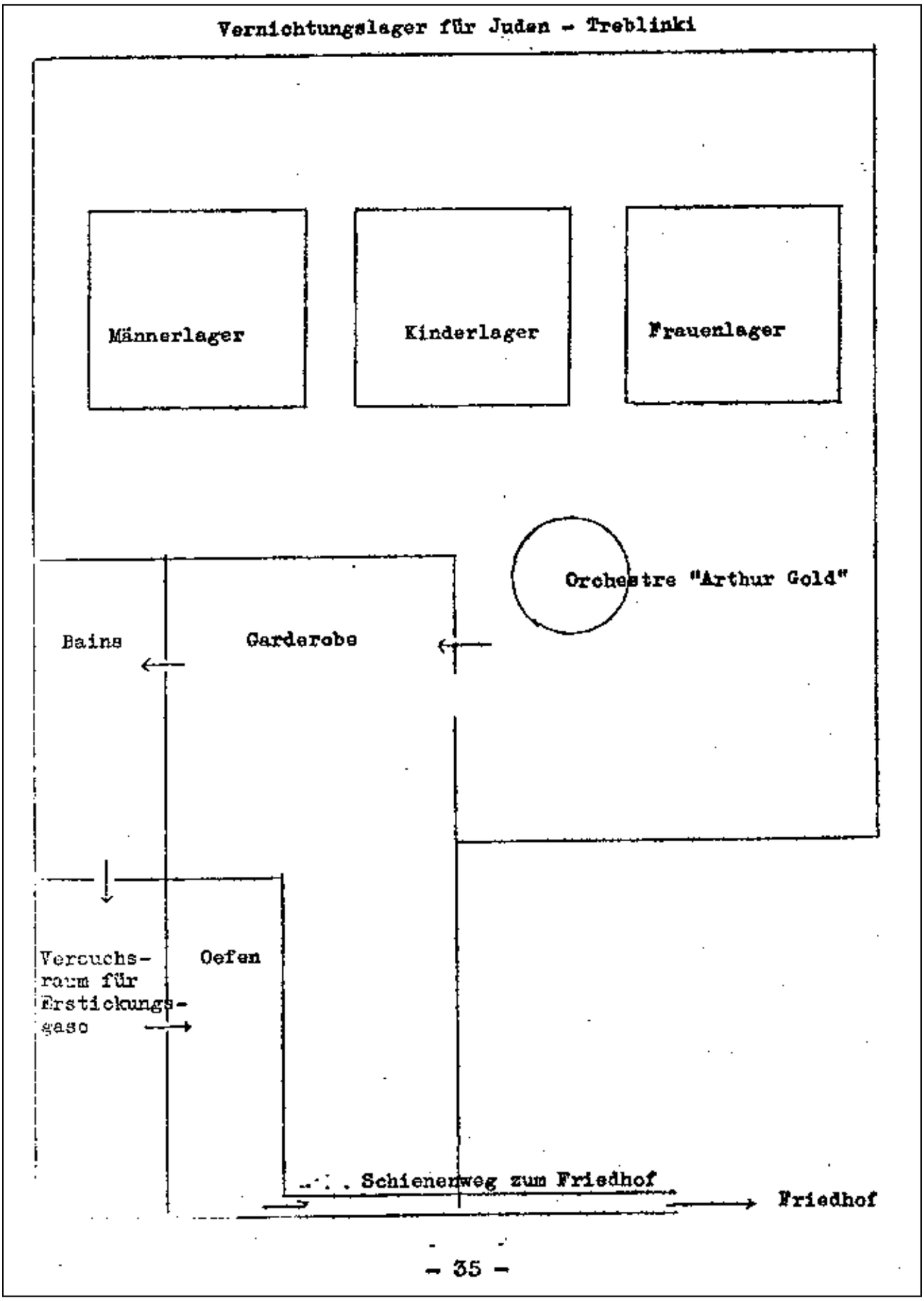
Documents



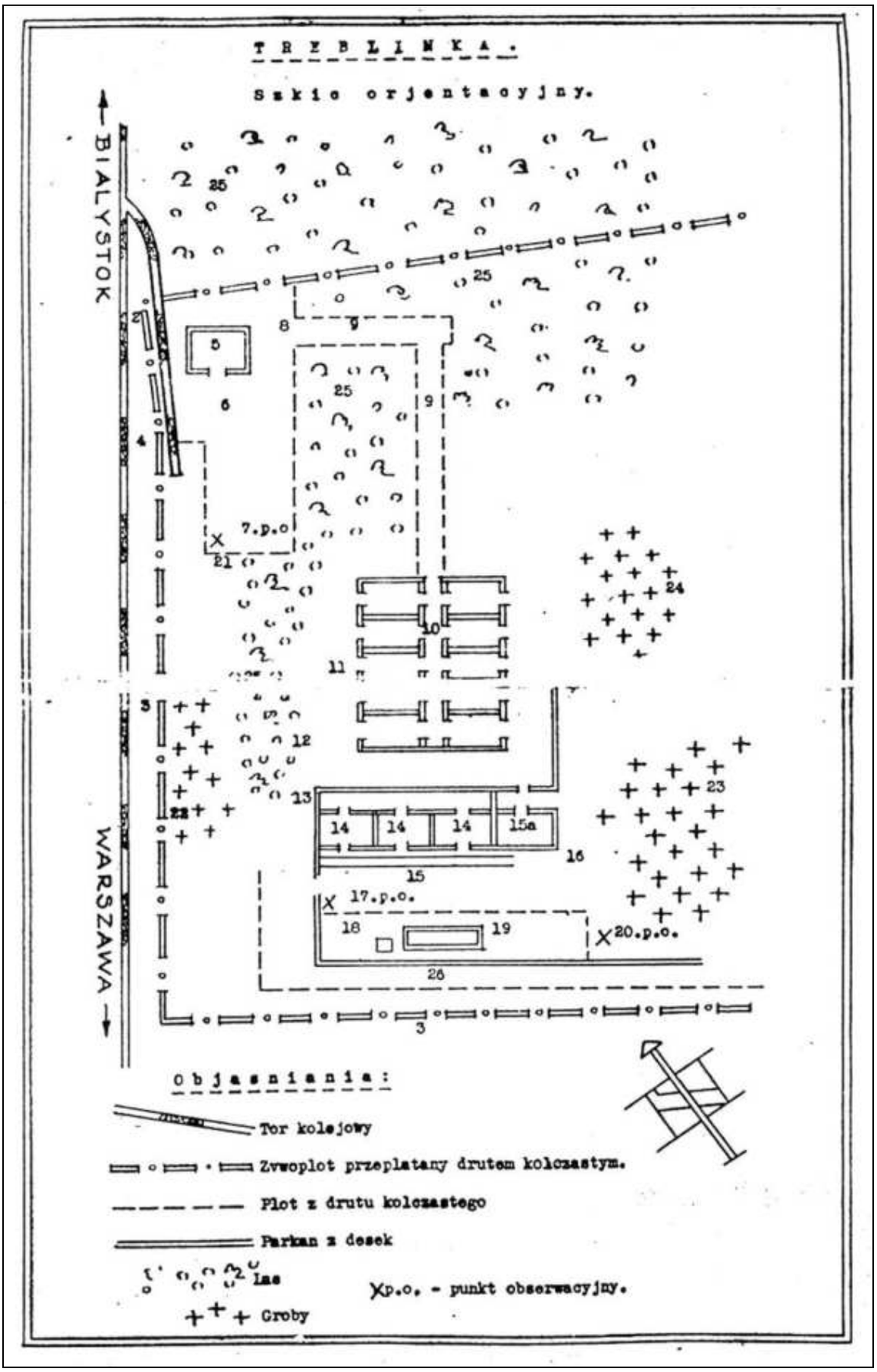
Document 1: Geographic location of Treblinka. From: Atlas samochodowy Polski, Warsaw-Breslau 1997.



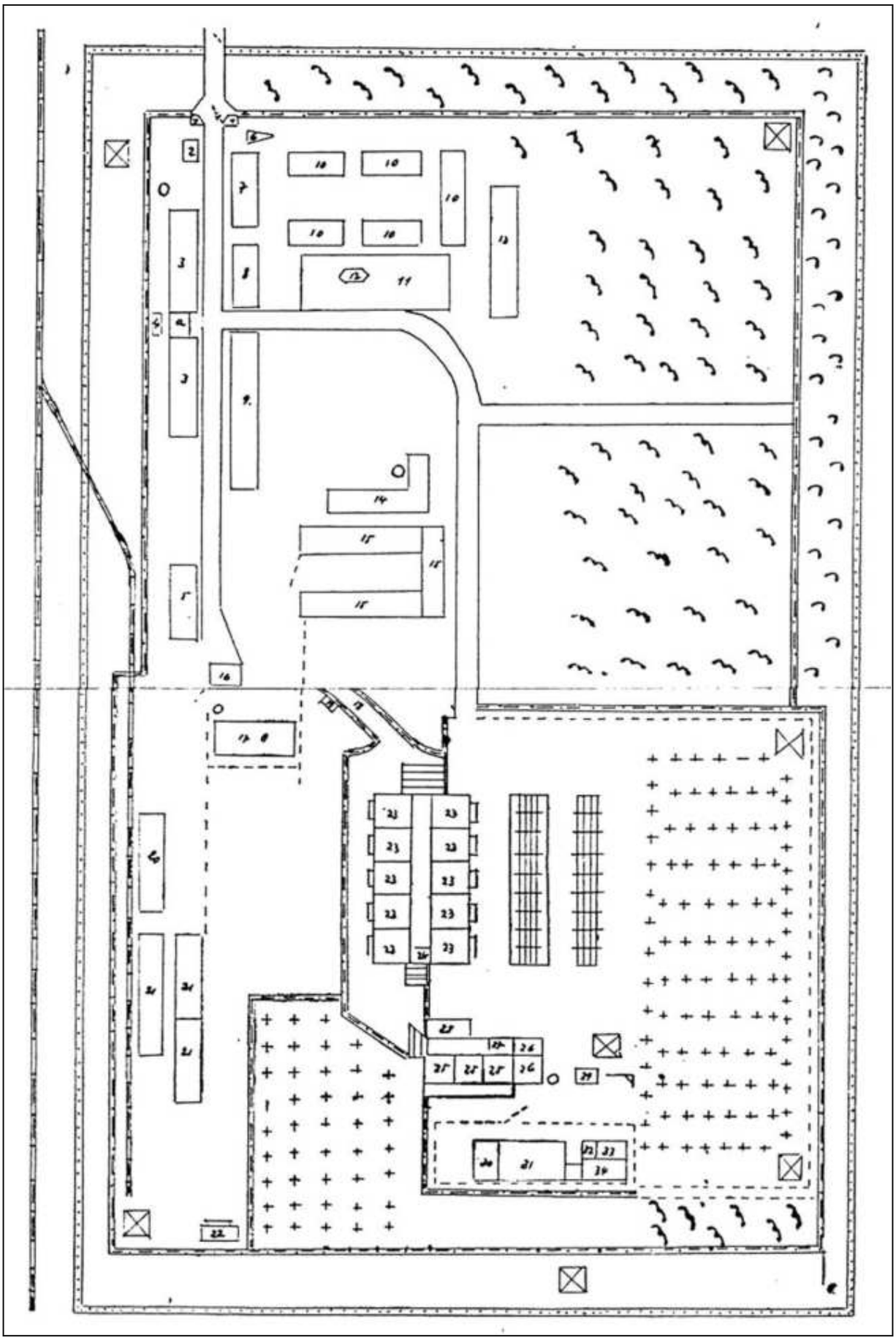
Document 2: Plan of Treblinka, enclosed with the Report of November 15, 1942. From: Krystyna Marczewska and Władysław Ważniewski, "Treblinka w świetle akt Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraj" (Treblinka in Light of the Documents of the Home Government Delegation, i.e., the leadership of the Polish underground of the Polish Republic), in: Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, Volume XIX, Warsaw 1968, p. 141.



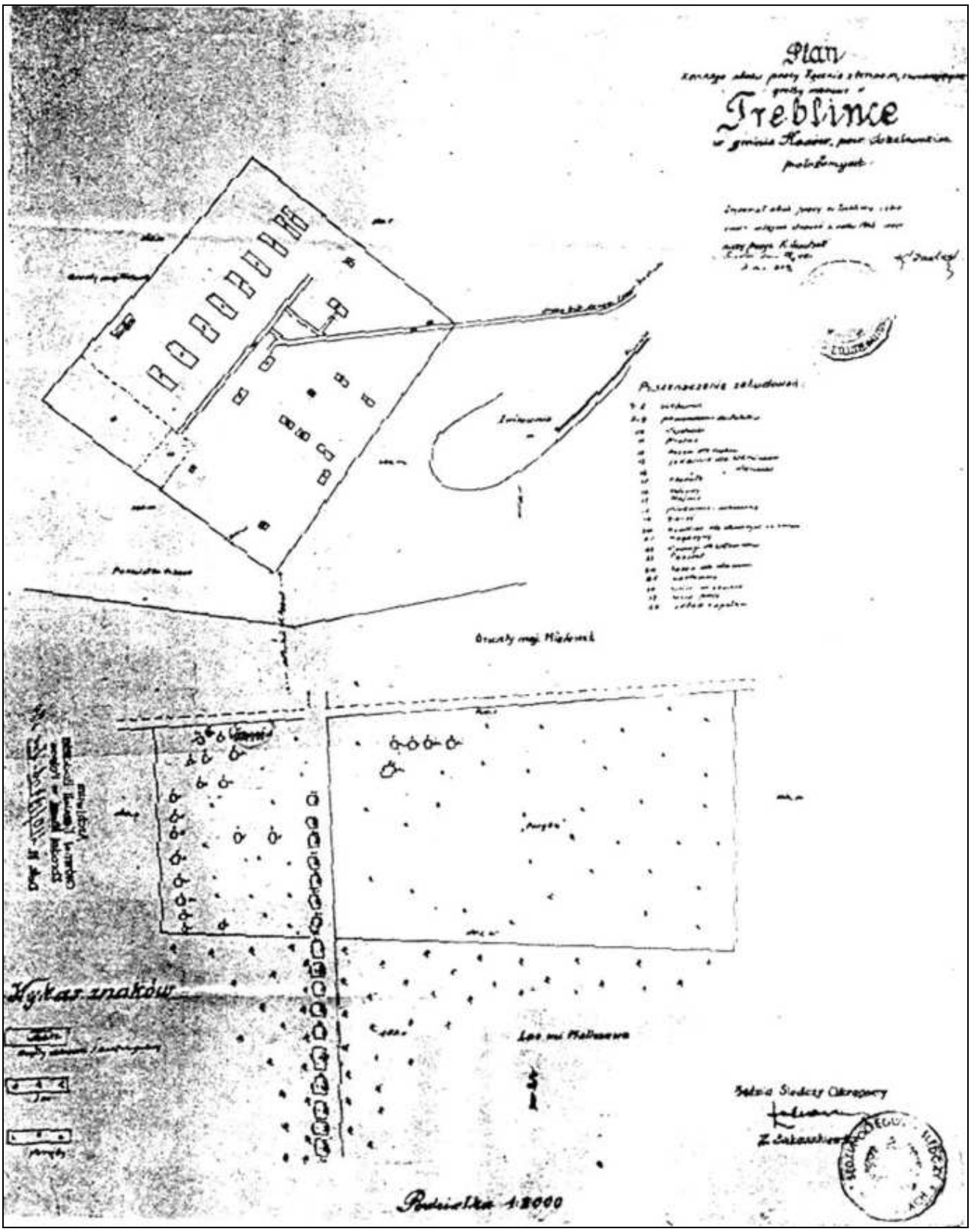
Document 3: Plan of Treblinka, enclosed with the report published by A. Silberschein. From: A. Silberschein, Die Judenausrottung in Polen, Geneva 1944, third series, p. 35.



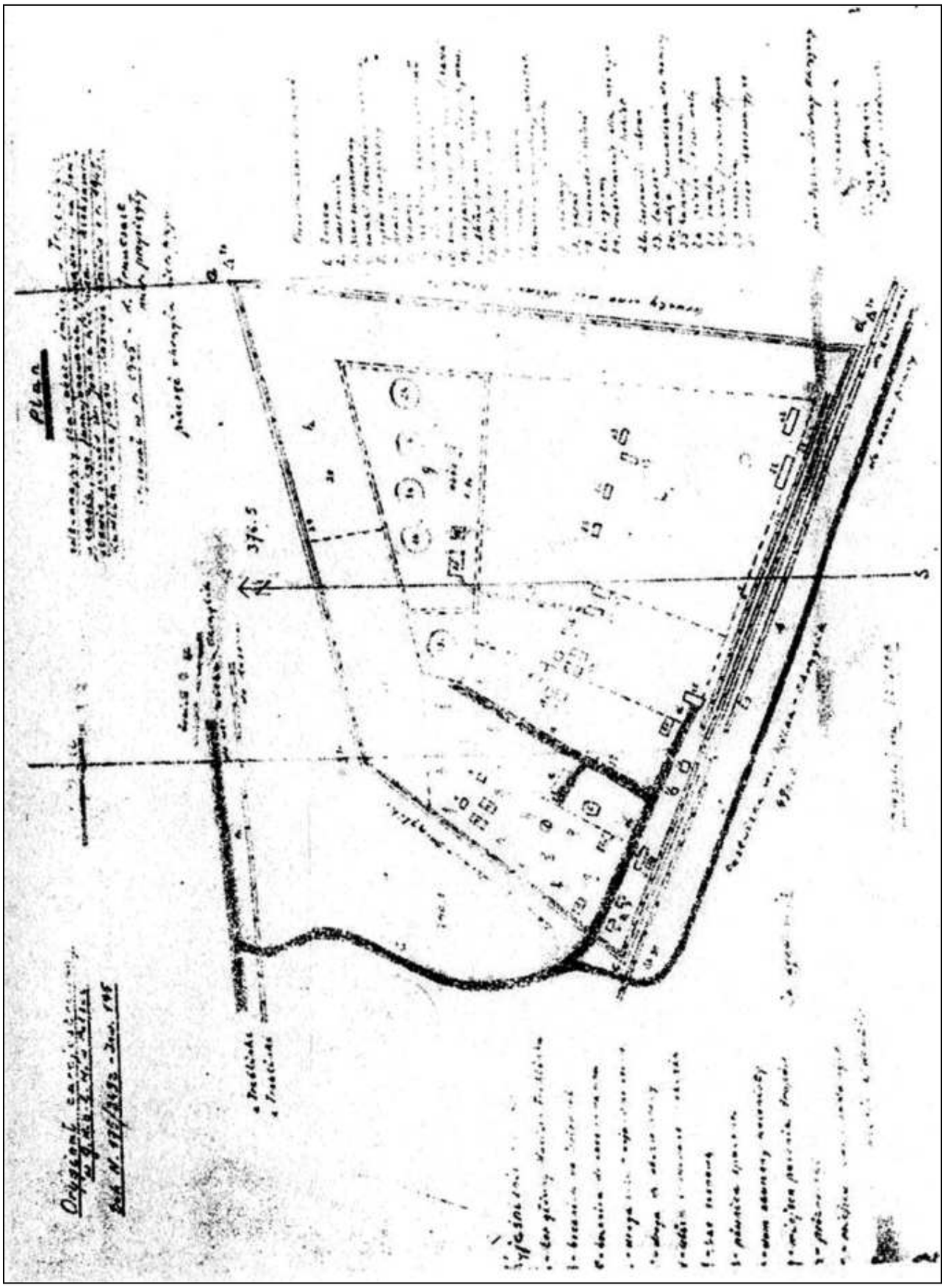
Document 4: Plan of Treblinka, published by J. Wiernik in 1944. From: Yankel (sic) Wiernik, A Year in Treblinka, published by American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland, New York 1944, pp. 24f.



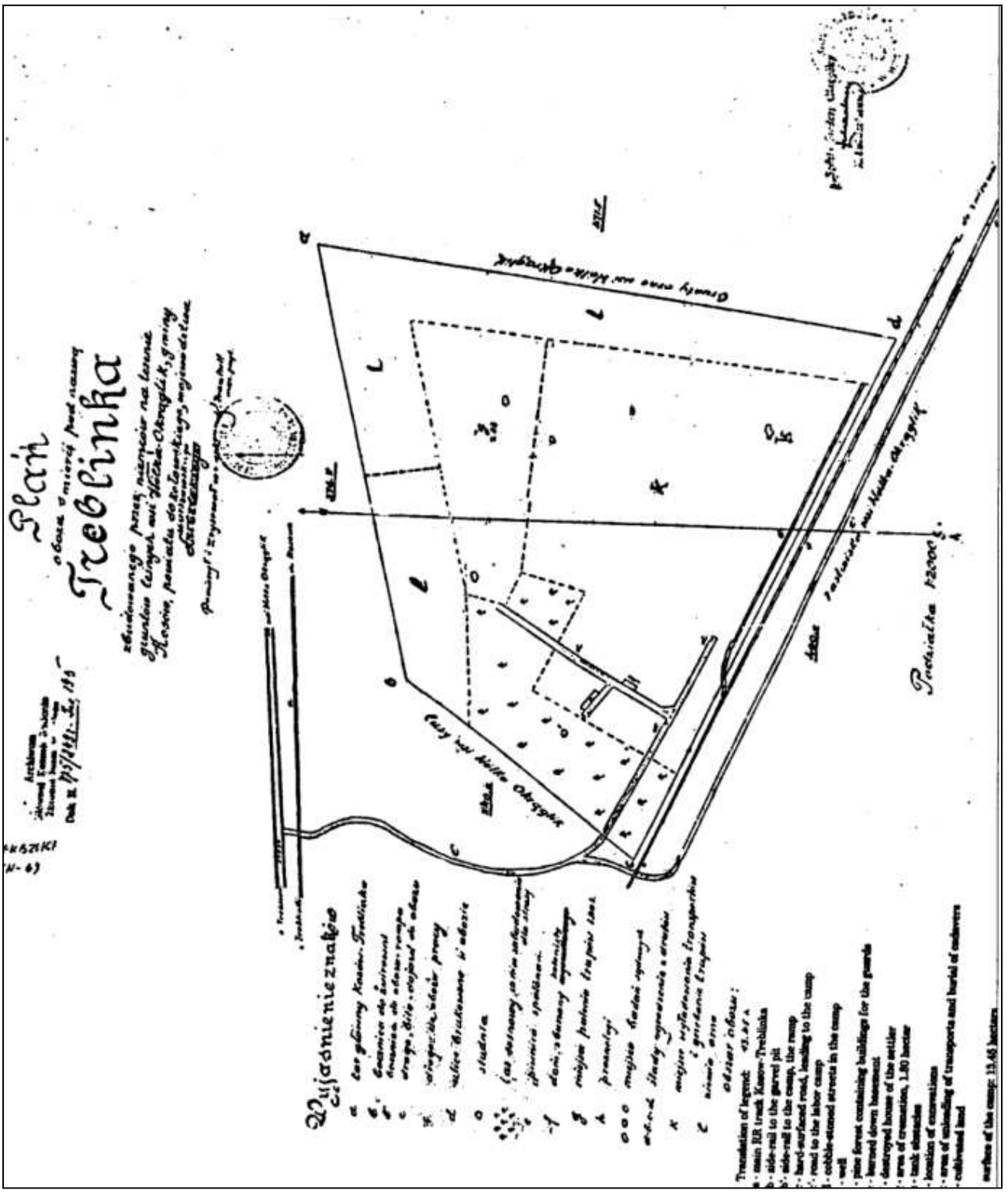
Document 5: Plan of Treblinka, drawn in 1945 by J. Wiernik. From: Filip Friedman, This Was Oświęcim!, The United Jewish Relief Appeal, London 1946, pp. 81-84.



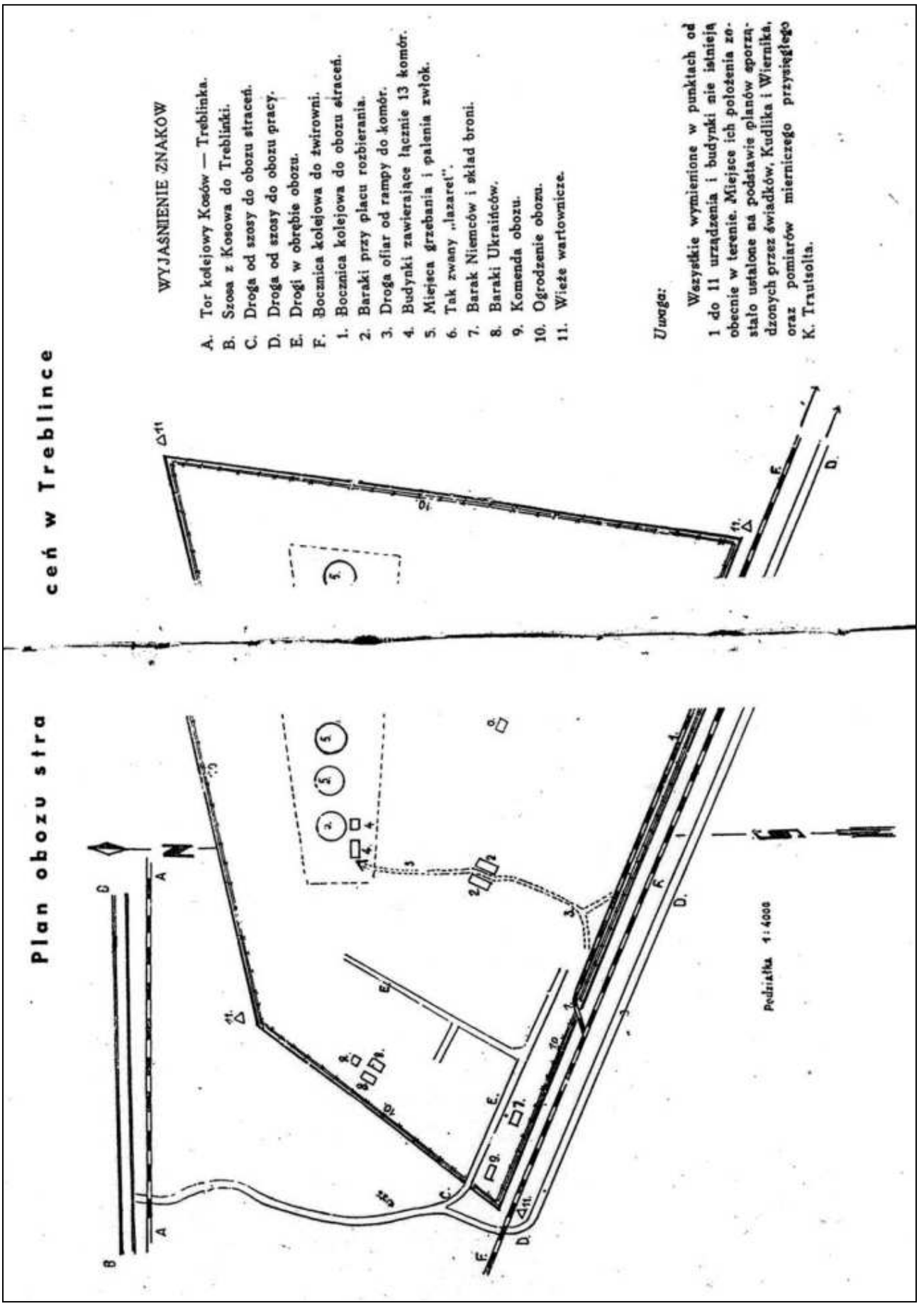
Document 6: Plan of Treblinka, drawn by the surveyor K. Trautsolt. From: Stanisław Wojtczak, "Karny obóz pracy Treblinka I i ośrodek zagłady Treblinka II," in: Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, Warsaw 1975, XXVI, p. 158.



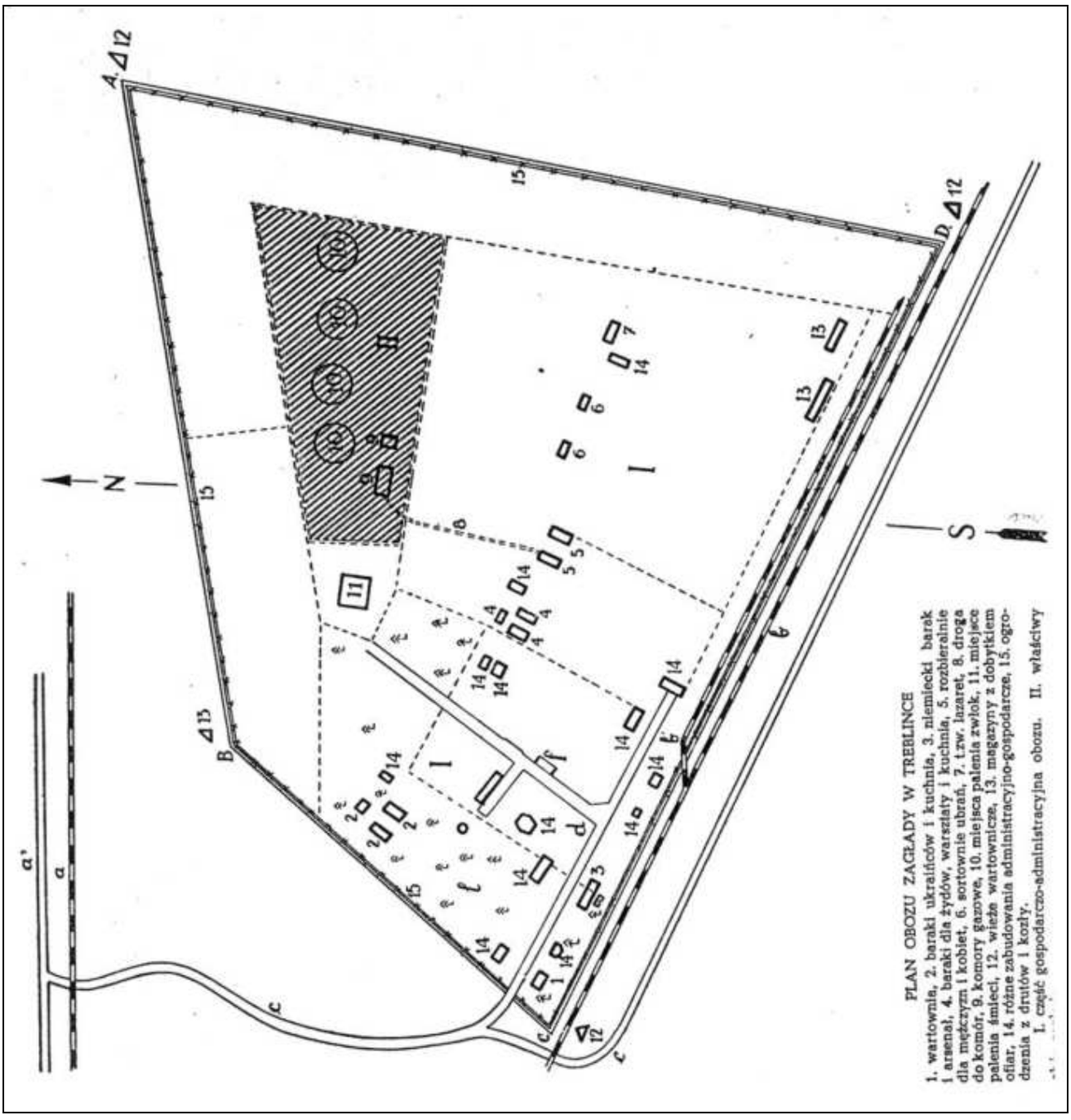
Document 7: Plan of Treblinka, based upon the plan of Trautsolt and testimony of J. Wiernik and A. Kudlik, reproduced in Stanisław Wojtczak, "Karny obóz pracy Treblinka I i ośrodek zagłady Treblinka II," in: Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, Warsaw 1975, XXVI, p. 166.



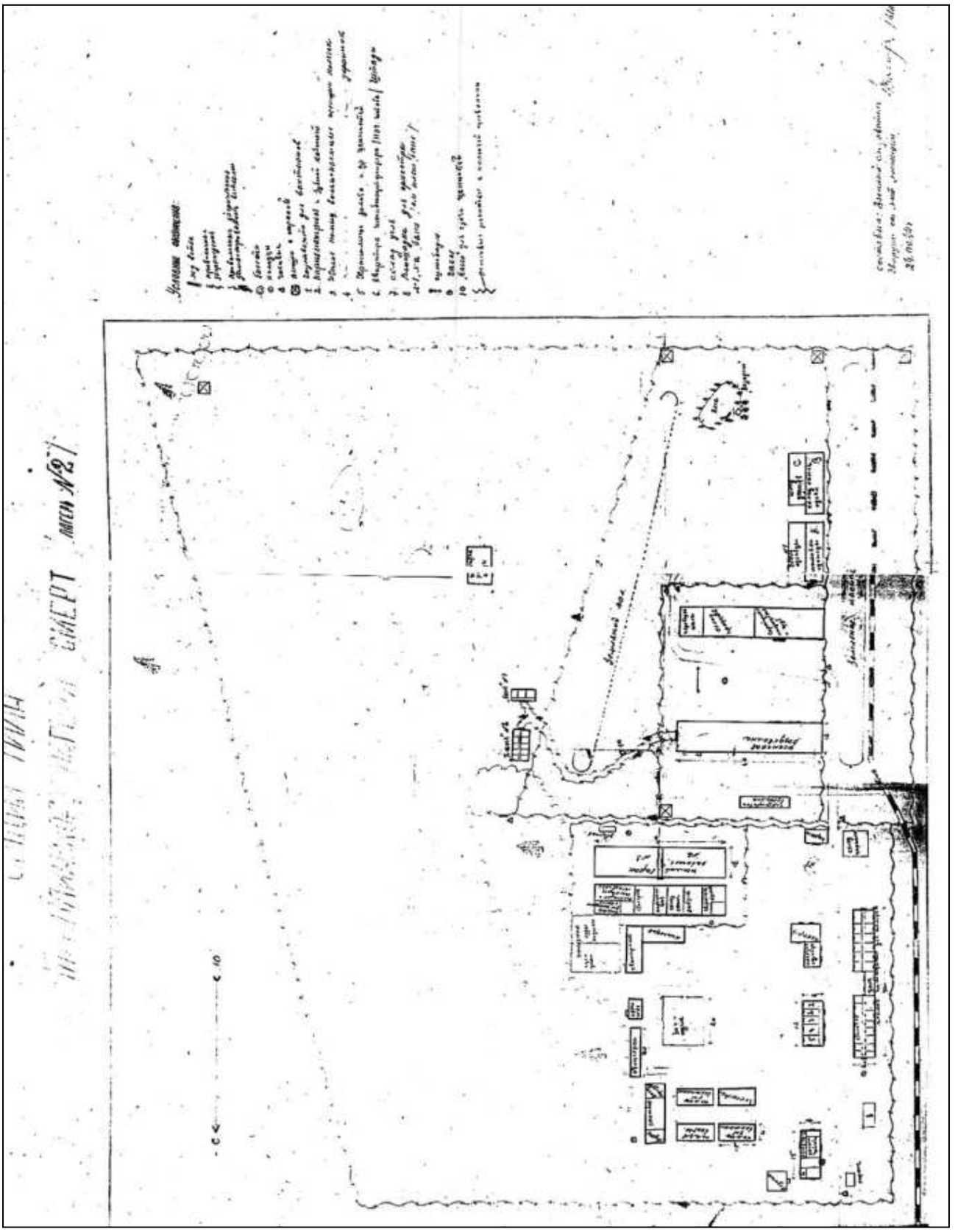
Document 8: Simplified Trautsolt Plan of Treblinka, reproduced by A. Neumaier in: "The Treblinka Holocaust," in: Germar Rudolf (ed.), Dissecting the Holocaust, 3rd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2003, p. 489; according to the rubber stamp, this comes from the Archives of the Chief Commission for the Investigation of Hitler Crimes in Poland (Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce).



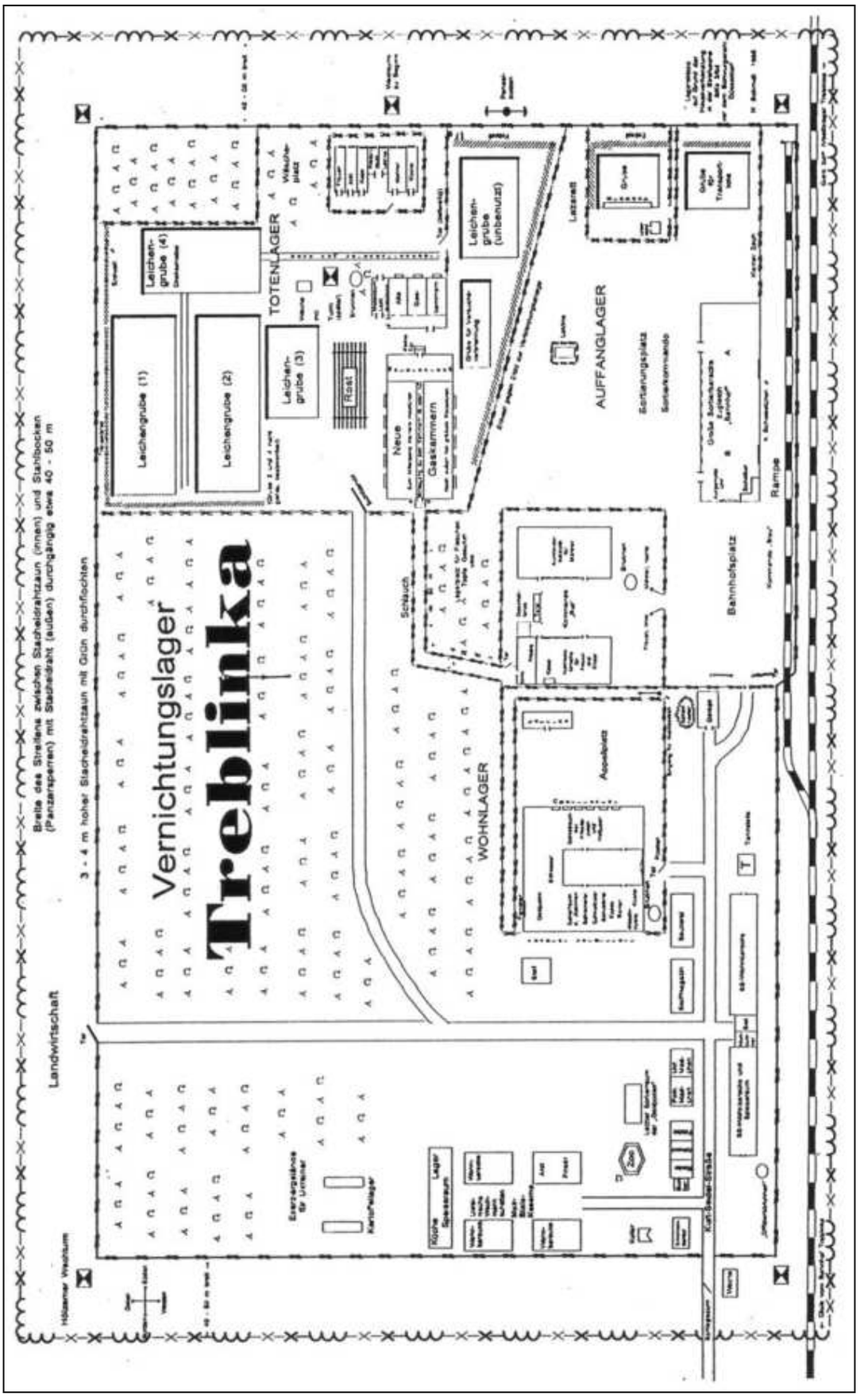
Document 9: Plan of Treblinka, drawn in 1945 by the surveyor K. Trautsolt. From: Z. Łukaszkiewicz, Obóz straceń w Treblince, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warsaw 1946, pp. 54f.



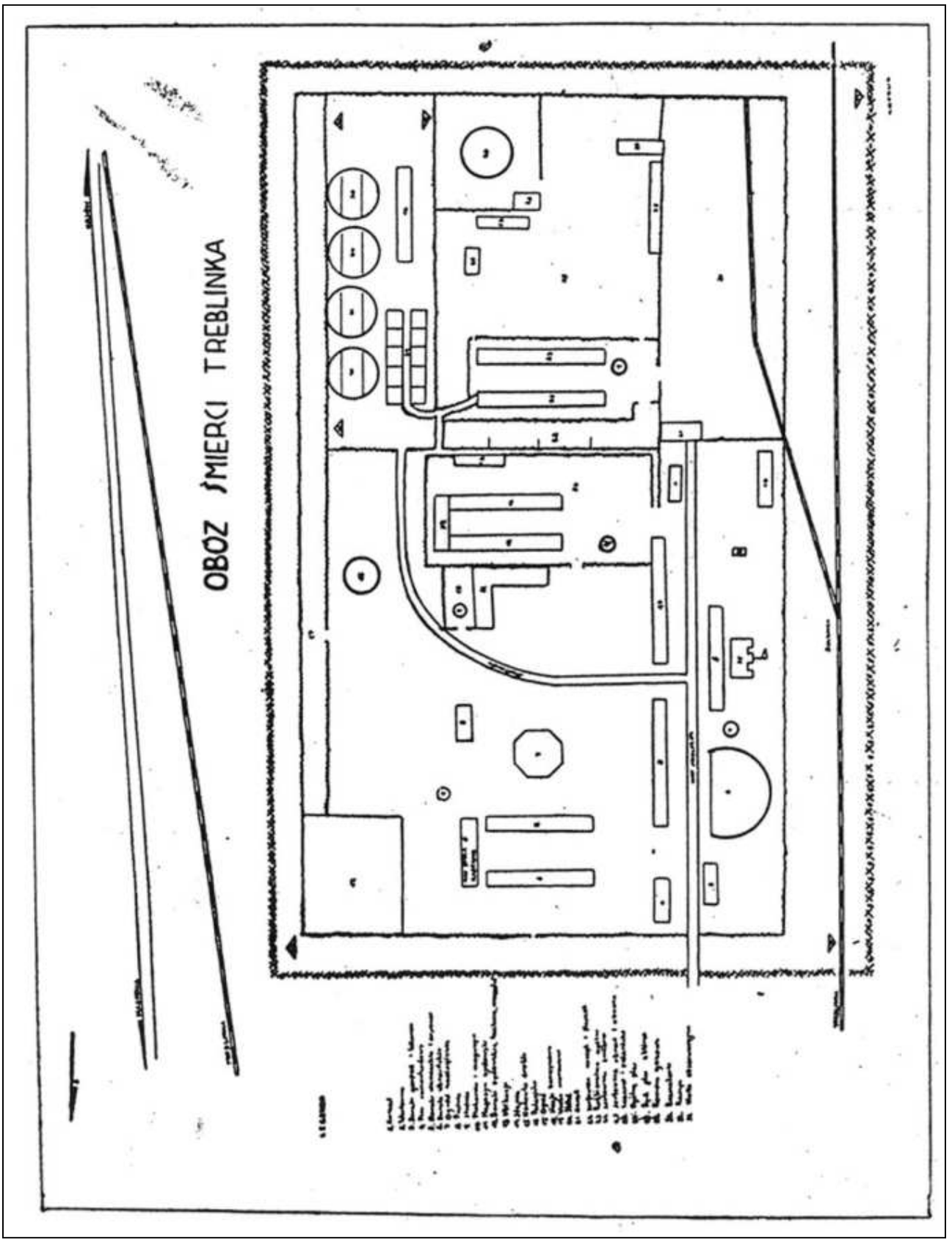
Document 10: Plan of Treblinka, published by Z. Łukaszkiewicz. From: Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni niemieckich w Polsce, Posen 1946, Volume I, unnumbered page.



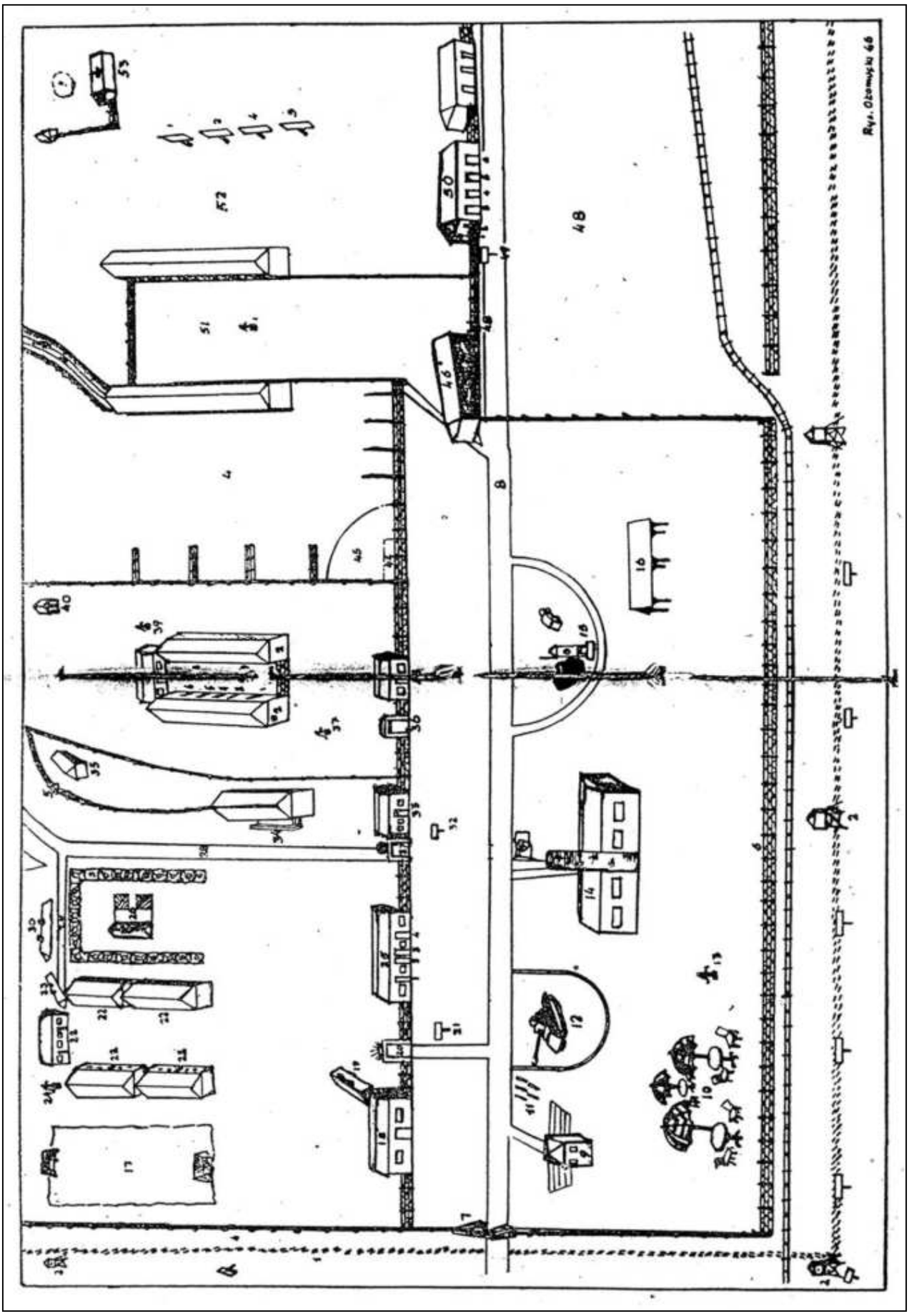
Document 11: Plan of Treblinka, drawn by the Soviets on September 24, 1944. GARF, 7445-2-134, p. 2.



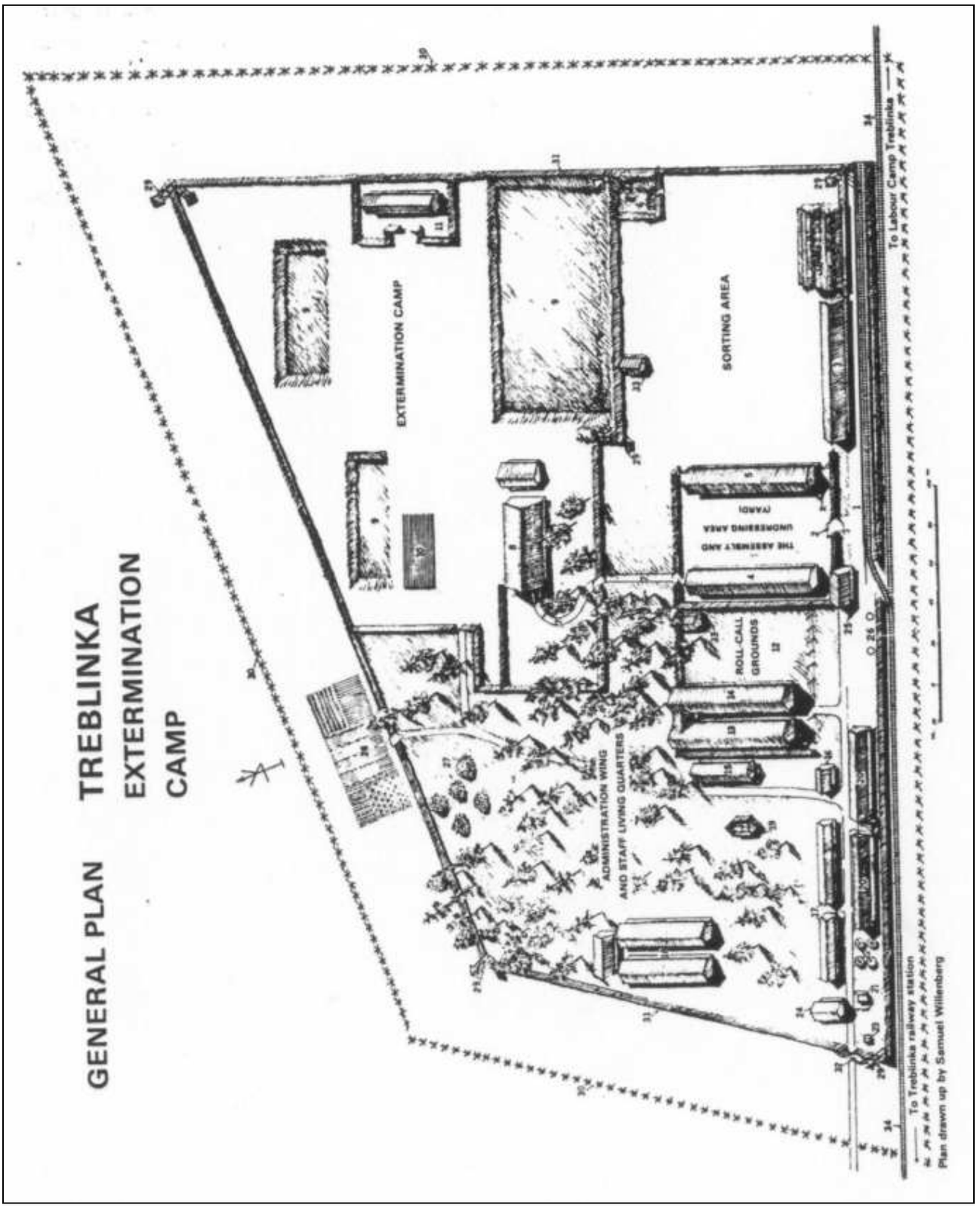
Document 12: Plan of Treblinka, drawn by the Chief State Prosecutor A. Spieß, presented at the first Treblinka trial in Düsseldorf. From: Manfred Burba, Treblinka. Ein NS-Vernichtungslager im Rahmen der "Aktion Reinhard", Göttingen 1995, pp. 14f.



Document 13: Plan of Treblinka, drawn in 1946 by A. Kudlik. From: Wydawnictwo Centralnej Żydowskiej Komisji Historycznej (ed.), Dokumenty i Materiały, edited by N. Blumental, Lodz 1946, p. 12.



Document 14: Plan of Treblinka, drawn in 1946 by M. Laks. From: Wydawnictwo Centralnej Żydowskiej Komisji Historycznej (ed.), Dokumenty i Materiały, edited by N. Blumental, Lodz 1946, pp. 8f.



Document 15: Plan of Treblinka, drawn by S. Willenberg in 1984. From: S. Willenberg, Revolt in Treblinka, Żydówski Instytut Historyczny, Warsaw 1989, p. 6.

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SS-Sonderkommando
T r e b l i n k a

Treblinka, den 4. Juni 1943

An den
SS.und Polizeiführer im Distrikt Lublin
Ausbildungslager Trawniki
z.Hd.SS-Hauptsturmführer Streibel
T r a w n i k i

Betr.: Lieferung von Kies.

Anbei erhalten Sie eine Rechnung der Deutschen Erd-und Steinwerke G.m.b.H.Auschwitz,(Oberschlesien) über an Sie geliefer-ten Kies.Ich bitte um baldige Überweisung des Betrages von ~~RM 1579~~ Zl.1579.90 an die Kreissparkasse Sokolow.

Der Versand von weiteren 30 Waggon Kies an Sie, erfolgt in den nächsten Tagen.

SS-Sonderkommando Treblinka

I.A.

Zbiory AP w Lublinie, SS-Uscna.

Document 16: Letter of June 4, 1944, from the SS-Sonderkommando of Treblinka to the SS and Police Chief in the district of Lublin. WAPL, ZBL, 268, p. 77.

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Trawniki, den 1. Juli 1943.

Betr. Kieslieferung nach Trawniki

Bez. Ihre Rechnungen vom 3./6., 13./6. u. 17./6. 43.

Anl. 3 alte Rechnungen und 2 neue Rechnungen dreifach

An die

Deutschen Erd- und Steinwerke G.m.b.H.

Kieswerk Treblinka

T r e b l i n k a Post Malkinia

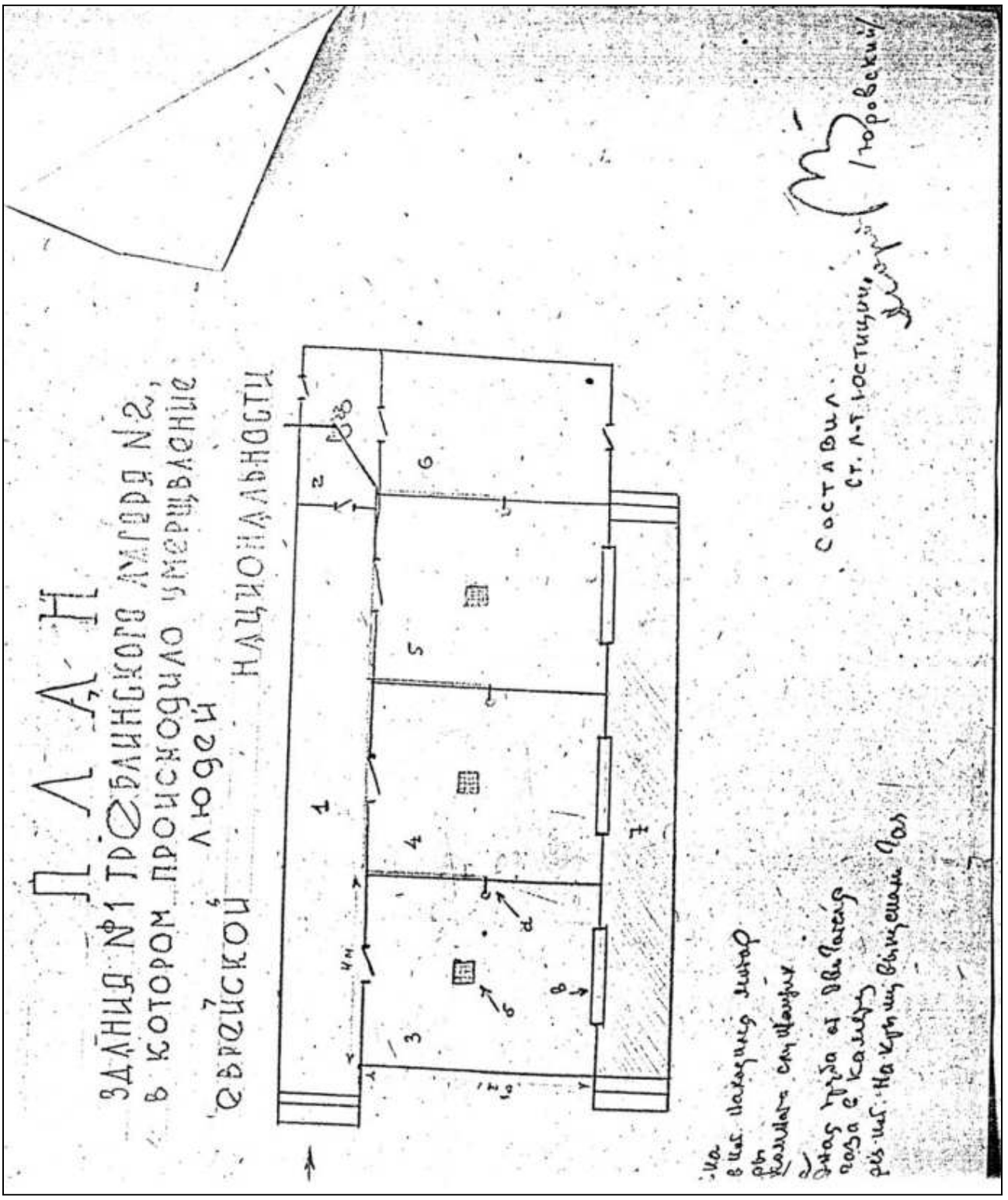
Hiermit wird der Empfang von 100 Waggon Kies Bestätigt. Die letzten 20 Waggon mit 213,87 cbm mussten wegen Abfuhr und Lagerungsschwierigkeiten nach Lublin weitergeleitet werden. Der Kies wird dort für das Bauvorhaben des K.L. Lublin verwandt.
Zur Durchführung einer einwandfreien Rechnungslegung ist es daher erforderlich, dass der gelieferte Kies getrennt für Ostindustrie Trawniki und K.L. Lublin in Rechnung gestellt wird. Die von hier neuerstellten Rechnungen bitte ich nach Unterschriftsleistung in zweifacher Ausfertigung an die
Z e n t r a l b a u l e i t u n g

der Waffen SS u. Polizei

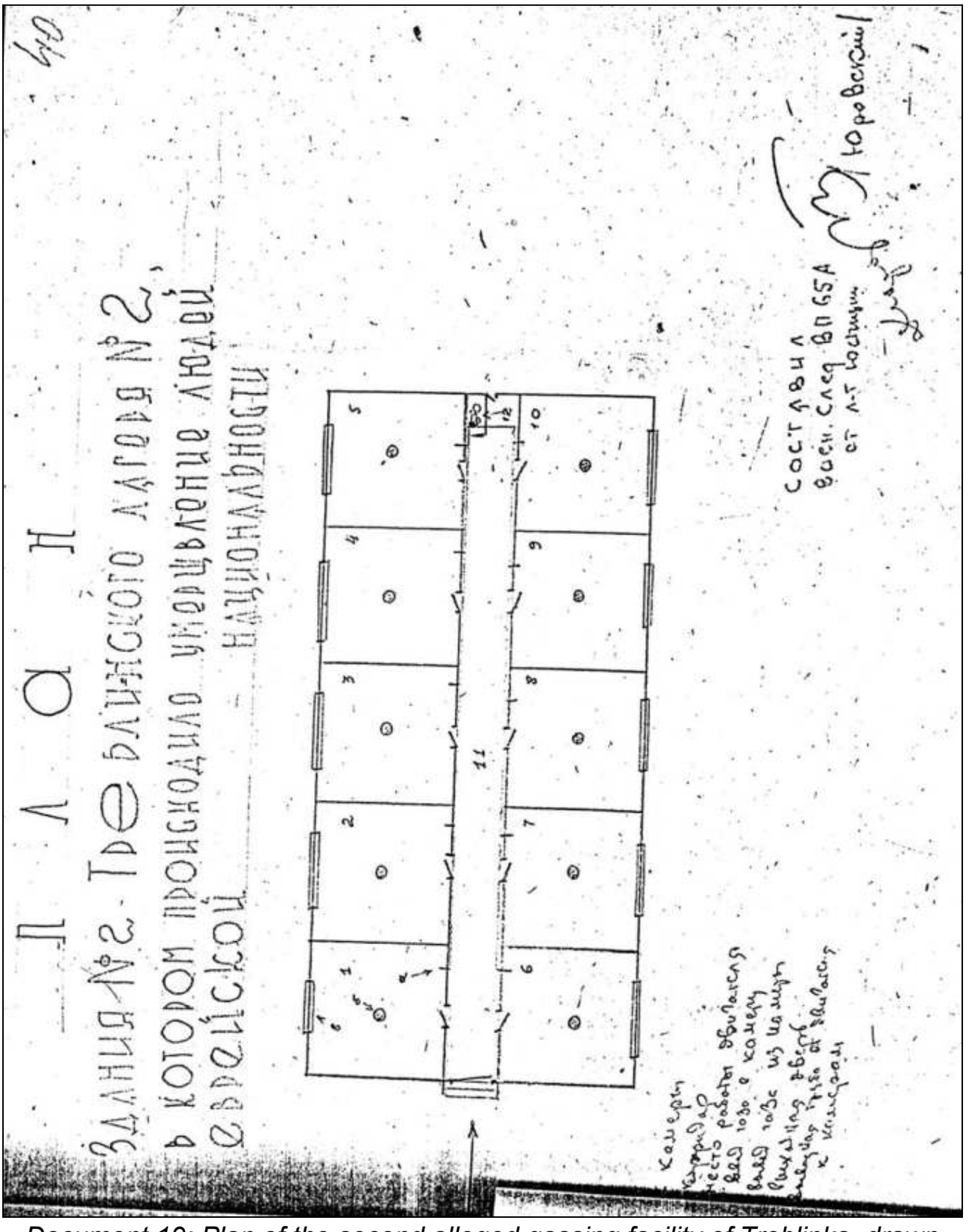
L u b l i n

Bernadinerstr. 5 zu senden. Anliegend werden die alten Rechnungen zurückgesandt.

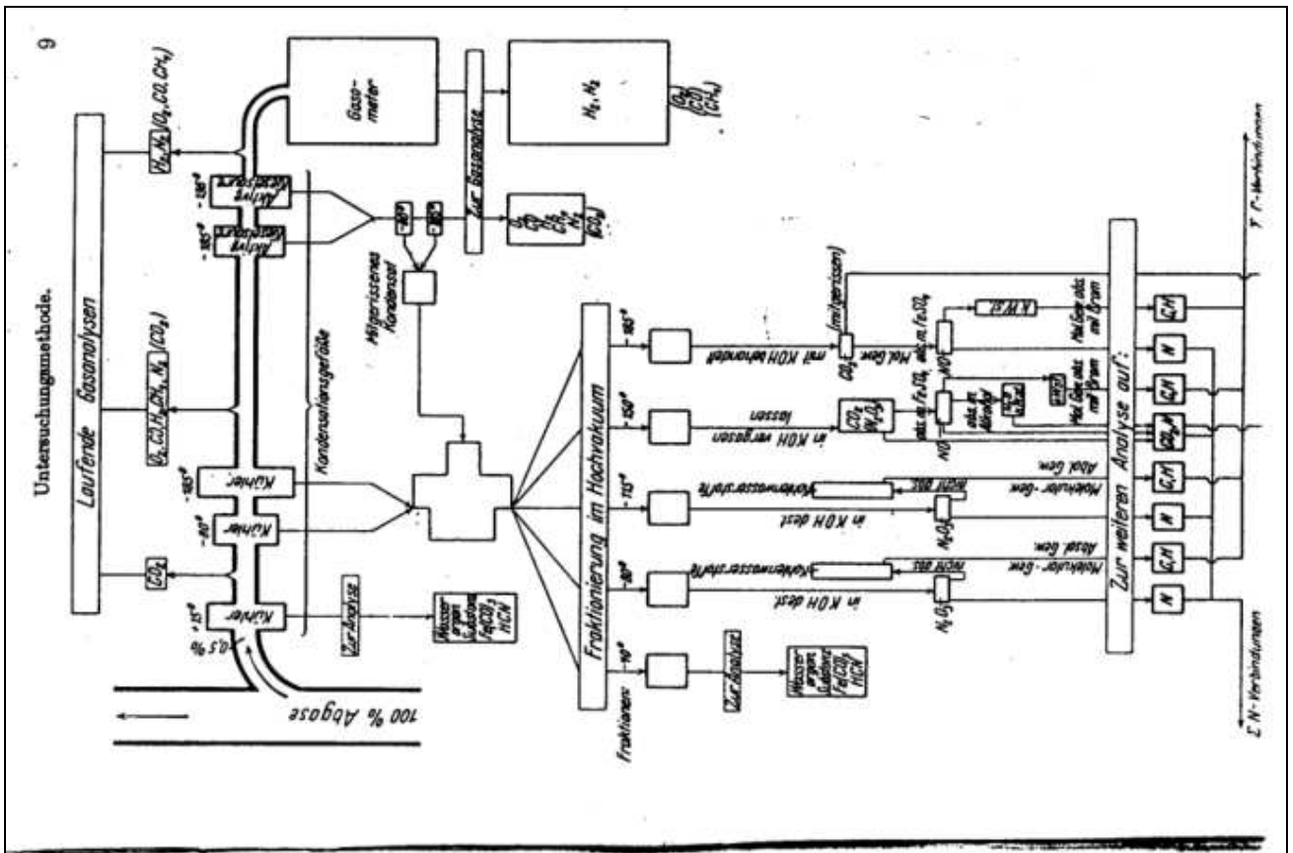
Document 17: Letter of July 1, 1943, from the SS and Police Chief in the district of Lublin to the Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke GmbH, Kieswerk Treblinka. WAPL, ZBL, 268, p. 75.



Document 18: Plan of the first alleged gassing facility of Treblinka, drawn by 1st Lt. Jurowski in August/September 1944. GARF, 7445-2-134, p. 39.



Document 19: Plan of the second alleged gassing facility of Treblinka, drawn by 1st Lt. Jurowski in August/September 1944. GARF, 7445-2-134, p. 40.



B. Chemische Untersuchungen an Auspuffgasen.

Versuchsprogramm, Versuchsprinzip, Schaubild zum Versuchsgang, Analysenapparaturen, Versuchsgang, Versuchsprotokoll, tabellarische Übersicht und Besprechung der Gesamtergebnisse: Bei gleichen Motorbedingungen verbrennen sämtliche Brennstoffe gleichartig. Je höher die Belastung des Motors, desto vollständiger die Verbrennung. Bei Leerlauf neben CO, CH_4 und H_2 etwa 0,4% Kohlenwasserstoffe in den Abgasen. Bei Vollast neben sehr wenig CO, CH_4 und H_2 nur etwa 0,1% Kohlenwasserstoffe, außerdem sehr geringe Mengen Stickoxyde. Schwerflüchtige Anteile, ungesättigte Verbindungen, Alkohole, Azeton, Phenole, Aldehyde und Säuren unter beiden Bedingungen.

Unseren Versuchen legten wir folgenden Versuchsplan zugrunde:

Versuche bei Leerlauf
bei Verwendung von Brennstoff A
" " A1[1]
" " D
" " E
" " F1[1]
" " G[1]

Versuche bei Vollast
bei Verwendung von Brennstoff A[2]
" " D
" " F
" " G

Außerdem wurde noch ein Versuch angestellt, bei welchem die normale Vergaserdüse 70 gegen eine 85 ausgetauscht, also mit Brennstoffüberschuß (fettes Gemisch) gearbeitet wurde. Hierbei wurde Brennstoff D benutzt.

1. Untersuchungsmethode.

Das Prinzip ist kurz folgendes: Die Abgase werden fraktioniert — kondensiert und die einzelnen Kondensate nach dem Stockschen Hochvakuumverfahren[4], die nicht kondensierbaren Bestandteile mit Hilfe der üblichen Methoden analysiert.

Die Überlegenheit dieser Methode gegenüber der üblichen direkten Gasanalyse besteht nicht nur in der Fraktionierung der in den Auspuffgasen enthaltenen Stoffe, sondern vor allen Dingen in der außerordentlich starken Anreicherung der Komponenten, die in den Auspuff-

[1] Wir begnügten uns hierbei, nur die Abgase des leichtest flüchtigen und des schwerst flüchtigen Benzins der Untersuchungsreihe mit einem Antiklopfmittelzusatz zu untersuchen.

[2] Da Benzol keine Tendenz zum Klopfen hat, hätten Zusätze von $Fe(CO)_5$ zu Benzol für die Praxis keinen Sinn.

[3] Hier erübrigten sich Versuche mit Zusatzmitteln, da zwischen der Wirkung des Zusatzes bei Leerlauf und Vollast grundsätzlich keine Unterschiede bestehen und die spezifische Wirkung auf die Abgaszusammensetzung besser bei Leerlauf als bei Vollast, wo nur relativ wenig unverbrannte Anteile in den Abgasen enthalten sind, untersucht wird.

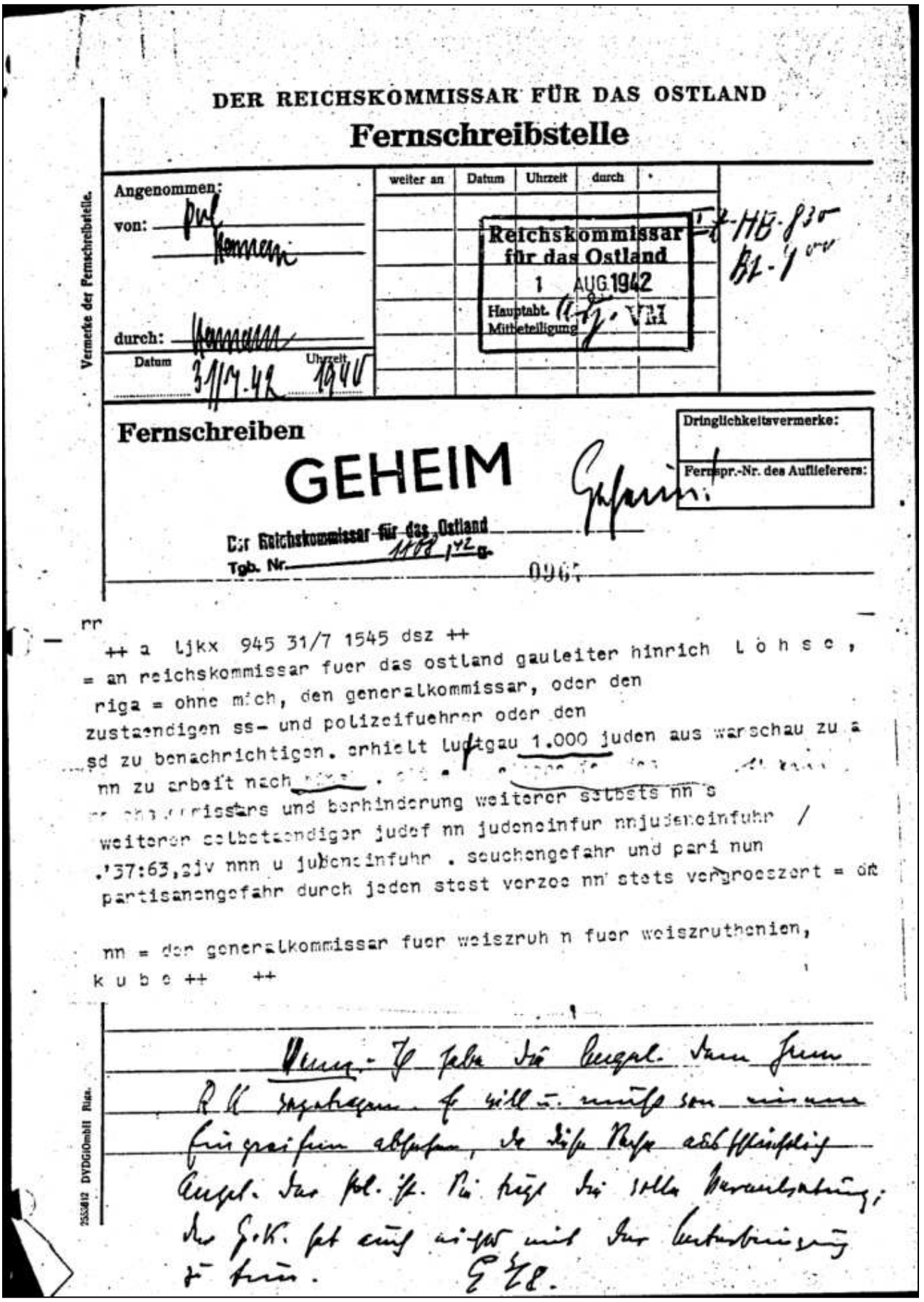
[4] Stock 1914, 1917, 1918 (210); siehe auch unsere Ausführungen auf S. 11ff.

Document 20: Chemical analyses of exhaust gases. Method of analysis. From: E. Keeser et al., Toxikologie und Hygiene des Kraftfahrwesens, *Julius Springer Verlag, Berlin 1930, p. 9.*

Georg Grabarz, Elektromeister, Gleiwitz, Ruf 2198 Blatt 1 Datum 1o. 11. 4

Lfd. Nr.	Menge	Gegenstand	Einheitspreis RM	Gesamtpreis RM
		Kostenveranschlagung über Notstromanlage in K.L. Au.		
1)	1	stehenden, eifachwirkenden 7 -Zylinder 4-Takt-Deutz-Dieselmotor Type V7M 436		
		Dauerleistung : 35o PS Drehzahl: 5oo Upm Überlastbarkeit kurzzeitig : 2o% Kraftstoffverbrauch: 17o gr/ PSeh bei Vollast 17o gr/ PSeh bei 3/4 " 185 gr/ PSeh bei 1/2 " mit 1o % Toleranz für die Gewähr, bei Verwendung von geeignetem Kraftstoff mit einem Mindest-Heizwert von Hué 1o.ooo kcal/kg. Schmierölverbrauch: o,88 kg./Std. ohne Gewähr, bei Reinigung und Wiederverwendung des gebrauchten Öles. Kühlwasserberbrauch: 12 1/ PSeh bei 1o°C Zufluss-und 7o°C Abflusstemperatur, ohne Gewähr. Die Leistung wird erziehlt in Meereshöhe bei 2o° C Maschinenraumtemperatur und vermindert sich bei Aufstellung in Höhen über NN für je 1oo m um 1 % und bei Umgebungstemperaturen über 2o°C für jede weiteren 2,5 °C um 1 %. Beträgt die Summe beider Leistungs-Minderungen nicht mehr als 5 %, so kann sie vernachlässigt werden. Lieferungsumfang: Motor mit Kuppelflansch an der Kurbelwelle und Kupplungsbolzen, Schaltwerk, Ölkühler, umschaltbares Ölfilter, Handflügelpumpe zum Vorschmieren der Lager, eingebaut Schmierölpumpe und Zylinderschmierapparat, Schmieröldruckmesser, Druckluftanlassvorrichtung einschliesslich Anlassgefäss mit Manometer und Druckluftleitung, Aufladeventil, Drehzahlverstellvorrichtung für Handbetätigung + 5 %, Kraftstoffbehälter ohne Unterstützungen mit Inhaltsanzeiger und Handpumpe, Kraftstoffilter ohne Leitungen, Leckölbehälter, angebautes und wassergekühltes Auspuffsammelrohr, Auspuffableitungsrohr bis unter Flur, Auspufftopf ohne Unterstützungen Auspufftemperatur-Überwachungsanlage,		

Document 21: Cost estimate of the Georg Grabarz firm, Gleiwitz, dated November 10, 1940, for emergency power supply in the Auschwitz concentration camp. RGVA, 502-1-128, pp. 45-49, with page 45 reproduced here.



DER REICHSKOMMISSAR FÜR DAS OSTLAND

Fernschreibstelle

Vermerke der Fernschreibstelle.

Angenommen:
von: pul
Hermann

durch: Hermann
Datum 31/7.42 Uhrzeit 1940

weiter an	Datum	Uhrzeit	durch

Reichskommissar für das Ostland
1 AUG 1942
Hauptabt. II Pol. VBI
Mitbeteiligung

I-Z-HB-830
BZ-1 000

Fernschreiben

Dringlichkeitsvermerke:

Fernspr.-Nr. des Auflieferers:

GEHEIM

Der Reichskommissar für das Ostland
Tgb. Nr. 1189/42 g.
096

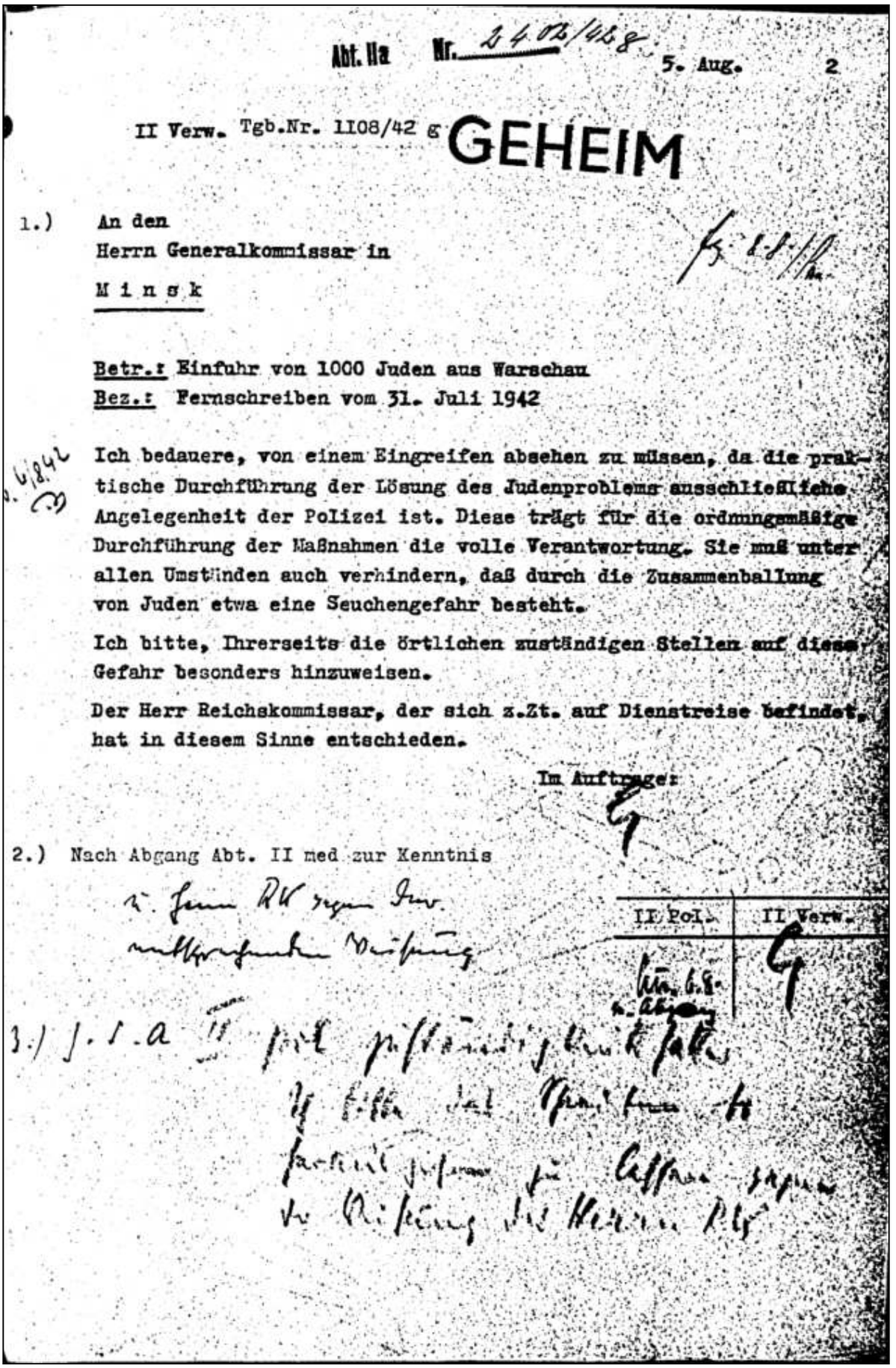
rr
++ a ljkx 945 31/7 1545 dsz ++
= an reichskommissar fuer das ostland gauleiter hinrich l o h s e ,
riga = ohne mich, den generalkommissar, oder den
zustaendigen ss- und polizeifuehrer oder den
sd zu benachrichtigen. erhielt ludtgau 1.000 juden aus warschau zu a
nn zu arbeit nach [illegible]
[illegible] und verhinderung weiterer selbsts nn s
weiteren selbstaendigen judef nn judeneinfur nnjudeneinfuhr /
.'37:63,gjv nnn u judeneinfuhr . seuchengefahr und pari nun
partisanengefahr durch jeden stost verzoe nn' stets vergroesszert = dk

nn = der generalkommissar fuer weisruh n fuer weissruthenien,
k u b e ++ ++

Verm.-St. habe die Angel. dem Herrn
RK vorgelegen. Er will v. mir, dass ich einen
Fernspruch absetze, da diese Sache schleunig
Angel. des Pol.-Fr. Bln liegt die stelle Verantwortung;
der G.K. hat uns nichts mit der Entscheidung
zu tun. E 28.

2553612 DVDGiOmbH Riga.

Document 22: Telegram of July 31, 1942, from the Reichskommissar for White Russia, Wilhelm Kube, to the Reichskommissar for the Ostland, Hinrich Lohse. GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 80.



Abt. IIa Nr. 2402/428. 5. Aug. 2

II Verw. Tgb.Nr. 1108/42 g GEHEIM

1.) An den
Herrn Generalkommissar in
M i n s k

Betr.: Einfuhr von 1000 Juden aus Warschau
Bez.: Fernschreiben vom 31. Juli 1942

v. 6.8.42

Ich bedauere, von einem Eingreifen absehen zu müssen, da die praktische Durchführung der Lösung des Judenproblems ausschließliche Angelegenheit der Polizei ist. Diese trägt für die ordnungsmäßige Durchführung der Maßnahmen die volle Verantwortung. Sie muß unter allen Umständen auch verhindern, daß durch die Zusammenballung von Juden etwa eine Seuchengefahr besteht.

Ich bitte, Ihrerseits die örtlichen zuständigen Stellen auf diese Gefahr besonders hinzuweisen.

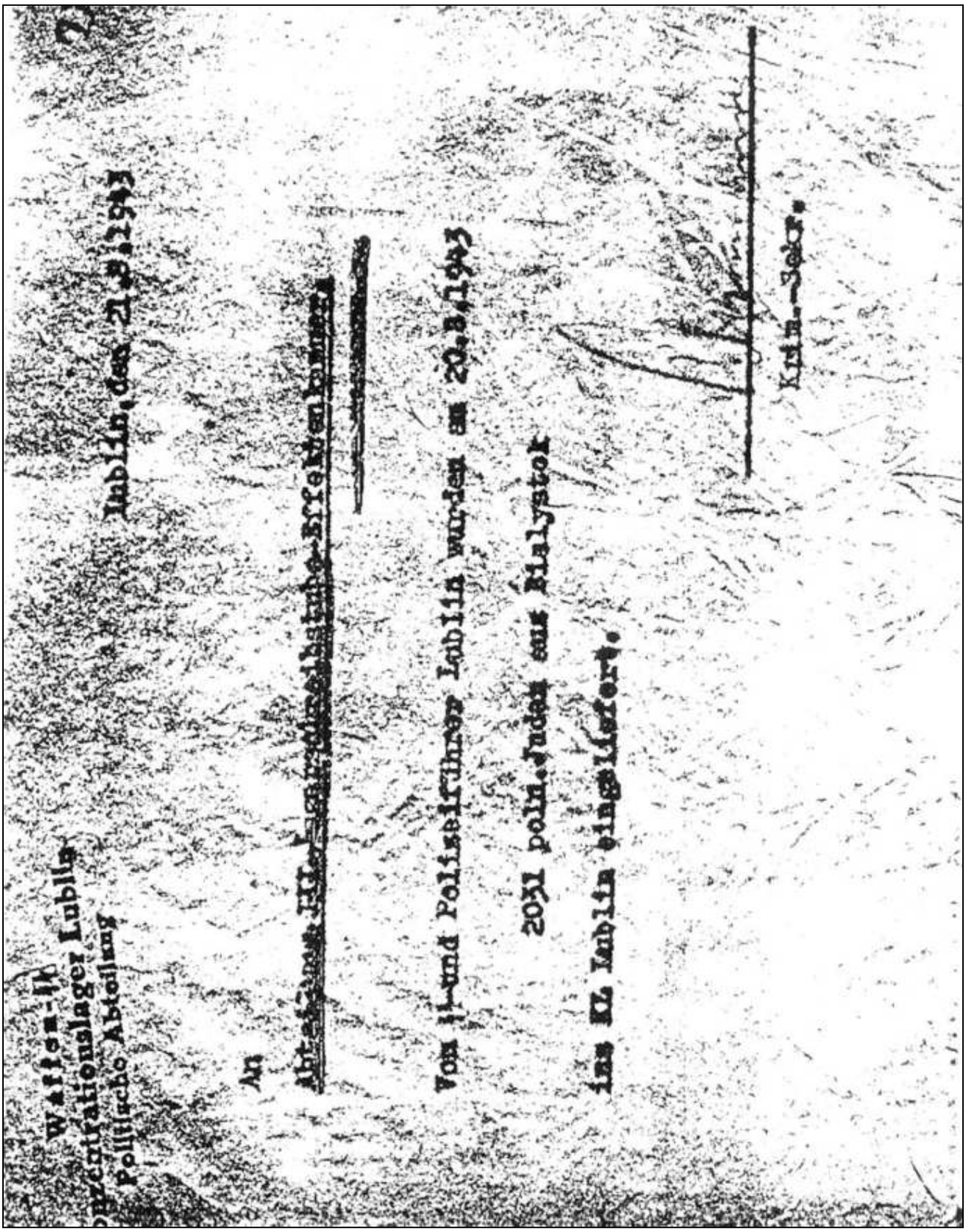
Der Herr Reichskommissar, der sich z.Zt. auf Dienstreise befindet, hat in diesem Sinne entschieden.

Im Auftrage:

2.) Nach Abgang Abt. II med zur Kenntnis

II Pol.	II Verw.
6.8.	

Document 23: Letter of August 5, 1942, from the Reichskommissar for the Ostland, Hinrich Lohse, to the Generalkommissar in Minsk. GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 81.



Document 24: Letter of August 21, 1943, on the subject of arrival of a transport with 2,031 Jews from Białystok, from the Political Department of the Lublin KL to Department III, the camp office and communications traffic room. GARF, 7021-107-3, p. 258.

Photographs

Photo 1: Treblinka. A large portion of the camp grounds was paved over with concrete, and 17,000 cement blocks evocative of tombstones have been placed there. © Carlo Mattogno, 1997.

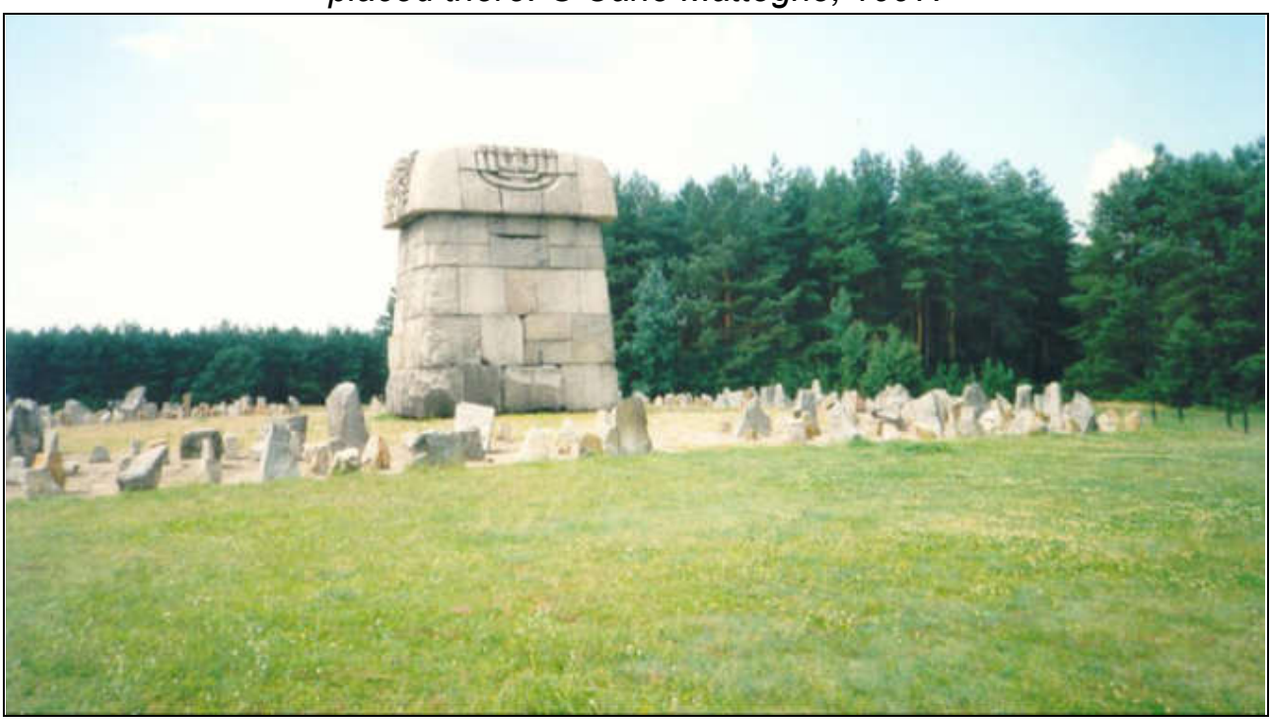


Photo 2: Treblinka. Stone monument in the center of the camp. © Carlo Mattogno, 1997.

Photo 3: Treblinka. One of the memorial stones erected at the camp entrance. © Carlo Mattogno, 1997.

Photo 4: Treblinka. Cross-ties made of concrete, flanked by a platform also built of concrete, symbolize the railway line and the train platform of the camp. © Carlo Mattogno, 1997.

Photo 5: Treblinka. Only a spacious meadow bordered by fir trees has remained of the camp. © Carlo Mattogno, 1997.

Photo 6: The gravel pit of Treblinka I. © Carlo Mattogno, 1997.

Photo 7: Cemetery where Polish prisoners who died in Treblinka I rest. © Carlo Mattogno, 1997.

Photo 8: Treblinka I. The concrete foundations, on which the barracks stood, can be seen on the camp grounds. © Carlo Mattogno, 1997.

Photo 9: Treblinka I. One of the eight concrete foundations, on which the barracks stood. © Carlo Mattogno, 1997.

Photo 10: Aerial photograph of Treblinka from May 15, 1944. From: John C. Ball, Air Photo Evidence, Ball Resource Services, Delta/B.C., 1992, p. 86; p. 130 in Rudolf's 2020 edition.

Photo 11: Aerial photograph of Treblinka from November 1944. From: John C. Ball, Air Photo Evidence, Ball Resource Services, Delta/B.C., 1992, p. 87; p. 131 in Rudolf's 2020 edition.

Abbreviations

AMS: Archiwum Muzeum Stutthof (Archive of the Stutthof Museum), Stutthof
APL: Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi (State Museum in Lodz), Lodz
BAK: Bundesarchiv Koblenz (Federal Archive), Coblenz
CDJC: Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine (Contemporary Jewish Documentation Center), Paris
DAL: Derzharchive L'vivs'koi Oblasti (State Archive of the Lemberg District), Lemberg
GARF: Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation), Moscow
HI: Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford
IMT/G: The Trial against the Main War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, 1945-1946/Der Prozeß gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vor dem Internationalen Militärgerichtshof, Nuremberg 1947
NARA: National Archives Record Administration, Washington; D.C.
NARB: Nattsionalnii Archiv Respubliki Belarus (National Archive of the Republic of White Russia), Minsk
PA: Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (Political Archive of the Foreign Office), Berlin
RGVA: Rossiiskii Gosudarstvenni Vojennii Archiv (Russian State War Archive), formerly TCIDK: Tsentr Chranenia Istoriko-dokumental'nich Kollektsii (Center for the Preservation of Historical Document Collections), Moscow
ROD: Rijksinstitut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (Reich Institute for War Documentation), Amsterdam
VHA: Vojenský Historický Archiv (Military Historical Archiv), Prague
WAPL: Wojewódzkie Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie (State Archive of the Lublin Dictrict), Lublin

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HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS · VOLUME 9

BELZEC

PROPAGANDA, TESTIMONIES, ARCHEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND HISTORY

CARLO MATTOGNO

Belzec: Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research and History

This is a reprint of the 2004 first edition of this book. Since that year, the author has found a number of additional documents and testimonies on the so-called “Operation Reinhardt” Camps. Many of them are discussed in the 2021 sstudy *The “Operation Reinhardt” Camps Treblinka, Sobibór, Bełżec: Black Propaganda, Archeological Research, Expected Material Evidence* by Carlo Mattogno. For details see the books advertised in the back of this book.

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Bełżec

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Cover illustrations: top: sculpture at the Belzec Camp representing a pyre; left: excavated garage building (Document 13 in the Appendix); right: entry gate to the camp grounds (© C. Mattogno); bottom: parts of the grounds of the Belzec Camp are today filled with chunks of concrete and rebar. The memorial was designed by Polish artists Andrzej Solyga, Zdzislaw Pidek and Marcin Roszczyk and opened with great ceremony on June 3, 2004 (top and bottom image: © Lysy, 18 September 2011, commons.wikimedia.org); background: the Belzec Monument from a distance (© Ulranen, June 2010, Wikipedia commons).

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Introduction

For official historiography it is now indisputable dogma that, from March 1942 onwards, three extermination camps were set up on Polish soil – at Bełżec, at Treblinka, and at Sobibór – where mass murder of Jews deported there took place in homicidal gas chambers using the exhaust gases from diesel engines. However, this is neither the first nor the only version that circulated during the Second World War; it was the eventual result of a slow narrative evolution, the main phases of which can be followed in the propaganda, in the original historical version, and in the judicial proceedings of that time. Until 1946, there circulated several totally different versions of the extermination methods allegedly used in those camps, which nonetheless received the blessings of the Polish authorities. With respect to the number of victims in these camps, various absolutely ludicrous figures were reported: 3 million for Treblinka,[1] now reduced to 870,000; some 2 million for Sobibór,[2] now standing at 250,000; and 3 million for Bełżec,[3] against 600,000 at present.

How and why did the present 'authorized' version of official historiography come about? And what is its historical value? In the book *Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*[4] Jürgen Graf and I have exhaustively answered those questions for the alleged extermination camp at Treblinka. The present study undertakes the same task with respect to the alleged extermination camp at Bełżec. In the discussion which follows, I shall obviously make use of the results arrived at in my Treblinka book, without repeating the corresponding evidence each time, although some quotations become necessary.

I did not, on the other hand, think it necessary to reiterate the technical objections valid with respect to the use of diesel exhaust gases for homicidal gassings; they apply for the Treblinka camp just as much as for Bełżec.[5] Aside from this, I have been able to make use of a precious tool – archeological research at the 'scene of the crime' – which unfortunately was not available at Treblinka and which, as we shall see, will furnish us with conclusive criteria for testing the official theses.

Carlo Mattogno

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1 Report of the Soviet commission of inquiry, Aug. 24, 1944. GARF, 7021-115-9, pp. 103-110.
2 Testimony of Zelda Metz, in N. Blumental (ed.), *Dokumenty i materiały*, vol. I, Łódź 1946, p. 210.
3 According to witness R. Reder. Cf. below, Chapter II.4.
4 Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004.
5 *Ibidem*, pp. 111-137.

Chapter I:
Literary Origins and Development of the Alleged Methods of Murder

1. Birth of an 'Extermination Camp'

Bełżec originated in the summer of 1940 as a work camp,[6] but from November 1941 on – according to the official historiography – it took on a new function as a camp for total extermination, in line with the camps at Sobibór and Treblinka created later. This means that the Jews deported there were totally exterminated on arrival, except for an insignificant handful of people who were allowed to live a little while longer in order to carry out labor tasks. The alleged extermination activity at Bełżec began on March 17, 1942, and ended in November or December of that year. The camp was allegedly equipped, successively, with two extermination installations. The first, made of wood, was allegedly built some time in November and December 1941; it measured 12 by 8 meters and housed three gas chambers 4 by 8 meters each. The second structure was claimed to have been set up in June of 1942 after the first had been torn down. It was a brick structure that contained six gas chambers arranged on either side of a central corridor, each measuring 4 by 5 meters.[7]

For Bełżec, and the other two camps as well, the study of the origins and development of the sources of information during the war and in the postwar period is of vital importance for an understanding of how the currently dominant historical version of Bełżec came about and what level of credibility can be ascribed to it.

In the book *Treblinka*[4] I have described the origins and the development of these sources of information about the Treblinka camp: from the effect of the mysterious "*toxic fluids*" to the "*mobile gas chambers*," to the delayed-action gas, to the railroad cars sprinkled with quicklime, to the famous "*steam chambers*," to the vacuum death chambers, to the poisoning by means of "*chlorine gas and cyclon gas.*"[8]

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6 Cf. Chapter V.1.

7 For a summary of the official version see Israel Gutman (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, 4 vols., Macmillan, New York 1990, here vol. 1, pp. 174-179.

8 C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 47-76.

In 1946, witnesses imputed even more fanciful methods of murder to the Sobibór extermination facilities; Alexander Pechersky depicts them as follows:[9]

> *"At first sight, one has the impression of entering a bath-house like any other: faucets for hot and cold water, wash basins.* […] *As soon as all have entered, the doors are closed with a heavy thump. A heavy black substance comes down in swirls from openings in the ceiling. One hears frantic screams, but not for very long because they change to gasping suffocating breaths and to convulsions. Mothers are said to have been covering their children with their bodies.*
>
> *The 'bath' keeper observes the whole procedure through a window in the ceiling. Within a quarter of an hour everything is over. The floor opens and the corpses fall into carts waiting below, in the basement of the 'bath-house'. As soon as they are full, they move away quickly. It is all done according to the latest German technology. Outside, the corpses are discharged in a certain order and doused with gasoline which is then lit. Right there, they burn."*

Another witness, Leon Feldhendler, declared:[10]

> *"The bath was equipped in a way as if it were really meant to be used for washing (faucets for the shower, a pleasant environment). The baths were places for gasification.* [11] *Five hundred persons were gassed at a time. Sometimes they released streams of chlorine* [sic[12]]*, they always tried out other gases."*

The themes of chlorine and a sliding floor were subsequently merged into a new version by the witness Zelda Metz, who asserted:[13]

> *"*[The victims] *went naked to the cashiers. They deposited there any money, jewels, and other valuables. The Germans gave them a brass token or simply a number, orally, so that later they would be able to withdraw the money and their belongings. They then entered the wooden building where the women's hair was cut, and then to the 'Bath', i.e., the gas chamber. They were asphyxiated with chlorine.*[14] *After 15 minutes, they had all suffocated. Through a window it was checked whether they were all dead. Then the floor opened automatically. The corpses fell into the cars of a train passing through the gas chamber and taking the corpses to the oven. Before being burnt, their gold teeth were extracted. The oven was an enormous open-air furnace with a grid."*

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9 A. Pechersky, *The Sobibór Revolt*, State Edition Der Emes, Moscow 1946, in Yuri Suhl, *Ed essi si ribellarono. Storia della resistenza ebraica contro il nazismo*, Milan, 1969, p. 31.

10 N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 204.

11 "*gazowniami*"

12 "*czasem puszczano prąd chlorku*"

13 N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 211.

14 "*dusili chlorem*"

The version of murder by means of exhaust gas from an undefined "*engine*" was only made official from 1947 on.[15]

Propaganda stories that are no less fantastic were told of Bełżec as well; we shall examine them in the following paragraphs.

2. Extermination by Electricity

In the stream of information on the Bełżec camp which emerged during the Second World War, the alleged system of murder later to be embraced by the official historians – gas chambers using the exhaust gas from a diesel engine – does not appear at all. Instead, we find all manner of methods, not only diverse in nature, but in part quite fantastic.

The first reports of Bełżec appeared on April 8, 1942, a few weeks after the opening of the camp:[16]

> *"Among the Jews terrible desperation. We now know that every day there is a train arriving at Bełżec from Lublin and one from Lvov, each with twenty cars. The Jews must get off, are taken behind a barbed-wire fence and murdered by an electric current*[17] *or poisoned with gas*[18] *and then the corpses are burnt*[19]*."*

The electrocution tale appears also in the "chronicles of an unknown author," said to have been unearthed in that camp in 1953:[20]

> *"Sadism in the years 1940–1941*
>
> *At Bełżec, near the Soviet border, there was a camp which surpassed even Auschwitz in terms of sadism. For example, Jews were arrested every day, forced to dig a deep and narrow ditch and were then thrown into it one at a time. Then each prisoner was forced to go to the toilet on the head of the victim. Anyone refusing received 25 lashes. In this way, they went to the toilet all day long until the victim finally suffocated in the feces.*
>
> *The Soviet border guards, on the other side, asked the Jews to try to escape to the Russian zone if at all possible. Anyone able to make use of a moment of inattention by the SS would succeed, because the SS, when they noticed this, could no longer shoot – the bullets would have hit the other side of the borderline. Then the SS took up a position next to the fence, shooting at the hands or feet still sticking out on their side, and when the*

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15 Z. Łukaszkiewicz, "*Obóz zagłady w Sobiborze*," in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, Poznan 1947, p. 52

16 Z. Klukowski, *Dziennik z lat okupacji*, Lublin 1959, p. 254.

17 "*prądem elektrycznym*"

18 "*gazami*"

19 "*zwłoki palą*"

20 "*Kronika oświęmcimska niezanego autora*," in *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historicznego*, Warsaw, no. 54, January-June 1954, p. 307.

Soviet border guards protested, the SS shouted, 'The hand or the leg is still on our side!'

At that time, the work to be done was to dig a long and deep trench along the borderline. Later, when the Germans had penetrated deep into the USSR, 8 large barracks were built in the forest, equipped with tables and benches. The Jews from Lublin and Lvov were pushed into them and electrocuted."[21]

On July 10, 1942, the Polish government in exile in London received the following report:[22]

"According to information from a German who is employed there, the place of execution is at Bełżec, near the station, and is surrounded by barbed wire. Inside as well as around the fence, Ukrainians are on guard duty. The execution is done in the following way: A train full of Jews, after arriving at Bełżec station, moves on a siding toward the fence which surrounds the place of execution. There is a change of crew. Beyond the fence, the train is handled by German personnel up to the point of unloading where the rails end. Once discharged, the men go into a barrack on the right, the women into one on the left, to undress, supposedly for taking a bath. Then the groups go together into a third barrack with an electric plate[23] *where the execution occurs. The bodies are then taken by means of a railway to a pit, about 30 meters deep, situated outside the fence. The pit was dug by Jews who have all been killed. The Ukrainian guards who are assigned to the camp are to be murdered once the action is over. The Ukrainians on guard duty have lots of stolen money and jewelry: They pay 400 zloty for a liter of vodka, or 2,000 to have sex with a woman, and give her jewels."*

On November 15, 1942, Dr. Ignacy Schwarzbart, a member of the Polish National Council, made a declaration, in which he paraphrased the above report:[24]

"The methods applied in this mass extermination are, apart from executions, firing squads, electrocution and lethal gas-chambers. An electrocution station is installed at Belzec camp. Transports of settlers arrive at a siding, on the spot where the execution is to take place. The camp is policed by Ukrainians. The victims are ordered to strip naked ostensibly to have a bath and are then led to a barracks with a metal plate for floor. The

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21 "*elektryzowano*"

22 *Meldunek nadzwyczajny z miejsca tracenia w Bełżcu z 10.VII.42r*, SPP, Jcha 15, poz. 81. The report was later included as "*Annex 3*" in the long account (Sprawozdanie No. 6/42) drawn up in London on December 23, 1942, by the Interior Minister, St. Mikołajczyk, of the Polish government in exile. HILA, Stanford University, Box 3, pp. 63f.

23 "*z płytą elektryczną*"

24 Jacob Apenszlak (ed.), *The Black Book of Polish Jewry*, American Federation for Polish Jews, New York 1943, p. 131.

door is then locked, electric current passes through the victims and their death is instantaneous. The bodies are loaded on the wagons and taken to a mass grave some distance from the camp."

The report dated July 10, 1942, reappears on December 1 in an English-language Polish review:[25]

"Extraordinary Report from the Jew-extermination Camp at Belzec.

July 10th, 1942.

According to information from a German employed at the extermination camp, it is situated in Belzec, by the station, and is barred off by barriers of barbed wire. Inside the wire, and all round the outside, Ukrainians are on guard. The executions are carried out in the following fashion: When a trainload of Jews arrives at the station in Belzec, it is shunted by a side track up to the wire surrounding the place of execution, at which point there is a change in the engine crew and train guards. From the wire onward the train is serviced by German drivers who take it to the unloading point, where the track ends. After unloading, the men go to a barracks on the right, the women to a barracks situated on the left, where they strip, ostensibly in readiness for a bath. After they have undressed both groups go to a third barracks where there is an electrified plate, where the executions are carried out. Then the bodies are taken by train to a trench situated outside the wire, and some thirty metres deep. This trench was dug by Jews, who were all executed afterwards. The Ukrainians on guard are also to be executed when the job is finished. The Ukrainians acting as guards are loaded with money and stolen valuables; they pay 400 zlotys for a litre of vodka, 2,000 zlotys and jewellery for relations with a woman."

The declaration made by Dr. Schwarzbart was recapitulated ten days later by the bulletin of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in an article entitled "*250,000 Warsaw Jews Led to Mass Execution: Electrocuting Introduced As New Method of Mass Killing of Jews.*"[26] On December 20, 1942, the *New York Times* ran an article on the alleged extermination of Jews in Poland by the Germans which said, among other things:[27]

"Actual data concerning the fate of the deportees is not at hand, but the news is available – irrefutable news – that places of execution have been organized at Chelm and Belzec where those who survive shootings are murdered en masse by means of electrocution and lethal gas."

In 1944, the story of the electrocution installation at Bełżec was embellished with new and fantastic details. On February 12, the *New York Times* revisited the camp, publishing a more detailed report headlined "*Nazi Execution*

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25 *Polish Fortnightly Review*, December 1, 1942, p. 4.

26 "*250,000 Warsaw Jews Led to Mass Execution: Electrocuting Introduced As New Method of Mass Killing of Jews*," *Daily News Bulletin*, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, vol. XXIII, no. 273, November 25, 1942, p. 2.

27 "*Allies describe outrages on Jews*," *The New York Times*, December 20, 1942, p. 23.

Mill Reported in Poland: Fugitive Tells of Mass Killings in Electrically Charged Vats":[28]

> *"Stockholm, Sweden. Feb. 11 (AP). A young Polish Jew who escaped from a mass execution in Poland with the aid of false identification papers repeated today a story that the Germans operated an 'execution factory' in old Russian fortifications in eastern Poland.*
>
> *The Jews were forced naked onto a metal platform operated as a hydraulic elevator which lowered them into a huge vat filled with water up the victims' necks, he said. They were electrocuted by current through the water. The elevator then lifted the bodies to a crematorium above, the youth said.*
>
> *The youth said he personally had seen trainloads of Jews leave Rawna Luska* [Rawa Ruska] *in eastern Poland in the morning for the crematorium at near-by Beljec* [Bełżec] *and return empty in the evening. He was told the rest of the story, he said, by individuals who escaped after actually being taken inside the factory. The fortifications, he added, were built by the Russians after they had occupied eastern Poland."*

In 1944, Dr. Abraham Silberschein, a member of the Polish parliament and delegate of the World Jewish Congress, published, in Geneva, a series of mimeographed brochures entitled *Die Judenausrottung in Polen* (The extermination of Jews in Poland), in which he included even more horrifying propaganda stories. From these, I shall present two reports on the Bełżec camp in their entirety. The first one has the title "*Die Hölle von Belzec*" (The Bełżec Hell):[29]

> *"Jews deported to Belzec were ordered to undress, as if they were going to take a bath. They were, indeed, taken to a bathing establishment able to contain several hundreds of people. However, they were executed en masse by means of an electric current. A boy who managed to escape from such an establishment told me what happened after the electrocution:*
> *The fat from the corpses was drained in order to – make soap from it.*
> *The remnants of the corpses were then thrown into anti-tank ditches which had been laid out along the Russian border by the arch-henchman Major Dollf. Burial of the slaughtered had to be done by the strongest of the Jews, selected among the doomed. It often happened that these people had to bury their own relatives. Not much later, these Jews, too, who had been assigned the task of burying their dead brethren – a task which they did against their will and by being forced – were killed in the same way. The*

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[28] "*Nazi Execution Mill Reported in Poland: Fugitive Tells of Mass Killings in Electrically Charged Vats*," *The New York Times*, February 12, 1944, p. 6.

[29] A. Silberschein, "*Die Hölle von Belzec*," in *Die Judenausrottung in Polen*, vol. V, Geneva 1944, pp. 21f.

Jews buried at Belzec came mainly from Lublin, Lemberg [Lvov], *and other towns in Eastern Galicia. Some 300,000 Jews were interred there.*

Far too many corpses having been thrown into these mass graves, it was impossible to cover them with a sufficiently thick layer of earth. This caused a stench of rotting flesh to spread over the whole area. This smell is still perceptible (i.e. in April, at the time of writing of this eyewitness report). Travelers on the railway line Zawada-Rawa Ruska close the windows, for this awful stench penetrates into the compartments and causes the people to vomit. I myself had to travel along this line on several occasions and have thus been able to convince myself of this state of affairs. As late as April 10, 1943, I passed through there one last time. The Christian population of Belzec has left this place for the only reason of this stench.

The men of the Gestapo and the Ukrainians who commit these murders have magnificently enriched themselves by taking the gold and the jewelry which some Jews had sewn into their clothes. Those butchers had so much money that they were able to pay 20 gold dollars to the farmers for a bottle of vodka."

The second report published by A. Silberschein was called "*Hinrichtungs- und Vernichtungslager Belzec*" (Execution and Extermination Camp Bełżec) and spoke of an undefined "*electric oven*" as the means of assassination:[30]

"The Victims.

Starting in 1942, so-called actions took place in all Polish cities and towns. Based on a well-defined plan, they were repeated at almost regular intervals and became the horror of the Jewish population. In general, such actions consisted of a number of local Jews being rounded up and deported. The number was often specified in advance, and the local Jewish council was demanded to provide this number. Special commando units were organized for this purpose. They traveled from one town to the next to carry out their hounding of the Jews. The Jews caught in this way were normally taken to the Belzec extermination camp. Without exception, this was the fate of all Jews caught in Eastern Galicia.

Belzec is a little town, formerly a border crossing between Galicia and Poland, situated on the railway line from Lemberg [Lvov] *to Lublin. The camp that existed here was a most extraordinary one. While all other camps were officially designated as prison camps, concentration camps, or work camps, this camp was a pure extermination camp. Jews were sent there for this purpose only. It would not be wrong to say that all Jews from Galicia, certainly all who came from Eastern Galicia, died there with the exception of the few who were able to save themselves. However, not only were transports of Polish Jews from Galicia taken there, Belzec was also*

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[30] A. Silberschein, "*Hinrichtungs- und Vernichtungslager Belzec*," in *Die Judenausrottung in Polen*, Geneva 1944, vol. III, pp. 41f.

the destination for many convoys of foreign Jews, in particular Jews from Holland and from Germany.

Installations.

Belzec and its surroundings have become a fortress of the Inquisition as never before seen in the history of mankind.

Special buildings for gassing experiments were built here, special factories for the production of soap and shoe polish from Jewish fat, hospitals were built for the purpose of a prior withdrawing of blood transfusions of Jewish children [sic]. *Special types of equipment for hanging were devised. Even soldiers of the Wehrmacht would not believe it, but still, those installations were observed by reliable eyewitnesses.*

Murder Procedure.

Not a single one of all the hundreds of thousands brought to Belzec ever managed to escape. We are, therefore, unable to know the details of what was going on inside the camp.

According to a German employed there, the camp is protected by a barbed-wire fence and is situated in the immediate vicinity of the station. Within the barbed-wire, Ukrainians are on guard duty.

The executions take place as follows: On arrival, the train with the Jews is taken to a siding right next to the wire fence. Then the crew is changed. After unloading, the men are directed to the right, the women into the barrack on the left. They were ordered to undress and to prepare for an end. They then must enter a third barrack, which contains an electric oven. The executions take place in this barrack. After that, the corpses are taken by train to a ditch beyond the barbed-wire fence. The ditch has a depth of some 30 meters. It was dug by Jews.

Travelers and tourists who have passed through Belzec have confirmed that the fields all around have become mass graves. At every step one notices traces of lime and gore. The fields are strewn with skeletons in various stages of decomposition. The air reeks with a pestilential stench. Therefore, the farmers in the area have fled from their villages. The town itself is deserted and ghost-like. There is only the occasional SS policeman loitering about, yawning.

On the basis of the number of Jews caught during the actions, who were all taken – as previously mentioned – to Belzec, it can be assumed that no fewer than six hundred thousand Jews from Galicia died as martyrs there. Adding the other transports, one can safely say that the number is much higher still, perhaps twice as high."

The paragraph relating the method of execution appears nearly word for word, in another book, also published in 1944; here, however, instead of the

term "*oven*" we have "*hearth*": "*Then they move on into a third barrack with an electric hearth where the execution takes place*."[31]

In a book published in Stockholm in 1944 and translated into English and German a year later, Stefan Szende gives the following account of Bełżec camp:[32]

> *"Belzec was a little place to the north of Rawa-Ruska, just on the 1939 Russo-German frontier. Immediately this frontier line had been agreed on, the Russians had begun to erect fortifications on a big scale. When the German troops crossed the frontier in June, 1941, the fortifications were still incomplete.*
>
> *It was from these half-finished Russian fortifications that the Nazis made their slaughter-house in which millions of Jews were exterminated.*
>
> *To exterminate 5 million people is an enormous task, and even in our age of technical perfection it needs a lot of preparing and organizing, and there are many problems to be faced by those planning to carry it out. Tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands, of Jews had been taken to 'Pjaski.' Further tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands had died as a result of ill-treatment, starvation and disease. But there were still millions left and they all had to be killed in accordance with the orders of the Fuehrer.*
>
> *Even the effective killing of bed-bugs or lice on a large scale demands a certain technique. However, no one can doubt that the Germans are a highly talented people in all technical matters. Amongst them there were highly efficient engineers of death. These men were given their instructions by the Gestapo, and they set to work to solve the technical problems to which the mass slaughter of millions of defenseless men, women and children gives rise. They solved the problem. They solved it brilliantly. Their Fuehrer, Adolf Hitler, and Himmler, the head of the Gestapo, must be well satisfied with them and their work.*
>
> *Months of planning and building operations were necessary, but the Germans are a patient people and the objective was worth the time spent on achieving it. The extermination of millions of Jews with the very latest modern technical means -what an enticing aim! Hundreds of thousands of labor hours were expended. Tens of thousands of tons of valuable materials were used in the process. But at last, in the spring of 1942, the scientific slaughter-house at Belzec was ready.*
>
> *The mass-killing installation at Belzec occupies an area almost five miles across. This area is surrounded by barbed wire and every other*

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31 *Soll ich meines Bruders Hüter sein? Weitere Dokumente zur Juden- und Flüchtlingsnot unserer Tage*, Evangelischer Verlag A.G. Zollikon, Zürich 1944, p. 56.

32 Stefan Szende, *Der letzte Jude aus Poland*, Europa Verlag, Zürich 1945, pp. 290-292; Engl. Stefan Szende, Adolf Folkmann, *The Promise Hitler Kept*, V. Gollancz, London 1945/Roy, New York 1945, pp. 159-161.

modern device for keeping prisoners in and others out. No one is permitted to come near the place except properly authorized persons or those who will never leave the place alive. But despite all these precautions there were one or two people who saw the inside of Belzec and nevertheless succeeded in escaping. Despair and desperation makes a man ingenious.

Specially chosen S.S. men guard the Belzec killing plant. They are men without nerves. There is much to do in a slaughterhouse and it gives sadists great pleasure to compel their victims , to do as much of it as possible. For instance, the clothes and the belongings of the millions of victims had to be collected and sorted out. For this purpose the S.S. chose certain Jews out of each transport that arrived. These Jews were not spared, of course. It was merely that their execution was postponed. Two such Jews actually succeeded in making their escape. They escaped into the Ghetto which still existed in Rawa-Ruska at the time. In Rawa-Ruska they reported the details of the technically perfected slaughter going on in Belzec.

As far as I know, no Jew ever succeeded in escaping from Belzec and reaching neutral or Allied territory. The two Jews who made their escape from Belzec to Rawa-Ruska in the summer of 1942 were probably killed subsequently when the Ghetto there was liquidated, but a number of people who heard the evidence of these two fugitives from Belzec did escape. The following description of the Belzec slaughterhouse comes from them.

The trains coming into Belzec loaded with Jews were driven into a tunnel in the underground premises of the execution building. There the Jews were unloaded and ordered to divest themselves of all their things. In 1942 Jews arriving at Belzec came dressed and carrying all sorts of belongings with them. Fully loaded trains from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Holland, France and the Balkan States arrived in Belzec, and they were all treated in the same way. These Jews were told to take all their things with them, as they were going to be 'settled' in the East. Thus tens of thousands of Jews arrived, bringing all sorts of property with them, typewriters, sewing machines, crockery, silver and so on.

Everything was taken away from them. The goods seized in this way were carefully sorted out, listed and ticketed and subsequently used for the benefit of the master race. It was to spare the staff at Belzec this tremendous task, which, of course, hindered them in their real job, that later on all Jews were sent to Belzec naked.

When trainloads of naked Jews arrived they were herded into a great hall capable of holding several thousand people. This hall had no windows and its flooring was of metal. Once the Jews were all inside, the floor of this hall sank like a lift into a great tank of water which lay below it until the Jews were up to their waists in water. Then a powerful electric current was sent into the metal flooring and within a few seconds all the Jews, thousands at a time, were dead.

The metal flooring then rose again and the water drained away. The corpses of the slaughtered Jews were now heaped all over the floor. A different current was then switched on and the metal flooring rapidly became red hot, so that the corpses were incinerated as in a crematorium and only ash was left.

The floor was then tipped up and the ashes slid out into prepared receptacles. The smoke of the process was carried away by great factory chimneys.

That was the whole procedure. As soon as it was completed, it could start up again. New batches of Jews were constantly being driven into the tunnels. The individual trains brought between 3,000 and 5,000 Jews at a time, and there were days on which the Belzec line saw between twenty and thirty such trains arrive.

Modern industrial and engineering technique in Nazi hands triumphed over all difficulties. The problem of how to slaughter millions of people rapidly and effectively was solved.

The underground slaughter-house spread a terrible stench around the neighborhood, and sometimes whole districts were covered with the foul-smelling smoke from the burning human bodies."

A variant of the underground extermination was published in the infamous *Black Book* of the well-known Soviet propaganda writers I. Ehrenburg and V. Grossman, compiled in 1945 and 1946. A certain corporal (*Obergefreiter*) Erik Heubaum, a German prisoner of war, is said to have declared in a statement, about which no particulars are given, not even a date:[33]

"I have even seen how peaceful citizens were exterminated by means of gas. I drove some communications people to a minor station some 12 kilometers from Rawa Ruskaya. Near that station, in the middle of a forest, an underground encampment had been set up. One day, when I was there, a convoy of Jews was brought in. From closed cars, people were stretching their arms out the windows begging for water, but nobody was allowed near them. In the evening, these people were led into the forest. Anyone not involved was moved to the station building. The forest was surrounded by SD units. Then all of these people, without any distinction of age or of sex, had their clothes taken from them and were pushed into the underground encampment. Three quarters of an hour later, men from a different section were sent in to take out the corpses before another group was brought in. In this way, each night, up to three hundred people were killed.

I observed that scene over a period of eight days. An SS man from Saxony, Karl Horst, told me that those people were being asphyxiated by means of gas. He took part in this. The executions were directed by Sturmbannführer [major] *Herbst, who came from Breslau."*

[33] I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *Le livre noir*, Actes Sud, 1995, pp. 1058f.

But even the story of the descending or collapsible floor took on further variations. The files of the Soviet commission of inquiry for the Sokal territory, dated October 7, 1944, contain is the statement of a certain Rozalja Schelewna Schier:[34]

> *"My husband, who was working at the Bełżec station at the time, told me the following:*
>
> *At Bełżec station two transports consisting of fifty to sixty cars arrive every day. Each car holds 100-120 persons. The train is taken to a siding in the forest, about one kilometer away. There a movable shed has been placed on the rails. It is marked 'Baths for Jews.' The people who have arrived are ordered to undress and enter the baths; they are promised work afterwards. When the bath house is completely full with 100-120 people, gas and high-voltage electric current are fed into it. Within 5 minutes, all the people in the bath house were dead. Inside the shed, the floor folds automatically, and the corpses fall into a previously dug trench where the victims are doused with a flammable liquid and burnt."*

A year later, the extraordinary collapsible floor at Bełżec has changed again. On October 16, 1945, the witness Jan G. declared to the investigative judge of Zamość:[35]

> *"By what means the Jews in the gas chamber were killed is difficult to say. At the time the Jews were driven into the gas chamber, a strong engine (250 HP) was running within the camp. It is said that the Jews were killed by means of the exhaust gas. It is untrue that the Jews were killed by means of an electric current; the voltage was much too low for masses of people to be killed that way. While the extermination camp was in operation, the 'blacks'*[36] *in my railroad workshop fashioned 48 pairs of special hinges, and a large number of narrow-gauge rails were shaped by bending. From this I conclude that the hinges were used for the floor of the gas chamber, which opened up after the Jews had been killed, thereby letting the corpses drop into carts, which took them to a common grave."*

In 1945, Dr. Guérin reported on an encounter he had had three years before with a soldier of the Security Police during a round-up of Jews in the ghetto of Rawa Ruska:[37]

> *"He then pulled out a map and pointed to the name of a village: Belsetz* [sic]. *The means of extermination: electrocution. Women, old people, and children were taken on foot, naked, into a hall with metal plates in the floor. When a certain number of people had been assembled, a high-voltage current passed through the plates. The name of Belsetz was con-*

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34 GARF, 7021-67-82, p. 3.
35 ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1157 (translation from the Polish).
36 Soviet prisoners of war.
37 Armand Guérin, *Rawa Ruska*, Editions Oris, Paris 1945, p. 148.

firmed on two occasions by other Germans but none of those we approached was able to confirm that he had personally witnessed such executions. Others held that the executions took place in gas chambers, but here, too, the exact place could not be ascertained."

In 1945, Stefan Tadeusz Norwind wrote:[38]

"Major corpse factories existed at Belzec, at Sobibor, at Majdanek, and also, it is said, at Palmyry in the region of Warsaw.[…] *The factories had two types of installations. Some of them were electrical, i.e. naked people were pushed onto a steel plate and then killed by a high-voltage current (this took place e.g. at Belzec). Others consisted of hermetically sealed gas chambers where, again, naked people were killed by means of steam or gas (this took place at Tremblinka* [sic]*)."*

The story of extermination by means of electricity also appears, with other fanciful details, in the above-mentioned *Black Book*:[39]

"Belzec is a terrifying place where the Jews were exterminated. And this place is surrounded by the utmost secrecy on the German side. But the railway men who operate the convoys of the condemned tell their family and friends the truth about the extermination of the Jews at Belzec.

The Jews were made to go into a gigantic hall, which could take in up to a thousand people. Along the walls, the Germans had strung uninsulated electric wires. The same wires were in the floor. When the hall was full of naked people, the Germans switched on the current. It was a gigantic electric chair, which we never thought could have been invented even by the most warped mind."

In 1946, Simon Wiesenthal wrote an article with the title "*Seifenfabrik Belsetz*" (soap factory Bełżec), his second of two dedicated to this fanciful topic.[40] In this article he outlined out an imaginary history of the Bełżec camp, crammed with historical falsifications. In January 1942, Wiesenthal says, the Bełżec area was inspected by a commission of top SS officials, among them Adolf Eichmann, whom Wiesenthal promotes to the rank of "*SS General*" for the occasion! The commission decides to make "*the available installations the starting point for the erection of a place of extermination.*" For this purpose, "*a site of 3 square kilometers*" (300 hectares, or about 750 acres) was fenced in. The area of the camp proper came to about 6 hectares, or about 15 acres. Then comes his description of the alleged extermination procedure:[41]

"The people, squeezed together by the SS, hounded by the Latvians and Ukrainians, ran into the 'bath' through the open gate. It could hold 500 persons at a time. The floor of the 'bathhouse' was made of metal, and

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38 S. T. Norwind, *Martyrium eines Volkes*, 1945, pp. 102f.

39 I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *op. cit.* (note 33), pp. 213f.

40 Cf. below, section 4.

41 S. Wiesenthal, "*Seifenfabrik Belsetz*," *Der neue Weg*, No. 19/20, Vienna 1946, p. 14.

showers hung down from the ceiling. When the space was full the SS delivered a 5,000-volt current to the metal plate. At the same time, the showers spewed out water. A brief scream and the execution was over. An SS surgeon-major by the name of Dr. Schmidt ascertained the death of the victims by looking through a peephole, the second door was opened, the 'corpse commando' arrived and quickly removed the dead. – There was now room for the next load of five hundred."

3. From Electrocution to the "*Trains of Death*"

Another story about Bełżec, widely circulated during the Second World War, concerned the "*trains of death*." It was invented by Jan Karski (his real name was Kozielewski), a courier with the Polish government in exile in London, who affirmed that he had visited the Bełżec camp in October 1942, disguised as an Estonian guard, together with a real Estonian guard who had been bribed. Walter Laqueur writes:[42]

"Karski lived underground in Warsaw in 1941-2, engaged in 'black propaganda' among German soldiers, printing and distributing leaflets in German."

In fact the story told by Karski is a simple kind of "*black propaganda*." It was the final product of a well-defined literary development which can easily be traced in the surviving documents. The first version of this story, dating back to November 1942, did mention trains of death, but only as an instrument of torture, taking the Jews from the Warsaw ghetto "*to special camps at Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor,*" where they would be killed. With respect to the camp at Bełżec, Karski not only did not yet pretend to have visited it but ascribed to it the method of extermination in vogue at the time – electrocution. However, by December 1942, Karski had invented the story of his phantom visit – disguised as a Polish policeman – to a "*marshalling camp*" fifty kilometers from Bełżec, rehashing 'the trains of death' motif, the trains having now become a means of extermination in themselves, although he was still assigning to Bełżec the methods of murder by poison gas and electric current. In the final elaboration of his story, Karski transformed the "*marshalling camp*" into the camp at Bełżec, which he now pretended to have visited disguised as an Estonian guard!

On November 25, 1942, Karski arrived in London and handed the Polish government in exile a report.[43] It was transcribed under the title "*News Is*

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[42] W. Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret: An Investigation into the Suppression of Information about Hitler's "Final Solution"*, H. Holt, New York 1998, p. 230.

[43] Cf. M. Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, Henry Holt, New York 1981, p. 93-95.

Reaching the Polish Government in London about the Liquidation of the Jewish Ghetto in Warsaw," and the complete text of it is as follows:[44]

"The persecution of the Jews in Poland, which has been in progress from the very first day of the German occupation, has taken on extremely acute forms since March 1942, when Himmler ordered the extermination of 50% of the Jewish population in the Government General, to be carried out by end of 1942.

Though the German assassins had started this work with extraordinary gusto, the results apparently did not satisfy Himmler for during his visit to the General Gouvernement in July 1942 he ordered new decrees personally, aiming at the total destruction of Polish Jewry.

The persecution in Warsaw started on 21st July 1942, when German police cars suddenly drove into the ghettos. The soldiers immediately started rushing into houses, shooting the inhabitants at sight, without any explanation. The first victims belonged mostly to the educated classes. On that day almost all the members of the Jewish Municipal Council were arrested and held as hostages.

On 22nd July 1942 the Jewish Council was ordered to proclaim the decree of the German authorities dealing with the re-settlement of all the Warsaw Jews, regardless of sex or age, in the eastern part of Poland, with the sole exception of persons working in German factories or members of the Jewish militia. The daily quota of people to be re-settled was fixed at 6,000 and members of the Jewish Municipal Council were ordered to carry out the order under pain of death.

By the next day, however, on 23nd July, the German police again appeared in the Jewish Municipal Council and demanded to see the chairman, Mr. Czerniakow. After the police had left, Czerniakow committed suicide. From a note left for his wife, it became clear that he had received orders to deliver 10,000 people the next day and 7,000 daily on the following days, in spite of the fact that the quota had been fixed originally at 6,000. The victims to be delivered to the Germans are either dragged out of their homes or seized in the streets. As the zeal of the Jewish police to perform these duties against their own people was slight and did not give a guarantee of efficiency, the Germans have mobilised temporary security batallions for the man-hunts, consisting of Ukrainians, Latvians, and Lithuanians. These battalions, under the command of SS men, are characterised by their utter ruthlessness, cruelty and inhumanity.

The Jews, when caught, are driven to a square. Old people and cripples are then singled out, taken to the cemetery and there shot. The remaining people are loaded into goods trucks, at the rate of 150 people to a truck with space for 40. The floor of the truck is covered with a thick layer of

[44] Foreign Office papers, 371/30923, xp 009642, pp. 78f., and 371/30917, xp 5365, pp. 78f.

lime and chlorine sprinkled with water. The doors of the trucks are locked. Sometimes the train starts immediately on being loaded, sometimes it remains on a siding for a day, two days or even longer. The people are packed so tightly that those who die of suffocation remain in the crowd side by side with the still living and with those slowly dying from the fumes of lime and chlorine, from lack of air, water and food. Wherever the trains arrive half the people are dead. Those surviving are sent to special camps at Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor. Once there, the so-called 'settlers' are mass murdered.

Only young and relatively strong people are left alive, for they are valuable slave labour for the Germans. However, the percentage of these is extremely small, for out of a total of about 250,000 're-settled' only 4,000 have been sent to auxiliary work on the battlefronts.

Neither children nor babies are spared. The orphans from asylums and day-nurseries are evacuated as well. The director of the biggest Jewish orphanage in Warsaw and well known writer Janusz Korczak, whom the Germans had given permission to remain in the ghetto, preferred to follow his charges to death.

Thus under the guise of re-settlement in the east, a mass murder of the Jewish population is taking place. Started on 22nd July 1942, it has been progress ever since. By the end of September 1942 250,000 Jews had been eliminated. The extent of this action is best characterised by a few figures: In the Warsaw ghetto there lived, according the official German statistics of March 1942, about 433,000 people. In spite of the extremely high mortality caused by bad hygienic conditions, epidemics, starvation, executions etc., the number of Jews in the ghetto remained more or less stable, for to replace the dead, Jews from other parts of Europe, Germany, Austria, Holland, were sent to Warsaw. According to information leaking from the Arbeitsamt [Labor Office]*, only 40,000 people are to remain in the Warsaw ghetto, only highly skilled workers, to be employed in German war industry. The most convincing proof of the dwindling numbers in the ghetto lies in the fact that for September 1942 120,000 ration cards were printed. For October the number issued was only 40,000.*

Simultaneously with the extermination of Jews in the Warsaw ghetto, ghettos in the provinces, at Falenica, Rembertow, Nowy Dwor, Kaluszyn and Minsk Mazowiecki are being liquidated. In the district of Wilno only one Jewish community has remained, in the city itself, numbering only 12,000 people. According to news which reached London some time ago the Germans have murdered 60,000 Jews in Wilno, 14,000 in Kowno and 50% of the Jewish population of Lwow; similar news reaches us from cities in S. Eastern Poland, such as Stanislawo, Tarnopol, Stryj.

The methods applied in this mass extermination are, apart from executions by firing squads, electrocution and lethal gas-chambers.

An electrocution station is installed at Belzec camp. Transports of 'settlers' arrive at a siding, on the spot where the execution is to take place. The camp is policed by Ukrainians. The victims are ordered to strip naked, – to have a bath, ostensibly – and are then led to a barrack with a metal plate for floor. The door is then locked, electric current passes through the victims and their death is almost instantaneous. The bodies are loaded on the waggons and taken to a mass grave some distance from the camp.

A large digging machine has been installed recently at Treblinka. It works ceaselessly digging ditches – mass graves for Jews who are to meet their death there. The Ukrainian guards, witnesses of the mass murders, are allowed to keep the money and jewellery robbed from the victims. These bestial murders sometimes take place in the presence of the local non-Jewish population, who are helpless and overcome with horror at the sight of such inhuman violence. What the Poles' reactions to these unspeakable crimes are, is best proved by a pamphlet by the 'Front for the Liberation of Poland', containing a strongly worded protest against the terrible extermination of the Jews. According to the pamphlet, the total number of Jews murdered in Poland since September 1939 exceeds one million."

The text of the report on Bełżec is identical to the one by Ignacy Schwarzbart mentioned above, which, however, dates from November 15, 1942, and therefore precedes it by ten days. On November 26, 1942, Richard Law, British Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, wrote in a note that "*this morning*" two English Jews, Mr. Silverman and Mr. Easterman, had requested an audience to talk "*about the extermination of Jews in Europe*," and that the latter had presented him with a document, "*which was handed to him last night by a member of the Polish Government*."[45] But I. Schwarzbart, who was indeed a member of the Polish National Council, was in possession of a portion of the document as early as November 15.

Another portion, the section dealing with the transports of the Jews, appeared with some modifications and with the inevitable reference to the electrocutions in the report of the Polish government in exile at London of December 10, 1942:[46]

"The floor [*sic*] *of the trucks were covered with quicklime and chlorine. As far as is known, the trains were dispatched to three localities, Tremblinka* [sic]*, Belzec and Sobibor, to what the reports describe as 'extermination camps'. The very method of transport was deliberately calculated to cause the largest possible number of casualties among the condemned*

[45] Foreign Office papers, 371/30923, xp 009642, p. 73.

[46] Foreign Office papers, 371/30924, xp 5365, pp. 121-124. Jacob Apenszlak (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 24), p. 122.

Jews. It is reported that on arrival in camp the survivors were stripped naked and killed by various means, including poison gas and electrocution."

This shows that the 'mission' of Jan Karski was, in fact, a "*black propaganda*" operation carried out in style. Sure enough, the story of the trains of death, attributed to a "*courier who reached London in December 1942*," surfaced in London that December.[47]

This precedes Jan Karski's version of 1944, which we will examine below, but with one decisive difference. He did not yet pretend to have smuggled himself into the Bełżec camp, even though he did visit a marshalling camp situated "*about fifty kilometers from the city of Belzec*."

In March of 1943, the newspaper *Voice of the Unconquered* published the report in question under the title "*Eye-Witness Report of a Secret Courier Fresh from Poland*." It also referred to a courier who "*reached London at the beginning of December, 1942*."[48]

This courier, just like the other one, had brought back "*a personal eye-witness account*,"[48] which was published in the newspaper. The part on Bełżec is set forth below, with subtitles added by the editors of the paper:[49]

"Roads Paved With Dead

I want to return to the question of 'deportations': I saw in Warsaw the first part of this act and later on the outskirts of Belzec the second and last part. From Warsaw the Jews are driven to the tracks on the outskirts of the city where a long train of cattle cars is already waiting for them. Before they reach the tracks, however, many are shot for one reason or another. Particularly those who lag behind. The whole route is literally strewn with corpses. When they finally reach their destination they are robbed of all their possessions (officially the deportees are urged to take along their most valuable possessions). Then they are loaded in cars, a hundred people in a car, and the first lap of the journey which lasts from two to eight days begin. Not once during the journey are the doors of the cars opened with the result that many die before they reach the 'sorting point' (Obóz Rozdzielczy) which is located about fifty kilometers from the city of Belzec. Nevertheless the first stage of this journey is mild, almost human, in comparison with what awaits them at the second stage.

<u>Belzec the Slaughter House</u>

In the uniform of a Polish policeman I visited the sorting point near Belzec. It is a huge barrack only about half of which is covered with a roof. When I was there about 5,000 men and women were in the camp. However,

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47 Jacob Apenszlak (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 24), pp. 135-138.

48 "*Eye-Witness Report of a Secret Courier Fresh from Poland*," *Voice of the Unconquered*, March 1943, p. 5.

49 *Ibidem*, p. 8.

every few hours new transports of Jews, men and women, young and old, would arrive for the last journey towards death.

It is humanly impossible to convey the impression that these 5,000 people made upon me: they are no longer in the image of men. Skeletons with eyes dead with resignation. Naked, frightened, they are in constant motion with convulsive, nervous movements. A child is lying with his face towards the roof. It is in the last agony of death. But no one pays any attention to it. I spot amidst this indistinguishable mass an old man completely nude. He was probably stripped of his rags. No one looks at him. He makes no impression upon the people that surround him. The guards keep on shooting at the throng. Corpses are scattered everywhere. Men, in their convulsive moving about, step over them. They hardly notice the dead. Every few minutes the guards pick a number of men to clear the dead which are piled up alongside the fence. This, too, is done without any emotion, without a single expression, in their faces as though they are completely oblivious of what they are doing. These are no longer normal beings but one large convulsive mass breathing its last.

The people are kept in this camp for several days. By the time they start on the last leg of their death-journey most of them have had nothing to eat for days since they are not given any food and have to subsist on whatever they manage to bring along with them.

The second and the most gruesome stage of their journey commences. Accompanied by the lashing of whips and the shooting of guns the 'deportees' are suddenly, without any warning, beginning to be driven to the railroad tracks which are several dozen meters from the camp. A wild stampede of human beings begins. In the meantime, the Germans have made all the preparations to intensify their torture.

The route from the camp to the tracks is a specially constructed narrow passage lined by a weak fence of boards. On both sides of the fence are stationed armed guards. From behind the people are driven by guards who lash out mercilessly with their whips. Everything is designed to create a panic and stampede. But at the same time 'order' is demanded and no one dare touch the fence. Anyone who as much as touches the fence is shot by the guards who are lined alongside of it. The shooting, the blood and the groans and shrieks of those who have been hit only increases the stampede and this gives the guards additional reason for shooting. In this manner, hundreds are killed on a stretch of several meters. But these are the lucky ones. An even more horrible death awaits the survivors.

The narrow passage leads to an open door of a cattle car. These are the famous cars designed for '40 people or 8 horses.' We have measured these cars and found that if human beings were to be loaded there tightly pressed together and completely nude they could hold only 90. Yet 140 people are loaded in these cars. On both sides of the entrance are stationed special

S.S. men with guns and whips. It is their job to force the people into the cars.

In Area of 50 Kilometers Corpses of Jews Are Being Burned Day and Night

In panic and fear the emaciated skeletons perform acrobatic feats. A moment comes when the last inch of a car is loaded to capacity. But human beings are still being driven into it: einsteigen, einsteigen![50] *People begin to climb over the heads of their neighbors holding on by the hands, feet or hair of those who are already inside. Thus fifty more manage to get into the car which is then locked. Soon another takes its place...*

A long train thus packed with several thousand men, women, and children is switched to a side line where it remains from two to eight days. The doors are never opened. Those inside suffer inhuman agony. They have to perform natural functions over the heads of the others. Many cars are painted with lime which begins to burn from the dampness of the urine and increases the tortures of the barefooted and nude.

Because there are not enough cars to kill the Jews in this relatively inexpensive manner many of them are taken to nearby Belzec where they are murdered by poison gases or by the application of electric currents. The corpses are burned near Belzec. Thus within an area of fifty kilometers huge stakes are burning Jewish corpses day and night."

In 1944, Karski published a book of memoirs entitled *Story of a Secret State*. He relates that in early October of 1942 he slipped into the ghetto of Warsaw and established contact with the local Bund, the union of socialist Jews. The head of this organization informed him about the deportation of "*over three hundred thousand*" Jews into "*execution camps*."

The story goes as follows:[51]

"A few days after my second visit to the Warsaw ghetto, the Bund leader was to arrange an opportunity for me to see the Jewish death camp. The camp was located near the town of Belzec about one hundred miles east of Warsaw and was well-known all over Poland from the tales of horror that were circulated about it. The common report was that every Jew who reached it, without exception, was doomed to death. The Bund leader had never been in it but had the most detailed information on its operations. I was to go on a day when executions were scheduled. The information was easy to obtain because many of the Estonian, Latvian, and Ukrainian attendants who worked there under Gestapo supervision were in service of Jewish organisations. Not from any humane or political consideration, but for money. I was to wear the uniform of one of the Estonians who would stay home while I went in with his papers. [...] *Early in the morning of the*

[50] In German in the text.

[51] Jan Karski, *Story of a Secret State*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston 1944, pp. 339-351.

day we had selected, I left Warsaw in the company of a Jew who worked outside the ghetto in the Jewish underground movement. We arrived in Belzec shortly after midday and went directly to the place where the Estonian was supposed to be waiting to give me his uniform."

Karski's story is quite verbose, so I will only quote the essential points. Accompanied by an Estonian guard, he approaches the camp:

"As we approached to within a few hundred yards of the camp, the shouts, cries, and shots cut off further conversation. [...] *We passed through a small grove of decrepit-looking trees and emerged directly in front of the loud, sobbing, reeking camp of death. It was on a large, flat plain and occupied about a square mile. It was surrounded on all sides by a formidable barbed-wire fence, nearly two yards in height and in good repair. Inside the fence, at intervals of about fifteen yards, guards were standing, holding rifles with fixed bayonets ready for use. Around the outside of the fence militia men circulated on constant patrol. The camp itself contained a few small sheds or barracks. The rest of the area was completely covered by a dense, pulsating, throbbing, noisy human mass."*

Karski then dwells on the description of the crowd, repeating and enlarging on themes already dealt with in his paper of December 1942, but with an important addition: "*They were all former inhabitants of the Warsaw ghetto*." As in the preceding report about the "*marshalling camp*" located at 50 km from Bełżec, Karski mentions the trains of death and the narrow passages the Germans had set up to funnel the crowd into the cars, and then continues:

"And now came the most horrible episode of them all. The Bund leader had warned me that if I lived to be a hundred I would never forget some of the things I saw. He did not exaggerate. The military rules stipulate that a freight car may carry eight horses or forty soldiers. Without any baggage at all, a maximum of a hundred passengers standing close together and pressing against each other could be crowded into a car. The Germans had simply issued orders to the effect that 120 to 130 Jews had to enter each car."

After another digression describing the loading of the victims into the cars, Karski writes emphatically:

"I know that many people will not believe me, will not be able to believe me, will think I exaggerate or invent. But I saw it and it is not exaggerated or invented. I have no other proofs, no photographs. All I can say is that I saw it and that it is the truth. The floor of the car had been covered with a thick, white powder. It was quicklime. Quicklime is simply unslaked lime or calcium oxide that has been dehydrated. Anyone who has seen cement being mixed knows what occurs when water is poured on lime. The mixture bubbles and steams as the powder combines with the water, generating a large amount of heat. Here the lime served a double purpose in the Nazi economy of brutality. The moist flesh coming in contact with the

lime is rapidly dehydrated and burned. The occupants of the cars would be literally burned to death before long, the flesh eaten from their bones. Thus, the Jews would 'die in agony', fulfilling the promise Himmler had issued 'in accord with the will of the Fuehrer', in Warsaw, in 1942.[52] *Secondly, the lime would prevent decomposing bodies from spreading disease. It was efficient and inexpensive – a perfectly chosen agent for their purposes."*

After three hours, the forty cars of the train filled with Jews started to move. Karski continues:

"My informants had minutely described the entire journey. The train would travel about eighty miles and finally come to a halt in an empty, barren field. Then nothing at all would happen. The train would stand stock-still, patiently waiting while death penetrated into every corner of its interior. This would take from two to four days. When quicklime, asphyxiation, and injuries had silenced every outcry, a group of men would appear. They would be young, strong Jews, assigned to the task of cleaning out these cars until their own turn to be in them should arrive. Under a strong guard they would unseal the cars and expel the heaps of decomposing bodies. The mounds of flesh that they piled up would then be burned and the remnants buried in a single huge hole. The cleaning, burning and burial would consume one or two full days. The entire process of disposal would take, then, from three to six days. During this period the camp would have recruited new victims. The train would return and the whole cycle would be repeated from the beginning."

Even if Karski's account, in its various literary layers, is a simple fabrication, someone tried to improve on it, arguing that Karski had simply been wrong, that instead of visiting Bełżec he had gone to Izbica, a place some sixty kilometers farther north.[53] That could be true with respect to the "*marshalling camp*" of December 1942, but in 1944, as we have seen, Karski spoke specifically of the Bełżec camp:

"A few days after my second visit to the Warsaw ghetto, the Bund leader was to arrange an opportunity for me to see the Jewish death camp. The camp was located near the town of Belzec about one hundred miles east of Warsaw and was well-known all over Poland from the tales of horror that were circulated about it."

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52 This promise was another infantile invention of Jan Karski.

53 E. Th. Wood, S. M. Jankowski, *Karski. How One Man Tried to Stop the Holocaust*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York 1994, pp. 128f.

This is so clear that the book was published in the US with a leaflet by William Sharp containing four drawings which summarized its contents, the fourth one containing the following explanation:[54]

> *"He visited notorious Jewish death camp, disguised as Estonian guard."*

In 1987, in an interview given to Maciej Kozlowski, a journalist with *Tygodnik Powszechny*, Karski stated firmly that he had actually entered the Bełżec camp:[55]

> *"We went together* [with a guide] *to Lublin, then changed trains and finally came to Bełżec. It was in mid-October* [1942]*."*

At this time, Karski added a further lie to his original fabrication:

> *"I thought, then, that Bełżec was a transit camp. It was only after the war that I convinced myself that Bełżec was the final point of extermination."*

In his description of 1944 he unavoidably made serious errors, because, in fact, he had never seen the Bełżec camp. For example, that camp is not "*on a large, flat plain*," but on the side of a hill, and Estonian guards were never on duty there. Furthermore, the very basis of the story – that the camp guards could be bribed – is in flagrant contradiction to their being described, in the report of July 10, 1942, and others, as having "*lots of stolen money and jewelry*" and being able to pay 20 gold dollars for a bottle of vodka.

That the whole account has been completely invented is evident, by the way, from its basic premises. In October 1942, in order to investigate how the deportees from the Warsaw ghetto were allegedly exterminated, Karski allegedly went – on the specific instructions of the head of the Bund – not to Treblinka but to Bełżec! And at a point in time at which the first wave of deportations has been over for a month, he 'sees' there crowds of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto! Thus, if Karski's fable were to be convincing, it would be necessary for the Jews from the Warsaw ghetto to have been deported to Bełżec via Izbica! With total disregard for the intelligence of the victims of his fabrications, Karski did not even go to the trouble to check the location of Bełżec. He places it at a distance some 160 km east of Warsaw, whereas in reality it is nearly 300 km to the south-east of the Polish capital.[56]

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[54] Reproduced in E.Th. Wood, S.M. Jankowsi, *Karski. Opowieść o emisariuszu*, Wydawnictwo Baran i Suszczyński, Państwowe Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka, Kraków/Oświęcim 1996, documentary annex outside the text.

[55] "*Niespełona misja. Z profesorem Jenem Karskim kurierem polskiego podziemia w latach II wojny światowej rozmawia Maciej Kozłowski*," in *Tygodnik Powszechny*, No. 11, 1987. (No page number shown in the photocopy in my possession).

[56] This information is also in error for Treblinka, which is situated some 80 km northeast of Warsaw (by rail).

The whole story invented by Jan Karski has fallen into disrepute among official historians (despite isolated paroxysms),[57] but not the man himself, who enjoyed high regard among the official historians until his death in July 2000.[58] As Theodore O'Keefe has correctly said:[59]

> *"few alleged eyewitnesses to the Nazi 'extermination' camps have been as influential, and as honored, as Jan Karski."*

Thus the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* has an entry on Karski which, however, puts in doubt the acceptability of his testimony:[60]

> *"It is not quite clear whether Karski, disguised as a guard, actually did view the mass murder in the Bełżec extermination camp, as he later wrote."*

In Western countries, on the other hand, he was always careful, enjoying the mendacious fame of being an 'eye-witness' of the 'extermination camp' at Bełżec, to give support to the official story by his presence or his signature, without, however, detailing his 'testimony.' With the complicity of the official historians, he became the guarantor of the alleged exterminations in the gas chambers of Bełżec, for which the exhaust gas from a diesel engine was allegedly used. In this role he appeared, for example, in an Italian broadcast[61] and in Claude Lanzmann's famous film *Shoah*. In these Karski tells about his various 'missions' during the war, but without ever mentioning the Bełżec camp.[62]

Here is another striking example. In 1997 J. Karski wrote the foreword to the new edition of a translation of Rudolf Reder's book about Bełżec, which

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[57] E.g., on Oct. 7, 2003, p. L37, Germany's highly renowned newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* wrote: "[Historian Raul] *Hilberg's last book to date* […] *'Sources of Holocaust Research,' has silently abandoned some of the most famous, but obviously also least reliable witnesses like Kurt Gerstein and Jan Karski. Thus, the denier and the propagandist are complementary figures of our times.*"

[58] "*On September 10th, 2002, Polish Foreign Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz unveiled a monument to Dr. Jan Karski on the campus of Georgetown University. The monument is crafted as a park bench with Karski sitting on it*." http://polish-jewish-heritage.org/Eng/monument_karski.htm. In 1999, the book by Karski was published in Polish under the title *Tajne państwo: opowieść o polskim podziemiu*, Twój Styl, Warsaw 1999.

[59] T.J. O'Keefe, "*A Fake Eyewitness to Mass Murder at Belzec*," in *The Revisionist*, No. 1, November 1999, p. 1.

[60] E. Jäckel, P. Longerich, J. Schoeps (eds.), *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*, Argon Verlag, Berlin 1993, vol. II, p. 741; the earlier English edition of this encyclopedia does not mention Bełżec in its entry on Karski at all: Israel Gutman (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 7), vol II, p. 787.

[61] The "*Speciale-Mixer*" of Giovanni Minoli, broadcast for the first time by RAI 2 on June 21, 1989, at 8:30 PM. Cf. in this respect my comments in *La soluzione finale: Problemi e polemiche*, Edizioni di Ar, Padua 1991, pp. 208-219.

[62] C. Lanzmann, *Shoah*, Fayard, Paris 1985, pp. 183-196.

had first appeared in 1946,[63] needless to say without giving the slightest hint of his alleged visit to that camp.[64] Fraud in league with buffoonery!

4. The "*Soap Factory Using Human Fat*" at Bełżec

Even before the Second World War had ended, the legend of a factory established at Bełżec for the manufacture of soap from the corpses of the allegedly exterminated Jews was being circulated.

A report sent on August 30, 1942, by the Geneva Office of the Jewish Agency for Palestine to the US government and forwarded by the latter to the Holy See on September 26, 1942, contains the first germs of this legend:[65]

> *"Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto is taking place. Without any distinction all Jews, irrespective of age or sex, are being removed from the Ghetto in groups and shot. Their corpses are utilized for making fats and their bones for the manufacture of fertilizer. Corpses are even being exhumed for these purposes.*
>
> *These mass executions take place, not in Warsaw, but in especially prepared camps for the purpose, one of which is stated to be in Belzek* [sic[66]]. *"*

As we saw in section 1, by 1944 the legend of a factory for human soap at Bełżec had already started to take shape, and was disseminated in its initial form by A. Silberschein. In fact, the reports on Bełżec mentioned above state that in this camp "*the fat from the corpses was drained in order to – make soap from it*" and that the Germans had set up "*special factories for the production of soap and shoe polish from Jewish fat.*"

This juicy story then appeared in the *Black Book* in the following form:[67]

> *"In another place, still in the Belzec camp, there was a soap factory. The Germans selected the fattest people and killed them to make their soap. Arthur* [Israelevitch] *Rosenstrauch, a bank clerk from Lvov to whom we owe this report, even held a bar of this 'Jewish soap' in his hands. The Gestapo bandits did not deny the existence of such a 'factory'. When they wanted to scare a Jew, they said to him 'we will make soap from you.'"*

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63 Cf. below, Chapter II.1.

64 R. Reder, *Bełżec*, Fundacja Judaica, Państwowe Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka, Krakow 1999. Polish text and English translation with foreword by Jan Karski dated Washington, July 4, 1997, pp. 5 and 77.

65 *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1942, vol. III, p. 775.

66 The text received by the Vatican has the spelling "*Belick*." *Actes et documents du Saint Siège relatifs à la seconde guerre mondiale. Le Saint Siège et les victimes de la guerre, janvier-1941-décembre 1942*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, vol. 8, 1974, p. 52. This is the only mention of the Bełżec camp in the whole book; clearly it has been confused here with the Treblinka camp.

67 I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *op. cit.* (note 33), p. 214.

However, the most enthusiastic storyteller and spreader of this legend of human was none other than Simon Wiesenthal. In 1946, he wrote an article entitled "*RIF*," which opened with these words:[68]

> *"In the last week of March, the Rumanian press published a unique piece of news: In the little Rumanian town of Folteceni, twenty boxes of soap were laid to rest in the Jewish cemetery with all the traditional pomp and circumstance of a funeral. The soap had recently been found in a former German army depot. The boxes were clearly labeled 'RIF – Rein jüdisches Fett'* [RIF – pure Jewish fat]. *The boxes were destined for the Waffen-SS, and on the wrappers it said with full and cynical objectivity that the soap had been made from Jewish bodies."*

In reality, the acronym RIF stands for "*Reichsstelle für industrielle Fettversorgung*" (National office for industrial fat supply) and has nothing to do with human fat, much less Jewish fat, as was also admitted by the Jewish historian Yehuda Bauer in a letter dated January 9, 1991.[69]

Still, Simon Wiesenthal recounts profusely the fantastic story of the alleged manufacture of human fat:

> *"Toward the end of 1942, the terrible words 'transport for soap' were uttered for the first time! It was in the Government General, and the factory was in Galicia, at Belsetz*[sic]. *In this plant, between April of 1942 and May of 1943, 900,000 Jews had been used as raw material* […]*; certain solids* [of the corpses] *were separated and sent to northern Germany, and there, a special oil for U-boat engines was produced. The human bones went into the Lemberg bone mill, and there they were turned into fertilizer.* […] *What was left, the residual fat, was needed for soap production. In parallel with the human transports, other substances such as soda, kolophonium, and sand were transported as secondary raw materials. The Belsetz plant had a daughter company at Danzig; a portion of the intermediates were sent there. Belsetz was a model plant. Therefore, transports to this location had priority with the Ostbahn* [Eastern Railroad]. *The plant needed raw materials … and wheels turned for victory!"*

We see that before he embarked on his lucrative career as a 'Nazi hunter,' Simon Wiesenthal pursued the slightly less noble activity of a catcher of lies!

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[68] S. Wiesenthal, "*RIF*," in *Der neue Weg*, No. 17/18, Vienna 1945.

[69] http://www.nizkor.org/features/techniques-of-denial/appendix-7-02.html; cf. also Reuter press release of April 24, 1990, as published in, *e.g.*, *The Daily Telegraph*, April 25, 1990, "*Jewish Soap Tale was 'Nazi Lie'*"; cf. Mark Weber, "*'Jewish soap'*," *Journal of Historical Review*, 11(2) (1991), pp. 217-227.

Chapter II:
Origins and Development of the Official Historical Version

1. The Struggle between Electric Current and Exhaust Gas

On the eve of the Nuremberg trial, the version of extermination at Bełżec by electric current had vanquished the other versions and had been officially adopted by the Polish and Soviet authorities.

In 1945, Dr. Litawski, officer in charge of the Polish War Crimes Office, drafted a report on the alleged German extermination camps in Poland for the coming trial, in which he wrote:[70]

> *"The camp of Bełżec was situated in the neighbourhood of the railway station and was linked with it by a special track on which the trains carrying arrested Jews were brought close to the barbed wire of the camp. In the beginning only smaller transports of Jews amounting to several hundreds of people were sent to this camp. But early in April 1941 a bigger group arrived, about 5,000 Jews picked up in a street chase in the ghetto of Warsaw.*
>
> *Early in 1942 the first reports have been leacked* [sic] *out that special electric installations were used in this camp for a quick mass killing of Jews. On the pretext of bathing, completely undressed Jews were brought to a special building called 'baths,' whose floor consists of slabs through which flows electric current of high voltage. In this way big masses of Jews were killed; their corpses were cremated or buried in huge common graves."*

The Polish government, in its official report on the German crimes in Poland, presented by the Soviets as Document USSR-93 at the Nuremberg trial, wrote the following about the camp at Bełżec:[71]

> *"The camp at Belzec was set up in 1940 to take in deportees, mostly Jewish deportees. By and by, however, it was converted to other ends and used for the execution of countless Jews. In the early months of 1942, reports came in that in this camp, special installations for the mass execution of Jews were being built. Under the pretext that they were being taken to a*

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[70] AGK, MSW London, 89, pp. 3f.
[71] URSS-93, pp. 41f.

bath they were undressed completely and pushed into the building. A strong electric current passed through the floor of this building. Thousands of human beings were killed here. The guards plundered and robbed the inmates while they were still alive; after they had been killed they took anything that the Jews had left behind."

The following passage from the official report of the Polish government, document USSR-93, was quoted at Nuremberg by the Soviet Prosecutor L.N. Smirnov during the session of February 19, 1946:[72]

"I end my quotation here, and I call the attention of the Tribunal to Page 136, on the reverse side, of the document book; this is from a report of the Polish Government, which shows that the Camp Sobibur[73] *was founded during the first and second liquidation of the Jewish ghetto. But the extermination on a large scale in this camp really started at the beginning of 1943. In this same report, in the last paragraph on Page 136 of the document book, we may read that Camp Belsen* [sic] *was founded in 1940; but it was in 1942 that the special electrical appliances were installed for mass extermination of people. Under the pretext that the people were being led to the bath-house, the doomed were undressed and then driven to the building where the floor was electrified in a special way; there they were killed."*

On the other hand, the investigations conducted toward the end of 1945 and in early 1946 by Regional Investigative Judge Czeslaw Godzieszewksi of the court at Lublin and by the prosecutor of the Zamość court, Jan Grzybowsky, who interrogated dozens of witnesses, not only did not determine what the alleged method of extermination had been, but managed to create total confusion in this regard. In fact, the indirect witnesses who reported hearsay mentioned a jumble of various methods of execution without, however, being able to state which one was the actual or the prevailing one. For example, on October 14, 1945, the Pole Eugeniusz G. declared:[74]

"Being afraid for my own life, I did not ask the 'blacks' who worked in the extermination camp at Belzec by what means the Jews were killed. In general, people said that in the Belzec camp the Jews were annihilated by means of gas, others thought that electric current was used, others still maintained that they were killed in a chamber from which the air was pumped out for them to suffocate."

And on March 20, 1946, another Polish witness, Edward F., gave the following deposition:[75]

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72 IMT, vol. VII, pp. 576f.
73 Phonetic transliteration of Sobibór.
74 ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1136 (translation from Polish into German).
75 ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1223 (translation from Polish into German).

> *"They* [the Ukrainians on duty in the camp] *told me that several hundred Jews at a time were crammed into the barrack, where they were killed by an electric current; their corpses were then taken to the trench by means of a narrow-gauge railway."*

However, the final blow to the determination of the presumed methods of extermination came from the only self-styled eyewitness: Rudolf Reder.

On April 11, 1946, the Zamość prosecutor issued a report with the title "*Report on the results of the investigation in the matter of the extermination camp at Bełżec*," in which he summarized the results of his investigation. On murder method, he wrote:[76]

> *"It was impossible to determine what had been the method of killing of the people in the gas chambers. In particular, we could not ascertain whether the pipes which linked the engine with the gas chambers served to blow a gas into the chambers, to compress the air in the chambers, or to pump air out of the chambers. The witness Rudolf Reder, who worked in the camp at the time of the murder of the Jews, has stated that, while he was indeed on the ramp* [next to the gas chambers] *at the moment the doors were opened immediately after the people in the chambers had been killed, he never noticed any particular smell. The corpses in the chambers showed no unnatural discoloration. They had the appearance of living persons; usually their eyes were open. The air in the chambers, on opening, was pure, transparent, and odorless. In particular, there was no smell of smoke or of engine exhaust."*

Rudolf Reder was a Jew born at Dębica on April 4, 1881. From 1910 onwards, he lived at Lvov as a manufacturer of soap. He was interrogated as a witness by Judge Jan Sehn on December 29, 1945. He stated that he had been arrested in his city on August 16, 1942, and taken to Bełżec the following day. On arrival, the entire transport of some 5,000 persons was completely annihilated in an extermination building containing six chambers, except for eight persons, including the witness. They had responded to a request by one of the SS for specialist workers and had come forward, exactly eight persons out of 5,000! As the witness was already 61 years old at the time, it is not clear how he could have been selected for work. After a stay of more than three months in the camp, during which he miraculously stayed alive by various strokes of good luck, he no less miraculously managed to escape and stay in hiding until the Red Army arrived. He described in detail the alleged extermination building and added:[77]

> *"I am not in a position to say precisely what chemical process was used to murder the people in the chambers at Bełżec. I know only that from the*

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[76] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1226 (translation from Polish into German).
[77] AGK, OKBZN Kraków, 111, pp. 4-4a.

engine room a pipe, one inch[78] *in diameter, went to each of the gas chambers. Those pipes had their outlet in the individual chambers. I cannot say whether any gases were fed through those pipes into the chambers, whether they compressed the air in the chambers, or whether the air was pumped out of the chambers. I was often on the ramp at the moment the doors were opened, but I never smelled any odor, and on entering a chamber right after the doors were opened I never felt any ill effects on my health. The bodies in the chamber did not show any unnatural discoloration. They looked like live persons, most had their eyes open. Only in a few cases were the corpses bloodstained. The air in the chambers, when they were opened, was pure, transparent and odorless. In particular, there was no smoke from the exhaust gas of the engine. The* [exhaust] *gas was evacuated from the engine directly into the open air, and not into the chambers."*

In 1947, the *Glówna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce* (Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland) came to a dishonest finding on the method of murder to be attributed to the Bełżec camp. In the article "*The Bełżec extermination camp*" that appeared in the official bulletin of the commission, Eugeniusz Szrojt wrote:[79]

"It has not been possible to ascertain for how long the execution chambers, in the construction of which the witness Kozak was employed, functioned. However, there is no doubt that the chambers in the new building mentioned by witness Reder were functioning in August of 1942. Nonetheless, within a span of two months, during which the camp did not operate – the period between the middle of May and the middle of July – the new building was put up, a more solid and more spacious building for mass murder of the victims in order to be ready for the major operation of the liquidation of the Jews in the Government General, which had been scheduled for the autumn."

Szrojt was referring to two items from the evidence given by Stanislaw Kozak and Rudolf Reder, whom he called "*the two most authoritative witnesses in this respect*."[80] Neither item in evidence explained what had been the alleged method of extermination. We shall deal with the deposition by the former in section 3 below. The latter piece of evidence is nothing but the statement given by Reder before Judge Jan Sehn on December 29, 1945, already mentioned!

Despite this, Szrojt adds, a few pages on:[81]

"All of the witnesses who have testified on this point – except one – agree that the Germans killed by means of the exhaust gases from an en-

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78 *Cal*, Polish inch, corresponding to 2.4 cm.

79 E. Szrojt, "*Obóz zagłady w Bełżcu*," in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, Poznan 1947, III, p. 36.

80 *Ibidem*, p. 35.

81 *Ibidem*, p. 41.

gine set up in the execution building. The gases from the engine were fed into the chambers through special pipes with outlets in the chambers."

This was a lie on several counts. First of all because, as we have seen, none of the witnesses had named this method of murder as the only or at least the prevailing method. Second, because Szrojt equates self-styled eye-witnesses and witnesses who had never set foot into the camp and who uttered only hearsay. Third, because "*the two most authoritative witnesses in this respect*," Kozak and Reder, in fact had not mentioned this method, and fourth, because Reder had categorically ruled it out when he declared:

"The [exhaust] *gas was evacuated from the engine directly into the open air, and not into the chambers."*

In 1948, in a subsequent official publication of the Polish government (which had given official sanction to high-voltage current as the murder method three years earlier), asphyxiation with carbon monoxide produced by the exhaust gas of an engine became 'history':[82]

"With the victims in the gas-chambers, the final stage of the liquidation process commenced. The doors were securely locked behind the victims who were closely packed in the chambers. The engine was started up and carbon monoxide introduced into the chambers through special exhaust pipes. In a few minutes the cries of the suffocating people died down and after 10-15 minutes a special team of Jews opened the outer doors of the chambers."

Elsewhere, the so-called 'Gerstein report'[83] monopolized the attention of historians as soon as it was published and very quickly became the cornerstone of the proof that the alleged extermination camp at Bełżec (and, in the process, at Treblinka) was historical fact.

In a separate study of Treblinka, I have explained why and when the new method of murder by means of exhaust gases superimposed itself, in a textual process, upon the old method of steam and was elevated to the status of historical fact.[84] In this development, the decisive element, not only in the choice of exhaust gas as a method, but also for the type of engine that would produce it, was the 'Gerstein report.'

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[82] *Polish Charges against German War Criminals (Excerpts from some of those) Submitted to the United Nations War Crimes Commission by Dr. Marian Muszkat*, Główna Komisja Badania Niemieckich Zbrodni Wojennych w Polsce, Warsaw 1948, p. 226.

[83] The account, in a number of versions, of SS *Obersturmführer* Kurt Gerstein who is said to have visited, in August of 1942 the extermination camps at Bełżec and Treblinka. Imprisoned by the French, Gerstein died under mysterious circumstances (presumed suicide) on July 25, 1945. Cf. in this respect: C. Mattogno, *Il rapporto Gerstein: Anatomia di un falso*, Sentinella d'Italia, Monfalcone 1985; H. Roques, *The "Confessions" of Kurt Gerstein*, Institute for Historical Review, Costa Mesa 1989; C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 41f. and 126-132 ("*The 'Mission' of Kurt Gerstein"*).

[84] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 74-76.

At this point we should examine this most important point more closely. On January 30, 1946, Assistant General Prosecutor of the French Republic Charles Dubost presented to the Nuremberg tribunal a group of documents, classified as PS-1553, which included a report in French signed by Kurt Gerstein and dated April 26, 1945.[85] The report, in which Gerstein described one of his alleged visits to the camp at Bełżec, was not read into evidence, but another version, with the story of the gas chambers running on an engine, was published by the French newspaper *France Soir* on July 4, 1945, with the title "*J'ai exterminé jusqu'à 11.000 personnes par jour*" (I exterminated up to 11,000 persons per day).[86] Furthermore, on January 16, 1947, the German translation of Document PS-1553 was presented as evidence at the 'Doctors Trial' as Exhibit 428.[87]

Thus, at the beginning of 1946, the method of murder described by Kurt Gerstein had officially established itself in Western jurisprudence, and the Polish investigators did no more than follow suit. This, however, created a flagrant contradiction, which the official historiography has since preferred to gloss over: Notwithstanding the similarities between the tales of the two fundamental witnesses, Kurt Gerstein and Rudolf Reder – the most surprising elements of which cannot be verified objectively[88] – they differ on a by no means irrelevant point: Gerstein speaks of a "*Dieselmotor*,"[89] whereas Reder, just as explicitly, of an "*engine running on gasoline*," which consumed "*about 4 jerricans of gasoline per day*."[90] Also, in his booklet of memoirs, which came out in 1946, he mentions an "*engine functioning with gasoline*" ("*motor pędzony benzyną*"), which consumed "*about 80 – 100 liters of gasoline per day*."[91] Not to mention the fact that Gerstein attributes the death of the victims in the alleged gas chambers to the exhaust gases of his diesel engine, whereas Reder, on the contrary, states that the exhaust gases of his gasoline engine were vented not into the gas chambers, but into the open air!

When it became advisable to give some more weight to the story of an extermination of Jews at Bełżec and to quote both Reder and Gerstein together,

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85 IMT, vol. VI, pp. 361-364, 424.

86 Leo Kelber, "*Un bourreau des camps nazis avoue: 'J'ai exterminé jusqu'à 11.000 personnes par jour*,'" *France Soir*, July 4, 1945, pp. 1f.

87 Military Court, Case 1, Nuremberg, proceedings of January 16, 1947, pp. 1806-1815. A long portion of the document was published on pp. 1808-1814.

88 Cf. in this respect my study *Il rapporto Gerstein, op. cit.* (note 83), pp. 129-137.

89 PS-1553, p. 6; PS-2170, p. 6; T-1310, p. 14.

90 Interrogation of December 29, 1945. AGK, OKBZN Kraków, 111, pp. 3-3a.

91 Rudolf Reder, *Bełżec*, Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historiczna przy C.K. Żydów Polskich – Oddział w Krakowie, Kraków 1946, pp. 44 and 46.

it was sufficient to drop these irksome contradictions and to declare, as does Nella Rost Hollander:[92]

> *"These two witness reports are nearly identical, therefore they confirm each other!"*

The metaphorical duel described in this section, in its scope and its outcome, has an importance which goes beyond the single case we have dealt with, because it poses a general problem of historiographical method affecting all the fanciful versions that have circulated about the alleged extermination camps.

Official historiography now accepts that those stories are historically unfounded but tenaciously insists on granting them value insofar as, according to Pierre Vidal-Naquet, they are said to be "*like a shadow cast by reality, like an extension of reality*,"[93] and are thus, in their own way, real!

The problem is that the assumed 'reality' said to be casting this "*shadow*" is in itself historically unfounded, because it is based on 'eye-witness testimonies' the plausibility of which is exactly equivalent to those that have now been recognized as false. The abandonment of methods of murder prevailing until then (steam at Treblinka, chlorine at Sobibór, electricity at Bełżec) in favor of the new method of exhaust gas from a diesel engine does not relieve anyone of the responsibility of presenting new and decisive documents or evidence, or of new material findings, even if only out of opportunistic motives.

Thus it was necessary for the official historians to adopt a version, which, while maintaining a link with the witnesses, seemed at least superficially more credible, because they could obviously not call propaganda tales bordering on the ludicrous history. On the other hand, the murder method was made uniform for all three camps, as it was unbelievable that three camps under the same German authority were using such wildly differing methods of murder.

By 1965, when the Bełżec trial took place in Munich, the official historical and legal framework had been so firmly established that the defendants, in the hope of minimizing their sentences, could not but accept it unconditionally and proffer painful 'confessions.'[94]

2. Revisions and Contradictions by Michael Tregenza

Michael Tregenza, one of the major specialists on the history of Bełżec, has recently overcome the troublesome contradiction discussed above, in the

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[92] Nella Rost Hollander, *Belzec. Camara de gas. Tumba de 600.000 Mártires Judíos*, Stephen Wise Institute, World Jewish Congress in Uruguay, 1963, p. 4. Nella Rost was the author of the preface to the book of memoirs of Rudolf Reder quoted in the preceding note.

[93] P. Vidal-Naquet, "*Tesi sul revisionismo*," in *Rivista di storia contemporanea*, Turin 1983, pp. 7f.

[94] Cf. below, Chapter III.

only way that correct historiographical method requires: by declaring all the key eyewitness testimony inadmissible![95]

But if the two essential testimonies – those of Rudolf Reder and Kurt Gerstein – on which, for all intents and purposes, the official story of Bełżec is based, are inadmissible as evidence, how can one continue to state seriously that Bełżec was an extermination camp? To resolve this problem, Tregenza entangles himself in a contradiction no less troublesome: He rejects the self-styled 'eyewitnesses' who testified in 1944 and 1945 in favor of a swarm of minor witnesses who first 'spoke,' on his prompting, in the 1990s ("*Gespräche und Interviews mit den Bewohnern von Bełżec*"),[96] and of the defendants of the German Bełżec trial who, as we have seen, testified 20 years after the events and who, for reasons of their defense strategy, confirmed the framework of Bełżec based on the inadmissible evidence of the witnesses mentioned above!

Tregenza then makes several points, from which it is evident that Bełżec was not a 'shadow' camp. According to him, everything took place in broad daylight, so that the legends mentioned above could not at all be "*like a shadow cast by reality*." He writes:[97]

> *"Whereas Sobibór and Treblinka lay hidden and isolated and were removed from public view, this extermination camp lay right next to the heavily traveled rail and road links between Lublin and Lemberg, directly next to the village of Bełżec. Fences and watchtowers were clearly visible to the traffic passing through, as well as to the villagers. Thus, it is not surprising that both the camp and what happened inside were known to the local population from the beginning. After all, a group of workers was charged with the construction, which included the first gas chambers."*

Indeed, what strikes the visitor's eye most of all is the proximity of the camp to the road (the present national road 17, linking Zamość to Rava Russkaya and continuing on to Lviv, called Lemberg by the Germans at the time and Lwów by the Poles) and to the railroad from Lublin to Rava Russkaya.[98] Since the camp was laid out on the side of a small hill, with the gas chambers of the second phase as well as the mass graves allegedly located in the upper portion, a 3-meter-high fence, even if it had been interwoven with pine or fir branches,[99] would not have prevented anyone from observing all phases of the alleged extermination from some distance. The 'terrible secret' of Bełżec

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95 Cf. below, Chapter III.1.

96 M. Tregenza, "*Das vergessene Lager des Holocaust*," in I. Wojak, P. Hayes (eds.), *"Arisierung" im Nationalsozialismus, Volksgemeinschaft, Raub und Gedächtnis*, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt/Main, New York 2000, p. 246.

97 *Ibidem*, pp. 241f.

98 Cf. documents 1-3 in the Appendix.

99 ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1129 (translation from Polish to German), testimony of S. Kozak.

would therefore have become known immediately. In this regard Tregenza is even more explicit:[100]

> *"From the very beginning, every single villager knew what was going on in the camp. This resulted from the fraternization between the camp staff and the Ukrainian village population, many of whom entertained members of the SS and 'Trawniki men' in their homes and were well paid for their 'hospitality'. This apparently included prostitution as well. Some young women – according to statements by local people – were said to have done so with the 'Trawniki men' for jewelry and other valuables. Furthermore, prostitutes from other towns came to Bełżec. In the files of the Polish People's Police there are indications concerning a number of villagers who served in various departments of the camp SS. In particular, three sisters of the J. family worked in the SS staff kitchen and in the SS laundry which belonged to the B. family. The village bakery, owned by the Ukrainian N. family, provided the daily supply of several hundred loaves of bread for the SS staff, the 'Trawniki men,' and the thousand or so Jews working in the camp. A number of villagers took the bread by farm cart to the camp gate. One of them was the Jew Mojesz Hellman, who lived clandestinely in Bełżec under the name of Ligowski. The wages consisted of valuables and cognac.*
>
> *Four men were employed within the camp proper, among them Dmitri N., who checked and repaired the showers and baths of the 'Trawniki men.' Mieczyslaw K. and Waclaw O. worked as mechanics in the garage of the SS or as electricians. The electrician Michał K. installed cables and lighting in the second gas building, the so-called 'Stiftung Hackenholt'* [Hackenholt Foundation] *and is said to have occasionally assisted in the gassings. To the knowledge of the author, this is the only case of a Pole directly* [involved] *– voluntarily and with pay – in the mass murder of Jews in an extermination camp. It is also worth mentioning that the villagers Eustachy U. and Wojciech I. were not only allowed to own cameras but were even allowed, nay, encouraged, to take pictures of the guards of the extermination camp. Some of the photographs were even taken within the camp. The SS men and the 'Trawniki men' would also take pictures of one another and give the films to Wojciech I. for development and printing."*

Tregenza adds that the 20 men who, according to Kozak,[101] were forced by the SS to build the first gas chamber at Bełżec were in fact paid volunteers:[102]

> *"These workers were not forced to build the camp, rather, they were recommended by the village administration and were well paid."*

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[100] M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), pp. 246f.
[101] Cf. following paragraph.
[102] M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), pp. 247f.

In 1961, Heinrich Gley declared during the preparation of the Bełżec trial:[103]

> *"In any case, I was frequently ordered to do work outside the camp with a Jewish work detail. The tasks varied in duration, between two and six weeks. They took me as far away as 50 kilometers from the camp."*

The Polish witness Maria D. had already declared (on October 16, 1945) that some Jews working at the camp "*had the right to leave the camp perimeter.*"[104] And on the previous day the Polish witness Tadeusz M. had stated:[105]

> *"There were two groups of Jews employed in the camp: One group worked outside the limits of the camp, the other was not allowed to leave the camp and was charged with the removal of the murdered Jews from the gas chamber and with their burial. These groups were completely isolated from each other. The Jews who worked outside the camp had the right to marry and to write to their families. These letters were opened and any Jews in hiding could thus be found out. For the Jews employed within the camp, the Germans had organized a soccer team and a string orchestra."*

These descriptions prove, on the one hand, that in Bełżec everyone knew everything about what went on and thus the legends related above had no reason for being other than to serve as propaganda tales; on the other hand they show that the SS at Bełżec had no 'terrible secret' to keep and felt so strongly implicated in a monstrous crime that they allowed Polish civilians to enter the camp and take pictures of them!

3. Execution Chambers of the First Extermination Building: Narrative Origins and Recent Developments

As we have seen in the preceding section, the testimonies on the alleged execution chambers of the second extermination building at Bełżec contain gross contradictions, to which the official historiographers – except Tregenza – have preferred to close their eyes, pretending that these contradictions did not exist. But the only testimony on the alleged execution chambers of the first extermination building not only fails to mention an engine for the production of the lethal gases, but appears technologically inexplicable.

Stanislaw Kozak was interrogated on October 14, 1945, by Regional Investigative Judge Czeslaw Godzieszewski. He declared that, at the end of October of 1941, he was forcibly assigned by the SS to a group of 20 inhabitants of Bełżec to work on the camp (for Tregenza, as we have seen, they were volunteers and were well paid). Work started on November 1. These Polish workers

[103] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1285, interrogation of May 8, 1961.
[104] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1154 (translation from Polish into German).
[105] *Ibidem*, p. 1144.

built three barracks. The third is said to have been an extermination barrack. Kozak describes it as follows:[106]

> *"A barrack, right next to the siding, was 50 m long and 12.5 m wide. It was to be a day room for the Jews selected for work in the camp. The second barrack, measuring 25 m in length and 12.5 m in width, was destined for the Jews going to the bath. Next to it we built a third barrack, 12 m by 8 m. It was split into three rooms by wooden walls, each room thus measuring 4 by 8 meters; they were 2 meters high. The dividing walls were made of wooden boards nailed to either side, the space in between being filled with sand. On the inside, the walls of the barrack were covered with cardboard; the floors and the walls up to a height of 1m and 10 cm were covered with sheets of galvanized steel. From the first to the second barrack, which I mentioned above, there was a passage 3 m wide and having a barbed-wire fence, 3 m high, on either side. Part of this fence, toward the siding, was covered by means of pines and firs that had been specially cut down for the purpose of making the siding invisible.*
>
> *A covered passageway led from the second to the third barrack; it was about 2 m wide and high and had a length of some 10 meters. This aisle led to the corridor of the third barrack; there were three doors for access to the three parts of the barrack. Each part had a door on the northern side, about 1.80 m high and about 1.10 m wide. These doors, as well as those from the corridor, were tightly sealed with rubber. All the doors of this barrack opened toward the outside. The doors were very strong, made from planks three inches thick and protected against being pushed open by a wooden bolt that would be placed into two hooks specially mounted for this purpose. Each of the three rooms had waterpipes at a level of 10 cm above the floor. Furthermore, on the western wall of each part of the barrack water pipes ascended vertically to a level 1 m above the floor, ending with an opening directed into the room. The elbowed pipes on the walls of the barrack were connected to the pipes running below the floor. In each of the three parts of the shed we set up ovens weighing about 250 kilograms. One may assume that the elbowed pipes were later connected to the ovens. The ovens were 1 m 10 cm high, 55 cm wide and 55 cm deep. Out of curiosity I looked into an oven through the oven door. I did not see any grids. The inside of the oven seemed to be lined with refractory bricks. I did not see any other openings. The oven door was oval in shape and had a diameter of some 25 cm placed about 50 cm above the floor. Along the north side of this shed, at a level of 1 meter, a wooden ramp had been built next to a narrow-gauge track which led to the trench in the far corner of the northern and eastern limit of the extermination camp, which had been dug by*

[106] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, pp. 1129f. (translation from Polish into German).

the 'blacks.' […] *After we had finished building the three barracks just described, the Germans released us from work on December 22, 1941."*

The most surprising thing in this account is that the SS, after making the 20 Poles build the alleged homicidal gas chambers and the auxiliary barracks, had no qualms about sending home the holders of this 'terrible secret'![107] In addition, Kozak's story is incomplete since it lacks the fundamental element: the means by which death was to be inflicted. The story is even more mysterious because of the presence of an oven – without a grid, but with a refractory lining! – in each of the three rooms: What was the purpose of these ovens? Yitzhak Arad reports the testimony of Kozak without comment,[108] and that is very telling.

It is clear that Kozak, called upon to testify after the end of the war about the 'extermination camp' at Bełżec, reinterpreted his experience of 1941 accordingly and consequently distorted what he remembered. This is the only way to explain the strange mixture of divergent elements in his account. As Jean-Claude Pressac underlined in 1995, the description given by Kozak corresponds, in fact, more closely to a disinfestation unit[109] than to an extermination site:[110]

"Instead of a homicidal installation, one ought to accept the hypothesis of three delousing stations set up at Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka, whose purpose was prophylactic hygiene and the fight against typhoid fever."

Other historians have, on the contrary, tried to explain Kozak's description within the framework of official historiography, adding on fancifully. The first to do so was the witness Michał Kuśmierczak, who, while being interrogated by Regional Investigative Judge Godzieszewski on October 16, 1945, made the following statement:[111]

"One of the 'blacks' told me that they killed the Jews with the exhaust gases produced by a 250 KV[sic! KW] *engine, or rather asphyxiated them in this way; the motor was said to have been hidden 3 m below ground, at a distance of 30 m from the chamber. The exhaust pipe measured 7 inches in diameter and fed into pipes 2 1/2 inches in diameter. As soon as a transport of Jews arrived at the station, the engine was started up."*

Recently, this incredible story has been taken up by Tregenza, who has drawn a map of the camp at Bełżec with a phantom-like "*gassing engine in*

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[107] It would be even more surprising that the Germans paid Poles to build the alleged gas chambers!

[108] Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1987, p. 25.

[109] This explains the presence of the stoves. They were *Heißluftentwesungsöfen* = hot air disinfestation ovens.

[110] J.-C. Pressac, "*Enquête sur les camps de la mort*," in *Historama-Histoire*, special issue 34, 1995, pp. 121.

[111] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1150 (translation from Polish into German).

pit" and an "*underground gas pipe*."[112] But why place an engine in a pit, 30 m from the 'gas chambers,' and hook it up to them with an underground pipe? An impenetrable mystery!

4. The Number of Victims of the Alleged Gassings

On September 22, 1944, while being questioned by the Soviet prosecutor for the region of Lvov, Rudolf Reder declared that 3 million people had been murdered at Bełżec.[113] On April 11, 1946, the Polish prosecutor at Zamość, T. Chróściewicz, summarized in a report the results of his investigations on the Bełżec camp and wrote on the subject of the number of victims:[114]

> *"The total number of transports of Jews taken to Belzec amounted to some 500, with 439 having come from the direction of Rawa Ruska and 57 from the direction of Zawada. The average number of persons in one transport was 3,500. Multiplying this figure by the number of transports, i.e. 500, and adding the 100,000 persons taken to the Belzec camp by trucks, one can arrive at a total number of some 1,800,000 persons who were murdered at Belzec."*

In 1947, the Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland set the number of alleged victims for this camp at 600,000; this figure then passed into official historiography and is almost unanimously accepted even today, although it is based on an absolutely arbitrary method of computation. The assumption was that from March 17, 1942, until the beginning of May and from July until the end of September, or 133 days, one transport per day comprising 40 cars each with 100 persons per car on average, thus 532,000 persons altogether, had arrived at the camp, and that in October, November, and December there had been two transports per week of 4,000 persons each – another 96,000 arrivals – thus bringing the total number to 628,000, or roughly 600,000 altogether.[115] On the number of transports there was no document whatsoever; everything was derived from the testimony of the eyewitnesses, the most precise of whom had been Eustachy Ukraiński, who had spoken of 500 transports and 1,800,000 victims.[116] This testimony had appeared so convincing to the prosecutor of Zamość that in his report of April 11, 1946, as we have seen, he made it the basis of his calculation of the

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[112] R. O'Neil, "*Bełżec: The 'Forgotten' Death Camp*," in *East European Jewish Affairs*, 28(2) (1998-9), p. 59. In the caption on this page the author explains: "*All drawings by Michael Tregenza*." Cf. document 5 in the Appendix.

[113] GARF, 7021-149-99, p. 18.

[114] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1225 (translation from the Polish into German).

[115] E. Szrojt, "*Obóz zagłady w Bełżcu*," in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, Poznan 1947, III, pp. 43f.

[116] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1118 (translation from the Polish into German).

number of victims. At the time, a number of alleged victims in the millions was being bandied about,[117] with a corresponding number of transports attested to by the witnesses. Therefore, a computation of 600,000 victims, with no basis whatsoever in the eyewitness testimony, was, for all intents and purposes, arbitrary and unfounded.

The Central Commission's finding was really a clear attempt to justify, one way or another, the figure mentioned as mere conjecture by Abraham Silberschein in 1944:[118]

> *"On the basis of the number of Jews rounded up during the actions, who, as mentioned above, were all taken to Belzec, it is to be assumed that no fewer than* six hundred thousand *Jews from Galicia suffered a martyr's death there."* (emphasis added)

In its verdict in the Bełżec trial, the Munich Jury Court asserted the following:[119]

> *"Between March and May 1942 at least 90,000 persons and between July and November 1942 (after the erection of the permanent gassing building) at least 300,000 persons came to their deaths in the Belzżec extermination camp."*

But Adalbert Rückerl says in a note:[119]

> *"In Polish publications the total number of persons murdered at Belzec is given as 600,000. However, recent estimates by the historian Dr. Scheffler, based in particular on transport documents, arrive at an even higher figure."*

During the 1960s, Tatiana Berenstein tried to make the conjectures of the Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland more consistent in her study "*Extermination of the Jewish Population in Galicia (1941-1943)*," in which she asserted that at Bełżec some 550,000 Jews from Galicia had been murdered.[120] The article was accompanied by tables full of data on the deportations of the Jews, based almost exclusively on testimony.[121] The figure adopted by Berenstein corresponds to 87.5% of the total of presumed victims adopted by the Polish investigative commission, without the roundings (i.e. 628,000); the percentage of transports coming from Galicia, as indicated by the prosecutor of Zamość, is practically identical: 87.8% (439÷500). Arithmetically speaking, we have 628,000×439/500=551,384, i.e. about 550,000!

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[117] The witness Eugeniusz G. mentioned the figure of 2 million (ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1136). R. Reder, as we have seen, takes it to 3 million.

[118] A. Silberschein, *op. cit.* (note 30), p. 44.

[119] A. Rückerl (ed.), *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse*, DTV-Verlag, Munich 1979, p. 136.

[120] T. Berenstein, "*Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrikcie Galicja (1941-1943)*," in *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historicznego w Polsce*, 61, 1967, p. 29.

[121] *Ibidem*, pp. 32-59.

In this way, Polish historiography, in its arbitrariness, tried to justify the arbitrary findings of the Polish judiciary. This work was brought further along by Arad. In spite of the fact that his tables of deportations to Bełżec – which are not substantiated by documents – came to a total of about 517,000 deportees,[122] he nonetheless pretended to prove the official figure of 600,000 victims.[123]

Robin O'Neil has gone far beyond his predecessors, affirming that at Bełżec 800,555[124] persons were murdered. The list of transports that he used is, however, to a great extent the fruit of his imagination. Recently, Michael Tregenza has become even more radical; he writes:[125]

> *"Officially, we speak today of 'at least 600,000 murdered persons,' but on the basis of more recent research and diggings one has to assume a considerably higher figure – possibly up to one million."*

Actually, neither the new research nor the Polish excavations have brought forth even the slightest indication as to the number of victims of the camp's alleged gas chambers; indeed, the figure stated by Tregenza is based entirely on old testimony:[126]

> *"'The Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland', in 1945, came to the conclusion that the Bełżec camp operated for a total of 133 days and that over this period transports of 40 cars with some 4,000 Jews arrived at the camp each day. This corresponds to a minimum number of 532,000 victims. Later estimates assumed a minimum of 680,000 Jews that arrived at the camp. During the period with the highest number of gassings, in August and September 1942, there were three or more transports daily, frequently with over sixty cars, each car containing at least 100 persons. This amounts to a daily number of some 12,000 victims. Rudolf Reder, a survivor of the camp, has confirmed this figure. Other witnesses, among them the personnel at Bełżec station, claim that on certain days 15,000 or more Jews had arrived at the station. However, not all of them were gassed the day they arrived. If, for this period of fifty days, we add another 5,000 per day (to the 4,000 victims mentioned above) we would arrive at a total of at least 930,000."*

This figure is therefore not based on new documentary sources but on new historiographical aberrations: It is, in fact, composed of the old unfounded figure of 532,000, arbitrarily raised to 680,000, plus the new arbitrary figure of (5,000×50=) 250,000!

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[122] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 108), pp. 383-389.
[123] *Ibidem*, p. 177.
[124] R. O'Neil, "*Bełżec: A Reassessment of the Number of Victims*," in *East European Jewish Affairs*, 29(1-2) (1999), p. 104.
[125] M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), p. 242.
[126] *Ibidem*, p. 253.

Elsewhere, Tregenza, relying on such sources, committed a historiographical blunder of his own, because the testimony that 12,000 to 15,000 deportees arrived at Bełżec each day was tailored to the propaganda schema of the immediate postwar years, of 2 to 3 million victims; the role of the witnesses was precisely to substantiate such figures.

To justify his raising the ante on the number of the victims, Tregenza invokes another argument that is even less consistent:[126]

> *"There is much disagreement on the subject of the number of pyres at Bełżec. Witnesses from the village state that up to five pyres were in use, whereas SS personnel spoke of two pyres during the judicial proceedings in Munich in 1963/1964. According to their indications, at least 500,000 people were burned on those pyres. Assuming that a minimum of 500,000 corpses were burned on two pyres, one has to assume, for five pyres, a much higher figure – possibly twice as high – than the 600,000 persons officially assumed so far."*

In this way Tregenza not only attributes more value to the declarations of "*witnesses from the village*" of Bełżec than to the results of the proceedings of the trial at Munich, he also arbitrarily selects from these declarations those that mentioned a higher number of pyres![127]

But then he himself realizes the absurdity of what he has just written and says:[126]

> *"It is difficult to conceive that within such a short span of time – in only nine months – so many people could have been murdered under the supervision of not more than fifteen SS men."*

Indeed.

According to German sources, the number of Jews *deported* to Bełżec was 434,508.[128]

[127] Cf. below, Chapter IV.4.1.
[128] Cf. below, Chapter V.3.

Chapter III:
Witnesses and Defendants

1. The Witnesses Kurt Gerstein and Rudolf Reder

For several years now revisionist historical criticism has been demonstrating that the two fundamental witnesses to the assumed extermination of Jews at Bełżec – Kurt Gerstein and Rudolf Reder – are totally untrustworthy. Since the middle of the 1980s, the so-called 'Gerstein report' has been analyzed either by myself[129] or by Henri Roques;[130] I also studied Rudolf Reder during that period.[131] As we have seen in the preceding chapter, the two testimonies contain glaring contradictions, in particular on the essential point of the technique used for the gassings. This, together with other contradictions, absurdities, and incongruities, has led Michael Tregenza to a total and unconditional acceptance of revisionist positions:[132]

> *"At the end of 1945, only seven surviving Jews were known to have survived Bełżec,*[133] *one of whom was murdered a year later at Lublin by Polish anti-Semites. Of these seven survivors, two – Rudolf Reder and Chaim Hirszman*[134] *– testified to the mass murder in court after the war. Only Rudolf Reder, the most famous survivor, published a brief account of his experience in Krakow in 1946.*

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[129] C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 83); Mattogno, *L' "irritante questione" delle camere a gas ovvero da Cappuccetto Rosso ad ...Auschwitz. Risposta a Valentina Pisanty*, Graphos, Genoa 1998, pp. 76-121; C. Mattogno, J. Graf, Treblinka, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 126-132.

[130] A. Chelain (ed.), *Faut-il fusiller Henri Roques?* Polémiques, Paris 1986. English translation: H. Roques, *op. cit.* (note 83); cf. A. Chelain (ed.), *La thèse de Nantes et l'affaire Roques*, Polémiques, Paris 1988.

[131] C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 83), Chapter VIII, pp. 129-137 (on the witness Rudolf Reder).

[132] M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), pp. 242f.

[133] Rudolf Reder, Sara Beer, Hirsz Birder, Mordechai Bracht, Samuel Velser, Chaim Hirszman, and a Jew nicknamed "*Szpilke*."

[134] On March 19, 1946, Chaim Hirszman appeared before the regional historical commission of Lublin, but he was murdered the same day after his interrogation had been adjourned. Therefore, we have only a very laconic testimony from his side (Zydowski Instytut Historiczny (Jewish Historical Institute), Warsaw, Report N° 1476). As far as its content is concerned, it is so irrelevant that it does not even appear in the extract of testimonies on Belzec presented by Marian Muszkat in the official report of the Polish government on the German crimes against Poland. *Polish Charges against German War Criminals…*, *op. cit.* (note 82), pp. 227-232.

Judged in the light of what we know today, the two reports are contradictory and contain inconsistencies. Reder, for example, spoke of 3 million victims and gave false dimensions regarding the mass graves and the camp. He stated that Rumanians and Norwegians had been involved in the exterminations, which is incorrect, and he mentions an undocumented visit to Bełżec by Himmler. Hirszman, too, exaggerated the number of victims, speaking of 800,000 victims between October and December of 1942; he spoke of roll calls, which Reder, for his part, discounted; he spoke of children being thrown into the gas chambers over the heads of the women, which is improbable considering the height of the ceiling in the chambers.

Further information regarding Bełżec is limited to the frequently mentioned report of the SS officer Kurt Gerstein, the 'Gerstein Report.' […]

Based on the current state of our research, we must also designate Gerstein's material on Bełżec as questionable, even belonging to the realm of fantasy in some places. He gave erroneous dimensions for the mass graves, the number of guards he mentioned is too high, he assigned twenty to twenty-five million victims to Bełżec and Treblinka, he described the camp commander Wirth as 'a frail and small man from Swabia' (in reality, Wirth was tall and broad-shouldered), etc. In contrast to Gerstein's statements we must assume that he spent more than two days in the Bełżec camp. As he indicated to another witness,[135] *he was present there on several occasions. As has been ascertained by later investigations and statements, all three eyewitness reports regarding the Bełżec camp must be considered to be unreliable."*

It is no longer worth our while, therefore, to insist on the value of these two testimonies, which the leading official specialist on Bełżec has now called "*nicht zuverlässig*" (not reliable).

The devaluation of these witnesses has, however, forced Tregenza to revaluate other minor witnesses, starting with Dr. Wilhelm Pfannenstiel and the accused in the Bełżec trial. We shall consider them in the following sections.

2. The Witness Wilhelm Pfannenstiel

In the various versions of his report, Gerstein had mentioned Dr. Wilhelm Pfannenstiel, asserting that the latter had accompanied him on his trip to Bełżec. At the end of the war, the "*French Charges against German War Crimes*" section of the United Nations War Crimes Commission issued an arrest warrant, in which, on the basis of what Gerstein had written, Gerstein himself was considered a suspect ("[…] *and the name of the author of the re-*

[135] The witness Wilhelm Pfannenstiel. Cf. following paragraph.

port, Kurt Gerstein, who pretends to have fought this policy of atrocities").[136] Pfannenstiel was counted among the "*German leaders responsible for having ordered the policy of extermination of the detainees in various camps by means of gas chambers.*"[137] His name followed, in sequence, those of Hitler, Himmler, Eichmann, and Günther![138] The charge was the violation of article 302 of the penal code, which carried the death penalty. After being arrested by the Allies, Pfannenstiel was interrogated as one of the accused in the IG Farben trial (August 1947 to June 1948) on the subject of his relations with Gerstein, whose report of April 26, 1945, (PS-1553) had already been submitted as proof of the charges and accepted by the tribunal in the Doctors Trial. In order to save his skin, he tried to wriggle his way out, 'confirming' that he had been present at a gassing with exhaust gas from a diesel engine, but denying that he had ever been at Bełżec or Treblinka:[139]

"Q. Of what other concentrations camps did you know that they conducted gassings? You were also at Treblenka[sic]*?*

A. I do not know that at all.

Q. Belczek?[sic]

A. I have heard Belczek being talked about."

Pfannenstiel's 'confession' on the subject of the alleged gassing is very significant in view of the circumstances under which it was made. It was the first interrogation which the accused underwent, as is clear from its opening:[140]

"Pfannenstiel is sworn in.

Q. I could have interrogated earlier, but I waited until I had more material against you."

During the interrogation, out of the blue, the prosecutor von Halle asked Pfannenstiel:[141]

"Do tell us about the scene you have witnessed, won't you, with this diesel engine, how many chambers were there?"

The only previous reference by Pfannenstiel to the gassings had been:[142]

"Q. I want you to tell the truth about what happened at Lublin.

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[136] "[…] *et le nom de l'auteur du rapport, Kurt Gerstein, qui prétend avoir combattu cette politique d'atrocités.*"

[137] "*dirigeants allemands responsables d'avoir ordonné la politique d'extermination des détenus dans divers camps par l'usage des chambres à gaz*", S. Friedländer, *Kurt Gerstein ou l'ambiguïté du bien*, Casterman, Tournai 1967, pp. 14f.; Engl. see Saul Friedländer, *Counterfeit Nazi: the ambiguity of good*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London 1969.

[138] Rolf Günther, SS *Sturmbannführer*, head of *Abteilung* (department) IV-B-4a of the RSHA, under SS *Obersturmbannführer* Adolf Eichmann, head of *Abteilung* IV-B-4.

[139] Interrogation No. 2288 of Prof. Dr. Pfannenstiel by Mr. von Halle on October 30, 1947, p. 6; Staatsarchiv Nuremberg, KV-Anklage, Interrogations, No. P 33.

[140] *Ibidem*, p. 1.

[141] *Ibidem*, p. 4.

[142] *Ibidem*, p. 2.

A. I have told you the absolute truth. I learned later that at Lublin gassings were carried out with auto-gas."

Hence the gassings "*with auto-gas*" had happened at Lublin and not at Bełżec, and Pfannenstiel had not been present there with Gerstein, because he learned about them "*later*."

Still, Pfannenstiel, without at least asking – as would have been logical – to which "*scene*" von Halle was referring, was eager to reply, contradicting himself:[143]

"A. There were – I believe – six chambers in a slightly elevated building.

Q. The people inside were naked and squeezed together?

A. Yes, the chambers were being filled one by one.

Q. Were there any children?

A. Yes.

Q. How was the diesel exhaust introduced?

A. From a 1,100 HP engine. The exhaust pipes went into the individual chambers."

It is thus obvious that von Halle knew the Gerstein report, at least superficially, and that Pfannenstiel not only knew it, but also knew that von Halle did! And from such a scenario of intrigue the only result could be this kind of Kafkaesque interrogation!

In 1949, Kurt Gerstein's story was debated at the trial of Gerhard Peters, the former director of the DEGESCH company,[144] distributor of Zyklon B; it found a wide echo in the German press under Allied command.[145] But Pfannenstiel, in spite of having been acquitted on all counts by the Allied tribunals, still had to face the final hurdle of the German legal system. When he was interrogated by the Darmstadt district court on June 6, 1950, he was still a defendant, but by the next time (November 9, 1959), Pfannenstiel had become an important witness, and he would appear in this role at the Bełżec trial of 1965.[146] At that time, he began his career as the official guarantor of the truth of the Gerstein report, much to the benefit of the growing German historiography on the Holocaust. Pfannenstiel did not have to wait long for the results. He was acquitted for lack of proof in three proceedings against him by the prosecutor at Marburg on Lahn (a small act of gratitude on the part of the leaders of the judiciary), and all passages placing him in a bad light were expunged from the first official German publication of Gerstein's report of May 4, 1945, prepared by historian Hans Rothfels in 1953 (a small act of gratitude

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[143] *Ibidem*, pp. 4f.

[144] DEutsche GEsellschaft für SCHädlingsbekämpfung – German Society for Pest Control.

[145] Cf. for example the article "*Zyklon B gegen KZ-Häftlinge. Bericht über ersten deutschen Giftgasprozess*," in *Die Neue Zeitung*, Nr. 34, March 22, 1949.

[146] A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 119), p. 83. Cf. following paragraph.

on the part of historiographers).[147] It is therefore not surprising that, after 1950, Pfannenstiel would guarantee officially and publicly the admissibility of the Gerstein report (with the exception of the passages regarding himself).

In private, on the other hand, he could allow himself to express what he really thought. This he did in a letter to Paul Rassinier, dated August 3, 1963, in which he wrote:[148]

> *"Your assumptions regarding the genesis of his* [Gerstein's] *report, this most incredible piece of trash in which 'poetry' far outweighs truth, and also about his death, are in my opinion quite correct."*

Since Rassinier suspected that the report was neither true nor authentic and that it was drafted by the two American officers who were the first to interrogate Gerstein, it is clear that Pfannenstiel entirely discounted the veracity of the report. Further along in the letter Pfannenstiel explained that the mentioning of his name in the "*trash*" had caused him serious prejudice, and that in consequence he wanted to avoid at all cost a debate about his person; he asked Rassinier to exercise the greatest reserve regarding his name. And this is quite easy to understand.

The Gerstein report had thus become well known by 1959. In 1951, Léon Poliakov published a long extract of the April 26, 1945, version of the report (PS-1553),[149] which became an official 'historical document;' two years later, Hans Rothfels published the German report of May 4, 1945. Pfannenstiel could no longer play on the ambiguities. On the contrary, the "*Bericht vom 26. April 1945*" (Report of April 26, 1945) served as the basis for the interrogation of November 9, 1959, as is evident from the fact that Pfannenstiel expressly mentioned it.[150] During the interrogation, Pfannenstiel also referred to Gerald Reitlinger's book *Die Endlösung*[151] (The Final Solution); he was, therefore, well informed about the historiographical dogma of the time and knew well what he had to say. Pfannenstiel's 'confirmation' was no doubt copied from the 'Gerstein report,' although he found a way of inserting (on purpose?) additional contradictions and absurdities.

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[147] Hans Rothfels, "*Augenzeugenbericht zu den Massenvergasungen*," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1(2) (1953), pp. 177-194.

[148] Letter published as a facsimile by W. Stäglich and U. Walendy in "*NS-Bewältigung. Deutsche Schreibtischtäter*," *Historische Tatsachen* No. 5, Historical Review Press, Brighton 1977, p. 20.

[149] L. Poliakov, *Bréviaire de la haine. Le IIIe Reich et les Juifs*, Calmann-Lévy, Paris 1951, pp. 221-224; Engl.: *Harvest of hate; the Nazi Program for the Destruction of the Jews of Europe*, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, N.Y., 1954.

[150] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 44.

[151] The book was published in Berlin by Colloquium Verlag in 1956; first Engl. ed.: Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, Mitchell, London 1953.

Pfannenstiel declared that he had gone to Lublin together with Gerstein, and from there to Bełżec, where he witnessed the arrival of a transport of Jews:[152]

> *"Several railroad cars were pushed into the camp, containing some 500 Jews – men women and children.* […] *I wish to add that some Jews had died along the way. My impression was that the Jews in the cars were squeezed extremely tightly together."*

Now this is how Pfannenstiel describes the alleged event during the interrogation of November 8, 1963:[153]

> *"I observed the arrival of the train of some 12 cars, from which 300 to 500 men, women and occasional children disembarked. Nobody was shot. I saw no corpses being carried out of the train, either."*

The 500 deportees had thus become 300 to 500, whereas the "*children*" had transformed themselves into "*occasional children*." Furthermore, "*some Jews*" who had been unloaded dead now disappeared. Furthermore, if the 12 cars making up the transport contained 300 to 500 persons, the average load for each car was 25 to 42 persons, who could surely not be described as having been "*extremely tightly squeezed together*"!

Gerstein had spoken of 6,700 deportees, of whom 1,450 arrived dead![154]

Then Pfannenstiel described the first gassing:[155]

> *"Once the hair of the women had been shorn, the whole transport was led into a building containing 6 chambers. As far as I know, only 4 were needed that time. When the people had been locked into the chambers, the exhaust gases of an engine were fed into these chambers. Gerstein determined that it took 18 minutes for everything to become quiet in the chambers.* […] *Once stillness reigned, the outer doors of the chambers were opened and the corpses brought out, checked for gold teeth, and then piled up in a pit. Again, this work was performed by Jews. No physician was present. I did not notice anything unusual about the corpses. Some were bluish in the face."*

The "*bluish*" coloration of the corpses is dealt with (as is the rest) in the Gerstein report: "*On jette les corps,* bleus*, humides* […]"[156] (they throw the *blue*, wet corpses). As has already been noted, the victims of poisoning from carbon monoxide (contained in the exhaust gases of a diesel engine) have a "*cherry-red*" or "*pink*" color,[157] not blue.

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[152] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, pp. 138f.
[153] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 8, 1963. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 15.
[154] PS-1553, p. 6.
[155] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 43.
[156] PS-1553, p. 7.
[157] F. P. Berg, "*Diesel Gas Chambers: Ideal for Torture – Absurd for Murder*," in G. Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, 2nd ed., Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2003, p. 439 and corresponding references to the specialist literature in note 22.

Regarding the reasons for his visit to Bełżec, Pfannenstiel declared that at Lublin he had learned that Bełżec was a camp at which Jews were murdered; he asked SS *Brigadeführer* Globocnik, deputy of Heinrich Himmler, to be allowed to visit it. The latter, proud of his work, was happy to oblige.[158] Pfannenstiel justifies himself as follows:[159]

> *"The reason why I asked at all to be allowed to visit the camp is probably due to a certain curiosity on my part. I wanted to find out, in particular, whether any cruelties accompanied the killing of these people. I considered it particularly cruel that the killing took 18 minutes to accomplish."*

In contradiction to this, in the interrogation of November 8, 1963, Pfannenstiel declared:[160]

> *"On the other hand, if the concept of humaneness can be applied here at all, matters proceeded very humanely."*

Obviously, this "*cruelty*" was "*very humane*," if only because the duration of the gassing had dropped to 12 minutes in the interrogation of April 25 1960:[161]

> *"After some 12 minutes, things became quiet in the chambers. The Jewish crew then opened the doors leading to the outside* […]*."*

Furthermore, during the interrogation on November 9, 1959, Pfannenstiel declared he had gone to Lublin with Gerstein on August 17, 1942. This is the first time that he gives a precise date for this trip. Somehow, Pfannenstiel's memory seems to have become sharper with the passage of time. In the interrogation of October 30, 1947, he mentions no date; in the one of June 6, 1950, he makes the general statement that the alleged event took place "*in the summer of 1942*";[162] in that of November 9, 1959, he affirms that he had "*gone to Belzec on August 18 or 19, 1942*";[163] and in the interrogation of April 25, 1960, he finally states the exact date of the alleged gassing:[164]

> *"If you ask about executions of Jews, I must confirm that I witnessed an execution of Jews on August 19, 1942, in the extermination camp of Belzec."*

Of course, Pfannenstiel had only reread, more attentively, the Gerstein report. With respect to the objective of the Gerstein 'mission,' Pfannenstiel declared:[165]

> *"Gerstein had been ordered by Globocnik to take care of the disinfection of the large amounts of clothing that originated at Belzec."*

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[158] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, pp. 42f.
[159] *Ibidem*, pp. 43f.
[160] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 8, 1963. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 16.
[161] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on April 25, 1960. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 587.
[162] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 42.
[163] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 137.
[164] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on April 25, 1960. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 585.
[165] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 136.

No mention at all of a mission to change the operation of the alleged gas chambers. With this simple statement, Pfannenstiel completely destroyed the entire narrative structure of the Gerstein report. What need was there, really, to send a technician from Berlin on a journey over 700 km with a hazardous load of liquid hydrocyanic acid, merely to disinfest[166] clothing? And where and how would Gerstein have been able to carry out the disinfestation with liquid hydrocyanic acid? Furthermore, during the interrogations of June 6, 1950, onwards, Pfannenstiel had declared that Gerstein "*had already gone to Lublin and Belzec several times before*,"[167] thus inflicting another mortal blow to the story of Gerstein's alleged 'mission.'

Here's how Pfannenstiel described the motivation for his own visit to the Bełżec camp:[168]

> *"As far as I remember, Globocnik suggested that, as a Professor of Hygiene, I should occasionally go along."*

Thus, he had not asked permission from Globocnik to visit the camp out of a "*certain curiosity*," but had been asked to do so by Globocnik himself!

Later, Pfannenstiel would change his story again:[169]

> *"At that time, a certain SS Obersturmführer* [senior lieutenant] *Gerstein, who also belonged to the SS health office in Berlin, was questioned by Globocnik at Lublin about how best to disinfect these large amounts of textiles. Gerstein had recommended a certain product that could be sprayed on the individual layers of clothing. I did not know this product myself. Globocnik also asked my advice, whereupon I told him that it would be best if I could go and have a look at the camp."*

Obviously, as the "*large amounts of textiles*" were stocked at Lublin, there was no need for Pfannenstiel to go to Bełżec, or for Globocnik to give him the permission to visit the alleged extermination camp. Relying, here as well, on the Gerstein report, Pfannenstiel then devised a 'virtuous' reason to justify the alleged fact that he had witnessed a 'gassing:'[170]

> *"He* [Wirth] *asked me whether I wanted to observe such an extermination operation; after a long hesitation I accepted. My aim was, in fact, to report to the SS Reichsarzt* [SS surgeon general] *about these extermination operations."*

In the interrogation of November 8, 1963, Pfannenstiel perfected this explanation, asserting:[171]

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[166] With the term "*Desinfizierung*" (disinfection) Pfannenstiel meant "*Entwesung*" (disinfestation).
[167] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950, ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 43.
[168] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959, ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, pp. 136f.
[169] Interrogation on April 25, 1960, ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 585.
[170] *Ibidem*, p. 586.
[171] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 8, 1963. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 15.

"Thereupon I decided to stay in Belzec for the night, so as to be able to report to Berlin about the whole matter from my own observation. At that time, I firmly believed that nothing was known in Berlin about these things."

Here we have Pfannenstiel wanting to become another Gerstein and to inform, not the whole world, but Berlin about the alleged extermination of the Jews! Needless to say, the report by Pfannenstiel to the SS *Reichsarzt*, Dr. Grawitz, took place "*orally*,"[172] because there is no trace of it. As for Pfannenstiel's attempt to link this alleged report to the closing of the Bełżec camp,[172] there is no documentary evidence of that either.

In the interrogation of November 9, 1959, Pfannenstiel made another statement which is not a little extraordinary:[173]

"As far as I can remember, the German personnel at the camp consisted of about four persons."

Thus the extermination of 600,000 people would have been the work of four SS men!

Later, Pfannenstiel describes the gassing installation:[174]

"The gas chambers were lined up on either side of the corridor. The corridor itself was 3 m wide. I do not remember exactly the size of the chambers. I think they had a floor area of about 16 sqm. The doors of the gas chambers were equipped with glass windows, through which it was possible to watch what was going on inside. They were not actual windows, only small peepholes. The engine itself was not in a separate room, rather, it stood freely on a podium. It was run with diesel fuel."

On the subject of the murder engine, Gerstein had been extremely vague, saying only that it had been "*an old Russian diesel engine*";[175] therefore Pfannenstiel had to improvise. He invented its unique location in the open, and showed a double blindness, gross and contradictory, about its horsepower, which he reduced drastically from 1,100 HP during the interrogation of October 30, 1947, to 10 HP in the interrogation of April 25, 1960:[176]

"The Jews had to enter into chambers in the building, into which were fed the exhaust gases of a 10 HP engine, located in the same building."

If we remind ourselves that the diesel engine of the best Soviet tank of World War II, the T 34, had a power of 500 HP, it is easy to judge the value of Pfannenstiel's declarations.

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[172] Interrogation of April 25, 1960, ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 588.
[173] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 137.
[174] *Ibidem*, p. 138.
[175] PS-2170, p. 3.
[176] Interrogation on April 25, 1960, ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 587.

Moreover, Gerstein's engine was explicitly labeled "*old*"; it actually stalled, and it took 2 hours and 49 minutes to get it going.[177] Pfannenstiel's engine, on the other hand, ran smoothly right away:[178]

> *"There was no slowdown due to an engine failure. I would surely remember that."*

The doors of the alleged gas chambers were equipped with peepholes. About this, Pfannenstiel declared:[179]

> *"The peephole that existed in all the doors had quickly steamed up from the inside, so it was no longer possible to observe anything from the outside."*

Gerstein, on the other hand, was luckier and could observe the inside of the gas chambers clearly:[180]

> *"Another 25 minutes pass. Sure enough, many are now dead. One can see this through the little window in which the electric light illuminates the chambers for a moment."*

Pfannenstiel also disputes the dimensions of the alleged piles of clothing, 35 to 40 m high, 'seen' by Gerstein,[181] which he says were only one tenth as high:[182]

> *"The figures advanced by Gerstein are grossly exaggerated. In the report I possess there is a mention of 35 to 40 m in height. These figures are completely false. But even the actual pile of textiles with a height of 3 to 4 m was terrifying enough."*

Pfannenstiel, for obvious reasons, denied categorically the passages of the Gerstein report which place him a bad light. In the interrogation of June 6, 1950, he said:[183]

> *"I know that Dr. Gerstein gives a totally different account of this gassing scene. His account is wrong. It is full of exaggerations. His statement that he believes 25,000,000 people have been dealt with in this way is a typical example."*

He specifically denied ever having uttered – at least in a derogatory sense – the phrase Gerstein attributed to him: "*like in a synagogue*" with reference to the agonized victims of the alleged gas chambers, and most emphatically denied having gone to Treblinka where – according to Gerstein – he gave a talk praising the extermination of the Jews.[184]

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[177] PS-1553, p. 3.
[178] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 8, 1963. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 16.
[179] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959, ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 139.
[180] PS-2170, p. 6.
[181] PS-1553, p. 4.
[182] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 8, 1963. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 16.
[183] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 44
[184] PS-1553, pp. 4f.

All this is easy to understand, but Pfannenstiel makes another rather more enigmatic statement:[185]

> *"Through these* [doors] *Jewish detainees took out the corpses and threw them into large pits. The corpses were burned in these pits.* […] *From my point of view, the incineration of the corpses at the time was still quite imperfect."*

In the interrogation of April 25, 1960,[186] Pfannenstiel again sets forth his 'observations,' this time in greater detail:[187]

> *"From the inspection site the corpses were taken directly to deep mass graves that had been dug in the vicinity of the extermination installation. When the pits were rather full, the corpses were doused with gasoline – it may have been some other flammable liquid – and were then lit. I could only determine that the corpses burned just partly. Then another layer of earth was thrown over the corpses and then fresh corpses were placed into the same pit."*

This 'observation' by Pfannenstiel was in contradiction both with his own statements,[188] with the Gerstein report, and with official historiography (G. Reitlinger), and Pfannenstiel realized it full well. This could only be intentional. Why should Pfannenstiel want to deny this tenet of the Holocaust dogma?

The reasons which prompted Pfannenstiel to give official backing to the 'confirmation' of the Gerstein report (and to deny it privately later) are easy to understand, and there is no need to dwell on them. The content of Pfannenstiel's confirmation is totally dependent upon the Gerstein report, its one and only source. Even where he claims to have traveled from Berlin to Bełżec together with Gerstein, his statements contain no new or significant element which might actually stem from such an event; they do nothing but echo Gerstein's statements. In the rare instances in which Pfannenstiel tries to distance himself from Gerstein's testimony, he ends up talking nonsense, as in the case of the diesel engine's horsepower. From Pfannenstiel's account we can draw no new knowledge, no new documentation, no new proof. From the beginning, both the judges and the historians realized the incongruity of the Gerstein report. Thus, for example, León Poliakov's expurgation of the text he quoted, in the end falsifying it in an essential point.[189] Pfannenstiel's task was

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[185] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, pp. 139f.

[186] Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on April 25, 1960. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, pp. 583-588.

[187] *Ibidem*, pp. 587f.

[188] As we have seen above, in the interrogation on June 6, 1950, he had only said that the corpses had simply been "*in einer Grube aufgeschichtet*" (piled up in a pit), but not burnt.

[189] He falsified the surface area of the alleged gas chambers by writing 93 square meters instead of Gerstein's 25 and omitting Gerstein's figure for their volume (45 cubic meters). Poliakov realized full well that the correct quotation alone (700 to 800 persons in 25 square meters and 45 cubic meters) would have sufficed to disqualify the entire Gerstein report. Concern-

to rescale Gerstein's report, to eliminate its outrageous exaggerations in order to reduce it to an acceptable nucleus. Today, some official historians, such as Tregenza, consider Pfannenstiel's testimony more important than Gerstein's, which is (finally) regarded as inadmissible. But why was Gerstein, if describing an actual event, constrained to provide an account so demented as to render it inadmissible?

On this fundamental point, which could shed light on the actual impetus of the Gerstein reports, the official historiography is silent.

As for Pfannenstiel, his efforts failed: He diminished Gerstein's acceptability without being able to achieve his own.

3. The Bełżec Trial

The vagaries of the Bełżec trial were summarized by Adalbert Rückerl as follows:[190]

> *"The main proceedings against the only defendant still in the dock in the Belzec trial, Josef Oberhauser, lasted a mere four days, from January 18 to 21, 1965. The court interrogated fourteen witnesses. Thirteen of them had been members of the SS or the T4 organization at the time. The fourteenth witness was – as far as could be ascertained – the only one of the victims to have survived the Belzec camp. Among the witnesses were six suspects against whom the penal court had dropped charges. Five of them, as well as another witness, had since become defendants in the Sobibór trial. One of the witnesses was Professor Pfannenstiel, who had, at the time, in August of 1942, visited the Belzec camp together with Gerstein.*
>
> *During these proceedings, the defendant Oberhauser refused any comment regarding the case. He pleaded to having acted under orders and to having been sentenced previously, on September 24, 1948, by the Magdeburg district court for participation in the mass killings perpetrated at Belzec, with subsequent incarceration in GDR prisons on account of this sentence.* […]
>
> *The criminal section of Munich district court 1 sentenced Oberhauser for aiding and abetting in 300,000 cases of joint first degree homicide, as well as five further counts of aiding and abetting in 150 cases each of joint first degree homicide, to a total of four years and six months penal servitude and loss of civic rights for a period of three years."*

ing Poliakov's manipulations cf. in this respect my study *Il rapporto Gerstein, op. cit.* (note 83), pp. 208-227.

190 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 119), pp. 83f.

Aside from Oberhauser, the most important codefendants were Werner Karl Dubois, Erich Fuchs, Alfred Schluch, Robert Jührs, and Heinrich Gley; these, however, soon became mere witnesses.

As we have seen in Chapter II, by 1965, when the Bełżec trial was conducted at Munich, the official legal and historical framework in relation to this camp had already been consolidated; hence, in their efforts to minimize their sentences, the defendants were compelled to accept this framework.

What is striking in their depositions – and thus confirms their purely tactical and defensive value – is the extreme vagueness with which they replied to the essential questions regarding the camp: the structure and operation of the alleged gas chambers, the burial and incineration of the corpses, the transports and the records of the alleged extermination. Nothing new of any substance emerges from their statements. And when, for tactical reasons, something new does appear, it contradicts the official version. This, however, does not disturb official historians like Yitzhak Arad, who, by means of a convenient sleight of hand, manages to create a fictitious 'convergence,' where there is, in actual fact, a glaring contradiction.

In the chapter "*Die 'Aktion Reinhard': Gaskammern in Ostpolen*" ('Operation Reinhard': Gas Chambers in Eastern Poland) in a classic work of the 1980s, Arad writes:[191]

> *"Within four weeks, between 17 March and 14 April, close to thirty thousand of the thirty-seven thousand inhabitants of the Lublin ghetto were deported to Belzec. Within the same period an additional eighteen thousand to twenty thousand Jews from the Lublin district were sent to Belzec, among them three thousand from Zamosc, thirty-four hundred from Piaski, and twenty-two hundred from Izbica and other localities.*
>
> *The first Jewish convoy from the Lvov district came from Zolkiew, a town fifty kilometers southwest of Belzec. This convoy consisted of approximately seven hundred Jews and reached Belzec on 25 or 26 March 1942. Subsequently, within the two weeks up to 6 April 1942, some thirty thousand other Jews from the Lvov district arrived in Belzec.*
>
> *Among them were fifteen thousand Jews deported from Lvov during the socalled March operation, five thousand from Stanislawow, the same number from Kolomea, and others from Drohobycz and Rawa-Ruska. Most of those who were sent to Belzec from the district of Lvov during this wave of deportations were classified as 'unfit for work.'*
>
> *After eighty thousand Jews had been murdered in a major operation that lasted about four weeks, the convoys were suspended. Toward the end of April or the beginning of May 1942, Wirth and his SS men left the camp.*
>
> *Oberhauser made the following statement on the subject:*

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[191] Eugen Kogon, Hermann Langbein, Adalbert Rückerl *et al.* (eds.), *Nazi Mass Murder*, Yale, New Haven 1993, pp. 102-138, here p. 121.

After these first gassings, Wirth and Schwarz, together with all the German personnel, disappeared from the camp."

Arad thus makes Oberhauser the scapegoat of the story of the alleged gassing of 80,000 Jews, but the former SS sergeant had said something quite different:[192]

"The gassings of Jews in the Belzec camp up to August 1, 1942, can be divided into two categories. The first test series covered 2 or 3 transports of 4 to 6 cars with 20 to 40 persons each. On average, 150 Jews arrived with each transport and were killed. These gassings were not yet carried out within the framework of a systematic program of extermination; the aim was to test the capacity of the camp and to determine technically how gassings could be carried out.

After these first gassings, Wirth and Schwarz as well as the whole German crew disappeared from Belzec."

Oberhauser hence refers to the gassings of 2 to 3 transports of 150 persons each, at most 450 altogether, whereas Arad makes him responsible for the gassing of 80,000 persons!

The Jewish historian was obliged to have recourse to this base deception because the contradiction between Oberhauser's version and the official one is simply too stark to be reconciled.

Arad's historical 'reconstruction' continues:[193]

"In mid-May Wirth returned to Belzec. During the latter half of the month two smaller convoys reached the camp, bringing 1,350 Jews from the ghettos of Laszczow and Komarow, near Zamosc.[28] In early June convoys began to arrive from the Cracow district. Three, consisting of five thousand Jews in all, came between 1 and 6 June. A total of eleven thousand more victims, from the city of Crakow and its surrounding areas, reached Belzec between 11 and 13 June. They were followed shortly afterward by another forty-five hundred."

Hence, during this period, another 21,850 Jews are alleged to have been gassed. However, Oberhauser had this to say on the matter:[194]

"For another 6 weeks, things were quiet in the Belzec camp. […] *then there was another test series up to August 1, 1942. During this time, as far as I know, we had 5 or 6 transports consisting of 5 to 7 cars with 30 to 40 persons each coming to Belzec. The Jews of two of these transports were still gassed in the small chamber, then Wirth had the gassing barrack torn down and replaced it with a solid new building with a higher capacity. The Jews of the remaining transports were then gassed in this new gassing building."*

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[192] Interrogation of J. Oberhauser on December 12, 1962. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, pp. 1683f.
[193] E. Kogon *et al.* (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 191), p. 121f.
[194] Interrogation of J. Oberhauser on December 12, 1962. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1685.

Thus, according to Oberhauser, the number of gassing victims was at most 1,680, a figure quite different from the 21,850 presented by Arad. In further contradiction to the official version, Oberhauser asserted:[194]

> *"Whereas during the first test series and the first two transports of the second test series bottled gas was still used for the gassings, the Jews of the last transports of the second test series were killed with the exhaust gas of the tank engine or truck engine, which Hackenholt operated."*

This means that the alleged first gassing building was not equipped with an engine for the production of the deadly exhaust gas. With respect to the use of "*bottled gas*," Oberhauser gave no details, nor did he describe the new building, the burials, or the burning of the corpses.

The judges did not seem overly worried about these strident contradictions. They asked no explanations of the defendant, and handed everything over to the historians.

The statements of Werner Karl Dubois, who was a driver at Bełżec, are on the other hand rather general. On the question of the alleged gas chambers, he came up with nothing better than:[195]

> *"It has just been asked how large the gas chambers may have been or how many persons they would have been able to accommodate. I cannot answer this, in the same way that I cannot say anything about the engine used. I cannot even offer an appropriate estimate. I never saw the gas chambers from the inside. The engine was inside the building in which the gas chambers were located as well. I never saw that engine either."*

Considering that the camp was rather small and that the SS personnel numbered a dozen men or so, this witness' statement is curious, to say the least – unless he had never seen the presumed gas chambers from the outside, either.

He had seen something, though:[196]

> *"With my own eyes I have seen that a transport consisted of at least 20 and up to 40 cars."*

"*Some 15 cars for unloading*" entered the camp and "*at least 30 and up to 50 people were transported in one car*," so that the maximum load of a train would be 2,000 persons, i.e. half the figure commonly accepted.

He relates activities that would not really be in keeping with those of an extermination camp:[197]

> *"Thus it happened occasionally that I did clean-up operations in the installations of the former demarcation line with a Jewish work detail. A number of shelters contained equipment still serviceable, such as machine*

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[195] Interrogation of Werner Karl Dubois on September 16, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1398.
[196] *Ibidem*, p. 1402.
[197] *Ibidem*, p. 1396.

guns, etc. This equipment would be collected and taken to the equipment depot."

"It also happened that I organized a soccer match with 22 Jews on the sports ground; Jews from No. 1 camp were able to watch it under proper guard."[198]

The testimony of Heinrich Gley, a former SS *Scharführer* (sergeant), is also rather pallid, except for some details about the incineration of corpses, which I shall consider in chapter V.

His knowledge of the alleged extermination installations of the camp can be judged in the light of the following statement:[199]

"After the doors of the gas chambers had been closed, a large engine – I don't know whether it was a diesel or an Otto [gasoline] *engine – was started up by a mechanic from the Hiwi* [auxiliaries] *section. The exhaust fumes of this engine were fed into the chambers and caused the death of the Jews."*

This means that he did not even know whether the alleged murder weapon was a diesel or a gasoline engine!

Robert Jührs was transferred to Bełżec in August 1942. He, too, offered nothing but general and uninteresting statements, with one exception, which, however, collides with the official version:[200]

"The corpses from the gas chambers were taken to the burial area not by carts but manually and directly by the Jewish work detail."

This signifies that the 600,000 corpses attributed to Bełżec were hand-carried, one by one, to the mass graves!

Karl Alfred Schluch, who had been assigned to Bełżec from April 1942 through August 1943[201] – except for sick leave between October 1942 and February/March 1943 – furnished a more detailed account of the alleged extermination process than did the other defendants:[202]

"When the Jews had entered the gas chambers, the doors were closed by Hackenholt himself or by one of the Ukrainians under his command. Then Hackenholt started the engine, with which the gassing was carried out. After some 5 to 7 minutes – this is only my estimate – the death of all inside was ascertained by looking through the peephole. Only then were the outer gates opened and the chambers aired […]*."*

The duration of the victims' agony – even if roughly estimated – is in general too short, even in light of the 'determination' of the tribunal, which set it

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[198] *Ibidem*, p. 1394.
[199] Interrogation of Heinrich Gley on May 8, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1291.
[200] Interrogation of Robert Jührs on October 11, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1465.
[201] Interrogation of Karl Alfred Schluch on April 11, 1962. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1247.
[202] Interrogation of Karl Alfred Schluch on November 10, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1512.

at 15 to 30 minutes.[203] Rather than being an estimate, it is reminiscent of something in the testimony of Stanislaw Kozak, dated February 19, 1946, which had been translated into German and admitted into the trial proceedings:[204]

"To poison a person, 7 minutes in the 'bath' are needed."

A novelty worth noting is the ventilation of the alleged gas chambers mentioned by the witness. Taking into account the density of carbon monoxide of 0.967 (relative to air), which is practically equal to that of hydrogen cyanide (0.969), and mindful that killing the victims within 15–30 minutes would have required reaching a lethal concentration of some 5,000 parts per million (5.7 milligrams/liter)[205] within the gas chambers, it would certainly have been necessary to ventilate the chambers or to wear an independent breathing apparatus on entering, but none of the main witnesses ever mentioned this. This witness, however, describes the victims of the presumed gassings thus:[206]

"After the gas chambers had been ventilated, a Jewish work detail arrived, led by a Kapo, and removed the corpses from the chambers.

I was occasionally on duty at this site, and I can thus describe the operations in detail, because I saw and witnessed everything myself.

The Jews had been squeezed very tightly into the gas chambers. For this reason, the corpses were not found lying on the floor, rather they stood this way or that, leaning against one another, some forward some backward, depending on the space they had, some kneeling. At least some of the corpses were wet with feces and urine, others with saliva. I could clearly see that some of them showed a bluish discoloration at the lips or the tip of the nose. Some of them had their eyes closed, others' eyes had rolled up. The corpses were pulled out of the chambers and immediately examined by a dentist. The dentist removed any rings from their fingers and extracted any gold teeth present. The objects of value thus recovered were thrown by him into a carton provided for this purpose."

This is copied straight out of the 'Gerstein report,' which describes the scene in the following terms:[207]

"The dead are standing upright, like columns of basalt. […]

They throw out the corpses – wet with sweat and urine, dirty with feces, with menstrual blood down their legs."

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[203] *Urteilsbegründung* (judicial opinion) in the Bełżec trial, in A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 119), p. 135.

[204] ZStL, 8AR-Z 252/59, p. 1131.

[205] According to F. Flury, the concentration of CO at 5,000 p.p.m. is "*in 5-10 Minuten tödlich*" (lethal within 5-10 minutes). F. Flury, F. Zernik, *Schädliche Gase, Dämpfe, Nebel, Rauch- und Staubarten*, Verlag von Julius Springer, Berlin 1931, p. 209.

[206] Interrogation of Karl Alfred Schluch on November 10, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1513.

[207] PS-2170, p. 6.

This is confirmed by the inevitable reference to the "*bluish*" color of the corpses, again taken from the 'Gerstein report,' with which I have already dealt above.

It should also be mentioned that people tightly pressed together in a room would not stand upright after they died. Their knees would bend one way or another, and their bodies would thus slump. It is furthermore worth noting that it would not exactly have been the epitome of German organizational genius to have 600,000 corpses checked by *one* dentist!

The witness then relates the burial of the victims in mass graves:[206]

> *"After this procedure, the corpses were thrown into the large pits already prepared. I can state the dimensions of a pit only in a rough way. It could have measured some 30 m in length by 20 m across. The depth is more difficult to guess, because the side walls were at an angle and, moreover, the loose earth had been piled up along the edges. I think, though, that the pit may have been 5 to 6 m deep."*

The interesting point here – as we shall see in Chapter V – is the mention of the earth removed from the pit and piled up near its edge. The witness says nothing about the total number of pits or the total number of corpses thrown into the pit he refers to.

Schluch claimed to have been on duty at the gas chambers, but in spite of this he did not even know how many there were:[206]

> *"How many gas chambers there were at Belcec*[sic] *I cannot say exactly. There must have been several because, after the gassings, corpses were taken out through the doors both on the left and on the right hand side. Just like any other member of the Belcec staff, I imagine, I inspected the gas chambers. Besides, when we were assigned for duty there, we also had to check the gas chambers."*

He does know the dimensions of the gas chambers, though:[208]

> *"The gas chamber at Belcec may have measured 4 x 8 meters."*

Here, the poor witness gets mixed up between the dimensions of the *new* gas chambers and the *old*, just as Kozak did.[209]

Elsewhere, Schluch's testimony shows another surprising omission:[208]

> *"How the gas was fed into the chamber, I can no longer recall."*

The instrument of murder was a "*diesel engine*," but unfortunately K.A. Schluch had not seen it and could not describe it:[209]

> *"For the gassings an engine was started up. I cannot give a more detailed description of the engine, because I never saw it. I am not a specialist, but I would say that, judging from the sound, it was a medium-size diesel engine."*

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[208] Interrogation of Karl Alfred Schluch on November 10, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1514.

[209] ZStL, 8 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1129.

Erich Fuchs, former SS *Scharführer* (sergeant), explained that he had been sent to Bełżec in the winter of 1941:[210]

> *"When we arrived at Belcec* [sic] *we met Friedel Schwarz and two SS men whose names I cannot remember. They were guarding a barrack structure, which we were to equip as a gas chamber.*
>
> *Wirth told us that 'all Jews were to be killed off' at Belcec. For this purpose, the barracks* [plural in the original German – ed.] *were to be turned into gas chambers. I installed shower heads in the gas chambers. These shower heads were not hooked up to a water pipe, because they were only meant as a disguise for the gas chambers. The Jews to be gassed were, in fact, falsely told that they were to be bathed and disinfected."*

As we have seen above, the witness Stanislaw Kozak stated he built the barrack housing the gas chambers between November 1 and December 22, 1941. Erich Fuchs spoke, on the other hand, of barracks being "*turned into gas chambers*." Which barracks, if the alleged gassing barrack was a single one? And in what way were these "*barracks* […] *turned into gas chambers*"? Simply by equipping them with fake shower heads! Precisely because they were crude fakes, these showers wouldn't have worked "*as a disguise*," but would immediately have aroused the suspicion of the intended victims.

Fuchs further testified that he had been present at the gassing of the first transport of Jews, some 1,000 persons, "*in the so-called bath room (gas chamber),*" thus adopting the terminology of the Polish witnesses just as he had accepted the fake showers. He later stated that he had been present at two other transports, without supplying any pertinent details.[211]

In conclusion, the witnesses at the Bełżec trial followed, more or less freely, depending upon their tactical aims, the dictates of the official historiography on Bełżec, founded upon the 'Gerstein report' and upon the Polish testimonies of the years 1945/1946. Their statements read like vague summaries of earlier court reports, without adding to these any important new findings. Like the court reports, the testimonies are absolutely devoid of any objective or documentary evidence. These declarations have, no doubt, a legal value – which, however, has nothing to do with a demonstration of the truth or with historiography.

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[210] Interrogation of Erich Fuchs, ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, pp. 1782f.
[211] *Ibidem*, p. 1783.

Chapter IV:
Bełżec in Polish Archeological Research (1997 to 1999)

1. The Mass Graves

In 1997, the Rada Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa (Council for safeguarding the remembrance of struggle and martyrdom) of Warsaw, together with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum of Washington, D.C., decided to undertake archeological diggings within the area of the former camp at Bełżec, with the principal aim of identifying the mass graves described by witnesses. The work was conducted by a team of archeologists from the Nicolas Copernicus University of Toruń, led by Professor Andrzej Kola; it was conducted in phases: in 1997 from October 12 through 25, in 1998 from April 27 through June 6 and from October 25 through November 14, and finally in 1999 from September 12 through 25. The historians Robin O'Neil and Michael Tregenza took part in the project in 1997 and 1998; the latter, on his own account, investigated the area with a metal detector. In 2002, Kola wrote a paper on the diggings entitled "*Hitlerowski obóz zagłady Żydów w Bełżcu w świetle źródeł archeologicznych. Badania 1997-1999*,"[212] published in English under the title "*Bełżec: The Nazi Camp for Jews in the light of archeological sources: Excavations 1997-1999*."[213] During the research, drilling was conducted out in the designated area at 5 m intervals with a manual drill some 6 to 8 m long and with a diameter of 65 mm. Altogether 2,227 drillings were sunk, and mass graves were identified by 236 of them. The earth samples taken in this way were then analyzed to determine their contents. This research resulted in the discovery of 33 graves in two separate areas of the camp; Kola provides a drawing and a brief description for each of them. He then summarizes his observations as follows:[214]

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[212] Rada Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa/United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Warsaw/Washington 2000.

[213] The Council for the Protection of Memory and Martyrdom, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Warsaw-Washington 2000.

[214] A. Kola, *Bełżec: The Nazi Camp for Jews in the light of archeological sources: Excavations 1997-1999, op. cit.* (note 213), pp. 38-40. The imperfect English in the following excerpts is derived from the USHMM's English translation of Kola's Polish original.-ed.

"The first zone, probably the older one, contained the graves appearing close to the other in western and north-western part of the camp. […]. *That was probably the place, where they started burying the victims. Generally 21 graves were reported in that area, which makes nearly 64% of the whole number in that site. The largest graves were also registered in that part. One can not exclude, however, that several of them (reported as graves of a big volume) were previously some separated smaller ones, which borders mixed either during covering them with soil, covering the traces of the camp up after closing the camp down or result of burglary searches after the war.* […] *The other zone of the graves' appearance takes up the north-eastern area of the camp. 12 graves were reported here (about 36% of the total number), with more regular forms (mainly of a rectangle view), which differed from one other in size and appearing in significant scattering. In the area of those graves, transformation of ground, characteristic for the first zone does not occur at all, or very rarely. The other parts of the camp are free from graves. The majority of graves situated here reached the depth between 4,00-5,00 m. One can suppose that those depths were regarded as the optimum ones; underground waters appeared at bigger depths. In the first zone, as we can suppose, connecting smaller neighbouring graves into bigger ones by destroying earth walls separating them was observed. That is why the bigger graves show clearly former original pits. The structures of grave contents in both zones are similarly varied. One can report graves filled with bodies in wax-fat transformation (in bottom parts of the ditches, as a rule), over which there are layers of body ashes and charcoal. Similar structure was reported in 10 graves (No 1, 3, 4, 10, 13, 20, 25, 27, 28, 32). In the rest of the graves in number of 23 only the layers of crematory ashes as well as charcoal placed on a few levels with sandy ground were observed. In non crematory graves, there was often a layer of lime placed over the bodies, which purpose was to quicken the process of decomposition of the corpses. The total surface of the burial pits at the area of the camp amounts about 0,52*[215] *ha, which states barely 9% of the camp territory in the present, enclosed shape.*[216] *The total volume of the graves is estimated for about 21,000 m³. The big number contains mainly ashes of bodies, which made killing and burying hundreds of thousands of people in one place possible."*

In the table below I have summarized the details of the dimensions of the graves:

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215 Actually 0.59 hectares (about 1.5 acres). Cf. below.

216 In the southeast, the original surface area of the camp extended beyond the present boundary and measured about 6.2 hectares.

#	Dimensions [m]	Depth [m]	Surface [m^2]	Est'd. volume, [m^3]
1	40×12	4.80	480	1,500
2	14×6	2.00	84	170
3	16×15	5.00	240	960
4	16×6	2.30	96	250
5	32×10	4.50	320	1,350
6	30×10	4.00	300	1,200
7	13–14×27	4.50	364.5	1,600
8	28×10	4.00	280	850
9	8×10	3.80	80	280
10	24×18	4.25–5.20	432	2,100
11	9×5	1.90	45	80
12	6×16×11.50×18	4.00	~132	400
13	12.50×11×17×18[217]	4.80	~200	920
14	37×10	5.00	370	1,850
15	13.50×6.50	4.50	87.75	400
16	18.50×9.50	4.00	175.75	700
17	17×7.50	4.00	127.5	500
18	16×9	4.00	144	570
19	12×12	4.00	144	500
20	26×11	5.00	286	1,150
21	5×5	1.70	25	35
22	9×15	3.50	135	200
23	16×8.50	4.00	136	550
24	20×5.50	5.00	110	520
25	13×5	4.00	65	250
26	13×7	4.00	91	320
27	18.50×6.00	5.00	111	450
28	?	?	~17.5[218]	70
29	25×9	4.50	225	900
30	5×6	2.70	30	75
31	9×4	2.60	36	90
32	15×5	4.00	75	400
33	9×5	3.00	45	120
		Total:	5,490	21,310

The 33 graves thus have a total surface area of 5,919 square meters and a total volume of 21,310 cubic meters.

[217] Dimension taken from the drawing.
[218] Assuming an average depth of 4 meters.

2. Comparison of Research Results with Testimonies and Judicial Findings

2.1. Testimonies

As we have explained above, Kurt Gerstein and Rudolf Reder are the two principal witnesses regarding the camp at Bełżec. Both of them give a detailed description of the mass graves. In a declaration made before the Jewish historical commission in 1945, Reder stated:[219]

> *"A grave was 100 m long and 25 m wide. A single grave contained about 100,000 persons. In November 1942 there were 30 graves, i.e. 3 million corpses."*

During the interrogation, which was conducted by the investigative judge Jan Sehn on December 29, 1945, the witness strengthened his declaration further:[220]

> *"The graves were all dug to the same dimensions and measured 100 m in length, 25 m in width and 15 m in depth."*

In his famous report of April 26, 1945, Gerstein wrote:[221]

> *"Then the naked bodies were thrown into large trenches about 100 by 20 by 12 m, situated near the death chambers."*

And in the report he wrote on May 6, 1945, he affirmed:[222]

> *"The naked corpses were thrown onto wooden carts* [and then] *into pits only a short distance away and measuring 100 by 12 by 20 meters."*

One trench thus had a surface area of 2,500 m^2 for Reder and 2,000 m^2 for Gerstein, a volume of 37,500 m^3 for the former and 24,000 m^3 for the latter. However, from Kola's research we can deduce that the largest trench in area (#27) had a surface of 540 m^3, whereas the most capacious (#10) had a volume of only 2,100 m^3. Furthermore, as Kola has determined, the majority of the trenches had a depth of 4 to 5 meters; below this level there was ground water. Hence, the depth of 12 to 15 meters asserted by the two witnesses could not be confirmed by the diggings. As for Reder's testimony, the total surface area of the 30 graves he claims to have seen in the camp (7.5 hectares) would have covered more ground than the camp itself (6.2 hectares)!

2.2. First Judicial Findings

So obvious an absurdity as this was not only accepted but willfully exaggerated by the Zamość prosecutor, who, in his report of April 11, 1946, wrote:[223]

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[219] N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 223.
[220] AGK, OKBZN Kraków, 111, p. 4.
[221] PS-1553, p. 7.
[222] PS-2170, p. 6.

> *"All mass graves had the same dimensions: 100 m in length, 25 m in width, and 15 m in depth. The corpses tossed into the graves were covered with lime. Then those piles of corpses were covered up with sand by the detainees. There may well have been thirty, forty, and even more graves of this kind in the camp."*

In this fashion, Rudolf Reder's thirty graves became "*forty and even more*"!

2.3. The Location of the Mass Graves

Andrzej Kola has made a drawing of the Bełżec camp, with the area of the mass graves marked by vertical shading.[224]

A drawing published by Robin O'Neil shows the actual position of the graves and their peripheries in more detail.[225] The majority of the graves is located along the northwestern border of the camp (on the left in the drawing), some graves are near the center of the camp, and a few lie along the northeastern border (at the top in the drawing).

In 1946 Rudolf Reder wrote a book entitled *Bełżec*, which was published in Krakow by the central Jewish historical commission. On p. 43 of this book there is a map of the camp, drawn by J. Bau according to information from the witness.[226] This drawing – which Kola publishes without comment[227] – is upside down with respect to normal practice. It shows 26 graves along the northwestern border and 6 in the center.

The official map of the camp was drawn by the investigative commission of the German crimes in Poland and appeared in the article "*The Bełżec extermination camp*" by Eugeniusz Szrojt, a member of this group.[228] There, the area of the graves is represented by a rectangle placed near the northeastern border of the camp.

In conclusion, we can see that the location given by Kola for the majority of the graves is in disagreement both with Rudolf Reder's testimony and with the findings of the Polish investigative commission. Furthermore, an examination of the map of Bełżec as published by Arad[229] forces one to conclude that the quarters of the Ukrainian guards, the hygienic installations (barbers, infirmary, dentists for the SS and the Ukrainians), the kitchen for the Ukrainian

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[223] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1227 (translation from Polish into German).
[224] A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 19. Cf. document 4 in the Appendix.
[225] R. O'Neil, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 59. Cf. document 5 in the Appendix.
[226] R. Reder, *op. cit.* (note 91), p. 43. Cf. document 6 in the Appendix.
[227] A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 7.
[228] E. Szrojt, "*Obóz zagłady w Bełżcu*," in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, vol. III, Poznań 1947, insert without page number. A. Kola has also shown this map without any commentary; cf. document 7 in the Appendix.
[229] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 108), p. 437. Cf. document 8.

guards, the garage, and the shoemakers' and tailors' workshops (shown on the map as numbers 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8) were located right next to mass graves or even on top of them!

These are not the only problems stemming from the location of the graves. Kola's and Robin O'Neil's maps (documents 4 and 5 in the Appendix) show mass graves scattered at random all over the camp, without any particular orientation or order. It is not necessary here to invoke the proverbial German pedantry, which has been well discussed by Rudolf Reder. On his map, in fact, the mythical 30 mass graves all have the same shapes, dimensions, orientation, and are properly arranged in two parallel rows. This is simply a matter of common sense: An orderly arrangement of the graves would obviously have allowed more efficient use to be made of the limited space available within the camp, and a better hygienic protection of the camp personnel. It is no exaggeration to claim that, if the camp commander had had the mass graves dug in such an irregular fashion, he would have been shot for sabotage. Unless, of course, he had peculiar artistic inclinations. Many graves shown by Kola have, in fact, the oddest shapes![230]

3. Uncovering the Corpses

3.1. The Findings and Claims of Andrzej Kola

As we have seen above, A. Kola asserts that ten graves (# 1, 3, 4, 10, 13, 20, 25, 27, 28, 32) were "*filled with bodies in wax-fat transformation*," but then hastens to add that they were located "*in bottom parts of the ditches, as a rule*," which means that these graves were not, in fact, 'filled' with corpses in a state of saponification.

Before we deal with the problem of the number of corpses in these graves, we must first explain what "*wax-fat transformation*" is:[231]

> *"*[It] *consists of the formation of adipocere, an insoluble soap of greasy and oily appearance having an unpleasant odor, produced by the combination of neutral fats from tissue and calcium and magnesium salts present in the water or in the humid soil in which the corpse rests. The absence of air is crucial. The process starts with the subcutaneous tissue and then spreads to the fatty perivisceral tissue. Saponification sets in after a few weeks and is complete after 12 to 18 months."*

Robin O'Neil, referring to the diggings done during the period between April 28 and June 4, 1998, has proposed a general estimate of the number of corpses:[232]

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[230] As the graves No. 1, 9, 12, 14, 22 and 29. Cf. documents 9, 10 in the Appendix.
[231] http://digilander.libero.it/fadange/medicina%20legale/tana.htm
[232] R. O'Neil, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 54.

> *"In two of these graves the bodies had not been exhumed and burnt as per the Himmler directive of 1942. How many bodies remain in these two graves is difficult to establish. To be sure, there are many thousands."*

Michael Tregenza, on the other hand, has been bold enough to name a precise figure:[233]

> *"Although it is difficult to attach a figure to the unburnt corpses, a conservative estimate would be on the order of at least 15,000."*

What is the basis of this estimate? Obviously nothing but the volume of the graves and the thickness of the layer of corpses, but, as we shall see, Tregenza's estimate is decisively disproved by the actual results of the Polish field work.

The only way to dispel any uncertainty would obviously have been to unearth the corpses buried in the graves – why did the Polish authorities not do this? If the main objective of the archeological research was the identification of the mass graves, why were the corpses buried in these graves not exhumed? When the Germans discovered the graves of the victims of the Soviet NKVD at Katyn and Vinnytsya, they did not simply drill holes in the ground with a manual drill – they opened the graves, exhumed the corpses, did autopsies, and tried to identify them.

On April 13, 1943, on the basis of information from the local population, the Germans discovered seven graves containing a total of 4,143 corpses of Polish soldiers in the forest of Katyn. Between April and June, the bodies were examined by a commission consisting of physicians from twelve European countries, by a commission of the Polish Red Cross, and by U.S., British, and Canadian officers who were prisoners of war. The Germans then published an official report with the forensic medical findings of the investigation, containing 80 photographs and the names of the victims identified.[234]

The Vinnytsya massacres were discovered by the Germans in the beginning of June 1943. Ninety-seven mass graves were found in three different locations, containing the bodies of 9,432 Ukrainians murdered by the Soviets. Between June 24 and August 25 no fewer than 14 commissions, 6 of them composed of foreigners, visited the mass graves. Again, the Germans collected the results of their findings in a substantial publication: 282 pages with 151 photographs, with forensic medical reports, and victims' names.[235]

Why, then, were the corpses of the mass graves at Bełżec not exhumed? The answer is implied in the analyses of the probes taken out during the drillings. In fact, Andrzej Kola publishes the results of 137 samples – obviously the most significant ones of the 236 samples taken altogether – but out of

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[233] M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), p. 258.

[234] *Amtliches Material zum Massenmord von Katyn* (Official documents concerning the mass murders at Katyn), Berlin 1943.

[235] *Amtliches Material zum Massenmord von Winniza* (Official documents concerning the mass murders at Vinnytsya), Berlin 1944.

these only two (482/XV-30-60 and 486/XV-25-50) bear the explicit designation "*human corpses*."[236] The symbol designating "*human bones and wax-fat mass*" – a kind of stylized double X – appears, in addition to the samples just mentioned, only on four more samples (485/XV-30-50, grave 10, 286/XVI-90-40 and 332/XVI-85-40, grave 3, and finally 1042/XIV-45-80, grave 20).[237] The thickest layer is the one belonging to sample 332/XV-85-40 (described as "*tooth/human hair/water/human hair*"), which corresponds to approximately 15% of the depth of the grave (= 5 meters), thus to about 0.75 meters. Kola further mentions the discovery of corpses in a layer 1 meter thick in grave 27,[238] but without providing a visual representation of the location of the 4 drillings carried out in this location. In any case, the order of magnitude does not change.

In all other instances, the corpse layer is thinner and is always located at the bottom of the grave. Hence, there are only three graves which contain more or less strongly saponified bodies. Moreover, in the light of the approximating method used by Kola (one sample every 5 meters), strictly speaking one cannot even say that these graves contained a layer of bodies as extensive as their surface area. This becomes evident, at last, in the results of the analyses published by Kola: Human remains are present in 3 out of 7 samples in grave 10, and in 1 out of 5 samples in grave 3 and grave 20. In these, the only three graves containing corpses,[239] human remains were identified in 5 out of 17 samples, *i.e*., in fewer than 30% of these cases. Thus, from all 236 drilling samples, we have only 5 'positive' cases, that is, 2%! What does that mean, apart from any extrapolations? It means simply that the drill, which had a diameter of 65 millimeters (~2.5 inches), went like a lance five times through the remains of three or four bodies; in other words, *in concrete terms*, Kola has discovered 15 or 20 corpses.

Therefore, the only legitimate conclusion one can draw from these samples is that the graves mentioned contained only rare corpses here and there.

Nonetheless, Kola's book contains a rich photographic documentation of objects found in the area of the camp during the project work. A full 37 color photographs show the most insignificant junk: horseshoes, keys and padlocks, earthenware pots and rusty scissors, pieces of glass and of china, broken combs, glass bottles, coins etc., etc. – but not a single photograph shows a corpse or part of a corpse!

On the other hand, given the small number of drillings, one cannot exclude the presence of other layers of corpses near those identified by Kola; this is even probable. In fact, when one examines the positions of the three samples

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[236] A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 15.
[237] *Ibidem*, pp. 15, 17f.
[238] *Ibidem*, p. 36.
[239] I have not taken into account grave No. 27, because A. Kola has not provided the diagram of his probes, and verification is thus impossible.

in grave 10 that indicated the presence of the corpses in a state of saponification, they are found to be concentrated in two small areas at lower left[240] of samples 485 to 486 and near 483. This may indicate that originally there were two small graves of 40 to 50 square meters with several layers of corpses at the bottom. The same might be true for samples 286 and 332 of grave 3, which are next to each other within the standard distance of 5 meters along the south-north diagonal of the grave,[241] and for sample 1042 of grave 20. One may conclude that the *most probable* interpretation is that the graves contained at most several hundred corpses.

3.2. The Polish Findings of 1945

On October 12, 1945, the Regional Investigative Judge of the district court of Zamość, Czeslaw Godzieszewski, presented an "*Account of the diggings in the cemetery of the Bełżec extermination camp*," in which he set down the findings from the inspection of the Bełżec camp he had made that day, aided by 12 workers. In this context, he wrote:[242]

> *"The opening labeled No. 1 was taken down to a depth of 8 m and a width of 10 m and attained the bottom level of the graves. During the operation, at a depth of about 2 m, we struck the first layer of ash stemming from incinerated human bodies, mixed with sand. This layer was about 1 m thick. The next layer of ash was discovered at a depth of 4 – 6 meters. In the ash removed, some charred remains of human bodies were found, such as hands and arms, women's hair, as well as human bones not totally burnt. We also recovered pieces of burnt wood. In trench No. 1, the layer of human ash stopped at a depth of 6 meters. The opening labeled No. 2 was taken down to a depth of 6 meters. In this trench, the layer of human ash began at a depth of 1.5 m and continued down to a depth of some 5 m, with occasional breaks. Here, too, the ash contained human hair, part of a human body, pieces of clothing, and remnants of incompletely burnt bones. Openings labeled Nos. 3 and 4 were freed to a depth of 3 meters. In hole No. 4, at a depth of 80 cm, we found a human skull with remnants of skin and hair, as well as two shinbones and a rib. Furthermore, at a level of between one and three meters, these holes yielded human ash mixed with sand and fragments of incompletely burnt human bones. Openings labeled Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 were dug to a depth of 2 m, but showed only human ash mixed with sand and human bones, such as jawbones and shinbones. Throughout all the excavations it was observed that the camp cemetery had already been disturbed by wildcat diggings; this is borne out by the fact*

[240] Cf. document 11 in the Appendix.
[241] A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 22.
[242] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1121 (translation from Polish into German).

that the layers of human ash are not uniform but mixed with sand. The recovered human bones; the bodily remains, which where in a state of complete decomposition; and the ash were collected in a common location to await the arrival of the district surgeon. Work was stopped at 17:30 hours."

The next day, October 13, 1945, the findings were inspected by the coroner. The subsequent report describes primarily the results of the examination performed by the judge and the coroner:[243]

"During the inspection of the area of the extermination camp, particularly during the excavations at the place of the cemetery on October 12, 1945, a large number of human bones were found, such as skulls, parts of skulls, vertebrae, ribs, collarbones, shoulder blades, arm bones, lower legs, wrists, fingers, pelvic bones, thigh bones, lower legs, and foot bones. Some of the bones mentioned are either partly burnt or had not been burnt at all. Except for a few skulls showing rotting scalp and hair, the majority of the bones are free from soft tissue. Among the remains of human bodies recovered on October 12, 1945, we identified two forearms and a lumbar portion of the backbone with some soft tissue and traces of carbonization. The lumbar section belongs to an adult, whereas the forearms come from a child a few years old. From the size of the various bones one can conclude that they belong to persons of different age groups, from two-year-olds up to very old people, as borne out by toothless jaws and numerous dentures. Among the jawbones found there was one partially burnt specimen containing milk teeth as well as incipient permanent teeth, which indicates that it belongs to a person 7 to 8 years of age. No traces of bullet holes or other mechanical wounds were found on the skulls. The long bones show no traces either of gunshot wounds or fractures. Because of the advanced state of decomposition it was very difficult to say to what organs the recovered shapeless portions of soft tissue from human bodies might belong. In a hole dug by the local population in a search for gold and valuables, two lower legs belonging to a two-year-old child were discovered. These members are partly decomposed, partly mummified. The area of the cemetery, in particular the wildcat holes, is covered with layers of human ash of varying breadth, which stem from the incineration of human corpses and wood; they are intermingled with sand in varying proportions. The color of the ash varies between light-ash and dark gray; the ash has a heavy consistency and smells of decomposing human bodies. In the ash, charred human bones as well as pieces of charcoal are clearly visible. In the lower strata of the ash the smell of decomposition is more pronounced than in the layers nearer the surface. The hair discovered belongs mainly to women,

[243] *Protokoll der Leichenschau* (report of coroner), October 13, 1945. ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, pp. 1123f. (translation from Polish into German).

as shown by their length and by the type of arrangement (braids and buns fixed with hairpins). In addition to natural hair, we encountered ladies' wigs as well. With this, the inspection was terminated."

The coroner's expert opinion, which comes at the end of the report, reached the following conclusions: The bones found were human in origin and came from a "*very large*" quantity of corpses; these corpses had been interred about three years earlier; some of them did not present traces of incineration; and the examination of the skulls and other samples excluded shooting as the cause of death.

The presence of unincinerated corpses within the Bełżec camp area is therefore nothing new. As far as their number is concerned, the Polish coroner's expert opinion gives no specific data, but the general tone of the report and its insistence, in the description, on single bones as if they were unique pieces leaves us wondering about the value one should attribute to the "*very large*" quantity of corpses conjectured by the coroner.

In any case, the essential problem is not the existence, but the significance of these corpses. In other words: What does their existence prove?

3.3. Significance of Corpses Present

All official commentators have interpreted the presence of those corpses as proof of the alleged fact that mass exterminations did indeed take place at Bełżec. As we have already seen, O'Neil sounded that battle cry as early as 1998: The bodies were those of victims from the gas chambers that had not been exhumed and cremated, contrary to Himmler's mysterious order.[244] Thus he has created a circular logic that starts with the assumption that the corpses are those of victims of the gas chambers and proceeds to 'demonstrate,' on the basis of their presence, that the gas chambers did indeed exist! The pretension of these commentators – that the corpses at Bełżec amount, furthermore, to a refutation of revisionist theses – is not only false, it is also grotesque. Of course, no revisionist historian would dream of stating that there were never any deaths at Bełżec. As we shall see in the next chapter, deaths at that camp occurred among the detainees due to epidemics, and due to hard work and misery even before it became – according to the official historiography – an extermination camp. This fact entirely demolishes the interpretation of the official historians by proving that the presence of corpses at Bełżec is not in absolute disagreement with the revisionist thesis. If one really wanted to disprove that thesis, it would be necessary to demonstrate that there are burial sites in the camp containing hundreds of thousands of victims. But if this cannot be done for entire corpses, as we have seen, might it not be true – given

[244] Cf. next paragraph.

that the evidence of incinerations at Bełżec is indisputable – for incinerated corpses at the camp?

To answer this question, it is necessary to ascertain whether the volumes of the mass graves identified by Kola and the amount of ash from human beings and wood the graves contain are in keeping with the mass cremation of hundreds of thousands of corpses, or, more exactly, 600,000 corpses. We shall examine this in the next section.

4. Compatibility of Archeological Research Results with the 'Extermination Camp' Thesis

4.1. Cremation of the Corpses

In the chapter "*The Erasure of the Crimes*" of his book on the Operation Reinhardt camps, Yitzhak Arad relates the story of the mysterious order to burn the victims of the alleged German exterminations as follows: In the spring of 1942, Himmler decided on the exhumation and cremation of Jews and Soviet prisoners of war shot by the *Einsatzgruppen* in the occupied Soviet territories. In March, Heydrich discusses the question with SS *Standartenführer* (colonel) Blobel who, in June, is entrusted with that mission (the alleged "*Sonderaktion* [special operation] 1005") by Heinrich Müller, the head of the Gestapo. After some experimentation at Kulmhof, the first exhumation and incineration of corpses is carried out at Auschwitz.

The order is alleged also to have been transmitted to Odilo Globocnik, who, under the direct command of Himmler, commanded the three Operation Reinhardt camps; Arad does not state this explicitly.

In these three camps, the exhumation and cremation activities are said to have started in the summer of 1942 at Sobibór, in December 1942 at Bełżec, and in March 1943 at Treblinka! Why didn't Globocnik obey Himmler's order? The answer Arad provides is astonishingly flimsy: Kurt Gerstein tells us that Globocnik allegedly declared in August 1942 that, instead of erasing the traces of the mass graves, it would be better to commemorate them on bronze tablets inscribed to the effect that it was the Germans who had had the courage to carry out such a gigantic job, and "*for this reason Globocnik did not immediately enforce cremation of the corpses in the Operation Reinhard camps*."[245]

Still, says Arad, "*in spite of Globocnik's attitude*" the exhumation and cremation activities were undertaken all the same.

Actually, Arad's story has no historical foundation.[246] The only thing that is certain is that the alleged visit by Himmler to Treblinka, during which he is

[245] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 108), pp. 170f.
[246] Cf. in this respect C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 217-229.

said to have decided on the cremation of the corpses in there, never took place![247]

We know next to nothing about the cremation of corpses at Bełżec. The Zamość prosecutor, in his report of April 11, 1946, mentioned above, wrote:[248]

> *"A number of tasks in the camp, such as the transportation of the murdered Jews, the digging of graves, the mass burial of corpses in the graves, the sorting of clothes, other objects and valuables left behind by the victims, were carried out by certain Jews staying permanently in the camp. After the liquidation of the camp, these Jews were taken to Sobibór, presumably to be executed. We were able to ascertain that the Jews working in the camp received a food ration of half a loaf of bread per day. In December of 1942, the transports of Jews to the Belzec camp were stopped; the Germans then started to erase systematically the traces of their crimes. The corpses were unearthed with special excavators and burned on piles of wood doused with a flammable mass. Later, the cremation process was improved by using railroad rails to build scaffolds, on which layers of corpses were placed in alteration with layers of wood soaked, as before, with an easily flammable liquid. To separate valuables that the corpses might have contained, the ash of the cremated corpses was passed through a grain separator and then buried again. The cremation of corpses was terminated in March 1943. Then all camp buildings, fences, and watchtowers were dismantled, the area was cleaned, leveled, and replanted with young pine trees."*

The cremations were thus carried out, apparently, between December of 1942 and March of 1943. The witness Kozak declares in this respect:[249]

> *"The disinterred corpses were piled on pyres that were burning and were doused with a liquid. Two or three pyres were burning simultaneously. While this was going on, a horrible stench of decomposed human bodies and burnt human bones and bodies floated over Belzec. This stench could be smelled up to 15 km away from Belzec. The cremations went on without interruption for three months; after that, the Germans started dismantling the camp."*

On the number of pyres, the witnesses questioned by the Polish judiciary in 1945 gave widely differing answers: For Eustachy Ukraiński[250] there were "*mehrere*" (several), one for Tadeusz M.,[251] one to three for Mieczyslaw K.,[252]

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[247] *Ibidem*, pp. 141-143.

[248] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1227 (translation from Polish into German).

[249] *Ibidem*, p. 1132.

[250] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1119: "*Es brannten zugleich mehrere solche Feuer*" (Several such fires were burning simultaneously).

[251] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1145: "*Zu gleicher Zeit konnten mehrere Haufen brennen, doch habe ich persönlich nur 1 großes Feuer und einen Rauch auf dem Lagerhügel gesehen*" (Several

three for Eugeniusz G.[253] and Edward F.,[254] three to four for Edward Luczynsky,[255] four to five for Wiktor S.[256]

During pre-trial interrogation for the Bełżec trial, Heinrich Gley declared on January 7, 1963:[257]

> *"As far as I can remember, the gassings were stopped toward the end of 1942, when we already had snow. Then the general exhumation and cremation started; it may have lasted from November 1942 through March 1943. The cremations went on day and night without interruption, first on one and then on two hearths. One hearth allowed some 2,000 corpses to be burned in 24 hours. The second hearth was erected about four weeks after the beginning of the cremation operation. Thus, on average, the one hearth burned a total of 300,000 corpses over a period of some 5 months, the other 240,000 over some 4 months. Of course, these are only general estimates."* (emphasis added)

However, during his interrogation on May 8, 1961, he had said something entirely different:[258]

> *"The mass gassings of Jews in the Belcec* [sic] *camp were terminated at the end of 1942. To answer your question, I say that I am sure no corpses were as yet being cremated when I arrived. In the beginning of 1943 – I can no longer say whether it was in January, February, or March – I was ordered to gather, with a work detail, regular and narrow-gauge rails and large rocks. This material was to serve for the construction of large grids, upon which the corpses were burned that had been buried initially. I was not part of the cremation detail."*

Thus, the cremations would not have started before January of 1943. In section 4.3. we shall examine the consequences ensuing from these declarations.

Yitzhak Arad, one of the major specialists on Bełżec among the official historians, dedicated only one scant page to the question of corpse cremations, in which he refers to H. Gley, to the report of the Zamość prosecutor, and to

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piles could burn at the same time, but I saw only one large fire and a [column of] smoke on the camp hill.)

252 ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1128: "*Ich habe gesehen, daß zur gleichen Zeit 1-3 Feuer brannten*" (I have seen 1 to 3 fires burning simultaneously).

253 ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1136: "*Wie ich gesehen habe, brannten zugleich drei Haufen*" (From what I have seen, 3 piles were burning simultaneously).

254 ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1223: "[…] *diese verbrannte man an drei Stellen*" (…those were burnt at three sites).

255 ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1140: "*Gleichzeitig brannten 3-4 Scheiterhaufen*" (3 to 4 pyres were burning simultaneously).

256 ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1160: "*Gleichzeitig brannten 4-5 Feuerstellen im oberen Teil des Lagers*" (4 to 5 fire sites were burning simultaneously in the upper part of the camp).

257 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 119), pp. 142f.

258 ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1286.

the statement of seven lines of one Maria Damiel, an insignificant witness who never put her feet into the camp![259]

4.2. Capacity of the Graves

On the basis of experimental data, the maximum capacity of a mass grave can be set at 8 corpses per cubic meter, assuming that one third of them are children.[260] Hence, the alleged 600,000 corpses at Bełżec would have required a total volume of (600,000÷8=) 75,000 cubic meters. The average depth of the graves identified by Professor Kola is 3.90 meters. Assuming a layer of earth 0.3 m thick to cover the graves, the available depth would be 3.60 meters.[261] It follows that the burial of 600,000 corpses would have required an effective area of (75,000÷3.6 =) approx. 20,800 square meters. On the other hand, the surface area of the graves identified by Kola is 5,919 square meters and their volume 21,310 cubic meters, theoretically sufficient to inter (21,310×8=) 170,480 corpses – but then where would the other (600,000 – 170,480 =) 429,520 corpses have been put?

4.3. Wood Requirements

The cremation of a corpse of 46 kg (average assumed weight, including allowance for presumed children) requires about 160 kg of firewood.[262] To burn 600,000 corpses, one would therefore have needed (600,000×160=) 96 million kg of wood, or 96,000 tons; this corresponds to the harvesting of 192 hectares of a 50-year-old fir forest,[263] about thirty times (!) the surface of the Bełżec camp. Photographs taken of Bełżec from the air, published by John C. Ball, show that in 1944 the forests around the Bełżec camp were the same as in 1940.[264] So where would this immense quantity of wood have come from? Its transportation would have required some 19,000 trucks or over 3,800 freight cars, the equivalent of 95 trains of 40 cars each! However, none of the numerous local witnesses interrogated by the investigative judge of Zamość between the end of 1945 and the beginning of 1946 ever saw such an enormous flow of trucks and/or trains full of firewood.

As we have seen in section 4.1., according to the findings of the Polish courts the cremation of 600,000 corpses went on without interruption for three

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[259] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 108), pp. 172f.
[260] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 137f.
[261] This also results from A. Kola's data: (21,310÷5,919 =) 3.60 meters of depth utilized for the burials.
[262] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 145f.
[263] *Ibidem*, p. 151f.
[264] J.C. Ball, *Air Photo Evidence: Auschwitz, Treblinka, Majdanek, Sobibor, Bergen Belsen, Belzec, Babi Yar, Katyn Forest*, Ball Resource Services Limited, Delta, B.C., Canada, 1992, pp. 94f.

months, from December 1942 through March 1943. This corresponds to an average of 6,650 corpses per day! For each and every day about 1,064 tons of wood – over 42 freight cars or over 200 trucks – would have been needed.

4.4. Duration of the Cremations

No witness has described the structure of the pyres or the technique of cremation. Assuming that the pyres were identical to those allegedly used at Treblinka, the corpses would have been cremated on two or three grids made of railroad rails and measuring 90 square meters each.[265] Let us assume that there were three grids. The amount of wood which can be burnt per square meter of such a grid is approximately 80 kg per hour,[266] hence (90×80=) 7,200 kg per hour for one such grid, or 21,600 kg/h for three. This means that in order to burn the 1,064 tons of wood which were needed every day, the time taken would have been (1,064,000÷21,600=) 49 hours of continuous combustion. If we add another day for the cooling of the pyre, the removal of the ash, and the construction of a fresh pyre, the cremation of 6,650 corpses would have taken no less than three days, and the whole undertaking would have stretched out over at least 9 months. The cremation would, therefore, not have ended in March of 1943 but in September of that year!

If, on the other hand, we assume only two grids, the cremation would have lasted more than 13 months!

4.5. The Ash

The incineration of a corpse in a crematorium oven yields about 5% of ash having a specific gravity of 0.5.[267] For a cremation in the open air the quantity of ash goes up considerably. The wood burnt produces about 8% of ash with a specific gravity of 0.34.[266] Therefore, the alleged 600,000 victims would have left behind (600,000×45×0.05=) 1,350,000 kg or 1,350 tons of ash, with a volume of (1,350÷0.5=) 2,700 cubic meters, whereas the wood ash would have amounted to (96,000×0.08=) 7,680 tons, corresponding to about 22,600 cubic meters. Altogether then, some (1,350+7,680=) 9,030 tons or (2,700+ 22,600=) 25,300 cubic meters of ash would have resulted from the enormous incinerations.

However, the total volume of the graves identified by Kola is 21,310 cubic meters. Thus, even if all of the graves had been full to the brim with ash unmixed with sand, there would have been (25,300–21,310=) about 4,000 cubic meters of pure ash left over, enough to fill some 290 trucks or 60 railroad freight cars.

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[265] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 146-148.
[266] *Ibidem*, p. 149.
[267] *Ibidem*, p. 150.

But the graphs of the analyses of the 137 drill cores presented by Kola show that the ash in the graves is normally intermingled with sand, that in more than half of the samples the layer of ash and sand is extremely thin,[268] and that at times the ash is close to being completely absent.[269] Furthermore, out of the 236 samples, 99 are irrelevant, and among the 137 relevant ones more than half show only a very thin layer of sand and ash, whereas among the remainder the percentage of sand is not less than 50%, and the thickness of the sand/ash layer varies greatly. Finally – and Kola does not state this explicitly – besides the sand, the human remains are intermingled also with animal remains:[270]

> *"These diggings produced also a large amount of human bones,*[271] *which were partly intermingled with remains of animal origin."*

From all this it becomes obvious that the amount of ash actually located in the graves is *absolutely incompatible* with the cremation of 600,000 corpses.

4.6. The Soil Removed from the Graves

When a grave is being dug, the soil removed in the process, which was initially somewhat compressed, will normally dilate by 10 to 25% in volume.[272] We have already seen that the burial of 600,000 corpses would have required mass graves having at least a total volume of 75,000 m^3 and an area of 20,800 m^2. The 75,000 m^3 of extracted sand, undergoing a dilation of 10%, would have increased to some 82,500 m^3. Where would such an enormous quantity of sand have been put? If it had been spread evenly throughout the camp in a layer 2 m thick, it would have covered an area of (82,500÷2=) 41.250 m^2; in other words: equal to the total area of the camp minus the mass graves![273] Dry sand has a specific gravity of 1.4; therefore, the 82,500 m^3 of sand mentioned above would correspond to (82,500×1.4=) 115,500 tons, or the equivalent of more than 4,600 freight cars or more than 24,000 truckloads. If the mass graves were covered by a layer of sand 30 cm thick, this would have consumed (20,800×0.3=) about 6,200 m^3, but then where would the remaining (82,500–6,200 =) 76.300 m^3 have gone?

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[268] As for example in the samples 394/XVI-70-75, 395/XVI-70-80, 396/XVI-65-80, 400/XVI-65-50, 401/XVI-65-45, 474/XV-40-55, 478/XV-35-60, 600/XV-20-45, 607/XV-20-15, 612-XV-25-10, and others.

[269] In the samples 281-XVI-95-30, 282/XVI-95-35, 288/XVI-90-30, 289/XVI-90-25, 290/XVI-90-20, 291/XVI-90-15, 292/XVI-90-10, 295/XVI-85-0, 296/XVI-85-10, 300/XVI-85-30 336/XVI-80-35, 337/XVI-80-30, and 341/XVI-80-10.

[270] M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), p. 257.

[271] Incineration of the corpses involved burning up the bones as well as the flesh, so Kola includes the unburnt ones in the category "*human bones and wax-fat mass*" discussed above.

[272] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 139.

[273] 62,000–20,800=41,200 m^2.

This enormous quantity of sand could neither have been piled up in the camp[274] nor transported out of the camp, therefore it was never actually extracted, and thus the respective mass graves were never dug.

4.7. Actual Surface Area of the Graves

The official thesis of the extermination of 600,000 (or hundreds of thousands) of persons at Bełżec is therefore in contradiction on every count with the material data we have examined. Still, according to Kola's statements, 33 mass graves were dug within the camp. How many corpses did they actually contain? In section 4.2. we have calculated that they would have had a capacity of some 170,500 corpses.

But since this purely theoretical figure is already destroying the Holocaust pretense of a mass extermination allegedly perpetrated at Bełżec, it cannot, at the same time, be accepted as a working hypothesis to determine the full scope of the facts. *Either* an extermination of *at least* 434,500 Jews (the figure resulting from the report of SS-*Sturmbannführer* Höfle of April 28, 1943) did indeed take place at Bełżec, *or* there was no mass extermination at all, for if we accept a lower number – for example the hypothetical 170,500 victims mentioned above – the result would be that the remaining 264,000 deportees were taken elsewhere – alive and kicking – away from the Bełżec camp.

The capacity figure of 170,500 corpses for the actual mass graves, is, however, based on two unrealistic assumptions: a maximized surface/volume of the graves and a maximized density of corpses in them.

Let us consider the first assumption. Kola's assertions concerning the area and the volume of the mass graves are actually rather arbitrary. He himself, as we have seen in section 4.1. above, has remarked:[275]

> *"In the first zone, as we can suppose, connecting smaller neighbouring graves into bigger ones by destroying earth walls separating them was observed."*

And a few pages further along he adds:

> *"Additional disturbances in archeological structures were made by intensive dig-ups directly after the war while local people were searching for jewellery. The facts make it difficult for the archeologists to define precisely the ranges of burial pits."*

The Germans closed Bełżec in September 1943. The Soviets arrived in October 1944. In October 1945, the district court at Zamość opened an inquiry on the alleged extermination camp. On October 14, the witness Stanislaw Kozak stated:[276]

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[274] Thus, the statement of the witness Karl Alfred Schluch regarding a mass burial of this size cannot be true.

[275] A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 65.

[276] ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1132f (translation from Polish into German).

> *"After the removal of the fences, the local population started to search for gold, jewels, and other valuables that might have been left behind by the Jews, by digging in the area of the camp. That explains the great number of human bones spread all over the site of the former camp, as well as the great number of holes in the ground."*

Other witnesses, like Eustachy Ukraiński[277] and Eugeniusz G.,[278] confirmed this statement. In his report of April 11, 1946, the Zamość prosecutor wrote:[279]

> *"At the moment, the camp site has been completely dug up by the local population in their search for valuables. This has brought to the surface ash from the corpses and from wood, charred bones as well as bones that were only partially charred."*

What's more, as we have seen above, nine graves had been opened by order of Regional Investigative Judge Godzieszewski on October 12, 1945. The local population continued to dig in the area of the camp until the early sixties, at which time it was transformed into a monument and surrounded by the present enclosure. How many graves were dug up in those twenty years? The diggings took place in total disorder, without any regard for orientation, order, or symmetry, which explains the total lack of orientation, the confusion, and the irregularity of the graves identified by Kola. In the course of these diggings, the walls which had originally separated the graves were destroyed, deceptively enlarging the graves. Furthermore, as we see from Kozak's testimony, the soil removed from the graves was spread across a large area of the camp, leaving ash and human remains exposed. When the graves were refilled, this mixture of soil, ash, and human remains ended up both in places which had originally been earthen walls separating the graves, and in holes where there were originally neither remains nor ash, thus creating the illusion of more numerous and more extensive mass graves. The presence of saponified corpses in limited areas of three large graves (see section 3.1.) can be explained in this way, or by the enlargement of graves that had initially been smaller.

The correctness of this interpretation is supported by the drawings of the graves published by Kola. In fact, the sections of the individual graves nearly always show a highly irregular bottom, with bumps and holes. This is particularly apparent in graves 3, 7, 8, 12, 14, 20, 23, 28, 32, and 33. These unconnected graves give evidence of the activity of wildcat diggers, certainly not of excavations of mass graves aligned in military fashion.[280]

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[277] *Ibidem*, p. 1119.
[278] *Ibidem*, p. 1135.
[279] *Ibidem*, p. 1227.
[280] A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), pp. 21-39.

The drawings of the soil samples that were taken provide further confirmation. As we have seen, of the 236 samples taken in connection with the graves, 99 are irrelevant and more than half of the remaining 137 show a very thin layer of sand and ash. What is more important, however, is the fact that there is often a difference between samples in a single grave, with very thin and very thick layers, as shown for example by graves No. 3, 4, 6, 7, 17.[281] Such a variation in the soil strata can only be explained by the inclusion in the grave of soil from an area that did not initially belong to it.

Andrzej Kola, who was supposed to furnish the 'material proof' of the alleged extermination at Bełżec, did not take these facts into account; because of this the layout he gives for the graves is completely random, as is their surface area, their volume, and even their number.

4.8. Density of Corpses in the Graves

Let us now turn to the second assumption. Here, the comparison with the mass graves discovered in the vicinity of the Treblinka I camp leads us to entirely different conclusions. In August 1944 the Soviets found three mass graves with a total surface area of some 150 m^2 and a volume of some 325 m^3, of which 250 m^3 were actually used (the graves were covered with a layer of sand about 50 cm thick), containing 305 corpses, or 1.2 corpses per cubic meter.[282] A year later, the Poles discovered, in the forest of Maliszewa, about 500 m south of the Treblinka I camp, 41 mass graves having a total surface area of 1,607 m^2, which, according to the estimate of the judge Łukaszkiewicz, contained 6,500 corpses. In the opinion of the forensic physician, a grave of $2\times1\times1$ m^3 contained, in fact, 6 corpses, i.e., 3 corpses per cubic meter.[283]

Therefore, the purely theoretical assumption that the original mass graves could have contained 170,500 corpses is without physical basis, and the actual figure should be considerably lower.

In conclusion, the mass graves at Bełżec are absolutely incompatible with the burial of 600,000 bodies, even if we include a large number of children among the dead. Mass extermination excluded, there is thus only one assumption which could explain the presence at Bełżec of mass graves and corpses: the revisionist thesis.

As we will see in the following chapter, at Bełżec deaths of detainees from epidemics (such as typhus) were recorded as early as the spring of 1940, and many other deaths were recorded in succeeding months, when the site became a very harsh hard labor camp. In later phases of the story of Bełżec, the arrival of transports under disastrous conditions – such as the one from Kolomea on

[281] *Ibidem*, pp. 14-18.
[282] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 77.
[283] *Ibidem*, p. 88.

September 10, 1942, with 2,000 dead on board – added thousands of bodies to the mass graves of the camp. To this we must add the natural mortality among the approximate 434,000 Jews transferred to Bełżec. Although it is impossible to establish the number of these deaths, it is nonetheless possible to infer, from what has been discussed above, an order of magnitude of several thousands, perhaps even some tens of thousands.

4.9. Reasons for Cremation

The cremation of the bodies of the dead constitutes in and of itself neither proof nor evidence in favor of the official theses, because this was the practice in all concentration camps and had a well-established hygienic function. In the area of the Bełżec camp, Kola's findings show that, along a line linking grave 3 and grave 10, about two-thirds of the length of the camp,[284] the groundwater level was at a depth of 4.80 meters.[285] In the area below, toward the railroad, this level was obviously at a smaller depth; in the area of grave 1, it was 4.10 meters.[286] It is probable that the cremation had to do with the danger of contamination of the ground water, as I have discussed elsewhere.[287] Fundamentally, however, one cannot exclude the explanation adopted by the official historiography, while giving it a different interpretation. If the Soviets had discovered mass graves full of corpses dead of disease or malnutrition, then they would certainly have exploited them for propaganda against the Germans, as the latter did in Katyn and Vinnytsya against the Soviets.

What is not clear is why a certain number of bodies was not cremated. This fact is explained by O'Neil in the following terms:[288]

> *"The corpses not exhumed and burnt (graves from first investigation) may have been the result of a mass panic with insufficient time to destroy all evidence."*

But this makes no sense, because the cremations stopped officially in March 1943, and the SS garrison stayed at the camp for another six months, until September of 1943. One might think that there was an oversight, but this assumption, too, does not hold much water, because the last SS administration of the camp certainly made a record of the mass graves and would have known where to dig. Finally, even the conjecture that at first sight appears to be the most plausible, namely that we have here the corpses of the Jewish personnel exterminated after the end of the cremations, cannot be sustained be-

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[284] The camp was situated on a slight incline with a difference of about 10 meters between the lower portion, near the railway, and the highest point.
[285] A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 22.
[286] *Ibidem*, p. 21.
[287] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 139f.
[288] R. O'Neil, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 56.

cause everybody – witnesses,[289] judges[290] and historians, including O'Neil[291] – is in agreement on the fact that these Jews were not killed at Bełżec, but were rather transferred to Sobibór.[292]

On the other hand, the graves that contain saponified bodies are not concentrated in a definite area, but are scattered throughout the camp (see document 4 in the Appendix). The most plausible hypothesis is that these graves pertain to the previous camp administration and therefore go back to 1940, when Bełżec was originally used as a camp for gypsies and later integrated into the "*Otto-Programm*;"[293] in both instances plenty of victims were buried in the camp. At that time, the structure of the camp was different from what it was later on, and there was more space; this may explain the unusual position of these mass graves.

5. The Buildings

5.1. The Actual Purpose of the Excavations

The Polish researchers also sought to identify the buildings that had been at Bełżec. The results have been described in detail by A. Kola.

What strikes us immediately in Kola's account is that, opposed to the procedure with the mass graves, actual diggings were undertaken to bring to light the original structures. Kola has published a dozen photographs of these. This was done out of an obvious scientific intent: The primary and essential task of the Polish archeologists was the search for traces of the missing gas chambers. For this reason they unearthed and examined any kind of structural remnant in the hope that it might belong to the gas chambers, but they were careful not to disinter and examine the remains in the mass graves, because, as we have seen, this would have risked too blatant a refutation of the thesis of mass extermination. The need to find the remnants of the gas chambers has spurred Kola into advancing the most unconvincing hypotheses.

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[289] For example E. Ukraiński and S. Kozak. ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, pp. 1119 and 1131.

[290] For the corresponding passage see § 9a of the report by the prosecutor of Zamość dated April 11, 1946, *op. cit.* (note 76).

[291] R. O'Neil, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 50. Cf. also I. Gutman (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 7), vol. I, p. 178.

[292] According to the official historiography, these detainees were transferred to that camp to be murdered there. However, Tregenza states: "*After the dissolution of the Bełżec extermination camp, Sara Beer, together with a group of 20 to 25 Jewesses, was transferred to the Jewish work camp at Trawniki and from there to the concentration camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Sara Beer survived the 'death march' from Auschwitz to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in January 1945 and was freed by British units on April 15, 1945*." (M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), p. 260). Hence, the SS at Bełżec were not so anxious to eliminate 'eye-witnesses' after all!

[293] See Chapter V.

5.2. The Alleged Gas Chambers of the Second Phase of the Camp

After having described six irrelevant findings (Buildings A – F) Andrzej Kola focuses on "*Building G*" (see document 4, site reference G). Here, the drillings[294]

> *"revealed the existence of an undefined building negative, made completely of wood, partly buried in the ground, dismantled totally. In the bottom view the relicts had a shape of a regular rectangle with the size of about 3,5 x 15 m, which bottom was deposited horizontally to the depth of about 80 cm.* [...] *The wooden building served probably as gas chamber in the second stage of the camp functioning* [sic]*, in autumn and winter 1942. Such an interpretation could be confirmed by its location in the camp plan. The probing drills from the north-eastern and eastern part of the building excavated only mass grave pits. Location of the gas chamber close to the burial places in the second stage of the camp existence was confirmed by some of the witness reports."*

This is incredible. The only reason why this "*Building G*" must have contained the alleged homicidal gas chambers of the second phase of the camp is its location! Obviously Kola never even considered whether this wooden structure could have belonged to the initial phase of the camp, *i.e.*, the year 1940, and whether the graves could have been dug after the structure had been dismantled. Actually, everything stated above about this building is in open contradiction to the testimonies and the judicial findings. Andrzej Kola is aware of this, as he writes:[295]

> *"According to him* [Rudolf Reder]*, however, the chamber was made of concrete. The excavations carried out in that area did not prove any traces of brick or concrete buildings, which makes that report unreliable."*

But then one would have to class all the witnesses and all the judicial findings as "*unreliable,*" because they all agree that the gas chambers of the second phase of the camp were housed in a brick structure. One has only to quote the two most authoritative historical sources. The sentence passed at the Bełżec trial (January 18 to 21, 1965) mentions explicitly the construction, in the second phase of the camp, of "*a solid stone building with a total of 6 gas chambers measuring 4 by 5 meters*."[296]

And the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, under the entry "*Belzec*," chapter "*Second Phase*" states:[297]

> *"The existing gas chambers were demolished and in their place a new building, made of brick and concrete and containing six 13-by-16-foot (4 × 5 m) cells, was errected."*

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[294] A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 61.
[295] *Ibidem*, note 28 on p. 61.
[296] A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 119), p. 133.
[297] I. Gutman (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 7), Vol. I, p. 178.

Kola's hypothesis contradicts the testimonies and the judicial findings not only as to the structure of the alleged gas chambers, but also regarding their surface area. As noted in the two preceding quotations, their official dimensions are 4 by 5 m, *i.e.* 20 square meters each, or 120 m^2 for all six chambers. Kola's "*Building G*," on the other hand, had dimensions of 3.5 by 15 m or 52.5 m^2. According to the drawing that is at the center of J. Bau's map, the gas chamber would have had to contain six gas chambers arranged on either side of a central corridor.[298] If that corridor had a minimum width of 1 m[299] and ran the length of the building, an area of 37.5 m^2 would remain for the six gas chambers, *i.e.*, 6.25 m^2 in average (*i.e.*, including outer and inner walls) for each gas chamber, which thus would have had to measure ((3.5–1)÷2=) 1.25 by 5 meters!

To recapitulate: On the one hand, the archeological findings contradict the testimonies and the judicial findings, making them inadmissible; on the other hand, Kola's hypotheses regarding the functions of "*Building G*" are in disagreement with the testimonies and the judicial findings. However, if we are to accept the official thesis, we cannot free ourselves from these sources: Either the gas chambers did exist the way the witnesses have described them, or they did not exist at all. And because the archeological findings contradict the witnesses, the gas chambers of the second phase of the camp never existed. And those of the first phase?

5.3. The Alleged Gas Chambers of the First Phase of the Camp

This assumed extermination structure, according to Kozak, who claimed to have taken part in its construction and described it in detail,[300] must have been located in the southern part of the camp, near the railroad siding. Andrzej Kola has therefore examined this area of the camp in detail, looking for the remains of these elusive first gas chambers. In the southwest angle of the camp he found the remnants of a large building (labeled by him "*Building D*" and indicated by me with the letter "*D*" in document 4 in the Appendix) with brick foundations and measuring 26 by 12 meters. He describes it as follows:[301]

> *"The building had at least 6 equal rooms with the sizes of about 16.60 x 3.80 m, separated by inside wall. Only the southern (6th) room was additionally divided into two smaller ones."*

This is at variance with the drawing of the diggings he presented (figure 69 on p. 55),[302] which shows foundations of about 16 by 12 m and dividing walls in six main rooms (which I have numbered 1 to 6 in the drawing mentioned)

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[298] Cf. document 6 in the Appendix.
[299] But, as we have seen in Chapter III, W. Pfannenstiel mentioned a width of 3 meters!
[300] Cf. Chapter II.3.
[301] A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 55.
[302] Cf. document 12 in the Appendix.

with dimensions of about 5 × 3.80 meters. In sector No. 2, there is a brick channel 6 × 1 m^2 (labeled "*K*" in the drawing of the diggings) "*serving originally as a canal*[sic] *for repairing cars*."[303] The two photographs published by Kola leave no room for doubt in this respect.[304] The conclusion is obvious:[305]

"One can suppose the room served as a garage."

I have dwelt on this point because, surprisingly, Kola clumsily tries to pass it off as the first extermination structure, with its three gas chambers!

Of this, Kola gives not even a vague hint on the four pages he dedicates to "*Building D*." The contrast between a real garage with a workshop for vehicle repairs and the alleged homicidal gas chambers is too glaring. He therefore introduces his nonsensical hypothesis underhandedly, in a different context. A few pages further on he says that he did three soundings in the area north of "*Building D*"[306]

"to verify the location of the railway which served in the first stage of the camp functionning for removing the corpses from the gas chambers to the grave pits. It was connected with the interpretation of the function of Building D as gas chamber."

But what sort of a link could there be between "*Building D*" and the alleged gas chambers? Again, only its location!

The camp railway that Kola was looking for was mentioned by Kozak, who declared:[307]

"Along the north side of this barrack [the 'gas chambers'] *there was a ramp made of wooden planks at a level of 1 m, and along this ramp there was a track of a narrow-gauge railroad leading to the ditch, which the 'blacks'* [Soviet prisoners of war] *had dug in the very north and east border of the extermination camp."*

And here is the result of Kola's search:[308]

"However, traces of that railway were not found."

Later, possibly a little discouraged by this resounding failure, Kola returns to his hypothesis in a slightly more moderated tone:[309]

"Only the building D was relatively big. Can it be interpreted as a death chamber?"

Then Kola restates the description of the supposed first gassing structure given by the witness Kozak and comments:[309]

"They [the remains of "*Building D*"] *are different, much bigger building size, which were about 26.00 x 8.00 m,*[310] *and the interior was divided*

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303 A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 56.
304 *Ibidem*, pp. 55f., photographs 71 and 72; cf. document 13 in the Appendix.
305 A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 57.
306 *Ibidem*, p. 64.
307 ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1130 (translation from Polish into German).
308 A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 65.
309 *Ibidem*, p. 66.

into 6 rooms. [...] *The function interpretation of building D and the witness's description is not fully in accordance with the observation made during archeological works. It concerns first of all its location inside the camp. That building was excavated in its western part, whereas, according to S. Kozak's report the gas chamber described by him could have been placed several meters toward the south from that place. Moreover the witness mentioned erecting the hut with the destination of being a gas chamber, when in the case of building D could have only an adaptation of the existing building equipped with a garage canal. The division of foundation part of building D into 6 identical rooms indicate that its overground part had 6 frame-houses, one of which served as garage."*

To summarize: The barrack described by Kozak was at a different location than the traces of "*Building D*." It was built expressly as a gassing structure, whereas "*Building D*" had a different purpose. It measured 12 by 8 m as opposed to the latter's 26 by 12 m. It was divided into three rooms rather than the six in "*Building D,*" and finally there is no trace of a camp railway: Thus, Kozak's description is in absolute disagreement with the archeological findings. But Kola did not want to draw the logical conclusion that this witness, too, is 'unreliable'; instead, he has opted for an unbelievable escape hatch:[311]

"In such an interpretation the gas chamber in the first stage of the camp existence must have been situated south-east from building D *and south to it the changing room and the barber."* (emphasis added)

In other words, since the remains of "*Building D*" are in total disagreement with Kozak's description, and since the homicidal gas chambers must have existed, it follows that they were located "*south-east of building D*"! Unfortunately for Kola, there is not a trace of any structure in that area. Thus, in his attempt at least partly to salvage the official thesis, Kola is obliged to have recourse to an act of faith: There are no archeological traces of those elusive gas chambers, but nevertheless they did exist!

That there is indeed not a trace of the presumed gas chambers is admitted candidly by O'Neil who writes:[312]

"We found no trace of the gassing barracks dating from either the first or second phase of the camp's construction."

Obviously, he relates that fact to the efforts of the SS to erase any vestiges of the alleged gassing structures, but who can seriously believe that they could have succeeded in making the buildings, foundations and all, disappear without a trace? Unless the SS had sensed that over half a century later Kola and Robin O'Neil would come looking for them with their manual drill!

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[310] As I have indicated above, the remains measured 26 m × 12 m according to the survey by A. Kola.

[311] A. Kola, *Bełżec…*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 67.

[312] R. O'Neil, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 55.

Chapter V:
Documented History of the Bełżec Camp

1. Origins and Function of the Bełżec Camp

In June of 1940, as part of the so-called "*Otto-Programm*,"[313] the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht decided on the construction of an anti-tank trench (a "*Buggraben*") between the Bug and San rivers along the Polish-Soviet border.

In September of 1940, 6,000 Jews were transported from Warsaw and elsewhere to Hrubieszów, a town near the river Bug, which formed the border between Poland and the Soviet Union, where they were to build a road of strategic importance. The detainees were housed in a labor camp. On September 10, a Jewish hospital was set up for the inmates. One of those assigned to it was a Jewish doctor who left Poland in April 1943 and later wrote an account of the German occupation. He stated:[314]

> *"At the same time* [August 1940]*, the Jews of the city and the district of Lublin were arrested and sent to Belzec, where they were 'taught' how to work under the guidance of the 'famous' Dachau henchman Major Dollf and his assistant Berteczko. Almost nobody came back from this 'course.' Many died of injuries from the beatings they received while working, others from typhus and other diseases, still others were simply shot. At Belzec, their main task was to dig anti-tank trenches along the border at a distance of several tens of kilometers."*

Bełżec was the center of a network of ten forced labor camps for a total of some 15,000 Jews, of whom 2,500 were initially detained at Bełżec[315] as part of an "*SS Grenzsicherungsbaukommando*" (SS border securing construction group).[316] The living conditions of the detainees in these camps were very

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[313] A project for the construction of roads of strategic importance and for technical improvement of the entire transport infrastructure of the Government General. Cf. S. Piotrowski, *Dziennik Hansa Franka*, Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, Warsaw 1956, p. 218 (*Arbeitssitzung* [working session] of September 20, 1940).

[314] A. Silberschein, *op. cit.* (note 29), p. 8.

[315] T. Berenstein, "*Obozy pracy przymusowej dla Żydów w dystrikcie lubelskim*," in *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historicznego w Polsce*, 22, 1957, pp. 5f.

[316] Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord. Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während der zweiten Weltkrieges*, Röderberg-Verlag, Frankfurt/Main 1960, p. 219.

harsh. In a "*Bericht über das Ergebnis einer ärztlichen Visitation in den Lagern der Belzec-Gruppe*" (Report concerning the results of a medical inspection of the camps in the Bełżec group), dating from the middle of September 1940, one can read:[317]

> *"Generally abominable, especially in the north. The rooms are absolutely inadequate to take in so many people. They are dark and dirty. Infestation by lice is rampant. About 30% of the workers have no shoes, no trousers, no shirt. Everyone sleeps on the floor, without any straw. The roofs are damaged everywhere, no glass in the windows, it is terribly crowded. For example, 75 persons sleep in a room 5 by 6* [m]*, on the floor, one upon the other. Under these circumstances, there is no question of undressing. On top of that, there is a scarcity of soap, and it is even difficult to get water. The sick sleep and lie together with the healthy. The barracks must not be left during the night, all the natural urges have to be relieved locally. Thus, it is not surprising that under these circumstances there are many cases of disease. It is extremely difficult to be excused from work for even one day. Hence, even the sick have to go to work."*

This tragic situation seems to have been especially prevalent at Bełżec because, on September 20, 1940, a "*Bekanntmachung an die jüdische Bevölkerung*" (announcement to the Jewish population) from the *Arbeitsamt Lublin* (Lublin labor office) threatened Jews who tried to avoid in the following terms:[318]

> *"Anyone not respecting this duty after Monday, September 23, 1940, will immediately be sent to the Belzec work camp."*

On October 21, 1940, a civil servant of the office of "*Innere Verwaltung, Bevölkerunsgwesen und Fürsorge*" (Internal administration, population matters and social welfare) of the "*Regierung des Generalgouvernements*" (Administration of the Government General) wrote an internal memo concerning "*Ihre fernmündliche Anfrage wegen Auflösung des Judenlagers in Belzec und vorhandene Mißstände*" (your telephone inquiry regarding the dissolution of the Jewish camp at Bełżec and present deficiencies). The memo states that because of lack of cooperation on the part of SS *Brigadeführer* (major general) Globocnik, it was not clear whether "*das Judenlager in Belzec*" (the Jewish camp at Bełżec) had already been closed. The memo continues:[319]

> *"The Jews of the Belzec camp shall be disbanded* [320] *and put to work within the Otto-Programm. Those from Radom and Warsaw are to go back to their original homes. The Jewish councils are even ready to fetch their racial comrades. Concerning the execution of this task there is a puzzling*

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317 *Ibidem*, p. 221.
318 *Ibidem*, p. 231.
319 N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.*, (note 2), pp. 220f.
320 "*aufgelöst*"

lack of clarity, and the proper cooperation of the organs of the SS and Polizeiführer [Chief of SS and Police] *cannot always be achieved in practice. The present state of affairs is as follows: 8 trains have been scheduled for the transport. Two trains have meanwhile departed. The first train left from Hrubieschow with 920 Jews on board, accompanied by 9 SS and local militia personnel. Only about 500 of them have arrived. We could not find out where the other 400 have gone. As they cannot have been shot in such a large number, I have heard it said that they were perhaps released against payment of a certain sum. Let me stress that this latter statement is only a supposition. The second train went to Radom with some 900 Jews. While it would have been easy to identify the 3 to 400 Jews from Radom still at the Belzec camp, this request of the Department of Work was not granted, and only 16 from Radom were on the train."*

The fate of the Jews detained at Bełżec was clarified in the "*Oktober-Bericht des Gouverneurs im Distrikt Lublin, Zörner, über die Zwangsarbeit der Juden*" (October report of the governor of the Lublin district, Zörner, regarding the forced labor of the Jews):[321]

"During the month in question, so many Jews were requisitioned for forced labor that Jews had to be brought in from other districts. From the Jewish camp at Belzec, 4,331 Jewish forced laborers who were released had been assigned to road construction and building work for the 'Otto-Programm.' Their condition was such that they could not be regarded as completely fit for work."

Previously, in April 1940, Bełżec had served as a camp for gypsies, and the inmates had suffered from the spread of infectious diseases such as typhus.[322]

2. The Bełżec Camp in Documents

Only a few original documents concerning the deportations to Bełżec (from Galicia) have survived. While they show a very severe German attitude toward the Jews, they do not confirm the alleged extermination policy.

On February 2, 1942, the *Kommandeur der Ordnungspolizei im Distrikt Galizien* (Commander of order police in the district of Galicia) issued an order on the "*Arbeitseinsatz von Juden*" (labor service of Jews), in which he stated:[323]

"On the basis of a number of notes I have received from German official agencies and authorities, I must strongly insist on the following: Re-

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[321] Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 316), p. 217.

[322] E. Dziadosz, J. Marszałek, "*Więzienia i obozy w dystrykcie lunelskim w latach 1939-1944*," in *Zeszyty Majdanka*, 3, 1969, p. 61.

[323] RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 129.

cently, we have seen more and more cases in which Jewish workers assigned to urgent work for war aims are being rounded up by various official agencies and are thus being withdrawn from the necessary work that they had been assigned to. Jews who have been drafted for important war projects of the Wehrmacht as well as for projects of the Four Year Plan possess a corresponding identity card bearing the seal of the agencies or authorities to which they are assigned.

I request once again to inform expressly all units under [my] *command, and in particular the Ukrainian auxiliary police, to the effect that it is prohibited to round up those Jews assigned to work service. In case of non-compliance with this order I shall punish the guilty."*

On September 14, 1942, *Zugwachtmann der Schutzpolizei* (railroad guard of the protection police) Josef Jäcklein wrote a report, "*Resettlement from Kolomea to Belzec*." He escorted a train of 51 cars loaded with 8,200 Jews that left Kolomea at 20:50 hours on September 10. The Jews quickly sought ways to escape, ripping the barbed wire from the openings of the cars and opening up holes in the walls, which caused Jäcklein to cable ahead to Stanislau station to have boards and nails ready. On arrival at that station, the train stopped one hour and a half for the repairs. A few stations farther along, the Jews had again ripped out the barbed wire and made new holes, so the train stopped again. Jäcklein relates:

"When the train left, I even noticed that in one car hammers and pliers were being used. Questioning the Jews as to why they still had these tools, they declared that they had been told that they would be able to put them to good use at their next destination."

Again and again, at every stop, the train had to stop for repairs to the car walls. Finally the train arrived at Lemberg/Lwów, where Jäcklein turned over "*9 cars marked L and destined for the forced labor camp at Lemberg*" to SS *Obersturmführer* (senior lieutenant) Schulte, but another 1,000 Jews came on board. When the train moved on, escape attempts resumed. As the escort had expended all their ammunition, they had to use "*stones*" and "*bayonets*" to prevent escapes. The transport took place under catastrophic conditions. Jäcklein writes in this respect:

"The ever increasing panic among the Jews, caused by the strong heat, overloading of the cars with up to 220 Jews, the smell of corpses – 2,000 dead were counted when the train was unloaded – made the transport nearly impossible."

The train arrived at Bełżec at 6:45 p.m. the following day and was turned over to the camp authorities at 7:30 p.m. Unloading the cars took until 10 p.m.[324]

[324] RGVA, 1323-2-292b, pp. 61f.

This transport was also the topic of another report, drawn up at Lemberg on September 14, 1942, by *Leutnant der Schutzpolizei der Reserve* (lieutenant of the reserve protection police) Wassermann.[325] The train carried 8,205 Jews, and most cars contained 180 to 200 persons. The guard detail traveled in 2 passenger cars so that the average load per car was (8,205÷49=) 167 persons.

In the first portion of his report, Wassermann describes a transport from Kolomea to Bełżec on September 7, 1942. The security police gathered some 5,300 Jews at the "*Sammelplatz des Arbeitsamtes*" (collection site of the labor office), and another 300 were rounded up in the Jewish sector. Wassermann states:

> *"The transport was fully loaded at 19 hours. Altogether, 4,769 Jews have been resettled, once the security police had released about 1,000 of the Jews who had been rounded up."*

Each car was loaded with 100 persons. Other Jews were, however, shot:

> *"On September 7, 300 old, infected, frail, or untransportable Jews were executed."*

During the days following there were more shootings:

> *"During the actions in the Kolomea area on September 8, 9, and 10, 1942, about 400 Jews had to be liquidated by shooting for the usual reasons."*

The catastrophic transport of September 10-11, 1942, was caused by logistical deficiencies rather than homicidal intent; when it was possible, transports took place under more humane conditions, like the one on September 7, when the deportees traveled 100 per car. Before the transport left, the security police released about 1,000 Jews who could have easily been transported on the train, by simply increasing the load from 100 to 123 persons. During the transport of September 10-11, 1942, nine cars with detainees were unloaded "*for the forced labor camp.*" This does not jibe with an alleged program for the *total* extermination of the Jews.

The shootings of various groups of Jews were motivated by the fact that they were "*old, infected, frail, or untransportable*" persons – but if the direct transports to Bełżec were carried out for the purpose of extermination, then why these preliminary shootings?

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[325] RGVA, 1323-2-292b, pp. 40-42. A "*Leseabschrift*" (reading copy) of this document was reproduced by R. Hilberg in the book *Sonderzüge nach Auschwitz*, Dumjahn Verlag, Mainz 1981, pp. 194-197. Although claiming to be an identical text, it shows substantial formal differences from the document conserved at the RGVA: It is an original typescript, while the RGVA document is a carbon copy; it does not show runic characters for SS, which are, however, present in the RGVA version; it does not have handwritten annotations and has a different line width, which causes the typescript to be 4 pages long as against 3 for the RGVA version. The signature of Wassermann is identical for the two versions to the point of seeming to have been copied in, see Document 16 in the Appendix.

Moreover, that the "*resettlement*" was in reality the murder of the Jews in the alleged gas chambers, as the official historiography interprets it, is all the more dubious in light of the above.

In the weekly report of "*Sicherungsbezirk Nord, Einsatzkommando 5. Komp. Pol. Rgt. 24*" (Security district north, action commando, 5th company, 24th police regiment), written at Rawa Ruska on December 12, 1942, one can read:[326]

> *"In the period concerned, the action commando was used for the resettlement of Jews in Rawa Ruska. 750 Jews who were in hiding after resettlement were dealt with according to instructions."*

Apparently these Jews were not hiding before or during the resettlement in order to escape it, but they were hiding *afterwards*. Hence, these Jews were still alive "*after resettlement*" and were able to hide – certainly not in the Bełżec camp! – and they were treated accordingly because of that, which can mean that they were either shot or punished otherwise.

On October 31, 1942, the *Einsatzkommando* of *Sicherungsbezirk Nord* reports the arrest (but not shooting!) of 20 Jews for having "*left resettlement location without permission and jumped from transport trains*."[327]

And the report of December 5 states that 60 Jews "*were dealt with according to instructions*" (perhaps shot, but perhaps also only arrested) for the very same reason:[328]

> *"Escaped from transport trains and left resettlement location without permission."*

The "*resettlement location*" was the ghetto of Rawa Ruska, 27 km away from Bełżec; it continued to exist seven months after the opening of the presumed extermination camp!

As I have shown elsewhere, on October 28, 1942, SS *Obergruppenführer* (General) Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, in his capacity as Senior SS and Police Chief in the General Government and Secretary of State for the Security Services, issued a "*Police regulation concerning the formation of Jewish living quarters in the districts of Warsaw and Lublin*," which instituted 12 Jewish residential areas; on November 10, 1942, Krüger instituted another 4 such areas in the district of Radom, 5 in the district of Krakow, 32 in the district of Galicia, and 2 more in the county of Rawa Ruska (Rawa Ruska ghetto and Lubaczów).[329] A few weeks later, Bełżec, which – according to the official historiography – had been set up specifically to exterminate the Jewish population of the district of Galicia, ceased activity!

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[326] RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 6. Cf. document 15 in the Appendix.
[327] RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 29.
[328] RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 7.
[329] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 266f.

3. Bełżec as Part of the German Policy of Deporting Jews to the East

A document that has recently come to light – a report by SS *Sturmbannführer* (major) Höfle to SS *Obersturmbannführer* (lieutenant colonel) Heim, dated April 28, 1943, and decrypted by the British secret services – gives the number of persons transferred to Bełżec up to December 31, 1942: 434,508, numbers quite far from those championed by the official historiography.[330]

This document must be viewed in the light of decisions taken by Fritz Reuter, an employee of the Department of Population and Welfare in the Office of the Governor General for the District of Lublin, and by SS *Hauptsturmführer* Hans (or Hermann)[331] Höfle, then delegate for Jewish resettlement in the Lublin district, dated March 16, 1942.

It is advisable here to repeat what I have already written in a separate study:[332]

On March 17, 1942, Fritz Reuter made a note in which he referred to a talk on the previous day with the SS *Hauptsturmführer* Höfle, the delegate for the resettlement of Jews in the Lublin district:[333]

> *"I arranged for a talk with Hstuf. Höfle for Monday, the 16th of March 1942, namely at 17:30 hours. In the course of the discussion the following was explained by Hstuf. Höfle:*
>
> *It would be expedient to divide the transports of Jews arriving in the Lublin district at the station of origin into employable and unemployable Jews. If it is not possible to make this distinction at the departure station, then the transport will have to be divided in Lublin in the manner mentioned above.*
>
> *All unemployable Jews are to come to Bezec* [Bełżec]*, the outermost border station in the Zamosz district.*
>
> *Hstuf. Höfle is thinking of building a large camp in which the employable Jews can be registered in a file system according to their occupations and requisitioned from there.*
>
> *Piaski is being made Jew-free and will be the collection point for the Jews coming out of the Reich.*
>
> *Trawnicki* [Trawniki] *is not at present occupied by Jews.*

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[330] Peter Witte, Stephen Tyas, "*A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of the Jews during 'Einsatz Reinhardt' 1942*," in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, no. 3, Winter 2001, pp. 469f.

[331] According to *Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord* (note 316) and Reitlinger (note 151), Höfle's first name was Hans, but according to R. Hilberg (note 325) and the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (note 7), it is Hermann.

[332] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka, op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 235-238.

[333] Józef Kermisz, *Dokumenty i Materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. II: *"Akce" i "Wysiedlenia*," Warsaw-Lodz-Krakow 1946, p. 32f.

H. asks where on the Dęblin-Trawnicki route 60,000 Jews can be unloaded. Informed of the Jewish transports now departing from here, H. explained that of the 500 Jews arriving in Susiec, those who were unemployable could be sorted out and sent to Bezec. According to a government teletype dated March 4, 1942, a Jewish transport, whose destination was the Trawnicki station, is rolling out of the Protectorate. These Jews are not unloaded in Trawnicki, but have been brought to Izbiza. An inquiry of the Zamosz district, asking to be able to request 200 Jews from there for work, was answered in the affirmative by H.

In conclusion he stated that he could accept 4-5 transports of 1,000 Jews to the terminal station Bezec daily. These Jews would cross the border and never return to the General Gouvernement."

This document is of capital significance for two reasons. First, Höfle was the deputy *Stabsführer* (staff leader) of the SS and Police Chief for the Lublin district (Odilo Globocnik). According to official historiography, in this capacity he coordinated "*the construction of the extermination camp Belzec and the deportations there from the Lublin district*."[334] Second, Bełżec is supposed to have begun its homicidal activity on the day after the talk referred to in Reuter's note, March 17, 1942. According to official historiography, it was (like Treblinka, Sobibór, and Chełmno) a pure extermination camp, where there was no separation of those fit and those unfit for labor. Yet, according to the cited document:

A subdivision of the Jews into those able to work and those not able to work was planned. The Jews able to work were to be used for labor assignments. Bełżec was to become a camp in which the Jews fit to work were "*registered in a file system according to their occupations*." This does not conform in the least to a 'pure extermination camp.'

All Jews unable to work were to be brought to Bełżec. The camp was supposed to "*accept 4-5 transports daily, of 1,000 Jews to the terminal station Bezec*[sic]," clearly Jews unable to work, who would "*cross the border*" never to return to the General Government. For that reason, Bełżec was designated as "*the outermost border station in the Zamosz district*." This sentence makes sense only in connection with a resettlement beyond the border.

Piaski was to become the "*collection point for the Jews coming out of the Reich*." If one travels by road, it is another 24 km to Lublin, located to the northwest of Piaski, and 91 km to Bełżec. The distance to Bełżec by train is even greater (about 130 km). This contradicts the thesis that Bełżec was a pure extermination camp, since in this case the collection point would have been Bełżec itself.

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[334] E. Jäckel *et al.* (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 60), vol. II, p. 619. Not included in the English edition by I. Gutman, *op. cit.* (note 7).

It was intended to unload 60,000 Jews at a point on the Dęblin-Trawniki route. The former locale is 76 km northwest of Lublin (in the direction of Warsaw); Trawniki is 13 km east of Piaski (for which it serves as rail station) on the Lublin-Rejowiec-Chełm/Lublin-Bełżec railroad line (before the Rejowiec station, a junction of the rail line turns off south toward Bełżec). This project as well cannot be reconciled with the claim that Bełżec was a pure extermination camp.

This is fully and entirely confirmed by a report dated April 7, 1942. Its author is SS *Hauptsturmführer* Richard Türk, director of the Department for Population and Welfare in the Office of the Governor of the Lublin district. The report deals with the month of March and contains a paragraph titled "*Jewish Resettlement Operation of the* SS *and Police Chief*," in which Türk reports:

> *"The possibilities of accommodation, limited to places along the Dęblin-Rejowiec-Belzec railway line, were and are currently being discussed with the representative of the SS and Police Chief. Alternative possibilities were determined.*
>
> *On the basis of my proposal, there is a fundamental understanding that as Jews from the west are being settled here, local Jews are to be evacuated in like numbers, if possible. The current status of the settlement process is that approximately 6,000 were settled here from the Reich, approximately 7,500 have been evacuated from the district, and 18,000 from the city of Lublin.*
>
> *Individually, 3,400 have been evacuated from Piaski, district of Lublin, and 2,000 Reich Jews have come in so far; 2,000 from Izbica, Krasnystaw district, and 4,000 Reich Jews arriving in it; from Opole and Wawolbnica, Puławy district, 1,950 have been evacuated* […]*."*

The report later mentions the resettlements of Jews from Mielec and Bilgoraj and makes clear that the majority of the evacuees was unfit for labor:[335]

> *"On March 13, 1942, the Cholm district received approximately 1,000 Jews, of whom 200 were accommodated in Sosnowice and 800 in Włodawa.*
>
> *On March 14, 1942, Międzyrzec, Radzyn district, received 750 Jews. On March 16, 1942, the Hrubieszow district received 1,343 Jews, 843 of which have been accommodated in Dubienka and 500 in Belz. The majority were women and children, with men fit for labor only a minority. On March 16, 1942, the Zamosz district received 500 Jews, all of whom have been lodged in Cieszanow.*
>
> *On March 22, 1942, 57 Jewish families with 221 persons were resettled from Bilgoraj to Tarnogrod."*

[335] Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 316), p. 271.

The history of the resettlement of Jews in the district of Lublin confirms fully the Höfle directive mentioned above and is in clear contrast with the official thesis of the extermination of Jews.

After the opening of the Bełżec and Sobibór camps, as many as 33 transports of western Jews (a total of 31,046 persons) arrived in the Lublin district; they were not sent to either of the two alleged extermination camps; and after the arrival of the first transport at Sobibór (May 9, 1942) in the district of Lublin, through July 15, 1942, there were another 36 transports (with a total of 35,034 persons) of which only eleven (with 11,021 persons) were sent to Sobibór, and none to Bełżec.[336]

On the other hand, the first transport of western Jews to arrive at Sobibór (the transport of 1,000 Jews arriving on May 9, 1942, from Theresienstadt at Sobibór-Osowa[337]) was not gassed in its entirety, as the official historiography maintains: At least 101 Jews from this transport died at Majdanek,[338] and we have registry data for 90 of them;[339] this indicates that an equal number of Jews – if not the entire transport – were transferred to this camp.

Nor were the Jews deported to various places in the Lublin district 'gassed' in the alleged extermination camps at Bełżec and Sobibór. According to research done by Miroslav Kryl, 858 Jews sent to the Lublin district from the ghettos at Theresienstadt and Prague died between May and September 1942 at the Majdanek camp.[340] Of these, 525 arrived directly at Lublin and 333 had come there from other places in the Lublin district.[341]

A study by Janina Kiełboń of the *Totenbücher* (death books) of Majdanek furnishes more detailed data: Between May and September 1942 a total of 4,687 western Jews died in this camp, among them 1,066 Czech Jews, 2,849 Slovak Jews, and 772 German and Austrian Jews.[342] Of these, 735 Jews were between 11 and 20 years old, 163 were over 60 years of age, out of whom three Slovak Jews were in the 81 to 90 year age range.[343]

The number of western Jews who died at Majdanek, however, was even greater, as can be deduced from the series of documents "*Totenmeldung für die Effektenkammer*" (Mortality report for the property depot), which have survived in part. For eight days in all (October 20 and November 29 through December 5, 1942), the deaths of at least 183 western Jews were registered in

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[336] Cf. the transport list in C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 242-244.
[337] Osowa is a small community located a few kilometers southwest of the Sobibór camp.
[338] Cf. below.
[339] Cf. Table 1.
[340] M. Kryl, "*Deportacja więźniów żydowskich z Terezina i Pragi na Lubelszczyznę*," in *Zeszyty Majdanka*, XI, 1983, pp. 33-35.
[341] *Ibidem*, p. 35, cf. Table 2.
[342] J. Kiełboń, "*Księga więźniów zmarłych na Majdanek w 1942 R. Analiza dokumentu*," in *Zeszyty Majdanka*, XV, 1993, p. 114.
[343] *Ibidem*, p. 113.

these documents: 41 Czechs, 108 Slovaks, and 34 Germans and Austrians.[344] The Jews evacuated from Theresienstadt had been deported mainly to Izbica (March 11 and 17), to Trawniki (June 12), and to Zamość (June 20 and 30).

Thus the number of deaths of western Jews at Majdanek established so far is 4,870. According to Zofia Leszczyńska, between April and June 1942 five transports of Czech and Slovak Jews (4,813 persons) were sent directly to Majdanek and another 16 (about 13,500 persons) were transferred there from the residential areas of the Lublin district,[345] which brings the total to about 18,300. This figure, though, does not include the German and Austrian Jews, whose numbers can be estimated at about 3,600.[346] Hence, no fewer than 21,900 western Jews were registered at Majdanek, about one third of all the deportees to the Lublin district. Jews from France, Belgium, and Holland[347] also arrived at Majdanek and were probably taken elsewhere. Only one Dutch Jew appears in "*Totenmeldung für die Effektenkammer*": Lewy Trompetter, born in Amsterdam on April 27, 1873, and registered, at age 69, under the number 7,593; he died on December 1, 1942.[348]

In October of 1942, 1,700 Jews left Bełżec for Majdanek.[347] At least 700 Dutch Jews were moved from Sobibór to work camps,[349] and some of them returned home by way of Auschwitz.[349] The Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (Imperial Institute for War Documentation) in Amsterdam has in its archives six postcards written by Dutch Jews detained at the work camp of Włodawa[350] (Sobibór).[351] One was written on May 23, 1943,[352] by Elly Herschel, a Dutch Jewess, 18 years old, who had been deported to Sobibór on April 6.[353] From Treblinka, at least several thousand Jews were transferred to other camps.[354] The case of Minna Grossova, a Czech Jewess, is particularly significant; born on September 20, 1874, she was deported to Treblinka October 19, 1942, but died on December 30, 1943, at Auschwitz.[355] Thus, in spite of her 68 years of age, she was not only not 'gassed' at Treblinka, but was in-

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[344] GARF, 7021-107-3, pp. 226-235.
[345] Z. Leszczyńska, "*Transporty więźniów do obozu Majdanku*," in *Zeszyty Majdanka*, IV, 1969, p. 184
[346] The figure is based on the mortality rate of the Czech and Slovak Jews, i.e. (4.064÷18.300× 100=) 22.2% applied to the 806 ascertained deaths of the German and Austrian Jews: (802× 100÷22.2) ≅ 3.600.
[347] Z. Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 345), p. 189.
[348] GARF, 7021-107-3, p. 234.
[349] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 259-261.
[350] Wlodawa was located about 10 km from Sobibór.
[351] J. Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibór*, Metropol Verlag, Berlin 1998, pp. 154f.
[352] Date entered by the detainee in the text of the postcard.
[353] ROD, c[2]-611. Cf. document 14 in the Appendix.
[354] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 286-288.
[355] *Terezínská Pamětní Kniha*, Terezínská Iniciativa, Melantrich 1995, p. 393.

deed moved to Auschwitz, where she was duly registered; hence, she survived even the 'selection' on arrival.

Besides the transports to the Lublin district, between May 5 and November 28, 1942, another 36 transports of western Jews (about 35,000 additional persons) were deported into the eastern territories (Minsk, Raasiku, Maly Trostinec, Riga) without even stopping at the three alleged extermination camps at Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka.[356]

How are these facts to be reconciled with the theses of official historiography?

In the preceding chapters I have shown that not only is the massacre of the Jews transported to Bełżec not confirmed by any material or documentary proof, but also that the results of Polish archeological research refute it; therefore, we are left with only one possibility: Bełżec was a transit camp – of the same type as Sobibór and Treblinka.

This is not the place to reiterate the evidence I have gathered in another, much more exhaustive study.[357] Thus I shall limit myself to stating that, having excluded the hypothesis of a massacre, we can regard as true everything that the witnesses described as 'camouflage' to fool the victims. I refer in particular to the speeches by the SS regarding the destination of the deportees: They were in a transit camp, from which they would be moved to other labor camps in the east, but first they had to take a shower and be disinfested.

And, as Jean-Claude Pressac has made clear, the first alleged gassing building can be interpreted only as a building for disinfestation by means of steam.[110]

Significantly, no witness has ever mentioned the existence at Bełżec, or anywhere near the camp, of a disinfestation unit, which, however, would have been indispensable – *even* if mass exterminations had taken place – for the treatment of the enormous quantity of the victims' garments, before those could have been loaded on trains and shipped to Lublin.

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[356] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 200f. (List of transports).
[357] *Ibidem*, pp. 253-273 and 290-299.

Conclusion

In this study, I have described, first of all, the literary formation of the thesis, presently upheld by official historiography, of mass exterminations at Bełżec by means of diesel engine exhaust gas; I have shown that it represents the culmination of the propaganda legends spread during the Second World War by professionals in atrocity propaganda like Jan Karski. I have exhaustively demonstrated how this version came to prevail over the other two versions – just as untrue – of extermination by means of electrocution and by means of "*trains of death*." I have further shown that the two principal testimonies on which the extermination thesis has been tendentiously constructed – those of Rudolf Reder and of Kurt Gerstein – are not only in irreconcilable disagreement with each other over the type of engine used for the alleged murder of the victims (diesel for one, gasoline for the other), but even with respect to its very use as an instrument of murder: Whereas Gerstein attributed the death of the victims in the alleged gas chambers to the exhaust gases from his diesel engine, Reder asserted that the exhaust gases of his gasoline engine were released into the open air instead of into the gas chambers! The official thesis, based on the so-called 'Gerstein report,' has therefore been openly denied ever since the immediate postwar period.

Once the murder method had been selected – exhaust gases from a diesel engine – the judiciary quickly entered the fray on the side of historiography, to give it its official blessing and to disseminate it worldwide through the farcical trial testimonies as a worthy epilogue to the black propaganda of the war years.

The thesis of mass extermination at Bełżec not only collapses under the weight of its own principal main witnesses, it also runs up against insurmountable material impossibilities, especially those concerning the cremation of the alleged victims. Polish archeological research has dealt the final deathblow to the official thesis: Its findings categorically disprove the possibility of burying 600,000 (or several hundred thousand), corpses, and the quantity of bodies, bones, and ashes that was discovered are absolutely incompatible with such an enormous massacre. Moreover, the total absence of archeological evidence of the alleged extermination installations completely refutes the conflicting testimonies that are the basis for the extermination claims, testimonies Tregenza has already qualified "*as not reliable*" (rendering them thus doubly unreliable). The excavations at Bełżec have therefore contributed greatly to revealing the truth – but not the official truth!

Now that the hypothesis of mass extermination has been ruled out, there remains only one alternative: Bełżec was a transit camp for the transfer of Jews to the east.

Appendix

Abbreviations

AGK: Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni w Polsce, at present Główna Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Warsaw

GARF: Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiskoi Federatsii, Moscow

HILA: Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University

IMT: The Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, 1945-1946

ROD: Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, Amsterdam

ZStL: Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen, Ludwigsburg

Tables

Table 1

Jews deported on May 9, 1942, from Theresienstadt/Terezin to Sobibór-Osowa and deceased at Lublin-Majdanek (from: *Terezínská Pamětní Kniha*, Terezínská Iniciativa, Melantrich 1995, vol. I, pages shown in table; dates given in dd/mm/yyyy).

Surname	first name(s)	date of birth	date of death	reference
Adler	Rudolf	6/12/1909	21/7/1942	p. 522
Beck	Rudolf Jan	27/4/1918	14/8/1942	p. 354
Broch	Karel	19/3/1895	4/7/1942	p. 508
Danzer	Jaroslav	26/4/1910	6/9/1942	p. 522
Derblich	Josef	11/9/1894	14/8/1942	p. 522
Ditmar	Julius	28/5/1894	17/8/1942	p. 523
Dorfmann	Ladislav	26/8/1891	4/9/1942	p. 523
Dubsky	Bedrich	27/1/1895	30/8/1942	p. 523
Dusner	Vilem	13/6/1898	14/8/1942	p. 524
Dux	Viktor	1/6/1896	25/6/1942	p. 524
Edelstein	Frantisek	28/3/1896	8/6/1942	p. 524
Ehlich	Jan	27/6/1925	24/7/1942	p. 524
Ehrlich	Bedrich	17/3/1895	22/6/1942	p. 524
Ehrlich	Jan, Ing.	13/8/1898	27/6/1942	p. 524
Einhorn	Mojzis	19/5/1894	22/8/1942	p. 525
Eisler	Josef	26/11/1906	10/9/1942	p. 525
Eisner	Vilem	4/9/1905	16/7/1942	p. 525
Eisner	Harry	28/1/1920	16/9/1942	p. 526
Ekstein	Bedrich	23/9/1892	16/7/1942	p. 526
Felix	Josef G.	26/7/1904	25/7/1942	p. 190
Fischhof	Evzen	28/12/1907	10/8/1942	p. 526
Fischl	Pavel	9/3/1897	28/6/1942	p. 526
Fleischl	Valtr	5/12/1900	27/7/1942	p. 494
Forell	Vitezslav	16/5/1899	18/7/1942	p. 412
Graumann	Bedrich	13/3/1892	2/9/1942	p. 527
Grossmann	Jan	3/1/1920	4/9/1942	p. 527
Günsberg	Karel	29/7/1918	4/8/1942	p. 527
Günstling	Karel	23/8/1924	25/7/1942	p. 527
Guth	Josef	12/4/1925	24/9/1942	p. 527
Guttmann	Jindrich	22/4/1899	22/7/1942	p. 528
Guttmann	Jiri	21/6/1925	28/7/1942	p. 528
Guttmann	Leopold	13/3/1899	1/9/1942	p. 528

Surname	first name(s)	date of birth	date of death	reference
Guttmann	Oavel	12/3/1921	25/7/1942	p. 528
Haag	Milos	1/5/1907	22/7/1942	p. 528
Haas	Arnost	10/1/1895	25/7/1942	p. 528
Haas	Beno	20/9/1893	12/9/1942	p. 528
Haber	Julius	12/11/1892	12/9/1942	p. 528
Hatschek	Bedrich	7/4/1902	13/9/1942	p. 423
Hochberg	Julius	18/11/1904	11/9/1942	p. 452
Kalla	Robert	24/6/1924	14/8/1942	p. 529
Klein	Otto	4/5/1899	23/5/1942	p. 454
Klement	Richard	15/4/1898	27/7/1942	p. 358
Kohn	Artur	2/6/1899	13/7/1942	p.454
Kohn	Alexander	3/10/1924	1/8/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Bedrich	13/3/1894	13/7/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Edvard	3/1/1903	11/7/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Emil	6/11/1894	7/9/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Emil	12/2/1901	5/9/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Frantisek	26/2/1910	6/1/1945 [sic]	p. 529
Kohn	Jan	26/3/1923	23/8/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Karel	10/4/1914	31/7/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Leo	28/6/1908	4/9/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Leo	20/3/1892	9/7/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Rudolf	4/4/1882	30/8/1942	p. 529
Kollin	Otto	8/9/1904	7/9/1942	p. 530
Kowanitz	Jindrich	10/4/1924	11/8/1942	p. 530
Kürschner	Oskar	24/10/1900	31/7/1942	p. 484
Löwy	Maximilian	13/2/1896	4/9/1942	p. 469
Löwy	Alois	7/7/1897	8/8/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Ervin	4/9/1898	7/8/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Ervin	10/9/1895	10/8/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Frantisek	26/9/1900	2/9/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Josef	2/12/1896	25/9/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Kurt	23/1/1927	4/8/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Norbert	16/11/1900	20/7/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Rudolf	16/6/1902	6/7/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Valtr	2/6/1907	15/7/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Viktor	29/4/1896	16/7/1942	p. 531
Mahler	Hanus	24/4/1897	13/8/1942	p. 241
Mahler	Petr	30/5/1926	4/9/1942	p. 241
Neumann	Anton	1/4/1928	11/9/1942	p. 533
Neumann	Frantisek	11/8/1904	1/9/1942	p. 533
Neumann	Jan	14/5/1909	16/8/1942	p. 533
Neumann	Leo	1/4/1897	21/8/1942	p. 533
Neumann	Oskar	4/7/1892	12/9/1942	p. 533
Neumann	Valtr	13/12/1918	20/7/1942	p. 533

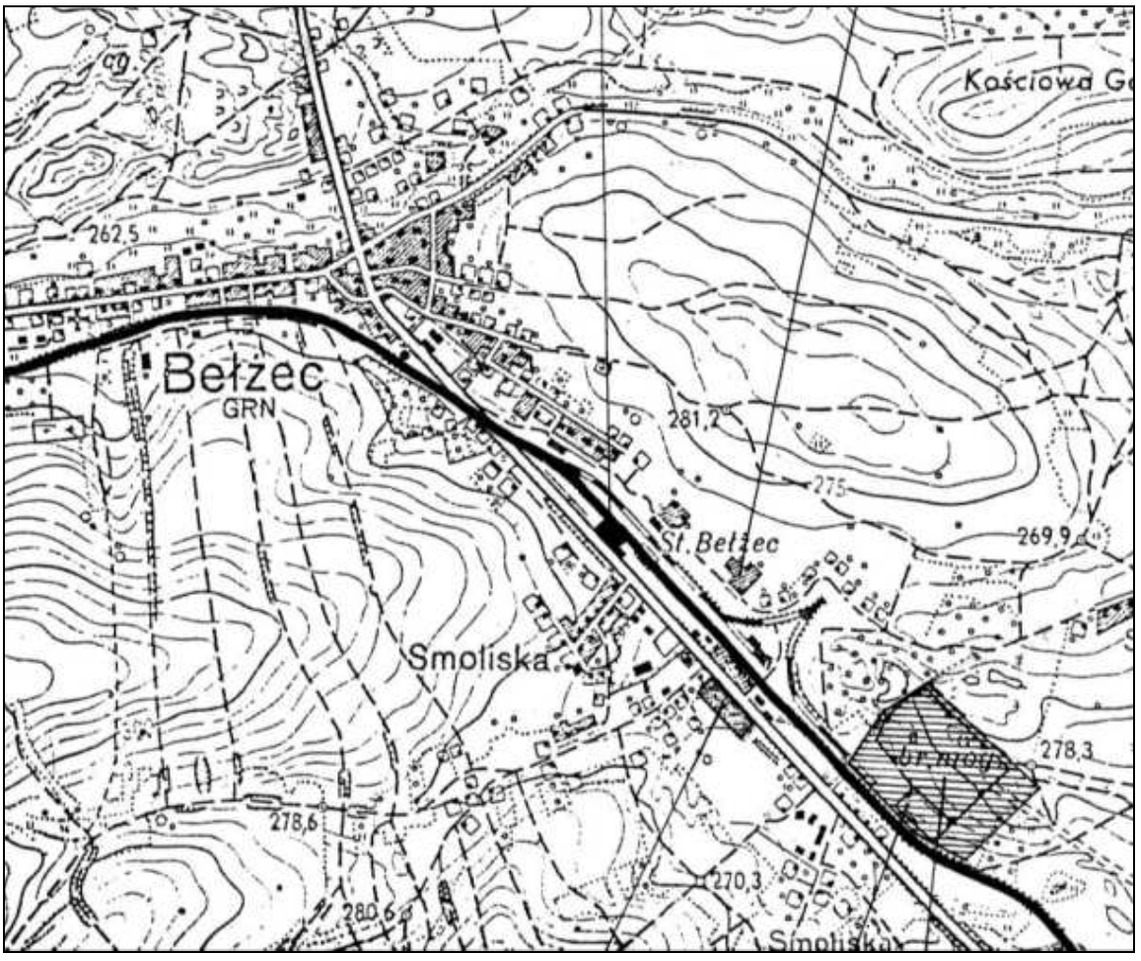
Surname	first name(s)	date of birth	date of death	reference
Neumann	Viktor	12/11/1896	23/9/1942	p. 533
Neuschul	Emil	17/1/1899	1/8/1942	p. 534
Nord	Oskar	26/2/1899	17/9/1942	p. 534
Polak	Frantisek	21/12/1902	9/9/1942	p. 165
Polesi	Karel	29/5/1896	30/7/1942	p. 274
Roll	Vitezslav	28/7/1921	12/9/1942	p. 182
Rosenbaum	Ota	22/7/1893	7/7/1942	p. 275
Sinaiberger	Pavel	19/7/1910	31/8/1942	p. 472
Spitzer	Simon Arnost	23/12/1902	28/6/1942	p. 445
Weiner	Josef	29/8/1907	7/9/1942	p. 490
Weiss	Bedrich	12/2/1908	30/8/1942	p. 535
Wurm	Jan	2/2/1911	20/7/1942	p. 535
Zucker	Hugo	1/11/1904	11/7/1942	p. 490
Zwicker	Arnost	1/4/1916	20/8/1942	p. 402

Table 2

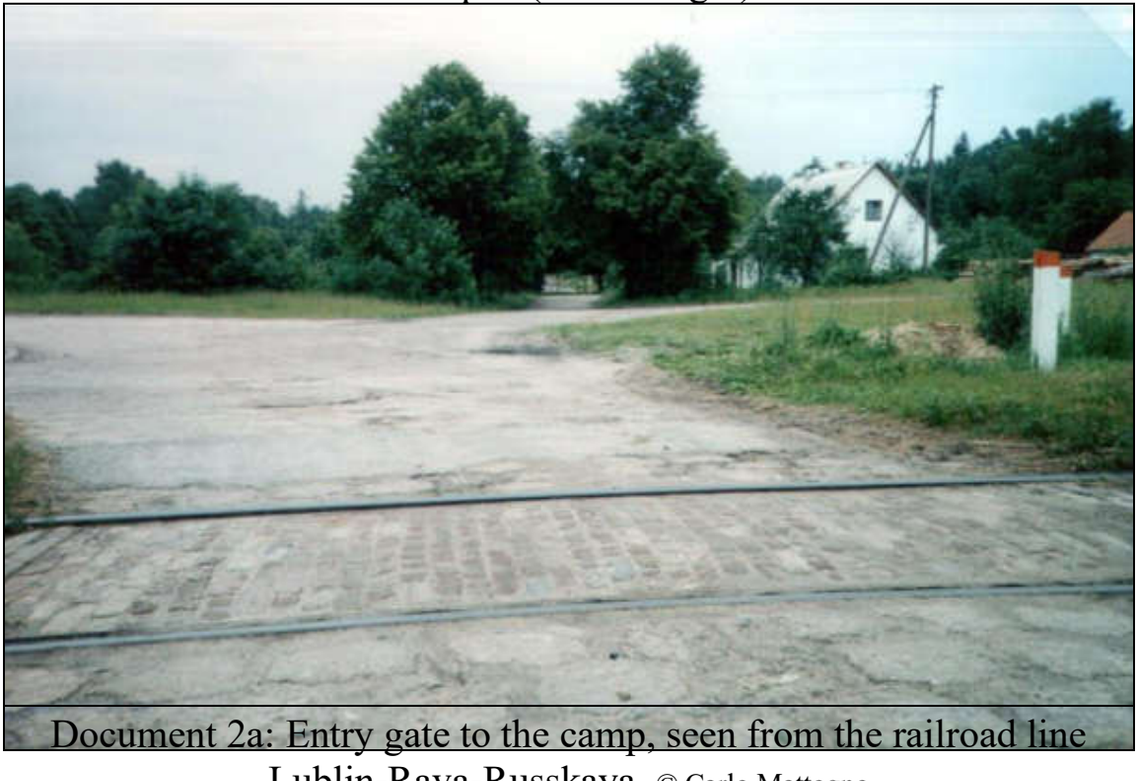
Jews deported from the ghettos of Theresienstadt/Terezin and Prague to the Lublin district and deceased at Lublin-Majdanek between May and September 1942 (dates given in dd/mm/yyyy).

Date of deportation	origin	destination	number of deaths
11/3/1942	Theresienstadt	Izbica	7
17/3/1942	Theresienstadt	Izbica	2
1/4/1942	Theresienstadt	Piaski	21
18/4/1942	Theresienstadt	Rejowiec	1
23/4/1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	101
27/4/1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	118
9/5/1942	Theresienstadt	Sobibór/Osowa	101
17/5/1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	146
25/5/1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	71
10/6/1942	Prague	Ujazdów	105
12/6/1942	Theresienstadt	Trawniki	96
13/6/1942	Theresienstadt	Majdanek	89
Total:			858

Documents



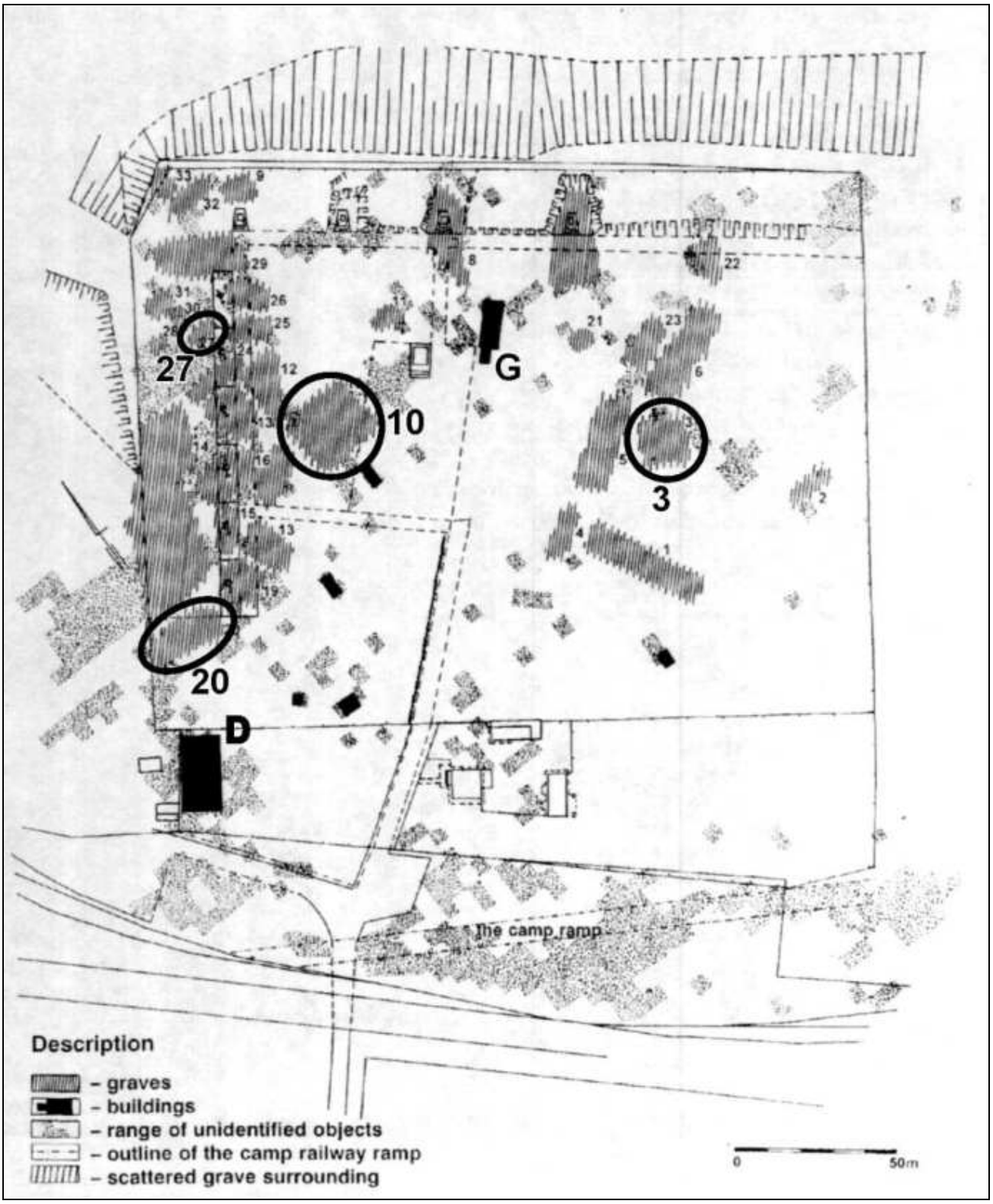
Document 1: Topographical map of the Bełżec area. The camp area is striped (bottom right).



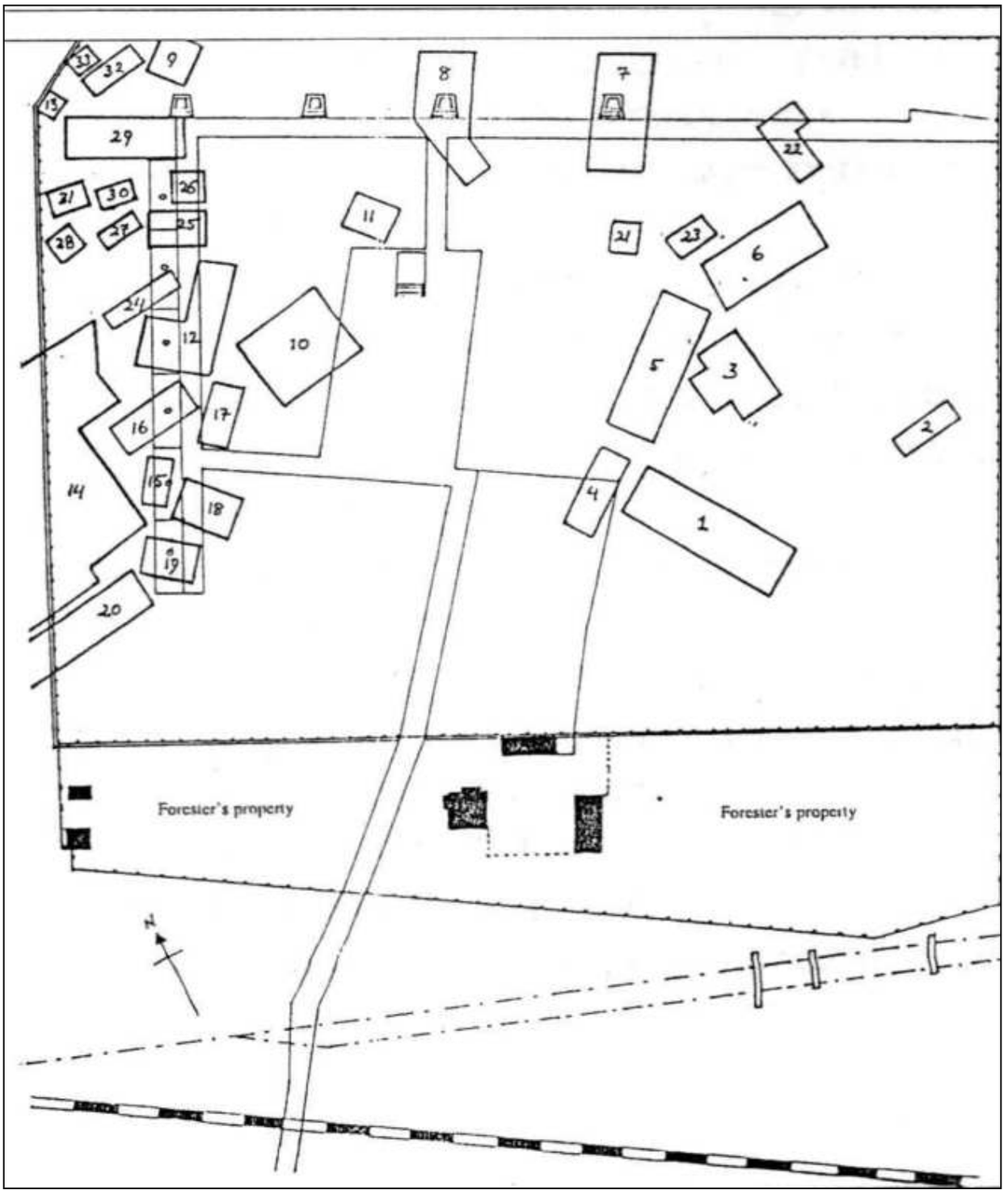
Document 2a: Entry gate to the camp, seen from the railroad line Lublin-Rava-Russkaya. © Carlo Mattogno

Document 2b: Close-up view of entry gate to the camp. © Carlo Mattogno

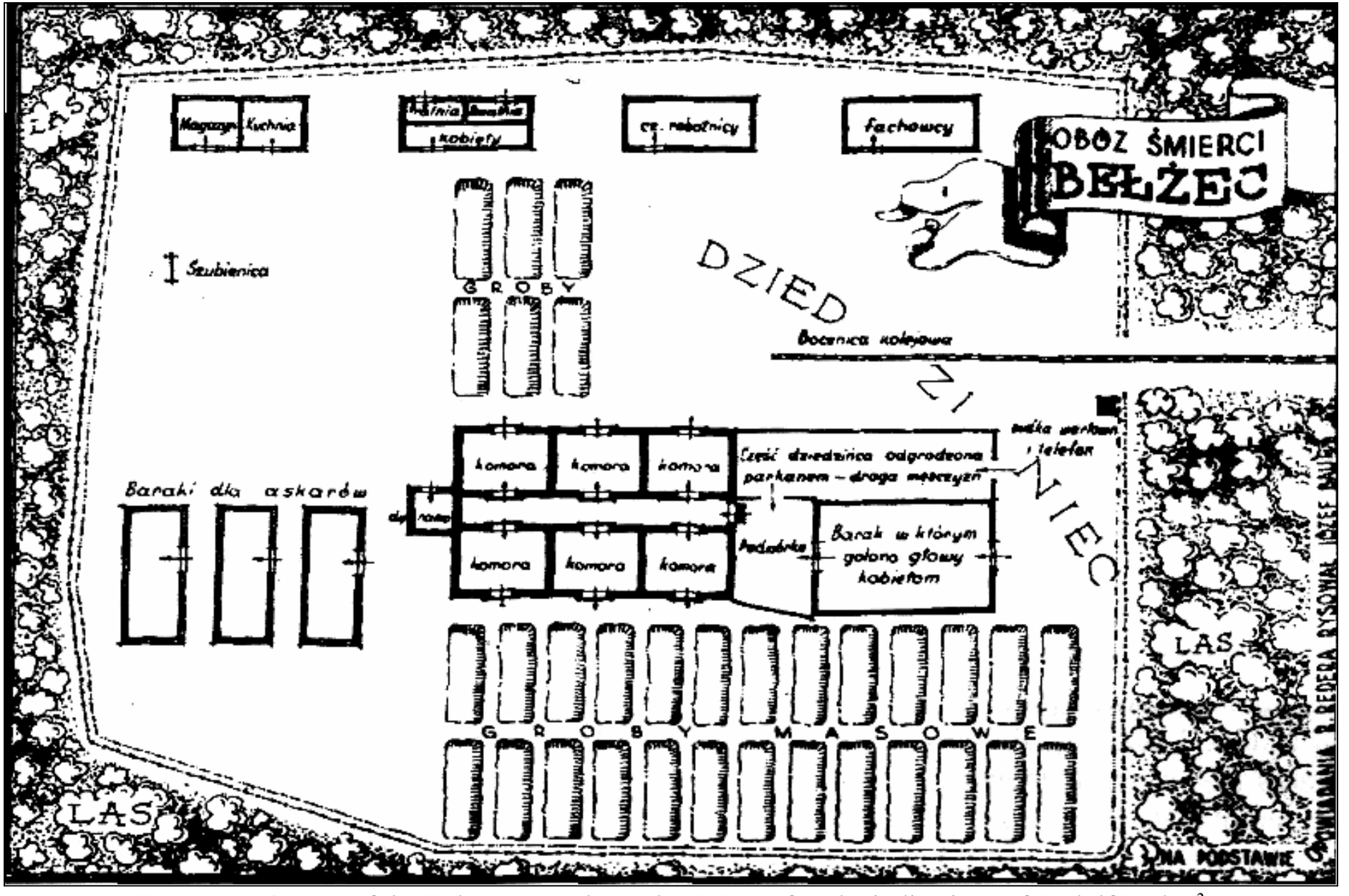
Document 3: State road no. 17, seen from the north-west corner of the camp. © Carlo Mattogno



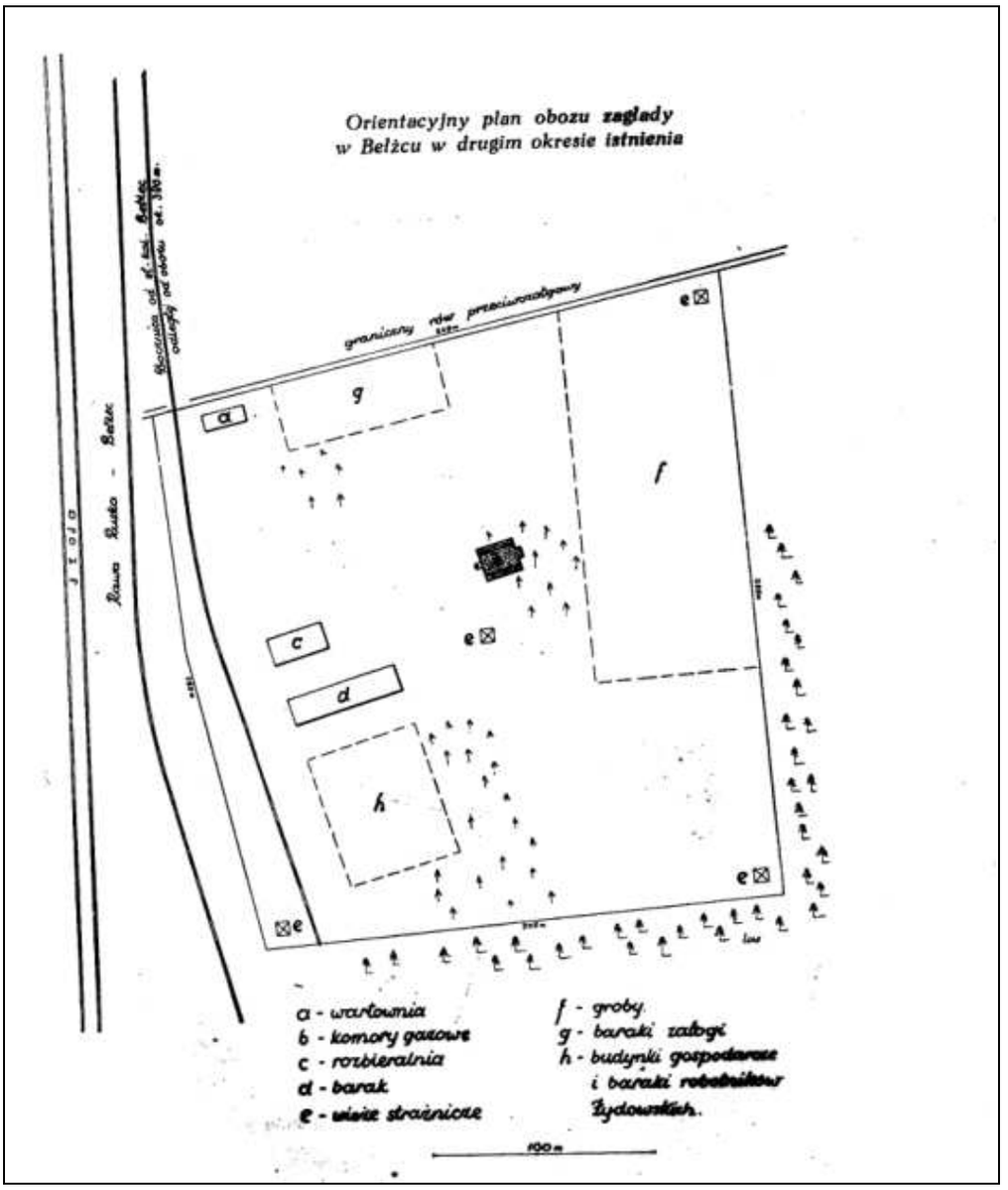
Document 4: Map of the Bełżec camp showing the areas with mass graves (shaded) and the locations of brick structures (in black). Graves #3, 10, 20, 27 , surrounded with circles, contain corpses in a state of saponification.[1]



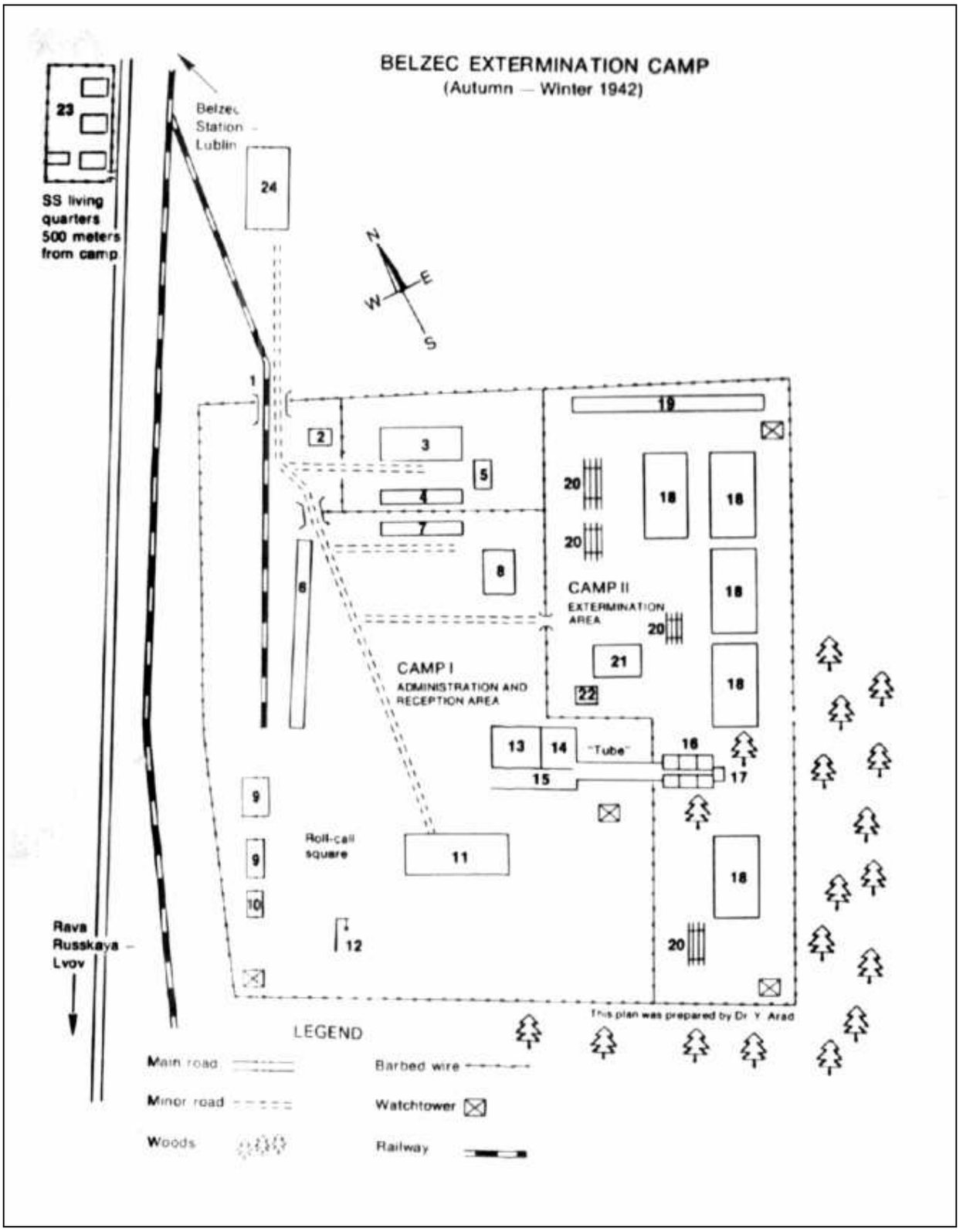
Document 5: Position and orientation of the mass graves.[2]



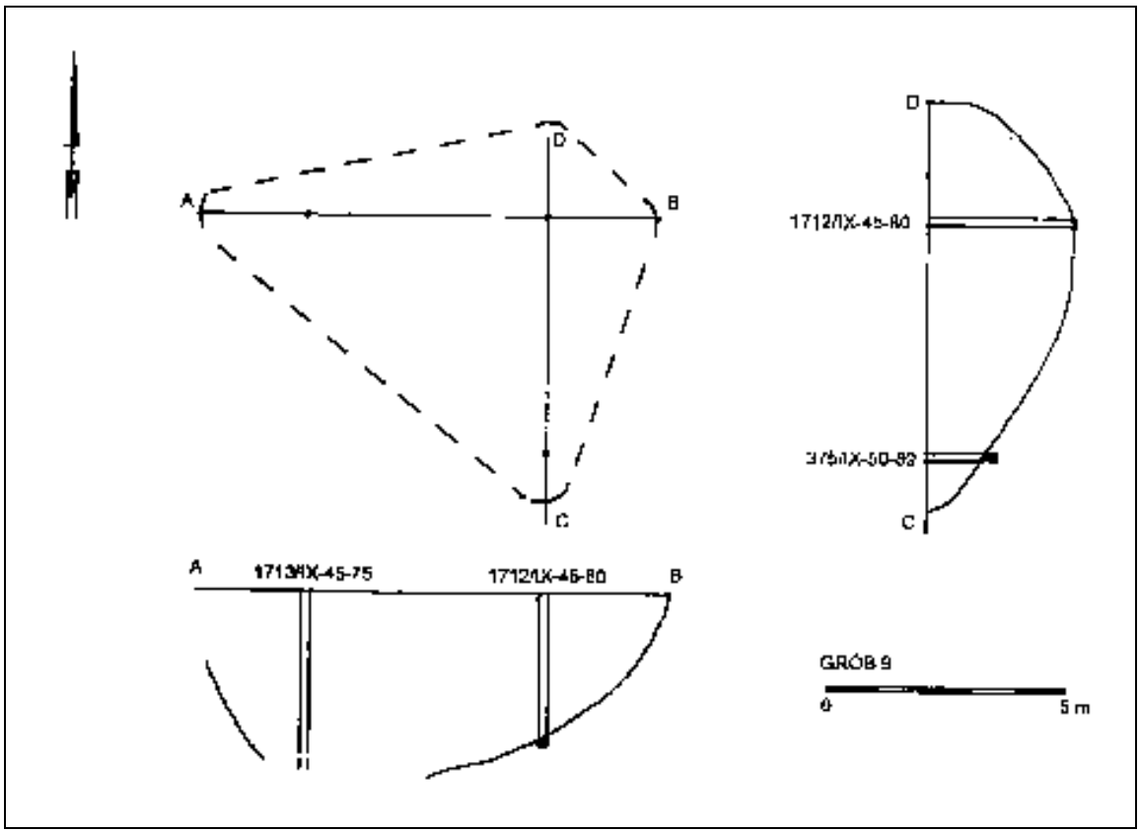
Document 6: Map of the Bełżec camp drawn by J. Bau after the indications of Rudolf Reder.[3]



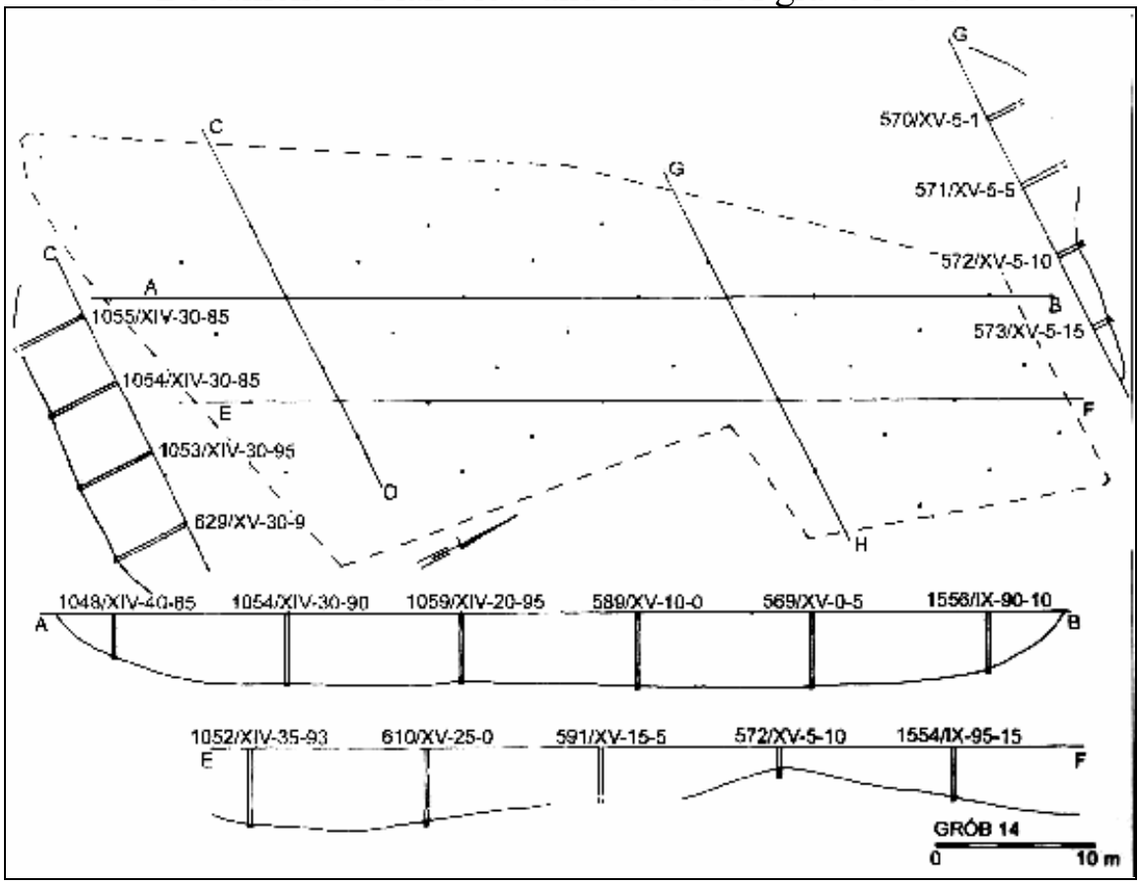
Document 7: Official map of the Bełżec camp by the Central Commission for the Investigation of the German Crimes in Poland.[4]



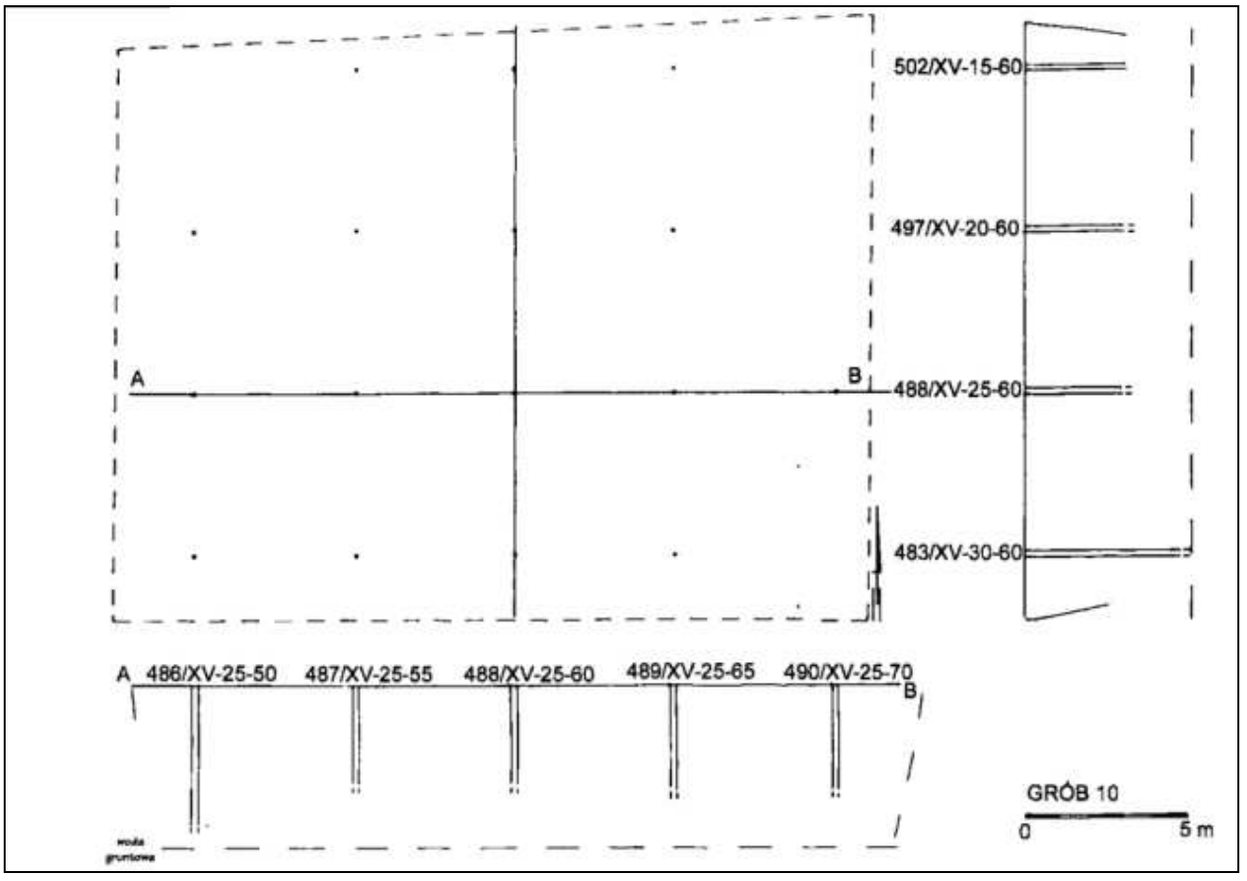
Document 8: Map of the Bełżec camp according to Arad.[5]



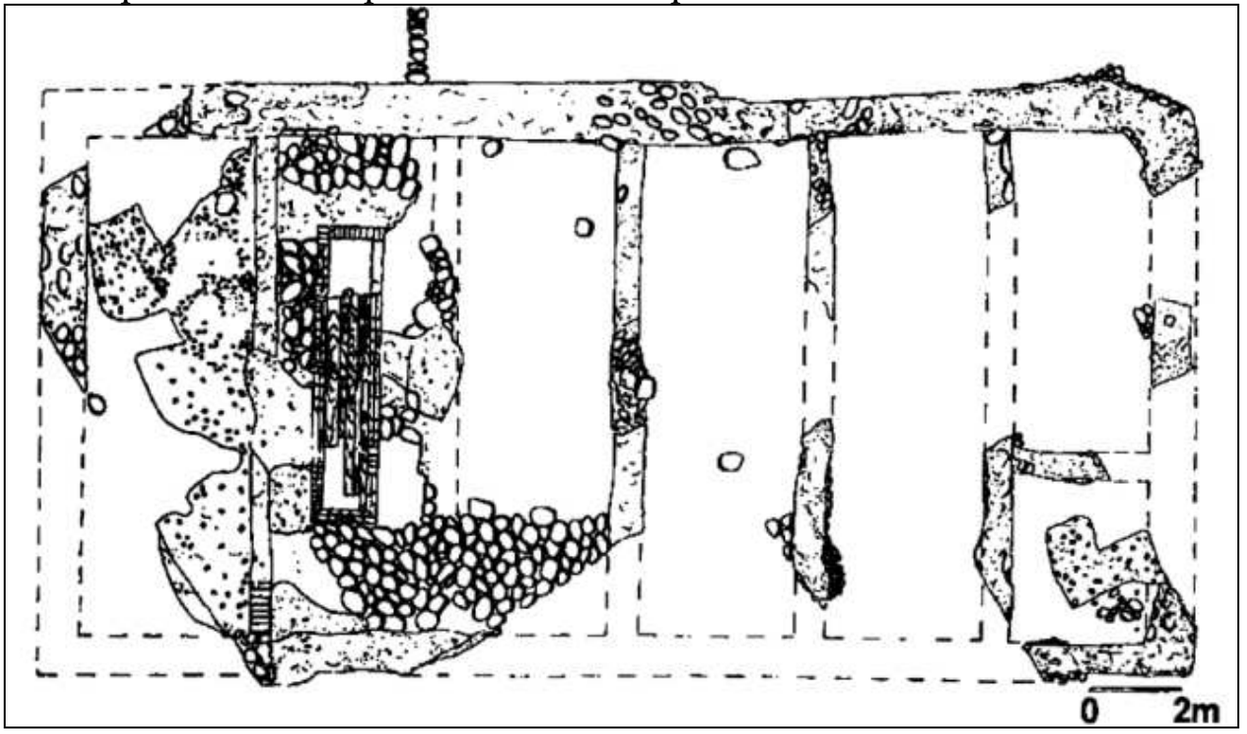
Document 9: Plan view and section of grave No. 6.[6]



Document 10: Plan view and section of grave No. 14.[7]

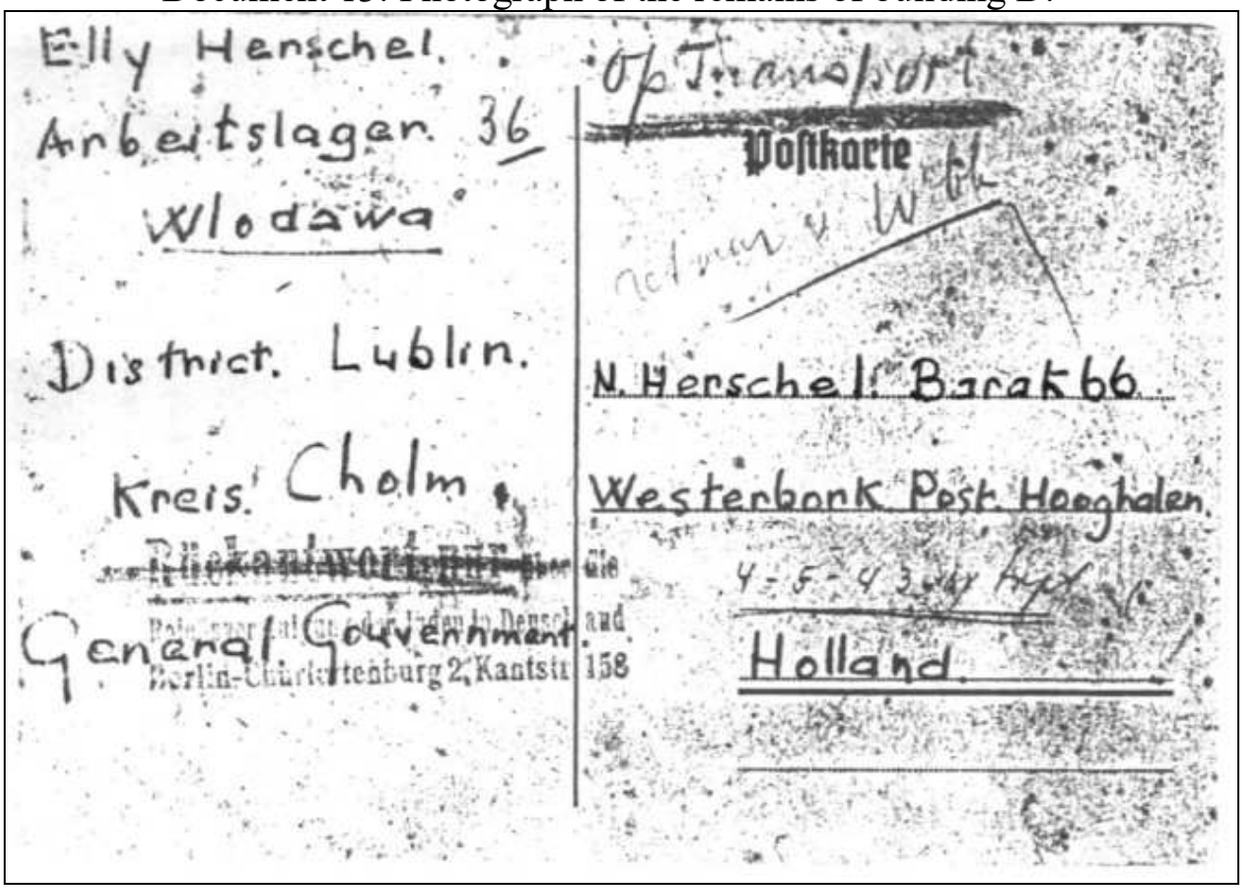


Document 11: Plan view and section of grave No. 10. Drillings evidencing the presence of corpses in a state of saponification are shown in bold.[8]

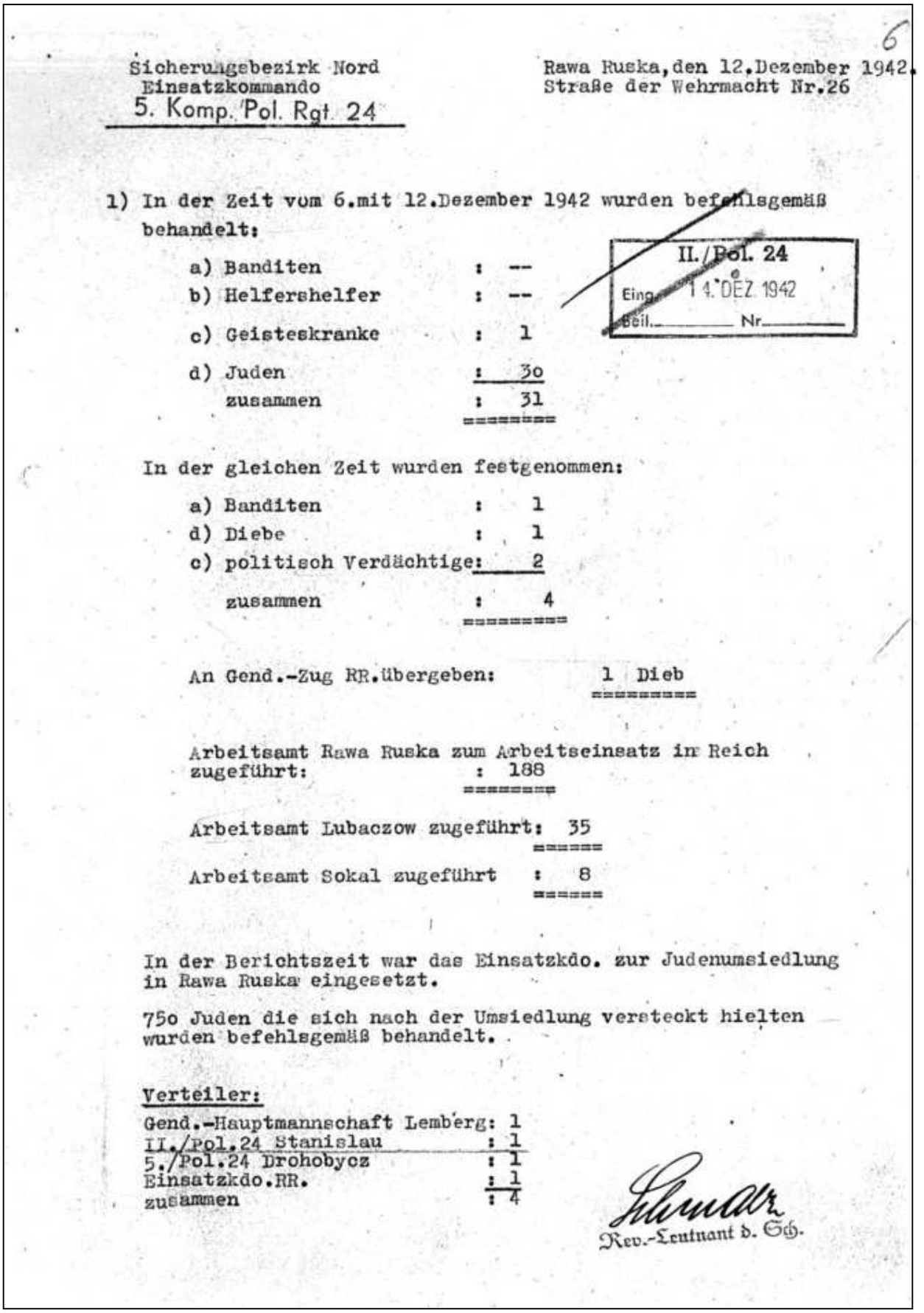


Document 12: Plan view of building D.[9]

Document 13: Photograph of the remains of building D.[10]



Document 14: Postcard sent on May 23, 1943, by Elly Herschel, Jewish inmate of the camp at Włodawa (Sobibór).[11]



6

Sicherungsbezirk Nord
Einsatzkommando
5. Komp. Pol. Rgt. 24

Rawa Ruska, den 12. Dezember 1942.
Straße der Wehrmacht Nr. 26

1) In der Zeit vom 6. mit 12. Dezember 1942 wurden befehlsgemäß behandelt:

a) Banditen	:	--
b) Helfershelfer	:	--
c) Geisteskranke	:	1
d) Juden	:	30
zusammen	:	31

II./Pol. 24
Eing. 14. DEZ. 1942
Beil. Nr.

In der gleichen Zeit wurden festgenommen:

a) Banditen	:	1
d) Diebe	:	1
c) politisch Verdächtige:		2
zusammen	:	4

An Gend.-Zug RR. übergeben: 1 Dieb

Arbeitsamt Rawa Ruska zum Arbeitseinsatz im Reich zugeführt: : 188

Arbeitsamt Lubaczow zugeführt: 35

Arbeitsamt Sokal zugeführt : 8

In der Berichtszeit war das Einsatzkdo. zur Judenumsiedlung in Rawa Ruska eingesetzt.

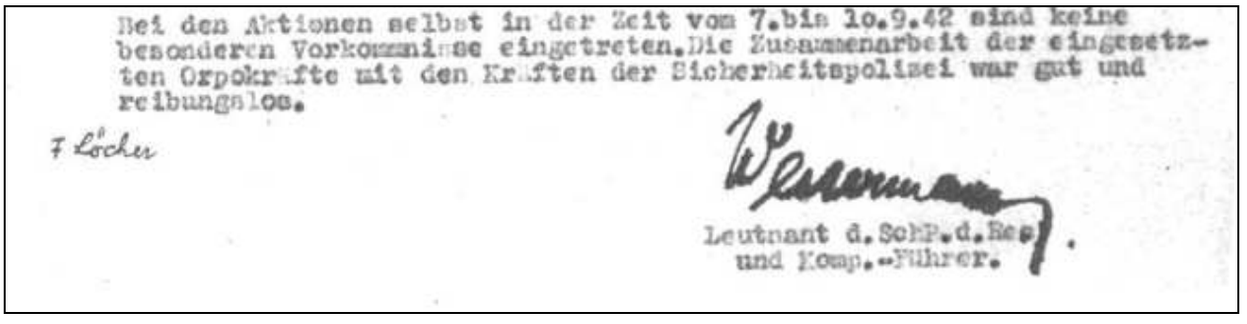
750 Juden die sich nach der Umsiedlung versteckt hielten wurden befehlsgemäß behandelt.

Verteiler:

Gend.-Hauptmannschaft Lemberg:	1
II./Pol.24 Stanislau	: 1
5./Pol.24 Drohobycz	: 1
Einsatzkdo.RR.	: 1
zusammen	: 4

Schneider
Rev.-Leutnant d. Sch.

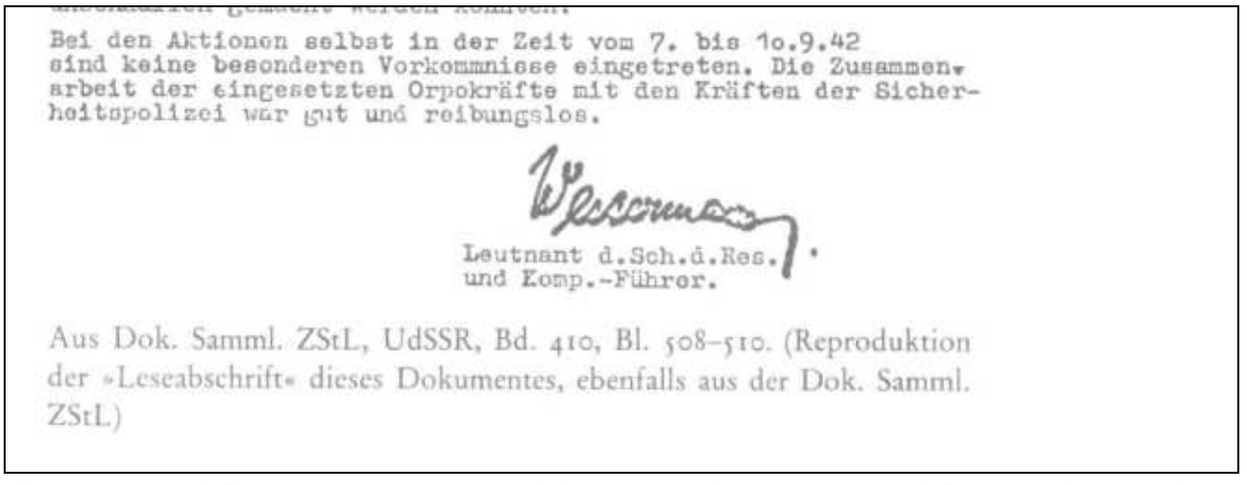
Document 15: Report of security district north, action commando, 5th company, 24th police regiment: 750 Jews were hiding after resettlement.[12]


Bei den Aktionen selbst in der Zeit vom 7.bis 1o.9.42 sind keine besonderen Vorkommnisse eingetreten.Die Zusammenarbeit der eingesetzten Orpokräfte mit den Kräften der Sicherheitspolizei war gut und reibungslos.

7 Löcher

Leutnant d.SchP.d.Res.
und Komp.-Führer.

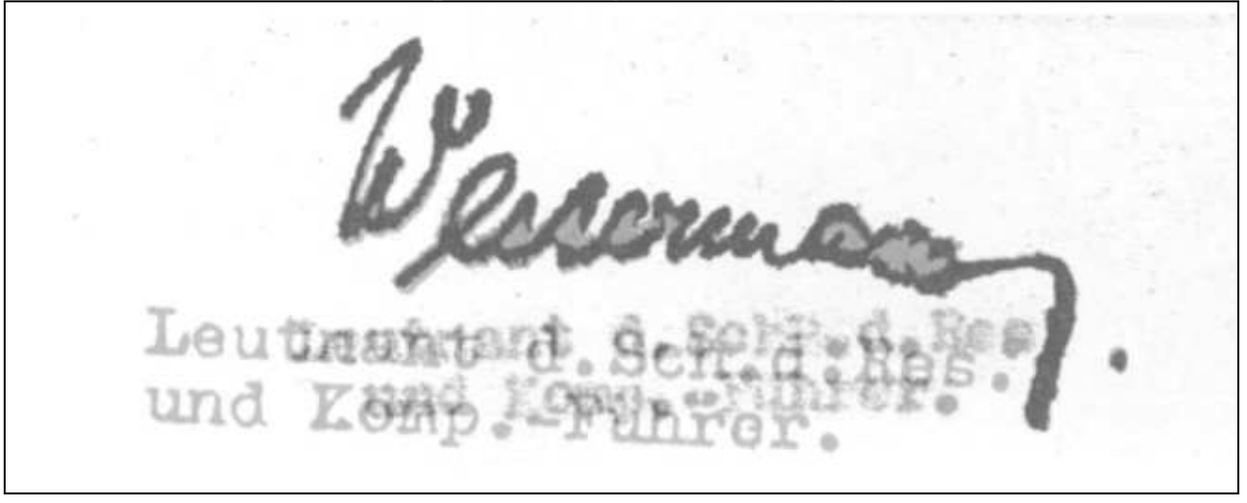
Document 16a: Signature underneath the Report of a deportation transport of Jews to Bełżec, by *Leutnant der Schutzpolizei der Reserve* (lieutenant of protection police reserve) Wassermann of September 14, 1942 – GARF version.[13]


Bei den Aktionen selbst in der Zeit vom 7. bis 1o.9.42 sind keine besonderen Vorkommnisse eingetreten. Die Zusammenarbeit der eingesetzten Orpokräfte mit den Kräften der Sicherheitspolizei war gut und reibungslos.

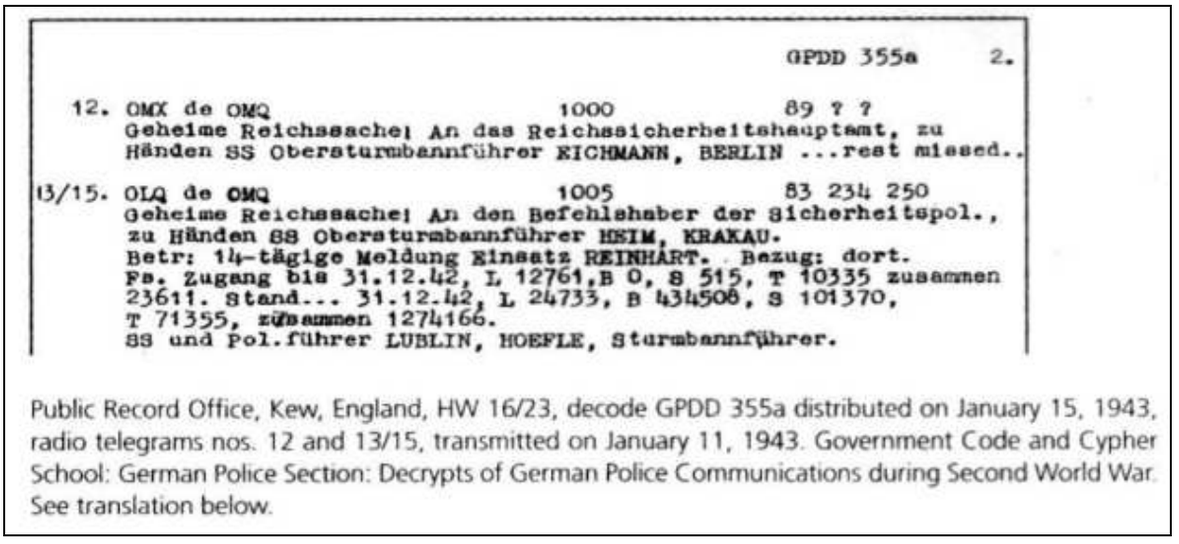
Leutnant d.Sch.d.Res.
und Komp.-Führer.

Aus Dok. Samml. ZStL, UdSSR, Bd. 410, Bl. 508–510. (Reproduktion der »Leseabschrift« dieses Dokumentes, ebenfalls aus der Dok. Samml. ZStL)

Document 16b: Signature part of the same document as 16a, but the version as reproduced by Raul Hilberg.[14]



Document 16c: Overlay of signatures from documents 16a and 16b.



GPDD 355a 2.

12. OMX de OMQ 1000 89 ? ?
Geheime Reichssache! An das Reichssicherheitshauptamt, zu Händen SS Obersturmbannführer EICHMANN, BERLIN ...rest missed..

13/15. OLQ de OMQ 1005 83 234 250
Geheime Reichssache! An den Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspol., zu Händen SS Obersturmbannführer HEIM, KRAKAU.
Betr: 14-tägige Meldung Einsatz REINHART. Bezug: dort.
Fs. Zugang bis 31.12.42, L 12761,B 0, S 515, T 10335 zusammen 23611. Stand... 31.12.42, L 24733, B 434508, S 101370, T 71355, zusammen 1274166.
SS und Pol.führer LUBLIN, HOEFLE, Sturmbannführer.

Public Record Office, Kew, England, HW 16/23, decode GPDD 355a distributed on January 15, 1943, radio telegrams nos. 12 and 13/15, transmitted on January 11, 1943. Government Code and Cypher School: German Police Section: Decrypts of German Police Communications during Second World War. See translation below.

Document 17: German Police Communication on deportation figures to the Reinhardt camps Lublin-Majdanek (L), Bełżec (B), Sobibór (S), and Treblinka (T).[15]

Document Sources

1 A. Kola, *Bełżec. The Nazi Camp for Jews in the light of archeological sources. Excavations 1997-1999*, Warsaw-Washington 2000, p. 19; circles with large number as well as large letters "*D*" and "*G*" added by this author.
2 R. O'Neil, "*Bełżec: The 'Forgotten' Death Camp*," in *East European Jewish Affairs*, 28(2) (1998-9), p. 59.
3 R. Reder, *Bełżec*, Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historiczna przy C.K. Żydów Polskich – Oddział w Krakowie, Kraków 1946, p. 43.
4 E. Szrojt, "*Obóz zagłady w Bełżcu*," in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, III, Poznań 1947, insert without page number.
5 Y. Arad, *Bełżec, Sobibor*, *Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomimgton and Indianapolis 1987, p. 437.
6 A. Kola, *op. cit*. (note 1), p. 26.
7 *Ibidem*, p. 29.
8 *Ibidem*, p. 27.
9 *Ibidem*, p. 55
10 *Ibidem*, p. 56.
11 Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, c[2]-611.
12 RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 6.
13 RGVA, 1323-2-292b, pp. 40-42.
14 R. Hilberg, *Sonderzüge nach Auschwitz*, Dumjahn Verlag, Mainz 1981, pp. 194-197.
15 Peter Witte, Stephen Tyas, "*A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of the Jews during 'Einsatz Reinhardt' 1942*," in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, no. 3, Winter 2001, pp. 469f.

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HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS · VOLUME 19

SOBIBÓR

HOLOCAUST PROPAGANDA AND REALITY

JÜRGEN GRAF, THOMAS KUES, CARLO MATTOGNO

Sobibór: Holocaust Propaganda and Reality

Jürgen H.P. Rieger, * 11 May 1946, † 29 October 2009
The lawyer Jürgen Rieger, one of the most brilliant and outspoken representatives of the national right wing in Germany, courageously and ably defended several revisionists in court (among them Thies Christophersen, Ernst Zündel, Germar Rudolf, Horst Mahler). As he would make no concessions to the Big Lie, he himself was prosecuted twice for revisionist heresy. On 29 October 2009 this remarkable man suddenly died from a stroke at age 63.
He will not be forgotten.

CAVEAT: The first edition of the present book appeared in 2010. Since that year, the author has found a number of additional documents and testimonies on the so-called “Operation Reinhardt” Camps. Many of them are discussed in the 2021 study *The “Operation Reinhardt” Camps Treblinka, Sobibór, Bełżec: Black Propaganda, Archeological Research, Expected Material Evidence* by Carlo Mattogno. For details see the books advertised in the back of this book. Most of the new insights presented in that book were not included in the present revised edition. However, we have included a research update of May 2018 as a Supplement in Chapter 13 starting on page 401.

Castle Hill Publishers

Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues, Carlo Mattogno

Sobibór

Holocaust Propaganda and Reality

Dedicated to the Memory of Jürgen Rieger

Academic Research Media Review Education Group Ltd

January 2024

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Cover Illustrations: top: Sobibór Memorial Sobibór Railway Station (Photo 13 in the Appendix); left: commemoration plaque (Photo 14); right: Sobibór Railway Station (Photo 3). Background: Section of a 1933 map of the area around Sobibór (Document 1).

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1. Introduction

On 12 May 2009, John Demjanjuk, 89 years of age, born in Ukraine, and erstwhile citizen of the United States, was deported to Germany where he was immediately jailed at Stadelheim prison in Munich and presented with an arrest warrant charging him with "aiding and abetting murder in at least 29,000 cases." Five years earlier, the U.S. authorities had stripped him of his U.S. citizenship.

The leftist German news magazine *Der Spiegel* described the background of the matter as follows:[1]

> *"As a guard in the extermination camp at Sobibór in 1943, Demjanjuk is said to have aided the Nazis in the mass murder of thousands of Jews.* […] *Several documents suggest that Demjanjuk belonged to a unit of some 5,000 foreign helpers – Balts, Ukrainians, ethnic Germans – trained by the National Socialists at the Trawniki training camp east of Lublin in the mass murders perpetrated in the occupied territories."*

A central position in the indictment is occupied by an identity card according to which Demjanjuk, in 1943, was serving as a guard at the Sobibór Camp. As opposed to this, an expert opinion formed on the basis of a number of elements had concluded as early as 1987 that the identity card was a forgery.[2] Over the next few years the German media largely accepted this view and *Der Spiegel* stated clearly and succinctly in its edition of 2 August 1993:[3]

> *"It* [the document] *had obviously been forged."*

Even if the identity card were indeed authentic, it would merely attest to Demjanjuk's *presence* in the camp but would not in the least prove that the Ukrainian had, in fact, participated in any murder, let alone in 29,000 such acts. In the article mentioned initially *Der Spiegel* noted:[1]

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1 Georg Bönisch, Jan Friedmann, Cordula Meyer, "Ein ganz gewöhnlicher Handlanger," in*: Der Spiegel*, No. 26/2009, 22 June 2009 (www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-65794351.html).

2 Dieter Lehner, *Du sollst nicht falsch Zeugnis geben*, Vowinckel Verlag, Berg/Starnberger See 1987.

3 "Mörderische Augen," in: *Der Spiegel*, No. 31/1993, 2 Aug. 1993 (www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13681024.html).

> *"For the German judiciary the case against the alleged SS-guard is a first. For the first time the authorities are attempting to bring to trial a hand from the lowest echelon of the hierarchy, not merely for some instance of excessive cruelty, but because of his participation in ensuring the smooth operation of the machinery of murder."*

Whereas the "Nazi perpetrators" had been indicted for certain concrete crimes in all previous trials, this was no longer the case for John Demjanjuk: the Ukrainian is to be sentenced for his sole presence as a guard in the Sobibór Camp at a time when, as the prosecution maintains, at least 29,000 people were murdered there! Concerning this monstrous perversion of justice the German judiciary provides us with the following justification:[1]

> *"The arrest warrant states that the guard would not have had to participate in the mass murder. Like so many other men from Trawniki, he could have deserted."*

By itself, the prosecution of an 89-year-old man for crimes which he allegedly committed at age 23 goes very much against the grain of our natural sense of justice and of European legal traditions, but the Demjanjuk case is further poisoned by the fact that the accused has already spent seven years in prison – five of them on death row – only to be declared innocent later on. We must remember that the U.S. authorities had extradited him to Israel in 1986. During his trial there, he was identified by a number of former Treblinka inmates as "Ivan the Terrible," a Ukrainian whom these witnesses accused of having not only gassed a huge number of Jews with exhaust gases from the Diesel engine of a knocked-out Soviet tank, but also of having committed all kinds of mind-boggling atrocities.

In its verdict the Jerusalem court quoted the former Treblinka prisoner Pinchas Epstein, who had testified as follows:[4]

> *"Sometimes he* [Ivan] *would come with a dagger, sometimes with a bayonet, and he would crack skulls, he would cut off ears.* […] *I want to say, honorable court, that it was horrible to look at the corpses when they took them out of the cabins. People with crushed faces, people with stab wounds, pregnant women with stab wounds in their bellies, women with the fetuses hanging half out, young girls with stab wound on their breasts, with eyes gouged out.* […] *He would stand and gaze upon the results, what he had done, the stab-*

---

4 Criminal case No. 373/86, State of Israel vs. Ivan (John) Demjanjuk, Verdict, p. 182 f. Awkward language here and in the following quotes in the original.

bing of the girls, the gouging of the eyes, the severing of the girls' breasts – he stood there and enjoyed the scene.[…] *This Ivan was a monster from another planet."*

The witness Yehiel Reichmann testified as follows:[5]

"I want to tell you what took place next to the well with my friend Finkelstein. While I was still washing teeth together with him, with Finkelstein, this devil Ivan came with a drilling machine for drilling holes. And he rotated the drilling machine for making holes on Finkelstein's buttocks and said to him: if you scream I'll shoot you. He injured Finkelstein; he was bleeding, he suffered great pain, intense pain, but he was not permitted to scream, because Ivan had given him an order: If you scream, I'll shoot you! Ivan was a super-devil, a super-destroyer from Treblinka."

On the basis of these testimonies Demjanjuk was sentenced to death by hanging back in 1988. On appeal in 1993, however, he was acquitted and allowed to return to the USA because the witnesses "had been mistaken" (cf. Subchapter 11.3).

The identity card which is now taken to prove Demjanjuk's presence at the Sobibór Camp was in the hands of the Israeli authorities as early as 1986, but the Ukrainian was *never* indicted by the Israelis for any crimes committed at that camp.

Once the Demjanjuk trial had crashed in Israel, the German authorities apparently feared a similar flop. On the German radio service *Deutschlandfunk* a reporter asked the former minister of justice, Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger:[6]

"There [in Israel]*, he* [Demjanjuk] *has been indicted and sentenced once before in the eighties for aiding and abetting the murder of more than 800,000 Jews at Treblinka. Later, however, the charges were dropped, the death sentence was rescinded. Is there a risk that there will be a repeat performance in Munich?"*

The former government minister replied:

"I do not believe that what happened in Israel will now repeat itself in Munich. […] *Well now, I think, the possibilities that exist for demonstrating* [his guilt] *have now surely been examined by the prosecution very, very carefully and over many, many years."*

Demjanjuk was formally charged two months after his extradition:[7]

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5 *Ibid.*, p. 186.

6 *Deutschlandfunk*, 14 July 2009, www.dradio.de/dlf/sendungen/interview_dlf/998673/.

7 "Ermittler erheben Mordanklage gegen Demjanuk," *Tagesspiegel*, 14 July 2009

> *"The prosecution of Munich I has indicted the suspected NS-criminal John Demjanjuk on charges of aiding and abetting the murder of 27,900 Jews."*

Thus the number of murders in which the Ukrainian is alleged to have participated had mysteriously diminished from 29,000 to 27,900, although in the period concerned, i.e. between May and July 2009, no document has surfaced which would in any way justify this revision – a truly disarming proof of the assertion that the German judiciary have examined the matter "very, very carefully and over many, many years."

Faced with such a situation, *Der Spiegel* could not but note:[1]

> *"NS-trials are laborious and delicate. Easily, the defendants appear to be pitiable and decrepit old men who are persecuted mercilessly."*

Still, the Hamburg news magazine took the oncoming trial of John Demjanjuk to be a necessity by invoking the historian Norbert Frei and asserting:[1]

> *"The Germans owe it to the victims and the survivors, but also to themselves, to prosecute Demjanjuk."*

In other words, the old man *must be* sentenced – regardless of any legal aspects – because the Germans owe this to themselves!

In the last chapter of this analysis we shall discuss in detail the incredible perversions of justice committed by the German judiciary – in line with their American counterparts in earlier days – in the persecution of a defenseless old man. The main part of the present book is, however, devoted to the examination of the elements of proof regarding the alleged mass murders of Jews at Sobibór.

According to official historiography, this camp, together with Treblinka and Bełżec, was one of the three "extermination camps"[8] in eastern Poland where more than one and a half million Jews are reported to have been killed by means of exhaust gases from combustion engines. In 2002, two of us (C. Mattogno and J. Graf) presented a thorough documentation on Treblinka,[9] whereas the Bełżec Camp was dealt with by Carlo Mattogno two years later,[10] but until now no revisionist mono-

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(www.tagesspiegel.de/weltspiegel/Kriegsverbrechen-Mord-Konzentrationslager-John-Demjanjuk;art1117,2846684).

8 The word *Vernichtungslager* (extermination camp) does not appear in any German document dating from WWII. It was coined by the Allies later on.

9 Carlo Mattogno, Jürgen Graf, *Treblinka: Vernichtungslager oder Durchgangslager?*, Castle Hill Publishers, Hastings 2002; Engl.: *Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, Theses & Dissertation Press, Chicago 2004.

10 Carlo Mattogno, *Bełżec. Propaganda, Zeugenaussagen, archäologische Untersuchungen, historische Fakten*, Castle Hill Publishers, Hastings 2004; Engl.: *Bełżec in*

graph has appeared on the subject of Sobibór. The present work aims at filling this gap.

To assist us in our endeavor, Carlo Mattogno and I managed to win the help of an extremely able researcher, the Swede Thomas Kues who had in the past written several most pertinent articles on this topic.[11]

Chapters 4 and 5 (except for Subchapters 4.2 and 5.3) the present book have been written in English by Thomas Kues. Carlo Mattogno is responsible for Chapter 3, 5.3. and 7 to 9, whereas I have contributed Chapters 2, 6 and 10 to 12 as well as Subchapter 4.2. The chapters and sections written by Carlo Mattogno and myself have been translated into English by Henry Gardner from the respective original languages (Italian and German).

Jürgen Graf
30 November 2009

Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research and History, Theses & Dissertation Press, Chicago 2004.

[11] https://codoh.com/library/authors/kues-thomas/

Measurement Conversions

Since all three authors are Europeans, they use metric units throughout the book. Since some U.S. readers might find it difficult to imagine lengths, areas, volumes and weights given in metric units, a conversion list of the most common units is given below:

Mass
1 kg = 2.205 pounds
1 ton = 1,000 kg = 2,205 pounds

Length
1 mm = 0.03937 inch
1 cm = 10 mm = 0.3937 inch
2.54 cm = 1 inch
30.48 cm = 1 ft
1 m = 100 cm = 1.094 yard
1 km = 1,000 m = 0.6214 miles
1.609 km = 1 mile

Area
1 m^2 = 10.76 sqft/ft^2
1 hectar = 100 m × 100 m = 10,000 m^2 = 2.471 acres
1 km^2 = 1,000 m × 1,000 m = 1,000,000 m^2 = 247.1 acres = 0.3861 square miles

Volume
1 m^3 = 1.308 cyd/yd^3 = 35.31 cft/ft^3

For more detailed conversions please refer to Internet websites like convert-me.com

2. The Sobibór Camp and its Historiographic Representation

2.1. Sobibór as Described in the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*

Under the heading "Sobibór," the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* has the following text:[12]

> *"Extermination camp near the village and railway station of Sobibór, in the eastern part of the Lublin district in Poland, not far from the Chełm-Włodawa railway line. Established as part of the operation of Aktion Reinhard,*[13] *the camp was built in a sparsely populated, woody, and swampy area beginning in March 1942. Local inhabitants and a group of eighty Jews from nearby ghettos were employed to construct it; Obersturmführer Richard Thomalla,*[14] *a staff member of the SS construction office in Lublin, was in charge. In April 1942, SS-Obersturmführer Franz Stangl was appointed camp commandant and assumed responsibility for completion of the camp. In building Sobibór, the Germans drew on experience gained in the construction and operation of the Bełżec extermination camp.*
>
> *The camp staff included 20 to 30 German SS men, most of whom had previously taken part in the euthanasia program, as had Stangl. In addition, 90 to 120 Ukrainians served in the camp. Most were Soviet prisoners of war who had been trained for the job at Trawniki, some were Volksdeutsche, Soviet nationals of German origin The German staff filled most of the command and administrative positions, while the Ukrainian unit acted as a guards and security personnel, their*

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12 Israel Gutman (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, Vol. 3-4, MacMillan, New York 1990, pp. 1373-1377.

13 See Subchapter 8.2. about this campaign "Aktion Reinhard(t)"; the spelling in original documents and in the literature varies between Reinhard and Reinhardt. Editor's remark.

14 The higher quality German edition gives Thomalla's rank as Hauptsturmführer; Israel Gutman, Eberhard Jäckel, Peter Longerich, Julius H. Schoeps (eds.), *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust. Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden*, Argon Verlag, Berlin 1993.

function being, among other things, to quell any resistance offered by the Jews who were brought to the camp and to prevent their escaping. Jewish prisoners were employed as well, on various physical tasks.

The camp was in the form of a rectangle 1,312 by 1,969 feet (400 × 600 m) in area, surrounded by a barbed wire fence 9.8 feet (3 m) high, with tree branches intertwined in it to conceal the interior. There were three camp areas, each individually fenced in: the administration area, the reception area, and the extermination area. The administration area consisted of the Vorlager ('pre-camp'; the part of the camp closest to the railway station) and Camp I. The Vorlager included the railway platform, with space for twenty railway cars to be stationed, as well as the living quarters for the German and Ukrainian staff. Camp I, which was fenced off from the rest, contained housing for the Jewish prisoners and the workshops in which some of them were employed.

The reception area, also known as Camp II, was the place where Jews from the incoming transports were brought, to go through various procedures prior to their being killed in the gas chambers – removal of clothes, cutting of women's hair, and confiscation of possessions and valuables.

The extermination area, or Camp III, located in the northwestern part of the camp, was the most isolated. It contained the gas chambers, the burial trenches, and housing for the Jewish prisoners employed there. A path, 9.8 to 13 feet (3-4 m) wide and 492 feet (150 m) long, led from the reception area to the extermination area; on either side was a barbed-wire fence, and here too branches were intertwined to conceal the path from view. It was along this path that the victims were herded, naked, toward the gas chambers from the shed where they had undressed.

The gas chambers were inside a brick building. Each chamber was square, measured 172 square feet (16 sq m), and had a capacity of 160 to 80 persons.[15] *The chambers were entered from a platform at the front of the brick building; each gas chamber also had another opening, through which the bodies were removed. The gas, carbon monoxide, was produced by a 200-horsepower engine in a nearby shed, from which it was piped into the gas chambers. The burial*

15 Note that the number of gas chambers is not given!

trenches were nearby, each 164 to 197 feet (50-60 m) long, 33 to 49 feet (10-15 m) wide, and 16.4 to 23 feet (5-7 m) deep. From the railway platform to the burial trenches ran a narrow-gauge railway, used to transport persons too weak to make their way to the gas chambers on their own, as well as the bodies of those who had died en route to Sobibór.[…]

Several hundred able-bodied Jews were chosen from among the first few transports to form work teams. Some were employed in the workshops as tailors, cobblers, carpenters and so on, to serve the needs of the German and Ukrainian camp staff; all the other work assignments related to the processing of the victims along the route that led from the railway platform to the burial trenches. A total of about 1,000 prisoners, 150 of them women, were eventually put into these teams. One group, numbering several dozen, worked on the railway platform. Its job was to remove from the cars those who were incapable of getting off on their own; to remove the bodies of those who had died en route; and to clean out of the cars the dirt that had accumulated and the articles left behind. […]

In the extermination area, two hundred to three hundred Jewish prisoners were kept, whose task was to remove the bodies of the murdered victims from the gas chambers, take them to the burial ground, and then clean up the chambers. A special team of prisoners, nicknamed 'the dentists,' was charged with extracting gold teeth from the mouths of the victims before their bodies were put into the trenches. Toward the end of 1942, in an effort to erase the traces of the mass killings, the bodies were exhumed and cremated; this task too was carried out by a special team of prisoners. […]

Transports: First Stage. *The procedure for the reception of incoming transports was based entirely on misleading the victims and concealing from them the fate that was in store for them. When a train arrived, the deportees on board were ordered to disembark and were told that they had arrived at a transit camp from which they would be sent to labor camps; before leaving for the labor camps, they were to take showers, and at the same time their clothes would be disinfected. Following this announcement, the men and women were separated (children were assigned to the women), on the pretext that the sexes had to be separated for their showers. The victims were ordered to take off their clothes and hand over any money or valuables in their possession; anyone who was caught trying to con-*

ceal any item was shot. There followed the march to the gas chambers, which had been made to resemble shower rooms. Some 450 to 500 persons entered the chambers at a time. Everything was done on the run, accompanied by shouts, beatings, and warning shots. The victims were in a state of shock and did not grasp what was happening to them. When the gas chambers were jammed full of people, they were closed and sealed and the gas was piped in. Within twenty to thirty minutes, everyone inside was dead.

The bodies were then removed from the gas chambers and buried, after the gold teeth had been extracted from their mouths. The whole procedure, from the arrival of the train to the burial of the victims, took two to three hours. In the meantime the railway cars were cleaned up, the train departed, and another twenty cars, with their human load destined for extermination, entered the camp.

The first stage of the extermination operation went on for three months, from the beginning of May to the end of July 1942. The Jews who were brought to Sobibór during this period came from the Lublin district in Poland, and from Czechoslovakia, Germany, and Austria. The latter - those from countries outside Poland - had first been taken to ghettos in the Lublin district, and from there were deported to Sobibór. Some 10,000 Jews were brought from Germany and Austria, 6,000 from Theresienstadt, and many thousands from Slovakia; all in all, between 90,000 and 100,000 Jews were murdered at Sobibór in this first stage. The transports came to a temporary halt at the end of July, to enable the Lublin-Chełm railway line to undergo repairs.

In Sobibór's first three months of operation, the Germans found that the gas chambers, which had a total capacity of fewer than six hundred persons, created a bottleneck in the murder program. The halt in camp operations during August and September of 1942 was therefore used to construct three more gas chambers. These were put up next to the existing chambers under the same roof, with a hallway separating the old chambers from the new. With a new capacity of twelve hundred persons, the rate of extermination could be doubled. At the end of August 1942, Stangl, the commandant of Sobibór, was transferred to the Treblinka extermination camp, and his place was taken by SS-Obersturmführer Franz Reichleitner.

Second Stage. *By the beginning of October 1942, work on the railway line was completed and the transports to Sobibór could be re-*

newed. Until early November, the arriving transports brought more Jews from towns in the Lublin district; in the winter, following the closing of the Bełżec camp, and in the spring and summer of 1943, Sobibór also received transports from Eastern Galicia. […] *From October 1942 to June 1943, a total of 70,000 to 80,000 Jews from Lublin and the Eastern Galicia districts were brought to Sobibór; the number of victims from the Generalgouvernement was between 145,000 and 155,000.*

By the end of October 1942, 25,000 Jews from Slovakia had been killed at Sobibór. In the second half of February 1943, Heinrich Himmler paid a visit to the camp. While he was there, a special transport arrived with several hundred Jewish girls from a labor camp in the Lublin district. Himmler watched the entire extermination procedure. In March of that year, four transports from France brought 4,000 people, all of whom were killed. Nineteen transports arrived from the Netherlands between March and July 1943, carrying 35,000 Jews. The Dutch Jews came in regular passenger trains, were given a polite welcome, and asked to send letters to their relatives in the Netherlands to let them know they had arrived at a labor camp. After they had written these letters, they were given the same treatment that was meted out to all the other transports. Within a few hours they all perished.

The last transports to arrive at Sobibór came from the Vilna, Minsk, and Lida ghettos, in the Reichskommissariat Ostland; 14,000 Jews came on these transports in the second half of September 1943, following the liquidation of the ghettos in these cities. This brought the total number of Jews killed at Sobibór throughout the period of the camp's operation to approximately 250,000.

At the end of the summer of 1942, the burial trenches were opened and the process of burning the victims' bodies was begun. The corpses were put into huge piles and set on fire. The bodies of victims who arrived in subsequent transports were cremated immediately after gassing and were not buried.[16]

Resistance and Escape. *On July 5, 1943, Himmler ordered the closing of Sobibór as an extermination camp and its transformation into a concentration camp. On a piece of land added to the camp area and designated as Camp IV, warehouses were built to store captured*

16 Earlier, it was said that the corpses were unearthed and burned "towards the end of 1942." Author's comment.

Soviet ammunition, which the prospective camp prisoners were scheduled to handle.

Throughout the camp's existence, attempts were made to escape from it; some of them were successful. In retaliation for these attempts, the Germans executed many dozens of prisoners. During the summer of 1943, in order to prevent escapes, and also as a safety measure against attacks by partisans, the Germans planted mines along the entire circumference of the camp. In July and August of that year, an underground group was organized among the Jewish prisoners in Sobibór under the leadership of Leon Feldhendler, who had been chairman of the Judenrat (Jewish Council) in Żółkiew, a town in Eastern Galicia. The group's aim was to organize an uprising and a mass escape from the camp. In the second half of September, Soviet Jewish Prisoners of War were brought to the camp from Minsk; one of them was Lt. Aleksandr Pechersky. The underground recruited him into its ranks and put him in command, with Feldhendler as his deputy. The plan was for the prisoners to kill the SS men, acquire weapons, and fight their way out of the camp. The uprising broke out on October 14, 1943, and in its course eleven SS men and several Ukrainians were killed. Some three hundred prisoners managed to escape, but most of them were killed by their pursuers. Those who had not joined the escape for various reasons and had remained in the camp were all killed as well. At the end of the war, about fifty Jews survived of those who had escaped during the uprising.

In the wake of the uprising the Germans decided to liquidate Sobibór, abandoning the idea of turning it into a concentration camp. By the end of 1943 no trace was left; the camp area was plowed under, and crops were planted in its soil. A farm was put up in its place, and one of the Ukrainian camp guards settled there. In the summer of 1944 the area was liberated by the Soviet army and troops of the Polish People's Army (see Gwardia Ludowa). […]*"*

2.2. Sobibór as Described in Contemporary Documents

The description of the function and the history of the Sobibór Camp, which is found in the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, relies exclusively on testimony and on trial sentences which, in turn, are based entirely on

the accounts of eye witnesses (and on confessions by defendants). Contemporary documents concerning Sobibór are rare and do not support the official descriptions in any way. The most important of these documents will be analyzed in later chapters. In the way of an introduction to this topic we will summarize them here.

2.2.1. Himmler's Directive of 5 July 1943 and Pohl's Reply

On 5 July 1943, *Reichsführer*-SS Heinrich Himmler issued the following directive:[17]

> *"The Sobibór transit camp, located in the Lublin district, is to be converted into a concentration camp. A dismantling unit for captured enemy munitions is to be set up in the concentration camp."*

The Holocaust literature regularly deforms the contents of this directive. Thus, in the text taken from the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* quoted above, we read:

> *"On 5 July 1943, Himmler ordered Sobibór to be closed as an extermination camp and transformed into a concentration camp."*

It is, however, an undeniable fact that Sobibór, in Himmler's directive, was not referred to as an "extermination camp" but as a "transit camp."

Ten days later, on 15 July 1943, the head of the SS-*Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt* (Economic Administrative Main Office of the SS), SS-*Obergruppenführer* Oswald Pohl, in his answer to Himmler's note, suggested to abandon the idea of converting the "Sobibór transit camp in the Lublin district" into a concentration camp, as the dismantling of seized enemy munitions could also be carried out without such a measure.[17] Hence, Sobibór was regarded as a "transit camp" by Pohl as well. The transformation of Sobibór into a concentration camp, originally ordered by Himmler, never took place.[18]

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[17] NO-482. This document is shown as a reproduction in several books about Sobibór, e.g. Thomas (Toivi) Blatt, *Sobibór. The Forgotten Revolt*, HEP, Issaquah 1998 (unnumbered page in the attachment).

[18] In this context it is of interest that Otto Ohlendorf, in his postwar affidavit (PS-2620) and in the context of the so-called gas vans (not discussed here), used the term "transit camp" as well (translated below):

> *"Im Fruehjahr 1942 wurde uns vom Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD in Berlin Gaswagen geschickt.* [...] *Wir hatten auch diese Gaswagen in der Naehe der Durchgangslager* [=transit camp] *stationiert, in die die Opfer gebracht wurden. Den Opfern wurde gesagt, dass sie umgesiedelt werden wuerden und zu diesem Zwecke in die Wagen steigen muessten."* (Emph. added)

In the official English translation, this term was mistranslated with obvious intent (*Trial of War Criminals before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals*, Vol. IV, "The Einsatzgruppen Case," U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1950, pp. 206f.;

2.2.2. Documents about the Sobibór Uprising

Some surviving documents mention the uprising and the mass break-out of Jewish detainees on 14 October 1943. The commander of the security police in the Lublin district sent the following telex to the duty officer at Krakau on 15 October 1943:[17]

> *"On 14.10.1943, around 17:00 hours, uprising of the Jews in the Sobibór SS-camp, 40 km north of Cholm. They overpowered the guard detail and fled in an unknown direction after an exchange of gunfire with the rest of the camp personnel. Nine SS-men murdered, 1 SS-man missing, 2 foreign guards shot.*
> *Some 300 Jews have escaped, the remainder were either shot or are now in the camp. Military police and Wehrmacht were notified immediately and took over camp security at around 1:00 hours. The area to the south and the southwest of Sobibór is being searched by police and Wehrmacht."*

Five months after these events, on 17 March 1944, SS-*Untersturmführer* Benda wrote an account of the Sobibór uprising – which he wrongly dated 15 October 1943 – and of the ensuing search for the fugitives, stating that the rebels had "shot an SS officer as well as 10 SS NCOs."[17]

2.2.3. The Höfle Radio Message

A very important document, published only in 2001, gives us precise information concerning the number of detainees deported to Sobibór up to the end of 1942.[19] It is a radio message of 11 January 1943 which was sent by SS-*Sturmbannführer* Höfle, a subordinate of Odilo Globocnik, Head of Police and SS in the district of Lublin. It was addressed to Globocnik's deputy, SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Heim. The message was

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http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/NT_war-criminals_Vol-IV.pdf):
"In the spring of 1942, we received gas vehicles from the Chief of the Security Police and the SD in Berlin. [...] *We also had these gas vehicles stationed in the neighborhood of the transient camps into which the victims were brought. The victims were told that they would be resettled and had to climb into the vehicle for that purpose."* (Emph. added)
Although the English terms could be confused (transient ↔ transit), the German terms cannot (*Durchgangslager* ↔ *vorübergehende Lager*), and it is unlikely that the translator chose the false, but uncommon term (transient) by accident instead of the common, correct one.

19 Peter Witte, Stephen Tyas, "A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of the Jews during 'Einsatz Reinhardt' 1942," in: *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, No. 3, Winter 2001.

intercepted and decoded by the British Secret Service, but the British could not interpret its contents. On the subject of Sobibór the text states that 101,370 persons had been moved to that camp up to the end of 1942. The message contains no indications regarding the fate of the deportees.[20]

2.2.4. Provisional Summary

The few wartime documents which have come down to us prove that, at least through July of 1943, Sobibór counted officially as a "transit camp" and that 101,370 persons had been deported there by the end of 1942. There was an uprising at the camp on 14 October 1943 resulting in a mass escape of Jews. There is no documentary evidence for the mass murder of Jews or for the existence of homicidal gas chambers at Sobibór.

2.3. Sobibór in Official Historiography and "Holocaust" Literature

The uninitiated will no doubt assume that a great number of scientific studies have been made on the subject of Sobibór. This is not at all the case, though. The literature concerning this camp is sparse, and most of the existing books are novelistic if not fictional. The book list in the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* has only four entries under the heading of "Sobibór."[21] In the light of the enormity of the crimes ascribed to the camp by the official version of history, this is surprising, to say the least.

We will now give an overview of the way Sobibór has been described by orthodox historiography and by the "Holocaust" literature in the period since 1946.[22]

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[20] An extensive analysis of the Höfle radio message will be given in Subchapter 9.4.

[21] Yitzhak Arad, *Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka* (1987); Miriam Novitch (ed.), *Sobibór: Martyrdom and Revolt* (1980); Richard Rashke, *Escape from Sobibor* (1982); Adalbert Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse* (1977).

[22] Because of our ignorance of Hebrew and Yiddish, we have not been able to consider works that have been published only in one of these languages.

2.3.1. N. Blumental's *Documents and Materials* (1946)

The first representation of the Sobibór Camp with any claim for scientific procedure dates from 1946. At that time a documentation was edited in Poland by N. Blumental, the title of which, translated into English, is "Documents and materials from the time of the German occupation of Poland." The first volume of this series contains 15 pages dealing with Sobibór: one and a half pages of introduction by the editor followed by the accounts of two former Sobibór detainees, Leon Feldhendler and Zelda Metz:[23]

> *"The death camp in the district of Lublin was set up during the first half of 1942. The first transport probably arrived in April or May. It was a typical extermination camp – complete with gas chambers, open-air incineration of the corpses, etc. Furthermore, a specialty of this camp was animal husbandry and the raising of poultry by the camp commander; surviving detainees have stated that during the 'Aktionen' the birds would be excited so that their honking would drown out the people's screams.*[24] *There were workshops in the camp making use of human raw materials, e.g. women's hair for the manufacture of mattresses. The belongings of those murdered as well as the 'products' of the death camp were shipped to Germany.* […] *On 14 October 1943 the detainees revolted, as they had done at Treblinka.* […] *Due to the complete absence of any official documents it is difficult to say how many people perished in this camp.* […] *The figures given by the witnesses range from one to 2.5 million. It is difficult to judge this matter, but if we take into account that the camp operated from April or May of 1942 through October of 1943, we may set the number of persons killed at Sobibór over the whole period of the existence of this camp at about one million."*

Both the succinct character of this description as well as the lack of any significant details are truly astonishing! The introduction says nothing about the number and the structure of the "gas chambers," nothing about the nature of the gas used, whereas L. Feldhendler and Z. Metz, the two witnesses quoted later, assert that the mass killings were done by means of chlorine! According to Z. Metz, the gas chamber had a collapsible floor, allowing the victims to drop right into railway cars locat-

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23 Nachman Blumental (ed.), *Dokumenty i Materiały z czasów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce. Obozy*. Vol. 1, Łodź 1946, pp. 199-214, here quoted pp. 199f. of the introduction.

24 The inventor of this silly story is Alexander Aronovitch Pechersky. Cf. Subchapter 4.2.

ed below (cf. Chapter 3, p. 71). Zelda Metz states that the number of victims was around two million (p. 210)!

As we can see, this first "scientific" description of the events at Sobibór differs from today's version in two fundamental respects: the killing method used and the number of victims.

2.3.2. Report by the "Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland" (1947)

A ten-page account concerning the "Sobibór extermination camp" appeared in the Bulletin of the "Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland" in 1947. It is based on[25]

> *"the statements by former Jewish detainees of the camp and by a number of Poles – mainly railway personnel, as well as on experts' opinions and investigations carried out on site."*

Concerning the rooms in which the mass murders were allegedly carried out the report by the commission stated (p. 52):

> *"Unfortunately it has not been possible to gather any details on the subject of the chambers in which human beings were annihilated. The reason is that none of the former detainees of the camp, which had been questioned during the investigations, were directly present in the vicinity of the chambers; on the other hand, we must stress that workers employed in other parts of the camp did not have access to the part of the camp which comprised the chambers. The evidence collected leads to the conclusion that the chambers were located in a building above ground and consisted of wood on the inside. The outer walls of this building were made of cement. It probably contained 5 chambers, which could accommodate some 500 persons. They were killed by means of exhaust gases produced by an engine located next to the chambers and linked to them by means of pipes."*

This version is still somewhat at variance with today's description, according to which the "gassing building" initially contained three and later six rooms.

The number of victims for this camp was given as around 250,000, about a quarter of the figure of one million stated in the series *Docu-*

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[25] Z. Łukaszkiewicz, Glowna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce, "Obóz zagłady w Sobiborze," (The extermination camp at Sobibór) in: *Biuletyn Glownej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, No. III, Posen 1947, p. 49.

ments and Materials a year earlier. This latter figure apparently seemed too unbelievable even to the commission.

In Section 5.1.1. we will consider the forensic investigations which revealed the presence of human remains in the camp and which described the alleged technology of incineration of corpses at Sobibór as presented in the report by the commission.

Once this book was published, Sobibór disappeared from view for a long time. Only two decades later did chroniclers and witnesses come to the fore once more.

2.3.3. Yuri Suhl (1967)

A collection of accounts describing the Jewish resistance against National Socialism, edited by Yuri Suhl, appeared in the USA in 1967.[26] It contains, among other items, Alexander Pechersky's account "Revolt in Sobibór." This account had been published in the USSR as early as 1946, but since it had been written in Yiddish, it had remained largely unnoticed. We will discuss the Pechersky report in Subchapter 4.2. in more detail.

2.3.4. Adam Rutkowski (1968)

It took 23 years after the end of the war for anything to be published about Sobibór by a historian. Although it was not a book, at least it was a 40-page article. Its author was Adam Rutkowski, a staff member of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. The title can be translated as "The resistance movement in the Hitlerian execution camp of Sobibór."[27] Rutkowski's article exhibits most clearly certain fundamental contradictions and absurdities which reappear throughout the later literature about the camp. We will now discuss two of them.

2.3.4.1. The knowledge of the "working Jews" about the fate of the other deportees

Rutkowski writes:

> *"Initially not even those detainees who had been in Sobibór for some time knew what Sobibór really was due to the internal structure and organization of the camp (the complete isolation of the in-*

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[26] Yuri Suhl, *They fought back. The Story of the Jewish Resistance in Nazi Europe*, Crown Publishers, New York 1967; MacGibbon & Kee, London 1968.

[27] Adam Rutkowski, "Ruch Oporu w Hitlerwoskim Obozie Straceń Sobibór," in: *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, No. 65-66, Warsaw 1968.

> *dividual camp sections, especially of section 3 where the gas chambers stood).”* (p. 5)

A few pages further on, we read:

> *“The ‘old’ detainees who wanted to spare the new arrivals any overly violent discoveries did not tell them the whole truth about Sobibór, especially about section 3, hermetically closed-off, but introduced them only slowly, in a stepwise fashion, to what Sobibór was.”* (p. 10)

In contrast to this we have Rutkowski’s description of the arrival of new transports:

> *“We must stress that the deportees, after having travelled for a long time (e.g. from Holland), were immediately made part of the efficient machinery of annihilation; this machinery would herd the victims from the first into the second barbed-wire cage, accompanied by deafening shouts on part of the SS men as well as by shooting, and would finally chase them into the gas chambers.”* (p. 4)

Other authors report that the SS received the new arrivals in a soothing manner, with an SS man giving a deceptive speech describing Sobibór as a transit camp (cf. Section 2.3.19). Thus, the various reports differ radically even at this early stage. If Rutkowski’s report were true, the small number of Jews singled out for work would obviously have realized from the very beginning what gruesome fate awaited the deportees.

Rutkowski (p. 3) accepts the figure of 250,000 victims set in 1947 by the “Main Commission for the Investigation of the German Crimes in Poland” as well as the fact that the camp was in operation for only 17 months. Hence he has over 15,000 deportees arriving at the camp each month – at least 500 per day. According to the official reports, the trains departing from Sobibór were always empty. How could any of the working Jews have any doubt concerning the fate that awaited their brethren in Section 3 of the camp?

Thus, Rutkowski’s assertion that even long-time detainees were unaware of the real character of the camp is absurd, if we accept the standard account of the events in Section 3 of the camp. The story about “the ‘old’ detainees who wanted to spare the new arrivals any overly violent discoveries” and thus “did not tell them the whole truth about Sobibór,” introducing them “only slowly, in a stepwise fashion, to what Sobibór was,” reads like a bad joke.

2.3.4.2. Details of the events in Camp III

On the subject of Section 3 Rutkowski writes on p. 6:

> *"All detainees of this section were murdered without exception."*

Three pages further on we learn:

> *"Even in section 3, on the threshold of the gas chamber, so to speak, there was resistance.* […] *In the winter of 1942/43 a group of naked women rebelled and refused to enter the gas chambers, even though the SS men and the guards beat them with sticks and poles. Half of them were shot in front of the building with the gas chambers. One time the victims succeeded in lifting the chamber door from its hinges – probably because of a defective gas pipe. The naked people ran all over section 3, which, in fact, was nothing but a large cage made of barbed wire. The SS men shot them with their submachine guns; Erich Bauer was one of them."* (p. 9)

Esther Raab is named as the source for this. She was a witness for the prosecution at two trials in 1950 (Berlin and Frankfurt-upon-Main; cf. Subchapters 6.2.f.). How could she have known? She could not have learned anything from the detainees in Section 3 because these people, as we know, "were murdered without exception," and she could not have seen it with her own eyes because Section 3, after all, was "hermetically closed off."

One of the most revealing passages of this article is the following:

> *"A special place in the history of the camp and in the memories of the prisoners is occupied by the project of a mass escape in the summer of 1943, which became known as the Dutch plan or the plan of a Dutch revolt. Over the years this event, as well as its instigator, have assumed fantastic, even legendary traits. Some detainees and some historians who follow them* [the statements of those detainees] *state mistakenly that the organizer was a captain of the Dutch navy (the Dutch navy or the Dutch merchant fleet)."* (p. 21)

Then Rutkowski tells us in a footnote:

> *"Dr. L. de Yong* [recte: Jong]*, a well-known Dutch historian of the Hitler-German occupation, who heads the Amsterdam Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie* [Imperial Institute for War Documentation]*, states in a letter to the Jewish Historical Institute: 'at that time there was no Jewish naval officer."* (p. 22)

So the story of the "Dutch captain" at Sobibór was a legend, cooked up in the rumor department of the camp. Rutkowski's article abounds with

such legends, probably without the author realizing this. The same goes for the whole orthodox historiography about Sobibór.

2.3.5. Stanisław Szmajzner (1968)

Stanisław Szmajzner, a Polish Jew and former detainee at Sobibór, emigrated to Brazil in 1947 and was a witness for the prosecution in the extradition procedures against the former SS men Franz Stangl and Gustav Wagner (cf. Subchapter 6.7.). He therefore played an important role in the drama of Sobibór, and we have every reason to take a close look at a book he published in 1968 under the title *Inferno em Sobibór*[28] ("Hell in Sobibór"), even though it exists only in Portuguese and was never fully translated into another language.[29] It is easy to understand why it never appeared elsewhere: Szmajzner's description of the camp is so different from the official picture and contains so many embarrassing passages that even those editors who normally deal with such matters knew better than to make the book known beyond the reach of the Portuguese language.

According to his own indications Szmajzner was deported from Oppeln in Upper Silesia to Sobibór in May of 1942 and worked there as a goldsmith, making jewelry for the "Szarfuehrer" (Szmajzner's spelling) and other SS personnel. For a long time he did not know what was going on in Camp III, but one day he received the following message from his friend Abrão (Abraham) who worked in that section:

> *"Dear brother. I asked you to recite the Kaddish not only for your parents but for everyone. You should know that, of all the Jews passing through camp 1 and moving on into camp 2, hardly anyone is alive today. Out of all the transports that have arrived so far, only a small group still exists in order to do the daily tasks; by pure chance, I belong to this group.*
>
> *Once these thousands of Jews have passed through the gate which you spoke of, they cross a long corridor and enter camp 2. At that point their few remaining belongings are taken away, they must undress completely, and they are led to a large barrack under the pre-*

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[28] Stanisław Szmajzner, *Inferno em Sobibór. A tragédia de um adolescente judeu*, Edições Bloch, Rio de Janeiro 1968.

[29] On the Internet page www.holocaustresearchproject.org/ar/sobibor/smajzner.html is a partial translation into English which seems to have been prepared on the basis of a Polish text. No source is given. Possibly Szmajzner's book, published in Portuguese, was based on a Polish manuscript.

> *text of having to take a bath. Hundreds of people enter this place at the same time.*
>
> *Once the barrack is full, the door is closed and then hermetically sealed. Then a large Diesel engine is started up; its exhaust pipe passes through a hole in a wall, so that the exhaust gases go inside until all of them have suffocated."* (p. 152f)

A Diesel engine as the murder weapon has been accepted by official historiography for the Bełżec and Treblinka Camps,[30] but not for Sobibór. In this case most of the witnesses prefer not to specify an engine type, whereas the late U.S. political scientist Raul Hilberg expressly assigned a gasoline engine to this camp.[31] U.S. revisionist Friedrich P. Berg has shown in a detailed study that Diesel exhaust gases are most unsuitable for the mass murder of people in view of their high oxygen and low carbon monoxide content. Gasoline engines would be far more efficient.[32]

According to Abrão, Szmajzner's confidant, the Diesel engine was later abandoned and replaced by Zyklon B (p. 190f). As far as we know and apart from Szmajzner, the use of this pesticide for mass killings at Sobibór has only been claimed by a certain Joseph Tennenbaum.[33]

Among the nonsense which Szmajzner asks his readers to believe we have the following stories:

– Franz was an eighteen-year-old Jew who used to live in the Oppeln ghetto and had been a "good boy," but "once the Nazis made him commander of the Jews in Camp III, his personality changed radically." He eventually went so far as to believe that he was "a real German, even a staunch defender of Nazism. He believed that the Jewish race had to be eradicated and his visible paranoia was such that he executed his tasks with a degree of sadism not even attained by the Germans." (p. 192)
– On certain days up to 8,000 Jews were killed at Sobibór; the total number of victims reached nearly two million (p. 270).

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30 I. Gutman et al., *op. cit*. (note 14), p. 176 (Belzec), p. 1428 (Treblinka).

31 Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, 3rd ed., Yale University Press, New Haven/London 2003, p. 936.

32 Friedrich P. Berg, "Diesel Gas Chambers – Ideal for Torture, Absurd for Murder," in: Germar Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, 2nd ed., Theses & Dissertation Press, Chicago 2003, pp. 435-469.

33 Joseph Tennenbaum, *In Search of a Lost People. The Old and the New Poland*, The Beechhurst Press, 1948, p. 285, quoted after Paul Grubach (cf. section 2.4).

– In the fall of 1942 a "Walt-Kommando" (Szmajzner's spelling) was created; its task was to fell trees and chop wood because with "the oven burning the whole time, it required gigantic amounts of fuel" (p. 207). The members of this "Walt-Kommando" had to perform back-breaking work, but their daily food ration consisted only of a piece of bread, "for the Germans felt that they were strong enough to carry out this momentous work without proper food" (p. 231f).
– The German Jews who had been deported to Sobibór, while having "suffered terribly under Nazism, still believed in the Führer and his gang" (p. 230). Therefore, "they attempted most diligently to work together with the monsters" (p. 231).

Such absurdities notwithstanding, Szmajzner's book contains a few credible passages, such as the following:

> *"I had become, by the way, a hardened consumer of vodka.* […] *I had no trouble getting my bottle, and be it through the dangerous barbed-wire fence. I must admit to the reader that, at Sobibór, I drank enough for the rest of my life."* (p. 222)

If there is one passage in Szmajzner's book of which we believe every word, it is this one!

2.3.6. Adalbert Rückerl (1977)

In 1977 Adalbert Rückerl, long-time head of the German Central Agency for the prosecution of Nazi crimes at Ludwigsburg, Germany, published a book entitled *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse*[34] (NS crimes in the light of German criminal proceedings), in which he documents the trials in Germany against former members of the camp personnel at Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka and Chełmno. In Subchapter 6.4. devoted to the Hagen trial of 1965/66 we will refer to this book on many occasions (cf. Subchapter 6.4).

2.3.7. E.A. Cohen (1979)

In 1979 the Dutch Jewish physician Elie A. Cohen, M.D., who had been interned at Auschwitz and Mauthausen during the war, published a book in Holland entitled *De negentien treinen naar Sobibór*[35] (The nineteen trains to Sobibór). Aside from extensive psychological consid-

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[34] Adalbert Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse*, dtv, Frankfurt a. M. 1977.

[35] Dr. E. A. Cohen, *De Negentien Treinen naar Sobibór*, B. V. Uitgeversmaatschappij Elsevier Boekerij, Amsterdam 1979.

erations, the work gives us a summary of the orthodox version of the fate of the Jews during the Second World War as well as a résumé of the official depiction of Sobibór, which Cohen had gathered from the literature about the camp – extremely sparse at the time – and from the files of the German trials.

2.3.8. Miriam Novitch (1980)

With a certain Miriam Novitch acting as editor, a collection of accounts entitled *Sobibór. Martyrdom and Revolt*[36] appeared in 1980. It consists of an introduction and of uncommented statements by 25 former Sobibór detainees. The year in which these statements were recorded is given only in a few cases. Most of the accounts are surprisingly brief, and some amount to little more than one or two pages. With its 24 pages, the last account, written by Moshe Bahir, is an exception (pp. 139 – 163). The credibility of this key witness can be judged by the following passage:

> *"In the month of February, 1943, Himmler visited Sobibór a second time.* […] *Two days after the visit I heard a conversation between Beckmann and Bredov. One said to the other that the visit was designed to mark the completion of the first million Jews destroyed at Sobibór."* (p. 155f)

As we have already mentioned, up to the end of 1942 exactly 101,370 Jews had been deported to Sobibór – but *deported* is not synonymous for *annihilated*.

If we follow Bahir, the deadly gases were fed into the gas chamber by means of the pipe work of a shower; the chamber had a collapsible floor, which was opened after each gassing so that the corpses could fall into the cars waiting below (cf. Chapter 3).

The account given by the witness Hella Felenbaum-Weiss is also in blatant disagreement with the official version of Sobibór:

> *"One day, a convoy brought to the camp prisoners in striped pyjamas. They were extremely thin, and their heads were shaved; women and men looked alike and they could hardly walk. Rumors spread that these people, about 300 of them, came from Majdanek where the gas chambers were out of order. When they alighted from the train, they literally collapsed. SS Frenzel met them and poured chlo-*

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[36] Miriam Novitch (ed.), *Sobibór. Martyrdom and Revolt. Documents and Testimonies*, Holocaust Library, New York 1980.

> *ride on their heads, as though they were already dead. The arrival of another convoy distressed me in the same way. It was thought to come from Lvov, but nobody knew for sure. Prisoners were sobbing and told us a dreadful tale: they had been gassed on the way with chlorine, but some survived. The bodies of the dead were green and their skin had peeled off."* (p. 50)

Thus, the victims were not gassed in gas chambers but gassed along the way before they ever arrived, and it was not done by means of exhaust gases but with chlorine! As we have seen, this murder tool was also mentioned in the testimonies by Leon Feldhendler and Zelda Metz immediately after the war. The origin of this version of the gassing myth becomes clear when we read the sentence "SS man Frenzel went towards them and poured chlorine over their heads as if they were already dead": The corpses of dead detainees were indeed treated with chloride of lime (not: "chlorine") before they were buried in the mass graves to prevent the spread of diseases. This, by the way, has been confirmed by the "Main Commission for the Investigation of the German Crimes in Poland" in their report on Sobibór.[37]

The fact that the former Sobibór detainees contradict one another in crucial respects does not seem to perturb Miriam Novitch in the least. We will give an evocative example: Several witnesses have said that, before they had reached Sobibór, the Polish inhabitants had warned them of the dire fate awaiting them. Itzak Lichtman:

> *"We walked from Żołkiewka to Krasnystaw station. Everyone could see that we were Jews* […]. *Many children followed us, and Poles said as we passed, 'Hey, Żydzi, idziecie na spalenie' (Jews, you are going to burn)."* (p. 81)

Aizik Rottenberg:

> *"Włodawa was about eight kilometers from Sobibór. Polish peasants who went to market were saying, 'Jews, young and old, are being burned in Sobibór.'"* (p. 103)

Yehuda Lerner:

> *"On the way to Sobibór, the train stopped in Chełm. A Pole was moving from car to car noting the numbers* [of those inside]. *We asked him where we were going. He answered: 'To Sobibór, where prisoners are burned.'"* (p. 112)

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[37] Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *op. cit.* (note 25), p. 55.

Hence, while the Poles in the area are said to have known about the annihilation of the Jews at Sobibór, this was apparently not the case for the detainees in the camp itself – at least if we are to believe the witness Hershel Zukerman. He stated that the gas chambers were so well camouflaged that he believed for ten weeks that the people who had arrived together with him were in a labor camp. It was only by accident that he had learned of a mass extermination going on in Camp III (p. 107; cf. Chapter 4).

We can appreciate the scientific level of this book by the horror stories told by Miriam Novitch's witnesses, such as the following:

Ber Freiberg:

> *"Then the Nazis found new entertainment: they sewed up the lower part of the prisoners' trousers and put in rats. The victims were to stand quiet; if one of them moved, he was beaten to death."* (p. 75)

Eda Lichtman:

> *"Shaul Stark looked after geese; he fed them and weighed them every day. Once, a goose became ill and died. Frenzel, Bredov, Wagner and Weiss whipped Stark to death. The man's last words were: 'Avenge me, comrades, avenge me.'"* (p. 57)

Moshe Bahir:

> *"The first one of them* [the camp SS] *whom I encountered when I came to the camp was Oberscharführer Gustav Wagner.* […] *He would snatch babies from their mothers' arms and tear them to pieces in his hands."* (p. 149)
>
> *"Sometimes Grot would have himself a joke; he would seize a Jew, give him a bottle of wine and a sausage weighing at least a kilo and order him to devour it in a few minutes. When the 'lucky' man succeeded in carrying out this order and staggered from drunkenness, Grot would order him to open his mouth wide and would urinate into his mouth."* (p. 150f.)
>
> *"Oberscharführer Paul Bredov, aged forty, a Berliner, was a human beast in the full sense of the word. His direct assignment was to be in charge of the Lazarett* [infirmary]*, but he had additional jobs in the camp. His beloved hobby was target-shooting. He had a daily 'quota' of shooting and killing fifty Jews, all with his automatic pistol which was never separated from him even for a minute throughout the day."* (p. 153)

In view of the fact that the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* has accepted this "documentation" as one of only four titles recommended on the

subject of Sobibór, one wonders about the quality of other books not recommended by the *Encyclopedia* authors…

2.3.9. Richard Rashke (1982)

The American journalist Richard L. Rashke published a book entitled *Escape from Sobibor*[38] in 1982. He had visited a number of former Sobibór detainees – among them T. Blatt, S. Szmajzner and A. Pechersky – in their homes and interviewed them. The book is a rendition of these interviews – partly in direct speech, partly otherwise. As most of these detainees have made their own statements about their experiences at Sobibór, we see no reason why we should discuss this book in any detail and will merely quote a passage from the book written by Rashke himself:[39]

> *"I hated Poland. I couldn't understand a people who killed and betrayed Jews, who plundered and robbed them. I found it difficult to make distinctions between good Poles and bad ones, between peacetime and wartime, between heroism and the desire to survive, even if that meant selling Jews to the Gestapo for sugar and security. I felt hatred even for that Polish woman living in what was once a Jewish ghetto. And the Jewish Poles were not my people."*

This suffices to prove that this author of yet another of the four books on Sobibór recommended by the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* has a strong emotional bias.

2.3.10. E. Kogon, H. Langbein, A. Rückerl *et al.* (1983)

Edited by Eugen Kogon, Hermann Langbein, Adalbert Rückerl *et al.*, a collective volume entitled *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas* (National Socialist mass killings by means of poison gas) was published in Germany in 1983 and has since been considered the classic book of "Holocaust" literature.[40] In 1993 an English-language edition was published under the title *Nazi Mass Murder: A Documentary History of the Use of Poison Gas*.[41] Below we will quote mainly from this English edition. In the book's introduction the editors castigate those

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38 Richard L. Rashke, *Escape from Sobibor*, Houghton Mifflin, 1982.

39 *Ibid.*, 2nd ed., University of Illinois Press, Urbana/Chicago 1995, p. 357.

40 Eugen Kogon, Hermann Langbein, Adalbert Rückerl *et al.* (eds.), *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas*, S. Fischer, Frankfurt upon Main 1983.

41 Eugen Kogon, Hermann Langbein, Adalbert Rückerl *et al.* (eds.), *Nazi Mass Murder: A Documentary History of the Use of Poison Gas*, Yale University Press, New Haven 1993.

who "desire to defend the Nazi system" by denying "the killing of millions of victims by gas" while being careful not to mention any such authors or titles. In order to fight such tendencies efficiently and to contain them, the authors will "set down, in a precise and indisputable manner, the historical truth about the massacres perpetrated by means of poison gas."

In view of such an ambitious endeavor one should expect that the authors of the individual sections would take great care when formulating their theses, but this is not the case at all. In the section entitled "the construction of the Sobibór annihilation camp" we read, in fact:

> *"The first gas chambers in Sobibór were housed in a brick building with concrete foundations, in the northwestern part of the camp. Inside were three gas chambers; each measured four by four meters and could hold 150 to two hundred people at a time."* (p. 112)

Hence it was possible to press together in each chamber nine or even twelve persons per square meter. While the former figure still appears vaguely possible, the latter is not. Ten pages further on we have SS-*Oberscharführer* Kurt Bolender stating at one of his interrogations (p. 122):

> *"I would estimate that it took forty to fifty people to fill a chamber."*

If that was the case, what is the basis for the figure of 150 to 200 persons per chamber given by the author?

Another eleven pages on, we encounter the following passage:

> *"The new building* [i.e. the larger one, built in September of 1942] *had six gas chambers, three on each side. Its layout was similar to that followed in Bełżec and Treblinka, where the entrances to the gas chambers branched off from a central passage. The new rooms here were not larger than the old ones – that is, four by four meters – but the extermination capacity was increased to twelve hundred or thirteen hundred people."* (p. 133)

This means that in the gas chambers more than 13 persons could be squeezed onto one square meter! There is no witness statement to substantiate this ridiculous assertion.

How this collective volume deals with historical sources is illustrated by the following sentence:

> *"On 5 July 1943, shortly before the end of the Jewish transports from Holland, Himmler ordered the Sobibór extermination camp to be transformed into a concentration camp* [KZ] *for the storage and*

> *dismantling of captured enemy munitions."* (German edition, p. 191)[42]

Actually, Himmler had spoken about a transit camp in his directive and not about an extermination camp (cf. Section 2.2.1). In the section "The Liquidation of the Camps" we read:

> *"The terrain of the former extermination centers was plowed up, trees were planted, and peaceful-looking farmsteads constructed. A number of Ukrainians from the camp commandos settled there. No traces whatsoever were to remain as evidence of the atrocities committed in Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka, to which, by a conservative estimate, about 1,500,000 human beings had fallen victim."* (p. 137)

It is obvious that it would never have been possible to obliterate the traces of the burial, the excavation, and the open-air incineration of one and a half million corpses by the primitive plowing methods described above. The editors and the authors of this collective volume never even thought of requesting a forensic investigation of the crime site. They were happy with the accounts supplied by the witnesses, which they "corrected" if necessary, as we have seen in connection with the capacity of the gas chambers: In spite of the fact that the only witness quoted in this respect, Kurt Bolender, stated that the capacity was "40 to 50 persons" per chamber, the Sobibór chapters of the book twice give significantly higher capacities, which are not substantiated by witness statements.

Only the very naïve will accept the assertion in the introduction to the book, namely that the authors have "set down, in a precise and indisputable manner, the historical truth about the massacres perpetrated by means of poison gas."

2.3.11. Yitzhak Arad (1987)

In 1987, the Israeli historian Yitzhak Arad published a book entitled *Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*,[43] which is still regarded as a standard in this field. As has been shown in

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[42] In the English edition (p. 137) we read: "Himmler declared that Sobibór was to be converted into a concentration camp." However, since apparently no revisions were made from the German original in this chapter of the book, we find it likely that the omission of the word "Vernichtungslager" (extermination camp) in the English edition is due to the translator.

[43] Yitzhak Arad, *Bełżec*. *Sobibór, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington/Indianapolis 1987.

a previous study,[44] Arad brazenly falsified a source in connection with his treatment of the Treblinka Camp: He quoted a report from the underground resistance movement in the Warsaw ghetto dating from November of 1942, which described the extermination of the Polish Jews in "steam chambers" but replaced the embarrassing word "steam chambers" quite unabashedly by the term "gas chambers" (pp. 354f). In the case of Sobibór Arad does not use the device of outright falsification. He limits himself to handling witness statements selectively, carefully excluding all passages which disagree with the official version of Sobibór, such as those which describe the killing medium as having been chlorine or a black fluid, or those assigning a collapsible floor to the gas chambers (cf. Chapter 3). This latter contraption, which allowed the corpses of those murdered to drop right down into a cellar, was mentioned in 1944 by the witness Dov Freiberg, a.k.a. Ber Freiberg (cf. Chapter 3, p. 69.). Arad, while quoting Freiberg on three occasions (pp. 75, 128, 129), does not mention this uncomfortable fact, quite obviously because it would immediately discredit Freiberg as a witness in the eyes of any critical reader.

If we follow Arad, "at least 90,000 to 100,000 Jews were murdered" at Sobibór up to the end of July, 1942. (We remind the reader that according to the Höfle radio message, which Arad did not yet know, a total of 101,370 persons had been deported to Sobibór up to 31 December 1942). Still, the SS felt that the capacity of the old gassing building with its three chambers, each 4 meters square, "could not cope with the tasks imposed on this camp," so that "during the two-month lull in extermination activities in autumn of 1942 [sic], the old gas chambers were partially dismantled and the three additional gas chambers were built." (p. 123)

We are not told what we are to understand by the "three gas chambers […] 4 × 4 meters" being "partially dismantled." Arad goes on:

> *"The new six-room gas chamber building had a corridor that ran through its center and three rooms on either side. The entrance to each gas chamber was from the corridor. The three gas chambers were the same size as the existing ones, 4 × 4 meters. The killing capacity of the gas chambers was increased to nearly 1,300 people simultaneously."* (p. 123)

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[44] C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 62f.

Apparently, it was not "the old gas chambers" that were "partially dismantled" but the building in which they were housed. The statement that the six gas chambers, each with a floor area of 16 square meters, could now hold "nearly 1,300 people simultaneously" signifies that 13 persons would have had to stand on one square meter – an impossible thing to achieve, which we have already noted in our discussion of the collective volume *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas*. Just as the collective volume, Arad has no source for this assertion.

We should add that ten years before Arad's book appeared, Adalbert Rückerl, in the documentation *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas*, had assigned to the "six cells" of the new "gas-chamber building" a total capacity of "about 480" or 80 persons per "cell."[45] This would have amounted to 5 persons per square meter, a figure which is physically possible.

Although it is obvious that Arad cannot present any documentary or forensic evidence for the alleged mass killings at Sobibór, he has witness statements such as the following:

> *"In the winter of 1942/43 and in the spring and summer of 1943, transports arrived in Sobibór with Jews from the Lvov district. In some of the transports the Jews were naked. They were forced to undress before entering the freight cars, to make it more difficult for them to escape from the train.* […] *In her testimony, Ada Lichtman told of a transport that arrived from Lvov in the winter; nude corpses were removed from the closed freight cars. The prisoner platform workers said that the corpses were frozen and stuck to one another, and when they were laid on the trolley, they disintegrated, and parts of them fell off. These people had had a long voyage* [sic] *and their corpses crumbled."*

Normally frozen corpses do not crumble, which means that the "prisoner platform workers" related something that they could not have seen and hence never did see.

We will not go into Arad's statistics on the Jews that were deported to Sobibór from various countries, because this question will be dealt with in the discussion of the book by Jules Schelvis. Suffice it to say that Arad gives a figure of 145,000 to 165,000 (p. 390f.) for the Jews deported to Sobibór from the General Government (Polish areas occupied but not annexed by the Germans during the war). Actually, the

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45 A. Rückerl, *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 173.

maximum was about 54,000 (cf. Section 2.3.19.), which means that Arad's figure is too high by a factor of three.

To put it mildly, Arad's book does not measure up in any way to a "standard" on the subject.

2.3.12. Witold Zbigniew Sulimierski (1993)

By 1993, i.e. half a century after the closure of Sobibór, there was still no Polish monograph on this camp. To make up for this, a man by the name of Witold Zbigniew Sulimierski published a brochure during that year, the title of which can be rendered in English as "Sobibór. A Hitlerian Death Camp."[46] This booklet contains neither references nor a bibliography and is nothing but a summary of the usual unproven assertions concerning the camp.

On the subject of the murder weapon, i.e. the type of engine used at Sobibór, Sulimierski is one of the rare authors to opt for a Diesel engine.[47] He writes:

> *"The victims were killed by means of exhaust gases, which were fed into the cabins from a separate annex. This annex housed the 8-cylinder Diesel engine of an armored vehicle which K. Frenzl had brought from Lwów. Once the engine was started, the killing process took about 10 minutes."* (p. 19)

A time span of ten minutes between start-up of the Diesel engine and the death of the victims is absolutely impossible, as shown by a barbaric experiment on animals carried out in England in 1957. On this point, Germar Rudolf states:[48]

> *"These experiments simulated heavy motor load by limiting the oxygen supply artificially. This was achieved by restricting the air supply at the intake manifold as much as possible without completely killing the motor. This was necessary because the exhaust fumes simply did not cause poisoning in any of the test animals while the engine was idling or operating under light loads. After the gas chamber had been filled with exhaust gas 40 mice, 4 rabbits, and 10*

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46 Witold Zbignew Sulimierski, *Sobibór. Hitlerowski Obóz śmierci*, Fundacja "Kamena" w Chełmie, Chełm 1993.

47 As far as we know, Stanisław Szmajzer and Barbara Distel (see note 59) are the only two authors besides Sulimierski who claim that a Diesel engine was used for gassings at Sobibór.

48 Germar Rudolf, *Lectures on the Holocaust*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2005, pp. 279f.

guinea pigs were exposed to it. The last of the animals had died of a combination CO poisoning after three hours and 20 minutes."

2.3.13. Jules Schelvis (1993)

In the same year, i.e. 1993, Jules Schelvis, a Dutch Jew who had himself been deported to Sobibór in 1943, published a book entitled *Vernietigingskamp Sobibór*[49] ("Annihilation camp Sobibór"), which is by far the most extensive study of this camp. Eight editions have appeared in Holland to date. As Schelvis has revised his opinion on certain crucial points over the years – such as the number of victims at Sobibór – we shall base our discussion on the latest, 2008 edition.

2.3.14. Thomas (Toivi) Blatt (1996)

In addition to Alexander Aronovitch Pechersky, Thomas (Toivi) Blatt, a Polish Jew who was deported to Sobibór in early 1943 when he was 15 years old, is certainly the most widely known Sobibór detainee. He was an advisor for the 1987 movie *Escape from Sobibór*.[50] More than half a century after the end of the war, Blatt wrote a book entitled *Sobibór: The Forgotten Revolt*,[51] which has been praised lavishly by the usual devout audience. A certain Marilyn J. Harran, professor of religion and history at Chapman University, wrote for instance:[52]

"Thomas Blatt writes in the preface to his book: 'Witnessing genocide is overwhelming; writing about it is soul shattering.' Nor can the reader emerge unscathed from this wrenching account of man's inhumanity to humanity. The account of the killing of 250,000 Jews at the death camp Sobibór is made even more powerful by the fact that the author is one of a handful of survivors of the revolt. To read this book is to risk having one's soul shattered and one's humanity put in question. No one who reads it will ever be able to forget Sobibór or Toivi Blatt."

As soon as the interested reader opens this overwhelming book that shatters his soul and puts his humanity in question, he learns to his great surprise that the Nazis allowed T. Blatt to keep a diary (or that they were at least so sloppy in their supervision that he managed to do so undetected):

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49 Jules Schelvis, *Vernietigingskamp Sobibór*, De Bataafsche Leeuw, Amsterdam 1993.
50 T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), appendix.
51 *Ibid.* German: *Sobibór. Der vergessene Aufstand*, Unrat Verlag, Hamburg 2004.
52 *Ibid.*, Engl. edition, back cover.

> *"After the liberation I was able to collect about a third of the diary pages that I had given to Polish people for safekeeping."* (p. xi, footnote 7)

After his arrival at Sobibór the boy confided his first impressions to the diary:

> *"We stepped down from the trucks. In front of us stretched a long, barbed-wire fence interwoven with fir branches. Hypnotized, my eyes were fixed on the Gothic letters on the top of the gate leading inside: 'SS-Sonderkommando Sobibór.'"* (p. 38)

Again and again, Blatt cites entries from his diary in which he recorded, with painstaking accuracy, the dramatic events in the death camp. A particularly overwhelming entry reads:

> *"A tragic and heroic example of spiritual resistance is recorded in my diary:*
>
> *A transport of Polish Jews had been killed. The distant, dull, drum-like sound of bodies thrown from the gas chamber to the metal frame of the transportation lorry was always heard in the sorting shed. Invisible tension was tormenting us. Wolf was the supervising Nazi of the Himmelstrasse. I attached myself to the cleaning crew. I had never been in the dreary, fenced and camouflaged alley. I was curious to explore the camp, and this gave me the opportunity to trace the road to the gas chambers. At the entrance I picked up a rake and, watching the others, I began to rake the white sand, transforming the hundreds of footprints, human refuse and blood into an innocent, spotlessly even surface. While raking up bigger objects, I noted a trail of tiny green and red specks between the teeth of the rake. I bent down to collect them by hand and to my surprise and disbelief, I discovered paper money – dollars, marks, zloty and rubles – money torn into pieces too small to recollect* [sic].
>
> *I thought… How must the victims have felt when they acted in this way? In the last minutes before a tortured death they could still sabotage the Nazis. Their world was disappearing, and the lonely Jew takes his time to tear the banknotes into irreclaimable tiny pieces, making them unusable to the end."* (p. 55)

Fate willed it that the Poles to whom Blatt had entrusted his diary returned to him at least a third of it. We can be sure that this literary marvel, written by a fifteen-year-old boy, an inestimable account of the Holocaust, once specialists had attested to its genuine character, was translated into all the languages in the world, from Albanian to Zulu,

and sold dozens of millions of copies, to be quoted in every work of the Holocaust literature. It is certainly a gem in the museum of Yad Vashem, well protected by thick panes of glass that shield it from vicious attacks by Holocaust deniers and other vandals. Or is it?

Not at all. It is quite perplexing that up to the present day Toivi Blatt has neglected to publish his diary or at least to include a photocopy of a page or two in his book!

As if keeping a diary in an extermination camp were not by itself a miraculous achievement, Toivi Blatt also managed to preserve at the last moment the diary of another detainee, written in another extermination camp:

> *"On June 26, 1943, all Sobibór prisoners were suddenly locked in their barracks with strict orders to stay away from the windows so as not to observe the outside. As we found out later, a transport of the last 300 Jews from Bełżec had arrived in Sobibór. While being unloaded, the Jews, realizing what was going to happen and aware that there would be no salvation, resisted by running in all directions, choosing to be shot rather than gassed. This act of defiance was in vain: they were shot at random throughout the camp. The bodies were later collected by the Bahnhofkommando and delivered to Lager* [camp] *III for cremation.*
>
> *While sorting their clothing and burning the documents, I found a diary written up to the last minute which revealed that the transport was made up of workers from the Bełżec death camp. The anonymous author states that, after the closure of Bełżec in December of 1942, the surviving Jews had burned the corpses and dismantled the camp in the period until June of 1943. The Germans told them that they were being transferred to a new work place. They suspected a trap."* (p. 56)

Blatt states that he handed this diary to Leon Feldhendler, his co-detainee. Feldhendler allegedly confirmed this in Lublin in 1944 (p. 56, footnote 3). As Feldhendler was shot to death in a street of Lublin at the end of 1944 by a Polish anti-Semite, he unfortunately could not make this irreplaceable piece of evidence for the Bełżec Holocaust known to the rest of the world…[53]

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[53] Shaindy Perl, *Tell the World: The Story of the Sobibór Revolt*, Eastern Book Press, Monsey (NY) 2004, p. 244. Jules Schelvis (*op. cit.* (note 49), p. 234) dates Feldhendler's death to 6 April 1945.

The reason why Toivi Blatt allowed five decades to pass after his liberation before he finally published a little book about his adventures is probably the fact that he had to thoroughly study the literature about Sobibór and the trial files – fortunately, not an overly taxing effort. We must admit, though, that he did this very diligently and serves his readers all the potboilers that can be found in the earlier works about the camp, beginning with Shaul Stark, killed by the SS because one of the geese he had been entrusted with suddenly died (p. 51), moving along to Barry, the fiendish hound who would, on command, chew up the detainees' genitals (p. 52; see on p. 106 of this book), right up to the old Jew who, before being gassed, picked up a handful of dirt, threw it into the wind, and said to an SS man: "This will happen to your Reich!" (p. 57). More down to earth, but quite surprising, Toivi Blatt has this to say about the capacity of the gas chambers:

> *"A quick estimate tells us that over a working day of 14 hours, between 12,000 and 15,000 people were killed."* (p. 20)

Let us assume that this applies to the period after September 1942, when the original three gas chambers, each 16 m², were doubled by the addition of a further three chambers of the same size. This means that the capacity of the former chambers was around 6,000 to 7,500 persons per day. Hence, the old chambers could have handled the 250,000 Sobibór victims within 42 days, and we wonder why it was necessary to build the new chambers at all. It is all the more astonishing that the Germans, two months after the start-up of Sobibór, set up another death camp, Treblinka, which needed more than a year to do away with 870,000 Jews. It would have been possible, after all, to kill the lot of the victims of both camps, (870,000 + 250,000 =) 1,120,000 persons, in the three old 16 m² chambers at Sobibór within (1,120,000 ÷ 6,000 =) about 187 days without going through the trouble of building yet another death camp!

Blatt goes on to tell us:

> *"The prisoners were ordered to learn German military songs, clean the barracks and the yard, or were called to perform 'exercises,' exhausting drills performed for the sadistic pleasure of the Nazis. Many committed suicide; others were killed at the whim of the SS. Workers could always be replaced from the abundant supply in the next transport. The grueling work schedule was not simply the whim of the Sobibór administration. It was official policy issued by SS-Obergruppenführer Oswald Pohl to all camps: 'Time of work (for*

prisoners) should be in no way limited, it should depend on the organizational and structural purpose of the camp, and the type of work performed.'" (p. 46f.)

These assertions should be compared with the contents of a circular issued by the same Oswald Pohl on 26 October 1943 and sent to the commanders of all 19 concentration camps:[54]

"In former years, and within the scope of the educational policy then in force, it could be regarded as unimportant whether a detainee was doing useful work or not, But now, the work capacity of the detainees has become significant and all measures taken by the commanders, the heads of the V-services[55] *and the physicians have to aim for the health and efficiency of the detainees. It is not out of sentimentality, but because we need their arms and legs, because they have to contribute their share to the fight for the victory of the German people, that we must be concerned about the well-being of the detainees. My first priority is: No more than 10% of all detainees should be disabled because of diseases. This objective must be achieved by the joint effort of all concerned. Thus, it is necessary to ensure:*

1) good and proper diet
2) good and proper clothing
3) use of all natural health agents
4) avoidance of all unnecessary efforts not immediately connected with the tasks in question."

So much for the credibility of Thomas or Toivi Blatt. The only value of the book is in the reproduced documents and the photographs.

Aside from *Sobibór: The Forgotten Revolt*, Toivi Blatt has written another book, entitled *From the Ashes of Sobibór*,[56] which we will briefly discuss in Chapter 4 of this study.

2.3.15. Shaindy Perl (2004)

In 2004 a book entitled *Tell the World: The Story of the Sobibór Revolt*[53] and written by a certain Shaindy Perl was published in the USA. It is entirely based upon the recollections of a former Sobibór detainee,

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54 Archiwum Muzeum Stutthof, I-1b-8, p. 53.
55 Food service.
56 Toivi Blatt, *From the Ashes of Sobibór: A Story of Survival,* Northwestern University Press, Evanston 1997.

Esther Raab, and is another warmed-up version of the revolt of 14 October 1943 and the usual silly horror stories:

> *"'Ah, a baby,' he* [Oberscharführer Wagner] *said with an evil grin, carelessly grasping the crying child by its clothing.* […] *'You know what? Because I am in a good mood today, I will let you live. I will only take the baby, and you can continue working for us here.' Defiantly, the woman snatched the child from his arms and spit* [sic!] *in his face. Enraged, the SS man whipped out his gun and promptly shot her. As the others watched in horror, he pointed his weapon at the child and shot him, too."* (p. 81)

In spite of this, the book is valuable because it enables us to judge the credibility of Esther Raab, a witness for the prosecution who appeared in 1950 at the two Sobibór trials (cf. Subchapters 6.2.f.).

2.3.16. Michael Lev (2007)

The English translation of a novel entitled *Sobibór* has been published in Israel and the USA. The original was written in Yiddish sometime in the 1960s (the exact date is not indicated) by the Soviet writer Michael Lev.[57] The hero of the novel is a Polish Jew named Berek Schlesinger who is deported to Sobibór by the Germans, takes part in the uprising of 14 October 1943, and joins the Soviet partisans after his escape. Literary criticism not being our specialty, we have no reason to discuss this "masterpiece of historical fiction" the cover of the book promises us.

2.3.17. Dov Freiberg (2007)

The same year saw the publication in the USA of the English version of a book that had appeared twenty years earlier in Hebrew, written by the former Sobibór detainee Dov Freiberg (who used to call himself Ber Freiberg) and entitled *To Survive Sobibór*.[58] The fourth chapter of our book is devoted to the analysis of witness testimonies, and Freiberg's statements will be discussed there in the necessary detail.

2.3.18. Barbara Distel (2008)

Before the year 2008 no German historian had mustered up enough courage to write an article, let alone a book, about Sobibór. The world had to wait for Barbara Distel, long-time head of the Dachau memorial

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57 Michael Lev, *Sobibór*, Gefen Publishing House, Jerusalem and New York 2007.
58 Dov Freiberg, *To Survive Sobibór*, Gefen Books, Lynnbrook (NY) 2007.

site, who squeezed a 30-page article entitled "Sobibór"[59] into the eighth volume of a series she and Wolfgang Benz have been editing. Barbara Distel's text marks the intellectual and moral low point of the literature about this camp.

Concerning the number of victims ascribed to Sobibór, Barbara Distel starts out by saying that this figure "is taken to be 150,000 to 250,000" (p. 375). At the end of her contribution she opts for 250,000 (p. 402). Even if going along with orthodox historians in a dogmatic way by assuming that all but a few detainees deported to Sobibór were murdered there, such a figure is fundamentally impossible. Thanks to the Höfle message published seven years before Distel's article we know that 101,370 Jews were deported to Sobibór by the end of 1942. Moreover, all researchers agree without exception that the number of deportees was considerably less in 1943 than the year before. Barbara Distel either does not know the Höfle message or ignores it deliberately in order to arrive at a high number of victims. The former would make her an ignoramus, the latter a fraud.

Concerning the murder weapon Barbara Distel has this to say:

> *"In camp 3 there was the stone building with the gas chambers. Next to it stood a wooden shed housing a 200 HP Diesel engine, the exhaust gases of which were fed into the hermetically sealed chambers by means of pipes."* (p. 378)

The poor suitability of Diesel exhaust gases for mass murder being widely known and accepted, it is truly astonishing that Barbara Distel would choose this version without the slightest necessity. We remind our readers of the fact that most authors do not specify the type of engine (allegedly) used at Sobibór and that Raul Hilberg speaks explicitly of a gasoline engine.

Even the most primitive inventions of black propaganda are faithfully repeated by Barbara Distel, down to the silly story of the flock of geese that would be "excited so that their ear-splitting honks would drown out the screams of the victims" (p. 381). On p. 389 she refers to Ada Lichtman and writes:

> *"Each SS man had his own way of killing.* […] *They all waited for the arrival of the transports. Bredow was always on the lookout for young girls whom he would always whip sadistically. Gomerski*

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[59] B. Distel, "Sobibor", in: Wolfgang Benz, Barbara Distel (eds.), *Der Ort des Terrors. Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, Verlag C. H. Beck, Munich 2008.

> *killed the prisoners with a stick spiked with nails; Groth and Bolender had their dogs. When they said to a detainee: 'Ah, you don't want to work,' the dog ripped the victim to pieces."*

We can judge the level of German "Holocaust research" by this book.

2.3.19. Jules Schelvis (2008)

Ever since it first appeared in the Netherlands in 1993, Jules Schelvis' book *Vernietigingskamp Sobibór* has seen no fewer than eight editions. In 1998 it was translated into German,[60] and an English edition appeared in 2007.[61] The latest Dutch edition[62] was published in 2008. The various editions differ considerably in critical points. In the discussion below we will proceed as follows: Wherever the English edition agrees with the latest Dutch edition, we will quote from the English version or indicate the corresponding page number. In case of discrepancies we consider the latest published edition to be valid, as one may assume that it reflects the latest views of the author. In each particular case we will indicate what version the quotation was taken from.

Jules Schelvis' interest in Sobibór has a very personal and tragic background. On 1st June 1943 he was deported to that camp together with his wife Rachel and other relatives. They were part of a group of 3,006 Dutch Jews. Within a few hours of his arrival at the camp he was moved to the Doruhucza labor camp together with some 80 other detainees. After a two-year Odyssey through Poland and Germany, he was eventually liberated by French troops in the south German town of Vaihingen on 8 April 1945. He claims to have been the only survivor of his transport (p. 4).

With its vast bibliography and its wealth of footnotes, *Sobibór – A History of a Nazi Death Camp* formally satisfies all criteria of scientific work. In contrast to nearly all of his predecessors, Schelvis, in his description of the "extermination camp," turns out to be an intelligent pragmatist who throws out all manner of useless junk found in the traditional literature. By and large he dispenses with horror stories of the kind which immediately disqualify the tale of someone like Miriam Novitch in the eyes of a critical reader. His SS men do beat the Jews with whips and sticks when they do not work hard enough, but they refrain from sewing rats into their trousers, urinating into their mouths or

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60 Jules Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibór*, Metropol Verlag, Berlin 1998.
61 Jules Schelvis, *Sobibór. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, Berg Publishers, Oxford 2007.
62 J. Schelvis, *Vernietigingskamp Sobibór*, De Bataafsche Leeuw, Amsterdam 2008.

ripping babies apart. While the prisoners regarded SS man Bredow "as a violent person who ill-treated them incessantly" (German version, p. 299), they do not say – as Miriam Novitch does – that he had a daily quota of fifty detainees which he would kill with his gun.

When dealing with the accounts of eye witnesses, Schelvis takes care to discard all obviously incredible passages. Hence, he does devote a lot of space to Alexander Pechersky, the key witness, and lists the 1967 English translation of his 1946 report in his bibliography. On the other hand he carefully eliminates statements which would appear dubious to an attentive reader who knows the standard version of the history of Sobibór – such as Pechersky's bizarre description of the extermination process or his assertion that, as late as September 1943, a transport of new arrivals was exterminated every other day (cf. Subchapter 4.2.) – something which is anachronistic even from the point of view of orthodox historiography. In other words, Schelvis handles his witness accounts selectively in such a way that a reader who does not have access to the original sources does not learn about the absurdities contained in them.

This pragmatic approach also applies to Schelvis' estimate of the number of victims. In contrast to Barbara Distel and authors of her ilk, he does not stubbornly cling to the old figure of 250,000 victims, which has become untenable ever since the discovery of the Höfle message. While he still spoke of some 236,000 to 257,000 Sobibór deportees (who were all killed there except for a handful of them) in the German version, the 2008 Dutch version says:

> *"For many years it was believed that between 200,000 and 250,000 Jews were deported to the Sobibór extermination camp. New investigations have shown that the figure must be revised downward. The* [new] *figure is based on a radio message from Hermann Höfle, an SS-Sturmbannführer, who was one of the leading actors of Aktion Reinhardt in Lublin."* (p. 266)

The year 1942 saw deportations to Sobibór from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, from Slovakia, Germany (including Austria) and from the General Government. The English version of Schelvis' book has the following entries for the Jews deported to Sobibór from the areas mentioned:

Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia:	10,000 (p. 210)
Slovakia:	28,284 (p. 215)
Germany, incl. Austria	23,500 (p. 224)

On the subject of the General Government Schelvis does not provide figures of his own and simply quotes estimates of other authors (English version, pp. 225f). Since the total of deportees arriving at the camp in 1942 is known from the Höfle message, a simple subtraction tells us that – if Schelvis' figures are otherwise correct and complete – (101,370–(10,000+28,284+23,500)=) 39,586 Polish Jews must have arrived at Sobibór over the year of 1942.

Page 198 of the English version has the following list for the deportations of 1943:

– *Ostland* (Lida, Minsk, Vilnius):	13,700
– General Government:	14,900
– Holland:	34,313
– France:	3,500
– Skopje:[63]	2,382
Total:	68,795

Thus, Schelvis gives us the following grand total (English version, p. 198):

Table 1: Deportations to Sobibór Camp

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	*1942*	*1943*	*TOTAL*
Holland	–	34,313	34,313
Skopje	–	2,382	2,382
France	–	3,500	3,500
Ostland	–	13,700	13,700
General Government	39,586	14,900	54,486
Slovakia	28,284	–	28,284
Protectorate	10,000	–	10,000
Germany, incl. Austria	23,500	–	23,500
Grand total	*101,370*	*68,795*	*170,165*

We wish to point out that Schelvis' figure for the French Jews is higher by about 1,500 persons than the one given by Serge Klarsfeld in his standard work *Le Mémorial de la Déportation des Juifs de France*, which speaks of a total of 2,002 French Jews deported to Sobibór.[64]

[63] At the time Skopje belonged to Bulgaria.

[64] Serge Klarsfeld, *Le Mémorial de la Déportation des Juifs de France*, Beate and Serge

With respect to the Occupied Eastern Territories (German occupied areas of the Soviet Union) Schelvis relies exclusively on witness accounts. He believes that there were six transports and "possibly" a seventh and an eighth transport (p. 97f, English version). We may thus conclude that there is no documentary evidence concerning these transports – which does not necessarily mean, of course, that they did not take place. No one may doubt the presence of Alexander Pechersky and other Soviet Jews in Sobibór, even though the respective transport cannot be identified in documents, but one should note that A. Rutkowski speaks of only one train of deportees from Minsk which arrived at Sobibór on 19 September 1943 with 2,000 Jews on board, including Pechersky.[65]

On this basis we may surmise that Schelvis' figure of 68,795 Jews who came to Sobibór in 1943 – and thus his total of around 170,000 deportees – is too high and should probably by reduced by several thousand. On the other hand, there is no doubt that his order of magnitude is correct.

In order to prove that the deportees were actually gassed except for a handful of them, Schelvis has to show, first of all, that Sobibór was indeed equipped with homicidal gas chambers. Let us now examine how he approaches this problem in his chapter on "The Gas Chambers."

On the first four pages of this chapter he sketches the origins of the (alleged) Bełżec gas chambers on the basis of witness testimonies. He starts out with a statement made in 1945 by Stanisław Kozak, a Pole who claimed to have participated in the construction of the first gas chambers at Bełżec. According to Kozak it was a building 12 by 8 meters in size and some 2 meters high, subdivided into three rooms by wooden partitions (p. 97f., English version). Schelvis then quotes several witnesses and goes on to say:

> *"The first gas chambers at Sobibór were built to the same specifications as the original ones at Bełżec.* […] *A big engine, which was to produce the toxic gas, was picked up from Lemberg and connected to the pipelines. Erich Fuchs, who collected the machine, remembered* […]*"*

Klarsfeld, Paris 1978. Klarsfeld's book has no page numbers. In a "chronological table of the deportation trains," he mentions two transports from France to Sobibór, the first one leaving on 23 March 1943 and carrying 994 persons, the second leaving on 25 March and carrying 1,008 deportees.

65 A. Rutkowski, *op. cit.* (note 27), p. 27.

Then we have the statement made by E. Fuchs, a former SS man, during his interrogation at Düsseldorf on April 2, 1963 (p. 100f., English version).

This statement is followed by others made by former members of the Sobibór camp personnel in the 1960s, among them a statement by Erich Bauer made on 6 October 1965 during the Sobibór trial at Hagen. Schelvis comments on Bauer's explanations in the following manner:

> *"From his account it can be deduced that the gas chambers at Sobibór were indeed identical to those at Bełżec. Towards the end of April 1942 further trial gassings took place at Sobibór."* (p. 101, English version)

The witness with respect to these "trial gassings" is, once again, Erich Bauer. The major part of the footnotes in the chapter about the "gas chambers" refers to legal proceedings in Germany. It would not be possible to demonstrate any more clearly that the "evidence" for homicidal gassings at Sobibór was fabricated by the German judiciary decades after the war.

Schelvis is actually unable to refer to statements made by witnesses during or immediately after the war, because none of these witnesses have spoken of a gassing building subdivided into several rooms in which people were killed by engine-exhaust gas. If these initial witnesses had anything at all to say about the murder weapon, they spoke of entirely different methods, primarily chlorine or (in the case of Pechersky) a nondescript "black fluid" (cf. Chapter 3). The present-day version of the detainees being killed by means of engine-exhaust gases in a building with several gas chambers was proposed in 1947 by the "Main Commission for the Investigation of the German Crimes in Poland" not on the basis of witness testimony, however, but based on the Gerstein report *about Bełżec!* (Cf. Chapter 3)

At the very beginning of Schelvis' book, we have the following, truly astounding passage:

> *"Shortly after the liberation of Poland in 1944, a number of survivors gave statements about what happened in the camp, and the criminals who operated there. Still so traumatized by the torture they had endured, they referred to some of their torturers by name in relation to specific crimes which, years later, they felt less sure about. Some knew only first names. These testimonies should be regarded as contemporary documents rather than legal indictments where each and every comma and full stop or period must be in the*

> *right place. Despite their inaccuracies, they are of great value because they were given fresh from memory rather than being influenced by later writings or statements by others."* (p. 3, English version)

Without realizing it, Schelvis, in saying this, rejects outright the value of witness statements concerning Sobibór. If we accept the thesis that the witnesses for the prosecution, who had come forward as early as 1944 or shortly thereafter, no longer knew which SS-man had committed which (alleged) specific crime, how then can we ascribe any value at all to statements made during the Hagen trial, which took place in 1965-1966, i.e. over twenty years after the events? After all, the verdicts against the indicted SS-men, who had been accused of specific crimes, were based exclusively on eyewitness testimony. Everybody knows that human memory tends to become less and less reliable as the years go by.

There is yet another, very revealing aspect hidden in Schelvis' thesis that the declarations by the early witnesses are valuable because "they were given fresh from memory rather than being influenced by later writings or statements by others." If that is true, one may conclude that the witnesses who appeared at the trials of the 1950s and 1960s were indeed "influenced by later writings or statements by others." That this was actually the case is borne out by the fact that not one of the witnesses who testified in the immediate post war period spoke of a building in Sobibór which was subdivided into several chambers and was used to kill Jews by means of engine-exhaust gases.

In line with other orthodox historians, Schelvis states that the corpses of the Sobibór victims were unearthed and burned in the open from the fall of 1942 onwards. He obviously does not realize the enormous technical problems the open-air incineration of 170,000 corpses would have posed (cf. Subchapter 5.3). It is interesting to note that Schelvis, even in the 2008 Dutch edition of his book, does not refer in any way to the archeological soundings and digs carried out in the former camp by professor Andrzej Kola seven years earlier (cf. Sections 5.1.3., 5.2.3). It is simply inconceivable that Schelvis, a recognized expert on Sobibór, would have been unaware of such a fundamental study.

Jules Schelvis' book is undoubtedly the best which the defenders of the orthodox view about Sobibór have been able to muster, but then, at times, the best is not good enough. Just like his predecessors, Schelvis is unable to proffer even the shadow of a proof that the Jews deported to

Sobibór were killed in gas chambers in that camp – this is simply beyond the possibilities of any researcher, be he an honorary doctor of Amsterdam University or what have you.

Obviously, the revisionists must confront the question of what happened to the up to 170,000 Jews who were taken to Sobibór. The key to this mystery is supplied by Schelvis himself,[66] as we can see from the following extract taken from his chapter "Arrival and selection":

> *"The process following the arrival of a transport at the camp soon became routine.* […] *After exiting the sorting barracks, the men were separated from the women and directed to the undressing area in Lager* [camp] *2; the women to another part of the camp. Unless it had already been done at the platform, this was the point at which an SS man would give a short speech. Usually – until his transfer to Treblinka – it was given by Oberscharführer Hermann Michel. Dubbed 'the doctor' by the Arbeitshäftlinge* [inmate workers] *because of his habit of wearing a white coat, he delivered his speech in rapid German* […]. *Michel's words ran along the following lines: 'In wartime, we must all work. You will be taken to a place where you will prosper. Children and the elderly will not have to work, but will still be well fed. You must keep yourselves clean. The conditions under which you have travelled, with so many of you in each wagon, make it desirable that hygiene precautions are taken. This is why you will shortly have to undress and shower. Your clothes and luggage will be guarded. You must put your clothing into a neat pile, and your shoes must be paired and tied together. You must put them in front of you. Valuables such as gold, money and watches must be handed in at the counter over there. You must remember carefully the number the man behind the counter calls out, so that you will be able to retrieve your possessions more easily afterwards. If we do find any valuables on you after your shower, you will be punished. There is no need to bring a towel and soap; everything will be provided; there will be one towel for every two people.'* […]
>
> *Michel was so full of conviction when he delivered his speech, even as he was pulling the wool over the victims' eyes, that the Arbeitshäftlinge also dubbed him 'the preacher.' Sometimes he would make out* [sic] *that the camp was a transit camp, that the journey to Ukraine was only a matter of time, and that the Jews would even be*

[66] In a certain way Schelvis delivers this proof in his own fate, as Sobibór had been a mere transit camp for him.

granted autonomy there. Other times he would tell them they would all be going to Riga." (English version, pp. 69f.)

Soon after, Schelvis tells us, the deluded people would march into the gas chambers.

What was the use of this entire gobbledygook? Was it necessary to avoid attempts at breaking out? Such a thing would have been hopeless from the start, because the Ukrainian guards who "were, generally speaking, overzealous, displaying a fanatical loyalty to their duty as guards" and "often surpassed their German instructors in cruelty." They would "form a cordon to prevent the newcomers from escaping." (English version, pp. 34f., 62)

Was the speech needed to prevent any kind of resistance? Hardly, for the deportees were much too tired after the long trip and too scared to fight. Without fail, they would have obeyed any orders that would have been barked at them by the guards.

Then why harangue them? Why did the SS man tell them that Sobibór was a transit camp and that they would soon move on into Ukraine or to Riga?

Anyone in possession of his mental faculties can find the answer by himself.

2.3.20. Conclusions

The official version of the history of the camp, still in effect to the present day, was essentially defined by the 1947 report edited by the "Main Commission for the Investigation of the German Crimes in Poland": Sobibór was an extermination camp for Jews from various European countries. Except for a small number of "working Jews," the new arrivals were immediately killed by means of engine-exhaust gases in a "gassing building" subdivided into several chambers. The corpses were burned on pyres in the open. The number of victims amounted to some 250,000.

Since then, the Sobibór literature has, by and large, adopted this version, even though some authors, such as S. Szmajzner, claimed far higher numbers of victims. The only major revision on the part of any orthodox historian is due to Jules Schelvis. He reduced his figure to 170,000 when the Höfle message became known.

The attentive reader will have noticed that over a period of twenty years (between 1947 and 1967) not a single book, not even an article of any serious nature was written about Sobibór. Among novelists and his-

torians an interest in this camp increased only at the end of the 1970s. The reason for this phenomenon is obviously the increasing Jewish influence in the world. Its most noticeable characteristic has been the intensification of "Holocaust" propaganda. When we look at this literature, we see right away that the publications repeat over and over again a mass of unproven assertions, a never-ending line of the same horror stories and anecdotes, and promote to exhaustion the heroic tale of the uprising on 14 October 1943. Indeed, the available material does not provide the defenders of the "Holocaust" story with any more information than this.

The only work by any orthodox historian which commands a certain respect (in view of its impressive bibliography) is Jules Schelvis' *Vernietingskamp Sobibór*, but as far as the central question of this topic is concerned – the search for evidence of the mass exterminations – it is no better than the pitiable products of charlatans like Stanisław Szmajzner or Toivi Blatt. Like its predecessors, it provides not even a shred of forensic or documentary evidence for such mass exterminations and relies exclusively on testimony or on the "confessions" of defendants, which, on closer inspection, turn out to be useless.

2.4. A Revisionist Article about Sobibór

Aside from Thomas Kues,[11] the U.S. writer Paul Grubach has been the only revisionist to have seriously approached the problem of Sobibór before the publication of the present book. In August of 2009 he published an excellent article entitled "The 'Nazi Extermination Camp' Sobibór in the Context of the Demjanjuk Case."[67]

The starting point of Grubach's argument is a statement by Elie M. Rosenbaum, the head of the "Nazi-hunting section" of the American Department of Justice:

> *"Thousands of Jews were murdered in the gas chambers of Sobibór, and John Demjanjuk helped seal their fate."*

Grubach explains that there is no evidence for the existence of any gas chambers at Sobibór and that it is thus impossible to indict Demjanjuk

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67 Paul Grubach, "The 'Nazi Extermination Camp' Sobibór in the Context of the Demjanjuk Case," in: *Inconvenient History*, 1(2)(2009); www.inconvenienthistory.com/1/2/1908.

for having pushed even a single Jew into these phantom installations. Among others, he treats the following aspects of the question:

– The failure of demonstrating the existence of gas chambers by means of archeological investigations.
– The contradictions in the testimonies regarding the killing method.
– The contradictions in the testimonies regarding the number, the size, the structure and the capacity of the gas chambers.
– The contradictions in the testimonies regarding the disposal of the corpses.
– The wildly divergent figures given by the various authors and witnesses regarding the number of victims.

Grubach summarizes his findings very convincingly:

> *"As we have shown here, the traditional extermination story at Sobibór has no authentic war-time documentation to support it, nor does it have any forensic or physical evidence to prove it. It is based exclusively upon the testimony of former Sobibór inmates and the post war testimony of former German and Ukrainian soldiers who served at Sobibór.*
>
> *There are good reasons for even the most hardcore believer in the Holocaust to be very skeptical of the Sobibór extermination story. As the Scottish philosopher David Hume pointed out centuries ago, the veracity of human testimony is undermined when the witnesses contradict each other; when they are but few, or of a doubtful character; when they have an interest in what they affirm; when they deliver their testimony with hesitation, or on the contrary, with too violent asseverations, etc.*
>
> *As we have shown here, the 'eyewitnesses' to Sobibór do contradict each other; they are of a doubtful character, and they do have an interest in what they affirm. The German officials who 'confessed' to the existence of the Sobibór 'gas chambers' had a vested legal interest in promoting this falsehood. They could not do otherwise in the judicial system they were entrapped in. Former Sobibór inmates had a burning desire to see the Third Reich go down in defeat. For sure, former Sobibór inmate Zelda Metz admitted that: 'We* [prisoners] *all wanted to escape and tell the world the crimes of Sobibór. We believed that if the people knew about it, Nazi Germany would be wiped out. We thought that if mankind knew of our martyrdom, we would be admired for our endurance, and revered for our sufferings.' Many of these Jewish survivors from Sobibór put forth testi-*

mony that is truly doubtful, and they did have an interest in promoting horrendous atrocity stories about Sobibór. This would help to defeat and forever degrade their hated enemy, National Socialist Germany, and they would come away as heroes in the eyes of the world. These former Sobibór inmates were embroiled in the German-Jewish hatreds of the war, and their testimonies must be evaluated with this in mind."

2.5. Heinrich Himmler's Visit to Sobibór

Documentary evidence allows us to say that the *Reichsführer* SS, Heinrich Himmler, visited the Sobibór Camp on two occasions. The first visit – about which we know little more than that it was extremely short – took place on 19 July 1942.[68] The date of the second visit is not known precisely, although it did take place in March of 1943. On 13 April 1943 the head of SS and police of the Lublin district, Odilo Globocnik, noted in a letter to SS-*Gruppenführer* Maximilian von Herff that, on the occasion of his stay (in Lublin) in March, Himmler had inspected "installations of '*Aktion Reinhard*.'"[69] On the same date, a person whose signature on the corresponding document is illegible sent a letter to SS-*Obersturmführer* Kuno Ther saying, i.a.:[69]

"The Reichsführer SS, after visiting the Sobibór camp, basically approved the promotion of the deserving Führers [i.e. SS officers] *and men."*

Hence, Himmler's visit to Sobibór must have taken place in March of 1943. The document itself does not supply any more detailed information about the visit.

Orthodox historians do not get tired of claiming, on the basis of "eye witnesses" that Himmler attended a mass gassing of Jewish women and girls on the occasion of his second visit to Sobibór. The volume *Documents and Materials*, which appeared in 1947, has this to say:[70]

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68 According to the schedule for the visit, there was only a total of one hour and a half for Himmler to be taken from Chełm to Sobibór and to inspect the camp; www.holocaustresearchproject.org/ar/sobibor/docs/rfss%20visit%20programm.jpg.

69 Christopher R. Browning, "Evidence for the Implementation of the Final Solution: Electronic Edition," expert report introduced during the libel trial of D. Irving v. D. Lipstadt and Penguin Books, 1999; www.hdot.org/browning/#browning_553_n157

70 N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 199.

> *"Himmler visited Sobibór, as he did the other death camps. In his honor, 300 (other testimonies have 500) Jewish girls were gassed; they had been specially brought to the camp for this festive occasion. Himmler himself stood behind a little window and watched the girls as they were dying from the poison gas."*

The same volume contains the testimonies by Leon Feldhendler and Zelda Metz, who also speak of this non-event. Here is Feldhendler's account:

> *"A special event for the camp was Himmler's visit in March of 1943. Two hundred women had been brought in from Lublin for this day. They were locked up in a special barrack for two days, waiting to take part in a spectacle for the supreme henchman.* […] *The bath which was serving as a gas chamber had a little window on top through which Himmler could view with satisfaction the effect of a new gas."* (N. Blumental, *ibid*., p. 206)

Zelda Metz reports:

> *"Himmler came to Sobibór in late summer of 1943. In order to show him how efficiently the extermination camp was operating, 7,500 beautiful young girls were brought in from* [the Jewish camp on] *Lipowa Street and executed in front of him."* (*ibid*., p. 211)

While Leon Feldhendler has Himmler's visit take place correctly in March of 1943 and is happy with 200 women gassed for the occasion, Zelda Metz dates the visit to "late summer of 1943" and makes the number of the victims a full 7,500!

If we follow Toivi Blatt, the victims did not come from Lublin but from Włodawa. He writes:[71]

> *"SS-Oberscharführer Erich Bauer, in charge of the gassing process at Sobibór, concluded a demonstration gassing of over 300 specially selected young Jewish girls from the nearby city of Włodawa."*

Yet another version is provided by Moshe Bahir, according to whom the "several hundred" victims came neither from Lublin nor from Włodawa but from Trawniki.[72]

Nearly every book about Sobibór mentions Himmler's presence at the gassing of Jewish girls, although the dates and the number of victims vary. Claiming to quote from witness statements, B. Distel[73] and J.

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71 T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 12.
72 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 156.
73 B. Distel, *op. cit.* (note 59), p. 391.

Schelvis[74] give the date of the visit as 12 February 1943, although the documents cited have it take place in March. This matter is symbolic, showing as it does how the orthodox historians operate. The story of the *Reichsführer's* presence at a gassing of Jewish ladies also crops up in connection with Treblinka. The Polish Jewess Rachel Auerbach tells us:[75]

> *"It is said that on the occasion of his visit to Treblinka towards the end of February of 1943, a very special show was arranged for Himmler. A group of young women who had been specially selected for this event were herded into the 'bath house' – naked, so that the SS-Reichsführer might enjoy the view of their bodies – leaving it as corpses."*

It does not speak for the honor of orthodox historians that they accept such products of sick minds as historical truth.

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74 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 111.

75 Alexander Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka*, Holocaust Library, New York 1979, p. 48.

2.6. Sobibór's Claimed Number of Vicitms

Table 2: Victim numbers claimed for Sobibór

2,000,000	Zelda Metz,[76] Stanisław Szmajzner[77]
1,000,000	N. Blumental[78]
800,000	Kurt Ticho,[79] Ch. Engel and S. Engel-Wijnberg[79]
600,000	Yuri Suhl[80]
500,000	I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman[81]
*350,000	Erich Bauer, 1962[82]
300,000	Léon Poliakov[83]
250,000	*Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*,[84] Wolfgang Scheffler[85]
200,000	Raul Hilberg[86]
170,000	Jules Schelvis[87]
*110,000	Karl Frenzel, 1987[82]
*50,000 to 70,000	Karl Frenzel, 1966[82]
30,000 – 35,000	Jean-Claude Pressac[88]
*25,000 – 30,000	Hubert Gomerski, 1950[82]

* Victim numbers given by SS personnel formerly stationed at Sobibór

Table 2 is an incomplete list of the numbers of victims assigned to Sobibór by various witnesses and historians. As we have seen, Schelvis' figure of 170,000 corresponds to the maximum possible number of detainees *to have reached* Sobibór – but does not tell us anything about the ensuing fate of these deportees.

We will present our own estimate of the victims of Sobibór elsewhere in this book (cf. Subchapter 5.7).

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76 N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 210.
77 S. Szmajzner, *op. cit.* (note 28), p. 270.
78 N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 200.
79 Statement by Kurt Ticho (Thomas), ROD (Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, Amsterdam), c[23.62]09, p. 6.
80 Yuri Suhl, *Ed essi si ribellarono. Storia della resistenza ebraica contro il nazismo*, Milano 1969, p. 66.
81 Ilya Ehrenburg, Vasily Grossman (eds.), *The Black Book*, Holocaust Library, New York 1981, p. 443.
82 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 238.
83 Léon Poliakov, *Bréviaire le la Haine*, Calman-Lévy, Paris 1979, p. 387.
84 Cf. Subchapter 2.1.
85 Wolfgang Scheffler, *Judenverfolgung im Dritten Reich*, Colloquium Verlag, Berlin 1964, p. 40.
86 Raul Hilberg, *Die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden*, Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, Frankfurt 1986, p. 956.
87 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 62), p. 267.
88 Valérie Igounet, *Histoire du négationnisme en France*, Editions du Seuil, Paris 2000, p. 640.

3. Origins and Evolution of Claims about Sobibór

Józef Marszałek notes that the espionage service of the *Delegatura*, which was that branch of the Polish Government in exile in London during World War II which operated within Poland, and the intelligence service of the Polish National Army (the AK, or Armia Krajowa) "had a good knowledge of the Treblinka and Bełżec death camps, much less so with respect to Sobibór,"[89] which is to be understood mainly in a quantitative way. Bogdan Chrzanowski affirms that "the underground press wrote rather vaguely about another camp of immediate extermination, i.e. Sobibór, even though first indications had already surfaced in August of 1942."[90]

Wartime information about this camp was indeed sparse and vague from the first such item onward, which was written by Ruta Sakowska:[91]

> *"In early July of 1942, Oneg Szabat's*[92] *group managed to identify the location of the second extermination camp located in the General Government: Sobibór. The first news item about Sobibór – which went into operation in early May – was brought into the Warsaw ghetto by two couriers of the Dror,*[93] *'Frumka' Płotnicka und 'Chawka' Folman. In early June of 1942, on orders of the Dror, they went to the Lublin region, i.a. to Werbkowice near Hrubieszów, where there was a commune of Jewish youths. The two women arrived at Rejowiec on 6 June 1942. However, the Rejowiec Jews were*

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89 Józef Marszałek, "Rozpoznańie obózów śmierci w Bełżcu, Sobiborze i Treblince przez wywiad Delegatury Rządu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej na Kraju i Armii Krajowej," in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji zbrodni przeciwko narodowi polskiemu Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej*, Vol. XXXV, Warsaw 1993, p. 47.

90 Bogdan Chrzanowski, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w świetle polskich wydawnictw konspiracyjnych," in: *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historicznego w Polsce*, No. 1-2/1985, p. 103.

91 Ruta Sakowska, *Die zweite Etappe ist der Tod. NS-Ausrottungspolitik gegen die polnischen Juden gesehen mit den Augen der Opfer*, Edition Entrich, Berlin 1993, pp. 40f.

92 Hebrew for "Joy of the Sabbath," code name of a group of Jews dedicated to chronicling life in the Warsaw Ghetto, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oyneg_Shabbos_(group).

93 Hebrew for freedom, name of a group of socialist Zionists in the Warsaw ghetto.

no longer there, as they had been deported to the extermination camp in mid-May.

The following day the two young women reached Hrubieszów. On the way into town they met a column of several thousand Jews from Hrubieszów and its surroundings who were being herded to the station by the Germans.

A few days later 'Frumka' Płotnicka reported about this to Eliahu Gutkowski, the second secretary of the underground archives of the ghetto, who recorded the accounts of the two couriers: 'I almost fainted, the people marched in rows of four, more than 2,000 persons, men, women, and youngsters, no children. I noticed two or three children holding the hand of an adult. There was a deadly stillness in the ranks, people marched quietly, looking down with eyes that no longer saw anything…' This column was followed by a second group: old people and sick women, some eight to twelve people each on farm wagons; one could hear their subdued complaints and their prayers: 'Save us, oh Lord.' As 'Frumka' Płotnicka learned later, the children had been taken away from their parents and were taken 'to an unknown destination' in sealed [railway] *cars.*

The next day, the two liaison women were present at the station of the nearby town of Miąciń. And here, for the first time, they heard the name: 'Sobibór.' 'Frumka' Płotnicka told Eliahu Gutkowski: 'From morning till nightfall people arrived here with their wagons and their possessions. In the evening the Jews were herded into special cars, they could not take their possessions along […]. *The train left for 'an unknown destination.' There are rumors that the Germans had built another death camp at Sobibór, modeled on Bełżec.'*

'Frumka' Płotnicka died during the defense of the ghetto at Będzin (Bendsburg, Upper Silesia). 'Chawka' Folman survived and later published her memoirs in Israel."

On 1st July 1942 the journal *Polish Fortnightly Review* published an article which mentioned Sobibór in connection with the "destruction of the Jewish population" in Poland:[94]

"The German press reported that the ghetto had been transferred from Lublin to the village of Majdan Tatarski [Majdanek]*, but in fact almost the entire population was exterminated. For instance, it is generally known that a certain number of Jews from the Lublin ghet-*

[94] "Documents from Poland. German attempts to murder a nation. (5) Destruction of the Jewish Population," in: *Polish Fortnightly Review*, No. 47, July 1st, 1942, pp. 4f.

to were shut up in goods trucks, which were taken out beyond the town and left on a siding for two weeks, until all inside had perished of starvation. The majority of the Jews of Lublin were carried off over a period of several days to the locality of Sobibór, near Włodawa, where they were all murdered with gas, machine-guns and even by being bayoneted. It is an authenticated fact that Lithuanian detachments of shaulists,[95] *who have recently been brought into Poland, were used for these mass executions. The fetor of the decomposing bodies in Sobibór is said to be so great that the people of the district, and even cattle, avoid the place. One Pole working in Sobibór wrote a letter pleading to be granted a transfer elsewhere, as he could not remain in such conditions."*

A report dated 7 September contained this brief reference:[96]

"In spring the news came through that a new camp of tortures had been set up in Sobibór (Włodawski district). The winding up of the ghetto was expected already by the middle of April, and then, later, by the end of May. In June the rumor spread that it had been put off for some time. But the visit of Himmler to the General Government in the middle of July this year hastened the execution of the plan, and his former orders were even made stricter."

The newspaper *Rzeczpospolita Polska* wrote in its edition of 19 November 1942:[97]

"The Sobibór camp near Włodawa is temporarily not in operation but is being enlarged."

The first vague mention of the extermination method used at Sobibór – unidentified "gases" – appeared in an official report of the Ministry of the Interior of the Polish Government in Exile, dated 23 December 1942:[97]

"At that time – April/May – the first vague news about the camps of Sobibór, in the Włodawski district and Bełżec, in eastern Lesser Poland, reached Warsaw, indicating that there was mass poisoning with gases[98] *and assassinations with electric current of transports of hundreds of Jews who were moved there from the territory of western Lesser Poland.* […] *They are taken to three killing places,*

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95 Term for Lithuanian volunteers in the service of German armed forces during WWII.

96 "Report on conditions in Poland. Report received by the Polish government in exile in London on 27 November 1942. Annex No. 7. Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto," dated 7.IX.1942, p. 4. Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University, Box 29.

97 B. Chrzanowski, *op. cit.* (note 90), p. 103.

98 *gazami*

Treblinka, Bełżec and Sobibór, where the transports are unloaded, the condemned are stripped naked and murdered, probably with gases."[98]

In 1943 the Polish underground press published more news about the Sobibór Camp. The paper *Informacja Bieżąca* stated on 1st April:[99]

"The death camp of Sobibór has again been in operation since 10 March. At the moment, transports from Holland and France are arriving there. These Jews arrive in passenger trains and are convinced that they are to work in factories of the war industry further east. On Sunday, 14 March, Dutch Jews were even received at Sobibór by an orchestra; the next day, not one of them was alive."

A report of May-June of 1943 stated that, after the deportation of Jews to the work camps at Trawniki and Lublin, "women, old people and children were moved to Sobibór,"[99] which suggests that this camp was considered to be one not for general extermination but only for those unfit for work.

In the report of the *Delegatura* for the first three months of 1943 we read:[99]

"Some transports of Jews from France arrived during March of 1943. A train for Sobibór passed through the station of Radom on 3 March, on 6 March [there was a train] *at Częstochowa for Oświęcim* [Auschwitz]*, and on 11 and 18 March (train of 30 cars) for Sobibór."*

The *Informacja Narodowa* No. 3 dated 30 September 1943 reported that, out of the transports of Jews which had reached the camp between 19 and 25 September, "90% were killed and 10% sent to the camp at Trawniki."[99] In its No. 1 edition of 3 September the same paper had already written about "200 persons sent to the Sobibór death camp," which had been selected from Jewish transports directed from Byałistok to Trawniki on 15-21 August.[99] At Trawniki, after yet another selection, "old people, women, and children were sent to their death at Sobibór" on 27 September.[99]

An unknown "eye witness" composed a report on 1st November 1943 in which he said, among other things:[100]

"On the last day of the 'Aktion,' [campaign] *9 June* [1942]*, some 5,000 persons were assembled on the market square* [of Hrubieszów]. *The district supervisor appeared and carried out a selec-*

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99 J. Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 89), p. 46.

100 Abraham Silberschein, *Die Judenausrottung in Polen*, Geneva 1944, Vol. 5, p. 25.

tion according as he saw fit. The people he selected were allowed to remain in the town and work, the others were loaded on trucks, taken to Sobibór and executed there. (These Jews were sent to Sobibór because Bełżec was, by then, 'overcrowded.') Out of the 5,000 persons, 1,000 were moved to Sobibór."

In November of 1943, the underground press devotes a few lines to the revolt at Sobibór. *Informacja Bieżąca* No. 44 of 10 November states for example:[89]

"The Jews have destroyed the Sobibór Camp and escaped into the woods."

A furtive reference to Sobibór is made in the report from the *Delegatura* for November/December 1943:[101]

"The work camp at Lemberg with a few thousand Jews who still remained there was dissolved. This also applied to 2 other, smaller camps. This fact could not be prevented, although a Jewish group had destroyed the camp and the execution site at Sobibór – as had happened at Treblinka earlier on."

Marszałek stresses that these meager rumors did not provide any information on the organizational structure of the camp:[89]

"Hence one did not know anything about the layout of the camp, nor the kind of [supervisory] *personnel; there was no information about the Kommando that carried out the routine work for the operation of the camp, nor any details of the extermination method. Furthermore, there was no attempt at estimating the human losses."*

The situation was similar to that concerning the camps at Treblinka and Bełżec, about which the most absurd rumors were bandied about during WWII.[102]

Hence, practically nothing was known about Sobibór. This made the historical reconstruction of the camp particularly difficult, as we can see from this text written in 1945 by the *Polish War Crimes Office*, which attempted to give some kind of historical shape to the vague rumors:[103]

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[101] Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, *Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges*, Röderberg-Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1960, p. 366.

[102] Cf. in this respect: C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 47-69; C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 10, Engl. ed.), pp. 9-34.

[103] "Report by the Polish War Crimes Office, Dr. J. Litawski, Officer in charge, on the German crimes in Poland," 1945. AGK, MSW London [In the original, the name "London" is in Polish], 113, p. 626.

> *"The third torture place for Jews was the 'death camp' of Sobibór, near Włodawa on the river Bug, to the south of Brześć Litewski* [Brest-Litowsk]*, in the district of Lublin.*
> *This camp was used for the concentration of Jews during both the first and the second period of the liquidation of ghettos. In the first period – August 1942 – enormous masses of Jews from the General Government were brought to this camp to be destroyed in gas chambers. Besides Jews from foreign countries, especially from Low Countries and France, were brought there, who are given the assurance of being sent to factories in the Reich, but in fact share the fate of the Polish Jews in the gas chambers, whilst their luggage and other movables become a booty of the warders. In summer 1943 large numbers of Jews from the district of Lublin and especially from the neighbourhood of Włodawa and Hrubieszów are brought to Sobibór. In the first half of 1943, a group of 1,000 Jews were murdered in Sobibór who were employed in war factories and brought from the Warsaw ghetto. These people had been previously promised by the German authorities their lives would be spared in recognition of their war effort. During the same period thousands of Russian Jews were destroyed in Sobibór who had been deported in masses from Mohilew, Smoleńsk and Bobrujsk districts. In the second half of October 1943, a sedition broke* [out] *in the camp of Sobibór among several hundred of surviving Jews, who killed a number of hangmen, SS men and Ukrainians, burned down the barracks and escaped."*

This is a decidedly insipid "historical reconstruction," yet it entered the official report of the Polish government by way of the Nuremberg trial in an even more general form:[104]

> *"This camp was used for the concentration of Jews during the first and second extermination periods affecting the ghetto. Here, the Jews were killed in gas chambers. The foreign Jews, especially those from Holland and France, were brought to Sobibór under the pretext that they would have to work in factories in the Reich, and then executed. The high point of the executions was the year 1943. Thousands upon thousands of Jews were deported and killed in gas chambers."*

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[104] "The Polish Republic in the case against: 1. German war criminals; 2. Their corporations and organizations indicated under indictment No. 1 before the International Military Court," p. 42. This is the official report of the Polish government for the Nuremberg tribunal, document URSS-93.

At Nuremberg this passage was adopted in an even more succinct way by L.N. Smirnov, the Soviet prosecutor, who declared during the hearing of 19 February 1946 with reference to the official report of the Polish government:[105]

> *"*[…] *I call the attention of the Tribunal to Page 136 on the reverse side of the document book; this is from a report of the Polish Government, which shows that the Camp Sobibur*[106] *was founded during the first and second liquidation of the Jewish ghetto. But the extermination on a large scale in this camp really started at the beginning of 1943."*

In the years 1944-1946 witnesses still ascribed the most fanciful methods of killing to the alleged Sobibór killing installations. On 10 August 1944 Ber Moiseyevich Freiberg, a former Sobibór detainee, declared the following:[107]

> *"When a group of eight hundred people entered the 'bathhouse,' the door closed tightly.* […] *In a separate building, there was an electric machine which released deadly gas. Once released, the gas entered tanks, and from there, it came through hoses in the chamber to be asphyxiated* [sic]. *There were no windows in the building. A German, who was called the 'bathhouse attendant,' looked through a small glass opening on the roof to see if the killing process was completed. Upon his signal, the gas was shut off, the floor was mechanically drawn apart, and the corpses fell below. There were carts in the cellar, and a group of doomed men piled the corpses of the executed onto them. The carts were taken out of the cellar to the woods in the third camp. A huge ditch had been dug there, and the corpses were first thrown into it and then covered up with dirt. The people who delivered and disposed of the corpses were immediately shot."*

Alexander Pechersky a.k.a. Alexandr Peczorskij had this to say:[108]

> *"He was an old inmate who worked at sorting out the clothing of those who were killed. He was well-informed. From him we learned where our comrades had disappeared and how the whole thing operated. He spoke simply, as though it were a conversation about or-*

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105 Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal (subsequently quoted as *IMT*), Vol. VII, p. 576.

106 Phonetic transliteration of Sobibór.

107 I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *op. cit.* (note 81), p. 439.

108 A. Pechersky, *Revolt in Sobibór,* Yiddish translation by N. Lurie, Moscow, State Publishing House Der Emes, 1946. Reprinted in: Yuri Suhl, (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 20.

dinary matters, and we, the new arrivals who had lived through some unusual experiences ourselves, shuddered as we listened to his story.

'As soon as you were separated from them,' he said, 'they were taken to a second yard where everyone, without exception, must gather. There they are told to lay down their bundles and undress before going to the 'bath.' The women's hair is cut off. Everything is done quietly and efficiently. Then the bareheaded women, wearing only their undergowns, and the children go first. About a hundred steps behind them go the men, completely naked. All are heavily guarded. There is the 'bath'' he pointed with his hand, 'not far from where you see the smoke. Two buildings are standing there, one for the women and children, the other for men. I myself haven't seen what it looks like inside, but people who know have described it.

At first glance, everything looks as a bath should look – faucets for hot and cold water, basins to wash in… As soon as the people enter, the doors are clamped shut. A thick dark substance comes spiralling out from vents in the ceiling. Horrible shrieks are heard, but they don't last long. They are soon transformed into gaspings of suffocation and convulsive seizures. Mothers, they say, cover their little ones with their bodies.

The 'bath' attendant observes the entire procedure through a small pane in the ceiling. In fifteen minutes it is all over. The floors open up and the dead bodies tumble down into small wagons that are standing ready below, in the 'bath's' cellars. The full wagons roll out quickly. Everything is organized in accordance with the last word in German technology. Outside the bodies are laid out in a certain order. They are soaked with gasoline and set aflame. That is where they are burning.'"

In 1945 the Dutch Red Cross published a summary of the testimony given by Ursula Stern, deported to Sobibór on 9 April 1943:[109]

"There was a gas chamber which could hold 600 persons; the gas came into the chamber through showers; once the people were dead, the floor opened up and they fell through. Gassing of a group took about a quarter of an hour."

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[109] Het Nederlandsche Roode Kruis. Afwikkelingsbureau Concentratiekampen. *Sobibór.* 'S-Gravenhage, April 11, 1945, p. 11.

Chaim Engel, too, as reported by Jules Schelvis, declared in 1946 "that trap doors were located in the gas chambers through which the corpses would fall."[110] Another witness, Leon Feldhendler, stated:[111]

> *"The bath was arranged as if it were really a place to wash (faucets for the shower, a pleasant environment). The baths were places for gassing.*[112] *Five hundred persons were gassed simultaneously. Sometimes, a stream of chlorine would be released,*[113] *they were always trying out other gases."*

The literary elements of chlorine and the collapsible floor were then fused into a new version by the witness Zelda Metz, who asserted:[114]

> "[The victims] *went to the counter naked. There they deposited money, jewelry and valuables. The Germans gave them brass tokens or gave them numbers orally, so that, when they returned, they could claim the money and their affairs. Then they entered the barrack where the women's hair would be cut, and then into the 'bath,' i.e. the gas chamber. They were asphyxiated with chlorine.*[115] *After 15 minutes they were all asphyxiated. Through a little window,* [the Germans] *checked to see if they were all dead. Then the floor opened up automatically. The corpses fell into the car of a railway which traversed the gas chamber and transported the corpses to the oven. Before they were burned, their gold teeth were pulled out. The oven was an enormous hearth with an open-air grate."*

Murder by means of chlorine was also asserted by Salomea Hanel, who declared:[116]

> *"Out of the 3,000 persons, 7 women and 18 youths were selected for work, the others were sent to their death. There were barracks, one of them had 'cashier' written on it. The women were pushed to the 'cashier,' their heads were shaved, and then they were given tickets for the bath. Gestapo people told them that they all had to take a bath because they were full of lice. They were to put their shoes and clothes together and get a receipt in return. One time there was an incident because something had broken in the chamber. The people*

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110 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 82.
111 N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 204. The deposition dates from 1945.
112 *gazowniami*
113 *czasem puszczano prąd chlorku*
114 *Ibid.*, p. 211. This deposition as well dates from 1944 or 1945.
115 *dusili chlorem*
116 Wojewódzka Żydowska Komisja Historyczna w Krakowie (ed.), *Dokumenty zbrodni i męczeństwa*, Cracow 1945, p. 64.

> *who were moved out ran around naked and hid outside. The Germans killed* [them] *with chlorine."*[117]

If we follow Hella Felenbaum-Weiss, chlorine was used to kill the deportees during the journey:[118]

> *"The arrival of another convoy distressed me in the same way. It was thought to come from Lvov, but nobody knew for sure. Prisoners were sobbing and told us a dreadful tale: they had been gassed on the way with chlorine, but some survived."*

Stanisław Szmajzner, on the other hand, spoke of Zyklon B in 1996, as J. Schelvis tells us:[119]

> *"Szmajzner believed that the victims were initially killed by means of exhaust gases, but that Zyklon B was used later on."*

In his 1968 book *Inferno em Sobibor* Szmajner repeated this claim (cf. Section 2.3.5). An unnamed witness, however, speaks of victims "who were usually executed by means of electricity and gas."[120]

The story about the "little window in the ceiling" through which the man in charge of the gassing process would watch the agony of the victims and the tale of the collapsible floor of the gas chamber reappear in later accounts as well. In his memoirs, "written in about 1950" and published "in Tel Aviv in 1970," Moshe Bahir writes:[121]

> *"Lager* [camp] *3 was closed to all sides to the prisoners of Sobibór. It was impossible for us to see what was going on in that Lager because of the grove of pine trees which surrounded it. We saw only the roof of the 'bathhouse' which protruded through the trees. Thus we saw the murderous face of* Oberscharführer *Bauer, who used to stand on the roof of that building and peep through the little window into the death chambers.*
>
> *We all knew what was done inside the building. We knew that Bauer looked through the window in order to regulate the amount of death-gas which streamed through the ducts, which were in the form of an ordinary shower. He was the one who saw the victims suffocating from the gas that was showered upon them, and he was the one who ordered that the flow of gas be increased or stopped. And he was the one who ordered the victims in their final agony and in their death. At his order the machinery which opened the floor of the 'bath-*

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117 chlorkiem
118 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 50.
119 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 82.
120 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 269.
121 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 147.

> *house' was activated, and the corpses fell into small carts, which took them at first to mass graves and later, when time was short, to cremation ovens instead."*

Ada Lichtman, too, asserts that Bauer "supervised the executions from a roof window of the gas chambers"[122] Even as late as 5 June 1961, at the 65th hearing of the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem, the witness Ya'akov Biskovitz declared:[123]

> *"Yes, that is the fire pit in which the victims who were brought out of the gas chambers were burned. After some time, a buzzing sound would be heard, the floor opened up, and the victims fell into the deep hollow below and were conveyed in this little train into the pit where the eighty men of Camp 3 were working, and they burned the bodies."*

Bauer's presence on the roof ("to regulate the amount of death-gas") does not make much sense within the framework of Holocaust historiography, because the claimed engine allegedly producing the gas worked best only at a certain speed. In this sense, SS-*Unterscharführer* Erich Bauer declared on 2 April 1963:[124]

> *"On the suggestion of the chemist I set the engine to run at a certain number of revolutions, which would make acceleration unnecessary in the future."*

Perhaps for this reason Szmajzner later changed the "little window" into "a moveable skylight" for the introduction of Zyklon B (cf. Chapter 4, p. 83.), along the lines of the alleged model of the gas chambers in crematoria II and III at Birkenau!

The tale of the assassinations by means of an undefined "engine" was officially adopted only in 1947. During the Polish investigations on the Sobibór Camp the following was "ascertained:"[125]

> *"On the inside, this* [gassing] *building had brick partitions. It probably*[126] *held 5 chambers, which could accommodate a total of 500 persons. Killing was done with the exhaust gas produced by an engine set up next to the chambers and connected to them by pipes."*

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122 *Ibid.*, p. 56.

123 State of Israel, *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann. Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem*. Jerusalem 1993, Vol. III, p. 1184.

124 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 119.

125 Z. Łukaszkiewicz, "Obóz zagłady w Sobiborze," in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, Vol. III, Poznań 1947, p. 52.

126 *prawdopodobnie*

No witness statement described this killing method, though. It was, in fact, invented by the Polish investigators. The *Polish War Crimes Office* had already opted for one of the methods mentioned in the Polish underground press, the one using unspecified "gases," and applied it to the "gas chamber" installation. The Polish investigators themselves added the "exhaust gas produced by an engine," which they pulled out of the so-called "Gerstein report," as we have already made clear elsewhere.[127] Let us state here that, on 30 January 1946, the assistant general prosecutor of the French Republic, Charles Dubost, handed to the Nuremberg tribunal a file of documents, registered as PS-1553, which also contained a report written in French by Kurt Gerstein[128] and dated 26 April 1945.[129] This report, in which Gerstein describes an alleged visit of his to the Bełżec Camp, was not read in court, but another version of it, with the story of the gas chambers operating on the basis of a Diesel engine, appeared in the French newspaper *France Soir* on 4 July 1945 with the title "I have exterminated up to 11,000 people per day."[130] Furthermore, on 16 January 1947 a German translation of document PS-1553 was presented as Exhibit 428 during the Nuremberg trial of the physicians.[131]

Hence as early as the immediate post war years the story of the extermination of Jews at the Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka Camps was known widely enough to inspire the Polish investigators.

Another revealing aspect of what the investigators "established" is the fact that on the one hand they were ignorant of the story of the two alleged gassing buildings and on the other hand they claimed a number

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127 C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 70-76.

128 The German national Kurt Gerstein had joined the SS in early 1941, where he became a member of the Institute for Hygiene of the Waffen-SS, eventually serving as head of the technical disinfection services. At war's end he was arrested by the French, and in their custody he wrote several highly dubious and at times absurd "confessions" about mass murder scenes he claimed to have witnessed in the Treblinka and Bełżec Camps. Shortly thereafter he committed suicide… The importance of Gerstein's reports for mainstream Holocaust historiography on the Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka Camps is substantial; for a critical analysis see André Chelain, *Faut-il fusiller Henri Roques?* Polémiques, Paris, 1986. Editor's remark.

129 *IMT*, Vol. VI, pp. 332-334 and 363f.

130 G. Kelber, "Un bourreau des camps nazis avoue: 'J'ai exterminé jusqu'à 11,000 personnes par jour.'" *France Soir*, 4 July 1945, pp. 1f.

131 *Militärgerichtshof, Fall 1: der Ärzteprozeß*, Nuernberg, hearing of 16 January 1947, mimeographed transcripts, pp. 1806-1815; Staatsarchiv Nürnberg. A long extract from the document can be found on pp. 1808-1814; published condensed Engl. edition: U.S. Government (ed.), *Trials of War Criminals before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10*, Vol. I: "The Medical Case," Nuernberg, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 1949, pp. 865-870.

of gas chambers (5) which disagrees with the numbers usually given today for either of these buildings (3 and 6):[132]

> *"Within this building, three adjoining cells having a floor area of 4 × 4 meters were hermetically separated.* […] *It turned out that these gas chambers were too small, that the 'output' of the Sobibór Camp was too low. A construction crew from the Lublin base, under the technical direction of the accused L*[ambert] *tore down the old gassing building in part and replaced it by a new and larger* [massiv] *brick building with twice the number of chambers. The cells – each covering an area 4 × 4 and having an internal height of 2.20 m – were arranged on both sides of the building, either in such a way that they contained a central corridor or that they stood only in one row. Each of the cells could hold some 80 persons, if they were tightly packed. Construction work proceeded quickly within a few weeks, thanks to the use of Jewish detainees as laborers; now six chambers allowed killing 480 persons in one gassing operation."* (Emph. added)

Hence, according to today's orthodox view, there was no gassing building with *five* gas chambers. We should perhaps stress at this point that the second building equipped with six gas chambers measuring 4 × 4 m each could accommodate 1,200 to 1,300 victims according to Y. Arad.[133]

The description of the two gassing buildings set out in the reasoning of the Hagen trial sentence had nothing to do with witness accounts concerning Sobibór. It is not difficult to retrace its origins. The first building with its three gas chambers was copied from the account regarding Bełżec given by Stanisław Kozak to the investigating judge Czesław Godziszewski on 14 October 1945. We will discuss it later. Kozak declared that at the end of October of 1941 he was forced by the SS, together with some 20 inhabitants of the village of Bełżec, to work in the camp. (Although M. Tregenza tells us they were well-paid volunteers.[134]) Work began on 1st November. These Polish laborers built three barracks. The third one, the alleged extermination barrack, contained

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132 A. Rückerl, *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 163, 172f.

133 E. Kogon, H. Langbein, A. Rückerl *et al.* (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 40), p. 186.

134 M. Tregenza, *Das vergessene Lager des Holocaust*, in: I. Wojak, P. Hayes (Hg.), "*Arisierung" im Nationalsozialismus, Volksgemeinschaft, Raub und Gedächtnis*, Fritz Bauer Institut, Frankfurt a. M. 2000/Campus Verlag, Frankfurt a. M. 2000, S. 247f.; cf. C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 10, Engl. ed.), p. 43.

three rooms[135] which were later taken arbitrarily to be "gas chambers" – the witness' description evokes an entirely different picture, as we shall see in Chapter 8.

The second building at Sobibór with its three gas chambers on either side of a central corridor was clearly taken from the "Gerstein report," again referring to Bełżec:[136]

> *"In the bath itself, there were three chambers each to the right and left of a corridor, like garages, 5 × 5 m in size and 1.90 m high."*

Even J. Schelvis, in the section of his book which is dedicated to the "gas chambers," could not but describe those at Bełżec,[137] reproducing the drawings made by Eugeniusz Szrojt[138] and adding the captions "The first gas chambers at Bełżec, which also were the model for Sobibór"[139] and "The gas chambers after the reconstruction."[140] According to Schelvis "the first gas chambers at Sobibór were designed on the original pattern of Bełżec. The arrangement and the dimensions were identical."[141] Elsewhere he states that "the Sobibór gas chambers were identical to those of Bełżec."[142] We will later discuss the consequences deriving from this hypothesis.

The assertions made by the official historiography on the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór are thus completely unfounded not only with respect to documentary evidence, but also from the point of view of the statements made by the witnesses.

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135 The declaration by S. Kozak is shown in the book by C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 10, Engl. ed.), pp.45f.

136 Account by Kurt Gerstein dated 6 May 1945, PS-2170, p. 4.

137 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), pp. 113-119. Cf. Section 2.3.19.

138 Eugeniusz Szrojt, "Obóz zagłady w Bełżcu," in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, Vol. III, Poznań 1947, "Orientacyjny plan pierwszego budynku z komorami straceń w Bełżcu," and "Orientacyjny plan drugiego budynku z komorami straceń w Bełżcu," drawing outside of text, between pp. 40 and 41.

139 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 115.

140 *Ibid.*, p. 124.

141 *Ibid.*, p. 118.

142 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

4. Critical Analysis of Eye Witness Testimonies

4.1. Alleged Contacts with Inmates in Camp III

At Sobibór, in contrast to Bełżec and Treblinka, there were (supposedly) no survivors among the inmates working in the death camp proper, which is usually designated "Lager III" (Camp III) and described as "hidden in the thickness of the trees."[143] All first-hand accounts of the alleged killing installations derive from testimonies left by former SS or Ukrainian auxiliary camp personnel years or even decades after the end of the war. On the other hand we have a fairly large number of witness accounts from former Jewish inmates in other parts of the camp, some of whom divulge "knowledge," or rather hearsay, on details of the alleged mass killings.

The already mentioned Ya'akov Biskovitz (Jacob Biskubicz), born in the Polish town of Hrubieszów in 1926, is the only former inmate who claims to have seen the gas chambers with his own eyes.[144] On 5 June 1961 he testified at the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem:[145]

> *"Not everybody had the opportunity* [to see the killing installations]*, but I, by chance, did. By chance I was taken to bring a cart with a barrel of chloride. When I was passing by the two larger stores in Camp 2, I detached the cart and pushed it towards Camp 3. I was supposed to leave it near the gate, but I could not hold the vehicle back. The gate opened and it pushed me inside.*
> *Since I knew I would not get out alive from there, I began to run back at top speed and managed to reach my place of work without anyone noticing. I kept this a secret – I am stressing this – even from the inmates of the camp who worked with me. From a distance, I saw the pit and the hollow and the small train that carried the dead*

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143 From the testimony of Moshe Bahir, reproduced in M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 144.

144 According to Schelvis, an inmate named Chaim Trager (spelled Haim Treger by Novitch) "claimed to have seen all the goings-on in Lager 3 while building a chimney on a rooftop in that part of the camp." Curiously, Schelvis provides neither a quote nor a reference for this remarkable piece of testimony. J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 238.

145 State of Israel, *op. cit.* (note 123), Vol. III, p. 1188.

> *bodies. I did not see the gas chamber from the inside; I only saw, from the outside, that there was a very prominent roof, and that the floor opened and the bodies fell below.* […] *underneath the gas chamber, there was a hollow which already contained bodies."*

The problem with this description is obvious: no historian believes the gas chambers at Sobibór to have had collapsible floors, and therefore this testimony subsequently has dropped down the memory hole. In the 1980s writer Richard Rashke travelled to Israel to interview former Sobibór inmates for his book *Escape from Sobibór.* One of them was Biskovitz, who Rashke talked to in the presence of Israeli Holocaust historian Miriam Novitch.[146] Apparently not a single word was said about the event described above. Yet Biskovitz is not alone in claiming that "the floor opened up and the bodies fell below into the railway wagons." The same details appear in the testimonies of Alexander Pechersky,[147] Zelda Metz,[148] Ursula Stern,[149] Chaim Engel,[150] Dov (Ber) Freiberg,[147] and Moshe Bahir.[147] One might therefore assume that Biskovitz either did not keep his supposed observation a secret or that he was simply passing on rumors spread among the inmate population.

To the gas chambers with collapsible floors can be added the fantasies already mentioned in Chapter 3: the "thick dark substance […] spiraling out from the vents in the ceiling," suffocating the people inside the gas chamber, as mentioned by the leader of the October 14, 1943 uprising, Alexander Pechersky; and the "baths" described by Leon Feldhendler, Zelda Metz, and Salomea Hanel, where chlorine was used to kill the victims.

But where, we may ask, did the inmates' "knowledge" of the gas chambers originate, if, as Arad puts it, "nothing could be seen" from the outside, and the prisoners in Camp III "had no contact with those in the other parts of the camp"?[151]

Many of the eyewitnesses assert that the camp staff made substantial efforts to conceal the alleged true nature of the camp. According to Eda

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146 R. Rashke, *op. cit.* (note 39), p. 329.
147 Cf. Chapter 3, pp. 69, 69, 72.
148 Cf. Chapter 3, p. 71; already quoted in C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 10, Engl. ed.), p. 10.
149 Cf. Chapter 3, p. 70; declaration by Ursula Stern; Documentation of the "Joods Recherchewerk," April 11, 1945. SOBIBÓR. ROD, C [23.62]09, Verklaring 72, p. 2.
150 Engel "was under the impression that the bodies fell through trapdoors inside the chambers"; J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 68.
151 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 79.

(Ada) Lichtman, the SS kept up the transit camp "deception" even in front of the inmates:[152]

> *"The camp commander* […] *described the happiness awaiting those who left for the Ukraine. 'Life conditions and food are much better there than here… Certificates will be given to good workers, families will be united.' We were not allowed to express the slightest doubt."*

In a long interview made by Claude Lanzmann, Lichtman insisted that this alleged charade went on for the camp's entire period of operation:[153]

> *"They always thought that we did not know what was going on there. For example, there was an Oberscharfuehrer Stangl.* […] *And Stangl came and stood next to the window, here, at the shoemakers'* [where Ada's future husband worked]*, and always said: Oh, all of those you see here go through the… they change clothes, wash, put on clothes and go to the Ukraine. And you, once you finished your work, will get special certificates that you worked well, so that you will get good jobs there. And they are going today…"*

Dov Freiberg, a.k.a. Ber Moiseyevich Freiberg, arrived with one of the first transports in early May 1942. In 1987 Freiberg published a bulky autobiography in Hebrew, which was later translated into English as *To Survive Sobibór.* In it we read:[154]

> *"For some days we had hoped that they were still alive; we were still unable to fathom that we were actually in an extermination camp. Prisoners working in the forest said that they had heard the voices of people and children crying from within the forest, which we interpreted as evidence that they were still alive; only after some time did we understand that these were voices of people burying corpses…"*

According to Arad, Freiberg and his fellow inmates worked for two weeks only a few hundred meters away from the gas chambers without

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[152] M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 56. The witness Chaim Engel likewise claims that the Germans believed the detainees to be unaware of the (alleged) mass murder; Joshua M. Greene, Shiva Kumar (eds.), *Witness. Voices from the Holocaust*, Simon & Shuster, New York 2000, p. 154.

[153] Transcript of interview with Ada Lichtman, *Steven Spielberg Film and Video Archive at USHMM* (online: http://resources.ushmm.org/intermedia/film_video/spielberg_archive/transcript/RG60_5023/9D60DA93-2C5D-43A6-8365-A6F9AB822687.pdf), p. 39.

[154] D. Freiberg, *op. cit.* (note 58), p. 529.

realizing their existence.[155] One will, however, search through Freiberg's accounts in vain for an explanation of how exactly he and the other inmates came to this "understanding."

Freiberg stated in his Eichmann trial testimony that at the time he arrived in the camp "rumours were already circulating, but the people did not believe them," and that instead they were convinced that the deportees were sent "to the Ukraine for agricultural work." As can be expected, Freiberg portrayed this as a ruse:[156]

> *"They said that in two or three weeks' time we would be reunited with our families. But we saw their* [the deportees'] *personal effects, the following morning we were working with them* [the SS men]. *They* [the SS] *maintained that they distributed other clothes and that from Camp No. 3 trains were departing to the Ukraine."*

What Freiberg withheld from the court was the fact that he himself had seen SS men distributing clothes to detainees that supposedly were to be sent to the gas chambers. In an interview by Japanese journalist Aiko Sawada from 1999, Freiberg stated:[157]

> *"Another time some people received new clothes and were sent to the shower room. 'You will work for us in German factories, but first you are going to take a shower,' the German soldiers told them. Up to then they had been strict, but now they suddenly became friendly as they handed them clothes and told them that they could use the showers. I thought it very suspicious."*

Ada (Eda) Lichtman, who arrived at Sobibór in the middle of June 1942,[158] has made conflicting statements regarding when and how the inmates found out about the mass murder. In one version, an inmate working on top of a roof in Camp II observed dead people in Camp III that were being buried. The man became mute from shock but his brother somehow conveyed his story to the other Jews.[159] This took place either "a couple of days"[159] after Ada's arrival, or after "many days."[160] According to the other version:[161]

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155 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 79.
156 State of Israel, *op. cit.* (note 123), Vol. III, p. 1168.
157 Aiko Sawada, *Yoru no Kioku – Nihonjin ga kiita Horokōsuto seikansha no shōgen* (Memories of the night – Holocaust survivor testimonies told to a Japanese), Sōgensha, Osaka 2005, p. 303.
158 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 236.
159 A. Lichtman, *op. cit.* (note 153), p. 24.
160 *Ibid.*, p. 34.
161 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

> *"*[The Germans believed that] *we did not know what was going on here. And we had to pretend and act the role that we do not know.* […] *at the beginning I really didn't know. But then I knew very well, because one day while we were lined up in appell* [rollcall]*, we saw a fire, as big as the wall of a huge house, fire. And one felt the* […] *smell of burn… of burnt corpses. And we know*[sic] *it."*

As will be seen from our discussion in the next chapter about the beginning of cremations at Sobibór in early fall of 1942, this implies that it took the inmates three to four months before they realized that they were in a death camp!

Historian Arad contradicts both of Lichtman's versions, stating that "the truth of what was going on in Camp III became known to the Jewish prisoners in Sobibór at the beginning of June 1942," that is, more than a month after the camp began operating.[162] According to Arad this revelation came about thanks to the cunning inmate cook Hershl Zukerman (also spelled Cukierman):[163]

> *"I came up with an idea. Every day I used to send twenty or twenty-five buckets with food for the workers in Camp III.*[164] *The Germans were not interested in what I cooked, so once I prepared a thick crumb pie and inside I put the following letter: 'Friends, write what is going on in your camp.' When I received the buckets back, I found in one of them a piece of paper with the answer: 'Here the last human march takes place, from this place nobody returns. Here the people turn cold…' I informed some other people about the substance of this letter."*

In the Zukerman account found in the Novitch anthology the skilled cook turns the thick crumb pie into a "dumpling," and instead of the theatrical reply we get the curt "You shouldn't have asked. People are being gassed, and we must bury them."[165] Leon Feldhendler, elsewhere

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[162] In the account published by Novitch, Zukerman writes that it took him ten weeks to find out about the gas chambers (see p. 34). According to Schelvis (*op. cit.* (note 61), p. 232), Zukerman (here spelled Cuckierman) was deported with another 2,500 Jews from Nalenczow in May 1942. Thus the inmates in Camp I and II would have "learned" of the alleged gas chambers at the earliest in mid-July, not at the beginning of June.

[163] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 79.

[164] Regarding the number of detainees in Camp III several widely divergent estimates are given. In his Eichmann trial testimony Ya'acov Biskovitz gave their number as 80. Thomas Blatt estimates their number to a mere 30 man (*op. cit.* (note 56), p. 232). According to Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 79, on the other hand they numbered 200-300. Witness Chaim Engel states that "about fifty, sixty Jews" worked in Camp III; J. M. Greene, S. Kumar (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 152), p. 154.

[165] M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 107.

described as the leader of the camp underground,[166] and a certain Shlomo Goldstein are here revealed as the people to whom Zukerman confided the "substance" of the message. *Nota bene*: he did not show them the actual letter.

Zukerman was not alone in supposedly receiving messages smuggled out from Camp III. At the Eichmann trial Dov Freiberg affirmed that the inmates "had contact with Camp 3." In his 1987 book, however, he omitted to mention this. The above-mentioned Moshe Bahir tells us of letters even more remarkable than the one mentioned by Zukerman:[167]

> *"Sometimes we would find notes stuck to the sides of the empty buckets that were brought back from the gate. In these notes the men who worked at burning the bodies described what went on in Lager No. 3. One note told of a bloodstain which could not, by any means, be cleaned or scraped from the floor of the gas chamber. Finally, experts came and determined that the stain had been absorbed into the chamber's floorboards after a group of pregnant women had been poisoned and one of them had given birth while the gas was streaming into the chamber. The poison gas had mingled with the mother's blood and had created the indelible stain. Another note said that, one day, the workers were ordered to replace a few floorboards because several fragments of ears, cheeks and hands had become embedded in them."*

Thanks to these letters the inmates in the other parts of the camp "all knew what was done" in Camp III despite the fact that, as noted by Bahir himself, "it was impossible […] to see what was going on in that Lager"![168] Bahir's description of the gas chambers (cf. Chapter 3, p. 72.) bears a strong resemblance to that of Biskovitz, with Erich Bauer portrayed as looking down into the gas chamber (in singular) through a "window," regulating the amount of "death-gas" showered on the victims, and starting, once all inside were dead, the machinery opening the gas chamber floor, thereby making corpses fall into "small carts" transporting them to the mass graves.

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166 "The leading figure in the circle of those with ideas for resistance was Leon Feldhendler […] a former head of the *Judenrat* in the Żołkiewka ghetto"; Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 299.

167 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 148.

168 *Ibid.*, p. 147.

Why would the inmates in Camp III have misinformed Bahir and the other Jews in Camp I and II about the appearance and functioning of the gas chambers?

Another recipient of smuggled-out letters was the young Stanisław Szmajzner who migrated to Brazil after the war, where he published an account of Sobibór in Portuguese and also appeared as a witness in the extradition trials against Franz Stangl and Gustav Wagner. Szmajzner claims that a friend of his working in Camp III named Abrão (Abraham) bribed the Ukrainian guard Klat to deliver messages for him. One of them describes the killing process in detail, with the victims being murdered with exhaust gas from "a large Diesel engine" (cf. Section 2.3.5). While the victims are gassed, dragged out from the chambers and thrown into "immense ditches," the SS "monsters" are "delirious with happiness, as if they were at the opera."[169]

Abrão provided his friend with the following information in a later letter:[170]

> *"The manner through which the Jews were exterminated – asphyxiated by the combustion gases of a Diesel engine – had been abolished. They* [the Germans] *had also modified the bathroom-slaughterhouse and they had closed the hole in the wall through which went the exhaust-pipe of the motor which had been taken away. Besides, they had installed a moveable skylight*[171] *in the ceiling of the death shed. As they did not think one 'bathroom' was enough, the Nazis had erected another, which already obeyed the above-mentioned specifications.* […] *Abraham went on to explain that, to direct the massacre, a chief of operations had already been appointed, the cruel Bauer. His main activities were those of checking, through the skylight, the exact moment when the shed was filled to saturation. At that moment he issued an order, and the door was hermetically closed. Next he opened the skylight, threw a can of gas on the compact mass of condemned people, and closed it again. The gas was the deadly Zyklon B, conceived in laboratories in Germany with the only aim of answering to a demand from the genocidal murderers to discover a product which would kill more quickly."*

This means that the camp now had two gassing installations, both of them containing a single gas chamber into which Zyklon B was

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169 S. Szmajzner, *op. cit.* (note 28), pp. 152f.
170 *Ibid.*, pp. 190f.
171 Evidently meaning a skylight that can be opened.

dropped through a "moveable skylight." The problematic nature of this account is obvious. Not only the number of buildings and individual gas chambers, but also the alleged murder weapon clashes violently with the established historiography, which has it that Kurt Gerstein's supposed mission to replace the engine-exhaust gas used as killing agent with hydrogen cyanide "did not bring about any changes in the gassing system in the Operation Reinhard death camps."[172]

The presence in the witness accounts of the communications discussed above poses an important question regarding the veracity of the testimonies: If the mass gassing allegation is indeed true, why are the contents of the supposed letters from Camp III either inconsistent with the official narrative as established at the Sobibór trials or plainly absurd? It may be worth noting in this context that Jules Schelvis, in the most complete historiographic work to date on the Sobibór Camp, does not devote a single word to these letters.

4.2. Alexander Pechersky, the Main Witness

Alexander Aronovitch Pechersky (1909 – 1990), the leader of the successful uprising in Sobibór, is one of the stars of the history of the "Holocaust." He is the protagonist of a number of movies about the uprising, among which we have Jack Gold's *Escape from Sobibór* (1987) and Claude Lanzmann's *Sobibór, 14 octobre 1943, 16 heures* (2001).

Alexander Pechersky was drafted into the Red Army in June 1941 as a sergeant and was promoted to lieutenant in September of the same year. A month later he was taken prisoner by the Germans. After a failed attempt to escape he was deported to Borisov in May 1942 and then to a work camp at Minsk. On 18 September 1943 he was loaded onto a train together with all other Jews held at that camp. On 23 September he arrived at Sobibór, where he remained until the uprising on 14 October. The Jews who succeeded to escape split into various groups. On 22 October Pechersky's group encountered a unit of Soviet underground fighters and decided to join them.

An investigation into Pechersky's fate after that date yields the most astonishing contradictions. The Russian edition of *Wikipedia* tells us:[173]

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[172] Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 104.
[173] http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Печерский,_Александр_Аронович

> *"After the liberation of Byelorussia,*[174] *Pechersky was suspected of treason and assigned to a disciplinary battalion. The commander of that battalion, Major Andreyev, was so moved by Pechersky's account that, in spite of the prohibition to leave the territory of the unit, he allowed Pechersky to travel to Moscow and to depose before the commission investigating the misdeeds of the German-Fascist intruders and their helpers. Being members of the commission, the writers Pawel Antokolskij and Wenjamin Kawerin heard Pechersky's account. On that basis they published an article entitled* Wosstanje w Sobibore *(Uprising at Sobibór).*[175] *After the war, this text was incorporated into the famous collection* The Black Book. […] *In 1948, during the course of the political persecution of so-called 'unpatriotic cosmopolites,' he lost his job. For the following five years he could not find employment and depended on the support of his wife."*

However, in a conversation with another Sobibór detainee, Thomas (Toivi) Blatt, which took place in 1979 according to T. Blatt[176] and in 1980 according to the English edition of *Wikipedia*,[177] Pechersky says nothing about the disciplinary battalion. Instead he maintains that he suffered a serious wound in his leg during action in August of 1944 and was awarded a medal for bravery on that occasion.[178] He was, however, not able to enjoy this for any length of time, because, as he tells us:[179]

> *"I was thrown into prison for many years. I was considered a traitor because I had surrendered to the Germans, even as a wounded soldier. After people from abroad kept inquiring about me, I was finally released."*

The assertion that Pechersky was treated as a traitor because of his capture by the Germans also figures in the French edition of *Wikipedia*, which, moreover, wrongly states that Pechersky appeared as a witness at Nuremberg.[180]

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174 The northwestern part of the Soviet Union south of the Baltic states is referred to at times as White Russia (literal translation into English), Byelorussia (Russian name), Byelorussian SSR (political unit of the USSR), or Belarus (today's name of the independent country).

175 A footnote informs us that this article appeared in No. 4/1945 of the magazine *Znamya*.

176 T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 121.

177 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Pechersky

178 T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 123.

179 *Ibid.*, p. 124.

180 http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Petcherski

The story of Pechersky's "many years" of incarceration does not stand up to critical scrutiny. If his capture by the Germans had been considered to constitute treason, he would obviously have been judged and incarcerated immediately after he rejoined the Red Army. It is absolutely incredible that he would have been given a medal for being wounded, would have been allowed to testify before a commission, would have been permitted, in 1946, to publish an account of Sobibór, only to be then imprisoned "for many years" for having surrendered to the Germans in 1941.

In contrast to Pechersky himself, the English entry on *Wikipedia* gives precise dates for the time of his alleged imprisonment:[177]

> *"During Stalin's political witch hunts of 1948 Pechersky was fired from his job and imprisoned along with his brother. Only after Stalin's death in 1953 and mounting international pressure for his release was he freed."*

This wording suggests that Pechersky was jailed because of alleged anti-Soviet activities as part of the campaign against "cosmopolitanism," which began at that time, but it contradicts Pechersky's own presentation. Moreover, the German edition of *Wikipedia* states unmistakably:[181]

> *"He* [Pechersky] *entertained a correspondence with many survivors of the camp who lived in the West. In 1948 these letters led to his dismissal* [from his post as a music teacher] *because of 'relations with imperialist states.' He was not arrested, but could not exercise his profession for five years, having to restrict himself to occasional jobs."*

In her article on Sobibór published in 2008, which discusses Pechersky in some detail, Barbara Distel, too, makes no mention of his imprisonment by the Soviet authorities for any reason. She merely states that life was "difficult" for the former participants in the uprising once they had returned to the USSR.[182]

We thus arrive at the inescapable conclusion that Pechersky invented the story of his "many years" of incarceration in the Soviet Union in order to decorate himself with the halo of a double martyr who not only survived a "Nazi death camp" but also Stalin's dungeons. This in itself is enough to make him a con-man, and we have reason enough to be very suspicious of his Sobibór tales as well.

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[181] http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Petscherski

[182] B. Distel, *op. cit.* (note 59), p. 402.

The Russian *Wikipedia* entry on Pechersky tells us that the magazine *Znamya* published the article entitled "Wosstanie w Sobibore" (Uprising at Sobibór) by the writers P. Antokolskij and W. Kawerin in its 4/1945 issue. The article is based on Pechersky's deposition before the "commission investigating the misdeeds of the German-Fascist intruders and their helpers." Pechersky's account was presented in the third person. The famous propaganda writers Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman included the article in the manuscript of their *Black Book*, which, however, could never be published in the USSR because the censor's office had seized and destroyed the printing plates just prior to the date of the planned publication of the book. It was only in 1980 that a Russian language edition of the *Black Book* was published in Israel.[183] A year later an English translation appeared in New York.[184]

In 1946 a version of Pechersky's account, four times as long and written in the first person, was published by the Moscow publishing house Der Emes in Yiddish under the title *Der Uifstand in Sobibór*. Pechersky, although of Jewish origin, did not speak Yiddish, and so his Russian report was translated into the Yiddish language by a certain N. Lurie. *Der Uifstand in Sobibór* was translated into English in 1967.[108]

A comparison of the latter two versions of Pechersky's account shows that their contents are essentially identical. Two differences are worth being mentioned:

– According to the former version, later integrated into the *Black Book*, a train with 2,000 future victims arrived at Sobibór "nearly every day,"[185] whereas the trains of death, according to the 1946 version, operated only every other day.[186]
– In the first version, Sobibór is said to have existed for one year at the time of Pechersky's arrival, with a total of 500,000 victims.[185] According to the second version, the camp had been in existence for a year and half by September 1943; no total number is given for the victims, but if there was a trainload of victims every other day and if they were killed on arrival with only a handful of exceptions, then the number of those killed must have amounted to some 550,000 persons.

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183 Source: http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ilja_Grigorjewitsch_Ehrenburg
184 I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *op. cit.* (note 81), the paper by P. Antokolskij and W. Kawerin, "Revolt in Sobibór," is on pp. 427-445.
185 *Ibid.*, p. 443.
186 A. Pechersky, *op. cit.* (note 108), p. 19.

For the following analysis we will use as a basis the (long) 1967 English version "Revolt in Sobibór."

Pechersky's report is full of outrageous lies. He starts out by saying that he and his fellow deportees, during their train ride of four and a half days from Minsk to Sobibór in a hopelessly overcrowded car (p. 18), "were not given any food, not even a drink of water." Under such circumstances the better part of the deportees would have died of thirst on the way, but Pechersky does not mention a single death – even "two-year-old Nellie" had survived, although she would be killed on the spot as soon as she arrived at Sobibór (p. 21). As the Germans immediately selected a portion of the new arrivals – Pechersky among them – for work in the carpentry shop, it would obviously have been totally counter-productive for them to save a few buckets of water in exchange for the loss of valuable hands. On the other hand, if the death of the detainees had been their objective, they could simply have left them in the overcrowded cars without any water for a little longer. In that case all they would have had to do was to bury the corpses; no "extermination installations" would have been needed.

Right after his arrival Pechersky learns from "a short stocky Jew" that a mass annihilation of human beings is going on at Sobibór:

> *"I noticed, to the northwest of us, gray columns of smoke rising and disappearing in the distance. The air was full of the sharp smell of something smoldering.*
> *'What's burning there' I asked.*
> *'Don't look in that direction,' the Jew replied, 'your comrades' bodies are burning there, the ones who arrived together with you.'*
> *I almost fainted. He continued: 'You are not the first and not the last. Every other day, a transport of 2,000 arrives here, and the camp has been in existence for nearly a year and a half.'"* (p. 19)

Hence, even as late as September 1943, 2,000 Jews were murdered at Sobibór every other day (=1,000 per day). On the following pages Pechersky goes on to mention the arrival of new transports of victims. Looking at the matter from the point of view of the official version of Sobibór, we have here a blatant anachronism:

According to Jules Schelvis, there were six, possibly eight transports to Sobibór from the Soviet territories then occupied by the Germans, with Pechersky's being number two; the first one had left Minsk on 15

September.[187] Apart from these Soviet Jews, Jews from Holland, France, the General Government, as well as from the city of Skopje were taken to Sobibór in 1943.[188] The last transport from Holland departed on 20 July 1943,[188] the last one from France on 25 March 1943,[189] and the only one from Skopje on 30/31 March 1943.[190] Deportations from the General Government ended in June of 1943.[191] In other words, between 21 July and 14 September not a single transport reached Sobibór. This fits in very well with the fact that Himmler had decreed on 5 July that the "Sobibór transit camp […] is to be converted into a concentration camp" (cf. Chapter 2, p. 21).

What, then, was the origin of the victims mentioned by Pechersky's anonymous witness, those victims of whom "every other day, a transport of 2,000" had been arriving until 23 September? Here should be mentioned in passing that Pechersky still maintained in 1966 that the number of Sobibór victims amounted to at least 500,000, and that following his own arrival in Sobibór no less than 18 convoys with a total of 36,000 people reached the camp.[192] According to J. Schelvis, however, only 4-6 convoys, carrying at most 10,700 deportees, followed after Pechersky's arrival.[193]

If we follow Pechersky, we learn that, according to his informer, the mass murder was not carried out with engine-exhaust gases at all, but by means of a "thick dark substance" which came down spiraling from the holes in the roof of the death chamber (cf. Chapter 3, p. 69). There are more absurdities which the Jewish Soviet officer asks his readers to believe:

– Whenever people in Camp III are led to the death chamber, which is disguised as a "bath," three hundred geese that were kept in the yard "were chased around so that their honking would drown out the shrieks of the people" (p. 25).
– Pechersky learns from his friend Ber Feinberg, a Warsaw hairdresser, that formerly a train of ten cars filled "with clothing, shoes and sacks of women's hair" left Sobibór every day for Germany (p. 27).

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187 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 218-220.
188 *Ibid.*, p. 198.
189 *Ibid.*, p. 218.
190 *Ibid.*, p. 226 (note 5).
191 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 62), p. 263.
192 Reuben Ainsztein, *Jewish Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Eastern Europe*, Paul Elek, London 1974, p. 917, note 1.
193 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 218-220.

– Pechersky befriends an eighteen-year-old German Jewess named Luka who emigrated to Holland in the 1930s together with her parents. Even though she speaks only German and Dutch and he only Russian, they have extensive conversations in private. Luka tells him that she works in the yard. Through the cracks in a wooden fence "one can see the naked men, women, and children as they are led to Camp III" (p. 32). Luka also admits to Pechersky that, when she was eight years old, she was tortured by the German police who wanted to know the hiding place of her father, a communist, who was being sought. However, she did not succumb to the torture and did not squeal (p. 36).
– After their escape from Sobibór, Pechersky and his companions stop somewhere to the west of the Bug River near a farm. There they learn that the Germans in that region have set up a camp "where people were turned into soap" (p. 55). The tale of human soap has long since been abandoned by official historiography, but in the post war years it was a set piece of anti-German horror stories.

The most enlightening passages of Pechersky's report, however, are those dealing with the 14 October uprising itself. In order to understand the situation, we must remember the following: Pechersky tells us that, while he was at Sobibór, the camp held 600 (male and female) Jewish detainees (p. 29). They all are claimed to know that the Germans have already killed hundreds of thousands of their brethren. Every day they are being manhandled and ill-treated (24 September "passed more or less 'smoothly.' Only fifteen of us received twenty-five lashes with the whip, each for not displaying enough zeal in our work," p. 22). Each one of these Jews is fully aware of the fact that upon the dissolution of the camp he will be eliminated as an undesirable witness. Under these circumstances the detainees have nothing to lose, and the Germans must reckon any day with an attempt at an uprising, all the more so as the Jews are far from being defenseless: during the preparation of the revolt Pechersky advises Baruch, his co-conspirator, that he ought to "gather about seventy sharp knives and razors," (p. 34) and at the carpentry shop the workers have hatchets at their disposal.

A mere handful of SS men were facing these 600 desperate Jews who were boiling with rage and with the desire to take their revenge and who were, at least in part, armed with knives and hatchets. While the SS

have some helpers (Pechersky wrongly calls these guards "kapos"[194]), they cannot rely on them in any way. "We have privileges, but when the time comes to liquidate the camp, we'll find ourselves standing next to you. They will kill us too. That is clear," the Polish "kapo" Brzecki allegedly tells Pechersky (p. 38).[195] In other words, the guards can join the Jews at any time against the SS guards. Under those circumstances one would assume that the SS would be at high alert all the time – but that is the very thing that does not occur, according to Pechersky. Pechersky explains to his men:

> *"My plan is as follows: first we must do away with the officer group that administers the camp. Naturally one by one, and without the slightest sound."* (p. 41)

That is exactly what happens:

> *"Unterscharführer Ernst Berg rode up to the tailor's shop, as was arranged beforehand, dismounted from his horse and left it standing with the reins hanging down. From what I learned later, this is what happened inside: When the Unterscharführer entered, everybody rose as usual. Shubayev (Kalimali) walked over to the edge of the table. In the corner, near one of the table's legs, lay a hatchet wrapped in a shirt. The Unterscharführer removed his belt together with his holster and pistol and laid them on the table. Then he took off his jacket. Juzef, the tailor, immediately came over with the uniform and began to take the fitting. Senie moved up to the table to be able, if necessary, to grab the pistol. Juzef turned the German around with his back to Shubayev, explaining that he did so in order to get a better light on the uniform. At that moment, Shubayev clouted the Hitlerite on the head with the flat side of the hatchet. He let out a frightful scream. Outside, the horse quivered and pricked up its ears. The second blow silenced the Hitlerite for good.* […] *Ten minutes later, the chief of the guards, Oberscharführer Erbert Helm,*

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194 The "kapos" were recruited from among the detainees. As the Sobibór detainees were all Jewish, so were the kapos, obviously. Y. Arad writes: "In charge of each team was a capo, who was one of the prisoners. […] In Sobibór, the camp elder, who was called 'chief kapo,' was Moshe Sturm, nicknamed 'The Governor.'" (Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 107). The Ukrainian and other guards from Eastern Europe who served at Sobibór and in other camps are generally labeled "Trawniki men" in the literature. Pechersky does not give any numbers of guards. According to the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* (*op. cit.* (note 14), p. 1330), there were "between 90 and 120 Trawniki men" at Sobibór.

195 The literature about Sobibór does not mention the presence of Polish guards at that camp. In his report Pechersky apparently replaced *Ukrainian* guards by *Polish* ones in order to conceal the fact that certain Soviet citizens had voluntarily cooperated with the Germans.

> *entered the tailor shop. He never came out again. He was waylaid by Senie as soon as he crossed the threshold. At exactly four o'clock, as had been arranged beforehand, Oberscharführer Goettinger, the chief of Camp III, entered the shoemakers' shop. Arkady Vaispapir was repairing a stool. Grisha was standing near the door. The chief executioner was in a happy mood. 'The sun is shining, it is warm, good,' he babbled on. 'Are my boots ready?' 'Here, please,' Jakub said, handing him the boots, 'try them on.' 'Hey, you, Jakub,' the Oberscharführer went on, 'five days from now, I will be going to Germany. You must make a pair of slippers for my Frau. Remember that.' 'I hope your Frau will be satisfied,' Jakub replied. At this moment, Arkady brought the hatchet down on his head.* […] *At four thirty, Brzecki and his group returned from the Nord-Camp. Just then, Unterscharführer Haulstich appeared in the yard. Shloime ran up to him.*
>
> *'Unterscharführer,' he said, 'I don't know how to continue with the dug-outs. The people are standing around doing nothing.' The Unterscharführer started walking towards the barracks.* […] *In the meantime, the Unterscharführer was taken care of inside. Shloime himself had finished him off."* (pp. 45 – 49)

Is this report believable? Our answer is: Yes, absolutely so; it is the only believable part of Pechersky's account.

From German documents we know that the uprising was successful. Eleven SS guards and two non-German helpers were killed and 300 Jews managed to escape. This was possible only if the SS neglected to take even the most elementary precautions, because it did not even consider the possibility of an uprising. If, however, Sobibór was an extermination camp where a horrifying number of Jews had been murdered, where the Jewish workforce were facing death at any time and were whipped all along, one would have had to reckon permanently with a revolt. Thus, the absolutely hare-brained behavior of the SS who practically asked to be killed, as Pechersky describes it, proves that Sobibór was, instead, a camp where conditions may have been tough, but where the lives of the detainees were not in constant danger and where they were not continually ill-treated. Thus, the only credible portion of Pechersky's account belies the legend of "Sobibór, the extermination camp." It takes but a minimum of common sense to recognize this.

We come to the same conclusion when we look at Miriam Novitch's book, in which Pechersky gives us a condensed version of his 1946 re-

port: He tells us that the guards, at tattoo every night, had to hand in the clip of five cartridges which came with the rifle each of them had been issued[196] – but in a real extermination camp the camp administration would have made sure that all guards remained armed to the teeth 24 hours a day.

We wish to add that, according to a deposition made by the former police captain Erich Wullbrandt in Braunschweig in 1961, some of the Jews who had escaped returned *voluntarily* to the camp on the night of the uprising.[197] If this is true – and we see no reason why it should not be – we would have here a further proof of our assessment.

4.3. "The Most Conclusive Evidence"

In a note to his 1997 book *From the Ashes of Sobibór,* Thomas Toivi Blatt, the key witness of the German Demjanjuk trial, makes the following admission:[198]

> *"The most conclusive evidence that something murderous was taking place in Lager III was the fact that no-one ever came out alive, but such evidence was purely circumstantial. The Nazis made it difficult to collect any direct evidence of what was widely known throughout the camp."*

As will be shown below, this "evidence" is not only "purely circumstantial," but also fundamentally flawed.

Let us for the sake of argument assume that the alleged mass killings really took place. What, then, would the inmates working outside of Camp III have been able to observe of the extermination process? Schelvis gives us the following answer:[199]

> *"They would have heard the agonizing cries and screams of the victims; they also caught glimpses, through holes in the fence, of naked people going through the 'tube.' Then there was the stench of decomposing bodies, and later still the tall flames of the fires, all of which pointed to the fact that people were being murdered there."*

To this can be added the supply of vast amounts of firewood for the cremations, the cutting of the hair of the female victims, the noise com-

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196 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 95.
197 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 176, 193 (note 9).
198 T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 56), p. 232, note 7.
199 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 68.

ing from the gassing engine, and the fact, mentioned by Blatt, that "no-one ever came out alive" from Camp III. But do these observations really point unequivocally to the "fact" of mass gassings? Are all of them even reliable?

Let us begin with the "agonizing cries and screams." Needless to say, such sounds do not prove murder, only the expression of fear, and may have come from people who merely *believed* that they were about to be gassed. This sort of reaction was observed by an American in the liberated Belsen camp in 1945:[200]

> *"An American relief worker who had not worked at Belsen could not understand why 'it was difficult to get many of these people to take a steam bath voluntarily.' Many of the women especially, Marvin Klemme noted, 'would let out such screams as they were led into the place, or as the steam was turned on, that one would have thought that they were entering a slaughterhouse.' Eventually, 'a Jewish doctor explained that some of this fear resulted from a sub-conscious feeling that they were about to enter some kind of torture chamber."*

Eye witnesses and mainstream Holocaust historians both assert that the screams soon ceased because the victims were suffocated, but would not likewise the screamers have fallen silent (at least to the degree that they could not be heard from a certain distance), if they suddenly discovered that they were not in a "death chamber" but rather in an ordinary bath? Here we may also recall Freiberg's statement that "voices of people and children crying" were heard by some inmates "from within the forest" and were interpreted as evidence that the deportees were still alive, until Freiberg and his fellow inmates somehow realized that they were the voices of the men in the burial detail. But could the voices of adult males really be mistaken for children's cries?

The cutting of women's hair, rather than indicating mass killings, in fact works against the official hypothesis. Or are we to believe that the SS deliberately created a bottleneck in the extermination process just so that they could collect around 100 kg of hair per transport,[201] corresponding in value to only a minute fraction of the money, gold and other valuables confiscated from the deportees? Indeed, the haircutting on-

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200 Ben Shephard, *After Daybreak. The Liberation of Bergen-Belsen 1945*, Schocken Books, New York 2005, p. 148.

201 Cf. *Treblinka Flyer Sources*, Note 7; online: http://archive.li/9WDno.

ly makes sense as part of a delousing operation. Likewise, the undressing of people does not imply murder.

What about the noise from the supposed gassing engine? As seen above, the earliest eyewitness accounts asserted that the alleged victims were killed using chlorine (Feldhendler, Metz, Hanel) or an unidentified gas or substance (Pechersky, Freiberg's 1944 account). This can only mean that those witnesses *did not* connect the alleged gassings with the sound of an engine.[202]

The railroad employee Jan Piwonski, when interviewed by Claude Lanzmann in the 1970s, stated that he had clearly heard the sound of a diesel motor from inside the camp.[203] Diesel engines, especially those of an older type, produce a characteristic knocking sound which makes them distinguishable from petrol engines.[204] As already mentioned, the exhaust gas from diesel engines is not feasible as a weapon for mass murder.

In his book Freiberg recalls the acoustic impressions of his first night in Sobibór thus:[205]

> *"We sat on the sand, under the roof, waiting for the unknown. No more children crying, no more women sighing. Complete silence, as if no one was there. We heard only the hum of a motor that operated nonstop, accompanied by the croak of frogs, a sound that was somehow both monotonous and terrifying."*

Interestingly, later in the book Freiberg describes how, while being led to the haircutting barrack near Camp III where he and other inmates were to work, "only the monotonous hum of the generator and the sound of the crickets could be heard."[206] Curiously, the former SS Hubert Gomerski testified that the camp only had one generator,[207] which was located in Camp I, i.e. the other end of the camp, but he also mentioned that "in the gas chamber there was a light, which was powered

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202 Many years after the war Ada Lichtman insisted that she had not heard the sound of an engine; A. Lichtman, *op. cit.* (note 153), p. 24.

203 Transcript of the Shoah Interview with Jan Piwonski. Translation by Erica Booth, Volunteer-Visitor Services, May 2008, available at http://resources.ushmm.org/intermedia/film_video/spielberg_archive/transcript/RG60_5031/2ED4B8F9-C263-4A75-AD79-9C05BB0D486C.pdf

204 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diesel_engine

205 D. Freiberg, *op. cit.* (note 58), p. 190.

206 *Ibid*., p. 249.

207 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 113; according to Blatt, Sobibór was equipped with "an excellent lighting system in and around the camp which had an independent generator"; T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 14.

by the [gassing] engine,"[208] a statement which means that there indeed was a generator located in Camp III. Treblinka eyewitness Jankiel Wiernik speaks of a "power plant" located alongside the gas chambers in that camp, housing "a motor taken from a dismantled Soviet tank" which, besides acting as the killing agent, supplied the camp with electricity.[209] It is thus fully possible that inmates heard the sound from an engine used to generate electricity (or possibly a water pump engine) and then ascribed to it a false, homicidal origin.[210]

Observations of flames likewise do not prove mass killings. As will be further discussed in the next chapter, a certain percentage of the deportees died either in the camp or on their way to it. It is likely that sooner or later their corpses were burned for hygienic reasons.

While mainstream Holocaust historians have it that the cremation of victims at Sobibór began in early autumn 1942 (cf. Section 5.2.2.), there are witnesses contradicting this, such as Moshe Bahir, who describes his arrival at the camp as follows:[211]

> *"Behind the fence were huge piles of bundles and various personal belongings, flames of fire and pillars of smoke which arose from within the camp and, with their flickering light, tried to brighten the evening twilight, and, above all, the smell of charred flesh which filled the air."*

The witness claims to have arrived to Sobibór on April 20, 1942,[212] just a few days after the camp opened, and would therefore have been unable to observe either flames from cremation pyres or huge piles of personal belongings. Freiberg, who arrived some weeks later, writes on the other hand that Sobibór "looked like a big farm where everything appeared normal."[213]

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208 J. Schelvis, *ibid.*

209 C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 70-73.

210 One should recall here that, although situated adjacent to Sobibór station, the distance from the camp site to the actual village of Sobibór was about 4 kilometers. The nearest village, Żłobek, was located 3 kilometers to the west. Moreover, the area containing the camp site, the station, and a saw mill was situated in the middle of a forest. It is therefore possible that the camp was not linked to a power station, or, if it was, the capacity of the line may well have been too low for the needs of the camp. It is further unlikely that the camp was connected to a local water supply system.

211 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 143.

212 Bahir's testimony from the Eichmann trial on the other hand states that he arrived even earlier, on March 20, 1942 (State of Israel, *op. cit.* (note 123), session 65). Bahir is clearly not confused about the year, as he gives an account of Himmler's visit at "the end of July" (actually August 15), 1942.

213 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 73.

As will be further discussed in the next chapter, the cremation of hundreds of thousands of corpses on pyres would have required vast amounts of firewood. However, most eyewitnesses appear completely unaware of such a fuel supply. There is even confusion as to what kind of fuel was used. The witness Kurt Thomas (alias Kurt Ticho) testified that the corpses were burnt "with the help of firebombs, wood, and coal."[214] In another account, published in Novitch's anthology, Thomas mentions only coal as fuel.[215]

Many of the witnesses describe a stench supposedly emanating from decomposing corpses. It is a well known fact among police and people working in the field of forensics that the odor of putrefying corpses, which appears during the bloat stage of decomposition and is caused by the release of gases such as cadaverine und putrescine, is "terrible" and overwhelming.[216] In the case of open or shallow mass graves, the smell can spread over large areas, depending on weather and wind conditions. American journalist Elizabeth Neuffer has described a visit to a mass grave in Bosnia thus:[217]

> *"You could smell the mass grave at Cerska long before you could see it. The sickly, sweet smell of the bodies came wafting through the trees lining the dirt track up to the grave."*

In this case the mass grave contained only a few dozen corpses.[218] It seems highly doubtful that the inmates at Sobibór would have been able to determine by their olfactory senses alone if the decomposing bodies causing the stench numbered a few dozen, hundreds, thousands, or tens of thousands. In this context it is worth noting that the odor of decomposition is extremely persistent and may linger for months or even years after the disappearance of soft tissues or the removal of the decomposing corpse(s).[219]

Finally we come to the "evidence" that "no-one ever came out alive." The problem of this argument becomes evident by even a curso-

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214 "mit Hilfe von Brandbom[b]en, Holz u. Kohle"; Statement by Kurt Ticho (Thomas), ROD, c[23.62]09, p. 4.

215 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 78.

216 Cf. Alan Gunn, *Essential Forensic Biology*, 2nd ed., Wiley-Blackwell, New York 2009, p. 23.

217 Elizabeth Neuffer, *The key to my neighbor's house. Seeking justice in Bosnia and Rwanda*, Picador, New York 2002, p. 215.

218 "U.N. Starts Digging Up Mass Grave in Bosnia," *The New York Times*, 10 July 1996, p. 6.

219 Linda L. Klepinger, *Fundamentals of forensic anthropology*, John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken (NJ) 2006, p. 119.

ry glance at the various maps of Sobibór. The most "correct" map,[220] drawn by Bill Rutherford in 2002 and partially based on air photos, shows that the northern, eastern, and western borders of the vaguely trapezoidal Camp III area hardly could have been observed from other parts of the camp. This means that deloused deportees could have left Camp III unnoticed by inmates in Camp I and II. This also makes sense from a hygienic-prophylactic viewpoint, as naturally one would seek to avoid contact between deloused deportees and the potentially louse-carrying inmates of Camps I and II. Interestingly, the Rutherford map shows a sort of passage leading from the northeast corner of Camp III through the forest in the general direction of the main railroad.[221]

4.4. The Alleged First Gas Chamber Building at Sobibór

The findings of the Hagen trial verdict regarding the first gas-chamber building at Sobibór are summarized as follows by Rückerl:[222]

> *"About 500 m to the west of this chapel* [near the main railroad] *the pioneering commando erected the gas-chamber building: a small solid building with a concrete foundation. The inside of this building was divided into three adjoining gas-proof cells measuring 4 × 4 m. Each cell was equipped with an air-raid shelter door in each of the opposite external walls, one for entrance to the cell, one for pulling out the corpses."*

Rückerl adds that the gassing engine was placed in a special annex (*Anbau*) according to the Holocaust historiography to this building.

According to Yitzhak Arad:[223]

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220 Online: www.deathcamps.org/sobibor/pic/bmap21.jpg

221 It should be pointed out here that the trains bound for the east may have departed from the main railroad, rather than the sidespur leading into the camp. According to Jan Piwonski, who worked at the Sobibór station, the Chełm-Włodawa line saw little traffic, and thus such embarkations were feasible; Jan Piwonski, op.cit (note 203). The 1942 timetable of the railways in the General Government shows that there were four trains per day on this line, in each direction; cf. *Kursbuch Polen 1942 (Generalgouvernment)*, Verlag Josef Otto Slezak, Vienna 1984, p. 118.

222 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 163.

223 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 31. Arad's description is apparently based on that of Adalbert Rückerl, who in turn is reiterating and quoting the 1966 verdict from the Hagen Sobibór trial; cf. A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), 163

> *"The first gas chambers erected in Sobibór were in a solid brick building with a concrete foundation. They were located in the northwest part of the camp, more isolated and distant from the other parts of the camp than in Bełżec. There were three gas chambers in the building, each 4 × 4 meters. The capacity of each chamber was about two hundred people. Each gas chamber was entered through its own separate door leading from a veranda that ran along the building. On the opposite side of the building, there was a second set of doors for removing the corpses. Outside was a shed in which the engine that supplied the carbon monoxide gas was installed. Pipes conducted the gas from the engine exhaust to the gas chambers."*

The reader of this unambiguous description may get the impression that the eye witness testimonies concur on the characteristics of this building. Let us therefore take a look at the actual statements left by those who in their work as members of the camp staff supposedly observed it on repeated occasions or on a daily basis.

As the first commandant of Sobibór, Franz Stangl was present during the camp's construction and the beginning of the alleged gassings. Since he was transferred to Treblinka in early September 1942, he would not have been able to observe the second phase gas chambers, thus excluding the possibility of confusion between the two buildings. When interviewed by Gitta Sereny in a Düsseldorf prison in 1971, Stangl, as we have already said, recalled that the first gas-chamber building "was a new brick building with three rooms, three meters by four."[224] This is also consistent with a statement made by Stangl two years earlier, which describes the same building as a "stone construction."[225]

The former SS-*Unterscharführer* Erich Fuchs, who supposedly installed the gassing engine, testified:[226]

> *"Upon my arrival at Sobibór I found near the station an area with a concrete structure and several permanent houses."*

It is apparent from the context that the "concrete structure" is identical with the alleged gas-chamber building. One notes that, while Stangl places the gas-chamber building a considerable distance from the rail-

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224 G. Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, Vintage Books, New York 1983, pp. 109f.

225 Statement made by Stangl in Duisburg on 29 April, 1969, ZStL-230/59-12-4464; quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 33.

226 Statement made by Erich Fuchs in Düsseldorf on 2 April 1963, ZStL-251/59-9-1785; quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 100.

way station and isolated "back in the woods,"[227] Fuchs claims the same installation to have been located in an area "near the station" together with other buildings. This contradiction, however, is small compared to that revealed by the testimony of alleged "Gasmeister" Erich Bauer:[228]

> *"The gas chamber was already there, a wooden building on a concrete base about the same size as this courtroom, though much lower, as low as a normal house. There were two or three chambers, in front of which there was a corridor that, from the outside, you accessed via a bridge."*

Thus the witnesses disagree on the very construction material of the first gas-chamber building! How do mainstream Holocaust historians handle this glaring contradiction? As seen above, Arad simply ignores the statement of the key witness Bauer, while combining the descriptions of Stangl and Fuchs into "a solid brick building with a concrete foundation." Schelvis, on the other hand, finds it necessary to confront Bauer's testimony. In the German edition of his Sobibór book, published in 1998, we read:[229]

> *"Bauer was mistaken about the wooden building. It was a solid brick house."*

For some reason, however, Schelvis had completely changed his mind about this issue by the time the English language edition of the same book appeared in 2007. In this we read:[230]

> *"Because he* [Fuchs] *had put into place so many installations over the course of time, he did not remember that the first gas chambers at Sobibór had been constructed of wood."*

Consequently, the Bauer who erred in his recollections was turned into Bauer the reliable eye witness:[231]

> *"From his account it can be deduced that the gas chambers were indeed identical to those at Bełżec* [i.e. constructed of wood]*."*

Schelvis suddenly also discovered that the fact of the first gas-chamber building having been constructed of wood was a key factor behind its replacement with the second phase gas chambers:[232]

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227 G. Sereny, *op. cit.* (note 224), p. 109.
228 Erich Bauer in Hagen on 6 October 1965; StA.Do-X'65-176, quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 101.
229 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 119 and p. 120, note 285.
230 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 114, note 17.
231 *Ibid.*, p. 101.
232 *Ibid.*, p. 103.

> *"After a few months it became apparent that the gas chambers at both Bełżec and Sobibór needed to be replaced. The timber walls had become tainted with the sweat, urine, blood and excrement of the victims. The new gas chambers were to be brick-built, more durable, and support a larger capacity."*

Such is the arbitrary nature of mainstream Holocaust historiography! As could be expected, the reader of the English edition is not made aware of this 180 degree change, and no explanation is given of the reason behind it. Likewise, Schelvis never addresses the most crucial question raised by the eye witness accounts: how could it be that Stangl and Bauer, two men who both should have been intimately familiar with the gas-chamber building, produced such divergent testimony?

A most revealing insight into the artificial nature of the "gas chamber" observations is provided by the Ukrainian auxiliary Mikhail Razgonayev. In his interrogation of 20-21 September 1948 Razgonayev related how he was detached from the Trawniki training camp to Sobibór in May 1942, where he served as a guard until July 1943. Thus, he was present during the first as well as the second phase of the alleged extermination activity. His description of the killing installation is unusually detailed:[233]

> *"The gas chamber, or as it was termed for camouflage: 'bath-house,' was a stone building punctiliously isolated by a system of barbed wire fences from other parts of the camp and hidden by young trees, saplings in particular, from the view of the huts, 'dressing rooms,' so that the people who were in the 'dressing rooms' would not be able to see what was happening at the 'bath-house.' The 'bath-house' was distant from the 'dressing rooms' so that the cries emerging from the gas chambers, when the people realized that they had been tricked and were persuaded that they had been brought there not to bathe but for their destruction, could not be heard.*
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> *In the building with gas chambers there was a wide corridor, on one side of which were 4 chambers. In the four chambers the floor, ceiling, and walls were of concrete; they had 4 special shower-heads*

[233] Interrogation of Mikhail Affanaseivitch Razgonayev in the city of Dniepropetrowsk on 20 & 21 September 1948. Online: www.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/camps/aktion.reinhard/ftp.py?camps/aktion.reinhard//sobibor//razgonayev.001

> *that were intended not to supply water, but for the entry of exhaust gases, through which the people in the chambers were killed.*
> *Each chamber had two doors: internal on the corridor side through which the people would enter the chamber and external that opened outwards and through which the bodies would be removed.*
> *The doors – the internal and the external – were closed hermetically and fitted with rubber strips that did not allow the gas to escape from the chamber.*
> *Behind the rear wall of the building was located on a base, under an awning, a strong motor that would begin to work the moment the chambers were full and the doors were closed hermetically.*
> *From the motor led a pipe that went through the ceiling of the building corridor with the gas chambers. From the pipe would emerge into each chamber a metal pipe, ending with a shower head that was used in bath-houses for the supply of water. Through this system the exhaust gases from the motor would be led into the chamber."*

Razgonayev's layout of the building – a small number of chambers placed in a row – corresponds to that commonly alleged for the first gas-chamber building, although the number of chambers, four, is not mentioned by any other witness, either in connection with the first or the second building.[234] In the long interrogation protocol there is no mention whatsoever of the gas-chamber building being replaced or enlarged, yet the witness states that the Ukrainian guards were posted along the way to the gas chambers, and he even affirms:[233]

> *"During the time of my service as a guard and afterwards as an chief guard at the Sobibór camp, I saw the process of extermination of people with my own eyes."*

As we later learn that Razgonayev was promoted to chief guard (*Oberwachmann*) in December 1942, this statement implies that he performed guard duties in Camp III before as well as after the supposed reconstruction of the gas chambers. How it was possible for him to forget about this crucial event becomes even more inexplicable by the fact that Razgonayev mentions other construction work carried out in June-July 1942, in which he himself participated as a carpenter.

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[234] There can be no doubt that Razgonayev is speaking of four chambers in total, as later in the interrogation he mentions that the funneling of victims into the gas-chamber building "would continue until all 4 chambers were full."

The eye witnesses' claims regarding the first (trial) gassing are even more fraught with contradictions. Stangl describes the ostensible event as follows:[235]

> *"*[…] *one afternoon Wirth's aide, Oberhauser, came to get me. I was to come to the gas chamber. When I got there, Wirth stood in front of the building wiping the sweat off his cap and fuming. Michel told me later that he'd suddenly appeared, looked around the gas chambers on which they were still working and said, 'Right, we'll try it out right now with those twenty-five work-Jews: get them up here.' They marched our twenty-five Jews up there and just pushed them in, and gassed them. Michel said Wirth behaved like a lunatic, hit out at his own staff with his whip to drive them on. And then he was livid because the doors hadn't worked properly."*

In a statement from April 1969, Stangl further mentioned what allegedly had happened to the victims of this first gassing:[236]

> *"I think the bodies were buried near the brick building* [i.e. the gas chambers]. *No grave had been dug. I am certain that the bodies were not naked, but were buried with their clothes still on."*

Fuchs, however, had quite a different story to tell of the first gassing in his testimony:[237]

> *"Following this* [the installation of the gassing engine]*, a gassing experiment was carried out. If my memory serves me right, about thirty to forty women were gassed in one gas chamber. The Jewish women were forced to undress in an open place close to the gas chamber, and were driven into the gas chamber by the above-mentioned SS members and by Ukrainian auxiliaries.* […] *About ten minutes later the thirty to forty women were dead.* […] *I packed my tools and saw how the corpses were removed. The transportation was done with a lorry trail* [sic] *that led from the gas chambers to a remote plot."*

Thus, while Stangl has it that the victims numbered 25, were almost certainly male (since they constituted a construction commando), and were buried with their clothes still on near the gas-chamber building, Fuchs maintains that they were between 30 and 40, female, undressed before the gassing, and subsequently interred in a "remote plot." More-

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235 G. Sereny, *op. cit.* (note 224), pp. 113f.

236 Statement made by Stangl in Duisburg on 29 April 1969, ZStL 230/59-12-4464/65; quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 101.

237 Quoted in Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 32.

over, Fuchs lists a number of SS men as being present,[238] but mentions neither Wirth nor Oberhauser, despite the fact that SS-*Sturmbannführer* Wirth was the responsible inspector of the Reinhardt camps. This omission becomes even more glaring when Wirth's alleged display of anger is considered. The testimonies of Stangl and Fuchs are therefore completely at odds with each other regarding this singular event.

Another Sobibór SS man, Heinrich Barbl, further adds to the confusion surrounding the trial gassing:[239]

> *"Red Cross nurses accompanied the selected women, who were transported by bus. They assisted with the undressing."*

It seems more than a little strange that the SS would make the Red Cross privy to a top-secret extermination process, especially since, according to Stangl, Wirth feared that the victims "might have been spotted by someone outside the camp."[240]

A further small but nonetheless important contradiction concerns the exterior doors of the alleged gas chambers. According to Schelvis, at the time the second phase gas-chamber building was constructed, Wirth ordered new gas chamber doors that were hinged, so that the corpses of the victims would no longer block the exterior doors.[241] The witness Hödl spoke of the new gas chamber doors as "trapdoors" (*Klapptüren*) "which would be raised after the gassing."[242] This implies that the doors to the first gas-chamber building opened to the sides, as, needless to say, one would not have constructed doors that opened inwards.

As already mentioned, mainstream Holocaust historians assert that the second chamber building at Sobibór used the second phase building at Bełżec as a model and that the two buildings in fact were constructed by the same people (Hackenholt and Lambert). According to the witness Stanisław Kozak, all doors in the *first* gas-chamber building at Bełżec "opened toward the outside."[243] When it comes to Bełżec's *second* gas-chamber building, however, key witness Rudolf Reder has it that the corpses were pulled out through doors that "were slid open with wooden handles."[244]

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238 Thomalla, Stangl, Schwartz and Bolender; *ibid.*, p. 32.
239 Court testimony of Heinrich Barbl in Linz on 16 October 1965 at the Austrian Ministry of Internal Affairs; quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 101.
240 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 101.
241 *Ibid.*, p. 103.
242 *Ibid.*, p. 104.
243 E. Kogon, H. Langbein, A. Rückerl *et al.* (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 41), p. 108.
244 Rudolf Reder, *Bełżec*, Fundacja Judaica Państwowe Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka, Kraków 1999, p. 124.

The alleged second phase gas-chamber building at Bełżec was supposedly erected between mid-June and mid-July 1942.[245] By then the alleged first gas-chamber building at Sobibór had already been in operation for two months. Are we to believe that Wirth, the inspector and chief designer of the alleged *Aktion Reinhardt* "death camps," had the gas chamber doors at Bełżec changed from hinged to sliding ones,[246] while aware that doors of the latter type were impeding the extermination process at Sobibór?

Sereny comments that Franz Stangl's "different versions of events are not too important from the point of view of facts."[247] But what should one say about the fact that the former Sobibór SS men are contradicting themselves as well as each other when it comes to important details of the alleged mass gassings? Contrary to what mainstream Holocaust historians and propagandists may believe, such contradictions are fatal to the Sobibór gas chamber allegation, as this rests *exclusively* on such flawed eye witness evidence.

4.5. Miscellaneous Anomalies and Absurdities

The testimonies left by former Sobibór inmates are rife with contradictions, incongruities, anomalies, and absurdities which are indicative of their general quality. Below I will list only a few of them.

Dov Freiberg claims to have seen in the forest surrounding Camp III "a hill of white sand about twenty meters high" which "looked suspicious."[248] Needless to say, anyone would be surprised by a mysterious mountain of sand the height of a seven story building! He also writes that "hundreds of other workers were killed daily during the months I spent in the camp and were replaced by others."[249] Given that the inmates numbered around 600,[250] his survival was more than a little miraculous.

Freiberg also maintains that a group of 73 Dutch detainees caught trying to escape was punished with decapitation (!) and:[251]

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245 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 73.
246 *Ibid.*, p. 73, 183.
247 G. Sereny, *op. cit.* (note 224), p. 111.
248 D. Freiberg, *op. cit.* (note 58), pp. 219f.
249 *Ibid.*, pp. 260f.
250 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 333.
251 D. Freiberg, *op. cit.* (note 58), p. 276, note 1. According to Louis de Jong, some witness-

> *"After the war, an SS man by the name of Novak was caught, and a search of his home revealed photographs of the beheadings in Lager 3."*

Yet no Sobibór SS man named Novak was ever arrested,[252] and if such photographs really existed, they would surely have been reproduced a hundred times by now!

As we have already seen in Section 2.3.8., the witness Moshe Bahir is especially fond of ascribing cruelties of the more extreme and unbelievable kind to members of the camp staff. His mendacity is further demonstrated by the claim that the guard dog Barry, well-known also from Treblinka, was "the size of a pony."[253] Ada Lichtman states that young girls were "raped before being gassed" and that a newborn baby was drowned in the latrines by Gustav Wagner.[254] However, she also maintains that Wagner always was very nice to her, that he once saved her from being beaten by a Ukrainian guard, and that, at another occasion, he let Ada go without punishment after discovering her eating stolen food.[255] Esther Raab in turn recounts that Wagner once gave her candy.[256] Clearly the man was something of a split personality!

Other witnesses claim that inmates were forced to climb trees which were then cut down, so that they fell to their death, and that SS Gomerski and Wagner amused themselves by using babies as sling-balls.[257] In court the former camp commandant Stangl gave a rather different version of the alleged tree climbing murders:[258]

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es like Freiberg maintain that the Dutch Jews were beheaded, while other claim that they were shot; Louis de Jong, "Sobibór," *Encounter*, December 1978, p. 26.

252 According to Schelvis, two men of the camp staff bore the surname Novak: Anton Julius, who was killed in the revolt, and Walter Novak, who is said to have disappeared in 1947 after having spent some time as a prisoner of war. Schelvis notes that the Pirna police in 1946 searched the home of Walter Novak's wife, and that valuables supposedly taken from the camp were found, but mentions nothing of photographs or other documents; J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 260.

253 *Ibid.*, p. 150. Photos taken of Barry at Treblinka by Kurt Franz show him to have been of perfectly ordinary size (www.deathcamps.org/treblinka/pic/bigz04.jpg). According to Kurt Bolender, the dog was "rather aggressive," but never severely harmed any of the inmates; J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 92.

254 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 55.

255 A. Lichtman, *op. cit.* (note 153), p. 42, 44.

256 R.L. Rashke, *op. cit.* (note 39), p. 319.

257 "Sobibór – Mordfabrik hinter Stacheldraht," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 25 August 1950, p. 5.

258 Statement made by Franz Stangl in Duisburg on 29 April 1969, Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen Ludwigsburg (subsequently quoted as ZStL) 230/59-12-4469; quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 113.

> *"It came to my attention that Bolender was bullying the Jewish inmates by forcing them to climb up the trees. He would make them whistle or sing, and then they had to jump down.* […] *I called Bolender to order and told him that as long as I was at the camp, this must not continue any longer. I forbade him to engage in any more such bullying. At the subsequent meeting with the other officers I let it be known that I would not tolerate such bullying."*

It is thus possible that the allegations of murder by tree-felling originated with a case of relatively harmless bullying carried out by an individual SS officer, who was then reprimanded for his behavior.

Another anomalous group of assertions concerns the reception of the arriving Jewish deportees. According to Bahir, one of Gustav Wagner's duties was "counting the Jews who arrived in the transports"[259] and "conducting the registry of victims."[260] He also mentions that SS-*Oberscharführer* Hermann Michel "took a census" of the male arrivals.[261] Freiberg recalls an incident where, during a period of "respite from transports," Wagner went around registering the names, age and place of birth of the inmates in the camp.[262] But why was this done, if Sobibór indeed was a pure extermination camp? This is a question flying in the face of the official narrative. Schelvis compares the bureaucracy of the "extermination camps" with that of the *Einsatzgruppen*,[263] asserting that the former did not have to keep records of the alleged mass killings.[264] Later in his book, however, he details the procedure of transport lists used for the deportation of French, Dutch, German, and Austrian Jews to Auschwitz and Sobibór:[265]

> *"Two copies* [of the transport lists] *were given to the transport leaders for the journey east, creating the impression, perhaps, that they knew the deportees by name, and that the list would facilitate registration on arrival at the camp.*
>
> *At Auschwitz this may indeed have been the case – unless of course the victims were sent straight to the gas chambers. But the lists com-*

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259 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 149.
260 *Ibid.*, p. 144.
261 *Ibid.*, p. 146.
262 D. Freiberg, *op. cit.* (note 58), pp. 223f.
263 "Task forces," German military units deployed behind the Russian front to fight partisans. According to mainstream historiography they are also said to have shot between 1.3 and 2.2 million Jewish civilians. This topic will not be covered in the present book. Editor's remark.
264 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 15.
265 *Ibid.*, pp. 51f. See also Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 139.

> *piled for Sobibór were only ever intended to disguise the Germans' true intentions. The transport leaders would have passed the lists on to the camp commandant, but the most he probably ever did with them was to file them in a drawer somewhere. No further action was ever taken."*

Thus at least a part of the Jews sent to Sobibór was registered with their names – but the Holocaust historian assures us that this was only part of a "deception"! We may also note in this context that, while in Brazilian custody in 1967, Franz Stangl, the former commandant of Sobibór and Treblinka, allegedly stated to the São Paulo police that "his job during the war had been to take down the names of the victims as they were marched to the gas chambers."[266] A most thorough "deception" indeed![267]

Another example of this laborious charade: according to Ada Lichtman the Germans received the Dutch transports with long tables on which were nicely set coffee, bread, and marmalade.[268] After they finished eating, the Dutch Jews were shown around the camp. Next they had to write postcards addressed to their remaining relatives in the Netherlands, after which some of them were selected for work, while the rest was finally "chased off to be exterminated"![269]

Yet another anomaly found in Schelvis' description of the camp concerns Walter Poppert, a German Jew deported from Westerbork with his wife on May 8, 1943.[270] At Sobibór Poppert was foreman of the *Waldkommando*, a fact which was mentioned by him in a postcard dating from August 1943.[271] In other words: the SS allowed an inmate in a top secret "extermination camp" to communicate with the outside world – a contradiction which goes unnoticed by Schelvis.[272]

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266 "Austrian seized by Brazil as Nazi," *The New York Times*, 3 March 1967, pp. 1f. However, according to a notice in the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* ("Treblinkas chef greps i Brasilien," 3 March 1967, p. 13), Stangl "denied all allegations made against him."

267 For another important indication that the deportees who arrived in Sobibór (and the other Aktion Reinhardt camps) were indeed registered, cf. Subchapter 9.5.

268 Dov Freiberg likewise maintains that "there were transports where the people were greeted politely, with bread, jam and coffee"; D. Freiberg, *op. cit.* (note 58), p. 251.

269 A. Lichtman, *op. cit.* (note 153), pp. 46f.

270 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 139.

271 *Ibid.*, p. 112, 141.

272 Schelvis states that the arriving Dutch Jews sometimes were either encouraged or forced to "send postcards home to those left behind, telling them of their safe arrival," *ibid.*, p. 71. This was supposedly part of the "deception" of the victims. Poppert's postcard, however, was sent three months after his arrival to the camp, which makes it difficult to reconcile with the alleged policy of secrecy and camouflage.

Regarding the number of victims eyewitnesses often give figures significantly higher than both the figure of 250,000 hitherto generally accepted and Schelvis' lower estimate of 170,000. As mentioned before (Section 2.3.8.), Bahir claims to have overheard a conversation between SS men Paul Bredow and Rudolf Beckmann following Himmler's reported second visit to the camp in February 1943, in which it was said that "the visit was designed to mark the completion of the first million Jews destroyed at Sobibór"[273] – yet in reality little more than 100,000 Jews had been *deported* to the camp at that time. Zelda Metz in her early post war testimony gave the number of Sobibór victims as 2 million,[274] a figure which also appears in Szmajzner's book from 1968.[275] At the 1950 trial against the former Sobibór SS men Hubert Gomerski and Johann Klier witnesses mentioned the figure of more than 900,000 victims.[276] The above-mentioned Kurt Ticho/Thomas[79] as well as Chaim Engel and Selma Engel-Wijnberg[277] spoke of 800,000 victims. Exaggerations of this magnitude are hard to explain as simple misjudgments.

One also encounters false statements regarding the number and arrival dates of transports. The witness Ursula Stern claims that, between 9 April 1943 and 14 October the same year, a transport of Dutch Jews from Westerbork arrived at the camp "regularly every Friday" despite the uncontested fact that the last transport of Dutch Jews to Sobibór left Westerbork on July 20, 1943.[278]

4.6. Testimonies by Former Camp Personnel

Jules Schelvis describes the testimonies left by former German and Austrian Sobibór camp staff by writing:[279]

> *"Still using their Nazi jargon, those who had once been in power, showing no signs of emotion and giving only the barest of facts, submitted their statements about what had happened at Sobibór."*

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273 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 156.
274 Testimony by Zelda Metz, in: N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 210.
275 S. Szmajzner, *op. cit.* (note 28), p. 270.
276 "Die Massenmorde im Lager Sobibór," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 22 August 1950, p. 4.
277 Statement by Chaim Engel and Selma Engel-Wijnberg, ROD, c[23.62]09, p. 3.
278 U. Stern, *op. cit.* (note 149), p. 11.
279 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 2.

When it came to Camp III and what had allegedly transpired there, Schelvis adds: "the SS men were reluctant to reveal any snippets of information."[280] Most of their declarations are indeed severely lacking in detail, which should not come as a surprise, as their interrogators apparently did not show much interest in how exactly the alleged mass killings had been carried out, or even made possible. When we get extra "information," it is often peripheral, redundant, or absurd, such as the "snippet" provided by the former SS-*Oberscharführer* Alfred Ittner, who claimed that his colleagues Gomerski and Bolender had built a cabin at the edge of the cremation pit from where they could oversee the cremations while "generally amusing themselves and roasting potatoes over the fire"![281] Indeed, the information about the death camp proper at Sobibór is so scarce that, in order to describe it in detail, Schelvis has to spend five pages quoting the Bełżec witnesses Gerstein and Reder.[282]

One of the most frequently quoted former staff members is Erich Bauer, who in 1950 was sentenced to death (later commuted to life imprisonment) for having been in charge of the alleged murder weapon, the engine providing carbon monoxide for the gas chambers (see Subchapter 6.2). After having spent twelve years in the Berlin Tegel prison, Bauer suddenly decided to "come clean about the whole truth"[283] and spent the next years appearing as a witness for the prosecution and playing the role of the honest perpetrator (an activity which was to little avail, as he died in the same prison in 1980). The quality of his truth-telling may be ascertained from the fact that, while at his own trial in 1950, he maintained that the Sobibór victims numbered between 50,000 and 100,000,[284] in 1962 he suddenly changed this estimate to 350,000[285] – i.e. more than twice the currently held victim figure! Bauer's description of the roof of the first gas-chamber building is also more than a little curious:[286]

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280 *Ibid.*, p. 112.

281 Statement by Alfred Ittner, ZStL 251/59-7-1426 to 1427, quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 112.

282 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 105-109.

283 Erich Bauer on 20 November 1962, ZStL 251/59-VIII-1590, quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 2.

284 Verdict of the trial against Erich Hermann Bauer, Landgericht Berlin, 8 May 1950, PKs 3/50.

285 Ernst Klee, Willi Dreßen, Volker Reiß, *The Good Old Days*, Free Press, New York 1991, p. 232.

286 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 102.

> *"I remember quite clearly that a camouflage net had been draped over the gas chamber. I collected this net myself from the ammunition warehouse in Warsaw. It was thrown over the top of the roof and fixed onto it. When this was, I can no longer say. To start with, we had fir and pine trees covering the roof.* [sic …] *That was at the time when German flying units were flying to Russia. The German pilots were not to be able to see inside. The camouflage net was torn off the roof when the gas chamber was rebuilt. The camouflage net was acquired when the old wooden barracks were still in use,*[287] *because such a lot of steam was generated."*

Remarkably, none of the Jewish eyewitnesses who reports seeing the roof of the "gas chamber" building protruding above the trees surrounding Camp III have mentioned a camouflage net. Moreover, the alleged reason for the net is clearly spurious. How would pilots have been able to see through a roof? Wouldn't it have been much more logical to camouflage the mass graves instead? The claim that "a lot of steam was generated" during the gassings is likewise bizarre. By "steam," did Bauer mean engine exhaust? However, a native speaker of German would never use *Dampf* or any word derived from it[288] to denote exhaust fumes from an engine. There is no reason why the alleged gassing process would have produced steam. On the other hand, hot showers could result in a lot of steam, especially in cold weather. In addition, delousing chambers utilizing steam or hot air may also have caused such emissions of vapor.

In April 1963 and June 1965 two trials were held in Kiev against former Ukrainian auxiliaries who had served in Sobibór. Thirteen of them were sentenced to death and executed (see Subchapter 6.6). In the late 1970s testimonies from a handful of accused Ukrainian guards were made available to the U.S. Department of Justice by the USSR in connection with the first extradition trial against John Demjanjuk. When it comes to Camp III those testimonies are generally as vague and lacking in detail as the German ones.

The witness Vassily Pankov describes all three camps where he was posted – Sobibór, Auschwitz, and Buchenwald – as "death camps" where the SS and their auxiliaries "perpetrated physical extermination

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[287] The testimonial incongruity regarding the building material of the alleged gas chambers will be discussed in detail in Subchapter 4.4.

[288] In the original German the last part of the final sentence of the quote reads: "…*weil es dort immer so gedampft hat*"; J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 121.

of civilians."[289] The inclusion in this list of Buchenwald – a camp where no extermination is claimed to have taken place – should be enough to draw the veracity of Pankov's account into question.

The former auxiliaries moreover tend to grossly exaggerate the size of the camp, which is curious in the light of the fact that one of their primary tasks was to patrol the camp perimeter. M. Razgonayev stated that "the area of the camp was 2-3 square kilometers,"[233] while I. Danilchenko claimed that "the camp covered approximately four square kilometers."[290] According to the above-mentioned Rutherford map, the camp's area measured less than 20 hectares (i.e. 0.2 square kilometers ≈ 50 acres). Why would those guards make the camp out to be 10 to 20 times larger than it actually was?

Not all former members of the Sobibór camp staff were eager to confirm the official version of what had transpired at the camp. On 31 May 1978 Gustav Wagner handed himself over to the Brazilian special police in São Paulo. At the time of his arrest Wagner confirmed that he had been posted in Sobibór, but explicitly denied the gas chamber allegations:[291]

"I never saw any gas chamber at Sobibór."

4.7. The Value of Eye Witness Testimonies

Historian Christopher Browning notes the following on the subject of the *Aktion Reinhardt* eyewitnesses in his 1999 expert report from the Irving trial:[292]

> *"*[…] *human memory is imperfect. The testimonies of both survivors and other witnesses to the events in Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka are no more immune to forgetfulness, error, exaggeration, distortion, and repression than eyewitness accounts of other events in the*

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289 Interrogation of Vassily Pankov in the city of Stalino on 18 October 1950. Online: www.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/camps/aktion.reinhard/ftp.py?camps/aktion.reinhard//sobibor/pankov.001

290 Interrogation of Ignat Terentyevich Danilchenko in the city of Tyumen on 21 November 1979. Online: www.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/camps/aktion.reinhard/ftp.py?camps/aktion.reinhard//sobibor//dchenko.001

291 "*Eu nunca vi nenhuma camara de gas em Sobibór"*; quoted in: "Eu prefiro ir para a Alemanha, diz Wagner," *Folha de São Paulo*, June 2, 1978. Also "Wagner nega ser criminoso" (Wagner denies being a criminal), *Diário da Noite*, 31 May 1978, p. 1.

292 C.R. Browning, *op. cit.* (note 69); www.hdot.org/browning/#browning_545.2_n153

> *past. They differ, for instance, on how long each gassing operation took, on the dimensions and capacity of the gas chambers, on the number of undressing barracks, and on the roles of particular individuals.* […] *however, without exception all concur on the vital issue at dispute, namely that Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka were death camps whose primary purpose was to kill in gas chambers through the carbon monoxide from engine exhaust, and that the hundreds of thousands of corpses of Jews killed there were first buried and then later cremated."*

That eyewitnesses may err in their recollections is, of course, a truism. Browning should also know that people can "recall" false memories and that alleged perpetrators confess to crimes they never committed, even when not physically coerced to do so.[293] The supposed consensus invoked by him that the eyewitnesses "without exception all concur […] that Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka were death camps" where Jews were mass murdered with "carbon monoxide from engine exhaust" is in fact nothing but a mesh of contradictions, held together by mere belief.

As we have shown before, the early testimonies about Sobibór expressly do *not* claim the use of engine-exhaust gases for mass murder. In addition, the witness accounts left by Jewish former inmates about Sobibór are of little value to answer the question whether the camp was a center for mass extermination of Jews, as "the most conclusive evidence" those inmates had that gassings were taking place in Camp III, to which they lacked all access, was indeed "purely circumstantial" and, when examined more closely, does not unequivocally confirm the mass murder allegations. To this should be added the messages supposedly smuggled out from Camp III, whose reported contents are either absurd or contradict the established historiography on Sobibór.

On the other hand, the statements from former camp personnel are largely devoid of detail, especially where Camp III and its killing installations are concerned. As for the number, sizes, capacity, and construction material of the alleged gas chambers, or the circumstances surrounding the start of gassings at the camp, their declarations are rife with contradictions (cf. Subchapter 4.4).

While Browning and other historians of his ilk are satisfied with creating a historiographic picture out of selected pieces of eyewitness testimony and a handful of arbitrarily interpreted documents, all skeptical

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[293] Cf. Gisli H. Gudjonsson, *The Psychology of Interrogations and Confessions*, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester 2003, pp. 179-186.

inquirers searching for what really happened at Sobibór must recognize the necessity of comparing the witness accounts with available material evidence. Are the remains found at the former camp site really compatible with the alleged mass murder of hundreds of thousands of people in gas chambers? This will be the topic of our next chapter.

5. Critical Analysis of Material Evidence

5.1. The State of Evidence

5.1.1. Forensic Post War Survey by Polish Authorities

According to Jules Schelvis, the local Polish prosecutor failed to initiate a judicial inquiry into the crimes allegedly perpetrated at Sobibór and an inspection of the former camp area, so that the opportunity to establish the dimensions of the mass graves and other relevant matters was lost.[294] At least the latter half of this claim is incorrect, as in 1947 a report entitled *Obóz zagłady w Sobiborze* ("The extermination camp at Sobibór") was published by the Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland. In this we read:[295]

> *"Today, on the site of the camp, nothing remains of the old facilities destined specifically for the liquidation of the victims. What does remain, on the other hand, are a few small houses (in a state of considerable dilapidation) which served as living quarters for the service personnel of the camp. In the central part of the area, presumably at the sites used for the burial of the ashes, there is a growth of young firs covering some 1,200 square meters. Diggings showed the presence of ashes and of bone fragments mixed with ashes below a layer of sand half a meter thick. Close to the eastern limit of the camp a pit of chloride of lime, 20 by 15 m, was identified. Over the whole area of the camp human bones can be found here and there.*
>
> *The purpose of the camp can also be deduced conclusively from other results of the investigations. An opinion prepared by the institute of forensic medicine at the Jagellonian University states that the bones sent there for analysis were human bones. An opinion of the institute of forensic medicine at Cracow indicates that the sand removed from the diggings is mixed with bone ashes and fat. A certain*

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294 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 191.
295 Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *op. cit.* (note 25), pp. 49f.

amount of rubble[296] *was found at the site which witnesses have stated to have been the site of the building with the gas chambers."*

We will note here that apparently no effort was made to determine the number and/or dimensions of the present burial pits or the actual amount of ashes present and that the only pit for which dimensions are given is described not as a grave containing human remains but as "a pit of chloride of lime." The only evidence for the alleged gas chamber mass murder of at least 250,000 victims[297] which the commission's forensic experts could muster thus consisted of an unrevealed amount of human ashes mixed with sand and some uncharacterized debris from the supposed location of the "gas chambers"!

In Section 5.2.5. below we will return to the reported findings of the Central Commission.

5.1.2. Photographic Evidence

In an important 2009 article, which will be discussed later in this chapter, Isaac Gilead *et al.* write that "there are few images of Sobibór" and that those "very rare" pictures known to exist "do not contribute significantly" to our knowledge of the camp.[298] Arad states that the taking of photographs was prohibited in the Reinhardt camps.[299] However, we know that this rule was not always obeyed. At Bełżec the camp staff even invited local Polish villagers to take pictures of them inside the supposedly top secret "extermination camp."[300] The witness Kalmen Wewryk claims that the SS at Sobibór shot a film of a – supposedly fake – wedding ceremony in the camp.[301] It is thus possible that there exists yet undiscovered or unpublished photographic evidence relating to the Sobibór Camp. Furthermore we have an air photo of the former camp site taken by the Luftwaffe in 1944[302] which will be referenced later in the present chapter.

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296 *gruz*
297 *Ibid.*, p. 57.
298 I. Gilead, Y. Haimi, W. Mazurek, "Excavating Nazi Extermination Centres," *Present Pasts*, Vol. 1, 2009, p. 26.
299 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 18.
300 C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 10, Engl. ed.), p. 43.
301 K. Wewryk, *To Sobibór and Back: An Eyewitness Account*, online: http://migs.concordia.ca/memoirs/wewryk/chapt2.html
302 National Archives, Washington D.C., Ref. No. GX 191 F 910 SK, exp. 122.

5.1.3. Kola's Archeological Research at Sobibór 2000-2001

The first ever study[303] of the former Sobibór camp site by archeological means was undertaken in 2000-2001 by a team led by Professor Andrzej Kola of the University of Toruń, who had previously carried out excavations at Bełżec.[304] While the Sobibór excavation was reported on by a number of newspapers in late 2001, no translation into any western language has yet been made available of the brief research report which Kola published that same year in the journal *Przeszłość i Pamięć* ("Past and Memory") published by the Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom.[305] In the present chapter Kola's published results will be critically analyzed and compared to the established historiographic picture of the camp.

Regarding the purpose of the study Kola states:[306]

"The planimetric structure of the camp's buildings and the mass graves' locations are currently indiscernible as a result of deliberate destruction, demolition, and removing of the evidence of its infrastructure by the Germans in 1943, following the well-known mass breakout of prisoners on the 14th October of the same year. The aim of the archeological excavations is to recreate this plan as the basis of a fitting and dignified memorial to the victims of the Holocaust, including an adequate project of commemoration being formulated. It is also important to obtain authentic artifacts belonging to the Jews who were brought to Sobibór from all over Europe for the branch of the Łęczna-Włodawa Lakeland Museum located in Sobibór – objects bearing witness to the martyrdom of the victims or linked to the organization of the genocide."

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303 Historian Martin Gilbert, who visited Sobibór in the summer of 1996, writes in his travel journal that at the site of the former Camp III, "there is a patch of sand where men have recently been digging, trying to find the rails that were used for the crematorium pyres where the bodies had been burned. This work is being done by the regional museum at Włodawa." The details of this archeological activity are wrapped in obscurity, however, since it is not acknowledged in the Sobibór literature, not even in Kola's 2001 article, see note 305; Martin Gilbert, *Holocaust Journey*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London 1997, p. 250.

304 Andrzej Kola, *Bełżec. The Nazi Camp for Jews in the Light of Archaeological Sources. Excavations 1997-1999*, The Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom/United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Warsaw-Washington 2000.

305 Andrzej Kola, "Badania archeologiczne terenu byłego obózu zagłady Żydów w Sobiborze," in: *Przeszłość i Pamięć. Biuletyn Rady Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa*, No. 4(21) 2001, pp. 115-122.

306 *Ibid.*, p. 115.

Thus the officially stated purpose is basically the same as for the 1997–1999 excavations at Bełżec: to enable the construction of a new memorial by locating mass graves. However, the search for artifacts "linked to the organization of the genocide" – in other words remains of the alleged gas chambers – is also recognized as "important."

Kola next reiterates the basic layout of the camp, denoting Camp III as "the place of extermination" and stating that "the task of the archeologists" consists of "a highly extensive study of the site." He goes on to describe Camp III as follows:[306]

> *"Due to a lack of eye witness accounts and the removal of evidence we do not know the layout of Camp III. It consisted of a gas chamber (or chambers), barracks for the German, Ukrainian, and Jewish personnel, and barracks for the storage of the possessions of the arriving Jews, further a barber's barrack and also the burial sites of, as is estimated, more than 200,000 victims. Furthermore, from the available accounts it would appear that, from the rail ramp in Camp I through Camp II, a narrow-gauge railway led to Camp III, with its carts pushed by camp inmates. This railway was used to transport the sick and handicapped Jews brought to Sobibór over to Camp III. The route of the railway is not known."*

The claim that there is a "lack of eye witness accounts" concerning the structure of Camp III is incorrect, as the map used at the 1966 Hagen trial, which shows that part of the camp in detail, was drawn up by none other than Erich Bauer, the SS-*Oberscharführer* who allegedly was in charge of the gas chambers. As will be seen below, there also exists witness statements on the dimensions of the gas chambers and mass graves. It is worth noting that Kola consistently avoids comparing his research results with eye witness testimony, historiography, or judicial findings.[307]

The claim that Camp III contained "barracks for the storage of the possessions of the arriving Jews" lacks any foundation in historiography or eye witness testimony. Such barracks, the witnesses unanimously stated, were located in Camp II opposite the reception area,[308]

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[307] From his 2000 preliminary report on the survey, however, it is clear that Kola is well familiar with testimonies such as those of Chaim Engel, Moshe Bahir, Alexander Pechersky and Kurt Bolender; A. Kola, "Sprawozdanie z archeologicznych badań na terenie byłego obozu zagłady Żydów w Sobiborze w 2000 r." (Report on the archaeological investigations at the site of the former extermination camp for Jews at Sobibor in 2000), *Przeszłość i Pamięć*, No. 3, July-September 2000, p. 89.

[308] See for example the map in Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), pp. 34f; items 42-44, "Barracks

and no such structures are asserted to have been located in Camp III. The reason why Kola inserted this unfounded claim in his description of Camp III will become apparent later in this chapter when we turn to the subject of the excavated building remains.

After a preparatory survey had been conducted in autumn 2000, the actual study commenced in spring the following year. Its first goal consisted in marking out archeological remains detected by probing drills on a large-scale map (1:1000) of the former camp site area. For the sake of the survey the camp site and its immediate surroundings – a rectangular area measuring 700 × 900 m – were divided into 63 areas of one hectare each (≈ 2.5 acres), numbered I to LXIII. The progress of the work is summarized thus by Kola:[309]

> *"The program of archeological excavations of the Sobibór camp in 2001 consisted of two phases – one taking place in spring, the other in autumn. During the six week long spring phase in the period between 17th April and 9th June, archeological identification of the camp structure was carried out, starting with the supposed area of Camp III. In 2000, as part of the reconnaissance research near the mound commemorating the tragedy of the murdered Jews erected in the 1960s, mass graves were discovered by a few of the archeological probes made in this area.*
>
> *Following this lead, it was decided in 2001 to continue excavations in the region of these finds. This was carried out through archeological drillings using hand held geological drills with a 2.5 inch diameter, i.e. approx. 65 mm. Due to the considerable area to be explored, initially the drilling locations were determined by the intersections of a 5 meter grid, with an additional, narrower grid at sites where the drill cores had shown positive results (i.e. in places where cultural objects had been located – e.g. relics of buildings or graves). With this assumption in mind, at least 400 drillings would be required on each hectare.*
>
> *In the second phase, carried out from 19th August to 13th October, investigations of the camp's terrain using coring continued. Simultaneously excavations of selected structures (localized as a result of the phase one drillings) were started.*
>
> *During the springtime phase, 4 hectares of the area of the former Camp III (i.e. hectares XVII, XVIII, XXIV and XXV) were fully inves-*

for storing property."

309 A. Kola, *op. cit.* (note 305), p. 116.

tigated by coring. In each hectare 400 basic drillings were made; additional drillings enabling a more detailed localization of the remnants of anthropogenic structures were made in places of soil disruptions. At this stage the structures were divided into grave pits (usually easy to distinguish) and interferences in the natural stratigraphic structure, which were traces of unknown elements of other transformations of the terrain resulting from human activity. Their interpretation will only be possible if excavations take place.
In hectare XVII 90 additional drillings were carried out, 76 in hectare XVIII, 18 in XXIV, and 21 in XXV; thus altogether there were 1,805 drillings made on 4 hectares."

5.2. Mass Graves

5.2.1. Mass Graves in Testimony, Verdicts, and Historiography

The most important accounts of the mass graves at Sobibór derive from the former SS men Kurt Bolender and Hubert Gomerski. Jules Schelvis has summarized their statements as follows:[310]

"Until the end of 1942, the bodies were taken to a Lager 3 pit, measuring about 60 by 20 metres and about 6 to 7 metres deep, the walls sloping down to protect it from collapsing. Along one side a wooden structure jutted over the edge, so that the loaded carts could be tipped over and the bodies dumped into the pit. The bodies had to be laid out by the Arbeitshäftlinge [inmate workers] *in a prescribed fashion to use all the available space, and were then covered with chloride of lime. By June 1942 it had become clear to the camp leadership that the grave was filling up fast, so a second grave was dug about 80 metres away from the first."*

Schelvis then goes on to quote Bolender's testimony of December 8, 1963:[311]

"The first grave had been covered with a layer of sand. As this grave was completely full, the other bodies had to be taken elsewhere, even

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[310] Summary of a statement made by Kurt Bolender in Munich on 5 June 1961 (ZStL 252/59-11-1322), and a statement made by Hubert Gomerski in Hagen on 2 December 1966 (StA.Do-XII 65-705); J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 110.

[311] Statement by K. Bolender in Hagen on 8 December 1963 (StA.Do-band 35-116), quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 110f.

though the new grave was not yet ready. I still clearly remember arriving for work at the second grave one morning to find that the bodies which had already been piled up along one side had decomposed to such an extent that in the sweltering heat blood and body fluids had run all along the bottom of the unfinished grave. It was clear that we could not continue working under such circumstances."

Due to such problems the burial of uncremated corpses was stopped. Schelvis writes:[312]

"It was then decided to start burning the bodies instead and to get a machine in to dig up the tens of thousands of buried bodies to burn them as well. […]

The machine was taken to Lager 3 and, within a few days, work was begun on the very spot where the third grave was to be dug, with the digger pulling out trees and roots. A pit was excavated, but it was smaller and shallower than the other two. Once it was finished, rails were criss-crossed over the top, forming a rudimentary grid."

Accordingly there are said to have been three pits in Camp III: two used for the interment of corpses and one on top of which the cremation pyre was constructed. The number of burial pits was confirmed by a sketch drawn by Bolender while in custody.[313] This shows two graves, one of which is only half the size of the other.

Arad gives the following description of the Sobibór mass graves:[314]

"The burial pits were 50 to 60 meters long, 10 to 15 meters wide, and 5 to 7 meters deep. For easier absorption of the corpses into the pits, the sandy sidewalls were made oblique."

Arad never states the number of graves, and the map reproduced by him does not outline the graves.[315] Novitch only mentions an unspecified number of "common graves,"[316] while Schelvis accepts Bolender's claim that there only were two burial pits.[312]

Arad's description lacks a reference, but it is apparent that he has simply copied it from Adalbert Rückerl,[317] who in turn is summarizing

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312 J. Schelvis, ibid, p. 111.

313 Viewable online at: www.deathcamps.org/sobibor/pic/bmap4.jpg

314 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 33.

315 *Ibid.*, p. 35. This map is identical with the so-called Blatt-Bauer map.

316 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 24.

317 "A camp railway led from the outer doors of the cells of the gas-chamber building to large pits for placing the corpses, which had been dug, one after another during the first extermination phase of the camp and which had a length of about 50-60 meters, a width of 10-15 meters and a depth of about 5-7 meters; on account of the sandy soil they had inclined sidewalls"; A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 165.

the verdict of the 1966 Hagen trial. The map used during this trial,[318] compiled by the alleged supervisor of the gassings Erich Bauer, shows only two mass graves.

In 1947 the Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland wrote as follows on the disposal of corpses at Sobibór:[37]

> *"In all the Hitlerian extermination camps the burning of the corpses was used systematically to hide traces. This was also the case at Sobibór. In the minutes of the interrogations of witnesses there are many descriptions of this. It was difficult, however, to hide the incineration of the corpses, because the wind would spread a specific odor of incineration over a wide area; the smoke, as well as the fire of the burning sites could also be seen from far away. We must underline the fact that the incineration system had already been developed and perfected while the camp was still in operation. Initially the corpses were interred in layers in large pits and covered with chloride of lime. Large scale incinerations began in the winter of 1942/1943 and continued up to the liquidation of the camp. At first simple pyres were used, but eventually this system was replaced by the use of grates made from railway rails.*
>
> *Such an installation was very simple. Rails were mounted on two parallel rows of concrete blocks, layers of corpses were placed on them, and a fire was lit below. It is probable that easily flammable material was used. Over the period during which this installation was used large pits filled with corpses existed in the camp. Mechanical shovels were used to dig up the corpses and take them to the grates. The corpses from transports arriving at that time were burned immediately after being gassed. The ashes from the incinerations were dumped into the pits within the camp or, as witnesses have stated, partly taken away by rail in an unknown direction."*

Again we note the peculiar vagueness of the report. How many mass graves were there? What kind of "easily flammable material" was used as fuel? The claim that initially simple pyres were used to burn the bodies and that cremation grates were constructed only later is in clear contradiction with Bolender's testimony. It should further be pointed out that none of the numerous eye witness accounts studied by the authors

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318 Viewable online at: www.deathcamps.org/sobibor/pic/bmap2.jpg

of this book mentions the removal of ashes by train (or for that matter by trucks).

5.2.2. The Switch from Burial to Cremation

In order to proceed with our analysis of Kola's report, we must first determine the answers to the following two questions: when did cremations commence at Sobibór, and how many of the hypothetical corpses were cremated without prior interment?

The first question is especially difficult to answer, because mainstream Holocaust historians as well as eye witnesses provide widely divergent statements. Arad strongly implies that cremations started at some point in late summer or early autumn 1942. He writes that the operation began "as a result of the hot weather in the summer of 1942."[319] In his entry on Sobibór for the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* he writes confusingly that cremations commenced "toward the end of 1942," only to later date this event to "the end of the summer of 1942" (cf. Subchapter 2.1). Novitch asserts that, "beginning with the winter of 1942, they [the corpses] were no longer buried, but were burned in large open crematoria."[320] Neither Arad nor Novitch provide a source for their respective statement. According to Rückerl the burial pits were used only during the "first phase of extermination, lasting approximately half a year,"[321] which implies that cremations began in October or November of 1942, since the first transports to the camp arrived in the first days of May that year.[322] Schelvis is slightly more exact, writing that cremations had begun "by September or October 1942,"[323] while de Jong dates the commencement of both cremations and exhumations to October 1942.[324]

As for the eye witnesses, there are seven who provide some form of dating of the beginning of cremations. We have mentioned Bahir's claim that flames were visible already when he arrived at the camp in late April or early May 1942 (cf. Subchapter 4.3., p. 96). This, however, is not supported by any other testimony. According to Szmajzner, a digger "accompanied by a certain amount of rails," presumably used for

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319 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 171.
320 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 24.
321 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 165.
322 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 36, 390.
323 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 38. In the German edition of his book (*op. cit.* (note 60), p. 51) Schelvis dates the commencement to "about September 1942."
324 L. de Jong, *op. cit.* (note 251), p. 21.

the construction of the cremation grate, was brought to Camp III around August 1942.[325] The former Trawniki commandant Karl Streibel testified that, during a brief visit to Sobibór, he had observed a cremation grate, but no cremation in process. The visit took place "at the end of 1942."[326] Bolender's account of the mass graves implies that the burial of victims was stopped at the end of summer 1942. Hubert Gomerski testified in 1950 that no cremations took place until 1943,[327] and the Ukrainian Razgonayev dates the start to December 1942,[233] but both are contradicted by Werner Becher, who relates that the work of burning the corpses was initiated during his stay in the camp, which lasted from August through November 1942.[328] Another consideration which also speaks out against a later date is the unlikely idea that the SS would have dug a cremation pit, exhumed mass graves, and started burning corpses in mid-winter, when the soil might have been frozen.

While the dates found in eye witness testimony as well as Holocaust historiography are vague and divergent, the three most authoritative Sobibór historians – Arad, Rückerl, and Schelvis – all indicate that the beginning of cremations occurred around the same time as the rebuilding of the alleged gas chambers, which was accompanied by various other construction activities. According to Arad, this rebuilding was done during a two month lull in operations lasting from late July to the end of September 1942, which was caused by reconstruction work on the railway between Lublin and Chełm.[329] The new gas chambers became operational at the beginning of October.[330]

Given that the reported cause for the interruption of burials was problems caused by the hot summer weather,[331] it makes most sense that the preparations for outdoor incineration were carried out during the aforementioned two month lull when a lot of free hands were available, rather than in October or November, when the work force was again busy with receiving transports. We therefore find it reasonable to assume, as a conservative working hypothesis, that cremations began in the first days of October 1942.

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325 S. Szmajzner, *op. cit.* (note 28), p. 188.
326 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 172.
327 Referenced in the verdict against Erich Hermann Bauer, LG Berlin, *op. cit.* (note 284).
328 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 171.
329 *Ibid.*, p. 80. Schelvis (*op. cit.* (note 61), p. 103) has it that "the rebuilding took place between June and September 1942," but such an early start is extremely unlikely considering that large-scale transports to Sobibór continued at the end of July that year.
330 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 123.
331 *Ibid.*, p. 171.

How many of the alleged victims were buried prior to being exhumed and cremated, and how many were incinerated immediately after having been gassed? Schelvis has calculated the total number of deportees to be 170,165, rounded off to 170,000.[332] As we know from the Höfle telegram, 101,370 Jews were sent to Sobibór up until 31 December 1942. It follows from this that (170,165 – 101,370 =) 68,795 deportees arrived during 1943. According to orthodox historiography they were all cremated without prior interment. Schelvis states that this group was comprised of Jews from the Netherlands (34,313), France (3,500), Reichskommissariat Ostland (13,700), Skopje (2,382), and the General Government (14,900).[332]

The victim figure for 1943, however, has to be slightly reduced. Schelvis admits that, according to "rough estimates," approximately 1,000 Dutch Jews were transferred from Sobibór to labor camps in the Lublin district.[333] Despite the fact that those Jews did not perish in Sobibór, Schelvis has included them in his victim figure.[334] The real number of hypothetical victims for 1943 should therefore be 67,795.

Next we must determine how many Jews were deported to the camp from 1st October to 31st December 1942. According to Arad a total of 31,300 – 32,300 Jews were sent to Sobibór during this period.[335] Arad assures his readers that his lists of transports are based on "existing information." However, these lists consist to a large degree of figures lifted from testimonial evidence, estimates made by Jewish resistance members, or arrived at by mere conjecture.[336] For example, the lists for Treblinka[337] indicate that 824,170 Jews were deported to that camp during 1942, whereas the Höfle telegram shows that the actual figure amounted to 713,555 – an exaggeration of 16%. Faced with this tendency, we find it more reasonable to accept Gilead *et al.*'s estimate that 80,000 Jews arrived at the camp prior to the interruption of burials.[338] In

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332 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 198.

333 *Ibid.*, p. 14.

334 Witnesses quoted by Schelvis speak of at least 40 French Jews transferred from Sobibór to Lublin and of 830-880 Byelorussian Jews transferred to Trawniki, but it is unclear whether those groups are included in the victim figure or not; *ibid.*, pp. 217, 219f.

335 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), pp. 390f.

336 Cf. C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 102-105.

337 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), pp. 392-397.

338 I. Gilead, Y. Haimi, W. Mazurek, *op. cit.* (note 298), p. 25. Schelvis (*op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 112, 116 n. 64) writes that "there were already more than 100,000" corpses in the mass graves at the time cremations began, giving as his source a court document (VoHa-66-61b), but here he is clearly contradicting himself, as this would mean that cremations did not commence until early 1943.

our own calculations we will therefore assume the total number of hypothetical victims cremated without prior interment to amount to ([101,370 – 80,000] + 67,795 =) 89,165.

5.2.3. Mass Graves Identified by Kola

In his description of the discovered mass graves Kola provides precious little data, qualitative or quantitative, on the actual contents of the grave pits as revealed by the relevant drilling samples. As at Bełżec, none of the mass graves was excavated, and no attempt whatsoever was made to quantify the amount of human remains present in them. The only real quantitative statement regarding the contents of the graves is found in the following passage:[309]

> *"*[…] *altogether there were 1,805 drillings made on 4 hectares. In 1,107 of these a natural, anthropogenically unspoilt stratigraphy was discovered, where underneath a newer layer of humus (0-30 cm on average) natural, yellowish sand (archeologically barren) occurred. Grave remnants were found in 128 drillings. They are accumulated in seven pronounced groups that can be assumed as being separate pits which contain remains of mass murder victims. Most of these graves contain cremated human bones. The grave bottoms reached the depth of approx. 4 meters from the surface. Only in one case (grave No. 3) the bottom reached a depth of 5.80 m. Particularly noticeable traces of cremation occurred in the lower parts of the graves where distinct layers of scorched bones, with a thickness up to 40-60 cm, could be identified."*

One should note here that Kola does not provide a clear definition of what he means by "distinct layers." Are we talking of strata more or less exclusively containing ashes, or of ashes mixed with sand or other material? Further one would like to know how many of the 128 drillings actually turned up significant amounts of human remains, and not only evidence of soil disturbance.

Kola next goes on to briefly describe the characteristics of the individual mass graves:[309]

> *"**Grave No. 1** was found in the northeastern part of hectare XVII, directly to the west of the monument mound which commemorates the victims. The grave was localized by 27 drillings. The approximate dimensions of the outline are 20 × 20 m with the depth reaching around 4.30 m. It contains remains of cremated corpses.*

Grave No. 2 *lies in the western part of hectare XVII, to the south of the monument mound. It was localized by 28 drillings. It has an irregular outline, with dimensions of at least 20 × 25 m (the longer edge in NS orientation) and depth up to 4.00 m. It contains remains of cremated corpses.*

Grave No. 3 *is located in the southwestern part of hectare XI and the northwestern part of hectare XVII. It was localized by 17 drillings. It has an irregular outline, with dimensions measuring approx. 20 × 12 m (the longer side in NS orientation). Most of the grave is located under the northwestern part of the monument mound. The depth reaches up to 5.80 m.*

In its lower parts it is a skeleton grave, with corpse remains which have undergone wax-fat transformation,[339] *while in its upper parts it contains remains of cremated corpses, interstratified with layers of limestone, sand and charcoals. The northern part of the grave is situated close to the northern part of grave 4. To determine the extent of both of these graves more precisely, further, more detailed coring is required.*

Grave No. 4 *is a grave of considerable size covering the southern part of hectare XI and the northern and central parts of hectare XVIII. It was localized by 78 drillings. The outline, which is oriented in north-south direction, measures 70 × 20-25 m and has a depth of approx. 5.00 m. In its lower parts it is a skeleton grave, with corpse remains which have undergone wax-fat transformation, while in its upper parts it contains remains of cremated corpses, interstratified with layers of limestone, sand, and charcoals.*

Grave No. 5 *is a grave of small area in the northwestern part of hectare XVIII. It was localized by 7 drillings. Its outline is irregular, with an area of at least 10 × 12 m and a depth reaching up to 4.90 m. In its lower parts it is a skeleton grave, with corpse remains which have undergone wax-fat transformation, while in its upper parts it contains remains of cremated corpses.*

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339 Saponification or wax-fat transformation "consists of the formation of adipocere, an insoluble soap of greasy and oily appearance having an unpleasant odor, produced by the combination of neutral fats from tissue and calcium and magnesium salts present in the water or in the humid soil in which the corpse rests. The absence of air is crucial. The process starts with the subcutaneous tissue and then spreads to the fatty perivisceral tissue. Saponification sets in after a few weeks and is complete after 12 to 18 months."; http://digilander.libero.it/fadange/medicina%20legale/tana.htm (inactive).

Table 3: Dimensions, location and contents of mass graves at Sobibór Camp

DIMENSIONS [m]	AREA [m^2]	VOLUME [m^3]	# OF CORES	HECTARE #	HUMAN REMAINS	SHAPE
20×20×4.30	400	1,720	27	XVII	cremated corpses	
20×25×4.0	500	2,000	28	XVII	cremated corpses	irr.
20×12×5.80	240	1,392	17	XI-SW/ XVII-NW	cremated & saponified corpses	irr.
70×20-25×5.0	1,575	7,875	78	XI-S/ XVIII-N	cremated & saponified corpses	
10×12×4.90	120	588	7	XVIII-NW	cremated & saponified corpses	irr.
15×25×3.05	375	1,143.75	22	XVIII	cremated & saponified corpses	irr.
Total:	3,210	14,718.75				

> ***Grave No. 6*** *is located in the central part of hectare XVIII to the south of grave No. 5. It was localized by 22 drillings. It has an irregular outline with an area of at least 15 × 25 m and depth up to 3.05 m. In its lower parts it is a skeleton grave, with corpse remains which have undergone wax-fat transformation, while in its upper parts it contains remains of cremated corpses.*
>
> ***Grave No. 7 (?)*** *is a site where corpses were burnt, with an area of at least 10 × 3m and a depth of up to 0.90 m, located in the central part of hectare XVIII, approx. 10 – 12 m to the south from the southern edge of grave No. 4. The deposits of cremated corpse remains appeared in 6 boreholes during drilling. There are soil transformations around the grave of unknown origins. The structure was classified as a grave only because of the cremated corpse remains. However, it is possible that it was just a place where corpses were burnt. In order to determine the function of the place accurately, more detailed excavations are required."*

Excluding the cremation pit (No. 7) the characteristics of the mass graves may be summarized as per Table 3.

5.2.4. The Significance of Unincinerated Corpses

Camp Sobibór was liquidated following the prisoner uprising and mass escape on 14 October 1943. This means that the SS had a full year to exhume the hypothetical 80,000 bodies in the burial pits. On average they would therefore have to exhume merely (80,000 ÷ 365 =) 219 corpses per day. Given that the work reportedly was carried out by a big excavator and a special group of Jewish prisoners who apparently

worked full time digging up and transporting the bodies,[340] this task would have been easily accomplishable. Yet in spite of this, 4 out of 6 mass graves discovered by Kola contain remains of unincinerated, saponified corpses in their lower strata. This finding is obviously incompatible with the claim that the SS did their best to eradicate all traces of their alleged crime.[341]

Where did the unincinerated corpses come from? One hypothesis could be that they are the remains of detainees shot during the uprising. According to Arad, those shot during the revolt or executed afterward numbered between 380 and 420.[342] As the camp was hurriedly liquidated during the following weeks and as there was a lack of work force in the days immediately after the revolt (the dismantling of the camp was reportedly done by a group of Jews brought in from Treblinka), it is possible that their corpses were buried without prior cremation.

In Kola's preliminary survey report from 2000 it is further made clear that the corpses are not distributed over the entire area of graves No. 4-6. Of the initial 15 core samples taken on the eastern side of the memorial mound,[343] 6 encountered human remains; 4 of those contained "fragments of burnt human bones and charcoal," whereas 2 contained both human ashes and remains of saponified corpses.[344]

What seems to speak against this hypothesis is the fact that the saponified corpses were found in the *lower* parts of graves No. 3-6, with "remains of cremated corpses" reported as present in the *upper* layers. How did this come about? One possible explanation is that the burial detail opened up already existing mass graves instead of digging new ones. The reason for this would have been to save time and labor: since infill soil is significantly less compact than undisturbed soil, it takes less time and effort to dig through it, and there are no roots in the way. After the burial of the uncremated corpses, which were possibly covered with lime, the graves would have been filled in with the old infill soil as well as the dug up cremated human remains and wood ashes. That the corpses were placed at the very bottom of the graves could easily be explained by cautiousness on the part of the SS – after the discovery of the Soviet massacre victims in the Katyn forest, the Germans would have

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340 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 171.
341 *Ibid.*, pp. 170-178.
342 *Ibid.*, pp. 363f.
343 These samples form a cross just to the south-east of the mound, most of which is inside the area of what Kola later designated as grave No. 4; cf. Document 6, p. 411.
344 A. Kola, *op. cit.* (note 307), pp. 90f.

been careful when carrying out mass burials of their own, so as to not risk having mass graves with corpses usable for atrocity propaganda fall into Soviet hands. Buried at a depth of 3-5 meters, the uncremated corpses would be difficult to find.

5.2.5. Area and Volume of the Graves

What is the actual area and volume of the Sobibór mass graves? In order to discuss this issue, one has to consider it as a two-fold problem: how reliable is Kola's estimate of the area and volume of the mass graves in their present state, and how large were the mass graves in their original state at the time of the liquidation of the camp in late 1943?

The method used by Kola to locate the Sobibór mass graves – a grid of manually executed probing drills with 5 meter intervals – is identical with that previously used by him at Bełżec. It goes without saying that this method is highly approximative and that the mapped outlines of the graves are arbitrary to a certain degree. There is a very real possibility that the actual present volume of the graves is smaller than the stated 14,719 cubic meters. On the other hand we have no reason to believe that Kola has underestimated their dimensions.

As for the *original* area and volume of the graves, we know that, similar to Bełżec and Treblinka, extensive wildcat diggings were carried out by local Poles at the former Sobibór camp site following the German retreat and that those clandestine searches for buried valuables continued for several years.[345] According to the witness Thomas Blatt, who lived in Poland until 1957,[346] the diggings continued "for about ten years" after the end of the war.[347] The Polish witness Parkola describes one of the first wildcat excavations – carried out by a single man – as covering an area of about fifteen square meters.[348] Gilead *et al.* report that such diggings have continued to occur even into the present century.[349] Diggings are naturally aided by the fact that the soil at the former camp site is soft and sandy.

The witness Piwonski has further stated that, during the liquidation of the camp, Jewish workers had to fill in holes "that had been caused

345 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 191.
346 R.L: Rashke, *op. cit.* (note 39), p. 345.
347 *Ibid.*, p. 365.
348 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 191.
349 I. Gilead, Y. Haimi, W. Mazurek, *op. cit.* (note 298), p. 15.

by blowing up the concrete buildings."[348] To the wildcat pits should also be added the unknown number of diggings carried out by the surveyors of the Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland.[350] In this context one should further keep in mind that the mass graves were reportedly dug with oblique sidewalls, so that the surface areas of the pits were larger than the bottom areas.[351]

At Bełżec the activity of the wildcat diggers caused a "great number of human bones" and "ash from the corpses and from wood" to be spread over the surface of the camp,[352] and as seen from the above quoted 1947 report of the Central Commission, this was the case also at Sobibór. It is entirely reasonable to assume that the more or less random diggings at Sobibór also deceptively enlarged the graves in Camp III by destroying soil walls, thus connecting previously separate pits, or otherwise altered the original dimensions of the graves. When the holes were later filled in, bones and ashes from the surface mixed with sandy soil would have ended up in them, creating the illusion that they were part of the original graves.

As seen above, four out of six mass graves (#2, 3, 5, 6) are of irregular shape. There is no reason to assume, however, that originally they were not of regular shape, such as the square Grave No. 1. It follows that the irregularly shaped graves have probably been enlarged in the fashion described above. One may thus conclude with high probability that the original size of the mass graves was considerably smaller than Kola's estimate of 14,718.75 m^3.

As for the capacity of the Sobibór mass graves, we will simply note that the graves in their *present* size are able to contain the alleged number of 80,000 uncremated interred corpses, given a maximum density of 8 bodies per cubic meter,[353] but that this does not mean that 80,000 corpses *were* buried in them.

One might argue that it would make no sense to excavate such large pits if the Sobibór dead amounted to only some thousands. This argument, however, is fallacious for two reasons. First, if there were no

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350 To this should further be added the mysterious excavations in Camp III noted by Martin Gilbert in 1996, *op. cit.* (note 303).

351 That this claim corresponds to reality is indicated by the fact that in the first series of drillings made in hectare XVII south-west of the memorial mound (in the area of graves No. 1 and 2), the thickness of the grave strata varied between 60 and 430 cm; A. Kola, *op. cit.* (note 307), p. 90.

352 C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 10, Engl. ed.), pp. 88f.

353 C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), p. 137.

hundreds of thousands of corpses to dispose of, there would also exist no pressing need to save burial space. We know of several documented mass graves that have a density of 1-2 corpses per cubic meter.[354] Second, as already discussed, the original grave volume might have been significantly smaller than that estimated by Kola in 2001. It is therefore entirely possible that the mass graves at Sobibór contained only some thousands of corpses.

In their 2009 article, Gilead *et al.* reproduce a color photograph of the open field with the mass graves, taken from a weather balloon, accompanied by the following comment:[355]

> *"It appears to have delineated areas of mass graves in the open field, as defined by deeper green hues in the vegetation. This supports the conclusion of the 2001 coring activities carried out by Kola's expedition."*

Those deep green areas are indeed clearly visible against the yellow-brownish color of the remaining field. This phenomenon, where the outlines of old graves are detectable due to changes in surface vegetation caused by increased nutritional support from decomposing human remains and ashes as well as the looser, more aerated character of the infill soil, is well known from forensic literature.[356] But to what degree does the photograph actually support Kola's data on the mass graves? To determine this we have placed it side by side with the plan of the 2000-2001 excavations also included with the article.[357] Of the six burial pits identified by Kola, only two, graves No. 2 and 6, are matched by green areas of more or less the same shape and size. Grave No. 1 is visible only as a small, faint green smudge near the monument. The large graves No. 3 and 4 are only partially green, indicating that they are not joined together and may have originated as several smaller pits. The small grave No. 5 is partially obscured by the shadow of the rope connecting the camera-equipped balloon to the ground. "Grave" No. 7, the cremation pit, is not visible at all, implying that it was not used as an ash deposit and that the amount of cremated remains found in it was small. This comparison indicates that the present area – and in turn,

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354 Cf. J.C. Ball, "Air Photo Evidence" in: G. Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 32), p. 270; G. Rudolf (ed.), *Air-Photo Evidence*, 6th ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2020, p. 34; C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), p. 77.

355 I. Gilead, Y. Haimi, W. Mazurek, *op. cit.* (note 298), p. 31.

356 John Hunter, Margaret Cox (ed.), *Forensic archaeology: advances in theory and practice*, Routledge, New York 2005, pp. 30f.

357 Document 3, p. 408.

volume – of the mass graves is considerably smaller than estimated by Kola.

As seen above, the 1947 Central Commission report mentions a pit with an area of (20 × 5 =) 300 m^2, characterized as being filled with chloride of lime and located "close to the eastern limit of the camp." Of the seven pits identified by Kola, graves No. 4 and 7 are the ones furthest to the east. However, grave 7, measuring 10 × 3 m, is clearly too small to be the same pit. On the other hand, the area of grave No. 4 is (1575 ÷ 300 =) 5.25 times as large as the pit described in the report. Could it be that Grave No. 4 was drastically enlarged by various diggings, including those of the commission surveyors? According to Kola, limestone is among the contents of Grave No. 4.

Finally it should be noted that Kola's findings regarding the Sobibór mass graves contradict certain conclusions arising from his own previous survey at Bełżec, where mass graves having a total volume of 21,310 m^3 were identified.

The Sobibór mass graves have an average depth of (14,718.75 ÷ 3,210 =) 4,58 m and a total area of 3,210 m^2. With a 30 cm layer of sand covering the interred corpses, the available burial space would have amounted to ([4.58 – 0.30] × 3,210 =) approximately 13,739 m^3, resulting in a density of (80,000 ÷ 13,739 =) approximately 5.8 bodies per cubic meter. On the other hand, at Bełżec the mass graves were estimated to have a total area of 5,490 m^2 and an average depth of 3.88 m, which means that ([3.88 – 0.30] × 5,490 =) 19,654 m^3 of burial space would have been available. Since it is claimed that 434,508 uncremated corpses were buried at Bełżec, the density would have been (434,508 ÷ 19,654 =) 22.1 bodies per m^3.

If the alleged Bełżec victims had been buried with the same density as the alleged Sobibór victims, they would have occupied an effective volume of (434,508 ÷ 5.8 =) 74,915 cubic meters, i.e. 3.5 times the total size of the mass graves discovered at Bełżec! This clearly contradicts the notion that the Sobibór camp staff did their best to utilize the available burial space as effectively as possible.

5.2.6. A Note on the Ground Water Level at Sobibór

After the successful prisoner revolt, the Sobibór Camp was soon dissolved. To oversee this operation a number of SS men were transferred from Treblinka to Sobibór. One of them was Franz Suchomel, who in

the early 1960s left a brief account of his stay at Sobibór, in which we read:[358]

> *"I remember clearly that two Jews, a married couple from Holland, were found in Camp 1 hidden under the floor. By way of explanation I have to say that the barracks in Sobibór were constructed on top of meter high piles to avoid the danger of flooding."*

Suchomel later confirmed the swampy nature of the camp site in an interview conducted by Gitta Sereny sometime in the early 1970s:[359]

> *"In Sobibór* […] *one couldn't do any killing after the snow thawed because it was all under water. It was very damp at the best of times, but then it became a lake."*

The Sobibór Camp was located in eastern Poland, a few kilometers southwest of the village of the same name, which is in turn situated on the Bug River and the former Soviet-German demarcation line. The camp was constructed on a piece of land immediately west of the Chełm-Włodawa railway line, facing the Sobibór train station. It was surrounded by a forest consisting predominantly of red pines,[360] as well as by several marshland areas and a number of smaller lakes. As seen on a 1933 map of the area (a section of which is reproduced as Document 1, p. 407), there are patches of marshland marked out in the immediate vicinity of the future camp perimeter. The map further shows no less than six small lakes located within a 3 kilometer radius of the camp. The Bug River is found 2.5 kilometers to the east.

Regarding the location of the camp, Schelvis notes that "the single railway line […] ran through marshland,"[361] further noting that no deportation trains arrived to the camp between June and September 1942 because:[362]

> *"The railway line had subsided in various places between Chełm and Sobibór due to swampy soil conditions, slowing the trains down or even preventing them from using the track altogether."*

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358 "Protocol of official examinations carried out in Altötting, Bavaria, on 24 January and 7 November 1962." Quoted online at: www.holocaustresearchproject.org/ar/sobibor/sobiborliquidation.html

359 Gitta Sereny, *op. cit.* (note 224), p. 115.

360 *Ibid.*; R.L. Rashke, *op. cit.* (note 39), pp. 361f.; M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 82, 147.

361 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 28.

362 *Ibid.*, pp. 103f. In the German edition (*op. cit.* (note 60), p. 58, note 142) it is stated that this period lasted from the end of July to October and that the problems affected the stretch between Chełm and Włodawa.

Arad writes that "the whole area was swampy, wooded, and thinly populated."[363] The 1933 map in fact shows symbols denoting marshland in the immediate vicinity of the future Camp I.[364] At the beginning of his archeological survey in 2000, Kola identified an old drainage ditch at the former eastern border of the camp, beyond which a marsh emerges.[351] How high then was the ground water level in the area of the "death camp proper"? During the 2001 survey of the former Camp III area, Kola and his team discovered the remains of a well filled with sand ("Object C") in the northern half of the hectare numbered XXV, not far from the mass graves. When excavating this well, ground water was encountered already at a depth of 3.60 m, and the work had to be halted at a depth of 5 m because of the steady inflow of ground water.

The 1933 map reveals that the Sobibór station is found at an elevation of 167 meters. Lake Spilno, about a kilometer to the west, has an elevation of 164 meters, as is also the case with the swampy area located north of the later camp area and the road to the village of Żłobek, just to the west of the railroad. This was likely also the ground water level. The brown contour lines around the camp area indicate that it had a higher elevation. A look at a modern topographical map of Sobibór[365] in turn shows that the open, vaguely trapezoidal area with the memorial mound,[366] where the mass graves are located, has an elevation of 170 meters.[367] This means that the ground water level in this part of Camp III was found (170 – 164 =) 6 m below the surface. It is known, however, that the ground water level varies with the seasons and rainfall (or the thawing of snow). It is also possible that the average level was somewhat different in 1942-43.

The location of the Sobibór Camp was not chosen at random, but carefully selected by the SS Central Construction Office of the Lublin District.[368] The local Polish witness Jan Piwonski states that German of-

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363 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 30.

364 That this was true also in the early 1940s is shown by the aforementioned sketch drawn in custody by Kurt Bolender (see note 313), which has the word *Moor* (bog) written just above (i.e. west of) the workshop area (= Camp I).

365 Document 4, p. 409.

366 This monument is commonly referred to as the "mound of ashes" and described as containing ashes from the victims. However, when Kola investigated its contents, he discovered that it contains no human remains whatsoever; A. Kola, *op. cit.* (note 307), p. 91.

367 A comparison with a picture showing the present day memorial structures overlaid on the Rutherford map (www.deathcamps.org/sobibor/pic/Sobibór.jpg) reveals that the small round spot with an elevation of 171.5 m, to the west of the mound, is located outside of the grave area.

368 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 30.

ficers visited the future camp site on three occasions during the autumn of 1941.[369] According to Y. Arad there originally existed no plans to burn the victims at the Reinhardt camps, and the commencement of cremations at Sobibór in early autumn 1942 is said to have been caused by local reasons.[370] This is claimed to mean that the people who decided on the location of the camp were looking for a spot where the bodies of several hundred thousand potential victims could be interred without problem. But why then choose Sobibór, located in the middle of marshland?

The Hagen court, in the reasoning of its verdict at the end of the Sobibór trial, stated:[371]

> *"As early as the summer of 1942, a different reason had brought about a partial change in the extermination mechanism: As a result of the heat, the corpse pits that had already been filled bulged upwards, releasing corpse water, attracting vermin, and filling the entire camp area with a frightful stench. Furthermore, the camp command feared an intoxication of the drinking water, which came from deep wells in the camp building* [sic]*."*

This was the motive which caused the camp officials to disinter and burn the corpses. The danger of contaminating the ground water by the products of decomposing corpses had been known for decades. In 1904 Max Pauly had summarized the medical knowledge of his time as follows:[372]

> *"The decomposition* [of the corpses] *goes through several intermediate stages, involving corpse alkaloids or ptomaines (cadaverines) first discovered by Selmi of Bologna around 1870; they were later studied by Brieger, Baumert and others, but are still far from being completely known. Some of these substances are choline, neurine, saprine, neuridine, cadaverine, putrescine, mydalëine, muscarine, trimethyl amine, mydine. Some of them are extremely toxic and, furthermore, have the dangerous capacity of increasing the receptive-*

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369 Statement made by Jan Piwonski in Lublin on 29 April 1975, ZStL 643/71-4-441; quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 27.

370 Cf. Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 171.

371 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 173. The last sentence reads in the original: "Die Lagerleitung befürchtete außerdem die Vergiftung des Trinkwassers, das im Lagergebäude durch Tiefbrunnen gewonnen wurde." Rückerl may possibly be referring to the camp kitchen or to a pump house.

372 Max Pauly, *Die Feuerbestattung*, Verlagsbuchhandlung von J.J. Weber, Leipzig, 1904, pp. 19f., 24.

> *ness of the body for an attack by and a spreading of the particular morbific agents.* […]
> *Ground water, even more so than soil or air, is suitable for the propagation of the decomposition products. It is all the more dangerous as the subterranean currents can take on changes which are not noticeable on the surface. Thus, it is entirely possible for wells on the cemetery itself or close to it to have good water, free from organic substances, whereas the secretions of the graves may be carried away by underground currents to reach wells or other types of usable water and then exercise their harmful potential."*

For those very reasons the managers of the Theresienstadt ghetto decided to build the local crematorium:[373]

> *"As early as the spring of 1942 the command of the ghetto decided on the construction of a crematorium. The cemetery being situated in a depression was sensitive to ground water; often the corpses were lowered in water-logged layers. The SS worried about the drinking water becoming contaminated."*

Pery Broad declared that "in the large fish ponds in the vicinity of Birkenau, at Harmense for example," the fish were struck by a pandemic in the summer of 1942 and that "experts tied this event to a contamination of the ground water by corpse toxins."[374]

Although nowadays there is a tendency to consider such phenomena to be less dangerous, there are still directives for specific measures to ensure the health of the ground water:[375]

> *"When a large number of bodies require*[s] *disposal, for instance after a major disaster, the remains are most likely to be cremated. However, in many cases temporary storage facilities are required. In all cases, a 'wet' area must be designated to contain bodily fluids/wastes and chemicals. If drain discharges from this area are unsuitable (for example, a soakaway), then all drains must be sealed and liquids must be collected and disposed of safely by a specialist contractor."*

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373 "Das Krematorium am Jüdischen Friedhof," www.ghetto-theresienstadt.info/pages/k/krematorium.htm

374 P. Broad, "KZ-Auschwitz. Erinnerungen eines SS-Mannes der Politischen Abteilung in dem Konzentrationslager Auschwitz," in: *Hefte von Auschwitz*, Wydawnictwo Państwowe Muzeum w Oświęcimiu, No. 9, 1966, p. 27.

375 "Assessing the Groundwater Pollution Potential of Cemetery Developments", Environment Agency, Almondsbury 2004; http://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/598825/scho0404bgla-e-e.pdf.

This also applies to cemeteries where a rather limited number of corpses is interred in coffins, dispersed over a rather large area,[376] although they do not present the same degree of risk as mass graves with an enormous number of corpses buried without coffins in a very limited area.

One therefore cannot believe that the two chains of command controlling the alleged extermination camps – Hitler, through the Führer chancellery and Wirth, on the one hand and Himmler, via Globocnik and Höfle, on the other – would have opted for a swampy area as the spot to be used for the burial of tens or hundreds of thousands of corpses, only to be forced to have them dug out again and incinerated at the first signs of the inevitable phenomena caused by the decomposition of the dead bodies.

It would not have required the mind of a genius to avoid this problem: it would have been easy to choose a site more suitable for the cremation of the corpses from the very beginning of the operation.

5.3. Fuel Requirements

5.3.1. The Percentage of Children among the Deportees

As we have seen in Chapter 1, Schelvis comes to the following distribution by country of origin for the Jews deported to Sobibór:

– from Holland:	34,313
– from France:	3,500
– from the town of Skopje:	2,383
– from *Ostland*:	ca. 13,700
– from the General Government:	ca. 54,500
– from Slovakia:	28,284
– from the Protectorate:	ca. 10,000
– from Germany and Austria:	ca. 23,500

The transport lists of the Westerbork camp show a total of 34,324 deportees sent to Sobibór, 5,855 of whom are labeled "K[inder]"[377] (children up to the age of 16), i.e. 17.05%. The two transports from Drancy

[376] Ahmet S. Üçisik, Philip Rushbrook, "The Impact of Cemeteries on the Environment and Public Health. An Introductory Briefing," Waste Management WHO Regional Office for Europe, European Centre for Environment and Health, Nancy Project Office, www.academia.edu/26690761/THE_IMPACT_OF_CEMETERIES_ON_THE_ENVIRONMENT_AND_PUBLIC_HEALTH_AN_INTRODUCTORY_BRIEFING.

[377] ROD, C[64]312.1.

to Sobibór comprised a total of 2,002 deportees, among them 110 children up to the age of 16,[378] i.e. about 5.5%. Schelvis[379] has two more transports from Drancy which he assigns to Sobibór (departure from Drancy on 4 and 6 March 1943), but which Klarsfeld assigns to Majdanek. These transports comprised 2,001 deportees, with 7 boys and girls under the age of 17, i.e. about 0.35%.

The percentage of "Kinder" in all of the above Dutch and French transports thus amounts to 15.6% on average, or 1 out of 6 persons.

Helena Kubica estimates that out of the roughly 1,095,000 deportees to Auschwitz[380] some 216,300[381] were children, corresponding to 19.75% or 1 out of 5 persons.

For Poland H. Kubica finds some 66,000 children out of a total of 300,000 deportees, i.e. 22%; for Slovakia 9,000 out of 27,000 or 30%. She has a percentage of about 11.5% (2,636 out of 23,000 deportees) for Germany and Austria, and about 14.04% (6,460 out of 46,000) for the Protectorate (Theresienstadt).

Her estimate for Poland is probably too low. If we take as a yardstick the population of Polish Jews in the Łodź ghetto on 30 June 1942,[382] there were 25,947 children under the age of 16 among the total of 96,874 persons, or some 26.8%. We may thus assume roughly 27% instead of 22%.

On the other hand, the estimate with respect to Slovakia is rather on the high side. According to Bedrich Steiner, altogether 57,837 Jews were deported from Slovakia, among them 2,482 children below 4 years of age and another 4,581 between the ages of 4 and 10 years of age,[383] resulting in a total of 7,063 children below age 10 or 12.21% of the total. As compared to this, there were 12,891 children below age 10 in the Łodź ghetto, some 49.7% of all children. Hence, the percentage of children below the age of 16 deported from Slovakia may have been as high as 25%.

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378 S. Klarsfeld, *op. cit.* (note 64), p. 17 (our pagination).

379 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 217.

380 Franciszek Piper, *Die Zahl der Opfer von Auschwitz*, Verlag des Staatlichen Museums in Oświęcim, Oświęcim 1993, p. 200.

381 H. Kubica, "Kinder und Jugendliche im KL Auschwitz," in: Wacław Długoborski, Franciszek Piper (eds.), *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*, Verlag des Staatlichen Museums Auschwitz-Birkenau, Oświęcim 1999, Vol. II, p. 349.

382 "Die Ghettobevölkerung am 30. Juni 1942 (laut Meldungen)," WAPL, PSZ, 863, pp. 16, 16a.

383 State of Israel, *op. cit.* (note 123), Vol. II, p. 912.

From Germany and Austria, 14,442 Jews were deported to the Łodź ghetto in 1941, among them 999 children less than 16 years old, or 6.91%.[384]

Five transports left Prague for Łodź in 1941 with 4,999 Jews on board, of whom 575 or 11.50%[384] were children below 16 years of age.

If we assume the highest percentages mentioned above, assigning to *Ostland* the ratio applied to Poland, we come to a total of some 36,400 children deported to Sobibór (out of whom 5,972 are on record) which would bring their percentage to (36,400÷169,000[385]×100=) about 21.5% or practically 1 out of 5 persons.

5.3.2. The Average Weight of the Children

Based on scientific tables for the growth of children, the average weight of children below age 16 is about 30.5 kilograms.[386] The tables cover children between 1 month and 16 years of age, giving weights spaced one year apart for the mid-point of the year concerned (i.e. 1 month, 6 months, 1.5, 2.5, 3.5… 16 years). The average weight given is applicable only if the ages of the children at Sobibór were distributed in the same manner as in the above tables. Actually, the nominative lists for three Dutch transports to Sobibór (those of 25 May, 1st June and 6 June 1943)[387] with a total of 2,195 children under age 16 on board indicate that the number of older children is significantly higher (some 66.5% were more than 8 years old). This ratio amounts to about 63% for the 12 transports of the period between 3 March and 18 May. For the 14,442 Jews deported to Łodź from Germany and Austria the ratio is higher yet: some 70.2%, whereas for the Polish Jews in the Łodź ghetto itself it amounted to about 61.4%.

If we correct the above tables for the actual age distribution in the population concerned with higher percentages of children above the age of 10, we arrive at an average weight of 36.5 kg, which we will round off to 35 kilograms.

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384 "Eingesiedelte im Jahre 1941 aus dem Altreich, Wien, Prag, Luxemburg und aus Leslau und Umgebung," WAPL, PSZ, 863, pp.76-81.

385 The total number of deportees (about 170,000) minus some 1,000 selected for work.

386 Mario Cosciotti, "Tabelle riassuntive per il calcolo del fabbisogno energetico" (Comparative tables for the calculation of energy requirements), www.abodybuilding.com/tab_ener.htm#tab1.

387 The transport lists have been published by J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 49), pp. 305-542.

Assuming an average weight of 70 kg for a normal adult, we thus come to a weighted average of 63 kg[388] (4 adults of 70 kg and one child of 35 kg) for the deportees to Sobibór.

When dealing with the alleged gas chambers of Auschwitz, Robert Jan van Pelt accepted an average weight of 60 kg for the victims,[389] a figure we will use in our calculations, rounding off the above value where applicable.

For the deportees, especially those coming from Poland, a weight loss due to second degree malnutrition may certainly apply (loss of 10% to 25% of their normal weight),[390] bringing down the average weight to (65×0.75=) 45 kilograms. However, as we shall see below, this will not result in a significant reduction in the fuel requirements for the incineration, quite the opposite. We shall therefore stay with the average weight as set out above, giving more detailed explanations in Section 5.3.5.

5.3.3. Fuel Requirements for the Cremation of One Body

Valuable information concerning the wood requirements for the cremation of human bodies in the open can be gathered from three systems developed in India.

The *Teri* apparatus is a true cremation oven, equipped with a closed chamber and an external gasifier in which wood is gasified, with the combustible gases thus generated fed into the cremation chamber by means of a blower. The result is a powerful flame.[391]

An official document explains:[392]

"It was observed that each cremation using the gasifier took approximately 60-80 minutes consuming 100-150 kg of wood as against 400-600 kg in the traditional system and about 250-300 in improved

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388 An official publication by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment states: "The average weight of a corpse is assumed to be 65 kg. This assumption is based on the average weight of adults, children and emaciated corpses (from terminal illnesses)." G. Soo Chan, M. Scafe, S. Emami, *Cemeteries and Groundwater: An Examination of the Potential Contamination of Groundwater by Preservatives Containing Formaldehyde*, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Toronto 1992; www.archive.org/stream/cemeteriesground00chanuoft/cemeteriesground00chanuoft_djvu.txt.

389 Robert J. van Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz. Evidence from the Irving Trial*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 2002, pp. 470, 472.

390 A weight loss of 35-40% is normally fatal. S. McPhee, M. Papadakis, L. Tierney, *Current Medical Diagnosis and Treatment*, McGraw-Hill Professional, New York 2008, p. 1085.

391 See www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRjsUh_bpcw

392 *Teri Development of gasifier based crematorium*, TERI Project Report No.1999BE63, New Delhi, 2003.

> *open fire system using a metal grate. After carrying out successful trials the gasifier based crematorium system has now been put into regular use at Ambernath. The time required for cremation ranged between 70–85 minutes while the specific fuelwood consumption ranged from 110 to 145 kg per cremation during trial runs."*

The second apparatus is the *Mokshda Green Cremation System*. It is basically a simplified cremation oven, open at either end, consisting of a cremation grate mounted above ground level, protected on both sides by a metal panel with small perforations. Two steel plates cover these panels at a certain distance from the former and support a heavy steel plate roof shaped like a truncated pyramid and carrying a tall chimney.

A publicity pamphlet describes the apparatus, claiming that it "has brought down the wood consumption level to an average [of] 150 kg per cremation."[393] Applying this to a body of 70 kg, the specific consumption would thus be 2.14 kg of wood per kg of body weight.

The third apparatus, labeled "improved open fire system using a metal grate" is the *Fuel Efficient Crematorium*, consisting of three connected brick walls, similar to a barbecue grill, about 1.5 m high, holding a metal cremation grate at a level of about 50 centimeters. This piece of equipment, open at either end, is the direct precursor of the Mokshda Green Cremation System and allows a 50% reduction in the amount of wood as compared to a traditional cremation which requires some 400 – 600 kilograms.[394] Hence, the *Fuel Efficient Crematorium* consumes some 200 – 300 kg of wood per cremation.

Thus, for a body of 70 kg, these operational data correspond to

- 7.14 kg of wood per kg of bodyweight for a traditional pyre
- 3.9 kg of wood per kg of body weight for a pyre equipped with a metal grate
- 1.8 kg of wood per kg of body weight for the cremation furnace.

Hence, for the cremation of corpses on the grates of Sobibór we would thus have a standard value of 3.9 kg of wood per kg of body weight.

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393 "Medium-Sized Project Proposal: Mokshda Green Cremation System for Energy & Environment Conservation", www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/project_documents/PIMS%25203335%2520India%2520Green%2520Cremation%2520Rev%2520MSP%2520Proposal%252010%2520march%252008_0.doc, S. 6.

394 Council for advancement of peoples action and rural technology, Rural Technology Division, "Fuel Efficient Crematorium;" www.ruraltechindia.org/fec.htm. This document has been withdrawn, but can be found in a web archive: http://web.archive.org/web/20051103042401/http://www.ruraltechindia.org/fec.htm.

The differences in wood consumption mentioned above are essentially due to the combustion efficiency which is best in the *Teri* furnace, good in the *Mokshda* oven, and poor in the *Fuel Efficient Crematorium*.

No experimental data exist as far as the mass cremation of human corpses in the open is concerned. However, one may draw conclusions on this important topic from the incineration of animals which had to be disposed of on account of their having died or been slaughtered in connection with infectious diseases.

A number of directives state the corresponding fuel requirements. However, they cannot be utilized as such, either because they also mention fuels other than wood (straw, coal, liquid fuels) or because they refer to the initial layout of the pyre, allowing for the addition of fuel depending upon the progress of the incineration.

The only reliable data refer to the technical study of the operational results of the *Air Curtain Burner*. This device for the cremation of animal carcasses consists of a burner and a powerful blower, linked to an enclosure of refractory material or to a ditch into which the carcasses are placed.[395] Over two days, on 29 and 30 January 2002, two incinerations were carried out, involving 15 cattle carcasses each per day, for a total weight of 16.1 tons. The incinerations required 49 tons of timber, having an average humidity of about 20 percent.[396]

Fuel consumption thus was (49÷16.1=) 3.04 kg of timber per kg of carcass, in spite of the favorable conditions provided by the *Air Curtain System*.

This result is confirmed by the observation that "approximately 350 kg of ash is produced per tonne of animal."[397] Since a typical fresh carcass contains approximately 32% dry matter, of which 52% is protein, 41% is fat, and 6% is ash,"[398] it follows that one ton of carcass weight

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395 Cf. www.airburners.com/technology/principle/.

396 "Investigation into Burning Characteristics of an Air Curtain Burner," www.airburners.eu/DEFRA_UK-Air_Curtain_Burner_Report_S-321.pdf.

397 J.A. Mercer, N. Hesketh, J. Hunt, D.H. Oughton, "Burning of carcasses," ftp://kda-ftp.kda.ks.gov/Agricultural Waste Disposal Options/burning of carcasses v6.doc. According to another source, "a typical pyre for 300 cows," of a total weight of about 150 tons, produced "15 tonnes of carcass ash and 45 tonnes of other ash," altogether 60 tons, i.e. 400 kg of ash per ton of carcass weight. "Environment Agency North West Region Area. Extracts from Submission to Cumbria County Council's Inquiry into the Foot and Mouth Crisis", (Environment Agency Submission to County FMD Inquiry.pdf), 26.4.2002; http://cmis.carlisle.gov.uk/cmis/.

398 Curtis Kastner *et al*., "Carcass Disposal: A Comprehensive Review", Carcass Disposal Working Group, National Agricultural Biosecurity Center Consortium, March 2004; https://amarillo.tamu.edu/files/2011/01/draftreport.pdf.

contains (1,000×0,06=) 60 kg of ash, with the remainder of (350–60=) 290 kg stemming from the wood. It is known that, "on the average, the burning of wood results in about 6-10% ashes"[399] with an average of 8%. Therefore the ash mentioned is furnished by (290÷0.08=) 3,625 kg of wood, yielding a specific consumption of 3.6 kg per kg of carcass weight.

Similar data are provided by the description of the incineration of poultry in Virginia: 2,268 tons of carcasses were burned by means of 10,000 tons of wood,[400] i.e. using 4.4 kg of wood per kg of carcass weight.

In Carlo Mattogno's experiments with waste beef, a weight ratio of wood/flesh of 2.6 was needed in a makeshift closed furnace, of 3.1 in an open furnace and of 3.5 in a pit.[401]

For the mass cremation of corpses the above data allow us to assume a ratio of 3.5 on a weight by weight basis. The wood required to burn the corpse of an average deportee with a weight of 60 kg would thus be about 210 kilograms.

5.3.4. Decomposed Bodies

The above data concern fresh corpses. However, as we have seen above, 80,000 of the alleged 169,000 victims at Sobibór were initially buried. Later on, from October of 1942 onwards, they were exhumed and incinerated. The remainder of 89,000 victims was, instead, incinerated immediately.

The carcass of a dead adult sheep of a weight of 50 kg releases 7 – 8 kg of body fluid over the first week after its death, and 14 – 16 kg over the first two months; an adult cow of an initial weight of 500 to 600 kg will lose 80 and 160 kg respectively.[402] However, loss of body fluids will continue for months. According to another source, "animal leachate

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399 http://hubcap.clemson.edu/~blpprt/bestwoodash.html (inaktiv).

400 R.W. Peer, G.A. Flory and E.S. Bendfeldt, "Incineration of Mass Quantities of Poultry Carcasses", National Carcass Disposal Symposium, Beltsville, MD, 2006; www.deq.virginia.gov/Portals/0/DEQ/Water/VirginiaPollutionAbatement/CarcassIncinerationPres-NatCarcassDisposalSymp-12-2006.pdf.

401 Carlo Mattogno, "Combustion Experiments with Flesh and Animal Fat on cremations in pits in the alleged extermination camps of the Third Reich," in: *The Revisionist*, Vol. 2, Number 1, February 2004, pp. 64-72.

402 Abbey Nutsch, "Carcass Disposal Options: A Multidisciplinary Perspective", IFT Food Protection & Defense Research Conference, Atlanta, 3. November 2005; www.ift.org/~/media/Knowledge%20Center/Science%20Reports/Conference%20Papers/8Nutsch.pdf.

e.g. body fluids from carcasses are released (about 0.1 m^3 per adult sheep and 1.0 m^3 per adult cow) within the first year, and gas."[403] Dyan Pratt has monitored this for up to 25 months after the burial of the carcasses.[404] 466,312 carcasses were buried between the end of March and 7 May 2001 in Cumbria (northern England), and a system for the recovery of the body fluids was installed. Even as late as 2006 some 240 cubic meters of leachate were collected in a week.[405]

During the process of decomposition the soft parts of the carcass turn into body fluids, and this phase of the process often goes on for over a year.[406] This process also affects the proteins and the triglycerides (body fat); the latter decompose into glycerol and fatty acids.[407]

From the point of view of heat technology, the body will lose not only water – which, when it comes to combustion, would be an advantage – but also combustible substances, which represents a disadvantage.

Assuming that the human body consists on average of 64% water, 14% fat and 15.3% proteins,[408] a corpse of 60 kg contains 34.80 kg of water, 8.40 kg of fat, and 9.18 kg of proteins.

The heat consumption for the evaporation of body water and the superheating of the steam to 800°C thus amounts to $[640+(0.493\times700)] \approx 986$ kcal for 1 kg of water. Animal fat has a heating value of some 9,500 kcal/kg, hence, in the thermal balance the heat added by 1 kg of fat is equal to the heat lost by the vaporization of (9,500÷986=) 9.6 kg of water. For the proteins with a heat value of about 5,400 kcal/kg this ratio is roughly 1:5.5 in terms of weight.

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403 "Burial of Carcasses," www.strategyec.org.uk/EURANOS_D6C1R1/Euranosdatasheets/associateddocs/Burial%20of%20carcasses.doc (inactive).

404 D. Pratt, "Environmental Impact of Livestock Mortalities Burial," http://library2.usask.ca/ theses/available/etd-05212009-160732/unrestricted/DyanPrattMScThesis.pdf

405 "Foot and Mouth Disease in Cumbria – 2001," www.visitcumbria.com/footandmouth.htm.

406 Giorgio Canuto, Sergio Tovo, *Medicina legale e delle assicurazioni*, Piccin, Padova 1996, p.73.

407 Alan Gunn, *Essential Forensic Biology*, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester 2006, Chapter 1: "The decay process"; http://media.wiley.com/product_data/excerpt/65/04700127/0470012765.pdf; Shari L. Forbes, "Decomposition Chemistry in a Burial Environment," in: Mark Tibbert, David O. Carter (eds.), *Soil Analysis in Forensic Taphonomy*, CRC Press, Boca Raton (FL) 2008, pp. 205-209.

408 Douglas J. Davies, Lewis H. Mates (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, Ashgate, London 2005, p. 134.

Therefore, even assuming an extreme case where the alleged corpses at Sobibór would have lost their total water content over a period of 4 months, the heat of vaporization thus saved would have been 38.4×[640+(0.493×700)] ≈ 37,800 kcal for each corpse.

To balance this saving in heat, a loss of, say, 40% of body fat and 12% of proteins would have been sufficient: [(0.4×8.4×9,500) + (0.12×9.18×5,400)] ≈ circa 37,800 kcal.

Experiments with animal carcasses carried out in England in 2001 have shown, however, that this hypothesis is far too optimistic.

On 6 April 2001, 7,000 carcasses of sheep were unearthed at Mynydd Epynt (Wales). The *Epynt Action Group* reports that, together with an additional 14,000 carcasses, they caused such environmental problems that it became necessary to burn them. This took place over a period of 4 months from 24 April until the end of August. The task turned out to be very hard, because the incineration required an amount of fuel and a timeframe far in excess of those that had been observed with fresh carcasses.[409]

The 21,000 carcasses of a total weight of 1,050 tons[410] necessitated, in fact, 4,000 tons of coal, or 3.8 kg of coal per kg of carcass weight. If 1 kg of coal has a heating value of 6,200 kcal[411] as compared to dry wood with a water content of 20% having 6,800 BTU/lb,[412] the equivalent of 3,800 kcal/kg, then 1 kg of coal corresponds to some 1.6 kg of dry wood. Hence, the above consumption of coal corresponds to an equivalent of (3.8×1.6=) 6.0 kg of dry wood per kg of carcass weight.

The report explains:[409]

> *"When the decision was finally taken to remove the carcasses from the pit they had disintegrated to an extent that it was impossible to remove all the carcasses and those that were removed required approximately 120 tons of coal per day to burn about 50 carcasses (hence the astounding result of 20,000 tons of ash*[413] *to be removed)."*

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409 "Epynt Action Group," www.epp-ed.org/Activities/pcurrentissues/fmd/doc/contribution-EpyntActionGroup.pdf (inactive).

410 21,000×50÷1,000 = 1,050 tons.

411 www.engineeringtoolbox.com/fuels-higher-calorific-values-d_169.html

412 http://cta.ornl.gov/bedb/appendix_a/The_Effect_of_Moisture_Content_on_Wood_Heat_Content.xls

413 This amount stemmed from the cremation of 40,000 carcasses.

5.3.5. Emaciated Corpses

The following considerations concern bodies showing second degree malnutrition. During the so-called *Minnesota Starvation Experiment* (November 1944 through December 1945), 36 volunteers underwent a restricted diet over 24 weeks and saw their weight dropping from an initial average of 69.4 kg to 52.6 kg at the end of the period. On average they lost 16.8 kg or 24.4%, split up in the following manner:[414]

– Water: 37% of total loss or 6.2 kg
– Proteins: 9% of total loss or 1.5 kg
– Fat: 54% of total loss or 9.1 kg

As we have seen above, the heat loss brought about by the loss of 1.5 kg of proteins is the equivalent of the heat necessary to evaporate (1.5×5.5=) 8.2 kg of water, whereas the 9.1 kg of fat lost would have evaporated (9.1×9.6=) 86.3 kg of water, for a total of 94.5 kg of water. Since body water dropped by only 6.2 kg during the emaciation process, the negative effect of the loss of fat and proteins is enormous, corresponding as it does to the heat of vaporization of (94.5 – 6.2 =) 88.3 kg of water.

In other words, the loss of 6.2 kg of body water saves some 6.2×(640+0.493×700) ≈ 6,100 kcal in terms of fuel requirements, as opposed to a loss of available fuel of (9.1×9,500+1.5×5,400) ≈ 94,500 kcal caused by the loss of body fat and proteins. This results in a negative balance of some 88,400 kcal, the equivalent of 23 kg of dry wood.

In conclusion it may be said that, even though the average weight of the deportees may actually have been lower[415] than the values computed above, this would not have brought about any benefit as far as the thermal balance is concerned; on the contrary, it would have constituted a disadvantage, as it would have raised the fuel requirements.

5.3.6. Factors Influencing the Cremation

Available information on the burning of carcasses tells us that there are two factors favoring the combustion: the fat content of the carcasses and the dryness of the wood:

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414 Flamini Fidanza, "Effects of starvation on body composition," www.ajcn.org/cgi/reprint/33/7/1562.pdf

415 But T. Blatt writes: "There was no end to the quest for efficiency: it was found that the pyres burned hotter if *fat* women were alternated with the wood." T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 18.

> *"A very important factor observed during the incineration process was that carcass body fat added significantly to the incineration rate. It was observed that the small carcasses weighing less than 100 pounds* [45 kg] *were not incinerated as quickly as the carcasses with increased body fat. The body fat appeared to increase the incineration rate and provide higher burn temperatures."*[416]
>
> *"Open-air burning is the most lengthy of all incineration processes. The type of species burned influences the length of time; the greater the percentage of animal fat, the more efficient* [sic] *a carcass will burn* […]. *Swine have a higher fat content than other species and will burn most quickly* […]. *"*[398]

As far as the second factor is concerned, it has been ascertained that "dry wood for fuel is critical to ensuring a proper air/fuel mixture";[398] furthermore, "experience gained in North Carolina in 1999 (following Hurricane Floyd) and Texas (following flooding in 1998) confirms the importance of having dry wood for incineration";[398] finally, "kindling wood should be dry, have a low moisture content, and not come from green vegetation."[398] This became evident during a poorly run incineration:[398]

> *"An excellent example of trial-and-error occurred during the 2002 AI*[avian influenza]*-related disposal effort in Virginia: After burning several tons of* [poultry] *carcasses at an extremely slow rate, it was quickly determined that wood from the landfill was not a good fuel source due to its high moisture content."*

We must also look at the quality of the burning process:[417]

> *"Smoke from such fires can be high in particulates and/or produce offensive odors if the burn is not complete."*

Obviously, "successful burning of carcasses is somewhat dependent on weather conditions (rain can hamper effectiveness)."[417]

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416 "Swine carcass disposal evaluation using Air Curtain Incinerator System, Model T-359," December 19 - 20, 1994. Pilot Point, Texas. U.S. Department of Agriculture/Texas Animal Health Commission, www.airburners.net/tech_docs/usda-aphis_airburners_swine_carcass_disposal_evaluation.pdf.

417 B. Ellis, "Carcass Disposal Issues in Recent Disasters, Accepted Methods, and Suggested Plan to Mitigate Future Events," http://ecommons.txstate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1068&context=arp

5.3.7. Wood Requirements for Corpse Cremation at Sobibór

These considerations having been set forth, we will now return to the cremation of the alleged corpses at Sobibór. As the corpses already buried could not be burned with an amount of fuel lower than that need for fresh corpses, even needing more fuel in all likelihood, it is safe to assume a ratio of 3.5 kg of dry wood per kg of body weight for all corpses.

Before attempting to evaluate the amount of wood needed for the cremation, we must first go back to the description of the operations provided by Holocaust historiography. The tribunal at Hagen in Germany accepted the following:[418]

> *"A heavy excavator with an outrigger clamshell was then brought into the camp, with Jewish detainee laborers having to assist. The partly decomposed corpses were lifted out of the pits by the excavator and then burned on large grates in a prearranged but as yet empty pit. The grates consisted of old railway rails which had been placed over concrete foundations. From then on, all corpses stemming from the gassings were immediately burned over these fires, also during the night. The light from the fires was visible not only within the camp, but also outside, and the stench of scorched flesh filled the air all around."*

Schelvis describes the matter as follows:[419]

> *"It was then decided to start burning the bodies instead, and to get a machine in to dig up the tens of thousands of buried bodies to burn them as well. In the autumn of 1942 a heavy machine arrived in the middle of the night.* […] *It was of a type similar to the one used at Treblinka. The machine was taken to Lager 3 and, within a few days, work was begun on the very spot where the third grave was to be dug, with the digger pulling out trees and roots. A pit was excavated, but it was smaller and shallower than the other two. Once it was finished, rails were criss-crossed over the top, forming a rudimentary grid. The grabber was then used to excavate the decomposing bodies from the two existing mass graves and to haul them over to the new pit. The operator would drive right up* [to] *the grid, where the Ar-*

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418 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 173.
419 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 111f.

beitshäftlinge [inmate workers] *from Lager 3 piled the bodies into human pyramids. Then they were burnt.*

Once the Germans had started using the cremating pit, all the gassed bodies were taken there straight from the gas chambers to be burnt immediately. Both of the mass graves were eventually cleared and filled in with sand and dirt, and trees were planted in the soil covering them.

The cremation of the exhumed bodies, of which there were already more than 100,000, required huge quantities of wood, but plenty could be found in the neighbouring forest. A Waldkommando was formed, consisting of about thirty Arbeitshäftlinge. They had to cut down large numbers of trees and chop up the wood under the supervision of a few SS men and Ukrainian guards. To begin with, only young, strong men were chosen for the commando; later young women also became eligible. One of the few postcards that remain reveals that Walter Poppert from the Netherlands was the commando foreman at the end of August 1943.

The mass cremations resulted in huge fires, which flared up so high they could be seen far and wide, especially at night. The Ukrainians in their watchtowers could see the flames whenever the wind blew in their direction, making it hard for them to breathe. They were visible even from Piwonski's house in the village of Żłobek three kilometres to the north-west, and the stench was also noticeable from there. Some Ukrainians told him that in a single day as many as 5,000 to 6,000 bodies were exhumed and burnt."

Schelvis later comes back to this question and writes:[420]

"When it was decided around September 1942 to burn the bodies instead of burying them, firewood had to be collected from the nearby forest. A Waldkommando was formed, initially consisting of 20 to 25 men – the composition varying each day – who had to fell trees and chop them up. […] *The work was carried out in an area situated between one and three kilometres away."*

Finally, Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz writes:[421]

"The burning of the corpses was, however, difficult to hide, as the wind would spread a specific smell of fire all around and because the smoke and the fire from the burn sites were visible from far away."

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420 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

421 Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *op. cit.* (note 25), p. 55.

As we have already seen, Sobibór was surrounded by a forest consisting mainly of red pines. The wood of that tree has an upper heating value of 9,078 BTU/lb or 5,040 kcal/kg.[422] However, green wood contains at least 60% of water[423] and has a heating value of only some 1,900 kcal/kg.[424] At 60% humidity, red pine has a heating value of about 2,000 kcal/kg – without taking into account the heat required to evaporate this water during combustion (640 kcal/kg of water). At a water content of 25% the heating value is 3,780 kcal/kg[425]

It follows that 1 kg of dry wood (20% humidity) with a calorific value of 3,800 kcal/kg is the equivalent of 1.9 kg of green wood.

Thus, for the cremation of a corpse at Sobibór, some (210×1.9=) 400 kg of fresh wood were needed. Thomas Blatt, however, asserts that "the pyre, sometimes more than three yards high, was then doused with kerosene[426] and ignited."[427] Kurt Ticho/Thomas speaks also of coal as fuel for the cremations.[428] To demonstrate *a fortiori* the inconsistency of the Holocaust thesis, we will assume that the use of kerosene and/or coal would have brought down the fresh wood requirements by one

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422 Peter J. Ince, "How to Estimate Recoverable Heat Energy in Wood or Bark Fuels," United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, General Technical Report FPL 29, 1979; www.fpl.fs.fed.us/documnts/fplgtr/fplgtr29.pdf.

423 "The green moisture content of wood is normally above 60 percent, and can range as high as 120 percent for some species," in: "Moisture Content of 'Seasoned' Firewood," www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/wfiles/W179.pdf; "Mostly English and European Oak, when freshly felled, has a moisture content of between 60% and 80%," in: "South Downs Green Wood Centre – Timber Frame Green Oak Timber Frames," www.southdownsgreenwoodcentre.co.uk/timberframes.html; "What is the moisture content (MC) of wood compared to its dry weight? Typically 60% for green hardwoods, up to double that for softwoods." John Sankey, "Wood Moisture," www.johnsankey.ca/wetwood.html

424 See note 412: 3,400 Btu/lb = circa 1,900 kcal/kg.

425 "Energie rinnovabili" (renewable energies), www.pd.camcom.it/dev_cciaa/Web.nsf/C1256C75005AA1D4C125735200246A54/$file/biomasse.pdf (inactive); according to other sources, the heating value is 3,700-3,800 kcal/kg for a humidity of 12-15%: www.cofea.it/public/all_00029.pdf

426 In a later German version (2004) quoted by Jens Hoffman, the term "Benzin" (gasoline) appears here, presumably with the consent of Thomas Blatt. See J. Hoffmann, *"Das kann man nicht erzählen." "Aktion 1005." Wie die Nazis die Spuren ihrer Massenmorde in Osteuropa beseitigten*, KVV konkret, Hamburg 2008, p. 244. The fuel value of gasoline is 10,500 kcal/kg, almost identical to that of kerosene. It must be noted, however, that the use of gasoline would have been very dangerous on account of its volatility: by the time the corpses would have been thoroughly doused, ignition could have caused an explosion of the gasoline/air mixture.

427 T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 18.

428 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 78.

quarter, i.e. to 300 kg per corpse, even though such a hypothesis would be rather unlikely.[429]

What is more, the Third Reich could not afford to waste gasoline or other liquid fuels in such a manner. Schelvis tells us:[430]

> *"The pressing shortage of petrol and fuel oil had turned peat into a significant energy resource, as it was suitable not only for burning in stoves, but also as a fuel for generators. Globocnik complained about his dwindling petrol rations and of barely being able to keep his gassing engines running."*

On 4 September 1942 he therefore wrote to SS-*Hauptsturmführer* W. Grothmann, Himmler's adjutant at the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (RSHA, Imperial Security Main Office) in Berlin, asking to be assigned "*mehr Treibstoff*" (more fuel).[431]

Even so, the requirements of green wood for the Sobibór cremations would have amounted to (169,000×0.3=) 50,700 tons.

The forests in the Lublin area, including those around Sobibór, presently contain some 224 m^3 of wood per ha[432] or 197 tons,[433] which means that the 30 workers of the *Waldkommando* would have had to cut down (57,700÷197=) about 293 ha of forest, corresponding to nearly 3 km^2 or more than a square mile.

If we assume that the burnings went on continuously for 12 months from October 1942 through October 1943, then the 30 men of the forest detail would have had to fell and bring in (50,700÷365=) ca. 139 tons of lumber every day – an impossible task.

With traditional tools (axes, saws, billhooks), 6 lumberjacks working from dawn to dusk needed 15 days to fell, saw, and split 50 tons of wood.[434] This translates to (50÷15÷6 =) 0.55 tons of wood per man-day, which means that the 30 detainees of the forest detail would have been

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429 For example, in order to replace the heat produced by 100 kg of fresh wood, ([2,000×100]÷10,300=] 19.4 liters of kerosene (or 19 liters of gasoline), or else ([2,000×100]÷6,200=] 32.2 kg of coal per corpse would have been required, for a total of (169,000×19.4=) 3,278,600 liters of kerosene (or 3,211,000 liters of gasoline) or (169,000×32.2=) 5,441,800 kg of coal, or amounts intermediate between the two, if both were used.

430 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 139.

431 *Ibid.*, p. 138 (facsimile of the document).

432 *Przyroda*, www.wios.lublin.pl/tiki-download_file.php?fileId=232 (inactive).

433 The weight of freshly cut red pine is 880 kg per cubic meter. "Dizionario forestale," www.regione.fvg.it/rafvg/export/sites/default/RAFVG/AT9/ARG5/allegati/Dizionario_forestale_link.pdf (inactive).

434 "I Carbonai di Cappadocia," www.aequa.org/public/documenti/AOnLine/CarbonaiCappadocia.DOC.

able to handle (0.55×30=) 16.5 tons of wood per day, but the daily requirements (to cremate the total number of victims within 12 months, up to October 1943) were 139 tons and would have taken more than 8 days to provide. A full (50,700÷16.5=) 3,072 working days, or 8 years and 5 months, would have been needed to fell and prepare the 50,700 tons of fresh wood needed to cremate 169,000 corpses!

This wood would also have had to be moved into the camp, an operation which would have required 28 truckload movements per day over 365 days. But there is no testimony mentioning this enormous load. As against this, the aerial photographs of the Sobibór region, taken on 11 July 1940 and 30 May 1944,[435] do not show any apparent reduction in the wooded area around the camp – even indicating an increase in the vegetation on the southern side – nor did the Polish investigators raise this important issue.

5.3.8. The Duration of the Cremation

According to the official Holocaust historiography, the cremation of the corpses was carried out in a trench, on grates made of railway rails which rested on blocks of concrete. This trench, A. Kola informs us, measured 10 × 3 meters and was 90 centimeters deep (cf. Section 5.2.3).

For the assessment of the duration of cremations we may base ourselves on the cremation of animal carcasses. Between 1 p.m. on 15 April 2001 and 1 p.m. on 18 April two pyres were operated at Whithorn in Scotland. They measured 50 by 1.5 m each and allowed the cremation of 511 head of cattle, 90 sheep, and 3 pigs with a combined weight of 260,300 kg[436] on a total surface area of 150 square meters. Taking the smaller pit area at Sobibór into account, this corresponds to some (260,300×30÷150=) 52,060 kg in three days.

For the fresh corpses we have established an average weight of 60 kg, hence their total weight amounts to (89,000×60÷1000=) about 5,340 tons. Assuming that the previously buried corpses had lost all of their

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435 G. Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 354), pp. 146-148; "Mapping Sobibór," www.deathcamps.org/sobibor/maps.html.

436 We assume an average weight of 500 kg per cow, 100 kg per pig, 50 kg per sheep. Paul Watkiss, Alison Smith, AEA Technology Environment, "CBA of Foot and Mouth Disease Control Strategies: Environmental Impacts," http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130402184132/http://archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/atoz/fmd/documents/environmental_report.pdf; According to the official UK agricultural statistics, the average weights are 335, 80, and 18.2 kg respectively (*ibid.*).

body water, their residual weight would be (60–[60×0.64] =) 21.6 kg each, and their total weight would amount to (80,000×21.6÷1000=) 1,728 tons. Thus, the total combined weight of the two types of corpses would be (5,340+1,728=) 7,068 tons, with an average weight of 41.8 kg for each corpse.

The 52,060 kg mentioned above would thus correspond to 1,200 corpses.

We must, however, consider that in the case taken as a model the three days in question referred to the actual duration of the fire consuming the carcasses, whereas at Sobibór a continuous cremation of this kind could not have been implemented in view of the working hours in force in the camp: from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. (in the summer) or to 5 p.m. (in the winter).[437] Actually, "*die Arbeitsjuden konnten nachts schlafen*" (the Jewish workers could sleep at night),[438] hence they worked at most for 14 hours each day, which means that over one working day they could burn ([400÷24]×14=) circa 230 corpses.

Thomas Blatt asserts that the pyres were "more than three yards high"[439] (i.e. roughly 3 meters). However, the only incineration site identified for Sobibór (cf. above) covered a surface area of 30 square meters and was 90 centimeters deep. Actually, the volume below ground level should not be added to that of the pyre, because it was needed for the supply of combustion air, but we will still take it into account and thus assume a pyre 4 meters high with a total volume of some 120 cubic meters. One cubic meter of solid wood (i.e. without any air space between logs) yields a volume of 1.4 cubic meters when stacked in the form of sawn and/or split logs.[440] Wood of red pine immediately upon cutting weighs 880 kg per cubic meter, hence the weight of a pile of such wood, stacked, occupying one cubic meter (including air space) would be about 630 kilograms. This amount of wood would have been sufficient for the incineration of 2 corpses, which would themselves have occupied a space of some 80 liters or 0.08 cubic meters. In practi-

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437 T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 46.
438 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 135.
439 T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 18.
440 Workshop on: "Le biomasse agricole e forestali nello scenario energetico nazionale" (agricultural and forestry biomass from the point of view of national energy), Progetto Fuoco 2004, Verona (18-19 March 2004), http://docplayer.it/amp/46391110-Convegno-di-studio-le-biomasse-agricole-e-forestali-nello-scenario-energetico-nazionale-progetto-fuoco-2004-verona-18-19-marzo-2004.html.

cal terms, the volume of 300 kg of wood plus one corpse would have been roughly half a cubic meter.

It follows that one pyre of 120 cubic meters in overall volume would have contained about 240 corpses. We must, however, take into consideration that 1 cubic meter of stacked wood is not equivalent to 1 cubic meter of pyre volume, because in this case additional space for the passage of combustion air must be provided. Hence, a cubic meter of stacked red pine in a pyre would weigh less than 630 kg, and the actual incineration capacity would have been less than the theoretical value of 240 corpses estimated above. For our subsequent calculations we therefore use a value of 230 corpses.

To the time needed for the actual cremation we have to add the time it took to build the pyre and the time needed for its dismantling, i.e. the removal of the ash. Each load of 230 bodies thus involved:

1. The building of the pyre, using (230×0.3=) 69 tons of green wood and 230 corpses.
2. One day for the cremation as such.
3. The removal of (230×0.06[441]×0.35=) 4.8 tons of ash (assuming that 350 kg of ash was produced per ton of corpses cremated).

Given an average specific gravity of 0.4 for the ash, the ash volume would have come to (4.8×0.4=) 12 m^3 per day. This means that the cremation trench with its volume of (10×3×0.9=) 27 m^3 would have filled up with ash within two cremations.

Even if we assume that operations 1. and 3. above could have been carried out within a total of 24 hours (one working day), then the pyre could have incinerated 230 corpses within two days and the cremation of all alleged victims would have taken (169,000÷230×2 =) ca. 1,450 days, i.e. some 49 months or 4 years and 1 month, thus ending in November of 1946.

As far as the removal of the ash is concerned, we must also consider the rate of cooling of the ash. In the experimental cremation of animal flesh in a small pit carried out by Carlo Mattogno it turned out that 14 hours after the extinction of the flames the ash still had a temperature of 320°C and 160°C after 29 hours.[442] At Sobibór the greater volume of ash would certainly have needed a day and a half for cooling down to a

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[441] The percentage of ash is calculated on the basis of an average weight of 60 and not 41.8 kg, because the loss of water (or body fluids) from the corpse has no effect on its ash content.

[442] C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 401), p. 70. The experiment was carried out in February.

temperature at which it could be safely handled – we must not forget, after all, that the ash is reported to have contained bone fragments, which had to be crushed by hand. Forced cooling, e.g. by means of water, would have resulted in a layer of soaked ash and soil in the pit which would have caused a corresponding loss of heat in the succeeding cremation due to evaporation of the water.

In mainstream Holocaust historiography the descriptions of the fires provided above speak of smoke and dust as phenomena which normally accompanied the incinerations, but this only goes to show, as we have already noted, that the combustion proceeded poorly.

We must also keep in mind that, while fresh corpses could be arranged on the grate in a somewhat orderly fashion allowing for open spaces to be provided for the passage of air, the unearthed corpses were simply dumped from the excavator, forming vague piles similar to the shapeless masses of exhumed carcasses seen at Mynydd Epynt which we have spoken of above and which required amounts of fuel and burning times far in excess of the fresh carcasses.

This signifies that the cremation of the 80,000 corpses reportedly unearthed would have taken much longer and would have required much more wood than the cremation of the 89,000 fresh corpses.

Furthermore climatic and weather conditions slowing down the cremation process must be taken into account as well, in particular days of rain, snow, and frost during the winter months.

5.3.9. The Ashes

The human body contains about 5% ash,[408] similar to the ash content of cattle (6%). We will assume a value of 6% by volume for the wood, because it is fresh wood, very rich in water. Hence, the 169,000 corpses will yield (169,000×60×0.05=) 507,000 kg or 507 tons of ash, with the wood contributing (169,000×300×0.06 =) 3,042,000 kg or 3,042 tons, resulting in a total of 3,549 tons of ash.

We come to the same result if we assume that one ton of corpses plus the necessary wood yield 350 kg of ash.

Concerning the ash found in the camp, A. Kola asserts:[309]

> *"Particularly noticeable traces of cremation occurred in the lower parts of the graves where distinct layers of scorched bones, with a thickness up to 40-60 cm, could be identified"*

But this in disagreement with his description of the contents of the individual pits which claims that "the lower parts" of pits number 3, 4, 5,

and 6 did not contain "clearly identifiable layers of burnt bones having a thickness of 40 to 60 cm" but "remains of uncremated corpses in a state of saponification" whereas "in the upper layers" there were "remains of cremated corpses." Pits number 1 and 2 also contained "remains of cremated corpses." Such statements are not specific enough to permit a quantitative evaluation of the ash present in the camp.

Still, even if we were to accept that all pits contained a layer of some 50 cm of wood and corpse ash from cremations, not mixed with limestone and sand (which Kola mentions in particular for pit number 3), the respective volume would be (3,210×0.5=) 1,605 m^3, equal to (1,605×0.4=) 642 tons, corresponding to about 34,500 corpses. In this somewhat unrealistic hypothesis we would still be left with another 2,900 tons of ash, enough for 580 truckloads or 100 railway freight cars. Where would such enormous quantities of ash have ended up?

5.4. Excavated Building Remains

5.4.1. The Alleged Second Phase Gas Chambers in Testimony, Verdicts and Historiography

Mainstream Holocaust historians assert that, similar to Bełżec and Treblinka, the alleged extermination at Sobibór went through two phases: a first where a smaller gassing installation was used, and a second where this was replaced by a larger building containing more chambers. What distinguishes the alleged second phase gas chambers at Sobibór from the corresponding installations at Bełżec and Treblinka is the claim that this structure was erected on the same spot as the first phase gas-chamber building, which was partially or entirely demolished. This means that any archeological remains would primarily derive from the later structure.

The eye witness statements about the second gas-chamber building are generally vague with little detail provided on the appearance of the chambers or the mechanics of the killing installation. The former SS-*Scharführer* Franz Hödl confusingly stated that[443]

> *"a concrete building, 18 to 20 metres long, with about 6 to 8 gas chambers had been erected. The gas chamber had either 4 or 6*

[443] Statement by Franz Hödl, StA.Do-Gom-PB-III-1270; quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 104.

> *chambers on either side of the central corridor, three on the left, three on the right."*

The former Ukrainian auxiliary Vassily Pankov described the same building thus:[444]

> *"At the camp there were 6 not-large gas chambers, sized about 3 × 4 meters, and 50-70 and even up to 100 detainees were put into each chamber, and then the doors would be hermetically closed and a diesel motor operated, from which the exhaust fumes would be piped into each chamber. For an hour or more the detainees were killed by the gas in the gas chambers."*

Mainstream Holocaust historians seem to agree that the second building was a solid structure of brick or concrete, but when it comes to other details they frequently disagree. Arad holds that the rebuilding consisted in adding three new chambers and a corridor to the three chambers of the first structure, which he describes as a "solid brick building:"[445]

> *"The new six-room gas chamber building had a corridor that ran through its center, and three rooms on either side. The entrance to each gas chamber was from the corridor. The three gas chambers were the same size as the existing one, 4 × 4 meters. The killing capacity of the gas chambers was increased to nearly 1,300 people simultaneously. With the renewal of the extermination activities in Sobibór, in October 1942, the new gas chambers became operational."*

According to Novitch, the five new chambers measured 4 × 12 meters each with an individual capacity of 70 to 80 victims.[446] No source is provided for this description, though, and it does not match any known witness statement.[447] Louis de Jong speaks of six chambers with a total capacity of "about 500 people."[324]

In the English language edition of his Sobibór study, Schelvis asserts that the first gas chambers were built of wood,[448] while the new ones were housed in a brick building,[449] implying that the first structure was demolished completely. Schelvis does not state anything about the number or size of the new chambers, but finds it sufficient to quote the

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444 V. Pankov, *op. cit.* (note 289).
445 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 31, 123.
446 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 26.
447 The number of chambers is possibly derived from the 1947 Main Commission report, cf. Section 2.3.2.
448 For more on this issue see Subchapter 4.4.
449 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 103.

Hödl testimony mentioned above – as well as Kurt Gerstein's and Rudolf Reder's statements regarding the alleged gas chambers at Bełżec!

Rückerl writes in his summary of the Hagen verdict:[450]

> *"A group of construction workers from the Lublin head office, directed by the defendant L.*[ambert]*, partly tore down the old gas-chamber building and replaced it with a new and larger building of solid materials having twice the number of chambers. Each cell had a floor area of 4 by 4 meters and a clear height of 2.20 meters."*

The same verdict states that the first building contained three chambers,[451] so that the new chambers numbered six in total. No dimensions for the building itself are given, but based on the number and size of the chambers we may conclude that it measured approximately 13 × 10 m, allowing for a 1.5 meter wide central corridor and 20 cm thick walls.

It is apparent that Arad is basing his description on Rückerl's summary (without stating his source), but whereas Arad claims that each chamber had a capacity of (1300÷6=) 217 people, the Hagen court came to the conclusion that merely 80 people could be herded into each chamber, "if they stood tightly packed."[452]

Three years after the publication of his standard work on the Reinhardt camps Arad lowered the individual capacity of the new chambers to 160-180 victims in the entry for Sobibór in *The Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (cf. Subchapter 2.1). Léon Poliakov on the other hand, in his preface to Novitch's Sobibór anthology, writes that the new chambers had a total capacity of 2,000 victims.[453] Schelvis admits:[454]

> *"It is virtually impossible to deduce from the various witness examinations and documents how many people were actually killed at any one time in the gas chambers; the numbers given by the SS men and one Ukrainian are too divergent."*

He then adds in a note to this passage the following chronicle of inconsistency:[455]

> *"Bauer on 6 October 1965 in Hagen: around 50 to 60 per chamber; Frenzl on 10 October 1966 in Hagen: in groups of 250, possibly 150; Bolender on 5 June 1961 in Munich: 40 to 50 in one chamber; Gomerski on 19 September 1961 in Butzbach: 60 to 80 in one room*

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450 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), pp. 172f.
451 *Ibid.*, p. 163.
452 *Ibid.*, p. 173.
453 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 12.
454 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 102.
455 *Ibid.*, pp. 114f., note 30.

> *('I remember clearly that 250 people were counted off each time and then gassed'); Daniltschenko, a Ukrainian guard, in Lisakowsk on 25 January 1985: 'Each room could accommodate 250 persons. There were six chambers.' Since Daniltschenko started work at Sobibór only in 1943, the numbers given by him relate to the new, enlarged gas chambers. As for the others, it is not known whether their figures relate to the old or the new chambers. The judges in Munich concluded that, after the new gas chambers had been established, a gassing procedure could have killed up to 1,500 people at a time. The court at Hagen included in its verdicts of 1966 and 1985*[456] *that the most likely number of people gassed per procedure can be put at 480. It was found to be a reasonable assumption that each of the six gas chambers could hold 80 people."*

Thus the Munich court reached the verdict that the murder weapon had a capacity three times the *maximum* figure presented in the Hagen court's findings. How is that possible, if in fact we are dealing with real events?

The construction of the second gas-chamber building is supposed to have taken place during late summer or early autumn 1942. Erwin Lambert, who allegedly supervised the construction, mentions receiving instructions for the rebuilding work from Franz Reichleitner, who was appointed commandant in early September 1942.[457] This does not stop Schelvis from writing that the construction took place "between June and September 1942," when Stangl was still commandant of Sobibór.[458] Even more curious is Lambert's claim that he and Lorenz Hackenholt travelled to a sawmill near Warsaw where they "ordered a large quantity of wood for the rebuilding works."[457] Why would acquiring *large* amounts of wood be necessary if the new gas chambers were to be built of bricks and/or concrete?

5.4.2. Building Remains Excavated by Kola

Of the 1,805 drillings made on the 4 hectares of the former Camp III, 569 detected disruptions of soil layers directly underneath the surface, some of them reaching a depth of over 2 m. Kola writes:[459]

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456 The latter being the appeal trial of former SS man Karl Frenzel.

457 Erwin Lambert in Stuttgart on 2 October 1962; ZStL-251/59-8-1542/43, quoted in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 104.

458 *Ibid.*, p. 103.

459 A. Kola, *op. cit.* (note 305), p. 117.

> *"The disruptions are located mostly in the area of the graves, especially between the graves. Their identification is impossible without excavations. Considering the location (the region of the graves), we can suspect that they may be remains of the camp buildings with functions directly linked to the killing of the victims. They could be remains of e.g. a gas chamber or marks of intensive activity in the region of the graves e.g. soil surface transformations, which can be the result of moving the corpses or cremated remains. Excavations could possibly reveal the origins of these structures."*

In the end no diggings were undertaken within the grave zone despite Kola's suggestion (which is contrary to eye witness evidence) that the alleged gas chambers possibly could have been located there. Another zone with disruptions was found in the western and southwestern part of Hectare XVII, around Grave No. 2. This zone was left unexcavated too, as were a number of dispersed disruptions detected near the mass graves especially to the southwest and southeast of them.

The excavations carried out were concentrated on two other zones where soil disruptions had been detected by drillings, both located in the southern half of the former Camp III: the central and southern parts of Hectare XXIV and the central part of Hectare XXV near today's tarmac square with monuments and plaques commemorating the alleged victims. The disruptions detected in the latter zone were found to cover an area of approximately 40 × 30 m. In the process of numerous archeological digs carried out in hectares XXIV and XXV, the remains of a total of five structures were unearthed. They are designated by Kola as objects A to E. Objects A to D, all of relatively small size, are located in Hectare XXV, while the much larger Object E is situated in Hectare XXIV. Kola's archeological findings pertaining to these five objects will be presented in the following paragraphs.

A total of 800 drillings were also performed within the former area of Camp I and II (the hectares XXXI and XXXII on the border between Camp II and III, hectares XXXIX and XL just to the east of them, and Hectare XLVIII further south, within the former Camp I). Soil disruptions were found scattered around the area with a notable concentration found in the northern part of Hectare XXXI. Kola describes this as a continuation to the south of the disruptions in the central and southern parts of Hectare XXIV (where Object E was discovered). Numerous disruptions were also detected in hectares XL and XLVIII. In the former hectare they are concentrated in the northern and eastern parts,

while in the latter they are randomly scattered. All disruptions detected by probing drills in the former Camp I and II were left unexcavated.

5.4.2.1. Object A

This building object is located in Hectare XXV, Ar 53, 54, 63 and 64. It was unearthed by the diggings 1/01, 1a/01, 1b/01 and 1c/01. Kola writes about it:[460]

> *"The relic of a small building, probably a wooden barrack with some internal brick elements. The building had a basement with depth up to 2.50 m below ground level. The outline at ground level had dimensions of 2.75 × 2.75 m. The building's wooden elements were completely disassembled. The remains of the building are archaeological structures from the inside of the basement. These are humus mixed with sand containing disintegrated elements of the building (bricks and rubble, mortar, iron elements from walls, doors and ceilings – hooks, screws, nails, pins, staples, hinges, parts of a door frame, a window knob, and bars e.g. parts of the grill from an oven etc.). Some of the bars have characteristics of half-finished products. 4 chamotte bricks were also found. These structures are very distinctive in the sand base. From the collection of relics from the building numerous other items were found: spectacle frames and lenses, an iron drill, a file, an iron chisel, an iron element of a shovel, jars, an inkwell, perfume bottles, combs, parts of hair clips etc. From 80-90 cm below the ground to ground level there was a concentration of caked coal in the centre of the basement. The layer was 10-15 cm thick and covered an area of 1.5 × 1.5 m. Next to this coal, in the northwestern part of the building, there was a greater amount of coal, approx. 300-400 kg, reaching a depth up to approx. 2.20 m.*
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> *The property found in object A allows for a hypothetical interpretation of its function. A high concentration of coal with enough supply of wood (from forests in the vicinity) shows that the coal wasn't used as fuel, but for other purposes. Large amounts of bricks and rubble, including chamotte bricks and mortar, indicate that an oven was located here. The large amounts of pre-fabricated iron bars*[461] *as well as some iron tools (drill, file, and chisel) that were discovered could indicate that this was a blacksmith's workshop. If this hypothesis is correct, then the coal could have been used at the workshop. While*

460 A. Kola, *op. cit.* (note 305), pp. 118f.

461 *polfabrikaty zelaynych sztabek*

the workshop was in use, the coal was stored on the ground level, and after the building had been demolished, the coal was moved to the basement where its concentration can be found in a layer lying between the northwestern wall of the building and its centre."

Kola's explanation of this object may be logical, but it stands quite in contrast to his overlying thesis. For what reason would a smithy be placed in the "extermination area"? All maps of the camp further agree that a smithy was located in Camp I among various other workshops,[462] and there is no mention of a Camp III smithy in eye witness testimony. Also, in a small camp such as Sobibór there would certainly be no need for more than one smithy. An alternative interpretation of the function of this building will be presented in Subchapter 9.1., p. 286.

5.4.2.2. Object B

This small building object is located in Hectare XXV, Ar 23 and 33. It was unearthed by the diggings 2/01, 2a/01 and 2b/01. Kola writes:[463]

"Object B is what is left of a small (possibly wooden) building, completely demolished, with the floor level going up to 1.3m into the sandy soil. The outline of the building at ground level had dimensions of approx. 4.0 m × 3.5 m. At the bottom the outline was getting smaller. It had dimensions of 3.5 × 3.2 m. The interpretation of the relics of Object B is difficult.

The relic structures of the object (compressed and decayed organic structures) lack elements that would help to identify the structure or function of the building (bricks, nails, wooden boards, tar paper). By looking at the layout of the relics of this object we can assume that it was either a small barrack with a shallow basement or a building with the characteristics of a semi-dugout dug into the ground.

Among the relics of Object B, as opposed to those of building A, numerous items belonging either to the victims or to the Jewish personnel of Camp III were found. Most of the items were only fragmentarily preserved and corroded, for example elements of glass dishes, bottles and plastic soapboxes, food tins, remains of leather shoes, bucket handles, and many unidentified iron items which were highly corroded. Some of the items in better condition were taken

462 The Bauer map, reproduced in M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), pp. 36-37, marks this as building No. 3 in Camp I. The Blatt-Bauer map, reproduced in Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), pp. 34-35, shows this as building No. 21. B. Rutherford's map of Sobibór in June 1943 designates it as building No. 24.

463 A. Kola, *op. cit.* (note 305), p. 119.

out for conservation to be placed in a future exhibition. There were 73 fragments of ladies' combs, 12 fragments of hair clips, 46 elements of spectacle frames, 19 spectacle lenses, 11 perfume bottles, 19 rifle shells (Mauser) and pistol shells, 3 Polish coins, a tooth brush, 2 glass beads, 9 rubber endings from crutches or walking sticks, 4 fragments of scissors, 2 padlock keys, trowels etc. 12 dentures and fragments of flashlight batteries were also found."

5.4.2.3. Object C

This object consists of the already mentioned remains of a water well built of concrete. It is located in Hectare XXV, Ar 35, and was unearthed by the digging 3/01. The well had an inner diameter of 90 cm and was filled with sand at the time when excavations began.[463]

5.4.2.4. Object D

This building object is located in Hectare XXV, Ar 33. It was unearthed by the diggings 4/01, 4a/01 and 4b/01. Kola writes:[464]

"It is the imprint of a small wooden building occupying a rectangular area of approx. 5.2 × 3.0 m. Here, similarly to the building relic designated as Object B (located directly to the north of Object D), the wooden construction elements were dismantled and removed. Judging from the archaeologically recognized relic structures, this building could have had a shallow cellar or might have been a semi-dugout, about 1.5 m deep into the ground.

Little can be said in the current stage of exploring Camp III about how this building would have been used. Notably, in the remains of Object D numerous objects were found – most likely belonging to the victims – such as: dentures, spectacle frames and lenses, fragments of combs and hairclips, mirror fragments, cigarette holder fragments, soap dishes, clothing buttons, a spoon, a fragment of an electric razor, perfume bottles, belt buckles, pocket knives, a scissors fragment, a cut-throat razor.

Between ten and twenty rifle shell-cases were also found – these were Mauser,[465] *Mosin-Nagant,*[466] *and pistol shell-cases. The con-*

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464 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

465 The Karabiner Mauser 98k was the standard infantry rifle of the German Armed Forces during World War II. Due to its length of 1,110 mm (cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karabiner_98k) this weapon is not well-suited for executions at short distances, like for people lying down in a room. At such short distances its bullets have such a high inertia that they exit the human body still with high inertia, po-

necting elements of the building structure on the other hand contained numerous heavily corroded iron artifacts."

As with Object B one may note the presence of a large number of toilet articles (combs, hairclips, soap dishes, perfume bottles) which, if like Kola we assume them to be the belongings of the alleged victims, seems inconsistent with the eye witnesses' claims that the deportees not only undressed, but also handed over all their belongings in the Camp II reception area before they were led through the "tube" to Camp III and the "gas chambers."

Kola next makes the following comment on the location of the objects A-D:[464]

"When analyzing the topography of objects A, B, and D, their regular arrangement catches one's attention – they are located along a line running in North-South direction. Plenty of further anthropogenic changes were encountered close to the earth's surface, which suggests the presence of more objects, i.e. relics of unidentified buildings.

A water well was located here (Object C), which indicates the possible location in this part of Camp III of a row of buildings belonging to the personnel (perhaps a Jewish commando) directly involved with the extermination. This could be explored by carrying out further excavations in this area."

5.4.2.5. Object E

This very large building object is located in Hectare XXIV, Ar 17, 26-28, 36, 37, 46, 47, 56, 57 and 66. It was unearthed by the diggings 5/01 and 5a-Ł. Kola writes:[467]

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tentially ricocheting and endangering those in the vicinity. Furthermore ammunition for this weapon is also more expensive than that for pistols. For this reason, executions at short distances are usually perpetrated with pistols. If shootings did indeed occur at Sobibór, as part of a kind of euthanasia program or for other reasons, it is far more-likely that the victims were shot at the edge of a mass grave, as was indicated by Schelvis with reference to a statement by Erich Bauer (*op. cit*. (note. 61), p. 65): "I am aware that these people, i.e. the sick, handicapped and children, babies in particular, were transported to the so-called Lazarett and were shot by workers from Lager 3," while Schelvis clarfies: "what the Germans termed the Lazarett, which actually turned out to be the edge of a large pit in Lager 3." Editor's note.

466 The bolt-action rifle Mosin-Nagant was the standard rifle of the Red Army during World War II. Due to its length of 1,306 mm this weapon was even less suited for executions at short range than the Mauser 98k. Hence the remarks made in the previous note apply here as well; cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mosin–Nagant. Editor's note.

467 A. Kola, *op. cit.* (note 305), pp. 120f.

"Object E consists of a relic of a long, wooden barrack with a length of approx. 60 m. and a width of 6 m. The longer side was situated more or less in NS direction. Despite the investigational dig being widened greatly in the south, the exact boundary was not found. Judging from the drilling results, this barrack's projection to the south could have been 20-25 m longer. At its northern side the barrack was closed off by a laterally situated smaller barrack with an area of 14.0 × 4.0 m.

The imprint of the two entirely demolished barracks is clearly defined in the light sandy forest floor as a pit currently filled with a dark, sandy humus containing nondescript organic detritus. The foundation of Object E is located 70 to 80 cm below the surface and displays in its entirety a horizontal position. Only in some places does the pit reach a depth of 120-130 cm.

Both barracks must have been built from wood since there were no brick, rubble, or mortar remnants in their vicinity, while in several places charcoal, decayed or charred wooden boards and planks were found.

In a few spots, especially in the central part of the large barrack, reverse imprints of vertically embedded pillars were discovered in the archeologically barren sand. It can therefore be presumed that the barrack's wooden floor was placed on a pillar structure some distance (approx. 60-70 cm) from the ground. Furthermore in some places, below the even bottom line of the barracks' remains, shallow pits of an unclear use were encountered, 30-60 cm deep into the archeologically barren sand. The outlines of these were oval in shape – with diameters ranging from 50 cm (no. 5) to 110 cm (no. 1) and a maximum plunge into the archeologically barren sand of up to around 60 cm (no. 3) – cf. the plan of Object E.[468] *In the relic structures of the smaller barrack (in the northwestern part of Object E) two massive, 210 cm long wooden beams were discovered, resting horizontally on 90 cm thick sandy soil. They had holes (of 5-6 cm diameter) placed regularly all the way along the top, a few of which still had pegs in them. These beams originating from the barrack's construction have probably been moved here during the disassembling of the building. Next to these beams the archeologists came*

468 Despite being referred to by Kola, the plan in question is not included in his article.

across two structural beams of the barrack (no. 7 and 8) entrenched about 40 cm into the sand.

Many objects doubtlessly belonging to the victims or the personnel of Camp III were found among the remains of Object E. These objects were found immediately underneath the layer of humus and appeared on the entire site of Object E. They were: hairclips and hair combs, under- and outerwear buttons, spectacle frames and cases, spoons, forks and kitchen knives, scissors, belt buckles, belt clasps and attachments, gas lighters, metal boxes, fragments of electric razors and razorblades, casings and mechanisms from watches, cuff clips, medicine bottles and packages, mirror relics, pocketknives etc. It is worth noting that in the central part of the smaller barrack in Object E, on a plot of land of only between ten and twenty meters' area, a large number (around 1,830 units) of Mauser and Mosin-Nagant rifle bullets was found, shot into the ground and hence deformed. Pistol shells (9), Mosin-Nagant rifle shells (3) and a pistol bullet. It thus seems likely that sick and worn-out prisoners were shot here while lying down.

In the light of the above finds the following question comes to mind: What could have been the function of such a spacious barrack? In its northern appendix (the smaller barrack) doubtlessly prisoners' lives were ended by shooting. The considerable number of bullets accumulated in such a small area indicates that the prisoners were shot lying down, otherwise (in case of horizontal shooting) the bullets would have been dispersed. However it is commonly known that the main way of extermination in Nazi death camps was by gassing. That was also the case in Camp III in Sobibór, as is mentioned in all the eye witness accounts of prisoners (from Camps I and II) who survived. Is it possible that Object E is a relic of a gas chamber?

At this stage of research it is impossible to give a simple answer. The distance from this barrack to the closest mass grave is only around 60 m and to the centre of the grave region – approx. 100 m. This is the distance which the bodies of inmates were moved who had been shot in the northern appendix of the barrack. The same could have happened to the bodies from the gas chambers, if these were located in this barrack. It has to be remembered that numerous relics of camp buildings were found in the area of the mass graves, which need further archaeological verification. Perhaps it is there that relics of gas chambers can be unearthed. It seems – with our current

understanding – that the larger barrack, the relic of which – so far not completely discovered – has been designated Object E, is more likely to have been used as an undressing facility where the victims' clothing and equipment was sorted. This working hypothesis needs to be verified through further excavations of the non-burial structures of Camp III."

The discovery of Object E poses three major problems to mainstream Holocaust historians. First, all maps of Sobibór place the gas-chamber building in the southwestern part of Camp III, which is exactly where Object E is located. None of the other objects excavated were found here, a fact that is consistent with the maps and models which all concur that the gassing installation (including the shed with the gassing engine) was the only building located in this part of the camp.[469] However, the characteristics of Object E are absolutely incompatible with those of the alleged second phase gas-chamber building.

To begin with, the latter was supposedly constructed of bricks and/or concrete, whereas Object E consists of the remains of two wooden barracks. Kola even stresses the fact that no traces of bricks, rubble, or mortar were discovered at the excavation site.[470] As for the dimensions, the larger barrack, having a width of 6 meters and a length of at least 60 (possibly 80-85) meters, covers an area almost three times as large as that of the alleged gas chambers, while the relatively small width of the barrack does not allow for the supposed structure with two rows of gas

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469 The only other structure in the south-western part of Camp III was supposedly an enclosed yard. The haircutting barrack (or shed, as Schelvis calls it) situated just south of Camp III was clearly far too small to be identified as Object E, judging by the various eyewitness maps of the camp. It seems likely, given the unanimous eyewitness evidence, that the haircutting barrack was located not far from the southern border of Camp III and the alleged "gas chambers" in the area corresponding to the northern part of Hectare XXXI, where drillings detected notable soil disruptions, viewed by Kola as a continuation of the zone of disruptions containing Object E.

470 One may recall here that the Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland discovered "a certain amount of rubble" at a location identified by witnesses as having been "the site of the building with the gas chambers." The Polish word translated as rubble, *gruz*, denotes remnants of brick or concrete; it is never used for describing the remains of wooden structures. Since it is extremely unlikely that the investigators removed all the rubble from the site, it is clear that the supposed "gas chamber" remnants mentioned in the 1947 report are not identical with Kola's Object E. The rubble must therefore have come from another structure, most likely Object A, which Kola describes as containing "some internal brick elements." Because of its dimensions (2.75×2.75 m), this structure can safely be ruled out as the remains of the alleged homicidal gas chambers. The witnesses' likely identification of the remains of Object A as the "gas chambers" is significant in the light of our hypothesis on the purpose of that structure, which will be presented in Subchapter 9.1.

chambers placed alongside a central corridor. The length alone is more than three times that described by Hödl and five times that implied by Arad.

Second, at the northern end of the barrack, corresponding to where the witnesses place a small shed housing the gassing engine, we have another wooden barrack, measuring 14 × 4 m, wherein Kola apparently found no traces of an engine room, only spent ammunition.

Third, no witness has ever mentioned the presence in Camp III of a structure the size of the larger barrack. But how could such a huge building have gone unnoticed?

The area in the smaller barrack containing numerous spent bullets can be explained in two ways. On one hand one may accept Kola's hypothesis of a site where handicapped and sick deportees were shot. This notion, however, contradicts eye witness statements that such shootings were carried out at a pit (the "Lazarett") near the old chapel during the first phase of operations and that they were later (during late summer 1942) moved to the edge of one of the mass graves.[471] Moreover, if one posits that the alleged gas chambers were located within Object E, or else in an unidentified structure close to it, then it makes little sense that said deportees were brought all the way to the immediate vicinity of the gas chambers and shot there. Why waste ammunition on victims who could as well be jammed into the gas chambers located only a few meters away?

In the context of a transit camp it is possible that deportees who were severely disabled, infected by epidemic diseases, mentally ill, or dying, and therefore deemed unfit for further transport and resettlement or a hazard to other deportees, were liquidated on the spot (cf. Subchapter 8.4). A more innocuous explanation would be that the site was used as a storage for spent ammunition collected for the sake of recycling the metal – a procedure practiced by the military not only in war time.[472] However, until more exact details about this finding are revealed, such as the bullets' degree of deformation and their placement in the soil, the question of the nature of this site must remain open.

Kola's interpretation that Object E served as an undressing or sorting barrack lacks a basis in the testimonial evidence and is in fact contra-

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471 Cf. Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 77; J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 64f.

472 It ought to be pointed out that in summer 1943 Himmler ordered that Sobibór was to serve as a "dismantling unit for captured enemy munitions," and the Mosin ammunition found by Kola was exactly that; see p. 21. Editor's note.

dicted by the eye witnesses who claim that the Jewish deportees had to undress[473] before they entered the camouflaged pathway, known as the *Schlauch* (tube), which led from the reception area in Camp II to the haircutting barrack and the alleged gas chambers in Camp III. According to Arad the *Schlauch* was 150 m long.[474]

As already mentioned in connection with Object D, the presence of toilet articles (hairclips, combs, mirrors) and remains of clothing (buttons, belt clasps) are inexplicable within the frame of the established narrative. The possible explanation that we are dealing with the belongings of members of the Camp III work commando does not hold water. It is unanimously asserted that this group consisted of male prisoners only. What use would those men have for perfume bottles and hairclips? Furthermore, all witnesses concur that the sorting of the victims' confiscated belongings took place in barracks located in Camp II. The above is why Kola has had to invent the claim that "barracks for the storage of the possessions of the arriving Jews" were located in Camp III, namely in order to disguise the fact that Object E is a blatant anomaly.

To summarize: Object E cannot be the alleged gas chambers, while at the same time there is no other place for it in the official historiographic picture. As will be shown below, this situation has placed contemporary Sobibór historians in a difficult dilemma.

5.5. Continued Archeological Research 2007-2008

In October 2007 a new archeological team, headed by Isaac Gilead and Yoram Haimi of the Ben-Gurion University in Israel as well as Wojciech Mazurek from the Polish firm Sub Terra Archaeological Ex-

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473 This is not to say that this claim must necessarily correspond to the truth. In fact, it seems most likely, as indicated by the finds of toilet articles, buttons, etc., that the deportees entered Camp III still clothed. Knowledge we have of other transit camps also indicate such a procedure. For example, a plan of the *Entlausungsanstalt* at Transit Camp Strasshof shows that deportees entered the building with their clothes on. They undressed inside and handed over their clothes to be deloused, went through a medical assessment, took a shower, and then were handed back their deloused clothes; Franz Puntigam, Hermann Breymesser, Erich Bernfus, *Blausäuregaskammern zur Fleckfieberabwehr. Grundlagen, Planung und Betrieb*, Sonderveröffentlichung des Reichsarbeitsblattes, Berlin 1943, pp. 56f. One may further recall in this context the claim found in S. Szmajzner's memoirs that the victims did not undress completely until they had passed through the "Schlauch" and reached the gas chambers (cf. Subchapter 2.5.).

474 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 32.

aminations, set out to continue Kola's failed search for the gas chambers. In July 2008 the team was joined by Paul Bauman and Brad Hansen of the Calgary firm Worley Parsons Resources and Energy, Phillip Reeder of the University of South Florida, and Richard Freund of the University of Hartford, who carried out a geophysical survey using high resolution metal detection, magnetic gradiometer, terrain conductivity meter, ground penetrating radar, aerial photography, and GPS mapping. This work was carried out in the open field south of the circular monument where the mass graves are located, and in eight 20 × 20 meter squares placed immediately south and east of the area excavated by the archeological team in 2007. Several GPR profiles were also conducted across the "tentatively identified mass graves."[355]

An actual report on the results brought by the archeological survey of 2007-2008 has yet to appear. In early 2009 a new American journal on contemporary history, *Present Pasts*, published an article, "Excavating Nazi Extermination Centres," which we have already referred to, co-authored by Gilead, Haimi, and Mazurek. Of its 30 pages, less than 12 are devoted to Sobibór, and excluding the illustrations, most of which are of little interest, the description of the new survey covers a mere four and half pages. In this text there is relatively little information on what exactly was found and where. The team's search for the alleged gas chambers is described as follows:[475]

> *"In October 2007, acting on the assumption that we knew roughly where the gas chamber was located, we decided to dig first in the area bordering the west of Kola's Building E. We worked in 5 × 5m squares which correspond to Kola's grid, screened all the sediments we dug and used soft hair brushes to clean the surfaces we exposed. The sediment we excavated was sand, heavily mixed with ashes and burnt materials and artifacts. It was approximately 10 cm deep and overlaid deep layers of sterile sand. The nature and the extension of the archaeological deposit and the types of artifacts embedded in it indicate that the part of Sobibór we excavated is neither the gas chamber nor the undressing barrack."*

Thus while knowing "roughly" the location of the alleged gas-chamber building, the archeologists failed to turn up any evidence for its existence. How likely is this, if the gas chamber allegation is indeed true? While the former area of Camp III was divided into four hectares by

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475 I. Gilead, Y. Haimi, W. Mazurek, *op. cit.* (note 298), p. 27.

Kola's grid, the Rutherford map,[220] which is partially based on the 1944 air photo and therefore fairly reliable when it comes to the dimensions of the camp sections, shows that the actual surface of that camp amounted to no more than approximately 3 hectares. Thanks to the previous research results of A. Kola, the area to be searched for gas chamber remains could be reduced by approximately 0.5 hectare, i.e. 5,000 square meter (equaling the surface of the identified graves and structures and some of the space between them). For a reasonably well founded and equipped archeological team, such as that of Gilead *et al.*, locating the remains of a large building within such a small area would have been a matter of weeks, if not days – provided, of course, *that the building really had existed*. Given that the new team had at least the published results of Kola as well as ground penetrating radar and other advanced equipment available to them, it is radically impossible that no remains of any existing gas chambers were found during the several months long survey period. The situation that Gilead *et al.* find themselves in can thus be likened to a checkmate.

Continuing with the article we learn that the artifacts discovered in the new excavation area to the west of Object E included, among various mundane objects, "larger jars, some […] produced in the Netherlands, [which] could contain disinfectants."[476] This might possibly refer to a type of substance applied to the heads, armpits, and genital areas of deportees in the course of a bath and delousing procedure at a transit camp.[477]

All in all, the team recovered "about 1,000 artifacts that do not seem to be associated with gas chambers."[476] Photographs are provided of a cigarette case, seven hangers for security fencing, and a non-descript excavation site where the possible remains of camp fences were discovered. The latter is described as the most important feature unearthed.[478] Among the finds were also bullet cartridges and bullets deformed by fire.[476]

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476 *Ibid*., p. 30.

477 Cf. the testimony of transit camp inmate Galina K. quoted by Janet Anschutz, Irmtraud Heike, "Medizinische Versorgung von Zwangsarbeitern in Hannover: Forschung und Zeitzeugenberichte zum Gesundheitswesen," in: Gunter Siedburger, Andreas Frewer, *Zwangsarbeit und Gesundheitswesen im Zweiten Weltkrieg. Einsatz und Versorgung in Norddeutschland*, Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim, Zürich, New York 2006, p. 52.

478 I. Gilead, Y. Haimi, W. Mazurek, *op. cit.* (note 298), p. 28.

That the search for the elusive gas chambers in the end yielded a negative result is clear from Gilead *et al.*'s discussion of Kola's interpretation of Object E:[479]

> *"As mentioned above, the most important structure discovered during the dig of Kola is Building E. Although Kola suggested that this structure was the undressing barrack (Kola, 2001), in later reconstructions it appears as the gas chamber. The Sobibór booklet (Bem, 2006) includes a map labeled 'Sobibór Death Camp Memorial Map.' It consists of a combination of the present day structures and monuments of the site, with the suggested reconstruction as their background (Fig. 19). The 'Memorial Map' identifies the Sobibór gas chambers with Building E, which in Kola's opinion served as undressing complex. Rutherford (2002) follows this map in placing the gas chambers in the same place, although the structure he reconstructs is different in shape. It is obvious that the location of the gas chambers is a complex issue that has to be solved, an important objective for future archaeological research at Sobibór."*

That the team itself, at least at the time of their excavations, did not believe Object E to be the gas chambers, is apparent from the fact that they set out to find the building in the area west of this object. The statement that the location of the gas chambers is an issue that remains to be solved is of course nothing but an admission that Object E can *not* be positively identified as the alleged gas chambers and that no other possible remains of them had been discovered by the time of the article's publication in early 2009. This, however, has not prevented the team from writing the following on their official website:[480]

> *"In 2001 Polish archaeologists under the direction of Andrzej Kola carried out an excavation at the camp in Sobibór. The magnometric survey was carried out at the site in order to create a plan of the camp. Excavations revealed seven concentrations of mass graves and the structure that functioned as a gas chamber."*

Thus in their online writings the team claims that Kola *did* find the gas-chamber building, despite their own statement to the contrary and despite the fact that Kola interpreted Object E as an undressing or sorting barrack!

It should not come as a surprise that the team considers the search for the gas chambers to be of utmost importance, since they state on the

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479 *Ibid.*, pp. 33f.

480 "The Project," www.underSobibor.org/project.html (inactive).

same webpage that their archeological work "will constitute a basis for countering the claims of Holocaust deniers." In other words, they are looking for physical evidence supporting the mass gassings allegation. This task, long neglected by orthodox historians, is of course to be welcomed. There are, however, strong reasons to doubt the scientific honesty of Gilead *et al.* In their article we read:[481]

> *"We regard the Nazi extermination of Jews during the Second World War as a past reality. There is ample written and oral documentation to support it, as well as comprehensive and detailed historical studies that authenticate what Hilberg (1985) calls 'The Destruction of European Jews.' Arad (1987), in his study of the Einsatz*[482] *Reinhardt extermination centres, further establishes the role of Treblinka, Sobibór and Bełżec in the destruction process. Beyond the written documents, the evidence consists also of oral accounts of the survivors and SS perpetrators who served in the extermination centres and committed the murders* […]. *Thus, the extermination of Jews in general, and the extermination of Jews at Sobibór and other centres in particular, is a historically established truth which does not need to be proven by archaeological excavations. Archaeology has the role of supplementing information on the layout of the sites, structures and artifacts in use there, thus providing data for the historical reconstruction of the sites.* […]
>
> *Being acquainted with the terrain of Sobibór and other extermination centres, and also being familiar with writings of revisionists, we take a more reserved position regarding the role of historical archaeology in substantiating the extermination in general and gas chambers in particular. Knowing that the evidence of the extermination centres was obliterated by the perpetrators, we assume that remains of gas chambers, even if preserved in situ, are in an extremely bad state of preservation. If the standing gas chambers of Majdanek and Auschwitz-Birkenau are currently denied as such, there is a minimal chance, if at all, that future exposure of poorly preserved remains of gas chambers will assert any truth in the face of a revisionist's lie. The archaeology of extermination centres is not and cannot be an instrument to show deniers how wrong they are. We*

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481 I. Gilead, Y. Haimi, W. Mazurek, *op. cit.* (note 298), pp. 13f.

482 The term "Einsatz Reinhardt" is atypical, but it is used in some documents, for example in the Kuno Ther letter (note 69) the staff of the camps is designated "Sonderkommando 'Einsatz Reinhardt.'" Y. Arad used the term "Operation Reinhard," though.

> *think that documentation of detail is intrinsically important even without the need to refute lies, but we believe that, paraphrasing Evans (2002:237), professors of geography and archaeologists as well should not waste time debating with people who think that the earth is flat."*

To recapitulate: The extermination of Jews at Sobibór is a "historically established truth" based on eye witness testimony, Polish-Soviet reports, and a handful of documents relating to Jewish deportations, none of which mentions killings in any form. Since the extermination at Sobibór and other camps is an undisputed historical fact, there is no need to prove it with the methods of forensic archeology. Moreover, the remains of the alleged gas chambers are assumed to be in a state which makes impossible the verification of the gas chamber allegations, and therefore the results of the excavations and geophysical surveys carried out should not be, and cannot be, an attempt to verify the existence of the gas chambers. In turn, persons not satisfied with mere belief in eye witness claims and fanciful interpretations of documents are to be equated with flat-earthers and simply not debated with. The above is of course nothing but a pre-emptive clause, a guarantee to be able to pass off any uncomfortable data as irrelevant, and a carte blanche to ignore all negative critique of their conclusions, however well-founded it may be. The type of argumentation employed by Gilead *et al.* is typical of pseudoscience, as it is an impermissible attempt at immunizing one's thesis against any and all critique.

The dishonest approach of Gilead *et al.* becomes even more evident when considering the following passage in their article:[483]

> *"It is generally agreed that one of the challenges facing the historical archaeologist is the artifact/text dichotomy.* […] *If contradictions are apparent and real, we are talking about spaces between or within artifact and text, about dissonances, that may reveal additional aspects hitherto unknown* […]. *However, to establish if in a given case dissonances exist, the nature and quality of the evidence, of both the archaeological and the historical data, should be re-examined carefully".*

But how can an honest and unbiased re-examination of the evidence even be possible if the existence of the Sobibór gas chambers – for which there exist only the weakest type of evidence, namely eye wit-

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[483] I. Gilead, Y. Haimi, W. Mazurek, *op. cit.* (note 298), p. 22.

ness testimony – is taken as an *a priori* fact? In short, Gilead *et al.*'s reasoning serves only to betray their intellectual bankruptcy. Their only chance to redeem their honor as scientists would be to actually present physical evidence backing up the gas chamber allegations. To date, this has not happened.

5.6. The Official "Memorial Map" of the Sobibór "Death Camp"

Marek Bem, director of the Łęczyńsko-Włodawa Museum, is the author of a brochure aimed at foreign visitors to the memorial at the former Sobibór camp site,[484] published in 2006, which contains the official "memorial map" of the alleged extermination camp. A quick comparison makes evident that the memorial map's description of Camp III is based on Kola's excavation map. As noted by Gilead *et al.*, the large barrack of Object E is here identified as the gas chambers (item #74) and the smaller one as the "room with gas producing engines" (item #75). Objects A, B, and D (items #78-80) are all conveniently passed off as "administrative buildings." The map further places not one, but two cremation grates (item #82) inside graves No. 3 and 4, whereas the cremation pit discovered by Kola ("Grave" No. 7) is described as an ash dump (item #81), despite Kola's description of it as a cremation site, not a deposit for ashes. Apparently we are to believe that the SS had cremation grates built on top of unincinerated corpses! It is clear that Bem in producing the map has dishonestly "improved" upon Kola's excavation results in order to better make them fit the official historiographic picture.

5.7. Estimate of the Sobibór Death Toll

How many people died and were buried at Sobibór? We can affirm with certainty that the number of Sobibór dead is far less than the figures advanced by mainstream Holocaust historians. However, to answer with exactitude the question of the actual victim figure is, at the present,

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[484] Marek Bem, *Masterplan Sobibór: ...a place to remember ...a place to learn*, Muzeum Pojezierza Łęczyńsko-Włodawskiego, Włodawa 2006. Also available online at: www.Sobibór.edu.pl

more or less impossible due to the absolute lack of documentary evidence pertaining to the number of deceased deportees, as well as quantifiable forensic evidence. Nonetheless we will provide a rough estimate of this figure, which may be divided into three categories of deaths.

As for the first category, it is beyond any doubt that a large number of the Jews selected for work in the camp also perished there. As already mentioned, the October 1943 uprising led to the death of between 380 and 420 inmates. It is further to be assumed that an unknown number of inmates were executed in connection with earlier, failed escape attempts[485] or for violating camp rules. Many eye witnesses also speak of epidemic diseases, such as typhus, claiming victims among the inmate population,[486] which was replenished with new arrivals in case of losses. All in all the number of deceased inmates may have amounted to approximately 1,000 people.

The second category is that of those who died en route. This figure is difficult to estimate, but we know that the transports from the Netherlands and France took place under *relatively* humane conditions,[487] often using passenger trains, so that the number of en-route deaths among this group of in total (34,313+3,500=) 37,813 deportees is likely to have been small. In order to avoid accusations of underestimating the number of en route dead, we will assume, however, that 3% of all 170,165 deportees perished on board the trains due to dehydration, illness, and pressure injuries or suffocation caused by panicking fellow deportees, leading to a total of (170,165×0.03=) 5,104 en-route deaths. Since this is likely an overestimate, we will round off this figure downwards to 5,000 deaths.

As will be further discussed in Chapter 8, we find it likely that deportees who were found unfit for further transport to the east due to being disease carriers, mentally ill, or dying, were euthanized at Sobibór. If we assume that 2% of all deportees, excluding the 1,000 Dutch Jews transferred to labor camps in the Lublin district,[488] were put to death, we arrive at (169,165×0.02=) 3,383 victims, which we will round up to 3,500. In addition to this, there are indications that patients from mental

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485 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 140ff.
486 *Ibid.*, pp. 86f.
487 *Ibid.*, pp. 53f.
488 The reason for this exclusion is that, judging by the eyewitness testimonies, those deportees were not brought to Camp III and thus were not screened by the camp staff carrying out the euthanasia action.

hospitals in the Lublin district were sent to Sobibór to be euthanized.[489] Although there is no documentary evidence to rely on, we will estimate their number to 1,000 based on a claim of non-Jewish Sobibór victims made by Polish historians.[490]

Adding the three categories together we arrive at a total of (1,000+ 5,000+3,500+1,000=) 10,500 victims. It must be stressed that this is only a rough estimate, but we find it probable that the number of Sobibór victims is in the vicinity of 10,000 dead.

As shown above, we have several strong reasons to believe that the total volume estimated by Kola for the Sobibór mass graves, 14,718.75 m^3, is significantly larger than that of the original burial pits. With an average of (10,000÷16 =) approximately 600 corpses to dispose of per month, the camp staff would have had no reason to economize on the burial space. At the labor camp Treblinka I (not to be confused with the alleged extermination camp Treblinka II) the bodies of deceased prisoners were interred in three mass graves that averaged a burial density of 1 corpse per cubic meter.[491] It follows that the original volume of the mass graves would have been compatible with our victim estimate.

In the end, the only way to determine, however approximately, the number of Sobibór dead would be to open the mass graves and ascertain the amount of cremated human remains and the number of uncremated corpses actually present. This investigation should preferably be carried out by an international scientific committee and followed by a proper reburial of the excavated human remains. The fact that during the 2000-2001 as well as the 2007-2008 survey period no estimate of the amount of human remains was produced, to say nothing of a proper excavation of the graves, can only be taken as a strong indication that an amount of remains corresponding to approximately 170,000 victims was *not* discovered by the archeologists.

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489 Abraham Margulies (in M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 63) and Dov Freiberg (*op. cit.* (note 58), pp. 252f) both mention a transport consisting of mental patients.

490 A memorial plaque at Sobibór claims that "250,000 Jews and approximately 1,000 Poles" were murdered in the camp. A picture of this plaque is found on the book cover of W.Z. Sulimierski, *op. cit.* (note 46). See also Photograph 13, p. 418; Esther Raab testified in 1949 that Poles had also been gassed in Sobibór: Bogdan Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement. Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939-1944*, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 1999, p. 206, note 43.

491 C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), p. 77.

6. The Sobibór Trials

6.1. Legal Proceedings as the Basis for Historiography

Once the victorious Western Allies had created a puppet state called "Federal Republic of Germany," its leaders ordered the judiciary to fabricate the evidence for the mirage of the murder of millions of people in gas chambers, for which not a single shred of evidence survived – if it ever existed. To prove our point, all we have to do is quote Martin Broszat, long-time head of the Munich *Institut für Zeitgeschichte* (Institute of Contemporary History), who said in his introduction to Adalbert Rückerl's documentation about the "NS extermination camps:"[492]

> *"Without intending to anticipate a historical investigation and valuation of the part played by the German judiciary in the prosecution of NS crimes, we may retain as of today one aspect, particularly in respect of the activity of the central agency* [at Ludwigsburg]*: One must not judge the significance of the large-scale investigations carried out by the prosecuting and the judicial authorities since the end of the nineteen fifties merely by the – frequently minor – conviction rates.* […] *Even though the fact of the 'final solution of the Jewish question' can be found in nearly all history and other schoolbooks about the NS era, the specific circumstances of those horrifying events have so far been documented hardly at all in a systematic manner. The methodical obfuscation by the agencies involved and the thorough elimination of all traces at the end of the campaigns have prevented a precise reconstruction of the events over long periods or rendered them very difficult. This applies in particular to the large and carefully hidden extermination camps set up in the occupied Polish territories. In spite of unfavorable starting conditions, the long and painstaking investigations of the judiciary have brought about a general clarification of the facts and the circumstances."*

Succinctly said: Although nearly all history and other schoolbooks mentioned the final solution of the Jewish question, the latter had been

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[492] A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 7 ff.

documented hardly at all in a systematic manner. This was done only later, thanks to the long and painstaking investigations of the judiciary! In other words: the public prosecutors and the judges had to fly to the side of the historians in order to prove belatedly what had not been proved so far.

6.2. The Trial of Erich Bauer in Berlin in 1950

Martin Broszat's statement that the "the large-scale investigations carried out by the prosecuting and the judicial authorities" began only at "the end of the nineteen fifties" is in disagreement with the facts: the first trials of SS personnel stationed in the so-called "extermination camps" during the war started in fact in 1950. The procedure of the judiciary can be convincingly demonstrated by the manner in which the trial against SS-*Oberscharführer* Ernst Bauer was conducted. Bauer was a driver and alleged "Gasmeister von Sobibór," sentenced to death in Berlin in 1950 on account of "continual crimes against humanity."[493] After the abolition of the death penalty, the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment.

The indictment against Bauer consisted of 11 counts, the first and most serious of which read:[494]

> *"Activity as gas master. As soon as a new transport of detainees had arrived in the camp and the detainees had undressed, the defendant who was already known among the inmates as the 'Bademeister' led them to the gas chamber which was disguised as a bath. He sometimes preceded the convoy, sometimes walked next to the detainees beating them to make them walk faster. Subsequently, in Camp III, he was the only one to operate the gas machine to annihilate them."*

What is the basis of these assertions? In the early accounts of witnesses about Sobibór, Erich Bauer is either not mentioned at all or mentioned only in passing. His name appears neither in the two Pechersky reports nor in the testimony of Leon Feldhendler – which lists, after all, 10 SS men by name.[495] Zelda Metz has a total of seventeen names of SS men

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493 Verdict of Landgericht Berlin, 8 May 1950, PKs 3/50, p. 1.
494 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
495 "Wagner, Spiess, Neumann, Rose, Greischutz, Gomelski, Weiss, Getzinger, Beckmann, Müller" (Spelling of names unchanged from source). N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 208.

stationed in Sobibór, Bauer among them,[496] but does not ascribe to any of them any specific crimes. Bauer's promotion to the rank of "Gasmeister" is the work of the former Sobibór detainees Esther Raab and Samuel Lerer who appeared in Berlin as witnesses for the prosecution.

Shaindy Perl, whose only source is the testimony of Esther Raab, gives the following account of the circumstances leading to Bauer's arrest: Esther Raab and Samuel Lerer are said to have lived in Berlin after the war. One day, Samuel Lerer burst into Esther Raab's Berlin apartment telling her that he had discovered Bauer and his family at a fair on a ferris wheel. The two of them ran to the fair and bribed a policeman with two pounds of coffee to arrest Bauer:[497]

> *"The policeman eyed the sack of coffee greedily. 'Okay,' he said finally, 'but I hope you two are not mistaken.' Esther and Samuel assured him that they weren't. Then they watched with trepidation as the policeman approached Erich Bauer and whispered quietly to him. Bauer's color drained from his face and the policeman took his arm and led him away."*

We leave it up to the reader to decide whether this account is credible. On the other hand, it is a fact that the Berlin court, in its sentence, relied almost entirely upon the depositions of the witnesses "R." (Raab) and "L." (Lerer). The only other two witnesses, "the former detainees 'B.' and 'C.,' who have testified outside of court and have meanwhile emigrated," are mentioned only in passing. This means that Raab's and Lerer's credibility is extremely significant. We know little about Lerer, but the fact that he spoke of a million victims at Sobibór[498] should make us pause, to say the least. We have already stressed the doubtfulness of the witness Esther Raab.[499] Her notorious lack of reliability also becomes apparent when we see that she supplied her, as it were, biographer Shaindy Perl with inaccurate information concerning key questions. The following passages have been taken form Shaindy Perl's book, which, as we have already mentioned, is based exclusively on Esther Raab's statements:

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496 "Szpic, Wagner, Frenkel, Niemand, Rost, Greischutz, Gomerski, Getzinger, Konrad, Gebrüder Wolf, Vetland, Michel, Veis, Bauer, Sztojbel, Richter" (Spelling of names unchanged from source), *ibid.*, p. 209.

497 S. Perl, *op. cit.* (note 53), p. 221.

498 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 239.

499 Cf. Subsection 2.3.4.2. and Section 2.3.15.

> *"One day before his departure* [to America]*, Samuel suddenly burst into Esther's apartment, his face flushed with excitement. 'Esther, come quick! It's him!'"* (p. 219)
>
> *"Since Samuel was scheduled to leave Germany the next day, he followed the police to the station and gave them a brief statement about the crimes committed by SS Oberscharführer Erich Bauer in Sobibór."* (p. 221)
>
> *"Samuel's testimony stretched into the late afternoon, and it was already early evening when he finally left the station. He ran home to finish packing his belongings, and the next day he left the country as planned. Now, Esther remained the only person to witness against the notorious Bademeister."* (p. 222)

The wording of the sentence against Erich Bauer squarely contradicts this account. When Bauer's lawyer asked to have the two witnesses "L." and "R." (Lerer and Raab) confront the two former SS men "G." (Hubert Gomerski) and "K." (Johann Klier), the court struck down the request, saying i.a.:[500]

> *"An adjournment of the proceedings would also disallow another objective of the defense, i.e. a confrontation of these witnesses with the witnesses L. and R., because the latter have announced that they are about to emigrate; thus a new main hearing would have to take place without them."*

Hence, Samuel Lerer, at the time of the trial, had not yet emigrated at all and was still in Berlin, continuing to be a witness for the prosecution against Bauer. The arrest of the latter had incidentally taken place in 1949,[501] which means that several months had passed between Bauer's identification by Lerer and the trial. It is inconceivable that Esther Raab could have forgotten these circumstances and Lerer's participation in the trial, which means that she lied to Shaindy Perl on purpose. The only motive for this would be egocentricity: Esther Raab apparently wanted to be the only person to have tracked down Bauer all by herself and without any help from Lerer.

Another excerpt from Shaindy Perl's book:[502]

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[500] LG Berlin, *op. cit.* (note 284), p. 7.

[501] http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sobibor-Prozess. J. Schelvis confirms on p. 236 that Bauer's arrest took place in 1949. On p. 247, though, he asserts that Bauer was arrested as early as 1946 (*op. cit.* (note 61)). We assume that the former date, and not the latter, is in accordance with the facts.

[502] S. Perl, *op. cit.* (note 53), p. 224.

> *"Only several weeks later* [after the Bauer trial]*, she was contacted by a prosecutor from Frankfurt. 'Are you the woman who recently testified against Erich Bauer,' he asked. 'We've arrested Hubert Gomerski and Joseph* [read: Johann] *Klier. We are bringing them to trial here in Frankfurt. Will you come to serve as our witness?' Esther didn't really have much choice. There were so few survivors, and many of them had by now emigrated to Israel or the United States. Once again, the fate of the Nazi criminals was left in her hands alone."*

Quite apart from the fact that Gomerski and Klier were already in jail during the Bauer trial and were not arrested "a few weeks" later, the fate of these former SS men was not at all left in Esther Raab's hands alone, as she made her biographer believe. She was, in fact, one of a group of eight witnesses who testified in Frankfurt: "L." (Samuel Lerer who still had not emigrated to America yet), "Josef and Herz Z.," "E.," "T.," "M." and "B."[503] When telling about the trial of Gomerski and Klier, Esther Raab does not wish to have any competitors, and so she simply wipes out the names of the seven other witnesses.

All this goes to show that Esther Raab, witness for the prosecution, was an unrestrained liar, out to bolster her ego. Still, the Berlin district court in its verdict unhesitatingly assumed that her deposition (as well as Lerer's) was true in all respects and was thus sufficient to convict Bauer – who denied his implication in any crimes – of falsehood:[504]

> *"The defendant admits to having been aware of the goings-on in the extermination camp soon after his arrival in the Sobibór concentration camp some time in March or April of 1942 and, in particular, to have known that Jews of all nations were being gassed or shot there; he denies, however, to have participated in any atrocities and inhuman acts on Jewish detainees. He denies, in particular, to have been the Gasmeister of the camp and claims to have been a mere driver with the task of providing the camp with victuals. The gassings were performed initially by active SS personnel from Oranienburg. Later on, a certain 'Toni' had been Gasmeister, but he could not be more precise on his account.* […] *In spite of his denial, the defendant is proven guilty on this count by the credible statements provided under oath by the witnesses L. and R., former Sobibór detainees. Both*

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503 Verdict of Landgericht Frankfurt am Main of 25 August 1950, 52 Ks 3/50.
504 LG Berlin, *op. cit.* (note 284), p. 4.

> *of them have identified the defendant as having been the man who was acting as Gasmeister in the Sobibór Camp."*

Sensing the extremely hostile position of the court, Erich Bauer apparently did not deem advisable to deny the alleged mass murders at Sobibór, as he feared that such a stand would be regarded as "persistent disavowal" and held against him. He thus limited himself to "deny the atrocities and inhuman acts with few exceptions." In later years, countless defendants in NS trial would adopt the same strategy.

The man 'Toni' identified by Bauer as having been the *Gasmeister* was most probably the SS man Anton Getzinger, who did guard duty at Camp III and was killed in late summer or fall of 1943 while trying to defuse a Soviet tank grenade, which exploded in his hands.[505] As the court could no longer indict Getzinger, Bauer apparently decided to blacken a dead man by nominating him *Gasmeister* posthumously. It did not help him in any way, though.

As we have already stated, Bauer's lawyer wanted to have Gomerski and Klier – awaiting trial in their Frankfurt jail at the time – testify on his client's behalf. The court, however, refused to hear them, not only because of the impending emigration of the witnesses Lerer and Raab, but also because it *a priori* held them to be untrustworthy:[506]

> *"The witnesses G. and K. are SS men who were leaders of the Sobibór Camp at the same time as the defendant; both of them have been indicted for having committed crimes against humanity in the Sobibór Camp and are presently held awaiting trial or were formerly so held at the time of their provisional interrogation by the Frankfurt local court* […] *and this court thus did not hesitate in deciding that it had to accept the depositions of witnesses L. and R. rather than the untrue depositions of witnesses G. and K."*

This means the court believed that witnesses for the prosecution were, by definition, always telling the truth whereas former SS men were, by the same token, always lying – except, of course, in those cases where they testified against themselves or against their former comrades.

The Berlin court was of the opinion that "hundreds of thousands of Jews" had been gassed at Sobibór.[507] The judges accepted as "proof" of such an immense slaughter "the credible statements provided under oath

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505 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 255.
506 LG Berlin, *op. cit.* (note 284), p. 6.
507 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

by the witnesses L. and R." They did not even think of looking critically into the structure and the dimensions of the "gassing building."

All of the German trials of "NS perpetrators" accused of having participated in "gassings of Jewish persons" would follow this basic design. No forensic investigations or documentary evidence of the alleged mass murder were needed – after all, "credible statements provided under oath" were plentiful.

Shaindy Perl, Esther Raab's publicity agent, provides us with the reason for this flagrant disregard of legal principles:[508]

> *"Since the Germans were eager to prove to the world that they were taking action against the vicious murderers who ran the infamous death camps, their government wasted no time in setting a date for Bauer's trial."*

"The Germans" therefore conducted such trials in an effort to prove to "the world" that they were repentant. For "the world" to believe them, they not only had to accept the extermination of Jews in gas chambers as a historical fact, but also nail it down legally – and this worked only if one blindly accepted the veracity of the testimonies made for the prosecution.

We will conclude this chapter with a look at a sentence pronounced by the Berlin court which virtually takes one's breath away. Among the eleven points of Erich Bauer's indictment, number six states:[509]

> *"At one time there was a transport of some 15,000 Jewish detainees from Majdanek, to be gassed* [here]*, as Majdanek did not have a gassing installation. As the Sobibór installation was unserviceable at that time, they had to await their extermination for days on end in Camp I without receiving any food. This led to many of them dying of exhaustion. When others who had been given some food fought over it, SS personnel including the defendant shot into the pile of defenseless people. In the process, the defendant, too, killed at least four or five detainees."*

Hence, the sentence of the Berlin Court states that Majdanek *did not possess* a gassing installation. This clashes with the following excerpt from the sentence passed by a Düsseldorf court at the end of the Majdanek trial (1975 – 1981):[510]

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508 S. Perl, *op. cit.* (note 53), p. 222

509 LG Berlin, *op. cit.* (note 284), p. 3.

510 Landgericht Düsseldorf, Verdict against Hackmann *et al.*, XVII 1/75, Vol. I, p. 86 ff.

> *"The most terrible ordeal for the detainees, especially the Jews among them, was the selections for the killings by gas, which had begun in late fall of 1942 and which were most frequent in the spring and summer of 1943.* […] *Gassing of the victims always followed the same procedure. The detainees destined for death were taken to the barrack and then, once they had undressed, herded into one of the gas chambers. As soon as the door behind them had been made air-tight, carbon monoxide or Zyklon B was fed into the chamber."*

The Majdanek trial ended with the conviction, i.a., of two female guards, Hildegard Lächert and Hermine Braunsteiner-Ryan, for their alleged participation in the selection of Jewish women and children for the gas chambers of Majdanek – but if we follow the Berlin court's judgment of 1950, there never were any gas chambers at the Majdanek Camp! Hildegard Lächert was sentenced to 12 years in prison, Hermine Braunsteiner-Ryan received a life sentence. After she had spent 17 years behind bars, Johannes Rau, Minister President of Northrhine-Westfalia at the time, pardoned her on account of her ill health; she died three years later.[511]

This is the way justice is meted out in the "freest state of German history."

6.3. The Frankfurt Trial of Hubert Gomerski and Johann Klier (1950)

On the heels of the Bauer trial in Berlin the case against the former SS-*Unterscharführer* Hubert Gomerski and Johann Klier opened in the German city of Frankfurt-upon-Main only a few months later. In addition to the two witnesses "R." (Esther Raab) and "L." (Samuel Lerer), six more former Sobibór detainees took the stand. On 25 August 1950 Gomerski was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of an indefinite number of persons[512] (he was pardoned in 1972[513]). Johann Klier – who had received favorable testimonies from the witnesses – was acquitted.[512] Hence, for the Frankfurt court the mere fact that Klier had served at Sobibór did not lead to an automatic conviction. In this

[511] http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermine_Braunsteiner-Ryan
[512] LG Frankfurt, *op. cit.* (note 503), p. 1.
[513] http://holocaust-info.dk/sobibor/sobibor_personnel.htm

respect at least the court did not go quite as far in its arbitrariness as is common practice in today's Germany, where the nonagenarian John Demjanjuk is awaiting trial merely for having served (actually or allegedly) at the Sobibór Camp.

The trial was accompanied by a massive campaign in the media still under Allied control, a campaign which was later orchestrated during all major NS trials. In an article entitled "Sobibór – the death factory behind the barbed wire fence" the *Frankfurter Rundschau* wrote on 24 August 1950:[514]

> *"During the hearing, a number of written depositions were read, stemming from survivors who had emigrated to the United States. Hersch Cuckirmann, whose wife and three children had been gassed at Sobibór, spoke about a transport of 1,600 Jewish detainees who were brought in from the Majdanek Camp. He said that at the time the gas chambers were out of order and the starved and decrepit detainees had to wait for three days before they were gassed. But close to half of them had previously been beaten to death. Gomerski had used a watering can for this purpose, whereas SS-Oberscharführer Wagner had used a steel water hose. As opposed to this, Klier had not behaved inhumanely.* […]
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> *The witness Zelda Metz was present when detainees had to fetch water from a village. On the way, some detainees killed the Ukrainian guard and fled; the others were shot, and Gomerski participated in the shooting. One could learn from this witness that on certain days 5,000 people were brought into the camp and gassed. Prior to that, they had to write letters to their families saying they were fine. Jewish laborers working in Camp III also met their death.*
>
> *'Sobibór was a murder factory' said witness Kurt Thomas.* […] *Gomerski had not only taken part in the execution of 71 Jews who were shot because they were suspected of trying to escape, he also participated in the execution of 100 young Jews who were killed by being shot in the head. Sometimes Gomerski and SS-Oberscharführer Wagner would amuse themselves by using infants as missiles trying to outdo each other as to the distance thrown. When trees were felled, detainees were made to climb up the trees where they had to fix a rope with which both the tree and the detainees were then brought crashing down. Those who did not die from the crash,*

514 "Sobibór – Mordfabrik hinter Stacheldraht," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 24 August 1950.

> *lying on the ground with broken limbs, were given the coup de grace.*
>
> *Witness Chaim Engel told the court that Gomerski had boasted of having killed a detainee with twelve blows, and Mrs. Engel-Weinberg, the only Dutch Jewess to have survived Sobibór, confirmed that Gomerski always took part in the gassings and the shootings."*

Obviously, this was nothing but black propaganda of the crudest kind, but there was one passage in the article which should have alerted a critical reader: it was Zelda Metz' account of the detainees who "had to fetch water from a village" when "some detainees killed the Ukrainian guard" (not: *a* Ukrainian guard). If Sobibór had really been an inferno where the detainees had to suffer the most atrocious ordeals day after day and were facing death at any moment, the SS would hardly have taken the risk of sending out a platoon of detainees to fetch water, guarded by a single Ukrainian. It is obvious that, under the circumstances, desperate behavior had to be reckoned with at any time. That kind of operation was possible only if the camp command felt that there was little danger of an attempt at escaping – as the detainees did not have strong enough a motive to risk their lives doing so.

The Frankfurt trial of Gomerski and Klier strictly followed the pattern laid out by the trial of Bauer in Berlin, and so we will limit our description and quote only a few significant passages from the reasoning of the sentence on the subject of Gomerski:[515]

> *"From the testimony furnished by the witness R. we may conclude that the defendant himself has shot a group of about 40 persons coming from another camp and destined to be killed. At the time, the witness was employed in the armory and asserted that on a certain day the defendant arrived to pick up a pistol and some ammunition. In doing so, he said that there were only 40 persons that day. Soon after, the witness heard shots."*

So a Jewish inmate was working in the *armory*, and a SS-man had to pick up a pistol there, apparently because he did not own one?

We see that Esther Raab did not claim to have seen Gomerski shooting 40 people with his pistol. She merely stated that he had picked up a pistol with some ammunition and that shots rang out a little later. Nonetheless, the court sentenced Gomerski i.a. "because he has shot a convoy of some 40 Jews apparently because the size of the convoy did not

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[515] LG Frankfurt, *op. cit.* (note 503), p. 4.

warrant the operation of the gas chamber."[516] Furthermore, the court states in its reasoning:[517]

> *"The court considers the participation* [of the defendant Gomerski] *in the killing of detainee laborers to have been established in the following cases:* […] *The detainee Stark, who had to take care of the pigs held in the camp, was so severely beaten by the defendant and by Frenzel that Stark in desperation ran out of the camp through the gate which happened to be open at that time. The defendant and Frenzel ran after him and shot him several times. Seriously wounded – his body was ripped to the point that his entrails were hanging out – Stark was brought back into the camp and presented in this state to the other detainees assembled for the purpose. These occurrences have been confirmed collectively by the witnesses L. and R. The latter has also asserted that Stark was subsequently shot."*

Once the reader has stopped marveling at the fact that the gate at Sobibór at times "happened to be open," he should consult Miriam Novitch's book and read the testimony of Eda Lichtman:[518]

> *"Shaul Stark took care of the geese, fed them and weighed them every day. One time, a goose became ill and died. Frenzel, Bredow, Wagner and Weiss whipped Stark to death. The man's last words were: 'Avenge me, comrades, avenge me.'"*

Now did the detainee take care of pigs or of geese? Who beat him after one of the pigs or one of the geese died – Gomerski and Frenzel, as was accepted by the Frankfurt district court on the basis of the credible witnesses Esther Raab and Samuel Lerer who testified under oath, or Frenzel, Bredow, Wagner, and Weiss, as we learn from Eda Lichtman? Was he shot (Esther Raab) or whipped to death (Eda Lichtman)?

The extraordinary blindness of the Frankfurt judges can be seen from the following passage of their verdict:[519]

> *"The defendant denies ever to have shot or beaten to death anyone.* […] *On the basis of the testimonies recorded during the main trial hearings and the interrogations and depositions of the witnesses not present, read during the main trial hearings, the court rejects the declaration of the defendant as having been disproved.* […] *The witnesses have strengthened their depositions under oath to the extent*

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516 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
517 *Ibid.*, pp. 4f.
518 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 57.
519 LG Frankfurt, *op. cit.* (note 503), pp. 3f.

> *that they were questioned during the main trial hearings. Also during the initial investigations, the witnesses, independently of each other, had made statements which essentially agree with those made here."*

The court apparently never thought that the witnesses, who quite naturally were in constant touch with one another, might have mutually adjusted their statements. Still, the court remained unable to bring about a guilty plea by Gomerski:[257]

> *"Without showing any sign of emotion, Gomerski followed the horrifying descriptions of the witnesses who were testifying under oath. He qualified their depositions as being false and would sometimes smile during the questionings."*

A final illustration of the show-trial nature of these proceedings can be found in the behavior of Gomerski's lawyer, as recounted by the Jewish historian R. Ainsztein:[520]

> *"The effect of the testimonies was such that Dr. Lengsfeld, Gomerski's defence counsel, declared that he would refrain from making a final plea on behalf of his client and went on to say that his silence was meant to express the feelings of a German ashamed of the fact that such deeds had been committed by people speaking the German language."*

6.4. The Sobibór Trial at Hagen (1965/1966)

Between 6 September 1965 and 20 December 1966 twelve former Sobibór camp personnel were tried at Hagen in Germany. While on trial, one of the defendants, Kurt Bolender, committed suicide by hanging himself; he left a letter in which he insisted on his innocence.[521] Six defendants were convicted, whereas five others were acquitted on the grounds of putative state of emergency. Like their colleagues in Berlin and Frankfurt, the Hagen judges did not consider the mere fact of someone having served as an SS man in the Sobibór Camp to be sufficient reason for a conviction. This level of infamy would only be reached four decades later in connection with the Demjanjuk case.

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520 R. Ainsztein, *op. cit.* (note 192), p. 919, note 45.

521 "Der 'vergessene Prozeß,'" *Die Zeit*, No. 49, 1966; www.zeit.de/1966/49/Der-vergessene-Prozess

Contrary to the procedures in the Berlin and Frankfurt Sobibór trials of 1950, the Hagen court attempted to determine, by means of transport lists, the number of detainees shipped to Sobibór. It came to the following conclusion:[522]

> *"Using considerations most favorable for the defendants, it was determined on the basis on documentary evidence and witness testimonies heard in the main hearings that the deadly fate of at least 150,000 Jewish persons at Sobibór is known."*

We have already said that J. Schelvis believes some 170,000 Jews were deported to Sobibór, but his figure is probably too high by about 10,000 and should be reduced accordingly (cf. Section 2.3.19). Hence, the conclusion of the Hagen court regarding the number of deportees (150,000) was absolutely realistic. At the same time, their dogmatic conviction that the deportees were all murdered immediately on arrival (except for laborers directly employed at Sobibór or a small number that were sent to work camps) is clearly apparent. The judges never even thought that the documentary evidence cried out for different interpretations.

Listed below are the names of the persons convicted, together with their respective sentence and offense:

- Karl Frenzel: Life imprisonment for aiding and abetting with others the murder of at least 150,000 persons and for the murder of nine persons;
- Franz Wolf: Eight years imprisonment for aiding and abetting with others the murder of at least 39,000 persons;
- Alfred Ittner: Four years imprisonment for aiding and abetting with others the murder of at least 68,000 persons;
- Werner Dubois: Three years imprisonment for aiding and abetting with others the murder of at least 15,000 persons;
- Erwin Lambert: Three years imprisonment for aiding and abetting with others the murder of at least 57,000 persons;
- Erich Fuchs: Four years imprisonment for aiding and abetting with others the murder of at least 79,000 persons.[523]

Except in the case of Frenzel, these sentences were surprisingly mild. This can be explained by the general reasoning valid for all trials of personnel having worked in the "extermination camps": The judges assumed that the defendants had not volunteered for serving in these

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[522] A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 153.

[523] *Ibid*., p. 85. Rückerl gives only the defendants' initials. For the full names see, *i.a.*, http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sobibor-Prozess.

camps and that a refusal to participate in the maintenance of the "machinery of murder" could have exposed them to sanctions, including the death penalty. Thus, the court did not *a priori* attribute to them base motives – a condition which was and still is necessary in Germany for a murder charge. Base motives only came into play if a defendant had committed *unrequested* crimes, for example killing or ill-treating Jewish laborers, or whipping Jews on their way to the gas chamber. In such cases of "excesses," the defendants could face the toughest sanctions.

Whether an SS man had committed such "excesses" in an extermination camp was obviously something which the court could only ascertain on the basis of testimonies. As there were always plenty of witnesses on hand during these trials, all eager to ascribe the most horrifying deeds to any one of the defendants, the court could easily put pressure on the SS men in the dock. After all, it was entirely up to the judges to classify witness statements as "credible" or not.

The unbreakable rule was that a defendant could deny specific charges leveled against himself, but not the extermination of the Jews *per se*. Such latter arguments were considered "obstinate denials" and led to a more severe punishment. It is obvious that the defendants had been instructed accordingly by their lawyers who, for reasons of expediency, preferred not to question the concept of "extermination camps" drawn up by the courts, restricting themselves to insisting on the personal innocence of their clients or, at least, claim that the men had acted under military orders.

This was obviously true for the Sobibór trial at Hagen as well. Thus Albert Rückerl could state unopposed:[524]

> *"In the main hearings, the defendants argued strongly against any excessive individual murder charges. They did not, however, deny their having participated under orders in the activities accompanying the mass gassings of Jews at Sobibór."*

The sentencing of SS-*Unterscharführer* Erich Fuchs must be interpreted against this background. Fuchs was on trial for aiding and abetting with others the murder of at least 79,000 persons, but had escaped with a black eye and four years imprisonment. In March of 1963, long before the Hagen trial, Fuchs had declared the following in an interrogation by the prosecution:[525]

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[524] A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 85. Rückerl initializes the names of the defendants. Their full names can be found at http:/de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sobibor-Prozess.

[525] Interrogation of 2 April 1963, *ibid*., p. 166; also quoted by J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60),

"On Wirth's orders,[526] *I drove a truck to Lemberg and picked up a carburetor engine which I took to Sobibór. On my arrival at Sobibór, I could see, near the station, an area with a concrete structure and several solid houses. The local Sonderkommando was headed by Thomalla. Other SS men present were F., B., Stangl, F., Schwarz, B. as well as some more. We unloaded the engine. It was a heavy Russian gasoline engine (probably a tank or tractor engine) of at least 200 HP (V-engine, 8 cylinders, water-cooled). We placed the Motor on a concrete foundation and installed a connection between the exhaust and the piping. I then tested the engine. Initially, it did not work. I repaired the ignition and the valves and the engine finally started. The chemist whom I had already met at Bełżec went into the gas chamber with a measuring device and tested the gas concentration. Then a trial gassing was conducted."*

Then Fuchs goes on to describe a "test gassing" of 30 or 40 Jewesses (cf. Subchapter 4.4., p. 103). While the other courts had not made the slightest attempt at elucidating the murder weapon and the gassing procedure, the Hagen judges were at least able to base their verdict on Fuchs' statement in this regard. Thus, the gas chambers together with the gasoline engine as a murder weapon went on record. The fact that Fuchs supplied the names of several others, who had helped him with the installation of the engine and were present at the first gassing, may have helped him as well. We do not doubt in the least that the mild sentence was the result of a bargain. Fuchs supplied the desired evidence and was assured of the court's leniency.

What is perhaps even more interesting is a look at the acquittals at the Hagen trial. Adalbert Rückerl is surprisingly taciturn in this respect when he writes:[527]

"The remaining five out of the eleven defendants – a twelfth had committed suicide – were excusable, as the written reasoning states, on account of their unopposed claims of an emergency state of putative compulsion.[528] *Although for each one of them a realistic suspicion remained as to their actions under the individual circumstances, they had to be acquitted for lack of evidence."*

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pp. 118f.

526 Christian Wirth, Inspector for Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka.

527 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), pp. 85f.

528 "Putativer Befehlsnotstand" = A situation where one merely believes to be forced under threat of punishment to obey an illegal order.

We can find some additional information via the internet encyclopedia Wikipedia, which supplies us with the names of the five persons acquitted together with the charges against them:

– Erich Lachmann, charged with aiding and abetting with others the murder of at least 150,000 persons;
– Hans-Heinz Schütt, charged with aiding and abetting with others the murder of at least 86,000 persons;
– Heinrich Unverhau, charged with aiding and abetting with others the murder of at least 72,000 persons;
– Robert Jührs, charged with aiding and abetting with others the murder of 30 persons;
– Ernst Zierke, charged with aiding and abetting with others the murder of 30 persons.[529]

While the acquittals of Jührs and Zierke may be understandable in the light of the low number of murders in which they allegedly participated jointly, those of Lachmann, Schütt, and Unverhau are surprising on account of the seriousness of the indictment and are in striking disagreement with the sentences in the cases of Wolf, Ittner, Dubois, Lambert, and Fuchs who had likewise claimed an emergency state of putative compulsion and had not been charged with any excesses.

Schelvis explains Lachmann's acquittal on the grounds that the court had considered Lachmann to be "mentally impaired."[530] What is much more illuminating, however, is what Schelvis has to say about Unverhau:[531]

> *"He* [Unverhau] *was cleared after both the Hagen and the Bełżec trials* [the latter of which took place in Munich between 1963 and 1965]. *He was the only SS man who voluntarily spoke of his part in Operation Reinhardt immediately after the war."*

In other words: Unverhau had enlisted voluntarily as a witness for the prosecution in the NS trials after the war – and hence received his reward. Schütt's acquittal as well can be explained by his readiness to adopt the prosecution's cause, for he said in the trial:[532]

> *"In answer to the question why I was on the ramp when the transports arrived, I declare I was there out of curiosity. I wanted to convince myself of the inhumanity of the final solution, and to relay my*

529 http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sobibor-Prozess
530 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 258.
531 *Ibid.*, p. 263.
532 *Ibid.*, p. 261.

> *impressions back to Berlin so that I might be released. Under no circumstances did I ever get actively involved* [in the crimes committed] *at Sobibór. In fact, the crude manner in which the Ukrainians carried on repulsed me. The Jews were often pushed and beaten by them. They were merciless."*

All this indicates that the Hagen Sobibór trial, in line with most of the trials against "NS perpetrators," was primarily seen as an instrument to establish the judicial notoriety of the alleged mass murders. Defendants who were ready to cooperate with the court could more often than not count on a lenient sentence.

The Hagen judges behaved at times as if they were mentally deficient, swallowing even the most ridiculous lies uttered by the witnesses. Here is one example:[533]

> *"The witness Moshe B. asserted credibly: while he was waiting at the tables in the German mess hall in the entry camp, SS-Scharführer B. had approached him, asking him bluntly whether he was aware of what was happening in Camp III. When he said he did not know, B. was dissatisfied. He then placed an empty can on* [Moshe's] *head and tried to knock it off by pistol shots, all the time asking him whether he really did not know anything."*

Hence, the *Scharführer* himself did not know what was going on in Camp III, but expected a detainee, who (at least according to the traditional accounts of Sobibór) was strictly forbidden to enter that part of the camp, to tell him! The person behind the abbreviation 'Moshe B.' was actually our old acquaintance Moshe Bahir, whose credibility can be judged by the fact that, earlier on, he had spoken of a gas chamber with a collapsible floor and had asserted that in February of 1943 there had been a celebration at Sobibór on the occasion of the annihilation of the first million Jews (cf. Section 2.2.8., p. 32).

The fairy tale of SS men shooting tin cans off detainees' heads also appears in connection with other camps: at Auschwitz Gottfried Weise[534] and at Majdanek Anton Thumann[535] are said to have played the part of 'Wilhelm Tell' with fatal consequences for the detainees concerned.

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533 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 191.

534 Claus Jordan, "The German Justice System: A Case Study," in: G. Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 32), pp. 145-179, here p. 149.

535 Tadeusz Mencel (ed.), *Majdanek 1941-1944*, Wydawnictwo Lubielskie, Lublin 1991, p. 167.

It goes without saying that even the dustiest of shelf-warmers of black propaganda, Himmler's visit in early 1943 where he allegedly witnessed the gassing of Jewish ladies, was accepted by the Hagen court at face value:[536]

> *"Actually, at that time, very probably on 12 February 1943, Himmler was present at Sobibór. The court based its clear conviction on statements of the defendants who belonged to the camp personnel at that time, as well as on testimonies of former detainees heard as witnesses, and on the irrefutable opinion provided by the expert, Dr. Scheffler.* […] *In Himmler's honor, a group of pretty young Jewish women was brought in from some labor camp and gassed to provide Himmler with a show."*

By saying that the victims had been brought in from "some labor camp," the court circumvented the difficulty of saying where the women actually came from. There was a good reason for that: while most of the witnesses claim that the victims came to Sobibór from Lublin, Moshe Bahir stated that they came from Trawniki, and for Toivi Blatt they hailed from Włodawa (cf. Subchapter 2.5). Blatt, incidentally, caused a stir during the Hagen trial when he placed on the witness table two braids allegedly found on the former Sobibór camp site.[537]

Finally, we have to talk about the inglorious part Erich Bauer played in the run-up to the Hagen trial. Once the abolition of the death penalty had saved him from the guillotine, Bauer attempted to obtain his freedom by blaming his former comrades. Among other things, he drew a map of the Sobibór Camp for the Hagen court, including the "gas chamber,"[538] and he stated:[539]

> *"I estimate that the number of Jews gassed at Sobibór was about 350,000. In the canteen at Sobibór I once overheard Karl Frenzel, Franz Stangl and Gustav Wagner. They were discussing the number of victims in the extermination camps of Bełżec, Treblinka and Sobibór and expressed their regret that Sobibór 'came last' in the competition"*

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536 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), pp. 193f.

537 Heike Kleffner, Miriam Rürup, "Das vergessene Vernichtungslager Sobibór: Überblick über die juristische Verfolgung der NS-Täter und die Wahrnehmung in der Öffentlichkeit," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 7 Nov. 2003 (www.klick-nach-rechts.de/ticker/2003/11/Sobibór.htm).

538 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), pp. 158-161.

539 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 238.

It is said that traitors reap money but no gratitude, but in this case, Bauer reaped neither. After thirty-one years behind bars, at the age of seventy-nine, Bauer died in jail in 1980[540] – because two liars named Samuel Lerer and Esther Raab had decided to nominate him *Gasmeister* and because a court had decided to believe every syllable they uttered. After all, they had testified under oath!

6.5. The Sobibór Trial that Never Took Place

As opposed to the defendants in the Sobibór trials in Berlin, Frankfurt, or Hagen, who had merely occupied low-level posts during the war, the man brought to trial in Vienna in 1962 in connection with the events at Sobibór, Bełżec, and Treblinka was a real heavyweight. Hermann Julius Höfle, born in 1911, had been "*Referent für Judenangelegenheiten – Aktion Reinhardt*" (counselor for Jewish affairs – *Aktion Reinhardt*) in Lublin and deputy of Odilo Globocnik, the chief of SS and police in Lublin. It was he who reported in a radio message that up to the end of 1942 1,274,166 persons had been transported to "B.," "S." and "T." Referring to a meeting with Höfle, Fritz Reuter would write in March of 1943 that the Jews deported to Bełżec would be moved on "across the border and would never return to the General Government" (cf. Chapter 9, p. 297).

Hermann Höfle had been taken prisoner by the British in 1945 and handed over to the Austrian judicial authorities in 1947 but was liberated soon thereafter. In 1961 he was arrested once again and indicted. On 20 (other sources make it the 21st) August 1962, just prior to the opening of the trial, he hanged himself in his Vienna prison.[541] This, at least, is the official version, which is not altogether convincing, though.

After Höfle's arrest, enough evidence was collected against him to fill nine volumes, but "the Vienna prosecutor's office had not managed by that date [Höfle's alleged suicide] to extract a formal indictment from those substantial files."[542]

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[540] J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 247.
[541] www.deathcamps.org/reinhard/hoefle.html
[542] Sabine Loitfellner, *Die Rezeption von Geschworenengerichtsprozessen wegen NS-Verbrechen in ausgewählten österreichischen Zeitungen 1956 – 1975*; www.nachkriegsjustiz.at/prozesse/geschworeneng/rezeption.pdf.

This clearly indicates that Höfle had never admitted the annihilation of the Jews that the prosecution intended to lay at his feet. If he had indeed confessed, it would have been the easiest thing in world for the prosecution to prepare "a formal indictment from those substantial files." This leads one to believe that Höfle, who knew very well what went on in the camps at Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka, had stolidly maintained in the face of the Austrian judiciary that the three camps had been transit camps and that the alleged annihilations were nothing but propaganda.

In view of the important part played by Höfle in connection with the deportations of the Jews, the impending trial would have encountered great international coverage in the media. The Austrian authorities simply could not afford a defendant who refuted, point blank and in front of journalists from all over the world, the alleged extermination of Jews in the three camps of "*Aktion Reinhardt*." Seen in this light, we believe that Hermann Höfle did not commit suicide but was probably eliminated.

6.6. The Three Sobibór Trials in the Soviet Union

Three trials were conducted in the Soviet Union against former Ukrainian guards of the Sobibór Camp. On the subject of the first trial, we have not been able to find out such details as the number of defendants or the place and date of the trial. The website "Aktion Reinhard Camps" gives only the following somewhat laconic information on this point:[543]

> *"A few of the Ukrainian guards who served at Sobibór were brought to trial in the Soviet Union, such as B. Bielakow, M. Matwijenko, I. Nikfor, W. Podienko, F. Tichonowski, Emanuel Schultz and J. Zajcew. They were found guilty and executed for their crimes."*

The second and third trials took place in Kiev in April of 1963 and June of 1965, respectively. During the former, ten defendants were sentenced to be shot, another was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment. During the latter, the Soviet court pronounced three death sentences. If we follow the website "Aktion Reinhard Camps,"[543] A. Pechersky took the stand in the first trial, but according to B. Distel[544] he was a witness for the prosecution at both trials. Alexander A. Pechersky could thus boast of

[543] www.deathcamps.org/sobibor/sobibortrials.html
[544] B. Distel, *op. cit.* (note 59), p. 400.

having brought ten or thirteen men in front of a firing squad and of having had another man locked up for a decade and a half through his lies.

6.7. The Brazilian Extradition Proceedings against F. Stangl and G. Wagner

The first commander at Sobibór, Franz Stangl, as well as SS-*Oberscharführer* Gustav Wagner who had also been stationed at Sobibór emigrated to Brazil after the war. Stangl was arrested in 1967 at the instigation of Simon Wiesenthal and extradited to Germany. Gustav Wagner gave himself up to the São Paolo police in 1978, after Wiesenthal had launched a hunt against another man by the name of Wagner. The Brazilian newspaper *Folha de São Paolo* reports in its edition of 2 June 1978 that he adamantly denied the existence of gas chambers at Sobibór.[545] After having been jailed for some time, Wagner was released. No fewer than four states (Israel, Poland, Austria, and Germany) requested his extradition, but the Brazilian courts rejected all demands.[546] In the proceedings against both Stangl and Wagner the former Sobibór detainee Stanislav Szmajzner appeared as a witness for the prosecution[547] – we have drawn his profile elsewhere in this book.[548]

Franz Stangl was sentenced to life imprisonment by a Düsseldorf court in December of 1970 for the murder of 'at least 400,000 Jews.'[549] He launched an appeal. While the appeal was being processed, the journalist Gitta Sereny visited him in his cell on several occasions. He suddenly died on 28 June 1971. After his death Gitta Sereny wrote her book *Into that Darkness*, which has become a classic of 'Holocaust' literature. The book claims that Stangl had confessed without reservation to the mass murders at Sobibór and Treblinka, which he had been charged with. Still, Gitta Sereny could not really prove her point: there is no recording of her conversations with Stangl, and since dead men don't talk, she could have Stangl say whatever she liked. Gitta Sereny

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545 See Subchapter 4.6., p. 112; cf. Thomas Kues, "A Brief List of the Conveniently Deceased," http://codoh.com/library/document/656/

546 http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_Wagner_(SS-Mitglied)

547 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 62), p. 300, 302.

548 cf. Section 2.3.5, p. 29.

549 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 86.

gives us an interesting account of her last interview with Stangl, though:[550]

> *"The last day I spent with Stangl was Sunday, 27 June 1971. He had not been feeling well during the better part of that week and had stomach problems. I had brought him, on that day, a special soup in a thermos bottle. It was an Austrian soup that he said his wife cooked for him when he was feeling poorly. When I came back after being away for half an hour to have lunch, he had changed completely – he was in good spirits, his face was smooth and his eyes were fresh. 'I cannot tell you how fine I feel, all of a sudden,' he said. 'I have eaten this wonderful soup and then taken a nap. And I have never had such a good rest. Ach, I feel wonderful,' he repeated."*

A day later, Franz Stangl, who had liked Gitta Sereny's soup so much, left this world, and the master chef could write her book without worrying about any arguments. We leave it to the reader to draw his own conclusions from these bare facts.

Once the requests for Gustav Stangl's extradition had been definitely rejected in October of 1980, Gustav Wagner allegedly committed "suicide by stabbing himself." Schelvis designates the suicide thesis as the "official Brazilian version" and adds:[551]

> *"Szmajzner, however, let on that he had not been an entirely passive bystander at his death."*

Shaindy Perl tells us more about this matter:[552]

> *"Wagner's victory* [i.e. the refusal by the Brazilian legal authorities to let him be extradited] *was short-lived; he could not escape his avengers forever. One day in 1980, he was suddenly attacked and killed outside his home. His assailants left his mutilated body on his property and disappeared without a trace."*

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550 G. Sereny, *op. cit.* (note 224), p. 362.
551 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 264.
552 S. Perl, *op. cit.* (note 53), p. 232.

7. National-Socialist Policy of Jewish Emigration

The establishment of the Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka Camps took place within a historical context which must be well understood, before one can judge whether these camps – as traditional Holocaust historiography asserts – were extermination camps. For that purpose it is necessary to outline once again, with some more recent amplifications, the framework of the National-Socialist policy towards the Jews, which has been presented before in a separate study.[553]

7.1. Emigration

In one of the first written documents of his political career, Hitler, in a letter dated 16 September 1919 addressed to his friend Adolf Gemlich, proposes:[554]

> *"An anti-Semitism based merely on emotion will ultimately result in pogroms* [sic]. *Rational anti-Semitism, however, must lead to a planned* [and] *lawful fight against, and to the removal of, Jewish prerogatives, which set the Jew off from other aliens living in our midst (legislation concerning aliens). The final unalterable objective, though, must be the removal of the Jews."*

A few months later, on 13 August 1920, Hitler made a speech in Munich on the subject "Why are we anti-Semites?," in which he stressed that scientific evaluation of the Jewish question should result in moves bringing about the "removal of the Jews" from among the German people.[555]

This aim became the cornerstone of Hitler's Jewish policy after his ascent to power.

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553 C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 179-202.

554 Ernst Deuerlein, "Hitlers Eintritt in die Politik und die Reichswehr," in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte,* 7(2), April 1959, p. 204.

555 Reginald H. Phelps, "Hitlers 'grundlegende' Rede über den Antisemitismus," in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 16(4), October 1968, p. 417.

As early as 28 August 1933, the Reich ministry of economics concluded an agreement with the Jewish agency for Palestine which was to constitute the basis for the emigration of some 52,000 German Jews to Palestine over subsequent decade.[556] In a note of 19 March 1938, the ministry rescinded the agreement on the grounds that Germany was not interested in the emigration of rich Jews taking along their capital, but rather "in a mass emigration of Jews."[557]

The Nuremberg Laws of 15 September 1935 would reaffirm in a legislative manner articles 4 and 5 of the Party's program as elaborated in Munich on 24 February 1920. The aim of the law regarding Reich citizenship and of that concerning Germanic blood and honor was to separate and isolate the Jewish body, which was considered alien, from the German host with a view towards its pending expulsion. Gerald Reitlinger comments: "The Jews were meant to leave the Reich for good."[558]

At the end of 1936, a "Jewish section" was set up within the *Sicherheitsdienst* (Security Service), the main objective of which, according to Léon Poliakov, was "the examination of all problems in the preparatory stages of a mass emigration of Jews."[559]

A *Zentralstelle für jüdische Auswanderung* (central office for Jewish emigration) was established in Vienna on 26 August 1938 and was entrusted to Adolf Eichmann by Reinhardt Heydrich, the head of the Security Police.

A few days after the so-called "Night of broken glass," on 12 November 1938, Hermann Göring called a council of ministers to discuss the difficult situation which had arisen. Heydrich stated that the exclusion of Jews from German economic life had "not really resolved" the basic problem, i.e. the removal of the Jews from Germany. Thanks to the Vienna "*Judenauswanderungszentrale*" (Center for Jewish Emigration), at least 50,000 Jews had already left Austria, whereas, over the same period, only 19,000 emigrated from the *Altreich* (Germany in the borders of late 1937). He therefore proposed to set up an emigration office in the Reich proper modeled on Vienna and to embark on a vast migration policy, to be carried out over the next eight to ten years. Fi-

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556 R. Vogel, *Ein Stempel hat gefehlt. Dokumente zur Emigration deutscher Juden*, Droemer Knaur, Munich/Zürich 1977, p. 46 and 107-109.

557 NG-1889.

558 G. Reitlinger, *The Final Solution. The Attempt to Exterminate the Jews of Europe 1939-1945*, Vallentine, Mitchell & Co., London 1953, p. 8.

559 L. Poliakov, *op. cit.* (note 83), p. 16.

nance minister Johann L. Graf Schwerin von Krosigk seconded Heydrich's proposal: it was necessary to move the Jews abroad by all means available. Interior minister Wilhelm Frick stressed that the objective should be to bring about the emigration of the maximum possible number of Jews.[560]

On 24 January 1939, after having received Heydrich's proposal, Göring issued a decree approving the establishment of a *Reichszentrale für jüdische Auswanderung* (Imperial Center for Jewish Emigration), which was inaugurated in Berlin on 11 February. It was to put into practice the core idea of National-Socialist policy towards the Jews: "The emigration of the Jews from Germany must be promoted by all available means." The task of the new office was, in fact, "to take all measures necessary for the preparation of an increased emigration of the Jews," to further, preferentially, the emigration of poor Jews and, where necessary, to ease the bureaucratic practices in individual cases. Göring made Heydrich the head of this office.[561]

A report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 25 January 1939, entitled "The Jewish question as a factor of foreign policy in 1938," stresses unequivocally:[562]

> *"The ultimate goal of German policy towards the Jews is the emigration of all Jews residing on the territory of the Reich."*

Following the creation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, Eichmann – meanwhile promoted to the rank of *Hauptsturmführer* – was ordered on 15 July 1939 by Heydrich to establish a *Zentralstelle für jüdische Auswanderung* (Center for Jewish Emigration) in Prague as well. The founding act defines its objective as "the promotion and accelerated realization of the emigration from Bohemia and Moravia."[563]

This Jewish emigration program encountered an unexpected obstacle in the undisguised anti-Jewish attitude of the great democracies which, while decrying vociferously the persecutions of the Reich's Jews, refused to shelter the victims. In his speech of 30 January 1939, the Führer declared:[564]

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560 PS-1816, pp. 47, 55f.
561 NG-2586-A.
562 PS-3358.
563 Hans G. Adler, *Der Kampf gegen die "Endlösung der Judenfrage,"* Bundeszentrale für Heimatdienst, Bonn 1958, p. 8.
564 Max Domarus, *Hitlers Reden und Proklamationen 1932-1945*, Vol. II, first half, R. Löwit, Wiesbaden 1973, p. 1056.

> *"We are witnessing today the shameful spectacle of the whole democratic world shedding bitter tears, but remaining solidly hard-hearted toward the sufferings of the poor Jewish people at a time when it is their obvious duty to help."*

Hitler was alluding to the failure of the Evian conference, held from 6 to 15 July 1938 at the famous French spa. It had been convened at the suggestion of U.S. President Roosevelt and was to provide help for the victims of National-Socialist persecutions, primarily the Jews. But right from the beginning the good intentions of the U.S. President appeared dubious, as we hear from the Jewish historian Michael Mazor:[565]

> *"At his press conference in Warm Springs, President Roosevelt had already limited the possibilities for Evian by saying that no revisions or increases in the immigration quotas of the United States were planned in this respect. In the invitations to the conference sent to 33 countries, Roosevelt had underlined that it was not expected of any country to accept more immigrants than were presently scheduled by its laws."*

On such a basis, the Evian conference was doomed from the start. The result was that "the free world abandoned the Jews of Germany and Austria to their merciless fate."[565]

On 25 November 1939 Ehrhard Wetzel and Gerhard Hecht, officials concerned with racial policy, penned a memorandum entitled "The question of the treatment of the formerly Polish territories from the point of view of racial policy," which constituted a first draft of the future "*Generalplan Ost*." It contained, i.a., a plan for the resettlement of "some 800,000 Jews from the Reich (*Altreich*, Austria, Sudetenland, and Protectorate)" into the occupied Polish territories and of "another 530,000 Jews" from the formerly Polish territories now incorporated into the Reich.[566] The destination of these deportees was undoubtedly the General Government, which had been set up officially on 12 October.

The plan followed directives by Heydrich, addressed by express letter to all heads of *Einsatzgruppen*, on the subject of the "Jewish question in the occupied territories" dated 21 September 1939.[567] One of these directives, the Nisko[568] plan, suggested the creation of a Jewish

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565 M. Mazor, "Il y a trente ans: La Conférence d'Evian," in: *Le Monde Juif*, No. 50, April-June 1968, pp. 23 and 25.

566 "Die Frage der Behandlung der Bevölkerung der ehemaligen polnischen Gebietes nach rassenpolitischen Gesichtpunkte," PS-660, p. 25.

567 PS-3363.

568 Between 20 October 1939 and 12 March 1941, 6,615 Jews from Austria were taken to

reservation in eastern Poland. The attempt was possibly initiated by Eichmann, but it failed.[569]

In any case, the idea of Jewish emigration had not been altogether abandoned, for it was recommended in the above memorandum:[570]

> *"In order to render the Jew fit for emigration, it will be advisable, if need be, to improve his education."*

Himmler wrote in a memorandum of May 1940:[571]

> *"I hope to see the notion of a Jew melt away through the possibility of a major emigration of Jews to Africa or some other colony."*

In the same document, he rejects "the Bolshevik method of the physical eradication of a people [as it is,] according to my deeply rooted conviction, ungermanic and impossible."[571]

On 24 June 1940 Heydrich, the head of the RSHA, asked the minister of foreign affairs, Joachim Ribbentrop, to be informed of any ministerial meetings concerning the "final solution of the Jewish question," explaining the request by saying:[572]

> *"In 1939, the General Field Marshal* [Göring]*, in his quality as administrator of the Four-Year-Plan, entrusted me with the implementation of the Jewish emigration from the territory of the Reich. Subsequently, it was possible, even during the war and in spite of considerably difficulties, to carry on the Jewish emigration successfully. Since 1st January 1939, when my office took over this task, more than 200,000 Jews have so far emigrated from the Reich area. However, the problem as a whole – we are dealing with some 3¼ million Jews in the areas presently under German sovereignty – can no longer be solved by emigration.*
>
> *Thus, a final solution on a territorial basis will impose itself."* (Underlings in the original)

As a consequence of this letter, the foreign ministry developed the Madagascar plan.[573]

Nisko and other towns in the General Government. Cf. Subchapter 9.4., p. 317.

569 Seev Goshen, "Eichmann und die Nisko-Aktion im Oktober 1939," in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 29(1), January 1981, pp. 74-96.

570 PS-660, p. 35. Cf. Section 8.2.1., p. 244.

571 Heinrich Himmler, "Einige Gedanken über die Behandlung der Fremdvölkischen im Osten," in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 5(2), April 1957, p. 197.

572 T-173.

573 Two extensive treatments of this question are provided by Magnus Brechtkens, "*Madagaskar für die Juden": Antisemitische Idee und politische Praxis 1885-1945*, R. Oldenbourg Verlag, Munich 1998; and Hans Jansen, *Der Madagaskar-Plan. Die beabsichtigte Deportation der europäischen Juden nach Madagaskar*, Herbig, Munich 1997.

7.2. The Madagascar Plan

On 3 July 1940, Fritz Rademacher, head of the Jewish section in the foreign ministry, drew up a report entitled "The Jewish question in the peace treaty," introducing it as follows:[574]

> *"The impending victory gives Germany the possibility and, I think, makes it our duty, to resolve the Jewish question in Europe. The most desirable solution is: All Jews out of Europe."*

Rademacher goes on to explain that France – in a peace treaty considered to be imminent – would relinquish the island of Madagascar as a mandate, with all European Jews to be deported there, forming an autonomous state under German supervision:

> *"Germany will be given the island as a mandate.* […] *Within this territory, the Jews will be given autonomy in other respects: their own mayors, their own police, their own postal and railroad services etc. The Jews will be solidary debtors for the value of the island."*

Ribbentrop approved the project and forwarded it to the RSHA, which was to take care of the material preparations for the resettlement of the Jews on the East-African island and for the supervision of the evacuated Jews.[575]

This was precisely the "final solution of the Jewish question on a territorial basis" imagined by Heydrich.

On 30 August 1940, Rademacher elaborated a paper entitled "Madagascar project." Its section on "Financial considerations" begins with the words:[576]

> *"The execution of the final solution proposed requires considerable means."*

Hence, "the final solution of the Jewish question" meant nothing but the resettlement of the European Jews on Madagascar. On 12 July 1940, Hans Frank, Governor General in Poland, made a speech announcing the decision[577]

> *"to ship the whole lot of Jewry from the German Reich, the General Government, and the Protectorate to some American or African colony as soon as this can be done after a peace treaty. Madagascar is being considered, and is to be ceded by France for that purpose."*

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574 NG-2586-B.
575 NG-2586-J.
576 NG-2586-D.
577 PS-2233. *IMT*, Vol. XXIX, p. 378.

On 25 July, Frank reiterated that the Führer had decided to deport the Jews "as soon as overseas transportation permits the deportation of the Jews."[578]

In October of 1940, Alfred Rosenberg wrote an article entitled "Jews on Madagascar," in which he reminded his readers that as early as the anti-Jewish congress at Budapest in 1927 "[…] the question of a future removal of the Jews from Europe [was] discussed, and here, for the first time, the proposal was made to promote Madagascar as the intended homestead of the Jews." Rosenberg himself endorsed this idea and expressed his wish for the Jewish "circles of high finance" in Britain and the USA to help with the creation of a Jewish reservation on Madagascar, something which constituted a world-wide problem.[579]

At a meeting dedicated to the topic "The Jewish question as a world-wide problem," which took place on 29 March 1941, Rosenberg declared:[580]

> *"For Germany, the Jewish question can only be considered solved when the last Jew has left the Greater German space."*

Among other things in this connection, he mentioned a "Jewish reservation," which apparently was to be located on Madagascar, even if he did not explicitly say so.

According to statements by Moritz von Schirmeister, a former official in the ministry of propaganda, Joseph Goebbels himself spoke about the Madagascar plan in public on several occasions,[581] and Ribbentrop recalled the Führer's decision to deport the European Jews to North Africa or Madagascar.[582]

The deportation of the European Jews to Madagascar was not a fictitious plan, but a real and concrete project. It was elaborated a few weeks after the armistice in France (22 June 1940), when a peace treaty involving the French surrender of Madagascar to Germany was being mulled over and, above all, when the end of the war was thought to be imminent. The protraction of the war prevented the implementation of this project.

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578 *Ibid.*, p. 405.
579 Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris (subsequently quoted as CDJC), CXLVI-51, pp. 4, 7, 9.
580 CDJC, CXLVI-23, p. 66 and 82.
581 *IMT*, Vol. XVII, p. 250.
582 *IMT*, Vol. X, p. 398.

Alongside these developments, the Reich administration continued to promote energetically the Jewish emigration, primarily from Germany.

On 20 May 1941 Reinhardt Heydrich stopped all emigration of Jews from France as well as Belgium "in view of the final solution of the Jewish question, no doubt about to be realized."[583] He obviously expected the imminent implementation of the Madagascar plan. Still, Heydrich reiterated the central tenet of NS policy toward the Jews:[583]

> *"In accordance with an instruction emanating from the Reich Marshall of the Greater German Reich* [Göring]*, the emigration of Jews from the Reich territory including the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia is to be implemented actively, even under the present state of war, within the conditions prevailing and taking into account the directives for the emigration of the Jews."*

Then Heydrich goes on to explain in no uncertain terms the reasons for his having prohibited the emigration of Jews from France and Belgium:[583]

> *"As the Jews on the territory of the Reich, for example, have only a limited choice of departure* [routes]*, mainly via Spain and Portugal, an emigration of Jews from France and Belgium would further reduce these possibilities."*

Two months later, on 31st July, Göring entrusted Heydrich with the task of undertaking all necessary preparations for the "*Endlösung*" (final solution), i.e. emigration or evacuation to Madagascar of all Jews within the German sway. In the letter, Göring said:[584]

> *"In addition to the task already entrusted to you by the decree of 14 January 1939, viz. to bring about an optimum solution to the Jewish question by emigration or evacuation in accordance with the conditions prevailing, I order you herewith to undertake all necessary preparations – organizational, administrative, and material – for a comprehensive solution of the Jewish question within the German sphere of influence in Europe. To the extent that the competence of other central agencies is concerned thereby, the latter are* [to be requested] *to participate.*
>
> *I order you furthermore to submit to me in the near future a comprehensive proposal concerning the organizational, administrative,*

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583 NG-3104. The letter is signed by Walter Schellenberg representing Heydrich.
584 NG-2586-E. PS-710.

and material requirements for the implementation of the final solution of the Jewish question so envisaged."

This document is in complete agreement with the Madagascar plan. The instructions given by Göring to Heydrich "in addition" to those already contained in the decree of 24 January 1939 were for all intents and purposes the implementation of the solution of the Jewish question "by emigration or evacuation"[585] of the Jews in the Reich exclusively, while simultaneously aiming for a territorial "final solution" by resettlement in Madagascar of all Jews in the European countries occupied by Germany. For the very reason that it was to include all Jews of the occupied European states, this solution was labeled a "comprehensive solution" [*Gesamt*lösung], a designation which echoes the "problem as a whole" [*Gesamt*problem], the term used in Heydrich's note of 24 June 1940 (cf. above).

Heydrich clearly alluded to the task entrusted to him by the decree of 24 January 1939 when, on 6 November 1941, he wrote that, years earlier, he had been given the order to prepare an "*Endlösung*" in Europe.[586] He himself identified the "*Endlösung*" with the solution "by emigration or evacuation" targeted in Göring's note of 31st July 1941. This is also the context of the order conveyed to the foreign ministry by Adolf Eichmann on 28 August 1941, which prohibited "an emigration of Jews from the territories occupied by us in view of the impending final solution of the Jewish question in Europe now being prepared."[587]

7.3. From Madagascar Plan to Deportation to the East

Over the months to follow, with the vision of large territorial gains appearing on the horizon since the beginning of the Russian campaign, new perspectives opened up, leading to a significant change of course in the NS policy in respect of the Jews. The "*Endlösung*" by deportation to Madagascar was now replaced by a "territorial final solution" involving the deportation of the European Jews into the eastern territories occupied by the Germans.

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585 Legal emigration to other countries or deportation to the East (Poland: October 1939 through March 1940) and/or to the West (unoccupied France: October 1940).

586 PS-1624.

587 PA, *Inland II* A/B, AZ 83-85 Sdh. 4, Vol. 59/3.

This change of course was proposed on 22 August 1941 by SS-*Sturmbannführer* Carltheo Zeitschel, advisor to the German embassy in Paris, who wrote in a note to the attention of ambassador Otto Abetz:[588]

"The continuing conquest and occupation of large territories in the East could at present offer us a rapid solution of the Jewish problem throughout Europe. As we can see from the cries for help addressed to the American Jews in the press of all the Jews in Palestine, some 6 million Jews are living in the regions recently occupied by us, especially in Bessarabia, amounting to one third of world Jewry. In the course of any new disposition of the eastern space, these six million Jews would in any case have to be grouped and a special territory would have to be staked out for them. It should not be a major problem to include the Jews from the remainder of the European states and to move there as well the Jews who are presently crammed into the ghettos of Warsaw, Litzmannstadt (Łodź), Lublin etc.

As far as the occupied areas are concerned, such as Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg, Norway, Yugoslavia, Greece, it would be easy to issue military orders for the removal of the Jews to the new territory in mass transports; other states could be encouraged to follow this example and to expulse their Jews to this territory. Within a short period of time, Europe could be made free of Jews.

The idea of moving all Jews to Madagascar which has been mulled for years and has recently been revived by admiral Darlan, is not a bad thing in itself, but would run into serious logistic problems so soon after the war when the world tonnage of ships, seriously diminished by the war, would be needed for purposes other than offering cruises to masses of Jews. In addition, moving nearly ten million people by ship would take years, even if enough shipping capacity were available.

I therefore submit to you to raise this question with the Reich ministry of foreign affairs in the near future and to suggest a meeting in this sense with the recently designated future minister for the eastern Territories, Reichsleiter Rosenberg, and the Reichsführer-SS for an examination of my proposal. Moving the Jews into the eastern territories, even during the war, should not present insurmountable diffi-

588 CDJC, V-15.

culties, particularly so as the Jews in the General Government could use their own vehicles and public roads."

After having alluded to the situation of the Jews in France, he concluded:

"Furthermore, I suggest approaching the Reichsmarschall [Göring] *in this matter since he is, at the moment, receptive to the Jewish problem; as his present disposition and his experience indicate, he can certainly be expected to become a strong supporter for the implementation of the idea expounded above."*

A plan for the removal of the Jews into the East had been considered earlier on several occasions. On 2 April 1941, i.e. before the beginning of the Russian campaign, Reichsminister Rosenberg had envisioned "to make extensive use of Muscovite Russia as an area for undesirable elements of the population."[589]

On 17 July 1941, Governor General Frank noted in his official journal:[590]

"The Governor General does not favor any further ghettos because the Führer expressly declared on 19 June that the Jews will soon be removed from the General Government with the latter becoming, as it were, a mere transit camp."

On 20 August 1941, Goebbels, noted in his diary after a visit to the Führer HQ:[591]

"Furthermore, the Führer promised me that I could remove the Jews from Berlin immediately after the termination of the eastern campaign."

On 24 September 1941, the day after a conversation with Heydrich at the Führer HQ, Goebbels noted in his diary, that the Jews in the East "would all be deported to the camps […] set up by the Bolsheviks."[592]

On the same day he wrote that the Führer's opinion was for the Jews to be pushed out of Germany step by step and wished:[592]

"Berlin will be first in line, and I am hopeful that we will succeed in moving a significant portion of the Berlin Jews to the East within this year."

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589 PS-1017.

590 Quoted acc. to Martin Broszat, "Hitler und die Genesis der 'Endlösung.' Aus Anlaß der Thesen von David Irving," in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 25(4), October 1977, pp. 748f.

591 *Ibid.*, p. 750.

592 *Ibid.*, p. 751.

On 28 September, Himmler transmitted to Arthur Greiser, *Gauleiter* of the Wartheland district, Hitler's order for the rapid deportation to the East of the Jews from the *Altreich* and the Protectorate. For this purpose Himmler strived, if possible even before the end of 1941, to move these Jews "initially, as a first step, into the eastern territories that were made part of the Reich two years ago, and to move them further east next spring," and thus he envisaged "to move some 600,000 Jews from the *Altreich* and the Protectorate to the Litzmannstadt ghetto […] for the winter."[593]

In a memo dated 7 October 1941, Werner Koeppen, a liaison official for Rosenberg, recorded that Hitler had made the following declaration the day before on the subject of the Protectorate:[593]

> *"All Jews must be removed from the Protectorate, and not just into the General Government as a first step, but right away further on to the East. We just cannot do this right now because of a shortage of transport capacity. Together with the Jews from the Protectorate, all Jews from Berlin and Vienna are to disappear."*

On 10 October 1941, during a meeting at Prague on the subject of "Solution to Jewish problems," Heydrich declared that he planned to deport some 50,000 Jews from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia to Minsk and Riga between 15 October and 15 November. They were to be housed in the "camps for communist prisoners in the operational area."[594]

On 13 October 1941, Frank and Rosenberg met for a discussion which also touched on the deportation of the Jews from the General Government:[595]

> *"The Governor General then raised the subject of the possibility of deporting the Jewish population of the General Government into the occupied eastern territories. Reichsminister Rosenberg remarked that similar suggestions had already come to him from the military authorities in Paris.*[596] *At the moment, however, he did not think that such resettlement plans could be implemented. Still, for the fu-*

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593 Letter from Himmler to Greiser dated 18 September 1941. BAK, NS 19/2655, p. 3. Facsimile of the document in: Peter Witte, "Zwei Entscheidungen in der 'Endlösung der Judenfrage': Deportationen nach Łodź und Vernichtung in Chełmno," in: *Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente*, Academia, Prague 1995, p. 50.

594 T/37(299), p. 2.

595 Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 101), p. 252. The quotation is from the diary of H. Frank, 1941/IV, pp. 930f.

596 A clear allusion to the proposal made by SS-*Sturmbannführer* Carltheo Zeitschel.

ture he was ready to promote Jewish emigration toward the East, also in view of the intention to move undesirable elements from the Reich territory into the sparsely populated eastern regions."

Thus, just a few months after it had been made, Zeitschel's proposal was accepted by Hitler himself when he decided to shelve the Madagascar plan and to move all Jews living in the occupied territories into the East. He probably took this decision at some point in September of 1941. On 23 October 1941 Himmler stopped all Jewish emigration,[597] effective immediately, and the evacuation of 50,000 western Jews to the East was ordered the following day. On 24 October 1941 Kurt Daluege, the chief of police (*Ordnungspolizei*) issued a decree on the subject "Evacuations of Jews from the *Altreich* and the Protectorate":[598]

"Between 1st November and 4 December 1941, 50,000 Jews will be deported by the security police from the Altreich, the Ostmark [Austria]*, and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia into the region of Minsk and Riga in the East. The deportations will be carried out by Reichsbahn trains of 1000 persons each. The trains will be assembled at Berlin, Hamburg, Hanover, Dortmund, Münster, Düsseldorf, Cologne, Frankfurt/M., Kassel, Stuttgart, Nuremberg, Munich, Vienna, Breslau, Prague, and Brünn."*

The new NS policy towards the Jews was announced to the higher party echelons at the *Wannsee-Konferenz*, a meeting specially convened for this purpose. It had originally been scheduled for 9 December 1941,[599] but was then postponed. It eventually took place in Berlin, Am Großen Wannsee 56/58, on 20 January 1942. The main speaker was Reinhardt Heydrich. The minutes of the meeting begin with a broad overview of the National-Socialist policy towards the Jews:[600]

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597 T-394: "*Reichsführer-SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei* has ordered the emigration of Jews to be prevented with immediate effect."

598 PS-3921.

599 PS-709. NG-2586-F.

600 NG-2586-G. This English translation of the *Wannsee Protokoll* can be found on the website of the Wannsee Memorial Institute in Berlin: www.ghwk.de/engl/protengl.htm. Editor's remark: Although the authors of the present work consider the content of the Wannsee Protocol to be plausible and therefore see no need to doubt its authenticity, it should be pointed out that other revisionist authors strongly disagree, cf. Roland Bohlinger, Johannes P. Ney, *Zur Frage der Echtheit des Wannsee-Protokolls*, 2nd ed., Verlag für ganzheitliche Forschung und Kultur, Viöl 1994; Roland Bohlinger (ed.), *Die Stellungsnahme der Leitung der Gedenkstätte Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz zu dem von Bohlinger und Ney verfaßten Gutachten zur Frage der Echtheit des sogenannten Wannsee-Protokolls und der dazugehörigen Schriftstücke*, Verlag für ganzheitliche Forschung, Viöl 1995; cf. Johannes P. Ney, "Das Wannsee-Protokoll – Anatomie einer Fälschung," in: Ernst Gauss (ed.), *Grundlagen zur Zeitgeschichte*, Grabert, Tübingen 1994, pp. 169-191; Engl.: "The

"SS Lieutenant General [Obergruppenführer] *Heydrich, Head of the Security Police and the SD, opened the meeting with the announcement that the Reich Marshal* [Göring] *had put him in charge of preparations for the final solution of the Jewish question. He noted that this conference had been called to clarify fundamental questions. The Reich Marshal's request that a draft be submitted to him regarding the organizational, technical and material aspects of the final solution of the Jewish question required prior joint consideration by all central agencies directly concerned with these problems in order to coordinate their subsequent course of action.*[601]

The authority for directing the final solution of the Jewish question rests with the Reichsführer-SS and Chief of German Police [i.e. Himmler] *(Head of the Security Police and the SD)* [i.e. Heydrich], *without regard to geographic boundaries.*

The Head of the Security Police and the SD [Heydrich] *then gave a brief review of the struggle conducted so far against this foe. The most important elements are:*

a) forcing the Jews out of the various spheres of life of the German people,

b) forcing the Jews out of the German people's living space (Lebensraum).

In pursuance of these endeavors, an accelerated emigration of the Jews from the territory of the Reich was seen as the only temporary solution and was accordingly embarked upon in an intensified and systematic manner.

On instruction of the Reich Marshal [i.e. Göring], *a Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration was established in January 1939; its direction was entrusted to the Head of the Security Police and the Security Service (SD)* [i.e. Heydrich]. *Its particular tasks were:*

a) to take <u>measures</u> for the preparation of increased Jewish emigration,

b) to <u>direct</u> the flow of emigration,

c) to speed up the emigration process in <u>individual cases</u>.

The aim of this task was to purge German living space of Jews by legal means."

Wannsee Conference Protocol: Anatomy of a Fabrication," online: www.vho.org/GB/Books/dth/fndwannsee.html.

601 Translation corrected by www.ghwk.de according to what Heydrich probably said. The original German sentence here is nonsense grammatically, literally stating that "prior all central agencies directly concerned with these problems have to be treated."

As a result of this policy and despite many difficulties, Heydrich stressed, roughly 537,000 Jews had emigrated by 31 October 1941:

> *"Of these,*
> *ca. 360,000 left the Altreich* [Germany with its 1937 borders].
> *ca. 147,000 left the Ostmark* [Austria after 15 March 1938],
> *ca. 30,000 left the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia* [after 15 March 1939]*."*

The protocol goes on to say:

> *"In the meantime, the Reichsführer-SS and Head of the German Police* [i.e. Himmler] *has forbidden any further emigration of Jews in view of the dangers posed by emigration in wartime and the looming possibilities in the East.*
> *III. As a further possible solution, and with the appropriate prior authorization by the Führer, emigration has now been replaced by evacuation to the East. This operation should be regarded only as a provisional option, though in view of the coming final solution of the Jewish question it is already supplying practical experience of vital importance."*

Hence, on Hitler's orders, expulsion to the occupied territories in the East replaced any voluntary or forced emigration of the European Jews to Madagascar, but it was to be only a "temporary possibility" while awaiting a definitive solution of this question to be realized after the end of the war.

As early as August of 1940 Hitler had announced his intention to evacuate all European Jews after the war.[602] On 7 March 1942 Goebbels noted in his diary:[603]

> *"The Jewish question must now be resolved on a comprehensive European scale. There are more than 11 million Jews in Europe.*[604] *At a later date, they will have to be initially concentrated in the East. Possibly, after the war, they could be given an island, say Madagascar. In any case, Europe will not be at peace as long as the Jews have not been neutralized completely on European soil."*

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602 Luther's memorandum for Rademacher dated 15 August 1940, in: Auswärtiges Amt, *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Series D, Volume X, London 1957, p. 484.

603 Heinrich Fraenkel, Roger Manvell, *Goebbels, eine Biographie*, Verlag Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Collogne-Berlin 1960, p. 256.

604 Excessively high figure, taken from the population statistics given on p. 6 of the *Wannsee Protokoll.*

According to a note of the Reich chancellery dating from March or April of 1942, Hitler had repeatedly informed Lammers, the head of the chancellery, "that he wanted to postpone the solution of the Jewish question until after the war."[605] On 24 July 1942, according to Henry Picker, Hitler underlined this intention by saying squarely that "he would, after the end of the war, take the rigorous stand of squeezing one city after another until the Jews came out, ready to emigrate to Madagascar or to some other Jewish national state."[606]

The intention of the National Socialists to solve the Jewish problem after the war results also from the so-called "Brown File" drafted by Rosenberg on 20 June 1941 and later integrated into the "Green File" of September of 1942. Its section "Directives for the treatment of the Jewish question" begins as follows:[607]

> *"All measures regarding to the Jewish question in the occupied territories in the East must be taken from the point of view that the Jewish question will be solved in a general way for the whole of Europe after the war. They must, therefore, be conceived as preparatory partial measures and must be in agreement with other decisions in this domain. On the other hand, the experience gathered in connection with the treatment of the Jewish question in the occupied eastern territories may have a bearing on the solution of the problem as a whole, as the Jews in these territories, together with those of the General Government, constitute the largest contingent of European Jewry. Any kind of purely vexatious actions, being unworthy of a German, are to be abstained from."*

In a typed copy of these "Directives," undated but surely stemming from the same period, the text continues as follows after the word 'domain':[608]

> *"This is applicable, in particular, to the creation of at least temporary facilities for the settlement of Jews from the territory of the Reich."*

A note by Martin Luther, an official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, referring to Jews of Spanish nationality living in occupied France and

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605 PS-4025.

606 Henry Picker, *Hitlers Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier*, Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, Munich 1981, p. 456.

607 "*Richtlinien für die Führung der Wirtschaft in den besetzten Ostgebieten*" (Directives for the Management of the Economy in the occupied eastern territories) (Green File), Berlin, September 1942. EC-347. *IMT*, Vol. XXXVI, p. 348.

608 PS-212. *IMT*, Vol. XXV, p. 302

dated 17 October 1941, speaks of "measures to be taken after the end of the war towards a fundamental solution of the Jewish question."[609]

During a meeting of *Reichsmarschall* Göring with the *Reichskommissars* for the occupied territories and the military commanders, which took place on 6 August 1942, Rosenberg declared:[610]

> *"The Jewish question for Europe and for Germany can be considered solved only when no more Jews exist on the European continent."*

We may thus conclude that the Wannsee meeting was convened solely for the purpose of informing the agencies concerned that emigration and the Madagascar plan had been abandoned, replaced as they were by the start of a new policy of large scale deportations of Jews into the East, and of discussing the problems arising from the new situation. The Madagascar plan officially was shelved on 10 February 1942. The reasons are explained in a note by Rademacher to envoy Harald Bielfeld of the Foreign Ministry, written on that day:[611]

> *"In August of 1940 I transmitted to you for your files the plan elaborated by my department for the final solution of the Jewish question, whereby the island of Madagascar was to be ceded by France, with the practical implementation of this task to be entrusted to the RSHA. In accordance with this plan, Gruppenführer Heydrich was ordered by the Führer to carry out the solution of the Jewish question in Europe.*
>
> *The war against the Soviet Union has meanwhile opened up the possibility of providing other territories for the final solution. The Führer has decided accordingly that the Jews will not be deported to Madagascar but to the East. Hence, Madagascar need no longer be considered for the final solution."*

This shows clearly that the "*Endlösung*" was of a territorial nature and consisted in the deportation of the Jews to the territories held by Germany in the East. This is in perfect agreement with another important document, the Luther memorandum of August of 1942. In it, Luther resumed primarily the essential elements of NS policy towards the Jews:[612]

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609 PA, *Politische Abteilung* III 245, AZ Po 36, Vol. I.
610 URSS-170. IMT, Vol. XXXIV, p. 417.
611 NG-5770.
612 NG-2586-J.

> *"The basic premise of the German policy in respect of the Jews, starting with the seizure of power* [by Hitler in 1933]*, was to promote Jewish emigration by all available means. For this purpose, Generalfeldmarschall Göring, in his quality as head of the Four-Year-Plan, created a Reich central agency for Jewish emigration and entrusted its leadership to Gruppenführer Heydrich, the chief of the security police."*

Having expounded the origins and the development of the Madagascar plan – which by now had been scrapped in view of the changed situation – Luther stressed that Göring's letter of 31 July 1941 was a follow-up to Heydrich's letter of 24 June 1940, which claimed that the Jewish question could no longer be solved by emigration but required a "territorial final solution." Luther went on to say:

> *"For that reason, Reichsmarschall Göring requested Gruppenführer Heydrich on 31 July 1941 to carry out all necessary preparations for a comprehensive solution of the Jewish question within the German sphere of influence in Europe (cf.* [document] *DIII 709g). On the basis of this order, Gruppenführer Heydrich convened a meeting of all German agencies involved for 20 January 1942, with secretaries of state from the other ministries and myself from the foreign office attending. Gruppenführer Heydrich explained at the meeting that Reichsmarschall Göring had issued his order being so directed by the Führer, and that the Führer had now approved the evacuation of the Jews to the East."*

Luther added that on the basis of this order the evacuation of the Jews from Germany had been started. The eastern territories were their destination, to which they would be deported by way of the General Government:

> *"The removal to the General Government is a temporary measure. The Jews will be moved on to the occupied eastern territories as soon as the material means are available."*

A circular dated 9 October 1942 and sent to Party officials, entitled "Rumors concerning the situation of the Jews in the East," explains in the following manner the measures taken against the Jews:[613]

> *"In connection with the elaboration of the final solution of the Jewish question, the inhabitants of various parts of the Reich have recently been discussing 'very severe measures' against the Jews, par-*

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613 PS-3244.

ticularly in the eastern territories. We have been able to ascertain that such representations – usually in a distorted or exaggerated manner – had been conveyed by members of the various units operating in the east who had, themselves, been able to observe such measures.

It is conceivable that not all members of our people will be able to comprehend the necessity of such measures, those members in particular who are not in a position to form their own opinion of the horrors perpetrated by the Bolsheviks.

In order to counter the spread of such rumors which often have an intentionally tendentious character, we hereby furnish the information found below in an effort to reflect the present state of the situation:

For the past 2000 years, a fruitless fight against Jewry has been going on. It was only after 1933 that we have been able to look for ways and means allowing us to bring about a complete separation of Jewry from the German host body. The portions of the solution carried out so far can be described as follows:

1) The repulsion of the Jews from the various domains of life of the German people. The laws passed by the legislature are to constitute the foundation guaranteeing that future generations, too, will be shielded from a renewed onslaught of the opponent.

2) The effort to expel the opponent completely from the territory of the Reich. In view of the fact that the living space available to the German people is very small, it was hoped that this problem could be solved by an accelerated emigration of the Jews.

Since the beginning of the war in 1939, emigration has become increasingly more difficult; at the same time, the economic space of the German people steadily increased in size compared to its living space so that, at the present time, a complete elimination through emigration is no longer possible in view of the large number of Jews present in this [economic] *space. It is to be expected that already the coming generation will no longer perceive this problem neither as vividly nor as clearly* [as we do] *on the basis of their own experience. Also, the matter has been set in motion and must be settled; hence, the problem as a whole must be resolved by the present generation.*

Therefore, the complete expulsion or elimination of the millions of Jews present in the European economic sphere is an imperative task in the fight to guarantee the existence of the German people.
Starting in the Reich itself and then extending into the other European countries made part of the final solution, the Jews will be moved into large camps in the East, some already in existence, others yet to be set up, where they will be used directly as labor or moved on further east. Elderly Jews, as well as those with high military decorations (EK I [Iron Cross]*, Golden medal for bravery etc.) will be moved successively to Theresienstadt, a town in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.*
It is in the nature of this task that some of these very difficult problems can, in the interest of the survival of our people, be solved only by the utmost severity."

On 23 November 1942, Himmler spoke at Bad Tölz, saying:[614]

"There has also been a complete change in the Jewish question in Europe. The Führer once said before the Reichstag [the Reich parliament]*: If Jewry were to instigate a war, for example to eradicate the Aryan peoples, it will not be the Aryan peoples that will be eradicated, but Jewry. The Jew has been removed from Germany; he now lives in the East and works on our roads, railways etc. This measure has been carried out thoroughly, but without any cruelty. We will not torture anyone, but we know that we are fighting for the existence and the survival of our Nordic blood."*

In a report written on 14 December 1942 by Walter Maedel, a German ministerial department head, and entitled "Financing the measures for the solution of the Jewish question," the National-Socialist policy towards the Jews is summarized as follows:[615]

"Some time ago, the Reichsmarschall ordered the Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police to prepare the measures serving the final solution of the Jewish question. The Reichsführer-SS has entrusted the Chief of the Security Police and SD with the execution of this task. The latter initially promoted the legal emigration of Jews overseas by special measures. When emigration overseas had become impossible after the outbreak of the war, he implemented the gradual cleansing of Jews from the Reich by their deportation to the

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614 Bradley F. Smith, Agnes F. Peterson (eds.), *Heinrich Himmler. Geheimreden 1933 bis 1945 und andere Ansprachen*, Propyläen Verlag, Frankfurt/Main 1974, p. 200.
615 NG-4583.

East. Lately, within the Reich territory, old age homes (old age ghettos) for Jews have been set up, for example at Theresienstadt. For details see note of 21 August 1942. The establishment of other old age homes in the eastern territories is being planned."

7.4. First Deportations to the East

The expulsion of 50,000 Jews from the Protectorate and the *Altreich* to Minsk and Riga, decided on at the meeting held on 10 October 1941, started a month later. It constituted only the first phase of these deportation, however, for the deportees were supposed to be taken further East eventually. One of the first reports concerning these transports to the eastern territories is a telegram sent on 9 November 1941 by Hinrich Lohse, Reichskommissar for the Reichskommissariat Ukraine to Rosenberg, Reichsminister for the occupied eastern territories, reading:[616]

"Security police announces implementation of transport of 50,000 Jews into eastern territories. First transport to arrive Minsk 10/11, Riga 19/11. Urgently requesting to prevent transport, as Jewish camps must be moved considerably further east."

On the same day, Dr. Georg Leibbrand, *Reichsamtsleiter* in the Rosenberg ministry, sent Lohse the following cable:[617]

"Concerning Jew transports into eastern territories. More detailed letter in mail. Jews will be moved further east. Camps at Riga and Minsk only temporary measure, hence no objections here."

The local administration was anything but happy about this influx of western Jews and objected on several occasions. On 20 November 1941, the German army commander for "*Ostland*" wrote Lohse a letter on the subject "Transportation of Jews from Germany to White Ruthenia"[618] specifying:[619]

"Hearing from 707 Division 25,000 Jews to be moved from Germany to White Ruthenia, apparently 3000 destined Minsk with 1500 already arrived from Hamburg. The influx of German Jews, consider-

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616 Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiiskoi (State Archive of the Russian Federation), Moscow (subsequently quoted as GARF), 7445-2-145, p. 52.

617 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 54 and 51 (Transcription of telegram).

618 "Generalbezirk Weissruthenien," the political unit formed by the Germans in the western part of Byelorussia temporarily occupied by them.

619 GARF, 7445-2-145, pp. 60f.

> *ably more intelligent than the mass of White Ruthenian population, presents great risk for pacification of White Ruthenia."*

The report goes on to state that the Jewish population of White Ruthenia was "Bolshevik and apt to adopt any kind of anti-German stance," being involved in clandestine resistance activities. Hence, the German-Jewish deportees would get in touch with communist organizations. For that reason, and also because the transports were hampering the German army, the commander asked "to ensure that no Jews will be sent from Germany to White Ruthenia."

The protests, however, would always be ignored. Franz Walter Stahlecker, chief of the security police and SD for the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, notified Lohse:[620]

> *"Jewish transports will continue to arrive at Minsk as planned. Of the 25 transports originally scheduled for Riga, the first 5 will be sent to Kowno."*

On 13 January 1942, a note from Lohse's staff reiterated:[621]

> *"Submitted to Reichskommissar* [Lohse] *requesting acknowledgement of report from Minsk city Kommissar regarding evacuation of allegedly 50,000 Jews from Germany to Minsk.*
>
> *In the absence of other orders from Reichskommissar, the instruction of 28/11 will remain in force to the effect that objections against any kind of transport from Germany are no longer to be raised."*

The Minsk local Kommissar, Wilhelm Janetzke, who opposed deportations into this city, turned directly to Rosenberg on 5 January 1942. In a letter concerning "The evacuation of Jews from Germany to Minsk" he explained that he had learned that the central agencies intended "to send another roughly 50,000 Jews from Germany to Minsk."

The city lay literally in ruins, with some 100,000 civilians living there, in addition to "some 7,000 Jews from Germany," as well as "approximately 15 to 18,000 Russian Jews" as prisoners. Hence, it was impossible to house any more people. In addition to these difficulties, there were "the very serious problems of feeding the population (including the Jews)." For these reasons, Janetzke requested the deportations of Jews to Minsk to be suspended.[622]

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620 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 62. The original has *Kauen*, the German name for Kowno.
621 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 67.
622 GARF, 7445-2-145, pp. 65f.

Counselor Wetzel, a member of Rosenberg's staff, answered on his behalf by means of a letter dated 16 January 1942 addressed to Reichskommissar Lohse:[623]

> *"Re: Evacuation of Jews from Germany to Minsk.*
> *I have received the letter dated 5 January 1942 from the city commissar at Minsk, of which I enclose a retyped copy for your information.*
> *I have been informed by the RSHA that 25,000 Jews from the Reich were scheduled for Minsk to be temporarily housed there in the local ghetto. Of these, some 7-8,000 have arrived at Minsk. The remainder cannot be moved to Minsk for the time being because of transportation problems. However, as soon as these problems will have been overcome, it is likely that these Jews will reach Minsk. I ask you to instruct the Minsk city commissar in this sense and to request him to get in touch with the competent police commander in the matter of food and housing for the Jews. I ask you moreover, to advise him* [the city commissar] *to use the official way of communication in the future."*

On 6 February 1942, however, the *Generalkommissar* for White Ruthenia, Wilhelm Kube, backed Janetzke's request. He restated that it was impossible to accept a further contingent of 25,000 Jews in a city like Minsk, 80% of which lay in ruins.[624]

On 26 June 1942, the Chief of the security police and the SD said in a report:[625]

> *"The measures taken by the security police and the SD must bring about basic changes in White Ruthenia as well. In order to establish control over the Jews, regardless of any future dispositions, Jewish councils of elders were set up which are responsible to the security police and the SD for the attitude of their racial brethren. Furthermore, registration of the Jews as well as their concentration in ghettos has started. Finally, the Jews have been identified by a yellow mark to be worn on the chest and on the back similar to the Jewish star used in the Reich territory. In order to make use of the labor potential of the Jews they are normally employed in groups and for clearing operations.*

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623 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 68.
624 GARF, 7445-2-145, pp. 72f.
625 "*Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten Nr. 9*" (Messages from the occupied eastern territories, no 9), Berlin, 26 June 1942. Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv (Russian State War Museum, subsequently quoted as RGVA), 500-1-755, p. 190.

By these measures, the basis for a final solution intended for the future has also been established in White Ruthenia."

These measures were nothing but the actual implementation of the policy set out in the "Brown File," which specified a future solution to the Jewish question "after the war" for the whole of Europe.

The available railway documents[626] enable us merely to reconstruct a portion of the whole picture for the Jewish transports that were moved directly into the eastern territories. The transports coming in from the Reich were arranged by the German *Reichsbahn* via the Königsberg *Reichsbahn* directorate whose task it was to inform all agencies concerned. The transports were labeled "Da"[627] and numbered successively. The empty trains, labeled "Lp," were given a number above 1,000. Altogether 66 such transports are known. Between 8 November 1941 and 28 November 1942 they moved 56,221 Jews[628] into the eastern territories, comprising

– 26 transports from the Altreich with 16,057 persons aboard
– 11 transports from the Protectorate with 11,000 persons aboard
– 29 transports from Vienna with 29,164 persons aboard

The destinations of these transports were: Baranoviči (1), Kaunas (2), Maly Trostinec (5), Minsk (34), Raasiku (1), Riga (23).

The four transports which left Berlin for Riga on 4 November 1941 as well as on 13, 19 and 25 January 1942, comprised some 5,000 individuals.[629] In the period between 17 November 1941[630] and 6 February 1942, there were 25 transports conveying a total of 25,103 persons to Riga,[631] but only 15,114 can be found on the list published in the source mentioned. This brings the total number of persons deported to [56,221+(25,103–15,114)=] 66,210. The Korherr report helps us in closing the gaps in the documents and to draw a complete picture of the

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626 A number of documents on the subject of the transports towards the East can be found in the National Archives of the Byelorussian Republic (Natsionalni Archiv Respubliki Belarus, Minsk, subsequently quoted as NARB) in file number 378-1-784.

627 According to some authors, this abbreviation stood for "David." Hilberg asserts that the symbol "Da" stood for "Judentransporte außerhalb Polens zusammengestellt." R. Hilberg, *Sonderzüge nach Auschwitz*, Dumjahn, Munich 1981, p. 76. German railway documents indicate that the persons transported were labeled "*Aussiedler*" (emigrants).

628 List of transports in: C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 200f.

629 Wolfgang Benz (ed.), *Dimension des Völkermords. Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, Oldenbourg Verlag, Munich 1991, p. 47.

630 This transport reached Riga on 19 November.

631 Enclosure to "*Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten*" No. 10, 3. July 1942. RGVA, 500-1-775, p. 233.

deportations of Jews into the East for 1942. We will come back to this question in Subchapter 9.4.

The National-Socialist policy towards the Jews, as discussed above, is well documented in all its aspects and in all its twists and turns (starting with the territorial final solution, initially targeting Madagascar, later on the East). No document, however, supports that radical change of principle, which an extermination policy would have been. When, how, why, and on whose orders would this policy of deportation and resettlement in the East have been turned into a program of total physical extermination? When did the deportation to the East become a mere "euphemism" for massacre? Who decided to build "extermination camps" and when, how, and why did this occur?

To these questions, mainstream Holocaust historians can furnish only conjectural and contradictory replies. What is certain is that such a radical about-face would have required an order just as radical: the alleged *Führerbefehl*, the order by Hitler.

The following chapter will deal with this fundamental question of Holocaust historiography.

8. The *Führerbefehl* and the Origins of the "Extermination Camps" in the East

8.1. The *Führerbefehl* and Holocaust Historiography

During the Nuremberg trial, at the morning hearing of 15 April 1946, the former commander of the Auschwitz Camp, Rudolf Höss, declared that, in the summer of 1941, he was ordered, by *Reichsführer* SS Heinrich Himmler to come to Berlin and that Himmler told him on that occasion that Hitler had given the order to exterminate the Jews.[632] This *Führerbefehl* immediately became the cornerstone of mainstream Holocaust historiography then taking shape but still lacking any kind of documentation. Over the following decades these historians went on to build upon this meager foundation a fortress of assertions and hypotheses so full of internal inconsistencies that in the late seventies David Irving would go so far as to question whether Hitler was even aware of the alleged genocide.[633] The ensuing debate of these theses, moved along by Martin Broszat, then director of the Munich *Institut für Zeitgeschichte*,[590] generated new points of view which brought with them a new historiographic concept, known as the functionalist or structuralist concept. Right from the start and in a way inevitably, this concept was at odds with the ailing Nuremberg concept – which we may call intentionalist – because at heart it constituted a critical reaction to the teachings of this "courtroom-based" historiography, the historiographic failings of which it exposed all too clearly. Hitler's role in the alleged genocide was reassessed along entirely different perspectives, becoming more and more obscure in the process and finally ending up in a "nod" by Hitler or in a "meeting of minds."

Mainstream Holocaust historians dedicated two major meetings to these burning problems.

The first of them was an international congress on the topic "Nazi Germany and the extermination of the Jews," organized by the *Ecole*

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632 *IMT*, Vol. XI, p. 398.
633 D. Irving, *Hitler's War.* Wiking Press, New York, 1977.

des Hautes Etudes en sciences sociales and the *Sorbonne*, was held in Paris from 29 June through 2 July 1982. The proceedings were published in 1985 in a volume of the same name.[634]

On that occasion, Uwe Dietrich Adam analyzed the National Socialist policy on the subject of the Jews between September of 1939 and June of 1941, a period which "can be regarded as being the descent towards the 'final solution.'" He stressed immediately, however, that:[635]

> *"*[…] *the precise date at which this 'final solution' was ordered constitutes a problem not yet resolved for German and for world history."*

On the subject of the origins of the alleged genocide of the Jews, Adam took a decided stand against the radical intentionalist thesis supported by Eberhard Jäckel, stating that he "agreed with the vast majority of historians in thinking that the order to liquidate the Jews on the German territory was never given, not even planned, in any way whatsoever, prior to the beginning of the war."[635] Given that "no written trace of this order has ever been found" and that it is highly unlikely that it will be found in the future, Adam stated that:

> *"*[…] *it becomes the task of the historian to date it in the most precise manner possible, using* [the tool of] *interpretation. Methods and hypotheses in this respect are limitless, we face very diverse opinions. Some people see the conception of the 'final solution' as having taken place at the time of Landsberg (Jäckel, Dawidowicz); another dates it to March of 1941 (Krausnick) or July of 1941 (Hilberg, Browning), still others to the fall of 1941 (Adam, Broszat). Neither the laws nor the measures taken by the Third Reich against the Jews allow us to fix a date for the issuance of the order. However, for those who are conversant with the institutional structure of the Third Reich after the beginning of the war, each measure taken reduces the possibilities of interpretation and allows, in the end, to eliminate certain dates or to confirm others with some degree of certainty."* (pp. 177f.; emph. added)

At the outbreak of the war the Jewish question, as it had been formulated in the Party program and defined by the early protagonists of race legislation, had been resolved; Adam (p. 179):

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634 Colloque de l'École des Hautes Études en sciences socials, *L'Allemagne nazie et le génocide juif*, Gallimard, Paris, 1985.

635 *Ibid.*, p. 177. Subsequent page numbers in the text refer to this.

> *"If you want to summarize the essence of the Nazi policy towards the Jews, there is one permanent and primary objective: to separate the Jews from the 'Aryans.' This political and racial objective of Nazi ideology – the elimination of the Jews from the '*Volkskörper*' (the body of the nation) – was reached in 1938."*

After the start of the hostilities the National Socialist policy towards the Jews aimed at a consolidation of this separation, but according to Adam (p. 185):

> "[it was] *worked out to a great extent under the influence of imponderable factors, of short-term ideas, of rivalries between officials, of accidental or intentional allusions by Hitler. The absence of any central authority for the coordination, the administration or the direction of anti-Jewish measures played a non-negligible role in this absence of unity and this aimless legislation."*

During this period before the outbreak of the war, the RSHA carried on with the policy of emigration. Adam (p. 186):

> *"Before the beginning of the war, the security service*[636] *in particular insisted on a 'solution of the Jewish question' by way of emigration. The creation of the Central Agency for Jewish Emigration*[637] *in January of 1939 allowed Heydrich to assume the leading role of the Jewish policy at ministerial level. He rapidly activated the SD plans for emigration and obtained his first major success when, in July of 1939, he created the 'Reich Association of Jews in Germany.'*[638] *It operated under the authority of the RSHA and he thus had the control of the large cultural Jewish associations and, above all, of the financing and the direction of the Jewish emigration."*

But the RSHA had not "reckoned with the anarchic structure of the Third Reich," which slowed down the Jewish emigration and did not allow Germany to reach "the astonishing figures reached by Eichmann in Vienna. Once the war had broken out, we may assume that the RSHA policy was in tune with Hitler's wish to attain as soon as possible a '*judenreines Deutschland*,' a Germany free of Jews." (*ibid.*)

The RSHA desperately tried to solve the problem of emigration:

> *"The taxes on emigration certainly went up continually, but at the same time the RSHA tried to soften the foreign exchange controls. In spite of all official regulations, it eventually obtained the employ-*

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636 *Sicherheitsdienst, SD*
637 *Zentralstelle für jüdische Auswanderung*
638 *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland*

ment of Jews in the agricultural sector 'in order to ease their emigration by providing them with a professional education.' The RSHA also managed to lower or to do away with all sorts of special taxes and limits on the export of capital. In December of 1940 they succeeded in convincing the Ministry of the Economy to accelerate the financial procedures in all cases of emigration against all regulations in force. This search for a global solution of the 'Jewish question' can still be found in the attempt by the RSHA to obtain a general directive for emigration from Göring. Later on this document[639] *would often be misinterpreted because of its wording. Göring ordered all Reich authorities to facilitate the emigration of Jews away from the Reich and the territories under protection to the extent possible, even in wartime. On the other hand, the emigration of Jews from France and Belgium was to be prohibited on account of the 'final solution, which was doubtlessly drawing near.' This seductive term 'final solution' was interpreted by generations of historians as to mean the physical destruction, whereas, at that time, it meant only the emigration of the Jews to Madagascar. The trap closed only in August of 1941. The RSHA prohibited the emigration of able-bodied Jews.*[640] *At the end of August 1941 Eichmann extended this regulation to all Jews who lived in areas occupied by Germany. On 23 October 1941 the RSHA informed all units of the police and the SD of an order issued by Himmler which stopped any Jewish emigration whatsoever, without exception, for the duration of the war."* (pp. 186f.; emph. added)

Christopher R. Browning took up the specific topic of the decision concerning the alleged genocide. He underlined above all the "major divergences" which divided the two Holocaust interpretations at the time (p. 190):

"The decision concerning the final solution has been the subject of a large number of historical interpretations. The essential divergences appear in respect of two connected questions: on the one hand the nature of the process by which the decision was taken and more particularly the role of Hitler and his ideology, on the other hand the moment at which this decision was taken. As Martin Broszat has

639 W. Schellenberg's letter dated 20 May 1941. Document NG-3104.

640 Eichmann's order concerned actually the Jews "fit for military service" (*wehrfähig*) and was obviously meant to keep the enemy from obtaining potential soldiers. Joseph Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht für die Juden im NS-Staat*, C.F. Müller Juristischer Verlag, Heidelberg-Karlsruhe 1981, n. 227, p. 347.

> *rightly stated, a diversity of interpretation advises us that any kind of theory on the origin of the 'final solution' belongs to the field of probability rather than to that of certainty."* (Emph. added)

Browning then sketched out a summary of these "major divergences" (p. 192):

> *"For Lucy Dawidowicz the conception of the final solution antedates its implementation by twenty years; for Martin Broszat the idea emerges from practice: the sporadic assassination of groups of Jews gave rise to the idea to assassinate all of the Jews systematically. Between these two extremes we have a great number of interpretations. Thus, Eberhard Jäckel believes that the idea to kill the Jews sprang up in Hitler's mind at the end of the 1930s. Karl Dietrich Bracher supposes that it already existed at that time. Andreas Hillgruber and Klaus Hildebrand maintain the supremacy of ideological factors but do not propose any precise date. Others, not all of them functionalists, place the decisive turn into the year of 1941; but as far as that year is concerned many dates have been suggested. Léon Poliakov believes that the most probable date is the beginning of 1941, whereas Robert Kempner and Helmut Krausnick sustain that Hitler took this decision in the spring in connection with the preparations of the invasion of Russia. Raul Hilberg thinks that the decision was taken in the summer when the massacres perpetrated in Russia led to the belief that this solution would also be possible in all of Europe for a victorious Germany. Uwe Dietrich Adam asserts that it was taken in autumn when the military offensive slowed down and it became apparent that a 'territorial solution' by way of a mass expulsion into Russia thus became impossible. Sebastian Haffner, finally, who is certainly not a functionalist, supports an even later thesis, early December, when the feeling of an eventual military defeat caused Hitler to seek an irrevocable victory over the Jews."*

Here Browning wonders:

> *"How are we to explain such a diversity of interpretations as to the type and the date of the decision concerning the final solution?"*

This diversity can be explained, according to Browning, by a subjective reason – the different viewpoints of the intentionalists and the functionalists – and an objective one, which is actually the true reason: "by the absence of documents." He said, in fact (p. 193):

> *"There are no written records about what was discussed between Hitler, Himmler and Heydrich on the subject of the final solution,*

> *and none of the three survived to testify after the war. Hence the historian must himself reconstruct the decisional process from the top down, extrapolating from external events and testimonies. Like Plato's man in the cave who sees only the reflections and the shadows, not the reality. This bold process of extrapolation and reconstruction invariably leads to a great variety of conclusions."* (Emph. added)

In fact, Browning insisted repeatedly on the almost total absence of documents concerning the origins of the decision on the subject of the alleged "final solution" (pp. 196f.):

> *"And yet, in spite of all that is known about the preparations for a German invasion of Russia, there is no specific documentation on the subject of the Russian Jews. In order to obtain an answer to this question, it is necessary to turn to post war testimonies, to indirect proofs, and to references dispersed throughout more recent documents.* […]
>
> *If the decision to kill all the Jews in Russia was undoubtedly taken before the invasion, the circumstances and the exact moment, on the other hand, remain obscure. It is impossible to say whether the initiative came from Hitler or from somebody else, from Heydrich, for example. Moreover, we do not know whether Hitler had already made his choice in March, when he clearly announced to the military that the war in Russia would not be a conventional war, or if the servility of the military later pushed him into extending his search for victims beyond the Judeo-Bolshevik intelligentsia. An insufficient documentation does not allow us to reply definitively to these questions and permits only an educated guess."* (Emph. added)
>
> *"We don't know and, no doubt, we will never know precisely, when and how Heydrich and his direct superior, Himmler, learned of their new assignment."* (p. 200)

In conclusion, Browning stated (p. 211):

> *"There was no written order for the final solution, and we have no reference to an oral order except what Himmler told Heydrich when he said that he acted with the Führer's approval."* (Emph. added)

Browning himself supports the following thesis (S. 190):

> *"The intention to massacre systematically all the European Jews was not clearly present in Hitler's mind before the war; it crystallized only in 1941, after the solutions considered previously had turned out to be unrealizable and after the imminent offensive against Russia brought along the perspective of having to deal with*

> *an even greater number of Jews than in the expanding German empire. The final solution took shape starting with a certain number of decisions taken in that very year. In the spring Hitler ordered the preparation of the massacre of the Jews who would fall into German hands in the course of the impending invasion. During the summer of that same year Hitler, sure of his military victory, had a plan prepared aiming for the extension of the extermination process to the European Jews. In October, even though the hope for a victory had not been borne out, Hitler approved the general lines of this plan, which entailed the deportation to extermination centers and the use of a lethal gas."*

But even this theory is purely conjectural. In any case, Browning himself declared that this alleged decision did not fit into a general plan for the extermination of the Jews (p. 198):

> *"However, the Jewish policy of the Nazis in the rest of Europe was not changed immediately in this sense. One continued to talk about emigration, of expulsion, and of plans for a future resettlement. In the autumn of 1940 Jews were expulsed to unoccupied France from the region of Baden and from the Palatinate in Germany as well as from Luxemburg; there were also expulsions from Vienna to Poland in early 1941. In February of 1941 Heydrich still spoke of 'moving them to a country which will be determined later.' And the Ministry of Foreign Affairs went on talking to the RSHA, the Reich agency of security, about blocking the emigration of Jews from other countries, thus monopolizing, for the German Jews, the possibilities of emigration, which were limited. This policy was even reconfirmed in a circular, dated 20 May 1941 and signed by Walter Schellenberg, which prohibited the emigration of Jews from France and Belgium. The former policy of emigration, expulsion, and resettlement was abandoned only progressively. In July of 1941 the RSHA informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that no more expulsions to France were planned. In February of 1942 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially dropped the Madagascar plan. <u>The preparations for the murder of the Russian Jews would thus not have any immediate repercussions on the Nazi Jewish policy in other countries.</u>"* (Emph. added)

Still, Browning did not have any doubt that his conjecture concerning an order to massacre the Russian Jews was unfounded. He maintained on the contrary that the "idea of a final solution for the European Jews

developed in a separate process and resulted from a decision of its own" (*ibid.*).

But since not even this alleged decision was supported by documentary evidence, the field remained open to the most wildly diverging conjectures on this point as well, which Browning sums up in the following manner (*ibid.*):

> *"Hilberg dates the decision to July 1941 at the latest; Uwe Dietrich Adam opted for a date between September and November; Sebastian Haffner suggests December and Martin Broszat rejects even the idea of a global decision and a particular date and believes in a gradual and unconscious process of intensification."*

On the subject of the alleged extermination order Browning's position was as follows:[641]

> *"In July of 1941, when the Nazi armies had shattered the defenses on the border of the Soviet Union, captured masses of Russian soldiers, and in the end covered two thirds of the distance to Moscow, Hitler approved the outline of a plan for the mass extermination of the Jewish population in Europe. In October of 1941, with the victorious encirclement of Vyasma and Bryansk and with the brief glow of a hope for the final triumph before the onset of winter, he approved the final solution."*

Yet this is just another conjecture unsupported by documents.

The problem of the origins of the decision to embark on the alleged extermination, which had remained unresolved at the Paris meeting, was again examined at the Stuttgart convention which took place from 3 to 5 May 1984 under the general heading "The Murder of the European Jews in the Second World War. Genesis and Implementation." The respective proceedings were published a year later under the same title.[642]

Eberhard Kolb formulated with great clarity the two fundamental questions which the meeting faced:[643]

> *"1. Was the 'Final Solution' the realization of a project which had been on the books for a long time and which aimed – in the last instance – at the physical annihilation of the European Jewry?*

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641 C.R. Browning, *Verso il genocidio*, Il Saggiatore, Milano 1998, p. 36.

642 Eberhard Jäckel, Jürgen Rohwer (eds.), *Der Mord an den Juden im Zweiten Weltkrieg. Entschlußbildung und Verwirklichung*, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart 1985.

643 *Ibid.*, p. 61.

2. Was there a specific order – at least an oral one if not a written one – by Hitler to kill not only the Jews living in Eastern Europe but all Jews within the German sway, and when was this order given?"

From there, Kolb goes on to set out the replies furnished by the Holocaust historiography up to the date of the meeting:[644]

"If I am not mistaken, the majority of the researchers today tend to put a big question mark on the idea of a National Socialist policy towards the Jews based on a plan which unfolded and moved along on a straight line – from the anti-Semitic slogans of the 'Kampfzeit,' via the anti-Jewish measures of the 1933-1939 period towards the organized mass murder from 1941 on. The real question today is whether (and when) Hitler gave a specific extermination order. Into the 1970s there was almost unanimous agreement on this point. Certainly: a written extermination order emanating from Hitler had not come down to us and we could assume that there never was such a written order. However, an express 'Führerbefehl' in the form of an oral instruction given by Hitler to Himmler was regarded as the indispensable condition for the assassinations which were begun in 1941.

On the other hand, there was no general agreement on the moment at which this order had been given: Raul Hilberg (1961) believes that the general extermination order was issued by Hitler in 'early summer' of 1941, Helmut Krausnick (1965) dates such an order to 'March of 1941 at the latest,' Uwe Dietrich Adam has a span 'between September and November of 1941'; if we follow Andreas Hillgruber (1972), Hitler's decision was taken in July of 1941 in connection with the expected triumph over the Soviet Union and with the planned expansion towards the East. As opposed to this, Martin Broszat (1977) questioned the thesis that there had been an express and specific extermination order issued by Hitler. The physical elimination of the Jews, according to Broszat, had not been planned a long time in advance and then carried out systematically, had not been set in motion by a single decision and a single secret order issued by Hitler; rather, the 'program' to annihilate the Jews had grown over time out of 'individual actions' until it became an institutionalized fact in the spring of 1942; it had assumed its defining characteristics, after the extermination camps in Poland had been

644 *Ibid.*, pp. 61-63.

set up (between December, 1941, and July, 1942). Such an interpretation, according to Broszat, could not be documented with absolute certainty, but could claim a greater degree of probability than the assumption of an all-embracing secret order to annihilate the Jews, issued in the summer of 1941 […].

Broszat's explanatory model of the genesis of the assassination plan was more clearly stated by Hans Mommsen (1983). In agreement with Broszat, Mommsen expressly asserts that there was no 'formal order' […].

Still, the majority of researchers cling to the idea that Hitler was the deciding factor in the murder of the European Jews and that there was an annihilation order issued orally.

Hans-Heinrich Wilhelm admits that there is no proof for an order to annihilate the Jews generally to have been issued prior to the start of the Russian campaign in 1941. He refuses, however, the thesis of an 'improvised radicalization' of the persecution of the Jews culminating in their systematic assassination and asserts that, without an overall directive from Hitler and without his approval, no partial activities eventually leading up to the program of a final solution would have been possible.

Christopher Browning (1981), explicitly targeting Broszat's explanation, comes to the conclusion that Hitler did order the elaboration of an annihilation plan in the summer of 1941; the foundations of the murder project are said to have been approved by Hitler 'in October or November of 1941.'

Gerald Fleming (1982) notes that the fateful change in the Jewish policy of the Third Reich occurred in the 'summer of 1941'; it was then that Hitler ordered the annihilation of the European Jews and simultaneously decreed that these murder operations had to be executed in a most carefully hidden manner and in the greatest possible secrecy.

Wolfgang Scheffler (1982) insists that all essential decisions concerning the implementation of the mass annihilation were taken between March and November of 1941. […]

Finally, we will briefly summarize the latest opinions. In view of the coincidence of several factors Shlomo Aronson (1984) comes to the conclusion that Hitler took the decision to kill the European Jews in 'late fall of 1941.' Also, if we follow Saul Friedländer, the existence of a general annihilation plan by the autumn of 1941 can no longer

> *be doubted; we must assume that Hitler approved such a plan 'some time in the summer of 1941.'"* (Emph. added)

As of 2005 the controversy around the *Führerbefehl* was not only unresolved but continued to rage to a greater degree to the point where Ian Kershaw felt the need to write an article on "Hitler's role in the final solution," in which he explained that with a few exceptions:[645]

> *"detailed research on the decisions and policies of genocide began as late as the 1970s, expanding greatly over subsequent decades, especially once the archival repositories in the former eastern bloc were opened. Only in the light of such research has it become possible to evaluate more precisely the role Hitler played in the emergence of the Final Solution. Yet even now, after exhaustive analysis, much remains obscure or contentious. The problems of interpretation arise from the complexities and deficiencies of the surviving fragmentary evidence, reflecting in good measure the obfuscatory language of the Nazi leadership as well as the extreme unbureaucratic leadership style of Hitler, who, especially once the war had begun, placed a high premium upon secrecy and concealment, with orders on sensitive issues usually passed on verbally and on a need-to-know basis. Until the 1970s it was generally taken for granted that a single, direct Hitler order launched the Final Solution. The presumption emanated from a Hitler-centric approach to the Third Reich, which placed heavy emphasis upon the will, intentions, and policy-directives of the dictator."* (Emph. added)

As opposed to this view, which was called intentionalist, a new interpretation sprang up during the 1970s, labeled functionalist or structuralist, which no longer placed Hitler in the center of the National Socialist regime, replacing him instead by an oligarchic government having chaotic and confused administrative limits and led by a "weak dictator" engaged primarily in propaganda (p. 13).

In the section "Interpreting the decision for the final solution," Kershaw goes through the beginnings of the functionalist interpretation, starting with Martin Broszat's views which we have already examined above (see p. 227). I will therefore begin with later interpretations from the 1980s onwards.

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645 Ian Kershaw, "Hitler's role in the final solution," at: www1.yadvashem.org/about_holocaust/studies/vol34/Kershaw%20E.pdf, p. 12; subsequent page numbers in the text refer to this paper.

In 1989 Philippe Burrin, in marked contrast with almost all of his colleagues, asserted according to Kershaw that it

> *"would be mistaken to see in the Göring mandate of 31 July 1941 a reflection of a fundamental order by Hitler for the Final Solution, that is, to extend the genocide already taking place in the Soviet Union into a program for the physical extermination of the whole of European Jewry. Rather, according to Burrin, the Göring mandate still fell within the remit of attaining a territorial settlement in the east once the war was over."*

The alleged extermination order is considered to have been issued in September of 1941 and to have been confirmed by Hitler's decision to deport the Jews to the East (p. 18). Soon after the publication of Burrin's study, Ian Kershaw informs us,

> *"the archives of the former eastern bloc started to divulge their secrets. Predictably, a written order by Hitler for the Final Solution was not found. The presumption that a single, explicit written order had ever been given had long been dismissed by most historians. Nothing now changed that supposition. In fact, little was discovered in Moscow or other east-European archives that cast new light directly on Hitler's role in the Final Solution. Indirectly, nevertheless, new perspectives on the emergence of a genocidal program did provide fresh insights into Hitler's own role."* (p. 18; emph. added)

For a study that appeared in 1995 Götz Aly had made use of these archives, as Kershaw explains (p. 19):

> *"Aly concluded that there was no single, specific decision to kill the Jews of Europe. Rather, analogous to Mommsen's notion of a system of cumulative radicalization, he posited a long and complex process of decision-making, with notable spurts in March, July, and October 1941, but continuing still as a series of experiments down to May 1942. Hitler's role, according to this interpretation, was confined to decisions as an arbiter between competing Nazi leaders whose own schemes to deal with the Jewish question had created insoluble problems."*

Other studies linked the alleged exterminations to decisions taken by local authorities, but "the role of Hitler, too, seemed scarcely to figure in the new explanations. Was it likely, or plausible, that the most radical of radical anti-Semites had played no direct part in shaping the policies aimed at destroying his perceived arch-enemy?" (p. 21)

David Bankier (1988) and Saul Friedländer (1997), Kershaw goes on to explain, had shown that during the 1930s Hitler had been more active in anti-Jewish politics than was believed earlier and that it was therefore difficult to accept that he would later stay out of the decisional process leading to the alleged genocide.

Kershaw writes that Browning maintained in 1994 the importance of the *Führerbefehl,* which he dated to the summer of 1941, stressing that, in this way, Browning "was not positing a single decision, but envisaging the point at which Hitler inaugurated the decision-making process, the first move in developments that would stretch over the subsequent months" (*ibid.*).

Kershaw maintains that Richard Breitman's point of view in 1991 was that he "dated 'a fundamental decision to exterminate the Jews' by the dictator to as early as January 1941, adding, however, that 'if the goal and basic policies were now clear, the specific plans were not,' and followed only after some time with the first operational decisions in July," something which Kershaw himself believes to be unsustainable (pp. 21f.).

Against this Kershaw summarizes Tobias Jersak as stating in 1999 that "the declaration of the Atlantic Charter by Roosevelt and Churchill on August 14, 1941 (meaning that Germany would soon be at war with the USA) was the trigger for Hitler, suffering at that point from a nervous collapse and reeling from the recognition of the failure of his strategy to defeat the Soviet Union, to take the fundamental decision that the Jews of Europe should be physically destroyed." But Kershaw states that Jersak "probably exaggerates the impact of the Atlantic Charter on Hitler," so that this interpretation, too, is unsustainable (p. 22).

Kershaw then goes on to examine Christian Gerlach's interpretation of 1997, according to which "by the time the meeting [of Wannsee] eventually took place, on January 20, 1942, Hitler's basic decision to kill all the Jews of Europe had been taken," but Kershaw judges that such a perspective is difficult to imagine, hence, once again, unsustainable. Going on to a study by Florent Brayard published in 2004, Kershaw continues (p. 23):

> *"A recent, meticulous examination of the complex evidence of decision-making on anti-Jewish policy between 1939 and 1942 offers yet another variant. Florent Brayard places the date of Hitler's order to commence the Final Solution as a comprehensive program later*

> *than any other historian had done, to June 1942, immediately following the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich in Prague."*

But to Kershaw it is "perhaps a little more plausible" to see in this event the last and greatest phase of an expanding process which resulted in the extermination program being extended to all European Jews (p. 24).

In what Kershaw calls a "magisterial study of the 'politics of annihilation'" that had appeared in 1998, Peter Longerich had established that "a comprehensive program of extermination of European Jewry developed as an incremental process, with a number of acceleratory spurts, between summer 1941 and summer 1942," as Kershaw summarizes it (*ibid*.), but in order to reach this somewhat trivial conclusion in respect of the Holocaust, a "magisterial study" was not really needed.

In the end, Kershaw strikes the balance of the studies concerning the *Führerbefehl* (pp. 25f.):

> *"It seems certain, given the fragmentary and unsatisfactory evidence, that all attempts to establish a precise moment when Hitler decided to launch the Final Solution will meet with objections. And, of course, much depends upon what is envisaged as a Führer order. Was it a precise and clear directive, or merely a green light or nod of the head? Interpretation rests additionally upon whether decision-making on the Final Solution is regarded as a continuum, with adjustments and acceleratory phases over the period of a year or so, or whether a point is sought where one precise quantum leap can be distinguished as forming* the *decision.* […]
>
> *It seems impossible to isolate a single, specific Führer order for the Final Solution in an extermination policy that took full shape in a process of radicalization lasting over a period of about a year. At the same time, much indicates that the extermination program did not develop without a decisive role being played by Hitler himself. To reconcile these two statements, we should look* both *for a* series *of secret authorizations for particular radicalizing steps, which can only be deduced from indirect or secondary evidence,* and *for a* number *of public signals or 'green lights' for action. We should also recognize that Hitler was the supreme and radical spokesman of an ideological imperative that, by 1941, had become a priority for the* entire *regime leadership."*

Within this scope, Kershaw's conclusion is that Hitler's "prophecy" of 30 January 1939 must be considered "as a key both to Hitler's mentali-

ty, and to the ways he provided 'directions for action.'" The prophecy supposedly shows (p. 42):

> *"how Nazi activists at different levels of the regime were adept in knowing how to 'work towards the Führer' without having to wait for a precise Führer order. It seems unlikely that Hitler ever gave one single, explicit order for the Final Solution. Within the unchanging framework of his prophecy, he needed do no more than provide requisite authorization at the appropriate time to Himmler and Heydrich to go ahead with the various escalatory stages that culminated in the murder of Europe's Jews."* (Emph. added)

But was such an intangible "authorization" (a mere excuse for not saying "order") given by a simple nod of Hitler's head?

It is certain that functionalism, far from resolving the hermeneutical problems of earlier times, only added new and more serious ones, pushing a disintegrating historiographic process into the dissection of elementary terms like "decision" and "order" and their vaporization in the rarefied and volatile atmosphere of a Holocaust universe which serves as an ethereal basis for Hilberg's "telepathic" interpretation.

In such a universe, the very concept of *Führerbefehl* loses its concrete connotation, with the "decision" evaporating into an unstable "decisional process" with an uncertain beginning and no more certain "developments," some of them possibly gradual, possibly discontinuous, or into "public signals" and "green lights" for Hitler, or into a vague "telepathic" intuition. This latter parapsychological conjecture was expounded by Raul Hilberg in 1983 at the Avery Fisher Hall:[646]

> *"But what began in 1941 was a process of destruction not planned in advance, not organized centrally by any agency. There was no blueprint and there was no budget for destructive measures. They were taken step by step, one step at a time. Thus came not so much a plan being carried out, but an incredible meeting of minds, a consensus-mind reading by a far-flung bureaucracy."*

Höss' declaration on the subject of the *Führerbefehl*, which mainstream Holocaust historiography had tenaciously clung to for decades, had been thrown quietly overboard by the functionalists with the result we have just discussed. But one had to wait until 1999 for a drastic revision of "the older research literature" by Karin Orth's article on Rudolf

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646 *Newsday*, Long Island, New York, 23 February 1983, p. II/3. Quoted by R. Faurisson, *Écrits Révisionnistes (1974-1998)*, Édition privée hors commerce, Vichy 1999, Vol. III, pp. 958f.

Höss.[647] In it Orth pushed back the alleged order by Himmler calling Höss to Berlin by one year into June of 1942.[648]

Another fundamental testimony which has disappeared from the mainstream debate about the Holocaust is the one by SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Dieter Wisliceny, who had been Eichmann's representative in Slovakia. His deposition in Nuremberg (3 January 1946) was widely used by the early Holocaust historiography, especially with respect to the alleged confidential remark ascribed to Eichmann that "he would leap laughing into the grave because the feeling that he had 5 million people on his conscience would be for him a source of extraordinary satisfaction."[649] Wisliceny is today remembered only for having supplied the fateful figure of 5-6 million Jewish victims, even though a little earlier he had declared that at least 4 million Jews had come within the scope of the "final solution," but that he did not know how many had survived. Actually, the Jews able to work were not subjected to this "final solution," e.g. the 25-30% of some 450,000 Hungarian Jews deported to Auschwitz,[649] hence the number of victims is less than 4 million. This brings us back to the *Führerbefehl.* During the same hearing Wisliceny declared that he met Eichmann in Berlin in late July or early August of 1942. On this occasion Eichmann is said to have shown him an order written by Himmler, which Wisliceny summarized as follows:[650]

> *"The Fuehrer had ordered the final solution of the Jewish question; the Chief of the Security Police and the SD and the Inspector of Concentration Camps were entrusted with carrying out this so-called final solution. All Jewish men and women who were able to work were to be temporarily exempted from the so-called final solution and used for work in the concentration camps. This letter was signed by Himmler himself. I could not possibly be mistaken since Himmler's signature was well known to me."*

During his interrogation by the prosecutor of the national Slovak tribunal, Wisliceny confirmed:[651]

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647 Her own words, K. Orth, "Rudolf Höß und die 'Endlösung der Judenfrage.' Drei Argumente gegen deren Datierung auf den Sommer 1941," in: *Werkstatt Geschichte*, 18. November 1999, pp. 45–57.

648 On the many material and chronological impossibilities in the various statements by Rudolf Höss see C. Mattogno, R. Höss, *Commandant of Auschwitz: Rudolf Höss, His Torture and His Forced Confessions*, Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2017.

649 *IMT*, Vol. IV, p. 371.

650 *Ibid.*, p. 358.

651 Slovenský Národný Archív, 36/48, p. 142.

> *"This order was dated April 1942 and showed Himmler's personal signature, which I knew well. The order mentioned that able-bodied Jews were to be exempted, for the time being, from extermination and were to be put to work in the factories attached to the KZs."*

Seeing that the alleged *Führerbefehl* transmitted by Himmler to Höss in June of 1941 concerned *all* of the Jews *without exception*,[652] i.e. also those apt to work, mainstream Holocaust historiography must prove the existence of a triple *Führerbefehl* – the first one for the total extermination of the Russian Jews, the second one for the total extermination of the western Jews, and a third one of a later date of a partial extermination. But there is yet another twist. According to mainstream Holocaust literature Sobibór and Treblinka were opened in May and July of 1942, respectively, hence after the alleged *Führerbefehl* of April 1942, and were to be *pure* extermination camps, i.e. for the total and indiscriminate extermination of able-bodied and other Jews. This would have required yet a fourth *Führerbefehl*, revoking the third one, regarding the two camps mentioned and also regarding Chełmno and Bełżec, the other two camps where a total extermination is said to have been carried out.

The fundamental problem of mainstream Holocaust historiography – when, how, and why the National Socialist policy of emigration/evacuation was abandoned in favor of extermination – remains thus unresolved. Hence, the *Führerbefehl*, which would have to coincide with this epoch-making change and clarify it, dissolves into subjective conjectures which border on parapsychology.

This historical inconsistency is necessarily reflected by the genesis of the alleged extermination camps in the East as well.

8.2. Origins and Significance of "Aktion Reinhardt"

Whereas the origin of the term *Aktion Reinhard(t)* is controversial even among mainstream historians – leading to two different ways of spelling it – they agree that it stood for the murder of Jews in the Gen-

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652 Himmler is alleged to have informed Höss of the following order by Hitler: "Alle für uns erreichbaren Juden sind jetzt während des Krieges ohne Ausnahme zu vernichten." (All Jews whom we can seize are to be annihilated without exception now during the war.") Martin Broszat (ed.), *Kommandant in Auschwitz. Autobiographische Aufzeichnungen des Rudolf Höß*, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, Munich 1981, p. 157.

eral Government and the Byałistok region, although the documents clearly prove them wrong.

8.2.1. The "Generalplan Ost"

On 24 June 1941 Himmler ordered SS-*Oberführer* Prof. Dr. Konrad Meyer-Hetling, his best specialist in this domain, to draw up plans for the German colonization of the eastern territories recently integrated into the Reich (primarily the *Reichsgaue* Danzig-West Prussia and Wartheland). On 15 July Meyer-Hetling terminated a study entitled "*Generalplan Ost*."[653] The general lines of the project had already been worked out for Poland by E. Wetzel and G. Hecht in the form of a secret memorandum. In it the objective of the *Ostpolitik* was defined in the following words:[654]

> *"The objective of the German policy in the new territories of the Reich must be the creation of a racially, spiritually, and mentally, as well as ethnically and politically homogeneous German population. It follows that all elements which cannot be Germanized will have to be removed relentlessly."*

This removal consisted of a population transfer which included exceptions constituting a "*Sonderbehandlung*" (special treatment).[655] Jews, however, were to be moved into the non-incorporated Polish territories (the General Government):[656]

> *"The remaining Polish territory which, at the moment, has a population of 12.7 million, would thus reach 19.3 million.*[657] *In addition, there would be another 800,000 Jews from the Reich (Altreich area, Austria, Sudetenlands, and Protectorate). Finally, another 530,000 Jews from the former Polish territories now integrated into the Reich would have to be transferred as well."*

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653 Jan Erik Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 50(1), 2002, pp. 41-69, here p. 42.

654 "Die Frage der Behandlung der Bevölkerung des ehemaligen polnischen Gebietes nach rassenpolitischen Gesichtspunkten," PS-660, p. 16.

655 *Ibid.*, p. 18, "Sonderbehandlung rassisch wertvoller Kinder"; pp. 24f., "Sonderbehandlung der nichtpolnischen Minderheiten."

656 *Ibid.*, p. 25.

657 Following the planned evacuation of 6,636,000 Poles residing in the Polish territories annexed by Germany.

As far as the treatment of these populations was concerned, the guiding principle was to separate and oppose Poles and Jews. The Jews might even have enjoyed a somewhat more favorable treatment:[658]

> *"The treatment of the Jews in the remaining territory could, in certain respects, be different from that of the Poles. Regardless of the question raised initially, whether the Jews are to be treated differently, i.e. more leniently than the Poles or not, the German administration will have the task of setting up the Poles and the Jews against each other.*
>
> *In order to make the Jew fit for emigration, it would be advisable, if need be, to provide him with a better educational training. Jewish political associations are to be prohibited in the same manner as Polish associations of this kind. On the other hand, cultural Jewish groups are more easily tolerable than their Polish counterparts. The Jews may probably be given more autonomy here in view of the fact that they do not possess real political power, as opposed to the Poles and their Greater Polish ideology. Obviously, an eye must be kept on Jewry and their well-known tendency to conduct political and economic intrigues.*
>
> *Yiddish as a language may be acceptable in public affairs. The Hebrew script, however, would be impossible here."*

There are other limitations concerning the press, the use of names, agricultural matters, as well as measures aiming at limiting population growth, such as abortions.

On 17 July 1941 Himmler, in his role as *Reichskommissar für die Festigung des deutschen Volkstums* (Reich commissar for the consolidation of German ethnicity)[659] named SS-*Brigadeführer* Odilo Globocnik, at the time head of SS and police in Lublin, to the post of *Beauftragter für die Errichtung der SS- und Polizeistützpunkte im neuen Ostraum* (commissioner for the installation of SS and police agencies in the new eastern region). In a note written on 21 July 1941, item 13, Himmler ordered that the commissioner should "primarily issue orders, by autumn, for the installation of the SS and police agencies in the new eastern region."[660] As Jan Erik Schulte tells us, "other orders issued

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658 *Ibid.*, pp. 35f.

659 To implement this task, which Hitler had given him with his decree of 7 October 1939, Himmler set up the "RKF office" (*Dienststelle* RKF [*Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums*]) directed by *SS-Oberführer* Ulrich Greifelt, which changed into "RKF-Stabshauptamt" (Central staff agency RKF) in June of 1941.

660 NO-3031.

by Himmler from Lublin indicate as well that he wanted to make use of detainees for projects arising in connection with the settling of the East."[661]

Himmler's high-flying projects transpire in his secret order of 5 December 1941 concerning the "use of detainees from concentration camps" transmitted to the head of RSHA, *SS-Gruppenführer* Reinhardt Heydrich, to the inspector of the concentration camps *SS-Brigadeführer* Richard Glücks, to all camp commanders, and to *SS-Gruppenführer* Oswald Pohl, head of *SS-Hauptamt Verwaltung und Wirtschaft* (Main Office for administration and economy). He ordered Pohl to train, "by the date of a peace agreement, for the projects to be undertaken from that moment on: 1) at least 5,000 stone masons, 2) at least 10,000 bricklayers." The size of this endeavor can be judged from the fact that Germany had only 4,000 stone masons before the war. After the peace treaty the company *Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke GmbH* was to provide at least 10,000 cubic meters of granite annually "for the Führer's major construction projects."[662]

As Schulte states:[663]

> *"For the building projects within 'Generalplan Ost' Meyer estimated a need for at least 850,000 workers over the first five years, with 400,000 of them assigned to the settlement areas in the occupied Soviet Union. Over the following five years there was still a need for 580,000 men, with 130,000 of them being employed in the new 'eastern region.'"*

In order to furnish the required manpower, Himmler ordered the construction of a concentration camp at Lublin in July of 1941 for 25,000 to 50,000 unspecified detainees. When the initial military successes in the war against the Soviet Union supplied the Germans with a large number of prisoners, Himmler decided to use them for the projects and thus ordered a prisoner of war camp to be built at Lublin, the first plan of which dates from 7 October 1941.[664]

The man in charge of this task was *SS-Oberführer* Hans Kammler, head of *Amt II – Bauten* (Dept. II, Constructions) within *SS-Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten* (SS Main Office for Budget and Constructions).

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661 J.E. Schulte, *op. cit.* (note 653), p. 44.
662 NO-385.
663 J.E. Schulte, *op. cit.* (note 653), p. 48.
664 Cf. in this respect J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *Concentration Camp Majdanek: A Historical and Technical Study*. Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2003, pp. 20-24, and Document 2 on p. 256.

On 1st February 1942, *SS-Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt* was set up, absorbing *Hauptamt Verwaltung und Wirtschaft* and *Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten*, *Amt II* of which became *Amtsgruppe C*, under Kammler's leadership.

On 1st November 1941 Kammler sent a post-dated order for the construction of the Lublin camp to the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police in Lublin (*Zentralbauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei*):[665]

> *"Construction order for the installation of a PoW camp at Lublin, to house 125,000 prisoners of war, is hereby given."*

But the camp strength was soon raised to 150,000 prisoners. On 8 December 1941 Kammler issued the following order to the local *Zentralbauleitung*:[666]

> *"In addition to the construction order of 1.11.41, I hereby issue the enlarged construction order for the installation of a PoW camp at Lublin to house a total of 150,000 PoWs and/or detainees."*

A few weeks later, on 26 November, Globocnik, in his function as commissioner for the installation of SS and police agencies in the new eastern region, ordered the Central Construction Office at Lublin to provide for the "installation of a transit support camp for the superior head of SS and police of Russia-South (and Caucasia) at Lublin," which comprised about 13 barracks, 11 of which were to be used for storage.[667] The camp was completed and handed over on 11 September 1942.[668] Its function was to supply the various agencies involved in construction projects in the eastern territories. A circular issued by the head of Office CV/Central Construction Inspection (*Amt CV/Zentrale Bauinspektion*), SS-*Sturmbannführer* Lenzer, dated 1st September 1942 and concerning "SS construction agencies and construction projects in the occupied territories, especially in the eastern region," gave instructions to split all construction work into exterior (*A-Arbeiten*) and interior works (*B-Arbeiten*) and requested the various construction groups (*Baugruppen*) to report by 1st November which projects were completed

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665 *Archiwum Panstwowego Muzeum na Majdanku* (Archive of the State Museum in Majdanek, subsequently quoted as APMM), Zentralbauleitung, 120, p. 8.

666 APMM, 120, p. 11.

667 Letter from the head of Zentralbauleitung at Lublin to Globocnik dated 27 January 1942. Wojewódzkie Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie (State Archive of the Vojvodship in Lublin, subsequently quoted as WAPL), 168, p.3. Erläuterungsbericht mit Kostenaufstellung über den Bau eines Durchgangsnachschublagers für den Höheren SS- und Polizeiführer Rußland Süd in Lublin. WAPL, 168, pp. 10-11.

668 "Übergabe-Verhandlung für Hauptnachschublager." WAPL, 168, p. 23.

in 1942 and which could be expected to be completed by 1st April 1943.[669]

The origins of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp are part of this context and retrace faithfully the initial vagaries of the Lublin camp. Birkenau was conceived on 30 October 1941 for 125,000 prisoners to be housed in 174 barracks (*Gefangenenunterkunftsbaracken*) with a maximum capacity each of 744 persons,[670] but the respective construction order was also post-dated to 1st November:[671]

> *"Construction order for the erection of a PoW camp at Auschwitz with a capacity of 125,000 prisoners of war is hereby given."*

The first drawings for the camp, the lay-out plan for the PoW camp at Auschwitz, Upper Silesia (*Lageplan des Kriegsgefangenenlagers Auschwitz O.S.*) of 7 and 14 October 1941[672] comprised 174 housing barracks, but a plan dated 5 January 1942[673] had 282 such barracks, the one dated 6 June 1942[674] had 360, and the one dated 16 August[675] had 513. Only the last one indicates a camp strength: 200,000 prisoners.

The enlargement of the PoW camp at Birkenau to a total of 200,000 persons was approved by Himmler during his visit to Auschwitz on 17 and 18 July 1942. In a letter dated 3 August 1942 and addressed to *Amt CV* of *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt*, SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Karl Bischoff, then Head of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office, wrote:[676]

> *"The enlargement of the project was submitted to Amtsgruppenchef C, SS-Brigadeführer und Generalmajor der Waffen-SS Dr.-Ing. Kammler, on the occasion of the visit of Reichsführer on 17 and 18 July 1942; approval mark on one copy of the site plan enclosed and rapid return of the latter is requested."*

On 27 August, Bischoff told the same office:[677]

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669 WAPL, 54, p. 13.
670 Erläuterungsbericht zum Vorentwurf für den Neubau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS, Auschwitz O/S. and Kostenvoranschlag für den Vorentwurf des Neubaus des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS Auschwitz O.S. RGVA, 502-1-233, pp. 14f. and 22.
671 RGVA, 502-1-233, p. 11.
672 Drawings published by Jean-Claude Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and operation of the gas chambers*, Beate-Klarsfeld-Foundation, New York 1989, pp. 185f.
673 *Ibid.*, p. 189.
674 *Ibid.*, p. 195.
675 *Ibid.*, p. 203.
676 GARF, 7021-108-32, p. 37.
677 GARF, 7021-108-32, p. 41.

"The site plan enclosed comprises the recently requested enlargement of the PoW camp to a strength of 200,000 men."

The enclosed drawing was the one dated 16 August 1942 mentioned above.

Initially the "*Generalplan Ost*" also comprised the camp at Stutthof. Himmler visited it on 23 November 1941 and wrote to SS-*Gruppenführer* Pohl on 19 December:[678]

"I have come to the conviction that Stutthof is of prime importance for the eventual settlement of the Danzig – West Prussia Gau. […] *Stutthof must furthermore be enlarged to the point of being able to accommodate eventually 200,000 Russians who will be used to carry out the settlement project of the Danzig – West Prussia Gau."*

Schulte asserts that "Himmler, Pohl, and Kammler therefore expected a total of 300,000 Soviet PoWs in mid-December of 1941 who were to be employed for the building of settlements in the East, later to be raised step-wise to at least 375,000 PoWs and/or detainees."[679]

In reality, however, the number of prisoners of war actually moved to the camps was extremely low, and those who had been transferred died by the thousands because of the disastrous conditions under which they had to live and work. Schulte observes:[680]

"Himmler and Pohl thus again faced the question as to who should build the SS and police agencies and the large settlements 'in the new eastern region' and improve the local infrastructure. After the brutal treatment applied to the prisoners in the PoW camps run by the SS and in the Stalags of the Wehrmacht, Red Army personnel would no longer be available, at least not for the foreseeable future. A modification of the gigantic projects being out of the question, the SS chiefs had to focus on a new group of victims for the recruitment of their forced laborers."

This new group would be the Jews who were to primarily carry out road works within the colonization of the East. In this context – which, as we shall see, clarifies the real meaning of Heydrich's decisions as he explained them at the Wannsee meeting – Himmler instructed Glücks on 26 January 1942 as follows:[681]

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678 Facsimile of the document in: Konrad Ciechanowski, Franz Dwertmann, Donald Steyer *et al.*, *Stutthof: Das Konzentrationslager*, Wydawnictwo "Marpress," Gdańsk 1996, outside of text.

679 J.E. Schulte, *op. cit.* (note 653), p. 53.

680 *Ibid.*, p. 56.

681 *Ibid.*, p. 59. NO-500.

> *"As Russian PoWs cannot be counted on in the near future, I shall dispatch to the camps a large number of the Jews and Jewesses who are being emigrated* [sic] *from Germany. You should take measures so as to be able to accept in the camps 100,000 male Jews and up to 50,000 Jewesses over the next 4 weeks. Major economic tasks and jobs will be entrusted to the concentration camps. SS Gruppenführer Pohl will supply you with details."*

Himmler viewed these 150,000 detainees "primarily as manpower for the *Generalplan Ost*."[682]

In accordance with the above directives, the first transports sent to Auschwitz and Majdanek contained only able-bodied Jews (cf. Subchapter 9.3). Schulte himself acknowledges that "according to the will of the *Reichsführer* SS, it was mainly the "able-bodied" Jews who would be deported to Auschwitz,"[683] and that "Himmler and Pohl considered [Auschwitz] to be a forced-labor camp of Jews for the 'settlement of the East' as late as June of 1942."[684]

The construction of any camps for the alleged *total* extermination within "*Aktion Reinhardt*" where even able-bodied Jews are said to have been murdered contrasts starkly with Himmler's and Pohl's search for Jewish manpower to be employed for "*Generalplan Ost*."

The crucial contradiction is Globocnik's claimed second "appointment" by Himmler to be the head of "*Aktion Reinhardt*." In this respect, J. Schelvis writes:[685]

> *"Globocnik was personally appointed by Himmler to lead* Aktion Reinhard*. It is certain that on 13 October 1941 Hitler ordered the Bełżec extermination camp to* [be] *built, and probably the one at Sobibór as well."*

Leaving aside the fact that "certainty" in this case stands for mere conjecture, how can we explain that Himmler made Globocnik commissioner for the installation of SS and police agencies in the new eastern region on 17 July 1941 and then, on 13 October of the same year, asked him to build an extermination camp while still retaining his former function?

With an unusual lack of consistency, the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* states:[686]

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682 *Ibid.*, p. 60.
683 *Ibid.*, pp. 65f.
684 *Ibid.*, p. 67.
685 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), pp. 33f.
686 I. Gutman, et al. (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 14), Vol. I, p. 546.

> *"When he visited Lublin in July of 1942, Himmler charged Globocnik with the planning and erection of SS and police agencies on the territory of the Soviet Union to be occupied in the future, and soon thereafter with the erection of extermination camps."*

Globocnik thus would have had to simultaneously carry out a task that needed a very large supply of Jewish manpower – within his tasks as commissioner for the installation of SS and police agencies in the new eastern region – and a task which required him, as head of the future "*Aktion Reinhardt*," to arrange for the complete extermination of these very same Jews.

Such mutually contradictory functions would call for an order by Himmler, which is even more mysterious and ambiguous than the *Führerbefehl*.

8.2.2. "Aktion Reinhardt"

The *Enzyclopedia of the Holocaust* has this to say under the heading "Aktion Reinhard":[687]

> *"Code name for the murder of most of the Jews in the General Government and the Byalistok region as part of the final solution. The name was coined a few months after the beginning of the Aktion in memory of Reinhard Heydrich, the chief planner of the 'final solution' in Europe, who had become the victim of an attack on his life by members of the Czech underground. According to the minutes of the Wannsee conference, the purpose of Aktion Reinhard was the killing of the 2,284,000 Jews who were then living in the five districts of the General Government – Warsaw, Lublin, Radom, Cracow and Lemberg (Lwów)."*

This claim would require that "final solution" was another "code name" designating the biological extermination, but this assumption is not backed up by documents. It is even in direct disagreement with the existing documents, as we have shown in Chapter 7.[688] As far as the "Wannsee conference" is concerned, we have already explained its real significance, which had nothing to do with any alleged plan for an extermination of the Jews. Actually, the respective minutes do not men-

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687 *Ibid.*, p. 14.

688 For an in-depth study of this question we refer the reader to the study by C. Mattogno, *Raul Hilberg e i "centri di sterminio" nazionalsocialisti. Fonti e metodologia.* 2008, pp. 5-24. Accessible online at the following address: http://aaargh.vho.org/fran/livres8/CMhilberg.pdf

tion any kind of program for the mass assassination of Jews in extermination camps, although one such camp (Chełmno) was allegedly in operation in January of 1942, with another one (Bełżec) under construction. As opposed to this, the minutes sketch out a project which was perfectly in tune with the National Socialist policy towards the Jews valid at the time:[689]

> *"The evacuated Jews will first be taken, group after group, to so-called transit ghettos, from where they will be transported further to the East."*

This is in perfect agreement with Hitler's remark noted by Governor Frank on 17 July 1941, which we have discussed in Chapter 7 (p. 211) and which spoke of "the General Government, with the latter becoming, as it were, a mere transit camp."

The following item on the agenda of the Wannsee meeting is also in blatant contrast with an alleged policy of extermination:[689]

> *"The intention is not to evacuate Jews over the age of 65 but to send them to an old people's ghetto. Theresienstadt has been earmarked for this purpose."*

This latter category comprised some 30% of the 280,000 Jews still remaining in the *Altreich* and the *Ostmark*[689] on 31 October 1941, i.e. 84,000 persons.

The *Protokoll* states that "emigration has now been replaced by evacuation to the East" as a possibility and as a provisional option in the process towards a final solution of the Jewish question. Hence, if "evacuation" were synonymous with extermination, the SS would have decided not to exterminate the 84,000 German Jews who were over 65 years old but to move them into an "old people's ghetto"!

The only passage of the *Protokoll* which Holocaust historiography invariably brings up in its effort to demonstrate that the decisions announced at Wannsee aimed at the extermination of the Jews, actually demonstrates the contrary:[690]

> *"In the course of the final solution and under appropriate direction, the Jews are to be utilized for work in the East in a suitable manner. In large labor columns and separated by sexes, Jews <u>capable of working</u> will be dispatched to these regions to build roads, and in the process a large number of them will undoubtedly drop out by way of natural attrition.*

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689 NG-2586-G, p. 8 (protocol text following the English translation on www.ghwk.de).
690 *Ibid.*, pp. 7f.

> *Those who ultimately should possibly get by will have to be given suitable treatment because they unquestionably represent the most resistant segments and therefore constitute a natural elite that, if allowed to go free, would turn into a germ cell of renewed Jewish revival. (Witness the experience of history.)"* (Emph. added)

This paragraph refers to "Jews capable of working"; the *Protokoll* says nothing about the fate of those *incapable* of working, but one cannot believe that they were going to be exterminated if 84,000 of them were going to be moved into an "old people's ghetto."

In this context the term "suitable treatment" has nothing sinister about it: If these people, "if allowed to go free," constituted "the germ cell of renewed Jewish revival," they would simply not be allowed to go free.

The employment of the able-bodied Jews "to build roads" in the East was part of *Generalplan Ost*, as has been pointed out by J.E. Schulte:[691]

> *"Rather, the Jews were to further the colonization of the East planned by the SS and build an enormous system of roads, not so much for military use but for the strategy of colonization. Generalplan Ost did not needlessly stress the significance of a network of superhighways which were to link the individual settlements. This program of road-building was to be carried out by Soviet prisoners of war, as Adolf Hitler stressed in mid-October of 1941. In accordance with these ideas, Organisation Todt, too, had banked on the use of Red Army prisoners for the construction of Dg IV.*[692] *When these men were no longer available, Jewish forced laborers replaced their murdered predecessors. Their utilization for road works in the Ukraine was envisaged in January of 1942."*

Hence, Heydrich referred to this project during the Wannsee conference.

The SS was also thinking of the improvement of the swampy regions of the Pripyet, which stretched out between eastern Poland and White Ruthenia, as can be seen for example from two studies which appeared in December 1941 and June 1942, respectively.[693] Furthermore, the idea of a system of canals to link the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea had al-

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691 J.E. Schulte, *op. cit.* (note 653), p. 59.

692 The *Durchgangstraße* IV or Dg IV was to go from Galicia to the eastern Ukraine.

693 Richard Bergius, "Die Pripjetsümpfe als Entwässerungsproblem," and Hansjulius Schepers, "Pripjet-Polesien, Land und Leute," in: *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*; quoted by G. Aly, *"Endlösung." Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden*, S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt/Main 1995, pp. 275f.

ready been raised by Alfred Rosenberg on 8 May 1941 in a directive to a Reich commissariat for the eastern territories.[694]

On 14 August 1942 SS *Brigadeführer* Otto Rasch, head of *Einsatzgruppe C*, proposed to Berlin the following solution of the Jewish question:[695]

> *"The surplus of the Jewish masses could well be employed and used up in the cultivation of the vast Pripyet swamps as well as those of the northern Dnyeper and along the Volga."*

Drainage operations were also being carried out in the Sobibór region and employed Jewish manpower. Schelvis tells us:[696]

> *"Dutch Jews are known to have been working on a drainage project alongside German and Slovakian Jews at Arbeitslager Ujazdów, fifteen kilometres to the southwest of Osowa, around 15 June 1942."*

He then mentions the presence of an engineer Holzheimer from the water company at Chełm, and drainage projects using Jewish labor in the area of Krychow.[697]

Let us return to *Aktion Reinhardt*. As far as the name is concerned, Peter Witte and Stephen Tyas affirm that "the well-known hypothesis of Robert L. Koehl, Uwe Dietrich Adam, Wolfgang Benz, the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in Munich, *et al.* that Einsatz or Aktion Reinhardt was named after State Secretary of Finance Fritz Reinhardt is highly questionable."[698] They underline that Heydrich's given name was, in fact, "Reinhardt" (and not "Reinhard") and that "the codename Reinhardt for the mass murder first appeared immediately after Heydrich's death in June 1942."[699] But this document – a letter from "Waffen-SS Standortverwaltung" of Lublin "an den SS- u. Polizeiführer – Reinhardt – Lublin" – is only a request for "50 empty suitcases stemming from the known action,"[700] without the slightest reference to any "mass murder" of Jews.

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694 PS-1029.

695 Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD. Ereignismeldung UdSSR No. 52 of 14 August 1941. NO-4540.

696 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 125; see also p. 209.

697 *Ibid.*, p. 211, 213.

698 P. Witte, S. Tyas, *op. cit.* (note 19), note 34 on p. 483.

699 *Ibid.*, p. 475.

700 Józef Kermisz (ed.), *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów ocupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, Vol. II, *"Akcje" i "Wysiedlenia,"* Warszawa/Łódź/Kraków 1946, p. 182.

Aside from this arbitrary interpretation, the hypothesis concerning the name of Heydrich appears plausible. Globocnik wrote in an undated report:[701]

"The whole of Aktion Reinhardt can be split up into 4 areas:
A) the deportation itself
B) the use of the manpower
C) the use of objects
D) the securing of hidden values and real estate."

Here, the deportation was to be the major aspect, which brings us back to Heydrich.

All surviving documents about "*Aktion Reinhardt*" refer exclusively to the economic aspect. Even at Auschwitz was a "disinfestation and storage chamber Aktion Reinhard" (*Entwesungs- u. Effektenkammer Aktion Reinhard*), which was called "*Kanada I*," i.e. *Bauwerk* 28, officially called "delousing and storage barracks" (*Entlausungs- und Effektenbaracken*), and a "*Station 2 der Aktion Reinhardt*."[702] As late as May-June of 1944, a "*Sonderkommando Reinhardt*" (special detail Reinhardt) was operating at Birkenau, with 2,505 detainees assigned to it as of 19 June.[703]

In 1999 Bertrand Perz and Thomas Sandkühler tried to prove that even in the case of Auschwitz *Aktion Reinhardt* stood for an alleged extermination,[704] but this thesis has no historical foundation.[705]

Summarizing what has been stated in Chapter 7, Heydrich

– was appointed by Göring as head of the *Reichszentrale für jüdische Auswanderung* in Berlin on 24 January 1939;
– requested Eichmann on 15 July 1939 to set up a *Zentralstelle für jüdische Auswanderung* in Prague;
– wrote to Joachim von Ribbentrop, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on 24 June 1940 saying that the Jewish problem could not be solved "by emigration" but required "a territorial final solution;"

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701 NO-057.
702 "Besichtigung des SS-Obergruppenführers Pohl am 23.9.1942." GARF, 502-1-19, p. 86.
703 "Übersicht über Anzahl und Einsatz der weiblichen Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz O/S," 30 June 1944. GARF, 7021-108-33, p. 157.
704 Bertrand Perz, Thomas Sandkühler, "Auschwitz und die 'Aktion Reinhard' 1942-1945. Judenmord und Raubpraxis in neuer Sicht," in: *Zeitgeschichte*, 26(5), 1999, pp. 283-318.
705 Cf. in this respect C. Mattogno *"Azione Reinhard" e "Azione 1005,"* Effepi, Genova, 2008.

– prohibited the Jewish emigration from France and Belgium on 20 May 1941 in an effort to render the emigration of "Jews from the Reich territory" easier;
– was entrusted by Göring on 31 July 1941 with the task of making preparations "for a comprehensive solution of the Jewish question within the German sphere of influence in Europe" in "addition" to the tasks Göring had given him on 21 January 1939, viz. to resolve "the Jewish question by means of emigration or evacuation;"
– was requested by Himmler on 18 September 1941 to implement the *Judenwanderung* (Jewish migration) via Łodź;
– declared in Prague on 10 October 1941 that it was being planned to deport 50,000 Jews from the Protectorate to Minsk and Riga between 15 October and 15 November, where they were to be housed "in the camps for communist detainees in the operational territory;"
– reported on 20 January 1942 during the Wannsee meeting on the policy of Jewish emigration directed by himself, thanks to which some 537,000 Jews had emigrated from the Reich territory by 31 October 1941, and stated that the *Reichsführer* SS had "forbidden any further emigration of Jews in view of the dangers posed by emigration in wartime and the looming possibilities in the East" and that, "as a further possible solution and with the appropriate prior authorization by the Führer, emigration has now been replaced by evacuation to the East."

Heydrich was therefore in actual fact "the chief planner of the final solution in Europe," but this term, in actual fact, designated the evacuation of the Jews from Europe, i.e. from the area of the General Government.

The following order given by Himmler to the higher SS and police leader in the General Government Friedrich-Wilhelm Krüger must be seen in this light:[706]

> *"I decree that the resettlement of the total Jewish population of the General Government must be implemented and terminated by 31 December 1942. On 31 December 1942 no persons of Jewish descent must any longer be present in the General Government unless they are held in the collection camps at Warsaw, Cracow, Chenstohova, Radom, Lublin. All other work projects employing Jewish labor must be terminated by that date, or, if their termination is im-*

[706] NO-5574.

> *possible, must be assigned to one of the collection camps. These measures are required to assure the ethnic separation of races and peoples in Europe as well as in the interest of the security and purity of the German Reich and its region of interest."*

The well-known letter written by the engineer Albert Ganzenmüller to SS-*Obergruppenführer* Karl Wolff, Himmler's assistant, is part of this framework:[707]

> *"Since 22 July there has been a daily train with 5,000 Jews from Warsaw via Malkinia to Treblinka, plus twice a week a train with 5,000 Jews from Przemysl to Bełżec. Gedob*[708] *is in permanent contact with the Cracow security service. The latter has agreed to stop the trains from Warsaw via Lublin to Sobibór (near Lublin) as long as the revamping of this line renders these transports impossible (until about October of 1942)."*

This was actually a "population movement" (*Bevölkerungsbewegung*), as Wolff wrote in his reply dated 13 August 1942.[709] The choice of Heydrich's first name "Reinhardt" in this context thus indicates the continuity of the task entrusted to him by Göring in 1939 and extended in 1941, viz. to resolve "the Jewish question by means of emigration or evacuation." It follows that *Aktion Reinhardt* in its main aspect, "resettlement" (*Aussiedlung*), was nothing but the implementation of this task. And the executor Globocnik acted in his quality of commissioner for the installation of SS and police agencies in the new eastern region.

This is borne out, moreover, by the fact that the resettlement entrusted to Globocnik was not limited to Jews, but comprised Poles and Ukrainians as well, as we can see from three documents relative to *Aktion Reinhardt*, assembled in the document file PS-4024: "measures for the conciliation of the foreign ethnicities in the case of resettlement,"[710] "measures for further resettlement,"[711] and the "note" of 1st July 1943, which described the operation "Werwolf 1" targeting the evacuations from an area surrounding the German settlement area in the Lublin district and the creation of a protective belt of Ukrainian settlements.[712] In

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707 NO-2207. Facsimile in J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 58.
708 *Gesellschaft der Ostbahn*, the German railway agency.
709 NO-2207. J. Schelvis, *op. cit*. (note. 60), p. 60.
710 "Maßnahmen zur Beruhigung der Fremdvölkischen bei der Umsiedlung," PS-4024, IMT, Vol. XXXIV, pp. 63-65.
711 "Maßnahmen für die weitere Umsiedlung," *ibid.*, pp. 65f.
712 *Ibid.*, pp. 66ff.

this respect Himmler gave specific directives two days later, which also mentioned the operation *Werwolf*.[713]

The report written by *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Helmut Müller of the *Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt* (Main Office for Race and Settlement) on 15 October 1941 to the head of this office, SS-*Gruppenführer* Otto Hofmann, documents that Globocnik was entertaining grandiose plans of resettlement, which had brought him into trouble with the local authorities. He dreamed of cleansing the General Government of Jews and Poles and of creating a territory for German settlements in the Lublin district with Himmler's approval.[714] Even then Globocnik acted in his role as commissioner for the installation of SS and police agencies in the new eastern region, not as the man in charge of an extermination of the Jews.

8.3. Alleged Genesis and Organization of the Extermination Camps of *Aktion Reinhardt*

8.3.1. Administration and Financing

At the Stuttgart congress mentioned above, Hilberg presented a paper entitled *Die Aktion Reinhard*, in which he stated:[715]

> *"The initial phase of Aktion Reinhard raises three separate questions. Why were there three camps instead of only one? Why were they built in succession, Bełżec first, then Sobibór, and finally Treblinka? Why did each camp have only three gas chambers when they turned out to be insufficient? One could argue that they were approaching the objective hesitatingly, without having a clear view of it. That is not really inconceivable, but is is certainly not the complete explanation, and perhaps not even the most important one. It was, to sum it up, a difficult administrative problem. For the 'Final solution of the Jewish question,' the Third Reich had neither a central agency nor even a separate budget."*

As far as the alleged extermination camps of *Aktion Reinhardt* are concerned, this explanation is clearly wrong even from the Holocaust point of view, because "a central agency" did indeed exist, with its line of

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713 Letter from Himmler to Frank dated 3 July 1943. NO-2444.
714 NO-5875.
715 R. Hilberg, "Die Aktion Reinhard," in: E. Jäckel, J. Rohwer (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 642), p. 129.

command Himmler → Globocnik → Höfle → Wirth,[716] whereas the financing could be provided for by the economic proceeds from *Aktion Reinhardt*, i.e. the goods confiscated from the Jews.

The facts set out by Hilberg in the form of questions are thus inexplicable.

Hence, if we followed mainstream Holocaust historiography, we would have three chains of command regarding the gas chambers:

– Hitler → Führer Chancellery[717] → KTI[718] → Carbon monoxide in steel cylinders → euthanasia institutes → *Gaswagen* → Chełmno;
– Hitler → Himmler → Eichmann → Höss → Zyklon B → Auschwitz/Majdanek;
– Himmler → Globocnik → Höfle → Wirth → exhaust gases → Bełżec/Sobibór/Treblinka.

This creates obvious and serious problems, especially as far as the choice of the "weapon of the crime" is concerned, which mainstream Holocaust historiography has never been able to solve. We will return to this question in Subchapter 8.5. below.

8.3.2. Construction of the Camps

Schelvis tells us that the construction of the Bełżec Camp began on 1st November 1941 "under the leadership of the central construction agency at Zamość" and "under the supervision of Richard Thomalla."[719] Blatt speaks of "engineers from the SS Zentralbauleitung (SS Central Construction Office) in Zamość."[720] Rückerl affirms that SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Thomalla "came from the SS construction office at Zamość."[721] Schelvis adds:[722]

> *"When Bełżec was almost finished, the Thomalla group, in March of 1942, went to Sobibór to continue the construction work there."*

In the General Government, construction work and the corresponding technical, financial, and administrative aspects were handled by *Bauinspektion* (construction inspection) *der Waffen-SS und Polizei Reich*

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716 SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Christian Wirth, Inspector of SS-*Sonderkommando* "Einsatz Reinhardt."
717 Karl Brandt and *Reichsleiter* Philipp Bouhler.
718 The Kriminaltechnische Institut (institute for forensic techniques) within Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA).
719 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 113.
720 T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 13.
721 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 72, note 65.
722 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 38.

Generalgouvernement, which ruled over 5 central construction offices with 9 (local) construction offices. The central offices were located at Warsaw, Lublin, Lemberg, Debica, and Cracow.[723] This was the situation on 14 November 1941.

The *Bauwirtschaft* (construction industry), on the other hand, was directed by an SS-*Wirtschafter* (economist) attached to the *Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer im Generalgouvernement*. Both *Bauinspektion* as well as SS-*Wirtschafter* were at that time attached to *Amt II (Bauten)* (Dept. II, constructions) of *Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten* (Central office of Budget and Constructions), run by SS-*Oberführer* Hans Kammler.

Thus, if the Bełżec Camp and subsequently the camp at Sobibór were built by the *Bauleitung* at Zamość, the construction order came from Kammler and the construction work was governed by the complicated bureaucratic procedure applying to all other camps, including the one at Majdanek.[724] This procedure was so complicated that, on 14 May 1943, Kammler sent out three pages of instructions for the "simplification of administrative procedures" concerning the rules then in force.[725]

The camp was therefore planned and built within the framework of responsibility and authority of *Amtsgruppe C* of *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt* (WVHA, Economic-Administrative Main Office), just in the same way as Auschwitz-Birkenau was. This makes Hilberg's thesis even more nonsensical that the alleged extermination camps of *Aktion Reinhardt* were built in the absence of a competent central authority and without a specific budgetary reference.

This also means that the camp had to be equipped with all elementary hygienic systems for the benefit of the SS supervisory force. Among other things, there had to be at least a water supply, a sewage disposal system, one or several washing barracks, toilet facilities, a sick bay, delousing or disinfestation facilities with bath, all the more so if Sobibór really was an extermination camp. The daily arrival of victims in precarious hygienic conditions and the presence of an enormous

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723 WAPL, ZBL, 12, pp. 11f, 47-49. Cf. also C. Mattogno, *The Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Auschwitz.* Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2005.

724 The respective documentation is kept at WAPL, file ZBL. As far as Auschwitz is concerned, cf. the source given in the preceding footnote.

725 Addressed to all construction groups of SS-*Wirtschafter* attached to the *Höheren SS und Polizeiführern in den besetzten Gebieten, Bauinspektionen, Zentralbauleitungen und Bauleitungen der Waffen-SS und Polizei* (hence including the SS-*Wirtschafter* attached to *Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer im Generalgouvernement*, as well as to the *Bauinspektion der Waffen-SS und Polizei Reich Generalgouvernement* and to the *Bauleitung* at Zamość); WAPL, ZBL, 268, pp. 94-97.

number of corpses in a very limited area would otherwise have increased the risk of spreading infectious diseases enormously.

Jan Piwonski, who worked at the Sobibór railway station, declared on several occasions to Claude Lanzmann that in late March and early April of 1942 barrack elements arrived at Sobibór by rail:[726]

> *"And a little bit later, train cars came from time to time with parts for the barracks.* […] *And the Jews unloaded the cars and brought the material for the barracks over there by the camp."*

Sobibór was therefore probably equipped with standard types of barracks found in all concentration camps, for example the "*Pferdestallbaracke"* type 260/9 (which measured 40,76m×9,36m), type IV/3 (19,95m×8,14m), type 501/34 (42,30m×12,50m), the "*Schweizerbaracke*" (28,20m×6,20m), the Baracke type VII/5 (33,15m×8,14m), type RAD IV/3 (59,55m×8,14m) etc. This also suggests that the construction of Sobibór was, first of all, Kammler's responsibility.

In the following chapter we will examine the conclusions which may be drawn from this state of affairs.

8.3.3. Construction of the Alleged Gas Chambers: General Problems

According to the official theses the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór were built on the model of those at Bełżec, and the latter were modelled on those of the euthanasia institutions. This alleged sequence has no backing in reality, though.

First of all there is no *documentary* evidence that the euthanasia institutions were equipped with *gas chambers operating with carbon monoxide* nor that *carbon monoxide cylinders* were ever used for homicidal purposes in the euthanasia centers.

There is furthermore no solid proof that the first alleged gassing building at Bełżec contained three gas chambers. In the course of his archeological investigations of that camp between 1997 and 1999, Prof. Andrzej Kola found traces neither of the first nor of the second alleged gassing building.[727]

In his statements made on 14 October 1945 mentioned above, the witness Stanisław Kozak expressed himself as follows on the subject of the alleged first extermination site of Bełżec:[728]

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[726] J. Piwonski *op. cit.* (note 203), pp. S3 and S5.
[727] C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 10, Engl. ed.), pp. 93-96.
[728] ZStL, 252/59, Vol. I, pp. 1129f. (Translation from Polish text); published in: Y. Arad,

> *"In each of the three sections of this barrack there were water pipes at a level 10 cm above the floor. In addition, on the western side of each part of this barrack, water pipes branched off to a level of 1 m above the floor, ending in an opening directed towards the center of the barrack. The elbow pipes were connected to those running along the walls of the barrack beneath the floor. In each of the three parts of the barrack we mounted ovens each one weighing some 250 kg. It is to be assumed that the elbowed pipes were later connected to the ovens. The ovens had a height of 1 m 10 cm, a width of 55 cm, and a length of 55 cm. Out of curiosity I looked into the inside of one of the ovens. I could not detect any hearths. The inside – as far as I could make out – was lined with refractory bricks. I could not detect any other openings. The oven door was oval, with a diameter of some 25 cm at a height of some 50 cm from the floor."* (Emph. added)

Mainstream historiography asserts that "the stoves described were used to heat the shed's rooms, thus allowing the bottled gas and Zyklon B used in the early stage of the camp's killing activities to work more efficiently in cold weather."[729] The source for this claim is the following passage from an article by Michael Tregenza:[730]

> *"The first attempts at mass murder by gas were conducted by Wirth in the small gassing barrack in February of 1942. This test gassing liquidated the 150 Jewish workers who had been deported to Bełżec for the construction of the camp. They were gassed by means of Zyklon B."*

Tregenza refers to the interrogation of Josef Oberhauser of 12 December 1960,[731] a reference which would later be taken up by Robin O'Neil with a corrected date (13 Dec.):[732]

> *"The first experimental killing with Zyklon B was carried out by Wirth on a group of about 150 Jews who had been brought to the camp from the nearby town of Lubycza-Królewska to complete construction of the camp and fell trees."*

"Die 'Aktion Reinhard,'" in: E. Kogon, H. Langbein, A. Rückerl *et al.* (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 40), pp. 152f.

729 *Bełżec Camp History*, in: www.deathcamps.org/belzec/belzec.html

730 M. Tregenza, "Bełżec – Das vergessene Lager des Holocaust," in: I. Wojak, P. Hayes (ed.), *"Arisierung" im Nationalsozialismus, Volksgemeinschaft, Raub und Gedächtnis*, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt/New York 2000, pp. 248f.

731 *Ibid.*, note 34 on p. 263.

732 R. O'Neil, *Bełżec: Stepping Stone to Genocide; Hitler's answer to the Jewish Question*, Chapter 8, in: www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/Belzec1/bel081.html#33.

However, Oberhauser's interrogation of 12 December 1960, a transcript of 5 pages, does not deal with alleged gassings in Bełżec at all, whereas the one dated 13 December, a transcript of 11 pages, does not even mention Zyklon B. The defendant had in fact declared:[733]

> *"While bottled gas* [Flaschengas] *was used in the first test series and for the first transports of the second series of tests, the Jews from the later transports were killed with the exhaust gas from a tank engine or a truck engine which Hackenholt operated."*

In this deposition, "bottled" gas obviously refers to carbon monoxide and not to Zyklon B, which was packaged in cans. In the passage following the one just quoted Tregenza himself actually asserts that "for the ensuing experiments" the gassings were carried out "with carbon monoxide gas from steel cylinders." The expression "bottled gas and Zyklon B" is therefore erroneous on two counts, because Oberhauser never mentioned Zyklon B at all and because he referred no doubt to carbon monoxide in cylinders.[734]

Jules Schelvis proposes a different explanation:[735]

> *"The intention was thus evidently not to use engine exhaust fumes to cause death, but carbon monoxide gas produced when coal is not completely burnt. Whether the first victims in fact died from carbon monoxide poisoning has not been conclusively established. Possibly the gas Zyklon-B was used earlier, but it is more likely to have been carbon monoxide stored in steel canisters, as used in the* Euthanasieanstalten*."*

This hypothesis is nonsensical because the ovens were inside the rooms and so the control of the combustion[736] would have had to be done by the victims themselves![737] The idea of passing the gases produced by the ovens through narrow *water* pipes is no less absurd, as such a thing could only have been accomplished by means of powerful blowers.

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733 Interrogation of Josef Oberhauser on 12 December 1962. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, Vol. IX, p. 1685.

734 For an in-depth treatment of the question, cf. C. Mattogno, "Postilla sull'articolo di Thomas Kues 'Le presunte gasazioni sperimentali di Bełżec,'" in: www.andreacarancini.it/2009/03/una-messaa-punto-di-carlo-mattogno/, 30 March 2009.

735 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 98.

736 The reaction of incomplete combustion of carbon is: $C + ½ O_2 = CO + heat$.

737 An incomplete combustion is basically a normal combustion run in such a way that the whole mass of the coal on the grate catches fire. When this has taken place, an incomplete combustion with generation of CO (carbon monoxide) can occur when the amount of combustion air is suitably reduced.

Moreover, if the ovens for the generation of carbon monoxide were already in the chambers, what was the use of the water pipes?

Kozak's ovens are also incompatible with an alleged gassing by means of "carbon monoxide gas from steel cylinders."

The Holocaust axiom that the alleged gas chambers at Bełżec and those of Sobibór were identical in number and dimensions is in contradiction with an important witness: If we are to believe Gitta Sereny, Franz Stangl, first commander of Sobibór, is said to have declared:[738]

> *"It was about ten or even fifteen minutes' walk away from the railway station where we were building the main camp. It was a new brick building with three rooms, three metres by four. The moment I saw it I knew what Michel meant: it looked exactly like the gas chamber at Schloss Hartheim."*

We would thus have three gas chambers, each 3 by 4 meters or 12 square meters for a total of 36 square meters. However, the alleged gas chambers at Bełżec measured 8 by 4 meters or 32 square meters each for a total of 96 square meters.

Stangl's reference to Hartheim castle is worth a closer look. Hans Maršálek writes the following about the layout of the alleged Hartheim gas chambers:[739]

> *"Then the victims were led into the gas chamber. It consisted of a room measuring 6.60 by 4.20 meters. The floor originally consisted of wooden boards, was then given a layer of concrete, and finally lined with red tiles. There were tiles as well up the walls to a level of 1.70 meters. In the center of the ceiling there was a water pipe with three shower heads. Alongside three of the walls there was a tube (15 mm in diameter) with many perforations. This is where the poison gas came from; a physician in the room next door always supervised its feed from a steel bottle."*

The number of victims put to death in this alleged gas chamber of 6.60m×4.20m = 27.72 square meters is said to have been 18,269.[740] At Sobibór, on the other hand, for the gassing of hundreds of thousands of Jews, three gas chambers of a total of 36 square meters are alleged to have been planned!

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738 G. Sereny, *op. cit.* (note 224), p. 109.

739 Hans Maršálek, *Die Vergasungsaktionen im Konzentrationslager Mauthausen. Dokumentation*, Wien 1988, p. 26.

740 Willi Dressen, "Euthanasie," in: E. Kogon, H. Langbein, A. Rückerl *et al.* (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 40), p. 62.

As far as the gassing technology is concerned, the descendance of those at Bełżec and at Sobibór from the gas chambers of the euthanasia institutions is furthermore inconsistent, because for the latter carbon monoxide gas in cylinders is reported to have been used, whereas for the former there allegedly was a switch to exhaust gas from an engine, Diesel at Bełżec, gasoline at Sobibór. Who decreed when, where, and why such an essential departure from the original way of operation?

For the first gas chambers at Bełżec this new gassing technology is not documented; to be more precise, no kind of technology is documented here at all. As far as Sobibór is concerned, mainstream Holocaust historiography suddenly brings in an engine for the gassings, based more on an act of faith that the local gas chambers were identical to those of Bełżec than on anything else. But instead of positing the use of a Diesel engine as at Bełżec, a gasoline engine is postulated. This is probably based on the statement by defendant Erich Fuchs quoted earlier (see p. 525).

According to the Holocaust historiography, at Bełżec "during the first 'trial,'[741] a Diesel engine of 250 HP was mounted outside in order to produce the carbon monoxide and feed it into the pipes,"[742] and a Diesel engine was later ascribed also to the alleged gas chambers of Treblinka.[743]

In his study "The Diesel Gas Chambers: Ideal for Torture – Absurd for Murder"[744] Friedrich Paul Berg has established that a Diesel engine produces at most 0.4% of CO, whereas a gasoline engine with a suitable setting of the carburator can produce up to 12% of the lethal gas. The "chemist" who allegedly had already carried out experiments and measurements at Bełżec cannot have been unaware of this. It is therefore incomprehensible why a Diesel engine should have been left in place at Bełżec and a similar engine was allegedly also set up in Treblinka after this purported Sobibór experiments. We must not forget that the gas generators using wood or coal which were widely installed and used during the war in all kinds of vehicles of the Axis powers (*Generatorgaswagen*) produced a gas that was extremely rich in CO, between 18

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741 But according to J. Oberhauser, as we have seen above, the first series of experiments was done by means of *Flaschengas* (bottled gas).

742 I. Gutman et al., (note 14), Vol. I, entry "Bełżec," p. 176.

743 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, entry "Treblinka," p. 1428.

744 *Op. cit.* (note 32); this is an updated version of the article "The Diesel Gas Chambers – Myth Within a Myth," *The Journal of Historical Review*, 5(1) (1984), pp. 15-46.

and 35%,[745] but for some strange reason there is no mention in the testimonies that the SS ever thought of using this widely available source for the generation of carbon monoxide, in spite of the fact that the toxicity of the gas produced by these generators was clearly indicated for safety reasons on all such generators.

What is even more mysterious is the alleged use of CO in the camps in the east and of HCN (hydrocyanic acid)[746] at Auschwitz. Kurt Gerstein's reports on his "mission" are at the heart of this dichotomy. Here Yitzak Arad has this to say:[747]

> *"The gassing system that had been developed and introduced by Wirth in the Operation Reinhard death camps proved only partially satisfactory. The frequent engine breakdowns caused disturbances and delays in the entire extermination process. Globocnik was aware of these shortcomings and, in coordination with the higher authorities of the SS, decided to look into the possibility of introducing an alternative gassing system. The prevailing opinion among the higher SS authorities in charge of the extermination of Jews was that Zyklon B was more suitable for this task.*
>
> Obersturmführer *Kurt Gerstein, the chief disinfection officer in the Main Hygienic Office of the Waffen SS, and SS* Obersturmbannführer *Wilhelm Pfannenstiel, professor and director of the Hygienic Institute at the University of Marburg/Lahn, who had also served as hygienic adviser of the Waffen SS, were sent to Lublin in the middle of August 1942. Gerstein's main mission was to check the possibility of introducing the gas Zyklon B into the gas chambers. Zyklon B had already been successfully used in Auschwitz instead of the engines that were still supplying the monoxide gas in the death camps of Operation Reinhard."*

As we have seen elsewhere,[748] Gerstein's "mission" is a chain of absurdities which ends with an even greater absurdity: although he had been ordered by the RSHA to change the alleged gas chambers running on Diesel engine-exhaust gases into chambers operating with hydrocyanic acid and having gone to Bełżec for this purpose with 45 *bottles* of HCN (which is nonsense, as there never was such a thing as bottled HCN), he then went back to Berlin without having done anything,

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745 *Ibid.*, pp. 459f.
746 The active ingredient of Zyklon B.
747 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 100.
748 C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), "The 'Mission' of Kurt Gerstein," pp. 126-133.

without having caused any changes, without reporting to anyone, and without being asked anything by anyone about his trip!

This absurdity was noticed by the French investigating judge Mattei in his interrogation of Gerstein:[749]

> *"Q: To whom did you report about the results of your mission?*
> *A: When I returned to Berlin after a trip which took about two weeks, I did not talk to anyone about the outcome of my mission. Nobody asked me anything.* […]
> *Q: As you said so yourself, you were given an important task by Berlin in your technical function; this mission was so secret which you had to execute as a state secret; you went to three camps, you were received there by a general who, in view of your mission, believed that he should tell you what two top Nazi leaders had said.*[750] *How can you expect us to believe:*
> *1) that you did not accomplish your mission,*
> *2) that you did not report about it to anyone,*
> *3) that no one has questioned you about it in any way."*

Schelvis devotes more than five pages to Gerstein;[751] he tries to avoid one of the grossest absurdities of his witness – the presence of "700-800 [Jews] on an area of 25m^2 and in a volume of 45m^3," and writes:[752]

> *"Gerstein was mistaken. The 700 to 800 he mentions must have been the total number of victims in the six chambers combined."*

Gerstein, however, did mean 700-800 persons in a single gas chamber and underlined it explicitly:[753]

> *"up to that moment all the people in the four rooms, already filled, they are alive; four times 750 people in a space of four times 45 cubic metres, still alive!"*

The development of the alleged extermination camps of *Aktion Reinhardt* inevitably collides with the unanswered questions raised by Hilberg.

Wolfgang Scheffler asserts that "Sobibór, on the other hand, was considerably less convenient as far as rail transport is concerned. It was constructed when it became apparent that Bełżec could not cope with

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749 G. Wellers, "Encore sur le Témoignage Gerstein," in: *Le Monde Juif*, Jan.-Mar. 1980, No. 97, p. 29, 32.
750 Hitler and Himmler are said by Gerstein to have visited the eastern camps on 16 August 1942. This is historically false.
751 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 106-110.
752 *Ibid.*, p. 115, note 45.
753 *Ibid.*, p. 108.

the assassination program,"[754] and the same reasoning should obviously be applied to the construction of Treblinka as well.

As we have seen above, the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* wants to make us believe that the SS had to envisage "the killing of the 2,284,000 Jews then living in the five districts of the General Government" as part of *Aktion Reinhardt*. To realize this objective, the SS planners are said to have built a single extermination camp – Bełżec – with a gassing installation absolutely ridiculous in view of its task: three gas chambers having a total of 96 square meters, which, according to Uwe Dietrich Adam, could accommodate at most 600 persons (or, if we follow the Bełżec trial sentence, 100 to 150 persons; cf. Subchapter 9.2). This means that the SS expected to conduct (2,284,000÷600=) 3,806 gassing operations!

At Sobibór, which was built to overcome the deficiencies of Bełżec, the SS likewise set up three gas chambers, but they were even smaller, 36 square meters altogether, or, if we follow the sentence of the Sobibór trial at Hagen,[755] three chambers each 4 by 4 meters, or 48 square meters altogether!

Only slowly and painfully the SS is said to have realized that "the gas chambers turned out to be too small, the 'output' of the Sobibór Camp was too low,"[756] and hence they ostensibly decided to build another three chambers of the same size, 4 by 4 meters,[757] to reach a total of 96 square meters.

At Bełżec the old gas chambers are alleged to have been torn down and substituted by six new ones, each 4 by 5 m[758] for a total of 120 square meters.

At Treblinka, the last of the claimed eastern extermination camps to be set up and said to have been built on the experience gained at Bełżec and Sobibór, the same mistake was made again: once again three small gas chambers are claimed, 4 by 4 meters[759] = 16 square meters each, with altogether 48 square meters, exactly like those at Sobibór, which had turned out to be too small! And, as at Bełżec, the first gas chambers

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754 Wolfgang Scheffler, "Chełmno, Sobibór, Bełżec und Majdanek," in: E. Jäckel, J. Rohwer (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 642), p. 149.
755 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 163.
756 *Ibid.*, p. 172.
757 *Ibid.*, p. 173.
758 *Ibid.*, p. 133.
759 *Ibid.*, p. 203.

were replaced by 6 or 10 (!) new chambers, 8 by 4 meters each.[760] Furthermore, to make things even more absurd, the old gas chambers at Bełżec were torn down instead of being left intact or repaired in order to ensure a higher extermination capacity.

In one of his(?) reports written at Rottweil on 4 May 1945, Gerstein alleged that Globocnik had given the "maximum output per day" for the eastern extermination camps as follows on 17 August 1942:

– Bełżec: 15,000 persons
– Sobibór: 20,000 persons
– Treblinka: 25,000 persons.[761]

If this had been so, 38 days would have sufficed to gas the alleged 2,284,000 victims.

Uwe Dietrich Adam summarizes in a table the respective data on the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps, see Table 4.[762] One can immediately see the madness in the planning of these camps (we have up-dated this table on the basis of the data available today).

Table 4: Alleged Operation Data of *Aktion Reinhardt* Camps

CAMP:	BEŁŻEC	SOBIBÓR	TREBLINKA
1st period from	17 March 1942	3 May 1942	23 July 1942
# of gas chambers	3	3	3
chamber size [m]	8×4 or 3×4	4×4	4×4
2nd period from	mid-July 1942	September 1942	September 1942
# of gas chambers	6	6	6 or 10
chamber size [m]	4×5	4×4	8×4

Hence SS *Obersturmführer* Richard Thomalla who is said to have built all three alleged extermination camps of *Aktion Reinhardt* one after another[763] would have been a perfect fool, if one were to follow mainstream Holocaust historiography, and even more so Wirth and Globocnik, who had ordered him to do the work. Actually, it is mainstream Holocaust history which is wearing the fool's cap.

760 *Ibid.*, p. 204.
761 A. Chelain, *op. cit.* (note 128), p. 299.
762 Uwe Dietrich Adam, "Les chambres à gaz," in: Colloque de l'École…, *op. cit.* (note 634), pp. 248f.
763 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), pp. 35f., 48f.

8.4. Euthanasia and *Aktion Reinhardt*

Yitzhak Arad summarizes the Holocaust story of euthanasia in the following words:[764]

> *"At the beginning of World War II, Hitler signed the following order: 'Reichsleiter Bouhler and Dr.* [Karl] *Brandt* [Hitler's personal physician] *are charged with the responsibility for expanding the authority of individual physicians, with a view to enable them, after the most critical examination in the realm of human knowledge, to administer to incurably sick persons a mercy death.'*
>
> *The man directly in charge of the euthanasia operations was Viktor Brack, a high official in the Chancellery of the* Führer *and subordinate to Bouhler. The T4*[765] *organisation established several institutions throughout Germany. The mentally ill destined for elimination were placed in hermetically sealed rooms, into which carbon monoxide was introduced; they died within a short time. Some victims were killed by injections of poison. All bodily remains were cremated.*
>
> *A request from Himmler to Bouhler in the summer of 1940 enlarged the euthanasia program to encompass sick concentration camp detainees from the camps inside Germany under SS supervision. Some of the detainees were Jews. They were removed from their camps to the euthanasia centers and were murdered there. The code name for this operation was 14F13. As a result of internal pressure within Nazi Germany, Hitler ordered the termination of the euthanasia program at the end of August 1941. However, sporadic killings of small groups of 'incurable victims' continued in some euthanasia institutions after this date."*

A short while laster Arad notes:[766]

> *"The most important group of Operation Reinhard came from the euthanasia program. They brought with them knowledge and experience in setting up and operating gassing institutions for mass murder. They filled the key posts involved with the extermination methods, the planning and construction of three death camps – Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka – and the command over these camps. Viktor*

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764 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 9, quoting PS-630.

765 Acronym deriving from Berlin address – Tiergartenstraße 4 – of the headquarters of this program.

766 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

> *Brack gave evidence in his trial after the war about the transfer of the euthanasia personnel to Operation Reinhard: 'In 1941, I received an oral order to discontinue the euthanasia program. In order to retain the personnel that had been relieved of these duties and in order to be able to start a new euthanasia program after the war, Bouhler asked me – I think after a conference with Himmler – to send this personnel to Lublin and place it at the disposal of SS Brigadeführer Globocnik.'*
>
> *The first group of euthanasia personnel, numbering a few dozen men, arrived at Lublin between the end of October and the end of December 1941. Among them was Kriminalkommissar of Police Christian Wirth, the highest-ranking officier from the euthanasia program assigned to Operation Reinhard, and Oberscharführer Josef Oberhauser. Additional people from the euthanasia program arrived in Lublin during the first months of 1942. Viktor Brack visited Lublin at the beginning of May 1942 and discussed with Globocnik the contribution of the euthanasia organization to the task of exterminating Jews."*

As for the deployment of euthanasia personnel at the "*Aktion Reinhardt*" camps, the following documentary evidence may be brought fourth. On 23 June 1942 the organizer of the euthanasia program, *SS-Oberführer* Viktor Brack, sent a letter to Himmler in which he stated:[767]

> *"In accordance with my orders from Reichsleiter Bouhler I have long ago put at Brigadeführer Globocnik's disposal part of my manpower to aid him in carrying out his special mission. Upon his renewed request I have now transferred to him additional personnel."*

Later in the same letter Globocnik's "special mission" is identified as "the action against the Jews". This can only mean that Brack had part of his euthanasia staff transferred to "*Aktion Reinhardt*." We furthermore have documentary proof that two individual members of the euthanasia staff were present in the Reinhardt camps. The physician Dr. Irmfried Eberl served as the medical director of the euthanasia institutes in Brandenburg and Bernburg. In the summer of 1942 he was transferred to Treblinka II, where he served as the first commandant of the camp.

Both the involvement in the euthanasia program and the transfer to Treblinka is confirmed by Eberl's preserved personal correspondence, part of which has been published by his biographer Michael Grabher.[768]

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767 *IMT* Document NO-205; quoted in Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 17.

768 Michael Grabher, *Irmfried Eberl. 'Euthanasie'-Arzt und Kommandant von Treblinka*,

Secondly, Christian Wirth is mentioned as belonging to the *Dienststelle* of Brack in a letter of recommendation dated 21 August 1941.[769] In another letter addressed to Kuno Ther and dated 13 April 1943, *Polizeimajor* Christian Wirth is identified as the "responsible inspector" (*verantwortlicher Inspektor*) of the Reinhardt camps.[770] He is again mentioned prominently in the letter sent by Globocnik to von Herff on 13 April 1943 concerning Himmler's visit to "installations of 'Aktion Reinhard'" (cf. Subchapter 2.5).

Thus there is no doubt that euthanasia staff members were indeed transferred to the Reinhardt camps. This fact is supposed to prove that these camps were extermination camps for Jews. These men are said to have built homicidal gas chambers there, similar in design to those allegedly used under the T4 program, and to have merely replaced the carbon monoxide cylinders by the exhaust gases from a Diesel engine.

From this point of view one cannot understand the fact that these men, whose specialty and training were to kill innocent people, were sent to the Russian front in the winter of 1942 in order to save the lives of wounded German soldiers. On 12 January 1942 the physician Dr. Fritz Mennecke wrote to his wife:[771]

> *"Since the day before yesterday a large delegation from our organisation, headed by Herr Brack, is on the battlefields of the East to help in saving our wounded in the ice and snow. They include doctors, clerks, nurses, and male nurses from Hadamar and Sonnenstein, a whole detachment of 20-30 persons. This is a top secret. Only those persons who could not be spared were excluded."*

Heinrich Gley, for example, was transferred from Sonnenstein to Minsk[772] in January of 1942 together with male and female nurses from other institutions. They were employed up to March and April 1942 "for the transportation of the wounded and of soldiers who were suffering from chillblains," after which they were all sent back to their original stations.[773] Karl Schluch, too, was sent to the eastern front in the

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Peter Lang / Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaft, Frankfurt am Main 2006. None of the letters sent by Eberl from Treblinka contains any mention of gassings of Jews.

769 Henry Friedlander, Sybil Milton, *Archives of the Holocaust,* Vol. 11, Berlin Document Center, part 2, Garland Publishing, New York/London 1992, Document 426 on p. 331.

770 *Ibid.*, Document 429 on p. 334.

771 G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 558), 1968, p. 135.

772 As part of "*Osteinsatz*" (Assignment East), the search for wounded German soldiers and their transfer to Minsk army hospital for treatment.

773 Interrogation of Henrich Gley on 8 May 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, Vol. IX, pp. 1281-1282.

winter of 1941 and stayed there until some time in February or March of 1942. He had to "help bring wounded soldiers back."[774] The same applies to Werner Karl Dubois, who stayed at this job until April of 1942.[775]

From the Holocaust perspective it cannot be explained why the euthanasia personnel were sent out to build gas chambers for *Aktion Reinhardt* but not at Auschwitz. After all, the so-called "*Sonderbehandlung 14f13*," i.e. the extension of the euthanasia program to the concentration camps, should have entailed such a move, all the more so as Reitlinger tells us that the Jewish detainees were included "merely for being Jews."[776] According to Danuta Czech's *Kalendarium*, Dr. Horst Schumann, the head of the Hadamar euthanasia institution, arrived at Auschwitz on 28 July 1941, leading a *Sonderkommission* which had the task of selecting "all invalids, cripples, and chronically ill" who were then sent to Sonnenstein to be gassed. This happened on Himmler's orders.[777]

Brack, however, declared that the order to transfer the euthanasia personnel to Lublin and to put it at Globocnik's disposition could have come "only from Himmler."[778] Yet if Himmler was indeed running all at once *Aktion Reinhardt*, *Sonderbehandlung 14f13*, and the alleged extermination program at Auschwitz, which he is said to have explained to Rudolf Höss in June of 1941,[779] then it is all the more inconceivable that the road leading to homicidal gas chambers at this camp should have been an entirely different one, without the euthanasia program being the least bit involved. The same reasoning applies to Chełmno.

Still, this point is not the only questionable one in the Holocaust thesis. Along the chain of events tying the euthanasia program to the alleged extermination of the Jews in the camps of *Aktion Reinhardt* exists a fundamental link: the plan to exterminate the Jews apt to work in the East. During the trial of the physicians in Nuremberg after the war this argument was set out in the following words:[780]

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774 Interrogation of Karl Schluch on 10 November 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, Vol. VIII, p. 1504.

775 Interrogation of Werner Karl Dubois on 16 September 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, Vol. VIII, p. 1382.

776 G. Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 558), 1968, p. 133.

777 Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, Rowohlt, Reinbek 1989, pp. 105f.

778 NO-426.

779 *Affidavit* of R. Höss on 5 April 1946, PS-3868.

780 Trials of War Criminals Before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals under Control Council

> *"In October 1941, Brack, the administrative head of the Euthanasia Program, forwarded plans whereby Jews who were unable to work should be exterminated by gas. He declared his readiness to send some of his assistants and especially his chemist, Kallmeyer, to the East, where the necessary gassing apparatus could be easily manufactured.*
>
> *Eichmann, whom Hitler had charged with the extermination of the Jews, was in agreement with these plans. Consequently, there were 'no objections to doing away with those Jews who are unable to work, by means of the Brack remedy.'*[781] *Kallmeyer, who was charged with the manufacture of the gassing apparatus and equipment, had been trained for this task in the Euthanasia Program. Previously he had been responsible for the proper operation of the gas chambers of the different euthanasia institutions."*

The foregoing is a summary of the draft of a letter, allegedly drawn up by *Amtsgerichtsrat* E. Wetzel, *Sonderdezernent für Rassenpolitik* (special secretary for racial policy) in the Ministry of the East, addressed to Hinrich Lohse, *Reichskommissar für das Ostland*. The letter dated 25 October 1941 deals with the "solution of the Jewish question." The policy of deportation to the East is clearly confirmed:

> *"According to Sturmbannführer Eichmann, camps for Jews are to be set up at Riga and Minsk, with Jews from the Altreich possibly being sent there as well. At the moment Jews from the Altreich are being evacuated to Litzmannstadt, but they may also be moved to other camps, later on to be employed for work in the East to the extent that they are physically apt."*

The novelty consisted in the plan to kill the unfit Jews in camps yet to be set up at Riga and at Minsk. The killing was to be carried out by means of "gassing equipment" (the "Brack remedy" mentioned above). However, "as Brack thinks that the manufacture of the equipment in the Reich is much more difficult than on site, Brack suggests to detach his staff, in particular his chemist Dr. Kallmeyer, to Riga to take care of the necessary arrangements."[782]

Law No. 10, "The Medical Case," Vol. I, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 1950, p. 804.

781 "keine Bedenken, wenn diejenigen Juden, die nicht arbeitsfähig sind, mit den Brackschen Hilfsmitteln beseitigt werden"

782 NO-365.

But what kind of "gassing equipment" are we dealing with? At the trial of the physicians, Brack described it as follows:[783]

> *"Then the patients were led to a gas chamber and were there killed by the doctors with carbon monoxide gas (CO).*
> *Q. Where was that carbon monoxide obtained, by what process?*
> *A. It was in a compressed gas container, like a steel oxygen container, such as is used for welding – a hollow steel container.*
> *Q. And these people were placed in this chamber in groups, I suppose, and then the monoxide was turned into the chambers?* […].
> *A. No special gas chamber was built. A room suitable in the hospital was used, a room of necessity attached to the reception ward and to the room where the insane persons were kept. This room was made into a gas chamber. It was sealed, given special doors and windows, and then a few meters of gas piping were laid, or some kind of piping with holes in it. Outside this room there was a container, a compressed gas container with the necessary apparatus, that is a pressure gauge, etc."*

Hence we are essentially dealing with carbon monoxide cylinders. But why would it have been easier to find them in Riga or Minsk rather than at home in the Reich? It would rather seem to be the other way around.

In this document, the date – 25 October 1941 – is crucial, because it has devastating consequences for the Holocaust theory. First of all, as we have seen above, the alleged *Führerbefehl*, which Himmler allegedly transmitted to Höss in June of 1941, concerned "*all* Jews whom we can seize… *without exception*," i.e. also those *fit for work*. We must therefore ask: Who ruled that those fit for work should be spared, and why and when was this done?

Secondly, the execution of the alleged extermination plan for the East, sketched out in Wetzel's letter, was not carried out. On this point Y. Arad says:[784]

> *"But the proposal of Dr. Wetzel and of Brack was not implemented in Ostland. The unemployed 'euthanasia' personnel were assigned to another and bigger task – the erection of camps with gassing facilities, where the annihilation of the Jews in the Nazi-occupied territories of Poland would be carried out."*

Schelvis, on the other hand, tells us that "it is certain that on 13 October 1941 Hitler ordered the Bełżec extermination camp to be built…," i.e.

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783 "The Medical Case," *op. cit.* (note 780), pp. 876, 881.
784 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 11.

just before the date of Wetzel's letter, and anyway the construction of this camp began "with certainty" on 1st November. Therefore, within the span of six days (i.e. between 25 October and 1st November, 1941) it was decided to abandon the idea of killing only the Jews *unfit for work* and to implement the general extermination of all Jews, including those *fit for work*, in the General Government – who took the decision, when, and why?

On the other hand, the western Jews quietly continued to be deported to Riga and Minsk (cf. Chapter 9) without those unfit for work being assassinated. The "Summary report for 16 October 1941 to 31 January 1942" of *Einsatzgruppe A* states that, as far as Riga and Minsk were concerned, by the final date of the report 20,000 Jews had been taken to Riga and 7,000 to Minsk and housed in reception camps. Some 70-80% were women, children, and old people, but still there were no mass executions; only "in individual cases Jews having a contagious disease were […] selected and executed."[785]

But the Holocaust thesis contains further complications: The chemist Helmut Kallmeyer mentioned by Wetzel in his letter was described at the trial of the physicians as "the technical expert on operation of the gas chambers in the euthanasia station."[786] Nevertheless, he took no part in the planning or the construction of the alleged gas chambers of *Aktion Reinhardt*, although all the prerequisites for such a participation apparently existed. On 6 September 1941 he was transferred to the euthanasia headquarters at Tiergartenstrasse in Berlin and remained there "unemployed" through January of 1942. In January or February of 1942 he was ordered to go to Lublin, where he presented himself to an office of the police or the SS, but was not given any specific assignment. After a week he was sent back to Berlin to do analytical work on drinking water.[787]

The task of planning and building the alleged gas chambers is claimed to have instead been entrusted to SS-*Scharführer* (staff sergeant) Lorenz Hackenholt for Bełżec, to him and SS-*Unterscharführer* (sergeant) Erwin Lambert for Treblinka, and to the same pair for the enlargement of the "gassing station" at Sobibór.[788] They are reported to

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785 "Gesamtbericht vom 16. Oktober 1941 bis 31. Januar 1942," RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 64. Cf. C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 229-231.

786 "The Medical Case," *op. cit.* (note 780), p. 813.

787 Interrogation of H. Kallmeyer at Kiel on 20 July 1961. ZStL 439 AR-Z 340/59 Ord. Euthanasie.

788 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 123; T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 19.

have been helped by a mysterious chemist named Blaurock or Blaubacke.[789]

And Brack's "gassing equipment"? How, when, why, and on whose orders was it replaced by an engine? Nobody seems to know…

Let us make a final remark on these alleged experts in gas chambers. In his annotated book on euthanasia Henry Friedländer dedicates only a couple of lines to Hackenholt:[790]

> *"In the fall of 1939, Dubois was recruited by T4, together with his friend Lorenz Hackenholt, who would later operate the diesel engine at the Bełżec gas chambers."*

However, his involvement in the alleged gas chambers at Bełżec is mentioned only in the "Gerstein report"! About Lambert, on the other hand, Friedländer has more to tell. He makes him "master mason and building trades foreman"[791] and asserts that "he served as T4 'expert for the construction of gas chambers,'"[792] and that therefore "Lambert's testimony that he only erected room dividers and installed doors is simply not believable."[792]

Within the Holocaust debate, though, it is Friedländer's assertion which is not believable.

Brack declared during his interrogation:[793]

> *"Q. How large were these gas chambers?*
>
> *A. They were of different sizes. It was simply an adjoining room. I can't remember whether they were 4 × 5 meters, or 5 × 6 meters. Simply normal sized rooms, but I can't tell you the exact size. It was too long ago. I can't remember.*
>
> *Q. Were they as large as this courtroom?*
>
> *A. No. They were just normal rooms.*
>
> *Q. Well, a man of your intelligence must have some idea about the size of these rooms. The assertion 'normal size' doesn't mean anything in particular.*
>
> *A. By that I mean the size of the normal room in a normal house. I didn't mean an assembly room or a cell either. I meant a room, but I can't tell you the exact size because I really don't know it. It might*

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789 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 116; A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 165.

790 Henry Friedländer, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: from Euthanasia to the Final Solution*. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill/London 1995, p. 241.

791 "Maurerpolier," *ibid.*, p. 214.

792 *Ibid.*, p. 215.

793 "The Medical Case," *op. cit.* (note 780), p. 882.

have been 4 × 5 meters, or 5 × 6 meters, or 3½ × 4½, but I really don't know. I didn't pay much attention to it."

We have already underlined above his statement to the effect that in the euthanasia institutions "no special gas chamber was built" and that the patients were "killed by the doctors with carbon monoxide gas," which means that the latter were operating the "gassing devices." In this context Lambert's job could have merely been that of a simple bricklayer, someone setting up partitions and putting in doors, as he had always maintained. It thus makes no sense to say that this bricklayer was an "expert for the construction of gas chambers."

We must also consider the fact that, if the order to build Bełżec was given on 13 October 1941 as Schelvis asserts, the only extermination system available at the time were the "gassing devices." Wetzel's letter (cf. above) says in this regard:[794]

"Head of department Brack indicates that the process in question is not without risk and that special protective measures are required."

For that very reason Kallmeyer's trip to Riga had been requested. How can it be, then, that the construction of the alleged gas chambers at Bełżec was entrusted to two simpletons, Hackenholt and Lambert?

Any transformation or adaptation of those "gassing devices" supposedly used in the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps should instead have been the task of the two alleged experts in homicidal gas chambers: Kallmeyer and Widmann.

But Kallmeyer has declared that he had never had anything to do with gas chambers while working on the T4 project, never to have travelled to Riga nor to any other alleged extermination camp,[795] and no one has ever disputed this. Not even Albert Widmann who headed the section V D 2 (Chemistry and Biology) at *Kriminaltechnisches Institut* (KTI, institute for forensic techniques) within the RSHA played a role in this project, although he said that he had discussed with Brack "the technical details of the implementation" of the gassing of mental patients with carbon monoxide.[796] But then, who was in charge? Two nincompoops promoted by mainstream Holocaust historiography to the rank of "experts" just because there was nobody else around?

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794 NO-365.

795 Interrogation of H. Kallmeyer at Kiel on 20 July 1961, cit. pp. 97-99.

796 Interrogation of A. Widmann at Düsseldorf on 11 January 1960. ZStL 202 AR-Z 152/59, Vol. 1, p. 51.

Actually, as we have already mentioned, there is no *documentary* proof that the euthanasia institutions were equipped with homicidal gas chambers.[797] Therefore there is no basis for the official thesis that the alleged gas chambers of the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps were built by T4 staff along the lines of those of the euthanasia institutions.

What is even less valid is the alleged proof of the secrecy surrounding all this. In this respect M. Novitch wrote:[798]

> *"Euthanasia was treated as a state secret, and all its participants were sworn to silence. Operation Reinhard was also a state secret; he who had not taken a vow of silence in Berlin had to do so in Trawniki. They signed the following proclamation: 'Any member belonging to the team of the death camps swears that he has been instructed by Sturmbannführer Hoefle, commander of the head office of Operation Reinhard, not to reveal any information, oral or written, on the resettlement of Jews.' It was stressed that anyone divulging a secret would be severely punished; it was also forbidden to take photographs of the camp."*

Leaving aside the straightforward lie regarding the "death camps,"[799] the obligation to secrecy concerned everybody, including the firms working in the concentration camps. These companies had to sign a "*Verpflichtungserklärung zur Geheimhaltung*" (declaration of commitment to secrecy) which covered leakage of information and the taking of photographs and threatened any such acts with the punishments for high treason.[800]

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797 This was asserted only by witnesses after the war. One of the most important of these witnesses, Viktor Hermann Brack, in his sworn statement of 14 October 1946 (NO-426), cited by Y. Arad in the passage quoted above, declared that in 1941 it was an "open secret" that the German authorities wanted to exterminate all Jews. Holding this to be "unwürdig" (below their dignity), he and his collaborators looked for "a different solution of the Jewish problem" and found one: the deportation of the Jews to the island of Madagascar, which they had thought out and proposed as an alternative to the extermination project already on the books! This will give the reader an idea concerning the trustworthiness of such testimonies.

798 M. Novitch, *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 24.

799 The document cited by M. Novitch states: "Minutes of the engagement of […] as a person specifically entrusted with the execution of work in connection with the implementation of Jewish resettlement within "Einsatz Reinhard" by the Chief of SS and Police in the Lublin district. […] declares: I have been thoroughly instructed and advised by SS-Hauptsturmführer Höfle in his quality as head of the Division "Einsatz Reinhard" under the Chief of SS and Police in the Lublin district: […]" Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 101), p. 300.

800 WAPL, ZBL, 7, p. 5.

On the other hand, the Holocaust thesis discussed above is neither the only one nor even the one most compatible with the circumstances. As it is certain that the National-Socialist policy in respect of the Jews did not aim at their extermination but at their deportation to the East, as there is no documentary evidence which would indicate that this deportation policy was ever reversed or interrupted in a manner which might correspond to the elusive *Führerbefehl*, the only reasonable conclusion which mainstream historiography could draw from the transfer of a portion of the T4 staff to the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps would be the extension of the euthanasia program to the Jews who were to be moved to the East.[801]

In such a case, however, the deportees in the camps would not all have been assassinated (except for a handful selected for work), but only a small fraction of them. One could thus no longer speak of pure extermination camps. Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka would thus have had a double function: a principal function as a transit camp for the resettlement to the East, and a secondary function as a euthanasia center for the mentally ill or the incurably sick.

This conclusion would also explain the double chain of command applying to those camps:

– Führer chancellery → Wirth: for euthanasia
– Himmler → Globocnik: for the deportation.

It would also be in agreement with the (low) quantitative material findings at Bełżec and Sobibór (mass graves and ash) which cannot be integrated in any way into the thesis of extermination.

The official thesis discussed above contains, moreover, a fundamental incongruity. The reasoning of the verdict for the Sobibór trial states:[802]

> *"This command had the task of helping the sick and the disabled as well as the children which were not accompanying the women on the*

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[801] According to mainstream Holocaust historiography, the Poles were subjected to euthanasia from autumn of 1939 *onwards*, but on a very limited scale (a few thousand persons). Stanisław Batavia, "Zagłada chorych psychicznie," in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, III, Poznań 1947, pp. 91-106; Willi Dressen, *op. cit.* (note 740), pp. 62-65. However, the case of the 25,000-30,000 Poles suffering from incurable tuberculosis in the Warthegau raises doubts on this point. On 1st May 1942 (NO-246) Gauleiter Greiser proposed to Himmler to kill them, but on 18 November this problem was still being discussed (NO-249), and in the end these patients were not killed. ("The Medical Case," *op. cit.* (note 780), pp. 759-794, "Project To Kill Tubercular Polish Nationals"), although it would have been easy to send them to Chełmno.

[802] A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 168.

> *normal path to extermination to climb into vehicles. German guards, in an effort to make them or keep them unsuspicious as to the killing plan, explained to these arrivals that they would be taken to the camp 'sickbay.' They were taken to the stretch of woods east of Camp III and were then shot and interred by members of the German and Ukrainian camp personnel near a hollow not far from the camp road."*

This would mean that the people who would have corresponded best to the category of euthanasia victims were not led to the gas chambers in the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps but taken to a fake "sickbay" or rather to the edge of a pit in a wooded area of the camp and shot. There is no sensible motive for such a procedure. From all traditional points of view, these people would have constituted a group of victims whose fate would not even have had to be discussed in any way. The only open question could have possibly been whether they should be given a gas chamber of their own, all the more so as Himmler, who is claimed to have been disgusted by the shooting of the Jews, is said to have ordered Artur Nebe, the head of *Einsatzgruppe C*, in August of 1941 to devise a more humane system of killing. Eventually, this effort is said to have resulted in the invention of the "gas wagons,"[803] alleged gas chambers like those at Sobibór but mobile rather than stationary.

In conclusion we can say that, even if Brack's "gassing devices" were perfectly documented, the detachment of the staff of the euthanasia program to the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps would not necessarily demonstrate that these camps were sites of mass exterminations.

8.5. Himmler's Cremation Order

Mainstream Holocaust historiography postulates another basic order which is, however, no less elusive than the *Führerbefehl*: Himmler's order to disinter and cremate the corpses in the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps. As we have seen in Subchapter 2.5., it is certain that Himmler paid a brief visit to Sobibór on 19 July 1942. He arrived there after a visit to Auschwitz (17 and 18 July), about which Franciszek Piper asserts:[804]

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[803] M. Beer, "Die Entwicklung der Gaswagen beim Mord an den Juden," in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 35(3), 1987, p. 407.

[804] F. Piper, "Gas Chambers and Crematoria," in: Yisrael Gutman, Michael Berenbaum (eds.), *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*. Indiana University Press, Blooming-

> *"It cannot be ruled out that his observations resulted in the decision to cremate the bodies instead of burying them. In fact, shortly after Himmler's visit, Standartenführer Paul Blobel of Eichmann's office arrived at Auschwitz with orders to exhume all the buried bodies, burn them, and scatter the ashes to prevent the possible reconstruction of the number of victims."*

At Auschwitz this activity is said to have begun on 21 September 1942,[805] at Sobibór in October 1942, at Bełżec in December 1942, and at Treblinka in March of 1943.[806]

These dates do not prove any general cremation order by Himmler, though – who was, after all, the head of *Aktion Reinhardt*. On the contrary: they disprove such an order, since it is incomprehensible why a specific cremation order would have been issued for each camp separately. It follows that in these camps the cremations were not carried out to hide "the traces of the crime," but probably for specific local reasons.

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ton/Indianapolis 1994, p. 163.

805 D. Czech, *op. cit.* (note 777), p. 305.

806 On this point Y. Arad has introduced further contradictions by asserting that Himmler issued the cremation order at Treblinka on the occasion of his visit in February-March 1943, which, however, has been shown never to have taken place, cf. C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 141-143.

9. Sobibór: Propaganda and Reality

9.1. Fake "Baths" or Real Baths? Sobibór as a Transit Camp

As we have seen in Chapter 4, the witnesses have described the alleged gas chambers of Sobibór as fake baths, but faked in such a way that they could have been real: "At first glance, everything looks as a bath should look – faucets for hot and cold water, basins to wash in" (Pechersky, see p. 70); "The bath was arranged as if it were really a place to wash (faucets for the shower, a pleasant environment)" (Feldhendler, see p. 71) and "everyone would be given a piece of soap." (Razgonayev, see note 233).

At the Eichmann trial in Jerualem there was the following exchange of arguments between the presiding judge and the witness Dov Freiberg during the 64th session (5 June 1961):[807]

> *"Presiding Judge: One moment. When did you become aware, when did it become clear to you for the first time, that these were not shower rooms, but gas chambers?*
> *Witness Freiberg: In the first days. There were some doubts, but it was known."* (Emph. added)

But on this point, Y. Arad writes:[808]

> *"The unawareness of what happened to the Jews who were taken to Camp III weighed heavily on the daily life of those selected to work. Days and even weeks passed until the Jewish prisoners who worked in Camp I and Camp II found out that those who had been taken there were gassed. In Sobibór, unlike Bełżec, the extermination area with gas chambers was more isolated from the other parts of the camp, and nothing could be seen."*

He then quotes another statement by Freiberg – in blatant disagreement to the one above – according to which "for two weeks he and those with

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807 State of Israel, *op. cit.* (note 123), Vol. III, p. 1176; the witness is the same person as Ber Moiseyevich Freiberg mentioned earlier.
808 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 79.

him hoped that the people had not been murdered, but had been sent to Ukraine. This in spite of the fact that they worked only a few hundred meters away from the gas chambers."[808] (Emph. added)

What matters here is not so much the contradictions of the witness Freiberg, but the contradiction with the official thesis of mass exterminations – as we can read in the article from the *Polish Fortnightly Review* of 1st July 1942 mentioned earlier (p. 65) that "the fetor of the decomposing bodies in Sobibór is said to be so great that the people of the district, and even cattle, avoid the place."

As the alleged extermination activity at Sobibór began for Arad "toward the end of April 1942" and as Freiberg arrived at the camp on 15 May,[809] the stench of the decomposing corpses should have been even more unbearable in Camps I and II and should have immediately revealed the "truth," i.e. the alleged extermination on the spot.

The detainees, however, did not know anything about this "truth" (cf. Chapter 4): Ada Lichtman tells us about the pep talk *Oberscharführer* Hermann Michel would give, in which he promised to the victims that, once they had taken their bath, they "would be going to the Ukraine to live and work."[810] On this point J. Schelvis writes:[811]

> *"Michel was so full of conviction when he delivered his speech, even as he was pulling the wool over the victims' eyes, that the Arbeitshäftlinge* [inmate workers] *also dubbed him 'the preacher.' Sometimes he would make out that the camp was a transit camp, that the journey to Ukraine was only a matter of time, and that the Jews would even be granted autonomy there. Other times he would tell them they would all be going to Riga. On a number of occasions his speech so roused the audience's enthusiasm – even among the Polish Jews – that they burst out in spontaneous clapping and cheering, completely oblivious of the fact that they would be dead within half an hour"*

A few pages on he asserts that even "the Arbeitshäftlinge of Lager 1 were not exactly sure of what went on in Lager 3," yet on the other hand "the stench of decomposing bodies, and later still the tall flames of the fires […] pointed to the fact that people were being murdered there"[812]

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809 *Ibid.*, p. 75.
810 *Ibid.*, p. 76.
811 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 70f.
812 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

But how then could Michel's talk be so convincing as to get the alleged victims to applaud?

The same contradiction also appears in Thomas Blatt's tale:[813]

> *"Deception and camouflage permeated the system, from the physical plan of the camp to the precise procedures followed upon the arrival of the trains.* […] *The first view of Sobibór was innocuous: the paved road from the main gate was lined by nicely painted buildings adorned with well-kept lawns and flowers.* […] *The condition of the transports often revealed the method by which Jews were deceived. Thus, Jews from western European countries (and especially from Holland) sometimes arrived in normal passenger trains with proper medical personnel and with food and condensed milk for the children. Their suspicion was not aroused when they arrived at Sobibór. The personnel continued to treat them carefully up to the moment of their deaths."*

Yet then again it could allegedly not be prevented that the deportees became aware right away of the alleged "truth":[814]

> *"After all, it was not difficult for the prisoners in other compounds to guess what was happening in Lager III. In summer, the high temperatures caused the gasses and body fluids from decomposing bodies to seep from the mass graves. The stench was unbearable, and it spread for many miles.* […] *Later, when the crematorium was built, fire and smoke were clearly visible for many miles, and the camp was often wreathed in foul-smelling smoke."*

On the other had Freiberg himself said about the camp:[815]

> *"There was a sign at the entrance to the camp – actually I did not glance at it then, but subsequently, when I went out to work outside the camp, I saw it – SS Sonderkommando Umsiedlungslager – Camp for Resettlement."*

Franz Stangl spoke of an *Umsiedlungslager* as well.[816]

It is a fact that the first descriptions of the alleged extermination facilities given by the witnesses resemble more closely actual sanitary installations (showers and disinfestation) than homicidal gas chambers.

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813 T. Blatt, *op. cit.* (note 17), pp. 22, 27.
814 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
815 State of Israel, *op. cit.* (note 123), Vol. III, p. 1167.
816 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 45, note 108.

This goes, above all, for the barrack at Bełżec with its "Öfen" (ovens) and "Wasserleitungsrohre" (water pipes) described by S. Kozak, as we have shown in the preceding chapter.

In the same way the report of 15 November 1942 about an installation wherein people were killed by steam can be brought down to this, once its propagandistic embroideries are removed:[817]

> *"It consists of only three chambers and a steam room. Along the northern wall of this house runs a corridor from which there are doors to the chambers. The outer wall of the chambers have valves* [sic…] *The steam room* […] *is adjacent to the building. Inside the steam room there is a large vat which produces the steam. The hot steam comes into the chambers through pipes installed there, each having a prescribed number of vents. While the machinery of death is in action, the doors and valves are hermetically closed."*

Such a description agrees perfectly with a disinfestation plant using steam. On precisely this basis Jean-Claude Pressac suggested that, "instead of starting with the assumption of a facility for killing people, the hypothesis will have to be accepted that from the end of 1941 until mid-1942 three delousing facilities were established in Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka," the aim of which was prophylactic hygiene and the fight against typhoid fever,[818] something which would have made much sense for a *Durchgangslager* (transit camp) within the *Generalplan Ost*.

As far as Sobibór is concerned, Andrzej Kola identified a furnace located in a small building with a basement 2.5 meters deep within the confines of Camp III. Near it he also discovered a larger coal storage of some 300 to 400 kilograms (see p. 162).

This furnace, which reminds us of those at Bełżec[819] and makes one think – in connection with real baths – of a hot air disinfestations furnace set up in the basement like those built by Topf in the Auschwitz *Zentralsauna* or of the furnace of a hot-water boiler. At Chełmno a disinfestation oven with chimney was supplied to the Sonderkommando as well.[820]

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817 A translation of this document is found in C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 52-57.

818 J.-C. Pressac, "Enquête sur les camps de la mort," in: *Historama-Histoire*, special edition No. 34, 1995, p. 121.

819 We remind the reader that, according to J. Schelvis, the first alleged gassing installation at Sobibór was built under the command of Richard Thomalla on the basis of the installation at Bełżec.

820 T-1298.

In the preceding chapter we have noted that the Sobibór Camp could not have lacked a delousing facility with baths, if only to protect the health of the German and Ukrainian personnel. Such a sanitary installation, however, is not found on any map drawn by former detainees or SS men. This gives rise to the supposition that the alleged gassing facility was in reality such a hygienic installation. This hypothesis is also well-founded, because the description of the "gassing building" fits well for an installation of that kind. According to witness testimonies, a hallway ran through the middle of the building, with three chambers each to the left and right of it, all with doors to the outside. A delousing facility always had two strictly separated sides, an "unclean" and a "clean" one; the former was used before the delousing procedure, the latter afterwards. The engine room, which according to witnesses was attached to the gassing building, might have contained the generator providing the facility with electricity.[821] This delousing facility was probably located in the hut labeled *Object E* by Kola, in which toilet articles were found (cf. Subsection 5.4.2.5., p. 165).

Jan Piwonski relates that an SS man addressed the crowd at the camp stating that "now you have arrived at Sobibór, this is a transit station; so now, you are going to pass through a series of high pressure sanitary systems, you will then be directed to areas where you will set yourselves up permanently and work,"[822] which reminds us of an installation for the production of steam used for disinfection and/or disinfestation.

In any case, it is a known fact that real showers and disinfestation facilities were claimed by Holocaust propaganda immediately after the war to have been merely fictitious installations designed to fool the victims. It is hard to believe that Richard David Breitman would write as late as 1991 about the real shower room of Majdanek:[823]

> *"At Majdanek, Globocnik's realm, a large quantity of installations have been saved from destruction. The building which housed the*

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821 The "Project of a watering, draining and pressurizing device in the building of the gas facility" ("*Projekt der Be-/Entwässerungs- u. Hydrophoranlage in dem Gebäude der Gasanlage*") in Lublin shows a service room with 2 rotary pumps, 1 compressor, 1 manual piston pump, 1 circulation pump (with a total of four engines) as well as 2 warm-water heaters and a pipe connection "to the well." Z. Lukaszkiewicz, "Obóz koncentracyjny i zaglady segno diacritico Majdanek," in: *Biuletyn Glównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, Wydawnictwo Glównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce, Vol. IV, 1948, Document on unnumbered page.

822 Emph. added. J. Piwonski, *op. cit.* (note 203).

823 R.D. Breitman, *Himmler. Il burocrate dello sterminio*, Mondadori, Milano 1991, p. 318.

gas chambers still exists – with its outside inscription Entrance to baths, and one can see the showers and pipes which were not put in to supply water but to fool the victims."

If a famous historian could have gone as far as that, what can we expect from ordinary deportees?

A similar account of the function of Sobibór was given by Judith Eliazer in her testimony at Rotterdam on 5 February 1946, in which she said:[824]

"On 10 March 1943 we went directly from Westerbork to Sobibór, where we arrived on 13 or 15 March. There we were selected. Thirty girls and 44 men were taken out. The remainder were gassed and burned. (We have seen that the others were moved away in tilting trolleys. They may have been dumped into pits.) Sobibór was not a camp. It was a transit camp." (Emph. added)

The witness was subsequently transferred to Lublin (Majdanek), Mileow, Trawniki, Lublin, Auschwitz, Birkenau, Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, Lippstadt bei Hannover, Kaunitz, before finally returning to Holland. At Sobibór she saw neither gas chambers nor cremations, hence only the function of a transit camp agrees with her actual experience.

We know that the extremely few German documents to have survived on the subject of Sobibór designate it precisely as a transit camp. On 5 July 1943 Himmler sent the following letter to SS-WVHA and seven other SS offices:[825]

"1. The Sobibór transit camp in the Lublin district is to be converted into a concentration camp. In the concentration camp a workshop for the defusing of enemy munitions is to be set up.

2. All Higher SS and Police Chiefs are requested to deliver there any enemy munitions to the extent that they are not needed for seized enemy ordnance.

3. Any metals, but most of all the explosive powder, are to be carefully reclaimed.

4. Simultaneously, a production site for our own multiple launchers and/or for other munitions is to be built."

On 15 July Oswald Pohl, head of SS-WVHA, replied with the following letter having the subject heading "Transit Camp Sobibór:"[826]

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824 ROD, 200AR-Z251/59 0V, p. 904.
825 Der Reichsführer SS. Feld-Kommandostelle, den 5. Juli 1943. NO-482.
826 SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt, Berlin, 15. Juli 1943. NO-482.

> *"Reichsführer!*
> *According to your above instructions, the Sobibór transit camp in the Lublin district is to be converted into a concentration camp.*
> *I have discussed this with SS-Gruppenführer Globocnik. Both of us propose to abandon this conversion, as the purpose intended, viz. to set up at Sobibór an installation for the defusing of enemy munitions, can be realized without such a conversion.*
> *All other points of the above instructions can stay unchanged. I request your approval which is only of importance for Gruppenführer Globoccnik* [sic] *and myself."*

Himmler's personal assistant, Rudolf Brandt, replied on 24 July:[827]

> *"The Reichsführer SS agrees to the proposal* [made] *by you and SS-Gruppenführer Globocnik concerning the maintenance of the Sobibór transit camp in the Lublin district in its present state, as the desired objective can be attained in this manner."*

The importance of this document can be judged by the fact that Christopher R. Browning suppresses it completely, even where he tries to refute the revisionist thesis of a transit camp Sobibór in a text which claims to furnish "Documentary Evidence concerning the Camps of Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka." He states:[828]

> *"If the documents concerning the Einsatzgruppen and the 'special trucks' speak openly about the methods of killing, i.e. shooting and gassing, such is not the case with the documents concerning the camps located in the three tiny villages of Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka, to which most Polish Jews were deported. Nonetheless, the quite scant surviving documentation makes clear that these were neither labor camps nor transit camps, and Jews were sent there simply to be killed.* […]
> *The scant surviving documentary evidence concerning the purpose of Sobibór indicates that the Germans considered it in the same category as Treblinka and Bełżec, but that it was inaccessible due to rail-line repairs during the peak months of the killing campaign of July-October 1942."*

In the absence of *any* documentary proof regarding Treblinka and Bełżec Browning actually declares that these camps therefore were not transit camps but extermination camps and then, by analogy, goes on to

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827 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 174.
828 C.R. Browning, *op. cit.* (note 69); www.hdot.org/browning/#browning_5_C.

say that Sobibór as well was an extermination camp, disregarding the three documents which speak of it explicitly as a transit camp!

Other "holocaust" historians use the subterfuge of camouflage measures instead. Raul Hilberg for example writes:[829]

> *"A standard concealment measure was verbal camouflage. The most important and possibly most misleading term used for the killing centers collectively was the 'East.' This phrase was employed again and again during the deportations. For camps, there were a variety of headings* […]. *Sobibór was appropriately called a* Durchgangslager *(transit camp). Since it was located near the Bug, on the border of the occupied eastern territories, the designation fitted the myth of the 'eastern migration.' When Himmler proposed one day that the camp be designated a Konzentrationslager, Pohl opposed the change."*

In fact, Himmler did not propose "to *designate* this camp a concentration camp" but ordered the camp to be "*converted* into a concentration camp" – the difference is not irrelevant. Furthermore, it is wrong to say that "Pohl *rejected* this *change of name*," because Pohl replied merely that setting up "at Sobibór an installation for the defusing of enemy munitions, can be realized without such a conversion."

Hence, it was not a question of *designation* or of *name*, but one of organization, as Hilberg himself explained in a different context:[830]

> *"A special enterprise was ordered by Himmler for Sobibór. This camp was set aside for the disassembly of captured ammunition in order to salvage the metals and explosives. The enterprise was not going to be incorporated into the WVHA industry network, inasmuch as it was designated to work for the SS-Führungshauptamt exclusively."* (Emph. added)

These manipulations show Hilberg's obvious embarrassment. How can anyone believe that Himmler and Pohl would have used an alleged "coded language" even in top secret documents? The most reasonable explanation, therefore, continues to be that the "myth of Ostwanderung" was, in fact, not a "myth" at all.

The very document used by Hilberg when he speaks of "eastern migration" (*Ostwanderung*) bears this out irrefutably.

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829 R. Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 31), p. 1028.

830 *Ibid.*, p. 986; but, as we have explained in the preceding chapter, the camp was built as part of the chain of command linking *Amtsgruppe C-Bauwesen* of WVHA and the *Bauleitung* at Zamość.

9.2. The *Ostwanderung*

On 15 September 1942 a meeting took place between Reichsminister Albert Speer and SS-*Obergruppenführer* Oswald Pohl, head of SS-WVHA. The following day Pohl wrote a detailed report for Himmler. The discussion had involved four main topics, the first of which was "Enlargement of barrack camp Auschwitz as a consequence of eastern migration." On this point, Pohl wrote:[831]

> *"In this manner Reichsminister Prof. Speer wants to guarantee the deployment at short notice of approximately 50,000 Jews fit for work in existing enclosed factories which have existing possibilities for lodging. We will skim off the labor force necessary for this purpose mainly in Auschwitz from the migration to the east, so that our existing production facilities are not disturbed in their output and their structure. The able-bodied Jews destined for migration to the east will therefore have to interrupt their journey and perform armament work."*

The *Ostwanderung* (eastern migration) was the deportation of Jews to the East. In this context the last sentence signifies that the physically unfit Jews within *Ostwanderung* would not interrupt their journey – and would thus not stop at Auschwitz – but continue their "journey" to the East.[832]

This move corresponded to the initial purpose of the deportations of western Jews to Auschwitz, which was essentially to provide slave labor; the problem of the unfit Jews was, therefore, still marginal. The first documented Jewish transports to arrive at Auschwitz came from Slovakia and France.

Slovakia carried out the deportation of the country's Jews in response to a proposal by the Reich. On 16 February 1942 Martin Luther, head of the *Germany Department* of the ministry of Foreign Affairs, sent a telex to the German embassy at Bratislava (Pressburg), in which he stated that the Reich government, "as part of the measures for the final solution of the Jewish question in Europe," stood ready to transfer

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831 Pohl Report to Himmler of 16 September 1942 on the subject: a) Armament work. b) Bomb damage. BAK, NS 19/14, pp. 131-133.

832 For a more detailed treatment of this question cf. Carlo Mattogno, *Special Treatment in Auschwitz. Origin and Meaning of a Term*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, pp. 52-56.

"20,000 young and healthy Jews" to the East where there was a "demand for work assignment."[833]

Referring to this telex, Luther wrote in his report to the Foreign minister dated August 1942:[834]

> *"The number of the Jews deported to the east in this manner was not sufficient to cover the need for labor. For this reason, the Reich Security Main Office, at the instruction of the Reichsführer SS, approached the Foreign Office to ask the Slovakian government to make available 20,000 young, sturdy Slovakian Jews from Slovakia for deportation to the east. The legation in Bratislava reported to D III 1002 that the Slovakian government took up the proposal with zeal, the preliminary tasks could be initiated."*

The initial concept for the Jewish transports was drawn up on 13 March 1942 and specified the dispatch of 10 trains to Auschwitz and another 10 to Lublin between 25 March and 21 April 1942. Each transport was to be made up of 1,000 persons.[835]

On 24 March SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Arthur Liebehenschel, head of *Amt D I* (*Zentralamt*) of SS-WVHA, sent a telex to the commander of the PoW camp at Lublin, SS-*Standartenführer* Koch, on the subject "Jews from Slovakia" in which he said:[836]

> *"As already stated, the 10,000 (ten thousand) Jews from Slovakia destined for the camp there* [Lublin] *will be moved in with special trains as of 27 March 27 1942. Every special train carries 1,000 (one thousand) inmates. All trains will be routed via the border train station of Zwardon (Upper Silesia), where they will each arrive at 6:09 a.m. and, over a two-hour break, will be channeled on to their destination by Security Police escorts and under supervision by the Kattowitz division of the State Police."*

On 27 March a certain Woltersdorf, an employee of state police office Kattowitz, addressed to *Amtsgruppe D* of SS-WVHA and two other offices a report concerning the first transport of Jews to Lublin headed "labor deployment of 20000 Jews from Slovakia," in which he wrote:[837]

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833 T-1078.

834 NG-2586-J, pp. 5f.

835 *Ibid.*, pp. 38f.

836 *Fernschreiben* from Liebehenschel No. 903 dated 24 March 1942 to the commander of K.G.L. Lublin. Photocopy of the document in: Zofia Leszczyńska, "Transporty więźnów do obózu na Majdanku," in: *Zeszyty Majdanka*, IV, Lublin 1969, p. 182.

837 Photocopy of the document in: Stanisław Duszak (ed.), *Majdanek*, Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, Lublin 1985, photograph No. 38.

"Arrival on 27 March 1942 at 6:52 of the 2nd train in Zwardon with 1,000 Jews from Slovakia fit for labor. A Jewish doctor was with the transport, so that the total number is 1,001 men."

On 29 April the German embassy at Bratislava sent a *note verbale* to the Slovak government, in which we can read:[838]

"The Jews from the territory of Slovakia who have been transported and are still to be transported into the territory of the Reich will be arriving, after preparation and retraining, for labor deployment in the General Government and in the occupied eastern territories. The accommodation, boarding, clothing, and retraining of the Jews, including their relatives, will cause expenses, which for the time being cannot be covered out of the initially only small labor output of the Jews, since the retraining have [sic] *an effect only after some time and since only a portion of the Jews deported and still to be deported is fit for labor."*

To cover these expenses, the Reich asked the Slovak government for the reimbursement of 500 Reichsmark per person.

On 11 May SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Wisliceny, Eichmann's representative in Slovakia, wrote the following letter to the Slovak ministry of the Interior:[839]

"As the Berlin Reich Security Main Office informed me by telegram on 9 May 1942, the possibility exists of accelerating the deportation of the Jews from Slovakia, in that still additional transports can be sent to Auschwitz. However, these transports are permitted to contain only Jews and Jewesses fit for labor, no children. It would then be possible to increase the transport rate by 5 trains per month. For the practical execution I venture to make the following proposal: during evacuation from the cities, Jews who can be pronounced fit to work will be selected out and passed into the two camps Sillein and Poprad."

The proposal was not accepted, because the 19 transports of Jews that left Slovakia in May were all sent to the Lublin district with destinations Lubartów, Luków, Międzyrzecz Podlaski, Chełm, Dęblin, Puławy, Nałęczów, Rejowiec, and Izbica.

In its edition of 25 April 1942 the newspaper *Lemberger Zeitung* wrote in this respect:[840]

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838 *Riešenie židovskiej otázky na Slovensku (1939-1945).* Dokumenty, 2. Časť, Edícia Judaica Slovaca, Bratislava 1994, p. 105.

839 *Ibid.*, pp. 108f.

> *"First, single and physically fit Jews and Jewesses are deported. The immediate consequence of this measure was that a large part of the able-bodied Jews suddenly became 'unfit for work,' for a variety of reasons, and inundated the hospitals, so that soon enough the really sick Aryans could not be treated."*

The transports from France also enter into this context. On 10 March 1942 Theodor Dannecker, SS-*Hauptsturmführer* and co-ordinator of Jewish affairs in France, reporting on a meeting held in the offices of department IV B 4 of RSHA, stated that negotiations could now be initiated with the French authorities "concerning the removal of some 5,000 Jews to the East." The document specifies that "initially, it is only a matter concerning male Jews fit for labor, not over 55 years of age."[841]

On 15 June 1942 Dannecker wrote a note concerning the future deportation of Jews from France in which he stated that military reasons stood in the way of a deportation of Jews from the Reich into the eastern operational zone, because the Führer had ordered to move to the Auschwitz Camp "for the purpose of productive labor" a large number of Jews from southeastern Europe (Romania) or the occupied territories in the West. For this the deportees of both sexes had to be between 16 and 40 years old; together with them it was possible to deport 10% of Jews unfit for work.[842] However, in a secret memo dated 26 June 1942 which dealt with the Jewish deportation Dannecker stressed that this concerned only physically fit Jews of both sexes aged between 16 and 45.[843]

The mass deportation of Jews residing in France, but also of the Dutch and Belgian Jews, was decided on a week later. On 22 June 1942 Eichmann penned a letter addressed to embassy councillor Fritz Rademacher of the Foreign Ministry on the subject of "Work assignment for Jews from France, Belgium, and the Low countries," specifying:[844]

> *"For the time being it is planned to initially deport to the Auschwitz camp approximately 40,000 Jews from the occupied French regions, 40,000 Jews from the Netherlands, and 10,000 Jews from Belgium in special trains running daily with 1,000 persons each from mid-July*

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840 "Die slowakischen Juden arbeiten," in: *Lemberger Zeitung*, 25 April 1942.
841 RF-1216.
842 RF-1217.
843 RF-1221.
844 NG-183.

> *or the beginning of August of this year,"* but the deportees were to be only *"Jews fit for work."*

The problem of the deportation of children and physically unfit adults was discussed in July and August. In a memo dated 21 July 1942, referring to a telephone conversation of the previous day, Dannecker wrote:[845]

> *"The question of the deportation of children was discussed with SS-Sturmbannführer Eichmann. He decided that, as soon as transportation into the General Government is again possible, transports of children can get moving. SS-Obersturmführer Nowak promised to make about 6 transports possible to the General Government at the end of August/beginning of September, which can contain Jews of every kind (also Jews unfit for work and old Jews)."*

We must remember that, according to the official German position at that time, Auschwitz was not located in the General Government but was part of the Reich. On the other hand, during these weeks deportations to Auschwitz were continuing without interruption: in fact, 14 transports of Jews reached this camp between 17 and 31 July, with 4 coming from Holland, 2 from Slovakia, 7 from France, and one of unknown origin.[846] Hence, the 6 transports mentioned above, which should have contained children and physically unfit adults, did not have Auschwitz as their destination.

Later on the RSHA decided on a different course. On 13 August 1942, SS-*Sturmbannführer* Rolf Günther sent a cable to the SS authorities in Paris concerning "Deportation of Jews to Auschwitz. Here: removal of Jewish children," in which he advised that the Jewish children held in the camps at Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande could be deported to Auschwitz a few at a time as part of the scheduled transports, but that there were to be no transports involving only children.[847] This had been decreed by the RSHA, obviously for reasons of propaganda. It was therefore decided to mix the Jewish children from the camps at Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande with adults in such a way that "300 to 500 Jewish children will be assigned to 700, but at least 500, adult Jews."[848]

A first transport comprising a certain percentage of children (about 10% of the total)[849] arrived at Auschwitz on 14 August 1942, even

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845 RF-1233.
846 D. Czech, *op. cit.* (note 777), pp. 250-262.
847 CDJC, XXVb-126.
848 RF-1234.
849 S. Klarsfeld, *op. cit.* (note 64), table showing the transports as a function of the age of the

though the plan agreed upon on 28 July 1942 had specified 19 August for the departure of the first train with Jewish children on board (these children had been arrested in Paris on 16 and 17 July), with another three for 21, 24, and 26 August.[850]

These documents demonstrate clearly the initial intention of the SS to move children and old people to the General Government, at first directly to and later via Auschwitz as a transit camp.

Even mainstream Holocaust historians Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt admit that Auschwitz "was to serve as a transit point between Germany, Bohemia, and the projected reservation in the East" within the framework of a "policy to deport the German Jews to Russia."[851]

9.3. Jewish Transports into the Lublin District in 1942

In early 1942 the Germans began to concentrate the Jews in the Lublin district and later to move them further east in order to make room for the Jews from the *Altreich*, Austria, Slovakia, and the Protectorate. These resettlements were entrusted to an office attached to the administration of the General Government called Main Department Internal Administration, Department of Population Matters and Welfare,[852] which received reports from *Unterabteilungsleiter* SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Richard Türk and from the local agencies.

On 17 March 1942 Fritz Reuter, an employee in the department of population matters and welfare within the office of the general governor for the Lublin district, wrote a memo on the subject of a discussion, which he had had with *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Hermann Höfle the previous day:[853]

> *"I had arranged a meeting with Hstuf. Höfle for Monday, 16 March 1942, at 17:30 hours. During the discussion Hstuf. Höfle declared:*

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deportees.

850 S. Klarsfeld, *Vichy-Auschwitz. Le rôle de Vichy dans la solutione finale de la question juive en France, 1942*, Fayard, Paris 1983, pp. 292-294. Facsimile of part of the original document in: S. Klarsfeld, *op. cit.* (note 64), page concerning convoy No. 11.

851 D. Dwork, R. J. van Pelt, *Auschwitz 1270 to the present*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York/London 1996, p. 291 and 295.

852 *Hauptabteilung innere Verwaltung, Abteilung Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge*

853 Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 101), pp. 269f.

It would be advisable to separate, at the stations of departure, the Jews coming to the district of Lublin into persons fit for work and those unfit. If such a separation is impossible on departure, one may want to adopt a solution whereby the separation would be carried out in Lublin on the basis of the above.

Jews unfit for work would all be taken to Bełżec, the outermost border station in Zamosc county. Hstuf. Höfle is about to build a large camp in which the Jews fit for work can be classified according to their professions and delegated as necessary.

Piaski will be freed from Polish Jews and will be the collection point for the Jews coming from the Reich. Trawniki will not be used for Jews for the time being.

H. asked at which point of the Dęblin–Trawniki line it would be possible to unload 60,000 Jews. When our present transports had been explained, H. declared that, from the 500 Jews arriving at Susiec, those unfit for work could be separated and taken to Bełżec. According to a government teletype dated 4 March 1942, a Jewish transport from the Protectorate with destination Trawniki is being run. These Jews have not been unloaded at Trawnicki, but have been taken to Izbiza. An inquiry from the Zamosc county chief for the use of 200 Jews from there for work was approved by H.

Finally, he declared that he could receive 4 to 5 transports per day of 1,000 each with destination Bełżec. These Jews would be taken across the border and would never return to the General Government."

This document is of critical importance for two reasons: First of all, Höfle in his quality as commissioner for the resettlement of Jews in the district of Lublin,[854] was the deputy of *SS- und Polizeiführer* for the district of Lublin, i.e. of Globocnik, who was also commissioner for the installation of SS and police agencies in the new eastern region, which means that he, too, operated within the dispositions of the *Generalplan Ost*. The task of the labor camp for able-bodied Jews was probably the supply of manpower for the construction of *Durchgangsstrasse IV* (transit road IV) in nearby Galicia.

Secondly, Bełżec is said to have started its murderous activity on 17 March 1942, immediately after the meeting just mentioned. According to mainstream historiography it was (like Treblinka, Sobibór, and

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854 *Beauftragter für die Judenumsiedlung im Lubliner Distrikt*

Chełmno) a straightforward extermination camp with no separation between Jews fit and unfit for work taking place there. However, the quoted document states:

1. A separation between Jews fit and those unfit for work was scheduled.
2. Jews fit for work were to be used for work projects.
3. The Jews fit for work would be assembled in a camp where they would be "classified according to their professions and delegated as necessary."
4. Piaski was to become the "collection point for the Jews coming from the Reich." By road Piaski is located 24 km to the southeast of Lublin and 104 km to the northeast of Bełżec. By rail the distance to Bełżec is even greater, some 155 km (from Trawniki to Bełżec via Rejowiec, including the road section Piaski-Trawniki). These data speak against the thesis that Bełżec was a pure extermination camp, for in that case it would have itself constituted the collection point.
5. It was planned to unload 60,000 Jews at a suitable point along the line Dęblin-Trawniki, which was part of the trunk line from Warsaw to Lublin, Rejowiec and Chełm. Dęblin station was located some 70 km to the northwest of Lublin in the direction of Warsaw. Trawniki was 13 km to the east of Piaski, for which it served as a railway station. Just west of Rejowiec a southward line branched off to Bełżec, Rawa Ruska, and Lemberg/Lvov. Again, all this speaks against the assertion that Bełżec was nothing but an extermination camp.

The most important point of the document is the fact that "Jews unfit for work would all be taken to Bełżec." The camp "could receive 4 – 5 transports per day with destination Bełżec," Jews unfit for work, apparently, who would be "taken across the border and would never return to the General Government." That is why Bełżec was referred to as "the outermost border station in Zamosc county." This sentence makes sense only in connection with a deportation of these Jews to the other side of the border, i.e. to the East. In any case, "4 – 5 transports per day of 1,000 Jews each" could not have been taken to Bełżec for reasons of their extermination, because the alleged three gas chambers of 32 square meters each could not have gassed 4,000-5,000 persons in a single day.

This is how Tatiana Berenstein describes one of the first Jewish transports to arrive at Bełżec.[855]

> *"In the afternoon of 16 March, i.e. a couple of hours after the start of the operation,* [the SS] *rounded up men in the ghetto of Lublin to be sent to work. Actually, the transfer operation began only half an hour after midnight.* […] *In the early morning, after checking of the documents, people with a valid work card were released. Out of the people arrested that night, 1,600 were sent by rail to the death camp at Bełżec, the others were temporarily let go, but were not allowed to return home. Actually, at that time, the gas chambers of Bełżec could not yet annihilate more than 1,600 persons in 24 hours."*

The decisions noted in Reuter's above memo are fully corroborated by a report written by SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Türk on 7 April 1942. The report covers the month of March and contains a paragraph entitled "Jewish Resettlement Operation of the SS and Police Chief," in which Türk says:[856]

> *"The possibilities of accommodation, limited to places along the Deblin-Rejowiec-Bełżec railway line, were and are currently being discussed with the representative of the SS and Police Chief. Alternative possibilities were determined.*
>
> *On the basis of my proposal, there is a fundamental understanding that, as Jews from the west are being settled here, local Jews are to be evacuated in like numbers, if possible. The current status of the settlement process is that approximately 6,000 were settled here from the Reich, approximately 7,500 have been evacuated from the district, and 18,000 from the city of Lublin.*
>
> *Individually, 3,400 have been evacuated from Piaski, district of Lublin, and 2,000 Reich Jews have come in so far; 2,000 from Izbica, Krasnystaw district, and 4,000 Reich Jews arriving in it; from Opole and Wawolbnica, Puławy district, 1,950 have been evacuated.* […]
>
> *Jewish resettlement from Mielic, Cracow county:*
>
> *On 13 March 42 Cholm county received about 1,000 Jews; 200 were housed at Sosnowice and 800 at Włodawa.*
>
> *On 14 March 42 Międsyrzecz in Radzyn county received 750 Jews. Hrubieszów county received 1,343 Jews, with 843 being housed at Dubienka and 500 at Belz. Most of them were women and children,*

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855 T. Berenstein, "Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim," in: *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce*, Vol. 21, 1957, p. 35.

856 Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 101), p. 271.

with able-bodied men a minority. On 16 March 42 Zamosc county received some 500 Jews who were all housed at Cieszanow.
Jewish resettlement Bilgoraj:
On 22 March 42 57 Jewish families, a total of 221 persons, were transferred from Bilgoraj to Tarnograd."

Another report describes the transfer of Jews from Bilgoraj to Tarnogròd, a village 20 km to the south, in the following words:[857]

"An evacuation of 57 Jewish families with a total of 221 persons from Bilgoraj to Tarnogròd took place on 22 March 42. Each family was given a vehicle to enable them to take along the necessary furniture and bedding. Special command and Polish police were used for the arrangements and the surveillance. The operation was carried out as planned without incidents. The evacuees were housed in Tarnogròd the same day."

The arrival of western Jews in the Lublin district began in mid-March. The first transports taken there left the Protectorate on 11 March, the *Altreich* on 13 March, Slovakia on 27 March and Austria on 9 April 1942. The transports comprised mostly persons unfit who were housed together with the able-bodied in the villages of the district.

On 12 April 1942 the Chairman of the Jewish Council in Lublin posted a letter to the Jewish Social Self-Assistance in Krakow, in which the "numbers of those resettled in the individual towns" were named in regard to Mielec:

Bełz	460 persons
Cieszanów	465 persons
Dubienka	787 persons
Sosnowica	210 persons
Międzyrzec	740 persons
Włodawa	770 persons

The letter continues:[858]

"In Izbica two transports arrived from the Protectorate with 1,000 persons.
In Izbica 1,871 arrived from the Rhineland.
In Piaski, Lu., 1,008 persons arrived from the Protectorate.
Moreover, in the last few days further transports arrived whose number varies between 2,500 and 3,000 persons. Yesterday, he[859]

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857 Józef Kermisz (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 700), p. 46.
858 Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 101), pp. 275f.

received an inofficial – at any rate so far unconfirmed – piece of news that a passenger train of 19 cars, which allegedly was traveling to Izbica and contained evacuees from Vienna, was supposed to go past Lublin. Officially nothing could be determined yet.
With regard to Lublin itself, an insignificant number of Jews has remained in the city up to now, who are supposed to be resettled from the city into its environs according to inofficial information."

On 16 April 1942 the *Landkommissar* at Lubartòw addressed the following letter to the county chief for *Lublin-Land*:[860]

"Yesterday afternoon at 18:00 hours, without any prior announcement, another transport of approximately 800 Jews arrived. About half were women and children under 14 years of age. There were no men at all in the transport. The Jews were from Slovakia as well. On Monday and Wednesday altogether over 1,600 Jews have arrived, among them hardly any fit for work. 200 Jews were transported onward to Kamionka, 300 to Ostrow, 80 to Firlej."

On 9 May 1942 the *Landkommissar* informed the county chief as follows:[861]

"Re: Evacuation of Jews from Slovakia.
As I already reported by telephone, the Governor of the district, Population and Welfare, informed me last Wednesday that on Thursday 1,000 Jews would be arriving from Slovakia; they would be transported farther in about 14 days. On Thursday the 7th of May the transport arrived here in the late evening; there were 841 persons, older men and women with children, 199 men were kept behind in Lublin. This transport was better equipped with baggage and food than the earlier ones. The direction of the evacuation from Lublin was under the control of SS-Obstf. Pohl, who was also present here on the occasion of the evacuation of the local Jews on April 9. The Jews are at first lodged in the former high school. Whether and when the transport onward is to take place is not yet clear."

Another letter, dated 13 May 1942, states:[862]

"Herr County Chief of Cholm was present here personally yesterday and requested that those of the next transport, who are fit for labor, also be sent to him, since he is in urgent need of a work force. Fu-

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859 Dr. Marek Alten, adviser on Jewish matters to the governor of the Lublin district.
860 Józef Kermisz (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 700), p. 48.
861 Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 101), p. 276.
862 Józef Kermisz (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 700), p. 49.

thermore, he complained about the fact that food, which is added to the transport trains, is always taken off in Lublin. I am asking that the food be passed on to Cholm as well with the next transports."

A similar complaint was voiced also by the Rejowiec delegation:[862]

"The delegation informed me that on 17 April 42 two transports of evacuees from Slovakia and the Protectorate arrived. The baggage of the evacuees has remained in Lublin, and the delegation requests that the baggage, which for the most part contains bed linens, be released."

In order to create room for the new arrivals, Polish Jews residing in the Lublin district were gradually deported farther east. These evacuations were initiated by the SS- and Police Chief of Lublin in collaboration with the "Sub-Department of Population and Welfare" of the Governor of the district of Lublin, specifically on the proposal of the local authorities. For example, a certain Lenk, a subordinate of the District Chief of Janów-Lubelsk, wrote to the SS- and Police Chief of Lublin:[863]

"I ask you to evacuate Jews from the following locations:

Radomysl	*500*
Zaklikow	*1,500*
Annopol	*500*
Ulanow I	*500*
Modliborzyce	*1,000*
Janów-Lubelski	*400*
Krasnik	*1,000* […]

Only old people, those unfit for labor, women, and children should be included in these evacuation operations, plus such men who are not employed at German agencies. Craftsmen, however, should still remain here for the time being."

On 13 May the county chief at Puławy sent a letter to the governor of the Lublin district, which reads under item 1:[864]

"In the period between 6 and 12 May, both inclusive, 16,822 Jews from Puławy county have been expelled across the Bug river on the instructions of the chief of SS and police."

These Jews are alleged to have been deported to Sobibór and killed there.[865]

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863 *Ibid.*, p. 54.
864 Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 101), p. 438.
865 *Ibid.*, note 1.

The railway line[866] Chełm-Sobibór-Włodawa, called 584h by the German *Ostbahn*, was a spur of the line 584h, which went from Chełm to Kowel in Ukraine.[867] The line 584h left the territory of the General Government near Włodawa (the border in that area followed the Bug river) and continued into Ukraine towards Brest-Litowsk. Hence, the expression "expelled across the Bug river" must be interpreted literally; it designated an expulsion from the General Government into Ukraine.

On 19 May the county chief of Lublin reported to the department of population matters and welfare:[868]

"Concerning the inquiry circular of the 12th of this month, I recommend, when opportunity arises, that the following Jews be deported, whose evacuation is required first:

Lubartow	*2,737*
Ostrow-Stadt	*3,062*
Piaski	*6,166*
Belzyce	*3,639*
Bychawa	*2,733*
Chodel	*1,398*
	19,735."

The county chief of Hrubieszów noted in a memo on 22 May:[869]

"The number and place of residence of those Jews whose evacuation appears to be necessary first, is as follows:

1) in Hrubieszów	*5,690 Jews*
2) " Uchanie	*2,025 Jews*
3) " Grabowiec	*2,026 Jews*
4) " Dubienka	*2,907 Jews*
5) " Belz	*1,540 Jews."*

There is no doubt at all that these transfers were serving the purpose of creating room for the western Jews deported into the Lublin district. The latter would then also be evacuated later on, again in stages. A report of 5 October 1942 by the county chief in Lublin to the Governor of the Lublin district sets out the following information regarding this:[870]

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866 The lines and place names used here are slightly different from those used in *Kursbuch Polen 1942 (Generalgouvernement)*, Josef Otto Slezak Verlag, Vienna 1984, a re-edition of *Amtlicher Taschenfahrplan für das Generalgouvernement* published by Generaldirektion der Ostbahn in Krakau and valid from 2 November 1943 onwards.

867 R. Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 627), pp. 252-254, railway maps Gouvernement General.

868 Józef Kermisz (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 700), p. 53.

869 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

870 Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 101), p. 336.

> *"Subject: Dispositions of 15 August 1942 and 28 September 1942*
> *With regard to the above dispositions I am reporting that 8,009 Jews from the Reich have been resettled into my district since the 1st of January 1942. 3,692 of these have already been resettled again. Expenditures or cash outlays have not been incurred due to these evacuations; the Piaski community merely put 400 vehicles at their disposal without cost for the transportation of the sick, children, and baggage."*

According to this report, the 8,009 Jews mentioned were housed in the following communities:

– 1,200 Jews from Germany in Belzyce
– 5,466 Jews from Germany in Piaski
– 54 Jews from Germany in Luszawa
– 652 Jews from Germany in Kamionka
– 125 Jews from Slovakia in Firlej
– 512 Jews from Slovakia in Ostrow Lub.

The last transport of Jews from the Reich had left on 15 July 1942, and by 5 October, out of the 8,009 Jews who had arrived only 3,692 had been moved on across the Bug; the remaining 4,317 were still in the Lublin district. This is not really in line with a policy of total extermination, just like the "400 vehicles at their disposal without cost for the transportation of the *sick, children, and baggage.*"

The Polish historian Janina Kiełboń presented a fairly complete picture of the deportations of Jews into the Lublin district between 1939 and 1942 in an article published in 1992.[871] In 1942 there were 72 transports with a total of 69,084 Jews having the following origins:[872]

– 14 transports from Theresienstadt and Prague (2 to Izbica, 4 to Lublino, 1 to Majdanek, 1 to Piaski, 1 to Rejowiec, 1 to Sobibór/Osowa, 1 to Trawniki, 1 to Ujazdów, 2 to Zamość) between 11 March and 13 June: 14,001 deportees;
– 14 transports from Altreich (1 to Bełżyce, 10 to Izbica, 1 to Kraśniczyn, 2 to Trawniki) between 12 March and 15 July 1942: 9,194 deportees;
– 38 transports from Slovakia (2 to Chełm, 2 to Dęblin, 2 to Izbica, 3 to Lubartów, 4 to Lublin, 2 to Łuków, 1 to Międzyrzec Podlaski, 5

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871 Janina Kiełboń, "Deportacja Żydów do dystryktu lubelskiego (1939-1945)," in: *Zeszyty Majdanka*, XIV, 1992, pp. 61-91.

872 For a list of the transports see: C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 242ff.

to Nałęczów, 2 to Puławy, 5 to Rejowiec, 10 to Sobibór) between 27 March and 14 June 1942: 39,889 deportees;
– 6 transports from Vienna (4 to Izbica, 1 to Włodawa, 1 to Sobibór) between 9 April and 14 June 1942: 6,000 deportees.

The transports went to:

Bełżyce: 1; Chełm: 2; Dęblin: 2; Izbica: 17; Kraśniczyn: 1; Lubartów: 3; Lublino-Majdanek: 9; Łuków: 2; Międzyrzec Podlaski: 1; Nałęczów: 5; Piaski: 1; Puławy: 2; Rejowiec: 6; Sobibór: 11; Sobibór/Osowa: 1; Trawniki: 3; Ujazdów: 1; Włodawa: 1; Zamość: 2.

Between 17 March 1942, the day the Bełżec Camp was opened,[873] and 2 May the Lublin district received 29 transports with 26,927 Jews, none of which went to this alleged extermination camp.

In the period between 3 May, the day Sobibór was opened,[874] and 15 July, out of the 41 transports with 40,153 Jews on board which reached the Lublin district only 12 went to Sobibór, carrying 12,021 persons, and none went to Bełżec.

In summarizing we determine that a mere 12 of the total of 70 transports which reached the Lublin district went into the alleged extermination camps, with a load of 12,021 persons out of of 69,084 passengers altogether.

One of the 12 transports going to Sobibór, the one which had left Vienna on 14 June 1942, was originally not supposed to go there at all, but to Izbica, as we know from *Transportführer* Josef Frischmann. When the train left Vienna, SS-*Hauptscharführer* Girzig of the Central Agency for Jewish Emigration was present. After a lay-over at Lublin where SS-*Obersturmführer* Pohl removed "51 able-bodied Jews between 15 and 50 years of age" and ordered "the remainder of 949 Jews to be taken to the labor camp at Sobibór," the train went into "the labor camp next to the station."[875]

Furthermore, the first of the 12 transports (the one with 1,000 Jews on board which reached Sobibór-Osawa[876] on 9 May 1942, coming from Theresienstadt) can obviously not have been gassed in its entirety, as mainstream historiography will have it: at least 101 Jews from this convoy died at Majdanek, and the personal data are known for 90 per-

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873 Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 68.
874 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 49; acc. to Arad, Sobibor was opened "end of April."
875 *Ibid.*, pp. 70f., facsimile of "Bericht des Transportführers J. Frischmann," dated "Wien, 20. Juni 1942."
876 Osowa is a small community located a few kilometers to the southwest of Sobibór.

sons from this latter group,[877] which means that hundreds of these Jews – if not the entire transport – were moved to this camp.

But not even those Jews who had initially been deported into the various communities of the district of Lublin were later "gassed" in the alleged extermination camps at Bełżec and Sobibór. Miroslaw Kryl found that at least 858 Jews who had been moved to the Lublin district from the Theresienstadt ghetto and from Prague died at the Majdanek Camp between May and September 1942.[878] 525 of these had come directly from Lublin and 333 from other communities.[879]

In a study of the death registry of Majdanek Janina Kiełboń published very detailed indications: a total of 4,687 western Jews died in this camp between May and September of 1942, of whom 1,066 were Czech, 2,849 Slovak, and 772 German and Austrian.[880] Among them 735 were between 11 and 20 years of age and 163 over the age of 60; among the latter were 3 Slovak Jews in the 81 to 90 age group.[881]

The number of western Jews who died at Majdanek was still larger, however, as one can deduce from the series of documents "*Totenmeldung für die Effektenkammer*" (death notifications for the chamber of personal effects), which are partially extant. These documents list the deaths of at least 183 western Jews within a period of eight days (20 October, and 29 November through 5 December 1942): 41 Czech, 108 Slovak, and 34 German and Austrian.[882] The deportees from Theresienstadt went primarily to Izbica (11 and 17 March), Trawniki (12 June), and Zamość (20 and 30 June).

Hence, the number of certified deaths of western Jews at Majdanek amounts to 4,870. According to Zofia Leszczyńska, Majdanek received five direct transports of Czech and Slovak Jews (4,813 persons) between April and June of 1942, plus another 16 transport (with some 13,500 persons) who moved there after having resided in the Lublin district,[883] yielding a total of about 18,300 persons. Not included in this

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877 Cf. the list in: C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 10, Engl. ed.), pp. 112ff.

878 M. Kryl, "Deportacja więźniów żydowskich z Terezina i Pragi na Lubelszczyznę" (The deportation of the Jewish detainees from Theresienstadt and Prague to the Lublin territory), in: *Zeszyty Majdanka*, Vol. XI, 1983, pp. 33ff.

879 *Ibid.*, p. 35. Cf. C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 10, Engl. ed.), p. 114.

880 J. Kiełboń, "Księga więźniów zmarłych na Majdanek w 1942 r. Analiza dokumentu" (The list of detainees who died at Majdanek in 1942. Analysis of a document), in: *Zeszyty Majdanka*, XV, 1993, p. 114.

881 *Ibid.*, p. 113.

882 GARF, 7021-107-3, pp. 226-235.

883 Z. Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 836), p. 184

figure are Jews from Germany and Austria who must have numbered around 3,600 persons.[884]

From this we may conclude that at least 21,900 western Jews were registered at Majdanek, almost one third of the total number deported into the Lublin district. There were also French, Belgian, and Dutch Jews who arrived at Majdanek;[885] they were probably moved elsewhere later on. Only one Dutch name appears in the *Totenmeldung* (death record) series: Lewy Trompetter, born in Amsterdam on 27 April 1873 and registered, at age 69 with the ID number 7593; he died on 1st December 1942.[886]

Besides the transports to the Lublin district, between 5 May and 28 November 1942 a full 36 transports of western Jews (over 35,000 persons) were deported into the localities in the eastern territories mentioned previously, bypassing completely the three alleged extermination camps of Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka. The 24 transports which went from Vienna to Minsk between 16 May and 28 November 1942 followed the line Vienna-Lundenburg-Prerau, skirting Auschwitz to the west via Oppeln (Opole) and Tschenstochau (Czestochowa) towards Warsaw, with some of them going on to Wolskowysk-Minsk via Białystok. To do that, they passed through Malkinia, some 4 km from the "extermination camp" at Treblinka. Some other transports proceeded via Siedlce-Czeremcha-Wolkowysk and thus came as close as 80 km to Treblinka and 140 km to Sobibór.

In the "train schedule order No. 40" of the German railway administration located at Minsk we can read:[887]

> *"According to an announcement by RBD* [Reichsbahndirektion, Imperial Rail Administration] *Königsberg, there will be a weekly special train (Zugg* [sic] *30,9) on Friday/Saturday with about 1,000 persons from Vienna via Bialystok-Baranowitsche to Minsk Gbf* [freight station] *having the following schedule:* […]*"*

Schedule order No. 517 of RBD Vienna, dated 18 May 1942, mentions the following routing for the transports from Vienna to Minsk:[888]

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884 This figure has been inferred from the mortality of the Czech and Slovak Jews of [(4,064÷18,300)×100 =] 22.2% applied to the 806 certified deaths of German and austrian Jews: [(802×(100÷22.2)] = circa 3,600.

885 Z. Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 883) p. 189.

886 GARF, 7021-107-3, p. 234.

887 *Haupteisenbahndirektion Mitte, Fahrplananordnung Nr. 40* of 13 May 1942. NARB, 378-1-784.

888 Deutsche Reichsbahn. Reichsbahndirektion Wien, Fahrplananordnung Nr 517 of 18 May 1942. NARB, 378-1-784.

> *"Wien Aspangbahnhof – Wien Nordbf – Lundenburg – Prerau – Olmütz – Groß Wisternitz – Jägerndorf – Neisse – Oppeln – Tschenstochau – Warschau West Gbf – Siedlce – Platerow – Czeremcha – Wolkowysk – Minsk."*

Why would one want to make a detour of some 300 km around three "extermination camps" with trainloads of Jews destined to be killed? Another event which is inexplicable from the mainstream Holocaust point of view has been noted by Jules Schelvis:[889]

> *"The intriguing question is why, in the spring and summer of 1943, the transports from Western Europe headed for Sobibór rather than Auschwitz/Birkenau, which was in fact closer."*

Schelvis acknowledges both the argument that the German war industry near Auschwitz at the time needed Jewish manpower and that the alleged extermination facilities at Auschwitz-Birkenau would have had sufficient capacity to handle these Dutch Jews.[890] Hence, the reason for the deportations of these people to Sobibór remains mysterious.

The transports from Westerbork ran along the line Breslau (Wrocław) – Oppeln – Czestochowa – Kielce – Radom – Dębin – Lublino – Cholm (Chełm). Going south from Czestochowa, along the line Zawiercie – Szczakowa – Mysłowice, the Auschwitz Camp is only some 100 km away – instead, the transports went east, another 400 km, to reach Sobibór. Schelvis himself then gives us a solid indication for the answer to this apparent riddle:[891]

> *"Mirjam Penha-Blits was on the same train.*[892] *She explained that the transport was apparently supposed to go to Auschwitz; after two days' travelling in passenger wagons that is where it arrived. For unknown reasons it stood stationary there; nothing else happened. No one was allowed to leave the wagons. After a few hours the train departed, and two days later we arrived at Sobibór."*

In the summary of this account, supplied by the Dutch Red Cross, one can read:[893]

> *"Deported by train from Westerbork on 10 March 1943, arrival at Sobibór around 13 March 1943 (via Birkenau – without lay-over – to Sobibór)."*

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889 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 14.
890 *Ibid.*, pp. 14f.
891 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 73.
892 The train from The Hague which reached Sobibór on 13 March 1943.
893 Het Nederlandsche Roode Kruis, *op. cit.* (note 109), p.16.

The train thus passed through the alleged extermination camp at Birkenau only to continue east for hundreds of kilometers – but why? The answer is found in a general memorandum dated 5 May 1943 and written by SS-*Gruppenführer* Wilhelm Harster, head of security police and SD in Holland:[894]

> *"1) General policy:*
> *The RFSS* [i.e. Himmler] *wishes that throughout this year as many Jews as possible are moved to the East.*
> *2) Forthcoming trains to the east:*
> *As a new Buna-plant is to be built at Auschwitz, the one in the west having been destroyed in air-raids, a maximum number of Jews from the west will be required primarily in the months of May and June. It was agreed to move the Jews already assembled for transport if possible during the first half of the month by combining several trains, i.e. that the Westerbork camp* [in Holland] *will be emptied rapidly. The aim is a figure of 8,000 during the month of May. Arrangement will be made by the BdS,*[895] *Den Haag, in conjunction with the RSHA.*
> *3) The Hertogenbosch camp:*
> *As the RSHA requests another 15,000 Jews, the point must be reached as soon as possible when the detainees of the camp at Hertogenbosch* [in Holland] *can also be made operative."*

In May of 1943 a total of 8,011 Dutch Jews were actually deported, but the respective transports were directed to Sobibór.[896] The most logical explanation of this riddle, which is also in keeping with the documents, is that these convoys were part of the *Ostwanderung* referred to above. The able-bodied were kept at Auschwitz,[897] with the remainder of the deportees moving on to Sobibór.

This, however, is also true for the two Jewish transports which left the camp at Drancy (in France) on 23 and 25 March 1943 (with 994 and 1,008 persons on board, respectively) and went directly to Sobibór instead of Auschwitz.[898]

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894 T-544.

895 Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD

896 In the month of June, there were 8,429 deportees, likewise moved to Sobibór. Overall 16,440 Jews were deported in May and June, among them 3,474 male and female children, which means that among the remaining 12,996 adults, the 8,000 able-bodied detainees requested by Auschwitz could be found.

897 In the case in question, the selected detainees were no doubt moved directly to the Monowitz camp without being registered at Birkenau.

898 S. Klarsfeld, *op. cit.* (note 64), chronological table of the deportation trains.

Such a procedure would also explain the extremely low number of able-bodied detainees at Sobibór, which the witnesses mention in connection with the transports from the west, only a few dozen in each convoy. Schelvis relates in fact that some 700 Dutch Jews were moved to the Dorohucza labor camp of the SS as soon as they came to Sobibór.[899] He adds that on 15 June 1942 Dutch, German, and Slovak Jews were working "on a drainage project" at the Ujazdòw labor camp.[900]

Altogether 117 Jewish work camps of various categories were in operation in the district of Lublin between 1939 and 1944:[901]

Table 5: Jewish Labor Camps in Lublin District 1939–1944

TYPE OF LABOR		NO. OF CAMPS
Military	border fortifications	9
	airports	6
Road Works	construction	18
	quarries	4
Soil Improvement	general	51
	agricultural	12
SS Enterprises		7
Railroads		5
Other		5

The camps located between Sobibór and Chełm were handling soil improvement tasks (drainage), as was the case for Luta (400 detainees), Osowa (400), Krychów (1,500), Ujazdów (400), Sawin (500), Sajczyce (600), Ruda (1,500), Nowosiółki (400), Dorohusk (300), in the same way as two camps in the west and southwest, Sosnovica (300) and Siedliszcze (2,000).[902]

Schelvis, however, reports also the testimony of an engineer from *Organisation Todt*, Otto Weissbecker, who accompanied a transport of 1,400 Jews from the Lida ghetto to Sobibór presumably on 10 September 1943. On his arrival at the camp he went to see Gomerski:[903]

> *"He said, I might as well send back half of them, as he needed only saddlers, shoemakers, sewers and tailors.* […] *The Jews had to line up in two groups without luggage. Although I had been promised*

899 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 119.
900 *Ibid.*, p. 125.
901 Edward Dziadosz, Józef Marszałek, "Więzienia i obozy w dystrykcie lubelskim w latach 1939-1944," in: *Zeszyty Majdanka*, Vol. III, 1969, p. 122.
902 *Ibid.*, pp. 109-121.
903 *Ibid.*, pp. 274f.

> *specialists, I received 630 workers without any experience, among them women. The children remained at Sobibór.* […] *I was ordered to take the Jews at my disposal to Trawniki, where half of them, in fact, remained. The others I took back to Lublin into a camp that was located next to a* [railway?] *stop (Old Airport).”*

Dina Czapnik’s story about the way “she was deported from Minsk to Sobibór in mid-September 1943 and then moved to Trawniki with about 225 specialists”[904] is likewise in disagreement with the thesis of nearly total extermination of the deportees taken to Sobibór and lends credit to the hypothesis that the Polish Jews selected for work were far more numerous than mainstream historiography asserts.

9.4. Evacuations to the East: Höfle Telegram and Korherr Report

In 2001 Peter Witte and Stephen Tyas published the text of a German radio message dated 11 January 1943, which had been decoded by the British during the war.[905] It is a telegram by SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Hermann Höfle addressed to SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Heim, chief of security police at Cracow, and to SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Eichmann of RSHA on the subject of “arrivals” of Jews in the camps of *Einsatz Reinhardt* up to 31 December 1942. The figures are as follows:

Lublin:	24,733
Bełżec:	434,508
Sobibór:	101,370
Treblinka:	713,555 (indicated by mistake to be 71355)
Total:	1,274,166

The report also mentions a “fortnightly report *Einsatz Reinhardt*” for the period of 18-31 December 1942 which show the following deportations:

Lublin:	12,761
Bełżec:	0
Sobibór:	515
Treblinka:	10,335
Total:	23,611

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904 *Ibid.*, p. 148.
905 P. Witte, S. Tyas, *op. cit.* (note 19), pp. 469f.

The authors state that the total figure of the Höfle report is identical to the one which appears under Item 4, Section V ("The Evacuation of Jews") of the Korherr report of 28 April 1943, which we present here in the general context of the evacuations:[906]

"The evacuation, at least as far as the Reich territory is concerned, replaced the emigration of the Jews. It was prepared on a large scale after the prohibition of Jewish emigration in the autumn of 1941 and largely implemented in the total Reich territory in 1942. In the balance of the Jewish presence it appears as 'migration.'

According to the figures of RSHA, the migrations were as follows up to 1 Jan. 1943:

From the Altreich including Sudetenland:	*100,516 Jews*
from Ostmark	*47,555 Jews*
from the Protectorate	*69,677 Jews*
Total	*217,748 Jews*

These figures comprise also the Jews evacuated to the old-age ghetto at Theresienstadt.

All moves combined, the following figures apply to the Reich territory including the eastern territories, as well as the German sphere of power and influence in Europe for the period between October 1939 and 31 Dec. 1942:

1. Evacuation of Jews from Baden and Palatinate [regions] *to France: 6,504 Jews*

2. Evacuation of Jews from the Reich territory including the Protectorate and Bialystok district to the east: 170,642 Jews

3. Evacuation of Jews from the Reich territory and the Protectorate to Theresienstadt: 87,193 Jews

4. Transport of Jews from the Eastern provinces to the Russian East: 1,449,692 Jews

Processed through the camps in the General Government area: 1,274,166 Jews

Through the camps in the Warthegau: 145,302 Jews.

5. Evacuations of Jews from other countries, viz.:

France (occupied before 10. Nov. 1942): 41,911 Jews

Netherlands: 38,571 Jews

Belgium: 16,886 Jews

Norway: 532 Jews

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906 NO-5194, pp. 9f.

Slovakia: 56,691 Jews
Croatia: 4,927 Jews
Evacuation, total (incl. Theresienstadt and incl. special treatment): 1,873,549 Jews
without Theresienstadt: 1,786,356 Jews
6. According to information from RSHA, the evacuation of 633,300 Jews from the Russian territories including the former Baltic states since the beginning of the eastern campaign must be taken into account. Not included in the above figures are the detainees in the ghettos and the concentration camps."

Concerning item 4 Witte and Tyas write:[907]

"It should be noted that the seemingly harmless euphemism 'passed through the camps in the General Gouvernment' already carried a sinister meaning for insiders in 1942/43. The phrase derives from the common term 'transit camp.' For example Theresienstadt and Westerbork were officially termed transit camps, whence transportation to the East meant in fact dispatch to death. But there are other examples of transit camps that served exclusively as killing sites. The extermination camps Sobibór and Chełmno were also designated by this term. But the euphemism used by Himmler and Korherr was calculated to make outsiders believe that there really were transports 'to the East.'"

This interpretation ranks with those of R. Hilberg and C. Browning examined above and is just as nonsensical: As the term transit camp appears in Himmler's letter of 5 July 1943 on the specific subject of Sobibór and as the letter is labeled "top secret," why should any *outsiders* be kept in the dark?[908]

Witte and Tyas then discuss the alleged "euphemisms" of the Korherr report:[907]

"To fully understand Höfle's telegram we have to take into account Himmler's criticism of the first, March 23, Korherr report. The Reichsführer-SS rejected several phrases in the sixteen-page paper and had Dr. Brandt, the head of his Personal Office, write Korherr on 14 April [recte: on 10 April] *1943:*
The Reichsführer-SS has received your statistical report on the 'Final Solution of the European Jewish Problem.' He does not wish the

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907 P. Witte, S. Tyas, *op. cit.* (note 19), p. 477.

908 All members of the SS who had access to this "geheime Reichssache" knew the truth and did not need any euphemisms.

words 'special treatment of Jews' to be used at all. On page 9, point 4, the text must read as follows:
'Transportation of Jews from Eastern Provinces to the Russian East:
Number of those passed
through the camps in the General Gouvernment…
through the camps in Warthegau…
A different formulation must not appear.'[909]
[…] *Korherr's original wording of page 9 point 4 to which Himmler objected is not fully known. Only the corrected version is extant. Korherr must have been too explicit, leaving little doubt that he meant the killing; otherwise Himmler's objections to the widely familiar term Sonderbehandlung in a 'State Secret' document could not be explained. Korherr changed page 9 of the report as requested. When he sent the corrected version back to Himmler's office on 28 April, it apparently escaped the Reichsführer's notice that the objectionable term Sonderbehandlung remained on page 10."*

The supposition proffered by Witte and Tyas does not make sense: If Korherr, on p. 9 item 4 of his report, had really been "too explicit" in his hint at an alleged killing of the Jews, Himmler would have ordered him to modify this wording; instead, he ordered him not to use the words "special treatment of Jews," which means that in connection with the letter of 10 April 1943 mentioned above the expression "special treatment of Jews" did in fact appear on p. 9 item 4 of the report. This is confirmed by the sum total which appears at the end of item 5 of Korherr's report where it is said:[910]

"Evacuation, total (incl. Theresienstadt and incl. special treatment)
1,873,549 Jews"

This figure actually includes the evacuations listed under items 1 (6,504), 2 (170,642), 3 (Theresienstadt: 87,193), 4 (special treatment: 1,449,692) and 5 (159,518), which we will discuss in greater detail later. The "special treatment" cannot refer to the 5 items mentioned except for item 3, because in that case the text would simply say "Evacuations total (incl. Theresienstadt)," as all other "evacuations" would be part of "special treatment."

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909 NO-5196.
910 NO-5197, p. 10.

We have here a blatant incongruence of the mainstream interpretation. In a study of the Korherr report, which the authors quote,[911] the Jewish French historian Georges Wellers asserted:[912]

> *"Moreover, thanks to Korherr's mistake, we now have a confirmation – if one was needed – coming from the top, that the '*Sonderbehandlung der Juden*' is a term so unmentionable that it has to be hidden by the even more innocuous term 'evacuation' even in an internal SS document. By the same token, we now know that the column 'evacuations' of Korherr's report includes the '*Sonderbehandlung.*'"*

On the subject of the significance of this word, Wellers explains elsewhere:[913]

> *"The coded term* Sonderbehandlung *(special treatment) and its numerous derivatives have a very precise meaning: they stand for execution, killing, murder. It does not indicate the type of execution – hanging, shooting, use of poison gas – nor the kind of people involved, but it applies massively, systematically in all of its shapes, to the case of the Jews."*

In short, if we follow Wellers, "evacuation" would be synonymous with "special treatment," which in turn is synonymous with killing.

Actually, as we have shown above, "special treatment" stands only for "transporting." It follows that according to Wellers' hypothesis only 1,449,692 out of a total of 2,506,849 Jews deported by the Germans had undergone a "special treatment," i.e. only those "passed through" the camps of the General Government and the Warthegau: 1,274,166 allegedly killed in the extermination camps at Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka, and Majdanek (for the General Government) and 145,301 at Chełmno (for Warthegau). Therefore, none of the Jews deported to Auschwitz before 31 December 1942 would have received "special treatment," i.e. would have been killed, none of the 633,000 Jews evacuated to the Russian territories, none of the 170,642 evacuated to the East, and not the 6,505 evacuated to France or the 87,193 Jews who went to the Theresienstadt ghetto.

Witte and Tyas go on to say:[914]

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911 P. Witte, S. Tyas, *op. cit.* (note 19), note 51 on p. 485.

912 G. Wellers, *La Solution Finale et la Mythomanie Néo-Nazie*, Beate and Serge Klarsfeld, Paris, 1979, p. 42.

913 G. Wellers, *Les chambres à gaz ont existé. Des documents, des témoignages, des chiffres*, Gallimard, Paris, 1981, p. 36.

914 P. Witte, S. Tyas, *op. cit.* (note 19), p. 478.

"The authors have not been able to determine whether non-Polish Jews from Germany, Austria, the Protectorate, and Slovakia were included in Höfle's and Korherr's figure. Korherr's statistics are apparently too ambiguous to determine this. On the one hand, his number for Jews deported to Theresienstadt is more than 21,000 smaller than the actual number. This evident reduction in numbers suggests that at least some of the deportees from Theresienstadt to the Lublin district and Warsaw ghetto are probably included in the Höfle-Korherr number of 1,274,166 victims. On the other hand, his number of Jews deported from Slovakia comes near to the sum total of Jews actually deported. At the end of 1942 at least 30,000 to 35,000 of these Slovak Jews had already been murdered in the Reinhardt camps. It follows that they cannot be included in the Höfle-Korherr number; otherwise it would be statistical double-counting. Further research is required to resolve this contradiction."

To elucidate this point, we must establish the exact distribution of evacuations dealt with in the Korherr report. Up to 1st January 1943 it shows the following numbers of Jews having been evacuated from the Reich:

From the *Altreich* and *Sudetenland*:	100,516
From *Ostmark*:	47,555
From the Protectorate:	69,748
Total:	217,748[915]

Altogether 87,193 Jews were evacuated to the Theresienstadt ghetto from the following territories:

From the *Altreich*:	33,249
From *Ostmark*:	14,222
From the Protectorate:	39,722
Total:	87,193[916]

Between 16 October and 4 November 1941, the Łodź/Litzmannstadt ghetto received:

From the *Altreich*:	9,431
From *Ostmark*:	5,002
From the Protectorate (Prague):	5,000
Total:	19,433[917]

915 NO-5194, p. 9.
916 *Ibid.*, p. 10.
917 Aufstellung der Neueingesiedelten. WAPL, PSZ 19, p. 195.

The transports into the Lublin district carried:

From the Altreich (13 March – 15 July 1942):	9,194
From Ostmark (9 April – 14 June 1942):	6,000
From the Protectorate (11 March – 13 June 1942):	14,000
Total:	29,195

Finally, 6,615 Jews were deported to Nisko and other areas in the General Government from *Ostmark* (20 October 1939 – 12 March 1941).[918] Thus we obtain the figures of Table 6:

Table 6: Jews Deported by Origin and Destiny

Origin: / Destiny	*ALTREICH*	*OSTMARK*	PROTECTORATE	TOTAL
Evacuations	100,516	47,555	69,677	217,748
France	6,504	0	0	6,504
Theresienstadt	33,249	14,222	39,722	87,193
Litzmannstadt	9,431	5,002	5,000	19,433
District of Lublin	9,194	12,615[919]	14,001	35,810
Eastern territories	42,138	15,716	10,954	68,808

Thus, out of the 217,748 evacuees, 35,810 went to the district of Lublin and 68,808 to the eastern territories. The latter group arrived in 68 transports at Minsk, Riga, Kaunas, Raasiku, Maly Trostinec, and Baranoviči between 8 November 1941 and 28 November 1942.[628]

In the abridged Korherr report of 19 April 1943[920] the data concerning the evacuation have a somewhat different distribution. In Table 7 we compare them with the report of 28 April.

The figure 170,742 includes the 35,810 deportees to the Lublin district, the 68,808 evacuees who went directly to the eastern territories (Minsk, Riga, Kaunas, Raasiku, Maly Trostinec, Baranoviči) we have already discussed, another (170,642 – 35,810 – 68,808 – 19,433 =) 46,591 Jews from Bialystok district, 8,500 of whom were deported to Auschwitz according to Franciszek Piper,[921] with the remaining 38,091

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[918] Wolfgang Benz (ed.), *Dimension des Völkermords. Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, Oldenbourg Verlag, Munich 1991, p. 76.

[919] 6,000 + 6,615 deported to Nisko.

[920] NO-5193.

[921] F. Piper, *op. cit.* (note 380), p. 183. Deportations from Białystok and Grodno. However, the transport from Grodno dated "11.1942" (1,000 deportees) is not shown in D. Czech's *Kalendarium* (*op. cit.*, note 777). On the way to Auschwitz, these transports had to pass through Malkinia, very close to Treblinka, (line Grodno-Bialystok- Małkinia-Warsaw-Cracow-Auschwitz) or through Siedlce, about 80 km south of Treblinka (line Bialystok-

Table 7: Comparison of Korherr's Figures

Origin \ Korherr Report:	19 April	28 April
From *Altreich* (with *Sudetenland*)	100,516	
From *Ostmark*	47,555	
From Protectorate	69,677	
From *Ostgebiete* (with Bialystok)	222,117	
From General Government (with Lemberg)	1,274,166	
From Baden and Palatinate to France		6,504
From Reich territory incl. Protectorate and District of Bialystok to the east		170,742
From Reich territory and Protectorate to Theresienstadt		87,193
From Eastern Provinces to Russia		1,449,692
Total	*1,714,031*	*1,714,031*

deported to the East without transiting through the "extermination camps" at Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka, Majdanek, or Chełmno.

The figure 87,193 includes 33,249 deportees from *Altreich*, 14,222 from *Ostmark*, and 39,722 from Protectorate.

The figure 1,449,692 includes 1,274,166 "transited through the camps in the General Government," 145,301 "transited through the Warthegau camps," and (1,449,692 – 1,274,166 – 145,301 =) 30,225 deported "to the Russian East" without passing through anyone of these camps.

From the above two reports we can compile the numbers of Table 8 for the evacuees.

The 35,810[922] Jews who were moved into the Lublin district were part of a group of 69,804 who had been moved there by means of 72 transports between 11 March and 15 July 1942,[923] viz.:

From *Altreich*, *Ostmark*, Protectorate (not counting the 6,615 Jews deported to Nisko):	29,195
from Slovakia:	39,889
Total:	6,084

There is no doubt that at least part of these western Jews were later evacuated to the east. For example, the report by the county chief of Lublin dated 5 October 1942 to the governor of the Lublin district,

Czeremcha-Siedlce-Dęblin-Radom-Cracow-Auschwitz) or even through Sobibór (line Bialystok-Czeremka-Brest/Litowsk-Tomaszowka/Włodawa-Lublin-Cracow-Auschwitz).

922 Except for the 6,651 Jews already deported from *Ostmark* to Nisko and other places.

923 C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 224ff. (list of the transports).

Table 8: Summary of Deportation Origins and Destinations

ORIGIN	NUMBER	DESTINATION
Altreich	100,516	6,504: France 9,194: District of Lublin 9,431: Litzmannstadt 42,138: Ostgebiete 33,249: Theresienstadt
Ostmark	47,555	12,615: District of Lublin 5,002: Litzmannstadt 15,716: Ostgebiete 14,222: Theresienstadt
Protectorate	69,677	14,001: District of Lublin 5,000: Litzmannstadt 10,954: Ostgebiete 39,722: Theresienstadt
Bialystok District	46,591	8,500: Auschwitz 38,091: to the East
Warthegau*	145,301	
Unknown	30,225	
General Government with Lemberg/Lvov	1,274,166	
Total:	1,714,031	

*11,233 from *Altreich*, *Ostmark* and Protectorate coming from ghetto of Łodź/Litzmannstadt

mentioned above, stated that out of the 8,009 Jews who had been resettled into the county territory, 3,692 had already been transferred elsewhere.

But there is no doubt either that these transferred persons were counted twice in Korherr's report. In fact, 23,500 Jews from the *Altreich* and from *Ostmark* who had been deported to the Lublin district[924] were sent to Sobibór according to Schelvis.

Out of the 57,752 Jews deported from Slovakia according to Vlasta Kladivová[925] (Korherr has 56,691), 18,746 went to Auschwitz and the remaining 39,006 into the district of Lublin, a figure practically identical to the one mentioned previously (38,889) given by the Polish historian Janina Kiełboń.[871] As we have seen, Schelvis writes that 28,284 went to Sobibór.

As far as the 69,677 Jews from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia are concerned, 18,004 of the 39,722 who had been evacuated to Theresienstadt were deported to Treblinka between 19 September and

924 But the total number of the deportees came to 21,809.

925 Vlasta Kladivová, "Osudy židovských transportů ze Slovenska v Osvětimi," in: *Tragédia slovenských židov*, Banská Bystrica, 1992, pp. 148f.

22 October 1942[926] and 10,000 of the 14,001 moved into the Lublin district were sent to Sobibór according to Schelvis.

From the 19,433 Jews of the *Altreich*, *Ostmark*, and the Protectorate who initially went to the Łodź ghetto 11,233 were transferred in March, August, and September 1942,[927] hence they are already included in the 145,301 Jews transited through the Warthegau camps.

This is to say that some 90,000 Jews have been counted twice, first as evacuated, later on as transited.

The Korherr report of 28 April counts 1,274,031 Jews as having been "passed through the camps in the General Gouvernment," an expression which leaves open the possibility of non-Polish Jews also having passed through such camps; the report of 19 April instead assigns this number explicitly to "General Gouvernment (incl. Lemberg)." Here it is in fact said that there were 2,000,000 Jews in this territory when it was taken over by the Germans; 427,920 are counted as losses due to emigration and excess of mortality over births as well as 1,274,166 due to evacuation, which means that as of 21 December 1942 only 297,914 remained in the area. The Höfle telegram, however, refers to the total number of Jews who transited through the camps of *Aktion Reinhardt*, not only to the fraction of Polish Jews.

Let us consider item 5 of the report dated 28 April 1943. The Jews listed there were taken to Auschwitz, except for the 39,006 (37,945 for Korherr) sent to the Lublin district. Table 9 lists, next to Korherr's data, the deportations to Auschwitz according to F. Piper,[928] the registrations at Auschwitz given in Danuta Czech's *Kalendarium*,[777] as well as those selected (i.e. taken off the train) at Kosel before arriving at Auschwitz.[929]

These Jews, although they were moved into the alleged extermination camp at Auschwitz, do not show up in the category which was originally labeled "special treatment of Jews." We will see later on how these inconsistencies can be explained and what conclusions can be drawn from them.

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926 Miroslav Kárný (ed.), *Terezínská Pamětní Kniha* (Guide to the Terezín Memorial Book), Terezínská Iniciativa, Melantrich, Prague 1995, Vol. I, p. 67.

927 WAPL, "Stand der Transporte," PSZ, 1203.

928 F. Piper, *op. cit.* (note 380), pp. 183-198.

929 Data taken from: S. Klarsfeld, *op. cit.* (note 64); Serge Klarsfeld, Maxime Steinberg, *Mémorial de la déportation des Juifs de Belgique*, The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York 1994; Het Nederlandsche Roode Kruis, *Auschwitz. Deel II: De deportatietransporten van 15 juli 1942 tot en met 24 august 1942*. 's Gravenhage 1948.

Table 9: Jews deported to and registered at Auschwitz

Author: / Country	Korherr: Deported	Piper: Deported	Czech: Registered	Klarsfeld: Selected at Kosel	Total registered/ selected
France	41,911	41,951	17,561	3,056	20,617
Netherlands	38,571	38,578	11,180	3,540	14,720
Belgium	16,886	16,621	4,489	1,373	5,862
Norway	532	532	186	0	186
Slovakia	56,691	18,746[925]	12,787	0	12,787
Croatia	4,927	5,000	587	0	587
Total	159,518	121,428	46,790	7,969	54,759

There is another important question on which Witte and Tyas have foundered without being able to provide a proper answer and which shows instead that their interpretation of the Korherr report and consequently of the Höfle telegram is unfounded. They write:[930]

> *"Now we have a fourth camp – L – obviously the Concentration Camp Lublin, commonly known as Majdanek, listed by Höfle ahead of the other three camps. Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka were extermination camps, so it is reasonable to assume that the numbers given for 'L' are numbers of Jews murdered also: it would not make sense to give the numbers killed for three camps and make Lublin an exception."*

Here we have again an instance of false reasoning "by analogy," like the one for C. Browning we have dealt with above. Here, however, we may also reverse the reasoning: given that Majdanek was not an extermination camp,[664] it would not have made sense to lump it together with three such camps, and hence Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka were not extermination camps.

Witte and Tyas examine the 24,733 Jews mentioned by Höfle which they claim were assassinated in the Majdanek gas chambers:[931]

> *"Globocnik must have been responsible for sending these unknown Jewish victims to the gas chambers of Majdanek, because, according Höfle's telegram, he counted them as Einsatz Reinhardt victims."*

They speak of "unknown Jewish victims," because for some strange reason they are trying – in vain – to identify these alleged victims before even wondering, whether the 24,733 Jews in question were in fact gassed according to the official history of the Lublin-Majdanek Camp.

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930 P. Witte, S. Tyas, *op. cit.* (note 19), p. 471.
931 *Ibid.*, p. 472.

In this connection they enounce two hypotheses: the alleged victims stemmed "from unknown transports from the Bialystok General District, or, more likely, from small forced labor camps."[932]

We must remember, though, that 12,761 out of these 24,733 Jews are said to have been gassed in the two weeks between 18 and 31 December 1942. According to Tatiana Berenstein and Artur Eisenbach, however, in November/December of 1942 only 5,000 Jews arrived at Majdanek from Poland, 4,000 of whom are said to have been killed immediately ("zgładzono od razu").[933] This will be discussed below. Zofia Leszczyńska, the author of the most detailed analysis of the transports of detainees to Majdanek, asserts that between July and December of 1942 15,000 Jewish detainees arrived at the camp in 13 transports and mentions the more important ones:

– 15 August: a large transport from Warsaw;
– 2 September: 1,000 Jews from the ghetto at Lublin;
– September: Jews from Bełżyc and Piask;
– September: 111 Hitlerjugend youths of Jewish descent;
– October: 1,700 Jewish women from Bełżec(!);
– November: Jews from Izbica.[934]

For the second half of December there is only one Jewish transport mentioned in the corresponding list for the 19th of the month, but neither the number of persons nor their origin are reported.[935]

Further on Witte and Tyas take up the problem of the gassings:[936]

> *"Lublin, however, was a regular concentration camp; from October 1942, three gas chambers were used to murder prisoners after selections of those deemed unable to work. The number culled during selections in Majdanek from October onwards is known: their sum is much lower than the figures given in Höfle's telegram. As the document indicates, the murder of Jews transported to Lublin without being registered at the concentration camp became an integral part of Einsatz Reinhardt from an unspecified date onward. Further research, one hopes, will hopefully permit more precise information."*

Hence, the number of those allegedly gassed between October and December of 1942 is said to be known and to be "much lower than the fig-

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932 *Ibid.*, pp. 471f.
933 T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, "Żydzi w obozie koncentracyjnym Majdanek (1941-1944)," in: *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, n. 58, 1966, p. 14.
934 Z. Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 836), pp. 188f.
935 *Ibid.*, p. 219.
936 P. Witte, S. Tyas, *op. cit.* (note 19), p. 473.

ures given in Höfle's telegram." But then, how could those 12,761 Jews have been gassed? The authors leave the answer to this contradiction to future researchers! Their wording is misleading, because it makes the reader believe that at least part of the 12,761 Jews in question were indeed gassed. Leaving aside the fact that there were no homicidal gas chambers at Majdanek, as has been shown in a study concerning this camp,[664] Witte and Tyas' pronouncements on the number of allegedly gassed prisoners are a bit risky, to say the least. As their sources they refer to a "historical expert opinion by Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Scheffler in the Düsseldorf 'Majdanek Trial,' p. 173 (unpublished)" and to the book by "Józef Marszałek, Majdanek. Konzentrationslager Lublin (Warszawa: Interpress, 1984)."[937]

We know nothing of professor Scheffler's "historical expert opinion," but as far as the alleged gassings at Majdanek are concerned, the verdict of the Düsseldorf trial did not even take it into consideration. No figures are indicated in the section dealing with gas chambers and gassings. Regarding this topic the tribunal declared:[938]

> *"The evidence considered has not yielded precise results concerning the total number of persons killed in the KL Majdanek by gassings, shootings, or some other violent death, through epidemics or lack of food, due to ill-treatment or other privations, or any other causes. The court, however, regards as certain that there were at least 200,000 victims, among them 60,000 Jews."* (Emph. added)

The latter figures are so "certain" that, of late, Tomasz Kranz, historian at the Majdanek Museum, has brought them down to 78,000,[939] a number which includes the 18,000 fictitious dead of the "*Erntefest*"[940] (harvest festival) as well as all of the 24,733 deportees mentioned in Höfle's telegram.

Among its sources (nearly all of them testimonies) the Düsseldorf court also cites "the professional opinion of the expert for contemporary history Prof. Dr. Scheffler."[941]

Józef Marszałek, long-term head of the Majdanek memorial, limits himself to general assertions as well without producing any figures:[942]

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937 *Ibid.*, note 25 on p. 482.
938 Landgericht Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 510), pp. 89f.
939 Tomasz Kranz, *Zur Erfassung der Häftlingssterblichkeit im Konzentrationslager Lublin*, Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, Lublin 2007, p. 62.
940 J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 664), Chapter IX: "Operation 'Harvest Festival,'" pp. 209-230.
941 Landgericht Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 510), p. 96.

> *"After the gas chambers had been opened, gassing became the chief form of immediate extermination of persons unfit for manual work: the sick, the disabled, elderly people, and children.* […]
> *Selections of the new arrivals commenced in the autumn of 1942. These were initially Jews brought from the closed ghettos and labour camps in the Lublin district, and later French and Dutch Jews deported to Majdanek in March 1943."*

Yet at the same time he stresses that "in the period when the gas chambers were operating, from September 1942 till September 1943, no cases of mass execution by shooting are known,"[943] which means that the 12,761 victims of *Einsatz Reinhardt* must have been gassed. But not even in the most important publication on Majdanek is there the slightest trace of these gassings.[944]

Hence, the 12,761 Jewish victims of *Einsatz Reinhardt* would have been gassed and burned and/or buried at Majdanek within 14 days without any witness having mentioned this and without leaving any documentary or material traces: How can anyone honestly believe such a story? It is also obvious that T. Berenstein and A. Eisenbach's assertion concerning the immediate killing of 4,000 Jews at Majdanek in November/December of 1942 has no foundation; hence one cannot even claim that at least part of the above 12,761 Jews were gassed.

Witte and Tyas have also skirted the absurdity of what we have been told about *Einsatz Reinhardt* – the transportation of the 12,761 victims to Majdanek – in the last two weeks of December of 1942. Their alleged extermination would necessarily have taken place in full view of all concerned, as compared to a mere 515 sent to Sobibór with its supersecret Camp III. If the former Jews had had to be killed, why would this not have been done quietly at Sobibór? Just as strange is the fact that during the said two weeks more Jews were sent to Majdanek than to Treblinka: 12,761 as against 10,335. This would mean that the SS, in spite of the availability of two camps for total extermination, would have gassed these 12,761 deportees in a minor camp which had received only 2% of all deportees up to 21 December 1942 (24,733 out of 1,274,166).

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942 J. Marszałek, *Majdanek. The Concentration Camp in Lublin*, Interpress, Warsaw 1986, p. 136.
943 *Ibid.*, p. 129.
944 Czesław Rajca, "Eksterminacja bezpośrednia," in: Tadeusz Mencel (ed.), *Majdanek 1941-1944*, Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, Lublin 1991.

The most reasonable explanation would thus be that these 12,761 Jews transited through Majdanek before moving on, alive, to the East. This obviously goes for all of the 24,733 Jews mentioned in the Höfle message.

This conclusion also flows out of the Korherr report. Under paragraph VIII "the Jews in the concentration camps" it says:[945]

> *"Not included are the Jews housed in the concentration camps of Auschwitz and Lublin in connection with the evacuation operation."* (Emph. added)

This statement refers to Jews who had been deported to the two camps without having been counted, but who were alive. An analysis of the data furnished by SS statistics confirms this. For the Auschwitz Camp the data specify a total of 5,849 male and female Jews admitted (*eingeliefert*), 1 released (*entlassen*) and 4,436 deceased.[946]

However and as mentioned above, item 5 of the Korherr report lists 159,518 Jews deported only from France, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Slovakia, and Croatia, 121,428 of whom were sent to Auschwitz. 54,759 of these were registered at the camp or selected at Kosel, which means that they could not have been among those assassinated. These Jews were part of the "*Evakuierungsaktion*" (evacuation campaign) which was the same as the "*Ostwanderung*" mentioned above.

For the camp at Lublin-Majdanek, Korherr presents the following data:

Table 10: Korherr's Figures for Majdanek

	Arrivals	Releases	Deaths	Present on 31 Dec. 1942
Lublin/Men	23,409	4,509	14,217	4,683
Lublin/Women	2,849	59	131	2,659
Total	26,258	4,568	14,348	7,342

We know from Höfle's telegram that the evacuation campaign had affected 24,733 Jews up to 31 December 1942, and Korherr tells us that at that time at least part of them were *housed*, alive, at Majdanek. They can thus not all be considered to have been assassinated, as Witte and Tyas will have it. All the more so, as there were 4,568 Jews who were released from Majdanek – a strange "extermination camp" indeed!

Tatiana Berenstein and A. Eisenbach assert that 51,700 Jews were brought to Majdanek in 1942, where 25,200 of them were registered

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945 NO-5194, p. 11.
946 *Ibid.*, p. 12.

(26,258 according to Korherr) and 26,500 allegedly murdered on the spot.[947] This figure is very close to Höfle's (24,733). It is much more logical for the allegedly gassed persons to have been transited through the Majdanek Camp without having been registered, just like the more than 100,000 Jews who passed through the transit section (*Durchgangslager*) of the Birkenau Camp between May and October of 1944 without registration.[948]

Schelvis tells us what happened to the transport of 1,000 Jews from Prague which left on 10 June 1942, i.e. after Sobibór had gone into operation:[949]

> *"The train stopped briefly at Lublin, where some of the men aged between 13 and 50 were selected for work at the camp, then continued to the Chełm area, where the deportees were put to work on various drainage projects, some at Ujazdów, near Hansk"*

He then claims, however, that "the majority" of the deportees were killed at Sobibór in October of 1942 "after an outbreak of typhoid," whereas "a small group ended up at nearby Krychów, until they too were gassed at Sobibór." Two Jews escaped during the removal from Ujazdow to Sobibór, one of them 12 years old, who would tell the story of this transport.

Hence, male deportees between 13 and 50 years of age were selected at Majdanek and remained there; younger and older deportees (i.e. those unfit for work) and all women,[950] regardless of age, were sent on to Ujazdow in Chełm county. As we have seen above, the local county chief asked on 13 May 1942 "to send along the able-bodied Jews as well with the next transport," which obviously means that at this point in time only the unfit had arrived.

Fritz Reuter's memo of 17 March 1942 cited above states that, if it is not possible to "separate Jews fit for work from those unfit already on departure," this was to be done at Lublin. We have also seen that some local authorities protested because "food, which is added to the

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947 T. Berenstein, A. Eisenbach, *op. cit.* (note 933), p. 14.

948 Andrzej Strzelecki, *Endphase des KL Auschwitz*, Verlag Staatliches Museum in Oświęcim-Brzezinka, 1995, p. 352.

949 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 209. Ujazdów is located only some kilometers from Sobibór, as noted by Schelvis in the German edition of his study (*op. cit.*, note 60).

950 At Majdanek, a women's sector was opened on 1st October 1942 in Feld V. This is the reason why the Korherr report has only such a small number for the female Jews in this camp.

transport trains," and "the baggage of the evacuees" often remained in Lublin.

If this was normal practice, the unfit detainees who arrived at Majdanek were removed and eventually went to Sobibór or Bełżec; the able-bodied were selected for work and were *housed* at the camp without registration or moved to other camps.

The minutes of a meeting "on the subject of the evacuation of the Jews of the General Government and the removal of the Romanian Jews to the General Government," held in Berlin on 26 and 28 September 1942, create yet more problems for Wittes and Tyas' theses. The document states:[951]

> *"A discussion has been proposed on:*
> *1. The evacuation of 600 000 Jews of the General Government.*
> *2. The deportation of 200 000 Jews from Romania into the General Government.*
> *Concerning item 1.: Urgent transports, proposed by the chief of security police and by the SD, viz.:*
> *2 trains per day from Warsaw to Treblinka,*
> *1 train per day from Radom district to Treblinka,*
> *1 train per day from Cracow district to Bełżec,*
> *1 train per day from Lemberg district to Bełżec*
> *would be implemented by means of 22 G-Wagen* [= freight cars] *which have already been provided for this purpose by the directorate of German railways at Cracow to the extent that this can be done.* […] *After termination of the repair work on the line Lublin-Chełm, probably from 1st November 1942, the other urgent transports can be carried out as well, viz.:*
> *1 train per day from Radom district to Sobibór,*
> *1 train per day from Lublin North district to Bełżec and*
> *1 train per day from Lublin Center district to Sobibór*
> *to the extent possible and provided the required number of G-Wagen are available."*

Thus, after 1st November 1942, i.e. after the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Majdanek are said to have gone into operation (October 1942), the alleged extermination of the Jews in the Lublin district was implemented in its entirety at Bełżec and Sobibór. If the evacuation of the Jews had stood for their extermination and if Majdanek had been

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951 Heiner Lichtenstein, *Mit Reichsbahn in den Tod*. Bund-Verlag, Collogne 1985, p. 62.

part of *Aktion Reinhardt*, this camp would have been a natural destination for at least part of the Jews in the district of Lublin, yet they were sent to Bełżec and Sobibór instead. This, as we shall see below, renders even more questionable the fact that the Höfle message should have an arrival (*Zugang*) of 12,761 Jews for Majdanek within the last two weeks of December of 1942.

On the other hand, if Majdanek had been part of the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps, why would its homicidal gas chambers[952] have used Zyklon B rather than the exhaust gases from an internal combustion engine? In this context it is absurd to believe that, according to mainstream Holocaust historiography, Bełżec initially experimented with Zyklon B for its killings, but abandoned it later. In the reasoning of the verdict in the trial against Josef Oberhauser in Munich it is in fact said:[953]

> *"Over the first few weeks Zyklon-B-gas was used as the killing medium, later on, for reasons of economy, exhaust gas from a Diesel engine."*

And for what purpose would Jews have been sent from Majdanek to Sobibór, i.e. from one alleged extermination camp to another? Schelvis tells us:[954]

> *"In the autumn of 1942 some 1,600 Jews arrived in their striped suits from Lublin/Majdanek; they were to be murdered the same day."*

According to the witness Joseph Duniec, the transport which left France on 25 March 1943 with 1,008 deportees on board was rerouted "to Majdanek and on to Sobibór, as Majdanek could not accommodate them."[955]

In stark contrast to this we have seen above in Fritz Reuter's memo of 17 March 1942, that "Hstuf. Höfle is about to build a large camp in which the Jews fit for work can be classified according to their professions and delegated as necessary" (see p. 297).

These Jews were certainly excluded from any evacuation beyond the confines of the Government General and were in all likelihood employed in the network of camps in the Lublin district.

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952 Actually, they were disinfestation chambers as has been documented abundantly in the book already mentioned, *op. cit.* (note 664), chapter VI.2: "Design, Construction and Purpose of the Gas Chambers," pp. 128-138.

953 A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 34), p. 133.

954 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 109.

955 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 233.

The deportations envisaged at the meeting of 26 and 28 September 1942 were later implemented only partially, because in the section "The Jews in the ghettos" Korherr established the estimate for "the Jews primarily housed in the remaining ghettos of the General Government" as of 31 December 1942 as given in Table 11.[956]

Table 11: Korherr's Ghetto Jews end of 1942

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF JEWS
Cracow	37,000
Radom	29,400
Lublin	20,000 (estimated)
Warsaw	50,000
Lemberg	161,514
Total, General Government	297,914

If there were about 600,000 Jews in the General Government yet to be evacuated at the end of September 1942 and if some 297,900 still remained at the end of December, it follows that between October and December roughly (600,000 – 297,000 =) 302,100 and up to the end of September (1,274,000 – 302,100 =) 971,900 had been evacuated.

But if 12,761 Jews had been gassed at Majdanek within two weeks, the remainder of 20,000 in the entire district could have been gassed in little more than three weeks.

The completion of the first disinfestation facilities at Majdanek, officially labeled "2 delousing barracks with baths," but which mainstream historiography claims to have house the alleged homicidal gas chambers, was announced on 22 October 1942.[957] At that time they were no doubt already in operation. If what mainstream historians claim were true, they would have had an extermination capacity of at least (12,761÷2=) about 6,380 persons per week. But even if the 24,733 Jews mentioned in the Höfle report had been taken to the camp after that date, the alleged gas chambers would have been able to operate for nine weeks, up to the end of December, and could have gassed (6,380×9=) about 57,400 persons, i.e. not only the 24,700 Jews who had arrived at the camp in 1942, but also the 20,000 remaining in the Lublin district at the end of the year, plus another 12,700.

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956 NO-5194, p. 11.

957 Letter from Zentralbauleitung at Lublin to SS-Wirtschafter Gruppe C-Bauwesen with Höhere SS-und Polizeiführer im Generalgouvernement dated 22 October 1942. WAPL, ZBL, 8, p.22.

The case of the district of Lemberg is stranger still. According to the Katzmann report a total of 254,989 Jews[958] had been "removed and/or resettled" as of 10 November 1942, presumably to Bełżec. On 31 December there were still 161,514 in the district, but in spite of this the Bełżec Camp was shut down on 11 December.[959]

The conclusion we may draw from the analysis of the Korherr report is that the "special treatment of Jews" stood only for the deportation of western Jews (those from the *Altreich* with *Sudetenland*, *Ostmark* and Protectorate) and of the eastern Jews (those from *Ostgebiete* with Bialystok and General Government with Lemberg) to the East, i.e. beyond the confines of the Greater German Reich. The Jews deported within these confines, in particular the roughly (121,428+8,500=) 130,000 Jews sent to Auschwitz, were not subjected to "special treatment."[960] Neither were the 69,084 Jews deported from the *Altreich*, *Ostmark*, Protectorate, and Slovakia to Nisko and the Lublin district *formally* subjected to it. We say *formally*, because they acquired the status of "specially treated" (*sonderbehandelt*) gradually as they were transited from the Polish ghettos through the various camps.[961] This is also true for the 18,004 Jews deported to Theresienstadt and then from that ghetto to Treblinka. In practice there was a double accounting system: one for the Jews evacuated from individual countries, and one for the Jews who were transited through the above camps and who were counted independently of their origin.

Within the scope of *Aktion Reinhardt* the count of the western Jews was, in fact, based on the transport lists of which SS-*Obersturmführer* Helmut Pohl in Lublin received two copies in his quality as Head of Resettlement at Lublin.[962] Here the western Jews in transit were counted again as arrivals (*Zugang*) to, or as transited (*durchgeschleust*) through, the Majdanek or the other camps.

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958 IMT, Vol. XXXVII, p. 398.

959 Robert O'Neil, "Bełżec: Prototype for the Final Solution. Hitler's answer to the Jewish Question," Chapter 10: "Bełżec's dead: burning of the corpses," in: www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/Bełżec1/bel000.html.

960 At Auschwitz, however, the term "Sonderbehandlung" had an analogous meaning but on a smaller scale; it designated the Jews who, as part of *Ostwanderung*, were transited through the camp on their way to the *Durchgangsghettos* in the eastern territories.

961 The 12,021 Jews sent to Sobibór were part of those evacuated and not of those specially treated (*sonderbehandelt*), therefore they were not quickly transited (*durchgeschleust*) either through this camp, but were probably spread over the whole area, as is suggested by the transport of 9 May 1942 mentioned above for work on *Wasserwirtschaft* and *Entwässerung*. Cf. also Chapter 7.

962 J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 60), p. 237.

9.5. Registration of Deportees in the *Aktion Reinhardt* Camps

The eastern Jews were sent to Sobibór and the other two camps without transport lists, and yet the figures of the Höfle message are extremely precise, down to single units. How can we explain this fact? The Museum at Konin provides us with a significant indication concerning this question, as far as the Chełmno camp is concerned:[963]

> *"South of the grave a round aluminum badge with No. 1280 and a hole for hanging the badge was found. According to the accounts of the employed workers, in the period between 1962-1964 when the cemetery was being tidied, 6 similar badges were found near the 'włocławska' grave. They were later handed over to the Town Council in Dąbie, which further handed them over to a newly-established Museum in Chełmno. Interesting is the fact that the badges have the same diameter, while the numbers on most of them form a sequence: 3276, 3277, 3378, 3280, 3281, 2521. In the Chełmno estate grounds, near the granary, a smaller badge with number 1104 was found. It is unknown which group of prisoners had to wear such badges. Significantly greater quantities (over 300) of such numbered badges made of concrete were found during archeological research in Bełżec; their function, however, has not been explained there either. Perhaps an answer to this question lies in the organization of labor camps for Jews."*

Andrzej Kola has, in fact, published three photographs showing various cement disks with an imprinted number in the middle and a hole near the upper edge.[964] Photograph 117, which also show a metric ruler, allows us to say that the diameter of these disks was about 5 centimeters, and the six disks visible show the following sequence of numbers: 12262, 12816, 12707, 12285, 12099, and 12420. But photograph 115 shows a disk with a number over 66000 (possibly 66977, the lower portion of the disk is missing). Kola tells us that these disks were found in excavation 11e/98, i.e. in an area of 31.5 sqm of Building D.[965] What was the function of such disks?

What comes to mind is a "token" in receipt of clothes that were to be disinfested; cement disks could have been attached to the clothes on

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963 "Chełmno," in: www.muzeum.com.pl/en/Chełmno.htm.
964 A. Kola, *op. cit.* (note 304), photographs 115-117 on pp. 83f.
965 *Ibid.*, p. 54.

their passage through the disinfestation chamber, even if steam was being used there, so that the goods could be identified as they came out. The detainees would be given a token as a receipt with a corresponding number, as some witnesses have stated. On this point Louis de Jong declared:[966]

> *"The luggage* [of the deportees] *had to be left in the luggage barracks; in exchange the arrivals were generally handed numbered metal tags."*

From the "Holocaust" point of view, which de Jong shares, the "metal tags" could be explained as being fake "receipts" handed out to deceive the victims, but this would not apply to the cement disks as well. And even if they, too, were fake "receipts," why would one have produced over 66,000 of them? Such a high number makes sense only if the disks somehow related to people. Were they dead or alive? From the perspective of mainstream historiography it would have been useless to number the corpses by means of cement tags. If anyone had wanted to count the victims, a simple list would have been enough. The only instance where a similar system of identification is described is the case of the "*Schamotte-Marken*," disks made of refractory material and carrying a number that would be placed into the coffin to enable the identification of the ashes after incineration in civilian crematoria. Initially this method was also in use at Auschwitz.

In a letter dated 3 June 1940 the firm I.A. Topf & Söhne of Erfurt offered to SS-*Neubauleitung* of Auschwitz "500 pcs. refractory tags numbered consecutively 1 – 500" for the sum of 65 Reichsmark.[967] But in the camps of *Aktion Reinhardt* such a procedure would not have made any sense in the eyes of "Holocaust" historians, both because most of those camps didn't have crematories to begin with (Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka) and because it would have been absolutely foolish, if not close to impossible, to later on try to identify the remains of corpses in mass graves or incinerated in open pits.

Hence, the only explanation we are left with is that the tags concerned persons that were still alive. They were no doubt a means of identification based on the ID numbers as were used by all concentration camps. At Mauthausen, for example, a detainees would be given cloth tags with numbers, to be sewn on their uniforms, plus "a metal tag

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966 L. de Jong, *op. cit.* (note 251), pp. 24f.
967 RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 226f.

with punched numbers'"[968] to be worn like a military ID tag. The cement disks were therefore the ID numbers of the deportees passing through Bełżec and the other *Aktion Reinhardt* camps and, in all likelihood, tied in with a file system. On account of their precision, the numbers cited in Höfle's message speak in favor of such a procedure.

This does not stand in the way of the explanation we have proposed above: If each deportee going through an *Aktion Reinhardt* camp did indeed receive an ID number, then we can also understand why the cement disks accompanying the clothes into the disinfestation chambers show such high figures – over 60,000.

9.6. Prof. Kulischer on the Expulsion of Jews

But where did the Jews who had been evacuated from Greater Germany actually end up? This question was answered at the time of Korherr's report by Professor Eugene M. Kulischer, member of the International Labour Office at Montreal, Canada, in a book entitled *The displacement of population in Europe*[969] published in 1943. For his work the author used the assistance of 24 institutions – Jewish, American, Belgian, Czechoslovak, Finnish, French, Greek, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Turkish, Yugoslav, as well as the International Red Cross.

Each one of these institutions had a dense network of information channels in the various European countries, which meant that Kulischer had at his disposal the best sources of information relative to his project.

The book has a section entitled "The Expulsion and Deportation of Jews," which testifies to the author's profound knowledge of the National Socialist policy towards the Jews. It was a detailed statistical presentation, which constitutes the best comment on Korherr's report. We will quote the major passages:[970]

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[968] H. Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslager Mauthausen*. Dokumentation, Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, Vienna 1980, p.45. We wish to add that metal tags were used in the German army for the identification of soldiers. They were worn with a neck-band and had two sections, each bearing the same ID numbers etc. When a soldier was killed, one half was broken off and sent to the competent military authorities, the other half would be buried along with the body.

[969] E.M. Kulischer, *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, International Labour Office, Montreal 1943.

[970] *Ibid.*, pp. 95-99.

"Until the outbreak of war, emigration was ostensibly encouraged; Chancellor Hitler said that he would willingly give a thousand mark note to every Jew who would leave. In practice, however, less humane and more effective methods of promoting Jewish emigration were adopted. Life in Germany was made impossible for Jews in order to induce them to leave, and when they left they had to abandon almost all their property. At the same time, a moral obligation to receive the Jews was imposed on other nations.

With the extension of German conquests, the aims of Germany's Jewish policy were widened to embrace the 'liberation of all Europe from the Jewish yoke.' Not only the deportation and segregation of the Jews, but their extermination[971] *also was an openly proclaimed objective of German policy. But the main factor which changed the character of the anti-Jewish measures lay in the changed conditions themselves. With the progress of the war, emigration possibilities became more and more restricted. On the other hand, Germany was now able to send Jews to non-German territories under German control, so that as stimulated emigration declined, deportation increased. The Jews were either expelled to 'purge'*[972] *a given country or city of its Jewish element, or they were concentrated in specific regions, cities or parties of cities to 'purge' the rest of the locality.*[973]

It must be emphasised that the wholesale and recurrent removal of Jews is at the same time an effective method of securing their economic extermination. No regard is had to their prospects of earning a livelihood; on the contrary, the transfer is carried out in such a way as to make it impossible for the Jew to reorganize his economic life. His relations not only with the Gentiles but also with his own people are severed; and if he succeeds in establishing new connections they are again broken by a further move. Because of the various methods used to secure the segregation and concentration of Jews, they are uprooted over and over and prevented from striking

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971 In NS lingo "Vernichtung" or "Ausrottung." The significance of the term will be explained below.

972 In NS lingo: to carry out a "Bereinigung" or to render "judenfrei."

973 This was actually the usual procedure. For example, the counties (Kreise) of Biała Podlaska and Radzin in the Lublin district jointly selected Międzyrzecz "als jüdisches Wohngebiet"; as this community was part of Radzin county, Biala Podlaska county ended up "judenfrei." *Lemberger Zeitung*, no 246, 17 October 1942, p. 5, "Die erste judenfreie Stadt im GG."

fresh roots anywhere. First they are sent to the General Gouvernement. Then the town in which they were settled is 'purged.' In their new place of residence a ghetto is established. But even the ghetto does not give the Jews the security of a permanent residence, and they are again removed further east.

In many cases the immediate motive for expulsion or deportation was to make room for Germans. The first victims of expulsion on a grand scale were the Jews of the incorporated western Polish provinces, who were expelled along with the Polish inhabitants, in both cases to make room for the 'repatriated' Germans. Later, Jews were deported because, according to the official statements, they owned apartments suitable for alien refugees from cities subject to air-raids.[974]

At the same, however, another factor, perceptible since the end of 1940 and now assuming growing importance, is strongly operating in a contrary direction – namely, the needs of the German war economy. As a result, Germany's Jewish policy may be described as a compromise between extermination of the Jews and their utilisation in the war economy.

Early in 1941 a semi-official German article described with satisfaction the exclusion of the Jews working population from economic life. Already in 1938 the Jews had been 'released' from productive work on a wide scale. 'But,' the article continues, 'in consequence of the incipient strain on labour resources and of the necessity of harnessing all the available supply of manpower, a trend in the opposite direction soon became noticeable.' At first the Jews were used for unskilled jobs, but later the 'more efficient' among them were given suitable higher grade work. Jews were not, of course, reinstated in the professional activities from which they had been expelled. They were conscripted as forced labour, at first to 'release German workers for urgent construction work for the Reich,' but later also for direct employment in industries manufacturing army supplies. In a number of cases the Jews were not removed because they were needed as workers; in others, they were deliberately sent to places where they could be put to work. To some extent, therefore, the

974 The "Zusammenhang zwischen dem Wohnraummangel im Reich und den Judendeportationen" (relationship between housing shortage in the Reich and Jewish deportations), also in connection with "Wohnungen für Bombengeschädigte" (housing for victims of bombing), has been illustrated by Peter Witte, *op. cit.* (note 593), pp. 43-46.

character of deportation and even its direction were influenced by labour requirements.

Generally speaking, no other group of people has been subjected to compulsory removal from their homes on so great a scale. This forced transfer had taken the following forms:

- *Mere expulsion from a territory, the Jews being taken to the frontier of the territory they are to leave. This was the procedure adopted in regard of the Jews from Alsace and south-west Germany, who were taken to the French frontier,*[975] *and also at times in regard to the Jews of the Incorporated Provinces, who were taken to the General Gouvernment and there left to their fate.*
- *Mere expulsion from a city without any assignment or destination, as in the case of the Jews expelled from Cracow.*
- *Expulsion from an area which is to be 'purged of Jews' and deportation to a special region (e.g. the Lublin reservation), city or town, or part of such region, city or town. Since 1940 this has been the usual practice adopted in removing Jews from various German-controlled territories and deporting them to the General Government, or, latterly, to the occupied area of the Soviet Union.*
- *Deportation within the limits of the same territory; thus the Jews of the General Government are deported to other cities and towns in the same territory, in which ghettos are set up.*
- *Removal from one part of a city to another, by means of the setting up of ghettos or segregation in specified quarters.*
- *Removal of Jews conscripted for forced labour to special Jewish labour camps.*

It is worth noting that compulsory transfer is tending more and more to become the sole form of Jewish migration. Thus a Decree of 11 December 1939 prohibited the Jews in the General Government from changing their residence without a special permit, and similar measures have been adopted throughout the whole of German-dominated Europe.

Earlier Forms of Expulsion and Deportation.

There were various isolated instances of expulsion even before the outbreak of war. Thus, in November 1938, between 15,000 and 16,000 Polish Jews living in Germany were seized, packed into

975 The Jews deported to France from Baden and Pfalz (Palatinate) in Germany, estimated by Kulischer at 9,000. Korherr has 6,504.

freight cars and taken to the Polish border, many of them to the frontier town of Zbonszyn.

In this case the German authorities could claim that they were foreigners.[976] *But this was not so in another case which attracted much attention because of the exceptional attendant circumstances. After the annexation of Austria, 400 Jewish families living in the province of Burgenland were expelled. Some escaped to Vienna and other to Czechoslovakia, but a group of about 70, who were packed on an old freighter, remained aboard for more than four months in a no-man's land between Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary.*

After the outbreak of the war, the expulsion of Jews began at first in a somewhat unorganized fashion, its object being to place the Jews outside the limits of German rule. In September 1939 Polish Jews fled in masses from the invading armies, pushing further and further east in an attempt to escape to Soviet-occupied territory. In this they succeeded, owing to the attitude of the Soviet authorities during the first two months of the Soviet occupation of Poland. The Germans often tried to encourage this flight; many cases were reported of Jews literally driven at the point of guns and bayonets to the demarcation line and into the frontier rivers. Many were openly admitted by the Soviet authorities; many others managed to cross the border secretly. The number of Jews who fled into the eastern Polish provinces (both before they were occupied by the Soviet Union and after) is estimated by the Institute of Jewish Affairs at 200,000 al least.

At the end of November, the Soviet Government closed the frontier. In the meantime the Germans had begun to carry out another plan for the elimination of the Jews, that of deportation to the so-called Lublin 'reservation.' This idea of a special Jewish region, to which Jews from all German-ruled countries would be sent, is attributed to the National Socialist theorist Alfred Rosenberg, who proposed in a lecture on 7 February 1939, developing his scheme for a reservation in contrast with the Zionist idea of a Jewish State. After the occupation of Poland the Lublin district, which according to the census of 1931 had a population of 2,465,000 and numbered 314,000 Jewish inhabitants, was set apart for the execution of this plan. Before the

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976 As described by Reitlinger who speaks of 17,000 persons expelled in his German book *Die Endlösung. Hitlers Versuch der Ausrottung der Juden Europas 1939-1945*, Colloquium Verlag, Berlin 1992, pp. 10f. In the 1968 English edition, *op. cit.* (note 558), p. 9, he speaks of "15,000 Jews with Polish passports."

middle of 1940, 650,000 Jews were to be settled there. Great publicity was given to the scheme and a press campaign was launched to convince the German people that 'a solution of the Jewish problem in Europe' had finally been found. Deportation started in the second half of October 1939, and during the first months large numbers of Jews, especially from Vienna and the Protectorate and from the Old Reich, were sent to the reservation.[977] *The deportees were given a few hours to leave. They were permitted to take with them up to 50 kilograms (110 lbs.) of luggage and a sum of money equivalent to between $40 and $120. No preparations were made to receive them, and the reservation soon became a hotbed of epidemics which were bound to spread to the German army too. The idea of a special reservation for Jews was accordingly given up for the time being, after some 30,000 Jews had already been sent there."*

This is followed by a detailed statistical analysis of the individual countries, headed "Countries and Territories of Expulsion and Deportation," the results of which are summarized in the final tables set out below.

Kulischer then devotes a major section to the destination of the deported Jews, entitled "Territories of Destination and Methods of Confinement," which brings to mind the territorial final solution envisioned by Heydrich:[978]

"The number of the Jews deported up to December 1942 from all European countries except Poland, i.e. from Germany, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia, may be estimated on the basis of the figures given above at about 650,000. Furthermore, 50,000 to 60,000 Jews from Bohemia-Moravia have been confined in a concentration camp within the country itself.[979]

Some of the Jews from Belgium were sent to a neighbouring part of Western Europe for forced labour, but generally speaking the tendency has been to remove the Jews to the east. Many Western European Jews were reported to have been sent to the mines of Silesia. The great majority were sent to the General Government and, in ever growing numbers, to the eastern area, that is, to the territories

977 This was the Nisko plan. As already stated, the deportations from the "Jewish reservation" would begin on 20 October 1939; author's comment.

978 E.M. Kulischer, *op. cit.* (note 969), pp. 107f.

979 The ghetto of Theresienstadt; author's comment.

which had been under Soviet rule since September 1939 and to the other occupied areas of the Soviet Union.
During the early period, deportation meant removal to the General Gouvernment, but since 1940 the deported Jews have tended more and more to be sent exclusively to ghettos and labour camps.

Ghettos.
The first ghettos were set up in Łodź in the winter of 1939-1940. Since spring of 1940 they have been introduced in a number of cities and towns in the Warthegau and the General Gouvernment. In the summer of 1940 the Germans segregated the district of Warsaw inhabited mainly by Jews under the pretext that it was a breeding-place of contagious diseases, and in the autumn of the same year a ghetto was formally established. All Jews living outside its confines were ordered to move into the ghetto and all Poles living inside to leave the ghetto area. Many Jews were also brought there from abroad. In the first half of 1942 about 500,000 persons were crowded into the Warsaw ghetto.
The growth of the ghettos is illustrated by the following estimates. In November 1941 the Institute of Jewish Affairs estimated the number of Jews confined in the ghettos 'at no less than 1,000,000.' In December 1941 figures released by Polish Jewish circles in London showed that about 1,300,000 Jews had been herded into eleven ghettos in various parts of the country. For the early summer of 1942 the Institute of Jewish Affairs gave the number as 1,500,000. On 28 October and 10 November 1942 the Secretary of State for Security in the General Gouvernment issued regulations about Jewish ghettos in the five districts of the General Gouvernment (Warsaw, Lublin, Cracow, Radom and Galicia), providing that from 30 November 1942 all General Gouvernment Jews must live in confined areas. Jews employed in armament and other war industries and living in closed camps are exempted. The confined areas are of two kinds: ghettos inside the larger towns, and purely Jewish towns, cleared of their non-Jewish population. In the whole of the General Gouvernment there are 13 ghettos, the largest being the Warsaw ghetto, and 42 Jewish towns.[980]

980 These are two documents with the same title, "Polizeiverordnung über die Bildung von Judenwohnbezirken in den Distrikten Warschau und Lublin," issued by SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger in his quality of Höherer SS- und

Since the invasion of the U.S.S.R., ghettos have been established in Western Byelorussia, Western Ukraine and the Baltic States, and also in occupied Russia.

The primary purpose of the ghettos and special Jewish towns is the segregation of the local Jewish population. This consists of the former inhabitants of the area which was turned into a ghetto or a Jewish town, the inhabitants of the same town who are removed to the ghetto, and Jews removed from other localities of the same country. For the second and third categories segregation in the ghetto meant compulsory removal, and for the third category forced migration also. The number of persons affected by this internal forced migration may have numbered many hundreds of thousands in the General Gouvernment alone.

The ghettos of the General Gouvernment or of the Eastern Territories are also the usual destination of the Jews deported from the west by the German authorities or by authorities of other countries allied to Germany." (Emph. added)

The section which follows treats the *Forced Labour Camps*. After discussing age limits, working hours and types of work, Kulischer writes:[981]

"Up to the summer of 1941, at least 85 Jewish labor camps were known to exist in the General Gouvernment. Of the 35 camps the position of which was known, two-thirds were located on the eastern frontier.

Forced labour for Jews expanded rapidly, having developed from a subsidiary measure into an essential feature of the treatment of Jews. In April 1942, the Gazeta Żydowska reported that 25,000 Jews were engaged in compulsory construction work in the Warsaw district, and on the basis of other data given by the same journal, the Institute of Jewish Affairs estimated the total number of Jews in forced labour camps in Poland in the fall of 1941 at 100,000. During 1942, forced labour became the common fate of the Jewish in Poland and in German-occupied territory. The period for which Jews fit to work are liable for forced labour is no longer limited. Their removal to east was largely motivated by the wish to make use

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Polizeiführer in the General Government and of State secretary for security on 28 October and 10 November 1942, respectively. The first set up 12 Judenwohnbezirke, the second 41. Cf. the list in C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 266f.

981 E.M. Kulischer, *op. cit.* (note 969), pp. 107-111.

of them as forced labour, and as Germany's need of manpower grew, deportation for adults of working age was tantamount to assignment to forced labour.

In contrast with the other inhabitants of German-occupied countries, Jews are not sent to work in the Reich, because Jewish immigration would run counter to the policy of making Germany 'free of Jews.' The needs of the war economy compelled German authorities to deviate from this rule to some extent, and indeed some exceptions have been reported. But, generally speaking, deportation to the east is for the Jews the equivalent of the recruitment for work in the Reich to which the rest of the population of German-controlled Europe is subject, and their removal further and further eastwards is doubtless connected with the need for supplying the army's requirements near the front.

For the Polish ghettos are not the last stage in the forced eastward migration of the Jewish people. On 20 November 1941, the Governor General, Hans Frank, broadcast the information that the Polish Jews would ultimately be transferred further east. Since the summer of 1942 the ghettos and labour camps in the German-occupied Eastern Territories have become the destination of deportees both from Poland and from western and central Europe; in particular, a new large-scale transfer from the Warsaw ghetto has been reported. Many of the deportees have been sent to the labour camps on the Russian front; others to work in the marshes of Pinsk, or to the ghettos of the Baltic countries, Byelorussia and Ukraine. It is hardly possible to distinguish how far the changes in the Jewish population of the General Government are due to deportation and how far they are attributable to 'ordinary' mortality and extermination. Moreover, the number of Jews remaining in the General Government is in any case uncertain."

Finally, Kulischer sets out a statistical summary for the countries of the Jewish deportations, arranged in a way similar to Korherr's report:[982]

"Total number of Uprooted Jews.

On the basis of the data presented above, the numbers of Jews expelled and deported from Germany and countries under German occupation or control since the outbreak of war in September 1939 may be estimated as follows:

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982 *Ibid.*, pp. 111-113.

– Germany and Austria	*180,000*
– France (excluding Alsace-Lorraine)	*70,000*
– Alsace-Lorraine	*22,000*
– Belgium	*50,000*
– Netherlands	*80,000*
– Luxemburg	*2,000*
– Norway	*1,000*
– Slovakia	*70,000*
– Subcarpathia	*20,000*
– Incorporated Polish Provinces	*400,000*
– Old Romania, Transylvania, Bukovina and Bessarabia	*185,000*
Total	*1,080,000.*

In addition, some tens of thousands have been deported from the Bulgarian controlled parts of Yugoslavia and Greece. This brings the total number of expelled and deported Jews up to some 1,100,000. Of this total, 9,000 Jews from Baden and Palatinate, 22,000 from Alsace-Lorraine, some of the 70,000 from Slovakia, some of the 2,000 from Luxemburg, and the first 300,000 from the Incorporated Provinces of Poland, were expelled; the others have been deported.

Only a few thousand of these deportees were sent to western Europe; all the others went to the General Government, and further east to the German and Romanian-occupied territories of the Soviet Union. It should be noted that some of the Jews of Alsace-Lorraine and Germany may possibly appear twice in the calculation, since the 70,000 Jews deported from France to the east probably include a number of those expelled at an earlier date from Alsace-Lorraine and south-western Germany. In any case, a total of 1,050,000 would make allowance for any double counting.

In order to estimate the total number of uprooted Jews, however, this figure must be increased by the addition of those who were evacuated, fled or emigrated. According to the data given above, these figures are as follows:

– Refugees from Poland to and through Romania, Hungary and Lithuania	*50,000*
– Refugees from the Incorporated Provinces to the General Government	*60,000*
– Refugees from German-occupied Poland to Soviet-	*200,000*

occupied territory	
– Refugees from Bessarabia	*100,000*
– Evacuees from the Baltic States	*30,000*
– Evacuees from Western Byelorussia and Western Ukraine	*500,000*
– Evacuees from the pre-1939 territory of Soviet Union	*1,100,000*
– Emigrants to overseas and neutral European countries	*160,000*
Total	*2,200,000*

This number again includes some refugees who have been counted twice, among the following groups: (1) 50,000 refugees from Poland who went to European countries; many of these emigrated later, while others were afterwards deported; (2) 200,000 Jews who went from German-occupied Poland to Soviet-occupied territory in 1939; some of them were afterwards removed to the east, and therefore figure in the total of 500,000 Jews removed from Western Byelorussia and the Western Ukraine. To avoid the possibility of double counting, half of both these groups may be deducted, thus giving a total of 2,100,000.

Summing up both sets of figures, i.e. figures relating to Jews deported and expelled and to those otherwise displaced, a total of 3,150,000 is obtained.

This figure does not include. (a) the hundreds of thousands of Polish Jews deported eastward from the General Government, and (b) hundreds of thousands of Jews transferred by compulsion within the limits of the same country or territory to be segregated in ghettos and special Jewish towns, in particular in the General Government and in the German-occupied Eastern Territories. Assuming that only a third of the resident Jews who remained in these territories were affected by (a) and (b), nearly 1,000,000 Jews must have been compulsorily removed eastward or from one town to another. Accordingly, the number of Jews compulsorily removed from their homes would be about 2,100,000, or in any case over 2,000,000, and the total of all uprooted Jews 4,150,000, or in any case over 4,000,000."

Table 12: Deported Jews acc. to Kulischer

FROM	#	TO
Germany (incl. Austria)	170,000	General Government
Germany (Baden and Palatinate)	9,000	Unoccupied France
Slovakia	60,000	Eastern Galicia
Slovakia	10,000	Hungary
German occupied Poland	3,000	Hungary
	1,600	Romania
	15,000	Baltic States
	200,000	W. Byelorussia and W. Ukraine
Incorporated Polish Provinces	460,000	General Government
Western Byelorussia and Ukraine (frontiers of '40)	500,000	Eastern U.S.S.R. (113,000 beyond to Iran, India and Africa)
Lithuania	10,000	Eastern U.S.S.R.
Latvia	15,000	Eastern U.S.S.R.
Estonia	5,000	Eastern U.S.S.R.
Norway	1,000	General Government
Netherlands	80,000	German-occupied Soviet Territory
Belgium	1,000	Northern France
	50,000	German-occupied Poland
Alsace-Lorraine	22,000	Unoccupied France
Other parts of France	70,000	Incorporated Polish Provinces and General Government
Old Romania, Transylvania and Dobruja	80,000	Bessarabia and North Bukovina
Bessarabia and North Bukovina	185,000	Romanian-annexed Soviet territory (Transnistria)
Bessarabia and North Bukovina	100,000	Eastern U.S.S.R.

In a table entitled "Movements of non-German Populations" Kulischer summarizes the results of his study. We reproduce in Table 12 the numbers concerning the Jews.[983]

Kulischer appears to be well informed about the National Socialist policy toward the Jews and about the deportations, even though his statistical data at times diverge considerably from those of Korherr.[984] We must, however, remember that he was also well informed about the destination of the deportees. What he writes is in any case confirmed by contemporary documents.[985]

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983 *Ibid.*, pp. 114f.

984 However, the total number of missing registered Jews is equal to Korherr's figure: 4 million. NO-5194, p. 15.

985 For a more detailed treatment of this topic we refer the reader to chapter VIII.6: "Final Destination of Jews Deported to the East," C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), pp. 253-261.

A number of high-level meetings of German officials in late 1941 dealing with the deportations from the Protectorate to the East and the difficulties encountered at the receiving end have been discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

The *Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz* (Israelite weekly for Switzerland) reported the following on 16 October 1942:[986]

> *"For some time there has been a trend toward dissolution of the ghettos in Poland. That was the case with Lublin, then it was Warsaw's turn. It is not known how far the plan has been carried out already. The former residents of the ghetto are going farther to the east into the occupied Russian territory; Jews from Germany were brought into the ghetto to partly take their place.* […] *an eye witness, who was in Riga a short time ago and was able to flee, reports that 32,000 Jews are still in the ghetto of Riga now. Since the occupation, thousands of Jews have been killed. In the morning, the Jews are said to have to line up outside the city for forced labor. They are said to not receive salaries but only permissions for food supply. Compared to the rest of the populace, they are said to receive only severely short rations: they are said to receive only 100 g of bread daily and 2 kg of potatoes per week. Recently, transports of Jews from Belgium and other nations of western Europe were noted in Riga, which, however, immediately traveled on again toward unknown destinations. In the ghetto of Riga, so it is said, there were pogroms on the 30th of November and the 8th of December, to which a great many Jews fell victim."*

What was the fate of these deportees? We will address this question in the next chapter.

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[986] *Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz*, No. 42, 16. Oktober 1942, pp. 10f.

10. The Fate of the Deportees

10.1. The Fate of Jews Deported Directly to the East

As mentioned above, Reichsbahn documents show that at least 66,210 Jews from the *Altreich*, Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia were moved directly into the occupied Eastern Territories between November of 1941 and November of 1942.[987] We can retrace the fate of a certain portion of these people. In his book *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, Arthur Butz addresses the case of the German Jewess Jeannette Wolff, a socialist who was taken to Riga in 1942 and who described her experiences after the war.[988] A collective volume contains the reports of seven German Jews, five women and two men, who were likewise transported to Riga in 1941 and/or 1942 and who were later moved from there to the Stutthof concentration camp east of Danzig.[989]

It is of interest in this context to note that, out of the 48,609 Jews who arrived at Stutthof between 29 June and 27 October 1944, more than half of them – 25,043 persons – came from the Baltic states (10,458 from Kaunas in Lithuania and 14,585 from Riga in Latvia). Among them we find hundreds of children, labeled "Knabe" (boy) or "Mädchen" (girl) on the deportation lists. Some of the lists for the transports from Kaunas have survived. We can glean from the corresponding names and other details that the above designations applied to persons born in 1929 or later, i.e. to children not older than 15 at the time. The transport list of 12 July 1944 contains 3,098 names, among them those of 80 boys and girls. The nearly complete list of 19 July has 88 out of 1,095 names which belong to this category. The total number of children must have been far higher because 483 boys and 416 girls were moved on from Stutthof to Auschwitz on 25 July 1944.[990]

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987 Cf. end of Chapter 7, p. 224.

988 Arthur Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, Theses and Dissertation Press, Chicago 2003, p. 268. Jeannette Wolff's account was published in the collective volume *We Survived*, edited by Eric E. Boehm, Yale University Press, New Haven 1949.

989 Hermann Kuhn, *Stutthof. Ein Konzentrationslager vor den Toren Danzigs*, Edition Temmen, Bremen 1990.

990 Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *Concentration Camp Stutthof and its Function in National*

The deportation of German Jews into the eastern territories is mentioned in the official "Holocaust" literature as well. Gerald Reitlinger writes:[991]

> *"A larger number of deportees were taken to Riga.* […] *Jeannette Wolff* […] *mentions eleven transports, including the exceptionally large one by which she, along with 1,350 others, was taken from Dortmund to Riga on 25 January 1942.* […] *In response to this* [i.e. to an objection by the Wehrmacht which appreciated the Jews as workers and secretarial staff] *the Russia Plan was reactivated with some 25,000 Jews from the Greater Reich being taken to Riga, Estonia and the Minsk area."*

The relations between the Wehrmacht and the German Jews working for them seem to have been very good, because on 20 August 1943 they prompted SS-*Obergruppenführer* Richard Hildebrandt, Head of the SS-*Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt* (SS central office for race and settlement) to prohibit any contacts between Jews and German army personnel beyond the strict minimum necessary for the tasks at hand. He also banned any assignment of Jews to office work or private purposes.[992]

These facts are in disagreement with the official version of history, for we must remember the following:

As mentioned previously, the deportations began in November of 1941.[993] According to mainstream Holocaust literature, a first "extermination camp" went into service at Chełmno (Kulmhof) in December of 1941. As such a camp cannot be set up overnight, the construction of Chełmno must have been in the planning stage for months. If it actually was an extermination camp, then we would have to believe that a plan for the physical liquidation of the Jews already existed at such an early stage. (We remind our readers of the fact that Chełmno, just like the later camps set up at Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka, is said to have been a pure annihilation camp in which even the able-bodied Jews were gassed immediately on arrival, unregistered, except for a handful of "working Jews" whose lives were spared for the moment.)

Why then were German, Austrian, and Czech Jews not sent to Chełmno to be gassed, but moved into the eastern territories starting in

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Socialist Jewish Policy, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2003, p. 8, 93f.

991 Gerald Reitlinger, *Die Endlösung*, Colloquium Verlag, Berlin 1983, pp. 100ff.; Reitlinger's 1968 Engl. edition, *op. cit.* (note 558), pp. 92ff, mentions only "a few thousand Reichs Jews."

992 NO-1624, summarized by A. Butz, *op. cit.* (note 988), pp. 267f.

993 Cf. Subchapter 8.1. and Chapter 9.

November of 1941? Reitlinger confirms that from July and August of 1942 onwards some 25,000 German Jews were moved to Latvia, Estonia, and White Ruthenia, yet not to be gassed but to be used as workers or office staff. If we follow the mainstream Holocaust literature, five "extermination camps" were in operation by July of 1942, with a sixth being added the following month. Why did these Jews bypass these five or six "extermination camps" and go into White Russia or the Baltic states?

Such elementary questions have never been addressed by the court historians, and it is easy to see why this should be so.

10.2. Number of Jews Moved to the East

10.2.1. Via the *Aktion Reinhardt* Camps

Before addressing the question of the fate of the Jews moved into the eastern areas indirectly, i.e. via transit camps, we shall try to determine their total number. For this purpose we shall assume that this population is roughly identical to the persons who "were gassed in the extermination camps without being registered" according to the orthodox literature. We shall not attempt to subdivide this population according to nationalities and shall limit ourselves to a distinction based on only two categories: the Polish and the non-Polish Jews.

Let us first consider the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps. The most important document by far which we can consult for this purpose is the *Korherr Report*, according to which 1,274,166 Jews had transited "through the camps in the General Government" by the end of 1942 (cf. Chapter 9). As far as the figures for 1943 are concerned, the absence of any documents forces us to make an approximation for the number of persons having transited through the four camps. The general situation regarding the individual camps can be described as follows for the year 1943:

– Majdanek: No documents refer to any transfers to the eastern areas originating from Majdanek in 1943.
– Bełżec: This camp was closed down in November of 1942, hence no deportations can have originated there in 1943.
– Sobibór: Jules Schelvis speaks of 68,795 Jews arriving at this camp in 1943. Even though his figure may be slightly on the high side (cf.

Section 2.3.19.), we shall use it in compensation of any possible transfers from Majdanek and round it to 69,000 for the sake of simplicity.

– Treblinka: In the third edition (2003) of his standard work, Hilberg sets the total number of Jews taken to Treblinka at "up to 800,000."[994] Using Hilberg's maximum as a working hypothesis and deducting from it the 713,555 deportees mentioned in the Höfle radio message as having been taken to Treblinka up to the end of 1942 (cf. Subchapter 9.4.), we obtain a maximum figure of 86,445, rounded to 86,000 persons.

On this basis we can estimate the number of Jews moved from the camps of *Aktion Reinhardt* to the eastern areas in 1943 as being (69,000 + 86,000 =) 155,000 persons at the utmost. Together with the deportees of 1942, i.e. 1,274,166 or roughly 1,274,000 persons, we obtain a combined maximum of about 1,429,000 persons.

Now, what was the share of non-Polish deportees within this group? On the subject of Jews deported to the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps from Western and Southern Europe, the only precise indications concern Sobibór and Treblinka:

– Sobibór: If we follow Jules Schelvis, out of the total of about 170,165 (rounded to 170,200) deportees moved to this camp, some 54,550 came from Poland and another 13,700 from *Ostland* (cf. Section 2.3.19). Hence, if Schelvis' figures are correct, about (170,200 – 54,500 – 13,700 =) 102,000 Jews from other countries must have reached Sobibór.

– Treblinka: According to the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* the following non-Polish Jews arrived at the Treblinka Camp: 7,000 from Slovakia, 8,000 from Theresienstadt, 4,000 from Greece, 2,800 from Saloniki,[995] as well as 7,000 from Macedonia,[996] yielding a total of 28,800 persons. As the documented number of Jews from Theresienstadt was not 8,000, but 18,004 (rounded off to 18,000 persons),[997] we must raise the grand total by 10,000 to 38,000 altogether.

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994 R. Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 31), p. 1320.

995 After the occupation of Greece in 1940, the main part of the country was administratively subordinate to Italy, the north to Bulgaria, and the city of Saloniki, where most of the Greek Jews lived, to Germany. Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction…*, *op. cit*. (note 31), Vol. II, pp. 738ff.

996 I. Gutman et al., (note 14), Vol. I, p. 1430.

997 Miroslav Kárný, *Konečné řešení. Genocida českých židů v německé protektorátní poli-*

– Bełżec and Majdanek: On the subject of Bełżec, the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* has this to say:[998]

> *"Some of the transports to Bełżec brought along German, Austrian and Czechoslovak Jews who had previously been deported from their home countries to Polish ghettos."*

The Polish ghettos in question were situated in the Lublin district. It should be remembered that the total number of German, Austrian, Czech, and Slovak Jews moved to this district amounted to 69,084 persons.[871] According to Schelvis, 28,284 (rounded to 28,300) Slovak, some 10,000 Czech, and about 23,500 German and Austrian Jews reached Sobibór, a total of 61,800 persons (cf. Section 2.3.19). For Treblinka the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* merely mentioned 7,000 deportees from Slovakia. This brings the total of Jews reported by these two sources to have been moved to Sobibór and Treblinka from the countries mentioned to 69,084 persons.

If we take into account that a certain number of the Jews moved into the Lublin district must have died there, there is no room left for any Jews deported to Sobibór from the countries in question – unless the figures given by the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* and by Schelvis for Sobibór and Treblinka are too high and a portion of the deportees did not reach these two camps, but were taken to Bełżec instead. Any German, Austrian, Czech, or Slovak Jews who may possibly have been moved to the eastern areas from Majdanek had likewise spent time in the ghettos or work camps of the Lublin district, and the figures for Sobibór and Treblinka would have been reduced accordingly.

The approximate number of non-Polish Jews who transited to the East via the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps thus amounted to (102,000+ 38,800=) 140,800 persons. In the same way we find a maximum figure of (1,429,000–140,800=) 1,288,200 for the Polish Jews moved to the East via the four camps in question.

10.2.2. Via Chełmno

According to the Korherr report 145,301 Jews "were moved through the camps in the *Warthegau*" (cf. Subchapter 9.4). As there was only one such camp in the *Warthegau*, Chełmno (Kulmhof), Korherr must have

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tice, Academia, Prague 1991, pp. 115f.

998 I. Gutman et al., (note 14), Vol. I, pp. 179f.

made a mistake in using the plural, apparently because he said "moved through the camps in the General Government" elsewhere in his text.

For Chełmno no gassings are claimed to have taken place in 1943, which means that the figure of 145,301 (rounded to 145,300) must also be the total number of persons having been moved into the eastern areas via Chełmno.[999] Some 11,000 of them came from countries other than Poland,[1000] hence the number of Polish Jews within these deportees amounted to about 132,300 persons.

10.2.3. Via Auschwitz

Table 13: Number of Jews deported to Auschwitz

Origin	Deported	"gassed without registration" (i.e. moved elsewhere)
France	68,921	39,485
Belgium	24,906	15,724
Holland	60,085	38,231
Italy	7,422	5,661
Greece	54,533	41,776
Theresienstadt	42,454	18,396
Germany incl. Austria	23,438	17,165
Yugoslavia	8,000*	7,342
Norway	532	346
Czechoslovakia	21,572	9,082
Other camps	34,000	7,538
Unknown origins	6,016	4,262
Poland	188,000	149,000
Total	531,879	354,008

* hypothetical figure

A considerable portion of the Jews who reached Auschwitz and are said to have been gassed there on the spot without having been registered were Jews from Hungary. The deportations from Hungary, however, did not begin until May of 1944, and hence no Hungarian Jews ever reached the eastern areas, which were rapidly shrinking in size at the time. Only a certain number of Jewesses were moved into the Baltic states and were then sent on to Stutthof[1001] when these regions were

[999] For the summer of 1944, 7,000 gassings have been alleged for Chełmno. As the "gassed victims" (i.e. persons transferred) did, however, not reach the eastern territories, we need not take them into account here. Cf. Carlo Mattogno, *Il campo di Chełmno tra storia e propaganda*, Effepi, Genua 2009; Engl.: *Chelmno: A German Camp in History and Propaganda*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2017.

[1000] Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 101), pp. 285f.

[1001] Cf. J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 990), p. 31.

about to be abandoned by the German army. For that reason we do not have to consider Hungary in this respect.

Table 13 indicates the number of Jews sent to Auschwitz from countries other than Hungary as the well as the percentage claimed to have been "gassed without registration" (or moved further east in our opinion):[1002]

Hence, about 354,000 Jews were moved east from Auschwitz, among them some 149,000 Poles and some 205,000 persons from countries other than Poland.

10.2.4. Balance

We can now draw our conclusions regarding the number of Jews deported into the eastern areas:

– Deported via the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps:	~1,429,000
– Deported via Chełmno:	~145,300
– Deported via Auschwitz:	~354,000
– Deported directly w/o any stop-over in a camp:	~66,200
Total:	~1,994,500
– of which Polish Jews: (1,288,200 + 134,300 + 149,000 =)	~1,571,500
– of which non-Polish Jews: (140,800 + 11,000 + 205,000 + 66,200 =)	~423,000

Obviously, one has to deduct from these figures the deportees who died on the way to or at the transit camps. In the case of Sobibór we estimated their number to have amounted to about 10,000 persons, i.e. deportees who either died along the way or were killed in the camps in euthanasia operations – a practice which we believe to be probable although it is not documented (cf. Subchapter 5.7). As the conditions at Bełżec and Treblinka hardly differed from those at Sobibór and in view of the far greater number of people involved, the number of persons who died in these two camps or on the way there must have been much higher than in the case of Sobibór.

Seen in this light, the total of 1,994,500 persons arrived at above for the number of people moved into the eastern areas is necessarily too high. We wish also to stress that we have accepted the numbers quoted for the deportations in several instances in mainstream "Holocaust" lit-

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[1002] The table was set up by Carlo Mattogno on the basis of his article "Franciszek Piper und die Zahl der Opfer von Auschwitz," *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, 7(1) (2003), pp. 21-27, and of data in D. Czech, *op. cit.* (note 777).

erature, even if we judge them to be too high (especially in the case of the deportations to Treblinka in 1943). If allowance is made for this, then the actual figure for the Jews who were deported to the eastern areas may be lower by 100,000 than the maximum estimated by us, thus possibly being about 1.9 million at the utmost.

10.3. The Dissolution of Polish Jewry in the USSR

We must now consider the question of what happened to the Jews transferred into the Eastern Territories at the end of the World War II and over the ensuing years – to the extent that they survived the harsh conditions of the wartime. We shall first consider the Polish Jews who constitute the clear majority.

In June 1945 the World Jewish Congress claimed 475,000 to 525,000 Jewish survivors among the Jews formerly residing in Poland prior to Axis control, of which some 80,000 were still residing in Poland at war's end.[1003] At that time repatriation of Polish Jews from the Soviet Union had just begun. The *American Jewish Yearbook* states that by the end of June of 1946, when the repatriations came to an end, some 140,000 Jews had returned to Poland from the Soviet Union.[1004] The same source puts the number of Jews surviving in Poland before the repatriation at some 86,000 persons.[1005]

The order of magnitude of this latter figure could have been correct. On 19 July 1942 Heinrich Himmler had decreed that persons of Jewish origins in the General Government would only be allowed to reside in the "collection camps," (i.e. the ghettos) at Warsaw, Cracow, Czestochowa, Radom, and Lublin.[1006] Over time these ghettos were dissolved and their residents evacuated. In the western Polish regions, integrated into Germany and designated "Warthegau," the Jews were concentrated in the Łodź ghetto to the extent that they had not been transferred to the East. In view of this ghetto's industrial significance, it was dissolved

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[1003] "Statistic on Jewish Casualties during Axis Domination," Institute of Jewish Affairs, Records of the World Jewish Congress. Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives; www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/nuremberg/documents/index.php?documentdate=1945-06-00&documentid=C107-6-1&studycollectionid=&pagenumber=1.

[1004] *American Jewish Yearbook*, No. 49 (1947-1948), p. 381.

[1005] *American Jewish Yearbook*, No. 48 (1946-1947), p. 336.

[1006] NO-5574.

only in the summer of 1944. Considering this general situation, it is quite possible that the only Jews still living in the former General Government or the former *Warthegau* were Jews who had been lucky enough to find refuge among the Aryan population.

We believe the figure of 140,000 Jews who returned to Poland from the USSR, as quoted in the *American Jewish Yearbook*, to be far too low. By 1946 the "Holocaust" lore had already taken shape, and it would therefore have been in the interest of the Zionists to raise the Jewish losses to as high a level as possible.

Could these returnees have been, to a greater or lesser degree, Jews who had taken refuge in the part of Poland which was annexed to the USSR after the German invasion of September of 1939? The number of such refugees was extremely high. E. Kulischer, whose statistics are generally quite reliable, stated that there were 500,000 of them.[1007] The *American Jewish Yearbook* informs us that, in the first half of 1940, these refugees were given the choice of either taking on Soviet citizenship or going back into the German zone. According to the *Yearbook* "many" of the refugees opted for the latter alternative, but Germany refused categorically to let these Jews return. Towards the end of June 1940 the Soviet government ordered them to be deported into the inner regions of the Soviet Union, where the conditions are reported to have been extremely harsh.[1008]

We believe it to be highly improbable that these Jews had the possibility to return to Poland from Central Asia or Siberia in 1945 or 1946. In the same way, the returnees are unlikely to have been Jews who had acquired Soviet citizenship, because Soviet citizens normally were not allowed to emigrate. Thus it is most likely that the returnees were part of the Jews who had been moved to the eastern areas by the Germans three or four years earlier.

In mid-1946 the Soviet government prohibited any further returns of Jews to Poland. Three years later the *American Jewish Yearbook* reported the following developments:[1009]

> *"During the summer of 1949, the Jewish press outside the Soviet Union carried a number of reports about the mass deportation of Jews from the Western border region of the Soviet Union, especially*

[1007] E.M. Kulischer, *op. cit.* (note 969), table without page number, "General Survey of Population Displacement in Europe since the Beginning of the War."
[1008] *American Jewish Yearbook*, No. 43 (1941-1942), pp. 241f.
[1009] *American Jewish Yearbook*, No. 51 (1950), p. 340.

> *from White Russia, the Ukraine, Eastern Galicia, Bukovina, and Bessarabia. According to one report, the deportation affected mainly the Jewish citizens who had relatives in America or Western Europe; other sources maintain that the whole Jewish population of some territories was deported. The reports described, often in great detail, how the secret police rounded up the Jews, put them on deportation trains, and sent them off to unknown destinations, presumably Siberia or the Arctic regions of European Russia. One report asserted that 30,000 Jews had been deported from Lwów (Lemberg) and other cities of former Polish Eastern Galicia, and that the whole region was now free of Jews. Another dispatch described similar proceedings in an unnamed Ukrainian city. Indirect evidence of the veracity of these reports was seen in the fact that Polish Jews who had maintained correspondence with their relatives in the Ukraine and White Russia ceased to receive answers and their letters were returned with the comment: 'Returned to sender. Addressee has left.'* […] *The American Jewish League against Communism sent a protest to the Secretary General of the U.N. in which it estimated the number of Jews affected by the deportations as 400,000."*

Without the shadow of a doubt we may say that among the deportees there were many Jews who had been moved into the occupied eastern territories by the Germans a few years earlier. Most of them were probably Polish, but western Jews were among them as well.

At that point in time the distinction between ethnic Polish Jews and other Jews in the USSR becomes blurred. The distinction between the two had never been very precise. Up to the end of the First World War they had been subjects of the Tsar.[1010] The Polish state, after its foundation in 1918, profited from the weakness of the young Soviet government and conquered the western regions of Byelorussia and Ukraine. Two decades later, however, these regions returned to the Soviet Union. The local Jews spoke at least one of four closely related Slavic languages – Russian, Belorussian, Ukrainian and Polish – current in the area and usually in addition to Yiddish.

Three waves of deportations had swept a large part, if not the majority, of the ethnic Polish Jews into the inner or eastern regions of the USSR: The refugees coming from the German zone of occupation were deported to the extent that they did not take on Soviet citizenship. After

[1010] Except for those from Galicia; that region was part of the Austrian monarchy until the latter's collapse.

the German invasion of 1941, large portions of the Jewish population in the western regions were evacuated before the Germans arrived.[1011] Finally we have the mass deportations reported in the *American Jewish Yearbook* in 1949. Under these conditions the Polish Jews deported to the East by the German authorities in 1942 and 1943 could have inconspicuously blend into Soviet Jewry in general.

The situation of the non-Polish Jews who found themselves in the occupied eastern territories was entirely different. We shall now present several instances of unassailable evidence to show that the "Migration to the East" was far from being a "myth" for these Jews, as R. Hilberg would have it, but solid reality.

10.4. Western Jews in the Eastern Territories

10.4.1. Steffen Werner's White Ruthenia Hypothesis

In his book *The Second Babylonian Captivity*[1012] Steffen Werner presents a large amount of circumstantial evidence for the deportation of Jews to White Ruthenia. Among them we have utterances by Hitler who justified himself in a small circle of close collaborators for having sent the Jews "into the mud." Werner takes the "mud" to have been the Pripyet swamps in White Ruthenia, which the Jews allegedly were to clear. This hypothesis is supported by other sources. Gerhard Reitlinger says:[1013]

> *"A letter from Rosenberg's office, dated October 25th* [1942]*, shows that it was intended to select the able-bodied to work behind the Eastern front. Later, there were some rumours that Jews had been sent from Łodź to the land reclamation scheme in the Pripet Marshes and to the Jewish agricultural colonies near Krivoi Rog in the Ukraine".*

That such reports were not merely "rumors" is borne out by a letter written on 21 June 1942 by Walter Föhl, who was Head of the Main Department with the Reich commissar for the Consolidation of German

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[1011] Concerning these deportations cf. primarily Walter Sanning*, The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry*, Institute for Historical Review, Torrance (CA), 1983.

[1012] Steffen Werner, *Die zweite babylonische Gefangenschaft*, private edition 1990. A second edition was published in 1991 by Grabert-Verlag, Tübingen.

[1013] Gerald Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 558), 1968, pp. 90f.

Ethnicity.[1014] The letter was addressed to an unknown member of the SS, a section of which reads:[1015]

> *"Every day now, we have been receiving trains, each with 1,000 Jews from Europe, processing them and housing them in one way or another, and sending them on, right into the swamps of White Ruthenia towards the Arctic Ocean; that is where they will all find themselves when the war is over – if they survive (and the Jews from the Kurfürstendamm or from Vienna or Pressburg surely will not) – not without having built a few motorways. (But we should not talk about that.)"*

Highly significant in this connection is another quote from Werner's book, a text from a book entitled *Sowjetische Partisanen und deutsche Antifaschisten* (Soviet Partisans and German Antifascists), which appeared in communist East Germany in 1976:[1016]

> *"Within the brotherly family of the Belorussian partisans, Czechs and Slovaks, Frenchmen and Yugoslavs, Greeks and Dutchmen, Spaniards and Austrians, Germans and members of other nations fought courageously against fascism. The Communist Party and the Soviet government attached great importance to the heroic fight of these true internationalists. For their antifascist fight alongside the partisan units of Belorussia and for the heroic deeds they accomplished, orders and medals of the USSR were conferred i.a. to 703 Poles, 188 Slovaks, 32 Czechs, 36 Greeks, 25 Germans, 24 Spaniards and 14 Frenchmen."*

The presence of Poles (both Jewish and non-Jewish) in Byelorussia can be explained by the fact that they came from the western regions of Byelorussia which had been part of Poland until September of 1939, but this reasoning does not hold for the members of the other nations mentioned. We cannot explain the presence of Dutchmen, Frenchmen, Yugoslavs, or Greeks among the Byelorussian partisans except by assuming that they were Jews who had been deported to the East from their

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[1014] *Reichshauptstellenleiter der Dienststelle Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums* (RKF)

[1015] Fritz Arlt, *Polen-, Ukrainer-, Juden-Politik*, Wissenschaftlicher Buchdienst Herbert Tage, Lindhorst 1995, p. 22. Fritz Arlt had been part of the Main Department with the Reich commissar for the Consolidation of German Ethnicity in his function as head of the office for Upper Silesia. Arlt obtained the quoted letter from German Holocaust historian Götz Aly, who interprets it as evidence for "blatant extermination intention."

[1016] Heinz Kühnrich (ed.), *In den Wäldern Belorusslands. Erinnerungen sowjetischer Partisanen und deutscher Antifaschisten*, Dietz, East-Berlin 1976, p. 9.

respective countries, although this assumption would not apply to the Spanish fighters.[1017]

Still, in spite of many valuable indications and ideas which can be found in Werner's book, we must not disregard its glaring shortcomings. Werner writes at the very beginning of the book:[1018]

> *"I assert: 1) The final solution of the Jewish question consisted in the Jews being assigned to the eastern parts of White Ruthenia. To this day* [i.e. 1990] *they have been kept there by the Soviet Union in a kind of captivity."*

First of all, it is impossible for *the* (i.e. *all*) deported Jews to have been settled in the eastern part of White Ruthenia, as this was only one of several destinations for these deportees. Furthermore, it is equally impossible that the decrepit Soviet state, which by 1990 had long since discovered *glasnost*, would have been able or even willing to keep hundreds of thousands of people not only "in captivity," but to keep them from establishing any kind of contact with the outside world.

Finally, we cannot accept Werner's hypothesis that the Germans would have let the Jews settle freely in the eastern part of White Ruthenia. Werner tries to prove this assumption by means of maps allegedly showing an inexplicably large increase in the number of localities in this area, but one must assume that the occupying German army would have wanted to exercise strict control over the deportees, something which would only have been possible by means of camps and ghettos.

If the Jews deported to White Ruthenia had really been able to move around freely, they would have rushed to join the partisans – something the Germans had every reason to prevent. Therefore, we must assume that the foreign Jews mentioned above who did join the partisans had escaped from captivity or had even been liberated by these very partisans from their camps or ghettos.

[1017] S. Werner believes that these Spaniards were antifascists who had fled to France after Franco's victory and were then extradited to the Germans by the Vichy government and later transferred to Auschwitz. (S. Werner, *op. cit.* (note 1012), p. 89). As there were only relatively few Jews living in Spain, this would mean that non-Jewish detainees as well were moved from Auschwitz into the astern areas. So far we have not found any evidence for this. We therefore think that these Spaniards were most probably antifascists who had fled to the Soviet Union after Franco's victory in the Spanish Civil War.

[1018] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

10.4.2. *American Jewish Yearbook*

In 1943 the *American Jewish Yearbook* had the following to say on the subject of the developments in Poland in 1942:[1019]

> *"Throughout the year under review* [1942]*, as in previous years, scores of thousands of Jews were forcibly deported from their homes in cities and towns.* […] *Among the more important of these transfers of population was the expulsion of all but 11,000 of the Jews of Cracow, who were deemed 'economically useful' and put into a ghetto; those expelled, over 50,000 in number, were sent to Warsaw, Lublin and other cities. The stay of those sent to Lublin was short, for most of them were sent farther east, those remaining being penned in a ghetto in one of the suburbs of the city. Also sent east were most of the Jews who still remained in the western Polish provinces incorporated into the Reich.* […] *There was also an influx of German, Czech, Dutch and French Jews, forcibly sent into Poland, either to the ghettos or the labor camps."*

These details are highly valuable in several ways and confront the representatives of the orthodox version of history with insurmountable problems:

1. Orthodox "Holocaust" teaching asserts that the alleged gassing of Jews at Auschwitz began in February of 1942. Why were the Jews deported from Cracow in 1942 not sent to this camp which, after all, was only an hour's drive away, but were shipped to Warsaw and Lublin instead?
2. Likewise, the Jews deported to Lublin were not gassed in one of the available *Aktion Reinhardt* camps, but were in their majority "moved further east."
3. "The Jews who still remained in the western Polish provinces incorporated into the Reich" – except for those assigned to the Łodź ghetto – were allegedly murdered in gas trucks at Chełmno, if we are to believe today's official version of history. The *American Jewish Yearbook* does not say anything about this, yet asserts instead that the better part of these Jews was "moved to the East." If they had been deported to Chełmno before being moved on, Chełmno must have been a transit camp – to which the revisionists would agree.
4. Whereas the deportation of a certain number of German and Czech Jews to Polish ghettos has been recognized by mainstream histori-

[1019] *American Jewish Yearbook,* No. 44 (1942-1943), pp. 244f.

ans, this does not apply to Dutch and French Jews: these Jews are said to have been sent to Auschwitz and Sobibór as well as – to a lesser extent – to Majdanek, but not to any ghettos.

In its following edition the *American Jewish Yearbook* speaks of the presence of Dutch and other Western Jews in the occupied territories of the Soviet Union in 1943:[1020]

"There are reports of Jewish deportees from Holland and other Western countries having been sent to the occupied Soviet territories for military work, but their numbers and their fate are still shrouded in darkness."

10.4.3. *Judisk Krönika*

In this context certain information about the fate of the deported Jews during the war is of utmost interest which was proffered by the Jewish periodical *Judisk Krönika* appearing in Stockholm. In September of 1942 this Swedish-Jewish magazine told its readers:[1021]

"Jewish school children of more than 14 years of age are being deported from the Third Reich as well, mainly to Ukraine, where they are deployed in harvest work. The children are informed about their deportation only a few hours earlier and are allowed to take along only the mere necessities."

Mainstream Holocaust literature is oblivious about the deportation of German Jews to Ukraine. The only logical conclusion is that these Jewish school children belong to those Jews who were allegedly "gassed" in extermination camps. We remind our readers in this context that, according to eye witness testimonies, the new arrivals at Sobibór were received by an SS man who indicated that they would soon be continuing their journey to Ukraine.[1022]

In October 1942 *Judisk Krönika* reported:[1023]

"A large number of Jews who had been interned in German concentration camps have been transported to Poland, where they are deployed to drain the swamps of Pinsk. The Dachau camp is now devoid of any Jews. Most Jews from the Rhineland, including those of Cologne, have been transferred to the ghetto of Riga."

[1020] *American Jewish Yearbook, No.* 45 (1943-1944), p. 304.
[1021] *Judisk Krönika*, Vol. 11, No. 7, September 1942, p. 91.
[1022] See Section 2.3.19. (p. 54), Subchapter 4.1. (pp. 79, 80), see also Section 8.2.2. (p. 253).
[1023] *Judisk Krönika*, Vol. 11, No. 8, Oktober 1942, p. 123.

The city of Pinsk did indeed belong to Poland between 1920 and 1939, yet it fell to the Byelorussian Soviet Republic after the division of Poland at the outset of World War II. Other sources confirm that western Jews were assigned to render the swamps of Byelorussia arable (cf. Section 8.2.2., p. 253). This, too, is in contradiction to the mainstream version about the "Holocaust."

In the same edition of *Judisk Krönika* we read:[1023]

> *"The transport of this tremendous large amount of people* [from Western Europe] *to Poland was accompanied by the mass expulsion of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto and from other locations. These people were deported farther east, and since they were more or less unfit for labor due to starvation and diseases, one can imagine what fate awaited them there."*

Starting in August of 1942, the Polish-Jewish underground press reported about mass exterminations in Treblinka, although not a Diesel engine was mentioned as the murder weapon (this version was sanctioned by mainstream historiography only some years after the war), but entirely different methods, like for instance a mobile gas chamber moving along the mass graves, a delayed-action gas conveniently permitting the victims to walk from the gas chamber to the mass graves, where they would faint and fall into the graves, or scalding with hot steam.[1024] These "insights" had apparently not yet percolated into Sweden by October 1942, or else *Judisk Krönika* would not have disseminated the (doubtlessly true) message that the Jews of Warsaw were being deported farther to the east.

In its issue of May/June 1944 this periodical wrote:[1025]

> *"Certain sparse information begin to seep through about the fate of those Jews who have been deported from Western Europe to Eastern Europe. According to a communication from Lithuania, thousands of Jews from Holland, Belgium, and northern France have been deported to Kaunas, where many have been shot to death in the city's fortress. In Vilnius as well a large number of Jews from Western Europe has been executed. Some 20,000 Jews from Western Europe are still in the city's ghetto. The Germans are executing several hundred of them every day, and the Gestapo compiles lists of the next victims. Many Jews managed to escape from the various ghettos and to join partisan groups, and today there is a large number* [of Jews] *from*

[1024] Cf. C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *op. cit.* (note 9, Engl. ed.), Chapter 2.
[1025] *Judisk Krönika*, Vol. 13, No. 5, Mai/Juni 1944, p. 68.

Western Europe who are fighting together with the Lithuanian partisans."

This report is particularly instructive. It shows that only as late as spring of 1944 did "certain sparse information" began "to seep through" to *Judisk Krönika* "about the fate of those Jews who have been deported from Western Europe to Eastern Europe" – and this information did not speak of said Jews being murdered in "gas chambers"!

Whereas a transport of French Jews in May 1944 to the Lithuanian city of Kaunas (as well as to the Estonian city of Tallinn) is confirmed by mainstream historians,[64] they do not mention any deportation of Jews from Holland or Belgium to Lithuania. The inescapable conclusion is therefore that these Jews must be a part of those who mainstream historiography claims to have been "gassed" at Auschwitz or Sobibór.

The claim by *Judisk Krönika* that the German authorities executed the Jews present in the Lithuanian ghettos on a massive scale in late spring of 1944 is implausible. In that case the Soviets would certainly have obtained evidence for this crime after their conquest of Lithuania, which they would have exploited for their propaganda. Instead of fictitious mass gassings they would have accused the Germans of real mass executions and would have presented the corpses of those murdered as a *corpus delicti* for an investigation by international commissions – as the Germans had done in 1943 after discovering the massacres of Katyn[1026] and in 1944 after discovering the massacres of Vinnytsa.[1027]

In February 1945 *Judisk Krönika* wrote that in the summer of 1944 18,000 Jews were still present in camps in the Riga District, among them 15.000 from western Europe. Regarding the Latvian Jews as well the paper claimed implausibly that the Germans killed them all systematically before the Germans' retreat.[1028]

10.4.4. Further Evidence for Western Jews in the East

We will now present a number of additional proofs for the deportation of French, Belgian, and Dutch Jews into the occupied territories in the East. Apart from the above-mentioned transport of French Jews to Tallinn and Kaunas in May of 1944, mainstream historians never mention any transports of Jews from these countries into the East.[64] The irrefuta-

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[1026] Dt. Informationsstelle (ed.), *Amtliches Material zum Massenmord von Katyn*, Eher, Berlin 1943.
[1027] *Idem*., *Amtliches Material zum Massenmord von Winnitza*, Eher, Berlin 1944.
[1028] *Judisk krönika*, Vol. 14, No. 2, February 1945, p. 27.

ble conclusion is that these deportations concerned a portion of the French, Belgian, and Dutch Jews who, according to mainstream historiography, were allegedly gassed at Auschwitz, Sobibór, and Majdanek. Some of the cases reported here are due to the efforts of two undaunted revisionist researchers: Enrique Aynat[1029] in Spain and the late Jean-Marie Boisdefeu in Belgium.[1030]

1) On 29 June 1942 Valerio Valeri, the papal ambassador in France, wrote from Vichy to Cardinal Luigi Malone:[1031]
   "Towards the 20th of this month the occupational administrations, using the French police, have arrested some 12,000 Jews. […] *The majority of them are non-Aryans of foreign origin, primarily Poles, Czechs etc., who are destined to be deported to the Ukraine."*
2) A report of the Polish resistance, the date of which is unknown but which undoubtedly stems from the second half of 1942, states:[1032]
   "Recently, a certain number of Jews from Belgium has been transferred to Grodno [in White Ruthenia]*."*
3) On 16 October 1942, the *Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz* (the Israelite Weekly for Switzerland) carried the following item:
   "Of late, transports of Jews from Belgium and other western European countries were observed in Riga, but they moved on immediately to other destinations."
   Up to March of 1943 the destination of all Jews deported from Belgium was Auschwitz,[1033] which means that these Jews necessarily came to Riga via this camp.
4) The Jewish author Reuben Ainsztein mentions the presence of Belgian and Dutch Jews in the camp of Janow, near Lvov (Lemberg).[1034] It is highly likely that these Jews had been deported to that Ukrainian city via Bełżec, situated some 70 km to the northwest of Lemberg, in spite of the fact that mainstream historiography does not mention the arrival of Belgian or Dutch Jews at Bełżec.

[1029] Enrique Aynat, *Estudios sobre el "holocausto." La deportación de judíos de Francia y Bélgica en 1942*, Gráficas Hurtado, Valencia 1994.
[1030] Jean-Marie Boisdefeu, *La controverse sur l'extermination des juifs par les allemands*, Vol. 2, "Réalités de la Solution Finale," V.H.O., Berchem 2003.
[1031] *Actes et Documents du Saint-Siège relatifs à la Seconde Guerre Mondiale. Le Saint Siège et les victimes de la guerre. Janvier 1941 – Décembre 1942*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, Vol. 8, p. 610.
[1032] Maria Tykowska, "Exterminacja Żydów w latach 1941 – 1943," in: *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, No. 4/1964, p. 49.
[1033] S. Klarsfeld, M. Steinberg, *op. cit.* (note 929), pp. 42 ff.
[1034] Reuben Ainsztein, op. cit. (note), p. 708.

5) On 15 June 1943 the *New York Times* reported a communiqué of the Belgian government in exile, according to which most of the Belgian Jews had been sent to concentration camps in Germany, Poland, and in the occupied Russian territories.
6) The communist French underground newspaper *Notre Voix* wrote in April of 1944:[1035]

   "Thank you! A news item that will delight all Jews of France was broadcast by Radio Moscow. Which of us does not have a brother, a sister, or relatives among those deported from Paris? And who will not feel profound joy when he thinks about the fact that 8,000 Parisian Jews have been rescued from death by the glorious Red Army! One of them told Radio Moscow how he had been saved from death, and likewise 8,000 other Parisian Jews. They were all in the Ukraine when the last Soviet offensive began, and the SS bandits wanted to shoot them before they left the country. But since they knew what fate was in store for them and since they had learned that the Soviet troops were no longer far away, the deported Jews decided to escape. They were immediately welcomed by the Red Army and are presently all in the Soviet Union. The heroic Red Army has thus once again earned a claim on the gratitude of the Jewish community of France."

   It may be argued that this is a document written by French communists who used a radio broadcast of Radio Moscow and that both the French communists and Radio Moscow could be suspected right away of spreading propaganda. However, it is difficult to see in what way the presence of French Jews in Ukraine could have lent itself to propaganda. Moreover, one cannot see any reason why Radio Moscow or the French underground newspaper should have invented such a story. (What seems to be cooked up in this instance, on the other hand, is the tale that the SS wanted to shoot the Parisian Jews, but that the Jews could all escape and find refuge with the Red Army.)
7) In December of 1945 Friedrich Jeckeln, the former head of SS and police *Ostland*, but at that time in Soviet captivity, stated that Jews from Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia, and other countries had been held in the camp of Salaspils in Latvia.[1036]

[1035] Adam Raisky, *La presse antiraciste sous l'occupation hitlérienne*, Paris 1950, p. 179. A photocopy of this text is given by J.-M. Boisdefeu, *op. cit.* (note 1030), chapter V, C.

[1036] Gerald Fleming, *Hitler and the Final Solution*, University of California Press, Berkeley-

This is consistent with the article by *Judisk Krönika* already mentioned, according to which some 18,000 Jews were still in camps in the Riga region in summer 1944, among them 15,000 from western Europe.

8) In the June 1943 issue of *Contemporary Jewish Record* we read that "over 14,000 Jews from Belgium and Holland" had arrived in the Ukrainian town of Ochakov by April 29 that year.[1037] At this point in time, according to mainstream historiography, thousands of Dutch Jews were being gassed in Sobibór.

10.4.5. The Diary of Herman Kruk

During the German wartime occupation of Lithuania the Jewish librarian Herman Kruk wrote a diary of about 700 pages. After the dissolution of the Vilnius ghetto in September 1943 Kruk was deported to the labor camp Lagedi in Estonia, where he was reportedly killed on 18 September 1944. The Yiddish original of his diary was published in 1961 under the title *Hurbn Vilne* (The Destruction of Vilnius). An English translation followed in 2002.[1038] We will now quote several passages which are of particular importance to our topic.

16 April 1943 (p. 518):

"I learned that for the past two weeks two trains have been halted in Vilna, each with 25 cars of objects, apparently from the Dutch Jews. […] *Today a rumor is circulating that there are about 19,000 Dutch Jews in* [the small Lithuanian town of] *Vievis."*

Since there is no reason whatsoever why Kruk – or anybody else – should have invented this story, we regard this passage as strong evidence for the deportation of reportedly "gassed" Dutch Jews to the occupied Eastern territories. Between 2 March and 6 April 1943 six transports with altogether 7,699 Dutch Jews left Westerbork for Sobibór.[1039] (A seventh transport which departed from Westerbork on 13 April could not yet have reached Lithuania by 16 April, the date of the respective entry in Kruk's diary.) In view of these facts nothing is more logical than the assumption that these Jews were sent to Lithuania via Sobibór.

Los Angeles 1994, p. 96.

[1037] *Contemporary Jewish Record*, 6(3), June 1943, p. 300; during the war the district of Ochakov (Oceacov) was part of the Romanian-occupied region of Transnistria.

[1038] Herman Kruk, *The last days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania. Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the camps 1939-1944,* Yale University Press, New Haven/London 2002.

[1039] J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 62), p. 246.

There are two possible explanations why Kruk mentioned the presence of 19,000 Dutch Jews in Vievis instead of just some seven to eight thousand. First it may be that the information Kruk relied upon was incorrect regarding the number of Jewish deportees from the Netherlands. However, there is another and more probable explanation: In addition to Dutch Jews deported to Vievis via Sobibór there may have been others who had arrived earlier via Auschwitz. Between 17 July 1942 and 25 February 1943 altogether 42,533 Dutch Jews were sent to Auschwitz. According to mainstream Holocaust historians, 30,413 of them were "gassed upon arrival"[1040] – which means that they were probably deported east. If the destination of a part of them had been Vievis, it is perfectly possible that the number of Dutch Jews living in that Lithuanian town on 16 April 1943 amounted to 19,000.

On the same date Kruk wrote the following under the heading "More about the Dutch Jews" (p. 519):

> *"Just now I succeeded in getting a Jewish sign and a copy of the order of the Reichskommissar for the Occupied Netherlands about Jewish property (attached)."*

The editor follows this with a remark that "The order is missing." With "Jewish sign" is no doubt meant the cloth Star of David forcibly worn by Western Jews. In the Netherlands these emblems bore the inscription *Jood* (Dutch for Jew). This passage shows that Kruk had a good reason to believe the rumor about Vievis, since he himself was in possession of items belonging to one or more Dutch Jews.

Several reports exist about the labor camp of Vievis, a town situated between Kovno and Vilnius. A former inmate of the ghetto of Kovno, Avraham Tory, wrote in his diary on 2 July 1943:[1041]

> *"The conditions in the Vievis labor camp are harder than in the ghetto* [in Kovno]. […] *Once in a while, patients from the Vievis camp are admitted to our ghetto hospital. The camp inmates also come here quite often to ask for help over some problem or other. We, for our part, extend them whatever assistance we can."*

In a collective volume of "memoirs of Holocaust survivors" published in 2007 we learn the following about a certain "Marie" from the ghetto of Vilnius:[1042]

[1040] D. Czech, *op. cit.* (note 777), No deportations of Dutch Jews to Auschwitz took place in March and April 1943.

[1041] Avraham Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust. The Kovno Ghetto Diary*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge/London 1990. p. 407.

[1042] Joseph Rebhuhn, *"Why me?" Memoirs of Holocaust Survivors*, Wildside Press, Rock-

> *"When they saw that the last days of the ghetto were approaching,*[1043] *Adam* [Marie's brother] *succeeded to be transferred to the camp Zezmarai, working for the German engineering organization TODT. He was working there as a camp physician, while Marie remained in the ghetto. Just before the great action her brother arrived with friendly members of the TODT organization and saved her. She was right now in the camp Vievis. After about a month, she was transferred to Milejgany and from there to the Zezmarai camp."*

This clearly shows that Vievis served not only as a labor camp, but as a transit camp as well.

On 19 April 1943 Kruk confided to his diary (p. 519):

> *"Europe will be purged of Jews. The Jews of Warsaw are being taken to be killed in Malkinia, near Lwów or near Zamosc.*[1044] *The Jews from Western Europe are being taken east, their wandering goes on."*

The last sentence involuntarily reflects a formulation used twice by Oswald Pohl in his report for Himmler from 15 September 1942 where Pohl spoke of "Jews destined for migration to the east" (cf. Subchapter 9.2., p. 291).

On 30 April 1943 Kruk again mentioned the Dutch Jews (p. 525):

> *"We have already written about the packing up of 130,000 Jews from Holland and their transport to the East. We have also mentioned that carloads filled with goods from the Dutch Jews are in the Vilna railroad station. Now an issue that clears all up – beautiful old furniture has been brought here, to our joiner's workshops, to be repaired. In the drawers people find Dutch documents, including documents from December 1942, which means that ostensibly the Dutch were not taken to the East before January of February. Thus the Jews did not know they were going to be exterminated. The rich Dutch Jews even brought bridge tables with them in case, God forbid, such things wouldn't be found among the backward Ostjuden. Now it is clear that they were slaughtered.* […] *In our area dozens of railroad cars are scattered filled with Jewish junk, remnants of the former Dutch Jewry"*

Kruk does not mention why he is convinced that the Dutch Jews were "slaughtered." The fact that the local population found Dutch docu-

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ville (MD) 2007, p. 173.

1043 The ghetto was dissolved in September 1943.

1044 Malkinia was situated near the alleged "extermination camp" of Treblinka.

ments in the drawers of the furniture removes the last doubts about the origin of these deportees, because the Yiddish-speaking inhabitants of the ghetto could most certainly tell Dutch from German.

On 23 June 1943 Kruk wrote in his diary (p. 570):

> *"In the Minsk ghetto 3,000 – 4,000 Jews now live. Next to the ghetto is another ghetto. In the first ghetto are Jews from Minsk, Slutsk, Baranovitsh etc. In the second, there are altogether 1,500 German and Czech Jews."*

This information is not devoid of interest either. It confirms the deportation of German and Czech Jews to the occupied Soviet territories (a fact not contested by official historiography) and proves that these Jews were by no means exterminated.

Ironically Kruk's diary was enthusiastically lauded by two renowned Jewish mainstream Holocaust historians. For Yehuda Bauer it is "a unique and extremely valuable diary,"[1045] and Saul Friedländer states:[1045]

> *"Hermann Kruk's diary is one of the major sources that we have about the life and death of the Jews of Wilna during the Holocaust."*

Either the two illustrious historians have never read the book they praised so warmly, or they simply did not foresee that Kruk's diary, which deals a devastating blow to the official version of the events, would ever be read by critical observers.

On the other hand, there can be no doubt whatsoever that an even more famous Jewish Holocaust historian, Yitzhak Arad (who incidentally was a partisan in the Vilnius area in spring 1943),[1046] has indeed read Kruk's diary. In his 1980 book *Ghetto in Flames* Arad quotes the Yiddish original *Hurbn Vilne* twice as a sources.[1047] As the passages about the presence of Dutch Jews in Lithuania cannot possibly have escaped Arad's attention, he must have known the real destination of these Jews by 1980 at the latest – which did not prevent this august scholar from rehashing the gas chamber lie in his "standard work" about Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka published in 1987.[43]

[1045] H. Kruk, *op. cit.* (note 1038), back cover.
[1046] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yitzhak_Arad
[1047] Y. Arad, *Ghetto in Flames. The Struggle and Destruction of the Jews in Vilna in the Holocaust*, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem 1980, fn. 25 and 26, p. 369.

10.5. The Fate of Western Jews – a Hypothesis

Whereas Polish Jews present on Soviet territory could easily blend in after the war, the situation was entirely different for Jews from Western Europe who found themselves on Soviet territory after war's end. The presence of a large number of Jews from countries like Holland, France, or Greece would necessarily be highly noticeable and could not remain undetected abroad to the extent that these Jews were present in the border regions of Western Russia.

The mortality among the deportees was undoubtedly very high during the war due to the overly harsh conditions, but the number of those who returned to their countries of origin is so low that it cannot be explained exclusively by the high mortality caused by disease or malnutrition, etc.

For the 105,000 Jews deported from Holland the official statistics report only 4.86% of returnees. Individually, the allocation by camp is as follows:

Camp	Deportees	Returnees
Auschwitz:	60,185	1,052
Theresienstadt:	4,771	1,980
Bergen-Belsen:	3,742	2,050
Sobibór:	34,313	18[1048]

As far as the 75,721 Jews deported from France are concerned, only 2,560 returned according to the official count. There were only two returnees[1049] out of the 3,500[1050] persons deported to Sobibór.

Several explanations present themselves for the small number of returnees. They are not mutually exclusive and may well all apply, each to a greater or lesser degree:

1. Many of these Jews remained in the Soviet Union voluntarily.
2. Many of the Jews later emigrated to Palestine, the U.S., or other countries, either directly or indirectly after a brief stay in their countries of origin.
3. The countries of origin grossly falsified the statistics in order to massively pile blame on the Germans.

[1048] J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 199.
[1049] J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 198.
[1050] This is the figure given by J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 218. According to S. Klarsfeld, 2,001 Jews from France were deported to Sobibór (*op. cit.*, note 64).

4. The Germans liquidated the Jews concerned before retreating.
5. The Jews concerned were retained in the USSR against their will after the war.

Let us briefly examine the individual arguments:

1) The number of Jews from Western Europe who would have voluntarily chosen to remain in the USSR was probably very small. It is unlikely that Jews from Germany, Holland, or France would have wanted to remain in a totalitarian country devastated by the war – unless they had very personal reasons, such as a marriage with a local partner.

2) This hypothesis is much more convincing than the preceding one, especially in the case of France. Only 22,691 Jews from the 67,693 deported from the Drancy camp actually had French citizenship. The remainder consisted of foreign Jews (German, Polish, Russian, Romanian) who had emigrated to France[64] and had lived there more or less legally. These people probably did not have strong emotional ties to France.

On the other hand, it is impossible that the 8,000 Parisian Jews mentioned above, who had taken refuge with the Red Army, should have belonged exclusively or even largely to this group and then emigrated overseas without exception. There is no mention anywhere in the French literature on this subject concerning the return of even one such French Jew from the USSR, which is at least an indication that there were no (or only very few) such returnees.

Hypothesis 2 breaks down completely when we consider the Jews deported from Holland. They were for the most part Dutch citizens, formed one of the most strongly assimilated groups of Jews in Europe, did not have marked Zionist tendencies, and had not suffered from anti-Semitism in their country before the war. Moreover, Holland had not sustained serious material damage during the conflict and promised to become rapidly the wealthy country it had been before the war. Hence, most Dutch Jews had neither an ideological nor an economic incentive to emigrate.

3) There are no indications in the sense that official western European agencies would have consciously falsified their statistics.

4) We may also exclude the idea that the Germans massacred the Jews before retreating. As A. Butz has rightly remarked, such crimes would not have gone unnoticed, and the victorious powers could have presented at Nuremberg hard evidence for mass murder rather than rely-

ing on the nonsensical tale of the "gas chambers."[1051] (We can obviously not exclude excesses by desperate German soldiers under the circumstances they faced.)

5) We believe that this explanation is very convincing for the following reason:

Soon after the end of the war, the legend of the disappearance of the European Jewry in annihilation camps was declared an official truth. The alleged extermination of the Jews was one of the central pillars of the Nuremberg trial. It is obvious that this legend was extremely useful for the victors: the worse the atrocities that could be laid at the feet of the Third Reich, the more convincing the claim of the Allies of having saved Europe from the claws of Satan.

The governments of the USA and Great-Britain, faced with accusations by right-wingers of having given up half of Europe to Soviet totalitarianism, could easily counter this with the argument that communism certainly was the lesser of two evils by invoking the death camps, the gas chambers, and six million Jewish victims. Furthermore and by so doing, they were easily able to hide their own crimes, especially the carpet bombing of German cities and the massive ethnic cleansing going on in Eastern Europe at that time, behind the smoke-screen of the far more horrible deeds allegedly committed by the vanquished.

What is even more significant in this regard is the fact that the "Holocaust" provided the ideological backing for the justification of the foundation of Israel. In 1948 the United Nations pronounced themselves with 33 votes (against 13) in favor of the partition of Palestine. In line with the USA, the USSR also voted for partition and for the foundation of a Jewish state, cherishing no doubt the (unfounded) hope that such a state would become a bridgehead for the Soviets in the Near East, in view of the sympathies of many Jews for the communist idea.[1052]

The partition of Palestine infringed in an unbelievably brutal way on the rights of the local population. This could be justified by invoking the "Nazi genocide of the Jews" and its "six million victims": a people that had undergone such indescribable suffering needed a state of its

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[1051] A. Butz, *op. cit.* (note 988), p. 271.

[1052] This point of view is confirmed by historian Geoffrey Robert who writes: "After the war a de facto alliance developed between the Soviet Union and the nascent Israeli state. […] The Soviets did not trust Arab nationalism […] and they saw Zionism as a useful counter to Western influence in the Middle East." G. Roberts, *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War*, Yale University Press, New Haven/London 2006, p. 339.

own, even if the rights of another people had to be trampled upon in the process.

If the tale of the gassing of the Jews in "extermination camps" was to be believed world-wide, the deported German, French, Belgian, Greek, and other Jews could not be allowed to return home in droves and tell others about their lives as forced laborers or ghetto inmates in the East. Our hypothesis hence reads as follows:

Stalin's government saw to it that the western Jews who had been deported into the eastern areas and had survived the hardships of wartime were removed without a trace and were unable to communicate with friends or relatives. This meant, first of all, that they had to be moved from the western regions of the USSR into eastern areas of the country which were essentially hidden from the outside world. Such a migration could easily be accomplished within the mass deportations of 1949 described by the *American Jewish Yearbook*. We do not believe that these Jews were killed, but we assume that they disappeared in camps they would never leave.

Such a step allowed Stalin to consolidate the myth of the extermination of Jews in "gas chambers." It thus killed two birds with one stone: Stalin was able to take on the role of a savior who had freed half of Europe from a monstrous dictatorship, while at the same time enabling the foundation of Israel which he – erroneously – regarded as a Soviet outpost in the Near East.[1053]

If this hypothesis were correct, did the leaders of the Zionist movement know about what was happening in the USSR? The only possible answer is "yes," because this organization had enough informants all over the world to be kept abreast of what was going on locally. It would be naïve to argue that the Zionists would surely have decried such an inhumane policy of the Soviets. For these people, the main objective, which dominated all other considerations, was the foundation of a Jewish state in the Near East, and in order to reach that goal they were unhesitatingly prepared to sacrifice tens or hundreds of thousands of their own brethren.

[1053] In his book *Fälschung, Dichtung und Wahrheit über Hitler und Stalin* (Olzog, Munich 2004, p. 339), the late German historian Prof. Dr. Werner Maser expressed a similar hypothesis: "It was no topic for many of them [Stalin's propagandists] that Stalin represented the up to two million[!] Jews, who after the war could no longer return to their places of origin from the USSR because they had lost their lifelihood there, as victims of the National Socialist regime contrary to the truth." Editor's remark.

We remind our readers of the fact that the Zionists fired up the anti-Jewish atmosphere in Germany after Hitler's ascent to power by preaching a boycott of German products, in spite of the obvious repercussions such an attitude would have for the Jews in Germany. The Jewish writer Josef Gideon Burg has described the Zionist policy in the following words:[1054]

> *"This appears to me like a situation in a circus where a few pranksters would be throwing stones at a lion between whose teeth his tamer has just placed his head. They are quite safe, because there is, after all, an ocean or a cage between them and the danger."*

Burg was right: The Zionist leadership always considered their Jewish foot-soldiers to be expendable.

We believe that our hypothesis is the only one to explain the facts in a convincing way. A decision on its validity, however, will have to wait for the opening of the Russian archives – if that should ever occur. For the time being, though, it seems that this will not take place in the near future.

[1054] Josef G. Burg, *Schuld und Schicksal. Europas Juden zwischen Henkern und Heuchlern*, Verlag K. W. Schütz, Pr. Oldendorf 1990, p. 75.

11. The Demjanjuk Case

11.1. Hunting Down Old Men

The peace agreements signed in Westphalia in 1648 ended the most frightful war Europe had lived through up to that time. Among the conditions the former warring powers had agreed on was a complete amnesty for any and all violent crimes committed during the conflict. Article 2 of the Osnabrück Agreement of 24 October 1648 read as follows:[1055]

> *"That there shall be on the one side and the other a perpetual Oblivion, Amnesty, or Pardon of all that has been committed since the beginning of these Troubles, in what place, or what manner soever the Hostilitys have been practis'd, in such a manner, that no body, under any pretext whatsoever, shall practice any Acts of Hostility, entertain any Enmity, or cause any Trouble to each other; neither as to Persons, Effects and Securitys, neither of themselves or by others, neither privately nor openly, neither directly nor indirectly, neither under the colour of Right, nor by the way of Deed, either within or without the extent of the Empire, notwithstanding all Covenants made before to the contrary: That they shall not act, or permit to be acted, any wrong or injury to any whatsoever; but that all that has pass'd on the one side, and the other, as well before as during the War, in Words, Writings, and Outrageous Actions, in Violences, Hostilitys, Damages and Expences, without any respect to Persons or Things, shall be entirely abolish'd in such a manner that all that might be demanded of, or pretended to, by each other on that behalf, shall be bury'd in eternal Oblivion."*

The signatories to the peace treaty of Osnabrück thus did not want to perpetuate the wounds caused during the war, but to heal them. That was a wise thing to do.

When Napoleon had been beaten by a great European coalition, he was not tried and hanged as an "aggressor" or "war criminal," but simp-

[1055] See http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/westphal.asp

ly banished to Elba. After he had succeeded in leaving the island and in collecting once again a large army which then lost the decisive battle of Waterloo, he was, once again, not condemned and hanged but merely banished once more – this time, though, to the remote island of St. Helena which made any return impossible. In doing so, the victors made sure that Napoleon could never again constitute a danger – his honor remained untouched. At that time the Occident valued highly such things as chivalry and the respect for a courageous enemy.

All the more so, no one would have dreamed of pursuing a subject of the French emperor for "war crimes" and certainly not decades after the act – be it real or imagined. The thought that a French officer, ninety years of age, could have had to appear before a court in 1874 for having shot Spanish *guerrilleros* in 1809, when he was twenty-five years old, would certainly have been viewed as something completely absurd to a European citizen of the 19th century.

With the triumph of "democracy" and "human rights" in 1945, however, all this changed completely. The sinister farce mounted at Nuremberg, in which the victors who themselves had committed heinous crimes against humanity, hypocritically took on the role of judges over the vanquished, sending the latter to the gallows or behind prison walls on the basis of laws decreed *ex post facto*, amounted to the refusal of any idea of chivalry. We may believe, though, that at the time, in the immediate post war years, few people would have supposed that such trials of men who had unfortunately been on the losing side would still be held over five dozen years later.

John Demjanjuk's martyrium is unfortunately not an exception. For 11 years now Erich Priebke, born in 1913, has been under house arrest in Italy, because 65 years ago he had to shoot two hostages close to Rome. In March 1944, after a terrorist attack by communist guerillas had claimed the lives of 33 German policemen (plus several Italian civilians), Adolf Hitler personally ordered to shoot ten hostages for every policeman killed. The reprisal was carried out the day after the attack. The victims were for the most part men who were already in prison for underground activities. Women or children were not among them.

Sixty men had to take part in the reprisal shootings, among them seven officers. One of them was Erich Priebke. If he had refused to obey, he himself would have been shot:[1056]

[1056] Erich Priebke, Paolo Giachini, *Vae victis. Autobiografia*, Associazione Uomo e Liberta, Rome 2003, p. 125.

> *"*[Chief of execution SS captain] *Schuetz gathered the entire squad and warned: 'If anyone believes he doesn't have to shoot, then he can join the hostages straight away, because he will then be shot as well.'"*

His wife and children would have faced misery. So he did what he was asked to do. We must remember that at the time such reprisals were a common practice and as such condoned by the then rules of warfare, and they were practiced by the Italian army as well.[1057]

In 1948 a trial was held over the officers involved in the reprisal (NCOs and enlisted men had not even been prosecuted by the Italian authorities!). All defendants were acquitted, except for police chief Herbert Kappler who was sentenced for having caused another 10 hostages to be shot after the death of a 34th German policeman. This was considered to have been an excess on his part. At that time Erich Priebke, who had escaped from British captivity some months before, lived in the mountains of Southern Tyrol, unknown to the judicial authorities. This was unfortunate, as it should turn out, because he would otherwise have been acquitted just like his officer comrades, which would have saved himself the tragedy that ensued decades later.

After the war Priebke emigrated with his family to Argentina, where a Jewish journalist hunted him down in 1994. He was extradited to Italy a year later and tried in 1996, but acquitted because of the statute of limitations. A band of mostly Jewish hooligans then occupied the premises and took the judges hostage. After "hectic negotiations with the Jewish community,"[1058] "justice" minister Flick ordered a retrial. In 1998, after a series of appeals, the 85-year-old defendant was sentenced to life imprisonment, in keeping with the demands of the Jewish organizations. Magnanimously he was allowed to serve his time in house arrest. Ever since he has been living in the house of his lawyer and friend Paolo Giacchini and lacks nothing but his freedom. When he goes for a walk, the man, now 96 years old, is always accompanied by two *Carabinieri*.[1059]

[1057] For this see the legal expert report by Karl Siegert, "Reprisals and Orders from Higher Up," in: G. Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 32), pp. 530-550.

[1058] *Il Messagero*, 2 August 1996.

[1059] For this see E. Priebke, P. Giachini, *op. cit.* (note 1056); German: *ibid.*, 2005; Pierangelo Maurizio, Via Rasella, *Cinquant' anni di menzogne*, Maurizio Editione, Roma 1996; Mario Spataro, *Repressaglia*, edizione Settimo Sigillo, Roma 1996; Gernot Gysecke, *Der Fall Priebke*, Verlagsgesellschaft Berg, Berg am Starnberger See 1997.

Anyone fighting and killing on the victors' side during the Second World War had nothing to fear, even if he had killed not just two but more than one hundred thousand people. Paul Tibbets, the Hiroshima bomber pilot who killed some 70,000 Japanese civilians by pressing a button – tens of thousands would die later after painful sufferings caused by radioactivity – received any number of medals and continued his career, ending it as a brigadier general.[1060] Just like Erich Priebke, Tibbets had acted under orders, but unlike Priebke he would not have risked his life by refusing to obey the order given to him. He merely would have risked being demoted and a dishonorable discharge from the army. As opposed to Priebke, he never uttered a word of regret for his victims.

The vertiginous moral and civilizing progress assured to the western world by the victory of democracy in 1945 manifests itself in Germany today through the hunt for old men, which continues merrily on its way. To illustrate this, a news item from November 2009 may be quoted:[1061]

> *"A 90-year-old former member of an elite Waffen SS unit has been charged with killing 58 Hungarian Jews who were forced to kneel beside an open pit before being shot and tumbling into their mass grave.*
>
> *The man, named in the German press as Adolf Storms, becomes the latest pensioner to be prosecuted for alleged Nazi war crimes as courts rush to secure convictions before the defendants become too infirm and the witness testimony too unreliable.*
>
> *Mr. Storms was found by accident last year, as part of a research project by Andreas Forster, a 28-year-old student at the University of Vienna.*
>
> *The case against him was led by Ulrich Maass who is also the prosecutor in the trial of Heinrich Boere, 88, who is accused of shooting three Dutch resistance fighters.* […]
>
> *Mr. Storms was a member of the 5th Panzer Wiking Division which fought on the Eastern Front, moving through Ukraine into the Caucasus, taking part in a bloody fight for Grozny and the tank battles of Kharkov and Kursk before wheeling back through Eastern Europe. By most accounts it left a trail of bodies behind.*

[1060] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Tibbets

[1061] "Ex-SS trooper Adolf Storms charged over mass shooting of Jews," *The Times*, 18 November 2009 (www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article6920433.ece).

By the spring of 1945 the unit was heading to Austria with the intention of surrendering to the Americans rather than to the Red Army. But first the Wiking Division, led in the early days by General Felix Steiner, who is still revered among neo-Nazis, decided to clean up the evidence against it and eliminate the slave labourers who had dug its fortifications and defensive lines.
According to a statement issued by the regional court in Duisburg, where Mr. Storms has spent most of his retirement, 57 of the 58 victims were killed near the Austrian village of Deutsch Schuetzen. The mass grave there was excavated in 1995 by the Austrian Jewish association and the bodies given proper funerals."

For comparison: Winston Churchill, the main responsible for the bombardment of Dresden, which turned a city overflowing with masses of refugees into a sea of flames, was presented the Karl prize of the city of Aachen ten years later!

11.2. The OSI

Jimmy Carter, president of the United States of America from January 1977 through January 1981, stressed again and again that his major goal was the establishment of human rights. We will not deny that Carter, while in office as well as later on, has many achievements to his credit. He also bears the responsibility, however, for a political decision which was to have horrible consequences for many innocent people. In 1979 he approved the establishment of the Office of Special Investigations, which had been requested a year earlier by Elizabeth Holtzman, a Jewish congresswoman. The task of this office, operating within the U.S. Ministry of Justice, was the detection of "Nazi criminals" on American soil.

The German edition of the internet encyclopedia *Wikipedia* describes the OSI in the following terms:[1062]

"The OSI was attributed greater authority than any other department. Its agents could carry out themselves any necessary steps – from the initial investigations up to an eventual trial in court – they were allowed to negotiate directly with foreign governments and request the support of other U.S. agencies."

[1062] http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Office_of_Special_Investigations

Since its founding this agency has focused on revoking the U.S. citizenship of immigrants of German or east European origin for alleged "Nazi crimes," although more often than not these crimes are freely invented and even though these immigrants have lived in the U.S. for decades as peaceful and law-abiding citizens. Once these people are no longer U.S. citizens, they can be expelled at will or be extradited to states which want to prosecute them.

It is interesting to note that the OSI seems to be solidly in Jewish hands: ever since 1995, it has been headed by Eli Rosenbaum of Jewish faith, his deputy is Ronnie L. Edelman,[1063] of Jewish faith as well. Rosenbaum's predecessor was Neal Sher,[1064] likewise a Jew, as was the OSI chief investigator Edwards Stutman who died in 2005 and who had managed to have Demjanjuk stripped once again of his U.S. citizenship after the latter's acquittal in Israel and return to the United States.[1065] In other words: a revengeful minority within the U.S. government is allowed to further its own political agenda at free will.

The U.S. revisionist Andrew Allen has compiled an impressive documentation on the procedures of the OSI, how the agency fabricates incriminating evidence and suppresses exonerating material, using as an example the case of Martin Bartesch, a German-American.[1066] The most prominent victim of this sinister organization, however, is the Ukrainian-American John (Ivan) Demjanjuk.

11.3. Demjanjuk's Extradition to Israel and His Trial

First of all we shall offer the reader a few facts concerning Demjanjuk's biography. For the most part they have been taken from Hans Peter Rullmann's excellent documentation *Der Fall Demjanjuk* (The Demjanjuk Case).[1067] Born Ivan Demjanjuk in Ukraine in 1920, he joined the Soviet Red Army and was taken prisoner by the Germans in 1942. He

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[1063] www.justice.gov/opa/pr/Pre_96/February95/81.txt.html

[1064] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neal_Sher

[1065] Obituaries: "Edward Stutman, Prosecuted Nazis in US," *Washington Post*, 30 September 2005. "His identity as an American Jew was also extremely important."

[1066] Andrew Allen, "Die US-Nazijäger vom OSI und der Holocaust-Mythos," *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, 5(4) (2001), pp. 428ff.; Engl.: "The Office of Special Investigations and the Holocaust Myth," https://codoh.com/library/document/the-office-of-special-investigations-and-the/.

[1067] Hans Peter Rullmann, *Der Fall Demjanjuk. Unschuldiger oder Massenmörder?,* Verlag für ganzheitliche Forschung und Kultur, Viöl 1987.

was initially assigned to railroad repair work and was later moved to the PoW camp at Chełm in eastern Poland. After the war he lived in Germany for a few years, married a Ukrainian woman, and emigrated to the U.S. in 1952, where he found employment in the automobile industry and was naturalized in 1958.

The fact that Demjanjuk, together with other exiles, became active in an anti-communist Ukrainian movement in his new home state of Ohio would lead to his doom. A certain Emil Hanusiak who worked for the pro-Soviet newspaper *News from Ukraine* habitually published articles in which the Ukrainian exiles were blackened as "Nazi collaborators." In 1975 Demjanjuk became a target for Hanusiak's aims. He saw himself accused of having been a guard at the Sobibór Camp during the war.

Concerning the background of the campaign against the automobile worker, the Israeli lawyer Yoram Sheftel, who would later prevent Demjanjuk from ending up on the gallows in Jerusalem, had this to say:[1068]

> *"Since 1987, when it became widely known that I had joined Demjanjuk's defense team, I have been asked often what it was that could possibly have motivated the Soviet Union to malign this man, who in 1976 had been a blue-collar laborer at the Ford plant in Cleveland, and, to all intents and purposes, a perfectly nondescript sort of man. My answer has always been that the objective was not the specific man, John Demjanjuk. The Soviet objective, as far as I was concerned, was to cause a rift between the Jewish and the Ukrainian communities in North America. Because, despite the many difficult and painful memories of strained relations between the Jews and the Ukrainians, these two communities were beginning to cooperate in anti-Soviet activity. And it was causing considerable concern to the Soviet leaders in the Kremlin and their agents in North America, especially a certain Michael Hanusiak* […]. *The Soviets, therefore, decided to nip the Jewish-Ukrainian 'conspiracy' in the bud. The Soviet success with the Demjanjuk plot was complete. From the very beginning, Demjanjuk had cried out that he had never been a guard in any extermination camp, that all the Soviet accusations were no more than a vicious lie. As a result, much of the Ukrainian community in North America closed ranks around him.*

[1068] Yoram Sheftel, *Defending 'Ivan the Terrible.' The Conspiracy to convict John Demjanjuk*, Regnery Publishing, Washington 1996, pp. ix, x.

> *Not surprisingly, the Jewish community stood firmly on the other side – Demjanjuk's plea of innocence were seen as just another anti-Semitic Ukrainian lie. Inevitably, a deep rift between the two communities developed, to the obvious glee of the Soviets."*

This is a most convincing explanation. In 1976, the U.S. Immigration Service started investigating the Demjanjuk case. Gitta Sereny tells us:[1069]

> *"In Demjanjuk's case, the U.S. immigration authorities questioned the 12 survivors of the Sobibór Camp, then still living in the U.S., but not one of them was able to identify Demjanjuk. In April of 1976, the authorities sent 17 photos to Israel, including the photo for his 1951 entry visa.* […] *While none of the survivors there could identify Demjanjuk, it came as a surprise that several survivors of Treblinka felt that he was Ivan the Terrible, the gas-chamber guard of their nightmares. A few months later, in August of 1976, the Soviet authorities again became involved in the case. A Ukrainian newspaper* [the *News from Ukraine* already mentioned] *published a testimony, by then 30 years old, of a former Sobibór guard named Ignat Danilchenko which he had given in a Soviet war crimes trial. At the time, Danilchenko had said in court, the man in Sobibór he knew best had been a guard by the name of Ivan Demjanjuk who later served, like himself, as a guard in the concentration camp at Flossenbürg."*

Hanusiak's proof was an alleged service ID card issued to Demjanjuk in the Trawniki training camp where Ukrainian and other east European volunteers had been trained as concentration camp guards. The document states that Demjanjuk was assigned to Sobibór on 27 March 1943. It did not say anything about Demjanuk's alleged assignment to Treblinka. This "original document" was put at the disposal of the Israeli judiciary by the Soviets as late as December 1986, when Demjanjuk had already spent 9 months in a Jerusalem jail.

In an extensive study Dieter Lehner has advanced a number of arguments in favor of a thesis that this document is a gross falsification.[2] We will limit ourselves to the most important points:

1) The ID card contains obvious technical irregularities for this kind of document:[1070]

[1069] Gitta, Sereny, "Die falsche Schuld," *Die Zeit*, No. 44, 1992, www.zeit.de/1992/44/Die-falsche-Schuld

[1070] D. Lehner, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp. 16f.

"1. A combination of different fonts showing diverse characteristics. 2. Missing umlauts and umlauts of the letter 'ü' that have obviously been replaced in some other way. 3. The lines, especially those on the first page, are not parallel. 4. The special characters for 'Schutzstaffel' – SS – have different shapes and sizes. 5) The spelling of the word 'Grösse' has 'ss' instead of the correct 'ß.'"

2) According to the ID card, Demjanjuk was assigned to the L.G. (farm) at Okzow on 22nd Sept. 1942 and on 27th March 1943 to Sobibór. Lehner stresses that these indications do not show the termination of any of these assignments. A third assignment, either between or after the other two, cannot be found either.

   Lehner concludes:[1071]

   "Thus, it is left to the discretion of the observer, whether the holder of this ID card went directly from Okzow to Sobibór or whether he returned to Trawniki in between. If that was the case, we must ask when the guard came back from Okzow, who included the mention of 'Sobibór,' and why there is no mention of an assignment to 'Treblinka.' If eye witnesses allege to have seen him there, a corresponding entry should show up in the 'assignments' section of the ID card."

In other words, the ID card was, first of all, an obvious falsification and it would, secondly, not have provided any indication for a stay of the holder at Treblinka.

We do not know why the KGB – which certainly had at its disposal a host of experienced forgers – produced such an amateurish falsification, and there is no other suspect than the KGB in this case. We can of course exclude any involvement of the Israelis in this connection, because they would have been sure to produce a document in line with the statements of the witnesses to the effect that Demjanjuk had indeed been stationed at Treblinka rather than at Sobibór.

Although the U.S. judicial authorities at the time had at their disposal only a facsimile and although the ID card, as we have seen, did not prove Demjanjuk's presence at Treblinka, they decided to recognize its validity.

After Demjanjuk had been stripped of his American citizenship in 1981, he was extradited to Israel in February of 1986 – a country which did not even exist at the operational time of Treblinka Camp.

[1071] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

The only two prominent U.S. citizens who mustered up enough courage for Demjanjuk's defense were Patrick Buchanan – who compared the Demjanjuk case to the Dreyfus affair[1072] – and the House member James Traficant. The active support Traficant showed for the persecuted man, plus his critical opinion towards the Jewish lobby in the United States, were probably the reasons why Traficant had to go to prison for seven years in 2002 on maybe trumped-up charges of corruption and tax evasion.[1073] Right after his release from prison in 2009, he announced that he wanted to appear as a witness for the defense during the pending trial against Demjanjuk in Germany.[1074]

The trial started in February of 1987, one year after Demjanjuk's extradition. It was originally planned to use a football stadium for this purpose, but in the end the Israeli authorities opted for a movie theater. The media lost no time to fan a general hysteria, and the Israeli schools were compelled to deal with the trial.

It is obvious that the Israelis, just like the Soviets before them, were not interested in Demjanjuk as a person. The trial was primarily meant to feed the persecution psychosis of the Jews both in Israel and abroad and to align them unhesitatingly behind the state of Israel as the only bulwark of the Jews against any renewal of the "Holocaust." It also served as a useful tool for diverting the world's attention from the ruthless Israeli policy towards the Palestinians. Aside from that, the ensuing show trial was an ideal means of fomenting hatred against the Ukrainian people with which, according to Dov Ben-Meir, the Speaker of the Knesseth at the time, the Jews have a long open account to settle.

The account he referred to dates back to the 17th century. At that time the Cossacks under Bogdan Chmelnitzki revolted against Polish domination in western Ukraine and defeated the Poles in two major battles (1648 and 1649). There were also anti-Jewish pogroms during the revolt, primarily because the Polish masters had entrusted the collection of taxes from the local population to Jewish collectors, who subsequently had come to be hated by the Ukrainians. The revisionist Arnulf Neumaier notes:[1075]

> *"The circumstance that the Monster of Treblinka had to be a Ukrainian probably has historical roots in the time when the Cos-*

[1072] *The Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, Ohio, 1 October 1986.
[1073] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Traficant
[1074] Fox News, 10 September 2009.
[1075] Arnulf Neumaier, "The Treblinka Holocaust," in: G. Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 32), p. 474.

sacks liberated the western part of the Ukraine from Jewish oppressors and tax-collectors. Oaths of vengeance and instinctive hatred à la the Old Testament survive for centuries."

Neumaier's view seems to be correct, for when the president of the organization "Americans for Human Rights in Ukraine," Bozhena Olzhaniwsky, in a courteous letter to the Knesseth president dated 18 September 1986 expressed her unease about the way the Israeli legal authorities had been handling the Demjanjuk case, she received the following reply a few weeks later:[1076]

"At first I did not want at all to reply, because since the days of Bogdan Chmelnitzky, the Jewish people has a long score to settle with the Ukrainian people. […] *However, on second thought I reached the conclusion that an application such as yours, coming from an American citizen (even though of Ukrainian origin), must not remain without a response.* […] *To you and your friends, I suggest that you go to church not only on Sunday but also every day of the week, and that you kneel there until bleeding at the knees in asking forgiveness for what your people has done to ours."*

In defense of Israel we must state, however, that not all of its citizens approved Ben-Meir's primitive racial slurs. The writer Avraham Shifrin, for example, had some very harsh words to say to the Knesseth president.[1077]

During the trial, former detainees from Treblinka took the witness stand and recited the most sickening horror stories.[1078] The witness Eliyahu Rosenberg stated under oath:[1079]

"I saw him especially when I was working on the ramp every day, whenever consignments of Jews arrived for extermination. I saw him when he stood next to the gas chambers at the entrance to the corridor with a destructive instrument in his possession, such as a small short iron pipe, and a whip. He also wore a belt with his pistol. This shouldn't be so, all the destructive instruments together… I also saw that he had a dagger, I saw him with these destructive instruments, and how he would strike, lash, cut… these victims at the entrance to the gas chambers…. […] *They knew how to strike, to strike. We were already there, at that place, and we got used to the beatings.*

[1076] H.P. Rullmann, *op. cit.* (note 1067), pp. 202f.
[1077] *Ibid.*, pp. 206 ff.
[1078] Cf. the introduction to the present book.
[1079] Criminal Case No. 373/86, State of Israel vs. Ivan (John) Demjanjuk, Verdict, pp. 184ff.

> *But not to the tortures. God almighty, why tortures? Why cut living flesh from people? Nobody ordered them to do so, no one, he did it alone, on his own initiative. I never heard any German telling him to do that…* […]
> *I was there on the ramp. We had removed the bodies from the gas chambers, Ivan came out of his cabin, he saw how I was standing there, the place was full of corpses, he said to me… lower your trousers… lay down on them… I saw this incident, and in a second I understood: this was it, I was finished, either by the pipe in his hand or in another manner. Lefler (one of the German SS men) was standing there. He was standing and looking. I ran to him, I stood to attention and said to him (in German): Ivan wants me to have sexual relations with a dead woman. So then he went up to him and reprimanded him. Ivan only said to me (in Russian), I'll give it to you. He gave it to me and he found the opportunity."*

Eliyahu Rosenberg had a problem, however: it turned out that he had stated in writing in 1947 while in Vienna:[1080]

> *"The second of August 1943 was set as the day of the revolt.* […] *About three-thirty in the afternoon everything was prepared for the revolt.* […] *Then one of the water-carriers right then dashed into the barracks and yelled: 'Revolution in Berlin.' This was the signal.* […] *Thereupon some people rushed into the barracks of the Ukrainian guard detachment, where among others also the Ukrainian Ivan was sleeping, and killed the Ukrainians with shovels."*

As had been generally expected, the Israeli court pronounced the death sentence in April of 1988, yet it would not be a carried out. Even at such an early time too many inconvenient incidents had occurred, and Demjanjuk's lawyer Y. Sheftel used them as much as he could. (A gangster had poured acid into Sheftel's face in late 1988, a few days after another lawyer of the defense, Dov Eitan, had fallen from a sky scraper and died from the consequences of this tragic accident.) Sheftel eventually claimed to have identified the true "Ivan the Terrible," a certain Ivan Marchenko who had somehow disappeared.

The name Marchenko had originally been furnished by a former prostitute from the hamlet of Treblinka, near the camp, who had counted several of the Ukrainian guards among her clients during the war, Marchenko being one of them, but Sheftel found more evidence in the

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[1080] A photocopy of Rosenberg's statement is given by H.P. Rullmann, *op. cit.* (note 1067), pp. 133ff.

USRR. According to Soviet legal records, a Ukrainian by the name of Nikolai Shelayev – who had been sentenced to death and shot in 1952 for alleged crimes committed at Treblinka – had allegedly identified Marchenko as "the operator of the gas chambers at Treblinka." Shelayev's statements were confirmed by other former Treblinka guards, and an identity card for Marchenko came to light as well.

Under these circumstances the Israeli authorities would have been completely unable to justify Demjanjuk's execution. While they did attempt to prosecute him for crimes committed at Sobibór and Flossenbürg, there were no witnesses for such acts. Moreover, according to the U.S.-Israel extradition agreement, Demjanjuk could not even be prosecuted in these matters, as his extradition had been granted solely in connection with his alleged crimes at Treblinka. The incriminating ID card from Sobibór was not even mentioned in the sentence. In the end, John Demjanjuk was acquitted on appeal and was able to return to the U.S. in September of 1993. His citizenship was restored.[1081]

The juicy part of the story was that ever since 1979 the OSI had known of Demjanjuk's innocence. The German *Spiegel* journalist Carlos Widmann wrote in 1993:[1082]

> *"America's official Nazi hunters owe the fact that they did not burden their conscience with a judicial murder to two groups of people: to the Ukrainian associations which collected millions for Demjanjuk's defense and to Israel's supreme court which, in the end, used common sense. This debt will not be repaid.* […] *Since 1976 the Nazi hunters within the U.S. Department of Justice, who had been trying to sell Demjanjuk to the Israelis as a sadistic mass murderer, apparently knew all the time what was going on. As early as 1979 they had evidence from the USSR which demonstrated clearly that Ivan Demjanjuk was in no way 'Ivan the Terrible.' This evidence had been withheld by the agency from all parties concerned: from the U.S. court which stripped Demjanjuk of his American citizenship, from the Israeli court which sentenced him to death, and, quite naturally, also from the defense lawyers."*

[1081] For our description of the trial we relied upon Y. Sheftel, *op. cit.* (note 1068).

[1082] Carlos Widman, "Das Schreckliche an Iwan" (The terrible about Ivan), *Der Spiegel*, no 39/1993.

11.4. Demjanjuk's Extradition to Germany

It goes without saying that the OSI was unhappy with its defeat and was soon to start out again to have Demjanjuk, by now nearly 80 years old, once more removed from U.S. soil. The Internet encyclopedia Wikipedia summarizes the events as follows:[1083]

> *"Demjanjuk was put on trial again in 2001, and on February 21, 2002, Matia ruled that Demjanjuk had not produced any credible evidence of his whereabouts during the war and that the Justice Department had proved its case against him.*
>
> *On April 30, 2004, a three-judge panel of the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Demjanjuk could be again stripped of his U.S. citizenship because the Justice Department had presented 'clear, unequivocal, and convincing evidence' of Demjanjuk's service in Nazi death camps. The United States Supreme Court declined to hear his appeal in November 2004."*

In his 2002 decision judge Paul Matia had written:[1084]

> *"In serving at Sobibór, the defendant contributed to the process by which thousands of Jews were murdered by asphyxiation with carbon monoxide."*

We cannot decide whether Demjanjuk did serve at Sobibór or other NS camps. What can be said, though, is that in 1948, when demanding his recognition as a political refugee in Germany, and again during the interrogations preceding his extradition from the U.S. to Israel, he made certain unbelievable and contradictory statements. When he applied in 1948 for the status of a political refugee, he declared to have worked from 1937 (!) until January of 1943 as a farmer in "Sobibór, Chełm, Poland" and to have later been employed as a worker at Pillau, Danzig, and Munich until the end of the war.[1084] As there was indeed a farm near Sobibór, it is theoretically possible for Demjanjuk to have worked there (although certainly not from 1937), but it does not strike us as very likely. If, however, he was indeed assigned to the camp at Sobibór as a guard, this is a strong argument against the view of this camp as an "extermination centre," for in that case Demjanjuk would certainly have been bright enough not to mention this place in his application at all.

[1083] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Demjanjuk

[1084] Judge Paul Matia, United States District Court, Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, US of America versus John Demjanjuk. "Findings of Fact" (2002).

In his sentence of 2002, judge Matia claimed to possess documentary evidence proving that Demjanjuk had been stationed not only at Sobibór, but at Majdanek and Flossenbürg as well.[1084] Regarding Sobibór, as far as we know, there is no evidence other than the forged ID card issued at the Trawniki training camp. Judge Matia claims that documentary evidence was found in a Lithuanian archive proving Demjanjuk's presence as a guard at Majdanek in January of 1943. He is said to have been punished at the time for having left the camp to go shopping without being authorized to do so and in spite of a camp closure. Even though incriminating evidence from Soviet sources must *a priori* be viewed critically, we cannot exclude that Demjanjuk was actually at Majdanek. His stay at Flossenbürg, according to judge Matia, is confirmed by a German document from that camp.

To the extent that these documents are indeed authentic – something we are not in a position to judge, except for the Trawniki ID card shown decades ago as having been forged – Demjanjuk would indeed have misinformed the U.S. agencies before his emigration by hiding his activity as a guard. If he had owned up to this, not only would his application for a U.S. visa have been rejected, but he would also have run the risk of being extradited to the Soviet Union, which would have been tantamount to a death sentence. It is quite possible that Demjanjuk did not tell the truth during his interrogations by the American judicial authorities in 1976. Who would want to blame him for that? We must not forget that he was still running the risk of being extradited to the Soviet Union. That this fear was not at all unfounded is shown by the case of another Ukrainian, Fyodor Fedorenko, who was also accused by the Soviets of having served as a guard at Treblinka. Fedorenko was extradited to the USSR by the USA in 1984, sentenced to death in 1986, and executed by shooting a year later.[1085]

Once he had been stripped of his U.S. citizenship one more time, the U.S. authorities decided in 2005 that he was to be deported to Ukraine, to Poland, or to Germany. While both the Ukrainian and the Polish authorities refused to receive him (a sure indication that they did not have the slightest evidence to prosecute him for any crimes committed during the war!), Germany demanded his extradition in 2008, which was eventually accepted.

[1085] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fyodor_Fedorenko

11.5. The Run-Up to the Munich Trial

The trial of John Demjanjuk opened in Munich at the end of November 2009. In the weeks before it began, some sobering remarks were made in Germany. A press release of 17 November by the *Südwestrundfunk* said:[1086]

> *"Experts doubt* […] *that Demjanjuk will be convicted. The Dutch jurist Christiaan Rüter* […] *does not believe in a conviction. For years Germany has not prosecuted low-ranking camp guards like Demjanjuk, and if there were trials, they resulted in acquittals. If that has been legal practice for years, the Munich court could not suddenly diverge from it.* […] *For its 50th anniversary the Central Agency* [for the prosecution of NS crimes] *needed something special, a famous name for it to occupy center stage once again – that was his* [Rüter's] *provocative thesis. According to this not legal but political arguments would have brought about the investigation and the trial against Demjanjuk."*

How true!

Whether the Munich court will bring itself to pronouncing an acquittal in uncertain. Considering the enormous political pressure exerted on the court, we fear that this will not be the case. Before the trial started, it became known that "close to 40 joint plaintiffs have been accepted, all of them family members of people murdered at Sobibór."[1087] There is no better proof for our thesis that the real purpose of the trial is the promotion of the "Holocaust" hysteria and the further cementation of the legally prescribed view of history, because not a single one of the 40 joint plaintiffs can contribute anything to the questions the court must answer: firstly whether Demjanjuk was ever stationed at Sobibór at all, and more importantly whether he committed any crimes there.

[1086] "Der Fall Ivan Demjanjuk," Südwestrundfunk, 17 Nov. 2009 (www.swr.de/presseservice/archiv/2009/-/id=4288020/nid=4288020/did=5628852/1lr9xku/index.html)

[1087] www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/386/494719/text/

12. Conclusions

12.1. The Moral Responsibility of the Camp Personnel

Our conclusions are absolutely clear: Sobibór was not an extermination camp; it had no "gassing building" and hence no homicidal gas chambers. Some 10,000 people may have died there; such a figure would amount to one twenty-fifth of the figure of 250,000 victims widely quoted in the literature, or to one seventeenth of the figure of 170,000 given by J. Schelvis in the revised edition of his book, or to one fifteenth of the "minimum number" of 150,000 victims assumed by the Hagen court in 1966.

If our thesis is correct – and we are convinced that it is – and if Sobibór was a transit camp for Jews being moved into areas further east, we must obviously reassess the moral responsibility of the camp personnel, from the commanding officer on down to the Ukrainian guards who constituted the lowest echelon of the chain of command. It goes without saying that even in such a case the personnel involved did execute orders that constituted a gross violation of human rights, for no-one can argue against the fact that the deportation and expropriation of people on the sole basis of them being members of an ethnic or religious group and not for any individual wrongdoing is indeed a most serious transgression against human rights. On the other hand, these people were acting under orders, the execution of which they could not refuse without possibly endangering their own lives. It was not up to them to decide whether such orders were lawful or not, but the manner in which they executed them certainly was. Thus, the moral responsibility of the camp personnel hinges on the question as to whether or not they treated the detainees – during their short stay in the camp – as humanely as was possible under the prevailing circumstances, or whether they humiliated them; whether they made things bearable for the working Jews, or whether they did their part to create a little hell of their own for these people.

We cannot answer these questions in an unequivocal manner, as there is no documentary evidence describing the conditions in the Sobibór Camp. Witness testimony is totally unreliable; the witnesses have, without exception, lied with respect to the main point of the charges – the alleged mass killing of Jews (by means of a "black fluid," "chlorine," or engine-exhaust gases) – and we thus have no reason to believe their statements on the subject of any sadistic behavior of the camp personnel.

On the other hand, there are accounts whose veracity can hardly be disputed. Leon Feldhendler, who was interned at Sobibór from early 1943 until the uprising on 14 October of the same year,[1088] describes the living conditions of the Jewish artisans in the following words:[1089]

> *"In Camp I, Jewish tradesmen worked for the Germans – joiners, tailors, cobblers. They had their own barracks for sleeping in. There were 30 Germans and 180 Ukrainians. The tradesmen were living very nicely, in their workshops, they had comfortable quarters.* […] *Their daily rations consisted of half a kilogram of bread, soup, horsemeat, groats (from the transports) twice a week.* […] *Work: from 6.a.m. through 12 noon, an hour for lunch and then again work until 5 p.m.* […] *Time off between 5 and 10 p.m., at their discretion."*

It is a bit difficult to believe that the Jewish inmate Feldhendler would in any way have embellished conditions at Sobibór in order to whitewash the National Socialist system.

In view of these considerations we decide as follows: The camp personnel is to be acquitted of the main point of the indictment – the systematic murder of Jews – for manifest innocence, as well as of the secondary point – of willful ill-treatment of detainees – for lack of evidence.

We assume that euthanasia was practiced at Sobibór on a number of detainees (the feeble-minded or those having contagious diseases). In that case the SS men concerned would be guilty. Any alleged difficulties in providing sufficient food for the bulk of the population could be regarded as mitigating circumstances, but not as a justification. On the other hand, if euthanasia of the feeble-minded is presently considered in Western countries as "Nazi barbarism," we wish to call this a blatant and repulsive hypocrisy in view of the fact that these same countries al-

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[1088] J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 234.
[1089] N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 204.

low the piercing, the dismemberment, and the cauterization of an untold number of healthy babies in their mother's womb (some 25% of all pregnancies in the U.S. end with an abortion[1090]) and that in the U.S. many hundreds of abortions occur every year during the third trimester of pregnancy, when the baby is fully viable.[1091] People who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

12.2. "I am a Portion of that Force…"

Goethe has Mephistopheles say "I am a portion of that force which ever wills Evil and always creates Good." This also applies to those who, in 2000, entrusted Andrzej Kola, professor of archeology at the University of Torun, with soundings and diggings on the grounds of the Sobibór Camp. Professor Kola was obviously aware of the explosive power of whatever he would or would not find. He knew precisely what was expected of him. He consequently paid the required lip service to the Holocaust creed. Irrespective of the enormous pressure exercised upon him, he retained the necessary minimum of professional ethics preventing him from making use of falsifications. Even though he does not say so in so many words, his findings do not leave the least doubt in respect of the fact that the "gassing building" described by the "witnesses" did not exist – and if there was no such building, the whole matter is resolved.

Professor Kola also did not open any mass graves and did not assess the amount of any human remains. This, again, speaks for itself, as does the fact that he carefully avoided to compare the results of his investigations with any witness testimonies. The enormous T-shaped barrack (Object E) with its longitudinal dimension of 60 to 80 meters as well as Object A, a building equipped with a furnace, confront the mainstream "Holocaust"-historians with insurmountable problems and strengthen the revisionist thesis of Sobibór the transit camp.

Up to the year 2001 revisionists were limited to maintaining that the official Sobibór version was absolutely unbelievable. The orthodox thesis involved a load of contradictions which it was unable to resolve: the lack of any documentary evidence in respect of an extermination policy, the absurdities in the witnesses' accounts, the fact that after the liquida-

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[1090] In the 1980s, it was as high as some 35%, but the percentage has been shrinking ever since; see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abortion_statistics_in_the_United_States.

[1091] See www.lifeandlibertyforwomen.org/issues/issues_partial_birth_abortions.html.

tion of the camp the surrounding forests showed no significant decrease in area (where did the fuel for the cremation of the alleged 150,000 to 250,000 corpses come from?).

Ever since the publication of professor Kola's results, however, the story of the gassing of Jews at Sobibór has moved from the realm of the unlikely into the realm of the impossible. Even if professor Kola may not have set out to accomplish this voluntarily, he has earned our gratitude.

12.3. The Emperor's New Clothes

For a naïve observe it would be possible to argue as follows: The Hagen court has accepted a figure of "at least 150,000" for the number of victims at Sobibór, the leading specialist on the camp, Jules Schelvis, opted for 170,000 victims. This figure of 150,000 to 170,000 amounts to a mere 2.5 to 3% of the infamous figure of "six million" and is not really needed to maintain the thesis of the Holocaust. Could not the orthodox historians under the circumstances give up the claim of the Sobibór gas chambers and concede this point to the revisionists?

They cannot. First of all, the existence of gas chambers at Sobibór has been "proved" at three trials in Germany – Berlin in 1950, Frankfurt upon Main in 1950, and Hagen in 1965/66 – and is thus judicially notorious. At these trials, eight men were condemned to prison terms ranging from three years to life imprisonment. Of the latter, one (Erich Bauer) died in prison after 31 years, another (Hubert Gomerski) spent 22 years behind bars before he was pardoned, and the third (Karl Frenzel) remained in prison for 16 years. If the German judiciary were to admit that blatant miscarriage of justice had taken place at all three Sobibór trials, all other cases of such "Nazi crimes" would be up for review, because all trials of camp personnel had followed the same route as these trials: "We have sworn witness testimonies, why do we need forensic or documentary proof?"

Let us take this a step further: If the judiciary and the historians have "made a mistake" on Sobibór, what reason is there to believe the claims made in connection with the other camps of *Aktion Reinhardt*? If Sobibór falls, then so does Bełżec, where professor Kola has also carried out investigations leading to the same conclusions. Who will then believe the claims for Treblinka?

The Majdanek Camp – which was attributed 1.5 million victims at Nuremberg[1092] – can no longer be called an "extermination camp": the head of the history department of the Majdanek Museum, Tomasz Kranz, brought the number of victims down to 78,000 in 2005[1093] – a figure which is still too high by at least 28,000.[1094]

The smallest and least well known of the six "extermination camps," Chełmno, where 150,000 Jews were allegedly killed in "gas vans," cannot in any way fill the void caused by the loss of the "Reinhardt camps." Thus, only Auschwitz remains, the flagship of Holocaust propaganda and its weakest point, its Achilles heel, if there ever was one. In the face of the wide-ranging investigations of the revisionists, which have demonstrated time and again the complete lack of credibility of the official Auschwitz story, these "Holocaust" historians would in any kind of open debate find themselves beating a dead horse.

No, Sobibór cannot be given up, because that would cause a chain reaction bringing down the whole mendacious structure of the Holocaust like a house of cards. Hence, these historians cannot but close their eyes to the results of the archeological diggings and soundings and act like the crowd that praised the emperor's new clothes in Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale, even though everyone who was able to see saw that his Majesty was naked.

12.4. The Moloch

"Who can stand firm under the pressure and in the face of powerful Jewish organizations and their campaigns? Practically, no one. These institutions' hold on to the media, their perpetual moaning and recriminations, their systematic recourse to blackmail, their practice of telling lies designed to throw others off the track, the fear that they inspire (metus Judaeorum), their frenzy (be it real or make-believe) and their contempt of those who do not belong to the chosen people end up sweeping aside all obstacles. In order, suddenly, for such organizations not to be strictly obeyed it takes some exception-

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1092 *IMT*, Vol. VII, p. 590.

1093 Tomasz Kranz, "Ewidencja zgonów i śmiertelność więźniów KL Lublin," in: *Zeszyty Majdanka*, no 23 (2005), pp. 7-53.

1094 See Jürgen Graf, "Official Reductions of the Majdanek Death Toll", in: J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *Concentration Camp Majdanek*, 3rd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2016, pp. 260-274.

al historical circumstances. Then the humiliated, maligned, duped or colonized goyim take the risk of holding up their heads and, sometimes, go so far as to rebel against their tyrants. The hoax or religion of the 'Holocaust' has progressively built itself up since its beginning with rabbinical lies born in Central Europe; thereafter, with the aid of war propaganda, these inventions were exported to Western Europe (including the neutral countries, the Vatican and bodies like the International Red Cross). Once in place, they spread throughout the United States, where they benefitted from the staging provided by Hollywood and the rest of the media. They came back with all the more force from 1945 onwards to pour into the heart of Europe. They strongly contributed to the creation of the State of Israel, a source of conflicts to come. They poisoned the post war world. The ferment of hatred that an imposture of these dimensions leaves in people's minds infects our society still nowadays. Prodigious financial extortions, grounded in intimidation or blackmail, have for half a century been feeding the trade, the business, the industry of the Shoah. One would almost say that the heads of these Jewish groups had done their best to strengthen, for the anti-Semites' satisfaction, all the stereotypes of the Jew as a liar, a crook, alternately whining and arrogant, crying out for vengeance till the end of time and everywhere demanding his pound of flesh. These Jews have resurrected Shylock." — Robert Faurisson[1095]

The foundation of the state of Israel in 1948 was an anachronism. Great-Britain had just granted independence to India; dozens of Asian and African territories were attempting ever harder to shed the white man's rule. Yet at that very moment of de-colonization, the Jews in Palestine were permitted to launch a colonial venture of their own – with the blessings of both the USA and the Soviet Union. The reason given was the allegedly incomparable suffering of the Jewish people during the Second World War.

When the reputation of the Zionist state had reached a low point in the 1980s because of the terror exercised in Lebanon by the Israeli invaders and their local henchmen, Israel was careful to have its fifth column in the USA stir up the case of John Demjanjuk who was labeled "Ivan the Terrible" and "The super-devil of Treblinka." He was subsequently extradited to Israel where a carefully orchestrated show trial

[1095] Robert Faurisson, *Pope Pius XII's Revisionism*, Historical Review Press, Uckfield 2006, pp. 49f.

was staged against him. The result was that the world media now spoke of the "Treblinka gassings" rather than about the massacres against Palestinians. Although the trial resulted eventually in Demjanjuk's acquittal – thanks mainly to the courageous efforts of Yoram Sheftel, his Israeli lawyer – this did not in any way impair the picture of "Treblinka, the extermination camp" that had been implanted in the mind of the public.

When the bloodthirsty terror of the Israeli army in the Gaza strip had caused world-wide disgust in late 2008 and early 2009, John Demjanjuk, now 89 years old, had to be dragged once again onto the propaganda stage. His trial in Germany, which is taking place while this book is prepared for publication, will bring the Holocaust into the limelight one more time.

The zeal of the German authorities to bring an old man to trial, although nothing concrete is there to justify this, cannot be explained solely by the proverbial servility of the German puppet state towards Israel and Zionist organizations. The German ruling class needs the Holocaust more than anything else for its own survival. It needs it to nip in the bud any kind of resurgence of German self-esteem, to block the rise of any national forces and ideas, and hence to remain in power.

In order to demonstrate over and over again to the German people as a whole and to young Germans in particular the abject character of the National Socialist system, the "freest state in German history" has required, ever since it came into being, a never-ending stream of Nazi monsters as proof of the abominable state of mind of the German generation of WWII.

We will give a striking example of this policy: In 1984 the German magazine *Stern* arranged for a disgusting farce by setting up a meeting between Toivi Blatt and the former SS-*Oberscharführer* Karl Frenzel. The latter, born in 1911, had been arrested in 1962 and sentenced to life imprisonment at the Hagen Sobibór trial of 1966 for his complicity in the murder of at least 150,000 Jews. He had been released from prison in 1976, arrested again in 1980, but released once more after an appeal in 1981. Appeal proceedings had begun in 1982, had gone on for three years, and had ended with the confirmation of the previous sentence. In view of his advanced age and his poor health, Frenzel did not have to return to prison. He died in 1996.[1096]

[1096] J. Schelvis, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 253f.

In its edition of 22 March 1984, *Stern* published the verbatim account of the conversation between Frenzel and Blatt.[1097] Here are a few excerpts:

> *"Blatt: I see you sitting there, drinking your beer. You have a slight smile on your face. You could be anyone's neighbor, anyone's pal from the local sports club. But you are not just anyone. You are Karl Frenzel, SS-Oberscharführer. You were number three in the chain of command of Sobibór, the extermination camp. You were in charge of Lager I. Do you remember me?*
> *Frenzel: Not really well. You were a little boy at the time.*
> *Blatt: I was 15 years old. And I survived because you had me polish your shoes, no one else survived, not my father, not my mother, not my brother, none of the 2000 Jews from my home town of Izbica survived.*
> *Frenzel: That is terrible, really terrible.*
> *Blatt: At least a quarter of a million Jews were murdered at Sobibór. I survived. Why are you ready to talk to me?*
> *Frenzel: I wish to beg your pardon.* […]
> *Blatt: Philip Bialowitz testified that you caught a 15-year-old friend of his stealing a can of sardines. You took him to Lager III, to the crematorium, and shot him.*
> *Frenzel: That wasn't me.*
> *Blatt: It wasn't you? And what happened to the Dutch Jews?*
> *Frenzel: A Polish kapo told me that some Dutch Jews were organizing a revolt and I reported this to Niemann, the deputy camp commander. He ordered to execute all 72 of them.*
> *Blatt: And you took them to the gas chamber…*
> *Frenzel: No, I didn't.* […]
> *Blatt: Sobibór – the annihilation of 250,000 Jews – was that your duty?*
> *Frenzel: We had to do our duty. I am sorry about what happened there, but I cannot undo it."*

Let us stop for a moment to imagine the scene: After 16 years in prison Frenzel is a broken man who wants only one thing – not to go to prison again, to spend his remaining years as a free man. If there was one way of ruining his chances to have his sentence reduced or to be paroled, it would have been the denial of mass exterminations at Sobibór and to

[1097] Ulrich Völklein, "Der Mörder und sein Zeuge" (*The murderer and his witness*), *stern*, No. 13, 22 March 1984.

insist that there had been no gas chambers in that camp. What would have been the use of such stubbornness? Not one out of a hundred readers of *Stern* would have believed him. Forty years of brainwashing had done their work.

So, Frenzel does what countless other defendants have done in so many trials of "NS criminals." He does not deny the accusation as such, the organized mass murder of the Jews, but claims a state of emergency for himself, "we had to do our duty," denying his own involvement in specific crimes, like the shooting of the 15-year-old boy or the gassing of the 72 Dutch working Jews who had plotted a revolt. He is successful, like so many other "Nazi criminals" – the judges, while confirming the original sentence, grant him parole.

We are sure that hundreds, nay thousands of German schools have dealt with this conversation between Frenzel and Blatt in their history or German language classes. It is an ideal example for implanting the image of the despicable German Nazi who does whatever he is ordered to do, unhesitatingly, regardless of what it is and then, coward at heart, either denies everything or places the responsibility on someone else.

This is the way in which the soul of the young generation of Germans has been poisoned – and an end is not in sight.

"Nazi monsters" becoming an increasingly rare species – for biological reasons – the show trial against John Demjanjuk may be the last chance to present such an ogre to the German public. The fact that this monster is not a German himself but a Ukrainian may be a slight blemish, but even this aspect can be used to advantage: the abject character of the German Nazis was such that these people did not hesitate to make use of the most evil scum of other European nations for the realization of their own murderous aims!

The "Holocaust" Moloch must be fed – with the Ukrainians who faced the execution squads after the arch liar Alexander Aronovitch Pechersky "convicted" them through his testimony, with the former SS men Erich Bauer, Hubert Gomerski, and Karl Frenzel who withered behind bars for a total of 69 years; with Hermann Julius Höfle who was driven into suicide in a Vienna prison – or, which is much more likely, was simply liquidated; with Hermine Braunsteiner-Ryan who spent 17 years in jail for allegedly having selected Jewish children for the gas chambers at Majdanek, which, according to the findings of the Berlin court in 1950, never existed in the first place; with Gustav Wagner, who was knifed to death by a Jewish squad of killers after he had given him-

self up voluntarily to the Brazilian police; with 89-year-old John Demjanjuk who spent seven years in Israeli prisons and now finds himself again behind bars for freely invented crimes – the Moloch is insatiable.

His victims also include those who rise against the Big Lie. Wolfgang Fröhlich was sentenced in Austria to six years imprisonment, Gerd Honsik to five. In the "freest state in German history" Germar Rudolf spent 44 months behind bars, Ernst Zündel had been in prison since February of 2003, first in the U.S., then in Canada, finally in Germany. He was released on 1 March 2010. Sylvia Stolz, the revisionist lawyer, was sentenced to three years and three months imprisonment by the German Inquisition – nothing to write home about, really, if we compare this verdict to the term of 13 years brought down on the defense lawyer Horst Mahler in the same country.

In August of 2009 Horst Mahler's Polish wife Ełżbieta sent the following message to one of us (JG):

> *"I agree with you. I, too, admire my husband for his courage, but also for his generosity and his intelligence, which cannot be compared to that of anyone else I have met so far in my life. For myself and for my children who love him as they would their own father, his absence is a great loss. I do hope that he will not be kept in prison the whole time. That would come to thirteen years! That is a punishment fit for a murderer, but not for a man like my husband. I go to see Horst once a month; I cannot do it more often for lack of funds."*

The "Holocaust" rampart of lies cannot be brought down with one stroke. Its occupants are too strong. They control the governments, the judiciary, the media. Their financial means are virtually unlimited. All the revisionists can do is make dents in the walls of this rampart. If our book manages to make yet another breach, it has done its job.

13. Supplement

The archaeological excavations on the grounds of the former Sobibór Camp were far from complete when the present study was completed in 2010. It was not until the end of 2018 that the decision to finalize the archaeological research and convert the area into a museum complex appeared to have been made. Between spring 2011 and 2017, the responsible Polish and Israeli researchers repeatedly published summaries of their research results.[1098] The most-interesting of these is probably that of autumn 2014, in which the lead archeologists involved in the project reported that remains of the wall of the former gas-chamber building of the Sobibor Camp had been found. Here is what the Polish archaeologist Wojciech Mazurek, who was involved in the excavation, reported about it in autumn 2014 (English as in the original):[1099]

> *"During the September 2014 the excavation works in the area of the asphalt square with the stone tower and monument covered an area of about 10 ares. First, the square was cleaned from the sand layer, onto which a surface of cement slabs was built, covered with a layer of asphalt. Between the existing tower, symbolizing the location of the gas chambers, and the monument, numerous relicts of the first commemoration of the victims of Sobibor from 1965 were found. The tower and the monument at the current location were erected in the early 1980s. Between the tower and the monument, which was removed on 1 September 2014 but without the concrete base, a row of the square foundations of the crushed bricks bonded with cement mortar with dimensions of 60 x 60 cm was found, running from south to north at a distance of about 3 meters from one another, the last in the north at a distance of 4 m. In the area to the east of the monument, whose base has not yet been removed, the relics of the*

[1098] Once published online at http://sobibor.info.pl/?page_id=1248, but after the archeological research was wrapped up, this information page was removed; see Marek Bem, Wojciech Mazurek, *Sobibór: Archaeological Research Conducted on the Site of the Former German Extermination Centre in Sobibór 2000-2011*, Foundation for "Polish-German Reconciliation", Warsaw/Włodawa 2012.

[1099] Wojciech Mazurek, "Preliminary report from the pre-investment archeological excavation works at the former German-Nazi extermination camp in Sobibor conducted in the summer and autumn 2014," pp. 2f.; now at https://codoh.com/library/document/preliminary-report-from-the-pre-investment/.

> *brick foundations with a width of about 30 cm (two bricks longitudinally or one brick crosswise) were found. They form the outline of a set of 4 rooms with dimensions of 5 m on the east-west* [recte: north-south] *axis and 7 meters on the east-west axis. From the eastern side the rooms were closed with the semicircular formed foundation bench with a width of about 30 cm; a similar semicircle closes the room at the southern end. In the space of about 3 m, a row of pole holes (spaced at a distance of 2 to 3 m) is running. This is probably the area of the corridor separating two groups of rooms of alleged gas chambers, which is closed at the south with a wider* [smaller] *room measuring 5 x 3 m, where a petrol engine was probably located, whose exhaust fumes killed hundreds of thousands of people."*

A summary of previous research results written two years later describes the foundations of the brick foundations in somewhat more detail:[1100]

> *"In the area of the asphalt square the foundation outlines of 8 rooms used as the foundation for the older walls of the gas chambers. Three rooms on the south* [west of the "corridor"] *have dimensions of 4,00 x 5,30, the extreme northern room had the dimensions of 4,00 x 3,40 m. In the area east of the monument 4 outlines of brick foundations have been uncovered (dimensions: 5,05 m on the axis north-south and 6,80 m on the axis east-west). From the eastern side the rooms were closed with the semicircular formed foundation benches with a width of about 30 cm, similar semicircle closes the extreme southern room. Between the relics of western and eastern there was a space of about 3 meters* [wide]*, a row of pole holes (spaced at a distance of 2 to 3 m) is running North from this corridor adjusted a wider space with dimensions of 5,05 x 3,50 m, where probably a petrol engine was located, whose exhaust fumes killed hundreds of thousands people. From the south to the corridor separating older and younger gas chambers a room measuring approximately 3,00 x 1,00 m is adjacent. Probably it is a kind of staircase, through which Jews went on the way to the rooms where they waited for death."*

[1100] Teresa Mazurek, Wojciech Mazurek, Rafał Ratajczak, "The Results of the Pre-Investment Complementary Archeological Excavation Research Conducted on the Site of the Former Nazi-German Extermination Camp in Sobibór in the Autumn 2015," Chełm 2016, p. 29; now at https://codoh.com/library/document/the-results-of-the-pre-investment-complementary/. I reproduce the original English text, warts and all, including decimal commas instead of periods.

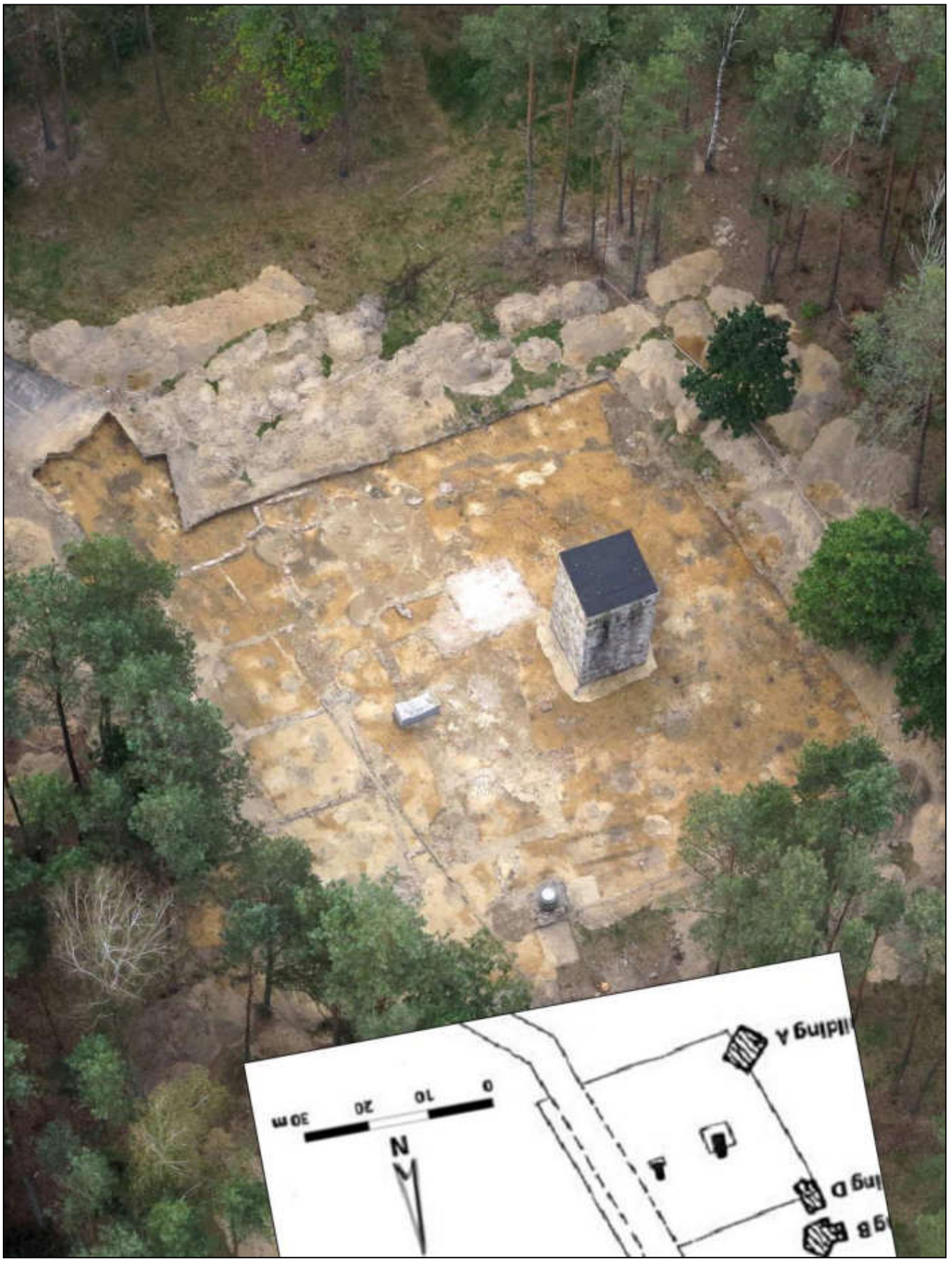


Illustration 1: *Aerial photo from 2014 of excavations around the old monument in the area of the former Sobibor Camp.*

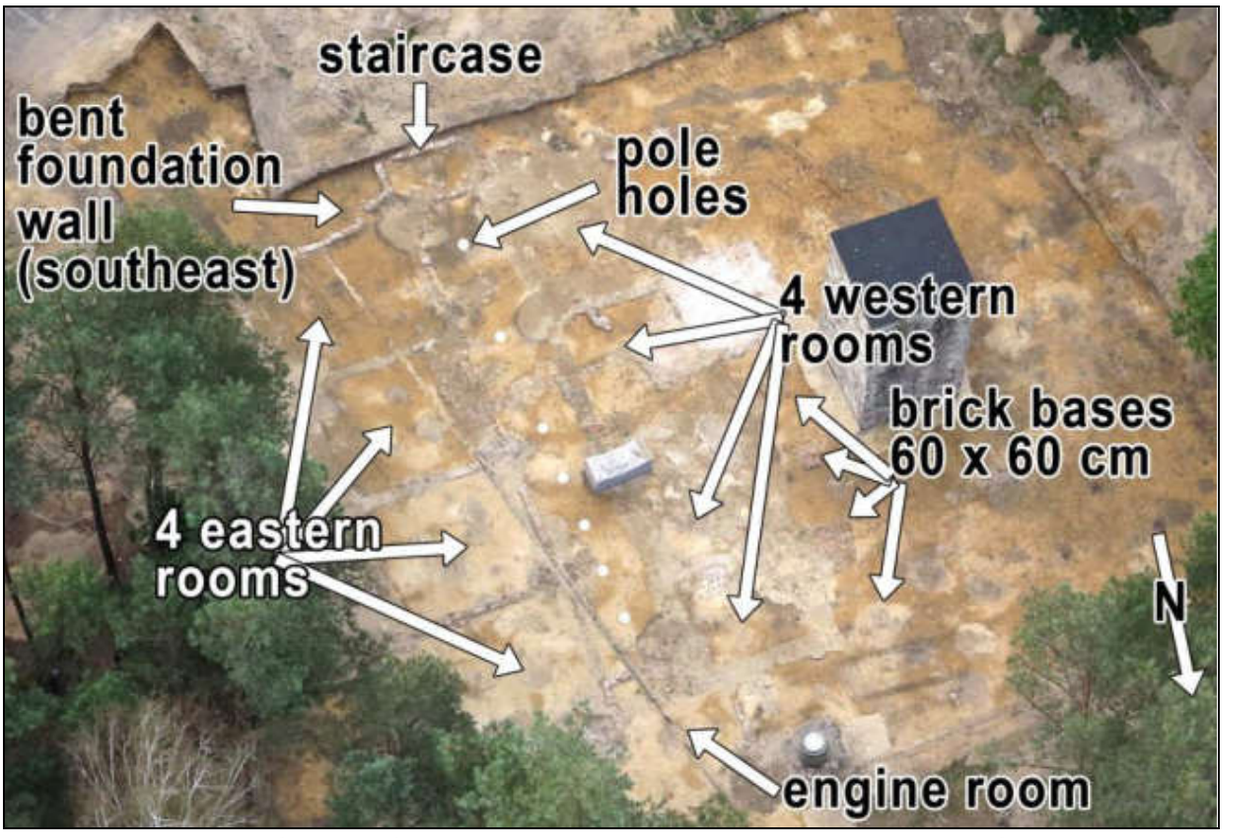


Illustration 2: *Section from Ill. 1 with added arrows and names of the objects mentioned in the quotations of the text.*

The article is accompanied by a high-resolution aerial photograph, of which I reproduce the relevant section in Illustration 1.

I inserted a section of the map reproduced as Document 2 in the Appendix (see p. 408). This shows where in the area of the former camp this site is located and how it is oriented. Illustration 2 shows with arrows and labels the objects mentioned in the quoted text.

The curved eastern foundations of the eastern rooms mentioned in both quotes are not recognizable in the aerial photo, but on some photos taken at n ground level they can be seen (Illustrations 3 and 4). However, what can be seen in Illustration 1 is the curved south-eastern foundation wall adjacent to the "staircase", on the top-left in Ill. 2.

If one assumes that these foundation walls actually belonged to the building that witnesses described as a gas-chamber building, we can surmise from the fact that the western rooms have different dimensions than the eastern rooms, that they were probably not constructed simultaneously or that they did not serve the same purpose. This would indicate that the western rooms are the "old gas chambers" that stood on a brick foundation. These chambers – or at least their foundations – were apparently not torn down later, but reused or continued to be used, and

that they were supplemented by four additional, somewhat larger chambers to the east.

The crucial question here is, of course, whether, and if so, how the archaeologists involved can possibly discern that the remnants of these walls are the remains of execution gas chambers? Apparently because witnesses said so, but many of these witnesses also claimed that, after the murder, the floors opened downward to dump the bodies, which is contradicted by the archaeological finds (see Subchapter 4.4. and Section 5.4.1. in the present book).

(https://beeldbank.leidenuniv.nl/ImageDisplay.php?uid=FT146924&thumbed=6)

(http://s1.ibtimes.com/sites/www.ibtimes.com/files/styles/lg/public/2014/09/19/camp2.jpg)

Illustration 3 & 4: *Ground-level photos of the remains of brick foundations of a building in the area of the former Sobibór Camp. Note the curved foundation wall in the foreground*

Mazurek's reports do not indicate whether he found any indications as to the purpose of this building. However, the curved eastern foundations of the eastern rooms should give orthodox historians a headache. Why would anyone equip rooms with such round walls, or at least wall foundations?

The long-standing excavations in Sobibór undisputedly revealed a number of graves. However, no attempt was made to excavate the areas that may have served as mass graves in order to determine exactly how large these graves were and what amounts of remains can be found in them. The reports made available to date give no data about the quantity, size and contents of the areas in which burned remains of corpses were found. It is therefore impossible to make an even approximate es-

timate as to the order of magnitude of the processes that would have had to be involved in order to produce these artifacts.

The reason for this lacuna may simply be that the excavations carried out were not intended to prove anything historically, but rather "were deemed necessary in order to reconstruct the map of the camp and also to integrate finds discovered in excavations into displays that will be part of the new center."[1101]

Accordingly, in 2017, they started to cover the area where human remains had been found with a massive layer of gray gravel followed by a layer of white marble gravel, see Illustration 5.[1102] After all, this project is ultimately about creating a sacred Memorial, not about clarifying historical details…

The Editor, May 6, 2018

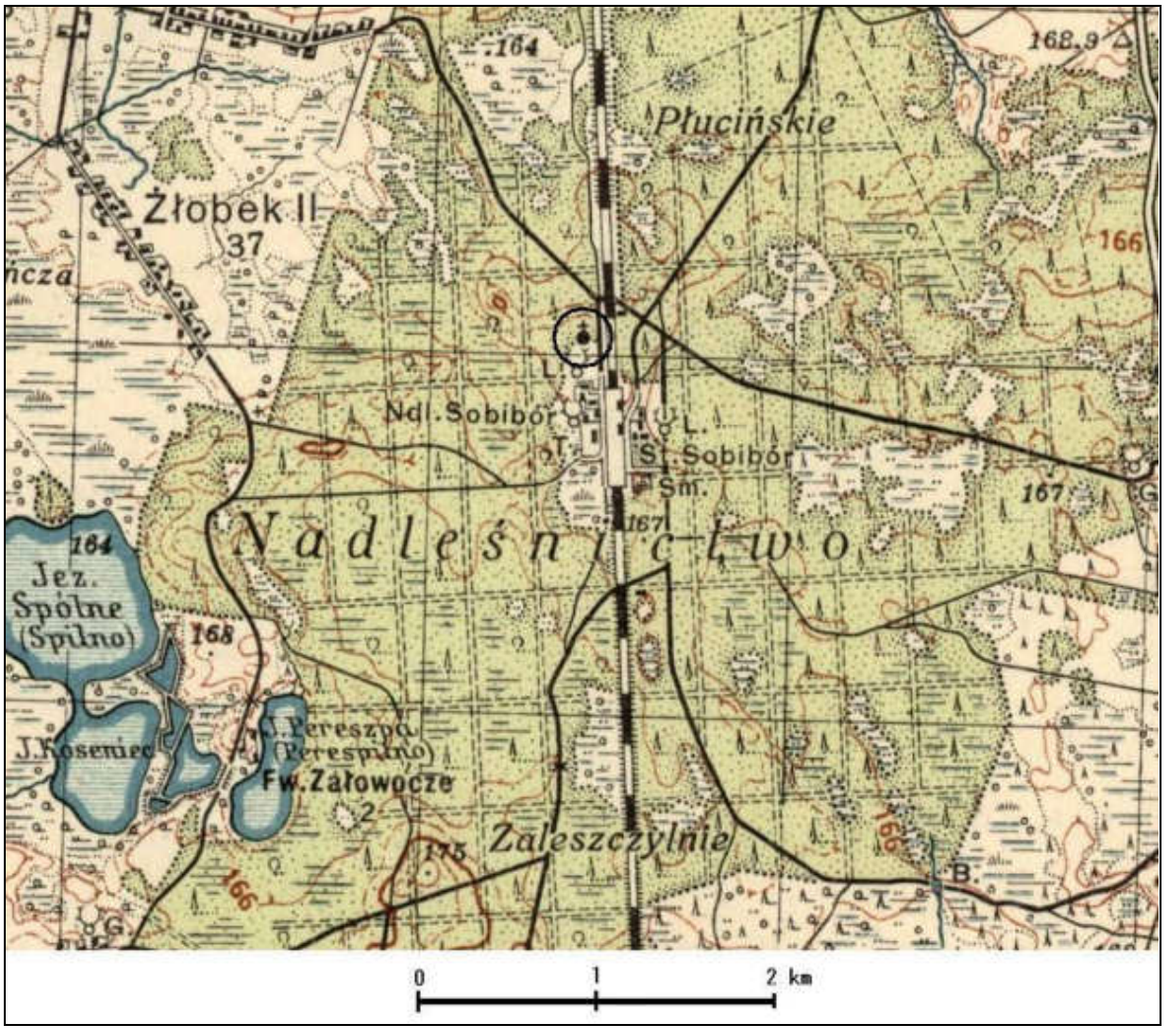
Illustration 5: *View from the southwest of the area of the former Sobibór Camp where human remains were found. With wheelbarrows, white marble gravel is applied on top of a layer of gray gravel. In the foreground, one area was temporarily left free for the burial of human remains that might later be found in other areas.*

[1101] Yoram Haimi, "Preliminary Report of Archaeological Excavations in the Sobibór Extermination Camp, 2016", https://codoh.com/library/document/preliminary-report-archaeological-excavations-sobi/.

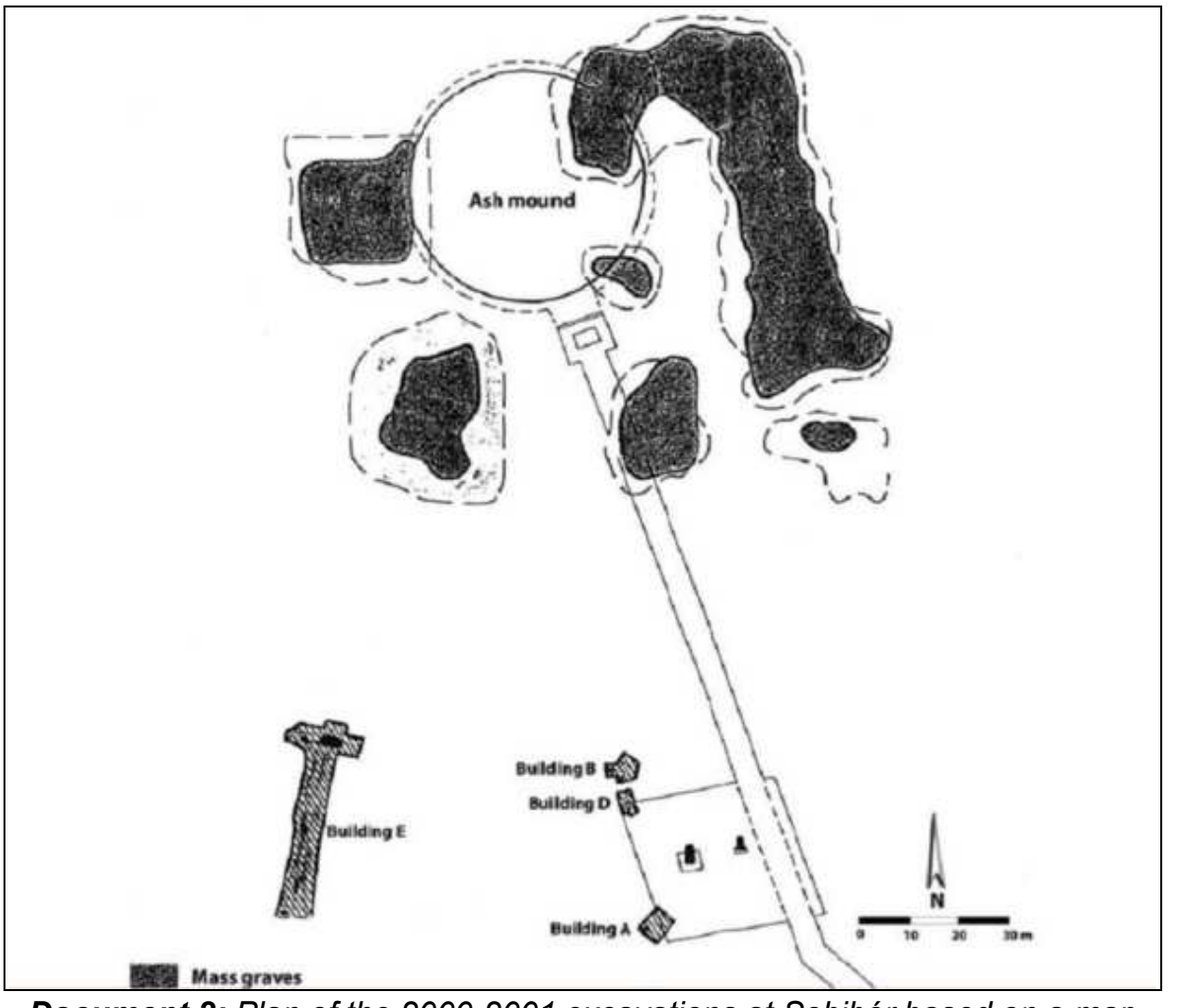
[1102] Wojciech Mazurek, "SPRAWOZDANIE Nr. 4" (Report No. 4), August 30, 2017; now at https://codoh.com/library/document/sprawozdanie-nr-4/pl/.

14. Appendix

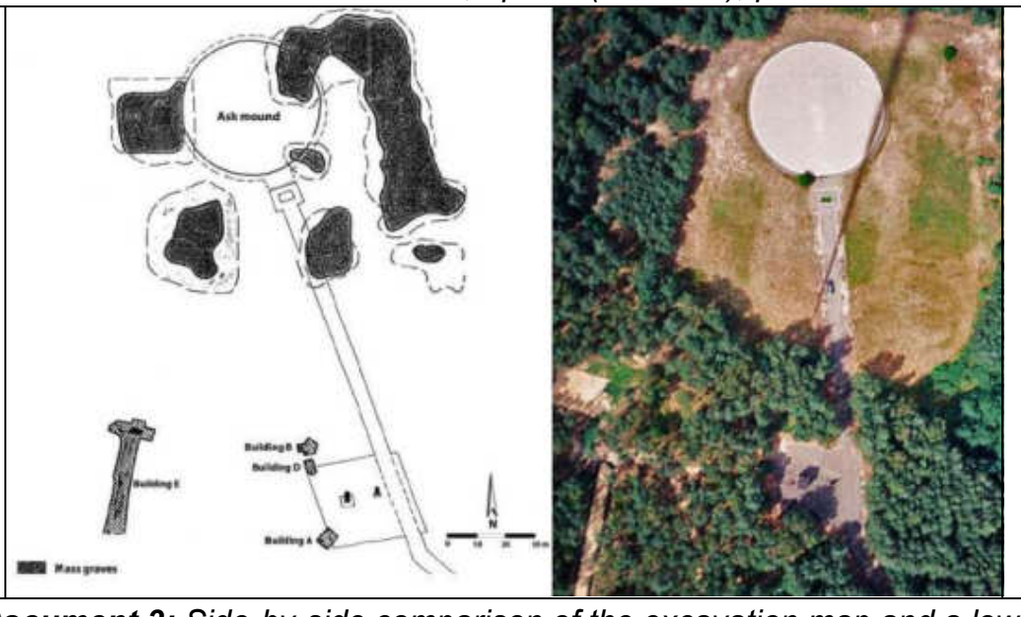
14.1. Documents and Photographs



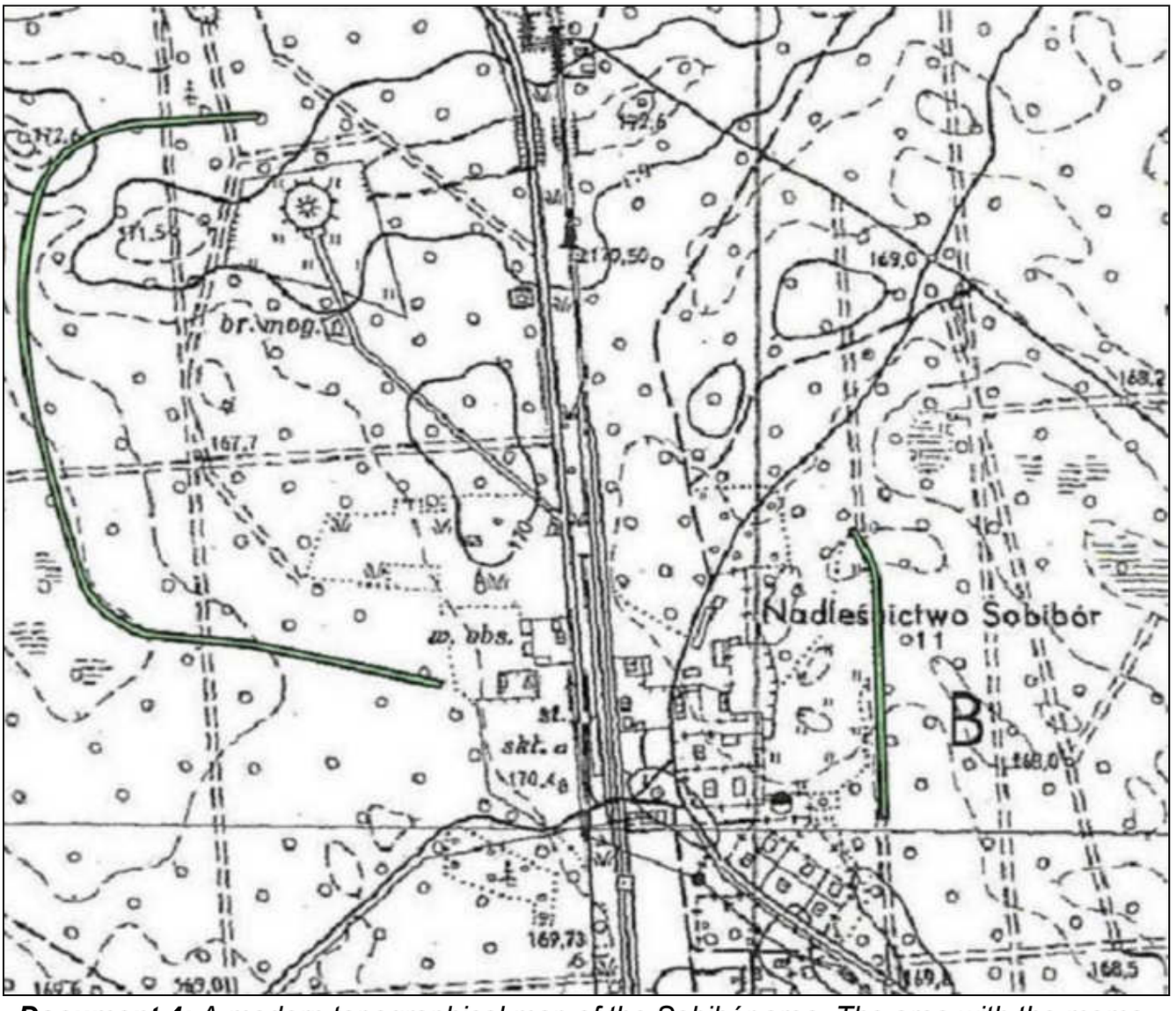
Document 1: *The Sobibór area in 1933. The future location of the camp was situated west of the railroad, opposite the Sobibór railway station. Camp III was found some hundred meters west of the chapel (circled) near the railroad. Camp II was located south-east of Camp III near the railway line. Source: section of the Opalin map from the Mapa Taktyczna Polski 1:100,000 drawn up by the Wojskowy Instytut Geograficzny 1933-1937; taken from the Internet at (now inactive) www.mapywig.org/m/WIG100_300DPI/P43_S37_OPALIN_300dpi.jpg*



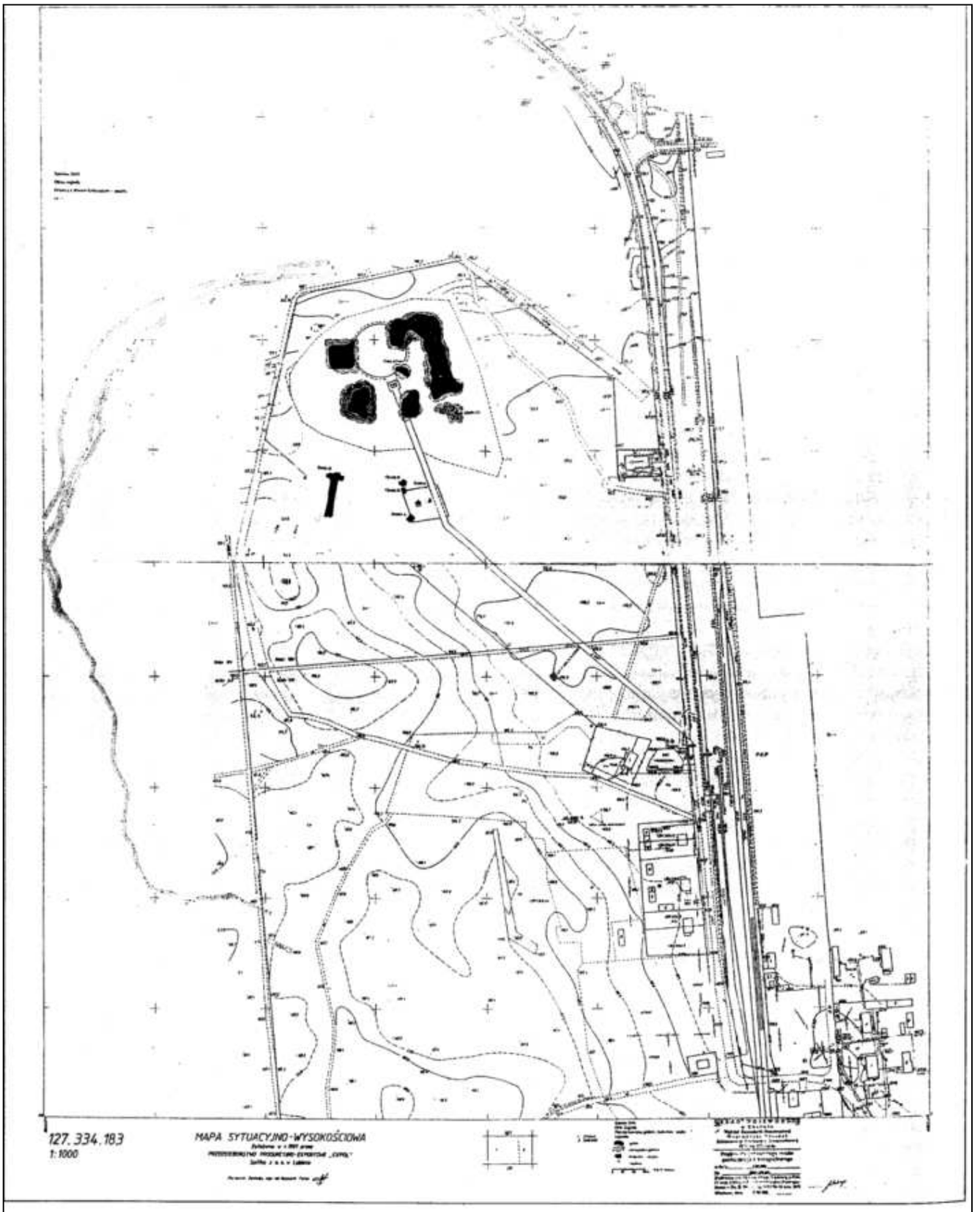
Document 2: *Plan of the 2000-2001 excavations at Sobibór based on a map drawn by A. Kola. Black: areas with disturbed soil (mass graves acc. to Kola). Source: Gilead et al., op. cit. (note 298), p. 28.*



Document 3: *Side-by-side comparison of the excavation map and a low-altitude aerial photograph of the former Camp III area taken in 2008 (source: Gilead et al., op. cit. (note 298), p. 31). The scales of the pictures have been made identical on the basis of the diameter of the circular memorial mound, which, although ash-less, is misleadingly called "Ash Mound." It is concial in shape and some 2 m high.*

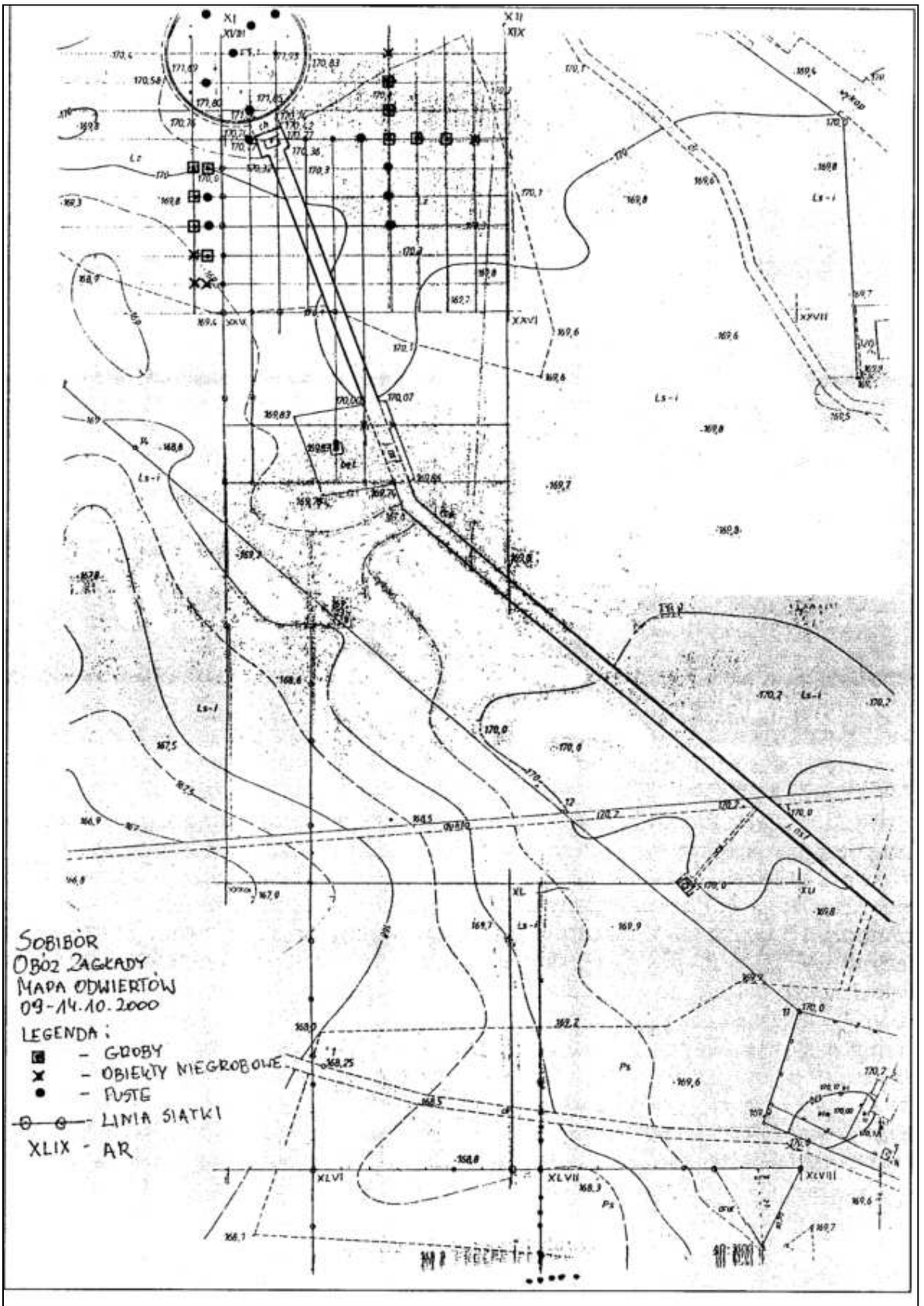


Document 4: *A modern topographical map of the Sobibór area. The area with the memorial is located to the upper left. Source: www.sobibor.edu.pl/angielska/historia/badania/ryc1.jpg (inactive)*



Mapa sytuacyjno-wysokościowa z rozmieszczeniem grobów w Sobiborze

Document 5: *Topographical map of the former Sobibór camp site with identified building remains and mass graves marked black. Source: Andrzej Kola, op. cit. (note 305), p. 122.*



Fragment mapy terenu b. obozu z lokalizacją archeologicznych sondaży wiertniczych

Document 6: *Map showing the former area of Camp III with part of the archaeological survey grid. Source: A. Kola, op. cit. (note 307), p. 92.*

Photograph 1: *st. kol. Sobibór = stacja kolejowa Sobibór = railway station Sobibór (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*

Photograph 2: *The platform of the Sobibór station viewed from the south. The former camp is located to the left, beyond the railway and the road. (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*

Photograph 3 (top): *The final part of the railway station platform, view from south (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*

Photograph 4 (left): *The former area of the Sobibór Camp seen from the railway platform, view from the west. In the background: The entrance to the soccer field located on the former area of Camp I. Farther beyond is seen the foresters' tower used for spotting fires (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*

Photograph 5: *The tower used for spotting forest fires located in the former area of Camp I, view from the east (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*

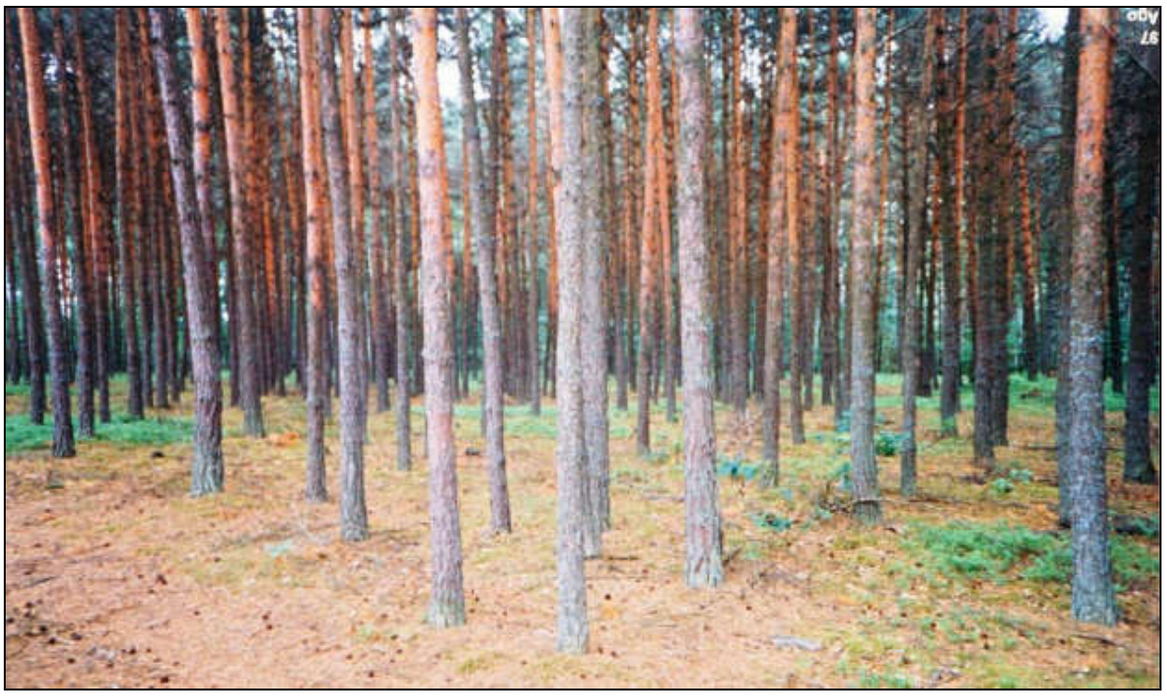
Photograph 6: *The former area of Camp I viewed from the east (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*

Photograph 7: *As Photograph 6, different perspective. © Carlo Mattogno*

Photograph 8: *The former area of Camp III viewed from the south. At the time this photograph was taken (June 1997) the circular memorial mound had not yet been constructed. © Carlo Mattogno*

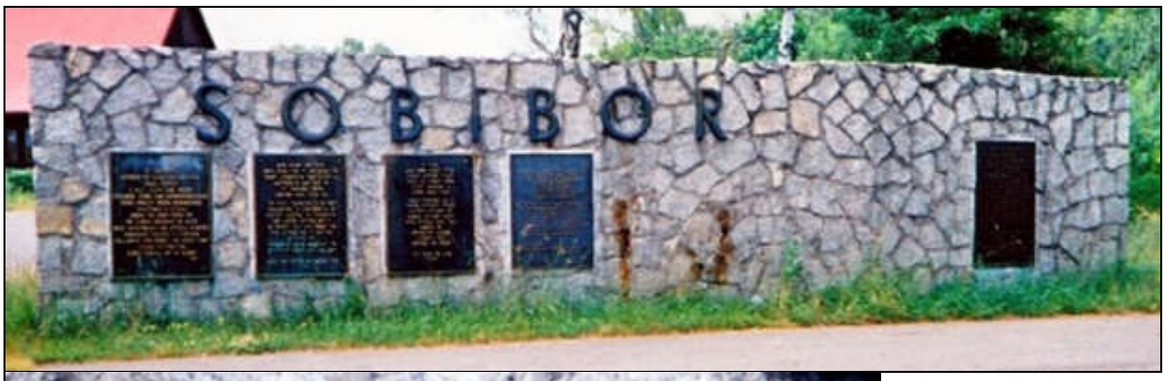
Photograph 9: *The former area of Camp III viewed from the south (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*

Photograph 10: *The former area of Camp III viewed from the southwest (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*

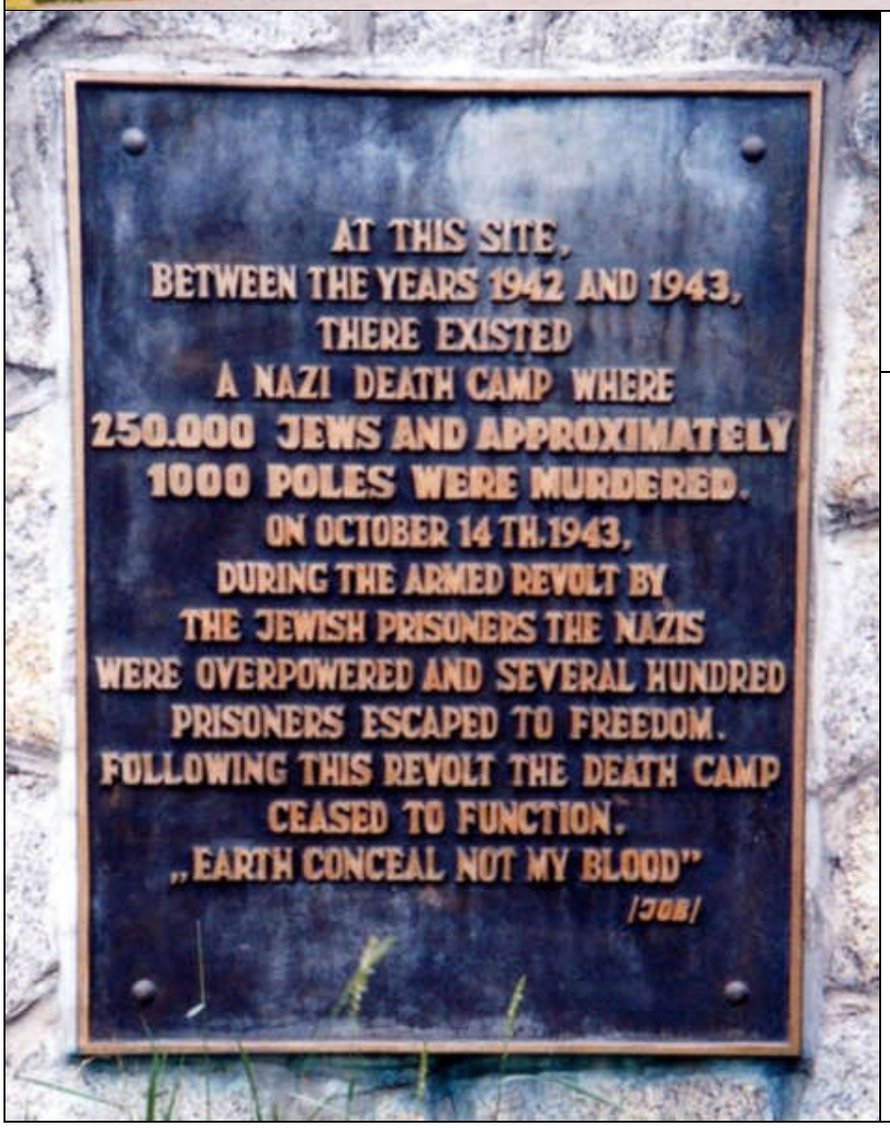


Photograph 11: *A group of red pines behind the former area of Camp III (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*

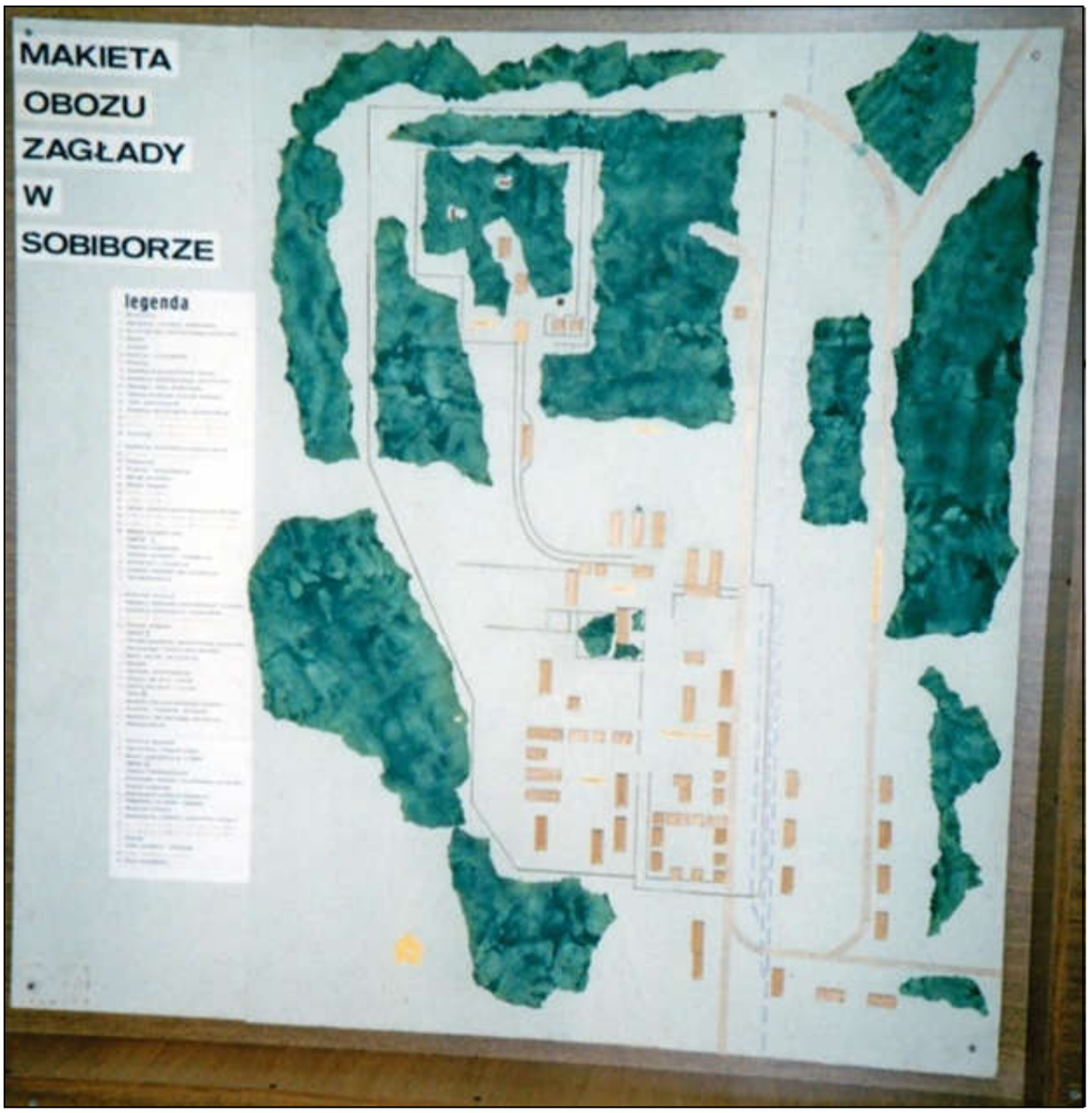
Photograph 12: *Piles of red pine logs to the south of the former Sobibór camp area. (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno The pile in the center, consisting of red pine logs about 2 meters long with an average diameter of about 12 centimeters, was about 30 meters long and had an average height of approximately 2.5 meters. Its estimated weight is about 100 tons – sufficient for the cremation of about 330 corpses. The cremation of the alleged 169,000 corpses would have required about 500 piles like this, or a stack of the same height but a length of 15 kilometers.*



Photograph 13 (top): *The memorial at Sobibór (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*



Photograph 14 (left): *Bronze plaque commemorating the 250,000 Jews and approximately 1,000 Poles allegedly killed at Sobibór and during the prisoner uprising of October 14, 1943 (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*



Photograph 15: *Map of the Sobibór Camp found inside the memorial building (June 1997). © Carlo Mattogno*

14.2. SS Ranks and U.S. Army Equivalents

SS	U.S. ARMY	SS	U.S. ARMY
SS Mann	Private	Hauptsturmführer	Captain
Sturmmann	Private First Class	Sturmbannführer	Major
Rottenführer	Corporal	Obersturmbannführer	Lieutenant Colonel
Unterscharführer	Sergeant	Standartenführer	Colonel
Scharführer	Staff Sergeant	Oberführer	Colonel
Oberscharführer	Technical Sergeant	Brigadeführer	Brigadier General
Hauptscharführer	Master Sergeant	Gruppenführer	Lieutenant General
Sturmscharführer	First Sergeant	Obergruppenführer	General
Untersturmführer	Second Lieutenant	Oberstgruppenführer	General of the Army
Obersturmführer	First Lieutenant		

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14.4. Abbreviations

AGK	Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni w Polsce, at present Główna Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Warsaw
BAK	Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Germany
CDJC	Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris, France
GARF	Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii, Moscow, Russia
IMT	International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, Germany
NARB	Natsionalni Archiv Respubliki Belarus, Minsk, Byelorussia
NMT	Trials of War Criminals before the Nuernberg Military Tribunal
PA	Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Bonn, Germany
RGVA	Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv, Moscow, Russia
ROD	Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, Amsterdam, Netherlands
StA	Staatsanwaltschaft, German State Prosecution office.
WAPL	Wojewódzkie Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie, Lublin, Poland
ZStL	Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen Ludwigsburg, Germany

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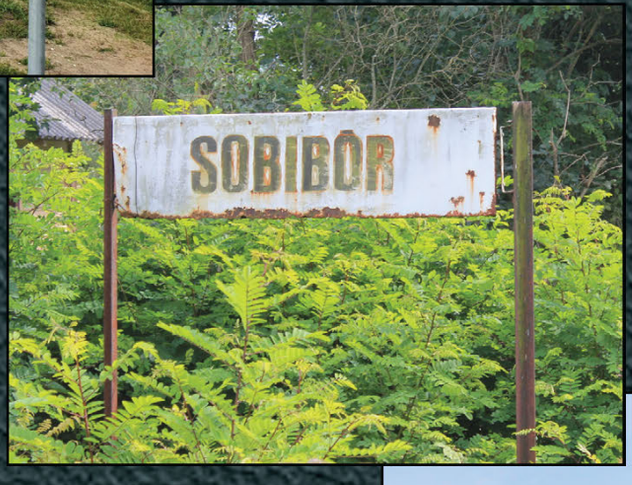

BLACK PROPAGANDA, ARCHEOLOGICAL RESEARCH, EXPECTED MATERIAL EVIDENCE

CARLO MATTOGNO

THE "OPERATION REINHARDT" CAMPS

Carlo Mattogno

The "Operation Reinhardt" Camps

Treblinka, Sobibór, Bełżec

Black Propaganda,
Archeological Research,
Expected Material Evidence

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Foreword

By now, the study of the camps of "Operation Reinhardt" by Carlo Mattogno and his colleagues Jürgen Graf and Thomas Kues has a history of its own, which deserves to be explained before delving into the present study.

Strictly speaking, this history started in 1998, when the first German edition of Jürgen Graf's and Carlo Mattogno's monograph on the labor camp at Majdanek appeared, which was a trail-blazing study based primarily on a plethora of original German wartime documents never before systematically analyzed by any historian (Graf/Mattogno).

Although the Majdanek Camp is generally not considered one of the "Operation Reinhardt" Camps, it is nonetheless true that many original German wartime documents clearly indicate that this camp was deeply involved in the activities of the so-called Operation Reinhardt (as was the Auschwitz Camp).

In a narrower sense, only three camps are usually referred to as *the* Operation Reinhardt Camps: Treblinka, Sobibór and Bełżec. All three are said to have served exclusively for the purpose of mass-murdering Jews. They were pure extermination camps, or so the orthodoxy claims.

After several years of research and writing, Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf submitted their text for a book on the first of these camps, Treblinka, to this editor in early June 2002. The book appeared a little more than two months later in German, and in January 2004 also in an English translation (Mattogno/Graf).

When Carlo Mattogno was done writing this book, he turned his attention to another of the three Operation Reinhardt Camps: Bełżec. Since much less primary source material exists about this camp, and because many observations about Treblinka also apply to Bełżec, Mattogno initially only planned to publish a lengthy journal article on that camp, which would have referred to his study on Treblinka many times. However, the project became too lengthy for a mere article after all, so it ended up being a proper, albeit slender book, which refers frequently to the Treblinka book in order to avoid repeating many things the author had already written before. He submitted the Italian typescript of this work in January of 2004. This time, our translator for the English edition was faster than the translator for the German edition, so the English edition already appeared in June of 2004, while the German edition only came out six months later in December (see Mattogno 2016).

During the next several years, Mattogno focused his razor-sharp mind on writing several studies on the Auschwitz Camp. When the focus returned to the Operation Reinhardt Camps in order to tackle the last of the three – Sobibór –

Mattogno was joined by Jürgen Graf and Swedish researcher Thomas Kues. Since there were many more primary sources available on that camp, and also because new insights had been gained in general about all matters concerning the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question" as pursued by the Third Reich in general and Operation Reinhardt in particular, we decided to bring all the issues involved up to the current state of knowledge, which meant repeating many of the things already written in the 2002 Treblinka monograph, but then integrating all the new findings into that framework. Handling three authors using three different languages turned out to be a challenge. Eventually, the English edition appeared in May of 2010, followed by the German edition in December of that same year (Graf/Kues/Mattogno).

All three studies of these camps, written more-or-less-independently from each other, had not been planned originally to be parts of a whole, let alone a series, so they inevitably contain duplications. Yet they all ended up as entries to our prestigious series *Holocaust Handbooks* (Vols. 8, 9 and 19).

The three studies eventually became the focus of a major attempt at refutation by mainstream scholars, which in turn triggered a massive response by Mattogno, Kues and Graf with their 1,400-page-work on *The "Extermination Camps" of "Aktion Reinhardt"* – clearly an overkill for most readers, in particular since that two-volume work does not develop its own self-contained story line, but for the most part is a point-by-point response and rebuttal of the attempted mainstream refutation (Mattogno/Kues/Graf). Fully comprehending that rebuttal requires first or concurrently reading the 700-plus-page mainstream "refutation", which is yet another challenge for the reader. Yet still, considering that this massive tome is an astounding demonstration of the full-spectrum dominance of revisionism over its opponents with regard to knowledge and mastery of the source material, that it is a sort of handbook featuring detailed answers to many objections against Holocaust revisionism, and because it contains major updates and upgrades to all three monographs on the Operation Reinhardt Camps, we decided to integrate it into the series *Holocaust Handbooks* anyway (as Vol. 28), albeit with some disquietude.

One advantage of this massive two-volume tome was that it reported about ongoing archeological digging on the grounds of the former Sobibór Camp. However, the book project was wrapped up in 2013, while the research at Sobibór was still going on. In fact, it reached its pinnacle (or climax, if you will), only in 2014 with the (re-)discovery of bricks in the soil alleged to be the remnants of the claimed "gas chambers." The researchers involved in the Sobibór digs kept reporting about their results until 2017, when the project was finally concluded. For Mattogno, this meant that more research needed to be discussed, and more revisions to be made. Would his new book comprise 2,500 pages this time?

Well, the good news is, no. Instead of revising the initial three monographs, which was deemed too much of a challenge, as a revision would mean that they all three had to be closely realigned, and instead of revising the two-vol-

ume-1,400-page doorstop, which has not exactly been any reader's favorite judging by sales figures, Mattogno decided to write a new book which would discuss the current, updated state of knowledge about all three camps, reduced down to the very essentials. This book with its systematically built, self-contained story line, which you are holding in your hands, is now the new Volume 28 of the *Holocaust Handbooks*. The former Volume 28 will be reissued as a slightly revised stand-alone work sometime in the future.

This raises the question: what exactly *is* essential about those three camps? First of all, a general discussion of the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question" in general and Operation Reinhardt in particular is not included in this book. This has been covered *ad nauseam* in the books on Treblinka, on Sobibór and in the two-volume doorstop. Furthermore, the present study has its focus only on witness testimony recorded during the war and in the immediate post-war era for two reasons. First, this is when the myth was created, and this is where its true origin can be found. And second, the nature of the human memory dictates that recollections older than several years are simply too unreliable, and when it comes to events that are highly publicized, and where there are strong expectations by the general public as to what has to be remembered – at times even at gunpoint – witness testimony tends to get increasingly contaminated by second-hand "knowledge" as time goes on.

Hence, in the first part of this study – in particular in the chapter about Sobibór and even more-so in the one focusing on Treblinka – the reader will find numerous early witness testimonies about the claimed extermination activities of the Reinhardt Camps, many of which have not been quoted, let alone discussed, in earlier revisionist works on this topic.

The second part of this book brings us all up to speed with the various archeological efforts made by mainstream scholars in their attempt to figure out what exactly happened at those camps – or rather, their attempt to prove that the myth based on wartime and post-war testimonies is true.

The third part compares the findings of the second part with what we ought to expect, and reveals the chasm that exists between archeologically proven facts and mythological requirements.

Some of what the reader will encounter in this book has already been said in one of the earlier four books on these camps. In fact, when I translated the present book from the Italian, I sometimes copied considerable parts from one of the three individual camp monographs, in particular when it comes to witness testimonies, because some of them have been quoted before. We tried to keep repetitions like this to a minimum, but since we all want to read the present book as a self-contained unit without having to constantly grab another book in order to understand, laying out the basics was a must.

I think the present book is a more-accessible replacement for the two-volume doorstop as Volume 28 of our series *Holocaust Handbooks*, and also one that we can easily update in the future, should the need arise.

I hope you can enjoy the read at least as much as I enjoyed the translating and editing of it.

Germar Rudolf
Red Lion, June 17, 2021

Introduction

The study of the sources dating back to the period of the Second World War shows unequivocally that the history of the alleged National-Socialist extermination camps, especially regarding the killing system that is said to have been used in them, developed over the years from evidently unfounded rumors through various intermediate stages to the "historical" version currently considered "true," and legally enforced as such in twenty or more countries.

When it comes to the genesis of the regnant historical account about the "gas chambers" purportedly located at the alleged "Operation Reinhardt" extermination camps – Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka –, the same literary process occurred as I have described regarding the creation of the officially authorized account about the alleged "gas chambers" of Auschwitz (see Mattogno 2021). The preconditions are identical, and so is the starting point. This is explicitly recognized by orthodox Holocaust historiography, which nevertheless stubbornly insists on attributing probative value to these fables.

Pierre Vidal-Naquet wrote that "[i]n the flow of information coming from the occupied territories were to be found the true, the less-true, and the false." This less-true and false information consisted of inaccuracies of all kinds as well as of fantasies and myths which, however, "did not exist in isolation, like some creation suo generis or 'rumor,' a hoax hatched by a specific milieu, such as the New York Zionists. They existed as the shadow projected by—or prolonging—reality" (Vidal-Naquet, pp. 83f.).

In the specific case, this presupposes that there was actually a well-defined "reality" – here the extermination of Jews in the aforementioned camps perpetrated in gas chambers using exhaust gas of a motor – that could cast "fantasies and myths" like shadows.

But it is a fact that this alleged reality, due to the total lack of documents and material traces, is exclusively based on testimonies, that is to say, precisely on pieces of literature. In practice, therefore, this "reality" consists of nothing other than the choices made by the courts and historians from among the various propaganda versions that circulated during the war. Hence, the judges and the historians decided that the extermination must have occurred in the aforementioned manner rather than by any other means claimed by the wartime sources, for example, by electrocution, steam chambers or chlorine chambers. And this did not happen because it was ascertained after the war on the basis of any kind of irrefutable evidence that this one version had been the reality, and

all the other claims were only "shadows," precisely because such evidence did not exist. There were no orders to establish extermination camps, original plans of the camps, documents on their construction, administration or operation, aerial photographs taken during their activity, and so on – nothing.

And here the fundamental problem arises: how did the "fantasies and myths" arise? At this point, only two answers seem possible. Either these fantasies and myths were inventions of the Jewish and Polish black propaganda, and for this reason already, they could not, in principle, reflect any kind of "reality", even if deformed. Or they came from "eyewitnesses", but if that was so, how is it possible that these testimonies had been twisted into delusional tales?

The problem is even more serious, because each of these (rejected) "fantasies and myths" had their own claimed "eyewitnesses", meaning direct witnesses of the actual crime – rather than just indirect witnesses. Hence, rejecting the electrocution, steam-chamber, and chlorine-gas-chamber narratives characterizes the corresponding "eyewitnesses" to these myths as premeditated liars – and this not only from the revisionist perspective, but also from that of today's orthodox Holocaust narrative.

From this it follows that the usual subdivision between direct witnesses, indirect witnesses and perpetrators is a schematic simplification that may be useful for categorizing the various statements, but it absolutely cannot solve the underlying problem.

For eyewitnesses, the conflict mentioned earlier remains intact. Indirect witnesses, since they have not witnessed the crime itself but only some aspects which they "interpreted", at best could have seen and/or heard mere external aspects from a distance, for example the arrival of transports, mass graves, the stench of corpses, the smoke of fires, etc. But what specifically would turn these camps into extermination camps is not the mere presence of these elements, but their order of magnitude, and no indirect witness, a mere temporary observer from a distance, could establish that these elements concerned hundreds of thousands rather than only hundreds, thousands or even tens of thousands of dead people.

The claimed perpetrators, meaning the SS men and their auxiliaries working at the Reinhardt Camps, testified, if at all, only at a point in time when the literary reality created by courts and historians had already been declared a "self-evident fact" that could no longer be challenged in court. Hence, the fact that many of these alleged perpetrators confirmed this "reality" with their statements ex post facto does not make this "reality" less literary in nature.

Considering the flood of claims that have been circulated since 1942, the elements that happen to end up conforming to the eventually agreed-upon version – the killing by gas, with more-or-less-fanciful add-ons – must therefore not be considered as partial truths that were somehow percolated out of the camps. In fact, the claims that eventually "stuck" were nothing but stereotypes which had been lavishly and indiscriminately attributed to anything in sight.

For example, A "toxic gas" was even invoked with regard to the alleged "extermination camp" of Trawniki!

In the reports under discussion, the Polish term "gaz" is extremely generic, somewhat as in English. The gas was also frequently correlated with "cylinders" and "tanks", and we must not forget that even "vapor chambers" were called "gas chambers."[1] Commonly used in the plural, the term did not reveal anything about the nature of the gas –the killing gases alleged also included chlorine, "chloride," ether, and Zyklon B.

It is easily explained where the idea of asphyxiating gases came from. The First World War saw extensive deployment of aggressive chemical weapons on all fronts by all belligerents. Between 1914 and 1918, 250,000 tons were manufactured. 1,000,000 soldiers were affected by this, 78,000 of whom died (Izzo, p. 7). In the summer of 1917, on a front of 10 kilometers between Neuilly and the left bank of the Meuse, more than 400,000 gas projectiles were launched, thousands more in August and October 1917 at Verdun, and in December 1917 along the Russian front (*ibid*., p. 31). In 1918, the German artillery depots contained 50% gas shells. In the first major offensive of 1918, 200,000 mustard-gas shells were fired by the Germans on a single day (*ibid*., p. 32).

Unlike the Germans, the French used hydrogen cyanide on the battlefield in the form of Vincennite, a mixture of 50% hydrogen cyanide, 30% arsenic trichloride, 15% tin tetrachloride and 5% chloroform, of which they prepared about 4,000 tons (*ibid*., p. 66).

In Germany, research for chemical warfare was conducted by the *Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut für physikalische Chemie und Elektrochemie* (Kaiser-Wilhelm Institute for Physical Chemistry and Electrochemistry), directed by Prof. Fritz Haber, in whose field of research of "combat gases" (*Gaskampfmittel*) the chemist Bruno Tesch worked from October 1915, who later became the owner of the Hamburg Tesch & Stabenow Company (Kalthoff/Werner, p. 11).

British black propaganda famously exploited this theme as well. In 1916, *The Daily Telegraph* published an article headlined "Atrocities in Serbia," allegedly transmitted by its Rome correspondent, which reported that two Italian prisoners of war had escaped from Austria through Serbia and had taken refuge in Romania. They had reported that the Austrians and Bulgarians had killed 700,000 people, claiming that women, children and old men had been locked up in churches and had been stabbed to death with bayonets or "suffocated by means of asphyxiating gas," and in this way 3,000 people had also been murdered in a church in Belgrade. "Serbian refugees," the article continues, "not on oath, have stated that they were present at a distribution of bombs and machines for producing asphyxiating gas to the Bulgarians by the Germans and Austrians, who instructed the former how to utilize these instruments to exter-

[1] See Subchapter 3.4. For example, in the "Tremblinki" report, published in 1944 by Rabbi Abraham Silberschein, the "steam chambers" were called "gassing installation," and the water vapor was called "gas."

minate the Serbian population. The Bulgarians used this method in Nish, Pirot, Prizrend and Negotin, the inhabitants of which places died of suffocation. Similar means were employed by the Austrians in several parts of Montenegro."

After the end of the war, although the Geneva Gas Protocol of 1925 forbade the use of aggressive chemicals in warfare, they continued to be studied – especially from a tactical point of view – in all the countries that had been involved in the conflict, giving rise to instructions and government manuals[2] as well as to a rich technical literature summarizing the studies and experiences made during the war.[3]

By the beginning of World War II, all belligerents had entire arsenals of chemical weapons.

On April 20, 1942, the British War Cabinet received a detailed report dated April 13 from the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs on possible future chemical warfare that was feared, with a precise description of the British chemical arsenal, including 95,000 phosgene-loaded bombs. The report drew attention to the fact that:

> *"the Russian may be tempted to accuse the Germans of having used gas against them, without their having done so, in order to bring our counter-measures into play. We shall have no check whether the story is true or false."*[4]

Such a situation arose when the Polish propaganda explicitly accused the Germans of having used war gases against Russian PoWs, which had happened already half a year earlier, on October 24, 1941, when the Information and Propaganda Office of the *Armia Krajowa* (National Army) of the Polish Government-in-Exile received the following message ("Obóz…", p. 11):

> *"At Oświęcim* [Auschwitz], *in early October, 850 Soviet officers and noncoms (POWs) who had been taken there were killed by gas as a test of a new type of combat gas, which is to be used on the eastern front* [*jako próbe być użyty na froncie wschodnim*]*."*

As is well-known, subsequently Jews were identified as the primary victims of the use of poison gas.

In several other studies, I have already outlined the storylines invented and spread by the Polish-Jewish black propaganda since 1942 for all three camps of Operation Reinhardt.[5] Ever since these studies were published, I have acquired a considerable number of additional documents. Since this is a fundamental subject, I deemed it appropriate to devote a specific in-depth study to

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2 Already in 1937, the British government published the 100-page manual *Air Raid Precautions Handbook No. 1*.

3 In addition to the already cited Izzo, see the works by Sartori, Prentiss as well as Flury/Zernik. Prof. Flury was a researcher at the *Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut*, and together with Dr. Albrecht Hase he had invented Zyklon A.

4 War Cabinet. Chemical Warfare. Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs and Annex 1. Report. TNA, CAB 66-24 (War Cabinet. Memoranda W.P. (42) 171 – W. P. (42) 220, Vol. XXIV, pp. 4-28).

5 Mattogno 2016, Chapter II, pp. 35-50; Graf/Kues/Mattogno, Chapter 3, pp. 63-76; Mattogno/Graf, Chapter II, pp. 47-76.

how these propaganda stories emerged and developed, which constitutes Part One of the present study.

Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues and I have already dealt with archaeological research and material evidence about these three camps in greater depth in another study (Mattogno/Kues/Graf). However, when this study was published, archaeological investigations at Sobibór and Treblinka were still in progress. Some of their results have been made accessible since then. Together with the additional documents acquired in the meantime, this not only allows me to come to a final conclusion on the matter, but also to revise previous tentative conclusions regarding mass graves and cremations. These issues constitute the subject matter of Parts Two and Three of this study.

Part One:

Black Propaganda

The Literary Genesis of the "Extermination Camps"

1. Bełżec

1.1. The Impossible Ignorance of "Reality"

The case of the alleged Bełżec Extermination Camp illustrates in an emblematic way the instrumental and mendacious character of the propaganda stories created and spread by Polish-Jewish black propaganda that I outlined in the Introduction. In this camp, everything took place in the light of day, so that the legendary narratives I will expound in this chapter cannot constitute a "shadow projected by—or prolonging—reality" at all.

Michael Tregenza, one of the foremost experts on the history of Bełżec, noted (Tregenza, pp. 241f.):

> *"Whereas Sobibór and Treblinka lay hidden and isolated and were removed from public view, this extermination camp lay right next to the heavily traveled rail and road links between Lublin and Lemberg, directly next to the village of Bełżec. Fences and watchtowers were clearly visible to the traffic passing through, as well as to the villagers. Thus, it is not surprising that both the camp and what happened inside were known to the local population from the beginning. After all, a group of workers was charged with the construction, which included the first gas chambers."*

This camp was in fact adjacent to a major road (today's State Road 17) and to the railway line connecting Lublin to Rava Russkaja and continuing on to Lviv, which the Germans call Lemberg and the Poles Lwów. Since the camp was located on the side of a small hill, and the allegedly homicidal gas chambers of the second phase, as well as the mass graves, are said to have been located in the upper part, the 3-meter-high fence, even if pine and fir branches were woven into it as claimed by some,[6] would not have prevented anyone from observing all the phases of the alleged extermination from a certain distance. Therefore, the "terrible secret" of Bełżec would have been on full display from the outset.

During the camp's period of existence, passenger trains continued to pass through Bełżec Station, and some testimonies come from their passengers. The bulletin *Oneg Szabat* of July 18, 1942 contains the following statement (Bańkowska/Epsztein, p. 255):

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6 Interrogation of S. Kozak dated October 14, 1945. Libionka, p. 147.

> *"Eyewitnesses* [*naoczni świadkowie*] *say that, when passing by train through Bełżec Station, conductors ordered the windows of the cars to be closed for six minutes to prevent the stench of the rotting corpses of murdered Jews from fouling the air in the cars."*

A collection of notes dated August 31, 1942 with the general headline "Observations on the 'resettlement['] of the Jews in the General Government" ("*Beobachtung über die 'Umsiedlung*['] *der Juden in General-Gouvernement*") is attributed to a certain Wilhelm Cornides. However, the original typescript lacks any indication of the author.[7] It was published by Hans Rothfels only in 1959, claiming without evidence that Cornides was the author (Rothfels 1959).

According to one of the short notes, the author was at the Rawa-Ruska [Rava Russkaja] railway station on August 31, 1942, where a train had stopped. He learned from a policeman that such trains had been transiting for three weeks.[8]

> *"I asked: 'How far will they still go?' He then: 'To Belcec.' 'And then?' 'Poison.' I asked: 'Gas?' He shrugged. Then he also said: 'In the beginning, I think they have always shot them.'"*

Then the scene shifts to a passenger train which the author had boarded at Rawa-Ruska:[9]

> *"We drove past the Belcec Camp. Before that, we drove through a forest of tall pine trees for a longer period of time. When the woman called out 'now it's coming', all you could see was a high hedge of pine trees. A strong, sweet smell was clearly noticeable. 'They are stinking already,' said the woman. 'Oh nonsense, that's the gas,' laughed the railway policeman. In the meantime – we had driven about 200 meters – the sweet smell had turned into a pungent smell of burning. 'This is from the crematorium,' said the policeman. Shortly afterwards, the fence ended. A guardhouse with SS posts in front of it could be seen. A double railroad track led into the camp. One track was a branch from the main line, the other led via a turntable out of the camp to a row of sheds about 250 meters away. A freight car was currently parked on the turntable. Several Jews were busy turning the turntable. SS guards, rifle under their arms, stood next to it. One of the sheds was open; one could clearly see that it was filled to the ceiling with bundles of clothes. As we drove on, I looked back at the camp. The fence was too high to see anything. The woman said that sometimes smoke could be seen coming out of the camp when driving by, but I could not see anything like that. My estimate is that the camp measures about 800 by 400 meters."*

Another source claimed the following for as late as April 1943:

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7 YVA, O.33-1784.
8 *Ibid.*, p. 1.
9 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

> *"Travelers on the railway line Zawada-Rawa Ruska close the windows, for this awful stench penetrates into the compartments and causes the people to vomit."* (Silberschein 1944b, p. 21; see the next subchapter)

Regarding Bełżec's "terrible secret," M. Tregenza, who also interviewed the local population, is even more explicit (Tregenza, pp. 246f):

> *"From the very beginning, every single villager knew what was going on in the camp. This resulted from the fraternization between the camp staff and the Ukrainian village population, many of whom entertained members of the SS and 'Trawniki men' in their homes and were well paid for their 'hospitality'. This apparently included prostitution as well. Some young women – according to statements by local people – were said to have done so with the 'Trawniki men' for jewelry and other valuables. Furthermore, prostitutes from other towns came to Bełżec. In the files of the Polish People's Police there are indications concerning a number of villagers who served in various departments of the camp SS. In particular, three sisters of the J. family worked in the SS staff kitchen and in the SS laundry which belonged to the B. family. The village bakery, owned by the Ukrainian N. family, provided the daily supply of several hundred loaves of bread for the SS staff, the 'Trawniki men,' and the thousand or so Jews working in the camp. A number of villagers took the bread by farm cart to the camp gate. One of them was the Jew Mojzesz Hellman, who lived clandestinely in Bełżec under the name of Ligowski. The wages consisted of valuables and cognac.*
>
> *Four men were employed within the camp proper, among them Dmitri N., who checked and repaired the showers and baths of the 'Trawniki men.' Mieczyslaw K. and Waclaw O. worked as mechanics in the garage of the SS or as electricians. The electrician Michał K. installed cables and lighting in the second gas building, the so-called 'Stiftung Hackenholt'* [Hackenholt Foundation] *and is said to have occasionally assisted in the gassings. To the knowledge of the author, this is the only case of a Pole directly* [involved] *– voluntarily and with pay – in the mass murder of Jews in an extermination camp. It is also worth mentioning that the villagers Eustachy U. and Wojciech I. were not only allowed to own cameras but were even allowed, nay, encouraged, to take pictures of the guards of the extermination camp. Some of the photographs were even taken within the camp. The SS men and the 'Trawniki men' would also take pictures of one another and give the films to Wojciech I. for development and printing."*

Tregenza adds that the 20 men who were allegedly forced by the SS to build the first gas chamber at Bełżec – were in fact paid voluntary employees (*ibid.*, pp. 247f.)

> *"These workers were not forced to build the camp, rather, they were recommended by the village administration and were well paid."*

To this image we can add what Patrick Desbois wrote in 2007 (Desbois, p. 45):

> *"In Bełżec I meet the baker who brought bread to the camp staff, the bricklayer who built the gas chambers, and the daughter of the town's mayor. Her father*

> *had been chosen by the commandant of the death camp to temporarily run the municipality. Decisions were made in the presence of the camp commandant. One time he had to provide barbed wire, another time he had to provide workers, yet another time he had to provide horses. When the SS stables were bombed, the camp commandant ordered the mayor to gather forty horses in the central square of the town. A German vet inspected them and chose the best eighteen. Each of the owners was given a receipt. I met the son of one of these farmers. As time passed, his father began to worry, so eventually he decided to go to the camp in order to retrieve the requisitioned horse. He told of having seen threshing machines in operation inside. The Nazis used them to sift through the ashes and find tooth gold."*

These circumstances show, on the one hand, that everyone in Bełżec knew everything, so that the legends put into circulation already in early April 1942 had no reason to exist except, precisely, as propaganda legends. On the other hand, they demonstrate that the SS in Bełżec had no "terrible secret" to hide, and most certainly did not feel at all involved in anything even remotely similar to such a monstrous crime as mass extermination, because they allowed Polish civilians and peasants access to the camp and even allowed themselves to be photographed by them!

1.2. Extermination by Electricity

In the stream of information on the Bełżec Camp which emerged during the Second World War, the alleged system of murder later to be embraced by the official historians – gas chambers using the exhaust gas from a Diesel engine – does not appear at all. Instead, we find all manner of methods, not only diverse in nature, but in part quite fantastic. The only specific reference to a killing with gas – and a very unusual one to boot – is found in a note published under the title "A policeman tells a tale in the town-hall basement of Cholm on September 1, 1942", which is one of the stories attributed to W. Cornides:[10]

> *"When asked how the Jews were being killed, the policeman replied: 'They are told that they have to be deloused, and then they have to take off their clothes, and then they come into a room where a heat wave is first let in, and there is already a small dose of the gas in it. That is enough for anesthesia. The rest follows then afterwards. And then they are burned straight away.'"*

The first news about Bełżec spread as early as April 8, 1942, hence a few weeks after the camp had opened. Zygmunt Klukowski noted in his diary on this date:[11]

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10 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

11 Klukowski, p. 254, entry for April 8, 1942. Extracts from Klukowski's diary were published three years earlier with the title "Niedola i zagłada Żydów w Szczebrzeszynie" ("The Misfortune and Extermination of the Jews in Szczebrzeszyn"), where the quoted passage can be found on p. 223.

> *"Among the Jews terrible desperation. We now know that every day there is a train arriving at Bełżec from Lublin and one from Lvov, each with twenty cars. The Jews must get off, are taken behind a barbed-wire fence and murdered by an electric current* [*prądem elektrycznym*] *or poisoned with gas* [*gazami*]*, and then the corpses are burnt* [*zwłoki palą*]*."*

A report of the *Delegatura* (the clandestine representation in Poland of the Polish Government-in-Exile in London), which I translate in full, also dates from April 1942 (Caban/Mańkowski, pp. 34f.):

> *"Bełżec Camp. As far as the Jews are concerned, terror has been imposed for many weeks. Cases of beatings and shootings of Jews are the order of the day. Among them is observed the fear of being taken to Bełżec Camp. The camp was completely finished a few days before March 17, 1942. From that day on, the transportation of Jews by trains from Lwów and Warsaw began. On the first day, five transports arrived, and then they came from one of the two areas. One transport entered Bełżec Station below the camp.*[12] *After an unloading of half an hour, the train comes back empty. The train crew is German and* [there is] *only one Pole, the fireman,* [who] *gets off at the station before entering the siding. The observations of the population (the camp is within visual and auditory range of the inhabitants of the railway buildings) all lead to one conclusion, that the Jews are killed en masse at the camp. The following facts support this:*
> *1) 52 transports arrived at the camp between March 17 and April 13 (one transport* [has] *18-35 freight cars* [with] *an average of 1,500 people).*
> *2) No Jews are brought out of the camp – neither during the day nor at night.*
> *3) No provisions are delivered to the camp (bread and other foodstuffs were provided for the Jews who previously worked on the construction* [of the camp]*).*
> *4) Lime is brought to the camp.*
> *5) Transports arrived at the camp at every hour. Prior to the arrival of a transport, no Jews are observed at the camp.*
> *6) Approximately 2 railway cars of clothing are taken from the camp after each transport, which are deposited in the railroad warehouses (clothing is looted by the Selbstschutz* [self-protection: Ukrainians on duty at the camp].
> *7) In the camp area, Jews were seen in underwear.*
> *8) There are 3 barracks in the camp area, in which not even a tenth of the Jews is accommodated.*
> *9) On the hottest days, one can smell a strong stench in the camp area.*
> *10) For vodka, which the Selbstschutzes drink in large quantities, they pay any amount requested, often with watches and precious objects.*
> *11)* […] *It is not known by which kind of death the Jews perish in the camp. There are three hypotheses: 1) with electricity* [*elektrycznością*]*, 2) with gases* [*gazami,* plural]*, 3) with rarefied air* [vacuum] *with the help of a suction pump. Regarding 1) – lack of an efficient source of electricity, regarding 2) – neither the delivery of gases* [*gazów,* plural] *was observed, nor the action of gas resi-*

12 Meaning the camp was located on a hill above the station.

> *dues* [*gazu*, singular] *after ventilation, regarding 3) – this hypothesis has no elements that can refute it. Instead, there is confirmation that the walls and floor of one of the barracks were covered with thick sheet metal during their construction (apparently on purpose).*
> *In the camp area large excavations were carried out in the fall. At that time, it was assumed that there would be underground warehouses. Today the purpose of these works was explained. From the airtight barracks into which the undressed Jews are forced, presumably for disinfection, a narrow-gauge railroad track leads to these excavations. It was seen that the Jews carried their 'disinfected' co-religionists to a mass grave on this track.*
> *In Bełżec, the term 'Totenlager'* [camp of the dead] *was heard in regard to the Jewish camp. The camp is run by 12 SS (kom*[mandant] *hauptmann* [captain] *Wirth), who have 40 Selbstschutz as aides."*

I will not dwell on this hearsay description,[13] but point out that the report's resistance authors would have done better to ask for first-hand information from the inhabitants of Bełżec who had access to the camp and allegedly even built the claimed "gas chambers" for pay! This confirms precisely that, from these sources, they knew or could have known everything from the very beginning, but instead they intentionally put out a grim story of black propaganda. The aforementioned hearsay description itself is the result of such propaganda, because the story of the trains entering the Bełżec Camp full of people but always leaving the camp empty, even at night – which implies a very improbable system of careful surveillance by the civilian population, with lookouts watching the camp around the clock – was the prerequisite for creating the story of an "extermination camp," but then there was still the crucial issue of the killing system, which was "solved" not with any demonstrable facts but with a lot of imagination.

In June 1942, Emanuel Ringelblum, Hersz Wasser and Eliahu Gutkowski prepared a report for the *Oneg Szabat* underground archives of the Warsaw Ghetto titled "The Purgatory of Polish Jews under the Nazi Occupation," where we read:[14]

> *"From mid-March 1942 to the present day, the extermination of the Jews of the Lublin District of Bełżec continues, where, according to the information provided, they kill by means of electricity* [*przy pomocy prądu elektrycznego*] *and then cremate in installed furnaces* [*w zainstalowanych piecach*]*."*

On July 10, 1942, the Polish Government-in-Exile in London received the following report:[15]

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13 For a discussion of these kinds of claims I refer the reader to Mattogno 2016 and Mattogno/Kues/Graf.

14 "Gehenna Żydów polskich pod okupacją hitlerowską," in: Bańkowska/Epsztein, p. 326.

15 *Meldunek nadzwyczajny z miejsca tracenia w Bełżcu z 10.VII.42r.* SPP, Jcha 15, poz. 81. The report was later included as "Annex 3" in a long report (Sprawozdanie Nr. 6/42) written in London on December 23, 1942 by the Minister of the Interior, St. Mikołajczyk, of the Polish Government-in-Exile. HILA, Stanford University, Box 3, pp. 63f.

> *"According to information from a German who is employed there, the place of execution is located in Bełżec, near the railway station, and is fenced off with barbed-wire fences. Inside and outside the barbed-wire fences, the Ukrainian guard detail stands sentinel. The execution takes place in the following manner: The train of Jews, after arriving at Bełżec Station, approaches on a siding the wire fences surrounding the place of execution, where the train personnel get replaced. From the fences* [onward], *the train is driven by German engineers to the unloading point, where the tracks end. After being unloaded, the men go to a barracks on the right, the women to a barracks located on the left, where they undress, purportedly for a bath. After undressing, both groups enter the third barracks, with an electric plate* [*z płytą elektryczną*], *where the execution takes place. Then the corpses are taken by rail to the pit, about 30 meters deep, which is located outside the fences. This pit was dug by Jews, all of whom were executed. The Ukrainian guard personnel serving there must be killed after the end of the operation. The Ukrainians on guard duty are overloaded with stolen coins and jewelry: they pay 400 złoty for a liter of vodka, and 2,000 złoty and also jewelry for having an affair with a woman."*

On July 25, Wehrmacht Captain Wilm Hosenfeld described in his diary the Jewish-Polish black-propaganda tales circulating at the time (Roth, p. 228):

> *"This week already 30000 Jews are to be led out of the ghetto, somewhere to the east. What will be done with them is already known, despite all secrecy. Somewhere, not far from Lublin, there are buildings with electrically heated rooms, which are heated by high-voltage current, similar to a crematorium. The unfortunate people are herded into these heating chambers and then burned alive. Thousands can be killed this way in one day."*

These fables later developed into a wide range of mutually contradictory fantasies.

In a report compiled after August 22, 1942 and titled "The Liquidation of the Jews in Warsaw" we read that in Bełżec

> *"within a month (March-April 1942) 80,000 people were killed with electricity."* (Tyszkowa, p. 53)

On November 15, 1942, Dr. Ignacy Schwarzbart, a member of the National Council of the Polish Republic, made a statement in which he paraphrased the July 10 report (Apenszlak *et al*., p. 131):

> *"The methods applied in this mass extermination are, apart from* [individual] *executions, firing squads, electrocution and lethal-gas chambers. An electrocution station is installed at Belzec Camp. Transports of settlers arrive at a siding, on the spot where the execution is to take place. The camp is policed by Ukrainians. The victims are ordered to strip naked ostensibly to have a bath and are then led to a barracks with a metal plate for floor. The door is then locked, electric current passes through the victims and their death is almost instantaneous. The bodies are loaded on the wagons and taken to a mass grave some distance from the camp."*

The July 10, 1942 report reappeared on December 1 in an English-language Polish magazine under the title "Extraordinary Report from the Jew-Extermination Camp at Bełżec."[16]

Dr. Schwarzbart's statement was picked up ten days later by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's *Daily News Bulletin* in an article titled "250000 Warsaw Jews led to mass execution: electrocuting introduced as new method of mass killing of Jews."

On December 5, 1942, Schwarzbart sent a telegram to the Jewish Congress in New York stating:[17]

> *"Special official envoy gentile escaped and arrived here left capital this October saw Warsaw ghetto on last August and September witnessed mass murder of one transport six thousand Jews at Belzec spoke to him yesterday 3 hours confirm all most horrible mass atrocities still living all remnants of Jews facing death."*

This envoy was Jan Karski, whom I discuss at length in Subchapter 1.3.

On December 20, 1942, *The New York Times* published an article headlined "Allies Describe Outrages on Jews" on the alleged extermination of the Jews in German-occupied Poland in which we read, among other things:

> *"Actual data concerning the fate of the deportees is not at hand, but the news is available – irrefutable news – that places of execution have been organized at Chelm and Belzec where those who survive shootings are murdered en masse by means of electrocution and lethal gas."*

In 1944, the story of the electrocution installation at Bełżec was embellished with new and fantastic details. On February 12, the *New York Times* wrote once more about the camp, publishing a more-detailed report headlined "Nazi Execution Mill Reported in Poland: Fugitive Tells of Mass Killings in Electrically Charged Vats":

> *"Stockholm, Sweden. Feb. 11 (AP). A young Polish Jew who escaped from a mass execution in Poland with the aid of false identification papers repeated today a story that the Germans operated an 'execution factory' in old Russian fortifications in eastern Poland.*
>
> *The Jews were forced naked onto a metal platform operated as a hydraulic elevator which lowered them into a huge vat filled with water up the victims' necks, he said. They were electrocuted by current through the water. The elevator then lifted the bodies to a crematorium above, the youth said.*
>
> *The youth said he personally had seen trainloads of Jews leave Rawna Luska* [Rawa Ruska] *in eastern Poland in the morning for the crematorium at near-by Beljec* [Bełżec] *and return empty in the evening. He was told the rest of the story, he said, by individuals who escaped after actually being taken inside the factory. The fortifications, he added, were built by the Russians after they had occupied eastern Poland."*

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16 *Polish Fortnightly Review*, December 1, 1942, p. 4.

17 TNA, FO 371-30924, p. 29.

In 1944, Dr. Abraham Silberschein, a member of the Polish parliament and delegate of the World Jewish Congress, published a series of mimeographed brochures titled *Die Judenausrottung in Polen* (*The Extermination of Jews in Poland*), in which he included even more-horrifying propaganda stories. From these, I shall present two reports on Bełżec Camp in their entirety. The first one has the title "*Die Hölle von Belzec*" ("The Bełżec Hell"; Silberschein 1944b, pp. 21f.):

> *"Jews deported to Belzec were ordered to undress, as if they were going to take a bath. They were, indeed, taken to a bathing establishment able to contain several hundreds of people. However, they were executed en masse by means of an electric current. A boy who managed to escape from such an establishment told me what happened after the electrocution: The fat from the corpses was drained in order to – make soap from it.*
>
> *The remnants of the corpses were then thrown into anti-tank ditches which had been laid out along the Russian border by the arch-henchman Major Dollf. Burial of the slaughtered had to be done by the strongest of the Jews, selected from among the doomed. It often happened that these people had to bury their own relatives. Not much later, these Jews, too, who had been assigned the task of burying their dead brethren – a task which they did against their will and by being forced – were killed in the same way. The Jews buried at Belzec came mainly from Lublin, Lemberg* [Lvov]*, and other towns in Eastern Galicia. Some 300,000 Jews were interred there.*
>
> *Far too many corpses having been thrown into these mass graves, it was impossible to cover them with a sufficiently thick layer of earth. This caused a stench of rotting flesh to spread over the whole area. This smell is still perceptible (i.e., in April, at the time of writing of this eyewitness report). Travelers on the railway line Zawada-Rawa Ruska close the windows, for this awful stench penetrates into the compartments and causes the people to vomit. I myself had to travel along this line on several occasions and have thus been able to convince myself of this state of affairs. As late as April 10, 1943, I passed through there one last time. The Christian population of Belzec has left this place for the sole reason of this stench.*
>
> *The men of the Gestapo and the Ukrainians who commit these murders have magnificently enriched themselves by taking the gold and the jewelry which some Jews had sewn into their clothes. Those butchers had so much money that they were able to pay 20 gold dollars to the farmers for a bottle of vodka."*

The second report published by A. Silberschein was called "*Hinrichtungs- und Vernichtungslager Belzec*" ("Execution and Extermination Camp Bełżec") and mentioned an undefined "electric furnace" as the means of execution (Silberschein 1944a, pp. 41-44):

> *"<u>The Victims.</u>*
>
> *Starting in 1942, so-called actions took place in all Polish cities and towns. Based on a well-defined plan, they were repeated at almost regular intervals and became the horror of the Jewish population. In general, such actions con-*

sisted of a number of local Jews being rounded up and deported. The number was often specified in advance, and the local Jewish council was compelled to provide this number. Special commando units were organized for this purpose. They traveled from one town to the next to carry out their hounding of the Jews. The Jews caught in this way were normally taken to the Belzec extermination camp. Without exception, this was the fate of all Jews caught in Eastern Galicia.
Belzec is a little town, formerly a border crossing between Galicia and Poland, situated on the railway line from Lemberg [Lvov] *to Lublin. The camp that existed here was a most extraordinary one. While all other camps were officially designated as prison camps, concentration camps, or work camps, this camp was a pure extermination camp. Jews were sent there for this purpose only. It would not be wrong to say that all Jews from Galicia, certainly all who came from Eastern Galicia, died there with the exception of the few who were able to save themselves. However, not only were transports of Polish Jews from Galicia taken there, Belzec was also the destination for many convoys of foreign Jews, in particular Jews from Holland and from Germany.*

Installations.
Belzec and its surroundings have become a fortress of the Inquisition as never before seen in the history of mankind.
Special buildings for gassing experiments were built here, special factories for the production of soap and shoe polish from Jewish fat, hospitals were built for the purpose of a prior withdrawing of blood transfusions of Jewish children [sic]. *Special types of equipment for hanging were devised. Even soldiers of the Wehrmacht would not believe it, but still, those installations were observed by reliable eyewitnesses.*

Murder Procedure.
Not a single one of all the hundreds of thousands brought to Belzec ever managed to escape. We are, therefore, unable to know the details of what was going on inside the camp.
According to a German employed there, the camp is protected by a barbed-wire fence and is situated in the immediate vicinity of the station. Within the barbed wire, Ukrainians are on guard duty.
The executions take place as follows: On arrival, the train with the Jews is taken to a siding right next to the wire fence. Then the crew is changed. After unloading, the men are directed to the right, the women into the barracks on the left. They were ordered to undress and to prepare for an end. They then must enter a third barracks, which contains an electric oven. The executions take place in this barracks. After that, the corpses are taken by train to a ditch beyond the barbed-wire fence. The ditch has a depth of some 30 meters. It was dug by Jews.
Travelers and tourists who have passed through Belzec have confirmed that the fields all around have become mass graves. At every step one notices traces of lime and gore. The fields are strewn with skeletons in various stages of decom-

position. The air reeks with a pestilential stench. Therefore, the farmers in the area have fled from their villages. The town itself is deserted and ghost-like. There is only the occasional SS policeman loitering about, yawning.
On the basis of the number of Jews caught during the actions, who were all taken – as previously mentioned – to Belzec, it can be assumed that no fewer than six hundred thousand Jews from Galicia died as martyrs there. Adding the other transports, one can safely say that the number is much higher still, perhaps twice as high."

The paragraph relating the method of execution appears nearly word-for-word in another book, also published in 1944. However, instead of the term "furnace" ("*Ofen*") we have here "stove" ("*Herd*"; *Soll ich*…, p. 56):

"Then they move on into a third barracks with an electric stove where the execution takes place."

In a book published in Stockholm in 1944 and translated into English and German a year later, Stefan Szende gives the following account of Bełżec camp:[18]

"Belzec was a little place to the north of Rawa-Ruska, just on the 1939 Russo-German frontier. Immediately this frontier line had been agreed on, the Russians had begun to erect fortifications on a big scale. When the German troops crossed the frontier in June, 1941, the fortifications were still incomplete.
It was from these half-finished Russian fortifications that the Nazis made their slaughter-house in which millions of Jews were exterminated.
To exterminate 5 million people is an enormous task, and even in our age of technical perfection it needs a lot of preparing and organizing, and there are many problems to be faced by those planning to carry it out. Tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands, of Jews had been taken to 'Pjaski.' Further tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands had died as a result of ill-treatment, starvation and disease. But there were still millions left and they all had to be killed in accordance with the orders of the Fuehrer.
Even the effective killing of bed-bugs or lice on a large scale demands a certain technique. However, no one can doubt that the Germans are a highly talented people in all technical matters. Amongst them there were highly efficient engineers of death. These men were given their instructions by the Gestapo, and they set to work to solve the technical problems to which the mass slaughter of millions of defenseless men, women and children gives rise. They solved the problem. They solved it brilliantly. Their Fuehrer, Adolf Hitler, and Himmler, the head of the Gestapo, must be well satisfied with them and their work.
Months of planning and building operations were necessary, but the Germans are a patient people and the objective was worth the time spent on achieving it. The extermination of millions of Jews with the very latest modern technical means -what an enticing aim! Hundreds of thousands of labor hours were expended. Tens of thousands of tons of valuable materials were used in the pro-

[18] Szende 1944, pp. 263-265; 1945, pp. 290-292; Szende/Folkmann, pp. 159-161.

cess. But at last, in the spring of 1942, the scientific slaughter-house at Belzec was ready.

The mass-killing installation at Belzec occupies an area almost five miles across. This area is surrounded by barbed wire and every other modern device for keeping prisoners in and others out. No one is permitted to come near the place except properly authorized persons or those who will never leave the place alive. But despite all these precautions there were one or two people who saw the inside of Belzec and nevertheless succeeded in escaping. Despair and desperation make a man ingenious.

Specially chosen S.S. men guard the Belzec killing plant. They are men without nerves. There is much to do in a slaughterhouse and it gives sadists great pleasure to compel their victims, to do as much of it as possible. For instance, the clothes and the belongings of the millions of victims had to be collected and sorted out. For this purpose, the S.S. chose certain Jews out of each transport that arrived. These Jews were not spared, of course. It was merely that their execution was postponed. Two such Jews actually succeeded in making their escape. They escaped into the Ghetto which still existed in Rawa-Ruska at the time. In Rawa-Ruska they reported the details of the technically perfected slaughter going on in Belzec.

As far as I know, no Jew ever succeeded in escaping from Belzec and reaching neutral or Allied territory. The two Jews who made their escape from Belzec to Rawa-Ruska in the summer of 1942 were probably killed subsequently when the Ghetto there was liquidated, but a number of people who heard the evidence of these two fugitives from Belzec did escape. The following description of the Belzec slaughterhouse comes from them.

The trains coming into Belzec loaded with Jews were driven into a tunnel in the underground premises of the execution building. There the Jews were unloaded and ordered to divest themselves of all their things. In 1942 Jews arriving at Belzec came dressed and carrying all sorts of belongings with them. Fully loaded trains from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Holland, France and the Balkan States arrived in Belzec, and they were all treated in the same way. These Jews were told to take all their things with them, as they were going to be 'settled' in the East. Thus, tens of thousands of Jews arrived, bringing all sorts of property with them, typewriters, sewing machines, crockery, silver and so on.

Everything was taken away from them. The goods seized in this way were carefully sorted out, listed and ticketed and subsequently used for the benefit of the master race. It was to spare the staff at Belzec this tremendous task, which, of course, hindered them in their real job, that later on all Jews were sent to Belzec naked.

When trainloads of naked Jews arrived, they were herded into a great hall capable of holding several thousand people. This hall had no windows and its flooring was of metal. Once the Jews were all inside, the floor of this hall sank like a lift into a great tank of water which lay below it until the Jews were up to

their waists in water. Then a powerful electric current was sent into the metal flooring and within a few seconds all the Jews, thousands at a time, were dead.
The metal flooring then rose again and the water drained away. The corpses of the slaughtered Jews were now heaped all over the floor. A different current was then switched on and the metal flooring rapidly became red hot, so that the corpses were incinerated as in a crematorium and only ash was left.
The floor was then tipped up and the ashes slid out into prepared receptacles. The smoke of the process was carried away by great factory chimneys.
That was the whole procedure. As soon as it was completed, it could start up again. New batches of Jews were constantly being driven into the tunnels. The individual trains brought between 3,000 and 5,000 Jews at a time, and there were days on which the Belzec line saw between twenty and thirty such trains arrive.
Modern industrial and engineering technique in Nazi hands triumphed over all difficulties. The problem of how to slaughter millions of people rapidly and effectively was solved.
The underground slaughter-house spread a terrible stench around the neighborhood, and sometimes whole districts were covered with the foul-smelling smoke from the burning human bodies."

A variant of the underground extermination was published in the infamous *Black Book* of the well-known Soviet propaganda writers Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, compiled in 1945 and 1946. A certain corporal (*Obergefreiter*) Erik Heubaum, a German prisoner of war, is said to have declared in a statement, about which no particulars are given, not even a date (Ehrenburg/ Grossman, p. 542):

"In addition, I saw peaceful residents exterminated with gas. I would drive telephone operators to a small station located twenty kilometers from the city of Rava Russkaya. An underground barracks had been built at this station in the woods. Once when I was at the station a group of Jews was brought in. The traincars were closed and the people, with their hands stretched out the windows, pleaded for some water, but no one was allowed to go near them. In the evening these people were herded into the woods. All the strangers were forced into the station. The woods were surrounded by S.D. units.
There these people, regardless of sex and age, men and women, the elderly and the children, were stripped naked and herded into the underground barracks. Three quarters of an hour later men from another group were sent in there to carry out the corpses. Then the next group was herded into the barracks… This is the way three hundred people were exterminated every evening.
I saw this go on for eight days. That people were being gassed there I learned from an SS man, Carl Horst from Saxony. He took part in it. The executions were supervised by Sturmbannführer (SS Major) Herbst, from the city of Breslau."

But even the story of the descending or collapsible floor took on further variations. The files of the Soviet commission of inquiry for the Sokal Territory,

dated October 7, 1944, contain the statement of a certain Rozalja Schelewna Schier:[19]

> *"My husband, who was working at Bełżec Station at the time, told me the following:*
> *At Bełżec Station two transports consisting of fifty to sixty cars arrive every day. Each car holds 100-120 persons. The train is taken to a siding in the forest, about one kilometer away. There a movable shed has been placed on the rails. It is marked 'Baths for Jews.' The people who have arrived are ordered to undress and enter the baths; they are promised work afterwards. When the bath house is completely full with 100-120 people, gas and high-voltage electric current are fed into it. Within 5 minutes, all the people in the bath house were dead. Inside the shed, the floor folds automatically, and the corpses fall into a previously dug trench where the victims are doused with a flammable liquid and burnt."*

A year later, the extraordinary collapsible floor at Bełżec has changed again. On October 16, 1945, the witness Jan Głąb declared to the investigative judge of Zamość:[20]

> *"The naked Jews were urged into an alleged bath, i.e., the gas chamber, where they were killed with gas* [*gazem*]*. The killing lasted about 15 minutes. It is difficult to determine what the Jews were asphyxiated with in the gas chamber. At the time when the Jews were urged into the gas chamber, a large engine of 250 HP was running in the camp area. It was said that the Jews were killed with combustion gases. It is not true that the Jews were killed with electricity in the extermination camp. The voltage of the current was too weak for the mass killing of people. During the period of operation of the death camp, the blacks* [Soviet PoWs] *manufactured 48 pairs of special hinges in my railway workshop and bent a large number of narrow-gauge railway rails on the turntable. From this I gather that the hinges were used for the floor of the gas chamber, which, after the killing of the Jews, was opened and the corpses fell down, from where they were taken to mass graves in wagons."*

In 1945, Dr. Jérome Guérin, a former French PoW, reported on an encounter he had had three years before in the ghetto of Rawa Ruska with a member of the German Security Police during a round-up of Jews (Guérin, p. 148):

> *"He then pulled out a map and pointed to the name of a village: Belsetz* [sic]*. The means of extermination: electrocution. Women, old people, and children were taken on foot, naked, into a hall with metal plates in the floor. When a certain number of people had been assembled, a high-voltage current passed through the plates. The name of Belsetz was confirmed on two occasions by other Germans but none of those we approached was able to confirm that he had personally witnessed such executions. Others held that the executions took*

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19 GARF, 7021-67-82, p. 3.
20 Minutes of the interrogation of J. Głąb on October 16, 1945. Libionka, p. 175.

place in gas chambers, but here, too, the exact place could not be ascertained."

In 1945, Stefan Tadeusz Norwind wrote (Norwind, pp. 102f.):

"Major corpse factories existed at Belzec, at Sobibor, at Majdanek, and also, it is said, at Palmyry in the region of Warsaw. […]
The factories had two types of installations. Some of them were electrical, i.e., naked people were pushed onto a steel plate and then killed by a high-voltage current (this took place e.g. at Belzec). Others consisted of hermetically sealed gas chambers where, again, naked people were killed by means of steam or gas (this took place at Tremblinka [sic]*)."*

The story of extermination by means of electricity also appears, with other fanciful details, in the above-mentioned *Black Book* (Ehrenburg/Grossman, p. 117):

"Belzec was a terrible extermination spot for the Jews, and the Germans kept it top secret. The railroad personnel who worked on the trains carrying the doomed victims, however, told their friends and relatives of how the Jews were being massacred in Belzec.
Jews were led into an enormous hall which held up to one thousand persons. The floors and walls of the hall were electrically wired and without insulation. As soon as the hall was filled with naked people, the Germans switched on a strong electrical current. This was an enormous electric chair[21] *– something that no criminal imagination could ever have invented."*

The electrocution story even appears in the "Chronicle of Auschwitz by an unknown author," which was allegedly unearthed in that camp in 1953 ("Kronika oświęcimska…," p. 307):

"Sadism in the years 1940-1941.
In Bełżec, near the Soviet border, there was a camp that surpassed Auschwitz in sadism. For example, every day Jews were taken and forced to dig a deep, narrow pit, then they were thrown into it one at a time. Then each prisoner was forced to relieve himself inside the pit, on the victim's head. Those who refused received 25 strokes. In this way, the prisoners' needs were performed on him throughout the day until he was finally suffocated by the stench.
The Soviet sentry, on the other hand, begged the Jews to take advantage of every possible moment to cross the border into the Russian zone. Whoever took advantage of a moment of the SS's inattention succeeded: in fact, when the SS realized it, they could no longer shoot, because the bullet would have ended up on the other side of the border. Therefore, the SS used to lurk next to the fences and shoot the hand or the protruding foot of those who crawled, at which point the Soviet sentry would protest again. But the SS would shout, 'The hand or leg is still on our territory!'
At that time, the job was to dig a long, deep, continuous trench as a border line. Later, when the Germans had penetrated deeply into Russia, eight large

21 This fable was also repeated about Treblinka; see Subchapter 3.3.

> *barracks were built in the forest, in which they installed tables and benches; there, the Jews from Lublin, Lvov and other districts were crammed in together and electrocuted* [*elektryzowano*]*."*

1.3. From Electrocution to the "Trains of Death": Jan Karski's Impostures

Another story about Bełżec, widely circulated during the Second World War, concerned the "trains of death." It was most successfully disseminated by Jan Karski (his real name was Kozielewski), a courier with the Polish government in exile in London, who reworked with powerful imagination the rumors circulating at that time about quicklime or chlorinated lime sprinkled on the floor of deportation cars, another popular propaganda theme. Walter Laqueur writes that

> *"Karski lived underground in Warsaw in 1941-2, engaged in 'black propaganda' among German soldiers, printing and distributing leaflets in German."* (Laqueur, p. 230)

In fact, the story told by Karski is a rather crude form of "black propaganda." It was the final product of a literary development which can readily be sourced in the surviving documents. The first version of this story, dating back to November 1942 – of which Karski was the bearer (but also the accomplice), as I shall make clear below – did mention the death trains, but only as an instrument of torture taking the Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto "to special camps at Treblinka, Bełżec and Sobibor," where they would be killed. With respect to the camp at Bełżec, Karski not only did not yet pretend to have visited it but ascribed to it the method of extermination in vogue at the time – electrocution. However, by December 1942, Karski had invented the story of his phantom visit – disguised as a Polish policeman – to a "sorting camp" fifty kilometers from Bełżec, rehashing 'the trains of death' motif, the trains having now become a means of extermination in themselves, although he was still assigning to Bełżec the processes of murder by poison gas and electric current. In the final elaboration of his story, Karski transformed the "sorting camp" into the camp at Bełżec, which he now pretended to have visited disguised as an Estonian guard!

Karski arrived in London illegally on November 25, 1942, and for this reason he was detained and interrogated at the Royal Patriotic School until November 28, when he was released due to the intervention of the Polish Government-in-Exile. This had a long diplomatic aftermath.[22] On November 26, the day of his arrest, Richard Law, British Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, wrote in a file memo that on that morning two British Jews, Mr. [Syd-

[22] The pertinent documentation can be found in: TNA, FO 371-32231.

ney] Silverman and Mr. [Alexander] Easterman, had asked him for an audience to talk "about the extermination of Jews in Europe," and the latter had handed him a document "which was handed to him last night by a member of the Polish Government,"[23] no doubt Karski, who had evidently met with them before his arrest.

The report in question was a two-page typescript titled "News is reaching the Polish Government in London about the liquidation of the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw," the full text of which I quote:[24]

> *"The persecution of the Jews in Poland, which has been in progress from the very first day of the German occupation, has taken on extremely acute forms since March 1942, when Himmler ordered the extermination of 50% of the Jewish population in the Government General, to be carried out by end of 1942.*
>
> *Though the German assassins had started this work with extraordinary gusto, the results apparently did not satisfy Himmler for during his visit to the General Gouvernement in July 1942 he ordered new decrees personally, aiming at the total destruction of Polish Jewry.*
>
> *The persecution in Warsaw started on 21st July 1942, when German police cars suddenly drove into the ghettos. The soldiers immediately started rushing into houses, shooting the inhabitants at sight, without any explanation. The first victims belonged mostly to the educated classes. On that day almost all the members of the Jewish Municipal Council were arrested and held as hostages.*
>
> *On 22nd July 1942 the Jewish Council was ordered to proclaim the decree of the German authorities dealing with the re-settlement of all the Warsaw Jews, regardless of sex or age, in the eastern part of Poland, with the sole exception of persons working in German factories or members of the Jewish militia. The daily quota of people to be re-settled was fixed at 6,000 and members of the Jewish Municipal Council were ordered to carry out the order under pain of death.*
>
> *By the next day, however, on 23nd July, the German police again appeared in the Jewish Municipal Council and demanded to see the chairman, Mr. Czerniakow. After the police had left, Czerniakow committed suicide. From a note left for his wife, it became clear that he had received orders to deliver 10,000 people the next day and 7,000 daily on the following days, in spite of the fact that the quota had been fixed originally at 6,000. The victims to be delivered to the Germans are either dragged out of their homes or seized in the streets. As the zeal of the Jewish police to perform these duties against their own people was slight and did not give a guarantee of efficiency, the Germans have mobilised temporary security battalions for the man-hunts, consisting of Ukrainians, Latvians, and Lithuanians. These battalions, under the command of SS men, are characterised by their utter ruthlessness, cruelty and inhumanity.*

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23 TNA, FO, 371/30923, p. 73.

24 TNA, FO, 371/30923, pp. 74f. (original typed text) and 76-79 (two transcripts).

The Jews, when caught, are driven to a square. Old people and cripples are then singled out, taken to the cemetery and there shot. The remaining people are loaded into goods trucks, at the rate of 150 people to a truck with space for 40. The floor of the truck is covered with a thick layer of lime and chlorine sprinkled with water. The doors of the trucks are locked. Sometimes the train starts immediately on being loaded, sometimes it remains on a siding for a day, two days or even longer. The people are packed so tightly that those who die of suffocation remain in the crowd side by side with the still living and with those slowly dying from the fumes of lime and chlorine, from lack of air, water and food. Wherever the trains arrive half the people are dead. Those surviving are sent to special camps at Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor. Once there, the so-called 'settlers' are mass murdered.

Only young and relatively strong people are left alive, for they are valuable slave labour for the Germans. However, the percentage of these is extremely small, for out of a total of about 250,000 're-settled' only 4,000 have been sent to auxiliary work on the battlefronts.

Neither children nor babies are spared. The orphans from asylums and day-nurseries are evacuated as well. The director of the biggest Jewish orphanage in Warsaw and well known writer Janusz Korczak, whom the Germans had given permission to remain in the ghetto, preferred to follow his charges to death.

Thus under the guise of re-settlement in the east, a mass murder of the Jewish population is taking place. Started on 22nd July 1942, it has been in progress ever since. By the end of September 1942 250,000 Jews had been eliminated. The extent of this action is best characterised by a few figures: In the Warsaw ghetto there lived, according the official German statistics of March 1942, about 433,000 people. In spite of the extremely high mortality caused by bad hygienic conditions, epidemics, starvation, executions etc., the number of Jews in the ghetto remained more or less stable, for to replace the dead, Jews from other parts of Europe, Germany, Austria, Holland, were sent to Warsaw. According to information leaking from the Arbeitsamt [Labor Office], *only 40,000 people are to remain in the Warsaw ghetto, only highly skilled workers, to be employed in German war industry. The most convincing proof of the dwindling numbers in the ghetto lies in the fact that for September 1942 120,000 ration cards were printed. For October the number issued was only 40,000.*

Simultaneously with the extermination of Jews in the Warsaw ghetto, ghettos in the provinces, at Falenica, Rembertow, Nowy Dwor, Kaluszyn and Minsk Mazowiecki are being liquidated. In the district of Wilno only one Jewish community has remained, in the city itself, numbering only 12,000 people. According to news which reached London some time ago the Germans have murdered 60,000 Jews in Wilno, 14,000 in Kowno and 50% of the Jewish population of Lwow; similar news reaches us from cities in S. Eastern Poland, such as Stanislawo, Tarnopol, Stryj.

The methods applied in this mass extermination are, apart from executions by firing squads, electrocution and lethal gas-chambers.

> *An electrocution station is installed at Belzec camp. Transports of 'settlers' arrive at a siding, on the spot where the execution is to take place. The camp is policed by Ukrainians. The victims are ordered to strip naked, – to have a bath, ostensibly – and are then led to a barracks with a metal plate for floor. The door is then locked, electric current passes through the victims and their death is almost instantaneous. The bodies are loaded on the waggons and taken to a mass grave some distance from the camp.*
>
> *A large digging machine has been installed recently at Treblinka. It works ceaselessly digging ditches – mass graves for Jews who are to meet their death there. The Ukrainian guards, witnesses of the mass murders, are allowed to keep the money and jewellery robbed from the victims. These bestial murders sometimes take place in the presence of the local non-Jewish population, who are helpless and overcome with horror at the sight of such inhuman violence. What the Poles' reactions to these unspeakable crimes are, is best proved by a pamphlet by the 'Front for the Liberation of Poland', containing a strongly worded protest against the terrible extermination of the Jews. According to the pamphlet, the total number of Jews murdered in Poland since September 1939 exceeds one million."*

The text of the report on Bełżec is identical to the one by Ignacy Schwarzbart mentioned above, which, however, dates from November 15, 1942, and therefore precedes it by ten days.

Another portion, the section dealing with the transports of the Jews, appeared with some modifications and with the inevitable reference to the electrocutions in the report of the Polish Government-in-Exile at London of December 10, 1942:[25]

> *"The floor* [*sic*] *of the trucks were covered with quicklime and chlorine. As far as is known, the trains were dispatched to three localities, Tremblinka* [sic]*, Belzec and Sobibor, to what the reports describe as 'extermination camps.' The very method of transport was deliberately calculated to cause the largest possible number of casualties among the condemned Jews. It is reported that on arrival in camp the survivors were stripped naked and killed by various means, including poison gas and electrocution."*

This shows that Jan Karski's "mission" was in fact a "black-propaganda" operation carried out in grand style and orchestrated from London. Sure enough, the story of the trains of death, attributed to a "courier who reached London in December 1942," surfaced in London that December (Apenszlak *et al*., pp. 135-138).

In March of 1943, the periodical *Voice of the Unconquered* published the report in question under the title "Eye-Witness Report of a Secret Courier Fresh from Poland." It also referred to a courier who "reached London at the beginning of December, 1942" ("Eye-Witness Report…," p. 5). This courier, just like the other one, had brought back "a personal eye-witness account"

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[25] TNA, FO, 371/30924, pp. 121-124.

(*ibid.*), which was published in that periodical. The part on Bełżec is set forth below, with subtitles added by the periodical's editors (*ibid*., p. 8):

"Roads Paved With Dead

I want to return to the question of 'deportations': I saw in Warsaw the first part of this act and later on the outskirts of Belzec the second and last part. From Warsaw the Jews are driven to the tracks on the outskirts of the city where a long train of cattle cars is already waiting for them. Before they reach the tracks, however, many are shot for one reason or another. Particularly those who lag behind. The whole route is literally strewn with corpses. When they finally reach their destination they are robbed of all their possessions (officially the deportees are urged to take along their most valuable possessions). Then they are loaded in cars, a hundred people in a car, and the first lap of the journey which lasts from two to eight days begins. Not once during the journey are the doors of the cars opened with the result that many die before they reach the 'sorting point' (Obóz Rozdzielczy) which is located about fifty kilometers from the city of Belzec. Nevertheless the first stage of this journey is mild, almost human, in comparison with what awaits them at the second stage.

Belzec the Slaughter House

In the uniform of a Polish policeman I visited the sorting point near Belzec. It is a huge barracks only about half of which is covered with a roof. When I was there about 5,000 men and women were in the camp. However, every few hours new transports of Jews, men and women, young and old, would arrive for the last journey towards death.

It is humanly impossible to convey the impression that these 5,000 people made upon me: they are no longer in the image of men. Skeletons with eyes dead with resignation. Naked, frightened, they are in constant motion with convulsive, nervous movements. A child is lying with his face towards the roof. It is in the last agony of death. But no one pays any attention to it. I spot amidst this indistinguishable mass an old man completely nude. He was probably stripped of his rags. No one looks at him. He makes no impression upon the people that surround him. The guards keep on shooting at the throng. Corpses are scattered everywhere. Men, in their convulsive moving about, step over them. They hardly notice the dead. Every few minutes the guards pick a number of men to clear the dead which are piled up alongside the fence. This, too, is done without any emotion, without a single expression, in their faces as though they are completely oblivious of what they are doing. These are no longer normal beings but one large convulsive mass breathing its last.

The people are kept in this camp for several days. By the time they start on the last leg of their death-journey most of them have had nothing to eat for days since they are not given any food and have to subsist on whatever they manage to bring along with them.

The second and the most gruesome stage of their journey commences. Accompanied by the lashing of whips and the shooting of guns the 'deportees' are suddenly, without any warning, beginning to be driven to the railroad tracks which are several dozen meters from the camp. A wild stampede of human be-

ings begins. In the meantime, the Germans have made all the preparations to intensify their torture.

The route from the camp to the tracks is a specially constructed narrow passage lined by a weak fence of boards. On both sides of the fence are stationed armed guards. From behind the people are driven by guards who lash out mercilessly with their whips. Everything is designed to create a panic and stampede. But at the same time 'order' is demanded and no one dare touch the fence. Anyone who as much as touches the fence is shot by the guards who are lined alongside of it. The shooting, the blood and the groans and shrieks of those who have been hit only increases the stampede and this gives the guards additional reason for shooting. In this manner, hundreds are killed on a stretch of several meters. But these are the lucky ones. An even more horrible death awaits the survivors.

The narrow passage leads to an open door of a cattle car. These are the famous cars designed for '40 people or 8 horses.' We have measured these cars and found that if human beings were to be loaded there tightly pressed together and completely nude they could hold only 90. Yet 140 people are loaded in these cars. On both sides of the entrance are stationed special S.S. men with guns and whips. It is their job to force the people into the cars.

In Area of 50 Kilometers Corpses of Jews Are Being Burned Day and Night

In panic and fear the emaciated skeletons perform acrobatic feats. A moment comes when the last inch of a car is loaded to capacity. But human beings are still being driven into it: einsteigen, einsteigen! [German in original] *People begin to climb over the heads of their neighbors holding on by the hands, feet or hair of those who are already inside. Thus fifty more manage to get into the car which is then locked. Soon another takes its place…*

A long train thus packed with several thousand men, women, and children is switched to a side line where it remains from two to eight days. The doors are never opened. Those inside suffer inhuman agony. They have to perform natural functions over the heads of the others. Many cars are painted with lime which begins to burn from the dampness of the urine and increases the tortures of the barefooted and nude.

Because there are not enough cars to kill the Jews in this relatively inexpensive manner many of them are taken to nearby Belzec where they are murdered by poison gases or by the application of electric currents. The corpses are burned near Belzec. Thus within an area of fifty kilometers huge stakes are burning Jewish corpses day and night."

On August 9, 1943, Karski, in his capacity as "the Delegate of the Polish Government to the Underground in Poland," met in New York with members of the World Jewish Congress. On this occasion, he gave a speech that was recorded in the minutes:[26]

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[26] "Minutes of meeting of representation of Polish Jewry held in office of World Jewish Congress August 9, 1943 – on occasion of the visit of Mr. Jan Karski – the Delegate of the Polish Government to the Underground in Poland," in: Friedlander/Milton 1990, Document 79, pp. 287-294.

"Mr. Karski then took the floor, and after having thanked Dr. [Aryeh] *Tartakower for his warm welcome, gave the following report:*
'I have come here as a delegate of the people of Poland. Until February 1943, I was in Poland where I was in close contact with the leaders of the Jewish Underground movement. Prior to my departure from the country, they entrusted to me a number documents and reports which I have since handed over to the competent Jewish bodies in London.
During the time I was in Poland, I visited the Warsaw Ghetto twice – the first time in October 1942 and the second, in January 1943. I also had occasion to be in the Concentration Camp for Jews 12 miles outside of Belzec near Lublin. It was there that the Germans, in one single day, murdered 5,000 Jews in cold blood.
I have given a report of the Jewish situation in Poland to leaders of the British Government as well as the British Labor Movement. I gave them a complete and comprehensive report. They can make no pretense of ignorance of the true state of affairs.
I have been asked by the leaders of Polish Jewry to tell you of Jewish suffering and to inform public opinion of plight of the Jews in Poland – so that at some later date, no-one may arise and claim that the world was unaware of the tragedy of Polish Jewry.
I can give you my personal guarantee that everything I report to you now is authentic and true. I speak from personal knowledge as well as from well authenticated reports given to me. I am ready to testify to the veracity of all I tell, under oath.
A special and vicious system has been implemented by the Germans in their plan to exterminate both Jews and Poles. […]
In a death camp 12 kilometres outside of Belzec (near Lublin) I myself witnessed the following horrible scenes: about 5,000 Jews had been brought there. About one fourth of them were quartered in very primitive barracks, the rest had to remain outdoors under the open sky. They had been permitted to bring along with them 15 kilograms of baggage (food, clothing and valuables). […] *I was able to be a witness to all this because I was there as a Latvian policeman."*

The Jews were then forced into train cars via a footbridge, as in the previous story:

"Each of these freight-cars is ordinarily intended to accommodate either 8 horses or forty persons. But the Jews were driven in, tightly packed ranks and as many as 130-140 people were pushed into one car, although the utmost capacity could not possibly have been more for than 100 people. The last car was filled first. When it was filled to the bursting limit, the next group (for the car ahead) were literally forced to clamber over the heads of the Jews in the previous car to reach their own. There were some 50 or 60 of these cars. About 300 Jews were shot or choked to death then and there. The floors of the car had been covered with a layer of quick-lime and chloride. As the packed mass of humanity performed its normal physical needs, the lime and chloride reacted

chemically and the fumes from the floor ultimately asphyxiated the Jews. In this way, the Germans rapidly 'liquidated' the 6,000 Jews whom they had deported from the Warsaw Ghetto. Dante's Inferno is as nothing to the hell which prevailed there. The cars reechoed with shrieks and wild cries. This lasted for about 8 hours. The trains were dispatched to some point 'North' – where, I do not know. After a journey of several days, the cars were shunted off somewhere in a field and eventually their human freight perished. I have heard that the Germans utilized those bodies for the manufacture of fertilizer."

Karski also provided mind-boggling statistical figures:

"1,800,000 Jews have perished in Poland at the hands of the Nazis – 1,500,000 bloodily (sic) massacrated and 300,000 due to sickness and starvation. There are about 500,000 Polish Jews in Russia. A number of them have managed to escape abroad. More than 500,000 Jews have been deported to Poland from other European countries. In February [1943], *scattered over 55 towns and villages, there were still close to 3,000,000 Jews in Poland."*

And here's another unique piece of news:

"Letters have arrived from Jews deported to the East. Some were written under German pressure. The arrival of these letters can be ascribed to the desire of the Nazis to create the impression that nothing is amiss. One must admit, that such letters do serve in a measure to allay the dread of the Jews in the ghettoes."

During this meeting of August 9, 1943, Karski lied to the members of the World Jewish Congress by stating that he had remained in Poland until February 1943 and that in January he had made his second visit to the Warsaw Ghetto.

In 1943, a booklet was published in London whose three authors were given as Alexei Tolstoy, Thomas Mann and a "Polish Underground Worker" who was undoubtedly Jan Karski. Karski's account, which I reproduce below, is written in the first person (Tolstoy *et al.*, pp. 9-11):

"The Jewish Mass Executions. Account by an Eye-Witness.
I was a member of the Polish Underground Movement. It was my duty to keep in touch with all underground parties, including the 'Bund' – the Jewish Social Democratic Organisation in Poland, and I left Warsaw in October, 1942, on a mission from the Underground Front to the Polish Government in London.
Among my other duties, I collected matter on the Jewish mass-exterminations carried out by the occupying power. I should perhaps explain why we paid special attention to the Jewish questions. I am not a Jew myself, and before the war I had very little contact with Jews; in fact, I knew practically nothing about them. But, at present, the extermination of the Jews has a special significance. The sufferings of my own Polish compatriots are terrible, and they are, of course, nearer to my heart; but the methods employed by the enemy against Poles and against Jews are different.

Us, the Poles, they try to reduce to a mediaeval race of serfs. They want to deprive us of our cultural standards, of our traditions, of our education, and reduce us to a nation of robots. But the policy towards the Jews is different. It is not a policy of subjugation and oppression, but of cold and systematic extermination. It is the first example in modern history that a whole nation (not 10, 20 or 30, but 100 per cent of them) are meant to disappear from this earth.

The methods of this process are known to a certain extent, but the details are not. The method is, as you know, to collect the Jews from all over Europe, to dispatch them to the Ghettos of Warsaw, Lwew [sic] *and Soon* [sic]*, where they stay for a certain time. From the ghettos they are 'taken East' as the official term goes, that is, to the extermination camps, at Belzec, Treblinka and Sobibor. In these camps, they are killed in batches of 1,000 to 6,000, by various methods, including gas, burning by steam, mass electrocution, and finally, by the method of the so-called 'death train'.*

In the course of my investigation I succeeded in witnessing a mass-execution in the camp of Belzec. With the help of our underground organisation, I gained access to that camp in the disguise of a Latvian policeman. I was, in fact, one of the executioners. I believe that my course of action was justified. I had no means of preventing the event, but by becoming a witness, I was able to carry a first hand account into the civilised world.

I arrived at the camp on a certain day in July, 1942. The camp, at that moment, contained roughly 6,000 Jews of both sexes and all ages. They had arrived a few days previously from the Ghetto of Warsaw. They did not know what fate was awaiting them. They had been told, like all detachments sent away from the Ghetto, that they were to be employed on field work and to dig trenches. On arrival at the camp, they had been encouraged to write letters to their friends left behind in the Warsaw Ghetto – letters stating that they were being treated correctly, and that deportation was not at all as bad as they had feared. This is part of the German technique to reassure the victims and keep them in ignorance until the last possible moment, thus avoiding unnecessary fuss.

Had these people known with certainly what was awaiting them, the Germans would have to use much bigger forces to deal with them. Later, when all these manoeuvres proved of no avail, and the fate of those 'going East' became known in the Ghetto of Warsaw, the Ghetto revolted. This happened in the Spring of 1943, and the Germans lost about 1,000 killed before they finally overcame and massacred the last survivors.

But the events I am speaking of took place almost a whole year earlier, and, as I say, the Jews in the camp did not know what fate was awaiting them. The executions took place on the day after my arrival.

The camp of Belzec is situated about 15 kilometres south of the town of that name. It is bounded by an enclosure which runs parallel to the railway track at a distance of some 30 yards. A narrow corridor about two yards in width, formed by a wooden palisade on either side, leads from the gate of the camp to a point on the railway track where the trains halt. At about 10 o'clock in the morning, a freight train halted alongside the camp. At the same moment, the

guards at the farther side of the camp started shooting into the air, and yelling at the Jews to get into the trucks. They thus created a deliberate panic in order to prevent any hesitation or resistance among the prisoners.

They were driven in a frantic hurry through the wooden palisade into the first truck which had halted opposite the gate. It was the standard army truck, marked for 'six horses or 36 men.' The floor of the truck was covered with chloride of lime about two inches thick, but the Jews had no time to realize what this meant. When about 100 had been driven into the truck, they could only stand packed like sardines. It seemed physically impossible to press more people into the truck, but at this moment, the guards, aided by the prisoners themselves who were half crazed with fear of the shots fired at their backs, began lifting those next to the truck and throwing them in bodily. Thirty individuals (men and women) were thrown in on top of the heads of those already inside. Some of the standing women had their necks broken, and the horror of the scene can be left to the imagination.

I counted 130 people thrown into the truck – the truck marked 'for 36 men.' Then the sliding doors were closed and bolted. The next truck was shunted into its place, and the same procedure carried out again. Altogether I counted 51 trucks, which absorbed the whole 6,000 people in the camp, with the exception of about 20 or 30, who had been shot dead during the rush.

When the camp was empty and the trucks all filled, the train moved on. The end of this story I learned from my 'comrades', that is, the executioners in the camp, who had done this sort of thing for several months, dispatching one or two trains each week. The train moves on for about 25 miles and then halts in an open field. There it remains standing, hermetically closed, for six to seven days. When, at length, its doors are opened by the grave-diggers' squad, the people inside are all dead, and their bodies in an advanced state of decomposition.

The details of how they die are simple and revolting: the chloride of lime on the floor has the property of developing chlorine gas when coming into contact with humidity. The people jammed into the trucks for many hours are compelled, at some time, to urinate, and this (on the lime), instantaneously produces a chemical reaction. Death must in the end be welcome, for whilst they are dying by the chlorine gas their feet are being burned to the bone by the chemically active chloride. As I said, the number executed in one death train is about 6,000 at a time.

I do not want to add any comments to what I have seen and described. I, myself, have not witnessed the other methods of mass-killing, such as electrocution, steaming, and so on, but I have heard first-hand eye-witness accounts, which describe them as equally horrible. The latest estimate of the number of Jews executed by these methods, in the systematic carrying out of Himmler's orders, is in the region of two million."

The story was published by the "National Committee for Rescue from Nazi Terror," which included British politicians, clergymen and intellectuals, under the title "News-talk on European Service of the British Broadcasting Corpora-

tion." The source was undoubtedly Karski, but what statement was he referring to? The text was written after the uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto, which began on April 19, 1943 and ended on May 16. Karski embarked from Scotland for New York on June 10 and arrived there on the 16th (Wood/Jankowski 1994, p. 182). The declaration would therefore have been made in London between the last ten days of April and the first ten days of June, but nothing is known about it.

In 1944, a book of memoirs by Karski titled *Story of a Secret State* was published. He relates that in early October of 1942 he slipped into the ghetto of Warsaw and established contact with the local Bund, the union of socialist Jews. The head of this organization informed him about the deportation of "over three hundred thousand" Jews into "execution camps" (Karski 1944a, p. 324).

The story goes as follows (Karski 1944a, pp. 339-351):

> *"A few days after my second visit to the Warsaw ghetto, the Bund leader was to arrange an opportunity for me to see the Jewish death camp. The camp was located near the town of Belzec about one hundred miles east of Warsaw and was well-known all over Poland from the tales of horror that were circulated about it. The common report was that every Jew who reached it, without exception, was doomed to death. The Bund leader had never been in it but had the most detailed information on its operations. I was to go on a day when executions were scheduled. The information was easy to obtain because many of the Estonian, Latvian, and Ukrainian attendants who worked there under Gestapo supervision were in service of Jewish organisations. Not from any humane or political consideration, but for money. I was to wear the uniform of one of the Estonians who would stay home while I went in with his papers.* […] *Early in the morning of the day we had selected, I left Warsaw in the company of a Jew who worked outside the ghetto in the Jewish underground movement. We arrived in Belzec shortly after midday and went directly to the place where the Estonian was supposed to be waiting to give me his uniform."*

Karski's story is quite verbose, so I will only quote the essential points. Accompanied by an (actual) Estonian guard, he approaches the camp:

> *"As we approached to within a few hundred yards of the camp, the shouts, cries, and shots cut off further conversation.* […] *We passed through a small grove of decrepit-looking trees and emerged directly in front of the loud, sobbing, reeking camp of death. It was on a large, flat plain and occupied about a square mile. It was surrounded on all sides by a formidable barbed-wire fence, nearly two yards in height and in good repair. Inside the fence, at intervals of about fifteen yards, guards were standing, holding rifles with fixed bayonets ready for use. Around the outside of the fence militia men circulated on constant patrol. The camp itself contained a few small sheds or barracks. The rest of the area was completely covered by a dense, pulsating, throbbing, noisy human mass."*

Karski then dwells on the description of the crowd, repeating and enlarging on themes already dealt with in his paper of December 1942, but with an important addition: "They were all former inhabitants of the Warsaw ghetto." As in the preceding report about the "sorting camp" located at 50 km from Bełżec, Karski mentions the trains of death and the narrow passages the Germans had set up to funnel the crowd into the cars, and then continues:

> *"And now came the most horrible episode of them all. The Bund leader had warned me that if I lived to be a hundred I would never forget some of the things I saw. He did not exaggerate. The military rules stipulate that a freight car may carry eight horses or forty soldiers. Without any baggage at all, a maximum of a hundred passengers standing close together and pressing against each other could be crowded into a car. The Germans had simply issued orders to the effect that 120 to 130 Jews had to enter each car."*

After another digression describing the loading of the victims into the cars, Karski writes emphatically:

> *"I know that many people will not believe me, will not be able to believe me, will think I exaggerate or invent. But I saw it and it is not exaggerated or invented. I have no other proofs, no photographs. All I can say is that I saw it and that it is the truth. The floor of the car had been covered with a thick, white powder. It was quicklime. Quicklime is simply unslaked lime or calcium oxide that has been dehydrated. Anyone who has seen cement being mixed knows what occurs when water is poured on lime. The mixture bubbles and steams as the powder combines with the water, generating a large amount of heat. Here the lime served a double purpose in the Nazi economy of brutality. The moist flesh coming in contact with the lime is rapidly dehydrated and burned. The occupants of the cars would be literally burned to death before long, the flesh eaten from their bones. Thus, the Jews would 'die in agony', fulfilling the promise Himmler had issued 'in accord with the will of the Fuehrer', in Warsaw, in 1942.*[27] *Secondly, the lime would prevent decomposing bodies from spreading disease. It was efficient and inexpensive – a perfectly chosen agent for their purposes. It took three hours to fill up the entire train by repetitions of this procedure. It was twilight when the forty-six (I counted them) cars were packed."*

After three hours, the train started to move. Karski continues:

> *"My informants had minutely described the entire journey. The train would travel about eighty miles and finally come to a halt in an empty, barren field. Then nothing at all would happen. The train would stand stock-still, patiently waiting while death penetrated into every corner of its interior. This would take from two to four days. When quicklime, asphyxiation, and injuries had silenced every outcry, a group of men would appear.*
>
> *They would be young, strong Jews, assigned to the task of cleaning out these cars until their own turn to be in them should arrive. Under a strong guard*

27 This promise was another one of Jan Karski's puerile inventions.

> *they would unseal the cars and expel the heaps of decomposing bodies. The mounds of flesh that they piled up would then be burned and the remnants buried in a single huge hole. The cleaning, burning and burial would consume one or two full days. The entire process of disposal would take, then, from three to six days. During this period the camp would have recruited new victims. The train would return and the whole cycle would be repeated from the beginning."*

On October 14, 1944, Karski presented in *Collier's Weekly* magazine, under the title "Polish Death Camps", a teaser for his book, whose publication was announced as imminent (end of October 1944). This text presents some additions and some variations with respect to the printed version. Karski laid out the background of his mission as follows (Karski 1944b, pp. 18f., 60f.):

> *"As a member of the underground, I was ordered to leave Warsaw and report to the Polish government and the Allied authorities about conditions in Poland. My orders came from the delegate of the Polish government acting somewhere in Poland and from the commander in chief of the underground army. Jewish leaders confided to me their written report but they insisted in order to be able to tell the truth I should see with my own eyes what actually happened to the Jews in Poland. They arranged for me to visit one of the Jewish death camps.*
> *The camp was near to the town of Belzec, about 100 miles east of Warsaw, and was well known all over Poland because of the tales of horror that were circulated about it.* […]
> *Early in the morning I left Warsaw in the company of a Jew who worked outside the ghetto in the Jewish underground movement. We arrived in Belzec shortly after midday and went directly to the place where the Estonian was supposed to be waiting."*

Karski confirmed that the camp "was on a large, flat plain and occupied about a square mile," or some 2.6 square kilometers, and that the Jews deported to Bełżec "were all former inhabitants of the Warsaw ghetto" (*ibid.*, p. 19).

Here the train stopped "about eight miles" away from the camp (*ibid*., p. 61), while in his book, this happened "about eighty miles" away (Karski 1944a, p. 350).

The literary development of Jan Karski's impostures is another typical example of how anti-German black propaganda was orchestrated.

At first, he "knew", by hearsay, that Bełżec was an extermination center using electrocution. Then he invented the fable of a visit, first to a "sorting camp" which was located 50 kilometers from Bełżec, then to the Bełżec Camp itself, which according to him was located 12 miles/12 kilometers/15 kilometers (!) south of the town, finally to the Bełżec Camp without further specification. He secretly entered the camp disguised as a Polish, a Latvian and then as an Estonian policeman. This occurred "shortly after midday," but he nevertheless witnessed the arrival of a train at "about 10 o'clock in the morning." There were either 5,000 or 6,000 victims; one car was arranged for 8 horses and 40 persons, but also for 6 horses and 36 persons, and had a capacity of 90 and 100 persons, but were loaded with either 130-140 or 120-130 people. During the

loading of the railway cars alone, some 300 people died, or maybe only "20 or 30." The cars were painted with lime and at the same time had their floors covered either with quicklime and chlorine/chloride/chloride of lime, or with quicklime only.

The train had either between 50-60 cars, or exactly 51 cars, or exactly 46 cars. The victims in the cars died mainly either from asphyxiation by "chlorine gas" or from burns caused by quicklime.

As for the destination of the "death trains", the contradictions are even more-glaring:

> *"A long train thus packed with several thousand men, women, and children is switched to a side line where it remains from two to eight days."*
> *"The trains were dispatched to some point 'North' – where, I do not know. After a journey of several days, the cars were shunted off somewhere in a field and eventually their human freight perished."*
> *"The train moves on for about 25 miles and then halts in an open field. There it remains standing, hermetically closed, for six to seven days."*
> *"My informants had minutely described the entire journey. The train would travel about eighty miles and finally come to a halt in an empty, barren field. Then nothing at all would happen. The train would stand stock-still, patiently waiting while death penetrated into every corner of its interior. This would take from two to four days."*

Even if Karski's account, in its various literary iterations, is a simple fabrication, someone tried to improve on it, arguing that Karski had simply been wrong, that instead of visiting Bełżec he had gone to Izbica, a place some sixty kilometers farther north (Wood/Jankowski 1994, pp. 128f.). That could be true with respect to the "sorting camp" of December 1942, but in 1944, as we have seen, Karski spoke specifically of Bełżec Camp:

> *"The camp was near to the town of Belzec*, […]. *We arrived in Belzec shortly after midday* […]*."*
> *"A few days after my second visit to the Warsaw ghetto, the Bund leader was to arrange an opportunity for me to see the Jewish death camp. The camp was located near the town of Belzec about one hundred miles east of Warsaw* […]*."*

This is so clear that the book was advertised in the United States with a poster by William Sharp containing four drawings summarizing its contents; the fourth bore the following caption:[28]

> *"He visited notorious Jewish death camp, disguised as Estonian guard."*

During a 1987 interview with Macjei Kozłowski, a journalist of the Polish weekly newspaper *Tygodnik Powszechny* (*Universal Weekly*), Karski confirmed that he had entered Bełżec Camp:[29]

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28 Reproduced in Wood/Jankowski 1996, unpaginated appendix of documents.
29 "Niespełona misja," no page number shown in the photocopy in my possession.

> *"We went together* [with a guide] *to Lublin, then changed trains and finally arrived in Bełżec. It was the middle of October* [1942]*."*

At this time, Karski added a further lie to the earlier narrative:

> *"I thought, then, that Bełżec was a transit camp. It was only after the war that I convinced myself that Bełżec was the final point of extermination."*

In his 1944 description he inevitably made serious errors, due to the fact that he had never actually seen Bełżec Camp. For example, that camp is not "on a large, flat plain," but on the side of a hill, and no Estonian or Latvian guards were ever on duty there. Furthermore, the very basis of the story – that the camp guards could be bribed – is in flagrant contradiction to their being described, in the report of July 10, 1942, and others, as having been "overloaded with stolen coins and jewelry" and being able to pay 20 gold dollars for a bottle of vodka.

That the whole account has been completely invented is also evident from its basic premises. In October 1942, in order to investigate how the deportees from the Warsaw Ghetto were allegedly exterminated, Karski allegedly went – on the specific instructions of the head of the *Bund* – not to Treblinka but to Bełżec! And at a point in time at which the first wave of deportations had been over for a month, he "saw" crowds of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto there! Thus, for Karski's fable to be plausible, it would be necessary for the Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto to have been deported to Bełżec via Izbica! With total disregard for the intelligence of the victims of his impostures, Karski had not even bothered to check the geographical whereabouts of Bełżec. He places it at a distance some 160 km east of Warsaw, whereas in reality it is nearly 300 km to the south-east of the Polish capital.[30]

In its August 1, 1943 issue, the clandestine French newspaper *Notre Voix* published a free adaptation of Jan Karski's "testimony" titled "The Horrible Massacre of 6,000 Jews in the Belcek [sic] Extermination Camp" which begins as follows:[31]

> *"It was in Belcek. 6,000 Jews of both sexes and all ages had arrived from the Warsaw Ghetto."*

Apart from these isolated historiographical paroxysms, the story invented by Jan Karski has fallen into total disrepute among orthodox historians, but not the man himself, who enjoyed high regard among them until his death in July 2000.[32] As Theodore O'Keefe correctly stated,

> *"few alleged eyewitnesses to the Nazi 'extermination' camps have been as influential, and as honored, as Jan Karski."* (O'Keefe, p. 1)

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30 This information is also in error for Treblinka, which is located some 80 km northeast of Warsaw (by rail).

31 Courtois/Rayski, pp. 203-205.

32 During a visit to the United States between September 9 and 15, 2002, Polish Foreign Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz unveiled a monument to Jan Karski at Georgetown University (*Yearbook…*, p. 219). In 1999, Karski's book was published in Polish (Karski 1999).

Thus, although the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* has an entry on Karski, it puts in doubt the reliability of his testimony:[33]

> *"It is not quite clear whether Karski, disguised as a guard, actually did view the mass murder in the Bełżec extermination camp, as he later wrote."*

In Western countries, on the other hand, he was always careful, enjoying the purloined fame of being an 'eye-witness' of the 'extermination camp' at Bełżec, to give support to the official story by his presence or his signature, without, however, detailing his 'testimony.' With the tacit complicity of official circles, he surreptitiously became the guarantor of the alleged exterminations in the gas chambers of Bełżec allegedly operating with Diesel-exhaust gases. In this role he appeared, for example, in an Italian TV broadcast.[34] In Claude Lanzmann's famous documentary *Shoah*, Karski elaborates about his various "missions" during the war, but without ever mentioning Bełżec Camp (Lanzmann, pp. 183-196).

In October 1978, the French-Jewish filmmaker had conducted a lengthy interview with Karski, the transcript of which has 73 pages. In it, Karski elaborated in detail about his alleged visit to Bełżec, with the usual preamble: In the Warsaw Ghetto, he had met two Jewish leaders who had proposed the fateful mission to him; this took place "at the beginning of October" or "possibly the end of September" of 1942.[35]

But then he was forced to postpone the alleged visit to the end of October or even November (p. 35). In fact, Lanzmann alluded to Rudolf Reder, another shameless impostor (see Mattogno 2021a), yet without explicitly mentioning him, and emphasized:

> *"When you went to Belzec, he was there. He escaped in November."*

The dialogue continued as follows (pp. 28f.):

> *"Karski – Well, a few days later contact was made – with some Jews whom I did not know, of course. We took a train to Belzec.*
> *Claude Lanzmann – From Warsaw?*
> *K. – From Warsaw. It's quite a long trip. About 4 hours, as far as I remember.*
> *C.L. – Belzec is 150 km south of Lublin.*
> *K. – Yes, so Sobibor is north of Belzec, which will enter the scene. So, we went to Belzec."*

Therefore, Karski confirmed once more that he had visited Bełżec Camp. Lanzmann then asked him whether he had any idea what he would see there, to which he replied:

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33 Gutman *et al*., Vol. II, p. 741; the earlier English edition of this encyclopedia does not mention Bełżec in its entry on Karski at all: Gutman, Vol. II, p. 787.

34 The "Speciale-Mixer" of Giovanni Minoli, broadcast for the first time by RAI 2 on June 21, 1989, at 8:30 PM. Cf. in this respect my comments in Mattogno 1991, pp. 208-219.

35 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, RG 60-5006, Interview with J. Karski, transcript, p. 8. All subsequent page numbers from there unless indicated otherwise.

> *"No. Well, I had heard* [talk] *about Belzec; I knew there was a camp there. However, what I heard at the time, even from some Jews, was that it was what was then called a 'transit' camp. As I understood after the war, at that time they* [the Germans] *were liquidating the camp as such. By November, there was no longer a camp. I don't know the reason, whatever it was, but apparently the last transport of Jews was taken out of Belzec and was sent to Sobibor, which became an extermination camp; or Jews who had been taken out of Warsaw or other ghettos were sent to Belzec for a short time and then again went somewhere else."*

Karski's claim that prior to his trip to Bełżec he had assumed that Bełżec was a 'transit camp' was a transparent lie, because in the report he brought to London at the end of November 1942, he explicitly stated:

> *"An electrocution station is installed at Belzec camp. Transports of settlers arrive at a siding, on the spot where the execution is to take place. The camp is policed by Ukrainians. The victims are ordered to strip naked ostensibly to have a bath and are then led to a barracks with a metal plate for floor. The door is then locked, electric current passes through the victims and their death is almost instantaneous. The bodies are loaded on the wagons and taken to a mass grave some distance from the camp."*

And in his book, he had recounted just as explicitly:

> *"A few days after my second visit to the Warsaw ghetto, the Bund leader was to arrange an opportunity for me to see the Jewish death camp. The camp was located near the town of Belzec about one hundred miles east of Warsaw and was well-known all over Poland from the tales of horror that were circulated about it. The common report was that every Jew who reached it, without exception, was doomed to death."*

Why would the *Bund* leadership have sent Karski on a mission to a transit camp instead of an extermination camp?

Lanzmann did not object and merely pointed out to Karski that Bełżec was initially intended for the Jews of the Lwów and Krakow area, and that the Jews of Warsaw were not deported to this camp, but to Treblinka. Karski answered evasively (p. 29):

> *"I wasn't aware of all these details at that time."*

This gross nonsense alone is enough to invalidate the fable invented by Karski. As I will document in Chapter 3, self-proclaimed escapees from the Treblinka Camp had returned to Warsaw as early as the end of August 1942, and had written reports about the "Treblinka Extermination Camp" there, so it is utterly demented to claim that the *Bund* leadership would have sent Karski to investigate *in Bełżec* the fate of the Jews he knew had been deported from Warsaw *to Treblinka*.

Lanzmann also noted that Bełżec is said to have become operational as a death camp already in March 1942. Karski was therefore forced to emphasize the "transit camp" thesis (p. 30):

> *"Yes, apparently, only at the time I visited it really became a transit* [camp]*, meaning that the Jews were sent somewhere else. The Germans announced that they* [the Jews] *would be deployed at forced labor, they would have good conditions…"*

Karski reiterated that he had entered Bełżec Camp disguised as an Estonian militiaman, and Lanzmann commented (*ibid*.):

> *"Because the camps were guarded by Ukrainians."*

Karski's response was:

> *"Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Estonian and Polish policemen and regular German Gestapo, SS etc."*

With this broad sweep of including everyone, he perhaps wanted to blunt the contradictions of his earlier statements on the subject.

The visit, Karski recounted, had been organized by the Jewish Resistance. He entered the camp with a "Jewish guide," about whom he clarified (p. 31):

> *"I had some kind of identification papers. And so I followed him* [the guide]*, he goes his way, I go his way, so I only followed him, and he led me to an officer, and I simply showed him* [the documents]*… he got in as a civilian. Only I was in disguise."*

Later, however, he completely forgot about this guide (p. 35):

> *"I entered the camp in the company of an Estonian militiaman, who wore the uniform of an Estonian militiaman and had a kind of 'Ausweis'* [ID] *that allowed me to enter the camp and leave the camp after showing the Ausweis."*

With his "eyewitness account," Karski tried to follow the plot of his book, with some confusion (the ordinary freight car was designed for 16 horses instead of 8; p. 33) and further contradictions. The number of train cars equals the number given in the book (p. 37):

> *"At the gate, in front of it, was a cattle train. I counted 46 cars."*

But the time he spent at the camp was "probably no more than 20, 25 minutes" (p. 32), "20 minutes, half an hour" (p. 39); in the book, however, Karski had written:

> *"It took three hours to fill up the entire train by repetitions of this procedure. It was twilight when the forty-six (I counted them) cars were packed."*

The cars were filled with 120 or 130 people each, and here as well the floors had been previously covered with quicklime, but Karski changed the fate of these Jews once again (p. 34):

> *"K. – What I understood was that the train was going somewhere and that they* [the Jews] *really died in these cars. Some of them were taken to Sobibor, as I later learned. And in Sobibor they were finished off.*
> *C.L. – They were gassed.*

> *K.– Yes. For what reason they were not gassed in Belzec, I do not know. Because they did it first in Belzec for months. Before that, they really gassed the Jews.*
> *C.L. – In Belzec there were six gas chambers.*
> *K. – Yes. Now, the date is important. When trying back then to investigate how it was, the camp was liquidated altogether apparently at the end of October or in November. The last remaining Jews were sent to Sobibor, and secondly, in the final phase, Jews from other ghettos passed through Belzec to be sent elsewhere."*

Karski had stated in the book that his alleged visit to Bełżec took place "a few days after" his second visit to the Warsaw Ghetto, which was at the beginning of October 1942 ("it was now the beginning of October, 1942"; Karski 1944a, p. 324), thus in the first ten days of October.

In order to avoid having to deal with the "gas chambers", and in particular with Rudolf Reder's testimony, who reported nothing about "death trains", Karski first of all introduced another self-contradiction by postponing the date of his alleged camp visit to the end of October or November 1942, suggesting that it had taken place after Reder's escape. However, Reder claimed to have escaped from the camp at the end of November 1942,[36] but Karski arrived in London on November 25, following this route: from Bełżec he went to Warsaw, then to Berlin (!), then to Brussels, then to Paris, to Lyon, to Perpignan, crossed the Pyrenees, went to Barcelona, to Gibraltar and from there embarked for London (Karski 1944a, pp. 352-378). In practice, Reder remained in Bełżec even after Karski's alleged visit.

Karski (or his "handlers" – he had become a "hot property") next invented the fable that the camp was being liquidated at the time of his visit, and in this context, the story of the "transit camp" was also introduced. In practice, he claimed that Bełżec had previously functioned regularly as an extermination camp using "gas chambers," but in the final phase had become a "transit camp." Here, too, Karski was forced to provide nonsensical explanations. The Jews he had seen during his alleged visit were the last remaining contingent at the camp; they were either sent to Sobibór, which "became an extermination camp"; or they came from the Warsaw Ghetto (in November 1942!) or other ghettos, and were temporarily transported to Bełżec in order to be transferred elsewhere shortly thereafter. Karski then claimed that the Jews he had seen (as he claims to have learned later) were sent to Sobibór, and that other Jews passed through Bełżec in the final phase of the camp's existence, which he evidently had learned later as well (one learns *so much* "later").

There is no need to emphasize that the fable of the "death trains" contradicts both hypotheses.

The procacity of these explanations is perfectly worthy of the character. According to Robert Kuwałek, 51,559 Jews are said to have been gassed in

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[36] Reder 1946, p. 63; see Mattogno 2021a, Part 1.

Bełżec in October 1942, and in November between 49,234 and 53,232 (Kuwałek, p. 170).

Lanzmann's interview therefore confirms that Karski was a conscious and intentional impostor, which is further reaffirmed in exemplary fashion by another fact. In 1997, J. Karski wrote the foreword to the new, 1999 edition of a translation of Rudolf Reder's book about Bełżec, which had first appeared in 1946, needless to say without giving the slightest hint of his alleged visit to that camp.[37] With his "authority," he therefore endorsed a testimony that radically contradicted his own. Thus, the imposture was also a hoax!

Before the World Jewish Congress, Karski had declared:

> *"Prior to my departure from the country, they entrusted to me a number documents and reports which I have since handed over to the competent Jewish bodies in London."*

One of these documents was precisely the report "News is reaching the Polish Government in London about the liquidation of the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw", which mentioned only the killing method by electricity with regard to Bełżec ("An electrocution station is installed at Belzec camp").

Assuming that Karski had actually visited the Bełżec Camp and had actually seen the "death trains," this would imply that he endorsed the report in question even though he knew it to be false. It follows that he was an impostor in any case, even if, absurdly, he had told the truth at some point. As such he was treated more or less explicitly by some Holocaust scholars. For instance, Raul Hilberg, in the chapter dedicated to the "Messengers" in his 1992 book *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders*, Hilberg first outlines Karski's testimony, and then states the following about it (Hilberg 1992, pp. 223):

> *"In fact, Jewish transports from Warsaw were routed to Treblinka, not Bełżec. No transport left Warsaw in October. The guards in Belzec were mainly Ukrainian, although a few Baltic nationals may have been among them. The same composition applies to the guard force in Treblinka. Above all, trains did not leave Belzec or Treblinka so that the passengers could die in the cars. Belzec and Treblinka were death camps with gas chambers, and these facilities were not mentioned in Karski's account."*

Consistent with this critique, he did not mention Karski at all in his 2003 monumental work *The Destruction of the European Jews*.

Michael Tregenza was very critical of Karski in an unpublished typescript of 2006 titled "Only the dead. Christian Wirth and SS-Sonderkommando Belzec," where he pointed out the many contradictions in Karski's various statements, but apparently believed that Karski had actually visited a real "sorting camp", namely the one in Izbica.[38] I have already mentioned earlier that in

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37 Reder 1999, pp. 5, 77; Karski's foreword (*przedmowa*) is dated Washington, July 4, 1997.

38 The Wiener Library, MS 183/98237. The typescript is marked with: "Presented to The Wiener Library Institute of Contemporary History by Gerald Fleming 2006."

such a case Karski's mission would have been senseless, because from the very beginning that mission was about visiting a "death camp."

The position of Polish historiography is deliberately ambiguous; it was expressed by its top Bełżec expert, Robert Kuwałek, in the following terms (Kuwałek, p. 199):

> *"For many years, the opinion persisted that Karski had been an eyewitness to what happened at the Bełżec Death Camp. He himself was convinced of this. On the other hand, when Jan Karski had already arrived in London, he said about the place he actually visited and where he saw the brutal preparation of a transport that it was a 'sorting camp' located in the vicinity of Bełżec, 12 miles from the village. Only in 1944 did he begin identifying it with Bełżec itself. Years later, it was established that in fact Jan Karski had been in Izbica Lubelska, where he witnessed the moment when a rail transport was put together and sent off to the nearby extermination camp. At that time, a transit ghetto existed in Izbica, where thousands of Polish and foreign Jews arrived who were kept there by the Germans only to be deported later to the Bełżec and Sobibór extermination camps. We do not know why Karski later claimed that he actually was at* [had gone to] *Bełżec. It is certain that he was informed about the local extermination camp, and that he passed on similar news to London as the Polish and Jewish agents. It may be that he wanted to further substantiate the information he had communicated from the country* [Poland], *since in the 'Extraordinary Communication' this information was relatively vague, and as a rule, news that had a general circulation was hectographed. It may also be that later the 'sorting camp' became confused in his memory with the Bełżec Extermination Camp."*

Without going into details, even this explanation is completely nonsensical on the whole, because – as pointed out earlier – it implies that the *Bund* leadership would have instructed Karski to investigate the alleged extermination at Treblinka of the Jews deported there from the Warsaw Ghetto by sending him *to Izbica*! And one cannot seriously believe that Karski had visited the Izbica *Ghetto* believing it to be the Bełżec *Camp*, especially since these two locations are 66 km apart.

In conclusion, Karski's testimony is absolutely untenable. It is simply a convolution of silly lies.

1.4. The "Soap Factory Using Human Fat" at Bełżec

Even before the Second World War had ended, the legend of a factory established at Bełżec for the manufacture of soap from the corpses of the allegedly exterminated Jews was being circulated.

A report sent on August 30, 1942 by the Geneva Office of the Jewish Agency for Palestine to the US government and forwarded by the latter to the

Holy See on September 26, 1942, contains the first germs of this legend (*Foreign Relations…*, p. 775):

> *"Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto is taking place. Without any distinction all Jews, irrespective of age or sex, are being removed from the Ghetto in groups and shot. Their corpses are utilized for making fats and their bones for the manufacture of fertilizer. Corpses are even being exhumed for these purposes. These mass executions take place, not in Warsaw, but in especially prepared camps for the purpose, one of which is stated to be in Belzek* [sic[39]]*."*

The legend then resurfaced in a report by the messenger Jerzy Salski dated April 18, 1943:

> *"d. Stage 4: Transport to Belzec. I have not been there myself, but people from the district said that there is a stench of corpses in the air. Rumors circulate that the Germans make soap from the fat of the corpses."* (Rudorff, Document 66, p. 255)

As we saw in Subchapter 1.2., by 1944 the legend of a factory for human soap at Bełżec had already started to take shape, and was disseminated in its initial form by A. Silberschein. In fact, the reports on Bełżec mentioned above state that in this camp "[t]he fat from the corpses was drained in order to – make soap from it" and that the Germans had set up "special factories for the production of soap and shoe polish from Jewish fat."

This juicy story then appeared in the *Black Book* in the following form (Ehrenburg/Grossman, p. 117):

> *"In a different area of the Belzec camp was a soap works. The Germans selected the plumpest individuals, killed them, and boiled them down for soap. 'Jewish soap' was printed on the labels. Izraelevich Rozenstrauch, a bank clerk from Lvov, actually held a bar in his hands, and he was one of the witnesses who provided us with this testimony."*

However, the most enthusiastic storyteller and spreader of this legend of human was none other than Simon Wiesenthal. In 1946 he wrote an article titled "RIF," which opened with these words (1946a):

> *"In the last week of March, the Rumanian press published a unique piece of news: In the little Rumanian town of Folteceni, twenty boxes of soap were laid to rest in the Jewish cemetery with all the traditional pomp and circumstance of a funeral. The soap had recently been found in a former German army depot. The boxes were clearly labeled 'RIF – Rein jüdisches Fett'* [RIF – pure Jewish fat]. *The boxes were destined for the Waffen SS, and on the wrappers it said with full and cynical objectivity that the soap had been made from Jewish bodies."*

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[39] The text received by the Vatican has the spelling "*Belick*" (*Actes et documents…*, p. 52). This is the only mention of Bełżec Camp in the whole book; clearly it has been confused here with the Treblinka Camp.

In reality, the acronym RIF stands for "*Reichsstelle für industrielle Fettversorgung*" (National office for industrial fat supply) and has nothing to do with human fat, much less Jewish fat, a fable which "most historians do not believe" anymore.[40] Still, Simon Wiesenthal recounts profusely the fantastic story of the alleged manufacture of soap from human fat:

> *"Toward the end of 1942, the terrible words 'transport for soap' were uttered for the first time! It was in the Government General, and the factory was in Galicia, at Belsetz*[sic]. *In this plant, between April of 1942 and May of 1943, 900,000 Jews had been used as raw material. The Jews were brought from two districts: Lublin and Galicia."*

The clothes and shoes of the victims – continues Wiesenthal – were sent to Germany, the hair to a factory in Brandenburg and

> *"certain solids* [of the corpses] *were separated and sent to northern Germany, and there, a special oil for U-boat engines was produced. The human bones went into the Lemberg bone mill, and there they were turned into fertilizer. Golden teeth were sent to the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office, Office Group D, Berlin-Oranienburg.*
>
> *What was left, the residual fat, was needed for soap production. In parallel with the human transports, other substances such as soda, colophony, and sand were transported as secondary raw materials. The Belsetz plant had a daughter company at Danzig; a portion of the intermediates were sent there. Belsetz was a model plant. Therefore, transports to this location had priority with the Ostbahn* [Eastern Railroad]. *The plant needed raw materials … and wheels turned for victory!* […]
>
> *Since 1942, the General Government knew exactly what RIF soap meant. For the cultural world, the pleasure may be incomprehensible with which the Nazis and their women in the General Government looked upon this soap. In every piece of soap, they saw a Jew magically turned into soap who thus was prevented from growing up to become a second Freud, Ehrlich or Einstein.*
>
> *This soap was perhaps meant to help clean off the stains of murder and blood. But it was unable to wash away that stain. It remained and lingered. This soap should actually be sent to Nuremberg, so that the dead may appear on trial as witnesses…* […] *And before the world tribunal, a small piece of soap appears and – bemoans these millions!"* (Wiesenthal 1946a)

In the next issue, the same magazine published another article by Wiesenthal titled "*Seifenfabrik Belsetz*" ("The Belsetz Soap Factory"), about which he explained (Wiesenthal 1946b):

> *"The great feedback to my article 'RIF' prompts me to provide further details of the events in the Generalgouvernement."*

The title only served to attract readers' attention, because he said nothing about the alleged human soap. In fact, in this article he outlined an imaginary history

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40 Shermer/Grobman 2002a, p. 115. In the Italian translation (2002b, p. 162), the term "most historians" is translated as "molti storici" – "many historians."

of Bełżec Camp that is riddled with historical falsehoods. In January 1942, Wiesenthal claims, the Bełżec area was inspected by a commission of top SS officials, among them Adolf Eichmann, whom Wiesenthal promotes to the rank of "SS General" for the occasion! The commission decided to make "the existing installations the starting point for the erection of a place of extermination." For this purpose, "a site of 3 square kilometers" (300 hectares, or about 750 acres) was fenced in. In reality, the camp's area was about six hectares (some 15 acres), hence just 6% of a square kilometer, or only 2% of what Wiesenthal claimed.

Wiesenthal also claimed that trains of 40-50 wagons departed from Lemberg (Lwów) Station, each loaded with 110-140 people were, initially dressed, but since August 1942 half-naked. Needless to say, the floors of the railway cars were allegedly covered with "quicklime" ("*mit ungelöschtem Kalk*").

And here is the description of the alleged extermination plant:

> *"The people, squeezed together, hounded by the SS, the Latvians and Ukrainians, ran into the 'bath' through the open gate. It could hold 500 persons at a time. The floor of the 'bathhouse' was made of metal, and showers hung down from the ceiling. When the room was full, the SS delivered a 5,000-volt current to the metal plate. At the same time, the showers spewed out water. A brief scream, and the execution was over. An SS head physician by the name of Dr. Schmidt ascertained the death of the victims by looking through a peephole, the second door was opened, the 'corpse commando' arrived and quickly removed the dead. – There was now room for the next load of five hundred."*

A good half of the article fictionalizes events as described by Rudolf Reder, spelled "Rechter" by Wiesenthal, who states that Reder arrived at "Belsetz" in August 1942 and escaped to Lemberg on an unspecified date. In retaliation for this escape, the SS allegedly shot 150 adult Jews and 45 children! "Rechter" drafted a report that circulated clandestinely, then was sent to Warsaw with false documents. "He fell during the Warsaw Uprising in 1943" (Wiesenthal 1946b, p. 14). In fact, Reder died in Toronto in 1968.

1.5. The Witnesses

The only known eyewitnesses who have left written reports or whose testimonies were recorded are are Rudolf Reder, Kurt Gerstein and Chaim Hirszman. Stanisław Kozak would technically be included in this list, but his is a separate case which I will discuss later. Mieczysław Garfinkiel, on the other hand, is the most-important of the indirect witnesses who reported the accounts of alleged eyewitnesses.

I have written a specific study about Reder and Gerstein, in which I reproduce and critically analyze their statements, showing their internal contradictions, absurdities and blatant lies – in Gerstein's case also delusional rantings –

and highlighting the contradictions of the two testimonies, the most insurmountable of which concerns the alleged killing system (Mattogno 2021a).

Kurt Gerstein's account is well-known. He spoke of a Diesel engine whose exhaust gases presumably asphyxiated the victims (Diesel exhaust, for all its odor, is relatively non-toxic). Rudolf Reder, on the other hand, described a fictitious "machine" in his various declarations that included a gasoline engine with a compressor, gas cylinders, spoked wheels and glass tubes, whose exhaust gases, however, did *not* asphyxiate the victims.

In the interrogation of December 29, 1945, he declared:

> *"On the opposite side of the building, that is, behind the wall in front of which the corridor ended, there was a small room in which the machines* [*maszyny*] *were located. I personally saw that in this small room there was a gasoline-powered engine which seemed very complicated. I remember it had a drive wheel* [*koło napędowe*]*, but I didn't observe any other structural or technical details."* (*ibid.*, pp. 24f.)
>
> *"I am unable to say what the chemical aspect* [*chemizm*] *of the mechanism of killing people in the Bełżec chambers consisted of. I only know one thing, that from the engine room a pipe of one inch in diameter went into each of the gas chambers* [*z komór gazowych*]*. The outlets of these pipes ended in the individual chambers. I don't know whether any gas was released through these pipes into the chambers, whether the air in the chambers was compressed* [*zgęszczano*] *or whether the air was pumped out of the chambers. I was often on the ramp when the doors were opened. However, I never smelled any odors, and entering the rooms immediately after opening the door never had any harmful effects on my health. The corpses found in the chamber did not show an unnatural color at all* [*żadnego nienaturalnego zabarwienia*]*. They all looked like living people, mostly their eyes were open. Only in a few cases did it happen that the corpses were stained with blood. The air in the rooms, after their opening, was clean, transparent and odorless* [*szyste, przeźroczyste i bezwonne*]*. In particular, no smoke or combustion gases from the engine could be perceived. These gases were discharged by the engine directly to the outside and not into the chambers* [*Gazy te były odprowadzane z motoru wprost na dwór a nie do komór*]*."* (*ibid.*, p. 26)

Chaim Hirszman was interrogated in Lublin on March 19, 1946 by members of the local District Commission for Jewish History. He was deported to Bełżec in September 1942 from the village of Zaklików, about 75 km southwest of Lublin, and remained at the camp until its liquidation. He escaped from a transport of the last inmates who were being transferred to Sobibór in May 1943. Hirszman was killed on the day of his deposition by a group of anti-communists and anti-Semites.

Despite his having stayed in Bełżec for eight months, Hirszman's deposition is very terse. I reproduce the part that refers specifically to his stay at the camp:[41]

> *"We were loaded onto a train and transported to Bełżec. The train entered a grove. Then all the train personnel were changed. Instead of the trainmen, SS men from the death camp took over. At that time, we were still unaware of the situation. The train arrived at the camp itself. Other SS men took us out of the train. They led us all together into a barracks – women, men and children. They told us that we were going to the bathroom, and ordered us to undress. I understood immediately what this meant. After undressing, we were ordered to line up, on one side the men, on the other side the women with the children. There was an SS man with a whip, and by striking them with it, he indicated to the men whether they should go to the right or to the left, to death* [or] *to work. I was chosen for the death side,* [but] *at that time I did not know it yet. After all, I believed that one side or the other meant the same thing: death. However, when I leapt in the direction indicated, an SS man called me and said: 'Du bist ein Militärmensch, dich können wir brauchen'* [*'You are a military man, we can make use of you'*]*. We who had been chosen for the job were ordered to dress. I and some other men were designated to lead the people to the furnaces* [*do pieca*]*. I was assigned to the women. At the entrance to the gas chamber* [*do komory gazowej*] *was the Ukrainian volksdeutsch Schmidt, who struck with his whip every woman who entered. Before the door was closed, he fired a few times with the pistol, then the door closed automatically* [*automatycznie*]*, and after 40 minutes we went in and took the corpses away to a special* [*illegible word*] *and cut the hair off the corpses, and the Germans took them away* [*Niemcy je zabierali*]*. The children were thrown into the chamber* [*do komory*] *directly over the heads of the women. In one of these 'transports' from the gas chamber* [*z komory gazowej*]*, there was the corpse of my wife; I had to cut her hair. The corpses were not buried immediately, but were held to accumulate a larger batch. Therefore, we did not bury them that day. As I saw, there were many people in the camp, only Jews. There were so-called 'clean' barracks and 'dirty' barracks. I was directed to a 'clean' one. The block leader* [*blokowy*] *assigned me a cot."*

Hirszman spoke of only one "gas chamber" (instead of the six canonical ones), and because the investigators took the gas chambers' existence and their own knowledge about it already for granted, they abstained from having Hirszman as a self-proclaimed eyewitness describe this chamber himself, so he said nothing about it, not even what sort of gas was used in it. The account contains other elements that are in conflict with Reder's account, but also with the current orthodox narrative: the door of the "gas chamber" closed "automatically", the gassing lasted 40 minutes (for Reder exactly 20 minutes by the clock), and the Jewish slave-labor inmates cut the victims' hair after the gassing instead of prior to it (Reder, Gerstein). Hirszman's claims regarding the burial of the

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41 Minutes of the interrogation of Chaim Hirszman dated March 19, 1946. Libionka, pp. 93-95.

corpses is not very clear; apparently, he meant to say that sufficient corpses had to pile up before they were buried in mass graves. He mentions "furnaces," although there never were any at Bełżec, but he says nothing about the exhumation and cremation of these corpses, which he would have been forced to participate in, or at least to have witnessed, if he really had remained at the camp until May 1943.

More information about this, along with much other information, comes from the deposition of his wife or rather widow, Pola Hirszman, which she made in April 1946. Since he claims to have cut the hair off his wife's corpse, it must be assumed that he had remarried in the meantime. The other alternative – that his wife also survived Bełżec, and that Chaim Hirszman lied about her death by gassing, and his cutting her hair afterwards – is a little too far-fetched to be considered seriously.

Pola testified as to what her husband had told her. Hence, it is a hearsay account of low value. Still, it is much more-detailed than Chaim's recorded testimony. In particular she mentioned the burning of the corpses, but it is not explained why Chaim himself had not mentioned it during his deposition. Her account is even more-clearly influenced by the rumors circulating at the time, including ridiculous stories such as the one about a deportation transport of children up to three years of age who were buried alive in a pit! Pola also hinted at gassings and "the gas chamber," but she knew as little about it as her husband, meaning nothing. The only reference to this is as follows:[42]

> *"The camp was like a city. There were wooden barracks, except for one barracks, in which the gas chamber* [*komora gazowa*] *was located."*

Hence, these two testimonies merely echo the black propaganda described earlier.

Other stories presumably told by alleged eyewitnesses who are said to have escaped from Bełżec were related by the hearsay witness Mieczysław Garfinkiel, who had chaired the Zamość Jewish Council in 1942, in his interrogation on October 5, 1945.[43] In the camp area were "a few wooden barracks," on which the first story centers:

> *"However, at the end of March* [*pod koniec marca*] *of 1942, 2-3 unknown Jews approached me who stated that, together with others, they had been brought to Bełżec the day before from Lublin, and had escaped from there, miraculously avoiding death, since, according to their account, all Jews who are brought to Bełżec are killed there by gassing in the aforementioned barracks."*

The second story is better articulated. A Jewish council member named Wolsztajn had a 17-year-old daughter and a 13-year-old son who was deported to Bełżec. Garfinkiel stated:[44]

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42 Minutes of the interrogation of Pola Hirszman of April 1946; *ibid.*, pp. 96-99.

43 Minutes of the interrogation of Mieczysław Garfinkiel dated October 5, 1945; i*bid.*, pp. 116-120.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 117.

> *"This young man came to me early in the morning on Monday, April 13, 1942; he seemed noticeably fatigued and frightened, and related that on Sunday morning he had been taken to Bełżec. There, after the unloading of the cars, an SS officer had told the people gathered on the spot that, since they had to go East to work, they all had to go through disinfection and bathing, and for that they had to undress without delay and go to the barracks in front of them. In the meantime, he managed to hide in a cesspool that was nearby, where he stayed until late at night. He saw and heard that naked people were being beaten and pushed into the barracks, from where no one came out, but he saw that on the other side of the barracks, after a while, naked corpses were being taken out on carts. Such a procedure took place a few times during that entire Sunday, with other transports arriving in the meantime. During the night, he crawled under the fence and regained his freedom, and with the help of Gypsies who lived not far away he went to Zamość. This was the first real and reliable report that we received from the Bełżec Death Camp."*

Garfinkiel asserted that the camp was located in a "heavily guarded area, surrounded by several rows of barbed wire." Nevertheless, by the end of March, about ten days after the camp had opened, two to three deportees had already escaped from the camp, and another one in mid-April – and these were only those who returned to Zamość. It is not clear, then, why the outlandish rumors I have outlined earlier immediately arose about Bełżec. The story of young Wolsztajn is obviously ficticious.

According to all the maps drawn by witnesses after the war, there was no cesspool anywhere in the Bełżec Camp. Any such cesspool had to be in the vicinity of the latrines, but, if we are to believe the camp map of May 1942 as published by the "Aktion Reinhard Camps" website,[45] the only latrine of the camp was in the sector reserved for Jewish service personnel, which makes perfect sense, but this was far away from the alleged gassing barracks. On the other hand, if this cesspool was used for the excreta of hundreds of people working at that camp, such a pool must have been several meters deep, and it is not explained how the boy could see what was happening around him while submerged therein. It is not even clear whether the alleged gassing took place in one or more barracks, because the text uses both the plural and the singular. In other words, Garfinkiel invented the "cesspool" for this occasion, so this alleged deportee could hide in it near the claimed killing site. The young man, who is said to have been just 13 years old, escaped late Sunday night by evading the very tight security and overcoming several rows of barbed wire, yet on Monday "early morning," he was already in Zamość, which is 42 km north of Bełżec via the main road (which was no doubt guarded by the Germans). When he arrived in town, he did not go to his father's house, which any normal 13-year-old boy would have done, but to Garfinkiel's! However, as a reaction to the boy's mind-boggling revelations, Garfinkiel – despite his official func-

[45] Online at http://www.deathcamps.org/belzec/pic/bmap18.jpg.

tion in the local Jewish council – did not alert anyone, and he did not see to it that the young man's terrible story was recorded in any way and made accessible to others, because it remained unknown to all until Garfinkiel mentioned it in his 1945 deposition. Precisely because he had invented it then.

1.6. The Contest between Electric Current and Exhaust Gas

On the eve of the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal, the version of extermination at Bełżec by electric current had vanquished the other versions and had been officially adopted by the Polish and Soviet authorities.

In 1945, Dr. Litawski, officer in charge of the Polish War Crimes Office, drafted a report on the alleged German extermination camps in Poland for the coming trial, in which he wrote:[46]

> *"The camp of Bełżec was situated in the neighbourhood of the railway station and was linked with it by a special track on which the trains carrying arrested Jews were brought close to the barbed wire of the camp. In the beginning only smaller transports of Jews amounting to several hundreds of people were sent to this camp. But early in April 1941 a bigger group arrived, about 5,000 Jews picked up in a street chase in the ghetto of Warsaw.*
> *Early in 1942 the first reports have been leacked* [sic] *out that special electric installations were used in this camp for a quick mass killing of Jews. On the pretext of bathing, completely undressed Jews were brought to a special building called 'baths,' whose floor consists of slabs through which flows electric current of high voltage. In this way big masses of Jews were killed; their corpses were cremated or buried in huge common graves."*

The Polish government, in their official report on German crimes in Poland, presented by the Soviets as Document USSR-93 at the Nuremberg IMT, wrote the following about the camp at Bełżec:[47]

> *"The camp at Belzec was set up in 1940 to take in deportees, mostly Jewish deportees. By and by, however, it was converted to other ends and used for the execution of countless Jews. In the early months of 1942, reports came in that in this camp, special installations for the mass execution of Jews were being built. Under the pretext that they were being taken to a bath they were undressed completely and pushed into the building. A strong electric current passed through the floor of this building. Thousands of human beings were killed here. The guards plundered and robbed the inmates while they were still alive; after they had been killed, they took anything that the Jews had left behind."*

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46 AGK, MSW Londyn, 89, pp. 3f.

47 "Die Republik Polen in der Sache gegen: 1. Deutsche Kriegsverbrecher; 2. deren Körperschaften und Organisationen bezeichnet unter Anklage Nr. 1 vor dem Internationalen Kriegsgericht," p. 42; IMT Document USSR-93, pp. 41f.

The following passage from the official report of the Polish government, Document USSR-93, was quoted at Nuremberg by Soviet Prosecutor L.N. Smirnov during the session of February 19, 1946 (IMT, Vol. 7, pp. 576f.):

> *"I end my quotation here, and I call the attention of the Tribunal to Page 136, on the reverse side, of the document book; this is from a report of the Polish Government, which shows that the Camp Sobibur*[48] *was founded during the first and second liquidation of the Jewish ghetto. But the extermination on a large scale in this camp really started at the beginning of 1943. In this same report, in the last paragraph on Page 136 of the document book, we may read that Camp Belsen*[49] *was founded in 1940; but it was in 1942 that the special electrical appliances were installed for mass extermination of people. Under the pretext that the people were being led to the bath-house, the doomed were undressed and then driven to the building where the floor was electrified in a special way; there they were killed."*

On the other hand, the investigations conducted toward the end of 1945 and in early 1946 by Regional Investigative Judge Czesław Godzieszewksi of the court at Lublin and by the prosecutor of the Zamość Court, Jan Grzybowsky, who interrogated dozens of witnesses, not only failed to determine what the alleged method of extermination had been, but managed to create total confusion in this regard. In fact, the indirect witnesses who reported hearsay mentioned a jumble of various methods of execution without, however, being able to state which one was the actual or the prevailing one. For example, on October 14, 1945, the Pole Eugeniusz Goch declared:[50]

> *"Out of fear for my life, I did not ask the blacks employed in the Bełżec Death Camp how the Jews were killed. Some people said that the Jews in Bełżec were killed in the camp with gas, others with electricity, still others that they were killed in a chamber from which air was pumped out, and in this way, they died of asphyxiation."*

On March 20, 1946, another Polish witness, Edward Ferens, testified as follows:[51]

> *"They* [the Ukrainians serving in the camp] *told me that Jews were crammed by the hundreds into a barracks where they were killed with an electric current, and that their corpses were then taken to a pit by a small train."*

However, the final blow to the determination of the presumed methods of extermination came from the only person who claimed to have been an eyewitness: Rudolf Reder.

On April 11, 1946, the Zamość prosecutor issued a report with the title "Report on the results of the investigation in the matter of the extermination

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48 Phonetic transliteration of Sobibór.

49 The German version has here more correctly "Beldjitze" for Russian "Белжец," which is an approximate transliteration of the Polish name Bełżec; IMG, Vol. 7, pp. 633f.

50 Interrogation of Eugeniusz Goch dated October 14, 1945; Libionka, p. 153.

51 Interrogation of Edward Ferens dated March 20, 1946; *ibid.*, p. 231.

camp at Bełżec," in which he summarized the results of his investigation. On murder method, he wrote:[52]

> *"It was not possible to ascertain how people were killed in the gas chambers. In particular, it was not ascertained whether the pipes that connected the engine to the gas chambers served to introduce any gas into the chambers, to compress the air in the chambers, or to pump air out of the chambers. The witness Rudolf Reder, who worked at the camp during the time of the killing of the Jews, stated that he was on the ramp* [next to the gas chambers] *at the moment of the opening of the doors immediately after the killing of the people who were in the chamber, but he never smelled anything. The corpses that were in the chamber did not show any unnatural discoloration. They had the appearance of living people, usually these corpses had their eyes open. The air in the chambers, on opening, was pure, clear and without odor. In particular, there was no smoke or combustion gases from an engine."*

As pointed out earlier, Reder categorically ruled out the gassing of the victims in the death chambers, because he explicitly stated that the exhaust fumes from the gasoline engine did *not* enter the chambers, but were vented outside. The Polish investigative judge thus ended up with an extremely prolix eyewitness, but without the murder weapon.

In 1947, *the Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce* (Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland) tried to fraudulently remedy this serious shortcoming. In the article "*The Bełżec extermination camp*" that appeared in the official bulletin of the commission, Eugeniusz Szrojt wrote (Szrojt, p. 36):

> *"It has not been possible to ascertain for how long the execution chambers, in the construction of which the witness Kozak was employed, functioned. However, there is no doubt that the chambers in the new building mentioned by witness Reder were functioning in August of 1942. Nonetheless, within a span of two months, during which the camp did not operate – the period between the middle of May and the middle of July – the new building was put up, a more solid and more spacious building for mass murder of the victims in order to be ready for the major operation of the liquidation of the Jews in the Government General, which had been scheduled for the autumn."*

Szrojt was referring to two items from the evidence given by Stanislaw Kozak and Rudolf Reder, whom he called "the two most authoritative witnesses in this respect." (*ibid.*, p. 35). Neither item in evidence explained what had been the alleged method of extermination. The second testimony is Reder's already-quoted statement before Judge Jan Sehn on December 29, 1945.

Despite this, Szrojt adds a few pages later (*ibid.*, p. 41):

> *"All of the witnesses who have testified on this point – except one – agree that the Germans killed by means of the exhaust gases from an engine set up in the*

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52 *Ibid.*, p. 234.

> *execution building. The gases from the engine were fed into the chambers through special pipes with outlets in the chambers."*

This was a lie on several counts. First of all because, as we have seen, none of the witnesses had named this method of murder as the only or even the prevailing method. Second, because Szrojt equates self-styled eye-witnesses and witnesses who had never set foot into the camp and who provided only hearsay. Third, because "the two most authoritative witnesses in this respect," Kozak and Reder, in fact had not mentioned this method, and fourth, because Reder had categorically ruled it out.

The Polish judiciary's choice was dictated partly by judicial and partly by literary concerns. On the one hand, they could not openly admit that they were ignorant of the "weapon of crime," and on the other hand, its article on Treblinka, which had declared the engine-exhaust method as true, had already been published in 1946 (see Chapter 3). For the sake of literary coherence, this method therefore had to be attributed also to Bełżec (and Sobibór).

In 1948, in a subsequent official publication of the Polish government (which had given official sanction to high-voltage current as the murder method three years earlier), asphyxiation with carbon monoxide produced by the exhaust gas of an engine became "history" (*Polish Charges…*, p. 226):

> *"With the victims in the gas-chambers, the final stage of the liquidation process commenced. The doors were securely locked behind the victims who were closely packed in the chambers. The engine was started up, and carbon monoxide introduced into the chambers through special exhaust pipes. In a few minutes, the cries of the suffocating people died down, and after 10-15 minutes, a special team of Jews opened the outer doors of the chambers."*

At first, the Polish judiciary did not specify what kind of engine produced the carbon monoxide, and apparently, they were not interested in it either. Western judges and historians, on the other hand, had known Kurt Gerstein's testimony since 1946, but took notice of Rudolf Reder's testimony only much later. When they did, they were confronted with the insurmountable contradiction explained earlier: a Diesel engine that killed victims and a gasoline engine that did not kill them, with the further complication first pointed out by engineer Friedrich Berg that Diesel-engine exhaust gas is utterly inefficiency for the mass killing of human beings (see Mattogno 2021a; Berg 1984/1994/2019).

The significance and the outcome of the metaphorical contest described in this subchapter have an importance that goes well beyond the specific matter dealt with, because they pose a general problem of historiographic methodology that concerns all the fanciful accounts that circulated about all three alleged extermination camps.

By the time the trial against the former SS men who had operated Bełżec Camp was held in Munich in 1965, the official historico-judicial picture of this camp was well established and considered "self-evident," hence beyond legal challenges, in spite of all contradictory testimony. In order to try to obtain min-

imum sentences, the defendants then had no choice but to perform false "confessions" that conformed with it (see Mattogno 2016, Subchapter III.3., pp. 62-69).

2. Sobibór

2.1. The First Clues in the Jewish-Polish Underground Press

Józef Marszałek notes that the espionage service of the *Delegatura*, which was the branch of the Polish Government in exile in London during World War II that operated within Poland, and the intelligence service of the Polish National Army (the *AK*, or *Armia Krajowa*) "had a good knowledge of the Treblinka and Bełżec Death Camps, much less so with respect to Sobibór" (Marszałek, p. 47), which is attributable essentially to the extreme scarcity of self-proclaimed eyewitnesses for the camp's period of existence.

Bogdan Chrzanowski affirmed in 1985 that "the underground press wrote rather vaguely about another camp of immediate extermination, meaning Sobibór, even though first indications had already surfaced in August of 1942" (Chrzanowski, p. 103).

Wartime information about this camp was indeed sparse and vague from the first such "news" item onward, which was described by Ruta Sakowska as follows (Sakowska, pp. 40f.):

> *"In early July of 1942, Oneg Szabat's*[53] *group managed to identify the location of the second extermination camp located in the General Government: Sobibór. The first news item about Sobibór – which went into operation in early May – was brought into the Warsaw ghetto by two couriers of the Dror,*[54] *'Frumka' Płotnicka und 'Chawka' Folman. In early June of 1942, on orders of the Dror, they went to the Lublin region, i.a. to Werbkowice near Hrubieszów, where there was a commune of Jewish youths. The two women arrived at Rejowiec on 6 June 1942. However, the Rejowiec Jews were no longer there, as they had been deported to the extermination camp in mid-May.*
>
> *The following day the two young women reached Hrubieszów. On the way into town they met a column of several thousand Jews from Hrubieszów and its surroundings who were being herded to the station by the Germans.*
>
> *A few days later 'Frumka' Płotnicka reported about this to Eliahu Gutkowski, the second secretary of the underground archives of the ghetto, who recorded the accounts of the two couriers: 'I almost fainted, the people marched in rows of four, more than 2,000 persons, men, women, and youngsters, no children. I*

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53 Hebrew for "Joy of the Sabbath," code name of a group of Jews dedicated to chronicling life in the Warsaw Ghetto, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ringelblum_Archive.

54 Hebrew for freedom, name of a group of socialist Zionists in the Warsaw Ghetto.

noticed two or three children holding the hand of an adult. There was a deadly stillness in the ranks, people marched quietly, looking down with eyes that no longer saw anything…' This column was followed by a second group: old people and sick women, some eight to twelve people each on farm wagons; one could hear their subdued complaints and their prayers: 'Save us, oh Lord.' As 'Frumka' Płotnicka learned later, the children had been taken away from their parents and were taken 'to an unknown destination' in sealed [railway] *cars.*
The next day, the two liaison women were present at the station of the nearby town of Miąciń. And here, for the first time, they heard the name: 'Sobibór.' 'Frumka' Płotnicka told Eliahu Gutkowski: 'From morning till nightfall people arrived here with their wagons and their possessions. In the evening the Jews were herded into special cars; they could not take their possessions along […]. *The train left for 'an unknown destination.' There are rumors that the Germans had built another death camp at Sobibór, modeled on Bełżec.' 'Frumka' Płotnicka died during the defense of the ghetto at Będzin (Bendsburg, Upper Silesia). 'Chawka' Folman survived and later published her memoirs in Israel."*

The beginning of the black propaganda about this camp was decidedly sluggish, but the subsequent news was just as evanescent. On July 1, 1942, the journal *Polish Fortnightly Review* published an article which mentioned Sobibór in connection with the "destruction of the Jewish population" in Poland ("Documents from Poland," pp. 4f.):

"The German press reported that the ghetto had been transferred from Lublin to the village of Majdan Tatarski [Majdanek], *but in fact almost the entire population was exterminated. For instance, it is generally known that a certain number of Jews from the Lublin Ghetto were shut up in goods trucks, which were taken out beyond the town and left on a siding for two weeks, until all inside had perished of starvation.*[55] *The majority of the Jews of Lublin were carried off over a period of several days to the locality of Sobibór, near Włodawa, where they were all murdered with gas, machine-guns and even by being bayoneted. It is an authenticated fact that Lithuanian detachments of* szaulis,[56] *who have recently been brought into Poland, were used for these mass executions. The fetor of the decomposing bodies in Sobibór is said to be so great that the people of the district, and even cattle, avoid the place. One Pole working in Sobibór wrote a letter pleading to be granted a transfer elsewhere, as he could not remain in such conditions."*

A report dated September 7, 1942 contained this brief reference:[57]

"In spring the news came through that a new camp of tortures had been set up in Sobibór (Włodawski District). The winding up of the ghetto was expected al-

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55 As explained in Chapter 1, this black-propaganda theme was later picked up and imaginatively embroidered by Jan Karski.

56 Term for Lithuanian volunteers in the service of German armed forces during WWII.

57 "Report on conditions in Poland." Report received by the Polish Government-in-Exile in London on November 27, 1942. Annex No. 7. Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto dated 7.IX.1942, p. 4. HILA, Box 29.

> *ready by the middle of April, and then, later, by the end of May. In June the rumor spread that it had been put off for some time. But the visit of Himmler to the General Government in the middle of July this year hastened the execution of the plan, and his former orders were even made stricter."*

The "Memorandum on the Situation in the Country for the Period October 11 – November 15, 1942" reported tersely that "Sobibór near Włodawa is temporarily inactive" (Gmitruk *et al.*, p. 273).

The newspaper *Rzeczpospolita Polska* (*Polish Republic*) wrote in its edition of November 19, 1942 (Chrzanowski, p. 103):

> *"Das Lager Sobibór bei Włodawa ist zeitweise nicht in Betrieb, wird aber noch erweitert."*

The first vague mention of the extermination method used at Sobibór – unidentified "gases" – appeared in an official report of the Ministry of the Interior of the Polish Government-in-Exile, dated December 23, 1942:[58]

> *"At that time – April/May – the first vague news about the camps of Sobibór, in the Włodawski District and Bełżec, in eastern Lesser Poland, reached Warsaw, indicating that there was mass poisoning with gases* [*gazami*] *and assassinations with electric current of transports of hundreds of Jews who were moved there from the territory of western Lesser Poland.* […]
> *They are taken to three killing places, Treblinka, Bełżec and Sobibór, where the transports are unloaded, the condemned are stripped naked and murdered, probably with gases* [*gazami*]*."*

The report entitled "The General Government under the Axe of the Occupier's Atrocious Terror," which was sent to London on January 6, 1943, contained these fleeting references (Gmitruk *et al.*, pp. 279, 284):

> *"Lately, the Jewish execution camp in Sobibór (Włodawa District) was also put back into operation.* […] *The train was directed to Włodawa. The threat of the situation is magnified by the fear that it may be headed to Sobibór, which is located on this line, the notorious slaughterhouse hidden in the woods."*

In 1943 the Polish underground press published more news about Sobibór Camp. The paper *Informacja Bieżąca* stated on April 1 (Marszałek, p. 46):

> *"The death camp of Sobibór has again been in operation since 10 March. At the moment, transports from Holland and France are arriving there. These Jews arrive in passenger trains and are convinced that they are to work in factories of the war industry further east. On Sunday, 14 March, Dutch Jews were even received at Sobibór by an orchestra; the next day, not one of them was alive."*

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[58] Ministry of the Interior of the Polish Government-in-Exile in London. Report No. 6/42 dated London, December 23, 1942, and signed by Minister Stanisław Mikołajczyk, pp. 50, 53. HILA, Box 29.

The "Memorandum on the Situation in the Country. General Government and Eastern Territories for the Period March 25 – April 23, 1943", drafted on April 24, 1943, reported the following (Gmitruk *et al.*, pp. 323, 340):

> *"Recently, several large transports of Jews from France and Holland were sent to Sobibór.* […] *Over 300 people were shot on the spot, and over 4,000 were sent to Zwierzyniec Camp, from where those fit for work were directed to the Reich, and those unfit for work* [were sent] *to the Bełżec and Sobibór Camps, where they were apparently liquidated in gas chambers."*

A report of May-June of 1943 stated that, after the deportation of Jews to the work camps at Trawniki and Lublin, "women, old people and children were moved to Sobibór" (Marszałek, p. 46), which suggests that at this camp not everybody was exterminated but only for those unfit for work.

In the report of the *Delegatura* for the first three months of 1943 we read (*ibid.*):

> *"Some transports of Jews from France arrived during March of 1943. A train for Sobibór passed through the station of Radom on 3 March, on 6 March* [there was a train] *at Częstochowa for Oświęcim* [Auschwitz], *and on 11 and 18 March (a train of 30 cars) for Sobibór."*

The *Informacja Narodowa* No. 3 dated September 30, 1943 reported that, out of the transports of Jews which had reached the camp between 19 and 25 September, "90% were killed and 10% sent to the camp at Trawniki" (*ibid.*). In its No. 1 edition of September 3, the same paper had already written about "200 persons sent to the Sobibór death camp," which had been selected from Jewish transports directed from Białystok to Trawniki on 15-21 August (*ibid.*). At Trawniki, after yet another selection, "old people, women, and children were sent to their death at Sobibór" on September 27 (*ibid.*).

An unknown "eyewitness" composed a report on November 1, 1943 in which he said, among other things (Silberschein 1944b, p. 25):

> *"On the last day of the* 'Aktion,' [campaign] *9 June* [1942], *some 5,000 persons were assembled on the market square* [of Hrubieszów]. *The district supervisor appeared and carried out a selection according as he saw fit. The people he selected were allowed to remain in the town and work, the others were loaded on trucks, taken to Sobibór and executed there. (These Jews were sent to Sobibór because Bełżec was, by then, 'overcrowded.') Out of the 5,000 persons, 1,000 were moved to Sobibór."*

In November of 1943, the underground press devotes a few lines to the revolt at Sobibór. *Informacja Bieżąca* No. 44 of 10 November states for example (Marszałek, p. 47):

> *"The Jews have destroyed Sobibór Camp and escaped into the woods."*

The "Memorandum on the Situation in the Country. General Government and Eastern Territories for the Period October 24 – November 21, 1943, as well as

supplementing the previous period", sent by the *Delegatura* to London on November 29, 1943 contains some additional information (Gmitruk *et al.*, p. 499):

> *"Revolt at Sobibór. In the second half of October, there was a bloody event, a successful uprising of Jews at the Sobibór Execution Camp. The inmates of the camp, numbering several hundred, killed a few dozen of their German and Ukrainian executioners. After burning down the camp, all the inmates escaped."*

A passing reference to Sobibór is made in the report from the *Delegatura* for November/December 1943 (Berenstein, p. 366):

> *"In Lemberg* [Lwów], *the labor camp with several thousand Jews still remaining in it was dissolved. Two other small groups were also liquidated. This fact could not be changed* [avoided] due to *the fact that a Jewish group destroyed the camp and the execution site in Sobibor – as had happened once in Treblinka."*

In the "Memorandum on the Situation in the Country. General Government and Eastern Territories for the Period November 22 – December 18, 1943, with supplements for the previous period," sent to London on January 27, 1944, we read (Gmitruk *et al.*, p. 524):

> *"Also in November the Germans killed about 8,000 Jews in the famous Sobibór Execution Camp, and a smaller number of people, numbering between a couple and a few hundred, among them 600 Jews employed in the Puławy sawmill."*

2.2. The Testimonies of Former Deportees

A number of testimonies of former deportees did not find the slightest echo in the Polish-Jewish resistance press of the time.

The first known testimony is that of an anonymous Slovak Jew who was deported from Sabinów on May 27, 1942 and, through successive stages, arrived in Sobibór, where he was selected to work with a group of 155 other Jews, after which he was transferred first to Ossowa, then to Krychow. After his escape, he returned to his homeland where he wrote a text on August 17, 1943 titled "Factual report of a Jew deported from Slovakia who returned." The most important information about the alleged death camp is this:[59]

> *"In the vicinity of Sobibor, fire can always be observed at night, and a stench of burnt hair can be perceived in the wider area. Various indications suggest (at least the population claims so) that the corpses which were previously executed by electricity and gas – and later buried – are now exhumed and burned in order to leave no traces behind."*

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[59] *Tatsachenbericht eines aus der Slovakei* [sic] *deportierten und zurueckgekehrten Juden*, dated "Slovakei, 17. August 1943." Moreshet Archives, Givat Haviva, Israel, p. 4. The German text has no umlauts.

Notwithstanding the fact that burials or outdoor cremations, as explained in the Introduction, do not by themselves prove any kind of mass extermination at all, because the question is purely quantitative in nature, here it can be observed that real mass cremations do not produce any perceptible "stench of burnt hair", because hair constitutes a negligible quantity compared to that of a corpse, it burns first and within a few seconds, and because its stench would be covered by the much more intense and lasting stench of burning flesh.

The burning of hair is also in contrast with the practice of shearing the deported Jews before the alleged gassing. If this hair-cutting practice was done as a result of following Richard Glücks's order of August 6, 1942, the hair was also to be cut from the men, provided that it was at least 20 millimeters long, so that the alleged victims were cremated basically without much hair.

On October 7, 1943 the partisan commander ZACHAR FILIPOWICZ POPŁAWSKI transmitted to the Plenipotentiary of the Communist Party of Belarus in the Brest District a report of a Ukrainian guard who had deserted from Sobibór and had joined the partisans. The witness described therein in detail the alleged extermination procedure:[60]

> *"Eight to ten railway cars are uncoupled from the train and moved to the camp grounds. Jewish workers open the cars and throw out the people – the living and the dead. Everyone falls onto the embankment. All that can be heard are the moans or cries of adults and children, the screams of the Germans and the hissing of whips. People run from the embankment through a corridor made of barbed wire. There is the first barracks (see map), where they throw down all their things: clothes, suitcases, packages. After exiting this barracks, they meet a German, who stands there with a whip and directs the men to the left, the women to the right. The women are led further down the corridor, towards Camp II, to the last two barracks, where they strip naked; money, watches, gold, silver, diamonds are taken from them. After the women, they lead to the barracks the men, where they, too, strip naked, and go to the 'bath' through the same corridor.*
>
> *The 'bath'* [*łaźnia*] *is divided into eight rooms. Each chamber holds 500 people. The doors close tightly, the valve* [*zawór*] *is opened. Gas from the engine* [*gaz z silnika*] *flows forcefully into the chamber. The wailing, crying and shouting of people can be heard through its wall. After 5-10 minutes, they are thrown, not yet completely dead, onto narrow-gauge carts, and at this time their teeth are pulled out, the remaining rings are removed from their hands. The corpses are taken to the hearth* [*do ogniska*], *they are dumped on the ground, and instantly they are placed on rails in sets of 1,000-1,500 people. A small fire is lit under them, and the people themselves catch fire and burn."*

This account cannot be considered a first "revelation" of the "truth", but is simply one of many versions of black propaganda – undoubtedly the one that comes closest to the final version that was arbitrarily chosen by judges and his-

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60 Bem 2014, reproduction of the document between pp. 224 and 225. The camp map mentioned in the testimony can be found on p. 85.

torians. However, it differs in significant respects from the official version of the Hagen Trial (see Chapter 5), according to which there were six gas chambers and not eight; 80 people could enter each chamber and not 500; the gassing lasted 20-30 minutes and not 5-10. The last sentence is patently absurd: under a pile of 1,000-1,500 corpses, "a small fire" was lit, thanks to which they caught fire and burned by themselves! This testimony, however, remained completely in the shadows.

In the years 1944-1946, witnesses attributed the most-imaginative killing methods to the alleged extermination facilities at Sobibór.

On August 10, 1944, BER MOISEYEVICH FREIBERG, a former Sobibór inmate, told a Soviet investigator the following during an interrogation in Chełm (Ehrenburg/Grossman, p. 439):

> *"When a group of eight hundred people entered the 'bathhouse', the door closed tightly.* […] *In a separate building there was an electric machine which released deadly gas. Once released, the gas entered tanks, and from there, it came through hoses in the chamber to be asphyxiated* [sic]. *There were no windows in the building. A German, who was called the 'bathhouse attendant', looked through a small glass opening on the roof to see if the killing process was completed. Upon his signal, the gas was shut off, the floor was mechanically drawn apart, and the corpses fell below. There were carts in the cellar, and a group of doomed men piled the corpses of the executed onto them. The carts were taken out of the cellar to the woods in the third camp. A huge ditch had been dug there, and the corpses were first thrown into it and then covered up with dirt. The people who delivered and disposed of the corpses were immediately shot."*

Also known from this witness is a statement in Russian dated August 18, 1944, which presents a more-concise description:[61]

> *"When a portion of the people, 800, had entered the premises, the doors were hermetically closed. In the building there was an electric machine* [электрическая машина, *elektricheskaya mashina*] *which produced the asphyxiating gas. The gas produced passed into cylinders and from them through pipes into the room. Generally, all those who were in the room were asphyxiated in 15 minutes. The building had no windows."*

On August 10, 1944, CHAIM PODROZNIK, a Polish Jew who had been deported to Sobibór in March 1943, was also interrogated in Chełm. Even before his arrival, he knew that this was a "death camp," and that it was also called "the eternal camp." However, during his stay at the camp, he did not learn much more about its alleged exterminating function, because in the more than four pages of his account, he limited himself to this fleeting reference:[62]

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61 YVA, P.21.1-56, p. 2.
62 YVA, P 21.1.-160, p. 1.

> *"At Sobibur* [sic] *120 men and 60 women arrived. The women and children, however, were immediately separated and taken to the 'bathhouse.' Many of us saw our wives and children for the last time."*

On September 17, 1944, HERSZ CUKIERMAN, another former inmate, stated:[63]

> *"The camp was divided into three parts. The first and second were in contact with each other. The third part was isolated, located in the woods, and access to its area was prohibited. In this camp, everyone went to be liquidated. In Camp 3, a part of the men, women and children were gathered, as many as the gas chambers could contain.* […]
> *In September, new gassing facilities were built. They had 8 chambers that held 100-120 people. In this way, 1,000 people could be killed at a time. After the construction of this complex, new transports began to arrive."*

Five years later, on September 14, 1949, Cukierman made a "Declaration" ("*Erklaerung*") at the Office of the Judicial Section of the Central Committee of Liberated Jews in the U.S. zone of [occupied] Germany in Munich. In it, Cukierman, who had stayed in Sobibór from May 1942 to October 1943, described the alleged killing of a transport of 1,600 Jews from Majdanek Camp on the orders of SS *Oberscharführer* Hubert Gomerski. In this context, the witness stated:[64]

> *"These 1,600 people were interned in our camp to be gassed. On the very day the gassing was to be carried out, there was a breakdown* [*ein Schaden*] *at the crematorium* [*im Krematorium*], *so that the cremation plant* [*die Verbrennungsanlage*] *could not be used."*

From this we can infer that the witness purported that a real crematorium existed inside Sobibór Camp.

On July 27, 1945 another former inmate, BERISCH FREIBERG, stated the following:[65]

> *"The bathhouse looked like this: a stone building, the size I can't indicate exactly, because we were not allowed to enter the third camp. Those who ever entered it were killed. Only once, when the gate was open, did I see a pile of corpses. So, the building was made of masonry, in front adorned with a red Star of David decorated with greenery, a window and iron doors, a flat roof, and on the roof a small window, where an SS man, whose name was Oberscharführer Getzinger, used to sit. He used to sit there, looking through the little window, observing, and when he saw that people were dead, he used to give further instructions.* […]

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63 AŻIH, 301/14, pp. 1-4.

64 Sąd Apelacyjny (Court of Appeals) Lublin, 193, Vol. III, p. 697a.

65 Report of Berisch Freiberg recorded by Bluma Wasser in Łódź on July 25, 1945. Translation from Yiddish into German by accredited interpreter Gabriel Miller. Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Ref. JS 27/61, Aktenband VIII, pp. 2637-2638. Some of the court documents related to Sobibór can be consulted in the NIOD Archives (*Instituut voor Oorlogs-, Holocaust- en Genocidestudies*) at Amsterdam.

> *He used to sit on the roof and enjoy the view of the gassed Jews. Inside there were pipes, just like in a shower room, and the people believed that water for taking a shower would come out of these pipes. When the people were inside, about 1,000 people at a time, the doors were bolted – there were no windows – gas, chlorine or talen* [?]*, came out of the shower pipes. It took between 15 and 20 minutes until all the people were dead. When the sadist saw from the little window that everyone was dead, the floor was opened with an electrical device, and the dead fell through, so that the next group of people could be brought in immediately afterwards. At the same time, the corpses under the floor were loaded onto trams, these are small wagons that run on narrow-gauge tracks, and they were taken to a place not far from the house."*

Here the witness pointed out that he had never entered Camp III. He had only seen a pile of corpses through the open gate to Camp II. But he contradicted himself later by stating that he had been selected to work as a barber in Camp III.

During an undated interrogation by the Israeli police, which was probably conducted for the Eichmann Trial, hence perhaps in 1960, Freiberg said that a German led the group of selected prisoners to a barber shop,

> *"to the last barracks, in front of the gas chambers, gave each of us scissors, and forbade us to make even a sound. In the barracks, there were two rows of benches, and I stood behind them. Groups of naked women were brought inside. The first ones recoiled when they saw men, and covered their* [intimate] *body parts with their hands. The Germans ordered them to sit down, and we shore off their hair."*[66]

A few years later, when testifying during the Sobibor Trial at Hagen on December 21, 1965, the witness reiterated:[67]

> *"I had to cut the hair of naked women in a barracks in front of the gas chamber."*

In 1945, the Dutch Red Cross published a summary of the testimony of URSULA STERN, who had been deported to Sobibór on April 9, 1943. We read there:[68]

> *"There was a gas chamber that could hold 600 people; gas was fed into the chamber through showers; after the people had died, the floor folded down, and they fell down. The gassing of a group took about a quarter of an hour."*

In October-December 1945, the investigating judge of the Lublin District Court, Sergiusz Urban, questioned several former Sobibór inmates, some of whom are completely unknown to Holocaust historiography.

On October 10, 1945, JOSEF TRAJTAG reported the following, among other things:[69]

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66 Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Sobibor 85 PM IV, p. 18.

67 Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Sobibor 66 PM dec '65, p. 833.

68 Het Nederlandsche Roode Kruis. Afwikkelingsbureau Concentratiekampen. *Sobibor.* 'S-Gravenhage, 11.4.1945, p. 11.

> *"We were not allowed to enter the camp where the death chamber* [*komora śmierci*] *was located. Approximately 700 Jewish men worked there exhuming, transporting and cremating corpses. From the accounts of those who were employed there,* [it appears] *that the chamber itself had a large underground room, the walls, ceiling and floor of which were lined with iron plates that were hermetically connected together. People were poisoned there with gases* [*gazamis*], *but what gases were used no one knew, except the Germans. It was said that people died in this chamber* [*w tej komorze*] *within five minutes. Then the workers entered the pit* [*do dołu*] *that was under this chamber into which the corpses of the murdered people fell thanks to the automatic opening of the iron floor; they transported the corpses of those killed on wagons* [*na wagonetki*] *and took them to a large pit, about 50 meters away from the chamber. The corpses were doused copiously with gasoline and burned."*

SAMET MOTTEL, who had been deported to Sobibór in the summer of 1943, was most-likely interrogated in October 1945. In the related undated interrogation minutes, he also spoke of a "death chamber" ("*komora śmierci*"), without further details, but his comrades had calculated that "about two and a half million people had been liquidated at the camp."[70]

SRUL JANKIEL FAJGIELBAUM, also interrogated by Judge Urban, stated on November 5, 1945 that he had been taken to the "Sobibór Death Camp" in the winter of 1942-1943. He provided a detailed description of the extermination facility:[71]

> *"The death chamber* [*komora śmierci*] *proper was built near me* [at his workplace]. *It was lined with iron plates, and together with other workers, I carried these plates to the site. The ceiling, the walls and the floor were covered with plates. The work was directed by a German engineer whose name I do not know. The capacity of this room was very large; the size of 4 large rooms. I am convinced that these iron plates were insulated. Each time, 200 people, stripped naked, were pushed into the chamber. They were urged from the barracks through the corridor. The electricians stated that the people in this chamber were also killed with electric current* [*za pomocą prądu elektrycznego*], *which was produced inside the chamber by means of a special motor and machine. The current was conducted by means of special cables enclosed in tubes that led inside the chamber. After the people were locked into this chamber, you could hear screams and shouts coming from them, but they lasted very briefly, a few seconds, then silence followed. After that, 8-10 Jewish workers were brought into the chamber, who carried the corpses out to the narrow-gauge railway. These workers did not return to the barracks, and I got the impression that the Germans later killed them. When I worked together with other selected* [*inmates*], *we selectees worked by transporting the corpses on carts*

69 YVA, O.21-27, pp. 1f.
70 *Ibid.*, pp. 10-12.
71 *Ibid.*, pp. 3-6.

> *and taking them to a pile. The corpses were black* [*czarne*], *because, as I said, the people were killed with electricity."*

In an undated "Official Note," Judge Urban summarized the contents of an article on Sobibór that had appeared in the fourth issue of 1945 of the Russian magazine *Znamja* [*Flag*]; Urban wrote, among other things:[72]

> *"In the third* [camp] *was the so-called 'Banja'/'bathroom,' which was a masonry room with an iron door."*

JAN PIWOŃSKI, a Polish railroad employee, was questioned by Judge Urban on November 10, 1945, and reported rumors spread about the camp:[73]

> *"In my opinion, the extermination chamber for human beings was in operation right from the start, meaning during the period when the construction of the other rooms was still in progress. Because already then, I heard the sound of some engine. Regarding the way in which the people were exterminated, various things were said about it in Sobibór at that time. Some said that the Germans would use some kind of gas, others talked about pumping the air out of the chamber. A certain BIELECKI, a Pole taken prisoner by the Germans in Lwów, whom the Germans had forced to guard the chamber, stated that some gas was emitted from this engine, which was led though pipes into the chamber. The people inside are said to have perished within 15 minutes by this gas."*

SALOMON PODCHLEBNIK, who was interrogated on December 6, 1945, claimed to have stayed at the Sobibór "Death Camp" from April 28 to July 25-27, 1943. About the extermination system, he stated:[74]

> *"The people in the chamber* [*w komorze*] *were asphyxiated with gas* [*gazem*], *and then the corpses were burned on pyres* [*na stosach*]. *In my opinion, about half a million people were annihilated in Sobibór."*

He also knew only of one "gas chamber" in which the victims were killed with an undetermined gas.

The witness had already been interrogated in Lublin on September 15, 1944. On that occasion, he stated that he had been deported to the camp on April 28, 1943, and had escaped on July 20. Another prisoner had told him that already by then the number of victims amounted to about one million. He had been assigned to the *Waldkommando* (forest labor unit), which had 40 inmates. A transport of 3,500 Jews arrived twice a week. Podchlebnik said nothing about the killing method.[75]

JÓZEF MALIŃSKI, a Pole who had worked at the Sobibór railway station, stated on December 13, 1945:[76]

> *"I was never in the death chamber, not even in its vicinity,* [but] *I know that it was made of bricks and fixed with cement. It was opined that 500-600 people*

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72 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
73 Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Sobibor 85 PM II NO 109, pp. 1f.
74 *Ibid.*, p. 8. AŻIH, 301/5355.
75 AŻIH, sygn. 301/10.
76 AŻIH, sygn. 301/5372, p. 2.

> *were liquidated at a time in the death chamber. How people were killed, whether by means of a current or an electric current* [sic], *I do not know, but I exclude the killing by electric current because of the low voltage. When people were being killed, a motor could be heard, but I do not know what its practical use was."*

On December 18, 1945, ICEK LICHTMANN, who had been deported to Sobibór May 15, 1942, made a statement in Krakow in which he reported:[77]

> *"In the middle of the forest, however, there was a small house with a red roof* [*domek z czerwonym dachem*] *into which about 1,500 people could fit. This little house was surrounded by a garden, above the house was the inscription 'Badehaus.' It was the gas chamber* [*komora gazowa*], *in which thousands of people were asphyxiated. It was located about 200 meters from the camp. After the gassing, the floor* [*podnaszono podłagą*] *was raised, the corpses fell into pits* [*do dołów*], *carts arrived at the bottom of these pits* [*and*] *took away these corpses, which were buried in pits* [*w dołach*] *in the woods. We were told about this by our fellow prisoners who had done this, and then they were killed as well,* [*and also*] *the Ukrainians who were guarding them.* [*…*] *In these conditions, I spent 17 months in the workshops, during which about a million people perished in the furnaces* [*w piecach*] *of this building with the red roof."*

According to the witness, there was a "gas furnace" ("*piec gazowy*") in Camp III.

On an unspecified date, most likely in 1945, EDA LICHTMAN, a Polish Jew deported to Sobibór in May-June 1942, wrote a short handwritten report in Polish titled "Sobibór Death Camp." According to her, there was a sign reading "*Seuchen-Bekämpfungsstelle*" ("Pest-Control Center") at the gate to Camp III. The gassing plant is described as follows:[78]

> *"It was a whitewashed building. On the roof, one could see the Star of David* [with] *a large inscription 'Nur für Juden'* ['Only for Jews']. *Two hundred people were pushed in and gassed. Oberscharführer Karl Bauer and Karl Bollender* [sic] *supervised the gassing. The gassed and sometimes even the living were thrown into pits, and the condemned were buried, then shot* [*rozstrzeliwano*]*."*

So, they were first buried, and then shot…?

In another undated but undoubtedly later statement, which was published by Miriam Novitch, the witness merely reported:[79]

> *"SS Scharführer Erich Bauer, master of camp No. 3, supervised the executions from a roof window of the gas chamber."*

The testimony by CHASKIEL MENDEL [MENCHE], who later became a questionable witness for the judiciary of the Federal Republic of Germany, probably dates back to 1945. He stated on August 22, 1950 that he had been in the

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77 AŻIH, sygn. 301/1204, pp. 3-5.
78 E. Lichtman, "*Sobibór Obóz Śmierci*." YVA, O 33-14.
79 "From Mielec to Sobibor. Testimony of Eda Lichtman," in: Novitch, p. 56.

Posen forced-labor camp since June 1940, and from June 1941 until the beginning of May 1945 in the Gross-Rosen Concentration Camp. On July 7, 1958, he stated that he had been in Posen until August 1943 and then in Gross-Rosen. On March 15, 1960, he stated that he had been in Koło from October 1939 to June 1941, in Posen until August 1943, and in Sobibór until mid-October 1943. His Displaced-Person Card of October 1945 mentioned only "KZ Gross-Rosen," and in his application for an identity card of October 1946 he wrote that he had been in Koło from 1939 to July 1, 1942, in Sobibór from this date until 1943, and that he had been active as a partisan from 1943 to 1945.[80]

In the testimony in question, he stated:[81]

> *"The whole camp was surrounded with wires and by watchtowers. We went through Camp No. 1 and passed through a gate into Camp No. 2. In Camp No. 1, the SS men had selected 12 men for work, including me. My wife and children had been taken away. Shortly after that I saw the women being led down a narrow path. After that, I saw a few Jews busy sorting clothes. But they did not want to explain to me what was going on there. Then I saw how women and men stripping naked in a fenced-in area, cuddling up to each other due to the cold. A Scharführer said to them, 'You are going to work in your own country. It will be good there.' After that, people walked down a narrow path to a red house labeled 'Bath Room,' but no one came out from there.*
>
> *At the end of May a transport from Lvov arrived. There were many corpses in the railway cars. The living were led into a hall with a sliding floor. The people fell in and perished instantly. A few hours later we came in small carts and took the corpses to the furnaces. Meanwhile, the music played, and the Germans then ordered us to dance. They brought in women so that we had partners to dance with. Then the Germans pulled the gold teeth out of the mouths of the corpses, and threw the corpses onto the grate. Even some of us 100 workers were taken every day for the fire."*

In 1947 a journal in Yiddish edited by Israel Kaplan published a short testimonial account written by Yechezkel Menche (the Chaskiel Mendel mentioned earlier). Here he asserted that he had been deported to Sobibór from Izbica with a transport of 6,000 Jews, at a time when the cremation pits already existed, thus not before September-October 1942. However, in the list of transports to the camp from the General Government as compiled by Marek Bem, only one transport left Izbica at that time – on October 8 – with 2,500 Jews (Bem 2014, p. 266-268). The witness spoke of extermination, but had no idea how it was carried out, because he mentioned twice the term "bad-anshtalt", the equivalent of the German term *Badeanstalt* (bathing facility), and four times

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80 Verdict of the *Bayerisches Oberlandesgericht*, Munich, of May 25, 1972 on an appeal by Menche for reparations (*wegen Entschädigung*). Wiederaufnahme-Verfahren Frenzel. Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Ref. Js 27/61, Aktenband VIII, pp. 1162f.

81 Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Sobibor 85 PM4 NO 186, unpaginated. This is an official translation from Polish.

"gaz-oyvns", in German *Gas-Öfen*, gas furnaces. The most significant sentence in the entire testimony is this:[82]

> *"After the Oberscharführer's speech, the people were led to the bathing facilities, and from there to the five gas furnaces. The gassed corpses were burned in four large prepared pits. Up to 300 SS directed the work.*
> *By my estimate, over one and a half million people were cremated in the camp."*

Menche was interrogated on April 22, 1975 in Melbourne on behalf of the German judiciary. His previous contradictory "knowledge" had now evaporated. He now merely reported the following:[83]

> *"As I have already stated, my wife and child were sent to Camp 2, and from there to Camp 3 for liquidation. I did not see this myself, but on the basis of my later experiences in the camp I know that this must have been the case, and as already stated, I did not see my wife and child again from that time on.* […]
> *Camp 3, the actual extermination camp, with gassing facilities and crematorium.*
> *I myself never went to Camp 3, but each of us knew what was happening there. We constantly saw at night the red fire from the burning facilities."*

BRONISŁAW LOBEJKO, who had been a Polish railway employee at Sobibór Station from the spring of 1942 to July 1944, was questioned by District Judge F. Zieliński on January 8, 1946, and reported the following:[84]

> *"According to reports of the Ukrainian guards, there were five gas chambers in the camp with electric light – in the form of baths. 500 people were herded into each gas chamber, which was then hermetically sealed. The killing was presumably done with the help of gas. This was evidenced by bottles similar to oxygen cylinders, which were delivered in large quantities."*

JULES SCHELVIS, the author of one of the best orthodox Holocaust studies on Sobibór, made a statement in Amsterdam on January 21, 1946, in which he stated that he had been deported to this camp on June 1, 1943. On arrival he was selected to work with a group of 81 deportees; after three hours he was transferred to Trawniki, and from there to Dorohucza. Therefore, he could not know anything about the fate that had been reserved for the rest of the transport. He claims that this had been revealed to him by one of his acquaintances, a certain Julek Monchait from Warsaw:[85]

> *"He had escaped from Sobibor and arrived at the Radom concentration camp, where I met him. He told me the following: 'After the men and women had undressed, they were led to a large barracks, the so-called bathhouse. In front of the barracks, on a lawn, stood a loudspeaker. It announced that they would*

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82 See Menche; translation from Yiddish by Kladderadatsch. The title page is in English.
83 Wiederaufnahme-Verfahren Frenzel. Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Ref. Js 27/61, Aktenband VIII, pp. 2005f., 2008.
84 Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Sobibor 85 PM IV NO 178, pp. 3f.
85 ZStL, 208 AR-Z 251/59, Vol. 5, pp. 857f.

now take a bath. […] *The hair was indeed cut off, and everyone was given a piece of soap with a towel, and they went into the barracks in groups. After 7 minutes, however, everyone was gassed. Special persons went into the barracks to examine the corpses for gold teeth. These were knocked out of the mouths. This way, the SS received a large quantity of kilograms of gold. We Jews had to drag the corpses to the crematorium, where they were burned.'"*

On June 22, 1946, SAARTJE WIJNBERG made an affidavit in which she stated that she had come to Sobibór from the Dutch camp in Westerbork on April 1, 1943 with a transport of 2,000 Jews. She described the fate of the alleged victims after the selection as follows:[86]

"The women's hair was cut, and they had to strip naked. The women had to undress in the barracks, the men outside in the open air. Afterwards, they were taken together with the children to the gas chamber of Camp III, without knowing what awaited them there. This barracks consisted of a large room in which showers were installed. However, no water flowed from these showers, but gas poured out, causing them all to suffocate.

I was in Camp II and could see how the victims entered the gas chamber. From outside, the familiar sounds of people being together in a confined space could be heard. The sound soon changed to wailing and crying, until it finally became silent. I know that the floor of the gas chamber consisted of two parts. These parts were lifted apart, and the bodies of the victims were thrown into carts that drove underneath and took the victims to the crematorium. A few hours later, a large fire could be seen in Camp III, and a horrible smell hung over the camp. The crematorium consisted of a furnace located in the ground."

Saartje Wijnberg was the wife of CHAIM ENGEL, who had also been deported to Sobibór, but already on November 6, 1942. Both husband and wife were interrogated in Zwolle on July 19, 1946, and their statements were summarized in a report. The fate of the alleged victims is described as follows:[87]

"Most of the time, the unfortunates were told that they had to take a bath. For this purpose, they were led to a special barracks, which was divided into a number of cabins that were equipped like shower cabins. Before entering, everyone had to undress completely. After undressing, the women had their hair cut off. This was not done with care, but in a crude manner. The hair was collected and shipped away. It was probably processed by some industry.

Gas poured into the cells from the shower openings. After the execution, the corpses were removed through trapdoors located in the floors of the cells."

Three years later, on August 29, 1949, Saartje Wijnberg confirmed these fables in another statement:[88]

"The people who arrived had to undress in one barracks, in the 2nd barracks their hair was cut, and in the 3rd barracks about 400 to 500 people had to take

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86 Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund 49/58, XV, p. 50.
87 ZStL, 208 AR-Z 251/59, Vol. 5, p. 890.
88 *Ibid.*, pp. 882f.

> *a so-called bath together. However, gas flowed in from the showers, and everyone was gassed. After that, the floor of the hall was opened, and the bodies fell into waiting carts which drove away. There were crematoria underground where everyone was burned. My husband heard from Ukrainians how the gassing and burning was done."*

The claim that some undetermined gas flowed from the showers was repeated on July 4, 1965 by KURT THOMAS in a statement for the Hagen District Court:[89]

> *"The showers blew gas instead of spraying water and the people suffocated a horrible death.* […] *All those murdered in the gas showers were burnt in the crematorium hole with help of coal and other flammables; the ashes were loaded into barrels and shipped to Germany as fertilizer."*

In 1946 another witness, LEON FELDHENDLER, stated (Blumental, p. 204):

> *"The bathroom was equipped as if it were really intended for washing (shower taps, comfortable furniture). The bathrooms were gassing rooms* [*gazowniami*]. *They gassed 500 people at once. Sometimes a stream of chloride was released* [*czasem puszczano prąd chlorku*]*; other gases were continuously tested."*

Also in 1946, ALEXANDER PECHERSKY (a.k.a. Pieczerski, a.k.a. Pechorskii, a.k.a. Peczorskij) published a booklet in Yiddish titled *Revolt in Sobibór* (Pechorskii 1946), an excerpt of which appeared in English in a book by Yuri Suhl, from which I take the following illuminating passage:[90]

> *"He* [the witness] *was an old-time inmate who worked at sorting out the clothing of those who were killed. He was well-informed. From him we learned where our comrades had disappeared and how the whole thing operated. He spoke simply, as though it were a conversation about ordinary matters, and we, the new arrivals, who had lived through some unusual experiences ourselves, shuddered as we listened to his story.*
>
> *'As soon as you were separated from them,' he said, 'they were taken to a second yard where everyone, without exception, must gather. There they are told to lay down their bundles and undress before going to the 'bath.' The women's hair is cut off. Everything is done quietly and efficiently. Then the bareheaded women, wearing only their undergowns, and the children, go first. About a hundred steps behind them go the men, completely naked. All are heavily guarded. There is the 'bath,'' he pointed with his hand, 'not far from where you see the smoke. Two buildings are standing there, one for women and children, the other for men. I myself have not seen what it looks like inside, but people who know have described it.*
>
> *'At first glance everything looks like a bath should look—faucets for hot and cold water, basin to wash in… As soon as the people enter the doors are clamped shut. A thick, dark substance comes spiraling out from vents in the ceiling. Horrible shrieks are heard but they don't last long. They are soon*

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89 YVA, O.33-717.

90 Pechersky 1967, p. 12. In the original Yiddish text, this passage is on p. 9.

transformed into gaspings of suffocation and convulsive seizures. Mothers, they say, cover their little ones with their bodies.
The 'bath' attendant observes the entire procedure through a small pane in the ceiling. In fifteen minutes it is all over. The floors open up and the dead bodies tumble down into small wagons that are standing ready below, in the 'bath's' cellars. The full wagons roll out quickly. Everything is organized in accordance with the last word in German technology. Outside the bodies are laid out in a certain order. They are soaked with gasoline and set aflame. There is where they are burning,' he pointed again."

An undated manuscript in Polish dates to the immediate post-war period, maybe to 1945, which was drafted by Pechersky under the name Pieczerski, and is titled "Memoirs of the Sobibór Death Camp." A few words are indecipherable, and in the below translation, I fill in the relevant gaps with my educated assumptions (underscored in the text). In it, Pechersky reported a story similar to the one just quoted, which he said had been told to him by a prisoner named Alosza:[91]

"Women and children entered one bathroom, men another. Armed security personnel stayed behind, closing the doors behind them the doors <u>lined</u> with sheet iron. And there one could hear the muffled <u>hum</u> of electric motors [*elektrycznych motorów*]. *Some went to the water taps… And a wild, inhuman scream ordered them to <u>stop</u> and hurry back. Everyone looked up. And from the ceiling, through large metal fans* [*przez szerokie metalowe wentylatory*] *they were <u>engulfed</u> by black, dense wafts of gas pumped in by electric motors* [*czarne, gęste kłęby gazu wtłaczane przez elektryczne motory*]. *By now everyone understood that they were condemned to a martyr's death. The heart-rending cries, the frightened screams of the children <u>mingled</u> into a terrible ensemble. The mothers clutched their children to their chests; they lay down on the floor covering them with their own bodies. They died in terrible torments. Women instinctively protected their children, wanting to prolong their lives even for a brief moment, protecting them from death. Some <u>wandered around</u> like birds in a cage looking for some place and way of salvation. This gas was creeping lower and lower. The death of the people asphyxiated by this gas was terrible. Some people were desperate enough to throw themselves into the dense wafts of the gas, others tried to push it away by mindlessly waving their hands. After 15 minutes, it was already all over. In the two bathrooms, only the corpses of the murdered were left…* [illegible word]. *Through a small glass window at the top, 'the bath attendant'* [*łazienny*] *watched the process of asphyxiation unfold. Then, with a loud humming sound, the fans began to clear the air in the bathroom. After not too long, the special guard looked into the bathroom space through the large glass window in the ceiling. As soon as the air was purified, he gave a signal, and by means of another mechanism, the floor opened, and the corpses tumbled down into the basement* [*i przy pomocy innego mechanizmu otwierała się podłoga i trupy zwalaly się w dół w piwnicę*].

91 A.A. Pieczerski, *Wspomnienie z Obozu Śmierci Sobibór*. APMM, sygn. VII-353, pp. 124f.

> *And there, little carts* [*wagonetki*] *were already waiting for them* [the corpses…]. *Then the carts, loaded with corpses, took them out into the courtyard."*

During the following years, Pechersky abandoned these tales completely. In 1961, his new version read as follows:[92]

> *"From the second zone of the camp, the completely undressed people were taken to the third zone, which was equipped with special chambers, where even water pipes and small water basins were installed, supposedly for cleaning purposes. However, this was all a pretense, because as soon as the people had entered the chamber, the door of the same was closed, and gas was ducted into the chamber, by which these people suffocated."*

Then a group of 30 workers presumably took the bodies out of the chambers on carts, piled them up, and burnt them.

The themes of chlorine gas and collapsing floors were later merged into a new version by witness ZELDA METZ, who recounted (Blumental, p. 211):

> "[The victims] *went naked to the cash register. They handed over their money, jewelry and valuables. The Germans gave them tin badges or assigned numbers by voice, so that they could collect their money and belongings on their return. Then they entered the barracks, where the women's hair was cut off, then into the 'bath,' the gas chamber. They were asphyxiated with chlorine* [*dusili chlorem*]. *After 15 minutes, they were all asphyxiated. Through a small window, it was verified whether they were all dead. Then the floor opened automatically. The corpses fell into a railroad car that passed through the gas chamber, and took the corpses to the furnace. Before cremation, their gold teeth were extracted. The furnace was a huge hearth with an open-air grill."*

The chlorine-murder method was also asserted by SALOMEA HANEL, who arrived at the camp on January 17, 1943. She declared (Borwicz/Rost/Wulf, p. 64):

> *"Of 3000 people, 7 women and 18 boys were selected for work, the rest were sent to death. There were barracks; on one was the sign 'cashier.' The women were urged 'to the cashier,' their heads were shaved, they were ordered to strip naked, then they were given tickets to the bathroom. Men from the Gestapo told them that they were all going to the bath because they were full of lice. They had to put their shoes and clothes together, and in return they got a receipt. Once there was an incident because something had broken in the room. The people who got out ran around naked and hid outside. The Germans killed them with chloride* [*chlorkiem*]."

There is another statement by this witness, likewise in Polish, yet undated; the passage equivalent to the one just quoted sounds as follows in this statement:[93]

> *"The transport had 2,800 people, of whom 25 people were taken to the camp. Barracks* [sic]. *The women were led to the barracks, their hair was shorn, they stripped naked, and received tickets for the bath. The Gestapo men said they all*

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92 Interrogation of Alexander Petscherski. Kiev, August 11, 1961. ZStL 251/59-13, p. 2674.
93 YVA, O.62-27, pp. 2f.

had to take a bath, because they were full of lice. The women went first. They had to arrange their shoes and clothes properly, and they got a receipt. There was one case where something went wrong in the chamber [*w komorze*]. *People got out and ran around naked, screaming at the top of their lungs. They were poisoned with chloride* [*chlorkiem*]*."*

According to HELLA FELENBAUM-WEISS, chlorine was used to kill deportees during transports (Novitch, p. 50):

"The arrival of another convoy distressed me in the same way. It was thought to come from Lvov, but nobody knew for sure. Prisoners were sobbing and told us a dreadful tale: they had been gassed on the way with chlorine, but some survived."

These conflicting rumors were reflected in the initial attempt at reconstructing the camp's history. In 1945, the Polish War Crimes Office attempted to sketch an initial "historical" picture of the camp as follows:[94]

"The third torture place for Jews was the 'death camp' of Sobibór, near Włodawa on the river Bug, to the south of Brześć Litewski, in the district of Lublin. This camp was used for the concentration of Jews during both the first and the second period of the liquidation of ghettos. In the first period – August 1942 – enormous masses of Jews from the General Government were brought to this camp to be destroyed in gas chambers. Besides Jews from foreign countries, especially from Low Countries and France, were brought there, who are given the assurance of being send to factories in the Reich, but in fact share the fate of the Polish Jews in the gas chambers, whilst their luggage and other movables become a booty of the warders. In summer 1943 large numbers of Jews from the district of Lublin and especially from the neighbourhood of Włodawa and Hrubieszów are brought to Sobibór. In the first half of 1943 a group of 1,000 Jews were murdered in Sobibór who were employed in war factories and brought from the Warsaw ghetto. These people had been previously promised by the German authorities their lives would be spared in recognition of their war effort. During the same period thousands of Russian Jews were destroyed in Sobibór who had been deported in masses from Mohilew, Smoleńsk and Bobrujsk districts. In the second half of October 1943 a sedition broke [out] *in the camp of Sobibór among several hundred of surviving Jews, who killed a number of hangmen, SS men and Ukrainians, burned down the barracks and escaped."*

This "historical reconstruction," which is decidedly insulting to any person with a critical mind, passed into the official report of the Polish government for the Nuremberg IMT in an even less-specific form (USSR-93, p. 42):

"This camp was used for the concentration of Jews during the first and second extermination periods of the ghettos. The Jews were killed here in gas chambers. Under the pretext of being led to factory work in the Reich, the foreign

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94 Report of the Polish War Crimes Office, Dr. J. Litawski, officer in charge, on German crimes in Poland. 1945. AGK, MSW Londyn, 113, p. 626.

> *Jews, especially from Holland and France, were brought to Sobibór and executed. The strongest wave of executions in this camp was in 1943. Thousands and thousands of Jews were brought and killed in gas chambers."*

At the Nuremberg IMT, this passage was summarized even more tersely by L.N. Smirnov, deputy prosecutor for the Soviet Union, who stated during the hearing of February 19, 1946 in relation to the Polish government's official report (Document USSR-93; IMT, Vol. 7, p. 576):

> *"I end my quotation here, and I call the attention of the Tribunal to Page 136 on the reverse side of the document book; this is from a report of the Polish Government, which shows that the Camp Sobibur was founded during the first and second liquidation of the Jewish ghetto. But the extermination on a large scale in this camp really started at the beginning of 1943. "*

In October 1946, the Rescue Committee of the Jewish Agency for Palestine drafted a bulletin dedicated to Sobibór that summarized the "knowledge" of the time:[95]

> *"Three huts were reserved for the women: in the first, they had to take off their shoes; in the second, they undresses* [sic]*; in the third, they had their hair cut; all this – they were told – for the sake of hygiene. They were ordered to put their money and their valuables into large boxes. The women, stripped of everything, were then led into an enclosure made of ropes; as they passed by, the Germans, lined up in several ranks and armed with rifles and whips, assaulted them; little children were torn from their mothers, thrown to the ground and trampled upon with nailed boots until their skulls were smashed. Women who tried to cover their nakedness with some rag or another had their breasts cut off.*
>
> *The men were marched at the double to a third field. There, in front of the entrance to the bath-house, they were addressed by one of the officials, who told them that they were going to be sent to Ukraine, but had first to undergo a thorough cleaning, for everybody would be employed on the same kind of work. The men listened and believed; they suspected nothing, even as they were led through long railed passages which were camouflaged with tree-branches.*
>
> *At first, when there were no more than two or three transports daily, the victims were put to death by asphyxiating gases. Two Soviet tanks were placed between the two halls mentioned above, and when enough people were assembled in the halls, the motor-engines of the tanks were started up and the waste fumes diverted through a pipe into the halls. Twenty minutes later, the doors were opened and Jewish workers dragged the half-suffocated men outside, where the bodies were thrown into vast pits, strewn over with lime and covered with ashes.*
>
> *In due course, an electrically driven machine was constructed for the production of asphyxiating vapours which entered the bath-house through a rubber-tube. A German was watching the agony of the men through a little window in the roof, in order to ascertain whether death occurred within the fixed time. Af-*

[95] YVA, M.4-87, pp. 5f.

> *ter 15-20 minutes, at a given signal, the gas was turned off. The floor parted and the bodies fell into a cellar, from where they were collected to be buried in pits. Water was pumped into the halls, the floors were washed, the doors opened and all started over again.*
> *The prisoners who had been employed to help in the work were shot on the spot.*
> *When the number of transports increased to seven or eight daily, Germans at Sobibor found they were unable to keep up with the influx and transports were diverted to Wlodawa. The first transport to be sent there comprised 3,000-4,000 men from Kalish and the surrounding area.* […]
> *Part of the transports were destined for work in the camps. One of the prisoners operated the electrical machine which filled the cabins of the bath-house with fumes, poisoning his brethren."*

A report by Nachman Blumental titled "*Obóz śmierci – Sobibór*" ("Death Camp – Sobibór"), also dating back to 1946, describes the extermination system as follows:[96]

> *"The people 'very politely' receive towels and soap. The engine is started, one can hear its noise; sometimes there are cries, moans, but they are muffled* […]. *After 20-30 minutes, the motor is turned off. In the bathroom, the floor opens automatically* [*rozsuwa się automatycznie podłoga*], *all 'those who have bathed' – in fact, they have been gassed (with chlorine or another gas)* [*chlorem lub innym gazem*]*."*

2.3. The Birth of the "Gas Chambers"

The killing method using exhaust gas from an unidentified "engine" was made official only in 1947. In the course of Polish investigations into Sobibór Camp, the following was "ascertained" (Łukaszkiewicz 1947a, p. 52):

> *"Inside, this* [gassing] *building had masonry walls. It probably* [*prawdopodobnie*] *contained 5 chambers that held a total of 500 people. They were killed by the exhaust gas produced by an engine installed next to the chambers and connected to them by pipes."*

The inconsistency of the Polish judges' historical claims with the available evidence is demonstrated by the collection of testimonies edited by Miriam Novitch. She published 30 testimonies, almost all of former Sobibór inmates (Tomasz Blattj, Stanislaw Szmajzner, Hella Felenbaum-Weiss, Eda Lichtman, Abraham Margulies, Simha Bialowitz, the widow of Joseph Dunietz, Selma Wijnberg, Ber Freiberg, Kurt Thomas, Itzhak Lichtmann, Ilana Safran, Alexander Pechersky, Lea Reisner-Bialowitz, Aizik Rottenberg, Herschel Zukerman, Jehuda Lerner, Haim Lejst, Haim Treger, Elihahu Lieberman, Jacob Biskubicz, Moshe Hochman, Haim Powroznik, Yehezkiel Menche, Salomea

[96] AAN, 212-III-1, p. 4.

Hanel, Zelda Metz, Michael Knopfmacher, Esther Raab and Samuel Lerner, Moshe Bahir), which she introduced by describing the alleged extermination facilities as follows (Novitch, pp. 24, 26):

> *"Each new chamber was ten meters square, and had two doors, one on the east and one on the west. The victims entered by the western door, the dead were evacuated by the eastern one.* […]
> *In order to build the new gas chambers, old houses were pulled down and new ones were erected, each 4 x 12 meters. Five rooms were prepared to hold 70 to 80 people. Thus, 400 victims could be put to death at the same time, if children were included."*

However, none of the witnesses whose testimonies she presents provided even a vague description of the alleged gassing facilities (with the exception of Moshe Bahir, to whom I will return below, who repeated the widespread tale of gas flowing from showerheads and of collapsible floors). For the first gassing facility claimed for Sobibór, Novitch did not mention the number of chambers, while for the second, later facility, the density of victims is greatly underestimated: each room measured (4 m × 12 m =) 48 square meters and could contain 70-80 people; five rooms therefore measured (48 m × 5 m =) 240 square meters and could contain 400 people. The maximum density of victims was therefore (80 ÷ 48 m² or 400 ÷ 240 m² =) 1.7 persons per square meter, including children!

Novitch had derived the new facility's number of chambers – five – from Z. Łukaszkiewicz's reconstruction, who had ignored the history of the two alleged gassing buildings, and had mentioned a number of gas chambers that was irreconcilable with the number established by the Hagen District Court in its verdict of December 20, 1966: according to this, the first building contained three gas chambers measuring 4 m × 4 m, while the second facility had six chambers, also measuring 4 m × 4 m (see Chapter 5).

Ultimately, the claimed structure of the two alleged extermination facilities simply followed that attributed to Bełżec. In Volume III of the *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, the article on Sobibór immediately follows the one on Bełżec, for which the Polish investigating judges had arbitrarily opted for a killing system by engine-exhaust gas, as demonstrated in the previous chapter; this same method was also attributed to Sobibór for the simple reason of literary consistency.

Despite this choice by the Polish judiciary, the other legends continued to circulate after 1947.

In a memoir written around 1950, MOSHE BAHIR, a former Sobibór inmate, resurrected the fable of the killing rooms with a collapsible floor, and a basement below with carts hauling away the victims (Novitch, p. 147):

> *"Lager 3 was closed on all sides to the prisoners of Sobibor. It was impossible for us to see what was going on in that Lager because of the grove of pine trees which surrounded it. We saw only the roof of the 'bathhouse' which protruded*

through the trees. Thus we saw the murderous face of Oberscharführer Bauer who used to stand on the roof of that building and peep through the little window, into the death-chambers.
We all knew what was done inside the building. We knew that Bauer looked through the window in order to regulate the amount of death-gas which streamed through the ducts, which were in form of an ordinary shower. He was the one who saw the victims suffocating from the gas that was showered upon them and he was the one who ordered that the flow of gas be increased or stopped. And he was the one who used to see the victims in their final agony and in their death. At his order the machinery which opened the floor of the 'bathhouse' was activated, and the corpses fell into small carts which took them at first to mass graves and, later when time was short, to cremation ovens instead. Two hundred Jews worked in the gas chambers Lager."

This tale was repeated and made official by the only former Sobibór inmate who claimed to have seen the gas chambers with his own eyes: YA'AKOV BISKOVITZ. On June 5, 1961 he testified as follows under oath at the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem:

"[Attorney General] *Q. Below, on the left, there are the gas chambers, and on the extreme left you wrote 'Fire Pit'. What is that?*
[Biskovitz] *Yes, that is the fire pit in which the victims who were brought out of the gas chambers were burned. After some time, a buzzing sound would be heard, the floor opened up, and the victims fell into the deep hollow below and were conveyed in this little train into the pit where the eighty men of Camp 3 were working, and they burned the bodies."* (State of Israel, p. 1184)
"President Judge: You described the inside of the gas chamber. For example, you told us how the floor opened up and the bodies fell below into the railway waggons.
Witness Biskovitz: Into the hollow below.
Q. Did you see this with your own eyes, or are you talking of things that you heard from others?
A. I will describe a shocking scene here.
Q. But first of all – did you, in general, have an opportunity of seeing these things from the inside?
A. Not everybody had the opportunity, but I, by chance, did. By chance I was taken to bring a cart with a barrel of chloride. When I was passing by the two larger stores in Camp 2, I detached the cart and pushed it towards Camp 3. I was supposed to leave it near the gate, but I could not hold the vehicle back. The gate opened and it pushed me inside. Since I knew I would not get out alive from there, I began to run back at top speed and managed to reach my place of work without anyone noticing. I kept this a secret – I am stressing this – even from the inmates of the camp who worked with me. From a distance, I saw the pit and the hollow and the small train that carried the dead bodies. I did not see the gas chamber from the inside; I only saw, from the outside, that there was a very prominent roof, and that the floor opened and the bodies fell below.
Q. You came to this conclusion from the nature of the structure?

> *A. Not from the nature of the structure – I saw it from afar even while I was running away quickly, although I cannot describe it exactly, after nineteen years.*
> *Q. Please understand me. You are somewhat familiar with these matters. Did you see the floor when it had opened up?*
> *A. I did not see that – I merely saw that underneath the gas chamber, there was a hollow which already contained bodies."* (*Ibid*., p. 1188)

So, Biskovitz first stated "I only saw, from the outside, that there was a very prominent roof, and that the floor opened and the bodies fell below," then, contradicting himself, he stated that he "merely saw that underneath the gas chamber, there was a hollow which already contained bodies" and "the pit and the hollow and the small train that carried the dead bodies." Even if one wanted to stick to the last statement, since the victims could not be gassed by remaining suspended in mid-air, the floor must have been collapsible, or tippable, or must have contained some kind of trap door, and this could well be a mere inference; but all this is irrelevant to this "eyewitness" statement:

> *"From a distance, I saw the pit and the hollow and the small train that carried the dead bodies."*

On November 9, 1965, at the Sobibór Trial held in Hagen (September 6, 1965-December 20, 1966), the witness, who at that time called himself Jakob Biscubicz, stated:[97]

> *"I was able to see the gas chamber from Camp II from above. The roof shone like metal. From the forest I could see the pits. I worked not far from Camp III. I did not look much because I was afraid. From the gas chambers one could hear the sound of the engines. The fire was also clearly visible."*

On this occasion, the witness stated that he had never entered Camp III, so that he committed perjury either at the Eichmann Trial or at the Hagen Trial – or both.

Miriam Novitch published a statement by the witness (under the name Jacob Biskubicz) which is undated, but was recorded undoubtedly prior to 1961. In it, he asserted that he had been deported to Sobibór in May 1943 with a transport of 3,000 Jews, of whom 80 were selected and "the others were sent into a forest to an unknown destination." Then he stated:[98]

> *"I couldn't believe in the reality of camp No. 3. One day, I was pushing a wheelbarrow loaded with chlorine and, eager to know what was happening in the camp, I went beyond the limit. I was nearly killed."*

It is clear that the witness did not know anything about the alleged extermination at that time; here he entered Camp 3 with a "wheelbarrow" rather than a

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97 11 Ks 1/64 Staatsanwaltschaft Hagen. Strafsache gegen Kurt Bolender und Andere (Sobibór Trial), p. 147.

98 "From Hrubieszow to Sobibor. Testimony of Jacob Biskubicz," in: Novitch, pp. 120f.

cart, but he saw nothing. Later, he invented the fable reported above, developing the theme merely outlined in this early statement.

Even statements exist by witnesses who were convinced that the gassings were carried out using Zyklon B. LEON (JEHUDA) LERNER, who had been deported to Sobibór in the summer of 1943, stated the following in a deposition made in Haifa on December 16, 1959:[99]

> *"SS man Getzinger was the head of the gas chambers, and he threw in the cyclone gas to kill the people. After half an hour, there was no trace left of all Jewish-Russian prisoners of war, as well as of the other Jews from the Minsk ghetto; they were all gassed.* […]
> *One day they placed a hand grenade between the cyclone gas shafts, and as soon as Getzinger went to get new gas for the gas chambers, the grenade exploded and Getzinger was torn to pieces."*

The former deportee STANISŁAW SZMAJZNER stated the following as late as in 1966:[100]

> *"Bauer threw cyclone into the 'bath', which killed the people. Only at the beginning, the people are said to have been killed by exhaust fumes."*

[99] Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Sobibor 85 PM V NO 17, p. 6.
[100] Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Sobibor 66, p. 909.

3. Treblinka

3.1. Treblinka prior to Treblinka

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, the alleged gas chambers of Treblinka started operating on July 23, 1942, the day on which the first transport of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto is said to have been exterminated in them (Arad 1987, pp. 37-43, 81). However, Jewish black propaganda had already qualified that camp as a "death camp" almost two months earlier. The *Oneg Szabat* bulletin of May 29, 1942 described the events in Otwock, a town in the Warsaw District, as follows (Bańkowska/Epsztein, p. 228):

> *"More than 500 Jews were captured in the streets and houses and sent to Treblinka, to the death camp* [*do obozu śmierci*] *(in Treblinka there are 2 camps, a labor camp and a death camp* [*obóz pracy i obóz śmierci*]*). At the death camp, the murderers do not kill by shooting; no bullets are wasted for them* [the Jews]*; the execution is done with clubs* – [by] *torture to death. Part of the group of 500 captured Jews were* [sent] *to the labor camp for various jobs."*

The theme was taken up again in the bulletin of June 18, 1942 (*ibid.*, p. 236):

> *"Treblinka (camp) – From an eyewitness comes the following information: 'We dug huge pits. Every day, the Germans brought a group of 300 Jews, who were ordered to strip naked and enter the pit. Then the pit was filled up with the living people. I was in the camp for three weeks (May).'"*

The bulletin of July 2, 1942 contains a chapter entitled "Treblinka," which picks up and further develops the previous propaganda themes (*ibid.*, p. 247):

> *"In the first half of May, there was a mass execution of Jews. The number of victims reached 300 per day. Poles who had been rounded up were used to bury the victims. The Germans shot many of the Polish grave-diggers."*

On July 11, 1942, the *Dziennik Polski* (*Polish Newspaper*) published a "Report of Minister Mikołajczyk, delivered at the British Ministry of Information" on its page 3 which contained the following chapter titled "*Rzeź Żydów*" ("Slaughter of the Jews"):[101]

> *"The situation of the Jews appears to be even worse. The matter of the Warsaw Ghetto is well known. Hunger, death and disease continuously and systematically threatened the population. In the Lublin area, on the night of March 23-24* [1942]*, the Jewish population was deported. Sick and disabled people were killed on the spot. All the 2-3-year-old children of the orphanage, 108 in num-*

[101] "Sprawozdanie…" At that time, Stanisław Mikołajczyk was the Minister of the Interior of the Polish Government-in-Exile in London.

> *ber, were sent out of the city together with their nannies and killed. A total of 2,500 people were killed that night, while the remaining 26,000 were sent to the camps in Bełżec and Tremblinka* [*wywieziono do obozów w Bełżcu i Tremblince*]. *From Izbica Kujawska, 8,000 people were deported in an unknown direction. Reportedly, in Bełżec and Tremblinka the killing is carried out by means of toxic gases* [*za pomoca gazów trujacych*]*..."*

But the first Jewish transport only arrived at Treblinka 12 days *after* the date of the report. The Polish historian Dariusz Stola describes the background of the report as follows (Stola, p. 163):

> *"At the National Council's extraordinary meeting on July 7 Mikołajczyk presented an extensive report which officially confirmed the facts already known and included new ones. The Council voted to add to its Appeal of June 10 a passage on 'the planned extermination of almost the entire Jewish population.' Mikołajczyk specified executions of Jews in Lublin, Izbica Kujawska, Rawa Ruska, Biłgoraj, Wąwolnica, Mielec, Lwów, Wilno, Tarnopol, Radom, Stryj, and Przemyśl that demonstrated the scale and the organized character of the anti-Jewish action. He also mentioned that 'apparently, in Bełżec and Trawniki,* [the Germans] *murder* [Jews] *with poison gas.'"*

However, this does not explain anything and only complicates the matter, as David Engel noted (Engel, Note 123, p. 298):

> *"Mikołajczyk also spoke of executions of Jews by gas taking place at another location as well; according to the account in* Dziennik Polski, *this was Treblinka, whereas according to the* Polish Fortnightly Review, *15 July 1942, it was Trawniki. Both readings are problematic. Most of the available evidence indicates that the Treblinka gas chambers began their operation with the arrival of the first deportees from Warsaw two weeks after Mikołajczyk's speech. Trawniki, on the other hand, was a labor camp, at which no installations for gas killing were erected. It is thus not clear to what Mikołajczyk was referring, or where he got his information."*

A 1942 propaganda pamphlet of the Polish government-in-exile in London, under the title "Statement of the Polish Vice-Premier," quotes Mikołajczyk's speech he gave on July 9, 1942 at a press conference in the British Ministry of Information. Here is the passage under discussion (*Stop them Now*, p. 6):

> *"Altogether, in that night 2,500 people were massacrated,*[sic] *and the remaining 26,000 Jews of Lublin removed to the concentration camps at Bełżec and Trawniki.*
>
> *'Eight thousand people were deported from Izbica Kujawska to an unknown destination. In Bełżec and Trawniki murders are also carried out by means of poison gas'."*

The identical text appeared in the report published by the *Polish Fortnightly Review* on July 15, 1942 ("A Press Conference…").

Now, where did this happen, in Treblinka or in Trawniki?

The editors of *Dziennik Polski* informed in a note that the text they published was the one that Minister Mikołajczyk had delivered to the National Council of the Polish Republic (*Radzie Narodowej R.P.*). Since the Polish text clearly states "Tremblinka," the problem only arises with its English translation. The pertinent Polish phrase reads "*w Bełżcu i Tremblince*," where the two nouns are in the locative case; "Trawniki," which falls into the category of pluralia tantum, turns to "Trawnikach" in the locative case. One cannot believe that the editors of *Dziennik Polski* had confused a supposed locative "*w Bełżcu i Trawnikach*" in Mikołajczyk's original text with "*w Bełżcu i Tremblince*." This is already excluded by the fact that, in the chapter "22 Concentration Camps" ("*22 obozy koncentracyjne*") – which was not printed by the *Polish Fortnightly Review* – the Polish text mentions "Tremblinka" and Bełżec, without any mention of Trawniki.

3.2. Phantom "Death Camps"

On the other hand, Trawniki had its own propaganda connotation which made it even more "problematic" than Treblinka. On April 14, 1942 the *Biuyletyn Informacyjny* (*Information Bulletin*) published an article titled "The Killing of Jews in the Lublin Area", in which the following was reported:

> *"*[The Jews] *who remained alive, about 25,000 in number, were transported to the camps of Bełżec and Trawniki* [*w obozów Bełżcu i Trawnikach*]. *In these camps, according to the most-reliable reports* [*wedle najwiarygodnicjszych relacji*], *the mass killing of Jews by means of toxic gases took place* [*przy pomocy gazów trujących*]*."* (*Biuletyn Informacyjny*, p. 902)

On April 30, the same newspaper reported again about sealed railway cars arriving "at the Bełżec or Trawniki Camp" (*ibid*., p. 916). This news even appeared in the bulletin of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of July 10, 1942 ("Nazis Slaughter…," p. 1):

> *"The suffocating of the 26,000 Polish Jews by poison gas took place in the two 'Jewish' concentration camps which the Nazis have established at Belzec and Trawniki."*

The editors of the *Polish Fortnightly Review* were undoubtedly inspired by it. In fact, Trawniki had been depicted by Polish-Jewish black propaganda as an extermination camp as early as June 1942:[102]

> *"Trawniki.*
> *On the Lublin-Chełm railway line, there is the small station of Trawniki and a hamlet of the same name. At the time of the outbreak of the German-Soviet war,*

[102] AŻIH, ARG [*Archiwum Getta*] 33.Ring.I/261 Mf. ŻIH-836, Bulletin of the *Oneg Szabat* containing information on the subject of the situation of Jews in various localities in the territory of the Polish Republic in the period April-June 1942 (June 24, 25, 30, 1942). Cf. Bańkowska/Epsztein, pp. 244f.

> *a camp for Soviet citizens and prisoners was established in Trawniki. This camp was soon 'liquidated' by killing most of the inmates, and during this operation, the local Jewish population* [was killed] *as well, numbering several hundred souls. For some time now, larger gas chambers* [*większe komore gazowe*] *and a primitive crematorium had been installed on the grounds. Since the installation of these gas chambers and the crematorium, trains of resettled Jews (mainly from Slovakia and the Czech Republic) arrived at Trawniki almost every day, about 1,500 per day. Upon arrival of the resettlers, they are stripped of everything they own, stripped naked, and then pushed into the aforementioned chamber. After the chamber is filled with victims, it is hermetically sealed, and a toxic gas is injected into the chamber using appropriate devices. After 15-30 minutes have passed, all those inside do not live* [anymore]. *Then, after adequate cleaning of the chamber from the remains of the gas, the asphyxiated Jews are burned in the crematorium. The clothes, underwear and shoes left behind by the Jewish victims are occasionally loaded onto railway cars and taken to the SS clothing factories, among others in Lublin (on the grounds of the old airplane factory) where these clothes are sorted and processed. The personnel employed in the Trawniki gas chamber and crematorium were exclusively SS men."*

The specification "on the Lublin-Chełm railway line" leaves no doubt that this was indeed Trawniki. Thus, the Jewish Resistance invented an "extermination camp" with gas chambers and a crematorium in Trawniki. This claim is even more-seriously flawed than the claimed transfer of victims to Treblinka a few weeks before the camp was actually opened, because it unequivocally shows that the Polish-Jewish propagandists who spread the first information about the "extermination camps" were deliberate liars.

A report by Israel Lichtenstein titled "Ten days of the 'trans-settlement action' of Warsaw Jewry," probably written in August 1942, speaks of the departure of railway cars with 120-200 people (Kermish, p. 698):

> *"In what direction? Nobody knows. Brest, Bobrójsk, Smoleńsk? – these are precisely the names. But anyone who knows the history of* Chełmno, Trawniki, *is aware of the way in which these unfortunates must perish: Machine guns, gas, electricity – these must be the redeemers of their suffering. And then mass graves for one thousand or one thousand five hundred bodies."* (Emphasis in original)

Here, too, Treblinka was ignored, and Trawniki was considered an extermination camp. On December 6, 1943, the *Daily News Bulletin* of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency wrote the following ("Germans have…," p. 4):

> *"The 'Jewish camps' are located at Belezec, Starogard, Potulice, Sobibor, Kosow-Podlaski, Treblinka, Trawniki, Poniechowek and also between Chelo* [Chełm] *and Wlodawa. Of these, Treblinka, Trawniki and Poniechowek are 'death camps' to which the Jews are sent to be executed. It is known that Treblinka has extensive execution facilities, such as gas and steam chambers."*

From this it is clear that this was not a confusion with the Bełżec and Sobibór Camps. In addition to Trawniki, it contains a reference to a phantom "death camp" at Poniechówek, a location a few kilometers from Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki and about 35 km northwest of Warsaw.

This news was reprised by the same bulletin on November 24, 1946 ("Jewish Mass Graves…"):

> *"Warsaw, 22 November (JTA). Police authorities today launched a campaign to put an end to looting of mass graves of Jews in the areas of Treblinka, Majdanek, Sobibor and Trawniki where Nazi extermination camps formerly existed."*

The "Memorandum on the Situation in the Country for the Period July 16 – August 25, 1942" (Bulletin No. 12) mentions another fictitious "extermination camp", Kosów Podlaski (Gmitruk *et al.*, pp. 217f.):

> *"Death Camps. The fate of the Jews deported from Warsaw is not exactly known. But the following facts are beyond doubt: a part of the deportees died in the railway cars of exhaustion, starvation, overcrowding and stench; the physically fitter ones were sent directly to work, it seems in the eastern territories in the rear of the front; the majority were sent to special Jewish camps that earned the name of death camps. These are the camps of Bełżec, Treblinka II, Sobibór in the Włodawa District and Kosów Podlaski. In these camps, Jews were killed in gas chambers built for this purpose."*

Other products of Polish-Jewish black propaganda were collected by Karl Yngve Vendel, an officer of the Swedish Consular Corps. On August 9, 1942, he visited some friends at their estate in East Prussia and stayed there until the 14th. Then he went to the Swedish Embassy in Berlin, where he wrote a report on the 20th on what he claimed to have seen and heard during his trip. Among other things, he reported the following:[103]

> *"The picture of the treatment of the Jews in Poland that I received from an informant* [*sagesman*] *is such that it can hardly be written down. Therefore, I want to limit myself to a few brief remarks. The treatment is different in different places, depending on the number of Jews living there. In some cities, there are Jewish quarters, in others, the ghettos are surrounded by a high wall, which the Jews can cross only at the risk of being shot, and finally in others, the Jews enjoy a certain freedom of movement. However, the intention is to exterminate them gradually. In Lublin, the number of Jews killed is estimated at 40,000. The extermination mainly affected Jews over 50, and children under 10 years of age. The others may remain alive to make up for shortages of manpower, and then, when they are no longer needed, they will be liquidated. Their possessions are confiscated, and mostly end up in the hands of the SS.*
>
> *In one town* [*stad*]*, all the Jews were rounded up for what was officially announced as 'delousing.' At the entrance, they had to leave their clothes, which*

[103] RAS, HP 324-84, p. 4. Long excerpts of the letter were translated into Polish by Lewandowski 1992.

> *were immediately sent to the 'textile collection'; the delousing procedure consisted instead of gassing* [*förgasning*]*, and then they could be put in a specially prepared mass grave. The source of all the information about the situation in the General Governorate that I have received is such that there can be no doubt as to the truthfulness of the informant's descriptions."*

Hence, "in a town" equipped with disinfestation facilities that "in reality" were homicidal gas chambers, the Jews were gassed and buried.

According to black-propaganda sources, an extermination camp equipped with homicidal gas chambers was also located in Lemberg [Lwów]. On May 18, 1943, the British received a "Memorandum" from Stockholm containing the statements of "two Belgian prisoners of war, L.H. and R.C., who escaped from Germany on 28th April and arrived in Sweden on 5th May [1943]," and who had been "in the penal camp at Rawa Ruska." They stated that "the Germans themselves boasted that at Lemberg they had specially constructed gas chambers where the Jews were systematically killed and buried. The total number was said to exceed 80,000."[104]

Another imaginary extermination camp was located "in the vicinity of Pinsk, for the eastern areas" (see the next subchapter). Finally, a Polish monthly published the following news in November 1943:[105]

> *"In the area of the former Warsaw Ghetto, the Germans built gas chambers* [*komory gazowe*]*, which went into operation for the first time on October 17 of this year. Since then, they have been killing ten* [sic] *people a day there."*

All this shows that the creativity of the Jewish-Polish black propagandists knew no bounds.

3.3. Treblinka in the Jewish-Polish Underground Press: Reports of Anonymous Eyewitnesses

As early as August 1942, the Polish-Jewish underground press began to spread far-fetched or patently false stories about Treblinka, purportedly based on eyewitness accounts. In this mishmash of information and disinformation, the most-varied killing methods appeared, including generic "gas chambers," but without special emphasis and often in correlation with other fanciful elements.

One of the first stories mentioning mobile gas chambers was published on August 17, 1942 in the *Informacja bieżąca* (*Current Information*), an internal bulletin prepared by the *Delegatura's* Information and Propaganda Office (Marczewska/Ważniewski, pp. 136f.):

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104 Memorandum. To: Political Intelligence Department. From: Press Reading Bureau, Stockholm. 18th May, 1943. TNA, FO 371-34430, C 5895, May 26, 1943.

105 *Wieś i Miasto*, Vol. IV, No. 7, November 1943, p. 7.

> *"After the departure of the locomotives, the Jews are forced to undress, supposedly for the bath; then they are led into the gas chamber and executed, whereupon they – sometimes still living – are buried in excavated pits. The pits are excavated by machine; the gas chamber is mobile and moves back and forth over the pits* [*kamera jest ruchoma i przesuwająca się nad dołami*].
> *The camp strength amounted to 40,000* [!] *Jews on August 5* [1942]*; about 5,000 are executed daily. The liquidation is carried out by Ukrainians under the leadership of SS men. The operation on the Warsaw Ghetto is supposed to be completed by September of this year."*

This tale reached the ears of Wehrmacht Captain Wilm Hosenfeld, who wrote in his diary on September 6, 1942 what one of his subordinates had told him about the atrocities presumably committed by a *Sonderkommando* in Siedlce. The Jews were dragged through the streets, some of them killed straight away, others taken to the railway station (Roth, p. 229):

> *"Then they were taken away, 200 people in a cattle car that usually holds 42. Where to, nobody knows. What do they do with them? Nobody knows either! But it cannot remain hidden. Several of them always manage to escape, and through them the insane acts become public. The place is called Triplinka* [sic] *in the east of the Generalgouvernement. There the cars are unloaded. Many are already dead. The whole area is closed off with walls. The cars drive in and are unloaded. The dead are piled up next to the tracks, the arriving healthy men have to carry away the piles of corpses, have to dig new pits and cover up the filled ones, then they are shot. Other transports arrive and carry away the previous ones. The women and children, numbering in the thousands, are forced to undress and are herded into a mobile barracks where they are gassed. The barracks moves to a pit* [sic], *and the corpses are dumped into the pit by means of a device by which a side wall opens and the floor rises. This has been going on for weeks now."*

The "Memorandum on the Situation in the Country for the Period July 16 – August 25, 1942" (*Bulletin* No. 12) reported the following (Gmitruk *et al*., p. 218):

> *"Recently, the news came from Treblinka that on average the Germans are killing 5,000 Jews a day there. For the mechanical excavation of the pits in which the murdered Jews are buried, two dredgers* [*bagrownice*] *have been brought in which are working continuously. However, since the corpses are buried at a shallow depth and their number is enormous, one can smell the terrible stench of the rotting corpses five kilometers around Treblinka."*

In the following bulletin, No. 13, titled "Report on the Situation in the Country for the Period August 26 – October 10, 1942," this news was picked up and rehashed as follows (Gmitruk *et al*., pp. 250f.):

> *"In Treblinka, Bełżec and other camps* [sic]. *The Jews deported from the Warsaw Ghetto and from the ghettos near Warsaw were directed to the territory covered by the report, still primarily to the Treblinka and Bełżec Camps, where*

> *they underwent atrocious mass extermination in gas chambers. According to information from people who arrived from Treblinka, 300-500 people per day perish from gases* [*od gazów*] *in this death camp. The Jews are transported to Treblinka Camp not only from Warsaw and its surroundings, but also from other territories. On the arrival of each train with the jam-packed cars sprinkled with chlorine and lime,*[106] *20-30% of the deported Jews are usually found dead. It is rumored that, in addition to Treblinka and Bełżec, the Germans have established yet other killing camps for Jews in the General Government. Part of the deported Jews, the healthiest and strongest people, were sent to special camps in the East in order to be deployed there in particularly strenuous and often dangerous work."*

Therefore, according to this report, Jews of Warsaw were also deported to Bełżec!

The report published by the *Informacja bieżąca* on September 8, 1942 mentioned the use of an undefined gas with a delayed effect as a method of killing (Marczewska/Ważniewski, pp. 137f.):

> *"The extermination of the Jews takes place entirely independently from the events in the camp. The locomotive pushes the cars with the Jews under the ramp, all in sequence. The Ukrainians pull the Jews out of the cars and lead them to the 'bath' in the bathhouse. This is a building surrounded by barbed wire. They enter in groups of 300 to 500 persons. Each group is immediately locked up hermetically and gassed. Of course, this gas is not immediately effective, for the Jews have to walk to the pits afterwards, which are about ten to twenty meters away and 30 m deep. There they lose consciousness and fall into the pits, and the excavator sprinkles a thin layer of earth upon them. Then the next group follows."*

The same text was republished in Issue No. 34/59 on September 15.[107]

On September 20, 1942, an article titled "The Jews of Warsaw Are Killed in Treblinka" appeared in the *Bund*'s periodical *Oif der Vach* (*On Guard*) that reported the following tale (Arad 1987, pp. 244-246):

> *"During the first week of the 'deportation Aktion' Warsaw was flooded with greetings from the deported Jews. The greetings arrived from Bialystok, Brest-Litivsk, Kosov, Malkinia, Pinsk, Smolensk. All this was a lie. All the trains with the Warsaw Jews went to Treblinka, where the Jews were murdered in the most cruel way. The letters and greetings came from people who succeeded in escaping from the trains or from the camp. It is possible that in the beginning, from the first transports, some of the Warsaw Jews were sent to Brest-Litivsk or Pinsk, in order that their greetings would mislead, deceive, and provoke false illusions among the Jews in Warsaw.*

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106 This fable, along with the one about Bełżec having been the destination of Jews deported from Warsaw, inspired Jan Karski to spin his yarn; see Subchapter 1.3.

107 AAN, 202-III-7, p. 148.

> *Actually, what was the fate of the deported Jews? We know it from the stories of the Poles and those Jews who succeeded in escaping from the trains or from Treblinka.* […]
> *The women and children from the arriving transport were divided into groups of 200 each and were taken to the 'baths'. They had to take their clothes, which remained on the spot, and were taken naked to a small barrack called the 'bath', which was located close the digging machine. From the bath nobody returned, and new groups were entering there constantly. The bath was actually a house of murder. The floor in this barrack opened up and the people fell into a machine. According to the opinion of those who escaped, the people in the barrack were gassed. According to another opinion, they were killed by electrical current. From the small tower over the bath, there were constant shots. There was talk that the shots were aimed at the people inside the barrack and those who survived the gas. The bath absorbs 200 people every fifteen minutes, so in twenty-four hours the killing capacity is 20,000 people. That was the explanation for the incessant arrival of people in the camp, from where there was no return, except a few hundred who succeeded in escaping during the whole time… During the daytime women and children were liquidated and during the nights, the men…*
> *The escape from the camp was difficult and dangerous, but there were people who tried to do it, in spite of the fact that the camp was strongly illuminated during the night.* […]
> *There were three such camps: one in the vicinity of Pinsk, for the eastern areas, another in the area of Lublin at Belzec, and the third, the largest, was Treblinka near Malkinia."*

On October 5, 1942, *Informacja bieżąca* circulated the following report (Marczewska/Ważniewski, pp. 138f.):

> *"Treblinka. The death camp is once more in operation. Transports arrive from the entire country (most recently Radom, Siedlce, Międzyrzec). At present 10 trains, rather than 20, are allowed to approach at a time, for it takes a long time until the bodies of those who died on the way (20-30%) have been unloaded. The gas chamber* [*komora gazowa*] *functions as follows: Outside of the barracks is a 20 HP internal-combustion engine, which is in operation around the clock. The end of its exhaust pipe is mounted in a wall of the barracks; the exhaust gases, with the admixture of toxic fluids* [*z domieszką płynów trujących*] *which have been specially mixed into the fuel of the engine, kill the people locked up in the barracks. Besides the Jewish workers, there is a Jewish orchestra as well as a group of Jewish women in the camp area with whom the staff enjoys itself. Up to the end of August, 320,000 Jews were exterminated in Treblinka."*

This account was later repeated in a series of reports on Treblinka sent to the Polish government-in-exile in London on March 31, 1943 (*ibid.*, p. 153):

> *"After arrival in the camp, the Jews receive the order to completely undress, under the pretext that they are being led to a bath. They are brought into a*

> *sealed chamber, a barracks, approximately 100 people at a time. Outside the barracks stands an internal-combustion engine of 20 HP, which runs around the clock. The engine's exhaust pipe leads through the barrack's wall, and the people locked up in the barracks are killed by exhaust gases channeled through it that contain toxic fluid additives, which have been especially mixed with the engine fuel."*

At this point, there was still only one "gas chamber," located in a barracks, which killed with the exhaust fumes of an internal-combustion engine, to whose fuel were added mysterious "toxic fluids." Different stories also circulated at the time, however. As Samuel D. Kassow wrote (Kassow, p. 192):

> *"*[O]*n October 9 Opoczynski reported rumors of a 'giant electric chair' in Treblinka, designed to kill ten thousand Jews and Poles a day. 'The Germans like to brag about their industrial prowess, and so they also want to run their killing industry with American efficiency.'"*

On October 8, 1942 the *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (No. 39; p. 1104) reported:

> *"In the course of two months of the horrible operation, about 90% of the ghetto's 370,000 inhabitants were taken away. It is probable that some of the deportees – the healthiest and most-robust – were employed somewhere in camps on the territory of Soviet Russia, but the vast majority were killed – mainly in the Treblinka Concentration Camp near Małkinia in special gas chambers."*

A brief report on Treblinka that appeared in the *Informacja bieżąca* of October 23, 1942 mentioned the construction of new barracks at the camp and the alleged killing of hundreds of Jews at the Treblinka railway station by Ukrainians. It also contains this sentence (Marczewska/Ważniewski, p. 139):

> *"The death chamber was expanded from a capacity of 350 people to 750."*

The "Memorandum on the Situation in the Country for the Period October 11 – November 15, 1942" (*Bulletin* No. 14) reproduces in the first person the eyewitness account on Treblinka of "a Jew who was sent there and managed to escape." In the account, the designations Treblinka I and Treblinka II refer to Camp 1 and Camp 2. I translate the essential part of the report (Gmitruk *et al*., pp. 272f.):

> *"After 15 minutes of travel, we arrived at Treblinka I Camp. We quickly left the railway cars. We were taken to a huge square surrounded by a very high barbed-wire fence. This square is located inside the camp, which in its entirety is also surrounded by a wire net interwoven with fir branches. After we were led through the square, the men were separated* [and placed] *on the right, the women and children on the left. The women were ordered to enter the barracks on the left, and to hand over their shoes before entering and to tie them in pairs. Inside the barracks, the women had to strip naked, and together with the naked children, they were pushed through a side exit onto the road leading to the huge barracks of Treblinka II Camp. This road is surrounded on both sides by a high wire fence. In these barracks, one is supposed to bathe; in reality, there looms death by gas asphyxiation* [*śmierć od uduszenia gazem*]*. I do not*

> *know what gas is used, but I know from a colleague who worked at Treblinka II Camp for 3 weeks that the corpses have a bluish color* [*zabarwienie sinoniebieskie*]. *I don't know how the barracks are emptied after the gassing, but I know that a special machine that can be heard all day is digging pits. After the women are brought into the death barracks* [*do baraków śmierci*], *the men are ordered to strip naked on the spot. I managed to join the group of Jews who were working, employed to take away the belongings left by the people pushed into the death barracks; this is done by a group of Jewish workers selected from the daily* [arriving] *new transports. I don't know the number of people killed in Treblinka, but the piles of clothes and shoes are enormous, reaching a height of 2 floors, occupying an immense space."*

The "death barracks" – instead of a single gassing facility – and even-more-so the "bluish color" of the corpses are precise indications of the made-up character of this tale. According to the current orthodox Holocaust narrative, the alleged gas chambers of the Reinhardt Camps were operated with the exhaust gases of gasoline engines, in which the toxic agent was carbon monoxide. The discoloration of victims who died from this gas is notoriously cherry red, not bluish, and after Thomas Kues's masterful treatment of this topic, there can be no doubt about this (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 856-868).

This account was later reworked and sent to London as "Treblinka (report of an officer who had participated in the 1939 campaign; his wife perished at Treblinka; he remained at the camp five days)." The last page of the original typescript features a sketch of the camp (Document 1) in which two rectangles marked with the number 13 are labeled as "*Baraki śmierci/komory gazowe*" ("Death Barracks/Gas Chambers"; Marczewska/Ważniewski, pp. 146-149). This confirms the false character of the tale.

On December 4, 1942, Abraham Stupp, a representative of the Jewish Agency in Tel Aviv, sent a telegram to Aryeh Tartakower and Rabbi Yosef Miller of the World Jewish Congress in New York, which states, among other things (restoring punctuation and implied words):[108]

> *"Warsaw deportations* [unfold] *since 22 June* [sic]. *7000* [deportees] *daily, once 20000. stop by October, 36000 remained. stop deported carried* [to] *Treblinka, there everey* [sic] *day trainloads* [of] *Jews arrive, they are stripped naked, clothes given tailors* [to] *be cut through* [in] *search* [of] *jewellery* […] *heaps* [of] *clothes lie about; then Jews taken* [to] *socalled bathhouse, hermetically closed chamber, air* [is] *pumped away, people suffocate. other reports say Jews killed* [with] *poison gas."*

An anonymous witness, who was deported from Częstochowa to Treblinka on September 21, 1942, was assigned to sorting clothes, yet he escaped on the sixth day and wrote a report (no date is given), in which he merely stated that the victims were sent "*do kaźni*" (which can mean both "to torture" and "to execution"), that "throughout the day, every 15-30 minutes, new transports went

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[108] TNA, FO 371-30924.

do kaźni", and finally that "muffled screams came for about 3-4 minutes from the torture [site], especially when there were women." The original text includes four maps of Treblinka. The most-detailed one also has a legend that mentions as No. 28 the "Women's road *do kaźni*," and as No. 30 the "Men's road from the undressing place to the road *do kaźni*."[109] 41 sites are numbered on the map and the legend, but no number or legend entry for "*do kaźni*" appears anywhere, which confirms the false character of the account.

Among the reports on Treblinka sent to London on March 31, 1943 mentioned earlier, one states that the Jewish extermination took place in "gas chambers", without indicating with what gas they operated, but it specifies that there were one hundred "gas chambers" in Treblinka (Marczewska/Ważniewski, p. 151):

> *"In this gigantic wooden house, where there were approximately 10,000 people in standing positions, an SS officer greeted them very politely and said the following, word-for-word: 'You have worked too little up to now for the German State, and because of this, the German Reich has decided to resettle you in the Ukraine, so that you work more. You are in a transit camp here. You will proceed directly to the bath.'* […]
> *They finally reach their destination – apparently baths, but in reality gas chambers. They walk, a few of them at a time, into one chamber, and there are probably a hundred of these chambers* [*a tych komór jest pewnie ze sto*]. […]
> *The bodies are piled up in even layers, a hundred at a time, and chlorine is sprinkled on them."*

Among the reports delivered to London on March 31, 1943 was one titled "*Charakterystyka metód Treblinki*" (Characteristics of the Treblinka Methods), in which three further murder methods were listed: shootings, trains with car floors covered with quicklime, and water vapor (*ibid.*, pp. 153f.):

> *"At the beginning of the so-called resettlement operation, when the technical preparations of the machinery of death were still not perfected, the Germans killed their victims in Treblinka in an extremely simple manner: a machine gun opened fire upon a crowd of men, women, and children who were brought forward, and they were shot down, each and every one of them. A crew of gravediggers threw all – the bodies of those killed, the critically wounded, as well as those lightly wounded – into the pits prepared up to that time and strew them over with earth.*
> *In August as well as the following months, as the acceleration of the campaign exceeded the possibilities of the steam chambers, the transports were loaded into cars, which were sprinkled with a layer of lime and chlorine, so that after the arrival in Treblinka, only corpses of a violet-blue color were tossed out of the cars. All had suffocated in torment in the cars. For these transports (for example from Międzyrzec Podl., Kielce) Treblinka was but the place of burial. From this information it emerges that a punctual and precise execution of the*

[109] AŻIH, ARG, 300.Ring II/297. Mf. ŻIH-800. The handwritten document was transcribed into the article "Relacje dwóch…"

> *determined plan was important to the Germans. The methods described above were practiced when the capacity of the machinery of death in Treblinka was faltering. The teeth of the corpses pulled out of the steam chambers in Treblinka were examined. Gold teeth and bridges were extracted by means of dental instruments."*

The "Memorandum on the Situation in the Country. General Government and the Eastern Territories for the Period of March 25 – April 23, 1943" (Bulletin No. 19, drafted in Warsaw on April 24, 1943) contains a paragraph titled "The Horror of Treblinka," where we read (Gmitruk *et al.*, p. 323):

> *"According to information that could be ascertained only recently, the technical installations in Treblinka for mass killings are so perfected that at the peak of the intensity of Jewish transportation, in the autumn of last year, 15,000 Jews were murdered in Treblinka every day. The killing of 800 people in the barracks* [*w baraku*]*, which imitates a bathhouse, but in reality is a gas chamber* [*komorę gazową*]*, lasts barely 10 minutes. At a certain stage of the existence of the Treblinka Death Camp, i.e. in the summer and autumn of last year, the corpses of the Jews killed with gas were buried in the ground or* [covered] *with a layer of lime cement.*[110] *During the winter and recently, the corpses are not buried in the ground, but* [are treated] *with powdered lime with the addition of corrosive acids so strong that the body together with the bones becomes shapeless and gets reduced to dust. Evidently for the purpose of eliminating any evidence of the mass murders, the excavation of the graves filled with earth has begun, and the corpses are destroyed with that corrosive powder. From the abyss of these tomb-pits, an unbearable smell and stench is released that can be smelled in a radius of more than 10 kilometers."*

There is no need to comment on such fantasies, which moreover completely ignored the claimed outdoor cremation of corpses. These fantasies reappeared in the "Memorandum on the Situation in the Country. General Government and the Eastern Territories for the Period of April 24 – May 21, 1943" (Bulletin No. 20, drafted in Warsaw on May 22, 1943; *ibid.*, p. 359):

> *"Also from Treblinka came the news that the Germans have begun to reopen the huge local graves of the Jews exterminated en masse there; the exhumed corpses are sprinkled with a certain corrosive mixture that completely reduces the bodies together with the bones to ashes. In this way, the corpses of the Jews murdered in Treblinka are currently annihilated continuously."*

The next testimony of a Jew deported to Treblinka dates back to August 1943 and was published the following year. About the alleged extermination, he stated (Stone, p. 20):

> *"Behind the fence was what was called the 'camp of corpses' and there we were not permitted to approach. Two young men managed to get over from*

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110 This fantasy was also attributed to Bełżec. Robert Kuwałek writes: "At first, the corpses were sprinkled with chlorine. Then, an attempt was made to cover them with wet cement, but the pits' cement cover cracked because of the gases." (Kuwałek, p. 160)

> *there to our side. From what they told us I can relate the following: There were about 500 Jews working there and eight barracks built for 7,000 men. The naked persons who were brought there were herded into the barracks and told they were going to be bathed. When a group of victims had been assembled in the building, it was flooded with gas. Those outside comprehended… and refused to enter. The S.S. men, the Ukrainians and the dogs got to work… This was the source of the screaming we had heard on every occasion. When everybody was inside, the doors were closed for 15 minutes… The 500 Jews were occupied in removing the bodies to a fire trench… those men lived under horrible conditions, and every day 10 or 12 killed themselves (to be replaced from the healthier-looking of the new arrivals)."*

From this it follows that there were eight gassing barracks, in which 7,000 people could be killed at a time, but then the witness speaks inexplicably of one building that was "flooded" with gas: by which gas and in which way is unknown.

In November 1943, Marek Ptakowski mentioned the "electric furnace engines" ("*motory elektrycznych pieców*") of Treblinka, which, in one half year, had produced three million victims! These had been killed in various ways:[111]

> *"Some transports went directly in front of machine-gun fire. Others were burned in electric furnaces, but the majority were asphyxiated in gas chambers."*

Among the claimed gassing systems was also this one:

> *"Then, when the intensity of the movement* [of transports] *increased considerably, the transports entered directly into a huge hall, from where they returned full of corpses."*

The "Memorandum on the Situation in the Country. General Government and the Eastern Territories for the Period of July 26 – August 26, 1943," sent to London on September 8, 1943, contains a paragraph on the August 2, 1943 uprising (Gmitruk *et al*., pp. 437):

> *"Bloody uprising in Treblinka. In the Jewish Treblinka* [sic], *there were recently several hundred Jews, craftsmen employed by the Germans in various activities, or laborers used in camp work. Recently, they were employed in the reopening of large mass graves with Jews executed in Treblinka, and in the cremation of the exhumed bodies. Some of these Jews still alive in Treblinka created an underground fighting organization. One day, at the beginning of August, the right moment was chosen for the uprising: a part of the German-Ukrainian staff went to the bath. The Jews threw themselves on the rest of the staff, disarmed them, killed about 50 Germans and Ukrainians, then set fire to the barracks. All the Jews in the camp fled to the wooded area around Treblinka. The Germans carried out large roundups in these woods. Some of the Jews were captured and killed, some escaped."*

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[111] See Ptakowski; GFHA, Catalog No. 3177, Collection 11254, pp. 188, 193.

According Yitzhak Arad, it may be assumed that "about 100 fugitives managed to get clear of the Treblinka region and scatter throughout occupied Poland, or even beyond its borders" (Arad 1987, p. 298).

This means that already in August 1943 about 100 former inmates, many of them "eyewitnesses," should have been able to provide detailed, consistent and more or less identical descriptions on the alleged gas chambers of Treblinka and their operation, but in fact even after that mass escape, the same more-or-less-senseless stories continued to circulate, starting with the extermination by water vapor, on which I will focus in the next subchapter.

3.4. Water-Vapor Extermination Chambers

All the claimed killing system – engine-exhaust gas with toxic liquids mixed in, stationary and mobile gas chambers, delayed- and immediate-effect gas, shootings, trains with the cars' floors covered with quicklime, electricity, an electric chair – were mentioned sporadically and very briefly in the "information" spread about Treblinka. The killing method *par excellence*, however, which was described most often and in great detail, was that of water vapor.

The story about the water vapor was reported by the witness Jakub Rabinowicz already in the second half of September 1942 (see next subchapter), but it became official (propaganda) "truth" only two months later.

On November 15, 1942, the resistance movement of the Warsaw Ghetto, operating in the underground, composed a long article entitled "*Likwidacja żydowskiej Warszawy*" (Liquidation of Jewish Warsaw), which contained a detailed description of Treblinka; because of its importance, it deserves to be quoted in full despite its length. The report, which was sent to the Polish government in exile in London on January 6, 1943, was accompanied by an "orientation sketch," of which at least two versions exist (Documents 2 and 3).[112] A complete English translation was published in 1943 in the anthology *The Black Book of Polish Jewry* with the headline "Treblinka. Official Report Submitted to the Polish Government" and reads as follows:[113]

> *"The village of Treblinka is situated near the Warsaw-Bialystok railroad line, a few kilometers from Malkinia, in a sandy and wooded area. The population consists of Polish peasant-farmers and forest workers. In 1940,* [correct: 1941] *the Germans established a penitentiary concentration camp, Treblinka A, on the sandy stretches near the village, for Poles who were guilty of transgressions against the occupant, of not supplying the demanded amounts of agricultural produce, or who were caught smuggling. The discipline at the camp is*

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112 AŻIH, ARG 300.Ring II/192. Mf. ŻIH-836, pp. 24-29. Cf. Bańkowska/Epsztein, pp. 357-364; Marczewska/Ważniewski, pp. 139-145; "Likwidacja…"

113 Apenszlak *et al.*, pp. 141-147; the numbers in parentheses, not included in the Apenszlak's English translation, are from the Polish original and refer to the sketches appended to the report.

very strict; prisoners are shot on any pretext. The camp is as notorious as the penitentiary camp at Oswiecim.

In March, 1942, the Germans began the construction of another camp, Treblinka B, in the vicinity. That camp has become the slaughter-house for the Jews of Poland and of other European countries. Poles from the nearby Treblinka A, as well as Jews caught in the neighboring villages, were put to work at the preparatory construction. That work lasted until the end of April when the central building of the camp, death-house No. 1, was built. (14).

Treblinka B is situated on the sandy hills among woodland.[114] *The area of the camp is comparatively small, some 5,000 hectares (about 12,500 acres).*[115] *It is entirely surrounded by a green fence interwoven with barbed wire entanglements (3). Part of the fence runs through a young forest in the north (25). At the four corners of the camp, observation points were placed for the* Lagerschutz *(Camp Guard). The* Lagerschutz *consists mostly of Ukrainians armed with machine-guns. At the observation points strong searchlights have been placed to light the entire place at night. Observation posts are also set in the middle of the camp and on the hills in the woodlands. The western border of Treblinka B is formed by the rail embankment along which runs a side-track that connects the camp with the main railroad-line (1). The side-line (2) was constructed in recent months, in order that the trains of transports might be delivered directly to the slaughter-house. The northern border of the camp is formed in the forest; east and south the border cuts through sandy hills. In the area of the camp, bushes form a long stretch parallel to the railroad tracks starting in the north (25).*

A railroad-crossing (4) is adjacent to the side-track; trains with transports halt there.

*From that barrier there is an entrance to a square which holds two to three thousand persons. The square is fenced in with barbed-wire. On the square, not far from the northern border, there is a wooden barracks. In the south-western corner of the square there is a guard-house with a military post on 24-hour duty (7). South of the square, outside of the fence, there is a cloth-sorting place (*Lumpensortierungsplatz*) (21), and further south, there is the execution place of the camp-commandant and the graves of the victims murdered by him (22). The arrival square (6) is connected with the rest of the area by an entrance in the north-eastern corner of the fence (8). From there, a path runs through the woods for about 200 meters eastwards (9) and then turns at right angles to the south and runs along the forest, parallel to the western limit of the arrival-square. This road stops at a large building (10) of an unusual shape; it is an unfinished one-story brick-construction, about 40 meters long and 15 meters wide. (When we received the information concerning Treblinka B in the first half of September, this building was about to be finished.) The Germans began the construction of that building after the action*[116] *started, probably in the*

114 The former camp area is known to be flat.

115 The size of Treblinka amounted to 13.45 hectares. See the following chapter.

116 The operation of relocating the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto.

middle of August, with the help of Jewish artisans picked out from among the Jews brought to Treblinka for slaughter. It is significant that the bricks for the construction had been brought from as far as Warsaw, in trucks attached to each transport. The bricks were loaded in the Warsaw Umschlagplatz *by Jewish workers. According to the report of an eyewitness, the interior of the building is as follows; a corridor 3 meters wide runs through the middle; there are five chambers on each side; the height of each chamber is about 2 meters; the area is about 35 square meters. The execution chambers are without windows, but they have doors opening on the corridor and a type of valve*[117] *on the outside walls. Next to these valves there are large scoops (they remind one of large vessels). In the walls pipes were installed from which water-steam is supposed to pour into the chambers. This was to have been death-house No. 2.*

A path (9) skirts the building and runs along its western wall finally ending at the next building (12) near death-house No. 1 (14). This building is at right-angles to the death-house No. 2. It is a brick construction much smaller than the other. It consists of only three chambers and a steam-room. Along the northern wall of this house runs a corridor from which there are doors to the chambers. The outside walls of the chambers have valves (until recently doors which had been changed into valves for utility reasons). Also here a scoop in the shape of a shallow vessel is placed at the height of the valves (15). The steam-room (15a) is adjacent to the building. Inside the steam-room there is a large vat which produces the steam. The hot steam comes in to the chambers through pipes installed there, each having a prescribed number of vents. While this machinery of death is in action, the doors and valves are hermetically closed. The floor in the chambers has a terra-cotta inlay which becomes very slippery when water is poured over it. There is a well next to the steam-room (16), the only well in the whole area of Treblinka B. Not far from the death-house, south of the barbed-wire and wooden fences, there is a grave-diggers' camp. The grave-diggers live in barracks (19) next to which are the kitchen buildings. On both sides of the camp there are two guard-houses (17, 20). The remaining area of Treblinka B is destined for the murdered victims. A part of that area is already a large cemetery (22, 23, 24). At first, Poles employed in the camps dug the graves; later, as the slaughter was intensified and the need for more ditches grew, special digging-machines (bulldozers) were brought, which ran day and night at grave-digging. A Diesel-motor supplies the energy and its rattle is a characteristic sound at Treblinka B.

The supervisors and execution-staff are small in numbers. The slaughter-house is commanded by an S.S. man of the rank of major (his name is Sauer). The German staff, consisting of S.S. men, are in terror of their chief. The moment they see him from the distance they drive the Jewish workers as well as the victims on their way to death with even greater energy. Altogether, there are ten Germans and thirty Ukrainians.

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117 "*Klapa*", flap, trap door.

The German crew changes from time to time; sometimes S.S. men from various towns of the General Government who were active at the deportations there, arrive at the camp.
In addition to the German-Ukrainian Lagerschutz*, there is also the Jewish auxiliary, part of whom are busy at the sorting place for the clothing of the victims (*Lumpensortierungsplatz*), and part of whom act as grave-diggers. They empty the execution chambers and bury the dead; the rest work at the arrival-square. The groups of the Jewish auxiliary service are headed by group-leaders whom the Germans call 'kapos.' They are relatively better fed than the rest and wear a triangular yellow patch at their knees to distinguish them from the others.*
The personnel of the Jewish auxiliary service undergoes almost daily changes. Rarely can a Jew stand that service for more than two weeks, due to the inhuman treatment they receive at the hands of the Germans. They are constantly tortured and whipped; corporal punishment (25 strokes) is very frequent as well as the shooting of the weak ones who lose their fitness to work. This is done mostly by the chief himself. Every day there is a roll-call. The German asks who does not feel strong enough to carry on with the work? A few men step out of the row, report their unfitness and beg him – as though for a favor – to be shot. The executions take place at a special spot; the victim himself stands erect over a grave while the chief shoots at the back of the victim's head. The next victim has to step nearer and throw the body of the murdered one into the ditch, and then a few moments later, share the fate of his predecessor. These young Jews are so overworked that all will to resist is gone; on the other hand, the German terror is so atrocious that it makes them even want to die so as not to suffer further inhuman tortures. In one of the first days of September, the chief of Treblinka thus murdered 500 young Jews by shooting them one after another with his gun; what is startling is that not one of this group of a few hundred men attempted to resist death. The execution lasted from 7:30 to 3 p.m.
The relatively lightest work in the death camp is the sorting of the clothing of victims. While assigned that work, one can eat to one's heart's content, for the 'deported' Jews took along large food-stocks: bread, marmalade, fat, sugar. But the chief does not leave the men at this work for any length of time; after a few days, he transfers them to grave-digging.
The gaps in the Jewish auxiliary service are supplemented from among the transports arriving in Treblinka. As a rule, two transports arrive daily: one in the morning and one toward evening. In the period of greatest of the action a few transports arrive daily. Each train consists of a few score of freight cars. Some of the cars halt at the side-track straight across from the arrival-square, while the remaining cars are shifted to the side to wait until the first part is taken care of. The cars are quickly emptied. The tortured and excited throng breathes with relief when let out on the square. They are immediately taken over by the Jewish auxiliary guard headed by the 'kapos.' These give orders in Yiddish. The women and children are ordered to enter the barracks immediately while the men remain in the square. Looking around, they see a high pillar

with a poster bearing a large inscription: Achtung Warschauer *(Attention, natives of Warsaw) despite the fact that transports of Jews from many other towns of the General Government, from Germany and the states of Western Europe are also brought to Treblinka. 'Do not worry about your fate,' continues the poster. 'You are all going eastward for work; you will work and your wives will take care of your households. Before leaving, however, you have to take a bath and your clothing must be disinfected. You have to deposit your valuables and money with the cashier (of Treblinka) for which you will get receipts. After the bath and disinfection, you will receive everything back unharmed.'*

In the first period of murder in Treblinka an S.S. officer with a kind, confidence-inspiring face used to come to the square and hold a speech along the same lines. However, when in the course of action ever larger transports arrived from the various parts and the crowds had to be quickly liquidated, the Germans cancelled the speech as superfluous.

To make the Jews believe that actual classification according to trades would take place at the arrival-square in order to send occupational groups for labor, they placed small signs with the inscriptions: Tailors, Shoemakers, Carpenters, etc. It goes without saying that such segregation never took place.

*The '*kapos*' quickly put the men in rows of ten, ordering them to take off their shoes, undress completely and prepare for a bath. Everybody is permitted to take along a piece of soap and his documents* [sic]. *In the meantime the sorting-service men take away the clothing to the sorting-place. Women and children also have to undress completely. Now comes the last act of the Treblinka tragedy. The terrorized mass of men, women and children starts on its last road to death. At the head a group of women and children is driven, beaten by the accompanying Germans, whips in their hands. The group is driven ever quicker; ever heavier blows fall upon the heads of the women who are mad with fear and suffering. The cries and laments of the women together with the shouts and curses of the Germans interrupt the silence of the forest. The people finally realize that they are going to their death. At the entrance of death-house No. 1 the chief himself stands, a whip in his hand; beating them in cold blood, he drives the women into the chambers. The floors of the chambers are slippery. The victims slip and fall, and they cannot get up for new numbers of forcibly driven victims fall upon them. The chief throws small children into the chambers over the heads of the women. When the execution chambers are filled the doors are hermetically closed and the slow suffocation of leaving people begins, brought about by the steam issuing from the numerous vents in the pipes. At the beginning, stifled cries penetrate to the outside; gradually they quiet down and 15 minutes later the execution is complete.*

Now comes the turn of the grave diggers. Shouting and cursing, the German overseers drive the diggers to their work, which consists of getting the bodies out of the execution chambers. The grave-diggers stand at the scoop, near the valves. The valves open but not a body falls out. Due to the steam all the bodies have become a homogenous mass stuck together with the perspiration of the victims. In their death agonies, arms, legs, trunks are intertwined into a gigan-

tic macabre entanglement. To make it possible for the grave-diggers to get out single bodies, cold water from the near-by well is poured over the mass. Then the bodies separate and may be taken out. As a rule the surfaces of the bodies are not defaced; only the faces and buttocks are purple. The grave-diggers, constantly beaten and driven by the Germans, place the corpses on the scoops until the chambers are empty. The bodies lie piled up like slaughtered cattle. Now the burying takes place. Formerly (during the first half of August), the Jewish grave-diggers had handcarts to convey the bodies to the ditches, which had to be done at top speed. Lately, however, the chief did away with them. 'Ein Mann – zwei Leichen' (one man, two corpses), meaning that each grave-digger has to bury two corpses. He ties the legs or the arms of the body with his belt and running, pulls it from the scoop to the ditches, throws it in and, again running, returns for the next load. Formerly the graves were right at the death-house so that the burying of corpses could take place quickly. As new victims were added, the grave-line moved ever further to the east and the pulling of the corpses to the graves takes longer and longer. After the ditch is filled, the grave-diggers quickly cover the bodies with earth and the digging-machine nearby prepares the next grave.

The execution of the men is identical. They also are driven through the road in the woods to their death. The victims react differently while being driven in the direction of the death-house; some repeat loudly psalms of penitence, confess their sins; others curse God; but a sudden shout of the Germans and the blows falling upon the backs of the doomed men immediately brings silence on the whole crowd. Sometimes all the victims cannot get into the overcrowded chambers; then the Germans keep the rest in the woods near the slaughter-house. These people see and hear everything but there is no attempt at self-preservation.

This is irrefutable proof of the atrocious terror wielded over their victims by the Germans.

The new death-house provides for the liquidation of 8,000 to 10,000 victims. If we consider that right now 2,000,000 murdered Jews, or the greater part of Polish Jewry, are already buried in the area of Treblinka, the disturbing question arises: for whom do the S.S. intend that new house of death; who are to utter their last breath in the slaughter-house? Most probably the death-machine, once started, will not limit itself to murdering Jews. At present, the specter of death in steam chambers rises before the Polish population; there have already been some signs of it: according to a report of an eyewitness, the Germans exterminated a group of Poles in death-house No. 1, in the second half of August." (Underscoring added)

This report was immediately considered reliable and thus was widely disseminated, both because it was said to be based on eyewitnesses, and above all because it was incomparably more detailed than all the other reports that circulated at that time, plus it was also accompanied by a detailed map.

In December 1942, the newspaper *Głos Warszawy* (*Voice of Warsaw*), organ of the Warsaw Committee of the Polish Workers' Party, published an arti-

cle headlined "*Obóz śmierci w Treblince*" ("The Treblinka Death Camp") that presented a somewhat different story of the "steam chambers."[118]

> *"The description of the Treblinka Death Camp is based on recorded eyewitness testimonies* [*na zaprotokółowanych zeznaniach naocznych światków*], *primarily former local grave diggers* [*grabarzy*].
> *The village of Treblinka is located several kilometers away from Małkinia. In 1940, the Germans established a concentration camp near this village. In March 194*[2], *the Germans began to build a new camp in the vicinity of the concentration camp, which was to be used, like Bełżec and Sobibór near Włodawa, for the mass murder of people, but was to be considerably larger in size. The construction of this monstrous slaughterhouse was completed after two months, when* [construction of] *Death House No. 1* [*dom śmierci nr 1*] *had reached the roof. It is a windowless masonry building, which consists of a corridor, three chambers* [*komór*] *and a boiler room* [*kotłowni*]. *Doors lead from the corridor to the chambers. On the outside, the chambers have trapdoors that open onto the hollowed-out ramp of a large boiler* [sic]. *From the boiler, pipes go to the chambers; they are provided with openings, from which water vapor* [*para wodna*], *after overheating in the boiler, escapes into the chambers. Doors and hatches in the chambers close tightly.* […]
> *This building is Death House No. 2* [*dom śmierci nr 2*], *a building that the Germans began in August of this year, but it was still not finished in September. Death House No. 2 is to contain 10 chambers. Further south is Death House No. 1, where the Germans over the past five months have exterminated 2 million people, mainly Jews from various locations in Poland, Germany and Austria. But not only Jews. Eyewitnesses* [*naoczny świadkowie*] *report that in the second half of August a group of Poles were killed in Death House No. 1. The pits of those murdered occupy the entire eastern part of the camp."*

Until April 1943, the journalist Eugenia Szajn-Lewin lived in the Warsaw Ghetto and kept a diary of important events during this time. She recorded what was said about Treblinka in the ghetto until the end of 1942 (Szajn-Lewin, pp. 83f.):

> *"The worst thing is death in Treblinka. By now, all know of Treblinka. There they cook people alive. They know by now that Bigan has escaped from Treblinka.* […]
> *He* [Bigan] *will build halls like the ones in Treblinka. Everything will be modern: the boilers that are heated by current, the steam-gas in there, the floor movable and sloping. 'There I will drive in the Germans, all naked. Many, many Germans, so that every corner is made use of, every centimeter.' And from the boilers the gaseous steam is conducted through the pipes, the boilers are red, and the steam… a hellish boiling bath. Four minutes suffice, then the*

[118] AŻIH, ARG, 432.Ring. II/319. Mf. ŻIH – 801 (this is an undated typewritten transcript of the article with the annotation "Reproduction from Głos Warszawy, organ of the Provincial Committee of the Polish Workers' Party"); cf. Wiatr *et al.*, pp. 219f.

floor flap automatically drops down,[119] *and the slimy mass of red, curled bodies flows away into the cesspit. And finished, the pits are simply filled with chlorine, and there is no more trace of what was once alive. 'All this lasts only seven minutes, you hear me?'"*

Information Note No. 3 of the *Oneg Szabat* of December 22, 1942 ("Wiadomości" Nr 3 22.12.1942 r.) reported the following (Wiatr *et al.*, p. 271):

"Information from survivors [*od ocalałych*] *of the Treblinka massacre affirms irrefutably and unmistakably* [*w sposób niezbity i nie pozostawiający żadnych wątpliwości*] *that 1. at the beginning of the so-called resettlement operation from Warsaw and places in the provinces, probably because of the still technically inadequate set-up of the death machine in Treblinka, the Germans killed their victims in too-simple a manner: they opened fire with machine guns on the crowd of men, women and children who had arrived in Treblinka, and they were exterminated one by one. The group of grave diggers threw everyone – the corpses of the killed, the seriously wounded and the lightly wounded – into pits prepared in advance, where those who were still alive would die in inhuman agony. 2. In August and the following months, when the intensity of the 'resettlement operation' led to the possibility of the steam chambers of Treblinka, the Germans organized themselves in this way: they loaded the transports of people from the localities covered by the operation onto railway cars sprinkled with a layer of lime and chloride, so that, after the arrival from the trip* [sic] *to Treblinka, only corpses of a characteristic purplish-blueish color, with swollen bodies, were thrown to the ground from the cars of the transport in question – they had all died amid terrible torments, suffocated in the death cars. For these transports (e.g. the group from Międzyrzec Podlaski, from Kielce) Treblinka was already only a cemetery. From the above, it is clear that for the Germans it was a matter of punctual and careful execution of a* [well] *laid-out plan. The mass-killing methods mentioned above were considered auxiliary when for these or other reasons the capacity of the Treblinka death machine was insufficient."*

In Information Note No. 5, covering the period January 1-8, 1943 ("Wiadomości" Nr 5 1 stycznia-8 stycznia 1943 r.), we read (*ibid.*, p. 285):

"Treblinka. In 'Information' #4, we reported on an innovation introduced at Treblinka, consisting of cutting the women's hair before they were sent to their death in the steam chambers."

Information Note No. 6 (January 9-15, 1943) also returned to the topic (*ibid.*, p. 295):

"Treblinka. From the series of macabre German figments: music at Treblinka. As a further demonstration of German cynicism at the Treblinka torture site, we note the following fact: a little Jewish orchestra often accompanies the march of the naked men and women on their way to the steam chambers playing various lively Jewish melodies and cheerful marches."

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119 This fable is commonly attributed to Sobibór.

In Issue 1(10) of January 1, 1943, *Głos Warszawy* reported:[120]

> *"Of the 400,000 Jews of Warsaw killed over two months in the steam chambers of Treblinka – 40,000 (10%) remained alive."*

On April 21, 1943, the story of the Treblinka "steam chambers" was also picked up by *Pravda*, with the appropriate adaptations (Sergeeva):

> *"The Central Death House at Treblinka B encompasses an area of 5,000 square meters. It is surrounded by a high barbed-wire fence. The execution chambers are windowless rooms that can be sealed hermetically. In the center of the camp are ten execution blocks. Next to these blocks is a boiler room, from which steam is brought into the blocks through pipes. Human beings are sent to the central death house in large numbers every day. Long lines of trains arrive every day, completely filled with people.*
>
> *These horrible caravans resemble transports of cattle sent to the slaughter. Upon arrival, the deportees are ordered to line up and strip naked; they are told that their clothes will be disinfested, and that they are going to bathe. Women and children undress a couple of steps away from the men. Then a frightening march begins. Along their way, these people begin to realize that they are being sent to their deaths. The women begin to scream, the children begin to cry. However, this does not last long.*
>
> *The German machine works like clockwork. There are no traffic jams. The guards speed up the march of the column. Those who fall are killed on the spot, the others are urged forward. A German officer stands at the entrance to the rooms. Adults are pushed into the chambers, children are thrown in onto their mothers' heads.*
>
> *The floors of the rooms are slippery. Usually, people fall and never get up again. When everyone has been pushed into the chambers, the doors are sealed hermetically. Then, the boiler room supplies the steam that is blown into the rooms.* […]
>
> *In this way, the population of Poland is exterminated. Day after day, according to a premeditated plan, systematically and in accordance with cannibalistic theories on the annihilation of the Slavic peoples, horrible, hair-raising operations are perpetrated."*

Jews were not mentioned at all! The victims of this alleged extermination were the Slavic peoples and in particular Poles!

On August 8, 1943, *The New York Times*, with reference to an article that appeared in a London newspaper, headlined on page 11: "2,000,000 Murders by Nazis Charged. Polish Paper in London Says Jews Are Exterminated in Treblinka Death House." The subtitle reads:

> *"According to report, steam is used to kill men, women and children at a place in the woods."*

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120 AŻIH, ARG, 432.Ring. II/319. Mf. ŻIH – 801 (reproduction of the periodical, p. 3).

The article was based upon a contribution published on August 7 in the magazine *Polish Labor Fights*, which was nothing other than the report of November 15, 1942. This is indubitably clear from the quotes in the *NYT* article.

On the same day, August 8, a Polish newspaper published in London, the *Wiadomośći Polskie* (*Polish News*), reported a very colorful version of the steam-chamber fable (No. 32 (178), p. 2):

> *"Treblinka. In the vicinity of Małkinia, in the middle of the sand, among hills and pine trees, since the beginning of the occupation, there has been a penal camp for Poles who have committed administrative crimes. It is called Treblinka.* […] *In March 1942 the Germans near this camp began to build another one, called Treblinka B, to distinguish it from Treblinka A. The camp lay on sandy hills in the middle of groves; up to it the Germans brought a track from the main railway, in order to deliver the victims to the torture center itself. The peculiarity of Treblinka is large chambers in which,* [when] *full* [of people], *from a boiler numerous pipes carry water vapor. It escapes from the pipes directly into the chambers through numerous sufficiently large openings. The transports were unloaded quickly. The living were lined up and the dead were thrown onto the platform, checking first with a few kicks that no one simulated death.* […]
>
> *They would line up the semi-conscious men and a short distance away the women and children, ordering them to strip naked in front of the bath. And then the hissing of the whips intensified, the swearing and shouting intensified, and the victims were led quickly and with the greatest agitation into the chambers. At the entrance, they were greeted by the camp commandant, the notorious sadist Sauer, who pushed the women and children inside with a large leather whip with several tails. The floor of the chamber was slippery, the unfortunates could barely stand on it, their feet burned, people fell and then could not get up again, because others trampled them down. And so the strange human block grew up to below the ceiling of the room. Only when the whole floor was already full of people lying down, those who came next could stand on their backs. But not even for long. They fell with any movement, finding the floor terribly slippery, they tumbled. In this jumble of human bodies, Commandant Sauer threw the children over the heads of the men and women; the swearing of the SS came from the corridor, the hissing of the whips ceased, until finally the door to the chamber was sealed, filled to the ceiling with people, who were writhing in agony before death.*
>
> *The steam filled the space, becoming in this chamber the agent that hastened death, which would have ensued even without it – by asphyxiation. A collective agony began.*
>
> *The flaps of the chambers were opening upward* [*Klapy komór uniosły się na górę*]. *Young Jewish boys were already standing in front of them with buckets of cold water, without which the corpses could not be separated. The SS set their whips in motion to hasten the emptying of the chambers."*

On August 18, 1944 Joseph Linton of the Jewish Agency sent the British Foreign Office a memorandum dated November 5, 1943, describing the fate of the Warsaw Jews, but without explicitly mentioning Treblinka:[121]

> *"They were made to undress in a hut, and were told that they were to be given a bath. Some of them had to remain outside. When the naked Jews had gone inside the hut, steam was turned on for a quarter of an hour. At the end of this time the hut, which was on wheels, was rolled by SS men over an open pit. The floor of the hut was withdrawn and the corpses fell into the pit. Those who were left outside were told to fill the pit with earth. During this process one of the Jews escaped and told one of the Polish sources what he had seen. It was estimated that ten waggon-loads of Jews were murdered every day in this manner for a period of three weeks: the total would have been between 40,000 and 50,000."*

In 1944, Rabbi Abraham Silberschein published an eight-page report on the camp of "Tremblinki." This report contains many new elements compared to the report of November 15, 1942. Because of its importance, the document, deserves to be reported in its entirety (Silberschein 1944a, pp. 33-40):

> *"<u>Tremblinki – The Main Extermination Camp</u>*
> *The small village of Tremblinki lies on the Warsaw-Bialostock* [sic] *rail line. The main extermination camp, three times as large as that of Lublin, was located not far from the village. It was at first set up as a concentration camp for Jews and Poles; but in March 1942, the Germans transformed it into an extermination camp for Jews only. They reconstructed the camp expressly for this and equipped it with gas experimental rooms and furnaces.*
>
> *<u>The Camp</u>*
> *The camp was situated in the midst of dense forests, entirely cut off from the outside world, and was reachable by means of a railway track with the Warsaw-Bialostock main line. It encompassed an area of 100 Morgen*[122] *and is surrounded by the thickest barbed wire.*
> *It consisted of three sections: the actual camp; the extermination camp, and an open square. The actual camp has three blocks: a men's camp, a women's camp, and between these two, a children's camp (see map).*[123] *A three-meter-wide anteroom divides the inside of each block* [Blöcke] *into two parts. From the anteroom, doors open into the cells. Each cell measures 36 m² with a height of no more than two meters* […two illegible words]. *Each structure was 40 × 50 m in size. Aside from this, two more elongated buildings, each about 120 × 150 m in size, were constructed later as a men's camp (not shown in the plan).*
> *The extermination facilities took up approximately the same space as the accommodation spaces and contained a dressing room (see plan). The dressing room contained a reception room for the camp administration, an anteroom,*

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121 Political Memorandum. From: Press Reading Bureau, Stockholm. To: Political Intelligence Department, London. Poland, No. 14. 5th November, 1943. TNA, FO 371-34551.

122 Archaic measure of area. 1 Morgen corresponds to 0.6178 acres.

123 See Documents 4f.

and the actual undressing room. The entrance to the dressing room was from the open square. A door led from the dressing room to the baths, from there a door led to the experimental chamber for asphyxiating gases, and from there a door to the furnaces. The furnaces were connected with a railway, which led to the cemetery (see plan).
A large pedestal had been erected on the open square. There were almost no workshops and only a few job positions in this camp.

The Guard Service – The Treatment
An SS detachment under the command of Hauptmann Sauer supplied the guard service in the extermination camp of Tremblinki. The composition of the staff of the detachment changed frequently.
The inmates performed various tasks in connection with the requirements of the camp. They were terribly maltreated and abused at this and had to endure the most inhuman punishments imaginable for every petty violation of the house rules or other mistake. Not all worked, most of them waited in the cells until the gassing facility was able to take them. But sometimes they were killed even sooner in another manner. The Germans shot several Jews on a daily basis, above all the commandant Sauer himself. Every afternoon he had his executioners assemble the Jews who still remained alive. Then he asked: 'Who is weak, who can no longer work?' The Jews made no answer at all to this: whoever had had enough simply stepped forward from the line – and was shot down. In this manner, Hauptmann Sauer murdered 500 Jewish youths, one after the other, on a single day in the beginning of September 1942.

The 'Kapus'
The 'Kapus' occupied a special position. It was these Jews upon whom many important mechanisms of the camp were imposed. Most Kapus had sorted through the clothing of those who had been transported out of this life. They did this task at a place called the 'rag sorting place.'
Others were also working at the railway station with the reception of those freshly arriving. Others, again, had to work as gravediggers. It happened not rarely that the Jews so occupied lasted no longer than two weeks and committed suicide.

The Delivery
Day after day two trains arrived in Tremblinki, completely filled with Jews. Jews were carried off from all parts of Europe to this place; but the main contingent was made up of the Jews from Warsaw, north Poland, and the Baltic.
Every train was 30 to 50 cars long. The emptying of the cars proceeded at lightning pace. Then the Kapus received the arrivals and read to them the camp regulations in the Jewish language. At the station building, the following appeal was displayed: 'Have no concern about your fate! You are all traveling only to work in the east. You yourselves will perform the work and your women will do the housework. Before traveling on, you have to bathe and remove the germs from your clothes. Gold and other valuables are to be deposited at the counter, where you will get a receipt for them.' And really, in order to lull the

belief in these promises into a feeling of security, the Germans had established an office at the train station, where each new arrival had to appear and report his professional training. After fulfillment of these 'statistics,' the people were brought into the camp and at first only sent into the disinfection baths. After the bath they were temporarily sent to the individual cells. There they were supposed to wait until it was their turn. But for the most part, those instructed didn't know what fate awaited them. They still believed that they would soon be traveling on to a place of work. This belief was even strengthened by the fact that there were no large factory facilities in the camp and that it had all seemed as if it were only a transit station.

The Murder Work

But when the rooms could no longer accept new arrivals, the most-senior inmates were gassed. Every day groups of a thousand people each were brought into the gas and furnace chambers. At first, as at their arrival, they were led into the bath by the Kapus. Everyone had to take off clothing and shoes and remained naked. For the further deception of the victims, each was handed a little piece of soap. In the meantime, the work of putting the discarded clothing and shoes in order was performed. Hauptmann Sauer took them over in the reception room of the extermination facilities. He did not miss any opportunity to flog every single person. Then the Germans drove the women and children as the first ones into the extermination cells. Now the final act of the extermination began:

Men and women, old people and children, all naked, take their last walk into death. At the fore stride the women and children, then the men, old and young, follow behind. To impel them to run faster, the Germans strike them on head and body. Now the victims are running, tormented by fear: their cries of dread, especially those of the women and children, ascend to the sky. Now everybody knows where this is leading – to death. The floor is slippery, one slips and falls. But those fallen can no longer even stand up; for continually new victims are flung over them. The children are thrown into the room, above the heads of their mothers. The extermination cells fill up. When they are full, then they are hermetically sealed, from every side the pipes open, out of which flows gas. The death of asphyxiation reaps a quick harvest. Within a quarter hour it is all over. Then the Kapus must go to work. With pitiless blows, the guard personnel force them to perform their work.

The gates of death open – but the dead bodies somehow cannot be pulled out individually: for they have all clumped together with one another and stiffened under the influence of the water vapor.

Water is fetched from a nearby well and the bodies are sprinkled with it so the gravediggers can carry away the corpses. These are loosened by it, one from the other, and it is easier to remove them. Their appearance has not changed, aside from a violet coloration of the head and the back side [sic].

Now the dead are loaded onto the ramp, conducted over a railway to the cemetery in the mass graves, where the Kapus bring their task to an end. (See the

almost identical description in the article by Tymon Terlecki 'Alle Juden raus,' cited by us on page 18 in 'L'extermination des Juifs polonais IV').[124]
By many hundred thousands, Jews from all regions of Europe have been exterminated in this way in Tremblinki alone.

The Camp Orchestra
But the camp of Tremblinki had another 'specialty.' To wit, the Jewish Arthur Gold Orchestra (see plan) gave concerts there, and it had the duty of playing for those who were being led to their death!!!! At the same moment as thousands of Jews were perishing in the gas chambers, the musicians had to play cheerful melodies. Whichever of them refused to do it was hanged up by his feet with his head down. Several of the musicians were seized by madness in the middle of playing. The artists, one after the other, jumped willy-nilly amongst the crowd of people who were waiting for their turn, and they bellowed with voice breaking and face madly distorted 'Frait och, yidelach, ir got zum tot mit klezemer!' (Enjoy yourselves, you Jews, you are going to death with music). Then the German bullets whizzed, and they sank under them to become a lifeless lump on the ground. After this the orchestra was brought up to strength again and the performance was repeated every time."

This account is clearly based on the report of November 15, 1942 with the addition of new fanciful elements, such as the "furnaces" and the "experimental chamber for asphyxiating gases."

The text published by Silberschein is the result of a reworking of two very short drafts titled "Extermination Camp Treblinka" and "Extermination Camp Treblinki" ("*Vernichtungslager* Treblinka"/"*Vernichtungslager* Treblinki").[125] The measurements of the alleged extermination building (40 m × 15 m instead of 40 m × 50 m) and the killing chambers (35 m² instead of 36 m²) also change here. The total number of victims is "many hundred thousands" instead of 2,000,000. The same archival source also contains a French translation, "*Treblinki Camp d'extermination des Juifs*," according to which the extermination building measured 40 m × 15 m, was divided into two parts by a 3-meter-wide corridor, and each part contained five "cells" ("*cellules*") 3.5 meters wide and 18.5 meters long. These two senseless figures are accompanied by a question mark.

In February 1945 the fable of the steam chambers, with other imaginative variations, appeared in a pamphlet in French that saw the light of day in Belgium (*L'extermination des Juifs de Varsovie*, p. 40):

"When the room is so full that nothing can be added anymore, the doors are locked tightly, and the other rooms are filled in the same way. The boiler is then set in motion (all the barracks are arranged in a circle around a central boiler and are connected to it by numerous pipes). Boiling water steam is

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124 This article appeared on November 7, 1943 in No. 45 of the political newspaper *Wiadomośći Polskie*, published in London, in which Tymon Terlecki quoted longer sections from the already-cited report of November 15, 1942.

125 YVA, M.20/160.

gradually introduced through the pipes, and the unfortunate people, suffocating more and more, end up succumbing amidst unimaginable suffering."

3.5. Testimonies of Former Treblinka Inmates (1942-1945)

The accounts presented in the previous subchapter were explicitly based on the statements of allegedly anonymous eyewitnesses who are said to have managed to escape from Treblinka. But already by the end of August 1942, reports of self-proclaimed eyewitnesses also existed, whose names and surnames are known, which should make them more-reliable than the anonymous ones. The fact that the fable of the steam chambers was nevertheless widely spread, is incomprehensible from an orthodox perspective, but has its own incontrovertible reason in the framework of the Jewish-Polish black propaganda, as I will explain in Subchapter 3.8.

One of the first witnesses was DAWID NOWODWOSKI, who was deported to Treblinka on August 18, 1942, but managed to escape after a few days. On August 28, 1942, he wrote a "Report of the stay at the extermination camp of Treblinka" ("*Relacja z pobytu w obozie zagłady w Treblince*"). However, no reference to mass extermination or killing chambers appears in the text. The only allusion, somewhat enigmatic, says: "2 executions after 15 minutes up to 40 minutes." (Wiatr *et al.*, pp. 126-129)

On the same day, August 28, Abraham Lewin, who had been among those who had recorded Nowodwoski's testimony, gave the following account of it (Lewin, p. 95):

"Today we had a long conversation with Dawid Nowodwoski, who returned from Tr[eblinka]. *He told us exactly all the suffering he had endured from the moment he was captured until his escape from the place of execution and his return to Warsaw. His words once again confirm what we know, and reaffirm beyond doubt that people of all transports were killed, and none of them could survive. And so, both those who are captured and those who voluntarily show up. This is the naked truth. Terrible. And to think that in the last few weeks at least 300,000 Jews from Warsaw, Radom, Siedlce, and many, many other places have been killed. Based on your account, we have written a testimony that is so terrible and gruesome that it cannot be expressed directly in human language. This is undoubtedly the greatest crime that has ever been perpetrated in the history of mankind."*

This account, full of drama but without any hard data, confirms that Nowodwoski's account was generic and vague.

The testimony of JAKUB RABINOWICZ dates to the second half of September 1942. Only a fragment of the original report is known, but it does not contain any reference to extermination facilities or killing methods.

There is, however, an important element in the development of the history of the gas chambers, the first reference to a Diesel engine, although it had a completely different function (*ibid*., pp. 136f.):

> *"The lights were turned off, the Diesel engine stopped running for the duration of the bomber flyover."*

Hence, this engine was connected to an electric generator that produced the electricity for the camp.

The Ring II/298 file in the Ringelblum archive, which contains the handwritten fragment in Polish, refers to two additional sources. The first is A. Lewin's "Diary of the Warsaw Ghetto," which contains a report dated September 27, 1942. It states that "Rabinowicz, relative of the Rabinowicz who returned from Treblinka, spoke for hours on end of the horror of Treblinka." The subject of the narrative is this (Lewin, p. 105):

> *"Completely naked women go to the bathroom – the house of death* [*dom śmierci*]. *Condition of the corpses of the killed. How do they kill people? With ordinary steam* [*zwykła parą*]. *Death follows after 7-8 minutes."*

The second source is Emanuel Ringelblum's "Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto," in which the following entry appears for October 15, 1942 (Ringelblum, p. 416):

> *"Message from the gravediggers (Jakob Rabinowicz), the Jews from Stoczek, who have escaped from railway cars loaded with objects, gold, and cash. Unanimous description of the 'bathhouse,' the gravediggers with golden patches on the knees.*
>
> *Method of killing: gas, steam, electricity."*

ABRAM JAKUB KRZEPICKI was deported to Treblinka on August 25, 1942. He managed to escape after 18 days by hiding in a railway car full of clothes, and he returned to Warsaw, where he wrote two different reports. In the shorter one, to which he also attached a camp map, the description of the presumed extermination plant is very poor (Wiatr *et al*., p. 212):

> *"From the central square a road through the woods leads to the bathhouse* [*do łaźni*]. *It is a small building hidden in the thickets, concealed by a green net placed on the roof.* […]
>
> *They let 800-1000 people enter into the bathhouse. None of us, workers, knew exactly how death was administered. However, there seemed to be a barely perceptible smell of chlorine around the bathhouse. I never worked on the evacuation of the bodies from the chamber, I did know, however, that it involved nearby pits, where they were then burned* [*spalane*] *along with all the camp waste. But before that, in a small hut located next to the bathhouse, the corpses have their gold teeth removed."*

The plan of Treblinka (Document 6)[126] is accompanied by a caption (Wiatr *et al*., p. 215): from the "undressing barrack" (No. 6) a narrow road (No. 7) leads

[126] Wiatr *et al.*, p. 216. The original is at: AŻIH, ARG 378.Ring. II/295. Mf. ŻIH-800

to the "bath building" ("*budynek łaźni*," No. 8); between the two structures, next to the road, is the "building designed for a crematorium" ("*budynek przeznaczony na crematorium*," No. 9); further up, to the right, are two "pits" ("*doły*"), to the left the "pit digger's shack."

Krzepicki's other report, written after December 26, 1942, is much longer and devotes a separate chapter to the Treblinka "bathhouse," but other references to it are scattered here and there. It states there that the victims undressed "before going into the gas" ("*do gazu*," *ibid*., p. 162); the witness specifies later (*ibid*., p. 171):

> *"After a couple of days of work sorting the objects – the new transports were not yet arriving all the time – after the noon roll call, I was taken away with four other people to sweep the road leading to the gas chamber* [*do komory gazowej*]*, or, as the Germans called it, the Badenanstalt* [*bathing facility*]*. We were terribly afraid of this place. Until then, I had never been there."*

One day, Krzepicki was traipsing around with a "column" of Jewish workers, when he managed to get a glimpse through "the open door of the gas chamber [*komory gazowej*]," a structure shortly before defined as "a large masonry building [*wielki murowany budynek*] that stood in the center of the death camp – the gas chambers [*komory gazowe*]." A detailed description follows, which is titled "Bath [*Łaźnia*] in the middle of the green forest. What can be seen through the open door" (*ibid.*, pp. 173f.):

> *"It seems, as I have already said, that this building stands among the trees. I have now observed that a green wire mesh has been stretched over its flat roof, which reaches behind the building with its edges. Could this be an anti-aircraft camouflage? Underneath the netting, one could see tangled pipes running through the roof. The walls of the building were covered with concrete on the outside. I cast a glance inside through one of the two* [*z dwojga*] *sturdy iron* [*żelaznych*] *doors painted white that was open. I saw a not very spacious hall – an ordinary bathing hall with all the normal equipment of a public bath* [*Zobaczyłem niezbyt obszerną salę – zwykła salę kąpielowaną z całym normalnym wyposażeniem publicznego kąpieliska*]*. The walls were very nice and carefully covered with white tiles* [*białymi kafelkami*]*. The floor was made of red-yellow terracotta tiles* [*Podłoga ułożona była z czerwono-żółtych płytek terakoty*]*. From the ceiling hung showers ... and ... nothing else. A cozy, well-cleaned bathhouse in the middle of the green woods. There was nothing else to see there. Instead, in front of the entrance to this 'bathhouse' you could see a lot. Not far away were mountains of clay and below them – still open, huge mass graves, in which already then rested tens, perhaps hundreds of thousands of 'people who had bathed.'*
>
> *As I was told, cremation of corpses was also carried out there.*
>
> *As a further improvement to the disposal of the dead – who knows if only of the dead – a new building had to be introduced, and we worked on its construction. It was said that it would be a crematorium* [*krematorium*]*."*

This text is similar to that of Abraham Krzepicki's report "Eighteen days in Treblinka" as published by Alexander Donat (Donat, pp. 77-145; although the original title is "A man who escaped from Treblinka… Interview with a returnee"). Arad states that the Yiddish manuscript was handed over by the leaders of the ghetto's clandestine archives to Rachel Auerbach "with the task of recording the testimony provided by Krzepicki," who died during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in April 1943 (*ibid.*, p. 77).

The first report mentions only one "bathhouse," which could accommodate 800-1000 people, but specifies that "[n]one of us, workers, knew exactly how death was administered."

The second report introduces blatantly conflicting elements; it speaks indiscriminately of a "gas chamber" (*komora gazowa*) and many "gas chambers" (*komore gazowe*), in the singular and plural, but the relevant building is described as a real "bathing facility" ("*Badenanstalt*"), consisting of a single room, with only two doors, showers, tiles on the walls and on the floor. On the roof, there was a tangle of pipes running through it that could only be connected with the showers. Besides that, "[t]here was nothing else to see there" – in particular, there was no cabin with the engine that was supposed to produce the lethal gases. This description is clearly incompatible with homicidal gassings, so that the term "gas chamber" in this story is a conspicuously extraneous element, probably introduced by Rachel Auerbach out of overzealousness.

In both accounts, the witness refers to the cremation of the corpses, which, from an orthodox perspective, is contradictory, because that cremation is said to have started only in April 1943. Krzepicki also spoke of a masonry crematorium he was helping to build, which also appears in the plan attached to the first report (Document 6), although it is known that no such facility ever existed in that camp.

JANKIEL WIERNIK is the best-known and most-important witness. He was deported to Treblinka on August 23, 1942, and escaped on August 2, 1943, but the first known mention of his writing *A Year in Treblinka* (*Rok w Treblince*) dates to June 6, 1944. On this date, Henryk Woliński, a Pole with a Jewish wife who had been working in the propaganda sector of the *Delegatura* since 1942, drafted a memo "Jews, materials for S.B." ("*Żydzi mater. do S.B.*"),[127] undoubtedly intended for the Government-in-Exile in London, in which he wrote that he enclosed the 21-page text "Rok w Treblince." He mentioned this in passing in connection with the fate of a transport of Jews transferred in 1943 to the Bergen [Belsen] camp, part of whom had been sent to Treblinka.[128] Evidently the report had been compiled recently. (Woliński or other informants would not have waited several months before sending such a propagandistically important document to London.) It is unknown why Wiernik waited so long to write his report. In fact, it was published in Polish in 1944 in the form of a

[127] "S.B." probably stands for "Sonderbehandlung" – special treatment, which is said to have been a German war-time code word for execution.

[128] Ghetto Fighters House Archives, Catalog No. 5966, Collection 23192, p. 50.

23-page pamphlet (Wiernik 1944a), and also as an English translation that same year (Wiernik 1944b).

There exists moreover a 22-page typewritten text with the same title, and also a 3-page manuscript titled "Report of a Jew, escaped from Treblinka, Janik Wiernik, residing in Warsaw, at 23 Wołyńska Street, 53 years old" ("*Relacje Żyda, uciekinieraz Treblinki, Janika Wiernika, zamieszkałego w Warszawy przy ul. Wołyńskiej 23, lat 53*"). In it, the alleged killing facility is described as follows:[129]

> *"Plaza* [sic] *built with 13 gas chambers (bath). Gas chamber 2m high 7m long and 7m wide. On one side a (normal) entrance door. On the opposite side – a flap which is opened after gassing people, the corpses are taken out through this flap. On the roof – a safety hatch used in the case of killing people with chlorine. After throwing the appropriate amount of chlorine, the hatch closes hermetically."* (Emphases added)

The typewritten text, from which I draw the following quotations, is almost identical to the published, printed text:[130]

> *"When I arrived at the camp, there were already 3 gassing chambers* [*komory do zagazowywania*]. *During my stay, 10 more chambers were added. The size of one chamber was 5 x 5 meters, a total of 25 square meters, the height was 1.90 meters. On the roof, an outlet with an airtight closure* [*wylot na dachu z hermetycznym zamknięciem*] *and pipe outlets, the terracotta floor* [*podłoga terakotowa*] *was sloping towards the ramp. The building, made of masonry, is separated from Camp No. 1 by a wooden wall. These two walls, wooden and masonry, together formed a corridor raised 80 centimeters above the horizontal plane of the entire building. The rooms had a connection to the corridor. A hermetically closed iron door* [*żelazne*] *led to each room. The chambers, on the side of Camp No. 2, were connected to a ramp* [*rampą*] *4 meters wide along all three chambers. The height of the ramp from the* [*ground*] *level was about 80 centimeters. From this same side led hermetically closed wooden doors. The door of each room on the side of Camp No. 2 – measuring 2-2.50 x 1.80 meters – could only be opened from the outside from the bottom upwards by means of iron posts. They were closed by means of iron hooks installed in the frames and wooden posts. The victims were pushed through the doors from the corridor side. The doors on side no. 2 were used to pull out the corpses* [of the] *gassed. Alongside the chambers was the electric-power station* [*elektrownia*], *almost the same size as the chambers, but higher than the height of the ramp. In the power station, there was the engine of a Soviet tank which was used for the introduction of gas into the chambers. This gas was fed in by connecting the engine to intake pipes.* [*Gaz ten wpuszcano, łącząc motor z rurami włotowymi*.] […]

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129 J. Wiernik, "Relacje Żyda, uciekinieraz Treblinki, Janika Wiernika, zamieszkałego w Warszawy przy ul. Wołyńskiej 23, lat 53." Ghetto Fighters House Archives, Catalog No. 3166, Collection 11261, p. 2. The term *"normalne*" is speculative.

130 Wiernik 1944, pp. 5f., 8-10; Wiernik 1944a, pp. 6-10.

Into one chamber measuring 25 square meters, 450 and 500 people were pushed. [=18 to 20 people per square meter! …]
They start the engine, connect it to the intake pipes [*Puszczają motor, łączą z rurami włotowymi*]. [After] *25 minutes at most, all are lying side by side.* […] *Neither pretty nor ugly, everyone is yellow and poisoned* [*Nie ma ładnych i brzydkich, wszyscy żółci i zatruci*]. […] *10 to 15 thousand people were gassed every day* [*Gazowano dziennie po 10 do 15 tys. ludzi*]. […]
The new facility between Camp No. 1 and Camp No. 2, on which I worked, was built very quickly. It turned out to be 10 new chambers. These chambers were larger than the previous ones, 7 x 7 meters, about 50 square meters. After completion, 1,000 to 1,200 people were crammed into each chamber [20 to 24 people/m²!]. *The chamber system was corridor-based. On each side of the corridor 5 chambers. Each chamber had two doors. One on the side of the corridor, through which the victims were pushed in, the other on the side of the camp, parallel to the first, was used for extracting the corpses. The construction system of door one and two* [the two doors to each chamber] *was as in the previous chambers. The view from Camp #1 was as follows: 5 wide concrete steps, on the steps on either side were carefully arranged flower pots. A long hallway. On top of the roof on the camp side the star of David /magen* [Hebrew term: star] *David/. The building looked like an ancient temple. When it was completed, the Hauptsturmfuehrer told the subordinates: 'endlich die Judenstadt fertig'* ['At last the Jewish city is finished']. *Construction on these chambers lasted five weeks.* […]
The number of transports increased every day, because there were already 13 gassing chambers. More than once 20,000 [people] *were gassed in one day."*

At the end of November 1943, an anonymous report on Treblinka appeared in the newspaper *Kraj* (*Country*) that has close similarities with Wiernik's report ("Świadkowie zbrodni," pp. 30f.):

"Witnesses to the Crime
From a Jewish escapee from Treblinka, who remained in this camp for a period of about 10 months thanks to fortunate coincidences, we received the following report, which concerns the method of mass liquidation of the Jews in this 'factory of death.'
Our informant managed to escape together with a group of about 2,000 Jews after disarming and killing a part of the camp's guard personnel and after setting fire to the barracks. A part of the fugitives survived. They would be the only witnesses to the German crimes at Treblinka.
'I was arrested during a raid in the Warsaw Ghetto on August 22, 1942. Our transport – as we were told – was destined for work [deployment] *in the East. We were crammed into the railway cars under guard. The Lithuanians who were escorting us took money and valuables from us. I don't really understand how we believed in these work deployments at the time, since there were women and children among us. But nobody foresaw reality. It was only when we were on the very site that our eyes were opened.*

In the camp on the ground, there were literally piles of corpses. We were separated: 'women and children on the left, men on the right.' We were ordered to hand over money, documents, valuables. We were ordered to sort clothes, suitcases and bundles into piles.

After a couple of hours, a transport arrived from Międzyrzec. Then we were taken to carry the corpses out of the cars (this was mostly a transport of corpses). Then we were beaten mercilessly. When this work was finished, we were made to sit in a semicircle and were targeted by machine guns. We were ordered to change places, to go to the right, to the left, in the end about 100 were 'pardoned' because of the random grouping, the rest (hundreds) were hit by the gunfire. This ended at midnight.

In the morning the work – sorting of clothes, bundles etc. or burying the corpses in pits prepared with machines. The corpses were partially rotten; it happened that a hand or a leg of a corpse remained in the hand of the worker. I worked for two days on the corpses, then I was deployed as a skilled carpenter in the construction of the gas chambers under the direction [*pod kierunkiem*] *of Ukrainians. There were already three of them –* [another] *10 chambers were built.*

The killing procedure was as follows: the transport that had arrived was ordered to undress for the bath, and was directed to the chambers. The Ukrainian who stood at the door encouraged those hesitant by poking them with his bayonet, and he killed the recalcitrant ones. After about fifteen minutes, the corpses were removed from the second door. The 'baths' worked more and more every day until February. In addition to the chambers, the 'sickbay' was used, especially for the old and sick. The person in charge wore a white coat with a red cross. Those who were directed to the 'sickbay' were made to sit on benches at the edge of a large pit, and with a blow were thrown into the pit. There were also transports from abroad. I estimate the number of corpses in the camp at about 3,000,000. The average length of a worker's life was 3-4 days, sometimes a week.[131] *About 40 people remained from my transport, skilled workers. Many committed suicide. There were periods – epidemics of hangings. Because even the sadism of the guards was inhuman. There was a Ukrainian who cut off ears, nose, drove nails into the rectum… One cannot imagine this reality of the camp. Not even if you tried to describe it, only a film could illustrate it. We were also mistreated by our compatriots – the Kapos.*

In February, according to rumors, Himmler came to the camp. He began the clean-up. The corpses were exhumed – they were burned. During this period, mass liquidations also ceased. We built observation towers. I was also 'honored' with the duty to build a small house in 'Zakopane style' by order of the camp commander. During this period, we were fed a little better and were not tormented much. The 'liquidation' of the pits was proceeding; 3/4 of the pits had already been liquidated. We had no illusions – we knew that the moment this work was finished, we would be finished too. Plotting began. The special-

131 The witness survived for about 10 months or about 43 weeks, so his survival was, in fact, 43 times longer than ordinary survival! He was therefore a veritable continuous-miracle worker.

ized craftsmen who worked in the area of the entire camp were the liaison men, the grave diggers, when cleaning up the corpses, 'stole' something several times. Coins and valuables buried in hidden places attracted the Ukrainians. The guard detail was enticed to 'trade,' and in this way their surveillance was diverted.

By the end of May, we were ready, but the deadline was postponed. Five men had specific tasks (assault on the guard personnel, liquidation of the sentries after having previously lured them down from the turrets, burning [the barracks]*, removal of the barbed-wire barrier). Our 'revolt' broke out on the 28th, at 5:30. I do not know the details of the fight, because the main fight took place on the grounds of Camp II, where our five attacked the barracks of the guard detail, took up arms and began the fight. We only had tools. The fight lasted about 15 minutes; the camp fell. I killed with an axe a Ukrainian who was chasing me, whose gun jammed, and I ran with my comrades into the woods. In the woods, we dispersed. Thanks to the help and information of the peasants, I managed to get to Warsaw. My personal life is shattered, but I have a wish that gives me the strength to live: that the truth about Treblinka will not be lost.'"*

This account appears to be an early, outline draft of Wiernik's later report, as evidenced by comparing the opening part of both:

– Wiernik:

"It was August 23, 1942 in Warsaw, at the time of the blockade. […] *Order to enter the railway cars. They crammed 80 people into them.* […] *I had prepared everything, because there were rumors that we were going to the Ukraine, where we were going to work.* […] *In the meantime, the Ukrainians were having a great time, their loud and cheerful laughter reaching our ears.* […] *The place was littered with corpses, they were dressed and naked.* […] *The women and children were ordered to stand on the left, and the men to sit in the courtyard on the right.* […] *Before dusk, another train arrived from Międzyrzec. There were 80% corpses. We began to unload them."* (Wiernik 1944a, pp. 1-3)

– Anonymous:

"I was arrested during a raid in the Warsaw Ghetto on August 22, 1942. Our transport – as we were told – was destined for work [deployment] *in the East. We were crammed into the railway cars under guard. The Lithuanians who were escorting us took money and valuables from us.* […] *In the camp on the ground, there were literally piles of corpses. We were separated: 'women and children on the left, men on the right.' We were ordered to hand over money, documents, valuables. We were ordered to sort clothes, suitcases and bundles into piles.*

After a couple of hours, a transport arrived from Międzyrzec. Then we were taken to carry the corpses out of the cars (this was mostly a transport of corpses)."

It should be pointed out that the similarities concern only the content: there are no matching Polish expressions in the two texts, although both are written in the first person. Moreover, they have some differences (the date of the arrest: August 23 and 22; the date of the uprising: August 2 versus May 28, 1943; the number of victims: "millions"[132] and "3,000,000"). All things considered, there is no escaping the conclusion: either the anonymous witness was Wiernik, or Wiernik was inspired by the anonymous author's account. But it is clear that the anonymous witness knew nothing specific about the alleged gas chambers, although the stated purpose of his narrative was to preserve "the truth about Treblinka." It follows that either Wiernik knew nothing precise about the alleged gas chambers in November 1943, just four months after his escape from Treblinka, or he subsequently plagiarized the anonymous witness's account.

In 1945, OSKAR BERGER wrote a memoir about Treblinka.[133] According to this, he had been deported from the Kielce Ghetto "in June 1942," and "two days later," he arrived in Treblinka, therefore when the camp was not yet in operation. On his arrival, he saw hundreds of corpses scattered on the ground; he was chosen with a group of 20 Jews to clean the railway cars; all the other members of the transport had to lie down on the ground in a square and were machine-gunned from the roof of the barracks. After 30-40 minutes, they were all dead, and Berger's group was forced to carry the corpses to a mass grave. Berger continues as follows:

> *"At the end, we were 200 Jews, who were goaded as the Sonderkommando in T II by our dehumanized henchmen from dawn until late at night to gather the countless victims of their daily massacre. Two to three transports daily, and each one brought 5000 men, women and children."*

Transports filled only with corpses also arrived:

> *"On occasion, transports arrive with corpses only. We suspect that these people were killed by gas in the railway cars, because we did not notice any wounds. Their bodies are convulsively intertwined, the skin is discolored bluish."*

After 20 days, the camp commander chose from three transports 200 craftsmen, and the head of the *Sonderkommando* declared "that the large gas chambers should be ready within a few weeks." Then, "this inconspicuous little house of bricks" was built near the mass graves, and was called "bathing facility":

> *"From now on, arrivals at T II were no longer shot. They now have to undress inside the fence of the 'bathing facility' and line up there naked – men, women and children, all together. They themselves have to bundle shoes into pairs. And then, subjected to beatings and maltreatment, which the SS again dishes out most 'liberally', they move forward toward the 'bathing facility'. Those who do not hurry are beaten so badly that they reach the building half-dead.*

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132 "Świadkowie zbrodni," p. 23: "*oni zgładzili miliony*," "they killed millions."

133 "T II geschildert von Oscar Berger." YVA, M.9-530.

> *Now, with a disgusting carnage, most of the victims are driven into the 'bath-house'. Already after ten minutes, the Sonderkommando has to assemble and empty the gas chambers. We take the corpses on carts to the mass graves for burning."*

And here is the story's epilogue:

> *"In September 1942, I and my comrade Karl Gottlieb make a desperate attempt to carry out our escape plan. Between blankets, bundles of clothes and piles of suitcases, which we had to stow in the railway cars, we hide shortly before the departure of the train. We succeed. We remain unnoticed, and the escape is successful. Thus, we could both escape from the inferno of TII."*

This "eyewitness" was therefore deported to Treblinka before the camp was opened, and escaped in September 1942. There were no gas chambers initially, and the killing of the deportees was done by machine-gun fire. After about twenty days, a gassing facility made of bricks, the "bathing facility," was built, in which he, as a member of the *Sonderkommando*, worked on removing the corpses. Despite this, he did not even know how many gas chambers there were nor what gas they operated with. The reference to the cremation of the corpses is clearly anachronistic. I have already commented on the claimed blue color of the alleged gassing victims' skin.

On December 12, 1945 SILVIA KERSCH, who had been deported from Grodno to Treblinka on January 18, 1943, wrote to her relatives in the United States a letter in which she stated:[134]

> *"Tremblika* [sic] *was called the people's factory* [*fabryka ludzi*], *where thousands of people perished every day. There were '4 big furnaces'* [*4 wielkie piece*] *in which people were thrown alive for cremation. The sight was terrible. In a dense forest* [was] *a red ground-level building and 4 tall chimneys."*

The case of SAMUEL WILLENBERG is especially important because of what the witness did *not* report. According to him, he was deported to Treblinka in October 1942 and remained there until the day of the uprising. Donat reports his long testimony, which he introduces with these words (Donat, p. 189):

> *"The excerpts published here are part of his memoires* I Survived Treblinka, *which were written in 1945 in Lodz, and are now in the archives of the Israeli semi-annual* Moreshet. *The full memoirs will be published shortly."*

Although these "extracts" cover 25 pages (*ibid*., pp. 189-213), they do not contain the slightest mention of the alleged extermination procedure carried out at the camp. The Yad Vashem Archives preserve a long report by Willenberg in Polish in two parts: the first consists of 23 consecutively numbered pages, the first of which shows as a header the personal data of the witness, with the indication that at the time he lived in Łódź. The text is interrupted at page 23. The second part has seven pages numbered from 1 to 7, which begins with the sentence I report below. A handwritten note in Polish that is difficult to decipher

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134 YVA, O.33-2117, p. 4.

refers to Willenberg and Treblinka. This text should be the logical continuation of the one mentioned above, but in the archives' folder it has been placed before it.[135] The unique and remarkable fact is that the extermination procedure is not given on any of these 30 pages; the only veiled reference is this (I, p. 17):

> *"After each transport, they took away the clothing that was in a yard behind the barracks. This was the sorting process. After the performance of their workday, these people were directed naked to the chambers* [*do komór*]*."*

The Polish text is only partially similar to the one published by Donat. For example, Willenberg's opening sentence: "In the spring of 1943, we began to expand Treblinka" (II, p. 1), is rendered by Donat as follows: "In the meantime, we continued to expand the camp" (Donat, p. 199).

The following sentences, which are certainly not irrelevant, do not appear at all in the English translation (I, p. 1):

> *"Toward the end of 1943, when transports were arriving increasingly rarely, the Germans began to liquidate the Treblinka staff with great ferocity. If in the first months after my arrival at the camp the number of workers reached up to 2,000 – this was already in the winter of 1942-1943 – our number had decreased to 900. These 900 people were joined by 100 people from the transport from Warsaw that arrived in January 1943."*

The differences are also evident at the ends of the two texts; Polish text (I, p. 7):

> *"We quickly crossed a grove. We crossed a road. There were about 200 of us. We split up. Most of us, including Wiernik, ran along another road. The rest, along with me, went along the railroad and the road. Along the road, a small group of people from the surrounding villages were walking about. I shouted to them: 'Hell has burned down,' and looked towards the woods. Above the woods there was an intense glow. The cemetery of millions of Polish Jews had burned down."*

English text (Donat, pp. 212f.):

> *"In front of me and behind me, men are running. It is difficult today to figure out how many were saved. I presume that about 200 men broke out the route along which I escaped.*
> *On another side, about 150 escaped.*
> *Now I am running with all my might among the trees. I feel a pain in my leg. I am wearing boots, and I feel blood filling up my right boot. The woods come to an end. I cross a highway and am once again swallowed up in a thick damp forest.*
> *Warmth and pleasant odors all around me. Night falls."*

Willenberg's memoirs were published in 1986 in a Hebrew translation in Tel Aviv with the title *Mered be-Treblinka* (*Revolt at Treblinka*), then in an Eng-

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[135] YVA, M-49.P-247, pp. 1-7 and 1-23. To distinguish the two texts, I refer to them as II and I, respectively.

lish translation in 1989, titled *Surviving Treblinka*. But even this text displays a profound omission of the alleged extermination system, regarding which it presents two passages evidently taken from the Holocaust literature of the time (Willenberg, p. 52):

> *"Soon the yard was clean and tidy. A moment later, the racket of an engine reached us from afar.*
> *'Now they poison the people with gas', I was told with terrifying simplicity. 'With gas made by a diesel engine'."*
> *"This is how they pack about 400 people into each gas chamber. A diesel motor from a Soviet tank is started up, producing burning gas which is piped into the chambers. The man in charge of the motor is Ivan, the same brute who stuffed everyone into the gas chambers in the first place."* (*Ibid.*, p. 59)

Be that as it may, despite these late hints, Willenberg remains the least-informative witness to the extermination procedures allegedly used at Treblinka.

3.6. The Soviet Investigation (1944)

In the middle of August 1944, the 65th Soviet Army conquered the region around Treblinka. The camp had been dissolved a year earlier. The military investigating judge of this army's Military Office of Prosecution, First Lieutenant of Justice Jurowski, went to work immediately, supported by other officers – Major Kononyuk, Major V.S. Apresian, First Lieutenant F.A. Rodionov, Major M.E. Golovan, and Lieutenant N.V. Kadalo – and conducted investigations on the grounds of the camps Treblinka I and Treblinka II between August 15 and 23. They furthermore questioned witnesses: Samuel Rajzman, Lucjan Puchała, Marianna Kobus, Stanisław Zdonek, Barbara Zemkiewicz, Józef Pukaszek, Stanisław Krym, Cheni Trać, Hejnoch Brenner, Abe Kon, Stanisław Kon, Mieczysław Anyszkiewicz, Tadeusz Kan, Franciszek Wesolowski, Max Lewit and Kazimierz Skarżyński.[136]

On August 24, 1944, a mixed commission composed of the Soviet officers mentioned above as well as representatives of the local Polish authorities produced the first official report concerning the camps Treblinka I and II. Regarding Treblinka II it states:[137]

> *"The Treblinka II Camp was an enormous death combine. The entire Jewish population of all the nations of Europe occupied by the Germans, was brought here for burning, besides many 'unfit' people of other nationalities. The death factory in which the SS men ruthlessly and zealously exterminated millions of people was in operation around the clock for 13 months, from July 1942 until September 1943. This diabolical undertaking ceased to exist only after the prisoner revolt in the Jewish camp.*

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136 GARF, 7021-115-11, pp. 15-43.
137 *Akt*, August 24, 1944. GARF, 7021-115-9, pp. 103-110.

Dozens of witnesses attest to having seen how up to three transports of Jews, with 60 cars each, arrived in the camp on a daily basis. The trains left the camp either loaded with sand or empty.
Martyrs of the camp who survived recount that they were delivered in railway cars in which there were 150, 180, or even 200 persons each. While traveling they were dying of hunger. There was no water. They drank urine. […]
At the railway branch line at Treblinka there was something in the camp which resembled a fine train station; the length of the platform was reckoned for 20 cars. All special buildings, where people were murdered, were carefully camouflaged on the outside as beautiful facilities. The avenues were sprinkled with sand and bordered by flowers, garden beds and fir trees – all this in order to deceive the 'passengers.' […]
Some persons, who escaped the pyre through a miracle, have portrayed the nightmarish images of the incineration of people:
The Jews delivered to the camp were received by the SS unit. The men were led to a special square, but the women and children were taken to the barracks. Beautiful and young Jewesses were taken by the Germans for themselves for a night. All men, women, and children were told to undress. The women's hair was shorn and it was sent to Germany as raw material. The clothes were sorted and likewise sent to Germany. The victims were ordered to take along valuables – gold, paper money, documents. The naked people were shown to a cashier's counter one by one, and they were told to deposit everything. After they had done this, they were allowed to go on and were led along the sand-strewn, flower-bordered avenue into the 'bath,' where they were given soap, a towel and underclothing. After depositing of the valuables, already on the way to the 'bath,' the polite tone gave way to roughness. Those who were walking were urged on by rods and beaten with canes.
The 'bath' was a house, which consisted of 12 chambers, each 6 × 6 m in size. 400 to 500 people were driven at a time into one chamber. It had two doors, which could be sealed hermetically. In the corner, between ceiling and wall, were two openings connected with hoses. Behind the 'bath' stood a machine. It pumped the air out of the room. The people suffocated within 6 to 10 minutes. The second door was opened and the dead were brought on wheelbarrows to the special furnaces.
In these, important scholars, physicians, teachers, musicians, the relatives of noted personalities were cremated. In such a way the sister of the famous psychiatrist Sigmund Freud, the brother of the French Minister Sourez [?] *and others were incinerated. (Witness testimony of Abe Kon, Hejnoch Brenner, Samuel Rajzman).*

The report ends with six "conclusions," of which the most-important is the first:

"On the basis of the preliminary facts, the cremation of people has been determined beyond a doubt. The extent of the extermination of human beings was monstrous: about three million."

On September 11, a "Report of the front-line press TASS" was issued, bearing the title "The Death Camp in Tremblinka" (sic). I reproduce the most-significant excerpts:[138]

> *"Tremblinka! At this word people tremble and look fearfully around. People who lived in the vicinity of Tremblinka could not sleep at night: the screams of the men, women, and children whom they were murdering ripped through the darkness. The stench penetrated from there. They were burning people there.* […]
> *Tremblinka – that is the same as Majdanek. It is one of the numerous factories of death, with which the Germans thickly covered Polish soil.*
> *The 'Tod-Lager'* [German in original; correct: *Todeslager; death camp*]*, as the Germans themselves officially called it, was established close to Tremblinka sometime in June 1942.* […] *By the beginning of July, the first transport arrived, filled to bursting with people – with 'living raw material,' as the doomed were officially called. The camp gate opened to the sound of a lively march, and the stream of living people poured inside. From this point on, this stream was uninterrupted for two years. The voracious gate consumed up to two thousand people daily.* [[139]…]
> *A fat Unterscharführer sent the human chain into the 'bath.' This was a low square room without windows, with a heavy entrance door. A large hose, through which gas was carried, led into the 'bath.' The people were forcibly pushed into the 'bath,' the door was tightly closed with a steel bar, the Unterscharführer gave a signal, and the 'bath-master' switched on the machinery of death.*
> *In the beginning, the 'bath' had three compartments and could hold 1,200 people. The Germans, however, were not satisfied with this capacity, and they quickly constructed a new building three times as large. Here there were 8 chambers, and the bath could accommodate 4,800 people at a time.*
> *The people in the 'bath' died under horrible tortures after ten minutes. The 'bath-master' observed this by means of a small glass window in the door. Here, every minute was costly – after all, thousands of other people were waiting their turn. For this reason, the 'bath' functioned with German thoroughness. Those for whom there was no room were beaten dead or flung onto the pyre alive.*
> *The corpses were retrieved from the 'bath' by a special squad; they were stacked upon rails which ran across wide pits. In the pits a fire burned that was never extinguished. This was the final stage of the 'processing.' The corpses were cremated and the human ashes were brought to Germany to fertilize fields. Even the roads inside the camp were sprinkled with it.* […]
>
> *K. Egorov*
> *1. Byelo-Russian Front*
> *September 12*

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138 GARF, 7021-115-8, pp. 217-221.
139 In the text originally "up to 7,000 people," then corrected by hand.

Tass Special Correspondent"

On September 15, 1944 a Polish-Soviet Commission of Investigation of German Crimes consisting of the secretary, Dr. P. Sobolewski, the representative of the information and propaganda sector of a Polish institution, M. Chodzko, and the representative of the War Office of the 2nd Belorussian Front, G.E. Levakov, authored a "Protocol of a preliminary investigation and a provisional inspection in the former concentration camp 'Tremblinka'," which summarized the investigations carried out by the Soviet military judiciary. I quote the relevant passages of the report:[140]

> *"The site of Tremblinka lies 7 km from the railway junction of Małkinia in the Sokolowski District. The German criminals built a railway line to the place where the camp was located, in order to be able to bring the transports of prisoners directly and unobserved into the concentration camp.* […]
> *The concentration camp Tremblinka consisted of two sections, which were at a distance of one-and-a-half kilometers from each other. The first section was named 'Death Camp No. 2.' This camp, on whose grounds only two burned-down farm buildings can now be found, was divided into two parts, and a railroad track led to this Camp No. 2. Here, something along the lines of a train station was constructed in order to disguise the actual mission – extermination. A three-layer fence was camouflaged with tree branches. For this reason, the people taken here believed initially that they were at a transit point on their journey to the east.*
> *In the first section of Death Camp No. 2, the prisoners who had been interned there had to undress. They were instructed to deposit their clothing at a certain place, and then forced to run naked with arms raised in the direction of the so-called bath. This was only a sham bath; it was actually a gas chamber consisting of three rooms. In the beginning, the method of pumping the air out of rooms by means of a small car motor was employed. Then, as a result of the great number of those destined for death, they began to use chemicals. About 400 people could be crowded into this space at a time. On the roof of this – hermetically sealable – building was a small window, through which the death struggle of the dying could be observed.* [[141]…] *Approximately 400 Jews worked at this chamber; they dragged out the corpses of those asphyxiated and threw them into enormous trenches which were located in the area of Death Camp No. 2 and which had been prepared beforehand and dug out by an excavator.*
> *In the winter of 1943, the German murderers proceeded to exhume and burn the corpses. For this purpose, they also used an excavator. The personal documents found here, torn into pieces and thrown away, prove that citizens of Poland, of the Soviet Union, of Czechoslovakia and other nations, members of the intelligentsia as well as simple workers, were killed here.*

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140 GARF, 7021-115-11, pp. 43-47.

141 A similar device, as I showed in the previous chapter, was also attributed to the alleged killing chambers of Sobibór.

The second section of the concentration camp was named 'Camp No. 1' and was located one-and-a-half kilometers away from the Death Camp. […]
The objects found bear witness to the fact that here men, women, and children of every age were interned here, entire families. The things found, such as violin parts, children's toys, devices for waving the hair [hair curlers], *books and the like, show that many came to this place who did not suspect their journey's destination. Pieces of burned and destroyed passports confirm that citizens from Poland, the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and other nations occupied by the Germans were interned here."*

On September 24, the Soviet investigative commission drew the first official map of the Treblinka Camp.[142]

What did the interviewed witnesses know about the extermination system alleged used at the Treblinka Camp?

ABE KON, a former Treblinka prisoner, stated on August 17, 1944:[143]

"I was sent into the Treblinka Camp in October 1942 with my relatives – father, mother, two sisters, a brother. […] *The naked people walking by were struck by whips. They were walking to a building, which had been nicely built with cement. A Jewish symbol, the 'Star of David,' was attached to the house. At the entrance to the 'bath' stood a Ukrainian with a knife and whip. He stabbed those who did not want to enter with the knife and dragged them into the building. The service staff named this Ukrainian 'Ivan the Terrible.'*
Plan of the 'Bath': The bathhouse consisted of 12 compartments. Each compartment measured 6 × 6 m. The height amounted to 2.5 m. They drove 400 people in each cabin. The people stood. They threw the children on their heads. The compartmentshad two doors, which could be sealed hermetically. In the corner between ceiling and wall two openings were connected with hoses. Behind the 'bath' stood a machine. It pumped the air out of the compartments. The people suffocated within 6 to 15 minutes. The second door was opened and the people were dragged out. Their teeth were examined and golden teeth were ripped out. From there the bodies were carried away on stretchers and were buried in the ground. They weren't buried any farther than 100 m away from the 'bath.' People were driven into the 'bath' three times a day. In this way 15,000 to 18,000 persons were destroyed each day. That's how it went for two months. Later, machines dug these bodies up and they were cremated in furnaces. There were no fewer than one million burned.
Later, the extermination process proceeded as follows: suffocation and burning. They were incinerated in a specially manufactured furnace, which could hold up to 6,000 bodies. The furnace was filled with corpses. Gasoline or petroleum was poured over them and burned. The cremation lasted up to an hour. […] *Those who could not walk to the 'bath' – invalids, old people – were sent to the 'hospital'; they went there. They were placed at the edge of a deep pit on the bottom of which was a pyre made up of human beings. The victims were*

142 Reproduced in: Mattogno/Graf, p. 337.
143 GARF, 7021-115-11, pp. 33f.

shot in the back of the neck, whereupon they fell into the pit and burned. So it went, day after day."

On August 22, Abe Kon gave another deposition, in which, strangely enough, the description of the "bath" presents a different element, as is evident from the following comparative analysis of the two texts:

– Deposition of August 17, as just quoted:

"The bathhouse consisted of 12 compartments. Each compartment measured 6 × 6 m. The height amounted to 2.5 m. They drove 400 people in each compartment. The people stood. They threw the children on their heads.
The compartments had two doors, which could be sealed hermetically. In the corner between ceiling and wall two openings were connected with hoses. Behind the 'bath' stood a machine. It pumped the air out of the compartments. The people suffocated within 6 to 15 minutes."
"Баня состояла из 12 кабин. Каждая кабина 6 х 6 метров. Высота 2,5 метра. В кабину загоняли по 400 человек. Люди стояли. Сверху на них набрасывались дети.
Кабина имела двое дверей герметически закрывавшихся. В углу между потолком и стеной было два отверстия соединенные шлангами. За "баней" стояла машина. Она выкачивала воздух из камер.
Люди задыхались через 6 – 15 минут."

– Deposition of August 22:[144]

"The bathhouse consisted of 12 compartments of about 6x6 meters each, 2.5 meters high. They used to put 400 people in each compartment. People stood there huddled together. Children were thrown on top of them. The gas was turned on. After 6 to 15 minutes – death."
"Баня состояла из 12 кабин примерно 6х6 метров каждая, высотой 2,5 метра. В кабину загоняли человек по 400. Люди стояли там тесно прижавшись друг к другу. Сверху на них бросили детей. Пускали газ. Через 6 – 15 минут – смерть."

The underlined words are identical or differ only in case or position in the sentence. Basically, the witness replaced the machine that sucked air from the chambers with an indeterminate gas.

On August 22, 1944, the Pole KAZMIERZ SKARŻYŃSKI gave the following statement:[145]

"Incarcerated Jews in the camp reported that many hundreds of prisoners at a time were penned in hermetically sealed chambers and were asphyxiated by pumping out the air. The people died very quickly – in 10 or 12 minutes. According to the stories of the Jews, the furnace was a pit of 25 m in length, 20 m wide and 5-6 m deep, with a grate made out of train rails on the bottom of the pit, which served as an air vent. The bodies were piled on the rails and burned. The glow from the fire was visible at a distance of 15 km. During the day a

144 Sverdlov, p. 106. The statement is signed "R. Kon," but it is undoubtedly Abe Kon.
145 GARF, 7021-115-11, p. 16.

> *black smoke spread. In a strong wind, the smell of burning was still perceptible 30 km from the camp."*

Kazimierz Skarżyński also gave another deposition – the day after the one mentioned above, hence on August 23 1944, in which, like Abe Kon, he removed the reference to pumping the air from the death chambers:[146]

> *"The Jews died in a special chamber* [в специальной камере] *in 10-12 minutes. The pit in which they were burned was 250 meters long, 20 meters wide and 5-6 meters deep, with a grate of rails at the bottom that formed an air vent. The corpses were thrown onto the rails in piles. The fire was visible at 15 kilometers, and the stench of burning could be smelled at 30 kilometers. The screams of the Jews, who were taken to the gas chambers* [к газовым камерам], *could be heard 2-3 kilometers away."*

The impetus for these significant changes is not apparent. It could be assumed that at the beginning the two witnesses had only indirect knowledge and that after the first interrogation they changed their version by talking to other survivors who had more-direct knowledge. However, together with Rajzman, they were undoubtedly the most-direct witnesses in the group of those interrogated by the Soviets. Lucjan Puchała was a railway employee;[147] Marianna Kobus was a resident of a nearby village;[148] Stanisław Zdonek was a former inmate of the Treblinka I Camp,[149] as was Barbara Zemkiewicz;[150] Józef Pukaszek worked on filling railway cars with sand;[151] Stanisław Krym had been interned at Treblinka I;[152] Cheni Trać spoke only about a shooting at Treblinka I on June 23, 1944.[153] Regarding the alleged extermination method, HEJNOCH BRENNER was even less-specific than Kon and Skarżyński:[154]

> *"Each convoy consisted of 6,000 people. The 'bath'* ['баня'] *killed 5,000 people at a time."*

STANISŁAW KON stated that he had been deported to Treblinka on October 2, 1942, but he knew nothing about the alleged extermination method:[155]

> *"The camp for the extermination of the Jews was established in July 1942.* […] *Over the course of 13 months, 15,000 to 18,000 people were killed every day. For about 2 months, fewer transports arrived: for 1 or 2 there were no transports at all. I think that in total about 3 million were exterminated."*

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146 *Ibid.*, p. 109.
147 *Ibid.*, p. 15, undated interrogation protocol.
148 *Ibid.*, p. 19, interrogation protocol of August 15, 1944.
149 *Ibid.*, p. 20, undated interrogation protocol.
150 *Ibid.*, p. 21, undated interrogation protocol.
151 *Ibid.*, p. 26, undated interrogation protocol.
152 *Ibid.*, p. 28, interrogation protocol of August 23, 1944.
153 *Ibid.*, p. 29, interrogation protocol of August 26, 1944.
154 *Ibid.*, pp. 30-32, interrogation protocol of August 17, 1944; quote from p. 30.
155 *Ibid.*, p. 35, interrogation protocol of August 18, 1944.

Mieczysław Anyszkiewicz was only a former detainee of Treblinka I,[156] just as Tadeusz Kan[157] and Franciszek Wesolowski.[158] Even Max Lewit was only interned at the Treblinka I Labor Camp, although he was a Jew from Warsaw.[159]

None of the other witnesses questioned by the Soviets up to August 23, 1944 had more precise knowledge than Kon and Skarżyński, and their subsequent introduction of "gas" or "gas chambers" was even less-detailed than the fabulous air-suction machine they had previously mentioned, but it was to this latter version that the Soviet investigators adhered in their report of August 24, 1944.

This demonstrates that neither Kon nor Skarżyński knew anything about any killing system notionally used on millions of Jews was, and that they were limited to imaginative conjecture, a fact that is moreover explicitly confirmed by Abe Kon in his interrogation by Polish official of October 7, 1945, which I discuss in the next subchapter.

But this also applies to SAMUEL RAJZMAN. On July 28, 1944, he made an 8-page statement in Lublin in Polish that bears the heading "Report from the Treblinka Death Camp. Personal experience." The following narrative appears in it:[160]

> *"After the women's hair was cut, they passed into the bathing facility, which consisted of 10 compartments, each of which contained 700-800 people. In these compartments were even hung towels and the rules of the bathing establishment. After people had been let into the compartments, they were hermetically sealed and with a machine the air was sucked out / at first, then they began to use toxic gases* [*gazy trujące*]. *People were asphyxiated in this way. People stayed in the compartments 10-20 minutes, because the time or the mass of people waiting did not allow* [taking] *the "bath" for a longer time. After 20 minutes they were thrown onto the hearth* [*na palenisko*] *and it often happened that after being thrown into the fire the victims would utter cries, but the German criminals did not react to this; at most they ordered them to cover them with corpses and on rare occasions they would take pity and shoot these people."*

The witness also presented a count of the camp's alleged victims, which shows 2,774,000 casualties.[161]

This statement was published in English translation in March 1945 by the U.S. government's Committee on Foreign Affairs with the title "Uprising in Treblinka" (Rajzman, pp. 120-125).

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156 *Ibid.*, p. 36, interrogation protocol of August 15, 1944.
157 *Ibid.*, p. 37, interrogation protocol of August 16, 1944.
158 *Ibid.*, pp. 38f., undated interrogation protocol.
159 *Ibid.*, pp. 40-42, undated interrogation protocol.
160 S. Rajzman, "Sprawozdanie z obozu śmierci w Treblince. Przeżycie własne." AAN, 212-III-2, p. 105.
161 *Ibid.*, p. 109.

In August of 1944, Rajzman wrote a 16-page report titled "'*Kombinat smerti' v Treblinke*" ("The Treblinka 'Death Factory'"), in which he described this camp's extermination method as follows:[162]

> *"After the shearing* [of their hair], *the women were sent into the 'bathing facility,' which consisted of a row of chambers, each of which could hold 700 persons. In the chambers, towels were hanging and a sign with the inscription 'Rules for using the bath'! The people were led in, and the doors were hermetically sealed. In the beginning, the method of pumping out the air was employed: the people died the death of asphyxiation under frightful torments. As time went by, the Germans switched to poisoning with gas, which went more rapidly. Each group stayed in the chamber from 12 to 20 minutes, no longer, for masses of new arrivals were waiting for their turn in the 'bath.' After twenty minutes, the bodies were already afire on an enormous pyre. Sometimes, desperate lamentation sounded from the fire. The Germans paid no attention to it – an expression of the 'extraordinary German tenderheartedness.' There were instances when one of the Germans delivered the coup de grâce to one of those thrown alive into the fire. Before the bodies fell into the fire, they were examined by a group of 'dentists', who checked whether perhaps there were teeth, crowns, or fillings of gold present; all of it was torn from the mouths of the dead with pliers.*
>
> *The corpses were burned in a huge pit. Cement foundations were erected on its bottom, upon which a grate made from railway rails was fixed. Under the grate burned an intense fire, into which some kind of fluid dripped* [from the corpses]. *The workers at the furnace* [sic] *were changed every two days, and only rarely did anyone remain more than a week at this 'work.' They were replaced by a fresh labor force, which came in with the new trains day after day. In 'reward' for their days of labor, these prisoners were not sent into the 'bath,' but were killed instead by a shot to the back of the neck."*

Later, on September 26, 1944, Rajzman was interrogated by Lieutenant Jurowski. The witness stated that he had arrived in Treblinka on September 27, 1942 and had remained there until August 2, 1943. Therefore, according to his statement, he spent more than ten months in the camp and must have known all about the gas chambers and their function, if there were any. Yet he reported the following:[163]

> *"Dr. Horonschitzki likewise had no access to the chambers, but of what was known to him, he told me the following: the people were driven in large parties into the chambers of the so-called 'baths.' These chambers were hermetically sealed. In the first period, the killing occurred by means of pumping out the air from the chambers; then one resorted to other methods – poisoning by chlorine gas and Cyclon gas. On the camp territory there was a special store of materi-*

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[162] S. Rajzman, "'Комбинат смерти' в Треблинке." GARF, 7021-115-8, pp. 7f. This deposition, mentioned in the August 24, 1944 report by representatives of the Soviet 65th Army, was acquired by the Soviets as evidence.

[163] USSR-337, p. 9 of the German translation.

als with a large amount (up to 15 tons) of so-called Chloren.[164] *Chloren came in blocks, white in color. I saw how barrels of this Chloren were carried into the second section every day."*

A few days earlier, on September 21, Jurowski had interrogated another witness, ABRAHAM ISAAK GOLDFARB. His report became one of the documents prepared by the Soviets for the Nuremberg IMT. It was later translated into German. The witness claimed that he had been deported to Treblinka from "Mensischez Podlaski", probably Międzyrzec Podlaski, on August 18, 1942. On an unspecified date, Goldfarb made another statement in Hebrew and Yiddish of which Yitzhak Arad is the only one to report excerpts. Since Goldfarb mentions "Ivan Demaniuk [sic]," it can be considered certain that this statement was made after 1986, the year in which John Demjanjuk was extradited from the United States to Israel on the charge of being "Ivan the Terrible," whose surname Goldfarb did not know in 1944.

In the two statements, the antecedents – the journey and the arrival – are narrated with significant differences. In 1944, he recounted:[165]

"On August 18, the transport, which consisted of about 80 cars, pulled in [to the camp]. *The cars were so crowded with people – suffice it to say that in my car there were 215 men.* […]

We left the town of Mansischez on August 18 at 11:00 in the morning. We arrived at Treblinka Station at 5:00 a.m. on the 19th of August. We were forced to stand at all times; not only were we not given food and water, but any attempt to obtain water from outside was prevented by shooting us on the spot. We had to defecate in the cars themselves. […]

From Malinka [Malkinia] *Station onward, our transport no longer consisted of 80 cars, but only of 20. The remaining 60 cars stayed behind temporarily at Malinka Station until the 20 cars were unloaded. When the doors of the cars were opened at the station – Treblinka Camp – it turned out that in 9 car 50-100 people each had died along the way. In the remaining 11 wagons, almost all died of asphyxiation. On the other hand, only a few corpses showed traces of gunshot wounds – this was the work of the gendarmes en route. For example, in our car, the mortality was relatively insignificant – 15 men – and all of them died of asphyxiation – because there were 8 little windows. The cars were intended for the transport of birds."*

At Treblinka, the witness learned from a certain Leib Czarny that the guards had fired bullets filled with toxic gases [*Giftgase*] at the deportees in the railway cars!

And here is the later version for the Demjanjuk Trial:[166]

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164 The term has the signification of "chlorination" (sterilization with chlorine), but evidently is used here as a synonym for chlorine.

165 USSR-380. "*Zeugenvernehmungsprotokoll*" of A.I. Goldfarb, pp. 2-4.

166 Arad 1987, pp. 64 and 84 (two different quotes from Goldfarb's testimony). The archival reference is: "YVA, 0-3/1846, testimony of Abraham Goldfarb."

> *"At the end of August 1942, the Germans carried out the expulsion from Mazaritz.* [sic…] *When the Jews were brought to the railway station, the Germans forced 150-200 of them into a freight car designed for sixty or seventy. The cars were closed from the outside with boards. Water and food were not provided. People were suffocating; there was no air to breathe. Before we moved off, the Germans sprinkled chlorine in the cars. It burned the eyes. The weaker among us fainted. People climbed on top of each other and banged on the walls with whatever they could find. The children were so thirsty they licked their mothers' sweat. ... There were 150 people in our freight car. During the two-day trip to Treblinka, 135 suffocated.* […]
> *When we reached Treblinka and the Germans opened the freight-car doors, the scene was ghastly. The cars were full of corpses. The bodies had been partially consumed by chlorine."*

It should be pointed out first of all that Arad writes that Goldfarb arrived at Treblinka on August 25, 1942 (Arad 1987, p. 84). This information was undoubtedly taken from the witness's statement. However, in 1944, Goldfarb had claimed to have arrived at Treblinka on the 19th. This is only the first of multiple contradictions. The journey lasted either "two days" or 18 hours. Goldfarb's car contained either 215 people, of whom 15 died, or 150 people, of whom 135 died. Furthermore, in the 1944 version there is no mention of the cars having been sprinkled with "chlorine." Finally, it should be noted that, according to the ruling of the Düsseldorf Jury Court of September 3, 1965, Treblinka Camp's railway platform could accommodate 20 railway cars, but any surplus cars waited at Treblinka Station, not Małkinia Station (Rückerl, p. 217).

This beginning already shows that the reliability of the witness is highly doubtful.

In his 1944 deposition, Goldfarb described the alleged extermination facilities at Treblinka in great detail. As soon as he arrived at the camp, he was assigned to unload the corpses from the railway cars and take them to mass graves. He was then part of the group of 980 male inmates and 25 female inmates who worked at the camp. He always remained in Camp 2, and was in charge of transporting corpses from the gas chambers to the mass graves, together with a group of 200-300 Jews. In this context, Goldfarb also mentions the "later author of the booklet 'Death in Treblinka' Jakob Werni [*sic*]" (USSR-380, p. 5).

Since this testimony is practically unknown, I present the essential part of his account despite its length (*ibid.*, pp. 5-7):

> *"One week after my arrival in the camp I was employed together with 25 other prisoners in the construction of the building with compartments in which people were murdered later. Already at my arrival at the camp, there was a building which contained 3 compartments for murdering people. The building was located in the forest, 200 meters from the platform of Treblinka Station. Access to the building was controlled by a fence made of barbed wire, which was cov-*

ered with pine branches for camouflage. In itself, this building was an ordinary one-story brick building with an iron roof.
From the entrance steps, one first entered a wooden annex, which resembled a corridor. Both the entrance door and the three iron doors leading from this annex to the three chambers of this house were hermetically sealable. Each of these three chambers has the size of 5 meters long, 4 meters wide and 2 meters high. The floor and the walls were covered with tiles in a cement-like fashion. Each chamber had an opening in the ceiling, which was covered with a net. Along the wall of the chamber was a pipe with a peculiar branch and a net-like bottom. This branch was almost at the wall itself. The wall had a significantly sooty area at this spot. Opposite this entrance door is an equally hermetically sealable exit door. All three doors of these chambers open sideways. At the house, there is a cement ramp. This is the brief description of this building.
Once at night – in mid-September 1942 – I and a group of prisoners were given the task of carrying the bodies of murdered people out of this building. I can tell something about the method of this murdering. Each of these chambers was extraordinarily densely packed with corpses. Both the chambers themselves and the corpses emitted a mixed smell of processed gases and burning, and most of the corpses had traces of significant bruising coming from their mouths. During the first period, a narrow-gauge track led to the building, upon which we transported corpses in small carts to the pits. On the question of the building's equipment and the mechanics of extermination of people, it is extremely important to add that in the annex of the building, an ordinary tractor-engine was set up, which was put into operation in two cases: when the chambers were filled with people, and for lighting purposes. From this generator, a pipe originated, through which the gases flowed out. This pipe led into the building through the floor to each chamber – as I said already – through the branching pipe. The second pipe of the generator led directly to the street. That is clear. When the engine served the purpose of exterminating people, the gases were introduced into the chambers through the system of pipes, but when it served the basic purpose of supplying the electric network, the gases went directly to the outside. The engine was operated by 2 guards – the first of them was Ivan, who was called 'Ivan the Terrible' in the camp."

The other guard's name was Nikolai. Goldfarb explains that, before entering the chambers, many people had had their ears, noses and other body parts cut off, and women had had their breasts cut off; then he continues as follows (*ibid.*, pp. 8-10):

"Now I would like to proceed to the description of the construction of the new building, which was designated for suffocating people, that is, go back to that point where I started the narration of the tragedy of the old house. The new building was built 20 meters away from the old one. 120 workers – Jews – were employed on its construction. In charge of the construction was the German engineer – Scharführer (I no longer remember his name). The construction lasted from the last days of August and was finished in the last days of November 1942. The new building 'Gasierungsgebaeude' [a non-existing German

term] *differed from the old one only by its size. It was significantly larger. It was also a one-story brick building. There were no wooden annexes. A road led to this building, which led from Camp No. 1 to our Camp No. 2. Around the building was a fence with barbed wire, which was covered with pine branches. The entrance to this building was reminiscent of a religious institution: on the top of the roof was a sign of David – Zion's Star – and on the sides, a peculiar altar was located. All this was decorated with flowers, so that externally no one could think that the tempting institution was a gassing building. The stairs led to a long corridor with 5 chambers on the right and on the left, with the only difference that on the left side, next to the last chamber, there was a small room for the engine. The chambers were connected with the corridor by doors covered with absorbent cotton and cloth, and hermetically sealable. Light fell into the corridor through windows located in the roof itself. Each chamber was 6 x 6 m square, 2 m high. The walls were covered with lime* [plaster?], *the floor was made of cement. The chambers were illuminated by windows located in the roof. In the wall in the corridor there were special small round openings and little spy windows for observation from the corridor, namely to see what was going on in the chamber.*

Opposite the entrance door was an exit door; however, these were not opened sideways, but from the illuminated bottom up, and they were on special hinges. Near each door was a ramp made of cement, on which the corpses were piled up for removal. The poisoning of the people was done in the same way as in the first building. From the engine, the pipes from which the gas flowed ran along the corridor to the chambers. One such pipe led to each chamber. There were special openings in the roof for the gas to flow out of the chamber. In fact, when this gassing building started its activity, it turned out that the engine would not be able to supply all 10 chambers with enough gas. It was sufficient only for 2 chambers. Then, for some time, while the engine was being repaired, another method of extermination – even more torturous – was introduced.

A significant amount of chlorinated lime was hurriedly brought to the building. A certain amount of chlorinated lime in a moistened state was put inside the chamber, which was then hermetically sealed. The extermination process of the people in the chamber lasted incomparably longer, and therefore was much more torturous. The people were kept in the chambers for 24 hours, and sometimes some remained alive. In connection with the fact that the gas supply to the chambers completely met the 'requirements', this [type of] *exterminating the people in this cheap way lasted the whole winter. The engine was started up in April 1943. This engine was operated by the German named Thomasch and the already-known Ivan and Nikolai. Thus, the extermination of many hundreds of thousands of people went on with the help of their poisoning by the gases produced by the engine."*

Regarding the number of victims, Goldfarb affirmed (*ibid.*, p. 11):

"The number of people exterminated in the camp is difficult to determine. Every 24 hours, up to 5,000 people were killed on average. There were also days

when transports of 1,000 people arrived, and there were days when their number reached 10,000 and 15,000."

In the later statement made in Israel, Goldfarb described the alleged gassing procedure in a very superficial manner, but added a few new elements that he had learned in the meantime:[167]

"At the entrance to the gas chambers stood the two Ukrainians, Ivan Demaniuk [sic] *and Nikolai, one of them armed with an iron bar, the other with a sword. Even they drove the people inside with blows… As soon as the gas chambers were full, the Ukrainians closed the doors and started the engine. Some twenty to twenty-five minutes later an SS man or a Ukrainian looked through a window in the door. When he had made sure that everyone had been asphyxiated, the Jewish prisoners had to open the doors and remove the corpses. Because the chambers were overcrowded and the victims had held on to one another, they were all standing upright and were like one single mass of flesh."*

I will return to the testimonies of Wiernik and Goldfarb in Section 3.9.2.

The journalist Vasily Grossman went to Treblinka in September 1944, during the Soviet investigation, and drafted a long article titled "Треблинский ад" ("*Treblinskij Ad*", "Treblinka Hell"). The 36-page typescript[168] appeared two months later in the Soviet newspaper *Znamja* with the same title (Grossman 1944). In 1946, this article was summarized in the *Black Book* under the headline "Report from Treblinka." It opens with a kind of preface with a description of the background (Grossman 1946, p. 398), which in the original typescript is found within the text:[169]

"Everything written below was compiled on the basis of the accounts of living witnesses, the testimonies of people who worked in Treblinka from the first day of its existence until August 2, 1943, when the rebellious, doomed inmates burned down the camp and fled into the forest; on the basis of the depositions of arrested guards,[170] *who confirmed word-for-word and supplemented the witnesses' accounts in many respects. I myself saw these people, spoke with them at length and in detail; their written accounts are before me on the table."*

Grossman conducted a journalistic investigation, parallel to the judicial one, to which he had access. In his report, he described the first alleged extermination facility as follows:[171]

"The first 3 concrete chambers were not large, 5 x 5 meters, or an area of 25 square meters [each]. *The height of a chamber was 130* [190[172]] *centimeters. In*

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167 Arad 1993, pp. 126f.; in Arad 1987, p. 86, he quoted only the initial, rather irrelevant, part of this text.

168 V. Grossman, "Treblinskij ad," GARF, 7021-115-8, pp. 168-203.

169 *Ibid.*, pp. 170f. (pp. 3f. of the typescript).

170 The Soviets did not arrest any Treblinka guards.

171 *Ibid.*, pp. 184f. (pp. 17f. of the typescript).

172 The typescript has 130, but this was changed to 190 in the subsequent article. Grossman 1944, p. 133.

each chamber, there were two doors, one through which people were let in, the other for the removal of the corpses [of those] *gassed. This second door was very wide, about two and a half meters. The chambers were installed together on a foundation."*

Regarding the second facility, Grossman wrote:[173]

"The area of each chamber was 7 x 8 meters, or 56 square meters. The total area of the ten new chambers was 560 meters [square]*, and including the area of the three old chambers, which continued to operate in case of the arrival of small groups, Treblinka had an industrial killing area of 635 meters* [square]*. 400-500 people were put together in one chamber. Thus, when fully loaded, an average of 4,500 people were exterminated in 10 chambers with each batch."*

On the alleged killing system, he elaborated in even-more detail:[174]

"Various means were used to bring about death. One was to push into the chambers the exhaust gases of an engine, taken from a heavy tank, which was used to produce electricity for the camp. These gases contained 2-3% carbon monoxide, which combines with the hemoglobin in the blood to form a stable compound known as carboxyhemoglobin. Carboxyhemoglobin is far more stable than the compound of oxygen and hemoglobin that forms in the alveoli in the process of respiration. In 15 minutes, all the hemoglobin in the blood combines with carbon monoxide, and breathing ceases to have any real effect. A person gasps for air, but the oxygen does not reach their body, and they begin to suffocate; the heart beats frantically, carrying blood to the lungs, but this blood, poisoned as it is by carbon monoxide, is unable to absorb oxygen. Breathing becomes shallow and labored, consciousness becomes clouded. The people show all the symptoms of agony from suffocation, and die as if strangled.

The second method adopted at Treblinka, the one used most-frequently, was pumping the air out of the chambers with special pumps [откачивание с помощью специальных насосов воздуха из камер / otkačivanie s pomoš'ju spetzial'nykh nasosov vozdukha iz kamer] – *death began from causes roughly similar to carbon-monoxide poisoning: people were deprived of oxygen."*

Grossman was clearly inspired by Jankiel Wiernik's account, which was already known to the Soviet investigating judge Jurowski (see Subchapter 3.8.).

Similar information can also be found in an undated report, yet undoubtedly from 1945, by a certain JANINA BUCHHOLCOWA (Bukolska) titled "The Treblinka Death Camp", where we read:[175]

"At the beginning of the camp's existence (at the end of July), the gassing chambers were not yet ready, and the 'elimination' of the transports took place in this way: on the railway platform, machine-gun fire was immediately opened on the people climbing out. Very quickly, the first 3 chambers were built, which

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173 *Ibid.*, p. 186 (p. 19 of the typescript).
174 *Ibid.*, pp. 186f. (pp. 19f. of the typescript).
175 J. Buchholcowa (Bukolska), *Obóz śmierci w Treblinke*. AAN, 212-III-1, p. 11.

could 'liquidate' 1,200-1,500 people at a time. But this 'yield' did not satisfy the Germans, who shortly afterwards (in September) built a large building with 10 chambers, which could swallow 6,000-7,000 people at a time. The average daily 'production' was 12,000 corpses, but in the periods of greater intensity, it reached 20,000.

In the chambers, they killed by pumping out the air and injecting into the chambers exhaust gas from a motor [*przez wypompowywanie powietrze i wpuszczanie do komór gazu z motoru spalinovego*]*, then toxic 'cyklon' gas was also used instead."*

3.7. The Polish Investigation (1945-1946)

On November 6, 1945, Investigating Judge Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz inspected the site of the former Treblinka Camp in the presence of Jerzy Maciejewski, prosecutor of the Siedlce District Court, the accredited surveyor Karol Trautsolt, the witnesses Samuel Rajzman, Henryk Reichman-Romanowski and Stanisław Kucharek, and the mayor of the village of Wólka Okrąglik.[176] I will return to the results of the inspection in Chapter 6.

In January 1946, RACHEL AUERBACH wrote a report in Yiddish in Łódź about the visit titled "*Oyf di felder fun Treblinke*" ("On the Fields of Treblinka"), which was published in 1947.[177]

Already in 1943, she had written a long manuscript, in which she referred to Treblinka in this way:[178]

"The steam chambers [*komory parowe*] *i.e. the 'baths', as well as the 'furnaces'* [*piece*] *are built – that much is clear – so that from the inside of them no one comes out alive."*

By 1946, Auerbach already had access to a range of literature and testimonies about Treblinka (the writings of Krzepicki, Wiernik, Grossman, Łukaszkiewicz; Donat, pp. 26f.). Nevertheless, her description of the "bathing establishment" still had imaginary elements, such as the suction pump, the "tank" of combustion gases, and the blue corpses (*ibid*., pp. 34-36):

"This was a gray-white building with all the accoutrements of a regular public bath in the inside: 'cabins,' plus a few chimneys protruding from the roof.

You entered the cabins from a corridor through doors just big enough to admit one person at a time. The door had been made so narrow on purpose, so that people who were already inside would not attempt to break down the door and escape. The cabins were lined with white tiles halfway up the walls. The floor

176 AGK, NTN 69, pp. 90f.

177 Auerbach 1947. On p. 13, the editing date is given as "Lodzsch, Januar 1946."

178 R. Auerbach, "Oni to nazwali wysiedleniem… (Rzecz o wytępieniu Żydów w Polsce)" ("They called it resettlement… (The truth about the extermination of the Jews in Poland)"). GFHA, Catalog No. 3168, Collection 11237, p. 23.

> *sloped down to wide, hermetically sealed chutes,*[179] *facing the entrance gate. Real showers were set in the ceiling of the rooms, but they were not connected to any water pipe. They were connected to something else: Initially, in the first building, there were three cabins. Later, when the enterprise had proven 'viable', it was expanded. A second 'bathhouse' of the same type was constructed, bigger and nicer than the first one, with 10 cabins inside.* […]
> *The motor, installed in a workshop near the bathhouse, could be started now. First, a suction pump was brought into play to draw the pure air from the chamber. After that, the pipe to the reservoir of exhaust gas from the motor could be opened.*[180]
> *'A few minutes later,' Jews who had worked in that part of the camp recalled, 'we would hear terrible screams from that building.' The screams of human pain, terror and despair. At the last moment, it seems, when the pumps started to suck out breathable air, all self-control broke, and there was an outbreak of collective hysteria inside the gas chamber.*
> *Later… in due time… all was quiet again…*
> *Perhaps 25 to 45 minutes later, the chutes*[179] *on the other side could be opened and the corpses tumbled out. The bodies were naked; some of them were white, others were blue and bloated."*

In his final report titled "The Treblinka Extermination Camp," Łukaszkiewicz mentioned the following witnesses: Jankiel Wiernik, Henryk Poswolski, Abe Kon, Aron Czechowicz, Oskar Strawczyński, Samuel Reisman [sic], Alexander Kudlik, Hejnoch Brener [sic], Stanisław Kon, Eugeniusz Turowski, Henryk Reichman, Szyja Warszawski and Leon Finkelsztein (Łukaszkiewicz 1946a, p. 133). In this report, the Polish judge reported excerpts from some of the testimony; other excerpts were published by Marian Muszkat in 1948 (*Polish Charges*…, pp. 187-196).

JANKIEL WIERNIK (who also called himself Jan Smarzyński) was interrogated by the Polish judge on October 12, and made a brief statement,[181] to which I will return in Section 3.9.1.

On January 4, 1947, Wiernik was heard as a witness during the trial of Ludwig Fischer, the German wartime governor of the Warsaw District, which took place from December 17, 1946 to March 3, 1947.[182] He claimed the following about the alleged gas chambers:

> *"Ten such chambers were built; previously there were only three. When the chambers were newly built, work began in them as* [only] *the Germans could do: normally, systematically, from 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. and, after the lunch break, until 6* [p.m.]. *When larger transports arrived, 12,000-15,000 and even 18,000*

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179 The original Yiddish text has here "קליאפע" ("*kliape*"), equivalent to German *Klappe* = a hinged lid/flap.

180 Yiddish text: "Then the tank reservoir [*rezervuar*], where the engine's combustion gas is collected, is attached"; Auerbach, p. 39.

181 AGK, NTN 69, pp. 31f.

182 AGK, NTN 75, pp. 6-17.

> [people] *were killed daily* [sic]. *From January 1, 1943, 8,000-12,000 began* [to arrive], *and then increasingly more.*
> *President – So there were up to 18,000 murdered per day?*
> *Witness Wiernik – Yes.*
> *President – How many chambers were there?*
> *Witness – Three and then thirteen. These new gas chambers were 7 x 7 meters and therefore about 50 square meters, or 95 m³ in volume. 1,000 or even 1,500 people were pushed in at a time. They were thrown in as long as there was room. Once they* [the Germans] *had enough chambers available, they worked systematically, as I say. When a transport arrived after 6 o'clock, when the chambers were already closed, the people were let into the chambers without releasing the gas, so that the people suffered all night long. In the morning, they would open the chambers … (the witness cries). When they opened the chambers in the morning, there were often people still alive, mostly children of 10, 13, 14 years of age. When the children tried to escape, they* [the Germans] *would shoot them one by one. He who managed to shoot a child was happy."*

Wiernik further stated that "in late January or early February 1943, Himmler arrived. He was accompanied by three people in military uniforms," one of whom was Ludwig Leist, at that time mayor of Warsaw, who was a co-defendant during the Fischer Trial.

Defense attorney Sliwowski then asked the witness why, in his booklet *A Year in Treblinka*, he did not mention Leist's presence when reporting on Himmler's visit to Treblinka. Wiernik replied:

> *"This was a surprise to me. I didn't know Leist, I see him now for the first time.*
> *President – Does the witness know him by sight?*
> *Witness – Yes."*

Meaning that he did not know Leist's name, but that he had recognized him in the dock. In his booklet, Wiernik had written in this regard (Wiernik 1944a, p. 13):

> *"It was the time when Katyn was a topic* [of conversation] *for the Germans. It was useful as propaganda. Once by chance we happened upon a newspaper and we believed these atrocities. At this same time, it seems, under the influence of these same events, Himmler arrived at Treblinka and gave orders to burn all the bodies of those killed."*

In the 1947 interrogation, the witness stated:

> *"I will talk more about how the burning was done. At first, the corpses were thrown into pits, until February* [of 1943], *there were already more than 2.5 million corpses. When Himmler visited the camp and gave the order to exhume and burn all the corpses, even dredgers* [*bagry*] *arrived, the pits began to be opened, railroad tracks were placed on metal supports, the corpses were placed on top, and the fire was lit."*

Previously, he merely stated that the Germans had exterminated "millions" (Wiernik 1944a, p. 22). The figure of 2,500,000 is more than three times the figure currently in vogue: about 781,000 (see Subchapter 7.1.).

Several partially burned documents concerning proposals for promotions of certain German leaders of the Reinhardt Camps suggest that Himmler visited Sobibór Camp on February 12, 1943.[183]

A letter from the *SS-Hauptamt, Personalhauptamt* (SS Main Office, Main Office Human Resources) in Berlin concerning Christian Wirth, undated but probably from April 1943, states (Friedlander/Milton, 1992, Doc. 432, p. 340):

> *"After an inspection of Sobibor Camp, where W. is currently working, the Reichsführer SS has agreed to a promotion…"*

On May 22, 1943 the SS and Police Leader in the Lublin District, Globocnik, wrote to the SS Main Office Human Resources that the men proposed for promotion did not have police ranks but ranks of the general SS, "and these [promotions] were granted to them by the RF-SS personally on the occasion of his last visit and detailed inspection of all facilities on February 12, 43" (*ibid.*, Doc. 435, p. 343). A little later, Globocnik again mentioned a visit by Himmler to all the installations of "Operation Reinhardt" ("after his thorough inspection of all installations of Operation 'Reinhard'"; *ibid.*, p. 344).

In a letter to the RSHA, probably written by the SS Main Office Human Resources, it is reported that, "after a visit to Sobibor Camp, the Reichsführer SS agreed to a promotion…" (*ibid.*, Doc. 438, p. 348).

Finally, the *Adjutantur* (the aide-de-camp's office) of the Reichsführer SS advised the SS Main Office Human Resources on August 19, 1943 as follows (*ibid.*, Doc. 439, p. 349):

> *"During his last visit to Lublin on February 2, 1943, the Reichsführer SS ordered the promotion of…"*

Himmler's visit is also mentioned in Globocnik's letter to the head of the SS Main Office Human Resources, SS *Gruppenführer* Maximilian von Herff (Berenstein, p. 301):

> *"On the occasion of his visit in March, the Reichsführer SS visited facilities of Operation 'Reinhard'…"*

Himmler's visit to Sobibór on February 12, 1943 is therefore documented. But did he also visit Treblinka?

To get a definite answer, one has to look at Himmler's service diary (*Diensttagebuch*) of 1943. The entry of February 12 informs us that Himmler, accompanied by three SS officers – SS *Hauptsturmführer* Grothmann, SS *Obersturmführer* Kiermaier and SS *Oberscharführer* Koch – departed from Lötzen Airport (East Prussia) at 10.30 a.m. and landed in Lublin at 12:00 p.m., where he was met by SS *Obergruppenführer* Krüger and SS *Gruppenführer*

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183 Some promotions to SS ranks encountered bureaucratic obstacles because the persons to be promoted did not belong to the SS, but to the police (*Kriminalpolizei*).

Globocnik. After "lunch at the airport hotel" ("*Essen im Flughafenhotel*"), he left at 12:30 p.m. "by car to Cholm" ("*mit Wagen nach Cholm*"). This was followed at 2:00 p.m. by the "departure from Cholm by special train to the SS Sonderkommando ("*Start von Cholm mit Sonderzug zum SS-Sonderkommando*"), then from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. by the "inspection of the SS Sonderkommando" ("*Besichtigung des SS-Sonderkommandos*"). At 4:00 p.m. "return trip to Cholm" ("*Rückfahrt nach Cholm*"), and finally, between 17:00 and 18:30, "return trip by car to Lublin" ("*Rückfahrt mit Wagen nach Lublin*").[184] The next day at 10:00, Himmler left for Lublin Airport ("*Fahrt zum Flughafen*"), where his plane took off at 10:30 ("Start Lublin"); after landing at 12.30 p.m. in Rastenburg, he drove to the Hitler's headquarters ("*Landung Rastenburg; Fahrt zur Wolfsschanze*").[185]

Neither these nor the following entries contain any reference to a visit of the Reichsführer SS to Treblinka, which therefore never took place.

The testimonies to this effect are therefore unfounded: Himmler never visited Treblinka, and the "eyewitnesses" who saw him with their own eyes lied through their teeth, starting with Wiernik.

When Wiernik wrote his booklet, he reported practically nothing about Himmler's alleged visit. From the related account I quoted earlier it appears that he reported mere rumors, but did not see the Reichsführer SS himself. In his 1947 interrogation, however, he claimed to have seen both Himmler and Leist:[186]

> *"I saw Leist in the company of Himmler, I do not remember exactly whether it was at the beginning of February 1941* [sic] *or in December; I declare one hundred percent that he was with Himmler /he points at him with his finger."*

It is clear that Wiernik had to implicate the defendant Leist in some way, so he embroidered the story of Himmler's visit according to the fable, widespread in the immediate post-war period, that the discovery of the mass graves near Katyn induced the Reichsführer SS to give the order for the exhumation-cremation of the corpses of those allegedly gassed. But this discovery occurred only on April 13, 1943, one or two months *after* his alleged visit to Treblinka.

Wiernik further exaggerated the capacity of the alleged gas chambers – 1,000-1,500 persons at a time on 49 square meters. In his booklet, as I have shown earlier, he claimed 1,000-1,200 persons per chamber, so that the upper limit of the claimed density was 30 persons per square meter!

On October 9, 1945, SAMUEL RAJZMAN made detailed statements about various aspects of the camp's operation, but said nothing about the essential one of the gas chambers. He spoke vaguely of a road leading "to the gas chambers" ("*do komór gazowych*") and of chambers, pits and hearths (*komory*, *doły*,

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184 Uhl *et al.*, Chapter "Januar bis März 1943", entry "Freitag, 12. Februar 1943". Original: NARA, T 84, Roll 25, February 12, 1943.

185 *Ibid.*, "Sonnabend, 13. Februar 1943."

186 AGK, NTN 75, p. 12.

paleniska) which were allegedly located in the camp's second sector.[187] His other claims are disproportionate and unbelievable. According to him, the Jewish service personnel ranged from 500 to 800 people.

> *"During my stay, several tens of thousands of people passed through this group (constant changes* [with people coming] *from the new transports), of whom at least 25,000 were killed or died of wasting away."*

Rajzman arrived at Treblinka on September 28, 1942 and escaped on August 2, so that his stay at the camp lasted a little more than ten months. In this period, at least 25,000 Jewish staff members allegedly perished, which means that, during this entire period of time, the staff was completely replaced no less than (25,000 ÷ 800 =) 31 times! Of course, Rajzman miraculously escaped death every time.

According to anecdotal evidence of the time, the witness asserted:

> *"I am convinced that Himmler made a visit to the camp in February 1943, arriving by airplane and landing near the camp. I also assume that in March 1943 the camp was visited by Governor Frank. SS generals made constant visits, and were shown the entire camp and its operation."*

Rajzman was also questioned at the Nuremberg IMT, during the afternoon session of February 27, 1946. In the transcript of the hearing, the interrogation, conducted by the tribunal's president, covers six pages.[188] He repeatedly spoke of "gas chambers," but never explained how they were structured and how they worked, and no one asked him. The president was only interested in secondary issues:[189]

> *"*[Rajzman] *The workers immediately took up all the clothes and hauled them to barracks, and the people then were obliged to go out to the gas chambers naked.*
>
> [President] *I would like you explain how the Germans called the gas chambers?*
>
> [Rajzman] *This street was called Himmelfahrt Street; that is to say, Ascension Street; that is to say, the road to heaven."*

The questioning continued wearily, but seemingly with some doubt on the part of the presiding judge:[190]

> *"*[Rajzman] *The procedure of undressing and introduction into the gas chambers lasted, for the men, about 10 minutes, and for the women not more than 15 minutes. The women lasted 15 minutes because before they went to the gas chambers their hair was cut off.*

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187 AGK, NTN 59, pp. 13-15.

188 Official transcript of the International Military Tribunal in the matter of The United States of America, the French Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics against Hermann Wilhelm Goering et al., Defendants, sitting at Nurnberg, Germany, on 27 February 1946, 1400-1700, Lord Justice Lawrence presiding, pp. 5097-5102.

189 *Ibid*., p. 5097.

190 *Ibid*., p. 5098.

> *The President: Do you mean that there was only 10 minutes between the time that* [they] *were landed out of the trucks and the time they were put into the gas chamber?*
> *The witness: As far as men were concerned, I am sure it did not last long than 10 minutes."*

This implies, moreover, that the haircuts of all women entering a "gas chamber" lasted only five minutes! The interrogation also fleetingly touched on the subject of the "gas chambers", but Rajzman evaded one of the very few important questions asked of him:[191]

> *"*[The President] *Tell, us, Witness, how many persons were exterminated in the camp on an average daily?*
> [Rajzman] *On an average I believe they killed ten to twelve thousand persons daily.*
> [The President] *In how many gas chambers did the killing take place?*
> [Rajzman] *At first there were only three gas chambers, but then they built more gas chambers. It was planned to increase this number to twenty-five.*
> [The President] *But how do you know that? Why do you say, Witness, that they planned to increase the number of the gas chambers?*
> [Rajzman] *Because all the building material had been brought and put in the square. I asked, 'Why? – there are no more Jews' and I was told that they would bring other nationalities."*

However, this does not explain the number – 25 "gas chambers" – and it is clear that the witness did not know what to say about the alleged new killing building.

It is not apparent why the Soviet prosecution preferred this witness over Abraham Isaak Goldfarb, who only two years earlier had given a far-more-detailed deposition.

Also in 1946, Rajzmann wrote a long essay titled "My Stay at Treblinka" ("*Mój pobyt w Treblince*"), which covers eight and a half pages in the printed version (Blumental, pp. 182-190). Although he claimed in this essay that 25,000 people were exterminated in Treblinka daily (*ibid*., p. 186), he did not describe any extermination system, and made no mention of the alleged death chambers.

By the 1950s, Rajzman had happily associated himself with the official version of the 'gas chambers,' but he remained quite silent about the details. In his report, published in English by Donat, he contents himself with the following remarks:[192]

> *"The women had to line up, and all their hair was clipped off. It was destined for use in German mattresses. Naked, they went the road of no return, into the gas chambers. While they undressed and walked into the gas chambers, the*

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191 *Ibid*., p. 5102.

192 Donat, p. 232. Donat states that this text is based on an English translation by a certain Howard Roiter of an eyewitness report given by Rajzman in Yiddish and recorded on tape (p. 251). The date is not given, but on p. 250, the witness mentions 1950.

> *Germans hit them very hard; many died from the beatings alone. Everybody was pushing to get to the gas chamber fast, because the Ukrainians and the Germans were beating them so hard. Everybody was stampeding forward. The whole place was covered with blood. People didn't know that it would be the end there; the idea was simply to get out of the place where they were beating you. And in doing that, they went straight into the gas chambers."*

In these few sentences, Rajzman thus mentions the "gas chambers" four times, but spares not a word as to their structure and manner of functioning.

STANISŁAW KON, who had been deported to Treblinka on October 1, 1942 and assigned to collecting the clothes of the alleged victims in Camp 2, testified on October 7, 1945.[193] Although Kon mentioned nothing about the killing system during his interrogation of August 18, 1944 (see previous subchapter), this changed during his actual testimony on trial, where he mentioned the two alleged killing systems then-most-in-vogue among the rumor-mongering witnesses:

> *"As for the chambers, I saw them from a distance while working on palisade repair. They looked like sheds. Above them was the star of Zion and, as I heard, the word 'Judenstaat'* [Jewish State] *was posted. The shed was set on high concrete foundations, so it was accessed by a few steps. Inside there were concrete chambers on either side of a corridor,* [from] *where each chamber was entered through hermetically sealable doors. On the outside, each chamber had a liftable shutter that was raised after the people had been killed, so that a considerable portion of the corpses fell out by force of gravity. The individual chambers were so full of people that the doors were closed with great force. The killing itself was done by pumping* [extraction] *of air or by the introduction of exhaust gas* [przez wypompowanie powietrza lub puszczanie gazu spalinowego]. *I do know, however, that near the shed* [*obok szopy*] *an engine was installed. I do not know whether it was for pumping* [out] *air or for the production and introduction of exhaust gas."*

Kon described the beginnings of the alleged exterminating activity by appealing to one of the fanciful themes then in vogue:

> *"As far as I know, the extermination of Jews in Treblinka began in June 1942; then there was an initial period in which people were killed with machine guns and buried with their clothes. Often, during work on the camp grounds, pits full of dressed corpses were found."*

And finally, here is the inevitable reference to Himmler:

> *"Comrades recounted that Himmler visited* [the camp] *in March 1943, and supposedly gave the strict order to burn all the corpses."*

ABE KON was interrogated on October 9, 1945 (pp. 16f.). He was deported to Treblinka on October 2, 1945 from Częstochowa, in a transport of 60 railway

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193 AGK, NTN 69, pp. 4-6. Subsequent page numbers from there, unless mentioned otherwise.

cars with 100 persons in each. Upon arrival, he was selected as part of a group of 60 persons to sort clothes.

> *"Two weeks after arriving at the camp, I had the opportunity to speak with a bricklayer who had worked on the construction of the chambers built during the camp's initial organizational period, and who had managed to get into the camp's first part. He said that there was a total of 12 chambers, made of concrete, with a corridor system. From the corridor, narrow doors led to individual chambers, but on the outside walls there were shutters* [*klapy*] *for the removal of corpses. They killed by extracting the air from the chambers* [*przez wyciągania powietrza z komór*]*."*

Thus, the witness reverted to the version of his Soviet interrogation of August 17, 1944. On that occasion, he had also stated that "for two months" 15,000-18,000 people a day were killed at Treblinka, or about 900,000-1,080,000. But to Judge Łukaszkiewicz, he said:

> *"From the time of my arrival to December 1942, an average of three transports of 60 wagons each arrived at the camp non-stop,"*

and, from his description of these transports, it is to be understood that each car contained 100 people. Therefore: 18,000 deportees per day for three months (October-December 1942), that is, 1,656,000.

Apparently, Kon knew nothing about any visit of Himmler to Treblinka, because regarding visits he stated merely:

> *"At the camp, there were often visits from generals, among them, in particular a general of small stature, slender, came often from Lublin."*

HEJNOCH BRENER, questioned on October 9, 1945 (pp. 20f.), stated that he had arrived at Treblinka from Koniecpol on October 15, 1942 with a transport of 60 railway cars, each with 180-200 persons. (The interrogation protocol incorrectly gives 1943 as the year of arrival). As soon as he arrived at the camp, he was picked as part of a group of 200 men who were temporarily assigned to sort clothes. By a stroke of luck, he was able to join the group of permanent workers who performed the sorting.

> *"On the third or fourth day after arrival, I was assigned to the group of barbers who were obliged to cut the women's hair before death. On the very first day of this group's work, we were sent to the so-called Lager 2 (there were chambers, pits and staff barracks), where a barbers' room was set up in one of the chambers intended for the extermination of persons. At that time, I had the opportunity to observe the arrangement of the chambers, as I worked during the liquidation of the victims of a 60-car transport. The chambers were located in a long building, they were made of concrete, the access to the chambers was from a corridor through small doors* [*małe drzwiczki*]*. There were two holes in the ceiling to pump the air out (people were killed by pumping the air out with a motor located next to the chambers)* [*W suficie były dwa otwory, którymi wypompowano powietrze (zabijano ludzi przez wypompywanie powietrza motorem, umieszczonym obok komór)*]*. The floor of the chambers was sloped to-*

> *ward the outer walls, in which raised* [liftable] *shutters were located. After the killing (it took about 15 minutes after the chambers were closed) the shutters were lifted, and the bodies fell out lifelessly, from where they were taken to the pits."*

There were 16 benches in the chamber-turned-"barbershop," with four to five barbers working at each bench. This means at least 64 places to sit, and as many barbers working concurrently. If the rooms measured 7 m × 7 m (= 49 m²), as Wiernik claimed, and if a bench was 3 m long and 40 cm wide, two benches could fit side-by-side in that chamber, with 8 rows of them taking up (8 × 0.4 m =) 2.4 meters of space, leaving ([7 m – 2.4 m] ÷ 9) 42 cm of space in front and behind each row of benches, which is barely enough room for the legs of the women sitting on them, let alone for any barbers to move around cutting hair. The number of benches and barbers therefore made no sense, but Brener, being a self-proclaimed eyewitness to this set-up, should have known precisely. This rather silly idea of transforming a gas chamber into a barber-shop was later taken up and developed by the notorious impostor Abraham Bomba.[194]

Brener provided further details:

> *"As far as I know, all the rooms were of the same size, and each held over 400 people."*

But Wiernik claimed that each chamber contained between 1,000 and 1,500 people! Brener further specified that the burning of the corpses began about six weeks after his arrival (October 15, 1942), which brings us to the end of December, hence two months *before* Himmler's alleged visit to Treblinka and his alleged order to exhume and burn the buried corpses. Of this alleged visit, however, Brener knew nothing, because on visits by outsiders he only stated:

> *"During my stay at the camp, there were frequent visits from SS generals, who were shown the entire camp and the system of exterminating people."*

OSKAR STRAWCZYŃSKI, who was questioned on October 7, 1945 (pp. 7-10), stated that he had arrived in Treblinka on October 5, 1942 with a transport of 60 railway cars, each carrying 150 people from Częstochowa. Fifty young men, including the witness, were selected for work at the camp.

On the alleged gas chambers, he reported that "in the hut where the women undressed, there were roughly a dozen (*kilkunastu*) barbers who immediately cut the women's hair," which contradicts Brener's silly claim that this took place in one of the gas chambers. The witness's claims about the alleged gas chambers are all from hearsay:

> *"From the accounts of Hersz Jabłkowski, who was a blacksmith and came from Stoczek Węgrowski, I know what the gas chambers looked like. Jabłkowski worked on the gas chambers, and then for some time he was in our group (I*

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194 Robert Faurisson drew attention to this false witness already in 1985 (Faurisson 1985). See also Smith 2003; Kues 2009b.

clarify that Jabłkowski was brought to the camp early, in May 1942, and at that time the camp was not yet thoroughly set up, so he could be in the first part of the camp, although he worked on the construction of the chambers in the second part). From his account it appears that there were concrete chambers on high concrete foundations, square-shaped, about 3 meters on each side [*betonowe komory o boku około 3-ech metrów, kwadratowe*],[195] *the floor was actually tiled. During the construction, showers were installed on the ceiling, but they were not connected to any water pipe, and Jabłkowski said that, when he was working on the construction, he asked the German overseer why the showers were not connected to pipes; the German replied that this would be done later. Jabłkowski worked on the construction of four rooms that were located in a building. The entrance to the building was served by steps on the aforementioned foundations.*

From the corridor, which was in the center, a small door [*małe drzwiczki*] *led to each room. The small doors were so narrow that only one person could enter at a time. They were made that way so that no one could back out, because the crowd following and the narrowness of the space did not allow it. On the outside, each chamber had a large shutter that rose up, through which the bodies were removed. The floor was actually covered with tiles and sloped toward the shutter. This had two purposes: first, to facilitate the corpses to fall* [outside]*, and second, to facilitate the flow of blood. I don't know exactly what the system was for killing people in the chambers. In my opinion, this was done either by pumping out the air* [*przez wypompywanie powietrza*]*, or by introducing gas from an internal-combustion engine into the chambers. I assume that no poisonous gas was used."*

Regarding transportation, the witness stated:

"Again from Jabłkowski's accounts, I know that mass transports of Jews began arriving at Treblinka at the Jewish holiday 'Tyszbeaf' [*Tishah b'av*]*. This holiday is in July. I do not remember on which day it fell in 1942* [July 22-23, 1942]*. From the time of this holiday to the end of November or beginning of December 1942, an average of three transports of people arrived every day, each one with 60 railway cars."*

Assuming a load of 100 people per railway car (although Strawczyński claims there were 150 people in each car), 18,000 deportees would have arrived every day at Treblinka, and over a period of about 130 days a total of 2,340,000!

HENRYK REICHMAN (alias Romanowski) asserted during his interrogation on October 12, 1945 (pp. 29f.) that he arrived at Treblinka on October 10, 1942 with a transport from the Lublin District which contained 12,000 persons. 150 people had been crammed into each car, meaning that the train must have consisted of 80 railway cars. Upon arrival at the camp, the witness was temporarily selected with a group of men to take away the clothes of the deportees. When the work was done, a German asked if there was a barber in the group,

195 Hence, each "chamber" had an area of 9 square meters.

whereupon Reichman came forward and was subsequently sent "to the area of Lager No. II (where the chambers were) to cut the hair of the naked women." In this regard, the witness reported a story similar to Brener's:

> *"The haircutting took place in a chamber, the first one, used as a barbershop. The building in which the chambers were located contained 10 chambers, with dimensions of eight-by-eight meters, the height was about two meters. The entrance to the chambers was from a corridor, but each chamber had a lift-up shutter toward the outside for the removal of corpses. The killing of people was done by extracting air from the chambers and introducing gas from the engine* [*przez wyciąganie z komór powietrza i wprowadzanie gazu z motoru*]*. The engine was located in an annex near the chambers. I remember that once, when the size of a transport was smaller, the Germans made an experiment: they did not introduce gas, they only extracted air. After 48 hours, when the chamber was opened, there were still people showing signs of life. Next to this building with 10 chambers was another smaller building with three chambers, also with an engine. In the large chambers, in the building that contained 10 chambers, about 1,400 people entered at a time. At the time of maximum extermination, all 13 chambers were used."*

After working for three days as a barber, Reichman was permanently assigned to Camp II, at first charged with transporting corpses, then with extracting gold teeth from the corpses. Regarding the exhumation-cremation of the alleged victims, the witness asserted anachronistically:

> *"The burning of corpses began on a larger scale in January 1943, when the new head of Camp No. II arrived, an SS expert at burning corpses. At that time, five or six furnaces* [*pieców*] *were built which looked like this: iron rails were placed on concrete bases on the surface of the ground. With dredgers, they put about 2,500 corpses from the pits at a time* [*kładziono bagrami z dołów około 2,500 trupów na raz*] *on top of this grate, and lit it from below."*

The witness evidently was unaware of the story of Himmler's alleged visit to Treblinka in February or March 1943 and of the alleged exhumation-cremation order, since he placed the start of the burnings in January.

In contrast to many of his colleagues, who spoke of an average daily influx of 18,000 deportees, Reichman asserted:

> *"From the time I arrived at the camp until about December 25, 1942, about 10,000 people arrived at the camp every day for extermination, sometimes as many as 18,000."*

The undated deposition of SZYMON GOLDBERG was published in 1946. The witness had been deported to Treblinka from Częstochowa in the first half of September 1942. He remained at Camp 1 for six months, then was transferred to Camp 2, where he worked for five months at the "gassing compartment":

> *"There, I carried the corpses from the gassing compartments* [*z kabin gazowych*] *to the blaze."*

The victims were sent "to the bath" [*do kąpieli*], which the witness describes as follows (Blumental, p. 179):

> *"They were even given a piece of soap. And then it was taken away from them at the gassing compartments. There were also showers in the compartments, but they didn't work, so* [they were only] *'for pretense'. One compartment contained a crowd, about a thousand people. They were stuck to each other; one person stuck to another person. They would kill by pumping out the air* [*przez wypompowanie powietrza*]*; one machine was for pumping* [*jedna maszyna była do wypompowywania*]*; and by introducing gas from a vehicle* [*przez wpuszczenie gazu z samochodu*]*. Ether (!) was burned, and this smoke was introduced* [*Eter (!) się palił i wpuszczali ten dym*]*. There was also chloride* [*Chlorek*]*. When I was working in the second camp at the removal of the corpses, I saw that the corpses were pale* [*blade*]*, the women often had hemorrhages, many had blood coming out of their mouths; their eyes looked distraught."*

There is no need to comment on these puerile fantasies of Polish-Jewish black propaganda.

HENRYK POSWOLSKI was interrogated by Judge Łukaszkiewicz on October 9, 1945 (pp. 18f.). He had been deported to Treblinka on January 19, 1943 with a transport of 3,000 people from the small Warsaw Ghetto. He was saved because an inmate of the service staff, who had an armband with the inscription "*Aelteste der Juden*" ("The Eldest of the Jews"), gave him the job as a bricklayer and stoker on his own initiative. There, he became part of the service staff, but he was *not* assigned to Camp 2. He told this hearsay story:

> *"Regarding the construction and installation of the chambers, my information is based on the accounts of workers who, in the initial period of the camp, had the opportunity to access the location of the chambers and pits. The chambers were made of concrete, I heard that they were even covered with tiles. On the walls were installed washbasins, which were meant to imitate a real bathhouse. On the ceiling were dummy shower heads, not connected to the water mains. I am sure that I was told that among the rooms there were two that had open* [collapsible] *floors. Under the floor passed carts with which the corpses were carried away* [*pod podłogę pojeżdzały wagoniki, ktorymi wywożono trupy*]*. They killed in this way: with a Diesel engine, placed near the chambers, first they pumped out the air, and then they introduced the exhaust gases of the engine.* [*wypompowywał najpierw powietrze a później wprowadzono spalinowy motoru*]*."*

Speaking of the so-called "sickbay," the witness reported that the sick and disabled were killed there.

> *"After the killing, all the corpses were burned. A certain white powder* [*jakiegoś białego proszku*] *was used for burning (I think it facilitated the burning)."*

Poswolski also took up the tale of Himmler's visit to Treblinka, which he described as follows:

> *"It seems that in March 1943 the camp was visited by Himmler. The camp staff and the Jewish workers gathered in the courtyard at 4 p.m., and a report was made, which was received by SS Man Küve. The latter in turn reported to the camp commandant, who then reported to Himmler. I assume that Himmler's visit was the start of the main operation, the purpose of which was to erase all traces of the crime. From this moment on, the corpses were exhumed from the pits by means of dredgers and burned."*

Poswolski therefore limited himself to expounding the trite propaganda themes that were in vogue in 1945 among Polish-speaking witnesses, including the fable of the gas chambers with collapsible floors, which was most-widespread among witnesses testifying about Sobibór Camp.

On December 28, 1945, Judge Łukaszkiewicz interrogated LEON FINKELSZTEIN,[196] who made statements that were as detailed as they were implausible. Finkelsztein had arrived at Treblinka on July 22, 1942 with a transport of 7,000 people from Międzyrzec Podlaski. Each railway car contained 200 people:

> *"Since the cars were sprinkled with chlorine, many people died during the journey, so that there were up to 50% dead bodies in the cars on arrival at Treblinka."*

A similar tale was told by Abraham Isaak Goldfarb, who had been deported to Treblinka from the same location on August 18, 1942.

When Finkelsztein arrived at the camp, where the transport was met by an orchestra, he managed to join a group of deportees who had received a red mark, and this saved him. He described as follows the work he was assigned to initially:

> *"When I was brought to the camp, the land was not yet fenced in and on the second day after my arrival I was immediately assigned to the group of workers who worked on the construction of the palisades. I worked there for three weeks."*

But because the first transport of Jews from Warsaw arrived at Treblinka the next day, July 23, one cannot seriously believe that the camp was still without a fence when it opened operations, and that those fences were built only during the following three weeks.

The account of the witness continues as follows:

> *"After this period* [of three weeks], *SS Man* [Kurt] *Franz chose the 200 strongest among us, and sent our group to the second part of the camp, where the chambers were. There I learned from a cook that 200 workers had been shot the day before who had rebelled and refused to work in the chambers. We had to replace them. At the time, there were three chambers in operation that were located in one building. The entrances to the individual chambers opened from a corridor, and were sealed with airtight doors. On the outside were large raised* [liftable] *doors, through which the bodies were taken out. The chambers*

[196] AGK, NTN 70, pp. 285f.

> *were lined with tiles. Next to the chambers, in an annex, was an engine, whose exhaust poisoned the victims. Death occurred after about 20 minutes. Sometimes, when the engine failed, the chambers were sprayed with chlorine, and the victims suffered greatly. I remember that once, after a whole night of such a poisoning, some people were still alive, and were buried anyway. It is not true that the floors of the chambers were open* [collapsible]*."*

The anecdote of the 200 workers shot was clearly a pretext to justify the witness's assignment to Camp 2. The description of the alleged gas chambers follows Wiernik's pattern, including the reference to the killing with chlorine, which the witness embroidered according to the version that had developed in 1944, particularly by Abraham Isaak Goldfarb. Burying people alive is one of the silliest black-propaganda themes.

Although this witness claimed that he had remained in Treblinka from the first to the last day (that of the uprising), he told very little about the alleged second gassing plant:

> *"As far as I remember, in November 1942 the new building containing 10 chambers was put into operation; the killing took place there likewise by means of exhaust gases; the capacity of these chambers was considerably greater."*

He furthermore stated that

> *"for a time, there was a railroad with carts for transporting the corpses, but it was soon eliminated, because, in the judgment of our executioners, loading and unloading the carts was very time-consuming. The corpses were simply dragged by the workers* [grabbing them] *by the limbs."*

Given that there were allegedly 21 mass graves in Camp 2, and that each contained up to 200,000 corpses (a total of 4,200,000!), the alleged substitution of a narrow-gauge railway system by dragging corpses individually by the arms or legs seems demented.

The witness added:

> *"As for the number of victims killed in Treblinka, it is difficult to establish it exactly. In my opinion, from the time of my arrival at the camp to the time of the uprising, transports of 3,000 to 12,000 people* [per day] *arrived continuously."*

The time limits are July 22, 1942 and August 2, 1943, or some 370 days, so the number of deportees would range from a minimum of 1,110,000 to a maximum of 4,440,000, where the second figure corresponds best to the number of those allegedly buried (4,200,000), if we follow this witness's fictitious account. Finkelsztein also spoke of the elimination of the corpses:

> *"As for the burning of corpses, at the beginning (still in 1942) they tried to burn the corpses on piles* [*na stertach*]*, but this did not give* [good] *results, so already in 1943, they began to build furnaces in pits* [*piece w dołach*]*, where special fans were used to blow in air. However, even these furnaces did not work well, so in the end the usual grates of iron rails on concrete bases were built. On such a grate, many corpses were placed together, and the burning*

gave good results. Such a grate was lit with a small amount of wood or rags soaked in gasoline, and then the corpses burned by themselves."

Leaving aside the anachronism of the beginning of cremations already in 1942, the system described by the witness, which is the same as the one allegedly adopted at Auschwitz (albeit without any fans that would have made it much-more-effective), did not work at Treblinka, although it is said to have worked perfectly fine at Auschwitz. On the contrary, the method that allegedly gave good results at Treblinka was based on the fable of the autocombustion of corpses.

As regards fables, in this context the witness tells another one. During the exhumation,

"large quantities of corpses still remained in the pits, because the workers did their best to sabotage the pits in this way: at every moment of inattention on the part of the Germans or Ukrainians, they covered large quantities of corpses with sand, which thus were never burned."

The expression "large quantities", if it is to make any sense, should be related to the number of those alleged to have been buried – over four million – meaning that huge numbers of corpses should still be there today. But such corpses have not been found.

ARON CZECHOWICZ testified on October 11, 1945 (pp. 27f.). He arrived at the camp on September 10, 1942 with a transport of 8,000 people from the Warsaw Ghetto. On arrival, the camp commandant selected 80 men, among them the witness, who recounted:

"On the first day, I worked sorting clothes, then I was sent to the part of the camp where there were chambers (the so-called Totenlager). I worked there for two weeks and one day, while I was busy carrying lumber toward a group of workers from the first part of the camp (where there were no chambers, only warehouses and housing barracks); taking advantage of the inattention of a Ukrainian, I managed to sneak into the group of workers from the first part of the camp. I stayed there, working on sorting clothes.

I can give the following details about my work in the so-called Totenlager. At the time of my arrival, there were three chambers in operation. On the outside, the building containing the chambers was similar to a shed. On each side in the walls of this building there were three large raised [*liftable*] *shutters at the top, through which the corpses were removed after the killing. On the roof of the building, there were three openings surrounded by a tube in the shape of a small chimney* [*trzy otwory otoczone rurą w ksztalcie kominka*], *and I saw with my own eyes that, after the chambers had been filled, through these openings a Ukrainian poured some liquid* [*jakiś płyn*] *into them from a sheet-metal canister (an ordinary canister like those used for heating oil). At the same time, the engine in the adjoining building, which was also operated by Ukrainians, began to run. At first, shouts could be heard from inside the chambers, but then there was total silence. More than 500 people entered each room, I believe.*

During my presence in this camp, the chambers were filled with people four times a day."

Hence, the witness saw with his own eyes small chimneys on the roof of the alleged gas chambers, through which a Ukrainian poured an undefined liquid from a canister! For what purpose is unknown.

Each alleged gas chamber contained more than 500 people, a figure identical to the maximum figure given by Wiernik (450-500 people). If the dimensions were the same (5 m × 5 m = 25 m²), one chamber contained 20 people per square meter. Since there were three chambers, and four batches of killing were carried out in one day, the daily figure of victims was 6,000. The time limits should be September or October 1942. This figure contradicts the huge influx of deportees imagined by several of Czechowicz's colleagues, starting with Oskar Strawczyński, according to whom, from the opening of the camp to the end of November 1942, 18,000 deportees arrived at Treblinka every day, only a third of whom could have been killed in the alleged gas chambers, if using Czechowicz's figures.

EUGENIUSZ TUROWSKI was heard by Judge Łukaszkiewicz on October 7, 1945 (pp. 11f.). He reported that he had been deported to Treblinka on September 5, 1942 in a transport of 50 railway cars from the Częstochowa Ghetto. Each car is said to have contained 100 persons. Upon arriving at the camp, he was selected with a group of 25 men as a mechanic, then assigned to the machine shops, where he worked until the uprising on August 2, 1943. From a Ukrainian named Grigor and a Jewish inmate named Jankiel, he learned that the first Jewish transports had arrived at Treblinka in June 1942, hence before the camp was opened.

"At that time, an extermination system had not yet been organized, so people from the transports were rounded up in the yard and killed with machine guns. They were buried in the pits with all their clothes. In mid-August 1942, or perhaps earlier, the gas chambers were installed. At first, there were four gas chambers, but by the time I arrived at the camp, another 10 chambers had already been built."

Similar fantasies were also conveyed by Oskar Berger as shown earlier. Turowski added to them the presence of fans to ventilate the alleged gas chambers. He did not know when the influx of mass transports began, but since his arrival in early December 1942, "at least three transports per day of 60 cars each" arrived at the camp, presumably with 100 persons per car, or 18,000 per day. He did not report, however, "how the extermination of people in the gas chambers took place."

Turowski further stated:

"As far as the erasure of traces of the crime is concerned, it is known to me that during the initial period, I presume more or less until June 1942, the corpses were exclusively buried in pits; later on, the corpses began to be burnt partially on piles [*na stertach*]*; then, already in the winter of 1942-1943, the*

> *burning began in special pits with grates installed* [in or on them], *and with the help of fans* [*przy użyciu wentylatorów*] *which blew air under the grates. During the period of maximum intensity of the corpse burning, dredgers* [*bagry*] *were used to extract the corpses from the old pits."*

These are more anachronistic claims and fanciful stories (such as the fans, this time to stoke the fire) that each witness used to season their tale according to the whim of the moment.

On October 9, 1945, Łukaszkiewicz questioned SZYJA WARSZAWSKI (pp. 22f.), who had been deported to Treblinka on July 23, 1942 with a transport of 1,800 people from Kielce (in 18 cars with 100 people each). The circumstances under which he was saved are quite unique. Upon arrival at the camp, the deportees were forced to lie on the ground, and were shot in the back of the head. Fortunately, the witness was only wounded in one hand and remained among the corpses until the evening. Then he was taken to a pit, where Jewish workers made him join them, and in this way, he became a member of their group. The story continues as follows:

> *"At first, I worked for two days with the corpses. From this period, I remember the fact of the arrival of a transport from Międzyrzec of about 20 cars. In these cars, there were mainly corpses of men, women and children who had perished from chlorine poisoning* [*skutkiem zatrucia chlorem*], *because the floors of the cars, as well as the victims of the upper part, were sprinkled with a layer of chlorinated lime."*

Hence, this chlorine myth was not only bandied about by Goldfarb and Finkelsztein, but also by Warszawski.

The witness told the following about his own activity:

> *"I lived all the time in the area of* '*Lager II*'. *We were 6 specialists, joiners-carpenters, always employed in construction (Wiernik was also in this group), and we were able to pass from Lager II to I and vice-versa while working. Working in the vicinity of the chambers, I had the opportunity to carefully observe their layout. By the time I arrived at the camp, four* [*czetery*] *concrete chambers on high foundations were already finished. The corridor in the center of the building that contained these chambers had entrances to the individual chambers of such size that only one person* [at a time] *could pass through the small doors. On the outside, each chamber had a raised* [liftable] *shutter* [*klapę*] *at the top, through which the corpses were thrown out. In principle, about 300 people could be brought into each chamber, but in order to hasten* [the killing process], *up to 600 were put in, often on the heads of the first victims who were already in the chamber. The poisoning was done by ducting in exhaust gases from an engine that was installed next to the chambers in a special wooden room."*

This witness was therefore able to "carefully observe" four gas chambers (instead of the usual three). Although each chamber was designed to hold 300 people, twice as many were crammed in, even on the heads of the victims al-

ready inside. If the dimensions of these chambers were as indicated by Wiernik (5 m × 5 m × 1.90 m; see Section 3.9.1.), they would have contained 24 persons per square meter and, with such a low ceiling, it would have been at least difficult to fit still more people over the heads of those already inside.

ALEKSANDER KUDLIK was heard by Łukaszkiewicz on October 10, 1945 (pp. 24f.). He recounted that he arrived at Treblinka on October 12, 1942 from Częstochowa in a train of 60 cars, each containing 120 people. Upon arrival, the camp commandant selected 30 deportees for work, and the witness, taking advantage of the Germans' inattention, managed to sneak into this group, which was assigned to sorting clothes. Then he was assigned to sort fountain pens, of all things, a job he claims to have performed for eight months in the first part of the camp. Here is his tale on the gas chambers from hearsay:

> *"In the second part of the camp, to which I did not have access, were the chambers and pits. Some inmates who were carpenters (in particular Wiernik) had the ability to move from one part to another. I know from their account that in the chambers people were killed by pumping out the air and then pumping in combustion gas* [*przez wypompowywanie powietrze i wpompowania następnie gazu spalinowego*]. *There were 10 chambers that could hold a total of about 5,000 people",*

therefore 20 people per square meter. Following the fables in vogue at the time, the witness added:

> *"As for the number of transports, from my arrival to December 1942, an average of three transports of 60 cars arrived each day."*

Judge Łukaszkiewicz also questioned several indirect witnesses, mostly Polish railroaders or workers who had worked at Treblinka Station or in surrounding areas. These were Józef Kuźmiński (October 16, 1945; pp. 75f.), Wacław Wołosz (October 18, 1945; p. 77), Mieczysław Lasowski (October 18, 1945; p. 78), Stanysław Adamczyk (October 26, 1945; p. 85), Lucjan Puchała (October 26, 1945; pp. 86-88), Wacław Bednarczyk (October 27, 1945),[197] Stanysław Borowy (November 21, 1945; pp. 105f.), Władysław Chomka (November 26, 1945; p. 191) and Franciszek Ząbecki (December 21, 1945).[198] Only three of them made statements that have some relevance to the theme of this chapter.

LUCJAN PUCHAŁA was a railway worker who had worked at Małkinia Station until June 1942, and then at the construction of the track from Treblinka Station to the sand pit near the Treblinka I Labor Camp. He reported:

> *"I learned in particular that a building of brick and cement had been constructed in which, as I later became convinced, there were chambers for the extermination of people. I heard that there were eight such chambers, and about 700 people could enter in each one of them.* […]
> *Since the gravel pit was located near the site of the death camp, I was able to observe many facts about the operation of this camp. It is known to me that*

197 *Ibid.*, p. 288.
198 *Ibid.*, pp. 131f.

immediately after July 1, 1942 three dredgers [*bagry*] *were brought in, with which pits of several dozen meters in length, fifteen meters in depth and ten meters in width were dug. On the day when the work on the railway branch was finished, the building for the chambers was already almost ready. From the middle of July, railway transports of Jews began to arrive immediately. At first, there was only one transport per day, sometimes two. The transports were brought to the platform in groups of twenty cars, because no more could fit on the branch line. There were from 200 to 280 people in the cars /chalk inscriptions on the cars/. Working at the gravel pit, I was able to survey the terrain of the camp from a knoll. It is well-known to me that, when a transport arrived, the SS and Ukrainians would chase the Jews out of the cars, and separate the men on one side, and the women and children on the other. After the separation, they ordered them to strip naked, then took them to a square, and shot them with machine guns. The corpses were buried in pre-made pits. This situation lasted more-or-less until the middle of August 1942, when the pits full of corpses and covered only with earth opened up as a result of the decomposition of the corpses, so that a terrible stench spread. The transports were then stopped for a period of about two weeks, and during this time the surface of the pits was cemented over. More-or-less from September 1, 1942, the activity in the camp began to intensify. At that time, the chambers were already in operation, and the extermination of people began on a large scale. Every day, two or even three transports of 60 cars each arrived without surcease.* […] *As for the burning of corpses, this began as early as the fall of 1942. In the winter, apparently after Himmler's visit, mass burning began and, as I heard, Himmler gave the order to extract the gold teeth from the oral cavities of the victims."*

Puchała embroidered the chestnuts of black propaganda with his own interpretation: there were eight gas chambers (not three or ten or altogether thirteen); the depth of the mass graves, equivalent to the height of a five-story building, is clearly disproportionate, as is the normal number of occupants of a car: from 200 to 280! The machine-gunning of the victims is another recurring theme in the testimonies of the time, as well as the even-more-fanciful covering of the mass graves with a layer of concrete, which, as I showed in Subchapter 3.3., was also attributed to Bełżec (Note 110, p. 105).

The beginning of corpse cremation in the fall of 1942 is a blatant anachronism, while Himmler's visit to Treblinka is a pure invention.

WŁADYSŁAW CHOMKA was a railroad worker who maintained a track section from Małkinia up to two kilometers from Treblinka Station. Among other things, he stated:

"While working on the railroad tracks, I often had the opportunity to talk to Jews who were employed by the Germans in railroad work. They belonged to the working staff of the extermination camp. I know from their stories that, during the period of greatest transport intensity, 7,000-10,000 people were exterminated every day, but there were days when 30,000 were exterminated. I remember that one of these workers, whose name was Sadowski, told me that at

> *the chambers there was a Ukrainian who used a rod* [*drągiem*] *to drive the people inside, and at the same time he enjoyed cutting off various parts of the victims' bodies."*

According to the current version of this legend, the Ukrainian in question was armed with a dagger or bayonet. In this regard, Leon Finkelsztein stated:[199]

> *"When the victims were pushed into the chambers, the Ukrainians Iwan, Mjkolaj and Woronkow cut off the women's breasts with a saber* [*szabla*]*."*

FRANCISZEK ZĄBECKI had worked at Treblinka Station since May 1941 as a rail traffic controller [*dyżurny ruchu*]. He spoke among other things about the period following the closure of the camp:

> *"During the fighting in 1944, when the Germans retreated under the pressure of the Red Army, the front line remained in the vicinity of the station for some time; then the station was blown up and burned down by the Germans. At the station, the railway documents were destroyed, which would have constituted evidentiary material, but I managed to hide some of them at the risk of my life."*

In the interrogation of December 21, 1945 by Z. Łukaszkiewicz,[200] Ząbecki told the story of the recovery of the documents after the bombing of Treblinka Station in 1944, and said that he was handing them over now to the Polish judge, stating, "I am submitting [*składam*] them now as documentation for the present case."

In 1946, Łukaszkiewicz published the previously mentioned booklet *Obóz straceń w Treblince*, which is an attempt to outline the camp's history based on testimonies. Among these, Ząbecki's testimony is also mentioned several times, but without any reference to whether he had handed over documentation on rail transportation to the judge. The most-important content concerns the meanings of the abbreviations "P. Kr.", "PJ" and "Da" (Łukaszkiewicz 1946b, p. 37). In the appendix, the judge published three railroad documents, but without mentioning that he had received them from Ząbecki. Even if Ząbecki's account were true, it is not known how many and which documents the witness managed to secure.

3.8. The Significance of the Report of November 15, 1942

The wide circulation of the story of the steam chambers testifies to the fact that it was considered very reliable, indeed the most-reliable of all those circulating that I have reported above. It was even officially endorsed. In the Polish government's report on German crimes in Poland prepared for the Nuremberg

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199 *Ibid.*, p. 286.
200 *Ibid.*, pp. 131f.

IMT and presented by the Soviets as Document USSR-93, we read about Treblinka:[201]

> *"When the process of exterminating Jews was initiated, Treblinka became one of the first camps to which victims were brought. They were put to death in gas chambers, by steam and electric current."* (Emphasis added)

The story of the Treblinka "steam chambers" was famously the subject of another official Polish government report, which was admitted to the IMT as Document PS-3311 (IMT, Vol. 32, pp. 153-158). It described as follows the "Charge Number 6" against Hans Frank, who had been the head of the General Government during the war:

> *"The German authorities acting under the authority of Governor General Dr. Hans Frank established in March 1942 the extermination-camp at Treblinka, intended for mass killing of Jews by suffocating them in steam-filled chambers."* (*Ibid.*, p. 154)

The certification of the report, prepared on December 5, 1945, are presented as follows:

> *"C e r t i f i c a t e*
>
> *This will certify that the document entitled 'Charge No 6, Camp of Treblinka,' concerning the extermination of Jews in this camp, is hereby officially submitted by the Polish Government to the International Military Tribunal by the undersigned under the provisions set forth in Article 21 of the Charter.*
>
> Dr. Cyprian
> *Dr. Tadeusz Cyprian*
> *Polish Deputy Representative*
> *on the United Nations War*
> *Crimes Commission in London"* (*Ibid.*, p. 153)

With this document, the steam-chamber claim became an indisputable fact, because the Nuremberg Tribunal simply took "judicial notice" of it.

The Polish government's Charge Number 6 against Hans Frank is based essentially on the November 15, 1942 report, of which it incorporates extensive passages, in particular those relating to the structure of the two "death-buildings" and the alleged killing system.

The report of November 15, 1942 is therefore the most-important historical source for Treblinka Camp during the time of its existence, and the entire subsequent orthodox historiography relies on this report, beginning with the description of the alleged "gas chambers," as I will demonstrate in the next subchapter. Nevertheless, it has been such a headache for orthodox historians that they occasionally cite it with blatant falsification. The Israeli historian Yitzhak Arad, for example, summarizes it as follows (Arad 1987, pp. 354f.):

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[201] USSR-93, English version. The Republic of Poland in the case against: 1. German war criminals. 2. Their corporate bodies and organizations, designated under Charge No. 1 before the International War Court, p. 44. An indication as to the report's credibility is given by the inclusion of a chapter entitled "A Soap Factory of Human Fat" following the section on Treblinka!

> *"In this document there is a description of the construction of the Treblinka extermination camp, its location, its size, and a detailed plan, including a sketch of the area. This report also includes a description of the dozens* [sic] *of new gas chambers and other structures in the camp. With regard to the camp staff, it states that, in addition to the Germans and Ukrainians there are also Jews, whom the document calls 'Jewish auxiliaries', who are employed at ancillary works, in sorting of clothes of the murdered and removing the corpses from the gas chambers and burying them. The document mentions the extremely difficult conditions under which the prisoners are kept, the daily killings among these Jews, and that their life expectancy in this camp was no more than two weeks. In the description of the way the transports were treated, there is reference to the deceptive ploys of the Germans and a description of the extermination process from the moment the people disembarked on the platform – the way they were tortured – until they were led into the gas chambers, as well as the system of burying the corpses. In conclusion, it stated that by then two million Jews had been murdered in Treblinka – the majority of Polish Jewry. The report concludes by asking why the new gas chambers were built, since indeed the majority of Polish Jewry had already been killed, and states that, according to one eyewitness, the Germans had already killed a group of Poles in the middle of August.*
>
> *This report is the first in which there is a comprehensive description of the Treblinka extermination camp. The facts are, for the most part, correct. Their source is escapees from the camp who reached the Warsaw ghetto and who gave testimony for the Ringelblum Archive and to Jewish underground groups in the Warsaw ghetto. This report is based therefore on the descriptions of witnesses who had seen for themselves the process of extermination, who had lived in the camp for days or weeks as prisoners, who had been employed at various jobs, and who had succeeded in escaping. The facts that they related on the basis of what they had seen were accurate, but the reference to two million Jews murdered was incorrect. In the period to which this report refers, one-fourth to one-third of the number cited in the report had been murdered. Also the detail about the murder of a group of Poles in Treblinka was incorrect."*

The gross falsification by way of omission committed here by the greatest orthodox expert on the Operation Reinhardt camps betrays his grave embarrassment in the face of this essential historical source which, on the basis of the testimonies of self-proclaimed eyewitness, undermines one of the fundamental cornerstones of orthodox historiography, namely the claim that the alleged gas chambers operated not with steam, as this source claims, but with engine-exhaust gases.

Arad claims, however, that the report contains "a description of the dozens of new gas chambers" as well as a description of the "extermination process," but he doesn't write a single word about the steam chambers; instead, he brazenly transforms them into "gas chambers"! Furthermore, he asserts that the claims in the report are "for the most part, correct" and that the witness testi-

mony was "accurate," although orthodox historiography had long since banished the steam chambers to the realm of myths.

No-less-dishonest is the summary that Polish historian Józef Marszałek gave of the November 15, 1942 report (Marszałek, p. 42):

> *"In this section* [of the report] *the site and topography of the camp are shown exactly, and the number of the gas chambers* [*komór gazowych*] *as well as their structure with the facilities for the gassing* [*do gazowania*] *of the victims are described."*

Ryszard Czarkowski, on the other hand, does not explicitly falsify the text, but omits the reference to "steam chambers," limiting himself to two short quotes ripped out of their context. By so doing, these quotes become completely meaningless (Czarkowski, p. 120):

> *"The execution rooms have no windows, but have doors that open to the hallway and some sort of folding door in the exterior walls."*
> *"The floor in the rooms is covered with terracotta tiles, which become very slippery when wet. Next to the boiler is the well – the only well on the entire Treblinka B grounds."*

But Czarkowski placed these quotes in a context that misleads the reader to assume they were "gas chambers."

In the following subchapter I will document how these fictitious "steam chambers" were literarily transformed into equally fictitious "gas chambers" operating with exhaust gases from an engine.

The first attempt at a literary reworking of the November 15, 1942 report is the text presented by Silberschein. Although his map of the camp is completely different (see Documents 4 and 5), the instrument of killing remains the same. The map shows a structure of four rooms with the victims' route indicated by arrows (see Documents 4f.): "*Garderobe*" (undressing room) → "*Bains*" (baths) → "*Versuchsraum für Erstickungsgase*" (experimental room for asphyxiating gases) → "*Oefen*" (furnaces), from which a "*Schienenweg zum Friedhof*" (a rail track to the cemetery) leads to the "*Friedhof*" (cemetery). This drawing has obvious inconsistencies with the current orthodox Holocaust narrative: the "baths" (which is supposed to be a euphemistic term for the "gas chambers") are evidently real here; the "experimental asphyxiant gas room" operated with "water vapor" according to Silberschein's text; the "furnaces," if they were cremation furnaces, constitute a double contradiction, first because no such furnaces were ever installed at Treblinka, and second because they would have made a "cemetery" quite superfluous.

3.9. The Literary Genesis of the Treblinka "Gas Chambers"

3.9.1. Jankiel Wiernik and the Report of November 15, 1942: Analysis of a Plagiarism

The starting point of the literary development of the Treblinka murder weapon is the report of November 15, 1942 with its "steam chambers". The importance of this report lies primarily in the fact that it constitutes the primary source of Wiernik's account, which precisely transformed the "steam chambers" into "gas chambers." Before proceeding, I should remind the reader that this witness wrote in his first draft of what later became the booklet *Rok w Treblince* that the victims were killed in gas chambers by throwing chlorine into them from a hermetically sealed trapdoor placed in the ceiling (see page 125). At that time, he had not yet decided what the alleged extermination system should be, and he collected the rumors about chlorine killings, which were also spread about Sobibór (Graf/Kues/Mattogno, pp. 63-76), and which were echoed by the witnesses Abraham Goldfarb, Szymon Goldberg and Samuel Rajzman for Treblinka.

But then, Wiernik changed his mind and resumed the description of the extermination procedure of the above-mentioned report, replacing, with a daring plagiarism, the steam chambers with the gas chambers using the exhaust gas of an engine.

The plagiarism is already evident from the fact that the map attached to the booklet *A Year in Treblinka* (Document 7) is identical to the one that illustrates the report of November 15, 1942 (Documents 2 and 3), has the same heading "*Treblinka. Szkic orjentacyjny*") and the same numbering. In this booklet, Wiernik wrote (Wiernik 1944b, p. 43):

> *"I, for one, resolved to give the world a description of the inferno and a sketch of the layout of that accursed hell hole."*

The typewritten Polish text is much-more-sober and precise (Wiernik 1944, p. 21):

> *"Ja za cel sobie obrałem żyć, by to opisać. Naszkicowałem plan miejsca zbrodni, by światu pokazać."*
> *"My goal was to live to describe it. I sketched a map of the crime scene to show the world."*

In the printed booklet, this phrase appears as follows (Wiernik 1944a, p. 22):

> *"Ja za cel sobie obrałem, by to opisać. Naszkicować plan miejsca zbrodni i światu pokazać."*
> *"My goal was to describe it. To sketch a map of the crime scene and show it to the world."*

However, the Polish booklet does not contain any map. Two legitimate questions arise: How can it be explained that a map supposedly drawn in order to "show the world" the Treblinka "crime scene" *was not* attached to the publica-

tion intended precisely to "show the world" the Treblinka "crime scene"? And was the map published in *A Year in Treblinka* really drawn up by Wiernik?

In the interrogation of October 12, 1945 Wiernik stated:[202]

> *"In the winter of 1943, I immediately wrote down all my memories and experiences of Treblinka, while they were still fresh, and my work was published in Warsaw in early 1944 by a Clandestine Organization as a paperback entitled 'A Year in Treblinka'."*

During the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem, where Wiernik appeared as a witness for the prosecution, he made the following assertion at Session No. 66 on June 6, 1961 (State of Israel, Vol. III, pp. 1202f.):

> *"Q.* [Attorney General] *After the War, immediately following the War, you drew a sketch of Treblinka?*
> *A.* [Wiernik] *Yes. This is it, here. I drew it. I prepared it when I was still underground, after my liberation in 1943. I drew it."*

Therefore, Wiernik would have drawn his map already in 1943. He acknowledged as his the map accepted by the tribunal precisely as "Sketch of Treblinka drawn by Witness Ya'akov Wierkik [sic]"[203] (Document 8). This drawing had been published by Filip Friedman in 1946[204] (Document 9). On this reproduction, a small section of the camp is missing, perhaps caused by a double folding of the sheet. The curious fact is that the Polish edition of this book does not contain the map in question.[205] The original is in the GFH archives (Document 10)[206] and has the heading "*Plan sytuacyjny obozu śmierci w Treblice*" ("Location Map of Treblinka Death Camp").

The map that served as a model for the one published in the American edition of Wiernik's report was received by the British Foreign Office on August 18, 1944 (Document 11)[207] and evidently also reached the United States. The sender was the representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in London, Joseph Linton, who had received it, together with the report on the "steam chambers," from the Minister of the Interior of the Polish Government-in-Exile in London.[208] The map probably reached the United States through one of these channels.

However, the enigma of the absence of the map in the Polish booklet still remains: why did Wiernik not attach the drawing he claims to have drawn months earlier?

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202 AGK, NTN 69, p. 32.
203 T/1300.
204 Friedman 1946, pp. 82f. On p. 84 we read: "This is a detailed architect's plan of the death camp in Treblinka, drawn by Yankiel Wiernik, a survivor of the camp."
205 Friedman 1945. This 107-page book has no illustrations.
206 GFHA, Catalog No. 4441.
207 TNA, FO 371/42806.
208 "Allied Reports. Auschwitz and Treblinka," in: http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/revolt/Allied%20Reporst%20on%20Treblinka%20and%20Auschwitz.html (last accessed on May 24, 2021).

As far as the alleged extermination installations are concerned, this map clearly follows that of the November 15, 1942 report, as can be seen visually by comparing Document 12 (section from Document 2), which shows the two steam-extermination installations, and Document 13 (clipping from Document 9), which refers to Wiernik's gas chambers. The only thing that is different are the numbers designating the various camp facilities:

#	MAP OF NOVEMBER 15, 1942	#	WIERNIK'S MAP[209]
10	Central corridor of the second building with 5 steam chambers on each side	23	"A building with a large corridor, containing five gas chambers on each side, with a platform outside each chamber"
11	Second building with steam chambers		
	Non-existing	24	"Room with motor feeding gas into the chambers"
14	Three steam chambers	25	"Building divided into three gas chambers, with a platform outside the building."
13	Platform outside the building		
15a	Boiler room (*"kotłownia"*)	26	"Room with motor feeding gas into the three chambers, also electric dynamo for the two camps"
	Non-existing	27	"Room with dentists sorting teeth taken from the dead"
	Non-existing	28	"Workshops (carpenters, shoemakers, sheet-metal workers)"

Wiernik's plagiarism is further confirmed by comparing the relevant descriptions. I highlight in bold the common elements.

a. Report of November 15, 1942 (translated from the Polish original):

> *"According to the report of an eyewitness, the interior of the building looked like this:* ***a corridor*** *3 meters wide runs through the middle, and* ***on each side, there are 5 rooms, chambers****; each chamber is about 2* ***meters*** *high; the surface area of each chamber is about 35 square meters. The execution chambers are without windows, but they have doors opening on the corridor and a type of* ***shutter*** [*Klapa*] *on the outside walls. Next to these shutters there are large* ***ramps*** *with a slightly hollowed-out floor reminiscent of a large trough. Workers installed* ***pipes*** *from which water vapor was to be released. This is to be Death House #2. The street through the middle of the woods (9) curves around this house, runs along the western wall through the trees of the woods (12) and ends at the next building, Death House #1 (14).*
>
> *This building is* ***perpendicular*** *to Death House #2. It is a much-smaller* ***brick*** *building than the one previously described. It consists of only* ***three chambers*** *and a boiler room. Along the north side of this house runs a corridor from*

[209] The captions are by Friedman 1946, p. 81.

which, through doors, one can enter the rooms. The outer wall of the rooms has a ***shutter*** *(until recently it had a door, which has been replaced with a shutter for reasons of convenience). There, at the height of the shutter, there is also a* ***ramp*** *in the shape of a trough (15). A boiler room is connected directly to the building (15a).*

Inside the boiler room is a large boiler to produce water vapor, and through ***pipes****, which run along the death chambers and have an appropriate number of holes, the superheated water vapor is released into the chambers. While this machinery is in operation, doors and stutters are closed* ***hermetically****. The floor in the chambers is covered with* ***terra cotta tiles*** *which become very slippery when wet. Next to the boiler is the well – the only well on the entire Treblinka B grounds.* […] *They* [the excavators] *are driven by a* ***Diesel engine****, the roar of which is the characteristic noise of the Treblinka B Death Camp."*

b. Wiernik's Text (as quoted before):

"When I arrived at the camp, there were already ***3*** *gassing* ***chambers****. During my stay,* ***10 more*** *chambers were added. The size of one chamber was 5 x 5 meters, a total of 25 square meters, the height was* ***1.90 meters.*** *On the roof, an outlet with an airtight closure and* ***pipe outlets****, the* ***terracotta floor*** *was sloping towards the* ***ramp****.*

The building, made of ***masonry****, is separated from Camp No. 1 by a wooden wall. These two walls, wooden and masonry, together formed a corridor raised 80 centimeters above the horizontal plane of the entire building. The rooms had a connection to the corridor. A* ***hermetically*** *closed iron door led to each room. The chambers, on the side of Camp No. 2, were connected to a* ***ramp*** *4 meters wide along all three chambers. The height of the ramp from the* [*ground*] *level was about 80 centimeters. From this same side led* ***hermetically closed*** *wooden doors. The door of each room on the side of Camp No. 2 – measuring 2-2.50 x 1.80 meters – could only be opened from the outside from the bottom upwards by means of iron posts. They were closed by means of iron hooks installed in the frames and wooden posts. The victims were pushed through the doors from the corridor side. The doors on side no. 2 were used to pull out the corpses* [of those] *gassed. Along the chambers was the electric power station, almost the same size as the chambers, but higher than the height of the ramp. In the power station, there was the* ***engine*** *of a Soviet tank which was used for the introduction of gas into the chambers. This gas was fed in by connecting the engine to intake* ***pipes****.* […]

Into one chamber measuring 25 square meters, 450 and 500 people were pushed. […]

They start the engine, connect it to the intake pipes. [After] *25 minutes at most, all are lying side by side.* […] *Nothing is pretty or ugly, everyone is yellow and poisoned.* […] *10 to 15 thousand people were gassed every day.* […]

The new facility between Camp No. 1 and Camp No. 2, on which I worked, was built very quickly. It turned out to be ***10*** *new chambers. These chambers were larger than the previous ones, 7 x 7 meters, about 50 square meters. After*

> *completion, 1,000 to 1,200 people were crammed into each chamber. The chamber system was corridor-based.* ***On each side of the corridor 5 chambers****. Each chamber had two doors. One on the side of the corridor, through which the victims were pushed in, the other on the side of the camp, parallel to the first, was used for extracting the corpses. The construction system of door one and two* [the two doors to each chamber] *was as in the previous chambers. The view from Camp #1 was as follows: 5 wide concrete steps, on the steps on either side were carefully arranged flower pots. A long hallway. On top of the roof on the camp side the star of David /magen David/. The building looked like an ancient temple."*

Thus, the report of November 15, 1942 contains all the essential elements of the plagiarism:

– first extermination building: 3 rooms, 2 doors opposite of each other in each room that can be closed hermetically, the external ones as a shutter; the presence of pipes inside, terracotta floor, a ramp along the north side;
– second extermination building: 10 rooms, 5 on each side of a central corridor; doors, pipes and floor as in the first building, 2 ramps on either side of the building.

Finally, the Diesel engine should also be mentioned, although it was mentioned in connection with the excavators in the Nov. 1942 report.

In particular, according to Wiernik's description, the first gassing facility consisted of four rooms in all, three "gas chambers" and an "electric power station" which, according to the typewritten Polish text, "*wzdłuż kamer znajdowała się*", i.e. "was along the chambers" (Wiernik 1944, p. 5), not behind one of them, so in his drawing it corresponds to Structure No. 28. On Wiernik's map, the former Room 15a of Document 12, the "boiler room", and the adjoining small room – previously without number or name – are labeled with No. 26, and part of the ramp forms Room 27, which previously had no number or name either. These three rooms are not mentioned in Wiernik's description.

Second, in his drawing, a small circle appears at the lower right corner of Room 26 (Document 13), which, according to the caption, represents a "well." This is mentioned in the Nov. 1942 "steam-chamber" report (and labeled in the respective map with No. 16), but not in Wiernik's description, who therefore drew this detail from that source as well.

The reference to the "outlet with an airtight closure" and to the color of the alleged poisoners (they were "*żółci*", yellow), which is reminiscent of the yellowish color of chlorine, resulted from an oversight by Wiernik, since this clearly refers to his first version – that of killing with chlorine.

This type of "closure" was also used in later versions of the tale, but since they had lost their original function, they took on other, no less fanciful ones.

Wiernik's story is the link between the steam-chamber version and the gas-chamber version currently in vogue, but it has a significant discordance with respect to the current gas-chamber narrative: the engine that is said to have

produced the gases for killing the victims was not specifically intended for this purpose, but was the engine that drove the power station's electric generator, which was located "along the chambers" and was "almost the same size as the chambers" ("*prawie tej samej wielkości co komory*"), i.e., it was a facility parallel to the first alleged extermination facility with three chambers, hence precisely the one labeled with No. 28 in Wiernik's map.

In the typewritten version of Wiernik's text, the passage that interests us here is written as follows (*ibid*.):

> *"Wielkość kamery wynosiła 5 x 5 m, razem 25 m kw., wysokość 1,90m. Wylot na dachu z hermetycznem zamknięciem i wloty rury, podłoga terakotowa, pochyła ku rampie."*
> *"The size of the chamber was 5 x 5 m, total 25 sq m, height 1.90m. Roof outlet with airtight closure and pipe inlets, terracotta floor, sloping towards ramp."*

There are other noteworthy elements in this text. The first concerns the dimensions of the gas chambers, which are 5 m × 5 m × 1.90 m, while the handwritten text says 7 m × 7 m × 2 m. This comes from a reworking of the data contained in the report of November 15, 1942, which mentions (for the second gassing building) "gas chambers" of 35 square meters each and 2 meters in height. Wiernik may have apportioned the area into 5 m × 7 m (= 35 m²), using the 5 as the length and width of the chambers in the first gassing building (5 m × 5 m), and the seven for the second building (7 m × 7 m), allowing himself a little freedom with regard to height (1.90 meters instead of 2).

The second element is the terracotta floor (*podłoga terakotowa*) of the "gas chambers," which was also copied from the Nov. 1942 report:

> *"Podłoga w komorach wyłożona jest posadzką terakotową" – "The floor in the chambers is covered with a terracotta flooring"* (Marczewska/Ważniewski, p. 142).

Wiernik's plagiarism is thus an indubitable fact.

Before examining the subsequent development of the version of the gas chambers, one must ask how it is possible that two witnesses could have seen practically identical killing facilities, but that for one it was operating with water vapor, while for the other it was operating with engine exhaust. From an orthodox perspective, there can only be two possible answers:

Hypothesis #1: Initially there were actually steam chambers, which were later replaced by gas chambers. This is not possible, because Wiernik arrived at Treblinka on August 23, 1942, while the report on the steam chambers of November 15, 1942 refers to "the first half of September." The steam chambers would therefore have existed when Wiernik was already at the camp, but he does not mention them.

Hypothesis #2: The "eyewitness" of the steam chambers made a mistake: he observed openings inside real gas chambers, but mistook the exhaust fumes coming from them for water vapor and deduced that they were steam chambers. Even this explanation is impossible, because the description of the steam

chambers is not that of an external observer, but that of an "eyewitness" who saw everything from inside and describes it exactly. The text speaks explicitly of a "boiler room" ("*kotłownia*") containing "a large boiler to produce water vapor" ("*duży kocioł do wytwarzania pary wodnej*") that was fed into the chambers through pipes ("*za pomocą rur*", "through pipes"). Even the description of the opening of the steam chambers after the alleged murder categorically excludes killing with exhaust gases from an engine:

> *"Due to the steam all the bodies have become a homogenous mass stuck together with the perspiration of the victims. In their death agonies, arms, legs, trunks are intertwined into a gigantic macabre entanglement. To make it possible for the grave-diggers to get out single bodies, cold water from the near-by well is poured over the mass. Then the bodies separate and may be taken out."*

To the best of my knowledge, the plan of the "steam chambers" reproduced here as Document 14 was made in the "second half of 1942" (the exact date is not given).[210] It is almost identical with the plan in the Nov. 1942 report, except for the fact that the heading, the numbers and the captions are missing.

A later plan, drawn "after July 1942," is already very detailed (Document 15).[211] In it, the first building is referred to as "*stare kąpieliska*," the second as "*nowe kąpieliska*," meaning old and new bathhouses. In both facilities, the steam chambers are marked with the letter "K" (*Komora*), and the chambers of the old facility also with the Number 14. The old facility's Room 15a is explicitly labeled as "*kotłownia*", boiler room, and Room 13 as "*Korytarz*", corridor. The circle with the Number 16 is explained as "*studnia*", well. In the new building, the label "*Korytarz*" appears, and the two side ramps are also drawn in.

Such precision further excludes the possibility of an error on the part of an outside observer. The only possibility is therefore that the "eyewitness" saw real steam disinfection/disinfestation facilities (*Dampfentwesung*), which also explains Krzepicki's description of the "*Badenanstalt*":

> *"*[…] *a not very spacious hall – an ordinary bathing hall with all the normal equipment of a public bath. The walls were very nice and carefully covered with white tiles. The floor was made of red-yellow terracotta tiles. From the ceiling hung showers ... and ... nothing else. A cozy, well-cleaned bathhouse in the middle of the green woods. There was nothing else to see there."*

Rachel Auerbach also provides another important link between the steam chambers and the engine-exhaust gas chambers, as she mentions

> *"engines for the excavation of mass graves, engines for operating steam death chambers* [*motory do obsługi parowych komor śmierci*]*."*[212]

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[210] AŻIH, ARG, 384.Ring.II/300.1.Mf. ŻIH-800. "Second half of 1942. Unknown author, Warsaw Ghetto. Map sketch of Treblinka Extermination Camp."

[211] AŻIH, ARG, 384.Ring.II/488. Mf. ŻIH-809. "After July 1942. Warsaw Ghetto. Unknown author, map of Treblinka Extermination Camp."

[212] R. Auerbach, *op. cit.* (note 178), p. 16.

What I have outlined above also provides a probable and plausible answer to the question I posed earlier: why did Wiernik not include the map of Treblinka Camp in the Polish booklet which he had drawn several months earlier? In Poland, the report of November 15, 1942 on the "steam chambers" was generally known, and the relevant maps of Treblinka were also known in certain resistance circles. Publishing a camp map in *Rok w Treblince* that so blatantly followed the lead of the above-mentioned report would have made Wiernik's plagiarism too evident.

3.9.2. Abraham Isaak Goldfarb und Jankiel Wiernik: Plagiarizing a Plagiarist

Just as the story of the "steam chambers" was the primary source of Wiernik's account, Wiernik's tale became the source of Goldfarb's narrative.

At the time of the preliminary Polish-Soviet investigation into Treblinka (August-September 1944), the investigators were familiar with Wiernik's pamphlet, which they explicitly cited as a source of information in their report of August 24, 1944: "… and information from the book 'Год в Треблинке/ *God v Treblinke*'" (= *Rok w Treblince = A Year in a Treblinka*).[213] This was also known to Goldfarb, who mentioned his colleague "Jakob Werni [sic]" as the "author of the booklet 'Death in Treblinka'" – "death" rather than "year," an error perhaps due to a slip of the German translator (there is in fact a assonance between "Год/*God*" and "*Tod*").

Goldfarb did not limit himself to drawing the essential elements of his story from Wiernik's, but developed on his own initiative one of the most fantastic elements of it. Some obvious contradictions are probably due to misunderstandings on Goldfarb's part or to his own literary "ornaments."

The first gassing building for Wiernik contained 3 rooms measuring 5 m × 5 m × 1.90 m; Goldfarb changed that to 5 m × 4 m × 2 m, and added a first blunder: it was "an ordinary one-story brick building with an iron roof [*mit einem Eisendach*]"!

Wiernik's manuscript cited earlier contained an even bigger goof:

> *"On the roof – a safety hatch used in the case of killing people with chlorine. After throwing the appropriate amount of chlorine, the hatch closes hermetically."*

In the typewritten text of his booklet, from which all references to killing by chlorine have been deleted, this hatch is transformed into a device whose function is never explained:

> *"On the roof, an outlet with an airtight closure* [*wylot na dachu z hermetycznym zamknięciem*]*."*

Goldfarb embroidered the story of the hatch with vivid imagination:

> *"Each chamber had an opening in the ceiling, which was covered with a net."*

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213 GARF, 7021-115-9, p. 109.

He did not explain the function of these openings either, which must be deduced by analogy from the description of the second killing building:

> *"The chambers were illuminated by windows located in the roof."*
> *"There were special openings in the roof for the gas to flow out of the chamber."*

Since any lighting windows had to be made of glass, they are unlikely to have served as gas vents. On the other hand, to air out the chambers after a gassing, it would have made no sense to install gas-exhaust hatches in this unique iron roof, since it would have been sufficient to open the two doors of each room for ventilation.

Goldfarb developed to the point of absurdity the initial idea of killing by chlorine, which at the time was still circulating in Polish-Jewish black propaganda. To introduce this fable, he had to distort Wiernik's story, who had limited himself to writing:[214]

> *"The engine in the new chambers worked badly. The unfortunate people suffered for hours before they died.* […] *When the chambers were opened, many were often still half-alive and were killed with* [rifle] *butts, bullets or or mighty kicks. Often the victims were left in the chambers overnight, and the engine was not started. Lack of space and crushing played their part, killing a very large percentage* [of people] *amidst terrible torments."* (Emphasis added; see footnote)

Goldfarb then invented the additional story that "the engine would not be able to supply all 10 chambers with enough gas. It was sufficient only for 2 chambers" – which, by the way, implies that the German designers of the system were incompetent. Therefore, the killing system was temporarily changed:

> *"A significant amount of chlorinated lime was hurriedly brought to the building. A certain amount of chlorinated lime in a moistened state was put inside the chamber, which was then hermetically sealed. The extermination process of the people in the chamber lasted incomparably longer, and therefore was much more torturous. The People were kept in the chambers for 24 hours, and sometimes some remained alive."*

Calcium chloride is a white crystalline powder that was used as a disinfectant at the time – according to black propaganda, however, it was also the substance with which the floors of railway cars of Jewish transports were sprinkled. In this imaginative use, it appears as "chlorine" in Goldfarb's second story (Arad 1987, pp. pp. 64, 84):

> *"Before we moved off, the Germans sprinkled chlorine in the cars. It burned the eyes. The weaker among us fainted.* […] *The cars were full of corpses. The bodies had been partially consumed by chlorine."*

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[214] The printed text, which I use here, differs in this respect from the typescript, which does not contain the sentence I have put in italics. In addition, the opening sentence bears "nie" instead of "źle" (error for "źle"), i.e., "the engine did not work" instead of "the engine worked badly." Wiernik 1944a, pp. 9f; 1944, p. 10.

How calcium chloride was "put inside" into the alleged gas chambers and what lethal action it exerted, remains shrouded in mystery. According to Goldfarb, this fantastic killing system was used from the startup of the new gassing building (end of November 1942) until April 1943, therefore for at least four full months, but Goldfarb is the only guarantor of this extraordinary notion. None of his colleagues reported anything about it.

Goldfarb also expanded on Wiernik's account of the power station, but here too he added a touch of originality:

– Wiernik:

> *"Along the chambers was the electric power station, almost the same size as the chambers, but higher than the height of the ramp. In the power station, there was the engine of a Soviet tank which was used for the introduction of gas into the chambers. This gas was fed in by connecting the engine to intake pipes."*

– Goldfarb:

> *"From the entrance staircase, one first entered a wooden annex, which resembled a corridor.* […] *in the annex of the building, an ordinary tractor-engine was set up* […]*"*

What is certain is that for Wiernik the power station was a separate structure from the first gassing building and parallel to it, while for Goldfarb it was an integral part of the building; moreover, one mentions a tank motor, the other a tractor motor – and that difference is not insignificant.

Wiernik fleetingly mentions the system connecting the engine to the gas chambers:

> *"This gas was injected by connecting the engine to intake pipes.* […] *They start the engine, connect it to the intake pipes.* [After] *25 minutes at most, all are lying side by side."*

Goldfarb decorated this theme with his vivid imagination as well:

> *"Along the wall of the chamber was a pipe with a peculiar branch and a net-like bottom."*

The motor

> *"was put into operation in two cases: when the chambers were filled with people, and for lighting purposes. From this generator, a pipe originated, through which the gases flowed out. This pipe led into the building through the floor to each chamber – as I said already – through the branching pipe. The second pipe of the generator led directly to the street.* […] *When the engine served the purpose of exterminating people, the gases were introduced into the chambers through the system of pipes, but when it served the basic purpose of supplying the electric network, the gases went directly to the outside."*

Apparently – and this is how Jurowski interpreted it in his drawing of the installation (see below) – two pipes started from the engine: one went directly out onto the street, the other entered the building and had a branch on the wall of the first gas chamber; from here, via three other branches, it entered each chamber. It is not clear how the two pipes were connected to the engine.

There is no need to emphasize too much that the entire gassing pipeline, with its imaginative developments, was a mere literary evolution of the pipeline that is said to have carried water vapor to the individual "steam chambers."

Goldfarb's description of the second gassing building follows Wiernik's, but even here he takes some liberties: the chambers did not measure 7 m × 7 m × 2 m, but 6 m × 6 m × 2 m; moreover, as in the first building,

> *"Light fell into the corridor through windows located in the roof itself."*

The two witnesses' testimonies diverge even more from each other on the duration of the second building's construction. For Wiernik, work "on these chambers lasted five weeks," while Goldfarb asserted that "construction lasted from the last days of August and was finished in the last days of November 1942," hence 13 weeks.

Regarding the number of victims, Wiernik had written:

> *"10 to 15 thousand people were gassed every day."*

Goldfarb reworked this theme as well:

> *"Every 24 hours, up to 5,000 people were killed on average. There were also days when transports of 1,000 people arrived, and there were days when their number reached 10,000 and 15,000."*

At the time of his second statement, Goldfarb no longer remembered the fairy tales he had told in 1944, and tapped into the Holocaustic lore of the time, such as the gassing duration of 20-25 minutes (Wiernik had written: "25 minutes at most"), but on the killing system he was extremely vague, and it is not even clear whether he was referring to a real gassing. Goldfarb's reference to a "single mass of flesh" of the execution victims is instead a leftover of the description about the supposed result of executions in the steam chambers (see above, Subchapter 3.3.):

> *"Under the effect of the steam, the corpses formed a monolithic mass held together by the excrement of the slain. In the agony, many arms, legs and trunks became gruesomely entangled."*

3.10. The Judicial Triumph of the "Gas Chambers"

At the end of 1945, three different versions of the extermination technique presumably used at Treblinka were still competing for supremacy: the steam version, the suction-pump version and the engine-exhaust version. Jankiel Wier-

nik, with an impudent plagiarism, transformed the "steam chambers" into "gas chambers," and this version imposed itself as judicial "truth" especially for the Polish investigators.

The prevailing version among the witnesses questioned by the Soviets in the first phase of their investigation was sucking out the air from hermetically sealed chambers by means of a motor-driven suction pump, and it was thanks to Abraham Goldfarb's plagiarism that they zoomed in to the "gas chambers."

It is not known whether Lieutenant Jurowski, after questioning this witness on September 21, 1944, drafted a report on Treblinka, but it is certain that he drew two sketches representing the first and second extermination facilities.

The first sketch (Document 16) is clearly based on Goldfarb's testimony. I have added the numbering of Document 12 onto this drawing. Room 15a becomes the staff room (in Jurowski's sketch: #6), while the small adjacent room, which was previously a simple unnumbered vestibule, becomes the engine room (#2). The unloading ramp for corpses, which was previously a single ramp along the north side of the building (#13), now doubles, with the creation of a second ramp on the other side (#1: north ramp; #7: south ramp). Jurowski drew the system of pipes invented by Goldfarb, in red in the original and always highlighted in grey by me (red in the ebook version): he indicated with "a" the outlet of the pipes in the rooms, with (б, b) the openings on the ceiling of the rooms that in the original version of Wiernik's story were used for the introduction of chlorine, and that now, as mentioned earlier, remained without a comprehensible function.

As for the second building, the findings of the preliminary investigation had stopped at the alleged existence of 12 gas chambers measuring 6 m × 6 m, in which the victims were killed by pumping out the air. The relevant drawing by Jurowski (Document 17) also refers to Goldfarb's testimony, but strangely enough he drew the "12 compartments" from the testimony of Abe Kon. Here too, the structure of the building is practically identical with that which contained the steam chambers, hence identical with those on Wiernik's plan, with the only difference that Goldfarb, followed by Jurowski, invented the engine room at the end of the corridor.

However, these plans did not play any role in orthodox Holocaust historiography until they were discovered by Jürgen Graf and myself at the Central State Archive of the Russian Federation in Moscow and published in our study of the Treblinka Camp (Mattogno/Graf, Docs. 18f., pp. 344f.).

It was thus the Polish judicial "truth" that imposed itself, albeit with difficulty, as the historical "truth". In 1946, Judge Z. Łukaszkiewicz sanctioned it as follows in his official report "The Treblinka Extermination Camp," which was published in the *Bulletin of the Central Commission of Investigation into German Crimes in Poland* (Łukaszkiewicz 1946a, pp. 136f.):

> *"According to the witnesses Wiernik, Reichman, Czechowicz and Finkelsztein, the description of the chambers (in which the victims were gassed) is as follows: Both buildings were constructed with the corridor system, but in the*

> *larger building the entrances to the chambers were on both sides of the corridor, while in the smaller building only on one side. These entrances were small and closed with airtight doors. In the interior walls of the chambers were large hermetically sealed shutters* [*klapy*] *that rose up and were used for the removal of corpses. The chambers were lined with tiles; the floor sloping outward facilitated the removal of corpses. In the ceiling there were openings* [*otwory*] *connected by pipes with combustion engines, located in outbuildings* [*w przybudówkach*] *next to each building. These openings were used to introduce exhaust gas into the chambers with which the victims were asphyxiated. Witness Wiernik, who worked as a carpenter throughout his stay at the camp and who enjoyed a certain degree of freedom as a result of this qualification, gives the dimensions of the chambers: in the smaller building 5 x 5 meters, in the larger building 7 x 7 meters."*

As can be seen, Łukaszkiewicz imaginatively resolved the ambiguity of the openings in the ceiling of the chambers – in Wiernik's original version intended for the introduction of chlorine into the rooms – by turning them into the outlets of the gassing pipes, but in this case, there would have been simple outlets, not "openings", meaning hatches or small windows. He also arbitrarily distorted the testimonies he claims to rely upon, because two witnesses attributed completely different functions to these alleged openings, as indicated earlier. Aron Czechowicz stated in this regard:

> *"On the roof of the building, there were three openings surrounded by a tube in the shape of a small chimney, and I saw with my own eyes that, after the chambers had been filled, through these openings a Ukrainian poured some liquid into them from a sheet-metal canister (an ordinary canister like those used for heating oil)."*

And here is Hejnoch Brener's claim:

> *"There were two holes in the ceiling to pump the air out (people were killed by pumping the air out with a motor located next to the chambers)."*

The nonsensical story of the narrow entrance doors, which merely would have delayed the entry of the hundreds of victims who had to pass through them, came from Hejnoch Brener's and Oskar Strawczyński's depositions, but for the former there "were two holes in the ceiling."

The Polish judge eliminated any reference to "extracting air from the chambers" prior to gassing (Henryk Reichman). Apart from Wiernik, none of the other three witnesses he cited provided a "description" of the gas chambers, so that his reference to Reichman, Czechowicz and Finkelsztein was misleading. In his book, Łukaszkiewicz himself quoted the following passage from the statements of Aron Czechowicz, whom he questioned on October 11, 1945 (Łukaszkiewicz 1946b, p. 10):

> *"*[…] *I was employed at the camp transporting lumber. This lumber was intended for the construction of the new chambers, which were being completed at this time."*

Since the witness had been deported on September 10, 1942 and the event narrated referred to September 20, Łukaszkiewicz deduced that the new gas chambers had come into operation in October (Łukaszkiewicz 1946b, p. 10).

With regard to Leon Finkelsztein, who was interrogated on December 28, 1945, the Polish judge limited himself to a few brief remarks: the witness had arrived in Treblinka on July 22, 1942 and the first gassing building with three chambers was already in operation (*ibid.*). Łukaszkiewicz even had the impudence to report this atrocity tale of Finkelsztein (*ibid.*, p. 18):

> *"As they pushed the victims into the chambers, the Ukrainians Iwan and Mikołai, armed with sabers, cut off women's breasts."*

However, the trail leading to the triumph of the gas-chamber version was initially fraught with glaring contradictions.

Łukaszkiewicz's report, which was written on December 29, 1945, was accepted by the Soviets and submitted during the Nuremberg IMT.[215] However, as I pointed out earlier, in their official report on German crimes in Poland prepared by their government for the Nuremberg Trials and presented by the Soviets as Document USSR-93, the Poles stated that in Treblinka the victims were killed "in gas chambers, by steam and electric current," although they were well aware of Wiernik's pamphlet, so much so that they mentioned it in their report. In fact, this document reads (USSR-93, p. 45):

> *"As in other cases, a first-hand document is presented also in this one which describes the conditions and crimes in Treblinka. It comes from a former inmate who managed to escape from the camp. This was Yankiel Wieznik* [sic]*, a Jewish builder, who spent a year in Treblinka."*[216]

This evidently means that the Polish government did not endorse the killing method claimed by Wiernik, but neither did it want to give up a first-hand witness. Hence this peculiar compromise.

During the Nuremberg IMT, L.N. Smirnov mentioned this passage of the Polish report when presenting it as Document USSR-93, further distorting Wiernik's name:

> *"On Page 70 of the Russian text of this report, there is a quotation from the statement of Jacob Vernik, a carpenter from Warsaw, who spent a year in the extermination camp of Treblinka 2.* […] *This is what Vernik said in presenting a report on Treblinka to the Polish Government; a report which, as he stressed in his foreword, was his only reason 'to continue his pitiful life':* […]*"*

This is followed by two quotations from Wiernik's pamphlet which appear already in the Polish report and which were quoted again by Smirnov (IMT, Vol. 8, pp. 239f.). The Soviets played along with the Polish-government scheme, because instead of getting Goldfarb, who had given a detailed description of the "gas chambers" (Document USSR-380), into the witness stand, they called

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[215] USSR-344. "Vernichtungslager Treblinka. Eidesstattliche Versicherung der bisherigen Angaben der Voruntersuchung bezüglich des Vernichtungslager 'Treblinka'."

[216] Two quotes from the introductory chapter of Wiernik's pamphlet follow.

Samuel Rajzman, who gave a deliberately ambiguous statement: in the light of the official Polish report, his generic "gas chambers" could in fact also be interpreted as steam chambers.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the case of Treblinka had a decisive influence for the Polish judiciary in attributing the killing system by means of engine-exhaust gas also to the Bełżec and Sobibór Camps, both due to the early date on which the first report on Treblinka Camp was finalized (December 29, 1945), and due to the presence of an "eyewitness" (Wiernik) who had expressed himself clearly and in detail on the alleged extermination method.

3.11. The Copycats

However, the gas-chamber version operating with engine exhaust was only slowly imposed. In the immediate post-war period, the fables invented by Polish-Jewish black propaganda continued to circulate, and others were added. The more-recent witnesses who had some knowledge of Wiernik's claims tried to follow it, but without renouncing their own personal contributions; those unfamiliar with Wiernik's tales unleashed their imagination even more.

In 1945, a memoir appeared in France by a certain BER BASKIND, a "Warsaw Ghetto survivor" who described as follows the alleged gas chambers of the "Tremblinki B" camp on the basis of the inevitable "eyewitness testimony" (Baskind, pp. 41, 43):

> *"On the outside, one might believe that these are just two bathing facilities. But in reality, these are gas chambers that can swallow 800 people at a time.*
> *The extermination technique is simple. After all openings have been plugged, it suffices to simply let the asphyxiating gases enter the chambers for 8 minutes. Not one minute more; the operation is minutely calculated and timed to avoid wasting precious gases!*
> *Once the operation is over, the doors are opened, and the terribly swollen corpses are removed; sometimes people in agony who don't wait to die. They are all burned together in immense holes previously dug. The work of a privileged few is carried out there who are selected as soon as they get off the train.*
> […]
> *The eyewitness who tells us what we have just read personally worked first at transporting the corpses, then loading the railway cars, for several days. With the help of his companions, he was able to hide in one of the carriages under a pile of clothes. Since these wagons were not guarded, he managed to abscond through an opening on the way to Lublin, and to flee."*

These "precious gases" certainly could not have been ordinary engine-exhaust gases.

In 1946, a Jewish historical journal written in Yiddish, *Fun Letztn Churbn* (*From the Last Extermination*) published the "eyewitness account" of a certain

SIMCHA BUNIM LESKY titled "In Treblinke." He arrived there at the end of July 1942 on a train that contained 10,000 deportees, 120-140 per car. On arrival at the camp, 800 young men, including the witness, were chosen to sort the deportees' clothes. The others were sent to a shed (*opdakh*), where they undressed, "then they were ordered to go to a fence woven of plants and wire, and from there to pass through a small door [*durkh a kleyn tirl*] on the other side." Machine-gun fire was heard throughout the night. The next day, the dead were collected and thrown into a pit:

> *"A layer of wood and a layer of men. And so, then, the bodies of our loved ones went up in flames."*

After three days, 17 of the original 800 prisoners remained alive. On the fourth day, the witness fortunately managed to escape by hiding in a train leaving the camp (Lesky; translated from Yiddish by Kladderadatsch).

The few clear facts of the testimony are at odds with those of the current orthodox narrative. The fence mentioned there should have been the so-called "hose" ("*Schlauch*") that connected Camp 1 to Camp 2, but it supposedly did not connect a shed to a "small door," but started outdoors and went to the alleged gas-chamber building. The cremation of corpses in late July-early August 1942 is also completely anachronistic. The system of killing is not explicitly stated, but it seems that machine gunning played an important role.

The following year, the same magazine published the eyewitness account of Henike Szperling titled "Treblinka." The witness claims to have been deported there in September 1942, and presumably remained there until early August 1943, when he escaped as a result of a prisoner uprising. He remained in Camp 1, where he worked in a unit assigned to sorting clothes. I translate the most-significant passage of the testimony (Szperling; translated from Yiddish by Kladderadatsch):

> *"Between Camp I and Camp II, three huge excavators work day and night, throwing huge piles of earth between the two camps. The blazing glow of the burning bodies rises day and night to the sky, and can be seen from miles away. When the wind blows in the direction of our camp, there is such a terrible stench that we cannot begin to do anything. Only when the wind changes direction can we resume our work normally. It is strictly forbidden to go from camp to camp. In the initial period, the food carriers used to come to us from Camp III and tell us the latest details of the atrocities taking place there. This churns our stomachs, makes our heads spin frantically. It often takes hours before we can get back to work. Our gushing tears cannot soothe our helpless rage and searing pain.*
>
> *They tell us how the path to the death camp passes through a garden. A short distance before the death camp is a booth, where everyone is ordered for the last time to hand over money and gold, and always under threat of execution: first* [comes] *the avarice of Nazism, not even the smallest value can be lost. At the death bath* [*totyn-bod*], *on which only the Star of David stands out, the victims are received with bayonets, and are taken to the bath chambers* [*bod-*

> *kamern*] *at bayonet points. While the men enter the chambers with more or less composure, the most terrible scenes take place among the women. Without any consideration, the SS men know how to silence the women with only the butt and bayonet of their rifle. When all the unfortunate women have been pushed into the chambers, the doors are shut tightly. After a few seconds, a frightening, terrifying scream bursts through the walls, a scream that is directed to the heavens, that cries out for vengeance. The scream becomes fainter and fainter, more and more dull. Eventually, everything falls silent. Then, the doors are opened, and the dead bodies are thrown into huge mass graves containing 60 to 70 thousand people. When there was no more room in the mass graves for fresh victims, a new order came to burn the bodies. A deep pit was dug, old crates, boxes, wood and the like were thrown into it. The whole thing was set on fire, a layer of corpses was thrown on top of it, then more branches, and on top of them more corpses, and so on. Later came the order to dig up the corpses from the mass graves and burn them as well."*

In this testimony the killing system remains a mystery: the victims entered the "bath chambers" alive and came out dead, and that is all. The capacity of the mass graves, 60,000-70,000 corpses (it is not clear if this refers to them all together or to each one), is in any case disproportionate, because it refers to Camp 1. The alleged practice of burning the corpses when there was no more space in the mass graves, besides being naive (the space available at Treblinka was enormous), is at odds with the current orthodox narrative; so too is the cremation method, which is also nonsensical: instead of first building a pyre of fuel and corpses in alternating layers, flammable material was thrown into a pit and then set on fire; only when this pyre was ablaze, were layers of corpses and additional wood thrown into the flames. This impossible cremation procedure was allegedly adopted before the exhumation-cremation of the corpses buried in mass graves started, which is another contradiction.

On December 24, 1947, ELIAS [ELA, ELIAHU] ROSENBERG made a detailed 12-page statement in German in Vienna titled "The Treblinka Death Camp," but it remained buried for decades in some archive,[217] and only reappeared during the Demjanjuk Trial.[218] The witness, who had been deported to the camp on August 20, 1942, described the first alleged killing building in detail:[219]

> *"The first thing that met our eyes was a building made of rough bricks in the shape of a tall barn. As I learned later, these were the gas chambers in which countless people died a horrible death. In this building were three compartments, about the size of a normal living room. The floor and half of the walls*

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[217] Eliahu Rosenberg appeared as a witness at the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem (Session 66 on June 6, 1961), but in his deposition he made no mention at all of his earlier report of December 24, 1947. State of Israel, Vol. III, pp. 1212-1215. The report in question is not even mentioned by Donat in his biographical note on Rosenberg (Donat, p. 289).

[218] Elias Rosenberg, *Tatsachenbericht. Das Todeslager Treblinka*. Wien, am 24.12.1947. A copy of the signed and notarized document was reproduced in Rullmann, pp. 133-144. An unsigned transcript is in the Yad Vashem Archives, O.33-39, pp. 1-11.

[219] E. Rosenberg, *Tatsachenbericht*. pp. 4f.; Rullmann, pp. 136f.

> *were covered with red stone tiles, so that* [one] *would not see the blood that often stuck to the walls. In the ceiling. there was a small window, sealed airtight, that could not be opened and through which the man could look who controlled the gas supply. There was also a shower head on the ceiling, but there was no water pipe leading to it. Since it was dark in the chambers, one could not see that along the walls there were some pipes with a diameter of about five centimeters, through which the gas – it was the exhaust of a single Diesel engine – was led into the cabin. Four hundred people were squeezed into one chamber. Since they could not even move because of the terrible lack of space, it was not possible for them to fall down or to fight back in any way. The Ukrainians were interested in chasing as many people as possible into the gas chamber in one 'batch,' because then they needed less gas, and the victims also suffocated earlier. As a rule, the gas was fed into the chambers for about 20 minutes, and then* [they] *waited for another quarter of an hour until the last gasps of those dying could no longer be heard.* […]
>
> *Since it was not possible to see through the window mounted in the ceiling of the gas chamber whether the people were yet dead, during each gassing two Germans stood at a /door/ trap door visible only from the outside and listened until no sound could be heard inside. Then the trap doors were quickly opened, and the corpses of those gassed were taken out."*

The witness then recounts the following anecdote:[220] In March 1943, a transport of 6,000 Jews arrived from Grodek. Approximately 30 young men attempted to escape; 10 were shot down, while the rest were captured and

> *"they were pushed into the gas chambers, but as a punishment, no gas was introduced for them, but chlorinated lime was thrown into the chamber, which decomposed only slowly. It took a full twenty-four hours before their gasps could no longer be heard.*
>
> *Shortly thereafter, new gas chambers were built, with room for up to 12,000 people. In order to use as little gas as possible, the compartments were built very low, so that a taller person could stand in them only when bent over. It sometimes happened that in the larger compartments, where the light gases flowed mostly to the ceiling, single children remained alive. The little ones were led to the pit and were mercilessly shot down by the guards."*

The story is clearly inspired by Wiernik's tale, but Rosenberg also wanted to add his touch of originality.

I noted earlier that Wiernik, in his transformation of the "steam chambers" into "gas chambers," forgot to eliminate the chlorine-inlet hatch in the ceiling of the rooms, which became an enigmatic "outlet with airtight closure." Witnesses who later incorporated this device in their narratives interpreted it in various ways. Rosenberg added a further explanation: it was an observation window. On the one hand, this is in contrast to the testimonies according to which observation windows were built into the doors of the chambers or (ac-

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220 *Ibid.*, pp. 7f./pp. 139f.

cording to Goldfarb) into their walls along the corridor, and on the other hand, it is nonsensical, since from this window "it was not possible to see through the window mounted in the ceiling of the gas chamber whether the people were already dead": but then, how could the gas controller regulate the flow of gas on sight?

The structure of the two alleged gassing facilities is similar to that described by Wiernik: in the first, each of the three gas chambers could hold 400 persons (Wiernik: 450-500), the gassing lasted 20 minutes (Wiernik: 25 minutes), the 10 gas chambers of the second facility could hold a total of 12,000 persons (Wiernik: 1,000-1,200 persons each, or 10,000-12,000 in all).

Rosenberg suggests that the ceilings of the second facility were lower than those of the first facility, although these were already relatively low: 1.90 meters according to Wiernik. (He did not comment on the second facility.) A further reduction, as the witness explicitly says, would have forced tall people to stoop, thus reducing the capacity of the rooms.

In addition to these variations on Wiernik's theme, the witness also added two major absurdities of his own: he claimed that the second gassing building was built after March 1943, and, in a much-less-imaginative way than Goldfarb, he repeated the fable of killings with chlorinated lime.

The fantastic character of the story is evident from the fact that Rosenberg knew practically nothing in his first, brief statement, which he made earlier, probably in 1945, under the first name Ela to the Historical Commission of Warsaw. The original text is written in very bad French with horrifying spelling mistakes. In the Ghetto Fighters House Archives, the first page of the French text is preserved (the following page contained only a couple of lines), and the Hebrew translation of the entire text (to tell the truth, more of a paraphrase than a translation), which in turn was translated into English on the presentation page of the document, which I use only for the missing final lines. Some phrases make no sense, and I translate them according to the logic of the discourse, or report them as they are. I also restore punctuation and implied terms:[221]

> *"Ela Rosenberg, born in Warsaw in 1924 at 25 Gesia Street. My father was killed in 1940. In August 1942 my family and I* [were deported in a] *railway car of 100* [people] *to Treblinka. When the train stopped it was morning. I* [saw] *from the window with the barbed* [wires] *the Małkinia Station. The Germans separated the train cars and sent them to the camp.* [The doors] *were opened immediately* [and the Germans shouted] *RAUS, RAUS. Men and women were separated, I said goodbye to my mother and sisters. I went to the men's side. We were ordered to sit down and* [were told] *that we* [were to] *bathe there, then we would be reunited with our families. They would also give us new clothes and we would go to work elsewhere. At this moment a German came swaggering in* [*en courage*: in courage] *and selected 30 people, including me. I*

[221] GFHA, Catalog No. 248, Collection 10737.

was happy to return [to] *my mother. He* [led us to] *a large yard* [with] *many clothes, suitcases, bundles and even money and other things. We still had our coats, and he told us to take them off and get to work. I did not understand anything and I asked* [*jńai (j'ai) dń* (?)] *other people, I did not know that we were forbidden to speak. I saw a man who lived* [in] *my street, but he had been caught in a roundup four days before me* [and] *I asked him*[: '] *Where are ours* [family members?']. *He did not answer* [*il ne dit*], *with tears in his eyes he told me*[: '] *You no longer have your mother or your sisters*['] [*il me dit tu nńa plsu ni ta mere ni tes osuers*]. *He had not finished speaking* [when] *two Germans arrived; they had no doubt noticed our conversation, and beat us mercilessly on the head, 25 blows on his naked bodies, and I had to get up from the ground; I could hardly work, until 10 o'clock in the evening. At 10 o'clock we were driven into the barracks, suddenly voices in German. A knife was stuck in Max* [*on a mit un couteau a Max*], *and after a few* [minutes] *he died, he croaked* [*il mou* (?) *creva*]. *They started beating us angrily and shooting at us. I received a bayonet blow in the shoulder. 100 people were killed and our heroes* [sic]. *Then, having finally arrived in the barrack, I tore my shirt and* [with a] *piece* [I] *made oensemment* [? bandaged?] *my arm. With the bayonet on my fingers. He threw himself on the ground crying and in pain* [sic]. *The elders knew that one had to get up even before daylight and wait for them to* [leave] *the shack. They did not open it screaming until 11 o'clock, they lined up 200* [prisoners] *and killed them on the spot in front* [of us], *with the machine gun and the rest at work. They didn't have to give us food and drink for three days. I work at sorting shoes. A German comes* [and] *takes 50 men, he says only for 10 minutes. An easy job. He leads us through the whole place to a door which we go through*[:] *my blood freezes in my veins. I have* [there is] *a pile of corpses on the ground, prisoners* [were] *picking them up bleeding, going towards them, picking them up* [and] *putting them on a stretcher, laying them down and cutting* [*et de poser et couper* (?)] *to take them elsewhere. I have no lashes in my eyes, suddenly* [comes] *a whiplash on my head. We are told to each take one dead person and carry him* [to] *the pit. We had to go* [to the] *gas chamber* [*chażbre a gaz*] *to bring the dead to the street,* [with] *beatings and shouting.* ['] *Schnel*[l] *Hunde'* [Quickly, dogs]. *The dead had been placed badly, the Germans started beating us. There is so much blood in the pit, the dead were submerged. I worked there for five months. They threw chlorine on the dead. In February 1943 the order came to pull* [out] *with a dredger* [the corpses]. *"*

The last sentence reads: "*En fevrier 43ż vient l rdre de detrer avec bagier*" [*En février 43 vient l'ordre de déterrer avec bagier*[222]], meaning "In February 43 come [came] the order to disinter [the corpses] with an excavator." The English translation of that sentence on that document reads:

"In February 1943 came the order to burn the bodies; we incinerated 8,000 bodies."

[222] Polish term meaning dredger (here in terms of excavator).

In 1948, in Buenos Aires, a testimony by SYMCHA POLIAKIEVICZ was published in Yiddish under the title *A tog in Treblinke* (*A Day in Treblinka*). The witness, who remained in Camp 1, thus reported what he came to know about the alleged extermination, which was practically nothing (Poliakievicz, p. 64; translation from Yiddish by Kladderadatsch):

> *"Out on the death square it is quiet now. The cries of those who were led off to 'bathe' have ceased. The screams have been swallowed up in the death chambers. Only for our suffering there still is no end. Around us, murderers mill about in a drunken state. In the distance, motors roar unceasingly, trucks drive in and out of the camp square. The hell has changed its appearance. A new arrival would not at all realize that he now found himself in such a terrible extermination camp."*

JERZY RAJGRODZKI was deported to Treblinka on September 12, 1942 and escaped on August 2, 1943. On an unspecified date, he wrote a lengthy report on his stay at the camp, which was published in 1958. Among other things, he gave a detailed description of the alleged gas chambers there (Rajgrodzki, pp. 105f.):

> *"At first there were only 3 gas chambers* [*komore gazowe*] *with a ramp facing our side. When I arrived at Lager II in mid-September, 10 new gas chambers were put into operation. They could hold about 4,000 people at a time. About 400 people could be crammed into each chamber. The gassing time was about one hour. Loading and unloading took a little longer. The pits were located to the east and west of the buildings. The new chambers were perpendicular to the old ones; there was a passageway between them. The building of the new chambers had massive walls. In the center was a long corridor, from which doors led to the 10 chambers, 5 chambers on each side. The doors* [*drzwi*] *of the chambers were narrow and had little glass panes* [peepholes] *to look through. It was ascertained whether the victims were already ready and whether the doors could already be opened from the opposite side, where the ramps were. The gates* [*bramy*] *were sturdy and sealed with a transverse wooden beam that allowed for interlocking closure. The gates were quite wide, about 2.5 meters, and fit precisely so that the gas would not escape. When the victims were now poisoned by the gas from engine combustion* [*zatrute gazem spalinowym od motorów*], *the gates were opened, and the bodies were thrown out. I worked a few times on the removal of the corpses. They were entwined, sweaty, and one layer was about five feet high. The walls were covered with tiles. The area of such a room could be 30-40 m². On the ceiling was an installation that resembled showers. The entrance to the gas chambers on the 'Himmelstrasse' side was lavish. There was a porch. The whole thing was similar to the entrance of a synagogue. In the middle, above the entrance, was the Star of Zion at the end of the portico. Over a few steps, one reached the corridor. The gassing equipment was located between the old rooms and the new ones. A door on the side of our barracks led to the machine room. The following people worked in the machine room: Iwan (more rarely), Mikolaj (more often) – both*

> *Ukrainians – as well as a Jew, a young man, who was later married. Lager II was located on the southern side, to the north of us was Lager I. In 1943 the old rooms were converted into workshops."*

This testimony is a poor rehash of Wiernik's account with the addition of other fictional elements. The capacity that Wiernik attributed to each of the three rooms of the first gassing plant (400 persons) here passes to the second plant, which therefore has a total capacity of (400 x 10 =) 4,000 persons. The width of the external shutters (2.5 meters) corresponds to Wiernik's maximum width (2-2.5 meters), but not the area of the rooms: 30-40 square meters (for Wiernik 25 square meters in the first building and about 50 in the second), nor the duration of the gassing (about one hour against 25 minutes). The nonsensical story of the very narrow access doors had already been reported by Hejnoch Brener and Oskar Strawczyński. The witness also picks up on the theme of the peepholes in the doors (or walls) of the alleged gas chambers, which contrasts with that of the small observation windows in the ceiling, whereas for Rajgrodzki, there "was an installation that resembled showers" on the ceiling, another fairly common propaganda theme. From Wiernik, the witness also took the location of the gassing engine: "The gassing equipment was located between the old rooms and the new ones." Wiernik placed the engine in the "power station," which was parallel to the first gassing building, and thus indeed between the old and new chambers (see Document 13, No. 28).

Part Two:

Archeological Research

4. Bełżec

I have dealt with this issue in detail in two previous studies (Mattogno 2016; Mattogno/Kues/Graf, Chapter 11); here I merely summarize and integrate the main arguments I made there.

4.1. The Findings of Judge Godzieszewski (1945)

On October 12, 1945, the regional investigative judge of the District Court of Zamość, Czesław Godzieszewski, presented an "Account of the Diggings in the Cemetery of the Bełżec Extermination Camp," in which he set down the findings from the inspection of Bełżec Camp he had made that day, aided by 12 workers. In this context, he wrote (Libionka, p. 139):

> *"The pit labeled No. 1 was excavated to a depth of 8 meters and for a width of 19 meters; in this way, it was excavated to the bottom of the pits. During the excavation, at a depth of about 2 meters, the first layer of ashes from burned human corpses mixed with sand was found. This layer had a thickness of about one meter. The next layer of ashes was discovered at a depth of 4-6 meters. Among the ashes extracted were found some charred parts of human bodies such as: hands, arms, also female hair and human bones not completely burnt. Also, pieces of burnt wood were extracted. The layer of human ashes in Pit No. 1 ended at a depth of about 6 meters. The pit labeled No. 2 was excavated to a depth of 6 meters. In this pit, the layer of human ashes began at a depth of about 1.5 meters, and continued with small interruptions to a depth of 5 meters. Along with the ashes were also extracted human hair, a piece of human body, shreds of clothing and remains of human bones not completely burned. The pits labeled No. 3 and 4 were excavated to a depth of 3 meters. In Pit No. 4, at a depth of about 80 cm, a human skull with the remains of skin and hair as well as two tibias and a rib were found. In addition, in these pits, at a depth of one to three meters, human ashes mixed with sand and the remains of human bones that were not completely burnt came to light. The pits labeled with the numbers 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 were excavated to a depth of 2 meters, and from them only sand mixed with human ashes and human bones were extracted, such as jaws and tibias.*
>
> *During the excavation of all the pits, it was ascertained that the soil of the camp cemetery had been excavated before, which is evident from the fact that*

the layers of human ashes are not homogeneous, but mixed with soil. The exhumed human bones, the parts of human bodies that were in a state of total decomposition and the ashes were deposited in one place until the arrival of the coroner."

The next day, October 13, 1945, the findings were inspected by the coroner. The subsequent report describes primarily the results of the examination performed by the judge and the coroner (*ibid.*, pp. 140f.):

"During the inspection of the death camp grounds and especially of the pits dug on October 12, 1945, a large quantity of human bones such as skulls, parts of skulls, ribs, clavicles, scapulae, arm bones, femurs, wrist joints, fingers, pelvises, and foot bones were found. Some of the above bones are only partially burned or not exposed at all to the action of fire.

Most of the bones are devoid of soft body parts, with the exception of a few skulls, in which there are remains of decomposed skin and hair.

Among the remains of human bodies exhumed on October 12, 1945 were recognized: two forearms and a part of the lumbar spine with soft body tissues and traces of charring. The part of the lumbar spine came from an adult man, while the forearms belonged to a child of a couple of years. Judging by the size of the individual bones, it can be ascertained that they come from people of various ages, starting from children of a couple of years to very old men; this is attested by the finding of jaws without teeth and numerous dental prostheses.

Among the jaw bones, a partially burned jaw was found in which, in addition to milk teeth, the presence of permanent teeth was found, which shows that it belongs to a child of 7-8 years. In the cranial bones there were no traces of entry holes or other mechanical wounds. Similarly, no traces of gunshot wounds or fractures were found in the long bones. Due to the advanced state of decomposition, it is difficult to determine to which organs the shapeless pieces of soft tissue of human bodies belonged that were found. Two femurs belonging to a child of about two years were found in one of the holes dug by the population of the surrounding areas in search of gold and valuables. These limbs had partly undergone decomposition and partly mummification. The ground of the cemetery and especially the excavated pits are covered with layers of varying thickness of human ashes from the combustion of human corpses and wood, and are mixed in various proportions with sand. The color of the ashes varies from ash white to dark gray, they are of unctuous consistency and smell of rotting human corpses.

In the ashes appear clearly charred human bones and pieces of charcoal. In the lower layers of the ashes there is a more-intense smell of putrefaction than in the upper layers. The hair that has been found is mostly female, as can be seen from its length and the type of hairstyle (braids and hairpins fixed with clips). In addition to natural hair, there are also wigs for women. This concludes the inspection."

The coroner's expert opinion, which comes at the end of the report, reached the following conclusions: The bones found were human in origin and came from

a "large number" ("*duża ilość*") of corpses; these corpses had been interred about three years earlier; some of them did not present traces of incineration; and the examination of the skulls and other samples excluded shooting as the cause of death (*ibid.*, p. 141).

As for the number of corpses, the report cited above does not give any precise data, but the general tone of the report, and its insistence on describing individual bones as if they were unique pieces, leaves one very perplexed as to the value that must be placed on the expression "large number" of corpses hypothesized by the coroner.

4.2. The Archaeological Investigations of Prof. Andrzej Kola (1997-1999)

4.2.1. The Mass Graves

In 1997, the *Rada Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa* (Council for Safeguarding the Remembrance of Struggle and Martyrdom) of Warsaw, together with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum of Washington, D.C., decided to undertake archeological diggings within the area of the former camp at Bełżec, with the principal aim of identifying the mass graves described by witnesses. The work was conducted by a team of archeologists from the Nicolas Copernicus University of Toruń, led by Professor Andrzej Kola; it was conducted in phases: in 1997 from October 12 through 25, in 1998 from April 27 through June 6 and from October 25 through November 14, and finally in 1999 from September 12 through 25. The historians Robin O'Neil and Michael Tregenza took part in the project in 1997 and 1998; the latter, on his own account, investigated the area with a metal detector. In 2000, Kola wrote a paper on the diggings titled *Hitlerowski obóz zagłady Żydów w Bełżcu w świetle źródeł archeologicznych. Badania 1997-1999* (Kola 2000a), which was also published in English under the title *Bełżec: The Nazi Camp for Jews in the Light of Archeological Sources: Excavations 1997-1999* (Kola 2000b). During the research, core samples of the soil were taken in the designated area at 5-meter intervals with a manual drill some 6 to 8 m long and 65 mm in diameter. Altogether 2,227 core samples were taken. The soil samples taken were then analyzed to determine their contents. Based on 236 core samples, 33 mass graves in two distinct areas of the camp were located. Kola provides a drawing and a brief description for each of them. He then summarizes his observations as follows (Kola 2000b, pp. 38-40; in labored English):

> *"The first zone, probably the older one, contained the graves appearing close to the other in western and north-western part of the camp.* […] *That was probably the place, where they started burying the victims. Generally 21 graves were reported in that area, which makes nearly 64% of the whole number in that site. The largest graves were also registered in that part. One can*

not exclude, however, that several of them (reported as graves of a big volume) were previously some separated smaller ones, which borders mixed either during covering them with soil, covering the traces of the camp up after closing the camp down or result of burglary searches after the war. […]
The other zone of the graves' appearance takes up the north-eastern area of the camp. 12 graves were reported here (about 36% of the total number), with more regular forms (mainly of a rectangle view), which differed from one other in size and appearing in significant scattering. In the area of those graves, transformation of ground, characteristic for the first zone does not occur at all, or very rarely. The other parts of the camp are free from graves. The majority of graves situated here reached the depth between 4,00-5,00 m. One can suppose that those depths were regarded as the optimum ones; underground waters appeared at bigger depths. In the first zone, as we can suppose, connecting smaller neighbouring graves into bigger ones by destroying earth walls separating them was observed. That is why the bigger graves show clearly former original pits. The structures of grave contents in both zones are similarly varied. One can report graves filled with bodies in wax-fat transformation (in bottom parts of the ditches, as a rule), over which there are layers of body ashes and charcoal. Similar structure was reported in 10 graves (No 1, 3, 4, 10, 13, 20, 25, 27, 28, 32). In the rest of the graves in number of 23 only the layers of crematory ashes as well as charcoal placed on a few levels with sandy ground were observed. In non crematory graves, there was often a layer of lime placed over the bodies, which purpose was to quicken the process of decomposition of the corpses. The total surface of the burial pits at the area of the camp amounts about 0,52[223] *ha, which states barely 9% of the camp territory in the present, enclosed shape.*[224] *The total volume of the graves is estimated for about 21,000 m³. The big number contains mainly ashes of bodies, which made killing and burying hundreds of thousands of people in one place possible."*[225]

In the table below I have summarized the details of the graves' dimensions:

223 Actually 0.59 hectares (about 1.5 acres). Cf. below.

224 In the southeast, the original surface area of the camp extended beyond the present boundary and measured about 6.2 hectares.

225 The original Polish reads, translated: "Thus an important part of the volume of the pits consists mainly of ashes of bodies and this shows the fact that hundreds of thousands of people were killed and buried there."

#	Dimensions [m]	Depth [m]	Surface [m²]	Est'd. volume, [m³]
1	40×12	4.80	480	1,500
2	14×6	2.00	84	170
3	16×15	5.00	240	960
4	16×6	2.30	96	250
5	32×10	4.50	320	1,350
6	30×10	4.00	300	1,200
7	13–14×27	4.50	364.5	1,600
8	28×10	4.00	280	850
9	8×10	3.80	80	280
10	24×18	4.25–5.20	432	2,100
11	9×5	1.90	45	80
12	6×16×11.50×18	4.00	~132	400
13	12.50×11×17×18[226]	4.80	~200	920
14	37×10	5.00	370	1,850
15	13.50×6.50	4.50	87.75	400
16	18.50×9.50	4.00	175.75	700
17	17×7.50	4.00	127.5	500
18	16×9	4.00	144	570
19	12×12	4.00	144	500
20	26×11	5.00	286	1,150
21	5×5	1.70	25	35
22	9×15	3.50	135	200
23	16×8.50	4.00	136	550
24	20×5.50	5.00	110	520
25	13×5	4.00	65	250
26	13×7	4.00	91	320
27	18.50×6.00	5.00	111	450
28	?	?	~17.5	70[227]
29	25×9	4.50	225	900
30	5×6	2.70	30	75
31	9×4	2.60	36	90
32	15×5	4.00	75	400
33	9×5	3.00	45	120
		Total:	5,490	21,310

The 33 graves thus have a total surface area of 5,490 square meters and a total volume of 21,310 cubic meters.

4.2.2. Actual Mass-Grave Data

But are Kola's statements about the number, shapes and sizes of the mass graves reliable?

[226] Dimension taken from Kola's drawing.
[227] Assuming an average depth of 4 meters.

It should be pointed out immediately that the geometric shapes of the mass graves outlined by the Polish archaeologist are not a fact, but an arbitrary conjecture. He publishes a map of the mass graves (Document 18; Kola 2000a, p. 19) and a grid map of the boreholes drilled in the former camp area with sampling sites five meters apart from one another (Document 19; *ibid*. p. 70).

The circles represent the 2,227 boreholes drilled. Those colored in red are the boreholes where remains pointing to mass graves were detected, which should be 236, but this map only contains 229.[228] Combining these circles gives 21 areas from which Kola inferred the number and shape of the pits. However, these areas have nothing to do neither with the number nor with the shapes of these pits, as it is clear from the comparison between these areas and Robin O'Neil's related drawings (Documents 20f.; O'Neil, p. 59):

– Areas Nos. 1 and 2 should correspond to Pits Nos. 13, 33, 32 and 9
– Area No. 3 to Pit No. 29
– Area Nos. 4 and 5 to Pit No. 26
– Area No. 5 to Pit No. 25
– Area No. 6 to Pits Nos. 27, 28, 30 and 31
– Area No. 7 to Pits Nos. 12 and 24
– Area No. 8 to Pit No. 10
– Area Nos. 9 and 11 to Pit No. 14
– Area No. 10 to Pits Nos. 16 and 17
– Area No. 12 to Pits Nos. 15, 18 and 19
– Area No. 13 to Pit No. 20
– Area No. 14 to Pit No. 8
– Area No. 15 to Pit No. 7
– Area No. 16 to Pit No. 22
– Area No. 17 to Pits Nos. 6 and 23
– Areas Nos. 18 and 20 to Pit No. 5
– Area No. 19 to Pit No. 3
– Area No. 21 to Pits Nos. 1 and 4
– the three boreholes to the right of Area No. 19 to Pit No. 2
– the (one!) borehole in Area 14 to Pit No. 11
– the (one!) borehole in Area 15 to Pit No. 21

As can be seen, defining the exact contours of the mass graves, based on a sampling grid whose mesh size was way too large, was so difficult that Kola defined them in a completely fanciful and arbitrary manner. His drawings of the mass graves are therefore purely fictitious and are far from corresponding to the results of the boreholes. On the other hand, since the boreholes are oriented according to an orthogonal north-south and west-east grid, it is easy to find straight lines and right angles in the aforementioned areas, which, howev-

[228] This plan therefore contains an insignificant margin of error for the purposes of my demonstration; of the missing surveys, I have in fact identified two (Pits 1 and 11), so that those actually missing are only five out of 236, or merely 2.1%.

er, do not follow the contours of the pits, but rather those of the boreholes, and this can also be demonstrated.

I will take as an example Pit No. 1, the widest pit which Kola identified through 13 core samples, as can be seen in his related drawing (Document 22). In Document 23, I present my own elaboration of the drawing in which I have inserted the 5 m × 5 m grid adopted by Kola, the points of the positive core samples (1-13) and those of the negative samples (01-07). From this drawing, it appears that the delimitation of the pit made by Kola would have required that all core Samples 01 through 07 had to be positive, which they were not, so Kola's delimitation of the pit is not backed up by his data.

The actual contours are drawn in Document 24. The area delimited by Points A-F is about 245 m², almost half of the area given by Kola (480 m²). However, the strange conformation of this geometric figure is compatible with three small pits arranged as they appear in the drawing in Document 25. This is also the most probable situation. In fact, nothing shows any relationship between these three pits that would allow interpreting them as one single large pit. The three pits have a combined area of about 100 m². The survey plan also shows that this is the most probable situation (Document 26; in the area of Pit No. 1, the sampling location is not shown where the number XXII appears). In this plan, No. 4 refers to the corresponding pit, identified by Kola by means of the four indicated core samplings. The related drawing (Document 27) shows that Kola identified a simple rhombus (A-B-C-D) whose surface is about 30 m², but he considered it to be 16 m × 6 m = 96 m².

Another obvious abusive interpretation of the actual data is represented by Pit No. 11 (Document 28). How could Kola identify on the basis of soundings 5 meters apart a pit measuring 9 m × 5 m?[229]

The sampling map confirms the arbitrariness (see Document 29). Only one positive (red) sample appears here (the second is the one I have indicated with the letter "B"). The blue circles around it designate "ground disturbances – unidentified field objects or disturbances near pits" (p. 70). Kola therefore arbitrarily prolonged the limits of the pit on both sides by 2 m (2 + 5 + 2 = 9 m) and arbitrarily fixed its width at 5 m.

Other instances of arbitrary delineation of pit boundaries on the basis of soundings on the same line include Pit No. 2 (3 soundings, 14 m × 6 m; p. 22), No. 24 (4 soundings, 20 m × 5.5 m; pp. 34f.), No. 27 (4 soundings, 18.5 m × 6 m; p. 36), No. 28 (3 soundings, 12.5 m × 5 m),[230] No. 30 (3 soundings, 9 m × 4 m; p. 38), No. 31 (2 soundings, 9 m × 4 m; p. 38) and No. 33 (2 soundings, 9 m × 5 m; p. 38). The dimensions of all of these pits are arbitrary and much larger than can be inferred from the core-sample data.

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229 Kola 2000a, p. 27; subsequent page numbers in the text from there unless stated otherwise.

230 *Ibid.*, p. 37. The measures, not indicated, are taken from Kola's drawing.

The greatest abuse of Kola's actual data concerns Pit No. 21: on the basis of a single core sample, Kola was able to "ascertain" that around this one sampling site there was a pit measuring 5 m × 5 m! (p. 33)

All other pits were delimited by Kola with these same fallacious procedures. I present two more examples: Pit No. 10, with its 24 m × 18 m (= 432 m²) is the second-largest. Kola delimited it by 16 soundings (p. 27), which I indicate in my elaboration of his drawing (Document 30). By joining the individual points, the result is Figure A-B-C-D-E-F-G, which has an area of about 237 m². From the 5-meter grid I added, it turns out that, in order to delineate Kola's geometric figure, Soundings 01, 02, 03, and 04 would have had to be positive as well, but they were negative.

One final example is Pit No. 7, with its 364.5 m² the third largest pit (Document 31). Here, too, the geometric figure resulting from the core samples is defined by the letters A-B-C-D-E and has an area of about 180 m². Kola abusively outlined the contours of the pit as if the core samples taken at 01, 02, 03, 04 and 05 had been positive, while instead they were all negative, meaning that there were no traces of mass graves at those points.

If one considers only the four pits I examined here (Nos. 1, 4, 7, 10), which represent about 23% of the total area, Kola abusively enlarged their surface by about 680 m², hence by 50%.

His demonstrative procedure is therefore arbitrary and fallacious in terms of the number, shapes and sizes of the mass graves. Moreover, the real areas of ground disturbances, *i.e.* those that actually result from the soundings, include the nine pits excavated by Investigative Judge Godzieszewski on October 12, 1945, as well as the wildcat diggings carried out for two decades by the local populace.

Kola himself admitted (Kola 2000b, pp. 39f., 65):

> *"One can not exclude, however, that several of them (reported as graves of a big volume) were previously some separated smaller ones, which borders mixed either during covering them with soil, covering the traces of the camp up after closing the camp down or result of burglary searches after the war.* […]
> *In the first zone, as we can suppose, connecting smaller neighbouring graves into bigger ones by destroying earth walls separating them was observed."*
> *"Additional disturbances in archeological structures were made by intensive dig-ups directly after the war while local people were searching for jewellery. The facts make it difficult for the archeologists to define precisely the ranges of burial pits."*

During the interrogation of October 14, 1945 by Judge Godzieszewski, Stanisław Kozak stated (Libionka, p. 150):

> *"After the removal of the fences, people from the surrounding area began digging up the camp grounds in search of gold, diamonds, and other precious items left behind by the Jews. This continues to this day. This also explains the*

> *large number of human bones scattered in the soil of the former camp and the large number of ditches dug* [*i wielka ilość rozkopanych dołów*]*."*

Again on April 11, 1946, the prosecutor of the Zamość District Court wrote in his report (*ibid.*, p. 235):

> *"Currently, the camp grounds are completely dug up by the surrounding populace looking for valuables."*

All things considered, one can therefore justifiably state that the order of magnitude of the real surface area of the mass graves on the grounds of the former Bełżec Camp is around 50% of that identified by Kola, in round figures approximately 3,000 square meters, for a volume of about 10,800 cubic meters.

4.2.3. Comparison of Research Results with Testimonies

Rudolf Reder and Kurt Gerstein, the two main witnesses on Bełżec Camp, both described the local mass graves in detail. I have dedicated a separate study to these two witnesses, where I translated all of Reder's known statements and summarized Gerstein's statements in detail (Mattogno 2021a). Here I will merely focus on their statements regarding mass graves.

Reder stated on September 22, 1944:[231]

> *"The corpses were dragged into* [already] *dug pits measuring 100 x 25 x 15 meters."*

In 1945, Reder reiterated:[232]

> *"One pit was 100 meters long and 25 meters wide. One pit held about 100,000 people. In November 1942 there were 30 pits, hence 3 million corpses."*

In his well-known "confession" of April 26, 1945, Gerstein wrote:[233]

> *"Then, the naked bodies were thrown into large pits of about 100 x 20 x 12 meters, located near the death chambers."*

Therefore, a pit had a surface area of 2,500 square meters for Reder and 2,000 for Gerstein, and a volume of 37,500 cubic meters for the former and 24,000 for the latter. However, Kola's claims that the largest pit (No. 27) had a surface area of only 540 square meters, and the most-voluminous one (No. 10) had a volume of only 2,100 cubic meters. Moreover, as Kola himself pointed out, most of the pits had a depth of 4-5 meters. Therefore, not even the depths of 12 or 15 meters asserted by the two witnesses are confirmed by the investigations. As far as Reder's testimony is concerned, the 30 pits he allegedly saw in the camp would have had a total surface area (7.5 hectares) that is greater than that of the camp itself (6.2 hectares)!

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231 Interrogation protocol of R. Reder by the Soviet prosecutor's office of Lviv Oblast (district) (Lwów). GARF, 7021-149-99, p. 18.

232 Neither month nor day is given; declaration titled "*Bełżec Rudolf Reder Komory gazowe*" made to the Krakow Section of the Central Jewish Historical Commission (*Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna*); Borwicz/Rost/Wulf, pp. 56-59.

233 PS-1553, p. 7.

A comparison of Kola's map of Bełżec Camp – in which the areas of the mass graves are indicated by vertical cross-hatching – with the corresponding drawing by Robin O'Neil (Documents 18 and 21), which more precisely indicates the position of the graves and their defined contours, shows that most of the graves were located along the camp's north-western border (on the left in the drawing). Some graves appear to be located in the center of the camp, and a few along the north-eastern border (at the top of the drawing).

In 1946, Reder wrote a memoir titled *Bełżec*, which was published in Krakow by the Central Jewish Historical Commission. On p. 43 of this booklet, there is a camp map drawn by J. Bau following Reder's description (Document 32; Reder 1946, p. 43). This drawing – reproduced by Kola without commentary (2000b, p. 7) – is oriented in the opposite direction to the norm, so it must be viewed upside down for a proper comparison with other camp maps. It shows 26 pits along the northeastern boundary and six in the camp's center.

The "official" camp map drawn by the Central Commission of Inquiry into German Crimes in Poland appeared in the article titled "The Bełżec Extermination Camp" by Eugeniusz Szrojt, a member of the aforementioned commission (Document 33).[234] In this map, the area of the mass graves is represented by a rectangle on the northeastern camp border.

Consequently, the locations of most of the mass graves indicated by Kola is in distinct contrast to both Rudolf Reder's testimony and the findings of the Polish Commission of Inquiry. On the other hand, if one examines the map of Bełżec published by Yitzhak Arad (1987, p. 437), one must conclude that the living quarters of the Ukrainian guards, the sanitary facilities (barbers, infirmary, dentists for SS and Ukrainians), the kitchen for the Ukrainian guards, the garage and the shoemaking and tailoring workshops (labeled with numbers 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 in the map) were located next to mass graves or even above them!

But these are not the only problems resulting from the locations of the pits. Kola's and O'Neil's maps (Documents 18 and 21) show mass graves scattered in bulk over almost the entire camp without any precise orientation or order. There is no need to invoke the proverbial German pedantry, which was well interpreted even by Reder. In fact, in his map, the 30 phantom mass graves all have the same size and orientation and are neatly arranged in two parallel rows. This is a question of simple common sense: an orderly arrangement of the pits obviously would have allowed for a more-rational use of the available space and greater sanitary protection for the camp personnel.

4.2.4. The Discovery of Corpses

Kola states that ten pits (Nos. 1, 3, 4, 10, 13, 20, 25, 27, 28, 32) are "filled with bodies in wax-fat transformation," but then immediately specifies that they are

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234 Szrojt, unpaginated insert. Kola reproduced this map as well (2000b, p. 7), likewise without any commentary.

found "in bottom parts of the ditches, as a rule," which means that these pits are not at all "filled" with bodies in a state of saponification.

Before addressing the problem of the number of corpses present in these pits, it is necessary to clarify what "fat-wax transformation" or saponification is. It consists in

> *"the transformation of cadaveric fats into an insoluble soap called adipocere. It is observed in cadavers stored in moist environments, in water, or in environments where putrefaction is hindered. The process begins after 2-3 months and is completed within a year."* (Strano, p. 254)

With reference to investigations performed at Bełżec during the period from April 28 to June 4, 1998, Robin O'Neil proposed a generic assessment of the number of bodies (O'Neil, p. 54):

> *"In two of these graves the bodies had not been exhumed and burnt as per the Himmler directive of 1942. How many bodies remain in these two graves is difficult to establish. To be sure, there are many thousands."*

Michael Tregenza, on the other hand, had the audacity to give a precise figure (Tregenza, p. 258):

> *"Although it is difficult to determine the number of unburned bodies, a conservative estimate is at least 15,000."*

The only way to dispel any uncertainty would obviously have been the exhumation of the bodies buried in the pits. The reason – or pretext – why this was not carried out is that Jewish law regarding burials allegedly prohibits it. The disturbance of the mortal remains of a buried Jew would somehow disturb his soul as well.

It is a fact, however, that this alleged law has been violated many times and even has been considered non-existent, without the exhumers ever reaping any serious rabbinical wrath. In another study, I documented this with two photographs of the exhumation of the surface layer of corpses from a mass grave in partial compliance with rabbinical law (as published by Patrick Desbois), and furthermore several cases in total disregard for rabbinical law with photographs and summaries of exhumation reports of Jewish corpses near Iasi (Romania), September 12, 1945; at Białystok (Poland), November 22, 1945; at Kerecsend and Budapest (Hungary), November 5, 1957; at Yurburg (Lithuania) in 1958; from mass graves in concentration camps in Germany in 1958; at Popricani (Romania) in 2004, and with other cases (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 1087-1091).

Kola published the results of 137 of the 236 samples taken. The related 137 graphs take up four and a half pages of a book of 84 pages in total (each page contains graphs of 32 samples), so all 236 samples would have taken seven and a half pages, or just three pages more. This leads to the assumption that he published the most-relevant ones – as any author does with the documents he reports in his book –, so that the remaining ones were undoubtedly less-relevant, if not irrelevant.

Of these 236 samples, only two (483/XV-30-60 and 486/XV-25-50) from Pit No. 10 bear the explicit indication "human corpses" (Kola 2000b, p. 15; in the Polish text: "*ciała ludzkie*"). The symbol designating "unburned human bones and saponified mass" ("*nieprzepalone kości ludzkie i masa woskowo-tłuszczowa*"), a kind of stylized double x, as well as in the above-mentioned samples, appears in only four other samples (485/XV-30-50, Pit 10, 286/XVI-90-40 and 332/XVI-85-40, Pit 3, and finally 1042/XIV-45-80, Pit 20; *ibid*, pp. 15, 17f.). This means that out of 236 only six were positive. The thickest layer was found in Sample 332/XV-85-40 (marked as "tooth/human hair/water/ human hair"/"*ząb/włosy ludzkie/woda/włosy ludzkie*"), which corresponds to approximately 15% of the depth of the pit, thus to about 0.75 meters of the total 5 meters. Kola also mentions the finding of human remains to a thickness of 1 meter in Pit 27 (*ibid*., p. 36), but without reporting the graph of any of the four boreholes performed in that area. But this does not change the order of magnitude.

If the descriptions of the individual pits are also examined, the following overall picture results.

GRAVE NO. 1: "the pit was filled with bodies in wax-fat transformation" (*ibid.*, p. 21). 13 core samples were taken, but Kola doesn't indicate the contents for any of them. Yet, as I mentioned above, Kola states that these human remains were "in bottom parts of the ditches, as a rule," and therefore this grave cannot be "filled with bodies."

GRAVE NO. 4: "The drilling was given up here at the depth of 2.30 m, because of a layer of bodies in wax-fat transformation" (*ibid.*, p. 23). The graphs of the four core samples (293/XVI/90-5, 294/XVI/90-0, 295/XVI/85-0 and 296/XVI-85-10; *ibid.*, p. 17) do not at all show the symbol for "bodies in wax-fat transformation," and therefore the related statement is either a mistake or a display of Kola's excessive zeal.

GRAVE NO. 10: "The grave was very deep (the drills in particular places were stopped at the depth of 4.25 to 5.20 m, because of bodies in wax-fat transformation and underground waters presence)" (*ibid.*, p. 27). Kola published the graphs of seven of the 16 core sample taken from this pit. Only three of them bear the symbol for human remains:

– 483/XV/30-60, with a layer of approx. 20 cm
– 485/XV/30-50, with a layer of approx. 20 cm and another layer of approx. 20 cm 1.5 m further below
– 486/XV/25-50, with a layer of approx. 30 cm.

In Kola's related drawing (see Document 34), I inserted the number of individual drillings, underlining the ones mentioned above. As is evident when comparing this drawing with the survey map (Document 20), Sample No. 485 (like Samples 499, 500, and 504) is not even part of those used by Kola to locate Pit No. 10, which he delineated based on 14 soundings. Furthermore, of the surrounding drillings, Nos. 481, 482, 484, 487 and 488 are negative. The last three

are less-deep, but the term marking them, "*blokada*" = "blocked", does not necessarily mean that they were blocked by the presence of human remains, because in such cases the term used is "blocked (human corpses)" ("*blokada (ciała ludzkie)*"), as for Samples 483 and 486 (*ibid.*, p. 15). This demonstrates the presence of some human remains in a state of saponification only in correspondence to the three above-mentioned sampling locations, and therefore it is wrong to speak of a layer of human remains covering the whole surface area of this pit.

GRAVE NO. 28: "In the deep parts of the core sample, we saw two layers of human remains in the state of saponification clearly outlined, from time to time covered with lime."[235] As can be inferred from Kola's related Figure 45, he refers to Sample 1647/IX/70-30, the only one located "in the deep parts" of the pit (the other two are in the shallower part).

To recapitulate, Pit No. 1 reportedly contains a layer of human remains of indeterminate thickness. The presence of human remains is not documented by the soundings for Pit No. 4. For Pit No. 10, human remains are present only in three out of the seven samples published by Kola; since he says nothing about the remaining nine, we have to limit ourselves to the reported data. In Pit No. 28, human remains were found in one out of three samples.

Therefore, the only legitimate conclusion that can be drawn from the core samples is that the above-mentioned pits contain only scattered human remains.

On the other hand, considering the small number of boreholes drilled, one cannot even exclude the presence of other layers of corpses around those identified by Kola; indeed, this is actually likely. If examining the location of the three boreholes in Pit No. 10 (underlined in the drawing) that revealed the presence of human remains in a saponified state, it turns out that they are concentrated in two small areas on the lower left: from Borehole 485 to 486 and around 483 (Document 34). This suggests that there were originally two small 40-50 square-meter pits in this area with a few layers of human remains at the bottom. The same could be true for Boreholes 286 and 332 of Pit No. 3, which are adjacent at the standard distance of 5 meters along the south-north diagonal of the pit (*ibid.*, p. 22), and for Borehole 1042 of Pit #20. In conclusion, the most-likely scenario is that the pits contained at most a few hundred corpses.

4.2.5. The Significance of the Presence of Human Remains

All orthodox commentators interpreted the presence of these human remains as proof of the reality of the mass extermination allegedly perpetrated at Bełżec. As I noted earlier, O'Neil launched the slogan as early as 1998: the human remains allegedly belonged to victims of the gas chambers who had not been exhumed and cremated, in disregard of a phantom order allegedly issued by

[235] Kola 2000b, p. 37. I translate from the Polish text (Kola 2000a, p. 36) myself, as the English translation is unclear.

Himmler.[236] In this way, O'Neil created a logical closed loop which started from the assumption that the human remains were victims of the gas chambers in order to "prove", on the basis of their presence, the reality of the gas chambers! These commentators' claim that the aforementioned human remains moreover refute the revisionist theses is not only unfounded, but also grotesque. In fact, no revisionist historian would ever claim that no deaths (nor even limited killings[237]) of people ever occurred in Bełżec. Inmates died in this camp from epidemics, hard work and hardship even before it became an extermination camp according to the orthodox narrative. On the other hand, when it became a transit camp according to the revisionist thesis, at least 441,000 Jews passed through it. There undoubtedly occurred both natural and non-natural deaths among them, the order of magnitude of which is difficult to establish. If one assumes with Dieter Pohl a mortality of some 5%,[238] the death toll would already be over 22,600.

This fact completely invalidates the orthodox commentators' interpretation, as it shows that the presence of human remains in the soil of the former Bełżec Camp is not at all irreconcilable with the revisionist thesis. In order to truly refute this thesis, it would be necessary to show that corpses in the order of magnitude of hundreds of thousands are or were buried in the camp grounds.

It should be remembered that Bełżec was a camp for Gypsies since April 1940, and at least 1,140 were interned there. In August of that year, this camp became the Main Camp (*Hauptlager*) of a network of forced-labor camps, with a total occupancy of about 15,000 Jews, as part of the so-called "Otto Program," which consisted of fortification work to protect the German-Soviet border by digging anti-tank ditches. Between 2,800 and 3,000 inmates were interned in Bełżec at that time. Various infectious diseases spread among the Gypsies and the other detainees, including typhus. Casualties numbered in the hundreds.[239]

All these events undoubtedly left traces in the ground, but these were studiously ignored in Kola's investigation.

4.2.6. The Alleged Gas Chambers

In addition to locating mass graves, Kola's archaeological investigations were also aimed at identifying the remains of the camp's architectural structures. The results were described by him in detail.

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236 On this, see Part Two of Mattogno 2018.

237 In another study, I argued that the only reasonable conclusion that orthodox historians could draw from the transfer of some of the personnel of Operation T4 to the Operation Reinhardt camps is the extension of the euthanasia program to the Jews who were to be deported to the East, and that this may well have happened; see Graf/Kues/Mattogno, Chapter 8.4. "Euthanasia and *Aktion Reinhardt*", pp. 270-281.

238 Pohl, p. 194. See Part Three.

239 Libionka, pp. 38-40 (A photograph in the unpaginated appendix shows "Gypsy children in the Bełżec Labor Camp in 1940" – about ten children in a rudimentary shack); Dziadosz/Marszałek, p. 61; Mattogno 2016, pp. 97-99.

In this case, unlike the procedure adopted for the presumed mass graves, excavations were carried out to bring to light the archaeological discoveries. Kola published 12 photographs of them. In this context, the identification of the remains of the alleged homicidal gas chambers was obviously of particular historical importance, but the need to find them at all costs pushed the Polish archaeologist to the most unlikely hypothesis.

After having described six objects (Buildings A – F) irrelevant to his agenda, Kola focused on "Building G". In this regard, the core samples

> *"revealed the existence of an undefined building negative, made completely of wood, partly buried in the ground, dismantled totally. In the bottom view the relicts had a shape of a regular rectangle with the size of about 3,5 x 15 m, which bottom was deposited horizontally to the depth of about 80 cm.* […] *The wooden building served probably as gas chamber in the second stage of the camp functioning* [sic], *in autumn and winter 1942. Such an interpretation could be confirmed by its location in the camp plan. The probing drills from the north-eastern and eastern part of the building excavated only mass grave pits. Location of the gas chamber close to the burial places in the second stage of the camp existence was confirmed by some of the witness reports."* (Kola 2000b, p. 61)

This is incredible. The only reason why this "*Building G*" must have contained the alleged homicidal gas chambers of the second phase of the camp is its location vis-à-vis pits whose own locations are inferred from bore samples! Kola evidently never even considered whether this wooden structure could have belonged to the initial phase of the camp, *i.e.*, the year 1940, and whether the pits could have been dug after the structure had been dismantled. Actually, everything stated above about this building contradicts the testimonies and the judicial findings. Kola is well aware of this, as he writes (*ibid.*, FN 28, p. 61):

> *"According to him* [Rudolf Reder], *however, the* [gas] *chamber was made of concrete. The excavations carried out in that area did not prove any traces of brick or concrete buildings, which makes that report unreliable."*

However, this assessment of Reder's testimony has two devastating consequences for orthodox Holocaust historiography.

First, it should be pointed out that in six statements, made between 1944 and 1956, Reder resolutely affirmed that the alleged gas chambers were "made of concrete" ("*z betonu*"), "of grey concrete" ("*z szarego betonu*"; see Mattogno 2021a, pp. 13-54), hence he was absolutely adamant about this fact. However, Reder's "report" (*i.e.*, his set of statements) still remains central in Polish historiography on Bełżec, and the only decent orthodox book on Bełżec Camp – written by Robert Kuwałek – draws extensively on it. Therefore, dismissing Reder's testimony generally as unreliable seriously undermines the entire orthodox narrative of that camp.

The second consequence is that one would have to classify all the witnesses and all the judicial findings on Bełżec as "unreliable," because they all agree

that the gas chambers of the camp's second phase were housed in a brick-and-concrete structure. For instance, for the second phase of the camp, the sentence handed down in the Bełżec Trial (January 18 to 21, 1965) mentions explicitly the construction of

> *"a solid stone building with a total of 6 gas chambers measuring 4 by 5 meters."* (Rückerl, p. 133)

And the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, under the entry "*Belzec*," chapter "*Second Phase*" states (Gutman, Vol. I, p. 178):

> *"The existing gas chambers were demolished and in their place a new building, made of brick and concrete and containing six 13-by-16-foot (4 × 5 m) cells, was erected."*

Kola's hypothesis contradicts the testimonies and judicial findings not only regarding the construction materials used for the alleged gas chambers, but also regarding their surface area. As is clear from the two quotes above, their official dimensions are 4 m × 5 m, thus 20 square meters, or 120 square meters for all six chambers together. Adding the central corridor (1.5 meters wide according to Reder), results in a building of (3×5 m=) 15 m × (2×4 m+1.5 m=) 9.5 m = 142.5 m², or (3×4 m=) 12 × (2×5 m+1.5 m=) 11.5 = 138 m², depending on the arrangement of the rooms. Building G as identified by Kola, on the other hand, left a footprint in the ground of 3.5 m × 15 m, or 52.5 m². It allegedly contained six gas chambers arranged on either side of a central corridor, as can be seen from the object in the center of the plan drawn by a certain J. Bau following Reder's descriptions (see Document 32). This corridor was one and a half meters wide and traversed the entire length of the structure (1.5 m × 15 m = 22.5 m²). Hence, for the six gas chambers remained only (52.5 m² – 22.5 m² =) 30 m², *i.e.* (30 m² ÷ 6 =) 5 m² for each room, which therefore measured 5 m × 1 m!

To recapitulate: On the one hand, the archeological findings contradict the testimonies and the judicial findings, making them inadmissible; on the other hand, Kola's hypotheses regarding the functions of "*Building G*" are in disagreement with the testimonies and the judicial findings. However, if we are to accept the official thesis, we cannot free ourselves from these sources: Either the gas chambers did exist the way the witnesses have described them, or they did not exist at all. And because the archeological findings contradict the witnesses, the gas chambers of the second phase of the camp never existed.

As for the alleged gas chambers of the first phase of the camp, their structure was described in detail by the witness Stanisław Kozak during his interrogation of October 14, 1945. Kozak claims to have participated in their construction (Libionka, pp. 146f.). This building presumably was a wooden shack measuring 12 m × 8 m, divided into three rooms measuring 4 m × 8 m (*ibid.*, p. 146). It is said to have been located in the southern sector of the camp, near the inner railway siding. Kola therefore carefully examined this area of the camp for the remains of these first imaginary gas chambers.

In the area of the southwest corner of the camp, he located the remains of a large building which he called "Building D" (which I labeled with the letter D in the map of the findings in Document 18). In the sampling map, it appears as excavation 11/98 (Document 35, where I added the letter D). Note that the remains of this structure were identified by eight soundings, and its footprint is basically square, while in the mapping of the findings it is rectangular and much wider.

The foundations of this structure measure 26 m × 12 m. Kola describes it as follows (Kola 2000b, p. 55):

> *"The building had at least 6 equal rooms with the sizes of about 16.60 x 3.80 m, separated by inside wall. Only the southern (6th) room was additionally divided into two smaller ones."*

This contradicts the drawing of the diggings he presented (Figure 69 on p. 55; see Document 36), which shows foundations of about 16 m × 12 m, and walls dividing the structure into six main rooms (which I have numbered 1 through 6 in the drawing mentioned) with dimensions of about 5 × 3.80 meters. In Sector No. 2, there is a brick pit measuring 6 m × 1 m (labeled "K" in the drawing of the diggings) "serving originally as a canal [sic] for repairing cars" (*ibid.*, p. 56). And the two photographs published by Kola (*ibid*., pp. 55f., Photos 71f.), the first of which shows the entire excavation (see Document 37), leave no doubt about this. The conclusion is inescapable (*ibid*., p. 57):

> *"One can suppose the room served as a garage."*

I have dwelt on this point because, surprisingly, Kola clumsily tries to pass it off as the first extermination structure, with its three gas chambers!

Of this, Kola gives not even a vague hint on the four pages he dedicates to "Building D." The contrast between a real garage with a workshop for vehicle repairs and the alleged homicidal gas chambers is too glaring. He therefore introduces his nonsensical hypothesis underhandedly, in a different context. A few pages further on he says that he did three soundings in the area north of "Building D" in order

> *"to verify the location of the railway which served in the first stage of the camp functioning for removing the corpses from the gas chambers to the grave pits. It was connected with the interpretation of the function of Building D as gas chamber."* (*ibid*., p. 64/2000a, p. 63)

But what sort of a link could there be between "Building D" and the alleged gas chambers? Again, only its location!

The camp's alleged narrow-gauge railway that Kola was looking for was mentioned by Kozak, who declared (Libionka, p. 147):

> *"Along the northern side of the aforementioned barracks* [the one that contained the "gas chambers"]*, a ramp of planks had been built at a height of about one meter, and along this ramp a narrow-gauge track had been laid*

> *leading to the pit that was located at the same corner as the northern and eastern border of the death camp."*

And here is the result of Kola's search (Kola 2000b, p. 65):

> *"However, traces of that railway were not found."*

Later, possibly a little discouraged by this resounding failure, Kola returns to his hypothesis in a slightly more moderated tone (*ibid.*, p. 66):

> *"Only the building D was relatively big. Can it be interpreted as a death chamber?"*

Then Kola restates the description of the supposed first gassing structure given by the witness Kozak and comments (*ibid.*):

> *"They* [the remains of *"Building D"*] *are different, much bigger building size, which were about 26.00 x 8.00 m,*[240] *and the interior was divided into 6 rooms.* […] *The function interpretation of building D and the witness's description is not fully in accordance with the observation made during archeological works. It concerns first of all its location inside the camp. That building was excavated in its western part, whereas, according to S. Kozak 's report the gas chamber described by him could have been placed several meters toward the south from that place. Moreover the witness mentioned erecting the hut with the destination of being a gas chamber, when in the case of building D could have only an adaptation of the existing building equipped with a garage canal. The division of foundation part of building D into 6 identical rooms indicate that its overground part had 6 frame-houses, one of which served as garage."*

To summarize: The barracks described by Kozak was at a different location than the traces of "Building D." It was built expressly as a gassing structure, whereas "Building D" evidently had a different purpose. It measured 12 m × 8 m as opposed to the latter's 26 m × 12 m. It was subdivided into three rooms rather than the six in "Building D," and finally there is no trace of a camp railway. Thus, Kozak's description is in absolute disagreement with the archeological findings. But Kola did not want to draw the logical conclusion that this witness, too, is unreliable. Instead, he opted for an unbelievable loophole (*ibid.*, p. 67):

> *"In such an interpretation the gas chamber in the first stage of the camp existence must have been situated south-east from Building D and south to it the changing room and the barber."* (Emphasis added)

In other words, since the remains of "*Building D*" are in total disagreement with Kozak's description, and since the homicidal gas chambers must have existed, it follows that they were located "*south-east of Building D*"! However, neither the core-sample drillings nor the excavations indicated that such presumed remnants exist; in fact, absolutely no construction remains were found

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240 As I have indicated above, the remains measured 26 m × 12 m according to the survey by A. Kola.

there. Thus, in his attempt to salvage the official thesis at least partly, Kola is obliged to have recourse to an act of faith: There are no archeological traces of those elusive gas chambers, but nevertheless they did exist!

The actual results of the investigation were admitted candidly by O'Neil who wrote (O'Neil, p. 55):

> *"We found no trace of the gassing barracks dating from either the first or second phase of the camp's construction."*

And this is an incontrovertible fact. The results of Kola's investigations are that they radically refute the statements of the two Polish key witnesses to Bełżec Camp about both the mass graves and the alleged gas chambers.

5. Sobibór

5.1. The First Archaeological Investigations

The Central Commission of Inquiry into German Crimes in Poland began its investigation of Sobibór Camp in early October 1945, and concluded it in October 1946. The site was inspected, but no excavations were carried out.[241]

The first scientific archaeological research in the area of the former Sobibór Camp was carried out during the years 2000-2001 by Prof. Dr. Andrzej Kola,[242] after having concluded his research at Bełżec. The most-important results – the discovery of six burial areas of various shapes and sizes, a small cremation site and five structures (named A, B, C, D, E) related to buildings/barracks, except for Object C, which I will return to below – were carefully described and analyzed by Thomas Kues and myself in two other studies, to which I refer.[243] In the present context, it will suffice to recall that Kola thoroughly investigated four hectares of land of the so-called "*Lager III*" (which was allegedly used for exterminating Jews and therefore had to contain the remains of the alleged gas chambers), which he named XVII, XVIII, XXIV and XXVI. The technique of investigation was described by Kola as follows (Kola 2001, p. 116):

> *"Due to the considerable area to be explored, initially the drilling locations were determined by the intersections of a 5-meter grid, with an additional, narrower grid at sites where the drill cores had shown positive results (i.e., in places where man-made objects had been located – e.g., relics of buildings or graves). With this assumption in mind, at least 400 drillings would be required on each hectare.*
>
> *In the second phase, carried out from 19th August to 13th October, investigations of the camp's terrain using coring continued. Simultaneously excavations of selected structures (localized as a result of the Phase One drillings) were started.*
>
> *During the springtime phase, 4 hectares of the area of the former Camp III (i.e., hectares XVII, XVIII, XXIV and XXV) were fully investigated by coring. In each hectare 400 basic drillings were made; additional drillings enabling a*

241 Bem/Mazurek 2012a, pp. 27-31; see also 2012b; see Subchapter 5.4.
242 Kola 2001, pp. 116f.; 2000, pp. 89-92.
243 Graf/Kues/Mattogno, pp. 117-120; 126-138; 160-176; Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 868-939.

> *more-detailed localization of the remnants of anthropogenic structures were made in places of soil disruptions.* […]
> *Additional drillings were carried out: 90 in hectare XVII, 76 in hectare XVIII, 18 in XXIV, and 21 in XXV; thus, altogether 1,805 drillings were made on 4 hectares."*

Despite this painstaking work, Kola was unable to find the remains of the alleged gas chambers. Searches continued in the following years; those of 2004 and during the years 2007-2011 were presented and discussed in detail by Thomas Kues.[243]

In July-August 2004, the Muzeum Pojezierza Łęczyńsko-Włodawskie (Museum of the Lake Region of Łęczna-Włodawa), under the direction of Marek Bem, resumed the archaeological research at the site of the former camp in cooperation with the television Discovery Channel, the German geophysics company Büro für Geophysik Lorenz and the Polish archaeological company Sub Terra Badania Archeologiczne. In October 2007, the original research group was joined by archaeologists from Israel's Ben-Gurion University, including Yoram Haimi and Isaac Gilead. None of these searches, however, led to the discovery of the remains of the alleged gas chambers.

The search was resumed in 2012 under the direction of Wojciech Mazurek, assisted by the company Sub Terra Badania Archeologiczne, with the assistance of Yoram Haimi, and lasted from November 26 to December 24. After a winter break, further work was carried out in May 2013. In his 2013 "Preliminary Report", Yoram Haimi wrote (2013, p. 1):

> *"At the end of the 2012 excavation season, we requested to continue archaeological research in Camp III and the Steering Committee granted approval to continue an additional excavation season. The purpose of the excavation was to examine Mass Graves Numbers 1, 2 and 7 as well as a location further to the east in the area of Camp III. Due to the sensitivity of this excavation area, we requested the rabbinical supervision of Alex Schwartz on behalf of Rabbi Schudrich from Warsaw.*
> *The archaeological excavations were extended over an area of 1000 square meters in December 2012. They were interrupted by winter weather and renewed again in May 2013 when an additional 650 square meters in four separate areas were investigated."*

The excavations revealed archaeologically important elements (fences, more mass graves, to which I will return below). Also worthy of mention is the discovery of the remains of a facility that has been interpreted as the "barracks of the Jewish prisoners," which Haimi describes as follows (*ibid.*, p. 17):

> *"East of the asphalt surface in Hectare XXV were found the remains of the barracks of the Jewish prisoners (Fig 2). This area requires further investigation. However, the present excavation season has revealed an area of 10 x 15 meters of the floor of the barracks (Fig 21). The remains of low pillars supporting the floor were discovered here similar to the Barrack Object 1714 uncov-*

ered in the summer of 2012. Pieces of barbed wire were found along the exterior of the place in which the walls of the barrack stood (Fig 22). A surprising discovery was traces of an escape tunnel, located 1.60 m. below the floor of the barrack (Fig 23) oriented eastwards toward the exterior of Camp III (Fig 24). Further excavation is required in this area."

His Figure 2 (Document 38) is a map with the new findings marked in red (here as such in the ebook version), including the presumed "Barracks of the Jewish prisoners."

5.2. The Discovery of the "Gas Chambers"

Archaeological research continued the following year, and finally, in September 2014, the discovery of the foundations of four gas chambers was proclaimed with great fanfare in the European and American media. However, this momentous find brings with it very serious problems that no one has ever considered.

In the immediacy of this sensational discovery, Wojciek Mazurek published online a "Preliminary report from the pre-investment archeological excavation works at the former German-Nazi extermination camp in Sobibor conducted in the summer and autumn 2014. Second report of the period Sept. 1 – Sept 30, 2014" (Mazurek 2014). Together with all the other reports on the ongoing forensic research posted between 2011 and 2017 on the Sobibor Museums's website (http://sobibor.info.pl), this report, too, was deleted in 2018 and disappeared without a trace.[244] Peculiarly, Mazurek announced the discovery with much restraint in his 2014 report (*ibid*., pp. 2f.):

"During the September 2014 the excavation works in the area of the asphalt square with the stone tower and monument covered an area of about 10 ares [= 1,000 m²]. *First, the square was cleaned from the sand layer. Between the existing tower and monument numerous relicts of the first commemorating the victims of Sobibor from the year 1965 have been found. The current location of the tower and the monument was located in the early 80-ies of 20 century. Between the tower and the monument, which was removed on 1 September 2014 but without the concrete base, a row of the square footings of the crushed bricks bonded with cement mortar with dimensions of 60 x 60 cm, running from south to north at a distance of about 3 meters from one another, the last in the north at a distance of 4 m. In the region to the east of the monument, whose base has not yet been removed, the relics of the brick foundations with a width of about 30 cm (two bricks* ***longitudinally*** *or one brick crosswise) have been found. They comprise a group of 4 profiles of the rooms with dimensions of 5 m*

[244] While working on the 2017 edition of his *Lectures on the Holocaust*, Germar Rudolf saved copies of all the reports, and when the Sobibor Museum deleted them in 2018, he posted them all online: www.codoh.com/media/files/SobiborForensicReports.zip.

> *on the east-west* [recte: north-south] *axis and 7 meters on the east-west axis. From the eastern side the rooms were closed with the semicircular formed foundation benches with a width of about 30 cm, similar semicircle closes the extreme southern room. In the space of about 3 m, a row of pole holes (spaced at a distance of 2 to 3 m) is running. This is probably the area of the corridor separating two groups of rooms of* ***alleged gas chambers****, which is closed from the south with a wider space with dimensions of 5 x 3 m, where probably a petrol engine was located, whose exhaust fumes killed hundreds of thousands of people."* (Emphases in original)

5.3. The Layout of the "Gas-Chamber" Facility

Mazurek published two photographs of the remnants of the alleged gas-chamber facility. One drone photo shows the exact location of the remnants (Document 39). They are located close to the east side of a square, at the center of which stands a monument Mazurek calls the "stone tower," with a square base of 4 meters on a side. The photograph is taken from a north-eastern position looking toward the southwest. The other photograph, from ground level looking toward the south, shows the brick foundation walls brought to light (Document 40). The masonry remains are therefore located under the former paved road that led from the square to the monumentary mound of ashes, which can be seen in the background in Document 40 (top left), as it clearly appears in an aerial photograph from a higher altitude (Document 41).

At first, the discovery comprised only four rooms, which are clearly visible in photographs of the time. One of the most-widely used is Document 42, in which I numbered the individual rooms (11: alleged "engine room"; 2-4: alleged Gas Chambers 2-4; Chamber 1 is behind the photographer, hence not visible). On September 26, 2014, the daily newspaper *Spiegel Online* published a news report on the discovery, which was illustrated by a fairly sharp aerial photograph (Document 43; Hecking 2014). Here, the stone tower is referred to as the "Polish Monument (modern)."

In the aerial photograph published by *Der Spiegel*, the top is oriented to the west, rather than north. In Document 43a, I have restored the standard northward orientation. Document 44 depicts the same scene in much more detail; in both photographs I have tagged the stone tower (A), the shaft identified by Kola (B), which in Document 38 is referred to as "Object C," two benches on the edge of the excavation (C), the no-longer-existing road (D) that led to the monumentary ash mound, and the alleged gas chambers (1, 2, 3, 4). In Document 44, the east sides (to the right, on the side of the benches) consist of semicircular-wall remnants (a, b, c, d). Document 45 is a photograph taken looking westward. In the foreground, one can distinctly see the semicircular wall (c). Document 46 shows this wall looking eastward (Baran, p. 20).

In Document 47, the presumed Gas Chamber 1 with the semicircular wall (a) appears in the foreground. Document 48 shows the same scene a little closer, and Documents 48a and b explain this photo.

The find I have designated with the letter (B) is the well located by Kola (Hectare XXV, Area 35, Excavation 3/01) at a depth of about 40-45 cm below the asphalt surface, whose wall covering was initially unearthed about 50 cm from its upper edge; further searches were carried out inside the well, to a depth of 5-5.10 meters. This was the only well found in the *Lager* III area (Kola 2001, p. 119). In the final phase of the work, a large concrete cylinder with a lid was placed over the excavation of the shaft (Document 50), which, as I will point out below, is visible in various photographs in front of the remnants of the alleged gas chambers. This well is located about 6 meters from the northwest corner of the remnants, so one has to wonder how it is possible that Kola, with his 5-meter-by-5-meter drill grid, was able to locate this small circle, which has a diameter of 90-100 cm, but missed the remnants of the alleged gas chambers, which are located less than half a meter from the paved surface that covered them.

As far as the dimensions of these remnants are concerned, if one sticks to the aerial photograph published by *Der Spiegel*, the measurements mentioned in the pertinent article – 5 m × 7 m – turn out to be rather uncertain.

The western perimeter wall is about 20 meters long, hence each room a little less than 5 meters wide (considering the thickness of the outer walls and partitions). The northern wall (delimiting Room 4) also measures about 5 meters, however, Rooms 3, 2 and 1, as I explained above, have an arched eastern side, so their measurements are less than 5 m × 5 m, which is particularly evident in Room 1, whose southern wall is about 3.5 meters wide. The western wall is about 12 meters away from the stone-tower monument.

In 2015, the area of the find was cordoned off by a metal fence that also included the parallelepiped-shaped monument and the well, preventing access to the remains. Documents 51 and 52 show the remnants from south to north; Document 53 from west (next to the stone tower) to east; Documents 54 and 55 from north to south, Document 56 from the northeast corner; Document 57 shows the fenced-off area from the north at a distance, from the road that led to the ash mound, which is clearly visible in the background in Documents 51 and 52.

The masonry structure that stood on these foundations therefore had a very unusual floorplan, and the reason for the presence of four semicircular walls on the eastern side of the building remains completely unexplained. But this is only the beginning. The crucial problem is in fact the following: what makes it possible to establish that the above-mentioned remnants are those of a homicidal gassing facility consisting of four gas chambers? Obviously, the only possible point of reference – since there are no documents – is of an anecdotal nature. For years, archaeologists, blinkered by their "historical" fixations, searched for the alleged gas chambers because political correctness demanded

that they had to exist, so sooner or later – digging a little here, a little there – something was bound to be found that the researchers could stick the coveted label onto. In order to be a *condicio sine qua non* of validity, this ideological prejudice should require the conformity of the archaeological remains with the testimonial statements. However, as I will document below, this essential condition does not exist at all.

In 2014, before the fateful "discovery," historian Marek Bem wrote a general study of Sobibór Camp, which, partly because of the author's qualification (a historian, for many years director of the Sobibór Museum), constitutes the most-thorough work on that camp (Bem 2014). The following year its "updated" English translation appeared (Bem 2015) – I will explain later in what ways it was updated. This is thus the reference work on Sobibór Camp, the most-authoritative orthodox text.

Regarding the alleged gas chambers, M. Bem writes (Bem 2015, p. 59):

> *"On the basis of the several dozen very different, often too general and imprecise descriptions that are available, I consider the Hagen jury's description of the Sobibór gas chamber to be adequate to match a possible appearance of the chamber at the time. It is a highly general description, but it includes the most crucial matters, and suitably takes into consideration observations provided by eyewitnesses, whose testimonies were and still are the only descriptions of that building:* […]*"*

This is followed by a long quotation from the judgment of December 20, 1966, of which I translate only the passages relating to the alleged gas chambers (first and second gassing buildings) from its original German:[245]

> *"About 500 m west of this chapel, the advance unit built the gas chamber building, a small solid structure with a concrete foundation. Inside this building, three adjacent cells measuring 4 x 4 m were sealed off gas-tight.* […]
>
> *For two reasons, additional construction appeared necessary to the Lublin headquarters and the camp management in Sobibor in the fall of 1942. The gas chambers proved to be too small, making the 'capacity' of the Sobibor Camp too low. Under the technical supervision of the defendant L.*[ambert]*, a construction team from the Lublin headquarters partially demolished the old gas-chamber building, and replaced it with a new, larger solid building with twice the number of chambers. The cells – each with an area of 4 x 4 and a clearance height of 2.20 m – were arranged on both sides of the building either in such a way that they left a central corridor or that they formed only one row. Each of the cells could be filled with about 80 people standing close together. With now six chambers, about 480 people could be killed during each gassing operation after completion of the construction work, which proceeded quickly within a few weeks due to the use of Jewish prisoners as helpers."*

Bem then sets out his considerations (I remind the reader that he wrote his Polish text before the "discovery" of the alleged gas-chamber ruins): In his

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245 Rüter/de Mildt, 2001, pp. 92f., 98; cf. Rückerl, pp. 163, 172f.

opinion, one of the problems with the gas-chamber building was that of the construction system of the foundations. Given the sandy soil of the camp, he considered it very likely that the walls of the building rested on horizontal beams ("the foundations consisted of [horizontal] support beams [*z belek podwalinowych*], rather than on concrete foundations").

In this context, he specified (Bem 2015, pp. 59-61/2014, pp. 64-67):

> *"To a very limited degree, the only possible chance to find answers to these questions is through archaeological research. I am of the opinion that the excavations made in the spring of 2011 have, beyond doubt, shown the route of 'the road to Heaven' in its final stage, which 'ushered' victims into the gas chamber. Such findings increase chances of locating the remains of the gas chamber. Getting to know the place where the chamber was built offers a chance for a thorough analysis of its framework. Consequently, such an analysis enhances the probability of a factual description of its ground part and ways of functioning."*

The English translation of the original Polish text is abruptly interrupted by a supplement, well highlighted in bold type and between square brackets, which says (2015, p. 61):

> *"**[On 8 September 2014, the archaeologists unearthed remains of red brick walls. All the indications are that these are the remains of the gas chamber. The excavated area lies between the (so-called) 'road to heaven,' the crematorium, the remains of the barrack which, at the time when the camp was operational, belonged to the special commando unit, and the well. A panel of experts from the Museum of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi German Concentration and Extermination Camp have officially confirmed the find. Undoubtedly, this remarkable discovery will be of vital importance in further research into the Holocaust because it might enable researchers to, firstly, arrive at a more accurate estimate of the Sobibór camp's victims, and, secondly, to obtain more precise information as to the exact way in which the victims were murdered.]**"*

This paragraph is full of scurrilous and even puerile propaganda. First of all, Bem does not mention the number of alleged gas chambers found – four – which is in open contrast to the "finding" of the Hagen District Court that staged the Sobibór Trial (September 6 – December 20, 1966), which Bem himself considered very close to reality: six chambers. Two "gas chambers" are therefore missing, and this cannot be an irrelevant fact. The reference to the "panel of experts from the Museum of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi German Concentration and Extermination Camp" who are said to have "officially confirmed the find" is almost comical: how could this group, based on a few rows of bricks scattered here and there that belonged to a structure of which nothing is known, confirm that these were the remains of "gas chambers"? And why would that be "official"? The next comment instead borders on dementia: how could one possibly establish, again on the basis of a few rows of bricks, "a

more accurate estimate of the Sobibór camp's victims," and how could one "obtain more precise information as to the exact way in which the victims were murdered"?

Further on, Bem publishes a "map of archaeological finds made on the territory of the former German extermination camp in Sobibor in the years 2001 – 2014. Compiled by Wojciech Mazurek and Rafał Ratajczak," which was updated as of December 31, 2014 (Document 58; *ibid*., p. 105). It also shows the alleged gas chambers, as can be seen clearly in Document 58a, which is a cut-out of the map.

Here the authors have correctly drawn the four alleged gas chambers, which I have numbered 1-4 in Document 58b, even with semicircular eastern sides (a-b-c-d), but they have imaginatively added along the western side a long corridor (10) flanked by four other gas chambers (5-8), with the alleged access staircase behind the southern side (9) and the alleged small room with the gassing engine to the north (11). The resulting plan is not only arbitrary, but also asymmetrical, because the rooms on the West side (5-8) are clearly smaller than those on the East side. Moreover, the problem of the number remains: eight, instead of six rooms.

And precisely six rooms were also advocated by Jules Schelvis. In his opinion, "the first gas chambers in Sobibór were built according to the original Bełżec pattern. The layout and dimensions [of the chambers] were identical."[246]

For Schelvis, the Bełżec model was also adopted for the second extermination facility at Sobibór, so much so that he reproduced the Polish drawings of the Bełżec facility to illustrate the structure of the alleged gas chambers in Sobibór. The second plan shows a facility with six gas chambers arranged in groups of three on either side of a central corridor, with an access staircase at the front, an engine booth at the back, and two side "ramps" (Document 59). In his plan of the camp, Schelvis drew precisely a gassing facility with 3 + 3 gas chambers (Document 60). At this point, he adduces the testimony of former SS *Scharführer* Franz Hödl, who stated during his interrogation of April 18, 1963:[247]

> *"During my time there, the gas chamber was not concealed from aerial view by a camouflage net hung above it. The gas chamber itself consisted of an elongated concrete barracks with a central corridor. From this central corridor one entered the individual extermination cells, three or four of which were located to the left and right of the corridor. It was dark in these cells. There was a flat roof, in which, to my knowledge, there were no hatches. The outer walls were formed by foldable doors along the entire length, which were folded up after the gassing. This was also the way of ventilating the cell."*

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246 Schelvis, p. 118. The statement is repeated on p. 120.

247 Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Protok. Vol. III, Gomerski Trial, p. 1278.

Hödl is said to have been the operator of the killing engine. The fact that he was not sure about the exact number of alleged gas chambers is surprising, to say the least. In his trial sketch of the Sobibór Camp of March 25, 1966, he was forced to decide on the number of alleged gas chambers, and opted for 3 + 3 (Document 61).[248] However, in order not to displease anyone, Hödl drew 4 + 4 gas chambers in the sketch of September 25, 1974 (Document 62).[249]

The Ukrainian auxiliary Vassily Pankov gave the following description (Graf/Kues/Mattogno, p. 149):

> *"At the camp there were 6 not-large gas chambers, sized about 3 × 4 meters, and 50-70 and even up to 100 detainees were put into each chamber, and then the doors would be hermetically closed and a diesel motor operated, from which the exhaust fumes would be piped into each chamber. For an hour or more the detainees were killed by the gas in the gas chambers."*

It is a fact that these are practically the only descriptions of the second gassing building at Sobibór. It is well known that there are no self-proclaimed (former) inmate eyewitnesses to the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (with the exception of the mythomaniac Ya'akov Biskovitz; see Subchapter 2.3.), so to get a description of the facilities, one has to rely on the post-war statements made by former SS men who, according to orthodox Holocaust historiography, played an important role in *Lager* III. However, they knew practically nothing about the new gas chambers, starting with their alleged builder, SS *Unterscharführer* Erwin Hermann Lambert. In the interrogation of October 2, 1962, he stated:[250]

> *"As I mentioned at the beginning, I was in the Sobibor death camp for about a fortnight to three weeks. It may have been in the autumn of 1942. However, I cannot be sure of the exact time.*
> *At that time, I received an order from Wirth to enlarge the gassing facility in Sobibor; in fact, I was to build the facility according to the model of Treblinka. At that time, I went to Sobibor together with Lorenz Hackenholt. Hackenholt was in Treblinka at that time. First, I drove together with Hackenholt to a sawmill near Warsaw. There Hackenholt ordered a larger consignment of lumber for the reconstruction work in Sobibor. Then the two of us drove to Sobibor. There we reported to the camp leader Reichleitner. He then gave us the pertinent instructions for the construction of the gassing facility.*
> *Before my arrival, the camp was already in operation, and a gassing facility had already existed. Probably the reconstruction had to be done because the old facility was not big enough or not solid enough."*

The narrative of this alleged event continues for another 28 lines, but without the slightest mention of structural details of the new "gassing plant."

As far as is known, SS *Hauptscharführer* Lorenz Hackenholt has never been interrogated.

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248 *Ibid.*, p. 60.
249 *Ibid.*, p. 1278.
250 Interrogation of Erwin Hermann Lambert, October 2, 1962. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 251/59, Vol. VIII, pp. 1542f.

SS *Oberscharführer* Hermann Erich Bauer, the alleged "*Gasmeister*" (gas master, gassing operator) of Sobibór, only mentioned the new gassing plant in passing:[251]

> *"Lager III was full of trees. I remember clearly that there was a camouflage net over the gas chamber.* […]
> *During the reconstruction of the gas chamber, the camouflage net was torn down. I don't know whether it was put up again later.* […]
> *The gas chamber was at first a purely wooden construction. During the time I was there, it was torn down and solidly rebuilt.* […]
> *I am completely sure that the gas chamber was built anew."*

SS *Unterscharführer* Hubert Gomerski, who served at *Lager* III, stated otherwise:[252]

> *"I do not remember any reconstruction of the gas chambers.*
> *At the chamber exits, only board walls were placed in front of the openings and then wedged shut. Trap doors were not installed. I know only of three doors – and three chambers. There was no corridor in the middle, where the chambers were on the left and right."*

However, as I pointed out in another study (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 762-768), Lambert and Hackenholt could not have taken the second gassing facility in Treblinka as a model for Sobibór, because the construction of the Sobibór facility is said to have been carried out in June-September 1942, while in Treblinka the work supposedly began only in late August/early September of that year. In this regard, Lambert stated (Arad 1993, p. 132):

> *"We must have worked for six or eight weeks on that job* [of building the large gas chambers]*."*

Therefore, the construction at Treblinka was completed in mid or late October, hence *after* the construction of the Sobibór facility. On the other hand, the design of the second gassing facility at Treblinka is said to have been different from the one claimed for Sobibór: six or ten "gas chambers" of 8 m × 4 m each at Treblinka, but six "gas chambers" of 4 m × 4 m each at Sobibór, so that the "model" for the claimed Sobibór facility should have been the claimed facility at Bełżec, not Treblinka.

Hence, if we insist on there being any logic to this, the alleged second gassing facility at Sobibór Camp was built on the model of that of Bełżec and contained 3 + 3 gas chambers, according to Schelvis's interpretation. However, there does not seem to be any logic in the matter, as the following summary shows:

1. Hagen District Court: six gas chambers measuring 4 m × 4 m, arranged on either side of a central corridor (3 + 3 chambers) or (!) in series one after the other.

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[251] Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Protok. Vol. III, Gomerski Trial, pp. 1129f.
[252] Interrogation of November 20, 1965. Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund-XI' 65, p. 711.

2. Franz Hödl: six or (!) eight gas chambers, arranged on either side of a central corridor (3 + 3 or 4 + 4 chambers).
3. Vassily Pankov: six gas chambers of 3 m × 4 m.
4. Hubert Gomerski: three gas chambers.

Returning to the initial topic, another surprising fact is that, despite the existence of a multiplicity of maps of the camp drawn by former inmates and former SS men indicating the location of the alleged gas chambers, twenty-five of which were published by Bem,[253] it took fourteen years of research to arrive at the alleged archaeological discovery.

What I have set out above confirms that the discovery – the remains of four alleged gas chambers – is at odds with conflicting witness statements and trial findings.

It is not necessary to insist too much on the fact that the only guarantors of the existence of a gassing facility at Sobibór Camp are the alleged eyewitnesses, who claim to have seen it with their own eyes. But if an archaeological discovery contradicts these testimonies, there are only two possibilities: either the discovery is bogus (in the sense that the remains of a structure of unknown purpose are attributed the status of gas chambers), or the eyewitnesses were blatantly mistaken about the alleged extermination facility, and this radically invalidates their related extermination testimonies.

However, there is also a third possibility, and it is the most-sensible, which is also valid for Bełżec: the eyewitnesses lied, therefore their fantasies cannot and do not match the archaeological reality.

Wojciech Mazurek's and Rafał Ratajczak's escape route from this dilemma, which adulterates the facts, to say the least, was to transform the remains of four rooms into the remains of eight rooms, plus an additional cell. This was clearly inspired by Hödl's map of September 25, 1974, as is evident from the comparison of the two drawings (Document 63), a map that was well-known to historians and archaeologists of Sobibór and is among those published by M. Bem.[254]

W. Mazurek was well aware that the alleged discovery of four gas chambers was in contrast to all the testimonies and trial verdicts. In fact, in the report quoted earlier, he left open a window for a future "adjustment" of the "discovery":

> *"In the space of about 3 m, a row of pole holes (spaced at a distance of 2 to 3 m) is running. This is probably the area of the corridor separating two groups of rooms of alleged gas chambers, which is closed from the south with a wider space with dimensions of 5 x 3 m, where probably a petrol engine was located, whose exhaust fumes killed hundreds of thousands of people."*

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253 Bem 2015, pp. 78-101; 2014, pp. 85-110.
254 *Ibid.*, p. 107.

If the "space of about 3 m" wide was a corridor, it is utterly unclear why there is "a row of pole holes (spaced at a distance of 2 to 3 m)" in its center. Such a row of pole holes suggests the presence of a fence rather than a corridor.

The "adjustment" was made in 2016, when Teresa Mazurek, Wojciech Mazurek, Rafał Ratajczak explained:[255]

> *"In the area of the asphalt square the foundation outlines of 8 rooms used as the foundation for the older walls of the gas chambers. Three rooms on the south have dimensions of 4,00 x 5,30, the extreme northern room had the dimensions of 4,00 x 3,40 m. In the area east of the monument 4 outlines of brick foundations have been uncovered (dimensions: 5,05 m on the axis north-south and 6,80 m on the axis east-west). From the eastern side the rooms were closed with the semicircular formed foundation benches* [*ławami fundamentowymi* = foundation walls] *with a width of about 30 cm, similar semicircle closes the extreme southern room. Between the relics of western and eastern there was a space of about 3 meters, a row of pole holes (spaced at a distance of 2 to 3 m) is running. North from this corridor adjusted a wider space with dimensions of 5,05 x 3,50 m, where probably a petrol engine* [*silnik benzynowy*] *was located, whose exhaust fumes killed hundreds of thousands* [of] *people."*

I give the dimensions of the various rooms in Document 64. In this drawing, the real findings are those colored in red and dark green; those in orange are mere traces, and those in light green mere conjectures.[256] Hence, the real remnants of the alleged gas chambers concern only four rooms.

The plan that appears in the document clearly shows an asymmetric building, and the dimensions given for the rooms are certainly not accurate. In fact, none of the rooms has a clear rectangular shape; on the contrary, they all represent indefinable, oddly shaped geometric figures. The northern walls of Rooms 1-4 should all measure 6.80 m, but in fact they are all different; the eastern walls should be 5.05 m long, but they are even-more-different than the northern walls, with more-or-less-arched contours.

Rooms 6, 7 and 8 are supposed to be 5.30 meters long each, but Room 8 is longer than the other two, Room 5 is the allegedly smallest gas chamber (3.40 m × 4.00 m = 13.60 m², although it is not rectangular), and the alleged engine room (No. 11) is larger than this gas chamber: 5.05 m × 3.50 m (but it is not rectangular either), *i.e.* 17.67 m² versus 13.60 m²! As can be seen in Document 65, of this room only two pieces of foundation remain on the East and West sides (which I have indicated with the letters "E" and "O").

The four western rooms (Nos. 5-8) form a sort of isosceles trapezoid whose northern side measures 4 meters, while the southern side measures 3 meters.

The small room on the south side (9) is instead said to be the base of the staircase leading into the alleged gas-chamber building, similar to what is claimed for the Bełżec facility (see Document 59). If a simple staircase re-

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255 Mazurek/Mazurek/Ratajczak, 2017, p. 33. The passage also appears in an earlier report in English by the same authors: *idem* 2016, p. 29, from which I quote the labored English here.

256 For the re-colored printed black-and-white illustration see the caption of Document 58b.

quired such a foundation, it would be needed all-the-more-so for the two lateral "ramps" (also drawn in Document 59), meaning the two concrete platforms purportedly located on either side of the building that are said to have served for easier removal of the alleged gassing victims from the individual chambers. However, archaeologists found no trace of the two "ramps" but, apparently, did not even question their existence.

A photograph taken from the south (Document 66) shows the aforementioned Room 9 in the foreground: here, however, the small piece of masonry on the north side and the debris located on the sides clearly form a semicircle.

The remnants, as I noted above, contain other foundations of semicircular perimeter walls, a feature that is at least unusual and has not been explained by archaeologists.

The real discovery is therefore the one that appears in a photograph published in the "2015 Annual Report" of the Majdanek State Museum (Document 67; Kowalczyk-Nowak, p. 24): ruins of 4 rooms (Rooms 1-4) plus the two smaller ones to the north (11) and south (9), all (but especially the latter) with more-or-less-tampered wall remnants.

In 2014, Polish archaeologists knew perfectly well the testimonial-judicial "truth" of the alleged gassing facility's layout (3 + 3 or 4 + 4 rooms), so that, in their perspective, they discovered half a building at the time: but how can one seriously believe that it took them two years to unearth the other half (in a rectangular area of about 80 m² adjacent to the half building already discovered)?

It can therefore be concluded that the alleged discovery is in contrast with all the testimonies and the court findings, both for the number, for the shape and for the sizes of the alleged gas chambers. This discovery also has a surprising background.

5.4. The Discovery (1945), Covering-up (1960s) and Rediscovery (2014) of the "Gas Chambers"

In a valuable work, Marek Bem and Wojciech Mazurek have outlined, among other things, the history of the Polish judicial investigations on Sobibór Camp (Bem/Mazurek 2012a&b). Summarized succinctly, these investigations began on October 4, 1945, and concluded in October 1946, with camp inspections and the interrogation of witnesses. On November 23, 1945, the prosecutor of the Lublin District Court compiled a report for the Krakow office of the Central Commission of Inquiry into German Crimes in Poland, in which he noted, among other things (Bem/Mazurek 2012a, p. 31):

> *"The gas chamber was blown up; in the place where it was located, judicial inspection revealed only remnants of rubble* [*resztki gruzów*]*, which make it impossible to determine their surface and size."*

In 1947, Judge Łukaszkiewicz summarized the results of the investigation in an article, whose title translates to "The Sobibór Extermination Camp," in which he wrote (Łukaszkiewicz 1947a, p. 50):

> *"As a result of the measurements taken during the investigation, a drawing of the camp area was compiled, in which all the remains that have been preserved in the camp to date were indicated. Also in the records, there is a drawing of the camp at the time of its operation submitted by the Central Jewish Historical Commission and compiled by former inmates of the camp. The location of the rubble during the investigation is in general agreement with the site of the gas chamber in this reconstructive drawing."*

The map that accompanies the article contains the location of the "*Komory gazowe*" ("gas chambers") written inside a red rectangle (Document 68).

Bem and Mazurek publish a geodetic map made by engineer Marian Cudny in 1951, which contains "the location of the elements of the camp infrastructure detected and identified by the Central Commission of Inquiry into German Crimes in Poland in the course of local investigation and inspection in the years 1945-1946" (Bem/Mazurek 2012a, p. 36). Unfortunately, the map is not very clear (Document 69), however the two objects I have labeled A and B can be identified thanks to another document.

In the early 1960s, the Council for the Protection of Monuments of Struggle and Martyrdom (*Rada Ochrony Pomników Walk i Męczeństwa*) decided to establish a memorial on the grounds of the former Sobibór Camp. The project was awarded to the architect Romuald Dylewski. In 1962, he drew up a plan for a circular ash mound with a diameter of 50 meters. In addition, in the area where the alleged gas chambers were located, he designed a stone pillar with a square base measuring 4 m × 4 m, 8 meters high, and next to it a stone slab measuring 6 m × 6 m, 30 cm high, which was not built. A statue was erected in its place.

In the technical explanations of his project, architect Dylewski examined individual sections of the camp, including the "gas chamber site" ("*Plac komór gazowych*"). In the relevant paragraph he noted (*ibid*., p. 44):

> *"The gas chambers represented the quintessence of the crime; at the same time, they were the place of extreme torture of the victims. This place is therefore particularly worthy of being taken as a model and to be emphasized. The project involves covering the remains of the foundations of the chambers* [*pokrycie śladu fundamentów komór*] *– in strict accordance with the contours provided on a geodetic basis – with an asphalt square, in which a monument with a torch will be erected. The asphalted square will be an extension of the road at this location, with dimensions of 30 x 30 meters."*

In the center of this square, it was planned to place the two monuments mentioned above. In order to carry out his project, architect Dylewski drew a new map of the former Sobibór camp which is a reworking of engineer Marian Cudny's map. The title is "Sobibór Extermination Camp 1942-1943 Existing

Situation – 1962."[257] The caption lists various remains (*ślady*), including the "Ruins of the Gas Chamber Building" ("*Ślady budynku komór gazowych*"), indicated by the letter S. Document 71 shows a section of the map, in which the area of the presumed gas chambers appears in the shape of an L. I have rotated this section by 90°, so that it corresponds to that of Document 72, and I have added the letters A and B. In both maps, A indicates the area of the presumed gas chambers, B the chapel, still today existing on the road that runs along the east side of the former camp. Document 73 is an excerpt of Document 71, which shows the area of the presumed gas chambers: sides a and b measure about 30 meters; Side a faces south, Side b faces east, towards the chapel. As can be seen by comparing Dylewski's map with an aerial photograph (Document 74), and with the map published by Bem (Document 72), where A and B also indicate the area of the alleged gas chambers and the chapel, this area was already perfectly well-known at the beginning of the 1960s. Right above it, the asphalt square of 30 m × 30 m was indeed built, by adding the north-western Quadrant c to the L-shaped remnants of the alleged gas chamber (Document 75).

In the text quoted earlier, Mazurek himself confirms this fact:

> *"Between the* [still] *existing tower and monument numerous relicts of the first commemorating the victims of Sobibor from the year 1965 have been found."*

But already at that time, the soil covering the future memorial square had been largely removed in order to create the asphalt road that would pass over the remains of the alleged gas chambers, as can be seen by comparing the two photographs in Document 76, which show the road leading to the ash mound after the discovery (above) and during the work on the monument (below).

With that, the circle is closed: the remains of the alleged gas chambers were identified in 1945, covered with asphalt in the 1960s (and probably damaged in the process), and then rediscovered in 2014!

In the 1960s, such an operation had a predominantly memorial and symbolic character. From 2000 onwards, historical-archaeological interest prevailed, and the search for the gas chambers took on a decisive function: on the one hand, the hope was to find confirmation of the testimonies, on the other hand to refute the so-called "deniers."

As I have documented earlier, however, the discovery is in radical contradiction to the testimonies. It follows that either the eyewitnesses lied and there never was any gassing facility, or the remains discovered in 2014 do not belong to the alleged gassing facility. But since by now archaeologists have thoroughly sifted all possible and imaginable locations on the former camp grounds, it can safely be concluded that there never was any gassing facility.

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[257] See Document 70; "Sobibór obóz zagłady 1942-43. Projekt pomnika. 1962 r." ("Sobibór extermination camp 1942-43. Monument project. 1962"). Powiatowe Archiwum Państwowe w Chełmie, Zespół PGRN-Włodawa.

5.5. The Mass Graves

In the years 2000-2001, Andrzej Kola carried out an archaeological survey on the grounds of the former Sobibór Camp. The results were described by him in two articles (Kola 2000c, 2001), which in turn were summarized and analyzed by Thomas Kues, as mentioned earlier. On the basis of 1,805 soundings similar to those carried out in Bełżec, Kola identified seven pits. The following table summarizes the relevant data (Graf/Kues/Mattogno, p. 128).

For Pits Nos. 1 and 2, Kola uses the term "*grób ciałopalny*," "cremation grave," meaning a pit containing cremated human remains. Pits Nos. 3-6 moreover contained corpses in a saponified state. Pit No. 7 was a "cremation conglomerate" by which was meant a "cremation grave" or "a place where corpses were cremated" (Kola 2001, pp. 116f.), meaning a real "cremation pit."

In subsequent research, 13 more pits were discovered. One mass grave, south of Grave No. 7, measured 25 m × 5 m and was 1.9 to 2.1 meters deep (Mazurek 2011, p. 4). It was referred to as Pit No. 8 (Object 882). In addition, "3 other small cremation pits" were found which were numbered 9-11 (Mazurek 2013, p. 1).

In the spring of 2013, "two skeletal burials were discovered" which were assigned Numbers 12 and 13; the first contained the remains of six corpses, the other just of one body. Another single grave, No. 14, contained a single corpse. Common grave No. 15, to which I will return below, was also located. Grave No. 16 contained the remains of at least two corpses (*ibid*., pp. 11f.).

Excavations carried out in the fall of 2015 showed that grave No. 8 and No. 15 were one continuous L-shaped grave (*ibid.*, p. 8). The depth was over 2.5 meters (Mazurek/Mazurek/Ratajczak 2016, pp. 24f.); this measurement evidently applies to Section 15 (since the depth of Grave No. 8 was only 1.9-2.1 meters). The entire pit was given the Number 8/15. The dimensions of Section 15 are not indicated, but the maps showing the pits (see below) show a length of about 15 meters and a width of about 5. Therefore, the entire pit measured 40 m × 5 m = 200 m². In the course of research, the archaeologists came across a pit in which, at a depth of 70-80 cm, there were burnt bones. It became Pit No. 17 (*ibid*., p. 30). Pit No. 18 had already been surveyed in 2011 and was then considered a garbage pit; the discovery of human bones in it made it classified precisely as Pit No. 18 (*ibid*., p. 36). The series is closed by two other very small pits, Nos. 19 and 20 (*ibid*., pp. 37f.).

The pits were surveyed topographically, and the corresponding maps permit getting a fairly accurate idea of their dimensions (Documents 77 [Mazurek 2013, p. 3] and 78 [Haimi 2015, p. 5]).

Above I noted that Pit No. 8/15 had a surface area of about 200 square meters. Of the remaining pits (9-14 and 16-20), the largest were Nos. 17 and 18, which measured roughly 4 m × 5 m each; all others were much smaller, mostly single burials. Taken all together, these pits did not even reach 100 square me-

Dimensions, Locations and Contents of Mass Graves at Sobibór Camp							
#	DIMENSIONS [m]	AREA [m²]	VOLUME [m³]	# OF CORES	HECTARE #	HUMAN REMAINS	SHAPE
1	20×20×4.30	400	1,720	27	XVII	cremated corpses	
2	20×25×4.0	500	2,000	28	XVII	cremated corpses	irr.
3	20×12×5.80	240	1,392	17	XI-SW/ XVII-NW	cremated & saponified corpses	irr.
4	70×20-25×5.0	1,575	7,875	78	XI-S/ XVIII-N	cremated & saponified corpses	
5	10×12×4.90	120	588	7	XVIII-NW	cremated & saponified corpses	irr.
6	15×25×3.05	375	1,143.75	22	XVIII	cremated & saponified corpses	irr.
7	10×3×0.90	30	27	6	XVIII	cremated remains	
	Total:	3,240	14,745.75	185			

ters. The average depth could not have been greater than that of Section 15 of Pit No. 8/15, hence 2.5 meters.

Therefore, the total area of the pits results in (3,240 m² + 300 m² =) 3,540 m², which can be rounded up to 3,500 m².

The total volume is (14,745.75 m³ + [300 m² × 2.5 m =]) 15,048.25 m³, in round figures 15,000 m³.

However, in the above-mentioned maps, the pits are not regular geometric figures, such as rectangles or squares, as Jules Schelvis sensibly represented them (Document 79), but silhouettes with odd and uncertain contours. One cannot seriously believe that those were the real contours of the pits, nor that they had been dug without criteria and almost at random, which would also be contrary to any rational management of the camp's space.

In order to interpret this fact, it is necessary to know what happened in the period immediately after the war.

In July 1944, the Red Army occupied the territory of the former Sobibór Camp. In 1945, the Polish authorities used the barracks of the camp near the railway, left untouched by the Germans, as a sorting center for Ukrainians who were to be deported. Their deportations took place in the years 1945-1947. The Ukrainians who were waiting for the trains dismantled the remaining camp barracks in order to obtain wood for heating. The work of destroying the traces left by the Germans was most likely completed by undocumented "excavations on the grounds in search for hoped-for 'precious objects left behind by the Jews,'" which was carried out by the population of the surrounding area. A witness, Jan Doliński, recalled that he went there about a hundred times, and that there were about a hundred people looking for precious objects; the sand was sifted through with large sieves measuring 1.5 m × 1.5 m. Among other things, he saw a large pit two meters deep in which a person was at work (Bem/Mazurek 2012a, p. 24).

Therefore, just as the grounds of the former Bełżec Camp, the grounds of the former Sobibór Camp had also been disrupted by wildcat diggings, which favored the scattering of ashes and human remains even to areas that had not been mass graves.

More information on the activities of these wildcat diggers was gathered by Thomas Kues (Graf/Mattogno/Kues, pp. 130f.).

It can therefore be safely assumed that random excavations by "gold diggers" devastated the original, probably orthogonal margins of the mass graves, creating the irregular contours indicated by archaeologists.

In Document 80, which is Mazurek's map of the pits, I superimposed a vertical and horizontal scale bar of 50 meters each (oddly divided into eight segments of 6.25 meters each) onto Pit No. 4. The length of this pit is therefore less than 55 meters, its width less than 20. The total area is therefore less than 1,100 square meters. Since this pit is credited with at least (70 m × 20 m =) 1,400 square meters, it exceeds the presumed effective area by 300 m², which represents a 21% increase.

From this it may be reasonably inferred that the real area of the pits was at least 20% smaller, so it amounted to about 2,850 square meters; the order of magnitude of the volume was therefore about 12,000 cubic meters.

However, this assumes that the mapping of the mass-grave areas is accurate. Kola surveyed the first six pits, which comprise the vast majority of the total surface area and volume of all the pits: 3,210 m² and 14,718.75 m³, respectively. During the preliminary investigations, Kola carried out only ten soundings in Hectare XVII, west of the former monumental mound. Of these, five were positive, meaning that the contents of these core samples led him to conclude that they contained traces of mass graves. To the east of the mound, he took fifteen core samples, six of which were positive, two others contained human hair (Kola 2000c, pp. 90f.). Kola published a map (Document 81), in which the soundings related to the pits are represented by a small square with a black dot in the center. Comparison with the map of mass graves he published in 2001 (Document 82) and with the corresponding map by W. Mazurek (Document 83) shows that the easternmost core sample, which was positive, is outside the area of Pit No. 4, and the southernmost sample, negative, is at its lower limit.

Kola subsequently identified Pit No. 3 with 17 soundings and No. 4 with 78. Since the boreholes were drilled according to the 5 m × 5 m grid I reproduced in Document 83, they were all arranged orthogonally. It is not explained how he could trace asymmetrical, irregular contours of these pits with such a sampling pattern. Nor is it clear how he could distinguish Pit No. 3 from Pit No. 4, since they are represented as a single figure.

In the two short articles mentioned earlier, Kola merely published the results of his investigations, or rather his conclusions, without providing any data that allowed any kind of verification, as he had done in the case of Bełżec.

Therefore, we are asked to have blind faith in his claims about his core-sample data and the correctness of his interpretations and conclusions.

But there is also another issue. Thomas Kues pointed out that Sobibór Camp was located in a vast marshy area to such an extent that, according to J. Schelvis, railway traffic between Chełm and Włodawa (a little more than 10 km north of Sobibór Station) was interrupted from the end of July to October 1942 because the railway tracks had sunk into the marshy ground at several points. A Polish map of 1933 shows that the station was located 167 m above sea level, and the surface of Lake Spilno, about 1 km to the west, was 164 m above sea level. In this lake, the water table of the area surfaced. According to a map published by Kola, the area of the mass graves was at a height of 170 m above sea level, so there the water table was at most six meters below ground level (Graf/Mattogno/Kues, pp. 133-138).

A 1:100,000 Polish map of the area around Włodawa was used by the Wehrmacht for military purposes. It contains multiple German annotations and various symbols, plus detailed explanations on the right-hand side, including about the local climate (Document 84). On this map, the territory is described as a depression with the River Bug in the center and sandy flatlands surrounding it. The marshes (*Sümpfe*) usually froze from mid-December to mid-March. The bogs (*Moore*) froze starting at temperatures of -6 to -8°C, in case of snow cover starting at -12 to -16°C. Heavy rainfall and snowmelt placed "vast areas under water." Average temperatures ranged from -4°C (January) to +18°C (July). Frost generally took over from mid-October to late April; streams were frozen from mid-December to mid-March. Average rainfall was 30 mm in January, February, and March, 40 in April, 50 in May, 80 in June and July, 60 in August, 50 in September, 40 in October, 30 in November and December; a total of 550 mm of rain in a year. Snow fell an average of 45 days per year. The snowpack persisted from mid-November to mid-March. Thawing at the end of February, soil consolidation after 3-4 weeks, dry soil after another 14 days.

Next to the railway station near Sobibór, the map has a cogwheel drawn in, which is the symbol of a sawmill (Document 85). The elevation of the station is again 167 m above sea level, and that of Lake Spilno again 164 m. Next to Lake Spilno, to the west, is a large dotted area with the annotation "flooded in spring." This flood zone is bounded by elevation entries 168 (east of the lake) and 166.9 (northeast, near the top of this area), so during spring, following the snow melt, the water level almost reached the elevation of the railway station.

Thus, the climatic conditions set forth above show that the water table varied throughout the year, rising during the period of heavy rainfall and spring melt. From this picture it appears that the area in question was certainly not optimal for the establishment of an extermination camp requiring the excavation of huge mass graves.

In particular, it does not seem very likely that the camp SS had dug mass graves up to 5.8 meters deep. The putrid runoff inevitably would have polluted

the groundwater. That the Germans were not insensitive to such sanitary issues is apparent from the relevant observations found in the above-mentioned map:

> *"Healthcare*
> *Supply of aseptic water adequate. Water wells are monitored. Dairy products not hygienically safe; milk must be boiled. Typhoid fever and dysentery remediated (about 80% of population vaccinated against these), malaria and Wolhynia fever*[258] *possible but not endemic; no typhus."*

As for Kola, his statement that most of the pits he identified had a depth of 4 to 5.8 meters is at odds with what he himself wrote in reference to the well mentioned earlier (Kola 2001, p. 119):

> *"The further archaeological investigation was therefore continued not within the indicated excavation, but inside the well, reaching a depth of 5.00-5.10 m. At this stage, the exploration was terminated due to the rapid inflow of ground water, which appeared from a depth of about 3.60 m* [*Na tym etapie eksplorację zakończono z uwagi na gwałtowny napływ wody gruntowej, która pojawiła się już od głębokości około 3,60 m*]*."* (Emphasis added)

On Kola's preliminary survey map (Document 81), the quadrangle in which the well and the alleged gas chambers were located is bounded by elevations of 169.83 (NW, the closest point to the well), 170.07 (NE), 169.86 (SE), and 169.75 (SW). The mass graves are located in an area with elevations of 170.30 to 169.70 meters. In practice, the difference in elevation between the two areas is a few decimeters.

Hence, if the water table in the well was at 3.60 m from ground level, Kola should have encountered groundwater starting at about 4 m in the area of the mass graves; but then, why did he never mention any groundwater intrusion during his drillings down to depths of 4.30, 4.90, 5.00 and even 5.80 m?

5.6. Comparing Archaeological Data with Testimonies

Such a comparison is not easy, because the testimonies are mutually contradictory. Former SS *Oberscharführer* Heinz Kurt Bolender, who arrived at Sobibór on April 22, 1942 and remained there until July, stated during an interrogation on June 5, 1961:[259]

> *"A mass grave may have been about 60 m long, 20 m wide and 6 – 7 m deep. The side walls were sloped to avoid the danger of collapse. In response to an interposed question, I explain that, at the time of my stay in Sobibor, no cremations of corpses have taken place. I know this for a fact. During my time, the corpses were layered in order to be able to accommodate as many as possible in one grave."*

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258 Also called trench fever and quintan fever.
259 ZStL 252/59, Vol. II, p. 1322.

During an interrogation of February 24, 1964, former SS *Unterscharführer* Hubert Gomerski stated in reference to *Lager* 3:[260]

> *"There were a total of three large corpse pits there. I estimate the length of the pits to be about 30 – 40 m, the width to be 8 – 10 m, and the depth to be about 2 – 3 m. The dimensions may have been different in each case; I cannot say that exactly anymore today.*
> *There were three corpse pits in Lager 3, which were located in the order of their construction at the rear end of the camp (as seen from the entrance to Lager 3), and to the right of the fence behind the guard tower, and to the left of the fence diagonally behind the gas chamber. Of these three pits, the last one was no longer used, because in the meantime an incineration facility had been built in the area behind the watchtower.*
> *This consisted of a row of iron girders, over which the corpses were placed. Then a large fire was lit under this row of girders. Subsequently, both the Jews who had just been killed and the corpses from the two pits mentioned first were burned in this manner."*

During his December 2, 1966 interrogation in Hagen, Gomerski returned to the matter in the following terms:

> *"In the pit, a small projection, a kind of jetty, was built of wood, and the dead were dumped from the carts from there into the pits. The pits had a dimension of 25 x 40 x 2-2 1/2 meters.*
> *The earth consisted of sandy soil; the walls were sloped."*[261]
> *"After about 2-2 1/2 months, the first transports arrived. A total of three pits were made; the third pit was not used. When the first transports arrived, the first pit was not yet completely excavated. The second pit was dug only when the first one was almost full. The third pit was dug with an excavator; it was not filled."*[262]
> *"I witnessed the digging of Pit 3, as well as the beginning of the burnings. When Bolender left the camp, there were no burnings yet."*[263]

During an interrogation of December 10, 1962, Erich Bauer spoke of "two pits of at least 30 m × 30 m base area each and about 5 m deep."[264]

With an erroneous reference to the summer of 1943, *Oberwachtmeister* Erich Lachmann stated:[265]

> *"The Jews who worked in the death camp were busy digging a large pit for the bodies."*

In this regard, he specified:[266]

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260 Landgericht Hagen, XXXVII Sobibor, pp. 16f.
261 Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund-XII1965, p. 705.
262 *Ibid.*, p. 709.
263 *Ibid.*, p. 710.
264 ZStL, 208 AR-Z 251/59, Vol. VIII, p. 1666.
265 Interrogation of Erich Gustav Willi Lachmann dated June 21, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 251/59, Vol. VIII, p. 678.
266 *Ibid.*, p. 680.

> *"The mass graves I saw in Lager 3 were about 60 to 70 meters from the gas chambers. I myself saw a mass grave that was still open. The corpses lay naked on top of each other in several layers. However, even with the most superficial estimate, I cannot state how many corpses lay in this mass grave. This mass grave was about the size of 60 x 60 meters. In any case, there must have been several thousand Jews lying in this pit. The corpses were sprinkled with chlorinated lime. It stank terribly."*

To recap, the mass graves had the following dimensions:

– Bolender: 60 m × 20 m × 6-7 m
– Gomerski: 30-40 m × 8-10 m × 2-3 m, or
40 m × 25 m × 2-2.5 m
– Bauer: 30 m × 30 m × 5 m
– Lachmann: 60 m × 60 m

According to these defendants, a total of three pits were excavated, but only two were used. These conflicting data are in turn at odds with the archaeological findings set forth above, both in terms of the number and size of the mass graves. The only compatible data is for the first pit, 60 m × 20 m for Bolender, 70 m × 20 for the archaeologists.

The German courts gave still different measurements, without explaining, on what this is based. The verdict of the Hagen Jury Court of December 20, 1966 devotes a few lines to the mass graves of Sobibór:[267]

> *"From the outer cell doors of the gas-chamber building, a field railway led to large pits. During the first extermination phase of the camp lasting some six months, these were gradually excavated, due to the sandy soil with sloping side walls, in order to accommodate the corpses; each was about 50-60 meters long, 10-15 meters wide, and about 5-7 meters deep."*

The court's map of the camp shows two mass graves.[268]

The verdict of the Frankfurt District Court of July 8, 1977 concerning the appeal proceedings in the case against Hubert Gomerski adds the following clarification (Rüter/de Mildt 2011, p. 662):

> *"The external wall of the individual cells was closed with large iron doors. From them, a field railway led to two large pits created within Camp III, which, during the first extermination phase lasting some six months, were gradually excavated with a length of about 40-50 m, 10-15 m in width, and a depth of about 5-7 m, and which were gradually filled with corpses of gassing victims."*

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267 Rüter/de Mildt 2001, p. 94. Cf. Rückerl, p. 165.
268 Rüter/de Mildt 2001, p. 91. Cf. Rückerl, pp. 160f.

6. Treblinka

6.1. Soviet and Polish Investigations (1944-1946)

In 2010, Caroline Sturdy Colls, at that point a PhD student, but currently associate professor of forensic archaeology and genocide investigation at Staffordshire University (Great Britain), began a series of archaeological investigations on the grounds of the former Treblinka Camp over several years. In order to properly evaluate her discoveries, it is necessary to know what had happened in this area before, starting in 1944. I have already dealt extensively with this subject in another study, to which I refer.[269] In the present study, I will reprise and expand only on what is useful within the perspective of this chapter.

As already mentioned in Subchapter 3.6., the Investigation Committee of the Soviet Union's 65th Army, in the presence of the local Polish authorities, carried out an inspection in the area of Treblinka I Camp between August 22 and 23, 1944, which led to the discovery of three mass graves and 13 graves containing only one corpse each. The results of the investigations carried out in the three mass graves were as follows:

1. A grave measuring 10 m × 5 m × 2 m, covered with a soil layer of 45 to 50 cm, with 105 bodies randomly buried in 5 to 7 rows.[270]
2. A grave measuring 10 m × 5 m × 2 m, covered with a soil layer of 45 to 50 cm, with 105 bodies randomly buried in 5 to 7 rows.[271]
3. A grave measuring 10 m × 5 m × 2.5 m, covered with a soil layer of 50 cm, with 103 bodies randomly buried in 5 to 6 rows.[272]

I have already mentioned the report of August 24, 1944, of which I quoted the "historical" part; but it also mentions findings on the ground:[273]

> *"A huge area of the camp was covered with cinders and ashes. The road, which connected the two camps and is three kilometers long, was covered with cinders and ashes to a height of 7 – 10 cm. One could recognize the presence of lime in large pieces of cinder with the naked eye. It is well known that lime is a product of burning bones. There were no production sites in the camp, but cinders and ashes were brought out of the camp every day by the ton. This*

269 Mattogno/Graf, pp. 77-90.
270 Akt No. 1, undated, but from August 22, 1944. GARF, 7021-115-11, p. 1.
271 Akt No. 2, August 23, 1944; *ibid*., p. 2.
272 Akt No. 3, August 23, 1944; *ibid*., p. 3.
273 Akt, August 24, 1944. GARF, 7021-115-9, pp. 103-110.

freight was loaded onto railroad cars, and 20 to 30 peasant carts distributed them and poured them onto the road. (Witness testimony of Lucjan Puchała, Kazimierz Skarzinski. Stanisław Krym inter alia).
The statements of the witnesses, the book 'A Year in Treblinka' [by Jankiel Wiernik]*, the presence of a large quantity of ashes and cinders, the presence of personal belongings and documents strewn on the grounds as well as excavated from the pits confirm that there were furnaces in the camp where people were cremated. In the beginning, the Germans buried the bodies of the murdered. After Himmler had visited the camp, the bodies were dug up with an excavator and cremated.*
At present it is difficult to uncover the traces and secrets of this furnace for the cremation of people, but based upon the available data, one can picture it.
The furnace – this was a large trench 250-300 m in length, 20-25 m in width and 5-6 m deep, excavated by an excavator. Driven into the bottom of the ditch were three rows of reinforced-concrete posts, one-and-a-half-m in height each. The posts were connected to one another by cross-beams. On these cross-beams rails were placed at intervals of 5 to 7 cm. That was a gigantic furnace grill. A narrow-gauge spur track led down to the edge of the trench. (Witness testimony of Abe Kon, Hejnoch Brenner, Samuel Rajzman, and the content of the book 'One Year in Treblinka'). […]
The Germans attempted to erase the traces of their atrocities. After the revolt of the Jews, they destroyed all camp buildings that were still intact after the fire. Oats, rye, and lupines were then planted on the grounds of the former 'death camp.'
What remains are the walls of the burned residential building and of the cattle stall of the colonist Strebel, who was settled on the territory of the camp. Remaining as marks of the existence of the camp are: an abatis of barbed wire, ashes, cinders, and a great number of pits, where household possessions of the cremated Jews have been buried."

As mentioned at the beginning of Subchapter 3.7., on November 6, 1945, Polish Investigative Judge Łukaszkiewicz prepared a "Protocol on The Judicial Activity Carried out on the Ground in the Course of the Investigation in the Case of the Treblinka Death Camp" concerning his visit to the former camp.[274] I report his observations on the state of the grounds of the former camp:

"The entire terrain of the camp is currently covered with holes, pits and craters [*dołkami, dołami i lejami*] *of various sizes. They can be found everywhere, even in places covered by the forest, however they are grouped more densely in the hill described in Point 2, where, in an area of about 2 hectares, every part of the ground is literally covered with them. The depth of some craters reaches 7 meters, the diameter to 25 meters. Near the craters there are unexploded airplane bombs and artillery shells, as well as numerous pieces of shrapnel. The mayor of the village of Wólka Okrąglik explains that the holes and pits were made by the local population in search of gold and jewelry, while the craters*

[274] AGK, NTN 69, pp. 90f.

were caused by the bursting of airplane bombs and shells by Red Army soldiers, who were stationed at the Kosów Lacki Railway Station. In the described part of the terrain, covered with excavations and craters, there are numerous human remains /crania and other bones/; some bones still have remnants of tissue, skulls remnants of hair. In addition, all this ground is covered with ashes, mixed with sand and gravel /since in this area there are no real layers of sand and gravel/. In the ashes, one can see remains of human bones. The witnesses Rajzman and Romanowski [Reichman] *explain that this is the very place where the pits were located in which the people were buried and then the furnaces* [*paleniska*] [were operated].*"*

In January 1946, Rachel Auerbach made the following report on the inspection of the Treblinka area that had been conducted on November 7, 1945 (see Subchapter 3.7.):[275]

"All kinds of scavengers and marauders come here in droves, shovels in hand. They dig, search, and ransack; they sift the sand, they drag parts of half-rotten corpses from the earth, bones and scattered refuse in the hope that they may come upon at least a coin or a gold tooth. These human jackals and hyenas bring along live artillery shells and unexploded bombs. They explode several of them at once, tearing huge craters into the desecrated, blood-drenched soil which is comingled with the ashes of Jews.

The Sandy Soil Yields Up Its Secret. *Our car came to a stop. We got out: this was where the camp area began. According to our measurements, it is 15 hectares. A well-paved road runs parallel to the railroad tracks for about 1½ kilometers and then comes to a dead end. Another road branches out from it and comes to an end even sooner. The surface of both roads contains a weird mixture of coal and ashes from the pyres where the corpses of the inmates were cremated. The second road leads in the same direction as the 'Road to Heaven' of which no trace is now left. Just a bit of the concrete foundations of a horses' stable – this is all that is left today of the camp buildings, the barbed wire fences, the barracks, the watchtowers, the gas chambers. Some of the buildings were burned down by the uprising, and the rest were carried off by human scavengers from neighboring villages after the arrival of the Red Army.*

While the Germans were still here, the whole area had been plowed up and sown with lupine grass. And the lupine grass really grew and covered the whole surface with a green mask. It looked as if all the traces of the crimes had been wiped away. But since then, during the past year, the human jackals and hyenas have been coming to the burial ground and here is the picture that we saw:

Here and there, like patches of grass near the seashore, half-covered by the shifting sands, there were still little clumps of withered lupine. Not one level place in the whole area. Everything had been torn up and dug up, little hills and holes. And upon them, beneath them and among them, all sorts of objects.

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275 Donat, pp. 69-72. Donat writes that the trip took place on November 7, but Judge Łukaszkiewicz mentions November 6 (see below).

> *Aluminum kettles and pans, enameled tin pots – blackened, dented, full of holes. Combs with teeth broken off, half-rotted soles from ladies' summer sandals, broken mirrors, leather briefcases. All this is near the station platform where the camp's first barbed wire fences had been.*
> *We began our tour at the place where the transports had been unloaded and we continued on the road which the Jews who were brought here had followed. What we saw here was the remnants of the Treblinka 'Werterfassung'. Remnants of the huge piles of Jewish property, which had been packed up and sent away, incinerated, cleared off, and yet still could not be completely cleared away. It was not possible to clear away every trace of what the hundreds of thousands of people who had passed through here had experienced. Here was the physical evidence, here were the corpora delicti* […]
> *But the physical evidence was not limited to objects. As we moved farther into the grounds, we walked over a field which was sown with human bones.*
> *The bombs had revealed the contents of the desecrated soil. Leg bones, ribs, pieces of the spine, skulls big and small, short and long, round and flat.*
> *Skulls!…*
> *If only we could get an ethnologist to come here!*
> *He could have made the most accurate anthropological measurements on the racial features of the Jewish people.* […]
> *We were now standing where the gas chambers had been, the huge mass graves and the pyres. In some places, the smell of death was still mingled with the odor of fire. Indeed, here and there we could see little piles of white ashes along with blackened bones, heaps of soot. All this had been buried several meters deep in the soil, mixed with sand and covered with more sand, but the explosions had brought it to the surface again. In one place the simultaneous explosion of several bombs had created a huge crater. Deep down in the hole, some outlines could be dimly seen through the fog.*
> *'Those aren't just bones,' explained the District Attorney. 'There are still pieces of half-rotted corpses lying there, bunches of intestines.'*
> *By now, the district attorney and the judge knew every nook and cranny here. They had been conducting their investigations for some time. They had examined both Jewish and non-Jewish witnesses, taken measurements and carried out minor excavations."* (Underlinings added)

Judge Łukaszkiewicz had gone to Treblinka in order to perform an official investigation of the alleged crime scene. As he later explained, he acted

> *"*[…] *at the request of the state prosecutor of the District Court in Siedlce of September 24, 1945, further induced by a letter of September 18, 1945, of the Main Commission for the Investigation of the German Murders in Poland."*[276]

After bidding farewell to the visitors, Łukaszkiewicz set to work with a group of workers. Between November 9 and 13, he undertook a thorough examination of the grounds as well as a series of excavations. Afterwards he composed

[276] USSR-344, GARF, 7445-2-126, p. 319 (p. 1 of the report).

an official protocol, which in view of its significance I reproduce in full (Wojtczak, pp. 183-185):

> *"Protocol of the Tasks Performed on the Grounds of the Death Camp Treblinka, Which Forms the Object of the Judicial Examination.*
>
> *From November 9 to 13, 1945, the examining magistrate of Siedlce, Z. Łukaszkiewicz, together with the state attorney for the District Court of Siedlce, J. Maciejewski, performed the following tasks on the camp grounds:*
>
> *1) November 9, 1945*
> *Excavations were begun on the grounds using the services of 20 workers who had been mustered by the village administration for carrying out roadwork. The excavations began at the location described by the witness Rajzman on November 6, where the so-called 'camp hospital' had stood and where, according to the witness, a mass grave is supposed to exist. Since a bomb crater 4.5 meters deep is present at the said location – two bombs still lie at a slight distance from this crater – the digging was begun in this crater. In the course of this work numerous Polish, as well as Russian, German, Austrian, and Czech coins and broken pieces of various kinds of containers were discovered. At the end of the work, at approximately 3 pm, at a depth of 6 meters, we encountered a layer which had not been reached previously. No human remains were found.*
>
> *2) November 10, 1945*
> *The work was continued, with 36 workers who had been commandeered for roadwork. At a depth of 6 meters begins a layer which has never before been uncovered by anyone. It consists partly of all sorts of kitchen utensils and different kinds of household objects; there are also pieces of clothing. At a depth of 7 meters, we reached the bottom of the pit – a layer of yellow sand which is not mixed with gravel. By additional digging we succeeded in determining the shape of the pit. It has sloping walls, and the bottom measures about 1.5 meters* [sic!]. *The pit was presumably dug out with an excavator. During the course of the excavations, numerous more-or-less-badly damaged Polish documents were discovered, in addition the badly damaged personal identity card of a German Jew, as well as several more coins: Polish, German, Russian, Belgian, and even American. After we had made certain that this pit, filled with broken pieces of the containers already mentioned, ran in a north-south direction on the grounds of the camp area – 2 meters more* [in a northerly direction] *had been excavated – the workers started work at this location.*
>
> *3) November 11, 1945*
> *A series of test excavations was performed at the place where the* [gas] *chambers had to have been located, in order to find their foundation walls if possible. Pits 10 – 15 meters in length and 1.5 meters deep were dug, uncovering undisturbed layers of earth.*

The largest of the craters produced by explosions – from this emerges numerous pieces of shrapnel –, which is 6 meters deep and has a diameter of about 25 meters, its walls give recognizable evidence of the presence of a large quantity of ashes as well as human remains – was further excavated in order to discover the depth of the pit in this part of the camp. Numerous human remains were found by these excavations, still partially in a state of decomposition [*w stanie rozkładu*]. *The soil consists of ashes interspersed with sand, and is of a dark-gray color, granular in form. During the excavations, the soil gave off an intense odor of burning and decay. At a depth of 7.5 meters the bottom was reached, which consisted of layers of unmixed sand. At this point the digging was stopped.*

4) November 13, 1945
With the assistance of 30 workers employed for roadwork, the opening of a pit was begun – a site where refuse was deposited in the northeastern section of the camp. In this location, as the workers from the nearby hamlets explained, a very large number of documents had been found so far. Work was begun at this location, where the people [of that area] *had dug a three-meter-deep pit in a search for gold. During the course of the digging, broken pieces of all sorts of kitchen containers as well as a large number of rags were found. Aside from the coins discovered so far, Greek, Slovakian, and French ones were found, as well as documents in Hebrew and Polish and remnants of a Soviet passport. At a depth of 5 meters the work was stopped due to the steadily worsening weather conditions.*

The Examining Judge *The State Attorney*
Łukaszkiewicz *Maciejewski*

Decision:
The Examining Judge of Siedlce, on November 13, 1945, rules in consideration of the fact that with great probability no mass graves are any longer to be found on the grounds of the former camp today, as is to be concluded from the witness testimonies examined so far and from the results of the work carried out at the site, and in consideration of the oncoming autumn, the present rainfall and the necessity of a rapid conclusion of the judicial preliminary investigations, in view of all these facts that work on the territory of the former death camp Treblinka is to stop.

The Examining Judge
Łukaszkiewicz." (Emphases added)

On December 29, 1945, after the conclusion of his preliminary investigations, Łukaszkiewicz issued a protocol with 14 paragraphs, which – as already mentioned – was presented by the Soviets at the Nuremberg Trial as Document USSR-344. In the third paragraph, which bears the title "Current condition of the camp terrain", it says the following:[277]

[277] *Ibid.*, pp. 319a-320 (pp. 3f. of the report).

> *"With the assistance of an expert surveyor and witnesses, I made an exact inspection of the terrain. According to the measurements, the area of the camp is approximately 13.45 hectares and had the shape of an irregular quadrilateral. No remnants of facilities of the former death camp exist any longer. The only things that remain of the structures are: a ditch with remains of burned wooden poles protruding up, which lead into the cellar, wall bricks from the foundations of the camp's housekeeping building and the site of the well. Here and there one finds traces of the burned-out wooden poles of the fence and remains of barbed wire. There are still a few sections of paved walks. Nonetheless, there are still other traces that hint at the existence and functions of the camp. In the northwestern section of the area, the surface is covered for about 2 hectares by a mixture of ashes and sand. In this mixture, one finds countless human bones, <u>often still covered with tissue remains, which are in a condition of decomposition</u>. During the inspection, which I made with the assistance of an expert in forensic medicine, it was determined that the ashes are without any doubt of human origin (remains of cremated human bones). The examination of human skulls could discover no trace of wounding. At a distance of some 100 m, there is now an unpleasant odor of burning and decay. In the southwestern direction, a portion of the camp terrain is covered by aluminum – enamel – glass and porcelain dishes – kitchen utensils – hand luggage – rucksacks – pieces of clothing, etc. <u>There are innumerable holes and craters on the property.</u>"* (Emphases added)

Łukaszkiewicz summarized the investigations carried out a month earlier at that location as follows:[278]

> *"During the work on the terrain, I found no mass graves, which, in connection with the statements by the witnesses Romanowski and Wiernik, leads to the conclusion that nearly all of the bodies of the victims were burned, all the more so since the camp was liquidated early and the murderers had much time. The ground of the camp was ploughed and sown. Ukrainians were settled there; they fled before the arrival of the Red Army (witnesses Kucharek and Lopuszyński)."*

On August 9 and 10, 1946, Łukaszkiewicz, along with the surveyor Trautsolt and the court physician Wakulicz, searched for mass graves in the area of the camp Treblinka I. In the forest by the village of Maliszewa, about 500 m south of the camp, a total of 41 mass graves were found, of which 40 had been desecrated; many bodies were strewn around them. One grave was only partially violated, and from it 10 corpses were able to be recovered. The court physician examined 112 skulls and determined that in only two cases had a shot in the head been the cause of death. The entire surface area of the graves amounted to 1,607 m². Concerning the number of the bodies discovered, Łukaszkiewicz wrote:[279]

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[278] *Ibid*., p. 324a (p. 12).

[279] Łukaszkiewicz 1947b, p. 120; Wojtczak, p. 135. Wojtczak claims that the graves contain 10,000 bodies according to the expert Piotrowski.

> *"Due to the destruction of the graves, it is not possible to count the bodies which have been there. The medical expert Mieczysław Piotrowski affirms, however, that one grave of 2 × 1 × 1 m (without taking into consideration the upper level of earth which covers the bodies) contains at least 6 nude bodies. Considering the size of all 41 graves, and under the assumption that the levels of corpses reach only up to 1.5 m in depth (the depth of the graves is up to 3 m), one can calculate that at least 6,500 people were buried there."*

On this occasion, the surveyor Trautsolt drew a map of the area of Treblinka I, on which he indicated the exact position of the graves (Mattogno/Graf, Doc. 6, p. 332). Of these, 17 were aligned in a row on a north-south axis; their total length was approximately 510 m.

The Soviets found 318 corpses, Łukaszkiewicz discovered another 122, totaling 440. 10,000-12,000 deaths are attributed to the Treblinka I Labor Camp (see below), but no other mass graves or evidence of mass cremations were found there. It is unknown what happened to the approximately 9,500-11,500 purportedly missing bodies.

Although Rachel Auerbach wrote pompously of "physical evidence" and "*corpora delicti*," neither the Soviets nor the Poles uncovered even the slightest scrap of proof that Treblinka II had operated as an extermination camp. As we have seen, the Soviets were compelled to make the following admission in their report of August 24, 1944 as quoted earlier:

> *"At present it is difficult to uncover the traces and secrets of this furnace for the cremation of people, but based upon the available data, one can picture it."*

Even the investigations performed by Łukaszkiewicz proved to be a complete failure in terms of this central issue. He arranged excavation at a definite spot in the camp where, according to the witness S. Rajzman, a mass grave was located, but discovered nothing of the kind. He had trenches dug, 10 to 15 m long and 1.5 m deep, at the places where, according to witnesses, the two alleged gassing buildings had stood, yet merely encountered "undisturbed layers of earth." To be sure, he did find skulls, but in insignificant quantity. Photographer Jakob Byk's most gruesome image shows about fifteen of them lying on the surface of the ground (see below). All the evidence he examined (coins, documents, rags, containers, remnants of various objects) shows merely that there was a camp at that place, and the human remains as well as the ashes prove only that bodies were buried or cremated in the camp. Nothing produced even a trace of evidence for mass murder, to say nothing of such a crime against *several hundred thousand* people.

Among the objects discovered, the skulls as well as the human body parts found in a state of decomposition deserve particular attention. From whom did they come? If we subscribe to the official historiography, this question remains unanswered. According to the official version, the cremation of the bodies exhumed from the mass graves was finished by August 2, 1943, the day of the prisoner revolt. During this revolt, at least 300 to 400 prisoners are supposed to

have been killed within the camp or in the vicinity of the wire fence (Arad 1987, p. 298). However, on August 18-19, 1943, 7,600 Jews from the Białystok Ghetto were allegedly gassed at Treblinka (*ibid.*, p. 396), whose bodies neither the Soviets nor the Poles discovered. If there were such killings, these victims therefore must have been cremated. The same is true for the bodies of those killed in the revolt. The surviving prisoners were not killed on the spot, rather they were transferred to Sobibór on December 20, 1943, as can be gathered from a corresponding Wehrmacht bill of lading (Łukaszkiewicz 1946b, p. 61). If decomposing body parts were found in November 1945, this discovery is also inconsistent with the thesis that the victims involved had been murdered more than two years before. Finally, it is strikingly problematic that no single *complete* body was discovered. From whom, therefore, did the skulls and body parts come?

On his inspection of the area of the former camp Treblinka II of November 9 to 13, 1945, Łukaszkiewicz was accompanied by the sworn surveyor K. Trautsolt. With the help of witnesses, Trautsolt drew a detailed plan of Treblinka II as it was at that time (Document 86). The plan, whose directional axes are transposed,[280] shows an irregular quadrilateral whose sides have the following lengths

– north side (actually the east side): 376.5 m
– east side (actually the south side): 471.5 m
– south side (actually the west side): 490 m
– west side (actually the north side): 240 m

On the plan the ruins that existed in the camp area are also entered: a burned-out cellar ("*piwnica spalona*"), designated by the letter "e," as well as the destroyed house of a settler ("*dom burzony kolonisty*"), marked with the letter "f."

On another, typographically identical map, Surveyor Trautsolt added the facilities that had allegedly been located in the camp area according to witness testimony. Łukaszkiewicz published two versions of this map, of which the first is quite poor (Document 87), the second of a higher quality (Document 88). In the latter, the exact area where the corpses are said to have been cremated is indicated: it is a trapezoid (No. 10) whose sides, when using the sides of the camp for scale, can be calculated as follows:

– north side (east): 188 m
– east side (south): 110 m
– south side (west): 174 m
– west side (north): 52 m

The total area is approximately 14,500 m². This was the purported death camp, Camp II, which contained the two alleged gassing installations.

This plan, as far as the shape and size of the camp are concerned, corresponds quite well to what can be gleaned from aerial photographs of the former

[280] The north-south line on the map actually corresponds to the east-west line.

Treblinka Camp from May and October 1944, and can therefore be considered the closest to reality. It was taken up by the witness Samuel Willenberg for "his" plan of the camp, in which the structures are depicted in three dimensions. In "Camp II," he drew three mass graves (burial pits), labeled with the No. 9, which measure – biggest to smallest – 120 m × 60 m (7,200 m²), 60 m × 15 m (900 m²) and 65 m × 10 m (650 m²; Documents 89f.; Willenberg, p. 6).

6.2. Caroline Sturdy Colls's Archaeological Investigations

The background and preliminary results (2010-2012) of the archaeological research of Caroline Sturdy Colls were discussed by Thomas Kues in a study first published in 2013 (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 939-952). By that time, she already had identified with non-invasive techniques, *i.e.*, without excavating the ground, the contours of ten probable mass graves/cremation sites – the largest of which measured 26 m × 17 m – and two brick structures, which she considered to be the probable gas chambers. She drew these findings on an aerial photograph of the site, as discussed at the time by T. Kues (*ibid*., p. 943).

In the following years, Sturdy Colls published several articles and books, but they did not add much to the initial data. I examine in chronological order the most-important ones.

The first article in the series is "Gone But Not Forgotten: Archaeological Approaches to the Site of the Former Treblinka Extermination Camp in Poland," published in 2013. Despite its length, it presents very little useful data:

> *"Eleven pits, the largest in excess of 34 m in length and the smallest in excess of 10 m, were recorded using geophysical survey in areas suggested by witnesses as having housed mass graves and cremation pits (Figure 2)."* (Sturdy Colls 2013a, p. 261)
>
> *"Given that only a small portion of the camp was examined during fieldwork to date, it is anticipated that further remains will be located in other areas not yet surveyed. In light of these findings, and based on a re-evaluation of historical material and recent developments in forensic and archaeological investigation, several important points require consideration with regards to the ability by the Nazis to totally eradicate all traces of the 800,000 people murdered at Treblinka, which will be discussed in more detail below.*
>
> *The first transport arrived at Treblinka from Warsaw on the 23 July 1942 and from this date until mid-August, Arad has estimated that between 5,000 and 7,000 people were sent to the camp each day, under the illusion that it was a transit camp. By the end of August 1942, it was reported that the death toll in the camp had reached 10,000 to 12,000 people a day, yet only three gas chambers existed. This meant that not all victims were sent to the gas chambers; some were shot, beaten or thrown alive into the so-called "eternal flame" located behind a false hospital (the Lazarett).*

> *Witnesses place the Lazarett and associated burial pit in close proximity to the southern end of the railway platform. This was confirmed when the results of topographic and geophysical survey were compared with, and overlaid onto, witness plans and contemporary aerial images. During this early period, the main method used to dispose of the victims' bodies was burial in mass graves. Body disposal groups were assigned, their sole responsibility being to dig large pits in the south and east portion of the camp.*
> *However, as more victims were sent to Treblinka, large 'kopachke' (*kopaczka*) or excavators were used to dig larger pits. Some witnesses talk of pits as large as 60–70 m in length, whilst some allude to the presence of smaller ones, measuring approximately 25 m which were either dug in the early phase or still by hand later on."* (*ibid*., pp. 263f.)
> *"As confirmed by topographic and geophysical techniques, two areas of structural debris appear to represent the remnants of the gas chambers, whilst the locations of three further structures were located immediately adjacent to the railway platform."* (*ibid*., pp. 272f.)

The article also contains two photographs from 1945 showing a few skulls and bones (*ibid*., pp. 268f.).

In none of her writings does Sturdy Colls mention the book on Treblinka written by Jürgen Graf and me, here quoted several times, but it is certain that she knew it. Indeed, from it she drew the information about the Soviet investigations in August 1944, for which she provides the incomplete source "GARF [State Archive of the Russian Federation], 7021," which refers to documents we found in this archive (Mattogno/Graf, p. 77).

Also dating from 2013 is the article "Archaeological Assessment on the Area of the Former Death Camp in Treblinka," which contains somewhat more detailed information:

> *"Death Camp*
> *Witness accounts suggest that the gas chambers are likely located to the south-east of the memorial obelisk. Two features consistent with structural remains and debris were recorded in this area, measuring 44 m x 20 m and 22 m x 15 m. Witness accounts suggest that the gas chambers were the only structures in the Death Camp that were made of brick (pers. comm. Edward Kopówka) and bricks were visible on the surface in this area. Therefore, the archaeological and historical evidence presents a strong case for the afore-mentioned features being the old and new gas chambers."* (Sturdy Colls 2013b, p. 202)
> *"Pits and Potential Graves*
> *Geophysics cannot detect bodies, but historical data and experience of other grave sites can aid interpretation. A number of pits were identified across the site, many of which were bisected by the memorial.*
> *This confirms that only limited investigations were carried out in advance of the memorial's construction. Some of the pits likely represent post-war looting but a number of larger pits were recorded in areas suggested by witnesses as having housed mass graves and cremation pits.*

The use of electrical imaging in conjunction with resistance and GPR survey allowed the construction of a large pit (26 m x 17 m) to be determined. Although the depth of this feature could not be determined, as it was greater than the three metre range of the electrical imaging and four metre range of the GPR, it was demonstrated that this feature had a ramp at the west end and a vertical edge to the east. This feature is also visible from the air and on the ground as an area of defined vegetation. Another feature, located adjacent to the memorial in the south-west of survey Area B, represents a substantial anomaly. This feature is bisected by the memorial, which was purportedly sited according to the location of mass graves in this part of the camp. Post-abandonment aerial images confirm the presence of this feature as an area of significant ground disturbance." (*Ibid*., pp. 203f.; emphasis added)

"Main Extermination Area

Much of the area believed to have contained the pits in the main extermination areas is now masked by the modern memorial or by the forest.

Whilst it has often been argued that the mass graves themselves were all destroyed when they were exhumed, several important points require consideration. Firstly, although initial attempts were made to mix the ashes with soil, this was quickly abandoned and the cremated remains were put back into the original ditches from which they came; thus if any such remains survived outside of the area of the monument, the grave cuts would still be detectable (Arad 1987: 176). Secondly, popular misconceptions can be seen to exist regarding cremation, in terms of the belief that a body will totally be reduced to ash. Recent work in forensic cremation demonstrates total eradication of bones requires extremely high temperatures (Thompson 2004) and the observation of burnt bone fragments in the topsoil and in the cracks of the monument itself confirms this hypothesis. Finally, considerable evidence exists to suggest that not all the bodies were exhumed and cremated, thus mass graves are likely to survive. All of these features would present detectable anomalies in the archaeological record.

Five pits were located with the GPR to the far east of the memorial. Although the GPR survey was unable to achieve a large enough depth range to determine the full extent of these pits, it is possible to say that they were all deeper that four metres and that they were all of considerable size in plan (G50 was visible to an extent of 34 m x 12 m, G51 – 19 x 12 m, G52 – 22 m x 15 m, G53 – c. 18 m x 7 m and G54 was visible to 20,8 m x c. 14 m). Given their location in the area thought to contain most of the mass graves and their proximity to the memorial, there is a strong case for arguing that they represent further burials. Similarly, they appear too large to be a result of post-war looting activity." (*Ibid*., pp. 204f.; emphasis added)

In 2015, a 350+-page book by Sturdy Colls titled *Holocaust Archaeologies: Approaches and Future Directions* appeared, in which she mentions her Treblinka investigations occasionally as a mere example to illustrate general methods. Every now and then, short paragraphs appear that summarize some

specific problems. Regarding the actual research, the author limited herself to these brief remarks (Sturdy Colls 2015a., pp. 184f.):

> *"After 6 years of non-invasive research, the landscape of Treblinka extermination camp was mapped, buried remains were identified and areas containing mass graves were located. In order to identify the nature of some of the apparent buried structures in extermination camp, it was necessary to carry out small-scale excavations. Because the locations of several mass graves had been determined in previous field seasons using geophysical survey methods, it was possible to avoid excavating in the areas known to contain the remains of Jewish victims. This meant that the work could be carried out in accordance with Halachic Law.* […] *Small-scale excavations were instead carried out in the area believed to contain the Old Gas Chambers, as indicated by archival research and geophysical survey.* […] *Specifically, GPR survey had indicated the presence of buried structural remains measuring 22 x 15 m.* […]
> *Given its rectangular shape in plan, it seemed likely that this feature was in fact the foundations of a structure. In order to confirm the nature of its construction materials, and thus hopefully its exact nature, minimally invasive excavations were undertaken. This approach confirmed the presence of the Old Gas Chambers and allowed the bricks, tiles and other materials used to build them to be confirmed.* […] *This minimally invasive approach also prevented considerable disturbance to the remains* [sic]*."*

Among other things, the book contains a disparaging remark about Holocaust revisionists, which I will address in the following subchapter.

Also dating from 2015 is her article "Archaeological Investigations at the Extermination and Labor Camps at Treblinka," in which the British researcher wrote gross nonsense regarding the alleged gas chambers, which I will address below.

She starts by stating that 10,000-12,000 victims are attributed to the labor camp, and 800,000-1,000,000 to the alleged extermination camp (Sturdy Colls 2015b, pp. 86f.). Her method of investigation had allowed the identification of mass graves "without the need to disturb their remains, thus allowing Halacha Law to be respected," and without ground disturbance at the other sites (*ibid*., p. 87). She then provides an explanation of one of the most effective methods she had adopted (*ibid.*, pp. 88f.):

> *"A LiDAR survey was recently undertaken at Treblinka, covering an area of 3.75km² that encompasses both the extermination and labour camps. LiDAR allows depressions, earthworks and above-ground features to be recorded in three dimensions (Corsi et al. 2013). The ability of this technology to propagate the signal through vegetation such as trees means that it is possible to record features that are otherwise invisible or inaccessible using ground-based survey methods."*

This method confirmed the presence of three mass graves measuring 7.4 m × 6.5 m, 9.2 m × 6 m and 19.2 m × 17.6 m in the area of the former Treblinka I

Camp (*ibid*., p. 89). Sturdy Colls then discusses the alleged extermination camp in general (*ibid*., p. 90):

> *"In 2010, a programme of non-invasive archaeological work was undertaken at Treblinka extermination camp that consisted of geophysical, topographical, and forensic survey. In total 111 features were identified, the majority of which likely relate the former death camp, its deconstruction or post-war investigations. The presence of these features confirmed that, contrary to popular belief, Treblinka was not completely destroyed by the Nazis when they abandoned the site in August 1943, nor has any of the post-war activity on the site removed all trace of the former camp. The features identified were divided into probable boundaries, structural remains, pits and other features."*

She then examines in detail the question of the alleged gas chambers (*ibid*., pp. 90f.):

> *"Of central importance to our understanding of the layout of Treblinka extermination camp and how it functioned are the gas chambers. Many questions still remained about where these chambers were located and how they functioned. In 2010, I identified a structure measuring 22 x 15m in the death camp using Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR). Archival research and witness testimonies suggested that this structure could be the remnants of the Old Gas Chambers. In order to confirm this, a small test trench was excavated in the centre of the feature in 2013.*
>
> *A large amount of building material was recovered from this area. Of particular note were several orange and yellow ceramic tiles bearing a star and the letters D and L on their base. Large sections of brick walling, brick fragments, white ceramic tiles, concrete, plaster and cross-shaped wall supports were also found in abundance.*
>
> *Witnesses allude to the fact that the Old Gas Chamber building was modelled on a bathhouse/Jewish mikveh with white tiled walls and a floor that was 'covered with orange terracotta tiles' (Krzepicki 1979, 104). The discovery of the orange and yellow floor tiles appears to corroborate these witness accounts. Having noted that the tiles bore a star and, in some cases the letters D and L, it was possible to source their manufacturer. The tiles were made by a company called Dziewulski and Lange. Their headquarters is based in Opoczno and the company still trades under the name Opoczno. This company may also have had an office in Warsaw during the Second World War. The same tiles have been observed in a mikveh in Lublin, a synagogue in Wyszków and in the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto. It is not yet known whether the tiles at Treblinka were taken from an existing structure (most likely in the Warsaw Ghetto) or whether the tiles were transported directly from one of the Dziewulski and Lange factories. Further research is being conducted to determine this.*
>
> *It is believed that gas was delivered to the Old Gas Chamber by way of a diesel engine (possibly from a Russian tank). Following the discovery of sections of wall and bricks, samples were sent for tests in order to confirm whether carbon monoxide was present. These tests confirmed that high concentrations of car-*

bon monoxide were present in the samples and that these were likely as a result of exposure to carbon monoxide, rather than its natural absorption from the air. Further tests are being carried out in order to confirm this theory.
It is clear from the nature of the material found and the in situ foundations that the Nazis attempted to demolish the walls of the building but left much of the building materials in the vicinity. The discovery of building materials in trench Treb03, which was outside the area of the foundations, revealed this material was spread over a large area. The depth of the foundations (0.85m) suggests that a large amount of redeposited sand was placed over the top of the foundations to mask them from view. This explains why, after the war and since, it was believed that the camp was entirely destroyed. It is also possible that some of the building materials found closer to the surface could also belong to the New Gas Chamber building which is believed to have been located in the vicinity."

Sturdy Colls finally reports on the human remains found (*ibid.*, p. 92):

"In the course of the excavations carried out in the death camp area, a considerable amount of human remains were encountered. These remains were not buried in mass graves but were rather scattered remains that had never been buried in a grave. As per the advice of Rabbi Michael Schudrich, the remains were reburied by a representative from his Office. Although it was not possible to carry out scientific analysis due to the stipulations of Jewish Halacha Law, it was possible to observe that many of the remains found were not cremated. All of the remains found were fragmented and disarticulated. Some of the remains did exhibit evidence of burning to varying degrees; some were white in colour suggesting prolonged exposure to flames, whilst others were superficially charred, suggesting a short period of exposure at low temperatures. This demonstrates that not all of the remains of the victims at the extermination camps [sic] *were cremated as documentary sources suggest. A concentration of gold and silver teeth, and dentures were also discovered in the area of the Old Gas Chambers, suggesting that they were removed from victims somewhere in the vicinity. This is consistent with witness accounts. As these remains are also bodily remains, they were also reinterred with the bone fragments that were found."*

In 2016, the article "'Earth Conceal Not My Blood': Forensic and Archaeological Approaches to Locating the Remains of Holocaust Victims" appeared, which provides the following data (Sturdy Colls 2016, pp. 180f.):

"The combined use of archival research, LiDAR survey and walkover survey allowed at least six potential graves to be identified in the area of the execution site to the south of the labour camp. Permission was granted for minimally invasive excavations at three of these sites. Here an approach was adopted that involved stripping the turf and topsoil away from the areas indicated in the LiDAR survey and digging small, minimally invasive test trenches at strategic locations within each feature. This approach was developed as a result of discussions with the museum, religious and archaeological authorities, and by drawing on the author's expertise as a forensic archaeologist. As victims from mul-

> *tiple faith groups may have been present, and given that the aim of the excavation was to confirm that human remains were present so that the grave could be marked, this minimally invasive approach was deemed most appropriate. It was also carried out in such a way that it would be possible to go back to each site to conduct a full exhumation in the future if this was deemed necessary. The excavations revealed the presence of disarticulated human remains belonging to multiple individuals in all three areas. Shoes and bullets were also recovered. The human remains were reinterred into the graves. As a result of this work, the museum authorities immediately erected markers on these three graves, which have already become the focus of commemorative activities at the site. This represents the first time that these graves have been marked and the first time since the post-war investigations that unmarked graves have been found and examined."*

Information about the alleged gas chambers is very nebulous (*ibid.*, p. 184):

> *"The excavations that were permitted at Treblinka in the terrain of the gas chambers resulted in the recovery of personal belongings including hair clips and jewellery. These items, alongside the scattered remains, dentures, teeth and other items that were recovered, provided the only evidence of individual and collective experiences in the absence of complete corpses. Through detailed research, including the analysis of witness testimonies, it has been possible to highlight some of these experiences and to explore some of the actions of the perpetrators."*

The final two sentences regarding the "collective experiences" are a verbal smokescreen to hide the absence of corpses.

Also in 2016, a 90-page booklet titled *Treblinka: Archaeological Investigations and Artistic Responses* appeared, which Caroline Sturdy Colls had written in collaboration with Michael Branthwaite. The contents of this booklet are announced with great rhetorical emphasis in the back cover:

> *"This book presents the major findings of the archaeological work, which included the discovery of the gas chambers, personal effects of the victims and mass graves."*

It should therefore expose an essential treatment of archaeological discoveries, but in fact it is quite disappointing. I report the most significant points.

The two authors confirm the discovery at Treblinka I of three mass graves of 7.4 m × 6.5 m, 9.2 m × 6 m and 19.2 m × 17.6 m.[281] In the chapter "The Gas Chambers," they write (p. 50):

> *"One of the key aims of the achaeological investigation at Treblinka was to determine the exact location of the gas chambers and how they functioned.* […]
> *A topographic survey of Treblinka revealed the presence of two depressions in a grassy area to the south-east of the memorial obelisk. Ground Penetrating Radar Survey (GPR) was then undertaken in this area and* [which] *revealed*

[281] Sturdy Colls/Branthwaite 2016, p. 28; all subsequent page numbers in the text from there unless stated otherwise.

structural remains measuring 22 x 15m. Based on the size and orientation of these remains, it seemed likely that they could be the old gas chambers building. An area of debris measuring 44 x 20m was also recorded. It seemed possible that this could be the remains of the new gas chambers.
In 2013, excavations were carried out to confirm the location and overall form of the remains identified in the GPR survey. This revealed that the 22 x 15m structure was made of brick and that it had in situ foundations. It also revealed that the old gas chambers had a tile floor, consistent with witness testimonies.
The discovery of these tiles proved that this building was modelled on a bathhouse, seemingly to deceive the people being sent there about their fate. The same tiles have been observed in a Jewish ritual bath (mikveh) in Lublin, a synagogue in Wydzków and in the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto. It is not yet known whether the tiles at Treblinka were taken from an existing structure (most likely in the Warsaw Ghetto) or whether they were transported directly from one of the factories of the manufacturer, Dziewulski and Lange. Further research is being conducted to determine this. However, it is possible that the tiles were specifically chosen by the Nazis because they were already commonly used in Jewish ritual baths."

On mass graves, Sturdy Colls and Branthwaite state (p. 70):

"Topographic and geophysical surveys in the terrain of the extermination camp allowed eleven potential mass graves to be located. These non-invasive techniques respected Jewish Halachic Law by not disturbing the ground. The graves varied in size – the largest were 34m x 12m and 26m x 17m. However, some were bisected by the modern memorial so their overall dimensions could not be determined. It is likely that further graves exist under the monument since it was built to protect the areas believed to contain mass graves. The graves appear to be located in two distinct areas; some at the rear of the death camp area and some nearer to the reception camp area, consistent with witness accounts concerning the different methods of body disposal. […]
The forensic achaeological research has also shown that, contrary to popular belief, not all of these bodies of the victims at Treblinka were cremated and reduced to ash. In the course of the excavations carried out around the gas chambers, a considerable amount of human remains were encountered. These remains were not buried in mass graves but were rather scattered remains that had never buried in a grave. Many of these remains were not cremated at all. Other exhibited various degrees of burning. The majority were only superficially charred. A concentration of teeth and dentures were also discovered near the old gas chambers. This seems to confirm witness testimonies that suggest that the bodies were searched and dental implants were removed following the gassing. As per the advice of the Office of the Chief Rabbi of Poland, all of these remains were reburied within the grounds of the extermination camp."

The book is lavishly illustrated and features some sixty photographs and drawings, most of them rather insignificant. However, none of them documents in any way the claims about gas chambers and mass graves. Thus, there is a suc-

cession of large photographs on two pages showing the sifting of sand by an archaeologist (pp. 30f.), a shoe (!; pp. 32f.), a single blade of a pair of scissors (p. 45), two combs and a comb remnant (p. 46), two tiles (pp. 54f.), brick and concrete fragments (pp. 56f.), two pendants (pp. 60f.), miscellaneous items (pp. 64f.), to which I will return below.

Among the very few useful illustrations are two photographs of a survey excavation – the same excavation portrayed from two different angles – showing a small pit measuring approximately one meter by two, less than half a meter deep, in each of which Sturdy Colls is about to work wearing the same clothes and gloves (pp. 17, 29). The captions inform that these were "minimally invasive excavations" in the area of the mass graves. The most important images, to which I will return below, are a LiDAR survey map of the camp area (p. 52) and a map of the finds (p. 71).

In 2018, the article "'This is Proof'? Forensic Evidence and Ambiguous Material Culture at Treblinka Extermination Camp" by Caroline Sturdy Colls and Michael Branthwaite appeared. In it, the two authors provide some additional information about the survey excavations (Sturdy Colls/Branthwaite 2018, pp. 434f.):

> *"The latter* [her 2013 research] *specifically focused on the area where the gas chambers were thought to be located. A 1 m × 1 m trench (Trench 4) was excavated within a 22 m × 15 m anomaly recorded by the GPR survey, which appeared consistent with a building foundation. A further trench (Trench 3), measuring 2 m × 1 m, was excavated to the west of this area in an area of scattered debris identified in the GPR results.* […]
> *The excavation of Trench 4 confirmed that the 22 × 15 m anomaly in the GPR results did in fact represent the foundations of the first gas chambers built by the Nazis at Treblinka (known as the old gas chambers), which existed at a depth of 0.85 m below the ground."*

Regarding the "discovery of the tiles and building materials" which supposedly confirm "the location of the old gas chambers and the testimonies of witnesses that stated that the floor was covered with red/terracotta tiles," Sturdy Colls and Branthwaite rely "for example" on Krzepicki and Wiernik (*ibid.*, p. 441). Feigning a critical mindset, they add (*ibid.*, p. 442):

> *"In contrast, the discovery of personal belongings in the gas chamber area appears to challenge the accepted history of the site, which states that people were stripped of these items when they arrived at the camp. Upon discovering these items, further archival research was undertaken which did in fact reveal testimonies that stated that people were sometimes sent clothed into the gas chambers when the camp was operating to full capacity. In fact, a testimony written by Rudolf Höß, the camp commandant of Auschwitz-Birkenau, stated that this was common practice when he visited the camp in 1943 (Notes of the former camp commander Rudolf Höß, 1.1.2.0/ 82344521, ITS Digital Archive, USHMM). Likewise, although women sometimes had their hair cut prior to entering the gas chambers, witnesses allude to the fact that haircutting sometimes*

> *took place within the gas chamber building, prior to gassing, or even after people were killed (Bomba 1996; Rajchman 2011). This offers a viable explanation as to why large numbers of hair clips and combs were found in the rubble directly above and adjacent to the gas chambers' foundations (see Fig. 2)."*

Their Figure 2 shows photographs of two combs and twelve clips (*ibid*., p. 436): a truly significant sampling of this alleged "large numbers"!

In the 2016 book, the two authors had published as many as eight photographs of it on two pages, one for each object (including three objects equal to those in Figure 2), including a medal, an object resembling a belt buckle, and even a hexagonal bolt (Sturdy Colls/Branthwaite 2016, pp. 64f.).

Caroline Sturdy Colls' so far last major paper, written in collaboration with Dante Abate, appeared in 2018. It is titled "A Multi-Level and Multi-Sensor Documentation Approach of the Treblinka Extermination and Labor Camps." It contains information on the various methods used, but practically nothing concrete about the results of the archaeological investigations. In their brief historical paragraph, the authors repeat that the death toll of the alleged extermination camp amounted to 800,000-1,000,000, and that of the labor camp to about 10,000, "as a result of the Nazi 'death through work' policy and executions between autumn 1941 and spring 1944" (Abate/Sturdy Colls, p. 130).

6.3. Analysis of the Results of Archaeological Investigations by Caroline Sturdy Colls

6.3.1. The Mass Graves

The archaeological investigations of Sturdy Colls appear superficial and amateurish despite her use of the most advanced technology. As for the results, they are clearly far inferior to those obtained at Bełżec and Sobibór by Kola using a simple hand auger.

The Jewish law concerning burials (*halakhah*) was evoked by her in an almost superstitious way to the point of avoiding "disturbance to the remains" and even any "ground disturbance"![282] This seems to be a pretext for not carrying out large-scale excavations such as those authorized and carried out in Sobibór, but also in Bełżec, where Andrzej Kola had all the archaeological objects he had found in his surveys unearthed and photographed.[283] He also published many photographs of utensils and personal effects,[284] from which it appears that there were far more objects than those documented by Sturdy Colls. I will return later to Sturdy Coll's so-called test trenches.

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[282] But she still reserved the right, in violation of this law, "to conduct a full exhumation in the future if this was deemed necessary"!

[283] Kola 2000a, Photos 60, 61 (p. 48), 63 (p. 50), 65 (p. 51), 67 (p. 53), 71 (p. 55), 72 (p. 56), 73 (p. 57), 76 (p. 59), 77 (p. 60), 78 (p. 61).

[284] *Ibid.*, Photos 84-118, pp. 71-84.

The methods of detection adopted by the British archaeologist are Electrical Resistivity Imaging, Ground-Penetrating Radar (GPR) and Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR).

With the first two methods, she claimed to have identified eleven mass graves. In reality, as shown by her own plans of these surveys (Document 91), she did not identify defined geometric figures, but rather shapeless areas of ground disturbance, colored in yellow (here changed to white due to this being a b&w print; the numbering is mine) which she interpreted as mass graves and to which she arbitrarily assigned exact geometric shapes and dimensions.

Document 91a shows 10 yellow areas (white in Document 91b) representing the probable mass graves; since Sturdy Colls later increased their number to 11 ("eleven pits"), without giving any explanation, it is assumed that she considered the pit between Nos. 5 and 8 as two pits, which I therefore numbered 6 and 7.

Sturdy Colls states that a "number of pits were identified across the site, many of which were bisected by the memorial," and that it is "likely that further graves exist under the monument,"[285] but this is belied by her maps, particularly Document 92, from which it appears that no areas of ground disturbance intersect the monument, which I have marked with "M," nor the "symbolic cremation pyre," which I have marked with "P."

In three of these eleven areas of ground disturbance, Sturdy Colls performed mini-invasive excavations – that is, an excavation of about one meter by two, less than half a meter deep, in which she found human remains (Document 93). She describes the finds as "a considerable amount of human remains" and "a concentration" of gold and silver teeth and dentures. However, this does not mean anything, because Judge Łukaszkiewicz ascertained already in 1945 that human remains were scattered over a large area. The only thing that is certain is that Sturdy Colls, in her writings mentioned earlier, did not publish any photographs of these remains, which she said would have been immediately reburied. She surely had found *some* remains (compatible with an excavation the size of 2 m × 1 m), which she attempted to amplify with a rather silly rhetorical emphasis. This also applies to the claim that "considerable evidence exists to suggest that not all the bodies were exhumed and cremated, thus mass graves are likely to survive" – which of course will never be ascertained for the sake of not causing any "ground disturbance."

From the orthodox perspective, her statement makes little sense, because "a considerable amount of human remains" would have to be related to the number of alleged victims of the camp – at least 800,000 – so that even the discovery of *thousands* of whole corpses could not constitute a *considerable* amount.

She also greatly underestimated the excavation activity of the post-war "gold diggers," which she dismissed with a few lines here and there:

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[285] The monument measures approximately 8 m × 6 m (= 48 m²), so even if there were another mass grave underneath it, the total volume of the pits would remain virtually unchanged.

> *"Some of the pits likely represent* [the result of] *post-war looting but a number of larger pits were recorded in areas suggested by witnesses as having housed mass graves and cremation pits."*
> *"Similarly, they appear too large to be a result of post-war looting activity."*

In her most voluminous book, the British archaeologist devoted a specific paragraph to this problem ("Case Study 11.5: Looting at Treblinka, Poland"), but even here she treated it with extreme superficiality. Her most significant statements are these (Sturdy Colls 2015a, p. 305):

> *"In the area of the Treblinka extermination camp in particular, looters have continued to dig at the site since the war. On the one hand, these activities allude to belief that Jewish gold exists at the site."*

In Chapter 3, I quoted detailed descriptions of the devastation of the former Treblinka Camp's grounds which began as early as 1944. I repeat what Rachel Auerbach stated about this in a book known to Sturdy Colls, since she referred to it:

> *"These human jackals and hyenas bring along live artillery shells and unexploded bombs. They explode several of them at once, tearing huge craters into the desecrated, blood-drenched soil which is comingled with the ashes of Jews."*

I also remind the reader that Judge Łukaszkiewicz found a bomb crater 4.5 meters deep in the area of the "camp hospital," as well as other craters in various places, the largest one with a diameter of about 25 and a depth of 6 meters, and he himself had excavations made in the so-called "death camp" which were 10-15 meters long and 1.5 meters deep. Finally, I would like to remind the reader that the looters' activity was so intense the following year that it was even echoed in the *Daily News Bulletin* of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of November 24, 1946, which I have already quoted about Trawniki ("Jewish Mass Graves…"):

> *"Warsaw, 22 November (JTA). Police authorities today launched a campaign to put an end to looting of mass graves of Jews in the areas of Treblinka, Majdanek, Sobibor and Trawniki where Nazi extermination camps formerly existed."*

In an article published in 2008, Piotr Głuchowski and Marcin Kowalski described the devastation of the grounds of the former Treblinka Camp since 1944 by hordes of grave looters searching for valuables (Głuchowski/Kowalski):

> *"Jackals in human form cut holes in the sacred ground. In the autumn of 1944, Ukrainian and Russian guards appeared again in Treblinka – this time in the service of Stalin. With their arrival, the village excavations turned into an industry. The Soviets brought mines and unexploded shells from the airport located 10 km away in Ceranów. The charge was buried in a mass grave, the Soviets detonated it, and Jewish corpses flew through the air."*

Then the statement of a certain Karol Ogrodowczyk, a member of the Polish Commission of Inquiry mentioned earlier, is quoted as follows:

> *"The area has been dug and searched, the pits are 10 meters deep, there are human bones and scattered objects, shoes, spoons, forks, candlesticks, hair from wigs brought by Jews. The air is filled with the stench of rotting corpses.* […] *The stench stunned us so much that my colleagues and I began to vomit and felt an extraordinary burning sensation in our throats.* […] *Openings* [holes] *had been dug under each tree by gold diggers, diamond diggers.* […] *In the midst of the trees, the local peasants bustled about eager to find treasures. Questioned by us. 'Why do you do this?' they answered nothing."*

It is therefore clear that a part – if not a large part – of the areas of ground disturbance (Sturdy Colls's eleven pits) can be traced to the aforementioned bomb craters and manual excavations.

Since the 25-meter-diameter crater found by Judge Łukaszkiewicz had a surface area of about 490 square meters (but for Rachel Auerbach this was only one of the "huge craters"), the largest disturbance identified by Sturdy Colls, with its 442 square meters, could comfortably fit inside it, so that the British archaeologist's claim that the pits "appear too large to be a result of post-war looting activity" is blatantly fallacious.

In the following table I summarize the results of Sturdy Colls's investigations of the ground disturbances in the area of the former Treblinka camps, the labor camp (Treblinka I) and the alleged extermination camp (Treblinka II):

Treblinka I		Treblinka II		
Dimensions [m]	Area [m²]	Dimensions [m]	Area [m²]	Sturdy Colls's Label
7.4 × 6.5	48.1	34 × 12	408	G 50
9.2 × 6	55.2	19 × 12	228	G 51
19.2 × 17.6	337.9	22 × 15	330	G 52
		18 × 7	126	G 53
		20.8 × 14	291	G 54
		26 × 17	442	?
		10 × ?	?	?
Total:	441.2	Total:	1825+	

As for the alleged extermination camp, according to Sturdy Colls's drawing (Document 91), the three largest pits (with 442, 408 and 330 m², respectively) were the pits to which I assigned the numbers 1, 3 and 2. Based on the surface area of the drawings, it can also be assumed, that the pit measuring 19 m × 12 m (228 square meter) concsists of the two merged pits I numbered 6 & 7, and the pit measuring 20 m × 8 m (160 square meter) is my No. 4.

Of the eleven mass graves Sturdy Colls claims to have identified, she provides the complete dimensions of only six; for one she mentions only the length of one side (10 meters).

The remaining (11-6=) five pits, of which Sturdy Colls did not give the dimensions (including the one with one side of 10 meters), were on average no larger than Pit No. 4 (Documents 91 and 92), so that for all five one can assume an area of (160 m × 5 m =) 800 m²; the total area of all pits is therefore about (1825 m² + 800 m² =) 2,625 m², or about 2,600 m².

Already as early 2012, Sturdy Colls stated (Sturdy Colls 2012):

> *"The existence of mass graves was known about from witness testimony, but the failure to provide persuasive physical evidence led some to question whether it could really be true that hundreds of thousands of Jews were killed here.*
> *Although they lasted only a few days, those post-war investigations* [1945-1946] *remained the most complete studies of the camp until I began my work at Treblinka in 2010.*
> *This revealed the existence of a number of pits across the site.* […]
> *Some may be the result of post-war looting, prompted by myths of buried Jewish gold, but several larger pits were recorded in areas suggested by witnesses as the locations of mass graves and cremation sites.*
> *One is 26m long, 17m wide and at least four metres deep, with a ramp at the west end and a vertical edge to the east."*

So even then Sturdy Colls was well aware of the problem: if 800,000 to 1,000,000 people were killed in Treblinka, and almost[286] all of their corpses were buried in the area of the "death camp", she would have had to find a suitable number of mass graves with an appropriate total size. But already the comparison with the mass graves of Treblinka I, in her perspective, is shocking: here she claims to have found three mass graves of 441 square meters in all for 10,000-12,000 corpses, which amounts to a burial density of at most 27 corpses per square meter. In the presumed extermination camp, she claims to have found eleven mass graves of 2,600 square meters in all for 800,000-1,000,000 corpses. Taking the lowest claimed death-toll figures for both camps – 10,000 and 800,000, hence a factor of 80 difference – a simple arithmetic comparison shows that the British researcher should have found on the grounds of Treblinka II Camp at least a total surface area of (441.2 m² × 80 =) 35,296 square meters of ground disturbances in as many as 150 individual spots![287]

These figures are so disproportionate to what was actually found that Sturdy Colls's eleven areas with ground disturbances she calls "mass graves" are merely risible. She tried to overcome these insuperable difficulties with a lie. In a polemical note she wrote (Sturdy Colls 2015a, p. 347):

> *"Whilst uncovering and presenting the physical evidence of the Holocaust has a role to play in combating Holocaust revisionism and denial in all of its forms, it is important to acknowledge that it can also be utilised by those who deny these events. When the number of graves recorded within a survey area is an-*

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[286] I will explain in Subchapter 7.2. this limitation, which is practically irrelevant in the present context.

[287] Assuming an average area of (2,600 ÷ 11 =) 236 m² per pit.

> *nounced, this may be used as 'evidence' that less victims died at the site in question. It will not be acknowledged that the area surveyed represented only a small proportion of a former camp area or a massacre site, and that further graves may exist elsewhere."*

In reality, when she wrote these lines in 2015, the mapping of the Treblinka area had already been concluded for some time, since it was thanks to this mapping that the British archaeologist had identified the eleven alleged mass graves and the areas of the alleged gas chambers. She knew perfectly well that no other mass graves existed, and she could not even make the excuse that "[m]uch of the area believed to have contained the pits in the main extermination areas is now masked by the modern memorial[285] or by the forest," because she herself explains that "[t]he ability of this technology [LIDAR] to propagate the signal through vegetation such as trees means that it is possible to record features that are otherwise invisible or inaccessible using ground-based survey methods."

Sturdy Colls was familiar with K. Trautsolt's plan and the one copied from it by S. Willenberg, since she published both (Sturdy Colls 2015a, pp. 123, 121), but without indicating – and without acknowledging – that in both plans the mass graves are located within the trapezoid of about 14,500 m² that I described above, which must have also contained the two alleged gassing buildings and, for Willenberg, also a cremation grate and a barracks for the inmates. She compared the Willenberg plan with a recent photograph of the Treblinka area (*ibid.*, p. 121),[288] so she knew where to look.

Therefore, the alleged mass graves are the 11 mentioned above and "elsewhere" there is no other grave.

No-less-devastating is the comparison with the indications of the witnesses. C. Sturdy Colls did not directly address this problem; he simply tried to evade it by adducing contradictory testimony:

> *"Some witnesses talk of pits as large as 60–70 m in length, whilst some allude to the presence of smaller ones, measuring approximately 25 m* […]*."*

The most-important witnesses are Jankiel Wiernik, Abraham Isaak Goldfarb and Eliahu Rosenberg.

In his manuscript report, Wiernik wrote:[289]

> *"The mass grave was 100 m long, 25 m wide, 15 m deep = 37,500 m³.* [*Masowy grób miał 100 m długości 25 m szerokości 15 m głębokości = 37.500 m³.*]*"*

In the typewritten report, he changed these measurements to 50 m × 25 m × 10 m:[290]

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288 On this page, Willenberg's map appears at the top, the aerial photograph at the bottom.

289 J. Wiernik, "Relacje Żyda, uciekiniera z Treblinki, Janika Wiernika, zamieszkałego w Warszawy przy ul. Wołyńskiej 23, lat 53." Ghetto Fighters House Archives, Catalog No. 3166, Collection 11261, p. 1.

290 Wiernik 1944, p. 3; cf. Wiernik in Donat, p. 153.

> *"The size of each was approximately 50 x 25 x 10.* [*Wielkość każdego była około 50 x 25 x 10.*]*"*

Goldfarb stated the following:[291]

> *"From March 1943 until the first half of July, a methodical cremation was carried out of all newly arrived corpses and of the corpses burned* [had been buried] *in 14 large pits. At the end of July, it one more pit was successfully dug, in which corpses were burned. Thus, until the day of the prisoners' uprising on August 2, corpses were burned in 15 pits. 6 pits remained untouched. In order to imagine this huge quantity of killed and burned people, it is necessary to say that in the smallest pit there were not less than 100,000 corpses."*

Finally, Rosenberg asserted:[292]

> *"Now, our task was to drag the dead on wooden stretchers at a run to a pit about one hundred-and-twenty meters long, fifteen meters wide, and six meters deep, in which tens of thousands of corpses were already lying when I arrived at the death camp."*

Sturdy Colls should also give credit to Chil Rajchman, a witness she mentioned, who wrote (Rajchman, p. 60):

> *"The pits were dug by a bulldozer (later on there were three of them). The pits were enormous, about 50 metres long, about 30 wide and several storeys deep. I estimate that the pits could contain about four storeys* [8-12 m]*."*
>
> *"In June* [1943] *fewer transports arrive. The new oven is ready. Corpses are speedily thrown into it. The work of clearing out the pits likewise proceeds at a rapid pace. Ten pits have already been entirely cleaned out. The last, the eleventh, pit is one of the four biggest, where a total of a quarter of a million people lie."* (*ibid*., pp. 83f.)

Assuming an average pit depth of six meters and a density of ten bodies per cubic meter (see Subchapter 7.2), Goldfarb's smallest pit had an area of 1,667 m², one of Rajchman's largest had an area of 1,800 m².

Keep in mind that the largest area of ground disturbance located by Sturdy Colls had an area of 442 square meters. In the following list I compare this with the data contained in the testimonies of the aforementioned witnesses:

- Sturdy Colls 442 m²
- Wiernik 1,250 m²
- Goldfarb 1,667 m²
- Rosenberg 1,800 m²
- Rajchman 4,166 m²

In essence, Sturdy Colls has demonstrated with her archaeological research that these witnesses were shameless liars.

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[291] USSR-380, p. 13.
[292] GFHA, Catalog No. 3562, pp. 5f.

6.3.2. The "Gas Chambers"

Thanks to her LiDAR survey, Sturdy Colls obtained a mapping of the area of the former Treblinka Camp in which she identified

> *"the presence of two depressions in a grassy area to the south-east of the memorial obelisk. Ground Penetrating Radar Survey (GPR) was then undertaken in this area and* [which] *revealed structural remains measuring 22 x 15m. Based on the size and orientation of these remains, it seemed likely that they could be the old gas chambers building. An area of debris measuring 44 x 20m was also recorded. It seemed possible that this could be the remains of the new gas chambers."*

The LiDAR image she published (Document 94) shows something like craters without geometrically regular contours and clearly shows that these possible remains are only a forced interpretation of the ground disturbances found. On their detection with the GPR system, Sturdy Colls only says that thanks to this system she identified merely an "anomaly," not defined masonry foundations, which she later transmogrified into "structural remains measuring 22 x 15m." A comparison with the claimed shape and location of the two buildings (Document 95) clearly excludes that these ground disturbances were outlined and measurable geometric figures. The presence of a structure "made of brick" was only a supposition, which the British archaeologist wanted to "verify" by digging an evaluation trench at the center of the relative area, which she called Trench 4 or Trench Treb04, measuring just 1 m × 1 m! She is very evasive about this excavation, but apparently it is the excavation depicted in one of the photographs she published (Document 96), with an equally evasive caption:

> *"The large sand deposits that were dumped over the top of the Old Gas Chambers by the Nazis."*

Another image (Document 97) shows the "Evaluation Trench Treb04." It represents the horizontal section of the aforementioned excavation of 1 m × 1 meters with an indication of its contents: "structural remains (stone and brick)" and "structural debris (brick, tile and stone)."

This 1 m × 1 m excavation is evidently the deepest square hole in Document 96, the one from which an unfolded two-meter stick emerges.

With the usual hyperbolic exaggeration, often bordering on the ridiculous, the British archaeologist claims that a "large amount of building material was recovered from this area." She documented this with images, presenting, as I noted above, photographs of two tiles and a few brick and concrete fragments!

The discovery of bricks and rubble in an area where years of bomb blasting and excavation of the ground by "gold diggers" had littered what had previously been under the sand, only proves that the rubble found by Sturdy Colls was located in that 1 m × 1 m excavation area – nothing else. No one can say that they were already there in 1942-1943, and no one can say that the anomaly in question was originally a building. To obtain at least this certainty, it would be

necessary to carry out real excavations as in Sobibór and unearth any foundations in their entirety.

Here an enormous inconsistency must be pointed out: how is it possible that the same political authority (the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage) and Jewish-religious authority (the Office of the Chief Rabbi of Poland), in the same years, authorized the excavation of the ruins of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór, but vetoed it in Treblinka? In fact, for Treblinka it, only permissions "for minimally invasive excavations at three of these sites" was granted.

The fact that Sturdy Colls never even touched on this issue raises the suspicion that the decision not to excavate was made locally, in an understanding between the museum authorities and Sturdy Colls herself. She was well aware of the absolute inanity of her discovery, and feared that this would be exposed even more by more-extended archaeological excavations.

Regarding this alleged discovery, the British archaeologist in fact reasons as if the soil she found in Treblinka in 2010 was the same soil that had been left there by the SS after their departure. In reality, at the beginning of 1946, the state of the soil was completely different. As mentioned in Subchapter 6.1., the terrain's state was described by Rachel Auerbach's succinct observation ("Not one level place in the whole area. Everything had been torn up and dug up, little hills and holes."). A photograph from the time (Document 98) fully confirms this observation. In 1997, when I visited the camp together with Jürgen Graf, the ground was leveled and flattened, as can be seen in a photograph of mine showing the area of Pit No. 3 and the alleged gas chambers (Document 99).

Basically, all Caroline Sturdy Colls has "discovered" is merely that there is an anomaly in the ground, at one point of which there is some scattered building debris. Her claim that her "approach confirmed the presence of the Old Gas Chambers" is therefore a pathetic logical fallacy.

As for the alleged building containing the new gas chambers, the British archaeologist's demonstration is even more fallacious and inconsistent. At the relevant site there was only an "area of debris measuring 44 x 20m," which is even less of an actual building ruin than the claimed "structural remains" measuring 22 x 15 meters, even though C. Sturdy Colls calls them both "areas of structural debris" in her 2013 paper:

> *"As confirmed by topographic and geophysical techniques, two areas of structural debris appear to represent the remnants of the gas chambers* […]*."*

In the related follow-up excavation, Sturdy Colls found personal effects that "appears to challenge the accepted history of the site, which states that people were stripped of these items when they arrived at the camp." As the only witness, she thoughtlessly names Rudolf Höss, the former Auschwitz commandant, who she claims "visited the [Treblinka] camp in 1943." This is false. In his contradictory (and far-fetched) statements, Höss said that he visited Treblinka in 1941 or, at the latest, in the spring of 1942, when the Treblinka Camp

did not yet exist, and that he found there ten gas chambers of about eight square meters, each capable of containing 200 people (25 people per square meter). In the interrogation of April 1, 1946, Höss asserted that the relevant building was "built next to a ramp and the train drove right up to it. The people were unloaded right into the chambers," and in his essay "The 'Final Solution' of the Jewish Question in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp," he confirmed that these were "built directly by the railway track. The Jews went straight into the gas chambers without undressing, by way of a platform which was level with the tracks" (see Mattogno 2020, pp. 200-204). So, if we generously ignore the blatant anachronism of his alleged visit, the alleged Treblinka gas chambers were located in Camp I, close to the railway track according to Höss!

Sturdy Colls's reference is therefore intentionally fallacious: Höss's testimony not only does not eliminate the contradiction of finding personal effects where they were not supposed to be, but it also contradicts the orthodox narrative regarding the location of that building and how the victims are said to have entered it.

Two issues related to the findings deserve special consideration. The British archaeologist adduces a kind of "chemical evidence" with which she perhaps wished to mimic – in a rather foolish way – Fred Leuchter's findings at Auschwitz. In 2015 she wrote:

> *"It is believed that gas was delivered to the Old Gas Chamber by way of a diesel engine (possibly from a Russian tank). Following the discovery of sections of wall and bricks, samples were sent for tests in order to confirm whether carbon monoxide was present. These tests confirmed that high concentrations of carbon monoxide were present in the samples and that these were likely as a result of exposure to carbon monoxide, rather than its natural absorption from the air. Further tests are being carried out in order to confirm this theory."*

Germar Rudolf, a chemist by education and an authoritative revisionist historian and publisher, when I queried him on this issue, replied (I summarize and simplify) that carbon monoxide, under normal conditions, cannot bind to a wall element for the long term. A compound between iron oxide (Fe_2O_3) and CO is certainly possible, but it is not stable for long periods of time. Unlike cyanide, which reacts with iron salts already at low concentrations and under normal conditions, CO is essentially inert. For Sturdy Colls's assertion to be acceptable, two things need to be demonstrated:

a. The chemical pathway leading to the formation of any kind of chemical component containing carbon monoxide and iron; and
b. that this compound can persist for decades under the sand.

Rudolf is known to be an expert on the formation of ferric ferrocyanide, or Prussian Blue, from hydrogen cyanide acting on masonry. As he has amply demonstrated, this Prussian Blue is a long-term-stable compound (see his exhaustive study Rudolf 2020). Sturdy Colls, however, speaks of the presence in masonry samples of *carbon monoxide*, which is a gas! She implies that this gas

penetrated into these samples during the years 1942-1943, and that it then remained trapped in these samples for over seventy years!

Unfortunately, the British researcher is silent about the type of analysis performed on these samples, the laboratory that is said to have performed them, and the quantitative results of them.

After this impromptu and ignorant foray into the area of analytical chemistry, she completely abandoned this fable and wisely never spoke of it again.

The other, apparently more-serious, issue is that of the discovery of tiles (presumably two), in the famous 1 m × 1 m excavation. She shows those tiles in two full-page color photographs (Sturdy Colls/Branthwaite 2016, pp. 54f.). She twice quotes a phrase by Abram Jakub Krzepicki from Alexander Donat's oft-cited book, in which the tiles strangely change their color:

> *"Witnesses allude to the fact that the Old Gas Chamber building was modelled on a bathhouse/Jewish mikveh with white tiled walls and a floor that was 'covered with orange terracotta tiles' (Krzepicki 1979, 104)."*

And in her 2018 paper, she wrote that "the testimonies of witnesses that stated that the floor was covered with red/terracotta tiles," with the same reference to Krzepicki and also to Wiernik.

As quoted in Subchapter 3.5., Krzepicki had stated:

> *"The walls were very nice and carefully covered with white tiles. The floor was made of red-yellow terracotta tiles."*

One of the two tiles photographed by Sturdy Colls is in fact red, and the other one of a pale-yellow color. With another daring paralogism, she came to the conclusion that these tiles confirm a) that the place where they were found was the structure with the old gas chambers, and b) that this structure was disguised as a bathhouse.

In her mythomania, she launched into a series of inane lucubrations (Sturdy Colls 2015a, pp. 348f.):

> *"Although conveniently ignored by deniers, the archaeological results at Treblinka actually disprove many long-established revisionist theories about the camp. Based on the GPR survey mentioned above, revisionists argue that the ground was not disturbed, but geophysical survey by the author has confirmed the presence of considerable disturbance across the entire former camp area and has resulted in the identification of many camp structures and mass graves. The discovery of the tiles and foundations of the gas chambers definitively disproves denier theories that the site was only a transit camp and confirms witness testimonies that these buildings were modelled on bathhouses. In fact, the archaeological evidence has confirmed various witness descriptions which state that 'the floor was covered with orange terracotta tiles' (Krzepicki in Donat 1979, p. 104) and demonstrated how the Nazis tried to hide the traces of their crimes by demolishing* [and] *burying the gas chambers under almost a metre of sand. The discovery of human remains and personal belongings of victims attest to the brutality of the camp."*

This quoted text dates back to 2015. The book on Treblinka compiled by Jürgen Graf and myself appeared in its first English edition in January 2004, and contains no mention of the thesis that "the ground was not disturbed." On the contrary, it exposed for the first time the "disturbance" of the terrain carried out by Judge Łukaszkiewicz's investigations (Mattogno/Graf, pp. 82-89) that I discussed above. Since this was (and remains) the only revisionist book on this camp, Sturdy Colls was tilting at windmills.[293]

Her claim that the "discovery of the tiles and foundations of the gas chambers definitively disproves denier theories that the site was only a transit camp and confirms witness testimonies that these buildings were modelled on bathhouses" is precisely another formulation of the paralogism I alluded to earlier.

It is all-too-easy to argue, based on "eyewitness" testimony, the opposite point:

1. These terracotta tiles originated literally from the "steam chambers," as I documented in Section 3.9.1.: "the floor in the [steam] chambers is covered with a terracotta flooring."
2. They then were adopted for Wiernik's "gas chambers", who mentioned a "terracotta floor" (*ibid.*)
3. Krzepicki described an "ordinary bathing hall" (see Subchapter 3.5.):

   > *"I cast a glance inside through one of the two sturdy iron doors painted white that was open. I saw a not very spacious hall – an ordinary bathing hall with all the normal equipment of a public bath. The walls were very nice and carefully covered with white tiles. The floor was made of red-yellow terracotta tiles. From the ceiling hung showers ... and ... nothing else. A cozy, well-cleaned bathhouse in the middle of the green woods. There was nothing else to see there."*

   Therefore, the discovery of the two tiles in question could only prove that they belonged to a bathing establishment, which would be a *confirmation* of the revisionist thesis.
4. There is no certainty that these two tiles were in that exact spot since 1942. It is possible, and even probable, that they ended up there because of the explosions that were set off in the area of the camp or excavations by looters (or both).
5. Sturdy Colls's claim to have found the foundations of a building is a further paralogism, because she merely brought to light – in an excavation of just

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293 Editor's remark: Sturdy Colls's remarks were probably aimed at a brief news article by Australian engineer Richard Krege about his 1999 ground-penetrating-radar research at Treblinka as published in a German-language revisionist magazine in 2000, which states (Krege, p. 63):

> *"The comparison of this* [GPR] *image with* [GPR] *images of areas where the soil is known to be untouched and essentially free of disturbances shows that the radar images taken by the Australians in the Treblinka Camp show an almost perfect soil untouched by man."*

However, Krege managed to scan only a small part of the former camp area. Due to a lack of funding and time, he was unable to scan the rest of the camp. As a result, Krege refused to publish his entire dataset, because he considered it highly incomplete and inconclusive. See Neumaier/Rudolf, p. 505.

one square meter! – a little rubble, which, like the tiles, could have originated from another location.

6. According to Wiernik, "Along the chambers was the electric power station, almost the same size as the chambers, but higher than the height of the ramp." Sturdy Colls does not consider it at all. If we were to follow Wiernik, the rubble in question could also have come from this structure.
7. It is unclear how she inferred from the LiDAR and GPR surveys of the ground that the two anomalies found had the exact measurements of 22 m × 15 m (first building) and 44 m × 20 m (second building). The fact is, however, that these measurements contrast with those indicated by the witnesses:
   - Wiernik:
     - first building: three chambers of 5 m × 5 m = a building of 15 m × 5 m;
     - second building: five chambers of 7 m × 7 m on two sides = a building of 49 m × 16 m (with a central corridor of 2 m width);
   - Goldfarb:
     - first building: three chambers of 5 m × 4 m = a building of 15 m × 4 m or 12 m × 5 m;
     - second building: five chambers of 6 m × 6 m on two sides = a building of 36 m × 14 m (with a central corridor of 2 m width).

For the Israeli historian Yitzhak Arad, highly regarded by Sturdy Colls, the chambers in the first building measured 4 m × 4 m (Arad 1987, p. 31) = a building of 12 m × 4 m; those in the second building measured 4 m × 8 m (*ibid*., p. 119) = a building of 40 m × 10 m (with a central corridor of 2 m width) or 20 m × 18 m (with the same corridor).

Summarized:

	Wiernik	Goldfarb	Arad	Sturdy Colls
old chambers	15 m × 5 m	15 m × 4 m or 12 m × 5 m	12 m × 4 m	22 m × 15 m
new chambers	49 m × 16 m	36 m × 14 m	40 m × 10 m or 20 m × 18 m	44 m × 20 m

Sturdy Colls and Wiernik's order of magnitude regarding the "new chambers" is almost compatible – 880 m² vs. 784 m² = 112% – but that regarding the "old chambers" is absolutely incommensurable: 75 m² vs. 330 m² = 440%! How could she seriously believe that a 75-square-meter building had left a footprint of "structural remains" of 330 square meters in the ground?

These inconsistencies add to the fact that the British archaeologist's own investigations into the mass graves have shown that the witnesses were liars: and if they are demonstrably untrustworthy about the mass graves, why should they be trustworthy about the alleged gas chambers?

But what defeats all of Caroline Sturdy Colls's fanciful lucubrations on the alleged gas chambers already by itself is her pretentious historical ignorance.

By the ineffective and inconclusive methods I have described above, particularly on the basis of a few tiles and a bit of rubble, she claimed to have determined "the exact location of the gas chambers and how they functioned" and that they were disguised as a "bathhouse", but at the same time she was unable to distinguish a real shower room from an (alleged) gas chamber, since she published a photograph of the real shower room in Barracks 41 ("*Bad und Desinfektion I*") of the Majdanek Camp with the following caption (see Document 100):

> *"The gas chambers at Majdanek, which were modeled on showers."*

6.3.3. Conclusion

From an orthodox Holocaust perspective, Sturdy Colls's archaeological research proves to be a total failure with regard to both the mass graves and the alleged gas chambers. She realized this well back in 2015, when she at least tried to mitigate the chasm that exists between her archaeological findings and the testimonies with superficial methodological remarks (Sturdy Colls 2015a, pp. 342f.):

> *"However, it should also be borne in mind that archaeological findings may conflict with witness testimonies and this can present new challenges to investigators. This is a trend that has recently been identified in the context of forensic archaeology* […]. *Witnesses may be adamant that a particular building was situated in a particular location or that it was of a specific size, details which may be disproved by the use of geophysics or the excavation of a particular feature. They may recall the size of mass graves and account for the number of bodies that they believe to be in that grave. In some cases archaeological investigations may prove these accounts to be accurate but in others they may show that the grave was larger or smaller, or that the number of bodies was different. Where the size of a grave is shown to be smaller, this will* [of] *course likely to result in revisionists suggesting that the witnesses have lied and that crimes were not as severe or did not take place at all.* […]
>
> *It will rarely be the intention of archaeologists to discredit witnesses (unless of course accounts are found to be deliberately falsified). Rather, it will be the intention to demonstrate that archaeological work can supplement and complement witness testimonies, the accuracy of which will have undoubtedly been influenced by the oppressive situations people found themselves in and the ability of individuals to recall information about events that occurred decades ago."*

This means that, when the archaeological investigation is in agreement with the testimonies, this is a confirmation of their truthfulness and the reality of the gas chambers; when it is in disagreement, this is only because they were "influenced" by adverse conditions and their difficulty in remembering events that happened "decades ago." With this, Sturdy Colls shows that she has no idea that all the most-important testimonies about Treblinka were rendered between 1944 and 1947.

According to this further paralogism, archaeological investigation can only confirm the testimonies, never refute them.

Sturdy Colls's historical-methodical ignorance is equal only to her arrogance. Her entire archaeological project is a huge bluff; she cannot even claim originality of the idea, which was copied by her from the ground-penetrating-radar research carried out in October 1999, also at Treblinka, by the Australian engineer Richard Krege in the company of Jürgen Graf, in whose initial phase at Birkenau I also participated (Document 101; see Krege 2000).

The British archaeologist mentions this in reference to "a GPR survey supposedly undertaken in 2000 [recte: 1999] by Richard Krege" (*ibid*., p. 348).

With incredible conceit and self-delusion, she instead considered her vacuous surveys of immense value, such that she could counter revisionism by simply disseminating her meager results (*ibid*., p. 349):

> *"Although Holocaust denial cannot be prevented, attempts can be made to combat it by the widespread dissemination of the archeological surveys through education programmes, archaeologists also have a role to play in tackling the prejudices that are at the root of many denial arguments."*

In reality, the dissemination of these "archaeological surveys" can only deal a lethal blow to archaeological-historical prejudices and exterminationist delusions about Treblinka.

The concluding sentence might also betray the actual essence of her real agenda, which lies far not only from archeology, but apparently also from objective truth itself.

Part Tree:

Expected Material Evidence

7. Exhumation and Cremation

In this chapter, I will examine whether the results of the archaeological investigations on the grounds of the former Operation-Reinhardt Camps Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka as set out earlier are compatible with the burial of the enormous number of corpses as declared by witnesses and orthodox Holocaust historians, as well as whether their claimed incineration on outdoor fires is consistent with the actual conditions. To begin with, I lay out the baseline data.

7.1. The Number of Alleged Victims

In 2001, Peter Witte and Stephen Tyas reported the discovery of an important document, a German radio message that had been intercepted and deciphered by the British. This message had been sent on January 11, 1943 by SS *Sturmbannführer* Hermann Höfle to SS *Obersturmbannführer* Willi Heim (Witte/ Tyas, p. 469). It concerned the intake ("*Zugang*") of deportees in the camps of the "*Einsatz Reinhart*." The figures, as of December 31, 1942, were: 24,733 for Lublin, 434,508 for Bełżec, 101,370 for Sobibór, and 713,555 for Treblinka, for a total of 1,274,166 deportees.[294]

The figure for Bełżec was accepted as definitive by Western Holocaust historians, but Robert Kuwałek tweaked it slightly upward and set the minimum number of alleged victims at 440,823 and the maximum at 453,021 (Kuwałek, p. 170).

In the discussion that follows, I therefore assume the minimum figure of 440,823 presumed victims, which I round up to 441,000.

With regard to Sobibór, the figure given by the most-competent orthodox historian of this camp, Marek Bem, is approximately 300,000 victims.[295] For Treblinka, Polish historian Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk gives the exact figure of 780,863 victims (Młynarczyk, p. 97), which I round up to 781,000.

To summarize:

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[294] The figure 71355 appears for Treblinka; the correct one, 713,555, results from subtracting the other partial figures from the total. The camps are indicated by their respective initial letters.

[295] Bem 2015, pp. 40, 222, 304, 355, 356, 372. Oddly, this figure is scattered throughout the book but does not appear in the paragraph where the author discussed in detail the deportations to the camp, and the number of victims (Chapter IV.9., "Transports from the General Government. The total number of victims of the German extermination centre in Sobibór", pp. 161-182).

Bełżec:	441,000
Sobibór:	300,000
Treblinka:	781,000
In Total:	1,522,000

7.2. Mass Graves

In the chapters on the archaeological investigations carried out in the individual camps, I noted that the data on the mass graves in Bełżec given by Kola – about 5,490 square meters and 21,310 cubic meters – are inflated by a good 50%, so that the more-realistic values are about 3,000 square meters and 10,800 cubic meters, respectively. In the pertinent chapters, I have shown that the figures for Sobibór and Treblinka are also exaggerated. To this should be added that the pits had to have sloping side walls in order to prevent their collapse (see below), so their actual volume is further reduced.

In the following table I summarize the official archaeological data:

Camp	Area [m²]	Volume [m³]
Bełżec	5,490	21,310
Sobibór	3,550	15,050
Treblinka	2,600	15,600

Sturdy Colls did not indicate the depth of the pits at Treblinka. The average depth of those at Bełżec was about 3.60 meters, that of Pits Nos. 1-6 at Sobibór (the deepest) about 4.60. In Treblinka, the depth of the pits found by Judge Łukaszkiewicz was 7-7.5 meters, but the British archaeologist noted that the alleged gas chambers were buried "under almost a metre of sand," and claimed that this was done by the "Nazis [who] tried to hide the traces of their crimes." In Bełżec and Sobibór, the findings were made also after digging through a layer of soil, so these areas were also covered with a layer of sand or soil. This layer clearly reduces the mass graves' effective depth for containing human remains, cremated and otherwise. In addition, at war's end, the grounds of the former Treblinka Camp were not level, but completely uneven, full of craters, holes and knolls, so the Łukaszkiewicz's measurements do not reflect the original state of the ground. I therefore assumed the depth of 6 meters, almost identical to the maximum depth attributed to the pits at Sobibór (5.8 meters) and, for what it is worth, identical to that stated by E. Rosenberg.

Before examining the issue of the mass graves' capacity, some clarifications must be made.

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, the corpses of the victims allegedly gassed were all buried in mass graves in Bełżec Camp, then later exhumed and cremated. The number of buried corpses is therefore 441,000.

In Sobibór, cremation is said to have begun as early as the beginning of October 1942, when approximately 80,000 deportees had arrived at the camp. (Graf/Kues/Mattogno, pp. 123-126). This is therefore the number of bodies interred.

In Treblinka, cremation is said to have been carried out from April to July 1943 (Mattogno/Graf, p. 147). According to Arad, the total number of victims was 881,390, 824,170 of whom by December 31, 1942, and a total of 866,790 by March 1943, hence 42,620 from January to March 1942 (*ibid*., pp. 102f.).

Manfred Burba calculated a total of 912,000 victims, of whom 837,000 were killed up to December 31, 1942, and 893,000 up to March 1943, hence 56,000 from January to March 1943 (*ibid*., p. 104).

For 1943, Arad considered 57,220 victims, Burba 75,000. Since the "Höfle telegram" attests to 713,555 deportees at the end of 1942, Młynarczyk's figure is compatible with Burba's: 780,863 – 713,555 = 67,308, a figure that represents the deportees in 1943. It constitutes almost 90% of Burba's (75,000), so the number of deportees from January to March 1943 can be considered to be (56,000 × 0.9 =) about 50,500. The total figure is therefore (713,555 + 50,500 =) about 764,000, which refers to the corpses buried in mass graves. For the thickness of the layer of soil covering the mass graves, I assume the figure for the pits at Treblinka I discovered by the Soviets: 0.5 meters.

I summarize the data in the following table:

Camp	claimed no. of buried corpses	volume of mass graves in m³	number of bodies per m³ of grave	effective[1] grave volume [m³]	number of bodies per m³ of grave
Bełżec	441,000	21,310	20.7	~ 18,565[2]	~ 23.8
Sobibór	80,000	15,050	5.33	~ 13,275[3]	~ 6.0
Treblinka	764,000	15,600	50.0	~ 14,300[4]	~ 53.4

[1] with a cover layer of 0.5 meter of sand deducted
[2] Bełżec: 5,490 m² × 0.5 m = 2,745 m³; 21,310 m³ – 2,745 m³ = 18,565 m³
[3] Sobibór: 3,550 m² × 0.5 m = 1,775 m³; 15,050 m³ – 1,775 m³ = 13,275 m³
[4] Treblinka: 2,600 m² × 0.5 m = 1,300 m³; 15,600 m³ – 1,300 m³ = 14,300 m³

The disproportionately different data about the claimed packing density of bodies in the graves constitutes the first insuperable contradiction.

It remains to be established how many corpses can be deposited in one cubic meter of mass grave. Marek Bem addressed this issue as follows (Bem 2015, p. 215):

> *"In order to establish the approximate number of victims buried in one grave (which was of a specific size), it is possible to make an attempt to estimate how much space one body took up. Since among the murdered were both men and women, children and adults, I have limited this analysis to the 'overvalued average', which means the body of an adult man. If we use this ratio in calculating the number of bodies buried by the Germans in the burial pits, this, still has to be a very careful calculation on account of the fact that small women and*

> *even smaller children will be omitted. Also, it is not possible to measure the empty space between the bodies, but if we consider the average height of a man to be 173 cm, we might accept, then, that the space taken up by the human body is 0,093 m³.*
> *The Germans aimed at the most effective utilisation of the burial pits; it seems plausible, therefore, that they must have made sure that the burial commando arranged the corpses as carefully and effectively as possible.*[296] *If we assume the average volume of a human body to be 0,093m³, any calculations of the size of a typical burial pit will be a realistic estimate. Normally, burial pits are described as cubic in shape. In Sobibór, however, the huge graves must have been the shape of an isosceles upside-down trapezium, with the shorter base at the bottom of these graves. The deeper a given pit was, the more sloping it* [its walls] *had to be, in order to prevent its sides from sliding inwards.*
> *The soil in the area of former camp III is sandy, which, on the one hand, made it easier to dig burial pits, but, on the other, made the graves less stable. Following these lines, we may accept the notion that the edges of all the pits were cut at an angle.*
> *However, the precise angle of inclination of the sides of the pits remains unknown, and it obviously depends on the size of each particular pit. In my calculations of the volume of the graves uncovered in the area of the former camp, I put forward that the slope indicator had to be about 60 degrees. As the total volume of the four pits uncovered so far (these were the pits made in the first phase when Sobibór was in operation, i.e. the corpses were buried there) amounts to 15,000m³, it can be assumed that if filled up to the full, they could have accommodated more than 120,000 human corpses."*

The purely conjectural number of 120,000 corpses subsequently becomes real (*ibid.*, p. 218):

> *"Soon afterwards, it was decided that the dead bodies should be burnt, hence, the Nazis brought to Sobibór an excavator with the aim of digging up those more than 120,000 corpses in order to burn them."*

If assuming a volume of 0.093 cubic meters per corpse, 10.7 corpses could fit into one cubic meter of pit.[297] This purely theoretical figure is contradicted by practical experience. In Katyn, the Germans discovered seven mass graves with a total area of about 478 square meters and an average depth of about 2.30 meters, which were filled with corpses to a height of 1.5 meters (= 717 m³). In these graves, 4,143 bodies were found, an average of (4,143 ÷ 717 m³ =) 5.8 per cubic meter (Auswärtiges Amt, pp. 39f., 47).

The "Report of the Medico-Legal Examination of the Mass Graves in the Vicinity of the Town Žagare" in Lithuania and the "Report of Medico-Legal

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296 This was explicitly stated by Bolender, but according to Gomerski, the corpses were dumped into the pits directly from the carts from a kind of jetty (see Subchapter. 5.6.); Rudolf Reder, on the other hand, repeatedly stated that at Bełżec the corpses were "thrown into the pits haphazardly" ("*bez porządku*," "*w nieładzie*"); see Mattogno 2021a, pp. 19, 22, 26.

297 Although Bem's numbers – 120,000 corpses in 15,000 m³ of space, "filled up to the full" – amount to eight corpses per cubic meter only.

Visual Examination of the Site of the Mass Graves in the Vicinity of Žagare," compiled by the Soviets on September 24, 1944 (Jakovlev, pp. 50-54), mention three mass graves with corpses of Jews shot by the Germans, the largest of which measured 122 m × 4 m × 2 m and contained 2,402 corpses. Of these, 20 were subjected to autopsy, the remaining 2,382 to visual forensic medical examination. This group included 1,213 corpses of women, 524 of men, 622 of children and young people up to 15 years of age, and 23 of infants. Since the cover layer of the pit was 30 centimeters, the actual volume of the pit was (122 m × 4 m × 1.7 m =) 829.6 m³, so the density of the corpses in it was (2,402 ÷ 829.6 m³ =) 2.9 per cubic meter. It is true that the corpses were placed there "without order," but it is also true that women accounted for 51% of the visually examined corpses, men for only 22%, and children and young people up to 15 years of age, including infants, for 27%.

In our Treblinka study, we assumed a packing density of eight corpses per cubic meter (Mattogno/Graf, p. 137), which I also adopted for Bełżec (Mattogno 2016, p. 85) and for Sobibór (Graf/Kues/Mattogno, p. 131). However, to prove *a fortiori* the absurdity of the orthodox Holocaustic thesis, one can also assume a maximum density of ten bodies per cubic meter of small, medium, and large men and women, as well as children of all ages.

However, this does not help much to support Bem's calculation.

First of all, the first four pits, which are also the largest, had a surface area of 2,715 square meters and a total volume of 12,987 cubic meters (see Subchapter 5.5.). Moreover, if we assume that all sides of the pits were inclined by 60°, the actual volume is further reduced.

Secondly, one cannot pretend that the "Höfle telegram" for Sobibór contained only a portion of the deportees. As noted earlier, the figure of 101,370 deportees is used to calculate the approximately 80,000 bodies exhumed. Following the reasoning of M. Bem, the pits in question would have contained (80,000 ÷ 15,000 =) 5.33 bodies per cubic meter.

For the rest, it is obviously not possible that the density per cubic meter of victims had been roughly 24 at Bełżec, 6 at Sobibór, and 53 at Treblinka.

Considering a maximum density of ten bodies per cubic meter, the values would be as follows:

Camp	claimed no. of buried corpses	mass-grave area in m²	volume of mass graves in m³	required volume in m³ at 10 corpses/m³ with 50 cm layer of covering
Bełżec	441,000	5,490	21,310	44,100 + 2,745 = 46,845
Sobibór	80,000	3,550	15,050	8,000 + 1,775 = 9,775
Treblinka	764,000	2,600	15,600	76,400 + 1,300 = 77,700

The data for Sobibór would therefore be the only one commensurate with the findings. Those for Bełżec and Treblinka are completely incommensurate. In these two camps, the mass graves could have contained only part of the bodies

of the presumed victims, about 42% in Bełżec, about 19% in Treblinka, as shown in the following table:

Camp	claimed no. of buried corpses	effective grave volume [m³]	corpses buried at 10/m³	corpses unburied
Bełżec	441,000	18,565	185,650	255,350
Treblinka	764,000	14,300	143,000	621,000

Let me emphasize that all the data used in the calculations are theoretical maximums. It should also be noted that, by changing perspective, the factors and coefficients also change. If mass extermination was not practiced in these camps, but there was a low mortality rate, there was no need to save space by cramming the pits with corpses. As a normal density, the experimental figure for Žagare may be valid: three corpses per cubic meter. The actual volume of the pits at Bełżec (or rather, a volume closer to reality) is about 10,800 cubic meters, and their surface area 3,000 square meters, which, with a covering of the pits with 50 centimeters of sand (without taking into account the layer of sand of a few decimeters with which the former camp area was later covered) becomes about (10,800 m³ – 3,000 m² × 0.50 m =) 9,300 m³. The fact that this volume includes the excavations carried out by the Polish judicial investigators and those of the "gold diggers" further reduces the original volume. In addition, the pits had to have sloping walls, which leads to a further reduction. But even taking into account the above figure, the real order of magnitude would be (9,300 m³ × 3 =) about 27,900 bodies. As a percentage, this is about 6% of the detainees deported to that camp.

Orthodox historian Dieter Pohl estimates that up to 5% of the deportees in the Reinhardt Camps perished during the journey from suffocation, dehydration, crushing caused by panicked deportees, etc. (Pohl, p. 194).

As for Treblinka, even taking into account the alleged 15,600 cubic meters of pits, the order of magnitude would be (15,600 m³ × 3 =) 46,800, roughly 6% of the total number of deportees.

The figure for Sobibór is also anomalous in this perspective: the 12,000 cubic meters mentioned in Subchapter 5.5. (see p. 232) would have contained 36,000 bodies, 12% of the total deportees.

However, the anomaly of Sobibór does not affect the general conclusion, since Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka either were *all* extermination camps in the terms described by the orthodox Holocaust historiography, or *none* of them was: *tertium non datur*. And since these data clearly demonstrate that Bełżec and Treblinka cannot not have been extermination camps, neither can Sobibór.

On the other hand, as I will show below, the supply of the wood that would be needed to cremate the corpses of the numbers of alleged gassing victims in the time available according to the orthodox narrative would have been impossible even for Sobibór.

7.3. Cremation of Corpses: Time Constraints

7.3.1. Bełżec

The most-detailed information on the cremation of exhumed corpses was provided on January 7, 1963 by former SS *Scharführer* Heinrich Gley in the course of the investigations leading up to the Bełżec Trial (Rückerl, pp. 142f.):

> *"According to my memory, the gassings were stopped at the end of 1942, when there was already snow. Then the general exhumation and cremation of corpses began; it probably lasted from November 1942 to March 1943. The cremations were carried out continuously day and night, first at one, then at two incineration sites. One incineration site offered the possibility to burn about 2000 corpses within 24 hours. About 4 weeks after the start of the cremation campaign, the second incineration site was set up. On average, 300,000 corpses were burned at one incineration site for about 5 months, and 240,000 corpses were burned at the second for about 4 months. These are, of course, average estimates."*

However, during an earlier interrogation of May 8, 1961, he had stated:[298]

> *"At the end of 1942, the mass gassings of Jews at the Belcec* [sic] *Camp were stopped. In response to an interposed question, I say that I know for certain that no bodies were being burned when I arrived. At the beginning of 1943 – I can no longer say whether it was in January, February, or March – I was assigned with a unit to bring in railroad tracks and field tracks, as well as large stones. This equipment was to be used for the construction of large grates, on which the bodies were burned that had first been buried. I was not part of the cremation detachment itself."*

Since the last Jewish transports arrived at the camp on December 11, 1942 (Kuwałek, p. 251), cremation could not begin until the middle of that month. As early as April 11, 1946, the prosecutor of the Zamość District Court concluded that Jewish transports had ceased in December 1942, and that the cremation of corpses was completed in March 1943 (Libionka, p. 235).

Therefore, the cremation lasted three and a half months, from mid-December 1942 to March 1943, or 105 days in rounded figures.

From Gley's statements, it can be deduced that the first pyre was erected in mid-December 1942, the second in mid-January 1943; the first cremated about 55% of the total number of corpses,[299] hence about 242,000 – if assuming a total of 441,000 corpses – and the second about 199,000.

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[298] Interrogation of Heinrich Gley dated May 8, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, Vol. IX, p. 1286.

[299] H. Gley stated that the total number of bodies cremated was 540,000.

7.3.2. Sobibór

The cremation of corpses, as noted above, began in early October 1942 and presumably lasted until the prisoners' uprising, which occurred on October 14, 1943, so it can be assumed to last about a year or 365 days.

7.3.3. Treblinka

The cremation of corpses lasted from April to July 1943, or about 122 days (Mattogno/Graf, p. 147).

7.4. The Green-Wood Consumption for Cremation

In our study on Sobibór, I had assumed, based on experimental data, that a woodcutter can cut 0.55 tons of wood per day (Graf/Kues/Mattogno, p. 152). I later found other data that better fit the claimed Holocaust context.

In the *Ereignismeldung* (Report on Events in the Occupied Eastern Territories) No. 171 of February 20, 1942, we read:[300]

> *"Currently, 25263 people are employed in the large-scale forestry operation, which covers the whole of Estonia and serves to procure firewood for the cities. The transport of the wood, for which 9000 horses are available, has already begun. The daily output per forest worker averages about 1.5 solid cubic meters."*

A "Headquarters Special Order" from the "Local *Wehrmacht* Headquarters Riga" dated 16 June 1944 bearing the subject "Supply with Heating Material 1944/45" forwarded the order by the *Kommandant* of the Security Region Latvia that all units of the *Wehrmacht*, with a few exceptions, had to "cut their own firewood." Major General and *Kommandant* Ruff, who signed the document, issued the following detailed orders in this regard:[301]

> *"2.) Logging*
> *It does not appear practicable for every unit and agency to log their own wood requirements independently. At least the small users must be pooled together into logging squads professionally supervised by trained forestry personnel and equipped with the necessary working equipment and power saws.*
> *The local Wehrmacht headquarters has been assigned to form such logging squads for the Riga garrison. Those units and agencies which do not log their own wood, but rather wish to participate in pooled logging squads, report their anticipated logging totals, and the numbers of soldiers, volunteers, POWs and other manpower to be deployed for this by 25 June to the 4th Detachment of the L.W.H. When calculating the necessary workforce, it is to be assumed that one soldier or volunteer can prepare 1.5-2 stacked cubic meters per day, a*

300 NARA, T 175-234-2723884.
301 LVVA, P-752-2-1, pp. 221-221a.

POW or other workers 1 stacked cubic meter, and for now that the logging must be carried out by the end of September. For this, one week is to be considered to consist of 5 full working days.
Logging sites favorably located for hauling off the wood are to be selected with the approval of the forestry administration. Quantities up to 200 stacked cubic meters can be released for logging by the chief forest ranger's office based on an order from a billeting administration office (see 3). Any quantities in excess will require the approval of the general commissar in Riga, FoHo [Logging] *Division. Applications for this are to be filed with the headquarters of the Security Region Latvia via the billeting administration office in charge. In urgent cases, application by phone directly with the Kommandatur Latvia suffices.*
3.) Release
Chief foresters are instructed to release prepared firewood and wood for self-logging only based on an order from the billeting administration office […]*."*

There are two units of measurement mentioned in these documents: the *Festmeter* (*fm*), which is a cubic meter of solid wood (without any gaps), and the *Raummeter* (*rm*), which is a cubic meter of neatly stacked wood (with gaps in between). According to established equivalence tables, 1 m³ of solid wood (*fm*) is equivalent to about 1.43 m³ of stacked wood (*rm*), and vice versa, 1 *rm* equals 0.70 *fm* (Wenzl, p. 321).

The average weight of a solid cubic meter (*fm*) of freshly cut wood (green wood) of the types of trees prevalent in Latvia (pine, fir, birch, alder) is about 900 kg, that of a stacked cubic meter (*rm*) about (900 kg/m³ × 0.7 =) 630 kg. The first document therefore shows a daily production of 1.5 solid cubic meters per worker, or (1.5 m³ × 0.9 =) 1.35 metric tons. In the case investigated here, however, we are dealing with civilians forced to work under awful conditions. Due to their living and working conditions, the productivity of inmates in the alleged "extermination camps" was necessarily lower, as shown by the second document, which indicates a daily productivity of 1.5-2 stacked cubic meters or (1.5~2 *rm* × 0.9 kg/m³ × 0.7 m³/*rm* =) between 0.945 and 1.26 metric tons of wood for soldiers or civilian volunteers, and only one stacked cubic meter or (1 *rm* × 0.9 kg/m³ × 0.7 m³/*rm* =) 0.63 metric tons for a prisoner of war. For the camps of Operation Reinhardt, we will assume this value.

In another study, I have devoted a long chapter to a detailed and documented study of open-air cremation in the camps of Operation Reinhardt.[302] The amount of wood – dry and fresh – necessary to cremate a human body (according to the various possibilities: gender, age, size, condition [fresh or decomposed] etc.) was calculated by me on the basis of experimental data. As the weight of the bodies, I assumed those proposed by an orthodox Holocaustic polemicist. The relative values are definitely too low, so that the corresponding wood requirement is also too low, but these are the only Holocaustic data

[302] Mattogno/Kues/Graf, Chapter 12, pp. 1169-1332; see in particular Point 75, pp. 1288-1293.

available, and by using them, my line of argument resulting from this will be valid for more-likely scenarios as well *a fortiori*.

On the basis of the complicated reasoning on the initial weight of the deportees and the decomposition times of the corpses as proposed by the polemicist in question, it is therefore assumed that the average mass of the bodies exhumed and cremated in Bełżec was 23.65 kg, 36.43 kg in Sobibór, and 18.95 in Treblinka. The differences depended on the greater or lesser time the bodies had been in the ground before being exhumed. For each type of body, I calculated a dry-wood requirement ranging from 132 to 134 kg. The values are almost equal, despite the difference in average mass of organic material to be incinerated, because of the differing chemical compositions of the bodies (water, fat and protein) indicated by the polemicist.[303]

For the alleged extermination camps, however, it is necessary to consider green wood, since, according to the orthodox narrative based on testimonies, inmate forest units are said to have been sent into the surrounding woods in order to cut trees and branches destined to fuel the cremation pyres. In another study, we explained that one can assume a conversion factor of 1.9, meaning that, based on their respective net calorific values, 1 kg of dry wood corresponds to 1.9 kg of green wood (Graf/Kues/Mattogno, p. 151).

The following table summarizes this data:

Camp	number of corpses	average corpse mass in kg	dry/green wood requirement to cremate one corpse in kg	total dry wood requirement in metric tons	total green wood requirement in metric tons
Bełżec	441,000	23.65	132 / 250.8	58,212	110,602.8
Sobibór	300,000	36.43	133 / 252.7	39,900	75,810.0
Treblinka	781,000	18.95	134 / 254.6	104,654	198,842.6
Totals	1,522,000			202,766	385,255.4

The procedure by which these camps are said to have procured the necessary wood (the deployment of inmate forest units in the surrounding forests) is rather simplistic and does not take into account the regulations in force at that time.

In the General Government, the management of forests depended on the "Main Department Forestry" of the local government. In the Warsaw District, it was represented by the Forestry Department headed by District Forester Küchler. Each of the 10 counties (*Kreishauptmannschaften*) of this district, with the exception of the capital Warsaw,[304] had a main forestry (*Oberförsterei*) that dependent on the above-mentioned office, which was in charge of wood supply. The wood was first cut (*Holzeinschlag*, wood cutting) and then transported little by little to the recipients (*Holzabfuhr*). Each county was

[303] *Ibid.*, pp. 1292f.; this explains how to arrive at the above values.
[304] As a city, Warsaw was a *Stadthauptmannschaft*, in contrast to a rural *Kreishauptmannschaft*.

assigned a certain amount of wood to be cut, which in some cases was even slightly exceeded. These activities were documented in detail. Some documents have been preserved and show exactly how much wood was cut and transported at various dates.

A chart on "Wood Cutting for the Economic Forestry Year 1944" ("*Holzeinschlag des Forstwirtschaftsjahres 1944*") shows the situation as of January 31, 1944 for the Warsaw District (Document 102). The amount of wood to be cut (*Einschlagsoll*) was 279,730 solid cubic meters (*fm*); the amount actually cut (*Einschlagist*) was 187,173 *fm*. The graph regarding "Wood transport of the wood cut 1943-1944" ("*Holzabfuhr des Holzeinschlages 1943-1944*"), with reference to the same date, gives the amount of wood that had been taken away: it amounted to 90,929 *fm* (Document 103).

It is worth mentioning that, according to Arad, in Treblinka "the entire cremation operation lasted about four months, from April to the end of July 1943" (Arad 1987, p. 177).

Now, at the Warsaw District, the wood cutting of 1943 until 31 January 1944 had produced 187,173 *fm* (=m³), or about 168,500 tons, of which 90,929 m³, or about 81,800 tons, had been taken away.

Treblinka Camp was located in Sokołow County, bordering on Ostrów County, to which nearby Małkinia belonged. The charts show that the actual wood production of these two counties had been 16,500 and 56,570 m³, respectively, or about 14,850 and 50,900 metric tons, of which 4,867 and 15,205 m³, or about 4,400 and 13,700 metric tons, had been delivered as of January 31, 1944.

All in all, the amount of wood hauled away from the two counties was about (4,400 + 13,700 =) 18,100 metric tons. This was the wood cut in 1943 and January 1944, available and therefore usable as of January 31, 1944.

As of March 1, 1943, the territory of the Warsaw District had an area of 17,168 km², and a population of about 2,699,000 people. In it, Sokołow County had an area of 2,565 km² and about 172,000 inhabitants, and Ostrów County 1,366 km² and about 109,000 inhabitants (Staatliches Amt…, pp. IXf.).

The total projected wood production of 279,730 *fm* (about 251,800 metric tons) covered the entire Warsaw District. Not all of the wood was firewood; some of it – *Stammholz*, wood for lumber; *Grubenlangholz*, mining shoring timbers; *Holzwollenholz*, wood for wood shavings; *Generatorenholz*, wood for producer-gas generators – was delivered to sawmills and private firms that processed it.[305]

On November 3, 1943, when the cremation of the bodies of those presumably gassed at Treblinka, Sobibór and Bełżec had been completed for months, Hans Frank issued an order valid for the entire General Government, stamped "Secret State Matter" ("*Geheime Reichssache*"), in which he launched a large-

[305] *Oberförsterei Ostrow. Verteilungsplan der Holzabfuhr für Monat Januar 1944*. APW, Zespół 489 II (*Kreishauptmannschaft Ostrow*), Sygn. 648, p. 186.

scale "mobilization for wood", because wood was considered a strategic asset. The operation mainly concerned the collection and transport of wood that had already been cut in execution of the 1943 wood-supply plan.[306]

In practice, in 1943, the Treblinka inmate forest unit would have had to cut almost 199,000 tons of wood on its own in the vicinity of the camp within just four months, while the amount of wood cut in the entire Warsaw District during that entire year was only 168,500 tons!

In 1944, the amount of wood cut was 260,940 *fm* (about 234,850 tons); for Sokołow County, the figure was 21,572 *fm* (about 19,400 tons), for Ostrów County, it was 93,759 *fm* (about 84,400 tons; Document 104).

7.5. The Wood Supply for Cremation: The Forest Units

Nothing is recorded about an inmate forest unit at Bełżec. According to Schelvis, the forest unit at Sobibór consisted of just 30 inmates (Schelvis, p. 134), but Bem states that there were 40 inmates (Bem 2015, p. 71).

No precise information is available about the strength of the forest unit at Treblinka Camp. Richard Glazar describes the task of this group of inmates as follows (Glazar, p. 115):

> *"To clear the woods around the perimeter of the camp—that's our main task now. Felled trees are hauled into camp and chopped into firewood. As spring becomes summer without transports, the greatest concentration of activity in the first camp moves down to the grounds behind the Ukrainian barracks, to the lumberyard. Those of us from Barracks A work there, along with other commando units who had previously worked at the sorting site. Idyllic mounds of freshly sawn and split firewood grow up and shine out from among the towering pines that have not been felled. A path runs along one side of the lumberyard and leads up to the main gate of the second camp. Though it is some seventy meters away, the gate is clearly visible from our work site. Here we deliver what wood is needed in that part of the camp. No one from over there is allowed out to work by the SS. The main work in the second camp still consists of digging up and incinerating the bodies from old transports."*

A few pages later, Glazar speaks of 25 inmates assigned to "forestry work," but in the context of camouflaging the camp (*ibid.*, pp. 127f.). Chris Webb and Michal Chocholatý, authors of a book on Treblinka, write that the local forest unit, also called woodcutter's unit, was "small in number, probably only a few dozen prisoners" (Webb/Chocholatý, p. 90).

Pretending that there is a logic in all of this (which there isn't), I assume as the "real" figure the maximum one mentioned for Sobibór, and based on it I calculate the strength of the forest units of Bełżec and Treblinka in proportion to the number of the claimed corpses cremated, *i.e.*:

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306 APW, Zespół 891, pp. 2-4.

– Bełżec: 60 inmates
– Sobibór: 40 inmates
– Treblinka: 100 inmates (for Webb/Chocholatý only "a few dozen").

In Bełżec, 60 detainees would have been able to cut (60 × 0.63 tons/day/man =) 37.8 tons of wood per day. In order to achieve the necessary amount, they would have had to work for (110,602.8 tons ÷ 37.8 tons/day =) 2,926 days, or a little over eight years, but they actual had only 105 days.

The 40 inmates at Sobibór would have had a daily capacity of (40 × 0.63 tons/day/man =) 25.2 tons of wood. To cut the required amount, they would have had to work for (75,810 tons ÷ 25.2 tons/day =) 3,008 days, or eight years and three months, but they only had about a year for this work.

As for Treblinka, the 100 inmates of the forest unit would have cut (100 × 0.63 tons/day/man =) 63 tons of wood each day; to reach the required amount, it would have taken them (198,842.6 tons ÷ 63 tons/day =) 3,156 days, or more than eight and a half years, but they had only 122 days in which to do it.

I summarize the results of these calculations in the following table:

Camp	green wood needed in tons	number of inmates in forest unit *Waldkommando*	fresh wood per day in tons	days needed	days available	missing days
Bełżec	110,602.8	60	37.8	2,926	105	2,821
Sobibór	75,810.0	40	25.2	3,008	365	2,643
Treblinka	198,842.6	100	63.0	3,156	122	3,034
Totals	385,255.4			9,090	592	8,498

In practice, the time required to complete the overall cremation work would have been more than 15 times longer than the time available. To give an idea, cremations at all three camps would have been completed only at some point in 1951!

No. 50 of the *Einsatzgruppen* "Reports from the Eastern Territories", which is dated April 16, 1943, offers another concrete reference point especially for Bełżec. The section on forestry sets out the forestry plan that had been prepared for Belarus (Mallmann *et al.*, p. 792):

> *"For the old Soviet area of White Ruthenia with about 400,000 hectares of forest, about 700,000 cubic meters of lumber and firewood are planned for cutting in the forestry year from October 1, 1942 to September 30, 1943. With an average work standard of 20 solid cubic meters of logging and 20 solid cubic meters of hauling per head and team, about 35,000 workers and 35,000 team members would be needed for 3 to 4 weeks. Distributed over the 5 winter months from November to March – the felling has to occur in these months mainly due to climatic conditions – a monthly average of about 7000 workers and 7000 teams* [horse-drawn cart + driver] *would be necessary."*

As I explained earlier, the 700,000 solid cubic meters mentioned in this document correspond to about 630,000 metric tons, to be cut in a forested area of 400,000 hectares. A daily productivity of 0.95-0.71 solid cubic meters, or 0.85-0.64 tons, per day was calculated for that work. This fully confirms the figure assumed in the calculations for an inmate (0.63 tons).

Each month, 100,000 solid cubic meters (about 90,000 tons) were expected with the use of 7,000 lumberjacks and 7,000 teams (horse-drawn carts).

For Bełżec, with a requirement of about 110,600 tons of green wood, such a project would have required about 8,600 lumberjacks to be completed within a month, but if the work was stretched out over three and a half months, the labor force would have had to encompass (8,600 ÷ 3.5 =) about 2,460 lumberjacks (and an equal number of horse teams for transport).

It should be remembered that Rudolf Reder, the quintessential witness to Bełżec Camp, had claimed that there was a total of 500 inmates working at the camp.[307] The required wood-cutting feat would not have succeeded even if they all had been employed to cut and haul wood.

As can be seen from the graphs mentioned earlier, hauling the cut wood also required the deployment of large numbers of men and animals, in this case about 2,460 horse-drawn carts with drivers. Nineteenth-century studies established that a man pulling a cart produces a "useful effect" of 2,500 kg, yet a horse produces 26,029 kg, so that the workforce of a horse is equal to that of more than 10 men (Majocchi, p. 140). Therefore, the aforementioned 2,460 teams (in the likely case of two-horse teams, this amounts to 4,920 horses) are equivalent to the work force of (4,920 × 10 =) 49,200 men! No witness or document has ever come to light that mentioned the deployment of huge pools of horse-drawn carts (or alternatively large pools of trucks) to transport massive amounts of wood, so this work evidently would have had to be performed by inmates – tens of thousands of them!

To obtain the required 198,842.6 tons of green wood needed at Treblinka Camp within a month, 13,900 lumberjacks would have been needed; doing the work within four months would have required (13,900 ÷ 4 =) 3,475 lumberjacks and as many teams of horses – or another 69,500 men. Note that Glazar claimed that the logs were dragged to Treblinka Camp by inmates.

7.6. The Invisible Logging

A 50-year-old spruce forest yields 496 solid cubic meters of wood per hectare (about 446 tons).[308] The wood requirements for Bełżec thus correspond to the

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307 See Mattogno 2021a, where I reported this witness's nine statements, interrogations, and writings, in which he repeatedly mentions this figure (pp. 13-16, 19f., 22, 36f., 45, 51f.).

308 Colombo, p. 161. The value shown is the highest of the five tree varieties shown in the table (pine [452 m³], spruce, fir, beech, oak).

total logging of (110,602.8 ÷ 446 =) 248 hectares, for Treblinka of (198,842.6 ÷ 446 =) 446 hectares.

In a well-documented article, Thomas Kues showed that the wooded areas cut around Treblinka Camp amounted to a maximum of 10 hectares (Kues 2009a). During construction, the camp, which had an area of 13.45 hectares, was completely cleared except for an area of about 2 hectares in the northern part. Comparison of the 1:100000 map from 1936 with the aerial photograph from May 15, 1944 shows that the forested strip to the north, east, and south of the camp remained virtually untouched: the deforested area inside and outside the camp was approximately 22 hectares, as opposed to the 446 required by the alleged mass cremations.

For Bełżec, a comparison of 1940 and 1944 aerial photography shows that the forest was cut – but not completely – only in the camp area (about 6.2 hectares) and simply thinned out beyond the northern, eastern, and southern borders of the camp (Rudolf 2020a, pp. 138-143). The total area, cleared and thinned, was on the order of 10 hectares. According to the "Minutes of the Inspection of the Bełżec Death Camp" by the Zamość investigating judge dated October 10, 1945, there was still a group of pine trees (*sosny*) over twenty years old in the area of the camp, towards the center. Another group of similar pine trees extended towards the south side, and a third group of 31 pine trees was located in the northwestern corner (Libionka, p. 122).

Again, the hectares cleared – about 10 – are a pittance compared to those needed: 248.

Two aerial photographs of Sobibór, the first dated July 11, 1940, the other May 30, 1944 (Rudolf 2020a, pp. 147f.), make it possible to establish that the area cleared was practically only that of *Lager* III, the equivalent of about 30 hectares, as opposed to the (75,810 ÷ 446 =) 170 hectares needed.

In order to visually render the idea of the order of magnitude being discussed, I take as a point of reference a photograph I took in June 1997 in an area south of the former Sobibór Camp (Document 105). It shows several piles of pine logs. The central pile, about 20 meters long and about 2.5 meters high, consisted of logs about 2 meters long with a diameter of about 12 centimeters. The estimated weight of this pile is about 100 tons, enough for the cremation of about 400 corpses. In Bełżec, about 1,106 similar piles would have been needed for the cremation of the corpses of the alleged gassing victims, in Sobibór about 758 and in Treblinka about 1,988!

7.7. The Cremation Procedure

Orthodox Holocaust historians imagine that cremation took place day and night for the above-mentioned periods, so that on average (441,000 ÷ 105 =) 4,200 corpses were cremated per day at Bełżec and (781,000 ÷ 122 =) 6,400 at

Treblinka. However, no one ever considered that this procedure would have encountered an insurmountable obstacle due to weather conditions. This is especially true for Bełżec. It should be remembered that cremation would have taken place there in the middle of winter, from mid-December 1942 to March 1943.

In the following table and chart, I report the minimum temperatures (first column) and precipitation in mm of water (second column) that were recorded during those months at the meteorological station in Tomaszów Lubelski, only 8 km away from the alleged "death camp"[309] (Documents 106f. and 108f.).

Starting on November 22, 1942, temperatures dropped significantly. From November 22 to 30, the average minimum temperature was -6.3°C, with a low of -10.3°C on the November 22. Therefore, the ground was solidly frozen by mid-December.

In total, from mid-December 1942 to March 1943, there were 31 days of precipitation, which brought down about 60 cm of water – some as rain, some as snow. The camp and the forests were covered with snow.

Under these conditions, it is hardly imaginable that each inmate of the camp's forest unit could cut 0.63 tons of wood each day. I will pass over the transport of the wood to the camp for the moment, and will merely observe that burning the huge piles of green, frozen, snow-covered wood, more or less like the one in Document 110, would have been an impossible task in itself without enormous quantities of oil or gasoline to light the fire, the supply of which is not documented in the slightest. For this reason, I do not even consider the possible but utterly unsubstantiated objection that the wood requirement for the cremation was relatively small because the cremation could have been accomplished with even-more-enormous quantities of oil or gasoline. If we allow the writing of history with mere unfounded speculations, it would be more serious to assert that the extermination was carried out with electrocution plants, chlorine and steam chambers, and that the corpses were eliminated with a "corrosive powder" – fables that at least have a basis in propaganda texts.

At minimum temperatures of -10°C, reached for 21 days, with 5 days between -21 and -25.3°C, the wood would have been frozen. Given that fresh wood contains at least 50% moisture by weight, 1 kg of wood contains 0.5 kg of moisture. The heat needed to melt ice is about 80 Kcal/kg, so 40 Kcal for 1 kg of wood. If even only 20% of the water contained in the 108,974.6 tons of fresh wood had frozen (*i.e.* the water contained in the wood needed for 21 days out of 105 days), the caloric requirement for melting the wood water would

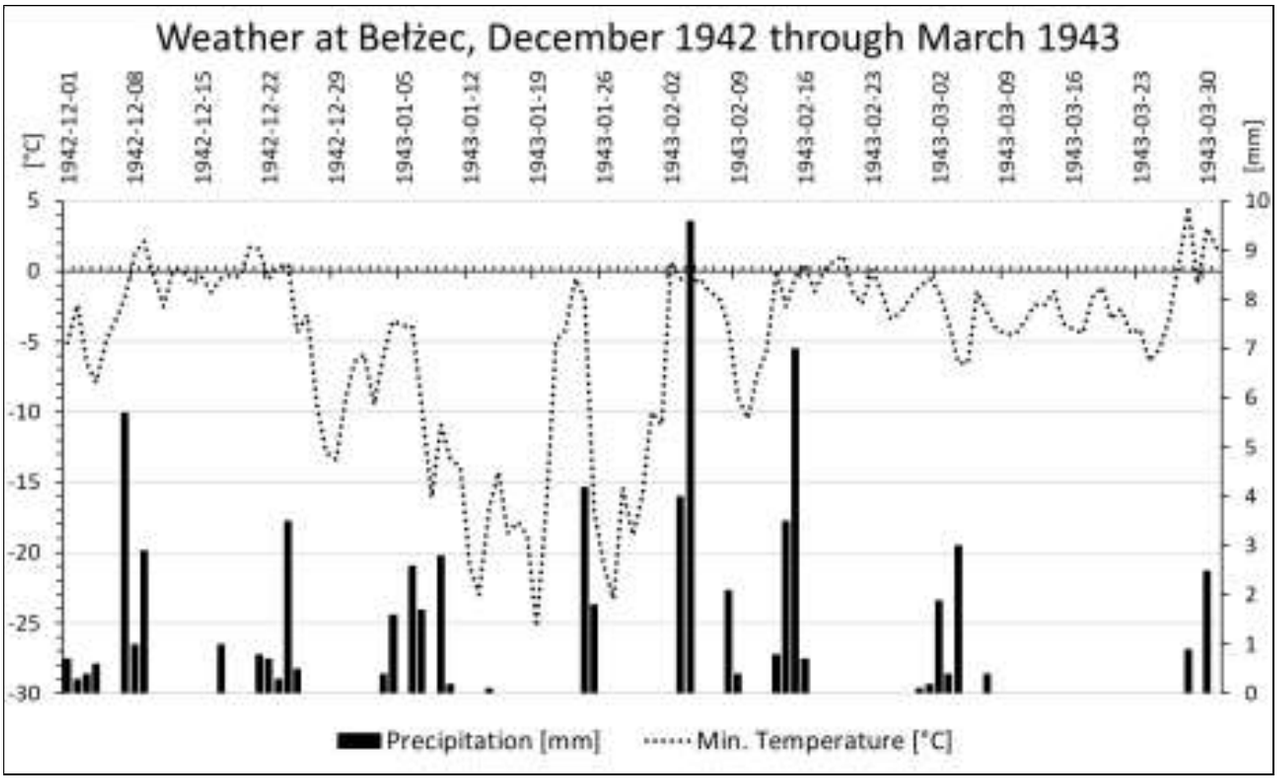
[309] "Minimalna dobowa temperatura powietrza atmosfericznego (°C) z okresu od 1 marca 1942 roku do 31 marca 1943 roku na podstawie pomiarów na stacji meteorologicznej Tomaszów Lubelski" ("Minimum daily air temperature (°C) from March 1, 1942 to March 31, 1943 based on measurements at the meteorological station Tomaszów Lubelski"); "Dobowa suma opadu atmosferycznego [mm] z okresu od 1 marca 1942 do 31 marca 1943 roku na podstawie pomiarów na stacji meteorologicznej Tomaszów Lubelski" ("Daily total precipitation [mm] from March 1, 1942 to March 31, 1943 based on measurements at the meteorological station Tomaszów Lubelski"). Instytut Meteorologii i Gospodarki Wodnej. Państwowy Instytut Badawcy, Warsaw.

	December 1942		January 1943		February 1943		March 1943	
Day	Temp. [°C]	Prec. [mm][310]	Temp. [°C]	Prec. [mm]	Temp. [°C]	Prec. [mm]	Temp. [°C]	Prec. [mm]
1	-5.1	0.7	-5.9	0	-10.9	0	-0.5	0.2
2	-2.4	0.3	-9.5	0	0.7	0	-1.4	1.9
3	-6.5	0.4	-5.9	0.4	-0.5	4.0	-3.5	0.4
4	-7.9	0.6	-3.5	1.6	-0.9	9.6	-6.5	3.0
5	-4.9	0	-3.9	0	-0.5	0	-6.5	0
6	-3.5	0.0	-3.9	2.6	-1.4	0.0	-1.4	0
7	-1.9	5.7	-9.5	1.7	-1.9	0	-2.9	0.4
8	1.3	1.0	-16.1	0.0	-3.9	2.1	-4.1	0
9	2.1	2.9	-10.9	2.8	-8.9	0.4	-4.5	0
10	-0.3	0	-13.3	0.2	-10.5	0	-4.4	0
11	-2.5	0	-13.9	0	-7.3	0	-3.5	0
12	0.1	0	-21.0	0	-5.7	0	-2.4	0
13	0.1	0	-23.0	0	0.1	0.8	-2.4	0
14	-0.9	0	-16.8	0.1	-2.5	3.5	-1.4	0
15	-0.4	0	-14.3	0	-0.4	7.0	-3.7	0
16	-1.5	0	-18.6	0	0.5	0.7	-4.1	0
17	-0.5	1.0	-17.8	0.0	-1.4	0	-4.4	0
18	-0.3	0	-18.8	0	0.1	0	-1.9	0
19	-0.4	0	-25.3	0	0.7	0.0	-1.1	0
20	1.7	0	-16.4	0	1.1	0	-3.4	0
21	1.6	0.8	-4.9	0	-1.4	0	-2.7	0
22	-0.5	0.7	-4.2	0	-2.3	0	-4.4	0
23	0.3	0.3	-0.5	0.0	0.1	0	-4.1	0
24	0.5	3.5	-1.9	4.2	-1.5	0	-6.4	0
25	-4.3	0.5	-17.0	1.8	-3.4	0	-5.5	0
26	-3.1	0	-21.0	0	-2.9	0	-3.4	0
27	-9.4	0.0	-23.3	0	-1.9	0	0.3	0
28	-12.9	0	-15.4	0	-1.1	0.1	4.6	0.9
29	-13.4	0	-18.8	0			-0.9	0
30	-9.1	0.0	-16.0	0			3.1	2.5
31	-6.4	0.0	-10.0	0			1.6	0

have been (108,974,600 kg × 40 Kcal/kg × 20% =) 871,976,800 Kcal, equal to about 83,028 liters of gasoline (two full tankers) with a calorific value of 10,500 Kcal/liter!

Temperatures were particularly severe during the second and third weeks of January. On some days, daily minimum temperatures dropped as low as -25°C (-13°F). At such temperatures, it is virtually impossible to do any work outdoors. And it is almost certainly impossible to dig up any soil or exhume any

[310] 1 mm of rainwater corresponds to 1 liter per square meter and roughly to 1 cm of fresh powder snow.



bodies, because the ground would have been so severely frozen that it would have required the use of jackhammers or explosives to break up the ground.

To make the task even more unfeasible, there was rain- and/or snowfall on 31 days out of 105, as I pointed out earlier. The snow accumulated on top of what had already fallen since the second half of November 1942 (about 5 cm of water, or 50 cm of powder snow, on Nov. 17, the same on Nov. 24, a few centimeters of water or decimeters of powder snow in the intermediate and subsequent days). In December 1942, about 18 cm of snow and rain fell, in January 1943 about 15 cm of precipitation, mostly as snow (in the case of powder snow, this amounts to 1.5 m of snow accumulation over the entire month!). In February there was about 28 cm of precipitation (rain and snow), and in March about 9 cm. Therefore, during the above-mentioned 31 days, (4,200 × 31 =) 130,200 corpses would have been cremated in one or two "hearths", on each square meter of which a total of 59.7 cm of precipitation would have fallen, equivalent to 597 liters of water.

According to the orthodox narrative, cremations at Treblinka took place between April and July 1943, on 122 days, and an average of 6,400 bodies were cremated each day. During this period, the meteorological station at Ostrów Mazowiecka, which was located about 20 km NNE of the camp as the crow flies, recorded 49 days of more-or-less-heavy rain: in April 27.5 millimeters of rain fell, in May 20.2, in June 65.3 and in July 167.1, a total of 280.1 mm (Document 111).[311] This is 280 liters of rain per square meter of cremation

[311] "Dobowa suma opadu atmosferycznego [mm] z okresu od 1 lipca 1942 do 31 lipca 1943 roku na podstawie pomiarów na stacji meteorologicznej Ostrów Mazowiecka" ("Daily total precipitation [mm] from July 1, 1942 to July 31, 1943 based on measurements at the Ostrów Mazowiecka weather station"). Instytut Meteorologii i Gospodarki Wodnej. Państwowy Instytut Badawcy, Warsaw.

grate. If there were two grates of 90 square meters each, as the orthodoxy has it (Mattogno/Graf, pp. 147f.), they would have received a total of (90 m² × 2 × 280 L/m² =) 50,400 liters of rain!

For Sobibór one can consider the climatic and meteorological data shown on the map adopted by the Wehrmacht that I described in Chapter V. At Sobibór, the woodcutting and cremation are said to have taken place over the course of one year, from October 1942 to October 1943. The average annual rainfall was 550 mm, or 550 liters per square meter of soil. The monthly rainfall was distributed as follows:

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
30 mm	30 mm	30 mm	40 mm	50 mm	80 mm
JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
80 mm	60 mm	50 mm	40 mm	30 mm	30 mm

Snowfall lasted for an average of 45 days, from mid-November to mid-March. This means that an average of 120 mm of rain or about 1.2 m of snow fell during this period. Finally, the marshes were frozen from mid-December to mid-March. This also applies to any wood cut during that period.

These were undoubtedly average values, but they could not deviate too much from the actual ones.

That 300,000 corpses were actually cremated under these conditions (an average of 822 every day for 365 days) can only be believed by those who have renounced any critical sense.

7.8. The Duration of Cremation

The experience gained in England during the incineration on pyres of livestock that had died in masses due to "mad-cow disease" (bovine spongiform encephalopathy, BSE), which began in 2001, showed that the capacity of these pyres, built according to technical guidelines of efficiency and economy, was about 8 kg of carcass in one hour per 1 square meter of cremation surface (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 1293-1296).

At Treblinka, the only camp for which orthodox historiography provides precise indications, the cremation of corpses is said to have been carried out on two grates of 90 square meters each, meaning that in 24 hours they would have been able to burn (2 × 90 m² × 8 kg/hr × 24 hr/day =) 34,560 kg of organic substance, or (34,560 kg/day ÷ 18.95 kg/corpse =) about 1,820 bodies per day. Therefore, the burning of 781,000 bodies would have required (781,000 corpses ÷ 1,820 corpses/day =) 429 days of uninterrupted burning, i.e. without allowing any time for the preparation of the two pyres (arrangement of wood and bodies) and for the removal of the ashes. However, the time available was only 122 days.

For Bełżec, assuming that the two hearths mentioned by Heinrich Gley were the same size as those at Treblinka, it would have taken (441,000 corpses ÷ [34560 kg/day ÷ 23.6 kg/corpse] =) about 300 days of uninterrupted burning to incinerate the alleged 441,000 victims, but only 105 days were available.

Whichever way one looks at it, the eradication of the bodies of 1,522,000 Jews in the camps of Operation Reinhardt proves to be completely impossible. This also applies to the total figure of 1,249,433 deportees mentioned in the so-called Höfle telegram (the figures for Bełżec – 434,508 people – Sobibór – 101,370 – and Treblinka – 713,555 – are no-less-impossible than those considered above), which represents the lower limit below which orthodox historiography cannot fall without contradicting one of its fundamental postulates.

A realistic, meaning at-least-feasible, order of magnitude can be deduced from the following observation: if the 40 inmates of the forest unit at Sobibór had cut 0.63 tons per day each, every day, for 365 days straight, their production would have been (40 × 0.63 tons/day × 365 days =) about 9,200 tons, enough to cremate about 36,400 corpses, which is roughly the number of corpses that could fit in the mass graves discovered by the archaeologists, as I have shown earlier. Even this is undoubtedly an excessive figure, but at least it gives a good understanding of a maximum possible order of magnitude.

I summarize the main data I have just shown in the following table.

Camp:	Bełżec	Sobibór	Treblinka	Totals
claimed number of victims	441,000	300,000	781,000	
claimed no. of buried bodies	441,000	80,000	764,000	
disturbed-soil volume [m³]	18,565	13,275	14,300	
needed mass-grave volume for claimed corpses [m³]	44,100	8,000	76,400	
total need of green wood [t]	110,603	75,810	198,843	385,256
wood forest units Waldkommandos could cut [t]	3,969	9,198	7,686	20,853
available cremation time [days]	105	365	122	
min. cremation time needed [days]	300	/	429	

The pairs of figures in bold clearly demonstrate the absurdity of the extermination activities claimed for the camps of Operation Reinhardt.

7.9. Cremation Ashes

In another study, starting out from the data presented by the orthodox holocaustic polemicist mentioned earlier, I derived the average ash weight resulting from the outdoor cremation of a presumed gassing victim for all three camps, and explained that the mass of pure ashes must be increased by the experimental factor of 1.67 due to the presence of unburned body tissue. For a human

body, this corresponds to approximately 3.7 kg of body-residue mass (ashes and incompletely or unburned tissue). The theoretical ash content of dry wood (8%) must also be increased by a factor of 1.67, determined experimentally, due to the presence of unburned or incompletely burned wood, resulting in (8% × 1.67 =) 13% wood-residue mass (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 1313-1316). I present the respective data in the following table:

Camp:	Bełżec	Sobibór	Treblinka	Totals
number of bodies	441,000	300,000	781,000	1,522,000
body-residue mass per body [kg]	3.7	4.0	3.7	
total body-residue mass [t]	1,631.7	1,200.0	2,889.7	5,721.4
total dry wood needed [t]	58,212	39,900	104,654	202,766
percentage of wood residues	0.13	0.13	0.13	
total wood-residue mass [t]	7,567	5,187	13,605	26,359
total residue mass [t]	9,198.7	6,387	16,494.7	32,080.4

An archaeological "confirmation" of this presumed immense cremation would therefore consist in the discovery in the area of the above-mentioned camps of a quantity of ashes in the order of magnitude of tens of thousands of tons. But this order of magnitude is categorically excluded by the results of the investigations on the grounds that I set out in Chapters 4 through 6.

Conclusions

No records are known to exist on the planning, construction, administration and actual use of the camps at Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka, and even less-so on their alleged function for the mass extermination of Jews. This function was invented by Polish-Jewish black propaganda in the ways illustrated in Part One of the present study, where I outlined the literary genesis of the gas-chambers lore, and documented that the historical "truth" currently in vogue for Bełżec and Sobibór is only an arbitrary selection by Polish investigators from the various propaganda "truths" circulating in the immediate post-war period. For Treblinka, they relied on Jankiel Wiernik's reckless plagiarism, who transformed the original "steam chambers" into "gas chambers" – and on copycat plagiarists such as Abraham Isaak Goldfarb.

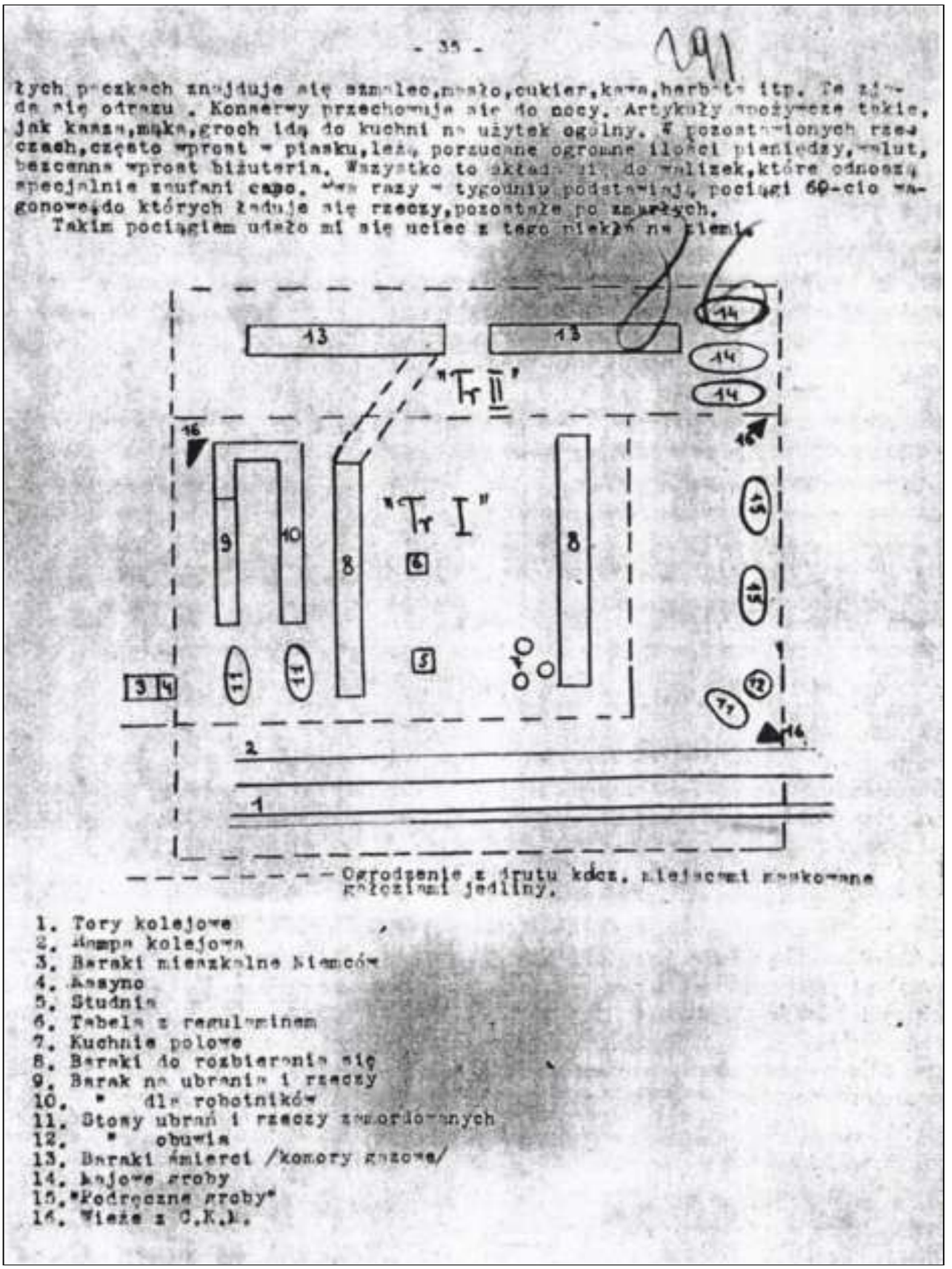
The examination of archaeological research into these camps as presented in Part Two revealed fallacious methods in the detection of mass graves and even more so of alleged gas chambers. In Bełżec, excavations were performed without finding any traces of the gas chambers; in Treblinka, traces were allegedly found, but without performing excavations. In Sobibór, the foundations of the alleged gas chambers that had already been found in 1945 and were purposefully buried under an asphalt square in the early 1960s, were re-discovered in 2014. These foundations have elements not explained by archaeologists (such as semi-circular walls and extremely irregular wall patterns) and are at odds with anecdotal evidence, which itself is mutually contradictory.

The mass graves identified by archaeologists – most prominently at Bełżec and Treblinka – are also in total contradiction with the relevant testimonies.

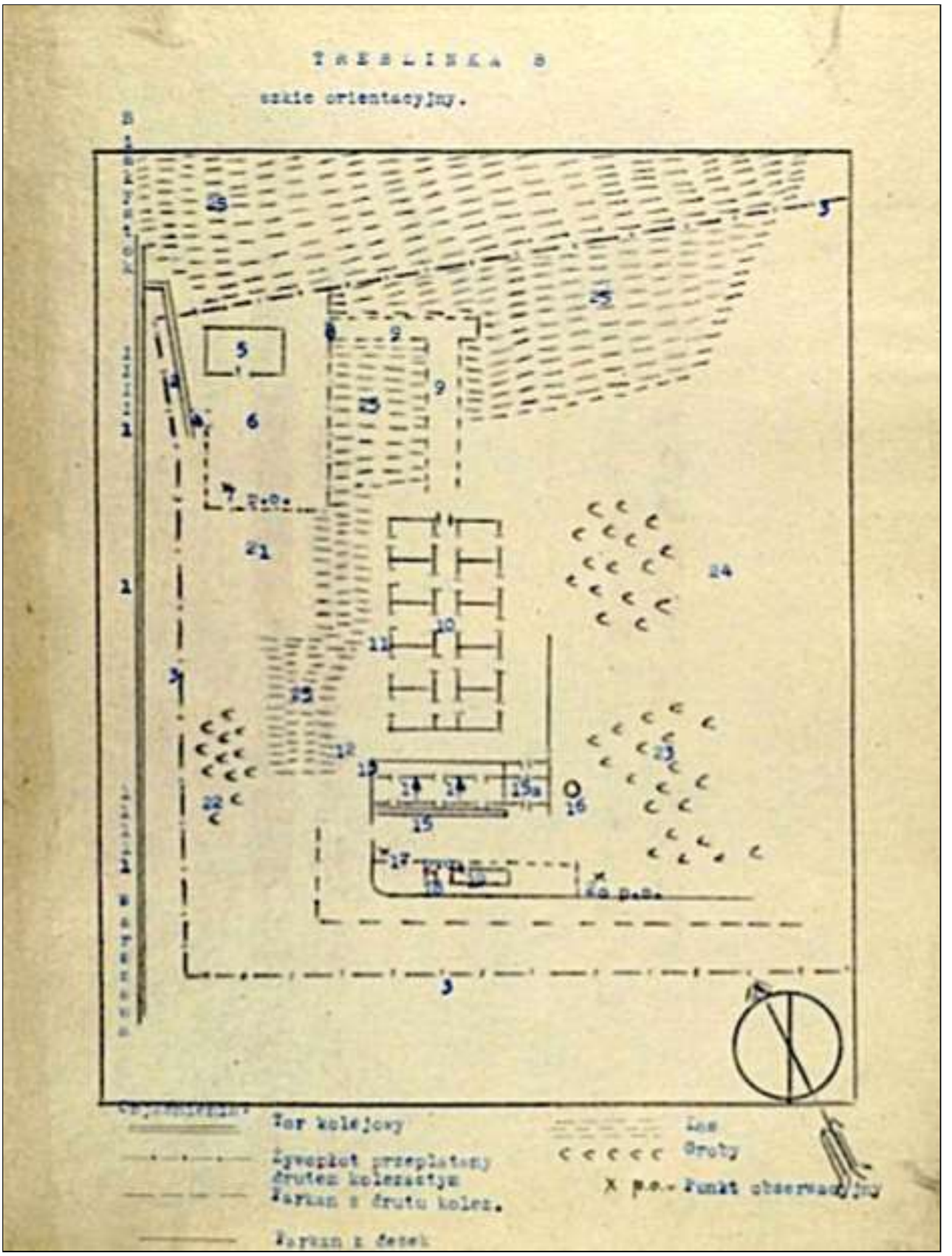
The study of the feasibility of mass exhumations and cremations as required by the orthodox narrative (Part Three) leads to the inescapable conclusion:

1. At Bełżec and Treblinka, the ground disturbances detected by the archaeologists could have accommodated only a portion of the claimed gassing victims. At Bełżec, over 257,000 bodies would have remained unburied, and at Treblinka over 626,000.
2. At Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka, just cutting the wood needed for the cremations (without considering its transportation to the camps) would have lasted more than eight years under the most-favorable circumstances, against the respective times available according to the orthodox narrative: 105, 365 and 122 days, respectively.

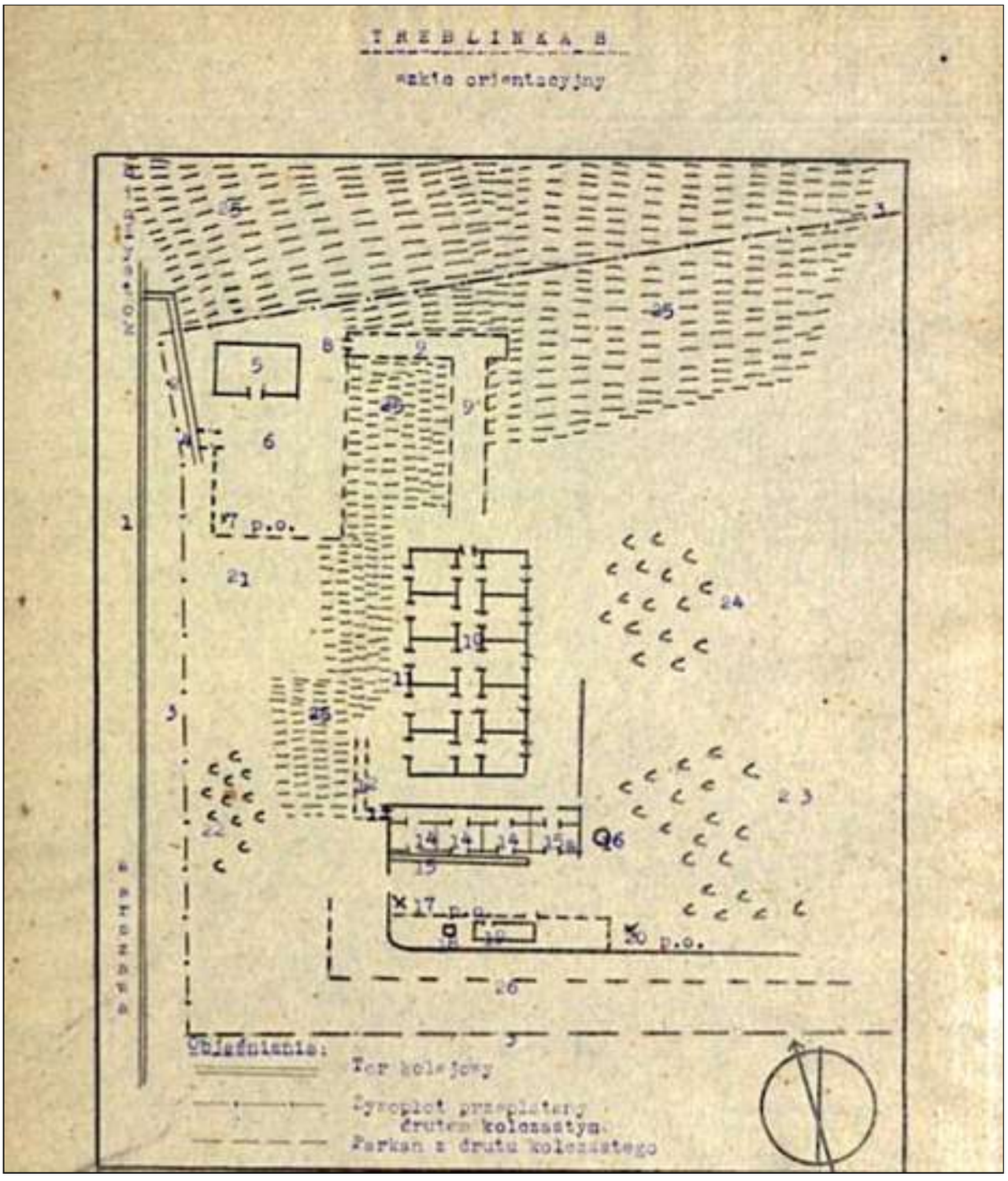
Appendix
Documents



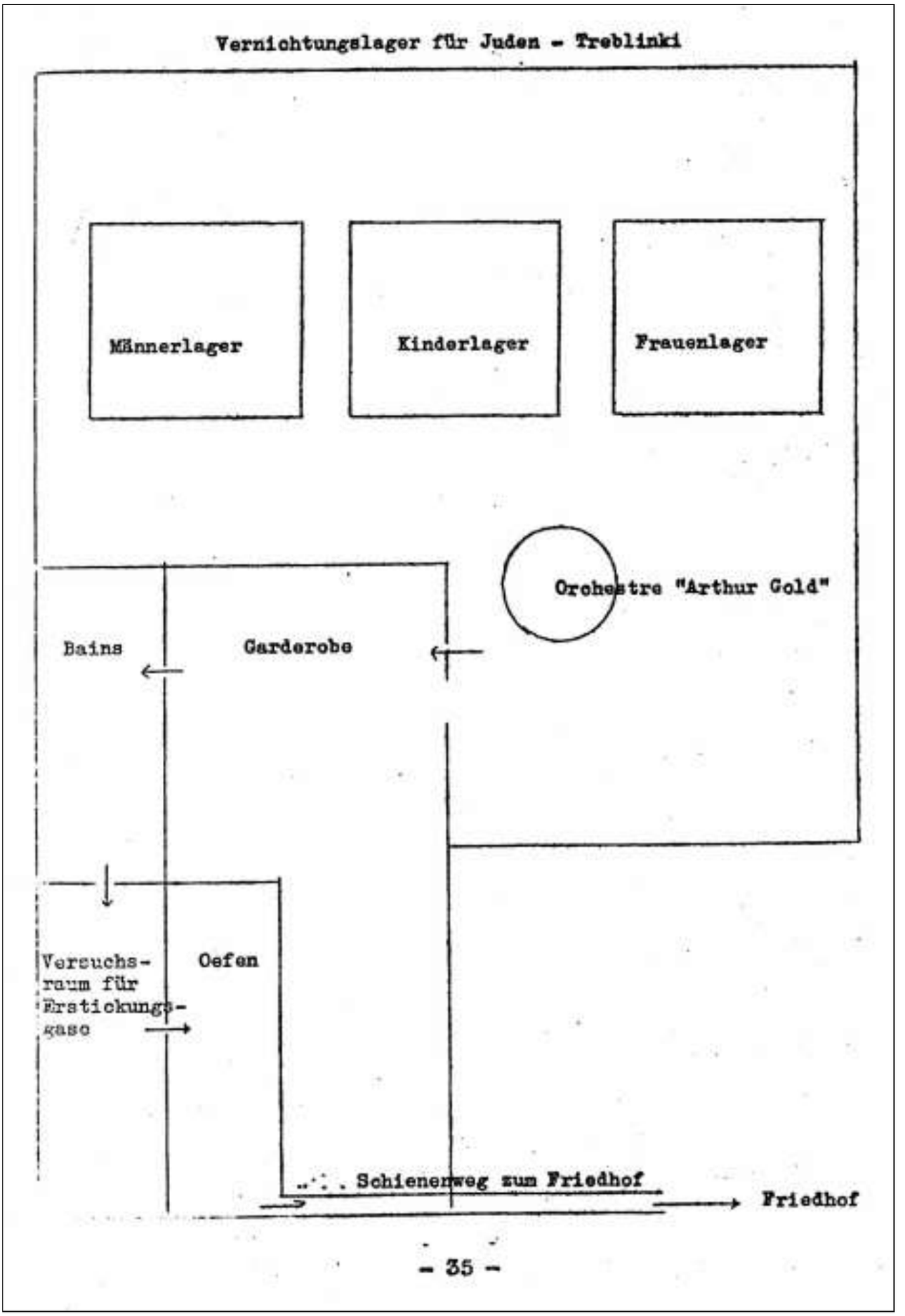
Document 1: Sketch of the Treblinka Camp by an anonymous witness (October-November 1942). Marczewska/Ważniewski, p. 149.



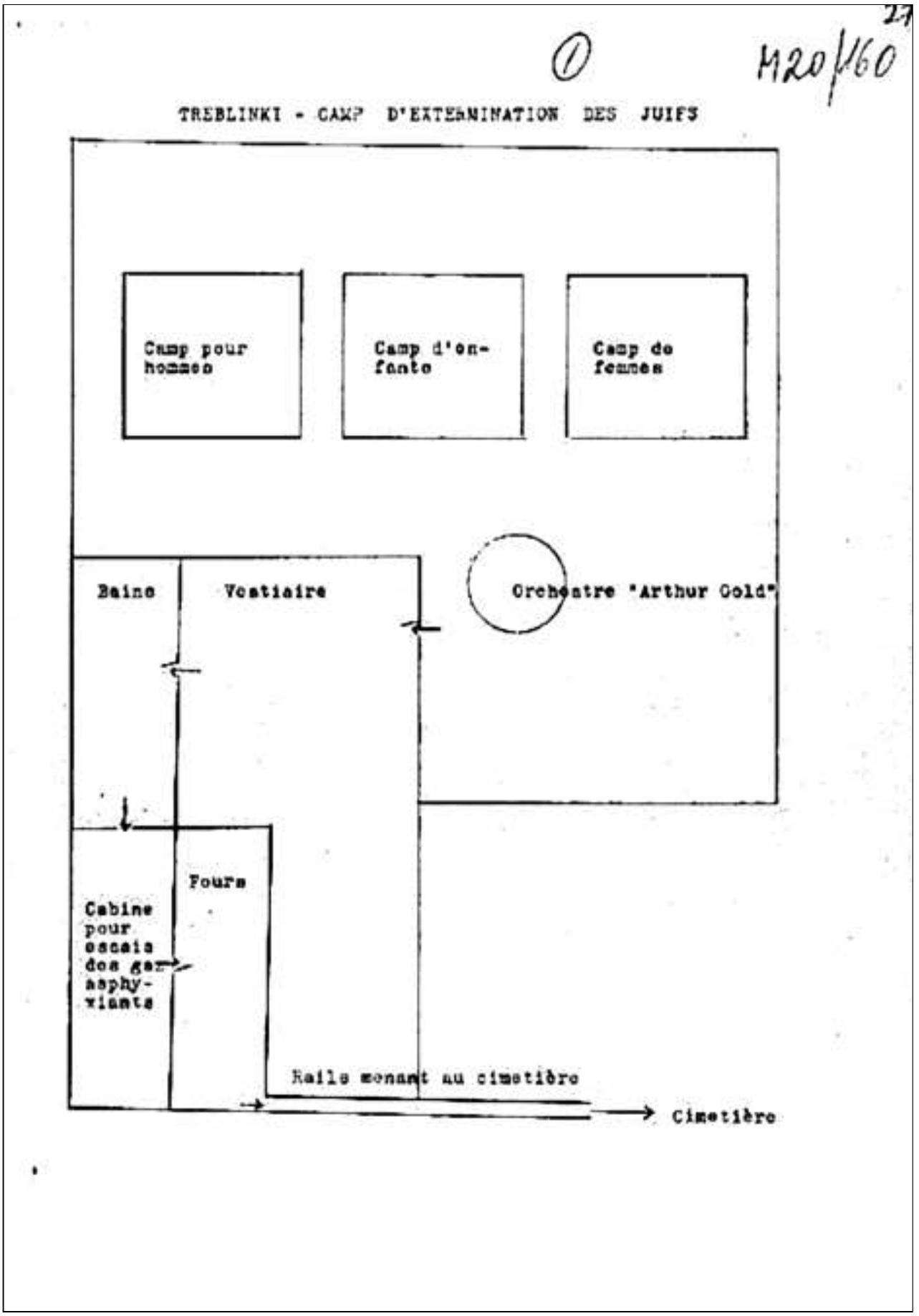
Document 2: "Treblinka B – orientation sketch." Maps attached to the report of November 15, 1942 concerning the "steam chambers" of Treblinka. AŻIH, ARG 300.Ring II/192. Mf. ŻIH-836, unnumbered pages.



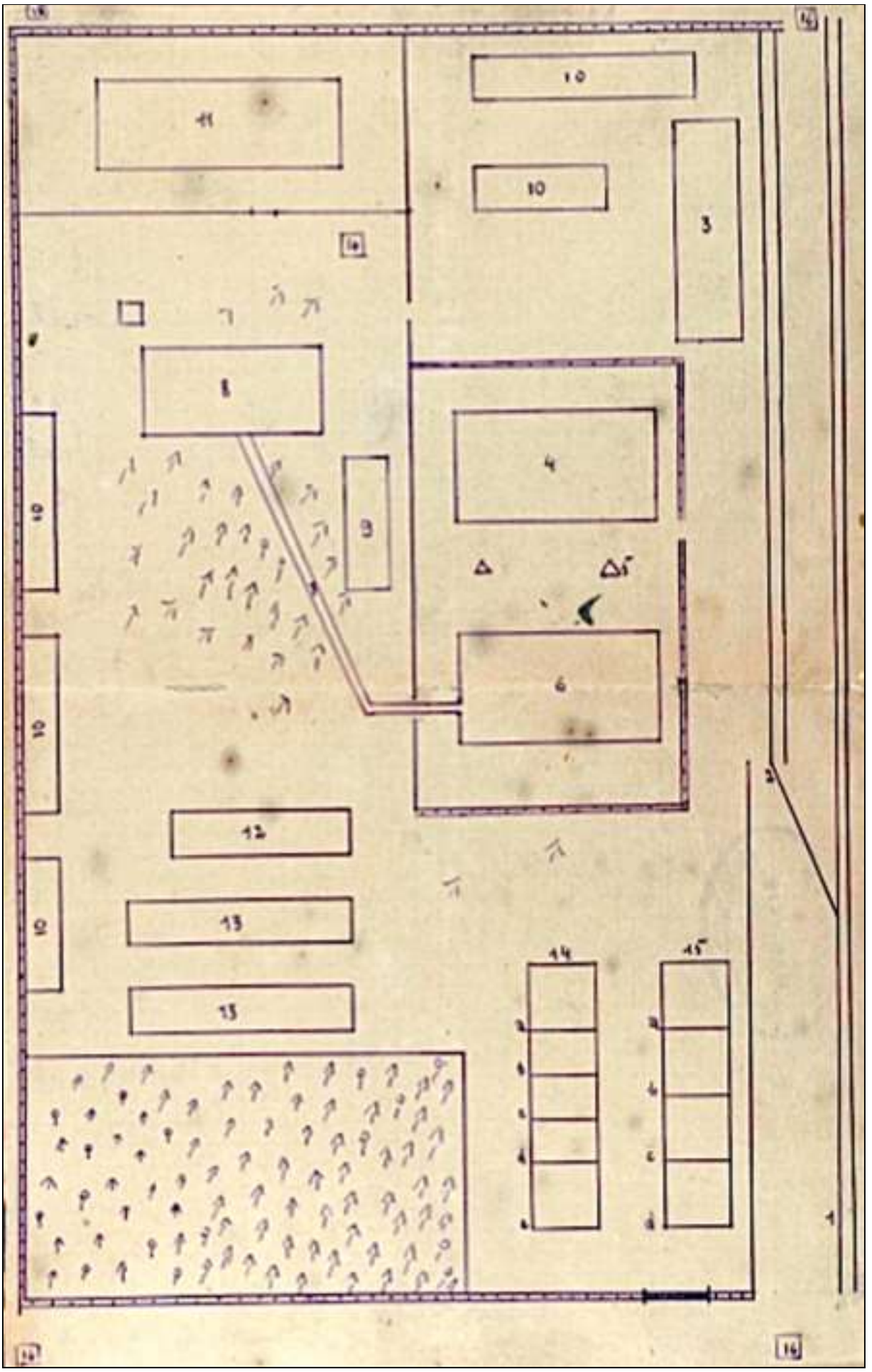
Document 3: as Document 2.



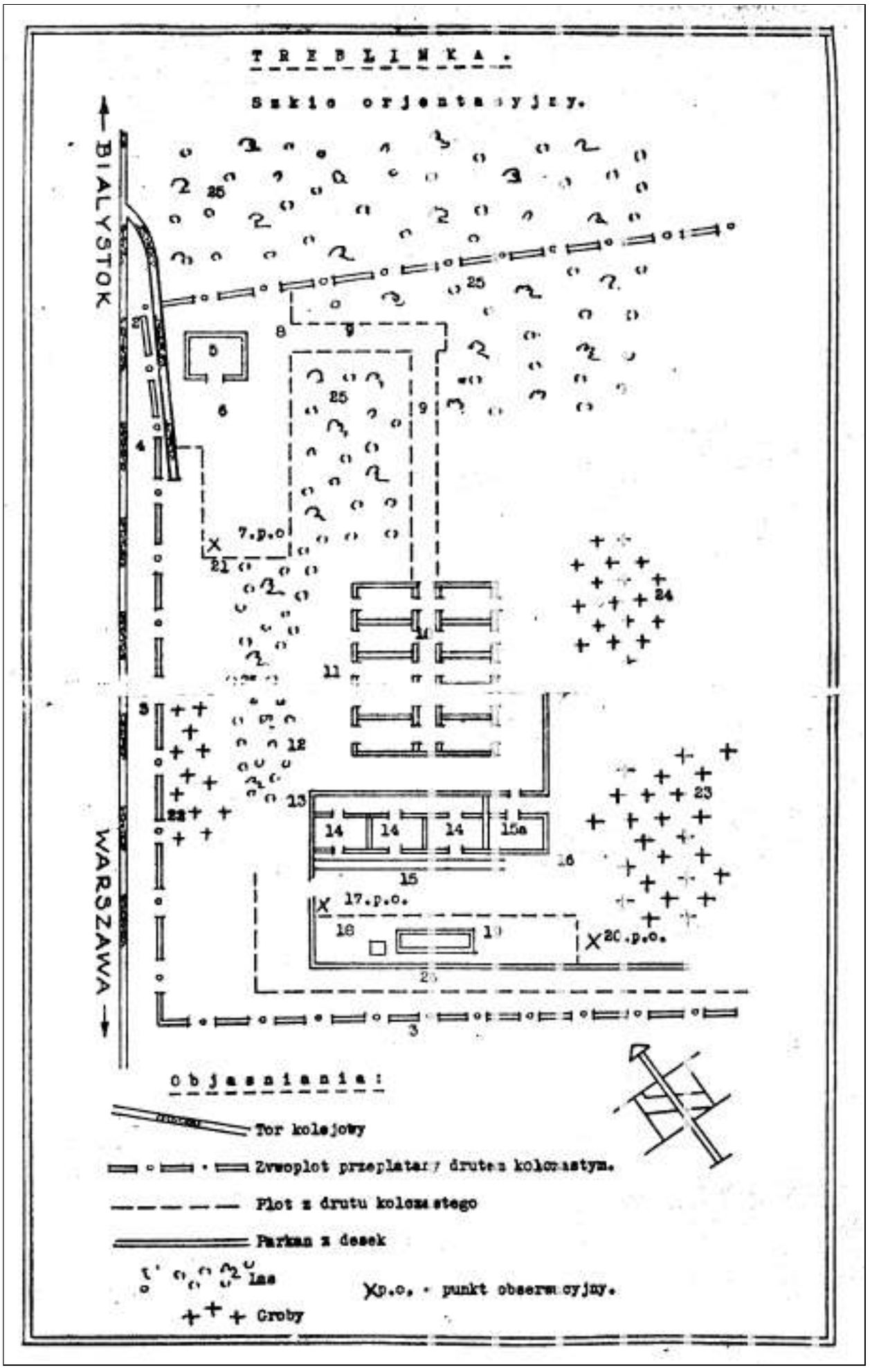
Document 4: "Vernichtungslager für Juden – Treblinki" / "Extermination Camp for Jews – Treblinki." Silberschein 1944a, p. 35.



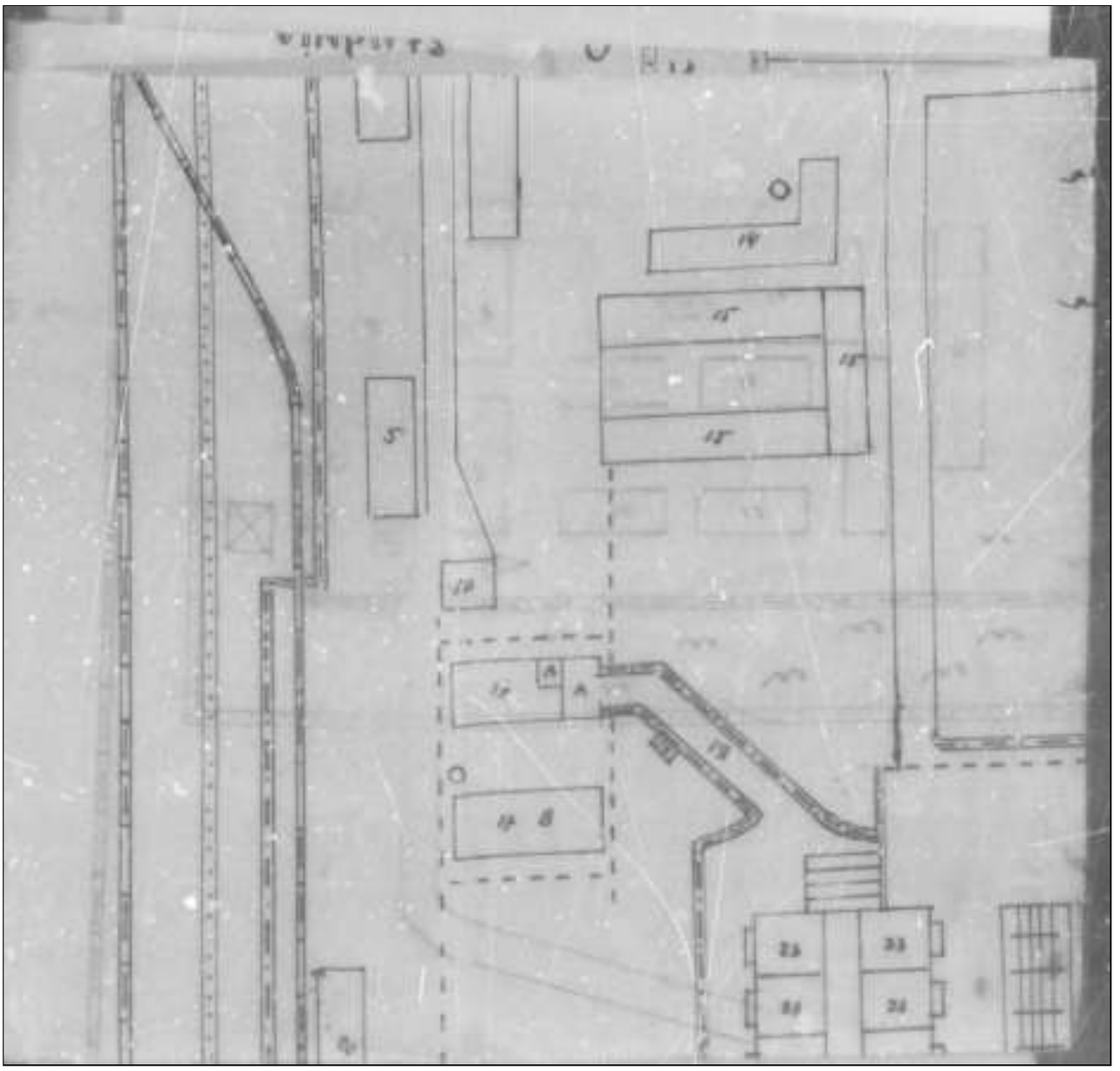
Document 5: "Treblinki – camp d'extermination des Juifs" / "Treblinki – Extermination Camp of the Jews." YVA, M.20/160.



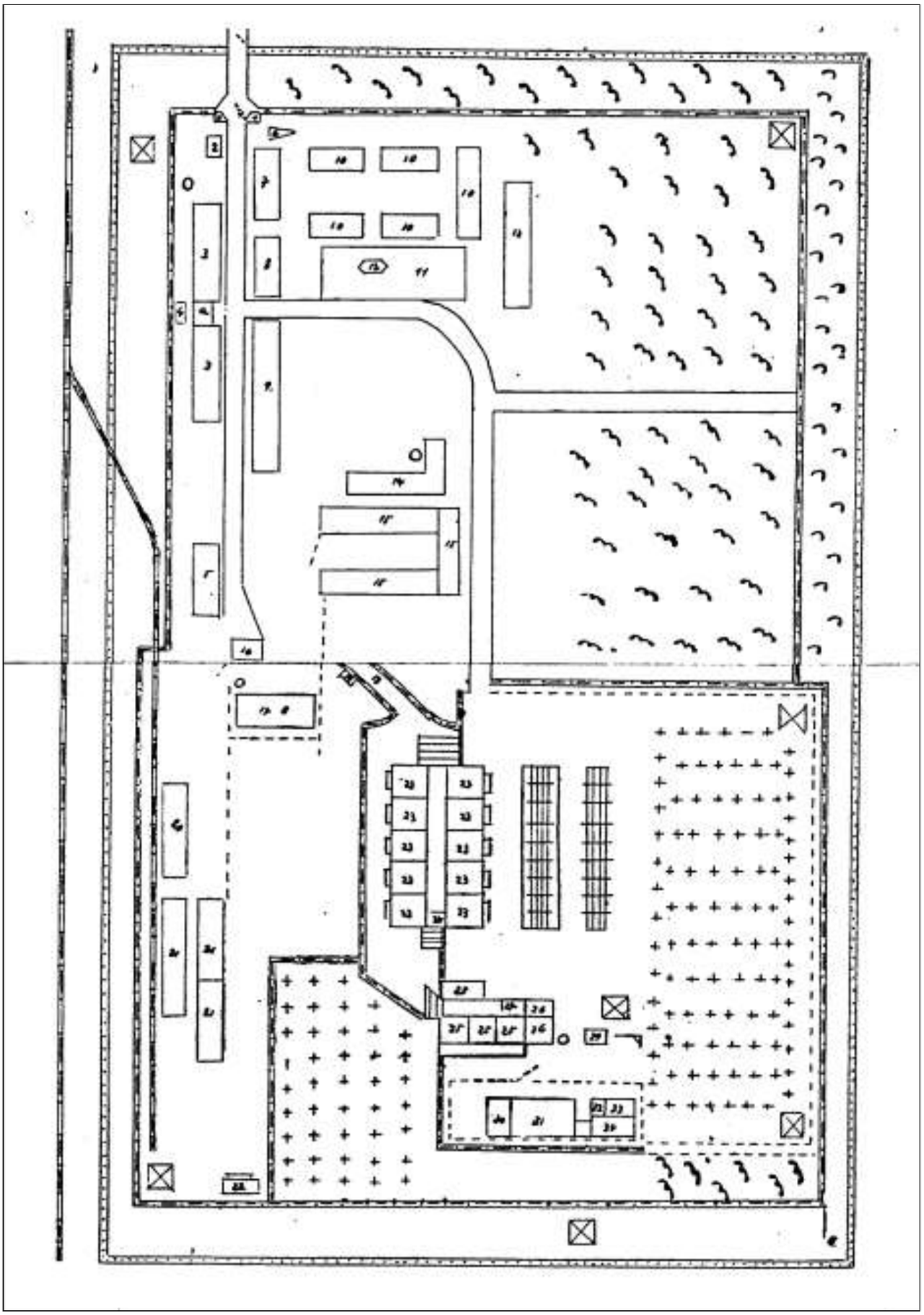
Document 6: Treblinka Map by Jakub Krzepicki (second half of 1942). AŻIH, ARG 378.Ring. II/295. Mf. ŻIH-800.



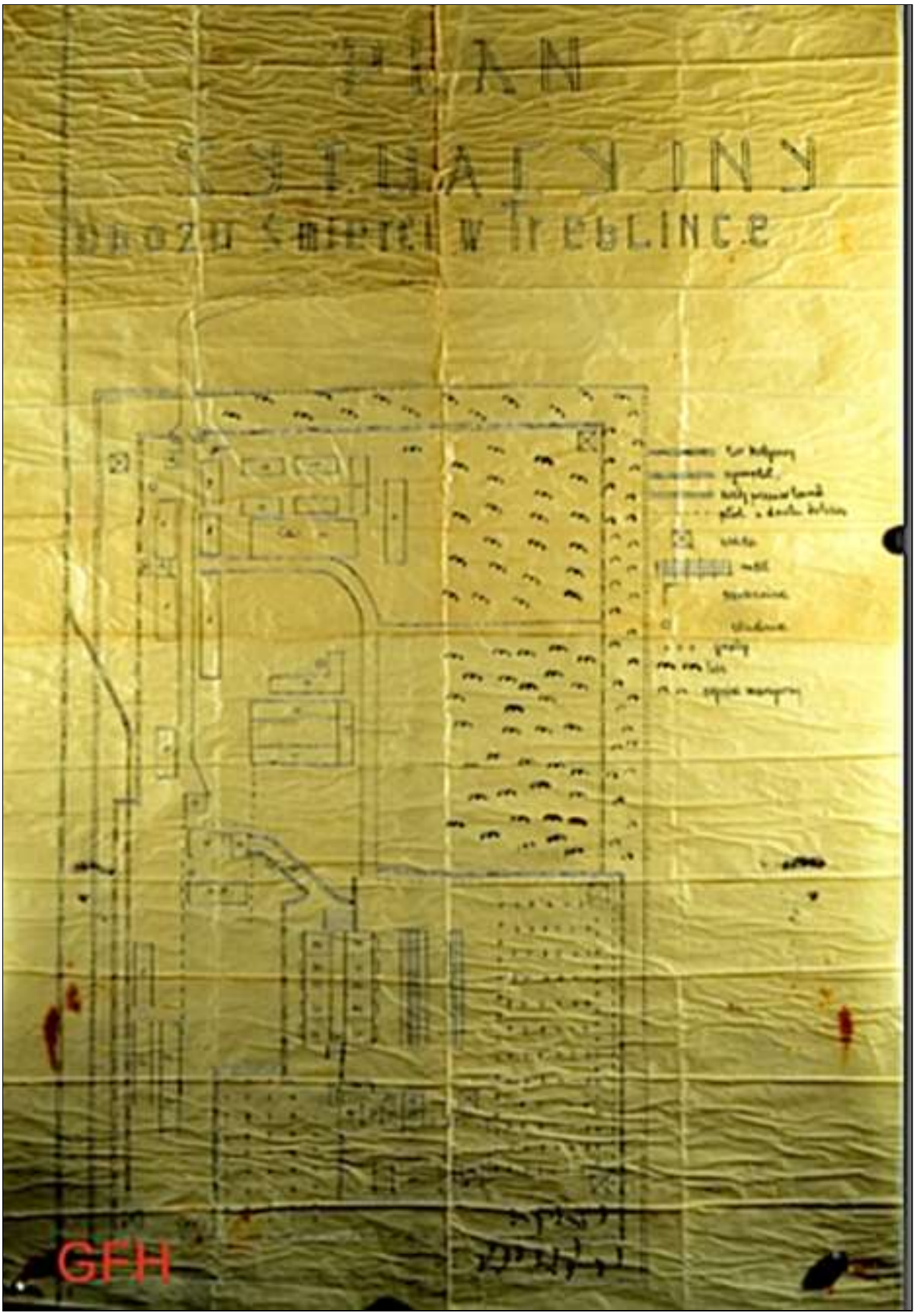
Document 7: "Treblinka – orientation sketch." Wiernik, 1944b, pp. 24f.



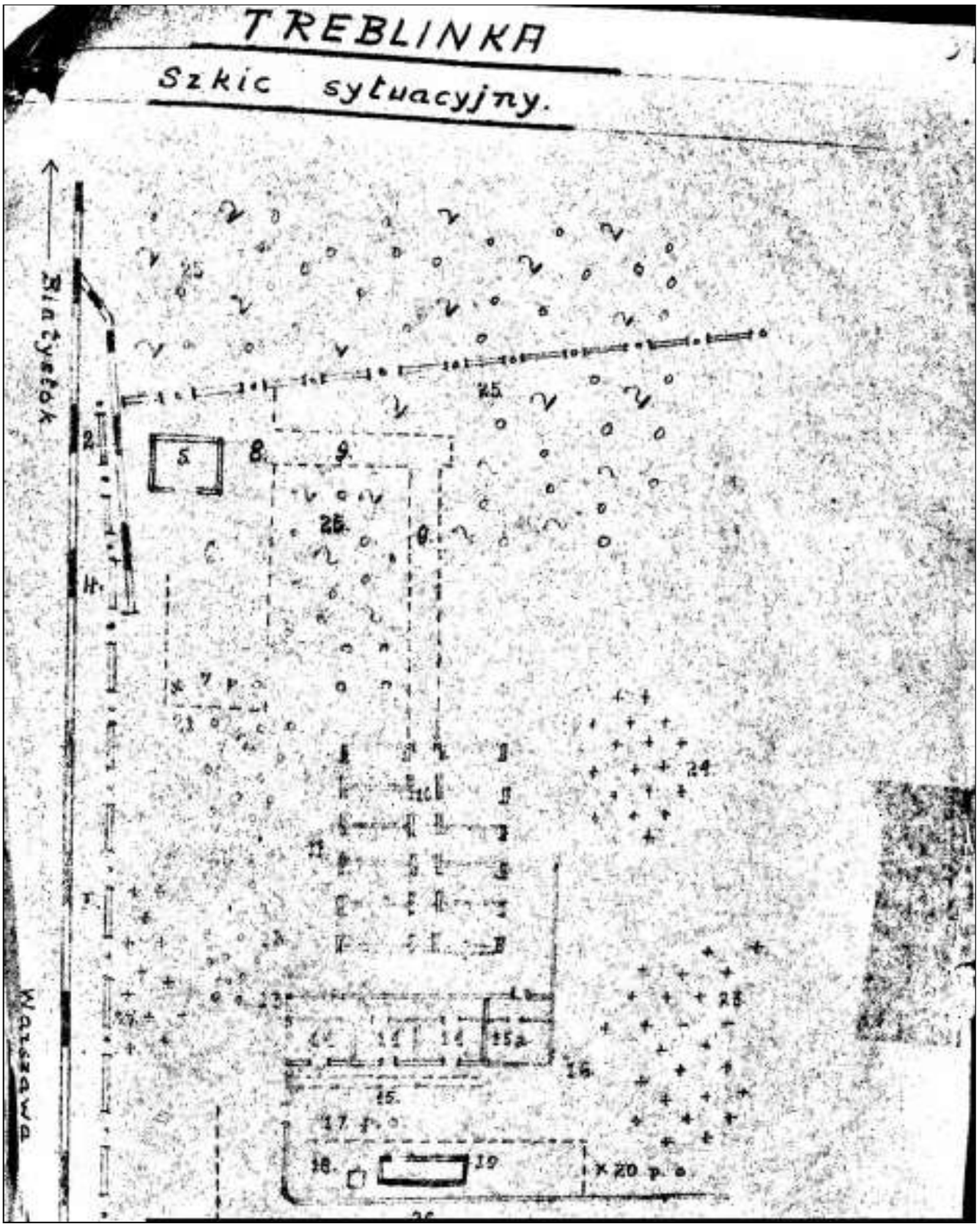
Document 8: "Sketch of Treblinka drawn by witness Ya'akov Wierkik [sic]." Eichmann Trial Document T/1300.



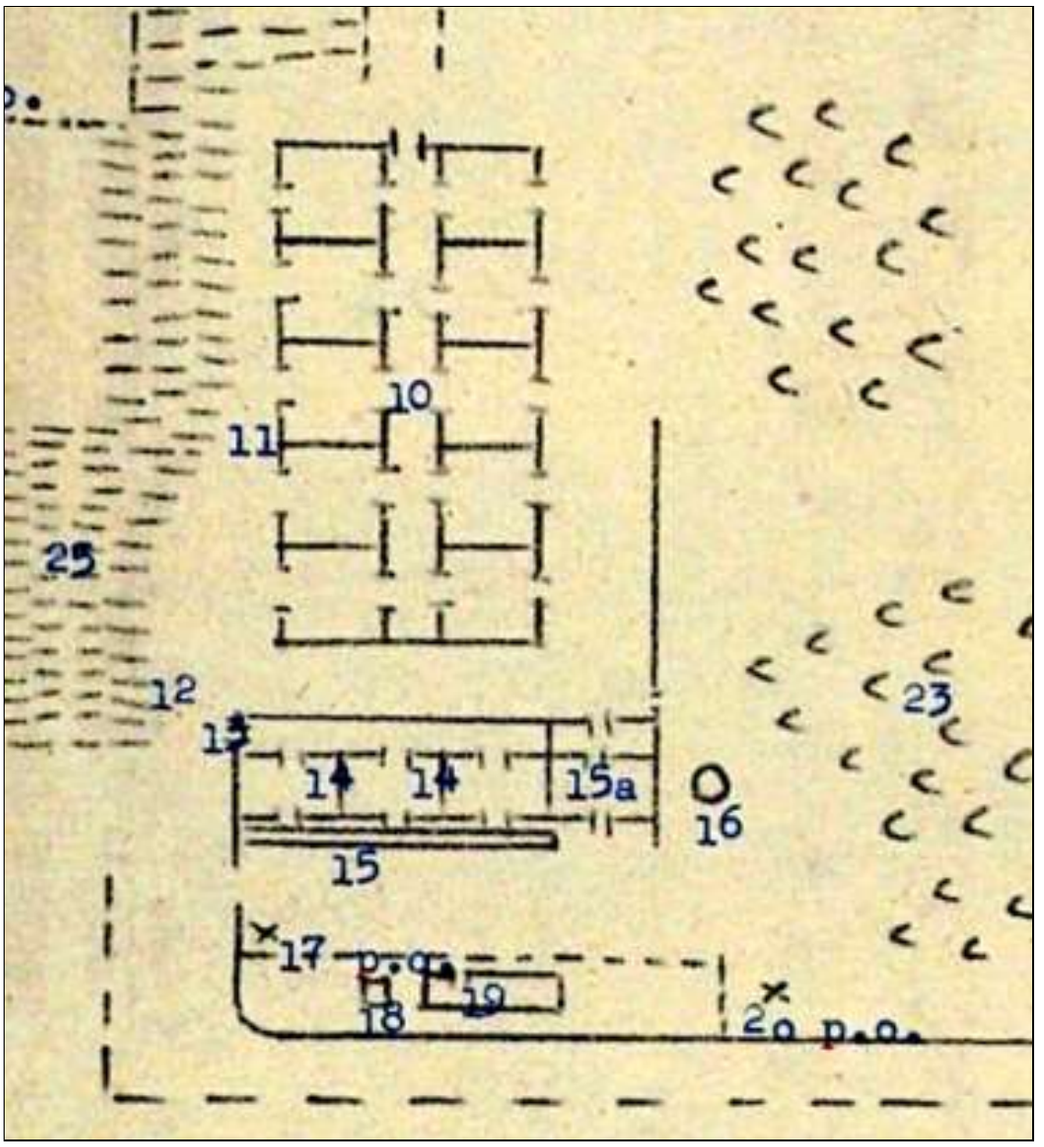
Document 9: Treblinka map drawn by Yankiel Wiernik. Friedman 1946, pp. 82f.



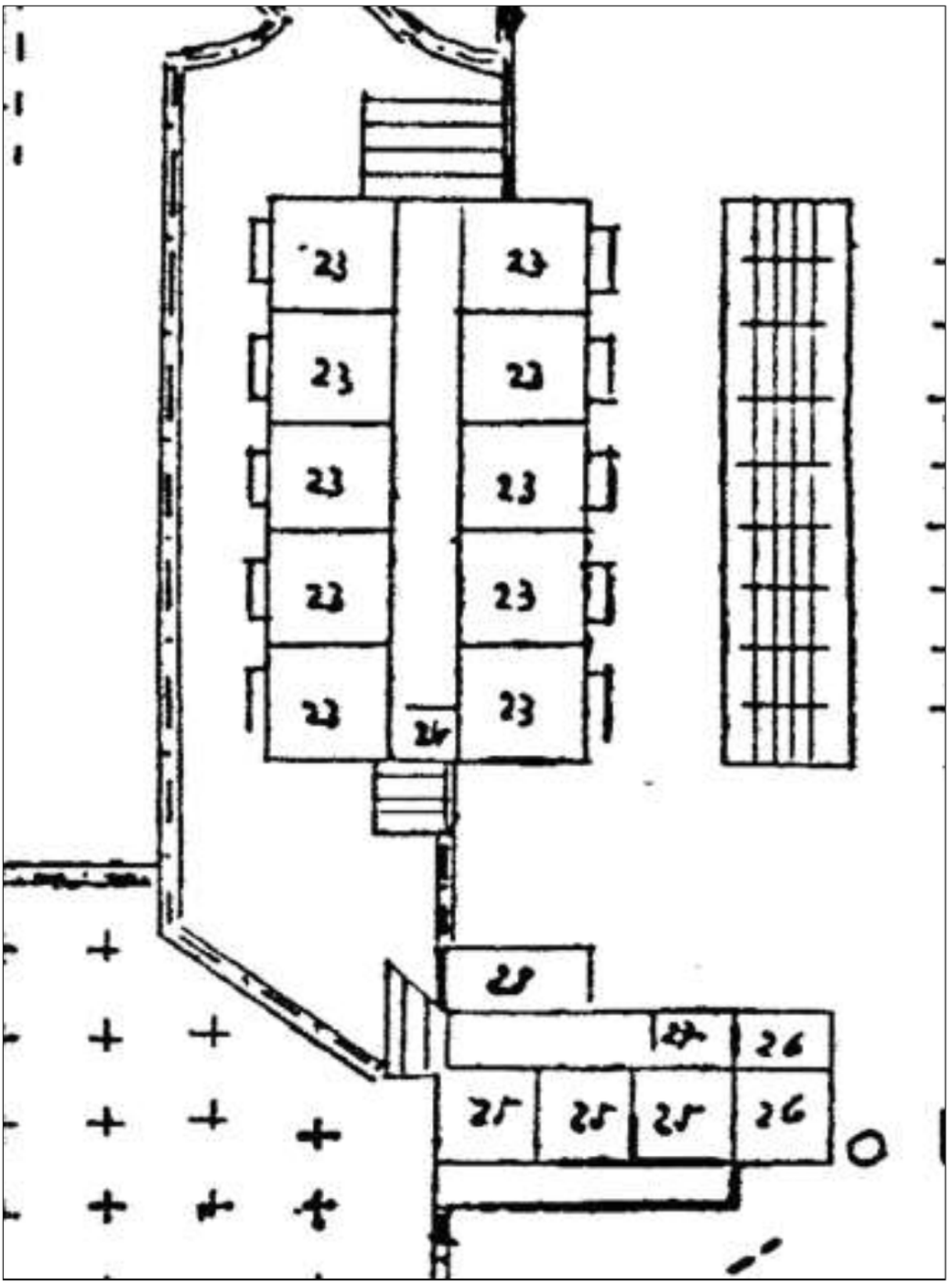
Document 10: "Location Map of Treblinka Death Camp." GFHA, Catalog No. 4441.



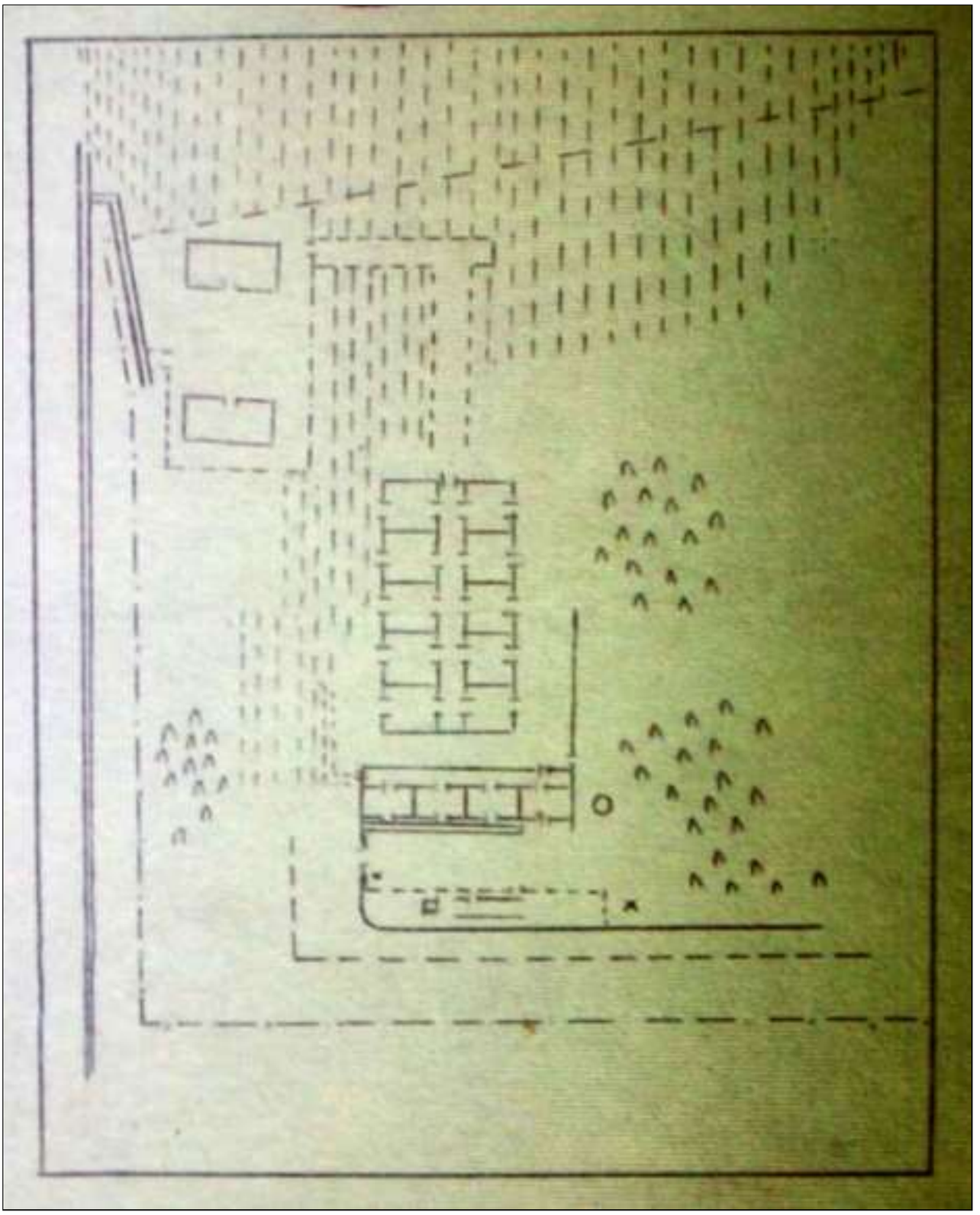
Document 11: "Treblinka – Location Map." TNA, FO 371/42806.



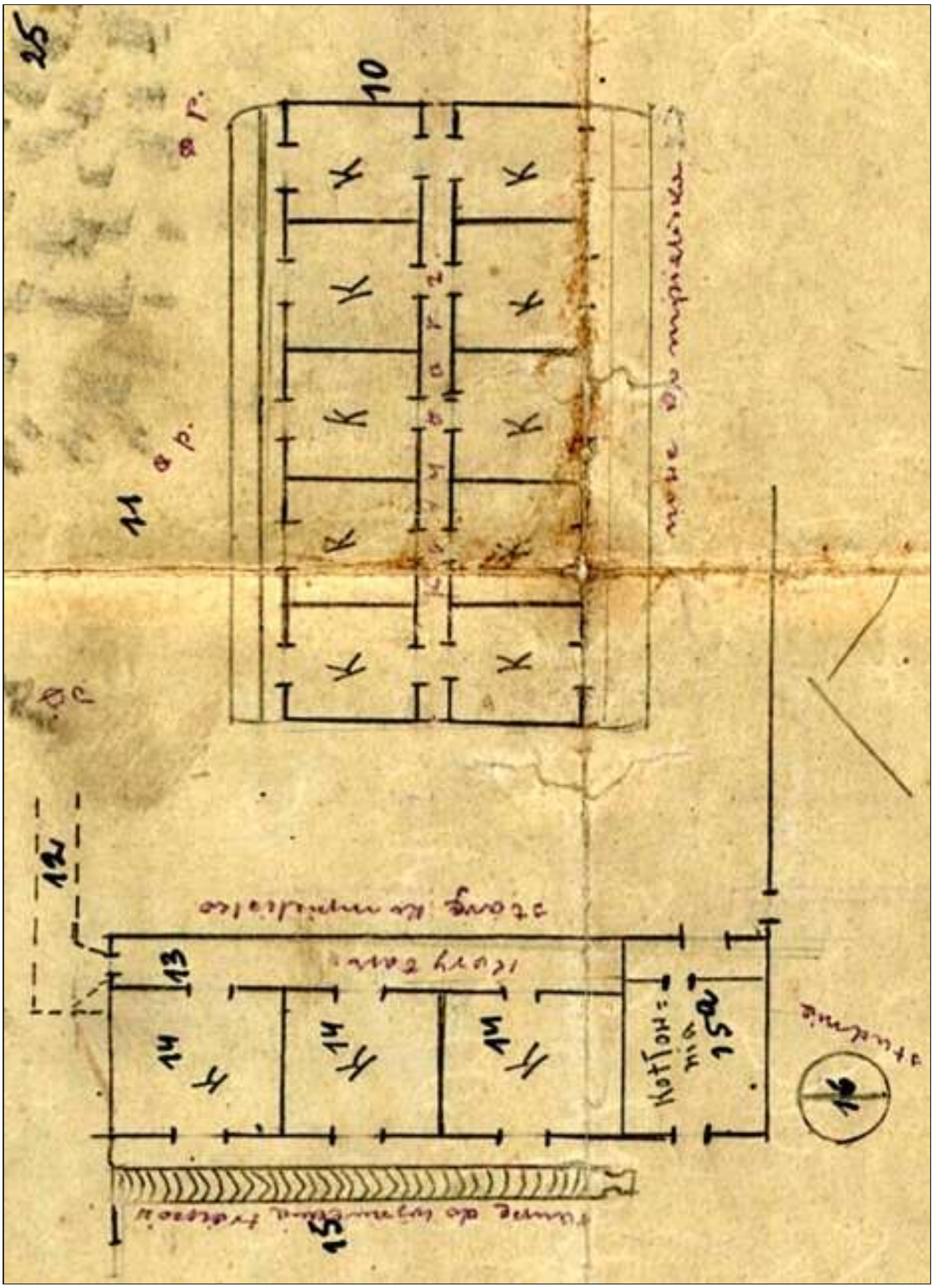
Document 12: Detail enlargement of Document 2.



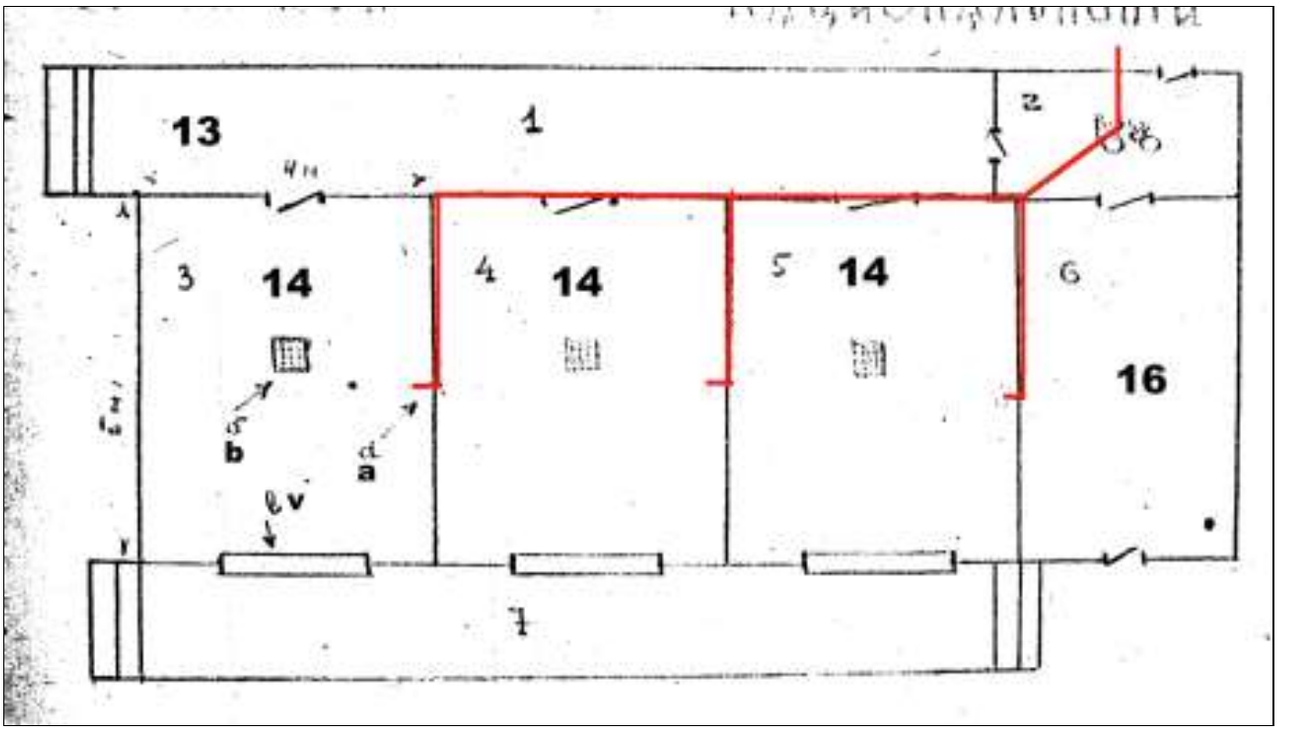
Document 13: Detail enlargement of Document 9.



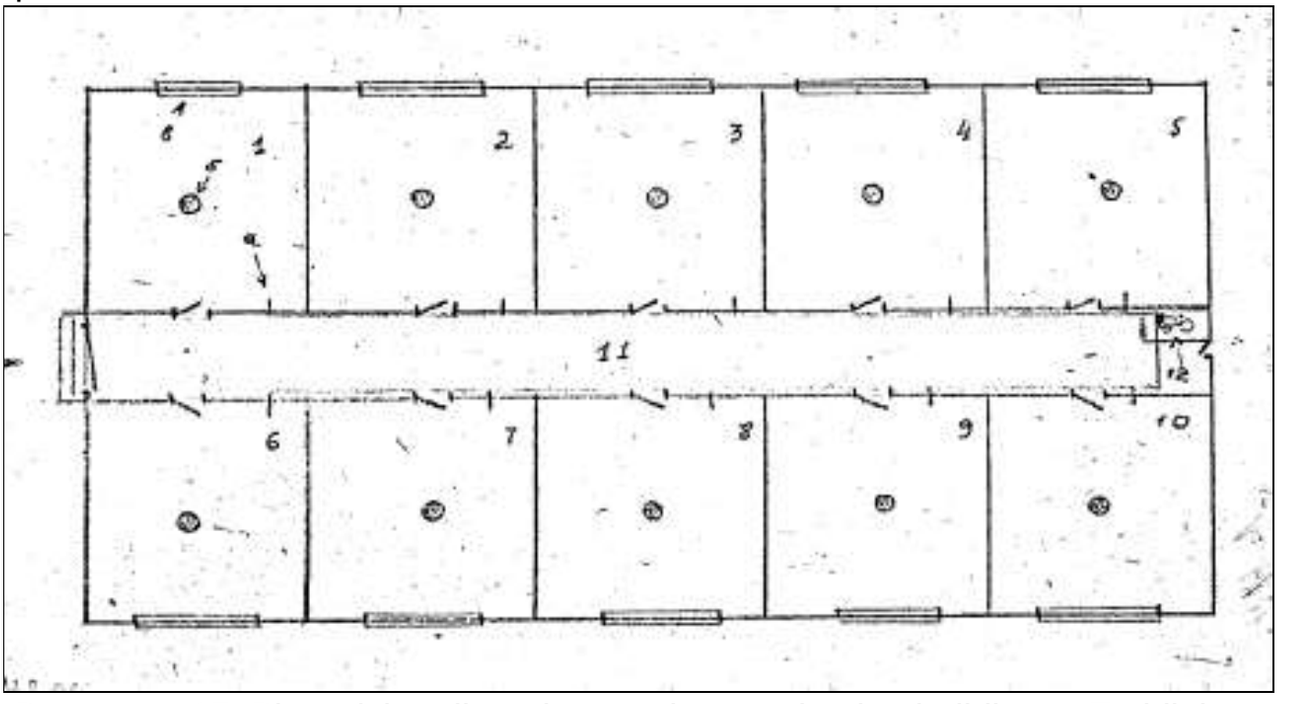
Document 14: Treblinka camp sketch by an unknown author (second half of 1942). AŻIH, ARG, 384.Ring.II/300.1.Mf. ŻIH-800.



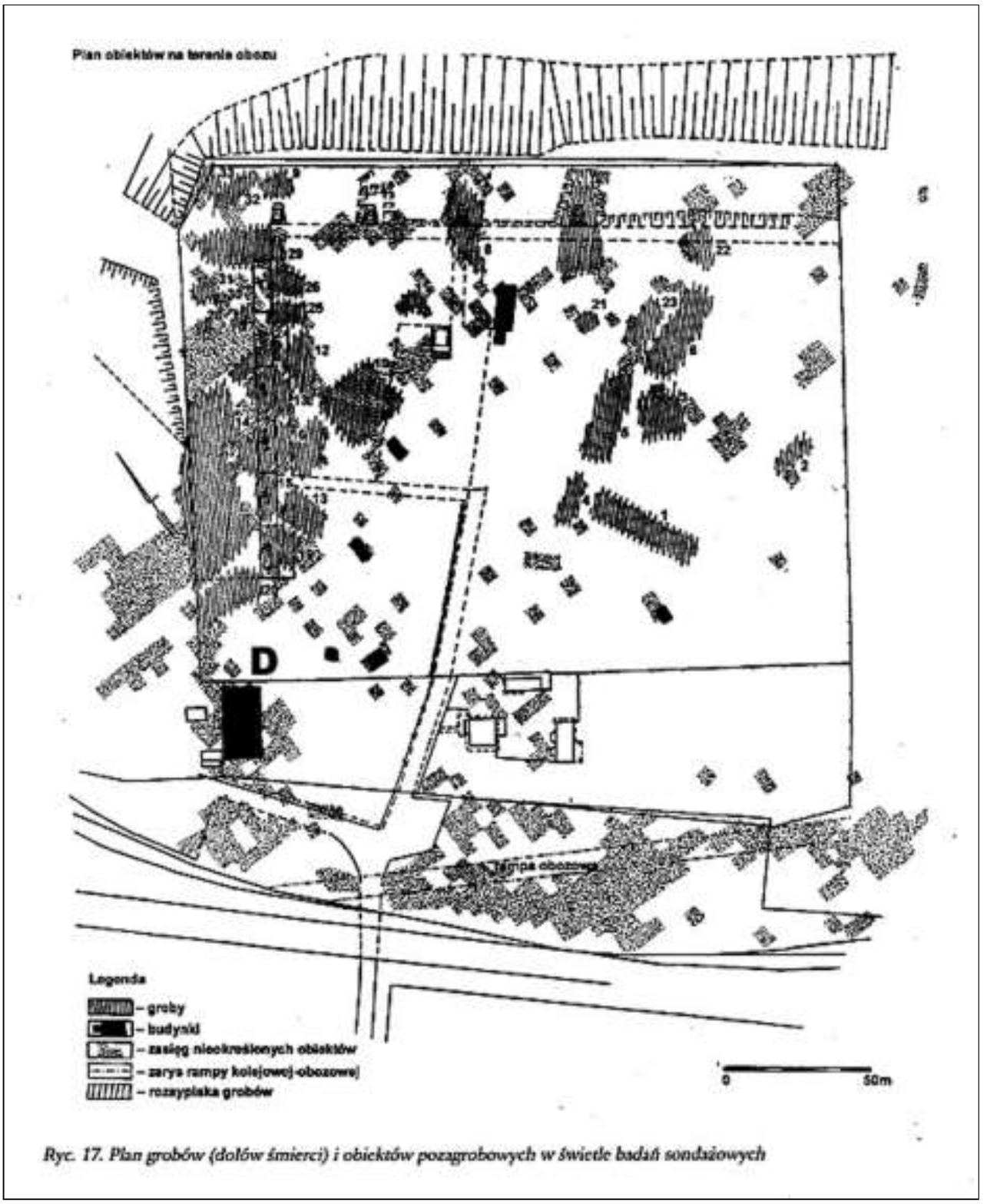
Document 15: Camp map of Treblinka by an unknown author (after July 1942). AŻIH, ARG, 384.Ring.II/488. Mf. ŻIH-809.



Document 16: Plan of the alleged first extermination building at Treblinka drawn by Lieutenant Jurowski after September 21, 1944. GARF, 7445-2-134, p. 39.



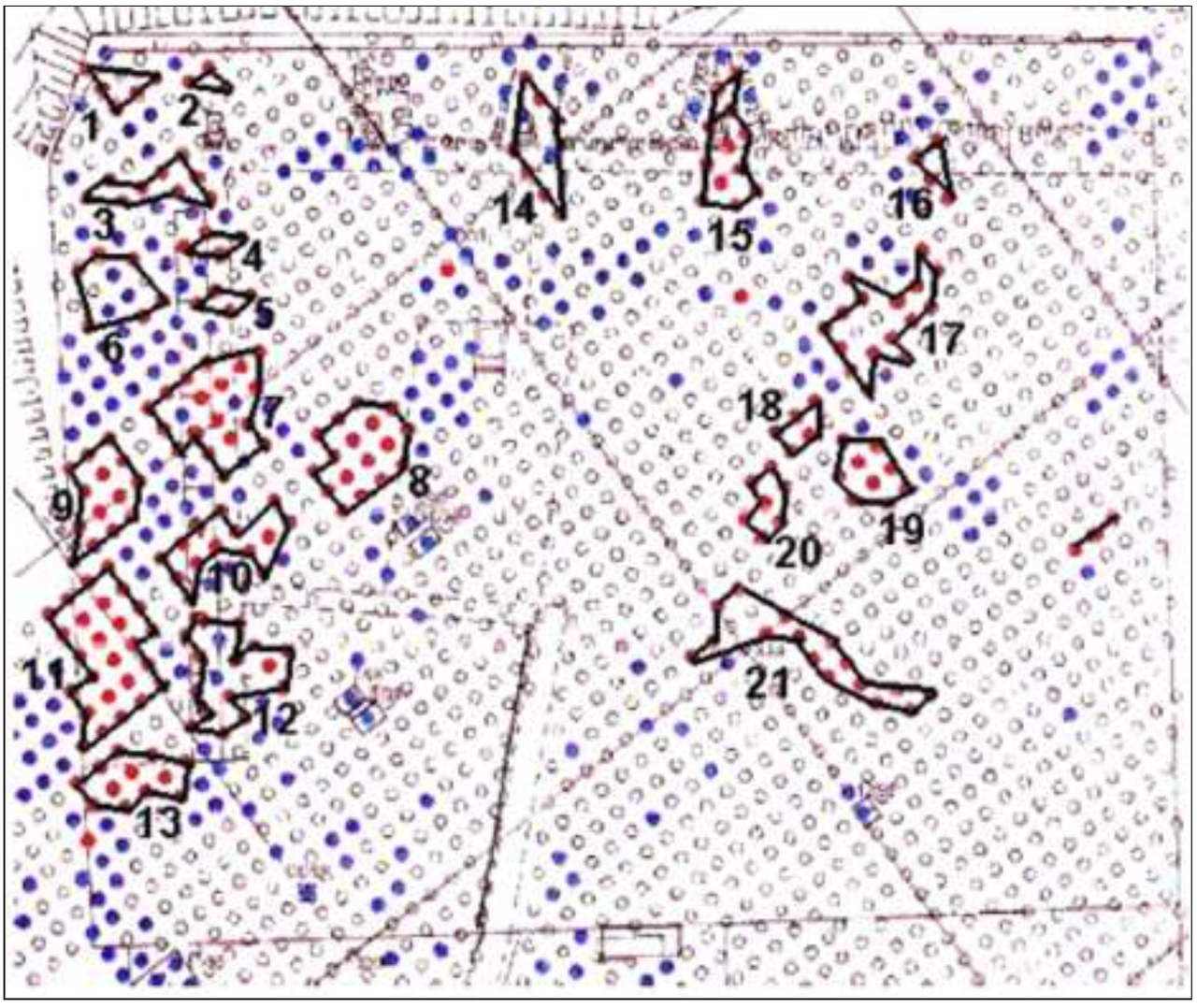
Document 17: Plan of the alleged second extermination building at Treblinka drawn by Lieutenant Jurowski after September 21, 1944. GARF, 7445-2-134, p. 40.



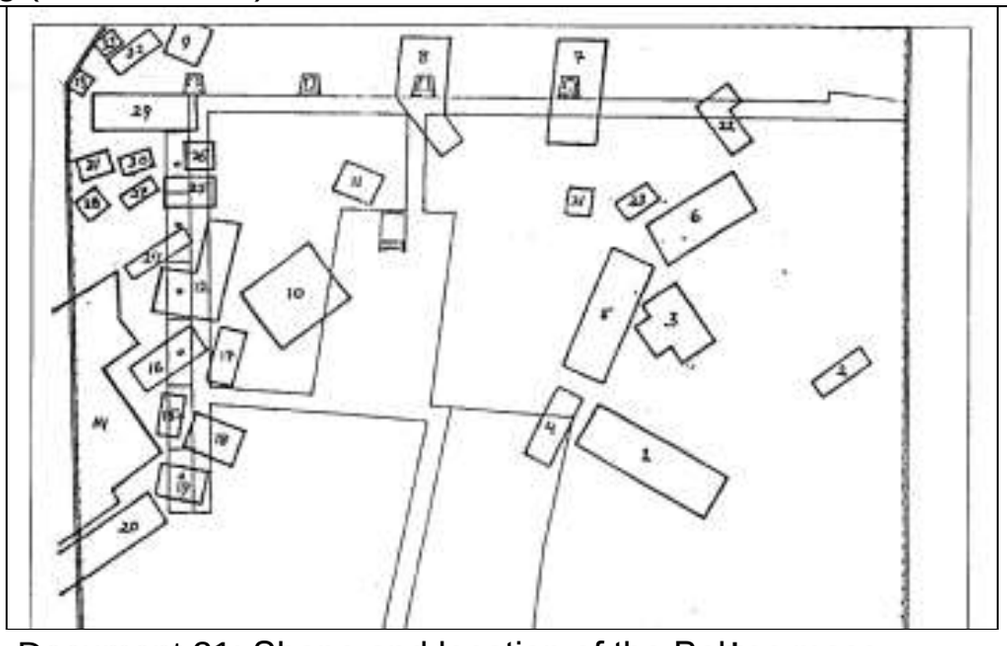
Ryc. 17. Plan grobów (dołów śmierci) i obiektów pozagrobowych w świetle badań sondażowych

Document 18: Mapping of mass graves at Bełżec by A. Kola. Kola 2000a, p. 19.

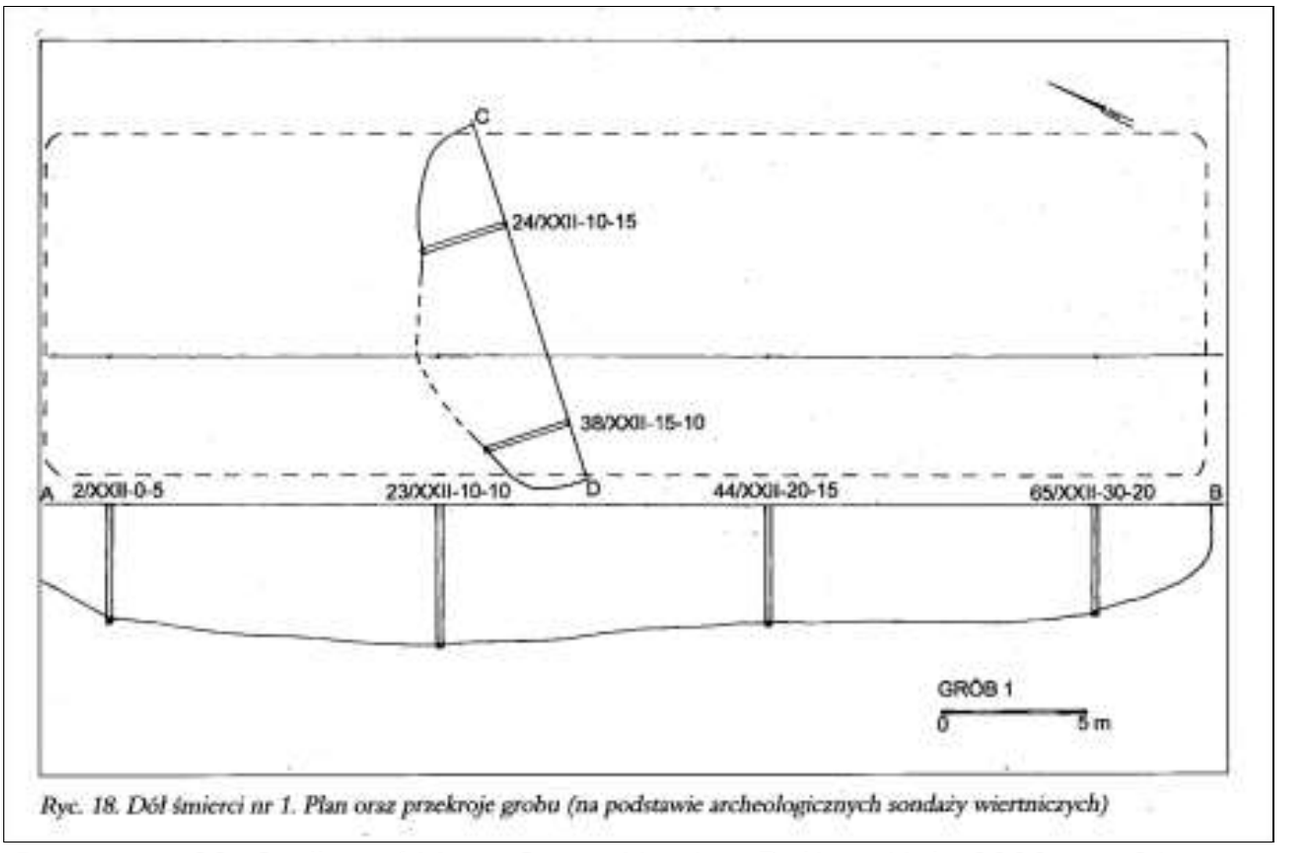
Document 19: Mapping of the surveys carried out at Bełżec by A. Kola. Kola 2000a, p. 70.



Document 20: Shape and location of Bełżec mass graves according to survey mapping (Document 19).

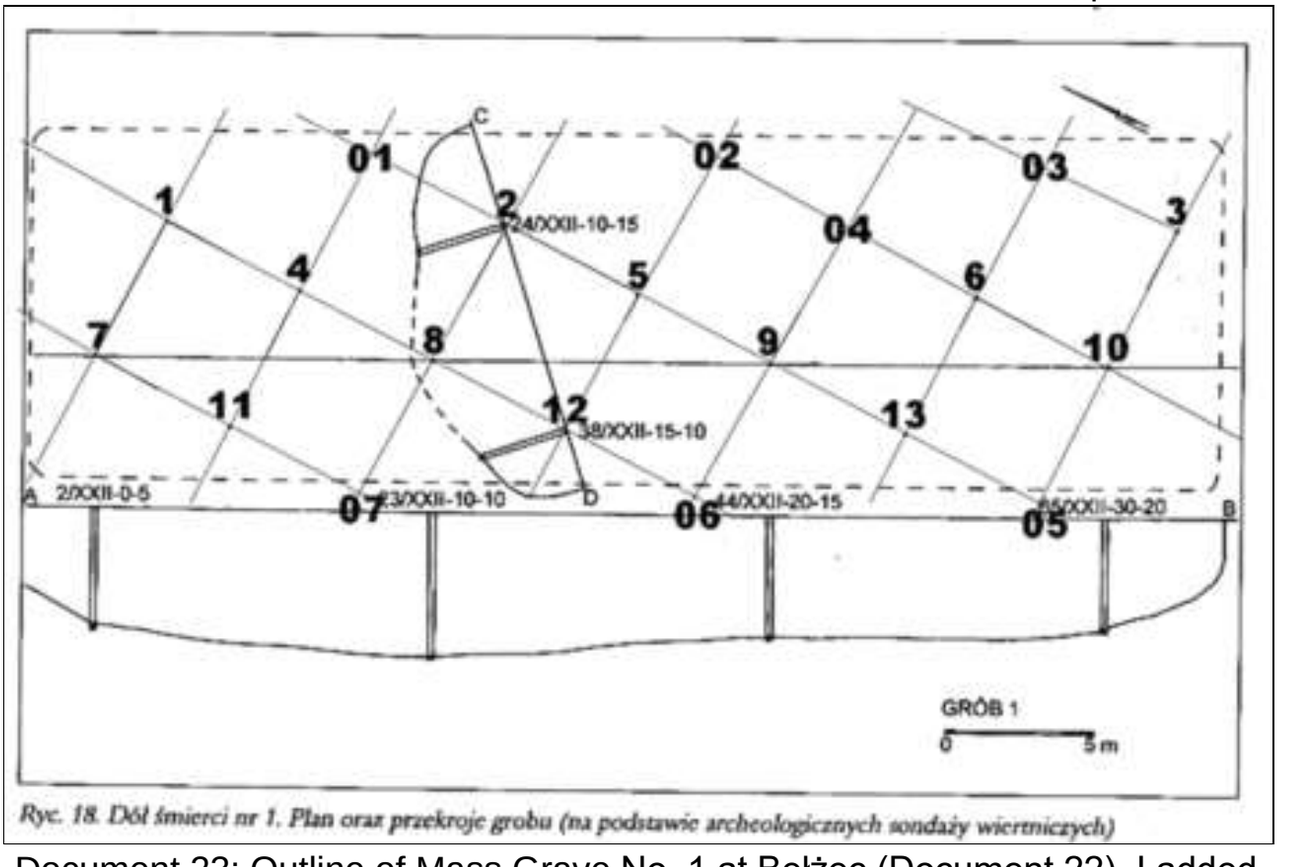


Document 21: Shape and location of the Bełżec mass graves according to Robin O'Neil. O'Neil, p. 59.



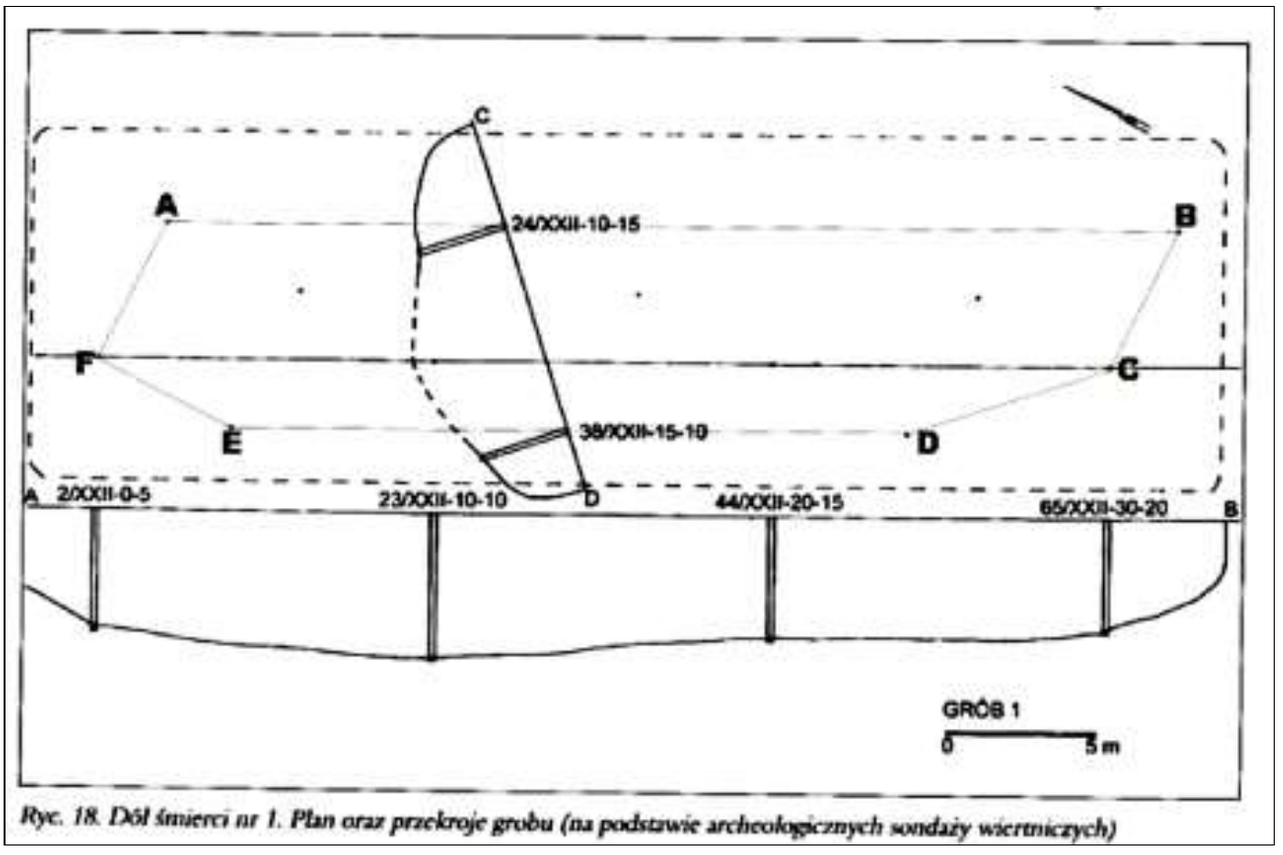
Ryc. 18. Dół śmierci nr 1. Plan orsz przekroje grobu (na podstawie archeologicznych sondaży wiertniczych)

Document 22: Outline of Mass Grave No. 1 at Bełżec. Kola 2000a, p. 21.



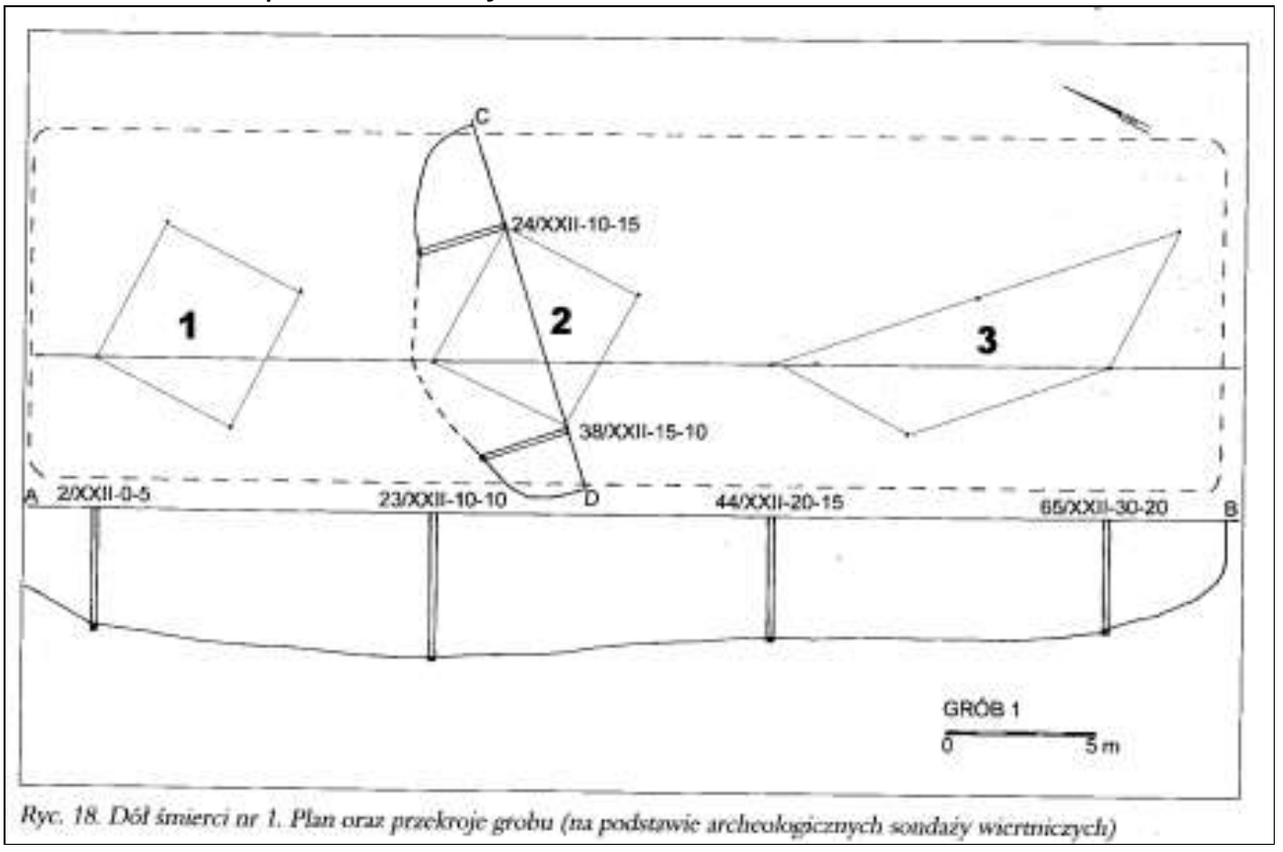
Ryc. 18. Dół śmierci nr 1. Plan oraz przekroje grobu (na podstawie archeologicznych sondaży wiertniczych)

Document 23: Outline of Mass Grave No. 1 at Bełżec (Document 22). I added the 5 m grid with the numbers of the positive and negative soundings.



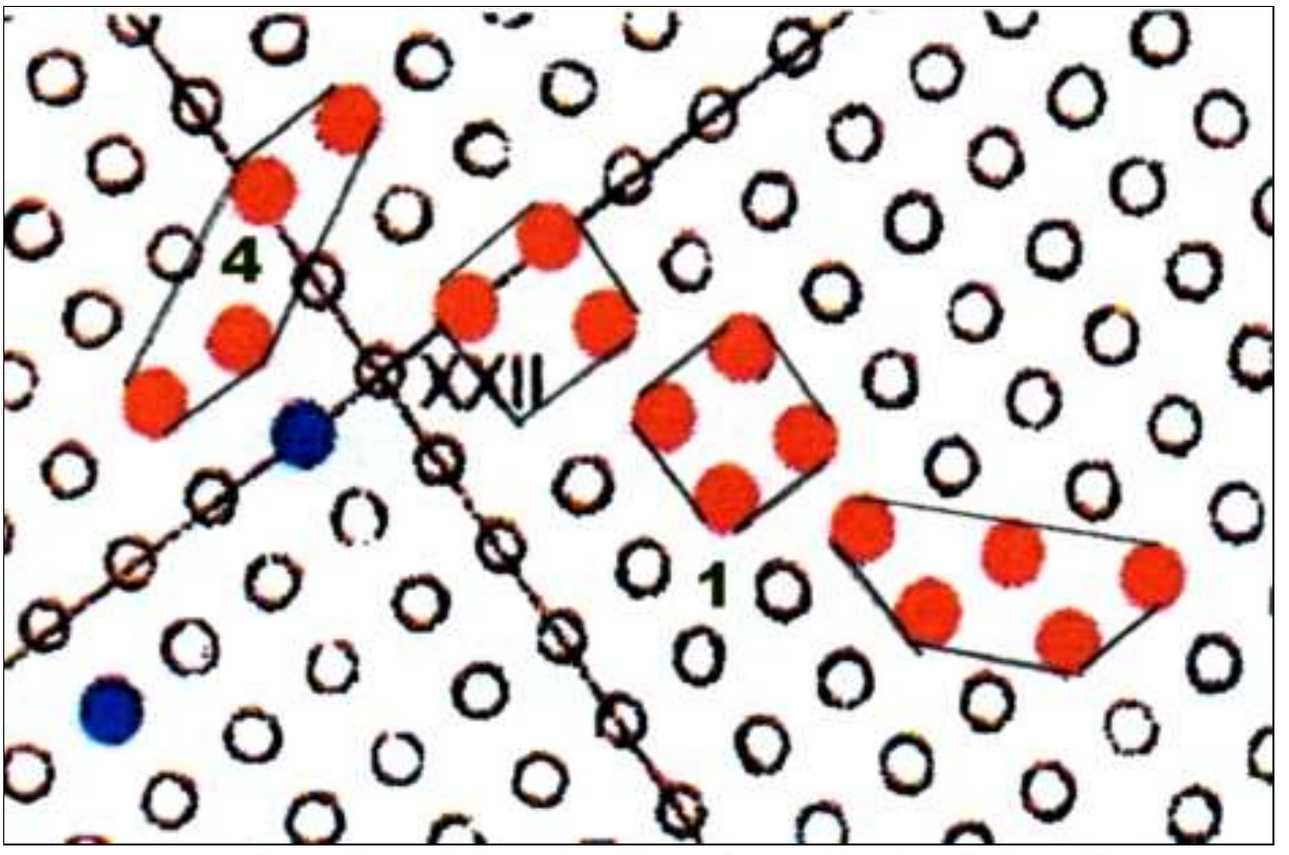
Ryc. 18. Dół śmierci nr 1. Plan oraz przekroje grobu (na podstawie archeologicznych sondaży wiertniczych)

Document 24: Outline of Mass Grave No. 1 at Bełżec (Document 22). Pit contours based on positive surveys.

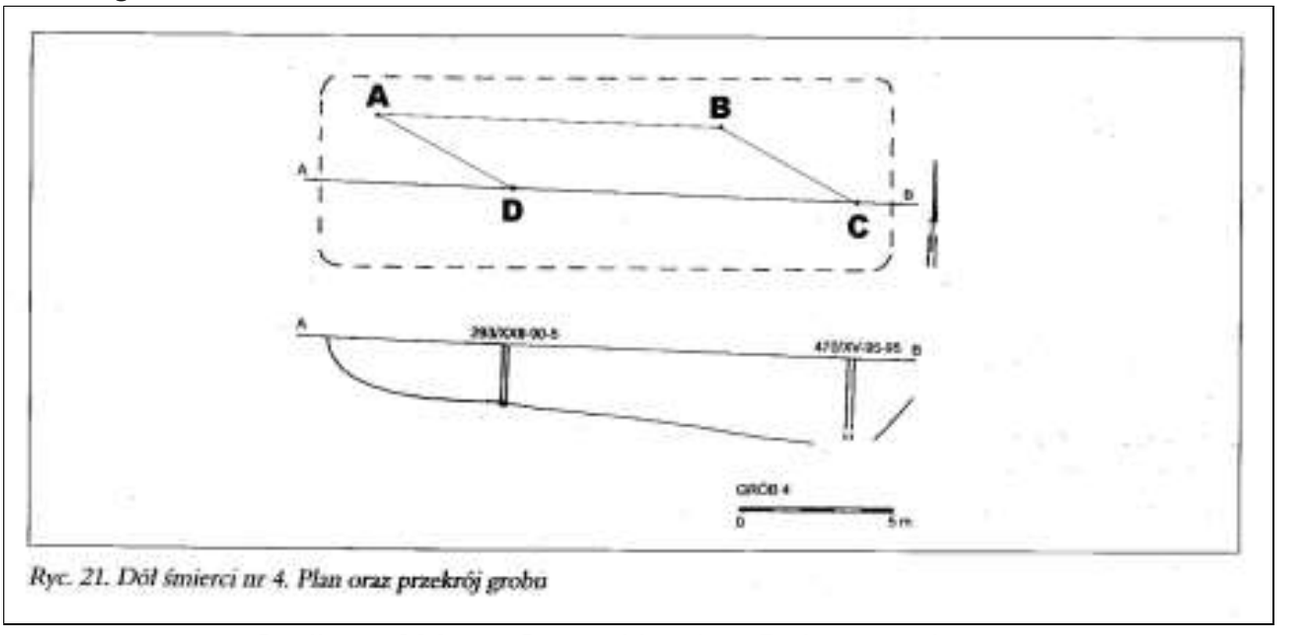


Ryc. 18. Dół śmierci nr 1. Plan oraz przekroje grobu (na podstawie archeologicznych sondaży wiertniczych)

Document 25: Outline of Mass Grave No. 1 at Bełżec (Document 22). Positive soundings are consistent with three small mass graves.

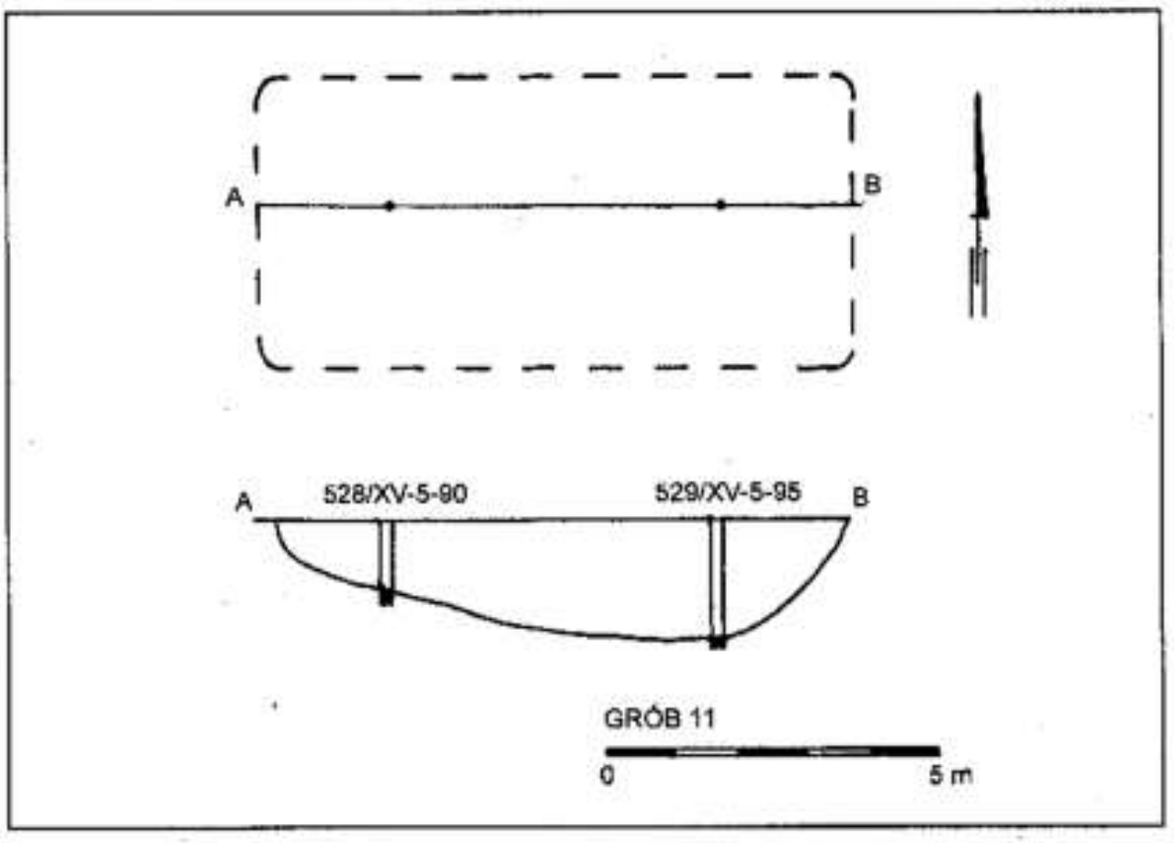


Document 26: Soundings delineating Mass Grave No. 1 at Bełżec (Document 19). To the right of Pit No. 4 the soundings are consistent with three small mass graves.



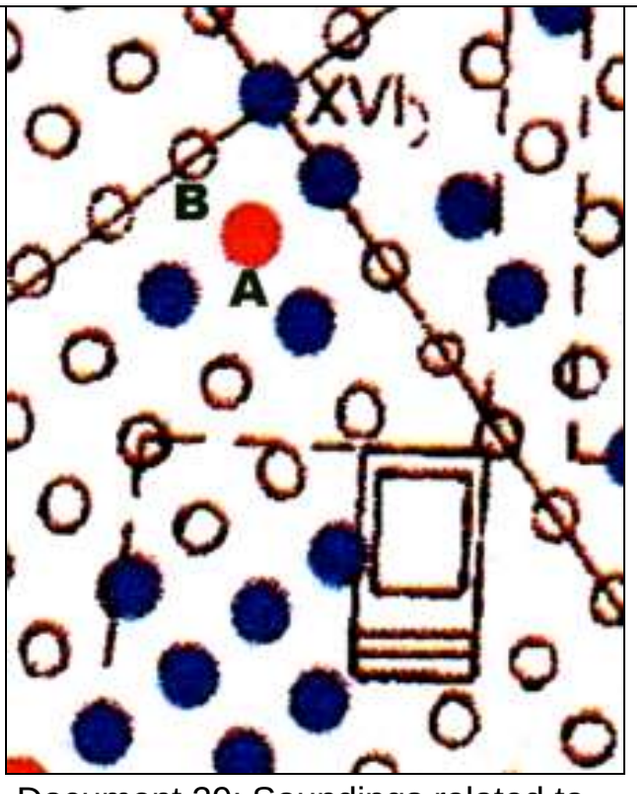
Ryc. 21. Dół śmierci nr 4. Plan oraz przekrój grobu

Document 27: Outline of Mass Grave No. 4 at Bełżec. Kola 2000a, p. 23. I added the letters designating the soundings and segments delineating the mass grave.

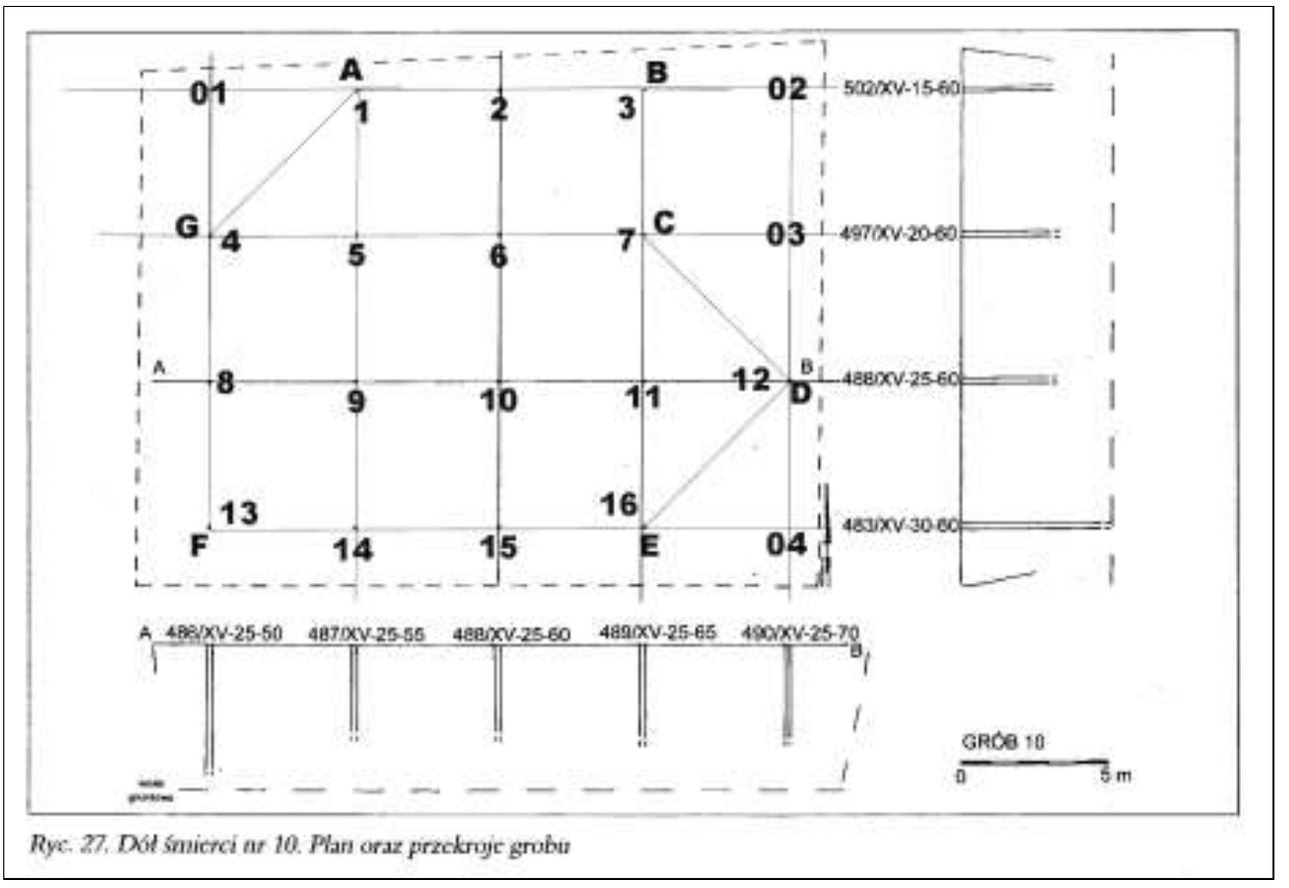


Ryc. 28. Dół śmierci nr 11. Plan oraz przekrój grobu

Document 28: Outline of Mass Grave No. 11 at Bełżec. Kola 2000a, p. 27.

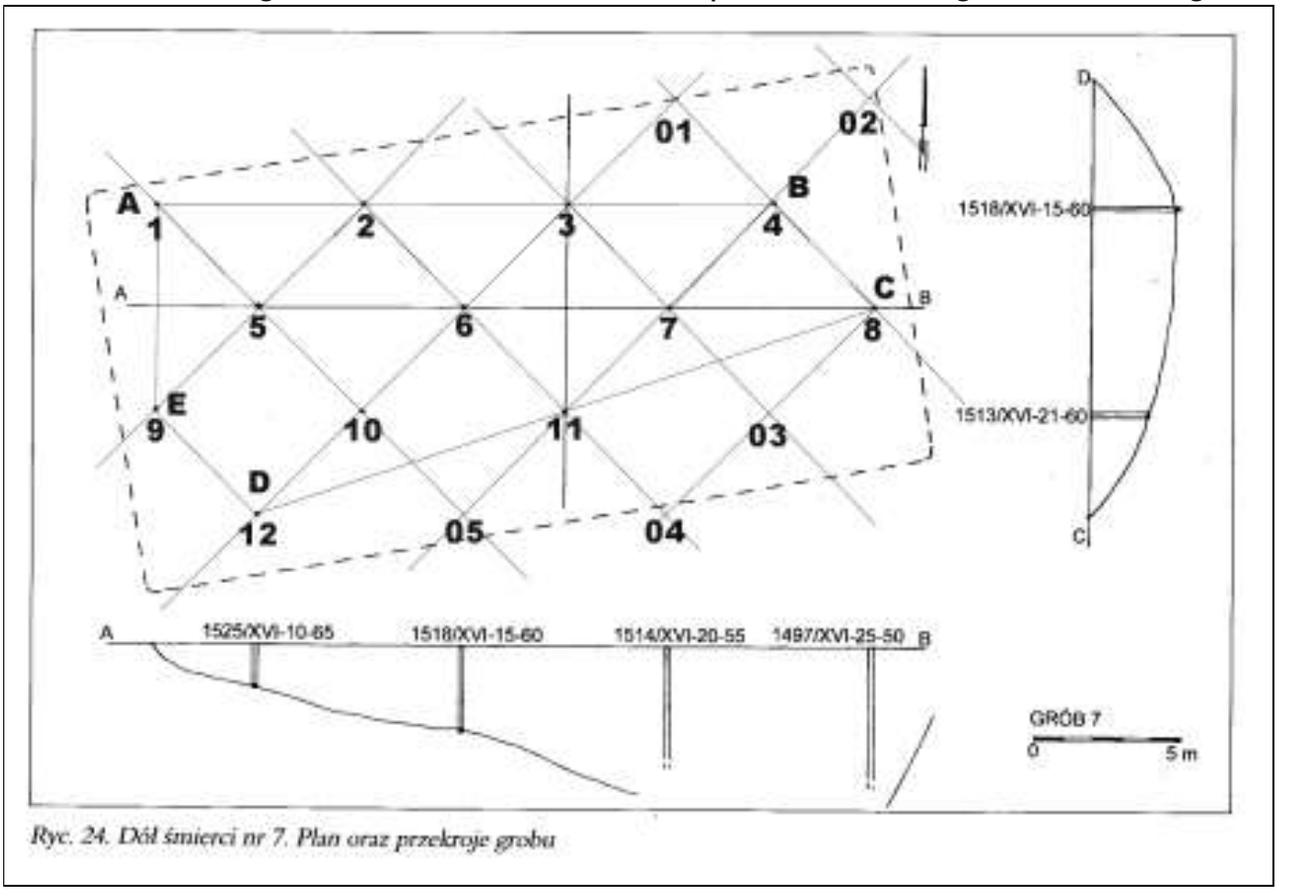


Document 29: Soundings related to the Mass Grave No. 11 at Bełżec (Document 19).



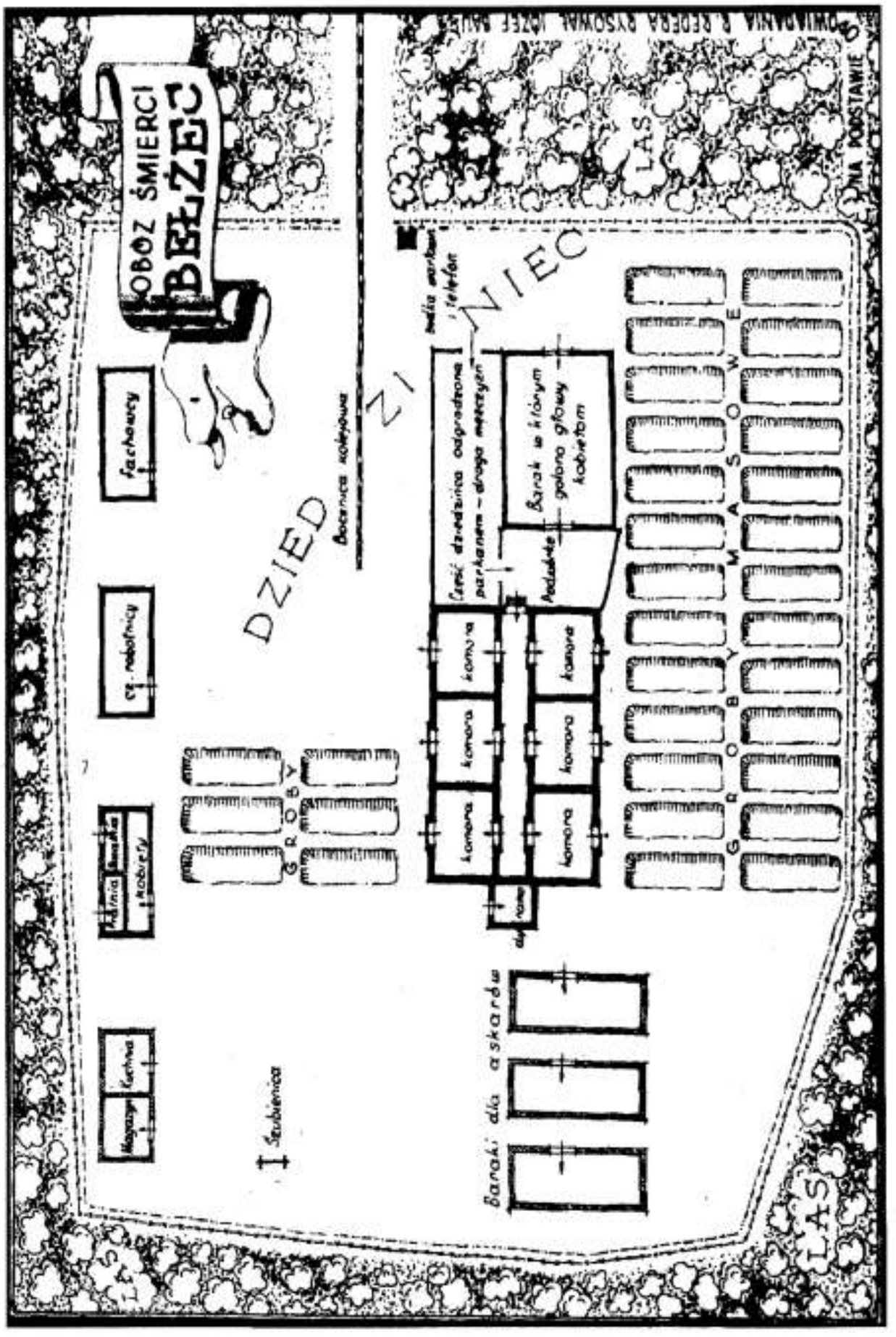
Ryc. 27. Dół śmierci nr 10. Plan oraz przekroje grobu

Document 30: Outline of Mass Grave No. 10 at Bełżec. Kola 2000a, p. 27. I added the 5 m grid and the numbers of the positive and negative soundings.

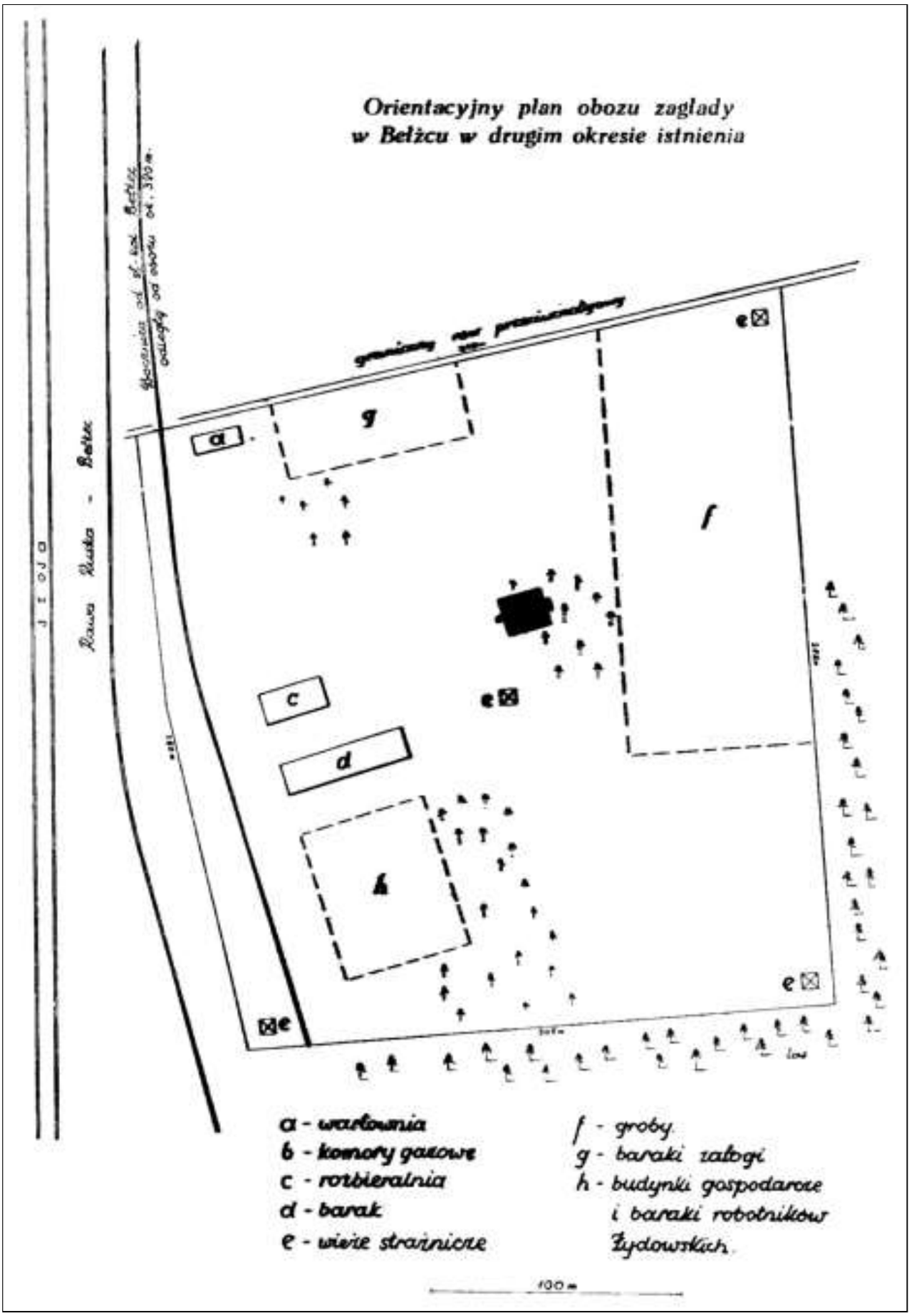


Ryc. 24. Dół śmierci nr 7. Plan oraz przekroje grobu

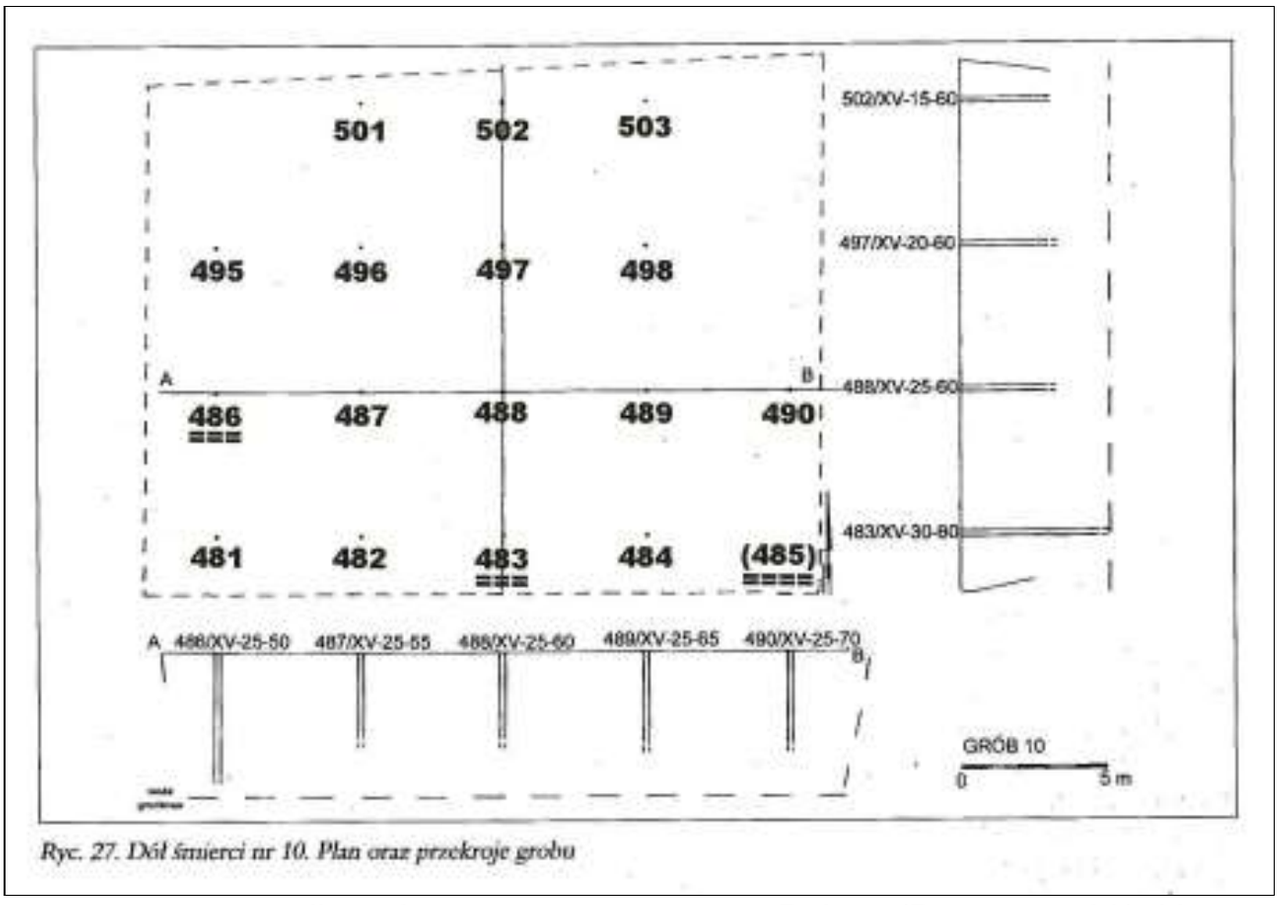
Document 31: Outline of Mass Grave No. 7 at Bełżec. Kola 2000a, p. 25. I added the 5 m grid and the numbers of the positive and negative soundings.



Document 32: Bełżec camp map drawn by J. Bau as instructed by Rudolf Reder. Reder 1946, p. 43.

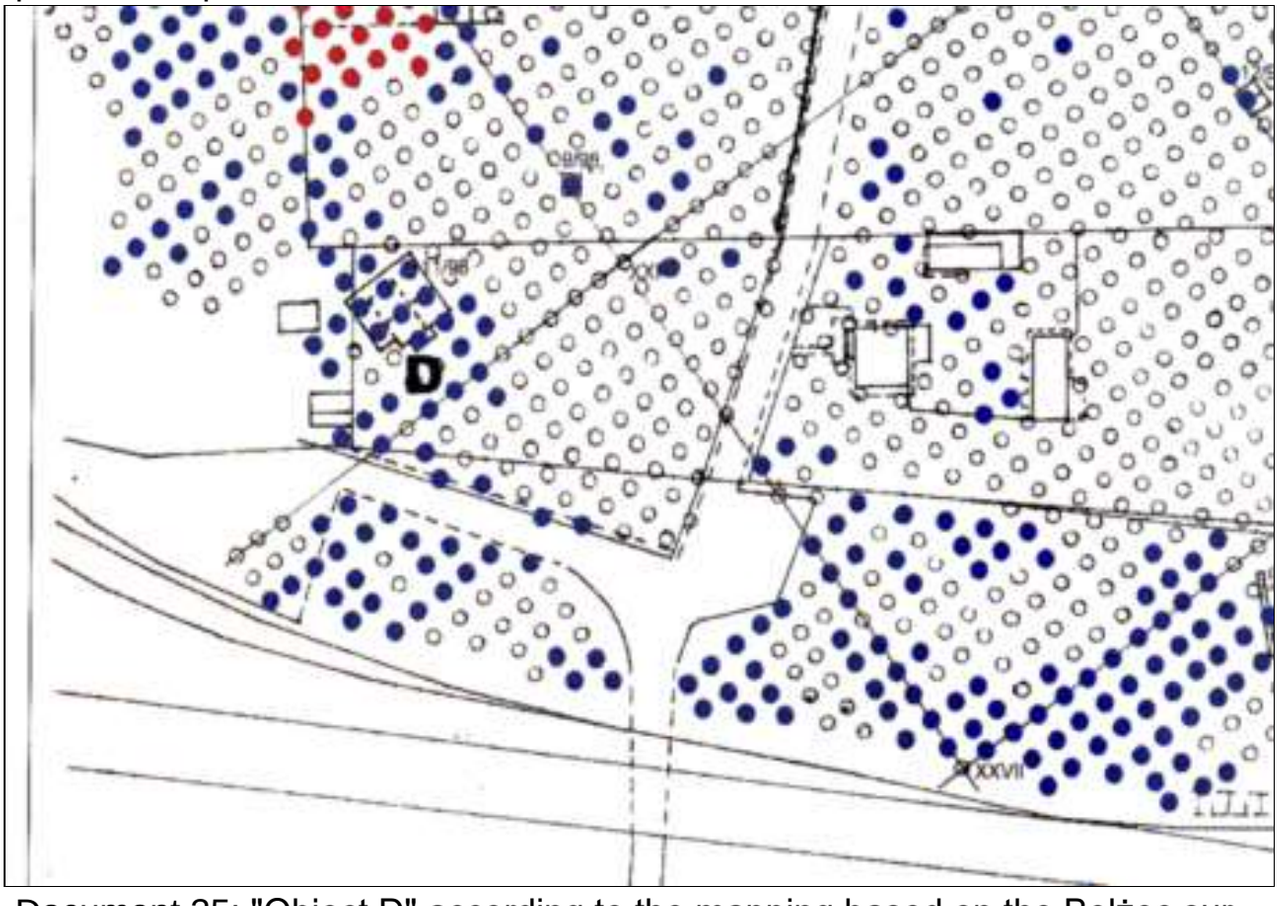


Document 33: Bełżec camp map (second phase). Szrojt, unpaginated insert.

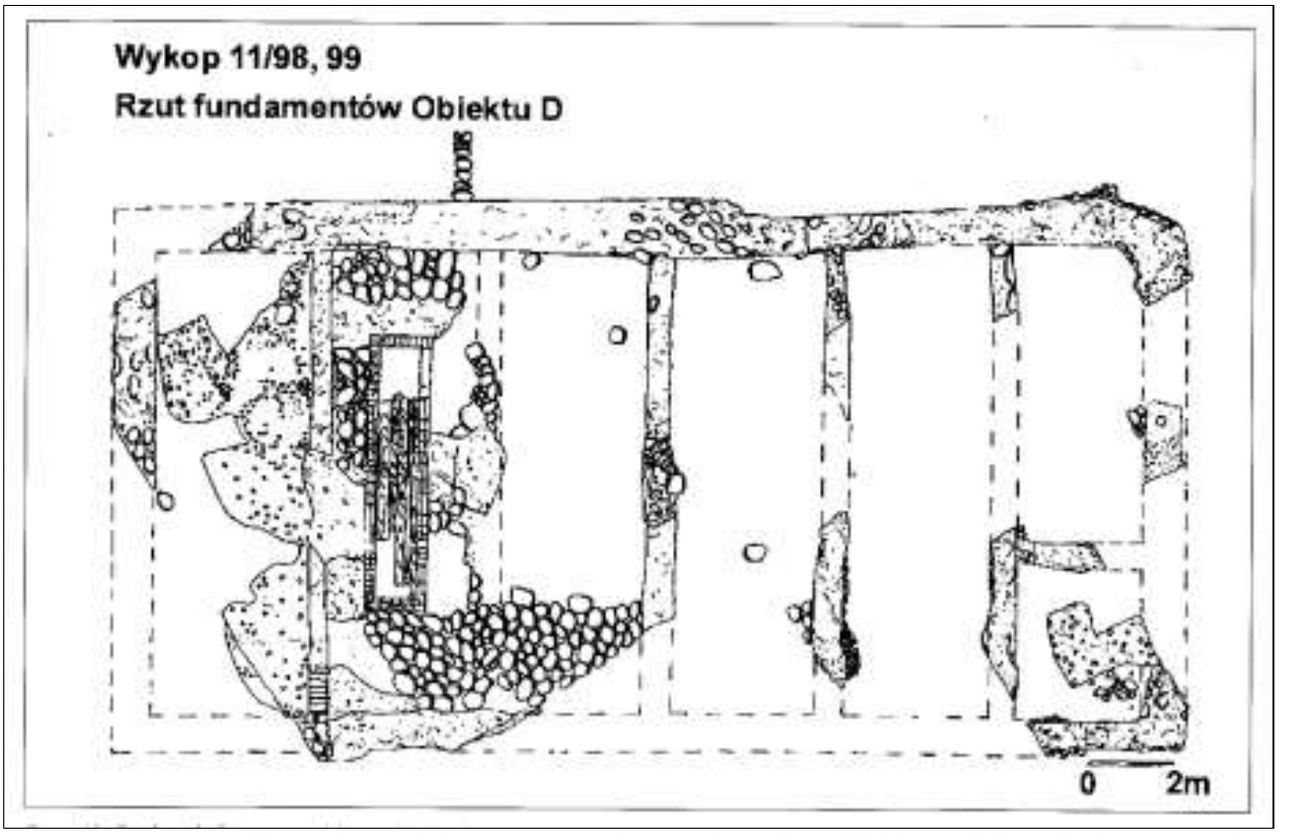


Ryc. 27. Dół śmierci nr 10. Plan oraz przekroje grobu

Document 34: Outline of Mass Grave No. 10 at Bełżec (Document 30). I have added sounding numbers; underlined numbers indicate the detection of saponified corpses.

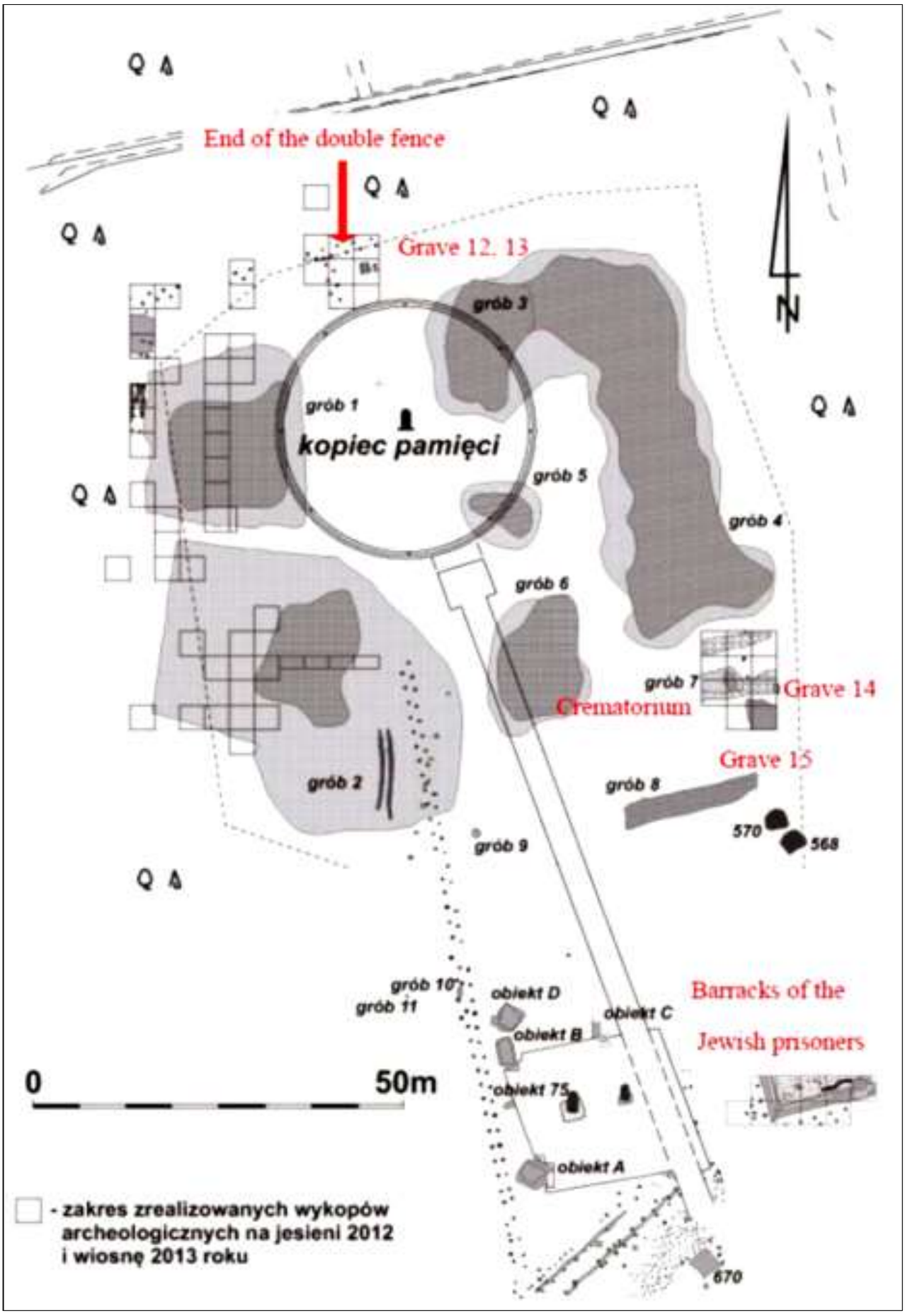


Document 35: "Object D" according to the mapping based on the Bełżec surveys (Document 19).



Document 36: Drawing of the excavation related to "Object D" at Bełżec. Kola 2000a, p. 54.

Document 37: Photograph of the excavation of "Building D" at Bełżec. Kola 2000a, p. 55.



Document 38: Map of archaeological findings at Sobibór (2012-2013). Haimi 2013, p. 3.

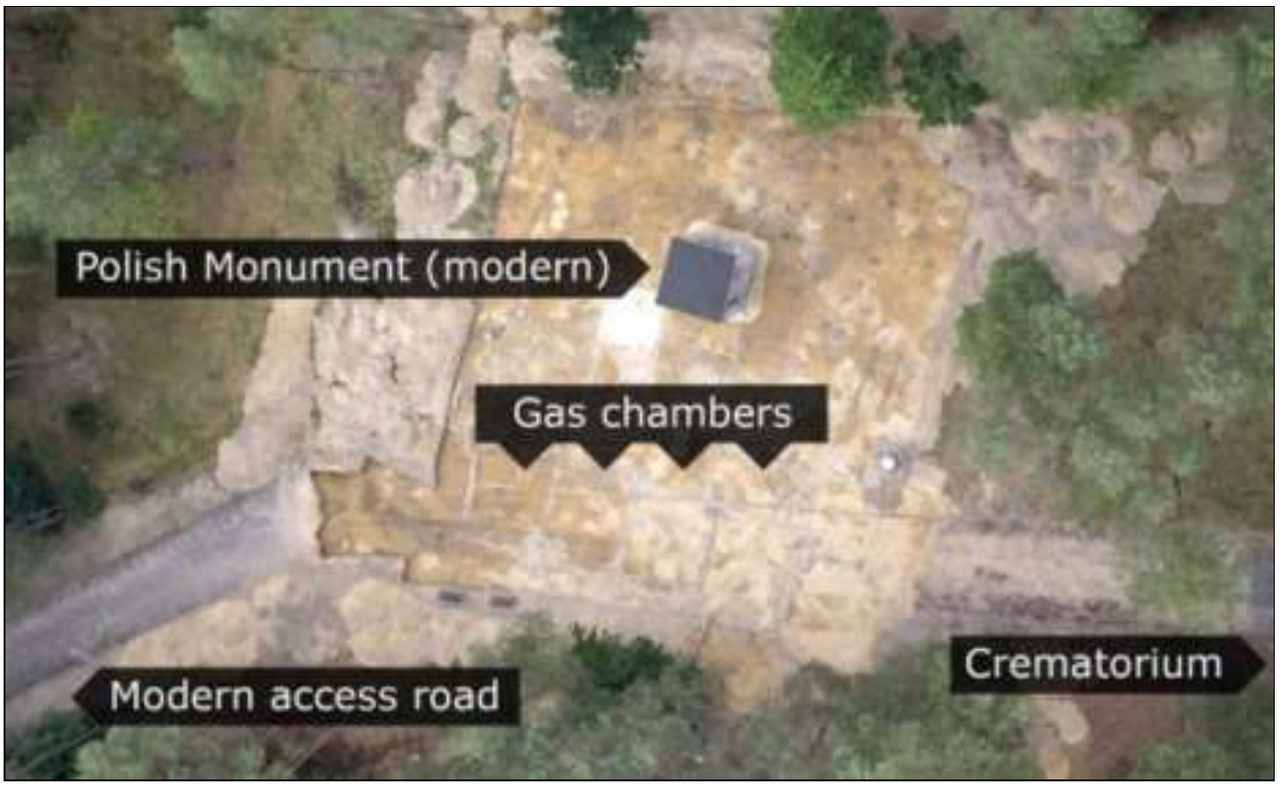
Document 39: The remains of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór, left, next to the trees. Seen from north-east to south-west. Mazurek 2014, p. 3.

Document 40: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór. Seen from south to north. Image in the public domain.

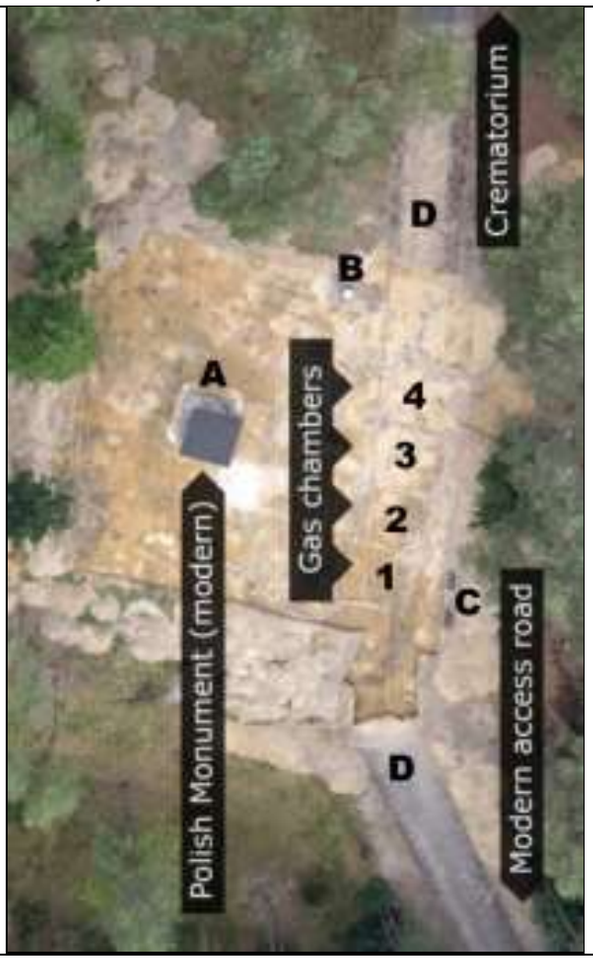
Document 41: Sobibór. The paved square (bottom) and ash mound (circle at the top). Image in the public domain.

Document 42: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (2014). Image in the public domain.

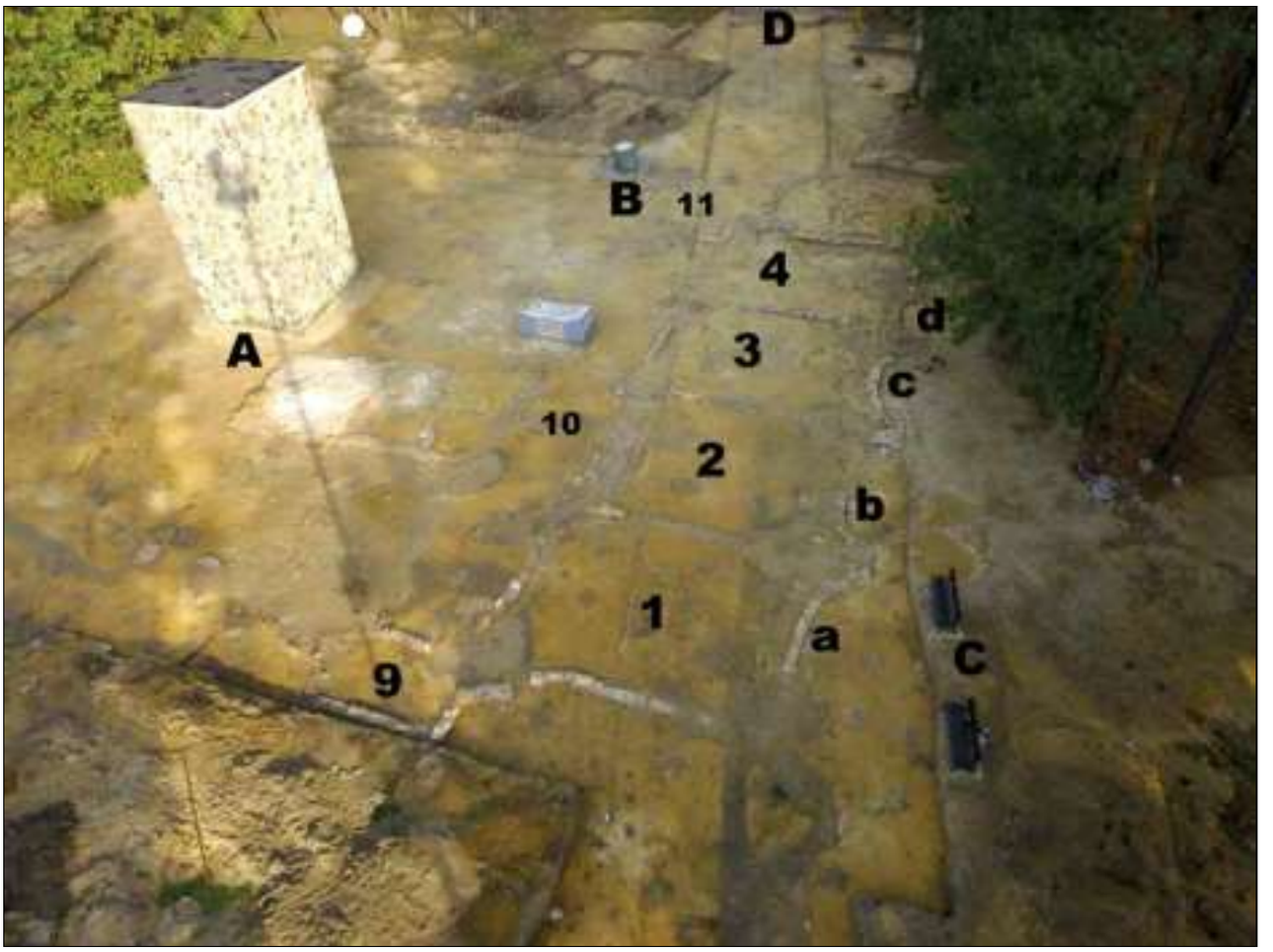
Document 42a: As Document 42, with numbers, letters and lines added. The dotted line markes the edges of the (former) asphalt road (compare to Documents 48b&c); numbered: remnants of Chambers 4 through 2, and 11 as the alleged "engine room"; c marks the arched eastern wall of Chamber 3; the grey line marked w is the western wall.



Document 43, 43a: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór. Hecking, p. 6. I added explanatory letters and numbers to Document 43a (see text).



Document 43a: as Document 43, rotated so north is at the top. I added explanatory letters and numbers (see text).



Document 44: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór. I added explanatory letters and numbers (see text). Image in the public domain.

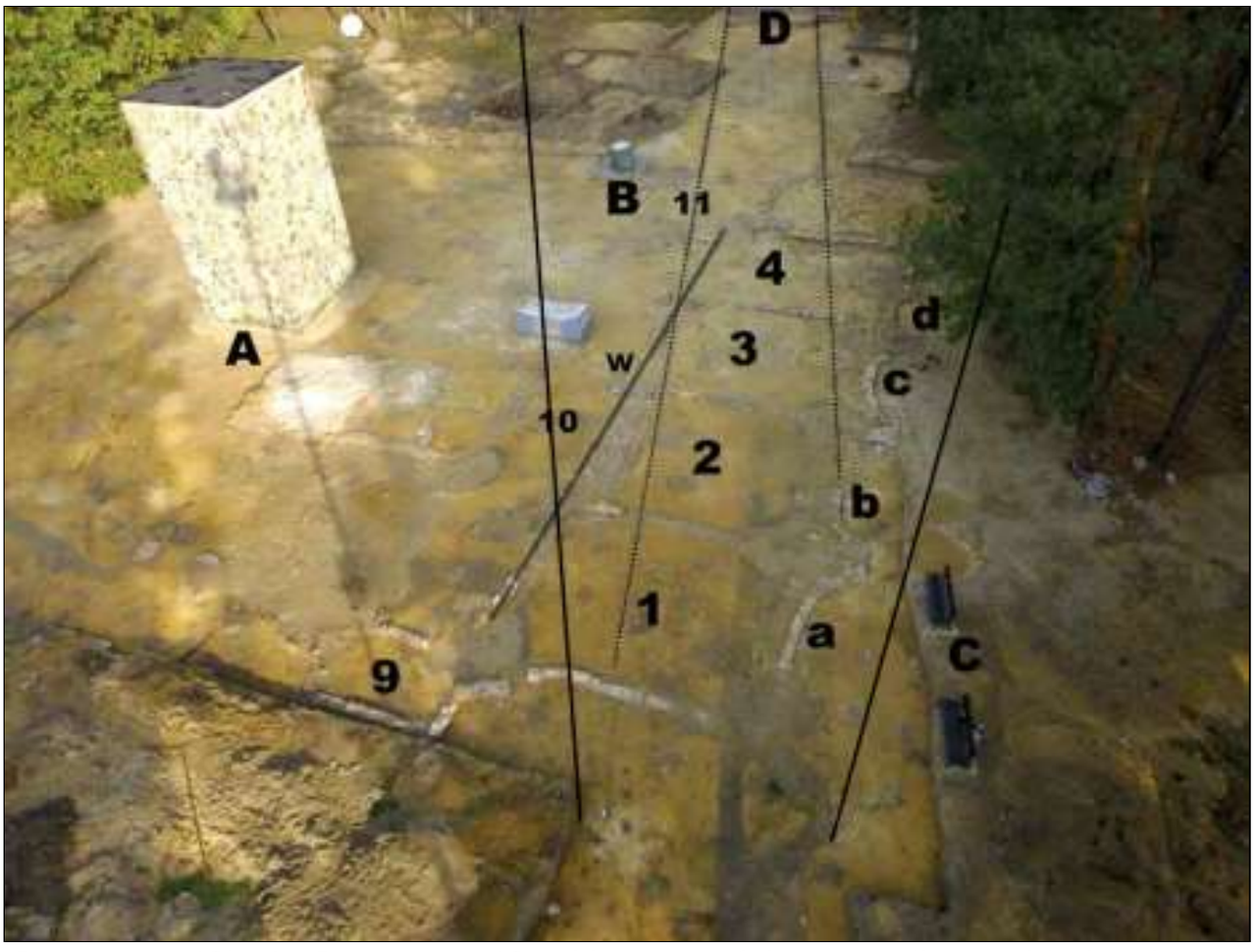
Document 45: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór. Alleged Gas Chamber No. 3. Seen from east to west. Image in the public domain.

Document 46: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór. Alleged Gas Chamber No. 3. Seen from west to east. Semi-circular side wall. Image in the public domain.

Document 47: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór. In the foreground is the alleged Gas Chamber No. 1. Seen from west to east. I added explanatory letters and numbers (see text). Image in the public domain.

Document 48: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór. Seen from south to north. Image in the public domain.

Document 48a: As Document 48, with numbers, letters and lines added. The dotted line markes the edges of the (former) asphalt road; the dashed lines mark the nothern and southern walls of Chambers 1 through 4; a through d are the arched eastern walls; the grey line marked w is the western wall.



Document 48b: As Document 42, with some of the same lines added as in Doc. 48a, plus black lines showing the persective of Docs. 48 and 48a.

Document 49: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór. At the right: part of the alleged gas chamber #4. Seen from west to east. Image in the public domain.

Document 50: The well in the vicinity of the alleged gas chambers before their "discovery" (2010). © Carlo Mattogno.

Document 51: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (2015). Seen from south to north. © Carlo Mattogno.

Document 52: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (2015). Seen from south to north. © Carlo Mattogno.

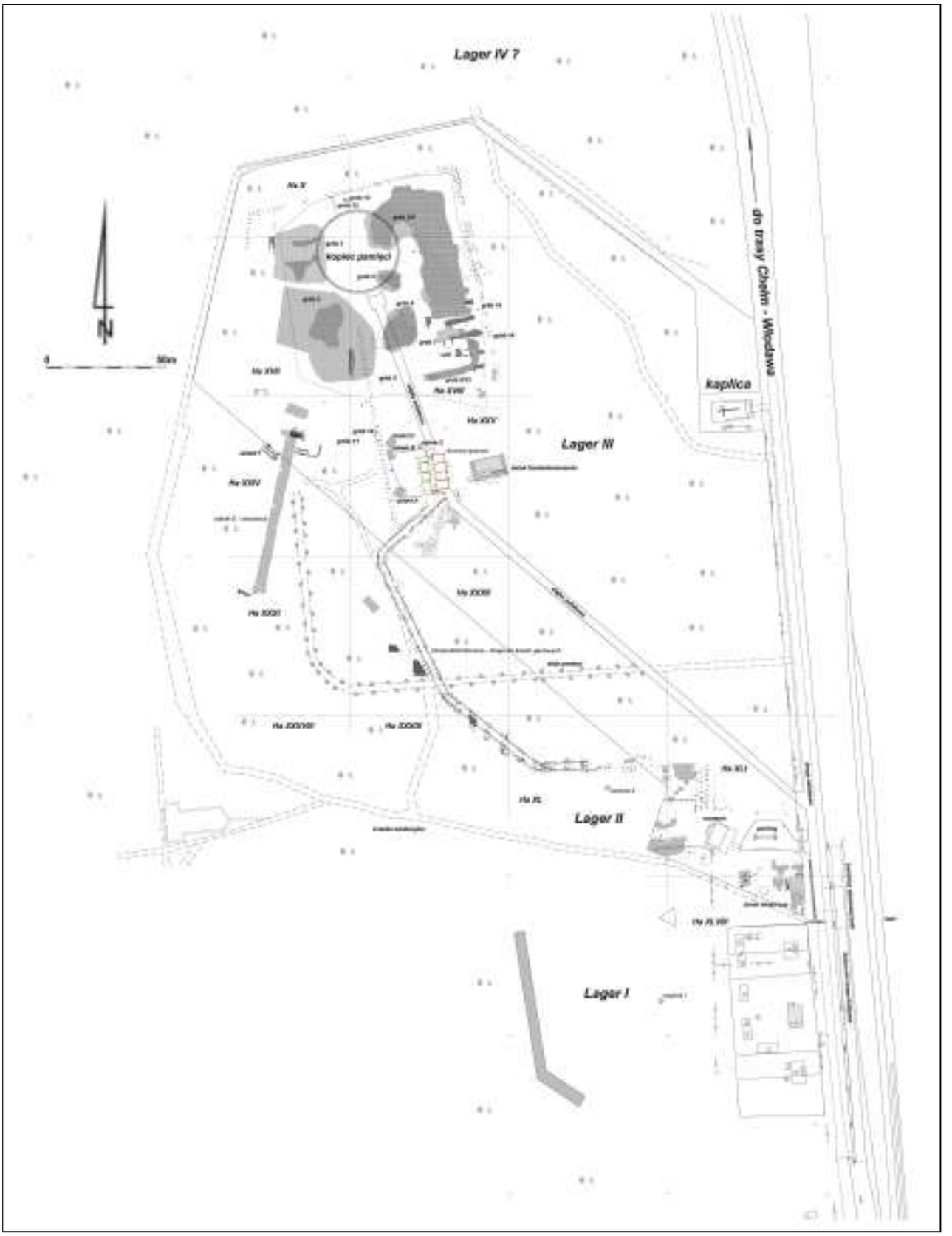
Document 53: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (2015). Seen from west to east. © Carlo Mattogno.

Document 54: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (2015). Seen from north to south. © Carlo Mattogno.

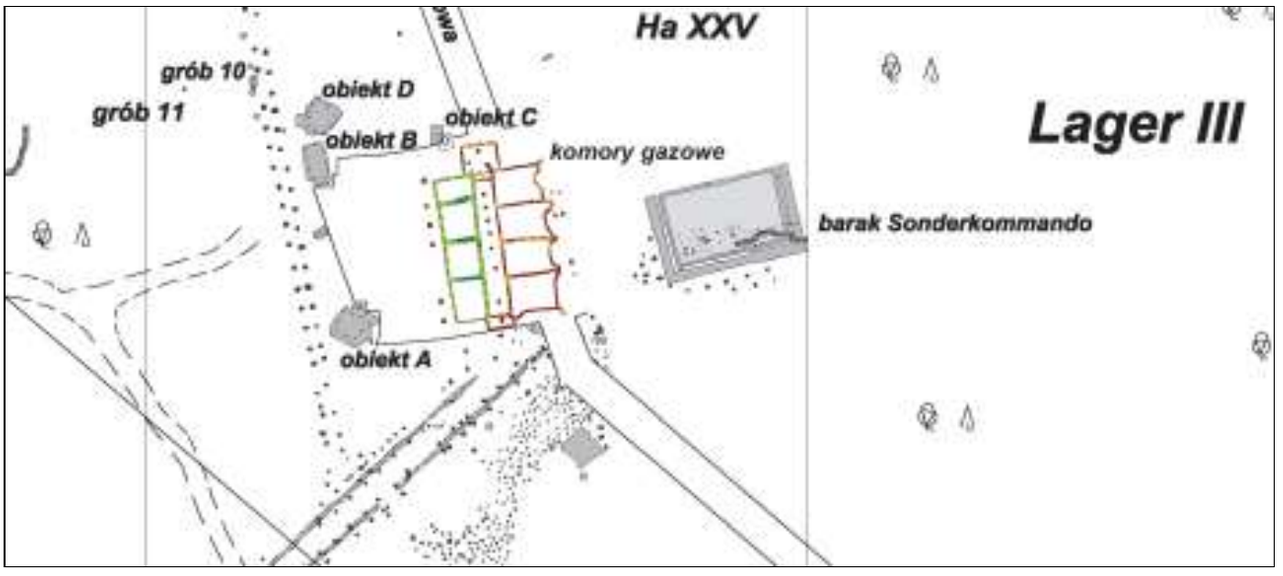
Document 55: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (2015). Seen from north to south. © Carlo Mattogno.

Document 56: Remnants of the foundation walls of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (2015). Seen from northeast to southwest. © Carlo Mattogno.

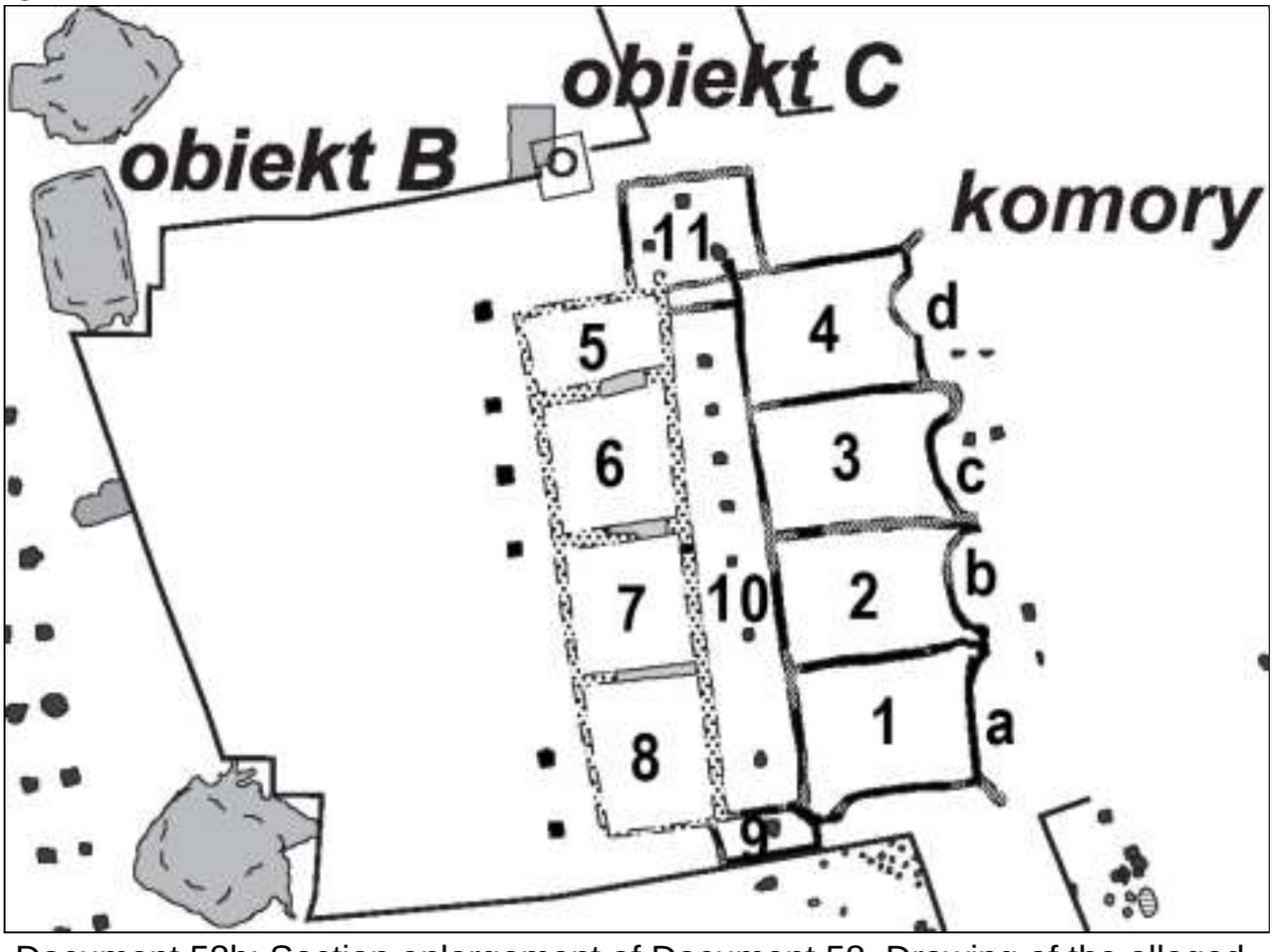
Document 57: The area of the alleged gas chambers of Sobibór as seen from the road leading to the ash mound (2015). Seen from north to south. © Carlo Mattogno.



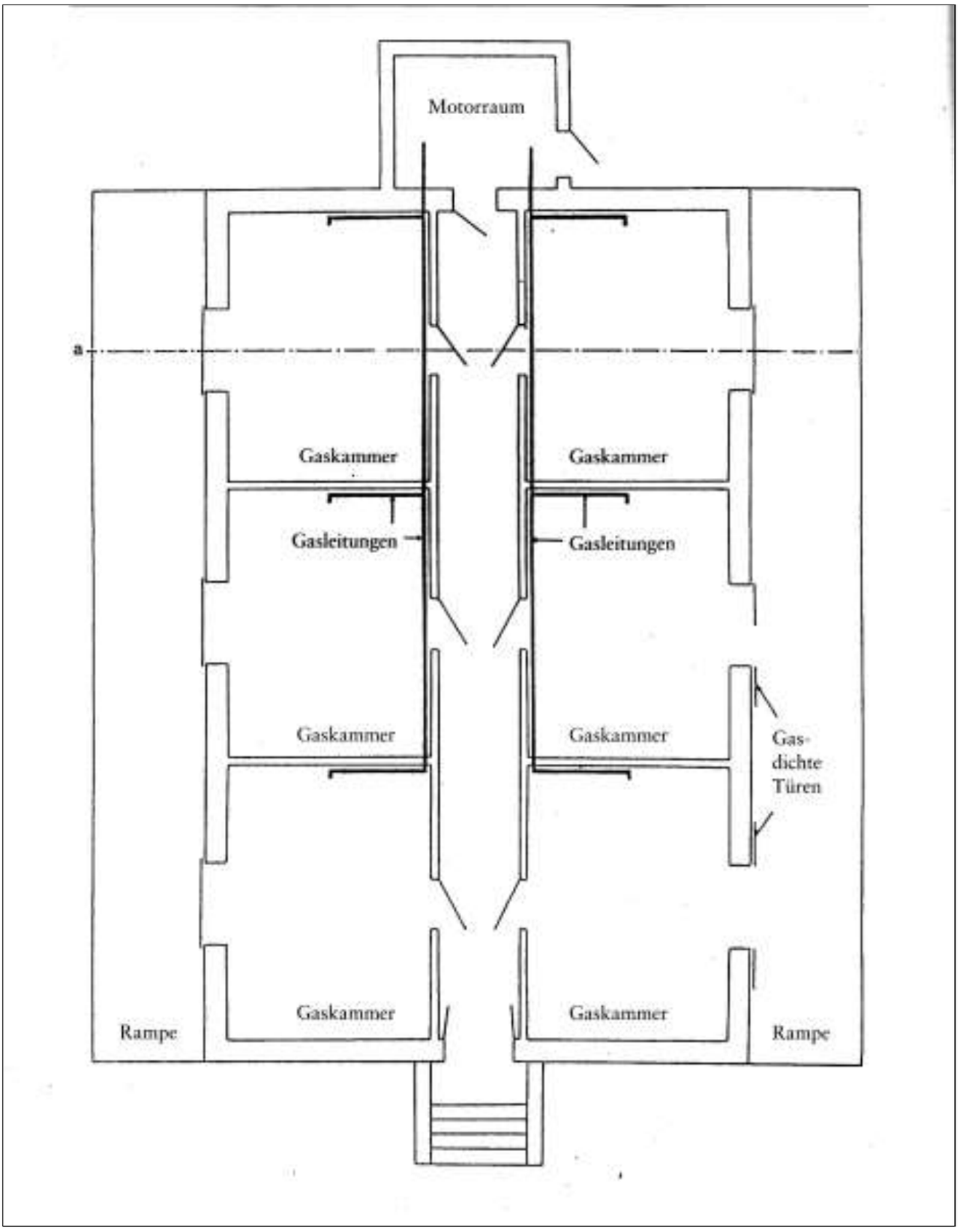
Document 58: "Map of archaeological finds made in the former German extermination camp Sobibor in the years 2001-2014. Compiled by Wojciech Mazurek and Rafał Ratajczak" updated December 31, 2014. Bem 2015, p. 105.



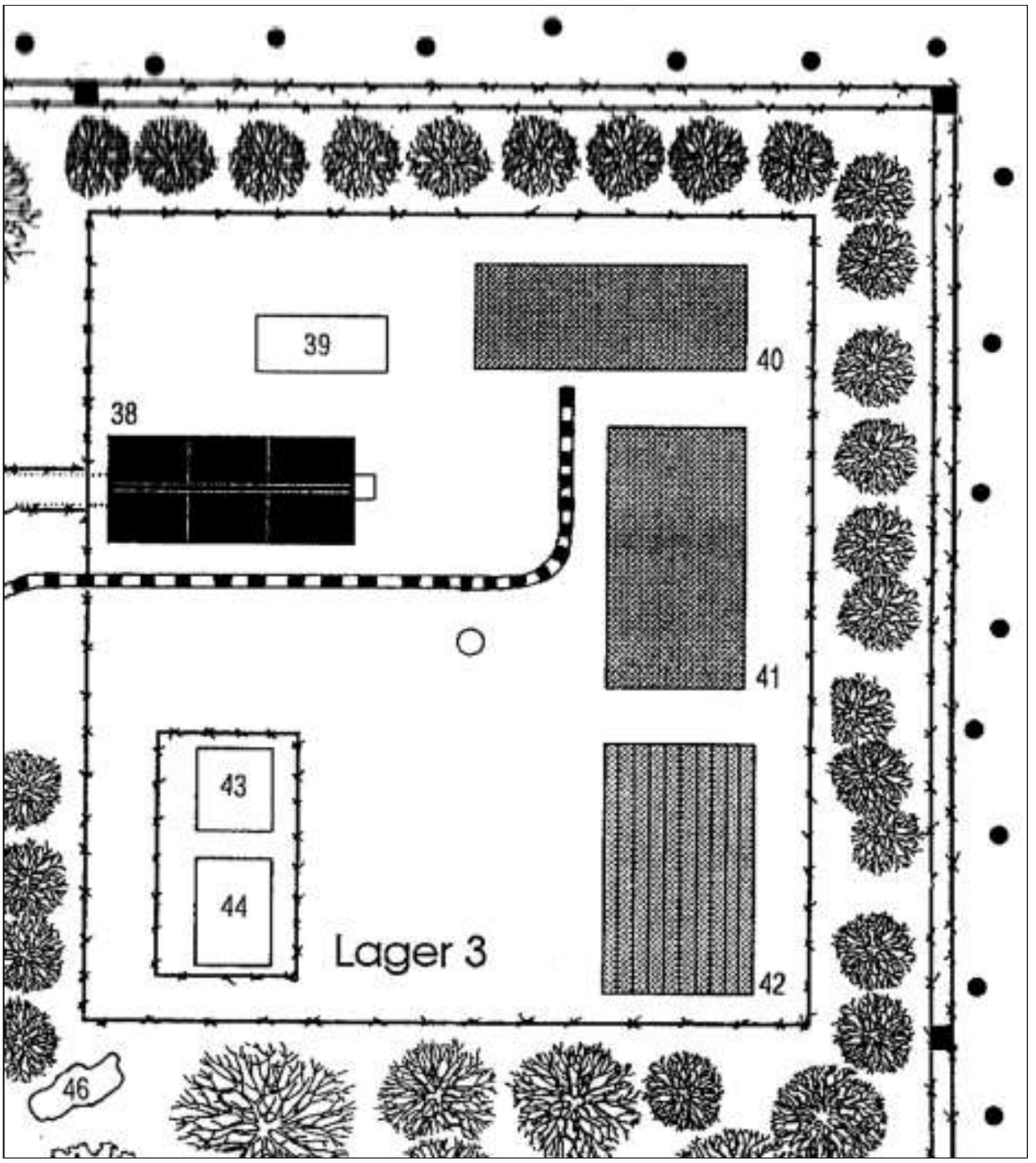
Document 58a: Section enlargement of Document 58. Drawing of the alleged gas chamber.



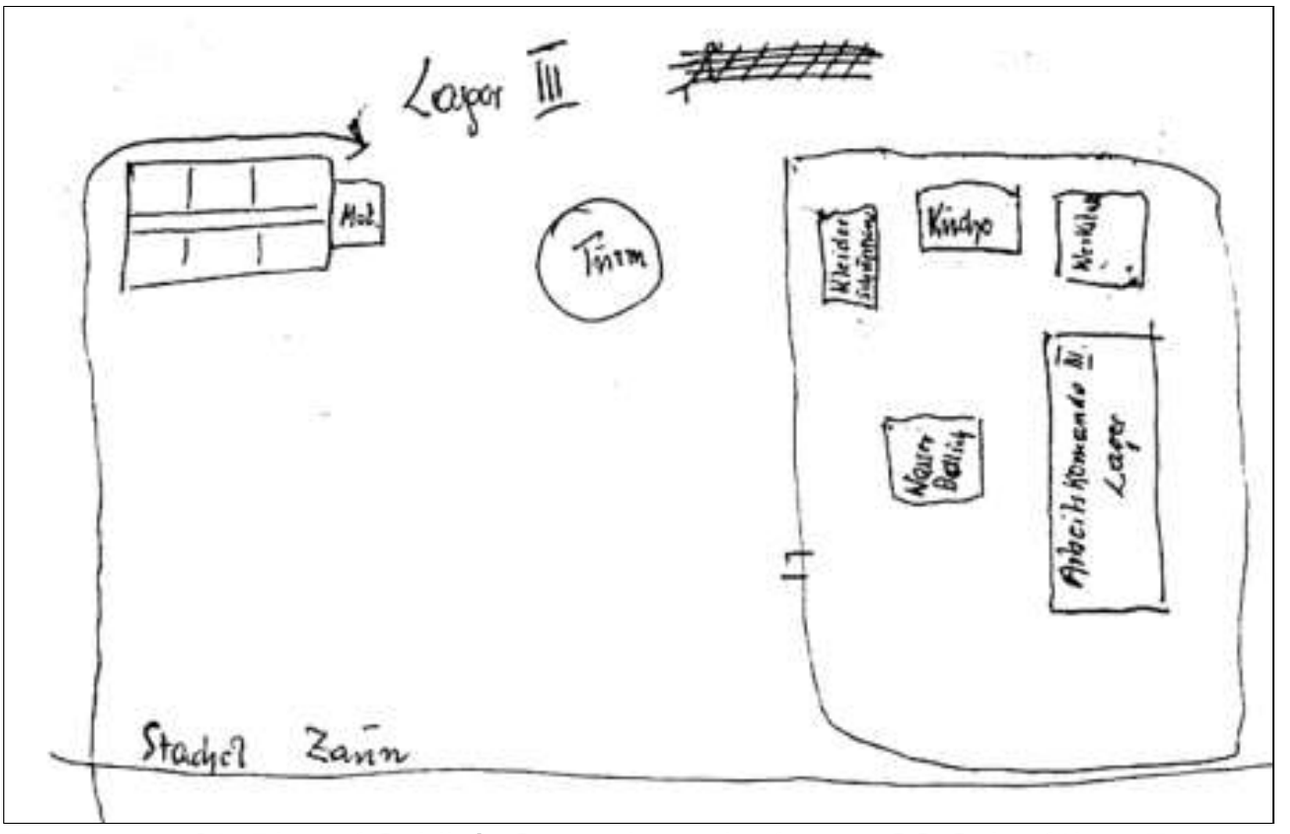
Document 58b: Section enlargement of Document 58. Drawing of the alleged gas chamber. I added explanatory letters and numbers (see text). For the printed black-and-white version, I changed the coloring as follows: red = black; orange = zig-zag lines; dark green = grey; light green: dots.



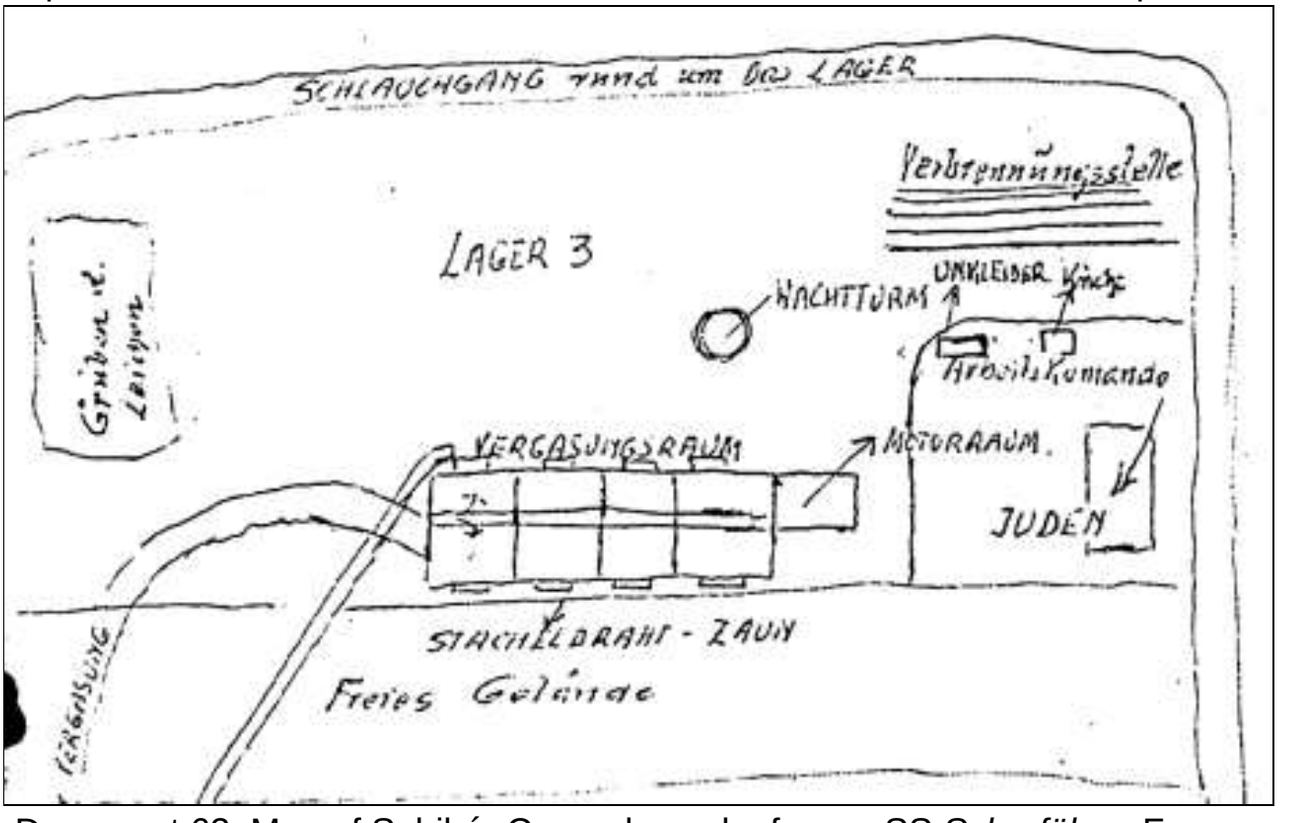
Document 59: Plan of the alleged gas chambers at Bełżec (second facility), also attributed to Sobibór. Schelvis, p. 124.



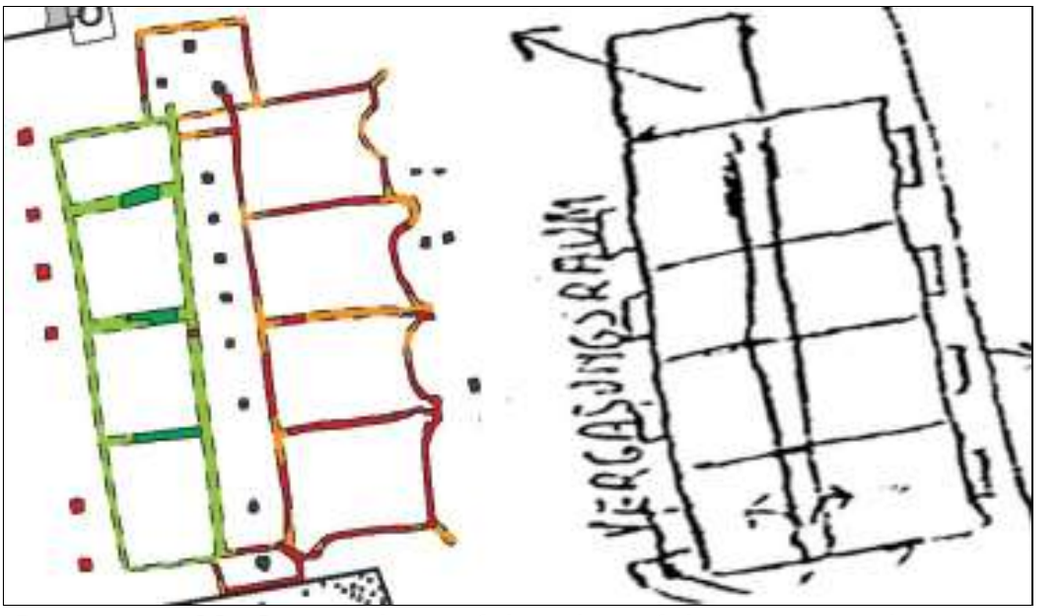
Document 60: Plan of Sobibór Camp drawn by J. Schelvis. *Lager* 3, with presumed gas chambers (second plant) in black. Schelvis, p. 9.



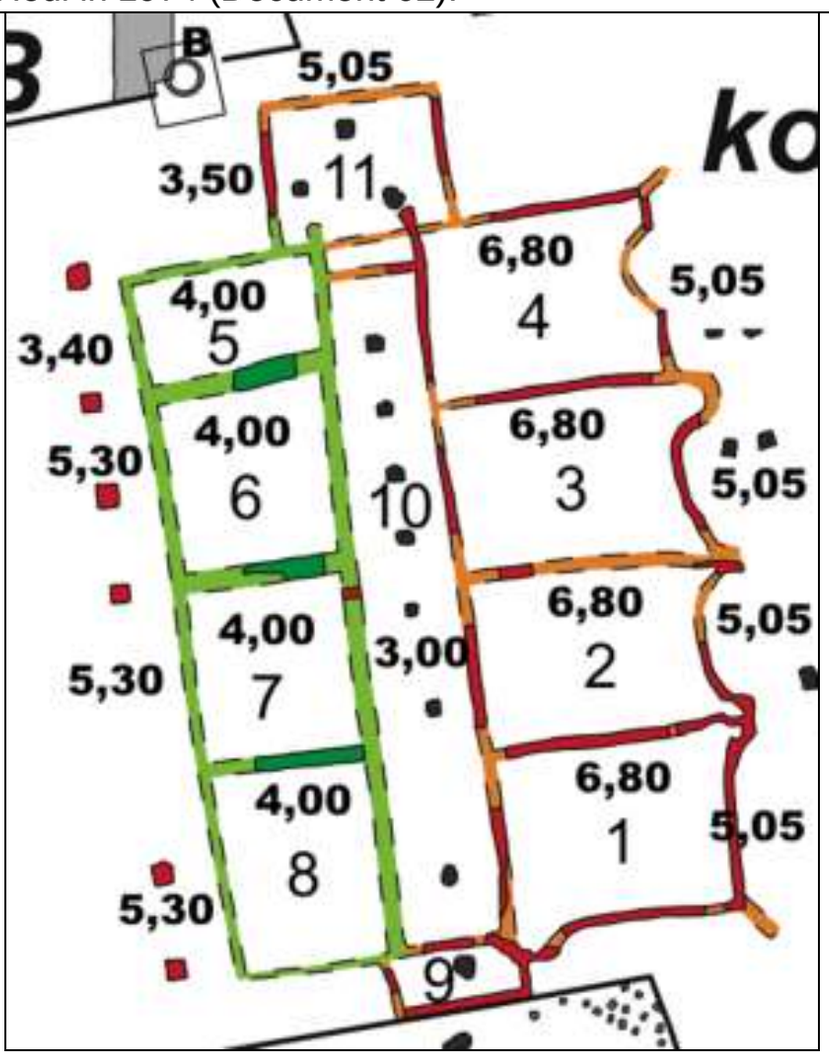
Document 61: Plan of Sobibór Camp drawn by former SS *Scharführer* Franz Hödl in 1966; *Lager* 3, with presumed gas chambers (second facility) at the top left. Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Protok. Vol. III, Gomerski Trial, p. 60.



Document 62: Map of Sobibór Camp drawn by former SS *Scharführer* Franz Hödl in 1974, *Lager* 3, with the alleged gas chambers in the center (second facility: "*Vergasungsraum*"). Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund, Protok. Vol. III, Gomerski Trial, p. 1280.



Document 63: Comparison of the plan of the presumed gas chambers of Sobibór (second facility) resulting from archaeological research (Documents 58, 58a, 58b) and the plan drawn by F. Hödl in 1974 (Document 62).

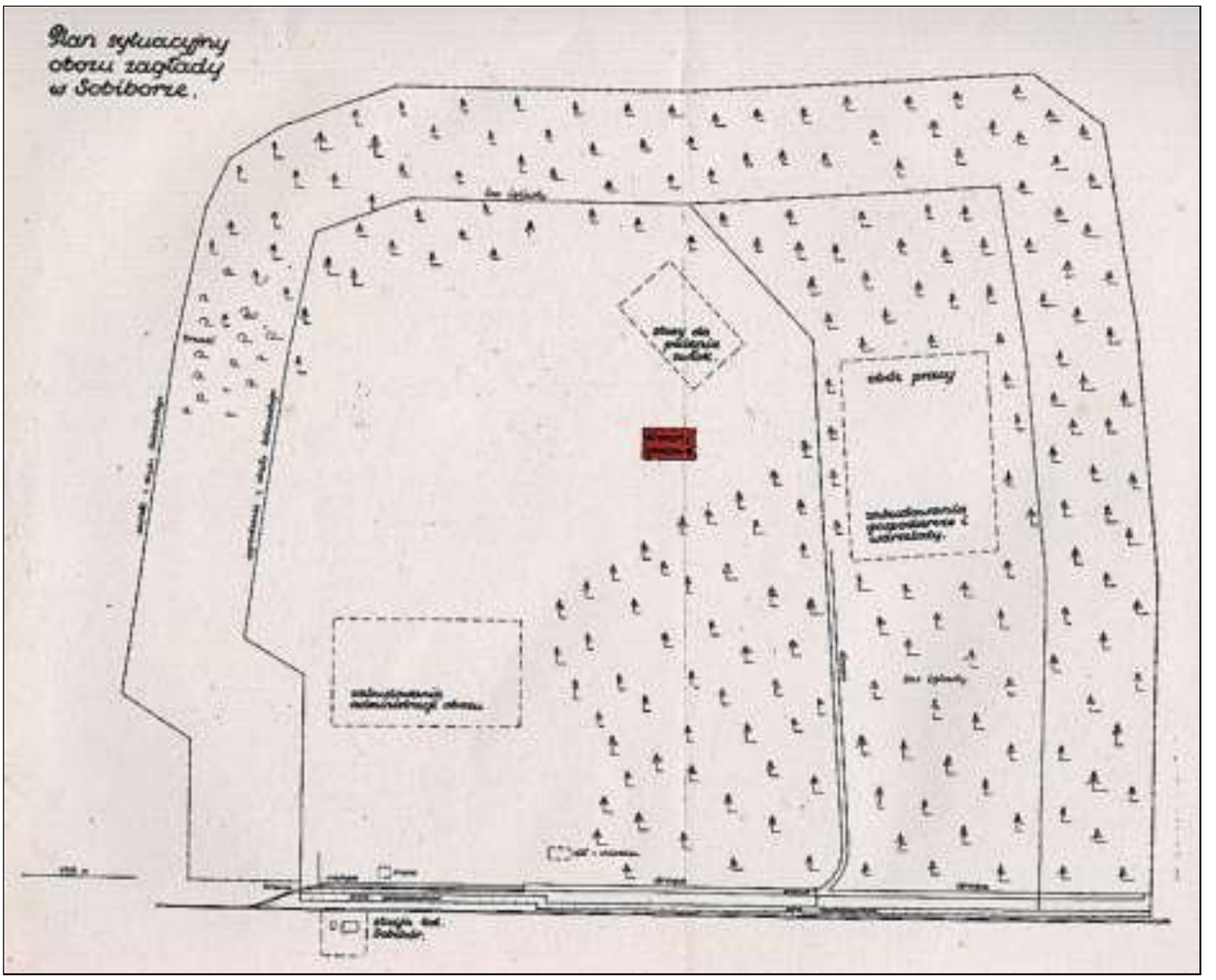


Document 64: Plan of the presumed gas chambers of Sobibór (second facility) resulting from archaeological research (Document 58b) with indication of the respective measurements.

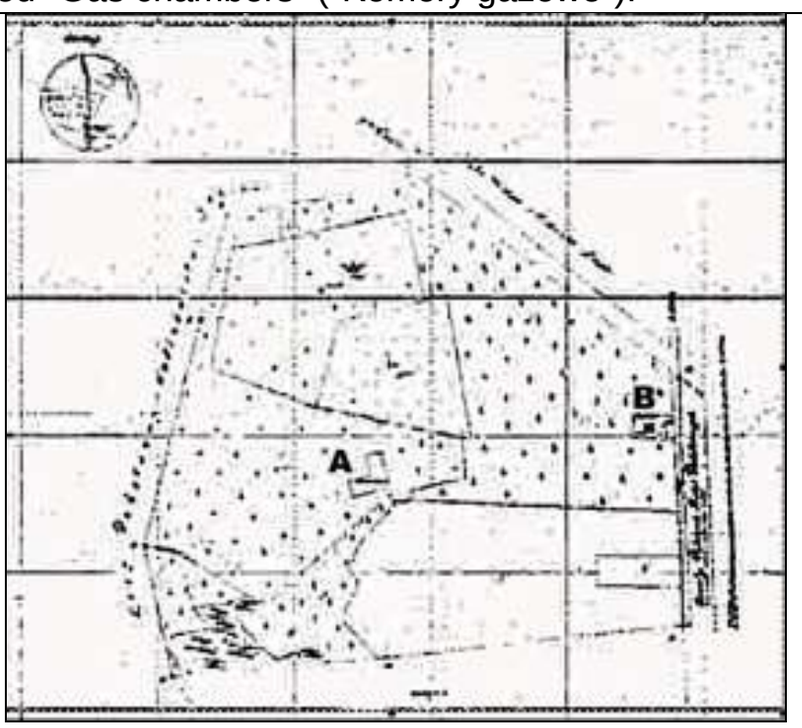
Document 65: Remnants of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (second facility). Seen from southeast to northwest. Haimi 2015, p. 9. I added explanatory letters and numbers (see text).

Document 66: Remnants of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (second facility). Seen from south to north. Image in the public domain.

Document 67: Remnants of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (second facility), 2014 or 2015. Kowalczyk-Nowak, p. 24.

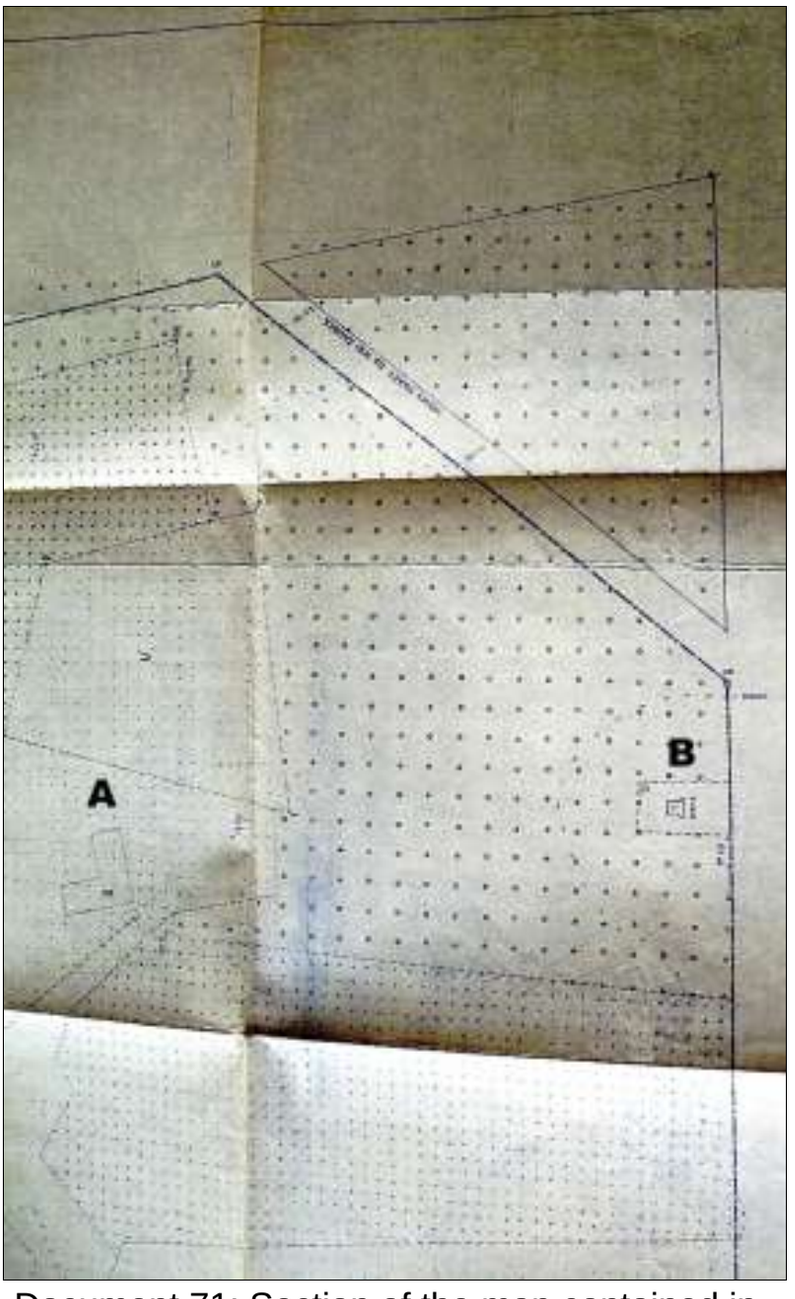


Document 68: "Map of the Sobibór Extermination Camp." Łukaszkiewicz 1947a, unnumbered insert. The red rectangle (dark grey in b&w print) in the center is labeled "Gas chambers" ("Komory gazowe").



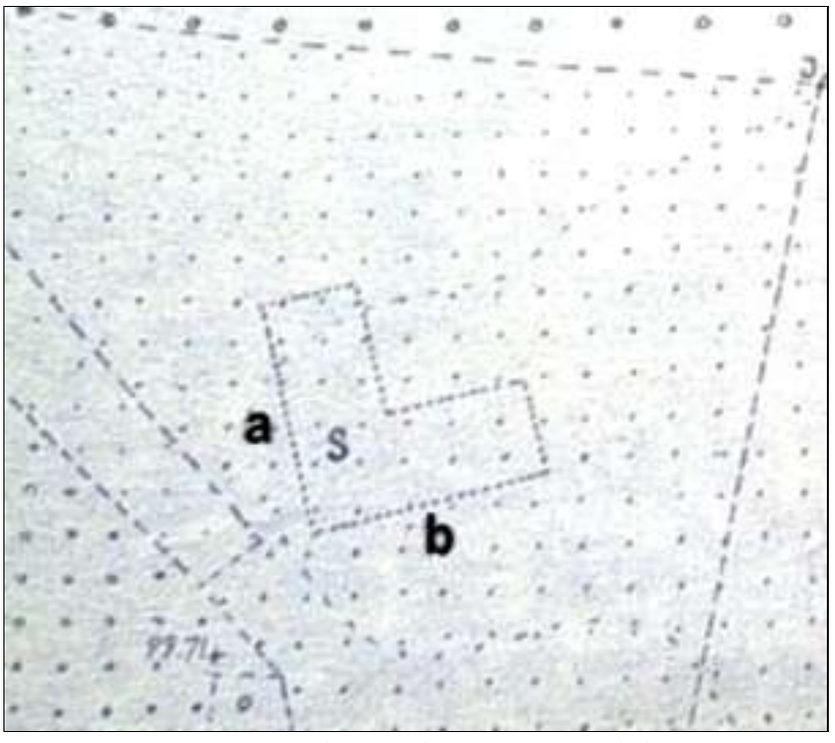
Document 69: Map of Sobibór Camp drawn by engineer Marian Cudny in 1951. Bem/Mazurek 2012a, p. 36.

Document 70: "Sobibór Extermination Campo 1942-1943, current situation – 1962." Legend of the map contained in the Sobibór memorial project by Architect Dylewski. Powiatowe Archiwum Państwowe w Chełmie. Zespół PGRN-Włodawa.



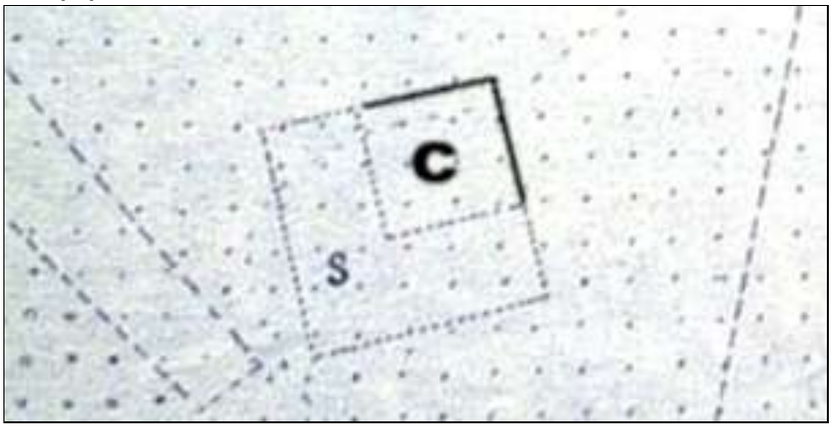
Document 71: Section of the map contained in the Sobibór memorial project of 1962 (Document 70), roated by 90° and with letters A and B addedd (see text).

Document 72: Section enlargement of Document 58.



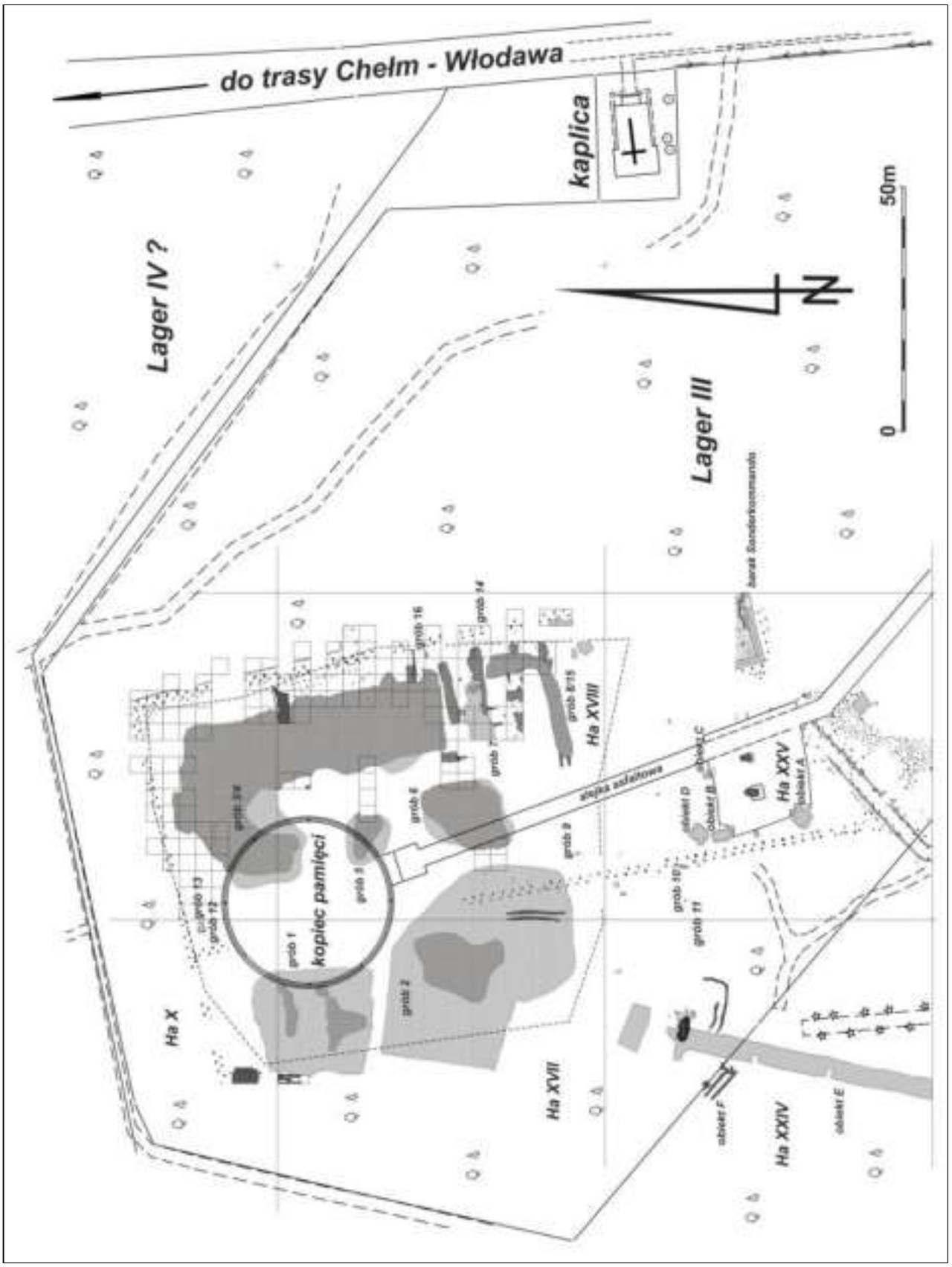
Document 73: Section enlargement of the map contained in the Sobibór memorial project of 1962 (Documents 70 & 71). The L-shaped area marked with the letter S represents "Ruins of the gas-chamber building."

Document 74: Aerial image of the area of the alleged gas chambers at Sobibór (A) and the chapel (B).

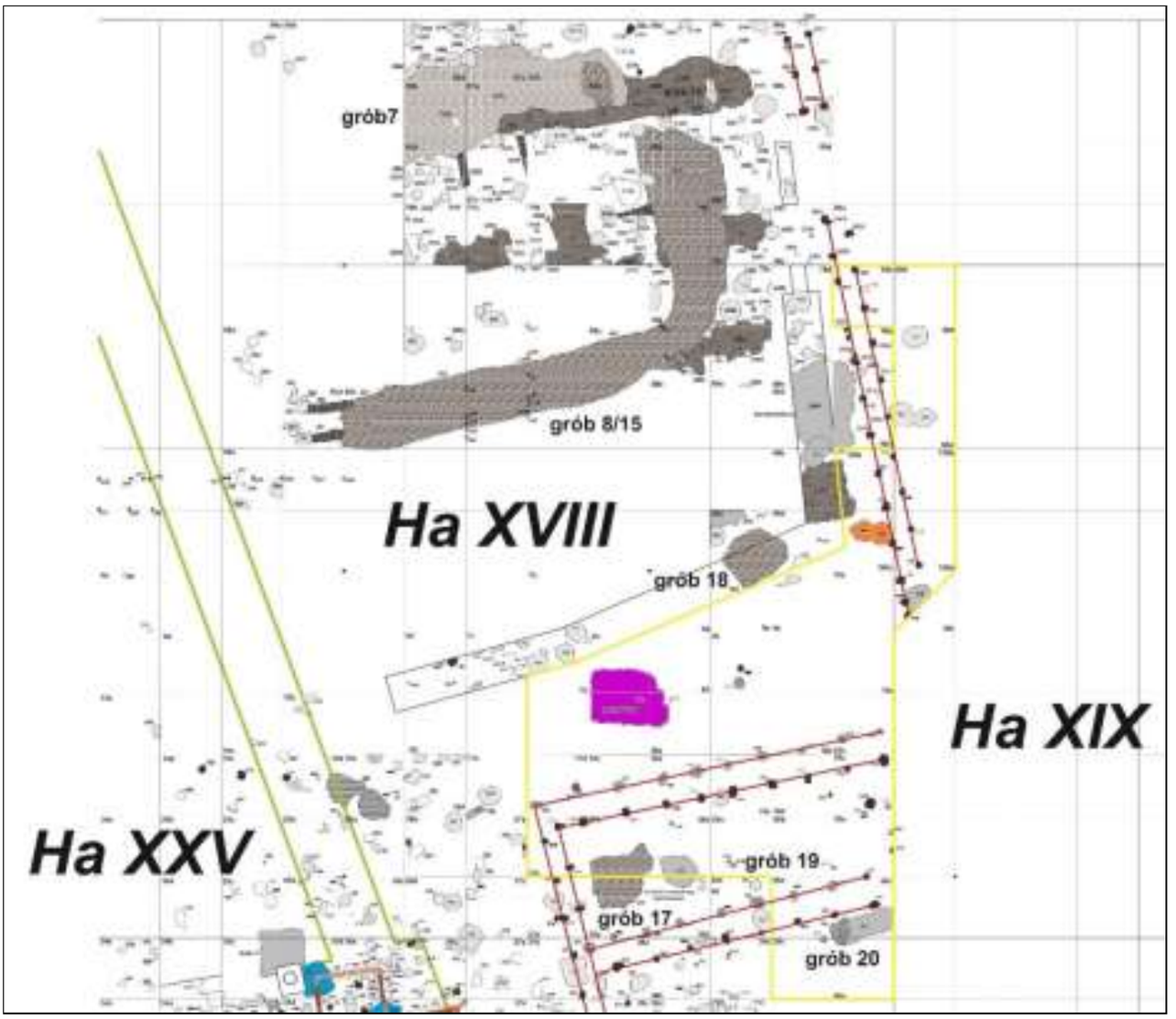


Document 75: Section enlargement of the map contained in the Sobibór memorial project of 1962 (Documents 70, 71, 73). The square area represents the area of the asphalt square.

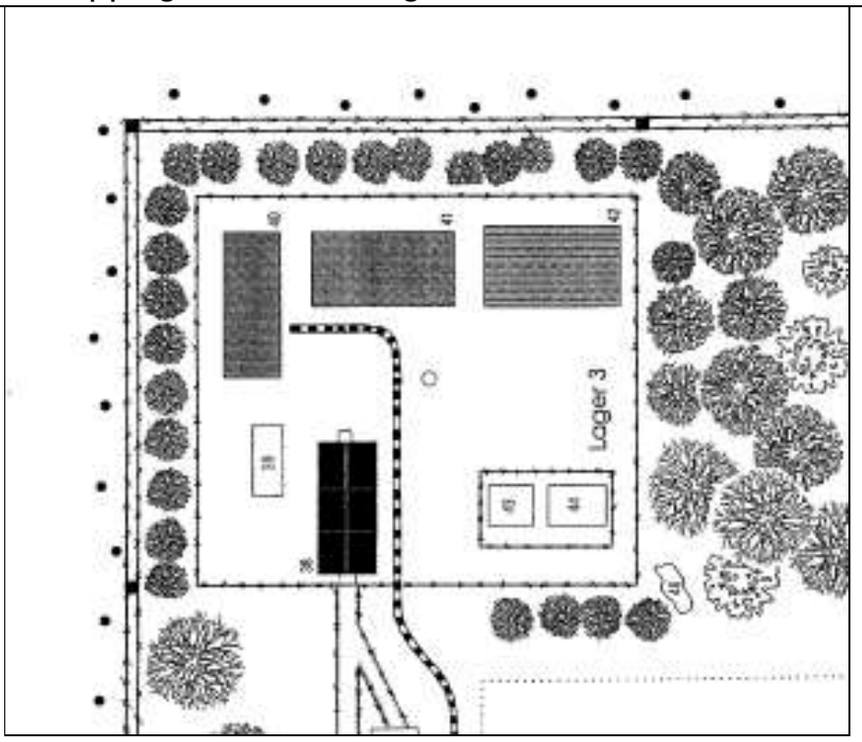
Documents 76a&b: Location of the alleged gas chambers beneath the road leading to the ash mound. Above: after 2014 (image in public domain); below: in 1965. Bem/Mazurek 2012a, p. 45.



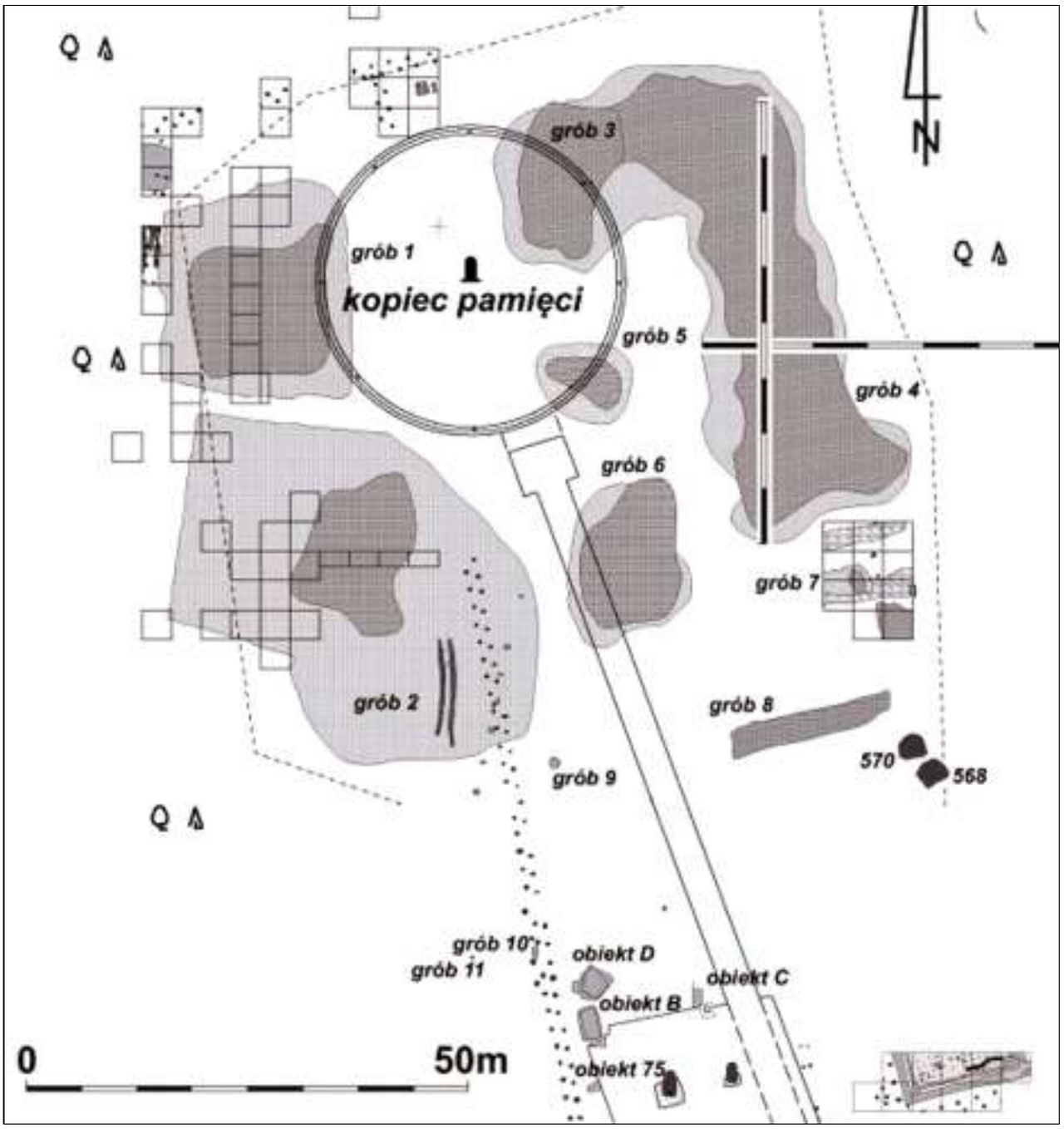
Document 77: Mapping of old mass graves at Sobibór. Mazurek 2013, p. 3.



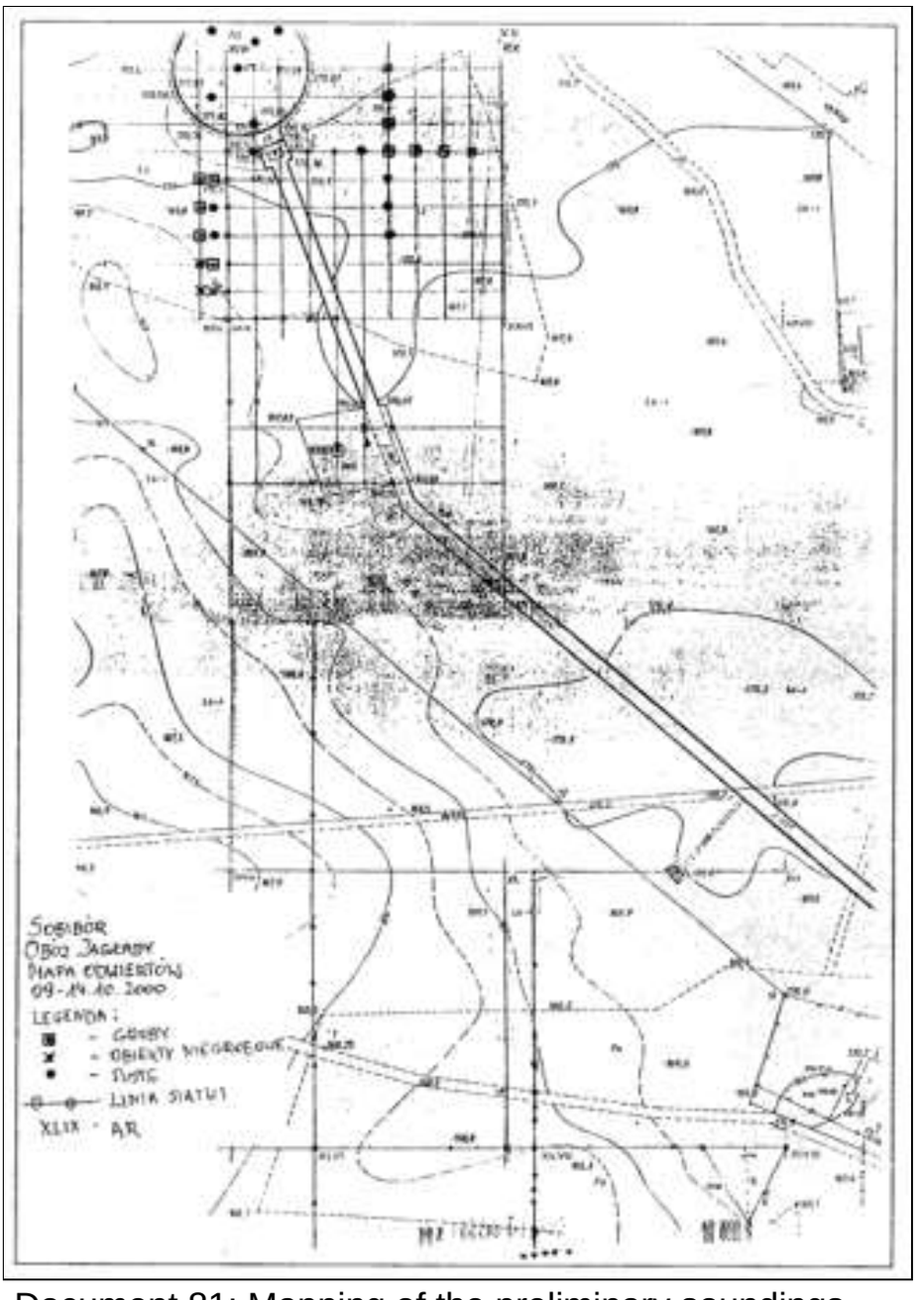
Document 78: Mapping of new mass graves at Sobibór. Haimi 2015, p. 5.



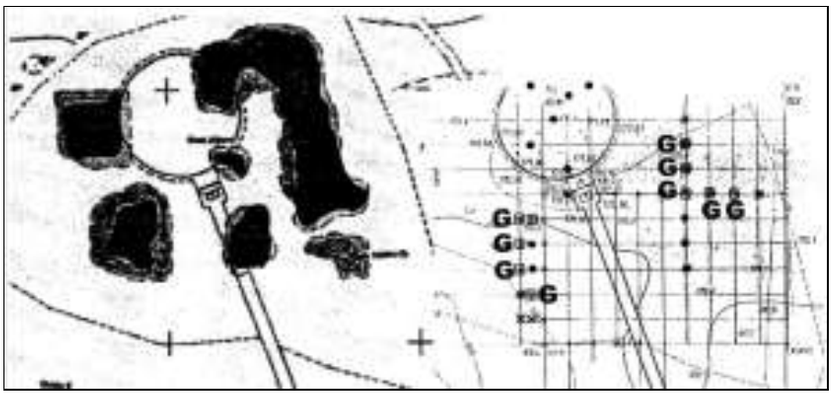
Document 79: Depiction of mass graves at Sobibór (rectangles Nos. 40 and 41) on J. Schelvis's camp map (Document 60). Schelvis, p. 9.



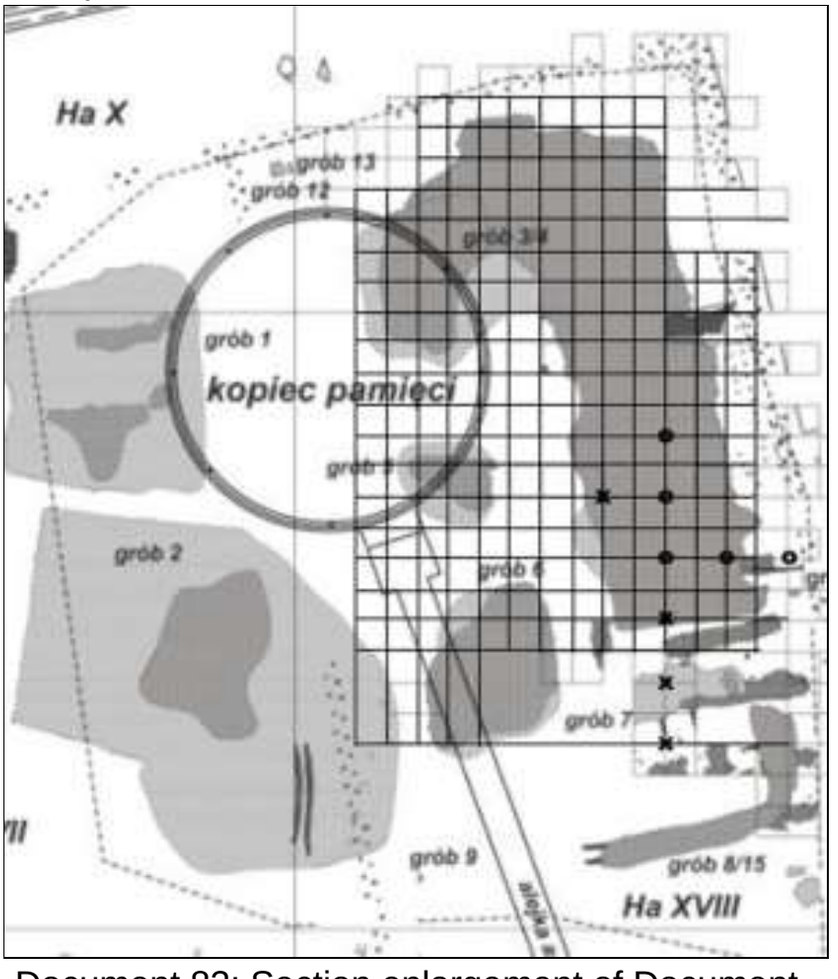
Document 80: Mapping of the old mass graves at Sobibór. I overlaid the two scale bars of 50 m on Pit No. 3/4. Mazurek 2013, p. 3.



Document 81: Mapping of the preliminary soundings made by A. Kola in the area of the mass graves at Sobibór Camp. Kola 2000c, p. 92.



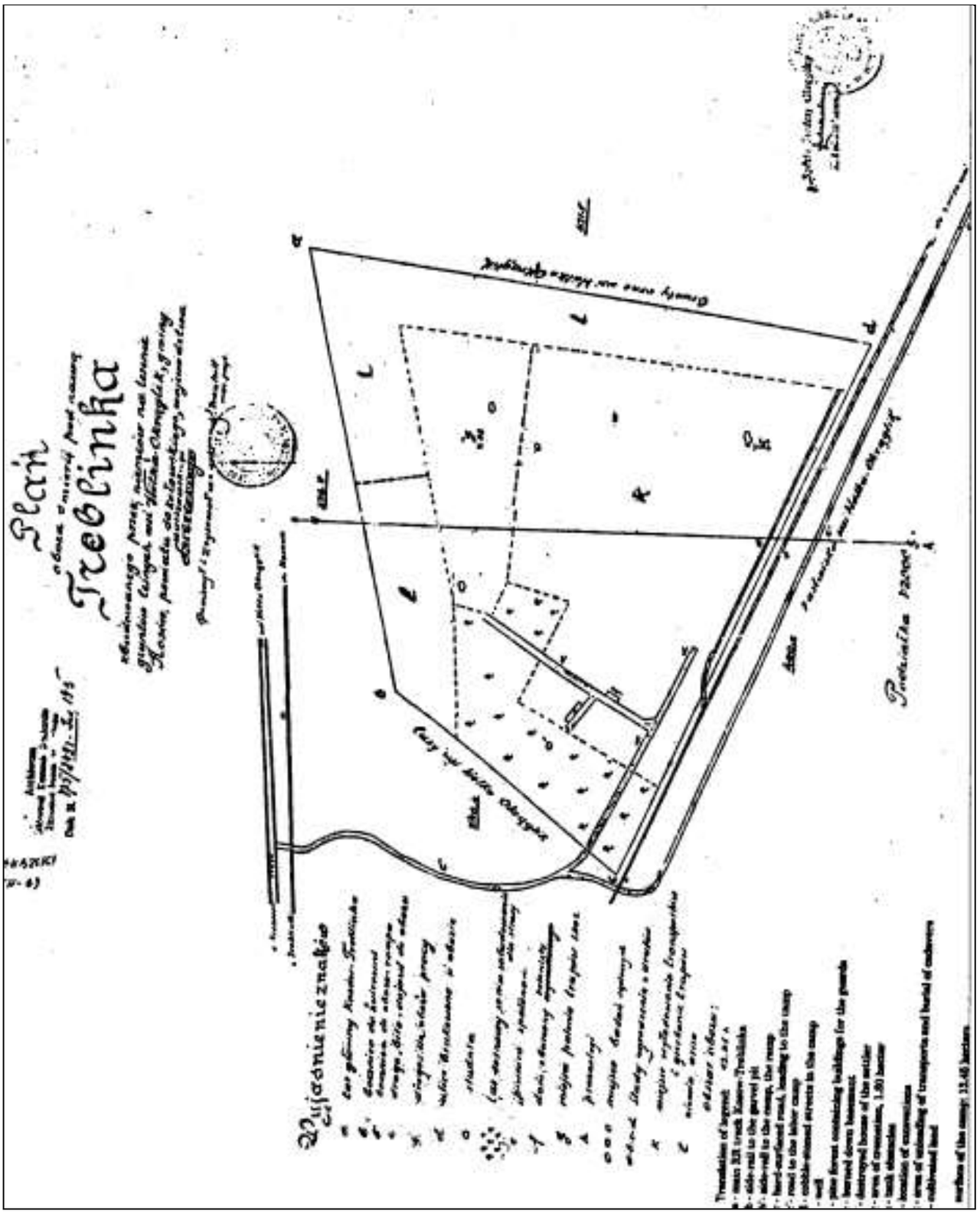
Document 82: Section enlargement of Document 80. The letter G [*Gróbˊ*: pit] indicates positive samples.



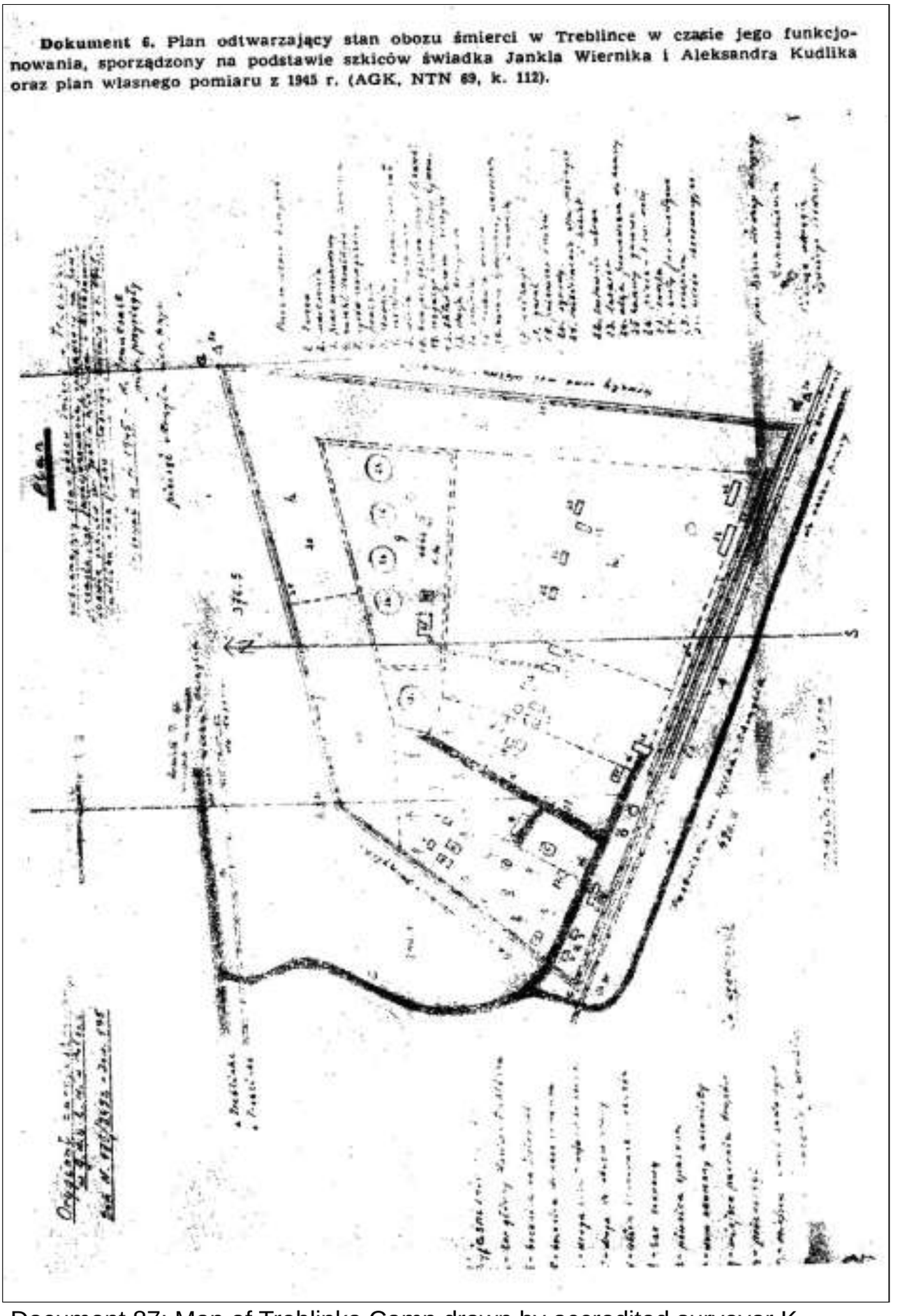
Document 83: Section enlargement of Document 80. I completed the grid.

Document 84: German military map 1:100000 of the Włodawa area. Mil-Geo-Karte, Ausgabe Nr. 1, Stand: 25.II.44. Großblatt Nr. 369 (Gebietsteil Generalgouvernement). Deutsche Heereskarte. Truppenausgabe Nr. 1 v. IV.44.

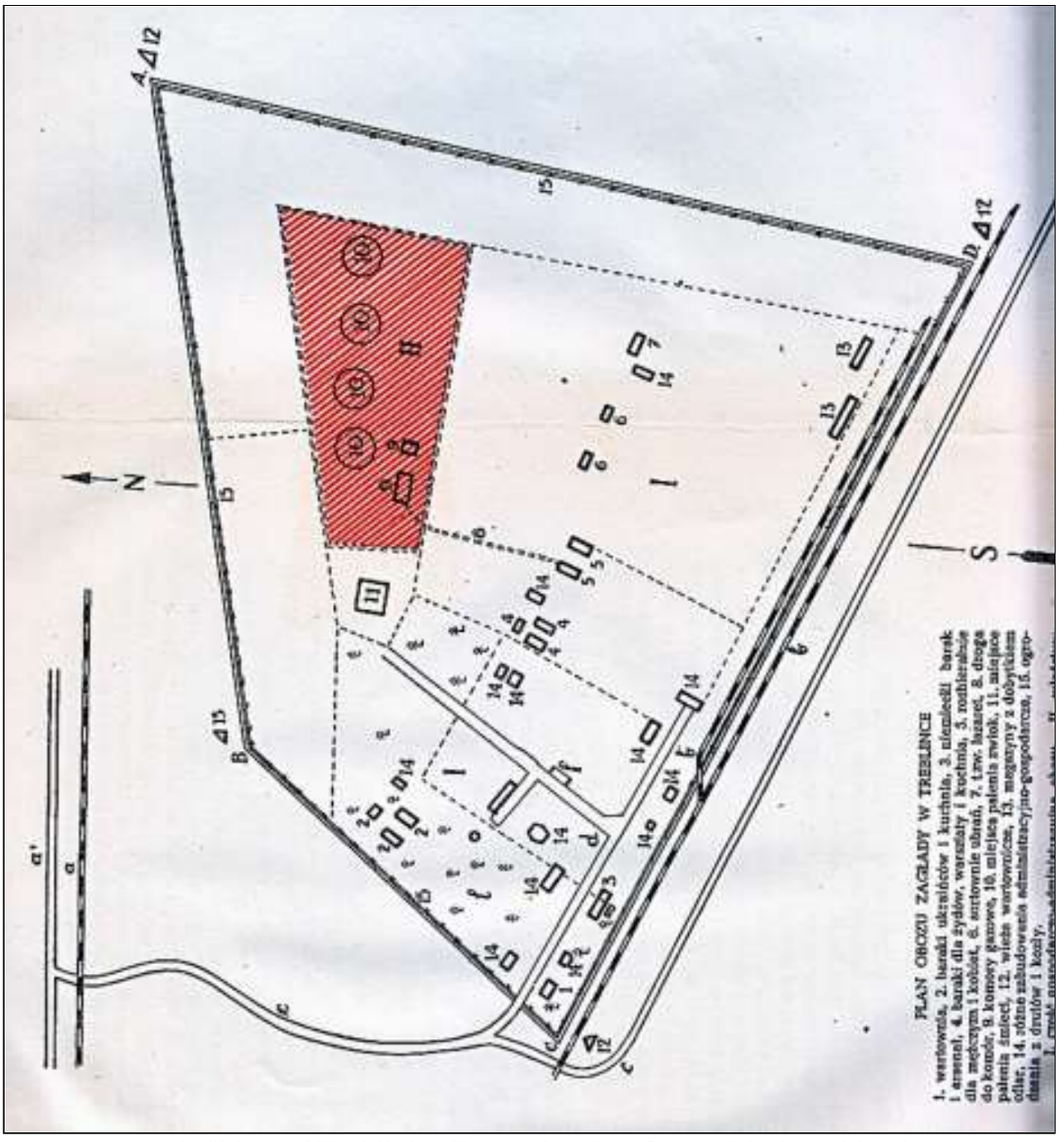
Document 85: Section enlargement of Document 84. Sobibór area.



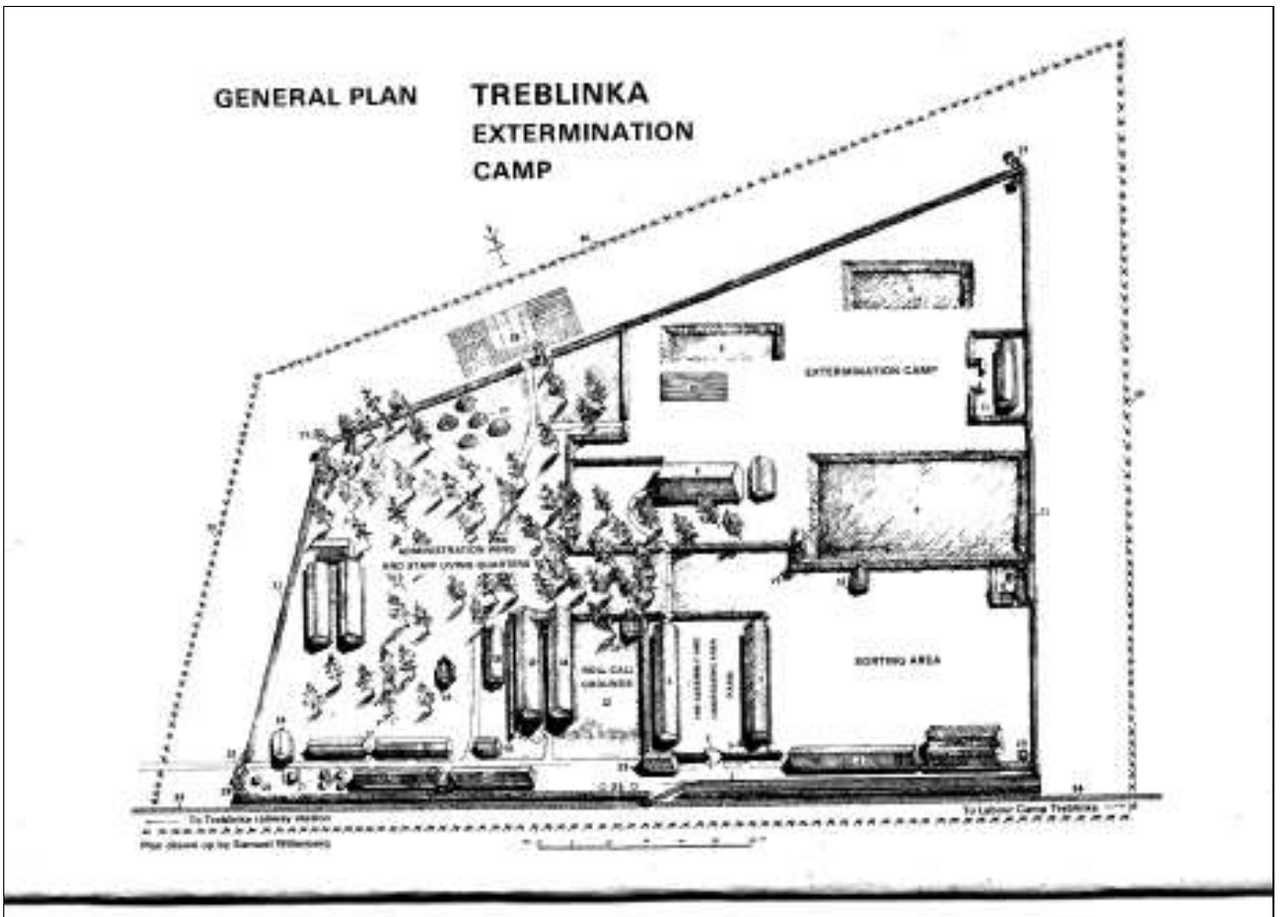
Document 86: Map of Treblinka Camp drawn by accredited surveyor K. Trautsolt (1945). Neumaier/Rudolf, p. 489.



Document 87: Map of Treblinka Camp drawn by accredited surveyor K. Trautsolt (1945). Wojtczak, p. 166.



Document 88: "Map of Treblinka Extermination Camp." Łukaszkiewicz 1946a, unnumbered insert.



KEY TO GENERAL PLAN OF CAMP

TREBLINKA EXTERMINATION CAMP – GENERAL PLAN

1 The railway track and the platform (ramp).

2 A small wooden sign attached to the gate, with an arrow indicating the direction of Bialystok and Wolkowysk.

3 A long barrack with a large painted inscription 'OBERMAJDAN'. On this outer wall a fake clock and on the barrack door the inscription 'CASH', a locked door with an inscription: 'To the first class waiting room'; a locked door with an inscription: 'To the second class waiting hall'; a locked door with an inscription 'To the third class waiting hall'. The barrack served as a storeroom for more valuable objects taken away from the victims.

THE ASSEMBLY AND UNDRESSING AREA (YARD)

4 On left, the women's barrack, where they had to undress. At the end of the barrack, behind a partition-wall worked the barbers. Behind the women's barrack – a sorting place for bottles and kitchen appliances ('Flaschensortieren').

5 On right, a barrack serving as storeroom. It also served as prisoners' night quarters until the escape of four of them.

X A well.

7 Path to the gas chambers.

SORTING AREA

6 'Lazarett' – execution site.

3 Two barracks where more valuable objects were stored. On the wall facing the ramp were signs for deceiving the victims.

12 Five-metre high wall.

ADMINISTRATION WING AND STAFF LIVING QUARTERS

15 Stables and pigsty.

16 Bakery.

17 Barrack containing: Ukrainian women's quarters; dental clinic of the SS men and Ukrainians; general clinic of the SS men and Ukrainians; room of the 'Goldjuden'.

18 Barracks of the Ukrainian guards.

19 Zoo ('Tiergarten').

20 SS men barracks connected by a corridor with the armory.

21 The armoured car.

22 Chairs on which relaxed the SS men. Above them were sun shades.

23 Ukrainians' guardroom.

24 Administration rooms, including the quarters of the camp commander Stangel.

25 Garage.

26 Gasoline and lubricating oil depot.

27 Timber yard.

28 Vegetable garden.

29 Watchtowers.

30 Anti-tank obstacles.

31 Barbed wire camouflaged by pine branches.

32 Main entrance gate.

33 Latrines.

34 Railway track.

EXTERMINATION CAMP

8 Ten new gas chambers; three old, small gas chambers.

9 Burial pits.

10 Rails on which victims' bodies were cremated.

11 Barrack prisoners' living quarters.

ROLL-CALL GROUNDS

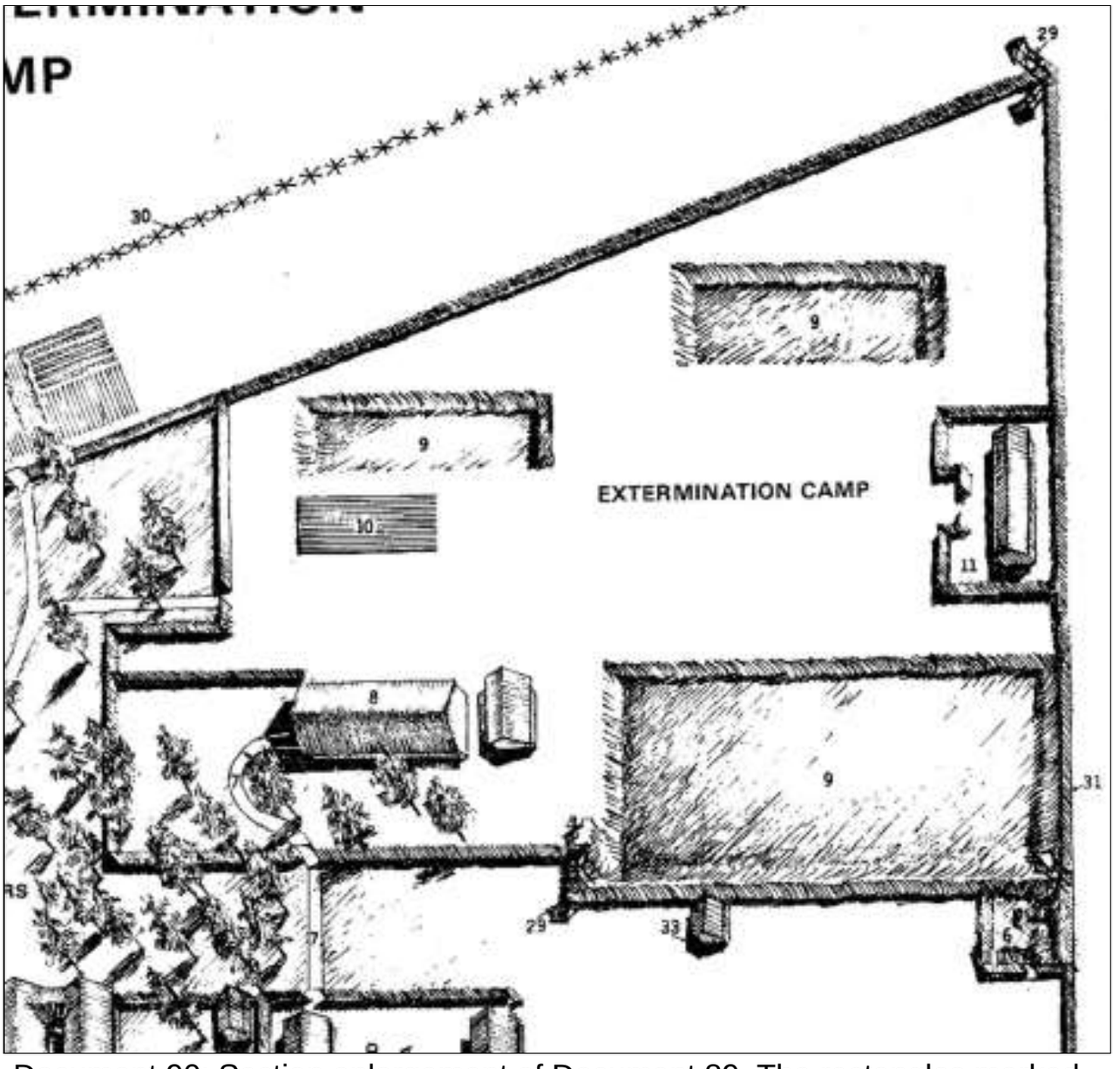
33 Latrines.

BARRACK – PRISONERS' LIVING QUARTERS

13 On left, barrack; kitchen; capos' and specialists ('Hofjuden'); tailor and furrier shop; next to the window stood the painter's easel, carpentry and locksmith's shop; smithy.

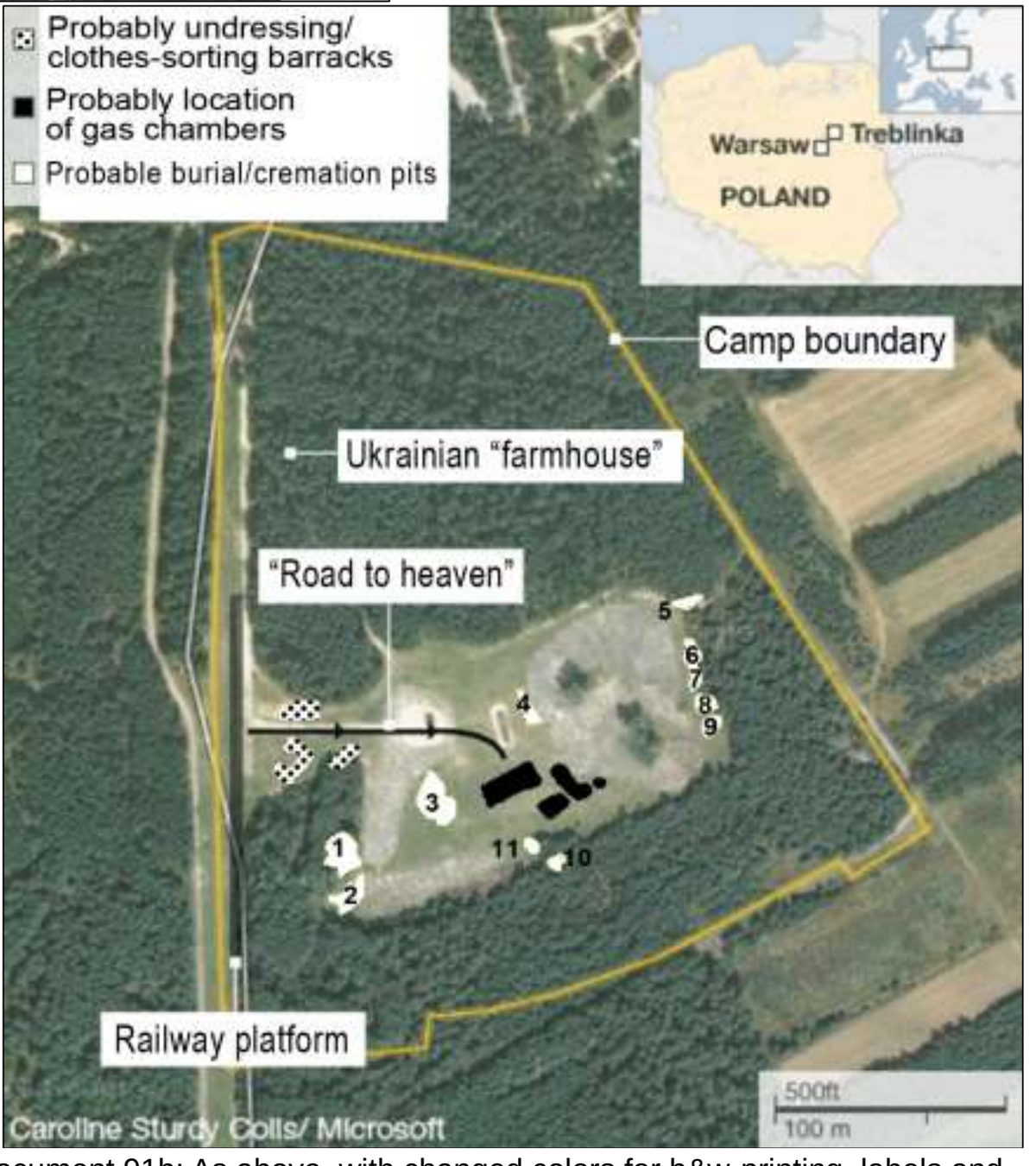
14 On right – barrack divided into latrines, washroom and on its sides prisoners' living quarters.

Document 89: "General Plan Treblinka Extermination Camp." Willenberg, p. 6.

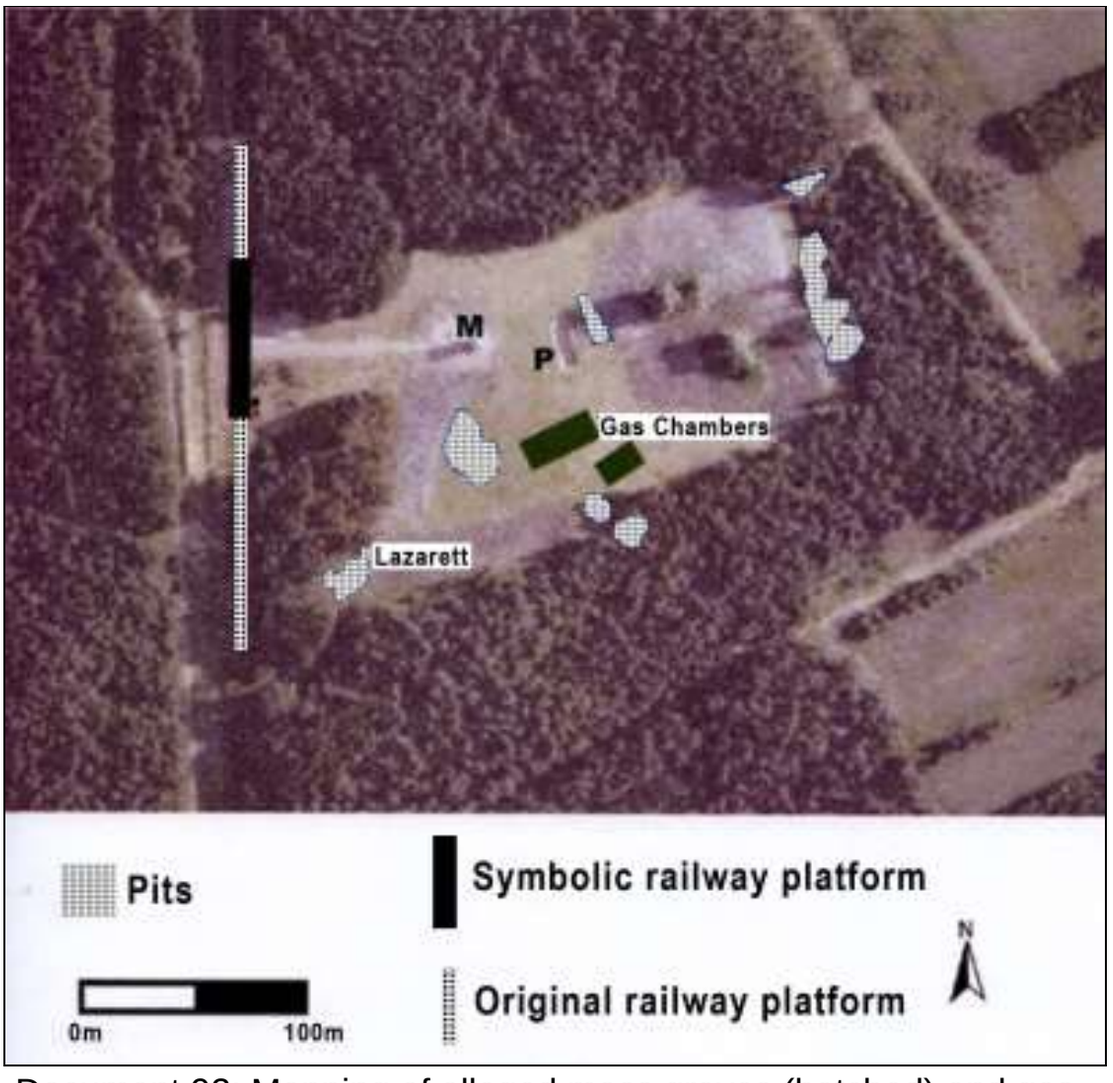


Document 90: Section enlargement of Document 89. The rectangles marked with the number 9 represent the mass graves.

Document 91a: Mapping of the "Probable location of the gas chambers" (blue) and of the "burial/cremation pits" (yellow) at the former Treblinka Camp. Sturdy Colls 2012; her original; recolored for b&w printing below.

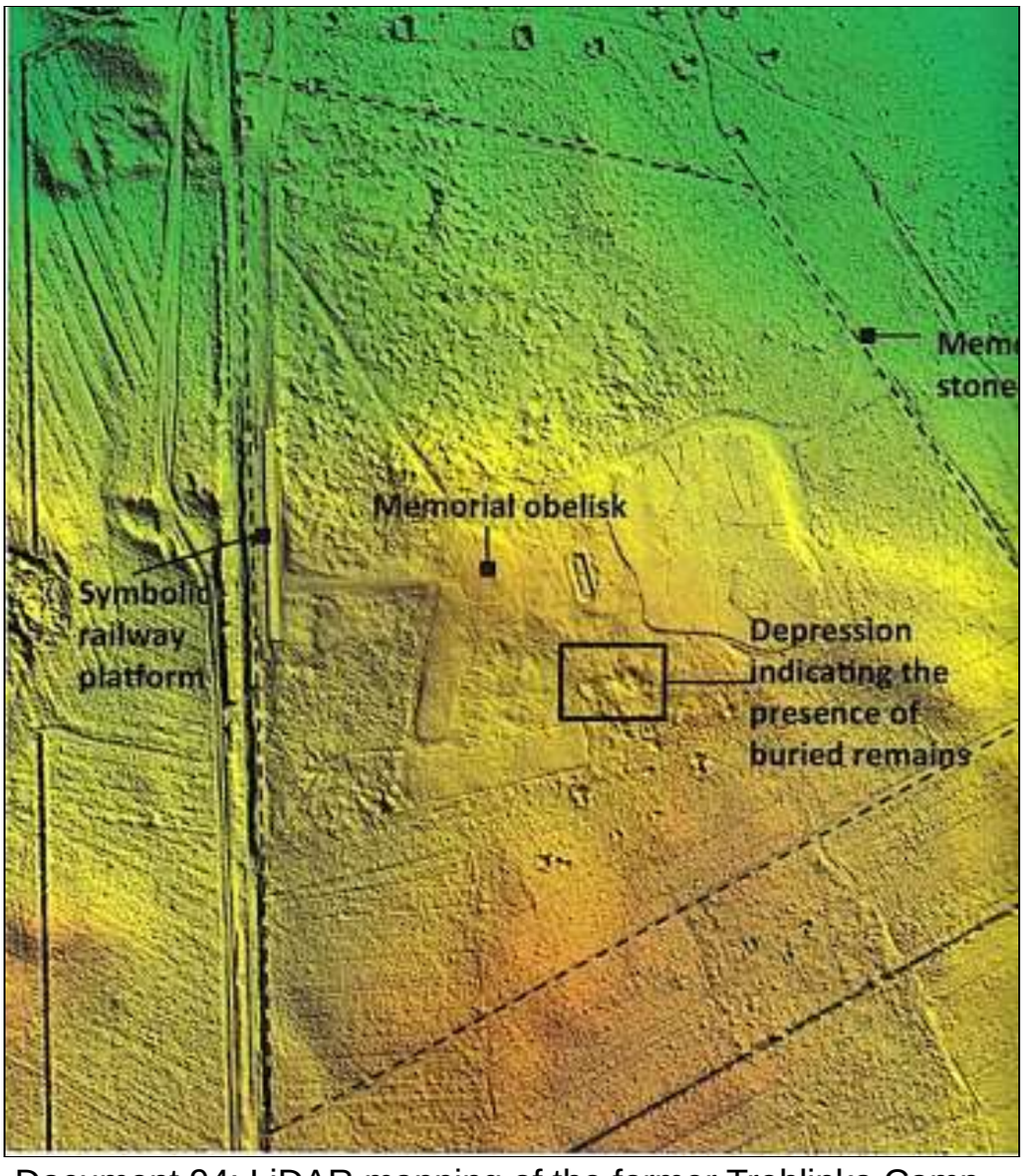


Document 91b: As above, with changed colors for b&w-printing, labels and legend redone for higher resolution, and numbers on the alleged mass graves added.



Document 92: Mapping of alleged mass graves (hatched) and gas chambers (in green/grey) at the former Treblinka Camp. Sturdy Colls/Branthwaite 2016, p. 71; recolored for b&w printing; see text.

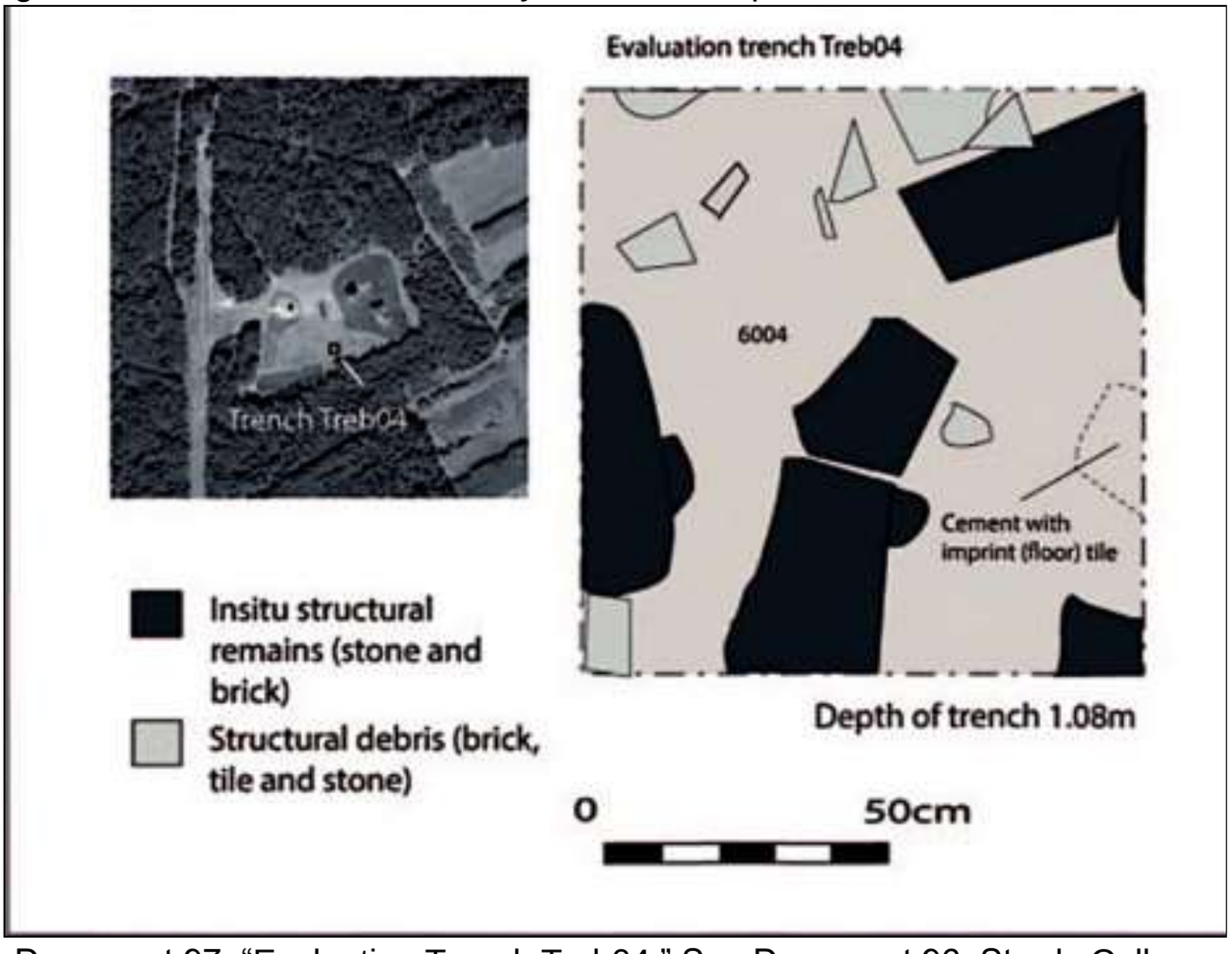
Document 93: "Non-invasive" excavation by C. Sturdy Colls in the area of a mass grave at the former Treblinka Camp. Sturdy Colls/Branthwaite 2016, p. 29.



Document 94: LiDAR mapping of the former Treblinka Camp. Sturdy Colls/Branthwaite 2016, p. 52.

Document 95: Section enlargement of Document 94 compared with mapping of alleged gas chambers.

Document 96: "Non-invasive" excavation by C. Sturdy Colls in the area of "old gas chamber" at Treblinka. Sturdy Colls 2015a, p. 249.



Document 97: "Evaluation Trench Treb04." See Document 96. Sturdy Colls 2015a, p. 186.

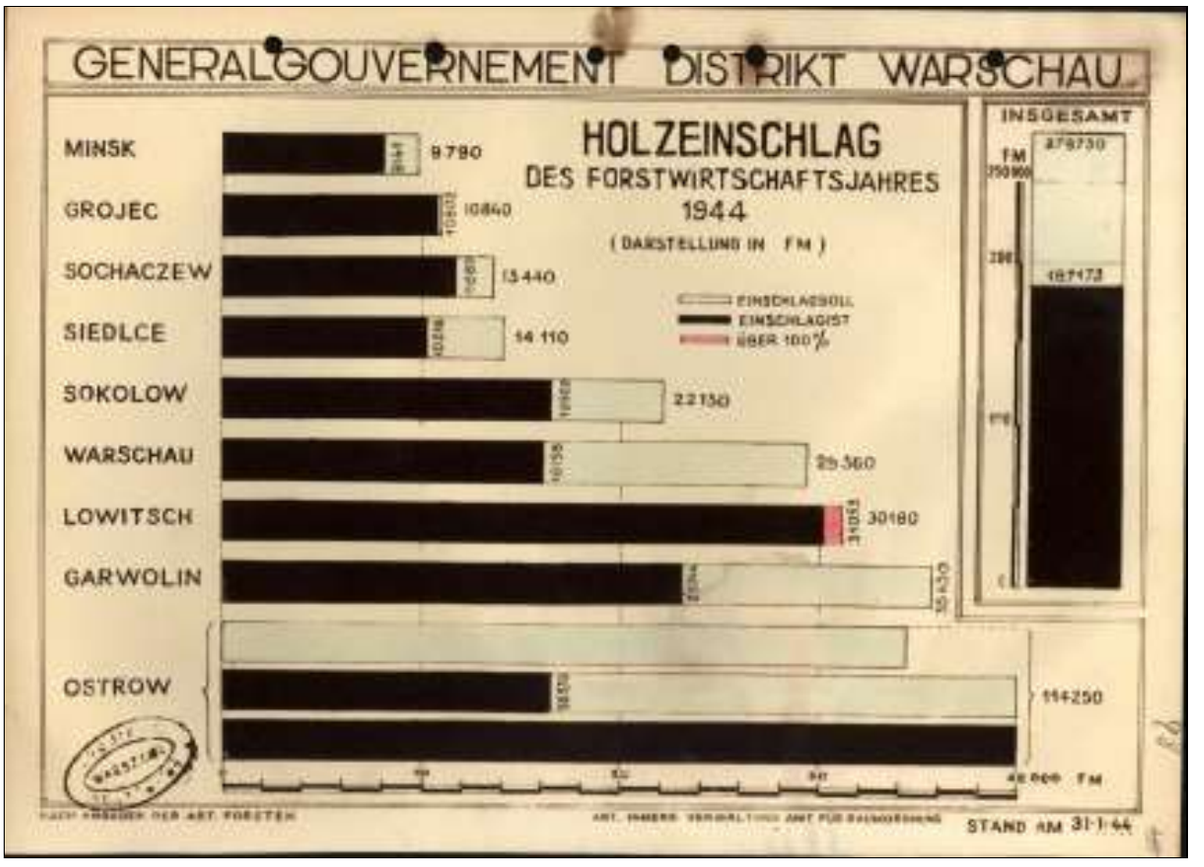
Document 98: Treblinka Camp in 1946. GFHA, Catalog No. 11337.

Document 99: Treblinka. The area of Pit No. 3 and the alleged gas chambers in 1997. © Carlo Mattogno.

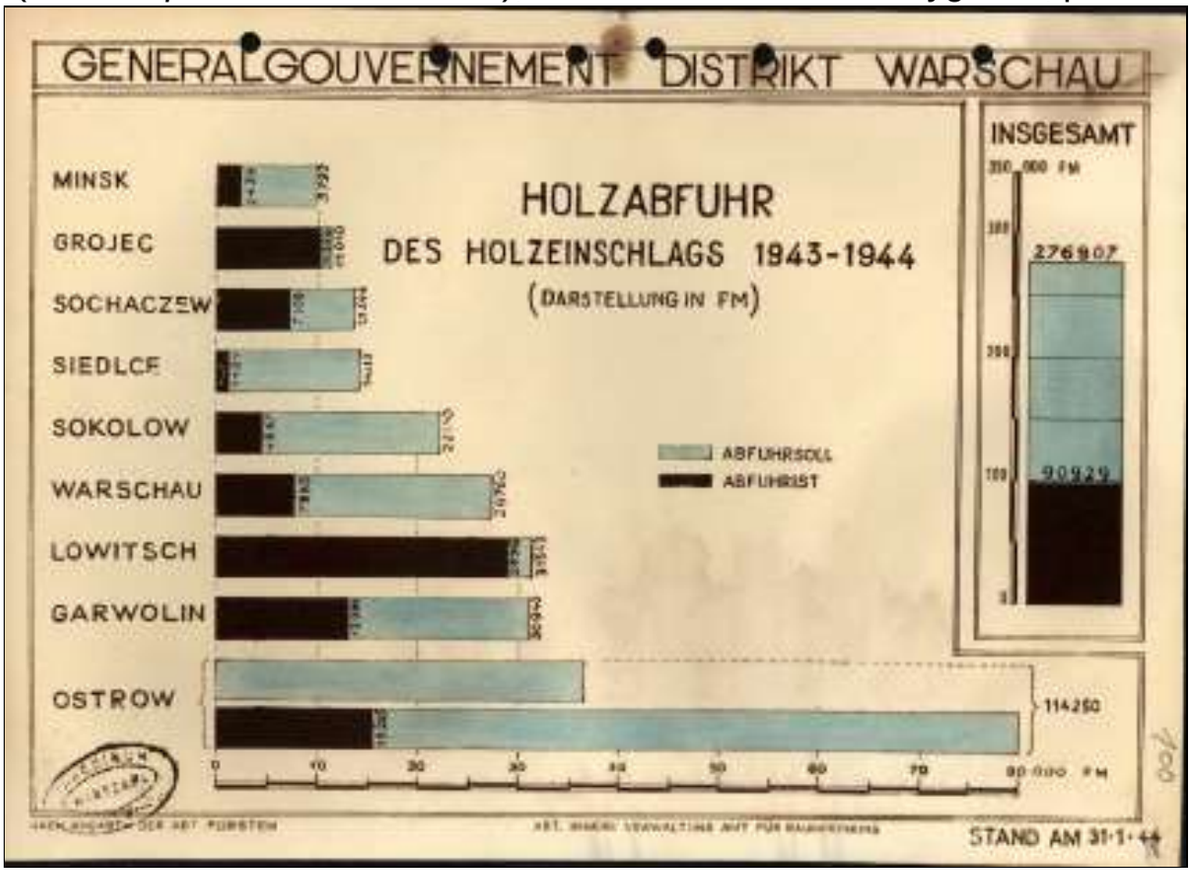
Fig. 9.9 The gas chambers at Majdanek, which were modelled on showers. (Copyright: Caroline Sturdy Colls)

Document 100: Photo by C. Sturdy Colls of the shower room in Barracks 41 (*Bad und Desinfektion I*) of the Majdanek Camp with the explanation: "The gas chambers at Majdanek, which were modelled on showers"! Sturdy Colls 2015a, p. 250.

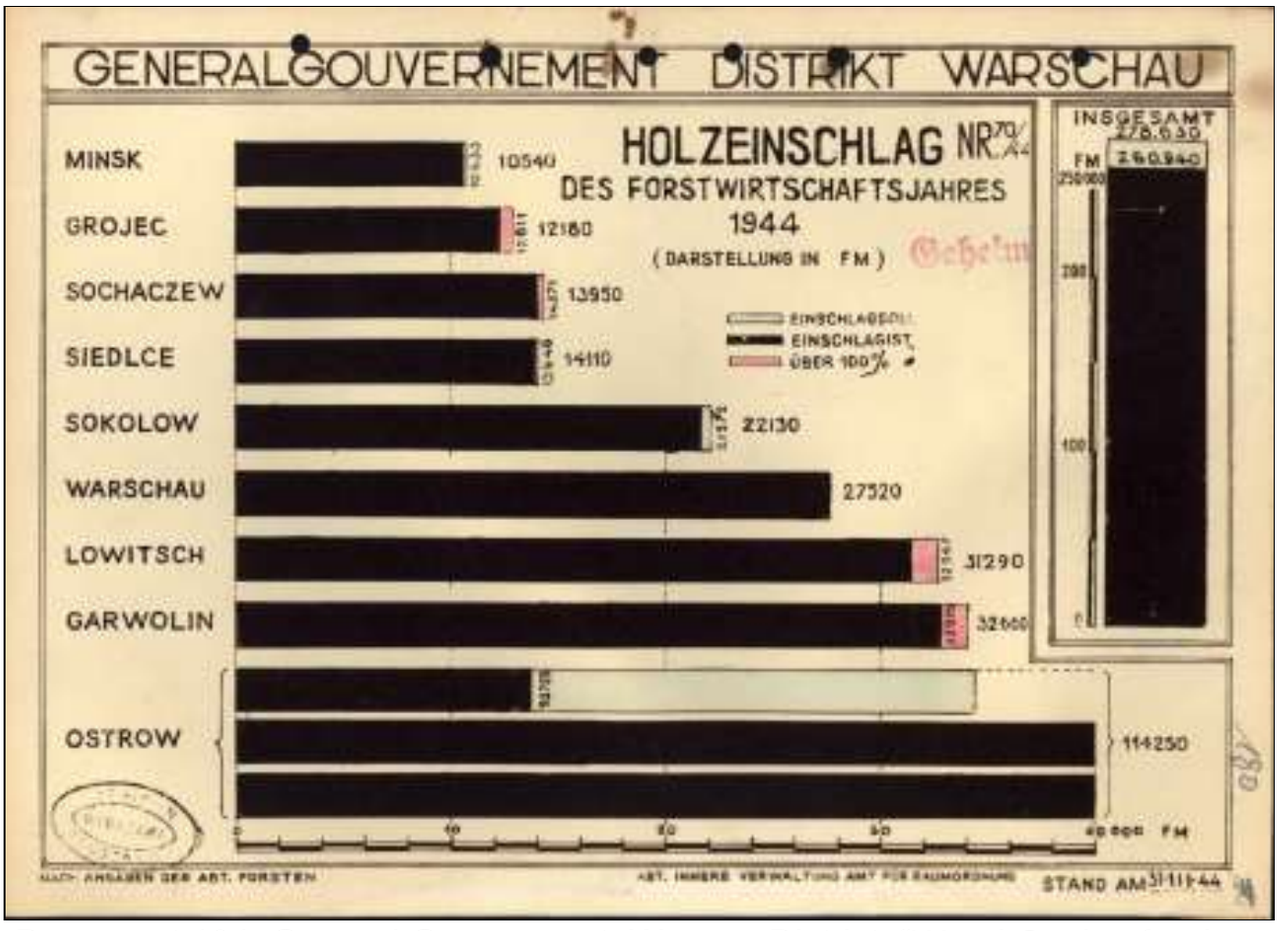
Document 101: The GBP device used by Richard Krege for his research. Birkenau, 1999. © Carlo Mattogno.



Document 102: General Government, Warsaw District, "Wood Cutting for the Economic Forestry Year 1944." January 31, 1944. APW, Zespół 489 II (*Kreishauptmannschaft Ostrow*), Starostwo Ostrow Maz. sygn. 82, p. 98.

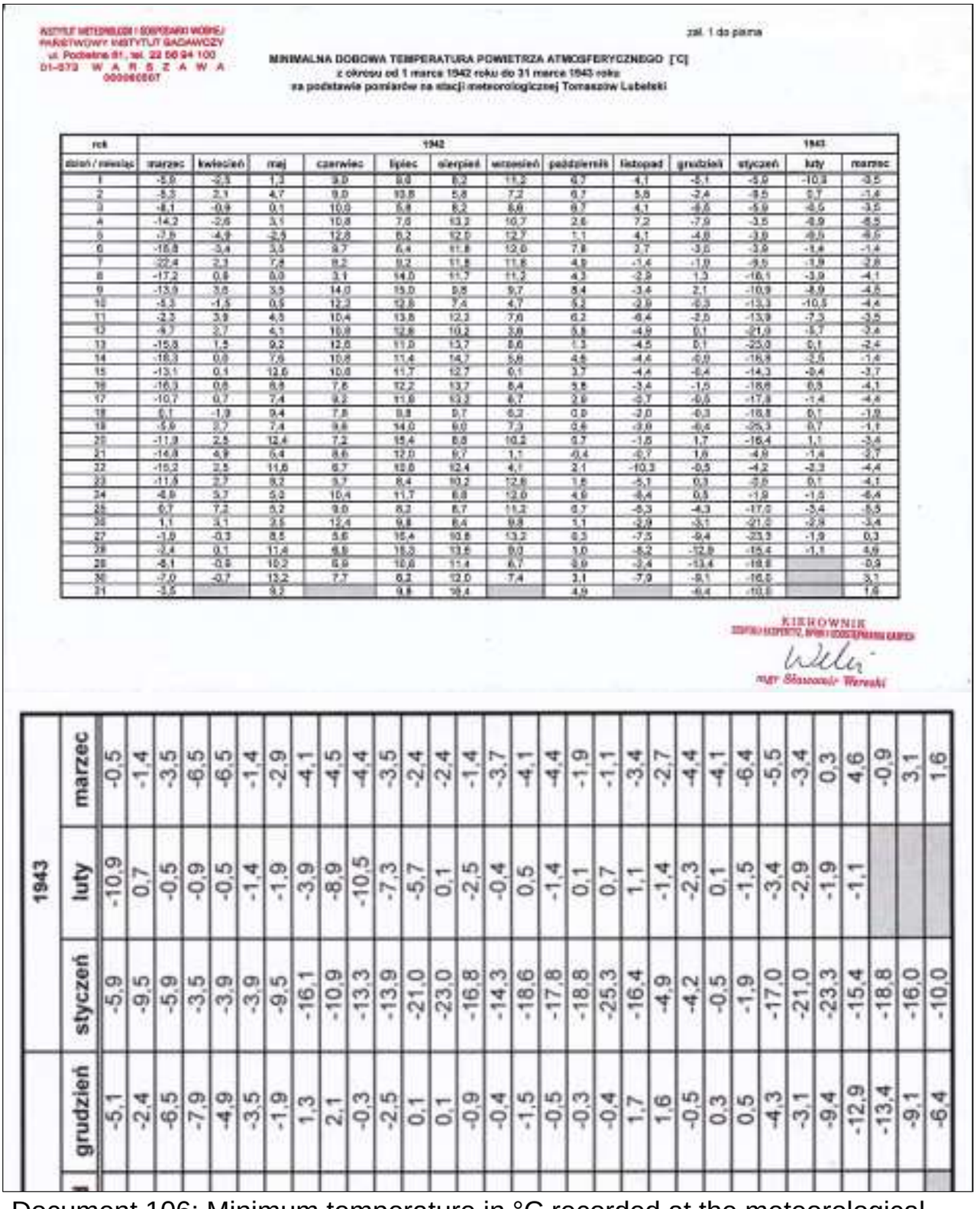


Document 103: General Government, Warsaw District, "Wood transport of the wood cut 1943-1944." January 31, 1944. APW, Zespół 489 II (*Kreis-hauptmannschaft Ostrow*), Starostwo Ostrow Maz. sygn. 82, p. 100.



Document 104: General Government, Warsaw District, "Wood Cutting for the Economic Forestry Year 1944." March 31, 1944. APW, Zespół 489 II (*Kreishauptmannschaft Ostrow*), Starostwo Ostrow Maz. sygn. 82, p. 180.

Document 105: Lumber piles south of the former Sobibór Camp (1997). © Carlo Mattogno.



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01-673 W A R S Z A W A

zał. 1 do pisma

MINIMALNA DOBOWA TEMPERATURA POWIETRZA ATMOSFERYCZNEGO [°C]
z okresu od 1 marca 1942 roku do 31 marca 1943 roku
na podstawie pomiarów na stacji meteorologicznej Tomaszów Lubelski

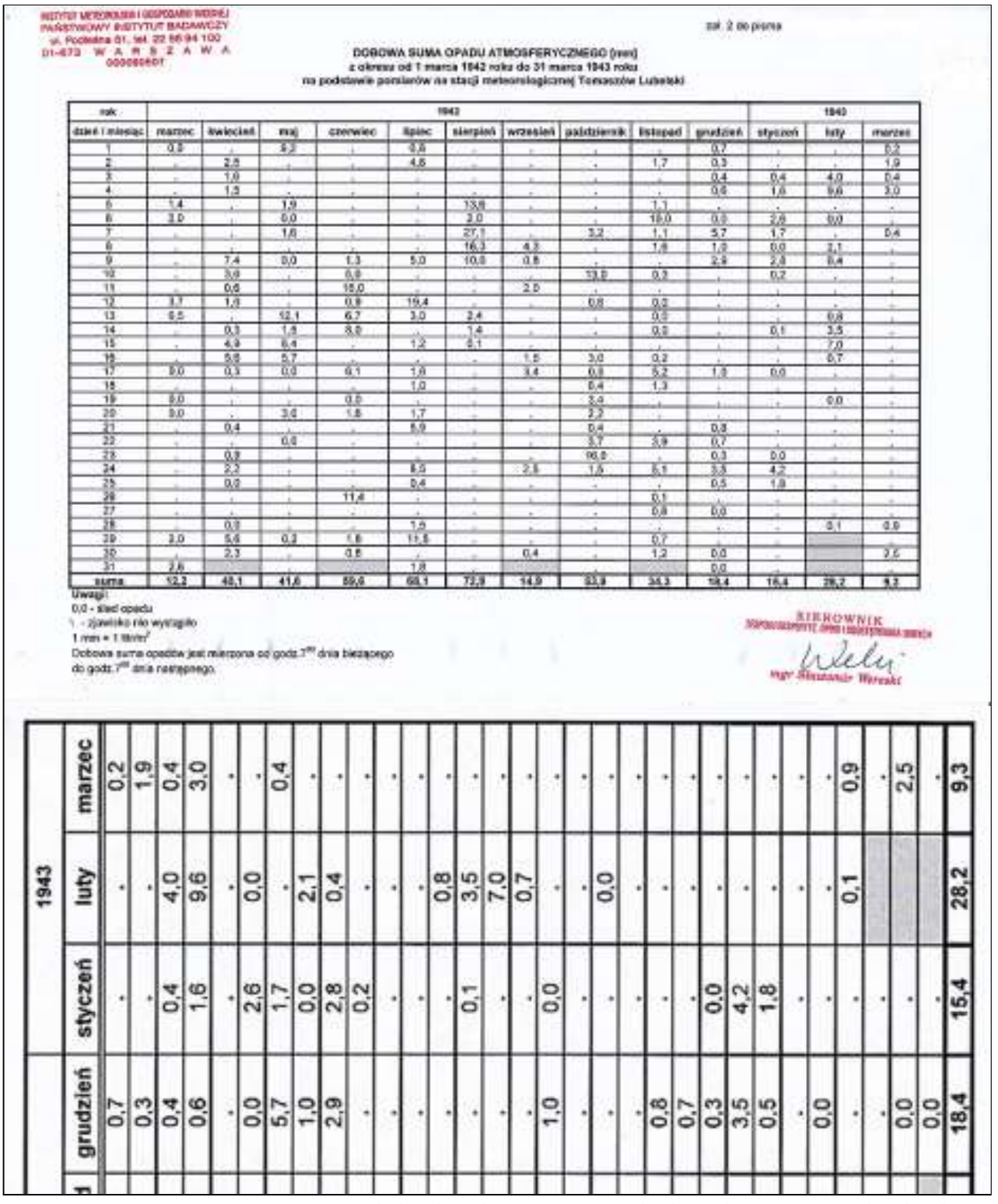
rok	1942										1943		
dzień / miesiąc	marzec	kwiecień	maj	czerwiec	lipiec	sierpień	wrzesień	październik	listopad	grudzień	styczeń	luty	marzec
1	-5,9	-2,5	1,3	9,0	8,8	8,2	11,2	6,7	4,1	-5,1	-5,9	-10,9	-3,5
2	-5,3	2,1	4,7	9,0	13,8	5,8	7,2	6,7	5,8	-2,4	-9,5	0,7	-1,4
3	-8,1	-0,9	0,1	10,0	5,8	8,2	5,8	9,7	4,1	-6,5	-5,9	-0,5	-3,5
4	-14,2	-2,6	3,1	10,8	7,6	13,2	10,7	2,6	7,2	-7,9	-3,5	-0,9	-6,5
5	-7,5	-4,9	-2,5	12,8	8,2	12,0	12,7	1,1	4,1	-4,9	-3,9	-0,5	-6,5
6	-10,8	-3,4	3,5	9,7	6,4	11,8	12,0	7,8	2,7	-3,5	-3,9	-1,4	-1,4
7	-22,4	2,3	7,4	8,2	8,2	11,8	11,8	4,9	-1,4	-1,9	-9,5	-1,9	-2,9
8	-17,2	0,6	0,0	3,1	14,0	11,7	11,2	4,3	-2,9	1,3	-16,1	-3,9	-4,1
9	-13,9	3,6	3,5	14,0	15,0	9,8	9,7	8,4	-3,4	2,1	-10,9	-8,9	-4,5
10	-5,3	-1,5	0,5	12,2	12,8	7,4	4,7	5,2	-2,9	-0,3	-13,3	-10,5	-4,4
11	-2,3	3,9	4,3	10,4	13,8	12,3	7,6	6,2	-6,4	-2,6	-13,9	-7,3	-3,5
12	-4,7	3,7	4,1	10,8	12,8	10,2	3,8	5,8	-4,9	0,1	-21,0	-5,7	-2,4
13	-15,8	1,5	9,2	12,6	11,0	13,7	8,6	1,3	-4,5	0,1	-23,0	0,1	-2,4
14	-16,3	0,0	7,6	10,8	11,4	14,7	5,8	4,6	-4,4	-0,9	-16,8	-2,5	-1,4
15	-13,1	0,1	12,6	10,8	11,7	12,7	0,1	3,7	-4,4	-0,4	-14,3	-0,4	-3,7
16	-16,3	0,6	8,8	7,6	12,2	13,7	8,4	3,8	-3,4	-1,5	-16,6	0,5	-4,1
17	-10,7	0,7	7,4	9,2	11,6	13,2	6,7	2,9	-0,7	-0,9	-17,8	-1,4	-4,4
18	0,1	-1,9	9,4	7,8	8,8	9,7	6,2	0,9	-2,0	-0,3	-16,8	0,1	-1,9
19	-5,9	0,7	7,4	9,6	14,0	9,0	7,3	0,6	-3,9	-0,4	-25,3	0,7	-1,1
20	-11,9	2,5	12,4	7,2	15,4	8,8	10,2	0,7	-1,6	1,7	-16,4	1,1	-3,4
21	-14,8	4,9	6,4	8,6	12,0	9,7	1,1	-0,4	-0,7	1,6	-4,9	-1,4	-3,7
22	-15,2	2,5	11,6	9,7	13,8	12,4	4,1	2,1	-10,3	-0,5	-4,2	-2,3	-4,4
23	-11,8	2,7	8,2	9,7	8,4	10,2	12,8	1,6	-5,1	0,3	-5,5	0,1	-4,1
24	-8,9	5,7	5,2	10,4	11,7	8,8	12,0	4,9	-6,4	0,5	-1,9	-1,5	-6,4
25	0,7	7,2	5,2	9,0	8,2	8,7	11,2	0,7	-5,3	-4,3	-17,0	-3,4	-5,5
26	1,1	3,1	3,5	12,4	9,8	8,4	9,8	1,1	-2,9	-3,1	-21,0	-2,9	-3,4
27	-1,9	-0,3	8,5	5,6	15,4	10,8	13,2	0,3	-7,5	-9,4	-23,3	-1,9	0,3
28	-2,4	0,1	11,4	6,8	16,3	13,6	9,0	1,0	-8,2	-12,9	-15,4	-1,1	4,6
29	-8,1	-0,6	10,2	6,9	10,8	11,4	6,7	0,9	-2,4	-13,4	-18,8		-0,9
30	-7,0	-0,7	13,2	7,7	8,2	12,0	7,4	3,1	-7,9	-9,1	-16,0		3,1
31	-3,5		9,7		9,8	9,4		4,9		-6,4	-10,0		1,6

KIEROWNIK

mgr Stanisław Wereski

1943	marzec	luty	styczeń	grudzień
	-0,5	-10,9	-5,9	-5,1
	-1,4	0,7	-9,5	-2,4
	-3,5	-0,5	-5,9	-6,5
	-6,5	-0,9	-3,5	-7,9
	-6,5	-0,5	-3,9	-4,9
	-1,4	-1,4	-3,9	-3,5
	-2,9	-1,9	-9,5	-1,9
	-4,1	-3,9	-16,1	1,3
	-4,5	-8,9	-10,9	2,1
	-4,4	-10,5	-13,3	-0,3
	-3,5	-7,3	-13,9	-2,5
	-2,4	-5,7	-21,0	0,1
	-2,4	0,1	-23,0	0,1
	-1,4	-2,5	-16,8	-0,9
	-3,7	-0,4	-14,3	-0,4
	-4,1	0,5	-18,6	-1,5
	-4,4	-1,4	-17,8	-0,5
	-1,9	0,1	-18,8	-0,3
	-1,1	0,7	-25,3	-0,4
	-3,4	1,1	-16,4	1,7
	-2,7	-1,4	-4,9	1,6
	-4,4	-2,3	-4,2	-0,5
	-4,1	0,1	-0,5	0,3
	-6,4	-1,5	-1,9	0,5
	-5,5	-3,4	-17,0	-4,3
	-3,4	-2,9	-21,0	-3,1
	0,3	-1,9	-23,3	-9,4
	4,6	-1,1	-15,4	-12,9
	-0,9		-18,8	-13,4
	3,1		-16,0	-9,1
	1,6		-10,0	-6,4

Document 106: Minimum temperature in °C recorded at the meteorological station Tomaszów Lubelski during the period March 1942 to March 1943. Instytut Meteorologii i Gospodarki Wodnej. Państwowy Instytut Badawcy, Warsaw.



INSTYTUT METEOROLOGII I GOSPODARKI WODNEJ
PAŃSTWOWY INSTYTUT BADAWCZY
ul. Podleśna 61, tel. 22 56 94 100
01-673 W A R S Z A W A

zał. 2 do pisma

DOBOWA SUMA OPADU ATMOSFERYCZNEGO (mm)
z okresu od 1 marca 1942 roku do 31 marca 1943 roku
na podstawie pomiarów na stacji meteorologicznej Tomaszów Lubelski

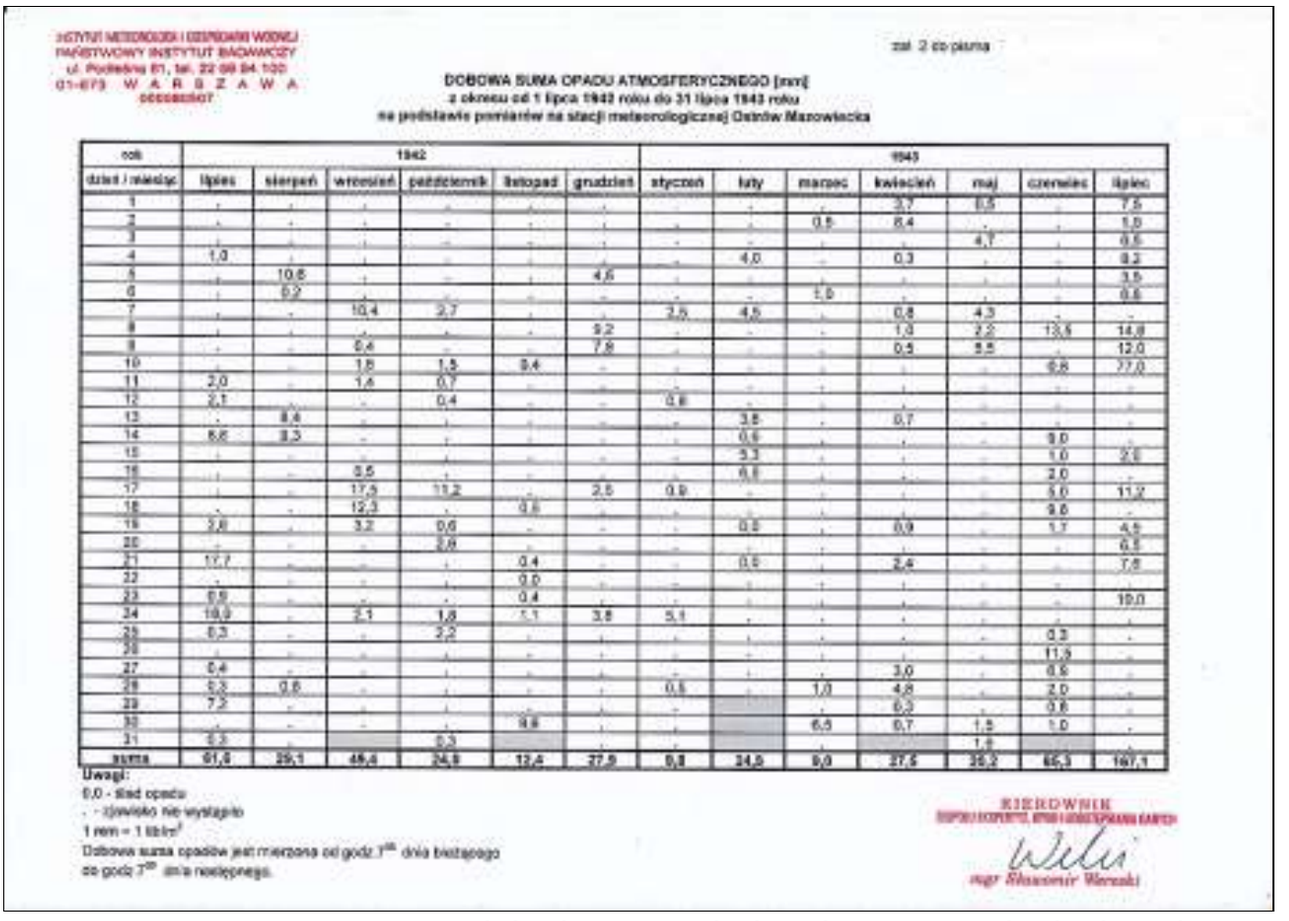
rok	1942										1943		
dzień i miesiąc	marzec	kwiecień	maj	czerwiec	lipiec	sierpień	wrzesień	październik	listopad	grudzień	styczeń	luty	marzec
1	0,8	.	9,2	.	0,6	.	.	.	.	0,7	.	.	0,2
2	.	2,5	.	.	4,6	.	.	.	1,7	0,3	.	.	1,9
3	.	1,0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0,4	0,4	4,0	0,4
4	.	1,3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0,6	1,6	9,6	3,0
5	1,4	.	1,9	.	.	13,8	.	.	1,1	.	.	.	.
6	3,0	.	0,0	.	.	3,0	.	.	10,0	0,0	2,6	0,0	.
7	.	.	1,6	.	.	27,1	.	3,2	1,1	5,7	1,7	.	0,4
8	.	.	.	.	.	16,3	4,3	.	1,8	1,0	0,0	2,1	.
9	.	7,4	0,0	1,3	5,0	10,0	0,8	.	.	2,9	2,8	0,4	.
10	.	3,0	.	0,8	.	.	.	13,0	0,3	.	0,2	.	.
11	.	0,6	.	18,0	.	.	2,0	.	.	.	.	.	.
12	3,7	1,0	.	0,8	19,4	.	.	0,8	0,2	.	.	.	.
13	9,5	.	12,1	6,7	3,0	2,4	.	.	0,3	.	.	0,8	.
14	.	0,3	1,5	8,0	.	1,4	.	.	0,3	.	0,1	3,5	.
15	.	4,9	6,4	.	1,2	0,1	.	.	.	.	.	7,0	.
16	.	5,6	5,7	.	.	.	1,5	3,0	0,2	.	.	0,7	.
17	0,0	0,3	0,0	0,1	1,0	.	3,4	0,8	5,2	1,0	0,0	.	.
18	.	.	.	.	1,0	.	.	0,4	1,3	.	.	.	.
19	0,0	.	.	0,0	.	.	.	3,0	.	.	.	0,0	.
20	0,0	.	3,0	1,8	1,7	.	.	2,2	.	.	.	.	.
21	.	0,4	.	.	8,9	.	.	0,4	.	0,8	.	.	.
22	.	.	0,0	.	.	.	.	3,7	3,9	0,7	.	.	.
23	.	0,3	.	.	.	.	.	96,0	.	0,3	0,0	.	.
24	.	2,2	.	.	8,5	.	2,5	1,5	5,1	3,5	4,2	.	.
25	.	0,0	.	.	0,4	.	.	.	.	0,5	1,8	.	.
26	.	.	.	11,4	.	.	.	.	0,1	.	.	.	.
27	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0,8	0,0	.	.	.
28	.	0,3	.	.	1,5	.	.	.	.	.	.	0,1	0,9
29	2,0	5,6	0,2	1,8	11,5	.	.	.	0,7	.	.		
30	.	2,3	.	0,8	.	.	0,4	.	1,2	0,0	.		2,5
31	2,8				1,8					0,0			
suma	12,2	48,1	41,6	59,8	68,1	72,9	14,9	33,8	34,3	18,4	15,4	28,2	9,3

Uwagi:
0,0 - ślad opadu
\ - zjawisko nie wystąpiło
1 mm = 1 l/m²
Dobowa suma opadów jest mierzona od godz.7[00] dnia bieżącego do godz.7[00] dnia następnego.

KIEROWNIK
mgr Aleksander Wereski

1943	marzec	luty	styczeń	grudzień
	0,2	.	.	0,7
	1,9	.	.	0,3
	0,4	4,0	0,4	0,4
	3,0	9,6	1,6	0,6
	.	.	.	.
	.	0,0	2,6	0,0
	0,4	.	1,7	5,7
	.	2,1	0,0	1,0
	.	0,4	2,8	2,9
	.	.	0,2	.
	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	.
	.	0,8	.	.
	.	3,5	0,1	.
	.	7,0	.	.
	.	0,7	.	.
	.	.	0,0	1,0
	.	0,0	.	.
	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	0,8
	.	.	.	0,7
	0,9	0,1	0,0	0,3
	.		4,2	3,5
	2,5		1,8	0,5
	.		.	.
	.		.	0,0
	.		.	.
	.		.	0,0
	.		.	0,0
	9,3	28,2	15,4	18,4

Document 107: Average precipitation in mm recorded at the meteorological station Tomaszów Lubelski during the period March 1942 to March 1943. Instytut Meteorologii i Gospodarki Wodnej. Państwowy Instytut Badawcy, Warsaw.



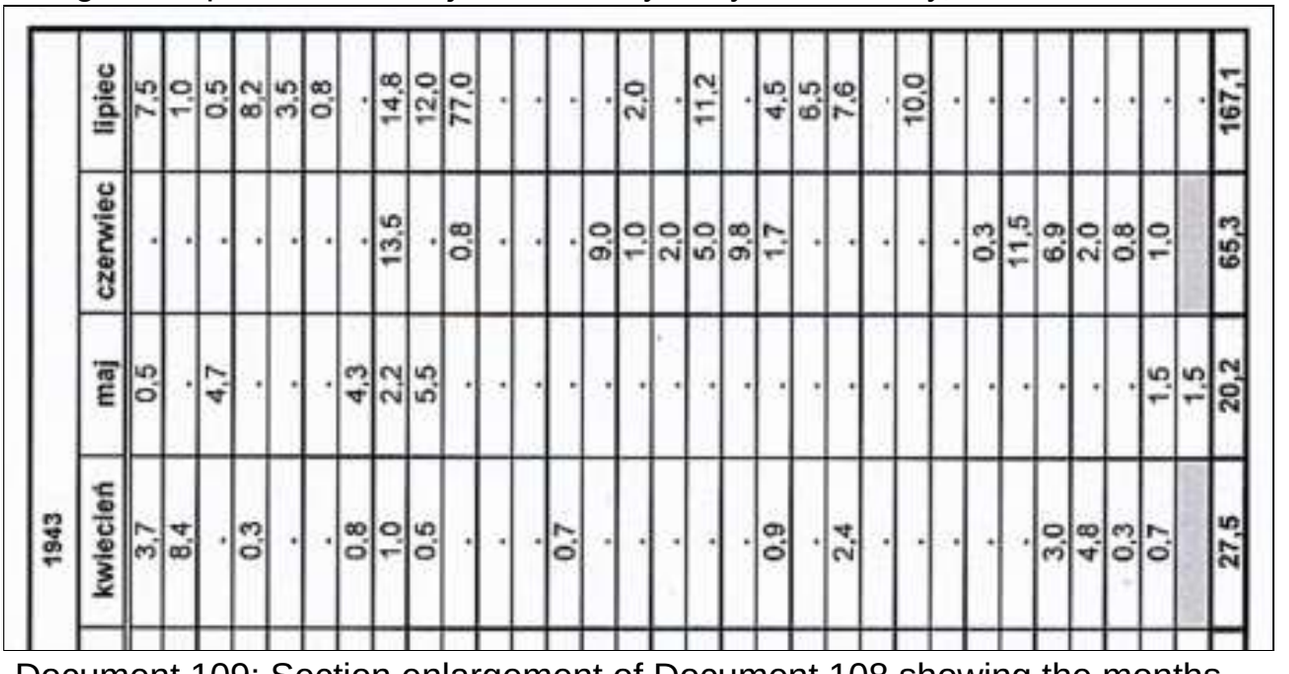
DOBOWA SUMA OPADU ATMOSFERYCZNEGO [mm]
z okresu od 1 lipca 1942 roku do 31 lipca 1943 roku
na podstawie pomiarów na stacji meteorologicznej Ostrów Mazowiecka

dzień / miesiąc	lipiec	sierpień	wrzesień	październik	listopad	grudzień	styczeń	luty	marzec	kwiecień	maj	czerwiec	lipiec
1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3,7	0,5	.	7,5
2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0,5	8,4	.	.	1,0
3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4,7	.	0,5
4	1,0	.	.	.	.	.	.	4,0	.	0,3	.	.	8,2
5	.	10,6	.	.	.	4,6	.	.	.	.	.	.	3,5
6	.	0,2	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,0	.	.	.	0,6
7	.	.	10,4	2,7	.	.	2,5	4,5	.	0,8	4,3	.	.
8	.	.	.	.	.	9,2	.	.	.	1,0	2,2	13,5	14,8
9	.	.	0,4	.	.	7,8	.	.	.	0,5	5,5	.	12,0
10	.	.	1,6	1,5	9,4	.	.	.	.	.	.	0,8	77,0
11	2,0	.	1,4	0,7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
12	2,1	.	.	0,4	.	.	0,8	.	.	.	.	.	.
13	.	8,4	.	.	.	.	.	3,5	.	0,7	.	.	.
14	6,6	8,3	.	.	.	.	.	0,6	.	.	.	9,0	.
15	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3,3	.	.	.	1,0	2,5
16	.	.	0,5	.	.	.	.	0,8	.	.	.	2,0	.
17	.	.	17,5	11,2	.	2,5	0,9	.	.	.	.	5,0	11,2
18	.	.	12,3	.	0,6	.	.	.	.	.	.	9,6	.
19	5,6	.	3,2	0,6	.	.	.	0,5	.	0,9	.	1,7	4,5
20	.	.	.	2,6	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0,5
21	17,7	.	.	.	0,4	.	.	0,5	.	2,4	.	.	7,6
22	.	.	.	.	0,0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
23	0,9	.	.	.	0,4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	10,0
24	10,0	.	2,1	1,8	1,1	3,8	5,1	.	.	.	.	.	.
25	0,3	.	.	2,2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0,3	.
26	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	11,5	.
27	0,4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3,0	.	6,9	.
28	5,3	0,6	.	.	.	.	0,5	.	1,0	4,8	.	2,0	.
29	7,2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0,3	.	0,8	.
30	.	.	.	.	9,8	.	.	.	6,5	0,7	1,5	1,0	.
31	0,3	.	.	0,3	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,5	.	.
suma	61,6	29,1	45,4	24,9	12,4	27,8	9,8	34,0	9,0	27,5	30,2	65,3	167,1

Uwagi:
0,0 - ślad opadu
. - zjawisko nie wystąpiło
1 mm = 1 l/m²
Dobowa suma opadów jest mierzona od godz 7[00] dnia bieżącego do godz 7[00] dnia następnego.

KIEROWNIK
mgr Wiesław Warecki

Document 108: Average precipitation recorded at the meteorological station Ostrów Mazowiecka during the period July 1942 to July 1943. Instytut Meteorologii i Gospodarki Wodnej. Państwowy Instytut Badawcy, Warsaw.



1943	kwiecień	maj	czerwiec	lipiec
	3,7	0,5	.	7,5
	8,4	.	.	1,0
	.	4,7	.	0,5
	0,3	.	.	8,2
	.	.	.	3,5
	.	.	.	0,8
	0,8	4,3	.	.
	1,0	2,2	13,5	14,8
	0,5	5,5	.	12,0
	.	.	0,8	77,0
	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	.
	0,7	.	9,0	2,0
	.	.	1,0	.
	.	.	2,0	.
	.	.	5,0	11,2
	.	.	9,8	.
	0,9	.	1,7	4,5
	.	.	.	6,5
	2,4	.	.	7,6
	.	.	.	.
	.	.	.	10,0
	.	.	.	.
	.	.	0,3	.
	.	.	11,5	.
	.	.	6,9	.
	3,0	.	2,0	.
	4,8	.	0,8	.
	0,3	.	1,0	.
	0,7	1,5		.
		1,5		.
	27,5	20,2	65,3	167,1

Document 109: Section enlargement of Document 108 showing the months April through July 1943.

Document 110: Wood pile with snow deposit. Image in the public domain.

Archive Abbreviations

AAN	*Archiwum Akt Nowych* (Archive of New Files), Warsaw, the former *Archiwum Zakładu Historii Partii* (Archive of the Department of Party History)
AGK:	*Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu – Instytutu Pamieci Narodowej* (Archive of the Central Commission for the Investigation of the Crimes against the Polish People – National Memorial), Warsaw
APMM:	*Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum na Majdanku* (Archive of the Majdanek State Museum), Lublin
APW:	*Archiwum Państwowie w Warszawie* (Warsaw State Archives), Warsaw
AŻIH	*Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego* (Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute), Warsaw
GARF:	*Gosudarstvenny arkhiv Rossiyskoi Federatsii* (State Archive of the Russian Federation), Moscow
GFHA	*Ghetto Fighters House Archives*, Kibbutz Lohamei Haghetaot, Israel
HILA	*Hoover Institution Library and Archives*, Stanford, California
IMT	*Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal Nuremberg, 14 November 1945 – 1 October 1946*. Nuremberg, 1947
IMG:	*Der Prozess gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vor dem internationalen Militärgerichtshof.* Nuremberg, 1947-1949
LVVA	*Latvijas Valsts Vestures Arhivs* (State Historical Archives of Latvia), Riga
NARA	*National Archives and Records Administration*, Washington, D.C.
RAS	*Riksarkivet* (Nationalarchiv), Stockholm,
SPP	*Studium Polski Podziemnej w Londynie* (Study of Clandestine Poland in London), London
TNA	*The National Archives*, Kew Richmond, Great Britain, formerly *Public Record Office*
YVA	*Yad Vashem Archives*, Jerusalem
ZStL	*Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen für die Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen* (Central Office of the State Justice Administrations for the Investigation of National-Socialist Crimes), Ludwigsburg, Germany

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2nd, revised edition

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CHEŁMNO

A GERMAN CAMP IN HISTORY AND PROPAGANDA

CARLO MATTOGNO

CHEŁMNO. A GERMAN CAMP IN HISTORY AND PROPAGANDA

Carlo Mattogno

Chełmno

A German Camp
in History and Propaganda

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Cover illustrations: Top: Chełmno Camp Memorial; left: memorial bolder for the inmates who died at Chełmno (photo © Carlo Mattogno). Right: photo of a pit dug during an archaeological excavation of the Chełmno Camp's cremation furnace. The background panorama shows ongoing excavation works at the Chełmno Camp.

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Introduction

The alleged extermination camp at Chełmno (German: Kulmhof), a town in Poland in the region of Warta, called Warthegau by the Germans during the Second World War, is of major importance in orthodox Holocaust historiography, because it is claimed to be the first "death camp" built to serve the genocidal agenda of which the Germans are accused. Unlike other camps established afterwards, it is not said to have been equipped with stationary gas chambers, but with "*Gaswagen*" (gas vehicles),[1] mobile gassing trucks which allegedly used engine-exhaust gas to kill human beings. The camp is said to have operated, with occasional periods of inactivity, in two phases: from 8 December 1941 – the day it opened – to 7 April 1943, and again from April 1944 to January 1945, killing a total of 152,000 to 340,000 people (Jäckel *et al.*, vol. I, p. 280; see Chapter 11).

Documentation about it is almost nonexistent, which is why the picture outlined by orthodox Holocaust historiography is based almost exclusively on court records, which is to say, it is in fact based entirely on testimony. But even these data are rather limited: until 2007 they have only permitted the preparation of the odd leaflet by some Polish historians and a few articles by Western historians. As Israeli historian Shmuel Krakowski, who is currently the world's leading Holocaust expert of the orthodox persuasion, wrote (Krakowski 1995, p. 55):

> *"Research on the extermination camp at Chełmno upon Ner occupies a very small place in Holocaust historiography."*

His 2007 study of this camp, despite its stated intention to "expand the state of knowledge" and to "try to complete what has not been taken into account in the existing literature" (Krakowski 2007, p. 10) actually reflects the accumulated historical-documentary inconsistency of the orthodox Holocaust historiography about Chełmno. He reaffirms, among other things, that "sources on the Chełmno camp are extremely few, hence the insignificant number of publications on the topic" (*ibid.*, p. 11).

In the revisionist school, the most important historiographic contribution is the 2003 article by Ingrid Weckert "What Was Kulmhof/ Chełmno?"

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[1] This term became commonplace only after the war.

These studies have inevitably left many gray areas, and the history of the Chełmno camp is still in many aspects enigmatic. One of the most important issues, raised in 1999 by Bertrand Perz and Thomas Sandkühler, concerns the relationship between Chełmno and "Aktion Reinhardt," but even more important is the relationship between the "field incinerators" of Chełmno and cremation at Auschwitz (see Mattogno 2008).

The existence of "gas vans" during the Second World War is very controversial and is disputed by revisionist scholars (see Marais 1994; Weckert 2003; Alvarez 2011). However, the interpretation of documents relating to the alleged "gas vans" (called *Sonderwagen*, *Sonderfahrzeuge*, and *Spezialwagen*) is not the subject of this study, which restricts the scope of its investigation to determining whether such vehicles might have actually been used for the purpose of extermination at Chełmno. Yet even in this limited scope, it is important to initially examine the decision-making process and technical development that would be required to lead to the existence and use of the "gas vans."

1. The Orthodox "Gas Van" History

In a paper setting out the conclusions of Holocaust historiography on the origins of the "gas van," Mathias Beer notes that the first document on this issue dates from 26 March 1942, so that

> *"the path of decisions leading to the construction and the operation/usage of these vans remains obscure."* (Beer 1987, p. 404; all subsequent page numbers from the German version unless stated otherwise)

He claims that the well-known trials held since 1945 can remedy this lack of documentation, although he warns (*ibid.*):

> *"However, the historian is not entitled to use court verdicts without examining them, because justice and historiography pursue different ends. For him* [the historian] *primarily witness testimonies are important, because they help to fill the gaps in the sources. But due to their peculiarities testimonies can be treated on an equal footing with documents, for example, and be used profitably by historical research only if certain principles are observed. The basic requirement is not to abandon the link between witness statements and documents which have been subject to thorough source criticism, that is to say, to always connect the probable with a certain fact.* [But] *even in this way we cannot respond satisfactorily to every question."*

As there are no documents which can be used as a basis of comparison, this means that for Chełmno the testimonies cannot constitute historical sources, so that there cannot even exist a genuine historiography for this camp.

Beer follows the technical development of a euthanasia "gas van" through the intermediate stage of the *"Kaisers-Kaffee-Wagen"* ("Kaiser's Coffee Cart" (pp. 404f.):

> *"Testimonies exist which report that during the evacuation of nursing homes for the mentally ill in Poland in 1939-1940, a hermetically sealed trailer was used with the words 'Kaiser's Coffee Shop'* [*Kaisers-Kaffee-Geschäft*] *on it, which was towed by a tractor. In the trailer sick persons are said to have been killed with pure carbon monoxide (CO) injected from steel cylinders. Precisely because there are no documents, the provenance of this vehicle cannot be clarified. However, there are indications that allow us to answer the*

> *question whether there is a link between 'Kaiser's Coffee' van and gas vans."*

Then he sets out the Holocaust thesis on euthanasia (p. 405):

> *"In a letter dated 1 September 1939, Hitler authorized his personal physician Dr. Karl Brandt and Reichsleiter Philipp Bouhler of the 'Führer's Chancellery' to carry out the 'euthanasia.' The Institute for Criminological Technology (Kriminaltechnische Institut, KTI) in the Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA) was charged with testing suitable killing methods, which concluded that the most appropriate method was killing with CO. After an experimental gassing was conducted in early 1940 in the former prison of Brandenburg/Havel – mentally ill persons were killed using CO in an airtight room – this procedure was also used in all other 'euthanasia' institutions. The Führer's Chancellery received the necessary CO under the aegis of the KTI on the basis of a conversation between Head of the Office* [Viktor] *Brack and* [Albert] *Widmann, head of section V D 2 (chemistry and biology). On the orders of* [Arthur] *Nebe, head of the Amt V (crime fighting unit) of the RSHA, SS Untersturmführer* [August] *Becker collected the steel cylinders at the IG Farben plant in Ludwigshafen and brought them to individual institutions."*

It must be emphasized here that the claim regarding the use of carbon monoxide bottles for homicidal purposes is based *exclusively* on testimonies (note 14-18, p. 405), which moreover were made rather late.[2] But since, as M. Beer rightly points out, justice and historiography pursue different ends, these legal testimonies have no historiographic value due to the total absence of documents. In fact, there is *no documentary evidence*:

1. that the euthanasia centers were equipped with *carbon-monoxide gas chambers*,
2. that *cylinders of carbon monoxide* were used for homicidal purposes by the euthanasia centers,
3. and that the IG-Farben plant in Ludwigshafen supplied *bottled carbon monoxide* to the euthanasia centers.

In addition, there is *no documentary evidence* either that the *KTI*, the Institute for Criminological Technology, had experimented with killing

[2] The sources are statements made by German defendants in 1959 and1960 in connection with investigations by the *Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen* in Ludwigsburg.

procedures, that it had chosen carbon monoxide as a means of killing and that at the beginning of 1940, in the former prison of Brandenburg upon Havel, an experiment was carried out with a CO gas chamber.

M. Beer then returns to the "Kaiser's Coffee" vans (p. 405f.):

> *"The 'Kaiser's Coffee' vans operated on the same principle as the gas chambers of the 'euthanasia' institutions. In a trailer, CO was released through pipes from a steel cylinder placed in the towing vehicle. Hence it was a gas chamber on wheels. Testimonies state that, from December 1939 on, mentally ill persons in nursing homes in Pomerania, East Prussia and Poland were killed in these vehicles by the Sonderkommando Lange. The name of the Kommando derived from its leader SS Obersturmführer and police adviser Herbert Lange. The letter from Higher SS and Police Leader* [Wilhelm] *Koppe to SS Gruppenführer* [Jakob] *Sporrenberg explains the use of this Kommando at Soldau:*
>
> > *'The so-called Lange Sonderkommando for special tasks subordinated to me was seconded to Soldau, East Prussia, during the period of 21 May to 8 June 1940 in accordance with the agreement made with the RSHA, and in that time has evacuated 1,558 patients from the Soldau transit camp.'*
>
> *Lange brought along one of these vans either from the RSHA (as is implied by the statements of Gustav Sorge and the important role of the Group II D, technical matters, within the RSHA in the progressive development of the gas van), or he himself had it fabricated in collaboration with the RSHA."*

Beer expressed the suspicion that Lange had "the task of field-testing this vehicle" and adds that immediately after this task his Soldau *Sonderkommando* was disbanded, and from this moment "there are no more reports on the use of such vehicles." (p. 406)

The connection between the alleged "Kaiser's Coffee" vans and the alleged CO gas chambers at the euthanasia institutions is in fact totally inconsistent, since there is no documentary evidence that either actually existed. Koppe's letter quoted above neither demonstrates the existence of a "Kaiser's Coffee" van nor its homicidal use. And strictly speaking it doesn't demonstrate either that the Lange *Sonderkommando* had killed 1,558 persons, because it speaks simply of an evacuation from a transit camp.

Before describing the alleged technical development from "Kaiser's Coffee" vans to the "gas van," it is necessary to explain the decision-

making process that would have motivated it. In this connection, M. Beer writes (p. 407):

> *"On 15 and 16 August 1941 Himmler was in Baranovichi and Minsk and witnessed a shooting in the area of Einsatzgruppe B. The Higher SS and Police leader of Central Russia, von dem Bach-Zelewski, who was present, later reported that Himmler was visibly shaken. Then Himmler visited a nursing home for the mentally ill and subsequently ordered the head of Einsatzgruppe B, Nebe, to seek ways to end as soon as possible the suffering of these people, because after experiencing the shooting he had concluded that 'shooting was certainly not the most humane way.' He was to submit a 'report' on this. Himmler turned to Nebe, because the KTI, which answered to Amt V, had already distinguished itself in experimenting with killing methods in the context of 'euthanasia,' so that now its experience could be utilized."*

But no document exists for this anecdote either. Its sole support allegedly comes from former SS *Obergruppenführer* Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski in a statement published on 23 August 1946 in the New York Jewish newspaper *Aufbau* and repeated in 1960 by Karl Wolff, Himmler's adjutant (note 30, p. 407). It concerns an interrogation record drawn up for the Nuremberg trials. Before introducing the story, the German official declared that the extermination of the Jews "had been deliberately planned *before* the war by Heinrich Himmler" and that "Himmler had consequently focused on war in order to fulfill his plans" (Bach-Zelewski, p. 1). These are nonsensical claims to which not even the most-obtuse intentionalist would subscribe. This is followed by a description of the alleged Jewish shooting, without even an indication of the year! (Bach-Zelewski, p. 2)

M. Beer's narrative continues (p. 407):

> *"Nebe was at the same time head of Amt V of the RSHA. In this function he sent Widmann to Minsk with explosives and two metal hoses in early September."*

They allegedly used the explosives to blow up a bunker which the mentally ill were forced to enter, but the result was not satisfactory, so a gassing experiment was carried out in a nursing home in Mogilev by cutting two holes into the wall of a sealed room, to which the exhaust pipes of two vehicles were hooked up using the metal hoses. Beer concludes (pp. 408f.):

> *"The two experiments convinced Nebe that the only feasible idea was killing by exhaust gas, which most probably is to be attributed to him. But for the Einsatzgruppen, for whom the new 'more humane' killing method was sought, a stationary gas chamber, in which people could be killed with exhaust gas, was of no use. In order to fulfill its purpose, it had to be mobile. Based on these considerations and the experience so far gained, the KTI project to build gas vans was born. Nebe and* [SS *Sturmbannführer*, head of the *KTI* Walter] *Heess suggested such a proposal to their superior Heydrich, head of the Security Police and Security Service."*

Here we need to examine the account by Widmann, on which M. Beer relies, in order to examine the reliability of these later anecdotal sources. The premise of the two killing "experiments" mentioned above is that it was not possible to transport cylinders of carbon monoxide (CO) to Russia. Why was it not possible? Widmann does not explain this. He received from Nebe, through his deputy Werner, an order to procure 250 kg of explosives. In an excess of zeal, Widmann bought 400 kg. To say the least, an exorbitant amount for a killing "experiment," certainly more suitable for a mass extermination. The idea of the "experimental" gassing allegedly came to Nebe, who is *rumored* to once have fallen asleep in his car in the garage (with the engine running!) and thus had nearly died! Widmann then also obtained two metal hoses. With these materials he went to Minsk. The first "experiment" was performed in a forest near the city, where there were "two shelters" 3 m × 6 m. In one of the two, explosive charges were placed, and the mentally ill persons brought from a mental hospital in Minsk were made to enter. Then the charges were detonated. Since not all were dead after the first time, they reloaded more explosives and pulled the trigger once more. Result: 250 kg of explosives used to kill 18 people, but unfortunately their body parts had been scattered all over the place, some of them hanging in the surrounding trees! Smart as the Germans were, they subsequently concluded that blowing up people was messy and inefficient.

Widmann then moved to Mogilev. In a mental hospital, among other buildings, a laboratory was chosen to carry out the gassing. The window was walled up, leaving two holes for inserting two metal hoses. Initially only one was inserted into a hole and was connected to the exhaust pipe of a car. Then 5 to 6 mentally ill persons were made to enter the room. At this point, "Nebe entered the building, where the

inside of the laboratory could be seen through a glass window in the door." So a room with a door and with a "glass window" had been chosen as a "gas chamber"!

Because after 8 minutes no effect could be observed, Widmann and Nebe came to the conclusion that the gas flow was insufficient, so the second hose was inserted into the hole and connected to a truck; after "a few minutes," the victims became unconscious. Widmann says nothing about the type of engine of the two motor vehicles. Leaving aside the absurdity of the "5-meter-high flames" which came out of the chimney of the crematorium of the Pirna Euthanasia Institute (which in his opinion was caused by the fact that too many corpses were cremated together),[3] I note only that such massive disorganization, such ridiculous incompetence, such gross carelessness is utterly irreconcilable with the procedures of the Institute for Criminological Technology of the *RSHA*. Hence the testimony is totally unbelievable, the witness utterly untrustworthy.

Let's go back to Beer's story. In October 1941 Heydrich allegedly turned to SS *Obersturmführer* Walter Rauff, head of Group II D 3, technical issues (*Technische Angelegenheiten*), whose Section II D 3a, Automotive Division of the Security Police (*Kraftfahrwesen der Sicherheitspolizei*), was directed by SS *Hauptsturmführer* Friedrich Pradel, who, according to Beer (p. 410),

> *"gave* [Harry] *Wentritt* [head of Section II D 3a, repair workshop] *the task of verifying whether it was possible to inject the exhaust gases into the enclosed body of a van. After Wentritt had confirmed this, Pradel ordered Rauff to get in touch with Heess. They explained to him how such a truck had to be modified in order to work. Then, on Rauff's orders, Pradel and Wentritt visited the Gaubschat Company in Berlin-Neukölln, which specialized in the construction of truck bodies, pretending to need vehicles to carry away the bodies of victims of typhus epidemics."*

As soon as the first van was ready, it was taken to the workshop of the Office II D 3 a, where it was allegedly converted into a "gas van" by connecting a metal hose to the exhaust pipe, which piped the exhaust gases into the van's cargo box. This "gas van" was then brought to the *KTI*, where analyses of the exhaust gas taken from the van's loadspace were carried out. Beer continues (p. 411):

---

[3] Interrogation of Albert Widmann on 11 January 1960. ZSL, Az. 202 AR-Z 152/59, pp. 44-53.

> *"A short time later an experimental gassing took place at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp (where the KTI had a workshop), which also involved SS officers in addition to Heess and the two chemists Leiding and Hoffmann."*

In this way, according to Beer, the prototype of the "gas van" was built and tested. Regarding their use, he states (p. 412):

> *"If we start from the time of the experimental gassing in Sachsenhausen and given the time required for the modification of vehicles, between eight to fourteen days or so, plus the time required to drive the vehicles to their operational area, it seems that the first gas van could have been used only starting in late November early December 1941. The first use of a gas van can be documented in the operational area of Einsatzgruppe C at Sonderkommando 4a at Poltava."*

The conclusion of this labored story takes us to the specific theme of this study (*ibid.*):

> *"The use of gas vans is attested to for 8 December* [1941] *at Chełmno by the previously mentioned Sonderkommando Lange."*

In this scenario, *nothing* is documented: the experimental gassing at Mogilev, the transformation of a van into a "gas van," the experimental gassing in Sachsenhausen, the first use of gas vans; all that is left to mere testimonies.

In conclusion, of the origin of the "gas van" of orthodox Holocaust historiography, *in documentation*, nothing is known.[4]

As noted by Friedrich Paul Berg, in the years between the two world wars and in particular during World War Two, so-called "producer-gas" vehicles were in use in many European countries. In Germany these vehicles were called "*Generatorgaswagen*" (producer-gas vehicles) or simply "gas vans" (*Gaswagen*). Although such gas generators, fired with wood or coal, produce a mixture rich in CO – from 18 to 35% – the CO content emitted by a gasoline engine is usually less than 10%. Oddly enough, the evidence does not suggest that the *KTI* ever thought of using gas generators for homicidal purposes (Berg 2003, pp. 459f.).

According to a document first mentioned by Christian Gerlach in 1997, but which has apparently remained unpublished – the "Report on the Activities and the Situation of *Einsatzgruppe B* for the Period 16 to

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[4] In 2011, Beer had a new, slightly shorter paper published on the same topic, which does not contain any new information relevant in this context (Morsch/Perz/Ley 2011, pp. 154-165). I discuss this paper in Mattogno 2016, pp. 55-62.

28 February 1942" of 1 March 1942, this unit had received two "gas vans" (*Gaswagen*; Gerlach 1997, p. 68, and note 83, p. 77). But considering the above-mentioned wartime terminology, I posit that these were *Generatorgaswagen* rather than homicidal "gas vans," a term, moreover, which does not appear in any other wartime document as far as I know and which began to circulate as a designation for homicidal vehicles using exhaust gases only after the war.[5]

The "gas vans" were allegedly created primarily to facilitate the homicidal activities of the *Einsatzgruppen* and were then deployed precisely for this purpose. According to Beer, of the six alleged "gas vans" of the "first series" (Diamond brand or some generic "small" van) converted in 1941, one was assigned to *Einsatzgruppe* C, one to *Einsatzgruppe* D, two to Chełmno (p. 413); also in 1942, thirty other "gas vans" of the second series (Saurer brand) were produced, 20 of which had already been delivered by April 1942 (p. 415), one to Chełmno, the rest apparently to the *Einsatzgruppen*.

It should be noted that the *Einsatzgruppen* have left an enormous quantity of documents on their activities. The "*Ereignismeldungen UdSSR*" (Information on Events in the USSR) amounted to "more than 2,900 typewritten pages" (Krausnik/Wilhelm 1981, p. 333). "There are 195 numbered reports ranging from 23 June 1941 to 24 April 1942 (*ibid.*, pp. 650ff.). The "*Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten*" (Communications from the Occupied Eastern Territories) are 55 weekly reports numbered from 1 May 1942 to 23 May 1943 (*ibid.*, pp. 652f.). Finally there are 11 "*Tätigkeits-, Lageberichte der Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD in der UdSSR*" (Reports on the Activities and Situation of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the Security Police and Security Service in the USSR) that are dated from 31 July 1941 to 31 March 1942 (*ibid.*, p. 654).

In spite of this huge volume of documents, in these reports "gas vans" never appear (with the one exception mentioned above) and no victim is ever listed as killed with a "gas van." Apparently no one has addressed this enormous contradiction so far.

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[5] Although the term "gas lorries" appeared in an article of the British weekly *News Review* on 16 July 1942 (Sharf 1963, p. 187), and "gas lorries" as well as "gas vans" were one main focus of the Krasnodar show trial in 1943 (*The Peoples' Verdict* 1944, pp. 49f., 53, 65, 78, 89f., 110). On the document mentioned by Gerlach see also my elaborations in Mattogno 2016, pp. 112-114.

2. The Alleged Hitler Order, Zyklon B & CO

Orthodox Holocaust historiography attributes to the Chancellery of the Führer not only the design of the "*gas vans*," but also of the alleged eastern extermination camps. In 1976, Ino Arndt and Wolfgang Scheffler noted in this regard (Arndt/Scheffler 1976, p. 114.):

> *"The successful testing of human extermination by carbon monoxide, and 'experience' therein acquired by the staff in relation to the technical apparatus of mass destruction, formed the immediate background to, and a precondition for, the killings of incomparably greater size (for which the aforementioned definition of mass extermination has become customary) that began immediately after the end of 'Action T4' outside the Reich in the territories of occupied Eastern Europe, especially the 'Final Solution of the Jewish question,' which was carried out in the gas chambers of the extermination camps and gas vans used by the Einsatzgruppen of the Security Police and Security Service."*

This thesis has become a kind of dogma of Holocaust historiography.

Heinz Peter Longerich, in his report in support of Deborah Lipstadt in the libel trial of David Irving (January-April 2000), reaffirms in this regard (Longerich 1999, Chapter III.B):

> *"1. Parallel to the beginning of the deportations, the transfer of gas-killing technology into the Eastern European region was begun. This technology had been under development in the context of the 'euthanasia' programme since 1939.*
>
> *2. This transfer was initiated after the programme of 'euthanasia' had been stopped on 24 August 1941.* […] *Only a few weeks later, the first preparations can be documented for the construction of gas chambers in Eastern Europe.*
>
> *3. The decision to build the first extermination camp in Bełżec was made in mid-October. The killing was to proceed by means of exhaust from a permanently installed motor. Construction started at the beginning of November, and the killing experts of Operation T4 were ordered to Bełżec in December 1941."*

Such a transfer would of course also have involved Chełmno (*ibid.*):

> *"9. Around the same time, from October/November 1941 onward, the gas vans were also deployed by the SK Lange in the Warthegau*

> *to murder of Jews. On 8 December, the killing began in Chełmno, where a permanent location of gas vans was established – that is, a further variant of an extermination camp."*

But this primary function of the killing system using engine-exhaust gas contrasts sharply with that allegedly adopted at Auschwitz. Longerich mentions this contradiction almost as a matter of compliance with record, without however attempting to explain it (*ibid.*):

> *"10. While the mass murders were being prepared or already executed in Bełżec, the Warthegau, and in the occupied eastern territories with the help of exhaust fumes, the Commandant of the Auschwitz concentration camp took another course. In September or December 1941, 600 Soviet prisoners of war, as well as a selected 250 sick prisoners, were murdered in the basement of Block 11 of Auschwitz by means of a high concentration of the extremely poisonous disinfectant Cyclon B. At a later point, in December 1941, a further 900 Soviet POWs were murdered by means of gas.*
>
> *11. In his writings from the Krakow prison after the war, the former Commandant of Auschwitz Höß described how he had discussed the question of the most suitable poison gas to be employed, on the occasion of a visit by Eichmann. The date of this visit is still not certain – some of his comments indicate the autumn of 1941, others point to a later date somewhere in early 1942. Höß further states that during the time that he was not in Auschwitz himself, his deputy used Cyclon B to kill Soviet POWs on his own initiative."*

The question is actually even more complex than it appears at first sight, because here comes into play not only the agent of killing – Zyklon B as against CO – but also the hierarchical path of the alleged extermination order. On this point, in fact, orthodox Holocaust historiography has an irresolvable dichotomy: on one hand the following path:

> Hitler → Führer's Chancellery → *KTI* (Technical Criminal Institute) → euthanasia → "gas vans" → the alleged extermination camps in Chełmno and the east

and on the other the path:

> Hitler → Himmler → Eichmann → Höss → Auschwitz → Majdanek.[6]

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[6] According to orthodox historiography, the camp Lublin-Majdanek was equipped with a homicidal Zyklon B gas chamber since October 1942. Marszałek 1986, p. 140. See in this regard Graf/Mattogno 2003.

In his manuscript "*Die Endlösung der Judenfrage*" ("The Final Solution of the Jewish Question"), completed in November 1946 in Krakow, Höss explained the origin of the alleged extermination of the Jews at Auschwitz as follows (Broszat 1981, pp. 157-160):

> *"*[Höss] *In the summer of 1941 – at the moment I cannot say the exact date – I was suddenly summoned to Berlin to the Reichsführer* [Himmler]*, through his adjutant office.*[7]
> [Himmler] *'The Führer has ordered the final solution of the Jewish question, and we – the SS – must carry out that order.* […] *You will learn further details from Sturmbannführer Eichmann, of the RSHA, who will contact you in the near future.* […] *You are to maintain absolute silence regarding this order, even with your superiors.'*
> *Shortly thereafter Eichmann came to me to Auschwitz.*[8] *He apprised me about the plans for the operations in the individual countries.* […] *Furthermore we talked about implementing the extermination. Only gas would be an option* […]*. Eichmann wanted to inquire and then inform me about a gas which could be procured easily and which did not require any special devices. We drove into the area in order to determine the suitable location. We considered the farmhouses* [the future Bunker 1] *to be suitable which were located at the northwestern corner of the later Construction Sector III* [at] *Birkenau.* […]
> *Eichmann drove back to Berlin in order to report to the RFSS* [Himmler] *about our conversation.* […]
> *At the end of November, a conference of the entire section on Jews took place at the Eichmann office, to which I was called as well.* […] *I could not yet find out about the beginning of the operations. Also, Eichmann hadn't managed to locate a suitable gas yet.*
> *In the fall of 1941, by means of a secret special order, the Gestapo separated all* [Soviet] *political commissars and special political functionaries in the PoW camps and sent them to the closest concentration camp for liquidation. Smaller transports of that kind arrived continuously at Auschwitz, which were killed by shooting in the*

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7 The claim is not confirmed by any document.

8 Eichmann's visit to Auschwitz is not confirmed by any document. At Nuremberg Höss declared that this visit was "about 4 weeks after having received that order from the *Reichsführer*" (IMT, vol. 11, p. 399), *i.e.* in July 1941, given that the meeting with Himmler had taken place in June. Höss's affidavit of 5 April 1946 (PS-3868), p. 2.

> *gravel pit close to the Cartel Building*[9] *or in the courtyard of Block 11. On the occasion of a business trip, my deputy, Hauptsturmführer Fritzsch, had used gas on his own initiative for the killing of these Russian PoWs; he did this in such a way that he cram-packed the individual cells located in the basement with Russians and threw in Cyklon B* [Zyklon B] *while using gas masks, which caused immediate death.* […]
> *During Eichmann's next visit I told him about the use of Cyklon B, and we decided to use this gas for the future mass extermination.* […]
> *I cannot say anymore at what time the extermination of the Jews began. Probably still in September 1941, but maybe only in January 1942."*

So here is involved a direct line Hitler → Himmler → Eichmann → Höss, which, precisely because it implies a presumed general order by Hitler for the extermination of the Jews, of which Höss was to be the main executor, precludes the parallel line via the Chancellery of the Führer, unless you assume a kind of schizophrenia in the top Nazis in charge of the implementation of the alleged extermination of the Jews.

Raul Hilberg inadvertently exacerbates this contradiction by describing the genesis of the alleged homicidal gas chambers as follows (Hilberg 1995, p. 951):

> *"During the summer of 1941, when Himmler began to consider the physical destruction of the Jews throughout Europe, he consulted the chief SS doctor (SS und Polizei Reichsarzt), the Gruppenführer Dr.* [Ernst Robert] *Grawitz, to find out what the best way would be to carry out this mass extermination. Grawitz advised the gas chamber."*

He refers to the affidavit of Konrad Morgen of 13 July 1946, which says (IMT, vol. 42, p. 559; Document SS 65):

> *"In order to implement the mass extermination as ordered by Hitler, Himmler asked him* [Dr. Grawitz] *at that time to suggest a killing method which would be both painless and would spare the victims any fear of death. Hence one had chosen a method which left the victims in complete ignorance of their fate up to the moment of the unexpected application of a fast-acting, highly volatile gas."*

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9 A former building of the Polish Tobacco Cartel, later incorporated into the camp.

The initiative in finding the most-appropriate system of extermination was therefore assumed by Himmler through Grawitz, not by the Chancellery of the Führer through the Institute for Criminological Technology. But even with this in mind, it is absolutely incredible that, while the Institute for Criminological Technology would carry out the alleged dilettante experiments referred to above, Himmler, instead of awaiting the results of the above killing experiments, is said to have delegated the search for a "fast-acting, highly volatile gas" to Eichmann. Eichmann's performance, however, was so dismal that at the end of November 1941, four months after he was sent to Auschwitz, he had still not found the most-appropriate gas. Instead, this is said to have been found *without great effort* at Auschwitz by a mere SS captain and then used on large scale.

In reality, it would have been very simple to find an appropriate gas. During the First World War both sides used aggressive chemicals of all kinds.[10] At that time, the aggressiveness of the various substances was indicated by the product of mortality or toxicity index that is derived from the Haber Equation and given in "milligrams of toxic substance per m^3 to be inhaled in one minute to obtain the death of the individual." The most-toxic substances found are given in Table 1. As is clear from this table (Izzo, pp. 45f.):

> *"The most dangerous war gas, according to the Haber index, is phosgene, followed soon after by diphosgene."*

It is noteworthy that CO, with its high index of 70,000, was considered the least-effective gas: 150 times less effective than phosgene, from 17.5 to 70 times less effective than hydrocyanic acid: Who would have ever chosen it for mass extermination?

At that time, Germany was at the forefront of chemistry, and these data were in any reference book, such as *Schädliche Gase, Dämpfe,*

[10] Here is the list for the curious reader: chlorine, bromine, phosgene (carbon oxychloride), thiophosgene (carbon sulphochloride), hydrogen cyanide, cyanogen chloride, cyanogen bromide, methyl chloroformate, monochloride chloroformate, dichloride chloroformate, trichloride chloroformate (diphosgene), ethyl iodoacetate, bromoacetone, iodoacetone, bromomethyl ethyl ketone, dimethyl sulphate, methyl chlorosulphate, ethyl chlorosulphate, chloropicrin (trichloronitromethane) dichloro methyl arsine, dichloro ethyl arsine, vinyl chloride dichloro arsine, ethyl sulfide dichloride, acrolein (allyl aldehyde), benzyl chloride, benzyl bromide, bromo benzyl cyanide, phenylimino phosgene (carbil phenyl amine chloride), chloroacetophenone, chlorinated diphenyl arsine, cyan diphenyl arsine, amino diphenyl chloro arsine, N-ethyl carbazole. See Izzo, "Principali aggressivi chimici," table outside of text.

Table 1: Toxicity of poison gases used in WWI		
SUBSTANCE	TOXICITY INDEX†	
phosgene	450	Most toxic
diphosgene	500	
mustard	1,500	
ethyl iodo-acetate	1,500	
chloropicrin	2,000	
chloro ethyl sulfate	2,000	
hydrogen cyanide*	1,000-4,000	
ethyl bromo-acetate	3,000	
perchloro methyl mercaptan	3,000	
chloro acetone	3,000	
bromo acetone	4,000	
xylene bromide	6,000	
chlorine	7,500	
carbon monoxide	70,000	Least toxic

† using the Haber toxicity equation; *depending on the concentration

Nebel, Rauch- und Staubarten, Ferdinand Flury and Franz Zernik, one of the best, which had appeared as early as 1931.[11]

The story of the origin of the alleged homicidal gas chambers is therefore not only documentarily unfounded, but also internally inconsistent.

[11] Similar data can be found in an Italian book by Michele Giua (1933). Another important work on this topic, likewise published in 1933, was Mario Dartori's *Chimica delle sostanze aggressive* (German 1935).

3. The Construction Order for the Chełmno Camp

On the design of the alleged extermination camp at Chełmno, Krakowski stated the following (1983, p. 110):

> *"A letter, written on 16 July 1941 by SS Sturmbannführer Rolf-Heinz Höppner, on the staff of the Höherer SS und Polizeiführer in the Warthegau, to SS Obersturmbannführer Adolf Eichmann, mentions for the first time that 'the Jews* [must] *be eliminated with some quick-acting poison.'"*

In his book published in 2007, Krakowski sees in this letter a wider and more-systematic murderous intention (p. 21):

> *"By this memorandum, as well as by events that happened on the ground, we can assume that already at this early stage there were debates on the extermination of the Jews of the Warthegau, although the manner and pace of implementation of this massacre had not yet been decided upon."*

The text of the letter, as we shall see later, belies this interpretation, which extrapolates and emphasizes a proposal that is at odds with a general policy of extermination.[12] This document fits seamlessly into the National Socialist policy of Jewish deportation to the east, which renders extremely problematic the orthodox claim of a planned extermination of the Jews and the establishement of the alleged extermination camps, beginning with Chełmno, which is said to have been the first to become operational.

In another study I have documented this policy, which resulted in the deportation of more than 56,000 Jews from the *Altreich* (Old Reich), the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the *Ostmark* (Austria) to the eastern territories (Riga, Kaunas, Raasiku, Minsk, Baranov, Maly Trostinec) and more than 69,000 Jews from those three countries and Slovakia to the Lublin District (Mattogno/Graf 2004, Chapter VI and VIII). Auschwitz had an important role in this policy of deportation because – as was established on 15 September 1942, at a meeting between the Minister Albert Speer, SS *Obergruppenführer* Oswald Pohl

[12] The quotation is furthermore inaccurate, as the original text does not say "by some quick-acting poison (*durch irgendein schnell wirksames Gift*)," but "by some quick-acting substance" (*durch irgendein schnellwirkendes Mittel*). See below.

and other officials of the Reich – this area was the center for the assembly of forced-labor units that were selected during the deportation of Jews to the eastern territories, referred to in the "*Ostwanderung*" document:[13]

> *"The Jews fit for work destined for migration to the east will therefore interrupt their journey* [at Auschwitz] *and shall have to perform armaments work."*

Götz Aly has documented that from January 1941 onward the SS planned to transfer to the ghetto of Łódź in the General Government[14] the majority of Jews unfit for work, who would be replaced by Jews fit for work (Aly, pp. 264f.). He then sums up the plans of the SS (*ibid.*, p. 267):

> *"In the spring of 1941 officials in the RSHA dealing with Jewish affairs and in the General Government considered employing Jews fit for work in 'work columns'; due to new forced labor projects they would have to create 'space' in the ghettos of the General Government, into which Heydrich, Eichmann and Höppner wanted to deport Jews unfit for work from the regions of Łódź, Dombrowa and Zichenau."*

Aly notes that the Jews were divided into two groups – those fit and those unfit for work – who were to be treated differently (*ibid.*, pp. 267f.). These measures, however, were regarded as temporary only in view of an impending "total solution (*Gesamtlösung*) of the European Jewish question," which in the spring of 1941 took account of the future "potential of the east" (*ibid.*, p. 268).

In this respect, Aly makes it clear that in early 1941 the plans of the SS, to which he assigns undocumented intentions of extermination, were to concentrate Jews unfit for work in reservations or ghettos for the elderly on the eastern outskirts of the General Government and to transfer them later, after victory, to Soviet territories bordering the marshes of eastern Poland and present-day Belarus, while Jews fit for work reclaimed those marshes starting in the summer of 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 273).

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[13] Pohl Report to Himmler of September 16, 1942 on the subject of armament work and bomb damage, BAK, NS 19.14, pp. 131-133. See Mattogno 2004c, pp. 52-54.

[14] The General Government (German: *Generalgouvernement*, Polish: *Generalne Gubernatorstwo*) was the German term for the part of Poland not incorporated into the Reich or annexed by the Soviet Union during World War II. It was governed by a German occupational administration.

Aly later documents that "the plan to deport the Jews to the Pripyat marshes, which used to be located in eastern Poland but later were part of White Russia," was taken very seriously by the SS, and in this context he mentions, among other things, two studies that appeared in December 1941 and June 1942 in the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (*Journal for Geopolitics*) entitled "*Die Pripjetsümpfe als Entwässerungsproblem*" authored by Richard Bergius, and "*Pripjet-Polesien, Land und Leute*," by Hansjulius Schepers (*ibid.*, pp. 275f.). On 19 July 1941, the Governor General of Poland Hans Frank, in a paper to Hans Lammers, head of the Reich Chancellery, suggested the annexation of the "swamp lands of Pripyat" into the General Government (*i.e.* wartime Poland) in order to move there "elements of the population (especially Jews)" in order to use them for productive activities useful to the Reich (*ibid.*, p. 317).

Into this context fits the activity report allegedly written by SS *Sturmbannführer* Rolf-Heinz Höppner[15] on 16 July 1941, of which I provide a translation:[16]

"The L HÖ/S Posen, 16 July 1941

File Memo

Subject: solution of the Jewish question.

In meetings [held] *at the provincial government of the Reich, the solution of the Jewish question in the territory of the Warthegau has been addressed from various aspects. The following solution is proposed:*

1. All the Warthegau Jews will be assembled in a camp for 300,000 Jews which will be built in the form of barracks as close as possible to the railway line carrying coal and which contains equipment for industrial workers, tailors, cobblers and so on.

2. Into this camp will be brought all the Jews of the Warthegau. Jews fit for work, on request, can be organized into working groups and allowed outside the camp.

3. Such a camp, in the opinion of SS Brigadeführer Albert,[17] *can be guarded by much smaller police forces than is now the case. Moreo-*

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15 Adalbert Rückerl wrote in this regard (1979, p. 257, note 38): "In both the criminal proceedings before the District Court of Posen and subsequently in a preliminary investigation against him by prosecutors in Bonn Rolf H.[öppner] denied that the letter to the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* and the note attached to the documents had reached him."

16 T/219. Reproduction of the document in Leszczyński 1977, pp. 60f.

17 Wilhelm Albert was head of the police (*Polizeipräsident*) in Łódź.

ver, the danger of epidemics, which in Litzmannstadt [=Łódź] *and other ghettos is always present for the surrounding population, is limited to a minimum.*

4. This winter there is a danger that not all Jews can be fed any longer. We must seriously consider whether the most-humane solution is not to eliminate the Jews by some substance with rapid effect insofar as they are unfit to work.

5. For the rest a proposal was made to sterilize all the Jewesses in this camp who can still be expected to bear children so that with this generation the Jewish problem will indeed be solved completely.

6. On this matter the Reichsstatthalter [Arthur Greiser] *has not yet ruled. One gets the impression that Regierungspräsident*[18] *Übelhör does not want the Litzmannstadt ghetto to disappear, as he has a lot to gain from it. As an example of how much profit can be made from the Jews, I was told that the Reich Ministry of Labor pays 6 RM from a special fund for every Jew employed in work, but the Jew only costs 80 Pfennigs.*

SS Sturmbannführer."

The proposal attributed to Höppner is therefore not consistent with a plan of systematic extermination. That conclusion was also reached by Aly on the basis of an activity report from Höppner for Eichmann on 2 September 1941 (1995, p. 339):

"So Höppner from early September stated for a fact that 'the final solution of the Jewish question' was a first essential part of the general program of evacuation of all Jews who were 'under German influence.' He did not yet consider that systematic murder had been decided upon"

This is incontrovertibly confirmed by the rest of the letter from Himmler to Arthur Greiser, governor of Warthegau, of 18 September 1941:[19]

"The Führer wishes that the Old Reich and the Protectorate be emptied and cleared of Jews from west to east as soon as possible. For this reason I have worked hard to transport, possibly even this year, the Jews of the Old Reich and the Protectorate, primarily as a first step, into the new eastern territories obtained two years ago by the Reich, and to expel them farther east next year.

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18 President of the administrative district.

19 Letter from Himmler to Greiser of 18 September 1941. BAK, NS 19/2655, p. 3; reproduction in Witte 1995, p. 50.

> *I plan on deporting about 60,000 Jews from the Old Reich and the Protectorate to the Litzmannstadt ghetto, which, as I have heard, has the space to accommodate them. I beg you not only to understand this decision, which will certainly create difficulties for your Gau, but to support it with all your strength in the overall interest of the Reich.*
> *SS Gruppenführer Heydrich, who has to carry out this Jewish emigration, will approach you in due course directly or through SS Gruppenführer Koppe."*

While this document reflects perfectly the guidelines of the National Socialist policy of Jewish emigration, Holocaust historian Peter Witte found a way to twist the sentence, claiming that its "further transfer to the east" contains

> *"already, in its essentials, the death sentence of the Jews to be deported, regardless of the fact that at that time there were not yet any death camps ready to receive Jews and that their construction had not yet been ordered, although the ground for the extermination had already been prepared,* […]*"* (Witte 1995, p. 53)

where the last sentence refers to Höppner's alleged letter of 16 July 1941!

Unexpectedly – and mysteriously – a few weeks after the above-mentioned letter, in October 1941, Himmler allegedly ordered the construction of the "killing fields" of Chełmno and Bełżec. However, the documents continued to speak of evacuation to the east. I have cited many of them in a previous work (Mattogno/Graf 2004, pp. 181-193). Aly also mentions others (1995, p. 274):

> *"On 23 September 1941, Heydrich assured Goebbels, who approached him in his capacity as Gauleiter of Berlin, that, once the military situation would allow it, the Jews would have to be sent to the Communist camps on the Arctic Ocean. Immediately after the Wannsee conference, Heydrich returns to the 'Arctic Ocean' option: there they wanted to 'get hold of the Russian concentration camps'; the territory – which, despite what one might suppose to the contrary, had a sound, concentrated agriculture and an excellent base of raw materials – was an 'ideal future home for the 11 million Jews of Europe.'*[20] *In 1946, Frank's secretary of state, Josef Bühler, during his interrogation at Nuremberg, declared that Heydrich had told him*

[20] This refers to a secret speech by Heydrich in Prague on 4 February 1942.

> *at the beginning of 1942 that Himmler had the order from the Führer to gather all the Jews of Europe and evacuate them to the north-east of Europe, to Russia."*

The Jewish deportations to Minsk and Riga began on 8 and 15 November 1941, respectively (Mattogno/Graf 2004, pp. 200f.), but these were temporary locations only, because, as Heinrich Lohse, the *Reichskommissar des Ostlandes* (Imperial Commissioner for the Eastern Lands[21]), wrote on 9 October 1941, to Alfred Rosenberg, *Reichsminister für die besetzten Ostgebiete* (Imperial Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories), that "since Jewish camps must be shifted considerably farther to the east" (*ibid.*, p. 197) which is also consistent with the Arctic Ocean option.

The use of former Soviet prisoner-of-war camps to imprison Jews followed a general directive issued in Galicia as early as August 1941:[22]

> *"In almost all towns of some size in the district of Galicia there are said to be prisoner-of-war camps set up by the Russians. These are said to be equipped with the necessary facilities and are said to be especially well-suited to serve as camps for Jewish forced laborers. All existing camps are to be surveyed and immediately reported. At the same time their capacity and their condition is to be determined."*

But then suddenly, just when the policy of deportation to the east began to be realized, for mysterious reasons the SS began to build not transit camps, but "extermination camps." But what about the subsequent documents that continue to speak of deportation to the east? All that is left to orthodox Holocaust historiography is the subterfuge of "coded language," according to which one merely has to swap terms like "emigration" and "deportation" with "annihilation" so that the sources suddenly document the creation of the alleged extermination machine since October 1941. Here, for example, is how Aly addresses these difficulties of interpretation (p. 358):

> *"The minutes of the meeting in Prague on 10 October 1941 document how little difference there was in these days and in these weeks between the ideas of murderous deportation and immediate extermi-*

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[21] The territories of the Baltic countries, Belarus, Russia and the Ukraine temporarily occupied by the Germans.

[22] Letter of *Oberst der Schutzpolizei und Regimentskommandeur* Worm to Police Battalions 315, 133 and 254 as well as to the *Kommandos der Schutzpolizei* in Lemberg, Tarnopol, Stanislau of 14 August 1941. RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 158.

> *nation, with as little fuss as possible, of the European Jews, as the term 'evacuation' became synonymous with killing."*

But the document of 10 October 1941 speaks explicitly of deportations to the east and reception of the deportees in the appropriate camps:[23]

> *"Because of the evacuation, difficulties arose. It was planned to begin with it roughly on 15 October 1941, in order to let the transports take off one by one until 15 November, up to the number of some 5,000 Jews – from Prague alone. For now, one still has to be considerate of the Litzmannstadt* [Łódź] *authorities. Minsk and Riga are to obtain 50,000.* […] *During the following weeks the 5,000 Jews are now to be evacuated from Prague. SS Brif.* [Brigadeführer] *Nebe and Rasch can include the Jews in the camps for communist inmates in the area of operation. According to SS Stubaf. Eichmann this has already been initiated."*

Theresienstadt was considered to be a "provisional assembly camp (*vorübergehenden Sammellager*), albeit with a high mortality, from which evacuation was then to continue "to the eastern territories" (*in die östlichen Gebiete*; *ibid.*). Nothing in this document suggests any intention on the part of the SS to exterminate the Jews.

About the genesis of the Chełmno camp, Krakowski states (2007, p. 27):

> *"It is neither known when exactly the decision was made to establish the Chełmno camp, nor at which moment and under which circumstances the respective orders were issued."*

He repeatedly asserts that it was inaugurated on 8 December 1941 (*ibid.*, pp. 31-32, 35), but does not provide any documentary evidence, not even a single testimony.[24] Despite this, he even claims that "on that 8 December 1941 the gas vans made their awful journey three times" (*ibid.*, pp. 34f.), but this statement too is devoid of any documentary evidence. This applies also to the connection which Krakowski sees between the camp's alleged date of opening and the original date of the Wannsee Conference. He notes that the latter was initially convened for 9 December 1941, but was later postponed to 20 January 1942, because

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[23] *Notizen aus der Besprechung am 10.10.41 über die Lösung der Judenfrage*. T 37/299. Transcription in Kryl 1983, pp. 38-41.

[24] According to the testimony of Andrzej Miszczak, the first transport of inmates (700 Jews from Koło) arrived at the camp on 9 December 1941: Blumental 1946, p. 241. This is a simple claim without any documentary confirmation.

of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the subsequent entry of the U.S. into the war, and he concludes (*ibid.*, pp. 31f.):

> *"While the conference date was postponed, the opening date of the Chełmno extermination camp was not changed, and the massacre commenced – as planned – on 8 December 1941."*

But that unfounded conjecture does not turn this purely fictitious date into reality.

Furthermore, the guidelines set out by Heydrich at the Wannsee Conference are in sharp contrast to the alleged establishment of a death camp at Chełmno in early December 1941. Krakowski is forced to completely distort them. He writes (*ibid.*, p. 77):

> *"*[…] *already during this conference it was agreed to leave a small percentage of Jews alive in order to use their strength for forced labor. Working conditions would then gradually bring about the killing of all the forced laborers, according to the Nazi program called 'extermination through work.'"*

The truth is, however, that at the Wannsee Conference Heydrich announced the change in the National Socialist policy toward the Jews which had evolved a few months earlier:[25]

> *"In the meantime, the Reichsfuehrer SS and Chief of the German Police* [Himmler] *had prohibited emigration of Jews due to the dangers of an emigration in wartime and due to the possibilities of the east. Another possible solution of the problem has now taken the place of emigration, i.e. the evacuation of the Jews to the east, provided that the Fuehrer gives the appropriate approval in advance."*

That here was a genuine plan to deport the Jews to the east is admitted even by Hilberg, who comments (1995, p. 428):

> *"Heydrich explained what would be done with the evacuees: they were organized in huge labor columns; by using their labor, many of them would no doubt 'perish due to their physical weakness' (wobei zweifellos ein Grossteil durch natürliche Verminderung ausfallen wird).*[26] *The remainder (Restbestand) of this process of 'natural selection' – that is, the more resistant core of the Jews – would have to be 'treated accordingly' (wird entsprechend behandelt werden müssen), since history had shown how these Jews carry within them*

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25 NG-2586-G, p. 5 of the original.

26 The expression "*durch natürliche Verminderung*" does not mean "due to their physical weakness," but instead "by natural attrition," that is: by natural mortality.

> *the seeds of a new Jewish revival. Heydrich does not dwell on this 'according' treatment, but based on the language of the Einsatzgruppen reports we know that he alluded to their death sentence."*

But Hilberg himself distorts the final destiny of the remaining Jews, omitting the words "in case of liberation" (*bei Freilassung*), which categorically excludes both the "death sentence" he posits and the gradual "extermination through work" alleged by Krakowski, making clear that "*entsprechend behandelt*" probably simply meant that these Jews were not to be released.[27]

But if, as late as 20 January 1942, the National Socialist policy toward the Jews still provided for a *genuine* evacuation of the Jews to the east, then how can this be reconciled with the establishment of a camp at Chełmno? In this context Chełmno could only have been a transit camp for the evacuation of Jews from the Warthegau to the east.

Greiser's letter to Himmler of 1 May 1942, from which Krakowski infers that the Nazis intended "giving up – at least for a certain period of time – the total extermination of the entire Jewish population of the Warthegau in order to admit a certain percentage of them for the implementation of forced labor" (2007, p. 78) should be interpreted precisely in this sense.

The passage of the document relied upon by Krakowski says:[28]

> *"Reichsführer!*
> *The operation of special treatment of some 100,000 Jews in my governmental area, as approved by you in agreement with the Head of the Imperial Security Main Office, SS Obergruppenführer Heydrich, will be finished within the next 2-3 months."*

This "special treatment" was merely an extension to the Jews in Warthegau of the order that Himmler had sent to Greiser on 18 September 1941 concerning the expulsion of the Jews of the Reich proper and the Protectorate via the ghetto of Łódź during "next year," that is 1942.

But if the alleged establishment of the Chełmno "extermination camp" remains inexplicable and contrary to the sources, the report of the first alleged systematic extermination in this camp, as discussed in Chapter 5, is likewise contradictory and inexplicable.

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[27] As in the Madagascar project, the deported Jews were under the supervision of the SS in the eastern settlements as well.

[28] NO-246.

4. "Gas Vans" in Chełmno?

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, the alleged extermination of the Jews at Chełmno was carried out solely by means of "gas vans."

The only document that links vehicles called "*Spezialwagen*" to Chełmno is a file memo (*Vermerk*) of 5 June 1942 apparently from the *Referat II D 3a* of the *RSHA* 8.[29] This is said to be an official document drawn up in a very peculiar "'unique-est' copy" ("*einzigste Ausfertigung*"), although in German, the superlative of the adjective *einzig* does not exist (just as in English with its translation "unique"). It concerns "technical changes to the special vehicles [already] in service and which are [still] in production" and opens with an incomprehensible "for example":

> *"For example 97,000 were processed since December 1941 with 3 deployed vehicles without any defects in the vehicles becoming apparent."*

The reference that we are interested in is in the following sentence:

> *"The known explosion at Kulmhof* [=Chełmno] *has to be assessed as a single case."*

But the document in question contains so many anomalies and absurdities that Ingrid Weckert, Pierre Marais and Santiago Alvarez, who have researched it carefully, came to the conclusion that this is a back-dated fake along the lines of the memo from the Chief of Police and Security Service of 23 June 1942, addressed to the Fahrzeugewerke Gaubschat company in Berlin, to give the latter a criminal significance which it does not have.[30]

To assess the validity of this interpretation just one observation is sufficient. The memo of 23 June 1942, in Paragraph 1 says:[31]

> *"The cargo box is to be shortened by 800 mm in length. The protrusion at the door is omitted. The objection is herewith acknowledged that the shortening would result in a disadvantageous weight distri-*

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[29] Reproduced in: Alvarez 2011, pp. 318-322; Kogon *et al.* 1983, pp. 333-337; Rückerl 1971, document appendix outside of pagination.

[30] Weckert 2003, pp. 231-235; see in particular also Alvarez 2011, Subsection 2.2.4; Marais 1994, pp. 44-78; Walendy 1979, pp. 29-31; Weckert 1985, pp. 23-28.

[31] Facsimile of the document in: Alvarez 2011, pp. 323-325.

bution. The Gaubschat company will not be held liable for any disadvantages resulting from this."

And here is how it is interpreted in the memo of 5 June 1942:

"The vans' load usually amounts to 9 to 10 per m² [10 sq ft]. *Although no overloading occurs thereby for the spacious Saurer special vehicles, utilization in that form is not possible, because their off-road capability is highly reduced by this. A reduction of the load area appears to be necessary. This will be achieved by shortening the body by approximately 1 m* [39"]. *The above difficulty is not to be solved, as has been done so far, by reducing the number of units* [of payload]. *This is because a reduction in the number of units necessitates a longer operation time, since the empty spaces* [left by omission of the payload units] *also have to be filled with carbon monoxide. In contrast to this, a substantially shorter operation time suffices in case of a shorter load area and a completely filled loading space, since empty spaces are missing.*[32] *"*

According to the note of the *RSHA* on 27 April 1942, the cargo boxes of these special vehicles were 5.8 m long and 1.7 m high, and their load capacity was 4,500 kg.[33] Since the normal load was allegedly nine to ten – we assume people – per square meter, if the truck's floor was 2.5 meters wide (see further below), this would result in an area of 14.5 m^2 and a volume of 24.65 m^3. In this case, it would have held no more than (4,500 kg ÷ 14.5 m² =) 310 kg/m². Hence the permissible average weight of each person would have amounted to (310 kg/m² ÷ [9 to 10 m^{-2}] =) 34.4 to 31.0 kg, an unrealistic value for groups in which adults had to be relatively numerous. For the alleged gas chambers at Birkenau, Robert Jan van Pelt took a more-reasonable average weight of 60 kg per victim (van Pelt 2002, pp. 470, 472).

In other words: Loading nine to ten average people of 60 kg into such a truck would have amounted to (14.5 m² × [9 to 10 m^{-2}] =) 7.8 to 8.7 metric tons, which is almost twice the permissible load of 4.5 metric tons. Hence the above-quoted memo's claim is utterly wrong that "no overloading occurs."

The memo's claim that merely reducing the number of payload units led to "a longer operation time, since the empty spaces also have to be filled with carbon monoxide" is just as ridiculous. Even though shortening the load area by 1 m (or 17%) while maintaining the load density

32 German: "*weil freie Räume fehlen*." This is awkward German as well.

33 Facsimile of the document in Alvarez 2011, pp. 299-305.

would reduce the air volume accordingly, reducing the load density instead has hardly any effect on the air volume. To show this, I assume first of all that the vehicle's maximum load of 4,500 kg (≈ 4.5 m³ of bodies) was not exceeded. That would amount to (4,500 kg ÷ 60 kg) 75 persons, or 5.2 persons (or 310 kg) per square meter. We now reduce the payload by as many persons as would result from shortening the box by one meter. This amounts to (1 m × 2.5 m × 310 kg/m² =) 775 kg or roughly 13 people, or an additional air volume of 0.775 m³. Hence decreasing the load by 775 kg would increase the empty volume merely from (24.65 m³ – 4.5 m³ =) 20.15 m^3 to (20.15 m^3 + 0.775 m^3 =) 20.925 m^3, or just 3.7%. Even if we assume a higher load density as suggested by the memo, this would still not be more than a 7.2% increase in air volume. And if, as stated in the verdict of the Bonn Jury Court of 30 March 1963, the death of the victims occurred within about nine to ten minutes after starting the engine,[34] this marginal increase of free space would have resulted in an equally marginal change of the execution time, which would have been in the order of 20 to 40 seconds. This shows that the analysis presented in this memo of 5 June 1942 is ludicrous.

This memo also claims that, according to the company that was to carry out the work, the shortening of the body would have had a negative effect on weight distribution, resulting in an overload of the front axle of the vehicle:

> *"In a discussion with the manufacturer it was pointed out by the latter that a shortening of the cargo box would result in a disadvantageous weight displacement. It was emphasized that an overloading of the front axle occurs. In fact, however, an unintended balancing in weight distribution occurs, because during operation the load striving toward the back door always predominantly lies there. Due to this an additional load on the front axle does not occur."*

In other words, the victims would move toward the door of the "gas vans" and their weight on the rear axle of the vehicle would offset the overload on the front axle due to shortening of the vehicle body and rebalance the vehicle. This "solution" ignores the fact that the load of

[34] Rüter *et al.* 1979, pp. 232, 279; during this trial eleven defendants who had been officials of the Chełmno/Kulmhof camp were accused of various acts of homicide. It started on 26 November 1962 and lasted until 30 March 1963. After a partially successful appeal the case was retried and ended with a final verdict on 23 July 1965. Three of the defendants received 13 years, one 7 and one 8 years, and three others 13½ months of imprisonment. Cf. Alvarez 2011, Paragraph 3.7.4.1.

the "gas vans" is said to have been nine to ten victims per square meter and that just to maintain this density they wanted to shorten the box. But with such a packing density, the victims could not have moved at all.

Besides, the "special vehicles" described in the memo of 27 April 1942 could not have been homicidal "gas vans," as has been stressed by the revisionist authors mentioned above. This becomes clear from the fact that in relation to the design of a removable grate to be installed in the cargo box this document states:

> *"In order that the load does not fall over the last grate* [section] *toward the rear wall of the driver's cab, it is to be equipped with an angled gridwork of 3 – 400 mm height."*

But if the load consisted of people, standing nine to ten per square meter in the cargo box, how could a trellis just 30-40 cm [1' to 1'4"] high prevent the dying victims or their corpses, after the gassing, from falling or resting against the cab? Such a device could possibly be compatible with the transport of corpses, loaded and arranged neatly in the cargo box, but not with the transport of living people who became corpses inside the cargo box.

Apart from the reference mentioned above, the only documentary evidence of the use of a gassing van at Chełmno for homicidal purposes would be two photographs taken in 1945. The first photo, the best-known, is on display at the Chełmno Museum.[35] The second depicts the same alleged "gas van," which was in 1945 at the former Ostrowski Company in Koło,[36] a town located about 10 km northeast of Chełmno.

The photograph on display at the Chełmno Museum was published in 1982 by Gerald Fleming with this caption:[37]

> *"Mobile gas chamber in which Jewish men were murdered in the Chełmno (Kulmhof) extermination camp and at Konitz (Archives of the Polish Ministry of Justice)."*

This "gas van" was, however, not recognized as such by witness Bronisław Falborski, who was interrogated at Koło on 11 June 1945 by the

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[35] See Documents 1, 1a. The photograph's Polish caption reads: "Vehicle found after the war at Koło on the grounds of the Ostrowski factory." Supprisingly, whether this was in fact a "gas van" and how it would have operated is left to the visitor's imagination.

[36] See Document 3, taken from http://www.deathcamps.org/occupation/pic/bigChelmnovan.jpg.

[37] Fleming 1982, between pp. 128 and 129; see Document 2.

investigating judge Władysław Bednarz.[38] In his deposition he stated the following:[39]

> *"During the German occupation I worked as a mechanic for the German company 'KRAFT' in Koło, Asnyk Street. I worked for said company from April 1942 to 1943. I don't remember the exact dates. Our company repaired vehicles of the SS Sonderkommando from Culmhof. Once I was ordered to repair a vehicle which served to poison with gases. I cannot exactly remember when this happened. I think that it was in the summer of 1942. The vehicle was roughly 2.50 m high. Its length was 6 m, but its width*[40] *probably 2.50 m. The vehicle's color was black and had the shape of a box. The roof was flat and perpendicular to its walls. I believe that it was lined with sheet metal, but I am not certain about it. I did not look at the engine, and I have not paid attention to the make of the vehicle. The vehicle's doors could be locked with latch and keys."*

After the description of the vehicle, the witness spoke of repairs:

> *"The repair consisted of replacing a part between the flexible part of the exhaust pipe and the part which led into the vehicle's interior."*

He pointed out that the exhaust pipe consisted of three parts, of which the middle one was "flexible, like a hydraulic hose," and added that it

> *"could be connected to a pipe located in the floor of the vehicle, with the result that the exhaust gases flowed into the vehicle's interior."*

But the most important part of his deposition is this:

> *"Immediately before my employment at the 'Kraft' workshop I had been a driver at the forester Maj. In that connection I was frequently in the forest of Chełmno. In that period of time I frequently saw vehicles driving into the Chełmno forest and back. These were vehicles like those which I repaired later on in the 'Kraft' workshop. I had the impression that there were only two vehicles of the same size which encountered each other on their way.* […]

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38 The investigation of Judge Bednarz is archived in the collections "Ob-271" (9 volumes) and "Ob-19" (2 volumes) of AGK.

39 Deposition by Bronisław Falborski of 11 June 1945. Facsimile of the original text in Alvarez 2011, Appendix 9.

40 The text reads "*wysokość*" – "height," but as height has been mentioned before, this is evidently an erroneous replacement for "*szerokość*" – "width."

Three times I saw a converted moving truck van [*z wozu meblewego*] *which is currently in the courtyard of the former 'Ostrowski' Company. Once I had already seen this vehicle in the forest, the second time on the road and the third time when it was just coming out of the courtyard of the Chełmno Castle. This was in spring 1943. I saw this vehicle repeatedly at intervals of several days. Recently I saw this truck in the courtyard of the Ostrowski factory, and I am absolutely certain that it is the same vehicle (size – shape – color)."*

The two photographs mentioned above come from the Commission of Inquiry into German Crimes in Poland, which apparently inspected the vehicle, including transcribing everything written on it (see Document 4):

"on the back door: Otto Köhn Spedition /Ruf 516 Zeulen da i Th
on the left door: 40 km
on a metal plate on the engine:
'Humboldt-Deutz AG' Magirus-Werke 'Ulm / Donau
Baujahr 1939 Lieferdat 739 Abn-Stempel
Fahrgestell Nr. 9282/38 Nutzlast kg 2700
Fahrgestell-Baumuster 023. Eigengewicht 4980 kg.
Motor-Baumuster FoM 513 zul. Ges. Gew. 7900
Leistung P.S. 105 cm^3 7412 Zulässige Achsendrücke vorn kg 2400 hinten 5500."

From a comparison of the two photographs we see that they portray the same vehicle from different angles and on two different dates. With regard to the position of the vehicle, in both photographs we see on the left a dome-shaped shed with a window that appears in perspective at the same height as the top of the vehicle windows; on the right, in the Fleming photo, we see a low building of which in the Ostrowski photograph we see a part of the wall and its shadow. The vehicle has the same shape and details (*e.g.* the metal plate fixed on the hood between the two windows, the white disc [containing the characters "40 km"] drawn on the left door, the two parallel bars in relief on the same door between the disk and the window).

Regarding the alleged "gas vans" Chełmno, Jerzy Halbersztadt, a member of the faculty of the University of Warsaw and of the Holocaust Museum in Washington, wrote a note of interest:[41]

[41] J. Halbersztadt, "Enquires on the Killing of the Gombin Jews," in: http://pages.ucsd.edu/~lzamosc/chelm00.htm.

"The case of Chełmno death camp was investigated by the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland (it was the commission's name at the beginning of its existence) starting from May 1945. The commission received the information that in the town KOLO (ca. 12 km from Chełmno) in the former factory of Ostrowski there was a van which, according to the witnesses, was used in the death center at Chełmno. The van was found, photographed and researched.

The photos taken then are available in the Main Commission's Archives in Warsaw (signatures 47398, 47396, 47397, 47399; the best one is 47398). The captions of these photographs are still today: 'a car for killing people by the exhaust fumes at Chełmno.' One of these photos was reproduced in Fleming's book 'Hitler and the Final Solution' with the information that it is a photograph of a 'gaswagon' used in Chełmno.

Despite of their captions, the photographs do not show the gas van used in the Chełmno death camp. It is clear from the testimonies of Polish witnesses kept in the same archives of the Main Commission (collection 'Ob,' file 271 and others). Witnesses to whom the van photographed in Koło was shown did not confirm that it was one of those used in Chełmno for killing people. Some of them only said that it was similar to those described in their testimonies, but not the same. The most common answer was: 'I didn't see this one.'

The inspection of the van in Ostrowski factory, done on 13 November 1945 by the judge J. Bronowski, did not confirm the existence of any elements of system of gassing of the van's closed platform. The witnesses called this van 'a pantechnicon van' (a van to transport furniture). It was produced by 'Magirus-Werke' with a diesel type engine of 'Deutz.' The plate on the engine stated: 'Humboldt-Deutz A.G. 'Magirus-Werke' Ulm (Donau) Baujahr 1939 Lieferdat739 Abn-Stempel. Fahrgestell Nr. 9282/38 Nutzlast kg 2700 Fah[r]*gestell-Baumuster 023. Ei*[ge]*ngewicht 4980 kg. Motor Baumuster FoM 513 zul. Gesamt gew. 7900 Leistung P.S. 105 cm3 7412. Zulaessige Achsendruecke vorn kg 2400 hinten 5500.' The thickness of the car's wooden body was 7 cm, of the door – 8 cm. The walls, door, ceiling and floor were covered from the inside with the 2 mm sheet iron. The car was painted in grey-lead color. Under this paint the inscription was seen on the door of the cab: 'Otto Koehn Spedition Ruf 516 Zeulen… da i.TH.'*

I cite all these details to make possible the further comments to the story of this van. It is my feeling that there are some unclear points in this story. Nobody explained for what purpose this van was used. Its door was tightened with an impregnated canvas. What for? Some witnesses had seen this car in the area of the forest of Chełmno starting from the spring of 1942. It is possible that it belonged to the SS Sonderkommando Kulmhof, too. I came across a version that this van was used for a disinfection of victims' clothes but there are no grounds for it.

In 1945 the prosecutors came to the conclusion that this van was not a gas van of Chełmno. The van was left incomplete and not serviceable in Ostrowski's factory at least till 1950. The last known documents (a correspondence between the Association of Combatants 'ZBoWiD' in Koło and the Main Commission) of April 1950 inform that there was an idea to move this van to the museum in Auschwitz or Majdanek (till 1990 there was no museum in the Chełmno forest; [the] *first monument was erected there in 1964). Those plans were not accomplished and the van was scrapped, probably.*

Thus, there is no reliable graphic illustration of the gas vans used in Chełmno. However, the testimonies of witnesses contain many important data on these vehicles. In 1945 and later Polish authorities examined some Poles who stayed in the area of Chełmno after the removal of the vast majority of the Polish population to the GG in 1939-1940. The witnesses were able to identify gas vans very well. They declared that there were three or four gas vans, one of them was a bit bigger. All of them were black. The cars' bodies were boxes made of boards. The length of a biggest vehicle was 5.5-6 m. It was ca. 2.5 m high and 2.5 m wide. Each vehicle was guarded all the time (even during the repair in the local factories) by two watchmen, who did not give anybody the access to the van and, especially, to the chassis and the closed box (platform).

However, at least three witnesses were able to see the vehicles from the short distance. Mr. Jozef Piaskowski (b. 1908) was employed in the Reichsstrassenbauamt in Koło (former Ostrowski factory). In the winter 1941/42 he was ordered to repair the damaged cooler in the biggest of Chełmno vans. Piaskowski was an experienced driver. He declared later that he has never seen the motor of this type. 'The motor was a bit odd.' 'It was enormous.' The most interesting [thing] *in his report is the description of the exhaust system. He has noticed*

that the exhaust pipe was divided into three parts. First and third were done of metal as in normal cars. But the central part was done of the elastic, 'hydraulic' pipe which could join both standard tubes or could be screwed to the hole in the van's floor. After the repair of the cooler, when the motor was tested, so much exhaust fumes were produced that the air in the garage (size 30 m x 12 m) started immediately to be blue. The German bosses ordered to open all windows and doors. The workers who spent a very short time in the polluted air have got headache. The witness heard later their comments that the motor of this car uses 75 liters of petrol per 100 km, so twice more than normal motors do. Piaskowski stated that he had seen two military type gas-masks in the driver's cab. Piaskowski's colleague, Mr. Bronisław Mańkowski (b. 1882) confirmed his story and added that he had seen the van when the middle part of the exhaust tube was join[ed] *to the hole in the car's floor. Mańkowski declared that he looked inside the box when the watchmen left their posts for a while. He had seen a hole covered with a perforated sheet* [of] *iron in the middle of the wooden floor.*

Another witness, Mr. Bronisław Falborski (b. 1910), was employed in the 'Kraft' company in Koło, where the vehicles of the SS Sonderkommando Kulmhof were repaired, starting from 1942. In summer 1942 he received the order to repair one of the gas vans. His description of the exhaust pipe is in general the same as done by witnesses cited above. The only (but important) difference is the description of the connection of elastic pipe with the hole in the car's floor. According to Falborski (who made even a picture) they were join[ed] *by two fasteners tightened by four screws. It seems that this connection was permanent, quite difficult to change and only optionally substituted by the standard connection of both metal parts of the exhaust pipe as in normal cars. Falborski's report seems reliable as his task was to make this connection air-tight by the change of the packing between two fasteners.*

The cases of the repair of gas vans in the local workshops of Koło seem to be rare and exceptional. Probably it happened only in necessity when it was impossible to use military- or SS motor services.

The Chełmno death center stopped to operate many months before the liberation of this site. The gas vans were very easy to move from the area of Chełmno-Koło and to change into standard vans with very little signs of their previous function. It is very difficult to think

> *that* [the] *SS murder*[er]*s (who tried to destroy all evidences of genocide, like crematoria, camps, corpses, etc.) could simply forget a gas van near to Chełmno or elsewhere."*

J. Halbersztadt states that the Central Commission of Inquiry into German Crimes in Poland inspected the vehicle which was located at the former Ostrowski Company on 13 November 1945 and confirmed that it was *not* a "gas van." Nevertheless, according Halbersztadt the Polish authorities decided in 1950 to transfer the vehicle in question to the Museum of Auschwitz or Majdanek, apparently to show it as a real "gas van." However, this vehicle was traveling regularly between Chełmno Palace and the forest, because it necessarily belonged to the SS *Sonderkommando* Kulmhof.[42]

In his report of 7 January 1946, the investigating Judge Bednarz wrote as follows (1946d, p. 5):

> *"The camp's Sonderkommando didn't have a car repair shop, so that vehicles requiring repairs were brought very quickly to the workshop of the company Kraft- und Reichsstrassenbauamt in Koło. Eight Polish mechanics of this workshop described these vehicles' technical design as follows: the vehicles' dimensions were 2.5 to 3 m in width and 6 m in length; the smallest were 2.3 to 2.5 meters wide and 4.5 to 5 m long. The cargo box was made of narrow boards bolted together. Inside the vehicle was covered with sheet metal. The door was airtight, so any flow of air from the outside was absolutely impossible. The vehicles were dark gray. The exhaust pipe was under the vehicle and was connected in the middle of its length* [in the middle of the back]. *The opening of the exhaust pipe inside the vehicle was fitted with a perforated sheet which prevented the tube from being clogged. On the floor of the vehicle was a wooden grate. The engine was probably from the Sauer company. The driver's cabin bore the inscription 'Baujahr 1940 – Berlin' (built in 1940). Near the driver's seat were gas masks."*

This description – except for the words "*Baujahr 1940 – Berlin*" also fits the Ostrowski vehicle well (even though Magirus trucks never had Saurer engines). Its picture shows clearly that "the body was built with narrow planks bolted together," and in particular in the part of the body above the windows of the cab, where some boards had been removed. The presence of gas masks in the cab refers to the deposition of one

[42] Only one vehicle of the SS *Sonderkommando* was permitted to move freely in the off-limits area.

witness ("Piaskowski declared that he saw two military-type gas masks in the cab").

At that time two types of masks against carbon monoxide existed in Germany: the CO-Degea mask produced by the Auer company and the CO-Draeger mask. Because the adsorbents used in the filters absorbed humidity from the air, the filters had to be stored in airtight boxes in order to prevent their premature failure due to moisture (Izzo 1935, pp. 181-187). There is no evidence that the masks allegedly seen by witnesses were masks for carbon monoxide and not the normal gas masks issued to the army, which in Auschwitz members of the SS had to have with them even when they were admitted to the SS infirmary (SS *Revier*)![43]

As far as the alleged "gas vans" are concerned, any use of masks against CO would be entirely unnecessary if the manufacturers of these alleged gas vans had taken the elementary precaution of installing a sealable opening at the front of the body, above the cab, whereby, after the alleged homicidal gassing, by opening this and the back door and by driving the vehicle at low speed, a stream of air would have been produced in the body that would have eliminated the toxic gas in a few minutes. But, as is well-known, this would be asking too much of German "technical genius"!

In a revised edition of the report mentioned above, W. Bednarz added further details on the issue of the Polish mechanics (Bednarz 1946a, pp. 23f.):

> *"Three vehicles operated at Chełmno. The largest had a capacity of about 150 people. (The witness Ross stated that he had heard someone say to a man of the Sonderkommando that 150 people fit into the vehicle, but 'with the whip' 175 people. The witness Kozanecki said the vehicle contained 150 adults (or 200 children). The two smaller vehicles contained 80-100 people (according to similar statements by other witnesses). Some witnesses also spoke of a fourth vehicle. As for the possibility that there was a fourth vehicle of a similar shape (which is currently at the former Ostrowski factory at Koło) and which was used to disinfect clothing or which was a closed vehicle for transporting Jewish workers to the forest, the statements that a fourth gassing vehicle had allegedly existed should be consid-*

[43] *Standortbefehl Nr. 19/44* of 14 July 1944, in: Frei *et al.* 2000, p. 469; see also p. 49 (*Kommandanturbefehl Nr. 13/41* of 13 June 1941) and p. 353 (*Standortbefehl Nr. 46/43* of 14 October 1943).

ered with some skepticism, as it is possible that there is an error due to the reasons mentioned above.

The [gas] *vehicles were often damaged, and the Sonderkommando made the mistake of not having their own repair shops. So the vehicles, including the gas vans,*[44] *officially called by them* [the SS] *'Spezialwagen,' had to be brought to the workshops at Koło (of said Kraft- und Reichsstrassenbauamt), whose staff was composed almost entirely of Poles. This enabled simple mechanics such as Piaskowski – card 16,*[45] *Falborski – card 28, Rossa – card 43, Mańkowski – card 30, Fójcik – card 222, Junkiert – card 320, Lewandowski – card 189, Jankowski – card 117, to get to know the configuration of the vehicles.*

All these witnesses were examined at different times and even in different locations. Each of them made a sketch with their own hand of the exhaust pipe and of its entrance to the inside of the vehicle."

From the above, these are some clear conclusions:

1. The Ostrowski vehicle was not a "gas van."
2. No photograph of a "gas van" exists.

Precisely because it was not a "gas vans," the Ostrowski vehicle – the only one documented – raises doubts regarding the existence of "gas vans" at Chełmno. Since it certainly belonged to the Kulmhof *Sonderkommando* and was seen to travel between the palace and the forest, yet obviously without any homicidal purpose, why then would the other two or three similar trucks necessarily be "gas vans"? Everything is down to testimonies. I will deal with these in detail in Chapter 7. Here it is important to note that according to the defendant Bruno Israel, an ethnic-German police officer who was transferred to Chełmno in July-August 1944,[46] in addition to two gassing "special vehicles" at the camp "there was also a third vehicle that was used to fumigate clothes." He pointed out in this regard (Bednarz 1946a, p. 72):

"The photographs shown to me (the accused was shown the photographs on pages 397 and 398 of the documents) precisely depict the vehicle described by me."

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44 "*Komory gazowe*," literally "the gas chamber."

45 Reference to card numbers of the respective depositions within the investigation, reference no. III 13/45 NT (Bednarz 1946a, p. 12, footnote).

46 Krakowski writes that B. Israel was tried and convicted in October 1945, but soon was back at large (2007, p. 177).

But the only existing photographs of a vehicle used in Chełmno were those of the vehicle that was found in the former Ostrowski works in Koło.

Incredibly, Krakowski believes that this vehicle was a real gas van. Criticizing Poles for their anti-Semitic attitude after the war, he states (2007, p. 194):

> *"No one thought it necessary to keep one of the gas vans that the Germans had left behind in their flight. Thus an important object and many traces disappeared that attested to the existence of an extermination camp in the village of Chełmno."*

As pointed out by Weckert (1985, pp. 14f.), while the alleged use by the Germans of Saurer trucks as the "gas vans" is at least understandable, because this company, although Swiss, had a branch in Vienna, which in 1941 was part of Greater Germany, the choice of Diamond trucks is absolutely inexplicable, since it was an American company that, after Pearl Harbor, about the time of the alleged entry into service of Chełmno, obviously no longer supplied trucks or spare parts to Germany.

In 1941 the Diamond Company produced two series of army trucks, Models 967 and 968. The second was designed in 1939, adapted for production in 1940 and produced from 1941 to 1945. This vehicle was 6.83 meters long and 2.44 wide, powered by a Hercules RXC 6-cylinder 8,668 cm^3 gasoline engine.[47] The body of the vehicle was not much longer than the cab, which is less than 4 meters (see Document 4a). The Diamond truck was therefore not the most-suitable vehicle for special use as a "gas van," but it is more likely that, if the Chełmno *Sonderkommando* had one, it was used for normal purposes like the truck that was found in the courtyard of the Ostrowski Company.

As part of the documentary evidence on the alleged gassings at Chełmno, the height of absurdity is reached by the famous work *Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord*, published by the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. Here is published an invoice of *Kopernikus-Apotheke* (Copernicus Pharmacy) of Posen dated 31 March 1942 "to the Reich Commissioner for the Strengthening of the German National Character" (*für den Beauftragten Reichskommissars des für die deutschen Festigung Volkstums*) for 1,641 kg of "chlorinated lime" (*Chlorkalk*). The document bears the stamp in the lower left of the administration of the Litzmannstadt ghetto (*Getto-Verwaltung Litzmannstadt*;

[47] "Diamond T Models 967, 968," in: www.thewheelsofsteel.com/diamond-t-models-967-968; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diamond_T

see Document 5). And here is the incredible caption that accompanies it (Jüdisches Historisches… 1960, p. 279):

> *"Chloride of lime was strewn inside the wagons which served to transport the Jews to the Kulmhof death camp."*

Clearly reminiscent of the propaganda stories of Jan Karski about Bełżec! (See Mattogno 2004b, pp. 22-33)

Another alleged proof is an invoice from the Heyne Motors Company (Heyne-Motoren) of Leipzig addressed to SS *Sonderkommando* X for the attention of the SS *Hauptsturmführer* Police Detective Bothmann, Kulmhof (*an das* SS *Sonderkommando* SS *X* (*z. H. Herrn* SS *Hauptsturmführer Krim.-Kom. Bothmann Kulmhof*) concerning "1 used diesel engine guaranteed operational" (*1 Stck. gebrauchter betriebssicherer Dieselmotor*) amounting to RM 1,400 (see Document 6). The book's caption accompanying the document is an outrageous lie (Jüdisches Historisches… 1960, p. 282):

> *"Supply of a diesel engine to the SS Sonderkommando Bothmann for the gassing of Jews in the death camp of Kulmhof."*

Here the commentator has forgotten that, according to the official thesis, the gassing took place using "gas vans" and not by means of a stationary diesel engine, a method of extermination that Holocaust historiography attributes instead to the camps of Bełżec, Sobibor and Treblinka.

It is all too obvious that the "chloride of lime" was used for the purpose of disinfection and the diesel engine was to drive an electricity generator.

5. The "First Systematic Extermination of Jews in the Warthegau"

G. Aly writes (1995, pp. 354f.):

> *"Already on September 26* [1941] *Krumey*[48] *had sent 900 Jewish women and children at a time from the Łódź ghetto via Leslau (Włocławek) by rail. Three days later there was another transfer from the same location with more than 1,000 persons – 'again almost exclusively women and children.' And a third transport followed.* […]
>
> *The first systematic extermination of Jews in the Warthegau fits into this context also. Neither the exact date nor the instrument of extermination is known – gas vans or shooting? However, there is agreement on the fact that it took place in late September/early October.*
>
> *If we consider the principles upon which Höppner, Krumey and the like acted, this crime took place exactly when it was certain that, after the ghettoization of the Jews of Loslau and Łódź, further deportations would be impossible because of the resistance of the local authorities. According to the report of Isaiah Trunk,*[49] *the following happened:*
>
> *'(Then) the entire Jewish population of the Konin district, about 3,000 persons, was concentrated in Sagurawe (Hinterberg in German). First, all men between 14 and 60 years and all women between 14 and 50 years had to undergo a medical examination and pay four marks each for this. In this way, as it is said, suitability for work was determined. Finally the transfer began, which is claimed to have been by truck to the nearby city of Koil and thence by rail to Łódź. In fact, the people, 60 at a time on a truck, were taken out into the nearby woods at Kazimierz (Biskup), where they were killed.'"*

The alleged "agreement" of the sources, which supposedly ascertains this alleged crime of which "neither the exact date nor the instrument" is known, is actually a single source, which for the most part was concocted by Isaiah Trunk. This source is a clandestine report called "Mass

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48 Hermann Krumey, SS *Obersturmbannführer*, official at the Litzmannstadt station of the State Police.

49 That is a report quoted by I. Trunk. See below.

executions of Jews in the district of Koło" dated 25 March 1942, from which we have this passage from Trunk:[50]

> *"In October 1941 the whole Jewish population of the district of Koniń – about 3,000 people – was concentrated in Zagórów (Hinterberg). First they had to pay a 'poll tax' of 4 RM per person and undergo a medical examination – the examination included men from 14 to 60 years and women from 14 to 50 years and was apparently intended to establish suitability to work, after which the so-called 'transfer' began. The Jews were transported in trucks, 60 at a time, and each could take a package of 1 kg. The journey ended in the Kazimierz woods on the outskirts of Zagórów, where the Jews got out and were taken into the woods. From that moment all trace of them was lost, and nothing is known; neither inquiries in writing nor by messengers sent either to the Reich or to the General Government yielded any results.*
>
> *Halfway through December, a similar 'transfer' took place in the Koło district (Wartebrücken). The destination was the village of Chełmno (Kulmhof). The entire Jewish population of Koło (2,000 persons) and Dąbie upon Ner (1,000 persons) was sent there (also after payment of a tax of 4 RM and after medical examination), then in early January, in succession, the Jews of Kłodawa (January 2 and 4), of Izbica Kujawska (January 6 and 9), and of Bugaj (January 9)."*

A later report in the *Oyneg Shabbos* (clandestine archive of the Warsaw Ghetto, also known as the Ringelblum archive), clearly derived from the aforementioned source, says with regard to this (Sakowska 1993, p. 186):

> *"In the second half of November 1941, in the city and district of Koło (district of Warthbrücken), news began to spread that the entire Jewish population of these areas had been transferred to the region of Pinsk or to Eastern Galicia. The German authorities imposed a poll tax of 4 RM on the entire Jewish population, and all men aged 14 to 60 years and women up to 50 years underwent a medical examination to ascertain their suitability for work. Concerned by these facts, the Jewish community endeavored to obtain information on the matter of the transfer, but their efforts were in vain. All that can be established is the fact that, after this prelude,*

[50] Report entitled "*Masowe egzekucje Żydów w pow. kolskim*" (mass execution of the Jews of the Koło district) of 25 March 1942, in: Tyszkowa 1992a, p. 52.

> *the Jewish community of Zagórów in the Konin district was transported by truck to the Kazimierz woods, located near the city, where all trace of it was lost."*

Hence neither report claimed that the deported Jews had been killed. But the most surprising thing in this story is that the SS would have made a "selection" in reverse (men 14 to 60 years, women 14 to 50 years) in order to exterminate those able to work – after a medical examination to confirm their ability to work! Maybe the SS were afraid of killing any Jew incapable of work? – while at the same time they sent the transport of Jews unable to work to the Łódź ghetto!

Krakowski states that Jews from the district of Konin were killed in two places, the Niesłusz-Rudzica Woods and the Wygoda Woods. He then reports a long testimony given on 27 October 1945 by the Polish veterinary surgeon Mieczysław Sekiewicz on the alleged massacre in the Wygoda Woods. The Germans had allegedly prepared two pits in those woods and had forced the Jews to strip naked and get down into the larger pit, whose bottom was covered with lime (Krakowski 2007, p. 24):

> *"Then – the witness continues – a truck appeared on the side of the road which stopped on the path at the edge of the clearing. I noticed that there was something on the truck, like tubs for washing. The Germans then started up a small engine, which was clearly a pump, and connected it via a tube to one of the tubs. Two Gestapo agents held the pipes and began to sprinkle the Jews herded into the pit with a liquid. I think it was water, as it appeared to be, but I cannot be sure. During the pumping operation, they connected the tubes to each of the other tubs. People began to cook while still alive, and this was certainly due to the boiling fresh lime.* […] *This all went on for two hours."*

A truly original execution system: Death by showering with water and a disinfectant! To be sure, up to the 1940s the vast majority of the eastern European population had never seen a shower in their lives, so the witness's consternation is comprehensible. But how could the more-cosmopolitan western historians interpret this as a method of extermination?

6. The First Testimony: The "Szlamek" Report

6.1. Origins of the Report

Krakowski wrote in this connection (1983, p. 131):

> *"Only a few Jews managed to flee from the 'Arbeitskommando' (labor squad). The first was Jakov Grojanowski, who then contacted Dr. Emanuel Ringelblum in the Warsaw ghetto, who was director of the clandestine archive 'Oneg Shabbat,' and was able to deliver to him in 1942 a report written in his own hand on the Kulmhof death factory. Grojanowski died in the ghetto, but his report was found in the ruins of the ghetto among Ringelblum's documents."*

This report is a long document written in Yiddish and allegedly based on the account of a Jew from Izbica Kujawska known as "Szlamek," whose identity is uncertain.[51] Ruta Sakowska rejects the name of Yakov Grojanowski (or Jakub Grojnowski or Yakov Grojanowski) and identifies it with Szlojme Fajner, one of the three who escaped from Chełmno,[52] stating (Sakowska 1993, p. 184):

> *"In the catalog of the archive of the ghetto that was drawn up after the war on the basis of Hersz Wasser's information, his report is also registered under the name of Jakub Grojnowski, but it is unknown whether this is the real name of the author; the narrator figures in the text as 'Szlojme' ('Szlamek' is a diminutive of this name), not as Jakub."*

Krakowski writes that Jakov Grojanowski was a pseudonym and considered it likely that the person in question was Schlomo Winer, an alleged fugitive from Chełmno. However, he makes no mention of the name "Szlamek" (Krakowski 2007, pp. 61f.).

It is unclear whether the report was written by "Szlamek" personally or by Hersz Wasser, secretary of *Oyneg Shabbos*, based on the state-

[51] A German translation of the report can be found in Sakowska 1993, pp. 159-182, entitled: "[Februar] *1942, Warschau, Ghetto. Als Totengräber im Vernichtungslager. Augenzeugenbericht über die Ermordung von Juden und Zigeunern in der Gaswagenstation Chełmno am Ner vom 5. bis zum 19. Januar 1942, mitgeteilt von 'Szlamek,' der von dort fliehen konnte* [aufgezeichnet von Hersz Wasser]"; an English translation can be found in Gilbert 1985, pp. 252-279. Gilbert attributes this report to Yakov Grojanowski.

[52] The other two, who survived the war, were Abram and Michał Roj or Mordka Podchlebnik; see Subsection 7.2.3.

ments of the witness. What is certain is that Wasser later, on 25 March 1942, drew up a summary of the report "on the basis of what Szlamek said."[53]

Both reports come from the archive *Oyneg Shabbos*.

6.2. General Characteristics of Report

The witness affirms that he was arrested on 5 January 1942 and that he worked from 6 January until the day of his escape, 19 January, at Chełmno, where, as we shall see, Jews and Gypsies were allegedly murdered with "gas vehicles." The report is drawn up as a diary in which events are recorded each day with an extraordinary wealth of detail when you consider that the witness wrote down or recounted these events from memory. I summarize, as an example, the entry for 9 January. We should first note that, as soon as they arrived at Chełmno, the "diggers," including "Szlamek," had to hand over "all money and valuables" (Sakowska 1993, p. 160), and therefore watches. How could he then always be so sure about the time? I quote (*ibid.*, pp. 169-171):

> *"On Friday, 9 January, at seven o'clock in the morning we were again brought some bitter coffee.* […] *At eight o'clock the SS arrived.* […] *The courtyard was already surrounded by some 20 policemen with submachine guns.* […] *In the courtyard we saw two open trucks full of Gypsies, men, women and children with their belongings.* […] *We were in the front of the vehicle and behind were seven policemen armed with submachine guns ready to fire.* […]
> […] *another eight persons were selected* […]. *An hour later the first truck arrived with Gypsies, and forty minutes later the next one.* […] *Among them* [the 8 gravediggers] *were: Abram Zielinski from Izbica, 32 years old, Brawman from Izbica, 17 years of age, Zalman Jakubowski from Izbica, 55 years of age, and Gerszon Praszker from Izbica.* […] *Around three* [in the afternoon]*, when there was not much work* […]. *That day we had lunch at one thirty* […]. *That day eight or nine transports of Gypsies were buried. We finished work at five thirty* […]. *In the Chełmno Castle, we saw to our painful surprise a new group, possibly gravediggers: 16 men from Izbica and 16 men from Bugaj. Among the men from Izbica were: Mojsze Lepek, about*

[53] Sakowska 1992, p. 23. Polish text in Tyszkowa 1992a, pp. 52-54. German translation in Sakowska 1993, pp. 186-189.

40 years of age; Awigdor Polański, about 20 years of age; Sztajer, about 55 years of age; Król, about 45 years of age, Icchak Prajs, about 45 years of age, Jehuda Lubiński, 31 years of age, Kalman Radziejewski, 32 years of age, Menachem Arcichowski, about 40 years of age, and from Bugaj my companion and friend Izbicki, 33 years of age. Twenty old gravediggers and five new ones, 25 in all, were pushed into another cellar, a little smaller than the earlier one. We found bed linen, personal linen, shirts, jackets and basic food-stuffs (bread, sugar and lard).”

The story goes on and on like this – indeed, even more detailed – for fifteen days: a truly prodigious memory.

6.3. Structure and Function of a “Gas Van”

The witness provides this detailed description of a “gas van” (*ibid.*, pp. 162f.):

“The vehicle had a special design. It looked something like this: It was as large as a normal truck, of gray color, but at the back it was closed hermetically with two doors. Its interior was lined with sheet metal, it had no seats, on the floor was a wooden grate, like in a bathroom, and on it was a straw mat. Between the cargo box and the cab were two small windows through which, with [the help of] *electric lights, it was checked whether the victims were already dead. Under the wooden grates were two 15-cm-diameter pipes leading to the cockpit. They were connected to the openings through which the gas flowed. The gas apparatus was in the cab, in which only the driver was sitting, who was always the same, in uniform with the SS death’s head. He was maybe 40 years. There were two vehicles of this kind.*

When a truck arrived, it stopped about five meters away from the ditch. The head of the group of guards, a high-ranking SS man, was a sadist and a hard-boiled gangster. He ordered the eight men to open the doors of the vehicles. Immediately we were struck by a deep and pungent smell of gas. They had killed Gypsies from Łódź. Their belongings were still in the vehicle: harmonicas, violins, duvets, even watches and gold jewelry. After about five minutes of

waiting with open doors, the SS man shouted: 'You Jews, inside and throw out everything!'"

The witness gave further details (*ibid.*, p. 166):

"As the companions of the eight gravediggers told us, there is a special device with buttons in the driver's cab that is connected by two tubes to the interior of the cargo box. The driver (there were two for the two execution vehicles, always the same persons) pressed a button and got out of the vehicle. Then you could hear screams from the vehicle, desperate cries and banging against the outside wall. This lasted about 15 minutes; then the driver got into the cabin, where he shone an electric lamp into the interior through a glas pane in order to see whether the people were already dead, and then he approached the pit with the truck up to a distance of about five meters. After another five minutes, 'bull's pizzle' ordered four gravediggers to open the doors. A strong smell of gas came out. After waiting another five minutes, he shouted: 'You Jews, you go to put tefilin' – meaning to throw out the corpses. They lay clinging to each other in the dirt of their excrements."

And here is what happened then (*ibid.*, p. 167):

"Four gravediggers threw out the corpses, of course encouraged by beatings and screams. The corpses were thrown together in a pile; two other [prisoners] *dragged the corpses to the grave and threw them in there. Down there were two more who piled the corpses on the instructions of an SS man. When the vehicle was empty, the gravediggers started cleaning up the excrements and other dirt. The straw mat and wooden grate were taken out of the truck and* [they] *cleaned the truck with their own shirts* [sic] *before putting the grate and the mat back in place. The exterior double door was hermetically sealed with a bolt."*

How did these vehicles of death work? And did these "gas vans" operate with engine-exhaust gas? It is not known. What is certain is that the description of the witness is in stark contrast to the orthodox version on two essential points. First, according to this orthodox version, the victims were loaded into the "gas vans" at Chełmno Castle and murdered on the way to the camp, whereas the testimony reviewed here claims that the assassination was carried out directly at the camp in a hermetically closed "gas van" and even in the absence of the driver.

Second, according to the orthodox version it was necessary to connect the exhaust pipe of the engine with a special flexible pipe to the interior of the cargo box, an operation that was performed outside the vehicle. This witness, however, speaks of a "gas system" equipped with "buttons" that was "in the cab" and was linked to "two 15-cm-diameter pipes" that ran along the floor of the cargo box "under the wooden grates." In order to inject the gas into the body of the truck, all that was needed was to press a "button" of the "gas apparatus." It remains undetermined whether the engine was switched on or off and whether the killing was done by means of engine-exhaust gas or another gas. The first hypothesis of a running engine is in contradiction to the statement about the "gas apparatus," because it was not possible, simply by pressing a "button" in the cab, to tightly connect a pipe or hose to the exhaust pipe which would have connected it to the two pipes that were allegedly located in the vehicle's cargo box.

The witness further stated that the two rear doors were "hermetically" sealed and that, when the van was opened, he smelled "a strong smell of gas." Now, in the history of the "gas vans," if one thing is certain it is that the system of piping engine-exhaust gases into a hermetically sealed cargo box cannot work, because the pressure inside the sealed cargo box would either shut down the engine or burst the cargo box (see Alvarez 2011, Subsection 1.3.2.). Hence the witness could not have described a real fact.

6.4. The Color of the Corpses[54]

About the corpses the report states:

> *"What was the appearance of the corpses? They were neither burned nor black. The complexion of their faces was unchanged. Almost all the dead were lying in their excrement."* (Sakowska 1993, p. 163)
>
> *"It seemed that they were only put to sleep; their cheeks were pale, and they maintained their natural skin color."* (*ibid.*, p. 166*)*

The color of the corpse of a person dead by asphyxiation from carbon monoxide is known to be "cherry red" or "pink" (Berg 2003, p. 439, esp. note 22).

[54] For a profound treatment of this see: Mattogno/Kues/Graf 2013, pp. 945-949, 964-976.

Charles D. Provan has challenged this finding, citing some examples of medical literature which *also* mention a bluish color in cases of carbon-monoxide poisoning. Provan cites a 1970 medical source on a group of suicides by carbon-monoxide poisoning which had the following colors: 51 normal color; 7 bluish, 14 red, 5 cherry pink, 4 pale. Another group of people poisoned accidentally had the following colors: 44 normal color, 5 bluish, 3 red, 4 cherry pink, 2 pale. According to these examples the prevailing color is normal, but another medical source proffered by Provan explains (2004, pp. 160-162):

> *"At autopsy the most striking appearance of the body is the color of the skin, especially in areas of post-mortem hypostasis. The classical 'cherry-pink' color of carboxy-hemoglobin is usually evident if the saturation of the blood exceeds about 30%. Below this, familiarity and good lighting are needed and below 20%, no coloration is visible. As these low concentrations are rarely fatal, however, little is lost."*

So the color "cherry pink" usually manifests itself when the carboxy-hemoglobin level in the blood "exceeds 30%." Since the "gas vans" supposedly were instruments of murder which killed the victims in 20 minutes (Sakowska 1993, p. 166), the victims must have had a much higher percentage than 30% of carboxy-hemoglobin in their blood. According Flury and Zernik, in fact, a percentage of 40-50% produces "headache; a state of confusion; in case of stress, collapse and fainting," and a percentage of 60-70% "loss of consciousness, for prolonged exposure respiratory arrest" (Flury/Zernik 1931, p. 202; see also Berg 2005; Kues 2008).

A study on the forensic autopsy reports of 182 bodies of people who died accidentally from carbon-monoxide poisoning in Vienna between 1984 and 1994 resulted in (Risser/Bonsch/Schneider 1995, p. 596):

> *"We found a strong association between the carboxyhemoglobin level and the cherry-coloring of pink livor mortis. In 98.4% of unintentional carbon-monoxide-related deaths livor mortis were clearly cherry-pink."*

The study confirmed that

> *"fresh corpses with carboxyhemoglobin levels greater than 31% show a clear cherry-pink coloring of livor mortis."*

So the alleged victims of "gas vans" murdering with carbon monoxide should normally have a "cherry-pink" color, but, as we have seen, according to the witness, they had a "natural skin tone."

Therefore, if the witness described a reality in this case, the corpses he witnessed had not died of poisoning by exhaust gas.

6.5. The Mass Graves

The corpses of the alleged victims were buried in very peculiar mass graves which the witness describes as follows (Sakowska 1993, p. 170):

> *"We took up hoes and spades and began to work. The pit bottom was about one and a half meters wide; the hole became wider at the top, reaching a width of five meters at the surface, and it was five meters deep. The mass grave proceeded as a long line. When a tree was an obstacle, it was cut down."*

And here is how the burial of corpses took place (*ibid.*, p. 163):

> *"A layer contained 180-200 corpses. After three trucks had arrived, twenty gravediggers were employed to bury the bodies. At first they had to fill two graves each time. Then, when the number of vehicles grew to nine (nine times 60 corpses at a time) we had to fill three graves a day."*

According to the first description (entry of 9 January 1942), there was only one pit with a cross section of a regular inverted trapezoid with a lower, smaller width of 1.5 m, a height of 5 m and an upper, larger width of 5 m. The length is not given because the pit, which looked like a "long line," was extended from day to day. In the course of this work, if there was a tree on the route of the trench, it was "cut," which is not very rational, because the roots had to be uprooted (which the witness does not mention). The second description cited above (entry of 7 January) instead presupposes the presence of several graves – we must assume of the shape indicated above.

According to the witness, in these pits there was "a layer containing 180-200 corpses," and every day three pits were filled. Here the term "layer" should not be understood in the strict meaning (in which case the sentence would make no sense), as is clear from the term that appears in the English translation of the report presented by Martin Gil-

bert: "batch" (1985, p. 256). This means that each grave contained 180-200 bodies.

From the measurements given by the witness, the following data ensue:

– Assuming a packing density of eight bodies per cubic meter, a section of a mass grave is of 13.5 m^2 (assuming a depth of 4.5 m, with a layer of 0.5 m of soil on top of the corpses);
– 200 corpses occupy 25 m^3;
– so the length of a pit was a mere (25÷13.5 =) 1.85 meters!

It was therefore quite an unusual pit, both in shape and size. The testimony suggests that the pits were dug by hand by "gravediggers," because it says, "We took up hoes and spades and began to work," and suddenly afterward it talks about a pit. However, leaving aside the difficulties of digging a pit by hand in the shape mentioned above, the work would have a much more serious impediment. In fact, the witness says (January 9): "The cold reached 20 degrees [below zero]" (Sakowska 1993, p. 170) and confirmed on 13 January, "we worked until six in the afternoon in intense cold" (*ibid.*, p. 176).

The ground was therefore frozen; so how could they dig by hand three pits (or sections of pits) per day?

No less problematic is what the witness adds about the state of the corpses (*ibid.*, p. 179):

> *"On Friday* [16 January] *they began to sprinkle the graves with chloride of lime, because the rotting corpses gave off a strong smell."*

But if the temperature was 20 degrees below zero, how could the bodies decompose? Here too, then, the witness could not have been describing any reality.

In conclusion, the report "Szlamek" does not correspond to reality and is therefore totally unreliable.

Perhaps that is why Krakowski, in his 2007 book (pp. 62-64), preferred not to mention it at all, merely referring generally to its content according to the story of Yitzchak Zuckermann, a member of *Oyneg Shabbos*.

7. Postwar Witnesses

7.1. The SS

7.1.1. Walter Piller

Krakowski quotes a report written by SS *Hauptscharführer* Walter Piller (Chełmno camp Deputy Commander in 1944) "during his Russian imprisonment in May 1945" in which, in relation to the second phase of the camp, he wrote (Krakowski 1983, pp. 138f.):

> *"I think it was at the beginning or end of May when the extermination of the Jews of the Łódź ghetto began, and it lasted until mid-August 1944.* […] *According to my calculations, the number of exterminated Jews amounted to 25,000. I am unable to state the exact figure. But the number of Jews above or below this figure should be small. To arrive at this figure, I use the following calculation: Each transport of Jews from the Łódź ghetto contained 700 people (some were fewer, even 300). But I want to take 700 as a base. Each week three transports arrived, making 2,100 people a week. The Kommando worked continuously month by month as follows: two weeks in May, in June and July continuously, therefore eight weeks, and in August another two weeks. This results in a total in 12 weeks of* [12 × 2100 =] *25,200 Jews. In mid-August the ongoing transport of Jews was stopped completely."*

However, as Adalbert Rückerl writes, the first Jewish transport supposedly sent from the Łódź ghetto to Chełmno left on 23 June 1944 (Rückerl 1979, p. 284), not in mid-May. The deportations stopped "in July 1944" (*ibid.*, p. 283), more precisely on 14 July (*ibid.*, p. 293), not in mid-August.

On the other hand, as discussed in Chapter 13, the Bonn Jury Court (erroneously) recognized only 10 transports for 1944 instead of 36, which means that there is not even a vague indication in favor of Piller's allegations; moreover, these 10 transports left one per day for 10 consecutive days, but Piller said that three transports came to Chełmno each week. His testimony is therefore absolutely unreliable.

7.1.2. Bruno Israel

Bruno Israel, as I mentioned earlier, was assigned to the Chełmno police in July/August 1944. On 29 and 30 October 1945 he was interrogated as a defendant by Judge Bednarz, who published the interrogation (Bednarz 1946a, pp. 67-74). Krakowski writes in this regard (1983, p. 177):

> *"Israel was interrogated and sentenced already in October 1945 by Judge Bednarz, but he was released already a short while afterwards."*

Israel stated that during his stay at the camp two transports arrived from Łódź of 700-800 Jews each. The victims came from Koło to Chełmno in a train of 15-17 train cars, two of which were loaded with luggage. This luggage was transferred by truck to the camp into a large shed where they were sorted. The Jews were transported to the camp in three covered trucks, each carrying 40-50 people. Each vehicle made two, three or maybe four trips per day, and in some cases only half of the transport was killed on that same day and the other half the next day. The killing activities began at 7 a.m. and stopped at 4 p.m. The Jews transported to Chełmno undressed in a shack which bore the inscription *Durchgangslager* (transit camp), men and women separately. Then they climbed into a "*Spezialwagen*." They were told that they had to take a bath, and soap was also given to them. How the SS could have hoped that the victims would confuse the back of a truck with a shower system remains a mystery. Then the doors were closed (*ibid.*, pp. 70f.):

> *"Before starting the engine, the exhaust pipe was secured to the pipe that went to the engine* [sic]. *I noticed that the exhaust pipe went through the floor to the center of the vehicle, so that, after the engine started, the exhaust gases went inside the vehicle poisoning those present."*

Here we have instead the description of Walter Piller (Krakowski 1983, p. 141):

> *"During the trip the driver Laabs opened a valve through which streamed the gas that killed the occupants in 2-3 minutes."*

Therefore, for Bruno Israel the gas was injected before the departure of the vehicle using two tubes; according to W. Piller, on the other hand, the gassing was carried out while the vehicle was moving by activating a "valve," which brings us back to the fanciful claims of "Szlamek."

But back to Israel's story. According to this, after a few minutes the "special vehicle" moved off in the direction of the furnaces. On arriving in front of them, it stopped, the doors were opened, and the corpses were thrown into the furnaces. The bodies burned "quickly" (*szybko*), which is nonsense (see Section 9.2.).

About the crematoria, Bruno Israel declared (Bednarz 1946a, p. 71):

> *"The shorter tracks formed the grid, but the longer ones were used to mask the crematoria* [making them invisible] *to aviators."*

But he added (*ibid.*, p. 73):

> *"Rags, paper and photographs were burned in a pit dug at the end of the park. They were burning day and night."*

This pit was clearly visible from an aircraft, but why then were the furnaces camouflaged?

Bruno Israel furthermore stated (*ibid.*, p. 72):

> *"In December 1944, the liquidation of the camp began. The crematoria were demolished. The bricks were taken away. I do not know exactly where. A special commission arrived that monitored whether the works were carried out accurately. It was noted that the reinforced concrete of one of the furnaces had remained in the pit; it was ordered to be brought away. Currently there is no trace of the furnaces."*

But the book itself which contains Bruno Israel's deposition has two photographs of the alleged ruins of a crematorium that belie this assertion (*ibid.*, pp. 8f.; see Documents 7 & 8).

Two other testimonies of former SS men will be discussed in Section 9.3.

7.2. The Inmates

The only self-styled survivors of Chełmno who have testified regarding its alleged exterminating activities in 1944 are Mordechai or Mordka or Mieczysław Żurawski, Shimon Srebrnik and Michał or Mordka Podchlebnik. At the 65th hearing of the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem, which was held 5 June 1961, the prosecutor, referring to these three people, said (State of Israel 1993, p. 1194):

> *"There are no other survivors of the extermination camp at Chełmno."*

This is also confirmed by Krakowski, who writes (1983, p. 145):

> *"Mordechai Żurawski, along with Michel Podchlebnik and Shimon Srebrnik, was one of three survivors of Kulmhof."*

7.2.1. Mordechai or Mordka or Mieczysław Żurawski

Żurawski was questioned by Judge Bednarz on 31 July 1945. In addition, on 5 June 1961 he was also heard as a witness for the prosecution at the 65th hearing of the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem.

Before Judge Bednarz he testified that in 1944 he was in the Łódź ghetto and worked at Radogoszcz Station, from where Jewish transports of 700-1,000 persons left for an unknown destination. In one of these transports he himself was deported (Bednarz 1946a, p. 61):

> *"On 10 May 1944 I went with the seventh transport"*

During the Eichmann trial the witness said instead (State…, p. 1194):

> *"Judge Halevi: You arrived at Chełmno in 1944?*
> *Witness Zurawski: In 1944, approximately in July."*

From the Łódź ghetto the transport was sent by rail to Koło and from there by a narrow-gauge railway to Chełmno. Upon arrival, six men were selected, including the witness, who was sent to the "*Waldkommando*" (forest team) to collect wood from another forest for the "cremation furnaces." Then he was assigned to a crematorium and was allegedly able to observe from a distance of 200 meters how the extermination of the Jews took place.

With regard to the transports, Żurawski said (Bednarz 1946a, p. 63):

> *"10 transports came to Chełmno in 1944. These transports contained from 700 to 1,000 persons. When a transport arrived with 700 people, it was completed using small transports by truck, so that a total of 10,000 people were killed at Chełmno. Heffele* [Häfele] *spoke of this."*

At the Eichmann trial the witness stated as follows (State…, p. 1193):

> *"While I was there, three transports of one thousand persons each came. Before that, some seven thousand persons had arrived. I heard this from the people who were there before me. All these persons were burned."*

The name *Zorawski Mordka* indeed appears in the seventh evacuation listing for the Łódź ghetto, which is dated 7 July 1944.[55] But that does not necessarily mean that the transport in question was actually sent to Chełmno, much less that the deportees were exterminated there. Indeed, as we shall see in Chapter 13, the story of the 10 aforementioned transports being sent to and exterminated at Chełmno is not only unsupported by documentary evidence, but it is unreasonable and contrary to the National Socialist policy of conserving Jewish labor.

Żurawski also provides a detailed description of the crematoria, which was then taken up by the Judge Bednarz (see Section 9.1.). In that regard, the witness pointed out (Bednarz 1946a, p. 63):

> *"In one layer (the lowest) you have 12 people. On the corpses were placed more pieces of firewood and then a*[nother] *layer of corpses. In this way, the pyre could hold 100 corpses at a time. As the bodies burned, space was created at the top that was filled with successive layers of wood and corpses. The corpses burned quickly. After about 15 minutes they were already burned."*

In Section 9.2. I will show that these claims are unsustainable. I will return to this witness in Subsection 7.2.4. in order to complete the picture of Żurawski's reliability.

7.2.2. Shimon Srebrnik

Srebrnik was interrogated by Judge Bednarz on 29 June 1945 at Koło. He stated that he had been arrested and sent to Chełmno in March 1944 (Srebrnik 1945):

> *"Up to March 1944 I had been in the Łódź ghetto, from where I was then driven off to Chełmno. In Łódź I worked in the ghetto in the so-called metal department. In March 1944, the Germans organized a round-up. They caught me while I was on a streetcar and led me to Balucki Square where there were some cars from Chełmno."*

But during the 66th day of the Eichmann trial (6 June 1961) he claimed to have been captured in the summer of 1943 in the Łódź ghetto and that he was brought to Chełmno, at the age of thirteen years (State…, pp. 1197f.):

> *"Q. In the summer of 1943, you were in the Łódź Ghetto?*
> *A. Yes.* […]

[55] "*Zur Arbeit aus Litzmannstadt-Getto am 7.7.1944 ausgereist*." APL, PSZ, 1309, p. 80.

Presiding Judge: How old were you at the time?
Witness Srebrnik: Thirteen. […]
Judge Halevi: On what date did you reach Chełmno?
Witness Srebrnik: In 1943, close to the year 1944."

It is unclear why the attorney general asked the witness the specific question about the summer of 1943, if this was not the date of his deportation; if it was only the date of his capture, it is not clear where the witness was from the summer of 1943 to the end of that year. What is certain is that there was at that time no one in Chełmno, as the camp was not in operation during that time. Indeed, Rückerl writes about this (1979, p. 283):

"In April 1944 Bothmann, with some ex-members of his Sonderkommando, left the SS 'Prince Eugene' division and returned to Chełmno."

Hans Bothmann, SS *Hauptsturmführer* and *Kriminalkommissar* (police detective), was commander of the Chełmno camp starting in March 1942 as Herbert Lange's successor.

The witness claimed instead that the first Jewish transport had come to Chełmno two or three months after his arrival, namely in February-March 1944 (State…, p. 1198):

"Attorney General: When did transports of Jews reach Chełmno, after your arrival?
Witness Srebrnik: About three months after my arrival. Perhaps it was two months after, I don't remember exactly.
Q. What did you do during those two or three months?
A. We put up huts, we put up tents, there was work in the Waldkommando and in preparing the crematorium."

He pointed out that these first transports came "from Łódź"! So the witness's story is entirely invented. On the other hand, how can you seriously believe that a child of thirteen years was first assigned to the *Waldkommando*, then the *Hauskommando* (internal team) and survived for at least 13 months in the "death camp"? Judge Raveh also had some doubts, since he asked the witness (*ibid.*, p. 1201):

"Judge Raveh: You said you were thirteen years of age. When were you thirteen? When you came to Chełmno?
Witness Srebrnik: When I came to Chełmno."

The presiding judge of the court also expressed some doubt, primarily about Bothmann's rank (*ibid.*, p. 1199):

"[Witness Srebrnik:] *Obersturmbannfuehrer Hans Bothmann, he did it on the Sabbath...*
Presiding Judge: Obersturmbannfuehrer [Lieutenant Colonel] *or Obersturmführer* [First Lieutenant]*?*
Witness Srebrnik: Obersturmbannfuehrer.
Presiding Judge: That is a very high rank.
Attorney General: Are you sure of his rank?
Witness Srebrnik: I once heard him speaking on the telephone, and he answered 'Obersturmbannfuehrer.'
Q. Is that how you know?
A. Yes.
Q. Actually, he was of a much lower rank, as far as is known to us. Please continue."

Bothmann was in fact an SS *Hauptsturmführer* (Captain). But another more-important point of this silly lie puzzled the presiding judge: the number of victims. The public prosecutor asked the witness how many people were taken to Chełmno for extermination from the start of the transports, and he replied (*ibid.*):

"About 1,000-1,200.
Q. Every day?
A. Yes."

Judge Raveh then asked the witness (*ibid.*, p. 1201):

"I understood that there were exterminations for about nine months while you were there?
A. Yes, but I don't remember exactly.
Q. You said that you arrived there at the beginning of 1944, and that you left at the beginning of 1945, and that they had ceased the extermination three months before that. According to this, I make it nine months. Is my calculation correct?
A. Correct."

Accepting the correctness of this calculation, the witness denied he had said shortly before that the gassing had begun two or three months after his arrival in Chełmno, that is, as we have already seen, in February-March 1944, so that the total would be reduced to six or seven months.

Subsequently, the presiding judge returned to the question (*ibid.*):

"Did they put 1,200 people to death every single day?
Witness Srebrnik: That was more or less every day. Sometimes they would have a break of one day, in order to grind the bones.

Q. From this it follows that they exterminated many tens of thousands there?
A. Yes, they exterminated many.
Q. One of the witnesses who preceded you gave much lower figures. Are you sure of your facts?
A. Yes.
Presiding Judge: Thank you, Mr. Srebrnik, you have concluded your testimony."

The reference was to the witness Żurawski, who had spoken of 10,000 victims in total. Instead, according to the statements of Srebrnik, in the alleged nine months' activities of the camp the number of victims would have been (9×30×1200=) 324,000!

Obviously, the presiding judge dropped any further inquiries; otherwise he would have had to accept the inevitable conclusion that the witness was a base impostor.

In contradiction to the above exorbitant death toll, however, Srebrnik had stated in 1945 (Srebrnik 1945):

"Transports arrived in Chełmno every second day. Each transport carried from 700 to 1,000 people. I estimate that in 1944 alone 15,000 Jews were brought to Chełmno. However, I did not count them – my assumption is based on what the policemen had said before the transports arrived. That is why I claimed that in 1944 15,000 Jews were killed in Chełmno."

The difference between 324,000 and 15,000 is not irrelevant.

In an undated Deposition No. 102 made immediately after the war before the Central Commission for Jewish History the witness, who then called himself Szymon Srebrny, claimed (Blumental 1946, p. 244):

"The whole time of my stay in the 'death factory' I worked cutting trees, with my legs shackled with chains to the belt so that I could not escape. I [also] *had to extract gold teeth or crowns from the jaws of the murdered people with pliers; I had to remove rings from their hands; I arranged the piles of logs and corpses; I was present at the burning of the bodies; and I broke up the human bones with a hatchet."*

It is very unlikely that the SS entrusted to a thirteen-year-old tasks such as extraction of gold teeth, the arrangement of bodies in the pyres and crushing bone residue, and in fact at the Eichmann trial the witness did not dare to repeat such statements. In fact, already during his deposition in front of Judge Bednarz of June 1945 Srebrnik did not claim that he

had been assigned to the *Waldkommando*, but to the *Hauskommando* (Srebrnik 1945).

At the end of this interrogation Srebrnik demonstrated that he is a false witness. In fact, he "recognized" the vehicle parked on the grounds of the Ostrowski Company as the "gas van" he claims to have seen. (*ibid.*):

> *"The Jews' clothes were stored in the other barracks in the woods. They had to be carried to the barracks rapidly before another truck arrived. (Here, the witness was shown a photo of a van found in the Ostrowski factory in Koło). This is the van used in Chełmno for gassing. This is the vehicle I mentioned in my testimony with the word 'Otto' on its door."*

But as we have seen earlier, the Central Commission of Inquiry into German Crimes in Poland, which had inspected this vehicle, had established that this was *not* a "gas van."

The witness lies also regarding the cremation facilities (see Chapter 9).

7.2.3. Michał or Mordka Podchlebnik

This witness appeared at the 65th day of the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem on 5 June 1961 under the name Michael Podchlewnik. He claimed he was arrested by German police and taken along with thirty people to Chełmno in 1941 (State… 1993, p. 1189). After a couple of days he was sent to work in the woods (*ibid.*, p. 1191):

> *"In the forest, the pits were being dug. There were twenty-five men, and all were digging pits. We went out at half past six in the morning in winter; this was two days before the New Year, at the end of 1941."*

The witness is said to have arrived in Chełmno on 27 December 1941. He told the film director Claude Lanzmann that he was captured "at the end of 1941, two days before New Year," that is 29 December, and the next morning, 30 December, was brought to Chełmno (Lanzmann 1985, p. 93). In a statement immediately after the war to a commission of the Jewish Historical Institute he claimed instead that he was taken to Chełmno on 3 January 1942 along with 40 people (Blumental 1946, pp. 239f.). Then he was sent to work in the woods, where he was used for the excavation of mass graves measuring 6 m × 8 m. While he was at work, he saw the trucks ("gas vans") which brought about 80 corpses, which were buried in mass graves (*ibid.*, p. 240).

During his interrogation by Judge Bednarz on 9 June 1945, Podchlebnik confirmed having arrived at Chełmno "in early January of 1942" and to have witnessed the unloading of various trucks. Here's how he described the corpses (Bednarz 1946a, pp. 42f.):

> *"The external appearance of the corpses was normal. I did not notice that the corpses had their tongues out; rather their teeth were gritted in an unnatural way. The bodies were still warm. I did not notice any characteristic smell of gas."*

As we have seen above, "Szlamek's" report also said that the color of the corpses was normal, which is impossible for a carbon-monoxide poisoning carried out under the conditions claimed. The absence of any smell is rather contrary to that report, in which we read (see Section 6.3.):

> *"Immediately we were struck by a deep and pungent smell of gas.* […] *A strong smell of gas came out."*

The witness also provided a detailed description of the mass graves and of the way the corpses were buried (*ibid.*, p. 43):

> *"The corpses were placed in such a way that they lay alternately with the head next to the legs of the next corpse. The corpses were bunched tightly face down. The bodies had not been stripped of their clothes. Each grave was six meters deep and about 6-7 meters wide (above). In the lowest layer the bodies of four or five people were laid, in the final top layer were placed up to 30 bodies. The corpses were covered with a layer of sand about a meter thick. I saw several times that at night, the sand was displaced and that, here and there, bodies surfaced which had been buried the day before. Apparently then, the site was not guarded at night. When we worked, the length of the excavation could have been fifteen meters. In the course of a day some 1,000 people were buried. This quantity of corpses occupied 4-5 meters of excavation."*

As in "Szlamek's" report, Podchlebnik also speaks of a grave with the regular section of an inverted trapezoid, but with different dimensions: height 6 meters (instead of 5), the longer leg 6-7 meters (instead of 5) and smaller leg about 1.20 meters.[56] In his statement to the Jewish Historical Institute he mentioned instead a depth of 8 meters and a width of 6 meters.

[56] This measure is derived as follows: 30 corpses are claimed for the larger base of up to 7 m, which equals 1.20 m for the five corpses claimed for the smaller base.

In practice, the pit(s) would have had the cross section of a large funnel, with steeply sloping walls, and it would have been very difficult to dig them manually, especially in winter with the ground frozen: Five meters in length of such a trench would have corresponded to 120 cubic meters of soil. But above all, it would have had no advantage over a normal rectangular pit, which would have been even easier to dig and would have held more.

At the Eichmann trial, the witness expounded in the following way the extraordinary story of his escape (State… 1993, p. 1191):

> *"Then there was New Year, and we did not work on those days. We started to think, some of my companions and I, how to get away from there. Anyhow, we could not stand it any longer. We thought we must try – either we would succeed in escaping or not. On the first day after the holiday, we went to work, after New Year."*

That was precisely the day of the escape, 2 January 1942. The witness stated that he stayed at Chełmno for 10 days (*ibid.*, p. 44: "I have worked at Chełmno for ten days"), but this cannot be reconciled with the dating of his arrival at the camp which he gave at the Eichmann trial: 27 December 1941. In this case his stay at Chełmno would have been a mere six days. Not to mention that in his statement to the Jewish Historical Institute Podchlebnik said he had arrived at the camp only on 3 January 1942, so he would have arrived at Chełmno on the day after his escape!

And after his escape, instead of alerting the local Jewish community and preparing a report on the alleged extermination camp, Podchlebnik remained totally silent for more than three years and spoke out only in June 1945. Yet his testimony does nothing but to repeat propaganda themes which were essentially taken from "Szlamek's" report, and hence it is equally implausible.

7.2.4. How Many and What Kind(s) of "Gas Vans" Operated in 1944?

Regarding the basic question of the number and type(s) of "special vehicles" allegedly used in 1944, the essential evidence is contradictory. Witness Podchlebnik said (Bednarz 1946a, p. 43):

> *"The truck in which the people were poisoned by gas held 80-90 people at a time. During my stay in Chełmno two trucks were used*

simultaneously. There was also a third larger truck, which was defunct and was at Chełmno in the yard (I saw a wheel removed).”

Witness Żurawski stated the following (*ibid.*, p. 62):

“They were operating two trucks: a larger one, which could hold about 130 people, and another smaller one, which could hold 80-90.”

The defendant Bruno Israel finally said (*ibid.*, p. 72):

“There were two death trucks at Chełmno. During the time I was at Chełmno essentially [*zasadniczo*] *a single truck was used. The second, smaller one with a capacity of 80 people was a spare vehicle at Chełmno. These two trucks were sent to Berlin.”*

According to the defendant, a third disinfestation truck existed besides these two, which “had the wheels removed” (*ibid.*).

It is important to note that these three people were in Chełmno during the same period.

According to Podchlebnik, two small “special vehicles” were operating, while a third, larger one, was inoperable. Żurawski said two trucks were in operation, a large and a small one. Finally, according to B. Israel, a single small truck was in operation, while another large truck was inoperable, whereas the third truck was a disinfestation vehicle. It is interesting to note that according to Podchlebnik the third “special vehicle” was missing a wheel and that according to B. Israel the third vehicle, which was used for disinfestation, had all wheels missing. Now, in the first photograph of the vehicle that was in the courtyard of the former Ostrowski Company, the left front wheel is seen to be missing indeed, while in the second picture it can be discerned that all four wheels are missing (which were removed by the Poles). It is therefore clear that Podchlebnik and B. Israel, to whom these photographs were shown during Judge Bednarz’s investigation, identified the Ostrowski vehicle with the third “special vehicle,” the other with a disinfestation vehicle.

7.2.5. The “Testament” of the Last Prisoners of Chełmno

This title is given a 17-page booklet originally written in Polish and translated into Russian by a certain Soviet individual named Eiseman, an interpreter of the 7th Section of the Central Political Bureau of the 1st Byelorussian Front. Apparently the original is missing. The Polish text by Krakowski (Krakowski 1996, pp. 45-57) is a retranslation from

Russian. Together with Ilya Altman, Krakowski has also edited an English translation. The booklet is a collection of writings by some of the last 47 prisoners at Chełmno, including Żurawski and Srebrnik, who have both authored short notes. In the introduction to the publication mentioned above, Krakowski and Altman provide valuable material for judging the value of this journal. With reference to these two witnesses they write (Krakowski/Altman 1991, pp. 107f.):

> *"In July 1945 both testified before the Commission chaired by the Polish Judge Władysław Bednarz, who was investigating German crimes at Chełmno. Subsequently they testified at the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem. For some reason they do not mention the document written shortly before the killing of Chełmno's last forced laborers."*

The final date of the diary is in fact 9 January 1945! This is just the first puzzle. Krakowski and Altman list others (*ibid.*, p. 108):

> *"The circumstances surrounding the composition of this document under the harsh regime of the camp remain a mystery. It is impossible to explain how its authors had found pieces of paper, a pencil and a place and time to quickly write their messages. We do not even know the identity of the persons who found the document and handed it over to a Soviet soldier who later passed it on to the headquarters of the First Belarusian Front. There it was translated into Russian with a preface of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Moscow."*

Logically, the people who must have delivered the booklet to the Russian soldier can only have been the allegedly only two survivors of that group of 47 prisoners, that is Żurawski and Srebrnik. But if that is so, why then did they not mention it during their interrogation by Judge Bednarz?

Apart from a list of garbled names of SS men allegedly present at Chełmno,[57] the booklet superficially deals with the ostensible extermination, digressing largely into personal matters. The first item recorded refers to a group of Jews from Łódź being sent to Chełmno on 15 September 1944. Next follows a description of the alleged extermination process (Krakowski/Altman 1991, pp. 110f.). But according to orthodox Holocaust historiography, the last convoy of Jews gassed at the camp allegedly arrived there on 14 July.

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[57] Out of 28 names listed, 22 are garbled; see Krakowski 1996, pp. 55-57.

Then the book speaks of prisoners "belonging to the so-called '*Waldkommando*'" who "went into the forest to gather firewood for the furnaces where people were burned" (*ibid.*, p. 112). But who could be cremated after 15 September 1944?

Another gassing is said to have occurred on 31 August (*ibid.*, p. 113), and yet another "in August 1944" (*ibid.*, p. 120). From the few lines written by "Sewek Srebnik," but signed by "Srebnik Shmuel, Srebnik Sewek," presumably Shimon Srebrnik, we gather only that the author worked at Chełmno "as a shoemaker" (*ibid.*, p. 117). The record made by "Żurawski Mordke," that is Mordka Żurawski, says among other things (*ibid.*, p. 119):

> *"In July 1944 I was sent to 'Leipzig and Munich,' along with 7,000 people. I was picked out by the camp commander, and that day I worked there. All the* [other] *people of this transport who had left with me were wiped out."*

The dispatch of transports to "Leipzig and Munich" (allegedly a "camouflage" for Chełmno)[58] was never mentioned by the witness in his statements afterward, and this also applies to the "testament." On the other hand, of the 65,000 Jews who were in the Łódź ghetto in early August 1944, some 22,500 were deported to Auschwitz and the remaining 42,500 to labor camps in Germany (see Chapter 10). Hence the destination "Leipzig and Munich" is perfectly consistent for one or more of the 10 transports "for labor" (*zur Arbeit*), with which the about 7,000 Jews mentioned above were deported from the ghetto.

Krakowski and Altman say (*ibid.*, p. 107) that many of the 47 final prisoners at Chełmno

> *"were transferred from the Łódź ghetto during the months of May-June 1944. Consequently, they witnessed the entire process of mass murder of the Jews from the Łódź ghetto in gas vans during the period between 23 June and 14 July,"*

that is, the Jews of the 10 transports mentioned above. Apparently the "Testament" was written just to give credibility to this story. If the 10 transports had gone to labor camps in Germany, how could they hope to make the world believe in the almost total extermination at Auschwitz of the Jews from the ghetto of Łódź? Given this, the surprising fact is readily understandable that none of the notes, allegedly written by at least 12 different Jews, had been written in Yiddish.

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[58] About the destination of Munich see Chapter 13.

8. The Cremation of the Bodies of the Alleged Victims

8.1. The Purpose of Cremation

As to the timing of the first cremation activity at Chełmno, orthodox Holocaust historiography presents two opposing and irreconcilable scenarios. One is essentially linked to the so-called "*Aktion* 1005," allegedly carried out by SS *Standartenführer* Paul Blobel on the orders of Gestapo chief Heinrich Müller. Concerning this Hilberg writes (1995, p. 392):

> *"In June 1942* [Himmler] *gave the order to SS Standartenführer Paul Blobel, head of Sonderkommando 4a, to 'destroy the traces of the Einsatzgruppen's executions in the east.' In this regard Blobel formed a special task force with the code name '1005,' which had the task to excavate the graves and burn the corpses."*

The link with Chełmno would consist in the following fact (*ibid.*, p. 1039; see next chapter):

> *"Hence Blobel and his 'Kommando 1005' went to Kulmhof in order to see there what could be done with the graves located there. He built numerous pyres and primitive furnaces and even used explosives."*

According to this interpretation, the first cremation at Chełmno resulted from the desire of the SS to remove the traces of their crime. Krakowski presents it as follows (2007, p. 119):

> *"Meanwhile the Germans in the camp focused primarily on the destruction of the traces of their murders, cremated the bodies and scattered the ashes of the murdered. These activities were directed by Paul Blobel, the commander of 'Aktion 1005,' who had specialized in eliminating the traces at massacre sites. Blobel chose Łódź as the seat of his office so that it would be as close as possible to the operations center, the Chełmno camp."*

Judge Bednarz knew nothing of all this. In his investigation, he simply established that the two crematoria were constructed in the spring of 1942. He explained in 1946 that the cremation of corpses began in the

summer of 1942 as a result of an outbreak of typhus caused by the fumes of the corpses (see Section 9.1.).

In this regard the verdict of the Bonn Jury Court pointed out (Rüter *et al.* 1979, p. 279f.):

> *"In summer 1942 a strong smell of decomposition became noticeable coming from the mass graves in the forest. It grew increasingly strong and covered the entire area. The corpse gases penetrated the covering soil, which was merely half a meter thick and planted with broom for camouflage reasons. Thereupon an incineration furnace was erected which consisted of a pit of a circumference of 4 × 4 m and a depth of 2 m, several iron railway tracks as a grate and an air duct cut horizontally into the soil."*

This interpretation attributes the beginning of cremation at Chełmno to sanitary needs, so that there is no place in this version for Blobel and his *Aktion* 1005. Indeed, in this perspective, Blobel's mission at Chełmno becomes pointless.

Jens Hoffmann tries to reconcile the two contradictory arguments by writing (2008, p. 11; also p. 81):

> *"During the summer of 1942 Blobel was frequently busy in the Chełmno 'Waldlager' in order to test procedures for the cremation of corpses. Even the local camp staff was interested in Blobel's experiments, who had learned something about flamethrowers and incendiary bombs already in World War I as an army engineer.*[59] *Due to the summer heat, the bodies of victims buried in mass graves had become a hygiene problem. The murderers were concerned about the quality of groundwater, some of them considered aesthetically unacceptable odors and liquids that escaped from the graves."*

8.2. The Alleged Mission of Blobel at Chełmno[60]

Hilberg writes (1995, pp. 1039f.):

> *"In 1942 the corpses were buried in mass graves at Kulmhof, in the camps of the General Government and in Birkenau.* [...] *Considerations of the same kind led the head of the Gestapo, Müller, to instruct Standartenführer Blobel, commander of Einsatzkommando 4a,*

[59] But that training did not turn Blobel into an expert on corpse cremation.

[60] This chapter briefly summarizes what I have documented elsewhere (Mattogno 2008).

to destroy the graves in the occupied territories in the east. Hence Blobel and his 'Kommando 1005' went to Kulmhof in order to see what could be done with the graves located there. He built numerous pyres and primitive furnaces and even used explosives. In addition to these techniques, Kulmhof had a special device – a bone mill (Knochenmühle). On 16 July 1942 the deputy chief of Gettoverwaltung [administration of the ghetto]*, Ribbe, sent a letter to the 'Jewish elder' Rumkowski asking him to look for a mill in the Łódź ghetto, 'hand-cranked or electric.' He added in no uncertain terms: 'The Sonderkommando of Kulmhof is interested in this machine.' The ghetto evidently did not have such a mill, since a few months later Biebow sent a requisition to the Gestapo in Łódź regarding the purchase of a bone crusher from the Company Schriever & Co. in Hamburg. Biebow asked the Gestapo to keep the purchase documents. 'For some reason' he did not want to keep them. When Höss, the commandant of Auschwitz, visited Kulmhof, Blobel promised that he would send a mill 'for substances.' But Höss preferred that the remains of the bones be destroyed with hammers."*

But if two properly operating crematoria had already been built at Chełmno for sanitary reasons (see Section 9.1.), what would have been the point of Blobel's experimental cremations? And what sense was there in assigning them specifically to him?

The problem of mass cremation for sanitary reasons due to epidemics or battles had been discussed by German specialists since 1875, when Friedrich Küchenmeister wrote about a project by Friedrich Siemens (the creator of the first hot-air crematorium) conducted at his specific request regarding a mass cremation installation for the corpses of soldiers fallen on the battlefield. The project was called "*Feldofen Leichenverbrennung System für Friedrich Siemens*" (Field incinerator for Cremation of Corpses, Friedrich Siemens System; Küchenmeister 1875, pp. 82f.).

By the end of the nineteenth century several scientific works on cremation contained discussions on mass-cremation furnaces for corpses from contagious diseases and casualties of war.[61] In November 1901, during a convention of the Chamber of Physicians for the Prussian province of Brandenburg, Dr. Weyl proposed cremating the victims of a typhus epidemic that was raging in the region. He turned to engineer Hans Kori (a future competitor of the Topf company for the supply of

[61] One of the first was Pini 1885, pp. 151-157.

crematoria to concentration camps), who, on 10 February 1902, proposed "the construction of temporary or portable furnaces" which could be assembled in 36 hours.[62]

The First World War rekindled the interest of German specialists to the extent that an apparatus for mass cremation was even patented.[63] The oft-cited patent application for a "continuously operating cremation furnace for mass use" (*Kontinuierlich arbeitender Leichen-Verbrennungsofen für Massenbetrieb*) which Topf chief engineer Fritz Sander filed on 26 October 1942 and then revised on 4 November 1942 arose from that tradition of research into mass cremations.

The engineer Kurt Prüfer, of the Topf & Sons Company of Erfurt, at that time supervisor of the construction of the crematoria at Auschwitz-Birkenau, was one of Germany's leading experts on cremation. So why then would Gestapo Chief Müller have assigned a layman like Blobel to carry out experiments in the field of cremation without even consulting a specialist like Prüfer or Sander?

The only certain fact is that the alleged activity of Blobel at Chełmno is not confirmed by any document, but only by a single testimony, that of Rudolf Höss, the commandant of Auschwitz, which was then "confirmed," long after the fact, by one of the architects of the Auschwitz crematoria, Walter Dejaco.

8.3. Höss's Visit to the *Aktion* Reinhardt Field incinerators

On 17 September 1942 SS *Untersturmführer* Walter Dejaco wrote the following "Report on the Mission to Łódź" (*Reisebericht über die Dienstfahrt nach Litzmannstadt*):[64]

> *"Purpose of Journey: Inspection of a special installation*
> *Departure from Auschwitz was on 16 Sept. 1942 at 5 a.m. by car of the headquarters of Auschwitz concentration camp.*

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62 *An den Deutschen Reichstag. Eingabe vom 20.Februar 1902 wegen Verbrennung von Pestleichen*, Attachment II.

63 Deutsches Reich. Reichspatentamt. Patent no. 331628; class 24d. Issued on 11 January 1921. Adolf Marsch in Gera, Reuss. "*Schachtofen zur gleichzeitigen Einäscherung einer grösseren Anzahl von Menschenleichen oder Tierkadavern*." German patent valid as of 30 September 1915.

64 RGVA, 502-1-336, p. 69; see Document 9.

Participants: SS Obersturmbannführer Höss, SS Untersturmführer Hössler and SS Untersturmführer Dejaco.
Arrival at Łódź at 9 am. A visit to the ghetto took place, followed by a trip to the special installation. Inspection of the special installation and discussion with SS Standartenführer Blobel about the design of such an installation. The construction material ordered by special directive Staf. Blobel from the company Ostdeutsche Baustoffwerke, Posen [Poznan]*, Wilhelm Gustloffstr., are to be delivered immediately to Auschwitz concentration camp. The order results from the attached letter of the W.V.H.,*[65] *and the request and allocation of the ordered materials is to be effected immediately by the local Central Construction Office in agreement with Ostuf. Weber of Office C V/3. The required number of waybills is to be sent to the above company.*
With reference to the discussion of SS Staf. Blobel with the company Schriever & Co., Hannover, Bürgermeister Finkstr., the reserved ball mill for substances which has already been reserved is to be delivered to the Auschwitz concentration camp.
Return on 17 Sept. [19]*42, arrival at Auschwitz at 12 o'clock.*
Dejaco
SS Ustuf. (F)
Attachments:
1 carbon copy
1 sketch."

The two enclosures are missing, and we know nothing of such a "special installation" at Auschwitz.

And here is the text of the relevant *Fahrgenehmigung* (travel permit) of the vehicle for the trip to Łódź:[66]

"Copy.
Radio message no. 52
Arrived: 15 Sept. [19]*42 1744*
Sender: To
W.V.H.A Auschwitz concentration camp
Re.: travel permit
Reference: Local application of 14 Sept. [19]*42*

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65 *WVHA*, *Wirtschafts-Verwaltungs-Hauptamt*, the economic and administrative main department of the SS.

66 AGK, NTN, 94, p. 170; see Document 10.

Travel permit for passenger car from Au. to Litzmannstadt [Łódź] *and back for inspecting the experimental station for field incinerators Aktion Reinhardt is granted herewith for 16 Sept.* [19]*42.*
The travel permit is to be given to the driver.
The Head of Office Group D
sgnd. Glücks SS Brigadef. & Major General of the Waffen SS, Head of the Office in the rank of a Lieutenant General of the Waffen SS.
Certified correct
sgnd. Selle
Radio station supervisor
Certified true copy
Mulka
SS Hauptsturmführer and Adjutant"

8.4. Did Höss Visit the Chełmno Camp?

No document exists certifying that the "special installation" was in Chełmno; this is based only on Höss's notes (Broszat 1981, pp. 161f.):

"I drove with Hössler to Culmhof for an inspection. Blobel had ordered several improvised furnaces to be built, and he incinerated with wood and petroleum refinery byproducts.[67] *He also tried to destroy the corpses with explosives, but this succeeded only very incompletely. After having been pulverized in a bone mill* [Knochenmühle]*, the ashes were scattered in the expansive forest area."*

As I have noted elsewhere (Mattogno 2004c, pp. 17-25), the general context in which the Auschwitz commandant makes this claim is demonstrably false. This also applies to the specific point at issue, about which Höss made contradictory statements. He said in fact (Broszat 1981, p. 162):

"During the visit at Kulmhof I also saw the extermination installations with the trucks, which were adapted for killing with engine-exhaust gases. However, the local commander did not consider this method as reliable, because the gas is formed in a very irregular fashion and often did not suffice at all to kill."

In contrast to this, Höss said elsewhere (*ibid.*, p. 170):

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67 In German: "*Benzinrückständen*," *e.g.* kerosene and naphtha.

> *"I personally have seen only Culmhof and Treblinka. Culmhof was no longer in operation."*

But if Höss had visited Chełmno on 16 September 1942, the camp was still in operation; if, however, it "was no longer in operation," the visit would have taken place after 7 April 1943 (see Section 12.4.).

On the other hand, the travel permit mentioned above refers to a journey to Łódź and back. Dejaco's report says that the Auschwitz SS came to Litzmannstadt (Łódź) and visited the local ghetto before the "trip to the special installation," where they had a "discussion with SS *Standartenführer* Blobel": if this was at Chełmno, why did the SS stop at Łódź and visit the ghetto first? And why does the travel permit not mention the alleged destination of "Kulmhof and back"? Chełmno is in fact about 60 km northwest of Łódź. Moreover, as reported by Gerald Reitlinger (1965, p. 170),

> *"during his interrogation in Nuremberg, Blobel described the site with great delicacy as 'an abandoned Jewish cemetery near Łódź,'"*

confirming that Höss did not visit the Chełmno camp on 16 September 1942, so the "field incinerators *Aktion* Reinhardt," whatever their function may have been, were not located in or near this camp.

Orthodox Holocaust historiography assumes the following premisses to be true:

– these "field incinerators" were located at Chełmno;
– they were built by Blobel;
– in June 1942 Gestapo chief Müller had given Blobel the order to remove the mass graves in which the victims of German shootings were buried (Spector 1990);
– Blobel decided to use the same method at Chełmno as well.

Hence one would have to assume that contemporary documents confirm both the claimed mass murders at Chełmno and the reality of the so-called "*Aktion* 1005." But neither of it is true, as I have documented elsewhere (Mattogno 2008).

8.5. "Bone Mill" or "Ball Mill"?

In his famous documentary collection on the Łódź ghetto, Artur Eisenbach published the transcript of the two documents relating to Chełmno offered by Hilberg as evidence of the criminal function of the camp in

connection with Dejaco's report of his trip to Łódź on 17 September 1942 (Eisenbach 1946, p. 279):

"To the
Eldest of the Jews[68]
Litzmannstadt
Ghetto letter no. 10195
027/2/Lu/R 16 July 1942

Re.: Machines in the ghetto

I ask to determine immediately whether there is a bone mill inside the ghetto, either with engine or hand-cranked.
On behalf of (Fr. W. Ribbe[69]*)*
The special command Kulmhof is interested in this mill."

On the same page Eisenbach also published the transcript of the second document, which does not explicitly mention "bone mill":

"To the
Secret State Police
c/o Mr. Commissar Fuchs
Litzmannstadt
027/1/Bi/Si 1 March 1943

Re.: Purchase for the special command Kulmhof

Attached I send back to you the documents about the purchase from the company Schriever & Co., Hannover. The matter has been concluded in the meantime, but for certain reasons I do not want to keep this file in my administration, and ask it to be taken into storage there.
On behalf of:
Attachment: 1 file
(Biebow[70]*) head of department."*

Ribbe's request of 16 July 1942 for a "bone mill" is recorded only in Eisenbach's transcript, without even an archival reference. No one has ever seen the original document. In addition, Biebow's letter of 1 March 1943 makes explicit reference to Schriever & Co. of Hannover, which is also mentioned in Dejaco's report, but relating to a "ball mill."[71]

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68 "*Ältesten der Juden*," office held by Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski.
69 Friedrich Wilhelm Ribbe, deputy chief of the Łódź ghetto administration.
70 Hans Biebow, chief of the Łódź ghetto administration.
71 A ball mill is a type of grinder usually using steel balls in order to grind solid materials into fine powders.

Hence until proven otherwise – which means as long as the original document is not produced – it is more than legitimate to assume that the "special command Kulmhof" had requested a simple "ball mill," a machine which it subsequently actually received. In support of this a further argument can be made.

The "bone mill" was a machine that was designed to obtain fertilizer from animal bones. A similar machine still exists in Germany as a historical artifact:[72]

> *"Around the year 1837, the milling facility with a pounding de-vice for animal bones was built. The resulting bonemeal was used as organic fertilizer for the hardscrabble fields. If the bone particles were still too large after pounding them, they were placed in a drum full of stones that further pulverized them."*

The "bone mill" was normally used in industrial equipment for the processing of animal carcasses.[73] Hence, if the "special command Kulmhof," which certainly was not involved in the production of fertilizers from animal bones, had asked the Jewish Council of the Łódź Ghetto, of all possible addressees, for just such a "bone mill," it would surely have raised serious suspicions.

Finally, the fact that it could also have been hand-cranked (*Handbetrieb*) does not comport with the alleged grinding of bone residues from tens of thousands of corpses (for more see Mattogno 2008, pp. 37-40).

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[72] "Knochenmühle in Mühlhofe," in: www.meinerzhagen.de/tourismus/sehenswertes/sehenswuerdigkeiten/knochenmuehle-in-muehlhofe; www.heimatverein-meinerzhagen.de/index.php/67.

[73] Heepke 1905, p. 156, drawing of a "*Anlage für Cadaververnichtung*" (facility for carcass elimination) with "*Knochenmühle*" (bone mill).

9. The Chełmno "Crematoria"

9.1. Construction and Operation

Not a single document exists on the alleged Chełmno crematoria; all we know about them is a simple summary of evidence compiled by Judge Bednarz. And even this merely applies to the second phase of the camp, because there were no witnesses to the first phase. In his first report on the camp he wrote (Bednarz 1946d, p. 6):

> *"Until spring 1940* [should be: 1942] *the bodies were buried in huge mass graves, one of which was 270 meters long, 8.10 wide and 6 deep. In the spring of 1942 two furnaces were built. As of this time all corpses were cremated. The corpses already buried earlier were cremated as well. We have no precise data about these furnaces, as the preliminary investigation could not rely on any witness who, in the years 1942 to 1943, had worked in the woods where the bodies were cremated. Witnesses living near the forest saw two chimneys located in a fenced-in area which were smoking all the time. During the first deactivation of the camp the furnaces were blown up by the camp authorities on 7 April 1943."*

In a later report Bednarz remarked (1946a, p. 20):

> *"In summer 1942 the large amount of rotting corpses that had accumulated led to a typhus epidemic. In addition, the odor was so intense as to render the admission of new transports impossible. It was therefore necessary to find means of mitigation. They then began to cremate the bodies. Subsequently the numerical strength of the Waldkommando was increased (testimony of witness Kozanecki, card 82) and new transports ceased to be admitted* [in a note: probably in June and July 1942]. *Two crematoria were built, whose chimneys towered above the forest (deposition of witnesses on Cards 13, 57, 61, 67 and others). However, in order to accelerate the cremation process of the accumulated corpses, timber was transported from the nearby forest of Kościelec, since the wood on site was not enough. Huge pyres were prepared, and the corpses were cremated on them. Working conditions were terrible. When a special commission came from Berlin to check the work status, the police said laughingly that 'die Herren aus Berlin'* [the gentlemen from Berlin]

could not stand the atmosphere and had already passed out after 5 minutes (witness statement by Rozalia Peham, wife of a member of the Sonderkommando, Card 160).

The ashes were dumped in trenches 4 meters deep and 8-10 meters wide. They were then covered with earth. On that site a stand of partly conifers and partly birches was planted. The bones were crushed with wooden pestles on a cement base prepared specifically for this purpose. For a certain time the bones were probably crushed by a machine for grinding (mill). The investigation has ascertained only the fact that this machine, coming from the Zawadka mill, was brought into the area of the Sonderkommando*, and the fact that it was returned after having been disinfected (deposition by witnesses Sokolnicki, Card 143, and Kruszczyński, Card 413).”*

The crematoria of the camp’s second phase, however, are extensively described by several witnesses. Bednarz summed up their statements as follows (1946d, p. 6):

“2 new furnaces were built in 1944, during the period when the camp resumed its activities. Witnesses Żurawski, Srebrnik and the policeman in custody Bruno Israel, who had seen the reconstructed furnaces, described them as follows: the furnaces were built into the ground and did not protrude above ground level. They had the shape of a cone with a base of equal angles and its apex in the ground. At the top the furnace measured 6 × 10 meters and had a height and a depth of 4 meters.[74] *At the bottom, where a grill was located, the furnace measured 1.5 × 2 meters. The grate was made up of railway rails. A channel through which air flowed and which at the same time served to remove the ashes and bones led to the ash compartment. The walls of the furnace were made of refractory bricks and cement. Alternating layers of wood and corpses were placed in the furnace in order to speed up the combustion process. The cremation capacity of the furnace was a hundred corpses at a time. When the bodies fell down* [through the grate] *during the combustion process, more could be added on top of them. Bone ash and debris removed from the ash compartment were placed in a pit after being crushed by a pestle, and then, in 1943, the bones and ashes were taken se-*

[74] According to Szymon Srebrnik, who claims to have seen them, the furnaces “were approximately three metres (10 feet) tall. The width was about the same” (Srebrnik 1945).

cretly at night to the village of Zawadka and were thrown into the river from the bridge."

And here is the description given by Bednarz in his second report on Chełmno (1946b, pp. 22f.):

"According to the investigation's results, the crematorium of 1944 looked like this: It was built in such a way that it did not protrude from the ground. At the top, it had the shape of a rectangle of 10 × 6 meters. The furnace tapered off like a funnel toward the bottom and ended with grates made of railway rails. The hearth had a dimension of 1.5 × 2 m. The furnace was 4 meters deep, the walls were brick covered with a layer of refractory cement. The ash compartment was under the stove, from which a narrow channel had been excavated. Through this channel the ashes were extracted.[75] *They used a custom-built poker in order to pull out the ashes. This work was so hard that the workers who performed it died after a few days (Card 342).* [Note: *After a few days they were so exhausted that they were killed as unfit for work.*] *When the furnaces were not in operation, they were camouflaged for fear of air raids, so that they could not be seen from above. On the furnace's opening, railway rails were placed of some 15 meters in length, and on top of them plates and branches were put (Bruno Israel, Card 394). Alternating layers of corpses and wooden logs were put into the furnace. They were arranged in such a way that they did not touch one another or hinder the airflow to successive body layers. 12 bodies were put in the lower layer. The furnace was ignited through the channel to the ash compartment. The corpses were not moistened with gasoline or other flammable substances. They burned rapidly, more or less within 20 minutes (cards 342, 170). As they burned, the layers of corpses sank toward the* [bottom of the] *pit, which made it possible to add a new load. A furnace contained up to 100 corpses. Thus, a transport carried by the gas-chamber truck was instantly cremated in a furnace."*

The system described by the witnesses (particularly by M. Żurawski) is nothing other than the so-called Feist apparatus, a furnace for burning the carcasses of animals which have died of infectious diseases. It was developed by Veterinarian Georg Feist in the second half of the nineteenth century. A book on cremation from the turn of the century ex-

[75] The witness Srebrnik stated that "there was neither a chimney nor a special trench for better draught." (Srebrnik 1945)

plains its structure and operation with the aid of a drawing (de Cristoforis 1890, pp. 125-128; see Document 11):

"This apparatus was originally designed by Dr. Feist for the sole hygienic purpose of destroying the carcasses of animals which had died of infectious diseases, but it is easy to understand that, with appropriate modifications, it could also be used to incinerate human remains in the case of a significant mortality, such as casualties of war or during an epidemic when the number of victims, the lack of time or money does not permit a crematorium to be built, and finally in all the circumstances that Captain Rey saw when he conceived his mobile crematorium.

The veterinarian Georg Feist had the idea of using cremation in order to render harmless the animal carcasses affected by a contagion; he was convinced that burial would serve only to create a diffusive hotbed of the contagion in the area where it already raged, a contagion which at the same time was the economic ruin of the country. The idea of Dr. Feist was immediately approved by his veterinary colleague Zündel and by the local authorities. The Strasbourg authorities granted permission to build a special furnace in each of the larger departments affected by the contagion, i.e. Johaness-Rohrbach and Canton Saaralben.

The first Feist furnace was built on the principle of the lime kilns situated on a hill just 20 km from the village of Rohrbach. The wind came primarily from the east-south-east; the mouth of the chimney opened in this direction. The vertical space for the carcasses is perfectly round: it is 1.75 m high and has a diameter of 1.60 m at the top and 0.90 m at the bottom at the level of the second grate. In this space at first some straw with dry branches and wood chips is introduced, then coal, to a total thickness of 40-50 cm. Next the carcass is introduced and the spaces between the carcass and the walls are well filled with coal; the space which may remain at the top is filled with more straw and kindling. Finally the whole is doused with 5-10 liters of oil.

On top of this a funnel of white sheet metal, 2 mm thick, is located; then the fire is lit with a suitable medium at the lower grate, which is about 65 cm above the ground. Under the furnace there is a trough of sheet metal in which fluids which may seep through due to the heat are absorbed by the ash. The complete combustion takes 5 to 6 hours for small animals and 8 to 9 for bigger ones, which weigh 250

to 500 kg, which amounts to 4-8 corpses of an average weight of 60 kg each. At this time, moreover, everything is reduced completely, leaving an ash residue of 1 to 2.5 kg.[76]

The employee responsible for conducting the cremation receives 20 Swiss francs per carcass, but is obliged to provide all the fuel, and thus earns about half the sum. Fuel consumption is about 500-600 kg of coal, 5-10 liters of oil and about 75 hundredweight of straw and firewood."

In summary, the Feist apparatus had the shape of a truncated inverted cone and a hearth grate of 90 cm in diameter with a surface area of ($\pi \times r^2 \approx$) 0.64 square meters; in eight to nine hours it could incinerate animal carcasses weighing some 250 to 500 kg, which is equivalent to four to eight corpses of 60 kg, while consuming about 500 to 600 kg of coal and five to ten liters of gasoline. Assuming average values, this results in 375 kg of organic matter (the equivalent of six corpses) incinerated in 8.5 hours using 550 kg of coal. In 24 hours, therefore, the cremation capacity of the furnace was 1,050 kg of load (the equivalent of 18 corpses) consuming 1,550 kg of coal. This amounts to an average of roughly 1.45 kg of coal per kg of combusted load.

In contrast to this, the Chełmno furnaces are said to have had a rectangular cross section and were allegedly equipped with a grate of 1.5 m × 2 m = 3 m². A system of this kind therefore would have had a combustion capacity (3÷0.6=) 5 times higher, therefore (18 × 5 =) 90 corpses in 24 hours, while consuming (90 corpses × 60 kg/corpse × 1.45 kg coal/kg corpse≈) 7.800 kg of coal.

Żurawski's claim that a layer of 12 corpses burned in 15 minutes[77] is therefore crazy. In such a case, one furnace alone would burn 1,152 corpses in 24 hours, which is absurd. Instead, the theoretical capacity of the two incinerators at Chełmno would have been 180 corpses in 24 hours. But in practice, since the two furnaces were fuelled with green wood according to witnesses, which has a calorific value much lower

[76] The real quantity should rather be 10-25 kg. This is probably a printing error.

[77] See quote on p. 63; W. Piller "confirmed" this absurdity by also asserting that the corpses were cremated within some 15 minutes (Krakowski 2007, p. 144); Srebrnik confirmed no less absurdly: "The capacity of one furnace was more or less the same as one van. […]. It took approximately one hour for the corpses to burn." Since he claimed that the smaller "vans" had a capacity of 100-120 persons, the furnace in turn could allegedly cremate at least this number of corpses within an hour (Srebrnik 1945).

than that of coal,[78] the actual combustion capacity would have been considerably lower.

But even the theoretical maximum capacity of 180 corpses in 24 hours would still have been inadequate for an ostensible extermination camp like Chełmno with its relatively limited influx of victims. This is particularly true for the claimed first phase of camp's activities, which saw many more victims than the claimed second phase.

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, Blobel began his cremation experiments at Chełmno in June 1942. By mid-September he had developed a cremation system so satisfactory that his "field incinerators" were visited by Rudolf Höss and considered a model for Auschwitz.[79] Hence for the SS authorities their efficiency would have been indisputable. So when these authorities, in the second phase of the camp, are said to have had to reconstruct the two furnaces which had previously been dismantled, they apparently built the same furnace model as developed by Blobel. This is stated explicitly by Konnilyn G. Feig, who writes:[80]

> *"Blobel finally discovered an efficient method of body disposal. He constructed a vast pyre of iron rails and wooden sleepers, built in the form of furnaces. They were laid deep in the ground so they did not project above the surface. The furnaces measured at the top 6 by 10 meters and were 4 meters deep. A channel to the pit below facilitated the removal of ashes and bones."*

But in this case, cremation of the 145,301 alleged victims of 1942[81] would have required (145,301÷180=) about 807 days (2 years and 2½ months)!

Archaeological excavations carried out by the Poles in the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, disproved the report accepted by Judge Bed-

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[78] Coal has a calorific value between 15 MJ/kg (moist lignite) and 34 MJ/kg (anthracite) (3,583 to 8,121 kcal/kg); www.engineeringtoolbox.com/fuels-higher-calorific-values-d_169.html. The values for wood are between 8 MJ/kg (green) and 16 MJ/kg (dry) (1,911 to 3,822 kcal/kg), van Loo/Koppejan 2008, p. 40.

[79] In reality Höss inexplicably is said to have introduced crude "cremation ditches"; see Section 9.4.

[80] Feig 1981, p. 271. The few pages dedicated to the events at Chełmno are utterly inconsistent ("Chełmno/Kulmhof: The Secret Camp," pp. 266-274).

[81] The number of Jews who, according to the Korherr Report, "*wurden durchgeschleust… durch die Lager im Warthegau*" ("were funneled… through the camps in the Warthegau"; NO-5194, p. 9) and who, according to orthodox historiography, were gassed in Chełmno. For instance, the Bonn Jury Court determined its minimum death toll of "at least 145,000" for the camp's first phase based on the Korherr Report (Rüter *et al.* 1979, pp. 285f.).

narz: they found only the ruins of a single crematorium, which had a maximum footprint of 6 m × 5 m, not 6 m × 10 m (see Chapter 10), and therefore had a grate in proportion of 1.5 square meters and a maximum cremation capacity of 45 corpses per 24 hours. This fact completely demolishes any claim that Chełmno was an extermination camp. Nevertheless, in the following section I will continue discussing Bednarz's report to show *a fortiori* its inconsistency.

9.2. The Furnace's Capacity and Wood Requirement

The data calculated in the previous chapter – the cremation of 90 bodies in 24 hours with a consumption of 7,800 kg of coal – are valid for corpses with an average weight of 60 kg, which is that of the alleged victims of gassing (see Graf/Kues/Mattogno 2010, pp. 130-133.).

As we have seen, the calorific value of coal varies from 3,583 to 8,121 kcal/kg, so the average value is 5,852 kcal/kg.[82] Freshly cut wood has a calorific value of 1,911 kcal/kg, equivalent to about (1,911÷5,852×100=) 33% or a third of that of 1 kg of average coal.

Hence, cremating a body of about 60 kg requires (1.45×60×3=) some 260 kg of fresh wood. Thus, in order to cremate the minimum number of alleged victims – about 152,000 bodies (see Chapter 11)[81] – (152,000×260≈) 40 million kg or 40 thousand metric tons of wood would have been required. In the woods around Chełmno we can assume a timber production of about 200 tons per hectare, as in the region of Lublin (*ibid.*, p. 144). Therefore 40 thousand tons of wood would have required the logging of about (40,000÷200=) 200 hectares of forest. In Chapter 10 we will see what consequences follow from this data.

9.3. Contradictions Surrounding the Activity of the Crematoria

Krakowski writes in his article about Chełmno (1983, p. 142):

> *"In August 1944 the Łódź ghetto was liquidated within three weeks, and the 70,000 Jews there were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau to*

[82] That value is at the low end, since most types of coal have a value around 7-8,000 kcal/kg. The subsequent values are therefore very conservative. The actual fuel-wood consumption might be as high as 350 kg per average corpse.

be gassed. The capacity of Kulmhof would not have sufficed for killing tens of thousands of people in a very short time. The Sonderkommando Bothmann remained in Kulmhof for a little while in order to erase all traces that could have been created by the massacre. Hauptscharführer Walter Burmeister said before the investigating judge:

'During the last few months before we left Kulmhof transports no longer arrived at the camp. In this period the corpses were merely exhumed and burned.'

This statement was confirmed by Alois Häfele:

'[...] *In April 1944 a telegram arrived in Weimar from Bot*[h]*mann in Posen according to which we again were required at the extermination camp Kulmhof. We headed for Kulmhof. Here Bothmann greeted us and told us that this time, by order of the Reichsführer-SS Himmler, it was necessary to remove all traces at Kulmhof. The mass graves of the Waldlager* [forest camp] *were opened. The corpses found in these pits were cremated with the help of Jewish work details in a crematorium that had been built before.'"*

But if the bodies of the camp's first phase were cremated in a first pair of furnaces and those of June/July 1944 in the second pair (in two furnaces, not one as claimed by Häfele), which mass graves were reopened in 1944?

In Krakowski's 2007 book these contradictions are even more evident (pp. 122f.):

"After the liquidation of the ghettos in the Warthegau and the 'closure' days of the Łódź ghetto, transports to Chełmno were suspended. Throughout the autumn of 1942 and during the months of winter 1942/1943 the camp staff was busy removing the traces of their murder, a work which had begun already in the spring of 1942. In September 1942 these activities were further accelerated under the supervision of Paul Blobel. The Germans built two corpse-cremation plants in a clearing. The mass graves were opened, and work details were forced to exhume the bodies and to carry them to the crematoria."

He then states that in March 1943 it was decided to liquidate the camp and to assign its staff (the Bothmann *Sonderkommando*) to the SS Division "Prinz Eugen" which operated in Yugoslavia (*ibid.*, p. 123), adding (*ibid.*, p. 125):

> *"On 7 April 1944 the men* [the Jewish detainees] *blew up the crematorium and a part of the castle which had been used to receive the victims prior to their murder."*

But in November 1943 the SS staff was sent back to the camp "to complete activities in order to conceal the massacre that had been carried out" (*ibid.*, p. 127).

When the Bothmann *Sonderkommando* returned to Chełmno in April 1944 in order to resume the extermination activities, "two identical crematoria were built in the forest for the cremation of corpses" (*ibid.*, p. 132). All the corpses of the alleged victims from the camp's first phase (1941-1942) who had been buried in mass graves were exhumed and then cremated in the old crematoria; all the corpses of the second phase (1944) were cremated in the new furnaces. In contradiction to this, Krakowski states that in the fall of 1944 Jewish prisoners in the *Waldlager* were forced "to pull out the corpses of the dead from mass graves" (*ibid.*, p. 161) and explicitly reiterates:

> *"Incomparably worse was the situation of those prisoners who were brought daily to Waldlager in order to open up the mass graves and to cremate the corpses of the murdered."* (p. 162)
>
> *"The work to conceal the massacre continued until October 1944 – the corpses were pulled from the mass graves and burned, their bones crushed, the ashes scattered, the land cleared."* (p. 164)

These contradictions perfectly reflect the testimonies. In fact, they provide conflicting data also about the mass graves, which – it should be made clear – were used only during the first months of the camp's activity, until the first two crematoria were built.

Krakowski tells us in this regard that three clearings existed in the *Waldlager*; the largest of them contained two pits 30 m × 10 m and 2 m deep; the middle-sized clearing had a single pit of a similar size, and in the smaller clearing there was a pit of 12 m × 10 m, 3 m deep (*ibid.*, p. 34). However, with reference to another testimony he subsequently mentions a pit measuring 200 m × 5 m, another 50 m long and a third 150 m long (*ibid.*, p. 60). Another witness, Johann I. (his last name is not given), refers to two pits 20-30 m long, 6-8 m wide and 4 m deep (Rückerl 1979, p. 272).

9.4. The Chełmno "Crematoria" and "Field incinerators *Aktion* Reinhardt"

I have stated above that, according to orthodox Holocaust historiography, the "field incinerators *Aktion* Reinhardt" had been built by Blobel in Chełmno after several attempts as a result of his cremation experiments in connection with the alleged *Aktion* 1005. The explanations I have provided in the previous sections allow the reader to judge to what extent this assumption is based on historical fact.

Jean-Claude Pressac summarized Dejaco's witness statement about his report of 17 September 1942 during the hearing of 20 January 1972 in the Vienna trial, where he was charged together with his former colleague Fritz Ertl. Pressac commented (1993, pp. 57f.):

> *"According to Dejaco, the installation resembled a large circular charcoal kiln with a diameter of 4 to 6 meters, and backfilled on its periphery. Blobel insisted on arranging the corpses and the wood in layers, which always had to be alternated. Blobel was of the opinion that his installation was not convenient for a fast incineration, given that the combustion was slow. Nevertheless, the principle (alternated stacking) was to be preserved.* [...] *Blobel's installation was not reproduced in Birkenau, but its principle was applied: combustion of layers of wood and corpses stacked alternately on vast grates, consisting of railroad rails supported by small brick pillars."*

The cremation facility at Auschwitz described by Pressac is not based on reality nor on documents or testimonies,[83] so it is pure conjecture on his part. Besides, it would also have been technically very difficult, since large piles of alternating layers of wood and corpses burn unevenly. Hence the pile would sooner or later lean to one side or the other and would ultimately topple over, spilling burning wood, embers and corpse parts off the grate.

According to Höss, in fact, the outdoor cremation of corpses in Auschwitz was carried out in a completely different way from what he said he had observed at Chełmno (Broszat 1981, p. 161):

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[83] Witnesses of open-air incinerations in Auschwitz usually talk about one layer of wood at the bottom of a trench (or pyre), followed by huge piles of corpses or alternately added layers of wood and corpses, on occasion sprinkled with corpse fat allegedly collected from the burning corpses. Railway grates are not part of the Auschwitz lore (cf. Mattogno 2005, pp. 13-23).

> *"We started with the cremation only toward the end of summer; first on a pile of wood with about 2,000 corpses, then in the pits with the exhumed corpses from earlier. First the corpses were doused with oil-refinery byproducts,*[84] *and later with methanol.*[85] *Cremation in the pits went on continuously, hence day and night. By the end of November all mass graves had been emptied. The number of corpses buried in the mass graves was 107,000. This figure not only includes the transports of exterminated Jews from the beginning up to the time when they began the cremations, but also the corpses of prisoners who had died in Auschwitz in the winter of 1941/42, when the crematorium next to the hospital was out of operation for a long time. All the prisoners who died in the Birkenau camp are included as well."*

This process has no resemblance to the "field incinerators" allegedly used by Blobel for cremations, nor did a "ball mill" exist at Auschwitz to crush the cremation residues. So what brought Höss to Chełmno? And if simple pyres or simple pits sprinkled with refinery byproducts or methanol sufficed to easily cremate tens of thousands of corpses, why did the *RSHA* order Blobel to carry out cremation "experiments" at Chełmno?

Dejaco's statements further complicate the story: the "experiments" carried out by Blobel would in fact lead to the creation of a "charcoal kiln" (*Kohlenmeiler*) which was, by its own creator's admission, totally inefficient for mass cremation!

As for the "principle" of the system – alternating layers of wood and corpses – allegedly brought to Auschwitz from Chełmno: it was a very primitive technique of cremation. The true "principle" of Blobel's system, however, was instead specified as a "charcoal pile," which has never been tried or even suggested in the history of modern cremation, and for good reason. The purpose of such a pile is indeed to produce charcoal by incomplete combustion of wood, therefore carbonization, not cremation or incineration (complete combustion), so it is obvious that such a system was quite inefficient for mass cremation of corpses, to put it mildly.

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84 In German: "*Ölrückständen.*"

85 The only known Auschwitz document which mentions methanol (methyl alcohol) is the *Standortbefehl* (garrison order) no. 30/44 of 11 December 1944, with which the camp commander forbade the SS men to purchase vodka from Poles, because it contained methanol which had caused cases of blindness and death among the acquiring SS men (Frei *et al.*, 2000, p. 519).

10. Excavations and Archaeological Findings

10.1. Investigations of Judge Bednarz and the Koniń Museum

In 1945 the Chełmno camp was examined by Judge Bednarz, who briefly described the material findings (1946a, pp. 20f.):

> *"When the pits into which the ashes and crushed bones had been dumped were reopened in the course of the investigation, ashes, hair, traces of chlorine – apparently thrown in for the purpose of disinfection – bones and bone fragments as well as small objects were found, such as combs, buttons, purses, etc. (document of the protocol of investigations, Card 530). It should also be noted that, because of soil fertilization with human ashes, the vegetation in this area is much more lush and green in color."*

Further archeological surveys were conducted in 1951 and in 1986-1987. The latter, sponsored by the District Museum, at that time headed by Łucja Nowak, were summarized as follows by Janusz Gulczyński (1991, pp. 91-93):

> *"In the former camp in the woods of Rzuchów the Museum of Martyrdom is located, which is a branch of the museum district of Koniń. Upon its initiative, various works were undertaken in relation to the layout of the terrain. Investigations have been carried out to obtain the largest possible number of artifacts linked to the crime scene, in general to the martyrdom of the Jewish population during the last war.* […]
>
> *In 1986, archeological-documentary work began in the clearings of the Rzuchów forest by a group of staffers of the museum district of Koniń. The purpose of the excavations was to extract from the earth any artifacts and to validate all things where possible in order to develop information about Chełmno in relation to the years 1941-1945. The point of departure of the work was the data derived from interpretation of aerial photographs taken by the army in 1958. Photo interpretation allowed locating within the boundaries of the forest area the contours of mass graves, of four barracks and also of trenches whose function was not very clear. Another purpose was to verify the photo interpretations of and to discover the remains of a*

crematorium. Five excavations were carried out with a total surface area of 208 square meters. It was clear that the traces of the barracks were not preserved. They were probably removed during development in the Sixties and Seventies. It was found that burned human bones, in addition to being scattered around the Warta region, were also scattered in the woods. Even now they emerge on the surface. The function of one trench has been established: it probably served the Hitlerites to burn the victims' personal belongings which were unsuitable to be sent back to the Reich. Thus from the probing trench dug during this survey a large number of objects was retrieved – studded handbags, purses, suitcases, shoes, belt buckles, knives, clothes pins, prosthetic fittings, dentures, buttons – including those from Soviet uniforms – casings of rifle cartridges, pistols, etc.
Partial remains of one of the crematoria were identified. It is shaped like a big hole with dimensions of about 17 × 17 m with sloping walls. The furnace is filled with sand of a light gray color with ashes and a huge amount of crushed human bones. At a depth of 2 m under the excavation walls blocks of broken concrete and bricks were found, which are the remains of the blown-up crematorium. It was observed that the cement had been reinforced with parts of baby carriages. On each of the furnace's walls a system of drainage pipes [sic] *was discovered which probably led air into the furnace. These data are contained in a report by the archeological section of the museum district of Koniń, archeological excavations, Chełmno upon Ner, 1986. Research continued the following year. This time attention focused on two excavations. More debris of the crematorium was discovered: concrete blocks, broken bricks, etc. Within the ventilating drainage tubes a black layer was observed, like soot: traces of the smoke from cremating corpses. Everywhere minute human bone fragments were found, especially ashes and bone dust. At a depth of 3 meters the surface of one excavation trench was covered with a mass of tiny bones. All this made a particularly gruesome impression.*
In the second excavation, where concrete debris, bricks and drainage pipes were also discovered, other artifacts were found: the soles of shoes, broken prostheses, buckles, spoons, forks, etc. There were no human bones and bone dust, at least not in large amounts, in comparison with the excavation carried out at the location of the crematorium. The hypothesis was confirmed last year: that place

> *was probably used to burn various items of no value, hence inappropriate for sending to the Reich."*

In late November of 1988, the Koniń District Museum sent to the Institute of Forensic Medicine of the Medical Academy of Poznań a parcel containing four bags filled with earth mixed with ashes and bone fragments taken from the Chełmno camp. The Koniń Museum asked for a report on the samples sent in order to determine whether these fragments contained bones and human ashes and what their percentage was. The Institute of Forensic Medicine confirmed on 5 December 1988 that the bone fragments and ashes were human, adding that the percentage of residual bone in the material sent could be estimated "*na kilka procent*,"[86] – at a few percent.[87]

10.2. The Map of the Camp

In 1989 Zdzisław Lorek, on behalf of the Koniń District Museum, produced a map of the former Chełmno camp with a precise indication of the excavations and archeological findings,[88] which was updated in 1996, using the most recent findings.[89] Before analyzing this, it should be noted that the dimensions of the crematorium mentioned by Gulczyński – 17 m × 17 m – are clearly wrong, as the current architectural reconstruction of the furnace measures roughly 6 m × 5 m (see Documents 17-20). A plaque in Polish informs the reader:

> *"In this place the foundations of a furnace were discovered in which thousands of bodies of murdered Jews were cremated. Its contours have been reconstructed on the surface with authentic fragments of the furnace."* (See Document 21.)

This is confirmed by a photograph of yore showing the archeological excavation relating to the furnace (see Document 14).

The plan divides the above-mentioned camp into four quarters (*Kwatera* I to IV). Sector I (see Document 12a) is located behind the entrance to the camp (see Documents 22f.). The memorial for the victims and the small museum are located there. The irregular trapezoid that appears above the words "*Kwatera I*" represents an excavation

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86 The indefinite pronoun "kilka" means "some," "several."
87 Letter reproduced in Gulczyński 1991; appendix outside of text.
88 The map was published in *ibid.*
89 This map can be found in Krakowski 1996, outside of text; see Document 12.

carried out in 1951. The small circle on the left with an inverted black triangle inscribed is the "presumed location of the fuel storage in 1944." Below this, on the right, the oblique H-shaped design with the inscription "w.s. I. II. III, 1991 r." indicates three excavation surveys carried out in 1991 ("w.s." stands for "*wykopy sondażowe*," excavation survey).

Sector II (see Document 12b) is defined as "location of killing and burial of the first group of Jews." From top to bottom, they show "the burning of old wood / June 1942," the symbol of the flames, the "Lapidarium" (see Document 24), the "symbolic grave of the children of Lidice" represented by the parallelogram with crosses inside (see Section 14.2.). On the left, the rectangular shape covered with "T"s, is a "mass grave discovered by the archeological survey." But the surveys, indicated by a dot accompanied by the initials "w.s.," are only 5 in number and very far apart: the nearest is about 14 meters away, and between the first and last is a distance of about 48 meters. The circle inscribed with a black triangle above the rectangle bears the inscription "[Here] were unearthed skulls and long bones of the murdered victims"; the circle underneath the parallelogram has this inscription: "[Here] were unearthed belongings of the murdered victims." Under the circle, the inscription "w.IV/86" indicates Excavation No. IV carried out in 1986.

Sector III (see Document 12b) contains a very narrow long rectangle with "T"s inside. The related caption for this symbol says, "*Uporządkowane mogiły żydowskie*," namely "arranged Jewish graves." It alludes to the fact that these areas were framed by a concrete wall and filled with sand (see Document 25) in what constitutes the "arrangement" mentioned above. But, as we shall see below, the "arrangement" has an alternative significance. Based on the scale of the map, the pit is approximately 190 meters long. The small circle at the bottom with the black triangle inscribed indicates "fragments of brick and/or slag." The shaded rectangle to the left indicates the "traces of a furnace / floor plan of 1951."

Sector IV (see Document 12c) is that of the alleged mass extermination. A concrete wall is dedicated "to the memory of Jews killed at Chełmno 1941-1945" (see Document 27). On the map it is called "*ściana pamięci*," "wall of remembrance." Under "*Kwatera IV*" is the inscription: "(1951 – outlines of three pits 150 m × 5 m and in the SE part a field crematorium)." The three pits are the three long narrow rectangles with the "T"s inside, designated in the caption, "arranged Jewish

graves" (see Document 26). At the northern end of the central pit is a Star of David. According to the caption, the shaded areas are the "presumed location of buildings or other objects" according to the interpretation of aerial photographs. An "a" indicates the two furnaces from 1942; the remaining symbols have the following meanings:

"b": "probably the wooden shed for the motorized mill to grind the unburnt bones to powder";

"e": "probably field crematoria, circular pits with a diameter of 4 meters with stone cladding, 1942";

"f": "probably 'undressing' cabins inscribed '*Durchgangslager*' and storage for clothes of the murdered victims, 1944."

The significance of the figure corresponding to "g" is not indicated. The caption states instead that these interpretations are based on witness statements.

At the bottom, in front of the "wall of remembrance," two black rectangles identified by the symbols "A/86" and "B/87" signify two excavations carried out in 1986 and 1987, like the symbols "wI/86," "WII (/86)" and "wV/87." The caption provides this explanation:

Excavation I: negative result
Excavation II: remains of a cremation furnace
Excavation III: negative result
Excavation IV: mass grave
Excavation V: pit used to burn belongings of victims

In the caption is also a rectangle with a double border as a kind of frame with the following explanation:

"Cremation furnace from 1944 located during archeological investigations."

It is located between the two black rectangles mentioned above and is mostly covered by them.[90]

10.3. Investigations of 2003-2004

The Konińi District Museum carried out further archeological investigations in 2003-2004. The results have been summarized on the related website by Łucja Pawlicka Kamiński (Pawlicka Nowak). A thorough examination of these investigations will be possible only when a scien-

[90] Julet Golden has also written about the first archeological survey, but his account is very superficial (2003, pp. 50-53).

tific study is published like that of Prof. Andrzej Kola on archeological investigations carried out in the former Bełżec camp (Kola 2000).

In Sector IV of the camp, the most important with regard to the alleged extermination activities, a mass grave 174 m long and 8 m wide was allegedly identified, plus a second, parallel pit, 182 meters long and 10 m wide, and furthermore 11 pits of varied dimensions between 9 m × 7.5 m and 8.5 m × 15.5 m, located alongside the second pit, 2-3 meters apart. The pits are said to have been discovered "by random testing and drilling," but it is not explained what criteria were used. The map which shows the new findings (see Document 12e) is not clear: it seems, for example, that for the first pit (174 m long) only four sample drillings were carried out (numbered VI to IX), which were very far apart, and maybe two unnumbered others in the final section at the bottom. For the second pit there are seven indications that could be drill sites. The map shows that the area of the first pit and the series of 11 pits partially overlaps that of the outer pits (B and D) indicated on the earlier map of Lorek (see Document 12 c), while the second pit is adjacent to the central one (C). In practice, the new surveys have "confirmed" the three pits defined earlier by arbitrary means, and this was to be expected.

Moreover six cremation sites have been detected, indicated in the map above with the numbers 2/03, 3/03, 4/03, 5/03, 20/03 and 21/03.

A comparison with Lorek's map shows, however, that the findings 2/03, 3/03, 4/03 and 5/03 had already been examined before, but at that time they had not been considered to be cremation sites so that here only the interpretation has changed. But for the findings 20/03 and 21/03 the function as a cremation site is only alleged. For good reason Pawlicka Kamiński (Pawlicka Nowak) concluded that "the results of the archeological investigation described above will not answer all questions and all doubts; the question of the crematoria remains particularly uncertain" (Pawlicka Nowak). The alleged cremation sites mentioned above were in fact temporary facilities (which are, moreover, not attested to by witnesses) and are unrelated to the two claimed brick furnaces, one of which – according to Pawlicka Kamiński (Pawlicka Nowak) – was discovered in 1986-1987, while the second was not found even in the course of subsequent investigations.

10.4. The Results of the Investigations

The only mass grave found in the first phase of archeological investigations is that in Sector II. However, as I said above, it was identified basically only by five drillings, which I have numbered from 1 to 5 in an enlargement of the map (see Document 12d). From this it can be seen clearly that Drill Sample no. 3 was taken from outside the area of the alleged mass grave, which is about 20 meters wide and about 60 meters long. This huge area was then allegedly identified on the basis of four drillings made at great distances from each other. This is neither scientific nor can it be taken seriously. Apart from the width of the trench – about 20 meters – it contradicts the testimony of "Szlamek" and Podchlebnik, who speak of 5 meters and 6.7 meters, respectively. I remind the reader that Sector II was the alleged "killing and burial place of the first group of Jews," *i.e.* of the first Jews to arrive at the camp, among whom also these two witnesses are said to have been.

The three long 150 m × 5 m "arranged" pits do not derive, in fact, from archeological surveys. In 1964 Edward Serwański published a map of Chełmno in which next to Sector D (= Sector IV of Lorek's map), referred to as "clearing with traces of the crematoria," is Sector C, which is explained as follows: "*polana z symbolicznymi mogiłami pomordowanych Żydów*," that is: "clearing with symbolic graves of murdered Jews." So the three graves in question are merely "symbolic" – just like the common grave of the Lidice children – and the same goes for the alleged mass grave in Sector III. These graves are therefore "*uporządkowane*," "arranged" in the sense that they are a symbolic museum reconstruction.

The second phase of archeological investigations (2003-2004) is said to have confirmed the presence of a grave in Sector II (8 to 3 m wide and 62 m long), a rectangular pit 254 meters long in Sector III, and especially the three graves in Sector IV mentioned above, all matching Lorek's map precisely. Thus the symbols were made reality.

Pawlicka Kamiński (Pawlicka Nowak) refers to the "aerial photograph of Chełmno of May 1942, very important in the search for graves" (see Document 13), asserting that "it shows both clearings [sectors II and III]; the pits were probably camouflaged," or else do not appear at all in the photograph, although they should have been present on the site since December 1941. Another aerial photograph of October 1944 allegedly shows clearly "the clearings with the pits and the place

where the wood was burned during the experimental cremation of corpses with thermite incendiary bombs during the first phase of the [murder] center" (Pawlicka Nowak). But despite its obvious importance, this aerial photograph was never published.

Excavations revealed the remains of only one crematorium (see Document 14). Because of its underground structure with a reinforced concrete base, it was extremely difficult to remove all the debris after it was destroyed using explosives. For this precise reason, the Poles have found many remains of this furnace. But of the other three claimed furnaces, there is no certain archeological trace. Yet the so-called eyewitnesses – Żurawski, Srebrnik and Podchlebnik – should have been able to indicate easily the precise spots where they were. From this flows the hard-to-deny conclusion that there was only one crematorium at Chełmno.

The alleged extermination area, Sector IV, has the shape of an irregular trapezoid with sides – clockwise from the north – of around 130, 190, 170 and 250 meters. The most interesting thing arising from Lorek's map is that this sector is surrounded on all sides by woods dating from a period prior to the creation of the camp; it is in fact bordered on the north by a pine forest (*las sosnowy)* dating from 1929, on the west by a pine forest from 1927, on the south by a pine wood from 1929 and on the west by a pine forest from 1927. To the south, across the road which leads to Majdany, extends another pine forest dating from 1932. The rest of the camp is also surrounded by pine forests from before the war: to the north of Sector II, there is a small pine forest dating from 1919, where the museum has been built, and in front of it an even smaller pine stand from 1929. Across the road, which marks the northern boundary of the field, there is a large forest of spruce and pine from 1919 stretching over 450 meters. South of Sector II, between Sector III and the camp's eastern boundary, extending for about 550 meters from north to south and about 250 from west to east, are three small pine woods from 1929 and a forest of spruce and pine also from 1929. Two other pine woods dating from 1929 and 1927 lie north of Sector III (see Document 12). So in 1944 the oldest woods were 17 years old.

Within the grounds of the camp, Lorek's map shows four small areas of reforestation: the first ("stand of spruce and birch / about 1942-1943") is located west of Sector II, the second ("spruce and birch stand / approx 1942") is located south of Area II and the third ("pine forest with admixture of birch / about 1942-43") is located at the southern end

of Sector III, and the fourth ("pine forest / about 1945") is in the southern Sector IV. The total area of these woods is about one hectare. From the dates it is clear that these woods (except perhaps the last) were planted by the SS, who apparently had previously cleared the respective areas.

Assuming that the felling had been carried out in order to obtain timber for the cremation of corpses of the victims, from this hectare of pine forest less than 20 years old, the SS would have produced about 200 tons of timber, enough to cremate (200,000÷260=) about 770 bodies. However, as we saw above, to cremate the bodies of the minimum number of alleged victims would have required clearing 200 hectares of forest. To get an idea of such an area, it is enough to consider that – as indicated in the key to Lorek's map – the actual surface area of the Chełmno camp is 8.92 hectares, so that the area to be cleared would have been more than 22 times larger than the entire camp! Because no witness said that the wood came by rail, we might suppose that it had been cut near the camp. But the logging of an area of two square kilometers around the camp would not have gone unnoticed, and Judge Bednarz would certainly have submitted it as evidence for the cremation of the bodies of the victims. However, he never mentioned any such thing.

On the other hand, as can be seen in the aerial photograph of the area of the camp from May 1942 (see Document 13), which shows a rectangle of about 1,200 × 1,900 meters (= 228 hectares, roughly the area to be cleared!), there was a lot of treeless, agricultural land around the wooded area of the camp. Hence the SS would have had to fetch the wood from even further away, using teams of inmate loggers and trucks. In order to transport 40 thousand tons of wood needed for the cremation of corpses, eight thousand trips of a 5-ton truck would have been required. This coming and going of trucks full of wood directly to the camp would have been noticed by the local Polish population, but Judge Bednarz does not say anything in this regard either.

On this Krakowski notes (2007, p. 123):

> *"Trees from the surrounding woods were used for firewood. The Pole Michał Radoszewski was one of those forced wood suppliers. According to his testimony, the supplied timber was unloaded in the area of the crematorium by Jewish forced laborers. Having their feet shackled, they could move only in small steps. The Germans beat*

them incessantly, goaded and mistreated them. Radoszewski also reported the smell of smoke that hovered over the area."

The Jury Court in Bonn ascertained that "the Jewish *Kommandos* working in the camp consisted at each instance of about 50-60 people altogether" and (Rüter *et al.* 1979, p. 280):

"The major part of the Jewish inmates, some 30 men, worked as 'Waldkommando' in the Waldlager [forest camp] *and had to empty the gas vans, rough-clean them, and put the corpses into the pits."*

Krakowski records the statements of witness Walter Piller according to whom (2007, p. 161)

"In the fall of 1944 there were 80-90 Jewish inmates in the Chełmno camp who were divided into two groups. A small part of them was brought to the forest camp each day, where they were forced to pull out the corpses of those murdered from the mass graves, to work at the crematorium and ultimately to dismantle these crematoria in order to erase the traces of this massacre."

So a "*Holzkommando*" (wood-gathering detail), which would have been absolutely essential for the cremation of corpses, is not even mentioned. It could be formed only from some of the 30 prisoners mentioned above, at most a few dozen prisoners, most-strikingly with their feet shackled. They would have had to cut trees for 40,000 tons of wood (and load and unload a truck more than ten thousand times) in a period of five months[91] or 150 days, averaging about 267 tons (or 53 full trucks) a day!

The cremation of 152,000 corpses would have produced at least 456 tons of human ashes, or approximately 940 cubic meters (Davies/Mates 2005, p. 134).

As Judge Bednarz established (see Section 9.1.):

"The ashes were dumped in trenches 4 meters deep and 8-10 meters wide. They were then covered with earth. On that site a stand of partly conifers and partly birches was planted."

Let us assume that the soil analyzed by the Institute of Forensic Medicine of the Medical Academy of Poznań was taken from one of these pits. The analysis shows, however, that the soil contained only small

[91] According to the orthodox version transports arrived at the camp during nine months, including December 1941; the two furnaces are said to have been built in the spring of 1942, therefore not before March, hence they cremated over no more than five months.

proportions of human bone fragments and ashes. This, too, contradicts the thesis of mass cremation.

The alleged cremation of 152,000 corpses has therefore no documentary basis and no support from material evidence.

11. The Alleged Number of Victims

The first official Polish surveys on the number of victims of Chełmno contradict each other. On 20 May 1945 the Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland, a delegation of the Central Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland, fixed this number at 1,300,000! (Gulczyński 1995, p. 31 & p. 40, note 50.)

The witness Andrzej Miszczak was more precise (Blumental 1946, p. 242):

> *"After an exact and precise calculation, the number of people murdered by the Hitlerite cannibals amounted to 1,300,097"!*

The Polish War Crimes Office, however, while not mentioning a precise figure, advocated a much lower order of magnitude: a few tens of thousands. In its report we read:[92]

> *"The first transport was in December 1942* [should be: 1941]*, when the district of Koło was purged of Jews: so the Germans deported about 2,000 Jews from Koło and about 1,000 from around Dębie. Starting in mid-January 1943* [sic]*, even tens of thousands of Jews from the Łódź ghetto were brought to the Chełmno camp."*

These data were then included in the report of the Polish Government for the Nuremberg trials submitted to and accepted by the Soviets as Document USSR-93, which dedicated to Chełmno the few lines that follow:[93]

> *"This camp was a receiving station for Jews arriving from the Reich and the incorporated territories. The first transport arrived there in December 1942. At that time 2,000 Jews from Koło and about 1,000 Jews from Dębie were murdered."*

At the end of 1945 Judge W. Bednarz carried out a preliminary investigation into the camp. In his report, dated 7 January 1946, he devoted a whole chapter to the number of victims (Bednarz 1946d, pp. 6-8):

> *"There is no way of determining the number of those murdered in Chełmno, neither on the basis of the camp's reports nor based on reports relating to Jewish rail transports, because the camp authorities destroyed all documents, and all tickets were taken away during*

[92] Report by Dr. J. Litawski, officer in charge of the Polish War Crimes Office, 1945. AGK, MSW Londyn, 113, p. 626.

[93] USSR 93, p. 84 of the English translation.

the evacuation. Regarding direct transports to Chełmno the preliminary investigation had to restrict itself to testimonies. Because it wished to investigate the number of victims as accurately and authoritatively as possible, it interrogated the witnesses who were at various locations through which the transports of the Reich passed (Łódź, Koło, Powiercie, Zawadki, Chełmno). The testimonies are based on tickets seen (and other statements by the witness Lange, employee at the Koło train station), on personal observations (counted transports), and on figures given by German members of the Sonderkommando regarding the transports.

With regard to the number of Jews in each transport, the witnesses agree: the number was at least 1,000 people per train. There were periods when the number was higher, but in general it must be concluded that the number of about 1,000 is reliable, because it was constantly repeated by the witnesses at different stages [of the camp's history].

As this figure does not include transports by motor vehicles, the preliminary investigation has therefore all the more reason to take the minimum figure of 1,000 victims a day.

Transports with vehicles were particularly numerous during the liquidation of ghettos in small towns. If one considers the number of Jews throughout the territory, the number of victims who were brought to Chełmno in vehicles must have been considerable. So far precise calculations are still impossible, because until now no statistics exist about the population killed by the occupation authorities. When asked how many trains were brought to Chełmno during the time of [its activities]*, the preliminary investigation provides the following answer:*

The activities of mass murder in Chełmno lasted from 8 December 1941 to 7 April 1943. (In the period from April 1943 until the complete liquidation of the camp in January 1945 the camp was virtually inactive. In this period only 10 transports arrived, which are approximately 10,000 victims). Let us now consider the period from 8 December 1941 to 7 April 1943, that is a period of 480 days, from which we can subtract an interruption of two months in the spring of 1942, when no transports arrived, as well as short interruptions due to technical difficulties, i.e. 70-90 days in all. The camp had to work on Sundays and holidays, for example, the maximum activity there was during Pentecost 1942. So from the 480 days we want to sub-

> *tract 130-150. The number of 330 days of activity of the extermination camp Chełmno thus corresponds to reality. Assuming that each day 1,000 people were killed, we arrive at 330,000 murdered during the period of 330* [active] *days of the death camp. To this number must be added the 10,000 Jews who were killed in 1944. Overall one has to assume a minimum figure of 340,000 victims murdered at Chełmno – men, women and children (even infants).”*

This became the official number of victims for half a century and as such appeared in the authoritative *Bulletin of the Central Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland* (Bednarz 1946b, p. 157). At the hearing on 27 February 1946 of the Nuremberg Tribunal, Soviet High Councilor of Justice Smirnov read an extract from the document USSR-340 containing the figure of 340,000 victims.[94]

The *Encyclopedic Informer*, published in 1979 by this Polish Commission (which had changed its name in the meantime), indicated a total of 310,000 victims, using Bednarz's calculation method, but with an unexplained reduction in the range from 330 to 300 days: 300 × 1,000 + 10,000 = 310,000 (Główna Komisja… 1979, pp.129f.).

During the criminal trial against former members of the Chełmno *Sonderkommando*, the Bonn Jury Court settled for an alleged minimum death toll of 152,000, consisting of 145,000 victims during the camp's first phase and 7,000 during its second phase. The court based its assumptions for the camp's first operational phase on the figure given in the so-called Korherr Report for Jews led "through the camps of the Warthegau…145,301." Korherr even appeared as a witness to confirm this number (Rüter *et al.* 1979, pp. 285f.). The figures of the camp's second phase are based on deportation lists compiled by the "Statistical Department of the Eldest of the Jews in the Ghetto of Litzmannstadt," according to which 7,176 Jews were deported from the ghetto in summer 1944, although with no destination given (*ibid.*, p. 286). Hence the court assumed a minimum death toll of 145,000 for the first and 7,100 or 7,000 for the second phase (*ibid.*, pp. 235, 241, 263, 286).

Polish historiography was subsequently adjusted to this order of magnitude. In 1995 Julian Baranowski wrote (1995, pp. 23f.):

> *"As a result of this process* [of mass extermination]*, which lasted from 10 December 1941 to 12 September 1942, more than 134,000 inhabitants of the ghettos in the region of Warta and more than*

[94] IMT, vol. 8, pp. 330f. Bednarz's name is misspelled there as "Wladislav Bengash," the camp as "Helmno."

Table 2: Victims of the Chełmno camp per Baranowski 1995, p. 24

DISTRICTS	NUMBER OF JEWS DECEMBER 1941	DATES OF EXTERMINATION	NUMBER OF MURDER VICTIMS	NUMBER DEPORTED TO ŁÓDŹ GHETTO
Łódź city	167,540	I-V and IX 1942	70,672	/
		VI-VII 1944	7,196	
Ciechocinek	1,580	IV 1942	1,580	/
Gostynin	about 4400	IV 1942	about 4400	/
Kalisz and city	1,449	III 1942	972	522
Koło	3,830	XII-1941 – II 1942	3,830	
Kutno	about 13,000	III-IV 1942	about 10,700	
Łask	21,734	VI-VIII 1942	15,859	5,875
Łęczyca	10,528	V-VIII 1942	8,760	1,767
Łódź surrounding area	6,203	V 1942	2,423	3,780
Sieradz	11,731	VIII 1942	9,589	2,142
Turek	3,432	XII 1941-VII 1942	3,342	190
Wieluń	10,490	VIII 1942	9,498	992
Wocławek	5,639	IV-V 1942	2,557	3,082
Total	*261,556**	/	*151,378***	*18,350*

* In the original erroneously 261,558; ** In the original erroneously 151,380

10,000 Western European Gypsies were murdered in the Chełmno camp. Among them, sharing this fate, were over 4,000 Gypsies from the Austro-Hungarian border region. The second phase of the liquidation of Jews in the Chełmno camp began in June 1944. The victims of this action were the inhabitants of the last European ghetto – the ghetto of Łódź. Until its closure on 14 July 1944, 7,200 more Jews perished in this camp. The tally of the extermination of the Jewish population in the Warta region and of the Jews deported from Western Europe to be liquidated comes close to 151,000. Even if adding approximately 4,000 Gypsies and assuming a figure of some 3,000 Jews from the labor camps liquidated by the Łódź district government, the death toll of the Chełmno extermination camp is far short of figures given so far. In light of the figures contained in the attached table, the data about the extermination of 200,000 and even more than 300,000 victims alleged in these publications are far from the truth, are highly exaggerated."

The data of the table in question, entitled "The extermination of the Jews from the territory of Warthegau and Western Europe at Chełmno

upon Ner during the period December 1941 to July 1944," is given in Table 2.

Hence the number of alleged victims posited by today's orthodox historians, including Polish historiography, is less than half the figure put forward by Judge Bednarz in 1946.

In this context it is perhaps interesting to note that the order of magnitude of the future alleged total death toll of the Chełmno camp was already anticipated in late November 1942. At that time the clandestine Polish periodical *Ziemie Zachodnie Rzeczypospolitej* (Western Territory of the Republic) wrote (Chrzanowski 1985, p. 100):

> *"From December 1941 to October of this year 250,000 to 300,000 Jews, mainly from the Łódź district and partly from Germany, have so far gone to this camp and have not returned."*

12. Jewish Deportation Transports to Chełmno

12.1. Transports from Warthegau to the Łódź Ghetto

The first three Jewish transports to arrive in the ghetto of Łódź from the Warthegau were made up as follows:

– First transport: 937 Jews from Leslau
– second transport: 762 Jews from Lubraniec and 316 from Chodecz
– third transport: 399 Jews from Brześć Kujawski and 668 from Kowal

The total of these three sets of deportees is therefore 3,082 Jews.[95] Concerning the third transport there is a report by the head of the Hygiene Section (*Gesundheits-Abteilung*) of the ghetto dated 10 October 1941:[96]

> *"Re. C h i l d r e n .*
> *Among the* [668] *Jews admitted on 9 October 1941 are*
> *374 C h i l d r e n .*
> *All those admitted from K o w a l had been housed in a church since 29 September 1941 together with their children, where many children have suffered through the measles. A measles epidemic raged in Kowal.*
> *Right now 193 children are incubating the measles, and the measles will most likely break out on 11 or 12 Oct. 1941.*
> *Since no case of measles exists here in the ghetto, a strict and absolute isolation of the admitted children is necessary in order to prevent spreading the measles."*

After referring to cases of other infectious diseases among these children, the report continues:

> *"Re.: A d u l t s :*
> *intensely louse-infested,*
> *several cases of blindness,*
> *one pneumonia,*
> *one open tuberculosis,*

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95 "*Eingesiedelte im Jahre 1941 aus dem Altreich, Wien, Prag, Luxemburg und aus Leslau und Umgebung*." APL, PSZ, 863, p. 81.

96 "*Bericht des Vorsitzenden der Gesundheits-Abteilung, Herrn Dr. Miller, vom 10. Oktober 1941 über den Zustand der am 9. Oktober 1941 aus Leslau und Umgebung eingewiesenen Juden*." APL, PSZ, 1570, p. 1. At the end the report bears the stamp of Ch. Rumkowski, "*Der Älteste der Juden in Litzmannstadt*."

74 geriatrics,
Then also scabies and less-severe skin diseases."

In the first half of 1942 7,649 Jews were transferred to the Łódź ghetto from Warthegau in the following transports:

– from Zgierz: a transport (January) of 84 persons
– from Pabianice: 4 transports (17 and 18 May) of 3,652 people
– from Löwenstadt: 4 transports (19 and 20 May) of 2,927 people
– from Osorkow: a transport (22 May) of 741 persons
– from Belchatow: a transport (13June) of 115 persons
– from Zelow: a transport (13 June) of 96 persons
– from 14 unspecified cities: 1 transport (24 June) of 34 persons.

The total number of persons transferred included 1,436 children under fourteen years (including two infants born in 1941) and 171 older than sixty years (including 2 of 89).[97]

12.2. The Deportations to Chełmno

From the "Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto" the following picture of the deportations of Jews from Łódź to Chełmno results, but is never mentioned:

MONTH	RESETTLED (*AUSGESIEDELT*)	SOURCE*
January	10,003	vol. I, p. 401
February	7,025	vol. I, p. 426
March	24,687	vol. I, p. 445
April	2,349	vol. I, p. 495
May	10,914	vol. II, p. 7
September	15,685**	vol. II, p. 278f.
Total:	*70,663*	

* Dąbrowska/Dobroszycki 1965;
** The deportations took place on 1, 2, and 7 to 12 September

A report from the ghetto's Statistical Office of 30 June 1942 shows the number of evacuees by date of birth, sex and "stages":[98]

97 "*Eingesiedelte aus dem Warthegau 1.I.-30.VI. 1942*." APL, PSZ, 863, pp. 86f.
98 "*Ausgesiedelte aus dem Getto 1.I.-30.VI.1942*." APL, PSZ, 863, pp. 57-59.

STAGE	PERIOD	NUMBER OF TRANSPORTS	NUMBER DEPORTED
I	16 to 29 January	14	10,003
II	14 February to 2 April	40	34,073
III	4 to 15 May	12	10,914
	Total:	*66*	*54,990*

Some transports are known in detail from the railway documents that have been preserved. For the period from 16 March to 2 April 1942 we can derive the following numbers:[99]

DAY	EVACUATED – "*AUSGESIEDELT*"	DAY	EVACUATED – "AUSGESIEDELT"
16 March	637	25 March	1,000
17 March	768	26 March	1,001
18 March	1,001	27 March	1,000
19 March	1,000	28 March	1,001
20 March	1,001	29 March	1,000
21 March	1,041	30 March	965
22 March	303	31 March	883
23 March	797	1 April	1,049
24 March	1,000	2 April	1,301
		Total:	*16,748*

The trains left from the station at Widzew-Radegast (Łódź) and arrived at Pryzbyłów and Warthbrücken (Koło) traveling the following distances:

– Widzew-Radegast-Przybylow = 147 km
– Warthbrücken-Widzew-Radegast = 146 km.

The guards of the first four transports traveled up to Przybylow, the others to Warthbrücken. There were always 13 guards, regardless of the number of deportees.

For the period of 4 to 15 May 1942 we have the following data:[100]

[99] "*Nachweis der in der Zeit 16.3 – 2.4.42 abgefertigten Juden – Sdz*," in: Hilberg 1981, pp. 145f.

[100] "*Nachweis der in der Zeit 4.5 -15.5.42 abgefertigten Juden – Sdz*," in: Jüdisches Historisches… 1960, p. 281.

DATE	EVACUATED – "*AUSGESIEDELT*"	EXPELLED – "*AUSWEISUNG*"[101]
4 May	1,008	1,002
5 May	914	909
6 May	1,000	1,000
7 May	952	952
8 May	954	949
9 May	952	952
10 May	1,005	950
11 May	949	949
12 May	947	947
13 May	1,000	999
14 May	706	706
15 May	606	599
Total:	*10,993*	*10,914*

These trains also left from the Widzew-Radegast station and traveled up to Warthbrücken. The escort was always 13 guards, except 4 May (12 guards).

The table below summarizes the data of orthodox Holocaust historiography concerning evacuations to Chełmno from individual locations each month:

MONTH/ YEAR	ŁÓDŹ	CIECHOCINEK	GOSTYNIN	KALISZ	SIERADZ	WIELUŃ	WŁOCŁAWEK	ŁĘCZYCA	ŁASK	KUTNO	KOŁO
12/'41											
1/'42	10,003										3,830
2/'42	7,025										
3/'42	24,687			972						10,700	
4/'42	2,349	1,580	4,400				2,557				
5/'42	10,914							8,760	15,859		
6/'42											
7/'42											
8/'42					9,589	9,498					
9/'42	15,685										
6/'44	7,196										
7/'44											
Totals	77,859	1,580	4,400	972	9,589	9,498	2,557	8,760	15,859	10,700	3,830
Total evacuees: 145,604											

[101] "*Bevölkerungsveränderungen im Monat Mai 1942 nach Meldungen*." APL, PSZ 863, p. 52.

12.3. Who Was Evacuated and Why?

In a report by the Gestapo in Łódź on the deportations of 9 June 1942 we read as follows (Jüdisches Historisches… 1960, pp. 285f.):

> *"On order of the Gauleiter all Jews unable to work are to be evacuated and those fit for work of the entire Gau are to be concentrated in the Litzmannstadt ghetto. From here larger quantities of Jews are to be deployed for various works (construction of railroads and roads) in the Gau area, and after completion of the work they are to be led back into the ghetto. The Jews remaining in the ghetto are to be deployed for work there without exception. During the formation of the Gau's first ghettos it proved necessary to make room for the Jews to be settled in. For this purpose a larger number of Jews unable to work was evacuated from the ghetto and sent to the Sonderkommando. 44,152 of the Polish Jews have been resettled since 16 Jan.* [19]*42. Of the 19,848 Jews from the Old Reich, from Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia which were admitted to the local ghetto in October 1941, 10,993 have been evacuated, so that by now space for about 55,000 Jews has been created in the ghetto."*

So the Jews evacuated were those unable to work, and the reason for the evacuation was to create space for new arrivals fit for work. A later report, dated 2 July 1942, *i.a.* fixed the working-age limit as follows (*ibid.,* p. 292.):

> *"Due to the strong decrease in the Jews' hardiness, the work performance has decreased as well. In this context, the eldest of the Jews has now brought to work assignments all children over 10 years of age in order to ensure that the delivery dates of Army orders are scrupulously met."*

The verdict of the Bonn Jury Court stated:

> *"Since on the one hand emigration had failed, yet on the other hand space had to be created for the ethnic Germans to be resettled, the National Socialist leadership of the Warthegau decided in conjunction with Hitler and Himmler to 'evacuate' (which according to the terminology back then meant: to kill) all Jews unfit for work and to concentrate all those of the entire Gau* [district] *who were fit for work in the ghetto of Lodz."* (Rüter *et al.* 1979, p. 275)

> *"For the most part these were women, children and older men who were no longer fit for work."* (*ibid.*, p. 233; similar p. 281)

In this context Baranowski stated (1999, p. 94):

> *"Another tragedy took place between 3 and 12 September 1942: a deportation directed against children under the age of 10 and adults over 65."*

He published three excerpts from a list of "Jews evacuated from the Litzmannstadt ghetto" (*Evakuierte Juden aus Litzmannstadt-Getto*) dated 7 September 1942 (*ibid.,* p. 93) containing the names of 69 children born between 1939 and 1942 and further states that the Jews of the ghetto in the age group 10 to 65 years were forced to work (*ibid.,* p. 74). If we adopt this figure, the data from 30 June 1942 mentioned above means that of the 54,990 Jews evacuated from the ghetto and allegedly sent to Chełmno, some 46,572, that is almost 85%, were able to work!

Conversely, after the end of the evacuations the number of children under the age of 10 remaining in the ghetto and escaping the alleged gassing at Chełmno was still quite high. From a statistical report called "The population of the ghetto on 1 August 1943 based on year of birth and sex according to dispatches" (*Gettobevölkerung am 1. August 1943 laut Geburtsjahr und Geschlecht nach Meldungen*)[102] we have the following data:

YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTALS	YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTALS
1934	549	447	996	1939	464	439	903
1935	460	464	924	1940	283	279	562
1936	405	341	746	1941	148	112	260
1937	582	610	1,192	1942	88	119	207
1938	517	471	988	1943	39	37	76
				Totals	*3,535*	*3,319*	*6,854*

In addition to these 6,854 children under 9 years old, there were living in the ghetto 1,400 people older than 65 years, broken down by year of birth and sex as appears in the following table. The oldest person was a woman of 95 years.

[102] APL, PSZ, 863, p. 21.

YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTALS	YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTALS
1848	0	1	1	1865	12	5	17
1850	1	2	3	1866	22	18	40
1852	0	3	3	1867	9	1	10
1853	0	1	1	1868	13	45	58
1854	1	0	1	1869	13	49	62
1855	1	0	1	1870	29	25	54
1856	0	3	3	1871	37	83	120
1857	0	3	3	1872	31	57	88
1858	4	2	6	1873	41	114	155
1859	6	5	11	1874	21	74	95
1861	1	3	4	1875	104	176	280
1862	0	4	4	1876	55	107	162
1863	10	13	23	1877	67	117	184
1864	10	1	11	*Totals*	*488*	*912*	*1,400*

The total number of inhabitants of the ghetto unable to work was therefore 8,254 out of a total of 84,280.

From the last known data on the population of the ghetto, dating back to 1 March 1944, we have a total of 77,679 Jews broken down by age as follows:[103]

AGE RANGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
8	2,248	2,247	4,495
9 – 14	3,373	3,313	6,686
15 – 20	5,670	6,308	11,978
21 – 30	5,811	11,181	16,992
31 – 40	7,620	10,344	17,964
41 – 50	4,443	5,950	10,393
51 – 60	2,663	3,705	6,368
61 – 70	881	1,530	2,411
71 – 80	127	242	369
81 – 86	5	18	23
Totals:	*32,841*	*44,838*	*77,679*

Above I noted that on 30 June 1942, of the 54,990 Jews evacuated from the ghetto, 46,572 were able to work. Children under 10 and seniors over 65 therefore totaled 8,418. This fact, though incompatible with the thesis of extermination at Chełmno, fits perfectly with the thesis of transfer to the east. The evacuation lists in fact demonstrate indisputably that the deportations took place by family. The undated first list has 710

[103] "*Aufteilung der Getto-Bevölkerung per 1. März 1944*." APL, PSZ, 184, p. 13.

people, including 26 families consisting of five to eight members.[104] For example, the Januszewicz family consisted of Chana (1906), Mordka (1931), Małka (1933), Ester Bajla (1936), Abram (1934), Liba (1939) and Leew (1941);[105] the Beremblum family of Száma (1903), Sura (1909), Irena (1906), Beresz (1927), Mendel (1926), Abram Icek (1928), Roza (1911), and Luzer (1936);[106] the Wołch family of Kraut (1900), Sara (1897), Machla (1929), Perla (1930), Esther Gitla (1932) and Nechem (1939).[107]

Another 24 families had 4 members, 38 had 3.

The undated list no. 14 contains 586 persons, including 28 families from five to eight members, 19 of four members, and 50 of three members.[108] For example, the Piepszynski family consisted of Jadzia (1929), Cerka (1907), Estera (1927), Abram (1937), Rucha (1903), Zlata (1929), Menachem (1931) and Bencjon (1935).[109] The Zalcsztajn family included Szulim (1896), Chaja (1896), Chana (1921), Icek (1922), Rojza (1928), Ita (1934) and Moszek (1937).[110]

List no. 32, also undated, includes 1,000 people, among whom were 45 families consisting of five to seven persons, 45 of four and 62 of three.[111] For example, the Cukier family included Zyskind (1903), Tauba (1903), Dawid (1925), Juda (1927), Szmul (1933), Niece (1935) and Icek (1936),[112] and the Ber family, Idel-Lajb (1909), Masz (1906), the twins Fiszel and Kerszel (1934), Chaim (1939), Moszek (1870) and Perla (1874).[113]

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[104] "*Transportliste Evakuierter Juden aus dem Getto Litzmannstadt*. *1. Transport*." APL, PSZ, 1229, pp. 1-25.
[105] *Ibid.,* p. 7.
[106] *Ibid.,* p. 21.
[107] *Ibid.*, S. 9.
[108] "*Transportliste Evakuierter Juden aus dem Getto Litzmannstadt. Transport 14*." APL, PSZ, 1229, pp. 272-291.
[109] *Ibid.*, p. 281.
[110] *Ibid.*, p. 279.
[111] "*Transportliste Evakuierter Juden aus dem Getto Litzmannstadt. Transportliste XXXII*." APL, PSZ, 1229, pp. 86-119.
[112] *Ibid.*, p. 90.
[113] *Ibid.*, p. 92.

12.4. Operations Ceased in 1943 and Resumed in 1944 – Why?

According to the investigations of Judge Bednarz, the first phase of the camp's existence lasted from 8 December 1941 to 7 April 1943 (Bednarz 1946d, p. 7). On this date the camp ceased its alleged extermination operation: the palace was blown up and the crematoria were destroyed. However, as shown in the summary table presented above (bottom of p. 116), the last alleged act of mass murder took place in September 1942, with the result that the camp would be left idle for more than six months. So why was it liquidated only on 7 April 1943?

The reopening of the camp in 1944 is even more incomprehensible. Krakowski writes (1983, p. 136):

> *"In early 1944 the National Socialists decided to resume the extermination activities in Kulmhof due to the impending liquidation of the Łódź ghetto."*

However, after 10 transports allegedly sent to Chełmno, the National Socialists allegedly realized that "Kulmhof's capacity did not suffice for the killing of tens of thousands [of people] in a very short time" (*ibid.*, p. 142). So after a year of operation the SS is said to still have been unfamiliar with Chełmno's extermination capacity?

13. The Alleged Gassings in 1944: Chełmno and Auschwitz[114]

Krakowski quotes a letter from Arthur Greiser to Oswald Pohl dated 14 February 1944 in which, among other things, we read (Krakowski 1983, p. 137):

> *"The reduction will be made by the SS Sonderkommando Hauptsturmführer Bothmann, who has worked previously in the Gau."*

In a telex to Himmler of 9 June 1944, Greiser reported *i.a.* as follows (Rückerl 1979, p. 284):

> *"Since I have finished the preparations for the ghetto's evacuation and as I have carried out the first evacuations of the same,…"*

Rückerl comments (*ibid.*, p. 284, note 83):

> *"Greiser's statement that the evacuation had already started in early June seems to have been a mere demonstration intended to express the urgency of his request. From other sources it can be inferred that the transports from Łódź to Chełmno started only at the end of June 1944."*

In fact, the "reduction" of the ghetto had already begun three months earlier with two transports that departed on 4 and 16 March 1944, one with 750 people and the other with 850.[115] As we learn from Eisenbach on the basis of documents kept in the Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, these 1,600 Jews were sent to the arms factories in Skarżysko-Kamienna, a town about 45 km south-west of Radom (Eisenbach 1961, p. 568). This is confirmed by Krakowski (2007, p. 136). In this regard, there is also an essay by Hans Biebow of 18 March 1944 on the subject of "Transfer of 1,500 Jews to the General Government" (*Überführung von 1500 Juden in das Generalgouvernement*; Jüdisches Historisches… 1960, p. 461).

The transport list of 4 May was accompanied by a note saying:[116]

> *"Attached the C.P.* [=Central Prison] *sends a list of persons who have left the C.P. on 4 March of this year for work outside the ghetto."*

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[114] This is a summary of my study Mattogno 2003.
[115] APL, PSZ, 1223, pp. 60-73 and 14-59 (list of names of transport).
[116] APL, PSZ, 1223, p. 74.

And the transport list of 16 March has this heading: "For work on 16 March 1944 from Litzmannstadt-Ghetto" (*Zur Arbeit am 16. März 1944 aus Litzmannstadt Ghetto).*[117]

In May there were other small transports of Jews "moved out for work outside the ghetto" (*zur Arbeit ausserhalb des Ghettos abgereist*), for example: 90 on day 4; 50 on day 17; 30 on day 27; 60 on day 30.[118] The bulk of transports, however, began on 23 June. The Łódź State Archives has preserved lists of names from ten Jewish transports – men and women – who left the Łódź ghetto between 23 June and 14 July 1944[119] according to the following table:

TRANSPORT	DATE	NUMBER OF DEPORTEES
1	23 June 1944	562
2	26 June 1944	912
3	28 June 1944	799
4	30 June 1944	700
5	3 July 1944	699
6	5 July 1944	699
7	7 July 1944	700
8	10 July 1944	700
9	12 July 1944	700
10	14 July 1944	699
	Total	*7,170*

These lists also bear the heading "*zur Arbeit ausserhalb des Ghettos ausgereist*" – moved out for work outside the ghetto.

The verdict of the Bonn Jury Court states in this regard (Rüter *et al.* 1979, p. 286):

> *"The statistical lists mentioned do not expressly state that these transports left for Chełmno instead of for Auschwitz, for example, as they did starting in August 1944. But this derives from the credible affirmations of the witness Z., who came to Chełmno with the 7th or 8th transport and who has given the total number of all transports carried out to Chełmno as 10 to 12. The Jury Court is therefore convinced that the ten transports mentioned went to Chełmno and that therefore at least 7,000 Jewish persons were killed in Chełmno during the camp's second phase."*

[117] APL, PSZ, 1223, p. 14.
[118] APL, PSZ, 1223, pp. 10-16,
[119] APL, PSZ, 1309, pp. 1-225.

"Witness Z" was Żurawski, and the Jury Court recklessly based the conviction for exterminating 7,000 Jews at Chełmno on a single, moreover extremely dubious, witness!

There is in fact not the least indication that the 10 transports were sent to Chełmno, and this is so evident that even Eisenbach wrote in his famous documentary collection on the Łódź ghetto, with reference to the evacuation of the ghetto (Eisenbach 1946, p. 265):

> *"The Chełmno camp had already been dissolved* [in the summer of 1944]*, and therefore the Jews were sent to Auschwitz and other camps."*

In this context, he mentioned the first three transports of the table which I quoted above (*ibid.*). It is therefore clear that he, who had studied the documents available to the Central Jewish Historical Commission (including witnesses), did not have even the slightest hint indicating that the 10 above-mentioned Jewish transports were sent to Chełmno.

Let us return to the 7,170 Jews transferred between 23 June and 14 July 1944. The lists of names are of fundamental importance in order to understand whether these Jews were actually deported "for work." In these lists, in fact, we have the dates of birth for 6,763 individuals, ranging from 6 to 70 years old, although such extreme ages are exceptions: there are only 3 children aged 6 years, 4 aged 7 years, 7 aged 8 years, 8 aged 9 years and 9 aged 10 years. In the same way, the lists contain only one person each of the ages 70, 69 and 66 years, 2 of 65 years, 6 of 64 years, 2 of 63 years, 7 of 62 years, 4 of 61 years and 17 of 60 years. The age distribution of the deportees is shown in the following table:

AGE RANGE	DEPORTEES	AGE RANGE	DEPORTEES
≤ 8	14	31 – 40	1,338
9 – 14	181	41 – 50	915
15 – 20	1,660	51 – 60	341
21 – 30	2,290	61 – 70	24
		Total	*6,763*

It is therefore evident that the vast majority of the deportees were people capable of work, most of whom had actually worked in various facilities in the ghetto. Numerous documents attest that, on the day of deportation, the ghetto administration regularly communicated to individual companies that they had lost the labor of the transferred Jews

who had worked there.[120] However, in the hypothetical case of a policy of extermination of Jews unable to work, it would be stupid to exterminate all 7,170 Jews, most of whom were perfectly capable of work. It would have been more logical instead to send to the alleged extermination camp at Chełmno those unable to work, *i.e.* the 4,495 children under ten years old and the 392 people over 70 who were still in the ghetto on 1 March 1944.

Another important fact helps us to understand why the transports also included small children: even in this case the deportees were not selected by age – at least not only by age – but by family, as is clear from the names and addresses of the deportees. For example, one of three six-year-old children, Johanna Dahl, born in 1938, was deported with the third transport along with Greta Dahl, born in 1912, presumably the mother: both had the same address, Krater 25.[121] The second child born in 1938, Dora Gerstel, was deported with the second carriage along with Edith Gerstel, born in 1904; both had lived at Siegfried 14.[122] The third six-year-old child, Moniek Sztycki, was deported in the fourth transport along with Gela Sztycka, born in 1900, who had too lived at Hohensteiner 13.[123]

In conclusion, the 10 above-mentioned transports of Jews were not sent to be gassed at Chełmno, but to concentration camps "for work."

This also follows from the "Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto." On 16 July 1944 it stated (Krakowski 2007, p. 140):

> *"In fact this is not about an evacuation of merely 500 people which had to be concealed as a voluntary recruitment, but about numerous work consignments outside the ghetto. It is said that first of all the first group of about 500 people is bound for Munich, where they must perform clearance work* [of air-raid rubble]*. The same week, probably 23 Friday of this month, another group of about 900 people has to leave. Then for three weeks 3,000 people have to leave in transports of 1,000 people each. For each transport, a head of transport, two doctors, medical personnel and security services have to be appointed. The latter may not be formed by the ghetto's security services, but be taken from the same transport. We do not know where the large groups are headed. Even for these large transports*

[120] APL, PSZ, 1302 (lists of names).
[121] APL, PSZ, 1309, p. 58, nos. 136 & 137 of the list.
[122] APL, PSZ, 1309, p. 70, nos. 223 & 224 of the list.
[123] APL, PSZ, 1309, p. 201, nos. 589 & 590 of the list.

> *the same transport rules apply which are referred to in the above-mentioned notice. 15-20 kg of luggage may be brought along, but this baggage has to take up as little space as possible."*

An annotation a little later, dated 26 July, said:[124]

> *"Today came the first news from the ghetto people who left the ghetto for work during the last evacuation. 31 postcards arrived, all of which had been postmarked on 19 July 1944. From these cards it fortunately results that the people are well and above all that the families are together. One postcard says in simple Yiddish words: 'We laugh about your soup!' They are happy in the ghetto and hopeful that they will soon receive similar reports from other evacuees. It is therefore confirmed that the labor columns have actually been employed in the Altreich. We remember that before the departure of the first carriage it was said that they had to go to Munich. One group has probably arrived there. Also note that, as evidenced by the news, the people are housed in comfortable cabins."*

One final observation: As we have seen above, according to orthodox historiography, the SS used the term *Evakuierung* (evacuation) in order to camouflage the transfer of Jews to Chełmno for homicidal purposes. In the "Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto" the participle *wysiedlono* = "displaced, evacuated" is used,[125] which translates into German as *Ausgesiedelte*.[126] But here those allegedly gassed in 1944 are no longer referred to as *evakuiert* or *ausgesiedelt* but instead as "*zur Arbeit aus Litzmannstadt-Getto ausgereist"* – moved out of the Łódź ghetto for work. Do we find ourselves faced with an "encrypted" term for murder within an encrypted expression, a kind of double encryption? Who can seriously believe such a thing?

The confirmation of the above conclusions is offered to us specifically by the deportation of the remaining Jews of the Łódź ghetto to Auschwitz. In this regard, Krakowski says (1983, p. 142):

> *"In August 1944 the Lodz ghetto was liquidated within three weeks; the 70,000 Jews there were deported to Auschwitz to be gassed. Kulmhof's capacity did not suffice for the killing of tens of thousands* [of people] *in a very short time."*

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[124] Hoffmann 2008, p. 226. The author claims that the cards in question were written in Chełmno, but this is only an unproven conjecture.
[125] Dąbrowska/Dobroszycki 1965, vol. I, p. 495 & passim.
[126] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 477 & passim.

In fact, of the 65,000 Jews (maximum figure) deported in August 1944 from the Łódź ghetto, no more than 22,500 were sent to Auschwitz, of whom about 11,500 were then transferred from Auschwitz to Stutthof. Included in the transport of 3 September 1944 were also some forty children from 6 months to 14 years, who should have ended up in the "gas chambers" at Auschwitz, if orthodox "logic" had its way, but who were instead transferred with their mothers to Stutthof and properly registered there (see Documents 15, 15a, and Table 3, p. 149).

The two brothers Michael Salomonowicz (born 6 Oct. 1933, no. 1653 on transport list, registered at Stutthof with the number 83620) and Josef (born 1 July 1938, numbers 1654 and 83621 as above) traveled with their mother Dora Salomonowicz, born 28 August 1904, number 1652 on the transport list, registered under number 83619 at Stutthof. All three came from the Łódź ghetto, whither they had been deported on 3 November 1941, and all three survived the war (Terezínská Iniziativa 1995, vol. I, p. 138).[127] Michael and Josef therefore were 8 and 3 years old, respectively, when they were deported to Łódź, yet in spite of this they survived both the selection for alleged extermination at Chełmno and the selection for the claimed extermination at Auschwitz!

There is no doubt that the remaining children also came from Łódź. The transfer of these children shows that among the Jews of the Łódź ghetto there was no selection for the alleged gas chambers, otherwise how would they have remained alive?

Of about 11,000 male Jews deported to Auschwitz from the Łódź ghetto, around 3,100 were registered. The fates of the remaining 7,900 are not documented. Yet although their alleged gassing as unable to work cannot be ruled out *a priori*, in such a case the question would arise again, why the children mentioned above would have been left alive? The adults, like all non-registered Jews, were probably sent to the Birkenau *Durchgangslager* (transit camp), and from there they were probably transferred to other concentration camps.

As I noted above, on 1 March 1944 there were in the Łódź ghetto 4,495 children under 8 years old and 392 persons older than 70 years. In the 10 Jewish transports from the ghetto between 23 June and 14 July 1944 there were 14 children up to 8 years old and no persons over 70 years old. Since the 1,600 Jews moved from the ghetto in March 1944

[127] Interesting that all three appear in the Yad Vashem "Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names"!

were all able to work, being aged (with some exceptions)[128] between 18 and 45, it follows that the 65,000 Jews moved out of the ghetto in August 1944 included more than 4,800 inmates unable to work who were not gassed either at Auschwitz or elsewhere.

And if, as claimed by Krakowski, "Kulmhof's capacity did not suffice for the killing of tens of thousands [of people] in a very short time" (1983, p. 142), why would the alleged extermination camp at Chełmno have been reactivated, since the alleged extermination camp at Auschwitz was available?

On 15 August 1944 the head of *Amtsgruppe DIV (KL-Verwaltung*[129]*)* of the *WVHA*, SS *Sturmbannführer* Burger, sent to the head of *Amtsgruppe B*, SS *Gruppenführer* Lörner, a letter relating to a "*Häftlingsmeldung*" (communication concerning prisoners) and "*Häftlingsbekleidung* (clothing for prisoners). This says that on 1 August 1944 the population of the concentration camps was 379,167 male and 145,119 female prisoners, to whom were added "*angekündigte Neuzugänge*" (announced new arrivals). Among them are 60,000 prisoners "*aus Litzmannstadt (Polizeigefängnis und Getto*)" – from Łódź (police and ghetto prisoners). The list of "*Neuzugänge*" (new arrivals), 612,000 prisoners altogether, was closed with the following comment:[130]

> *"A major part of the inmates is already en route and will arrive in the concentration camps during the next days."*

Burger stated that there was not enough clothing for 612,000 new prisoners on arrival and therefore requested the allocation of "special textile quotas." The *Amt DIV/4* was indeed responsible for clothing (*Bekleidung*), so the *WVHA* genuinely expected these prisoners to arrive in the concentration camps and to be in need of proper clothes – a need which executees do not have. Therefore, also the 60,000 Jews from Łódź were expected to stay alive and be in need of clothing, whose evacuation to the concentration camps had already been under way for several days.

This document shows the claim to be historically unfounded that the Jews from the Łódź ghetto were sent to Auschwitz in order to be gassed there.

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[128] Two inmates of 17 years, two of 16 and one of 49.
[129] Office group D IV (administration of the concentration camps).
[130] PS-1166.

14. The Alleged Murder of Gypsies and the Children of Lidice

14.1. The Gypsies

In his report of 7 January 1946 Judge Bednarz wrote that the Germans had killed 5,000 Gypsies at Chełmno, among others (1946d, p. 2). This information was immediately transformed into a certain historical fact and as such was accepted even by the Jury Court in Bonn (Rüter *et al.* 1979, p. 284):

> *"To this total figure some 5,000 Gypsies have to be added which, according to the credible statements by witness G. (at that time active as the deputy of the Eldest of the Jews in the administration of the Łódź ghettos) and Fuchs (at that time police detective at the State Police Department Łódź), were evacuated from the Łódź ghettos and killed in Chełmno."*

Documentary information about the fate of the Gypsies in the Łódź ghetto is very limited. Anton Galiński informs us that the first transport of Gypsies – 1,000 people – came from Hartberg to Łódź on 5 November 1941, followed by three more transports of also 1,000 persons each: on the 6th from Fürstenfeld, on the 7th from Mattesburg and on the 8th from Rotenturm. The last transport of 1,007 individuals arrived on the 9th from Oberwart. These 5,007 Gypsies consisted of 1,130 men, 1,188 women and 2,689 children (Galiński 1995, p. 76). On the 4th or 5th of November 1941 the first cases occurred of what soon became a terrible typhus epidemic, which eventually led to the liquidation of the Gypsy Camp (*ibid.*, p. 78). In this respect Galiński writes (*ibid.*):

> *"In the absence of documents it is impossible to establish reliable data on the final liquidation of the Gypsies in the Łódź camp* [i.e. the Gypsy Camp in Łódź]. *The apex of their deportation to the extermination camp Chełmno upon Ner falls in the period between 5 and 12 January 1942. This can be seen from invoices issued by the ghetto administration for the rental of trucks needed by the Gypsy Camp. This is also confirmed by the Jew 'Szlamek' who escaped from the Chełmno killing center."*

In reality no document records that the Gypsies were transported to Chełmno. The "Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto" provides the following

information on the fate of the Gypsy Camp. The bulletin of 1-5 December 1942 reads (Dąbrowska/Dobroszycki 1965, vol. I, p. 361):

> *"Mortality in 'Gypsy Camp.' Prior to the camp's liquidation. According to the data of the local funeral section, which, as the bulletin of the first day of last month noted, undertakes the burials of the dead from the 'Gypsy Camp' in the area allotted to the Jewish cemetery, during the month of December* [1941] *400 people were buried in this area (previously, since arrival* [of the Gypsies]*, 213), which is twice the deaths which had occurred among the 250,000 Jews who lived in Łódź before the war. Due to a typhus epidemic raging in the camp area, the funeral section put in place special measures of precaution. Ultimately the dead 'Gypsies' are brought to the cemetery not in hearses, but with a special vehicle built for this purpose, closed with boards and covered with a tarpaulin. For the transportation of corpses special containers are used as well. On this occasion it is worth noting that even an undertaker has fallen victim to his profession, a certain Boms who used to transport the corpses from the camp. As in the doctors' cases, he had probably been infected with typhus. Fortunately, however, a tragic end was avoided, as it had happened to a doctor and an official of the criminal investigation department. After several weeks of treatment, Boms recovered from the infectious disease and left the hospital on the 2nd of December. As affirmed by the inhabitants of the camp's immediate vicitnity, for 10 days the 'Gypsies' have been taken away by truck. This camp will have been completely cleared by the end of this week; that is absolutely certain. Already now the camp is almost uninhabited. The liquidation of the camp was probably dictated by the necessity to obviate the danger of the typhus contagion."*

The bulletin of 1 December 1941 reports that the Gypsies, numbering some 5,000, had arrived in Łódź on 8 November 1941, it and confirms the figure of 213 deaths. Therefore the liquidation of the camp took place in early January 1942.[131] This is indirectly confirmed by a letter with the heading "The Mayor of Litzmannstadt" (*Der Oberbürgermeister von Litzmannstadt*) dated 14 January 1942, which ordered:[132]

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[131] The bulletin says that between 1 and 5 January 1942 the Gypsy Camp was liquidated with absolute certainty "by the end of this week," *i.e.* the week ending Sunday, 4 January.

[132] APL, PSZ, 110, p. 20.

"The former Gypsy Camp has been put under quarantine until 18 Feb. 1942. Hence I prohibit herewith any access to this area."

A previous letter, sent 5 December 1941 by Chaim Rumkowski of the ghetto administration, with the topic "Gypsy Camp – typhus" (*Zigeunerlager – Fleckfieber*), proposed implementing prophylactic measures against the spread of disease:[133]

"After conferring with my physicians I may suggest to you the following in the above matter:

In order to prevent a transfer of the typhus diseases detected in the Gypsy Camp to Litzmannstadt and the ghetto, the following might be suggested or recommended:

1. The installation of a bathing facility in the Gypsy Camp with at least ten showers.

2. Establishing a permanent disinfector.

3. It is necessary that the Gypsy corpses are undressed, washed, shorn, shaved and if possible placed in boxes or paper bags prior to being brought to the Jewish corpse cart.

4. The danger of an infection/body louse/ is reduced to a minimum, if each Gypsy is bathed and moreover his clothes are disinfected accordingly before getting in touch with German authorities or with the ghetto's health-care staff."

On the other hand, already on 12 November 1941 "the Mayor of Litzmannstadt" had ordered several measures to improve the Gypsy Camp, which included a hospital system and latrines, upgrading the kitchen and the construction of a disinfestation plant.[134] Therefore the liquidation of the Gypsy Camp was not premeditated, but due to the typhus epidemic which had broken out.

Whither were the Gypsies evacuated? No known document answers this question. The claim that they were transferred to Chełmno is based almost exclusively on the "Szlamek" Report. Even more explicitly than Galiński, Gulczyński admits (1995, p. 39, note 30):

"The information on the topic of the Gypsies can be found in reports of fugitives from the camp, for example AŻIH [archive of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw]*, ring* [archive Ringelblum] *I, no. 412 (Szlamek report). This report has been published in: R. Sakowska…"*[135]

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[133] APL, PSZ, 110, p. 42.

[134] APL, PSZ, 110, pp. 67-69.

[135] The reference is to the Polish edition of Sakowska's book (1993).

In Chapter 6 we have seen, however, that the "Szlamek" Report is totally unreliable. Not only that, but it does not justify the claim of the total extermination of the Gypsies of Łódź. In fact it contains only two references to gassing of Gypsies:

– on 8 January 1942: 7 "vehicles" (that is "gas vans")
– on 9 January 1942: 8 or 9 "vehicles."

Since each vehicle is said to have contained 60 people according to this witness, the total number of gassing victims would be at most [(7+9)×60=] 960 people.

On the other hand, as we have seen above, according to Galiński the extermination of Gypsies took place between 5 and 12 January 1942, but for the 5th, 6th and 7th "Szlamek" does not mention any gassings, and for the 10th, 11th and 12th it claims only two gassings of Jews from Kłodawa (7 "vehicles" on the 10th and 9 on the 12th), followed by a day of "repose" (11 January). However, 4,365 persons were transferred from the Gypsy Camp in Łódź,[136] while merely 960 are said to have been gassed according to the "Szlamek" Report. What then happened to the remaining 3,405?

14.2. The Children of Lidice

The story of the children of Lidice is even more nebulous. It was born from the usual rumors collected by Bednarz in the course of his preliminary investigation, but they did not relate at all to the children of Lidice (Bednarz 1946d, p. 3):

> *"In 1943 four trucks arrived at the camp with children aged from 12 to 14 years (no Jewish star). The witnesses are of the opinion that they were 'Aryan' children. This happened at a time when the German government drove out the Polish population from Zamość, regularly separating the children from their parents."*

Hence according to Judge Bednarz, the children who allegedly arrived at Chełmno in 1943 were Polish. In the following years, these alleged Polish children were transformed into (Czech) children of Lidice, but there is still confusion about this in orthodox Holocaust literature. The Polish historian Marek Budziarek writes about it (1995, p. 71):

[136] Of the 5,007 Gypsies admitted to the ghetto, 213 died in November 1941, 400 in December 1941, and 29 during the first two days of January 1942.

> *"Based on collected archival materials we can now say with certainty that in the summer of 1942 a transport of 88 Czech children (aged between 1 and 14 years) from Lidice and Lezak in Czechoslovakia arrived in the transfer camp, which was located in an old dormitory house of the Albertine Nunnery in Gneisenaustrasse 32 (currently 28 Infantry Regiment Kaniowski). A few days later another 12 children arrived."*

Seven of these 100 children were Germanized. About the remaining 93, Budziarek claims that they were subject to "special treatment," then adds (*ibid.*):

> *"We do not know the final decision of the Hitlerite authorities regarding the last moments of the lives of these small Czechs. However, it can be said with great probability that they were killed at Chełmno upon Ner. This probability was confirmed by the verdict of the Bonn Jury Court (27* [recte: 23] *July 1965),*[137] *which sentenced former SS officers of the Chełmno extermination center. It clearly states that 'a transport of about 50-75 children aged 4 to 14 years" arrived at the camp.' If they came to Chełmno, they were undoubtedly killed."*

In fact, in relation to 50-75 children, the verdict of the first instance (30 March 1963) states:

> *"Different than the usual transports of Jewish persons were in addition a transport of some 50-75 children aged 4 to 10, who were better dressed and fed than the Jewish children,* […]*"* (Rüter *et al.* 1979, p. 281)

The verdict of the later retrial states tersely (*ibid.*, p. 233):

> *"Moreover a transport of some 50-75 children aged 4-14 years arrived,..."*

Hence, the verdicts handed down by the Bonn Jury Court make no statements at all about the children's provenance. The word "Lidice" does not appear anywhere in either verdict.

Rückerl commented (1979, pp. 280f., note 76):

> *"According to Polish research, this transport of children had to be children from the Czech village of Lidice who could not be 'Germanized' and whose relatives were killed or deported in retaliation for the attack on Heydrich. In an investigation of the public prosecutor in Frankfurt against the former head of the emigration center in*

[137] The retrial took place between 5 and 23 July 1965.

> *Łódź, SS Sturmbannführer Krumey, a number of reference points turned up for the accuracy of this hypothesis. But so far no certain proof could be developed."*

In reality there is no evidence either that these children were deported to Chełmno: this story, dogmatically accepted as "likely" or "certain" by historians and the courts, is nothing more than the last echo of the rumors collected at the end of 1945 by Judge Bednarz, which, as I may stress once more, related to *Polish* children sent to the camp in 1943, not to *Czech* children of Lidice sent to Chełmno in the summer of 1942!

Krakowski writes nevertheless (2007, p. 122):

> *"As for the Czech children, there are documents that prove their deaths at Chełmno. Their fate is referred to in an exchange of letters between the Reich and its representation in Łódź. In one of these letters, dated 12 June 1942, it announces its intention to send 86 Czech children to Łódź who could not be "Germanized." The camp's staff members Fritz Ismer and Walter Burmeister, in their statements before the German court, also mention the arrival of three truckloads of non-Jewish children."*

Hence this is not based on documents, but on simple testimonies of the 1960s which inevitably reflected this propaganda theme developed during the preceding years.

A final observation. As seen above, the children of Lidice allegedly transferred to the Łódź ghetto numbered 100, of whom 7 were Germanized. Gulczyński published a list of 82 names of children with the following heading in Czech:[138]

> *"Children of Lidice who did not return, probably* [*pravděpodobně*] *gassed – transported to Poland, to Łódź."*

Hence here no certainty either. In a pamphlet representing an update to Bednarz's booklet, Edward Serwański claims as well that the alleged event occurred "very likely" (Serwański 1964, p. 31), which is an elegant way of masking the total lack of documentary evidence.

I must add that, if these 82 children "did not return" while the remaining 18 "returned," but only 7 were Germanized, how can we explain the survival of the other 11? Did they survive their gassing?

In conclusion, the story about the gassing of the children of Lidice at Chełmno has no historical basis either.

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[138] Gulczyński 1991, appendix outside of text. The respective list originates from the Museum of Martyrs in Lidice (Gulczyński 1995, p. 41, note 66).

15. The Destination of the Deported Jews

Reitlinger reports that some Jews who had been deported to Łódź were transferred to an unknown destination with minimal luggage. From a letter of Rosenberg's office of 25 October 1941 we can glean that it was planned to use a greater number of Jews fit for labor for work in the rear of the Eastern Front (Reitlinger 1965, p. 115):

> *"Subsequently rumors had it that the Jews would be transferred from Łódź to the reclamation areas of the Pripyat marshes and the Jewish agricultural colonies near Krivoi Rog, Ukraine."*

In a clandestine report entitled "Mass Executions of Jews in the Koło District" of 25 March 1942 one reads:[139]

> *"Officially the purpose of this deportation is not revealed to the deportees, but in private the Germans have launched a different version: a center for the entire district will set up at Chełmno, which will be one stage of the transfer into the region of Pinsk or to Galicia."*

A report by the *Oyneg Shabbos* shortly thereafter stated (Sakowska 1993, p. 186):

> *"In the second half of November 1941 the news spread in the cities of the Koło district (Warthbrücken district) that the entire Jewish population of this area had to be transferred to the region of Pinsk or to eastern Galicia."*

In 1943 the Canadian demographer Eugene M. Kulischer mentioned the swamps of Pinsk (in the Pripyat) among the destinations of the Jewish deportations (Kulischer 1943, pp. 110f.):

> *"Since the summer of 1942 the ghettos and labour camps in the German-occupied Eastern Territories have become the destination of deportees both from Poland and from western and central Europe; in particular, a new large-scale transfer from the Warsaw ghetto has been reported. Many of the deportees have been sent to the labour camps on the Russian front; others to work in the marshes of Pinsk, or to the ghettos of the Baltic countries, Byelorussia and Ukraine."*

[139] Report entitled "Masowe egzekucje Żydów w pow. Kolskim" (Mass Execution of Jews in the Koło District) of 25 March 1942. Maria Tyszkowa 1992b, p. 52. The report was published in 1943 in: Apenszlak 1943, pp. 115-118.

As Aly has documented, draining the marshes of Pripyat was a project that the German administration had begun to seriously discuss in April/May 1941 (Aly 1995, pp. 275-279; see Chapter 1). Thomas Sandkühler confirmed (1996, pp. 110f.):

> *"Rosenberg's first position pager on the Soviet Union of 2 April* [1941] *shows that the Pripyat marshes were already under discussion in the spring of 1941.* [...] *Perhaps it was intended to concentrate the Jews of the General Government temporarily in eastern Galicia, and then push them into the swamps of Pripyat."*

The "Chronicle of the Łódź ghetto" contains several clues in favor of this plan. The report no. 6 of 10-13 January 1942 shows the first anticipation of the future evacuations (Dąbrowska/Dobroszycki 1965, vol. I, p. 385):

> *"The transports will comprise 700 people per day. The evacuees may carry with them baggage of 12.5 kg per person. All money possessed by the expellees must be changed to German marks at the assembly point."*

The "selection" criterion for the deportees, as we have seen above, was inability to work: Jews unable to work had to be transferred from the ghetto to make room for newcomers fit for work. But the bulletin no. 7 of 14-31 January 1942 describes the procedure as follows (*ibid.,* p. 392):

> *"The evacuees received their deportation orders in the mail, which called on all the individuals specified (as is known, during the entire period established for the deportation all family members are being evacuated, in certain cases even together with other resident persons* [in the same premises] *who were not part of the family) to report on the indicated day – more or less within three days after delivery of the order – at the meeting place, organized in no. 7 Szklane Road."*

So the policy of deportation essentially concerned families and households, rather than those unable to work, and extant evacuation name lists fully confirm this. The same report states that the deportation train consisted of 20 passenger coaches with 55 people per wagon (*ibid.*, p. 393).

The bulletin no. 14 of 10 to 14 April reported as follows about the first news from the deportees (*ibid.,* pp. 457f.):

> *"On 12 April, at Balucki Square, a senior officer of the Secret Police stopped briefly who was the head of the camp in which the deportees*

from the ghetto were. This is the first reliable source of information about the deportees; to be exact, it is worth adding that the version most persistently spread about [their] *whereabouts has been confirmed this time. Hence it has now been irrefutably established that the camp is located in the outskirts of the town of Koło, now called Warthbrücken. The camp contains 100,000 Jews, and from this it can be concluded that in addition to the 44,000 deported from the ghetto, Jews from other cities were concentrated as well. Earlier this huge camp had been the place of residence of Germans of Volhynia. Apparently 30,000 people used to live there. They left decently housed barracks and even furniture at the disposal of the Jews. The provisioning of the camp, it seems, is exemplary: those able to work are employed within the camp, for road repairs and for agricultural labor. In the near future workshops will be organized."*

The bulletin no. 24 of 1-3 May 1942 states (*ibid.,* p. 497):

"In the ghetto the word goes around persistently that the first two transports of evacuees were directed to occupied France, the other to Bessarabia."

The bulletin no. 25 of 5 May 1942 informs that the first two transports of western Jews from the ghetto included "even physicians and health-care staff" (*ibid.,* p. 504).

Jews from Łódź were also sent to the Baltic countries. Herman Kruk, a Polish Jew who fled to Vilnius in 1939 and subsequently became a resident of the local ghetto, wrote in his diary on 4 July 1942 (Kruk 2002, p. 319):

"Now I learn from two young people who were taken out of the Łódź Ghetto in March that Łódź has a ghetto. There is no shooting, and mass executions are unknown. The only thing is, people are taken off to work. They figure that about 10,000 Jews have recently been sent out of Łódź. […] *Both of the young men escaped from such a group* [of workers]*, and after a week of wandering, they were arrested in Vilna* [and taken to] *Lukiszki* [a prison] *and were released from there only two days ago. Here in the ghetto they were clothed, and soon they will be sent to forest work."*

On the same note, he added:

"Just received a message from Łódź. For us, Łódź is one of those cities from which you can obtain almost no information. Of course,

> *the rumors from there are crazy and wild, and according to them, it is already certain that there are no Jews in Łódź.*
> […] *Now the young people know what it is to be sent out to work. They are dragged around from place to place; they don't know where they are or what they are doing. From time to time, groups are pulled out and disappear, and they assume that they are shot."*

Avraham Tory, another Jew who lived in the ghetto of Kaunas (Kovno) and who kept a diary, wrote on 14 July 1942 (Tory 1990, p. 111):

> *"Four Jews from Łódź have been brought to the* [Kovno] *Ghetto hospital for surgery. They had spent a long time in a labor camp."*

And on 30 July he noted (*ibid.,* p. 116):

> *"The Łódź Jews who had been employed at the construction of the Kovno-Vilna highway and were transferred to Riga will be replaced by 500 workers from the* [Kovno] *Ghetto."*

In two long reports of 25 and 27 May 1942 addressed to Palestinian Jewish institutions, the Zionist delegate Meleh "Noi" Neustadt confirmed (Laqueur 1982, pp. 188f.):

> *"Lodz was more or less cut off from the outside world. There was no direct contact but it had been learned that 'unproductive elements' had been deported from Lodz to Minsk, Kovno and Riga."*

On the other hand, there is also a letter to the Gestapo in Łódź dated 11 May 1942 which reads:

> *"Re.: Delivery of iron material to the Sonderkommando K.*
> *I have brought the following delivery to the Sonderkommando and request to hand back to me the necessary iron bills."*

Among the materials listed there was "1 complete disinfection oven with chimney 2,050 kg" (*1. kompl. Desinfektionsofen m. Schornstein 2.050 kg*).[140]

The camp had to be much greater than what orthodox Holocaust historiography claims, because already on 27 May 1942 it had 370 railway cars full of clothing:[141]

> *"At the Sonderkommando Lange an estimated 370 railway cars with garments are stored, for the removal of which some 900 trucks with trailers are necessary* […]*"*

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[140] T-1298. Cf. State of Israel 1993, vol. III, p. 1202.

[141] Letter by Otto Luchterhandt, Deputy Head of the Łódź ghetto, to the *Landeswirtschaftsamt* Posen dated 27 May 1942, in: Eisenbach 1946, p. 233.

According to the data claimed by orthodox Holocaust historiography, 79,000 people had been evacuated to Chełmno by May 1942, each of whom was allowed to take along 12.5 kg of luggage in addition to the clothes they wore. This luggage consisted certainly not just of clothes. To have a reference point, 97,000 full sets of clothes for men without underwear, 76,000 equivalent sets for women and 89,000 pieces of silk underwear filled 34 railway cars; 2,700,000 kg of rags in turn filled 400 railway cars.[142]

Based on the latter figure, 340 railway cars would have contained 2,295,000 kg of clothing, so that each deportee would have to have brought along 29 kg of clothing on average! The first figure shows, however, that 76,000 full sets of female clothing occupy less than 34 carriages. Hence it is obvious that the 340 wagons of clothing could not have belonged merely to the evacuated Jews, but must have come mainly from the clearing of all the ghettos in the Warthegau. As of 23 March 1942, all the property of the deported Jews became the property of the ghetto administration:

> *"According to the directive of 23 March 1942 by the governor, all valuables such as money, foreign currencies, household goods, merchandise, which are the property of resettled Jews, become the property of the ghetto administration in Litzmannstadt."*

Among these goods were also "fabrics, leather and other raw materials of all types" (*Textilien, Leder und sonstige Rohmaterialen aller Art*; Eisenbach 1946, p. 209). It is clear that almost 2,300 tons of clothing could not be stored in the so-called "palace" or "castle" of Chełmno.[143] Hence they had to be stored in storage barracks in the camp. And this certainly was the camp's secondary function.

But the Chełmno camp's main function must be considered in relation to the National Socialist policy of deporting the Jews to the east as I have outlined in Chapter 1, including the letter from Himmler to Greiser of 18 September 1941. In this letter, as we have seen, Hitler ordered the transfer of Jews from the Reich proper and the Protectorate to Łódź

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[142] NO-1257, "*Aufstellung über von den Lagern Lublin und Auschwitz auf Anordnung des SS Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamts abgelieferten Mengen an Textil-Altmaterial*," 6 February 1943.

[143] In the Polish drawing of this area (see Document 16) no. 11 stands for "Piles of clothing 1941-1943 (15×5×4), and in the years 1944-1945 two sorting barracks and a clothes-disinfestation truck." The volume of the dimensions given is 300 cubic meters, but 340 railway cars full of clothing corresponds to more than 21,000 cubic meters.

as a provisional stage of their subsequent deportation to the eastern territories. In this context Chełmno was therefore a transit camp for the ghetto. The choice of a village west of Łódź is explained by the need to reconcile the demands of confidentiality and logistics: Chełmno is located near the major railway line Poznań-Warsaw-Minsk and in a relatively quiet area.

16. The Value of the Content of the Court Verdict

In the introduction to the present book I posited that the image of Chełmno as outlined by orthodox Holocaust historiography is almost exclusively based on trial evidence and in practice on testimonies. The moment has now come to explain the significance of this evidence.

On 5 July 1962, the Public Prosecution Office at the District Court in Bonn issued an indictment against 13 former members of the "*Sonderkommando* Chełmno." The trial started on 26 November 1962 and unfolded in 36 trial days until 30 March 1963, the day when the verdict was announced, which sentenced six of the defendants to prison terms between 3½ and 15 years for "jointly aiding and abetting in murder (mass murder)." The case against one defendant was vacated due to his deteriorated health, and with respect to six other defendants, although also found guilty of the same offense, the court abstained from meting out a punishment for a number of mitigating circumstances.

Since the appeal of this verdict was successful for eleven defendants, their cases were sent back to the Bonn Jury Court for retrial. This began on 5 July 1965 and ended on July 23 after eleven court days. The punishments meted out this time ranged from 13½ months to 13 years' imprisonment for eight of the defendants, while three of them, although found guilty again, once more got away without punishment (Rüter *et al.*, pp. 227f., 271; Rückerl 1979, pp. 248f.; Krakowski 2007, p. 178).

The criminal investigation was started in 1959 with a complaint by the *Landeskriminalamt* of Baden-Württemberg against Kurt Lange. In this document the established "facts" about the Chełmno camp were described thus:[144]

> *"In 1946 a book by the Jewish Historical Commission appeared in Łódź entitled 'Documents and Materials, Vol. I, Camps, which in Chapter VII under the title 'Chełmno' contains a collection of testimonies and documents relating to the construction of the extermination camp and the implementation of the extermination program.* […]
> *The following statements are extracted from this document:*

[144] Landeskriminalamt Baden-Württemberg. Sonderkommission Zentrale Stelle. Strafanzeige gegen Kurt Lange. Ludwigsburg, 13 November 1959; SL, EL317IIIBü2151, pp. 11-14.

....It results from the declaration of Miszczak Andrezej [Andrzej] *that at the end of November 1941 members of the Gestapo arrived at Chełmno and seized and occupied the church, the castle, the parish and many private houses. Some 3 km from Chełmno, between Chełmno and Koło, was an isolated wooded area of about 1 square km. In this area the trees were cut and trenches 6 m wide and adequately deep were excavated. In these pits the execution victims were buried who had been executed at the Chełmno Castle. The executions were carried out against people who had been brought to Chełmno in numerous transports until December 1943. In June 1942 the bodies dumped into mass graves were cremated in two furnaces in the forest. The witness named the plenipotentiary of the Gestapo in Chełmno, Lange, as the person responsible for the crimes. And Bothmann as his successor.*

According to another document, which in said book is referred to merely as number 104, the story of Chełmno is related as follows:

'First of all the Jews of the Koło district were taken out of their homes and transported to Chełmno in trucks. They were told that there would be kind of 'Jewish city' at Chełmno. The entire Jewish population of Koło (2,000 souls) and Dabię (1,000 souls), including infants, children and the frail elderly, as well as the sick and the bedridden, were brought to Chełmno with trucks in groups of 60 people.

The Jewish communities of Kłodawa (1,200 people), Izbica (1,300 people), Bugaj (800 people) and Sompolno (1,000 persons) met the same fate.

Upon the transports' arrival at Chełmno, the newcomers had to leave their luggage in the church located on the left along the main road. About 100 meters away was the Chełmno Castle. Then the transports were brought there. The castle was an old dilapidated house on a plain, the remnants of the castle destroyed during the First World War. In the castle a German SS officer and a civilian of 60 years held a speech to the newcomers. On this occasion it was said to the Jews that they – the Jews – had been brought to Chełmno only in order to be ultimately employed in the ghetto Litzmannstadt, where there were work places and lodgments for their use. At Chełmno a bathing facility had been built where they, the Jews, had to get washed. They would also have to get decontaminated and disinfected. Then those gathered had to undress and go 'to the shower-

room.' In reality they were led through a door onto a ramp from where they were herded into two prepared vehicles. The vehicles had the size of a truck, were gray and sealed hermetically. The back door was locked with an external latch. There were no seats inside. The outer walls were covered with sheet metal, the floor was fitted with small wooden grates covered with straw mats. Under the wooden grates on both sides, the outlets of the gas pipes of about 15 cm were located, covered by a grate. The [gas] *influx pipe was attached to a gas apparatus (*Gasapparate*) in the driver's cabin. Then the vehicles left the castle and drove to a wooded area about 7 km away from the castle, traveling for about 15 minutes. The wooded area was surrounded by armed police. There was a trench 5 meters wide and deep. When no voices could be heard anymore from within the vehicle, the doors were opened and the corpses taken out from the inside. Usually 20-30 gravediggers were in the wooded area and about 30 members of the SS, the police and the Gestapo. The bodies, which still had their normal face color, were then searched for valuables by two civilians. In particular the private parts and the anus were inspected. Then gold teeth were pulled out of the mouths using pliers. Then the corpses were thrown into the pit. Then the vehicle was thoroughly cleaned of dirt and other human excretions and returned to the castle. Every day 6-9 transports of corpses were carried to the wooded area. Each layer of corpses* [in the mass grave] *contained 200 bodies. Soil was thrown on each layer of corpses, and starting on 17 January 1942 chloride was also strewn.*

According to calculations by investigating Judge Wł. Bednarz, who led the investigation in the case of the Chełmno death camp appointed by the Central Commission of Inquiry into German Crimes in Poland, the number of victims of this camp was some 330,000."

The book on which the *Landeskriminalamt* of Baden-Württemberg based his findings on the "history of Chełmno" is the oft-cited *Dokumenty i materiały* (Blumental 1946). It must be pointed out immediately that this work contains only a few German documents, but none of them refers to "construction of the extermination camp and the implementation of the extermination program." And that which is presented as a "document" bearing the number 104 is nothing but the quotation of a propaganda story published in New York in 1943, which I already mentioned in the previous chapter (Note 139, page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**), namely pages 115-118 of Jacob Apenszlak's book *The Black*

Book of Polish Jewry (Blumental 1946, p. 244). Not only that, but this story came in turn from the narrative of "Szlamek"!

The Bonn Chełmno trial was therefore bound to proceed along the lines set by Polish propaganda, which had given this Jewish propaganda a legal look, and the defendants had to comply with it or else risk being sentenced to an even more-severe punishment, had they tried to derail the trial from those tracks.

This explains perfectly the defendants' "confessions," who restricted themselves to confirming this propaganda which had been taken as official truth by the court.

The judicial truth is not necessarily the historical truth, and this applies especially to ideological and political trials of this kind.

17. Conclusions

All that is left is to summarize the conclusions arising from this study.

1) The establishment of Chełmno camp fits perfectly into the National Socialist policy of deporting the Jews to the east.

2) No documentary or material trace exists for the use of "gas vans" in this camp. The truck photographed by the Commission of Inquiry into the German crimes in Poland in the courtyard of the Ostrowski factory was used to disinfest clothing or to carry passengers.

3) There is no evidence for the first alleged systematic extermination of Jews in the Warthegau, and no one can specify when or how it was perpetrated.

4) The first witness account about the alleged extermination at Chelmno, the "Szlamek Report," is completely unreliable. Similarly unreliable and even contradictory are the witnesses of the postwar era.

5) Only one cremation furnace has been confirmed archeologically in the Chelmno camp. It would have taken almost nine years to cremate all the bodies of the alleged victims of homicidal gassings in that furnace. There are no material traces of the alleged mass cremation.

6) Rudolf Höss's visit to the "field incinerators *Aktion* Reinhardt" had nothing to do with Chełmno.

7) The camp's claimed death toll number is not based on any documentation. It was set to 1,300,000 by the Commission of Inquiry into the German Crimes in Poland, but later reduced to 340,000 by Judge Bednarz. Polish historiography today assumes a figure of about 152,000 victims, which in practice coincides with the number of Jews who, according to the Korherr Report, were led "through the camps of the Warthegau… 145,301," plus some 7,000 additional victims for the camp's claimed second extermination phase in 1944.

8) The transports of Jews sent to the Łódź ghetto included a high percentage of people unable to work (elderly and children), only some of whom were evacuated to make room for Jews fit for work.

9) The Chełmno camp ceased operations in April 1943, which would be inexplicable if it really had been an extermination camp for the Jews in the Warthegau, especially for the Jews of the Łódź ghetto. This is all the more inexplicable because on 1 March 1944 4,495 children under 8

years of age and 392 elderly persons aged over 70 years were still alive in the ghetto.

10) Even more inexplicable, from the perspective of orthodox Holocaust historiography, is the reopening of the camp in April 1944. The claim that it had to exterminate the Jews of the Łódź ghetto has no documentary support, and there is no evidence that the 10 Jewish transports evacuated from the ghetto "for labor" between June and July 1944 were gassed at, or even went to, Chełmno. In fact, the analysis of name lists of the deportations permits us to rule out this possibility.

11) No documentary evidence exists for the alleged extermination at Chełmno of Gypsies from the Łódź ghetto.

12) No documentary evidence exists either for the alleged extermination at Chełmno of the children of Lidice.

13) The ultimate destiny of the Jews who passed through the Chełmno camp was not the alleged "gas vans," but the region of Pinsk, in particular the area of the Pripyat Marshes, and partly also the Baltic countries.

18. Appendices

18.1. Łódź Ghetto Children Deported from Auschwitz to Stutthof

Table 3: Children of the Łódź Ghetto Present in the Transport of 3 Sept. 1944 from Auschwitz to Stutthof

#	SURNAME	FIRST NAME	BORN	REG.-NO.
1588	Baude	Golda	12 Sept. 1937	83555
1590	Brin	Hala	23 April 1937	83557
1592	Darl	Dina Sissel	30 June 1938	83559
1594	Borenstein	Lotte	14 June 1934	83561
1595	Borenstein	Eva	14 Nov. 1939	83562
1597	Brijmann	Lilianna	14 July 1938	83564
1599	Chimonovits	Josef	22 Nov. 1935	83566
1600	Chimonovits	Mejer	02 Nov. 1936	83567
1601	Chimonovits	Izak	19 Oct. 1943	83568
1603	Chimowicz	Eugenia	06 Nov. 1935	83570
1604	Chirug	Zila	09 Sept. 1941	83571
1606	Chirug	Ruth	21 April 1937	83573
1608	Czariska	Sara	30 June 1932	83575
1610	Danziger	Arjela	19 March 1937	83577
1611	Feinsilber	Eva	04 Jan. 1940	83578
1614	Fürstenberg	Abram Meier	09 Feb. 1932	83581
1616	Gutmann	Dora	17 Jan. 1937	83583
1618	Glückmann	Schmul	24 March 1935	83585
1619	Glückmann	Chaja	12 Aug. 1930	83586
1621	Jacob	Gittel	06 March 1944	83588
1623	Jalanowicz	Felga	10 Jan. 1940	83590
1627	Kupferschmidt	Abraham	29 Oct. 1938	83594
1629	Kasz	Bronia	21 Feb. 1930	83596
1631	Frantz	Noemi	02 Nov. 1937	83598
1633	Lachmann	Kazimierz	01 March 1937	83600
1635	Neuberg	Lila	10 Oct. 1936	83602
1637	Potok	Trunseb	24 Feb. 1944	83604
1638	Rosenblum	Bronka	27 Dec. 1931	83605
1641	Rotstein	Regina	12 Aug. 1932	83608
1642	Rotstein	Sala	03 Oct. 1938	83609
1643	Richer	Tela	14 June 1932	83610
1645	Reingold	Elchanan	12 Dec. 1937	83612
1646	Steier	Frema	25 July 1942	83613

#	SURNAME	FIRST NAME	BORN	REG.-NO.
1648	Stelowicka	Ruchla	01 April 1936	83615
1650	Szyper	Adam	06 Dec. 1939	83617
1653	Salomonowicz	Michael	06 Oct. 1933	83620
1654	Salomonowicz	Josef	01 July 1938	83621
1656	Skura	Estera	27 Dec. 1933	83623
1657	Tabackschmeker	Jochwet	25 March 1930	83624
1660	Wolman	Kristina	25 Sept. 1930	83627
1735	Wolf	Helga	02 July 1935	83702

= running number of the list; Reg.-No. = registration number in Stutthof

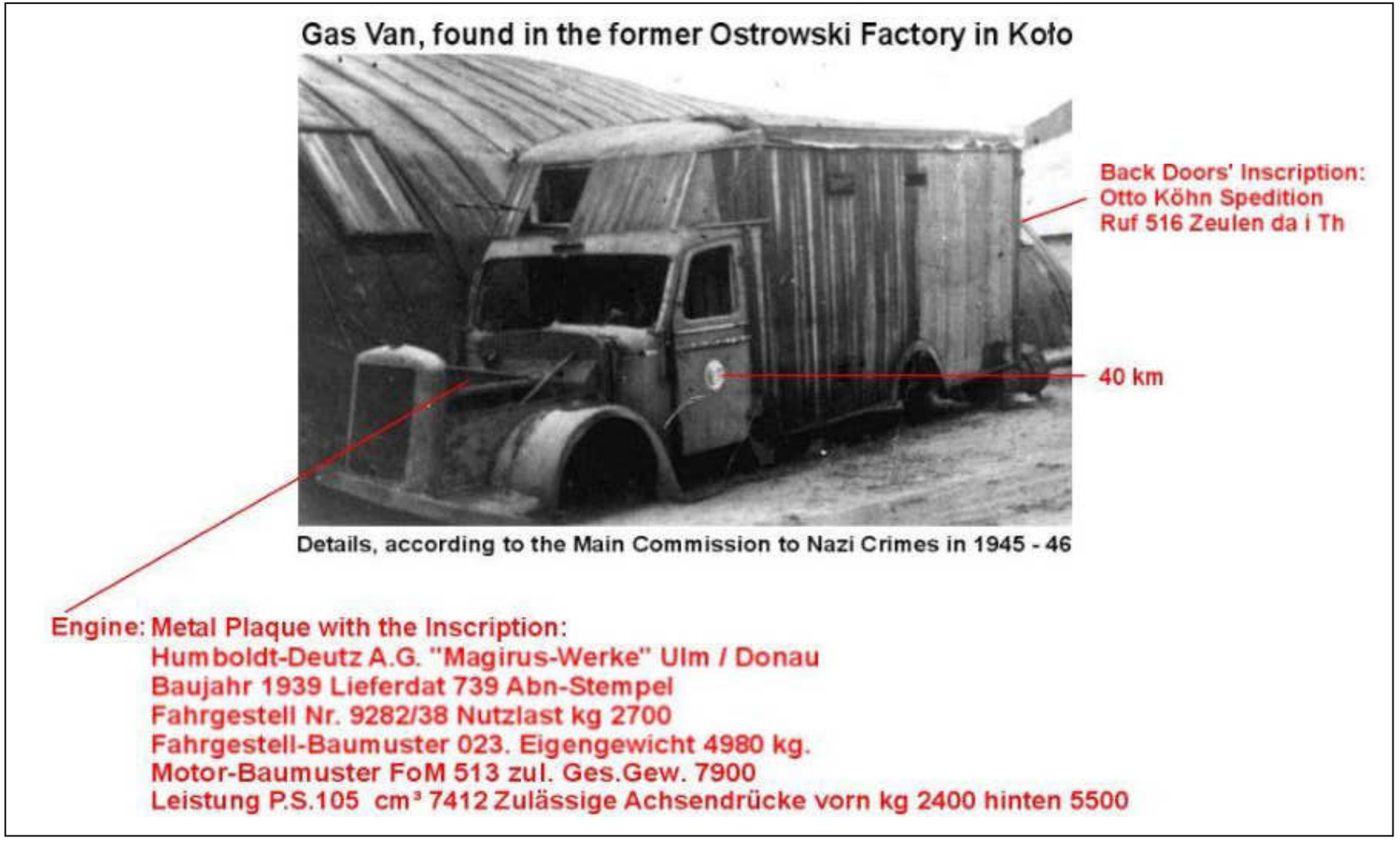
18.2. Documents

Document 1: Illustration board at the Chełmno Camp Museum (photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

Document 1a: Detail of Document 1. The caption reads: "Vehicle found after the war at Koło on the grounds of the Ostrowski Factory."

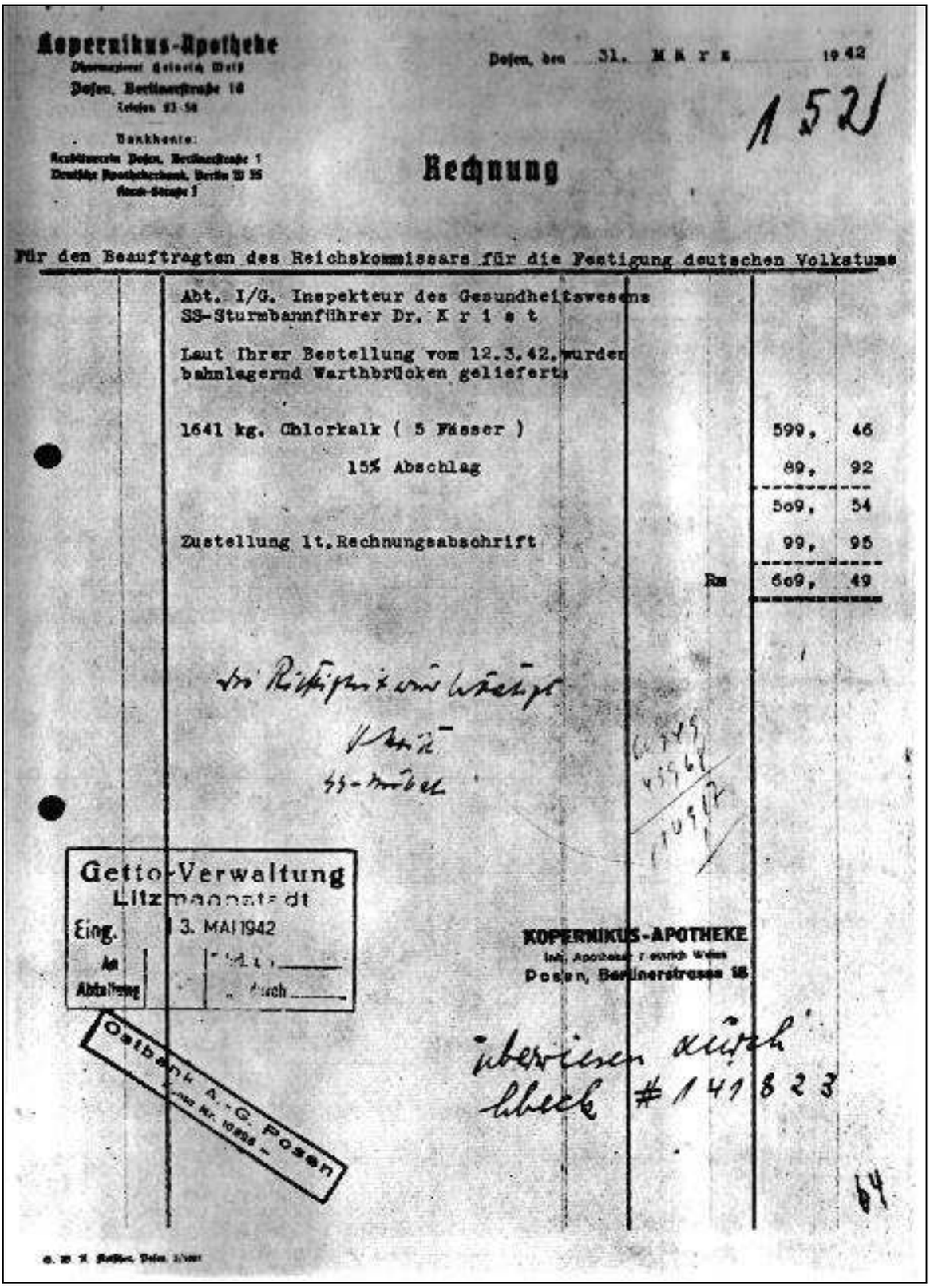
Document 2: Photo of an alleged "gas van." (Fleming 1982, appendix between pp. 128 & 129)

Document 3: Photo of an alleged "gas van." (www.deathcamps.org/occupation/pic/bigchelmnovan.jpg.)



Document 4: Photo of an alleged "gas van"; same as previous document with descriptions added (www.deathcamps.org/occupation/pic/bigkulmhof2.jpg)

Document 4a: Photos of a Diamond Truck Model T 968. (www.olive-drab.com/idphoto/id_photos_diamondt_968.php)



Kopernikus-Apotheke
Posen, Berlinerstraße 18

Posen, den 31. März 1942

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Rechnung

Für den Beauftragten des Reichskommissars für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums
Abt. I/G. Inspekteur des Gesundheitswesens
SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Kriest

Laut Ihrer Bestellung vom 12.3.42. wurden
bahnlagernd Warthbrücken geliefert:

1641 kg. Chlorkalk (5 Fässer)	599,	46
15% Abschlag	89,	92
	509,	54
Zustellung lt. Rechnungsabschrift	99,	95
Rm	609,	49

Getto-Verwaltung
Litzmannstadt
Eing. 3. MAI 1942
An Abteilung
durch

KOPERNIKUS-APOTHEKE
Inh. Apotheker Heinrich Weiss
Posen, Berlinerstrasse 18

überwiesen durch
Lübeck #141823

Ostbank A.-G. Posen

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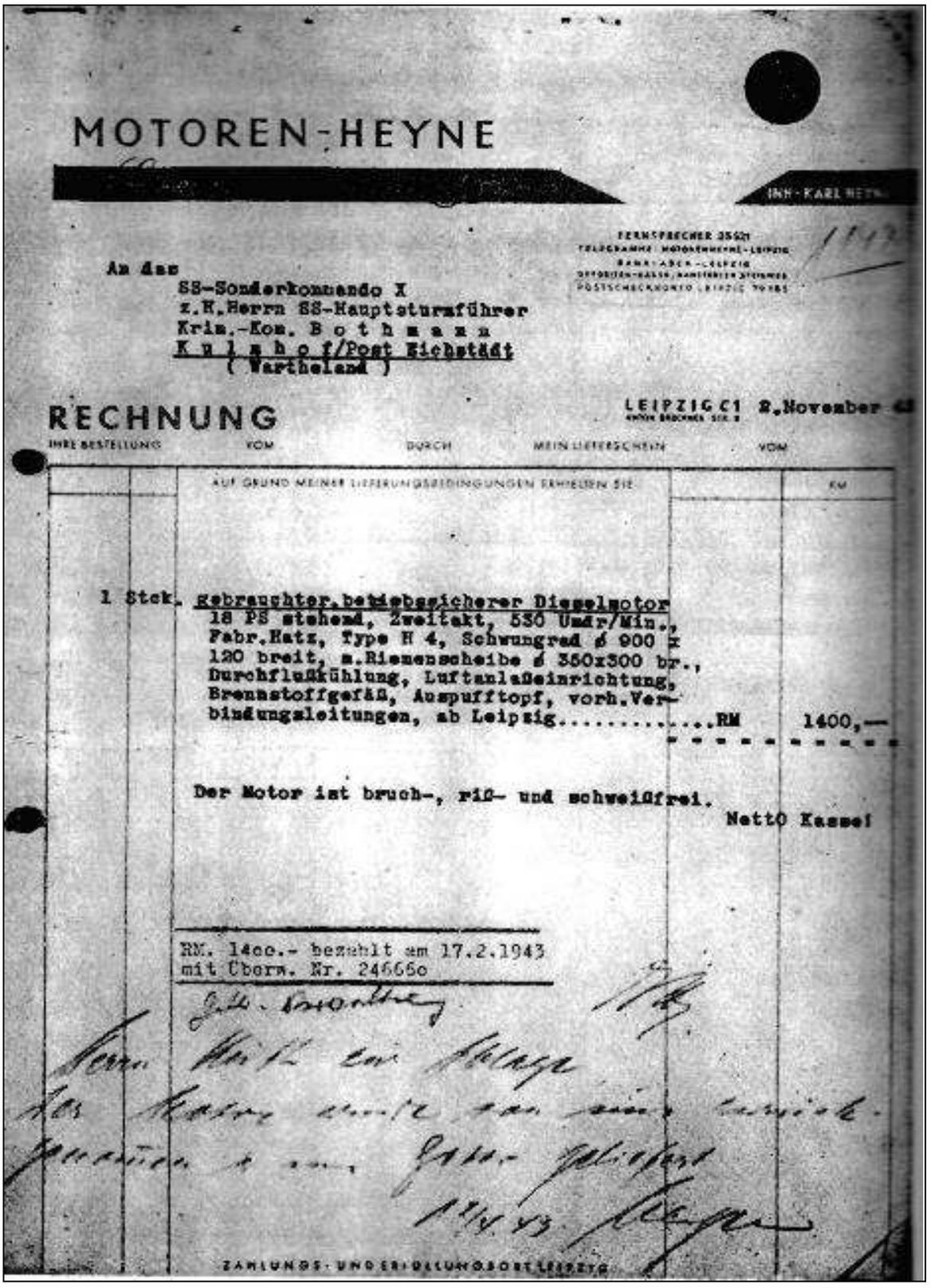
Document 5: Invoice of the *Kopernikus-Apotheke* (pharmacy) in Posen dated 31 March 1942 for the delivery of 1,641 kg of calcium chlorinated lime (*Chlorkalk*). (Jüdisches Historisches… 1960, p. 279)



MOTOREN-HEYNE

INH. KARL HEYNE

An das
SS-Sonderkommando X
z.H.Herrn SS-Hauptsturmführer
Krim.-Kom. B o t h m a n n
K u l m h o f/Post Eichstädt
(Wartheland)

RECHNUNG

LEIPZIG C1 2.November 43

IHRE BESTELLUNG VOM DURCH MEIN LIEFERSCHEIN VOM

AUF GRUND MEINER LIEFERUNGSBEDINGUNGEN BERECHNEN SIE RM

1 Stck. Gebrauchter,betriebssicherer Dieselmotor
18 PS stehend, Zweitakt, 530 Umdr/Min.,
Fabr.Hatz, Type H 4, Schwungrad ø 900 x
120 breit, m.Riemenscheibe ø 350x300 br.,
Durchflußkühlung, Luftanlaßeinrichtung,
Brennstoffgefäß, Auspufftopf, vorh.Ver-
bindungsleitungen, ab Leipzig.....RM 1400,—

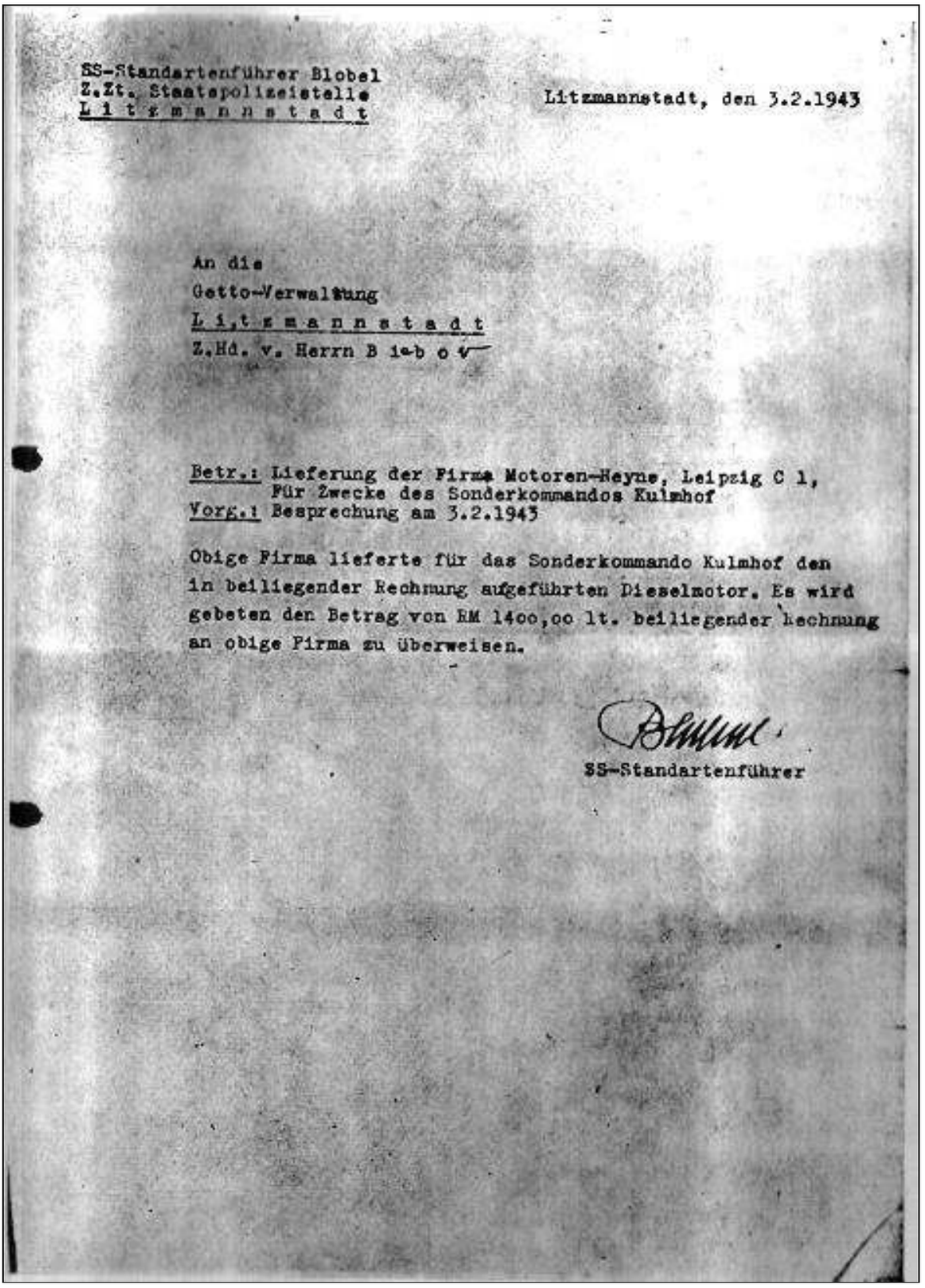
Der Motor ist bruch-, riß- und schweißfrei.

Netto Kassel

RM. 1400.- bezahlt am 17.2.1943
mit Überw. Nr. 24666o

ZAHLUNGS- UND ERFÜLLUNGSORT LEIPZIG

Document 6, 6a: Invoice from the Heyne Motors company (*Heyne-Motoren*) of Leipzig addressed to SS *Sonderkommando* X to the attention of SS *Hauptsturmführer* Police Detective Bothmann, Kulmhof, regarding "1 used diesel engine for safe operation." (Jüdisches Historisches… 1960, p. 282.



SS-Standartenführer Blobel
Z.Zt. Staatspolizeistelle
L i t z m a n n s t a d t

Litzmannstadt, den 3.2.1943

An die
Getto-Verwaltung
L i t z m a n n s t a d t
Z.Hd. v. Herrn B i e b o w

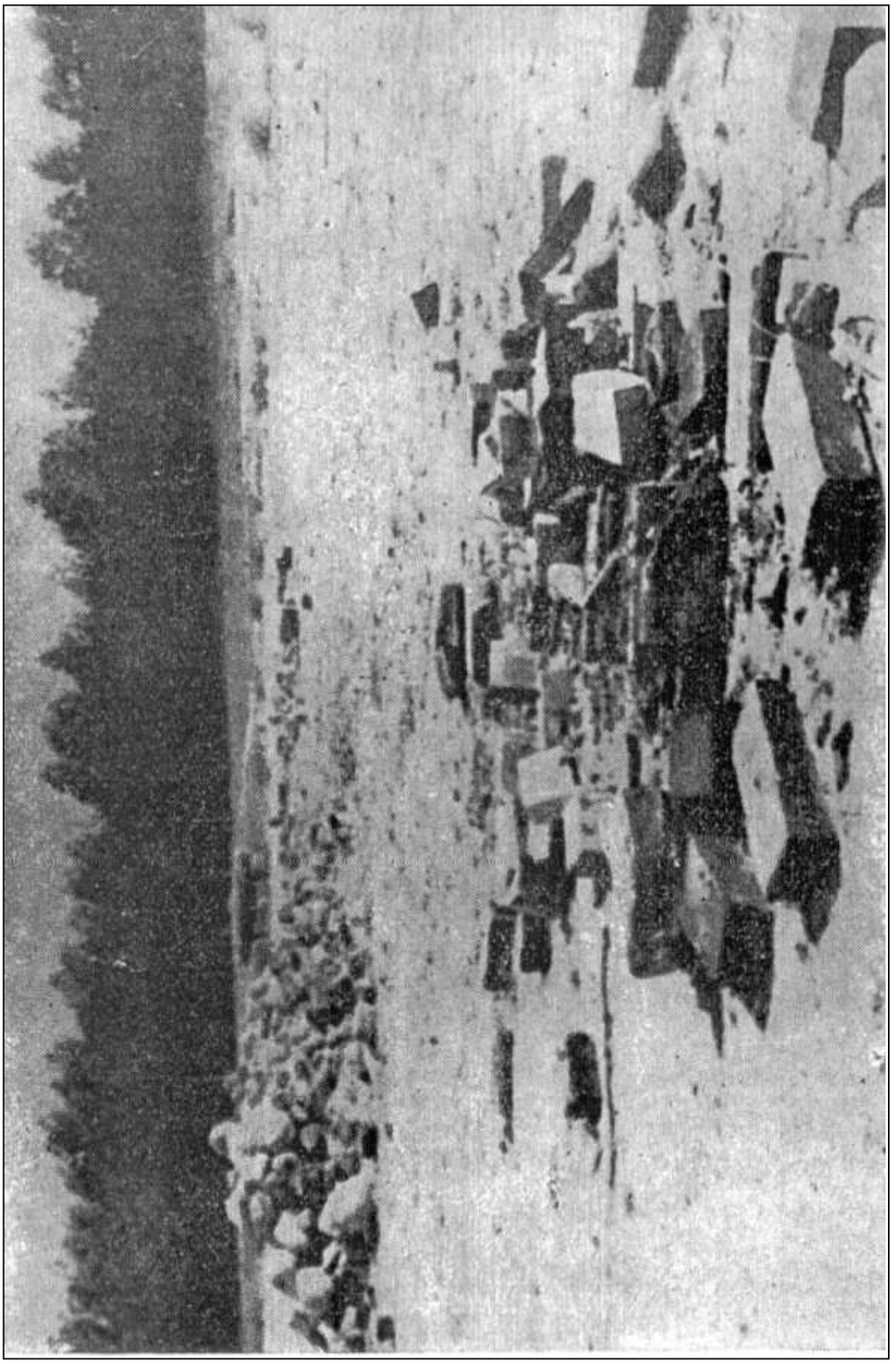
Betr.: Lieferung der Firma Motoren-Heyne, Leipzig C 1,
Für Zwecke des Sonderkommandos Kulmhof
Vorg.: Besprechung am 3.2.1943

Obige Firma lieferte für das Sonderkommando Kulmhof den in beiliegender Rechnung aufgeführten Dieselmotor. Es wird gebeten den Betrag von RM 1400,00 lt. beiliegender Rechnung an obige Firma zu überweisen.

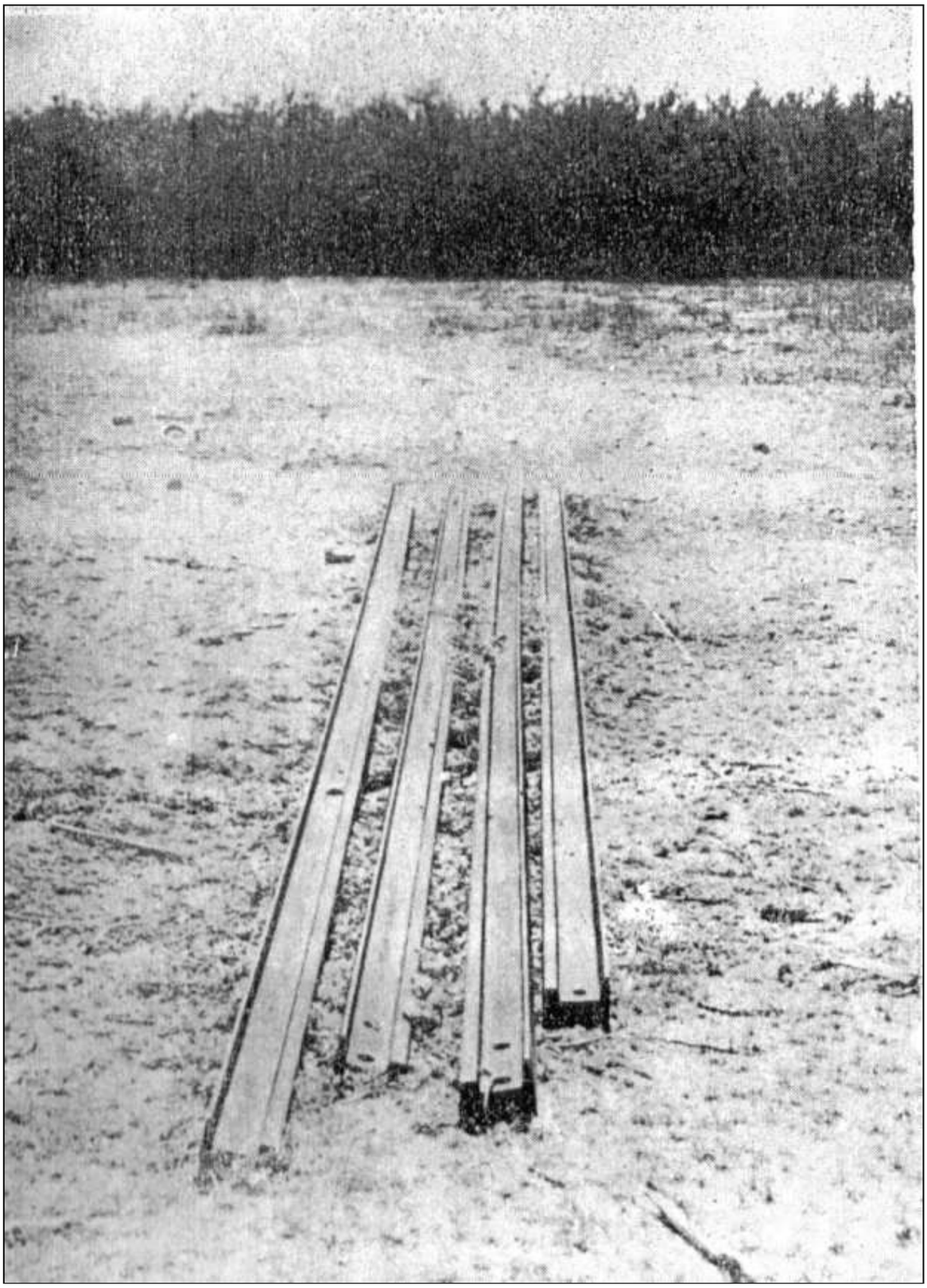
Blobel

SS-Standartenführer

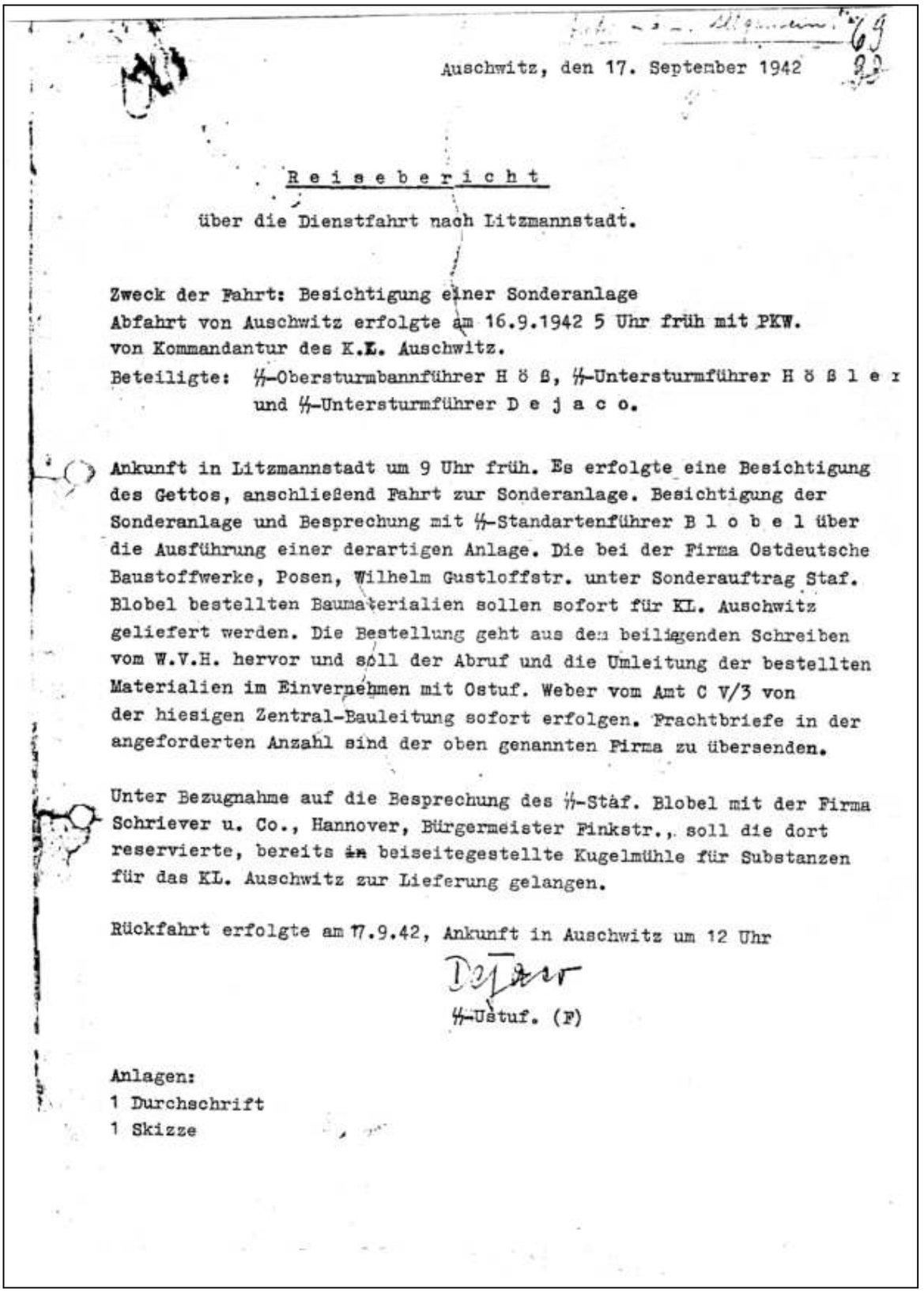
Document 6a: Document 6, continued.



Document 7: Remainders of the cremation furnace at Chełmno (Bednarz 1946a, p. 7).



Document 8: Remainders of the cremation furnace at Chełmno (Bednarz 1946a, p. 8).



Auschwitz, den 17. September 1942

R e i s e b e r i c h t

über die Dienstfahrt nach Litzmannstadt.

Zweck der Fahrt: Besichtigung einer Sonderanlage
Abfahrt von Auschwitz erfolgte am 16.9.1942 5 Uhr früh mit PKW.
von Kommandantur des K.L. Auschwitz.
Beteiligte: ᛋᛋ-Obersturmbannführer H ö ß, ᛋᛋ-Untersturmführer H ö ß l e r
und ᛋᛋ-Untersturmführer D e j a c o.

Ankunft in Litzmannstadt um 9 Uhr früh. Es erfolgte eine Besichtigung des Gettos, anschließend Fahrt zur Sonderanlage. Besichtigung der Sonderanlage und Besprechung mit ᛋᛋ-Standartenführer B l o b e l über die Ausführung einer derartigen Anlage. Die bei der Firma Ostdeutsche Baustoffwerke, Posen, Wilhelm Gustloffstr. unter Sonderauftrag Staf. Blobel bestellten Baumaterialien sollen sofort für KL. Auschwitz geliefert werden. Die Bestellung geht aus dem beiliegenden Schreiben vom W.V.H. hervor und soll der Abruf und die Umleitung der bestellten Materialien im Einvernehmen mit Ostuf. Weber vom Amt C V/3 von der hiesigen Zentral-Bauleitung sofort erfolgen. Frachtbriefe in der angeforderten Anzahl sind der oben genannten Firma zu übersenden.

Unter Bezugnahme auf die Besprechung des ᛋᛋ-Staf. Blobel mit der Firma Schriever u. Co., Hannover, Bürgermeister Finkstr., soll die dort reservierte, bereits ~~in~~ beiseitegestellte Kugelmühle für Substanzen für das KL. Auschwitz zur Lieferung gelangen.

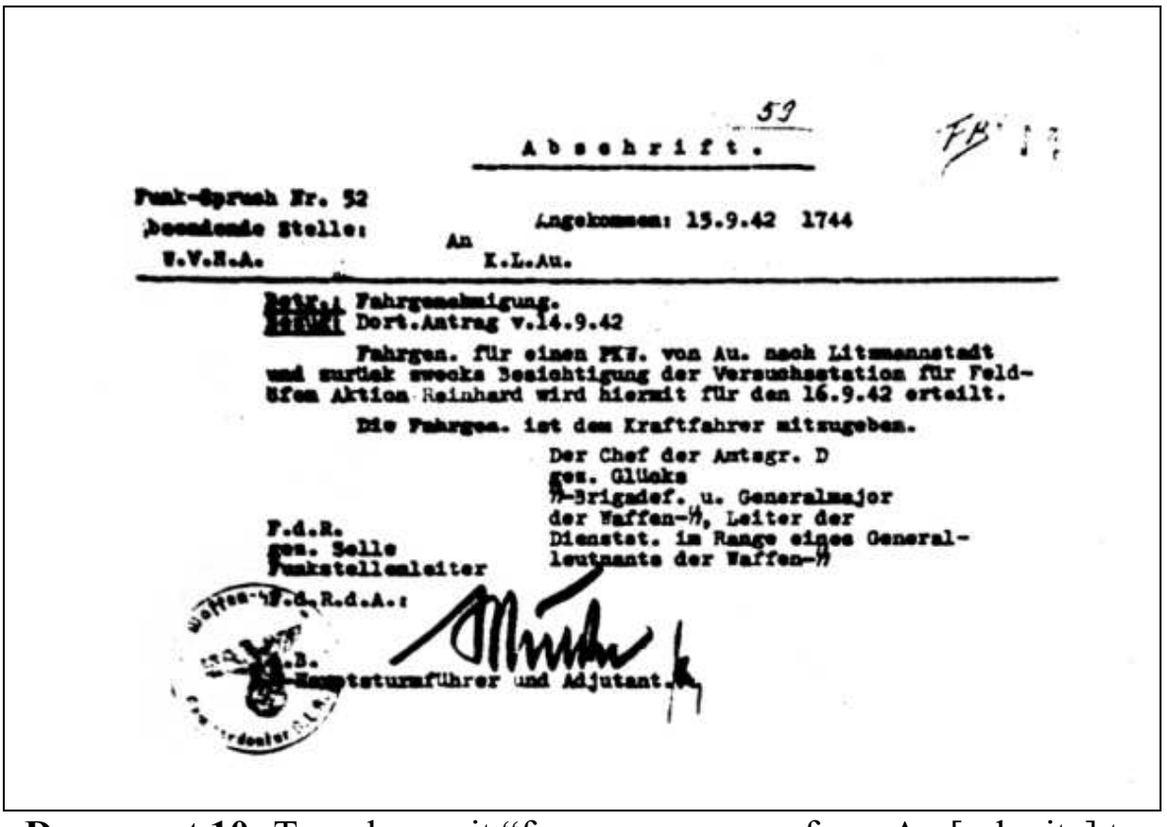
Rückfahrt erfolgte am 17.9.42, Ankunft in Auschwitz um 12 Uhr

Dejaco

ᛋᛋ-Ustuf. (F)

Anlagen:
1 Durchschrift
1 Skizze

Document 9: "Report on the business trip to Litzmannstadt" written by SS *Untersturmführer* Walter Dejaco on 17 September 1942. (RGVA, 502-1-336, p. 69)



59

Abschrift.

Funk-Spruch Nr. 52
Besondere Stelle:
W.V.H.A.

An
K.L.Au.

Angekommen: 15.9.42 1744

Betr.: Fahrgenehmigung.
Dort.Antrag v.14.9.42

Fahrgen. für einen PKW. von Au. nach Litzmannstadt und zurück zwecks Besichtigung der Versuchsstation für Feld-Öfen Aktion Reinhard wird hiermit für den 16.9.42 erteilt.

Die Fahrgen. ist dem Kraftfahrer mitzugeben.

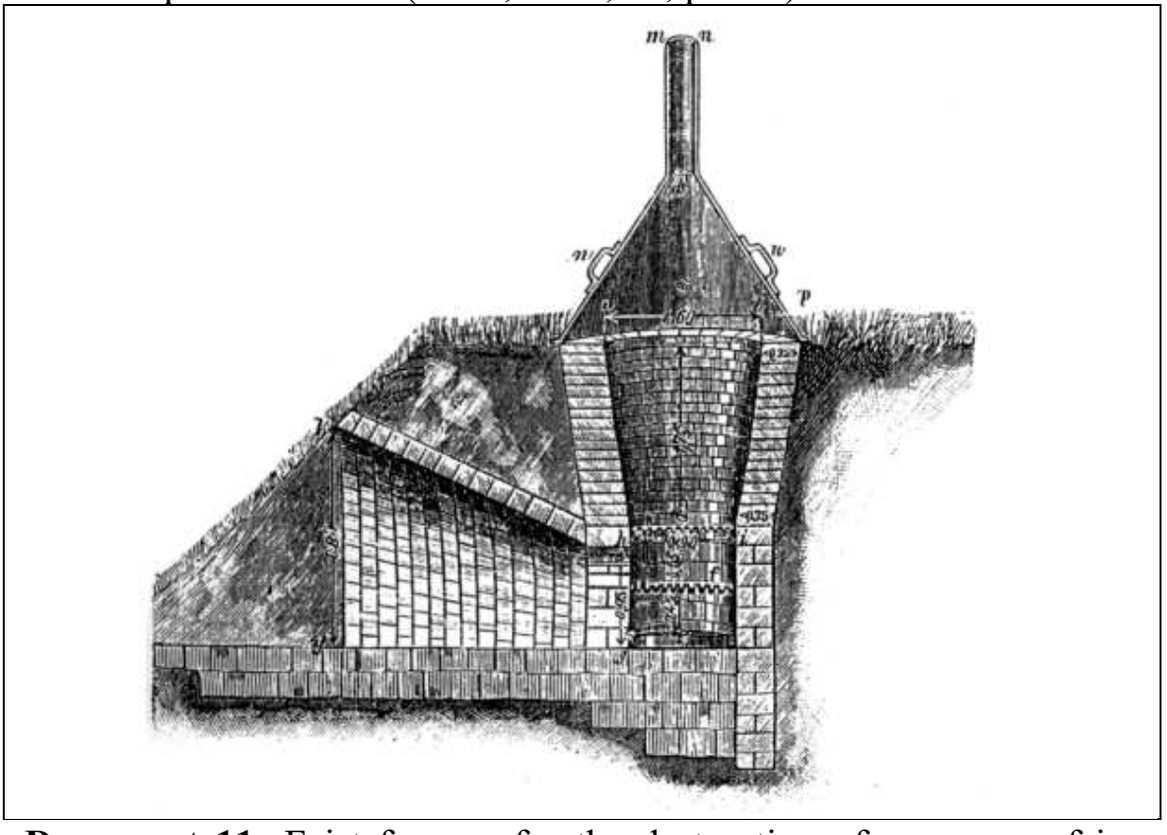
Der Chef der Amtsgr. D
ges. Glücks
SS-Brigadef. u. Generalmajor
der Waffen-SS, Leiter der
Dienstst. im Range eines General-
leutnants der Waffen-SS

F.d.R.
ges. Selle
Funkstellenleiter

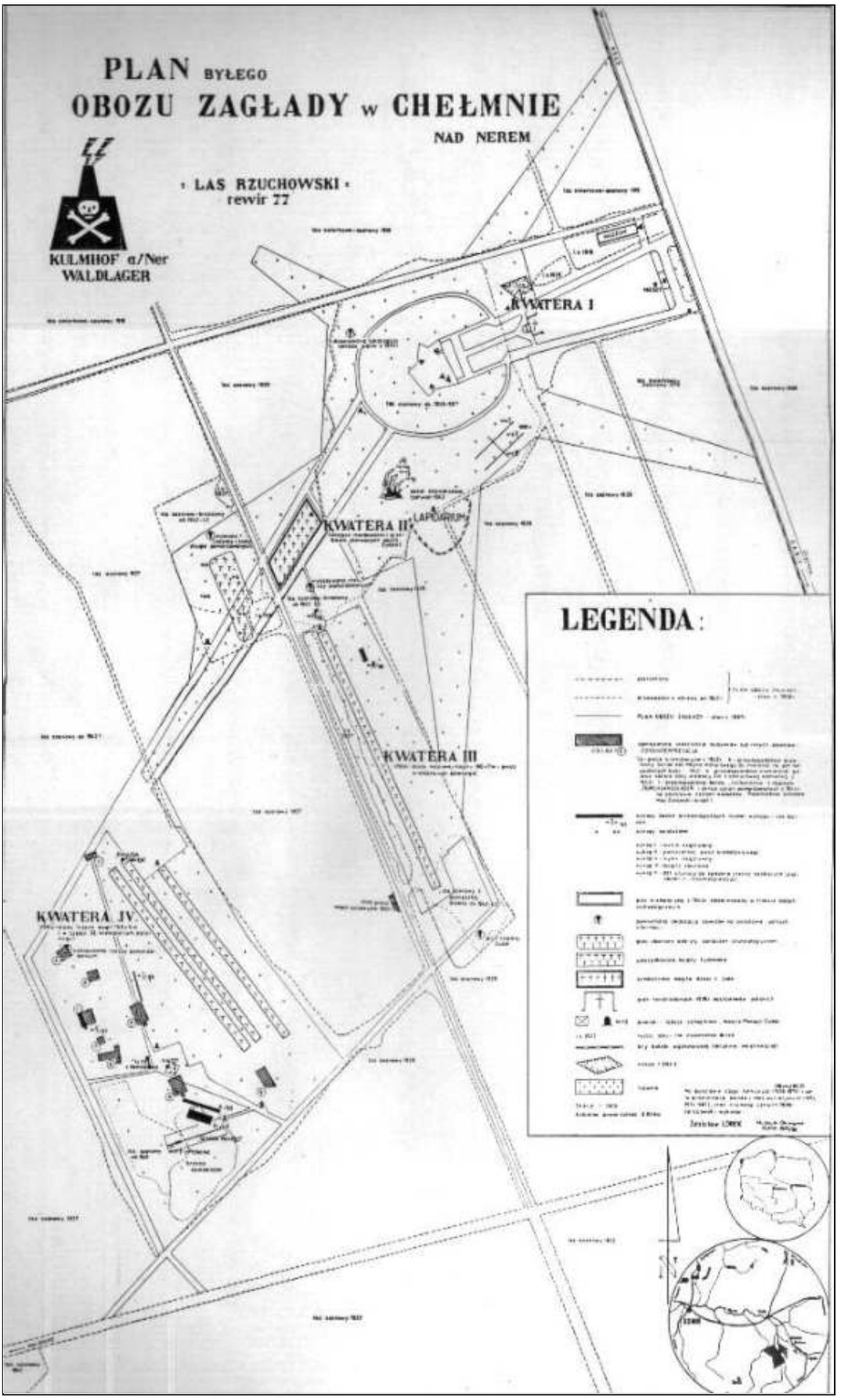
Waffen-SS d. R.d.A.:

Hauptsturmführer und Adjutant.

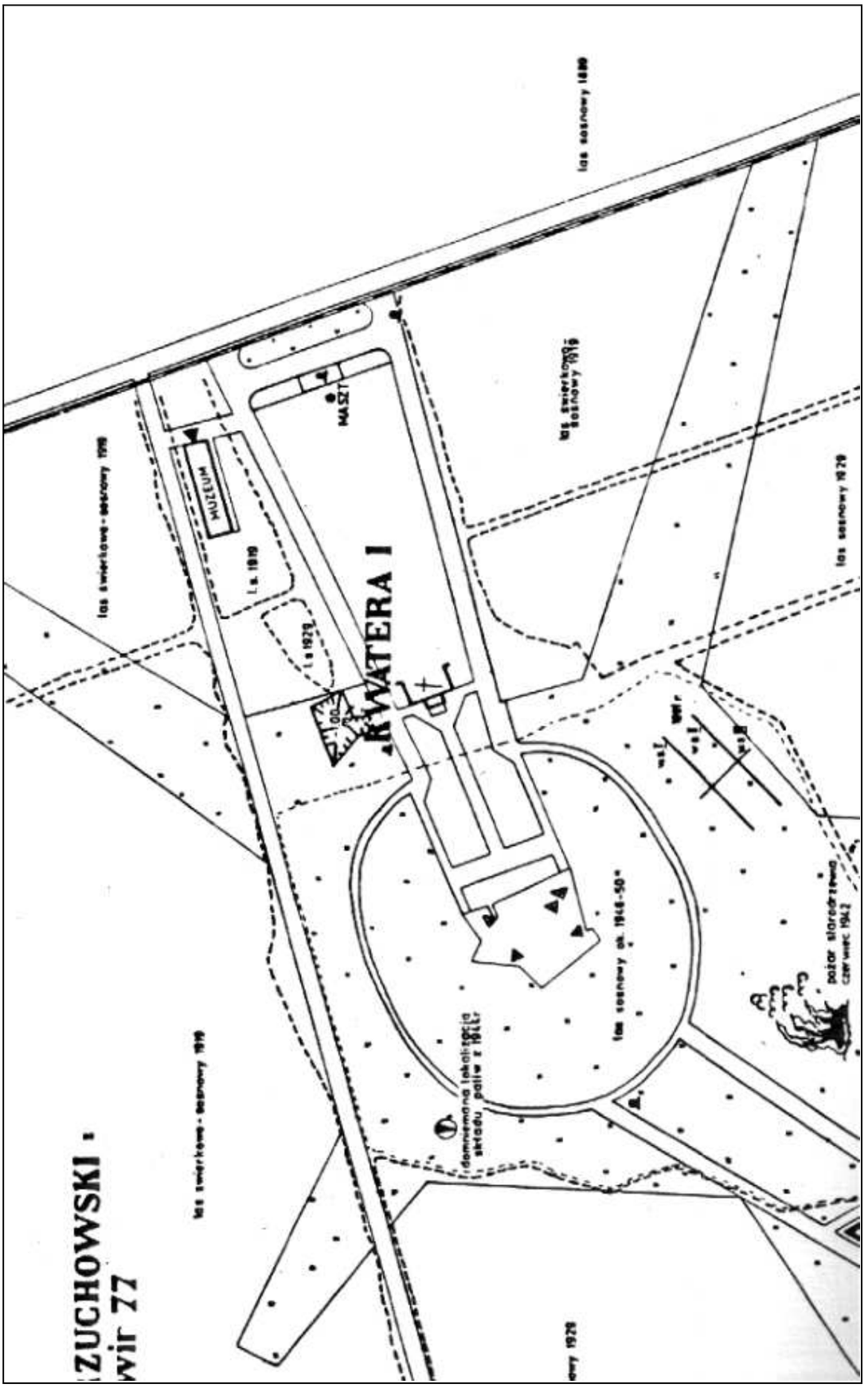
Document 10: Travel permit "for passenger car from Au.[schwitz] to Litzmannstadt [Łódź] and back for inspecting the experimental station for field incinerators Aktion Reinhardt" issued by the SS *WVHA* on 15 September 1942. (AGK, NTN, 94, p. 170)



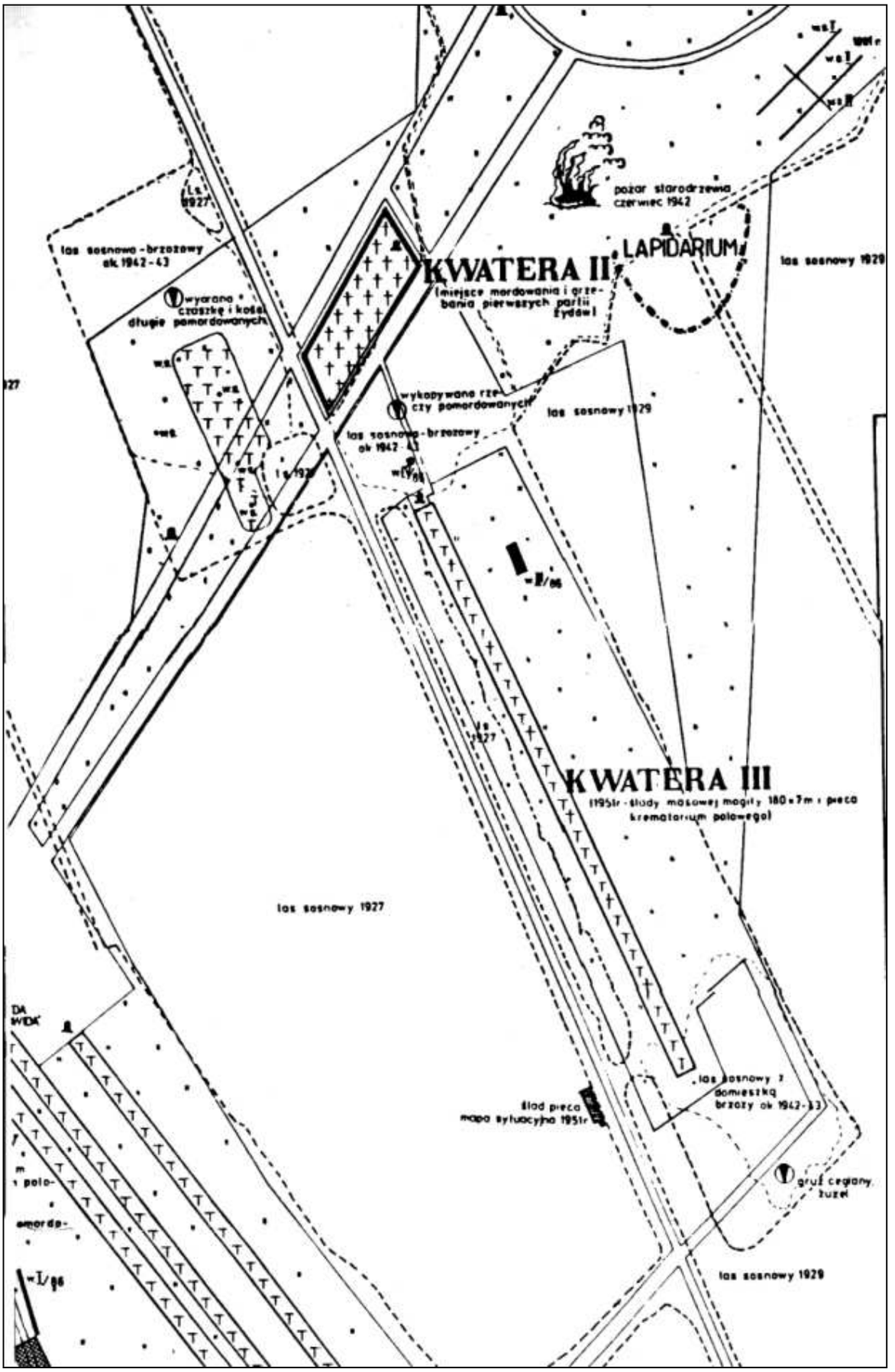
Document 11: Feist furnace for the destruction of carcasses of infected animal. (de Cristoforis 1890, p. 126)



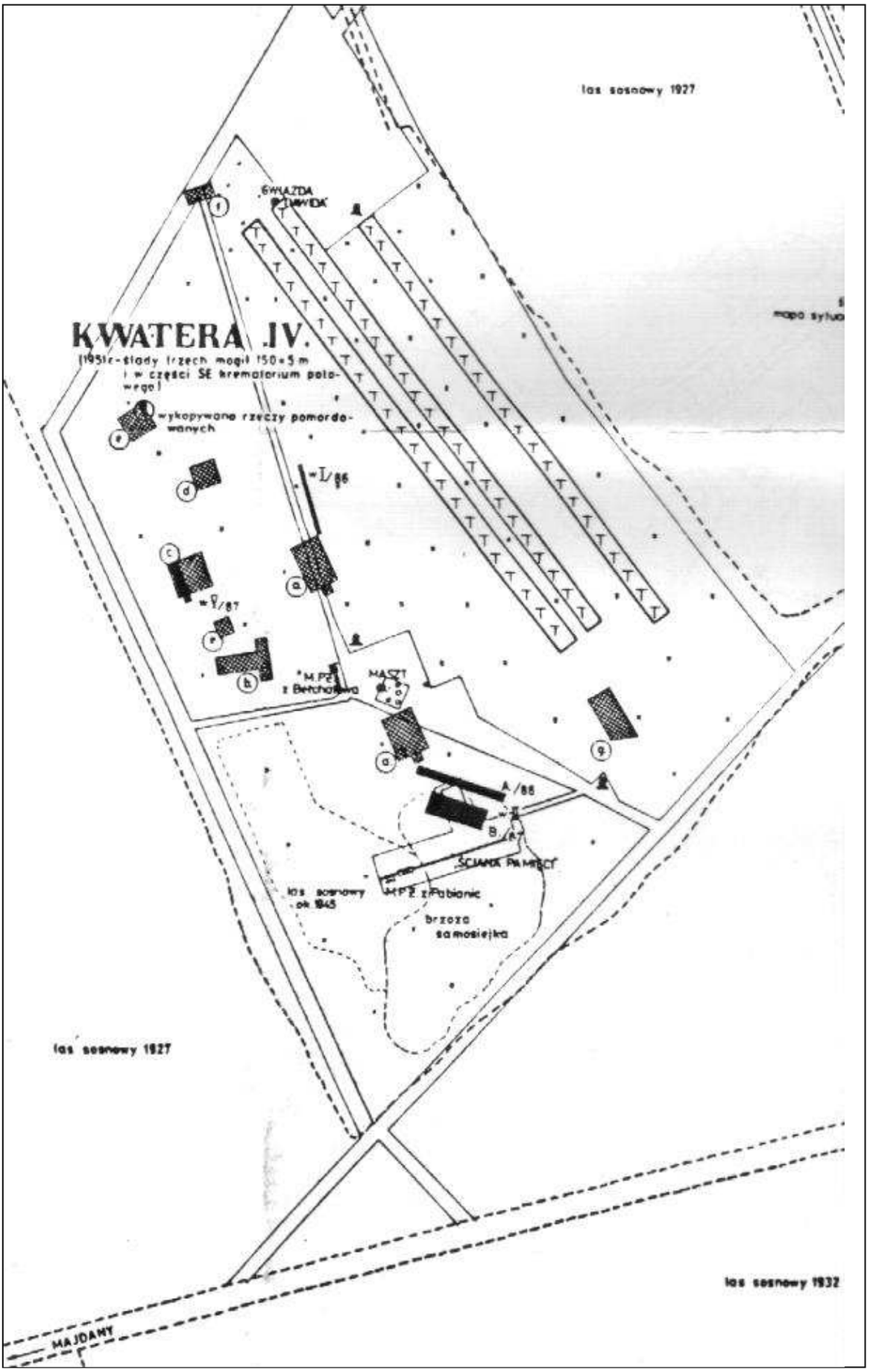
Document 12: Map of the Chełmno camp. (Krakowski 1996, table outside of text)



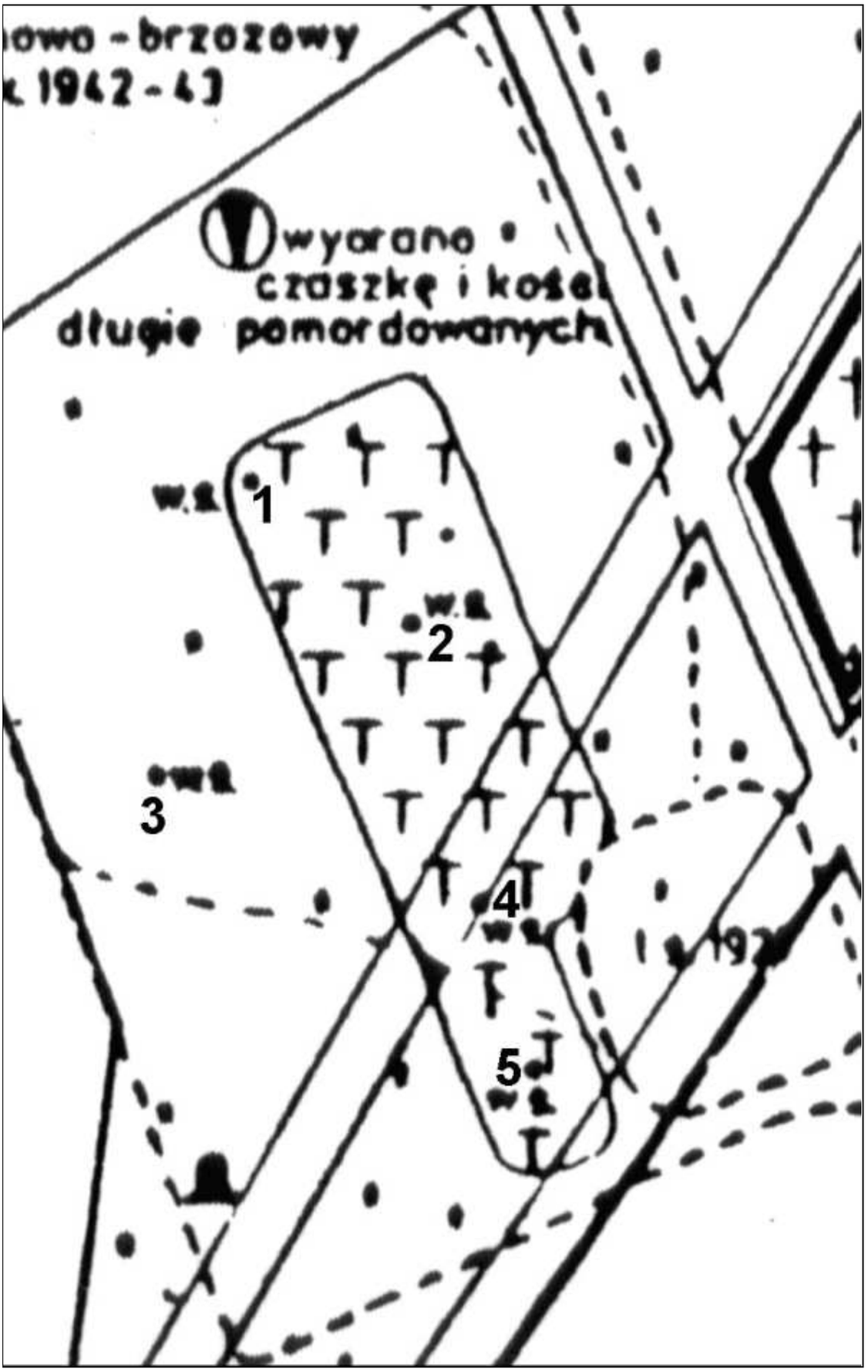
Document 12 a: Detail enlargement of the Chełmno camp map, sector I (rotated, see Document 12).



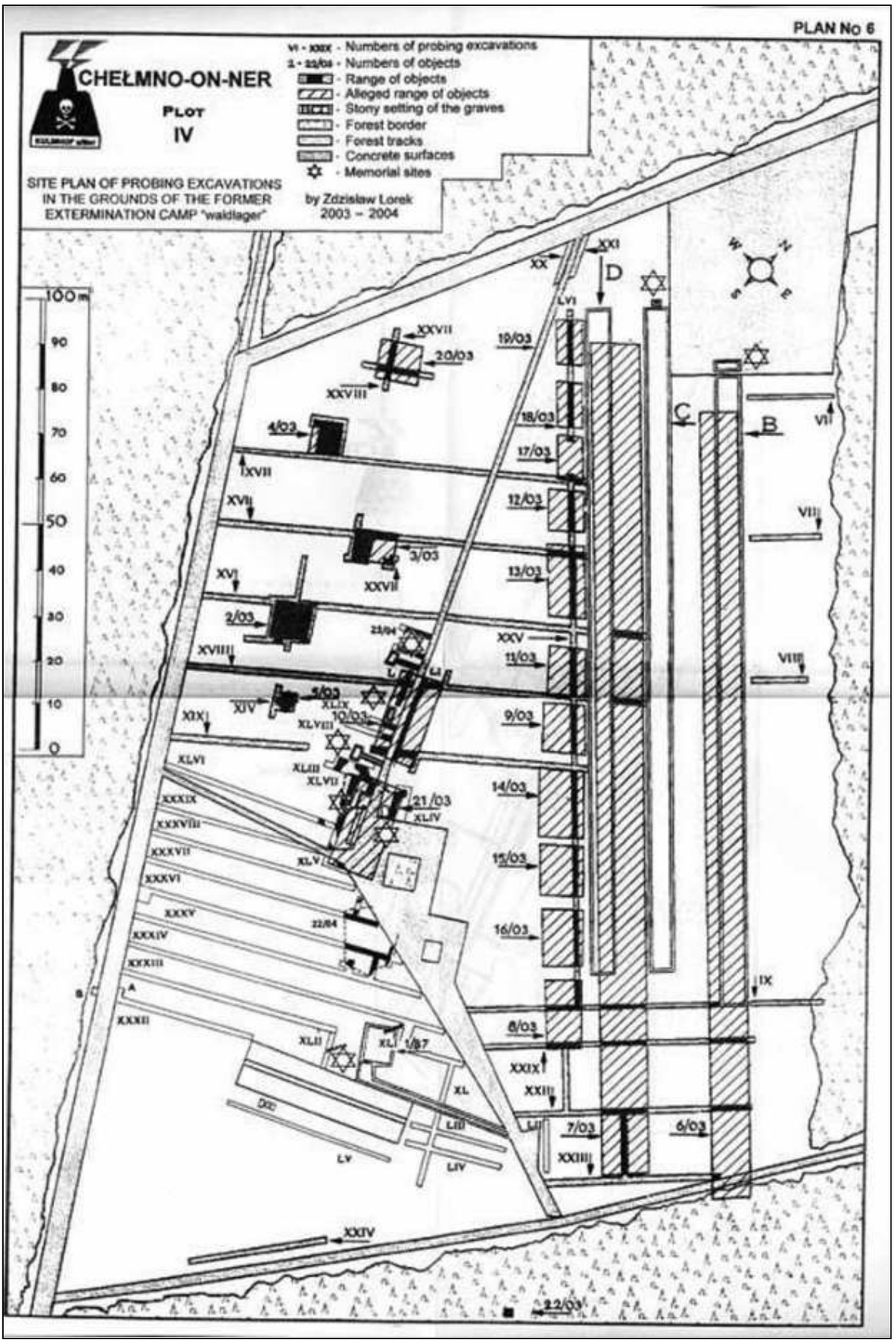
Document 12 b: Detail enlargement of the Chełmno camp map, sectors II-III (see Document 12).



Document 12 c: Detail enlargement of the Chełmno camp map, sector IV (see Document 12).



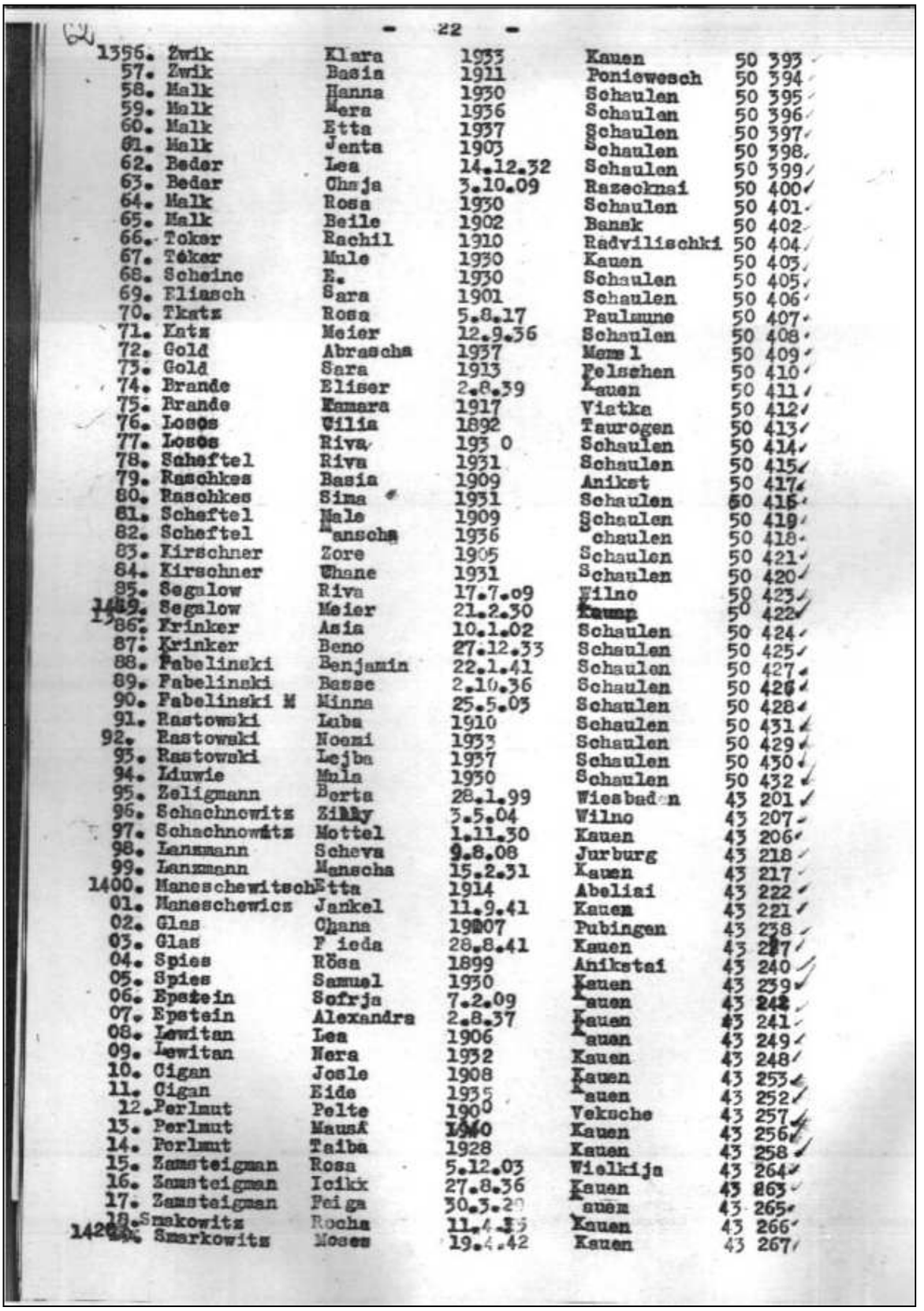
Document 12 d: Detail enlargement of the Chełmno camp map, sector IV, detail (see Document 12). Numbers 1-5 added by the author; see Section 10.4.



Document 12 e: Map of the archeological survey of 2003-2004 drawn by Zdzisław Lorek. (www.muzeum.com.pl/en/chelmno.htm)

Document 13: Air photo of the Chełmno camp of May 1942. (www.deathcamps.org/occupation/pic/bigarie.jpg; erroneously attributed to 1941).

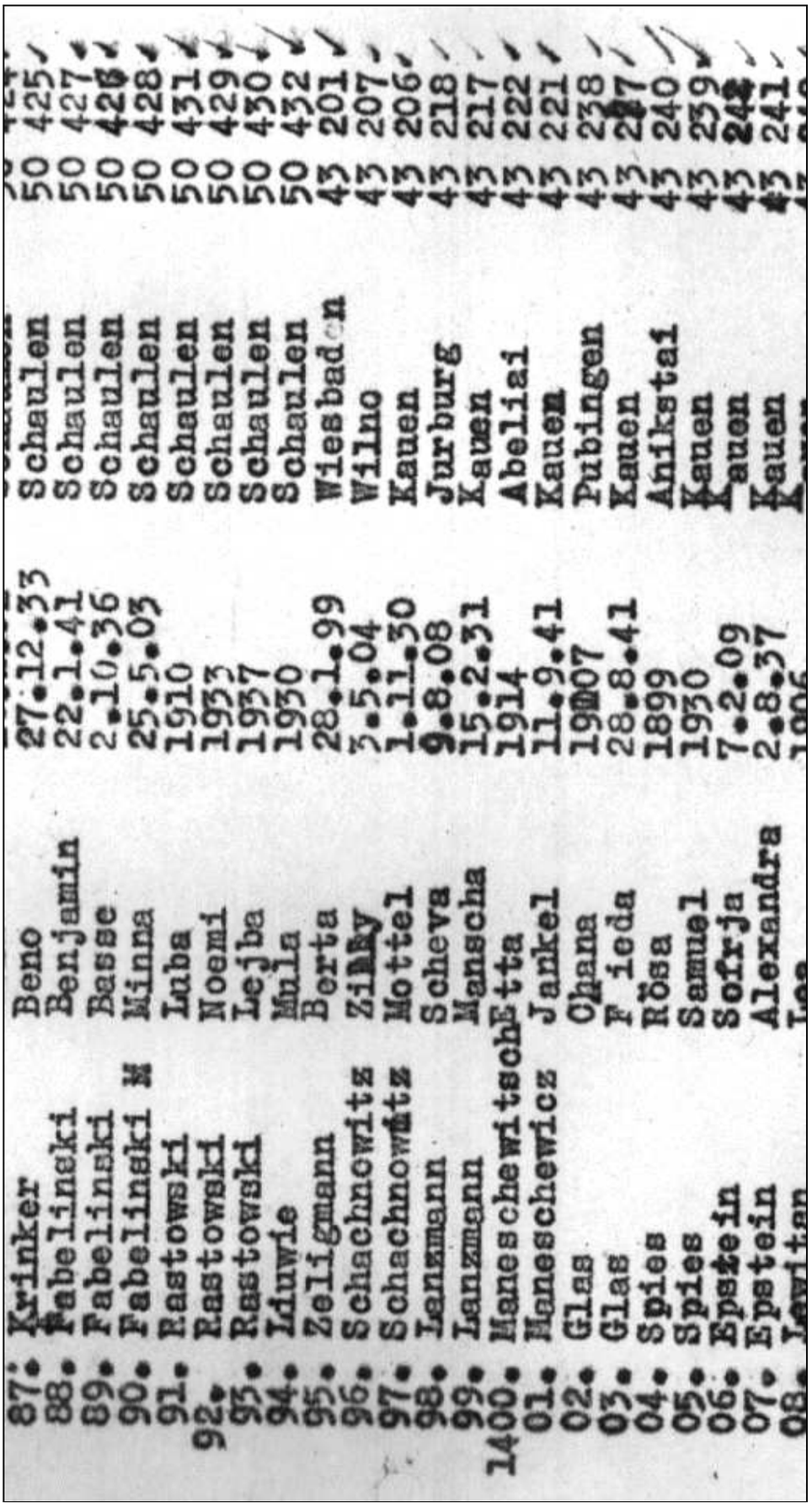
Document 14: Archaeological excavation of the cremation furnace of the Chełmno camp. (Gulczyński 1991, photo outside of text)



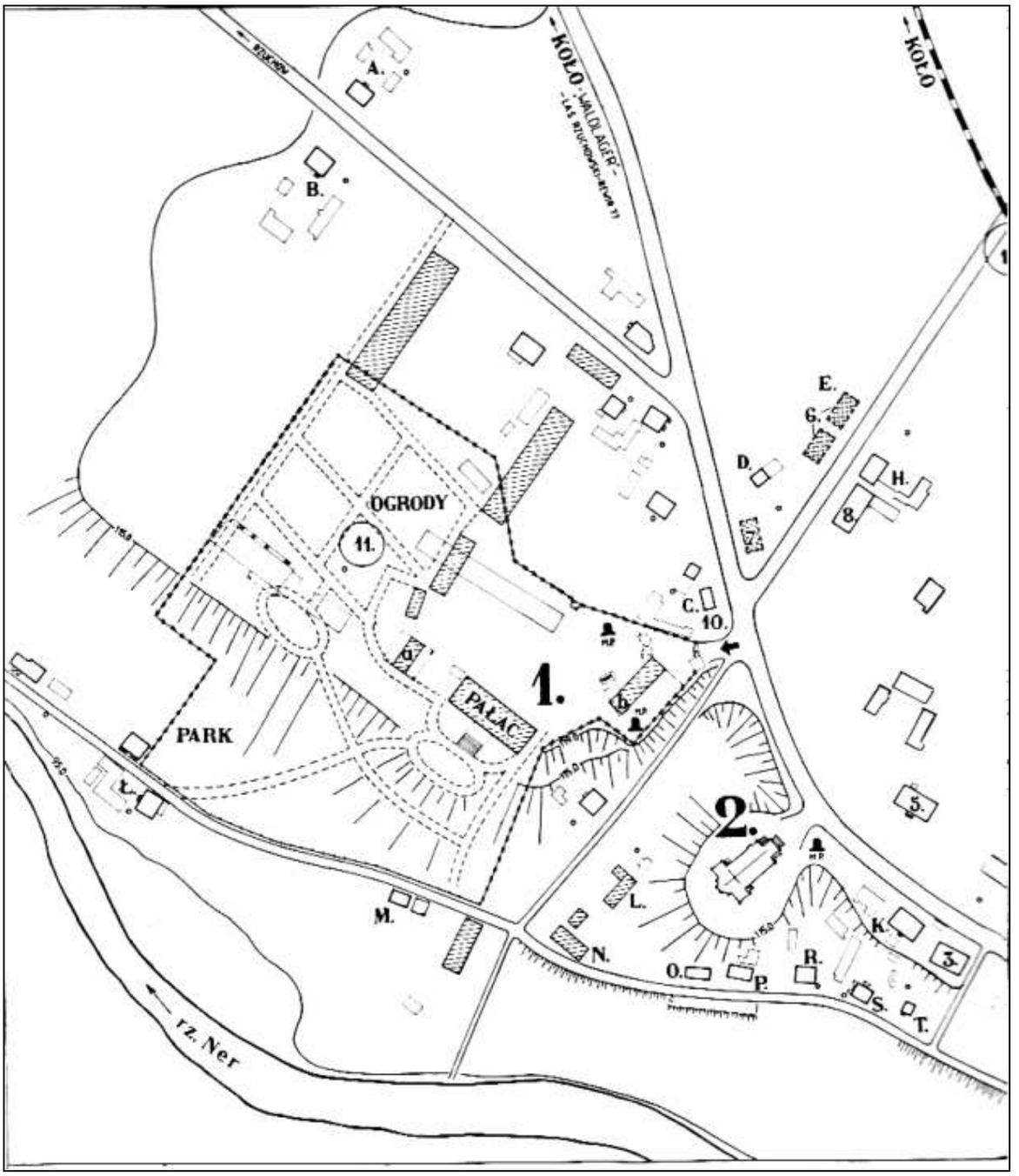
- 22 -

1396.	Zwik	Klara	1933	Kauen	50	393
57.	Zwik	Basia	1911	Poniewesch	50	394
58.	Malk	Hanna	1930	Schaulen	50	395
59.	Malk	Mera	1936	Schaulen	50	396
60.	Malk	Etta	1937	Schaulen	50	397
61.	Malk	Jenta	1903	Schaulen	50	398
62.	Beder	Lea	14.12.32	Schaulen	50	399
63.	Beder	Chaja	3.10.09	Raseeknai	50	400
64.	Malk	Rosa	1930	Schaulen	50	401
65.	Malk	Beile	1902	Bansk	50	402
66.	Toker	Rachil	1910	Radvilischki	50	404
67.	Toker	Mule	1930	Kauen	50	405
68.	Scheine	E.	1930	Schaulen	50	405
69.	Fliasch	Sara	1901	Schaulen	50	406
70.	Tkatz	Rosa	5.8.17	Paulsune	50	407
71.	Katz	Meier	12.9.36	Schaulen	50	408
72.	Gold	Abrascha	1937	Memel	50	409
73.	Gold	Sara	1913	Pelschen	50	410
74.	Brande	Eliser	2.8.39	Kauen	50	411
75.	Brande	Kamara	1917	Viatka	50	412
76.	Losos	Cilia	1892	Taurogen	50	413
77.	Losos	Riva	193 0	Schaulen	50	414
78.	Scheftel	Riva	1931	Schaulen	50	415
79.	Raschkes	Basia	1909	Anikst	50	417
80.	Raschkes	Sima	1931	Schaulen	50	418
81.	Scheftel	Male	1909	Schaulen	50	419
82.	Scheftel	Manscha	1936	chaulen	50	418
83.	Kirschner	Zore	1905	Schaulen	50	421
84.	Kirschner	Chane	1931	Schaulen	50	420
85.	Segalow	Riva	17.7.09	Filno	50	423
1389.	Segalow	Meier	21.2.30	Kaunp	50	422
1386.	Krinker	Asia	10.1.02	Schaulen	50	424
87.	Krinker	Beno	27.12.33	Schaulen	50	425
88.	Fabelinski	Benjamin	22.1.41	Schaulen	50	427
89.	Fabelinski	Basse	2.10.36	Schaulen	50	426
90.	Fabelinski M	Minna	25.5.03	Schaulen	50	428
91.	Rastowski	Luba	1910	Schaulen	50	431
92.	Rastowski	Noemi	1933	Schaulen	50	429
93.	Rastowski	Lejba	1937	Schaulen	50	430
94.	Lduwie	Mula	1930	Schaulen	50	432
95.	Zeligmann	Berta	28.1.99	Wiesbaden	43	201
96.	Schachnowitz	Zilly	3.5.04	Wilno	43	207
97.	Schachnowitz	Mottel	1.11.30	Kauen	43	206
98.	Lanzmann	Scheva	9.8.08	Jurburg	43	218
99.	Lanzmann	Mansche	15.2.31	Kauen	43	217
1400.	Maneschewitsch	Etta	1914	Abeliai	43	222
01.	Maneschewics	Jankel	11.9.41	Kauen	43	221
02.	Glas	Chana	1907	Pubingen	43	238
03.	Glas	Frieda	28.8.41	Kauen	43	237
04.	Spies	Rösa	1899	Anikstai	43	240
05.	Spies	Samuel	1930	Kauen	43	239
06.	Epstein	Sofrja	7.2.09	Kauen	43	242
07.	Epstein	Alexandra	2.8.37	Kauen	43	241
08.	Lewitan	Lea	1906	Kauen	43	249
09.	Lewitan	Nera	1932	Kauen	43	248
10.	Cigan	Josle	1908	Kauen	43	253
11.	Cigan	Eide	1935	Kauen	43	252
12.	Perlmut	Pelte	1900	Veksche	43	257
13.	Perlmut	Mausa	1940	Kauen	43	256
14.	Perlmut	Taiba	1928	Kauen	43	258
15.	Zamsteigman	Rosa	5.12.03	Wielkija	43	264
16.	Zamsteigman	Icikk	27.8.36	Kauen	43	263
17.	Zamsteigman	Peiga	30.3.29	Kauen	43	265
18.	Smakowitz	Rocha	11.4.35	Kauen	43	266
1426.	Smarkowitz	Moses	19.4.42	Kauen	43	267

Document 15: Page 22 of the list of a transport of Jews from Auschwitz to Stutthof of 3 September 1944. (AMS, I-IIC-3)



Document 15a: Page 22 of the list of a transport of Jews from Auschwitz to Stutthof of 3 September 1944; detail (AMS, I-IIC-3; detail)



Document 16: Map of the Chełmno "castle". (Krakowski 1996, outside of text)

Document 17: Ruins of the cremation furnace of Chełmno. (Photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

Document 18: Ruins of the cremation furnace of Chełmno. (Photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

Document 19: Ruins of the cremation furnace of Chełmno. (Photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

Document 20: Ruins of the cremation furnace of Chełmno. (Photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

Document 21: Ruins of the cremation furnace of Chełmno. Memorial stone. (Photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

Document 22: Memorial entrance of the Chełmno camp. (Photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

Document 23: Sector I of the Chełmno camp. (Photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

Document 24: The "Lapidarium" of the Chełmno camp. (Photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

Document 25: One of the "symbolic" graves of the Chełmno camp. Detail. (Photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

Document 26: The three "symbolic" graves in Sector IV of the Chełmno camp. (Photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

Document 27: The "Memorial wall" in Sector IV of the Chełmno camp. (Photo of 1997). © Carlo Mattogno

18.3. Abbreviations

AGK: *Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu – Instytutu Pamieci Narodowej* (Archive of the Central Commission for the Investigation of Crimes Against the Polish People – National Memorial), Warsaw

AMS: *Archiwum Muzeum Stutthof* (Archive of the Stutthof Museum)

APL: *Archiwum Państwowe w Łódźi* (Łódź State Archive)

APMO: *Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu* (Archive of the Auschwitz State Museum)

GARF: *Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiskoi Federatsii* (State Archive of the Russian Federation), Moscow

IMT: *Trial of the major war criminals before the International Military Tribunal* (IMT). Nuremberg 14. November 1945 – 1. October 1946. Published at Nuremberg, Germany, 1947

RGVA: *Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv* (Russian State War Archive), Moscow.

SL: *Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg*

ZSL: *Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen*, Ludwigsburg

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THE GAS VANS

A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION

SANTIAGO ALVAREZ

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Santiago Alvarez

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Cover Illustrations: Top: truck equipped with a producer-gas generator (see page 106). Left: moving truck found in Poland after the war, for decades falsely claimed to have been a "gas van" (see page 279). Right: made-up drawing of an alleged "gas van" following testimony (see page 262). Background bottom: section of Document 501-PS (see page 287).

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Preface

The present study is the result of a confluence of several coincidences. As a matter of fact, its author never intended to write a book on the topic. He merely wanted to translate the book written by another author, and maybe edit it and update it a little where required. But that was not meant to be.

At the beginning there was the idea in early 2010 of translating into English Pierre Marais's French study *Les camions à gaz en question* (*The Gas Vans Scrutinized*), which had been published as early as 1994. This was meant to fill a gap in the series *Holocaust Handbooks*, which at that point did not have a monograph on the topic of the elusive "gas vans." In 2008, Marais's study had been translated to German by Swiss translator Jürgen Graf, who made some minor updates to the text.[1] At that time, I was supplied with both Graf's German translation as well as the French original. The text part itself had only some 100 generously formatted pages, and together with the recent updates prepared for the German edition, it looked like a project which could be wrapped up swiftly, or so I thought.

Although initially by far no expert regarding the "gas vans" of the Third Reich, I had read several papers about this issue in the past permitting me to have a fairly good grasp of the state of the art. Hence, while translating Marais's work, I noticed numerous errors of facts, flawed and missing arguments, and, worse still, so many omissions of important documentary and anecdotal material, a great deal of which had become generally accessible only during the past 15 years, that I decided to give it a complete work over. Well, the more I worked on it, the more material turned up, so I ended up both increasing the book's volume by at least 100%, and rewriting, replacing or even deleting sizeable sections of Pierre's own text, which had become in need of revision and updating due to the added content and the many corrections.

At what I thought was the end of my editing efforts, I had in front of me a book that by 80% of its content was no longer Pierre's, but mine, and in which the parts that still were Pierre's at times read like alien remnants clearly written in the style of a different author and sometimes

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1 It was published by an Italian publisher; see Marais 2008.

awkwardly misplaced by the book's new structure. There could be no doubt that this would have to be smoothed out as well.

Under these circumstances, could the book still be presented to the original French author – or the public – as a translation of his work? Hardly. Would he accept all the changes made? Well, I was afraid to ask, and when getting in touch with Pierre's literary agent, he balked and suggested to not even submit this typescript to the then 90-year-old Monsieur Marais, as he might have a hard time getting over this unscrupulous gutting and rewriting of his work. Therefore, the decision was made to make the rewrite complete and publish it under my name instead.

Yet in spite of all the rewriting done, this present book still owes a lot to Pierre's original work. First it is the very reason for its existence. Next, some of the basic structure of this book still follows Pierre's lead, and many of his arguments can still be found in it, even if they have been rearranged, rephrased, and at times reevaluated. And last but not least, Pierre's book was a trail blazer at its time, a foundation upon which the present study erects its larger, more thoroughly argued edifice. Pierre's book has been my stepping stone to the present study; his tome is the giant, the pioneer work of the first hour, without which this present book would not be.

Although this book may be regarded as a clear improvement in comparison to Pierre's work – a natural progress to be expected after almost two decades have passed – it is still far from complete, as much archival material held by the *Zentrale Stelle* in Ludwigsburg, Germany, is currently difficult, if not impossible, to access by critical researchers due to German censorship laws. Hence any of this study's conclusions must necessarily be considered provisional in character, and the discussion will remain open.

In addition to Pierre Marais, the present study owes much to the support by Thomas Kues, who tirelessly supplied me with all kinds of documents, some of them on my request, but also many which had been hitherto unknown to me.

Carlo Mattogno helped to improve the book as well by critically reading an earlier version of it, and indirectly by his own research for his book on the Chełmno Camp, about which I was continually informed, so that the present book could profited considerably from this.

I also thank all my other helpers, who for safety reasons will remain unnamed.

Introduction

When it comes to the "Holocaust," the alleged mass murder of European Jews by the Third Reich, most people think they "know." Of course we all "know" that it happened. We "know" that six million died. We "know" that the Nazis pushed the Jews into the gas chambers and gas ovens, that they burned them, dead or alive, in gigantic crematories and on huge pyres. Our knowledge is so certain that anyone uttering disbelief is swiftly ostracized. In many countries people even call the police and have doubters arrested, prosecuted, and sent to prison. He who doubts what everybody knows to be true must be evil, indeed.

Most readers perusing the above sentences might not even notice that it contains a typical error, a falsehood even acknowledged by orthodox historians. This error has to such a degree become a fixed part of the cliché which we consider to be "knowledge" that it passes unnoticed.

There were no gas ovens.

The term makes no sense.

Mainstream historians claim that there were gas chambers on the one hand, designed to quickly asphyxiate hundreds, if not thousands of people at a time within mere minutes.[2] On the other hand everybody agrees that there were crematory ovens, designed to reduce deceased camp inmates to ashes (although the inmates' cause of death and the crematories' capacities are disputed[3]). In the mind of the public at large, though, gas chambers and crematory ovens have merged to some ominously sounding "gas ovens." The public discourse about the Holocaust is replete with that nonsensical term, even though what it describes never existed.

So much about "we know."

Listing and explaining all the false clichés prevailing in the public about the "Holocaust" would fill a separate book, so I will abstain from

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2 Revisionists contest that notion, though, see primarily the numerous entries for Mattogno in the bibliography.

3 On the only existing scientific-technical study of the cremation furnaces at Auschwitz see Mattogno/Deana.

doing it here. The point I was trying to make is that, although we all have some basic grasp about what is meant by "the Holocaust," most people are quite unfamiliar with even general aspects of the topic.

While gas chambers dominate the public's mind when the specter of the "Holocaust" is raised, "gas vans" are usually absent from the discourse. What percentage of the general populace has ever heard that the Nazis are said to have deployed mobile gas chambers as well, which historians usually call "gas vans"?

This lack of knowledge is excusable, because even in orthodox historiography the "gas vans" have played only a minor role. To this date no monograph has appeared on the topic written by a mainstream historian. Mere articles published in journals or anthologies exist, and most of them do not even focus on the gas vans themselves but instead on some location like the Chełmno Camp in Poland or the Semlin Camp in Serbia, on certain German armed units, in particular the German anti-partisan *Einsatzgruppen* behind the Russian front, or events where they are said to have been used, like the euthanasia action, to name a few. We will encounter many of these papers in the present study. But before doing this, I want to discuss the one mainstream paper which comes closest to a study of the gas vans as such. By so doing we will recognize the dire need for a much more thorough and critical study.

In 1987 German historian Mathias Beer published a paper whose German title translates to "The development of the gas vans for the murder of the Jews." In it he tries to describe, based on 14 documents and many more testimonies, how National Socialist Germany developed this murder weapon. Right at the beginning of his paper he admits that all extant documents are from a late phase of these vans' deployment, hence could elucidate little about their development. To remedy this, he resorts to verbal claims made by various persons asserting to have witnessed something, most of whom were interrogated during some criminal investigation or trial. Knowing that by relying on such statements Beer enters shaky territory, he declares that "due to their peculiarities testimonies" need to always be linked to, that is to say supported by, some documents, and that those documents themselves need to be "subject to thorough source criticism" (all on p. 404).

I agree with this, as this is a standard method of historiography. Yet Beer has missed two important issues here: first of all, each testimony, whether supported by a document or not, needs to be subjected to criticism as well. A medieval testimony claiming that the devil rode by on a

broom stick having sex with a witch, supported by a medieval document claiming to document that very "fact," might fulfill Beer's criteria, but it does not constitute truth. The creator of a document can err and lie just as much as a witness. Next, Beer completely omits the most important group of evidence: physical, tangible evidence. Where is the flying broomstick? Where is the devil? Did the devil leave his semen in the witch?, etc. are all very important questions to be asked.

In our context these questions would be: Where are the vans? Where are the corpses? Where is the poison in their body?

Beer is completely mute on all accounts: no scrutiny of the witness testimony performed, no material traces requested, no questions asked about the construction and operational mode of these vehicles. And worse still: he fails his own criterion that document criticism is pivotal, because his paper does not contain any critical discussion of any of the documents he cites or at least a reference to such a discussion (which does not exist among orthodox historians, I may add).

Hence Beer's paper is a complete failure already on formal grounds. But that is not the end. His self-defined goal to trace the development of the gas vans within the framework of documents falls flat as well. As Mattogno has shown (2017, Chapter 1), Beer's lengthy "reconstruction" of how the gas vans allegedly came into being is not based on any documents, as Beer himself admitted. What remains are the testimonies on which Beer relies heavily. We will encounter most of them in this study, where we will subject their statements to critical scrutiny. The result is shocking: many of the important witness statements used by Beer can be demonstrated to be highly implausible (see, for instance, two of the persons allegedly responsible for the vans' development: August Becker, Chapter 3.7.3.3., and Albert Widmann, Chapter 3.7.4.6.).

While doing his research for his own 1994 study on the gas vans, Pierre Marais had noticed Beer's complete lack of a critical attitude, as a result of which he wrote him a letter with several questions, to which Beer responded accordingly. I have reproduced this exchange with Marais's comments in Appendix 10 (p. 368). Although Marais's questions to Beer weren't as hard-hitting as I would have formulated them, Beer's subsequent refusal to continue the exchange shows who of the two is a dogmatic ideologue and who a critical freethinker.

Any decent researcher would have taken such critical inquiry as a reason to look into his own research again and to amend it where neces-

sary. But such an open-minded approach does not seem to be Beer's cup of tea, for when he had a slightly abridged and updated version of his 1987 paper published in a 2011 anthology (Morsch/Perz/Ley, pp. 154-165), it exhibited the same deficiencies of superficiality. Here again, Beer's references to documents and witness accounts serve only to once more uncritically repeat what he has read. In addition, this new version of Beer's paper also lacks any reference to – and discussion of – any topical criticism made during the past two decades (mainly Marais 1994 and Weckert 2019). Hence Beer, like most mainstream Holocaust authors, has proved to be impervious to critique, which means that he is insusceptible to the scientific method.[4]

In view of the total failure of orthodox historiography to appropriately address the issue of the "gas vans," Pierre Marais 1994 monograph on the "gas vans" was a sorely needed study indeed. Unfortunately it remained without any reaction from the historiographic establishment.

The present study will start by including and summarizing what Marais has already revealed and by carrying the topic farther and deeper.

[4] Beer has added an inconspicuous deception to this paper which is common among mainstream Holocaust authors: He quoted Becker's letter to Rauff with "since December 1941, for example, 97,000 were processed with 3 deployed vehicles" (Morsch/Perz/Ley, p. 164), *i.e.* with a lower case "since," thus giving the false impression that this statement is to be found somewhere in the middle of the letter, whereas it is actually its very (absurd) beginning. See Chapter 2.2.4.1.

1. Material and Forensic Evidence

1.1. Material Traces of the Weapon of Crime

When there is sufficient reason to suspect that a murder has been committed, finding the murder weapon and at least traces of the victim are key issues during the investigation of what has happened. This is so for court proceedings in a state under the rule of law, but this ought to be also a pivotal point for any independent scientific investigation. After all, one of the most important tenets of science is that a claim must be substantiated, or else it is not much more than mere hot air. To be more precise: substantiating a person's claim requires more than coming up with more individuals making the same or a similar claim. If we merely collect claims, we may thus obtain a number, maybe even a great number of identical or similar claims, but they are still mere claims. Substantiation requires most of all substance: hard, physical, tangible evidence beyond mere statements.

In the case investigated here the allegation is made that during the Second World War a huge number of individuals was killed at various points in time and at numerous locations by means of "gas vans" deployed by German units. Some of the killings are said to have happened in the course of fighting partisans in the Soviet territories temporarily occupied by the Germans; others ostensibly happened in the context of the implementation of the so-called "Final Solution to the Jewish question," which, according to orthodox historiography, meant the physical annihilation of many Jews within the German realm of influence during World War Two.

The partisan warfare during World War Two followed its own, at times cruel, rules. In this context, summarily killing partisans was not an illegal activity, if judged by international law as in effect at that time.[5] Even West German courts of law dealing with partisan killings allegedly committed with "gas vans" did not sentence any defendant on

[5] On the sometimes cruel but, during World War II, generally accepted customs of warfare – when it comes to killing civilians – see Siegert 2019; on partisan warfare see Seidler 1998.

this ground alone, as killing partisans by whatever means, as long as it was not excessively cruel, was considered a legal act of war.[6] Communist East German trials, on the other hands, always considered the killing of partisans a crime (see Chapter 3.8.1.). Since the present study is not about legal considerations but rather about the evaluation of evidence presented, the legal aspects will not be discussed any further.

Although most of the killings said to have been perpetrated with "gas vans" are claimed to have occurred within the so-called "Final Solution," I will not enter into a discussion of this term and its historical interpretation either, as this would lead us far astray from our actual topic and because both orthodox and revisionist literature about the "Final Solution" are replete with considerations on this topic.

In these "gas vans" the Germans are said to have used the vehicles' exhaust gases for homicides, the most toxic component of which is carbon monoxide (CO, sometimes also referred to as carbon oxide). This gas is a result of an incomplete combustion of the carbon component of fuels consisting of hydrocarbons, like gasoline and Diesel fuel. Complete combustion leads to carbon dioxide (CO_2), which is much less toxic than CO. I will elaborate on this a little more in Chapter 1.3. Suffice it here to say that the claimed weapon of crime in a more-narrow sense is said to have been a standard truck or van engine as it was mounted into the vehicle by the manufacturer without any modification. The truck itself, however, is said to have been retrofitted with certain additional equipment permitting the actual homicide. What exactly these changes to the serial trucks and vans were is one of the central questions to be elucidated by the present study, next to determining the make and model of the trucks themselves as well as the engines used.

German documents from 1942 prove the order of thirty special cargo boxes mounted onto the chassis of Austrian Saurer trucks sporting Diesel engines.[7] The vehicles thusly equipped are claimed to have been used as "gas vans" especially by the so-called *Einsatzgruppen*, German armed forces officially in charge of combating partisans operating behind the German lines at the eastern front. One would therefore have to expect that one or several of these vehicles were captured by the Soviets during their counter-offensives, but this is apparently not the case. In

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6 Many defendants in West German trials claimed that they had only killed (or known about the killing of) partisans, but the judges usually did not believe them; see Chapters 3.7.4.3. to 5., 3.7.4.9. & 3.7.6.11. In one case, however, the defendant's claim was accepted, resulting in his acquittal, see Chapter 3.7.5.5.

7 See the "Dossier R 58/871 f° 1" in Appendix 4.

fact, no information exists about a location where one could investigate a wreck of such a gas van or even only some instructive traces of the special retrofitting which inevitably would have been required for the deployment of these vehicles for homicidal purposes. The Soviets, however, are said to have captured some of those responsible for the homicides in gas vans, whom they put on trial in 1943 (see Chapters 3.2. and 3.3.). How do they explain the fact that they managed to catch some of those who had operated the trucks, but that the vehicles themselves simply vanished?

Mainstream historians, like Mathias Beer, are wont to respond to this glaring lack of any material trace of these elusive vans by coming up with a pseudo-explanation (see Beer's letter to P. Marais, p. 371):

> *"It would not be surprising if no gas vans had been found after the war, because the gas vans, like all other traces left by the extermination of people, were destroyed as best as possible in the rush."*

This does, however, render Beer's position even worse, as this claim also requires supportive evidence – this time to prove that the Nazis did indeed manage to erase all those traces, and how this was possible. After all, the lack of evidence does not prove a claim to be true, which is what Beer tries to argue here. If anything, the lack of evidence refutes the claim.

As we will see, the operation of a truck suffocating humans locked inside of it is rather easy. There are no difficulties constructing it, and manufacturing it *a posteriori* as a fake piece of evidence would doubtlessly have been quite easy. That no such attempt was ever made makes the whole issue even more mysterious.

The claim that thirty vehicles retrofitted for mass gassings, which would have served as a vivid example of the "Nazi barbarity," have simply disappeared without trace ineluctably had to raise certain doubts about their very existence. Unless new information surfaces, one cannot but conclude that the "murder weapon" in the form of these infamous "gas vans" has not been produced to this very day. There are absolutely no tangible material items: no truck, no part of a truck, no drawing or blueprint of a truck.[8] As we will see during the analysis of the existing documents, not even a technical study of these ostensible gassing vehi-

[8] In the above-mentioned letter Beer claimed that a gas van wreck actually exists as a memorial in the town of Konin, Poland, near the former Chełmno Camp. But an inquiry by P. Marais with that town's authorities exposed this claim as false; see Appendix 10, page 376.

cles exists, and it is incomprehensible how such a vehicle could have been constructed without a corresponding technical drawing.

1.2. Material Traces of the Victims

Both the Serbs and the Soviets conducted forensic investigations by exhuming mass graves allegedly containing victims of "gas van" mass gassings.

The Soviets conducted their investigations right after they had reconquered territories from the Germans in early 1943. A summary of the findings were published during the war in a booklet containing a summary of two trials staged in 1943, where the defendants had been accused, among other things, of having participated in the mass murder of Soviet citizens with "murder vans."[9] I will analyze the horrific circumstances of these Soviet wartime show trials in Chapters 3.2. and 3.3. Here I will address only the forensic findings of the Soviet investigating committee, which were quoted as follows in the booklet *The People's Verdict* (1944, p. 13; similar on p. 32):

> *"*[…] *623* [exhumed corpses] *were examined by medical experts* […].
>
> *On the basis of the thorough medical, chemical and spectroscopic investigation which was carried out, a Committee of Experts consisting of Dr. V. I. Prolorovsky* […] *arrived at the conclusion that the cause of death in 523 of the cases examined was carbon monoxide poisoning.* […] *In their report the Committee of Experts stated that the carbon monoxide could undoubtedly have had lethal effect if the waste gases from the Diesel engine penetrated the closed van.*
>
> *The Commission stated:*
>
> *'If the outlet for the carbon monoxide (including waste gases) is in closed premises, the concentration of carbon monoxide in those premises increases very rapidly and may cause death even in the course of a few minutes (from five to ten).'*

---

[9] There exists another instance of a claimed Soviet forensic investigation: 214 exhumed, former mentally sick children who are said to have been killed in a gas van. This forensic expert report, also dating from 1943, was introduced as evidence for the prosecution during a West-German court of law in 1972 (see Chapter 3.7.5.3.). I have so far not been able to obtain a copy or even a summary of this expert report. Maybe the exhumed children shown in Illustration 1 are from that source.

Illustration 1: Photograph taken by Soviet commission of corpses exhumed in 1943 from a grave near Krasnodar.[10] The caption reads: *"Atrocities of German-Fascist invaders in Krasnodar. Photo shows corpses of children poisoned with carbon monoxide gas by the German invaders. The dead bodies have been extracted from a pit for medico-legal examination."*
However, who these victims are, how and when they died, and who murdered them, if anyone, is completely unknown.

> […] *The total number of the Soviet citizens asphyxiated in 'murder vans' is 7,000."*

Soviet wartime expert commissions are notorious for faking and lying about their alleged findings, as the Katyn case amply demonstrates (Sanford 2005). That there is something very fishy about the "expert report" discussed here results from the fact that finding carbon monoxide in severely decomposed corpses was still impossible at the beginning of this millennium and even with the much-refined forensic methods, which were far superior to the crude spectroscopic methods used in the 1940s. Only in 2010, a method based on gas chromatography was established which allowed reliable detection of carbon monoxide levels in "severely" rotten tissue and blood samples a few days old (Walch *et al*. 2010, p. 23). Hence, how would it have been possible for these Soviet

[10] http://collections.yadvashem.org/photosarchive/en-us/11290.html; similar but not quite as clear: …/69350.html, …/69926.html; Yad Vashem does not give an archival source for these photos.

experts to prove carbon monoxide poisonings in corpses which have been rotting in their graves for many months, if not more than a year, by using a method that is unsuitable for this to begin with? How decomposed the corpses were can be gleaned from a photo added to one of the reports, see Illustration 1.[11]

Another indicator that this commission most certainly was not expert at what it stated is the fact that they claimed that, due to the "Diesel engine" exhaust gases piped into the cargo box, "the concentration of carbon monoxide in those premises increases very rapidly and may cause death even in the course of a few minutes (from five to ten)." As I will show in the next chapter, this is simply not possible with Diesel exhaust gases.

In addition to the Soviets, their loyal communist allies in Yugoslavia also performed an investigation by having a War Crimes Commission exhume two mass graves after the liberation of Serbia. They presented their results in March 1945. Orthodox historian Byford writes about this (2010, p. 25):

> *"In fact, the* [Commission's] *approach to evidence was determined primarily by political concerns.* […] *For instance, in the winter of 1944/1945, the War Crimes Commission, acting upon reliable evidence, unearthed approximately 11,000 bodies at two sites where victims of the Semlin*[12] *Anhaltelager were said to have been buried. And yet its report, published a year later, stated that the total number of casualties was as high as 40,000. This figure was arrived at by adding up the various unverifiable approximations offered by a relatively small number of witnesses and former inmates whose statements were collected in the course of the investigation. Similarly, in the case of Banjica, although log books discovered after the war suggested that the total number of inmates was 23,637, of whom 4,286 were executed, the War Crimes Commission dismissed both figures as too low and stated that the actual number might be as high as 80,000 dead."*

Hence we face the problem that here, too, propaganda and political purposes irreparably corrupted the record. If the commission did indeed find 11,000 corpses – who guarantees us that this number was not al-

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11 This Soviet medical expert report is available in the Central Archives of the Federal Security Service (former KGB) of the Russian Federation in Moscow, file H-16708 (Krasnodar trial), vol. 1, part 1, p. 32; quoted acc. to Bourtman 2008, p. 254.

12 Serbian name: Sajmište.

ready exaggerated? – but they lied about that, then how can we trust them about anything we can find in their report?

In early 1942, the Semlin *Anhaltelager* was called *Judenlager* (camp for Jews), as almost exclusively Jews were interned there, until they were allegedly killed with gas vans in the spring of 1942. The number of Jews killed in gas vans is supposed to have been around 7,000 to 7,500 (Byford 2010, p. 6; Manoschek 1998, p. 229f.; Browning 1983, p. 61). After all Jews had been removed from the camp by May 1942, the camp changed its function and was renamed to *Anhaltelager*. Byford writes about this phase of the camp (*ibid.*):

> *"*[…] *Semlin became an* Anhaltelager*, a temporary detention camp for political prisoners, captured partisans and forced laborers, most of whom were subsequently transported to various labor camps in Germany and Norway. Between May 1942 and July 1944, 32,000 inmates (mainly Serbs) passed through the camp, of whom 10,600 died of starvation, exposure and disease or were killed."*

Hence it seems that the 11,000 victims allegedly found by the Yugoslav investigation commission were exclusively victims of this later phase of the camp, when no Jews were held in it anymore. There does therefore not seem to by any forensic proof that even a single person had died in a gas van. If they did, where are their bodies?

Christopher Browning has the following answer to that question (1983, p. 85):

> *"In December 1943, Paul Blobel's Kommando 1005, charged with digging up and burning the bodies from the mass graves left behind by the Einsatzgruppen in Russia, arrived in Yugoslavia, and liquidated the mass graves near Avala* [where, it is said, the gassed victims were buried] *among others."*

We've heard that before: the evil Germans saw to it that all the remnants of these 7,000+ victims disappeared tracelessly, and the traces of the former mass graves along with them. Dare I say that this would have been an impossible feat? (For more on this, see Mattogno 2022.) But if I am wrong, I wonder why the Germans did not perform this same miracle again on those 11,000 victims of the later phase of the camp.

1.3. Forensic and Technical Considerations

1.3.1. The Toxicity of Diesel Exhaust Gas

As mentioned before, it was repeatedly mentioned during Soviet show trials that in the gas vans used by German units in the East, murder was committed by means of exhaust gases from diesel engines. During this study, we will encounter this claim repeatedly.

Before investigating the question what type of vehicles with what kind of engines are said to have been used, we need to clarify first why this matters.

Whether one can commit murder with Diesel engine exhaust within the time spans claimed is a forensic question. U.S. engineer Friedrich P. Berg has done thorough research about this, which he first published in 1984 and, in his latest revised and expanded form, in 2019. Berg also elaborated in detail about the toxic effects of carbon monoxide and other constituents of Diesel engine exhaust gases. I will not repeat any of this here, as it would be repetitive and would lead us too far afield. The interested reader might either consult Berg's paper or any handbook of toxicology from any library directly.

Whereas gasoline engines operate with a dearth of oxygen and therefore produce rather high amounts of toxic carbon monoxide, Diesel engines always operate with a huge excess of oxygen, as a result of which its exhaust gases contain only minor amounts of carbon monoxide, the lethal compound in engine exhaust gases.[13] Although not impossible, it is rather difficult to increase the amount of carbon monoxide in Diesel exhaust gases. If a Diesel engine runs idly or with only a minor load, it must even be considered impossible to produce an exhaust gas whose composition can become acutely dangerous to persons with an average health within the time span of interest here (up to half an hour).

In contrast to this stands the drastically larger carbon monoxide content in the exhaust gases of gasoline engines, which can be manipulated in various ways to increase it even more, for instance by closing the idle-mixture adjustment screw of the carburetor. For this reason gasoline engines would have been the self-evident choice for the construction of "gas vans" (as also for the generation of carbon monoxide for the stationary "gas chambers").

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[13] It must be kept in mind that the CO contained in the exhaust gases is an incompletely combusted item resulting from a lack of oxygen.

Did the Germans know about the difference between Diesel and gasoline engine exhaust? Both engines had been invented in Germany,[14] and the record shows that German engineers and scientists were very well aware of that difference long before World War Two. Once again it was Berg who has documented the use of Diesel engines early on in coal mines in Germany exactly because their exhaust gases were relatively harmless (Berg 2019, pp. 453-456). Mattogno and Graf have shown in turn that German scientists had made thorough exhaust gas composition analysis of a broad variety of gasoline engines, which was for instance published in a 1930 book dedicated to the toxicology of gasoline engine exhaust gases (Mattogno/Graf 2020, pp. 123-125; cf. Keeser/Froboese/Turnau 1930).

In 1994 Berg drew attention to a forensic study conducted by British scientists who had conducted a test gassing of rabbits, mice, and guinea pigs with Diesel engine exhaust gases. They "succeeded" in killing all their animals only after going to the engine's limit and after more than three hours of exposure (Pattle *et al.* 1957; Berg, in Gauss 1994, p. 333; Berg 2019, pp. 458f.). In this context it deserves emphasis that Diesel exhaust gases have other features than delivering small amounts of carbon monoxide which need to be considered. In particular old engines produced a lot of smoke (particulate matter; see Berg 2019, pp. 451f.), which consisted not only of soot but also of a mixture of highly irritating, smelly chemicals. And like all exhaust gases, Diesel exhaust gases are hot when exiting the tail pipe: well beyond 100°C (200°F). Although the toxic effect of Diesel exhaust gas is moderate at worst, the combined effect of irritating chemicals, smoke, heat, noxious gases and oxygen deprivation will kill most people locked up in an enclosed space filled with such gases after an extended period of time. But as the above experiment shows, it would take hours of horrific suffering.

This proves that attempts at mass gassings with Diesel engines would have been a disaster at best.

Friedrich Paul Berg has not only pointed out that the use of Diesel engine exhaust gases for mass murder would have been absurd, but that

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[14] The four-stroke gasoline engine was first patented by the German watchmaker Christian Reithmann on 26 October 1860 (http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_Reithmann); today these engines are frequently called Otto engines due to the first car engine built by Nikolaus Otto of the Deutz engine factory in Cologne, employing as technical directors for engine construction Gottlieb Daimler (later of Daimler-Benz) and Wilhelm Maybach; the Diesel engine was patented in 1893 by German engineer Rudolf Diesel (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diesel_engine)

the use of *any* exhaust gas is absurd when considering that the Germans, suffering from lack of petroleum during WWII, had retrofitted almost their entire truck fleet during the war, step by step, with so-called producer-gas generators. I will elaborate on this more in Chapter 2.4. when discussing wartime documents, as the extant documentation about this technology stems primarily from that era.

Surprisingly, this finding of the general unsuitability of Diesel engines for a swift and efficient mass murder was recently confirmed by an orthodox anthology on the Holocaust, where the toxicologist Achim Trunk writes in a paper entitled "The lethal gases" (Morsch/Perz/Ley 2011, pp. 35f.):

> *"It can be derived from the animal experiments* [by Pattle *et al*.] *that it is possible in principle to murder human beings with Diesel exhaust gases – even many simultaneously. In order to generate highly toxic exhaust gases which kill within a maximum of 20 minutes, however, Diesel engines in the facilities for gas murder would have had to be operated under heavy load, i.e., they had to be slowed down. Such a slowing, power-consuming device (such as a dynamometer) was much less simple and cheap to obtain than the large engine from a destroyed vehicle wreck. Slowing down a powerful Diesel inside a gas murder facility would have meant moreover that the engine would have become much noisier and would have vibrated much more intensively. Its exhaust gases would have contained a lot of soot. Whether such features have been observed (or whether clues to power consuming devices exist) is no longer a question to toxicology but rather to the sources and source criticism. According to this author's knowledge, no clues in that direction exist.*
>
> *A different explanation is more likely, according to which the murder weapons were all gasoline engines.* […] *That gasoline engines were indeed deployed in the extermination camps of the 'Aktion Reinhardt' derives from reliable sources. Rudolf Reder, for instance, one of the very few survivors of the Belzec extermination camp, spoke of an engine fueled with gasoline located in a small room next to the gas chamber. It is said to have consumed 80 to 100 liters of gasoline daily. For the later-day extermination camp Sobibór, where one could apply the experiences gained in Belzec, exact statements by the perpetrators exist that the murder device was a gasoline engine;* […] *In the case of Treblinka, which was the latest of the extermination camps of the 'Aktion Reinhardt' to be built (and the big-*

> *gest), science has so far assumed that a Diesel engine was used. This raises the question why, from the point of view of the murdering institution, a successful method should have been replaced by a different, technically much more difficult."*

It is worth noting in this context that Reder, in his testimony about Belzec, expressly and in various ways stated that the engine's exhaust gases were *not* used for murdering the victims, but that it was vented directly outside (see Mattogno 2021b for details). The other star witness of orthodox historiography for the alleged exhaust gas mass murders in Belzec, the mining engineer Kurt Gerstein, speaks repeatedly of a Diesel engine providing the poisonous gas.[15] He, as a mining engineer, certainly knew to tell a Diesel from a gasoline engine. However, contrary to what Trunk wants us to believe, neither Reder nor Gerstein are reliable witnesses, as both their testimonies are riddled with absurdities and impossibilities (see Mattogno 2021b).

With regard to the Sobibór Camp, the situation is by no means as clear-cut as Trunk would have his readers believe, for in this regard there are statements concerning both a gasoline and a diesel engine (see Berg 2019, pp. 439). Finally, one must not forget that in German colloquial language used by laymen, the terms "gasoline" ("*Benzin*") and "gasoline engine" ("*Benzinmotor*") are sometimes used summarily for all types of internal-combustion engines, regardless of whether they run on alcohol, gasoline, diesel, or kerosene, just as in English a "gas engine" certainly includes a Diesel engine. Hence, while one can be fairly certain that someone means a Diesel engine when they use the word Diesel, it is not at all clear that someone means a gasoline-fueled, spark-plug-equipped carburetor engine when they refer to a *Benzin* engine.

I may also mention in passing that it is not at all trivial to run a stationary gasoline engine, as they – in contrast to Diesel engines – tend to overheat quickly. They require special cooling devices to be kept operational.

Trunk's last sentence quoted above about the anachronistic reversal to an imperfect method is of course valid. It also applies to the gas van issue. Here the first generation of gas vans consisting of a mixture of makes, models and equipment with usually undefined engine types, some of which may have been gasoline engines, are said to have been replaced with a more sophisticated "second generation" of vans which,

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[15] On this see next to Mattogno 2021b also Roques's PhD thesis 1985, two volumes, plus: Roques 1986 & 1989, Chelain 1989.

judging by the brand, were most likely equipped with Diesel engines (more on this in the next section) This fact is glossed over by Trunk who erroneously or deceptively writes (Morsch/Perz/Ley 2011, p. 37):

> *"Reports about the killings with gas vans explicitly give gasoline engines as the source of the lethal gas."*

Trunk is definitely disingenuous when he writes (*ibid.*, p. 37):

> *"The claim by revisionists is wrong that it is impossible in principle to commit mass murder with Diesel engines."*

Trunk, who quotes Fritz Berg's 1984 paper on Diesel gas chambers (his footnote 27, p. 33), hence knows about Berg's work, has used many of the sources and arguments from Berg's various papers, yet he has failed to acknowledge that Berg's claim is *not* that mass murder with Diesel exhaust engines is impossible, but rather that it is extremely cumbersome and absurd, especially when considering the available alternatives – just as Trunk has concluded.

1.3.2. The Vehicles and Engine Type Used

It is important to know that by the mid-1930s the Diesel engine had displaced the gasoline engine almost completely on the heavy utility vehicle market in Europe.[16] This is particularly true for the Swiss-Austrian truck manufacturer Saurer, who equipped their trucks only with Diesel engines[17] – in fact, Saurer had been a Diesel engine pioneer for decades.[18] This is an important observation, because from wartime documents we will learn that Saurer delivered the chassis and engines for the thirty ordered gas vans which are said to have been the vast majority of vehicles allegedly used as gas vans, in particularly for what Mathias Beer calls the "perfectioned" "second generation" of gas vans (Beer 2011, p. 159).

1.3.2. Hermetically Sealed Gassing Boxes

When studying pertinent documents and witness testimonies about "gas vans" in subsequent chapters, we will frequently encounter the claim that the gassing box used to kill the victims was hermetically sealed, hence that the exhaust gases piped into it had no way of escaping but

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16 See www.flambino.ch/truck/uebersaurer/geschichte_saurer/geschichte_saurer.htm.
17 www.saureroldtimer.ch/5000geschichte/5200chronosaurer/index.html.
18 See http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adolph_Saurer_AG; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diesel_engine; cf. Wipf/König/Knoepfli 2003.

were accumulating inside the box. I will deliberate about this already now, while discussing forensic and technical matters.

The questions raised by this claim are as follows:

1. How quickly does the gas pressure rise inside the alleged hermetically sealed gassing box?
2. What is the effect of this steady rise in internal pressure on the gassing box and on the engine?

Question two has basically two possible answers:

2.a) Either the gassing box bursts, as it can no longer withstand the internal pressure, or

2.b) the engine stalls, as it can no longer expel its exhaust gases into the pressurized gassing box.

Which of the two events happens depends on the stability of the gassing box and on the capability of the engine to overcome an external pressure, which is called exhaust gas back pressure. We will investigate both next.

With the advent of turbochargers and catalytic converters, exhaust gas back pressure has become an important feature of combustion engines. There exists therefore a plethora of data about it, although none of it reaches back pressures anywhere close to where an engine would stall. Under normal operational conditions, engines running on high rpms can produce a back pressure of up to one atmosphere in extreme cases with no sign of stalling.[19] The exhaust back pressure required to stall an engine would therefore be considerably higher, yet of course also noticeably below the engine's compression rate. The actual value depends primarily on the engine's compression rate, which was somewhat lower for engines during the 1940s than it is today, although Diesel engines have always used higher compression rates than gasoline engines, as they have to compress the fuel/air mixture to the point where it self-ignites. They will therefore stall later than gasoline engines.

If the exhaust pipe of a running engine is connected to a hermetically sealed container, the gas pressure in the latter will rise to the point where either the engine stalls or the container fractures or bursts due to its internal pressure. If the container resists the steadily increasing pressure, the engine will stall as soon as the engine's threshold value for tolerable exhaust gas back pressure has been reached.

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19 http://www.aa1car.com/library/exhaust_backpressure.htm.

For the sake of the argument, we may assume that a wartime Diesel engine could still be operated at an exhaust back pressure of two atmospheres (ca. 2 bar). We will now calculate the amount of gas produced by such an engine.

For lack of better data, let us assume a moderate truck engine volume of five liters[20] and an engine speed of only marginally above idle – say 1,000 revolutions per minute. A four-stroke engine discharges its exhaust gases only after every second revolution, so we would have 500 times five liters of exhaust gases produced in a minute, which equals 2.5 m^3 of exhaust gas. Although it is true that the exhaust gas is slightly pressurized when exiting the cylinder, it cools down considerably afterwards and hence contracts. Within the error margins of our rough calculations, both effects can be considered to compensate each other, so we will ignore them here.

The cuboid cargo boxes claimed to have been used are said to have had a free volume of some 15 to 20 m^3.[21] This means that the pressure in such a cargo box, if closed hermetically, would have doubled within some six to eight minutes. Although such an overpressure is unlikely to make the engine stall, as Diesel engines run on high compression rates, the pressure exerted on the walls of the cargo box would have been immense: 1 atmosphere (≈ 1 bar) of overpressure equals by definition the effect of a weight of one kilogram per square centimeter, or ten metric tons per square meter. Since the long wall of the cuboid cargo box under scrutiny was 5.8 meters long and 1.7 meters high,[22] hence had a surface area of almost 10 square meters, 1 atmosphere of overpressure would have been equal to a load of 100 metric tons! There is no way such a cargo box could have withstood such a force. Already with a

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20 One of the vans found after the war which was initially speculated to have been used as a gas van had a 7.4-liter Diesel engine; see http://dss.ucsd.edu/~lzamosc/chelm00.htm. But for the sake of the argument, I reduce it to a smaller size.

21 The cargo boxes manufactured for Saurer trucks were 5.8 m long, 1.7 m high (see the document on p. 312) and probably some 2.3 m wide (the documents do not mention a width, but the width of trucks varies usually between 2.30 and 2.50 m. A standard container today has a width of 2.44 m). This amounts to some 22.7 m^3, of which the body volume of the victims has to be deducted. Some 50 to 130 victims are claimed (see Chapter 4.2.4.), which, with an average weight of 60 kg ≈ (60 liters) amounts to ca. 3 to 8 m^3 of filled space. Hence I subsequently calculate with some 15 to 20 m^3.

22 This is valid for the Saurer trucks. The dimensions of the cargo boxes of the other claimed truck models from Diamond/Renault/Opel/Mercedes/… are unknown, but as they are frequently referred to as the "small vans," they must have been considerably smaller. This does, of course, not have any effect on the pressure exerted per square meter of surface area.

tenth of that load – and at a tenth of the time (less than a minute) – the cargo box would have been bound to burst or even explode, had it really been sealed hermetically.

For this reason truck containers designed to withstand any kind of pressure have cylindrical shapes with convex or semi-spherical bases, as can be gleaned from tank cars and generally with containers holding liquids or gases under pressure, for the circular shape distributes the forces exerted by the pressure equally over the entire structure.

It is therefore impossible that any gas van which is said to have piped engine exhaust gases into its cargo box was equipped with a hermetically sealed cargo box. The box had to have some excess pressure release valve or opening in its coachwork somewhere.

This will become a most important point when discussion the so-called Just document (Chapter 2.2.4.), which insists on the alleged fact that the gassing box needed to be hermetically sealed in order to function, but at once states that “97,000” persons “were processed” “without any defects in the vehicles becoming apparent.” This is technically impossible, plain and simple.

2. Documents

2.1. Photographs

If, due to lack of reliable information, one assumes that not a single gas van and no characteristic part of it survived the war, then the next question to ask is whether photographs of the time span exist during which these vehicles were allegedly used. And in fact, several photos of vehicles do indeed exist about which it is claimed that they served as "gas vans."

The best known of these photographs was reproduced by Gerald Fleming (1984, after p. 92) with the caption:

> *"Gas van used to liquidate Jews at the Kulmhof (Chelmno) extermination camp and near Konitz."*

Christopher Browning reproduced this and a similar photo of the same vehicle with a similar caption (1985):

> *"Gas Vans (2 pictures), taken by Polish photographer after the liberation –Yad Vashem Archives."*

The originals of these photos (four of them all in all) were taken by the Commission of Inquiry into the German crimes in Poland at war's end and are now in the Commission's archives in Warsaw (signatures 47396 to 47399). Copies of the originals of these photos are, *i.a.*, located in the archives of the Auschwitz State Museum and of the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem, from where one can easily procure a copy.[23] In 1988 Yad Vashem has stated in a letter to a revisionist researcher that back then the photos published by Fleming and Browning were the only ones it had showing a gas van, and it asked to send in further such photos, should the occasion arise, from which one may deduce that at that time Yad Vashem didn't have any other photos either (see Appendix 10). The photos are reproduced in Appendix 1 (starting on page 279). What do we see there?

The first photo (Illustration 12) shows a truck which has been photographed from the front slightly to the left so that one can see its left

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[23] Search online at http://collections.yadvashem.org/photosarchive/en-us/search.html.

side. Three men are looking at the truck. The photo in Illustration 13 shows that the truck had a cargo box closed at the rear by a two-winged door, the left wing of which is standing wide open in the first photo. The cargo box extends into the room over the driver's cabin as is common for moving trucks. The radiator grill sports the logo of a German producer: Magirus.[24] As can be seen from the second image, the wheels of the truck seem to be missing, and the number plate is invisible. A photo taken from the rear shows that the cargo box was made of many vertical wooden boards (Illustration 15, p. 281). A photo taken from the interior of the truck's cargo box, though blurred, does not show the wooden boards, hence has obviously been lined with same sheeting. The picture also shows some probably wooden framework of unknown purpose (see Illustration 16, p. 281). As we shall see later, such a framework is never mentioned by any witness.

Although both Gerald Fleming and Christopher Browning have claimed that this is a homicidal "gas van", an impartial observer can easily recognize that *nothing* visible about this vehicle supports this claim. But then why do orthodox historians like Browning and Fleming present it as a depiction of a gas van for homicide? Have they investigated and verified their sources before they added their caption to this photo of an absolutely mundane, apparently decommissioned vehicle – perhaps one among many thousand others that could be found?

Another detail catches the attentive reader's eye: All witnesses quoted in the literature as well as in the various court protocols claim that the "gas vans" exclusively belonged to the five makes Saurer, Diamond, Opel, Renault, and Daimler Benz (see Chapter 4.2.2.);[25] Magirus is not mentioned a single time.[26] The two important documents which we will discuss later in detail likewise mention merely "gas vans" made by Saurer and Diamond.

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[24] The Klöckner-Humboldt-Deutz AG in Ulm, Germany, which had been formed in 1936 as a merger of the truck manufacturer Magirus and the engine manufacturer Humboldt-Deutz plus in 1938 with the steel producer Klöckner-Werke AG, used this logo only until the end of 1939 for its trucks, so that the truck in the photo must be older than this. Starting in 1940 a circle with the words "Klöckner-Deutz" was used as a logo; see http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magirus-Deutz.

[25] With one extraordinary exception: A West-German court verdict claimed in 1974 that a Ford truck built in the USSR was converted to a gas van in a makeshift way as late as summer 1944, see Chapter 3.7.5.5.

[26] There are two Polish witnesses who falsely identified the truck shown in the photograph discussed here as a gas van: B. Falborski (Chapter 3.6.2.3.) and S. Srebrnik (Chapter 3.6.3.1.).

The origin of Fleming's photo was publicly revealed only in 1995, when Jerzy Halbersztadt, at that time director of the Polish Program of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, posted the following text to the newsgroup Holocaust:[27]

> *"The commission received the information that in the town KOLO (ca. 12 km from Chełmno) in the former factory of Ostrowski there was a van which, according to the witnesses, was used in the death center at Chełmno. The van was found, photographed and researched.*
>
> *The photos taken then are available in the Main Commission's Archives in Warsaw (signatures 47398, 47396, 47397, 47399; the best one is 47398). The captions of these photographs are till today: 'a car for killing people by the exhaust fumes at Chełmno'. One of these photos was reproduced in the Fleming's book 'Hitler and the Final Solution' with the information that it is a photograph of a 'gaswagon' used in Chełmno.*
>
> *Despite of their captions, the photographs do not show the gas van used in the Chełmno death camp. It is clear from the testimonies of Polish witnesses kept in the same archives of the Main Commission (collection 'Ob', file 271 and others). Witnesses to whom the van photographed in Kolo was shown did not confirm that it was one of those used in Chełmno for killing people. Some of them only said that it was similar to those described in their testimonies, but not the same. The most common answer was: 'I didn't see this one'.*
>
> *The inspection of the van in Ostrowski factory, done on 13 November 1945 by the judge J. Bronowski, did not confirm the existence of any elements of system of gassing of the van's closed platform. The witnesses called this van 'a pantechnicon van' (a van to transport furniture). It was produced by 'Magirus-Werke' with a Diesel type engine of 'Deutz'. The plate on the engine stated: 'Humboldt-Deutz A.G. 'Magirus-Werke' Ulm (Donau) Baujahr 1939 Lieferdat 739 Abn-Stempel. Fahrgestell Nr. 9282/38 Nutzlast kg 2700 Fah*[r]*gestell-Baumuster 023. Ei*[ge]*ngewicht 4980 kg. Motor Baumuster FoM 513 zul. Gesamtgew. 7900 Leistung P.S. 105 cm^3 7412. Zulaessige Achsendruecke vorn kg 2400 hinten 5500.' The thickness of the*

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[27] http://dss.ucsd.edu/~lzamosc/chelm00.htm; response to an inquiry by Leon Zamosc, University of California, San Diego, 11 Oct. 1995; Subject: Gas vans in Chełmno; enhanced with illustrations at www.deathcamps.org/gas_chambers/gas_chambers_vans.html; since 1996 Halbersztadt has been Director of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

car's wooden body was 7 cm, of the door – 8 cm. The walls, door, ceiling and floor were covered from the inside with the 2 mm sheet iron. The car was painted in grey-lead color. Under this paint the inscription was seen on the door of the cab: 'Otto Koehn Spedition[28] *Ruf 516 Zeulen.....da i.TH'.*

I cite all these details to make possible the further comments to the story of this van. It is my feeling that there are some unclear points in this story. Nobody explained for what purpose this van was used? Its door was tightened with an impregnated canvas. What for? Some witnesses had seen this car in the area of the forest of Chełmno starting from the spring of 1942. It is possible that it belonged to the SS-Sonderkommando Kulmhof, too. I came across a version that this van was used for a disinfection of victims' clothes but there are no grounds for it.

In 1945 the prosecutors came to the conclusion that this van was not a gas van of Chełmno. The van was left incomplete and not serviceable in Ostrowski's factory at least till 1950. The last known documents (a correspondence between the Association of Combatants 'ZBoWiD' in Kolo and the Main Commission) of April 1950 inform that there was an idea to move this van to the museum in Auschwitz or Majdanek (till 1990 there was no museum in the Chełmno forest; first monument was erected there in 1964). Those plans were not accomplished and the van was scrapped, probably.

Thus, there is no reliable graphic illustration of the gas vans used in Chełmno."

This statement speaks for itself. I will address the topic of clothes disinfection or disinfestation in Chapter 2.3.

Today the Chełmno Museum shows one of the photos discussed above in its exhibition with a truthful caption reading: "Vehicle found after the war at Koło on the grounds of the Ostrowski factory." The connection to the gas vans is not made explicitly, but the mere fact that it is exhibited will inevitably lead the visitor to think that this must have been such a vehicle. This disingenuous trick is typical for museums of that kind.

Another photo occasionally reproduced has been taken from a documentary about the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal compiled by Pare Lorentz and Stuart Schulberg probably shortly after the

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28 *Möbelspedition* is the German term for a moving company.

Tribunal had ended.[29] This footage does not give any indication as to what is shown; this is left entirely to the viewer's imagination. There is also absolutely no proof as to the origin of the footage.

Several scenes from it were later put together by unknown persons to create a photomontage which was published by various sources (Friedländer, between pp. 16 & 17; Höhne, p. 57; see Ill. 20f. on pp. 285f.). Four images from this footage even ended up in the files of German prosecutors who were investigating a gassing crime allegedly committed in Mogilev by German forces.[30] Since both witnesses of this alleged crime insisted that these photos have nothing to do with what they remembered, the photos were never used as evidence (see the case of A. Widmann discussed in Chapter 3.7.4.6., esp. from p. 222 onward).

Schwensen has tried to track down the origin of this footage, but concluded that, contrary to unfounded claims to the opposite, it is most certainly a staged studio scene filmed for this U.S. propaganda documentary about the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal. Irrefutable proof for this is the unnatural way the shadows are cast in this footage, requiring several intense lights from various directions. Finally, the ominous-looking shadow of a person in uniform makes it certain that this setting was arranged for its psychological effect. The viewer will assume that this is the shadow of one of the evil Nazi perpetrators watching how innocent victims are being killed with car exhaust gasses.

This fraudulent misrepresentation of a still taken from a fiction movie is not the only case. Another mis-captioned picture of an alleged gas van appeared in several issues of the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* (1963, 1966, 1967a, 1968, 1988) as an illustration of articles, three of which dealt with trials of defendants accused of having participated in the claimed mass murders with these vehicles. This picture is reproduced in Appendix 1 as well (starting on p. 283). It shows the rear of a vehicle bearing a large cross – no doubt a red cross of an ambulance – which looks huge when compared to the person standing next to it. There is again absolutely nothing about this photograph lacking any details that would justify the captions given: "Mobile gas chamber" (1963), "SS gas van: 'The people didn't scream" (1966), "NS gas van,

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29 National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), 111 M 7596 Reel 5; cf. www.youtube.com/watch?v=liTspfANDXQ, the relevant scenes between 1:06 and 1:16; Reitlinger refers to this reel in his 1953 book, p. 130, unnumbered footnote.

30 Chief Prosecutor Dr. Hillmann. District Court Stuttgart, letter of 30 Nov. 1961 to Ministry of Justice of Baden-Württemberg; ref. 19 Js 328/60; in: Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg, EL 317 III, Bü 2152.

'nine to ten per m^2'" (1967a) "Gas van of the SS: 'miserable botchery'" (1968), "Rauff gassing van: Death on the cargo area" (1988). Later on, when discussing contemporary documents, we will recognize the significance of the words "nine to ten per m^2." *Der Spiegel* did not give any information about the provenance of the photo. In 1997 David Cole found out that this photo was taken from the 1961 fictional movie "Ambulans" by the Polish-Jewish filmmaker Janusz Morgenstern.[31] It may be assumed that *Der Spiegel* knew of its origin but hid that fact from its readers.

The first paragraph of the 1967a *Spiegel* article reads as follows:

> *"The two box vans cruised around the courtyard of the Berlin Reichskriminalpolizeiamt (RKPA)*[32] *with smoking exhaust pipes. But the air remained pure: The car exhaust gases were piped into the van's interior via hoses."*

The reader is flummoxed: How can exhaust pipes at once smoke *and* leave the air pure? But better still: considering the relatively small size of city blocks in Berlin: Who would be so crazy and let a van cruise round and round in such a restricted area just to produce some exhaust gas, when Berlin was rich in lethal city gas coming straight from the mains, to name just one source of poison gas readily available?

Since the advent of the Internet, "photoshopped" images of alleged gas vans can be found on many websites. The website http://www.deathcamps.org has created(!) several such images, which, together with their own comments, they use to adorn a reprint of Halbersztadt's above-mentioned text.[33] One image of the moving truck taken by the Polish commission has clearly been mislabeled as "Gas Van, found in the former Ostrowski Factory in Koło." While captions printed on the larger "created" images state that they are merely "based" on a photo or have even been "created." Although a note at the bottom of the page clearly states "The pictures of the Diamond, Opel, Saurer, and gas trailer are not original. They just show their possible appearance," other websites simply copy these images without explaining that they are artwork rather than photos.[34] I have reproduced some of these "artworks" in Appendix 1.

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31 See www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfsAq8RI5iY; www.codoh.com/library/document/3276/

32 Reich Police Department for Criminal Investigations.

33 www.deathcamps.org/gas_chambers/gas_chambers_vans.html .

34 For instance http://strangevehicles.greyfalcon.us/NAZI%20GAS%20VANS.htm.

All things considered, there does not exist any pictorial evidence for the existence of "gas vans." If photos existed, their owners would most certainly have published them by now. But since this is not the case, the only possible conclusion is that the "murder weapon" can just as little be seen on photographs as in reality, although there is a spate of reports presenting the gas vans as a proven historical reality beyond any doubt.

2.2. German Contemporary Documents

2.2.1. Introduction

If the gas vans existed indeed, then we need to find out the conditions under which they were constructed and used. In view of the thoroughness and the Germans' talent to organize, some documentary traces must have been left behind, unless one accepts the improbable thesis, which is nonetheless systematically invoked by certain historians, according to which this operation had been carefully camouflaged and that all traces have been erased.

Although it is relatively easy to construct a vehicle which asphyxiates its passengers during transit, its manufacture requires certain tasks to be done in a workshop, which are unimaginable to have been performed spontaneously. The decision to build such vehicles inexorably had to come from the top of the hierarchy, and it then had to be handed down from one level to the next lower one down to those responsible for carrying out the necessary experiments and to those charged with deploying the vehicles.

Although I have of course no experiences in this regard – and for good reasons – it seems to me that the construction of vehicles meant to kill persons locked up inside of them during transit had to include under any circumstances three technical adaptations:

a. Since panic among a large number of persons can drive people to extremes, such a cargo box would have to be especially strong. Hence, a robust cargo box structure had to be bolted to the chassis, fitted inside with a cage resembling a zoo's big cat cage, which could withstand both shocks during the ride as well as escape attempts of those lock up inside. This is especially true for the door, which had to be particularly reinforced in order to keep the panicking victims securely locked up inside, even if they all stormed the door. In this context

I may remind the reader that a panicking crowd collectively pressing against doors, fences or even walls can make them collapse. A standard rear door of a normal van would not have done the trick. Needless to say that no such construction can be found in the documents we are about to examine.

b. If exhaust gases were used to suffocate the victims, an engine type had to be used whose exhaust gases produced sufficient carbon monoxide to kill within a few minutes. This is to say: the truck had to be equipped with a gasoline engine. Alternatively and more conducively, a vehicle equipped with a wood gas generator could have been used with a means to alternatively switch the wood gas to flow either to the engine or into the cargo box, although this would have rendered the van immobile during gassing operations.
c. If exhaust gases were used, and if occasionally the truck's cargo box was also to serve as a normal transport device, then a mechanism is expected to have been added permitting to alternatively pipe the exhaust gases either to the outside as usual or through a hole into the cargo box. A flexible metal hose or a telescopic pipe extension which can be reversibly attached to the exhaust pipe comes to mind.
d. The entry hole inside the cargo box emitting the noxious gases needed to be designed in such a way that the passengers, any accidentally falling objects or any fluid would be unable to destroy or block/plug it.
e. Furthermore there needed to be at least one pressure relief valve or opening for the excess gases to escape. The latter point is very important and in my view is a *conditio sine qua non* for the functioning of the gas van.

If thirty such vehicles have existed, as is claimed, this means that these design changes would have been made to thirty vehicles. Under these circumstances, we would have to expect at least a part of the pertinent documents in the archives, namely: correspondence on the highest level about the feasibility of the operation, a decision to allocate the required financial resources, correspondence with companies in order to obtain technical advice, cost estimates including construction blueprints, orders, invoices, etc.

In order to get an idea about the quantity of documents which would have been required for the construction of vehicles, it suffices to imag-

ine that for instance the locksmith shop at Auschwitz received detailed written instructions even for the most minute maintenance work.[35]

Let us now look into the actual situation about documentary proof for the construction of the gas vans.

The first document we will thoroughly analyze, and which I consider to be suspicious for reasons explained later, forms the core of the dossier 501-PS of volume 26 of the document collection compiled by the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg (IMT, Vol. 26, pp. 103-110). It is a letter dated 16 May 1942, which I will subsequently refer to as the "Becker document." After this I will also address three telegrams of 9, 15, and 22 June 1942 which are part of this dossier and which refer to "S-Vehicles" and the need for "exhaust hoses."

There are indisputably authentic documents on special vehicles used by the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (RSHA), which, however, do not give the slightest reason to assume that they were used for homicidal purposes. One can consult these documents in the German Federal Archives (*Bundesarchiv*) in Koblenz, where they are kept in a dossier with the reference R 58/871 fº 1. They are reproduced in Appendix 4 of this book and followed by a translation and my own comments, where due. Among these documents is a note which I will scrutinize next and which I consider to be suspicious for reasons to be explained later. It is dated 5 June 1942 and bears the rubber stamp imprint "*Geheime Reichssache*" (secret state matter) like many military documents of that era. Due to its signatory SS-*Obersturmführer* Willy Just, it is usually referred to as the "Just document."

The documents contained in this dossier of the *Bundesarchiv* are evidently an indiscriminate mixture of unrelated items, which creates the impression that they have been picked arbitrarily from various sources for demonstration purposes. In order to assess their respective import, it would be necessary to know where each one of them originated, so that they could be put into the context within which they emerged.

Next there is a letter allegedly written on 11 April 1942 by SS-*Gruppenführer* Dr. jur. Harald Turner, who was the head of the wartime military administration in Serbia. Although it only contains the word "delousing van," this word is considered to be a euphemism or "camouflage word" for "gas vans" by orthodox historians, which is why I will address this highly suspicious document as well.

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35 Cf. *Le Monde juif* No. 107, July/September 1982, pp. 109f. Carlo Mattogno has given many examples for this in his various books, e.g. 2019.

Then I will address an "Activity Report" by *Einsatzgruppe* B of 1 March 1942, which is so far the only known document of the *Einsatzgruppen* mentioning gas vans in their motor pool.

Finally I will briefly deal with of a letter by Dr. Erhard Wetzel from 25 October 1941, Nuremberg document NO-365, which is occasionally mentioned in the context of "gas vans," although it does not contain this or any related term.

We ought to have expected to encounter a great number of documents dealing with the design, construction, and deployment of the gas vans, but to my knowledge the items mentioned above are the only ones hinting at the existence of such vehicles – the first group in a poorly disguised, the second in an absolutely open fashion, and the others only in the mind of the believer. In the following I will subject all these documents to a thorough analysis. This will expose the bizarre character of some of these documents as well as a number of improbabilities which should not evade the attention of an alert reader. In my opinion these documents do not only fail to prove the reality of the "gas vans," but quite to the contrary they are a grave argument against the thesis that German units had "gas vans" for homicidal purposes.

The result of these preliminary observations is that no material traces, no photographs and no documents exist which unequivocally prove the historical reality of gas vans for homicidal purposes.

2.2.2. The Becker Document (501-PS), 16 May 1942

2.2.2.1. Origin

This letter is the most important part of the Nuremberg document 501-PS and is frequently quoted (IMT vol. 26, pp. 102-105). The other parts of that document are three telegrams, which I will analyze in Chapter 2.2.3.

Paul Rassinier may have been the first to critically comment on this document (1950, pp. 175-178). Next followed German revisionist Ingrid Weckert in 1985 (pp. 18f.), with an updated and more thorough version nine years later (in 1994, pp. 193-218), which appeared in a slightly revised English translation several years later (now Weckert 2019). In this she writes regarding this document's origin (p. 216):

> *"The author has in her possession two letters from the National Archives in Washington DC, USA, each of which attests to a different origin of the Nuremberg Prosecution Document 501-PS.*

> *An April 26, 1945, memo from the Headquarters of the 12th US Army states that a unit of the 12th Army had found the documents in the 'RSHA reserve depot in Bad Sulza'. The originals, the memo states, were sent to the document center in Paris.*
> *The docket, which usually accompanied the documents that were presented to the Nuremberg Tribunal, is dated September 7, 1945. This paper states that the place where the document was found, as well as its source, is unknown and that it had been received from the OCC London (the British Prosecution).*
> *A document without such identification,* i.e.*, with the note '*source and origin unknown*', lacks even slightest evidentiary value. If the defense had submitted an equally dubious paper, the Court would have rejected it instantly."*

2.2.2.2. Analysis of the Form

Mrs. Weckert has subjected the document to a detailed formal critique (2019, p. 217), after which she concluded:

> *"By now the author has in her possession three different 'copies' of the letter from Becker to Rauff, but a copy of the original letter is still not to be had. Evidently no such 'original copy' exists."*

Her conclusions are based on the assumption that the one version which really could be addressed as an original letter is only a carbon copy of the original, which, so she posits, should have remained with the sender rather than ended up in Berlin. This assumption is based on her hypothesis that the letter was written on very thin paper. Whether or not this letter was written on thin carbon-copy paper remains to be demonstrated, as Mrs. Weckert had access only to copies of the original. But even if so, this doesn't prove that the original letter wasn't typed on such paper.

In fact, the file 501-PS as archived in the U.S. National Archives contains two versions of this letter.

One, which I call version A, is a three-page white-on-black photostat of the alleged original. Since the photographic photostat process used in those years to make copies of documents inverted black and white, the original used to prepare this document must have been a normal black on white document.

The other, version B, is a two-page black-on-white copy full of typos, some of which reveal the Anglo-Saxon background of the typist. Instead of the signature, the letter ends with a note "(Sgd)," *i.e.* the Eng-

lish abbreviation for "signed." Hence it is clear that this version was typed by an Anglo-Saxon. Since it contains proper SS runes, it was obviously written on a German official wartime typewriter. This version also bears all the handwritten marks and words as version A, which are very similar both in position and in style to those on version A – except for Becker's signature. All this is perfectly explicable, if one assumes that this document is a retyped copy of version A, which the typist tried to make appear as similar to version A as possible.

The file 501-PS of the U.S. National Archives contains another document signed by Fred Niebergall, Chief of Document Control Branch of the Office of Chief of Counsel for War Crimes, Evidence Division,[36] prepared on 19 July 1948, in which he certifies that the "attached photostat is a true and correct copy of the original." Since photostats are negative photographic reproductions of documents, this can only refer to version A.

It seems that the black on white (positive) version from which this photostat must have been taken is not part of the 501-PS file stored in the U.S. National Archives, although the Archive itself at one point had a black on white version of the first page of this document exhibited in a showcase, which has been photographed, see version C. This version shows creased paper and a reinforcement around the filing holes, which means that this is not a mere positive reproduction of version A. Since its handwritten marks are identical with those on version A, it may be assumed that this may be the original of page one.

Carlos Porter opines "that the white document [version B] is a first draft for the black one [version A]," that is to say: version B was a draft, which some more sophisticated document "producers" used as a template to manufacture the "original" [version C], from which version A was reproduced as a photostat.[37] There is no way right now to prove this hypothesis.

It is a mystery why version B made it into the U.S. National Archive in the first place, since it has no probative value, never received any official endorsement, and was never used by any court of law to prove anything.

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36 This office handled the safekeeping and registration of all documents brought to Nuremberg for evidentiary purposes and assembled them into document series.

37 www.cwporter.com/501ps.htm.

So where is the positive original now, if the National Archives insist they don't have it? Porter tried to chase it down and came to this result (*ibid.*):

> *"The National Archives in Washington* […] *claim that the original documents are in The Hague. The Hague claims the original documents are in the National Archives.*
> *The Stadtarchiv Nürnberg and the Bundesarchiv Koblenz also have no original documents, and both say the original documents are in Washington."*

There is another version of the Becker document, version D, which is a photostat made from a document which must have been almost identical to version A. It was presented to Walther Rauff, who confirmed its authenticity by writing a note on the left margin saying "I received this letter in May 1942. 18 October 1945 Rauff" (Nuremberg document 2348-PS). I say almost identical, because the photostat presented to Rauff doesn't have the handwritten paragraph marks as can be found on versions A and C, which therefore must have been added onto the "original" after the Rauff photostat copy (version D) had been made, but before the preparation of the photostat found in the U.S. National Archives (version A). The earlier version D presented to Rauff also bears lower Nuremberg archival numbers (A092586 to A092588) than version B (A090025, A090027, A090028; A090026 seems to have been skipped; see on the lower part of each page in Appendix 2). This in spite of the fact that version D had to make a long journey before it could be registered in Nuremberg (Rauff was at that time incarcerated in Italy, see Chapter 3.5.2.).

The only thing that makes me suspicious about this is the length to which the Nuremberg prosecution went to get Rauff to certify the authenticity of this one document. To achieve this, they sent this one document across war-torn Europe for the sake of obtaining a brief sentence and signature on it plus a supportive yet rather terse affidavit. This seems to have been quite an unusual procedure, which I have not heard of for any other Nuremberg document. Apparently, there was never any intention to have Rauff testify about this in Nuremberg, because in that case they would have moved Rauff himself to Nuremberg rather than the document to him.

All in all, there seem to be reasonable explanations for all the differences in the extant versions. Hence, I cannot find any formal reasons to suspect a forgery in this case. Of course, this does not necessarily mean

that the document is genuine. Forging documents is easy, if all the original stationery, office equipment, and a huge amount of original handwritings and signatures are at one's disposal, as was the case for the victors occupying the German authorities' offices after the German unconditional surrender. The proof is in the pudding, as the saying goes, which I will therefore analyze next.

2.2.2.3. Translated Content

In contrast to the Just document, which will be analyzed in Chapter 2.2.4., the Becker letter is not subdivided in numbered paragraphs. In order to facilitate its analysis, Pierre Marais has numbered both each paragraph and each sentence in his 1994 study, and I will apply this method here too, as it will facilitate the subsequent step by step analysis of this document's content. This analysis follows Marais's arguments to a large degree.

I do *not* reproduce the official English translation of the Nuremberg Tribunal here, because it is riddled with faulty translations which gloss over the at times absurd contents of the German original.

"Field Post Number 32704 Kiev, May 16, 1942

B. No. 40/42 –

TOP SECRET!

To
SS-Obersturmbannführer R a u f f
In Berlin
Prinz-Albrecht-Str. 8

1st paragraph:

- 1st sentence: The overhaul of the vehicles at Group D and C is finished.
- 2nd sentence: While the vans of the first group can also be deployed when the weather conditions are not too bad, the cars belonging to the second group (Saurer) are absolutely stranded in rainy weather.
- 3rd sentence: For instance, if it has rained a mere half hour, the vehicles cannot be used because of plain skidding.
- 4th sentence: It can only be used in absolutely dry weather conditions.

– 5th sentence: The question arises now whether one can use the vehicles only on the execution spot while stationary.
– 6th sentence: First, the vehicle must be brought to this place, which is only possible in good weather.
– 7th sentence: But in most cases the execution spot is 10 to 15 km off the traffic routes and is difficult to access already due to its location, [but] during humid or wet weather not at all.
– 8th sentence: If those to be executed are driven or conducted to this place, they notice at once what is going on and become unsettled, which should be avoided if possible.
– 9th sentence: There is only the one way left: to load them up at the gathering point and then to drive off.

2nd paragraph:

– 10th sentence: I had the vehicles of Group D camouflaged as trailer homes by having had window shutters mounted, one on each side of the small vans and two on each side of the big ones, like the ones which are seen on peasant houses in the countryside.
– 11th sentence: The vehicles had become so well known that not only the authorities, but also the civilian population called them ‘death wagons’ as soon as one of the vehicles turned up.
– 12th sentence: My opinion is that even camouflaged it cannot be kept secret in the long run.

3rd paragraph:

– 13th sentence: The Saurer vehicle which I transferred from Simferopol to Taganrog had a brake defect *en route*.
– 14th sentence: At the S.K.[38] in Mariupol it was determined that the brake sleeve [“Manchete”] of the combined hydraulic-pneumatic brakes was broken in several places.
– 15th sentence: Through persuasion and bribery at the H.K.P.[39] I managed to have a mold turned, after which two brake sleeves have been cast.
– 16th sentence: When I got to Stalino and Gorlovka several days later, the drivers of the vehicles complained about the same defect.
– 17th sentence: After consulting with the commanding officers of these commandos, I proceeded once more to Mariupol in order to have further brake sleeves manufactured for these vehicles.

38 *Sonderkommando* = special command.
39 *Heeres-Kraftfahrzeug-Park* = Army Motor Pool.

– 18th sentence: It has been agreed that two brake sleeves will be cast for each of these vans; six will remain in Mariupol as back-up for the Group, and six brake sleeves will be sent to SS-Untersturmführer E R N S T to Kiev for the vehicles of Group C.
– 19th sentence: For the Groups B and A, the brake sleeves could be obtained through Berlin, as the transportation from Mariupol to the north is too inconvenient and would take too long.
– 20th sentence: Smaller defects of the vehicles will be carried out by technicians of the commandos or groups in a workshop.

4th paragraph:

– 21st sentence: Due to the uneven terrain and the hardly describable way and road conditions, the sealings and rivets become loose over time.
– 22nd sentence: I was asked whether in such cases the vehicle ought to be transferred to Berlin for repairs.
– 23rd sentence: A transfer to Berlin would be too expensive and would require too much fuel.
– 24th sentence: To save such an expense, I gave the order that they themselves solder small leaky spots, and if this could not be done any more, to inform Berlin at once by radio that the vehicle Pol. No… was out of service.
– 25th sentence: Furthermore, I ordered to keep all men as far away from the van as possible during the gassings, in order that they will not be harmed by possibly escaping gases.
– 26th sentence: On this occasion I wish to call attention to the following: after the gassing various commandos let their own men do the unloading.
– 27th sentence: I have drawn the attention of the commanding officers of the concerned S.K. to the tremendous mental and physical harm that this work can do to the men, if not just now then later on.
– 28th sentence: The men complained to me about headaches occurring after every unloading.
– 29th sentence: Nevertheless one does not want to deviate from this decree, as it is feared that the prisoners enlisted for the work could use a favorable moment to escape.
– 30th sentence: In order to protect the men from such harm, I ask to give corresponding orders.

5th paragraph:

– 31st sentence: On all occasions the gassing is not done in the right manner.
– 32nd sentence: In order to get the work done as quickly as possible, the driver gives full throttle.
– 33rd sentence: Through this measure the executees suffer a death through suffocation and not as intended a death by being put to sleep.
– 34th sentence: My instructions have now revealed that death occurs faster and that the prisoners fall asleep peacefully when adjusting the levers properly.
– 35th sentence: Distorted faces and excretions, which have been seen previously, could no longer be observed.

6th paragraph:

– 36th sentence: In the course of the current day, I continue my journey to Group B, where further messages can reach me.

(sgd.) Becker
–Untersturmführer"

2.2.2.4. Analysis of the Content

– 2nd to 4th, 6th, and 7th sentence: The last two sentences are pointless repetitions of the first three. Would anyone believe that a truck can be completely incapacitated after just half an hour of rain?

The author of these lines might be hinting at the difficulties the German army faced in the east, but that had little to do with certain trucks skidding about. Road conditions in the Soviet Union were generally catastrophic during the war. There were hardly any paved roads outside of major cities. In addition, the German army was not prepared for the Russian winter, so their motor pool, as everything else, came to a freezing standstill in November 1941. Diesel vehicles in particular, if not filled up with special winter Diesel or alternatively equipped with heated Diesel tanks, fuel lines, and injection pumps (which they weren't), could not move due to the fuel being frozen solid. When the winter finally ended, the upper layer of the frozen soil thawed, yet lower layers stayed frozen for weeks to come. As a result, any melt water and rain did not drain, so the entire unpaved road system of the Soviet Union turned into a huge quagmire, in which the German army got literally stuck. It was not before April or May 1942, depending on the re-

gion we are talking about, that weather and soil conditions enabled the German army to deploy their vehicles again with some reliability.

Of course, everybody involved in the war knew this, as this catastrophic first Russian winter halted the initial German thrust and was one major reason why the Soviet Union did not collapse in late 1941/early 1942.

It is very strange that the Becker document does not even hint at any of this. Instead, already mere humid weather conditions are claimed to have rendered the trucks useless because of skidding, when in fact getting stuck in the mud had been the big problem of all German vehicles. If what the Becker document insinuates here was German army standard during that war, they wouldn't have gotten much farther than Warsaw with that kind of equipment!

– 8th sentence: According to the author of this letter, sometimes the executees had to walk to the execution site, but at other times they were carried there by a vehicle. From this it has to be concluded that the executees and the gas van were at times brought separately to this spot. If the reason for this was that the respective gas van could not drive, then how did the van get to the execution site? Was it left there overnight? And if this gas van couldn't move about, how did the other "normal" trucks transporting the executees manage to get there? What a logistic mess! I may mention in passing that there is not a single witness statement or court verdict claiming that any victims had to walk to the gas-van execution site (see Chapter 3).

In addition, no reason is given why the executees became unsettled when walking to their execution site and what would have been necessary to prevent this.

– 9th sentence: This sentence is obscure, since it does not fit into the context. In order to understand the second part of this sentence, it has to be assumed that the executees had been gathered in a building or in a fenced-in area. But would it not have been common, even inevitable practice anyway to pick up those to be executed at a collection point?

– 10th and 12th sentence: It is ridiculous to claim that the mere mounting of window shutters on the sides of the truck would have sufficed to give it the looks of a trailer home. Besides, motorized, truck-size trailer homes weren't exactly a common commodity in Russia in those years, to put it mildly, because in that era trailer homes consisted of horse-drawn carriages! Hence, a truck thusly adorned inevitably would have *attracted* attention instead of diverting it, all the more so as

a truck with window shutters, yet without any corresponding windows, would have been a peculiar sight, indeed! Even the author of the letter states shortly afterwards in the 12th sentence that "even camouflaged" such a truck "cannot be kept secret in the long run," which makes me wonder why such puerile attempts at camouflage would have been undertaken in the first place; after all, the letter's author does not mention an order to that effect.

In Chapter 3 we will encounter a number of court verdicts claiming that the gas vans were adorned (as alleged camouflage) with drawn-on windows and even curtains, which was just as puerile and futile, attracting attention instead of diverting it. The first such claim stems from a 1943 Soviet show trial (see p. 120), whose respective statements were later parroted in several verdicts of the Munich district court which gave a kind of rehashed performance of the 1943 Soviet show trial (pp. 120, 236, 237, 241). It may be conjectured that the author of the Becker letter was inspired by this 1943 Soviet claim, although he changed the theme from windows to shutters. If so, this would prove that the Becker letter was written *after* the 1943 Soviet trial.

– 13th sentence: Taganrog at the Black Sea lies some 50 km west of the Russia City Rostov on the river Don; it was occupied by German troops in October 1941. They pushed farther east into Rostov-on-Don, but could hold that city only for a week due to adverse weather conditions. They were subsequently pushed back to Taganrog. During the subsequent months the Germans had to struggle primarily with "General Winter," then during the spring thaw with extremely muddy roads which grounded almost all of their motor pool. Up to late June 1942, when the Germans renewed the offensive with "*Fall Blau*" (case blue), Taganrog was the eastmost frontline town in German hands in the Russian south. Being a frontline town, it was under direct control of the German military front line units, who most certainly would not have tolerated stirring up the civilian population by having gas vans driving around killing civilians. It also seems inconceivable that under these circumstances, with Red-Army units in immediate proximity, the RSHA would have ordered a "gas van" to be sent to a location where they were in danger of being captured by a sudden Soviet counterattack.

– 14th to 19th sentence: The word "Manchete," plural "Mancheten" (with ch and a single t) is not part of the German everyday language nor of technical lingo. Dictionaries merely list the word with a "sch" and a

double t as "Manschette." It has several meanings, of which only the technical one is of relevance here, referring to a usually flexible, elastic sheathing for protection, stabilization, or sealing/separation of an item: cuff, sleeve, cast. This term, which appears misspelled seven times in the Becker document, indicates that at least in this context the document talks about real issues, which could corroborate its authenticity.

In order to find out what these items were, Pierre Marais inquired with the Viennese company Steyr-Daimler-Puch (S.D.P.) which had absorbed the Austrian part of the Saurer company in 1959. They proffered the following information (see their letter to Marais on p. 382):

> *"The wartime Saurer vehicles were equipped with a vacuum-supported hydraulic brake, as they are still being used in today's cars and small vans following the same principle.*
>
> *The 'Manchete' mentioned was a rubber membrane of the vacuum servo device which tore frequently, leading to the loss of the power support so that the trucks could be braked only with the force of the foot. Hence it is not a total loss, but a diminished efficacy of the brakes.*
>
> *The mold mentioned in the letter did not serve to cast, but rather to vulcanize*[40] *the rubber membrane."*

This answer gave rise to the following remarks:

First Point: That the Saurer trucks had a vacuum-supported hydraulic brake is confirmed by other sources, according to which the Saurer C-class trucks introduced in 1935 and produced until 1955 were all equipped with Diesel engines and had "servo-supported hydraulic brakes; max. load up to 11 tons."[41]

The term "combined hydraulic-pneumatic brakes" used in the Becker document (*Öl-Luftdruckbremse*; literally: oil/air-pressure brake) implies, however, that the system required a *compressor* in order to generate pressurized air (*Luftdruck*). Although pressurized pneumatic braking systems might have existed in some vehicles, it makes no sense, technically speaking, to combine a pressurized pneumatic system with a hydraulic system, nor is there a precedent for such a combination to my knowledge. But the point is moot, since we know that these trucks had vacuum-assisted hydraulic brakes. The author of the Becker document was obviously not only unfamiliar with the proper terms, but seems to

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40 Vulcanization: introduction of sulfur into rubber in order to harden it by crosslinking the individual polymer strands.

41 www.saureroldtimer.ch/5000geschichte/5200chronosaurer/index.html.

have made up a non-existing technical term in order to appear knowledgeable. This is surprising when considering that Becker himself had claimed that he was allegedly selected from the highest quarters "to pay particular attention to the mechanical functioning of these vans" and went out of his way in order to organize repairs of the brake system.

Second Point: The definition of the term *Manchete* fits the context of the document: mentioning damaged sleeves with the resulting effects and with a reference to their frequency is in accordance with the facts and thus does not merit any further comment.

Third Point: This confirms that the rubber pieces could not have been cast under the circumstance described in the document, but it still evades me how they could have been vulcanized in their entirety. This would have required that the manufacturing company sent unvulcanized spare part sleeves, which doesn't seem likely; hence this point remains unclear. One can assume that tears in a membrane could be repaired in a makeshift way by mending them with unvulcanized rubber patches, which were then vulcanized by applying a chemical, as it is done with perforated rubber tubes, but that does not require a mold.

The irrational expressions used in the Becker document about turning a mold and the casting of a sleeve in it are therefore conspicuous. Most likely the author of this document knew only that the Saurer trucks frequently broke down due to damaged sleeves – that couldn't have been a secret – but he obviously had no idea what these items really were. This leaves us with two options: Either the author and signer of said report was technically ignorant and quite naïve, or else we are dealing with a crude forgery clumsily using a characteristic of the wartime Saurer trucks, which was well-known to their drivers back then, in order to give it some realistic content. Considering all the peculiarities of this document, I am inclined to posit the second option.

– 15th sentence: Although the author of the letter can claim mitigating circumstances for his act of bribery due to the described situation, it is very strange that an SS officer admits *in writing* to a higher-ranking superior to have acted that way, all the more so since by so doing he also incriminates the responsible person of the workshop, who has acted for far less unselfish motives than the author himself.

– 20th sentence: the author probably means that repairs will be carried out, not defects.

– 21st sentence: It is not specified what kind of sealing is meant. Concerning rivets, it should be noted that it is highly unlikely that they

became loose as a result of the "uneven terrain" and the "hardly describable way and road conditions": Bolted connections can become loose – this happens frequently – yet rivets hardly ever do. But if they do, such damage is often serious, as loose rivets cannot be repaired but have to be replaced, and while becoming loose, they often widen the holes into which they were fastened. This gives the impression that the author let his fantasy run loose without bothering about the probability of his claims.

In this context it is worth noting that many witness testimonies and subsequently many court verdicts claim that the cargo boxes used were merely lined with sheet metal on the inside, which means that the cargo box itself was made of wood, since a sheet metal lining would have been superfluous, had the box been made of metal. Hence, if we follow the majority of anecdotal evidence, it would have been the sheet metal lining which, according to the Becker document, had become leaky and needed to be soldered to keep it airtight.

– 22nd, 23rd, and 24th sentence: Fissures in metal plates are not sealed by soldering but rather by welding. Such repair work could have been done at the spot, so that it is incomprehensible why the vehicles had to be sent to Berlin for such a repair work.

The perseverance with which the author insists on the issue of sealing the gassing box is noteworthy when considering that gas vans used for homicidal gassings could have worked only, if the *sealed* cargo box, which sported a *sealed* door – the witness statements emphasize this over and over again – had openings permitting the *escape* of the excess exhaust gases (see Chapter 1.3.2.), which is to say: they *could not* and *should not* have been sealed!

– 25th sentence: By referring to "possibly escaping gases," the author once more confirms his underlying hypothesis that a proper operation of a gas van required as sealed cargo box, as this phrase implies that under normal conditions of the gassing operation no gases escape near the vehicle. But as already described in Chapter 1.3.2., an engine whose exhaust pipe is connected to a sealed cargo box will bend and eventually blow the box apart. Hence we have a physically or mechanically impossible claim here.

Not to mention the fact that "possibly escaping gases" could not be more dangerous for those operating the vehicle than the inevitable inhalation of exhaust gases of city traffic or of the idling engine of a stationary vehicle.

– 26th to 29th sentence: The author bemoans that the unloading of the gassing victims, which does "tremendous mental and physical harm" to those doing it, is sometimes performed by his men, and he suggests that orders are given to have inmates do this work. But according to mainstream historiography, the killing method "gas van" had been invented precisely because of the following reason:

> *"However, the mass shooting of Jews, Gypsies and other Soviet citizens affected the morale of the Einsatzgruppen (operational groups) that carried out the executions behind the front-line troops."* (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 52)

In the same anthology Walter Rauff is quoted as follows:

> *"At the time to most important consideration for me was the psychological stress felt by the men involved in the shootings. This problem was overcome by the use of gas vans."* (*ibid.*, p. 53; see Chapter 3.5.2.)

I may point out that the last sentence from the above quote allegedly stemming from Rauff is in blatant contradiction to the 27th sentence of the letter at issue, which was addressed precisely to Rauff!

In 1980 the Munich District Court stated that

> "[…] *later, about early summer 1942 and on orders from the Imperial Security Main Office, the so-called gas van was used for the killings in order to save ammunition and to spare the members of the commandos the terrible scenes of the executions."* (Rüter *et al.* 1968ff., vol. 44, p. 250)

From this we ought to conclude that the execution method used previously – shootings – which is common practice during wartime, caused even more mental and physical harm to those charged with it.

As we will see when dealing with various court cases, the situation is contradictory and confusing indeed; while some witnesses or verdicts stated that gas vans replaced shootings due to gassings being less stressful for the executioners, others stated that gas van executions were eventually abandoned (or never implemented to begin with) because this method of killing was allegedly even worse than shootings (see *e.g.* Chapters 3.7.3.1. and 3.7.5.2.). However, I have not found a single occasion where the unloading is said to have been done by SS men.

With regard to jeopardizing their physical health, the respective men could inhale only insignificant amounts of exhaust gases when opening the doors, and since the operation took place outdoors, the risk was minimal in any case.

– 32nd sentence: This sentence implies that the gassings took place while the trucks were stationary, because a driving truck cannot be operated at "full throttle" all or even most of the time. This in turn implies that the truck's engine was running without any load. In case of Saurer trucks with Diesel engines, their exhaust gases would not have had toxic amounts of carbon monoxide under these circumstances; hence they would have been unsuited for murder by asphyxiation (see Chapter 1.3.1.). This way the victims could only have been very slowly cooked to death with the hot gases.

– 33rd & 34th sentence: These sentences make no sense at all, since the cause of death is suffocation under any circumstances. "Putting to sleep" by means of poisonous gas is merely a euphemism for asphyxiation. While it cannot be argued that suffocation under the described conditions can occur while the victims were either awake or asleep, no reason can be seen how "adjusting the levers properly" could have an influence on the drowsiness of the victims.

We must keep in mind that Diesel exhaust gases of yore have always been full of smoke and irritants under *any* circumstances, which arouse people rather than lull them to sleep. It was therefore technically impossible to adjust such an engine in such a way that it would have produced exhaust gasses capable of putting anyone to sleep peacefully.

It is not even clear what "levers" (plural) the author is talking about. The truck had only one accelerator pedal, and that is called "*Gaspedal*" or simply "*Pedal*" in German, not "*Hebel*." One court verdict mentions the adjustment of a stationary vehicle's idling speed (*Standgas*), probably by means of a hand throttle or choke, but as evidence for this it quotes the Becker document (Rüter *et al.* 1968ff., vol. 33, p. 284), so we are going in circles here.

Even though pulling the choke would have increased the engine's rpm while idling and hence the amount of gas produced, it would have had no significant effect on the composition of the exhaust gases. The same is true if the driver of a stationary truck gave "full throttle," as the Becker document mentions (on this see Berg 2019, pp. 447f.). The only effect would have been that the gassing box had been filled faster with the hot but non-toxic Diesel exhaust gases. But the amount of gas produced by the position of the accelerator or the choke has neither an influence on the time it took for suffocation to occur nor on the circumstances under which death set in, that is, whether the victims fell asleep

or remained awake, whether they ended up having distorted faces or not, or whether they lost control of their bowel movements or not.

It is, by the way, astounding that the National-Socialist hierarchy even bothered with such humanitarian consideration in this context and allegedly tried to achieve that the victims fell asleep peacefully and forever, or so the Becker document suggests. But since adjusting the levers properly wouldn't have had any effect anyhow, this story is simply untrue. The real reason why the author included this tall tale was probably to give the impression that he is talking about real events. But since the claims are nonsense, this exposes the author as a liar.

The reference to these "levers" probably inspired later "witnesses" to confabulate about some undefined levers used to initiate the piping of exhaust gases into the cargo box, as we will see later on.

– 35th sentence: as mentioned in Chapter 1.3.1., Diesel exhaust gases are not only hot but also full of smoke and irritants so that no matter which way one *tries* – with or without success – to suffocate anyone with them, it is going to be torture. Hence, quite contrary to what the author of the Becker document claims, it must be argued that, the faster death occurs, the less time the victims have to suffer and panic; "full throttle" would therefore indeed have been the best advice, if it could speed up the process at all, which it couldn't.

The analysis of this letter leaves behind an awkward impression. This impression as well as the criticism I have expressed about each point prompt me to doubt the authenticity of this letter.

I will now turn to the other documents which form part of 501-PS.

2.2.3. The Telegrams of 501-PS

2.2.3.1. Two Versions

The texts of the telegrams of 6 and 15 June 1942 exist in two different versions, which are reproduced consecutively in IMT, Vol. 26 (pp. 106-109). Since the documents reproduced in the IMT volumes have been retyped rather than photographically reproduced, I will subsequently refer to the alleged originals of these documents as archived in the U.S. National Archives.

Both versions of each telegram bear handwritten marks, which give the impression that both versions were prepared in the offices of the RSHA in Berlin. Version A of the telegram of 9 June 1942 – the one reproduced first in the IMT volume – is typed on the *lower* half of a

sheet of paper, while version B of the *later* telegram of 15 June 1942 is typed on the *upper* half; hence they were apparently typed counter-chronologically. Although there were six days between the receipts of these two telegrams, and although 7749 other telegrams arrived at the RSHA in the meantime (or so the serial numbers suggest: version A 144,702, version B 152,452), somebody must have taken the trouble to pull out these two telegrams and retype them in inverted chronological order on a separate sheet of paper. Even the handwritten note "Repair immediately after return – report completion" was added at the top left corner to the retyped telegram of 9 June 1942, although apparently by a different writer than the one which is on the other, ostensibly original version. This version also includes a red underlining of the address line (so the footnote in IMT, Vol. 26, p. 106), whereas version B of this telegram has the secrecy note beneath the address line framed in red (*ibid.*, p. 108, footnote).

2.2.3.2. 9 June 1942 from Belgrade

Apart from the Turner letter, which I will discuss in Chapter 2.2.7., this is the only documentary evidence hinting at the use of special vehicles (*Spezialwagen*–Saurer) in Serbia, although the telegram's content gives no indication as to what exactly was special about it.

In the subsequent English translation, I have removed the upper-case style and fixed some typos to make it easier to read (see Appendix 3 for the German text):

> *"To the R.S.H.A. Office Roem 2 D 3 KL. A–to att. of Major Pradl – Berlin .––*
> *Re.: Special wagon–Saurer.—*
> *Dossier: none.––*
> *The motorists SS– Scharf. G o e t z – a. M e y e r have accomplished the special order, hence the*[y] *named can be* [are] *ordered back with the above-mentioned vehicle. Due to cracked axle of the rear half of the axle a transfer per axle* [cannot take place].—
> *I have therefore order that the vehicle is transferred back to Berlin loaded on the* [by] *railway.*
> *Expected arrival between the 11. a 12 6. 42 The motorists Goetz a. Meyer accompany the vehicle.– –*

The Comm. of SIPO a. the SD[42]*– Belgrade– Roem 1 – BNR. 3985/ 42 42*
sgd. Dr. Schaefer– SS– Oberstubaf–"

The telegram also contains a handwritten note in the upper left corner reading:

"Repair immediately after return. Report completion."

Version A of this telegram's text, which was typed on the lower half of a separate sheet of paper – with the text of the telegram of 15 June 1942 in the upper half – sports a typo not contained in version B. It reveals the originator of this retyped version: the second occurrence of the word "*Fahrzeuge*" (vehicle) is mistyped as "*Fahryeug*." This is a common mistake of a German typing on an English typewriter or vice versa, because on German typewriters the position of the Z and Y are swapped in comparison with their position on an English typewriter. A second typo also included in version A but not in version B is located two words earlier, which sports a question mark instead of a comma. Since the telegram was typed in upper case, this indicates that the typist accidentally forgot to release the upper-case key (or unlock the caps lock). And in fact, old German mechanical typewriters had the question mark as the upper-case alternative of the comma. Although this was not the case for all English typewriters of that age, some did have the same comma/? combination as the German typewriters.[43]

Hence, although this cannot be said with certainty, the most-likely scenario here is that an Anglo-Saxon typist wrote this telegram on a German machine. The less likely scenario is a German typist writing on a somewhat rare English typewriter. The almost impossible scenario is a German typist writing on a German machine or an English typist on an English machine, because then the accidental swapping of Y and Z wouldn't have happened.

It is therefore reasonable to assume that this retyped version was created by either a person normally typing on an English typewriter but in that occasion using a German model, or a person used to typing on German typewriters, but in that case using a somewhat rare English typewriter. This means in plain English that the versions A of the two telegrams were probably (re?)typed after the war in a setting of a mé-

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42 SD stands for *Sicherheitsdienst* – security service.

43 A Google image search of typewriters shows that some old typewriters had a comma/? combination, while others had today's layout. I don't know when that combination was changed to today's standard.

lange of Germans and Anglos-Saxons as well as German and English typewriters. This wouldn't be a problem, if this sheet of paper didn't have a number of German handwritten remarks on it giving the impression that this document is an original created in 1942.[44] So it is either an incompetent way of creating a copy of the originals – but why are they then part of the set of "original" documents? – or these handwritten remarks were meant to look real and are therefore fake. Hence, the most likely scenario is a person used to English typewriters writing on a captured German typewriter. Hence this summary sheet is suspicious.

Another indication that this telegram is not authentic are the names of the two drivers mentioned: Götz and Meyer. To this day no such individuals who are said to have been employed as drivers by the RSHA have been identified. This stands in stark contrast to other individuals who were never mentioned in any document as gas van drivers but who were nevertheless identified somehow and were even prosecuted for allegedly driving such vehicles (see Chapters 3.6.4., 3.7.4.1., 3.7.4.10f.). This indicates that the drivers mentioned in this telegram probably never existed. Browning has hidden this important fact in a footnote (Browning 1983, p. 79, fn 75):

> *"All attempts to trace the drivers, Götz and Meyer, have been unsuccessful. The few gas van drivers who have been identified were full-time Sipo-SD drivers subsequently assigned to gas van duty."*

The reverse of this telegram (version B, the ostensible original) has the following handwritten text:

> *"II D 3a (2)* *Berlin, 11 June 42*
> *c/o Pr. Sukkel for further action and immediate initiation of repairs. I request to be informed of the arrival of the vehicle.*
>
> pp. Just
>
> *II D 3a (9)* *Berlin, 16 June 42*
> *Note:*
> *The vehicle arrived here on 16 June 42 around 13.00. Repairs will be initiated immediately after thorough cleaning.*
> *pp.* [signature illegible]

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[44] The red underlined address line already mentioned plus at the top right: "II D 3a Major Pradel Niederhausen (Kop)"; at the right margin below the dotted page halving line: "Nach Rückkehr sofort wieder instandsetzen- Fertigstellung melden (Kop)" = Repair immediately after return– report completion (Kop).

II D 3a 9 *Berlin, 13 July 42*
1. Note: The S-vehicle reg. no. 71463 has been completed ~~and is to be sent to Riga with the driver.~~
2.) Sent to head of motor pool T.J. Niederhausen with the request to take note and for further action.
pp. [signature illegible]

2.2.3.3. 15 June 1942 from Riga

"To the RSHA. – ROEM. 2 D 3 A – Berlin.–
Secret State Matter.––––
Re. S.–Wagon.–
At the commander of the SIPO a. the SD. Belarus a transport of Jews arrives weekly which is to be subjected to a special treatment.– The 3 S-wagons existing there do not suffice for this purpose. I request the allocation of another S–wagon (5 tons). Furthermore I request at once to also send 20 exhaust hoses for the existing 3 S–wagons (2 Diamond, 1 Saurer), as those available are already leaky.
= =
= The Comm. of SIPO a. the SD. Ostland
Roem. 1 T – 126/42 GRS. [secret state matter]
A. sgd.: Truehess. HStuf. [correct: Truehe, SS HStuf.]
Task: [handwritten:]
1) *When can the deployment of another S-wagon be expected?*
2) *Are spare exhaust hoses available, on order or when deliverable?*
3) *Submit draft for answer"*

It is from this document that the claim arose that the Germans used trucks built by the U.S. company Diamond as gas vans. Although Diamond was a big player in the U.S. truck market in the 1930s and during the war, no U.S. truck company ever exported trucks on a considerable scale to European markets. There may have been a few selected Diamond trucks in Germany, and if so, they were probably vehicles with extraordinary designs rather than trivial trucks, but the probability that any of them ended up being used as gas vans was minute. In addition, since Germany could not get any spare parts for these trucks after the entry of the U.S. into the war at the end of 1941, these vehicles would probably not have been used for anything requiring reliability. It is therefore much more likely that the name Diamond was entered in this

"telegram" by a writer who thought that using one of the best-known truck models – best known to him – was a wise thing to do. Since Saurer was a well-known name for Diesel and gas-generator trucks in Germany, it cannot surprise to see this name mentioned in the telegram either, all the more so as the name "Saurer" had already been mentioned during the war in Soviet show trials as the make of gas vans used in the USSR. (I will return to that in Chapter 3.5.1., p. 133.)

Hence, apart from the typo replacing a Z for a Y in the summary version of the first telegram, here we have another indication that the mastermind behind the creation of these documents was probably Anglo-Saxon (i.e., U.S.-American) in nature rather than German.

It should also be noted that the telegram's claim that three existing trucks were insufficient to "process" the incoming weekly transports is untenable. Each of these transports contained some 1,000 people (Mattogno/Graf 2020, pp. 200f.; Rüter *et al.* 1968ff., vol. 19, p. 195), so if we assume five workdays a week, each van had to treat (1,000 ÷ 5 ÷ 3 =) 67 people, which amounts to one gassing each day. It is therefore pure nonsense that "the 3 [existing] S-wagons existing there [did] not suffice for this purpose." That shows that this telegram was produced in order to make the alleged ongoing mass murder look even bigger than it theoretically could have been, if all deported individuals had indeed been gassed. This is yet another indication that the telegram has its roots not in reality but in the imaginations of propagandists.

2.2.3.4. 22 June 1942 from Berlin

This is the draft for an outgoing telegram allegedly sent to Riga in response to their request for more trucks:

"Reichssicherheitshauptamt *Berlin, 22 June 1942*
I1 D 3 a B. No. 240142 s[ecret] *S*[tate]*M*[atter]
Secret State Matter!
1.) T[ele]*G*[ram]
To the Commander of the Security Police and the SD Ostland
in Riga
Subject: S Wagon
The transfer of a 5 t Saurer can be expected middle of next month. The vehicle is currently at the Imperial Security Main Office for repairs and to make minor changes. 100 m hose will be sent along.
p.p.
(signature as head)

2.) F[ollow-]*u*[p]. *immediately at II D 3 a (9)*
p.p.
Rauff
[page 2]
Tasks:
1) When can the deployment of another S-wagon be expected?
2) Are (?) exhaust hoses available, on order or when deliverable?
3) Submit draft for answer"

The typed text on page two is a copy of what had been handwritten below the Riga telegram, where the typist couldn't discern the word "spare" (German: *Reserve*).

This document is the link between the two telegrams discussed before, as a handwritten note on page one of the original allegedly states:

"No. T. J Niederhausen for further action and please note the remark of 13 July 42 on the back of the telegram from Belgrade. For technical reasons only five rings of 10 m each can be sent."

The remark of 13 July 1942 mentioned that the truck sent back from Serbia had been repaired and that it is to be sent off to – where exactly? The telegram requesting the van came from Riga without indicating that the vans ought to be sent elsewhere, so Berlin had to assume that the van had to be sent to Riga. That this was indeed initially anticipated is shown by the handwritten remark on the back of the Belgrade telegram (see Chapter 2.2.3.2.). Fact is that all except one of the mentioned deportation transports to be "processed" went to Minsk, not Riga, which is therefore where the vans would have been needed. This may be the reason why this part of the sentence was crossed out. Yet still, it is striking that the most important information needed to send the van on its way – its destination – is not mentioned anywhere.

What is strange as well is this document's request on page 2 under #3 to submit a draft for an answer, even though it already contains the very answer to the telegram from Riga on its page 1.

2.2.3.5. Leaky Exhaust Hoses

Flexible metal hoses, which are commonly referred to as exhaust, ventilation or suction hoses, are usually made of thin, sometime zinc-plated steel bands coiled up like a spiral.[45] They overlap at the edge, where

[45] Some of today's exhaust hoses are even made of high-temperature resistant plastics or mineral fibers, but such materials did not yet exist during the Second World War.

they interlock in a groove. Although this gives them some flexibility, such hoses are neither gastight (unless especially sealed) nor pressure resistant. Apart from funneling gases, these hoses are also used to transport free-flowing solids (grains, powders, pellets, granules, etc.), which would wear down rubber or plastic hoses too fast. Characteristic for these metal hoses was their relatively low flexibility.[46] In the present case, where the hose is said to have made a 90° bent from the horizontal exhaust pipe to the cargo box floor, this low flexibility would have made an installation difficult, and the metal hose bending first downward from the exhaust pipe and then in an arch back upward toward the floor opening would be in danger of hitting the road surface (see Illustration 27, p. 384). A technician wearing his thinking cap would therefore either have installed an L-shaped pipe in the floor to avoid having to bend the hose, or better still, he would have connected the cargo box with the exhaust pipe through a hole in the lower side wall (beneath the grate), thus also eliminating the risk of items falling or fluids flowing into this pipe. Such a connection would have required only a bend shaped like a flat ~ in the metal hose, if such a hose was necessary at all.

This brings up the next point: Neither does the normal configuration of an exhaust pipe require a hose and usually doesn't have one either, nor can a reason be seen why it is absolutely necessary to use a metal hose in order to convert a van into a "gas van." The exhaust pipe could have been readily connected to the cargo box with a solid pipe, where simple devices suffice to permit a thermal expansion. A reversible connection of the exhaust pipe to the cargo box would have been required, however, if occasionally the truck's cargo box was to serve also as a normal transport device, as I have explained on page 40. And in fact, several court verdicts claim that the gas vans were first driven to an execution site with the victims locked up inside the cargo box, but that the gassing itself occurred only after arrival, when the vehicle was stationary again (see Chapter 4.2.7.). Whether such a procedure would have made sense and would have been efficient is a question I will not discuss here.

An absolute necessity for flexible metal hose would have existed only, if the cargo box had a special design requiring the exhaust system to be both connected to it *and* moveable. However, in all the witness tes-

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[46] Although today's hoses are quite flexible and usually also sealed, cf. www.flextraction.co.uk/pdfs/hoses/metal-hoses/Metal-Hose-375-Special-Fibre-Seal.pdf.

timonies I have encountered only one claims a movable cargo box, here a cargo box that could be tipped in order to unload its cargo (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 70). But even that could have been done after disconnecting the exhaust system from the box. In addition, this statement stands in such crass contradiction to all other witness statements and to the extant documents that it can safely be disregarded.

Since metal hoses for hot aggressive gases were zinc-plated, they could resist corrosion relatively well. Dangerous to exhaust pipes and hoses are primarily acidic components of the exhaust gas itself, like nitrous and sulfuric oxides, which, if dissolved in water, form highly aggressive acids. Water in exhaust pipes and hoses forms primarily during the first minutes of operation, when the exhaust system is cold and water contained in the exhaust gas condenses inside of it. Major amounts of fluids that have accrued inside the pipe due to other reasons would have been blown out right at the start of the engine.

Although the "telegram" gives no reason why the hoses were leaking, the Just document analyzed in the next chapter suggests that "accruing fluids" were responsible for this. It could be hypothesized that human body fluids are meant with this, but it is a fact that such fluids – urine, blood, feces, saliva – are not corrosive in any way. As a matter of fact, the ammonia which develops from urine, the main body fluid to be expected in a hypothetical mass murder scenario, is slightly alkaline and would therefore *reduce* the corrosion of the acidic exhaust gases by neutralizing them partially.[47]

Hence it takes years before metal exhaust hoses or pipes rust through, in particular if they are zinc-plated. Why then did Riga request 20(!) new exhaust hoses for three trucks, and Berlin was prepared to sent 100 m (which amounts to an individual hose length of 5 m), although they had to reduce that amount "for technical reasons" to just 5 m × 10 m. This would mean that theses hoses were expected to become leaky again after just a few months. Was someone slashing them with axes or knives? Or were they really dangling so low that they scraped the roads?

I want to point out moreover that the one information which the Berlin recipient of the telegram from Riga really needed in order to supply these exhaust hoses is not included: their diameter, as such hoses come in a broad variety. Considering that two unusual Diamond trucks had to

[47] On the corrosive effect of various chemicals on steel see www.engineeringtoolbox.com/metal-corrosion-resistance-d_491.html.

be equipped with them, this information would not have been easy to come by and could not be expected to be known by some pencil pusher in Berlin.

2.2.4. The Just Document, 5 June 1942

This file memo is one of the documents contained in the dossier R 58/871 fº 1 of the German *Bundesarchiv* in Koblenz which comprises 22 pages altogether. This dossier contains correspondence regarding "special vehicles."[48] The document quoted below has been reproduced in the German edition of Kogon *et al.* in its entirety (1983, pp. 333-337). The French and English editions contain only a reproduction of the first page and a translation of the complete text (Engl.: 1993, pp. 228-231). Ingrid Weckert has analyzed this document as well in her two papers (1985, pp. 23-28; 2019, pp. 222-227). My subsequent analysis is based to a sizeable part on Marais's observations.

2.2.4.1. Translation[49]

II D 3 a (9) No. 214/42 g. Rs. Berlin, June 5, 1942

Onliest Copy.

Top Secret!

I. M e m o:

Regarding: Technical modifications to the special vehicles deployed in service and in the process of construction.

For example, 97,000 were processed since December 1941 with 3 deployed vehicles without any defects in the vehicles becoming apparent. The known explosion at Kulmhof [=Chełmno] has to be assessed as a single case. Its cause is to be ascribed to an operating error. In order to avoid such accidents, special orders have been issued to the offices concerned. The orders have been kept in such a way that the degree of security has been increased considerably.

The other experiences made so far let the following technical modifications appear to be expedient:

1. To allow for the rapid inflow of the carbon monoxide while preventing excessive pressure, two open slits of 10 cm × 1 cm [4" × 0.4"] are to be located in the upper back wall. These are to be covered on

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48 See the German original in Appendix 4.

49 Since several versions of this document have different passages underlined, hence are probably later additions, underscores have been omitted here altogether.

the outside with easily movable hinged metal flaps in order to allow for self-regulation of any potential excess pressure.

2. The vans' load usually amounts to 9 to 10 per m^2 [10 sqft]. Although no overloading occurs thereby for the spacious Saurer special vehicles, utilization in that form is not possible, because their off-road capability is highly reduced by this. A reduction of the load area appears to be necessary. This will be achieved by shortening the body by approximately 1 m [39"]. The above difficulty is not to be solved, as has been done so far, by reducing the number of units. This is because a reduction in the number of units necessitates a longer operation time, since the empty spaces also have to be filled with carbon monoxide. In contrast to this, a substantially shorter operation time suffices in case of a shorter loading area and a completely filled loading space, since free spaces are absent.

   In a discussion with the manufacturer, it was pointed out by the latter that a shortening of the cargo box would result in a disadvantageous weight displacement. It was emphasized that an overloading of the front axle occurs. In fact, however, an unintended balancing in weight distribution occurs, because during operation the load striving towards the back door always predominantly lies there. Due to this an additional load on the front axle does not occur.
3. The connecting hoses between the exhaust pipe and the vehicle frequently rust through, because they are corroded on the inside by accruing fluids. To avoid this, the filler pipe is henceforth to be mounted in such a way that introduction proceeds from above downward. This will prevent the influx of fluids.
4. To allow for easy cleaning of the vehicle, a tightly closeable drain opening is to be located in the center of the floor. The drain cover with about 200 to 300 mm [8" to 12"] in diameter is to be equipped with a U-trap so that thin fluids can also drain out during operation. In order to prevent clogging, the U-trap is to be equipped with a sieve on top. Thick dirt can be rinsed off through the large drain opening during cleaning of the vehicle. The vehicle's floor has to slant slightly toward the drain opening. This is to ensure that all fluids flow toward the center immediately. Thus, it is largely prevented that fluids enter into the pipes.
5. The observation windows installed so far can be omitted, as they are hardly ever used. During construction of further vehicles, this omis-

sion of the windows saves substantial labor time with regard to their difficult installation and sealing.

6. The lighting appliances are to be more strongly protected from destruction than they have been so far. The iron grid guard over the lamps is to be domed enough to render damage to the lamp window no longer possible. From practical experience it was suggested that the lamps should be omitted altogether, since they are allegedly never used. It was found out, however, that, when the back door is closed, *i.e.*, when it gets dark, the load always urgently strives towards the door. This is because, at the onset of darkness, the load strives towards the light. This renders it difficult to latch the door. It was established that a din always breaks out at the point when the doors are closed, probably due to the eerie nature of darkness. For this reason, it is expedient to turn the lights on before and during the first minutes of operation. The lighting is advantageous also during operations at night and for cleaning the vehicle's interior.
7. In order to achieve a faster and easier unloading of the vehicle, a retractable grate is to be installed. It is to be guided on small wheels in U-shaped iron rails. The extraction and retraction has to happen by means of a cable winch mounted below the vehicle. The firm commissioned with this installation considers this design to be unfeasible at this time due to a lack of personnel and material. The implementation is to be suggested to another firm.

The above-mentioned technical modifications are to be implemented for the vehicles in service only, if one vehicle has to undergo a different major repair. The aforementioned modifications are to be considered as far as possible for the 10 commissioned Saurer chassis. Since the manufacturer has emphasized on occasion of a consultation that technical modifications are currently not possible or only for minimal modification, it ought to be tried, using a different company, to equip at least one of these 10 vehicles with all the improvements and modifications resulting from practical experience made so far. I suggest commissioning the firm in Hohenmauth with the single implementation.

Considering the circumstances, a late completion has to be expected for this vehicle. It then has to be kept available or to be deployed not only as a model but also as a back-up vehicle. In case it proves reliable, the other vehicles are to be withdrawn from service one by one and are to be converted following the model vehicle.

II. Group Leader II D
SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Rauff

submitted for your attention and for adjudication.

p.p. Su 4/6
Just wa”

2.2.4.2. Analysis

2.2.4.2.1. Form

Ingrid Weckert was the first to thoroughly criticize this document, to which I refer the interested reader (Weckert 1985, 2019). I will give a summary of some passages of Weckert’s most recent paper below. But it suffices to have some elementary knowledge of the German language in order to spot anomalies and errors in this document.

First of all there is the non-existing superlative “onliest” (“*einzigste*”) used in the letterhead (although this is quite a common error in German colloquial speech). Much stranger is the expression “for example” used in the letter’s first sentence. As Ingrid Weckert pointed out correctly (2019, p. 224):

> *“It makes no sense to begin a letter with ‘for example’. The term ‘for example’ has meaning only when something was described or claimed in the foregoing, for which an example then follows. In this particular case ‘for example’ cannot even refer to the ‘re.:’-line; the ‘re.:’-line speaks of technical modifications which are necessary, but the text immediately states that no defects have occurred in the vehicles. And that is not exactly an example to demonstrate the necessity for technical modifications!”*

Other than being a nonsensical initiation of a letter, the implication of using “for example” in the first sentence is that the 97,000 processed units are only one example among several. Yet the author leaves the reader in the dark about what this “several” could have been.

It is interesting to note that Kogon *et al.* committed their own forgery twice in their book by omitting these telltale words “for example” altogether with no hint at the fact that they have omitted anything (1993, pp. 55, 228).

Furthermore, the word “*Siphon*” is misspelled with a “y” (which, by the way, is one English way of spelling it); the word “*weitgehendst*” should actually be “*weitestgehend*,” although this mistake has become

part of the German vernacular, hence could not cause suspicions on its own.

The word "lamp window" ("*Lampenfenster*," paragraph 6) is neither part of the German language nor of technical lingo nor does it make sense. It should be "*Lampenglass*" (lamp glass) or "*Lampenschirm*" (lampshade).

The word "*Syphonkrümmer*" (siphon elbow pipe) is a pleonasm, as a "*Siphon*" already refers to a U-shaped pipe, hence there is no need to add "*Krümmer*" to it (literally: bender, meaning a bent pipe).

These first remarks raise the question whether the author of these lines was a native German speaker and whether he was a technician. No less justified is the question: who writes to whom here? The first line of the letter seems to contain the abbreviation of the organization creating this memo: II D 3. The recipient is mentioned unequivocally and by name: the leader of group II D. According to Uwe Dietrich Adam (1985, p. 241), II D 3 refers to "the section automotive transports [...], subordinate to the section for technical matters." The signatory, Just, therefore signed a letter sent to one of his superiors, yet the tone of the memo does not confirm this assumption: Although the author starts out with a statement of accounts, he increasingly slips into the role of a man who is giving orders rather than receiving them.

No indications are given in the instruction that this memo was accompanied by enclosures (in this case the word "enclosure(s)" (*Anlage(n)*) or the respective abbreviation (*Anlg.*) had to be included in the document), yet as we will see during the study of its content, the questions dealt with would have required several drawings and schematic illustrations. The memo does not have the features of a general instruction – for this it goes too much into details: diameter of the siphon, position and size of the slits; nature of the flaps; extraction and retraction of the retractable grate, etc.

These preliminary observations are meant to alert the reader to the highest degree of vigilance during the subsequent study of the content of this document, which exhibits so many formal peculiarities.

2.2.4.2.2. Content

Let us first look at the very first words of this document: "For example 97,000 were processed since December 1941 with 3 deployed vehicles." During my analysis of the Becker letter (p. 51) I explained already the catastrophic conditions which the German army had to deal with in

Russia during the winter 1941/42. Hence, processing 97,000 units (or even several such amounts) under these conditions would not have been trivial at all, if considering that during the Russian winter the majority of the German equipment was inoperational due to the extreme cold, followed by a spring when catastrophic roads conditions did not permit any major German operation. Hence already the three words "Since December 1941" render this first sentence historically unlikely.

The objects of the memo at issue are technical questions; six modifications to existing vehicles as well as one for those to be manufactured in the future are suggested:

1. adding slits and flaps;
2. shortening the cargo box;
3. relocating the exhaust gas filler pipe upwards;
4. adding a drain in the floor and slanting the floor toward it;
5. removing observation window (in future vehicles);
6. better protected lamps;
7. adding a retractable grate.

Before discussing these suggested changes, let me first direct our attention back to the first sentence about the 97,000 processed units.

The second chapter of *Nazi Mass Murder* bearing the title "A Code Language" (Kogon *et al.* 1993, pp. 5-12) deals with the alleged code terms used by the "Nazis" in order to hide the "extermination." Doubtlessly in keeping with this, the author of this memo has not stated in his introductory sentence with the 97,000 figure, what kind of "units" are meant. Yet this measure of precaution was most naïve and futile, as it becomes subsequently all too clear that only human beings can be meant by those "processed." (Let's keep in mind here that this introductory paragraph serves the function of a statement of accounts and is as such directed to superiors.)

97,000 "units processed" within six month (180 days) in three vans means that each truck had processed (97,000 ÷ 3 ÷ 180) ≈ 180 units every single day, which amounts to three "loads" daily per truck of 60 victims each.[50] Considering this result, which must have been very satisfactory in the eyes of those responsible for this operation, one can only be surprised by the demand for so many and certainly important modifications to the vehicles which have accomplished these "achieve-

[50] The wartime Saurer heavy goods vehicle had a maximum load capacity of 5 metric tons, although the RSHA letter of 27 April 1942 mentions 4.5 metric tons (see Appendix 4, which amounts to 60 people of 75 kg each, or 75 people of 60 kg each).

ments" "without any defects […] becoming apparent."[51] If they operated as flawlessly and efficiently as the author claims in his first sentence, why change them? Remember: If it's not broken, don't fix it!

I will now scrutinize and comment on each of the demanded modifications.

1. Adding slits and flaps

The demand to have two slits of 10 cm × 1 cm added to the rear wall of the cargo box so that excess gas can escape means that at the time the memo was written no such slits existed and that the gas had no other way of escaping – or else the slits would have been superfluous. Hence the cargo boxes would have been sealed hermetically and the gas pressure would have built up inside until the doors were opened; many "witness testimonies" as well as the Becker document analyzed before confirm this explicitly. Nonetheless these boxes are said to have gassed almost 100,000 human beings. In my mind this is a radical impossibility.

Connecting an exhaust pipe to a closed cargo box would have resulted in an immediate and rapid increase in gas pressure, which would ineluctably have led to the cargo box buckling and eventually bursting (see Chapter 1.3.2.). That the cargo box could have resisted the resulting high internal pressure is extremely unlikely, but even if that had been the case, then the engine would have died as soon as the counter pressure had reached a certain level.

Considering these facts, how could it have been possible to gas even a single person under the described circumstances? The reference to an "explosion at Kulmhof" does not yield any answer either, for first of all it says that it was a single case, and second it is said to have been caused not by a flawed design but due to an operating error.

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[51] A flawless operation on such a grand scale indicates that the engines were operated normally, quite in contrast to claims made by Georges Wellers, who writes in Kogon *et al.* (pp. 281f.): "In the 'S-Wagen' and in the first gas chambers of the extermination camps, exhaust gases rich in carbon oxide produced by deliberately maladjusted engines were used." It is unlikely that such deliberately maladjusted engines would have functioned flawlessly for an extended period of time; such maladjusted engines tend to overheat, misfiring, and explosions of explosive fuel/air mixtures in the exhaust muffler. Such engines also have a greatly reduced power while consuming exorbitant amounts of fuel. It is, moreover, known that the flooding of the engine with excessive amounts of fuel leads to excessive wear of the engine, in particular in the case of Diesel engines due to particulate matter (Diesel smoke). Yet even under such conditions, executions with Diesel engine exhaust gases still last several hours; see Chapter 1.3.1. and Pattle *et al.* 1957.

If, however, openings are added to the cargo box, the situation changes instantly; the connecting hose can simply be attached to the exhaust pipe, and in this case the cargo box functions as a giant muffler, through which the exhaust gases flow.

The author of the memo specifies that the slits are to be equipped with flaps "in order to allow for self-regulation of any potential excess pressure." Unless this is simply a case of clumsy wording, we are dealing with an error in reasoning here. Of course it is the slits which prevent an overpressure, not the flaps; quite to the contrary, the latter create a minute overpressure already due to their weight and also because they cover a certain part of the slits, depending on the degree to which they are open. Considering that the amount of gas produced by the engine is considerable, these flaps would indeed have to be constantly in the open position during a hypothetical gassing operation to prevent excess pressures. So what were the flaps good for? The only technically plausible reason for adding such flaps is to prevent both the formation of excess pressure and a free exchange of air while *no* exhaust gases were piped into the cargo box. But why was that necessary, if the vans served no other purpose than gassing people? I will return to this point in Chapter 2.2.6. when discussing the likely real purpose of these RSHA special vehicles. Anyway, the uselessness of these flaps for a hypothetical gassing van seems to have slipped the author's attention.

I should add here that in a later, probably authentic RSHA document of 23 June 1942 reference is made to the fact that the first 20 Saurer trucks delivered to the RSHA had "openings covered with sliders" in their back doors, which means that the cargo boxes of the real Saurer trucks *never sealed hermetically*, although such sliders could have been a major obstacle for excess gases to escape, depending on their design. The RSHA document mentioned requested the *replacement* of these sliders with slits of the same kind as described in the Just document (see point 7 of this document on p. 329), whereas the Just document gives the impression that the slits were not as replacement item but rather a new feature.

2. Shortening the cargo box

The two paragraphs dedicated to this demand seem to be the result of an abstract intellectual construct.

– First the author of the memo states that the Saurer truck cannot be loaded with 9 to 10 per m^2, "because their off-road capability is highly reduced by this," "although no overloading occurs thereby."

1. Remark: If considering that the cargo boxes installed on the Saurer chassis had a surface area of (5.8 m × 2.3 m ≈)[21] 13.3 m², then a loading density of nine to ten persons per m² would have resulted in a load between 120 and 133 persons.

First of all, this amount is at the upper range of what witnesses have claimed about these vehicles, whereas the most frequent claim is about 50 to 60 persons (see Chapter 4.2.4).

Next, assuming an average weight of 60 kg per persons,[52] this density would also have resulted in a total load between seven and eight metric tons, which is two to three tons (40 to 60%) over the maximum load capacity of the Saurer trucks of five tons.[50] Hence the statement "although no overloading occurs thereby" is clearly false.

Finally I may suggest that it is psychologically impossible to pack people that dense under the claimed circumstances without having their disciplined cooperation. Beating them up and threatening them, as the perpetrators are said to have done according to numerous court verdicts, would more likely have led to panic rather than cooperation. In this context Marais cited a newspaper report, according to which the Japanese traveling in Tokyo's subways do not succeed in packing themselves more densely than just over seven people per m², although they all cooperate and try hard (*Le Monde*, 20/21 January 1985).

Hence the claim that nine to ten people per m² could be and usually were loaded into these trucks is simply bogus.

2. Remark: The off-road capability of a vehicle depends for the most part on its design and not on its load. It is primarily ensured by the existence of several driven axles – the front axle among them – a reduction gear unit, and possibly a limited slip differential. (As to the reason of driving the truck off-road: from several court verdicts it emerges that the trucks are said to have been driven to off-road mass graves or tank ditches where the victims were allegedly buried.)

– The author of the memo categorically states next: "A reduction of the load area appears to be necessary."

3. Remark: The way this sentence is phrased it implies that a reduction of the load area would compensate for the reduced off-road capa-

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52 Usually, an average weight of 75 kg is assumed for adults, but since the lower weight of children has to considered, I have reduced this average weight to 60 kg.

Illustration 2: A heavy goods Saurer Diesel truck, series C, as produced between the mid 1930s and the 1950s.[53]

bility, which is very odd. But when continuing to read, it becomes apparent that the decrease in size is demanded for a different reason.

– Next the author of the letter claims that the impeded off-road capabilities could not be remedied by "reducing the number of units."

4. Remark: Reducing the number of those locked up in the cargo box would indeed have solved the difficulty – if an excess load had been the reason to begin with. Yet such an approach is claimed unsuitable because…

– The author of the document claims to prove that a mere reduction of the number of people per load would increase the time needed for the killing, "since the empty spaces also must be filled with CO."

5. Remark: Assuming a ceiling height of some two meters for the gas vans of an unknown make (*e.g.* Rüter *et al*. 1968ff., vol. XXI, p. 230) – otherwise the victims couldn't have stood inside the cargo box – the volume available for each square meter of floor would have been 2 m³. In case of the Saurer trucks with their cargo box height of merely

53 http://de.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Datei:Saurer1038.jpg&filetimestamp=20041127172501.

1.7 m, it would have been 1.7 m³. Assuming further that 9.5 people with an average volume of 60 liters each (≈60 kg) could indeed be crammed onto one square meter, they would occupy some 0.57 m³, which amounts to 28.5% of the total volume (2 m ceiling height) and 33.5% (1.7 m ceiling height) respectively, hence some 71.5% and 66.5% had to be filled with gas even then. Even when reducing the density drastically to five persons per m² – a density more likely to be achievable with non-cooperative victims – then the percentage to be filled with gas would have risen only from 71.5% to 85% (2 m; +19%) and from 66.5% to 82% (1.7 m; +23%), respectively. Hence, even reducing the density of the victims drastically would have increased this free volume only marginally. Considering that flushing the entire cargo box once with exhaust gases would have taken only a few minutes (see Chapter 1.3.2.), an extension of this time by some 20% isn't exactly something any mass murderer would be worried about. This proves that the author's worries were misplaced at best.

– The author of the document continues his train of thought and claims that the shortening of the cargo box (that is, the gassing box) by one meter would allow "a substantially shorter operation time" due to the reduction of free space while keeping the load.

5. Remark: Reducing the Saurer cargo box length from 5.8 m by one meter reduces its length by about 17%, so the loading capacity goes down accordingly. If assuming a box width of 2.3 meters and a loading density of ten persons per square meter, then the load would go down by some 22 persons from 133 to 111. The corresponding calculations for free space would look similar as those above. Which way ever one looks at it, there is no reason to assume that such a change would lead to "a substantially shorter operation time." Apart: if the gassing device had been constructed properly and if the amount of gas flowing through was sufficient – which could have been the case only and exclusively if an opening existed – then the existence of free space had basically no influence on the speed with which suffocation occurs. It can therefore be ascertained that the "Saurer special vehicles," if maintaining their off-road capabilities had required it (which is not evident at all), could have been loaded with considerably less than nine to ten persons per square meter without noticeably increasing the required gassing time. Hence there was no apparent reason for the demanded shortening of the cargo box.

– As if he had second thoughts, the author of the memo points out that a shortening of the cargo box "would result in a disadvantageous weight displacement" and that "an overloading of the front axle occurs."

6. Remark: This is not true. Although the shortening of the rear part does indeed lead to a shift of the center of mass of the – presumably evenly distributed – load toward the front, this does not result in a higher load on the front axle, because the total weight has also been reduced (this is, after all, the initial hypothesis). Provided, of course, that the vehicle isn't overloaded in general, which would have been the case with a loading density of nine to ten persons per m^2, but that would have primarily affected the rear axle bearing the main load, not the front axle.

– The author of the document is nevertheless convinced that such an overloading would occur, but he discovers a palliative remedy: "the load striving towards the back door always predominantly lies there"!

7. Remark: Can one seriously believe that nine to ten persons crammed onto each square meter can compact themselves even more and thus shift their collective center of mass? And apart from that: How could the victims strive toward any location during a mobile gassing operation, that is, while the car rolled off-road, jostling the load back and forth, left and right? If there ever had been a danger of overloading an axle, it would have been during off-road transit. If this sentence proves anything, then the fact that nowhere near ten persons per square meter were ever crammed into that cargo box, as moving collectively in one direction and coming to lie predominantly at a certain part of the cargo box presupposes that it cannot have been cram-packed with people.

In brief: a slight shortening of the cargo box could not have caused an overloading of the front axle, and even if that had been the case, then this would most certainly not have been compensated by the victims striving toward the rear of the truck. It should also be noted that only a massive overloading can lead to premature wear or even to a broken axle, as the load-bearing capacities of axles is in general generously designed.

3. Relocating the exhaust gas filler pipe upwards

The author of the memo writes:

> *"The connecting hoses between the exhaust pipe and the vehicle frequently rust through, because they are corroded on the inside by accruing fluids."*

In Chapter 2.2.3.5. I have already discussed the improbability that exhaust hoses rust through within a few months. It would have taken years before such metal hoses had rusted through.

The subsequently stated request to change the exhaust gas entry opening implies that as of then the gas had been piped into the cargo box through just one opening in the cargo box floor.

Udo Walendy claims that by connecting the hoses conducting the gases to the floor of the cargo box, it had to be assumed right from the start that fluids would enter into it, be it during a gassing procedure or while cleaning the cargo box (Walendy 1979, p. 30). I don't agree with this, as any engineer would have rightly assumed that any liquid which might have seeped into the hose would have been driven out and/or dried by the hot exhaust gases, hence this issue of fluids would not have been considered to be a problem during a gassing. The hole could have been blocked by any other object, though, which might have been accidentally or intentionally dropped into the hole by a victim. Such a blocking of the pipe would have caused the motor to die right away, which would have ended the gassing operation right there. And if such a blocking of the pipe could occur accidentally, how could one have prevented the victims from deliberately blocking this inlet hole with an object? How can one gas 97,000 people under such circumstances?

I may also point out that the reference to the frequent corrosive destruction of the connecting hoses contradicts the initial claim of the letter that so far no "defects in the vehicles" have become "apparent."

4. Adding a drain in the floor and slanting the floor toward it

While adding a drainage opening in the middle of the floor does not pose any difficulties, it is not at all easy to design the floor in a way that it has an incline toward that opening in order "that all fluids flow toward the center immediately." Since the floor of utility vehicles is generally even, this requested change would either have required the construction of a special concave floor or a second floor of this shape covering the original floor. Both solutions would have required comprehensive efforts.

Regarding the subsequent sentence that such a floor would prevent "that fluids enter into the pipes" (this must refer to the pipes for the in-

troduction of gas), it seems the author of that letter has forgotten that in the previous paragraph he had requested to move that introduction pipe away from the floor, which, if realized, would have completely solved the problem of cleaning the cargo box – unless he assumed right away that his suggestion of moving the gas inlet had hardly any chance of being accepted. But if his superiors would not implement such a small change as moving the exhaust opening away from the floor, how could he seriously assume that they would go through the trouble of installing a concave floor?

5. and 6. Removing observation window and better protected lamps

Removing the observation window would indeed facilitate the production of the vehicles, even though their installation does not pose a technical problem, as Udo Walendy has pointed out.

Demanding a better protection of the lamps makes sense, although it is not conceivable why the victims should have had an interest in damaging the light, if they panicked "due to the eerie nature of darkness." If it was dark, how did they find the lamp in the first place? If the lamp was on, it wasn't dark, was it?

It is more likely that the victims would have tried to damage the observation window, which, if not made of bullet-proof glass, could have been destroyed with a mere stone that a victim could have grabbed just before entering the truck. Hence, a suggestion of *either* securing *or* removing the observation window completely should be expected here.

Although it is conceivable that the victims would have had the tendency to "strive toward the door" after the doors had been closed, the author's explanation is nonsense that this movement toward the door was due to "the load" striving "towards the light" when the ceiling lamp had been turned on. Since the doors were allegedly "hermetically sealed," no light could have entered from it. Apart, the only natural light entering the cargo box after the doors had been closed would have come through the observation window. Hence if they did indeed strive toward the light, the victims would have moved toward the window, particularly after the commencement of the gassing, and if only in an attempt to break the glass for the sake of getting fresh air. If they moved toward the door, then only because they *knew* it was a door and hoped to get out despite it being locked. Such a reaction would indeed be natural and could actually become so intense in situations where crowds fear their demise that they can break open even the most sturdy, locked doors

(while squeezing and trampling to death some unlucky fellows, for sure).

7. Adding a retractable grate

Such a device is seemingly easy to design, but its installation and operation would have caused great difficulties, because this grate needed to be able to carry a heavy load, which would have caused leverage forces when pulling out the grate.

In summary, this document makes a similar impression as the previous one: Its technical improbabilities are no less frequent than those of the former document. Especially the first requested change requires by its nature that the vehicles could not have functioned in their original design; this leads us to radically doubt the authenticity of this letter. As we shall see later, Ingrid Weckert shares out point of view. I will next summarize some of her observations.

2.2.4.3. Ingrid Weckert on the Just Document

Ingrid Weckert's original German analysis of this document (1985, pp. 23-28) was published in a somewhat revised version in English (2019). Instead of quoting it in length, I will only give the highlights of her analysis here and refer the reader to her full text for a more thorough reading.

The contents of the German Federal Archives file R 58/871, which reflect a coherent sequence of events, are as follows:

April 1942: The RSHA considers equipping its special vehicles with a device to accelerate their unloading.

23 and 24 April 1942: Representatives of the RSHA and the Gaubschat Company meet to discuss three possible solutions, of which only the third, the manufacture of a retractable grate, is taken into consideration.

27 April 1942: The RSHA has a note prepared with a precise suggestion for the construction of a retractable grate.

(30 April 1942: In a letter to the Gaubschat Company the RSHA requests the agreed-upon design changes according to the above-mentioned note. This document is not part of the file, but is mentioned in the next document, the response of the Gaubschat Company.)

14 May 1942: In a letter to the RSHA the Gaubschat Company declares that is cannot implement the changes requested in the RSHA letter of 30 April 1942 due to lack of personnel.

23 June 1942: Internal writing by Pradel. As its first point it discusses the impossibility to have the outstanding vans produced by a Czech company, since secrecy could not be guaranteed. Point two of the memo is a draft for a letter by the RSHA to the Gaubschat Company, in which, with reference to a meeting between RSHA officials and Gaubschat employees of 16 June 1942, the originally requested major changes of the vehicle design are abandoned in exchange for seven minor modifications.

18 September 1942: The Gaubschat Company informs the RSHA in its response that the requested design changes will be implemented, but initially only for one vehicle.

24 September 1942: The Gaubschat Company informs the RSHA that it will manufacture the remaining nine vans.

All these documents bear the same file reference number of the RSHA: "II D 3 a (9) Nr. 668/42." Hence these documents were not classified. These documents are reproduced in Appendix 4 with translations and comments, where due.

There are two more documents in this file R 58/871, which have no connection to these documents:

– Letter of the RSHA of 26 March 1942 to the Institute for Police Technology (*Institut für Kriminaltechnik*) regarding a special van for the Mauthausen Camp.
– Note of the RSHA of 5 June 1942 (the Just document).

The first one in the list was probably accidentally filed in that folder by mistake (or with malicious intent), whereas the last one is the Just document, which bears a different reference number: "II D 3 a (9) Nr. 214/42 g. Rs.," where "g. Rs." indicates that the document is classified as "secret state matter."

The unsuspicious documents of file R 58/871 form a logical sequence of correspondence between the RSHA and Gaubschat regarding requested modifications to certain special vehicles, whose purpose is the transport of some goods, without specifying the type of goods. Nothing in them indicates that they deal with anything criminal. These documents all have the same reference number, are not marked as secret, have each sheet numbered (not the pages), and follow one another chronologically. They deal with changes to be made exclusively to fu-

Table 1: Comparison of the Documents in File R 58/871

FEATURE	CORRESPONDENCE	JUST LETTER
Sender	given*	not given
Reference	II D 3 a (9) Nr. 668/42-121	II D 3 a (9) Nr. 214/42 g.Rs.
Topic	changes to new vehicles	changes to old and new vehicles
Term	*Sonderfahrzeuge*	*Spezialwagen*
Secrecy	none	top secret
Pagination	per sheet	per page

* "Reichssicherheitshauptamt" on 27 April, "Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD" on the others.

ture, that is, newly constructed "*Sonderfahrzeuge*," the common German term for special vehicles.

From the contents of these letters, it can be derived with certainty that those vans could *not* have been used for transporting living human beings.

First of all, the height of the vans after their suggested conversion would only have been 162.5 cm at most (5'4"),[54] which is inadequate for transporting standing people. Next, it is stated that a minimum free clearance between a potentially tippable floor and the ceiling would have to have been a mere meter (3'4"), because otherwise the load would be crushed. Hence this load, whatever it was, could not have been people, some if not most of whom must have been expected to stand upright even after their presumed death, if the van had been cram-packed with people.

One suggested change requested that an "angled gridwork" of 30 to 40 cm (approximately 12" to 16") in height was to be added to the end of a prospective floor grate in order "that the load does not fall over the last grate towards the back of the driver's cabin." Living, standing people, however, could never be prevented from falling over such a low trellis.

Weckert therefore concludes that the special vehicles discussed in those letters cannot be the same as those discussed in the Just document.

In contrast to this stands the Just document, which has a different reference number, hence does evidently *not* belong to this line of correspondence. It is also the only one with all its pages numbered and rubber-stamped as "Top Secret." Plus, it talks about changes to future *and* old "*Spezialwagen*" (special wagons), a term never used in the other

54 It might even have been lower, see my consideration on p. 88.

documents. A summary of the discrepancies between this document and the others can be gleaned from Table 1.

2.2.4.4. The Just Document and the Letter of 23 June 1942

In and of itself, the Just document contains, as we have seen, numerous anomalies, which raise doubts about its authenticity. When comparing it with the letter of 23 June 1942, one of the other documents in the file R 58/871, the authenticity of which cannot be doubted due to its internal logic and chronological consistency, Ingrid Weckert was able to show that the Just document is actually a rewritten plagiarism of the RSHA letter of 23 June 1942.

While both documents have seven points, the RSHA letter's content is always innocuous, whereas the Just letter gears them toward homicide (see Weckert's tabular juxtaposition in 2019, pp. 225, reproduced here in on pp. 334f.). Since there is no direct relation between the seven points made in both letters, this alone may not be a strong argument to claim a forgery. The most obvious proof for a forgery, however, is the fact that the Just letter, dated June 5, is actually referring in its point 2 to a consultation between the RSHA and Gaubschat, which the letter of 23 June 1942 shows to have taken place only 11 days later: on 16 June 1942!

It is difficult to imagine that such anomalies are a pure coincidence and that the pre-dating was *not* a deliberate act.

2.2.4.5. Comparison of the Three Versions of the Just Document

Table 2: Differences between three version of the Just letter

Page	German Federal Archives	*NS-Massentötungen…*	*NS-Prozesse*
1	no underlinings	date line underlined; three lines from "*Seit*" to "*auftreten*" underlined	no underlinings
3	no underlinings	three lines from "*Es wurde*" to "*starkes*" are underlined	no underlinings
4	no underlinings	line from "*Drängen*" to "*erfolgte*" is underlined	no underlinings
5	no underlinings	the line "*SS-Obersturmbannführer Rauff*" is underlined	no underlinings
5	right margin marking with word "*ja*" (yes) plus initial with date present: "$R_{10/6}$"	no marking, no word, no initial or date	no marking, no word, no initial or date

Interestingly enough, although the Just document claims to be the "onliest" copy, it actually exists in at least three different "onliest original"

forms. Two of them are easily accessible, as they have been reproduced in widely available books, whereas the third is a photocopy of DIN A4 size (21 cm × 29.7 cm) in the file R 58/871 of the German Federal Archives. The differences between those three versions are summarized here and are also given in more detail in Table 2:[55]

– The first "original" is in the German Federal Archives. We take it as the standard here.
– The second "original" was used by Kogon *et al.* (1983, pp. 333-337). Here several text underlining have been added, plus on the last page vertical marks at the edge, the word "*ja*" (yes) next to them, as well as an initial and date claimed to stem from Rauff ("$R_{10/6}$") are missing.
– A third "original" was published by Rückerl.[56] It is almost identical with the copy in the German Federal Archives, except that here, too, the vertical marks, the "*ja*" and the initial with date are missing on the last page.

Weckert also pointed out that the initial on the last page of the version in the German Federal Archives, which is claimed to be Rauff's, is very similar to that on 501-PS, but decisively different to Rauff's signature and initial on other documents. Be that as it may, since anyone could have made this initial, it doesn't prove much.

These differences do not pertain to the machine-written text, which seems to be identical in all three versions. One may therefore assume that they all derived from the same document.

Since the Just letter exists in three versions, even though it claims to be the "onliest" copy, it must be assumed that the "original" was changed by later additions and/or deletions. How did the original look? Was it the version reproduced in *NS-Prozesse*, which shows the least changes? Or the one in the German Federal Archives, which bears an initial and a date – which is interpreted to stand for the recipient (Rauff) and the date of reception (June 10)? Or the one reproduced in *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen…*, which contains numerous underlinings?

Logic makes us assume that the original ought to be in the Federal Archives, if the document is authentic. In that case the authors of both

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55 For the archival version see Appendix 4 (p. 324). For the two version published in books see Appendix 5, starting on p. 340.

56 Rückerl 1971, pp. 209-213; it ought to be pointed out that Rückerl is also among the editors of the book *Nazi Mass Murder* (1993).

books mentioned have reproduced this version, but purged the margin lines and the initial plus date at the end. While the word "*ja*" could simply have been clipped off during reproduction for the book, the lines at the margin and the initial with date run into the text area and thus had to be blotted out manually (in 1971 there was no Photoshop around yet). But why would they have deleted Rauff's(?) initial and the date on the last page, if they support their thesis, as Ingrid Weckert rightly pointed out? And even though it is conceivable that some investigator or prosecutor using a copy of this document has underlined the most incriminating sentences of this document – for this is what is underlined in the Kogon version – why would he also have underlined the date line on page one and Rauff's name and rank on the last page?

It is impossible to come to coherent conclusions from these conjectures, so the questions posed here remain unanswered.

2.2.5. Comparison of the Becker and Just Document

Although both the Becker document of 16 May 1942 and the Just document of 5 June 1942 appertain to the same kind of vehicles, which are claimed to have been prototypes deployed around the same time, there are considerable differences in both documents. In fact, what they state

Table 3: Juxtaposition of the Becker and the Just documents

BECKER DOCUMENT	JUST DOCUMENT
Reference to numerous flaws. No reference to openings for gas release.	Reports 97,000 executions, "without any defects in the vehicles becoming apparent."
In spite of the numerous flaws no changes to the vehicles are requested.	Although no defects had occurred, seven changes are requested (internal contradiction).
Reference to difficulties of moving the vans: during moist and rainy weather the vans are inoperable.	Reference to a highly reduced off-road capability while fully loaded, resulting in the need to reduce the load.
Emphasizes the importance of keeping the cargo box hermetically sealed; it is even considered to send the vans to Berlin for this purpose.	The first of the requested changes concerns two slits of 1 cm × 10 cm to avoid high internal pressure.
The vans were camouflaged without attaining a permanent deception about their purpose.	No attempts at camouflage were implemented.
Thoroughly addresses the danger of the operating personnel inhaling the gases – although the cargo box is hermetically sealed.	No reference to such a danger.
The author wants to ascertain that the victims do not die of suffocation but die a humane death through falling asleep.	No efforts are made to induce a painless death of the victims.

about the alleged gas vans is at times outright contradictory, giving the impression that both authors were *not* writing about the same objects. A summary of the main discrepancies is given in Table 3. They clearly show that only one of these documents can be genuine, if any.

Regarding the layout one difference is conspicuous: While the Just document was made in flawless machine writing and contains no typos or corrections (see Appendix 4), the version B of the Becker document (single-spaced) is riddled with all sorts of typos and handwritten corrections (see Appendix 2); versions A, C, and D (double-spaced) seems to have been written with more care, but as far as can be judged from the extant reproductions – photographs – this version still does not reach the meticulousness with which the Just document was produced.

In summary: The Becker documents, versions A, C, and D, give a better impression of authenticity than the three versions of the Just document, which are based on one single machine-written, impeccable text that had obviously been tailored after the war to achieve a certain goal. It goes without saying that this does not imply that the authenticity of the various versions of the Becker document is historically beyond reproach!

2.2.6. The Real Purpose of the RSHA Special Vehicles

The information contained in the file R 58/871 about the cargo boxes of the RSHA special vehicles do not reveal anything about the nature of the intended load. All one can ascertain is that the material wasn't particularly fragile, since the unloading was to occur "fast" and "automatically"; for this reason, it was considered making "the entire cargo box or a second floor tiltable."

Here is Pierre Marais's hypothesis about the nature of the intended load:

The RSHA special vehicles with the described cargo box allowing a fast automatic unloading were meant for the transportation of corpses.

The following points support Marais's hypothesis:

1. The organization responsible for the conversion of these vans was responsible for security and police issues, which indicates that third persons were meant to remain unaware of the load. The load could have been corpses – of executions, "natural" deaths, or war casualties – which had to be transported *en masse* to crematoria, open air incineration places, or mass graves.

2. The load was obviously not (or no longer) fragile or delicate.
3. The weight of the load, 4,500 kg, corresponds to some 60 to 75 corpses, which would have amounted to an average of six corpses per square meter, which sounds plausible.
4. The requested hygienic measures:
   a. In order to permit a thorough and effortless cleaning, the inside of the van had to be covered with smooth sheet metal. The protruding parts of the back wall had to be beveled with sheet iron. A large opening had to be included in the cargo box's floor.
   b. In order to limit foul smells from exiting the van, the cargo box was to be sealed, though obviously neither airtight nor pressure-resistant. Openings in the upper part of the side walls served to allow any excess pressure building up inside to escape while preventing a free exchange of air.

   In addition to Marais's supportive points, I may add my own:
5. The technician at the Gaubschat Company who supervised the design and construction of the cargo boxes ordered by the RSHA, a certain M. Bauer, testified in 1961 that the RSHA employees Pradel and Wentritt had told him during a visit that they would need the vehicles in order to transport corpses caused by typhus.[57] Since Bauer had to know what the load would be for which he had to build a cargo box, it surely didn't matter what the cause for the victims' death was. Hence I consider it likely that Pradel and Wentritt told Bauer the truth about the cargo, but not necessarily about the reason for their existence.
6. In the original version of his Nuremberg testimony, Otto Ohlendorf consistently used the term "*Totenwagen*" = corpse vehicle (or wagon for the dead). The "*Toten*" was later struck out and replaced by "*Gas*" (IMT, Vol. 31, p. 41; see Chapter 3.5.3.). It may be assumed that he did this either due to habit, as he used to call these vehicles that way, or in order to somehow slip a message into his affidavit for future readers.
7. No matter what the corpses' origin was, the German authorities must have had an interest in reducing the number of witnesses to a minimum, as witnesses during wartime tend to spread all kinds of founded and unfounded rumors. A speedy unloading mechanism reducing the need for manual labor served that purpose.

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[57] Testimony of M. Bauer, Gaubschat engineer, 21 March 1961, prosecution Hannover, ref. 2 Js 299/60; quoted acc. to Beer 1987, p. 410.

These considerations are valid independent of the type of speedy unloading mechanism requested and eventually realized.

The main objection against this hypothesis could be that the height of the angled gridwork of 30 to 40 cm is insufficient in order to ensure "that the load does not fall over the last grate towards the back of the driver's cabin." Although it is true that six corpses deposited per square meter would form a higher pile, this is only the average density of the load. The load usually is higher in the middle as well as particularly at the rear of the cargo box – which would also have been conducive to a speedy unloading – so that one may assume that only up to two corpses would have been lying on top of each other at the front end of the cargo box. In that case the gridwork would have served its main purpose – quite independent of the unloading mechanism eventually chosen – as well as its auxiliary purpose in case of an unloading with an extractable grid: facilitating the extraction of the load.

The low height of the gridwork designed to prevent that the load doesn't fall between the end of the floor grid and the cargo box's front wall isn't just an objection to my hypothesis. It is an even more grave argument against the orthodox hypothesis according to which these RSHA special vehicles are identical with the infamous "gas vans" used to kill numerous living, that is to say: *standing* people crammed together in the cargo box with exhaust gases. It is obvious that, after the gassing operation, many of the tightly stacked corpses at the front part of the cargo box would have fallen over this small gridwork during unloading, thus preventing them from being automatically removed, no matter what the unloading mechanism would have been. To prevent standing people from toppling over a fence-like structure requires a height *at least* three times higher than requested (one meter and more).

Another argument against the "gas van" hypothesis is the low height of the cargo box of only 1.70 m (memo of 27 April 1942). After installation of the retractable floor grid this height was reduced by 7.5 cm to a mere 162.5 cm (*ibid.* as well as order of 30 April 1942). Another even more drastic reduction of the free height occurred due to the new requested version with the floor grid rolling on U-shape rails (letter of 23 June, #3), which could only be done by lifting the floor grid even higher (see Marais's drawing on p. 317).

Since the floor grid had to be installed on top of the wheel housings – which usually protrude much higher than just 7.5 cm from a cargo box floor – and since the lateral U-shaped guide rail would have rested

on the mentioned extension of the wheel housings, much more than the claimed 7.5 cm would have been lost. As a matter of fact, the floor grid itself would already have had a height of some 5 cm, if it was to bear the weight of up to ten panicking people per square meter. I assume therefore that the height was reduced by at least 30 to 50 cm, which would have reduced the available height above the grid to some 1.20 to 1.40 m. Quite apart from the reduction of the maximum loading capacity affected by this, it goes without saying that no grown-up individual would have been able to stand upright in that cargo box: The "passengers" would have had to bend over or even crawl into the van.

Another argument against the gas-van hypothesis is the vehicle model chosen. During the war, the German Wehrmacht obtained almost 100,000 medium-size trucks (3 tons) of the type Opel Blitz, which had a 3,600 cm³ gasoline engine.[58] Equipped with an appropriate cargo box, this vehicle could have served as a "gas van." Yet the RSHA instead decided to buy Saurer heavy goods trucks, which had Diesel engines and were therefore only capable of slowly torturing the intended victims to death. Considering that the RSHA even wanted the cargo box to be shortened (see letter of 23 June 1942 in Appendix 4, pp. 329ff.), why then buy a long unsuited truck to begin with, when shorter, suitable trucks are to be had at every street corner and probably for much lower prices? It must therefore be assumed that the purpose of these vehicles was not to kill with exhaust gases.

2.2.7. The Turner Letter, 11 April 1942

This letter claims to have been written on 11 April 1942 by SS-*Gruppenführer* (Major General) Dr. Harald Turner, who at that time was the head of the German military administration in Serbia. It was directed to General Karl Wolff, who was chief of Himmler's personal staff. During his own trial in 1964 in Munich, Wolff insisted that he had no knowledge of what was happening to the Jews – as Himmler's adjutant (Giese 1964). It is not known whether Wolff ever received this letter.

Harald Turner had a PhD in law, hence could be considered well-educated. In spite of this, his letter is riddled with spelling errors, butchered German language, and nonsensical content, which I will discuss subsequently. The author of the letter tried to emulate the rune-

[58] See www.cokebottle-design.de/dokuwiki/doku.php?id=typenspezifisches:opel_blitz_3_to_3_6-36.

shaped SS type, which was included on official typewriters of the era, by superimposing a set of double slashes on a dash and adding another double slash a three-quarter line lower: ⸗ (although I don't know how this could be accomplished with such accuracy for all 4 cases, as a subscript-like half-line lift wouldn't have been enough).

As the head of Serbia's wartime military administration, Turner or his secretary must have had access to a proper typewriter sporting the runic SS key. But even if he had no such typewriter, using a simple SS in replacement was common and acceptable. I have never seen such a forced SS rune on an official letter of that era before, and neither has anyone else I've asked. It is also awkward that Turner's personal letterhead, on which this letter gives the impression to have been typed, did not contain his SS rank, so that the writer added it using his inventive ⸗ improvisation. David Irving has remarked that the original of this letter, which is kept in the Berlin Document Center biographical file on Turner, does not have the German standard paper format (DIN A4, 210 mm × 297 mm) but instead U.S. letter format, a paper size which during the war was not available in Europe.[59]

A reproduction of the document (taken from Friedlander/Milton 1992, part 2, pp. 284-286) and its English translation can be found in Appendix 6.

2.2.7.1. Problematic Content

– The first four paragraphs describe an event with many words without even once stating what this is all about. What makes the author think that the recipient knew what he was writing about? As far as I could verify, there is no historical event – some decision in favor of Turner and against some ominous "Wehrmacht" interests – which would warrant such sentences. As a matter of fact, there had only been a decision *against* Turner, whose attempt to gain Serbian support for his occupational policies led to deteriorating relations between him and his SS men, not the Wehrmacht. As a result of SS claims that Turner was too soft on the Serbs, the anti-Serbian hardliner August Meyzner was appointed as head of the local SS units in early 1942, which seriously undermined Turner's position (Browning 1995, pp. 134-136; Manoschek 1995, p. 170).

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59 http://www.fpp.co.uk/Legal/Penguin/Reply/3.html and personal correspondence.

– The letter insinuates that this ominous foiled Wehrmacht intrigue was directed not only against Himmler (whose title was *Reichsführer SS*, not *SS-Führer*) and the SS, but also the "corps of civil servants" (*Beamtenschaft*), which means all of Germany's civil servants. Such a Wehrmacht intrigue potentially affecting millions of German civil servants sounds far-fetched to the point of being outrageous, and I could not find anything in the literature confirming this.
– The attachment mentioned in the letter is unknown. The letter insinuates that it might have dealt with some pressing issues about Jews in Serbia. At any rate, the writer takes this attached letter as a reason to jump right into the middle of a completely different topic.
– After having dealt with the clearing out of "the camp" (this refers to the Semlin Camp near Belgrade), the author suddenly changes tack, as he is now worried about the attitude of "Jewish officers" held as PoW, if they find out about that clearing. The author speaks again of "the camp" in singular, although there were many PoW camps in Germany and the German occupied territories. It is also inconceivable why those (relatively few) Jewish officers could have "easily" caused "complications." And even if so, who would have cared, since Jews are said to have been expendable anyhow?
– "repercussions on our prisoners in Canada": even though some German soldiers were held in Canadian PoW camps, the vast majority of German PoW camps in early 1942 were located in Britain and the U.S. In addition, if the Germans had to worry about any of their PoW in Allied hands, it would have been primarily about those in Soviet hands. The Canadians were the smallest players in that game. It is therefore beyond comprehension why Turner should have mentioned them. Unless, of course, the author of this letter was Canadian.

2.2.7.2. Problematic Language

– "*möchte ich nicht verfehlen*" – probably literal translation from English "I don't want to fail"; correct German would be: "*möchte ich nicht versäumen*."
– "*meinen* […] *Dank* […] *zu übermitteln*" – correct German: "*meinen Dank auszusprechen*"; "*übermitteln*" means to convey thanks from a third person.

– "I can also again today, the more so since you know me well enough, only once more repeat" – a very circuitous way of saying nothing.
– "*Ich möchte nicht erinnern*" – English "I don't want to remind"; incomplete phrase; correct German: "*Ich möchte ihn nicht daran erinnern*" or "*Ich möchte dies nicht anmahnen*." The sentence basically makes the same statement twice: "I don't want to remind, because […] I don't feel entitled to remind."
– "*was allerdings weitergeführt worden ist*" – English: "which, however, was continued." The "*allerdings*" (however) indicates a contradiction, but there is none here.
– "*Dann ist der Augenblick gekommen, in dem die* […] *jüdischen Offiziere* […] *hinter die nicht mehr vorhandenen Angehörigen kommen*" – English: "Then the moment has come in which the Jewish officers […] get behind the no longer existing relatives"; the German expression "*dahinter kommen*" (to find out about, to get to the bottom of) cannot be used with a mere "*hinter;*" in addition the entire sentence structure is wrong; correct is: "*Dann ist der Augenblick gekommen, in dem die* […] *jüdischen Offiziere* […] *dahinterkommen, daß die Angehörigen nicht mehr vorhanden sind*." In the way used here this expression has a spatial meaning: to get behind something or somebody.
– "*das dürfte immerhin leicht zu Komplikationen führen*" – English: "that could after all easily lead to complications"; the "after all" here makes neither sense in German nor in English.
– "*Werden nun die Betreffenden entlassen* […] *nicht allzu lange*" – English: "When those affected [Jewish officers] are being released, they would in the moment of arrival have their final freedom, but like their racial comrades not for very long": What is "in the moment of arrival" supposed to mean? The arrival moment of their freedom? If so, then this translates to: when freed, they are free at the moment when they are free, but not for long…

Considering the bad usage of the German language, the question arises whether this was Turner's normal style. Friedlander/Milton have reproduced two more of Turner's letters.[60] Both letters exhibit a perfectly normal usage of the German language. Although Turner had at times

[60] 1992, part 1, pp. 356-362 (NO-5810); vol. 11/2, pp. 282f. (NO-3404); for references to numerous other Turner documents similar in style see Browning 2004, pp. 521f., notes 106, 117f., 132; Browning 1986.

the tendency to write complex phrases, they are grammatically correct, consistent, and make sense, quite in contrast to the letter at issue here.

2.2.7.3. Spelling and Punctuation

Most German words requiring an "ß" are misspelled with an "ss" (wrong: *dass*, *weiss*, *erschiessen*, *Grüssen*), although a few are spelled properly. Commas are set erratically, and spaces between words and periods, commas, hyphens and quotation marks are inconsistent. "Canada" is spelled the English way, not as the German "Kanada."

The other two letters mentioned above do not show these erratic patterns. The first one (to Richard Hildebrandt from 17 October 1941) was apparently typed on a machine not possessing any "ß," whereas the second one (a duplicate of a letter to Himmler from 1 March 1942, typed by a secretary), consistently uses a double s instead of an "ß" for the word "daß" ("that" as conjunction) but otherwise uses the "ß" correctly. It also uses a proper rune-SS, which proves that such a machine was at Turner's disposal at that time.

2.2.7.4. Assessment

Orthodox historians consider this document as a vital link to "reveal" that the term "delousing" was in fact used as a "code word" for homicidal gassings.[61] It is based on the following sentence:

> *"Already some months ago, I shot dead all the Jews I could get my hands on in this country, concentrated all the Jewish women and children in a camp and at once with the help of the SD acquired a 'delousing van,' which will have accomplished the definitive clearance of the camp in about 14 days to 4 weeks, which, however, was continued by Meyssner since his arrival and the turning over of these camp issues to him."*

By "Jews" obviously only Jewish males are meant. In the fall of 1941, there has been quite some back and forth between various German officials regarding the fate of the Jewish prisoners held in the Semlin Camp. Whereas it was decided to shoot the males as hostages in the escalating partisan warfare, German foreign minister Ribbentrop determined in a telegram on 2 October 1941 with respect to women, children and the elderly:[62]

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61 See www.holocaust-history.org/19420411-turner-wolff/.

62 NG-3354, reproduced in Kempner 1961, p. 293.

> *"As soon as the technical means exist for the complete solution of the Jewish question, the Jews will be deported on the waterway* [i.e., the Danube] *to the reception camps in the east."*

Orthodox historians see this as a mere ruse, though:

> *"*[…] *the Nazis employed elaborate deception: not only were the victims told that they were being transferred to a different and better transit camp, but they were given fictitious 'camp regulations' which they supposedly needed to get acquainted with prior to arrival at their destination."* (Byford 2010, p. 19; based on Browning 1985, p. 80; cf. also Browning 1983, pp. 75f.)

However, so far no document is known which would have changed this decision to deport the Jews. Unless such a document is found, we must therefore assume that "clearance" of the camp was *not* equivalent with mass murder but rather with deportation. After the Wannsee Conference on 20 January 1942 had established the bureaucratic means to implement this "complete solution," the road was prepared to deport these Jews.

In this context it is interesting to note that Browning reports about Turner's intervention with Felix Benzler, at that time Plenipotentiary for Foreign Affairs in Belgrade, in order to prevent the execution of the last 1,500 male Jews as hostages by trying to have them deported instead (Browning 1978, p. 61; 2004, p. 343).

Hence, in real life Turner was relatively "soft" on the Serbs in general and on the Serbian Jews in particular and had no interest in having them executed. The letter analyzed here, however, gives the opposite impression.

None of the problematic issues raised above are ever even mentioned, let alone addressed, by orthodox historians.

Could the well-educated Dr. Turner have written such an imbecilic letter on U.S. stationery with its phantasmagorical content while at once toying around with his typewriter – or have his secretary do so – in order to compose some artistic rendering of the SS rune?

2.2.8. Activity Report by *Einsatzgruppe* B

An "Activity and situation report of *Einsatzgruppe* B" of 1 March 1942, covering the time from 16 to 28 February 1942[63] (cf. Gerlach 1997, p.

[63] Der Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR, ZUV 9, vol. 31, p. 159.

68), mentions in passing that this group had received two large "gas vans" (*Gaswagen*) while having already two small ones. According to Gerlach, this document was discovered in the 1990s among the papers of the *Staatssicherheit*, which was Communist East Germany's secret service until 1990. Needless to say, this isn't exactly a trustworthy source.

I have reproduced pages 7 and 8 of this report in Appendix 7. The relevant passages read as follows:

> *"The following gas vans which arrived in Smolensk on 23 February 42 have been distributed as follows:*
> *EK 8:¶truck Saurer Pol 71 462*
> *EK 9:¶truck Saurer Pol 71457¶ Both vehicles arrived with defects in Smolensk and were allocated to the Einsatzkommandos after the defects had been repaired. After the conclusion of the operation at the EK 8, the two smaller gas vans will be transferred to SK 7a and to SK 7b.*
> *After deducting the lost vehicles, the current inventory is as follows:¶*[…]
> *Staff:* […]*¶19 cars 4 trucks 3 special vehicles* […]
> *EK 8:¶35 cars 3 trucks 1 ambulance 1 gas van*
> *EK 9:¶36 cars (of which one radio site) 5 trucks 1 gas van* […]
> *In addition it is necessary during the advance to staff all heavy vehicles – like repair truck, bus, gas van and tank truck – with two drivers."*

As far as I know, this is a unique occurrence of the term "*Gaswagen*" in a German wartime document. Here the reader needs to keep in mind that there exist literally thousands of documents by the *Einsatzgruppen* listing in cruel detail, among other things, when they executed whom and why. But gassings are not mentioned once, and gas vans only occur in this one document from the archives of a communist secret service infamous for their lies and forgeries.

The vehicles in question are specified in this document as Saurer trucks; hence they were equipped with Diesel engines, which are unsuitable for homicidal purposes. Furthermore, they were apparently not considered to be "special vehicles," the term used for homicidal "gas vans" in the telegrams of 501-PS and the Just document, because "3 special vehicles" are listed separately for the staff's motor pool. It seems likely that these trucks were part of the set equipped with the Gaubschat cargo boxes, which moreover, as we have seen, were not

suited for transporting standing people, among other things due to their limited height (see Chapter 2.2.6.).

It is possible that these trucks were equipped with wood gas generators. However, in this case the term "gas van" is unlikely to refer to them potentially having such a gas generator, as the report appears to list the vehicles not by fuel source but rather by general vehicle type. If the Saurer trucks had been normal trucks merely using wood gas as their fuel, I would expect them to be listed among the normal trucks.[64]

It is odd, though, that the "two smaller gas vans" mentioned in this document as currently belonging to EK 8 but to be reassigned later to SK 7a/b are not included *as such* in any of the lists of vehicles assigned to the various groups. It may therefore be inferred that they are part of EK 8's three trucks, but if that is so, this means that these "gas vans" were listed as normal trucks after all, not as "special vehicles."

Hence it is possible, but not imperative, that these vehicles were somehow special. Not having been suitable for homicidal purposes with their inferred design, there seem to be three options left: a) these vans were equipped with wood gas generators; b) they were disinfestation vans; c) the document's authenticity is questionable.

A fourth option would be that these vehicles were homicidal vans after all, but must have used some other setup than attested to by witnesses and the Gaubschat correspondence.

In this context it should be noted that, during a 1966 West-German trial, the Germans deployed at *Einsatzkommando* 8 claimed to have no knowledge at all about homicidal gas vans in their former unit (see Chapter 3.7.4.4.), which is in stark contrast to most other such trials, where at least some of the German defendants and witnesses frequently confessed to their existence and use. Interestingly, in later West-German trials the gas vans of *Einsatzkommando* 8, which in 1966 had been unknown to the Germans alleged to have used them, became more and more established "facts," with the memories of those involved slowly "refreshing" (see Chapters 3.7.4.9. and 3.7.4.11.). The more those Germans were interrogated and had to testify or stand trial, the more their "knowledge" seems to have grown.

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64 Although a separation by fuel type may occur in documents. For instance, the activity reports of the Auschwitz motor pool sorted the collective kilometers driven by its vehicles by the type of fuel used: Diesel & gasoline, wood gas, and "propellant gas" (*Treibgas*), probably referring to natural gas: Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv (Russian national war archives), Moscow, ref. 502-1-181, p. 246; see Appendix 7.

2.2.9. Remarks about Document NO-365

I haven't dealt with the Nuremberg document NO-365 yet, which is occasionally mentioned in connection with gas vans. This document is said to have been compiled by Dr. Erhard Wetzel of the German Imperial Office for the Occupied Eastern Territories. It is dated 25 October 1941 and directed to the Reich Commissar for the Eastern Territories, Heinrich Lohse in Riga. The letter mentions the names [Adolf] Eichmann, [Viktor] Brack, and [Helmut] Kallmeyer. Although gas vans are not mentioned in it, it refers to "gassing apparatus" (*Vergasungsapparate*) without giving any details. On occasion it is claimed that an illegible signature can be found at the end of this letter, but this is incorrect, as this letter (or this draft) isn't signed at all, hence it is unlikely that it was ever sent. The allegedly incriminating passage reads as follows (NMT, Vol. 1, p. 870):

> *"Referring to my letter of 10/18/1941, you are informed that Oberdienstleiter Brack of the Chancellery of the Fuehrer has declared himself ready to collaborate in the manufacture of the necessary shelters, as well as the gassing apparatus. At the present time the apparatus in question are not on hand in the Reich in sufficient number; they will first have to be manufactured. Since in Brack's opinion the manufacture of the apparatus in the Reich will cause more difficulty than if manufactured on the spot, Brack deems it most expedient to send his people directly to Riga, especially his chemist Dr. Kallmeyer, who will have everything further done there. Oberdienstleiter Brack points out that the process in question is not without danger, so that special protective measures are necessary. Under these circumstances I beg you to turn to Oberdienstleiter Brack, in the Chancellery of the Fuehrer, through your Higher SS and Police Leader and to request the dispatch of the chemist Dr. Kallmeyer as well as of further aides. I draw attention to the fact that Sturmbannfuehrer Eichmann, the referent for Jewish questions in the RSHA, is in agreement with this process. On information from Sturmbannfuehrer Eichmann, camps for Jews to be set up in Riga and Minsk to which Jews from the old Reich territory may possibly be sent. At the present time, Jews being deported from the old Reich are to be sent to Litzmannstadt* [Łódź], *but also to other camps, to be later used as labor in the East so far as they are able to work."*

Hence, the author simultaneously talks about the erection of shelters for Jews and of the installation "gassing apparatus." These gassing devices are said to be manufactured in the Reich, yet not in sufficient numbers that some could be sent to Riga. Hence some ought to be constructed right where they are needed. Could these devices have been homicidal gas chambers? I opine that for the following reasons they could not:

a. No one has ever claimed that homicidal gas chambers were "apparatuses" which were produced centrally somewhere in the Reich and could be shipped to certain locations. All alleged homicidal gas chambers are said to have been erected locally in an *ad hoc* fashion.
b. No one has ever claimed that homicidal gas chambers were to be set up or have ever been operated in Riga.
c. The "gassing apparatus" could also not have been a homicidal "gas van" either, as gas vans could not have been "manufactured on the spot." In addition, retrofitting a truck to serve as a "gas van" would not have required a chemist, but rather a mechanic, and if the exhaust gasses of such a vehicle had been used for the murder as claimed, this procedure would not have been any more dangerous for the operators than any other usual tail pipe (in contrast to a producer-gas generator, for instance).

I posit instead that these devices were disinfestation chambers for the following reasons:

a. They were to be set up next to living shelters for deported Jews, so these Jews were meant to be kept alive, also by means of fighting insect-borne diseases. This is in keeping with the necessity to maintain high hygienic standards in crowed living conditions (cf. Crowell 2000, p. 65).
b. In late 1940, the chief chemist of the German company distributing Zyklon B described a new disinfestation chamber system using this insecticide. This "apparatus" was subsequently produced centrally in large numbers and shipped and installed throughout Germany and the occupied territories to fight insect-borne diseases (Peters/Wüstinger 1940). Wartime restrictions on iron allotments, however, precluded that sufficient numbers of the device could be produced.
c. Instead of using a pre-manufactured delousing apparatus, a makeshift Zyklon-B delousing chamber could easily be built on the spot,

as was done in many concentration camps, although such makeshift solutions were "not without danger," indeed.

d. Using a poisonous chemical disinfectant – hydrogen cyanide – also explains why a chemist is involved.

It has also been argued that this document may actually be a forgery. For instance, all three persons implicated – Eichmann, Kallmeyer and Brack – all insisted in various trial declaration that there the letter's contentions are untrue (see Mattogno 2022, pp. 154f.). Fact is that Dr. Bruno Tesch, owner of the disinfestation company Tesch & Stabenow, Hamburg, was carrying out major fumigation training courses for SS personnel in the Riga Region in late 1941. This results from two SS radio messages intercepted and deciphered by the British (*ibid*., pp. 155f.). This is probably the real background of this letter, which may or may not be a forgery. But in any case, it never seems to have been signed and send to anyone.

Since these "gassing apparatus" are not an object of this study, I will not address the issue further here.

2.3. German Special Vehicles

Orthodox historiography about the Third Reich is full of speculations about the real meaning of so-called "code words" used by Third Reich officials in a wide variety of documents. "Gas vans" are no exception to this rule. As we will see later, there are several German documents frequently quoted in the context of the so-called "gas vans" which include words like "*Sonderwagen*," "*Sonderfahrzeuge*," or "*Spezialwagen*," all of which translate to "special vehicle." Except for the *Einsatzgruppe* report discussed in Chapter 2.2.8., there is no known German wartime document using the term "gas vans." The mere appearance of terms like "*Spezialwagen*" prompted German historian Mathias Beer to claim in his article on the alleged German wartime "gas vans" (1987, p. 403, note 5):

> *"The connection* [of terms like *Spezialwagen*] *with the camouflage word Sonderbehandlung* [special treatment], *i.e., killing* […] *is obvious."*

Although it might seem obvious at first sight, this is so only because modern historians have become conditioned to see such a link, even if it doesn't exist. A brief look into the nomenclature of German Wehrmacht vehicles would have prevented Beer from jumping to such conclusions, because *every* vehicle of the German armed forces which was not a merely repainted vehicle taken from civil serial production, but which was custom-made for the armed forced was called "*Sonder(kraft)fahrzeug*" (special [motor] vehicle). Hence the German Wehrmacht had hundreds of such "*Sonderkraftfahrzeuge*," which were known as "*Sd. Kfz 1*" to "*Sd. Kfz 250*" and higher (Davies 1973; Milsom 1975; Oswald 1990; Frank 1992), and these vehicles also included all the German armored vehicles (tanks), which were never officially called *Panzer*.[65]

A different issue is the term "*S-Wagen*," which can also be found in German wartime documents connected with the alleged "gas vans." Although Beer believes this term to be an "abbreviation of spezial or sonder" (*ibid.*), this isn't true either. The *"S"* referred to the type of drive (Oswald 1990, p. 177; similar Spielberger 1977, p. 153f.):

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[65] See also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sonderkraftfahrzeug; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_SdKfz_designations.

> *"The standard vehicle types were known as S-types, whereas the A-types had all-wheel drive, while being identical in every other respect."*

John Milsom's 1975 documentation *German Military Transport of World War II* contains several illustrations apparently stemming from a secret contemporary German document with the title *Bildermappe. Eingeführte Waffen und Geräte* (Picture Folder. Introduced Weapons and Devices). Interestingly, some of the vehicles listed were used for poison gas detection and to decontaminate people, clothes, and gas masks using hot water, steam, and hot air. They were designed to be used in case of gas warfare, but fortunately were never used. These vehicles had cargo boxes which could be sealed hermetically, and which looked rather peculiar. This may have contributed to the creation of the story about gas vans – in spite of the vehicle's purely sanitary function. Illustrations of some of these vehicles can be found in Appendix 8.

Another important aspect is disinfestation, that is: the killing of vermin, such as fleas and lice. Fleas and lice carry human pathogens which can cause severe illnesses, such as typhus and plague. Typhus and plague epidemics, not weapons, have always been the primary killers during wars, caused by the deterioration and collapse of hygienic conditions. Fighting epidemics therefore means fighting the insects spreading the disease. While Germany fought the war in the east, the issue of disease control was always present. Disinfesting – or in the vernacular: delousing – the soldiers' clothes and equipment was important, but since the soldiers had to constantly move, so did the disinfestation units.

Even Germany's enemies reported about these units, for instance the British *Times* of 30 Dec. 1941, p. 3:

THE TIMES

"SPREAD OF TYPHUS IN EAST EUROPE

'MENACING CONDITIONS'

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

STOCKHOLM, DEC. 29

German references to typhus, or merely to 'epidemics,' in Poland, the Ukraine, the Baltic States, and particularly in Lithuania, are becoming ever more frequent, but few details are allowed to pass through the censorship to give an idea whether its prevalence is really so serious and so widespread as the precautions suggest. The Germans have now introduced mobile delousing squads with special

vans, and they are already working hard in the regions bordering on Russia, where the Germans are organizing winter quarters for soldiers from the Eastern front."

Such mobile delousing units employed either some kind of poisonous substance like Zyklon B (hydrogen cyanide) or simply hot air or hot steam in order to kill pests. In contemporary British expert literature on disinfestation, we read about the hot air method (Busvine 1951, p. 85f):

"Insects are not very resistant to high temperature; they die if their bodies are raised to about 60°C (140°F) for five or ten minutes […]. *The destruction of insects by heat has been quite widely practised, both for disinfesting articles (e.g., clothing. bedding, wooden articles and food) and for disinfecting premises. The use of heat does not call for any special experience. Such risks as do exist (scorching, fire) are obvious to the simplest workman.* […] *Hot air is the most satisfactory heat-disinfesting agent for destroying insect pests.* […] *The most efficient hot air disinfestor which is reasonably mobile and thus adapted to Service requirements, is the* [1940] *Millbank apparatus which employs the forced draught principle."*

To be effective, a disinfestation van's cargo box had to be sealable and in case of hot air or steam disinfestation also insulated. Where poisonous substances were used, these vehicles were probably also equipped with warning signs and symbols about the potential danger emanating from them for the operating personnel and for bystanders.

Regarding the use of disinfestation methods at the eastern front by German units Berg pointed out (1987, p. 77):

"The high temperature approach, whether it involved steam or hot air, was used more often in Eastern regions occupied by the Germans. This was because of the shortage of the trained specialists which were needed whenever one worked with Zyklon-B."

German wartime expert literature describes in detail the technology used in one type of delousing/disinfestation van, which was meant to replace older systems, which had either been unreliable or damaging to the disinfested goods (Dötzer 1944, p. 29):

"The combined hot air–steam–hot air method […], *system Hygiene Institute of the Waffen-SS-Goedecker, works according to the following new principle for mobile units:*

The goods to be disinfested are suspended loosely in a closed chamber mounted on a vehicle. It is first pretreated for some 20 minutes with agitated hot air of 80 to 90°C. The hot air is generated by an

equally mobile heat exchanger (heat source: steam) and is pressed through the goods to be disinfested with a strong fan. Subsequently the same chamber is charged for some 20 to 30 minutes with streaming, pressurized steam of 110°C and 0.5 atmospheres. Afterwards the steam is removed by agitated hot air of 80 to 90°C, and in addition the goods are post-treated and dried for some 15 minutes with agitated hot air. In this way an impeccable degree of disinfestation is achieved while being very gentle to the fabrics and avoiding a change in shape of the goods to be disinfested."

Since modern devices weren't always to come by at the eastern front, improvised solutions had to make do at times. In this regard the *Heeresdienstvorschrift* (German Army service regulation) 195/6 of 1942 concerning hot "air" disinfestation devices mandated the following about a makeshift solution:

"III. Disinfestations

[…]

c) Disinfesting with exhaust gases

Disinfestations with [hot] *exhaust gases from combustion engines, preferably Diesel engines (no Otto* [gasoline] *engine for their increased danger of carbon oxide), requires the following accessory parts, which can be improvised:*

1. 1 distribution funnel,

2. 1 bendable metal hose

3. 3 rolls of asbestos tape of thickness 3, 4 and 5 mm, each 3 m long.

For disinfestations with exhaust gases in the E-Baracke 42 [disinfestation shed 42] *a 100 HP Diesel engine suffices. The engine is to be mounted close to the shed, and the exhaust gases are to be lead toward the middle of the shed by means of a flexible hose pulled over the exhaust pipe and sealed with asbestos tape. The entry opening of the hose into the shed is to be protected with asbestos against fire hazard. The distribution funnel is to be suspended from the ceiling in the middle of the shed at about ¾ height with the tip pointing downward. The exit opening of the metal hose is to be affixed beneath the center of the funnel so that the exhaust gases are spread out evenly in the shed. The doors are to be closed firmly. The engine is to be loaded with some 60% of maximum load. The disinfestation procedure is otherwise identical to the hot air procedure.*

> *After the end of the disinfestation time, the shed is aired by opening both doors, and it may be entered for emptying only after a quarter hour.*
> *The disinfested items keep being aired, and soot deposits are beaten or brushed off where needed. This procedure may be applied only in lack of other means, since it is very uneconomical."*

Although this service regulation talks about disinfestation sheds, it is not inconceivable that a similar setup could have been used for mobile units, that is: Diesel engine powered trucks using metal hoses to feed their exhaust gases into a sealed cargo box holding goods to be disinfested. Although such a setup would be most unsuited for mass murder, it sure does the trick for hot air disinfestation.

A closer look into witness testimonies reveals that these disinfestation vans were indeed known, albeit misunderstood. The Chełmno survivor Mieczysław Żurawski stated in 1945, for example, that two gas vans operated in this camp, plus a third vehicle which was a "disinfestation truck" (Bednarz 1946c, p. 72; see Chapter 3.6.2.6.).

In passing, I would like to mention the arguably technologically most advanced special vehicles of the entire war: Starting in 1943, the SS deployed mobile microwave delousing trucks in order to disinfest the clothes of inmates in the Auschwitz and Majdanek concentration camps (Wallwey, pp. 311-317). But since these were extremely expensive and highly efficient devices to *save* the lives of inmates, orthodox historiography never utters even one single word about their existence.

2.4. Producer Gas Vehicles

As mentioned in Chapter 1.3.1., it would be irrational to try to commit mass murder with Diesel engine exhaust gas, as it contains only low concentrations of carbon monoxide. In contrast to this, gasoline engines easily produce quickly lethal amounts of carbon monoxide, and this difference was well-known among German engineers and toxicologists since the 1930s, as Mattogno and Graf have shown (2020, pp. 123-125).

But not even gasoline engines would have been the choice of a potential mass murder, since Germany had an even cheaper, less complicated, and more efficient method readily at hand: wood gas or producer gas generators.

Illustration 3: A German wartime producer gas truck form Saurer (Type 5 BHw, produced until 1935; Berg 2019, p. 465)

As early as 1984, Friedrich Paul Berg not only pointed out that the use of Diesel engine exhaust for mass murder would have been absurd, but also that the theory of the use of *any* exhaust gases is absurd when considering that the Germans, suffering from lack of petroleum during WWII, had retrofitted almost their entire truck fleet during the war with so-called producer gas generators. They were technically rather primitive, as all that was needed for their construction was a steel container and a few pipes. By smoldering any available combustible organic material (wood, charcoal, coke) under restricted oxygen supply, these generators produced a gas mixture with carbon monoxide contents as high as 30% and more.[66] The vehicles equipped with these generators used this gas to fuel their engines. But since the energy content of producer gas is rather low compared to gasoline or Diesel fuel, engines thusly fed had a considerably reduced power.

But make no mistake: producer gas is lethal only *before* entering the engine! Since the engine burns the carbon monoxide, what comes out the exhaust pipe is actually quite harmless, in particular in case of Diesel engines. It would therefore not make any sense to pipe the exhaust gases of such a producer gas van into a hypothetical gassing box. For this one would have used the generator gas itself, which of course would mean that the same gas could not simultaneously be used to drive

66 How easy it indeed is can be seen from Episode 4 "Engine Exhaust" of the documentary "One Third of the Holocaust," www.HolocaustHandbooks.com/index.php?page_id+1001, starting at 2 min. 20 sec.

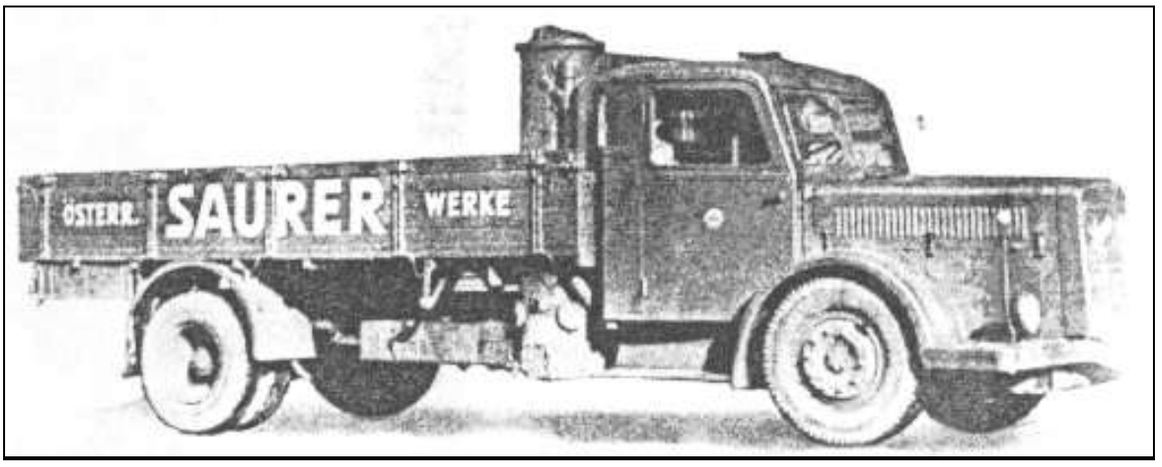

Illustration 4: Saurer BT 4500 with producer gas generator. A Saurer truck similar to this type allegedly was used for mass murder in Kulmhof/Chełmno – not with producer gas, but incredibly with its exhaust gas (Berg 2019, p. 464).

the van. Hence any use of producer gas for homicidal gassing purposes would have been very difficult during transit. Either the gas could be used for fueling the engine *or* for gassing people. Using the gas for both operations at once, that is to say, splitting it between engine *and* cargo box, would have reduced the engine's power even more and up to a critical point. Therefore this potential *ersatz* theory to rescue the "gas van" claims founders in view of the fact that all witness statements speak of the *exhaust* gas being piped into the cargo box during transit, as we will see later. (For a hypothetical design of such a producer gas murder van see Ill. 28 on p. 385.)

Berg has not only shown that half a million of Germany's trucks and vans were equipped with these generators during the war, but also that every truck and van driver had to be specifically trained to use these generators, as their gas was extremely dangerous. So any truck driver in Germany would have known how to quickly get access to cheap poison gas for mass murder. And not only the truck drivers, but also the entire elite of the Third Reich, who were involved in campaigns to promote this technology in Germany's desperate attempt to keep its rolling fleet mobile in the face of an extreme dearth of petroleum (Berg 2019, pp. 463-466, 470f.).

So how come that anyone could come up with the ridiculous claim that Diesel engine exhaust gas was used for mass murder instead of producer gas? Well, the producer gas technology had been a recent German development and had probably not sunk into the consciousness of those spreading the story. The Diesel engine, in contrast, was a German invention of the late 19th century und was therefore well-known

during World War II. Claiming the use of huge Diesel engines might simply have sounded more German, and during and after World War II anything “German” equaled evil.

3. Court Files of the War and Postwar Period

3.1. Early Media Reports

Before turning to court files, I would like to start this chapter with several reports in British mass media hinting at the existence of mobile gassing devices for mass homicide. Both reports have the touch and smell of the products of Allied psychological warfare, hence may be nothing more than propaganda.

The first one is at once one of the first media reports ever about alleged German massacres of Jews. It appeared in the notoriously anti-German London *Daily Telegraph*, which had spread (false) gassing rumors already during the First World War.[67] On June 25, 1942, the following article could be found on page 5 of this newspaper:

"GERMANS MURDER 700,000
JEWS IN POLAND
TRAVELLING GAS CHAMBERS
DAILY TELEGRAPH REPORTER

More than 700,000 Polish Jews have been slaughtered by the Germans in the greatest massacre in world history. […]*"*

These charges were very general and were subsequently not substantiated. Today orthodox historiography assumes that in Poland gas vans were primarily deployed in the Chełmno Camp, although the maximum claimed death toll amounts to merely half of what the *Daily Telegraph* claimed in 1942.[68]

A somewhat more detailed account, probably based on the same British "intelligence" (psychological warfare) sources, was published

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[67] *Daily Telegraph*, March 22, 1916, p. 7: "ATROCITIES IN SERBIA: 700,000 VICTIMS. […] The Governments of the Allies have secured evidence and documents […] proving that Austria and Bulgaria have been guilty of horrible crimes in Serbia […]. Women, children, and old men were shut up in the churches by the Austrians and either stabbed with the bayonet or suffocated by means of asphyxiating gas. In one church in Belgrade 3,000 women, children, and old men were thus suffocated. […]"; see Aitken 1991; the first mainstream historian to mention this newspaper article was Walter Laqueur 1980, p. 9.

[68] The claimed Chełmno death toll actually ranges between 34,000 and 1,300,000, depending on the author; see Mattogno 2017, Chapter 11.

some three weeks later, on 16 July 1942, in the British weekly *News Review* under the title "Death refined," which included references to stationary gas chambers in the Majdanek camp (Lublin) as well as to gas vans used in Russia to kill partisans (Sharf 1963, pp. 186f.):

> *"Bringing their tastes for technical refinement into the gentle art of civilian murder, the Germans are using mobile gas chambers for execution behind the front, manned by SS and Gestapo men.*
>
> *First introduced by the Gestapo to get rid of incurably ill people, gas was taken into special wards and released after patients had received a dose of sleeping-drug, keeping hospitals clear for wounded soldiers.*
>
> *When war started, large gas stations were set up in Poland to kill off Jews who had been expelled from Germany to Lublin district* [=Majdanek] *as well as the Polish Jews who lived there.*
>
> *No sleeping-drugs were wasted on them. They were just trussed up and finished off. Last winter gas lorries were taken behind the Eastern Front to liquidate guerillas."*

The next time a mass murder in mobile devices committed by Germans was hinted at was in a radio speech given by German writer Thomas Mann, who had emigrated to the U.S. in 1933 and whose anti-German propaganda speeches were aired by the British during the war (Mann 1945). Mann's speeches clearly spread Allied atrocity propaganda, as Thomas Kues has shown in his analysis (Kues 2010). To name just one of his outrageous propaganda lies, Mann claimed for instance that the Germans were exterminating the French and had a plan of killing 20 millions of them! The "gas vans" occurred in a speech aired on 27 September 1942 (Mann 1945, p. 73):

> *"In Paris 16,000 Jews were herded together within a few days, loaded onto cattle cars and sent away. Whither? One who knows is the German train engineer who has been reported about in Switzerland. He fled there after several times having to drive trains filled with Jews, which were halted on an open stretch of track, hermetically sealed, and then gassed through. The man could not stand it anymore. Yet his experience is far from exceptional. A precise and authentic report is available on the killing of not less than 11,000 Polish Jews with poison gas. They were brought to a special execution field near Konim* [correct: Konin] *in the Warsaw District, put inside wagons which had been sealed airtight, and transformed into corpses within fifteen minutes. We have a detailed description of the*

> *whole process, of the screams and pleas of the victims and the merry laughter of the SS Hottentots, who took fun in performing their task."*

Considering that Mann's speeches are riddled with lies and distortions, these few lines can hardly be seen as proof for anything. Mann's first claim of French Jews gassed while aboard cattle cars is untrue even in the eyes of orthodox historiography, but it is interesting nevertheless, as seasoned revisionist Friedrich P. Berg has maintained for years that such a procedure would actually have been feasible, although it never happened (Berg 1993).

Since these *British* media reports have been the first published references to "gas van" murders, the origin of such claims in general may not be Soviet in nature, as the following chapters suggest. It appears that the Soviets simply picked up the idea from the British and elaborated on it further.

3.2. The Krasnodar Trial

3.2.1. Prehistory: Soviet Gas Vans

In his summary article about the "gas vans," German historian Mathias Beer posits the following (1987, p. 403):

> *"The term 'gas vans' refers to a special creation of the Third Reich, namely a heavy vehicle on whose chassis an airtight body had been mounted in which people were killed by means of the introduction of exhaust gas."*

As early as 1991 German political scientist Udo Walendy has pointed out that the Third Reich could *not* claim to be the inventor of such an evil device, even if the claims by orthodox historiography were true (Walendy 1991, pp. 35f.) – at least if one is inclined to believe the hearsay statements as published by Soviet dissident Pjotr Grigorenko. In his *Memoirs* he recounts what a former friend, Vasily Ivanovich Teslya, had told him (Grigorenko 1982, p. 208f.):

> *"Once, when we were discussing fascist atrocities, I said, 'What beasts they must have been and how absolutely corrupt to have thought up gas wagons.'*
>
> *In reply Teslya said, 'Are you aware, Pyotr Grigoryevich, that we invented the gas wagon for use on the so-called kulaks?*

> *'In the prison in Omsk one day a fellow prisoner called me over to a window which opened on the inner court. There was a shutter on the window, but through a crack we could see a door into another prison building.*
> *'In a short time a Black Maria*[69] *rolled up. The door in the building opened and guards drove people into the open doors of the prison van. Well over thirty prisoners jammed into the Black Maria standing up. The doors were forced shut by the guards and the van departed. I was going to leave the window but my cellmate said: 'Just wait a bit. They will come back soon.' And they did. When the van doors were opened black smoke poured into the air and corpses fell out onto the ground. Those which did not fall out by themselves were pulled out with hooks by the guards. Then all the corpses were dropped into a nearby basement sewer hole. Every day for a week we watched this happen. That other wing of the prison was known as the 'kulak' wing.'"*

It goes without saying that the probative value of this story from hearsay is rather low. If put into the context of well-documented Soviet killing methods and experiments using a wide variety of poisonous gases and other substances, however (see Bobrenjow/Rjasanzwe 1993, pp. 43, 171; Baldajewa 1993; Volodarsky 2009), it seems indeed that the sick minds coming up with the idea of "gas vans" can be found within the pre-war Soviet secret services.

In 1994 U.S. engineer Friedrich P. Berg reported about a four-part TV documentary with the title "Monster: A Portrait of Stalin in Blood" aired in the U.S. in 1993 about the collapse of the Soviet Union (Gauss 1994, p. 342). One segment of the second part of the series subtitled "Stalin's Secret Police," is of special interest, as it confirms what we suspect. At one point KGB officer Alexander Michailov states the following:[70]

> *"We've come across evidence that long before Hitler's gas vans came into being, Isai Davidovich Berg invented secret gas vans in Moscow. It was a simple airtight van in which prisoners were delivered, and when necessary, carbon monoxide exhaust fumes were piped into the van."*

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69 Soviet inmate transportation van.

70 www.youtube.com/watch?v=itPPRxy_AQ4; the relevant scene starts at 3 min. 21 sec.

It goes without saying that the van could not have been airtight in a strict sense, if exhaust fumes were to be delivered into it. As to the type of engine used, F.P. Berg wrote (2019, p. 470):

> *"However, these Soviet vans did not have Diesel engines, because all pre-war trucks in the Soviet Union had only gasoline engines, since the entire transportation system in the USSR was based on earlier, western engine types such as that of Ford Motor Co. Therefore, more than likely, the Soviet allegations of gas trucks are truly based on the Soviets' own mass-murder technology to which they simply added Diesel engines to make them seem more sinister and, most of all, more German."*

The revelation about Soviet gas vans was confirmed two years later by Russian writer Michael S. Voslensky, who had been a Russian interpreter during the Nuremberg Trials, but who was later exiled as a dissident. After the collapse of the Soviet Union he gained access to the once secret files of the former Soviet Secret service NKVD. Among other atrocities found there, he also reports the following (1995, pp. 28f.):

> *"And one final detail. During World War Two the people in the Soviet Union were indignant when they learned that the German security services used retrofitted vans to kill people with exhaust gases. In the Soviet media these gas vehicles were called 'soul vendors.' They really were a diabolic invention, and their inventors were criminals.*
>
> *Only this wasn't a German but a Soviet invention. In the USSR a truck was constructed whose exhaust gases were piped into the enclosed cargo box. The inventor was a certain Berg, head of the economic department of the NKVD for Moscow and the area around Moscow. Long before the war – in 1936 – one began to use Berg's invention. Berg himself was executed in 1939 as a participant at an alleged 'conspiracy of NKVD members against the leadership of the State.' Of course, this plot was an invention. Nevertheless, the reader will hardly be able to feel pity for Berg."*

So when war broke out between Germany and the Soviet Union in June 1941, the stage was set, and the Germans had no idea what was coming their way.

3.2.2. Background and Conditions

Not having access to trial documents of the Krasnodar trial of summer 1943, we have to make do with an analysis of the trial published by Russian historian Ilya Bourtman in 2008 as well as with an English booklet published in 1943 by the Moscow Foreign Publishing House (*The Trial*, 1943), which is an English translation of articles published in the Soviet newspaper *Pravda*. In 1944 this booklet was followed by another publication with the title *The People's Verdict* (1944) containing the content of the former brochure (pp. 7-44) plus an English translations of the case summary of the Kharkov trial (pp. 45-124), with excerpts from interrogations of the defendants and several key witnesses. This trial will be discussed in Chapter 3.3. The Krasnodar trial itself took place between 14 and 17 July 1943. Although for obvious propagandistic reasons the newspaper articles published about the trial gave the impression that German officials were being tried, this was not the case. Instead, eleven Soviet citizens were mainly accused of collaborating with the German *Sonderkommando 10a* (which belonged to *Einsatzgruppe* D) in "guarding Gestapo buildings that held arrested Soviet citizens, executing arrests, going on military searches and expeditions against the partisans and peaceful Soviet citizens, [and] exterminating Soviet citizens by hanging, mass shootings, and use of poison gases" (Bourtman 2008, p. 251). It is the latter aspect in which we are interested. Just one day after the verdict had been handed down, eight of the defendants were publicly hanged on the main square of Krasnodar, underlining the show character of the trial, whereas the remaining three had to serve long prison terms. Bourtman writes about this trial (*ibid.*, p. 250; unless stated otherwise, all page numbers in this subchapter are from this):

> *"From the apologetic and self-denouncing defendants, to the largely inconsequential lawyers, to the stern and ruthless prosecutor, each actor had a scripted part to play. Just as important as the trial itself (if not more important) was the coverage it received. The large numbers of people who came to see the executions underscored the increasing psychological impact of the Soviet war crimes trials. In Krasnodar, the public execution was attended by thirty thousand spectators. The Soviet press (including children's newspapers) reported every word uttered by the prosecutor; film crews recorded*

the trial, and edited segments were shown in cinemas around the Soviet Union."

Although it has been suggested that this trial and others of its kind had been staged by the Soviet Union as a "retaliation" for the German propaganda exploiting the discovery of the mass graves at Katyn (Sanford 2005), this is not entirely true, as the indictment against the defendants actually dates from 13 February 1943 (*ibid.*), that is, *before* the discovery of the Katyn mass graves. Hence the proceedings as such were not influenced by Katyn, yet probably their propagandistic exploitation was (p. 260). In fact, at least as important was the need to deter the population of the Soviet Union from collaborating with the Germans, whom they conceived as their liberators from Stalinist oppression, or as Bourtman puts it (*ibid.*):

"There is reason to believe that the Soviet leadership, its views clouded by ideological assumptions concerning a supposed 'friendship among nations,' underestimated the willingness of Soviet citizens to engage with and assist the German occupying forces. Officials hoped that the widespread media coverage of the trials held during the war would have the effect of minimizing ongoing collaboration in the still-occupied Soviet lands and preventing future collaborationist activities. The Soviet authorities knew that some citizens in the borderlands had welcomed the German occupiers as liberators; rooting out these and other 'enemies of the state' was essential to the reaffirmation of the Soviet regime's authority. Trials of Soviet collaborators sent a clear message that those who participated in national movements aimed at usurping the power of the Soviet state would be dealt with harshly."

That these trials were indeed nothing else but propaganda shows can be gleaned from their conditions. Here is, for instance, what Bourtman writes about the methods used during the Krasnodar trial to extract confessions from the defendants (pp. 253f.):

"Some historians, including Hostettler, have noted that Soviet interrogators used coercive methods to extract confessions: 'The methods used during months of interrogation included confinement in a punishment cell too small to move in, intolerable pressure by teams of inquisitors working for hours and days at a stretch, savage beatings, prolonged deprivation of sleep, and promises of leniency or pardon in return for co-operation.' Prusin suggests further that, at least for more senior individuals, 'the descent from a position of authority to

> *the status of helpless prisoner gravely undermined their moral strength.' Documents from the trial in Krasnodar suggest that the defendants relinquished their claims of innocence only as a result of grueling interrogations and out of a sense of hopelessness. For example, during his first interrogation, on March 25, 1943, Tishchenko told his interrogators that he was innocent of most of the crimes with which he was charged; only after three months of interrogations did he plead guilty to all. Yet for Soviet authorities, everything was much simpler: only the guilty would confess."* (For references see there.)

In addition to "pedagogical" reasons, the trials also had other political motivations, as Bourtman notes, who also aptly describes the theatric role all actors had been assigned during these trials (pp. 255f.):

> *"Thus,* […] *class issues continued to play an important role in determining state violence during and after the war. The Soviets used the military tribunals* […] *as an instrument for cleansing Soviet society of elements perceived as unfaithful.*
>
> *The three defense attorneys in the Krasnodar proceedings had little impact on the trial's outcome. Because confession was considered the ultimate proof of a defendant's guilt, and all of the defendants had been made to confess numerous times during the pre-trial interrogations, the lawyers could not have mounted a cogent defense even if they had wanted to. The tribunals were structured in such a way as to give the defense attorneys as marginal a role as possible; their participation, it seems, was merely symbolic—intended to demonstrate the fairness of the proceedings.* […] *Unlike the judges and the prosecutors, defense lawyers were not allowed to cross-examine the witnesses. In accordance with the June 1941 decree, no pre-trial meetings were allowed; defendants and their lawyers met for the first time on the first day of the trial before the proceedings began. As a result, the lawyers could do little in court other than plead for leniency for their defendants* […].
>
> *For their part, the judges' role was to support the prosecutor, intervening only to recapitulate horrific incidents. The three judges in Krasnodar fulfilled this role precisely. Above all, they pressed the defendants for details of the atrocities they had* [allegedly[71]] *commit-*

[71] Despite the horrific conditions of these trials described by Bourtman, he never utters even a word of doubt that the crimes claimed by the prosecution could have been invented or grossly exaggerated.

> *ted. For example, they relentlessly questioned defendant Nikolai Pushkarev, extracting from him* [alleged] *details of mass arrests and executions of Soviet civilians. Throughout the trial, the judges interjected comments intended to highlight the appalling nature of the defendants' acts of collaboration.*
>
> *In sharp contrast to the groveling lawyers, the State Prosecutor commanded overwhelming authority during the military tribunals. His role was that of director; generally theatrical and overbearing, he set the tone for the trial and orchestrated it. He unyieldingly dramatized and embellished the role of the accused in the crimes* [allegedly] *committed, but at the same time was careful to implicate the German government and high command, as well as the German officers in charge of a particular region.* […State Prosecutor] *Yachenin described in typically overblown terms the historical importance of trying the defendants: 'Today Soviet law will mete out justice to the traitors, fascist hirelings, and boot-lickers now in the prisoners' dock. Tomorrow the court of history, the court of freedom-loving nations of the world, will pronounce its inexorable verdict on the bloodthirsty rulers of Hitlerite Germany and all its associates—on the enemies of mankind who have plunged the world into the welter of the present war. Not one of them will escape stern retribution! Blood for blood, death for death!'*
>
> […] *the trial in Krasnodar established the model for the thousands of trials that followed.* […] *And yet, for the Soviet government, the primary significance of the tribunals lay not in the punishment of the thousands of collaborators and German POWs, but in the propaganda value that could be extracted from them.* […]
>
> *Coverage of the Krasnodar Trial both within and outside the Soviet Union amounted to a highly organized public relations campaign. The highest levels of the Soviet regime, including Stalin himself, received daily reports on the progress of the trials* […]. *But it seems clear that they* [the Soviet leaders] *saw the trials as an instrument of propaganda – as a means to publicize German atrocities* [allegedly] *committed on Soviet territory."*

This attitude was even confirmed by Joseph Stalin himself, who, as the probable initiator of those trials, must have known best about their propagandistic nature. According to one source, Stalin is said to have confided to an interlocutor in private that this trial was most beneficial

for his propaganda, but that the allegations made were "exaggerated" (Bishop, p. 33).

3.2.3. Gas Van Claims during the Krasnodar Trial

But now back to the gas vans. Bourtman states that none of the defendants of the Krasnodar trial had been accused of having been involved in any act of mass murder, so statements about gas vans during the trial had an exclusively declamatory nature and were very vague. They served clear propaganda purposes (p. 258):

> *"Children's newspapers also covered the trial. One image that appeared often in accounts published for children was that of the 'murder vans' (as the newspapers dubbed them) in which some 6,280 Soviet citizens were* [allegedly] *gassed during the course of the regional occupation. For many Soviet citizens, it seems, the murder vans were emblematic of Germany's ruthless efficiency and inhumanity. At every turn, prosecutor Yachenin exploited the image of the vans, and this focus was reflected in the dozens of newspaper reports devoted to them. On July 21, 1943,* Pionerskaia Pravda*, a weekly geared to children between the ages of 8 and 14, ran an article entitled 'Hitler's Murder Vans.'"*

Since I have not yet seen any of these pictures of alleged gas vans published in the Soviet media during that time, I cannot currently comment on them. I will instead quote a few excerpts from *The People's Verdict*:

> *"Lastly, the investigation revealed that many thousands of Soviet citizens were put to death by asphyxiation by means of carbon monoxide in motor vehicles specially equipped for this purpose, known as 'murder vans.'*
>
> *In the autumn of 1942,*[72] *the Germans began to utilize specially equipped motor vehicles, which the population called murder vans, for the purpose of doing away with Soviet citizens.*
>
> *These murder vans were covered five-ton or seven-ton grey-painted motor trucks, driven by Diesel engines. The interior of these vans was lined with zinc-plated sheet iron. At the back they had double doors which closed hermetically. The floor consisted of a grating, beneath which there was a pipe that was connected with the exhaust*

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72 Note that orthodox historiography assumes the fall of 1941 as the beginning of these gassings.

> *pipe of the engine. The exhaust gas from the Diesel engine, which contained a high concentration of carbon monoxide, penetrated the interior of the van, causing the rapid poisoning and death from asphyxiation of the prisoners confined in it.*
> […] *Before being dragged from the cellar the prisoners were stripped of their clothing; then they were bundled into the murder van 60 to 80 at a time. The doors of the van were then hermetically closed and the engine started. After standing with the engine running for several minutes, the van would drive to an anti-tank trench which had been dug outside the Measuring Instruments Factory on the outskirts of Krasnodar. As a rule, the murder vans were escorted by a convoy of police from the Sonderkommando SS-10-a. By the time the vans reached the anti-tank trench the people were asphyxiated by the gas. The bodies were flung into the trench and buried. Men, women and children were bundled into the van without discrimination."* (pp. 8f.; all subsequent page no. in this section from it.)

Just like in many other report and witness statements, the claim is made here as well that the cargo box into which the persons to be "liquidated" were herded was sealed hermetically, since it makes no sense to seal the back door(s) hermetically but to leave the rest of the cargo box unsealed. I have stated several times that the system was not operable under these circumstances (see Chapter 1.3.2.). Furthermore, it is simply a lie to claim that the "exhaust gas from the Diesel engine" "contained a high concentration of carbon monoxide" "causing the rapid poisoning and death from asphyxiation of the prisoners confined in it." I posit that death by suffocation would occur due to lack of oxygen, which would occur sooner or later in a space into which 85 persons had been crammed, even without the need to have the victims inhale Diesel exhaust gases – under technically highly dubious circumstances.

> *"Yevdokia Fedorovna Gazhik, who, one day, witnessed the forcible loading into the 'murder van' of an arrested woman and her five-year-old daughter, stated as follows:*
> *'Into this "motor bus" the Gestapo men were forcibly dragging a woman about thirty years of age. The woman refused to go into the van, resisted, and all the time tried to reach a little girl behind her, four or five years old, who was crying: "Mummy, Mummy, I want to ride with you." Unable to subdue the arrested woman, one of the Gestapo men seized the little girl and smeared her lips and nose with*

> *a thick black liquid. The child instantly fell unconscious. The Gestapo man picked her up and threw her into the van. On seeing this, the mother uttered a wild shriek and rushed at the Gestapo man. After struggling with the woman for several seconds the Gestapo man succeeded in overpowering her and dragged her into the van.'"* (p. 9f.)

This statement is interesting due to its similarity to claims regarding the alleged murder methods used in the Sobibór camp, as attested to by Soviet witness Alexander Pechersky, who also claimed the use of some mysterious black/dark substances to poison people (Graf/Kues/Mattogno 2020, p. 70). It is today either dismissed or ignored by orthodox historians as completely baseless, as no such rapidly acting poisonous black substance has ever been identified. Hence this witness statement may be a case of "cross-fertilization" of "independent" witnesses – or merely a variation of mankind's association of black with evil.

The pages 13 and 32 of *The People's Verdict* deal with forensic examinations of mass graves allegedly containing victims of homicidal gassings by means of "gas vans." I have analyzed these claims in Chapter 1.2., to which I refer.

> *"Tishchenko answered in great detail showing that he was quite familiar with the whole business. These vans were five-ton or seven-ton motor trucks, he said, with bodies built over them. These had double walls* [probably doors] *and false windows which gave them the appearance of motor buses. At the rear of each vehicle there was a door which closed hermetically. The floor consisted of a grating under which ran the exhaust pipe from the Diesel engine by which the vehicle was driven. The exhaust gas penetrated the interior of the vehicle. When the vehicle was standing with the engine running, death ensued within seven minutes; when it was in motion death ensued in ten minutes.* […] *Tishchenko stated that one day he was present when 67 adults and 18 children were bundled into a 'murder van.'"* (pp. 16f.)

As mentioned before, it is not possible to pipe exhaust gas into a hermetically sealed cargo box for more than a few minutes without the box giving way in one way or another. If assuming some technical arrangement that would have allowed this device to function (like openings in the cargo box permitting excess gas to escape), and that suffocation had occurred due to lack of oxygen, it is obvious that the amount of gas produced (as well as its content of carbon monoxide) was higher for a

Diesel engine during engine load (that is, when the van was moving) than while idling, so that the victims would have died faster during transit than when the vehicle was standing. Hence the witness' statement is illogical in this regard.

> *"The next witness to be examined was Kotov,* […]
> *'*[…] *Several minutes later I felt bad and began to lose consciousness. At one time I had taken a course of anti-gas bombing drill and I soon realized what was happening – we were being poisoned with some kind of gas. I tore off my shirt, moistened it with my urine and pressed it to my nose and mouth. I began to breathe more easily, but I lost consciousness all the same. When I came to I found myself in a pit among scores of dead bodies. I managed to climb out of the pit somehow and crept home with great difficulty.'"* (pp. 28f., similar on p. 11)

It is too bad that carbon monoxide is insoluble in water, hence his urinated shirt wouldn't have helped him a bit. This statement indicates, though, that gas warfare hysteria prevailing throughout Europe in that era due to traumatic experiences during the trench warfare of the First World War have left their psychological traces, upon which the propagandists played their tune (see Crowell 2000).

The witness Inozemtseva stated:

> *"Going on duty on 23rd September, I saw a large dark grey vehicle in the courtyard, which looked something like a furniture van."* (p. 29)

This is in accordance with the fact that the only truck ever suspected to have been a gas van, which was investigated for this very reason by a Polish expert commission after the war, turned out to be mere moving trucks, indeed (see pp. 35f.). Hence the witness unwittingly and unwillingly hit the jackpot with this statement. Of course, with this statement he contradicts the claims quoted before that the trucks had windows painted on their side, making them look like motor buses.

It is worth noting that "Jews" were never mentioned as the victims of the claimed murders, be they in gas vans or otherwise. Rather it is claimed that the extermination measures were aimed mainly at eliminating children, the sick, and the disabled from hospitals, clearing them out for wounded German soldiers (pp. 8, 10-13, 27-30, 35). The commission's victim count of "only" 7,000 seems also ridiculously low, if considering that the Just document alone claims 97,000 victims for just 6 months. Maybe both figures have the same source: After the war, with

hundreds of thousands and millions of victims claimed for each and every alleged German murder location, the 7,000 figure of the Krasnodar trial was probably no longer horrific enough, and hence maybe it was amended by adding a nine: 97,000.

To summarize: What we have found out about this trial and the evidence presented does not yield any new evidence about the existence of gas vans. Quite to the contrary, the circumstances of the trial and the claims made increase our skepticism.

3.3. The Kharkov Trial

The conditions of the Kharkov trial were the same as those of the Krasnodar trial, hence I refer to what I have stated in the previous chapter.

The Kharkov chapter in *The People's Verdict* is much longer than the one on Krasnodar primarily due to lengthy quotes from confessions made by the defendants and from witness statements. I will subsequently quote a number of them, restricting myself to passages containing information about the alleged gas vans and to such passages requiring comments for other reasons. I insert due comments after each quote.

> *"As established by the investigation similar 'gas lorries,' which were nicknamed 'murder vans,' were used by the Germans for murdering peaceful Soviet citizens not only in Krasnodar but also in Kharkov.*
>
> *These vans, as testified by the German defendants in the present case and also by witnesses who witnessed the crimes committed by the Germans, are large closed trucks of dark grey colour, driven by Diesel engines. The vans are lined inside with galvanized iron and have airtight folding doors at the back. The floor is equipped with a wooden grating under which passes a pipe with apertures. This pipe is connected to the exhaust pipe of the engine. The exhaust gases of the Diesel engine, containing highly concentrated carbon monoxide, enter the body of the van, causing rapid poisoning and asphyxiation of the people locked up in the van."* (p. 49)

It is a simple fact that Diesel exhaust gases never contain "highly concentrated carbon monoxide." This quote is the first time a probably horizontal "pipe with apertures" running underneath the grate is mentioned, a device not referred to in any of the extant documents. It would have been completely superfluous, as a simple hole in the floor or wall would

have sufficed to introduce the gas, which would have spread out evenly already due to the victims' movements. The only effect of such a horizontal floor pipe would have been to render the production of these vans more expensive and complex, to complicate the cleaning of the van and to make it more prone to damage. Later we will encounter this claim frequently during West-German trials.

> *"The witness Obersturmbannführer Heinisch stated:*
> *'In the S.D. (Security Service) a so-called "gas lorry" was manufactured. Outwardly it hardly differs from an ordinary prison van, but its body is hermetically closed and exhaust gases pass from the engine along a special pipe to the body. This van holds several dozen persons. They are usually told that they are to be dispatched to another jail or camp. When the van starts the gases penetrate inside the lorry and the people are asphyxiated.'"* (p. 50)
>
> *"The investigation has also established that after murdering Soviet people in the 'murder vans,' the German invaders conveyed their bodies to the outskirts of Kharkov, dumped them in empty barracks or other half-demolished buildings, poured petrol over them and set them on fire."* (pp. 51f., similar pp. 86, 105)

It can safely be assumed that this and similar stories proffered by witnesses during this trial were completely made up. When the German Armed forces entered larger Russian cities, some of its buildings had been damaged by the fighting, and some had been destroyed on purpose by the retreating Soviet forces following their scorched earth policy. Hence the German occupational forces had massive problems finding sufficient shelter for themselves and for the local population. Under these circumstance, deliberately burning down some of the remaining buildings did certainly not happen, all the more so since this was a highly unsuitable method to incinerate the remains of the alleged mass murder.

> *"*[…] *Hitler was extremely annoyed about the talkativeness of persons who in some way or another had learned about the existence of the 'gas lorries.' As a result of this talkativeness, von Alvensleben said, and also as a result of the carelessness of certain S.D. and Gestapo chiefs, documents concerning the 'gas lorries' had fallen into the hands of Russians."* (p. 53)

No such document was ever presented by the Soviets. Hence it can be assumed that this story was made up as well.

> *"President: Describe what the 'gas van' is like.*

> [Wilhelm] *Langheld: As far as I remember the 'gas van' is a vehicle dark grey in colour, completely covered in, having hermetically sealed doors at the back.*
> *President: How many persons can a van hold?*
> *Langheld: Approximately 60 to 70 persons.*
> *President: Under what circumstances did you see the van in Kharkov?*
> *Langheld: I was at 76, Cherniskevsky Street at the H.Q. of the S.D. and heard a terrific noise and screaming outside.*
> *President: What happened then?*
> *Langheld: A gas van at that moment had driven up to the main entrance of the building, and one could see how people were being forcibly driven into it, while German soldiers were standing at the doors of the van."* (p. 65)

Defendant Hans Ritz stated:

> *"It was an ordinary closed army transport lorry, only with an airtight body. Lt. Jacobi opened the doors of the machine and let me look in. Inside the machine was lined with sheet iron, in the floor was a grating through which entered the exhaust gases of the motor which poisoned the people inside the van.* […] *I should add that they numbered about 60 persons."* (pp. 69f.)
> [Reinhard] *"Retzlaff: In March, 1942, when I entered the courtyard of Kharkov Jail, I saw there a large van painted dark grey."* (p. 77)
> *"Prosecutor: How many Soviet citizens in all were exterminated by means of the gas van?*
> *Retzlaff: As S.D. man Kaminsky told me, more than 5,000 people were destroyed in March. Taking into consideration this figure as well as the fact that the gas van made its deadly rounds every day, it can be considered that the total number of persons put to death in Kharkov is approximately 30,000."* (pp. 78f.)

Hence the Soviets had figured out that the 7,000 victims claimed during the Krasnodar trial wasn't impressive at all, if compared to all the other numbers being touted during that time. The numbers were therefore jacked up considerably.

> *"Prosecutor: Tell the Court in detail what this van was like, how it was designed and how people were murdered in it.*
> [Mikhail] *Bulanov: This machine was a huge two-axled truck of approximately five to seven tons capacity. It was painted grey and had a six-cylinder engine. The body of this machine had folding doors*

which closed hermetically. It was evidently made airtight by means of the rubber lining of the door.
Prosecutor: The lining of the door?
Bulanov: Yes, the lining of the door. The body is lined inside with galvanized iron and there is a wooden grating in the lower part of the body.
Prosecutor: That means that this grating forms the floor?
Bulanov: Yes, this grating forms the floor on which the prisoners stand. In the lower part of the truck is the exhaust pipe of the engine through which the exhaust gas passes into the body. After the people are put into the truck, the door is closed, the engine is started and the truck is driven to the unloading point. During this time the people are done to death." (p. 85)

This is a most determined confirmation that the cargo box was indeed hermetically sealed – which proves that this witness statement is simply a lie. But the witness must have known it, because he worked on such a van, or so he claimed (p. 87).

"Prosecutor: Tell the Court everything you know about the gas van.
[Georg] *Heinisch: The gas van is a kind of prison van, equipped with hermetically closing folding doors, in which exhaust gases from the engine pass along a special pipe into the body of the van, thus causing asphyxiation of all the people inside.*
Prosecutor: How long have you known of the existence of this gas van?
Heinisch: I learned about its existence in January this year during a conference of District Commissars at which Lieut.-General of Police von Alvensleben was present.
Prosecutor: Tell the Court about this conference and what you learned there about the gas van.
Heinisch: Von Alvensleben stated that information concerning the gas van had fallen into the hands of the Russians. According to Lieut.-General of Police von Alvensleben, the Führer – that is, Hitler – had ordered that there should be no further open talk about the gas van on pain of arraignment for trial by a special court of S.S.
Prosecutor: Have you yourself ever seen a gas van?
Heinisch: Yes, I saw one in the town of Rovno, but not in action.
Prosecutor: Did you take part in the extermination of people by means of gas vans?
Heinisch: No, I did not.

> *Prosecutor: Tell the Court in detail about your talk with Somann.*
> *Heinisch: Somann told me that death caused by gas poisoning was painless and more humane. He said that in the gas van death was very quick, but actually death came not in twelve seconds but much more slowly and was accompanied by great pain.*
> *Somann told me about the camp in Auschwitz in Germany where the gassing of prisoners was also carried out. The people were told that they were to be transferred elsewhere, and foreign workers were told that they would be repatriated and were sent under this pretext to bath-houses. Those who were to be executed first entered a place with a signboard with 'Disinfection' on it and there they undressed the men separately from women and children. Then they were ordered to proceed to another place with a signboard 'Bath.' While the people were washing themselves special valves were opened to let in the gas which caused their death. Then the dead people were burned in special furnaces in which about 200 bodies could be burned simultaneously.*
> *Prosecutor: Did Somann tell you on whose instructions execution by gas poisoning was introduced?*
> *Heinisch: Somann told me that in the autumn of 1942 a conference took place between Hitler, Himmler, and S.D. Chief Kaltenbrunner, at which it was decided to perform executions by means of gas poisoning."* (pp. 89f.)

This statement proves that a lie becomes unstable the more a liar talks about it. This statement is so full of preposterous claims that it should make every historian blush. Not only have the Soviets never presented any evidence about the gas vans which had fallen into their hands, but the alleged Hitler order is a complete invention as well, of which no trace exists.

How anyone could have claimed that the execution with exhaust gases would take only a few seconds is beyond me. But the best part is actually what Heinisch is telling about gassings in Auschwitz, the black propaganda about which had been spread by the Polish underground movement since the fall of 1941. According to Heinisch, the victims in Auschwitz were gassed *while* taken an actual shower – by suddenly turning on a valve to insert the gas. Although stated with much determination, this is nevertheless utter nonsense[73] and merely proves that

[73] About the alleged gassing procedure, see Mattogno 2021a.

the defendant is simply parroting what was put in his mouth. On the upside, though, is the fact that this statement confirms indirectly the enormous efforts of the German authorities to disinfest the Auschwitz prisoners in order to save their lives. The propagandists simply twisted the tale to fit their purposes.

> *"Heinisch: Extermination of people by gas poisoning was to take place in concentration camps.*
> *President: In German-occupied territory?*
> *Heinisch: There are no concentration camps in the occupied regions.*
> *President: That means in Germany?*
> *Heinisch: Yes."* (p. 92)

Today the exact opposite is claimed: extermination is said to have taken place in camps *outside* of Germany proper in the camps Belzec, Sobibór, Treblinka, Chełmno, and Auschwitz (although the Polish territory around Auschwitz and Chełmno/Kulmhof had been temporarily annexed by Germany during the war). Once again this shows that at this early point of the legend, the story had not yet been carefully orchestrated.

> *"*[The witnesses'] *testimony revealed details of the terrible tragedy enacted in the hospital, in which wounded Red Army men were being treated, after the capture of Kharkov by the Germans.*
> *'The human mind simply cannot grasp what I saw and lived through in the period of the German occupation,' stated Witness Djinchviladze. 'In the 8th block of the hospital there were 400 seriously wounded men who needed immediate surgical attention. They were either in the operating theatre or being prepared for operating when a dull explosion occurred. The nurses ran towards me shrieking. It transpired that S.S. men had driven up to the hospital, nailed up all the entrances and hurled two incendiary bombs into the premises. The first floor was at once enveloped in flames. The fire reached the beds of the wounded. With their clothes burning, they crept towards the windows. Many were so weak that they fell dead after crawling a few steps. Those who reached windows and climbed onto sills were shot from tommy-guns by S.S troopers who had surrounded the building."* (p. 102, similar pp. 103f.)

Considering that the German Armed Forces were desperate for hospital space and equipment in order to treat their own wounded soldiers, who would seriously believe that the first thing they had on their mind when

occupying Kharkov would have been to set the local hospital on fire? It is more likely that the hospital, if it burned down during the early days of the occupation in the first place, was a victim of Soviet sabotage troops which the Red Army left behind in many major cities to wreak havoc among the German occupational forces.

> *"The depositions of the accused and the witnesses state that in various parts of the temporarily occupied territory of the U.S.S.R. the German fascist invaders used specially equipped large vans in the bodies of which Soviet citizens were murdered by exhaust gases containing carbon monoxide. The medico-legal experts proved this beyond doubt for the first time when examining bodies exhumed in the town of Krasnodar and in its vicinity. At the same time the presence of carbon monoxide was irrefutably established by a combination of physiological, chemical and spectroscopic tests of the blood in the tissues and organs of the corpses. The same method of poisoning with carbon monoxide as was used in Krasnodar has been proved by medico-legal examination of some of the bodies exhumed in Kharkov.*
>
> *The lorry which came to be known as the 'gas van' or 'murder van,' designed to exterminate people inside its airtight body by means of exhaust gases, must be regarded as a mechanical method for the simultaneous poisoning of large groups of people."* (pp. 109f.)

The alleged spectroscopic test merits the same comments as those allegedly performed for the Krasnodar trial.

In summarizing, it can be concluded that, according to the two Soviet show trials, the alleged gas vans of an unspecified make and model were grey (pp. 8, 28, 29, 29, 49, 50, 65, 77, 85, 105), had Diesel engines (8, 9, 13, 17, 49, 49), weighed five to seven tons (8, 16, 85), and had two axles and six cylinders (p. 85), and most importantly: their doors closed hermetically (pp. 9, 17, 50, 65, 85, 90). This latter point plus the claimed Diesel engine renders the claims of mass gassings within the claimed span of time (7 to 10 minutes, p. 17) technically impossible, though. I may add in passing that some witnesses claimed that the vans looked like motor buses (pp. 9, 17), moving trucks (p. 29) or ordinary prison vans (p. 50).

It is astounding that, as early as late 1943, the Soviets had prisoners in their custody who were allegedly well familiar with the "gas vans," but that none of these vans had fallen into their hands, although it was claimed that they had been frequently deployed behind the enemy lines

by the *Einsatzgruppen* (see the Becker document of 16 May 1942 and the Just document of 5 June 1942). If these prisoners knew those vans so well, how come that there are no drawings prepared by them?

Once more the trial transcript repeatedly claims as one of the major motivations for the alleged gas van murders the clearing of hospitals (pp. 54, 56-58, 74, 84, 96, 100, 102-108). It is interesting to note that Jews are not mentioned even once as the victims of these gas van murders in either trial. They were added into the story only after the war, when depicting Jews as the unique victims of every German atrocity had become all the rage.

In a later publication entitled *German-Fascist Occupation Troops in the Stavropol Area: Soviet War Documents*, from December 1943 and published by the Soviet Embassy in Washington, DC, we have a description of the gas van on page 172. According to that description, the engine was a "Sau[r]er" engine, hence with certainty a Diesel engine. The connection made here to a company called Saurer is significant, because it reappears in the infamous letter from Becker to Rauff in Nuremberg File 501-PS.

3.4. The Psychological Framework of Postwar Confessions

Much has been said and written about the appalling conditions prevailing during the trials against alleged war criminals in Germany immediately after the war and in the ensuing decades as well as about the many reasons for false or inaccurate confessions and testimonies. Instead of repeating or summarizing this, I refer the reader to a paper by Germar Rudolf (2019, pp. 83-127) and to the pertinent chapter in Rudolf's *Lectures on the Holocaust* (2023, pp. 360-434). Later on, when dealing with witness statements (Chapter 4), I will return to this issue. Right now I want to focus on the desperate situation in which defendants can find themselves when the profound legal standard "innocent until proven guilty" is violated, which happens even today in states under the rule of law. In order to clarify the problems we are dealing with, I want to point out only one legal case here which unfolded in the U.S. in 1997. This case is so powerful, exactly because it has nothing to do with the topic of this book, as will become immediately clear.

In 1997 a young U.S. American navy soldier was accused of having committed a rape-murder against a female neighbor. Although he denied any involvement and passed the lie detector test, the interrogating officer did not believe him and kept him under pressure, demanding a confession. After many hours of relentless interrogations, the man finally confessed. When a DNA test showed that the defendant's DNA did not match the rapist's DNA, the interrogation officer, instead of releasing the innocent man, assumed a gang rape and demanded that he be told the names of the assumed others involved. After days and days of interrogations, the accused finally uttered names of other soldiers he knew. They, too, were arrested and went through the same ordeal. They all initially denied any involvement; they all passed the lie detector test; yet they all confessed after so many hours and days of relentless interrogations. None of their DNA matched that of the rapist, so the interrogator asked for more names. Eventually seven soldiers were under arrest. Only by chance was the real rapist found shortly afterwards, who had raped two more women in the neighborhood and whose DNA had even been on file. Yet nobody cared to look for a DNA match in the police database.

The tragedy was that, when the case went to trial, neither the prosecutors, nor the judges, nor the jury members could believe that perfectly innocent men would confess a horrible crime they had not committed. Even though they all had initially insisted, and some of them even during the trial, that they were innocent; even though the DNA showed that they were; even though they had changed their stories multiple times along the way to adjust it to what the prosecution wanted to hear; even though the final story they had concocted about what had allegedly happened was at times absurd and contradicted material evidence; and even though the true rapist insisted that he had done it alone – the court and the jury still found the four innocent men guilty of gang-raping and murder.

This scandalous case of miscarriage of justice was thoroughly documented (Wells/Leo 2008) and led to a documentary in the U.S. public broadcasting channel PBS on Nov. 9, 2010.[74] In it Tom Wells expounded that the threat of capital punishment hovering over those four inno-

[74] See http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/the-confessions as well as their website with literature about this phenomenon at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/the-confessions/false-confessions-and-interrogations.

cent men had a similar effect as the presentation of the torture devices had during medieval witch trials.

Hence, all it takes to make almost every person confess almost any crime is to put him or her into a desperate situation which has apparently only one exit: comply with the wishes of your tormentors. In the long run, everybody will confess. Physical abuse is no prerequisite. After endless exhausting interrogations and weeks or months of incarceration, the prospect of many more months of this and of many years, nay, decades in prison – or even of the death penalty – makes almost every defendant willing to say just about anything the interrogator wants to hear – if only the threatened punishment can be averted or ameliorated:

> *We know you are guilty. If you don't confess and cooperate, we'll lock you away for the rest of your life – or maybe we will even put you onto the electric chair.*

One must keep in mind that we are dealing here with criminal proceedings of "every day" crimes in a highly developed and sophisticated legal system.

How much worse must it have been for the German defendants during the immediate postwar trials, where the defendants had no recourse to any efficient defense, where third degree torture was common practice, and where the death penalty was meted out by the hundreds? And how bad must it have been for the German defendants during the trials in West Germany ever since, where disputing the reality of the claims made by the prosecution posed the risk of an even more severe punishment for lack of contrition and repentance?

Having said this, I will now turn to the various "confessions" and witness statements made regarding the "gas vans" without repeating over and over again the basically worthless nature of such confessions.

3.5. Gas Vans during the IMT and NMTs

3.5.1. The Soviet Background

The gas van claim played only a minor role during the International Military Tribunal (IMT) and the Nuremberg Military Tribunals (NMTs) after the war. Not just with respect to this claim, these trials were extensions of the Soviet wartime show trials discussed before. This is not just proven by the first reference to "gas vans" during the IMT, which oc-

curred in the indictment with indirect reference to the claims made during the Soviet show trials in Krasnodar and Kharkov (IMT, Vol. 1, p. 49; shortly thereafter repeated by the Soviet prosecutor Ozol, vol. 2, p. 63):

> *"In Krasnodar some 6,700 civilians were murdered by poison gas in gas vans,* […].
>
> *In Kharkov about 195,000 persons were either tortured to death, shot, or gassed in gas vans."*

In addition to these show trials, Soviet prosecutor Smirnov presented the minutes of a Soviet court-martial – of all things – held on 29 October 1944, which claims the "annihilation of Soviet citizens in Smolensk in May 1943, by means of asphyxiation through carbon monoxide in gas vans." The "information" gathered by Soviet court-martials was most certainly not more but rather less reliable than that gathered during the above-discussed Soviet show trials (vol. 7, p. 465). The attempt of defense lawyer Dr. Kurt Kauffmann to have this obvious propaganda material excluded failed, though, because Art. 21 of the London Charter defining the rules of the IMT stated clearly that all evidence created by the victorious powers has to be accepted at face value (vol. 1, p. 15), or in legalese expressed by the court's presiding judge Lord Geoffrey Lawrence (vol. 7, p. 453):

> *"Article 21 is perfectly clear, and it directs the Tribunal to take judicial notice of the various documents which are there set out, and expressly refers to the records and findings of military or other tribunals of any of the United Nations."*

Other similar Soviet claims about "gas vans" were similarly based on the "findings" of investigations conducted by Soviet commissions (vol. 7, pp. 503, 544, 556, 571-575). In this context the Soviet prosecution quoted from a deposition allegedly made by a German soldier named E.M. Fenchel who is said to have been a PoW of the USSR. This deposition had been published in 1943 by the Soviet Embassy in the U.S. as part of an already mentioned booklet consisting of crass anti-German atrocity propaganda. It is not known whether this person, whose name is spelled Fenichel in that brochure, ever existed.[75] If so, he was never presented as a witness during any postwar trial. The text contains inter-

[75] Embassy 1943, p. 171; the same witness statement of a PoW Fenchel (without i) is quoted in an undated German translation of a report of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission about German crimes allegedly committed in the Stavropol area: Gosudarstvennij Archiv Rossjskoj Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation), ref. 7445-2-93, p. 24.

esting claims regarding the technical equipment of these vans (IMT, Vol. 7, pp. 572f.):

> *"While working as a motor mechanic, I had the opportunity of studying in detail the van construction especially adopted for suffocating and exterminating people with exhaust gases. There were several such vans in the town of Stavropol at the disposal of the Gestapo.*
>
> *Their construction was as follows: The body was approximately 5 meters long by $2^1/_2$ meters wide by approximately $2^1/_2$ meters in height. It was shaped like a railway car without windows. Inside it was lined with galvanized sheet iron; on the floor, also covered with galvanized iron, was a wooden grating. The door of the body was lined with rubber and was tightly closed with an automatic lock. On the floor of the van, under the grating, were two metal pipes.* […]
>
> *These pipes were connected with a transverse pipe of equal diameter.* […]
>
> *These pipes had frequent holes a half centimeter in width. From the transverse pipe down through a hole in the galvanized iron floor went a rubber hose with a hexagonal screw at the end, threaded so as to fit the thread on the end of the engine exhaust pipe. This hose is screwed on to the exhaust pipe and when the engine is running all the exhaust gas goes into the body of this hermetically closed van. From the accumulation of these gases, a man inside the van died within a short space of time. The machine could contain approximately 70 to 80 people. The motor of this machine usually bore the trademark 'Sau*[r]*er.'"*

Saurer engines were always Diesel engines, so dying within a short period of time was not possible with such engines' exhaust gases. If connected to the hot tail pipe, a rubber hose would not have lasted very long. A hermetically closed box would not have lasted long. The height of the vans' cargo box, though needed to transport standing persons, does not agree with the documented height of a mere 1.70 m. No rubber-lining of the door (what for? Or did he mean a rubber sealing?), automatic door (why and how?) are ever mentioned by other witnesses. As mentioned before (p. 122), the two parallel pipes connected with a transverse pipe and sporting numerous holes would have made no sense at all, other than being expensive and complex to install, complicating the cleaning of the cargo box, and making the entire system susceptible to damage. A thread could not be cut into a regular exhaust pipe, as they

are usually too thin. Plus the extreme temperature differences of an exhaust pipe, coming with considerable thermal expansions and contractions, would have made it difficult to screw anything on it. No engineer would have resorted to such a solution.

Repeated references to the Becker letter and to the telegrams contained in 501-PS as discussed here in Chapter 2.2.2. and 2.2.3. were meant to bolster the Soviet case (vol. 2, p. 126; 3: pp. 559-561, 4: pp. 213, 251, 253, 323f.; 7: pp. 172; 19: 511; 20: p. 177). One of the telegrams was again mention during the Einsatzgruppen Case of the NMTs (vol. 4, p. 514).

3.5.2. Walther Rauff's Affidavits

At war's end Walther Rauff was serving at the Italian front, where he was taken prisoner of war by U.S. troops in spring 1945. While imprisoned he was asked twice to confirm the authenticity of the Becker document, which was to be used as incriminating evidence against the defendants during the then pending Nuremberg Military Tribunal. On 18 October 1945 he wrote a handwritten note across the left margin of this document "confirming" its authenticity. On the next day he signed a brief English affidavit, in which he repeated this confirmation (IMT, Vol. 30, pp. 256-258). Having a prisoner confirm the authenticity of a document before a trial is not necessarily common practice, but when considering the fact that the origin of the Becker document was noted as "unknown," one can understand the U.S. authorities' eagerness to have Rauff confirm its authenticity.

As Weckert has observed correctly (2019, pp. 220f.), Rauff's affidavit contains a number of errors of fact, for instance that he wrongly located the Saurer company in Berlin, when in fact it was located in Vienna:

> *"The vans were built by the Saurer Works, Germany, located, I believe, in Berlin."*

He may have confused Saurer with Berlin Gaubschat Company manufacturing the cargo box for these vehicles. Such minor mistakes would therefore not cast any doubt about the truthfulness of Rauff's affidavit. The orthodox Holocaust literature claims that Rauff had been in charge of deploying the "gas vans" ever since their inception (Kogon *et al.* 1993, pp. 53f.). All the more surprising it is to read that Rauff apparently didn't know much about those vans, which becomes apparent when he says for instance:

> *"In so far as I can state these vans were probably operating in 1941."*

But the "gas vans" are not said to have been "invented" before the outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union – Kogon *et al.* maintain that the gas vans were planned only in late 1941 (1993, p. 53), and according to the Just document they had been deployed starting in December 1941. Hence Rauff's statement doesn't make much sense.

Rauff also claimed that, after reading the Becker document, he had asked Pradel "to have the technical matters, of which the letters complained, remedied." Note the plural "letters"! Hence Becker wasn't just shown one letter, although he certified only the Becker document and doesn't mention any other document. Fact is that the Becker document does not contain any complaints about technical matters. Rauff's statement would make sense in the context of the Just document, though, which suggests numerous technical changes. This makes me suspect that Rauff had been shown that document as well. Why he wasn't asked to confirm the authenticity of the Just document as well is a mystery. Having been shown two such documents, which, superficially seen, seemed to mutually confirm each other, must have left an impression on Rauff. But since the Just document was never introduced during the IMT or the subsequent NMTs, maybe the issue of having its authenticity confirmed never came up.

Although the Becker document implied that Rauff was one of the main responsible persons in the deployment of the "gas vans" and as such "responsible for nearly 100,000 deaths during the Second World War,"[76] the U.S. troops did not transfer him to Germany for prosecution. Some time later Rauff actually even managed to escape from a U.S. internment camp and subsequently fled from one country to the next. He eventually emigrated to Chile, where he was interviewed at least twice, once by a journalist and once by a German public prosecutor.

The first interview was conducted by the U.S. journalist Georgie Anne Geyer, who met Rauff in southern Chile in 1966. Here are the relevant passages of what she claims Rauff had told her (Geyer 1966, pp. 109f.)

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[76] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_Rauff.

> *"Then, in a conversation that kept changing from moment to moment, I decided to wade in – I asked him of what he was actually accused. His face tightened:*
> *'They say I killed ninety-six thousand Jews,' he said unemotionally. 'They know I never killed one man, and we never killed one Jew there.' He paused. 'That was* [not] *a gentleman's war.'*
> *'There is no brief way to explain it all,' he said as we drank a white Chilean wine. 'Nobody can explain simply what happened in Germany. You have to understand what Germany went through in the twenties and thirties. It was a proud country, humiliated. No people can stand that. There were terrible things done, later on – I don't say there weren't terrible things. I'm not one who says he didn't know…' (He seemed, I thought here, almost strangely proud of not taking the 'easy' way out on 'knowing.') 'I knew. But I was a soldier – right or wrong, my country. A soldier obeys. That's what he is.'*
> *I pressed him, because I still did not, then, know all the details of his case. 'Of what exactly are you accused?'*
> *'They say that I was in charge of technical things,' he said, his voice sinking lower. 'What did I know of technical things? I was the organizer. Organization – that was my strength.'* [...].
> *As the corpulent hotelkeeper's wife served us lamb from Tierra del Fuego, I asked him, 'If you could go back, would you do the same thing over again?'*
> *'Yes,' he said slowly, 'I would have to say I would do the same thing again. There was nothing else to do.'"*

All we can deduce from these meager statements is that Rauff apparently had no bad conscience, that he felt innocent of the accusation of murdering 97,000 people, the figure given in the Just document (and not 96,000, as Rauff erroneously stated). Claiming that the Second World War was a "gentleman's war" is surreal and contradicted by himself shortly thereafter when admitting that there "were terrible things done." Hence I assume that this is a mistake in Geyer's book. Unfortunately Geyer did not dig dipper into Rauff's alleged knowledge of things.

Rauff was more specific about what he knew during an interview he volunteered to give to a German prosecutor on 28 June 1972.[77] Although most of the testimony is about competence issues in his former

[77] www2.ca.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/people/r/rauff.walter/Rauff-deposition-translation; page numbers of the interrogation protocol as rendered in this translation.

office at the RSHA – he describes himself again as having been a mere "mobilization organizer" (p. 8) – there are some devastating statements about the "final solution" from a man who was allegedly deeply involved in its implementation:

> *"Of the measures against the Jews in Russia I knew right from the start. I never got to know officially, however, on what order the killing of the Jews was based. While I got to know after the war that there was a so-called Führer order, the content of which was the liquidation of the Jews for racial reasons, I cannot remember that during the war it had ever been said that there was such an order. Of the existence of such an order I should have been informed for my activity in Tunis, because there were many Jews there who even worked for us voluntarily without anything happening to them.*
>
> *Already during the Polish campaign I had heard of liquidation measures against the Jews, without being still able today to say whether I got to know that officially in the course of meetings or from any conversations."* (p. 8)

So here we have a person allegedly deeply involved in the organization of the mass murder of Jews, but he knows nothing of any orders to eliminate the Jews. In fact, his entire testimony is riddled with doubts and "I don't know anymore." This emphasizes that Rauff could not distinguish anymore between what he knew back then and what he has "learned" ever since. Fact is, however, that, instead of him killing Jews, these Jews worked for him "voluntarily without anything happening to them."

When asked more specifically about the "gas vans," Rauff answered:

> *"Regarding the annihilation of Jews in Russia I know that gas vans were used for this purpose. I cannot say, however, from when on and to what extent this happened. I used to think that the thing with the gas vans started at the time when I was at the navy. Today I have doubts about this and consider it possible that this matter only got going after I had returned from the navy. At any rate I know that at some time after my return I saw two of these gas vans standing in the yard, which Pradel showed to me. Somehow I then also learned that the gas vans were used for the execution of sentences and for the killing of Jews.*
>
> *I consider it impossible that Pradel should have carried out the development of the gas vans on his own initiative. He must have re-*

> *ceived an order for this either from me or from another superior standing above me.*
>
> *Whether at that time I had doubts against the use of gas vans I cannot say. The main issue for me at the time was that the shootings were a considerable burden for the men who were in charge thereof and that this burden was taken off them through the use of the gas vans.*
>
> *I don't think that Dr. Siegert was involved in these matters at the time, although he probably knew about them.*
>
> *It is correct that I received something from Becker about the use of gas vans. I myself had told Becker to send me a corresponding report."* (p. 12)

Excuse me? The person centrally responsible cannot remember how it came that these vans were used? And he only "somehow" – accidentally? – "learned that the gas vans were used for […] the killing of Jews"? And as the one in charge of "mobilizing" the *Einsatzgruppen* and equipping them with vehicles, as the one who was allegedly involved in defining and improving the "gas vans'" design, how come he was shown such a heinous vehicle only once in passing?

Since General Pinochet steadfastly refused to extradite him, Rauff had nothing to fear; hence he agreed voluntarily to testify in front of a German prosecutor. I therefore think that Rauff's statement is sincere and to the best of his knowledge. But all it proves is that he cannot distinguish anymore between what he knew then and what he learned later. However, if he had indeed been in charge of deploying these vans following extermination orders from higher up, then he most certainly would have remembered, or so I am inclined to think.

Rauff died on 14 May 1984 in Chile without ever having been prosecuted for his lack of knowledge about the crimes he is said to have committed.

3.5.3. Otto Ohlendorf's Affidavit and Testimonies

Ohlendorf had been the head of the security service (*Sicherheitsdienst*) within the SS-RSHA from 1939 to 1945. I subsequently quote from p. 3 of his affidavit dated 5 November 1945 (Document 2640-PS, *IMT*, Vol. 31, p. 41):

> *"In the spring of 1942, we received ~~corpse~~ gas vehicles from the Chief of the Security Police and the SD in Berlin. These vehicles were made available by office II of the RSHA. The man who was responsible for*

> *the cars of my Einsatzgruppe was Becker. We had received orders to use the cars for the killing of women and children. Whenever a unit had collected a sufficient number of victims, a car was sent for their liquidation. We also had these* ~~*corpse*~~ *gas vehicles stationed in the neighborhood of the transit*[78] *camps into which the victims were brought. The victims were told that they would be resettled and had to climb into the vehicle for that purpose. After that the doors were closed and* ~~*the gas turned on*~~ *by starting the vehicle the gas streamed in. The victims died within 10 to 15 minutes. The cars were then driven to the burial place, where the corpses were taken out and buried.* […]
>
> *I was shown the letter which Becker wrote to Rauff, the head of the Technical Department of office II, in regard to the use of these* ~~*corpse*~~ *gas vehicles. I know both these men personally and am of the opinion that this letter is an authentic document."*

Ohlendorf's original testimony is extremely interesting, because in its original form he consistently used the term "*Totenwagen*" = corpse vehicle (or wagon for the dead). The "*Toten*" was later struck out and replaced by "*Gas*." The English translation of his testimony has no trace of this original wording.

Similarly revealing is the way Ohlendorf originally described the way the gas was administered ("*das Gas* [*wurde*] *angedreht*" = the gas [was] turned on). This was of course not in accordance with the official story of exhaust gases being piped into the cargo box, and so this passage, too, was changed later on.

Other than that, we do not learn anything new about the deployment of the gas vans from Ohlendorf's declaration. It confirms the previously quoted witness testimony, according to which the van could operate ten to fifteen minutes. I maintain my claim that we deal with a technical impossibility: If the cargo box was hermetically sealed, then either the box would have burst or else the engine would have stalled.

Ohlendorf's testimony during the IMT regarding the gas vans basically repeated what he had already stated in his affidavit. However, when asked "How was the gas turned on?," he revealed his lack of

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78 The official English translation in *NMT* 1950, vol. 4, pp. 206f., has the word "transient." This is no minor mistranslation, but reeks of fraud. Although the English terms could be confused (transient ↔ transit), the original German terms cannot (*Durchgangslager* ↔ *vorübergehende Lager*), and it is unlikely that the translator chose the false, but uncommon term (transient) by accident instead of the common, correct one, because the unwelcome term used by Ohlendorf here supports the revisionist theory that the alleged "extermination camps" were indeed mere transit camps.

knowledge of any details about the issue by responding: "I am not familiar with the technical details" (*ibid.*, p. 322). This confirms that the original German version of Ohlendorf's affidavit probably conveyed what he had thought, and that the correction was done by (or on command of) others. Also, his claim about how many persons were executed at one time (15 to 25, *ibid.*, p. 323) is at odds with the load usually claimed, which was three times as large.

He added a peculiar twist when claiming that Himmler had ordered in the spring of 1942 that women and children are to be killed only in gas vans rather than by shootings (Vol. 4, pp. 322, 332; also NMT, Vol. 4, pp. 205). This has not been confirmed or claimed by anyone else as far as I could find out.

During his interrogation, Ohlendorf was asked to authenticate the Becker document, which is peculiar, as it shows that the prosecution was desperate to get anyone to confirm its authenticity. That was not normal procedure during the IMT. Anyway, Ohlendorf vaguely confirmed the authenticity by saying, among other things, that it "roughly correspond to the experiences" he had at the time. He also stated that he knew the Becker letter because he "saw this letter during my interrogation," meaning that he was unfamiliar with it before this. He declared that the gas vans were assigned "to the Einsatzgruppe as a special unit, headed by the man who had constructed the vans," and that he thought that "Becker was the constructor of the vans. It was he who was in charge of the vans of Einsatzgruppe D" (*ibid.*, pp. 323f.). All this is blatantly wrong and certainly not in agreement with any experiences. This shows that Ohlendorf was clueless and tried to make up some seemingly coherent story on the fly.

A little later, he repeated that he knew about the Becker letter only because he had "learned of Becker's reports for the first time from the letter to Rauff, which was shown to me here," and then radically contradicted his earlier endorsement of the Becker letter as genuine because it corresponds to his experiences. Becker's claim that the victims died in agony was allegedly not true (*ibid.*, p. 332):

> *"On the contrary, I know from the doctor's reports that the victims were not conscious of their impending death."*

Ohlendorf testified again during the *Einsatzgruppen* Case of the Nuremberg Military Tribunal. There he specified that there were two different sizes of gas vans, one for up to 15 people, and the other for up to 30, and repeated his claim that they were to be used only for women

and children. Amazingly, when asked whether the cargo box had any windows, he responded "That is possible" (NMT, Vol. 4, p. 301), although he insisted that he saw such a van only once. How he could have known that there were two types with different capacities, if he had seen only one, is unclear. All this shows once more that Ohlendorf was profoundly ignorant of the issue he was asked to testify about.

3.5.4. Ernst Biberstein's Affidavit

Between September 1942 and June 1943, Biberstein was commander of *Einsatzkommando* 6. In his affidavit, he writes regarding the deployment of gas vans (translation of document No-4314, NMT, Vol. 4, p. 210):

> *"I personally superintended an execution in Rostov which was performed by means of a gas truck. The persons destined for death* […] *were loaded into the gas truck which held between 50 and 60 people.* […] *I myself saw the unloading of the dead bodies, their faces were in no way distorted, death came to these people without any outward signs of spasms. The gas truck was driven by the driver Sackenreuter of Nuernberg who had been most carefully instructed about the handling of the gas truck, having been through special training courses."*

While it is not likely that a commander of such a unit would waste his time by sitting in the passenger seat of such a van during its operation, it sure is possible. But a training course for gas-van drivers? Are we to believe that Germany actually had special training courses for the teaching of gas-van mass murderers?[79] Or is Biberstein here referring to the instruction of drivers in the handling of producer-gas vehicles?

This brings up the issue on how the operators of these gas vans were instructed on how to use them. Maybe some secret courses to learn the trade existed indeed. But unless I find evidence for it, I decide *in dubio pro reo*.

3.5.5. Karl Braune's Testimony

Braune, head of *Einsatzkommando* 11b from October 1941 to October 1924, stated the following in his affidavit (translation of document NO-4234, NMT, Vol. 4, p. 214):

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[79] August Becker mentioned such training courses as well in 1960 (Beer 1987, p. 112).

> *"In the spring of 1942 a gas truck was placed at the disposal of my unit, but I did not use it for executions. In my opinion an execution by shooting is more honorable for both parties than killing by means of a gas truck. This is the reason why I refused to use the gas truck."*

A brave and honorable act of inner resistance, bravo! And his superiors, allegedly always short of trucks to kill people, let him get away with having his gas van just sit there and rust?

3.5.6. Various Testimonies

I now turn to a number of statements by defendants at the IMT as well as their lawyers. First comes Baldur von Schirach, during the war head of the *Hitler-Jugend* and *Reichsstatthalter* in Vienna (Vol. 14, p. 431):

> *"Dr. Colin Ross came to Vienna in 1944 and told me that he had received information, via the foreign press, that mass murders of Jews had been perpetrated on a large scale in the East. I then attempted to find out all I could. What I did discover was that in the Warthegau executions of Jews were carried out in gas vans."*

Unfortunately, no one at the trial was interested to find out how and by which means von Schirach had found out what, as he was interrupted at that point, and the issue was not brought up anymore. The Chełmno Camp is located in that Warthegau area, where mass murders with gas vans are claimed to have happened. I will return to this topic when dealing with the German postwar trials.

Alfred Jodl, at war's end chief of staff of the supreme command of the German armed forces, stated the following (Vol. 15, p. 333):

> *"I never heard a single word about tortures, deported persons, or prisoners of war, crematoriums or gas vans, torments reminiscent of the Inquisition, and medical experiments."*

Although it might be that he had not heard of some of these things, he surely went too far when claiming that he had never heard anything about prisoners of war.

Hans Fritzsche, editor-in-chief of the German news agency "Deutsches Nachrichten-Büro" and Josef Goebbels's right-hand man, stated in his defense (Vol. 17, p. 181):

> *"I, as a journalist who worked during that period, am firmly convinced that the German people were unaware of the mass murders of the Jews and assertions to that effect were considered rumors; and reports which reached the German people from outside were officially denied again and again. As these documents are not in my*

possession, I cannot quote from memory individual cases of denial; but one case I do remember with particular clearness. That was the moment when the Russians, after they recaptured Kharkov, started legal proceedings during which killing by gas was mentioned for the first time.

I ran to Dr. Goebbels with these reports and asked him about the facts. He stated he would have the matter investigated and would discuss it with Himmler and with Hitler. The next day he sent me [a] *notice of denial. This denial was not made public; and the reason stated was that in German legal proceedings it is necessary to state in a much plainer manner matters that need clarification. However, Dr. Goebbels explicitly informed me that the gas vans mentioned in the Russian legal proceeding were pure invention and that there was no actual proof to support it."*

Hans Laternser, defense lawyer of the generals on trial, deliberated in his final plea (Vol. 21, p. 402):

"In the autumn of 1943, 195,000 persons are alleged to have been killed in mass executions and in gas vans in Kiev. For counter-evidence I refer to Affidavits 1116-a, 1116-b, and 1116-c, which show that the Wehrmacht never possessed any gas vans."

Has anyone ever heard about these affidavits? So far, I have been unable to locate them. Since they are exonerating, they are probably considered irrelevant by orthodox historiography.

The same is true for 60 more such documents referred to by Hans Gawlik, defense lawyer of SS and SD defendants (Vol. 22, p. 24):

"The Prosecution have also submitted Document Number 501-PS on the use of gas vans. I must point out that Amt III never issued instructions on the use of gas vans, as testified by the witness Dr. Ehlich [vol. 42, p. 106]. *Document 501-PS submitted by the Prosecution shows by its reference Number II that the matter of gas vans was dealt with in Amt II of the RSHA. The SS-Obersturmbannfuhrer Rauff mentioned in the document was not a member of Amter III and VI, but a group chief in Amt II of the RSHA. He was at that time in charge of motor transport. I refer in this connection to the testimony of the witnesses Ohlendorf and Hoeppner (Session of 3 January 1946) and to 60 affidavits from the entire Reich and the occupied territories for the period from 1941 to 1945, according to which the SD had nothing to do with the use of gas vans."*

There were a few other minor references to gas vans during the IMT, for instance the affidavit by Paul Blobel (3824-NO, NMT, Vol. 4, p. 213). Where they contain any information about the gas vans, I have listed them in the appropriate sections of Chapter 4.2.

3.5.7. Franz Ziereis's "Confession"

On 8 April 1946, the former inmate of the concentration camp Mauthausen, Hans Maršálek, made a deposition for the Nuremberg Tribunal in which he claimed the following (IMT, Vol. 33, pp. 279-286):

> *"On 22 May 1945, the Commandant of the Concentration Camp Mauthausen, Franz Ziereis, was shot by American soldiers while escaping and was taken to the branch camp of Gusen. Franz Ziereis was interrogated by me in the presence of the Commander of the 11th Armored Division (American Armored Division) Seibel; the former prisoner and physician Dr. Koszeinski; and in the presence of another Polish citizen, name unknown, for a period of six to eight hours. The interrogation was effected in the night from 22 May to 23 May 1945. Franz Ziereis was seriously wounded – his body had been penetrated by three bullets – and knew that he would die shortly and told me the following:"* (p. 280)

Before we turn to some excerpts of what Maršálek claims what Ziereis told him, we must pause for a moment and consider the situation: The former German camp commander Ziereis has been shot and is slowly bleeding to death. Yet instead of trying to save his life, they let him slowly die. In addition, the weak and dying Ziereis is being incessantly interrogated for hours on end through the night. This interrogation is not done by some neutral investigating person, but instead by three former inmates who must have had many axes to grind.

There is no signed and sworn "confession" by Ziereis. We only have Maršálek's word for what Ziereis allegedly said, among which we find for instance:

> *"Chemielskwy and Seidler in Gusen had human skin specially tanned on which there were tattoos. From this leather they had books bound, and they had lampshades and leather cases made."* (p. 281)

After U.S. units had spread the atrocity story about lampshades and "leather" objects manufactured from the skin of murdered prisoners in the Buchenwald Camp, Maršálek made sure "his" camp could compete

with this by putting into Ziereis's mouth a similar nonsense, for which there is not a shred of evidence.

> *"According to an order by Himmler, I was to liquidate all prisoners on behalf of SS-Obergruppenfuehrer Dr. Kaltenbrunner; the prisoners were to be led into the tunnels of the factory Bergkristall and only one entrance was to be left open. Then this entrance was to be blown up by the use of explosives and the death of the prisoners was to be effected in this manner. I refused to carry out this order."* (*ibid.*)

So wasn't Ziereis a humane commander after all? The entire story is probably invented, though.

> *"A gassing plant was built in Concentration Camp Mauthausen by order of the former garrison doctor, Dr. Krebsbach, camouflaged as a bathroom. Prisoners were gassed in this camouflaged bathroom."* (*ibid.*)

I quoted this sentence in order to avoid accusations of omitting decisive passages. Since gas chamber claims are not a topic of this book, I merely want to point out that Austrian orthodox historians established in 1995 the complete lack of any traces of killing devices at the concentration camp Mauthausen. They also determined that the gas chamber shown to visitors in that camp is a post-war fabrication with no relation to reality (Freund/Perz/Stuhlpfarrer 1995).

Immediately afterwards we find the following statement:

> *"Apart from that a specially built automobile commuted between Mauthausen and Gusen, in which prisoners were gassed while travelling. The idea for the construction of this automobile was Dr. Wasiczki's, SS-Untersturmfuehrer and pharmacist. I, myself, never put any gas into this automobile, I only drove it, but I knew that prisoners were being gassed."* (*ibid.*)

This, too, is made up. If there ever were any "gas vans," then they were the brainchild of people higher up in the hierarchy of the RSHA, like Walther Rauff. Apart, Rauff's letter of 26 March 1942 (see Appendix 4), if dealing with "gas vans," would be an indicator that the Mauthausen Camp had requested such vans from the German Institute for Criminological Technology in Berlin. Hence no "gas vans" were ever invented by some little SS-*Untersturmführer* personally known to Ziereis.

Ziereis's claim to have driven the van himself is utterly unbelievable. The boss of a network of prison camps comprising 50,000 inmates

and more – numerous "satellite labor camps" were also under Ziereis's command – most certainly did *not* spend his precious time commuting in a van between two camps.

Furthermore, the expression "I, myself, never put any gas into this automobile" indicates that those vans did not use their exhaust gas but required the addition of some other gas. This is probably the origin of the legend that some of these vans actually used Zyklon B to kill people. I will return to this claim in Chapter 5.1., where I discuss claims made by French orthodox historian Pierre-Serge Choumoff about Mauthausen.

At the end of his "confession," Ziereis is said to have claimed the following:

> *"SS-Gruppenfuehrer Gluecks gave the order to classify weak prisoners as mentally deranged and to kill them by a gas plant which existed in the Castle Hartheim near Linz. There, about 1 - 1½ million human beings were killed."* (p. 282)

Even orthodox historians agree that such a gargantuan number of victims is nonsense, plain and simple. If Ziereis said something like it, it merely proves the methods used to extract this statement. Maršálek himself must have been aware of the incredibility of this victim count, so he tried to shore it up by stating at the end of his testimony:

> *"He* [Ziereis] *however insisted on this number and explained to me that actually a great number of mentally deranged from the entire Southern Area of Germany were shipped there and liquidated. This accounts for the high number of victims."* (p. 285)

Sure.

Ingrid Weckert pointed out (2019, p. 212) that Maršálek changed his story in the second edition of his books about the history of the Mauthausen Camp. Regarding the death of Ziereis, he writes there (1980, p. 200, note 15):

> *"On May 23, 1945, Ziereis was apprehended in his hunting cabin on the Phyrn (upper Austria) by American soldiers, and was injured by two bullets when he attempted to flee. As a result of these injuries, Ziereis died on May 25, 1945, in the 131st American Evacuation Hospital, Gusen."*

In this book, Maršálek makes no reference to any interrogation of Ziereis, which according to his affidavit of 1946 would have taken place the night *before* Ziereis's discovery and arrest. Maršálek even explains in his preface why he has omitted this affidavit:

> *"Further, all statements that cannot be documented* […] *have been deleted."*

3.5.8. A Special Murder Vehicle

A special case of murder vehicle is described in two German documents which entered the Nuremberg files as 4048-PS (IMT, Vol. 34, pp. 125-128; cf. vol. 20, pp. 151f.).[80] They describe a German plot to assassinate French General Deboisse held as a PoW in late 1944. The second of these documents written by Kaltenbrunner and send to Himmler states succinctly:

> *"Carbon monoxide is released by the driver into the closed back of the car. The apparatus can be installed with the simplest means and can be removed again immediately. After considerable difficulties a suitable vehicle has now become available."*

From the proceedings themselves it can be gleaned that Deboisse was indeed assassinated (vol. 21, p. 501), but it is unclear by which means, as two more options (shooting, poison) were laid out in these documents. I am quoting this document in order to highlight that the German authorities considering this assassination did not plan to pipe exhaust gases into the passenger compartment, but rather to use a separate device, probably bottled pure, odorless CO gas. Anything else would have been technically too complicated, plus it would have caused the intended victim to become suspicious and cause trouble.

Himmler, of course, would also have been the driving force behind the "gas van" mass murders in Eastern Europe. If these mass murders had taken place in the preceding years, wouldn't the masterminds of this crime have thought similarly then and employed something more suitable than hardly toxic, but highly irritating Diesel fumes?

3.6. Gas Vans during Postwar Trials Outside of Germany

3.6.1. Yugoslavia

In 2010 Byford published a critical study about gas-van claims made by the Yugoslavian judiciary after the war. Since his critical method of as-

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[80] The German "Kohlenoxid" = carbon (mon)oxide has been mistranslated as carbon dioxide in the English translation.

sessing witness statements is of central importance to the present study, I will abstain from reinventing the wheel and direct the reader's attention to Byford's paper as well as my remarks about it in Chapter 4.1.

I want to indicate here, though, that one witness about the Semlin Camp near Belgrade testified that the Jews there were killed by all kinds of means, among them *not* a gas van but a gas chamber. This account was mentioned during the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem (State of Israel 1993, Session 46, Part 6; 19 May 1961):

"I know that part of [the Jews…] *were suffocated in gas chambers."*

Even though prosecutor Bar-Or tried to repair this damaging testimony by stating that this "is not a reference to gas chambers," since we "know from other evidence that gas vans were sent to Serbia," but that does not change the fact that with this statement the divergence of witness accounts on those alleged gas vans received yet another – stationary – dimension.

3.6.2. Poland

3.6.2.1. General Remarks

The Polish trials against Germans during the immediate postwar time are infamous for their Stalinist character. They were prepared and conducted during a time when Poland had not only been forcibly turned into a Stalinist state due to its occupation by the Red Army, but in addition it was dominated by a rabid anti-Germanism which in those years had turned genocidal, manifested by the greatest ethnic cleansing the world has ever seen (de Zayas 1993) and by extermination camps into which German civilians were pressed and subjected to a cruel regiment leading to the death of many thousand inmates (Sack 1993). In those years Poland desperately needed a reason to "justify" its unfolding genocide and a tool with which to secure for the future its robbery of 20% of Germany's territories. The Stalinist show trials staged after the war were the vehicles with which this goal was to be achieved. They were charged with producing the evidence of an unprecedented genocide committed by Germans on Polish soil, which was to justify or at least make understandable any anti-German measure after the war. While the IMT and the NMTs only scratched the surface by making mainly unsubstantiated claims about the alleged genocide committed by the Germans during the war, the Polish judiciary subsequently set out to fill in the framework given by the Allied tribunals.

The most prominent of these trials is the Krakow trial against the guards of the former German concentration camp at Auschwitz. Mattogno has thoroughly documented (2019), how the extant German wartime documents were twisted and maliciously misrepresented by the court in order to form a base upon which, with the help of mendacious witness statements and coerced confessions, the legend of the extermination camp was erected, which to this day forms Poland's, if not the world's stranglehold on Germany's (and Austria's) self-perception.

The same methods were of course also applied by the Stalinist Polish postwar judiciary during other trials against Germans. Although this is not to say that Germans did not commit crimes during the war in Poland, this nevertheless needs to be kept in mind when looking into these court cases.

3.6.2.2. The Cases against Piller and Gielow

According to my knowledge, two trials were conducted in Poland shortly after the war in which gas vans played a role. The only information I could come by so far I have found in the chapter on the Kulmhof/Chełmno Camp of Kogon *et al.*, who quote frequently from witness statements contained in the trial records of these trials, one of which had been conducted in Łódź, the other in Kalisz (court file dates 1947 and 1948, respectively; Kogon *et al.* 1993, fn 6, 10, 13, 17-19, 35, 37, 39, 41-43, pp. 262f.). The remaining quotes of that chapter refer almost exclusively to the court records of the Bonn trial against the Chełmno guards, which I will address in Chapter 3.7.4.1.

Kogon *et al.* quote a "confession" made by Walter Burmeister after the war in Poland about the deployment of gas vans in Chełmno. He describes them just as they appear in the extant authentic correspondence between the RSHA and the Gaubschat company, yet instead of a simple hole in the floor through which the gas was piped, he claimed in deviation from the standard version that underneath the obligatory wooden floor grate there was a "pipe, pierced with holes, which led out to the front," where a "metal spiral hose" was attached in order to pipe exhaust gases into the cargo box. Burmeister insisted with resolve, however, that the vehicles were "medium-weight Renault trucks with Otto engine," which had been "difficult to drive" (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 77). However, there is no documentary or anecdotal evidence that a Renault truck was ever used by the RSHA for anything, let alone as a gas van equipped as described by Burmeister. They are all supposed to have

been Diamond or Saurer trucks. This indicates that Burmeister was merely parroting what the Poles put on his platter, and he added his own yarn, which reveals the worthlessness of his statement.

It is worth noting that, during an interrogation some 15 years later in Germany on January 24, 1961, Burmeister described the piping device differently, this time strictly following the version claimed by the Becker and Just letters (Klee/Dreßen/Rieß 1988, p. 202):

> *"The gas van was a large truck with a ca. 4 to 5 m long, ca. 2.20 m wide, and 2 m high cargo box. It was lined with sheet metal on the inside. There was a wooden grate on the floor. There was a hole in the floor of the cargo box which could be connected to the exhaust pipe with a flexible metal hose."*

Hence Burmeister's knowledge had been "streamlined" over the years to fit the orthodox "truth."

Another "confession" from the Polish files stems from Walter Piller, the former deputy commander of the Chełmno Camp. When he penned down this text in May 1945, he was a PoW in the custody of the Soviet Union. So here we have a direct documentary link between the Stalinist wartime show trial in the Soviet Union and its copycat version in Poland after the war. Kogon reproduces large parts of this piece of Soviet war propaganda (*ibid.*, pp. 95-99). Since Mattogno has dealt with Piller's "confession" in detail (2017, Chapter 7.1.), I will restrict myself to the passages dealing with gas vans (*ibid.*, p. 98):

> *"At the end of this ramp was a closed truck into which the Jews had to climb. When seventy or ninety people were inside, the doors were closed and the van drove the two hundred–odd meters to the crematory ovens. On the way, Laabs, the driver, opened a valve through which gas flowed. The occupants died within two to three minutes. The gas used was produced by the gasoline engine."*

If the deputy camp commander didn't know, who would have? The story about the valve in the driver's cabin and the swift execution within 2 to 3 minutes sticks out of the mass of witness accounts like a sore thumb. Soviet war propaganda, as I said. An interesting aspect is the gasoline engine, whose exhaust gases would have been suitable to kill, although hardly within three minutes after opening "the valve." Considering that the Soviets insisted on a Diesel engine as a source of the exhaust gas still during the IMT, it is unlikely that this version came from there. On the other hand, the German word for gasoline (*Benzin*) is fre-

quently used by people unfamiliar with technical issues to describe the fuel for any kind of internal combustion engine.

The affidavits by various witnesses compiled in preparation of these trials will be discussed in detail in the next four subchapters.

3.6.2.3. The Interrogation of Bronisław Falborski

Appendix 9 contains a reproduction of the original as well as a translation of the "Protocol of the interrogation of a witness," which took place on 11 June 1945 in Koło (Poland).[81] In it Falborski claimed to have repaired a truck he considered to have been a "gas van." He described it with no great details as a black truck with a cuboid cargo box. He stated that he "had the impression that there were only two" of these trucks driving forth and back between the Chełmno castle and a forest where, according to other witnesses, the mass graves of the gassing victims are said to have been located.

Right after this statement Falborski says:

> *"Three times I saw a converted moving truck van which is currently in the courtyard of the former 'Ostrowski' company. Once I had already seen this vehicle in the forest, the second time on the road and the third time when it was just coming out of the courtyard of the Chełmno castle."*

With this Falborski suggests that the Ostrowski Magirus was either identical with one of the two trucks mentioned by himself which were allegedly shuttling forth and back from the castle to the forest, or he implies that this moving truck was a third vehicle repeatedly making the same tour. At any rate, this links this vehicle to the alleged gassings in the eyes of this witness.

Since the Polish investigation commission came to the conclusion that this truck had indeed been nothing else but an innocuous moving truck (see Chapter 2.1.), it can therefore be stated with certainty that the witness Bronisław Falborski did see nothing else but a harmless moving truck driving about, and subsequently also that the other trucks driving along the same route were on similarly innocuous missions.

So how do we assess Falborski's description of the repairs he claims to have made on an exhaust system of a truck with apparently homicidal features? The answer to this question lies hidden in the witness's testi-

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[81] Copy and German translation in ZStL ref. 203 AR-Z 69/59, special binder A; also in Bednarz 1946c, pp. 28f.

mony. If we carefully analyze what he tells us about the exhaust system he claims to have repaired, it turns out to be nonsensical:

Illustration 5: Bronisław Falborski in Lanzmann's movie *Shoah* (1985)

a. Large trucks do not have tail pipes reaching all the way to the end of their cargo compartment. Their exhaust pipes exit either overhead of the driver's cabin or on the left side behind the driver's cabin. The reason for this is that the engines of such trucks are always in front of or underneath the driver's cabin, and adding useless five meters of exhaust pipe to reach the truck's end would be a crazy waste of material and would be asking for trouble.
b. There is no other witness testimony confirming the complicated nature of the system as described here (although there are other statements claiming other nonsensical setups, as we will see later).
c. The witness contradicts himself. First he says that the exhaust system allegedly used to perform homicides consisted of three parts: the fixed front part of the exhaust pipe, a fixed part leading into the cargo box, and a flexible part connecting the two ("that the exhaust pipe […] consist[ed…] of three parts"). This is logical. But then he claims that there was another, fourth part between the flexible middle piece and the pipe penetrating the cargo box's floor: "the middle part of the pipe was connected with the interior of the vehicle, but the part between these two parts was worn." This was the very piece he claims to have replaced. Such a piece is nonsensical and most certainly did never exist, even if the rest of his story were true. The witness just made it up in order to have something to replace, that is to say, in order to be able to make up a tall tale.

The drawings added by the witness confirm our impression; they are of a very bad quality and rather puerile, more able to obfuscate the matter than to clarify anything. The upper drawing allegedly represents the truck. The lower sketch consists of two drawings: on the left something resembling two pipes connected by a flange, and on the right a square

with four dots, apparently showing a plan view of the flange, although interestingly it does not include the central opening for the pipe. Hence this Polish mechanic must have been a really bad draughtsman.

Using a flange rather than a clip to attach the flexible hose to the pipe was an awkward solution, as any change from "gassing" to normal operation and *vice versa*, would have necessitated the opening of the flange, which was a rather laborious procedure.

Another surprising aspect of this testimony is that the Germans, who are said to have perpetrated their extermination operations under the strictest secrecy, let a Polish mechanic do this trivial repair of a gas van, allowing him to recognize its murderous nature – all the more so since the exhaust system was still in the "homicidal" position when handed in – and who must have been expected to convey this information to his compatriots. Apart from Falborski himself, seven more individuals are said to have worked in the same workshop where the repair work was done, whose names as given by Falborski indicate that they, too, were Poles. Although the witness claims that the German police did not allow the workers to investigate the design of the vehicle, this is a ridiculous claim, as the mere fact that the exhaust pipe led straight into the cargo box was sufficient proof that the vehicle was meant to be used for murderous ends, a fact which could not have evaded Falborski's and his colleagues' attention.

In summary, it is clear that this witness statement was meant to corroborate the intended claim by the Polish Investigative Commission that the moving truck found by them in the courtyard of the former "Ostrowski" company in Koło, Poland, had been a homicidal "gas van." It is fortunate that at the end of the day this Commission and even the Polish prosecutor were honest enough to admit that this truck never served any homicidal purposes. However, by so doing they proved that witness testimonies given in front of judges or prosecutors in Stalinist postwar Poland did not always tell what they knew but rather what they were told to know.

Falborski also featured in Claude Lanzmann's movie *Shoah* (1985). While right after the war the only knowledge he claimed to have about gas vans came from what he had allegedly observed while repairing one, plus that he had seen these vans on occasion on the roads, in Lanzmann's movie he suddenly had detailed knowledge about their op-

eration, even about the entire program of exterminating the regional Jews:[82]

"'Were there a lot of Jews in Koło?'
'A great many. More Jews than Poles.'
'And what happened with the Koło Jews? Was he an eye-witness?'
'Yes. It was frightful. Frightful to see. Even the Germans hid, they couldn't see that. When the Jews were herded to the station, they were beaten, some were even killed. A cart followed the convoy to pick up the corpses.'
'Those who couldn't walk, were slain?'
'Yes, those who'd fallen.'
'Where did this happen?'
'The Jews were collected in the Koło synagogue. Then they were herded to the station, where the narrow-gauge railroad went to Chełmno.'
'It happened to all the Jews in the area, not just in Koło?'
'Absolutely. Everywhere. Jews were also murdered in the forests near Kalisz, not far from here.' […]
'Was the road between Chełmno, the village and the woods where the pits were asphalted as it is now?'
'The road was narrower then, but it was asphalted.'
'How many feet were the pits from the road?'
'They were around 1,600 feet, maybe 1,900 or 2,000 feet away. So even from the road, you couldn't see them.'
'How fast did the vans go?'
'At moderate speed, kind of slow. It was a calculated speed because they had to kill the people inside on the way. When they went too fast, the people weren't quite dead on arrival in the woods. By going slower, they had time to kill the people inside. Once a van skidded on a curve. Half an hour later, I arrived at the hut of a forest warden named Sendjak.[83] *He told me: 'Too bad you were late. You could have seen a van that skidded. The rear of the van opened, and the Jews fell out on the road. They were still alive. Seeing those Jews crawling, a Gestapo man took out his revolver and shot them. He finished them all off. Then they brought Jews who were working in the woods. They righted the van, and put the bodies back inside.'"*

82 www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPQ9jYe_7HY; _lfFAH3BA04; R6nvodrL7Qo.
83 In 1945 his name had been Maj, see Appendix 9.

30 some odd years after the war Falborski had obviously enhanced his memory with what he had heard since the war's end. I also wonder if by then Falborski had knowledge about the Becker document talking about the gas vans skidding about.

Stories from hearsay related some forty years after the alleged event are notoriously unreliable. In order to proof this, let's imagine this scene described in detail by Falborski at the end of the above quote. According to orthodox historiography, between 50 and 100 people were crammed into these trucks. The truck was operated by one or two men, and it was only occasionally accompanied by a car with one or two more German officials. So let's assume in this case we had "only" 50 victims plus a car as an escort. The truck skidded and turned over. The doors burst open, and 50 Jews came tumbling out still alive. Four German officials now faced 50 Jews somewhere in a forest. One of the Germans decided to shoot them all. So he pulled out his Walther P38, the German standard army pistol – which was carried only by officers, but not by rank and file soldiers. This weapon can hold 8 rounds.[84] Since the Germans did most certainly not send four officers on this gassing tour, the one person having a pistol could not fall back on the other Germans' ammunition. Hence, if assuming that this German officer needed only one bullet for each victim – a conservative assumption – then this German fiend had to reload his pistol (50/8) seven times. It is neither likely that he carried seven full cartridges in his pocket, nor is it likely that he had 42 loose rounds. So how did he get the ammunition needed? And while shooting the first Jew, what was the reaction of the other 49 Jews? Would they have patiently waited for their turn? And after he had emptied his first cartridge and was trying to reload his pistol or radioed to his head office for support and more ammunition, what were the remaining 42 Jews doing? Sitting down and waiting?

Hence we have caught Falborski lying twice. It seems that each time he talks about the "gas vans," he is lying.

It is interesting to note that other Poles who worked together with Falborski at that auto repair shop testified as well, as Falborski himself mentioned.[85] They all described various aspects of the vehicle(s) they had seen and worked on and agreed more or less about what they claim to have seen. The witnesses Jozef Piaskowski and Bronisław Mańkowski allegedly even confirmed the awkward, nonsensical setup of the al-

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84 http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walther_P38.

85 See Chapter 3.6.2.7. for more details.

leged exhaust system.[86] I will spare the reader any more details here and refer to these testimonies instead. Equipped with the critical faculties developed above, the inclined reader will be able to see through these streamlined, orchestrated testimonies without my guidance.

Before leaving this witness and turning to the next witness who testified before the same Polish judge, I would like to draw attention to the testimony of a German witness made some 16 years later containing a detailed description of the exhaust system he claims to have seen. It was Johann Haßler who stated that he had driven a "gas van" (Kohl 2003, pp. 69f.):

> *"At the exhaust pipe, right after the engine, there was a short connecting piece with a thread. Onto this thread a metal hose could be screwed, which led into the interior of the box. Behind the connecting piece was a slider, which closed the exhaust pipe opening to the rear so that the gases were now piped into the interior of the box. There two pipes branched off to both sides, and they ran along the sides of the box floor. The box floor itself was covered by a wooden grate so that the pipes could not been seen. The pipes had a hole of some 1 cm diameter each 4 cm. Exhaust gas was flowing in through these holes when the engine was running.*
>
> *This vehicle was an American 3 ton truck of the make Diamond. Only the chassis and the engine were from that company, though. It had a wooden box-like coachwork measuring 3.5 × 2.5 × 2 m. On the inside it was lined with metal sheets. The vehicle had a dark grey color. It has no windows and had double doors at its back.*
>
> *Unterscharführer Hans Meyerhoff was the co-driver. During the latter deployments of the gas van he operated the gassing device while I merely drove. Operating the gassing device was very easy: A hose had to be connected to the connecting piece, and the slider at the exhaust pipe had to be closed.*
>
> *This was about the gassing of Jews in Minsk* [...]. *Each gas van could accommodate some 25 persons.* […] *This way the gas vans stood side by side some two meters away from the edge of the pit, when the order was issued to let the engines run. Shortly before this the co-driver had connected the metal hose and had closed the slider behind the connecting piece.* […] *the engines ran for some ten minutes. After waiting some more ten minutes, the co-driver had to*

[86] Acc. to Halbersztadt, see footnote 27.

open the doors, and the captive Russians [POWs] *had to pull the dead Jews out of the vehicle and throw them into the pit."*

The exhaust system described here is completely different than what Falborski has described. One may try to explain them away by saying either that Falborski was obviously not inclined to tell the truth anyway or that both witnesses simply had seen different vehicle types.

The problem is more profound, though. Exhaust pipes are not thick pipes allowing the easy addition by welding of thick, threaded pipe pieces forking off to allow a hose to be screwed onto it. The damage done to the exhaust pipe would probably have been bigger than the functionality gained – but was any functionality gained at all?

Adding a slider to close the rear part of the exhaust pipe sounds easy enough, but that is far from true. The slider had to be held in place by something and at once be able to close the pipe completely. Hence this would have required cutting a piece out of the exhaust pipe and inserting some device that could accommodate the slider. That would have made sense only, if one insisted on leaving the metal hose leading into the box's interior connected at all times. If it was added only during a gassing, as the witness claimed, it could just as well have been stuck (or screwed) onto the end of the exhaust pipe. So there was really absolutely no point for such a messy, complex remodeling of the exhaust pipe. It can safely be assumed that the witness made it up.

Another remarkable feature attested to by the witness are the two pipes branching off inside the cargo box to both sides, running "along the sides of the box floor." Giving such a meticulous description of a sophisticated detail might make the testimony more credible in the eyes of the read, but at closer inspection the opposite turns out to be true.

It may be assumed that the witness implied that these pipes were meant to serve the even distribution of the gas inside the van close to the floor (comparable to the burner of a gas stove). Such a system seems reasonable at first sight, but as I have described before (pp. 122, 133), this is far from true. I may elaborate on this a little more here, even if it appears repetitive. Since the exhaust gases would have streamed into the cargo box with considerable speed and since the victims, through their body motions and breathing, would have caused sufficient air motion in the van to further distribute and mix the gases, a sophisticated gas distribution pipework was utterly unnecessary. It would only have complicated the manufacture and maintenance of these alleged vans. As a matter of fact, cleaning the van equipped with such

pipes would have been difficult, and the pipes would have been in constant acute danger of being damaged by the cleaning personnel. The existence of such a pipework is moreover contradicted by the Just document (if one is inclined to take it seriously), which in its third paragraph suggests the upward relocation of the intake pipe (for the gas) so that no fluids can enter into the opening. If it existed in the first place, it can be concluded from this that the gas intake consisted of a mere opening in the floor.

Hence this detailed description of something that no reasonable engineer or mechanic with some common sense would have ever seriously considered installing proves merely that the witness's fantasy was running rampant.

In passing I may note that in a 1961 testimony a certain Erich G. stated that he, too, drove such an alleged gas van in the Minsk area, but according to him the vans could hold 50 to 60 people, and he merely talked about him "connecting the hose to the exhaust pipe" without referring to any fanciful yet useless contraption. (Benz/Distel 2009, pp. 575f.)

3.6.2.4. The Interrogation of Szymon Srebrnik

This witness, who at the time of his interrogation was only 15 years old, is said to have been one of only three survivors of the Chełmno death camp ever to testify about what had transpired there.[87] On 29 June 1945 he testified before the Examining Judge Władysław Bednarz as follows (Srebrnik 1945):

> *"There were three vans:* [a] *larger one and two smaller ones. The larger van could hold up to 170 people, while the smaller ones, 100-120."*

With this size the witness sets the record for the vans' capacity and goes well beyond what would have been physically possible even with the large Saurer trucks. The witness continues:

> *"The van doors were locked with a bolt and a padlock. Then the engine was started. The exhaust fumes entered the interior of the van and suffocated those inside. The exhaust pipe went from the engine along the chassis and into the van, through a hole in the car's floor, which was covered with a perforated sheet of metal.*

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87 State of Israel 1993, vol. III, p. 1194, right after the witness Żurawski had been dismissed; online: …/Session-065-06.html, end of text; cf. Kogon *et al.* 1983, p. 145.

The hole was located more or less in the middle of the chassis. The van's floor was also covered with a wooden grate, just like the one in the bathhouse. This was to prevent the prisoners from clogging the exhaust pipe.

The vehicles were specially adapted vans. On one of them, under a new coat of paint, one could see a trade name. I cannot remember the name, but it started with the word 'Otto.'

I do not know the make of the engine. The chauffeurs were Burstinger [Burmeister?], *Laabs and Gielov. Shouting and banging on the door lasted about four minutes. The van was not moving at that time.*

After the shouting faded, the vehicle started moving in the direction of the crematoriums. When the van reached its destination, its door was unlocked to let the fumes out. Then two Jews went inside and threw out the bodies.

The gas coming out had all the characteristics of the exhaust fumes (colour and smell) I cannot be mistaken here. The corpses, having been searched through, were placed in the furnace. […]*"*

Note that exhaust gases from gasoline engines would not have any distinct, perspicuous characteristics, hence this statement indicates the use of Diesel engines. As to the "trade name" referred to as 'Otto,' he specifies a little later:

"(Here, the witness was shown a van found in the Ostrowski's factory in Koło). This is the van used in Chełmno for gassing. This is the vehicle I mentioned in my testimony with the word 'Otto' on its door."

As mentioned in Chapter 2.1., the moving truck found in Koło was formerly owned by the moving company "Otto Koehn Spedition." Like Falborski, this witness as well confirms the identity of his "gas van," which was no gas van at all. It shows that his statement, too, was orchestrated. That the witness is telling invented nonsense can be seen from the following statement:

"There were a few instances of unintended self-incineration: a Jew trying to set fire to a pile of bodies died in the flames himself."

As if humans can suddenly catch fire when exposed to flame and die in it.

At the end of his statement, when telling the tall tale of his escape, the witness recounts yet another nonsensical story:

> *"Lenz ordered us to lie down on the ground. He shot everybody in the back of the head. I lost consciousness and regained it when there was no one around.*
> *All the SS men were shooting inside the granary. I crawled to the car lighting the spot and broke both headlights. Under the cover of darkness I managed to run away. The wound was not deadly. The bullet went through the neck and mouth and pierced the nose and then went out."*

A miracle, indeed! How much the statements of the witnesses interrogated by Bednarz had been streamlined due to cross-fertilization can be derived from the fact that the peasant Andrzej Miszczak, who had lived close to the Chełmno Camp, could accurately retell Srebrnik's miraculous survival story (Bednarz 1946c, p. 52f.):

> *"Apart from Żurawski maybe also the Jew Simon Srebrnik was rescued, who got shot in the back of the head by the Germans, thus killing him, or so they thought. But the wound wasn't lethal, and Srebrnik survived."*

And here is yet another dramatic atrocity story by Srebrnik, which I refuse to believe, but the reader may disagree with me here:

> *"Finkelstein, whom I have already mentioned in my testimony, had to throw his own sister into* [the] *flames. She regained consciousness and shouted, 'You murderer, why are you throwing me into the furnace? I'm still alive.'"*

3.6.2.5. The Interrogation of Michał Podchlebnik

This witness is said to have been the second of three survivors of the Chełmno death camp. In his interrogation of 9 June 1945 before investigative judge Bednarz, Podchlebnik claims to have merely heard how the gassing procedure in Chełmno was carried out (Podchlebnik 1945):

> *"Suddenly, I heard a truck door slam followed by an outburst of screaming and banging on the truck's walls. Then I heard the engine start and after six-seven minutes, when the screams fainted and died, the truck left the palace grounds. Next we were ordered to go to a large room upstairs."*

Why the persons herded into the van would suddenly start to scream after the door had been shut is a mystery. Here, too, the gassings are said to have been committed while the truck was stationary, a procedure conducive only for vehicles with gasoline engines.

The witness's next statement is a story he heard from other inmates who had allegedly unloaded the vans, hence this is from hearsay:

"They removed the corpses from large black vans, in which according to their accounts, Jews had been poisoned with exhaust fumes.

The corpses were in underwear, in the van there were some towels and pieces of soap […]*."*

Illustration 6: Michał Podchlebnik (Bednarz 1946c, Illustration p. 10)

Later the witness states that he had to remove "towels and pieces of soap" from the van after the gassing in order to reuse them. This procedure is said to have been meant to fool the victims into believing that they were going to take a shower. People struggling for their lives would have made a mess of both towels and soap, though, so such a procedure sounds far-fetched.[88]

"The following day I volunteered to work in the woods.

While I was leaving, I saw a large van with its back end up against the palace. The door was open. A footbridge made it easier to get into the vehicle. What drew my attention was a wooden grate on the van floor, just like those in a bathhouse. […]

At about 8am the first car from Chełmno arrived. When the van's door was opened, dark smoke with a white tint belched out from the inside. We were not allowed to approach the van at that moment and could not even look in the direction of the open door."

How did he manage to see the smoke then? Interestingly, lethal gasoline engines do not produce dense smoke, and smoking Diesel engines are hardly lethal, most certainly not for those opening the door.

"I noticed that the Germans, having opened the door, ran away from the vehicle. I cannot tell whether the gas coming out from the inside was an exhaust gas or some other gases. We usually had to wait for so long that I did not smell the gas. Gas masks were not used.

After three or four minutes had passed three Jews went into the van."

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88 In his testimony before a Polish judge, former Chełmno inmate Bruno Israel also claimed that the victims led into a gas van in Chełmno were given soap, unless they had their own. Towels, they were told, would be issued at the bath (Bednarz 1946c, p. 70).

Quite a theatric scene, but completely made up. No matter what engine these vans had, there was no reason at all to run away. Apart from which, if the Germans thought they had to run away from the vehicle, why were they near it in the first place, and if they ran, why didn't the Jews run with them and keep running? After all, running Germans are pretty bad guards…

"*The corpses generally did not look bad. I did not notice anyone with their tongue sticking out of their mouths or with any unnatural bruises."*

That's not along the line of many other witnesses, but is not really indicative of anything.

"I could not smell any gas."

If the van had been filled with clearly visible smoke, after a few minutes of venting the exhaust gasses inside the van would still have been noticeable. Maybe the witness involuntarily tells us here indirectly that these corpses were *not* the results of gassings?

"After the van had been emptied of the bodies, it returned to Chełmno. Two Jews passed the corpses to two 'Ukrainians' whose names I do not know. They spoke Polish and wore civilian clothes.

There was one more 'Ukrainian,' but he was accidentally trapped in the van and gassed along with other Jews. They tried to rescue him by artificial respiration, but the attempt was unsuccessful. I was there and saw it myself."

This is yet another dramatic scene, which required that this poor Ukrainian fellow had entered the van with the Jews during loading at Chełmno. How one can accidentally be gassed that way was apparently incomprehensible even to the interrogating judge, leading to the witness's emphasis:

"I was there and saw it myself."

Here again the already referred to Polish peasant Andrzej Miszczak, a mere resident in the vicinity (p. 160), delivers us "converging proof" – not necessarily for the reality of this event, but merely for the cross-fertilization among these witnesses interrogated in Poland right after the war (Bednarz 1946c, p. 49):

"The eighth Pole [of the Chełmno gassing *Sonderkommando*] *was 'Marian' who accidentally got into the vehicle and was poisoned. This was during the first days of January.*

In 1942 he was buried separately on the castle grounds."

The evil Ukrainians, diabolical lackeys of the Germans, were used for all sort of vile jobs to desecrate and plunder the victims. Here some Holo-pornographic scenes:

> *"The 'Ukrainians' pulled out gold teeth from the corpses' mouth, tore off little sacks of money from their necks, pulled off wedding rings, watches and so on. The corpses were searched over very precisely. The 'Ukrainians' were looking for gold and valuables even in women's reproductive organs and anuses. They did not use rubber gloves."*

About the gas vans, Podchlebnik says only the following:

> *"The van in which the victims were gassed could take 80-90 people at a time. During my stay in Chełmno, two cars were used simultaneously. In addition, there was another van, the largest of the three, but it was out of order and remained in Chełmno in the yard (I saw it had one wheel taken off).*
>
> […] *Jews who carried the corpses from the van had to remove the wooden floor grate from the vehicle and clean the car thoroughly."*

Just like the first Chełmno witness Srebrnik, this one also is at the upper range of the vans' alleged capacity, which would have been physically impossible with the type of vans claimed by orthodox historiography. This internal consistency of falsehood indicates that both witnesses did not testify independently.

It is also interesting to note that on one of the photos of the famous Koło moving truck, the left front wheel can be seen as missing (see Illustration 12, p. 279). Although it is not mentioned in his statement, it is likely that Podchlebnik was shown the photos of that truck as well and that his story about the decommissioned third "large" truck missing a wheel is based on exactly this photo.

According to Podchlebnik, the regime at Chełmno was cruel, except that, when it comes to his escape, he forgets about this general theme and shows the SS man as a comrade willing to share even his last cigarette with an inmate (keep in mind: cigarettes in wartime Germany were rare and expensive, since tobacco does not grow in central Europe!):

> *"When the truck was in the woods, I asked the escorting SS man for a cigarette. When he gave me what I wanted, I stepped back and my companions surrounded him asking for cigarettes for themselves.*
> *With a sudden movement I cut the tarpaulin on the driver's side with a knife I had on me and jumped out of the car."*

He had a knife? Sure, every inmate had a knife. After all, that's what inmates have…

3.6.2.6. The Interrogation of Mieczysław Żurawski

This witness was interrogated by investigative judge Bednarz on 31 July 1945 (Bednarz 1946c, pp. 60-66). His statement does not contain quite as much information as those of the other witnesses. He describes the van as black, sealed, lined with sheet metal inside and a bathroom-style wooden grate on the floor. The exhaust pipe entered into the cargo box through a hole in the floor covered with a sieve. He was oblivious of the van's make and of the device which allowed switching the gas from flowing into the box rather than escaping to the outside. He claimed that two vans operated at Chełmno: a larger with a capacity of about 130 people, and a smaller one for up to 80 to 90 people (all p. 62).

Regarding the duration of the gassing procedure he claims the second fastest – and unrealistically short – time of all witnesses:

> *"After four minutes, when* [the victims] *ceased moaning – the car was moving in the direction of the crematoria."* (p. 60)

With respect to the unloading procedure Żurawski writes:

> *"After opening the car door, 5 to 6 minutes still had to pass before you could get inside.* […] *I may mention that bodies found next to the exhaust pipe were burnt, so that their skin came off."* (p. 62)

Again, since the exhaust gases created by the van were almost immediately rendered relatively harmless by mixing with the ambient air – since they were warm or even hot, they would have risen swiftly – there was no reason to wait with the unloading procedure.

The second sentence is the only reference that I have encountered so far indicating that the hot exhaust gases had a thermal effect on some of the victims. Considering that the entering exhaust gasses cannot have been much hotter than 150°C and that the corpses could not touch it due to the wooden grate, it is not perceivable how this could have led to such intense burnings that the skin peeled off, which requires heat as is produced in fires only.

The credibility of this witness becomes clearly perceptible when he talks about the speed of cremation in Chełmno's open earth furnace, about which writes:

> *"The corpses were burning fast. Approximately 15 minutes later they were already burned."* (p. 63)

However, cremating corpses in open incineration devices takes hours rather than minutes (see Mattogno 2017, Chapter 9).

That there was some cross-fertilization among the witnesses can be seen from Żurawski's testimony about Finkelstein's unfortunate sister:

> *"I heard that the worker Finkelstein had to push his sister into the furnace, who was still alive. Further details on this I do not know because it happened before my arrival."* (p. 64)

This was only the climax of a theme which Żurawski had developed in the three preceding sentences:

> *"There was an accident when guard Hannes threw one of the Jewish workers alive into a burning furnace. I cannot remember the name of the Jew.* […] *There were cases were people thrown out of the van were still alive. They were nevertheless thrown into the furnace. If they groaned too loud, they were finished off with a shot from his revolver."* (*ibid.*)

Well, what can we say… accidents happen.

Żurawski's story of his escape is heartening as well. He tells how he fought with a knife (another inmate with a knife) and managed to run away, even though he was shot at. There is a problem with that statement, though: Żurawski and all of the other witness stated that their ankles had been shackled together with a short chain during their entire stay at Chełmno, disabling them from walking fast, let alone running. Apparently asked by the judge to explain how he could run away with those chains, he explained:

> *"On mentioning these chains, I've been shackled, so before escaping I dropped back in the granary. I had hidden a pair of large tailor's scissors, with which I cut the chain's junction link."* (p. 65)

Sure, he swiftly cut the link of a steel chain with a pair of scissors, and all this while they were chasing him and shooting at him.

A final slip-up happened toward the end of the testimony, when judge Bednarz showed the famous Ostrowski truck photo to Żurawski as well, suggesting that he would identify it as the gas van, as the other three witnesses had done before. But for some inscrutable reason Żurawski refused to go along with the story and stated instead:

> *"Having shown me the van (the van being shown to the witness is located in the former Ostrowski factory), I state that it was used to disinfect clothing. It stood in the garden of the palace (the wheels were removed)."* (p. 66)

Oops! Another Chełmno witness, the defendant Bruno Israel, could even tell details about this disinfestation truck (p. 72):

> *"In addition* [to two gas vans] *there was a third vehicle for disinfecting clothes. This vehicle had its wheels removed. I do not know whether it served to gas people.*
>
> *Clothes and underwear were hung into the van or put on special benches. Then a basin with burning sulfur was put inside and the vehicle closed over night. The photos shown to me (the defendant was shown pictures on cards 397 and 398 of the data sets) is the vehicle described by me."*

These numbers refer to photos of the derelict moving van in the Ostrowski factory (see Halbersztadt's paper as quoted on p. 35). Since sulfur dioxide, the product of burning sulfur, is indeed a disinfestant used by the Germans already during WWI (usually combined with dry heat, maybe even from the vehicle's exhaust gases; see Thompson 1920), these witnesses' stories may actually have some truth to them – and may have inspired them to extrapolate the gassing of clothes to the gassing of humans.[89]

3.6.2.7. Investigative Judge Władysław Bednarz

A few words are due about the investigating judge who interrogated numerous witnesses in the context of the Chełmno Camp after the war in Poland. In Chapter 2.1. I've already mentioned that Judge Władysław Bednarz had the honesty to admit that the dilapidated moving truck found on the grounds of the Ostrowski factory in Koło was *not* a gas van. Bednarz has summarized his findings numerous times. The first summary was written on 7 January 1946 and was submitted as document USSR-340 during the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal (Bednarz 1946a). The excerpt read into the IMT transcript does not contain any details about the gas vans, which are merely referred to as "murder vans" by the Russian prosecutor Smirnov.[90] Later that year Bednarz's summary was published in Polish and English in the collections of the Polish Central Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland (Bednarz 1946b), and also in 1946 Bednarz published

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89 Although convicted for his service as a German guard of the Chełmno Camp in October 1945, Bruno Israel is said to have been released from custody rather swiftly (Krakowski 2007, p. 177).

90 IMT, Vol. 8, pp. 330f. Bednarz' names is misspelled there as Wladislav Bengash, the camp as Helmno.

a book dedicated to his findings about Chełmno, from which I have taken some of my above quotes of the witnesses' depositions (1946c).

In USSR-340 Bednarz wrote about the gas vans (1946a, p. 5):

> *"The camp's Sonderkommando didn't have a car repair shop, so that vehicles requiring repairs were brought very quickly to the workshop of the company Kraft- und-Reichsstrassenbauamt in Koło. Eight Polish mechanics of this workshop described these vehicles' technical design as follows: the vehicle's dimensions were 2.5-3 m in width and 6 m in length; the smallest were 2.3 to 2.5 meters wide and 4.5 to 5 m long. The cargo box was made of narrow boards bolted together. Inside the vehicle was covered with sheet metal. The door was airtight, so any flow of air from the outside was absolutely impossible. The vehicles were dark gray. The exhaust pipe was under the vehicle and was placed in the middle of its length. The opening of the exhaust pipe inside the vehicle was fitted with a perforated sheet which prevented the tube from clogging. On the floor of the vehicle was a wooden grate. The engine was probably from the Sauer company. The driver's cabin bore the inscription 'Baujahr 1940 – Berlin' (built in 1940). Near the driver's seat were gas masks."*

Here again we encounter the technically impossible claim of a hermetically sealed cargo box. What is most interesting, though, is the claim about the vehicle's engine: a "Sauer." This name cannot have come from the truck found on the grounds of the Ostrowski factory, because this was a Magirus truck which had engines by the Humboldt-Deutz company. So where did the idea for the (misspelled) "Sauer" come from?

On page 133 I have quoted from a deposition made in the context of a Soviet show trial by a certain German defendant Fen[i]chel. This deposition had been published by the Soviet government as early as 1943 (Embassy 1943, pp. 171f.) and was also introduced during the IMT (vol. 7, pp. 572f.). In it Fen[i]chel had stated that the gas van's engine was a "Sauer" – the same typo, the same false claim that Saurer built engines for other trucks, whereas Saurer was actually a truck manufacturer. Here we have one more proof for cross-fertilization, running down from the Soviet show trials through the Polish investigations into the IMT trials. And here another interesting feature of Fenchel's description of the "hermetically closed van" just like Bednarz' description:

> *"Inside* [the truck] *was lined with galvanized sheet iron; on the floor, also covered with galvanized iron, was a wooden grating."*

In his book on the Chełmno Camp Bednarz summarized the claims made by eight Polish mechanics who claim to have repaired a gas van at one point or another, one of them the above-quoted Bronisław Falborski. However, the features Bednarz describes are restricted to the vans' estimated dimensions and their loading capacity. Then he brings up the fact that some witnesses reported about a disinfestation truck and elaborates (Bednarz 1946c, pp. 23f.):

> *"Three vehicles operated at Chełmno.* […] *Some witnesses also spoke of a fourth vehicle. As for the possibility that there was a fourth vehicle of a similar shape (which is currently in the former Ostrowski factory at Koło) and which was used to disinfect clothing or which was a closed vehicle for transporting Jewish workers to the forest, the statements that a fourth gassing vehicle had allegedly existed should be considered with some skepticism, as it is possible that there is an error due to the reasons mentioned above."*

Had Bednarz been consequential, the fact that some witnesses falsely identified the Ostrowski Magirus as "the gas van," whereas others saw in it a mere disinfestation vehicle, should have cautioned him not just about the purpose of the Ostrowski Magirus, but about all trucks claimed to have been gas vans. After all, if some witnesses were wrong about the Ostrowski truck, the others could have been just as wrong with their claims. The only difference here is that their claims could not be refuted due to the lack of any trace of any other truck. But the *lack* of evidence can never be summoned in *support* of a claim.

It may be considered a certainty that the innocuous Ostrowski truck was indeed used in one way or other in and around Chełmno. But if so, how can we be sure that any sighting by witnesses of a similar truck wasn't just as harmless a vehicle as the Ostrowski truck? Maybe *all* sightings actually concerned this truck?

Bednarz continues his train of thought as follows (*ibid.*, pp. 24f.):

> *"The* [gas] *vehicles were often damaged, and the Sonderkommando made the mistake of not having their own repair shops. So the vehicles* […] *had to be brought to the workshops at Koło* […], *whose staff was composed almost entirely of Poles. This enabled simple mechanics such as Piaskowski – card 16,*[91] *Falborski – card 28,*

91 "card" refers to the card numbers of the file system Bednarz had used during his investigation ("karta śledztwa III 13/45 NT"; Bednarz 1946c, p. 12, footnote); if have not yet

Rossa – card 43, Mańkowski – card 30, Fójcik – card 222, Junkiert – card 320, Lewandowski – card 189, Jankowski – card 117, to get to know the structure of the vehicles. All these witnesses were examined at different times and even in different locations. Each of them made a sketch with their own hand of the exhaust pipe and of its entrance to the inside of the vehicle.

The testimony of the interrogated drivers and mechanics are completely compatible with one another and can be used to discuss the details of the gassing vehicle's design. The exhaust pipe ran underneath the car, and at half of its length it was connected with a pipe section in the cargo box floor (pursuant to the technical details of how these tubes are assembled together). The few witnesses who saw the 'Sonderwagen' from the inside (Żurawski, Srebrnik, Grabowski – card 279) concluded that the inlet of the exhaust pipe in the vehicle's interior was protected by a kind of metal sieve. On the vehicle's floor lay a second floor of wood, as in a streetcar or a bathroom. It prevented the clogging of the exhaust pipe from the inside."

So what does the fact prove that several witnesses agreed on some sort of connection between the exhaust pipe and the cargo box? Since by 1945 the claim of German murder vans using exhaust gasses to kill people had been bandied about for some three years, anyone asked to draw a sketch of the gassing mechanism would have drawn some connection from the exhaust pipe to the interior of the cargo box. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure that one out. But the quality of these drawings clearly reveal them as worthless scribblings (see Falborski's sketch on page 359).

The next three paragraphs in Bednarz's description are about an entirely new issue: the alleged use of some mysterious additives mixed into the gas van's gasoline in order to make it more poisonous (*ibid.*, pp. 25f.):

"It could not be established whether only the vehicle's exhaust gas was used for poisoning or whether some other substances were added to the oil or gasoline in order to accelerate the process of poisoning. In that regard, there is no sufficiently reliable data. It was only observed that some balloons and bottles of unknown chemicals were constantly coming in for the Sonderkommando (witness Bosiński – card 432).

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been able to review these other witness statements.

> *The driver of SS Dr. Ralf König, Grabowski, testified that he had once used the gasoline borrowed from the Sonderkommando. When he turned on the engine – as usual in the garage – he felt that he was losing consciousness ('I felt lightheaded, and I felt a slightly sweet taste on the lips' – card 279). This witness testified further: 'Dr. König, when I told him about it, absolutely forbade me to run the engine in the garage in case the gasoline came from the Sonderkommando.'*
>
> *The driver Piaskowski (card 17) testified that during one of the repairs he had started the 'Sonderwagen's' engine in a closed garage. The result was similar to that described by chauffeur Grabowski*).''*[92]

In this context a certain Kazimierz Grabowski testified during the trial against Rudolf Höß, former commander of the Auschwitz camp, that the engine of a gas van was fueled with methanol (Höß Trial, vol. 26, pp. 32f.). I am not sure whether this is the same witness, though.

It goes without saying that mixing any chemical additives to the gasoline in order to accelerate the gassing procedure wouldn't have made any sense, as those additives would have burned in the engine before exiting through the exhaust pipe. This section merely proves how rumors grew and were spread among the witnesses and how they were willing to back them up with purely invented stories about sweet tasting exhaust gases and doctors giving stupid advice. (Any doctor would have advised not to let any engine run in an enclose space, not just when the gasoline came from certain sources.)

The information given in the final paragraph of Bednarz's description of the alleged gassing trucks deployed in Chełmno is somewhat more detailed than what he wrote in USSR-340 (*ibid*., p. 25f.):

> *"The witnesses determined the vehicle's dimensions as follows: 2.5 to 3 meters wide, about 6 meters long, when it comes to the larger vehicles, and 2.3 to 2.5 m wide and 4.5 to 5 m in length regarding the smaller vehicle. The cargo box was built with narrow, tight, closely connected boards so that the car could give the impression of an indoor paneling. The interior was lined with sheet metal, and it had sealed doors. All the cars were dark gray, almost black. The engine was probably of the 'Saurer' brand (Lewandowski, Rossa)."*

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92 In a footnote Bednarz states that the Central Jewish Historical Commission has a German document speaking of "*Spezialbenzin*" – special gasoline.

Here Bednarz has corrected the misspelled Saurer name, but still: either the entire vehicle was a Saurer, or if not, then the engine wasn't a Saurer either. Plus, if it had been a Saurer truck with a Saurer engine, it would have had a Diesel engine incapable of killing in the manner described by the witnesses. In addition, the cargo box of the innocuous Ostrowski moving truck was also made of tightly connected wooden boards with a sheet metal lining on the inside (see Illustration 15f.). Hence this alleged feature of the "gas vans" could originate from cross-fertilization among erring or lying witnesses.

3.6.3. Israel

3.6.3.1. Szymon Srebrnik

The three witnesses whose depositions before a Polish investigative judge have been analyzed in the three previous subchapters – Srebrnik, Podchlebnik and Żurawski – also testified during the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem during the 65th and 66th session, 5 & 6 June 1961.[93]

The first interesting passage of Srebrnik's testimony from a critical point of view is the following:

> *"When I arrived* [at Chełmno]*, the building had been blown up, and we were told* […] *to clean it.* […] *We began cleaning the stones and everything. We found bones there, and all kinds of things – skulls, hands and legs. We did not know what it was.* […] *it was explained to me that there had been a magnificent villa there, a beautiful building, and there had been Jews inside. They had contracted some sickness. They put them inside, and blew up the building together with them."*

It goes without saying that destroying a large building for the sake of killing a number of sick persons isn't exactly a rational way of committing mass murder or fighting disease, all the more so since the Germans lacked housing due to the Allies' bombing campaign and would therefore never have considered such lunacy. This story has a parallel in a tale given by a defendant during a German trial held some six years later, which we will encounter in Chapter 3.7.4.6.

An interesting feature of the Eichmann trial is that, for long stretches during interrogations of witnesses, it is not the witnesses who tell a story but rather the prosecutor who merely asks the witnesses to confirm a

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93 State of Israel 1993, vol. III, pp. 1190-1201; I subsequently quote from the internet version …/Session-066-01.html to …/Session-066-03.html.

certain claim or to specify an issue about an event assumed to be self-evident. For instance, the very first time gas vans are mentioned during Srebrnik's interrogation is by the prosecutor, who suddenly changes topics and asks him:

"Q. When did the gas trucks arrive?"

Under a proper court of law in a state under the rule of law, such a question would never have been permitted. It's like asking a person: "when did you rape your wife?" It is clear from this that the Eichmann trial was not about establishing things, but merely to get them confirmed and filled in with a few more details.

In contrast to Srebrnik's 1945 maximalist claim about the vans' capacity, he reduced it during the Eichmann trial to "eighty to a hundred people." This is all we can learn about the gas vans from his testimony.

The tall tale told in 1945 about Finkelstein's living sister in the flames received a workover, as he no longer claims that she came back to life in the flames, but he repeats the miracle of how he survived being shot in the neck, showing the court some scars allegedly stemming from that event, even though the wounds to his nose are now said to have been caused by some glass slivers.

Although the Jerusalem prosecutors or judges were in general quite credulous, there were moments during the trial when they were not quite inclined to follow Srebrnik. One of these occasions concerned the alleged death toll of the camp during Srebrnik's presence in 1944. Right after the war in 1945 he had stated (Srebrnik 1945):

> *"I estimate that in 1944 alone 15,000 Jews were brought to Chelmno. However, I did not count them – my assumption is based on what the gendarmes had said before the transports arrived. That is why I claimed that in 1944 15,000 Jews were killed in Chelmno."*

During the Jerusalem trial in 1961, however, he claimed that the Germans had killed 1,200 Jews more or less every day for nine months straight:

> *"Q. How many people were brought to Chelmno for extermination, after they began arriving?*
> *A. About 1,000-1,200.*
> *Q. Every day?*
> *A. Yes.* […]
> *Q. I understood that there were exterminations for about nine months while you were there?*
> *A. Yes,* […]

Presiding Judge: Did they put 1,200 people to death every single day?

Witness Srebrnik: That was more or less every day."

This the Presiding Judge could not believe, hence he asked the witness a final question:

"One of the witnesses who preceded you [Mieczysław Żurawski] *gave much lower figures."*

But Srebrnik insisted on his figures, even though mathematically speaking this would have amounted to the absurdly high figure of (9 months × 30 days × 1,200/day =) 324,000 victims (minus an occasional "break of one day, in order to grind the bones," as Srebrnik adorned his gory tale). After this the witness was dismissed by the judge, who obviously had enough of Srebrnik's tales.

The more time passed, the bigger Srebrnik's figures got. During the first minutes of Lanzmann's movie *Shoah*, Srebrnik even claimed (Lanzmann 1985):

"It was always this peaceful here. Always. When they burnt 2,000 people – Jews – every day, it was just as peaceful."

So from 15,000 in 1945 we arrive at (9 months × 30 days × 2,000/day =) 540,000 during his *Shoah* Interview in the 1970s. And these are only figures for that second (1944) period of the camp, resulting in even higher figures when considering the claimed first, much longer extermination period of that camp (1941 to 1943). Not even orthodox historians insist on such extreme figures.[94] I have elaborated elsewhere in more detail on Srebrnik's lies (Alvarez 2011), and so has Mattogno with more arguments (Mattogno 2017, Chapter 7.2.2.).

3.6.3.2. Michał Podchlebnik

Podchlebnik's testimony during the Eichmann trial is evidently a coached retelling of his 1945 Polish testimony, since the prosecutor asked the witness to confirm one event after the other in the sequence as described in his 1945 affidavit, including his miraculous escape thanks to the generous SS men. A few unbelievable passages which I have criticized in Chapter 3.6.2.5. were left out, though, for instance the running Germans, the pornographic fantasies, and the gassed Ukrainian. Reading into the record a postwar Stalinist document and having it merely

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94 The Bonn Jury Court determined "at least 145,000" for the camp's first period and "at least 7,100" for the second, so a total of at least 152,100 (Rüter *et al.* 1968ff., vol. 21, pp. 235, 241, 263, 286).

uncritically confirmed by the witness reveals the charade which the Eichmann trial really was (State of Israel 1993; …/Session-065-05.html to 06.html).

3.6.3.3. Mieczysław Żurawski

Żurawski's statement in Jerusalem was cleansed as well from all but one of the implausibilities of his 1945 statement as listed in Chapter 3.6.2.5., although in this case the prosecutor did not follow the 1945 affidavit as strictly as in Podchlebnik's case (State of Israel 1993, …/Session-065-06.html). But Żurawski came up with a new outrageous tale he had not mentioned back in 1945:

> *"So they* [the Germans] *lined us up with bottles on our heads and had their game of target practice. Those whose bottle was hit stayed alive, and those they hit in the head – fell, and the others had to bury them."*

It goes without saying that this tale is technically and physically possible, but whether one believes it is a matter of probability and personal inclination, that is to say: if you think that the Germans during World War II were a race of devils and that the witnesses testifying in Jerusalem were inclined to tell the truth, then this event would very well have been possible.

Another interesting aspect of Żurawski's testimony is his response to the question as to what happened to the gas vans after the dissolution of the Chełmno Camp:

> *"Q. What happened to the gas vans?*
>
> *A. The gas vans were also taken in the direction of Koło."*

This is, of course, the location where the famous moving van was found on the grounds of the Ostrowski company, so this brief episode can be regarded as an attempt to remedy the slip-up in Żurawski's 1945 testimony about the truck found there having been used for disinfestation.

The one implausibility which reoccurred in Jerusalem was Żurawski's story about his escape. This time the interrogator simply didn't ask any "stupid" questions raising the issue of how Żurawski got rid of his chain, so the absurdity remained inconspicuous to the uninformed reader/listener.

3.6.4. Austria

Here, too, I rely on what Kogon *et al.* mention with regards to a trial conducted by the *Landesgericht* in Vienna in the early 1960s (1993, pp.

78f.). Their only reference to this trial consists of a quote from a summary of the interrogation of two defendants given only by the initials of their last names. In it gas vans are mentioned only in passing: "The people were killed by piping in engine exhaust fumes" (*ibid.*, p. 79). The verdict of the LG Kiel of 11 Apr. 1969, p. 39, mentions a pending criminal investigation in Austria against the driver of an alleged gas van referred to there only as "We." So far I have not been able to obtain any information about this case.

Another trial was in preparation in Austria in 1967 against Herbert Andorfer for his involvement in the claimed mass murder of Jews held in the Semlin Camp in Serbia (*Landesgericht* Wien, 27e, Vr 2260/67). Since Andorfer had immigrated to Venezuela after the war and had received citizenship there, Austria eventually decided that he was no longer an Austrian subject. Andorfer was subsequently extradited to Germany, where he stood trial for the above mentioned charges (see Chapter 3.7.4.8.).

3.7. Gas Vans during West-German Trials

3.7.1. Introduction

Since the trials conducted in communist East Germany until its collapse and reunification with West Germany in 1989/1990 were radically different from those conducted in the West Germany, I will deal with the communist trials in Chapter 3.8.

All in all 27 trials were conducted in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) by German courts of law addressing in one way or other the alleged mass murder committed with gas vans.[95] A summary of the verdict data is given in Table 4. It is impossible to cover all of these trials in detail, but I will give a summary of each and discuss the issues pertinent to our topic. Unless otherwise stated, all page numbers given in the subchapters of this section refer to the respective volume as given in Table 4.

Since court verdicts tend to mention primarily the evidence which justifies their verdict, judging the cases by their verdicts alone results in a lopsided perspective. Hence, in order to do each case justice, one

[95] Since some of them are mere retrials of successful appeals, the number of unique cases is actually only 24.

Table 4: West-German Cout Cases Addressing Gas Vans	
VOL.*	# (COURT, DATE OF VERDICT IN YYMMDD)**
VII	231 (LG Stuttgart, 491108; 500815)
IX	298 (LG Karlsruhe, 491215; 511107), 310 (LG Wiesbaden, 520324)
XI	362 (LG Köln, 530620)
XVIII	526 (LG Karlsruhe, 611220)
XIX	552 (LG Koblenz, 630521), 560 (LG Karlsruhe, 631213)
XXI	594 (LG Bonn, 630330, 650723)
XXII	601 (LG Koblenz, 651110), 603 (LG Kiel, 651126), 606 (LG Wuppertal, 651230; 671213)
XXIII	624 (LG Frankfurt/M., 660312), 632 (LG Hannover, 660607)
XXVI	658 (LG Stuttgart, 670915)
XXIX	679 (LG Stuttgart, 680611)
XXXI	700 (LG Dortmund, 690116)
XXXII	702 (LG Kiel, 690411), 703 (LG Darmstadt, 690418)
XXXIII	720 (LG Kiel, 691128)
XXXV	750 (LG Frankfurt/M., 710319)
XXXVI	765 (LG Darmstadt, 711223)
XXXVII	769 (LG München I, 720322), 777 (LG München I, 720714)
XXXIX	807 (LG München I, 740329), 809 (LG Kiel, 740614)†
XL	816 (LG München I, 741115)
XLIV	864 (LG München I, 801219)

* Volume of Rüter 1968ff.; ** case no. acc. to Rüter;
† case 795 of this volume (LG Hamburg, 5 June 1973) does *not* deal with gas vans, in contrast to the false claim on the Rüter webpage at www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv/brd/files/brd795.htm

would have to read the entire case file compiled by the prosecution during the time between opening the investigation until right up to the trial. It goes without saying that these files would also be lopsided, as prosecutors in such cases frequently tend to merely find culprits for crimes which are considered self-evident rather than scrutinize the historical record. Yet still, experience shows that many revealing witness statements not fitting into the prosecution's agenda are silently dropped and are subsequently also not quoted in the "scientific" literature. Today these investigation files are held by the German Federal Archives in its Ludwigsburg branch. Access to them is basically impossible for notorious revisionists, as a revisionist's application to use the archive would probably result in a refusal at best and immediate arrest at worst rather than access to the documents.[96]

[96] An application to use the archive has to be filed in advance and has to contain personal data as well as information about the project for which the material will be used, see www.bundesarchiv.de/imperia/md/content/bundesarchiv_de/benutzung/vordruck_neu.pdf.

It would also be conducive to consult verbatim records of the court proceedings. All of the court cases dealt with here were conducted on the second level right from the start due to the severity of the alleged crime (*Landgericht*=LG). The German penal procedure does not permit any appeal of matters of fact in such cases, so that verbatim records are useless, since no court will ever check the facts assessed and "established" by the judges during such a trial. As a result, trial records were actually even abandoned in Germany in the 1970s for this type of court, while they had already been mere scant summaries rather than verbatim recordings before that.

Hence, we have to make do with breadcrumbs for now, that is, with what the judges deemed to be important. Later generations of critical researchers may be able to do a better job, once they manage to get to the core of this documentation.

I have split up the West German trials into four subchapters, which does not only serve to make the chunks more digestible, but also to give an impression about the temporal clustering of these trials[97] reflecting a general tendency of trials against alleged NS criminals. Right after the creation of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, West German courts continued these trials mainly as a legacy of the various Allied tribunals. But with the rising Cold War, pressure to prosecute German veterans soon decreased, as the Western Allies needed those veterans' support in building up a new German army as a bulwark against communism. In addition, since the German judiciary is organized by the German *Länder*, a central authority investigating NS crimes on a national and international level was missing.

After some political pressure by interested lobby groups, such a body was formed in 1958: the *Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen* (Central Office of the State Justice Administration for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes), which is basically an official (initially only West) German Nazi hunter organization. This office's activities, together with the fear that the statute of limitation for murder would soon make the prosecution of the alleged perpetrators impossible, led to a rising tide of court cases in particular during the second half of the 1960s. This fear proved to be misplaced, however, as the same pressure groups which had pressed for the creation of West Germany's Nazi hunter organiza-

97 Mere retrials of successful appeals are always treated together with the first trial.

tion also successfully lobbied for the repeated extension and finally for the abrogation of the statute of limitation for murder. Ever since the number of trials has steadily declined simply due to the fact that most cases had already been dealt with, that the defendants are no longer alive, and that new evidence, which usually is almost exclusively anecdotal in nature, was harder to come by as time passed by.

The mindset of the persons working in the *Zentrale Stelle* can be determined by the sources they quote, for which the book by Kogon *et al.* (1993) is a textbook example. One of the main editors of this tome, Adalbert Rückerl, was the head of the *Zentral Stelle* between 1966 and 1984. His office delivered the bulk of the evidence on which this book, co-edited by him, is based, which consists mainly of postwar testimonies of defendants and witnesses. When it comes to the gas vans, it is striking that Kogon *et al.* also refer to the "evidence" gathered during the Kharkov and the Krasnodar trials without even a hint of criticism (*ibid.*, pp. 62, 67; fn. 50, p. 261). They even quote from the propaganda work *The Black Book* by Soviet atrocity propagandist Ilya Ehrenburg (*ibid.*, p. 64; fn 45, p. 261), plus Herr Fenichel as published in a wartime Soviet propaganda brochure (see Chapter 3.5.1., p. 132) is quoted as well (*ibid.*, p.; fn. 58, p. 261). This clearly indicates that the West German criminal investigations into these alleged crimes were nothing else but yet another extension of the Soviet wartime show trials.

Before turning to the individual cases, I may briefly analyze the punishments meted out against the defendants in the trials I am about to review, see table to the right.[98] All in all 69 defendants were tried in these West German cases, although not all of them for their alleged involvement in gas van murders. If a defendant was punished, it was either for manslaughter or for aiding and abetting in murder. Not a single defendant was punished for murder, as they were all assumed to have merely assisted the main villains (Hitler, Himmler, Heydrich etc.). As can be seen from the tabular listing, 21 of the defendants were either acquitted or not punished, be it because the court abstained from doing so or because the case was shelved. 25 defendants received prison terms of less than five years. Five years imprisonment is considered the threshold beyond which prison terms really start wreaking havoc on a defendant's

[98] life + 15; life + 8, 15, 3 × 13, 12 (appeal shelved due to unfitness), 2 × 10, 3 × 8, 4 × 7, 2 × 6½, 5½, 4 × 5, 8 × 4½, 6 × 4 (one not enforced), 3½, 2 × 3, 2 × 2 ½, 2 × 3, 4 × 1 + 6 weeks, 21 × acquittals or no punishment (including Becker for unfitness; Heinz G. Rie. for allegedly gassing partisans).

life. Hence 46 of 69, that is two thirds of all defendants got away rather cheaply.

Juxtapose this with the prison terms meted out in West Germany for doubting or contesting the claims made by these West German court verdicts – that is to say: punishments of Holocaust revisionists, see the table just underneath the one mentioned previously listing some of the most prominent cases. One of them, Sylvia Stolz, is actually a lawyer who was punished for her defense activities on behalf of Ernst Zündel.

From this we can see that today in West Germany the judiciary punishes a defendant who kills one Jew or even a great many of them with a similar severity as it punishes a defendant who disagrees with a Jew (or a German judge, for that matter).

Punishing Gas Van Killers

WEST GERMAN VERDICTS	#
life terms:	2
15 years and more:	1
10 to less than 15 years:	6
5 to less than 10 years:	14
less than 5 years:	25
acquittals or no punishment:	21
number of defendants:	69

Punishing Revisionists

DEFENDANT	YEARS
Wolfgang Fröhlich	16‡
Horst Mahler	14*‡
Ernst Zündel	7†
Günter Deckert	5‡
Germar Rudolf	3 2/3‡
Sylvia Stolz	3½*
Udo Walendy	2½‡
Otto E. Remer	1 5/6
Fredrick Töben	5/6
Siegfried Verbeke	¾

3.7.2. From 1949 to 1959 (4 trials)

3.7.2.1. LG Stuttgart, Verdict of 8 Nov. 1949 & 15 Aug. 1950

During this trial a defendant was prosecuted who had been incarcerated since war's end and was to see the light of day no more in his life: Ferdinand Göhler. In 1941 he was employed in the town administration of Kalisch, where he was also concerned with the administration of the camp Bornhagen (Polish: Kozminek), where Polish Jews had been incarcerated. Although the original indictment of 25 April 1949 accused him of having been involved in the resettlement of Jews at the end of November 1941 (p. 190, 217), during which several hundred Jews are said to have been killed by means of "gas vans," the court of the first trial declared this case beyond its jurisdiction. As this decision was confirmed on appeal, this issue was no longer dealt with in detail during the

* For a combination of historical and political statements.
† Including two years in Canada, which the German court refused to acknowledge.
‡ Accumulated term of two or more cases, served together.

retrial of the case in 1950, so no verdict was passed in this regard at all (p. 191). The court nevertheless made a few statements in this regard, which I quote:

> *"The removal was done with a special vehicle, which had the shape of a moving truck and which could be entered from the back. Due to its dark paint, it was called 'black van.' According to the opinion of the Jewish witnesses, a gassing device was installed inside of it, which could be turned on during transit. Nobody could make specific statements about this* […]*."* (p. 200)
>
> *"The so-called black vehicle was a large truck, which looked like a moving truck and whose interior was lined with sheet metal. An invisible device to be operated from the driver's cabin was installed in its interior, through which a lethal gas could be released into the enclosed vehicle, a device which was started soon after the truck had driven off so that the Jews inside the vehicle could be killed during transit."* (p. 231)
>
> *"In this capacity* [the defendant] *then participated in the gassing action of 26 Nov. 1941. This was implemented in such a way that the Jewish inmates assigned for this were loaded into a special vehicle, a so-called 'black vehicle,' on the square in front of the synagogue in Bornhagen in the presence of the raiding squad: the vehicle resembled a moving truck, and in its interior, which was sealed airtight, pipes had been laid so that the occupants could be killed during transit."* (p. 239)

It is worth noting that the gas vans employed by the Soviet Secret Services before the war seem to have been based on black prison transport vehicles ("Black Maria," see Chapter 3.2.1.), yet that only a minority of witnesses of the alleged German "gas vans" stated that they were black (see Chapter 4.2.), whereas most witness claim colors similar to those usually applied to German military vehicles (grey, sometimes with a brownish or greenish hue). The "moving truck" theme, which we will encounter in numerous German court verdicts, probably is an outcropping either of the early Soviet show trials claims (see *The Peoples' Verdict*, p. 29) or of the Koło Magirus moving van falsely identified by Falborski *et al.* as "the gas van" (see Chapters 3.6.2.3ff.). The claim of a separate gassing device in the van's interior which could be turned on from the driver's cabin during transit is in conflict with most other witness statements as well (see Chapter 4.2.6.), which insist on engine exhaust gases being used, a process which had to be initiated while the

truck was standing still. The issue of an allegedly airtight gassing box need not be addressed here again.

Furthermore, the claim that the Bornhagen camp had "gas vans" at its disposal at the end of November 1941 is not credible. The very first gas vans claimed to have been deployed by the Germans are said to have been delivered only toward the end of November/early December 1941, if we believe the orthodox version (Beer 1987, p. 412, who does not mention this verdict). It does not appear likely that the unimportant little camp of Bornhagen was the first to receive one, nor is such a claim backed up by anything.

Despite the collective length of these two verdicts and their associated appeal decisions, little more can be gleaned from them for the present technical purpose. The court itself stated that many testimonies were presented to the court only in writing, since most witnesses had emigrated from Germany at the time of the trial and were therefore unable to testify in person. Since the various testimonies about the defendant's alleged crimes were riddled with contradictions, impossibilities and "untrue statements," the court moreover stated:

> *"These contradictions about the descriptions of the incidents are so huge and affect the decisive events so much that no findings could be made which would suffice for a conviction."* (p. 205)

Many such "untrue statements" were never even detected by the court. For instance, one witness implied that mass murder with gas vans had occurred as early as 1940 (p. 228), which indicates that just about any van or truck picking up inmates was a target for being named a "gas van" by some witness.

So how could the court be so sure that the alleged mass murders with a gas van took place in the first place? I quote:

> *"Finally it has become generally known from the war crimes tribunals that countless Jews had been exterminated in such a way."* (p. 234)

That the historical "truth" had been cast in stone at the very outset of this trial is also hinted at by the verdict of the Mannheim Upper District Court (*Oberlandesgericht*). After the first verdict had been handed down on 8 Nov. 1949 by the LG Stuttgart, the defendant filed an appeal with the Mannheim Upper District Court, in which he requested, among other things, that the LG Stuttgart also rule about the alleged mass murder with gas vans. In its decision the Mannheim court rejected this request, stating among other reasons also (p. 244):

> *"An acquittal is legally out of the question already because the authorization by the military government does not extend to the sentencing of this case under the aspect of crimes against humanity."*

This indicates that the German postwar trials in such cases were indeed little more than extensions of the Allied postwar trials.

3.7.2.2. LG Karlsruhe, Verdicts of 15 Dec. 1949 & 7. Oct. 1951

During this trial Adolf Rübe was tried and sentenced to life imprisonment plus 15 years for murder and 26 cases of manslaughter, which he is said to have committed between late 1942 and summer 1943 while doing an office job for the Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*). The verdict relies heavily on the IMT, whose determinations about the alleged National-Socialist measures for the physical extermination of the Jews the court considered to be facts "notorious to the court" (p. 13), or in other words: they were not subject to discussion.

Before we turn to the German trial, I want to briefly discuss Rübe's role during the Nuremberg trials. Rübe had been arrested by the Allies right after the war and was made to write an affidavit, in which he related the following atrocity story, among other things (NMT, Vol. 4, p. 473):

> *"'On the occasion of an exhumation in Minsk, in November 1943, Obersturmfuehrer Heuser arrived with a Kommando of Latvians. They brought eight Jews, men and women, with them. The Latvians guarded the Jews, while Harter and Heuser erected a funeral pyre with their own hands. The Jews were bound, put on the pile alive, drenched with gasoline and burned.' (NO-5498.)"*

This is said to have happened at a time when the Germans were retreating at all fronts and are said to have been in the process of excavating hundreds if not thousands of mass graves in Russia in order to cremate the remains of their mass murders in an attempt to destroy material evidence. That is also the background why those eight Jews are said to have been burned on a pyre instead of simply being shot. However, considering that one needs some 200 kg of wood per person for a successful cremation, that therefore the suggested pyre for eight persons had to contain some one and a half metric tons of wood, how likely is it that two German officers did the job all by themselves, while their Latvian helpers just stood by and watched? This gives a clear indication about the truthfulness of Rübe's statements made under the duress of

Allied incarceration. His statement clearly served merely to incriminate his superiors and to buy himself freedom from prosecution.

In his NMT statement Rübe also details the events of an alleged mass shooting of 1,800 Jews in the Sluzk ghetto in February 1943 (*ibid.*, pp. 564f.). At the end of his statement he mentions his then superior SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Strauch, who was one of the defendants of this NMT trial. Rübe's affidavit, among other things, sealed Strauch's fate.

Although Rübe was released from Allied custody after signing his affidavit, it bought him freedom only for a short while. Still before the creation of the Federal Republic of Germany he was arrested by "German" authorities and put on trial himself. Although the verdict against him mentions his involvement in the above-mentioned alleged execution of Jews from the Sluzk ghetto (pp. 12, 36), this was not the focus of the trial, as Rübe had successfully claimed to have been a mere spectator of this event. The focus of this German trial was Rübe's alleged involvement during the elimination of the Minsk ghetto, where numerous witnesses claimed that he had committed cruelties and murdered some of the ghetto's occupants.

Since Rübe had helped with his affidavit for the NMT to cast the official version into stone, he had no line of defense left during his own trial. It is again important to note that this court as well made ample use of testimonies from hearsay and presented written statements by witnesses who never appeared on trial. Their statements had been taken much earlier and sometimes even during the so-called "*Spruchkammer*" trials (pp. 23f.), which were Allied postwar denazification tribunals with no legal basis and no due process. It is in this context that a gas van is mentioned (*ibid.*). Except for the number of people allegedly forced into this vehicle (50 to 80, p. 24), no details are given.

Rübe's defense in this context is very interesting. He admitted the existence of one such van, yet claims that the "gas pipe had been defective, as a result of which the van had never been used" (p. 27). Since the court could not establish that Rübe had ever been involved in the use of such a van, he was acquitted of the according charge.

All we can learn from this case is that there is a strict historical and legal continuity between the Allied postwar tribunals and the subsequent (West) German postwar trials, where the conditions may have been more humane, but a defense regarding gas van (and other) claims

was possible only when accepting the main line of the orthodox version of history.

3.7.2.3. LG Wiesbaden, Verdict of 24 Mar. 1952

This trial is interesting, as it ended with an acquittal for all five defendants who had been accused of wittingly causing the death of numerous individuals by transferring them from regular prisons to concentration camps. But these jurists all managed to convince the court that they did not know what was going on in the concentration camps.

Gas vans were not in the focus of this trial. Only on two occasions a gas van was mentioned, although they are both interesting cases, as they show how rumors spread and multiply. The first case was attested to by an unnamed witness:

> *"When he was in the Monowitz camp, which belonged to Auschwitz, his health deteriorated so much that he was supposed to be gassed. He was hauled into a gas van, in which the inmates were gassed on the way to the crematoria."* (p. 325)

Needless to say that he miraculously escaped his own gassing, because some physician put a stop to it by claiming that on that day the camp had to be squeaky clean due to a visit by some delegation of officers. The problem with this is that even orthodox historians reject this alleged gas vans deployment in Auschwitz as untrue. Yet the Wiesbaden court believed the witness, which shows how credulous German courts are when it comes to believing just about anything a former inmate tells.

The second case was attested to by a prosecutor working in Linz, Austria, during the war (p. 354):

> *"This witness definitely knew about the extermination methods in the individual camps. But it is telling that he did not find out about it due to his activity in the office of the attorney general, but incidentally when working at a German district court in The Haag.* […] *In Holland the witness also heard before March 1943 about the invention of a Berlin police officer. According to this exhaust gases were piped into hermetically sealed vehicles in order to kill inmates."*

If considering that Holland was a hotspot of Allied propaganda efforts and mass gassing claims (Kues 2010), we can see where this "knowledge" came from.

3.7.2.4. LG Köln, Verdict of 20 June 1953

The defendant of this trial was the former SS-*Oberführer* and Colonel of the Police Dr. Emanuel Schäfer, who was responsible for the Semlin *Judenlager* (Jewish camp) near Belgrade, Serbia. Most of the verdict deals with considerations about the execution of two hostages, which is irrelevant in the present context. Since the 7,000+ inmates of the Semlin Camp are said to have been gassed using a Saurer truck especially transferred for this purpose (see Chapters 1.2., 2.2.7. and 4.1.), Schäfer found himself in an uncomfortable position. In this context the court introduced the documents of 501-PS, which gave Schäfer no room to maneuver. The verdict states:

> *"One day in the spring of 1942, presumably in early March 1942, a telegram of the RSHA arrived from Berlin which was marked as 'Secret State Matter' and which was therefore immediately shown to the defendant. The telegram which no longer exists* [how convenient!], *had the following content according to the defendant's own statement:*
>
> *'Re: Jewish Action in Serbia,*
> *Einsatzkommando with special vehicle Saurer on route by road with special order.'*
>
> *The defendant was immediately aware of the telegram's meaning. He knew that this was about the killing of the Jews still present in the camp in Belgrade, all of them Jewish women and children."* (pp. 152f.)

In fact, the defendant himself had claimed during the trial to have become "immediately aware of the telegram's meaning." The court summarized his statements as follows:

> *"When the telegram announcing the arrival of the special Saurer vehicle had arrived at his office and was presented to him, he knew immediately what this was all about. He immediately recognized the announced action against the Jewish inmates of the Semlin Camp as plain, mean, cowardly murder. He felt nauseated. But he claimed to have been unable to do anything about it. It has been an inevitable Führer order.* [… Resistance] *would have meant mortal danger. It would also have been absolutely impossible to sabotage the announced measures or to resist them in any way. He had no other choice but to let the announced measures unfold."* (p. 164)

Anyone reading this has the right to feel nauseous himself. Such defendants who obsequiously followed even the most cruel and obviously illegal order deserve our utmost disgust.

But how could Schäfer have known what the telegram meant? There is nothing in the alleged telegram's claimed text hinting at any criminal meaning. This suggests that what he told the court is knowledge in hindsight at best. And in addition: which *Führer* order is he talking about? No such order was ever found! Hence it probably never existed! It was invented by defendants like Schäfer in an attempt to hide behind it.

Moreover, if the Saurer *Diesel* engines couldn't do what Schäfer and the verdict claim they did (killing within 15 minutes), if therefore his testimony isn't true, then why would he say such things?

The answer to this question lies in what I have stated in Chapter 3.4. about the impossible situation German defendants found – and are still finding – themselves in during postwar trials. Schäfer was the responsible person for what happened in that camp, as the court correctly established:

> *"The Semlin* Judenlager *was under the defendant's control. This means that nobody could carry out an order in this camp without his permission and cooperation."* (p. 166)

So if the "truth" is a lie but is cast in stone, how would you defend yourself as the one whose signature is under each document, real and fake? Now read Schäfer's statement once again. He chose the only path open to him. It is a lie itself, as it can be assumed that during the war he mostly did what he thought was right and necessary. The disgust he claimed to have felt when he read the incoming telegram is itself a lie serving yet another lie: that he wanted to resist but couldn't. The only credible version is that back then he didn't see a reason to resist. And this was not so because he was a monster – the court itself stated eight times that he was a decent man (pp. 159, 161, 163, 168 (2×), 169 (2×), 171)[99] – but because he didn't see anything monstrous happening.

Although the court claims that its allegations regarding the deployment of these "gas vans" are partly "based on the defendant's own statements" (p. 154), it is unclear which part of it was confirmed by the

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[99] Even more so in a different verdict against Schäfer for his role in the deportation of Cologne's Jews, case 403, LG Köln, verdict of 9 July 1954, Rüter *et al*. 1968ff., vol. 403, pp. 575-602. During this trial Schäfer claimed he had sincerely thought the Jews would merely be resettled "like the Red Indians were into some reservation."

defendant in which way, as the other part of the court's story not backed up by documents had been contributed by unspecified witnesses, about whose testimonies we learn nothing from the verdict.

About the "gas van" itself the court stated:

> *"The special vehicle Saurer was a especially constructed vehicle for this purpose, with which the exhaust gases of the running engine were piped into the interior of the closed vehicle by means of a special device (lever and hoses), so that the persons in the interior were put to sleep and died of a carbon oxide poisoning."* (p. 153)

A special device, indeed, sporting a lever and several hoses at once. The notion that a lever was used to "turn on" the gassing was probably inspired by the Becker document, which mentions such levers without specifying what they were, even though from the context it is clear that they were allegedly used to fine-tune the procedure, not to turn it on and off (see page 56).

Nothing in the verdict indicates who came up with such a description, but it probably stems from the defendant, who most likely just made up what he thought would have been the likely setup. Again the court:

> *"After three days the Sonderkommando consisting of the SS-Scharführer Goetz and Meyer arrived in Belgrade with the special vehicle Saurer from Berlin.* […] *In the course of this time the Jewish men, women, and children present in the Semlin Camp were handed over to them for removal by means of the 'gas vans.' It was feigned to the Jews that they would be relocated to a different, better camp. To make this deception more credible, it was ordered that the Jews had to take along all of their belongings. Hence the victims let themselves being duped and credulously climbed in groups of 25 persons into the death van in hope for better living conditions. The vehicle was closed and started moving. During transit the driver directed the engine's exhaust gases through a hose into the vehicle's interior by means of a lever, so that the occupants fell asleep in the way described above* […]*."* (*ibid.*)

So now we know for sure: the lever to switch the gassing on and off was in the driver's cabin and could be operated by the driver during transit! Quite fanciful indeed.

According to another source, though, that lever is said to have been at the *outside* of the truck (Manoschek 1998, p. 230, referring to Landesgericht Wien, 27e, Vr 2260/67):

> *"One of the two drivers, Wilhelm Götz or Erwin Meyer, got out and turned the lever at the outside of the truck, so that then the exhaust gases would be led into the vehicle's interior."*

Considering that the Saurer vehicles could allegedly accommodate up to 100 victims at a time, the court's claimed load is a little off, but that may be explained by the fact that they all took their belongings along,[100] a claim which we will encounter again in a similar manner in the next verdict handed down some eight years later.

Next the court refers to an actually existing document, the telegram of 9 June 1942 reporting the conclusion of the "action" (p. 154; see Chapter 2.2.3.2.), which bears the defendant's name. If genuine, it sure does not have any incriminating content either.

The defendant was finally sentenced to 6½ years imprisonment for two murders (the two hostages mentioned at the beginning) and aiding and abetting in the murder of some 7,000 people. So his strategy panned out at least partially: He blamed it all on the rotten corpse of the *Führer*.

3.7.3. From 1960 to 1964 (2 trials)

3.7.3.1. LG Karlsruhe, Verdict of 20 Dec. 1961 & 13 Dec. 1963

During this trial eight defendants, only three of which were sentenced,[101] were accused for various (mass) homicides during their service for various German authorities in the eastern theater of war. Two of the defendants were successful with their appeals. The subsequent passages are from the first verdict, unless otherwise stated.

Most of the homicides dealt with during this trial concern shootings, which do not interest us in this context.[102] Regarding mass murder with gas vans, which the defendant Dr. Hans Schumacher was accused of having supervised in early 1942 and which he confessed to have done, the court writes:[103]

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100 Since no other vehicle is mentioned, they probably took it along in the gas van. But compare Chapter 3.7.4.8. about the same event, where a separate vehicle is claimed.

101 Hans Schumacher & Reinhold Brünnert each to 4 years; the retrial against Erich Ehrlinger was first postponed but later shelved due to the defendant's permanent unfitness for trial (appeal verdict, p. 629); see next footnote.

102 Interestingly, the main defendant Erich Ehrlinger, head of *Einsatzkommando* 1b in summer 1941, "persistently" denied having ordered or participated in wanton mass murder, though the court did not believe him, pp. 85f., 106. Initially sentenced to twelve years, a retrial never took place due to him allegedly being permanently unfit for trial. Ehrlinger died in 2004 at the age of 95. So much for his unfitness; cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erich_Ehrlinger.

103 The verdict of the appeal merely copied this passage from the first verdict, p. 615.

> *"*[The gas van] *was a cuboid truck resembling a moving truck which could be sealed airtight and which could accommodate some 30 persons. By way of a dedicated device which was to be operated by the driver, engine exhaust gases could be led inside the van instead of to the outside. The occupants then died within a few minutes.*
> […] *When the inmates climbed into the gas van, they did not know what was awaiting them; Dr. Schumacher had told them that they would be resettled; hence they remained fully dressed and could also take their small possessions along. After they had climbed into the gas van, the doors were closed tightly, and still within the prison courtyard the exhaust gases of the running engine were led into the vehicle's interior. Soon thereafter the vehicle started to rock slightly; dull cries and knocking was audible. The inmates struggled for their lives. When all had turned silent after a few minutes and the vehicle had stopped rocking, this was the sign for the driver that the inmates were now dead. Now the gas van drove to its destination at the city limits,* […]. *When opening the truck at the burial site, the corpses of men, women and children half stood, half lay in a disorderly manner and had distorted and disfigured faces, were soiled with vomit and excrements, visibly the signs of a painful death."* (p. 100)

According to Dr. Schumacher, those gassings were only exceptions to the shooting rule, because "the atrocious corollaries of the gassings (unloading the corpses)" as well as the "emotional burden of the SS men who had to bury the victims" was unendurable (p. 103; appeal verdict: p. 618). This is interesting because the gas vans are said to have been invented in order to relieve the SS men charged with mass shootings from this burden. Just read what these men allegedly did instead of using the gas van for its intended purpose:

> *"The inmates meant to be executed* […] *had been loaded* […] *onto a truck, whose cargo space was surrounded by a tarpaulin, or on a gas van temporarily used as a transport van. Then they were* […] *driven to the execution site* […]. *The inmates were led individually or in small groups* […] *to the ditch, into which they had to lie down face down, in order to be shot by a member of the execution command with a shot in the neck. It thus happened frequently, that the subsequent inmates had to lie down on their executed, gory fellow sufferers, before they were all covered with dirt."* (p. 104; appeal verdict: p. 618)

Killing each human being individually at arm's length sure is a heavier emotional burden on everyone than killing a large batch anonymously in a gas van. Also, I cannot see why burying a gassed victim should be ghastlier than burying a shot victim. The former is less gory, for sure.

But emotional considerations aside, the real absurdity of this statement is the claim that most of the time the gas van wasn't even used as such. Instead, it served as a mere transport vehicle.

Hence I think this is just a defense stratagem by Dr. Schumacher to downplay the use of gas vans, since he must have felt that he could not deny them away. On his appeal he was sentenced to four years imprisonment.

Another defendant, referred to only as "P.," had invented a different tack to completely avoid punishment for an alleged execution, profiting from the above claim that the "gas van" usually served merely to transport inmates to the execution site:

> *"It cannot be seen from the* [execution] *order that this time it was not to be implemented by shooting but instead by gassing. P. subsequently went to the prison courtyard in the early morning in order to drive with the loaded inmates to the execution site, as he thought. When he arrived at the prison courtyard, the last prisoners were about to be loaded into the gas van, which P. did not recognize as such; among them was also a woman, and when looking into the gas van he also recognized another woman and 2 little children of some 1 to 2 and 4 to 5 years of age. The driver closed the truck and drove it to the gate of the prison courtyard, where he stopped it. P, however, had entered a car standing on the road in front of the prison courtyard in order to follow the prisoner truck to the execution site, as he had done during the execution in April. Yet contrary to his expectation the prisoner truck did not come. After some 10 to 15 minutes had passed, P. left his car and went to the prison courtyard in order to find out why the truck was not coming. When he asked the driver there, he told him that the inmates had been gassed. The driver, whose name could not been found out, had run the engine on high speed for several minutes and had led the exhaust gases into the van's interior, after he had closed the van's door and had driven the truck to the prison's courtyard gate. Only then did the defendant P. realize that the special treatment happened by gassing this time and not by shooting."* (p. 118)

The court believed him. He was acquitted.

3.7.3.2. LG Koblenz, Verdict of 21 May 1963 & 10 Nov. 1965

During this trial eleven defendants were accused of various (mass) homicides, mainly by shooting and gassing in "gas vans," during their service in *Sonderkommando* 1a and 1b of *Einsatzgruppe* A at the eastern theater of war, mainly in and around Minsk. They were sentenced to the following prison terms: life + 8, 15, 10, 8, 7, 3 × 4½, 2 × 4, 3½ years; five of the defendants were said to have been involved in gas van executions. Many of the defendants confessed.

The striking features of this verdict are its long passages dealing with the history of National Socialist anti-Jewish measures and the NS organizations implementing them. In this regard it is therefore a history lesson to the public rather than an attempt at clarifying certain alleged events. Again, some of the homicides dealt with are not said to have been committed with "gas vans," so I will not address them here.

Regarding the deployment of "gas vans" in the Minsk area the court writes, obviously to a great degree based on the extant documents discussed in Chapter 2:

> *"Starting roughly in June 1942, gas vans were used for killings. The headquarters had three such vehicles at their disposal, one large Saurer truck and two somewhat smaller Diamond trucks. The Imperial Security Main Office, which also called these vehicles 's-vehicles' (special vehicles) in its official writings, had devised these devices on the one hand in order to accelerate the mass killing, and on the other hand because it was feared that carrying out so many shootings would be too heavy an emotional burden for the assigned men. The gas vans were deployed only on the explicit order of the commander. They were entrusted to particular drivers, who had been prepared in Berlin for taking over these vehicles. The gas vans had a cuboid cargo box making them look like a moving truck. They were lined with sheet metal on the inside. A double door at the rear was the only opening. A foldout ladder facilitated the entry.* […] *These* [vehicles] *were always loaded so densely that body stood next to body. This allowed up to 60 persons to be crammed into it. After the doors had been closed, the occupants were surrounded by complete darkness and airtightly locked away from the outside world. The gas vans then drove to the execution site and stopped next to the pit. Only then the extermination was initiated. The driver and his co-driver connected a hose and piped into the interior the exhaust gases of the engine, which was running only on low hand throttle.* […] *the*

> *vehicle rocked forth and back for minutes, although this turmoil subsided slowly. After some 15 minutes the vehicle stood still."* (p. 194f.)

With the exception of the foldout ladder, which is mentioned nowhere else as far as I know, this description of the "gas van" could probably be seen as a kind of "standard" in the sense that it shows the features most frequently referred to. Merely the claim that the gassing procedure was initiated only after arrival at the burial place is somewhat strange. That is precious time and in particular fuel wasted.

The court verdict discussed in the previous chapter quoted a defendant claiming that the gas vans weren't used often because their method was so cruel and emotionally burdensome. Here we read the exact opposite. Yet here, too, a reason is given why mass shootings continued in spite of the existence of these vans, yet it is different than what we've heard before:

> *"*[…] *frequent defects of the gas vans may have been the reason that they were not used continuously, so that Jews kept being shot."* (p. 195)

Later on the verdict also claims bad soil conditions as a reason why the truck couldn't approach the pit anymore, so the victims had to be shot (p. 268; 270), or that the gassing didn't work at all, as the victims were merely unconscious (p. 270). Hence this verdict surmises as well that the gas vans were at times not used to gas people but rather to merely transport them to an execution site in order to be shot there (p. 197).

3.7.3.3. Interrogations of August Becker

In 1959, the West German authorities finally succeeded in tracking down the Chemist August Becker, the author of the infamous letter introduced during the IMT as part of 501-PS. Becker had apparently dropped out of sight since the war, as he had never been asked to corroborate his letter at Nuremberg or any other trials. No less than at least five German prosecution offices subsequently interrogated Becker: Gießen (28 Jan 1959; 26 March 1960), Düsseldorf (11 Jan. 1960), Hannover (28 Jan. 1960), Wiesbaden (4/5 April 1960, while hospitalized) and Stuttgart (20 June 1960).[104] Although the Internet encyclopedia Wikipedia claims that Becker was eventually sentenced to 10 years im-

[104] The dates are taken from Beer (1987), except for the one of 4/5 April 1960 and 28 Jan. 1959, which stem from http://www.landesarchiv-bw.de/stal/grafeneck/index.htm; Beer doesn't list them, because these interrogations did not deal with gas vans.

prisonment,[105] there is no evidence to support this, as his name does not show up in any verdict of that time. Wikipedia also claims that he was released from prison on 15 July 1960 due to a stroke he had suffered, which sounds probable, as he suffered more strokes later on. Yet at that time he was probably only in investigative custody. When Becker was called as a witness during a later trial against defendants accused of having participated in the Third Reich's euthanasia program, Becker's mental health had deteriorated to such a degree that he was not even capable of testifying as a witness, as he could "hardly get a reasonable sentence together," as the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* reported (1967b).

The quality of Becker's statements of 1960 can be derived from the interrogation protocol prepared on occasion of Becker's interrogation of 26 March 1960, excerpts of which have been published by Klee/ Dreßen/Rieß (1991), from which I will subsequently quote several sentences, followed by my comments (pp. 69-71):[106]

> *"I was to pay particular attention to the mechanical functioning of these vans. I would like to mention that there were two types of gas vans in operation: the Opel-Blitz, weighing 3.5 tonnes, and the large Saurerwagen, which as far as I know, weighed 7 tonnes."* (p. 69)

If true, this sets the record straight about the alleged Diamond trucks used as gas vans, or any other make or model. According to this, Becker must really have known all the technical details of these gas vans. Unfortunately he was never asked to reveal any details about them during his many interrogations.

> *"I thus left by train on 5 or 6 January 1942 traveling via Cracow and Fastov to Nikolayev. From there I flew in the Reichsführer's plane to Simferopol in the Crimea.* […] *I reported to the head of Einsatzgruppe D, Otto Ohlendorf, sometime in January. I remained with this group until the beginning of April 1942 and then visited each Einsatzgruppe."* (p. 70)

Sure, little Becker fetches Heinrich Himmler's personal plane, which just happened to wait for him in the world metropolis of Nikolayev, and from there he flies around behind the Russian front inspecting the gas vans of the various *Einsatzguppen*.

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105 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/August_Becker.

106 Tellingly; the German Wikipedia webpage quoting excerpts from this testimony does not quote any of these passages, except for the last one, see http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/August_Becker_(Chemiker).

> *"At the same time I also learned from Potzelt that there was a Jewish extermination camp in Minsk. I flew to Minsk by helicopter, correction, in a Fiesler Storch* [light aircraft] *belonging to the Einsatzgruppe. Travelling with me was Hauptsturmführer Rühl, the head of the extermination camp at Minsk, with whom I had discussed business in Riga.* […]
> *When I saw what was going on in Minsk, that people of both sexes were being exterminated in their masses, that was it – I could not take it anymore* […]*."* (p. 71)

When it comes to his mode of traveling, Becker's fantasy lurks once again when he conjures up a helicopter. The "extermination camp in Minsk" probably refers to the Maly Trostinec camp 12 km southeast of Minsk. Orthodox historiography claims that some 40,000 to 60,000 Jews deported to Minsk from Germany, Czechia, and Poland were killed there *en masse*.[107] But Becker's timing is off, as said deportations began only in early May 1942, so he could not have witnessed any of it.

Another problem with Becker's statement is the alleged camp commander *Hauptsturmführer* Rühl. This person is probably identical with SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Felix Rühl.[108] However, Rühl was a member of *Einsatzgruppe* D which operated in the Ukraine and Caucasus, not in the Reichskommissariat Ostland, where Kiev was located. I have found no evidence that Rühl was ever stationed in that region, or that he had any connection whatsoever with Minsk or Maly Trostinec. Furthermore, the Maly Trostinec camp was run by the Commander of the Security Police and the SD Minsk, not by the *Einsatzgruppen*.

Becker continues:

> *"In a private conversation lasting about an hour I described to Pradel the working method of the gas vans and voiced criticism about the fact that the offenders had not been gassed but had been suffocated because the operators had set the engine incorrectly. I told him that people had vomited and defecated."* (*Ibid.*)

"Offenders"? Is Becker implying that he thought the gas had been deployed to execute death penalties? I have already discussed the nonsense about distinguishing between "gassing" or "putting to sleep" and "suffocating" and about being able to manipulate the way the victims die by operating the engines in a certain way. This confirms merely that Becker has learned the content of this document by heart – he was

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107 http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maly_Trostinec.
108 http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felix_R%C3%BChl.

probably confronted with it numerous times during his interrogations, so he learned step by step what was expected of him, and he duly complied.

From these excerpts it becomes evident that Becker was really mentally confused. Mathias Beer, however, quotes Becker's various depositions eleven times in his 1987 paper, without even once hinting at their problematic nature.

3.7.4. From 1965 to 1969 (11 trials)

3.7.4.1. LG Bonn, Verdicts of 30 Mar. 1963 & 23 July 1965

This trial was directed against eleven defendants who were former officials of the Chełmno/Kulmhof camp, where gas vans are said to have been the primary weapon of mass murder. It is therefore also one of the most detailed verdicts with regards to this question. Hence I will analyze it here more thoroughly than the other verdicts discussed in this chapter, whereby I will include Marais's 1994 observations.

After a retrial following an appeal of the first verdict, eight of the defendants were sentenced (3×13, 8, 7 years, 3×13½ months) and three exempted from punishment. None of the defendants denied the charges.[109] Most insisted that they thought they had to follow orders, and those who stated that they tried to resist claimed that such resistance had either been futile or that they thought their own lives would have been in jeopardy, if they had tried.

Although several defendants declared that they never had anything against Jews and actually got along with them pretty well before their deployment in Chełmno, these could just be claims. This is different with defendant B. (Heinrich Bock) who "got engaged to a Jewess in Berlin in 1940" at a time when such an act could and usually did have negative repercussion even for the non-Jewish partner in such a relationship. This proves, as the court stated, that he indeed "had no antipathy against Jews," and therefore considered "the killing of the Jews to be against morality and law." Yet still he obediently followed all orders (pp. 253, 291f.).

Another defendant (Me.)[110] even stated that his father, an opponent of National Socialism, had been arrested and severely mistreated by the

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[109] One of them (Sch.) tried to commit suicide when first confronted with the charges, though, p. 258.

[110] Perhaps Kurt Meier; see www.holocaustresearchproject.org/othercamps/chelmnoSSstafflist.html.

Gestapo. Yet when Me. allegedly informed his father about what was going on in Chełmno, not even he "could give him any advice as to how to avoid this activity" ("Me.," pp. 256f.). What a defense strategy! If not even staunch anti-Nazis had a solution, how can you sentence a son for not knowing what to do! I wouldn't believe that story for a second, but it worked, and that's what counts in a court room: "Me." got off the hook.

If the extermination claims about Chełmno are true, the Nazi's skills to make everyone, even their opponents, follow their orders blindly was quite remarkable indeed.

3.7.4.1.1. Technical Details

The verdict of the first trial contains the entire text of the Just document (pp. 273-275; the letter's first paragraph is quoted on p. 285). This set the rigid framework within which the "facts" could be established by the court.

> *"The gas vans were large trucks painted grey of a foreign make* […]*"* (pp. 230, 277)

The reference to a "foreign make" is consistent with other sources referring to foreign makes (Diamond, Renault, see Chapter 4.2.2.). The most likely candidates for such vans, the German makes Saurer and Opel (Blitz) (see Becker's statement, p. 193), were therefore allegedly not represented in the Kulmhof/Chełmno Camp, where only up to three such vans are said to have been in operation.[111]

> The vans sported a *"*[…] *closed cargo box, which was separated from the driver's cab and was roughly 2 m wide, 2 m high and 4 m long."* (*Ibid.*)

According to witness statements and the Just document, "nine to ten" persons per square meter were crammed into the cargo box. If we assume a packing density of 10 persons per m^2 and when assuming an average body weight of 60 kg (with a density of roughly 1 kg/liter), then these 80 persons weighing 4.8 metric tons filled up 4.8 m^3 of the total of 16 m^3 of available space. Under these circumstances each person had (11.2 ÷ 80) 0.14 m^3 (= 140 liters) of air volume at his or her disposal. Under these circumstances the victims would soon have been suffocated

[111] At times one of the three claimed Chełmno gas vans is said to have been a Saurer, although Mattogno has pointed out that the witness statements about the kind and number of gas vans allegedly deployed in Chełmno are not consistent (Mattogno 2017).

due to the lack of oxygen without the need of conducting exhaust gases into the interior.

> *"The interior* [of the cargo box] *was paneled with zinc-coated iron sheets. Wooden grates lay on the floor, under which pipes were located."* (*Ibid.*)

This description of the gas van's nonsensical internal piping is probably based on a testimony similar to that by Johann Haßler for the Minsk gas vans and other such descriptions as discussed before (see pp. 122, 133, 157), to which I refer the reader.

The verdict continues:

> *"To the openings of the pipes at the van's floor hoses were connected which had a conical tip."* (*Ibid.*)

This sentence makes no sense. How can hoses have conical tips? And why would there have been several openings for connecting hoses? This implies that there were several independent pipes inside the cargo box, each with its own gas supply, which would have been a truly absurd design. This sentence does also not explain how these hoses were connected to these openings. Reason demands that the "pipes" (of the pipework) ended in just one opening in the floor, which was equipped with some (conical?) adapter, to which the hose could have been connected.

> *"The end of the hose could be inserted into the exhaust pipe and screwed tight with a cap nut."* (*Ibid.*)

If the hose was inserted into the exhaust pipe, it could not be screwed tight with a cap nut. Cap nuts press the end of a hose equipped with an end piece (with or without sealing) against the edge of a pipe. Exhaust hoses, on the other hand, are usually attached to pipes using hose clamps, not cap nuts.[112] This statement shows once more that the judges writing the verdict were not exactly familiar with technical issues like this, so that the witnesses could – and did – tell them whatever they liked.

Assuming that the hose was attached to the exhaust pipe with a cap nut, then the exhaust pipe must have had an outer thread, which is quite unusual, as exhaust pipes are usually too thin to allow for a thread to be cut into them. Hence it must have been equipped with a special, thicker end piece. It is also worth noting that the exhaust gases' high tempera-

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[112] See www.esska.de/esska_de_s/schlaeuche-schellen.html.

ture would have created difficulties to keep this thread operable due to fast corrosion, unless one had used special stainless steel.

It is furthermore striking that the two ends of the hose were not attached with the same technique: The one end was "inserted" into the exhaust pipe and fixed with a cap nut, whereas the other end had an ominous "conical tip," with which it was attached to the pipe in the cargo box. Why complicate matters in such a way? Perhaps the connection to the box was permanent, whereas the one to the exhaust pipe was not, allowing for the hose to be detached, rolled up and stowed somehow underneath the cargo box? Apparently, the judges didn't care too much to find out how the hose was attached to the pipe opening.

The verdict continues:

> *"The two wings of the door at the back of the cargo box opened to the outside and were equipped with a rubber sealing ensuring an airtight closure."* (pp. 230f., 277)

No word indicates that the cargo box had openings enabling the escape of excess exhaust gases (for instance of the kind mentioned in the first paragraph of the Just document: two 1 cm × 10 cm slits). In fact, going to the trouble of using rubber seals to make the box airtight logically excludes the option of any openings. This confirms once more that the cargo box, in which the victims were said to have been locked, is said to have been sealed *hermetically*, which means that the exhaust gases must have exerted an ever-increasing pressure on the interior of the cargo box. The description given for the way the hose was connected to the pipe opening or to the cargo box indicates that this connection must have been hermetical as well. Under these circumstances, the exhaust gases would have been piped into an enclosed space with a free volume of some 11 m^3, so that it would have taken only a few minutes until the pressure would have risen to such a degree that the cargo box would have given way. Yet we are told that the operation took up to 15 minutes (see Chapter 4.2.5. for the various alleged operation times).

3.7.4.1.2. Operational Mode

> *"Next the naked people had to enter the gas van. In each case it had been backed up by the driver to the openings of the ramp. After the wings of the door had been opened, the ramp was entirely closed up, since the ramp's floor was at the same height as the floor of the gas van. While the Jewish people walked across the ramp, they were supervised by another police guard in addition to the accompanying*

> *Pole and police guard. This guard was outside of the ramp next to the gas van, where he was to prevent escape attempts.*
> *After the victims had entered the gas van, a Polish worker closed the door and usually also connected the hose stowed underneath the van with the exhaust pipe. The latter activity was sometimes also performed by the gas van's driver himself, who subsequently started the engine and gave a little gas.*
> *The engine exhaust reached the van's interior through the hose. To those locked up inside, these exhaust gases consisting of carbon monoxide mixed with smoke and irritants caused headache, temporal pressure, nausea, vomiting and trembling. The victims realized what was happening. They got scared and panicked. This manifested itself in moanings and screams. They faced death and banged against the van's walls in desperation. After a suffering of several minutes, 7 to 8 minutes after starting the engine they became unconscious, and after another 2 minutes they were dead.*
> *After starting the engine, the gas van's driver waited for some 10 to 15 minutes. Then the hose was detached."* (pp. 231f., 279)

The latter is not easy at all! After ten minutes of operation an exhaust pipe is very hot, and it is not advisable to touch it with one's bare hands. In addition, a spanner, a wrench or a pair of pliers would have been needed to unscrew the cap nut from the exhaust pipe. The other end of the hose had to be detached as well for cleaning purposes – although it is not known how, as the type of connection is unknown.

> *"After the Jewish workers had unloaded the corpses, they superficially cleaned the van's interior, which was soiled by the victim's blood, urine, and excrements."* (pp. 232, 279)

During three later West German trials the expert "Prof. Dr. Joachim Ger.[chow]" of the Institute for Forensic and Social Medicine in Frankfurt testified about the effects of carbon monoxide poisonings, where he confirmed that vomiting, defecation, and urination can be an effect of such a death (Rüter *et al*. 1968ff., vol. 32, p. 99; vol. 37, p. 421; vol. 39, p. 613). That claim was confirmed by another expert witness, "Prof. Dr. Ste.," who stated that these events usually occur after unconsciousness has set in (*ibid.*, vol. 39, p. 665). But it is unclear where the blood could have come from.

The verdict also addresses an explosion which is said to have occurred toward the end of May of 1942 in the *basement* of the Kulmhof

Castle,[113] and "exact circumstances of which can no longer be determined." During that event the defendant "S." (Alexander Steinke) is said to have been injured (pp. 240, 259, 326). The court conjectures that this explosion was identical to the one referred to in the first paragraph of the Just document (p. 285), even though a "gas van" parked in the castle's court yard could not possibly lead to an explosion in the castle's *basement*. The court made this forced parallel between the Just document and the eyewitness accounts in order to give both a higher degree of credibility by means of an alleged "convergence of evidence," which, however, did not exist here at all. This is also visible from the court's claim that, since the number of gas vans mentioned in the Just letter is the same as is said to have been deployed at Chełmno, the Just letter must be talking about these three Chełmno vans. However, the context clearly shows that the reference to the alleged explosion in Chełmno is set in contrast to the general use of these vans, so the author is talking about a general deployment of the vans and not just those at Chełmno.

Hence, and if considering the dubious nature of the Just document, whatever the Just document says about the number of vans deployed cannot really be used to verify the claims of other sources. It might be that this document's claim of three deployed gas vans is the original source of the claim that three gas vans were used in Chełmno – or vice versa. But that would only prove a cross-fertilization from early witnesses to the document's creators and then from the document to later witnesses.

The rest of the verdict consists of lengthy statements about the lives of the defendants as well as of the accusations and the reasons for the verdict. All this is of no importance to us, except perhaps of the following peculiar passage from the reasons given for the rejection of an appeal, which had been filed by the defendant Ernst Burmeister (p. 350):

> *"The reading of German translations of protocols written in Polish about the findings made during an inspection of a so-called gas van as well as about the interrogation of the – meanwhile executed – deputy camp commander Piller was not a violation of article 249 of the Penal Law. Since the translations carry the attestation clause of a sworn court interpreter, whose signature is also certified by the court, they could be read without that their accuracy had to be as-*

[113] Regarding Kulmhof/Chełmno one has to distinguish between the town as such, where Poles lived, the separate "castle," and the "forest camp" some four km apart (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 75).

> *certained once more during the trial, be it by the interpreter or in another way* […]. *Moreover the verdict would not be based on a potential violation: The design of the gas vans was undisputed; the jury court did not use the statements by camp commander Piller to the detriment of the defendants (verdict under B.III.2b).”*

Since this quote is about the deputy camp commander Piller, the relevant passage at the end of this paragraph B.III.2b ought to be mentioned here (p. 296):

> *“Hence it has been ascertained that the statement by Piller is incorrect, wrongfully incriminating the defendant.”*

I have analyzed Piller’s sore-thumb “statement” about the valve-murder within two to three minutes already in Chapter 3.6.2.2.

Regarding the inspection of a “so-called gas van,” the alleged “findings” could have been challenged in court, but in that case neither the judges nor the defense lawyers were very curious and preferred to hide behind the text so that they did not have to challenge their own persuasions, even though the use of the adjective “so-called” may indicated that even the judges had their qualms. As I have quoted in Chapter 2.1. (p. 35), this inspection of a “so-called gas van” did indeed come to the conclusion that this was *not* a gas van, hence the only thing this document introduced by the court should have served to do would have been to exonerate the defendants.

In summary it can be stated that this judicial text officially confirms a particular feature of the “gas vans” appearing in all witness accounts: These vehicles had a *hermetically sealed* cargo box. This would have been technically impossible, as I have pointed out in Chapter 1.3.2. Already this fact should cause reservations about the eyewitness accounts. According to my knowledge no judicial authority has so far ordered an experiment being made to verify whether such a “gassing operation” would have been possible in the first place under conditions described by the prosecution.

3.7.4.1.3. The “Explosion of Kulmhof”

This accident is mentioned in the first paragraph of the Just letter (see Chapter 2.2.4.) and referred to four times in the court verdict under scrutiny. Neither document contains information about the cause of the explosion, but the claimed date of this alleged event enables us to come to revealing conclusions regarding the authenticity of this claim.

It goes without saying that this event, if it happened in the first place, must have occurred prior to the authoring of the Just letter (if both explosions are identical). Since the day on which this letter is claimed to have been written – the fifth of June 1942 – was entered by hand (presumably by the author),[114] it can be assumed that the document itself was actually written one day or even several days prior to the entry of the date. If considering the length of the document, which is a fairly detailed technical report, one may rightly assume that it is based on a manuscript whose drafting must have required some time. Since the author in Berlin could not possibly have learned immediately about this explosion in Poland, which during times of war was nothing extraordinary, one can safely assume that this explosion at Kulmhof/ Chełmno must have occurred at the end of May 1942 at the latest, when considering all the necessary steps involved, as this hypothetical, but realistic inverse chronology shows:

5 June: signing of the letter;
3 June: typing of the letter;
1 June: start of drafting the manuscript;
28 May: reception of the news about the explosion;
25 May: explosion at Chełmno.

The verdict of the German court at Bonn states that the explosion at Chełmno occurred "at the end of May." Hence both documents seem to agree on the time when the event is said to have occurred, and there is no *a priori* reasonable doubt as to the event's reality, since the verdict mentions injuries suffered by one of the defendants (pp. 240, 259, 326 of the verdict).

I should mention here that Ingrid Weckert disagrees on this point. In a letter to P. Marais she wrote:

> *"If the explosion had occurred only a few days earlier, then the news about it would not even have reached Berlin by June 5, let alone that someone had given 'special orders' to other 'concerned departments.' German red tape has never reacted that fast, and most certainly not during the war and at the RSHA, which had other preoccupations. Hence the fabricated letter of 5 June 1942 was typed considerably later and by people who knew about the explosion. Since this was an internal affair, one has to look for the forger among this small group of people."*

[114] This procedure can be found in other German documents of this era as well.

In order to assess the authenticity of the Just letter from that point of view, one has to determine by way of a careful analysis of this document whether the author could have known not only about the explosion at Chełmno but also about all the other information contained in the letter at the time when it was drafted.

In this regard I may add the following: The Just letter does not only prove that the author knew about the alleged explosion, but also:

a. that the explosion had been assessed;
b. that the cause of this accident had been determined;
c. that special orders had been issued to prevent the repetition of such an accident in the future;
d. that the orders had been implemented and tested regarding their efficacy;
e. that this had led to a considerable increase in security.

I quote this passage once more from the letter:

> *"The known explosion at Kulmhof has to be assessed as a single case. Its cause is to be ascribed to an operating error. In order to avoid such accidents, special orders have been issued to the offices concerned. The orders have been kept in such a way that the degree of security has been increased considerably."* (emph. added)

Such a wording requires that considerable time had passed between finding out about the event, assessing its causes, devising remedies, issuing the order and the determination that the security had subsequently increased considerably, which is to say that a number of gassing operations must have been conducted in the meantime to ascertain this alleged fact. If we assume the reality of the explosion at the stated time – the court considered it to be a fact – the following things must have happened in Berlin, if we are to expect that the author of the Just letter really signed this document on 5 June 1942:

a. immediate information about the accident, including a report detailing the causes for it;
b. the causes were analyzed swiftly, and "special orders" were issued instantly for those operating the gas vans;
c. rapid receipt of a confirmation by the responsible officers at Chełmno that the gassing operations (most likely a number of them) had run smoothly since the orders had been received;
d. and finally drafting and typing a detailed technical report – i.e., the Just letter.

All this seems utterly incredible and hence proves in my view once more that the Just document was drafted and typed long after 5 June 1942 and was then antedated – always assuming the Chełmno explosion did indeed happen at the claimed time. Plus it must be emphasized that the author of the Just document changed the nature of the explosion, which the witnesses claimed to have occurred in the basement of the Chełmno Castle, by falsely bringing it into the context of a gas van operated outside the building.

Aside from the fact that the document itself gives rise to so many points of critique, this additional point does certainly not support its authenticity!

If the Just document is indeed a forgery, the fact that the date of the explosion at Chełmno is not mentioned in it is perhaps not without relevance, because this omission averts the risk that a reader insufficiently familiar with the details becomes suspicious due to the two dates being too close together. On the other hand: If the date of this accident is considered to be relatively well established, the questions rises why the author has not avoided such critique right from the start by choosing a later date for the letter more consistent with the chronology of the events. I may surmise that either he did not know the exact point in time of this alleged explosion or that he probably didn't realize that the chain of multiple events involved would have delayed the typing of such a document much more than he had anticipated.

As to the reason for such an explosion, one can only speculate. If the explosion occurred in the castle's basement as claimed by the witnesses, then the gas vans could not have been involved. If positing that these homicidal gas vans were real and that it was an actual gas van that caused it (not in a basement, though), it could be that it was not really an explosion but merely a bursting of the cargo box as a result of an extreme pressure inside of it caused by it being hermetically sealed, as so many witnesses claim. However, if the vans' cargo boxes were hermetically sealed indeed, this bursting would inevitably have occurred already during the very first attempted gassing (*i.e.* in late 1941), after which pressure release openings would have been included *immediately* in all such vans in order to prevent such an event in the future – and not only after having processed "97,000" without any other problems, as the Just document claims. It would have been impossible to process even one person without such openings.

Another hypothetical cause for the explosion involving "gas vans" could have been that an explosive carbon monoxide/air mixture had developed inside the cargo box, which was ignited by some spark. But since this requires *at least* 12% carbon monoxide in the air,[115] such a value would have been unachievable with any unmanipulated combustion engine (the maximum value for a gasoline engine, reached while idling, lies at 10%; see Keeser/Froboese/Turnau 1930, p. 26; Mattogno/Graf 2020, p. 124).

If, however, the vans in question were fueled by generator gas, whose fuel gas was explosive by definition, it is possible that such a gas generator exploded. This seems to be the only realistic explanation, although such an explosion would have had nothing to do with homicidal gassings.

But as I said, the witnesses mentioned an explosion in the basement only.

3.7.4.1.4. Miscellanea

There are a few aspects of the verdict which are worth mentioning briefly. For instance, the threat of typhus epidemics was apparently a constant companion of those working in Chełmno. In that regard, the verdict states:

> *"In Posen* [defendant Laabs] *was inoculated against typhus, sworn to secrecy, and subsequently ordered to join the special command at Chełmno."* (p. 240)
>
> *"The escorts and guard posts of the police obtained protection suits and an inoculation and were disinfested with Lysol. Yet in spite of this preventive measure, many police officials contracted typhus."* (p. 281)

Although mentioned only in passing in the verdict, these events are a strong indicator that the inmates held in that camp or which passed through it had to undergo a similar treatment as well.

To prove his moral outrage about the alleged killing operations with gas vans, the defendant Laabs, who is said to have operated such a van, claimed the following according to the verdict:

> *"Even if* [Laabs], *according to his unrefuted statement, was very terrified when he operated the gas van for the first time und subse-*

[115] The lower explosion limit of CO in air is 12 vol.%, a value far beyond what Diesel engine can emit and also beyond the normal operational range of gasoline engines; see www.engineeringtoolbox.com/explosive-concentration-limits-d_423.html.

> *quently jumped out of the driver's cabin and 'shat in his pants',* […].*"* (pp. 244, 290)

This puerile, probably invented story did not help him, though, as he willingly complied to perform all the later claimed gassings according to the court.

Laabs's alleged horrors are juxtaposed by the alleged reaction of another purported gas van operator, the defendant Walter Burmeister, about whom the court writes:

> *"Conducting the gas van made such a little impression on him that today he does no longer know when he did it the first time."* (p. 247)

Or maybe he cannot remember because there is nothing to remember? Similarly calloused, according to the court, was the defendant Alois Haefele, about whom the court stated:

> *"*[…] *not even today the defendant has a feeling of personal guilt* […]*"* (p. 248)

So either he still thought during his trial that mass murder is a good thing to commit, or else he had no feeling of guilt because there was nothing to feel guilty about in terms of the indictment? The former would mean that the defendant was and is a human monster. Yet in this regard the court accepted that, while working at Chełmno, the defendant

> *"prohibited the carrying of whips in order to prevent the guards from striking the victims,* […] *he took care that the Jewish workers had sufficient food, occasionally gave them cigarettes, and on one occasion stopped the co-defendant Heinl from beating up the Jews."* (p. 249)

So he was definitely not a callous monster. But why would he then be utterly unrueful about the crimes he committed or helped to commit?

Walter Burmeister, by the way, tried to rescind his pretrial testimony, in which he had admitted that he had operated the gas van, to the effect that he had merely driven the gas vans to the incineration pit after an unnamed Polish worker had attached the hose to the cargo box, had started the engine, and thus had performed the execution. Blaming that which was undeniable in the court's eyes on some anonymous Polish guy was too transparent a maneuver to be credible, so the court did not believe him (p. 299).[116]

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[116] One of the witness during that trial was Sr[ebrnik], who claimed, among other things, that the defendant Burmeister used denitist tools, incidentally found among the victims' property, to arbitrarily pull or break some of the witness's teeth merely in order to torture him, an outrageous claim the court gullibly rubber-stamped as true, p. 300.

3.7.4.2. LG Kiel, Verdict of 26 Nov. 1965

During this trial only one defendant was prosecuted for having been a guard in the Chełmno Camp. The verdict only mentions the initial of his last name (F). The defendant was sentenced to 13½ months imprisonment for aiding and abetting mass murder. The term was considered served with the jail time the defendant had spent prior to the trial. A gas van is mentioned once in passing (p. 424) and described in more detail later (p. 429):

> *"The gas van had a closed cargo box of ca. 4 m length and 2 m width and looked like a moving van or a refrigerator van.* […] *It contained 70 to 80 persons, as results from a memo of the Imperial Security Main office of 5 June 1942* [Just letter] *regarding technical changes of the deployed special vehicles and those in production* […]*"*

This is followed by a quote from the Just letter including the reference to a packing density of 9 to 10 per m^2. The verdict continues (p. 430):

> *"After all victims* […] *had been driven into the van, the airtight doors were closed by the Polish helpers. Then a hose was screwed onto the exhaust pipe, which led to an opening in the floor of the cargo box. The opening was covered by a grate.* […] *Next the driver of the gas van, that is the witness Laabs or the driver Hering, started the gasoline engine of the vehicle and let it run at a certain rpm so that as much carbon oxide was produced as possible.* […] *Only after 6 to 7 minutes the screams stopped, since the victims had become unconscious. To be on the safe side, the gas van driver let the engine of the stationary van run for some more 10 minutes, then removed the hose from the exhaust pipe and drove to the forest camp."*

Hence, here as well the "truth" of the gas vans – for the court – had been cast in stone from the outset by the content of the extant documents produced during the Nuremberg trials, and everything else revolved around it.

Purely technically speaking, if indeed a van with a gasoline engine was used, then the scenario described was possible, since an airtight door doesn't mean that the cargo box itself was airtight as well (although this may be assumed). We also have to ignore the minor detail of a hose being screwed to an exhaust pipe, which is technical nonsense.

The gas vans allegedly deployed in Chełmno are said to have been of the "first group" (an expression used in the Becker document, see

Chapter 2.2.2.3.; cf. Beer 1987, p. 414), which entails that not all of them, if any, were Diesel-equipped Saurer trucks.

3.7.4.3. LG Wuppertal, Verdicts of 30 Dec. 1965 & 13 Dec. 1967

This trial concerned four defendants accused of having participated in mass killing operations of *Einsatzkommando* 6 within *Einsatzgruppe* C, which operated in the north and central Ukraine. Some of these killing operations are said to have been conducted with a "gas van." Some of the defendants claimed that they executed only criminals and partisans as well as their supporters, but the court did not believe them. One defendant was acquitted, while the other three were sentenced to 8, 5, and 3 years, respectively.

The verdict does not contain much information about the "gas van." It merely states that it was "a 5 ton truck with a metal cargo box resembling a moving truck. The cargo box could hold at least 60 densely packed people and could to be entered from the rear through a large door. The engine's exhaust gases could be introduced with a hose" (p. 513). Note that numerous sources speak of a wooden cargo box merely lined with sheet metal.

An attempt to kill the occupants of an insane asylum with an unnamed poison failed according to the verdict, because "either the doctors refused to administer the poison or because the poison turned out to have no effect." I wonder which poison they picked so expertly that it had no effect. Anyway, the occupants were subsequently killed with a shot in the neck instead, an operation about which the court affirms:

> *"Many of the victims went laughing and wildly gesticulating into their death."* (p. 509)

That may be a child's imagination of the occupants of an insane asylum, but highly educated judges should know better.

To close this case, there is also a little gem regarding the German concentration camps in the verdict. Since one of the defendants had repeatedly been severely drunk during his military service, he eventually got sentenced to 8 months. After he had served his time the following ensued in 1944:

> *"Subsequently he underwent a rehab in the Buchenwald concentration camp."* (p. 506)

This may not fit into the cliché the common reader might have about those camps, which merely indicates that this cliché is somewhat off the mark.

3.7.4.4. LG Frankfurt/M., Verdict of 12 Mar. 1966

This trial against Adolf Josef Har[?]., a former member of *Einsatzkommando* 8 (part of *Einsatzgruppe* B) deployed in the vicinity of the Belorussian town of Mogilev, initially ended with a prison term of four years, which was later revoked on appeal. A retrial mandated by the court of appeals never occurred.

Even though the defendant had merely been the manager of his unit's housing facilities, he was accused of having participated in several mass shootings of civilians (pp. 346f.) as well as in the gassing of some 600 prison inmates in a "gas van" (p. 349). About the gas van allegedly used by *Sonderkommando* 8 we read in the verdict:

> *"It was a truck with coachworks resembling a moving truck which could be closed airtightly and in whose interior the exhaust gases of the engine could be piped by means of a hose connected to the van's exhaust system.* […] *The gas van, which could hold some 50 to 55 persons, was mainly used to clear out prisons. At the prison's ramp the victims had to climb into the van's cargo box. The 'special vehicle,' as it was called back then, subsequently drove to the tank ditches outside of Mogilev. Here the hose leading into the van's cargo box was connected to the engine's exhaust system, and the engine was adjusted to 1,200 to 1,500 rpms. After some 8 minutes the engine was turned off and the cargo box was opened."* (p. 344)

The defendant admitted to his participation in several mass shootings while at once denying the extent of his involvement as claimed by the prosecution. He also insisted that he had not known the religious background of his victims, whom he considered to have been partisans or saboteurs (p. 349), a claim which the court rejected as untrue (p. 355). According to the verdict, the defendant's reaction toward gas van claims was as follows: (p. 349)

> *"He also denies having supervised the so-called clearings of prisons, as such clearings are completely unknown to him. He claims to know nothing about a gas vans, he says that he has never seen such a van in Mogilev."*

The defendant was not alone in this lack of any knowledge. Although the court considered the existence and deployment of the gas van an

immutable fact, it could not help but express its surprise about the complete ignorance of many witnesses in this regard: (pp. 356f.)

> *"It was striking that many witnesses knew nothing about the existence of the gas van. Even the witness Ric.*[chter], *during whose time as leader of the* Einsatzkommando *8 the gas van had been deployed, stated that he found out only during the interrogations that there was a gas van in his detachment. The witness Ste., who otherwise gave detailed statements, knew nothing of a gas van either."*

The verdict discusses in detail the court's difficulties to refute the defendant's claims, as the only evidence against him was other witness testimony. With a lot of healthy skepticism, which is rare among judges dealing with such cases, the court argued why it could not rely on many of these witness testimonies:

> *"During the interrogation of witnesses, difficulties resulted primarily from the fact that the witnesses' memory has faded substantially – the events about which they had to report are now already 24 years ago.* […]
>
> *Another difficulty was that the majority of witnesses heard by the court have been interrogated repeatedly during the past years in several investigation and penal cases – in one case thirty times. It lies within the nature of the matter that the witnesses are confronted with claims during theses interrogations, so that in the course of time a witness can no longer distinguish knowledge based on his own experience from knowledge based on what he has learned later on."*

Needless to say that this is true for the majority of the trials conducted after the war – the more so, the later they took place.

Due to these and other "insurmountable difficulties," many of the defendant's claims could not be refuted with certainty.[117]

In this context it is interesting to note that the existence of several gas vans is documented for *Sonderkommando* 8, see Chapter 2.2.8. (provided the document is authentic). As described there, it is by no means clear, though, whether these vehicles served the purpose of mass murder. They may just as well have been simple producer gas vans.

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[117] The verdict's revocation by the court of appeals was based on a technicality: Since the verdict had mentioned that the defendant had considered the execution orders he had received as legally binding, the court had to either acquit the defendant for "mistake of prohibition" or refute his claim.

3.7.4.5. LG Hannover, Verdict of 7 June 1966

This trial is probably the most interesting from the point of view of our research topic, because the defendants are said to have been the individuals in charge of designing and building the "gas vans:" August Becker, the author of the infamous Becker letter, Friedrich Pradel, whose signature or initials can be found on some of the documents investigated here, and Harry Wentritt. Since August Becker had suffered several strokes by 1966, he was declared unfit for trial and incarceration (see Chapter 3.7.3.3.). The German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* (1966) described Pradel's case as follows:

> *"The old Sturmbannführer's eyes are welling up. 'Your Honor', he sobs, 'I really have no knowledge about exterminations of Jews.'*
> *The former SS man currently sitting in the dock of the Jury Court in Hanover is accused of aiding in 6,000 cases of murder. According to the indictment, Friedrich Pradel, 65, once head of the motor vehicle department II D 3a of the Imperial Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA), is said to have arranged for the construction of at least 13 mobile gas chambers and to have sent them from Berlin to their deployment in the east.*
> *Also on trial is the man who mounted the killing utensils into the gas vans as the head of the RSHA car repair shop: the former SS-Untersturmführer Harry Wentritt, 63.* […]
> *Pradel claims not to have known that the '97,000' who were systematically killed without a verdict were Jews: 'I thought persons sentenced to death would be executed in the vans – that is to say captured partisans and maybe also soldiers of enemy armies.' And whiningly enraged: 'But Jews –, no, never.'*
> *Pradel could also not remember the telegrams in which SD Einsatzgruppen, with explicit reference to 'new transports of Jews,' requested more gas vans from his department or – as the commander of the security police in Minsk did on 15 June 1942 – requested 'to also send ten* [correct: 20] *exhaust hoses, since the existing ones are already leaking.'*
> *But Pradel can at least remember the purpose of the gas vans: 'It was meant to be a more humane kind of execution,' he says reluctantly. Question of the judge: 'More humane for whom – for the executees or for the execution commands?' No answer."*

The "97,000" mentioned by *Der Spiegel* refer to the number mentioned in the Just document, whereas the "telegrams" mentioned refers to only one such document dated 15 June 1942, see Appendix 3.

During the court investigations leading up to this trial, Wentritt stated the following during an interrogation (Kogon *et al.* 1993, pp. 53f.):

> *"A removable exhaust hose, which led from the outside to the floor of the van, was fixed to the exhaust* [pipe]. *We bored a hole in the van about 58 to 60 millimeters in diameter, the size of the exhaust pipe. Over this hole, to the inside of the van, was welded a metal pipe, which was attached to, or could be attached to, the exhaust hose that came from the outside. When the engine was switched on and the connection made, the engine's exhaust fumes went through the exhaust pipe into the exhaust hose and from there into the pipe that led to the inside of the van. Thus the van filled with gas. Pradel did not go into further details; in any case, that's all I can remember now. He gave instructions to fix the vans in such a way that the engine exhaust fumes could be introduced into the van. This was possible with the help of the hose that was attached to the exhaust. Pradel then told me that another pipe had to be fitted inside the van to prevent the occupants from interfering with the admission of the gas. Thus the work carried out by our motor pool was essentially determined by Pradel or his superiors."*

Wasn't Wentritt the guy whose workshop was to do the work? Then why would "all [he] can remember" be merely what Pradel had told him?

Although it makes sense to secure this gas inlet spot from interventions by the occupants, it is unclear how this could have been done with "another pipe" "fitted inside the van." Maybe Wentritt refers to a long horizontal pipe underneath the floor grid sporting numerous small holes. However, considering that the floor grid would have prevented the victims from interfering with the inlet holes, such a device would have been quite superfluous. Without such a floor grid, however, any pipe within the reach of the victims could have been interfered with by them.

At the end of this trial Pradel was sentenced to seven years imprisonment for aiding in the murder of at least 6,000 persons, whereas Wentritt received only 3 years.

In the verdict we read the following about the reason why "gas vans" were invented in the first place (p. 615f.):

> *"The members of the* Einsatz- *and* Sonderkommandos *could not bear the moral burden* [of mass shootings]. *Many of them were family fathers themselves who had a particularly hard time shooting women and children. Drinking excesses, insubordinations and serious mental disorders are said to have occurred."*

About how they were devised, the verdict states (p. 616):

> *"At that time gas vans were already known and had been tested in practice, because already during the so-called euthanasia action mobile gas chambers had been deployed for the extermination of mentally ill persons allegedly unworthy of living. These were trucks with airtight cargo boxes, into which the sick persons were led and where they were killed by means of chemically pure carbon monoxide drawn from steel bottles. The gas vans subsequently planned were to differ from that only by introducing into the vehicle the poisonous engine exhaust gases containing carbon monoxide instead of the chemically pure carbon monoxide from steel bottles. This had the advantage that the expensive transport of the bottled gas could be omitted, which would have encountered difficulties especially in the spacious eastern territories."*

Allegedly asked by his superiors to solve the technical issues involved, the defendant Wentritt is said to have responded (p. 617):

> *"The exhaust pipe merely has to be cut open and a T piece inserted. Then it is possible without difficulties to introduce the gas from the exhaust pipe into the van's interior."*

Let us consider this for a moment. An exhaust pipe ends in the open. In order to *insert* a T piece, the pipe would get cut off, the T piece inserted, and then the cut-off piece would be re-attached to the other end of the T piece. Technically seen, this is nonsense. If you want to have a T piece in an exhaust pipe, just *attach* it to the end of the exhaust pipe, not *insert* it. Furthermore, a simple T piece wouldn't have done the trick, as the gas, following the path of least resistance, would have escaped from the tailpipe into the open rather than flowing into the cargo box. Piping the gas into the box would have required the closure of the other exit of the T piece.

This account resembles the nonsensical statement by witness Johann Haßler (see p. 156). Both tried to sound convincing by describing a specific technical detail, but neither seems to have realized the nonsense they were saying. They should have stuck to the mainstream story of simple metal hoses attached to the tail pipe.

Another rather astounding claim can be read on the same page:

> *"When the defendant Pra.*[del] *received the order from Rauff to construct the gas van, he realized immediately that these vans were also meant to be used for the mass extermination of the Jews for racial reasons."*

This is said to have happened in September 1941, at a point in time when no decision about the "final solution" had been made yet and no systematic mass extermination was happening, even if we follow most mainstream historians' point of view.[118] How Pradel could have known something which wasn't even decided yet by the German government – if it ever was – is a complete mystery. In this context it is therefore important to note that this claim by the court is based on a statement Pradel made during interrogations in 1961 and 1962 while in pre-trial detention, four to five years prior to the trial (pp. 639f.). During the trial itself, Pradel turned around 180° when he stated, as quoted by the German newsmagazine *Spiegel* (see p. 211):

> *"'Your Honor',* [Pradel] *sobs, 'I really have no knowledge about exterminations of Jews.'"*

The verdict confirms this when it summarizes Pradel's statements during the trial as follows (p. 638):

> *"The defendant Pra.*[del] *has stated that, when he had received the order to build the gas vans and had forwarded it to Wen.*[tritt], *he had not known that the mass extermination of the Jew was to be implemented with this. He claims to have learned about this only after the war. He had thought instead that the gas vans were to be used during the execution of partisans properly sentenced to death."*

It goes without saying that the court believed what the defendant said while in pre-trial detention. This cannot have been the case because Pradel's earlier statements were more convincing – historically seen they cannot be convincing – but because they fit into the dogma. The situation is similar with regards to the other defendant (pp. 641f.).

On page 615 the verdict quotes an absolutely incredible passage from one of the action reports of the Einsatzgruppen:

> *"In action report no. 128 of 3 November 1941, Einsatzgruppe C (of leaf 3 and 4): Even if so far a total of 75,000 Jews have been liquidated in this manner, it is clear already today that a solution of the Jewish problem will not be possible. Although we managed to effect*

[118] The decision to prevent Jewish emigration and to deport them to the east (whatever that meant) was only made in late October 1941; see Rudolf 2023, pp. 168f..

> *a complete resolution of the Jewish problem in smaller towns and also in the villages, in larger cities we always observe that, if a commando returns after a certain period of time and although all Jews have disappeared after an execution, a number of Jews is over and over again encountered which exceeds the number of executed Jews considerably."*

This is the Nazi paradox of mass murder: the more Jews the German units executed, the more of them emerged out of nowhere… Considering that the German units are said to have been highly "successful" in eliminating the Jewish population in the occupied Soviet territories, such a remark is not only logically impossible, but must also be wrong, if the predominant orthodox historical school is correct. While this document proved the mass murder in the eyes of the court, it sheds a revealing light on the credibility of the creator of the documents in my view.

Another revealing passage from the verdict sheds a similar light on the careless manner in which the court determined what it considered to be true. On page 619 the verdict discusses how the defendants managed to procure their first five trucks for conversion into "gas vans." Although orthodox historiography maintains that the first trucks were trucks of the U.S. company Diamond, that's not what the court came up with. In it we read:

a. Pradel claimed that he tried – in vain – to obtain trucks from the witness Bal.
b. The witness Bal. had no recollection of ever procuring trucks for Pradel.
c. Next Pradel claimed that Walter Rauff himself procured five rusty Saurer trucks from the head of the SD's motor pool, the witness Ga. These trucks were inspected by Pradel and Wentritt in the courtyard of the SD in Berlin.
d. The defendant Wentritt, however, had no recollection whatsoever of this alleged event.
e. The former head of the SD motor pool, witness Ga., as well as his staff member, witness Heinrich M., could not recall such an event either. According to them, the SD only once had three or four superfluous trucks (of the Büssing company, according to witness M.), which were modified to serve as radio trucks. They themselves had seen such a radio truck after its conversion.

What would the critical historian make of this hodge-podge? The court wasn't bothered by this muddle, though, and simply mandated (p. 619):

> *"It has remained unclear who organized and delivered the five trucks for the construction of the gas vans. Due to the statements of both defendants the Jury Court is convinced, however, that it is certain that these five Saurer trucks were present on some day in the fall of 1941."*

Not because the evidence says so, but because the dogma cannot be upheld without it.

The court continued as follows (*ibid.*):

> *"Both defendants together visited the vehicle company Gaubschat Ltd. in Berlin during the fall of 1941. There Pra.*[del] *discussed the possibility of equipping the 5 ton vehicles with an airtight cargo box. Due to the ordered secrecy he gave as a reason that the vehicles were to be deployed for the removal of corpses in case an epidemic loomed.*"

But was it really a ruse to fool the Gaubschat staff, or a mere lie to assuage the relentless interrogators and judges?

> *"Initially the Gaubschat company built only one vehicle as a prototype by equipping one of the five Saurer vehicles with a roughly 2 m high airtight cargo box, which had a fixed, high-domed roof of the type of railway freight cars. It had a double-leaf door at the rear opening outward for loading. On the inside the box was lined with sheet metal, and in its upper corners it had lights protected by iron screens. The floor was covered by a wooden grate. The driver's cabin, equipped with the usual two doors, was detached from the cargo box. On the outside the vehicle, which had a length of four to five meters and a width of some 2 meters, was painted field gray. In that way it looked like a large moving truck."* (*Ibid.*)

As can be derived from the Gaubschat documents, the cargo boxes built by that company were actually only 1.7 m high, not 2 m (in order to allow for railway transportation of these vehicles), and from this we have to deduct the height of the wooden grate, so we end up with a free height of maybe 1.6 m or less (if taken into consideration the pipes allegedly lying beneath the grate, see below). In addition, the Gaubschat cargo box alone was 5.8 m long, which would have resulted in some 8+ m for the entire vehicle, not 4 to 5 m. Although the court was in possession of these documents (as results from the verdict, pp. 621f.), they seem to have taken from it only what fit into their preconceived notion.

The high, vaulted roof described in the verdict is a new feature unheard of so far and not exactly common for moving trucks.

Regarding the conversion to a gas van, the verdict states, based on statements made by the defendant Wentritt (pp. 619f.):

> *"He cut the exhaust pipe open and inserted a T-piece into it. Then he drilled a hole of some 50 to 60 mm into the floor of the cargo box, through which he inserted a connector piece. This connector piece was welded* [to the floor], *and inside the cargo box a U-shaped pipe system was connected to it, sporting small holes in regular distances. All that was needed now in case of necessity was to make a connection with a screwable hose between the T-piece in the exhaust pipe and the connector piece in the floor of the cargo box, both of which had threads. It was then possible to conduct the exhaust gases without difficulties through the connector piece into the pipe system and from there into the truck's interior."*

Without difficulties – except that without a cap or plug the gases would have escaped out of the tail pipe instead of taking a 90° turn and streaming out of the small holes of the U-shaped pipe system – a complicated device as useless as tits on a boar.

The next step in the expertly planned and executed construction of these vans was their testing, about which the court writes:

> *"After he had done his work, the defendant – as he admitted – brought the vehicle* […] *personally to the Institute for Criminological Technology in Berlin* [Kriminaltechnische Institut, KTI]. *There a chemist performed a gas analysis by putting a measuring device into it for a longish period of time while Wen.*[tritt] *let the engine run. The defendant Wen.*[tritt] *did not learn anything about the results. Even the witnesses Dr. Lei.*[ding], *and Dr. Hof.*[fmann], *whose position and assignment within the KTI has already been described, have reported about the gas analysis* […]. *Dr. Lei. himself performed it in the courtyard of the KTI. The description of the gas van given by these two witnesses matches the Saurer prototype converted by Wen.*[tritt]*."*

This is all very impressive, with the one catch that all Saurer trucks had Diesel engines; hence their exhaust gases while idling in some courtyard would never have resulted in dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.

We need to keep in mind that the KTI wasn't just some institute. Remember Q, the quirky inventor of gadgets in the James Bond mov-

ies? That's the type of people we would expect in such an institute in a nation that during those years was leading the world technologically. They knew what they were doing. And they knew that exhaust gases of idling Diesel engines would not kill anybody. So why did all those doctors of crime technology testify otherwise?

Whereas there is documentary evidence about the existence of 30 Saurer trucks for some unknown special purpose, no such evidence exists about the procurement and conversion of the wraithlike Diamond trucks (or Becker's Opel Blitz, or Burmeister's Renault, etc.) – apart from the mere claims by the defendants that they existed, although they couldn't explain who delivered them and who had converted them (p. 621).

The court subsequently summarizes a number of statements by witnesses claiming to have driven such gas vans. The most striking example of the statements quoted, and the one revealing the circumstances under which those witness statement came into being, is the following (p. 626):

> *"The witness Gne. committed suicide in the pretrial detention center Berlin-Moabit on 20 July 1961 by hanging himself. In his unsworn affidavit which was read by the Jury Court he confirmed having transferred a Diamond gas van together with Ge. from the Imperial Security Main Office in Berlin via Riga to Minsk* […]*."*

Hence an unsworn statement by a man who had committed suicide five years earlier *due to the situation that made him write this statement* was used as evidence during this trial.

On the same verdict page we read what two other "voluntary" witnesses claimed "independently" from one another that they had arranged for a gas van to be sent back to Berlin for repairs in order to make sure that the cargo box was airtight! (A Diamond truck in one case, a Saurer in the other.) The defendant Wentritt denied having received those trucks in Berlin and having made any such repairs, but the court didn't believe him. However, no gas van with an airtight gassing box could function, so the witness's story is false, plain and simple. This nonsensical statement was obviously copied from the 4th paragraph of the Becker document's equally nonsensical consideration to transfer leaky vans to Berlin for repairs (see p. 48).

The rest of the verdict consists mainly of speculations about the total number of victims of these alleged gas vans at each of their location of deployment, based on a number of witness statements and documents.

Although certainly interesting from a historical point of view, these considerations do not contribute anything new to our understanding of the matter at hand.

3.7.4.6. LG Stuttgart, Verdict of 15 Sep. 1967

Albert Widmann was a Chemist at the German Institute for Criminological Technology in Berlin (*Kriminaltechnisches Institut,* KTI). In 1939 he received orders from Arthur Nebe, then head of the Reich Police Department for Criminal Investigations (*Reichskriminalpolizeiamt*), to find a poisonous chemical which could be used to kill severely mentally disabled individuals in the course of the euthanasia program. He settled for bottled carbon monoxide. Later he is said to have gotten involved in the development of "gas vans" as well. In 1967 he was tried on both accounts by the Stuttgart District Court. The German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* reported about this trial (1967a):

> *"In the fall of 1941 the expert* [Widmann], *who meanwhile had become the head of the chemical department of the KTI, was ordered to a mission in the east in order to develop 'other killing methods' as a relief for the SS execution commands. Widmann traveled with eight centners* [400 kg] *of explosives, two metal hoses and two vehicles into the area of Minsk to experiment in murder.*
>
> *The first attempts were disappointing. 25 mentally ill people were locked into a shelter, which had been prepared with explosives; Widmann gave the sign for the explosion and also operated the ignition device himself. Each time corpse fragments whirled through the air and got stuck in the trees. This procedure was unsuited for mass murder."* (Similar, but more detailed: verdict pp. 561f.)

We can take for granted that Widmann has developed an efficient method for killing people at the beginning of the euthanasia action in late 1939 – bottled carbon monoxide (verdict p. 559). It's been tested and foolproof. In late 1941 he was allegedly asked to help jump-start a similar program in Minsk. Instead of giving those Germans in Minsk a simple advice like: "If you don't have bottled gas, take it from your wood gas generators," he instead traveled 2,000 miles to get himself involved. Even Widmann's interrogator was doubtful, as he asked him whether such a single experiment would have justified such a journey (Friedlander/Milton 1993, p. 483). For some incomprehensible reason, however, he thought he couldn't take along a bottle or two of carbon monoxide or a wood gas generator. But taking along 400 kg(!) of ex-

plosives on this long journey was no problem and was also indispensable, since, after all, the German army in the east had no such thing as explosives. Maybe they were fighting their war against the Red Army with hammers and sickles…

Instead of putting his two exhaust hoses to "good" use in Minsk right away, though, those smart Germans decided to blow up a few mentally ill people instead using several hundred kilograms of explosives, even though a few kilograms, properly arranged, would have sufficed completely. Hence, already the sheer amount of explosives said to have been used proves beyond doubt that the inventors of this story didn't know or didn't care what they were talking about.

And surprise, surprise: this method turned out to be a bloody mess! But since not all people had died with the first round of dynamite, they allegedly blew them up a second time, only to find corpse parts scattered all over the surrounding trees.

Widmann even attended a conference, during which the results of this experiment were analyzed (Friedlander/Milton 1993, p. 483):

> *"During the conference with Nebe we reached the conclusion that, although killing with explosives 'occurs with a jerk,' it was not feasible due to the comprehensive preparatory works; in addition also due to the large amount of work in context with filling up the explosion craters."*

– not to mention picking up the intestines from the tree branches over there… (similar the description in the verdict, p. 563.)

Who were the mentally sick people here? The alleged victims, Widmann and his colleagues, the journalists from *Der Spiegel*, the prosecutors and judges during this trial who repeated this nonsense, or the orthodox historians who parrot it without twitching an eye?[119] Or maybe all of them?

This absurd story reminds me of the memoirs by former Auschwitz commander Höß, who, after months of torture and imprisonment, had claimed that attempts were made to make corpses disappear by blowing them up, which, needless to say, didn't work out too well (Broszat 1958, p. 159). In this context I may also refer back to a survivor of the

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[119] Excerpts of it have been quoted by Krausnick/Wilhelm 1981, pp. 548-552, without any critical comment; the curious reader may read this nonsense online at www.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/people/ftp.py?people//w/widmann.albert/Sentence-on-A.Widmann.txt; when quoting Widmann, Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 52f., seem to have been at least dimly aware of the nonsense, hence they mention the explosive experiment only in passing.

Chełmno Camp who came up with a similar story of mass murder by blowing up a building (see Chapter 3.6.3.1.).

The explosive story reported by *Der Spiegel* astonishingly stems from the defendant himself, who concocted it during an interrogation seven years prior to the trial (Friedlander/Milton 1993, pp. 477-480; subsequent page no. in this chapter from there, unless indicated otherwise). Reading this interrogation makes one think that Widmann was pulling the interrogator's legs. He claimed, for instance, that prior to their departure one of his colleagues had asked "the air force" to find out, how many explosives they would need to obtain the intended result. Why the air force? What do they know about blowing up people in wooden sheds? In fact, any air force officer confronted with such an inquiry would most likely have given the closest insane asylum a call, asking for a straightjacket. Next Widmann claims that they had trouble getting the explosives and that at the end they bought it from a company in Berlin (pp. 477f.). Well, next time I am in Berlin I'll stroll into an explosive factory as well and buy 400 kg TNT. Why not? Bomb shopping is my favorite pastime!

Widmann also tells us the gripping story how his superior had come up with the idea of killing by means of exhaust gases (p. 478):

> *"With Heess there has also been talk about using gas to kill the mentally ill* […]. *I assume that Heess had talked about this already earlier with Nebe. That must have been around the time when Nebe – as Heess had told me back then – had dozed off in his car in the garage with the engine running and almost had died, if one is inclined to believe his tales."*

Yes, if…[120]

Widmann subsequently tells the tale about preparing the wooden sheds for the fireworks, but claims that he had seen no victims (or parts thereof) either before, during, or after the explosion (pp. 479f.). That was probably meant to be his emergency exit out of being held responsible.

There is another problem with the explosive story, an internal inconsistency which the Stuttgart court itself pointed out (verdict p. 565):

> *"Because at that time gas vans were already known and field-tested. Already during the euthanasia action mobile gas chambers which looked like company vans of Kaiser's Coffee Shop were deployed for*

[120] The LG Hannover called this story a "rumor," verdict of 7 June 1966, p. 616.

> *the extermination of allegedly severely mentally sick persons in the General Government in Poland. These were vans with an airtight*[121] *cargo box, in which the sick persons placed in it were killed by means of chemically pure carbon monoxide taken from steel bottles"*

If that is so, and if Dr. Widmann was as deeply involved in the development of killing methods for the euthanasia action as is claimed, why would he have seriously considered killing mentally sick people with dynamite two years later?

Widmann also claimed that he did use those two exhaust hoses a little later in the Belorussian town of Mogilev. For this they "sealed" a room of a mental asylum by walling up a window – yet a second window was left intact for the victims to smash (?) – and then they added two openings into a wall. After the victims had been locked up in the room, exhaust gas from a gasoline car was piped in via one of the holes – with no success after 5 minutes. Then, in addition to the car, the tail pipe of a "transport vehicle belonging to the regular police" was hooked up to the second hole – this time with success after another 8 minutes (p. 482; verdict, pp. 562f.). There is a problem with this story:

1) The car's exhaust gases would have been swiftly lethal; if the police vehicle was an Opel Blitz with a gasoline engine, its exhaust volume could have sped up the process; if the vehicle had a Diesel engine, the intended victims would have gotten tortured instead.

2) The second hole in the wall would have been needed for excess gas to escape. Plugging it would have led to problems.

Interestingly, Widmann was confronted with seemingly corroborating evidence for this alleged gassing in a Mogilev mental asylum using vehicle exhaust gasses: Four photographs were presented to him, which seemed to show a scene similar to what Widmann described: two cars with their exhaust pipes connected to holes in a wall via hoses. However, both Widmann and also his former laboratory assistant Hans Schmidt clearly agreed independently from each other that these images had nothing to do with what they claimed to have witnessed.[122] This is not surprising, as these photos were stills from a staged footage record-

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[121] In this case, airtightness is not an issue, if pure CO is used, as the build-up of pressure need only be of 1% or so to provide a lethal concentration.

[122] Interrogation of Hans Schmidt in Stuttgart; in: Bundesarchiv B 162/1604, pp. 496f.; Interrogation of Dr. Albert Widmann in Düsseldorf, 18 April 1962; in: Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg, EL 48/2 I, Bü 319, p. 1303-1306; for excerpts see Schwensen; the photos were not introduced as evidence during the trial.

ed for a U.S. propaganda documentary about the Nuremberg IMT (see p. 36 and Ill. 20f. on pp. 285f.).

The question remains, however, how the individuals staging this footage in the late 1940 could have known the main features of what Widmann and others testified about starting only in the late 1950s: two cars connected with hoses to holes in a wall. However, when considering the highly suggestive and leading interrogation techniques of German officials investigating alleged Nazi crimes, it may well be that the U.S. propaganda film footage is the original, whereas Widmann's and Schmidt's testimonies are only an echo, adjusted by some concrete memories of events they both did experience, which made both agree on some features which are at odds with the footage.

Widmann also spread the lie that crematorium chimneys – in this case of a hospital – can spew "5 m high flames" (p. 484). This legend has been thoroughly debunked by C. Mattogno (2004c).

The verdict describes the gas vans as delivered by Gaubschat and the changes allegedly made by Widmann in an almost identical way as the verdict of the LG Hannover of 7 June 1966 (see previous chapter, pp. 216f.). Both verdicts obviously based their descriptions on the same witness statements and declarations of the defendants, and from the wording itself (p. 566) it seems that the Stuttgart judges even copied passages of the Hannover verdict. Regarding an analysis of this description I refer the reader therefore to the previous chapter.

An article by the local newspaper *Stuttgarter Nachrichten*[123] quotes the witness Paul Werner, a wartime superior of Widmann, as having "consciously heard" about the "gas vans" only after the end of the war, just like Widmann insisted that during the war he never heard anything about Jews being killed in gas vans, although he admitted to have known about their existence. He claims to have thought that this was just an extension of the euthanasia action. He also admitted having performed gas analyses of the air inside such a "gas van" in action. The verdict writes about this (pp. 567f.):

> *"In the spring of 1942, possibly already in January 1942, the defendant, who by then knew about earlier gas analyses, and his coworkers received the order from Dr. Heess to once more perform measurements and gas analyses at a gas van located in the courtyard.* […] *The purpose of these gas analyses was to either determine*

[123] Newspaper article of the *Stuttgarter Nachrichten* posted at www.landesarchiv-bw.de/stal/grafeneck/grafeneck08b.htm (probably 16 March 1967).

> *the time needed to obtain an absolutely lethal CO content of 1% in the cargo box, or whether an explosive gas mixture develops inside the van due to the exhaust gases piped into it (because such a van had exploded in Kulmhof in spring of 1942). Due to the measurements and gas analyses performed by the KTI and the technical works of the automotive department D 3a, the first Saurer vehicles were operable around January 1942."*

Here we have another court reference to the explosion in Kulmhof/Chełmno, this time even with cause given: the concentration of carbon monoxide inside the cargo box had allegedly risen beyond the lower explosion limit of 12%, although this value is unachievable with Diesel engines and extremely unlikely with gasoline engines. Also, if Widmann was indeed ordered to do measurements as early as January 1942, the Chełmno explosion must have occurred at the beginning of January 1942 at the latest, and not in May as the Bonn court had claimed.

Widman, by the way, gave a different reason for taking gas samples inside a standing "gas van" with an idling Diesel engine: he claims that this was made in order to find out when a lethal content of 1% carbon monoxide in the air was reached (Beer 1987, p. 411) in order to ensure a swift execution. With exhaust gases from an idling Diesel engine, however, this value would never have been reached. Interestingly, Widmann also stated that "the gas analysis did not have a useful result," a claim the court did not believe (verdict p. 570). When keeping in mind that an idling Diesel engine would never have resulted in any "useful result," this statement might actually be the only credible part of Dr. Widmann's confession.

Considering that Germany was (and still is) one of the world's leading nations regarding science and technology, it must be assumed that a very high technological standard also prevailed in the RSHA's Institute for Criminological Technology, to which Widmann belonged. Yet when reading Widmann's testimony, one is struck by the massive disorganization, ridiculous incompetence, and gross carelessness reflected by these men. This is irreconcilable with what has to be expected by such a German institute. In other words: Widmann's testimony is totally unbelievable, and he is utterly discredited as a witness.

Widmann was eventually sentenced to 6½ years imprisonment, but with time already served, the remaining time was suspended in exchange for a payment of 4,000 deutschmarks for an association for

handicapped people. Considering his claim of having been deeply involved in mass murder, this verdict is a joke.

3.7.4.7. LG Stuttgart, Verdict of 11 June 1968

The defendant of this trial, Edgar Enge, served as a guard in the Semlin *Judenlager* near Belgrade, whose inmates are said to have been summarily killed with a Saurer "gas van." The defendant was accused of having, on a few occasions, accompanied the van on its way to the mass graves and having secured the unloading of the vans by other inmates. With regards to the features and operation of the gas van itself the court verdict is rather terse. In contrast to the Köln court, which claimed 25 occupants per gassing, this court maintains 50 victims per load (p. 412).

There is little interesting in this verdict for our purposes. The defendant's defense strategy was once more not to deny the "established facts" claimed by the prosecution, yet to claim that resistance was impossible. The only witnesses testifying during that trial were other German guards. They all had their own versions about what allegedly transpired, pointing with fingers all over the place but never to themselves (pp. 413f.), so that at the end the court surrendered to this irresolvable mess of anecdotal discrepancies and judged "*in dubio pro reo*" regarding one charge. Although sentenced for aiding and abetting in the mass murder of the Serbian Jews, the court abstained from meting out a prison term for it, primarily because right after the war the defendant had already spent more than three years in Allied custody due to his mere SS membership (p. 419).

I may mention in passing that during a pre-trial interrogation Enge is said to have stated that "it was an open secret that Jews were being gassed with that van" (Manoschek 1998, p. 231). That remark may be innocuous, but it may also indicate that Enge found out about this secret, unknown to him at that time, only after the war, when everybody claimed that the alleged "Nazi genocide against the Jews" was an open secret. This notion is supported by yet another statement made in 1952 by a head of department in Harald Turner's wartime military administration in Serbia, a certain Dr. Walter U. He is said to have stated that he "found out from ethnic German circles in the spring of 1942 that the Jewish inmates of the camp were being gassed" (Manoschek 1998, p. 231). If this alleged mass murder with special vehicles had been a fact indeed, it seems unlikely that a head of department of the German military administration in Serbia would have found out about that fact only

from rumors spread among civilians in Serbia. It does not seem very likely either that Dr. U. made up this story in order to hide any first-hand knowledge he might have had. In that case a flat denial of such knowledge would have been the most likely approach.

3.7.4.8. LG Dortmund, Verdict of 16 Jan. 1969

The defendant during this trial was Herbert Andorfer, at war's end an SS-*Obersturmführer* who had volunteered for service at the SS headquarters of an *Einsatzgruppe* in Serbia. All through the war Andorfer's official primary occupation was fighting partisans, initially in Serbia, but later also in Italy (p. 676). Starting in January 1942, however, Andorfer was the head of the Semlin *Judenlager* until it was dissolved in the summer of 1942 (p. 679). In that function he is said to have regularly accompanied the "gas van" on its 15 km long way out of the camp through Belgrade to the burial ground. Since this involved passing the newly established border between wartime Croatia and Serbia, Andorfer's claimed primary duty was to make sure that the van would not be stopped and searched at that border. The defendant confirmed these claims, although he claimed that he thought the occupants of the van had been dead by the time it left the camp (p. 683). He received a 2½ year prison term for aiding and abetting in mass murder.

Much of the "facts" about the alleged gas van deployed in Serbia as stated by the verdict have been taken from the various documents discussed here in Chapter 2. Even the height of the van's cargo box (1.70 m, p. 680) was obviously taken from the Gaubschat correspondence (memo of 27 April 1942). About the gassing mechanism the verdict states (*ibid.*):

> *"The vehicle was equipped with a special device (lever, connecting hoses and pipe) allowing for the poisonous carbon monoxide gases of the running engine to be piped into the cargo box* […]. *The device serving this purpose could not be seen from the outside."*

Here we have yet another story about a lever inside the driver's cabin (as it was not visible on the outside) and several hoses. This resembles the description as given in the Cologne verdict against Dr. Schäfer for the same crimes allegedly committed in Serbia (see Chapter 3.7.2.4), and it may be assumed that it was actually copied from there. No further detail about the van's equipment is given.

In one regard the present verdict deviates from the 1953 Cologne verdict discussed in Chapter 3.7.2.4: it claims that the victim's luggage

was transported in a separate truck along with the gas van to the burial site (p. 681). If that is so, the question arises: why would the Germans have sent the victim's luggage on a separate truck together with the "gas van" to the burial site? Did they bury the luggage as well? This makes sense only if this convoy was *not* a homicidal one driving to a burial site, but rather one serving to relocate the persons *with their luggage*.[124]

In this context it is interesting to note that Andorfer's attitude toward the inmates of the Semlin Camp was quite the opposite of what one might surmise, as Browning reported (Browning 1983, p. 63):

> *"Finally, the new commandant, Herbert Andorfer, noting that the food ordered represented the absolute minimum required rations, threatened that no bills would be authorized until all orders were filled. The Belgrade municipal government warned its Department of Social Welfare that the Germans were ready to prosecute those responsible for unfilled orders for urgently needed supplies. Up to this point, at least, the German commandants were not behaving as if they knew that their prisoners were soon to be murdered."*
>
> *"As camp commandant he had worked for more than a month with the camp's 'self-administration' and* [had] *become personally acquainted with about 50 of the prisoners. By his own account he had even drunk coffee and played cards with some of the prisoners in the camp administration after they had learned not to fear him."* (*Ibid*., pp. 78f.)

And after all this, when faced with the alleged order to kill these inmates, he simply complied. Is that credible?

The verdict also has a forensic glitch when it states (p. 681):

> *"The corpses' faces had a reddish-pinkish color throughout, which indicated a poisoning with carbon dioxide."*

Carbon dioxide poisoning leads to a bluish skin color, a sign of oxygen deprivation. Carbon monoxide would result in a reddish skin discoloration, a sign of oxygen over-saturation, yet a Diesel engine driving with a low engine load across a city wouldn't produce sufficient amounts of carbon monoxide to cause such a discoloration.

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[124] Browning claims that the luggage truck eventually turned off (Browning 1983, p. 80).

3.7.4.9. LG Kiel, Verdict of 11 Apr. 1969

This trial was held against two defendants: Heinz R.H. Richter as head of *Einsatzkommando 8* within *Einsatzgruppe* B during summer 1942 while deployed in the vicinity of Mogilev, and Hans Karl A. Ha.[?] as the head of this *Einsatzkommando*'s external services. They both were sentenced for their alleged involvement in the mass shootings and gassings in gas vans of Jews. Richter was sentenced to seven years, Ha. to five and a half years.

Interestingly the court used, among many other documents, not only the written statements of numerous witnesses who never appeared during this trial, but also the affidavits of witnesses who had died long before even the investigations for this trial had started (pp. 8f.), a practice which is considered illegal under Anglo-Saxon law.

The unusual feature of this trial is the fact that both defendants had a long track history of having been philo-Semites before and at the beginning of the war. Richter had a relationship with a Jewish woman and helped her escape, just as he helped numerous other Jews in various ways (pp. 11, 14). Furthermore, as a prosecutor in France during the German occupation Richter also showed no reluctance in prosecuting superiors and other high-ranking Germans who had committed illegal acts against Jews (pp. 13f.). The second defendant was no less eager to help Jews avoid being arrest by the Gestapo or to ease their lot after imprisonment (pp. 19f.)

This raises the question how two philo-Semites could so easily be converted into mass-murdering automatons once deployed behind the eastern German frontline in Russia.

According to this verdict, *Einsatzkommando* 8 is said to have received a "gas van" in May or June 1942 and is said to have used it until September of that year (pp. 25, 33f.).[125] The verdict's description of this van is terse (p. 33):

> *"This vehicle was a box-like vehicle similar to a moving truck, lined with sheet metal on the inside. A hose connected to the exhaust pipe of the van was used in order to pipe the engine exhaust gases into the hermetically sealed van* […].
>
> *When the gas van was filled, the winged doors were closed, and the driver Schl. drove the van with an accompanying person and under guard to a tank ditch. Meanwhile in the interior the victims stood*

[125] Note that this timeline contradicts the data in the wartime document analyzed in Chapter 2.2.8.

> *cram-packed next to each other on the fully used loading surface* […]. *After a drive of 10 or 15 minutes the gas van reached the tank ditch. Here the actual killing operation commenced. The hose was connected, the engine brought to a certain speed, and thus the victims were killed within 10 to 15 minutes by means of the exhaust gases piped into the van."*

It is not clear what the sources for this description are, although it may be assumed that the Becker and Just documents listed in the verdicts (p. 7) were of major importance, all the more so since the verdict itself states (p. 34):

> *"About the gas van deployments conspicuously few witnesses made more detailed statements. Even those witnesses who, despite a general unwillingness to make statements, have stated relatively much about the shooting actions, became instantly reluctant when confronted with questions about the gas van actions."*

While the court considered the horrific nature of the gas van deployments as the main reason, I posit that lack of knowledge about any technical or operational detail made the witnesses reluctant. Shootings, after all, happen in every war, so no fantasy or inventions are necessary to report about them, whether real or invented. Yet those elusive gas vans are obviously a different matter altogether. In addition, what scant "knowledge" the witnesses claimed to have had about those vehicles might actually stem from prior interrogations and trials, as was stated in a trial held three years earlier against another German defendant involved in the same activities of *Einsatzkommando* 8 (see Chapter 3.7.4.4.).

About the defendants' attitude during the trial the verdict states (p. 41):

> *"While the defendant Ha. admitted this – his – participation at the extermination actions against Jews ordered from Mogilev, claiming to have received orders for this from the defendant Ric*.[chter], *the latter denied to have been involved in any way in the extermination measures of Einsatzkommando 8 against Jews."*

Richter's categorical denial of involvement did not include his contesting that the extermination took place, though. He merely claimed to have steadfastly refused to follow orders about it as received from higher up after he had been forced once to attend a gas van execution (*ibid.*). As to mass shootings, he claimed to have attended only one of them where merely partisans had been shot (p. 42). He even claimed to have

known about the actions against Jews only because the other defendant had told him on occasion that a "Jew action" would take place the next day (p. 44).

It is worthwhile reminding the reader that Richter had claimed during the above mentioned earlier trial to have found out only during post-war interrogations that there was a gas van in his detachment (see Chapter 3.7.4.4.).

It goes without saying that, in view of the preordained "self-evident" nature of such mass executions, the numerous witness statements to the contrary, the *Einsatzgruppen* reports sent to Berlin, Richter's leadership position within *Einsatzkommando* 8, and internal inconsistencies in Richter's various trial and pre-trial statements, the court could not believe him. In fact, a large section of the verdict is dedicated to refuting Ric's claims (pp. 43-62).

Within this lengthy refutation one can also find a brief, yet incomplete list of reasons for the potential inaccuracy of witness testimony (p. 57). It is incomplete because it does not include the possibility that many witnesses subjected to massive prosecutorial as well as societal pressure are perfectly capable of inventing very detailed, superficially plausible stories in order to yield to that pressure, as I have described in Chapter 3.4.

A possible point in case here is the witness referred to by the verdict merely as "Schl." He was the main witness for the "gas van" mass murders, as he testified extendedly about his alleged activities as the driver of the gas van deployed at *Einsatzkommando* 8 (pp. 34, 39 56-58). Since Schl.'s detailed confessions amounted to a massive self-incrimination leading to his own indictment and trial in front of the same court a little while later (see Chapter 3.7.4.11.), the court interpreted his confession as credible (p. 34). Never mind the fact that, according to the witness Graalfs, during another trial Schl. had admitted while testifying in court that he did not know whether he was telling "the truth or poetry" and that at that point he tried to distance himself from the matter (p. 58).

It was convenient for the court that almost all witnesses testifying during this trial had themselves been members of the German armed forces in one way or other, which somehow in the eyes of the German judiciary and the public at large renders their statements credible only if they are self-incriminating. Hence the judges could at will declare this

or that statement as plausible or implausible, depending on the need to come to the expected, politically correct verdict.

The case of the witness "Pri." undergirds this notion. Pri. had claimed that at one point all the inmates of the Mogilev prison were shot because some of them had been diagnosed with typhus. Apparently, this claim had not been bandied about sufficiently yet, so none of the defendants or other witnesses could "remember" such an event, hence the court acquitted the defendants in this regard (p. 74). Yet instead of concluding that Pri. had probably either made up the event or was no longer capable of distinguishing between fact and rumor and thus had to be rejected as an unreliable witness, the court accepted Pri.'s second wild story about the summary execution of the inmates of an insane asylum with engine exhaust gases, just because the submissive defendant Ha. had admitted his involvement in this event (pp. 74f.).

3.7.4.10. LG Darmstadt, Verdict of 18 Apr. 1969 & 23 Dec. 1971

This trial was held against three defendants, two of whom were indicted exclusively for their participation in mass shootings (Theodor L. Chri[?].[?], Karl Ernst R. Kre[?].), which is of no relevance to the present investigation. These two defendants were acquitted in 1969, whereas the third, Wilhelm Findeisen, was retried and sentenced to 37 months imprisonment for his involvement in mass gassings as the driver of a "gas van" while serving at the headquarters of *Einsatzgruppe* C in Kiev and at *Sonderkommando* 4a in Kharkov.

The gas van which the defendant is said to have driven from Berlin to Kiev in November 1941 is described in the verdict as follows (1969, pp. 93f.; 1971, p. 469f.):

> *"This vehicle was a larger truck of a foreign make painted grey which looked like a moving truck. It was equipped with an airtight cargo box which was separated from the driver's cabin and could accommodate some 40 to 45 standing persons. The interior was lined with sheet metal and had removable wooden grates on the floor, beneath which were pipes. A metal hose was connected to the opening of the pipes at the cargo box, which could be screwed onto and thus connected with an especially designed exhaust pipe floor. The rear of the cargo box had a winged door, which could be sealed almost* [sic] *airtight from the outside. The engine exhaust gases reached the interior through the hose and caused the death of those locked up inside."*

In this case the executions are said to have been conducted while the truck was in transit to the burial sites, lasting some 15 to 30 minutes (1969, pp. 94f.; 1971, pp. 470f.).

Since the defendant operated the truck for roughly half a year all by himself, and also because the defendant – according to the court – had emphasized that he had been instructed on how to connect the hose to the exhaust pipe (1969, p. 94; 1971, pp. 470, 475), his description of a hose which could be screwed to an especially designed exhaust pipe and about several "pipes" on the inside underneath the "wooden grates" must be taken seriously. But his description is still nonsensical, technically speaking, and it is contradicted by many other witnesses, who describe other, often similarly or even more nonsensical ways of connecting the hose to the exhaust pipe.

It is also strange that the court – and thus probably also the defendant – did not specify the actual make of the truck. Since the defendant used it for half a year during many quite memorable events – if they took place – it is hard to believe that he could not remember the make of the vehicle. Was it one of the legendary, yet elusive Diamond trucks?

One rather peculiar statement in the verdict should not be withheld from the reader. It concerns the severe cold during the Russian winter (1969, p. 95; 1971, p. 471):

> *"In order to keep the gas van operable, it was protected from the severe cold during many days and nights by lighting a fire underneath the vehicle in order to protect it from freezing."*

If that is true, I wouldn't be surprised if that was the actual reason why the gas vans were frequently defective, as the court stated in the sentences before. Any rubber or wooden parts wouldn't have liked a fire in their vicinity at all, not to mention lubricants, fuel, hydraulic liquids etc.

3.7.4.11. LG Kiel, Verdict of 28 Nov. 1969

This trial was held against Heinz Joachim Schl.[?], a self-incriminating defendant who had previously played an important role during other trials by delivering the courts "first-hand" knowledge about the gas van deployment (see *e.g.* Chapter 3.7.4.9.). Here he faced charges regarding his claimed activities as a gas van driver for *Sonderkommando* 8 in and around Mogilev from June to August 1942 (pp. 287, 293). But because they considered the defendant's firm belief credible that refusing orders to partake in the mass gassings would have endangered his own life (the

so-called "putative emergency situation," pp. 301-307), he was acquitted.

The gas vans are initially described only in passing as vehicles with cargo boxes, into which the engine exhaust gases were piped via a hose, resulting in the victims' death within 10 to 15 minutes. This statement is followed by quotes from the Becker and Just documents (p. 284). Afterwards we find a somewhat more detailed description, the source of which is unclear, but probably stems from the defendant himself (*ibid.*):

> *"The vehicle had a truck frame upon which a cargo box of some 7 to 8 m was installed. The box could be opened at the rear with doors. The vehicle had a grey exterior painting. The interior of the box was lined with sheet metal. A wooden grate was on its floor, beneath which two longitudinal pipes and a cross pipe ran, which were equipped with small holes through which the engine exhaust gases were led into to box's interior. The exhaust pipe tapered off conically; the cone sported a threat with a cap nut, to which a hose was connected, whose other end was attached to the vehicle's cargo box in order to perform the gassings. Some 50 to 55 persons could be accommodated in the vehicle's cargo box with much effort; already with 50 persons the cargo box was overcrowded."*

Regarding the uselessness of those criss-crossing pipes underneath the wooden grate and the unlikely use of a thread in the exhaust pipe to affix a hose I have made ample remarks before, so I will spare the reader a repetition. In addition, is there a need to point out that a pipe tapering off conically cannot have a functioning thread? Also, a cargo box of 7 m length and 2 m minimum width has a surface of at least 14 m². Allowing for a mere five persons per square meter would already result in 70 people for the entire van. Cramming ten persons on a square meter would permit 140 people to fit into the cargo box. Were the judges unable to perform such simple basic multiplications?

New about the gassing procedure claimed by the defendant is that all gassings are said to have been conducted at night "in order to avoid unsettling the local populace" (p. 285). There is no supportive evidence for such a claim, though.

Although it is claimed by various verdicts that the perpetrators devised various schemes to lull the victims into believing that the tour they were about to embark on served to resettle them to another town or camp, or else to drive them to some delousing procedure, this verdict claims that from a certain point in time onward all victims had to un-

dress themselves prior to entering the van (p. 285), which would have nixed any attempt at making them believe the ruse they had been told by their malefactors. To top it off, the verdict states that the victims even had, "among other things, their golden dental prosthesis broken out" before embarking on their supposed final journey (p. 286). However, dentures do not need to be broken out of one's teeth, nor are they ever made of gold, as gold is too soft a metal for dentures; but crowns and fillings were and are frequently made of an alloy containing gold, and they had to be broken out of one's teeth. But breaking crowns or fillings out of the teeth of living victims without consent and anesthesia is no small feat, to say the least. We can glean from this that the judges seem to have believed just about any nonsense the defendant and/or the witnesses told them.

The verdict describes the defendant as a "truth-loving, sensible person, yet mentally not very flexible" (p. 292), or in plain English: he was a simpleton whose memory could easily be fooled. That may be the root cause of all the nonsense this defendant told during his various testimonies and interrogations, and it may also be the reason why he, during a different trial, had exclaimed that he is no longer certain whether what he is telling is "the truth or poetry" (see p. 230). But one truth is certain: the judges following each and every single one of his tales have exhibited a mind that is just as inflexible.

3.7.5. From 1970 to 1974 (6 trials)

3.7.5.1. LG Frankfurt/M., Verdict of 19 Mar. 1971

This trial was held against the defendant Karl Stro.[?] for his alleged involvement in mass shootings and gassings using a gas van while serving in *Einsatzkommando* 8 in Mogilev and other location in the occupied Soviet Union. As in the case against Heinz Joachim Schl. (see previous chapter), this defendant was also acquitted due to a "putative emergency situation" (pp. 144-146).

The verdict's description of the van and the gassing procedure is rather terse (pp. 138f.) and reads like a shortened summary of descriptions given by other German post-war verdicts. According to this, the van could hold 50 to 70 victims, had a double door at the back of its cargo box, was lined with sheet metal on the inside, was equipped with several wooden floor grates, beneath which were pipes sporting small holes to distribute the exhaust gases, which were piped in via a hose. The van

would kill the victims while stationary within 8 to 10 minutes with the engine revved up. One specialty of the van described by this court is that it had "observation slits" in the back doors. If referring to observation openings at all, other verdicts state that the gassing could be observed from a window leading from the driver's cabin to the cargo box. The procedure itself was, so the verdict, even "more cruel" and "more terrible" than the executions by shooting which they were meant to replace (pp. 139, 143).

In addition to this, the verdict claims that the defendant was also indirectly involved as a guard in killing mentally sick people locked up in a room, into which the exhaust gasses from a truck were piped via a hose and through a hole freshly broken through a wall (p. 140; cf. Chapter 3.7.4.9.). This reads like a repetition of the story told by Albert Widmann (see p. 222), which is not to say that it is necessarily untrue. Since euthanasia killings were performed in Germany proper, it is possible that similar deeds were committed in various German occupied territories as well.

3.7.5.2. LG München I, Verdict of 22 Mar. 1972

This trial had three defendants, given in the verdict only with the first three letters of their last names: Karl Fin.[?], Siegfried Schu.[chardt], and Theodor Lip.[?] They received 4½, 5 and 3 years, respectively, for their alleged involvement in the mass murder by shooting and gassing in a gas van in numerous locations of the occupied Soviet Union as members of *Einsatzkommando* 10b (pp. 63-66).

This verdict's description of the gas van allegedly used and the gassing procedure is very short as well (p. 75):

> *"This gas van was a truck with an enclosed cargo box resembling a moving truck, whose rear doors could not be opened from the inside. Exhaust gases were piped into the interior during transit, and thus the human beings were killed."*

On the same page we also find this quite astounding statement:

> *"As a result of complaints from members of the command, the defendant Schu. later refused to use the gas vans again, on the grounds that it was impossible to persuade the people* [the members of the command] *to carry out such a task."*

Such a statement does not only undermine any defendants' attempt to claim that refusing to cooperate in these killings was threatened with punishment, but it also undermines the claim of orthodox historians that

the vans were introduced to alleviate the stress of German soldiers asked to shoot people.

3.7.5.3. LG München I, Verdict of 14 July 1972

This trial was against three defendants (Kurt Tri.[?], Friedrich Sev.[?], Heinrich Gö.[?]), each of whom received a four year prison term for adding and abetting in mass murder ostensibly committed while a member of *Einsatkommando* 10a of *Einsatzgruppe* D in southern Ukraine. For the present study only the case of Dr. med. Heinrich Gö. is relevant, as he was accused of ordering the asphyxiation of 214 sick children residing at a children hospital in Eysk (Jeissk in the verdict) in October 1942 by means of a gas van.

The verdict's description of the gas van is again rather short and reads as follows (p. 408):

> *"The 'gas van' or – as the Russians called it – the 'soul killer' was a large truck with a cargo box. It had false windows painted on the outside walls, and a large double door at the back with which the cargo compartment could be closed. The cargo box was lined with white sheet metal on the inside, and the floor was covered with a wooden grate. A hose permitted the exhaust fumes to be directed into the interior from below."*

Although the verdict claims that this is the summary of a number of "basically" (whatever that means) congruent witness statements (p. 419), the alleged Russian nick name for this vehicle – "soul killer" – as well as the false windows were first claimed by the Soviet show trial in Krasnodar (*The People's Verdict* 1944, pp. 16f.), but are otherwise conspicuously absent in witness statements and court verdicts.[126] This gives us a clue where the entire theme of this trial comes from: it is basically a repetition of the Krasnodar show trial, with new defendants and a different children hospital (cf. *The People's Verdict* 1944, pp. 27-31, 35), but otherwise all the old claims and methods, including the uncritical acceptance of testimonies made by Soviet "witnesses" – or as the verdict puts it naïvely: "no manipulation of the [Soviet] witnesses has been noticeable" – plus a forensic expert report about 214 exhumed children allegedly killed with carbon monoxide produced by the Soviets back in

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[126] The Polish peasant Andrzej Miszczak who lived close to the Chełmno Camp and had heard "rumors" about gas vans (Bednarz 1946c, p. 47) called these vehicles "hell autos" (*ibid*., pp. 23, 47f., 52).

1943 (pp. 412, 419; cf. *The People's Verdict* 1944, pp. 31f.; see Chapter 3.2. in this present study).

That neither the defendant nor the witnesses knew why these 214 had to be killed is of no relevance. The court knew it: they had to make room for injured German soldiers (p. 421).

The defendant, by the way, denied having had any knowledge, let alone having been involved, in the murder of these children. He also claimed to have seen a gas van only twice and from a distance (p. 422). How he could have known "from a distance" that this was "the" gas van is a mystery, though. Of course the judges did not believe him.

3.7.5.4. LG München I, Verdict of 29 Mar. 1974

At the end of this trial the three defendants – Johannes P. Schlu.[?], Heinrich A. Win.[?], Rudi F. Esc.[?] – were sentenced to 4½, 3, and 5 years imprisonment for their various contributions to the claimed mass murder of Jews allegedly committed by *Einsatzgruppe* D in southern Ukraine. Only the – confessing – defendants Schlu. and Esc. were accused of having been involved in the operation of a "gas van" by *Einsatzgruppe* 11 in the Ukrainian town Cherkessk.

The verdict's brief description of the "gas van" reads like the one contained in the verdict handed down by the same court some 20 months earlier (LG München I, 14 July 1972; see previous chapter), including the alleged vehicle's nick name and the painted-on, false windows (p. 601):

> *"This vehicle, which was called 'soul killer' by the Russians, was a large truck with a cargo box. It had false windows painted on the outside walls, and a double door at the back with which the cargo box could be closed. A hose permitted the exhaust fumes to be directed into the interior from below."*

It may thus be assumed that the judges copied it from there. The gassing itself is said to have occurred while the vehicle was stationary, during which exhaust gas was piped into the interior for "at least five minutes" (*ibid.*), which is an execution time on the short side.

Nothing else can be gained from this verdict for our study.

3.7.5.5. LG Kiel, Verdict of 14 June 1974

This extraordinary case involves the defendant Heinz G. Rie.[?], who was the head of unit 570 of the German secret military police (*Geheime Feldpolizei*) during the war. He had been indicted for killing Soviet par-

tisans by means of a makeshift "gas van" in Mogilev in June 1944, shortly before the town was retaken by the Red Army. Since the execution of partisans was covered by international law, the defendant was acquitted.

The "gas van" is described as follows (p. 662):

> *"The defendant knew that the security service* (Sicherheitsdienst) *had deployed to a considerable degree and over a longer period of time a gas van for the extermination of Jews. Due to a conversation* […] *the idea occurred to him to also set up and deploy a gas van for the execution of partisans sentenced to death. At least two months before the retreat of his group from Mogilev end of June 1944, the defendant arranged for a Russian truck of the make Ford with a gasoline engine to be refitted as a gas van.* […] *Since the tarpaulin covering the cargo area had been destroyed in Roslavl and as no replacement could be obtained, the defendant arranged for it* [the vehicle] *to be equipped with a sturdy compartment made of boards while still in Roslavl. In Mogilev the vehicle was now sealed with metal plates and equipped with a device which permitted to pipe the exhaust gases into the interior of the cargo box. After operating a lever in the driver's cabin, the exhaust gases were blown through a pipe into the cargo box."*

The gassing procedure during transit is said to have lasted 15 to 20 minutes (p. 663).

The Soviet Union did indeed produce Ford trucks equipped with gasoline engines prior and during the war, made under license from the U.S. Ford company. It is doubtful, though, whether the Germans could have located the required amount of sheet metal for such a project, considering that, in the summer of 1944, supplies at the eastern front were extremely scarce and that the German lines were overrun by Soviet troops only a few weeks later. Regarding the described gassing mechanism, however, I think it can be excluded with certainty that a complex lever mechanism operable from within the driver's cabin would have been designed and constructed for such a makeshift gas van merely designed to execute a few partisans (the court assumed as certain only the execution of four (4!) partisans in this way).

The source of this story is not known. The verdict merely states that the defendant did not contradict this description, which probably means that he didn't say anything about it at all. Six other witnesses mentioned in the verdict merely claimed to have "heard" about this makeshift gas

van from others. Hence the entire story sounds more like a rumor than an established fact.

In deviation from other court verdicts dealing with gas van murders, this court came to the conclusion that the execution with carbon monoxide was not cruel (pp. 664f.). The expert witness testifying about the way death occurs during CO poisonings even referred to poison gas executions in U.S. gas chambers with hydrogen cyanide, which he considered to be relatively humane as well (p. 665).

3.7.5.6. LG München I, Verdict of 15 Nov. 1974

Of the two defendants on trial, only the case of Walter Keh.[?] is linked to the deployment of an alleged "gas van." As an interpreter of *Einsatzkommando* 12a within *Einsatzgruppe* D, which operated in southern Ukraine, he is said to have been involved in the gassing of Jews while stationed in Simferopol on the Crimean Peninsula.

The bogus nature of this entire case becomes clear when considering the British trial against German General Field Marshal Erich von Manstein in 1949. Manstein, who during the war was the commander in chief of Germany's 11th Army operating on the Crimean Peninsula, among other places, had been indicted by the British for assisting in the *Einsatzgruppe* D's claimed mass murder of the local Jewish populace. Yet Manstein's defense team managed to prove that the local Jewish community was never threatened with destruction, let alone that it was destroyed (Paget 1951, pp. 170f.).

The verdict here under scrutiny has the leanest description of those alleged "gas vans" ever encountered in any verdict. All one can read there is (p. 287):

> *"During these operations the victims were loaded into the gas vans – trucks with hermetically sealed cargo boxes – and killed by engine exhaust fumes.* […] *After loading the winged rear doors were closed. The van stood with its engine running for five to ten minutes, during which time the exhaust fumes were directed into the interior of the cargo box by a special device.* […] *The victims finally died after a few minutes, caused by a paralyzed brain due to lack of oxygen.* […]
>
> *When nothing more could be heard from the interior, the van drove to the anti-tank ditch that had been dug around Simferopol."*

This finding follows the common, yet technically impossible pattern of hermetically sealed cargo boxes. The alleged gassing is here claimed to

have happened while the van was stationary. The introduction of the exhaust gases by means of "a special device" is awkwardly imprecise. The killing time reported is on the low side.

As to the defendant's attitude the verdict elaborates (p. 294):

> *"*[…] *the defendant denied strongly having participated in any gas van operations. He stated that he has never seen a gas van in his life and that he had not even heard of the existence of such vehicles at that time;* […]*."*

Evidence to the contrary originated almost exclusive from testimonies and affidavits by Russian citizens (p. 294), the same kind of witnesses that had appeared during the Krasnodar show trial. The defendant's suspicion of a Soviet orchestration of these testimonies was brushed aside by the court (pp. 295). The 1943 Krasnodar trial and its show trial nature as the origin of the claims leveled against the defendant are not mentioned in the verdict.

The defendant was sentenced to four years imprisonment.[127]

3.7.6. From 1975 to now (1 trial)

3.7.6.1. LG München I, Verdict of 19 Dec. 1980

This trial was conducted against the defendant Dr. Kurt Christmann, head of *Einsatzkommando* 10a within *Einsatzgruppe* D. He has been accused of mass gassing of Soviet partisans, among them children, while stationed in Krasnodar. Christmann was also the (absent) chief villain during the Soviet Krasnodar show trial of 1943 (*People's Verdict*, 1944, pp. 14, 17f., 21). With this, the stage was set for a repetition of this show trial, for which numerous Soviet witnesses testified who had been "screened" by the Soviet secret service KGB before their appearance in court (p. 271). Rudolf (2019, p. 110) has highlighted the manipulative character of these KGB screenings, which became a public notoriety during the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial.

Although the defendant claimed that his trial was yet another communist setup (p. 270), the court tried to dispel this claim by arguing that the various testimonies of Soviet as well as German witnesses made "independently" from each other over a period of several decades could not possibly have been orchestrated by the Soviet authorities (pp. 271-274). Even though that would be true regarding details of such testimonies – which, however, could not possibly be expected to be congruent

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[127] The other defendant, "Max Dreh.," was sentenced to five years imprisonment.

anymore after almost four decades had passed – the conspicuous feature of most of those testimonies is actually their general *lack* of details. For the most part the witnesses merely repeated war time propaganda claims and postwar mass media clichés and pinned them on whichever defendant they were let loose against.

The verdict describes the "gas van" as follows (p. 251):

> *"As an external identification sign a card-game heart was painted on the truck according to the designation of Einsatzgruppe '10a.' It was a 6 ton truck with a gasoline engine and a closed cargo box with a loading surface of at least 2 × 4 m. It was lined with sheet metal on the inside, had no seats, no separating walls and was locked hermetically from the outside air with a winged door at the back. As camouflage both toward the local populace as well as toward the victims who had to enter the truck, false windows and closed curtains were painted on the left- and right-hand outer side of the cargo box, which, however, was pitch-black dark on the inside with the doors closed. By means of a lever the driver could pipe the engine exhaust gases through a hose into the interior of the vehicle in order to kill the locked-up victims.*
>
> […] *the number of victims in each case amounted to at least 30 persons.*
>
> […] *After that the driver closed the winged door, sat down in the driver's cabin, started the engine, which he left running while stationary, and directed the exhaust gases into the interior of the van.* […]
>
> *The gas van remained in the courtyard of the commando building with its engine running until no sound could be heard from inside. Only then did the van leave the courtyard."*

I was not able to verify whether a red card-game heart was indeed the identification sign of *Einsatzkommando* 10a. Since this was a rather small unit of merely some 100 persons (p. 250), I doubt they had any dedicated sign to begin with. Here, too, the 1943 Soviet show trial theme of painted windows perseveres, this time even embellished with curtains, and the lever in the driver's cabin to turn on the gas is just as unrealistic. These technical data are said to have been given by the witness Tho. and were allegedly confirmed by various Soviet witnesses (p. 279), which means that here we have evidence for the convergence of nonsense.

The defendant has to share a part of the blame for the success of the Soviet campaign to frame him, because he merely tried to convince the court that he had nothing to do with those gas van deployments and did not care about them either, hence had no knowledge about them. He even claimed that he had heard only from one of his colleagues, Dr. med. Heinrich Gö., about the mechanics of the gassings (pp. 261f.). It goes without saying that such a defense strategy for the head of this commando was doomed to fail right from the start. The judges even knotted a noose from his statement about his lack of knowledge: because he didn't care about the gas vans, he was indifferent to the mass murder and hence a most callous mass murderer (p. 276).

Dr. Gö., by the way, denied ever having spoken to the defendant, and during his own earlier trial he had stated to have had no knowledge about those vans himself (see Chapter 3.7.5.3.).

During this trial the common feature of testimonies given by German witnesses was once more that they had "knowledge" about the gas van only from hearsay, if at all, or because they happened to have seen such a van standing around somewhere at some point, though not while in operation (pp. 277-280). This raises once more the question how the witnesses could have known at that time that the van or truck they saw standing around was indeed a "gas van" in terms of a vehicle for mass murder with poison gas? The court does not seem to have been interested in finding out, since the German witnesses were generally suspected of not being truthful, hence were rather irrelevant witnesses anyway. Or as the defendant expressed it succinctly when the prosecutor pointed out to him that he should behave himself because he is a defendant (p. 276):

"But only because we have lost the war!"

The court used this statement also against the defendant as proof that he only regrets to have lost the war, but not to have killed innocent people. Yet that statement by the defendant cuts the other way as well, because due to Germany's total defeat and the total domination of all kinds of Allied atrocity propaganda stories ever since, an effective defense against bogus claims has become almost impossible for a German defendant involved in controversial events during World War II. It has become self-evident on a global scale that Germans were the chief villains of World War II. Every German defendant, the incarnation of evil as such in the eyes of the public at large, the prosecution and usually also of the judges, was confronted with that incontrovertible, insurmountable dogma.

The defiant Christmann was ultimately sentenced to ten years imprisonment.

3.8. Gas Vans during Communist East German Trials

3.8.1. General Remarks

Except for the last verdict studied here (see the list below), each one was handed down against merely one defendant for "war crimes and crimes against humanity according to article 6, letters b and c, of the Statute of the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg of August 8, 1945." This means that, by the very laws applied, all these trials were legal extensions of the Nuremberg Trials. This shows even in the fact that at times the verdicts of the IMT and of respective NMTs as well as evidence presented during those trials were quoted as evidence (see *e.g.* case 1024, pp. 640f.; case 1044, p. 283).

Hence, in sharp contrast to the West German trials which applied penal law in existence at the time when the crimes are said to have been perpetrated, the East German communist judiciary applied laws which had been enacted only after the war, which is a crass violation of basic legal standards of nations under the rule of law.

In addition to this, the verdicts themselves are filled with communist political and historical rhetoric which makes it at times difficult to read them. Here are a few selected quotes (emphasis added):

> *"On 22 June 1941 the German Fascists continued their war of aggression, which they had begun in 1939, with their devious, insidious and treacherous assault against the USSR with the aim to destroy the Soviet Union as the first socialist state."* (Case 1018, p. 487)
>
> *"With the creation of the fascist dictatorship the German imperialists immediately initiated measures to implement their plans for*

Table 5: East German Court Cases Addressing Gas Vans

VOL.*	# (COURT, DATE OF VERDICT IN YYMMDD)**
I	1018 (LG Berlin 780814), 1024 (LG Karl-Marx-Stadt 760611)
II	1044 (LG Karl-Marx-Stadt 711202)
III	1082 (LG Neubrandenburg 610222)
IV	1163 (LG Greifswald 520703)

* Volume of Rüter *et al*. 2002ff.; ** case no. acc. to Rüter

> *world domination which they had held for years."* (Case 1024, p. 637)
>
> *"When the fascist tyranny was erected in Germany in 1933, the darkest epoch of human history began. The Hitler state as the power organ of the German monopoly capitalists* […]*"* (case 1082, p. 387)
>
> *"After the assault of the fascist troops against Austria…"* (Case 1163, p. 471)
>
> *"By prosecuting war crimes and crimes against humanity* […] *the determination of the workers' and peasants' state is documented to do anything in order that a war will never again originate from German soil.*
>
> *By this the socialist German Democratic Republic distinguishes itself decisively from the ruling order of the Federal Republic of Germany, whose aggressive character has not changed. Although they wish to make the world believe that there is no continuity between the Federal Republic of Germany and fascist Germany* […] *the domestic and international politics prove again their reactionary character. These neofascists and incorrigible militarists in West Germany have learned nothing from history. They propagate, 30 years after the assault on the Soviet Union that 'this German offensive of June 22, 1941, was a classic preventive war.'*
>
> *With approval and support of ruling circles in West Germany, the criminal SS units with their commanders march about, for instance, they 'cultivate their tradition' and are recommended as role models to the soldiers of the Bundeswehr."* (Case 1044., pp. 281f.)

This lengthy introduction to the verdict, of which only a part is quoted here, makes the reader think that it was not the defendant who stood trial in that instance, but rather West Germany, which shows that those communist trials always also had an important political role in morally undermining and thus delegitimizing West Germany. As a whole, the East German verdicts are filled with such communist rhetoric and are thus very similar in tone to those of the Stalinist show trials in Krasnodar and Kharkov in 1943. This impression is reinforced by the courts' occasional use of documentary evidence produced for these trials (see, *e.g.*, case 1018, p. 501) as well as by making ample use of the testimonies of Soviet witnesses of yore.

The verdicts also made dogmatic assertions about history and morals, which they then used as justification to ignore well-established legal principles and international law as valid during World War II, like

the illegal nature of partisan warfare and the legality of executing partisans. For the East German court, which were basically lackeys of the Soviet Union, the Russian and Polish partisan fighters were patriots, whereas Germans fighting partisans where terrorists and murderers (see, *e.g.*, case 1018, p. 517). Hence all the defendants in these cases were sentenced for each and every civilian they had killed, whether they had engaged in partisan warfare or not. As a consequence, all defendants either received a life term (cases 1018, 1044, 1163) or were even sentenced to death (cases 1024 & 1082).

When it comes to the actual or alleged crimes committed, the verdicts often read like a dizzying staccato of frequently rather brief indictments. In all five cases studied here, all five defendants gave full confessions, as is traditional custom in communist show trials (1018: p. 502; 1024: p. 649; 1044: p. 294; 1082: p. 394; case 1163: p. 474).

Note also that the first three cases follow in the footsteps of West German cases dealing with the same alleged crimes but trying other defendants. Hence many of these East German trials look to me like communist copy-cat trials of cases previously "established" as fact by West German courts.

Having said all this, I will now briefly summarize and analyze passages of these verdicts strictly pertinent to our topic. (In contrast to the West German trials, the East German trial cases were numbered antichronistically by Rüter *et al.*, so here we start with the latest and proceed to the earliest.)

3.8.2. LG Berlin, Verdict of 14 Aug. 1978

This case involves Herbert H. Paland, a former member of the German secret military police unit 570, who is said to have also been involved in the killing of Soviet partisans by means of a "gas van" in Mogilev in June 1944 (see the parallel West German case held four years earlier as described in Chapter 3.7.5.5.).

The gas van is described as follows (p. 500):

> *"On orders by MP commissar Rie. a truck was converted into a gas van. The closed cargo box was lined with sheet metal on the outside* [sic] *and thus airtight. It had a double door at the rear end. By means of a special construction exhaust gases of the engine could be piped into the interior of the cargo box. The gases entered from an opening near the driver's cabin."*

According to this verdict, not four but five persons were gassed in a truck, which also sported benches along the side wall for the victims to sit on. The gassing took place during a 2 to 3 km transit through Mogilev, *i.e.* within some 5 minutes (p. 500).

The "new" features here are: an outside lining, a gas inlet near the driver's cabin (probably so the driver can operate it from his cabin?), and benches for the victims to sit on. The theme of an outside lining may stem from a Jewish propaganda booklet published in the U.S. in 1943 entitled "*The Black Book of Polish Jewry*," which describes the gas vans in that way, although expressly without any seats (and with a gas apparatus inside the driver's cabin; Apenszlak 1943, pp. 115-118). This story was in turn based on the so-called "Szlamek Report," a diary allegedly written by one of the Jews working the Chełmno Camp. This unknown "Szlamek" is said to have worked there for only two weeks in January 1942 before he managed to escape. His testimony has also been reproduced by Sakowska (1993, see pp. 162f., 166 for the relevant passages). Carlo Mattogno has thoroughly scrutinized the Szlamek Report, to which I refer the reader (2017, Chapters 6 & 16).

3.8.3. LG Karl-Marx-Stadt, Verdict of 11 June 1976

During this trial Johannes E. Kinder faced charges for alleged crimes committed while a member of *Sonderkommando 10a*. The claimed "gas van" murders are said to have involved 214 mentally sick children residing at a children hospital in Eysk (Jeisk in the verdict) in October 1942. It is a parallel case to the West German case described in Chapter 3.7.5.3., which had been held four years earlier, to which I refer the reader.

Regarding the gas van the verdict states tersely, and regarding the alleged camouflage in keeping with the above West German verdict (p. 648):

> *"This vehicle specifically dedicated for the killing of women and children had a closed cargo box, lined with aluminum sheet metal and camouflaged on the outside as a trailer home."*

About the 214 child corpses allegedly exhumed by a Soviet commission after the re-occupation of this territory by the Red Army a year or so after the claimed crime, the verdict writes that "some [of the child corpses] still held their crutches in their hands" (p. 648). Yeah, sure.

And here is how the communist court dealt effectively with the defendant's failing memory about the claimed mass murders (p. 649):

> *"That many of the terrible scenes of the mass murder evade the defendant's memory merely proves that the persecution and killing of Soviet individuals was part of his ongoing 'work' and was nothing extraordinary."*

This way the lack of evidence conveniently turns into supportive evidence.

3.8.4. LG Karl-Marx-Stadt, Verdict of 2 Dec. 1971

Georg Frentzel was the defendant during this trial, indicted for his activities while a member of *Einsatzkommando* 8; in this regard it is as a parallel case to three West-German trials held five and two years earlier as described in Chapters 3.7.4.4., 3.7.4.9 & 3.7.4.11.

This case does not involve "gas vans" as such but reiterates the theme of gassing mentally sick persons form an insane asylum as mentioned in a West German case tried two years earlier (see Chapter 3.7.4.9). This theme follows the pattern of accusations made during the trial against Albert Widmann (Chapter 3.7.4.6) and other cases (see Chapters 3.7.4.3 & 3.7.4.9.). Like in the Widmann case, here too the window of a room was allegedly walled-up and two metal pipes were added to a wall in order to allow exhaust gases to be piped into that room. In this case, however, two cars are said to have been used to produce the gas. The process is said to have lasted some 20 to 30 minutes "per batch," with a total of 600 murdered persons (p. 292).

Just like the Widmann case with the alleged attempt to dynamite the victims prior to resorting to gas, this case too claims such an insane approach (p. 293):

> *"*[…] *200 patients of the insane asylum in Mogilev were killed.* […] *The victims* […] *were shot in tank ditches, and hand grenades were thrown at them."*

The verdict finally has an interesting statement regarding the gassing with stationary gasoline engine as mentioned by me on p. 27 which I have not found anywhere else (p. 292):

> *"The defendant's car was connected to the gas chamber several times. The vehicles had to be changed constantly in order to prevent the engines from overheating."*

3.8.5. LG Neubrandenburg, Verdict of 22 Feb. 1961

Kurt G. Goercke was the defendant during this trial, facing charges of mass murder in numerous cases allegedly committed during his deployment in Russia with *Sonderkommando* 4b. The "gas van" ostensibly used by this unit is described by the verdict as follows (p. 393):

> *"This truck had a solid, sealed, lockable cargo box, into which the exhaust gases of the engine were piped. The vehicle could accommodate 30 persons."*

The procedure is said to have taken five to ten minutes (*ibid.*).

3.8.6. LG Greifswald, Verdict of 3 July 1952

This trial was held against Bruno W. Sattler, who was head of the Gestapo in Serbia from February 1942 to the end of the German occupation. The whole case was tried at a time when Germany was still under the absolute jurisdiction of the occupational powers. Therefore the laws applied in that case followed the directives of the Allied Control Council. The verdict is less polemical than the others reviewed here, but at once considerably less sophisticated from a legal point of view (it is not even eight pages long).

A "gas van" is mentioned only briefly in the context of the alleged gassing of Serbian Jews held in the Semlin Camp (although that camp's name isn't even mentioned, pp. 473f.):

> *"In the second half of 1942 the defendant was apprised during an early conference with Dr. Schäfer that it had been announced by Berlin via a telegram that a gas van would be sent.* […] *This gas van was a sealed truck into which the exhaust gases of the engine were piped. The vehicle could accommodate some 25 to 30 persons."*

That's all. The "facts" themselves probably originated from the telegrams contained in IMT document 501-PS (see Chapter 2.2.3.). As far as can be gathered from this verdict, the defendant's sole contribution to this was his knowledge about these things while in office in Serbia.

The mentioned Dr. Schäfer faced charges for his involvement in the alleged extermination of Jews in Serbia in a West German court of law a year later (see Chapter 3.7.2.4.).

4. Critical Summary of Witness Testimonies

4.1. The Witness Problem

Before listing the incongruencies of witness statements about the alleged "gas vans," I have to once more return to the challenges posed to the historian by the general unreliability of witness testimonies. In Chapter 3.4. I already deliberated about the problematic nature of confession made by alleged perpetrators when facing a situation where "innocence" is not an option in the eyes of the prosecution, the judges and the public at large. Now I will address the problems surrounding witness statements made by victims or alleged neutral bystanders. For this I will use a recently published paper on a subsection of the issue at hand: "gas vans" in Serbia.

The alleged deployment of a "gas van" in Serbia poses a challenge to orthodox historiography, as was recently acknowledged by mainstream historian Jovan Byford. Whereas the orthodoxy accepts the generally held view that "gas vans" were deployed in the spring of 1942 to kill some 7,000 Jewish women and children held in the Semlin Camp near Belgrade (see Chapter 1.2.), the claim by numerous witnesses that non-Jewish Serbs – mostly resistance fighters – held in the Banjica camp were also killed in "gas vans" is disputed, as there is no corroborating documentary evidence to support this claim. Byford has done a thorough analysis as to why false "gas van" claims arose, which I would like to subsequently quote in lengthy excerpts, as it sheds a bright light on the poor quality of orthodox historiography of the Holocaust in general. Byford's statements are ultimately revisionist in nature and absolutely devastating for mainstream historiography. One can only speculate why he did this iconoclastic, taboo-shattering work. I surmise that his work, which was "part of a research project on the post-World War II memorialization of the Semlin Judenlager [Jewish camp]," tries to maintain the Jewish monopoly for horrendous sufferings during World War II, which requires the debunking of claims about similar sufferings by non-Jews, here by non-Jewish Serbs in the Banjica camp

in Serbia. All subsequent page numbers are from Byford 2010 unless stated otherwise:

> *"The alleged presence of the gas van at Banjica poses two interesting questions. There is some agreement among historians today that, when it comes to precise events, details or numbers, eyewitness testimonies are* […] *'inaccurate with the regularity of a metronome.'* […] *And yet, historians who acknowledge the unreliability of testimonies are generally not concerned with exploring or explaining the origins or the nature of the erroneous claims found therein. Having established that a specific account of an event or a series of events is inaccurate or erroneous, they are quite content to pass on the questions pertaining to the nature of the 'eroding,' 'distorted,' 'false' or in some cases even deliberately fabricated memory to psychologists who are believed to have the relevant expertise and vocabulary to address them. So, the first question – how, or indeed why, does an image, in this case that of the gas van, become part of the subjective experience and life story of a small group of survivors? – is arguably one for psychologists rather than historians to consider.*
>
> *The second question concerns the way in which erroneous information found in a small number of testimonies becomes part of historical knowledge and public memory. Why were eyewitness reports about the gas van at Banjica incorporated into accounts of the camp's history, in spite of the glaring inconsistencies among them and the absence of corroborating evidence? How did historians and a wide range of non-historically trained writers, who cooperated in the creation and transmission of public history in postwar Yugoslav society, approach survivor testimony as a historiographic source? Linked to this question is a broader one: namely, what was the role of survivor testimony in Yugoslav historiography of Nazi concentration camps?* […]
>
> *Also, I argue that the origin of the claim about the gas van at Banjica can be traced to a wartime rumor, which in the postwar period, through a process of both individual and institutional transmission, became 'solidified' and entrenched in the official history of the Nazi occupation of Serbia."* (p. 9)

One reason why Byford considers witness statements about "gas vans" in the Banjica camp unreliable is their inconsistency and contradictory nature. Since I later want to juxtapose these statements with those made

regarding other "gas vans," I will quote Byford's findings next. One claim about the Banjica "gas vans" goes as follows:

> *"In the autumn of 1944, shortly after the liberation of Serbia, the Yugoslav State Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes Perpetrated by the Nazis and Their Accomplices established a special task force devoted to the investigation of crimes committed at Banjica. After a four-month-long enquiry, the task force published a report, which concluded, among other things, that 'Hitler's fascists' in charge of the camp had at their disposal several specialist vehicles, in the form of smaller railway wagons, which were hermetically sealed and had a device that generated gases."* (p. 10)

This is yet another encounter of hermetically sealed wagons, although on rails for a change, which in lack of an engine is said to have sported some "device" as a source of poison gas. These wagons are said to have been "mainly used at Semlin" to kill Jews, but also in Banjica (*ibid.*). The commission's findings are the earliest recordings and compilations of witness statements, which should render them more reliable than later collections, yet this description of the "gas vans" – allegedly used in both camps! – is at odds with the story as it is accepted today. The indictment against August Meyszner, who was prosecuted in Serbia shortly after the war, replaced the rail wagon by a "hermetically sealed truck," yet maintained "a specially designed device" to produce the gas (pp. 10f., and once more on p. 11).

There is even an account on cyanide gas chambers:

> *"*[The witness] *also mentions the 'special pastime' of 'Dr. Jung,'* […] *which involved 'releasing cyanide into the gas chambers while observing its effects on the victims.'"* (p. 12)

Some witnesses described the vehicle as looking like a "furniture removal truck" (p. 23), others as an "armored truck" (pp. 15, 23); according to one witness it was a "rather large truck with the body made of wooden planks" (p. 17), "larger than other trucks" (p. 35), whereas another insisted that it was "made entirely of aluminum, coated in metal on the inside, so that no air could get inside … instead of windows it had a grille which allowed gas to get in, gas that was mixed with the exhaust fumes" (pp. 17, 35). Whereas most witnesses claim that the vans were meant to kill the prisoners, one witness declared that they were "only meant to make the inmates unconscious, so that they would not realize that they were about to be shot," another that the victims walked out of the truck very much alive (p. 18).

Byford summarizes the problems of witness statements in the Banjica case as follows:

> *"As we have seen, some authors contend that the vehicle was used at the camp solely for the murder of Jews, or more specifically, Jewish women and children. Others claim that it was used against all categories of prisoners, including captured partisans and communist activists. The presence of the gas van at the camp is sometimes narrowed down to specific dates and selections of prisoners (for instance the execution on May 9, 1942), while in other instances it is said to have been used periodically throughout the occupation. The gas van is mostly referred to in the singular, but some of the sources claim that Germans had several such vehicles at their disposal."* (p. 14)
>
> *"Thus, in addition to the problem of variability among the witness accounts, many of the claims and descriptions found in them are directly contradicted or proven impossible by other forms of evidence pertaining to the gas van's mission in Serbia. Given that we know that there was only one gas van in Belgrade, which was deployed for a limited period (around six or seven weeks), between late March and early May 1942, there clearly could not have been two or more gas vans, the vehicle could not have been seen at Banjica in early March 1942, nor could the victims have walked out of it alive.* […] *In other words, survivors claim to have witnessed the killing process itself. Their version of events, however, contradicts what is known about the modus operandi of the mobile gas van in Belgrade. At Semlin, the van never even crossed the camp perimeter, and the gassing began after the vehicle crossed the pontoon bridge over the river Sava."* (p. 18)

What Byford overlooks is that all of his claims about what we "know," which is not founded in the documents analyzed in the previous chapter, is itself based on witness accounts, primarily made by defendants during numerous German trials. Their reliability isn't higher than those collected by Yugoslav commissions and historians either.

Byford next tries to explain why nobody ever scrutinized these witness statements and revealed their unreliability:

> *"And yet, institutions that played a dominant role in shaping official history and collective memory in postwar Yugoslav society did not reflect on the variability apparent in the testimonies or the inconsistencies found in them. They were, similarly, not troubled by the un-*

> *corroborated nature of survivors' accounts. Instead, the story of the gas van was accepted unquestioningly and perpetuated, in a matter-of-fact way, as an indisputable fact about Banjica and an important entry in the catalogue of heinous crimes perpetrated there by the 'Fascists and their accomplices.'"* (p. 19)

It goes without saying that this is true for almost the entire orthodox historiography on the Holocaust. Byford elaborates further:

> *"In fact, the approach* [of the Yugoslav War Crimes Commission] *to evidence was determined primarily by political concerns. Given that the findings were to be used to justify Yugoslavia's claim for reparations, the main criteria in the selection and evaluation of evidence was whether or not it strengthened the Yugoslav case. This meant not only that casualty figures were routinely exaggerated* […]*, but also that there was no real willingness to differentiate verifiable fact from rumor, at least not when rumors were more 'convenient' than material evidence."* (p. 25)

Byford's assessment is similar with respect to the Historical Archive of Belgrade's activities of compiling witness statements in later years, which wasn't interested in witness statements as such but in "details of events that were compatible with the established ideological agenda" of heroizing the Yugoslav resistance fighters (p. 29).

Even though portraying oneself as a hero and having financial consideration may have played a role, this explanation falls short of the complex motivations of the victors of World War II, which, next to simple lust for revenge and justifying one's own deeds, also included the determination to once and for all break the neck of an enemy – politically, economically, demographically, and psychologically – who, in the victors' eyes, had twice within 30 years thrown the entire world into an abyss of mass butchery and mass murder. Or to put it succinctly:

> *If we had finished the job after World War I, Auschwitz would never have happened. So let's finish it now!*

Hence those Holocaust claims were welcome as a justification to prepare the world psychologically to finish the job: genocide against the German people. That was the general mood between 1942 and late 1947, which saw a huge surge of mass murder and ethnic cleansing against anything German. Yugoslavia was no exception from this, as this country ethnically cleansed its German minority with utmost brutality after the war. But even after this anti-German genocidal hysteria had subsided, the world still needed – and is still in need for – a scapegoat

for the calamities of the 20th century and a justification to keep their various spoils and, most of all, their moral high ground. In addition, a simple black and white approach to history and politics – with the good guys here and the evil guys there – facilitates the manipulation of the masses. The scarecrow "Hitler" can always be employed against any enemy in justification for a war (Slobodan Milosevic, Saddam Hussein, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, etc.), and in comparison to Auschwitz and all that's associated with it, any other government crime, which is in need for a cover-up, can be portrayed as being not *that* bad. This is why they all love to maintain this wartime propaganda, including the present German government, which is in constant need of proving that they are now with the good guys.

But back to Byford. He even mentions the common fact that orthodox Holocaust historiography commits outright forgeries by "editing" embarrassing witness statements:

> *"Testimonies were* […] *full of 'contradictions, vague or imprecise claims, repetitions, etc.' Editors, therefore, faced the task of eliminating all 'inconsistencies in the data which might create doubt in the reader's mind about what is true and what is not.' Historians or non-historically trained writers* […] *were asked to work through the testimonies and 'flag any politically sensitive content so that the Editorial Board can take a collective decision on these issues.'"* (p. 33; as an example for such a manipulation see the case of Filip Marjanović, pp. 34f.)

By so doing, Byford goes on, the editors

> *"*[…] *selected from each testimony those elements that confirmed existing 'truths' and perpetuated the dominant culture of memory. There were, therefore, no credible witnesses as such, and no survivor was a 'living, eloquent witness to Nazi crimes' per se. There were only usable stories, or rather fragments of testimony deemed 'believable' by those who selected them for publication.*
>
> *What is especially important however is that it was precisely this kind of selectivity and the reasoning behind it that put pressure on survivors to produce 'good' testimonies and modify their accounts in the direction of greater 'plausibility.'"* (p. 38)

Byford also makes some very interesting, revisionist observations about other causes for false witness statements:

> *"A fear rumor is a piece of unverified information (which is not necessarily untrue) which reflects the fears and anxieties of the popula-*

> *tion among which it circulates. Bogey rumors are not uncommon in time of war. The war creates the situation of ambiguity, cognitive uncertainty and anxiety in which rumors flourish.* […]
> *The specific conditions that have been shown to be conducive to the proliferation of wartime rumor are even more pronounced in concentration camps and prisons. It is there, more than anywhere else that 'life becomes subject to the vicissitude of events over which individuals have little control,' where 'institutional channels (of communication) are destroyed or impaired' and where the flow of communication is facilitated by the 'disappearance of conventional social barriers."* (p. 21)

Byford even gives some interesting examples shedding some revealing light on other aspects of the Holocaust:

> […] *Even while at Auschwitz, these girls remained terrified of 'mass rape at the Russian front' more than of anything else, death included."* (p. 21)

This corroborates F.P. Berg's observations that Auschwitz prisoners were more terrified of Red Army soldiers than they were of their SS guards, who are claimed to have tormented and butchered them for many years (Berg 2003).

Byford continues:

> *"Also common in concentration camps were rumors relating to specific methods of killing. In situations where death was a daily occurrence, the main source of anxiety and, by extension, the subject of rumor mongering and speculation, was the time, place and method of execution. In those contexts fear rumors took the form of accounts of particularly horrific and feared ways of dying. At the Starachowice labor camp in Poland, for instance, there was a rumor that at the nearby Bugaj forest victims were being buried alive, rather than shot. In camps throughout the Third Reich, stories about murder with electric current in water, gassing on board trains, or about victims being skinned alive or turned into soap, were rife. All these stories, however, turned out to have been unfounded. Similar examples of rumor can be found also in the Serbian context."* (*Ibid.*)

Byford next addresses the considerable social pressure witnesses experience to testify what everybody expects them to have experienced, that is, to cater to the historical clichés of a society:

> *"They* [the witnesses] *were expected to comment on events that, in most instances, lay beyond their immediate knowledge.* […] *in bear-*

> *ing witness to Nazi crimes, survivors of concentration camps invariably 'have to refer to matters outside their own experience.'* […] *The practice of witnessing therefore required those taking on this role to overcome the gulf that separates what they experienced and what they were summoned to witness.'* (p. 30)
>
> *"Another route available to witnesses facing the predicament of having to generate an account of events that they did not directly experience is to produce claims that are congruent with already available* [alleged] *knowledge. Aaron Beim and Gary Fine have suggested that, by producing an account that corroborates rather than contradicts existing historical claims, witnesses render their story more credible and strengthen their status as a reliable witness. They do so by confirming the audience's expectation about what someone in that position could and should have seen. Therefore, although testimonies of survivors are predominantly based on personal experience, and are framed as such (this after all is the source of their cultural power), they will more often than not be embellished with 'historical claims consistent with institutionally legitimated information' of the kind 'found in textbooks or other cultural objects'. This is, for instance, why testimonies of Auschwitz survivors recorded after 1993, when* Schindler's List *was first shown, are more likely to contain descriptions of events resembling the film's famous shower scene than those collected before that date. Or why, in the words of Geoffrey Hartman, 'every Auschwitz survivor seems to have gone through a selection by Mengele, as if he had manned his post 24 hours a day.'"* (pp. 30f.)

As I will show now in my summary of witness statement about the "gas vans" in general, what Byford states about a "gas van" at Banjica is basically true for all "gas van" claims. Except that for these we have a few seemingly corroborating, yet, on closer look, very suspicious documents. Regarding the alleged gassings of Jews in Serbia, the evidentiary basis is actually very meager, as Walter Manoschek conceded (1995, p. 169, note 2):

> *"Only a few written documents exist about the gassing of the Jews in Serbia. Of the Jewish inmates of the Semlin Camp only roughly half a dozen people survived, which by now have all died. When describing the events, we essentially depend on the statements of the perpetrators during trials – except for some extant reports and interviews or letters of the survivors."*

For my summary of witness statements I have relied on witness statements as contained in various documents, as summarized by the above analyzed court verdicts, and as rendered in the general literature. Where pertinent, I will comment such claims in each subsequent subchapter.

4.2. Claimed Features of the Vehicles

4.2.1. Introduction

In his 2010 article, Byford used internal contradictions of witness accounts as one method to show that gas van claims for the murder of non-Jewish Serbs in Serbia during the war are false, all the more so as they are not supported by any documents. Although a few documents exist for the claim that gas vans had been employed in Serbia (Semlin Camp, spring 1942), Poland (Chełmno) and Russia (by the *Einsatzgruppen*), a critical analysis of them reveals that they make technically impossible claims, are contradicted by other, doubtlessly authentic documents, and were probably forged immediately after the war. This leaves us with the witness statements. Following Byford's approach, I will now list the claims made about the alleged gas vans in all the extant material analyzed for this study, that is: both witness statements and the forged documents, which are basically nothing else but claims by anonymous persons. As indicated in Chapter 3.7.1., this list of claims is far from complete, as I had to rely on bits of information contained mainly in verdicts and secondary literature, whose authors have not been interested in shedding any light on the alleged features of these gas vans. Kogon *et al.*, for instance, list a large number of witness statements at their disposal at the *Zentrale Stelle*, but what they tell us about them hardly ever includes anything about the van's features. Once critical researchers will be able to tap into that resource, I am convinced that the discrepancies will turn out to be even more glaring than they are already now. But already now my lists show crass divergences between the claimed features which are much more pronounced than in Byford's case. The logical conclusions to be drawn from this are obvious.

I have rendered in bold what could be considered a kind of "standard" claim, as it is the most frequently found description in the various court verdicts.

4.2.2. Vehicle Models

– **Saurer** (501-PS; IMT, Vol. 7, p. 573; 2348-PS, IMT vol. 30, p. 256; LG Köln, 20 June 1953, pp. 153f., 164; LG Hannover, 7 June 1966, p. 621)
– Diamond (501-PS, telegram 15 June 1942; Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 64; LG Hannover, 7 June 1966, p. 622)
– American (Beer 1987, p. 412)
– foreign (LG Bonn, 23 July 1965; LG Darmstadt, 18 Apr. 1969, p. 93)
– Opel (Beer 1987, p. 414; Klee 1991, p. 69)
– Renault (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 77)
– Daimler Benz (IMT vol. 19, p. 573; Choumoff 1987, p. 38)
– Magirus Deutz (Falborski; Srebrnik; Fleming 1984, after p. 92)
– Russian Ford truck (LG Kiel, 14 June 1974, p. 662)

Usually neither witnesses nor verdicts make any statements about the make or model of the vans. In most cases such claims are probably based on the extant documents discussed in Chapter 2.2. When discussing the makes and models used as gas vans, Beer concedes that, apart from what we have in the documents, information is scant and inconsistent. He claims that this mishmash of vehicles existed only during the early phase of the gas vans' deployment, caused by "difficulties existing at the beginning when organizing chassis" (1987, p. 414). Once things got properly organized, though, that is in late 1941, "the entire order was with regards to Saurer vehicles" (*ibid.*). He finds documentary support for this in the Becker letter, which in its second sentence distinguishes between a "first group" of vehicles and a "second group" consisting of Saurer trucks.

Already in Chapter 2.2.6. (p. 89) I have pointed out that a systematic approach to mass murder vans killing with exhaust gases would have required the use of vehicles equipped with gasoline engines, like the ubiquitous Opel Blitz. Beer, however, maintains that such vehicles were used only at the beginning of the haphazardly organized project, while they were later replaced with vehicles equipped with Diesel engine during the more systematic phase of the project. If anything, this observation undermines his entire theory (see Chapter 1.3.1.).

4.2.3. General Appearance

– large former refrigerator truck (Rosenberg 1985, p. 36; similar LG Kiel, 26 Nov. 1965, p. 429); with a huge red cross (Sherman-Zander 1984, p. 49)
– all metal cargo box (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 60; LG Hannover, 7 June 1966, p. 623)
– camper van with windows, curtains and shutters painted on, including a chimney (Loewenstein 1961, p. 51; cf. the Becker letter 501-PS)
– black vans (Podchlebnik; Bednarz 1946c, p. 62; LG Stuttgart 15 Aug. 1950. p. 200f.; Smoliar 1966, p. 67; Falborski, Appendix 9)
– hermetically sealed yellow van (Kazimierz Czyzewski, Höß Trial, vol. 35, p. 163)
– green truck, like those delivering cigarettes (Lanzmann 1985)
– grey-green vans (Kogon *et al.* 1993, pp. 57, 80)
– grey truck like a mail van (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 72)
– grey Saurer truck with ten benches for the inmates to sit on (Manoschek 1998, p. 230)
– very big armored vans (Lanzmann 1985)
– trailers attached to trucks (Johnson/Reuband 2005, p. 237)
– ordinary truck, like a box car, possibly with windows (NMT, Vol. 4, p. 301)
– **like a moving van**, (dark) **grey** (Kogon *et al.*, pp. 57, 61-63, 72; *The People's Verdict* 1944, p. 29; Lanzmann 1985; LG Hannover, 7 June 1966, p. 619: with a high vaulted roof; without color: LG Stuttgart, 8 Nov. 1949, pp. 200, 231, 239; LG Karlsruhe, 20 Dec. 1961, p. 100; LG Koblenz, 21 May 1963, p. 194; LG Kiel, 26 Nov. 1965, p. 429; LG Wuppertal, 30 Dec. 1965, p. 513; LG Frankfurt/M., 12 Mar. 1966, p. 344; and other verdicts)
– **interior lined with sheet metal, wooden floor grate** (*The People's Verdict* 1944, pp. 8, 16f., 49, 69, 85; Bednarz 1946c, pp. 25f.; LG Bonn, 23 July 1965; Kogon *et al.* 1993, pp. 60, 86: 2 m high; *Soviet Government* 1945, p. 227; similar: LG Koblenz, 21 May 1963, p. 194, and many other verdicts)
– cargo box of 7 to 8 m length, grey, lined with sheet metal, wooden floor grate with two pipes beneath (LG Kiel, 28 Nov. 1969, p. 284)
– ditto, grey normal truck, like a bathroom, with straw mat (Sakowska 1993, pp. 162f.)

– hermetically closed box of 5 m × 2.5 m × 2.5 m, like railway car; lined with galvanized sheet iron, wooden floor grate; door lined with rubber and automatic lock; two metal pipes with frequent holes spreading the gas; rubber hose connected to engine exhaust pipe (IMT, Vol. 7, pp. 572f.; similar *The People's Verdict* 1944, pp. 49, 85)
– airtight cargo box lined with sheet metal at the outside, a gas inlet near the driver's cabin, and benches for the victims to sit on (LG Berlin, 14 Aug. 1978, p. 500)
– false windows (*The People's Verdict* 1944, pp. 16f.: "appearance of motor buses"; LG München I, 14 July 1972, p. 408; 29 Mar. 1974, p. 601)
– false windows and closed curtains (LG München I, 19 Dec. 1980, p. 251)
– prisoner transport van, 1.5 to 2 metric tons (Choumoff 1987, p. 42; *The People's Verdict* 1944, p. 50)
– 5 or 7 ton, grey (*The People's Verdict* 1944, pp. 8, 16, 85)
– 3 ton van with cargo box 4 m × 2 m (Beer 1987, pp. 412-414)
– two smaller vans (Beer 1987, p. 413)
– tiltable cargo box for fast unloading (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 70)
– stationary gas chamber (State of Israel, session 46, part 6; 19 May 1961)

And here is my favorite, attested to by George Goiny-Grabowski regarding alleged gas vans deployed in Auschwitz:[128]

> *"The gas vans had an image showing a human head which kept its nose closed with one hand."*

Or in other words the vans allegedly had a warning sign like the one designed by me on the right warning everyone:

Danger! Stinker on the road!

Please forgive me my black humor.

A frequent claim made in witness accounts which is not listed here is that the "gas vans" had a ***hermetically sealed*** or ***airtight*** cargo box (see e.g. *The People's Verdict* 1944, pp. 8, 17, 50, 65, 85, 89, 110; Kogon *et al.* 1993, pp. 53, 57, 59; Beer 1987, p. 403; LG Stuttgart, 8 Nov. 1949,

[128] Archives of the Auschwitz Museum, Collection "Statements," vol. 61, p. 167.

p. 239; LG Wiesbaden, 24 Mar. 1952, p. 354; LG Karlsruhe, 20 Dec. 1961, p. 100; LG Bonn, 30 Mar. 1963, pp. 230f., 277; LG Koblenz, 21 May 1963, p. 194; LG Frankfurt/M., 12 Mar. 1966, p. 344; LG Hannover, 7 June 1966, pp. 616, 619; LG Stuttgart, 15 Sep. 1967, p. 565; LG Kiel, 11 Apr. 1969, p. 33; LG München I, 15 Nov. 1974, p. 287; LG Berlin, 14 Aug. 1978, p. 500; LG München I, 19 Dec. 1980, p. 251; interestingly, the verdict by LG Darmstadt, 18 Apr. 1969, pp. 93f., speaks both of an airtight and a merely "almost" airtight cargo box).

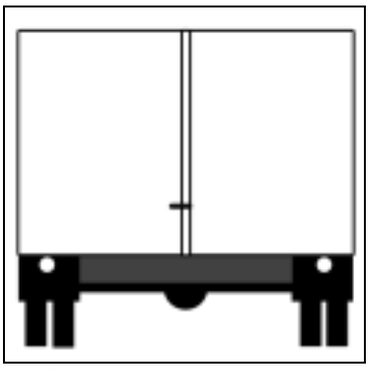

Illustration 7: Schematic drawing of rear view of a Saurer truck with Gaubschat cargo box, 2.30 m wide, 1.70 m high.

The fact that many witnesses and court verdicts speak of a truck resembling a moving van could be interpreted as "converging evidence" for the truth of such claims. However, at closer inspection the opposite turns out to be true. Moving vans have two distinct features: First the area above the driver's cabin is also used as storage space (see Illustrations 12 to 17 in Appendix 1). Second, in order to maximize the space available for the storage of furniture, the cargo box was always considerably higher than wide, often even higher than average trucks: 2.50 m and more.

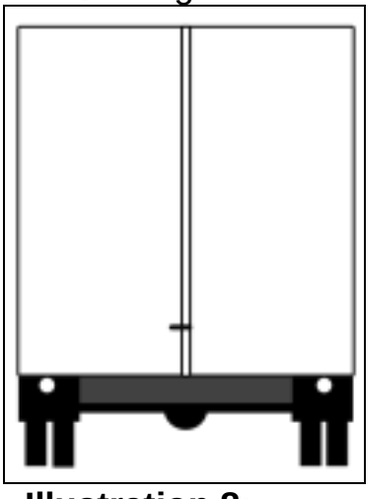

Illustration 8: Schematic drawing of rear view of the same truck with furniture cargo box, 2.30 m wide, 2.70 m high.

In contrast to this, the thirty cargo boxes ordered from the Gaubschat Company most definitely did not include the space over the driver's cabin and were only 1.70 m high to a length of 5.80 m. With an assumed width of some 2.30 m, the Saurer trucks with Gaubschat cargo boxes would have looked from the rear like Illustration 7, whereas a moving van's rear view would have looked like Illustration 8. In Illustrations 9f. I have juxtaposed the side view of a Gaubschat Saurer (my drawing) and a hypothetical Saurer moving truck taken from the artwork shown in Illustration 17 (p. 282). It is therefore clear that these long Gaubschat cargo boxes were unusually *low*. There is no way anyone could have taken those Gaubschat Saurers for moving trucks.

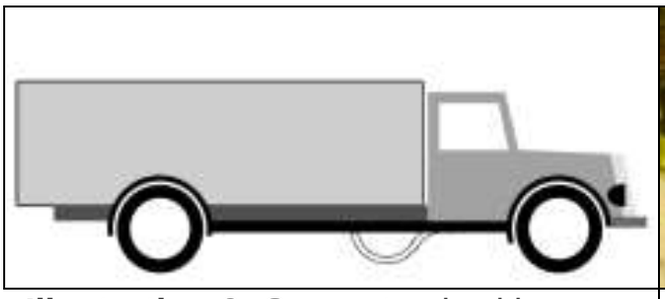

Illustration 9: Saurer truck with Gaubschat cargo box and exhaust metal hose; author's drawing.

Illustration 10: Saurer truck as moving truck; artwork (see Illustration 17, p. 282).

This juxtaposition reveals it: the Saurer trucks with Gaubschat cargo boxes did not resemble a moving truck at all.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that we are dealing here with a cross-fertilization of the vast majority of testimonies, which may have been inspired by claims made during the Soviet wartime show trials, but in particular during the postwar trials in Poland by the evidently false statements of witnesses like Falborski, who has seen a real moving truck but assigned a function to it which it never had (see Chapter 3.6.2.).

The claims about internal sheet metal lining and wooden grates, on the other hand, are probably a mere repetition of what can be found in the extant Gaubschat correspondence and any encounters with the real Saurer trucks equipped as such. The sheet metal lining could in many cases also stem from mere cross-fertilizations from witnesses who had seen the Ostrowski moving truck, whose interior was also lined with sheet metal and which had been falsely identified as a "gas van" by several witnesses. Hence finding these features repeated in numerous witness accounts cannot surprise either.

Omitted from this list are witness claims about gas vans allegedly deployed in Serbia to kill Serbs, as such claims have been disputed as inventions by Byford (2010). Also omitted were witness statements about the characteristics of some very early gas vans allegedly used during the euthanasia program, which is a different topic altogether. These are said to have been hermetically sealed trailers with the inscription "Kaiser's Coffee Shop" and drawn by a tractor-trailer, using carbon monoxide from steel bottles as the source of poison gas (Beer 1987, pp. 404-407, 417; as a van without tractor in LG Stuttgart, 15 Sep. 1967, p. 565). This theme was already mentioned by the Polish judge Bednarz in 1946, where it may have started its career as a converted truck of "Kaiser Kaffe[e] Wien" (Bednarz 1946c, p. 25). I am not going to scrutinize

this puerile and ridiculous theme any further, since not a shred of documentary evidence exists for it. Carlo Mattogno has exposed this pseudo-historical claptrap in the first chapter of his book on Chełmno, to which I refer the interested reader (2017).

4.2.4. Capacity

– 170 (Srebrnik, large type)
– 150-175 (Bednarz 1946c, pp. 23, 48 [large])
– 130 (Bednarz 1946c, large type, p. 62)
– 100-120 (Srebrnik, small type)
– 100 (Rosenberg 1985, p. 36; Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 71; Browning 1983, p. 82)
– 80-100 (Beer, Appendix 10; Bednarz 1946c, p. 23 [small])
– 80-90 (Podchlebnik; Bednarz 1946c, pp. 43, 48, 62, 72 [small type])
– 70-90 (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 98)
– 80 (Blumental 1946, p. 240; Kogon *et al.*, p. 64)
– 70-80 (IMT, Vol. 7, pp. 573, 575; *The People's Verdict* 1944, p. 17; LG Kiel, 26 Nov. 1965, p. 429; LG Stuttgart, 8 Nov. 1949, p. 231)
– 60-70 (*The People's Verdict* 1944, pp. 65, 70; Friedlander/Milton 1993, p. 182)
– 50-80 (with luggage, Manoschek 1998, p. 230; LG Karlsruhe, 15 Dec. 1949, pp. 7, 24)
– at least 60 (LG Wuppertal, 30 Dec. 1965, p. 513)
– **50-60** (NMT, Vol. 4, pp. 210, 545; Beer 1987, pp. 412f.; large, Kogon *et al.* 1993, pp. 54, 57, 59, 64, 69, 88; Browning 1983, p. 82; LG Stuttgart, 11 June 1968; Benz/Distel 2009, pp. 575f.; Kazimierz Czyzewski, Höß Trial, vol. 35, p. 163; LG Koblenz, 21 May 1963, p. 194; LG Frankfurt/M., 12 Mar. 1966, p. 344; LG Hannover, 7 June 1966, p. 622, for Saurer; LG Stuttgart, 11 June 1968, p. 412; LG Dortmund, 16 Jan. 1969, p. 680; LG Kiel, 11 Apr. 1969, p. 39; 28 Nov. 1969, p. 284)
– 40-60 (Klee/Dreßen/Rieß 1988, p. 75)
– several dozen (*The People's Verdict* 1944, p. 50)
– 30-50 (Beer 1987, p. 414)
– 40-45 (LG Darmstadt, 18 Apr. 1969, pp. 94, 97)
– 35-40 (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 84)
– 30-40 (NMT, Vol. 4, p. 213)
– at least 30 (LG München I, 19 Dec. 1980, p. 251)

– 30 (Beer 1987, pp. 411f., 414; Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 61; LG Karlsruhe, 20 Dec. 1961, p. 100; LG/BG Neubrandenburg, 22 Feb. 1961, p. 393)
– 25-30 (small, Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 54; LG Hannover, 7 June 1966, p. 622, Diamond; LG Greifswald, 3 July 1952, p. 474)
– 25 (with luggage; LG Köln, 20 June 1953, p. 153; Kohl 2003, pp. 69f.)
– 15 (small), 30 (large) (NMT, Vol. 4, p. 301)
– 15-25 (NMT, Vol. 5, p. 688)
– up to 14 (Artur Meyer, Archives of the Auschwitz Museum, Collection "Statements," vol. 93, pp. 23, 23a)

Although next to nothing is known about the technical data of some of the claimed gas vans, the 30 Saurer trucks equipped with Gaubschat cargo boxes allegedly used for gassings are well defined. As I have described elsewhere (p. 74), loading a Saurer truck with nine to ten persons per m², resulting in a capacity of 120 to 133 persons, would have exceeded the vehicle's maximum permitted load of 5 tons considerably by some 50% (±10%). It also appears impossible to cram so many unwilling individuals so tightly. Hence, claimed packing densities beyond 6 persons per m², amounting to some 80 persons in the entire cargo box with a total of some 4.8 tons, must be regarded as technically highly unlikely.

4.2.5. Duration of the Gassing Procedure

– 20-30 min. (Rosenberg 1985, p. 36; Loewenstein 1961, p. 51)
– 15-30 min. (LG Darmstadt, 18 Apr. 1969, pp. 94f.)
– 15-20 min. (Sakowska 1993, p. 166; Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 63; LG Kiel, 26 Nov. 1965, p. 430; Kohl 2003, pp. 69f.; LG Koblenz, 30 Dec. 1965, p. 513; LG Kiel, 14 June 1974, p. 663)
– 15 min. (LG Köln, 20 June 1953, p. 153; Benz/Distel 2009, pp. 575f.; LG Koblenz, 21 May 1963, p. 194)
– 10-15 min. (NMT, Vol. 4, p. 206; IMT, Vol. 4, p. 322; LG Bonn, 23 July 1965, p. 232; LG Kiel, 28 Nov. 1969, pp. 284, 286)
– 12 min. (Kogon *et al.* 1993, pp. 58, 87)
– 10 min. (NMT, Vol. 4, p. 302; Kogon *et al.* 1993, pp. 58, 86; Klee/Dreßen/Rieß 1988, p. 201)
– 7-10 min. (*The People's Verdict* 1944, p. 17)

– 7-8 min. (NMT, Vol. 4, p. 213; LG Frankfurt/M., 12 Mar. 1966, p. 344)
– several minutes (*The People's Verdict* 1944, p. 8)
– a few / 5-10 min (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 65; LG Karlsruhe, 20 Dec. 1961, p. 100; LG/BG Neubrandenburg, 22 Feb. 1961, p. 393)
– 6-7 min. (Podchlebnik)
– 5-7 min. (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 70)
– at least 5 minutes (LG München I, 29 Mar. 1974, p. 601)
– 4-5 min. (Bednarz 1946c, pp. 22, 60)
– 2-3 min (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 98)

4.2.6. Poison Source

– Diesel exhaust gases (*The People's Verdict* 1944, pp. 8f., 13, 17, 49; plus any reference to Saurer trucks, see Chapter 4.2.2.)
– gas and exhaust fumes from burning gasoline in the engine (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 59); Otto/gasoline engine (*ibid.*, pp. 77, 98; LG Kiel, 26 Nov. 1965, p. 430; LG Kiel, 14 June 1974, p. 662)
– **exhaust gases** (Rosenberg 1985, p. 36; Loewenstein 1961, p. 51; Sherman-Zander 1984, p. 50; NMT, Vol. 4, p. 448; Manoschek 1998, p. 230 (switchable); IMT, Vol. 7, p. 573; Beer 1987, pp. 410, 412; Kogon *et al.* 1993, pp. 60f., 63f. 86f.; LG Munich 15 Nov. 1974; LG Wuppertal, 30 Dec. 1965, p. 513; LG Frankfurt/M., 12 Mar. 1966, p. 344, and many others)
– exhaust gases *and* other gases (Choumoff 1987, p. 35; Klamper 1991, p. 33)
– exhaust gas from engine fueled with methanol (Kazimierz Grabowski, Höß Trial, vol. 26, pp. 32f.) or maybe with other additives (Bednarz 1946c, p. 25)
– carbon monoxide (NMT, Vol. 4, p. 441)
– bottled carbon monoxide (Rückerl 1977, p. 267; Morsch/Perz/Ley 2011, p. 180)
– Zyklon B dumped in from the driver's cabin (Choumoff 1987, pp. 39, 42f.; Klamper 1991, p. 33)

Some witnesses claimed separate gas-producing devices, which are listed in the next subchapter, together with the various means of piping the poison into the cargo box.

4.2.7. Gassing Procedure

The standard version is a flexible, removable metal hose attached to the exhaust pipe during a gassing operation, which led the gases into the cargo box. However, there is a plethora of other versions about the way the gas was produced and piped into the cargo box:

– from a device in the driver's cabin, upon pressing a button piped from there into the cargo box (Sakowska 1993, pp. 162f., 166)
– a valve in the driver's cabin, turned on during a transit of 200 m (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 98)
– a lever in the cabin, operated by the driver (LG Köln, 20 June 1953, p. 153; LG Dortmund, 16 Jan. 1969, p. 680; LG Kiel, 14 June 1974, p. 662; LG München I, 19 Dec. 1980, p. 251)
– a lever outside the cabin (Manoschek 1998, p. 230)
gassing device inside of truck, operated form the driver's cabin during transit (LG Stuttgart 15 Aug. 1950, p. 200)
– custom built device by Auschwitz motor pool (Jan Dziopek, Höß Trial, vol. 8, p. 109)
– exhaust pipe forking mechanism (Falborski, Appendix 9; Kohl 2003, pp. 69f.)

The statements claiming that the vans had some fancy piping and/or wiring allowing the poison gas to be "turned on" by opening a valve or pushing a button inside the driver's cabin are a curiosity. This runs not only contrary to most other witnesses, but it would also have been quite a technical feat to revamp a normal truck in such a drastic way that the flow direction of the exhaust gases (let alone gasses produced otherwise, as some state) could have been handled from within the driver's cabin. It shows that the fanciful fantasies of these witnesses were devoid of any basis in reality.

The problem is, however, that the witnesses claiming these fanciful devices aren't just some individuals. One of them, claiming a button in the cabin (Sakowska 1993, pp. 162f., 166), actually stems from one of the most important "sources" we have about Chełmno: the so-called "Szlamek" Report already mentioned before (p. 246), which is a testimony allegedly given by a former inmate who is said to have been a grave digger in Chełmno and who allegedly managed to flee and subsequently had his version recorded in the Warsaw ghetto in early 1942.

Orthodox historian Peter Klein posits – without proof – that the vehicle described in this report was an undefined early version which op-

erated with bottled carbon monoxide (in Morsch/Perz/Ley 2011, p. 180), but such bottles don't have buttons to turn them on either. Besides, bottled CO is said to have been used only in the context of the euthanasia action during the years 1939 to 1941 in a tractor-trailer setup sporting the infamous "Kaiser's Coffee Shop" sign (Beer in *ibid.*, p. 158; Beer 1987, pp. 404-406), which is not what the report describes. Apart from the button (and straw mats in the cargo box), the report's description clearly follows the stereotypical pattern of the claimed "moving truck" type gas vans with grey color, hermetically closing double doors, wooden grates, sheet metal lining, observation window, cargo box lamp (maybe inspired from the Gaubschat correspondence).

The other testimony stems from Walter Piller, the former deputy commander of the Chełmno Camp (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 98). According to him the exhaust gases from a gasoline engine were piped into the cargo box using a valve in the driver's cabin, killing the victims within two to three minutes (see Chapter 3.6.2.2.). He should have known better.

Another frequently mentioned, yet utterly useless feature was some fanciful piping inside the van to distribute the gas (*The Peoples' Verdict* 1944, p. 49; IMT, Vol. 7, pp. 572f., LG Bonn, 30 Mar. 1963, p. 230; LG Hannover, 7 June 1966, p. 619; LG Darmstadt, 18 Apr. 1969, p. 93; LG Kiel, 28 Nov. 1969, p. 284; Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 54; LG Frankfurt/M., 19 Mar. 1971, p. 138; Kohl 2003, pp. 69f.; Sakowska 1993, pp. 162f.), one of which is said to have had the gas entry not through the floor, as is the standard method, but at the front (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 77).

According to the standard version, the gassing itself is said to have occurred during transit, that is to say, while the van was moving. Not all witnesses agreed with this, though, as some examples show:

– drive to ditch, then turn on the gas while stationary (Kogon *et al.* 1993, p. 58; LG Koblenz, 21 May 1963, p. 194; Benz/Distel 2009, pp. 575f.; Kohl 2003, pp. 69f.; LG Wuppertal, 30 Dec. 1965; p. 513 (optional); LG Frankfurt/M., 12 Mar. 1966, p. 344; LG Kiel, 11 Apr. 1969, p. 33; 28 Nov. 1969, p. 286; LG München I, 29 Mar. 1974, p. 601)
– gassing in stationary van before departure (Kogon *et al.* 1993, pp. 65, 66, 69-71, 86 (2 ×), 87; Lanzmann 1985; Podchlebnik; Srebrnik; Bednarz 1946c, p. 60; LG Karlsruhe, 20 Dec. 1961, pp. 100, 118;

> LG Bonn, 23 July 1965, pp. 231f.; LG Kiel, 28 Nov. 1969, p. 284; LG München I, 15 Nov. 1974, p. 287)

This raises the question: What was the point of a mobile gas chamber, if it was used while stationary only? Or as the Dortmund District Court put it in its verdict of 16 Jan. 1969 regarding the claimed gas van murders in the Semlin Camp in Serbia (case 700; Rüter *et al*. 1968ff., vol. 31, p. 683):

> *"There was finally no plausible reason to commit the killing in the camp* [while stationary] *and to let the engine run for an extended period of time, if a longer driving route was available."*

It must also be kept in mind that the vast majority of gas vans were Saurer trucks with Diesel engines, which, when running idly, will not kill anyone within half an hour, and even when moving they would need a heavy load to accomplish that, if at all possible. This would have required continuously driving up a steep mountain, for instance, but such mountains are few and far between in most Soviet areas occupied by the Germans during WWII.

4.2.8. The When, Where, and How Many

Since by definition "gas vans" are mobile, they could have been deployed just about anywhere, and so we can find witnesses claiming to have seen them pretty much at any time and any place, so we gain little by analyzing witness statements in this regard.

Many witnesses do not specify when and where exactly they made their observation. Usually witnesses claim to have seen only one such vehicle at a time. In some cases time and location of such an observation can be derived indirectly from the biographic data of alleged perpetrators, as it can usually be determined when they were deployed in which region with which unit. Although Kogon *et al.* try to determine with such data how many gas vans had been deployed by which German unit (1993, pp. 56-70), this attempt is necessarily futile in the face of the contradictory and unreliable nature of the anecdotal evidence used. It is finally turned *ad absurdum* when Kogon *et al.* claim that a gas van was even deployed at the concentration camp Majdanek (p. 72), which allegedly had numerous stationary gas chambers and hence no need for mobile ones. And indeed, in her orthodox monograph about the Majdanek camp, the German orthodox historian Barbara Schwindt claimed that the Majdanek "gas van" story is untrue and merely based

on the "spreading of errors" caused by a lack of knowledge about the camp's history (Schwindt 2005, p. 13). However, just six years later the Polish Majdanek specialist Tomasz Kranz[129] maintained that "gas vans" had really been deployed at Majdanek, although he referred only very vaguely to "circumstantial evidence" in support of this claim (Morsch/ Perz/Ley 2011, p. 219). This shows that the Holocaust orthodoxy itself is mightly confused about this issue.

The same absurdity can be observed regarding the Auschwitz camp. Although Auschwitz is said to have been replete with stationary gas chambers and therefore shouldn't have had a need for mobile ones, there is an abundance of witnesses claiming the use of gas vans in that camp as well.[130] One of those witness claims about a warning sign "dangerous stinker on the road" I have quoted in Chapter 4.2.3. (p. 260). An even greater nonsense is claimed for the Mauthausen Camp, were a stationary gas chamber was also said to have been in use (see Chapter 5.1. for more details).

The problem is that one can prove just about anything with eyewitness testimonies about events of the Second World War. A case in point is the eyewitness account by German citizen Hilde Sherman-Zander, whose testimony already sticks out because she claims to have seen not one, not two, but actually a long file of gas vans deployed to help clear the Riga ghetto (1984, p. 49):

> *"K. and his helpers spoke uninterruptedly. 'You will be fine. You will go to a fishery village, Dünamünde, close to here. There will be easy work for you in closed rooms. In the canning factory. You will have to mend nets and… you will be fine…'*
>
> *Suddenly a motorcade drove into the ghetto: refrigerator trucks which, completely insulated, are used to transport meat. But these carried a huge red cross.* […] *The refrigerator truck left the ghetto in a long row."*

Note that the Red Cross sign is not attested to by any other witness as far as I know. The witness may have derived that from the various published images in the German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* (see Chapter 2.1.). The witness continues (p. 50):

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[129] Kranz is currently the head of the research department at the Majdanek camp museum; see Kranz 2007.

[130] See www.deathcamps.org/gas_chambers/gas_chambers_auschwitz_testi.html; cf. Robert J. van Pelt's elaboration on that in Morsch/Perz/Ley, p. 215f.

> *"What the Latvian men told us made our blood freeze in our veins: No fishery village Dünamünde ever existed. No canning factory. The refrigeration trucks with the Red Cross were mobile gas chambers! With exhaust pipes turned into the interior, with carbon monoxide the people had been murdered."*

First of all, a village named Dünamünde did indeed exist; this is the German name for Daugavgriva (which has the same meaning, *i.e.* the mouth of the Düna/Daugava river), which is in fact a neighborhood in northwestern Riga.[131] Next, this testimony is contradicted by orthodox historiography, which insists that gas vans were not used during the clearing of the Riga ghetto (Angrick/Klein 2009, p. 334, note 3):

> *"The deployment of gas vans in this operation is not documented. Latvian policemen from Victor Arajs's auxiliary security police who were deployed during Operation Dünamünde spoke exclusively of shooting operations. Because a good many of them were transferred to Minsk in spring 1942 in order to guard the arrival of Viennese Jews at the extermination camp Maly Trostenez* […], *where gas vans were used, the difference in their actions was quite apparent to them* […]*."*

The Chełmno Camp is an exception in this regard, as the alleged deployment of gas vans there is narrowly defined in time and space. Here the majority of witnesses claimed either two or three deployed gas vans, although inconsistencies can be found here as well (see Mattogno 2017).

4.2.9. Conclusion

As unsettling as these witness reports may be by their sheer number, their discrepancies are just as unsettling, or should be for the critical historian. Many witnesses' descriptions are very vague, whereas others describe trivial events which were later distorted and gave rise to ominous rumors whose origins have to be seen in war propaganda. Other witnesses have shaped their testimony according to what they have learned only after the war. Karl Loewenstein is a classic example for this. Although his testimony is very detailed (1961, p. 51), it contains not only absurd aspects (trucks with painted windows, curtains, shutters plus a fake chimney to make it look like a trailer home), but he actually quotes the Becker letter (of 501-PS) in full right after his own state-

131 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daugavgr%C4%ABva .

ment, which clearly shows where he got his fanciful fantasies from. Again others clearly told what they were expected to tell, like the Polish witness Falborski (see Chapter 3.6.2.3.).

Be that as it may, when reading the witness statements, it is striking that according to many of them the "gas vans" were equipped with a *hermetically sealable* cargo box. Since this feature renders a long-term operation of the engine impossible or would lead to the destruction of the cargo box, and because there is no way around this physical reality, we are confronted with a problem.

It is, on the other hand, strange that to my knowledge only one witness ever uttered a word about the effects of the exhaust gases' high *temperature* (see Chapter 1.3.1.). It was the Polish witness Mieczysław Żurawski who stated: "I may mention that bodies found next to the exhaust pipe were burnt" (Bednarz 1946c, p. 62).

Hence, on top of the potentially noxious content of the exhaust gases, the cargo box would also have been a huge cooker, in which those doomed to die would have been exposed to the hot exhaust gases, which by itself would have led to their eventual, although very slow demise. The consequences of this thermal effect would have been visible on the corpses and would have increased the horror of the spectacle presenting itself to the commandos ordered to drag the corpses out of the cargo box after the door had been opened. We note that the analyzed documents remain silent about this point as well.

After critically reviewing witness claims about the murder of non-Jewish Serbs with gas vans in wartime Serbia, orthodox historian Byford rejected them as unconvincing (see Chapter 4.1.).

After scrutinizing the entire plethora of evidence about the remaining gas van claims, we cannot but join Byford in his verdict.

Mainstream historian Prof. Dr. Michel de Boüard, himself an inmate of the Mauthausen concentration camp during the war, stated the following about the quality of survivor stories, which is just as true regarding the gas vans (Lebailly 1988):

> *"I am haunted by the thought that in 100 years or even 50 years the historians will question themselves on this particular aspect of the Second World War which is the concentration camp system and what they will find out. The record is rotten to the core. On one hand a considerable amount of fantasies, inaccuracies, obstinately repeated (in particular concerning numbers), heterogeneous mixtures,*

and generalizations and, on the other hand, very dry critical [revisionist] *studies that demonstrate the inanity of those exaggerations."*

4.3. A Hypothesis on the Origin of "Gas Van" Claims

If it is true that it is impossible to operate a "gas van" as described by piping exhaust gases into a hermetically sealed cargo box, why did so many witnesses claim or even insist that the cargo box was indeed sealed? How could the witnesses *en masse* claim something that cannot be true?

Killing with poisonous gases comes with the natural assumption that the gases thusly used must be very dangerous indeed. It is therefore only logical to assume that those outside the gassing locale who are performing the gassing or who are mere bystanders need protection from this very poison, which is achieved by hermetically sealing the gassing locale. This assumption is reasonable for the use of Zyklon B and other poisonous gases, and it is correct also for the use of carbon monoxide in gas chambers contained within closed buildings, where the operators themselves are inside the same building, although in different adjacent rooms.

The situation is of course different for gassings with carbon monoxide in "gas vans" or freestanding rooms, as is said to have been the case in the Action Reinhardt camps. Here any escaping carbon monoxide would have quickly been diluted by the surrounding air and hence rendered harmless.

It is an irrefutable fact, though, that the sheer amount of gas produced by the engines rendered those claimed gassings technically different from those where only a minute amount of gas is said to have been applied once, as in the case of Zyklon B. Neither the mobile nor the stationary engine-exhaust gas chambers could have been hermetically sealed.

It may therefore be surmised that the witnesses added to their story not something they had observed but what they assumed due to prevailing clichés and fantasies: poison gas must be sealed off hermetically. It also sounds more dramatic, as the poison gas appears more dangerous than a substance that can escape the chamber without harming anyone.

If it is moreover a fact that the Germans all over Europe used vans and trucks fueled with wood gas generators, how come that nobody ev-

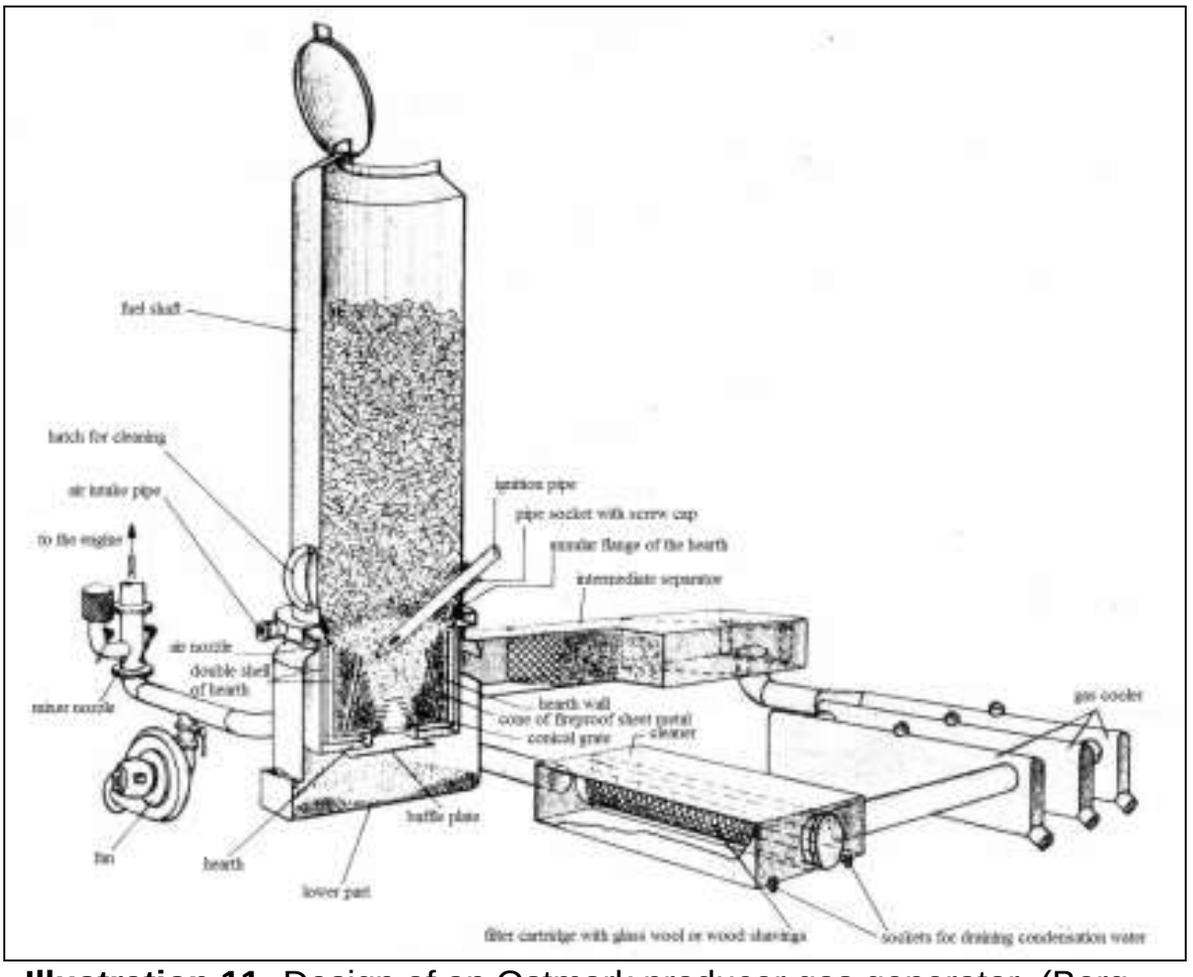

Illustration 11: Design of an Ostmark producer gas generator. (Berg 2019, p. 468; descriptions translated)

er claimed that their generator gas was used for mass murder? The answer to this question may also shed light on the origin of the "gas van" story. It is safe to say that many, if not all, of the witnesses testifying regarding the "gas vans" had seen German transport vehicles equipped with wood gas generators. Since this technology was introduced by Germany *en masse* only during the war, it was a new and unknown technology particularly to most people in the occupied territories. In this context it is interesting to note the following fact:

a. In trucks and vans the wood gas generators were frequently placed between the driver's cabin and the cargo box, frequently making it look like a part of the cargo box (see the two illustrations showing Saurer trucks equipped with gas generators on pp. 106 & 107).
b. The generator was connected to the engine with a pipe leading the fuel gas into the engine.
c. Before being able to drive off and sometimes in mid-operation, the driver or co-driver had to either "start" the generator by lighting its

fire, or he had to check its proper operation. This required manipulating of valves and a fan driving the fuel into the engine.

d. The danger of the extremely poisonous wood gas required special caution, which was emblazoned on labels affixed to the device itself.

So imagine the following scene observed by a later "witness" who has never heard of producer gas vehicles: An SS man goes to the back of his van's cabin and starts manipulating a device equipped with skulls and bones signs, "Poison!" and "Danger!" words. This device is directly attached to the van's cargo box. A pipe is leading from the engine to bottom of that device (or vice versa, but how could the witness know which way the gas flowed?).

Et voilà: you have a "gas-van witness."

There are, of course, other vehicular occurrences which might have contributed to the rumor about gas vans. In Chapter 2.2.6. I elaborated on the probable purpose of the special vehicles ordered by the RSHA and manufactured by the Gaubschat Company. If my hypothesis is correct that they were vans to transport corpses, then numerous witnesses must have seen how these corpses were eventually unloaded. It seems almost inevitable that at least some of these witnesses must have thought or later concluded from stories spread by rumors, by the media, by the judiciary and by historiography, that what they had experienced was the last step of a gas van murder.

German disinfestation vehicles as mentioned in Chapter 2.4. may have added to the rumor, in particular if some of them used their own hot exhaust gases for hot air disinfestation by piping them into their disinfestation compartment via a metal hose.

Although it is possible that the Soviet gas vans mentioned in Chapter 3.2.1. may have inspired some Soviet official to invent stories about German "gas vans," I do not believe that the general populace in the Soviet territories temporarily occupied by the Germans had any knowledge about these Soviet vans. Hence I consider their existence not sufficient to explain why so many witnesses testified to their existence in German hands, all the more so since some of the witnesses had no connection to the Soviet territories to begin with.

5. Conclusions

There can be no doubt that the Germans of the later 19th and early 20th century were a special breed. Just imagine all the things they did: they invented the gasoline engine, the Diesel engine, the Wankel engine, the jet engine, and the rocket engine; by the end of WWII they had the first rockets, first jets, first helicopters, first stealth submarines, first plans for building space shuttles and stealth bombers; by that time they had also invented nerve gases, had discovered nuclear energy, developed coal gasification, invented artificial rubber, the video telephone, the amateur video camera, infrared-based night vision devices, tape recording, TV, live TV, color TV, cable TV, microwave ovens, discovered the link between smoking and lung cancer, built the first computer (Zuse, tube-based), and last but not least the electron microscope.

What can one expect from such a people when they turn their energy to murdering people *en masse*? Crude, hardly operable makeshift solutions?

Because this question is *not* rhetorical in nature, I hope that the reader will permit me to delve into the matter a little bit deeper. The question is, more accurately put, what options the Germans had and which one they would have chosen to commit mass murder. This might sound a little crazy, as it appears to be a contest in mass murder, but this thought experiment is necessary to realize the nature and quality of the claims made about the gas vans, among other things.

In his study of the alleged Auschwitz gas chambers, Germar Rudolf has discussed the various options available to the Auschwitz camp authorities (Rudolf 2020, pp. 295-298), while Fritz Berg has done something similar for the *Aktion Reinhard* camps (2019, pp. 463-466), and in his study about Chełmno, Carlo Mattogno has marveled over the question why the Germans are said to have used CO, when they had at their disposal numerous other agents which were much more potent (Mattogno 2017, toward the end of his Chapter 2).

I will not argue here that carbon monoxide would not have been a good choice for the Germans – or anyone else intending to kill with a

toxic gas. Any other, more potent agent always has the severe drawback that it is also very dangerous for the perpetrator. But not CO, if a few safety rules are observed. In addition, CO can be generated easily and cheaply, is easily applied, and is easy to discard. Once released into the environment, it quickly dilutes down to harmless concentrations and is rapidly oxidized to innocuous CO_2.

The question is: how would the Germans, ingenious engineers and chemists as they were back then, have constructed a "gas van"? I do not wish to go into details here, but will focus mainly on the source of carbon monoxide. The attentive reader might already guess what I am getting at: producer gas vehicles. Already after World War One this technique was developed in Germany, and during World War Two the Germans improved that technique to a high standard and produced hundreds of thousands of these devices.

Hence, if the Germans had used the Saurer trucks mentioned in the Gaubschat exchange as gas vans – or any other truck – they would have been equipped with wood gas generators, and this very gas – before(!) entering the engine – would have been used to kill the inmates locked up in the cargo box. I have prepared a drawing of such an operational hypothetical Saurer gas van; see Illustration 28 (p. 385).

Illustration 27 (p. 384), on the other hand, shows a draft of an impossible "gas van" as described in the pertinent literature using the exhaust gases of a Saurer Diesel engine, piped into the cargo box's floor via a metal hose. The vehicle's dimensions are based on the Gaubschat correspondence (cargo box height to length ratio 1.7:5.8). The problems with such a design are insurmountable. Such vans could simply not have served the function ascribed to them.

Today, after several decades of extended and exhaustive archival and forensic studies, we know with a probability bordering on certainty that there never were any stationary "gas chambers" for the mass murder of human beings.[132] Is the situation identical with regard to the "gas vans"? Back in 1994 Pierre Marais concluded in his tome that his studies did not yield any evidence for their existence. Although I have been able to scrutinize many more sources than were available to Marais, my own verdict is basically the same:

– There are still no material traces of these vehicles and no photos.

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[132] For this see the various studies of the Holocaust Handbooks as introduced at the end of this book, in particular volumes 2, 4, 5 8, 9, 11, 14, 16, 19-23, 25, 28, 38, 41, 42, 49, 50.

– The forensic findings about claimed gassing victims presented during communist show trials are not worth the paper they are written on.
– None of Marais's reasons to doubt the authenticity of the key documents alleged to prove the gas vans' existence have ever been addressed, let alone refuted, and I have found more such reason to suspect foul play.
– The few additional documents not known to Marais which I have analyzed here have increased the impression that such documents are either ambiguous (Activity Report by *Einsatzgruppe* B) or highly suspicious (the Turner letter).
– The contradictory and at times absurd nature of witness testimony, already demonstrated by Marais, has been revealed in an even more glaring light in this study.

All this does not prove that gas vans never existed. But then again, having no evidence for the existence of the Flying Spaghetti Monster doesn't refute its existence either. He who wants to believe will always do so. However, he who wants to have unequivocal evidence will not find it – for now.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1: Images of Alleged "Gas Vans"

See my comments in Chapter 2.1.

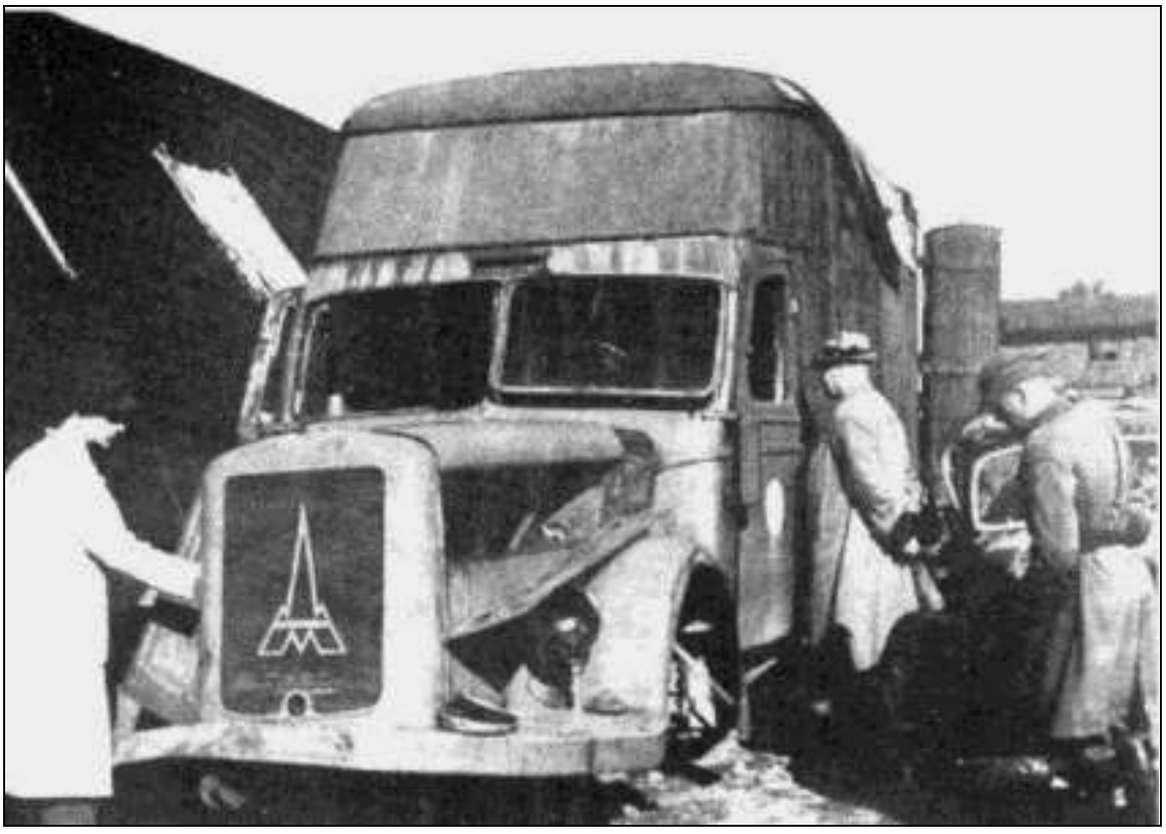


Illustration 12: Photo taken by a Polish investigation commission showing a derelict moving truck (acc. to Halbersztadt; http://dss.ucsd.edu/~lzamosc/chelm00.htm; also cropped at http://collections.yadvashem.org/photosarchive/en-us/43921.html). Deceptively mislabeled by Gerald Fleming as a "Gas van used to liquidate Jews at the Kulmhof (Chełmno) extermination camp and near Konitz" (1984, plate 7, after p. 92). In late 2010, the Internet encyclopedia Wikipedia had this photo posted on seven(!) entries with the false caption "Gas Van in Chełmno extermination camp" (Gas van; Einsatzgruppen; Chełmno extermination camp; Walter Rauff; Sajmište concentration camp; Wilhelm Rediess; August Becker).

Illustration 13: Same as before, different angle, but probably taken at a later time, since the hood has been removed and a hole appears in the area above the windscreen (www.deathcamps.org/occupation/pic/bigchelmnovan.jpg.).

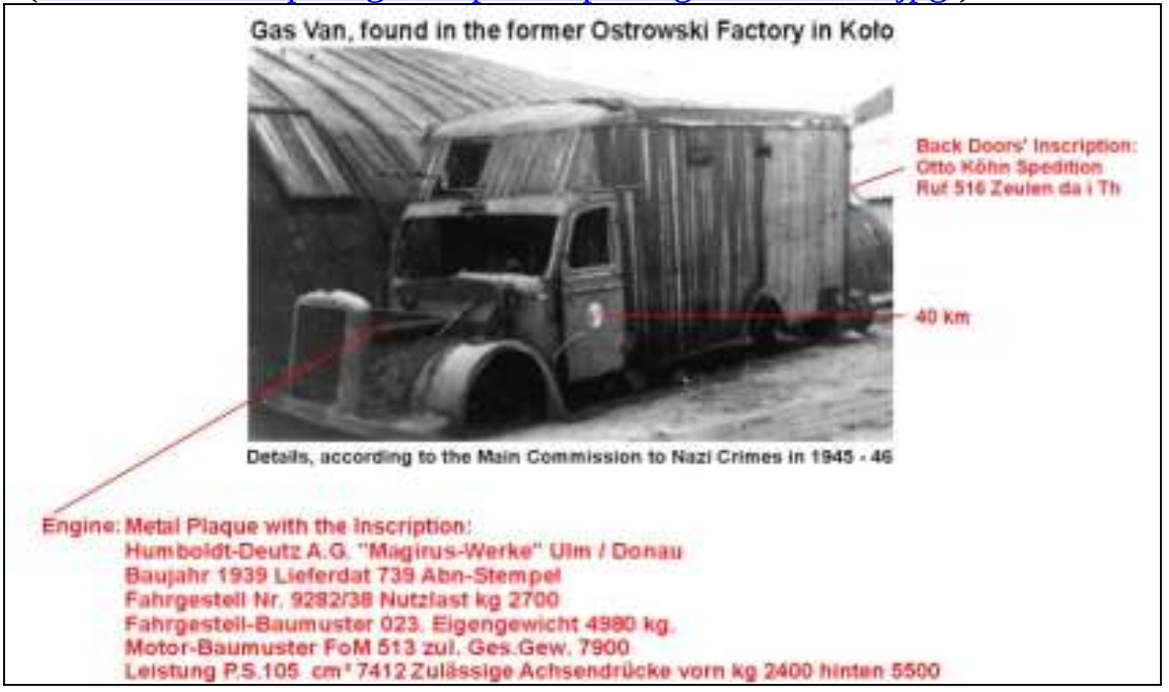


Illustration 14: Same as before; details added as captions according to Halbersztadt (as above); the misleading headline has probably been added by www.deathcamps.org (www.deathcamps.org/gas_chambers/pic/bigkulmhof2.jpg; http://collections.yadvashem.org/photosarchive/en-us/89591.html).

Illustration 15: Same as before, rear view (www.deathcamps.org/gas_chambers/pic/bigkulmhof4.jpg; http://collections.yadvashem.org/photosarchive/en-us/54160.html).

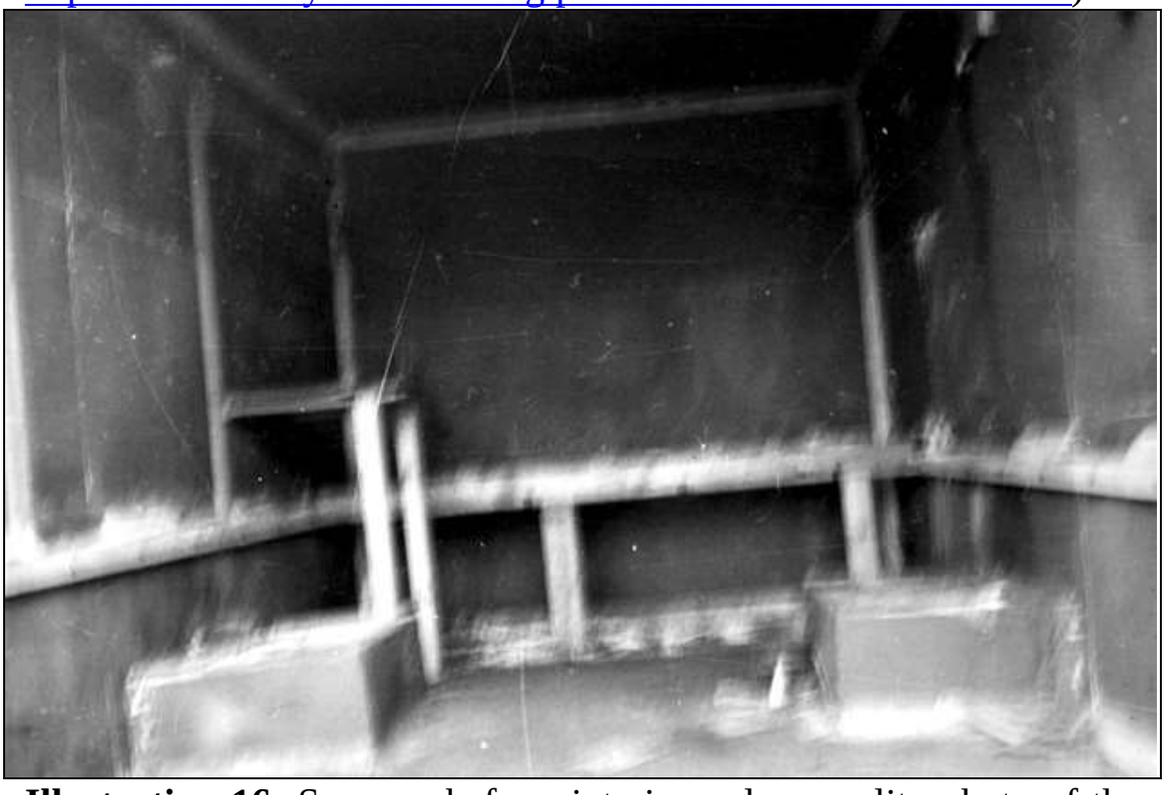


Illustration 16: Same as before, interior; a low-quality photo of the moving truck's cargo box. Yad Vashem, archival reference 1427/84 (http://collections.yadvashem.org/photosarchive/en-us/28025.html)

Illustration 17: Gas van artwork by www.deathcamp.org: A photoshopped image of a Saurer truck "based on G. Flatz's Saurer Photo" (www.deathcamps.org/gas_chambers/pic/bigkulmhof3.jpg).

Illustration 18: Gas van artwork by www.deathcamp.org: A drawing of a hypothetical "gas trailer" drawn by a tractor (http://www.deathcamps.org/gas_chambers/pic/bigtrailer.jpg).

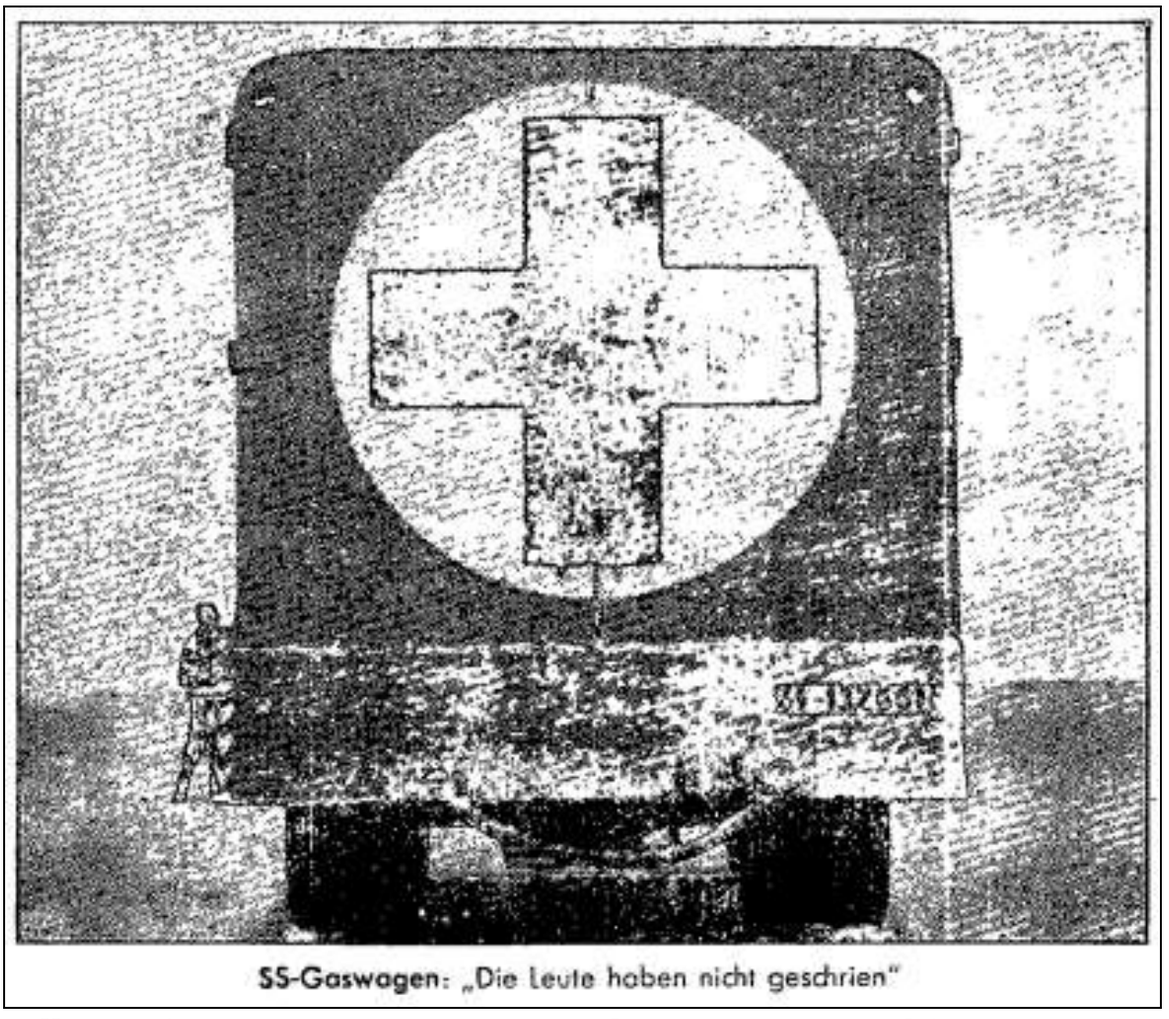
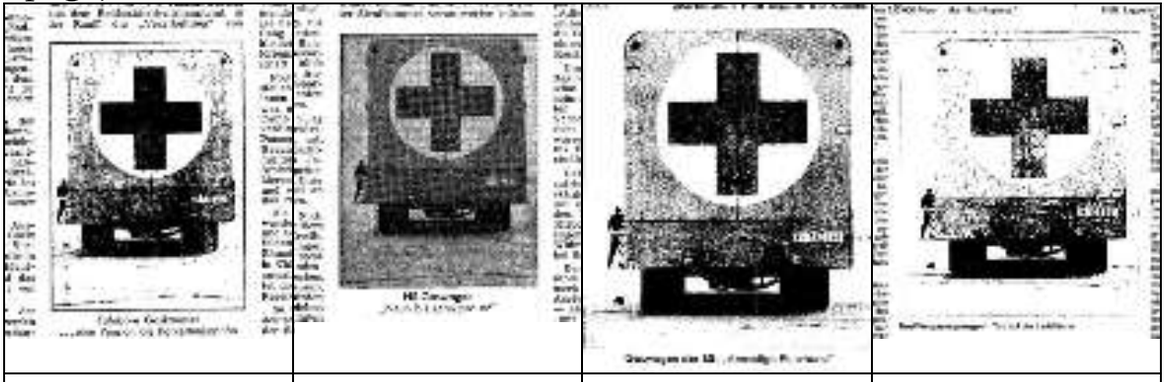


Illustration 19a: A "gas van" according to *Der Spiegel* (1966; same image used in *Der Spiegel* 1963, 1967a, 1968, 1988, see thumbnails below). In fact, this is a scene taken from the 1962 Polish movie "Ambulans" directed by Janusz Morgenstern; see Ill. 19f. (next page).



b: 1963	**c:** 1967a	**d:** 1968	**e:** 1988

Illustration 19f: Scene from Janusz Morgenstern's 1961 fiction movie *Ambulans*, 8 min 48 seconds into the movie – the source of the image used by *Der Spiegel* to illustrate its articles on gas van murder trials in West Germany in the 1960s. The movie is posted on YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkrwONpOPdg. The inset in a white frame shows the van's number plate as shown in the movie at 8 min 43 seconds.

Illustration 20: A "gas van" according to Saul Friedländer's book *Kurt Gerstein et l'ambiguïté du bien* (1967, between pages 16 and 17). It bears the following fraudulent caption, misleading the reader to believe that this is what he sees:

> *"Gas chamber 'foundation Hackenholt' at Belzec. The inmates were exterminated within 32 minutes by means of exhaust gas of a Diesel engine (car in the foreground of the photo). Gerstein, who assisted in this operation, has described its functioning in his report. Hackenholt was the inventor of the installation, and it was he who made the engine operate."*

As a matter of fact, the room in the upper right is the morgue of the former crematorium in the Auschwitz Main Camp, which is today presented to tourists as a homicidal "gas chamber" (see Mattogno 2016b, p. 136). The cars shown are of an unknown origin and have nothing to do with what Friedländer claims. Apart from which, Gerstein had claimed that a separate Diesel engine fed the gas into the chamber, not a truck engine.

This image was also shown on 24 March 1983 in a TV documentary by Alain Decaux dedicated to Kurt Gerstein on the French TV channel *Antenne 2*.

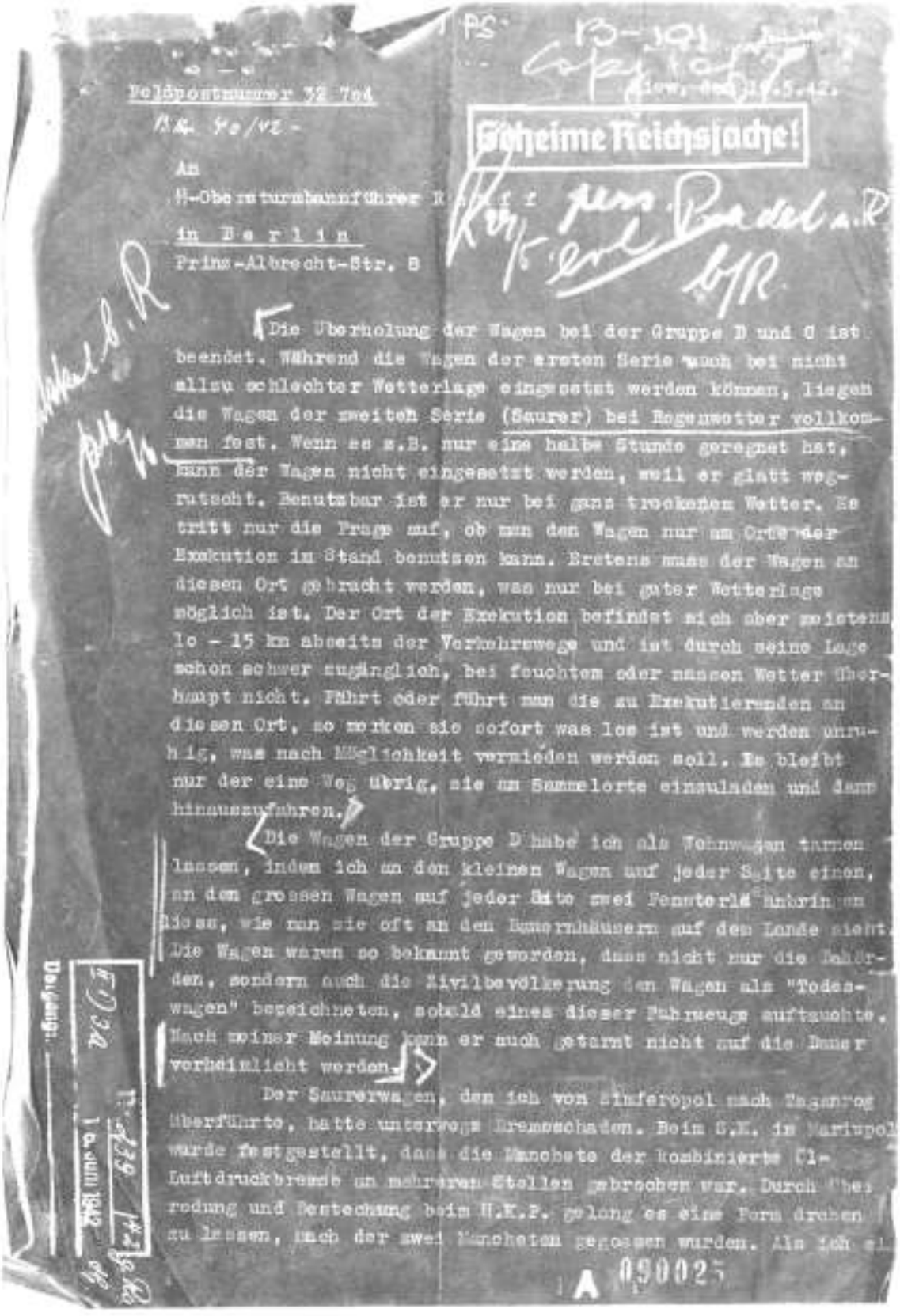
For the true origin of this composition, see the next illustration.

Illustration 21: As the previous illustration, taken from http://www.deathcamps.org/gas_chambers/pic/bigmogilev01.jpg.
There is no evidence to confirm that this footage was found in "Nebe's Flat," as is suggested by the caption. Arthur Nebe, until summer 1944 head of the *Reichskriminalpolizeiamt*, was a member of the anti-Hitler conspiracy, for which he was shot by the Germans shortly before the end of the war. He did not have a flat, but rather a house, which had been thoroughly searched and cleaned out of any incriminating evidence by the police after the assassination attempt against Hitler on July 20, 1944.
Note the numerous different shadow directions cast by a number of intense studio lights – in particular the ominous looking shadow of a person in uniform, which is a suggestive studio technique to imply the presence of an evil Nazi officer.
The stills used to create this composition originate from a U.S. propaganda documentary about the IMT; National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), 111 M 7596 Reel 5; cf. www.youtube.com/watch?v=liTspfANDXQ (from 1 min. 06 sec to 1 min. 16 seconds into the clip)

Appendix 2: The Becker Letter

Version A

Source: U.S. National Archive, 501-PS-HLSL_NUR_02459001 to 3



PS- 13-101

Geheime Reichssache!

Feldpostnummer 32 704

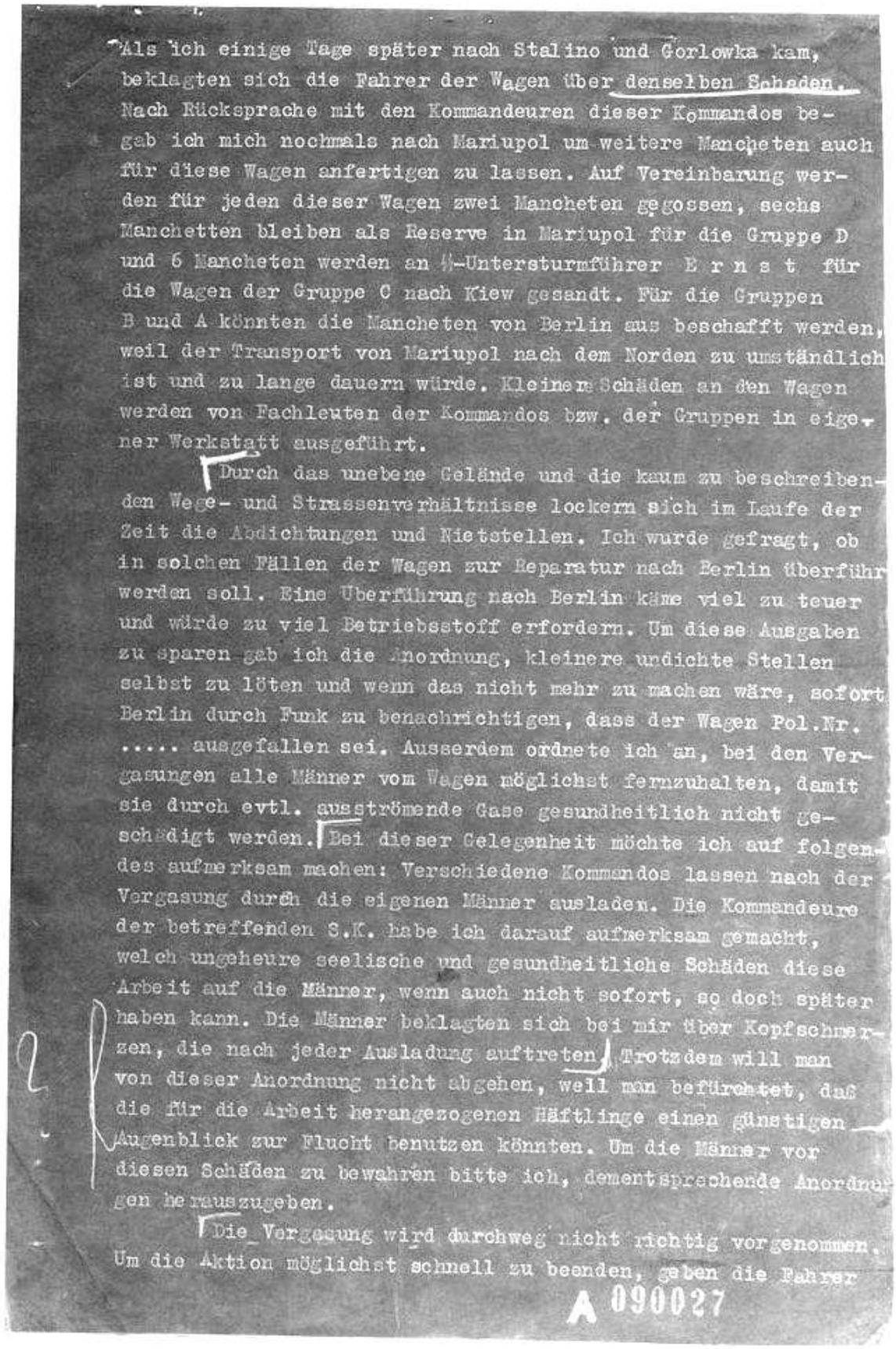
An
SS-Obersturmbannführer
in Berlin
Prinz-Albrecht-Str. 8

Die Überholung der Wagen bei der Gruppe D und C ist beendet. Während die Wagen der ersten Serie auch bei nicht allzu schlechter Wetterlage eingesetzt werden können, liegen die Wagen der zweiten Serie (Saurer) bei Regenwetter vollkommen fest. Wenn es z.B. nur eine halbe Stunde geregnet hat, kann der Wagen nicht eingesetzt werden, weil er glatt wegrutscht. Benutzbar ist er nur bei ganz trockenem Wetter. Es tritt nur die Frage auf, ob man den Wagen nur am Orte der Exekution im Stand benutzen kann. Erstens muss der Wagen an diesen Ort gebracht werden, was nur bei guter Wetterlage möglich ist. Der Ort der Exekution befindet sich aber meistens 10 - 15 km abseits der Verkehrswege und ist durch seine Lage schon schwer zugänglich, bei feuchtem oder nassem Wetter überhaupt nicht. Fährt oder führt man die zu Exekutierenden an diesen Ort, so merken sie sofort was los ist und werden unruhig, was nach Möglichkeit vermieden werden soll. Es bleibt nur der eine Weg übrig, sie am Sammelorte einzuladen und dann hinauszuführen.

Die Wagen der Gruppe D habe ich als Fahrwagen umbauen lassen, indem ich an den kleinen Wagen auf jeder Seite einen, an den grossen Wagen auf jeder Seite zwei Fensterln anbringen liess, wie man sie oft an den Bauernhäusern auf dem Lande sieht. Die Wagen waren so bekannt geworden, dass nicht nur die Behörden, sondern auch die Zivilbevölkerung den Wagen als "Todeswagen" bezeichneten, sobald eines dieser Fahrzeuge auftauchte. Nach meiner Meinung kann er auch getarnt nicht auf die Dauer verheimlicht werden.

Der Saurerwagen, den ich von Simferopol nach Zaporog überführte, hatte unterwegs Bremsschaden. Beim G.K. in Mariupol wurde festgestellt, dass die Manschette der kombinierte Luftdruckbremse an mehreren Stellen gebrochen war. Durch Überredung und Bestechung beim H.K.P. gelang es eine Form drehen zu lassen, nach der zwei Manschetten gegossen wurden. Als ich e

A 090025



Als ich einige Tage später nach Stalino und Gorlowka kam, beklagten sich die Fahrer der Wagen über denselben Schaden. Nach Rücksprache mit den Kommandeuren dieser Kommandos begab ich mich nochmals nach Mariupol um weitere Manchetten auch für diese Wagen anfertigen zu lassen. Auf Vereinbarung werden für jeden dieser Wagen zwei Manchetten gegossen, sechs Manchetten bleiben als Reserve in Mariupol für die Gruppe D und 6 Manchetten werden an SS-Untersturmführer E r n s t für die Wagen der Gruppe C nach Kiew gesandt. Für die Gruppen B und A könnten die Manchetten von Berlin aus beschafft werden, weil der Transport von Mariupol nach dem Norden zu umständlich ist und zu lange dauern würde. Kleinere Schäden an den Wagen werden von Fachleuten der Kommandos bzw. der Gruppen in eigener Werkstatt ausgeführt.

Durch das unebene Gelände und die kaum zu beschreibenden Wege- und Strassenverhältnisse lockern sich im Laufe der Zeit die Abdichtungen und Nietstellen. Ich wurde gefragt, ob in solchen Fällen der Wagen zur Reparatur nach Berlin überführt werden soll. Eine Überführung nach Berlin käme viel zu teuer und würde zu viel Betriebsstoff erfordern. Um diese Ausgaben zu sparen gab ich die Anordnung, kleinere undichte Stellen selbst zu löten und wenn das nicht mehr zu machen wäre, sofort Berlin durch Funk zu benachrichtigen, dass der Wagen Pol.Nr. ..... ausgefallen sei. Ausserdem ordnete ich an, bei den Vergasungen alle Männer vom Wagen möglichst fernzuhalten, damit sie durch evtl. ausströmende Gase gesundheitlich nicht geschädigt werden. Bei dieser Gelegenheit möchte ich auf folgendes aufmerksam machen: Verschiedene Kommandos lassen nach der Vergasung durch die eigenen Männer ausladen. Die Kommandeure der betreffenden S.K. habe ich darauf aufmerksam gemacht, welch ungeheure seelische und gesundheitliche Schäden diese Arbeit auf die Männer, wenn auch nicht sofort, so doch später haben kann. Die Männer beklagten sich bei mir über Kopfschmerzen, die nach jeder Ausladung auftreten. Trotzdem will man von dieser Anordnung nicht abgehen, weil man befürchtet, daß die für die Arbeit herangezogenen Häftlinge einen günstigen Augenblick zur Flucht benutzen könnten. Um die Männer vor diesen Schäden zu bewahren bitte ich, dementsprechende Anordnungen herauszugeben.

Die Vergasung wird durchweg nicht richtig vorgenommen. Um die Aktion möglichst schnell zu beenden, geben die Fahrer

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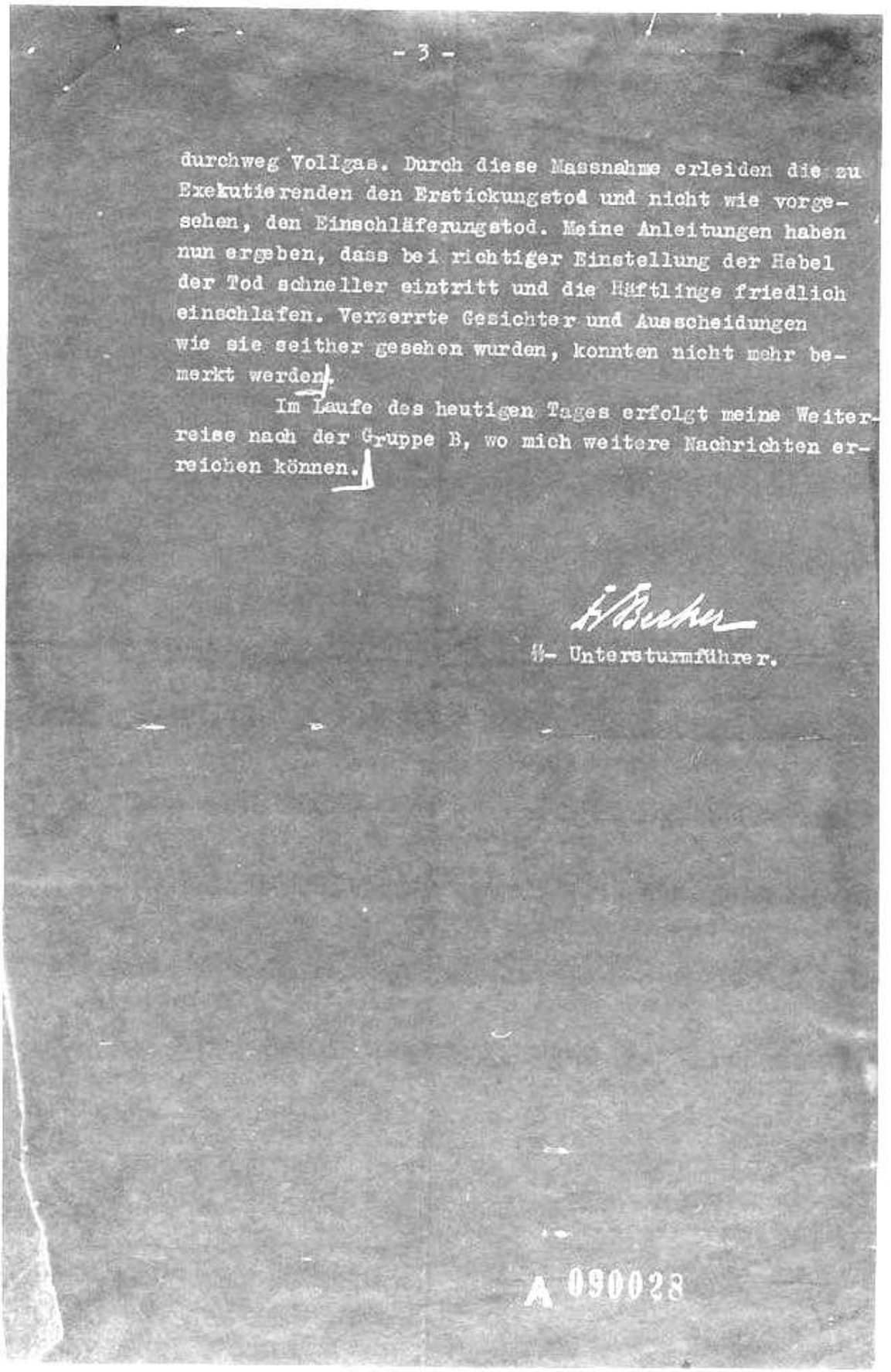


- 3 -

durchweg Vollgas. Durch diese Massnahme erleiden die zu Exekutierenden den Erstickungstod und nicht wie vorgesehen, den Einschläferungstod. Meine Anleitungen haben nun ergeben, dass bei richtiger Einstellung der Hebel der Tod schneller eintritt und die Häftlinge friedlich einschlafen. Verzerrte Gesichter und Ausscheidungen wie sie seither gesehen wurden, konnten nicht mehr bemerkt werden.

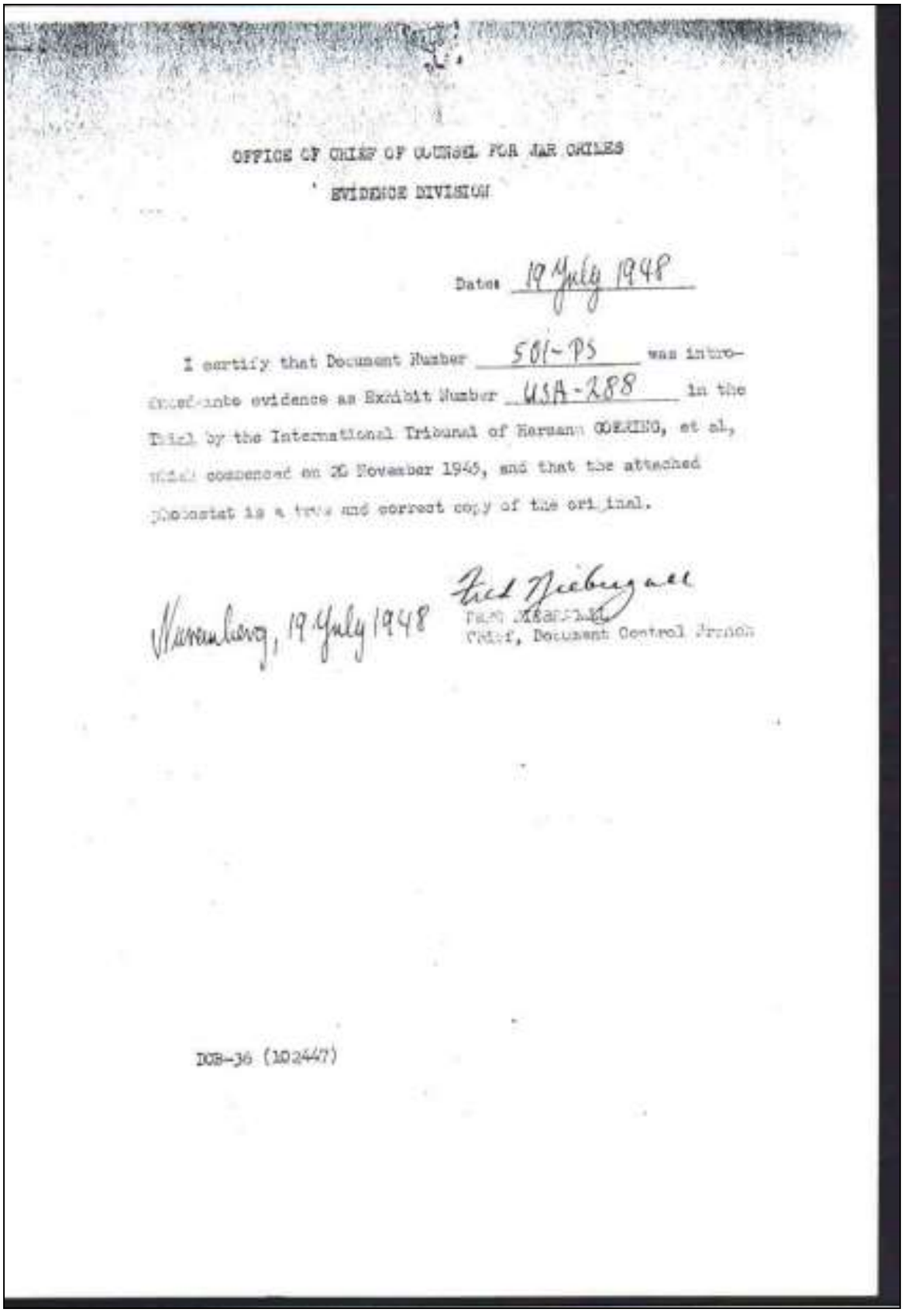
Im Laufe des heutigen Tages erfolgt meine Weiterreise nach der Gruppe B, wo mich weitere Nachrichten erreichen können.

H. Becker

H- Untersturmführer.

A 090028

Letter of authentication. Source as Version A



OFFICE OF CHIEF OF COUNSEL FOR WAR CRIMES

EVIDENCE DIVISION

Date: 19 July 1948

I certify that Document Number 501-PS was introduced into evidence as Exhibit Number USA-288 in the Trial by the International Tribunal of Hermann GOERING, et al, which commenced on 20 November 1945, and that the attached photostat is a true and correct copy of the original.

Nuremberg, 19 July 1948

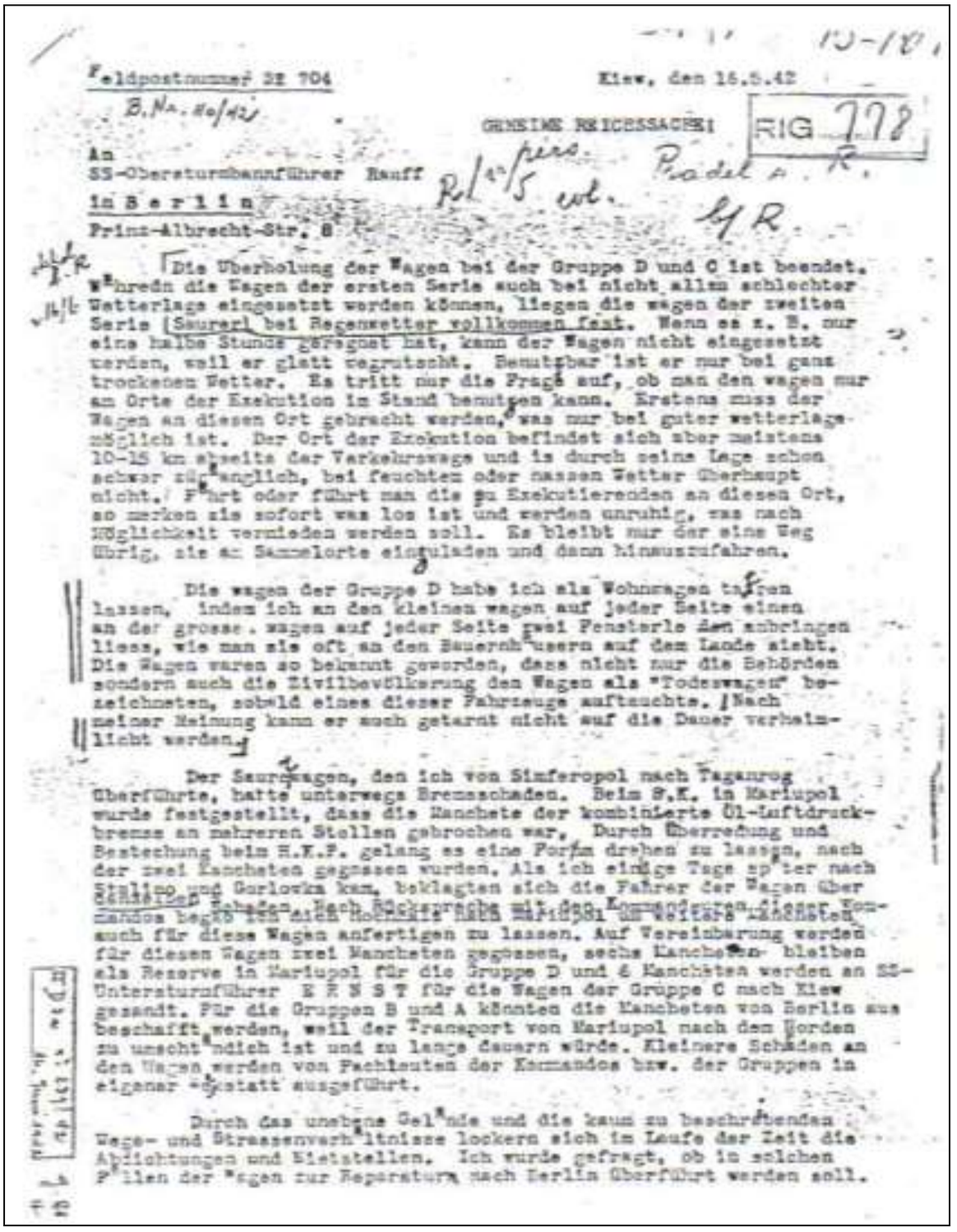
Fred Niebergall

[illegible]
Chief, Document Control Branch

DOB-36 (102447)

Version B

Source as Version A



Feldpostnummer 32 704 Kiew, den 16.8.42

B.Nr. 40/42

GEHEIME REICHSSACHE! RIG 778

An
SS-Obersturmbannführer Rauff
in B e r l i n
Prinz-Albrecht-Str. 8

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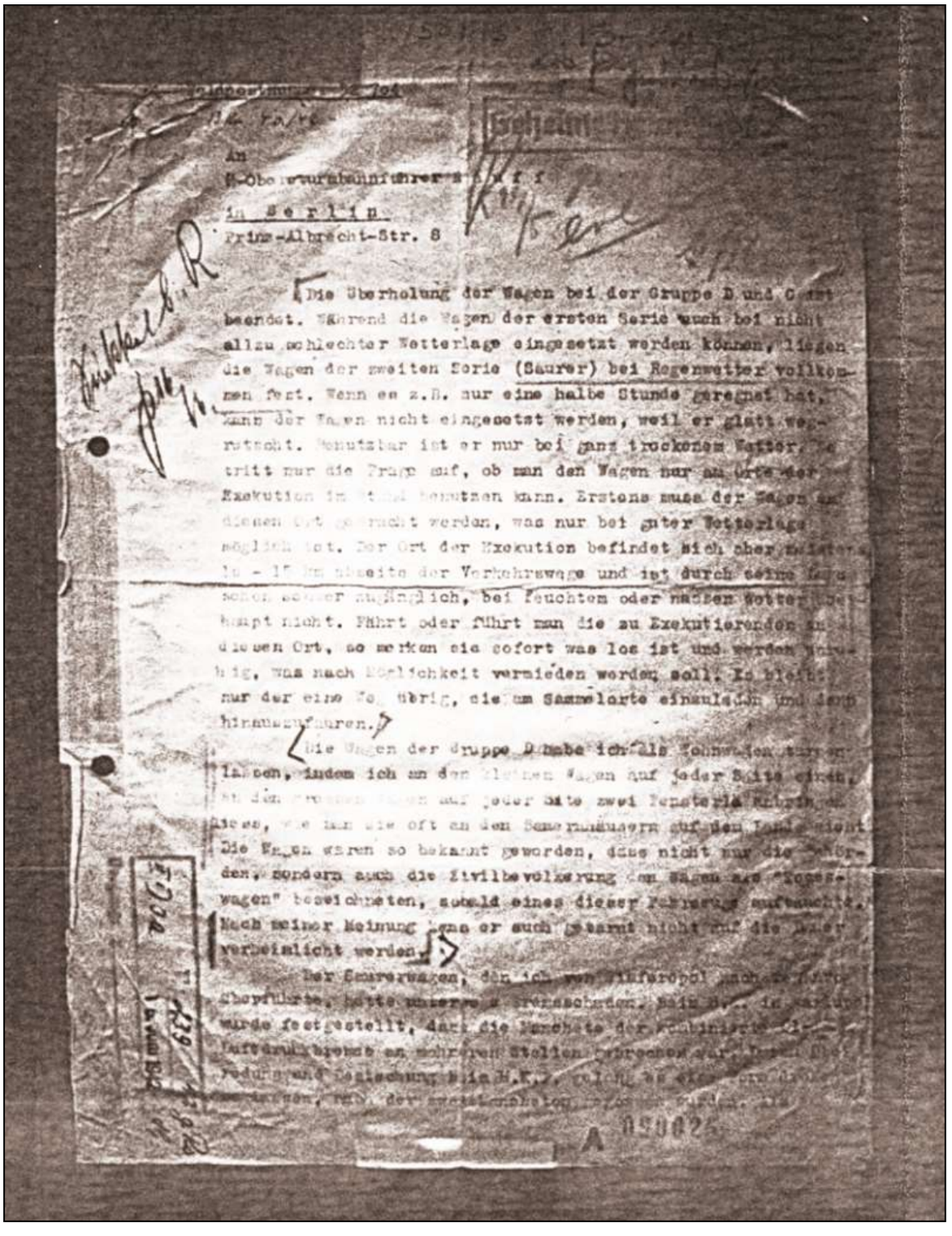
Im Laufe des heutigen Tages erfolgt meine Weiterreise nach der Gruppe B, wo mich weitere Nachrichten erreichen können.

(Sgd) Becker

SS-Untersturmführer

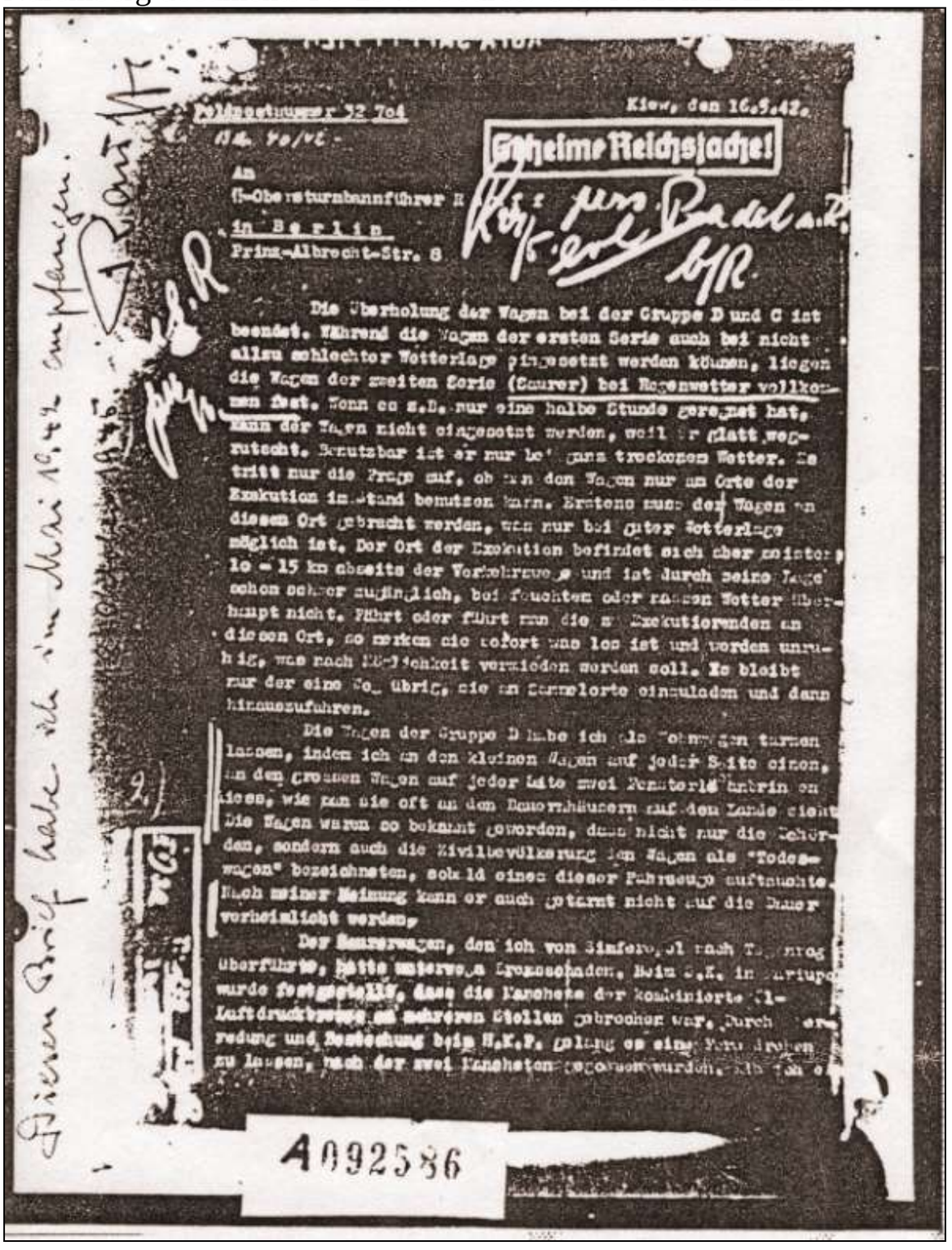
Version C

Reproduction of a photograph taken of an exhibit in a showcase at the U.S. National Archives, showing page one of a positive copy of the Becker document, consistent with the first page of the negative photostat of version A.



Version D

Photostat authenticated by Walther Rauff at the left margin; part of Nuremberg documents PS-2348. Source: U.S. National Archives.



Geheime Reichssache!

Kiew, den 16.9.42.

An
SS-Obersturmbannführer R
in Berlin
Prinz-Albrecht-Str. 8

Die Überholung der Wagen bei der Gruppe D und C ist beendet. Während die Wagen der ersten Serie auch bei nicht allzu schlechter Witterlage eingesetzt werden können, liegen die Wagen der zweiten Serie (Saurer) bei Regenwetter vollkommen fest. Wenn es z.B. nur eine halbe Stunde geregnet hat, kann der Wagen nicht eingesetzt werden, weil er glatt wegrutscht. Benutzbar ist er nur bei ganz trockenem Wetter. Es tritt nur die Frage auf, ob man den Wagen nur am Orte der Exekution im Stand benutzen kann. Erstens kann der Wagen an diesem Ort gebraucht werden, wenn nur bei guter Witterlage möglich ist. Der Ort der Exekution befindet sich aber meistens 10 - 15 km abseits der Verkehrswege und ist durch seine Lage schon sehr unzugänglich, bei feuchtem oder rauhem Wetter überhaupt nicht. Führt oder fährt man die zu Exekutierenden an diesen Ort, so merken sie sofort was los ist und werden unruhig, was nach Möglichkeit vermieden werden soll. Es bleibt nur der eine Weg übrig, sie an Sammelorte einzuladen und dann hinauszuführen.

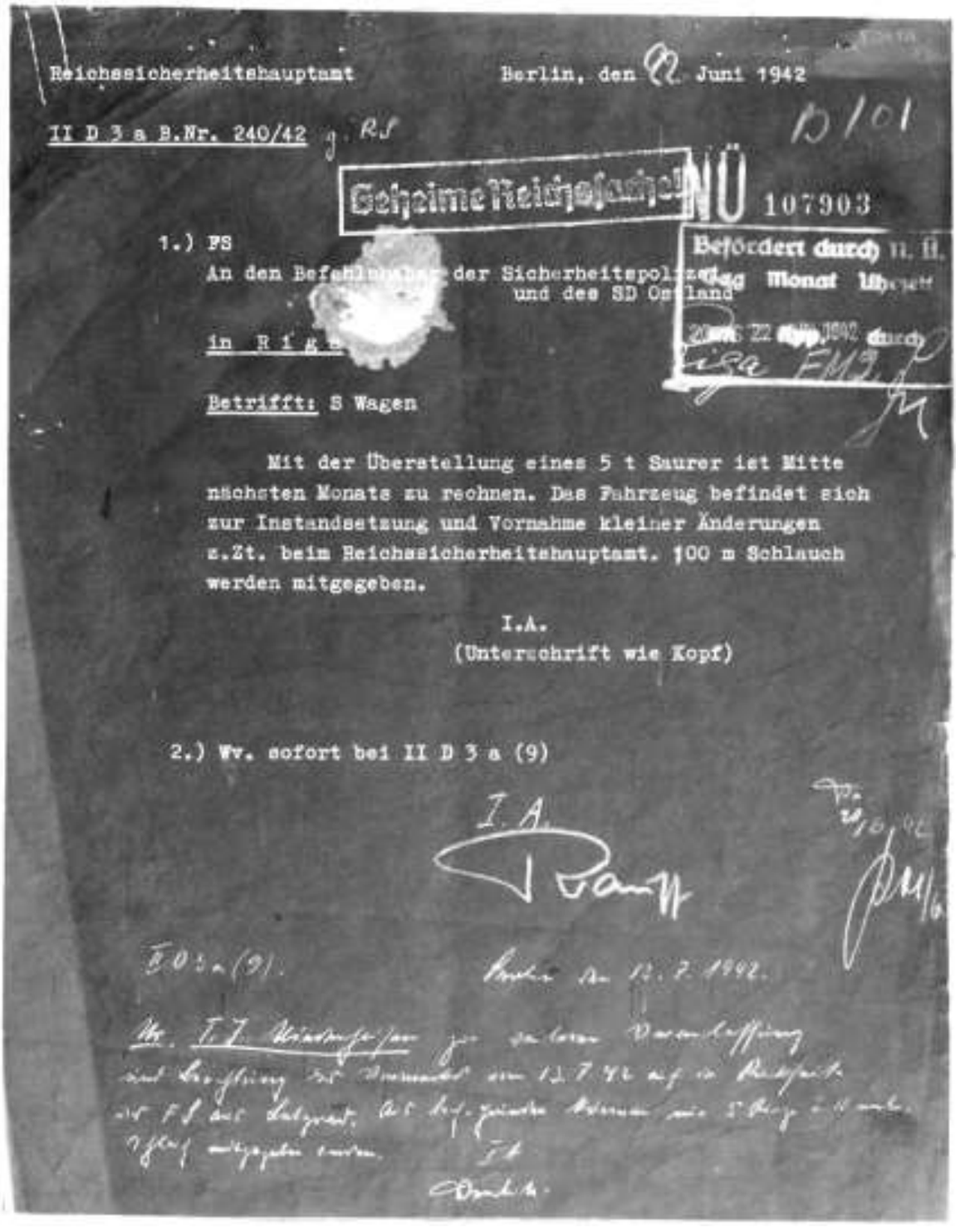
Die Wagen der Gruppe D habe ich die Schmalzen tarnen lassen, indem ich an den kleinen Wagen auf jeder Seite einen, an den grossen Wagen auf jeder Seite zwei Benzinöfen anbringen liess, wie man sie oft an den Bauernhäusern auf dem Lande sieht. Die Wagen waren nun so bekannt geworden, dass nicht nur die Behörden, sondern auch die Zivilbevölkerung den Wagen als "Todeswagen" bezeichneten, sobald einer dieser Fahrzeuge auftauchte. Nach meiner Meinung kann er auch getarnt nicht auf die Dauer verheimlicht werden.

Der Saurerwagen, den ich von Simferopol nach Taganrog überführte, hatte unterwegs Grossschaden. Beim E.K. in Zaritzyno wurde festgestellt, dass die Kanäle der kombinierte Cl-Luftdruckbremse an mehreren Stellen gebrochen war. Durch Verbindung und Besichtigung beim H.K.P. Zaritzyno ging es eine Weile gut, bis nach der zweit Kanäle gebrochen wurden, sodass ich

A092586

Appendix 3: The Telegrams of Document 501-PS

Source: U.S. National Archives, rec. no HLSL_NUR_02459004 to 7 (for the Becker document see Appendix 2)



Reichssicherheitshauptamt Berlin, den 22. Juni 1942

II D 3 a B.Nr. 240/42 g. RS

D101

Geheime Reichssache! NÜ 107903

Befördert durch [illegible]

1.) FS

An den Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD Ostland

in R i g a

Betrifft: 5 Wagen

Mit der Überstellung eines 5 t Saurer ist Mitte nächsten Monats zu rechnen. Das Fahrzeug befindet sich zur Instandsetzung und Vornahme kleiner Änderungen z.Zt. beim Reichssicherheitshauptamt. 100 m Schlauch werden mitgegeben.

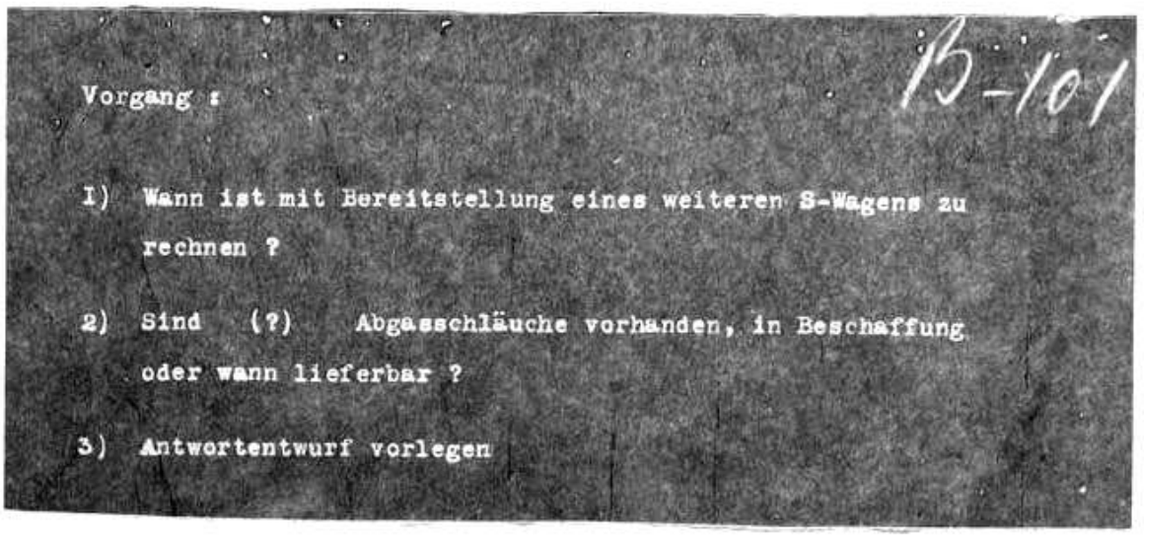
I.A.
(Unterschrift wie Kopf)

2.) Wv. sofort bei II D 3 a (9)

I.A.

II D 3 a (9).

Berlin, den 12.7.1942.


Vorgang :

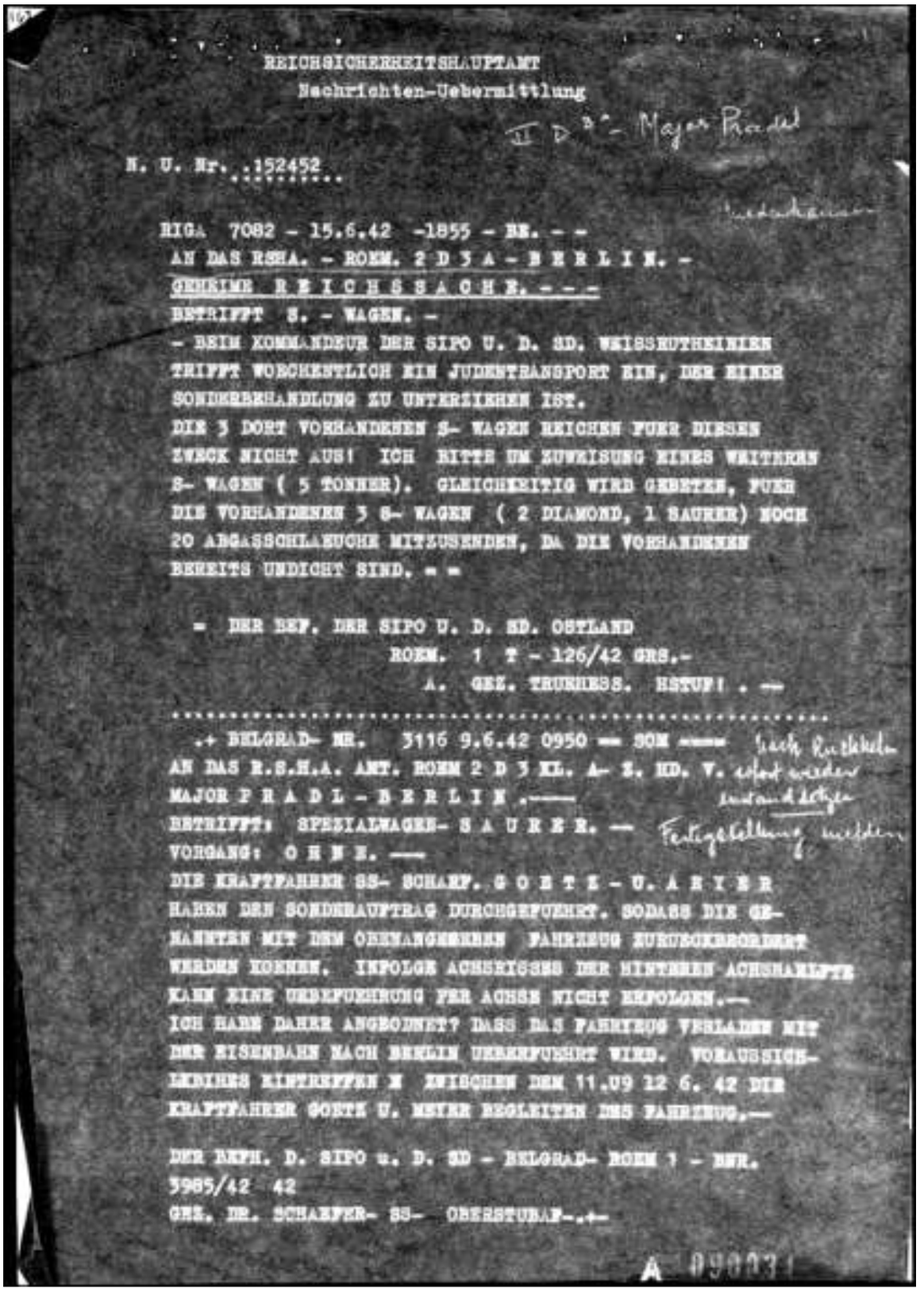
B-101

I) Wann ist mit Bereitstellung eines weiteren S-Wagens zu rechnen ?

2) Sind (?) Abgasschläuche vorhanden, in Beschaffung oder wann lieferbar ?

3) Antwortentwurf vorlegen

22 June 1942 draft for telegram from RSHA, Berlin,
front (previous page) and back



REICHSSICHERHEITSHAUPTAMT
Nachrichten-Uebermittlung

N. U. Nr. 152452

RIGA 7082 - 15.6.42 -1855 - BE. - -
AN DAS RSHA. - ROEM. 2 D 3 A - B E R L I N. -
GEHEIME R E I C H S S A C H E. - - -
BETRIFFT S. - WAGEN. -
- BEIM KOMMANDEUR DER SIPO U. D. SD. WEISSRUTHENIEN
TRIFFT WOECHENTLICH EIN JUDENTRANSPORT EIN, DER EINER
SONDERBEHANDLUNG ZU UNTERZIEHEN IST.
DIE 3 DORT VORHANDENEN S- WAGEN REICHEN FUER DIESEN
ZWECK NICHT AUS! ICH BITTE UM ZUWEISUNG EINES WEITEREN
S- WAGEN (5 TONNER). GLEICHZEITIG WIRD GEBETEN, FUER
DIE VORHANDENEN 3 S- WAGEN (2 DIAMOND, 1 SAURER) NOCH
20 ABGASSCHLAUCHE MITZUSENDEN, DA DIE VORHANDENEN
BEREITS UNDICHT SIND. = =

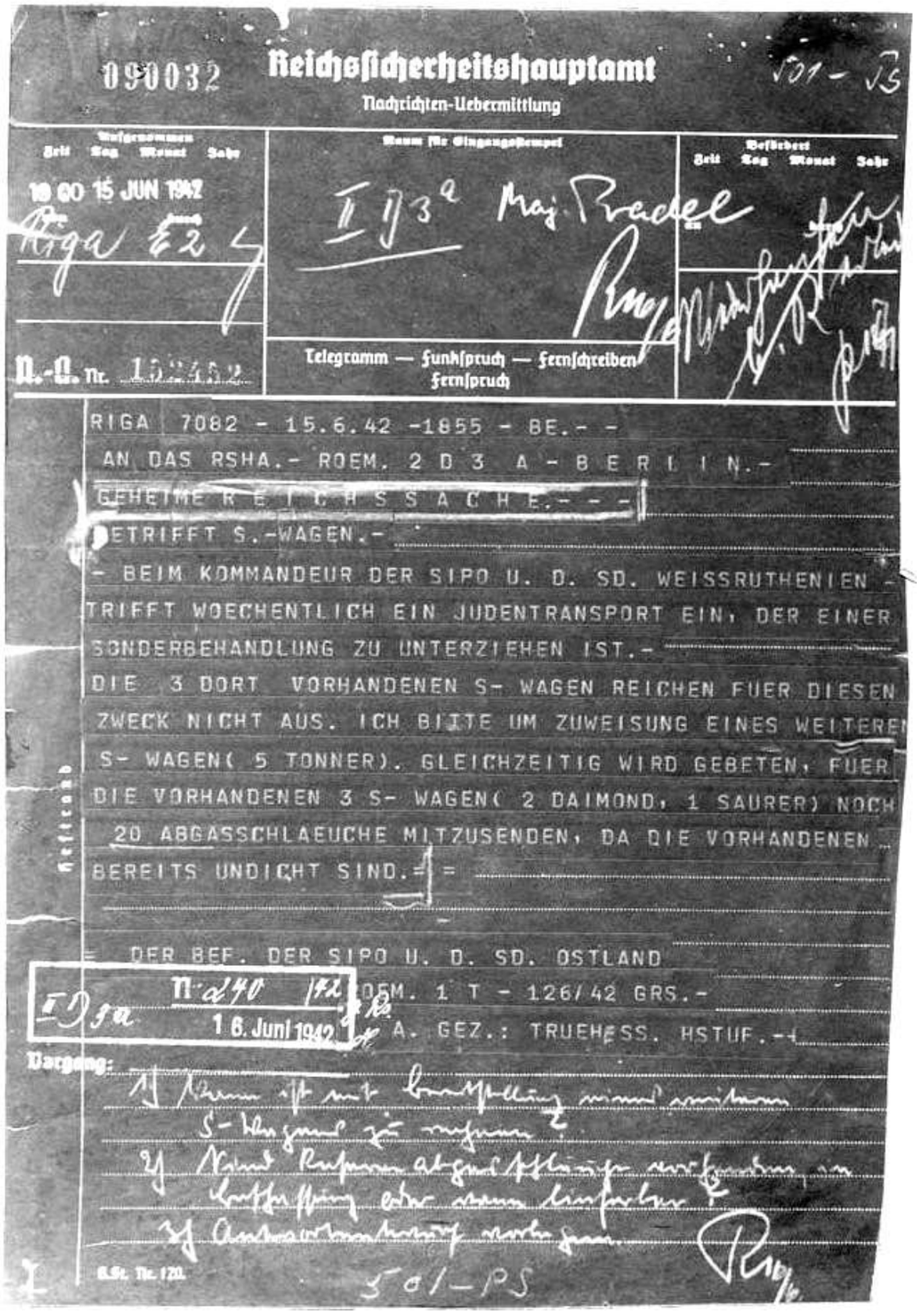
= DER BEF. DER SIPO U. D. SD. OSTLAND
ROEM. 1 T - 126/42 GRS.-
A. GEZ. TRUMMESS. HSTUF! . —

.+ BELGRAD- NR. 3116 9.6.42 0950 = SOM =
AN DAS R.S.H.A. AMT. ROEM 2 D 3 KL. A- Z. HD. V.
MAJOR P R A D L - B E R L I N .—
BETRIFFT: SPEZIALWAGEN- S A U R E R. —
VORGANG: O H N E. —
DIE KRAFTFAHRER SS- SCHARF. G O E T Z - U. A R I E R
HABEN DEN SONDERAUFTRAG DURCHGEFUEHRT. SODASS DIE GE-
NANNTEN MIT DEM OBENANGEFUEHRTEN FAHRZEUG ZURUECKBEORDERT
WERDEN KOENNEN. INFOLGE ACHSBRUCHES DER HINTEREN ACHSHAELFTE
KANN EINE UEBERFUEHRUNG PER ACHSE NICHT ERFOLGEN.—
ICH HABE DAHER ANGEORDNET? DASS DAS FAHRZEUG VERLADEN MIT
DER EISENBAHN NACH BERLIN UEBERFUEHRT WIRD. VORAUSSICH-
LICHES EINTREFFEN X ZWISCHEN DEM 11.09 12 6. 42 DIE
KRAFTFAHRER GOETZ U. MEYER BEGLEITEN DAS FAHRZEUG.—

DER BEFH. D. SIPO u. D. SD - BELGRAD- ROEM 1 - BNR.
3985/42 42
GEZ. DR. SCHAEFER- SS- OBERSTURMF-.+-

A 09033

Summary of telegrams of 9 & 15 June 1942 (version A)



090032 **Reichssicherheitshauptamt** 501-PS

Nachrichten-Uebermittlung

Aufgenommen Zeit Tag Monat Jahr: 10 00 15 JUN 1942 — Riga E 2 4

Raum für Eingangsstempel: II B 3a Maj. Bradel

Befördert Zeit Tag Monat Jahr

D.-U. Nr. 152462

Telegramm — Funkspruch — Fernschreiben — Fernspruch

RIGA 7082 - 15.6.42 -1855 - BE.- -
AN DAS RSHA.- ROEM. 2 D 3 A - B E R L I N.-
GEHEIME R E I C H S S A C H E.- - -
BETRIFFT S.-WAGEN.-
- BEIM KOMMANDEUR DER SIPO U. D. SD. WEISSRUTHENIEN -
TRIFFT WOECHENTLICH EIN JUDENTRANSPORT EIN, DER EINER
SONDERBEHANDLUNG ZU UNTERZIEHEN IST.-
DIE 3 DORT VORHANDENEN S- WAGEN REICHEN FUER DIESEN
ZWECK NICHT AUS. ICH BITTE UM ZUWEISUNG EINES WEITEREN
S- WAGEN(5 TONNER). GLEICHZEITIG WIRD GEBETEN, FUER
DIE VORHANDENEN 3 S- WAGEN(2 DAIMOND, 1 SAURER) NOCH
20 ABGASSCHLAEUCHE MITZUSENDEN, DA DIE VORHANDENEN
BEREITS UNDICHT SIND.- =

= DER BEF. DER SIPO U. D. SD. OSTLAND
ROEM. 1 T - 126/42 GRS.-
A. GEZ.: TRUEHESS. HSTUF.-

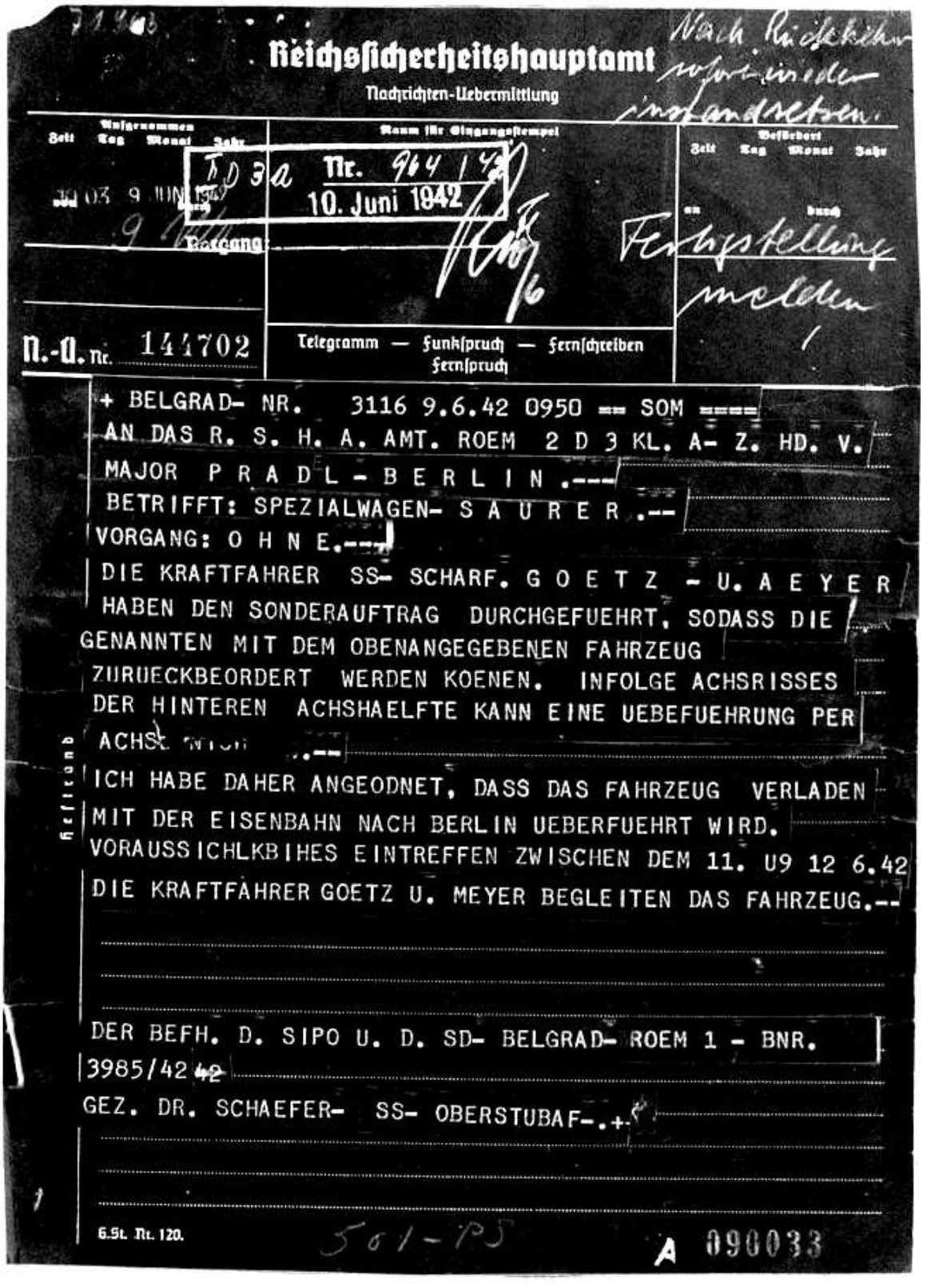
Eingang: II d 40 142 — 16. Juni 1942

Vorgang:
1) [illegible]
2) [illegible]
3) [illegible]

B.St. Nr. 120.

501-PS

Telegram of 15 June 1942 from Riga, version B



Reichssicherheitshauptamt

Nachrichten-Uebermittlung

Nach Rückkehr sofort einreden und anrufen.

Aufgenommen Zeit Tag Monat Jahr

Raum für Eingangsstempel

III D 3a Nr. 964 42

10. Juni 1942

Beförderl Zeit Tag Monat Jahr

an durch

Fernspellung melden

Eingang:

N.-U. Nr. 144702

Telegramm — Funkspruch — Fernschreiben Fernspruch

+ BELGRAD- NR. 3116 9.6.42 0950 == SOM ====
AN DAS R. S. H. A. AMT. ROEM 2 D 3 KL. A- Z. HD. V.
MAJOR P R A D L - B E R L I N .---
BETRIFFT: SPEZIALWAGEN- S A U R E R .--
VORGANG: O H N E.---
DIE KRAFTFAHRER SS- SCHARF. G O E T Z - U. A E Y E R
HABEN DEN SONDERAUFTRAG DURCHGEFUEHRT, SODASS DIE
GENANNTEN MIT DEM OBENANGEGEBENEN FAHRZEUG
ZURUECKBEORDERT WERDEN KOENEN. INFOLGE ACHSRISSES
DER HINTEREN ACHSHAELFTE KANN EINE UEBEFUEHRUNG PER
ACHSE NICHT ..--
ICH HABE DAHER ANGEODNET, DASS DAS FAHRZEUG VERLADEN
MIT DER EISENBAHN NACH BERLIN UEBERFUEHRT WIRD.
VORAUSSICHLKBIHES EINTREFFEN ZWISCHEN DEM 11. U9 12 6.42
DIE KRAFTFAHRER GOETZ U. MEYER BEGLEITEN DAS FAHRZEUG.--

DER BEFH. D. SIPO U. D. SD- BELGRAD- ROEM 1 - BNR.
3985/42 42
GEZ. DR. SCHAEFER- SS- OBERSTUBAF-.+

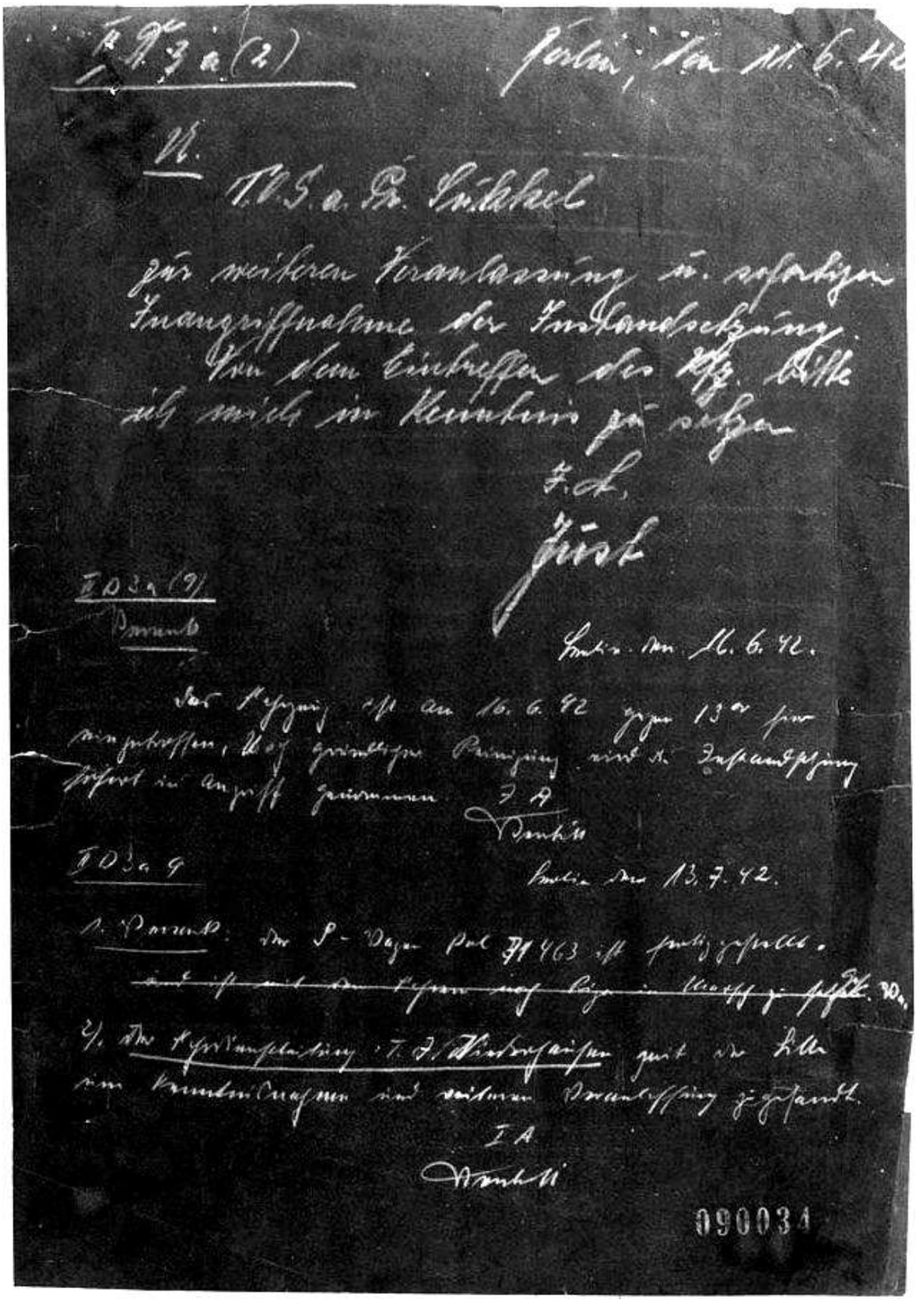
Befehl

6.St. Nr. 120.

501-PS

A 090033

Telegram of 9 June 1942 from Belgrade, version B



Back of Belgrade telegram of 9 June 1942 with handwritten notes

Appendix 4: Dossier R 58/871 fº1, BAK

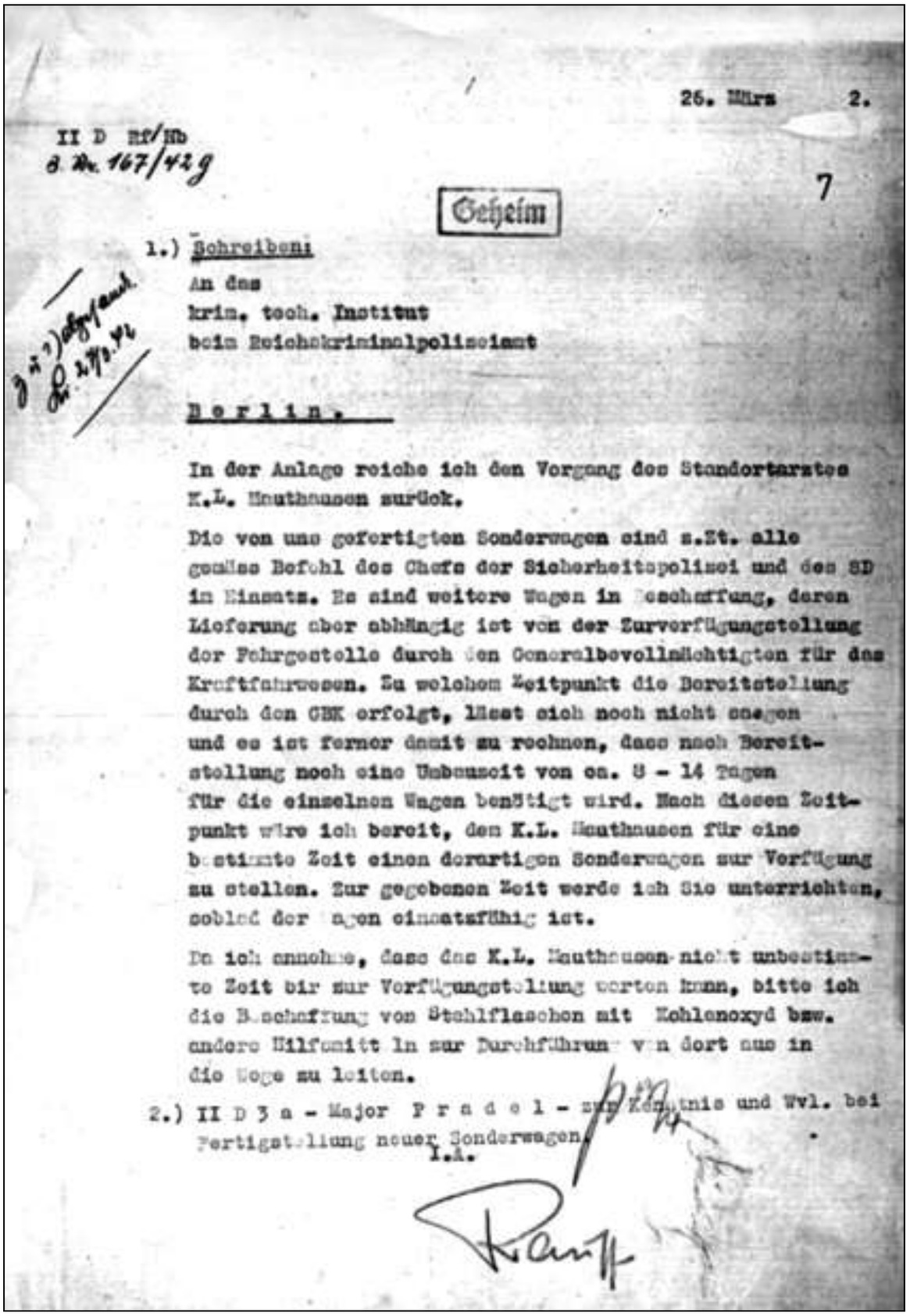
This file contains altogether 22 sheets. The first 21, which are of significance, are reproduced here in chronological order; the 22nd merely contains signatures, initials and illegible handwritten lines in German, which is not relevant for this study.

Considering the decisive role the note of 5 June 1942 has in this context – it is one of the two main pillars of the thesis of the existence of "gas vans," the second being the Becker document – it is appropriate to also reproduce the other three parts of this file which obviously form the basis of this note and which also give us technical information about these unknown special vehicles used by the Germans during the Second World War.

DOCUMENT PAGE
Letter of 26 March [194]2 302
Translation & Remarks 303
Memo of 27 April 1942 302
Translation & Remarks 305
Letter of 30 April 1942 318
Translation & Remarks 320
Letter of 14 May 1942 322
Translation 323
Memo of 5 June 1942 (Just document) 322
Memo and letter of 23 June 1942 329
Translation & Remarks 332
Juxtaposition of Two Documents 334
Letter of 18 September 1942 336
Translation 337
Letter of 24 September 1942 337
Translation 339

With the exception of the note of 5 June 1942 (and maybe the one of 23 June 1942), the content of this file and in particular the correspondence with the Gaubschat company does not contain unequivocal evidence giving rise to the suspicion that this is about murdering people.

Letter of 26 March [194]2



26. März 2.

II D Rf/Hb
B. Nr. 167/42 g

7

Geheim

1.) Schreiben!

An das
krim. tech. Institut
beim Reichskriminalpolizeiamt

Berlin.

In der Anlage reiche ich den Vorgang des Standortarztes K.L. Mauthausen zurück.

Die von uns gefertigten Sonderwagen sind z.Zt. alle gemäss Befehl des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD im Einsatz. Es sind weitere Wagen in Beschaffung, deren Lieferung aber abhängig ist von der Zurverfügungstellung der Fahrgestelle durch den Generalbevollmächtigten für das Kraftfahrwesen. Zu welchem Zeitpunkt die Bereitstellung durch den GBK erfolgt, lässt sich noch nicht sagen und es ist ferner damit zu rechnen, dass nach Bereitstellung noch eine Umbauzeit von ca. 8 - 14 Tagen für die einzelnen Wagen benötigt wird. Nach diesem Zeitpunkt wäre ich bereit, dem K.L. Mauthausen für eine bestimmte Zeit einen derartigen Sonderwagen zur Verfügung zu stellen. Zur gegebenen Zeit werde ich Sie unterrichten, sobald der Wagen einsatzfähig ist.

Da ich annehme, dass das K.L. Mauthausen nicht unbestimmte Zeit bis zur Verfügungstellung warten kann, bitte ich die Beschaffung von Stahlflaschen mit Kohlenoxyd bzw. andere Hilfsmittel zur Durchführung von dort aus in die Wege zu leiten.

2.) II D 3 a - Major P r a d e l - zur Kenntnis und Wvl. bei Fertigstellung neuer Sonderwagen.

I.A.

Translation & Remarks

26 March 2.

II D Rf/HB
B. Nr. 167/42g

1. Letter:
   To the
   Institute for Crim. Tech.
   At the Imperial Police Office for Investigations

   B e r l i n.

   Attached I return the file of the garrison physician concentration camp Mauthausen.
   The special vehicles manufactured by us are currently all in use according to the order of the head of the Security Police and the SD. More vehicles are on order, whose delivery, however, depend on the availability of the chassis by the Plenipotentiary [GBK] of motor vehicles. It is not yet known when the allocation will be made by the GBK, and it has to be reckoned that after the allocation an additional time for conversion of ca. 8 to 14 days will be needed for the individual vehicles. After this point in time I would be prepared to place such a special vehicle at the disposal of the concentration camp Mauthausen for a certain period of time. At a given time I will apprise you, as soon as the vehicle can be deployed.

   Since I assume that the concentration camp Mauthausen cannot wait for an undetermined amount of time for the allocation, I ask to initiate from there the acquisition of steel bottles with carbon oxide or other auxiliary agents for the implementation.

2. II D 3 A – Major P r a d e l – for information and resubmission on completion of new special vehicles.

P.P.

(signed Rauff)

REMARKS: Formally seen, almost everything about this letter is wrong:

a. The name of the sending authority (RSHA) is not given.
b. The name of the sending office is incomplete: Instead of “II D 3,” it only states “II D.”

c. Giving initials of the author (Rf) and of the secretary (Hb) was not practiced on any of the other RSHA letters in this file.
d. The letter's serial no. "167/42g" is handwritten, not typed.
e. No location (Berlin) is given
f. The year is only typed as "2" instead of "1942"
g. The paragraph starting with "2.)" was typed (squeezed in over the "I.A." line) after the paper had been removed from the machine, resulting in it being shifted and slightly rotated.
h. Since it does not belong to the other documents of this file R 58/871 f°1, somebody must have put it there on purpose.
i. Friedrich Pradel was not a major but rather an SS-*Hauptsturmführer* (equivalent to a captain).

I leave it up to the reader to decide whether that has any relevance.

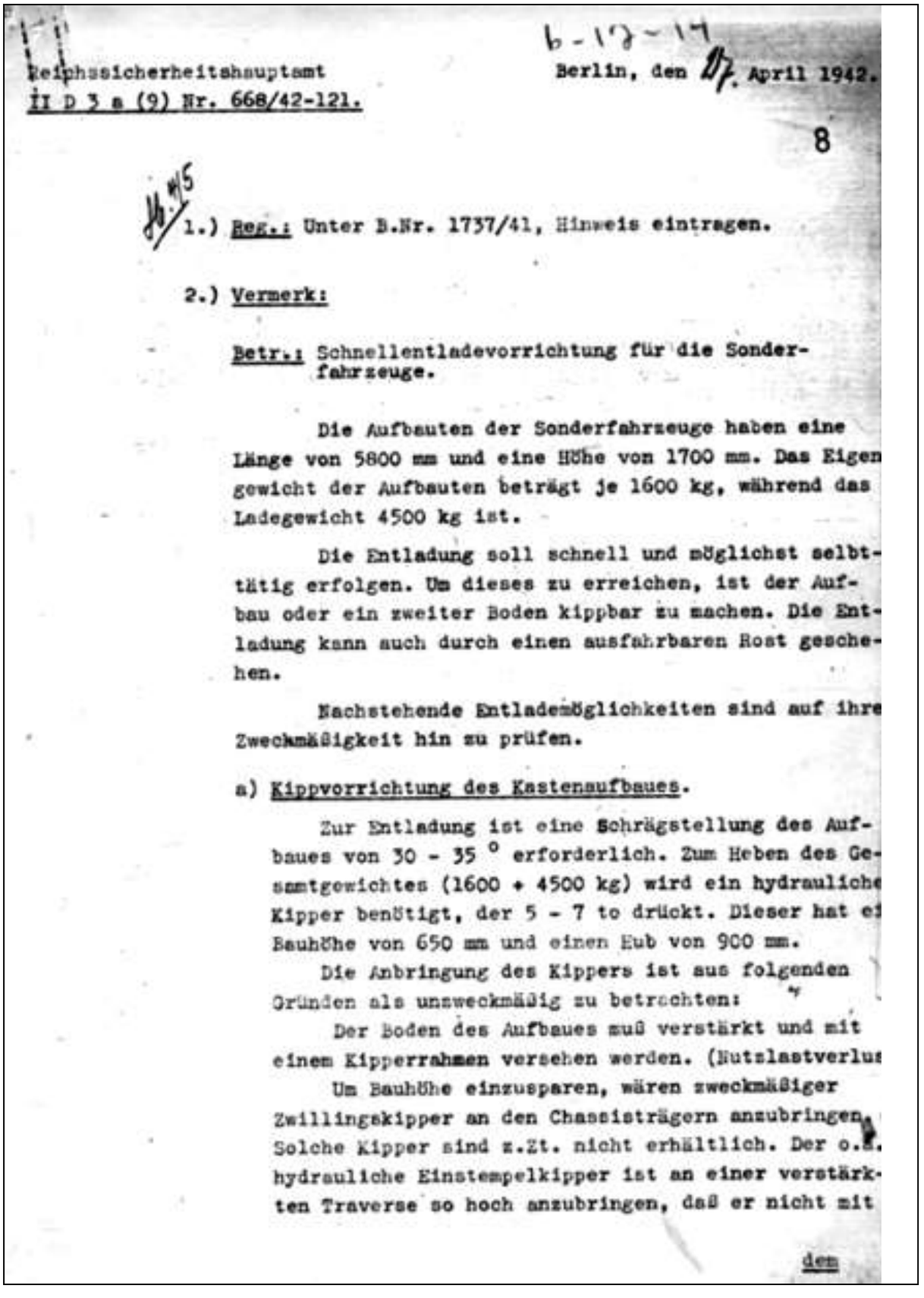
The request allegedly came from the Mauthausen garrison physician. Considering that the Saurer special vehicles with their Diesel engines and low cargo boxes could not have served as mobile homicidal gas chambers, it would be interesting to know what the original request was for – if it ever existed.

Using "steel bottles with carbon [mon]oxide or other means" instead of these non-homicidal special vehicles is a strong indicator that the author forced a link between two items which cannot, in reality, have existed.

Assuming for the sake of the argument that the Mauthausen Camp authorities really wanted to urgently murder people with carbon monoxide, any wood gas generator in their motor pool would have done the trick. Why request some rare, secret device from an Institute in Berlin? How could they have known about this secret device in the first place? And why did Rauff not complain that his State Secret was being bandied about by just about anyone?

I posit that this document was created for the Nuremberg trial in order to get some documentary "corroboration" for the – obviously false – gas van claims made by Hans Maršálek (see Chapter 3.5.7.).

Memo of 27 April 1942



Reichssicherheitshauptamt
II D 3 a (9) Nr. 668/42-121.

Berlin, den 27. April 1942.

8

1.) Reg.: Unter B.Nr. 1737/41, Hinweis eintragen.

2.) Vermerk:

Betr.: Schnellentladevorrichtung für die Sonderfahrzeuge.

Die Aufbauten der Sonderfahrzeuge haben eine Länge von 5800 mm und eine Höhe von 1700 mm. Das Eigengewicht der Aufbauten beträgt je 1600 kg, während das Ladegewicht 4500 kg ist.

Die Entladung soll schnell und möglichst selbsttätig erfolgen. Um dieses zu erreichen, ist der Aufbau oder ein zweiter Boden kippbar zu machen. Die Entladung kann auch durch einen ausfahrbaren Rost geschehen.

Nachstehende Entlademöglichkeiten sind auf ihre Zweckmäßigkeit hin zu prüfen.

a) Kippvorrichtung des Kastenaufbaues.

Zur Entladung ist eine Schrägstellung des Aufbaues von 30 - 35 ° erforderlich. Zum Heben des Gesamtgewichtes (1600 + 4500 kg) wird ein hydraulicher Kipper benötigt, der 5 - 7 to drückt. Dieser hat eine Bauhöhe von 650 mm und einen Hub von 900 mm.

Die Anbringung des Kippers ist aus folgenden Gründen als unzweckmäßig zu betrachten:

Der Boden des Aufbaues muß verstärkt und mit einem Kipperrahmen versehen werden. (Nutzlastverlust

Um Bauhöhe einzusparen, wären zweckmäßiger Zwillingskipper an den Chassisträgern anzubringen. Solche Kipper sind z.Zt. nicht erhältlich. Der o.e. hydraulische Einstempelkipper ist an einer verstärkten Traverse so hoch anzubringen, daß er nicht mit

den

dem schwingenden Kardanrohr in Berührung kommt. Durch diese Anbringung und durch die Einfügung des Kipprahmens wird der Aufbau um mindestens 200 mm gehoben. Eine Höherstellung des Fahrzeugaufbaues ist aber unzulässig, weil damit das Eisenbahnladeprofil überschritten wird; es sei denn, man verkleinert den Innenraum. Der Innenraum verliert aber schon durch die Verstärkung des Bodens etwa 150 mm an lichter Höhe.

Die Lieferzeit für die Einstempelkipper ist ½ bis 1 Jahr.

Für die konstruktive Ausführung, die starke Abweichungen von der schon früher festgelegten Konstruktion aufweisen, stehen der Fa. Gaubschat z.Zt. keine Kräfte zur Verfügung.

Die Ausführung der Kippvorrichtung verzögert die Fertigstellung der Fahrzeuge um weitere sechs Wochen.

An Nutzlastgewicht verliert jedes Fahrzeug ca. 400 kg.

Der Mehrpreis beträgt bei jedem Fahrzeug RM 1000.-- bis 1200.--.

b) <u>Kippbarmachung des Bodenrostes</u>.

Der Rost (zweiter Boden) muß für eine Belastung von 4 ½ to besonders stark gebaut sein. Damit wird der Aufbau 150 mm an Innenhöhe verlieren. Bei Fertigung eines durchgehenden Rostes sind auch die vorstehenden Radkästen zu überdecken. Dies bedingt einen weiteren Verlust an Innenhöhe.

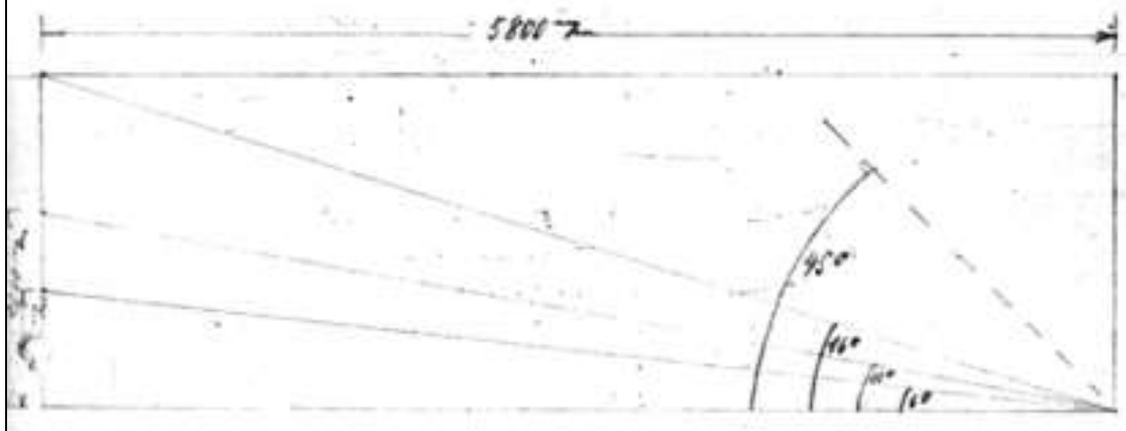
Ferner wird der durch den Boden eingeführte Kipper in Bezug auf die Abdichtung der Einführungsstelle Schwierigkeiten bereiten. Es ist zu beachten, daß der Kipperstempel nicht gerade hebt. Er muß beim Heben

<u>des</u>

- 2 -

9

des zweiten Bodens mitschwenken können.



Weiter ist das Abrutschen des Ladegutes ein Problem. Für ein fließendes Rutschen wird eine Schrägstellung des Bodens von 30 bis 35 ° benötigt. Die Skizze veranschaulicht, daß selbst dann, wenn der Boden am losen Ende bis unter das Wagendach angehoben wird, immer nur eine Schrägstellung von 16 ° erreicht wird. Praktisch ist dieser Kippgrad nicht zu erreichen, weil am oberen Ende der Ladefläche ein Einpressen der Ladelast erfolgen würde. Die größte Hubhöhe, an der Kopfwand gemessen, dürfte 1000 mm betragen. Bei dieser Höhe ist der Steigungswinkel des Bodens nur 10°.

Ferner sind Nutzlast- und Zeitverlust (für Anfertigung) zu berücksichtigen.

Der Mehrpreis wird, wie bei der Ausführung zu a), etwa 1000.-- bis 1200.-- RM betragen.

Vorstehende Ausführung ist nicht zweckmäßig.

c) Aus- und einfahrbarer Rost (Vorschlag).

Der Aufbau erhält einen ~~leichten~~ Bodenrost, der auf kleinen Rädern ausfahrbar gemacht wird. Er ist in 10 - 12 Querfelder zu unterteilen. Hierdurch wird er hand-

licher. Zudem wird ein Abkippen der einzelnen Felder beim Verlassen des Wagens möglich. Die Räder sind in U-Eisenlaufschienen zu führen. Ferner hat der Rost eine seitliche U-Eisenführung zu erhalten. Die Rostfelder sind durch Diagonalverspannungen gegen Verecken zu sichern.

Um eine möglichst große Bodenfläche fahrbar zu machen, ist der Rost so hoch zu legen, daß die Radkästen mit überdeckt werden. Hierdurch gehen (gegenüber den Ausführungen zu a) und b)) nur etwa 75 mm an Innenraumhöhe verloren. Demgegenüber steht (nun) der Vorteil, daß man den Rost in der Breite der Tür fertigen kann. Die nicht vom Rost verdeckten schmalen (ca. 250 mm) Längsstreifen sind bis zur Höhe des Rostes auszufüllen und leicht zur Wagenmitte zu neigen. Dieser Holzaufbau ist mit den Wänden durchgehend mit glattem Blech zu verkleiden. Die vorstehenden Rückwandteile sind von den Türpfosten nach den Seitenwänden durch Bleche abzuschrägen. Die Abschrägung soll ein Anecken der Last verhindern. Für die Ausfahrung des Rostes ist unter dem hinteren Ende des Wagens eine Drahtseilwinde (Spill) anzubringen. Das Drahtseil ist geschert unter dem Rostteil anzubringen, der an der Führerhausrückwand liegt. Das andere Ende des Seiles ist mit einem Ring zu versehen und innen, in der Nähe der Tür, abnehmbar anzubringen. Nach Öffnen der Tür ist das Seil mit dem Ring an die Windentrommel anzuhängen. Die Trennung zwischen Seil und Trommel ist erforderlich, um mit Bezug auf die notwendige Seildurchführung eine Undichtigkeit des Wagenaufbaues auszuschließen.

Beim Anziehen der Seilwinde (Handbetrieb) nimmt der griffige Rost auch die Last mit, die auf den verblechten schmalen Längsstreifen ruht. Dies geschieht umsomehr, als die Längsstreifen zum Rost geneigt sind. Damit das Ladegut nicht über den letzten Rost zur

Führer-

10

Führerhaus-Rückwand fällt, ist dieser mit einem angewinkelten Gitterwerk von 3 - 400 mm Höhe zu versehen.

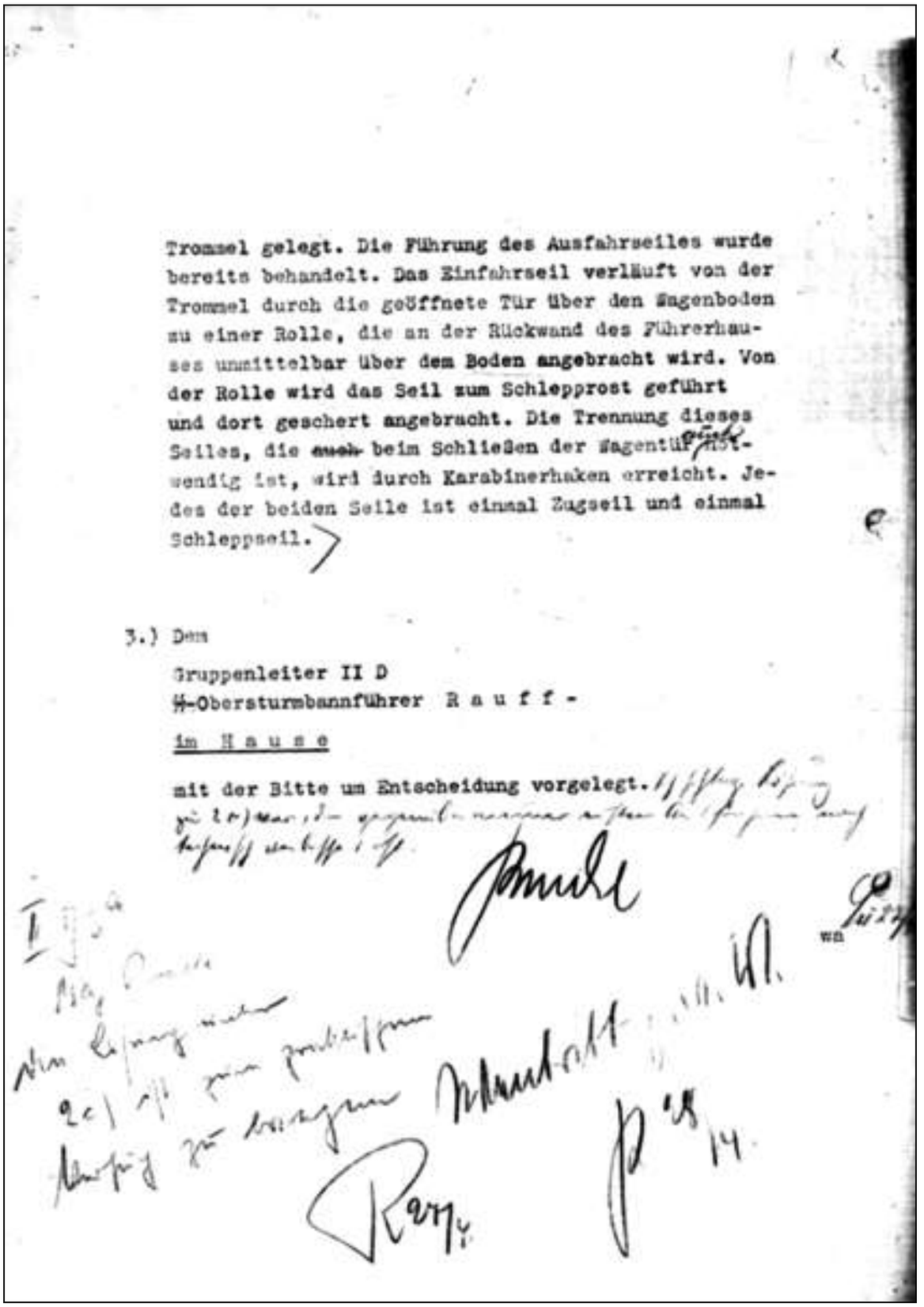
Die Räderlaufschienen und die seitlichen Führungsschienen sind so zu verlegen, daß sie von den Radkästen an zum Wagenende Gefälle haben. Die seitlich angebrachten U-Eisen-Schienen sind an ihrem Ende in halber Rostbreite oben offen zu halten. Dadurch wird ein Abkippen des über das Wagenende hinaus ausgefahrenen Rostfeldes möglich.

Um zu verhindern, daß der Rost mit der Last abfällt und sich gegebenenfalls unter sie legt, sind die Rostfelder scharnierartig miteinander zu verbinden. (Türangel). Der ganze Rost stellt dann den Teil eines endlosen Bandes dar. Trotzdem lassen sich die Felder leicht aushaken.

Das jeweils freigewordene Rostfeld ist unter den Wagen zu biegen, damit die anderen Felder folgen können. Liegt das Ladegut gegen die bereits ausgefahrenen Rostfelder, so sind diese durch Anfahren des Wagens frei zu machen.

Der letzte Rost ist seitlich mit Zapfen zu versehen. Die Zapfen sollen in zwei Gabelführungen eingleiten, sobald dieser Rost den Wagen verläßt. Hierdurch wird erreicht, daß dieser Rost nicht abfallen kann. Er darf nicht abfallen, weil das Seil an ihm befestigt ist, und weil er beim Einfahren des Rostes die anderen Felder hinter sich herziehen soll. Unterbleibt diese Auffangvorrichtung, so ist man genötigt, den Rost auseinander zu nehmen und die Felder einzeln wieder in die Schienen einzufahren. Sonst soll der Rost mit der Seilwinde wieder eingefahren werden.

(In diesem Falle erhält die Seilwinde 2 Drahtseile. Das Seil für das Ausfahren wird beispielsweise rechts und das für das spätere Einfahren links an die



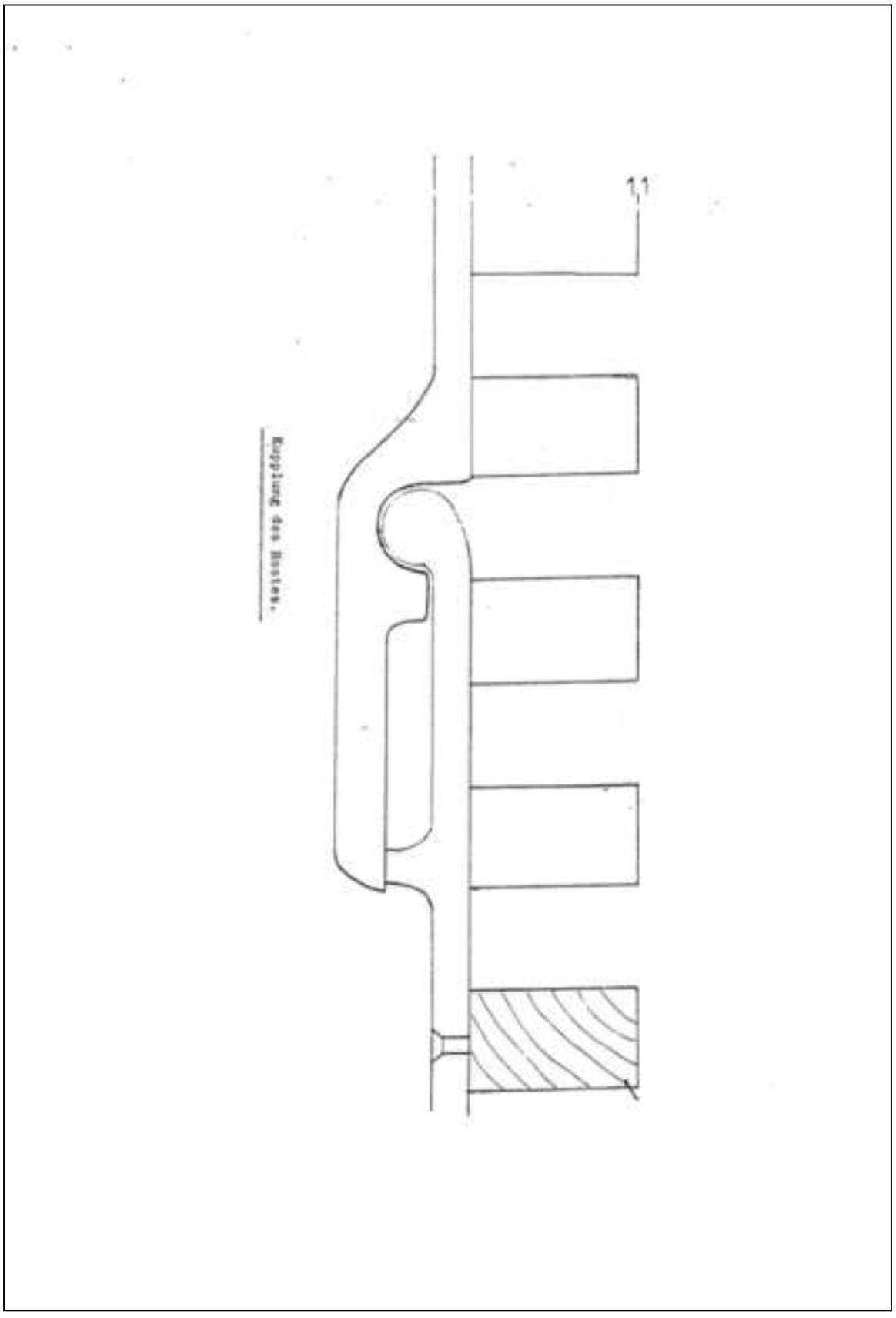
Trommel gelegt. Die Führung des Ausfahrseiles wurde bereits behandelt. Das Einfahrseil verläuft von der Trommel durch die geöffnete Tür über den Wagenboden zu einer Rolle, die an der Rückwand des Führerhauses unmittelbar über dem Boden angebracht wird. Von der Rolle wird das Seil zum Schlepprost geführt und dort geschert angebracht. Die Trennung dieses Seiles, die ~~auch~~ beim Schließen der Wagentür notwendig ist, wird durch Karabinerhaken erreicht. Jedes der beiden Seile ist einmal Zugseil und einmal Schleppseil.

3.) Dem

Gruppenleiter II D
~~H~~-Obersturmbannführer R a u f f -

im H a u s e

mit der Bitte um Entscheidung vorgelegt.


11
Kupplung des Hosten.

Translation & Remarks

Imperial Security Main Office Berlin, the 27th of April 1942.
II D 3 a (9) Bo. 668/42-121.

1.) Reg.[istration]: under B.No. 1737/41, enter remark.

2.) Note:

Re.: Fast unloading device for the special vehicles.

The special vehicle's coachworks have a length of 5800 mm and a height of 1700mm. The net weight of the coachworks is 1600 kg each, while the loading weight is 4500 kg.

Unloading is said to occur fast and as automatically as possible. In order to achieve this, the coachwork or a second floor is to be made tiltable. Unloading may also be achieved by means of an extractable grate.

The below unloading options are to be assessed as to their functionality.

a) Tilting mechanism for coachwork

For unloading the coachwork needs to be tilted by 30 – 35°. A hydraulic tipper with 5 – 7 tons capacity is needed to lift the gross weight (1600 + 4500 kg). It has a construction height of 650 mm and a lifting height of 900 mm.

Mounting a tipper ought to be considered as inexpedient for the following reasons:

The floor of the coachwork needs to be reinforced and equipped with a tipper frame (loss of payload).

In order to save construction height, it would be more expedient to mount twin tippers at the chassis girders. Such tippers are currently unavailable. The hydraulic single pillar tipper mentioned above has to be mounted on the reinforced traverse so high that it does not get in contact with the vibrating drive shaft. Due to this mounting and due to adding the tipper frame, the coachwork will be lifted by at least 200 mm. However, lifting the vehicle coachwork is impermissible, because this would exceed the railroad loading profile; except the interior space is reduced [in height]. But the interior already loses 150 mm in headroom due to the reinforcement of the floor.

Delivery time for the one pillar tippers is ½ to 1 year.

For implementing the design, which deviates strongly from the design defined earlier, the Gaubschat Company does not currently have the workforce.

Implementing the tipper delays the completion of the vehicles by another six weeks.

Each vehicle loses a payload of ca. 400 kg.

The surcharge for each vehicle is RM 1000.- to 1200.-.

b) Making for floor grate tiltable

The grate (second floor) has to be constructed particularly sturdy for a load of 4 ½ tons. Thereby the coachwork loses 150 mm of internal height. When constructing a continuous grate, the wheel cases have to be covered as well. This causes further loss of headroom.

Furthermore, the tipper introduced through the floor will cause difficulties with regards to sealing the introduction site. Note that the tipper pillar does not lift evenly. It has to be able to tilt together with the second floor.

Moreover, slipping of the load is a problem. For a flowing slide the floor has to have an inclination of 30 to 35°. The drawing illustrates that, even if the floor is lifted at the loose end up to the box ceiling, only an angle of 16° can be reached. In practice this tilt angle cannot be reached, because the load would be squeezed at the upper end of the loading surface. The highest lifting height, measured at the head wall, is probably 1000 mm. At this height the inclination of the floor would be merely 10°.

Moreover, the loss of payload and time (for production) has to be considered.

As in design a), the surcharge is some 1000.- to 1200.- RM.

The above design is not expedient.

c) Ex- and retractable grate (suggestion).

The coachwork obtains a ~~lightweight~~ floor grate, which can be extracted on little wheels. It is to be subdivided into 10 – 12 transversal sections. This makes it easier to handle. In addition, it enables each section to tip down on exiting the vehicle. The wheels are to be guided in iron U-shaped rails. Furthermore, the grate has to obtain a lateral iron U-shaped guide rail. The grate sections are to be secured against canting by means of diagonal braces.

In order to make as large a floor surface extractable as possible, the grate is to be mounted sufficiently high to cover the wheel cases. Hence only some 75 mm in internal height are lost (in contrast to the designs in a) and b)). In contrast to this is the advantage that the grate can be made as wide as the door. The narrow lateral ledges not covered by the grate (ca. 250 mm) are to be filled up to the height of the grate and to be sloped toward the center of the vehicle. Together with the walls, this wooden structure is to be covered with smooth sheet metal. The protruding parts of the rear wall are to be beveled with sheet metal from the door frame to the side walls. This beveling is supposed to prevent a jamming of the load. For extracting the grate, a cable winch (Spill) is to be mounted underneath the rear end of the vehicle. The cable is to be attached in a sheared way to the grate section located at the rear wall of the driver's cabin. The other end of the cable sports a ring and is to be attached in a removable way on the inside, close to the door. After opening the door the cable is to be attached to the winch drum using the ring. The separation between cable and winch is necessary in order to prevent a leakage of the coachwork with regards to the needed feedthrough of the cable.

When tightening the winch (manually), the non-slip grate also pulls along the load lying on the sheet metal covered lateral ledges. This all the more so as the lateral ledges slope toward the grate. In order that the load does not fall over the last grate [section] toward the rear wall of the driver's cabin, it is to be equipped with an angled gridwork of 3 to 400 mm height.

The wheel-guide rails and the lateral guide rails are to be mounted in such a way that they slant downward from the wheel cases toward the vehicle's end. The lateral U-shaped iron rails are to be left open at the top at their end for half a grate section width. This enables the grate section moving out beyond the end of the vehicle to tip down.

In order to prevent that the grate falls down with the load and comes to rest beneath it, the grate sections are to be attached to one another in a hinge-like manner (door hinge). The entire grate is then a part of an endless belt. Nevertheless, the sections can be detached easily.

Each extracted grate section is to be bent beneath the vehicle so that subsequent sections can follow. If the load rests against the already extracted sections, these are to be cleared by moving the vehicle.

The last section is to be equipped with lateral pivots. The pivots are to glide into a forked track as soon as this section exits the vehicle.

This prevents this section from falling out. It must not fall out, because the cable is attached to it and because it has to pull the other sections along when the grate is being retracted. If this catching mechanism is omitted, one is forced to disassemble the grate and to reinsert the sections individually into the rail. Otherwise, the grate will be retracted by the cable winch.

In this case the cable winch obtains 2 cables. The cable for extraction, for instance, is threaded clockwise and the one for the later retraction counterclockwise around the drum. The threading of the extraction cable has already been dealt with. The retraction cable runs from the drum through the open door along the vehicle's floor to a roller attached to the rear wall of the driver's cabin right above the floor. From the roller the cable is brought to the drag section and attached in a sheared manner. Detaching this cable, which also is necessary when closing the door, is achieved by means of a snap hook. Each of the cables is either a tow or a drag cable.

3.) To the

Group Leader II D
SS-Obersturmbannführer R a u f f –
in this house
presented with the request for a decision

[caption of illustration:] coupling of grate [section]

REMARKS: This text does not give the impression that it was authored by a technician; the terminology is naïve and the explanations rather incoherent. A German correspondent confirmed that this memo contains nonsensical items and uses uncommon terms. The description of the device listed under c), which is said to have been realized, is unclear; any reference to a guide roller at the vehicle's rear end is missing, whose installation would have been indispensable, since the winch was beneath the vehicle.

I have prepared a drawing about this device (see Illustration 22, p. 317), which is based on the information contained in the memo of 27 April 1942 as well as the confirmation letter of 30 April 1942. It shows the version which was eventually accepted according to these documents: A retractable floor grate. That the cable could be detached from the winch in order to avoid leakages of the cargo box is an indication

that even at this state of planning the cargo box was designed to be hermetically sealed, which could not have been accomplished with a cable permanently affixed to the winch beneath the car. This is contradicted, however, by the fact that already at that time the cargo box had openings in its doors covered with "sliders," which according to the letter of 23 June 1942 were to be replaced with openings in the side walls with hinged lids (see p. 333). Hence the cargo box has never been without "leakage."

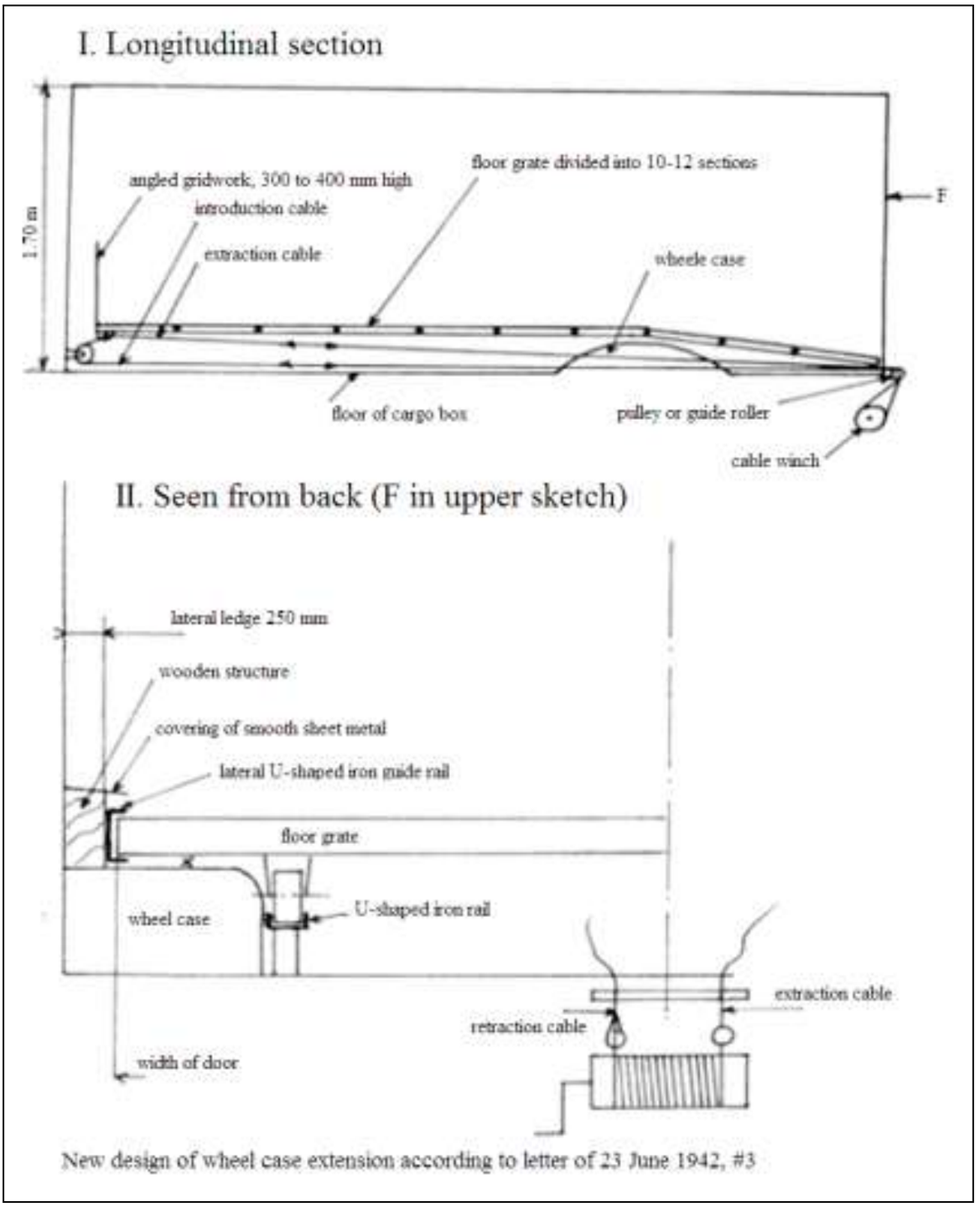
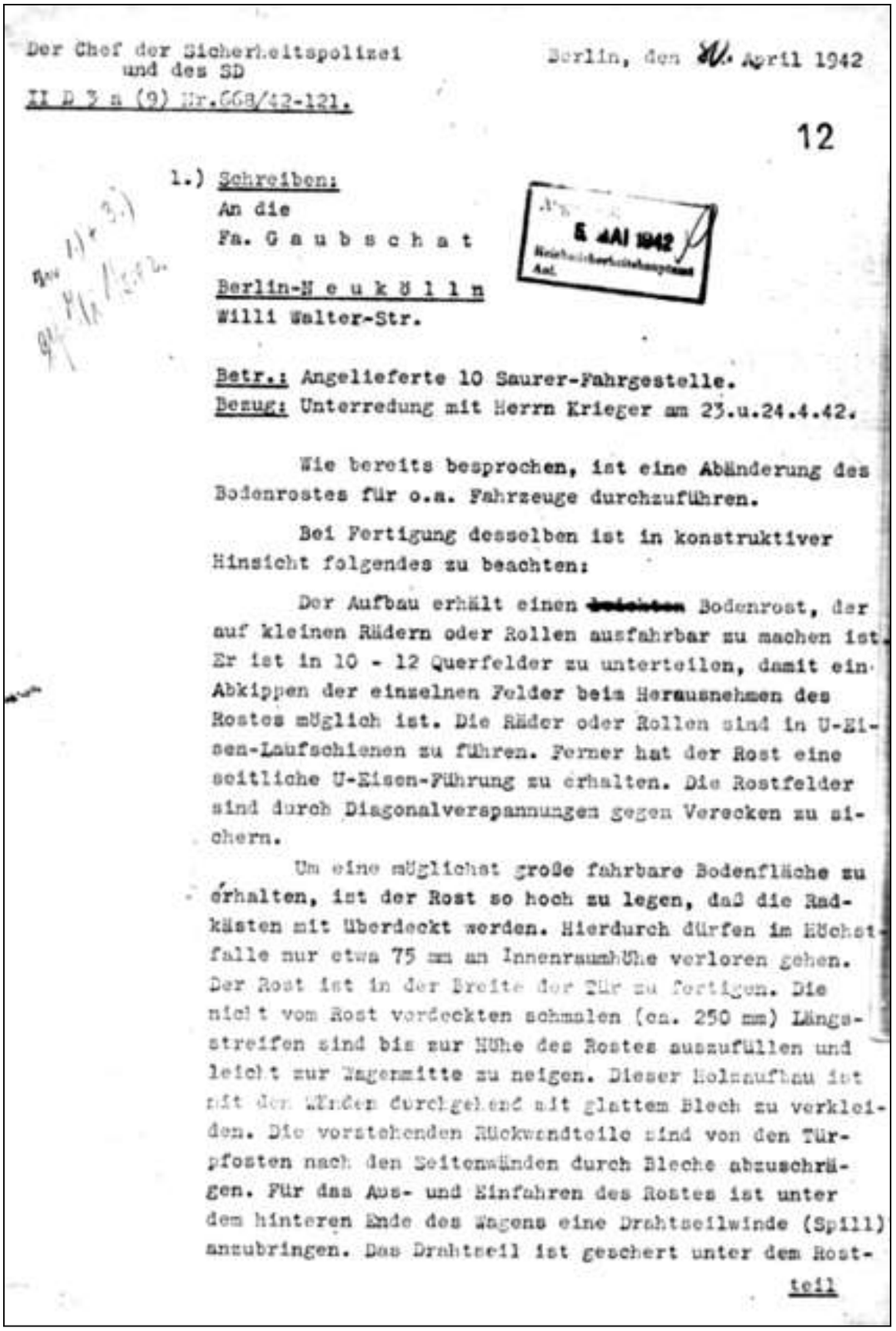


Illustration 22: Retractable grate for RSHA special vehicle according to suggestion c) of the memo of 27 April 1942; drawing by P. Marais.

Letter of 30 April 1942



Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei
und des SD
II B 3 a (9) Nr.668/42-121.

Berlin, den 30. April 1942

12

1.) Schreiben:
An die
Fa. G a u b s c h a t

Berlin-W e u k ö l l n
Willi Walter-Str.

30 APR 1942
Reichssicherheitshauptamt
Amt

Betr.: Angelieferte 10 Saurer-Fahrgestelle.
Bezug: Unterredung mit Herrn Krieger am 23.u.24.4.42.

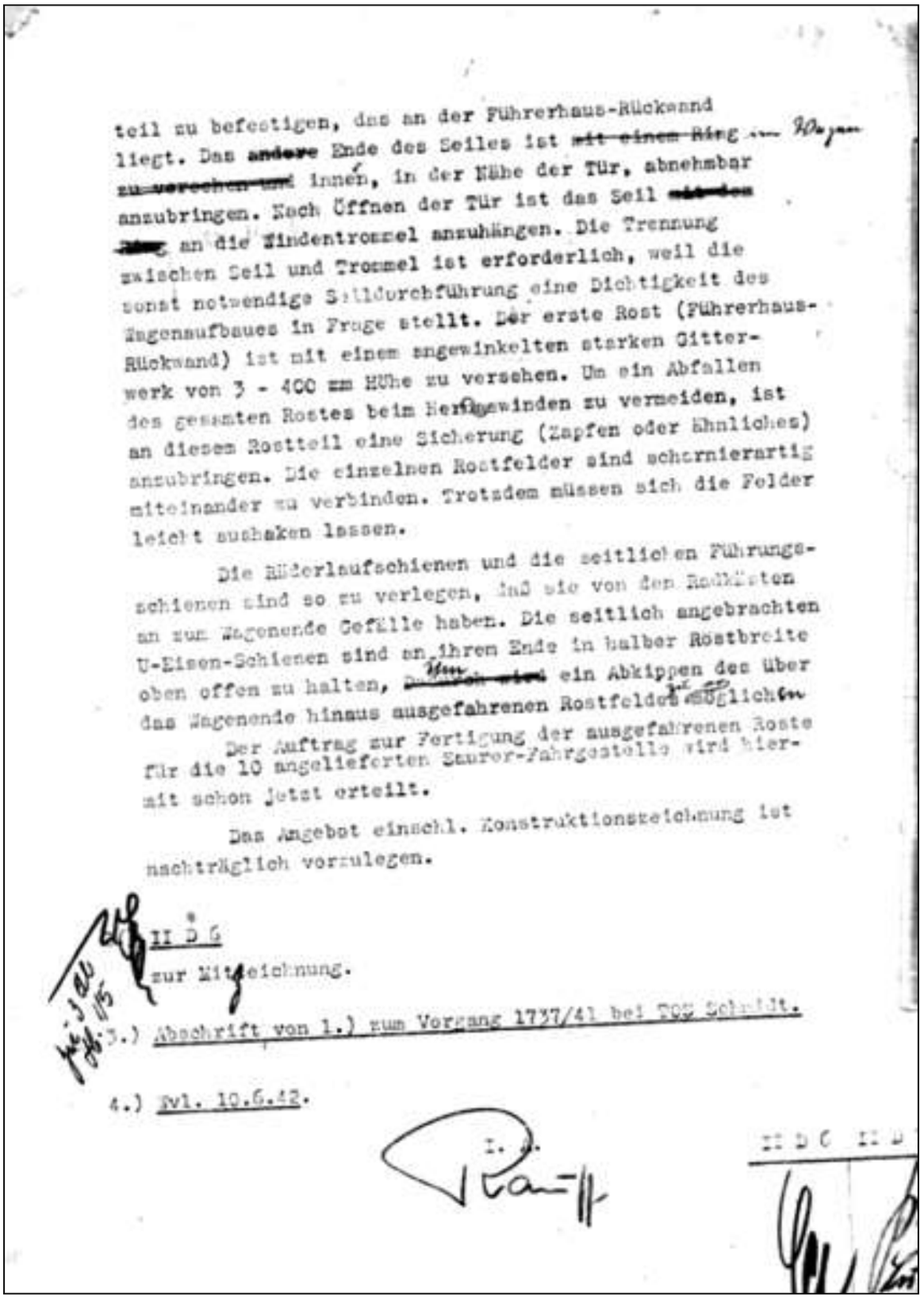
Wie bereits besprochen, ist eine Abänderung des Bodenrostes für o.a. Fahrzeuge durchzuführen.

Bei Fertigung desselben ist in konstruktiver Hinsicht folgendes zu beachten:

Der Aufbau erhält einen ~~doppelten~~ Bodenrost, der auf kleinen Rädern oder Rollen ausfahrbar zu machen ist. Er ist in 10 - 12 Querfelder zu unterteilen, damit ein Abkippen der einzelnen Felder beim Herausnehmen des Rostes möglich ist. Die Räder oder Rollen sind in U-Eisen-Laufschienen zu führen. Ferner hat der Rost eine seitliche U-Eisen-Führung zu erhalten. Die Rostfelder sind durch Diagonalverspannungen gegen Verecken zu sichern.

Um eine möglichst große fahrbare Bodenfläche zu erhalten, ist der Rost so hoch zu legen, daß die Radkästen mit überdeckt werden. Hierdurch dürfen im Höchstfalle nur etwa 75 mm an Innenraumhöhe verloren gehen. Der Rost ist in der Breite der Tür zu fertigen. Die nicht vom Rost verdeckten schmalen (ca. 250 mm) Längsstreifen sind bis zur Höhe des Rostes auszufüllen und leicht zur Wagenmitte zu neigen. Dieser Holzaufbau ist mit den Wänden durchgehend mit glattem Blech zu verkleiden. Die vorstehenden Rückwandteile sind von den Türpfosten nach den Seitenwänden durch Bleche abzuschrägen. Für das Aus- und Einfahren des Rostes ist unter dem hinteren Ende des Wagens eine Drahtseilwinde (Spill) anzubringen. Das Drahtseil ist gesichert unter dem Rost-

teil



teil zu befestigen, das an der Führerhaus-Rückwand liegt. Das andere Ende des Seiles ist ~~mit einem Ring~~ ... Haken ~~zu versehen und~~ innen, in der Nähe der Tür, abnehmbar anzubringen. Nach Öffnen der Tür ist das Seil ~~abzuziehen~~ an die Windentrommel anzuhängen. Die Trennung zwischen Seil und Trommel ist erforderlich, weil die sonst notwendige Seildurchführung eine Dichtigkeit des Wagenaufbaues in Frage stellt. Der erste Rost (Führerhaus-Rückwand) ist mit einem angewinkelten starken Gitterwerk von 3 - 400 mm Höhe zu versehen. Um ein Abfallen des gesamten Rostes beim Herausgewinden zu vermeiden, ist an diesem Rostteil eine Sicherung (Zapfen oder ähnliches) anzubringen. Die einzelnen Rostfelder sind scharnierartig miteinander zu verbinden. Trotzdem müssen sich die Felder leicht aushaken lassen.

Die Rollerlaufschienen und die seitlichen Führungsschienen sind so zu verlegen, daß sie von den Radkästen an zum Wagenende Gefälle haben. Die seitlich angebrachten U-Eisen-Schienen sind an ihrem Ende in halber Rostbreite oben offen zu halten, ~~damit sie~~ ein Abkippen des über das Wagenende hinaus ausgefahrenen Rostfeldes ~~möglich~~ ermöglichen.

Der Auftrag zur Fertigung der ausgefahrenen Roste für die 10 angelieferten Saurer-Fahrgestelle wird hiermit schon jetzt erteilt.

Das Angebot einschl. Konstruktionszeichnung ist nachträglich vorzulegen.

II D 6

zur Mitzeichnung.

3.) Abschrift von 1.) zum Vorgang 1737/41 bei Tgb. Schmidt.

4.) Wv1. 10.6.42.

I. A.

II D 6 II D

Translation & Remarks
(Stamps and handwritten notes outside of text omitted)

The Head of the Security Police and the SD
II D 3 a (9) No. 668/42-121

Berlin, the 30th of April 1942

1.) Letter:
To the
G a u b s c h a t Company
Berlin-N e u k ö l l n
Willi Walter-Str.

Reg.: Delivered 10 Saurer Chassis
Ref.: Discussion with Herr Krieger of 23 and 24 Apr. [19]42

As already discussed, a change of the floor grate of the above-mentioned vehicles is to be implemented.

While producing selfsame, the following has to be considered regarding the design:

The coachwork obtains a floor grate, which is to be made extractable on small wheels or rollers. It is to be subdivided into 10 to 12 sections, hence permitting the individual sections to tip down when taken out the grate. The wheels or rollers are to be guided in a U-shaped iron rail. Furthermore, the grate is to obtain a lateral U-shaped iron guide. The grate sections are to be secured against canting by means of diagonal braces.

In order to obtain as large a moveable floor surface as possible, the grate is to be mounted sufficiently high to cover the wheel cases. By so doing a maximum of only some 75 mm of interior headroom may be lost. The grate is to be manufactured at the width of the door. The narrow lateral ledges not covered by the grate (ca. 250 mm) are to be filled up to the height of the grate and to be sloped toward the center of the vehicle. Together with the walls, this wooden structure is to be covered with smooth sheet metal. The protruding parts of the rear wall are to be beveled with sheet metal from the door frame to the side walls. For the extracting and retracting of the grate a cable winch (Spill) is to be mounted underneath the rear end of the vehicle. The cable is to be attached in a sheared way to the grate section located at the rear wall of the driver's cabin. The ~~other~~ end of the cable ~~sports a ring and~~ is to be attached in a removable way on the [handwritten: vehicle's interior] in-

side, close to the door. After opening the door, the cable is to be attached to the winch drum ~~using the ring~~. The separation between cable and winch is necessary because an otherwise needed feedthrough of the cable would jeopardize the tightness of the coachwork. The first grate [section] (rear wall of the driver's cabin) is to be equipped with an angled, strong gridwork of 3 to 400 mm height. In order to prevent that the entire grate falls down when winching it out, a catch is to be mounted on this section (pivot or similar). The individual grate sections are to be attached to one another in a hinge-like manner. Nevertheless, the sections need to be easily detachable.

The wheel-guide rails and the lateral guide rails are to be mounted in such a way that they slant downward from the wheel cases toward the vehicle's end. The lateral U-shaped iron rails are to be left open at the top at their end for half a grate section width, in order to enable the grate section moving out beyond the end of the vehicle to tip down.

The order to manufacture the extractable grates for the 10 delivered Saurer chassis is given herewith already.

An offer including a construction drawing is to be submitted subsequently.

2.) II D 6:
for co-signature

3.) Copy of 1.) to case 1737/41 at TOS Schmidt.

4.) Resubmission 10 June [19]42

p.p. II D6 II D
[signed Rauff]

REMARKS: This order following the internal memo of 27 April 1942 gives an almost identical, although somewhat less detailed description of the device as in the previous document (see drawing on p. 317). Here, too, the author stresses that, since the cargo box must not have any leakages, it has to be possible to detach the cable from the winch.

Letter of 14 May 1942

Gaubschat 13

Fahrzeugwerke GmbH.
Berlin-Neukölln, Willi-Walter-Straße 32-38

Titl.
Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei
und des SD

Berlin SW 11
Prinz-Albrecht-Str.8

Chef d.Deutsch. Polizei
16. 5. 1942
Anlg.: 1

Ihre Zeichen: - | Ihre Nachricht vom: 30.4.42 | Unsere Nachricht vom: - | Unsere Abteilung: Verk. Mi/Ka. | Unser Sachbearbeiter: Wachsmuth | Tag: 14.5.42

Betreff:
Ihre Zeichen: II D 3 a (9) Nr. 668/42 - 121
Uns.Kon. 63 424 - 433

Wir bestätigen den Empfang Ihres Schreibens vom 30. v. M., mit welchen Sie eine Änderung der noch zu liefernden 10 Sonder-Fahrzeuge aus obigen Auftrag bekanntgeben.

Unsere Betriebsleitung hat sich eingehend mit dieser Angelegenheit befaßt. Wir müssen Ihnen mitteilen, daß die gewünschte konstruktive Umgestaltung der bisherigen Post-Ausführung in absehbarer Zeit von uns nicht durchgeführt werden kann. Für die hierzu notwendigen konstruktiven Arbeiten stehen uns z.Zt. keinerlei Kräfte zur Verfügung, da ein großer Teil auch des technischen Personals zur Wehrmacht eingerückt ist.

Ferner hat die Rückfrage zur Beschaffung der Seilwinden ergeben, daß hier Termine von ca. 10 bis 12 Monaten [illegible] werden, so daß die restlichen 10 Fahrzeuge dann frühestens im Herbst n. J. zur Lieferung kommen könnten, womit Ihnen sicherlich nicht gedient ist.

Die Fertigung der Aufbauten ist von uns so eingereiht, daß die Lieferung in der zweiten Hälfte des n. M. erfolgen wird, vorausgesetzt, daß nicht unvorhergesehene Zwischenfälle eine Verzögerung notwendig machen.

Nach allen sind wir also nur in der Lage, die Fahrzeuge in derselben Ausführung herzustellen, wie die bereits gelieferten.

Wir bitten Sie, von Vorstehenden Kenntnis zu nehmen.

Heil Hitler!

GAUBSCHAT FAHRZEUGWERKE GMBH.

Einlieferungen für Lieferung und Abholung ist nur beide Teile Neukölln

Tgb.-Nr. 668/42
18. Mai 1942

Translation

(address field and preprinted stationary items omitted)

30 April 42 Verk. Wa/Ka. Wachsmuth 18 May 42

Re.: Your Ref.: II D 3a (9) B.Nr. 668/42 – 121
Our Com. 63 424 – 433

We confirm receipt of your letter of the 30 of the previous month, with which you inform us about a change to the 10 yet to be delivered vehicles of the above order.

Our management has dealt thoroughly with this matter. We have to inform you that, within the foreseeable future, we cannot implement the requested design changes to the type of grate produced so far. We currently do not have any personnel at our disposal needed for the construction tasks required for this, since a major part of our technical staff has been drafted by the Wehrmacht.

Furthermore, the inquiry for the acquisition of the cable winch had as a result that delivery times of some 10 to 12 months are given for this, so that the remaining vehicles could be delivered during the fall at the earliest, which certainly does not serve you well.

The manufacture of the coachworks has been planned by us in such a way that they will be delivered in the second half of next month, provided that no unpredicted incidents necessitate a delay.

All in all we are now able to manufacture the vehicles with the same design as those delivered so far.

We request that you take note of the aforementioned facts.

Hail Hitler!

GAUBSCHAT VEHICLE WORKS, LTD.

Memo of 5 June 1942 (Just document)

II D 3 a (9) Nr. 214/42 g.Rs. Berlin, den 5. Juni 1942

Einzigste Ausfertigung.

Geheime Reichssache!

1

I. Vermerk:

Betrifft: Technische Abänderungen an den im Betrieb eingesetzten und an den sich in Herstellung befindlichen Spezialwagen.

Seit Dezember 1941 wurden beispielsweise mit 3 eingesetzten Wagen 97 000 verarbeitet, ohne daß Mängel an den Fahrzeugen auftraten. Die bekannte Explosion in Kulmhof ist als Einzelfall zu bewerten. Ihre Ursache ist auf einen Bedienungsfehler zurückzuführen. Zur Vermeidung von derartigen Unfällen ergingen an die betroffenen Dienststellen besondere Anweisungen. Die Anweisungen wurden so gehalten, daß der Sicherheitsgrad erheblich heraufgesetzt wurde.

Die sonstigen bisher gemachten Erfahrungen lassen folgende technische Abänderungen zweckmäßig erscheinen:

1.) Um ein schnelleres Einströmen des CO unter Vermeidung von Überdrucken zu ermöglichen, sind an der oberen Rückwand zwei offene Schlitze von 10 x 1 cm lichter Weite anzubringen. Dieselben sind außen mit leicht beweglichen Scharnierblechklappen zu versehen, damit ein Ausgleich des evtl. eintretenden Überdruckes selbsttätig erfolgt.

2.) Die Beschickung der Wagen beträgt normalerweise 9 - 10 pro m^2. Bei den großräumigen Saurer-Spezialwagen ist eine Ausnutzung in dieser Form nicht möglich, weil dadurch zwar

keine

keine Überlastung eintritt, jedoch die Geländegängigkeit sehr herabgemindert wird. Eine Verkleinerung der Ladefläche erscheint notwendig. Sie wird erreicht durch Verkürzung des Aufbaues um ca. 1 m. Vorstehende Schwierigkeit ist nicht, wie bisher, dadurch abzustellen, daß man die Stückzahl bei der Beschickung vermindert. Bei einer Verminderung der Stückzahl wird nämlich eine längere Betriebsdauer notwendig, weil die freien Räume auch mit CO angefüllt werden müssen. Dagegen reicht bei einer verkleinerten Ladefläche und vollständig ausgefülltem Laderaum eine erheblich kürzere Betriebsdauer aus, weil freie Räume fehlen.

In einer Besprechung mit der Herstellerfirma wurde von dieser Seite darauf hingewiesen, daß eine Verkürzung des Kastenaufbaues eine ungünstige Gewichtsverlagerung nach sich zieht. Es wurde betont, daß eine Überlastung der Vorderachse eintritt. Tatsächlich findet aber ungewollt ein Ausgleich in der Gewichtsverteilung dadruch statt, daß das Ladegut beim Betrieb in dem Streben nach der hinteren Tür immer vorwiegend dort liegt. Hierdurch tritt eine zusätzliche Belastung der Vorderachse nicht ein.

3.) Die Verbindungsschläuche zwischen Auspuff und Wagen rosten des öfteren durch, da sie im Innern durch anfallende Flüssigkeiten zerfressen werden. Um dieses zu vermeiden, ist der Einfüllstutzen nunmehr so zu verlegen, daß eine Einführung von oben nach unten erfolgt. Dadurch wird ein Einfliessen von Flüssigkeiten vermieden.

4.)

4.) Um eine handliche Säuberung des Fahrzeuges vornehmen zu können, ist der Boden in der Mitte mit einer dicht verschließbaren Abflußöffnung zu versehen. Der Abflußdeckel mit etwa 200 bis 300 mm ø erhält einen Syphonkrümmer, sodaß dünne Flüssigkeit auch während des Betriebes ablaufen kann. Zur Vermeidung von Verstopfungen ist der Krümmer oben mit einem Sieb zu versehen. Dicker Schmutz kann bei der Reinigung des Wagens durch die große Abflußöffnung fortgespült werden. Der Boden des Fahrzeuges ist zur Abflußöffnung leicht zu neigen. Hierdurch soll erreicht werden, daß alle Flüssigkeiten unmittelbar zur Mitte abfliessen. Ein Eindringen der Flüssigkeiten in die Röhren wird somit weitgehendst unterbunden.

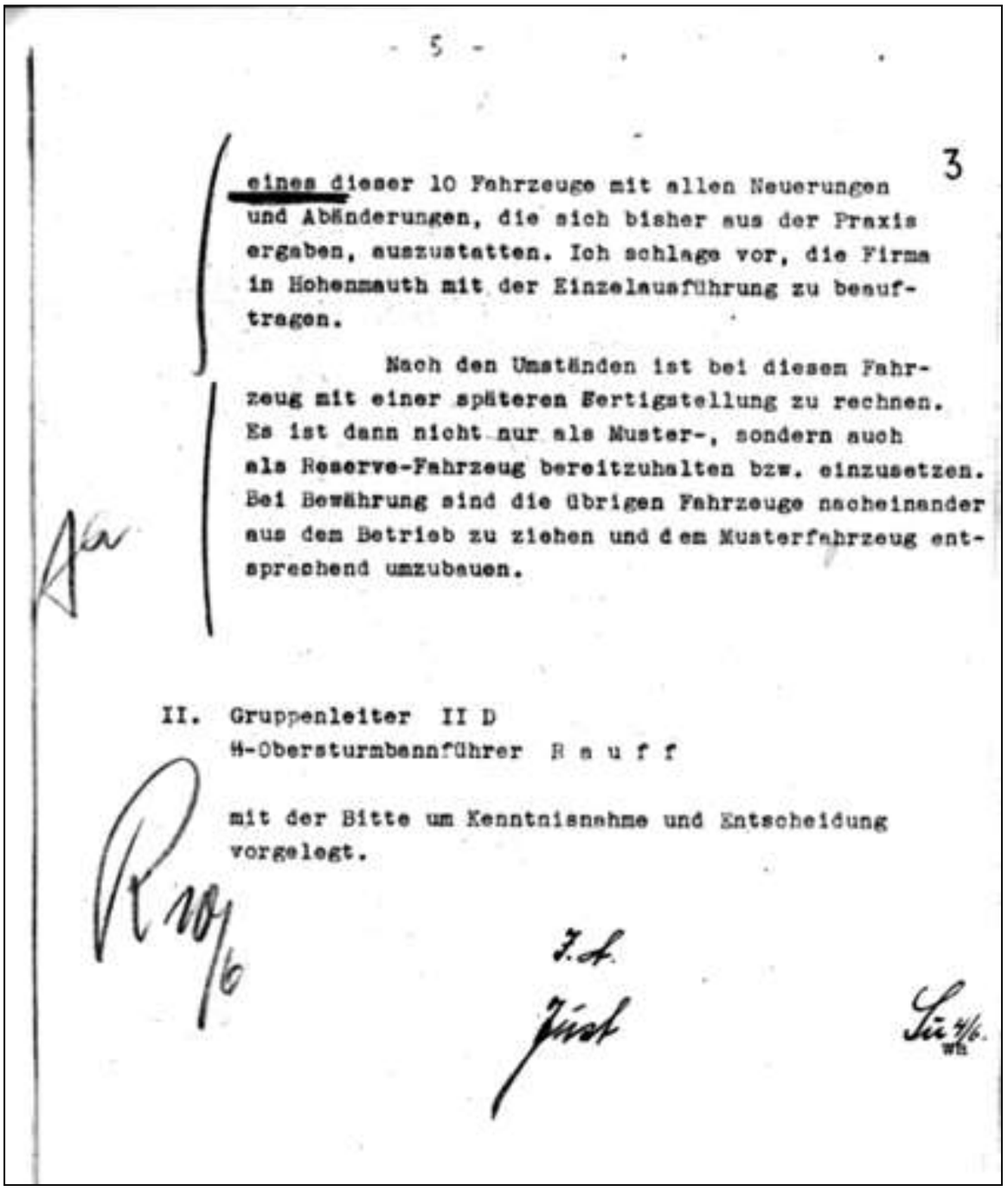
5.) Die bisher angebrachten Beobachtungsfenster können entfallen, da sie praktisch nie benutzt werden. Bei der Fertigung weiterer Fahrzeuge wird durch den Fortfall der Fenster mit Bezug auf die schwierige Anbringung und dichte Abschließung derselben erhebliche Arbeitszeit eingespart.

6.) Die Beleuchtungskörper sind stärker als bisher gegen Zerstörungen zu sichern. Das Eisengitterwerk ist so hoch gewölbt über den Lampen anzubringen, daß eine Beschädigung der Lampenfenster nicht mehr möglich ist. Aus der Praxis wurde vorgeschlagen, die Lampen entfallen zu lassen, da sie angeblich nie gebraucht werden. Es wurde aber in Erfahrung gebracht, daß beim Schließen der hinteren Tür und somit bei eintretender Dunkelheit immer ein starkes

Drängen der Ladung nach der Tür erfolgte. Dieses ist darauf zurückzuführen, daß die Ladung bei eintretender Dunkelheit sich nach dem Licht drängt. Es erschwert das Einklinken der Tür. Ferner wurde festgestellt, daß der auftretende Lärm wohl mit Bezug auf die Unheimlichkeit des Dunkels immer dann einsetzt, wenn sich die Türen schließen. Es ist deshalb zweckmäßig, daß die Beleuchtung vor und während der ersten Minuten des Betriebes eingeschaltet wird. Auch ist die Beleuchtung bei Nachtbetrieb und beim Reinigen des Wageninnern von Vorteil.

7.) Um eine schnelle und leichte Entladung des Fahrzeuges zu erreichen, ist ein ausfahrbarer Rost anzubringen. Er ist auf kleinen Rädern in U-Eisen-Schienen zu führen. Das Aus- und Einfahren hat mit einer unter dem Wagen angebrachten Drahtseilzugwinde zu geschehen. Die mit der Anbringung beauftragte Firma hält diese Ausführungsart wegen Kräfte- und Materialmangel z.Zt. für undurchführbar. Die Ausführung ist bei einer anderen Firma anzuregen.

Vorstehende technische Abänderungen sind an den im Betrieb befindlichen Fahrzeugen nur dann nachträglich auszuführen, wenn jeweils ein Fahrzeug einer anderen größeren Reparatur unterzogen werden muß. An den in Auftrag gegebenen 10 Saurer-Fahrgestellen sind die vorstehenden Abänderungen so weit als möglich zu berücksichtigen. Da die Herstellerfirma gelegentlich einer Rücksprache betonte, daß konstruktive Abänderungen z.Zt. nicht oder nur für kleinste Abänderungen möglich sind, ist bei einer anderen Firma der Versuch zu unternehmen, mindestens



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einen dieser 10 Fahrzeuge mit allen Neuerungen und Abänderungen, die sich bisher aus der Praxis ergaben, auszustatten. Ich schlage vor, die Firma in Hohenmauth mit der Einzelausführung zu beauftragen.

Nach den Umständen ist bei diesem Fahrzeug mit einer späteren Fertigstellung zu rechnen. Es ist dann nicht nur als Muster-, sondern auch als Reserve-Fahrzeug bereitzuhalten bzw. einzusetzen. Bei Bewährung sind die übrigen Fahrzeuge nacheinander aus dem Betrieb zu ziehen und dem Musterfahrzeug entsprechend umzubauen.

II. Gruppenleiter II D
H-Obersturmbannführer R a u f f

mit der Bitte um Kenntnisnahme und Entscheidung vorgelegt.

10/6

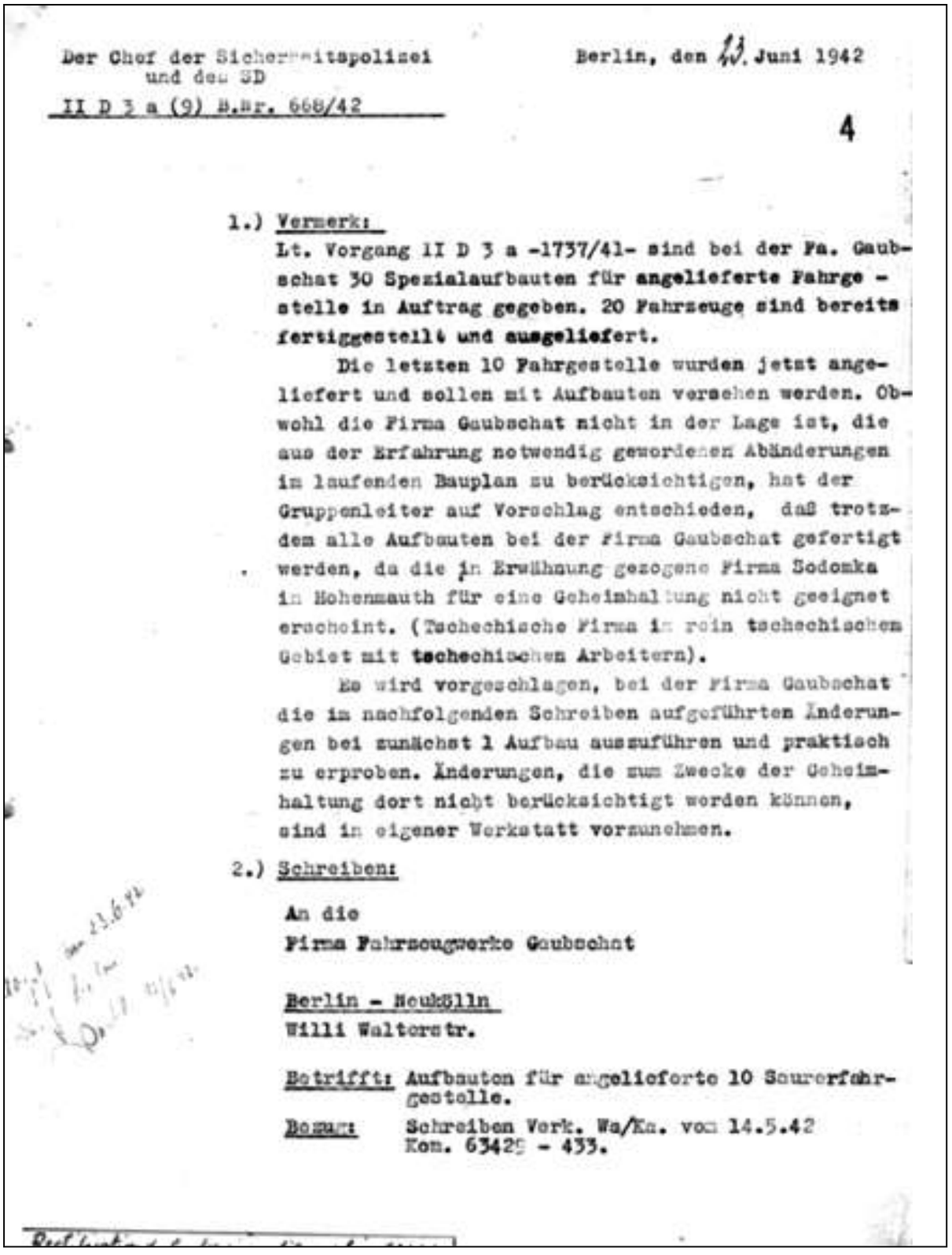
z.d.

Jüst

Sü 4/6.

For a translation see Chapter 2.2.4.1. See my comments in Chapters 2.2.4. and 2.2.5.

Memo and Letter of 23 June 1942



Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei
und des SD
II D 3 a (9) B.Nr. 668/42

Berlin, den 23. Juni 1942

4

1.) Vermerk:

Lt. Vorgang II D 3 a -1737/41- sind bei der Fa. Gaubschat 30 Spezialaufbauten für angelieferte Fahrgestelle in Auftrag gegeben. 20 Fahrzeuge sind bereits fertiggestellt und ausgeliefert.

Die letzten 10 Fahrgestelle wurden jetzt angeliefert und sollen mit Aufbauten versehen werden. Obwohl die Firma Gaubschat nicht in der Lage ist, die aus der Erfahrung notwendig gewordenen Abänderungen im laufenden Bauplan zu berücksichtigen, hat der Gruppenleiter auf Vorschlag entschieden, daß trotzdem alle Aufbauten bei der Firma Gaubschat gefertigt werden, da die in Erwähnung gezogene Firma Sodomka in Hohenmauth für eine Geheimhaltung nicht geeignet erscheint. (Tschechische Firma in rein tschechischem Gebiet mit tschechischen Arbeitern).

Es wird vorgeschlagen, bei der Firma Gaubschat die im nachfolgenden Schreiben aufgeführten Änderungen bei zunächst 1 Aufbau auszuführen und praktisch zu erproben. Änderungen, die zum Zwecke der Geheimhaltung dort nicht berücksichtigt werden können, sind in eigener Werkstatt vorzunehmen.

2.) Schreiben:

An die
Firma Fahrzeugwerke Gaubschat

Berlin - Neukölln
Willi Walterstr.

Betrifft: Aufbauten für angelieferte 10 Saurerfahrgestelle.

Bezug: Schreiben Verk. Wa/Kn. vom 14.5.42
Kom. 63429 - 433.

Vor Inangriffnahme der Fertigung der 10 Aufbauten wird gebeten, zu den in o.a. Schreiben und den am 16.6.42 zwischen Ihrem Herrn Ernst und Krüger und unserem techn. Ober-Sekr. a.Pr. Sukkel mündlich erörterten Abänderungen der Aufbauten folgendes zur Kenntnis zu nehmen:

Die Herstellung der Aufbauten hat im allgemeinen in der bisherigen Ausführung zu erfolgen. Wie bereits mündlich besprochen, sind noch folgende Abänderungen vorzunehmen:

1.) Der Kastenaufbau ist in seiner Länge um 800 m/m zu verkürzen. Der Wulst an der Tür fällt fort. Der Einwand, daß durch die Verkürzung eine ungünstige Gewichtsverteilung herbeigeführt würde, wird hier zur Kenntnis genommen. Etwaige hieraus entstehenden Nachteile werden gegenüber der Firma Gaubschat nicht beanstandet werden.

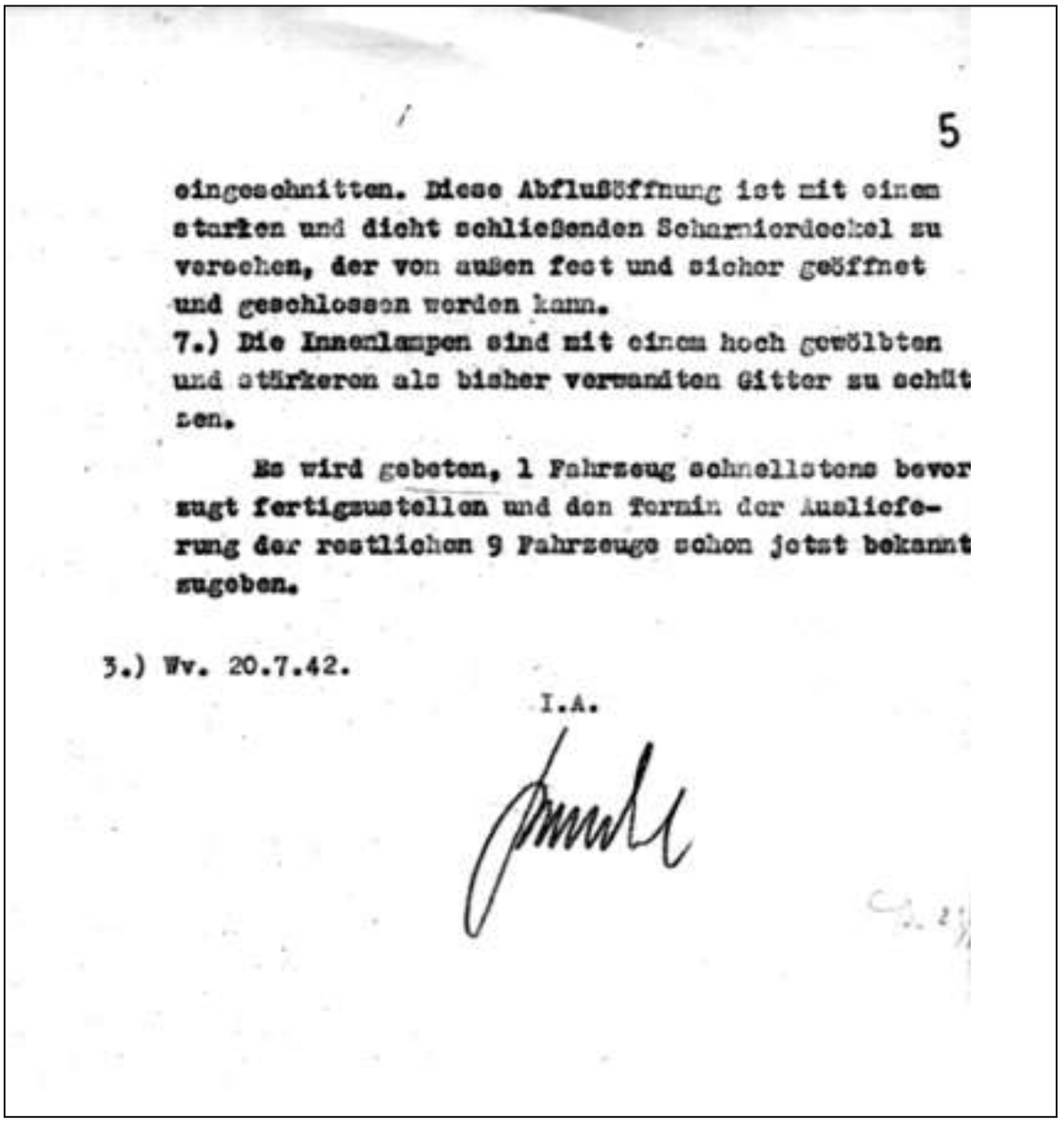
2.) Die beiden Radkästen sind nach vorn und hinten zu verlängern, so daß ein durchgehender Aufsatz an beiden Seitenwänden geschaffen wird.

3.) Da die jetzige Ausführung der Roste zu unhandlich ist, sind die Roste nur in einer Länge von 700 m/m zu fertigen und abweichend von der jetzigen Ausführung auf den unter 2) durchgehend eingebauten Radkastenaufsatz aufzulegen. Die Stützen der Roste auf den Kastenboden sind beizubehalten.

4.) Die beiden Ecken sind durch eine feste Verkleidung abzudecken. Die Verkleidung ist von dem Türpfosten bis ca. 1/2 m in das Kasteninnere vorzunehmen, so daß zu den Türen eine Verjüngung des Kasteninnern erwirkt wird.

5.) Die durch Schieber verdeckten Öffnungen an den hinteren Türen fallen fort und sind durch offene Schlitze von 100 x 10 mm in der oberen Rückwand (nicht Tür) zu ersetzen. Sie sind außen mit leicht beweglichen Scharnierblechklappen zu verdecken.

6.) Die im rechten vorderen Kastenboden befindliche Abflußöffnung mit Verschluß fällt fort, dafür wird eine ca. 200 mm ∅ große Abflußöffnung im Kastenboden



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eingeschnitten. Diese Abflußöffnung ist mit einem starken und dicht schließenden Scharnierdeckel zu versehen, der von außen fest und sicher geöffnet und geschlossen werden kann.

7.) Die Innenlampen sind mit einem hoch gewölbten und stärkeren als bisher versandten Gitter zu schützen.

Es wird gebeten, 1 Fahrzeug schnellstens bevorzugt fertigzustellen und den Termin der Auslieferung der restlichen 9 Fahrzeuge schon jetzt bekannt zugeben.

3.) Wv. 20.7.42.

I.A.

Translation & Remarks

(Stamps and handwritten notes outside of text omitted)

The Head of the Security Police and the SD — Berlin, the 23rd of June 1942

II D 3 a (9) Letter No. 668/42

1.) Memo:

Acc. to case II D 3 a –1737/41– 30 special coachworks for the delivered chassis have been ordered from the Gaubschat Company. 20 vehicles have already been completed and delivered.

The last 10 chassis have now been delivered and are to be equipped with coachworks. Although the Gaubschat company is unable to consider the necessary changes gained from experience, the group leader has decided on suggestion that all coachworks are nevertheless to be manufactured by the Gaubschat company, since the Sodomka company in Hohenmauth, which had been taken into consideration, does not seem to be suited for secrecy. (Czech company in a purely Czech area with technical staff.)

It is suggested to implement initially in 1 coachwork the changes listed in the following letter and to test them in practice. Changes which cannot be considered there for reasons of secrecy are to be made in an in-house workshop.

2.) Letter:

To the
Vehicle Works Gaubschat

Berlin Neukölln
Willi Walterstr.

Reg.: Coachworks for 10 delivered Saurer Chassis
Ref.: Letter sales Wa/Ka. Of 14 May [19]42, Kom. 63429-433.

Before initiating the production of the 10 coachworks we ask to take note of the following regarding the changes to the coachworks as discussed in the above mentioned letter and as discussed in person on 16 June [19]42 between your Herr Ernst and Herr Krüger and our technical head secretary a. Pr.[?] Sukkel:

In general, the production of the coachworks has to be done following the previous design. As discussed in person, the following changes are to be made:

1.) The cargo box is to be shortened by 800 mm in length. The protrusion at the door is omitted. The objection is herewith acknowledged that the shortening would result in a disadvantageous weight distribution. The Gaubschat Company will not be held liable for any disadvantages resulting from this.

2.) Both wheel cases are to be extended forward and backward so that a continuous box is created at both side walls.

3.) Since the current design of the grates is too cumbersome, the grates [sections] are to be produced in a length of only 700 mm and, in deviation from the current design, are to be put onto the continuous wheel case box of no. 2.)

4.) Both door corners are to be covered with a solid cover. This cover is to run from the door jambs to ½ m into the interior of the cargo box, so that the interior of the cargo box tapers off toward the doors.

5.) The openings covered by sliders at the rear doors are omitted and are to be replaced with open slits of 100 × 10 mm in the upper rear wall (not door). They are to be covered on the outside with hinged flaps.

6.) The drainage opening with lid in the floor on the right in the front part of the cargo box is omitted, and in its stead a drainage opening of ca. 200 mm diameter is cut into the box floor. This opening is to be closed with a strong and tight hinged lid which can be opened and closed firmly and safely from the outside.

7.) The internal lights are to be protected with a highly domed gridwork stronger than the one used so far.

It is requested to produce 1 vehicle as fast as possible and to announce the delivery date of the remaining 9 vehicles already now.

3.) Resubmission 20 July [19]42.

p.p.

REMARKS: No reason is given for the demand to shorten the cargo box. In my analysis of the Just document (2.2.4.), which addresses this issue under #2, I have discussed the claim that a shortening of the cargo box would lead to an “unfavorable distribution of weight.”

Here we are told that the doors contained "openings covered with sliders," which means that the cargo box has never been hermetically sealed, as sliders may be able to cover openings, but they cannot seal them. In their stead regular openings were requested for the new vans, which were to be covered with a mere hinged flap. Any minor overpressure in the cargo box would have lifted those flaps and allowed excess gas to escape, hence these cargo boxes would have "leaked" constantly.

Considering the obvious lack of "freedom from leakage" of this design, it is a riddle why the RSHA insisted in earlier letters that the cable used to move the floor grate can be detached from the winch to avoid such a leakage (see memo of 27 April 1942 and letter of 30 April 1942).

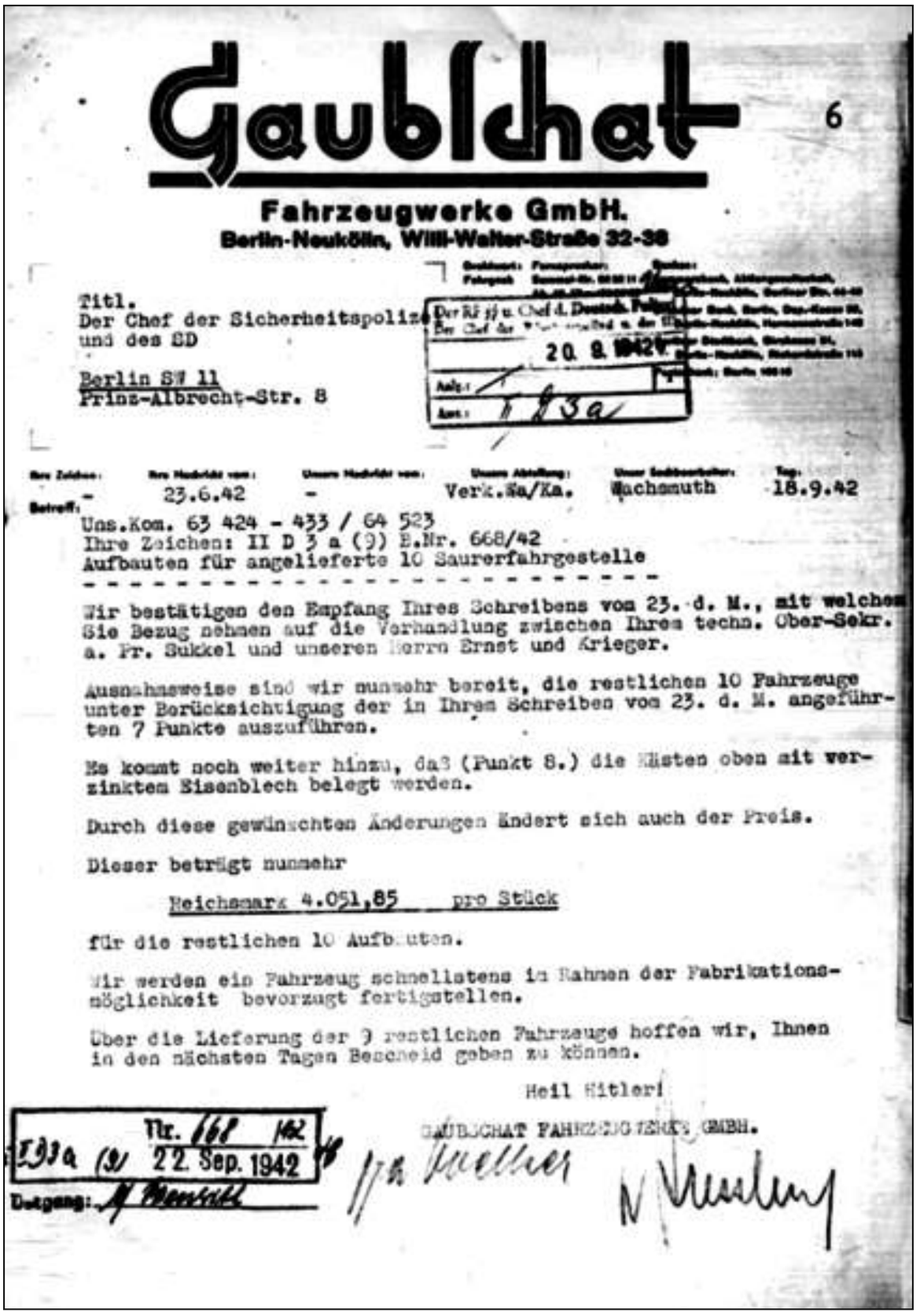
Juxtaposition of Two Documents

The following is a juxtaposition of some of the seven points listed in the RSHA letter to the Gaubschat company of June 23, 1942, with the corresponding points of the plagiarized "file memo" of June 5, 1942 (the "Just document"). Incriminating text passages are rendered in bold (taken from Weckert 2019, p. 225).

LETTER OF JUNE 23, 1942	"FILE MEMO" OF JUNE 5, 1942
"*1. The cube body is to be reduced in length by 800 mm* [31.5"]. […] *We herewith acknowledge the objections raised, that such a shortening would cause a disadvantageous distribution of weight.* [The preceding text shows that this objection was raised by Gaubschat on the occasion of a verbal discussion on June 16, 1942.] *Any disadvantages resulting herefrom will not be complained of to the firm of Gaubschat.*"	"*2. It would seem necessary to decrease the load area. This will be achieved by shortening the body by approximately 1 m* [39"]. *The above problem cannot be solved, as has been attempted, by reducing the number of objects per load.* ***This is because a reduction in the number necessitates a longer operation time, since the empty space also must be filled with CO.*** […] *In a discussion with the manufacturer it was pointed out by the latter that a shortening of the cube body would result in a disadvantageous weight displacement.* ***In fact, however, an involuntary balancing in weight distribution occurs because during operation the load strives towards the back door and always largely ends up there.*"**
"*5. The slide-covered openings in the rear doors are to be omitted, and replaced with open slits of 100 × 10 mm* [4" × 0.4"] *in the upper back wall (not*	"*1.* ***To allow for the rapid inflow of the CO while preventing excessive pressure,*** *two open slits of 10 × 1 cm* [4" × 0.4"] *are to be located in the upper*

LETTER OF JUNE 23, 1942	"FILE MEMO" OF JUNE 5, 1942
door). They are to be covered on the outside with easily movable, hinged metal flaps."	*back wall. These are to be covered on the outside with easily movable, hinged metal flaps* ***to allow for self-regulation of any potential excess pressure.*****"**
"*6. The closeable drain opening in the right front part of the cube floor is to be omitted. Instead, a drain opening of about 200 mm* [9"] *in diameter is to be cut into the cube floor. This opening is to have a strong, tight-fitting, hinged lid that can be closed and safely opened from outside.*"	"*4. To allow for easy cleaning of the vehicle* [this expression builds on the implied allegation that the gassed people were covered with excrement and filth and had dirtied the vehicle accordingly], *a tightly closeable drain opening is to be located in the center of the floor. The drain cover, about 200 to 300 mm* [8" to 12"] *in diameter, is to be equipped with a U-trap* ***so that thin fluid can also drain out during operation.*****"** [This too is a reference to excretions from the dying people.]
"*7. The interior lights are to be protected with a domed wire guard that is stronger than that used to date.*"	"*6. The lighting appliances are to be more strongly protected from destruction than they have been so far. The iron grid guard over the lamps is to be domed enough to render damage to the lamp glass no longer possible. From practical experience it was suggested that the lamps should be omitted altogether, since allegedly they are never needed.* ***It was found, however, that when the back door is closed, i.e., when the interior becomes dark, the load urgently strives towards the door. This is because, at the onset of darkness, the load strives towards the light.*** [Utter nonsense. Once the door was closed, it would have been no lighter there than in the rest of the cube body.] ***Further, it was found that a commotion, probably due to the eerie nature of darkness, always breaks out at the point where the doors are closed. For this reason it would be expedient to turn the lights on before and during the first minutes of operation.*****"**

Letter of 18 September 1942



Gaubschat 6

Fahrzeugwerke GmbH.
Berlin-Neukölln, Willi-Walter-Straße 32-36

Titl.
Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei
und des SD

Berlin SW 11
Prinz-Albrecht-Str. 8

Der RF ß u. Chef d. Deutsch. Polizei
20. 8. 1942
Anl.: 1
Abt.: II D 3a

Ihre Zeichen:	Ihre Nachricht vom:	Unsere Nachricht vom:	Unsere Abteilung:	Unser Sachbearbeiter:	Tag:
-	23.6.42	-	Verk.Ka/Ka.	Wachsmuth	18.9.42

Betreff: Uns.Kom. 63 424 - 433 / 64 523
Ihre Zeichen: II D 3 a (9) B.Nr. 668/42
Aufbauten für angelieferte 10 Saurerfahrgestelle

Wir bestätigen den Empfang Ihres Schreibens vom 23. d. M., mit welchem Sie Bezug nehmen auf die Verhandlung zwischen Ihren techn. Ober-Sekr. a. Pr. Sukkel und unseren Herrn Ernst und Krieger.

Ausnahmsweise sind wir nunmehr bereit, die restlichen 10 Fahrzeuge unter Berücksichtigung der in Ihrem Schreiben vom 23. d. M. angeführten 7 Punkte auszuführen.

Es kommt noch weiter hinzu, daß (Punkt 8.) die Kästen oben mit verzinktem Eisenblech belegt werden.

Durch diese gewünschten Änderungen ändert sich auch der Preis.

Dieser beträgt nunmehr

Reichsmark 4.051,85 pro Stück

für die restlichen 10 Aufbauten.

Wir werden ein Fahrzeug schnellstens im Rahmen der Fabrikationsmöglichkeit bevorzugt fertigstellen.

Über die Lieferung der 9 restlichen Fahrzeuge hoffen wir, Ihnen in den nächsten Tagen Bescheid geben zu können.

Heil Hitler!

GAUBSCHAT FAHRZEUGWERKE GMBH.

IV D 3a (9) Nr. 668/42
22. Sep. 1942
Ausgang:

Translation
(address field and preprinted stationary items omitted)

23 June 42 Verk. Wa/Ka. Wachsmuth 18 Sept. 42

Re.: Our Com. 63 424 – 433 / 64 523
Your Ref.: II D 3a (9) B.Nr. 668/42
Coachwork f. delivered 10 Saurer Chassis

We confirm receipt of your letter of the 23rd of the current month with which you refer to the negotiation between your technical Senior Secretary a. Pr. Sukkel and our Mr. Ernst and Krieger.

As an exception we are now prepared to engineer the remaining 10 vehicles while taking into account the seven points listed in your letter of the 23rd of this month.

To be added to this is that (point 8) the boxes are lined with zinc-plated sheet iron.

Due to this requested change the price changes as well.

It is now

Reichsmark 4,051.85 per piece

for the remaining 10 coachworks.

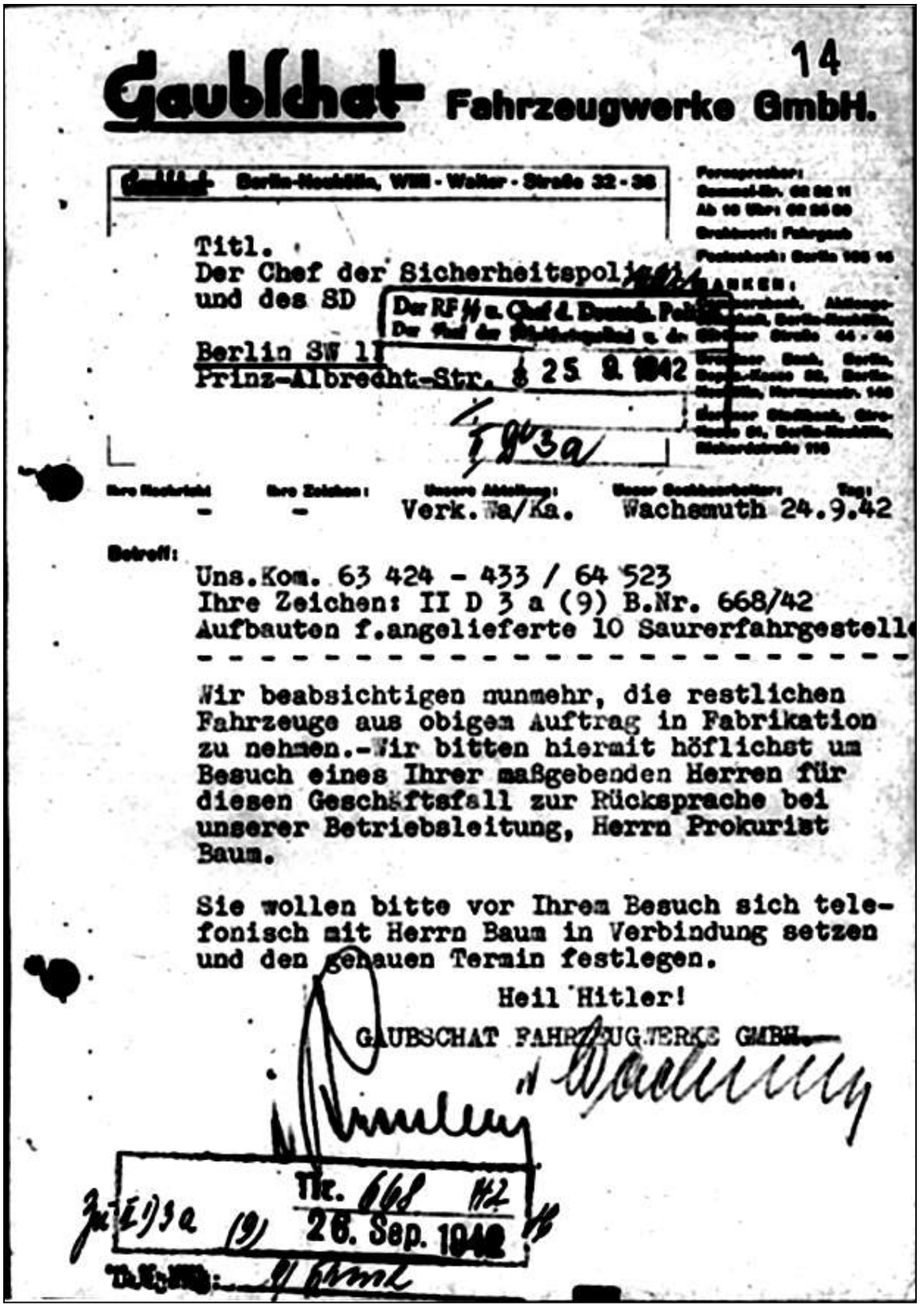
We will complete one vehicle as fast as possible within the framework of our production possibilities.

We hope to be able to inform you about the delivery of the remaining 9 vehicles within the next days.

Hail Hitler!

GAUBSCHAT VEHICLE WORKS, LTD.

Letter of 24 September 1942



14

Gaubschat Fahrzeugwerke GmbH.

Gaubschat Berlin-Hoppegarten, WIII - Walter - Straße 32 - 36

Fernsprecher: Sammel-Nr. 68 82 11 Ab 16 Uhr: 68 86 00 Drahtwort: Fahrgaub Postscheck: Berlin 168 16

BANKEN: Berliner Bank, Aktiengesellschaft, Depositenkasse Berlin-Hoppegarten, Berlin SW 68, Markgrafenstr. 44 - 46 Berliner Bank, Berlin, Depositenkasse 68, Berlin-Hoppegarten, Horstmannstr. 140 Berliner Stadtbank, Girokasse 24, Berlin-Hoppegarten, Mühlenstraße 116

Titl.
Der Chef der Sicherheitspol[illegible]
und des SD

Der RF-SS u. Chef d. Deutsch. Pol.
Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei u. des SD

Berlin SW 11
Prinz-Albrecht-Str. 8

25 9 1942

II D 3a

Ihre Nachricht	Ihre Zeichen:	Unsere Abteilung:	Unser Sachbearbeiter:	Tag:
-	-	Verk. Na/Ka.	Wachsmuth	24.9.42

Betreff:

Uns.Kom. 63 424 - 433 / 64 523
Ihre Zeichen: II D 3 a (9) B.Nr. 668/42
Aufbauten f.angelieferte 10 Saurerfahrgestell[illegible]

Wir beabsichtigen nunmehr, die restlichen Fahrzeuge aus obigem Auftrag in Fabrikation zu nehmen.-Wir bitten hiermit höflichst um Besuch eines Ihrer maßgebenden Herren für diesen Geschäftsfall zur Rücksprache bei unserer Betriebsleitung, Herrn Prokurist Baum.

Sie wollen bitte vor Ihrem Besuch sich telefonisch mit Herrn Baum in Verbindung setzen und den genauen Termin festlegen.

Heil Hitler!

GAUBSCHAT FAHRZEUGWERKE GMBH.

ppa. Wachsmuth

Tgb.Nr. 668 42
26. Sep. 1942

Zu E/3a (9)

Tb.Nr. [illegible]:

Translation
(address field and preprinted stationary items omitted)

– Verk. Wa/Ka. Wachsmuth 24 Sept. 42

Re.: Our Com. 63 424 – 433 / 64 523
Your Ref.: II D 3a (9) B.Nr. 668/42
Coachwork f. delivered 10 Saurer Chassis

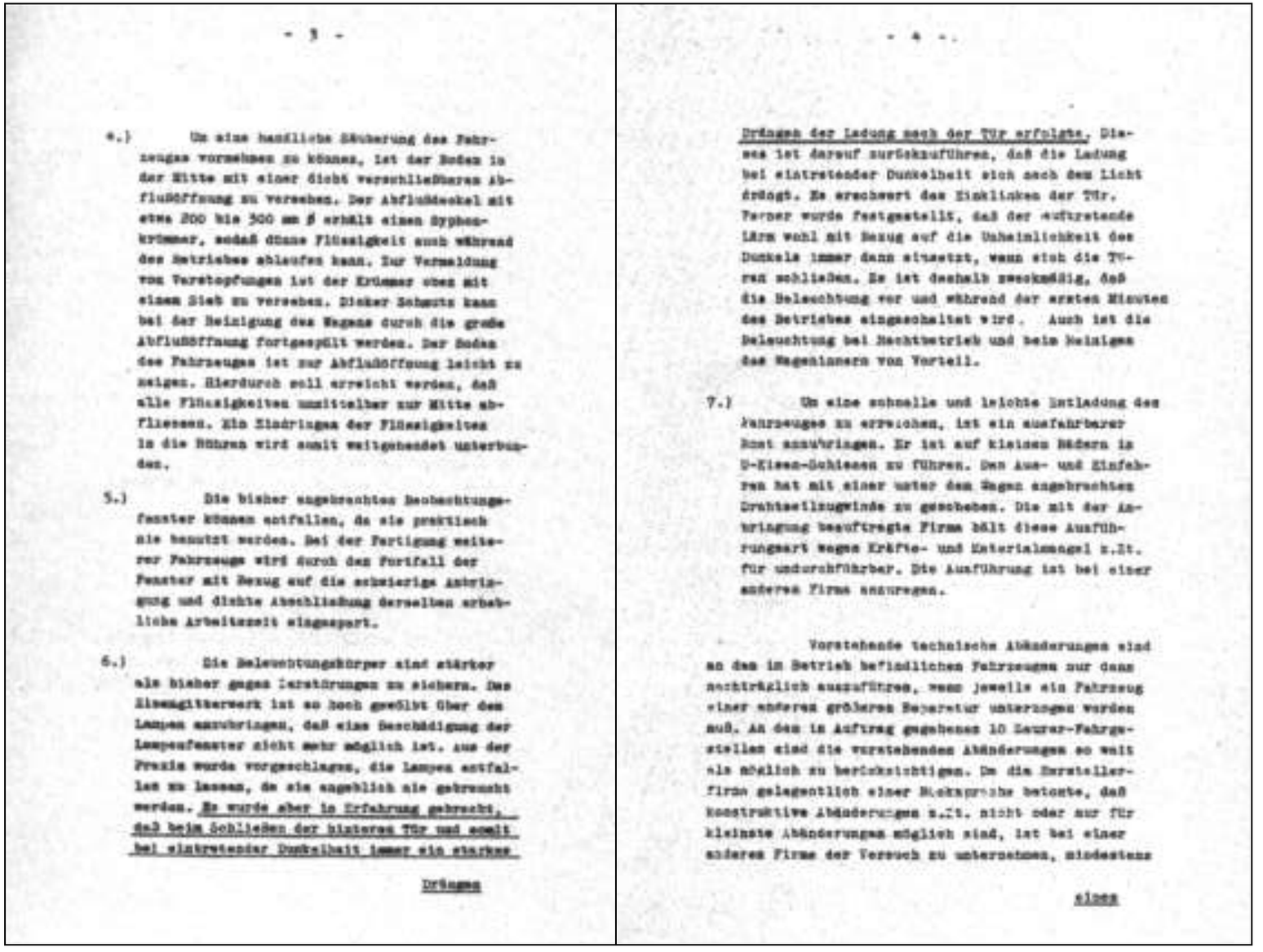
We now intend to take into manufacture the remaining vehicles from the above order. We herewith politely request a visit of one of your authorized gentlemen for this business case for consultation with our management, Mr. Commissioner Baum.
Please get in touch by phone with Mr. Baum before your visit in order to arrange for an exact appointment.

Hail Hitler!
GAUBSCHAT VEHICLE WORKS, LTD.

Appendix 5: Published Versions of the Just Document

See my comments in Chapters 2.2.4. and 2.2.5.

1. Reproduction in Kogon *et al.* 1983, pp. 333-337



- 3 -

4.) Um eine handliche Säuberung des Fahrzeuges vornehmen zu können, ist der Boden in der Mitte mit einer dicht verschließbaren Abflußöffnung zu versehen. Der Abflußdeckel mit etwa 200 bis 300 mm ϕ erhält einen Syphonkrümmer, sodaß dünne Flüssigkeit auch während des Betriebes ablaufen kann. Zur Vermeidung von Verstopfungen ist der Krümmer oben mit einem Sieb zu versehen. Dicker Schmutz kann bei der Reinigung des Wagens durch die große Abflußöffnung fortgespült werden. Der Boden des Fahrzeuges ist zur Abflußöffnung leicht zu neigen. Hierdurch soll erreicht werden, daß alle Flüssigkeiten unmittelbar zur Mitte abfließen. Ein Eindringen der Flüssigkeiten in die Röhren wird somit weitgehendst unterbunden.

5.) Die bisher angebrachten Beobachtungsfenster können entfallen, da sie praktisch nie benutzt werden. Bei der Fertigung weiterer Fahrzeuge wird durch den Fortfall der Fenster mit Bezug auf die schwierige Anbringung und dichte Abschließung derselben erhebliche Arbeitszeit eingespart.

6.) Die Beleuchtungskörper sind stärker als bisher gegen Zerstörungen zu sichern. Das Eisengitterwerk ist so hoch gewölbt über den Lampen anzubringen, daß eine Beschädigung der Lampenfenster nicht mehr möglich ist. Aus der Praxis wurde vorgeschlagen, die Lampen entfallen zu lassen, da sie angeblich nie gebraucht werden. Es wurde aber in Erfahrung gebracht, daß beim Schließen der hinteren Tür und somit bei einsetzender Dunkelheit immer ein starkes

Drängen

- 4 -

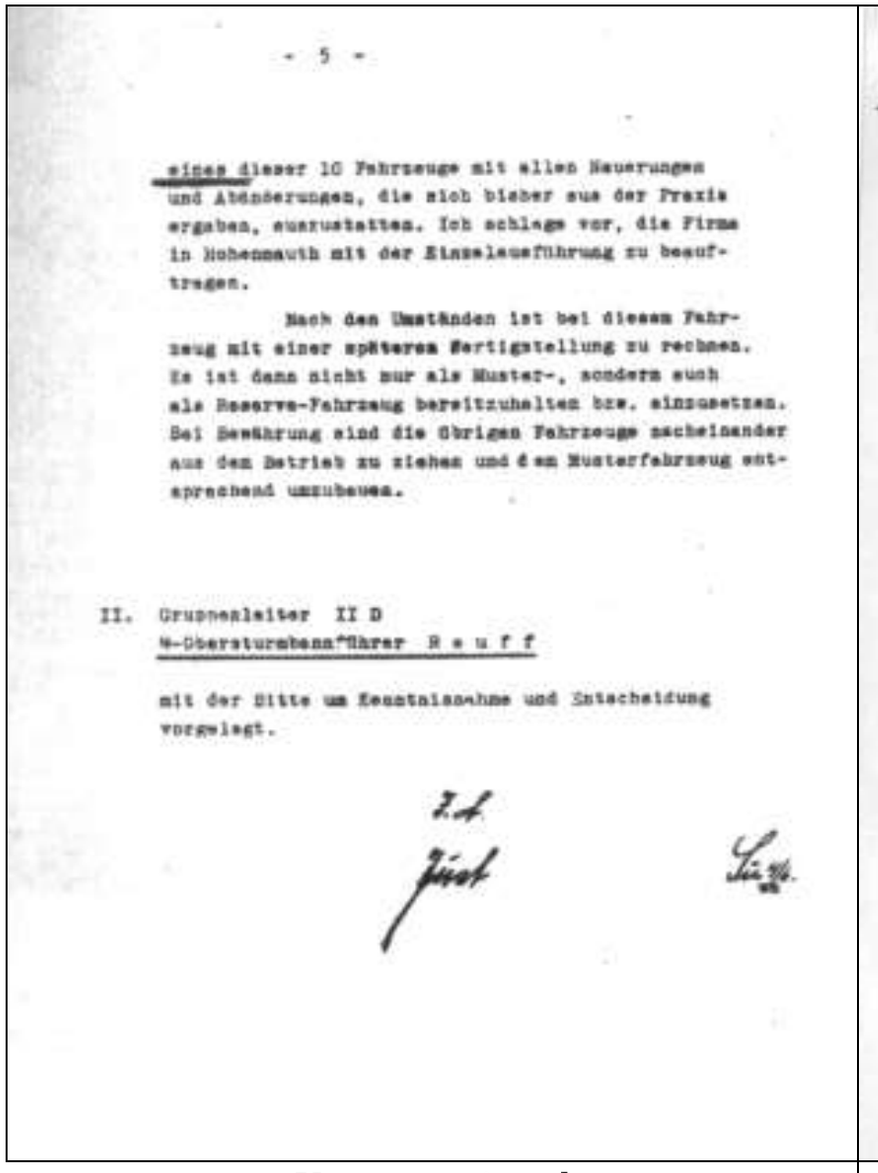
Drängen der Ladung nach der Tür erfolgte. Dieses ist darauf zurückzuführen, daß die Ladung bei einsetzender Dunkelheit sich nach dem Licht drängt. Es erschwert das Einklinken der Tür. Ferner wurde festgestellt, daß der auftretende Lärm wohl mit Bezug auf die Unheimlichkeit des Dunkels immer dann einsetzt, wenn sich die Türen schließen. Es ist deshalb zweckmäßig, daß die Beleuchtung vor und während der ersten Minuten des Betriebes eingeschaltet wird. Auch ist die Beleuchtung bei Nachtbetrieb und beim Reinigen des Wageninnern von Vorteil.

7.) Um eine schnelle und leichte Entladung des Fahrzeuges zu erreichen, ist ein ausfahrbarer Rost anzubringen. Er ist auf kleinen Rädern in U-Eisen-Schienen zu führen. Den Aus- und Einfahren hat mit einer unter dem Wagen angebrachten Drahtseilzugwinde zu geschehen. Die mit der Anbringung beauftragte Firma hält diese Ausführungsart wegen Kräfte- und Materialmangel z.Zt. für undurchführbar. Die Ausführung ist bei einer anderen Firma anzuregen.

Vorstehende technische Abänderungen sind an den im Betrieb befindlichen Fahrzeugen nur dann nachträglich auszuführen, wenn jeweils ein Fahrzeug einer anderen größeren Reparatur unterzogen werden muß. An den in Auftrag gegebenen 10 Saurer-Fahrgestellen sind die vorstehenden Abänderungen so weit als möglich zu berücksichtigen. Da die Herstellerfirma gelegentlich einer Rücksprache betonte, daß konstruktive Abänderungen z.Zt. nicht oder nur für kleinste Abänderungen möglich sind, ist bei einer anderen Firma der Versuch zu unternehmen, mindestens

eines

Kogon continued



- 5 -

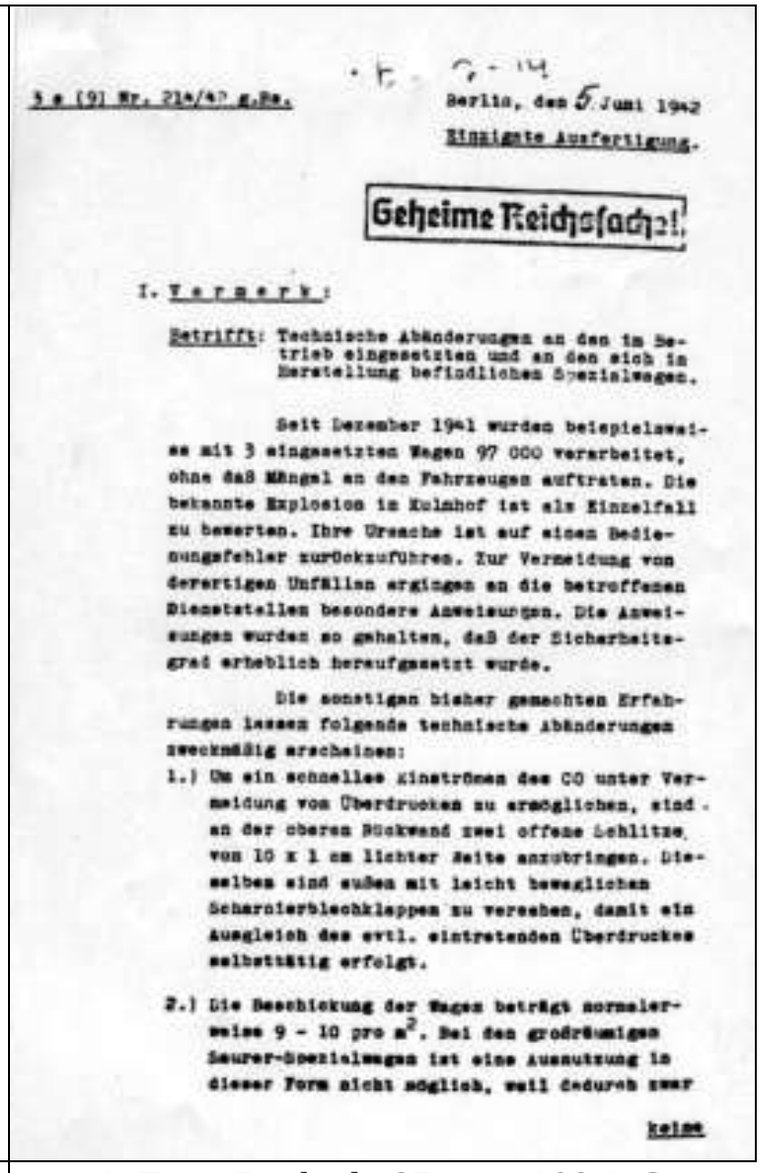
einen dieser 10 Fahrzeuge mit allen Neuerungen und Abänderungen, die sich bisher aus der Praxis ergaben, auszurüsten. Ich schlage vor, die Firma in Hohenmauth mit der Einzelausführung zu beauftragen.

Nach den Umständen ist bei diesem Fahrzeug mit einer späteren Fertigstellung zu rechnen. Es ist dann nicht nur als Muster-, sondern auch als Reserve-Fahrzeug bereitzuhalten bzw. einzusetzen. Bei Bewährung sind die übrigen Fahrzeuge nacheinander aus dem Betrieb zu ziehen und dem Musterfahrzeug entsprechend umzubauen.

II. Gruppenleiter II D
SS-Obersturmbannführer R e u f f

mit der Bitte um Kenntnisnahme und Entscheidung vorgelegt.

Jüst



5 e (9) Nr. 214/42 g.Rs. Berlin, den 5. Juni 1942

Einzigste Ausfertigung.

Geheime Reichssache!

I. V e r m e r k :

Betrifft: Technische Abänderungen an den im Betrieb eingesetzten und an den sich in Herstellung befindlichen Spezialwagen.

Seit Dezember 1941 wurden beispielsweise mit 3 eingesetzten Wagen 97 000 verarbeitet, ohne daß Mängel an den Fahrzeugen auftraten. Die bekannte Explosion in Kulmhof ist als Einzelfall zu bewerten. Ihre Ursache ist auf einen Bedienungsfehler zurückzuführen. Zur Vermeidung von derartigen Unfällen ergingen an die betreffenen Dienststellen besondere Anweisungen. Die Anweisungen wurden so gehalten, daß der Sicherheitsgrad erheblich heraufgesetzt wurde.

Die sonstigen bisher gemachten Erfahrungen lassen folgende technische Abänderungen zweckmäßig erscheinen:

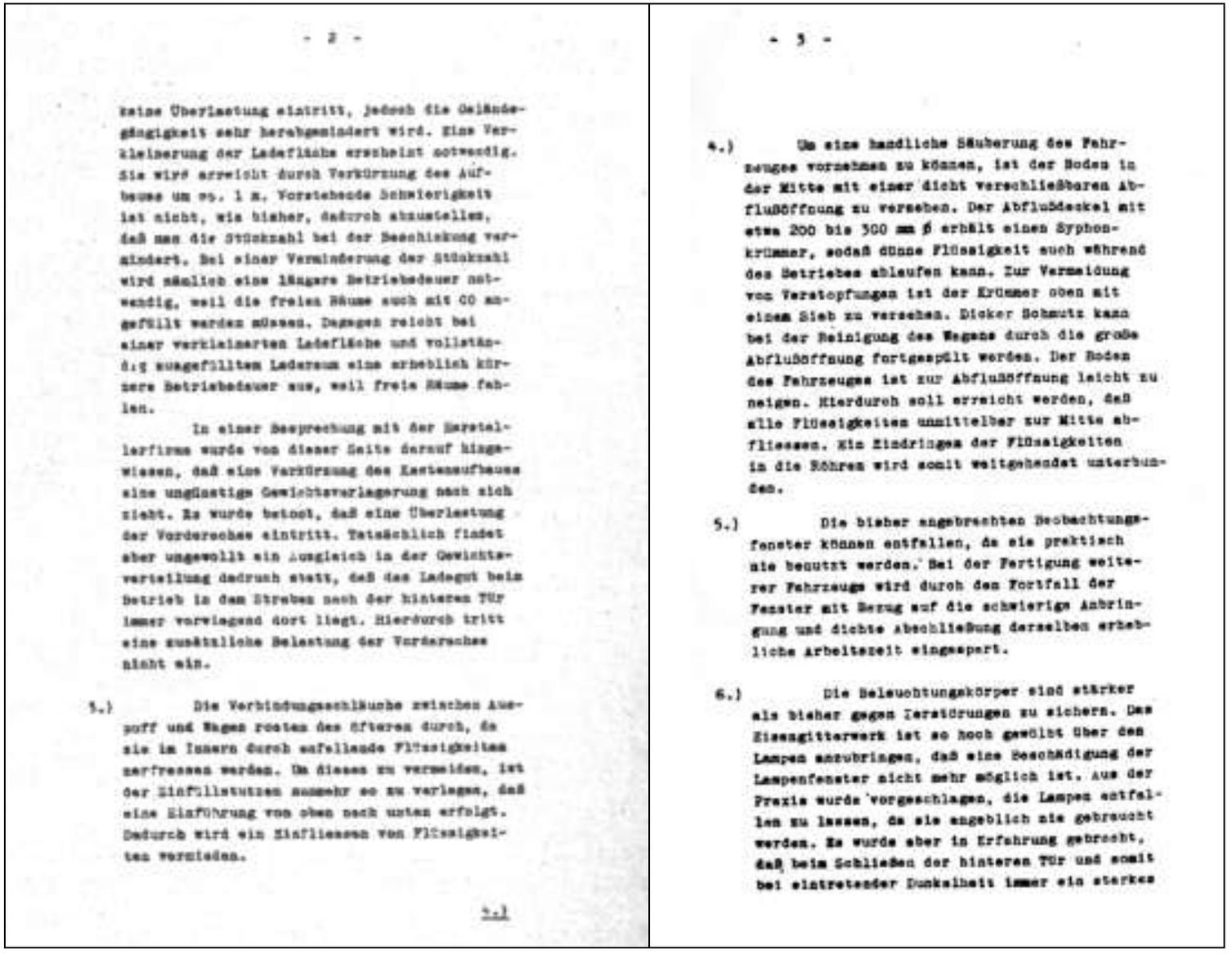
1.) Um ein schnelles einströmen des CO unter Vermeidung von Überdrucken zu ermöglichen, sind an der oberen Rückwand zwei offene Lehlitze von 10 x 1 cm lichter Weite anzubringen. Dieselben sind außen mit leicht beweglichen Scharnierblechklappen zu versehen, damit ein Ausgleich des evtl. eintretenden Überdruckes selbsttätig erfolgt.

2.) Die Beschickung der Wagen beträgt normalerweise 9 - 10 pro m^2. Bei den großräumigen Saurer-Spezialwagen ist eine Ausnutzung in dieser Form nicht möglich, weil dadurch zwar

keine

Kogon continued

2. From Rückerl 1971, pp. 209-213



- 2 -

keine Überlastung eintritt, jedoch die Geländegängigkeit sehr herabgemindert wird. Eine Verkleinerung der Ladefläche erscheint notwendig. Sie wird erreicht durch Verkürzung des Aufbaues um ca. 1 m. Vorstehende Schwierigkeit ist nicht, wie bisher, dadurch abzustellen, daß man die Stückzahl bei der Beschickung vermindert. Bei einer Verminderung der Stückzahl wird nämlich eine längere Betriebsdauer notwendig, weil die freien Räume auch mit CO angefüllt werden müssen. Dagegen reicht bei einer verkleinerten Ladefläche und vollständig ausgefülltem Laderaum eine erheblich kürzere Betriebsdauer aus, weil freie Räume fehlen.

In einer Besprechung mit der Herstellerfirma wurde von dieser Seite darauf hingewiesen, daß eine Verkürzung des Kastenaufbaues eine ungünstige Gewichtsverlagerung nach sich zieht. Es wurde betont, daß eine Überlastung der Vorderachse eintritt. Tatsächlich findet aber ungewollt ein Ausgleich in der Gewichtsverteilung dadrush statt, daß das Ladegut beim Betrieb in dem Streben nach der hinteren Tür immer vorwiegend dort liegt. Hierdurch tritt eine zusätzliche Belastung der Vorderachse nicht ein.

3.) Die Verbindungsschläuche zwischen Ausputf und Wagen rosten des öfteren durch, da sie im Innern durch anfallende Flüssigkeiten zerfressen werden. Um dieses zu vermeiden, ist der Einfüllstutzen nunmehr so zu verlegen, daß eine Einführung von oben nach unten erfolgt. Dadurch wird ein Einfliessen von Flüssigkeiten vermieden.

2.)

- 3 -

4.) Um eine handliche Säuberung des Fahrzeuges vornehmen zu können, ist der Boden in der Mitte mit einer dicht verschließbaren Abflußöffnung zu versehen. Der Abflußdeckel mit etwa 200 bis 300 mm ϕ erhält einen Syphonkrümmer, sodaß dünne Flüssigkeit auch während des Betriebes ablaufen kann. Zur Vermeidung von Verstopfungen ist der Krümmer oben mit einem Sieb zu versehen. Dicker Schmutz kann bei der Reinigung des Wagens durch die große Abflußöffnung fortgespült werden. Der Boden des Fahrzeuges ist zur Abflußöffnung leicht zu neigen. Hierdurch soll erreicht werden, daß alle Flüssigkeiten unmittelbar zur Mitte abfliessen. Ein Eindringen der Flüssigkeiten in die Röhren wird somit weitgehendst unterbunden.

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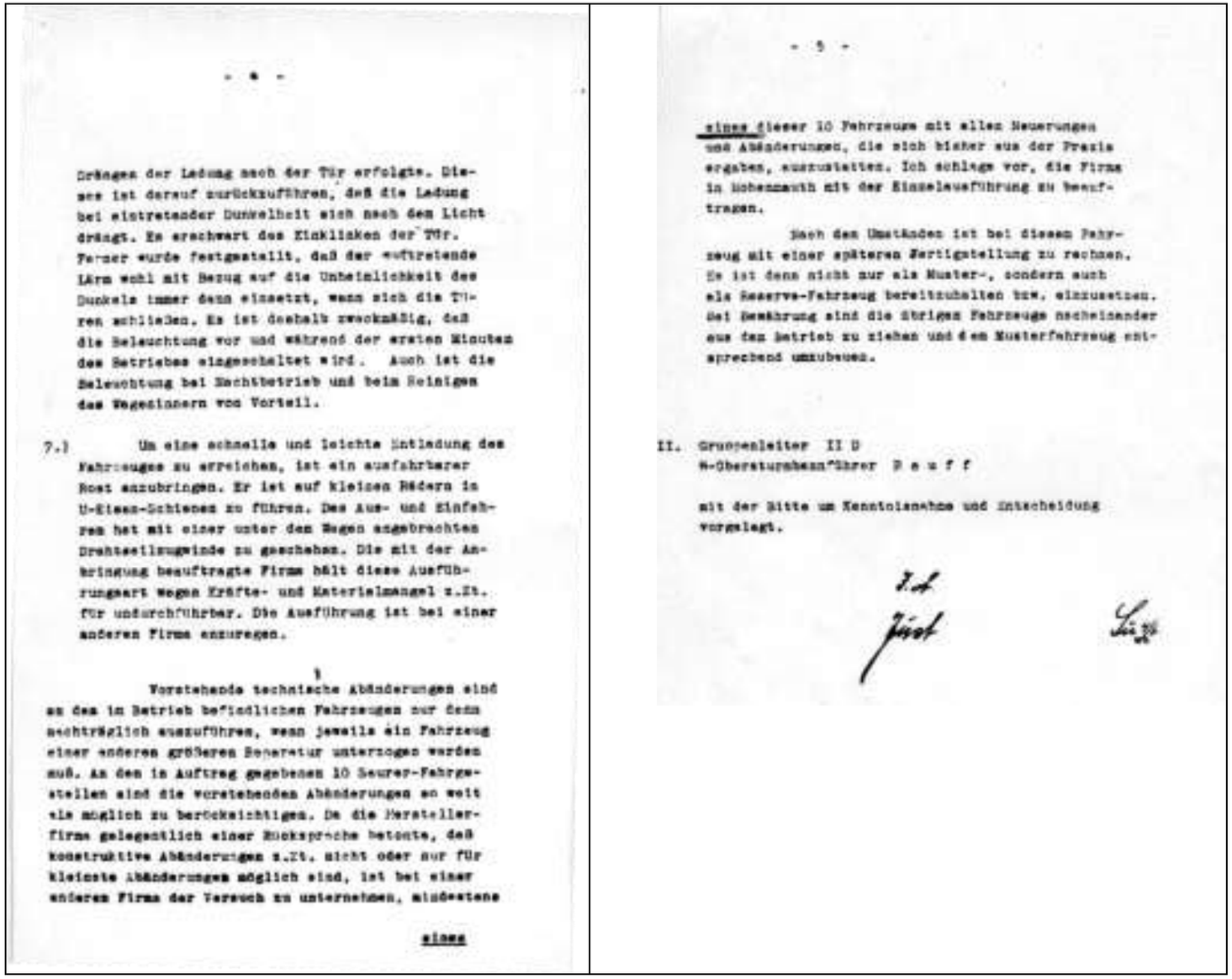
Rückerl continued (bottom of page 3 cropped due to scanning error)



- 4 -

Drängen der Ladung nach der Tür erfolgte. Dieses ist darauf zurückzuführen, daß die Ladung bei eintretender Dunkelheit sich nach dem Licht drängt. Es erschwert das Einklinken der Tür. Ferner wurde festgestellt, daß der auftretende Lärm wohl mit Bezug auf die Unheimlichkeit des Dunkels immer dann einsetzt, wenn sich die Türen schließen. Es ist deshalb zweckmäßig, daß die Beleuchtung vor und während der ersten Minuten des Betriebes eingeschaltet wird. Auch ist die Beleuchtung bei Nachtbetrieb und beim Reinigen des Wageninnern von Vorteil.

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einen

- 5 -

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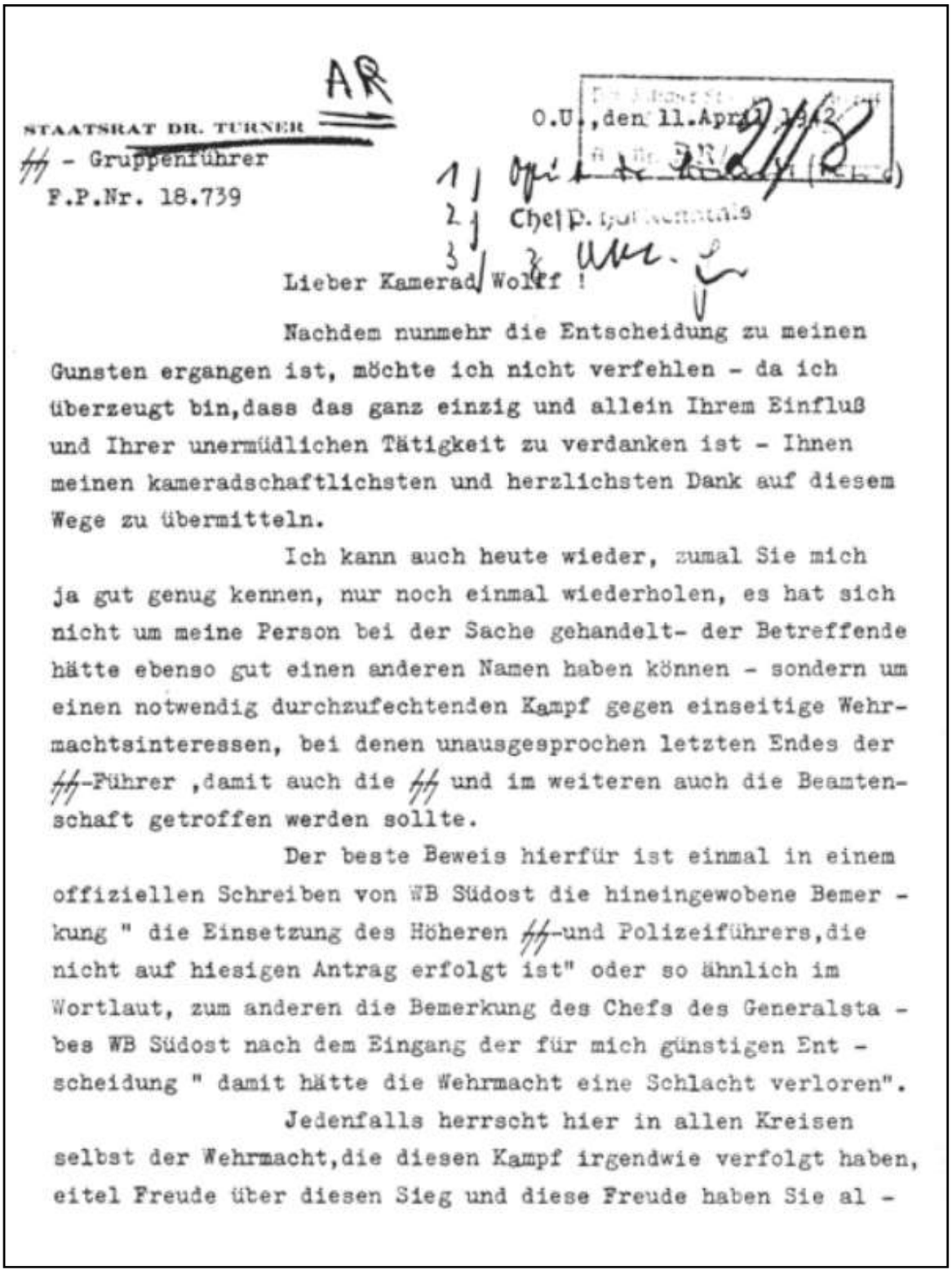
Nach den Umständen ist bei diesem Fahrzeug mit einer späteren Fertigstellung zu rechnen. Es ist dann nicht nur als Muster-, sondern auch als Reserve-Fahrzeug bereitzuhalten bzw. einzusetzen. Bei Bewährung sind die übrigen Fahrzeuge nacheinander aus dem Betrieb zu ziehen und dem Musterfahrzeug entsprechend umzubauen.

II. Gruppenleiter II D
N-Obersturmbannführer P e u f f

mit der Bitte um Kenntnisnahme und Entscheidung vorgelegt.

Rückerl continued

Appendix 6: The Turner Letter



AR

STAATSRAT DR. TURNER
SS - Gruppenführer
F.P.Nr. 18.739

O.U., den 11.Apr[illegible]

1) Opi
2) Chef P.
3) z. Akt.

Lieber Kamerad Wolff !

Nachdem nunmehr die Entscheidung zu meinen Gunsten ergangen ist, möchte ich nicht verfehlen - da ich überzeugt bin,dass das ganz einzig und allein Ihrem Einfluß und Ihrer unermüdlichen Tätigkeit zu verdanken ist - Ihnen meinen kameradschaftlichsten und herzlichsten Dank auf diesem Wege zu übermitteln.

Ich kann auch heute wieder, zumal Sie mich ja gut genug kennen, nur noch einmal wiederholen, es hat sich nicht um meine Person bei der Sache gehandelt- der Betreffende hätte ebenso gut einen anderen Namen haben können - sondern um einen notwendig durchzufechtenden Kampf gegen einseitige Wehrmachtsinteressen, bei denen unausgesprochen letzten Endes der SS-Führer ,damit auch die SS und im weiteren auch die Beamtenschaft getroffen werden sollte.

Der beste Beweis hierfür ist einmal in einem offiziellen Schreiben von WB Südost die hineingewobene Bemerkung " die Einsetzung des Höheren SS-und Polizeiführers,die nicht auf hiesigen Antrag erfolgt ist" oder so ähnlich im Wortlaut, zum anderen die Bemerkung des Chefs des Generalstabes WB Südost nach dem Eingang der für mich günstigen Entscheidung " damit hätte die Wehrmacht eine Schlacht verloren".

Jedenfalls herrscht hier in allen Kreisen selbst der Wehrmacht,die diesen Kampf irgendwie verfolgt haben, eitel Freude über diesen Sieg und diese Freude haben Sie al -

lein ,wie ich glaube,allen diesen Menschen bereitet .
Dafür meinen Dank !

Darf ich diese Gelegenheit benutzen, um Ihnen anliegend die Abschrift eines Briefes von mir an den Reichsführer vom 15.Januar 1942 zu übersenden, auf den ich bis heute ohne Antwort geblieben bin.Ich möchte nicht erinnern, weil solche Dinge wie ich weiss Zeit brauchen und ich mich nicht für berechtigt halte, den Reichsführer an die Erledigung einer Sache zu erinnern. Immerhin weiss ich,dass Sie für diese Dinge Interesse haben und warum ich Sie jetzt darauf aufmerksam mache, hat einfach seinen Grund darin, dass demnächst diese Frage mehr als akut wird . Schon vor Monaten habe ich alles an Juden im hiesigen Lande greifbare erschiessen und sämtliche Judenfrauen und=Kinder in einem Lager konzentrieren lassen und zugleich mit Hilfe des SD einen " Entlausungswagen " angeschafft,der nun in etwa 14 Tagen bis 4 Wochen auch die Räumung des Lagers endgültig durchgeführt haben wird,was allerdings seit Eintreffen von Meyssner und Übergabe dieser Lagerdinge an ihn, von ihm weitergeführt worden ist. Dann ist der Augenblick gekommen, in dem die unter der Genfer Konvention im Kriegsgefangenenlager bei..lichen jüdischen Offiziere nolens volens hinter die nicht mehr vorhandenen Angehörigen kommen und das dürfte immerhin leicht zu Komplikationen führen .

Werden nun die Betreffenden entlassen, so werden sie im Augenblick der Ankunft ihre endgültige Freiheit haben, aber wie ihre Rassegenossen nicht allzulange und damit dürfte dann diese ganze Frage endgültig erledigt sein . Das einzigste Bedenken könnten Rückwirkungen auf unsere Gefangenen in Canada sein, falls herauskommt, dass die Freigelassenen hier nicht frei herumlaufen... ich persönlich teile diese Bedenken nicht.

Mit den besten Wünschen für Ihr persönliches Wohlergehen, besten Grüssen und

H e i l H i t l e r !

bin ich wie stets

Ihr getreuer

Turner

Translation

Privy Councilor Dr. Turner
SS-Major General
F.P. Number 18.739

O.U., 11 April 11 1942

Dear Comrade Wolff!

After the decision has now been made in my favor, I don't want to fail – since I am convinced that this is singularly and only thanks to your influence and your tireless activity – to convey to you my most comradely and most heartfelt thanks in this way.

I can also again today, the more so since you know me well enough, only once more repeat that the matter did not have to do with my person – the person concerned could have just as easily had another name – but rather with a necessary battle that had to be fought out against one-sided Wehrmacht interests, by which in the final unspoken result the SS Führer, and therewith also the SS and further also the corps of civil servants would have been affected.

The best proof for this is, on the one hand, a remark woven into an official letter by Military Area Southeast "the appointment of the Higher SS and Police Leader, which did not occur due to the proposal here" or some wording like that, and on the other hand the remark of the Chief of General Staff of Military Area Southeast after receipt of the decision in my favor "herewith the Wehrmacht would have lost a battle."

In any event, pure joy prevails here about this victory in all circles even of the Wehrmacht who have somehow followed this struggle, and you alone have brought this joy to these people, as I believe. My thanks for that.

May I use this occasion to send you enclosed the duplicate of a letter by me to the Reichsführer of 15 January 1942 to which I have remained without an answer to this day. I don't want to remind, because such things take time as I know and I don't feel entitled to remind the Reichsführer about the settlement of an issue. I know after all that you have an interest for such matters and why I now draw your attention to it has its reason simply in the fact that this question is soon becoming more than critical. Already some months ago, I shot dead all the Jews I could get my hands on in this country, concentrated all the Jewish women and children in a camp and at once with the help of the SD acquired a "delousing van," which will have accomplished the definitive clearance of the camp in about 14 days to 4 weeks, which, however, was continued by Meyssner since his arrival and the turning over of these camp issues to him. Then the moment has come in which the Jewish officers located in the prisoner of war camp under the Geneva Convention get behind the no longer existing relatives – willingly or not – and that could after all easily lead to complications.

When those affected are being released, they would in the moment of arrival have their final freedom, but like their racial comrades not for very long and with that this entire question should be resolved once and for all. The onliest concern could be repercussions on our prisoners in Canada, if it comes to light that the freed persons do not run around freely here... I personally do not share these concerns.

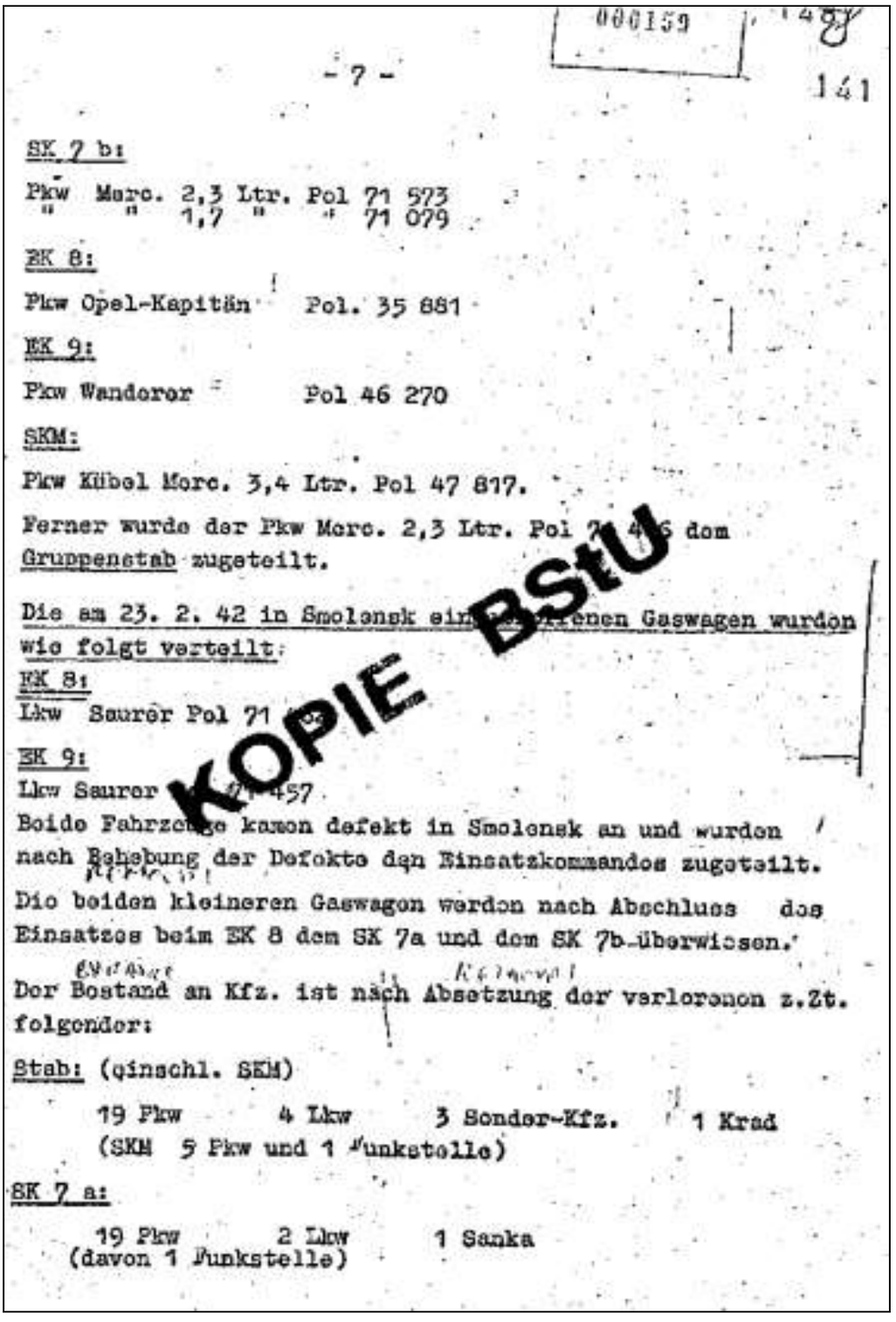
With the best wishes for your personal well being, best greetings and

Hail Hitler!

I am as always

your loyal
(signed Turner)

Appendix 7: *Einsatzgruppen* Report February 1942



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- 7 -

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SK 7 b:

Pkw Merc. 2,3 Ltr. Pol 71 573
" " 1,7 " " 71 079

EK 8:

Pkw Opel-Kapitän Pol. 35 881

EK 9:

Pkw Wanderer Pol 46 270

SKM:

Pkw Kübel Merc. 3,4 Ltr. Pol 47 817.

Ferner wurde der Pkw Merc. 2,3 Ltr. Pol 7[illegible]4[illegible]6 dem Gruppenstab zugeteilt.

Die am 23. 2. 42 in Smolensk eingetroffenen Gaswagen wurden wie folgt verteilt:

EK 8:

Lkw Saurer Pol 71 [illegible]

EK 9:

Lkw Saurer [illegible]457

Beide Fahrzeuge kamen defekt in Smolensk an und wurden nach Behebung der Defekte den Einsatzkommandos zugeteilt.

Die beiden kleineren Gaswagen werden nach Abschluss des Einsatzes beim EK 8 dem SK 7a und dem SK 7b überwiesen.

Der Bestand an Kfz. ist nach Absetzung der verlorenen z.Zt. folgender:

Stab: (einschl. SKM)

19 Pkw 4 Lkw 3 Sonder-Kfz. 1 Krad
(SKM 5 Pkw und 1 Funkstelle)

SK 7 a:

19 Pkw 2 Lkw 1 Sanka
(davon 1 Funkstelle)

KOPIE BStU

Activity and situation report of Einsatzgruppe B, of 1 March 1942, covering the time from 16 to 28 February 1942; here pages 7f.
Der Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR, ZUV 9, vol. 31, pp. 159f.

- 8 -

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SK 7 b:

23 Pkw (davon 1 Funkstelle) 3 Lkw 1 Sanka

EK 8:

35 Pkw 3 Lkw 1 Sanka 1 Gaswagen

EK 9:

36 Pkw (davon 1 Funkstelle) 5 Lkw 1 Gaswagen

Hiervon wurden durch Feindeinwirkung vernichtet: 10 Pkw.

Weiterhin wurden stark beschädigt: (Einschl. 4 Beute-Lkw) = 5 Lkw und 1 Krad Waffen- .

Bei weiteren 7 Pkw, die z.Zt. nicht fahrbereit sind, müssen die Schäden noch festgestellt werden. Es ist jedoch damit zu rechnen, daß mehrere wieder fahrbereit gemacht werden können.

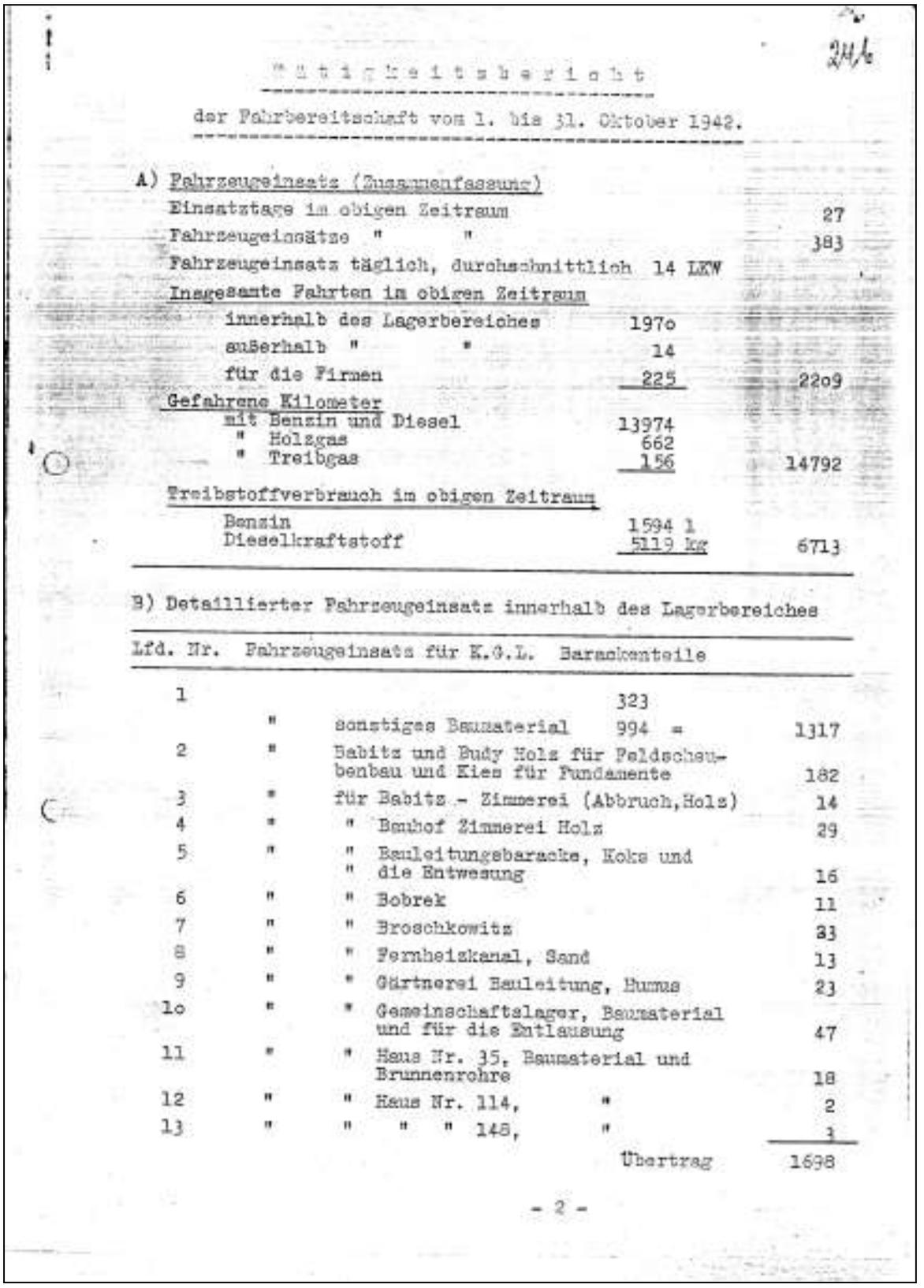
Von den in Mogilew beim EK 8 untergestellten Kfz. sind 1 Pkw und 1 Lkw bereits wieder instandgesetzt worden. Der Pkw wurde nach Smolensk überführt, während der Lkw in Mogilew verblieb, da mit diesem noch 2 Pkw, die hier nicht instandgesetzt werden können, nach Warschau transportiert werden sollen. Der Transport wird mit den Kfz. vom EK 8, die ebenfalls in Warschau repariert werden sollen, gemeinsam durchgeführt.

Damit beim wieder einsetzenden Vormarsch hinsichtlich der Besetzung der Kfz. (insbesondere auch der Beute-Kfz.) keine Schwierigkeiten entstehen, ist die Zuweisung von ca. 20 Fahrern erforderlich. Außerdem ist es beim Vormarsch unbedingt notwendig, alle schweren Lkw. - wie Werkstattwagen, Omnibus, Gaswagen und Tankwagen - mit 2 Fahrern zu besetzen. Entsprechende Zuweisungsanträge werden gesondert gestellt.

b) Ersatzteile:

Die bereits geschilderten Schwierigkeiten hinsichtlich der Beschaffung von Ersatzteilen bestehen nach wie vor.

KOPIE BStU



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Tätigkeitsbericht

der Fahrbereitschaft vom 1. bis 31. Oktober 1942.

A) Fahrzeugeinsatz (Zusammenfassung)

Einsatztage im obigen Zeitraum			27
Fahrzeugeinsätze " "			383
Fahrzeugeinsatz täglich, durchschnittlich 14 LKW			
Insgesamte Fahrten im obigen Zeitraum			
innerhalb des Lagerbereiches	1970		
außerhalb " "	14		
für die Firmen	225		2209
Gefahrene Kilometer			
mit Benzin und Diesel	13974		
" Holzgas	662		
" Treibgas	156		14792
Treibstoffverbrauch im obigen Zeitraum			
Benzin	1594 l		
Dieselkraftstoff	5119 kg		6713

B) Detaillierter Fahrzeugeinsatz innerhalb des Lagerbereiches

Lfd. Nr.	Fahrzeugeinsatz für K.G.L. Barackenteile		
1		323	
"	sonstiges Baumaterial	994 =	1317
2	" Babitz und Budy Holz für Feldscheu-benbau und Kies für Fundamente		182
3	" für Babitz - Zimmerei (Abbruch,Holz)		14
4	" " Bauhof Zimmerei Holz		29
5	" " Bauleitungsbaracke, Koks und " die Entwesung		16
6	" " Bobrek		11
7	" " Broschkowitz		33
8	" " Fernheizkanal, Sand		13
9	" " Gärtnerei Bauleitung, Humus		23
10	" " Gemeinschaftslager, Baumaterial und für die Entlausung		47
11	" " Haus Nr. 35, Baumaterial und Brunnenrohre		18
12	" " Haus Nr. 114, "		2
13	" " " " 148, "		3
		Übertrag	1698

- 2 -

Activity report of the Auschwitz motor pool for October 1942; Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv (Russian national war archives), Moscow, ref. 502-1-181, p. 246.

Appendix 8: Special Vehicles of the German Army

The technical data given for the two decontamination vehicles were taken from a German wartime brochure in the author's possession entitled *Bildermappe. Eingeführte Waffen und Geräte* (Picture Folder. Introduced Weapons and Devices), which contained a collection of numerous German army vehicles and their technical data.

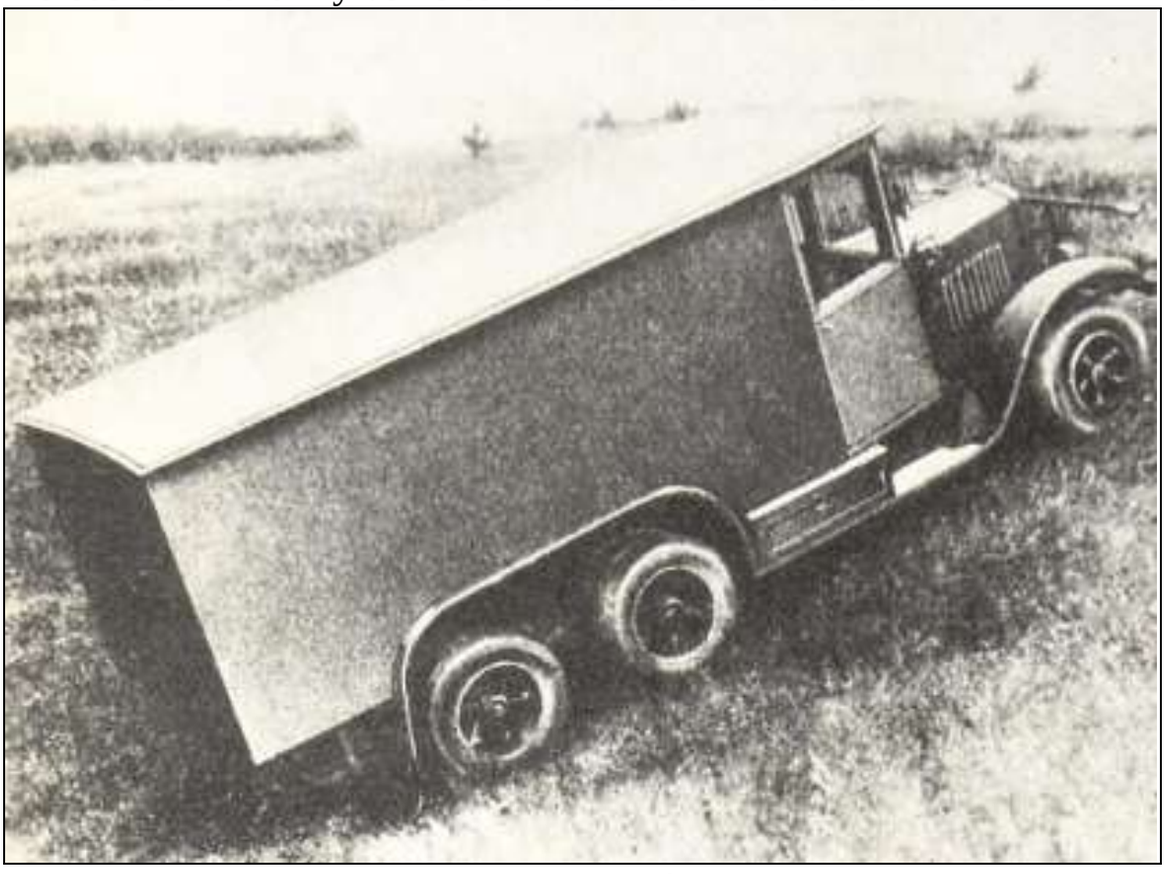


Illustration 23: Krupp L3H63 (picture from Milsom 1975, p. 104). Milsom does not give any indication as to the Sd.-Kfz. number assigned to this vehicle nor about its purpose or technical data. Since the vehicle did not seem to have had any special equipment, this might just have been a closed transportation van.

Illustration 24: Sd.-Kfz 92, personnel decontamination vehicle, Henschel 33G1 (picture from Milsom 1975, p. 144).
Purpose: decontamination of personnel and of heavy gas protection clothing used by the "fog units" [similar to ABC defense units]
Technical data: chassis: medium-size off-road capable 3 t truck. Warm water generation with a water brake driven by the engine with a performance of 44,000 kcal/h to heat the decontamination tub for heavy gas protection clothing und for warm water for two showers. Total weight: 9.3 tons.

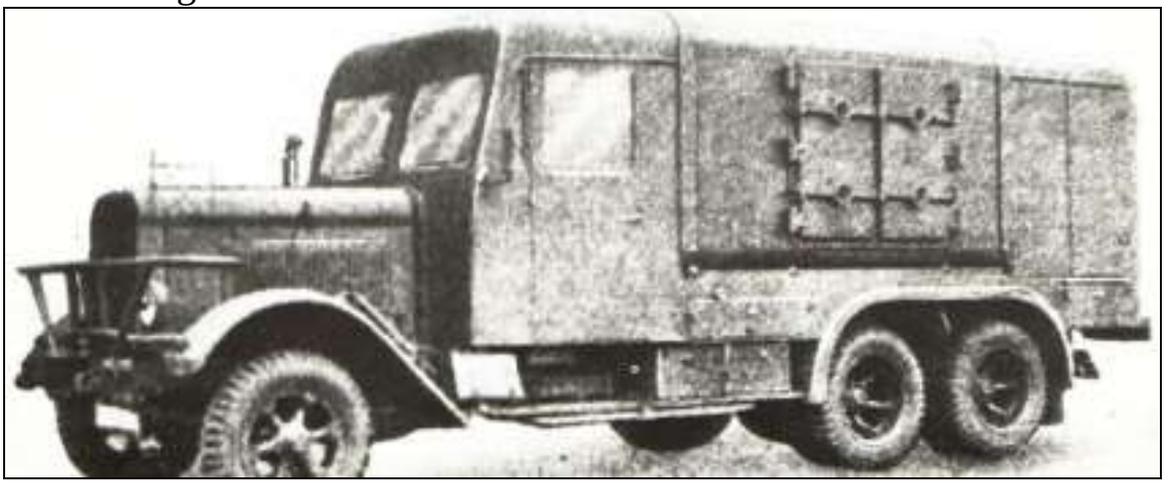
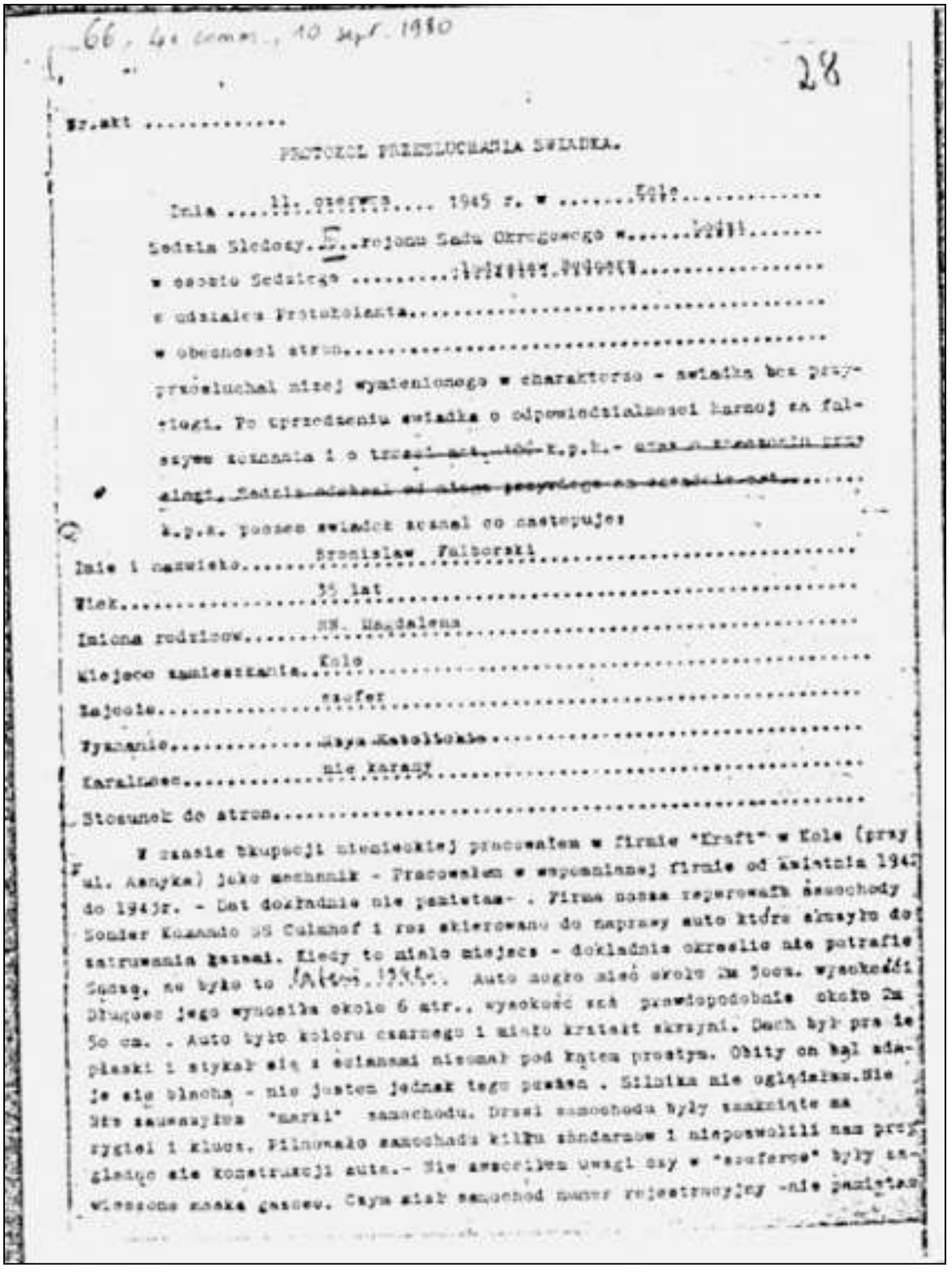


Illustration 25: Sd.-Kfz. 93, clothing decontamination vehicle, Henschel 33G1 (picture from Milsom 1975, p. 145)
Purpose: Assigned to the troop decontamination details for decontaminating uniforms, leather equipment, and gas masks with hot air and steam.
Technical data: chassis: medium-size off-road capable 3 t truck. Steam of 0.2 bar, 50 kg/h; air of 120°C, 3,600 m³/h; 2 chambers for 30 uniforms each of 2 m³ volume each; Duration of decontamination: 1½ hours for uniforms (combined steam-hot air process); ½ hour for leather equipment (hot air process). Total weight: 9.7 tons.

Illustration 26: Opel Blitz, A-Type (=all wheel drive), 3 tons. Together with the S-Type (standard drive), almost 100,000 of this truck were delivered to the Wehrmacht during World War II, some built by Daimler Benz, Borgward, and Klöckner-Deutz under license. It came with a broad range of coachworks. Hence, there was nothing special about this truck at all. Engine: gasoline, 3,600 ccm, 6 cyl., 68 HP. With such an engine, its exhaust gases were lethal. (Picture from Milsom 1975, p. 174)

Appendix 9: Interrogation Protocol of Witness Falborski

See my comments in Chapter 3.6.2.3.



66, Gas vans, 10 Sept. 1980

28

Sr.akt .....

PROTOKÓŁ PRZESŁUCHANIA ŚWIADKA.

Dnia ....11. stycznia.... 1945 r. w .....Kole.....

Sędzia Śledczy.....rejonu Sądu Okręgowego w.....Kolu.....

w osobie Sędziego .....[illegible].....

z udziałem Protokolanta.....

w obecności stron.....

przesłuchał niżej wymienionego w charakterze - świadka bez przysięgi. Po uprzedzeniu świadka o odpowiedzialności karnej za fałszywe zeznania i o treści art. 106 k.p.k.- ~~oraz o konieczności przysięgi. Sędzia odebrał od niego przyrzeczenie co do treści zeznań~~ k.p.s. poczem świadek zeznał co następuje:

Imię i nazwisko.....Stanisław Falborski.....

Wiek.....35 lat.....

Imiona rodziców.....NN. Magdalena.....

Miejsce zamieszkania.....Kolo.....

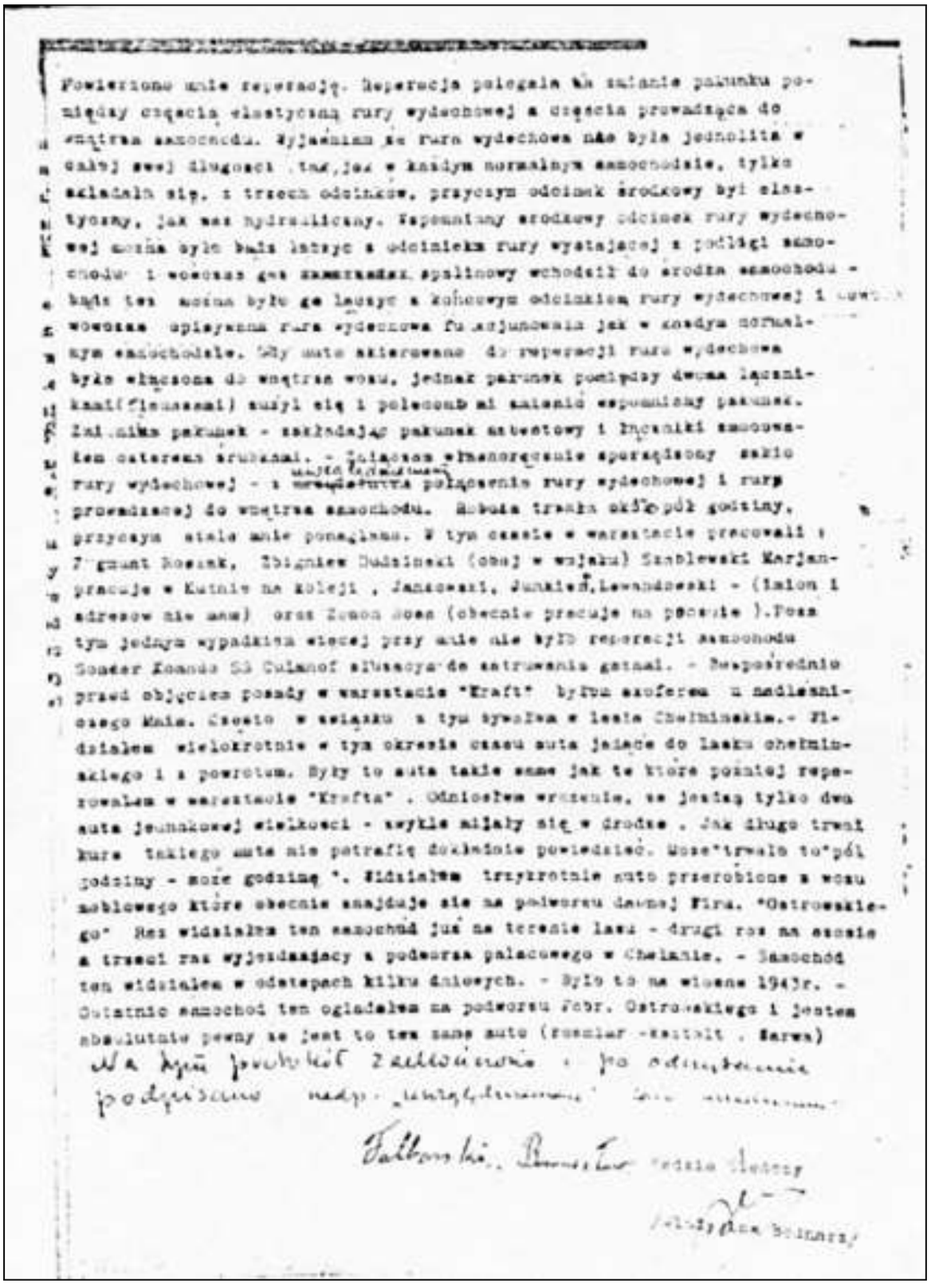
Zajęcie.....szofer.....

Wyznanie.....Wiary Katolickiej.....

Karalność.....nie karany.....

Stosunek do stron.....

W czasie okupacji niemieckiej pracowałem w firmie "Kraft" w Kole (przy ul. Asnyka) jako mechanik - Pracowałem w wspomnianej firmie od kwietnia 1942 do 1943r. - Lat dokładnie nie pamiętam- . Firma nasza reperowała samochody Sonder Kommando SS Culmhof i raz skierowano do naprawy auto które służyło do zatruwania gazami. Kiedy to miało miejsce - dokładnie określić nie potrafię Sądzę, że było to [illegible] 1943r. Auto długie około 5m 50cm. wysokości. Długość jego wynosiła około 6 mtr., wysokość zaś prawdopodobnie około 2m 50 cm. . Auto było koloru czarnego i miało kratkowate okienki. Dach był prawie płaski i stykał się z ścianami niemal pod kątem prostym. Obity on był zdaje się blachą - nie jestem jednak tego pewien . Silnika nie oglądałem.Nie wie zeznającym "marki" samochodu. Drzwi samochodu były zamknięte na zygiel i klucz. Policjanci samochodu kilku żandarmów i niepozwolili nam przyglądać się konstrukcji auta.- Nie zwróciłem uwagi czy w "szoferce" były zamontowane okienka gazowe. Czy miał samochód numer rejestracyjny -nie pamiętam



Powierzono mnie reperację. Reperacja polegała na założeniu połączenia pomiędzy częścią elastyczną rury wydechowej a częścią prowadzącą do wnętrza samochodu. Wyjaśniam że rura wydechowa nie była jednolita w całej swej długości tak,jak w każdym normalnym samochodzie, tylko składała się z trzech odcinków, przyczym odcinek środkowy był elastyczny, jak węż hydrauliczny. Wspomniany środkowy odcinek rury wydechowej można było łatwo z odcinkiem rury wystającej z podłogi samochodu i wówczas gaz zamarszałek spalinowy wchodził do środka samochodu - bądź też można było go łączyć z końcowym odcinkiem rury wydechowej i wówczas cała rura wydechowa funkcjonowała jak w każdym normalnym samochodzie. Aby auto skierowane do reperacji rura wydechowa była włączona do wnętrza wozu, jednak parownik pomiędzy dwoma łącznikami(flanszami) zużył się i polecono mi założyć wspomniany pakunek. Założyłem pakunek - składający pakunek azbestowy i łączniki samochodowe ostrymi śrubami. - Całkowicie włączenie sparaliżowany został rury wydechowej - z wnętrzem połączenie rury wydechowej i rury prowadzącej do wnętrza samochodu. Robota trwała około pół godziny, przyczym stale mnie pouczano. W tym czasie w warsztacie pracowali : Zygmunt Bosiak, Zbigniew Dudziński (obaj w wojsku) Szablewski Marjan- pracuje w Kutnie na kolei , Janowski, Junkiel, Lewandowski - (imion i adresów nie znam) oraz Zenon Boss (obecnie pracuje na poczcie).Poza tym jednym wypadkiem wtedy przy mnie nie było reperacji samochodu Sonder Komando SS Culmhof służącego do zatruwania gazami. - Bezpośrednio przed objęciem posady w warsztacie "Kraft" byłem szoferem u nadleśniczego Kmin. Często w związku z tym bywałem w lesie Chełmińskim.- Widziałem wielokrotnie w tym okresie czasu auta jadące do lasku chełmińskiego i z powrotem. Były to auta takie same jak te które później reperowałem w warsztacie "Krafta" . Odniosłem wrażenie, że jeżdżą tylko dwa auta jednakowej wielkości - zwykle mijały się w drodze . Jak długo trwał kurs takiego auta nie potrafię dokładnie powiedzieć. Może trwało to pół godziny - może godzinę ". Widziałem trzykrotnie auto przerobione z wozu meblowego które obecnie znajduje się na podwórzu dawnej Firm. "Ostrowskiego" Raz widziałem ten samochód już na terenie lasu - drugi raz na szosie a trzeci raz wyjeżdżający z podwórza pałacowego w Chełmnie. - Samochód ten widziałem w odstępach kilku dniowych. - Było to na wiosnę 1943r. - Ostatnio samochód ten oglądałem na podwórzu Fabr. Ostrowskiego i jestem absolutnie pewny że jest to ten sam auto (rozmiar -kształt . barwa)

Na żądanie powyższe zeznanie [illegible]

Fałbowski Ryszard [illegible]

Translation

Interrogation protocol of the witness

On 11 June 1945 Władysław BEDNARZ, Investigating Judge at section IV of the Łódź District Court, interrogated the below witness, who was left unsworn. After the witness had been informed that giving a false testimony is an offense, he declared the following:

Name and First name: Bronisław FALBORSKI
Age: 35 years
Names of parents: [father] unknown, [mother] Magdalena
Residence: Koło
Profession: Driver
Religion: Roman Catholic
Previous convictions: none

Declaration by the witness

During the German occupation I worked as a mechanic for the German company "KRAFT" in Koło, Asnyk street. I worked for said company from April 1942 to 1943. I don't remember the exact dates. Our company repaired vehicles of the SS *Sonderkommando* from Culmhof. Once I was ordered to repair a vehicle which served to poison with gases. I cannot exactly remember when this happened. I think that it was in the summer of 1942. The vehicle was roughly 2.50 m high. Its length was 6 m, but its height [width] probably 2.50 m. The vehicle's color was black and had the shape of a box. The roof was flat and rectangular to its walls. I believe that it was lined with sheet metal, but I am not certain about it. I did not look at the engine, and I did not pay attention to the make of the vehicle. The vehicle's doors could be locked with latch and keys. The vehicle was guarded by several police men who did not allow me to investigate its design. I did not pay attention to whether a gas mask hung next to the driver's seat. I cannot recall whether the vehicle had a registration number. I was entrusted with the repair. It consisted of replacing a part between the elastic part of the exhaust pipe and the part which led into the vehicle's interior. I clarify that the exhaust pipe did not consist of one piece as in normal vehicles, but of three parts, where the middle part was elastic like a hose. Said middle part could either be connected to a pipe located in the floor of the vehicle – with the result that the exhaust gases flowed into the vehicle's in-

terior – or to the rear part of the exhaust pipe; in that case the exhaust gases flowed into the open like with a normal vehicle. When the vehicle was turned in for repairs, the middle part of the pipe was connected with the interior of the vehicle, but the part between these two parts was worn, and I was ordered to replace it. I replaced it by mounting a new part made of asbestos fixed with four screws. I include a drawing of the exhaust pipe which I have made which shows the connection between the exhaust pipe and the vehicle's interior. This work took roughly half an hour, while I was constantly goaded to hurry up. At that time the following persons worked in that work shop: Zygmunt Roszak, Zbigniew Dudzinski – both are in the army [today] –, Szablewski Marian, who today works in Kutno with the railway, Jankowski, Junkiert, and Lewandowski, whose first names and addresses I cannot remember, as well as finally Zenon Rosa, who currently works for the mail services. Apart from this individual case there were no repair works on a vehicle of the Special Command SS [K]ulmhof serving to poison with gas.

Immediately before my employment at the "Kraft" workshop I had been driver for the forester Maj. In that connection I was frequently in the forest of Chełmno. In that period of time I frequently saw vehicles driving into the Chełmno forest and back. These were vehicles like those which I repaired later on in the "Kraft" workshop. I had the impression that there were only two vehicles of the same size which encountered each other on their way. I cannot say anymore with exactness how long a journey of such a vehicle lasted. Maybe it lasted half an hour to an hour. Three times I saw a converted moving truck van which is currently in the courtyard of the former "Ostrowski" company. Once I had already seen this vehicle in the forest, the second time on the road and the third time when it was just coming out of the courtyard of the Chełmno castle. This was in spring 1943. I saw this vehicle repeatedly with a gap of several days. Recently I saw this truck in the courtyard of the Ostrowski factory, and I am absolutely certain that it is the same vehicle (size – shape – color).

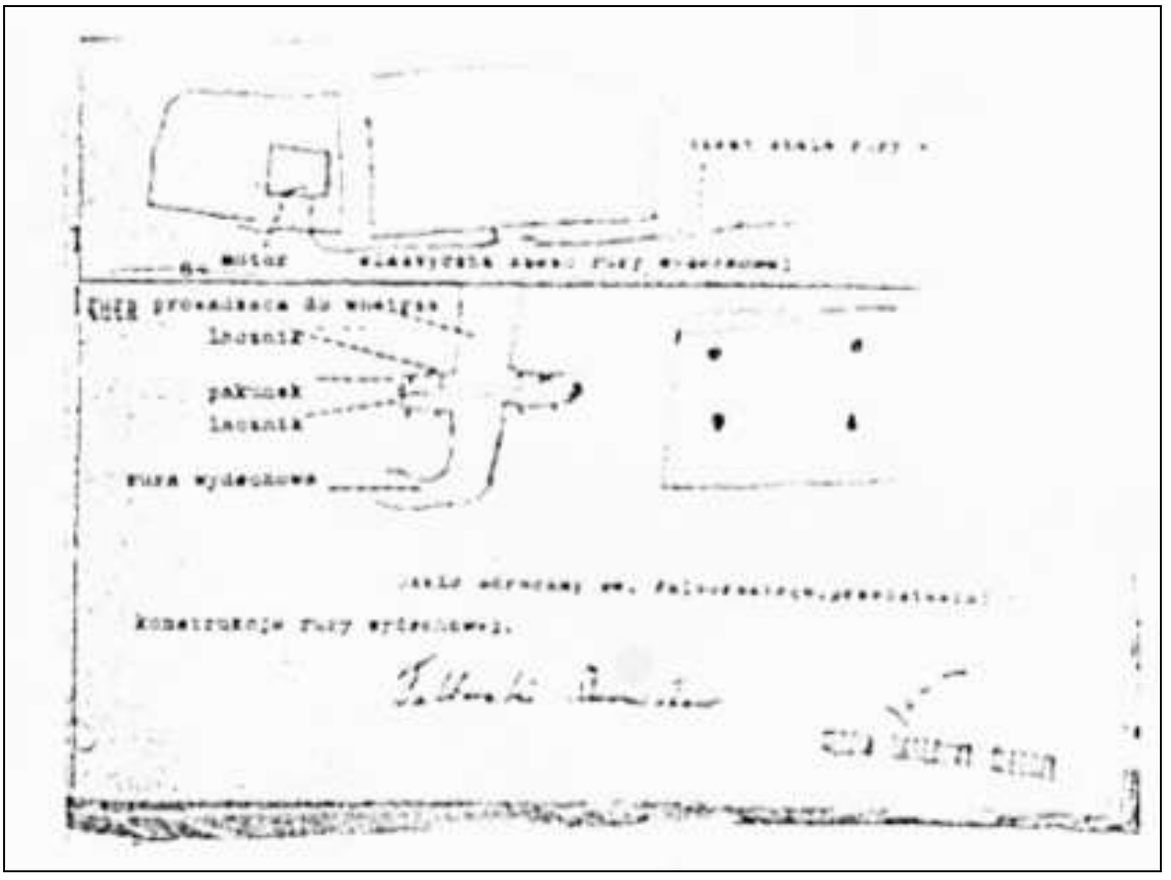
This concludes the interrogation protocol. Signed after reading out.

(signed) Falborski Bronisław

Władysław Bednarz

Investigating Judge

Drawing included in Falborski's affidavit

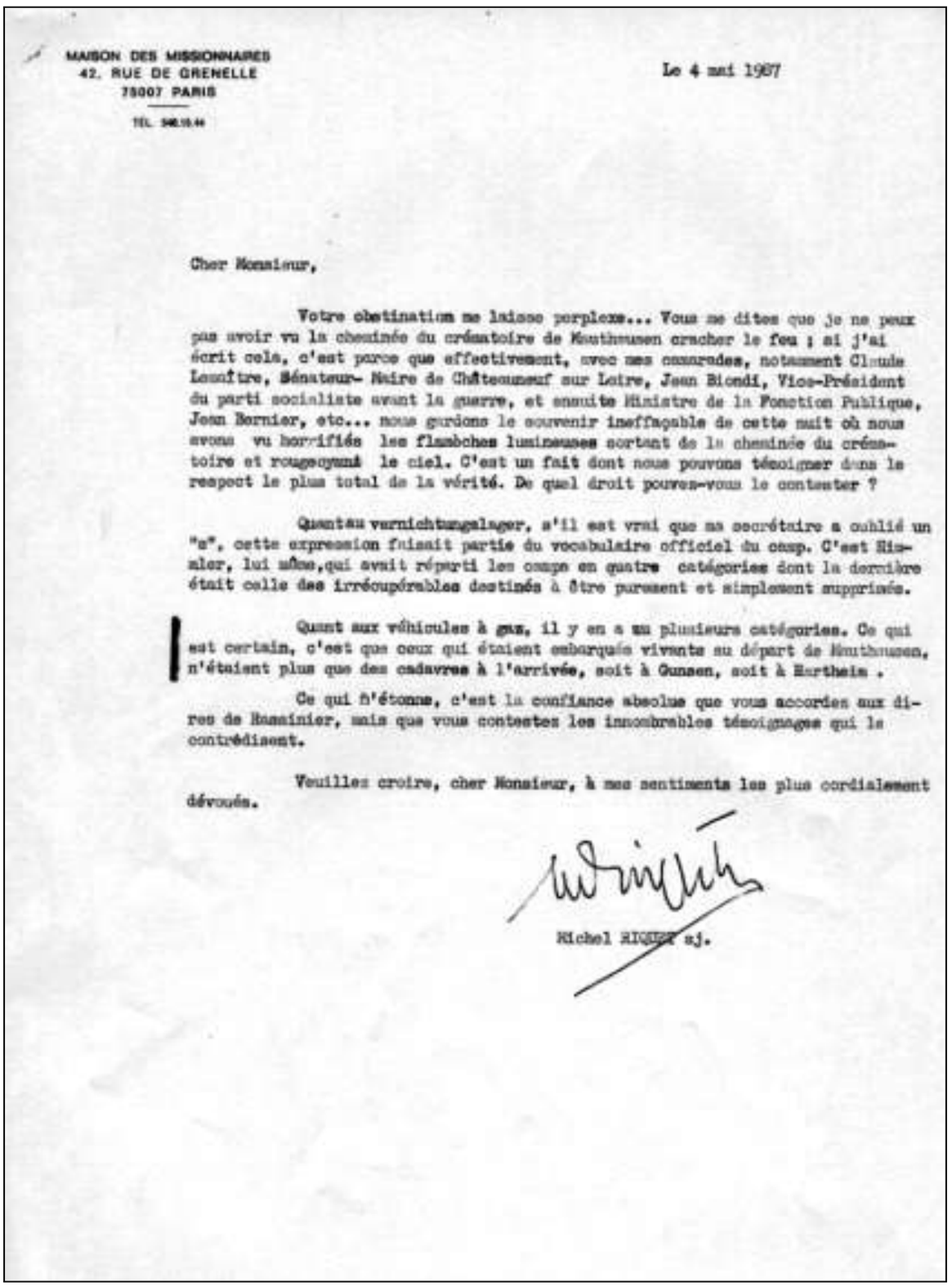


Translation of captions:

Polish	*English*
Elasticzna czesc rury wydechowej	Flexible part of exhaust pipe
Czesc satla rury wydechowej	Sturdy part of exhaust pipe
Rura prowadzaca do wnetrza	Pipe leading to outside
Lacznik	Connection
Pakunek	Device
Rura wydechowa	Exhaust pipe

Appendix 10: Correspondence

Letter on the "Gas Vans" of Mauthausen



MAISON DES MISSIONNAIRES
42, RUE DE GRENELLE
75007 PARIS
TEL. 548.10.44

Le 4 mai 1987

Cher Monsieur,

Votre obstination me laisse perplexe... Vous me dites que je ne peux pas avoir vu la cheminée du crématoire de Mauthausen cracher le feu ; si j'ai écrit cela, c'est parce que effectivement, avec mes camarades, notamment Claude Lemaître, Sénateur- Maire de Châteauneuf sur Loire, Jean Biondi, Vice-Président du parti socialiste avant la guerre, et ensuite Ministre de la Fonction Publique, Jean Bernier, etc... nous gardons le souvenir ineffaçable de cette nuit où nous avons vu horrifiés les flammèches lumineuses sortant de la cheminée du crématoire et rougeoyant le ciel. C'est un fait dont nous pouvons témoigner dans le respect le plus total de la vérité. De quel droit pouvez-vous le contester ?

Quant au vernichtungslager, s'il est vrai que ma secrétaire a oublié un "s", cette expression faisait partie du vocabulaire officiel du camp. C'est Himmler, lui même,qui avait réparti les camps en quatre catégories dont la dernière était celle des irréoupérables destinés à être purement et simplement supprimés.

Quant aux véhicules à gaz, il y en a eu plusieurs catégories. Ce qui est certain, c'est que ceux qui étaient embarqués vivants au départ de Mauthausen, n'étaient plus que des cadavres à l'arrivée, soit à Gunsen, soit à Hartheim .

Ce qui m'étonne, c'est la confiance absolue que vous accordez aux dires de Rassinier, mais que vous contestez les innombrables témoignages qui le contredisent.

Veuillez croire, cher Monsieur, à mes sentiments les plus cordialement dévoués.

Michel RICHTER sj.

Translation and Comments by P. Marais

4 May 1987

Dear Sir,

Your obstinacy leaves me perplexed... You tell me that I cannot have seen flames shooting out of the chimney of the crematory in Mauthausen. If I wrote this, then I did so because effectively, together with my comrades, notably Claude Lemaître, Senator and Mayor of Châteauneuf sur Loire, Jean Biondi, vice president of the Socialist party before the war and later minister for public services, Jean Bernier, etc.... we keep the ineffaceable memory of that night when we saw with horror the bright flames coming from the crematory chimney which reddened the sky. This is a fact to which we can attest with all due respect for the total truth. With what right can you contest this?

Regarding the *Vernichtungslager*, even if my secretary forgot an s, the expression was part of the official camp vocabulary. Himmler himself has divided the camps into four categories, the last of which was destined for the hopeless cases who had to be liquidated, purely and simply.

Regarding the gas vans, there were several categories. What is certain is that those who entered them in Mauthausen, arrived as mere corpses in Gunsen [sic] or in Hartheim.

What astounds me is the confidence you have in the Rassinier's claims, but that you contest the innumerable witness statements contradicting him.

With my best regards

Father Michel RIQUET

Comments by Pierre Marais

During an exchange of letters with pastor Riquet [see previous page], a former inmate of the concentration camp Mauthausen who had published an article in the Paris daily *Le Monde* on 5 October 1986, he sent me a publication about the problem of the gas vans. It is a special reprint of the numbers 123 and 124 of *Le Monde juif*, the periodical of the Centre de documentation juive contemporaine (Jewish Contemporary Documentation Center) located in Paris, which had been deposited in

the first trimester of 1987 "as legal evidence." Chapter III of this publication bears the title "Assassinats par gaz dans des véhicules spécialement aménagés (*Sonderwagen*)" (gas murders in especially equipped vehicles). On the one hand it is a mere summary of the arguments as published in the anthology *Les Chambres à gaz, secret d'État* (the French edition of *Nazi Mass Murder*), but on the other hand it contains hitherto unpublished details, which appear to indicate that the author, Pierre-Serge Choumoff, who had written the chapter on Mauthausen in said anthology, managed to obtain new information.

First of all I need to emphasize that Choumoff translated the German term "Sonderwagen" erroneously as "camion spécialement aménagé" (especially equipped van), which gives the impression that the German prefix "Sonder-" gives the term a suspicious meaning. In the caption of Choumoff's illustration 4 (p. 40) "Sonderwagen" is even shamelessly translated as "gas van."[133]

Choumoff distinguishes between two types of allegedly used "gas vans" (p. 37): "exhaust gas vehicles" (sic) and "gas vans operated with Zyklon B." I will not dwell on these definitions, which make no sense from a technical point of view.

When describing the vehicles of the first category, the author quotes court verdicts, confessions and other witness statements, and he names the following decisive feature of these "gas vans" (p. 35):

> *"It was a hermetically closed van, in whose interior exhaust gases, but certainly also other gases were piped."*

So out of nowhere we are told about the existence of "multi-gas vans"! Choumoff writes (*ibid.*):

> *"Soon* [this van] *drove around within the* [Mauthausen] *camp* [...], *until its human load was no longer alive, upon which it drove this load to the crematory."*

This latter claim gives rise to two questions:

a) What was the reason to drive the van around within (or maybe also outside of) the camp – allegedly to generate the needed exhaust gas to kill the victims – if the same volume could have been produced just as efficiently – or maybe even more efficiently – with a stationary van (provided it had a gasoline engine), which would also have saved precious fuel?

---

[133] Kogon *et al.* (1984, p. 79) mistranslated the term "*Der S-Wagen*" as "*Le camion à gaz*" (the gas van) when quoting document 501-PS. If that isn't a forgery, what is?

b) How could this "driving around within the camp," which must have attracted the inmate's attention, be reconciled with the repeatedly claimed secret nature of these extermination activities?

Choumoff claims furthermore that these "especially equipped vans" gassed their victims "during a ride of some 5 km between Mauthausen and Gusen." This implies that those vans could safely operate for a considerable span of time (at least the time it takes to drive 5 km, that is, 8 minutes or more) while their exhaust pipe was connected to a hermetically sealed cargo box – which I dispute once more emphatically. Moreover we are told – and not for the first time – that this van was indeed a "coach" (p. 37).

[*Comments by the present author:* In order to emphasize the absurdity of these Mauthausen gas van claims, permit me to quote from a "primary" source instead of relying on Choumoff. It is a list compiled in 1945 by a former inmate clerk of the Mauthausen Camp, Ernst Martin:[134]

> *"Gas auto*
> *An inmate transport car was equipped in a way that 'Zyklon B' could also*[!] *be introduced. The car loaded inmates in Mauthausen, gassed them during transit, unloaded them at the crematorium in Gusen and on the way back loaded inmates in Gusen, gassed them during transit and brought them to the crematorium in Mauthausen."*

Hence it was a true gassing merry-go-round, wasting fuel along the way – while there was allegedly a stationary Zyklon B gas chamber in Mauthausen all along.

Whereas the witnesses quoted earlier in the present study claimed that the "gas vans" were either a Saurer, a Diamond, an Opel, or a Renault truck, Choumoff presents us a "witness" who "believes that the vehicle was a Mercedes [...] of one and a half or two tons" (p. 38). Considering the fact that this witness was actually the head of the transport department, he had to know it. However, if assuming an average weight of 60 kg for each victim, a maximum load of two tons would have allowed only up to 32 victims (plus the driver) to enter this van, which is in conflict with all witness statements.

---

134 "Aufstellung über die Art der Ermorderung von Häftlingen im K.L. Mauthausen" by Ernst Martin, a former inmate clerk, dated 8 May 1945, Archiv Museum Mauthausen, ref. DÖW 2721; Klamper 1991, p. 33.

Anyway, with this new make and model we truly have an astounding variety of engines and chassis allegedly used. This did most certainly not facilitate the task of the company which had to custom-tailor the "hermetically sealed cargo box" and thusly turn innocuous vehicles into "especially equipped vans"! SA]

At its end Choumoff's paper contains a gem which I will not withhold from the reader:

> *"I know – because I have heard it –, that gas vans existed back then and how they operated."*

The decisive point here is that Choumoff's description of the way these "gas vans" allegedly operated is so rudimentary and yet at once expressed with such resolve that it is impossible to take this assertion at face value. At the end of the day, Choumoff merely repeats a rumor: "because I have heard it," and that's probably the essence of his essay.

In connection with his statements about the "exhaust gas vehicles" (p. 39) we learn about "the declaration of a witness" talking "about a *hermetically closed vehicle* [...], a van [...] equipped in such a way that its exhaust gases could be split. One part was piped into the van's interior, where the inmates were." Now this is much more interesting:

When first turning to the issue of gas vans, I asked how an engine of a vehicle could operate, if its exhaust gases were piped into an *enclosed* cargo box. This peculiarity runs like a red thread through all descriptions of these vehicles, and I posit that a manual or automatic device must have existed within the exhaust system permitting the release of some of the exhaust gases directly to the exterior. Although such a device would have prevented a pressure build-up inside the cargo box and thus its leakage or destruction, it is questionable whether enough gas would have entered the cargo box under such circumstances to affect a swift asphyxiation. This would have been possible only, if the allegedly "hermetically sealed" cargo box was exactly *not* sealed but rather sported some opening(s) through which the gas could have escaped in order that the cargo box fulfills the role of the muffler. (In this context I remind the reader of the logic underlying the first change requested by the Just document.) However, if assuming that such a device to split the exhaust gases was indeed present in those vehicles, and when considering the temperatures and the corrosive nature of the exhaust gases, then the manufacture of such a device would have required the use of special stainless steel, which was rare and expensive in Germany at that time.

Just as no reference can be found to an extant "gas van" in the pertinent literature, no indication exists in any publication that such a device has ever been found. The investigation of such a van would have made conclusions possible regarding the reality of these "murder vans" as well as their operational mode. Instead we are being fobbed off with vague, imprecise declarations which do not stand up to scrutiny, and we are served a hodge-podge of witness statements whose improbability inevitable have to puzzle us.

For the second category of vehicles mentioned by Choumoff, the "gas vans operated with Zyklon B," the difficulties with the engine do not apply, since here the exhaust gases would have been emitted normally. As a matter of fact, it can be stated with certainty that such "gas vans" did indeed exist, but merely as disinfestation vans, as I have described in Chapter 2.3.

This leads us to the more general question of "Zyklon B gas chambers," which isn't the topic of this study, though. Yet we cannot but indicate that Choumoff describes the technique to insert the gas into the cargo box only very cursorily:

> *"The gas was* […] *thrown into the interior of the vans from the driver's cabin during transit."* (p. 39)
>
> *"The conversion* [of a police van into a gassing van] *consisted mainly of sealing the interior of the van."* (p. 42)
>
> *"A tin container containing the Zyklon-B gas was thrown in during transit from the driver's cabin."* (*Ibid.*)

[*Comments by the present author:* Imagine the scene: two SS men sit on the front seat of the truck. One of them wants to open a Zyklon B can, for which a massive can-opener has to be hit with a hammer. However, in order not to poison themselves, both SS men have to don gas masks at first. Since that cannot be done while driving, they have to stop in order to don the masks. Once properly protected, the two continue their journey. However, since the gas mask severely restricts the driver's field of vision – not to mention steamy glasses – the truck is at a high risk of having an accident. Next the co-driver opens the can. While the truck lumbers along, driven by a half-blind driver around corners and through potholes, how many Zyklon B pellets will the co-driver spill into the driver's cabin in the process? Then he opens the window to the back of the truck and tries to pour in the poison. How much of it will the inmates throw right back at him? And if they stand cram-packed right up to the window: how is the co-driver going to get that stuff into

the compartment in between those intended victims in the first place? Moreover, how is he going to close the window, if the victims start fighting for their lives? And finally, what if one of the victims close to the window managed to carry some hard object with him, like a stone, and uses it to break the window?

I think that this little excursion suffices to expose the utter absurdity of this claim about Zyklon B gassings during transit, initiated from the driver's cabin. No sane person would ever have tried this. SA]

To top it off, we are also told that this vehicle, a so-called "*grüne Minna*" (German prisoner transport vehicle) "was conducted by the camp commander personally most of the time" (*ibid.*).

[*Comments by the present author:* Sure, the boss of a 50,000 person enterprise personally drives a prison transport van remodeled to kill people. If that doesn't make the alert reader realize that we are dealing with pure atrocity propaganda, what will? SA]

It goes without saying that the author doesn't utter a word about the security measures necessary when dealing with hydrogen cyanide – ventilation, neutralizing of the gas, touching the victims etc. (The interested reader may consult material about U.S. execution gas chambers in order to find out, how difficult it is to gas one single person (Leuchter/Faurisson/Rudolf 2017). According to Choumoff the operation is said to have been a cakewalk.

Hence this work does not improve our knowledge about the matter at all. The boastful declamations with which the editor's introduction is riddled[135] – "collective work of truth," "helping the truth about certain points to prevail [...]. The goal is accomplished," "The facts are recounted, undeniable, definitive," "These are not only veracious but also true documents" (sic) – cannot placate my skepticism.

We know how these almost lyrical assertions are substantiated in the case of the "gas vans." Let me quote a last example of the method with which the author wants to help the truth to prevail:

> *"The determined anomalies do indeed prove* [...] *that the eighty cases of death, which are said to have been caused by 'lung tuberculosis,' in reality were probably murders in a gas van."*

Any comment is superfluous.

I had asked pastor Riquet to forward a request to the author of this paper asking him to explain the operational mode of the "gas vans" al-

[135] Roger Heim is the editor of this tome.

legedly deployed at Mauthausen. I did not receive a response. What does the clergyman think about it? In his letter to me of 4 May 1987 he wrote:

> *"Regarding the gas vans, there were several categories. What is certain is that those who entered them in Mauthausen, arrived as mere corpses in Gunsen* [sic] *or in Hartheim."*

Fact is that pastor Riquet doesn't know much that is certain about these homicidal vans which were allegedly deployed in the camp where he was interned. One can of course assume that he is not a technician, in contrast to Mr. Choumoff.

[*Comments by the present author:* Finally, this raises the question: Why were "gas vans" deployed at the Mauthausen Camp to begin with, if, as orthodox historians claim, there was also a Zyklon B "gas chamber"? SA]

Letter by Mathias Beer to Pierre Marais

Mathias B e e r
Stockheimerstraße 25
7000 Stuttgart 40

Stuttgart, den 20.11.1987

Bezug: Ihr Schreiben vom 30.Oktober 1987
Betr.: Gaswagen-Komplex

Herrn
Pierre Marais
Rue de la Poste
St-Laurent de la Prée
F-17450 Fouras

Sehr geehrter Herr Marais,

haben Sie herzlichen Dank für Ihr Schreiben vom 30.Oktober 1987, in dem Sie Ihr Interesse an meinen Ausführungen über die Entwicklung der Gaswagen, ganz besonders aber an Fragen, die ich wegen meiner Fragestellung entweder nicht oder weniger explizit angesprochen habe, bekunden.

Meiner Antwort auf die einzelnen von Ihnen gestellten Fragen möchte ich einige grundsätzliche Bemerkungen zu meinem Aufsatz vorausschicken. Mein Anliegen war es, einen bis dahin wenig und nicht in allen Details bekannten Vorgang der nationalsozialistischen Massentötung zu erhellen. Dabei ist es mir gelungen über die Erkenntnisse, die die einzelnen Strafverfahren geliefert haben, wesentlich hinauszugehen. Sie beziehen sich auf: die Verbindung zwischen Euthanasie und Gaswagen-Aktion, die Befehlswege bei der Entwicklung der Gaswagen, die genaue zeitliche Abfolge der Ereignisse, die daran beteiligten Personen und Institutionen, die Zahl der Gaswagen bis Mitte 1942, die beiden Serien von Gaswagen und die Gaswagen als Bindeglied zwischen Euthanasie und der Tötung durch Giftgas in den Tötungslagern. Zu diesen Ergebnissen bin ich auf der Grundlage von Quellen u n d Zeugenaussagen gekommen, die, und das möchte ich unterstreichen, einer eingehenden Quellenkritik und Gegnüberstellung - Verfahren, das bei Historikern Üblich ist - unterzogen wurden.

Nun zu Ihren Fragen.

1. Ihre Beschreibung trifft nur auf die Gaswagen der "zweiten Serie" zu, die Saurer-Fahrzeuge, denn wie ich feststellen konnte (vgl. den Aufsatz S.413f.) wurden 1941 nur kleine Fahrzeuge hergestellt. Außerdem war der ursprüngliche Saurer-Wagen 5800 mm lang und die Zahl der pro Einsatz darin vergasten Personen nicht "ca. 50", sondern zwischen 80 und 100 Personen. Im Aktenvermerk vom 5.Juni 1942, der Ihnen nicht unbekannt ist, ist von 9 bis 10 Personen pro m² die Rede.
Das Problem des großen Drucks, der in den Kastenaufbauten ent-

- 2 -

stand, scheint den an der Entwicklung und beim Einsatz der Gaswagen beteiligten Personen nicht fremd gewesen zu sein. Dafür sprechen die des öfteren vorgenommenen Messungen und der schon erwähnte Aktenvermerk vom 5. Juni 1942. Darin heißt es: "Die bekannte Explosion in Kulmhof ist als Einzelfall zu bewerten. Ihre Ursache ist auf einen Bedienungsfehler zurückzuführen." Diese Explosion und ihre Folgen wird auch von mehreren Zeugen bestätigt. Darüber hinaus wird in dem Aktenvermerk vom 23. Juni 1542 folgendes aufgeführt: "Die durch Schieber verdeckten Öffnungen an den hinteren Türen fallen fort und sind durch offene Schlitze von 100 x 10 mm in der oberen Rückwand (nicht Tür) zu ersetzen. Sie sind außen mit leicht beweglichen Schanierblechkappen zu verdecken." An den Wagen waren demnach einfache "Überdruckventile" angebracht, die jetzt auf Grund der praktischen Erfahrung verbessert werden sollten. (Aktenvermerk vom 23. Juni 1942, Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Sign. R 58/871).

2. Es wäre nicht überraschend, wenn nach dem Krieg keine Gaswagen gefunden worden wären, denn die Gaswagen wurden, wie alle sonstigen Spuren, die die Vernichtung von Menschen hinterlassen hatte, so gut wie es eben in Eile ging, beseitigt. Aber von Gaswagen besitzen wir nicht nur Photos, die von polnischen Behörden nach dem Krieg angefertigt wurden (Archiv in Warschau und Yad Vashem Archives in Jerusamen), sondern ein Gaswagen steht meinen Informationen nach heute in Konin (Polen) als Denkmal zur Erinnerung an die Opfer.

3. und 4. Natürlich sind Unterschiede in der Terminologie der beiden von Ihnen angesprochenen Dokumenten festzustellen, doch ergeben sich, wie ein Vergleich mit den anderen erhaltengebliebenen Dokumenten zeigt, daraus noch keine "Unwahrscheinlichkeiten".

In der Hoffnung, Ihnen Ihre Fragen zufriedenstellend beantwortet zu haben, verbleibe ich mit besten Grüßen

Matthias Haan

Translation and Comments by P. Marais
(Letterhead omitted)

Re.: Topic of Gas Vans
[…]

Dear Mr. Marais,

Thank you very much for your letter of 30 October 1987, in which you evince your interest in my elaborations on the development of gas vans, and especially in questions which I did either not at all or hardly explicitly addressed due to my approach.

Before answering the individual questions you posed, I want to make a few fundamental remarks about my essay. My intention was to elucidate a course of events of National Socialist mass killings which so far has not been known in all its details. By so doing I manage to go beyond the insights yielded by the individual penal trials. They relate to: the connection between euthanasia and gas vans, the chain of command during the development of the gas vans, the exact temporal sequence of events, the persons and institutions involved, the number of gas vans in the middle of 1942, the two series of gas vans, and the gas vans as link between euthanasia and the killing with poisonous gas in the death camps. I arrived at these results on the basis of documents *and* witness statements, which, and I want to emphasize this, were subjected to thorough source criticism and juxtaposition – procedures which are common among historians.

Now to your questions.

1. Your description is valid only for the "second series" of gas vans, the Saurer vehicles, because I managed to establish (see my paper pp. 413f.) that in 1941 only small vehicles were built. Apart, the original Saurer vehicle was 5,800 mm long, and the number of persons gassed in it was not "ca. 50" but between 80 and 100 persons. The file memo of 5 June 1942, which is not unknown to you, mentions 9 to 10 persons per m^2.

The problem of the large pressure developing in the cargo box seems to have been known to the persons involved in the development and deployment of the gas vans. This is suggested by the frequent measurements conducted and by the already mentioned file memo of 5 June

1942. In it it says: "The known explosion at Kulmhof has to be assessed as a single case. Its cause is to be ascribed to an operating error." This explosion and its consequences are confirmed by several witnesses. Furthermore the following is stated in the file memo of 23 June 1542 [sic]: "The slide-covered openings in the rear doors are to be omitted, and replaced with open slits of 100 × 10 mm [4" × 0.4"] in the upper back wall (not door). They are to be covered on the outside by easily movable hinged metal flaps" Hence the vehicles did have simple "pressure relief valves," which now were to be improved due to practical experiences. (File memo of 23 June 1942, German Federal Archives, sign. R 58/871).

2. It would not be surprising if no gas vans had been found after the war, because the gas vans, like all other traces left by the extermination of people, were destroyed as best as possible in the rush. But we do not only have photos of the gas vans made by the Polish authorities after the war (in the archive in Warsaw and in the Yad Vashem Archives in Jerusamen [sic]), but according to my information there is a gas van to this day in Konin (Poland) serving as a memorial to commemorate the victims.

3. and 4. Of course one can discern differences in the terminology of the two documents mentioned by you, but, as a comparison with other extant documents reveals, this does not amount to 'improbabilities.'

I hope to have answered your questions satisfactorily and remain with my best greetings

(signed Mathias Beer)

Comments by Pierre Marais

Pierre Marais submitted four questions to the Mathias Beer. Here are Marais's four questions, followed by Beer's answers as well as by Marais's remarks triggered by them:

1. QUESTION: "*How could a gas van, which corresponds to the generally given description, have functioned when considering the internal pressure which the engine exhaust gases would have exerted on the walls of the sealed cargo box?*"

ANSWER: "*The problem of the large pressure developing in the cargo box seems to have been known to the persons involved in the development and deployment of the gas vans. This is suggested by the fre-*

quent measurements conducted and by the already mentioned file memo of 5 June 1942. [...] *Furthermore the following is stated in the file memo of 23 June 1542* [correct: 1942]*: 'The slide-covered openings in the rear doors are to be omitted, and replaced with open slits of 100 × 10 mm in the upper back wall (not door).'*"

REMARK: As I have already emphasized, such slits would indeed have prevented an excessive internal pressure by letting the exhaust gases escape from the cargo box. But this does not explain how the gas vans could have operated flawlessly without those slits for the first 97,000 victims which "were processed with 3 deployed vehicles."

2. QUESTION: "*Isn't it amazing that of the thirty gas vans which are said to have been in operation not a single one has ever been found?*"

ANSWER: "*It would not be surprising if no gas vans had been found after the war, because the gas vans, like all other traces left by the extermination of people, were destroyed as best as possible in the rush. But we do not only have photos of the gas vans made by the Polish authorities after the war (in the archive in Warsaw and in the Yad Vashem Archives in Jerusamen* [sic]*), but according to my information there is a gas van to this day in Konin (Poland) serving as a memorial to commemorate the victims.*"

REMARKS: The argument that there are no traces for the extermination of human beings because the "Nazis" have destroyed them does not solve the problem, yet instead exacerbates it. Instead of having to prove only one claim – "gas vans for the extermination of human beings existed" – Mathias Beer now finds himself in the situation of having to prove two claims: "gas vans for the extermination of human beings existed" and "all traces were destroyed."

This leaves us with two pertinent bits of information given by Beer in his response to my second question: There are photos of gas vans, and most importantly: the Polish town of Konin possesses a former gas van (which would mean that not all traces had been destroyed).

As to the photos, I have shown in [Chapter 2.1.] that those taken by the Polish investigative commission do show a trivial moving truck rather than a gas van. The other photos ever shown in the media have no probative value at all, as no source has ever been given for them. Hence Beer's claim is simply wrong.

Beer's second assertion initiated further investigations, the results of which I will disclose shortly.

3. QUESTION: "*Haven't you noticed any improbabilities in the file memo of 5 June 1942* [Just document] *and in the Becker report of 16 May 1942?*"

4. QUESTION: "*How is one to explain the entirely different phrasings of these two documents – the first tries to 'code,' whereas the second expressly talks about gassings and death?*"

ANSWER: "*Of course one can discern differences in the terminology of the two documents mentioned by you, but, as a comparison with other extant documents* [which?] *reveals, this does not amount to 'improbabilities.'*"

REMARKS: If Beer sees only "differences in the terms used" between the two documents, then this proves a lack of critical attitude. If he doesn't find any improbabilities, then he obviously lacks competence to investigate the issues at hand, which are mainly physical and technical in nature.

Beer's answers devoid of any content did not warrant a continuation of this correspondence. He did not address my request to name his sources more accurately.

In order to find out more about the photos allegedly taken by the Polish investigative commission after the war, a third person sent an inquiry to the State Museum of Auschwitz and to the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem [see pp. 377ff.]. I may first quote the essential sentences of the responses he received from the Auschwitz Museum:

1) "*I send you a photograph of the vehicle which served the function of a gas chamber used to murder inmates with exhaust gases in Hitler's extermination camp CHEŁMNO at the river NER in the district of KONIN.*"

2) "*After the war a memorial was erected in CHEŁMNO on the grounds of the former extermination camp.*"

Since no further information was given as to the origin and the current archival location of this photo, no further investigations could be conducted at that time. The photo sent is identical with the one published by Fleming showing a derelict Magirus truck. The Polish investigation team taking this photo stated, however, that this was *not* a gas van but rather a simple moving truck (see [Chapter 2.1.]).

The memorial in Konin mentioned by Beer was revealed as a simple stone rather than an old van by another photo sent to us by the Ausch-

witz Museum [see the illustration on p. 381]. Hence Beer must have erred.

The response by the head of the Yad Vashem archives was even more surprising. This stronghold of Holocaust hagiography sent us the same photo of the derelict Magirus moving truck, yet stated at once that beyond this they had no photos. What beats everything, though, was the request by the archive's director to inform her in case we would find another photo of a gas van and to send her a copy of it! That's a way to run an archive: let everybody send in any document they like and claim about its provenance whatever suits their purpose. Who cares about authenticity?

[*Comments by the present author:* Since Illustration 15 in Appendix 1, taken in 2010 from the Internet, sports a caption saying that it's from the Yad Vashem archives, who in return must have received it from the Polish archive owning the originals, it is safe to say that Yad Vashem's plea was finally heard by someone. In fact, their online database reveals that they received two of their images from orthodox Holocaust historian Michael Tregenza and German Nazi hunter Adalbert Rückerl.[136] Yad Vashem's "gas van" images showing the Ostrowski moving truck bear misleading or outright false captions, like (archival signature in parentheses):

"Kolo, Poland, A Magirus van found after the war, suspected as a gas van used for murder in Chelmno camp." (1264/2 & 1007/31; similar 1427/84)

"Chelmno, Poland, A gas van." (5318/232)

It is also hard to believe that back in the late 1980s und early 1990s, when those inquiries were made, neither Yad Vashem nor the Auschwitz Museum knew the results of this Polish investigative commission. If they did know it, then they lied to us. If they did not know it, then they were crassly incompetent. SA]

Regarding the alleged "gas van memorial in Konin" I first contacted the Polish embassy in Paris, then the city authorities of Konin, and finally the town authorities of Chełmno. Only the city authorities of Konin answered [see next page]. I have quoted their brief but unequivocal answer at the very beginning of this study, and I may repeat it here:

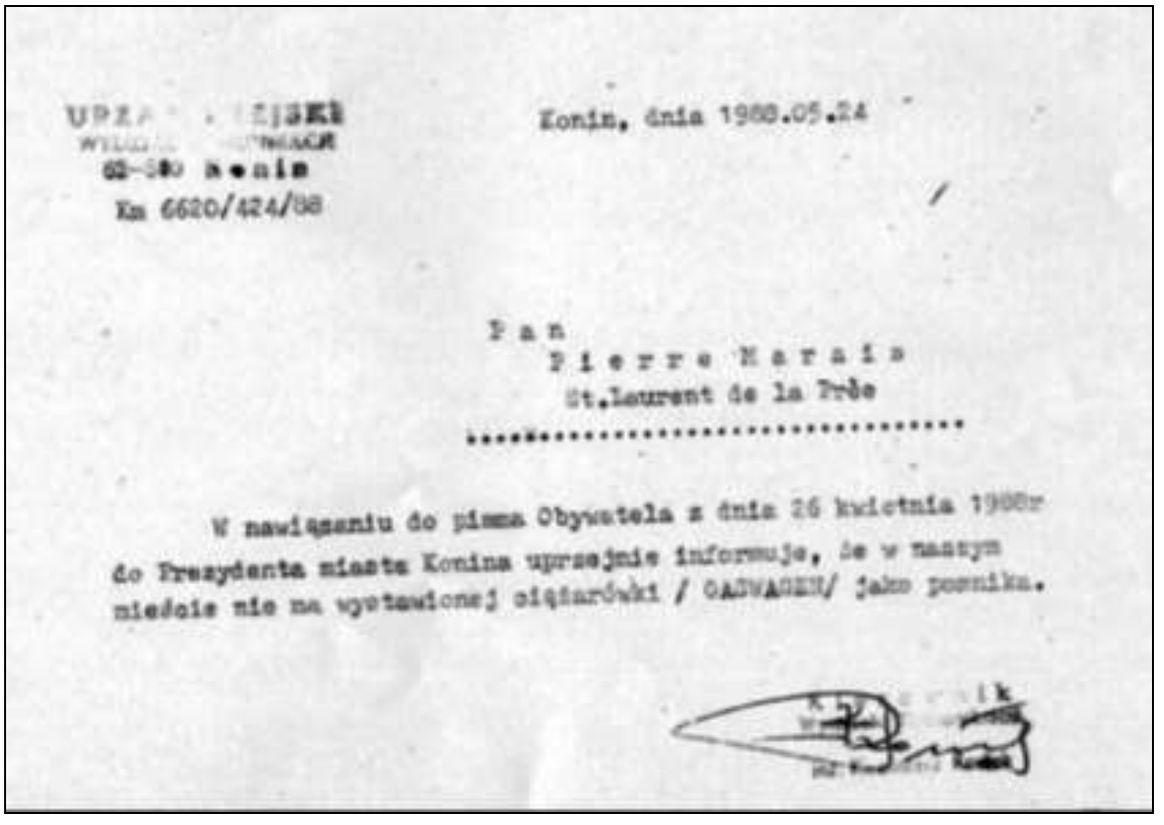
"There is no gas van serving as a memorial in our town."

---

136 Archival signatures 5318/232 and 1007/31, respectively; for their current holdings of "gas van" pictures use their image search engine at http://collections.yadvashem.org/photosarchive/en-us/search.html.

Hence the information obtained as a result of Beer's study and the exchange with him corroborate the conclusions arrived at in this study, namely that no material traces of gas vans exist.

Letter by the Town of Konin to P. Marais



Konin, dnia 1988.05.24

Pan
Pierre Marais
St.Laurent de la Prée

W nawiązaniu do pisma Obywatela z dnia 26 kwietnia 1988r
do Prezydenta miasta Konina uprzejmie informuje, że w naszym
mieście nie ma wystawionej ciężarówki / GAZWAGEN/ jako pomnika.

Translation

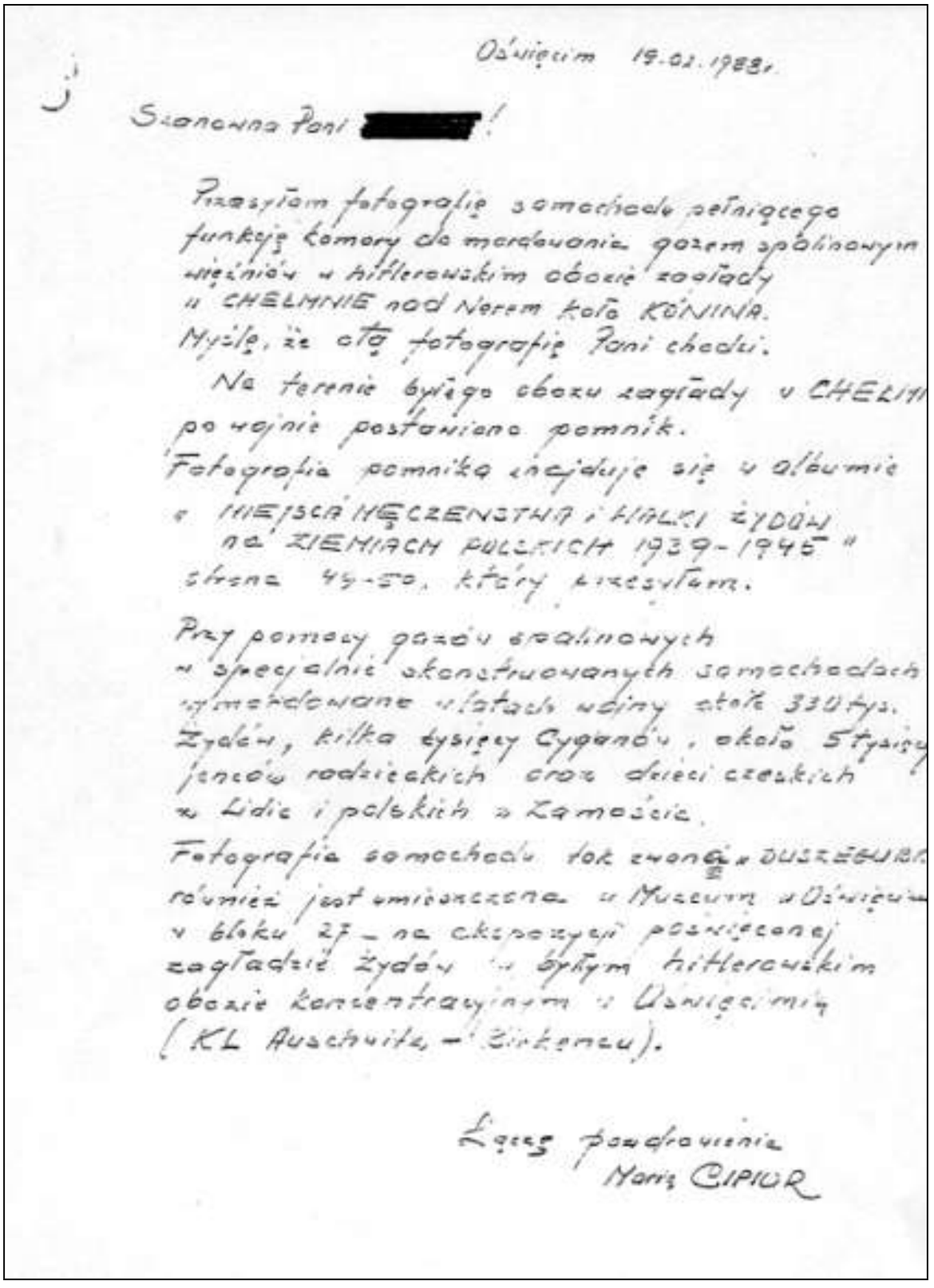
(Letterhead omitted)

Mr. Pierre Marais

In connection with your letter of 26 April 1988 to the mayor of the town of Konin I politely inform you that there is no gas van serving as a memorial in our town.

Head of Public Relations
Ing. Kazimierz Robak

Letter by Auschwitz Museum (Poland)



Oświęcim 19.02.1988 r.

Szanowna Pani [redacted]!

Przesyłam fotografię samochodu pełniącego funkcję komory do mordowania gazem spalinowym więźniów w hitlerowskim obozie zagłady w CHEŁMNIE nad Nerem koło KOŁA.
Myślę, że otą fotografię Pani chodzi.

Na terenie byłego obozu zagłady w CHEŁMNIE po wojnie postawiono pomnik.
Fotografia pomnika znajduje się w albumie „MIEJSCA MĘCZEŃSTWA I WALKI ŻYDÓW na ZIEMIACH POLSKICH 1939-1945" strona 49-50, który przesyłam.

Przy pomocy gazów spalinowych w specjalnie skonstruowanych samochodach uśmiercono w latach wojny około 330 tys. Żydów, kilka tysięcy Cyganów, około 5 tysięcy jeńców radzieckich oraz dzieci czeskich w Lidicach i polskich w Zamościu.
Fotografia samochodu tak zwanej „DUSZEGUBKI" również jest umieszczona w Muzeum w Oświęcimiu w bloku 27 – na ekspozycji poświęconej zagładzie Żydów w byłym hitlerowskim obozie koncentracyjnym w Oświęcimiu (KL Auschwitz – Birkenau).

Łączę pozdrowienia
Maria CIPIUR

Translation

Dear Mrs. [redacted]!

I send you a photograph of the vehicle which served the function of a gas chamber used to murder inmates with exhaust gases in Hitler's extermination camp CHEŁMNO at the river NER in the district of KONIN.

I think that this is the photo you are interested in.

After the war a memorial was erected in CHEŁMNO on the grounds of the former extermination camp.

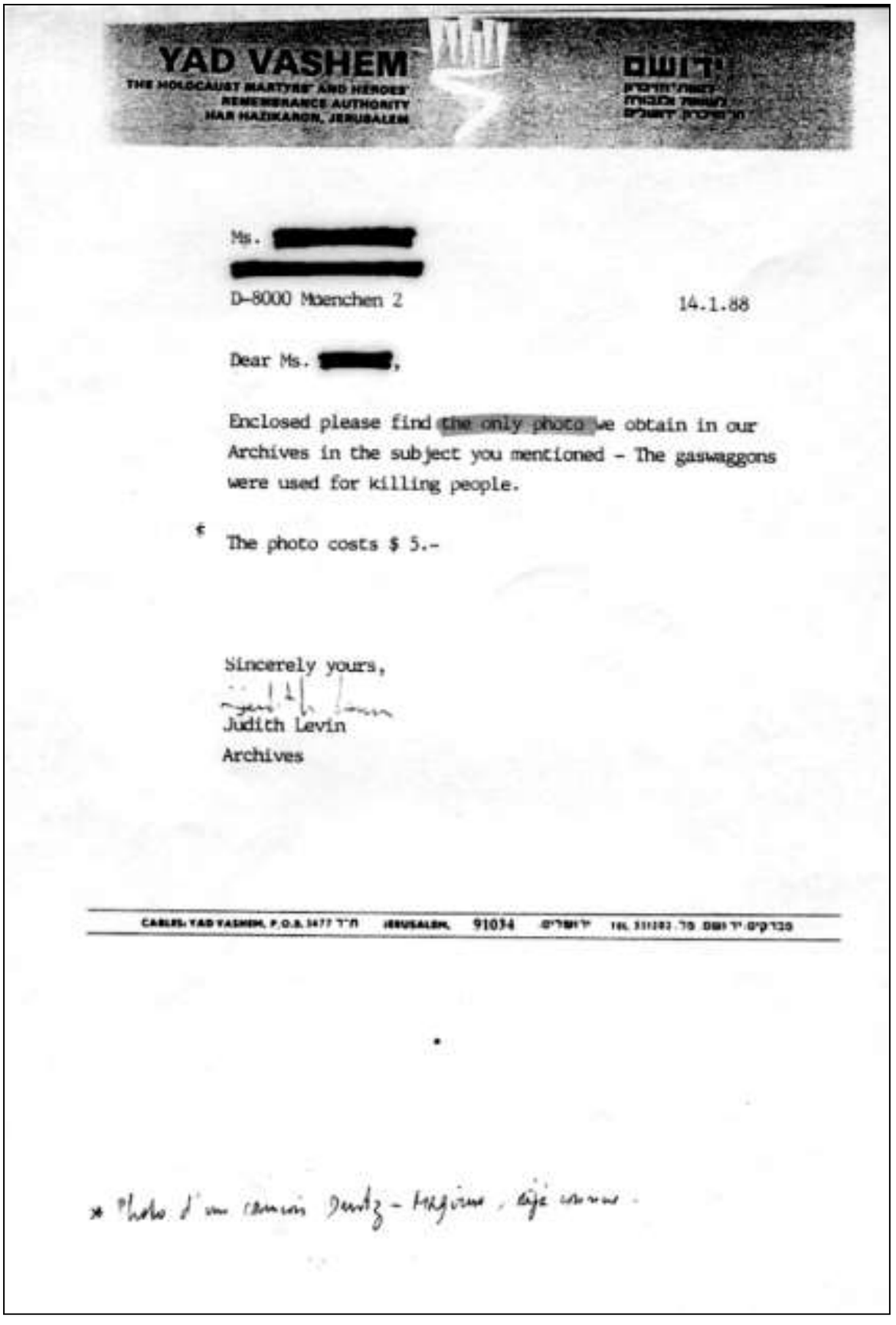
You can find the photo of this memorial in the album "Locations of Jewish Martyrdom and Fighting on Polish Soil 1939-1945," pages 49-50, which I enclose.

Roughly 330,000 Jews, several thousand gypsies and ca. 5,000 Soviet prisoners of war as well as Czech children from Lidice and from Zamosc in Poland were killed by means of exhaust gases in vehicles especially constructed for this.

The photo of the vehicle, a so-called "soul vendor," is also shown at the Auschwitz Museum in Block 27 as part of the exhibition dedicated to the extermination of the Jews in the former Hitler concentration camp AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU.

With my best wishes for your health

Two Letters by Yad Vashem, Jerusalem



YAD VASHEM
THE HOLOCAUST MARTYRS' AND HEROES' REMEMBRANCE AUTHORITY
HAR HAZIKARON, JERUSALEM

ירושם

Ms. [redacted]
[redacted]
D-8000 Moenchen 2

14.1.88

Dear Ms. [redacted],

Enclosed please find the only photo we obtain in our Archives in the subject you mentioned - The gaswaggons were used for killing people.

The photo costs $ 5.-

Sincerely yours,

Judith Levin
Archives

CABLES: YAD VASHEM, P.O.B. 3477 ירושלים JERUSALEM, 91034 ירושלים

* Photo d'un camion Saurer - Belgique, déjà connue.

Mr. [redacted]
[redacted]
D-8000 Muenchen 2
W. Germany

16.3.88

Dear Mr. [redacted]

I tried very hard to find out more information about the picture which I sent you as a gaswagon, but I didn't find any.

I'm also sorry to tell you that we don't have any other picture of a gaswagon.

If you have got in the meanwhile any other picture on this subject, I'll appriciate if you will informe me about, and send me a xerox copy of it.

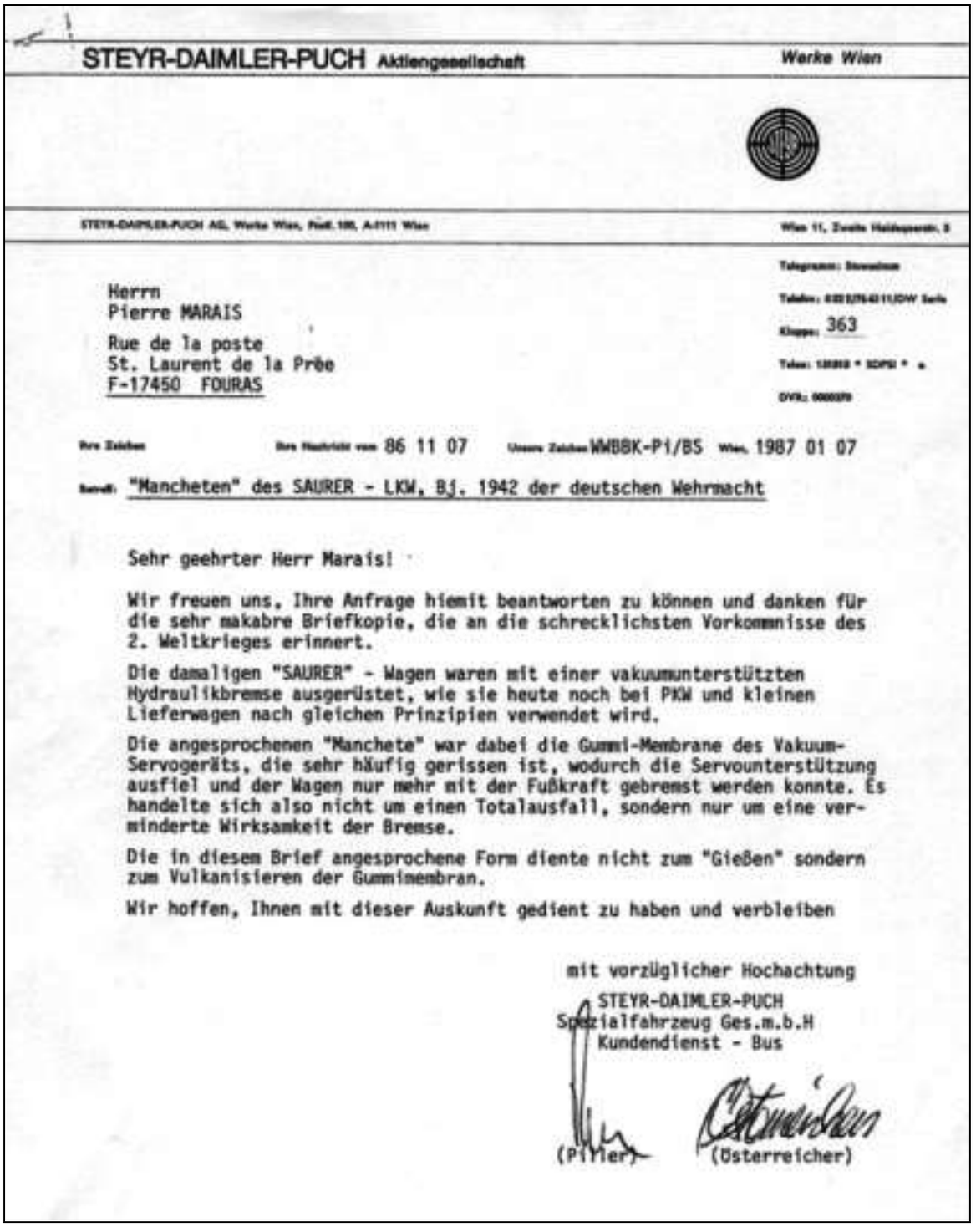
Sincerely yours,

Judith Levin
Archives

CABLES: YAD VASHEM, P.O.B. 3477 ת"ד JERUSALEM. 91034 ירושלים TEL. 511283 . פל. 511283 טלגרפים: יד ושם. ת"ד

Photograph of the Chełmno Memorial

Letter by Steyr-Daimler-Puch to P. Marais



STEYR-DAIMLER-PUCH Aktiengesellschaft Werke Wien

STEYR-DAIMLER-PUCH AG, Werke Wien, Post. 100, A-1111 Wien

Wien 11, Zweite Haidequerstr. 3

Herrn
Pierre MARAIS
Rue de la poste
St. Laurent de la Prée
F-17450 FOURAS

Telegramm: Steyrwien
Telefon: 6033/7540 11/DW Serie
Klappe: 363
Telex: 1[illegible] * SDPSI * a
DVR.: 0000379

Ihre Zeichen Ihre Nachricht vom 86 11 07 Unsere Zeichen WWBBK-Pi/BS Wien, 1987 01 07

Betreff: "Mancheten" des SAURER - LKW, Bj. 1942 der deutschen Wehrmacht

Sehr geehrter Herr Marais!

Wir freuen uns, Ihre Anfrage hiemit beantworten zu können und danken für die sehr makabre Briefkopie, die an die schrecklichsten Vorkommnisse des 2. Weltkrieges erinnert.

Die damaligen "SAURER" - Wagen waren mit einer vakuumunterstützten Hydraulikbremse ausgerüstet, wie sie heute noch bei PKW und kleinen Lieferwagen nach gleichen Prinzipien verwendet wird.

Die angesprochenen "Manchete" war dabei die Gummi-Membrane des Vakuum-Servogeräts, die sehr häufig gerissen ist, wodurch die Servounterstützung ausfiel und der Wagen nur mehr mit der Fußkraft gebremst werden konnte. Es handelte sich also nicht um einen Totalausfall, sondern nur um eine verminderte Wirksamkeit der Bremse.

Die in diesem Brief angesprochene Form diente nicht zum "Gießen" sondern zum Vulkanisieren der Gummimembran.

Wir hoffen, Ihnen mit dieser Auskunft gedient zu haben und verbleiben

mit vorzüglicher Hochachtung

STEYR-DAIMLER-PUCH
Spezialfahrzeug Ges.m.b.H
Kundendienst - Bus

(Pittler) (Österreicher)

Translation

(Letter header and footer omitted; see comments on page 52)

Re.: “Mancheten” of the 1942 Saurer truck of the German Wehrmacht

Dear Mr. Marais!

We are glad to be able to herewith answer your inquiry and thank you for the very macabre copy of a letter which reminds at the most terrible events of the 2nd World War.

The “SAURER” vehicles from back then were equipped with vacuum-supported hydraulic brakes [power brakes] as they are still used today in cars and smaller delivery vans following the same principle.

In this connection the “Manchete” was a rubber membrane of the vacuums-supported servo device, which ruptured frequently, leading to a loss of the power support so that the vehicle could only be braked with the force of the foot. Hence this is not a complete failure but merely a reduced efficiency of the brakes.

The cast mentioned in the letter was not used to “cast” but rather to vulcanize the rubber membrane.

We hope to have served you with this information an remain

Most sincerely

Steyr-Daimler-Puch
Special Vehicles Ltd.
Customer Service – Bus
(signed: Piller and Österreicher)

Appendix 11: Drawings of "Gas Vans"

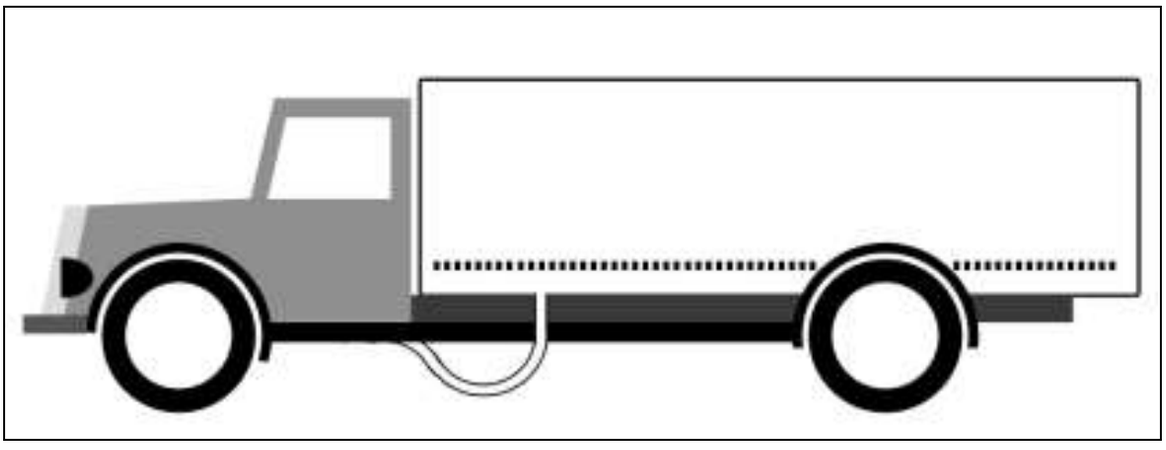


Illustration 27: *The Impossible Claim*. A Saurer truck with a Diesel engine, whose exhaust gases are piped via a flexible metal hose connected to a simple pipe in the bottom at the front part of the cargo box (first 20 trucks), which is hermetically sealed according to witnesses. Execution is claimed to have lasted up to 20 minutes while idling or in transit under low engine load. (Author's drawing.)

Problems:

1. Diesel engines, while idling or when running under low load, do not produce gases to be lethal within 20 minutes.
2. An airtight cargo box, as claimed by many witnesses, would have burst open under the exhaust gas pressure. However, the extant documents speak of opening in the door (first 20 trucks) or in the walls (last 10 trucks).
3. During the 1940s, metal hoses of the required size were not flexible enough to make a 90° bend underneath the truck without danger of contact with the road surface. An L-shaped pipe in the floor of the cargo box would have been required, although this is not mentioned by any witness.
4. The pipe opening in the floor could have been blocked by objects falling or fluids flowing into it. Although still functional, it is bad design.

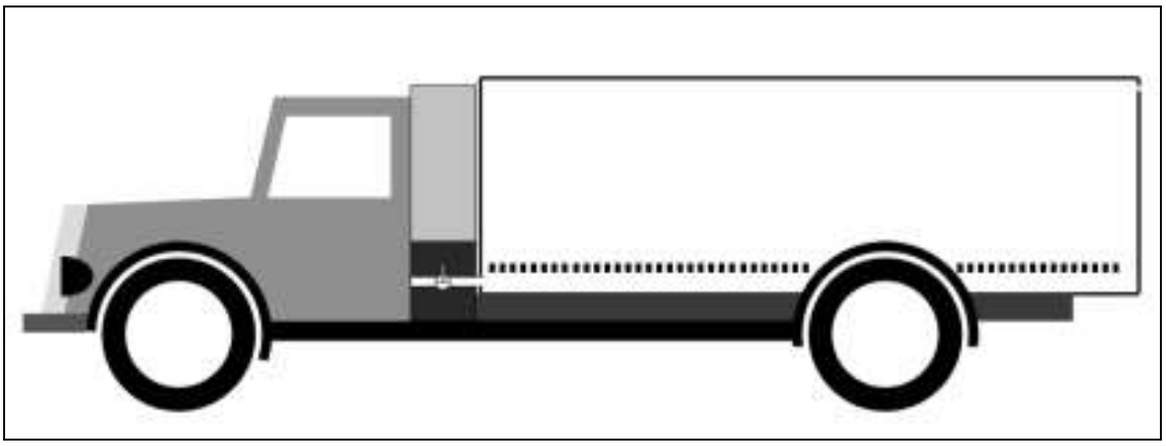


Illustration 28: *A Hypothetical Possibility*. A Saurer truck equipped with a wood gas generator placed between the driver's cabin and the cargo box. The gas generator's gases are highly toxic and almost instantly lethal. This gas is piped through a valve permitting to switch the gas between either the engine or the cargo box (or both, then leading to a reduced engine power). The gas enters the cargo box through a horizontal pipe underneath the wooden grate. This way no objects can fall or fluids flow into it, nor can the victims reach it through the grate. Excess gas can escape through a small opening somewhere in the walls or doors of the cargo box (as in this drawing). The floor could and would still have an opening, but merely for cleaning and draining purposes (not shown here). (Author's drawing.)

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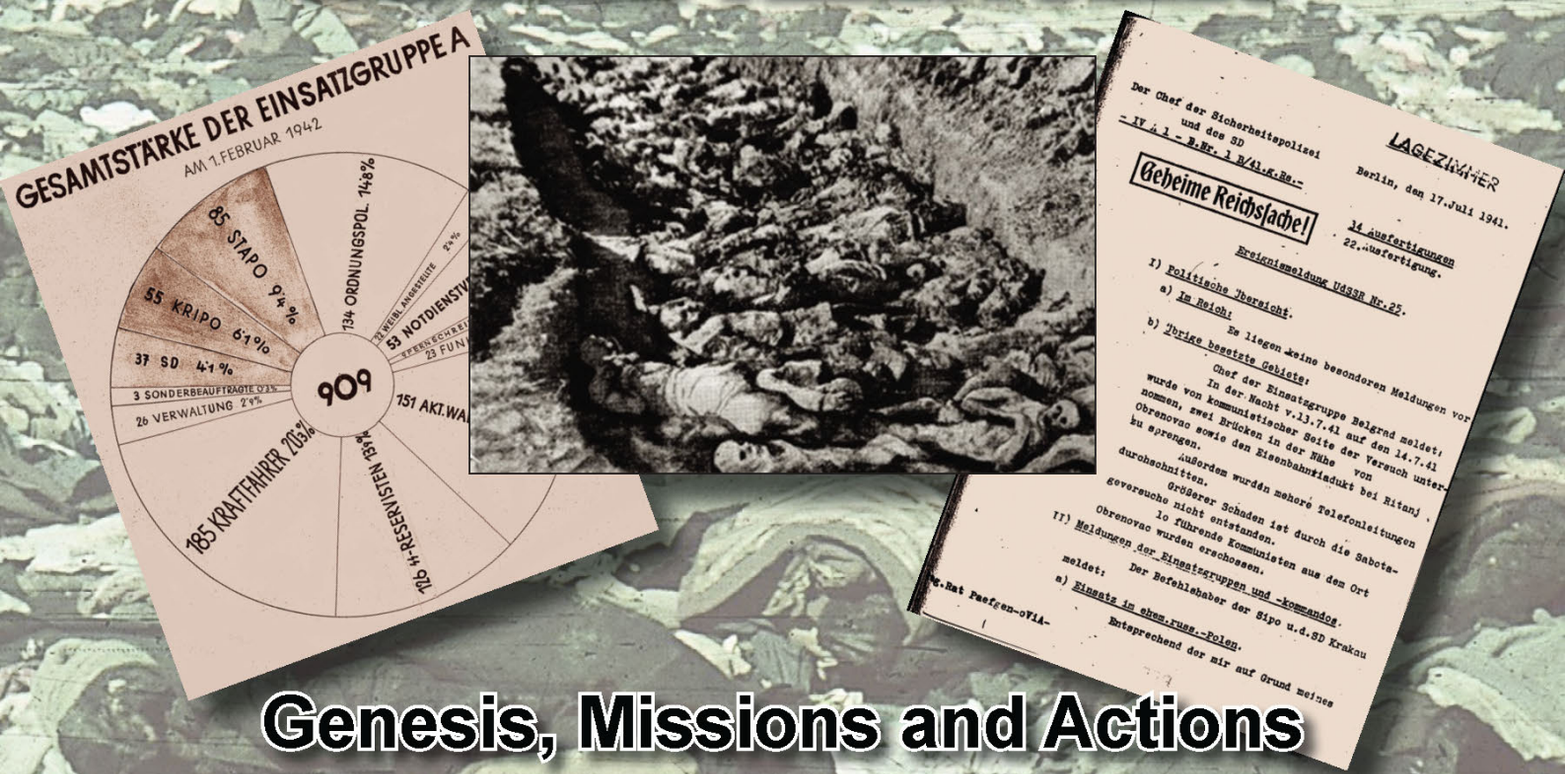

Genesis, Missions and Actions

Part 1: The Einsatzgruppen

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Carlo Mattogno

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Cover Illustrations: Foreground: left: composition chart of *Einsatzgruppen* A of late 1941/early 1942 (see Documents I.1.2); center: bodies allegedly found by Soviets in a mass gave at Drobitsky Yar (see Document II.8.9); right: frontispiece of *Ereignismeldung* No. 25 of 17 July 1941 (see Document I.1.5a). Background: clothing littered in the Babi Yar in late September 1941, photo by Hähle (see Document II.4.23).

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Foreword

Throughout the 19th Century, tsarist Russia was a predominantly agricultural society where many of its mostly orthodox-Christian subjects lived in serfdom to the few landowners of the nobility until the serfs were emancipated in 1861. This system might be described as a mild form of slavery, only that, instead of one ethnic or national group enslaving another, as has been the rule throughout the history of slavery, in this case the majority of the lower class of a people was enslaved by the upper class of that same people.

The abolition of serfdom by Tsar Alexander II did not change the fact, however, that most land was owned by the nobility, so that the peasantry continued to be at the mercy of the nobility to earn an income.

The Jews in tsarist Russia, although in their majority not engaged in agricultural activities, had their own grievances, most notable among them the fact that they were not allowed to settle wherever they wanted, and that they were subjected to a form of restrictive affirmative action in practicing certain professions.

Since the highly urbanized Jews of Russia were on average far more educated than their Christian fellow countrymen, Jews were overrepresented in many intellectual fields, revolutionary activities included. Although Russia's Christian peasantry had more reasons to strive for radical change, they were to no small degree kept in line with the tsarist regime first and foremost by their lack of education, but also by the Russian Orthodox Church, which was to no small degree an extension of tsarist power control. It was also a main driver behind anti-Jewish sentiments among Russia's Christians.

Of course, the history of Jewish-Christian animosities goes all the way back to the years when Christianity was born. During the first years of its existence, with the Jews being a powerful majority in Palestine and the Christians a powerless minority, Jewish persecution of Christians prevailed. The tables were turned when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman empire. Ever since, humanity has had to deal with a series of anti-Jewish measures by Christian rulers and the mob. While the uneducated masses may have been stirred up against the Jews with pseudo-arguments such as "Jews killed our Lord Jesus Christ" – which isn't even true because, strictly speaking, Jesus was killed by the Romans, if we were to take the New Testament's narrative at face value – the Christian clergy had a more-sophisticated approach to this issue, as is evidenced for instance by the Roman Catholic Church's century-long ban of the Talmud for its anti-Christian and anti-Gentile contents, or by Martin Luther's critique of Jewish teachings in this regard in his book *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* (*On the Jews*

and Their Lies). While such anti-Jewish attitudes were socially acceptable in Russia and most of Europe during the 19th Century, they are severely frowned upon today, to say the least, although more-recent studies have to a large degree justified the 2,000-year-old critique of Jewish scripture and its influence on the behavior of some – mostly orthodox and fundamentalist – Jews (see Shahak and Shahak/Mezvinsky).

To what degree this anti-Jewish attitude was socially acceptable back then can be gleaned from the *Antisemitismus-Streit*, an argument among scholars and prominent personalities that erupted onto the public stage in Germany in 1879, although it had been smoldering in less-popular circles many years prior to this and had a tradition going all the way back to Martin Luther.[1] The Jewish newspaper of record, *The New York Times*, commented on this argument in an editorial on 27 February 1880 as follows:

> *"The war, which has for some time raged in Germany between the natives and the Jews, seems rather to increase than diminish in intensity. It is something more than a popular prejudice, it is a national passion and the ablest, most dignified, and most learned men have ranged themselves on either side. To us here it seems very strange that such a contest of races can be going on in a land of so much intelligence and intellectual pretension, and in the year 1880, too. The crime of the Jews appears to be comprehended chiefly in their financial prosperity. No sin is as great as success in the eyes of the non-successful. The charge is made that of the 600,000 Israelites in the empire, hardly any engage in agricultural or mercantile pursuits; but that they control trade, rule the money markets, and are eating up the country with their avarice and usury."*

Societal and financial envy were only a side show of this German debate, however, while at its core was the criticism of Jewish teachings about how to regard and interact with Gentiles, as laid down in Jewish writings such as the *Talmud* and the *Shulchan Aruch*, facts which the *New York Times* carefully hid from its readers.

Fuel into the fire of anti-Jewish sentiments in Germany and in Russia was the publication and analysis – in Russia but also in the German language – of the minutes of the Council of Jews of the Minsk Ghetto (see Brafman), which undergirded the accusations that Jews are inherently hostile toward Gentiles. Since the Russian nobility was heavily influenced by German society and to a large degree related to its nobility, political and ideological discussions circulating in the German public inevitably had an impact in Russian intellectual circles.

Of course, this is also true for anti-tsarist circles, who eagerly picked up the German ideas of socialism and communism. While the German upper classes tried to cut the ground out from under these radical ideas by creating a constitutional monarchy and a parliament with far-reaching powers (after the German unification in 1871), and by implementing social reforms and social welfare,

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[1] A rather-comprehensive bibliography of anti-Jewish writings predominantly in Germany from the year 1500 all the way up to 1887 can be found in Frey, pp. 209-219.

Russia seemed to be too far behind with everything to be able to keep up with the modernization pace expected by the radicals.

As a result, the last two decades of the 19th Century as well as the first two decades of the 20th Century were marked by several attempts of political radicals in Russia to overthrow the tsarist regime, starting with the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881, and ending with the successful revolution in 1917.

Considering the backwards, at times even reactionary nature of the tsarist regime and Russian society in general during those years, one should think that the majority of Christian Russians should have had an interest in radical change just as any other disadvantaged group. In each of these attempts at overthrowing the tsarist regime, however, individuals with a Jewish background were vastly overrepresented among those radicals. While Christians identified with their notionally Christian tsars and their rule – or were led to identify with it by way of the Orthodox Church – Jews and other religious groups, as well as marginalized ethnic groups, did not have that allegiance. Jews, being outsiders both by religion and by race – at least they were treated this way, and many Jews saw themselves this way, too – had the highest probability of supporting the most radical changes most vociferously. And so they did.

While there were also non-Jews among those revolutionaries, the Russian mainstream was eager to focus on the Jews as the main drivers behind these events. The results were pogroms against the Jews, most prominently among them the ones triggered by the 1881 assassination of Tsar Alexander II, and by the abortive 1905 revolution. I have described these events in more detail elsewhere, where I also showed that they were the 19th Century's breeding ground for media buzzwords such as "holocaust" "six million" and "extermination" in connection with the persecution of the Jews in Russia (introduction to Heddesheimer, pp. 7-37).

It is understandable that media outlets such as the *New York Times* championed a development in Russia that would create something similar there to what existed in the U.S.: a republic with guaranteed civil rights for everyone. The hope that a revolution would do the job can be read between the lines of several *New York Times* articles of those days.

In 1917, the revolution in Russia led to a civil war lasting several years, and it was not clear at all from the outset that the revolutionaries would win this war. While it was raging, readers of the *New York Times* learned how the authors and editors of that newspaper trembled at the thought of the revolution failing. They knew that this time, after so much bloodshed, pogroms against Jews would threaten to wipe them out completely. For instance, in an article of 20 July 1921 on page 2 titled "Begs America Save 6,000,000 in Russia", we read in the subtitle that "Russia's six million Jews are facing extermination by massacre" as the power of "the counter-revolutionary movement is gaining and the Soviet's control is waning."

Of course, at that point everyone not blind to self-evident facts could see that those revolutionary Soviets neither planned to install a republic in the Soviet Union nor to grant civil rights to everyone. In fact, news spread throughout the world about widespread massacres by the Soviets against the former nobility, the Christian clergy, the "bourgeoisie," the "kulaks" (small independent farmers) and, in fact, anyone standing in their way. But at that point, the *New York Times* and many other similarly minded media outlets in the U.S. had stopped reporting most of the shocking news that should have been fit to print, and instead concealed with deafening silence the horrors unfolding in Russia. By looking away and supporting the perpetrators – millions of dollars were raised with the help of these newspapers to support whatever was going on in Russia at that time – they had become accomplices in the slaughter of millions, most of them Christians by faith.

The terrifying truth about Soviet Russia's many massacres unfolding during the civil war and in the two decades afterwards, which was plain to see for everyone next door in Europe, foremost in Germany, was to a large degree hidden from the American public for decades. In fact, only the Cold War breaking out after the conclusion of World War II allowed for a more balanced view of what had happened in Russia since 1917.

Who was responsible for these Soviet massacres?

Robert Wilton, the correspondent for the London *Times* during WWI and shortly thereafter, reported for his newspaper about events unfolding in Russia during the revolution. In 1920, while the civil war was still raging, he published a book on *The Last Days of the Romanovs*, in which he laid out the extreme dominance of individuals with Jewish backgrounds in carrying out the revolution, and in manning the leadership of the early Soviet Union. More-recent contributions have since confirmed this observation, although many of them are not available in the English language – one may wonder why.[2]

More convincing for many readers are perhaps statements made by Jews themselves who – confronted with what was going on in Soviet Russia perpetrated to a large degree by individuals with Jewish backgrounds – were not only horrified, but also spoke out in warning as to what that means for Jews in general. The Russian Jewess Sonja Margolina analyzed some of these early voices in her German 1992 book whose title translates to *The End of Lies: Russia and the Jews during the 20th Century*. This book was never translated into English either. In it, Margolina reviewed in detail a book that had appeared in 1924 in Germany under the title *Rußland und die Juden* (*Russia and the Jews*). This 1924 book examined the causes of the Russian Jews' conspicuously above-average participation in the excesses of the 1917 revolution and the tyranny that followed it. The book also contains an appeal by German Jews "To the Jews in all Nations!" where we read (Margolina, p. 58):

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[2] See for instance M. Weber; Bieberstein 2002; Solschenizyn 2003.

"The Jewish Bolsheviks' overeager participation in the subjugation and destruction of Russia is a sin that already bears within itself the seeds of its retribution. For what greater misfortune could happen to a people than to have its own sons engage in excesses? Not only will this be counted against us as an element of our guilt, it will also be held up to us as reproach for an expression of our power, for a striving for Jewish hegemony. Soviet power is equated with Jewish power, and the grim hatred of the Bolsheviks will transform into a hatred of the Jews […]. *All nations and peoples will be swamped by waves of Judeophobia. Never before have such thunderclouds gathered above the heads of the Jewish people. This is the bottom line of the Russian upheaval for us, for the Jewish people.'"*

Margolina quotes further from this 1924 anthology (*ibid*., p. 60):

"'The Russians have never before seen a Jew in power, neither as governor nor as policeman, nor as postal official. There were both good and bad times in those days too, but the Russian people lived and worked, and the fruits of their labors were their own. The Russian name was mighty and threatening. Today the Jews are at every corner and in all levels of power. The Russians see them at the head of the Czarist city, Moscow, and at the head of the metropolis on the River Neva and at the head of the Red Army, the ultimate mechanism of self-destruction. […] *The Russians are now faced with a Jew as judge as well as executioner; they encounter Jews at every step, not Communists who are just as poor as they themselves but who nevertheless give orders and take care of the interests of the Soviet power* […]. *It is not surprising that the Russians, in comparing the past to the present, conclude that the present power is Jewish, and so bestial precisely because of that.'"*

In the early 1990s, German professor Dr. Ernst Nolte, who specialized in the history of totalitarian ideologies, also pointed out the Jews' intimate entanglement in Communism (Nolte, pp. 92f.):

"For readily apparent social reasons, was not the percentage of persons of Jewish extraction particularly great among the participants in the Russian Revolution, different from the percentages of other minorities such as the Latvians? Even at the start of this century Jewish philosophers were still pointing with great pride to this extensive participation of the Jews in Socialist movements. After 1917, when the anti-Bolshevist movement – or propaganda – stressed the topic of the Jewish People's commissars above all others, this pride was no longer expressed, […] *But it took Auschwitz to turn this topic into a taboo for several decades.*

It is all the more remarkable that in 1988 the publication Commentary, *the voice of right-wing Jews in America, published an article by Jerry Z. Muller who recalls these indisputable facts – though of course they are open to interpretation:*

'If Jews were highly visible in the revolution in Russia and Germany, in Hungary they seemed omnipresent. […] *Of the government's 49 commissars, 31 were of Jewish origin* […]. *Rakosi later joked that Garbai (a gentile) was chosen for his post 'so that there would be someone who could sign the death sentences on Saturdays.'* […] *But the conspicuous role of Jews in the revolution of 1917-19 gave anti-Semitism (which 'seemed on the wane by 1914') a whole new impetus.* […] *Historians who have focused on the utopian ideals espoused by revolutionary*

> *Jews have diverted attention from the fact that these Communists of Jewish origin, no less than their non-Jewish counterparts, were led by their ideals to take part in heinous crimes – against Jews and non-Jews alike.'"*

Summarizing what was to follow, U.S. journalist Jerry Muller put the two large historical events of the 20th Century into this nutshell:

> *"The Trotskies make the revolutions* [*i.e.*, the GULag] *and the Bronsteins pay the bills* [in the Holocaust]*."*

Hence, the buzzword "Jewish Bolshevism," which was later used by the German National Socialists as one reason to persecute Jews, was not a pure figment of the imagination, and we do not have to rely on their sources (such as Kommos 1938) to learn about the veracity of their claims.

The counter-revolutionary forces fighting the Soviets in the years 1917 to 1921 were eventually defeated. The Jews of Russia and their brethren abroad could breathe a sigh of relief – for a while. The more the Soviets stabilized their tyranny in Russia, the more they laid their eyes upon other nations where they planned to carry out similar revolutions on their path to their dream of a "world revolution." Germany was considered the most-important stepping stone to reach that goal. But Germany, defeated and weak after World War I and in constant civil-war-like turmoil, was putting up a tough fight of resistance against such a bloody revolution. The most radical among the counter-revolutionary forces in Germany were the National Socialists, who tried to cut the ground out from underneath the revolution by making their own top-to-bottom socialist revolution on a national level while at the same time mercilessly combating any Soviet attempt at instigating a foreign-led, Jewish-dominated communist revolution.

On a national level, the National Socialists were sensationally successful in the years of peace, but with this success inevitably came confrontation with other foreign powers, among them first and foremost Stalin's Soviet Russia, which saw its plans of instigating a revolution in Germany foiled, hence considered war the only option left to conquer Central and Western Europe.

The German-Russian – or rather National-Socialist–Soviet-Communist – Clash of Titans started on 22 June 1941. The present book tries to uncover what subsequently happened to the Jews who lived in, or were deported into, the temporarily German-occupied territories of the Soviet Union. Unlike almost all mainstream authors writing about the topic, Carlo Mattogno is aware *and takes into consideration* that the "information" we have about those events is steeped in Soviet atrocity propaganda; that witness testimony and Soviet forensic expert reports are equally riddled with distortions, exaggerations and inventions; that the Soviets did not shy away from outright forgeries, even blaming their own massacres on the Germans, as in the case of Katyn Forest. With the historical record so contaminated with Soviet mendacity, what can we believe?

Hence, the critically minded scholar – and no other type of scholar should be trusted in these matters – may not take anything at face value; source criticism is absolutely crucial.

* * *

As National-Socialist Germany prepared her invasion of the Soviet Union, she did so as a counter-revolutionary power, as an avenger for Soviet terror past and present, with the intention to wipe out Judeo-Bolshevism once and for all. The reader of this book will read repeatedly that, as the German army moved into one Soviet city after another, the German authorities taking over behind the advancing front found confirmation after confirmation that Jews were indeed the mainstay of Soviet power and terror on many if not all levels. But was that really true? Can we take these claims in German contemporary documents at face value?

In 2001, Russian researcher Nikita Petrov published a paper which addressed the question to what degree Jews were involved in the Soviet Union's most prominent government agency of repression, the NKVD. This was possible because the NKVD itself had kept records on the ethnic affiliation of its employees and associates, and Jews were seen as a separate ethnic group, not as members of a religion. If we look at this data – see the table below – it turns out that up to 1937, Jews filled almost 40% of all the higher positions within the NKVD, while only some 2% to 3% of the Soviet population was Jewish at that time.

Proportion of Jews in the upper echelons of the NKVD							
	10 Jul. 34	1 Oct. 36	1 Mar. 37	1. Sep. 38	1 Jul. 39	1 Jan. 40	26 Feb. 41
Jews	38.54%	39.09%	37.84%	21.33%	3.92%	3.49%	5.49%

The drastic decline in the NKVD's Jewish composition was mainly due to the massacres committed among all government officials in the course of the purges carried out by Stalin in the years 1937/38. Because Jews were so extremely overrepresented among those officials, they were also among the main victims of these purges.

It is therefore safe to assume that, when the German army moved into Russia in June 1941, the astounding predominance of Jews in the Soviet state bureaucracy was to a considerable degree a matter of the recent past.

But why, then, did German contemporary reports as quoted in the present book state the opposite?

The first question to ask is always: how could they know? It is a fact that most Soviet officials fled when the Germans arrived. What the Germans found out about the ethnic composition of government personnel may have relied more on witness testimony and hearsay than on official records. At least that is the impression I received from reading these German reports, for they never mention the thorough analysis of employment records.

The next question to ask is: can we trust those witnesses? The answer to this is simple and clear-cut: no, we cannot. Anyone making statements in this regard to the Germans was evidently willing to collaborate with the enemy, and with the reputation the Germans had as Jew-hating anti-Semites, many witnesses may have anticipated what the Germans wanted to hear. Hence, this is a clear case of confirmation bias. The Germans were probably mostly hearing their own echo rather than independently collected, reliable data. It is also conceivable that

claims about Jewish dominance in positions of power contained in these documents were completely unfounded, hence made up in order to "justify" mass executions of Jews.

Does that mean that the Jews in Russia were not the enemy the Germans perceived them as? Not necessarily. If we put ourselves into the Jews' shoes for a moment, there are mainly two things to consider.

First, although the Soviet terror apparatus was to an astounding degree "Jewish" in nature until 1937, that does not mean that most Jews were involved in that apparatus. In fact, by the time of the Stalinist purges of 1937/38, it must have become clear to everyone in the Soviet Union that literally everyone was a victim of the Soviet or rather Stalinist terror. Even the perpetrators of that terror regime were caught up in a nightmare of horrors which they could not escape, and many of them were eventually swallowed up by this maelstrom they had helped create and maintain. From that point of view, everyone in the Soviet Union needed to be liberated, Jews and Gentiles, perpetrators and victims, government officials and the general populace. Had the Germans moved in with that attitude – to liberate everyone from the Bolshevik nightmare – they might have won the war. But that is not what they did.

Instead, the Germans moved in with the attitude of an eye for an eye. And as Gandhi correctly observed, that attitude merely makes the whole world blind. Even if many of Russia's Jews were not necessarily hostile to the Germans before the war, once the Germans had assumed a radical, to one degree or another eliminatory anti-Jewish stance when advancing into the Soviet Union, the Jews had little choice but to align themselves with the only power that could and would protect them from the counter-revolutionary, anti-Jewish wrath the Germans were both bringing with them and unleashing among the local non-Jewish populace.

Stalin was smart enough to recognize that he had to unite the peoples of his realm and beyond to win this war. So he reinvented Russian patriotism, resurrected the Orthodox Church, and rallied the Jews around him – only to revert all this again after the war, but that's beside the point. Hence, even if Stalin's Russia in 1938 wasn't more Jewish than Hitler's Germany at that time, as the German forces started committing massacres against the Jews on Russian territories, Stalin's Russia once more became the central focus of Jewish support – from within the Soviet Union itself, but also from the U.S. and elsewhere.

While Stalin turned many of his former enemies temporarily into "friends" and sowed discord among the rest of his enemies, Hitler, with his sweeping anti-Jewish stance and racist attitudes toward the Slavs, sowed discord among his potential friends and united his enemies.

Hence, if some Jews weren't already hostile toward the Germans when the war started, most if not all of them became enemies as it progressed. This in turn served as a justification for increasingly severe German measures against the Jews. This way, a vicious, ever-escalating cycle was created that turned the entire conflict into a bloodbath. In a way, therefore, the Germans created, maintained

and helped grow an enemy that needed not exist in the first place. It was a self-fulfilling prophecy of sorts.

As noble as the intention was to slay the Bolshevik monster, by applying methods similar to those of the Bolsheviks, *i.e.*, by declaring entire sections of the population as enemies (the nobility and bourgeoisie here, the Jews and Soviets there) – rather than by waging a war merely against ideas – and by perpetrating wholesale slaughters on a scale unprecedented in German history, the National Socialists and with them many millions of loyal German followers turned into a mirror image of the monster they were claiming to fight. It's an oft-repeated tragedy in the history of mankind.

Although these facts can make us understand why things happened as they did, none of it can excuse them.

In this sense, the present book tries to shed light on what exactly happened without trying to justify or excuse. Did the Germans go into Russia with the intention to slaughter all the Jews they got their hands on wholesale? Or was it a reaction to Soviet atrocities and a perception that Jews were primarily responsible for them? What exactly did happen? And how many Jews fell victim to these massacres?

The last question in the above list is probably also the most vexing one. Although Carlo Mattogno has given well-documented estimates in the past about the probable, actual death tolls of certain National-Socialist camps, the reader will be disappointed in this regard with the present book. Although Chapter 5 of Part One deals with this question, it merely makes us realize that it is close to impossible to pinpoint even an approximate figure. As a matter of fact, after having digested this voluminous work, the reader will understand that there are a number of seemingly insurmountable obstacles to determining a death toll. First, the numbers given in German documents are anything but reliable because the data contained in them are, to use Mattogno's words "chaotic and disordered," and the numbers given "almost never coincide with the declared totals" (see p. 280). Many scholars have suspected that the numbers in those documents may be exaggerated, but after reading Mattogno's analysis, one can safely say that they are entirely unreliable, and that anything is possible: exaggeration and understatement.

Next, there is reason to suspect that the German documents do not include all the massacres that have occurred. Most of these suspicions are based on mere witness claims of massacres that are not backed up by documents. Although mere claims by witnesses do not prove that a massacre occurred, if a forensic team finds a mass grave based on such witness testimony, and there is no known German document confirming that there has been a massacre, this can mean either that it wasn't documented, or else that this mass grave contains other victims instead, such as those of a Soviet massacre. Mattogno discusses one such case in Subchapter 1.6. of Part Two. Of course, the other extreme is possible, too, name-

ly that mass-execution events reported in German documents may have been invented from whole cloth. That possibility is discussed by Mattogno as well.

Ultimately, the only thing that could settle the question as to whether death-toll figures in German documents are correct would be to do numerous complete and thorough forensic exhumations of all victims found in a mass grave associated with a documented massacre, determine as best as possible the number and identities of the victims, the probable cause and approximate time of death, and the likely perpetrators. That is standard procedure in any other case of mass murder.

As Mattogno documents thoroughly, however, it is in particular Jewish religious authorities who successfully veto that such examinations occur. It is difficult to say whether this intentionally or unintentionally obstructive stance will ever change, or whether non-Jewish government authorities will ever muster enough backbone to do what should have been done a long time ago, no matter what some Jewish personality wishes. For now, all we can do is wait and hope. Of course, as decade after decade passes, this task will not become any easier, since the evidence needed to come to clear conclusions deteriorates steadily.

Mainstream death-toll claims for massacres committed by the *Einsatzgruppen* and associated German units usually vary between just under a million (Hilberg 2003, p. 408) and up to three million (Schwarz, p. 220). For now, little can be said about these figures other than that they are more speculative in nature than based upon hard, confirmable data. Their order of magnitude may be in the correct ball park, though. If so, these are indeed shocking numbers. But if we compare these figures with the death toll of Soviet atrocities committed since 1917 until the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, we are dealing with "peanuts." Estimates of that Soviet death toll up to 1941 range in the tens of millions, hence a factor ten higher than that of Jews (and non-Jews) presumably killed by Germans in the Soviet Union.

Yet when we go into libraries of the western world, we find more than 100,000 books on the Jewish WWII Holocaust, but only very few works dealing with the Soviet massacres in the years 1917-1941 – and beyond. Why is that?

While mainstream scholars claim that the Jewish Holocaust is one of the best- and most-thoroughly investigated genocides in the history of mankind, or even of *any* major event in our species's history, the Soviet massacres – a series of many genocides and non-genocidal mass murders of far greater magnitude – are hardly researched in a systematic and thorough manner by anyone in the western world. The former Soviet-occupied countries which suffered greatly under Soviet rule, such as the Ukraine and the Baltic countries, have done their share of investigations since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, but they have garnered little attention in the West. Why?

The answer to these questions can be found when we realize who holds cultural hegemony over the western world. This hegemony evidently results in this one-sided and lopsided historical perspective that is hiding cause and effect, and

turns history into an unintelligible black-and-white image of supposed absolute evil versus supposed innocent good. The forces that accomplish this are the same forces which, in the U.S. for many years since 1917, have to a large degree hidden from public view what was going on in the Soviet Union.

* * *

The book you are holding in your hands presents the results of the first-ever revisionist effort to comprehensively investigate the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen* behind the German-Soviet front during World War Two. According to mainstream sources, the murders perpetrated by the *Einsatzgruppen* and other associated German units encompass roughly one third of the Holocaust, quantitatively speaking (give or take a million victims, depending on the source). It is a vast topic in many respects: by the number of claimed events, by the size of the geographic area where these events are said to have occurred, by the amount of source material available, and by the number of – almost exclusively mainstream – studies already published about it. Carlo Mattogno has taken on a huge task.

The original Italian edition of this book was published in 2017. That edition has attracted the attention of a group of hostile commentators who, in August 2018, started to analyze and critique it in a series of blog entries online.[3] At that point in time, the editing efforts of the present English translation of Mattogno's book were well under way. Right after I was informed about these critical blog entries, I informed Carlo Mattogno about them. Since it was obvious that these blog entries had just started and were to be continued, probably for many months to come, reacting to them would have meant suspending the entire project, waiting for the bloggers to finish their critique, then do more research and finally rewrite the book where necessary, first in Italian, then in English. This would have delayed the English edition for a year, if not more. Add to this the volatile nature of blog entries, which can be changed and deleted at a moment's notice. In other words, Carlo Mattogno was not willing to give some hostile internet critics the power to postpone the publication of his own book *ad infinitum*.

The reader, on the other hand, is invited to take notice of the arguments of both sides in this debate. When reading about the bloggers' contentions regarding Mattogno's comments on the "Jäger Report," for instance, we notice first of all that the alpha and omega of historiography – source criticism – is something the bloggers evidently don't like at all. All Mattogno does in this regard in the present book is to raise some questions about this document. He does the same with the *Einsatzgruppen*'s infamous Incident Reports. Source-critical questions are not illegitimate, as the bloggers suggest, but pivotal. This alone shows the utterly unprofessional, biased approach of these bloggers. The next thing to notice with regard to the "Jäger Report" is that the bloggers accuse Mattogno of claims or mistakes he did, in fact, not make. Just read carefully what Mattogno wrote and what the bloggers claim (provided they haven't changed it by now), and you will real-

[3] http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/

ize their skewed perspective. Whether this is due to their incompetence or dishonesty may be left for the reader to decide.

In another blog entry, they accuse Mattogno of not having used all the secondary source material available on some aspects of the present study, and to have taken into consideration only a limited number of witness testimonies. Such accusations are inevitable and unreasonable. They are inevitable, because it is physically impossible to cover all existing sources in a book of a reasonable size written by only one author within a finite time span. In addition, quoting all the secondary sources in existence – of which there are thousands – would be a book-inflating exercise which would only annoy the reader without adding much information. At the end of the day, a study such as the present one must be based primarily on primary sources, not on other scholars' opinions.

Furthermore, when it comes to witness testimonies, these accusations are unreasonable as well, because the present book proves with ample examples that many if not most witness testimonies are filled with absurd claims that give rise to the conclusion that we simply cannot rely on them. Adding thousands more of these sometimes absurd and even grotesque statements won't change that conclusion. Such expansion of the data pool can only confirm it.

At the end of the day, it does not matter how many witnesses have claimed that witches ride on broomsticks and have sex with the devil (not necessarily both at once nor in that order). If it can be shown that many of these statements are untrustworthy, we need to seek better, more reliable types of evidence. In our case, as already stated, the type of evidence needed consists of thorough and independent forensic examinations of the mass graves that can be located. Nothing else will do. If such evidence is never developed or presented, the world will have to live for all eternity with critical, skeptical and even denying voices regarding the claimed *Einsatzgruppen* massacres.

Germar Rudolf
1 November 2018

Update to the Second Edition

When we were in the process of finalizing the first edition of this book, we found out that, while we were translating the author's text from Italian to English, he had made numerous corrections, updates and additions to his original Italian text without ever informing us about it. The extent of these changes were revealed only after this first edition was already about to be released, so we could not include those changes. However, when we recently prepared a German translation of this work based on the latest Italian text, we took this opportunity to also prepare a second English edition that incorporates all these changes.

Furthermore, while preparing both of these editions, more updates and corrections were include that had become necessary, some of which are based on the sometimes fruitful criticism of the internet bloggers mentioned earlier. For in-

stance, we have completely revamped the tables listing all the executions mentioned in the Incidents Reports (Tables 14-18, starting on page 260), and therefore also the statistics based on them, making this deluge of numbers more consistent and transparent.

Germar Rudolf
4 November 2021

Introduction

After the end of the Second World War, the nascent historiographical propaganda, which drew its lifeblood from the trials of the various military tribunals against the defeated Germans, concentrated above all on the "extermination camps" and specifically on the homicidal "gas chambers," which soon became the focus of what was later defined as the Holocaust.

During their trial of members of the *Einsatzgruppen* (September 1947 to April 1948), however, the Americans had brought to the fore the executions perpetrated by these units in the temporarily German-occupied eastern territories. Although these killings were numerically considerable (the indictment repeated the figure of two million victims mentioned in that of the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal[4]), they did not particularly capture the collective imagination, both for the workaday execution method used – shooting, although more-exotic murder weapons were also claimed as a "corrective," such as the "gas vans" – as well as for their problematic historical context (the merciless warfare against the Soviet Union).

Already in 1951, the French Jewish historian Léon Poliakov, in his compendium *Bréviaire de la Haine*, established the hierarchy of crimes attributed to the Germans by calling the *Einsatzgruppen* shootings "chaotic exterminations" and the institutionalized killings carried out systematically in "gas chambers" "methodical exterminations."

Precisely because the "gas chambers" captured the imagination in an extraordinary way and made the alleged crime appear "unique" in some way, they soon assumed absolute dominance in the orthodox Holocaust literature, with the Auschwitz Camp as the center of gravity. Even if, starting with Gerald Reitlinger,[5] issues related to the *Einsatzgruppen* were investigated with increasing depth, the "extermination camps" and their "gas chambers" kept an unchallenged predominance in orthodox Holocaust literature for a long time. Revisionism was born and evolved as a critical re-examination of this central aspect.

When the orthodox narrative of Auschwitz, the "symbol of the Holocaust" *per se*, began to falter under the impact of revisionist criticism, the emphasis gradually shifted to the so-called "Action Reinhardt" camps, namely Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka, for which specific documentation is notoriously non-existent. Since that edifice also stood on extremely shaky ground (see Mattogno/Kues/Graf), the orthodoxy began concurrently to increasingly emphasize the *Einsatzgruppen*'s

4 TWC, Vol. IV, p. 53, with explicit reference in footnote 2 to IMT, Vol. I, p. 292.
5 Reitlinger (1953) devotes two chapters to the *Einsatzgruppen*.

activities, for which there is at least abundant and specific documentation. This trend, already inaugurated at the end of the 1980s, especially by Arno Mayer (1988), and further developed a few years later by Michel Korzec,[6] has more-recently found new vigor thanks to Father Patrick Desbois (2007/2008).

Orthodox Holocaust studies on the *Einsatzgruppen* have grown enormously in recent years. This also resulted from the fact that the proper "extermination camps" are now exhausted as a topic of historiography. The latest book with scientific claims on Auschwitz (apart, for obvious reasons, from the in-house publications of the Auschwitz Museum) is Robert Jan van Pelt's *The Case for Auschwitz: Evidence from the Irving Trial*, which dates back to 2002. For the "extermination camps," the focus is now only on mere collections of testimonies such as the one edited by Dariusz Libionki for the Majdanek Museum, whose title translates to *The Bełżec Extermination Camp in Survivor Testimonies and Depositions of Polish Witnesses*, which appeared in 2013.

Although it is true that the last orthodox convulsions on the "gas chambers," published in the anthology *New Studies on National-Socialist Mass Killings with Poison Gas*, dates back only to 2011 (Morsch/Perz), it marked precisely the collapse of this essential aspect of the orthodox Holocaust narrative (see Mattogno 2016b). The research field dealing with the *Einsatzgruppen* is instead broad and partly unexplored, as a result of which we may expect a substantial shift of the holocaustic center of gravity toward this theme.

Although revisionist literature on the Holocaust has become very diverse and abundant for all these reasons over the past two decades, no revisionist study has existed so far specifically dealing with the *Einsatzgruppen*, with the sole exception of two 40-page brochures devoted to the subject by Udo Walendy (1983), which are now quite dated and moreover do not address many central issues.

The work I present here aims to fill this gap by providing the essential elements to orient the reader in this complex topic. Given the vastness of the problems involved, I preferred to deal with the fundamental issues as listed in the Table of Contents. Despite this self-limitation, the work has nevertheless become quite voluminous.

Unlike the "extermination camps" and "gas chambers," a large and certainly authentic documentation exists that attests to mass executions of Jews by shooting of an enormous magnitude that were carried out by the *Einsatzgruppen* and other associated units in the German-occupied eastern territories, although the exact death toll is difficult to quantify (see Chapter V of Part One). In this regard, therefore, it makes even less sense to label revisionist research efforts as "negationist" in nature, as does the silly stereotype affixed to revisionism by its adversaries. The fundamental problem is whether or not these shootings were carried out on the basis of a governmental extermination order (by Hitler, Himmler or Heydrich), and whether the Jews were shot merely because they were Jews.

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6 Korzec 1995. The author claimed that, of the 5 million murdered Jews, only "some seven- or eight-hundred thousand were probably gassed."

These two issues are essential conditions for including these executions in the orthodox Holocaust as it was defined by Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman in their 2002 study *Denying History*:

> *"When historians talk about the 'Holocaust', what they mean on the most general level is that about six million Jews were killed in an intentional and systematic fashion by the Nazis using a number of different means, including gas chambers."* (p. XV)

If the killings neither targeted Jews as such nor were ordered as such from above, they simply did not occur "in an intentional and systematic fashion," which refers to an extermination order or at least a "decision." In that case, they would be mere war atrocities in the context of an atrocious war conducted by both sides. Questioning the authenticity of the *Einsatzgruppen*'s reports does not make sense, but the fact that they are authentic does not necessarily mean that their statements are true. On the contrary, their contents at times cause a lot of consternation, and this concerns not just the death-toll figures, but extends to the well-founded suspicion that certain mass executions mentioned in them may have been completely invented. I will divulge the reasons for this in due time during the present study.

Since no certain *documentary* criterion exists that can be used to gauge the veracity of the enormous amount of data and numbers contained in the various *Einsatzgruppen* reports and related documents, I have used the only possible criterion that can provide at least a defensible order of magnitude: the material criterion of the discovery of mass graves and the corpses they contain.

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, the number of victims of the *Einsatzgruppen* is said to have ranged from a minimum of about 900,000 (Hilberg) to a maximum of about 2,600,000 (Arad). These and other figures are examined in Chapter 5 of Part One. Because the bodies of the victims were buried, in theory it should still be possible to find them in the mass graves. Hence, the material criterion would allow the *corpus delicti* to be discovered in a literal sense.

It is well known, however, that one of the cornerstones of the orthodox Holocaust narrative on the subject of the *Einsatzgruppen* is that, since 1943 at the latest, the Germans are said to have engaged in an institutionalized and systematic activity of locating the mass graves, exhuming the bodies contained in them, and burning the remains of the victims on outdoor fires (the so-called "Aktion 1005"). Given the importance of the topic, I considered it necessary to present it in as much detail as possible. Hence, the entire second part of this work is dedicated to this "Aktion 1005," meaning the alleged cremation of millions of corpses buried on Soviet territory temporarily occupied by the Germans.

Carlo Mattogno
September 2016

PART ONE:

THE *EINSATZGRUPPEN*

1. The *Einsatzgruppen*: Structure, Missions and Reports

1.1. The *Einsatzgruppen* in the Polish Campaign

The *Einsatzgruppen* that operated in 1941 within the framework of "Operation Barbarossa" had their forerunners in the *Einsatzgruppen* which were deployed in 1939 (Matthäus *et al.* 2014, pp. 2f.):

> *"During the Polish campaign, the Einsatzgruppen and their subunits, the Einsatzkommandos (EK), consisted of a force of roughly two thousand members of the German security police (Sicherheitspolizei, Sipo) – a combination of the Criminal Police (Kriminalpolizei, Kripo) and the secret state police (the notorious Geheime Staatspolizei, Gestapo) under the command of Reinhard Heydrich – and the Nazi Party's (NSDAP) intelligence service (Sicherheitsdienst, or SD, also headed by Heydrich). These Sipo/SD units, subordinated since late September 1939 to the newly created Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA) with Heydrich at the helm, were established in the planning phase of the war to cooperate closely with the German military in the goal of 'pacifying' the occupied Polish territories. Almost immediately they became a deadly tool in the repertoire of Nazi subjugation policies, targeting thousands of real or imagined 'enemies of the Reich' ('Reichsfeinde') and enforcing the 'Germanization' of vast parts of Poland. According to estimates, ten thousand civilians were executed during the fighting. Up to the end of October, the German military, SS, and police units shot an additional sixteen thousand Polish noncombatants, among them an unknown number of Jews."*

At first, and during the Polish Campaign, the Germans deployed a variety of units:

– *Einsatzgruppe* I, based in Vienna: this was commanded by SS *Brigadeführer* Bruno Streckenbach and consisted of 4 *Einsatzkommando*s of 90 men each; their field of action was western Galicia and eastern Slovakia;
– *Einsatzgruppe* II, based in Oppeln (today's Opole), under the command of SS *Obersturmbannführer* Emanuel Schäfer, with 2 *Einsatzkommando*s;
– *Einsatzgruppe* III, based in Breslau (today's Wrocław), commanded by SS *Obersturmbannführer* Hans Fischer, with 300 men;
– *Einsatzgruppe* IV, based in Dramburg (today's Drawsko Pomorskie), commanded by SS *Brigadeführer* Lothar Beutel, with 200-250 men;
– *Einsatzgruppe* V, based in Allenstein (today's Olsztyn), Prussia, commanded by SS *Standartenführer* Ernst Damzog, initially had 2 *Einsatzkommando*s consisting of 250 men each, to which a third was later added;
– *Einsatzgruppe* VI, based in Frankfurt/Main, led by SS *Oberführer* Erich Naumann, included 2 *Einsatzkommando*s;
– *Einsatzgruppe* z.b.V. (*zur besonderen Verwendung*, for special use), under the command of SS *Obergruppenführer* Udo von Woyrsch, consisted of 4 battal-

ions of *Ordnungspolizei* (regular German police) and 1 *Sonderkommando* of the Security Police (*Sicherheitspolizei*), with 350 men;

– *Einsatzkommando* 16, formed at Danzig (today's Gdansk) on 12 September 1939 with a strength of 100 men; its command was entrusted to SS *Obergruppenführer* Udo von Woyrsch (*ibid.*, pp. 9-12).

An agreement between the *Wehrmacht* and Sipo/SD regarding "Guidelines for the Foreign Deployment of the Security Police and the SD," undated (August 1939), describes the tasks of the *Einsatzgruppen* as follows (*ibid.*, Doc. 1, p. 32):

> *"The mission of the Einsatzgruppen and Einsatzkommandos has been determined by agreement with the Army High Command (OKH), as is confirmed in a letter from the Army High Command (6. Abt.-II-Gen-StdH. No. 1299/39 g.Kdos) dated July 31, 1939: 'The mission of the Security Police Einsatzkommandos is to combat all elements hostile to the Reich and to Germans in enemy territory to the rear of the combat troops.'"*

The collection of documents from which the above data are derived dedicates a special section to the topic of "Persecuting Jews," consisting of 20 documents (Nos. 42-61; *ibid.*, pp. 89-120), made up, for the most part, of testimonies and interrogations, photographs and quotations from books – there are only five contemporary German documents, only two of which are *Einsatzgruppen* reports.

Document 56 is a daily report from *Einsatzgruppe* VI by the Chief of the Sipo/SD dated 20 September 1939. These few lines are the **only ones** mentioning Jews: the document calls for the formation of "special commissioners to liquidate businesses whose Jewish owners have fled" and informs us that "a total of 40 Jewish businesses in the City of Posen are closed" (*ibid.*, p. 112).

The express letter from *Einsatzgruppe* z.b.V., Kattowitz, to the Sipo in Berlin, dated 8 November 1939 has as its subject "Jewish population" (*Jüdische Bevölkerung*). It contains a list of six municipalities (*Gemeinden*) from the Kattowitz District, indicating the total number of inhabitants for each of them, the total number of ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) living there, of Jews, and whether a "Jewish council of elders" (*Judenrat*) exists there. The total number of Jews is very small: 1,875 out of a total population of 251,201 persons. The letter states that "the number of Jews is constantly declining as a result of illegal emigration [*Abwanderung*] or the deportations [*Abtransporte*] from here" (*ibid.*, p. 118).

Document 52 is Heydrich's notorious express letter dated 21 September 1939 (PS-3363) addressed "to the heads of all task forces of the Security Police," which has as its subject the "Jewish Question in the occupied territory" (*ibid.*, pp. 104-108). In it, Heydrich sets forth his plans, based on the distinction between:

> *"1) the final goal* [Endziel] *(which requires a longer time frame), and*
> *2) the stages* [Abschnitten] *in the fulfillment of this final goal (which can be carried out in the short term)."*

His directives are delineated in five paragraphs, the first of which reads:

> *"The first prerequisite for the final goal is initially to concentrate the Jews from rural areas in the larger cities."*

This is followed by instructions for the formation of a "Jewish council of elders" ("In each Jewish community, a council of Jewish elders is to be established, composed, if possible, of remaining influential individuals and rabbis. The council of elders is to consist of up to 24 male Jews (depending on the size of the Jewish community)"); the necessary measures were taken in close collaboration with the authorities of the local civil and military administration. Paragraph IV addressed the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen* with regard to the Jews:

> *"The chiefs of the Einsatzgruppen will report to me on an ongoing basis regarding the following matters:*
> *1) Numerical overview of the Jews present in their areas (if possible, broken down into the categories indicated above). Here the numbers of Jews being evacuated* [*zur Abwanderung gebracht*] *from the countryside and the numbers of Jews already in the cities are to be stated separately.*
> *2) Names of the cities that have been designated as points of concentration* [*Konzentrierungspunkte*].
> *3) The deadlines set for moving* [*zur Abwanderung*] *the Jews to the cities.*
> *4) Overview of all Jewish-owned branches of industry and enterprises within their areas that are of vital and strategic importance or are relevant to the Four Year Plan."*

The "final goal" referred to deportation or expulsion, as may be deduced from Document 54, a file memo by RSHA "resettlement" expert SS *Hauptsturmführer* Adolf Eichmann dated 6 October 1939, which refers to a discussion with *Gauleiter* Wagner at Kattowitz "regarding the expulsion of 70,000 to 80,000 Jews from the Kattowitz District" and to a concurrent expulsion of Jews from the town of Mährisch Ostrau (*ibid.*, pp. 109f.).

In June 1939, Walter Stahlecker, the future commandant of *Einsatzgruppe* A, was appointed Commander of the Security Police and the SD at Prague. A file memo dated 16 October informs us that on 12 October, SS *Oberführer* Stahlecker, together with SS *Hauptsturmführer* Eichmann, had traveled from Mährisch Ostrau to Cracow to discuss the "Establishment of an appropriate area for the settlement of Jews" and reports:[7]

> *"In addition to the establishment of an appropriate area, the food conditions, housing possibilities, if any, and the transport's travel route should be clarified with the prospective terminus."*

This was in relation to the plan for a Jewish reservation in the area of the town of Nisko, located near the River San in southeastern Poland. The first Jewish transport from Mährisch Ostrau left on the morning of 15 October to build a "transit camp" at Nisko as stated in the related "daily report" from the head of the SD office at Mährisch Ostrau.[8] In other documents the camp is called "retraining camp"[9] or "resettlement camp Nisko upon San."[10] The Nisko Camp was com-

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7 YVA, O.53-87, p. 129.
8 YVA, O.53-87, p. 149.
9 File memo of 16 October 1939, Mährisch-Ostrau. YVA, O.51-91, p. 24; file memo of 12 February 1941, Mährisch-Ostrau. YVA, O.51-91, p. 69.

manded by SS *Sturmbannführer* Binnen and formed a "Central Office for Jewish Resettlement," as can be seen from the letterhead of his correspondence.[11]

This resettlement was intended as a kind of dress rehearsal for a much-more-comprehensive evacuation operation. A memo dated 11 October 1939, states:[12]

> *"For the time being, the Führer has ordered the redeployment of 300,000 impecunious Jews from the Old Reich and the Ostmark."*

The *Einsatzgruppen* were also involved in the resettlement project. Information about this can be found in a memo on the subject of the area of *Einsatzgruppe* 1, which was dispatched from Berlin on September 29, 1939 and received one day later by the "Central Office" in Moravia-Ostrava.[13] From this memo we learn that Heydrich's decree of 21 September was also valid for the area administered by said Central Office, which extended from Krakow to Połianec and Jarosław on the former demarcation line as well as on the Polish-Slovakian border and was thus considered territory for the planned resettlement. From October 1939, the deportation trains were to use the railroad line that ran from Mährisch-Ostrau via Krakow, Tarnow and Rzeszow to Jarosław.[14] The village of Nisko was located on the railway line Jarosław–Stalowa Wola–Sandomierz, but could also be reached via the line Tarnow–Debica–Mielec–Tarnobezg–Stalowa Wola, which was within the mentioned territory.

In conclusion, no German document attributes executions of Jews to the *Einsatzgruppen* in Poland.

Regarding the Jews, Szymon Datner presents a thorough set of statistics on the 714 batches of executions carried out by the Germans in Poland between 1 September and 25 October 1939, during the first 55 days of the occupation. It lists the number of executions and victims in two columns, showing 12,137 (September) and 4,199 victims (1-25 October), for a total of 16,336 victims (Datner 1967, pp. 110-112). It then provides a breakdown of the origins of these victims into twelve voivodeships (*ibid.*, pp. 113-117); another table summarizes these data, also reporting the percentage of the 16,336 victims and those of the 714 execution batches (*ibid.*, p. 118). Jews are mentioned only in the table "*Liczba ofiar*" (number of victims), which refers to executions carried out in the Łódź District, namely, 2,387 of the 2,393 victims, which are distributed as follows:

– executions of exclusively non-Jewish Poles: 1,773 victims;
– executions of exclusively Jews: 112 victims;
– executions of Jews and non-Jewish Poles: 502.

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[10] Letter from the Jewish Community in Moravian Ostrava dated 13 March 1940, YVA, O.51-91, p. 66.
[11] See, for example, the letter of February 8, 1940 to the Gestapo of Moravian Ostrava with the letterhead "Central Office for Jewish Resettlement Nisko upon San" ("*Zentrale Stelle für jüdische Umsiedlung Nisko am San*"), YVA, O.51-91. p. 60.
[12] YVA, O.51-91, p. 7.
[13] YVA, O.51-91, p. 1.
[14] YVA, O.51-91, file memo of 11 October 1939, Mährisch-Ostrau.

For another six executions carried out in this district, the ethnicities of the victims are not reported, bringing the total number of executed persons to 2,393 (*ibid*., p. 120).

If these figures be accepted, what do they mean? What is the relationship between the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen* in the Polish Campaign and those in the Russian Campaign? The authors of the document collection cited above only provide a partial answer to these questions. Within the scope of "Operation Barbarossa," the *Einsatzgruppen* killed "between five and eight hundred thousand civilians, the overwhelming majority of them Jews"; these units moreover "recorded many – though far from all – of these murders and communicated the details back to the RSHA, which compiled extensive reports on German occupation policy in the Soviet Union." But what made such violence possible? The roots of the violence were derived from the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen* during the Polish Campaign, and, more precisely, in the concept of "'pacifying' the rear army areas," implying a sort of complicity on the part of the *Wehrmacht* (Matthäus *et al.* 2014, pp. 154f.):

> *"On March 30, 1941, just as he had on August 22, 1939 prior to the attack on Poland, he* [Hitler] *put forward his views before the assembled senior generals, but this time with even more ominous implications: Bolshevism was an 'asocial crime'; Germany would 'have to step back from soldierly comradeship. The communist was not and is not a comrade. This is a fight of annihilation.' The war was about the 'destruction of the Bolshevist commissars and the communist intelligentsia',*[15] *a task that the Wehrmacht could not accomplish alone and that called for the assistance of Himmler's forces."*

This explains the difference in the *Einsatzgruppen's* activities during the Polish and the Russian Campaign: both were focusing on "pacifying" the areas behind the front, but in Poland, the *Einsatzgruppen* were only fighting Jews, while in the Soviet Union, they were fighting "Judeo-Bolshevism," which explains why the killings in Poland were very limited, and incomparably greater in the conquered Soviet territories.

This concept found expression in the very first *Einsatzgruppen* reports. *Ereignismeldung* (EM; Incident Report) No. 31 dated 23 July 1941 expresses it as follows (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 166):

> *"At least one and a half million Jews live in the Byelorussian settlement area; their sociological structure in the former Polish and former Soviet areas is not uniform. While the Jews in former Poland were officially insignificant and enjoyed no particular protection as Jews, in the Soviet Union they considered themselves part of the ruling class. Polish Jews lived in constant fear of hostile popular demonstrations; wherever they were not clearly in the majority, they considered it advisable to tread carefully and timidly. Soviet Jews, by contrast, had been stiffened up by a quarter century of Jewish-Bolshevist rule, so much so that they*

[15] The phrase "a task that the Wehrmacht could not accomplish alone and that called for the assistance of Himmler's forces" is NOT contained in the German edition of this book; Matthäus *et al*. 2008, p. 89.

> *very often behaved self-confidently, even arrogantly, even when German troops moved in."*

In his comment on the "Draft of establishing provisional guidelines for the treatment of Jews in the area of RKO" [*Reichskommissariat* East] dated 6 August 1941, Walter Stahlecker, commander of *Einsatzgruppe* A, reiterated (Angrick *et al.*, Doc. 37, p. 93):

> *"Leaving the Jews in their previous dwellings and workplaces in the General Government did not result in any serious political trouble. By contrast the Jews that lived in the East or were sent there by the Red rulers considered themselves essential bearers of Bolshevik ideals. Numerous Jews were avowed communist activists. Past experience certainly teaches us that focal points of unrest will remain even long after the military occupation of the Eastern territory. Acts of sabotage and terror will not just be incited and committed by communists who were not arrested during the latest purge. Rather, precisely the Jews will exploit every possibility to stir up trouble. Already the absolutely necessary, rapid pacification of the East requires the quickest possible elimination of disturbances during our constructive work."*

In other words, Soviet Jews were targeted not because they were Jews, but because they were collectively suspected of supporting Bolshevism. Even one of the principal witnesses confirming the existence of an extermination order during the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial, the Defendant Walter Blume, placed it within the framework of the struggle against Bolshevism:[16]

> *"I have used the wording that is somehow stuck in my memory, that eastern Jewry was the intellectual reservoir of world Bolshevism, and that for this reason, a military victory over Russia would not mean the end of Bolshevism as long as eastern Jewry still existed. This is why Eastern Jewry must be destroyed."*

In this context, it is important to stress that, in the handling of the "Jewish question," military necessity overrode ideological and political directives. As we will see in the next chapter, the end goal of National-Socialist Jewish policy was the deportation or expulsion of European Jews to various regions above the Arctic Circle or at least beyond the Urals, but this policy also had to deal with the politico-ideological attitude and behavior of the Jews in the various geopolitical areas.

1.2. Structure of the *Einsatzgruppen*

As is well known, the *Einsatzgruppen* consisted of four units designated A, B, C and D with a total strength of approximately 3,000 men.[17]

Einsatzgruppe A, with a documented strength of between 909 and 990 men (see further below), operated in the area of Army Group North, in the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*. It was commanded by SS *Brigadeführer* Walter Stahlecker (22 June 1941 – 23 March 1942), succeeded by: SS *Brigadeführer* Heinz Jost (29 or

[16] Interrogation of W. Blume on 13 January 1949. YVA, O.53-141, p. 55.
[17] The data about the individual unit leaders were taken from Krausnick/Wilhelm, pp. 644-646.

30 March – 2 September 1942), SS *Oberführer* Humbert Achamer-Pifrader (10 September 1942 – 4 September 1943), SS *Oberführer* Friedrich Panzinger (4 September 1943 – May 1944) and SS *Oberführer* Wilhelm Fuchs (May – October 1944). It was organized in four sub-units:

– *Sonderkommando* (or *Einsatzkommando*) 1a: commander SS *Standartenführer* Martin Sandberger (appointed KdS[18] Estland on 3 Dec. 1941), operative area Estonia.
– *Sonderkommando* (or *Einsatzkommando*) 1b: SS *Obersturmbannführer* Erich Ehrlinger, then SS *Obersturmbannführer* Eduard Strauch (from 3 Dec. 1941 until June 1943), followed by SS *Standartenführer* Erich Isselhorst (from 30 June until October 1943), operative area Byelorussia.
  On 9 December 1941, Ehrlinger was appointed by Heydrich, representing Himmler, "Commander of the Security Police and the SD for the General District Kiev in the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine."[19]
– *Einsatzkommando* 2: SS *Standartenführer* Rudolf Batz (1 June – 4 Nov. 1941), replaced by SS *Obersturmbannführer* Eduard Strauch (4 November – 3 December 1941) and by SS *Sturmbannführer* Erwin Rudolf Lange (from 3 December 1941 until October 1944), appointed KdS Lettland on 3 December 1941; operative area Latvia.
– *Einsatzkommando* 3: SS *Standartenführer* Karl Jäger, who then became KdS Litauen; Wilhelm Fuchs (15 September 1943 – 6 May 1944), and finally Hans Joachim Böhme (11 May 1944 – 1 January 1945); operations area Lithuania.

Einsatzgruppe B had approximately 665 members; it was commanded by SS *Brigadeführer* Arthur Nebe until the end of October 1941, followed by SS *Brigadeführer* Erich Naumann (beginning of November 1941 – March 1943), SS *Standartenführer* Horst Böhme (12 March – 28 August 1943), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Erich Ehrlinger (28 August 1943 – April 1944), SS *Standartenführer* Heinz Seetzen (28 April 1944 – August 1944) and once again by Horst Böhme (from 12 August 1944). This unit operated in Byelorussia, in the area assigned to the Army Group Central, and was sub-divided into:

– *Sonderkommando* 7a: SS *Standartenführer* Walter Blume (until September 1941), SS *Standartenführer* Eugen Steimle (September – December 1941), SS *Hauptsturmführer* Kurt Matschke (10 December 1941 – 28 February 1942), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Albert Rapp (February 1942 – 28 January 1943), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Helmut Loos (June 1943 – June 1944), SS *Sturmbannführer* Gerhard Bast (June – November 1944).
– *Sonderkommando* 7b: SS *Sturmbannführer* Günther Rausch (until February 1942), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Adolf Ott (mid-February 1942 – January 1943, replaced between July and October 1942 by SS *Sturmbannführer* Josef

[18] *Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei*, commander of security police
[19] NARA, T-175/240, 2729887; *Der Reichsführer-SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei im Reichsministerium des Innern, Schnellbrief* (express letter) dated 9 December 1941.

Auinger), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Karl Rabe (January 1943 – October 1944).
– *Einsatzkommando* 8: SS *Obersturmbannführer* Otto Bradfisch (until 1 April 1942), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Heinz Richter (1 April – September 1942), SS *Standartenführer* Erich Isselhorst (September – November 1942), and finally SS *Obersturmbannführer* Hans Schindhelm (13 November 1942 – October 1943).
– *Einsatzkommando* 9: SS *Obersturmbannführer* Alfred Filbert (until 20 October 1941), SS *Sturmbannführer* Oswald Schäfer (October 1941 – February 1942), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Wilhelm Wiebens (February 1942 – March 1943), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Friedrich Buchardt (January 1943 – March 1944).
– *Vorkommando* Moskau (Advance Unit Moscow): SS *Brigadeführer* Franz Six (until 20 August 1941), SS *Sturmbannführer* Waldemar Klingelhöfer (September 1941), SS *Sturmbannführer* Erich Körting (September – December 1941). In January 1942, this formation was merged with the *Teiltrupp* (subsquad) of SS *Obersturmführer* Wilhelm Döring and became *Sonderkommando* 7c; the commanders were SS *Standartenführer* Wilhelm Bock (January 1942 – mid-1942), SS *Hauptsturmführer* Rudolf Schmücker (June – late autumn 1942), SS *Sturmbannführer* Wilhelm Bluhm (late autumn 1942 – July 1943) and SS *Sturmbannführer* Wilhelm Eckardt (July – December 1943). After that, this unit was merged with SK 7a.

Einsatzgruppe C had a strength of 700-820 men and was active in *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine under Army Group South. It was led by SS *Brigadeführer* Otto Rasch (until the beginning of October 1941), followed by SS *Gruppenführer* Max Thomas (October 1941 – 28 August 1943) and by SS *Standartenführer* Horst Böhme (from 6 September 1943 until the end of March 1944). It consisted of:
– *Sonderkommando* 4a: SS *Standartenführer* Paul Blobel (until January 1942), SS *Standartenführer* Erwin Weinmann (13 January – July 1942), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Eugen Karl Steimle (August 1942 – 15 January 1943) and SS *Sturmbannführer* Theodor Christensen (January – end of 1943).
– *Sonderkommando* 4b: SS *Sturmbannführer* Günther Herrmann (until September 1941), SS *Sturmbannführer* Fritz Braune (1 October 1941 – mid-March 1942), SS *Sturmbannführer* Walter Haensch (mid-March – July 1942), SS *Obersturmbannführer* August Meier (July – November 1942), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Friedrich Suhr (November 1942 – August 1943), SS *Sturmbannführer* Walter Krause (August 1943 – January 1944).
– *Einsatzkommando* 5: SS *Brigadeführer* Erwin Schulz (until the end of September 1941), SS *Obersturmbannführer* August Meier (end of September 1941 – January 1942). The unit was dissolved in January 1942.
– *Einsatzkommando* 6: SS *Standartenführer* Erhard Kroeger (until November 1941), SS *Sturmbannführer* Robert Mohr (November 1941 – September

1942), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Ernst Biberstein (September 1942 – May 1943), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Friedrich Suhr (August – November 1943).

Einsatzgruppe D consisted of approximately 600 men and operated in the area of the 11th Army and the Rumanian army (Bessarabia, southern Ukraine, Crimea, Caucasus). It was commanded by SS *Oberführer* Otto Ohlendorf (until June 1942), followed by SS *Oberführer* Walter Bierkamp (July 1942 – July 1943). It consisted of:

– *Sonderkommando* 10a: SS *Standartenführer* Heinz Seetzen (until July 1942), SS *Sturmbannführer* Kurt Christmann (1 August 1942 – July 1943).
– *Sonderkommando* 10b: SS *Sturmbannführer* Alois Persterer (until February 1943), SS *Sturmbannführer* Eduard Jedamzik (until May 1943).
– *Sonderkommando* 11a: SS *Sturmbannführer* Paul Zapp (until July 1942; then SK 11a was merged with SK 11b), SS *Sturmbannführer* Gerhard Bast (SK 11a reestablished; November – December 1942), SS *Sturmbannführer* Werner Hersmann (December 1942 – May 1943)
– *Sonderkommando* 11b: SS *Obersturmbannführer* Hans Unglaube (when EK 11 was split into 11a and 11b, July 1941), SS *Sturmbannführer* Bruno Müller (July – October 1941), SS *Sturmbannführer* Werner Braune (October 1941 – September 1942), SS *Sturmbannführer* Paul Schulz (September 1942 – February 1943).
– *Einsatzkommando* 12: SS *Obersturmbannführer* Gustav Nosske (until February 1942), SS *Sturmbannführer* Erich Müller (February – October 1942), SS *Obersturmbannführer* Günther Herrmann (October 1942 – March 1943).

With the commencement of Operation Barbarossa, the position of *Höhere SS und Polizeiführer* (Higher SS and Police leader) in Russia was occupied by:

– Russia North and *Ostland*: SS *Gruppenführer* Hans-Adolf Prützmann, later replaced by SS *Obergruppenführer* Friedrich Jeckeln;
– Russia Central: SS *Obergruppenführer* Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski;
– Russia South und Ukraine: SS *Obergruppenführer* Friedrich Jeckeln, later replaced by SS *Gruppenführer* Hans-Adolf Prützmann.

The documents known as the first and second Stahlecker Reports contain two graphs describing the strength of *Einsatzgruppe* A dated 15 October 1941[20] and 1 February 1942[21] (see Documents I.1.1 and I.1.2). The following table places the related data side by side, so they can be compared easily:

[20] RGVA, 500-4-93, Annex 1a, p. 144, "*Gesamtstärke der Einsatzgruppe A.*"
[21] RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 183.

Table 1

	15 October 1941	1 February 1942
Total strength	990	909
Regular police force	133 = 13.4%	134 = 14.8%
Female employees	13 = 1.3%	22 = 2.4%
Emergency Service Recruits (*Notdienstverpflichtete*)		53 = 5.8%
Teletypists	3 = 0.3%	9 = 0.9%
Radio operators	8 = 0.8%	23 = 2.5%
Active Waffen-SS	340 = 34.4%	151 = 16.6%
SS reservists		126 = 13.9%
Drivers	172 = 17.4%	185 = 20.3%
Administration	18 = 1.8%	26 = 2.9%
Special envoys		3 = 0.3%
SD	35 = 3.5%	37 = 4.1%
Criminal police	41 = 4.1%	55 = 6.1%
State police	89 = 9.0%	85 = 9.4%.
Interpreters	51 = 5.1%	
Auxiliary police	87 = 8.8%	

It is strange that the strength of this supposed extermination unit would be reduced by 81 persons when there still remained much work to be done; at the same time, they increased the non-combatant personnel and personnel not directly linked to extermination: Female employees, teletypists, radio operators, drivers.

No less strange is the disappearance of the 51 interpreters, who must have been indispensable, whatever the activities of the *Einsatzgruppe*.

The first Stahlecker Report supplies an "Allocation plan for members of *Einsatzgruppe* A among the *Einsatzkommando*s"[22] (see Document I.1.3.), the data of which is summarized in the following table:

[22] RGVA, 500-4-93, Annex 1b, p. 145.

Table 2

	E.K. 1a	E.K. 1b	E.K. 2	E.K. 3
Total strength	105	110	170	141
Female employees	1 = 0.9%		4 = 2.4%	1 = 0.7%
Teletypist			4 = 1.8%	
Radio operator	2 = 1.9	1 = 0.9%	2 = 1.2%	1 = 0.7%
SS reservists	25 = 24%	26 = 23.7%	41 = 23.6%	32 = 22.9%
drivers	23 = 22.1%	34 = 30.9%	50 = 29.4%	34 = 24.3%
Administration	3 = 2.9%	2 = 1.8%	4 = 2.4%	1 = 0.7%
SD	8 = 7.8%	3 = 2.7%	8 = 4.8%	10 = 7%
Criminal police	11 = 10.5%	6 = 5.4%	13 = 7.8%	10 = 7%
State police	18 = 16.2%	12 = 11%	26 = 15.6%	29 = 20.6%
Interpreters	14 = 13.7%	6 = 5.4%	18 = 10.8%	8 = 5.6%
Auxiliary police		20 = 18.2%		15 = 10.5%

The total number of men in the four *Einsatzkommando*s was 526. Which tasks were carried out by the remaining 464 is not clear, since the total strength of *Einsatzgruppe* A was 990 men.

According to the Activity Report (*Tätigkeitsbericht*) of *Einsatzgruppe* B of 14 July 1941 relating to the period from 23 June – 13 July 1941, this unit had a strength of 521 men, allocated as follows (Angrick *et al*., Doc. 19, p. 58):

Table 3

	Leader	Subunit leaders	Men	Drivers	Total
Staff	15	11	3	23	52
SK 7a	10	37	15	31	93
SK 7b	11	38	15	27	91
EK 8	13	53	27	48	141
EK 9	15	51	32	46	144
Total	64	190	92	175	521

To the above must be added the second company of *Polizei-Ersatz-Batallion* (Police Substitute Battalion) 9 with 3 officers, 51 non-commissioned officers and 80 soldiers.

A schema relating to the organization of the "Higher SS and Police Leader South" dated 18 August 1941 indicates the strength of the units of *Einsatzgruppe* C: *Einsatzkommando* 4a and 4b consisted of 160 men each, while *Sonderkommando* 5 and 6 had 250 men each,[23] a total of 820 men (see Document I.1.4).

Einsatzgruppe D consisted of 400-500 men and had approximately 170 vehicles at its disposal (TWC, Vol. IV, p. 205). Ohlendorf declared that the strength of the unit commanded by him amounted to 500 men, 200 of whom were drivers (TWC, Vol. X, p. 1278).

[23] YVA, O.53-131, p. 14.

In addition to the *Einsatzgruppen*, other SS units, some of which were numerically larger, participated in operations in the eastern territories occupied by the Germans.

Starting at the end of July 1941, the three "Higher SS and Police leaders" ("*Höhere SS- und Polizei-Führer*") each disposed of three police battalions, precisely:

– HSSPF Nord (North): Polizeibataillon 53, 319, 321
– HSSPF Mitte (Center): Polizeibataillon 307, 316, 322
– HSSPF Süd (South): Polizeibataillon 45, 303, 314.

The total strength of this battalion was 8,000-9,000 men (Curilla 2006, pp. 97f.). The *Kommandostab Reichsführer* SS consisted of the following units:

– Begleit-Bataillon Reichsführer SS
– SS-Freiwilligen-Standarte Hamburg
– SS-Flak-Abteilung "Ost"
– SS-Kavallerie Brigade
– 1. SS-Infanterie Brigade
– 2. SS-Infanterie Brigade.

The strength of these units, according to Yehoshua Büchler, was 25,000 soldiers (Büchler, p. 14).

1.3. Missions of the *Einsatzgruppen*

The "Fact sheet for the leaders of the *Einsatzgruppen* and *Einsatzkommandos* of the Security Police and SD for Operation 'Barbarossa,'" drawn up according to the order of the *Wehrmacht* High Command dated 26 March 1941, lists the missions of the *Einsatzgruppen* as follows:[24]

> *"a) Non-combat zone of the Army operational area:*
> *Securing objects predetermined prior to commencement of the operation (materials, archives, card files of organizations, units, groups, etc. that are hostile to the Reich or* [German] *state) as well as particularly important individual persons (leading emigrants, saboteurs, terrorists, etc.).* […]
> *b) Non-combat zone of the Armed Forces operational area*
> *Investigation and combating efforts hostile to the* [German] *State and Reich, insofar as not incorporated into the hostile army, as well as general briefing of the commanders in the non-combat zone of the armed forces operational area as to the political situation."*

Point 8, headlined "Arrests, Searches and Confiscations" prescribed:

> *"Upon every arrest, a form from the issued 'Arrests' form book is to be completed with 2 copies. The original copy and 1st carbon copy are to be forwarded to the leader of the Einsatzkommando; he has to send it to the Einsatzgruppe using the most expeditious method. The carbon copy should remain with the Einsatzkom-*

[24] YVA, O.53-1, pp. 1-5.

mando, while the 2nd carbon copy should remain in the form book, which is to be given to the leader of the Einsatzkommando once used up.

Upon every confiscation, seizure, search, etc., a form taken from the issued 'Searches' form book is to be completed with 2 carbon copies; the procedure is otherwise identical to that followed in connection with arrests.

The delivery of confiscated objects is to be certified by the recipient agency on the 2nd carbon copy of the search report. Particular care is to be taken in the proper storage and securing of confiscated objects."

Point 12, "General Behavior," required impeccable behavior:

"All members of the Security Police and SD are to be repeatedly instructed in the most emphatic terms, including the threat of severe punishment, to maintain impeccable, disciplined, soldierly conduct. The mission requires the strictest discipline on the part of both leaders and men, both on duty and off duty. Official duties also include the maintenance of health and working strength. Any inordinate use of alcoholic beverages and neglect of duty under the influence of alcohol are to be prevented by immediate intervention. Personal relationships with the non-German population are prohibited; particularly, all contacts with women of other races are to be considered an offense against discipline and German honor."

Point 15, "War Diary," says:

"From the very outset of the mission, the leaders of the Einsatzgruppen and Einsatzkommandos are to keep a continual war diary, in which all important incidents and observations which may be of importance and/or interest in the future are to be noted chronologically. Care must be taken to ensure safe storage of all war diaries."

The various reports drawn up by the *Einsatzgruppen* show that these units had executive and informational responsibilities.

The executive responsibilities were both negative and positive in character. The negative aspect was the identification, capture and elimination of all those who were considered ideological and political enemies or who committed hostile acts against German troops or the populations of the occupied countries, starting with the partisans. However, as stated by the Danish researcher Therkel Stræde, the executive tasks did not initially contemplate mass executions, because (Stræde, p. 27):

"when the German police forces moved into Soviet territory in June 1941 they did not have a standard procedure for mass executions like this one, although the mass shooting of civilians and POWs had already been exercised during the Polish campaign in 1939. No detailed orders specifying the organizational and technical details of such massacres were handed out, and it is obvious from actual variations in the ways they were carried out that the methodology of mass killing was to a large extent left up to the commanders of the authorities and units to decide."

The positive aspect consisted of the restoration of the administrative, social and economic structure of regions devastated by the Soviets during their withdrawal or by the combatants.

Ohlendorf, in his deposition at the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial (October 1947), provided a good explanation of what this aspect consisted of (TWC, Vol. IV, pp. 252f.):

> *"First, the Einsatzgruppen and Einsatzkommandos never had the task to eliminate groups of the population because they were racially inferior, and even so that was not the main task. It was an additional assignment which, in itself, was foreign to the actual task of the Einsatzgruppen and Einsatzkommandos, because never was such a task of the security police or of the SD for that matter – and never by any means, as it is mentioned in another place in the indictment were they trained for such exterminations and executions.*
> *Rather, the general task of the Einsatzgruppen and the Einsatzkommandos was that the security of the army territory in the operational theaters should be guaranteed by them, and within the framework of this security task the execution order was, of course, one of the basic orders. But, in reality, the Einsatzgruppen's task was a positive one, if I leave out this basic order for exterminations and executions. It must be realized, of course, that a group of about 500 people who, on the average, had charge of an area of 300 to 400 square kilometers, could not terrorize such an area, even if they had wanted to do so. Therefore, if we regard it intelligently these tasks could only be called positive ones, and as such they were developed by myself.*
> *The first experiences I collected was when the task was transferred to us by the army to harvest the overdue crop in the Trans*[n]*istria. The larger number of Kommandos for weeks dealt only with this one task of harvesting in Trans*[n]*istria; I had given orders for this measure which was the basis of my policy altogether. First, the institution of a self-administration, as it were, in the communities and the communal settlements, and also in the municipalities; secondly, a recognition of private property; thirdly, the payment of wages the population received for each fifth sheaf of the entire harvest. I guaranteed this wage, even to the Rumanian authorities. Fourth, cultural places were restored that is, the population was supported in restoring the cultural centers and they were inspired to take up a new cultural life. It is not for me now to describe or discuss the success which this had with the populations of such places. I can only state that because of these measures the population was on our side, and they themselves reported any disturbances which might happen in these territories. Therefore, by this positive winning over of the population, the security of the territory internally could be guaranteed, and actually, in our territory a partisan resistance movement did not come into existence, but it was formed by external elements and was artificially extended."*

Such activity is attested to by the very *Einsatzgruppen* reports themselves. For example, as early as EM No. 21 dated 13 July 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* B reported as follows (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 113):

> *"Dr. Tumash and his staff are endeavoring, as their most urgent tasks, to secure the food supply of the city population, to reintegrate the able-bodied population into the labor force by way of an employment agency, and to put the rural popula-*

tion back on the land which had migrated into the cities under Bolshevik pressure since 1928."

At the beginning of August 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* B was engaged, among other things, in administrative activities and reconstruction measures (*ibid.*, p. 235):

"In all the localities and cities with which the Einsatzgruppen had any contact, temporary administrations were set up, in some cases by armed-forces units, in other cases by the Einsatzgruppen themselves, with the help of Byelorussian emigrants brought in by the Einsatzgruppen […]. *These administrations concerned themselves primarily with securing the food situation, restoring economic life, registering all livestock, finding shelter for residents whose homes had been destroyed, and even creating ghettos in this context."*

The reconstruction measures even included a religious aspect. For example, on 6 August 1941, SS *Sturmbannführer* Karl Tschierschky sent the following radio message to the RSHA (Angrick, *et al.*, Doc. 38, p. 95):

"Einsatzgruppe A, with the consent of Army Group North, has helped supply the occupied former Soviet-Russian territory with Orthodox priests, who are to begin caring for the spiritual needs of the Russian population in the next few days."

Einsatzbefehl (mission order) No. 10, issued by Heydrich on 16 August 1941, which had as its subject "Handling of ecclesiastical issues in the occupied territories of the Soviet Union," shows that in this field, the greatest concern of the Germans was political in nature. It was necessary to prevent attempts by the Catholic Church to exert an influence over the occupied territories of the Soviet Union, because this would have reestablished contact with the Vatican. It was not even desired to support the Orthodox Church, but where the population had expressed the desire for religious assistance and a priest was available, "the resumption of ecclesiastical activity" could be tolerated. The "living Church" should be kept under control, because it was not yet clear whether it was an organ of Soviet control. In the Baltic countries, the same principles applied with regard to the Evangelical churches: religious activity could only be permitted if it corresponded to a real desire on the part of the population (*ibid.*, Doc. 42, pp. 101f.). The *Einsatzgruppen* were supposed to deal with this religious obstacle course as well.

The informational tasks were those carried out institutionally by the Security Services and regarded all spheres of life in the occupied territories, *i.e.*, political, economic, social, cultural, racial, religious, commercial matters, etc. These tasks also included the gathering of important documents. This task was referred to in a radio message from the RSHA IV A 1 to the *Einsatzgruppen* on 1 August 1941 with the subject "Procurement of Illustrative Material." In it, Gestapo Chief SS *Gruppenführer* Heinrich Müller made the following request (*ibid.*, Doc. 32, p. 86):

"Ongoing reports on the work of the Einsatzgruppen in the East must be presented to the Führer from now on. Especially interesting illustrative material, such as slides, posters, leaflets and other documents will be needed for this purpose. Inso-

far as such material becomes available or can be procured, I request that it be forwarded by the fastest means possible."

Müller's concern shows that perhaps Hitler was not overly interested in mere numbers.

The so-called first Stahlecker Report, that is, the "Overall report up to 15 October 1941,"[25] shows the vastness of the tasks of the *Einsatzgruppen*. This is a 143-page letter with 18 appendices, including two duplicates, for a total of 221 pages. Only a very small part is dedicated to the Jews, and only a very small part relates to executions, that is, the paragraph "Struggle against Jewry"[26] and the synopsis "Overview of the Number of Executions Carried Out until the Present," while the paragraph "Jewish Influence over the Living Areas in the East" deals with historical, economic and historical matters.[27]

Among the annexes is a study of the structure of Soviet power in the past, a "Special Report on the GPU in Latvia"[28] and an "Overview of the Chief Agencies of the Estonian Socialist Soviet Republic."[29]

The "Summary Report of 16 October – 31 January 1942" of *Einsatzgruppe* A (the second Stahlecker Report), an extremely long report of 228 pages plus 19 appendices, lists the various fields of its activity, corresponding to as many tasks as shown by the index:[30]

I. General Overview
II. General Situation in Basic Terms
    1.) Report on Morale
    2.) Politics and Administration
    3.) Propaganda
    4.) Cultural Areas
    5.) Ethnicity
    6.) Public Health
III. Jews
IV. Church
V. Economy and Sustenance
    1.) Economic Policy
    2.) Food Situation
    3.) Agriculture
    4.) Industry and Trade
VI. Resistance Movements

Among the appendices are the following:

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[25] "Gesamtbericht bis zum 15. Oktober 1941," GARF, 500-4-93. Extracts from this long document were published as L-180 in IMT, Vol. 37, pp. 670-717, and NCA, Vol. 7, pp. 978-996. The longest extract may be found in Angrick *et al.*, Doc. 70, pp. 161-209.

[26] GARF, 500-4-93, pp. 30-34.

[27] *Ibid*., pp. 107-133.

[28] *Ibid.*, Appendix 6.

[29] *Ibid.*, Appendix 7.

[30] RGVA, 500-4-92, pp. 1-228. A brief extract from the text was produced as Document PS-2273. IMT. Vol. 30, pp. 71-78.

– Ethnicity in Byelorussia
– Religious Denominations in Latvia and Estonia
– Religious Life in Estonia
– Churches in Byelorussia
– Ratio between the Minimum Wage and the Existential Minimum
– Social Insurance in the Reich Commissariat East
– Age Distribution in Latvia
– Livestock in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia
– Types of Crops in Latvia and Estonia
– Carriage of Goods in Latvia
– Number of Persons Employed in Trade and Industry in Latvia.

The multiplicity and complexity of the tasks entrusted to the *Einsatzgruppen* is made obvious by many reports, such as the Activity and Situation Report of *Einsatzgruppe* B for the period of 16-30 September 1942. The subjects dealt with are as follows (Angrick *et al*., Doc. 156, pp. 433-461):

– General situation and morale
– cultural areas
– the cultural life of the Russian population during the Soviet era and today
– the cultural care of the population of the Soviet Union
– cultural institutions
  – theater
    – administrative structure
    – repertoire
    – actors' responsibilities
    – theater of the Soviet era in the area of the present Army Group Center
  – a) theater
  – b) film
  – c) musical life
  – d) libraries
  – e) radio
  – f) recital activities
  – g) museums
  – participation of the Russian population and their reception of the events
– economy
– trade
– labor and social affairs
– development and implementation of labor deployment
– working morale and performance
– procurement of manpower into the Reich
– propaganda for the recruitment of Russian manpower for the Reich

The handling of these topics was not merely occasional, as shown by the following table, summarizing the data set forth by Ronald Headland in his "Appendix B" (Headland, pp. 223-225), although it only refers to politico-cultural matters.

The figures in the columns indicate the number of reports dealing with the related topics.

Table 4

	EG A	EG B	EG C	EG D
Propaganda	5	10	4	5
Economy	10	9	13	7
Churches	11	8	9	7
Education, Culture, Science	6	2	6	6
Press	4	/	/	/
Agriculture, Food	3	4	14	9
Jews, Jewish Question	4	5	/	6
Ethnic Groups	11	10	27	16

The interests of the *Einsatzgruppen* extended beyond the above to other spheres, such as sports,[31] the prices of consumer goods,[32] food rations,[33] the structure of Soviet schools,[34] with an indication of the subject matter and number of hours required for each class,[35] tracking livestock,[36] wages,[37] and the health situation.[38]

The fulfillment of all these tasks, which were informational and, above all, administrative and organizational, required appropriate cultural training. Precisely this was the case of the accused at the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial, as tersely stressed by Judge Michael Angelo Musmanno (Earl, p. 96):

> *"Since the twenty*-[four] *defendants were charged with one million murders, one would expect to see in the dock a band of coarse, untutored barbarians. Instead, one beheld a group of men with a formidable educational background."*

The cultural training of the defendants was so obvious that it was highlighted by the very first commentators on the trial, such as Anatole Goldstein (Goldstein, pp. 21-23).

Earl notes that "a disproportionate number" of the defendants "were university trained – specifically in the profession of law – and a number of them even held doctoral degrees. Of the fifteen *Einsatzgruppenführer* who worked in Russia between 1941 and 1943, six (40%) had earned doctoral degrees, while all the rest had some university training. These statistics strongly suggest that the leadership corps of the *Einsatzgruppen* comprised men who were neither misfits nor fail-

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31 For example, "*Sportorganisation Dynamo*," EM No. 74 dated 5 September 1941.

32 The prices, including those of the black market, are sometimes listed in appropriate tables, as in "*Meldung aus den besetzten Ostgebieten*" (MbO) No. 34 of 18 December 1942.

33 Even the food rations are listed in tables, such as, for example, EM No. 150 dated 2 January 1942, EM No. 170 dated 18 February 1942, MbO No. 36 dated 8 January 1943.

34 For example, "*Sowjetisches Schulwesen*" ("Soviet School System"), EM No. 78 dated 9 September 1941; "*Schulwesen*," EM No. 88 dated 19 September 1941.

35 MbO No. 41 dated 12 February 1943.

36 MbO No. 22 dated 25 September 1942, containing notations of the number of cattle existing in 17 districts under the Soviet government as well as in 1942.

37 For example, MbO No. 28 dated 6 November 1942.

38 No. 18 of MbO dated 28 August 1942 contains a detailed set of statistics relating to syphilis and gonorrhea patients in Smolensk between January and June 1942. NARA, T-175/236, 2724770, p. 16.

ures; in fact, the opposite is true, as one historian has noted, they were more frequently "of above average intelligence, talent and ambition" (Earl, p. 100); he dedicates an entire paragraph to the topic "Education of the Defendants" and summarized the defendants' credentials in a table (*ibid.*, pp. 117-122).

The decision, on the part of the RSHA, to recruit personnel with such a high degree of university training is a very strong indication that their primary task did not consist of extermination at all, precisely because that would have favored "a band of coarse, untutored barbarians."

On 1 March 1942, Admiral Canaris and Heydrich signed the "Principles for cooperation between the Security Police and the SD and the Counter-Intelligence Agencies of the Armed Forces" which defined their respective powers. Those of the *Einsatzgruppen* are summarized as follows:[39]

> *"The task of the Security Police and SD is, as far as a cooperation with the Foreign Office/Counter-Intelligence Agency in the Armed Forces High Command is considered, to investigate and combat all ethnic and political enemies, and to preemptively carry out all measures in order to prevent and fend off their intentions and machinations, as well as to bring to justice the perpetrators while combatting illegal acts."*

An information report from Heydrich dated 2 March 1942 contains a "Compendium of Mission Orders and other Instructions for Deployment in the East" from 2 July 1941 to 14 February 1942. This is a collection of 15 mission orders and 9 decrees (pp. 263-265). Those mentioning Jews directly or indirectly are:

– Mission Order No. 1 dated 29 June 1941, reporting on self-purging efforts of anti-communist and anti-Jewish groups;
– Mission Order No. 2 dated 1 July 1941, clearing-up actions among Bolsheviks and Jews (in the former Polish territories): "It is a matter of course that the clearing-up actions are to be carried out primarily against the Bolsheviks and Jews" (p. 275).
– Mission Order No. 8 of 17 July 1941, "Guidelines for units of the Chief of the Security Police and Security Service to be assigned to PoW camps," probably republished in Mission Order No. 14 of 29 October 1941, "Guidelines for units of the Chief of the Security Police and Security Service to be assigned to PoW and transit camps."

Other directives addressed various tasks of the *Einsatzgruppen*:

– Decree of 23 Aug. 1941, securing of file materials of the agencies;
– Mission Order No. 10 of 16 August 1941, handling of ecclesiastical issues in the occupied areas of the Soviet Union;
– Decree of 1 October 1941, police measures to prevent interventions in the economy;

[39] YVA, O.53-3, p. 219; subsequent page numbers from there, unless noted otherwise.

– Decree of 30 Aug. 1941, spectators during executions (Heydrich ordered "to prevent the gathering of spectators during mass executions, even if this concerns *Wehrmacht* officers"; p. 307).

A directive of *Sonderkommando* 4a "to all unit leaders of SD field units" dated 19 March 1943 summarized the tasks of the *Einsatzgruppen* as follows:

> *"The task of the Security Police and SD is the investigation and combating of enemies of the Reich in the interests of security in the operational area, particularly the security of the troops. Besides the destruction of active adversaries, all those elements which, due to their basic convictions or past history, may become active as enemies under favourable circumstances are to be eradicated as a precautionary measure. The Security Police is carrying out this task corresponding to the general instructions of the Führer with all necessary severity. Harsh and decisive action is especially necessary in regions threatened by gangs* [partisans]. *The jurisdiction of the Security Police in the area of operations is based upon the Barbarossa Order. The measures recently taken by the Security Police on a considerable scale are considered by myself to have been necessary for two reasons."* (PS-3012. IMT, Vol. 31, p. 493)

1.4. Drafting and Reliability of the *Einsatzgruppen* Reports

The question of the origin and probative value of the *Einsatzgruppen* reports was discussed during the related trial held by the Americans after the war. The defense counsel declared (TWC, Vol. IV, p. 96):

> *"The principal proof offered by the prosecution in support of counts one and two of the indictment were more than ninety Einsatzgruppen reports. These reports were consolidated reports prepared by a special office of the RSHA in Berlin from the reports of the individual Einsatzgruppen. These top secret reports were distributed to a number of state and Party offices in Germany. Between July 1941 and April 1942 approximately 195 consolidated Einsatzgruppen reports were prepared in Berlin and distributed.*
>
> *The defense alleged that the consolidated reports contained many inaccuracies and even willful exaggerations concerning the number of exterminated people. The defense also claimed that the author of the reports had no first-hand knowledge of the observations contained therein, that his identity was unknown, and therefore the documents constituted inadmissible hearsay evidence."*

Before entering into a more-detailed study of the reliability of the reports, it is advisable to examine the question of how, and where, they were discovered. The reports formed part of a collection of two tons of documents confiscated on 3 September 1945 on the fourth floor of the general headquarters of the Gestapo in Berlin. The documentation was taken to the Berlin Document Center. Given the massive quantity of documents which had been discovered – between 8 and 9 million pages – it was a long time before the reports were found. Although Ohlendorf mentioned them in his testimony during the Fourth Military Trial at Nuremberg in January 1946, Benjamin Ferencz, the future Chief Prosecutor in

the *Einsatzgruppen* Case, was not looking for them in any particular way. He became aware of them between late 1946 and early 1947. The correspondence of the Chief of Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality mentioned the *Einsatzgruppen* reports on 15 January 1947, but from other letters it appears that by the beginning of February the reports had still not gained their attention, and did not come into Ferencz's hands before March-April 1947 (Earl, pp. 77f.). In this regard, Hilary Earl stated (*ibid.*, p. 78):

> *"Whether the reports were found in late 1946 or early 1947 remains a matter of speculation. Ferencz does recall, however, his excitement when one of the German researchers who worked in his office accidentally discovered twelve binders (Leitz Ordners) filled with top secret daily reports from the eastern front itemizing the carnage of the mobile security and killing units."*

The version of the documents' discovery as recounted by Tom Hofmann is completely different, in that the date, place and office all differ (Hofmann, pp. 117f.):

> *"In the spring of 1947 one of Ferencz's many diligent researchers, Fred Burin, burst excitedly into Ferencz's office. He had come upon some German files while searching through a Foreign Ministry annex located near the Tempelhof airport. He had found a nearly complete set of secret reports that had been sent by the Gestapo office in Berlin to perhaps a hundred top officials of the Nazi regime.* […] *The reports described the daily activities of special SS units nondescriptly called Einsatzgruppen – roughly translated as 'Special Action Groups.' They were organized in four units (A, B, C, D) ranging from about 500 to 800 men each. Their secret reports bore an innocuous title, which translated as 'Report of Events in the Soviet Union.'"*

Another little enigma appears at this point. Before discussing it, a minor explanation is required. The Incident Reports were drawn up in multiple copies, up to a maximum of 77. Every copy bears an indication of its specific number and the total number of copies produced. For example, Report No. 25 (see below) is the twenty-second copy of thirty-four: "*34 Ausfertigungen 22. Ausfertigung*." Now, Krausnick and Wilhelm declare (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 649):

> *"From the testimony of Mr. Benjamin Ferencz, Chief Prosecutor at the* Einsatzgruppen *Trial at Nuremberg, on 9 September 1947, it follows that Ferencz had the originals of the USSR Incident Reports brought from Berlin to Nuremberg for the above-named trial, where the defense attorneys were allowed to examine them* […]. *Said originals were subsequently sent to the United States, filmed there, and within the framework of the return of confiscated documents to the Federal Republic of Germany, they were finally transferred to the* [German] *Federal Archives at Koblenz. There, they may be consulted in Inventory R 58."*

Headland supplies additional information in this regard (Headland, p. 231):

> *"The complete original surviving set of the Operational Situation Reports (Ereignismeldungen UdSSR) and the Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories (Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten) is today found in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, under Bestand R58, Reichssicherheitshauptamt, Numbers 214-221, and Numbers 697, 698, 222, 223, and 224. A complete set of the Operational Situation*

Reports is found in the National Archives in Washington, on microfilm as part of the National Archives and Records Service (NARS) Microfilm Publication T175, Records of the Reich Leader of the SS and Chief of the German Police, rolls 233-235. A complete set of the Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories is found on Microfilm Publication T175, rolls 235-236. Copies of the reports are found in other archives, including the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in Munich.
The originals of all the Activity and Situation Reports (Tätigkeits- und Lageberichte der Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD in der UdSSR), with the exception of Report 9, are found in the Political Archives of the Foreign Office in Bonn under the reference: Inland IIg, 431 Russland: SD-Einsatzgruppen, Berichte 1941-1942."

It is nevertheless a fact that these same *original* reports with the same number of copies are located in the Russian State War Archive (RGVA), where Jürgen Graf and I saw them and photocopied them in part at the end of the 1990s (see Documents I.1.5. and I.1.5a.).

Regarding the rediscovery, it is odd that the binders which contained the Incident Reports on the fourth floor of the headquarters of the Gestapo at Berlin contained copies designated for various offices. At the end of each report, under the heading "*Verteiler*" (distribution list), there is normally an indication of the offices to which the individual copies were to be sent. Starting with EM No. 38 (30 July 1941), there is also an indication as to which copy was sent to each individual office. The most-complete list, relating to 55 offices, is in EM No. 128 of 3 November 1941.

The serial number of the copies appears for the first time in EM No. 6 (27 June 1941). The following table lists the EM number, the serial number of the existing copy (*Ausfertigung*, x) and the total number of those distributed (y); for instance, EM No. 6 is the 21st of 23 copies:

Table 5

EM	x of y	EM	x of y	EM	x of y	EM	x of y
6:	21 of 23	16:	19 of 30	24:	23 of 33	33:	17 of 41
7:	19 of 23	17:	21 of 32	25:	22 of 34	34:	29 of 41
9:	24 of 25	18:	18 of 32	26:	23 of 34	35:	27 of 43
10:	23 of 25	19:	19 of 32	27:	23 of 36	36:	32 of 43
12:	20 of 24	20:	21 of 32	28:	27 of 36	37:	23 of 45
13:	6 of 30	21:	21 of 32	29:	28 of 36		
14:	18 of 30	22:	22 of 30	30:	27 of 36		
15:	18 of 30	23:	21 of 32	31:	30 of 40		

EM No. 38 is Copy 33 of 45; in subsequent Incident Reports, Copy No. 36 prevails, as shown in the following summary:

Table 6

Copy #	# of times recurring	EMs in which the copy number recurs
11	2	44, 120
29	1	48
33	2	38, 45
34	4	39-42
35	3	43, 46, 47
36	71	49-51, 53-93, 95-97, 99-101, 103-119, 121-123, 127
47	1	102
48	1	125
51	46	128-132, 134, 136-144, 146-149, 152, 155, 160, 161, 163, 164, 169, 171-183, 186-188, 190, 192, 193, 195
52	1	145
57	17	133, 150, 153, 154, 156, 157, 159, 162, 165-168, 170, 184, 185, 189, 191, 194
60	1	135

The addressees of the copies of the reports were for the most part offices of the RSHA. The following is a list of those appearing in the table reproduced above:

Table 7

Copy No.	Addressee
11	Group II A 1 (Organization of the Security Police and Security Service) /RSHA
29	Group III A (Legislative and Reich Organizational Matters) /RSHA
33	Group IV B 4 (Jewish Matters, Evacuation Matters) /RSHA
34	Group IV E 2 (General Economic Matters, Industrial Counter-Intelligence) /RSHA
35	Group IV B (Sects) /RSHA
36	Higher SS and Police Leader Russia North
47	Group IV A ORR [*Oberregierungsrat*; Senior Civil Servant] Panzinger /RSHA
48	Group IV A 1 – *Kriminaldirektor* (Head of the Criminal Division) Lindow /RSHA
51	Group IV A 1 – KK (*Kriminalkommissar*, Detective Superintendant) Dr. Knobloch /RSHA
52	*Belegexemplar* (specimen copy)

Every office mentioned in the distribution list should have possessed the complete series of copies of the Incident Reports intended for that office; for this reason, the above-described mixture of such disparate copies in the twelve binders found by the Americans (and we do not even know to which office they belonged) is rather odd.

Headland affirms that EM No. 18 of 10 July 1941 contains the name Theodor Paeffgen in the distribution list for the first time, and notes that, comparing the copy number of the individual reports with the corresponding copy number in the distribution list, he found that many of the copies discovered by the Americans were sent to Paeffgen, and that, therefore, it is precisely to him "that we probably owe our knowledge of the reports. He, or his subordinates, obviously neglected to destroy the copies that were sent to him" (*ibid.*, p. 50).

This claim is nevertheless unacceptable, because, as shown by the distribution list of EM No. 38 of 30 July 1941, Paeffgen was supposed to receive the 33rd copy only ("Mission Intelligence Leader – RR Paeffgen (33rd copy)"; Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 209). But, as seen in Table 6, Copy No. 33 only pertains to two reports. Even if senior civil servant Paeffgen is mentioned in EM Nos. 12-17 as a special recipient of a copy (starting with EM No. 18, he appears in the distribution list), it is clear that the majority of the copies of the reports found by the Americans could not have been sent to his office.

No less strange is the fact that almost 9,700 copies were made of these reports, which were supposed to be so secret and so compromising, but the Americans only found 194 out of 195 (Report No. 158 is missing in the American collection). We must therefore assume that the SS destroyed the other 9500, approximately, and left only copies of these 194 EMs intact.

I do not wish to state that the Incident Reports currently available are forgeries, but these anomalies certainly deserve resolution.

There is another anomaly which no one appears to have noticed. In addition to the 195 Incident Reports, the documentation of the *Einsatzgruppen* includes 55 "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories" ("*Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten*") and 11 "Activity and Situation Reports" ("*Tätigskeits- und Lageberichte*"). A total of over 10,000 copies were also made of these reports, each of which was no doubt read by several SS or police officials. Nevertheless, there is no known mention, not a single known comment, on these reports by their intended recipients, starting with Hitler, Himmler and Heydrich, right down to the last National-Socialist official involved in the alleged extermination of the Jews. The immense majority of the German documents confiscated by the Allies constitute a dense fabric of reciprocal connections; the 261 *Einsatzgruppen* reports, by contrast, form a body unto itself, with no direct or indirect relationship to other documents, and this, too, should be explained. The only exception I know of is the transmission of "Activity and Situation Reports" to the German Foreign Office (NO-2650).

There is another problem which orthodox Holocaust historiography has never even mentioned. The "Fact sheet for the leaders of the *Einsatzgruppen* and *Einsatzkommandos* of the Security Police and SD" cited earlier ordered the leaders of the *Einsatzgruppen* to keep a war diary. The diaries of various units of the SS and Police are still in existence, but where are those of the *Einsatzgruppen*? As far as I know, there are no references to them in documents or testimony.

In the affidavit of 24 April 1947, Ohlendorf gave a detailed account of the origin of the reports (NO-2890; TWC, Vol. IV, p. 94):

> *"The reports of the Einsatzgruppen went to the armies or army groups and to the Chief of the Security Police and SD. Normally weekly or bi-weekly reports were sent to the Chief of the Security Police and SD by radio and written reports were sent to Berlin approximately every month. The army groups or armies were kept currently informed about the security in their area and other current problems. The reports to Berlin went to the Chief of the Security Police and SD in the Reich Security Main Office. After the creation of the command (headquarters) staff of the Chief of the Security Police and SD in about May 1942, this (staff) prepared the subsequent reports. The command staff consisted basically of Gruppenfuehrer (SS Major General) Mueller, chief of office IV, and Obersturmbannfuehrer (SS Lieutenant Colonel) Nosske, group chief in office IV, to whom specialists of offices III, IV, and VI were available for coordinating the composition of the reports. Questions which had to do with the personnel of the group and with garrisons went to office I. Administrative questions and matters concerning equipment were taken care of by office II. Information concerning the spheres of life (SD) went to office III. The chief of office IV received reports on the general security situation, including Jews and Communists. Information about the unoccupied Russian areas went to office VI."*

Other defendants in the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial supplied other important details in this regard. For instance, Heinz Hermann Schubert, former SS *Obersturmführer* and member of *Einsatzgruppe* D, declared in his affidavit dated 4 February 1947 (NO-2716; *ibid.*, p. 98):

> *"The Einsatzgruppe reported in two ways to the Reich Security Main Office, once through radio, then in writing. The radio reports were kept strictly secret and, apart from Ohlendorf, his deputy Standartenfuehrer Willy Seibert and the head telegraphist Fritsch, nobody, with the exception of the radio personnel, was allowed to enter the radio station. This is the reason why only the above-mentioned persons had knowledge of the exact contents of these radio reports. The reports were dictated directly to Fritsch by Ohlendorf or Seibert. After the report had been sent off by Fritsch, I received it for filing. In cases in which numbers of executions were reported a space was left open, so that I never knew the total amount of persons killed. The written reports were sent to Berlin by courier. These reports contained exact details and descriptions of the places in which the actions had taken place, the course of the operations, losses, number of places destroyed and persons killed, arrest of agents, reports on interrogations, reports on the civilian sector, etc.*
>
> *When Ohlendorf was absent from the staff of the Einsatzgruppe, no reports were sent to Berlin."*

Ex SS *Sturmbannführer* Kurt Lindow supplied other information in this regard in his affidavit dated 21 July 1947 (NO-4327; *ibid.*, pp. 99f.):

> *"3. In October 1941, till about middle of 1942, I first was deputy chief and later on chief of subdepartment IV A 1. This subdepartment dealt with communism, war*

crimes, and enemy propaganda; moreover, it handled the reports of the various Einsatzgruppen until the command staff was set up in 1942. The Einsatzgruppen in the East regularly sent their reports to Berlin by wireless or by letter. The reports indicated the various locations of the Gruppen and the most important events during the period under survey. I read most of these reports and passed them on to inspector Dr. Knobloch of the criminal police who made them up into a compilation which at first was published daily under the title 'Operational Situation Reports U.S.S.R..' These reports were stencilled and I corrected them; afterwards they were mimeographed and distributed. The originals of the reports which were sent to the Reich Security Main Office were mostly signed by the commander of the Einsatzgruppe or his deputy.

4. The reports 'Operational Situation Reports U.S.S.R.', nos. 114, 115, 118, 121, 122, 128, 138, 141, 142, 144, 159, as shown to me, are photostats of the original reports drawn up by Dr. Knobloch in subdepartment IV A 1 of which I was the chief. I recognize them as such by the red bordering, discernible on the photostat, by their size, the types, and partial bordering. I identify the handwritten initials appearing on the various reports as those of persons employed with the Reich Security Main Office, but considering that 6 years have elapsed since, I cannot remember the full names of these persons whose handwritten initials appear on the documents. From the contents of the handwritten notes I conclude that these were made by Dr. Knobloch, and moreover I notice that various parts of the abovementioned reports are extracted from the original reports of the Einsatzgruppen to the Reich Security Main Office.

5. On the strength of my position as deputy chief and, later on, chief of subdepartment IV A 1, I consider myself a competent witness, able to confirm that the 'Operational Situation Reports U.S.S.R.' which were published by the chief of the security police and the security service under file mark IV A 1 were compiled entirely from the original reports of the Einsatzgruppen reaching my subdepartment by wireless or by letter."

When the German army occupied a territory, Headlands writes, an *Einsatzkommando* or *Sonderkommando* arrived from the *Einsatzgruppe* in charge, which was subdivided into *Teilkommandos* (sub-units or partial units). A task was assigned to each *Teilkommando*, which, when the task was completed, drew up a report, which was sent to the head of the *Teilkommando*. The heads of the *Teilkommandos* summarized them and transmitted them to the head of the *Einsatzkommando* or *Sonderkommando*. The reports were forwarded by courier or radio to the head of the *Kommando*. These were then discussed, compiled and drawn up in more detailed reports. This task was carried out by the personnel of the *Kommando* (generally, the head, his substitute and a few officials from the police and SD), each of whom concerned himself with one specific aspect of the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen*. The reports drawn up by the *Kommando* were then transmitted to the headquarters of the *Einsatzgruppe*. Here, other specifically appointed officers analyzed them and made new rough drafts of them. The final drafting of the reports was performed with the participation of the various heads of the SD, as

well as the heads of the *Einsatzgruppen*. The reports, signed by the head of the *Einsatzgruppe* or his deputy, were then sent to Berlin.

Headland concludes:

> *"Thus the reports to this point were the result of several steps in a series in which a number of people – the men carrying out the operations, their leaders, various officials in the Kommandos, and those on the staff of the Einsatzgruppen headquarters – all came to bear on the content of the reports. The Kommando leaders and ultimately the Einsatzgruppen leaders exercised control over the reports, either by writing, reading, editing, approving, or signing them before forwarding them to Berlin."*

The RSHA did not receive reports through this channel alone. The commanders of the Security Police and Security Service were unable to control the flow of information relating to their area of competence, and many reports reached Berlin through other channels, such as the reports of the Higher SS and Police leader (Headland, pp. 37-39).

Further along, Headland returns to the matter, summarizing it as follows (*ibid.*, p. 166):

> *"It will be recalled that generally the leader of the subunits of the Kommandos would summarize the reports sent to him by his subordinates. This draft would then be sent to the leader of the Einsatzkommando or Sonderkommando, who would then compile a more comprehensive report from the reports of the various subunits. From the Einsatzkommando staff this report would then be sent to the headquarters of the Einsatzgruppe, where it would be combined with others and used as part of a further summary report drafted at Einsatzgruppe headquarters. These reports were then sent by the Einsatzgruppe to the RSHA. We have also seen that reports often bypassed the Einsatzgruppe headquarters and were sent directly to Berlin."*

The directives for the collection of information and the drafting of reports were issued by Heydrich by means of Circular Decree of 3 July 1941 with the subject "Operation Barbarossa – here: Command Staff and Mission Intelligence Leader of the Reich Security Main Office."

The mission intelligence leader was responsible for optimizing garrisons and operational direction of travel of *Einsatzgruppen* and *Einsatzkommandos*, in addition to all the informational technical links; another duty was to control the informational traffic between the RSHA and the *Einsatzgruppen* and vice versa. In particular, at the Berlin headquarters of the RSHA, the mission intelligence leader was entrusted with the task of:

> *"issuing all reports and documents received from the* Einsatzgruppen *A to D, including their commands, following completion of fact-checking and compilation, without delay and without exception."*

His office was therefore operational day and night. Teletypes, radio messages, or others arriving after 20:30 at night had to be presented without delay the next morning. Every day by 9:30 in the morning, the report compiled the day before,

previously submitted to the personal attention of SS *Brigadeführer* Heinrich Müller, had to be delivered to him in his capacity as head of the Gestapo in order to file them away. In addition, the following offices received copies of the reports:

"a) Head of the Security Police and SD = 1 copy
b) Adjutancy of the Security Police and SD = 1 copy
c) Kommando Staff at Office IV = 2 copies
d) Office head I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII = 7 copies
e) Main Office = 1 copy
f) II D, II D 1, II D 2, II D 3 = 4 copies
g) Reserve = 5 copies, Sa. 21 copies."

The post of mission intelligence leader was entrusted to the previously mentioned SS *Hauptsturmführer Regierungsrat* Dr. Paeffgen (Angrick *et al.*, Doc. 15, pp. 49f.). The list of 21 addressees constituted the distribution list mentioned earlier.

On 21 October 1941, Müller issued a decree with the subject "Operation Barbarossa – Incorporation of the Mission Intelligence Leader into the Command Staff," which amended the Circular Decree of 3 July. The office of the Mission Intelligence Leader was abolished on July 26. Its tasks were reassigned to the Command Staff of Office IV, which was responsible for "both the technical and material evaluation of the reports from the *Einsatzgruppen* and squads deployed in Operation Barbarossa." There then followed the third and last decree (*ibid.*, Doc. 73, p. 213):

"From this time forward, all incoming reports and documents received from Einsatzgruppen A to D are to be forwarded to the Command Staff from the Main Office (special entry point) by way of the Office Head IV after the completion of factual marking and compilation. Reports received during the night [are to be forwarded] *at the start of the following working day."*

During the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial, there was lengthy discussion of the essential question of the true and proper drafting of the Incident Reports and other reports (Activity Reports and *Meldungen*) by the RSHA. Dr. Willi Heim, defending Paul Blobel, formulated the discussion in these terms: The documents may be classified as either "signed" or as "anonymous." In the first case, the document is "authentic" if it really originates from the signatory; in the contrary case, it is "false." But if it is not possible to ascertain who the signatory is, we cannot say whether the document is "authentic" or "false." Heim did not deny that the documents in question were "authentic," in the sense that they undoubtedly originated from the RSHA, but this did not necessarily imply that they were also the truth. All the defendants declared under oath that the reports were "highly unreliable, inaccurate and faulty, and that not only with regard to figures, but also with regard to the contents and the actual wording." This depended upon the compilation process of the reports, and therefore it was necessary to examine two crucial questions (TWC, Vol. IV, pp. 105f.):

> *"How were the 'Situation Reports U.S.S.R.' and the 'Operational situation reports' of the Reich Security Main Office drafted? And the additional question: What sources of mistakes were thus provided and what effect did they have?"*

Incident Reports and Activity Reports were drafted in Department IV A 1 of the RSHA (Office IV constituted the *Geheime Staatspolizei* (Gestapo) and was directed by SS *Gruppenführer* Heinrich Müller), which concerned itself with "Communism, Marxism and accessory organizations, war crimes, illegal and enemy propaganda." Until the end of April 1942, this section was the center into which flowed the reports from the *Einsatzgruppen*. Officials assigned to their processing included the head of the department, Kurt Lindow, and two of his colleagues, SS *Hauptsturmführer* Günther Knobloch and Rudolf Fumy. The *Einsatzgruppen* reports referred to the scope of tasks of Department III (*Deutsche Lebensgebiete*), which concerned itself with administrative, racial, cultural and economic matters, for which Office IV, which specialized in executive tasks, did not possess the necessary competence. Office IV was therefore called upon to deal with matters with which it was not familiar, leading to inexactitude and error. Department IV A 1 moreover had extremely limited personnel, who did not even possess the technical tools to clarify dubious cases.

Another source of error was the insufficiency of communications media. The *Einsatzgruppen* were often more than 1000 km from Berlin, rendering the transmission of information difficult, not so much due to the distance in itself, but rather because the forwarding of teletypes and written reports depended upon the contingencies of the communications equipment, which worked at highly variable rates of speed, resulting in the irregular arrival of reports, leading to distortions and misunderstandings. Under such circumstances, there was the possibility that the same information might arrive by teletype or by courier; various reports with succeeding dates were registered before reports drawn up previously, which took longer to arrive at the analytical center of Department IV A 1. In dubious cases, it was considered preferable to repeat the same figures or simply use the highest ones.

The conditions under which the reports were drawn up were so unsatisfactory that in April 1942 a radical change was made in their compilation. The personnel of Department IV A 1 worked under Heydrich's orders, and were therefore highly interested in presenting the most favorable picture of the situation possible, and in evading the risk of unpleasant consequences in the contrary case. After all, Russia was far away, and no one could verify the correctness of the data appearing in the reports. The problem of unreliable reports increased as the war dragged on, as Himmler himself lamented in his speech at Posen on 4 October 1943 (TWC, Vol. IV, pp. 108f.):

> *"'I now come to a fourth virtue which is very scarce in Germany – truthfulness. One of the major evils, which developed during the war, is untruthfulness in reports, statements, and information, which subordinate offices send to their superior offices in civilian life, in the state, Party, and armed forces. Reports or statements are the base for every decision. The truth is that in many branches one can*

assume in the course of this war that 95 out of 100 reports are plain lies or only half true or half correct.'"

The fundamental problem therefore remained, *i.e.*, the fact that the original documents originating from the *Einsatzgruppen* which were used by Department IV A 1 in drawing up the reports were no longer available, and that, therefore, no one could ascertain the degree of reliability of the reports (*ibid.*, p. 109):

"The statements made hitherto were concerned only with the working conditions which existed in suboffice IV A 1. If the unsatisfactory conditions which prevailed there were already enough to cause this office to turn out piece work and incomplete results only, the sources of deficiency were further extended by the so-called report or information channel from subordinate to superior offices. We established – suboffice IV A 1 received the reports directly from the Einsatzgruppen. However, these reports were again only a summary of that which the individual detachments reported in writing, orally, or by teletype; added to this were other sources which, in case of measures to be taken by other, independently working units, or in case of cooperation of several units, were supplied. There is no doubt that the evaluation of the reports collected by the Einsatzgruppen was handled differently and was subject, to a great extent, to the attitude of the group chief and his departmental assistants. But this had taken place once already in a similar manner in most of the Einsatz- or Sonderkommandos, because it was not expedient to have the reports sent directly from the Teilkommando to the Einsatzgruppe, which might have resulted from a particularly difficult task or from special conditions of the area of operations.

It was a rule to send the reports of the Teilkommandos first to the Kommando chiefs. He based his activity report to the Einsatzgruppen on the reports received by him, or he had them drafted by his assistant [Sachbearbeiter], according to the distribution of task which was in force in his detachment. If the exhibits submitted by the prosecution were identical with the above-mentioned original reports and if they perhaps even bore the signature of the Kommando chief concerned, then objection against their correctness would have little hope to be successful; then the fact that the author of the document would have lied either when drafting the document or now in the trial because he is not brave enough to state the truth would be established.

The defense too – its interest in the establishing of the unrestricted truth is just as great as that of any other party in the trial – regrets that it is not possible to submit the original reports of the Einsatzgruppen and Einsatz or Sonderkommandos as documentary evidence."

Headland notes that, according to the above-mentioned Rudolf Fumy, the reports drawn up by Department IV A 1 contained "errors, distortions, and omissions of various kinds"; these errors, in the words of this German official, "should not be considered an exact description of the actual events and that they can be taken as a literal repetition of the original reports in a very limited scope only." Department personnel were insufficient to concern themselves with the constantly increasing quantities of material, and this fact resulted in an increasing superficiality of the work. Moreover, Heinrich Müller played an important role in preparing

the reports, accentuating or eliminating material in the reports depending on whether it was favorable or unfavorable to the other bodies of the Reich (Headland, p. 167).

This situation also had repercussions on the statistics relating to executions. During the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial, Ohlendorf declared that the figure of 90,000 persons executed by himself, as mentioned in various interrogations, was approximate, and that 15-20% of them resulted from double counting. Indeed, he went even further, stating that he did not know any longer how he could have remembered the figure in question, since he had no record of the numbers of executed persons, adding (TWC, Vol. IV, p. 256):

> *"I must now state solemnly that in the Reich Security Main Office, Heydrich, Mueller, and Streckenbach, and all the others who knew about these matters, intentionally exaggerated and invented the numbers of Einsatzgruppen A, B, and C. In the case of B, I mean the period of Nebe especially. I am convinced that these figures, which, if I add the numbers in the documents, are not even half of what the prosecution charges me with, are exaggerated by about twice as much."*

Dr. Rudolf Aschenauer, Ohlendorf's defense counsel, noted that EM No. 89 dated 20 September 1941 attributed the execution of 8,890 Jews and Communists between 19 August and 25 August to *Einsatzgruppe* D, positioned at Kikerino; the same number, however, also appears in EM No. 95 dated 26 September 1941, but in reference to Nikolayev as its position, commenting:

> *"It is my opinion that from the operational situation reports, not a single sentence can be identified with a sentence of an original report from the Einsatzgruppen and the Einsatzkommandos, but on the contrary, as becomes evident from these two reports, the operational situation reports are made up from the original reports, and they are full of mistakes and are not compiled with the viewpoint of passing on accurate figure reports."* (*Ibid.*, p. 257)

Another striking example of this laxity may be found in EM No. 106 dated 7 October 1941, where *Einsatzgruppe* C reported that at Kiev "the liquidation of approximately 35,000 Jews on 29 and 30 September 41 made an equivalent number of houses available"…then , in the same EM, that "*Sonderkommando* 4a executed 33,771 Jews on 29 and 30 September [1941]" (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., pp. 640, 642).

A repetition of identical figures also appears in two other reports. EM No. 152 of 7 January 1942 says:[40]

> *"420 persons were court-martialed and shot in Vilnius on 22 December 41. 385 of them were Jews, the rest Poles guilty of participation in Communist activities."*

EM No. 154 of 12 January notes:[41]

> *"402 persons were court-martialed and shot in Vilnius on 22 December 41. 385 of them were Jews, the rest Poles."*

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[40] NARA, T-175/234, 2723314, p. 9.
[41] *Ibid.*, 2723583, p. 28.

Headland supplies additional examples of errors and repetitions (Headland, p. 169). EM No. 86 of 17 September 1941 attributes 6,584 victims to SK 7a ("Bolsheviks, Jews and asocial elements"; Mallmann 2011 *et al*., p. 477) to *Sonderkommando* 7a, while EM No. 80 of 11 September states: "The execution total of SK 4a thus reached 7,152 persons on 24 August 41" (*ibid.*, p. 444).

EM No. 19 of 11 July 1941 announced the killing of 600 Jews at Tarnopol (Ternopol; *ibid.*, p. 104); this is repeated in EM No. 47 of 9 August (*ibid.*, p. 264).

EM No. 165 of 6 February 1942 says: "The last 38 Jews and Gypsies were executed on 1 February 42 in Loknya";[42] this communication also appears in EM No. 181 of 16 March: "38 Jews and 1 gypsy were shot in Loknya."[43]

Aschenauer moreover notes that EM No. 117 of 18 October 1941 gives a total figure of 40,699 persons executed by 15 October by *Einsatzgruppe* D (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., p. 696), but EM No. 129 of 5 November supplies a total of 31,767 (*ibid.*, p. 753).

In Ohlendorf's cross-examination, he was asked to supply a minimum figure of persons shot by *Einsatzgruppe* D, since he considered the figure of 90,000 previously mentioned by him to have been exaggerated. The defendant replied (TWC, Vol. IV, p. 270):

> *"In my direct examination I have already said that I cannot give any definite figure, and that even the testimony in my affidavit shows that in reality I could not name any figure. Therefore, I have named a figure which has been reported 'approximately.' The knowledge which I have gained by this day through the documents and which I have gained through conversations with my men, make me reserve the right to name any figure and strengthen this reservation. Therefore, I am not in a position to give you a minimum figure, either. In my direct examination I have said that the numbers which appear in the documents are at least exaggerated by one-half, but I must repeat that I never knew any definite figure and, therefore, cannot give you any such figure."*

In his appeal for clemency, submitted by Defense Counsel Rudolf Aschenauer, Ohlendorf asserted that the victims of the *Einsatzgruppen* did not amount to one million, as claimed by the prosecution, but 450,000 (Earl, p. 268). This does not diminish the horror of the crime, but is undoubtedly of value in terms of historiography.

Headland recognizes that "there is also evidence to suggest that some of the *Einsatzkommando* and *Einsatzgruppen* leaders deliberately exaggerated the numbers of persons shot for their own self-aggrandizement" (Headland, pp. 97, 102). He also supplies some important data in this regard.

A number of documents indicate that the total number of victims as of 2 February 1942 for the area of *Einsatzgruppe* A was 163,003. But the "Summary Report of 16 October – 31 January 1942," in its statistical summary of executions,

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[42] *Ibid.*, 2723799, p. 11.
[43] NARA, T-175/235, 2723987, p. 7.

supplies a total of 229,052 Jews killed. He also notes that "when we add up the totals that are given in this report by area, we get a total of 274,605 persons killed, including the pogroms in Lithuania" (*ibid.*, p. 103).

Headland states that the "Summary Report until 15 October 1941" (the first Stahlecker Report) mentions a total of 81,171 persons killed in Lithuania. The document in question explicitly declares that "the total number of liquidated Jews amounts to 71,105," a figure to which the 5,000 pogrom victims should be added, so that the total should be 76,105 (L-180, IMT, Vol. 37, p. 688). But the summary of executions supplies the figure of 80,311 Jews and 860 Communists, a total of exactly 81,171 (*ibid.*, p. 702).

Headland informs us that this figure also contains approximately 42,000 persons killed by the *Einsatzkommando* 2a at Siauliai before *Einsatzkommando* 3 reached the area on 2 October 1941 (Headland, table on p. 98). The Jäger Report lists 100,332 victims by 15 October 1941, plus 3,050 over the period from 28 September to 17 October. Given the lengthy period of time over which the executions were carried out and the order of magnitude of the total figures, the figure for the period 15-17 October can hardly be considered important, since the total figure amounts to 103,382 victims. To this should be added the 4,000 Jewish victims of pogroms carried out by Lithuanians, *i.e.*, a total of 107,328. This figure does not include the approximately 42,000 victims mentioned above, which brings the grand total to over 149,000. How are we to reconcile this figure with Stahlecker's figure of 81,171?

Headland admits that

> *"the claim that the numbers were exaggerated would also seem to have some basis in fact. Sources other than those used at the trial suggest that numbers were altered to produce a more favorable picture. Some historians have quite readily accepted that exaggerations took place in order to prevent* [sic; read: *convey*] *an impressive picture of the Kommando's activities."* (Headland, p. 173)

The "Summary Report from 16 October 1941 to 31 January 1942" devotes an entire paragraph to Latvia. Based on the 1935 census, there were only 93,479 Jews in the country.[44] An undated set of statistics, entitled "*Juden in Lettland 1940*" ("Jews in Latvia 1940") provides a detailed report on the Jewish population of the country: 93,904 persons, 44,122 of them in the City of Riga, 7,552 in the county of Liepaja (Libava), 17,763 in Daugavpils County.[45] Stahlecker informs us that,

> *"when the German troops moved in, there were still 70,000 Jews in Latvia. The rest had fled with the Bolsheviks. The remaining Jews were highly active as saboteurs and arsonists. The Jews set so many fires in Daugavpils that a large part of the city was destroyed."*

The report then says that 30,000 Jews had been executed by October 1941:

> *"The remaining Jews who were still indispensable in terms of economic life, were confined to ghettos, set up in Riga, Daugavpils and Liepaja."*

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44 RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 57.
45 LVVA, P-1026-1-3, p. 213.

Approximately 2,500 of these remaining Jews lived in Riga, approximately 950 in Daugavpils and approximately 300 in Liepaja, a total of 3,750. Other executions took place after October 1941: 11,034 Jews were shot at Daugavpils on 9 November, 27,800 at Riga at the beginning of December and 2,350 at Liepaja in mid-December, a total of 41,184.[46]

According to the summary table of executions, which extends to 1 February 1942, 35,338 Jews were shot in Latvia, plus 5,500 killed "in pogroms." But this figure is listed in the columns for "Lithuania" and "Latvia," and therefore refers to these two countries.[47] The Jäger Report attributes 4,000 victims to the pogrom in Lithuania (see Chapter 4), therefore 1,500 regard Latvia, and the number of Jews killed according to this report was 36,738. Now, if 30,000 Jews were shot by the month of October, and another 41,184 were killed in the two following months, for a total of 71,184, why does the summary table of executions report them as numbering 35,238 (+ 1,500)? On the other hand, since there were 3,750 Jews in the ghettos, there were not 70,000 Jews in Latvia, upon the arrival of German troops, but (71,184 + 3,750 =) 74,934.

The Jews killed in Lithuania, according to the summary table of executions, amounted to 136,421, plus some fraction of those 5,500 killed in the pogrom – according to the Jäger Report, 4,000 persons – for a total of 140,421. The total figure of Jews executed according to this report is some 135,352, but this includes 9,606 Latvian Jews from Daugavpils, so that for Lithuania the figure of (135,352 – 9,606 =) 125,746 should apply. Adding these 9,606 to the total for Latvia, we obtain (35,238 + 1,500 + 9,606 =) 46,344, a figure which does not square with that of 71,184.

The report in question contains another obvious error. On 11 November 1941, "The commander of the security police and SD Latvia, Office Daugavpils," informed the local District Commissioner: "On 9 November 1941, 11,034 Jews were executed in Daugavpils."[48] Therefore, if 17,763 Jews lived in Daugavpils County in 1940, 9,606 of whom were shot in August 1941, and 950 were in the ghetto on 1 February 1942, it is not possible for there to have been 11,034 victims on 9 November, because in that case the total number would have been greater than the initial figure: 9,606 + 950 + 11,034 = 21,590. The correct figure should therefore be 1,134. This is confirmed by the letter from the General Commissioner in Riga to the Reich Commissioner for the *Ostland* (*Reichskommisar für das Ostland*) dated 20 October 1941, according to which "there are 2,185 Jews in the county of Daugavpils";[49] subtracting the 950 detainees in the ghetto, there were 1,235 remaining persons, a figure compatible with the execution of 1,134.

Regarding Liepaja, the figure of 2,350 does not correspond to the figure stated in War Diary No. 1 of the SS and Police Garrison Leader Liepaja (*Kriegstage-*

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46 RGVA, 500-4-92, pp. 58f.
47 *ibid.*, p. 184.
48 LVVA, P-132-30-14, p. 33.
49 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 46.

buch Nr. 1 des SS- und Polizeistandortführers Libau) and other documents: 2,749 (see Part Two, Chapter 7).

It follows that (1,134 + 27,800 + 2,749 =) 31,683 Jews were shot in Latvia during the months of November and December 1941, making 61,683 Jews, if we add the 30,000 shot at the end of October; but even this figure contradicts the figure 35,238 (+1,500) in the summary table. What is more, even the figure of 27,800 Jews shot at Riga is contradictory and unsupported by evidence (see Chapter 4).

The number of Jews shot in "Lithuania," according to the Stahlecker Report, as stated above, was 136,421 (without the pogrom). This figure is taken from a communication from the "Commander of the Security Police and SD, Kaunas" (in German: Kauen, Kovno or Kowno) addressed "to Group A – Riga" dated 8 February 1942, which explicitly states that the figure in question – 136,421 – represented the number of executions carried out "by *Einsatzkommando* 3" starting on 1 February 1942. The total number of victims is given as 138,272, which includes 1,851 non-Jews.[50] The Jäger Report, the source of this figure, reports a total of 133,346 persons shot (without the pogrom), 131,656 of whom were Jews and 1,960 were non-Jews. However, the total number of Jewish victims also includes 3,031 Jews from Byelorussia, 9,012 Latvian Jews (from Daugavpils) and 4,934 Jews from the Reich, for a total of 16,977 non-Lithuanian Jews, which have to be deducted form the total for Lithuania; the correct figure should therefore be (136,421–16,977=) 119,444.

Regarding the reliability of the figures for these executions, there is another, more-specific problem, which no one has ever bothered with: how did they perform the counts and register the victims? The documents report interminable series of figures, but do not explain how they were established. The ordinary practice of the *Einsatzkommandos*, when they reached a locality, was to set up a ghetto or Jewish district, require the Jewish population to wear a distinctive sign, and register them by name. The resulting lists would have constituted a valid support for the executions, because they would have made it possible to establish not only the exact numbers of persons shot but the names of all persons who may have escaped execution as well. But no such use of the lists in question was ever attested to by any document. As an alternative, it would have been necessary to appoint an officer or non-commissioned officer responsible for counting the victims and annotating the numbers in an appropriate register (as fantasized about in the stories concerning "Aktion 1005" where counting the exhumed and cremated bodies is mentioned; see Part Two of this study). However, not even this is supported by documentary evidence. Ohlendorf, in this regard, explicitly declared (TWC, Vol. IV, p. 256):

"I did not keep a register of these figures."

[50] RGVA, 500-1-25/1, p. 170.

Since the *Einsatzgruppen* reports often dwelt at length on absolutely insignificant matters, the fact that the aspects mentioned above were never mentioned can only mean that neither of the two counting methods was used.

Hence one might argue that the victim figures, except in cases where there were very few victims, were not the results of any real count, but mere approximate guesses, sometimes rounded up, to give an impression, such as, for example, the figure for the number of victims at Babi Yar: 33,771!

But there is also the problem of willful exaggerations, as noted by Headland (as quoted here on p. 62). It is obvious that the heads of the *Einsatzgruppen*, on all levels, wished to give their superiors the impression of being hyper-active in all realms, including executions.

There is another important matter with regard to which the reports are very reticent. On 22 January 1942, von dem Bach-Zelewski stated, in a report to the SS, that the temperature had fallen to −42°C for two days.[51] EM No. 170 of 18 February 1942 dwells at length on Leningrad and supplies the following information (Mallmann 2014 *et al*., p. 161):

> *"In the course of January there began a veritable mass die-off among the civilian population. In particular, towards the end of the day, the bodies were brought out of the houses on hand-sleds to the cemeteries, where they were simply thrown into the snow, due to the impossibility of digging graves in the hard-frozen ground."*

EM No. 189 of 3 April 1942, *Einsatzgruppe* A mentions a temperature of -45°C (*ibid.*, p. 256), while EM No. 195 from *Einsatzgruppe* B of 24 April 1942 speaks of -48°C in Smolensk (*ibid.*, p. 327). On 6 February 1942, wrote the General Commissioner for Byelorussia, Wilhelm Kube that "the ground in Byelorussia was frozen solid to a depth of 2 meters," as a result of which, we may suppose, it was impossible to dig mass graves.[52]

The mention of mass graves, of course, presupposes mass executions, which was probably an indirect threat by Kube of such executions. However, such mass executions contradicted the orders issued. As early as January 16, 1942, Rosenberg had instructed the Minsk city commissioner to contact the local HSSPF "about the question of housing and feeding the Jews,"[53] so there was no provision for shooting these Jews.

The winter of 1942 was particularly harsh, and the soil remained frozen solid for months. On the other hand, the executions listed in the reports would have required the excavation – which would never have been easy – of numerous mass graves. How were they dug – and filled in again afterwards? Were these difficulties, which would inevitably have influenced the number of executions, really unworthy of mention in the reports?

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51 TNA, HW 16-53.
52 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 72.
53 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

1.5. *Einsatzgruppen* "Justifications" for Killing Jews

Headland notes that

> *"the Einsatzgruppen reporters for the most part did not simply record the killings, but felt the need to use euphemisms in their reports to cover up the act of murder. In the same way they also gave 'reasons' for their actions in order to justify them."* (Headland, p. 72)

The importance of the problem is obvious: If Hitler, in the summer of 1941, had ordered the extermination of the Soviet Jews because they were Jews, what need did the commanders of the *Einsatzgruppen* have to justify their individual killings? Headland claims that this was done based on two fundamental ideas (*ibid.*):

> *"The first was the fact that in presenting justifications for their deeds, the Einsatzgruppen leaders believed they were thereby providing themselves with a 'legal' basis for the killings. While they may have believed that it was correct to annihilate the Jews, such a belief certainly had no foundation in law. With an eye to the future, and for their activities, the Einsatzgruppen constantly depicted the executions as reprisals against so-called criminal acts of Jews, partisans, and others. This protection was therefore outward-looking, a means of the defense against external scrutiny."*

One might object that, for convinced National Socialists, like the heads of the *Einsatzgruppen*, any *Führerbefehl* was sufficient source of "legality," and that, at a time when they were convinced that the collapse of the Soviet Union was imminent, they were unlikely to have been so farsighted as to create alibis for themselves in any future prosecution brought against them by the Allies. In addition, the majority of the reports were intended for offices and departments of the RSHA. This interpretation is therefore unsustainable.

Headland's reasoning is also logically unfounded, since it presupposes as fact that the Jews were killed "as Jews," and not, as constantly stated in the reports, "as reprisals against alleged criminal acts of Jews, partisans, and others." Headland therefore presupposes that these explanations are false, and then uses the alleged falsity of the explanations to prove that they are false, and to explain why they are false!

The second idea, Headland continues, was more subtle: a sort of self-justification to render the onerous reality of the killings acceptable (*ibid.*, pp. 72f.). Such an explanation reminds us to some extent of Raul Hilberg's claim that "psychological justifications were an essential part of the killing operations" (Hilberg 2003, Vol. I, p. 341).

This may be valid for the material executors of the killings, but it certainly does not apply to the compilers of the final reports, who were simple office-bound bureaucrats in Department IV A 1 of the RSHA, working only with pencils and typewriters. They had no reason to "justify themselves."

Krausnick's conjecture that the above-mentioned justifications were imposed by Heydrich upon the commanders of the *Einsatzgruppen* as a sort of "convention of speech" (*Sprachregelung*; Headland, p. 74), quite apart from contradicting

Headland's explanations, has no basis in documentary fact. Regarding the various locutions used in referring to the killings, one may speak of "euphemisms" in the sense of ordinary bureaucratic language. Since the original reports have not survived, we do not even know whether this practice was adopted by the heads of the *Einsatzgruppen* or by the compilers of the final reports in the Gestapo.

Headland himself notes that, in the improbable event that the alleged "camouflaging and justifications" had really achieved their purpose, it does not explain why they were not adopted in all the reports; moreover, alongside "camouflage terms" such as "special treatment" or "rendered harmless," the reports also use crude and ordinary terms such as "shoot, liquidate, or annihilate." In view of this stark fact, Headland has no answer except the trite chorus of the "irrationality" of National Socialism (*ibid.*, p. 77):

> *"This question provides an example of the inexplicable and irrational quality inherent in much National Socialist thinking and methodology."*

Thus is the irrationality of orthodox Holocaust historiography "explained" by blaming it on the alleged "irrationality" of the National Socialists.

Hilberg lists 25 terms and locutions used in the reports to refer to executions, some of which are very explicit, as Headland admits, such as "*hingerichtet*" (put to death, executed), "*exekutiert*" (executed), "*ausgemerzt*" (eradicated), "*liquidiert*" (liquidated), "*erledigt*" (finished off; Hilberg 2003, Vol. I, p. 338). Now, if "conventions of speech" really existed, it would necessarily have been adopted by the compilers of the reports of Department IV A 1, which would have applied the system uniformly to the reports redacted by themselves, always utilizing the same pre-established terms.

On the other hand, the true significance of the "camouflage" terms may sometimes only be seen from the context; when this is not explicit, the meaning should not be taken for granted. This is true in particular for "*Sonderbehandlung*" (special treatment), "*Sonderaktion*" (special operation) and "*Umsiedlung*" (resettlement). For example, EM No. 156 of 16 January 1942 mentions "special treatment" (Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, p. 89):

> *"The evangelical-Lutheran church is attempting to obtain special treatment from German authorities, which should manifest itself in the form of governmental support of a financial nature in particular."*

No. 6 of the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories" (5 June 1942) refers to a "special operation" in which "2500 cubic meters of firewood, among other things, were distributed to needy persons."[54] No. 50 (16 April 1943) says:[55]

> *"A certain quantity of manpower was obtained by means of police special operations."*

A message intercepted by the British on 15 August 1941 mentioned a "student special operation" which consisted of allocating 30,000 RM to the students.[56]

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[54] NARA, T-175/235, 2724466, p. 21.
[55] NARA, T-175/236, 2725806, p. III.

"*Umsiedlung*" is sometimes clearly used as a synonym for execution, while on other occasions it means what it translates to: resettlement;[57] in some cases it seems to be distinct from execution, as in EM No. 177 of 6 March 1942 (Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, p. 195):

> *"As a result of the measures taken by Einsatzkommando 6, the towns of Gorlovka and Makeyevka are now free of Jews. Some of them, remaining in Stalino, will be resettled as soon as the weather permits it. A total of 493 persons were executed here (including 80 political activists, 44 saboteurs and looters and 369 Jews)."*

Here, by contrast, we appear to have the inexplicable use of the "camouflage" term "resettled" and the undisguised word "executed" in the same context.

The same is true of the term "evacuation." For example, the "Activity Report of the SS and Police Garrison Leader Liepaja" of 29 December 1941, notes:[58]

> *"2,749 Jews were evacuated in the period from 14 to 17 December 41."*

The reference is to the executions at Liepaja (see Part Two, Chapter 7); but just a few pages before, the report informs us:[59]

> *"100 Gypsies were evacuated from the City of Liepaja on 5 December 41."*

War Diary No. 1 of the SS and Police Garrison Leader Liepaja, which covers the period from 20 September 1941 to 30 November 1943, lists all the executions of Jews and non-Jews carried out at Liepaja during this period, but these 100 Gypsies are not mentioned (see Krausnick/Wilhelm, pp. 571-574).

An "Annex of All Administrative Orders of the Commander" in the rear of Army Group Center of 1 August 1941 says:[60]

> *"Jews have been evacuated from numerous municipalities.* […] *The Jewish evacuations resulted in numerous Jews of all ages and both genders wandering across the countryside from village to village and from city to city."*

In some cases the execution was the consequence of a scheduled evacuation that proved unfeasible, as in the report from Kriminalrat Schmidt (*Reichssicherheitsdienst*, *Gruppe Geheime Feldpolizei*, *Sicherungsgruppe Ost*) of 12 January 1942:

> *"227 Jews lived in the village of Strihawka*[?]. *The large number of Jews is attributed to the fact that there was a large GPU camp in the area. Since the Jews represented a great danger to the installation, I filed an application with the district commissioner to evacuate them. As a result of especially difficult circumstances, evacuation proved impossible. The Jews were therefore executed on 10 Jan. 1942 between 8.30 and 10.30 hrs."*

The mass grave had to be excavated with explosives due to the frozen ground.[61] Of course, this raises the question of how those graves were later filled in.

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[56] TNA, HW 16-6, Summary of messages intercepted between 15 and 31 August 1941. ZIP/MSGP 28/12.9.41, p. 6.
[57] See Subchapter 3.5., EM 91 ("resettlement" to the Ghetto of Pruzhany), and Part Two, Subchapter 8.6.
[58] LVVA, P-83-1-25, p. 50.
[59] *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[60] LVVA, P-70-5-23, p. 24.
[61] YVA, O.53-6, pp. 20f.

There is another problem. Some documents appear to testify to the existence of an order to exterminate the Jews. For example, in the "Summary Report of 16 October – 31 January 1942," *Einsatzgruppe* A reports:[62]

> *"According to the basic orders, the systematic cleansing operation in the East included the elimination of Jewry as completely as possible. With the exception of Byelorussia, this objective was largely achieved through the execution of 229,052 Jews so far (see Annex)."*

The "Summary Report until 15 October 1941" of *Einsatzgruppe* A mentions the "carrying out of basic orders" ("*Durchführung grundsätzlicher Befehle*").[63]

What these "basic orders" were, and where and by whom they were issued, remains unknown. But if they really existed, it would have made no sense to justify the various executions, as it would have been more than sufficient to indicate (as in other documents) that the victims were "treated as per orders."

The existence of "basic orders" does not in any case resolve the question raised in the preceding paragraphs, because we still do not know whether they regarded Jews as Jews or as supporters of Bolshevism. The first variant is excluded by the report for the period from 16 October 1941 to 31 January 1942, since at the end it contains a paragraph titled "The Jews from the Reich," which refers to the deportation of 20,000 Jews from the Reich to Riga who were not subjected to any policy of extermination.

There is another possibility that does not appear ever to have been taken into consideration by orthodox Holocaust historiography, and that is a diversification of the orders to the individual *Einsatzgruppen* based on the theaters of operation in which they operated. This could explain the occasional differences in methods followed, which may not necessarily be attributable to the differing rates of speed of advance of the units of the army to which the *Einsatzgruppen* were linked.

The *Einsatzgruppen* reports moreover present aspects which clash not only with Headland's interpretation as presented above, but with the general statistics of the shootings as well. There are frequent reports of shootings of minuscule groups of Jews, sometimes a single individual, usually with a plethora of explanations and wealth of detail. The following are a few examples.

<u>EM No. 20 of 12 July 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* C:</u>

> *"150 Ukrainians were found murdered in Stryi. By way of initiated investigations it was possible to arrest 12 Communists sharing responsibility for the murders. They consisted of 11 Jews and 1 Ukrainian, who were shot with the participation of the entire population of Stryi."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 109)

<u>EM No. 24 of 16 July 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* A:</u>

A report of a case of arson at Daugavpils (*ibid.*, p. 128):

> *"The Jews were decisively involved in the arson cases. 5 Jews were caught in the act during the first 3 days and instantly shot."*

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62 RGVA, 500-4-92 (PS-2273), p. 56.
63 L-180. IMT, Vol. 37, p. 689.

EM No. 36 of 28 July 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* B:

"12 Jewesses were also shot who could be proven to have been active as Communist Party agitators already during the Polish Campaign." (*ibid.*, p. 195)

EM No. 47 of 9 August 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* C:

"2 Jewish Communists who had attempted to lure smaller detachments into an ambush were also finished off." (*ibid.*, p. 265)

EM No. 67 of 29 August 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* B:

"11 Jews were executed in the villages of Szuchari [Sukhari] *and Yasna. Some of them had been guilty of sniping, others of engaging in Communist agitation. Among the liquidated Jews was one Communist party official who is said to have been a commissar."* (*ibid.*, p. 376)

One Jewess was shot "for sabotage," as well as 8 male Jews, "for attempting to intimidate the population through the spreading of false rumors."

"A Jewess who treacherously persuaded a German soldier to open a door, detonating an explosive charge which tore his lower arm off, was arrested after an investigation conducted by the Einsatzkommando. The Jewess was then publicly hanged."

"Another 10 Jews from Minsk, who spread anti-German propaganda among the population until the end, were also shot." (*ibid.*)

EM No. 73 of 14 September 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* B:

1 male Jew "who had destroyed a cable installation of the German army" was shot (*ibid.*, p. 403).

EM No. 92 of 2 September 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* B:

"In Novozybkov, an elderly Jew and a former NKVD militia man, who had been in constant contact with the partisans and had transmitted messages to them, were treated accordingly, in improvised fashion."

"Further a half-Jew was transferred from the POW camp in Minsk, who, as a long-time party member, had been a Politruk and political divisional commander in the Russian army. He was liquidated together with 3 other Jews, who had worked actively in the NKVD under Bolshevik rule and who refused to wear the insignia prescribed for Jews. In Minsk, a Jewess who had worked as an interpreter with the Field Commander's Office and who had pretended to be a Pole in order to be appointed to that position, was shot." (*ibid.*, p. 545)

EM No. 131 of 10 November 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* A:

"On 20 October 1941, the Jew Max Wulfson was arrested in his dwelling in Riga. Wulfson was under heavy suspicion of having acted as a contact man for Karl Kühndorff, a teacher who had emigrated from Germany in 1933 and who was in contact with Soviet Russian and English agents." (*ibid.*, p. 767)

"During the arrest of a Jew from Liepaja, large quantities of strychnine, enough to poison over 1,000 people, were found in his dwelling. The poison had been in

the hands of the Jew for quite some time. He gave unbelievable explanations as to the origins of the poison. He was executed." (*ibid*., p. 768)

EM No. 133 of 14 November 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* B:

"On the same day [16 October 1941] *the Jews Stanislaus Bonski and Tolja Ahonim as former NKVD-agents, and the Jews Simon Alexandrovich, Schuster Peiser and Michael Sakei were liquidated for possession of explosives. On the same day, the Jewess Cadine Orlov was executed for failure to wear the Jewish identifying mark and for refusing to move to the ghetto. On 18 October 1941, the Jews Lova Wasmann, Ferna Birkmann, Jakob Saravo, Abraham Linden, Abraham Baraniche, Salomon Katzmann and Behr Katzmann as well as the Jewess Fenia Leikina were liquidated for refusing to wear the Jewish identifying mark and for distributing anti-German agitation propaganda. On 20 October 1941, the Jew Stanilov Naum and the Jewish married couple Alär were liquidated for concealing themselves outside the ghetto in Mogilev. On 14 October 1941, the Jew Isaak Pyaskin, who had been a political collaborator of the Red Army and was found on the forward advance road towards Vyazma under suspicious circumstances, was shot by the advance unit of EK 9. On 17 October 1941, the Jew Maria Spirina was shot by the advance unit of EK 9 for serving as a gunwoman. On 21 October 1941, the Jew Joel Lyubavin was shot after being found in a Russian bunker in possession of a firearm not far from Vyazma."*

"On 17 October 1941, the Jew Samuel Goffmann was shot for carrying a false identity document for the purpose of concealing the fact that he was a Jew. […] *2 Jewesses were liquidated for setting fire to two houses in Bobruisk during an aerial attack during the night of 13 October 1941."* (*ibid*., p. 788)

EM No. 146 of 15 December 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* B:

"The Jew Elia Lapitzki and the Russians Ivan Matveyev, Nikolai Stepanenko, Gregory Skobilev and Semen Agafanov were shot for membership in a partisan group and/or for acting as informants for partisans. The Jew Bruck, residing in Bychikha, was proven to have supplied the partisans with several pigs. He was handed over to the Wehrmacht at their request and publicly hanged."

"In connection with Rishin's arrest [Rishin was a Russian arsonist], *7 Jews were arrested and convicted of partisan activities. All 8 persons were hanged."* (*ibid., p. 883)*

The following persons were also shot:

"A Jew, who had been a member of the Communist Party and NKVD agent since 1920, and had attempted to set fire to the village of Zavodeyki[?] *near Mogilev using gasoline; 8 Jews and Jewesses, who had concealed themselves outside the ghetto in Mogilev;* […] *9 Jews who had considerably terrorised the population of Mogilev through price-gouging;* […] *In Vyazma, a Jew who had belonged to the Communist Party since 1928 and had been active in agitation activities;* […] *the Jew Naikhin, his wife and another 3 Jews who had made derogatory remarks about the German armed forces."* (*ibid*., p. 886)

EM No. 148 of 19 December 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* B:

> *"2 Jews and 2 Russians guilty of repeated acts of looting,* […] *were court-martialed and shot."* (*ibid*., p. 888)

In this context the presumed legal and psychological justifications make no sense, either because the executions took place "after a court-martial" ("*standrechtlich*") or in an improvised manner ("*behelfsgemäß*") and were considered legal by the persons carrying out the executions, or due to the insignificant number of persons concerned, required no "auto-justification."

The case of Kodyma moreover shows that the motivations for the shootings carried out by the *Einsatzgruppen* cannot be reduced to simplistic patterns. The report from *Einsatzgruppe* D to the Army High Command 11/Ic of 4 August 1941 contains an appendix with the subject "Meetings of Jews in Kodyma" by *Sonderkommando* 10a. A Ukrainian woman had reported that a clandestine meeting of approximately 50 Jews had taken place at Kodyma to coordinate attacks against individual German soldiers. Investigations confirmed the allegation, and approximately 400 soldiers surrounded the Jewish quarter, with orders to arrest all Jews over the age of 15. Due to resistance from the Jews, it was necessary to have recourse to arms in some cases. At the end of the operation, approximately 400 persons were arrested, all males. The interrogators ascertained that approximately 98 of them had participated in the clandestine meeting or had committed acts of insubordination or were members of the [local] Jewish "intelligence" [organization]. 100 persons were Ukrainians or Russian and were of advanced age, as a result of which they were released.

> *"The remaining approximately 175 persons, without exception Jews, could not be proven guilty of participation. They were transferred to the armed-forces prisoner of war camp as hostages, while the above-mentioned 98 persons were shot after taking their personal data."* (Angrick 2013 *et al*., Doc. 35, pp. 88f.)

In other cases, in which shooting should have been inevitable, the outcome was otherwise. For example, a "letter (No. 989) by the head of the Ukrainian district administration of Kamianka to the village eldest and the police chief of Stepanivka date 29 July 1942" states that the district commissioner of Krivoy Rog, Hans Frick, was in possession of information according to which four Jews were hiding in the district and ordered (*ibid.*, Doc. 139, pp. 336f.):

> *"The Jews must be arrested and brought to the labor camp of the City of Verkhnedneprovsk. All prisoners of war who are without work and without documents and are just loafing around in the villages, should be sent there too."*

The numbers are another jarring element in the general context of statistics. The reports laconically mention thousands and tens of thousands of executions but then dedicate many lines to dealing with individual cases of Jews mentioned by name.

It is obvious that these facts do not square with the hypothesis of an order to exterminate Jews as Jews. The reports clearly show, by contrast, that the general motivation for the killings was the fact that the Jews were considered by the

Germans to be hardcore supporters of Bolshevism and the partisans. Thus, for example, in EM No. 127 of 31 October 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* C states this line of reasoning quite clearly:

> *"Already today it can be stated without hesitation that the Jew has acted in the service of Bolshevism without exception.*
> *"As a result, the necessity arose for the Security Police of special measures against Jewry,"*

precisely because the Jews were considered "the true carriers of Bolshevism" (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, pp. 740f.).

EM No. 124 of 25 October 1941 reports a specific application of this principle (*ibid.*, p. 732):

> *"The Krupski region may therefore be considered free of Jews. The complete liquidation of the Jews in the localities mentioned was necessary to deprive the numerous partisans and parachute infiltrators of all the support that they had been accustomed to receive precisely from the Jews."*

Another contrived accusation against the *Einsatzgruppen* as well as – and even more so – against the police battalions and the Command Staff SS, which were more directly involved in the struggle against the partisans, is that the SS used the struggle against the Bolsheviks as a cover to conceal the real object: *i.e.*, the massacre of the Jews.

It may be appropriate at this point to include a brief *excursus* on Himmler's annotation dated 18 December 1941 in his diary, an orthodox interpretation of which is provided by Christopher Browning (Browning 2004, p. 410):

> *"On December 18 Himmler met with Hitler. The cryptic remark in Himmler's appointment book stated simply: 'Jewish question/to be exterminated as partisans' (Judenfrage|als Partisanen auszurotten). Most likely, they discussed how the killing of the Jews was to be justified and what were the rules for speaking about it."*

The editors of Himmler's *Dienstkalender* (service calendar), which includes a transcript of the annotation, comment (Witte *et al.*, p. 294):

> *"This was obviously a follow-up discussion of Hitler's speech on the Reichs- und Gauleitertagung on 12 December and Himmler's meeting with Hitler, Bouhler and Brack on 14 December 1941* […]. *The broad expression 'Jewish Question' indicates that Himmler was taking note of Hitler's justification for the murder of the European Jews as a whole* […]*."*

The editors refer to the well-known article by Christian Gerlach on Hitler's presumed decision to exterminate all the European Jews, where he examines this document (Gerlach 1998, pp. 780f.):

> *"Himmler and Hitler met on the afternoon of December 18, 1941. In regard to the first topic discussed, Himmler recorded, 'Jewish question | to be exterminated as partisans.' There can be no doubt that what Himmler wrote down after the vertical line represented the results of the conversation. But what did the brief notation mean? Linguistically, the statement is an order. The term 'partisans' may at first glance seem to suggest the situation in the Soviet Union, but the execution of*

> *Soviet Jews had been decided some time ago and was already under way. Further, at that point there was not yet a significant number of Jewish partisans in the occupied Soviet territories. These considerations suggest that Himmler's notation meant something else – that it referred to potential partisans and to the supposed 'Jewish threat.' It is significant that Himmler's note lists the topic of conversation not as 'Jews in the east' or as 'Soviet Jews' but rather as the all-encompassing 'Jewish question.' By itself, Himmler's notation is difficult to interpret unambiguously, but there is some justification for interpreting Hitler's statement in a global sense."*

The annotation of 18 December 1941 should be placed in correlation with the presumed "decision to 'exterminate the Jews in Europe'," which, according to Gerlach, "must have been made after December 7 and before December 14, 1941" (*ibid.*, p. 784). Specifically, the meaning of the annotation is thought to be as follows (*ibid.*, pp. 786f.):

> *"Hitler viewed the Jews as opponents, revolutionaries, saboteurs, spies, 'partisans' in his own backyard – an area that now, in light of the expected United States attack, included all of Europe. That was what Hitler had meant by his remark, recorded by Himmler on December 18, 1941, 'to be exterminated as partisans.'"*

The explanation is obviously a bit forced. The reference to partisans, in this context, would only make sense in relation to the Jews of the East: only these could be killed *in the quality of* (*als*), not *like* (*wie*) partisans to justify the killings. But the motivations adopted in the *Einsatzgruppen* reports, as set forth above, also continued to be highly variegated and only refer to a minimum extent to killings of Jews in the capacity of partisans. Are we to believe that no one paid any attention to this alleged *Führerbefehl* ?

Ulrich Herbert, in his critique of Gerlach's conjectures – to which I shall return in the next chapter – also examined the annotation of 18 December 1941, noting that the German historian first presupposes the existence of a "Führer decision," and then adduces Himmler's annotation as important *proof* of its existence, but Herbert thinks "that is methodically problematic." Without the conjectural context created by Gerlach, the precise meaning of the annotation remains rather unclear (Herbert, p. 69).

In the "Monologe" at the *Führerhauptquartier*, the *Reichsführer* SS (Himmler) is invited to lunch by Hitler on December 14th, to lunch on the 17th, and to lunch once again on the 18th, but at table Hitler did not speak of any *Judenfrage* (Jewish question) or of partisans (Jochmann, pp. 152-156).

The original text of the annotation is of no assistance in clarifying the matter (see Document I.1.6). The term *Judenfrage* is separated from "to be exterminated as partisans" by a dash, and it is unclear whether this expression is an order or a conclusion linked to the preceding term. Orthodox Holocaust historians presuppose that the text implies "Jewish question. [The Führer has ordered that] the Jews are to be exterminated as partisans," but this is dubious at the very least,

precisely because we do not know the topic of the discussion between Hitler and Himmler.

In reference to the memorandum of 16 July 1941, according to which Stalin's order on partisan warfare gave the Germans the opportunity to kill "whatever opposes us" (see next chapter), we can also imagine a more general directive according to which it was considered necessary to "exterminate" all adversaries "as partisans," whether they were Jews or non-Jews.

Returning to the theory of the anti-partisan struggle being utilized by the Germans as a pretext to cover up the extermination of the Jews, Yehoshua Büchler, one of its principal supporters, says (Büchler, p. 14):

> *"The war against the partisans was utilized by Hitler not only as a mask for mass murder, but also as a way to build a broad consensus of all the Nazi forces operating in the occupied areas in regard to the murder of Jews. The Jews were portrayed by the Nazis as partisans or potential partisans, both as a group and as individuals. This conceptual integration of Jews and partisans was quickly internalized by a receptive SS and by German army soldiers, and provided the mass murder of the Jews with the legitimization of a 'war against the partisans.' All branches of the German state took part in the anti-partisan warfare, including the SS, police, army, civilian administration, local collaborators and parts of the armed forces of Germany's allies."*

It is still a fact that War Diary No. 1 of the Command Staff SS, which covers the period from 16 June to 31 December 1941 and which condenses the reports from all the subordinate units, only reports on partisan activities and does not even mention the term "Jude" (facsimile in Baade, pp. 13-101).

It is also true that the subordinate units drew up their own reports, which speak of killings of Jews, but the context is not the one imagined by Büchler. The first known report from the 1st SS [Infantry] Brigade, the "Activity Report for the time 27 July 41/12.00 o'clock – 30 July 41/12.00 o'clock," dated 30 July 1941, contains the first reference to any killing of Jews:

> *"Furthermore, approximately 800 Jews and Jewesses aged 16 to 60 years were shot by the end of the reporting period for aiding and abetting Bolshevism and Bolshevik partisans."* (*ibid*., p. 106)

The report provides an exact description of the brigade's mission for the period in question:

> *"Arrest and/or destruction of:*
> *a) what remains of the 124th Soviet Rifle Division;*
> *b) armed gangs;*
> *c) partisans;*
> *d) persons guilty of aiding and abetting the Bolshevist system;"*

The report also declares that "the overall operation was led by SS *Obergruppenführer* and Police General Jeckeln" (*ibid.*, p. 105).

The Activity Report for the period 3-6 August 1941, drawn up on 6 August ("Number 1"), reports a "cleansing operation" in the areas of Ostrog, Gritsev and Kunyov-Radogoshch with the following justification:

"Especially the Jews have encouraged Bolshevistic gangs in these localities."

As a result of this operation, 1,384 Jews and 1 Soviet soldier were shot; the Jews consisted of "men" and "women," *i.e.*, no children were killed (*ibid.*, p. 108).

The "Activity Report" for 6-10 August states with regard to Korosten:

"The Jews encouraging the gangs were shot. 2 Jews were publicly hanged in Zhitomir, for having 1,000 murders on their conscience, at least in part." (*ibid.*, p. 110)

The "Activity Report" for the same period, relating to "Number 3," announces, in particular, the general tasks of the brigade (*ibid.*, p. 111):

"Aggregated order for the 1st SS Brigade during the reporting period was: prevent hostile gangs from threatening Highway North in the regions of Zhitomir – Fasova – Yemilchino – Zwiahel; mop up scattered military units and gangs in the indicated area, and secure the extreme left wing of the 17th Army Corps in the vicinity of Yemilchino and west of it."

In this context, anti-Jewish actions were also carried out. "232 Jews guilty of encouraging bolshevist gangs" were shot at Chernyakhov on 1 August; "9 bolshevist Jews" were shot the same day at Mal-Goroschki (*ibid.*, p. 114); "3 bolshevist Jews" were shot in other localities on 9 August; "59 Jews were shot" in the area of Chernyakhov-Zhitomir-Bolyarka-Vilsk, while "36 bolshevist Jews" were shot in other localities, all on the same day, 9 August (*ibid.*, p. 115).

The "Activity Report" for the period 17-20 August 1941 reports the "aggregated order for the 1st SS Brigade" (*ibid.*, p. 116):

"a) prevent hostile gangs from threatening the Highway North in the Sokolov – Krayevshchina – Belka – Zwiahel region,
b) mop-up scattered military units and gangs in the indicated area,
c) particularly, secure the Zwiahel-Korosten supply road,
d) secure the left flank of the 17th Army Corps."

Killing Jews is not mentioned. According to the surviving reports – which leave many gaps – the number of Jews shot as of 26 November 1941 amounted to approximately 6,500.

The activity of the 2nd SS Infantry Brigade is known solely through a few reports. The "Activity Report" for the period 7-14 November 1941 contains only one single reference to Jews (*ibid.*, p. 197):

"Party officials and Jews put themselves in a better situation regarding food supplies, since most of them are sitting at the source. The attitude of the population towards the Jews has become much more hostile over the past few days."

The "Activity Report" for 21-28 November (*ibid.*, pp. 205-214) and the "Partisan News and Instruction Sheet No. 11 (reporting period 22–28 Nov. 41)" (*ibid.*, pp. 215f.) speak only of partisan activity, without any reference to Jews.

Police Battalion 322, as mentioned above, was under the jurisdiction of the Higher SS and Police leader Center, which was active in the Białystok area from the beginning of June to mid-July 1941; on 18 July, it was transferred to Baranovichi, and on 7 September it was moved to Mogilev. On 25 May 1942, it arrived at Kattowitz.

The war diary of Police Battalion 322 extends from 10 June 1941 to 26 May 1942.[64] It records various anti-Jewish actions, most of which involved relatively small numbers. On 8 July 1941, the battalion shot 12 Jews and 4 Poles "for denying the possession of looted property" (p. 33). 22 more persons, including one woman, were shot on 8 July at Białystok. The victims were said to have been "looters, fugitives, and almost exclusively Jews" (p. 35). From 6 to 17 July, still at Białystok, "105 civilians and soldiers of the Red Army (prisoners) were shot for looting or attempting to escape. Among them were 94 Jews" (p. 40). 36 Communists were captured and shot in the Białowieża area on 2 August. "Among these 36 were 5 Jews, 6 women, including one Jewess." Furthermore "2 arrested Jews were shot for attempting to escape" (p. 56). On 9 August, the 3rd Company of the battalion "is taking all the male Jews between the ages of 16 and 45 in Białowieża and is carrying out the evacuation of all other Jews out of Białowieża." These Jews were shot the next day; the victims were "77 Jews aged 16 to 45" (p. 63). From the context we may deduce that the other Jews were in fact evacuated. On 15 August, the 3rd company conducted a "Jewish operation" at Mrowka Mala:

> *"259 women and 162 children were resettled to Kobrin. All male Jews aged 16 to 65 (282 people) were shot, and 1 Pole for looting."* (p. 65)

On 31 August, the 7th and 8th Companies arrested 700 Jews including 64 women, and shut them up in the local prison. The next day, 914 Jews, including those arrested the day before, were shot (p. 76). On 1 September, the battalion shot 64 Jews, "because during the raid they were found not to be wearing the Jewish star" (p. 78).

On 16 September, at Knyazevka, 1 Jew, 89 Russians and 1 Communist were shot "for supporting the partisans" (p. 90). At Barsuki on 22 September, the battalion shot 5 Jews and 3 Jewesses (p. 98). On 25 September, at Knyazhitsy, 13 Jews, 27 Jewesses, and 11 children were found among the population. "Of these, 13 Jews and 19 Jewesses were executed in collaboration with the SD" (p. 104). 8 Jewesses and the 11 children were left alive. On 2 October 1941, the 7th, 8th and 9th Companies participated in a "Jewish operation" in the ghetto, together with the staff of the Higher SS and Police leader center as well as the Ukrainian auxiliary police. 2,208 Jews were captured and 65 killed on the spot. On 13 October, these Jews were shot; the 7th Company shot 378 of them, while the 9th shot 545 (pp. 110f.). On 7 October, the battalion shot "3 Jews and 4 Jewesses for supporting partisans" (p. 115), and two days later, "4 Jewesses for Communist machinations." On 11 October, 6 Jews were killed "for Communist propaganda" (p. 116);

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[64] YVA, O.53-127, pp. 1-254; subsequent page number from there unless stated otherwise.

the next day, another 8 were shot, together with 4 communists, "for supporting partisans" (p. 119). On 13 October, the battalion shot "7 Jews and 1 Jewess and 9 Russian [members of the] 'Wander' movement'" (p. 121). On 26 October, 2 Jews were killed "for sedition" (p. 130); the next day, "another 7 Russian soldiers and 2 Jews" were shot "while attempting to escape" (p. 130). On 6 November "2 Jewish tramps arrested by the 8th Company in the vicinity of Yanovo found to be wearing parts of Russian uniforms under their civilian clothing were shot while trying to escape" (p. 139).

The next execution dates to a bit over a month afterwards: On 8 January 1942, a Jew was killed on the road through Orsha (p. 181). Almost a month after that, on 3 February, "in Gnezdovo, a non-local Jewess was arrested and court-martialed and shot for Communist activity and for failure to wear the Jewish star" (p. 192).

On 27 February, the battalion carried out 8 executions (p. 202):

> *"5 Jews were court-martialed and shot for sedition against the measures of the German armed forces and the spreading of troubling rumors in Yanovo (approximately 21 km southeast of Smolensk). 3 Jewesses were arrested 5 km west of Smolensk on the road to Vitebsk and shot for leaving the Smolensk Ghetto without permission as well as for failure to wear the Star of David."*

Finally, on 2 March 1942, "4 Jewesses were arrested on the road Smolensk-Vitebsk about 5 km west of Smolensk. They were court-martialed and shot for leaving the Smolensk Ghetto without permission and for failure to wear the Star of David" (p. 202). Also, the battalion shot Jews "aged 15 to 65 years" and transferred Jewish women and children to other localities (see also Part Two, Subchapter 8.6.).

War Diary No. 3 of the 1st Company of the Reserve Police Battalion 13 covers the period from 31 July 1941 to 31 December 1942. For this long period, only three executions are recorded: on 4 August 1941, "67 Jews were shot";[65] on 14 October there was an execution probably involving 137 Jews. This annotation, like the entire war diary, is densely written with a fountain pen and is difficult to read. Finally, on 26 November 1941, 61 Jews were shot from Wysokie Litewskie.[66]

According to Edward B. Westermann, Police Battalion 310 "believed that theirs was the task to 'cleanse' the East of threatening 'infidels' (*Ostmenschen*, Jews, Communists) in the name of their own 'holy' ideology" (Westermann, p. 63).

The battalion was transferred to Lvov on 4 August 1941, whence it was transferred to the front, south of Leningrad, on 21 February 1942. Towards mid-July it was stationed at Daugavpils, in Latvia. On 9 July, Himmler ordered the merger of Battalions 305, 306 and 310 into Police Regiment 15, and Battalion 310 took

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65 YVA, O.53-15, pp. 30-230, here p. 35.
66 *ibid.*, p. 221.

over the name of the 3rd Battalion, 5th Regiment. On 21 August 1942, Regiment 15 was sent to Kobrin in Byelorussia.

The war diary for this battalion has survived. It covers the period from 1 October 1940 to 24 November 1942.[67] Up until this time, starting on 4 August 1941, the battalion was only deployed in two anti-Jewish operations: the evacuation of the Brest Ghetto (October 1942) and executions at Pinsk (November 1942), in which the 10th Company participated (see Chapter 5).

The executions of Jews involved with the partisans were subsequently carried out not as a simple "pretext," but for the active support made available to the partisan movement by the Jews.

Jürgen Förster cites a few of the Situation Reports of the "Commandant in Byelorussia of the Armed Services Commander Ostland" and commander of the 707th Infantry Division, General Gustav Freiherr von Bechtolsheim, who referred to this matter as follows:

> *"'Since, then and now, they [the Jews] make common cause with the Communists and partisans, the complete extermination of this alien element is being carried out' (Monthly Report of October 1 – November 19, 1941).*
> *'The measures introduced against the Jews, as bearers of the Bolshevist idea and as leaders of the Partisan Movement, have shown tangible results. The confining of the Jews in ghettos and the liquidation of Jews convicted of partisan activity and fomenting agitation are to be continued; these are most effective in furthering the pacification of the country' (Monthly Report of November 1 – November 30, 1941)."*

Notwithstanding the concentration of the Jews in the ghettos,

> *"'we repeatedly receive reports which show that Jews make common cause with partisans, and that considerable numbers are even armed and belong to the partisan bands. Jews are also continually involved in acts of sabotage' (Report of January 8, 1942)."*

The Situation Report of February 1-15, 1942 clearly states that, "without a single exception, Jews and partisans are an identical concept" (Förster, pp. 30f.).

A letter from the General Commissioner for Byelorussia Wilhelm Kube to Reich Commissioner for the Ostland Hinrich Lohse, which has as its subject "Combatting partisans and Jewish operation in the General District Byelorussia," is particularly explicit in this regard:[68]

> *"In all clashes with partisans in Byelorussia, it has been found that Jewry is the principal supporter of the partisan movement, both in former Poland and in the former Soviet part of the General District, together with the Polish resistance movement in the East and the Red Army in Moscow. As a result, the handling of Jewry in Byelorussia, in view of the threat to the entire economy, represents a prominently political issue which must consequently be tackled based, not on economic considerations, but on political ones. In detailed meetings with SS* Brigade-

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[67] YVA, O.53-12.2, pp. 70-415.
[68] PS-3428. IMT, Vol. 32, p. 280. Original text in: YVA, O.53-132, p. 98.

führer *Zenner and the magnificently hard-working leader of the SD, SS* Obersturmbannführer *Dr. jur. Strauch, we have liquidated approximately 55,000 Jews in Byelorussia during the last 10 weeks."*

In this context belongs for instance Operation Swamp Fever (*Sumpffieber*) as carried out on Himmler's order from 21 August to 21 September 1942 for the purpose of annihilating the partisan bands in the General District of Byelorussia. The outcome, according to the concluding report of the Higher SS and Police leader for the East of 6 November 1942, was this: 389 "armed bandits" killed in battle; death sentences followed by the shooting of 1,274 suspects; "8,350 Jews executed"; evacuation of 1,217 persons (PS-1113, p. 5). The Jews were found to be supporters of and collaborators with the partisans.

1.6. The Historical Value of the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial

Headland stressed that the military trials of exponents of the National-Socialist regime, in addition to pursuing legal objectives, occasioned the gathering of an enormous amount of information. Whatever one's opinion of these trials and their verdicts, it is a fact that, as a result of the trials, a great many documents were very rapidly discovered and examined, and that this has contributed "immeasurably" to our knowledge of the National-Socialist regime (Headland, p. 177).

This is also the limitation of such trials, as noted by Earl (Earl, p. 186):

"After all, criminal trials are adversarial, and testimony is most frequently given in an attempt to establish legal exculpation [or incrimination], *not to document historical truth. By their very nature, criminal trials can act as strong impediments to the attainment of historical truth, when by excluding or altering historical facts a defendant can demonstrate innocence or a prosecutor guilt."*

It should be stressed that all the documents exhibited in these trials were prosecution documents, since the documents were screened solely for the following purpose (Hofmann, p. 112):

"The Berlin branch staff was divided into different teams; their instructions were to locate and study all official Nazi records that might contain incriminating information needed by the twelve new subsequent trials being prepared. The documents, which were in German, would be summarized in English, and the Staff Evidence Analyses (SEAs) would be distributed to all lawyers in Nuremberg dealing with related prosecutions. If it was considered very important evidence, the original would also be sent."

This practice inevitably gave rise to a unilateral and tendentious view of the facts on the one hand, while depriving the defense of true defense documents.

Regarding the case under discussion, 30 days before trial, the defense attorneys "received copies of every document the prosecution intended to use in evidence. They had ample time to prepare for trial" (*ibid.*, p. 124). Thus, all the documents available to them were, exclusively and precisely, prosecution documents.

This tendentiousness is reflected in the very interpretation of the documents, including a distortion of their real meaning. Thus, for example, as recalled by Hofmann,

> *"when defendants insisted that they knew nothing about the murderous plans of the EG, Ferencz introduced a September 21, 1939 order from the chief of the security police, Reinhard Heydrich, to all EG units describing in detail how Jews were to be rounded up for annihilation. Among many other such revelations, Ferencz's staff produced the July 31, 1941 instruction from Reich Marshal Hermann Göring, who had ordered the security police to carry out 'a complete solution of the Jewish question.'"* (*Ibid*., pp. 130f.)

Ferencz probably did not even realize that the intended *Einsatzgruppen* recipients of the *Schnellbrief* dated 21 September 1939 (PS-3363) were those involved in the Polish Campaign, and not those in the Russian Campaign; and, if he did understand it, he acted in bad faith, because the document contains no reference to "annihilation." During the trial, he declared (TWC, Vol. IV, p. 667):[69]

> *"The initial steps for the 'final solution' of the Jewish problem, that is, the extermination of the Jews, were taken shortly after the invasion of Poland. On 21 September 1939, Heydrich directed as follows:* […]*"*

This interpretation, as I have explained above, is quite fallacious. On the second document, Ferencz asserted (*ibid.*, p. 667):

> *"On 31 July 1941, Heydrich was ordered by Goering to bring about the 'final solution' of the Jewish question in the German sphere of influence in Europe. Following the issuance of this directive, the wholesale slaughter of the Jews began."*

This is a blatant distortion, upon which I shall focus in the next chapter.

If it is true, as stated by Alfred Streim, that the statements of Otto Ohlendorf and the other defendants relating to the "*Führerbefehl*" are false, since they formed part of a defense strategy (see Subchapter 2.7., p. 136), it is easy to understand that the trial testimonies do not possess the intrinsic characteristics of veracity, and may be historically misleading.

Where the documents are concerned, there is no doubt that those introduced at trial do possess probative value. For this reason, the prosecution summation was unusually short, lasting hardly two days (8 & 9 April 1948).

It is also true that the presentation of these documents, which focused entirely on the executions, while legitimate from the legal point of view, inevitably altered the historical perspective, since it depicted the *Einsatzgruppen* as units having as their sole and exclusive task the extermination of Jews as such. The following are a few examples of such a procedure:[70]

> *"A Teilkommando of Sonderkommando 4a, operating in Poltawa, reported as of 23 November 1941:*
>
> *'Altogether 1,538 Jews were shot.' (NO-3405).*
>
> *Einsatzgruppe D operating near Simferopol communicated:*

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[69] The document was introduced into evidence as EC-307-I, TWC, Vol. IV, pp. 118-123.

[70] NMT, Case IX, transcript, 8 April 1948, pp. 6657f.

> *'During the period covered by the report 2,010 people were shot.' (NO-3225).*
> *An Einsatz unit, operating in the Ukraine, communicated that in Rakow:*
> *'1,500 Jews were shot.' (3876-PS).*
> *A report on activities in Minsk during March 1942 reads:*
> *'In the course of the greater action against Jews, 3,412 Jews were shot.' (NO-2662)."*

Ohlendorf's protest against this distortion was given short shrift (Earl, p. 213):

> *"During his direct testimony, Musmanno asked him whether or not it was true that the task of the Einsatzgruppen was to execute groups of people because they were racially inferior. Ohlendorf appeared incredulous at the suggestion. Jews were killed, he conceded, not because they were Jews, but because they were enemies of the Reich."*

Notwithstanding the volume of the documents examined, from the historiographic point of view, the trial was characterized by great shortcomings. The first regarded the very topics constituting the specific object of debate, as noted by Earl (*ibid.*, p. 180):

> *"Who committed genocide, how it was carried out, when it was decided upon as a policy, and who made the decision are the issues that are at the heart of this trial. In spite of this focus, definitive answers to these questions are impossible to ascertain. More than half a century after the conclusion of this trial, historians still only agree on one issue: that the mass killing of Soviet Jews by units of the Einsatzgruppen beginning in the summer of 1941 marks a watershed in Nazi racial policy towards Europe's Jews. Beyond that, there is non consensus."*

But even the number of defendants – and consequently the related selection from among all the former members of the *Einsatzgruppen* at the Allies' disposal – depended upon purely contingent factors, which have nothing to do with the requirements of justice (Hofmann, p. 120):

> *"The total number of mass killers to be tried depended upon finances and furniture. No Nuremberg tribunal could try more than 24 defendants in the same trial. The reason was that there were only 24 seats in the dock. Historians may not believe it, but it's true."*

The 24 defendants were:

1. Heinz Jost, commander, *Einsatzgruppe* A
2. Erich Naumann, commander, *Einsatzgruppe* B
3. Otto Rasch, commander, *Einsatzgruppe* C
4. Otto Ohlendorf, commander, *Einsatzgruppe* D
5. Adolf Ott, commanding officer of *Sonderkommando* 7b of EG B
6. Eduard Strauch, commanding officer of *Einsatzkommando* 2 of EG A
7. Emil Haussmann, commanding officer of *Einsatzkommando* 12 of EG D
8. Ernst Biberstein, commanding officer of *Einsatzkommando* 6 of EG C
9. Erwin Schulz, commanding officer of *Einsatzkommando* 5 of EG C
10. Eugen Steimle, commanding officer of *Sonderkommando* 7a of EG B
11. Franz Six, commanding officer of *Vorkommando* Moscow of EG B

12. Gustav Nosske, commanding officer of *Sonderkommando* 12 of EG D
13. Heinz Schubert, officer in *Einsatzgruppe* D
14. Lothar Fendler, deputy chief of *Sonderkommando* 4b of EG C
15. Martin Sandberger, deputy chief of *Einsatzgruppe* D
16. Matthias Graf, officer in *Einsatzkommando* 6 of EG D
17. Paul Blobel, commanding officer of *Sonderkommando* 4a of EG C
18. Waldemar Klingelhöfer, officer of *Sonderkommando* 7b of EG B
19. Waldemar von Radetzky, deputy chief of *Sonderkommando* 4b of EG C
20. Walter Blume. commanding officer of *Sonderkommando* 7a of EG B
21. Walter Haensch, commanding officer of *Sonderkommando* 4b of EG B
22. Werner Braune, commanding officer of *Sonderkommando* 11 b of EG D
23. Willi Seibert, deputy chief of *Einsatzgruppe* D
24. Felix Rühl, officer of *Sonderkommando* 10b of EG D.

The greatest criticism that can be raised against the Tribunal was no doubt that of completely neglecting the question of "Aktion 1005," the presumed operation consisting of the exhumation and cremation of the bodies of those who fell victim to the *Einsatzgruppen* and other units of the SS and Police, to which Part Two of the present study is devoted. Incredibly, although the supposed author of the operation was right there, *i.e.*, Blobel, the chief of counsel for the prosecution, Telford Taylor, not only never interrogated him on that topic in any specific way, but relied on the fanciful declarations of Rudolf Höss instead of asking the defendant directly concerned: Blobel. In the indictment, Taylor stated:[71]

> *"Although forming no part of the charges in the indictment, the systematic attempts to destroy the graves of the slain as described in official German documents are interesting in that they shed some light on the mental attitude of the executioners. Did they regard the executions as culpable acts, ocular evidence of which should be destroyed? The defendant Blobel in his affidavit, signed June 18, 1947, stated that in June 1942 he was entrusted by Gruppenfuehrer Mueller with the task of removing the traces of the executions carried out by Einsatzgruppen in the East. He leaves nothing to the imagination:* [[72]…]
>
> *So intent was Blobel, evidently in obedience to orders, to wipe out the incriminating evidence of the killings, that he even tried to destroy the corpses by means of dynamite. Rudolf Hoess, Commandant of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, who supervised these experimentations, stated that the dynamiting method was not successful:* [[73]…]*"*

This type of behavior is an indication of the "mental attitude" of the prosecutors and judges. This is also made apparent by the heated exchange between Defendant Ohlendorf and the representatives of the prosecution as to the legality of the executions. Ohlendorf declared that the exterminations in the East were the consequence of a total war aimed at the annihilation of an ideological enemy (TWC, Vol. IV, p. 355).

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71 *Ibid.*, p. 6741.

72 This omitted part will be quoted and discussed in Section 4.2.12 of Part Two (p. 501).

73 This is followed by two fragments from Rudolf Höss's "Notes" on Blobel.

In response to James E. Heath, a consultant for prosecution counsel, who criticized him for killing children, Ohlendorf raised the topic of the Allied population bombings. His accuser asked indignantly whether he wished to establish a moral equivalency between the deliberate killings of children by the *Einsatzgruppen* and those of the Allies; the defendant replied (*ibid*., p. 357):

> *"I cannot imagine that those planes which systematically covered a city that was* [not[74]] *a fortified city, square meter for square meter, with incendiaries and explosive bombs and again with phosphorus bombs, and this done from block to block, and then as I have seen it in Dresden likewise the squares where the civilian population had fled to – that these men could possibly hope not to kill any civilian population, and no children. And when you then read the announcements of the Allied leaders on this – and we are quite willing to submit them as document – you will read that these killings were accepted quite knowingly because one believed that only through this terror, as it was described, the people could be demoralized and under such blows the military power of the Germans would then also break down."*

Ohlendorf then drew his accusers' attention to the American atomic bombs dropped on Japan, establishing a strategic parallel with Hitler's conduct in the war in the East. The Führer wished to weaken the enemy's ability to resist through the adoption of draconian measures, just like the American government where Japan was concerned, or, in the words of Henry L. Stimson, secretary of war from 1940-1945 (*ibid*., pp. 360f.):

> *"To extract a genuine surrender from the emperor of Japan and his military advisers, a tremendous shock must be administered which should carry convincing proof of our power to destroy the Empire. Such an effective shock would save more lives, both American and Japanese, than it would cost."*

Telford Taylor, in his closing statement, claimed that the atomic bomb was a weapon like any other, just more powerful, and that its use was in no way prohibited (*ibid.*, p. 381):

> *"The atomic bomb, therefore, is neither more nor less legal than ordinary bombs; under the laws of war, the question is not as to the character or explosive capacity of the bomb, but how it is used. It is sad but true that the destruction of an enemy's power of resistance by air attacks against urban industrial centers has become an accepted part of modern warfare."*

But this is precisely the problem, how it was used: on two cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, causing the deaths of tens of thousands of persons, including those same children, who – if they had been Jewish – would have caused an outpouring of tears of indignation from the American prosecutor, but who left that same American prosecutor quite indifferent when they were Japanese or German; in the latter case, it would have been merely "an incident, a grave incident to be sure, but an unavoidable corollary of battle action" (*ibid.*, p. 467).

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[74] I have added the negation, which is missing in the original, contrary to all logic.

In his reading of the indictment, Taylor stated:[75]

> *"It was argued in behalf of the defendants that there was no normal distinction between shooting civilians with rifles and killing them by means of atomic bombs. There is no doubt that the invention of the atomic bomb, when used, was not aimed at non-combatants. Like any aerial bomb employed during the war, it was dropped to overcome military resistance."*

But the executions of Jews, from the German point of view, were also carried out "to overcome military resistance" – the resistance of the Soviet Union, depriving Bolshevism of its life-giving humus and support to the partisans.

There is no point in compiling a whole moral classification of the various crimes committed by the Germans and by the Allies, just as it makes no sense to balance the one against the other; but one cannot refrain from stigmatizing the hypocritical moralism of the Anglo-Americans: their absurd pretense of fighting Hitler's dictatorship – in favor of Democracy and Justice – while allying themselves with an even worse tyranny, their claim to be fighting against a criminal regime while standing side by side with an even more-criminal regime, their ambition to wage a "crusade" for the liberation of Europe leaving half of Europe under Stalin's yoke at the end of the war.

It is furthermore well known that the first concentration camps were built by the English in 1901, to be used against the Boers; it is less well known that the Americans almost immediately followed their example. As a consequence of the Spanish-American War (1898), the Americans occupied the Philippines; on 4 February 1899, the Filipinos rebelled, and another war broke out. The rebels used guerrilla tactics against the Americans, and in 1902, the Americans responded with "cruelty, including scorched earth tactics, torture, and internment of non-combatants in concentration camps" (Tucker, Vol. 1, p. 969).

The fact that the United States should build itself up into the proud scourge of Hitlerian racism is typical of Soviet propagandistic shamelessness, since the Americans were profoundly pervaded by racism against Afro-Americans – a racism systematically professed even inside the army (Tischauser, p. 101):

> *"The army, navy, army air force, marines, and coast guard did nothing to change their long-held racist structure or attitudes during the war. Every military unit remained segregated, black soldiers continued to serve only in transportation and construction units, and they faced racist hostility and hate in their training camps and in military bases throughout the entire war. Of the one million African Americans who served in the military during the four years of war, not one served in an integrated unit."*

The true politico-ideological nature of the Allied military trials was admirably summarized by Maurice Bardèche (Bardèche, pp. 17-19):

> *"The true basis for the Nuremberg Trial, the one which no one has ever dared to point out, is, I suspect, not fear: it is the spectacle of the ruins, it is the panic of the victors. It is necessary that the others be in the wrong. It is necessary, for if,*

[75] NMT, Case IX, transcript, 8 April 1948, p. 6723.

> *by chance, they had not been monsters, how would the victors bear the weight of all those destroyed cities, and those thousands of phosphorus bombs? It is the horror, it is the despair of the victors which is the true motive for the trial. They have veiled their faces before what they were forced to do and, to give themselves courage, they transformed their massacres into a crusade. They invented a posteriori a right to massacre in the name of respect for humanity. Being killers, they promoted themselves to policemen.* […]
>
> *To excuse the crimes committed in conducting the war, it was absolutely necessary to discover some even more serious ones on the other side. It was absolutely necessary that the English and American bombers appeared like the sword of the Lord. The Allies did not have a choice. If they did not solemnly affirm, if they did not prove by any means whatever that they had been the saviors of humanity, they were nothing more than murderers. If, one day, men ceased believing in the German monstrosity, would they not demand an accounting for the devastated cities?"*

To believe that such trials could result in "justice" or "historical truth" is an epic delusion.

2. The *Einsatzgruppen* and the Order to Exterminate the Soviet Jews

2.1. Positing the Problem

In order to clarify the question of whether an order for the systematic extermination of the Jewish population in the occupied eastern territories existed, three central aspects require in-depth analysis:

1. Did the *Einsatzgruppen* receive an order to exterminate the Jews in the Soviet Union before or after the start of Operation Barbarossa?
2. Were the Jews killed by the *Einsatzgruppen* because they were Jews?
3. Were the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen* part of a general plan of extermination which also included the Western Jews?

The third question concerns the broadest topic of National-Socialist policy with regard to the Jews, and for this reason it seems appropriate to begin with it.

2.2. National-Socialist Plans for an Extra-European Jewish Reserve

As mentioned before, at the end of 1939, Walter Stahlecker, before becoming commander of *Einsatzgruppe* A, collaborated on National-Socialist plans to deport the Jews, particularly the "Nisko Plan" (see Subchapter 1.1.).

Later, in a "Draft of establishing provisional guidelines for the treatment of Jews in the area of RKO" [*Reichskommissariat Ostland*] dated 6 August 1941, he outlined the following program (Angrick 2013 *et al*., Doc. 37, pp. 92-95):

> *"The draft foresees, as the most important and most decisive measure, the cleansing of the countryside of Jews. On the other hand, Jews should be prohibited from residing in localities of economic, military, or spiritual significance, or health resorts and spas. Hence, only a small number of small and medium-sized cities would be left for them as future places of residence. The number of these localities is extremely limited, given the spaciousness of the most-thinly settled East, which, apart from a few large cities, must be considered flat land. In these localities, the possibility would hardly arise of providing the Jews with useful employment.*
>
> *The draft is apparently planning the Jewish resettlement measures listed under Number V not as an immediate measure, but is rather being reserved for a later, gradual development. This would mean that considerable numbers of Jews would, at first, remain in the same dwelling places as before. In the East, like everywhere else, the Jews have concentrated themselves mainly in the big cities. In view of the small number of German law enforcement and security personnel, the Jews would continue their parasitic existence there for a long time and remain a perpetual source of unrest.* […]
>
> *The draft provides for a resettlement from the flat land into the cities. If the resettlement is approached already now, it must basically proceed as follows: Certain districts in the vast open spaces of the East will be set aside as Jewish reserva-*

tions. The population that has resided in these areas so far and which must now be resettled, can easily be pumped into other areas. Male and female Jews will be housed separately in the Jewish reservations. Until reaching reproductive age, boys will remain with their mothers. The Jews can be immediately set to useful work in the Jewish reservations. Thus, for example, building their own dwellings, or for agricultural work, forestry, or building roads. If additional manpower is available, the Jews can be put to work as closed work gangs for road construction even outside the reservation. In the meantime, if the overall cleansing of the European space of all Jews can still not be implemented, new employment possibilities can be created later through the founding of artisanal and industrial undertakings in the Jewish reservations. The Jews in the reservations will only be allowed as much shelter and food as are absolutely necessary to maintain their working strength. To the extent to which the necessary housing is not already available, it will be built by the Jews themselves, by building simple wooden barracks. The agricultural produce of the reservation itself will suffice for their food. Nor should sealing off the Jewish reservations cause any difficulty. The Jews must be prohibited on pain of death from leaving the reservation. Compliance could be supervised by numerically rather small units of auxiliary police.

Insofar as necessary, exceptions to the compulsory confinement to the Jewish reservation may be permitted, insofar as Jews practicing certain occupations, such as, for example, physicians or skilled workers, are still urgently needed outside the reservation at first. These Jews would be housed, insofar as possible, in the vicinity of their workplace, in sealed camps, separated by sex […].

Finally, in sum, it may be said that the above-mentioned handling of the Jewish question will accomplish the following:

1. An almost 100% immediate cleansing of Jews from the entire East

2. Prevention of Jewish natural increase

3. Possibility of the greatest possible exploitation of Jewish working strength

4. A considerable facilitation of the subsequent collective relocation into a non-European Jewish reservation.

It will only be possible to implement these radical measures through the deployment of units of the security and regular police force."

Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein commented (Angrick/Klein, fn 26, p. 122):

"In this context, it is worth noting that a general killing order apparently did not yet exist, and that the 'reservation policy' was still being pursued with certain borrowings from concepts involving the use of Jews for forced labor, especially regarding road construction. According to E[insatz]*G*[ruppe] *A's recommendation, this was to be pursued by Jewish labor details outside the 'Jew reserve' as well, an idea that reappeared in modified form during Heydrich's remarks at the Wannsee Conference. In that instance, German Jews were to be deported for 'constructing roads to the east.'"*

Discussion of a "Jewish reservation" or "reservations" in the East continued, even over the succeeding years. On 5 October 1942, Martin Luther, an official from the German Foreign Office, reassured the Hungarian ambassador Döme Sztojay

about the fate of the Hungarian Jews who were to be deported, stating (NG-1800. Text in Adler, p. 265),

> *"that all evacuated Jews and therefore also all Hungarian Jews would be employed building roads and later housed in a Jewish reservation."*

A "Recording of the discussion between Reich Foreign Minister and the Duce [Mussolini] in the Palazzo Venezia on 25 February 1943 in the presence of ambassadors von Mackensen and Alfieri and the state secretary" reports (Rothfels 1978, p. 296):

> *"The Duce is aware that Germany has a radical attitude towards the treatment of the Jews. Developments in the war in Russia have made this even more obvious. All Jews are being deported out of Germany and the German-occupied territories to reservations in the East. He (the Reich Foreign Minister) knows that these measures would be considered cruel particularly by the enemy side."*

In fact, this question had come up already earlier. On October 11, 1942, Mussolini had received Himmler in the Palazzo Venezia, who sent Ribbentrop a report on the conversation on the 22nd of that month. Regarding the Jewish question, it stated (Rothfels 1975, p. 150):

> *"The Jews would be taken out of the whole of Germany, the General Government and all the countries occupied by us, since they were everywhere the carriers of sabotage, espionage and resistance, as well as gang formation. In Russia, we had had to shoot a considerable number of Jews, both men and women, since there even the women and adolescent children had been messengers for the partisans. The Duce himself emphasized that we send the Jews who were politically incriminated to concentration camps, and that we use other Jews for road construction in the East, although the mortality rate would be very high, since the Jews had never worked in their lives. The oldest Jews would be placed in old-people's homes in Berlin, Munich and Vienna. The other old Jews had been placed in the small town of Theresienstadt as an old-age ghetto for German Jews, would continue to receive their pensions and salaries there, and could arrange their lives according to their own tastes; however, there they would argue with each other in the most lively manner. Another part of the Jews, we tried to drive over to the Russians in the East through gaps in the front, although the Russians shot at such assemblies of Jews quite often, and obviously did not like them either."*

And there are even indications of at least a partial activation of the plans for a Jewish reservation in the East. The report in the April 1942 issue of *Contemporary Jewish Record* on "over 30,000" Jews allegedly removed from the Vilnius Ghetto as of February 1942 informs us that "it is believed that half are now in labor camps on the Soviet front, and the remainder have either been interned or executed."[76]

On 11 July 1942, the *Generalkommissar* for Latvia, Otto-Heinrich Drechsler, wrote a letter to Lohse concerning the treatment of "half-Jews." As one of the measures to be taken against "Mixed-race persons of 1st degree (half-Jews),"

[76] *Contemporary Jewish Record*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (April 1942), p. 190.

Drechsler proposed "later maybe deportation to old Soviet territory" (Hoppe/ Glass, p. 626). The term "old Soviet territory" used here most-likely meant the German-occupied Russian territories to the east of the Baltic Region. Accordingly, this region must have been viewed as a suitable destination for transports of people of "undesirable" ethnic or religious background.

This measure formed part of a proposal consisting of three points: registration, sterilization and deportation; hence we may assume that the latter really meant what it said rather than being a camouflage term for extermination.

National-Socialist programs with regard to the Jews of the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* naturally form part of a much-broader general plan.

On 16 September 1941, Hitler, Himmler and Otto Abetz, Germany's ambassador in Vichy France, met in the Führer's headquarters, where Abetz took advantage of the opportunity to set forth the proposal made available to him by his advisor Carltheo Zeitschel on 22 August 1941, in which he advocated the deportation of all European Jews in the recently conquered Eastern territories, beginning as follows (CDJC, V-15):

> *"The continuing conquest and occupation of the vast Eastern territories may currently bring the Jewish problem all over Europe to a final satisfactory conclusion within the shortest period of time. Judging by the cries for help to American Jewry from all the Jews of Palestine in their press, over 6 million Jews live in the territories occupied by us during the past few weeks*[77] *– particularly, Bessarabia – which means, one third of all of world Jewry. In the reorganization of the East, these 6 million Jews would have to be gathered together in one way or another, and presumably a special territory would have to be set aside for them. It shouldn't be too big a problem in these matters if the Jews from all other European countries were to be added to this as well, and if also the Jews currently crammed into ghettos in Warsaw, Lodz, Lublin and so forth would also be deported there.*
>
> *As far as the occupied territories are concerned, such as Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Norway, Yugoslavia, Greece, the Jews could simply be transported away in mass transports to the new territory by military orders, and the other countries could be encouraged to follow the example and expel their Jews to this territory. We could then have Europe made free of Jews within a short period of time."*

On the same occasion, Hitler declared that he would kick all the Jews out of Europe, beyond the Urals (Rothfels 1970b, pp. 424f.):

> *"The Asians and Bolsheviks have to be kicked out of Europe, the 'episode of 250 years of Asianism' was over, he said. The Urals would be their border, beyond which Stalin and his pals could do what they liked. German encroachments over the Urals from time to time would make sure that Stalin wouldn't come entirely to rest there either."*

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77 This figure is excessively exaggerated.

This intention is also made clear in other documents. For instance, on 5 October 1941, while traveling through the General Government, including the Galicia District, Hans Frank spoke of the evacuation of the Jews to "reservations in deepest Russia (the Urals)" (Sandkühler, p. 134). When Hitler spoke of the disappearance of Jewry from Europe,[78] he meant precisely their deportation to areas beyond the Urals. This was expressly declared by Rosenberg on 18 November 1941 (see Subchapter 2.9).

Initially, one of the intermediate stages was the Yanovsky Camp near Lvov. Thomas Sandkühler notes in this regard that barracks construction work began at this camp in mid-October 1941, presumably to house transports of Austrian and Czech Jews. On 1 November, the area was fenced in and transformed into a forced-labor camp (Sandkühler, p. 156):

> *"Evidently, Heydrich and Eichmann were really planning to deport 'evacuation contingents' not only to Lodz and the Baltic but also to Lvov, where the ghetto was apparently to be subdivided into a 'supply depot' and a 'labor camp', i.e., the Janowska forced-labor camp. Presumably, Katzmann was to lead the Jews 'to the East while building roads.'"*

On 17 September 1941, Hitler met with Ribbentrop and Himmler, and on the next day Himmler sent Greiser the well-known letter which states:[79]

> *"The Führer wishes the Old Reich and the Protectorate to be emptied and freed of Jews from the West to the East. I therefore strive to transport, if possible already this year, the Jews from the Old Reich and the Protectorate initially, as the first stage, into the Eastern territories newly acquired by the Reich two years ago, in order to deport them off even further East next spring.*
>
> *I intend to take approximately 60,000 Jews from the Old Reich and the Protectorate for the winter into the Lodz Ghetto, which, from what I hear, has enough room for them. I ask you, not only to understand this measure, which will certainly cause difficulties for your district, but to support it with all your power in the interests of the entire Reich.*
>
> *SS Gruppenführer Heydrich, who is to undertake this migration of the Jews, will contact you directly, or via SS Gruppenführer Koppe, in due time."*

The treaty of Tighina, signed at the beginning of September 1941, had granted Transnistria to Romania; Clause 7 said (Arad 2009, p. 233):

> *"Evacuation of the Jews across the River Bug is not possible at the moment. Therefore they must be concentrated in labor camps and put to work until the cessation of hostilities when it would be possible to move them to the East."*

On 10 October, Heydrich, during a meeting, explained to Karl Hermann Frank (HSSPF Bohemia-Moravia), Horst Böhme (BdS Prague), Hans Günther (head of the Central Agency for Emigration of Jews in Prague) and Eichmann, as follows,

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[78] "*das Judentum aus Europa verschwindet,*" Hitler's Sportpalast speech on 30 January 1942. Domarus, Vol. II, 1st Half-Volume, pp. 1828f.

[79] Bundesarchiv Koblenz, NS 19/2655, p. 3; reproduced in Witte, p. 50.

as shown by the related record titled "Notes from the conference of 10 Oct. 41 on the solution of Jewish issues" (T/294):

> *"Difficulties resulting from the evacuation. It was planned to start with it* [the transports] *on about 15 October 1941 in order to get the transports gradually rolling by 15 November up to the limit of about 5,000 Jews – only from Prague. For now, lots of consideration must still be given to the Lodz authorities. Minsk and Riga are to receive 50,000.* […] *The 5,000 Jews from Prague are now to be evacuated over the coming weeks. SS* Brigadeführers *Nebe and Rasch can accommodate Jews in the camps for communist prisoners in the area of operations. This is already being initiated according to information from SS* Sturmbannführer *Eichmann."*

A file memo dated 24 October 1941 on a "Conference in Berlin on 23 Oct. 41 at [Department] IV B 4 presided over by SS *Sturmbannführer* Eichmann" informs us that the subject was an "Order of the Führer. (Evacuation of 5,000 Jews from the Old Reich, including Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia)." Jews older than 60 were exempt from evacuation due to "frailty," without [further] regard for age. "For the medical care of the Jews during transit and later in the camp," "sufficient sanitary material to take along" was to be made available to the deportees.[80]

This reflected Heydrich's intentions as already expressed a few weeks earlier. Götz Aly writes (Aly, p. 274):

> *"On 23 September 1941, Heydrich assured Goebbels, who was urging in his capacity as Gauleiter for Berlin, that the Jews would be shipped off to the communists' polar sea camps as soon as the military situation permitted."*

As early as 14 August 1941, Paul Worm, police colonel and commander of the Police Regiment Galicia at Lvov, sent an order to Police Battalions 315, 133 and 254, as well as to the police units in Lvov, Tarnopol and Stanislau with the subject "Jewish Forced-Labor Camps", which read:[81]

> *"Prisoner-of-war camps set up by the Russians are said to exist in almost every larger locality in the Galicia District. They are said to be equipped with all the necessary facilities and to be well-suited for establishing Jewish forced-labor camps.*
>
> *All existing camps are to be investigated and reported upon immediately. The holding capacity and properties are to be determined at the same time."*

On 9 November 1941, Friedrich Trampedach, one of Lohse's officials, sent Rosenberg a telegram. After announcing the arrival of the first two transports with Jewish deportees – one at Minsk on the 10th, the other at Riga on the 19th of November according to information from the Security Police – he stated:[82]

> *"Urgent request to prevent* [further] *transports, since Jewish camps must be relocated much further east."*

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80 YVA, O.23-76, pp. 2f.
81 RGVA, 1323-2-292, p. 158.
82 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 52.

Angrick and Klein commented (Angrick/Klein, p. 189):

> *"Why this transfer farther east was necessary remains a mystery, but Trampedach seemed to know, at least in the case of Minsk, that the Security Police there in fact wanted to send two arriving transports to Borisov and Bobruisk. This would have meant that the civil-administered General Commissariat Byelorussia would have merely served as another stop along the way for additional evacuations to military administered Rear Area Army Group Center. But the railroad situation in Army Group Center refused to permit this during the battle for Moscow."*

This is at least partially refuted by a German radio message intercepted by the British on 15 January 1942:[83]

> *"To the Higher SS and Police leader Russia North. Secret.*
> *The Fuehrer has ordered that troops of Jewish forced laborers must be more-quickly put to work in the Russian combat zone for the performance of important construction work. Starting on 18 Jan. 42,* [they] *are being sent by special transport into the construction zone in the Daugavpils-Moscow region assigned to the Silesian* Einsatzgruppe. *The Jews wear black work clothing with green armbands. Working assignment: Reich Autobahn. Guards provided by Organization Todt. Please make sure that the stock in forced labor will not be reduced.*
> *Higher SS and Police leader, South East"*

On 13 November Georg Leibbrandt, head clerk at Rosenberg's ministry, sent Lohse a telegram with the following content:[84]

> *"Regarding Jewish transport to the East. Exact document on its way. Jews to be sent further East. Camps in Riga and Minsk temporary measure only, therefore no objection here."*

Major clues in favor of the plan to deport the Jews even further east may also be found in subsequent documents. For instance, at the end of November, Hans Frank, according to a British source of 1942, declared in Cologne "that all Jews will be removed into the Russian Sphere further East beyond the Polish Frontiers."[85]

On 4 December 1941, Leibbrandt sent Lohse a letter with the subject "Solution of the Jewish Question" ("*Lösung der Judenfrage*") with reference to the following "directives":[86]

> *"The local doings of the General Commissioners in Riga with regard to the transport of Jews from the Old Reich to Riga and the construction of the Jewish camps have been forwarded to me. As SS Obergruppenführer Heydrich informed me during a conference a few days ago, the Jewish camp, the construction of which was to occur in the vicinity of Riga, was to be built near Pskov. I have already requested the Reich Security Main Office, by letter dated 12 Nov. 1941, to inform me in the future prior to the introduction of measures for the implementa-*

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83 TNA, HW 16-53, Teleprinter message.
84 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 54. The telegram is written in capitals, without umlauts.
85 TNA, FO 371-30938B, "Anti-Jewish Legislation in National-Socialist Germany from 1933-1941," p. 37,
86 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 64.

tion of the solution of the Jewish question so as to avoid the difficulties which have thus far arisen as a result of failure to inform my offices, or informing them too late."

The Wannsee Conference was originally planned for 9 December 1941, but was delayed due to the American entry into the war. Heydrich's letter of invitation to the other participants, including Luther, to whom the copy I quote was addressed, bore the date 29 November, and stated (reproduced in Kempner, pp. 127f.):

"On 31 July 1941, the Reich Marshal of the Greater German Reich, with the participation of the other central instances concerned, ordered me to make all the necessary preparations in organizational, physical and material regards for a comprehensive solution to the Jewish question in Europe, and to present him with an overall draft in this respect.

In view of the extraordinary significance attributed to these matters and in the interests of attaining an identical conception on the part of the central agencies involved in the other work connected with this final solution, I suggest making these problems the subject of a common discussion, particularly since Jews are already being evacuated to the East from the territory of the Reich, including the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia territory, since 15 October 1941 in rolling transports.

I therefore invite you to such a conference, followed by breakfast, at 12:00 A.M., 9 December 1941, in the offices of the International Criminal Police Commission, Berlin, Am grossen Wannsee, No. 56-58."

Heydrich explicitly referred to the well-known mission assigned to him by Göring on 31 July 1941:[87]

"Supplementing the orders already conveyed to you by decree dated 21 Jan. 39 to solve the Jewish question most favorably according to temporal circumstances in the form of emigration or evacuation, I hereby order you to devise all the necessary preparations in organizational, physical and material regards for a comprehensive solution to the Jewish question in the German sphere of influence in Europe.

Insofar as the responsibilities of other competent central authorities are affected by these measures, they are to participate.

I further order you to present me with an overall draft of the organizational, physical and material preliminary measures for implementation of the desired final solution to the Jewish question."

The meaning of the invitation was so clear that the German Foreign Office, on 8 December 1941, "in preparation for tomorrow's meeting with SS *Obergruppenführer* Heydrich," that is, in anticipation of the Wannsee Conference to be held the following day, drew up a note for Luther's attention titled "Wishes and ideas of the Foreign Office on the anticipated comprehensive solution of the Jewish Question in Europe." Point 1 set forth the following objective (NG-2586-F):

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[87] PS-710. IMT, Vol. 26, pp. 266f.; original reproduced in Kempner, p. 98.

> *"Deportation of all Jews of German nationality resident in the German Reich, including Croatian, Slovakian and Rumanian Jews, to the East."*

Furthermore, the evacuation of all the Jews whose German citizenship had been revoked, of all Serbian Jews and those handed over by the Hungarian government was requested.

Göring's decree of 24 January 1939 referred to the institution of a "Central Reich Office for Jewish Emigration" which had the task of promoting "the emigration of the Jews from Germany" by all means (NG-2586-A).

On 31 July 1941, emigration or evacuation was extended to all Jews under German domination; this is the reason why the document refers to a "comprehensive solution." There is therefore a strict continuity in National-Socialist policy from the decree of 24 January 1939, to the letter of 31 July 1941, to the invitation of 29 November 1941, and to the Wannsee Conference itself of 20 January 1942: a policy of emigration/evacuation/resettlement without any extermination "decision" at all.

The Wannsee Conference, as I have already noted, was originally convened for December 9th to inform the offices concerned of the Führer's decision to expel the Jews from Europe. On December 12th, Hitler informed high Party members as a preliminary matter. The new unforeseen event – the American entry into the war (December 11th), also upset Rosenberg's speech, which he was to have delivered on December 18th; on the 16th, he agreed with Hitler that it no longer served any purpose to speak of the "extirpation of Jewry" ("*Ausrottung des Judentums*"), or the evacuation of the European Jews to the East – this being the meaning of the Führer's "decision" – because he had wished to brandish the idea about as a threat, precisely to deter American entry into the war; but now, in face of a *fait accompli*, such a threat served no purpose, because the European Jews were going to have to suffer the consequences through evacuation to the East anyway. I will return to this issue in Subchapter 2.9.

That the alleged "decision" to "exterminate the Jews in Europe" – which was supposedly taken by Hitler after 7 December and before 14 December, as Gerlach conjectured (Gerlach 1998, p. 784) – was a mere announcement of a previous decision to evacuate the Jews to the East, which had to have been made before 9 December – the originally planned date for the Wannsee Conference – is shown by a *Schulungsblatt* (*Training Bulletin*) of the *Ordnungspolizei* dated 1 December 1941, which stated (Curilla 2006, p. 59):

> *"The Führer's prediction that a new war unleashed by Jewry would lead, not to the smashing of anti-Semitic Germany, but rather, to the end of Jewry, is being fulfilled in these very days. The gigantic spaces of the East, which are now available for colonization by Germany and Europe, will also enable the final solution to the Jewish problem in the near future, that is, not only the fall from power, but also the actual elimination of the parasitic race from the European family of peoples. That which appeared impossible two years ago, is now, step by step, becoming a reality: at the end of the war stands a Europe free of Jews."*

On 30 December 1941, Luther drew up a "Note by the Germany Division on No. 5 of the protocol dated 27 November 1941 on the reception of the Bulgarian Foreign Minister Popov by the Reich Foreign Minister in Berlin on 24 November 1941," which begins as follows (Rothfels 1969, p. 132):

> *"After an explanation of the Führer's decision that all European Jews will have to leave Europe, the difficulties with Jews of Hungarian, Rumanian, Spanish and other nationalities mentioned by Bulgarian Foreign Minister Popov will be obviated."*

On 16 December 1941 the Romanian leader Marshal Ion Antonescu convened his cabinet. According to the meeting's minutes, the following was stated on that occasion (Ancel, p. 259):

> *"The Germans want to bring the Yids* [sic] *from Europe to Russia and settle them in certain areas but there is still time before this plan is carried out."*

Nearly five years later, in 1946 at the Paris Peace Conference, members of the Romanian Foreign Ministry presented a study to the Allied victors in which they insisted that this indeed was the information which Germany had provided them concerning the fate of the Jews (*ibid.*, p. 269):

> *"In the fall of 1941, the German Legation presented to Antonescu's Government a plan that included Germany's intentions vis-à-vis the Jewish population in Poland, Slovakia, Romania, and Hungary. The Jews of these countries should have been deported to a region situated northeast of the Black Sea, beyond the line Rostov-Kharkov, where it was planned to establish an immense ghetto for* [them]. *For this purpose the Romanian Jews were to be gathered and deported to Transnistria, this* [territory] *being considered as a first stage of the deportation. After that the Jews would have been transferred farther* [east] *to the region that was allotted to them."*

The "Minutes of discussion of senior government advisor for the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Territories in the East Walter Labs, dated 16 January 1942," provides information as to Hitler's decisions and on Heydrich's related tasks (Klein 1995, p. 40):

> *"A few days before Christmas, on the premises of County Court Judge Wetzel, Main Department I, specialist for racial matters, a discussion took place regarding the draft of an order, forwarded here a while ago, regarding the concept of 'Jew', with the additional participation of:* […]
>
> *A few days before this talk, I had a similar discussion with the specialist of the Reich Ministry for the Interior, government advisor Feldscher. The latter explained the foreseeable development of the concept of 'Jew' as follows: SS* Obergruppenführer *Heydrich, with the Führer's permission, has been assigned the mission, by the Reich Marshal, of devising preparations for the implementation of the immediate and uniform solution to the Jewish problem in Europe upon conclusion of the war. In fulfillment of this mission, Heydrich convened a conference of the state secretaries of the participating departments, but the conference then had to be postponed until the month of January due to the session of the Reichstag."*

On 25 January 1942, Heydrich sent the bodies subordinate to him, including *Einsatzgruppen* A-D, a letter bearing the subject "Final Solution to the Jewish Question" (*Endlösung der Judenfrage*) in which he wrote:

> *"As an enclosure, I am sending a photocopy of an order from the Reich Marshal of the Greater German Reich/commissioner for the Four-Year Plan and chairman of the Ministerial Council for the Defense of the Reich dated 31 July 1941, for information purposes, and asking that it be given due consideration. According to the letter, I have been assigned with devising all necessary preparations from the organizational, factual and material point of view for a comprehensive solution to the Jewish question within the German sphere of influence in Europe. The tasks to be prepared for are being introduced."* (Angrick 2013 *et al.*, p. 269)

Here, Heydrich was explicitly recalling the mission entrusted to him by Göring on 31 July 1941, which was becoming a reality, the preliminary stages for which began precisely with the Wannsee Conference. These documents contain not the slightest trace of any "Hitler extermination order," allegedly issued at the start of December 1941. The Wannsee record therefore refers to a real evacuation, and the fact that the above-mentioned Heydrich letter was also sent to the *Einsatzgruppen* shows that the Jewish deportations occurring in the areas in which the *Einsatzgruppen* were in operation were not aimed at exterminating the deportees.

A circular letter from the Higher SS and Police leader Russia South with the Reich commissioner for the Ukraine to the general commissioners in Brest, Zhitomir, Nikolayev, Dnepropetrovsk and Kiev from 12 January 1942 stated (Hoppe, Doc. 53, pp. 182f.):

> *"Subject: Establishing Ghettos*
> *Pending the decree ordering the establishing of ghettos, I request already forthwith to ensure that preparations be gotten underway immediately. Ghettos are, insofar as possible, to be established in such a way that Jews from the Old Reich can be housed there already during 1942.*
> *Apart from firmly defined ghettos, barracks installations and the like can also be considered to house the Jews.*
> *Reporting deadline: 10 February 1942.*
> *Every district commissar must indicate where, and how many, Jews can be housed in his district. Locations linked by rail should be indicated as a priority."*

Eichmann's express letter (*Schnellbrief*) dated 31 January 1942 and addressed to "all Police head offices of the Old Reich (including the Gau of the Sudetenland), the State Police offices in Vienna, the central office for Jewish emigration in Vienna" issued directives for the deportations of Jews from the Old Reich, stating:

> *"The evacuation of Jews to the East, recently carried out in individual areas, represents the beginning of the Final Solution to the Jewish question in the Old Reich, Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia"*

Various categories of Jews were exempted from the evacuation, including:

> *"Jews a) aged over 65; b) as well as Jews aged 55-65, if they are <u>particularly</u> frail and therefore incapable of travelling."* (T/730; underlining in original)

Strict rules also existed for the transports from Theresienstadt to the occupied Eastern territories (the areas around Lublin, Riga and Maly Trostinets). Spared from deportation were:[88]

– Jews over 65 years of age;
– Jews who had received a war decoration above the Iron Cross second class;
– Jewish war invalids;
– Jews who lived in a valid mixed marriage;
– Jews of foreign nationality.

Of the 27,988 Jews living in the ghetto, 7,652 benefited from an exemption in April 1942.[89]

Also on 4 February 1942, a couple of weeks after the Wannsee Conference, Heydrich himself, in a speech before officials and party members from the protectorate, explicitly mentioned the future fate of all European Jews, whether or not they were able to work:[90]

> *"Those* [Czechs] *who cannot yet be Germanized can perhaps be* [used] *during the continuing exploitation above the Arctic Circle – where we will, after all, take over the Russian concentration camps that have, according to our present information, some 15-20 million deportees and that can thereby become an ideal home for the 11 million Jews from Europe in the future – maybe we can deploy those Czechs who cannot be Germanized in a positive way in pro-German tasks as overseers, foremen, etc."*

This policy was not aimed at subjecting the Jews to intolerable living conditions in order to bring about their gradual extinction, as Heydrich continued:

> *"This area, by the way, is not such a barren area as the Arctic-Sea area is always considered to be. It has only a very long winter, but decidedly concentrated good agriculture, and as to raw materials* [an] *excellent base. According to our knowledge, which we have gained in* [sic; from] *our security-police task forces in the East, we have noted amazing results."*

Czechs who could not be Germanized were not to be deported to the East as enemies, but on the contrary were to assume the positive function of an outpost in the territory not colonized by the Germans.[91] Heydrich's reference to the *Einsatzgruppen* emphasizes that Heydrich had by no means given these units the task of exterminating the Eastern Jews, because as late as February 1942 he was still planning the resettlement of the (allegedly) eleven million European Jews, including those in the occupied Eastern territories.

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88 YVA, O.51-204, p. 14, "*Ghetto Theresienstadt. Tätigkeitsbericht 4. April – 30. April 1942. Überreicht bei Lagerkommandantur Theresienstadt*."

89 *Ibid*., p. 15.

90 YVA, O.51-54, pp. 26f. of the document; speech delivered by the deputy *Reichsprotektor* of 4 February 1942 in the "*Deutschen Saal*" ("German Hall").

91 *Ibid*., pp. 69f.

In this context we must also see the letter written on 21 June 1942 by Walter Föhl, Deputy General Manager of the Department for Population and Social Care of the General Government:[92]

> *"Every day we take in 10 trains with over 1,000 Jews each, from all over Europe, give them medical care, accommodate them more or less temporarily, and then usually deport them further, into the swamps of Byelorussia towards the Arctic Ocean, where they will all be assembled at war's end – if they survive it (and the Jews from the Kurfürstendamm or Vienna or Pressburg certainly won't), but not without having finished building a few highways. (But let's not talk about that)."*

The Wannsee Conference signaled the definitive suspension of the Madagascar Plan. The respective decision was announced on 10 February 1942 by Franz Rademacher, head of Department D III of the German Foreign Office, in a letter to Legation Councilor Harald Bielfeld (NG-5770):

> *"In August 1940, I forwarded you the draft plan for the final solution to the Jewish question, drawn up by my office, according to which the island of Madagascar would be demanded of France in the peace treaty, the practical implementation of the task would however be transferred to the Reich Security Main Office. According to this plan,* Gruppenführer *Heydrich was tasked by the Führer with implementing the solution of the Jewish question in Europe. In the meantime, the war against the Soviet Union has given us the possibility to make other territories available for the final solution. Hence, the Führer has decided that the Jews are not to be sent to Madagascar but rather deported East. Madagascar therefore no longer needs to be earmarked for the final solution."*

Here is additional, complete confirmation of the real meaning of the Wannsee Conference and the "Führer decision," as well as the fact that the term "final solution" ("*Endlösung*") was not a "euphemism" for extermination at all.

Heydrich had already given consideration to the idea of evacuating all the Jews overseas as early as 1940. On 30 October of that year, he issued an order on the "Handling of persons returning to Germany from the occupied territories," in which he ordered:[93]

> *"The treatment of the above-mentioned Jews should not pre-empt plans for the settlement of the Jewish question in the parts of Europe under German influence following conclusion of a peace treaty. Immediate measures must be taken, however, in order to prevent the danger of a back-flow of Jews with German (including former Austrian, Czechoslovakian and Polish) nationality or, rather, former German, etc. nationality. These Jews, including their Jewish relatives, are all to be collected in internment camps and placed under guard. The internment of Jews with German or former Austrian, Czechoslovakian and Polish nationality makes it possible that, in case of a possible comprehensive evacuation from Europe, these Jews be the first ones who can be seized and transported off. It is therefore expedient to build internment camps for Jews at locations from where the subsequent evacuation overseas can be carried out most-conveniently."*

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92 Aly, p. 275. Cf. Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 506f., 572f.
93 YVA, O.53-59, p. 406 (74).

In this, Heydrich followed Hitler's instructions, which Luther had mentioned in a note dated August 15, 1940:[94]

> *"On the occasion of a meeting with Ambassador Abetz in Paris, Abetz told me that the Führer had told him during his presentation on France, which had taken place about 2 weeks ago, that he intended to evacuate all Jews from Europe after the war."*

On 7 March 1942, Goebbels wrote the following annotation in his diary:[95]

> *"I am reading a detailed memorandum from the Security Service and the police on the final solution to the Jewish Question. A great number of new viewpoints result from it. The Jewish Question must now be resolved within a comprehensive European framework. There are still more than 11 million Jews in Europe. They must later be concentrated in the East, to start with; maybe they can be assigned an island after the war, such as Madagascar.*
>
> *In any case, there will be no peace in Europe unless the Jews are completely put out of commission* [*ausgeschaltet*]*. This raises a great quantity of extraordinarily delicate questions. What happens to the half-Jews? What happens to all the persons related to them by marriage, or married to them? We're really going to have our hands full here, and a whole series of personal tragedies will no doubt occur within the framework of solving this problem. But that is unavoidable. The situation is now ripe to ultimately solve the Jewish question. Later generations will no longer possess the vigor, nor will they possess the vigilance of instinct.*
>
> *We therefore do well to proceed radically and consistently. The burdens that we impose upon ourselves here will be an advantage, a blessed bit of good fortune for our descendents."*

The "detailed memorandum from the Security Service and the police on the final solution to the Jewish question" referred to by Goebbels was the protocol of the Wannsee Conference. Goebbels states that it contained "a great number of new viewpoints," which refutes Gerlach's claim that it was closely connected to Hitler's supposed decision to exterminate all the Jews of Europe.

These "*new* viewpoints" consisted, in fact, of the solution to the Jewish problem "within a comprehensive European framework" (and no longer solely within the territory of "Greater Germany"), that is, as an "comprehensive solution" ("*Gesamtlösung*") by deporting the Jews to the East – not to be killed there, but to be sent elsewhere "after the war," perhaps to Madagascar. This Europe-wide extension of in the treatment of the Jewish question was a development of Hitler's famous "decision".

Goebbels's annotation is additional confirmation of the fact that the Wannsee Conference, as I outlined above, was linked to the National-Socialist plan of emigration/evacuation/resettlement as ordered by Göring on 31 July 1941.

A "Report on a discussion that occurred on 6 March 1942 at the Reich Security Main Office – Department IV B 4" dated 9 March 1942 states as follows:[96]

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94 YVA, O.51-28, p. 98.

95 Lochner, p. 114. My quotation is taken from Werner, pp. 43f.

96 T/37(39) = T/734.

> *"As an introduction, SS* Obersturmbannführer *Eichmann first spoke about the further evacuation of 55,000 Jews from the Old Reich as well as from Austria and the Protectorate.*
> *Among other things, Prague and Vienna are most-heavily involved in this – with 20,000 and 18,000 Jews to be evacuated, respectively. The strength of the other transports is determined proportionally, according to the number of the Jews still present in each State Police (headquarters) district. Düsseldorf has been assigned 1,000 Jews in this connection."*

The following part of this same document should be given particular attention in light of the claim that Hitler – according to the orthodox Holocaust narrative – allegedly had decided to exterminate the Jews almost three months earlier, and that the Wannsee Conference, which is said to have condemned to death without exception all Jews unable to work, had been held almost two months earlier:

> *"In this context, SS* Obersturmbannführer *Eichmann called attention to the fact that the guidelines issued, particularly with reference to age, frailty, etc. should be respected to the utmost, since during the transport to Riga, according to Jewish elders who filed complaints through Gauleiters Lohse and Meyer to SS* Obergruppenführer *Heydrich, there were some 40 to 50 cases of wrongful evacuation. Although the majority of these cases turned out, upon closer examination, to have been fully justified evacuations, the utmost effort should be made to avoid such complaints under any circumstances. SS* Obergruppenführer *Heydrich will therefore hold the State Police leaders personally responsible for respecting the guidelines in this respect.*
> *To ensure that individual State Police headquarters are 'spared the temptation to deport recalcitrant older Jews along with the others', SS* Obergruppenführer *Eichmann remarked, it should, for reassurance, be said that, over the course of the summer or fall, these Jews remaining in the Old Reich would very probably be deported to Theresienstadt, which was earmarked as a 'ghetto for the elderly.' This town was now being cleared out, and temporarily 15-20,000 Jews from the Protectorate could already be resettled there. This was being done, 'to save face before the outside* [world]*.'"*

Eichmann was referring to the "Guidelines for the Technical Implementation of the Evacuation of Jews into the General Government (Trawniki near Lublin)" from the beginning of January 1942, which exempted four categories of Jews from deportation, including:[97]

> *"4./Jews*
> *a) aged over 65,*
> *b) aged 55-64, who are <u>particularly</u> frail and entirely unable to travel.*
> *For Jewish married couples, in which one spouse is below 65 and the other is older than 65, both partners can be evacuated if the partner older than 65 is no older than 67 and an attestation can be produced from a public health officer showing that this spouse is <u>fit for work</u>. Additional exceptions are not permitted.*

[97] T/1395 [15-18].

(For Jews not to be evacuated on the grounds of age, separate provisions will be drawn up later).
Jewish legal advisors are to be included only in an appropriate ratio to the number of the initially remaining Jews.
Divorces as well as the separation of children aged up to 14 from their parents should be avoided."

The report dated 9 March 1942 entirely confirms the validity of these guidelines, particularly with regard to the prohibition against deporting frail, elderly Jews to the East. Thus, to prevent local Gestapo units from illegally including them in the transports, Eichmann felt himself obliged to calm them down, prematurely announcing that they would be transferred to the "Old-People's Ghetto" of Theresienstadt, which was therefore indeed an old-people's ghetto. If this was intended to "save face," this does not necessarily mean that Theresienstadt was created solely for propaganda purposes,[98] but rather, that the SS wished to avoid foreign criticism for deporting these types of individuals. All of which is completely incompatible with a logic of extermination.

The following statement by Ronald Headland, a scholar not otherwise without acumen, is therefore surprising for its seeming partisanship (Headland, p. 52):

"The essential thrust of German policy toward the Jews until 1941 was thus one of removal – the expulsion of Jews from the territory of the Reich proper. The decision to attack the Soviet Union brought with it a fundamental shift in this attitude. With the acquisition of the Soviet territories, the Germans realized they would now be faced with having several million more Jews on their hands. Again, while one cannot be absolutely certain, the available evidence seems to indicate that sometime in the spring of 1941, in the context of preparations for the imminent attack, the decision was taken to destroy the Jews in the Soviet territories."

The only known *Führerbefehl* is therefore mentioned in the subject line ("*betrifft*") of the file memo dated 24 October 1941 on a "Conference in Berlin on 23 Oct. 41 at [Department] IV B 4 presided over by SS *Sturmbannführer* Eichmann," which states that the Führer's order concerned the "Evacuation of 5,000 Jews from the Old Reich, including Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia." Eichmann issued directives which had to be scrupulously obeyed: Jews in mixed marriages, those with foreign nationality, those involved in working employment were to be exempt from evacuation, just as those over the age of 60; also exempted were sick and weak Jews, regardless of age.[99] These were directives which were then repeated and restated in greater detail, as we have already seen.

The directives regarding exemption from deportation for Jews unable to work were not simple enunciations of principle. On 27 May 1942, the State Police Headquarters in Düsseldorf sent a telex to the RSHA summarizing the deporta-

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98 A draft by SS *Sturmbannführer* Wilhelm Zoepf, Eichmann's representative in the Netherlands, dated 5 October 1942, contains the expression "*Propagandalager Theresienstadt*," the import of which may easily be misrepresented. T/537.

99 YVA, O.53-76, p. 2.

tions from its area of competence, with reference to Eichmann's express letter dated 31 January 1942:[100]

> *"Jews destined for the old-people's ghetto at Theresienstadt fall into the following categories:*
> *1. Jews over the age of 65 and frail Jews over 55: 1,545, among them 571 males and 974 females."*

Furthermore, there were 56 spouses from no-longer-existing mixed marriages (#2); 83 persons of "mixed race" (#3); and 51 "Jews with serious war wounds or bearers of the wound badge or of high decorations for bravery." The report concludes that

> *"from the local district can be deported to the East:*
> *154 Jews, and to the old-age ghetto in Theresienstadt:*
> *1,735 Jews."*

The candidates for deportation underwent a medical examination attesting to their fitness or ability to work, the findings of which were recorded in an appropriate dossier referred to as the "Examination Results" by the "physician under police contract."[101]

On 26 May 1942, the Essen outpost of the State Police Headquarters in Düsseldorf sent a report to the headquarters on the distribution of the local Jews according to the pre-established categories. Of a total of 654 Jews, 245 were listed as scheduled for deportation to Theresienstadt, and only 83 were available for evacuation to the East.[102]

On 9 August 1942, the State Police Headquarters of Düsseldorf sent Eichmann's office a report on deportations to the Old-People's Ghetto of Theresienstadt:[103]

> *"Of the 1,735 Jews reported based on the FS Decree No. 974 30 of 21 May 1942 – IV B 4 a - 2093/42g, 965 Jews were deported on 21 July 1942 on Special Train Da 70, while another 694 Jews, for a total of 1,649, were deported to Theresienstadt on 25 July 1942 on Special Train Da 71."*

Some of the (1,735 – 1,649 =) 86 persons not included had committed suicide; some had died or fled. One was bed-ridden and was therefore "exempted from the transport."

The option of a Jewish reservation on the Polar Sea or at any rate somewhere beyond the Urals, in which the Soviet Jews would also have been interned, is in direct contradiction to a deliberate policy of extermination, so that the genesis of the presumed "*Führerbefehl*," in addition to clashing with the total absence of documents, also collides with this real deportation policy.

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[100] T/1395 [89].
[101] T/1395 [45-48].
[102] T/1396 [110].
[103] T/1397 [223].

2.3. Operational Service Orders Issued to the *Einsatzgruppen*

The question of a "*Führerbefehl*," must also be examined in the context of the orders issued to the *Einsatzgruppen* from the very time they were formed, and the tasks assigned to them.

The first mention of the *Einsatzgruppen* appears in a document dated 3 March 1941, which Hilberg describes as follows (Hilberg 2003, Vol. 1, pp. 282f.):

> *"The context for deploying the Einsatzgruppen was operation 'Barbarossa', the invasion of the USSR. A written notation of the mission appeared in the war diary of the OKW's*[104] *Wehrmachtführungsstab (WFSt) on March 3, 1941, at a time when invasion plans were already far advanced. The topic of the entry was a draft directive to troop commanders, which had been prepared by Warlimont's office Landesverteidigung in the WFSt, and which had been submitted by WFSt Chief Jodl to Hitler for approval. The war diary contains Jodl's enclosure of Hitler's comments, including a philosophical point defining the coming battle as a confrontation of two world views, and several specific statements, in one of which Hitler declared that the 'Jewish-Bolshevik intelligentsia (*Intelligenz*) would have to be 'eliminated' (*beseitigt*). According to Hitler, these tasks were so difficult that they could not be entrusted to the army. The war diary went on with Jodl's instructions to Warlimont for revising the draft in conformity with Hitler's 'guidelines.' One question to be explored with the Reichsführer-SS, said Jodl, was the introduction of SS and Police organs in the army's operational area. Jodl felt that such a move was needed to assure that Bolshevik chieftains and commissars be 'rendered harmless' without delay. In conclusion, Warlimont was told that he could contact the OKH about revisions, and that he was to submit a new draft for signature by Keitel on March 13, 1941. On the specific date, the revised directive was signed by Keitel."*

As his source, Hilberg cites: "Kriegstagebuch des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht (Wehrmachtführungsstab), edited by Percy Schramm and Hans Adolf Jacobsen (Frankfurt am Main, 1965), vol. I, pp. 340-42" (*ibid.*, fn 8, p. 283). In this work, we read in the above-mentioned "Hitler Guidelines" (Schramm 1982a, p. 341):

> *"This coming military campaign is more than a contest of arms; it is also leading to a conflict between two ideologies. In order to end this war, it's not enough, with all the vast areas involved, simply to smash the enemy armed forces. The entire area must be dissolved into states, with their own governments, with which we can conclude peace.* […] *Today's Russia is no longer even conceivable without the socialistic ideal. It alone can form the domestic political basis for the formation of new states and governments. The Jewish-Bolshevist intelligentsia, as the 'oppressor' of the people until now, must be eliminated. The former bourgeois-aristocratic intelligentsia, insofar as it is still present particularly among emigrants, must be ruled out as well."*

The document continues as follows:

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[104] *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*, Wehrmacht High Command

> *"In accordance with these guidelines of the Führer, the instructions must be amended as follows:*
> *The border fortifications may only extend to the areas of operation. Whether it will be necessary to deploy institutions of the* Reichsführer *SS in addition to the Secret Field Police must be examined with the* Reichsführer *SS. In favor of it is the necessity to render harmless immediately all Bolshevist warlords and commissars."*

According to Hitler's directives, the "Jewish-Bolshevik intelligentsia" would therefore have to be "eliminated" within the framework of a profound political rearrangement of the Soviet Union, more for the fact of being Bolshevist than for being Jewish; and in fact, the orders issued by Alfred Jodl in conformity with these Hitler directives placed the accent on the "Bolshevist warlords and commissars," rather than on a "*Jewish*-Bolshevist intelligentsia."

Hilberg then continues his narration (2003, Vol. 1, pp. 283, 287):

> *"The decisive paragraph was a statement informing the troop commanders that the Führer had charged the Reichsführer-SS with carrying out special tasks in the operational area of the army. Within the framework of these tasks, which were the product of a battle to the finish between two opposing political systems, the Reichsführer-SS would act independently and on his own responsibility. He was going to make sure that military operations would not be disturbed by the implementation of this task. Details would be worked out directly between the OKH and the Reichsführer-SS. As the start of operations, the border of the USSR would be closed to all nonmilitary traffic, except for police organs dispatched by the Reichsführer-SS pursuant to directive of the Führer. Quarters and supplies for these organs were to be regulated by OKH/GenQu (High Command of the Army/General Quartermaster – Wagner)."*

At this point Hilberg refers to a "Directive by OKW/L (signed Keitel), March 13, 1941, NOKW-2302."

Nevertheless, this directive speaks of "special tasks" (*Sonderaufgaben*) entrusted to Himmler by Hitler, but makes no mention at all of any "Jewish-Bolshevist intelligentsia" (Hitler's phrase), nor "Bolshevist warlords and commissars" (Jodl's wording), much less the Jewish population.

This directive added that the future struggle would be between two visions of the world:[105]

> *"In the area of operations of the army the Reichsführer SS is receiving special tasks for preparation of the political administration by order of the Führer, which arise from the terminal struggle between two opposing political systems. Within the framework of this task, the Reichsführer will act independently and on his own responsibility."*

In practice, any mention of "Jewish Bolshevism" simply vanished along the way between Hitler and Keitel.

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[105] PS-447. IMT, Vol. XXVI, p. 54. Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, "Kommissarbefehl und Massenexekutionen sowjetischer Kriegsgefangener," in: Buchheim *et al.*, pp. 166-169 (transcript of the document) and p. 167 (my citation).

On 26 March 1941, Heydrich and Göring had a talk on the "Solution of the Jewish question." The related document states:[106]

> *"The Reich Marshal spoke to me, saying, among other things, that for a deployment in Russia, a very short, 3- to 4-page instruction should be prepared for distribution among the troops. On the dangerousness of the GPU organizations, the political commissars, Jews, etc., so that they know in practice whom to put up against the wall."*

This vague directive, as shown by subsequent documents, was not referring to a policy of Jewish extermination, but rather to the extermination of the members of the Soviet state apparatus.

Discussing this document in its historical context, Götz Aly in fact reaches the conclusion "that Heydrich's considerations on the 'solution of the Jewish question' referred to the territory of the Soviet Union since March 1941 at the latest." He adds (Aly, pp. 271f.):

> *"Hence in March at the latest, parallel to the conceptual formulation of the later* Einsatzgruppen *of the Security Police and the Security Service, Heydrich prepared in the same context the deportation of all European Jews who lived west of the German-Soviet border of interests."*

This interpretation is also shared by Christian Streit, according to whom the expression "deportation to the East," in the summer and fall of 1941, "was usually used in its most literal sense: it meant the enforcement of the migration of all Jews to Siberia"; thus, in his opinion, not only were Western Jews to be deported, but Soviet Jews as well, after the leadership had been eliminated (Streit 2002, p. 107):

> *"Once the Einsatzgruppen had liquidated the Jewish leaders, it would be an easy task to push the Jewish masses east simply by showing what was in store for them if they chose to stay."*

In practice, the policy of deportation or evacuation and the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen* developed in a parallel and distinct manner.

On 30 March 1941, Hitler gave a speech at the Reich Chancellery to 250 senior officials who were to occupy administrative positions in the future Eastern campaign. Chief of General Staff Franz Halder noted in his diary (Streit 1997, p. 34):

> *"Struggle between two worldviews, each opposed to the other: devastating judgement of Bolshevism, equals asocial gangsterism. Communism monstrous danger for the future.* […]
> *Struggle against Russia: Destruction of the Bolshevist commissars and the Communist intelligentsia. The new states must be socialist states, but without their own intelligentsia. It will be necessary to prevent the formation of any new intelligentsia. A primitive socialist intelligentsia will be enough."*

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[106] Klein 1997, pp. 367f. The document is presented as "*Aktennotiz für Himmler über eine Unterredung Heydrichs mit Göring am 26.3.1941*."

The circle of the *Einsatzgruppen*'s predestined victims broadened progressively, but the center of gravity was always focused on Bolshevism, and later on partisans as well.

The order issued by the High Command of the Army on 28 April 1941 on the "Regulation of the deployment of the Security Police and Security Service in conjunction with the Army" explained the deployment assignments of the related *Sonderkommando*s in the zone of operations, but always *without* mention of Jews.[107] These directives were echoed to the letter in the already-mentioned "Fact sheet for the leaders of the *Einsatzgruppen* and *Einsatzkommandos* of the Security Police and SD for Operation 'Barbarossa,'" which is undated but positively was issued before 22 June 1941 (Angrick *et al.*, Doc. 4, p. 30; see text on p. 42).

On 19 May 1941, the *Wehrmacht* High Command promulgated the "Guidelines for the behavior of the troops in Russia" which opened with the following general ideological declaration (Hoppe/Glass, p. 120):

> *"Bolshevism is the mortal enemy of the National-Socialist German people. Germany's struggle is to defeat this subversive worldview and its carriers.*
> *This struggle demands a ruthless and energetic crackdown on Bolshevistic agitators, franc-tireurs, saboteurs, Jews and complete elimination of all active or passive resistance."* (Emphases in original)

On 17 June, Heydrich invited the heads of the *Einsatzgruppen* to Prinz-Carl-Palais at Berlin-Glienicke, but there are no written records of the meeting. On the 29th, in reference to the oral remarks at that meeting, he issued orders on the instigation of anti-Jewish pogroms:[108]

> *"No obstacle should be placed in the way of the self-cleansing efforts of anti-Communist or anti-Jewish groups in the newly-occupied territories. On the contrary, they should be provoked, but without leaving a trace; they should be intensified, if necessary, and guided in the right directions, without allowing these local 'self-protection groups' to be able to appeal to orders or political promises later.* […]
> *The formation of permanent self-protection squads with centralized leadership should be avoided at first; instead, local people's pogroms should be provoked, as described above."*

The directive was put into writing the next day and became *Einsatzbefehl No. 1*.

The thrust of these orders, according to Streit, is to be explained by the fact that Heydrich wanted an alibi "in case the murders met with opposition from the *Wehrmacht*" (Streit 2002, p. 105), because

> *"the wording of the agreement between Reinhard Heydrich and the Army Quartermaster General, General Eduard Wagner, of 26 March 1941, which laid down the rules for the activities of the Einsatzgruppen in the rear army group and army areas, did not permit them to execute all Jews summarily."* (*ibid.*, p. 104)

and Heydrich was reluctant to act without the full support of the *Wehrmacht*.

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[107] NOKW-2080, transcript in: Angrick *et al.*, Doc. 1, pp. 26f.
[108] YVA, O.53-3, p. 273. Cf. Klein 1997, pp. 325f.

On 20 June 1941, the headquarters of the 22nd Infantry Division issued orders on "Prisoner Interrogation, Captured Papers" which included the Jews as well:

> *"The Jews, and members of other nationalities and Party members, are specially marked in paybooks and card files. It is particularly important to register them, since most of them speak several languages and are more intelligent than the mass of prisoners. Predictably, the Jews are particularly numerous in all administrative positions and behind-the-lines services (field kitchens, canteens, etc.). Using them to help interrogate other prisoners may be very useful. The mass of Jews should be separated and treated according to Ic-Conference of 20 June 41."* (Hoppe/Glass, pp. 125f.; emphases in original)

On 2 July 1941, Heydrich sent the Higher SS and Police leaders appointed for deployment during Operation Barbarossa the "most important orders" which had been sent by him to the "*Einsatzgruppen* and *-kommandos* of the Security Police and the Security Service." First of all, he discussed the principal objectives to be pursued (Klein 1997, p. 325):

> *"Immediate objective of the overall mission is the political pacification, meaning most-essentially the pacification of the newly occupied territories by the Security Police. The final objective is the economic pacification."*

The attainment of these objectives would require a variety of measures, including executions, measures which regarded well-defined categories of persons:

> *"Persons to be executed include all officials of the Comintern (just as the professional Communist politicians as such), the higher, medium and lower-level officials of the Party, of the Central Committee, of the regional and district committees, People's Commissars, Jews in party and state positions, other radical elements (saboteurs, propagandists, snipers, assassins, agitators, etc)."*

unless they were useful for the reconstruction (*Wiederaufbau*) of the occupied territories.

A memorandum dated 16 July 1941 on a meeting among Hitler, Rosenberg, Lammers, Keitel and Göring regarding German designs on the Soviet Union contains the following consideration, which some interpret as a sort of a green light for the indiscriminate killing of women and children:[109]

> *"Now the Russians have issued an order for partisan warfare behind our front. This partisan war also has its advantage: it gives us the possibility of exterminating everybody who opposes us."*

Yitzhak Arad states that this document "indirectly" mentions the Jewish question and comments (Arad 1979, p. 270):

> *"Indeed, many reports about the execution of Jews in various places in the Soviet Union mention the sabotage activities of the Jews, either as partisans or giving assistance to such."*

But this contradicts Arad's own unfounded hypothesis that the "special tasks" assigned to Himmler and the SS on 14 March 1941 "in actual fact meant the total

[109] L-221. IMT, Vol. 38, p. 88.

liquidation of Soviet Jewry by the Special Task Force (*Einsatzgruppe*) of the Security Police, the SD and other SS units" (*ibid.*, pp. 268f.). The directive of 16 July referred, in fact, to partisan activities.

Not even *Einsatzbefehl* No. 8, drawn up on 28 June and promulgated on 17 July 1941 as "Guidelines for units of the Chief of the Security Police and the Security Service to be assigned to the PoW camps" permitted the indiscriminate extermination of Jews, although it does mention "all Jews" among the PoWs whom it was necessary to identify.[110] According to these directives,

> *"The task of the units is the political vetting of all camp inmates and the separation and further treatment of a) politically, criminally, or otherwise unacceptable elements among them, and b) of persons who can be useful in the reconstruction of the occupied territories."*

The categories of prisoners to be identified were as follows:

> *"First and foremost, the mission is to identify:*
> *– all important officials of the State and Party, particularly:*
> *– professional revolutionaries,*
> *– Comintern officials,*
> *– all important Party officials of the Soviet Communist Party, and their auxiliary organizations in the central committees, district and regional committees,*
> *– all people's commissars and their deputies,*
> *– all former political commissars in the Red Army,*
> *– leading personalities in the central or mid-level agencies of government authorities;*
> *– leading personalities in economic life,*
> *– the Soviet Russian intelligentsia,*
> *– all Jews,*
> *– all persons identified as firebrands or fanatical Communists.*
> *As already mentioned, it is no less important to identify all those persons who could be useful in the reconstruction, administration and management of the conquered Russian territories."*

The *Kommandos* for whom the above-mentioned directives were intended were to "identify" the prisoners in these categories; the RSHA was then to decide as to their fate, which *also* provided for executing them, called "special treatment" ("*Sonderbehandlung*"). The procedure to be followed was as follows:[111]

> *"Every week, the leader of the EK sends a short report to the Reich Security Main Office by teletype or express letter. The report should contain:*
> *1) A short description of the past week's activity,*
> *2) Number of persons to be definitively considered suspicious (giving a number is enough),*
> *3) Names of persons identified as*
> *– Comintern officials,*

[110] German text of the document in Buchheim *et al.*, Vol. 2, pp. 202-204.
[111] PS-502. IMT, Vol. 26, pp. 113f.

– *Important Party officials,*
– *People's Commissars,*
– *Political Commissars,*
– *leading personality* [sic]

with short description of their position

4) Number of persons to be identified as unsuspicious

a) Prisoners of war

b) Civilians

Based on these activity reports, the Reich Security Main Office will then promptly communicate the further measures to be taken."

The camps to which the order applied were *Oflag*[112] 52, 53, 56, 57, 60, 63, 68 and *Stalag*[113] 331 of Military District I and *Stalag* 307, 316, 319, 324 and 327 of the General Government[114] plus approximately twenty others in the territory of the Reich.[115]

These directives were subsequently summarized and updated in Mission Order No. 14 dated 29 October 1941, which referred to "Guidelines for units of the Chief of the Security Police and Security Service to be assigned to PoW and transit camps." The updating related to the "Guidelines for the separation of suspicious Soviet-Russian PoWs and civilian internees of the eastern campaign in the PoW and transit camps of the area behind the front." Bolshevism was National-Socialist Germany's mortal enemy; Bolshevik soldiers did not fight in conventional ways, but by all means possible; they were not, therefore, protected by the Geneva Convention, and had to be treated pitilessly and energetically. Regarding the categories of persons to be identified, Jews were mentioned in the following context:[116]

"8) Members of the Soviet intelligentsia and Jews, insofar as they are professional revolutionaries or politicians, writers, editors, Comintern officials etc."

That Jewish prisoners of war were not inevitably destined to be shot without prior screening is shown by the "Report on the inspection of the collection camp in Trawniki" dated 14 July 1941 (Blumental, p. 259):

"The collection camp for escapees and suspicious persons arrested by the Wehrmacht is located in Trawnicki [sic] *on an estate. The camp itself is in a secluded location and specially marked off. The overwhelming majority of camp inmates are Jews, including Russian political commissars and instigators, for whom a special area fenced in by barbed wire was set aside.*

The rest of the camp consists of Russians, Poles and also some 141 Ukrainians, separated from each other. There are currently a total of 676 camp inmates."

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[112] *Offizierslager*, PoW camp for officers.
[113] *Stammlager*, PoW camp for soldiers and NCOs.
[114] Annex 3 to *Einsatzbefehl* No. 8. YVA, O.53-3, p. 295.
[115] "*Verzeichnis der Lager im Reichsgebiet, in denen bereits sowjetrussische Kriegsgefangene untergebracht sind, oder die demnächst belegt werden*," 21 August 1941. YVA, O.53-3, p. 297.
[116] YVA, O.53-3, p. 321.

Before the beginning of the Russian Campaign, therefore, no general order to exterminate the Jews existed. If such an order was ever issued, it must have occurred in the following months, as Hillgruber assumed (1984, p. 226):

> *"Even if one were inclined to doubt the truthfulness of Otto Ohlendorf's testimony of 5 November 1945 before the Nuremberg Tribunal during the Trial of the Major War Criminals, and that of Dr. Walter Blume before the Nuremberg Tribunal during the 'Einsatzgruppen' Trial on 29 June 1947, according to which the secret order to shoot all the Jews was issued to the 'Einsatzgruppen' leaders in May 1941 – Heydrich furthermore is said to have declared, 'in a small group' before the leaders of the 'Einsatzgruppen' and 'Einsatzkommandos' 'that Eastern Jewry, in the Führer's opinion, is the reservoir of Bolshevism and must therefore be destroyed' – the very high numbers of Jews killed already during the very first few weeks of the campaign, as reported by the 'Einsatzgruppen' and HSSPF, are a very clear indication that the victims cannot have consisted 'only' of Jews in Party and governmental positions, but that, at least during the campaign in the summer and fall of 1941, there was an intention to kill all Jews in the German-occupied part of the Soviet Union right away, even if its realization posed problems which could hardly be solved, in view of the massive numbers involved."*

This point of view will be examined in the next subchapter.

2.4. Military Orders Concerning the Jews

The military orders provided for a unrelenting fight against Bolshevism and the Jews, but not for their extermination.

On 12 September 1941, *Generalfeldmarschall* Wilhelm Keitel, head of the *Wehrmacht* High Command, issued an order concerning "Jews in the newly occupied eastern areas," which stated:[117]

> *"The struggle against Bolshevism demands a ruthless, energetic crackdown, most of all also against the Jews, the main carriers of Bolshevism."*

This did not imply a policy of extermination, because the document continues as follows:

> *"All cooperation between the Wehrmacht and the Jewish population, whose attitudes are openly or covertly anti-German, as well as the use of individual Jews in any kind of preferred auxiliary services for the Wehrmacht must not occur. On no account are military agencies to issue ID cards for Jews permitting them to work for the Wehrmacht.*
>
> *The only exception to this rule relates to the use of Jews in especially assembled work gangs, to be deployed under German supervision only."*

A secret order from *Generalfeldmarschall* Walter von Reichenau dated 10 October 1941 with the subject "Conduct of the Troops in the Eastern Territory" began as follows:[118]

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[117] GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 34.

[118] NOKW-3411. TWC, Vol. XI, pp. 329f., Facsimile of the original; D-411. IMT, Vol. 35, pp. 84-86; UK-81. NCA, Vol. 8, pp. 585f.

> *"A number of unclear notions still exist regarding the behavior of the troops towards the Bolshevik system.*
> *The most important objective of the campaign against the Jewish-Bolshevik system is the total smashing of its instruments of power and the extirpation of its Asiatic influence in the European cultural environment. Tasks result from this that extend beyond the conventional, singular military tradition. A soldier in the eastern territories is not merely a fighter according to the rules of the art of war; rather, he is also the bearer of a relentless ethnic idea, and the avenger of all the atrocities inflicted upon the Germans and other ethnically related peoples. This is why the soldier must have an understanding of the necessity for the hard, but just punishment of Jewish sub-humanity. It has the further purpose of stifling in the bud any uprisings in our rear which, as experience shows, are always incited by Jews."*

The document then lists the various duties of the troops, and summarizes them as follows at the end:

> *"The terror of German counter-measures must be stronger than the threats by vestiges of Bolshevism lingering around. Before all future political considerations, the soldier must accomplish two things:*
> *1.) The complete eradication of all Bolshevik false teachings, as well as the Soviet state and its armed forces,*
> *2.) The merciless eradication of all ethnically alien treachery and cruelty, and thus the securing of the viability of the German armed forces in Russia.*
> *Only in this way can we live up to our historical mission of liberating the German people from the Asiatic-Jewish danger once and for all."*

Von Reichenau did not, therefore, order that German soldiers commit atrocities against the Eastern populations, as the document is tendentiously interpreted on occasion; rather, he recommended the prevention of Bolshevik atrocities through the protection of the German army.

On 20 November 1941, General Erich von Manstein wrote that the Jewish-Bolshevik system must be eradicated:[119]

> *"Jewry constitutes the middleman between the enemy in our rear and the still-fighting residues of the Red Army and the Red leadership. More-strongly so than in Europe, it occupies all the key points of political leadership and administration, of commerce and trade, and further constitutes the germ cell for all unrest and possible insurrection. The Jewish-Bolshevik system must be eradicated once and for all. Never again must it be permitted to encroach upon our European living space."*

2.5. Ghettoization and Use for Labor

Alfred Streim noted that

> *"not in accordance with the assumption of the disclosure of the 'Führer order' between the end of July and the end of August 1941, however, is the fact that, at*

[119] PS-4064. IMT, Vol. 34, p. 130.

> *that very time, the* Einsatzgruppen *reported the establishing of ghettos and the registration of Jews 'as ordered,' for ghettoization and registration do not point to exterminating people, but, rather, to keeping them alive."*

The contradiction could be explained by the argument that these were merely measures taken in preparation for subsequent execution, for which purpose it was necessary to register all the Jews beforehand (Streim 1985, p. 114).

Raul Hilberg also considers ghettoization to have been merely a phase preliminary to the actual killing (2003, Vol. 1, p. 355):

> *"The inadequacy of the first sweep necessitated an intermediary stage during which the first three steps of the destruction process – definition, expropriation, and concentration – would be implemented. In most of the occupied USSR, however, the usual order was reversed, for in the wake of the killings the bureaucrats thought first of ghettoization and only later of economic measures and definition. The initial concentrations were effected by the mobile units themselves. These ghettoizations were by-products of the killing operations in the sense that the Security Police were forced to defer the complete annihilation of certain communities,"*

either because the communities were too numerous, or due to economic implications.

However, it should be noted on the one hand that the ghettoization lasted well beyond the end of August 1941, and on the other hand that the declared purpose was the deployment of able-bodied Jews, who therefore were able to support those unable to work from the proceeds of their labor. This practice was adopted precisely in the Baltic countries, which, according to the *Einsatzgruppen* reports, experienced an almost total extermination of the local Jews.

The policy toward the Jews that was to be implemented in the occupied Eastern territories is clearly outlined in the "Brown Folder," dated 3 September 1941, and more-precisely in the paragraph reading "Guidelines for the Handling of the Jewish Question," which, due to its importance, I shall now present in full (Hoppe, Doc. 1, pp. 87f.):

> *"1. General Issues.*
> *All measures regarding to the Jewish question in the occupied territories in the East must be taken from the point of view that the Jewish question will be solved in a general way for the whole of Europe after the war. They must, therefore, be conceived as preparatory partial measures and must be coordinated with other decisions in this domain.*
> *On the other hand, the experience gathered in connection with the treatment of the Jewish question in the occupied eastern territories may have a bearing on the solution of the problem as a whole, as the Jews in these territories, together with those of the General Government, constitute the largest contingent of European Jewry.*
> *Any kind of purely vexatious actions, being unworthy of a German, are to be abstained from.*

Possible actions by the local populace against Jews should not be hindered, insofar as it is compatible with the need to maintain calm and order in the rear of the fighting troops. Activities by street thugs and other shady elements, who are merely interested in looting Jewish stores and in robbing Jewry for their own material gain, should be opposed harshly.

2. Population Status.

Jewry forms very different shares of the population in the individual Reich Commissariats and within them in the General Commissariats. For example, millions of Jews, locally resident for generations, live in Byelorussia and the Ukraine. In the central regions of the USSR, however, Jews moved in for the most part only during the Bolshevik era. The Soviet Jews who moved into Eastern Poland, the Western Ukraine, Western Byelorussia, the Baltic countries, Bessarabia and Bucovina in the wake of the Red Army in 1939 and 1940 represent a special group. Varying methods of treatment regarding these various groups may to some extent be appropriate.

Above all, the Jews who moved into the territories newly occupied by the Soviets in the last two years, insofar as they have not fled, are to be separated with severe measures. Since this group have earned the intense hatred due to their terror against the population, their separation for the most part has been taken care of by the local population simply upon the appearance of German troops. Such retaliatory measures are not to be opposed. The remaining resident Jewish population should first be registered by introducing compulsory registration. All Jews will be marked by visible insignias (yellow Jewish star).

3. Segregation from Other Population Groups.

One first main objective of the German measures must be to segregate Jewry strictly from the remaining population. Since the Bolshevik Revolution, Soviet Jewry, especially in the core regions of the USSR, has continually attempted to disguise itself in order to advance inconspicuously to ruling positions. To this end, numerous Jews have abandoned their Mosaic creed and have adopted Russian family, first and father's names. Orders are to be given that all name changes of Jews made during the life of the person subject to compulsory registration, or, insofar as known, among his ancestors, are to be reported and reversed. The same applies to individuals who left the Jewish religious community earlier and who converted to other creeds (often several times over). Smashing the Jewish camouflage will be easier in the Reich Commissariats East and Ukraine, where a larger part of Jewry has lived for generations, than in the other Reich Commissariats. Soviet archival material, insofar as extant, should be used for this.

Freedom of movement is to be eliminated immediately for all Jews. Transfer to ghettos is to be aimed at, which will be facilitated in Byelorussia and the Ukraine due to the availability of numerous more or less contiguous Jewish settlements. These ghettos can be granted Jewish self-administration with Jewish police. Guarding the borders between the ghettos and the outside world is entrusted to the Commissariat's police forces.

Further intermingling with the rest of the population, for example through weddings, business mergers, common cultural activities, etc. is to be prohibited. Ap-

propriate measures must be taken to ensure that Jewry is gradually eliminated from public life."

In September 1942, this text was reproduced in the "Green Folder," which established "Guideline for the economic administration of the newly occupied territories," a document more than 200 pages long, drawn up by the Economic Administration Staff East and distributed in a total of 6,000 copies.[120]

Already on May 7, 1941, an "Instruction for a Reich Commissar in Ukraine" had been issued, which provided for the following measures (PS-1028; IMT Vol. 26, pp. 567-573, here p. 571):

"After the Jews will have been expelled from all public places as a matter of course, The J e w i s h Q u e s t i o n will undergo a decisive solution by the establishment of ghettos or labor columns. ~~As far as the Jews have not been expelled by the Ukrainians themselves, the small communities will have to be accommodated in larger camps in order to be active in the same way through~~ compulsory labor is to be introduced [...[121]]*~~, as it is already being carried out in practice in Litzmannstadt.~~"*

On 13 August 1941, Hinrich Lohse, *Reichskommissar* for the Ostland, drew up a regulation titled "Preliminary guidelines for the treatment of the Jews in the area of the Reich Commissariat Ostland" which ordered, among other things:

"a) The countryside is to be cleansed of Jews.

b) The Jews are to be removed from all trade, but most urgently from all trade in agricultural products and other food products.

c) Jews are to be prohibited from residing in localities of economic, military or spiritual significance or in spas or health resorts.

d) Insofar as possible, the Jews are to be concentrated in cities or districts of large cities already possessing a predominantly Jewish population. Ghettos are to be established there. Leaving the ghettos is to be prohibited to them."

Regarding provisioning, the document says:

"In the ghettos, [the Jews] *should be left with only just as much food as the rest of the population can spare, but no more than is sufficient to meet the minimum needs of ghetto residents. The same applies to other vital commodities."*

Able-bodied Jews were to be compelled to perform forced labor, the wages for which were only paid in the form of subsistence "for the forced laborer and his family members unfit for work."[122]

Lohse stated (Hoppe/Glass, p. 528):

"These temporary guidelines are only intended to ensure minimum measures of the General or Regional Commissars where, and insofar as, further measures related to the final solution of the Jewish question are not possible,"

and also added (*ibid.*, p. 527):

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120 EC-347. IMT, Vol. 36, pp. 348f.; T/296 – PS-702.

121 Illegible handwritten word in the original, not mentioned in the IMT transcript.

122 PS-1138. IMT, Vol. 27, pp. 19-25. Original document in: GARF, 7445-2-145, pp. 22-27, which includes a handwritten annotation dated 13 August 1941.

> *"For the final solution of the Jewish question in the area of the Reich Commissar East, the instructions of my address in Kaunas of 27 July 41 apply."*

Hoppe and Glass, who provide their readers with a transcript of the document, inform us that no record of this speech has been found, but that Lohse made another speech on the same problem on 1 August 1941 at a meeting held by *Reichsminister* Rosenberg, during which he stated:[123]

> *"According to the Führer decision, the Germanization of the Reich Commissariat East is to be the final objective; the Jews are to be removed from these regions to the last man."*

EM No. 53 dated 15 August 1941 (from *Einsatzgruppe* A) informs us that (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 294):

> *"The Reich Commissar for the East in Kaunas has drawn up the draft of a decree on guidelines for the treatment of Jews in the region of the Reich Commissariat East and made it available to the Higher SS and Police leader for an opinion."*

Order No. 12 from "Department VII" (probably from *Feldkommandantur* 240) dated 28 August 1941 was already concerned with the "Establishing of Ghettos":

> *"The establishing of ghettos in towns with large Jewish shares of the population, particularly cities, should be undertaken when such establishing is necessary or at least expedient."*

The order did not apply if the situation in the territory of operations rendered it impracticable due to lack of means or due to the urgency of other requirements.[124]

A letter of the General Commissar in Kaunas dated 12 September 1941 to the directors of the employment agency in Kaunas, Vilnius, Siauliai and Panevezys required, among other things, the "registration and deployment of Jews."[125]

On 30 September 1941, the City Commissar of Vilnius, Hans Hingst, promulgated detailed "Guidelines for the deployment of Jewish labor units" regarding their registration, payment and assignment to certain jobs (pp. 510-510a).

On 15 October 1941, the head of the employment agency in Vilnius informed the Jewish Council in the ghetto (p. 558):

> *"The assignment of Jewish manpower from the ghetto to labor assignments is subject to the Vilnius Employment Agency alone."*

When, on 1 October 1941, a soldier forcibly withdrew a certain number of Jewish workers from the employment agency without permission, the head of the latter agency petitioned Government Advisor Dünbier that he be reprimanded (p. 504).

From a file memo of the Riga Regional Commissioner dated July 6, 1942, we learn that Jews were used for supervising Jewish workers during their deployment (PS-579):

> *"The Jewish police acquit themselves well in the daily deployment of some 4,000 Jews."*

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[123] Hoppe/Glass, p. 527, fn 3; the source given is: "*Besprechungsprotokoll der Sitzung bei Reichsminister Rosenberg am 1.8.1941 vom 5.8.1941*."

[124] YVA, O.53-131, p. 17.

[125] LCVA, R-626-1-14, p. 542; next three page numbers from there.

One of the first bodies to supervise the establishment of ghettos in the Ostland was the "Labor Department" of the "Economic Command for the Territory of Former Latvia." This is evidenced by a file memo dated 21 July 1941 on the subject of "Labor Deployment of Jews." There was a noticeable shortage of labor in Latvian agriculture, which endangered the harvesting of the beet crop. Since no prisoners of war were allowed to be used for this purpose, the conscription of Jews was considered. The proposal submitted by the "Economic Command" to mark the Jews, group them in a ghetto, form a Jewish Council and, together with this council, to organize the massive use of Jewish labor, was approved by the cognizant SS authorities. The use of these Jews was to be regulated by a labor office, and a card index was to be set up for their registration.[126]

The proposal was accepted and implemented. An undated letter, written before 15 October 1941, headed "Abt. IIa" (Department IIa of the Reich Commissariat East) and addressed to the Regional Commissioners of Riga City and County, Jelgava, Liepaja, Daugavpils, Valmiera and Velikiye Luki, issued directives on the "Establishing of ghettos, Jewish labor camps and labor deployment of the Jews. Registration and obligation to surrender Jewish assets." The document begins as follows:[127]

> *"To cleanse the countryside of Jews, the following measures must be taken, giving due consideration to local and, in particular, economic conditions. All Jews must be confined to ghettos, that is, in larger cities that already host a large number of Jews."*

This is followed by detailed instructions as to the organization of the ghetto – which was to enjoy "self-administration" under the supervision of a regional commissar – and on the "labor deployment of the Jews":

> *"In order to employ the Jews fit for labor at productive work, it is appropriate to set up an employment agency for Jewish workers. Any request for Jews for any kind of labor deployment has to go through this agency."*

The wages earned by the Jews were to be paid into an appropriate account of the Regional Commissar.

> *"The remuneration for the working Jews, however, is not to correspond to the actual work done. The regional commissar will establish the sums required to defray the necessary maintenance of all ghetto residents. The highest rate for the procurement of the necessary maintenance is equal to the locally existing social-security maintenance rate. For the other, non-working Jews, the maintenance will be defrayed out of the wages earned by the working Jews. To attain the stipulated living standard (support rate), the Council of Jewish Elders will attempt to make as many Jews available for work as possible. The regional commissar will establish the quantity of food required for all ghetto residents."*

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[126] YVA, O.18-103, pp. 4f.
[127] LVVA, P-69-1a-19, pp. 54-56.

If the workplace was located at a great distance from the ghetto, a labor camp could be set up. The Jews were required to report their pecuniary circumstances by the 15th of October.

During this period, the idea arose and was developed of creating a concentration camp in Latvia. On 20 October 1941, Otto-Heinrich Drechsler, the general commissar for the region, drew up a file memo in which he stated:[128]

> *"SS* Brigadeführer *Stahlecker visited me in my private quarters on 11 October 1941 and explained that, according to the desire of the Führer, a large concentration camp for Jews deported from the Protectorate and the Reich was to be set up in the region of Riga, Jelgava and Tukums. On that occasion, he asked me to help him in the procurement of the necessary materials. I sympathized with him in view of this situation, but explained that naturally everything would have to be done to fulfill the Führer's wish."*

A handwritten note informs us that the then head of *Einsatzkommando* 2 of *Einsatzgruppe* A, SS *Sturmbannführer* Rudolf Lange, communicated to Drechsler by phone that the camp was to be built 20 km from Riga, with a capacity of 25,000 inmates. The first inmates were scheduled to arrive on 10 November 1941. "A second camp for 25,000 [inmates] is to be built within the framework of the Minsk Ghetto."[128]

Surprisingly, the proposal to build a concentration camp was brought up by Lange, a subordinate of Stahlecker, leader of *Einsatzgruppe* A, who had allegedly received the order to exterminate all the Jews in the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*. In a file memo with the subject "Establishing a concentration camp in Latvia" dated 1 October 1941, he noted that, at the time, there were approximately 3,000 inmates in the prisons of Riga, but that there was no way to employ them for any useful work:[129]

> *"Already for this reason it therefore appears imperative to establish a concentration camp in order to enable a greater exploitation of the inmate labor force.*
> *Another aspect in favor of establishing a concentration camp in the vicinity of Riga is the fact that there are still approximately 23,000 Jews in Riga. Cramming the Jews into a ghetto can only be a transitional solution. The necessity will arise shortly to free up the dwelling space occupied by the Jews for other purposes. If possible, an effort must also be made to put 100% to work all the male and female Jews who have been put only partially to work by armed forces agencies etc. Finally, the ghetto offers no possibility of preventing their continued procreation."*

The camp location would have to meet certain requirements, and Lange occupied himself with these as well:

> *"The land in the triangle between Riga, Jelgava and Tukums meets all these requirements. It is rather thinly settled countryside."*

Lange had inspected it on 27 September. The small farmhouses in the zone could form the nucleus for the construction of the camp. The territory was rich in tim-

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[128] YIVO, Occ. E 3-29.
[129] RGVA, 504-2-8, pp. 148-150.

ber, and the inmates could be employed in the extraction of peat, which was abundant. It was also possible to produce electricity for Riga using peat instead of coal. The territory permitted agriculture and animal husbandry. The camp could have absorbed the brick factories along the road from Jelgava to Tukums. In closing, Lange described the significance and scope of his proposal:

> *"Already now it can be said that the earmarked region offers so many possibilities that all the Jews remaining in Riga and even all of Latvia could be concentrated there. When so doing, the male Jews would have to be housed separately from the females right from the start to prevent any further procreation. Children under 14 will have to remain with the women."*

Lange's view of the future was therefore totally incompatible with the prospect of extermination allegedly ordered by his superior, Stahlecker.

At Berlin, Lange's proposal was amended based on the planned deportation of Jews from the Reich into Latvia, resulting in the concentration camp at Salaspils, but this does not alter the fact that the initial concept was in contradiction to any policy of extermination.

The response of the commissar of the Riga District to the above-mentioned directives of the *Reichskommissar Ostland* on the "Establishing of ghettos, Jewish labor camps and labor deployment of the Jews" is known: In a letter of 20 October 1941, he describes the measures undertaken by the civil administration of Latvia:[130]

> *"1. Registration of all Jews for enumeration and personal recording in special reporting office.*
> *2. Marking of all full-blooded Jews with Star of David and imposition of individual prohibitions and regulations, for example, use of public transportation, possibility of presence in public, etc.*
> *3. Obligation to work for all Jews fit for work, both male and female.*
> *4. Appointment of a Jewish Council of Elders, to whom the responsibility for the entire Jewish community and the administration thereof shall be transferred.*
> *5. Preliminary work on the establishment of a ghetto in the district of the Moscow suburbs."*

Particular attention is given to the "Region of Riga City":

> *"A Jewish problem as such exists only in the area of the City Commissariat in Riga. According to the registration carried out so far, approximately 30,000 Jews could be recorded. The establishing of the ghetto in the Moscow suburbs is nearing completion. The last Jew will have disappeared from the cityscape by 1 November 1941. The Aryans residing in this part of the city pose a particular difficulty when establishing the ghetto. The number of Aryans living in the Moscow suburbs amounted to 7,000. A Jewish security service, equipped with rubber billy clubs, was set up to maintain calm and order in the ghetto. The ghetto residents take care of their affairs by way of self-administration. The Jewish council of elders set up by the military administration was maintained for this purpose. This*

[130] GARF, 7445-2-145, pp. 44-46.

council of elders also takes care of the traffic between the ghetto and the German agencies.
The labor deployment of the Riga Jews and the residents of the Riga Ghetto is coming along extraordinarily well. Preparatory measures taken by the labor office were already taken in order to take individual working Jews out of the military agencies. Insofar as possible, Jews are to be employed by the armed forces only where Latvian workers
a) cannot be deployed and
b) are not available.
Apart from that, the forestry service and the supervisory authorities for the supply of heating fuel make efforts to employ larger contingents of male Jews. These are then housed separately from their wives in labor camps."

A file memo dated 27 October 1941 reveals that Lohse had called a meeting on the 24th of that month at which *Generalkommissar* Drechsler and SS *Sturmbannführer* Lange were present. The latter had stated that he had acted "merely on Heydrich's orders"; Heydrich had urged haste because the first transport of Jews was already scheduled for the 10th of November.[131] Lange further explained that so far

"only a few trees had been felled to make room for roads, and a construction shack had been erected. Substantial work had not yet been done to establish the camp, so that other provisions could still be made about the establishment of the camp without loss."

That the "other provisions" that could be made referred to shooting or gassing of Jews from the Reich, as is occasionally asserted, is utterly unsupported.

On 20 November, the general commissar in Riga sent the Reich commissar for the East a detailed report on the three ghettos in Latvia. There were 29,602 Jews in Riga, including 5,652 "children up to the age of 14," 2,794 boys and 2,858 girls. There were 15,650 Jews fit for work between the ages of 15 and 65, consisting of 6,143 men and 9,507 women. There were 8,300 unemployable Jews, consisting of 2,069 men and 6,231 women. The ghetto at Liepaja had a population of 3,890 Jews, including 782 "children up to the age of 14," 409 boys and 373 girls; there were 3,002 Jews fit for work aged between 15 and 65 (617 men and 2,385 women), and 106 unemployable Jews (29 men and 77 women). At Daugavpils there were 935 Jews, 173 of them up to the age of 14 (86 boys and 87 girls), 719 Jews fit for work aged between 15 and 65 (298 men and 421 women), plus 14 unemployable Jews (10 men and 4 women).[132]

On 27 August 1942, the Reich commissar for the East, Lohse, sent the general commissars for Riga, Kaunas and Minsk a letter on the administration of the Jewish ghettos, in which he pointed out the following:[133]

"The establishing of the ghetto is a political measure. Responsibility for it lies with the political division. Apart from establishing the ghetto, the administration

[131] YVA, O.18-155.
[132] LVVA, P-69-1a-19, pp. 21-27.
[133] YVA, O.53-1, p. 19.

> *also includes maintaining it and the means for the maintenance of the Jews' working strength (food and clothing, structural improvements in the ghetto)."*

The "working strength of the Jews" was considered an "accumulated asset."

On 25 September 1942, Lohse informed the general commissars for Riga, Tallinn (German: Reval), Kaunas and Minsk:[134]

> *"In the interests of maintaining the Jews' ability to work, I request that care be taken to hold back and store, out of the accumulated Jewish assets, sufficient quantities of laundry, clothing, shoes and other objects necessary for bare sustenance."*

These measures were intended to avoid "jeopardizing the future labor deployment of the Jews due to a lack of the necessary equipment."

On 8 August 1941, *Reichsminister* Fritz Todt promulgated an "ordinance" on the "Deployment of the Organization Todt in the occupied territories." The aim was the formation of units of the Organization Todt to improve the road system in Russia. The "OT I" was responsible for providing logistical assistance to combat troops. The "OT II" was subdivided into three "lines" responsible for road construction: the first, directed by the engineer Helmut Thiele, was to concern itself with "Thoroughfare XII from the former German Reich border near Taurage through Riga-Pskov and/or Tartu in the direction of Petersburg," in addition to Thoroughfare XIIa, which was to link Ostrov with Pskov; Line 2, headed by the engineer Grimm, was assigned to Thoroughfare IX, while Line 3 was entrusted to Director of Construction Office Spörl, who was to build Thoroughfare VII and VIII.[135]

These ambitious projects required large amounts of manpower. On 7 December 1942, Deployment Group Russia North of the Organization Todt had 48,649 workers, including 2,580 Jews.[136]

Angrick lists at least 20 camps in the central Ukraine alone, deploying Jews for Thoroughfare IV (Angrick, pp. 210f.), at least 25,000 of whom are said to have died (*ibid.*, p. 213), which means that the total number of Jews working there must have been far greater than that.

Other fragmentary bits of information confirm the use of Jews for their labor in these construction projects. For instance, a message intercepted by the British in very early 1942 said:[137]

> *"The regional commissars in Letishev, Stara-Konstantinov, Kaspopol, Sarny, and Vladimir-Volinsk were asked to provide 400 male Jews each, for a total of 2000, for urgent work on bridge construction."*

The *Deutsche-Ukraine Zeitung* No. 89 of 6 May 1942 reported the following news item with reference to Shepetovka:[138]

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[134] *ibid.*, p. 234.
[135] LCVA, R-1368-1-1, pp. 1-3.
[136] LVVA, P-752-2-1, p. 242.
[137] TNA, HW 16-6. Summary of messages intercepted between 15 January and 15 February 1942. ZIP/SMGP 33/17.3.42, p. 11.
[138] YVA, O.53-138, p. 2.

> *"A Jewish labor unit is at work building roads and stone bridges. A 19 km long road is being built from Sch. to Berezdov."*

2.6. The "*Führerbefehl*"

As early as the early 1970s, orthodox Holocaust historiography made a clear distinction between the fate of the Western Jews and that of the Eastern Jews under National-Socialist German rule. Already in 1961, Raul Hilberg summarized his position in these brief sentences (Hilberg 1961, p. 177):

> *"Basically, we are dealing with two of Hitler's decisions. One order was given in the spring of 1941, during the planning of the invasion of the USSR; it provided that small units of the SS and Police be dispatched to Soviet territory, where they were to move from town to town to kill all Jewish inhabitants on the spot. This method may be called the 'mobile killing operations.' Shortly after the mobile operations had begun in the occupied Soviet territories, Hitler handed down his second order. That decision doomed the rest of European Jewry. Unlike the Russian Jews, who were overtaken by mobile units, the Jewish population of central, western, and southeastern Europe was transported to killing centers."*

The theory of the two-fold extermination order became an indispensable cornerstone of the whole orthodox narrative, since it left every historian free to choose whatever dating system seemed best suited their agenda.

In the second edition of the same work published 24 years later, the two alleged Hitler "decisions" are no longer mentioned; Hilberg amended the above passage as follows (Hilberg 1985, p. 273; 2003, p. 276):

> *"The annihilation phase consisted of two major operations. The first was launched on June 22, 1941, with the invasion of the USSR. Small units of the SS and Police were dispatched to Soviet territory, where they killed Jewish inhabitants on the spot. Shortly after these mobile killings had begun, a second operation was instituted, in the course of which the Jewish populations of central, western and southeastern Europe were transported to camps equipped with gassing installations."*

Historians inherited the "*Führerbefehl"* from the Otto Ohlendorf Trial, in which it played a crucial role, as noted by Earl:

> *"The court believed that there was an order issued by Hitler to liquidate civilians and that it was given to the leadership of the Einsatzgruppen before the invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941. Importantly, the court also believed that this order explained the defendants' criminal actions; the Führerbefehl was the reason these men were on trial for crimes against humanity. No Hitler, no crime.* […]
>
> *The defense lawyers cite the order to justify and excuse the behavior of their clients in Russia; it was their defense. The judge and the prosecutor also saw it as integral to the trial because they believed it was the directive that was at the heart of Hitler's racial war against the Jews."* (Earl, pp. 147, 186f.)

It remained an undemonstrated supposition which was nonetheless accepted, because it suited both the prosecution and the defense in the same way (*ibid.*, p. 94):

> *"Not only did the prosecutors fail to prove that the defendants were party to, or even knew about Hitler's Final Solution, but there was also no attempt to show that the murders they did participate in constituted a systematic Russian- or European-wide program of murdering Jews."*

Initially, the historiographical debate on the alleged extermination order issued to the *Einsatzgruppen* was not very heated: it was merely a question of determining whether the presumed order was issued before the beginning of Operation Barbarossa or afterwards. I shall concern myself with this question in the paragraphs below.

Debate among orthodox Holocaust historians on the presumed order to exterminate the European Jews, by contrast, was more heated; after a clumsy series of conjectures of all kinds they eventually adopted Christian Gerlach's hypothesis that "the decision to 'exterminate the Jews in Europe' must have been made after December 7 and before December 14, 1941" (Gerlach 1998, p. 784).

But even this conjecture, like the others, is completely unfounded, as I have shown elsewhere.[139] What is important here is the fact that even Gerlach sticks to the above-mentioned dichotomy, although he does not take a clear position on the order allegedly issued to the *Einsatzgruppen*, with regard to which he limits himself to saying (Gerlach 1998, pp. 761f.):

> *"In the occupied territories of the Soviet Union, immediately following the German invasion of June 22, 1941, a systematic destruction of Jews began with the murder of men of military age. The executions were carried out by special mobile 'task forces' (Einsatzgruppen) of the Security Police and the Security Service (SD), by police battalions, by brigades of the Armed SS (Waffen-SS), and, to a more limited extent, by rear guard units of the army. Beginning in August and September of 1941, women and children were also included. Beginning in September and October, entire Jewish communities were liquidated, initiating the phase of total destruction."*

He then summarizes the dominant positions of orthodox Holocaust historians:

> *"The point of transition to a policy of exterminating the Jewish people, or the initial preparations for it, can thus be clearly seen in a number of occupied territories and regions beginning in September and October of 1941.* […] *In the context of these developments, most historians have hitherto equated the decision to deport German Jews with the decision to liquidate them. At the most, it is assumed that there were two separate decisions. One, involving the execution of Soviet Jews, would have occurred in July or August of 1941. The second, concerning the extermination of Jews from the rest of Europe, is supposed to have been reached in September or October of that year."* (*ibid.*, pp. 763f.)

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[139] Mattogno/Kues/Graf, Chapter 5, "The Führer Order and the Alleged NS Extermination Policy," pp. 166-377.

His contribution, as I have mentioned above, is in having propounded a Führer "decision" in December 1941.

The problem of the two-fold order (or double decision) therefore remains open: why didn't Hitler issue a single extermination order valid for all Jews without distinction? Why were two orders required? Even orthodox Holocaust historians admit that, at least at the beginning, the fate of the European Jews was quite distinct from that of the Soviet Jews. As Browning put it as early as 1982:

> *"In deciding to kill all the Russian Jews, Hitler broke the vicious circle which meant that, with each new military success, an ever-increasing number of Jews ended up under German rule. The Nazi Jewish policy in the rest of Europe was not immediately transformed, however. They continued to speak of emigration, expulsion and plans for future reinstallation.* […] *In February 1942, the Minister of Foreign Affairs officially abandoned the Madagascar plan. Preparations for the murder of the Jews did not therefore produce any immediate repercussions on Nazi Jewish policies in other countries. The idea of the Final Solution for the European Jews was formed by means of a separate process and resulted from a distinct decision."* (Browning 1985, p. 198)

More than a decade later, Dieter Pohl reiterated (1993, p. 98):

> *"Although the order to kill Jewish women and children en masse as well was presumably issued to the* Einsatzgruppen *at the same time – end of July/beginning of August – the plan for the total extermination of all European Jews was not as yet predetermined by this."*

These considerations supply the response to the second question which I set forth above: if the presumed extermination of the European Jews required a separate decision and a distinct order, then the Soviet Jews were not killed because of their religion or race, but because they were *Soviet* Jews, hence within the general context of the struggle against Bolshevism. The Hitlerian concept of "Jewish Bolshevism," which had already emerged in *Mein Kampf* (see Hillgruber 1987, pp. 105-107), always remained at the center of Hitler's world view.

The day of the attack on the Soviet Union, 22 June 1941, the Führer issued a *Proclamation to the German People* in which he declared as follows, among other things:

> *"It was not Germany that ever attempted to export its National-Socialist world view to Russia, but the Jewish-Bolshevist rulers in Moscow have incessantly attempted to force their rule upon our people, and the other European peoples, and this not only intellectually, but above all militarily and through power politics. This regime's activity has only resulted in chaos, misery and starvation in all countries."* (Domarus, Vol. II, 2nd half-volume 1941-1945, p. 1727)

At the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial, the defense introduced an "expert legal opinion" by Dr. Reinhard Maurach, professor of criminal law and eastern-European law, in which Point "C" regarded Germany's war against the Soviet Union. He noted, first of all, that the clash between these two powers was, and could only ever be, ideological (TWC, Vol. IV, p. 346):

> *"The enemy was not a state securely linked to the community of nations consisting of one nation or a self-sufficient union of nations, but rather an ideology that considered the state it had created only as one of the vehicles of its power, that basically denied the forms of existence of other nations and states, and which had unmistakably shown in all of its assertions of power up to the outbreak of the war that it would not consider the coming conflict merely as a 'war', i. e., as an armed conflict that would be waged according to certain minimum international rules, but that over and beyond this it was determined to fight it out without regard to basic agreements and with every means at its disposal. All persons in authority in both the German and the Soviet Russian camps were well aware, even before it began, that the war in the East could not be considered a 'normal war.'"*

In this context, the killing of Jews – unjustifiable from the objective point of view – had to be considered from the subjective point of view (*ibid.*, p. 347):

> *"General extermination measures cannot be justified by any war situation, no matter how exceptional; therefore we must examine to what extent they could have seemed necessary subjectively. And this leads us to the question of the relationship of bolshevism and Judaism (a) in reference to National-Socialist ideology and (b) in reference to the conceptions of the defendants themselves."*

In this regard, Dr. Maurach wrote (*ibid.*, p. 351):

> *"As a result of the historical sociological study of Russia during the past decades it has been established beyond doubt that the percentage of the Jewish population in political, cultural, and economic key positions within the Soviet Union is in fact an extremely high one.*
>
> *These findings were not only the result of inquiries by Germans and Russian emigrants but also, at least until about 1934, by Soviet Russian inquiries. But even according to the Soviet statistical system which is reducing the Jewish percentage, it is established that the percentage of the Jewish population in the aforementioned key positions exceeded their numerical strength (about 4-5 percent of the total population) by a considerable margin on the average. Individually the Jewish participation fluctuated and fluctuates in various offices, economic enterprises, and organizations, according to rank and positions. However, on the basis of Soviet statistics it is possible to establish in general that the share of the Jews was the greater, the more influential the office was, politically or economically, and the more influence was attributed to the bearer of the office (de facto if not de jure).*
>
> *The infiltration of Jews into official positions amounted to about 20 percent on the average at the time the statistics were made; the percentage was considerably higher in Party positions, the average of which fluctuated considerably. Thus, the Ministry of Foreign Trade with its representations abroad can be called a Jewish domain to an especially high degree. This can be applied in a similar way to the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry for National Security, and to the majority of the Economic Ministries; the Jewish percentage within the armed forces is especially large in the so-called political administration. Here the Jewish infiltration into the higher key positions comes up to 65 percent.*

> *We have seen* […] *that the National-Socialist ideology was rashly prepared to regard this circumstance as a conclusive, if not decisive, proof for the fact that bolshevism was a Jewish invention and was only serving the interests of Jewry."*

In this regard, however, according to Maurach, the National-Socialist ideology had confused the effect with the cause. Initially, Russian Jewry gathered around two principal organizations: the Zionist groups, who were anti-Soviet, and the Bund, with the Menshevik platform. With the passage of time, a great number of Jews, who belonged predominantly to the intellectual classes, infiltrated the Soviet bureaucratic apparatus, and it was precisely "this opportunism, and not an ideological and fateful link between Judaism and Bolshevism, which explains the great Jewish influence within state and party" (*ibid.*, p. 352).

But German soldiers, as they gradually penetrated Soviet territory, became increasingly aware of the preponderance of Jews in the Soviet state apparatus, and took this as confirmation that the theory of "Jewish Bolshevism" proclaimed by National Socialism was a fact of life (*ibid.*, p. 353).

Beginning at the end of July 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* C, stationed at Zhitomir at the time, reported:[140]

> *"Many Jews, particularly the intelligentsia, are as active as they possibly can be as informants and spies for the NKVD. They receive quite preferential treatment from the Soviet authorities. They were employed primarily as administrative employees, warehouse managers, kolkhozes and sovkhozes (80% of the Soviet officials in the Zhitomir Region were Jews). In administrating their religion, the Soviet officials hardly caused them any problems at all. In contradistinction to the Orthodox churches, their synagogues were always available to them for practicing their religious rituals. Among the Jews, there is still the hope that the Bolsheviks will return in the shortest time. Based on the attitude of the Jewish population under Bolshevik rule, the population, apart from a few exceptions, is emphatically anti-Semitic."*

A few days later, a report stated:[141]

> *"The prevailing role in the life of the people is played by the Bolshevik Party, whose main carriers are the Jews. Apart from a few exceptions, the Jews were also the sole beneficiaries of the system. Leading positions were almost without exception occupied by Jews. They exercised absolute power and enjoyed wide-ranging economic liberties.* […] *Jews, insofar as they did not belong to the Party, were raised from the masses to leading positions through promotion by their racial comrades."*

The Jews were consequently considered "a factor of disruption of the very worst kind."[142]

In EM No. 81 dated 12 September 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* C declared:[143]

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[140] Mallmann 2011 *et al.*; p. 201. EM No. 31, dated 23 July 1941.
[141] *Ibid.*, p. 218; EM No. 40, dated 1 August 1941.
[142] *Ibid.*, p. 439; EM No. 80, dated 11 September 1941.
[143] *Ibid.*, p. 451; EM No. 81, dated 12 September 1941.

> *"Experiences made confirm the earlier claim that the Soviet state was a Jewish state of the purest water."*

It should therefore be quite clear, explained *Einsatzgruppe* C,[144]

> *"that the German people are not conducting this war against the peoples of the USSR, but rather exclusively against Jewish Bolshevism."*

This conception also appears quite clearly in other private, non-propagandistic reports, such as that from the commander of the Security Police in Minsk, Burkhardt, of January 1942 (Hoppe, Doc. 50, pp. 176-178):

> *"In the areas of Byelorussia that were Bolshevik even before the Russo-Polish war, living conditions for lower-class Jews were the same as in the Polish sector. Here as well, there were decidedly poor Jewish areas of settlement. Since the nationalized economy in Russia didn't offer Jews anywhere near the same possibilities as in other countries, the Jews strived to gain decisive influence over the state apparatus itself and the Communist Party.*
>
> *Particularly desirable, of course, were the true Soviet power centers, the Central Committees of the Party and the Politburos. The extent to which leading Party positions were infiltrated by Jews, is shown by the following figures: With 1.77% of the total population, Jewry accounted for 5.2 % of all Party members, the Jews were represented with 25.7% in the Central Committee of the Party, and with 38.8% in the Politburo, a figure which rose to 42.9% by the close of the Lenin era. These figures are averages for the entire territory of Soviet Russia. With this one has to keep in mind that in a territory with a large and very dense Jewish population, such as Byelorussia, the percentage was much higher.* […]
>
> *Even the attitude of the Jews themselves is completely different in the two parts of Byelorussia. While in the former Polish territory the Jew was persecuted for untold ages and was therefore reluctant to take center stage, even in recent years, the Soviet Jew, in the 25 years of Soviet rule, adopted an extraordinarily self-confident and arrogant attitude, which he maintained even after the invasion by German troops. Only the solution to the Jewish question as initiated by the Security Police and Security Service was capable of bringing about changes here.* […]
>
> *This is contrasted by the fact that it is precisely Jewry that continues to be the most reliable carrier of the Bolshevik ideal, and will continue to be. A dramatic increase in Russian resistance and partisan activity is also noted in all the regions with Jewish settlements. Even if the Jew does not himself become active as a partisan or proceed against the Germans due to his racially determined character features, he still supports resistance forces by supplying them with information, clothing, etc."*

Maurach's interpretation does not appear more justified than the National-Socialist interpretation, since it is possible that it is Maurach's interpretation which mistakes effect for cause; a 1943 German brochure explains that (Leibbrandt, p. 33):

> *"*[…] *in 1903, there was a split in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks ('menshinstvo' – minority). It is charac-*

[144] *Ibid.*, p. 609; EM No. 100 of 1 October 1941.

teristic that – as long as the outcome of the Revolution was still unclear – Jews held leading positions in every political party in Russia. In 1905, Jewry's hour appeared to have come. The chairman of the Revolutionary Committee in Riga was a Jew, a second Jew raged in Liepaja, and Bronstein-Trotsky was chairman of the Worker Soviet in Petersburg. But the Czar was not overthrown.

All the Jewish activity in the Czarist state aimed at the collapse of the state, the elimination of the anti-Semitic ruling class, and the creation of preliminary conditions for Jewish rule in Eastern Europe on the path to world domination by Jewry sprang from the so-called 'Ahadha'amistic' movement, led by Ascher Ginzberg. After Ginzberg's move from Odessa to London, Ahadha'amism became the foundation for world Zionism, the leadership of which became the general staff of the Jewish campaign against the rest of the world.

Czarism collapsed in February 1917. Jewry triumphed with the abolition of the exemption clause on 3 April. Seven months later (7 November 1917), Lenin took power, with 6 Jews, 1 Russian, 1 Pole and 1 Georgian at his side."

This position, at least with regard to Bolshevism, coincided with that expressed by Winston Churchill in 1920. He distinguished between nationalist Jews, whose behavior was unexceptionable, and internationalist Jews, guilty of organizing a "world-wide conspiracy" (Churchill 1920, p. 5):

"In violent opposition to all this sphere of Jewish effort rise the schemes of the International Jews. The adherents of this sinister confederacy are mostly men reared up among the unhappy populations of countries where Jews are persecuted on account of their race. Most, if not all, of them have forsaken the faith of their forefathers, and divorced from their minds all spiritual hopes of the next world. This movement among the Jews is not new. From the days of Spartacus-Weishaupt to those of Karl Marx, and down to Trotsky (Russia), Bela Kun (Hungary), Rosa Luxembourg (Germany), and Emma Goldman (United States), this world-wide conspiracy for the overthrow of civilization and for the reconstitution of society on the basis of arrested development, of envious malevolence, and impossible equality, has been steadily growing. […]

There is no need to exaggerate the part played in the creation of Bolshevism and in the actual bringing about of the Russian Revolution, by these international and for the most part atheistical Jews, it is certainly a very great one; it probably outweighs all others. With the notable exception of Lenin, the majority of the leading figures are Jews. Moreover, the principal inspiration and driving power comes from the Jewish leaders. Thus Tchitcherin, a pure Russian, is eclipsed by his nominal subordinate Litvinoff, and the influence of Russians like Bukharin or Lunacharski cannot be compared with the power of Trotsky, or of Zinovieff, the Dictator of the Red Citadel (Petrograd) or of Krassin or Radek – all Jews. In the Soviet institutions the predominance of Jews is even more astonishing. And the prominent, if not indeed the principal, part in the system of terrorism applied by the Extraordinary Commissions for Combating Counter-Revolution has been taken by Jews, and in some notable cases by Jewesses. The same evil prominence was obtained by Jews in the brief period of terror during which Bela Kun ruled in Hungary. The same phenomenon has been presented in Germany (especially in

> *Bavaria), so far as this madness has been allowed to prey upon the temporary prostration of the German people. Although in all these countries there are many non-Jews every whit as bad as the worst of the Jewish revolutionaries, the part played by the latter in proportion to their numbers in the population is astonishing."*

Churchill concluded with this appeal to the nationalist Jews:

> *"It is particularly important in these circumstances that the national Jews in every country who are loyal to the land of their adoption should come forward on every occasion, as many of them in England have already done, and take a prominent part in every measure for combating the Bolshevik conspiracy. In this way they will be able to vindicate the honor of the Jewish name and make it clear to all the world that the Bolshevik movement is not a Jewish movement, but is repudiated vehemently by the great mass of the Jewish race."*

But even assuming Maurach's interpretation to be completely valid, there remains the fact that the National-Socialist vision of the world perceived the problem to be real, and thus, while it does not justify the massacres committed by the *Einsatzgruppen*, it at least permits an understanding of their motive, *i.e.*, the view that Eastern Jews were the architects and supporters of Bolshevism. The massacres were not, therefore, directed against Jews as such, but against Jews as Jewish-Bolsheviks.

The statements made on 13 January 1949 by Walter Blume, ex SS *Standartenführer* and head of *Sonderkommando* 7a of *Einsatzgruppe* B, with regard to the conference in Pretzsch, to which I shall return later, disregarding the presumed extermination order for now, no doubt provide an accurate picture of the ideological framework of the National-Socialist leaders. He recalled that on that occasion, Heydrich

> *"disclosed to us that the concentration of men and leaders occurred because now the Russian Campaign lay immediately before us, and that we, in the context of this war, have the security-police task of securing the operations of the armed forces with regard to the security of the troops in the territory that they just rolled through. He spoke of the great spaces which remained unsecured, of the highways, and mentioned the partisans in particular which had to be expected, and in connection with unsafe elements, which could or would become a danger for the armed forces, he named Eastern Jewry in particular.*
>
> [Question] *What did he say about Eastern Jewry in particular?*
>
> [Answer] *I have used the wording that is somehow stuck in my memory, that eastern Jewry was the intellectual reservoir of world Bolshevism, and that for this reason, a military victory over Russia would not mean the end of Bolshevism as long as eastern Jewry still existed. This is why Eastern Jewry must be destroyed."*[145]

This, as noted above, explains the otherwise inexplicable Holocaustian theory of the two-fold decision and two-fold order.

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[145] YVA, O.53-141, pp. 54f.

This is, by the way, the interpretation of Jewish historian Arno J. Mayer, who has written (Mayer, p. 270):

> *"*Ab origine *and in the first place, the Wehrmacht and its associated armies were fighting to defeat the Red Army, to conquer Russian territories, to destroy the Soviet regime, and to extirpate Bolshevism. The Jews became the chosen civilian victims of this furious total war. Political and politicized soldiers of Barbarossa fell upon them because they considered the Jew the primary carrier of the Bolshevik system and ideology—and because they were more vulnerable than other real or imagined carriers. This crusade within the war became ever more vicious and systematic with the unanticipated blockage and soaring ferocity of the military campaign.*
>
> *Even so, and notwithstanding the unparalleled magnitude of the Jewish suffering, the extermination of eastern Jewry never became the chief objective of Barbarossa. The fight for* Lebensraum *and against bolshevism was neither a pretext nor an expedient for the killing of Jews. Nor was it a mere smoke screen to disguise the Jewish massacres as reprisals against partisans. The assault on the Jews was unquestionably intertwined with the assault on bolshevism from the very outset. But this is not to say that it was the dominant strand in the hybrid 'Judeobolshevism' that Barbarossa targeted for destruction. In fact, the war against the Jews was a graft onto or a parasite upon the eastern campaign, which always remained its host, even or especially once it became mired deep in Russia.*
>
> *When they set forth on their mission, the Einsatzgruppen and the RSHA were not given the extermination of Jews as their principal, let alone their only, assignment."*

The "Guidelines for the Military Securing and Maintenance of Law and Order in the East" dated 25 September 1941, which have as their subject "Jews in the newly occupied Eastern territories," refer to Field Marshal Keitel's order of 12 September and clearly explain the National-Socialist position:[146]

> *"The struggle against Bolshevism demands a ruthless and energetic crackdown first and foremost also on the Jews, the principal carriers of Bolshevism."*

This therefore required the prevention of any "collaboration" between the *Wehrmacht* and the Jewish population and the use of Jews for important auxiliary tasks. They could only be used in "labor units" under German supervision.

"Judeo-Bolshevism" in the *Einsatzgruppen* reports is treated as a proven fact, a simple observation based on experience.

In the National-Socialist politico-ideological conception, "Judeo-Bolshevism" was, therefore, not just a pretext for the commission of genocide for racial motives. If the *Einsatzgruppen* had received such an order, there would have been no need constantly to stress the Jewish influence in the Soviet apparatus. On the other hand, it was not just a prejudice either, because in the areas in which such influence was scarce, the reports say so openly, as in the case of Borisov:[147]

> *"Jews here were relatively without influence."*

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[146] YVA, O.53-132, p. 27.

[147] EM No. 31, dated 23 July 1941. Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 165.

Even in the most-radical reports, such as that of *Einsatzgruppe* C in EM No. 86 dated 17 September 1941 (see Chapter 3), the priority of annihilating Bolshevism was repeated over and over again:[148]

> *"Even if an immediate 100% elimination of Jewry were possible, the political danger would not be eliminated by this. The work of the Bolshevists is supported by Jews, Russians, Georgians, Latvians, Ukrainians; the Bolshevik apparatus is in no way identical with the Jewish population. In this situation, the goal of political-police security would be missed if one were to place the main task of destroying the Communist apparatus in second or third place after the easier task of eliminating the Jews. Concentrating on Bolshevik officials moreover deprives Jewry of its most capable cadre, so that solving the Jewish problem increasingly becomes a purely organizational problem."*

Einsatzgruppe C therefore considered its "main task" to be the destruction of the Communist apparatus.

2.7. The Claimed General Order to Exterminate the Jews before the Beginning of Operation Barbarossa

In the early 1980s, Holocaust historiography was divided into two currents regarding the genesis of the decision relating to the mass shootings of Eastern Jews. This division was summarized by Krausnick and Wilhelm as follows:

> *"The different views on the genesis of National-Socialist Jewish extermination policy in 1941 consist largely in the fact that it is assumed, on the one hand, that a fundamental order on the general extermination of the Jews was issued weeks and months prior to the beginning of the campaign, while, on the other hand, an 'improvised radicalization' of the persecution of Jews right up to the final systematic killing is assumed."* (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 634)

In their view, these two positions "can only partially stand up to an examination of the sources." By the end of June 1941, the *Einsatzgruppen* were aware "at least in part, of the existence of a general order to exterminate the Jews," although it referred "only" to "Eastern Jewry".

The second position eventually prevailed and developed thanks, above all, to the contribution of Alfred Streim and Christian Streit. The first was in fact rather weak and was based on post-war statements which were dubious, to say the least. One of his most important supporters was Andreas Hillgruber (1984, pp. 224f.):

> *"While it is disputed among researchers when Hitler committed himself during the preparatory stages of the military attack on the Soviet Union – which was planned in detail since the beginning of June/end of July 1940 – to exterminate systematically the Jews on the territory of conquered European Russia in the course of the intended racially-ideological war of annihilation, a good argument can be made that his instruction, issued orally to Himmler or Heydrich, to shoot all the Jews in Russia was orally conveyed by the head of the Reich Security Main*

[148] *Ibid.*, pp. 478f.

> *Office, as well as head of the Security Police and Security Service (SD), Reinhard Heydrich, to the leaders of the so-called 'Einsatzgruppen' and 'Einsatzkommandos' at the end of May 1941, i.e., a few weeks before the beginning of the attack, at the Border Police School in Pretzsch (near Wittenberg)."*

The references adopted by Hillgruber (*ibid.*, fn 45, p. 225, quoting Höhne, pp. 328f., and Krausnick in Buchheim *et al*., pp. 363f.) in turn rely on the testimonies by Otto Ohlendorf and Walter Blume. These two anecdotal sources nevertheless vacillated ambiguously between a primary position of the Jew as a member of the group of predestined victims and a secondary one, which subordinated their killing to the conditions of the war against Bolshevism *qua* the Soviet Union.

In the source indicated, Krausnick writes (Buchheim *et al.*, Vol. 2, pp. 299f.):

> *"That the tasks of the* Einsatzgruppen *would include shooting all the Jews was never mentioned in this order from Brauchitsch based on an agreement with Heydrich.* […] *According to testimonies of participants, the secret order on shooting all the Jews was nevertheless transmitted orally to the* Einsatzgruppen *leaders personally, at the meeting of their formations in May 1941."*

In a note, he refers to the Nuremberg Trial transcripts, Vol. IV, p. 350, and Vol. XXXI, p. 39, specifying: "Ohlendorf, 5. November 1945 und 3. Januar 1946," in addition to Document NO-4145, "Dr. Walter Blume, 29. Juni 1947" (*ibid.*, fn 129, p. 300).

At the hearing of 3 January 1946, Ohlendorf was interrogated by Colonel Amen, who, among other things, asked him what other orders had been received by the *Einsatzgruppen* with regard to Jews and Communist commissars. Ohlendorf replied (IMT, Vol. 4, p. 316):

> *"The instructions were that in the Russian operational areas of the Einsatzgruppen the Jews, as well as the Soviet political commissars, were to be liquidated."*

At Pretzsch, "about 3 or 4 days" before the beginning of the Russian Campaign, there "was a conference at which the *Einsatzgruppen* and the *Einsatzkommandos* were informed of their tasks and were given the necessary orders." (*ibid*., p. 317).

In his affidavit dated 5 November 1945, Ohlendorf declared (PS-2620. IMT, Vol. 31, p. 39):

> *"Himmler declared that an important part of our mission consisted of the elimination of Jews – women, men and children – and Communist officials. I was informed of the attack on Russia about four weeks beforehand."*

In his affidavit of 29 June 1947, Walter Blume also gave particular prominence to the alleged extermination order (NO-4145. TWC, Vol. IV, p. 140):

> *"During the setting up of the Einsatzgruppen and Einsatzkommandos during the months of May-June 1941 I was at Dueben. During June, Heydrich, Chief of the Security Police and SD, and Streckenbach, head of office I of the Reich Security Main Office, held lectures on the duties of the Einsatzgruppen and Einsatzkommandos. At this time we were already being instructed about the tasks of exterminating the Jews. It was stated that eastern Jewry was the intellectual reservoir of bolshevism and, therefore, in the Fuehrer's opinion, must be exterminated. This*

> *speech was made to a small, selected audience. Although I cannot remember the individuals present, I assume that many of the Einsatzgruppen chiefs and Einsatz- and Sonderkommandos chiefs were present. I heard another speech by Heydrich in the Prinz Albrecht Palace in Berlin, in the course of which he again emphasized these points."*

Krausnick continues by also referring to Ohlendorf's statements which describe the presumed order in the general context of the war against the Soviet Union:

> *"According to* Einsatzgruppenführer *Ohlendorf's testimony, the 'Liquidation Order' applied to, as he put it, the 'killing of all captured racially and politically undesirable elements who had been designated a danger to security.'"*

This category included four main groups: "communist officials, so-called 'racially inferior Asians,' Gypsies and Jews" (Buchheim *et al*., p. 300).

Regarding the Gypsies, on 13 August 1942 the commander of the Regular Police at Cracow, Lieutenant General of Police Herbert Becker, transmitted the following teletype to the commanders of the Regular Police at Cracow, Warsaw, Radom, Lublin and Galicia:[149]

> *"In the opinion of the RFSS, it is not permissible to intervene against Gypsies with police methods simply because they are 'Gypsies.' Of course, against Gypsies who commit crimes or join the bandits* [partisans] *or are active in aiding and abetting them, one must proceed as uncompromisingly as against all other lawbreakers."*

At the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial, Ohlendorf, while questioned by his defense attorney Rudolf Aschenauer, described the problem of the presumed extermination order as follows (TWC, Vol. IV, p. 244f.):

> *"Q. When was the order given for the liquidation of certain elements of the population in the U.S.S.R. and by whom was it handed over?*
>
> *A. As far as I recollect, this order was given at the same time when the area of operations was made known. In Pretzsch, the chiefs of offices I and IV, the then Lieutenant Colonels (Obersturmbannfuehrer) Streckenbach and Mueller gave the order which had been issued by Himmler and Heydrich.*
>
> *Q. What was the wording of this order?*
>
> *A. This special order, for such it is, read as follows: That in addition to our general task the Security Police and SD, the Einsatzgruppen and the Einsatzkommandos had the mission to protect the rear of the troops by killing the Jews, gypsies, Communist functionaries, active Communists, and all persons who would endanger the security."*

Ohlendorf claimed that, when Streckenbach conveyed this order in Pretzsch, he and the other participants protested against it, to which Streckenbach replied that he, too, had protested initially when Himmler issued this order, but

> *"that Himmler had rebuked him just as severely by stating that this was a Fuehrer order, which must be carried out, in order to achieve the war aim of destroying*

[149] YVA, O.53-1, p. 141.

> *communism for all times, therefore, this order was to be accepted without hesitation."* (*ibid*., pp. 244f.)

Aschenauer then asked his client whether he was aware of "plans or directives which had as their goal the extermination on racial and religious grounds." Ohlendorf replied:

> *"I expressly assure you that I neither knew of such plans nor was I called on to cooperate in any such plans."*

This applied to Slavs as well as Jews. He knew

> *"that in the years of 1938, 1939 and 1940, no extermination plans existed, but on the contrary, with the aid of Heydrich and by cooperation with Jewish organizations, emigration programs from Germany and Austria were arranged; financial funds even were raised in order to help aid the poorer Jews to make this emigration possible."* (*ibid*., p. 245)

In 1941, he himself, Ohlendorf, intervened favorably in several individual emigration cases. He added (*ibid.*):

> *"When Himmler was in Nikola*[y]*ev in 1941, he neither made any reproaches about this, nor did he give me any other directives. I am rather convinced that where such an extermination policy was later carried out, it was not carried out by the order of the central agencies, but it was the work of individual people."*

In practice, the principal supporter of the Jewish extermination order explicitly denied that it was directed against the Jews as such.

Returning to Hillgruber, his reference to Heinz Höhne's book is entirely superfluous, because the author, in mentioning the meeting at Pretzsch, used the same source as Krausnick, *i.e.*, Ohlendorf and Blume (Höhne, p. 329).

Hence, the proofs for a presumed order to exterminate the Jews before the start of the Eastern campaign were entirely inconsistent.

In early May 1984, a famous congress was held at Stuttgart on the subject of "The Murder of the European Jews during the Second World War: Formation and Implementation of the Decision," during which two speakers concerned themselves specifically with the subject under discussion. Krausnick, who spoke on "Hitler and the Orders to the *Einsatzgruppen* in the Summer of 1941," reached the conclusion that "the 'general order on the total elimination of Jewry'" was issued to the *Einsatzgruppen* "prior to June 22, 1941," giving ample space to the post-war statements, not only Ohlendorf's and Blume's "canonical" statements, but also Karl Jäger's statements of 1959 – which contradict those by Ohlendorf and Blume, as Krausnick himself noted (Jäckel/Rohwer, pp. 91f., 103). I will return to this in Chapter 4.

In the paper titled "On the Disclosure of the General Order to Exterminate the Jews" by Alfred Streim, at that time chief prosecutor at Germany's Central Office for the Investigation of National-Socialist Crimes in Ludwigsburg (hereafter *Zentrale Stelle*), stated:

> *"While there is no doubt as to the existence of the orally-issued 'Führer Order', despite systematic investigation into the crimes of the* Einsatzgruppen, *to date it*

> *has not been possible to determine who, at what time and at what place, transmitted the order to the heads of the* Einsatzgruppen *and to the commanders of the* Einsatz- *or* Sonderkommandos *to exterminate all Jews."* (*ibid*., p. 107)

Streim deserves credit for having undermined the credibility of Ohlendorf's and Blume's statements as mere procedural defense tactics, and therefore also the reliability of historiographical interpretations based on these statements:

> *"Ohlendorf's testimony and statements on the disclosure of the 'Führer Order' by Streckenbach during a working conference in Pretzsch a few days before marching off into the 'Barbarossa' territory are false. During the* Einsatzgruppen *Trial, the former head of* Einsatzgruppe *D was able to convince his fellow defendants to submit to a line of defense devised by himself with the observation that, if they claimed to have carried out the extermination of the Jews from the very outset based on a 'Führer Order,' they could expect a more lenient sentence."* (*ibid*., pp. 107f.)

In Streim's view, the order to exterminate the Jews "was probably issued only a few weeks after the beginning of the Russian Campaign" (*ibid*., p. 112).

Nevertheless, a few defendants, such as Walter Haensch, head of *Sonderkommando* 4b of *Einsatzgruppe* C, declared that he had no knowledge of the "Führerbefehl" (TWC, Vol. IV, pp. 318-320):

> *"PRESIDING JUDGE MUSMANNO: Now, Witness, as I recollect what you stated, you were instructed by Stahlecker and later by Heydrich that you were to go into Russia and that you were to fight saboteurs, partisans, and obstructionists, and that you were also to offer protection to the German army.* […] *What was said to you about Jews, gypsies, and Communist functionaries?*
>
> *A. Your Honor, Jews and gypsies Streckenbach and Heydrich never mentioned to me. These words never came up on this occasion. The details of the assignment were not given.*
>
> *Q. What was said to you by Streckenbach and Heydrich regarding Jews, Communist functionaries, and gypsies?*
>
> *A. If I may repeat this, your Honor, Jews and gypsies were never mentioned. The word was never mentioned even.*
>
> *Q. In this whole conversation with these two men the word 'Jews' was never mentioned?*
>
> *A. No. It was not mentioned.*
>
> *Q. Did they not say that Jews were active Communists and in offering security to the army it was necessary to be on guard against the Jews?*
>
> *A. No, your Honor, this was never mentioned. If I may repeat, the individual persons or elements who might endanger the security of the troops were never mentioned at all by Streckenbach in any way, nor did Heydrich do so, but I was told that corresponding orders existed with the army, and that the mission of the Kommando was already fixed. That was during the second discussion with Streckenbach.* […]
>
> *Q. Was anything said to you about the Fuehrer Order which called for a liquidation…*
>
> *A. No.*

Q. Well, I didn't finish the sentence, but you apparently know what I am referring to. What was the Fuehrer Order? You answered before I finished the question, so, therefore, you are familiar with it. Now, what was the Fuehrer Order? Tell me.
A. Well, your Honor, I want to say the following.
Q. Tell me what the Fuehrer Order was.
A. Well, the Fuehrer Order, as I heard of it here and got to know it here, says that Jews – I don't remember the exact wording now but it was mentioned here – that Jews, and gypsies, and dangerous elements were to be killed.
Q. And when did you first learn of the Fuehrer Order?
A. I heard about the Fuehrer Order – about the existence of the Fuehrer Order – for the first time here from Mr. Wartenberg [Member of prosecution staff who conducted interrogations in this case].
The question was never put to me whether I knew the Fuehrer Order, but Mr. Wartenberg told me the fact that the Fuehrer Order existed.
Q. And when was that?
A. That was during an interrogation. It must have been the last interrogation, I believe on 23 July.
Q. 1947?
A. 1947, yes.
[…]
Q. In your conversation with Thomas, was nothing said about the order to liquidate Jews?
A. No. Nothing was mentioned.
Q. How long were you in Russia?
A. I was in Russia actually 7 to 8 weeks altogether. From the middle of March until about the middle of July I was in Russia, but there were interruptions.
Q. And, during all this time, did you have conversations with your sub-Kommando leaders?
A. Your Honor, I can only say that not even once was I told anything about the existence of such a Fuehrer Order."

2.8. The Claimed General Order to Exterminate the Jews after the Beginning of Operation Barbarossa

2.8.1. The Start of the Executions

Wolfgang Curilla noted that (Curilla 2006, p. 86):

> *"The question of whether the* Einsatzgruppen *received the order to kill all Soviet Jews before 22 June 1941 from the Security Police and SD is disputed."*

A few historians reply in the affirmative, and this opinion is also shared by numerous verdicts of the pertinent trials, although the defendants of these trials made defensive declarations of a mere tactical nature. The majority of historians maintain, however, that the general order to exterminate the Jews was issued "several weeks after the beginning of the Russian Campaign" (*ibid.*)

The most recent studies consider it established

> *"that prior to their mission, the* Einsatzgruppen *received no general order to kill all Soviet Jews, but rather, Himmler himself on his tour of inspection in July/August 1941 personally ordered the HSSPF to expand the mass murder to include women and children, who then forwarded the order to the* Einsatzgruppen*,"*

but Curilla considers even this interpretation to be "doubtful" (*ibid.*, p. 88). Of the references he relies on, the trial verdicts and the testimonies are, by their very nature, the most-fragile; his reference to documents would appear to be more robust, but is still limited to the realm of mere clues, "without this providing an unambiguous proof" (*ibid.*, p. 107).

Those historians who claim that the presumed order to exterminate the Jews was issued *after* the beginning of the Russian Campaign infer its existence from the first executions, in particular those involving women and children.

It is nevertheless certain that the initial mass executions of Jews took place due to local initiatives in the Memel Territory between 24 and 27 June 1941; orthodox Holocaust historiography attributes special importance to these particular executions, either because they were approved by Heydrich and Himmler, or because they are said to have constituted the beginning of the "Final Solution" in Lithuania (although the Memel Area was German territory). Under the date 30 June 1941, Himmler's *Dienstkalender* contains the following annotation (Witte *et al*., p. 181):

> *"12:00 train ride with RF to Grodno by way of Lyck and Augustowo.*
> *Return to train*[150] *at 22:35"*

The book editors limit themselves to stating that Himmler and Heydrich did not meet any member of the Security Police at Grodno (*ibid*., fn 51); they add that

> *"in a report by the Tilsit State Police office active in Augustowo on a 'punishment action', i.e., mass murder in Augustowo, Himmler and Heydrich were said to 'have been informed of the measures initiated by the State Police office in Tilsit and fully approved of them.'"* (*ibid*., fn 52)

Konrad Kwiet writes (Kwiet, p. 10):

> *"On June 30, Himmler and Heydrich arrived in Augustowo. They had already received telegraphic messages concerning the location and death toll of the first mass shootings, and after examining a detailed report, 'they both approved unreservedly of the measures' taken by EK Tilsit."*

The text of the document shows that there was no order and no policy of Jewish extermination at that time :

> *"In collaboration with the SD section in Tilsit, three large-scale cleansing operations were carried out, during which*
> *201 persons (including 1 woman) were shot in Garsden on 24 June 1941*
> *214 persons (including 1 woman) were shot in Krottingen on 25 June 1941*
> *111 persons were shot in Polangen on 27 June."*

After setting forth the reasons for these reprisals, the report continues:

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150 A train named "*Sonderzug Heinrich*" was used as Himmler's mobile headquarters.

> *"In all three large-scale operations, the persons liquidated were mostly Jews. But they also included Bolshevist officials and snipers, some of whom had been handed over as such by the armed forces to the Security Police."*

Krottingen (Kretinga) was burnt down on 26 June, apparently by members of the remaining Jewish population, but

> *"so far we have refrained from taking renewed action, since the only Jews left in Krottingen are women and children, who are currently still in the custody of the Lithuanian Security Service in Krottingen Area."*

This is followed by Heydrich and Himmler's approval:

> *"Further punitive action was taken by officials of the Suwalki Border Police Commissariat in Augustowo. Among other things, a children's holiday home was secured there. The* Reichsführer *SS and the* Gruppenführer*, who were present there by chance, became informed of the measures introduced by the State Police Agency in Tilsit and fully approved of them. The* Gruppenführer *ordered the secured building to be kept solely for the* Reichsführer *SS, pending further instructions."* (Hoppe/Glass, Doc. 14, pp. 143f.)

The initiative in the executions was taken by *Sturmbannführer* Böhme (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 79), on which Kwiet commented as follows (Kwiet, p. 4):

> *"Neither Hitler nor Stahlecker actually gave the first killing orders. They were issued instead in the East Prussian City of Tilsit by SS-Major Hans Joachim Bohme* [sic]*, head of the Staatspolizeistelle (Stapo) Tilsit."*

This document shows that until that time, Himmler and Heydrich had not issued any extermination order to the *Einsatzgruppen*. They limited themselves to approving reprisals for guerrilla activity, reprisals which did not involve women and children. This was confirmed at Nuremberg by Wilhelm Ziebs, former case handler at Department III A (Legal matters, administration, general population issues) of the Security Service's Central Office Königsberg, in an affidavit (SD-12. IMT, Vol. 42, p. 443):

> *"For the SD Section Tilsit, the SD Central Office Königsberg was the responsible reporting agency in charge of the regional central offices of the party and the state in the district. The SD Central Office in Königsberg never issued an order to the SD Section in Tilsit to liquidate Jews and Communists. It would not have been authorized to do so. If such an order had been issued by the Organization of Office III, the SD Central Office in Königsberg would absolutely have had to be aware of it. Likewise, the SD Central Office in Königsberg would have become aware of the results of the implementation of such an order. The objectives, tasks and activities of the SD section in Tilsit are known to me in the most precise detail because of my activities with the SD Central Office in Königsberg. The execution of Jews and Communists did not form part of the tasks of the SD Section Tilsit."*

EM No. 14 dated 6 July 1941 recorded the executions in the following manner (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 85):

> *"*[*Einsatzgruppe* A, Location Riga]. *Starting from Tilsit, three large-scale cleansing operations were carried out. 201 persons were shot in Garsden, 214 persons*

> *in Krottingen, and 111 persons in Polangen. In Garsden, the Jewish population supported the Russian border guards in defending against German attacks. In Krottingen, 1 officer and 2 billeting officers were treacherously shot by the population during the night following the occupation. In Polangen as well, 1 officer was shot from ambush by the population on the day after the occupation. In all large-scale interventions, mostly Jews were liquidated. The persons shot nevertheless included Bolshevik officials and snipers, some of whom were handed over to the Security Police by the armed forces."*

These reprisals were undoubtedly disproportionate, and later opened the way to an even more merciless escalation. A conspicuous example for this occurred at the beginning of July, as reported in EM No. 24 dated 16 July 1941 (*ibid.*, pp. 132f.):

> *"After a total of 10 members of the German armed forces had been found on 2 July, a platoon of ordinary police and a platoon of infantry were called in, and 1,160 Jews were shot in retaliation for the murder of the German soldiers and Ukrainians."*

2.8.2. The "Cleansing Operation" in the Pripyat Marshes

Initially, the circle of victims was rather limited. The order by the commander of the Police Regiment Center, Montua, to Police Battalions 307, 316 and 322 dated 11 July 1941 in this regard was very explicit (Hoppe/Glass, p. 160):

> *"On the order of the Higher SS and Police leader for special duty before the commander of the rear army area center, male Jews aged 17-45 who have been proven to be looters are to be court-martialed and shot immediately."*

The turnaround is said to have come about with the presumed Himmler order dated 1 August 1941, "all Jews must be shot. Drive Jewish women into the swamps" (*ibid.*, p. 94), which I will address now, and which Curilla commented as follows (*ibid.*, p. 105):

> *"That the extermination of Jewish men and women was the declared objective, at least on 1 August 1941, can be gleaned unequivocally from Himmler's order to the 1st SS Cavalry Brigade."*

As Browning reports (Browning 2004, p. 281),

> *"on July 31, after visiting Hinrich Lohse, the newly appointed Reichskommissar Ostland, and HSSPF Prützmann in Kaunas, Himmler flew on to Baranovichi, where he seems to have met Bach-Zelewski. One day later, the SS Cavalry Brigade passed on to its units the following communication: 'Explicit order by RF-SS. All Jews must be shot. Drive the female Jews into the swamps.' (Ausdrücklicher Befehl des RF-SS. Sämtliche Juden müssen erschossen werden. Judenweiber in die Sümpfe treiben).'"*

As a preliminary remark, it should immediately be noted that the Stahlecker draft dated 6 August 1941 relating to the "Jewish reservation" in the East (see Subchapter 2.2.) is in obvious contradiction to Himmler's presumed order to exter-

minate the Jews, which was allegedly issued only a few days earlier: can one believe that the head of *Einsatzgruppe* A knew nothing about it?

And can one believe that an order of this kind would have been issued to Prützmann, but not to the *Einsatzgruppen* at the same time? EM No. 40 dated 1 August 1941 treated this date as important solely for the following reason (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 213):

> *"Based on Führer's order, Galicia is withdrawn from the area of* [military] *operations as of 12 o'clock on 1 August 1941. It is now under civilian administration as part of the General Government."*

On 30 July, Himmler visited Riga; the next day, his agenda bore the annotation: "trip through Riga"; in this city, he is said to have met Lohse and Prützmann (Witte *et al.*, pp. 188f.). But in EM No. 48 dated 10 August 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* A reported (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 273):

> *"RFSS* [Himmler], *during a visit to Riga, mentioned that he intends to establish police formations of Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Ukrainians, etc., and to deploy them outside their own home territory in each case."*

There is no escaping the dilemma: either Himmler had not yet decided upon the mysterious extermination order, but he was thinking about it during the night of 31 July/1 August, or he had already decided upon it, but did not inform Stahlecker. It is hard to decide which of the two hypotheses is more nonsensical.

On 12 August, Franz Magill, commander of the mounted section of the 2nd SS Cavalry Regiment, sent Regiment Commander Heinrich Hierthes a "Report on the progression of the Pripyat Operation from 22 July to 11 August 1941."[151] This is a long report which dwells on marginal aspects treated at great length in pertinent paragraphs: "Population," "Soil Conditions" "Cultural Matters," "Economy," "Food Supply," "Communication Lines," "Condition of the Troops," "Weapons, Equipment, Vehicles" "Condition of the Horses" and finally "Pacification." But this paragraph only briefly mentions Jews:

> *"A large number of Jewish emigrants from the Old Reich and Austria were found."*

The report on the killing of Jews covers only a few lines:

> *"Jewish looters were shot. Only a few craftsmen, who were employed in repair workshops of the armed forces, were spared. Driving the women and children into the swamps did not have the success it was meant to have, as the swamps were not deep enough for them to sink. In most cases, you hit hard bottom (probably sand) after a depth of 1 meter, so sinking was not possible."*

Subsequently, even more laconically, it asserts the following:

> *"The total number of looters etc. shot by the cavalry detachment amounts to: 6,526"*

The report concludes as follows:

> *"In summary, it may be stated that the operation was successful."*

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[151] YVA, O.53-86, pp. 87-90.

The term "Jewish looters" points to a Himmler order transmitted by von dem Bach-Zelewski on 27 July 1941 to the 1st SS Cavalry Regiment, which stated:

> *"For the most part, Jews are to be treated as looters."*

The next day, SS *Brigadeführer* Kurt Knoblauch, commander of the *Kommandostab Reichsführer* SS, issued a special commando order (*Kommandosonderbefehl*) by Himmler titled "Guidelines for ranging over and combing through swampy areas by mounted units." It contains no reference to Jews. The paragraph "Treatment of the population" noted that the villages of the swampy territories could become "strongholds" for both the Germans and their enemies. The former case was possible wherever the population was pro-German and hostile to the Russians and Poles. In this case the population would have to be controlled by means of mayors and men who could be trusted, installed by the Germans and supported with provisions, horses and armored cars, and in part even armed, so as to defend themselves against hostile attacks. The second case – strongholds for the enemy – is described this way:[152]

> *"If the population, viewed nationally, is hostile, racially and humanly inferior, or even, as is very often the case in swampy areas, composed of resettled criminals, then all those suspected of aiding the partisans are to be shot; women and children are to be deported. Cattle and food are to be confiscated and brought to safety. The villages are to be burnt to the ground"*

The inspiring principle of this policy was: "No enemy may find support or sustenance in this region" (Baade, p. 223); it was, therefore, a sort of scorched-earth tactic.

Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, in his capacity as a member of the Higher SS leaders with the commander of the Rear Area Army Group Center, which operated behind the combat zone, was responsible for the related "cleansing" which is said to have concluded with "13,788 shot looters." Nonetheless, the chief of the general staff of the Rear Area Army Group Center compiled a report (presumably "based on incomplete information"), in which he wrote (Krausnick/Wilhelm, pp. 222f.):

> *"The SS Cavalry Brigade carried out its cleansing operation between Highway I and Pripyat. Non-locals in the area as well as Red Army members and Jewish commissars were arrested by the SS, and most of them were shot. The region may be considered pacified as the result of deployment of mayors and auxiliary police and the suppression of the Jews."*

Gerlach reports that the cavalry unit commanded by Magill killed Jews "between 18 and 60 years of age" (Gerlach 1999, p. 560). These were therefore military operations to "cleanse" elements considered dangerous in the area behind the front lines of the army.

The British intercepted many messages sent to Himmler in August 1941 by von dem Bach-Zelewski, some of which refer to this matter.

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[152] Baade, p. 222; also YVA, O.53-3, p. 312.

The first is dated 4 August 1941:[153]

"RF SS Pers. Kdo., Stab Rf SS und Cher Orpo.
Situation report: Cavalry Bridge has reached the LUBIACZ-DOLSK-JANOW-MOTOL-KLETNA line. 90 Bolsheviks and Jews were shot south of Highway 1 along the Morrez River during cleansing operations in the villages of WIZNA, ROZAN, WIELKA."

Another message was sent on the same day:[153]

"Rf SS Pers. Kdo., Stab Rf SS und Chef Ord. pol
Situation report: No significant changes at SS Cavalry Brigade yesterday's location. North and northeastward of SPOROVSKOYE Lake Regiment 1 formed a pocket to fight reported partisan bands. SS Cavalry Brigade liquidated 3,274 partisans and Jewish Bolsheviks by the evening of 3 August 41. No losses our side. On the commander's orders, an SS Sonderkommando found an ammunition convoy which had gotten lost and guided the transport safely to its destination. Only minor operations with police forces. Pol. Batl. 307 in the security section as yesterday. 260 partisans shot during a cleansing operation by Pol. Batl. 307. Russian cavalry north of Highway 1 encircled and in the process of being destroyed. Russian cavalry south of Highway 1, after several firefights with Wehrmacht and SS, apparently crossed PTSTSCH [=Pestsch?] *in a southeasterly direction."*

On 17 August, von dem Bach-Zelewski sent Himmler this account:[154]

"To Rf SS Kdo.stab und Chef Orpo.
In the concerned section, the 252nd I.D. in collaboration with the Pol. Reg. Center smashed the Russian 112th I.D. which had broken through on 6 August 41 from the north southward via R I. Russian commander killed, commissars escaped. 1 colonel captured. Enemy suffered serious losses and lost its firearms. The rest, scattered in groups, has fled into the woods to the south and north of the R. No more serious resistance under unified leadership can be expected from the enemy. A few days rest for the SS cavalry after reaching the collection line. For the sake of maintenance on 14 August 41, the liberation operation continues eastward in the Pripyat Marshes. Cavalry Regiment I is in the area of LYAKHOVICHI, Cavalry Regiment II around LUNINETS, motorized SS in STARYYE DOROGI and LYAKHOVICHI. Losses of Pol. Reg. Center during these fights: 12 deaths, 11 wounded, no missing; SS cavalry brigade: 2 deaths, 15 wounded; Pol. Reg. Center brought in 200 prisoners thus far. Total result for SS Cavalry Brigade: 714 prisoners, 9 cannons, 11 anti-tank guns, 1 grenade, 29 machine guns, 517 carbines, 600 rounds artillery ammunition, 300,000 rounds Russian ammunition and 800 horses. At night still small skirmishes with scattered Russian troops. Russian 112 I.D. consisted of Reg. 575, 383, 503 and 227th artillery regiment. Prisoners testified that they had received no pay for 3 months and only surrendered out of hunger."

These reports confirm that the two regiments of the SS cavalry brigade in the Pripyat Marshes were conducting military operations, not a manhunt for Jews, as is

[153] TNA, HW 16-53, Teleprinter message, 4 August 1941.
[154] *Ibid.*, 17 August 1941.

attested to by the number of prisoners captured and the conspicuous amount of materiel and weapons captured.

Returning to the Magill Report, the entire story is quite implausible. First of all, the presumed Himmler order did not mention children, so that following the order *literally* would have exempted them from execution anyway. In the second place, can one seriously believe that Himmler would have ordered such an absurdity? Drowning thousands of people in a swamp would have required enormous labor, pushing them into the water, drowning them, fishing them out, dragging them onto dry land and burying the bodies. Third, such an operation would have required prior reconnaissance of the swamps to determine where the water was deep enough. And finally, the report limits itself to mentioning that women and children could not be drowned in the swamps because the water was too shallow, without ever indicating what was done with them in the end.

Any mention of a presumed Himmler murder order by drowning is also missing; but without it, the report appears fragmentary and incomprehensible. I have already stressed the fact that the report only mentions Jews in a few lines, and the conclusion is clearly illogical, since it claims "that the operation was successful," while, on the contrary, the drowning of the women and children – who must have constituted the majority of the Jewish population – "did not have the success it was meant to have," *i.e.*, it was an obvious failure. It is therefore probable that the document has been manipulated, to say the least. The document available to us is not the original, but a "copy of a copy." Dieter Pohl and Hartmut Weber, in commenting on their transcript of this document, moreover inform us that (Hoppe/Glass, p. 243):

> *"A copy of the report was found by the Red Army in early 1942 and published in parts, while deleting most references indicating that the massacre was directed primarily against Jews; see L. Dubrovitsky, 'Bukhgalteriya palachey,' in Izvestia, 4 February 1942, p. 2."*

This article, whose Russian headline "Bukhgalteriya palachey" ("Бухгалтерия палачей") translates as "The Executioners' Bookkeeping," refers to a document from the "SS von Magill." The article claims to quote the following contentious passage from this document in Russian (*ibid.*):

> *"We drove the women and children into the swamp, but this did not produce the desired result, since the swamp was not deep enough for them to drown. They can touch the bottom at a depth of 1 meter in the majority of cases…* [illegible word]*."*

The document could therefore be a Soviet forgery (in terms of a fabricated insertion) fobbed off onto their Western "allies," and, as we shall soon see, there are good reasons for thinking so.

Karel C. Berkhoff has outlined the history of the document as follows:

> *"The Soviet authorities found telling documents in the headquarters of the 1st SS Cavalry Brigade, including a report about a 'Pripyat Action' conducted between July 27 and August 11, 1941. Thousands of civilians died in that campaign of*

> *mass murder, the vast majority of them Jews. The report included this passage: 'Driving women and children into the marshes did not have the required result, for the marshes were not deep enough to allow for drowning. At a depth of one meter in most cases one reached solid ground (probably sand), so that drowning was impossible.' An article in Izvestia in February 1942 attributed to a battalion commissar quoted all of this without clarifying that the victims were Jews. The writer or his censor also omitted an explicit passage about 'gathering the Jews' and the comment 'Jewish looters were shot. Only a few artisans, who had been put to work in repair shops of the Wehrmacht, were left aside.' Yet the removal of Jews was inconsistent, for the article quoted accurately the following from another captured report, about the 'pacification' of the Belarusian townlet of Starobin: 'It was ordered to shoot all Jewish males without exception, which was carried out… The auxiliary police carried out a number of executions and arrests.' The German report was signed by one Magill, but Izvestia (and later Molotov) called him 'von Magill.'"* (Berkhoff 2012, p. 143)

The order to kill "all Jewish males without exception," obviously adults, cannot be reconciled with the drowning of women and children in swamps.

The verdict of the Braunschweig District Court of 20 April 1964, Ref. 2 Ks 1/63, in its trial of Franz Magill and four other defendants mentions a handout of the SS Cavalry Brigade dated 4 August 1941 referring to Regimental Order No. 42 dated 27 July 1941, which ordered the following with regard to the Jews (Sagel-Grande *et al.*, pp. 43f.):

> *"Listing of all Jewish residents, during which all craftsmen should be listed separately. Compilation of the order for the establishment of a ghetto and the marking of the Jews in public by corresponding badges."*

This means that there was no order to exterminate the Jews at all. Nevertheless, the court claimed that Regimental Order No. 42 of 27 July 1941 also included an order to exterminate the Jews, which was said to have been proven by post-war testimony, including, first of all, the Magill Report! At this point, the court's verdict supplies an important bit of information:

> *"According to the testimony of the eyewitness W., these reports, drawn up for the brigade commander* [on the Pripyat cleansing operation, including the Magill Report], *fell into the hands of the Red Army near Toropets together with additional documentation of the brigade staff. The contents of the reports were mentioned in the Note of then People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR V.M. Molotov, dated 27 April 1942."*

The Soviets were therefore the sole repositories of the alleged "original" document and the sole guarantors of its "authenticity." The whole story is not only nonsensical, but in open contradiction to authentic documents.

In other cases, the Soviets published photocopies of captured original German documents. For example, a 1944 Russian-language "Communication of the Extraordinary State Commission" on "Instructions and Orders of the Hitler Government and the German Military Command for the Annihilation of Soviet Prisoners of War and Peaceful Citizens" contained photocopies of four documents,

the first of which was "Einsatzbefehl Nr. 14" of October 29, 1941.[155] The fact that the decisive excerpt from the Magill Report was not published in the original, despite the fact that it was ideally suited for propaganda purposes, strengthens the suspicion of forgery.

Magill was found guilty of "continual aiding and abetting in murder in at least 5,254 cases" and for "attempted murder in at least 100 cases" and sentenced to the very harsh term of five years' imprisonment! (Sagel-Grande *et al.*, p. 27)

In conclusion, it is very probable that very many Jews fell victim to the "cleansing action" in the territory of the Pripyat Marshes, but two important points should be kept in mind:

1. the Jews were not killed as Jews, but in the context of a death struggle against enemy forces, in which it was essential to deprive the enemy of any and all support;
2. in this context, there was no need to kill women and children, who were no doubt deported according to the directives of the *Kommandosonderbefehl* of 27 July 1941. These orders required the "shooting" of persons suspected of assisting the partisans and the "deportation" of women and children, so that this cannot have been a mere euphemism for shooting.

In his interrogation of 14-15 December 1945 by Major Tsvetayev, local commander of the 2nd Division of the NKVD, Friedrich Jeckeln, former Higher SS and Police leader in Riga, summarized the story of the drowning of the Jews in the swamps in a different context. According to him, Himmler had informed him that there were plans for many transports of Jews from the Reich and other countries to the Salaspils Camp, but:[156]

> *"Himmler said that he had not yet decided how these people were to be exterminated; whether to shoot them in Salaspils, or to chase them someplace into the swamp."*

This absurd statement was no doubt suggested to him by NKVD officials.

The circle of victims broadened in a big way compared to the initial practice: some *Einsatzkommando*s extended it to a few officials, and to some extent to mere members of the Communist party, members of the Jewish "intelligentsia," Asians and the mentally ill, to women and children. But even in this, the *Einsatzgruppen* reports disagree, and the motivations for the executions sometimes reveal conflicting perspectives.

In conclusion, given that there is no evidence of a general order to exterminate the Soviet Jews, the executions must have been carried out by local commanders who decided upon the times and methods of their actions within the context of the struggle against "Judeo-Bolshevism" and in the frantic efforts to provide security for the armed forces; the increasing strength of the partisan movement hardened their attitude. It is possible that some, driven by a particular hatred for the Jews in

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[155] YVA, O.51-106, pp. 41-45.

[156] "*Ausforschungsprotokoll des Verhafteten Friedrich Jeckeln, Riga, 14. Dezember 1945*," in: Christoforow *et al.*, p. 350.

this tragic conflict, may have really used the struggle against Bolshevism and the partisans as a pretext for committing massacres which were militarily quite unjustified.

2.9. *Reichsminister* Rosenberg and the Extermination of the Jews

The policy toward the Jews as set forth in Chapter 2 finds confirmation in the documents regarding Alfred Rosenberg, who was appointed Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories on 17 July 1941. In contrast to this, Yitzhak Arad maintained in his 1979 paper that Rosenberg did not initially belong to the limited circle of unconditional Hitler loyalists "and was not familiar with the Führer's directive to Himmler and the SS regarding the total physical annihilation of the Jews of the USSR issued at the planning stage of the invasion" (Arad 1979, p. 285); in consequence, "his directives concerning the Jews," although they were fully in accord with the documented, official policy toward the Jews, allegedly "stemmed from ignorance of the Führer's intentions." When he later is said to have become aware of these alleged intentions and their implementation by the SS, "he also gave his unequivocal support to the policy of liquidating the Jews" (*ibid*.). Such a position is already undermined by the fact that orthodox Holocaust historiography, as I have shown earlier, no longer claims that Hitler issued directives for the total extermination of the Soviet Jews in March 1941.

On 2 April 1941, Rosenberg wrote a memorandum which expresses his thoughts on the future occupation of Soviet Russia. With reference to czarist Russia, the "core territory" of which was the background of Soviet strength and which had to be weakened, he stated that such weakening could be achieved in three ways (PS-1017. IMT, Vol. 26, p. 549):

> *"1) through a complete destruction of the Bolshevik Jewish governmental administration, without encouraging the construction of a new governmental apparatus"*;

2) with a very intense economic exploitation or 3) with the assignment of vast territories of this "core territory" to other administrative organizations to be created, such as Byelorussia or the Ukraine.

And here is Arad's comment (Arad 1979, p. 266):

> *"In this document Rosenberg wrote that the Jewish-Bolshevik state administration was to be totally destroyed (völlige Vernichtung)."*

Another Rosenberg memorandum, dated 29 April, contains the following brief reference to the Jews (PS-1024. IMT, Vol. 26, p. 561):

> *"The Jewish question requires a general treatment, the temporary provisional solution of which must be determined (compulsory labor for Jews, ghettoization, etc.)"*

A similar mention is found in the already-mentioned "Instructions for a *Reichskommissar* in the Ukraine" dated 7 May 1941 (see p. 116).

Arad (1979, p. 273) notes that

> *"on August 16, 1941 Rosenberg issued the 'Decree Concerning Forced Labor for Jews in the Occupied Territories in the East,' the first document referring to the Jews signed by him as Minister for the Eastern Territories. The decree obliged all Jews between 14 and 60 years of age, both men and women, to report for forced labor, those who evaded doing so being punishable by execution."*

On 18 November 1941, Rosenberg held a press conference in Berlin, the content of which was summarized by Georg Wilhelm Großkopf, who was part of Department D IX of the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He summarized Rosenberg's declarations on the Jewish question as follows:[157]

> *"With regard to the Jewish question, Reichsminister Rosenberg remarked that the Eastern campaign will also solve this question for Europe; Jewry will be wiped out entirely on this side of the Urals, even while there were still millions of Jews in Europe."*

The original note handed out to the press by Rosenberg reads (Kempner, p. 87):

> *"The East is at the same time called upon to solve a question facing the peoples of Europe: that is the Jewish question. Approximately six million Jews still live in the East, and this question can only be solved through a biological eradication of all of Jewry in Europe. The Jewish question will only be solved for Germany when the last Jew has left German territory, and for Europe, when there is not one single Jew left on the European continent, right out to the Urals.*
>
> *That is the task with which fate has presented us. You can imagine men will only be called upon to carry out these measures if they understand the question as an historical task, who do not act due to personal hatred, but rather, as a result of this very sober political and historical insight. For us, the 9th of November 1918 was both a fateful day and a day of decision. Back then, Jewry showed us that it had decided on the destruction of Germany. That it did not succeed, is only thanks to the Führer and the strength of character of the German nation; we must therefore prevent some sentimental European race from accommodating the Jews again. And to this end, it is necessary to shove them over the Urals, or bring about their eradication in some other way."*

Rosenberg's press release fully reflected the idea which he had expressed a few months earlier in the article titled "The Jewish Question as a Global Problem" ("*Die Judenfrage als Weltproblem*"):[158]

> *"For Europe, the Jewish problem will only be solved when the last Jew has left the European continent."*

On 31 October 1941, Leibbrandt sent Lohse a letter with the following tenor (PS-3663. IMT, Vol. 32, pp. 435f.):

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[157] "*Aufzeichnung. Betr.: Ausführungen des Reichsministers Alfred Rosenberg bei Berliner Presseempfang am 18.11.1941*." PAAA, Pol. Abt. XIII, V.A.A. bei OKW, Vol. 25.

[158] PS-2665. IMT, Vol. 31, p. 67. The article appeared in the magazine *Weltkampf. Die Judenfrage in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, No. 1/2, April-September 1941. The text had already been published in the *Völkischer Beobachter* in Munich dated 29 March 1941 reporting on a conference held by Rosenberg the day before. PS-2889. IMT, Vol. 31, p. 256. Copy of typewritten original in: YVA, O.51-39.

> *"The Reich Security Main Office complains that the Reich Commissar for the East has prohibited executions in Liepaja. I call for an immediate report on the matter concerned."*

On 15 November 1941 Lohse replied (*ibid.*, p. 436):

> *"I have prohibited haphazard executions of Jews in Liepaja, because they were irresponsible the way they were carried out. Please inform me whether your inquiry of 31 Oct. is to be taken as an order to the effect that all Jews in the East are to be liquidated? Is this to occur without regard to age and sex or economic value (for example, skilled workers employed in armaments factories by the armed forces)? Naturally, cleansing the East of the Jews is an urgent task; but its solution must be brought into line with the necessities of the wartime economy. I have been unable to discern any such order from the directives on the Jewish question in the 'Brown Folder,' or from other decrees."* (Emphasis added)

This is the reply by Otto Bräutigam from Rosenberg's office dated 18 December (PS-3666. IMT, Vol. 32, p. 437):

> *"Subject: Jewish Question*
> *To the letter of 15 November 1941*
> *By now, oral meetings ought to have brought about clarity as to the Jewish question. In general, economic concerns are not be taken into account when dealing with the problem. It is moreover requested to settle any questions that arise directly with the Higher SS and Police leader."*

Essentially, Lohse asked whether he was supposed to kill "all the Jews in the East," which was something new to him, since none of the preceding directives ever provided for this possibility, starting with the "Brown Folder." In response, Bräutigam did not declare that the directives had changed, but limited himself to stating that economic concerns need not be taken into account in settling the matter. This did not necessarily refer to extermination, but rather to an exclusion of Jews from the economic life of the country. At that time, National-Socialist policy aimed at deporting the Jews from the Reich into the Eastern territories. During that precise period, on 13 November, Leibbrandt sent Lohse the telegram cited above, according to which the camps at Riga and Minsk were only provisional measures, because the Jews were to be sent "further East."

It is worth mentioning that during that period the authorities of the Reich attached great importance to economic issues. On December 19, 1941, Reich Labor Minister Franz Seldte informed the presidents of the state labor offices that Heydrich had issued instructions "for the evacuation of the Jews," according to which Jews working in the armaments factories whose responsible managers had refused to have these workers removed from their staff were not to be evacuated; the same applied to their families.[159]

The evacuation of these Jews was not decided until the end of 1942. This can be inferred from a letter of the General Plenipotentiary for Labor Deployment,

[159] YVA, O.18-12, p. 1.

Fritz Sauckel, dated 26 November 1942, according to which employed Jews were to be gradually replaced by Polish workers.[160]

After describing the ghettoization measures and the use of forced labor adopted by the Security Police and the Security Service with regard to Byelorussian Jews, Report No. 9 of the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories," dated 26 June 1942, concludes:[161]

> *"The measures taken by the Security Police and the SD have created fundamental changes with regard to the Jewish question also in Byelorussia. In order to bring the Jews under effective control, regardless of measures to be taken later, Jewish Councils of Elders were established who are responsible to the Security Police and the SD for the attitudes of their fellow Jews. In addition, the registration of the Jews and their confinement to ghettos has been initiated. Finally, the Jews have been marked by a yellow badge on the chest and back, similar to the Jewish star introduced in the territory of the Reich.*
>
> *To exploit the labor potential of the Jews, they are enlisted in general to participate in closed labor deployments and for cleaning-up projects.*
>
> *With these measures, the foundation has been laid also for the territory of Byelorussia regarding the final solution of the European Jewish question as planned for a later point in time."*

This prospect is congruent with the program tentatively planned almost a year earlier as laid out in the so-called "Brown Folder."

The document that is most incriminating for Rosenberg is undoubtedly the "Memo on a Conversation with the Führer on 14 December 1941." It concerned a speech that Rosenberg was meant to give at the Berlin Sports Palace, but which had become obsolete due to the U.S.'s declaration of war on Japan and the subsequent German declaration of war on the USA. In the memo dated 16 December, Rosenberg noted (PS-1517; IMT, Vol. 27, p. 270):

> *"On the Jewish question, I said that the remarks about the New York Jews would have to be changed somewhat now that the decision had been made. I took the position not to speak of the extermination of Jewry. The Führer affirmed this position and said that they had forced the war on us and had brought destruction, and it was no surprise if consequences hit them first."*

I have shown in Subchapter 2.2. that the Führer's "decision" had nothing to do with the claimed extermination of the Jews. In this context, one can only be surprised that historians, who are of the opinion that this "extermination plan" was so secret that the National Socialists had used a "camouflage language" even in their most secret documents, willingly believe that Rosenberg – with Hitler's approval – had wanted to speak frankly about the physical extermination of the Jews in a speech in the Sports Palace, which of course would have caused a worldwide sensation! It is now necessary to clarify what Rosenberg understood by the "extermination of Jewry". During the Nuremberg Tribunal on April 17,

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[160] *Ibid.*., p. 6, Document L-61.
[161] RGVA, 500-1-775, p. 190.

1946, he was questioned by the U.S. Prosecutor Thomas J. Dodd about the meaning of this term (IMT, Vol. 11, p. 553):

> *"Well then, perhaps we can help you on that. I will ask you be shown Document 1517-PS. It becomes Exhibit USA-824.*
> *[Document 1517-PS was submitted to the defendant.]*
> *Now, this is also a memorandum of yours written by you about a discussion you had with Hitler on the 14th of December 1941, and it is quite clear from the first paragraph that you and Hitler were discussing a speech which you were to deliver in the Sportpalast in Berlin, and if you will look at the second paragraph, you will find these words:* [followed by the above-quoted sentences]"

Dodd then asked Rosenberg the following question. (*ibid.*, p. 554):

> *"Now, you have indicated that you have some difficulty with the meaning of that word, and I am going to ask you about the word 'Ausrottung.' I am going to ask that you be shown—you are familiar with the standard German-English dictionary, Cassell's, I suppose, are you? Do you know this word, ever heard of it?"*

Rosenberg replied scornfully (*ibid.*):

> *"I do not need a foreign dictionary in order to explain the various meanings 'Ausrottung' may have in the German language. One can exterminate an idea, an economic system, a social order, and as a final consequence, also a group of human beings, certainly. Those are the many possibilities which are contained in that word. For that I do not need an English-German dictionary."*

Dodd doubled down (*ibid.*, p. 555):

> *"I want to remind you that this speech of yours in which you use the term 'Ausrottung' was made about 6 months after Himmler told Hoess, whom you heard on this witness stand, to start exterminating the Jews. That is a fact, is it not?*
> *ROSENBERG: No, that is not correct, for Adolf Hitler said in his declaration before the Reichstag: Should a new world war be started by these attacks of the emigrants and their backers, then as a consequence there would be an extermination and an extirpation. That has been understood as a result and as a political threat. Apparently, a similar political threat was also used by me before the war against America broke out. And, when the war had already broken out, I have apparently said that, since it has come to this, there is no use to speak of it at all."*

Rosenberg insisted that the quote in question speaks of the "extermination of Jewry" and that there is still a difference between "Jewry" and "the Jews" (*ibid.*). Dodd countered that the Jews had been "exterminated" in the Eastern territories at that time and quoted Leibbrandt's letter of October 31, 1941, referred to earlier, as proof of this (*ibid.*, pp. 555f.; PS-3663; IMT, Vol. 11, pp. 553-556).

In a "closing statement" written in Nuremberg on August 31, 1946, Rosenberg stated:[162]

> *"The thought of a physical extermination of Slavs and Jews, i.e. the actual genocide, never crossed my mind, let alone that I propagated it in any way. I was of*

[162] YVA, O.23-11, p. 33.

> *the opinion that the existing Jewish question had to be solved by creating minority rights, emigration or by settling the Jews in a national territory over a period of decades."*

In Nuremberg, Rosenberg also put ink on paper in a typewritten "Manuscript II." Next to the heading he added by hand the note "For scientific purposes only" as well as "The Indictment." Here is an excerpt:[163]

> *"I did not consider a l i t e r a l interpretation of the expression a n n i h i l a t i o n or extermination to be humanly possible. I took the shootings in the East, of which I had been informed, as a necessary measure in the suppression of communist resistance, and also as local violations without assuming a really deliberate Fuehrer order. Reports from the Moscow radio station I put aside as propaganda."*

2.10. Wetzel's Letter of 25 October 1941

In his attempt to show Rosenberg's "support" "for the Policy of Total Liquidation," Arad has recourse to a letter by Erhard Wetzel, an official from the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, dated 25 October 1941. This is presented as a "draft" (*Entwurf*) of a typewritten letter which, as far as is known, was never sent, and which bears, at the end, a single hand-written notation, which the analysts from Staff Evidence Analysis of the Office of US Chief Counsel interpreted as "Wet 25/10." Above this, the letters "N.d.H.M." are said to appear, faintly written in pencil, which is said to mean "*Nachschrift dem Herrn Minister*" – "copy for the Minister,"[164] but "*Nachschrift*" does not mean "copy" (in German *Abschrift*), but rather, "postscript." In the German transcript of the document, the initials are "N.d.R.M.", and the hand-written letters in the margin read "Wlt."[165]

This "draft" has as its subject "Solution of the Jewish question" and is addressed to the "*Reichskommissar für das Ostland*" Lohse, with reference to a report written by Lohse, dated 4 October 1941, "Regarding the solution of the Jewish question." On this, Arad writes (Arad 1979, p. 277):

> *"On October 4, Lohse sent Rosenberg a report on 'The Solution of the Jewish Problem.' In the report he described the mass murders, apparently adding that death by firing squads had created problems and that it was necessary to find an alternative method of extermination."*

This claim contains no reference to the source, and this is not surprising, since the report in question has never been found, so that the summary supplied by the Israeli historian is purely imaginary. This report is also mentioned in the cover letter accompanying the "draft," which begins this way (NO-997):

> *"I have no objection against your proposal for the solution to the Jewish question."*

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[163] YVA, O.23-11, pp. 5f.

[164] Translation of document NO-365. Office of U.S. Chief Counsel. Staff Evidence Analysis, p. 2. NARA, Record Group No. 238, NO-365.

[165] Staatsarchiv Nürnberg, *KV-Anklage, Umdrucke deutsch*, NO-365.

The letter in question, which is undated, is, in turn, yet another "draft." According to the heading, it is supposed to have been written by Wetzel in his capacity as "case handler" from "Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories" Rosenberg, just like the letter dated 25 October. The content of Lohse's report dated 4 October is not indicated.

This maneuver is obviously intended to create an antecedent to the letter of 25 October, upon which Arad dwells at great length (Arad 1979, pp. 277f.). The document should be examined in its historical-documentary context, starting, obviously, with an analysis of the text (NO-365):

> *"Subject.: Solution of the Jewish Question.*
> *1. To the Reich Commissar for the East*
> *Re: Your report of 4 Oct. 1941 on the solution to the Jewish question*
> *Referring to my letter of 18 Oct. 1941, you are informed that* Oberdienstleiter *Brack of the Chancellery of the Fuehrer has declared himself ready to collaborate in the manufacture of the necessary shelters, as well as the gassing devices. At the present time the devices in question are not on hand in the Reich in sufficient numbers; they will first have to be manufactured. Since in Brack's opinion the manufacture of the devices in the Reich will cause more difficulty than if manufactured on the spot, Brack deems it most expedient to send his people directly to Riga, especially his chemist Dr. Kallmeyer, who will have everything further done there.* Oberdienstleiter *Brack points out that the process in question is not without danger, so that special protective measures are necessary. Under these circumstances I beg you to turn to* Oberdienstleiter *Brack, in the Chancellery of the Fuehrer, through your Higher SS and Police leader and to request the dispatch of the chemist Dr. Kallmeyer as well as of further aides. I draw attention to the fact that* Sturmbannfuehrer *Eichmann, the referent for Jewish questions in the RSHA, is in agreement with this process.*
> *On information from Sturmbannfuehrer Eichmann, camps for Jews to be set up in Riga and Minsk to which Jews from the old Reich territory may possibly be sent. At the present time, Jews being deported from the old Reich are to be sent to Litzmannstadt* [Łódź], *but also to other camps, to be later used as labor in the East so far as they are able to work.*
> *As matters stand, there is no objection if those Jews who are unable to work are eliminated with Brack's means. In this manner, then, events will no longer be possible such as occurred during the shooting of the Jews in Vilnius according to a report which has been presented to me, and which can hardly be condoned of, also considering that the shootings were carried out in public. The able-bodied* [Jews] *on the other hand, will be shipped off East for labor deployment. That able-bodied men and women should be kept separately should be obvious.*
> *Please report to me regarding any further measures."*

Angrick and Klein then proceed to comment as follows (Angrick/Klein, p. 188):

> *"This is the first open statement that Jews evacuated from the west to the Reich Commissariat Ostland could be killed with gas if they were not able to work. Nonetheless, for historians, this draft letter continues to raise more questions about the further course of action of the mass murders than it answers. It is a mat-*

ter of fact that no gas chambers were ever built in the civil-administrated Reich Commissariat Ostland. Lohse and Brack testified after the war that they were unaware of the letter and its contents. The chemist Kallmeyer said he had never been to Riga. Eichmann's remarks regarding this document, which were made in Israeli custody, were different. He did not doubt the incident, but said that upon receiving the inquiry from the RMbO, he had merely passed along the position of his boss Gestapo chief Heinrich Müller. During his trial, however, Eichmann claimed that he had discussed gas chambers with regard to Riga. Wetzel in turn said he had merely taken dictation from his boss, at the time Georg Leibbrandt."

In fact, this document raises serious questions, not only historically and historiographically, but with regard to its authenticity as well. The document implicates three individuals: Eichmann, Kallmeyer and Brack.

During the 98th hearing of his trial (17 July 1961), Eichmann questioned the document, raising a series of objections, the meaning of which was briefly summarized by the prosecutor as follows: "And you are claiming that it was forged?" Eichmann explicitly declared (State of Israel, Vol. IV, p. 1707):

"I would never have spoken to Wetzel about gas, because I had nothing to do with the killing."

During the U.S. proceedings brought against Karl Brandt and others (The Medical Case), the chemist Helmut Kallmeyer rendered an affidavit on 20 June 1947 with reference to Wetzel's letter, which had already been introduced into evidence. Kallmeyer declared in his affidavit:[166]

"I was neither in Riga nor the Baltic in the Fall of 1941 or at any other time. Neither [did] *Viktor Brack ever speak to me of sending me to Riga to co-operate in the production of the necessary quarters and the gas chambers (Vergasungsapparate) and to make all further arrangements."*

Finally, Brack, during his trials, asserted that he knew nothing of the letter in question (TWC, Vol. I, pp. 887-889):

"Q. Did you receive a copy of this letter, Herr Brack?
A. I did not receive a copy of it nor did I even see a copy of that letter, nor do I know this Amtsgerichtsrat Wetzel.
Q. Did you have a conference with Eichmann on this problem, on the solution of the Jewish question?
A. I already said I cannot even remember the name Eichmann, nor can I remember the name Wetzel.
Q. Do you know anything about the matters discussed at this conference concerning the solution of the Jewish problem?
A. No. I know nothing.
Q. You have no idea. You never made any suggestions as to what kind of treatment or what kind of gas chambers should be used for the solution of the Jewish problem? You never did that?
A. I can remember nothing in this connection."

[166] Brack and Handloser Supplement V. Document No. 62. Affidavit of Helmuth Kallmeyer. Kiel, 20 June 1947.

After a reading of the letter, the trial prosecutor asked Brack:

> *"Herr Brack, are you still going to maintain what you said here in direct examination, namely, that you tried to protect the Jews and to save the Jews from their terrible fate and that you were never a champion of the extermination program?"*

Brack replied:

> *"I should even like to maintain that misuse, terrible misuse, was made of my name."*

As for Wetzel, he appears to have passed unharmed through the procedural nets spread by the Allies and by West Germany. Hilberg describes him this way (Hilberg 2003, Vol. 3, p. 1193):

> *"in Soviet captivity. Released, 1955. Ministerialrat in Lower Saxony. Retired, 1958. Subsequent West Germany investigation terminated without trial."*

In Chapter 6, I shall show that the above-mentioned "gassing devices" are incompatible with the presumed "gas vans," as claimed by some Holocaust historians. I wish to point out at this point that, since the "gassing devices" are associated with shelters ("*Unterkünfte*"), they could only have consisted of stationary gas chambers, either homicidal or for disinfestation. The term is usually used for devices turning a substance into a gas, such as the circulation devices (*Kreislaufgeräte*) inside the Degesch disinfestation chambers using HCN (Zyklon B), which were called "gassing" or "gasifier devices" ("*Vergaser-Geräte*"; see Peters 1933, p. 40). This system was tested at the Sachsenhausen Camp on 25 October 1940 by representatives of the camp's health and hygiene department, of the Concentration Camp Inspectorate, the Hygiene Institute of the Waffen-SS and Degesch. The same day, the head of the construction department of the Main Office Budgeting and Construction sent an order to all concentration camps to use it for disinfestation purposes in the future (Morsch/Perz, p. 262).

This interpretation is confirmed by two messages intercepted by the British in November 1941:[167]

> *"10. DQB de SPK SPK1 Nr 12 1107 3Tle 177 143 73 DSR 155SS Oberabschnitt North Sea, Hamburg 13.*
> *Firm TESCH STABENOW, HAMBURG 1. regarding letter of 5 Nov. Please inform me immediately when Zyklon was shipped, and when partial shipment of Tegas, Ethylene o.*[xi]*D and Trito can be expected, so that Dr. Tesch, who is training in Riga ... (corrupt groups)... all... are badly needed. Dr. TESCH requests that his mail be sent here* [handwritten]. *Head physician, Higher SS and Political Leaders, Riga."*

The gases mentioned in a garbled manner are, precisely, "T-Gas," Ethyleneoxide and Tritox.

The second intercept states:[168]

> *"SPÖ de SPK1 Nr 35 2200 3 Tle 179 141 DTD 410*
> *Dessau Works for Zyklon and Chemical Zyklon, DESSAU.*

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[167] TNA, HW 16-32, German Police Decodes, No. 1 Traffic: 13 Nov. 41, No. 10.
[168] *Ibid.*, No. 52.

> *Pickup of provided 700 kg. DNO by plane only possible from KÖNIGSBERG. Have suggested to army intendant 16 to arrange for Zyklon transport to KÖNIGSBERG by truck. If this is not possible, send a telex and ask for an address in KÖNIGSBERG where the Zyklon can be shipped by express rail. Please report successful completion to:*
> *Higher SS and Pol.leader East, RIGA"*

On 21 December 1941, the *Deutsche Zeitung im Ostland* (a German-language newspaper circulated in the occupied territories of the East) published an article titled "*Hygiene im Ostland*" ("Hygiene in the Eastern Territories") which referred to the recent introduction of hygienic measures in the Reich Commissariat (von Lilienfeld-Toal):

> *"One of the most urgent tasks related to hygiene in the East is the improvement of bodily cleanliness of the population and the struggle against vermin, particularly lice* […]. *By order of the Reich Commissar for the East dated 12 December 1941, all municipalities are to create and maintain facilities required to combat and prevent dangerous diseases. In this country, this most of all also includes delousing installations."*

It therefore remains for us to examine Wetzel's letter in its historical context. It is an unquestionable fact that the entire documentation from this period not only does *not* confirm the murderous implications of Wetzel's letter, but is in fact in open contrast to them. Suffice it here to point out that on the previous day, 24 October 1941, the above-mentioned meeting between Lohse, Drechsler, and Lange took place; on the same day, the report was written about the meeting which had been scheduled for 23 October under the chairmanship of SS *Sturmbannführer* Eichmann at Office IV B 4 in Berlin. A month earlier, on September 24, 1941, Karl Daluege, Chief of the Regular Police, had sent the relevant offices an urgent letter on the subject of "Evacuations of Jews from the Old Reich and the Protectorate," which stated (PS-3921. IMT; Vol. 33, pp. 535f.):

> *"In the period from 1 November to 4 December 1941, 50,000 Jews were deported by the Security Police from the Old Reich, from Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia to the East to the area around Riga and Minsk. The expulsions take place in Reichsbahn transport trains of 1,000 persons each. The transport trains will be assembled in Berlin, Hamburg, Hanover, Dortmund, Münster, Düsseldorf, Cologne, Frankfurt/M., Kassel, Stuttgart, Nuremberg, Munich, Vienna, Breslau, Prague and Brno."*

In none of these documents is there the slightest reference to a planned killing of Jewish deportees in Riga who were unable to work.

Arad writes (Arad 1979, p. 228):

> *"Documents published by the Soviets and trials of war criminals conducted in the USSR and other countries have not proved that permanent gas installations, in which Jews and non-Jews were killed, were constructed and used in the Eastern territories. However, gas vans, in which Jews were killed, did operate in these areas. Apparently, Lohse did not accept Dr. Wetzel's 'advice' and there were differences of opinion between Lohse and the SS concerning the Jewish question."*

Apart from the conjured-up reference to "gas vans" which isn't backed up by any document, this is precisely the crux of the problem, as is further indicated by the fact that Wetzel's letter was "a reply sent to Lohse in Rosenberg's name" (*ibid.*, p. 227). Rosenberg's role in this matter is too often forgotten. At the time, the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Territories in the East was still speaking of expelling the European Jews beyond the Urals, and little more than one month before, he had, together with Hans Frank, discussed the eventuality of deporting Jews into the Eastern territories:[169]

> *"The General Governor then began to speak of the possibility of deporting the Jewish population of the General Government into the Eastern territories. Reich Minister Rosenberg remarked that similar wishes on the part of the military administration in Paris had already come to his attention. For the moment, however, he cannot see any possibility to put such resettlement plans into action. In the future, however, he declared himself prepared to encourage Jewish emigration to the East, since the intention exists anyway of deporting the asocial elements within the territory of the old Reich into the thinly populated Eastern territory."*

Otto Bräutigam, in his letter dated 18 November, did not claim that these directives had been changed, but limited himself to stating that, according to the regulation in question, one did not need to concern oneself with economic interests. The meaning of this indication appears in the "Guidelines on the Treatment of the Jewish Question" ("*Richtlinien über die Behandlung der Judenfrage*"), which contained the necessary corrections consequent to the Führer decision to carry out the evacuation of the Jews to the East during the war, sent by Himmler to Rosenberg on 29 January 1942. This decision was reflected, first of all, in the first paragraph of the document (T/298). I underscored the changed words, while the words in the first version (see p. 114) are placed in square brackets:

> *"All measures regarding to the Jewish question in the occupied territories in the East <u>are to</u> [must] be taken from the point of view that the Jewish question will be solved in a general way for the whole of Europe [after the war]. <u>In so doing, such measures in the eastern territories as are helpful in bringing about the final solution of the Jewish question and therefore the expulsion of Jewry, must in no way be hindered. Precisely in the Eastern territories, a rather speedy solution to the Jewish question must be striven for.</u>'"*

Another version, undated but dating back to the same period, of these "Guidelines" contains subsequent variations on the same text (here underlined; PS-212. IMT, Vol. 25, p. 302):

> *"All measures relating to the Jewish question in the occupied eastern territories must be taken based on the point of view that the Jewish question will be generally solved for all of Europe after the war <u>at the latest</u>. <u>They are therefore to be devised as preparatory partial measures requiring coordination with the other decisions taken in this area. This applies most urgently to the creation of at least temporary housing possibilities for Jews from the territory of the old Reich.</u>"*

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[169] Berenstein *et al.*, p. 252. The date of the talk indicated here was 13 October 1941.

Paragraph 2 (*Bevölkerungsstand*) of the text of 29 January 1942 also mentions the deportation of Reich Jews to the East, which at that time had already started two months earlier:

> *"To these Jews come now the German Jews who are being transported out of the Reich into the occupied eastern territories and who lose their German citizenship with the relocation of their main residence into the occupied eastern territories according to § 2 of the 11th provision of the Reich Citizenship Law dated 25 Nov. 1941 – Reich Law Gazette, Part I, p. 722."*

A distinction was maintained between the millions of Jews who had lived in Byelorussia and the Ukraine for generations on the one hand, and those who had spilled over into western Poland and the adjacent regions following the advance of the Red Army in 1939-1940 on the other hand. The next sentence says:

> *"The still existing* [instead of: *the remaining residential*] *Jewish population must first be recorded by way of introducing compulsory registration. All Jews will be marked by visible badges (yellow star)."*

The phrase "still existing" implies that some of the Jews were no longer present, which can be explained by shootings, Soviet evacuations, or more or less coerced flight, as may be seen from the *Einsatzgruppen* reports. In the next chapter, we will see that the executions also intended to encourage the flight of large numbers of Jews to (as yet) unoccupied territories.

Regarding economic activity, the "Guidelines" prescribed that "the measures intended to bring about the expulsion of Jewry are to be carried out without regard to economic considerations." Until further decisions had been made, these guidelines simply excluded "Jewish activity in public professions [as public servants] and trade." Apart from that, the Jews were to continue their labor activities (T/298):

> *"The Jews are to be used under supervision for productive, largely physical, labor (road, railway and canal construction, agriculture, etc.). Jewish factory workers, craftsmen and home workers may continue to practice their trades; in so doing, efforts should be made, however, to pool them in purely Jewish enterprises under supervision by the civilian administration. Where Jewish agricultural undertakings (for example, collective farms) exist, they have to continue their work under close supervision."*

In conclusion, Wetzel's letter of 25 October 1941 is extremely dubious as to its authenticity, and from a historiographical point of view inconsistent with the extant documentation. In addition, the assertion that Rosenberg actively supported the alleged extermination of the Jews, or was at least privy to a general plan for such an extermination, cannot be supported by documentary evidence.

2.11. Himmler's Orders in 1942

On 18 May 1942, *SS Gruppenführer* Heinrich Müller is said to have sent *Standartenführer* Jäger the following radio message:[170]

> *"Riga, radio message No. 1533.*
> *Secret.*
> *To the commander of Security Police and Security Service, Lithuania,*
> *SS Standartenfuehrer Jaeger.*
> *On behalf of the commander of the Security Police and Security Service I wish to inform you of the following telex:*
> *Secret Reich Matter*
> *Subject: Final Solution to the Jewish Question.*
> *Following notification by the High Command of the Army, Jews employed at the Army Motor Pool 630 in Minsk as skilled craftsmen were recently subjected to special treatment despite promise to the contrary, thereby allegedly considerably impairing the potential performance of this agency. If that is the case, I request, in execution of a general order by the Reich Fuehrer SS and German Police Leader, that able-bodied Jews and Jewesses aged 16 to 32 years be exempted from special measures in the future, pending further instructions. These Jews are to be assigned to closed labor deployment. Concentration camp or labor camp.*
> *Signed, Mueller, SS Gruppenfuehrer, by proxy."*

The sense of the document is that Himmler had recently issued an order exempting able-bodied Jews aged 16 to 32 from killing, in countermand of a preceding order of total Jewish extermination, which therefore included able-bodied Jews. But when was this order issued? Arad writes (Arad 2009, p. 119):

> *"Forced labor, which was imposed on male as well as female Jews, was one of the worst nightmares in those days before the onset of the final, full-scale physical annihilation. The military administration ordered all Jewish males between 14 and 60 and all Jewish females between 16 and 50 to perform immediate forced labor. Rosenberg ordered on August 16, 1941, that all Jews, male and female ages 14 to 60, were subject to forced labor and that anyone who eluded labor would be imprisoned and in severe cases of evasion punished by death."*

The Wannsee Conference, as is well known, prescribed the labor deployment of able-bodied European Jews as follows (NG-2586-G, p. 7):

> *"In the course of the final solution, the Jews are now to be deployed for labor in the East under appropriate supervision and in an appropriate manner."*

The "Guidelines on the Treatment of the Jewish Question" transmitted by Himmler to Rosenberg on 29 January 1942, as I have shown above, prescribed that "the measures intended to bring about the expulsion of Jewry are to be carried out without regard to economic considerations," and "until such measures were taken," only "Jewish activity in public professions and trade" was to be prohibited. Apart from that, the Jews were to continue their labor activities.

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[170] RGVA, 500-1-25, p. 379.

As early as 12 October 1941, *Sonderkommando* 1 of *Einsatzgruppe* A reported that it had issued the following orders in Estonia:[171]

> *"1. Arrest of all male Jews over 16 years of age,*
> *2. Arrest of all Jewesses fit for labor 16 to 60 years of age, residing in Tallinn and surrounding area, who were put to work cutting peat,"*

The men, with the exception of physicians and the Jewish elders, were executed "by Estonian vigilantes under the supervision of the *Sonderkommando*."[171] The women were not harmed.

These orders were obviously in effect in January 1942.

A telex of Department IId (Labor Policies and Social Administration of the Reich Commissariat East) to the *Generalkommissar* in Minsk dated 17 January 1942 already contemplated the conservation of skilled Jewish manpower (Scheffler/Schulle, Vol. I, p. 6):

> *"On order of the Economic Leadership Staff East, Jewish skilled workers from industry and crafts upon whose work especial value must be placed in individual cases in the interests of the war economy, must be preserved for labor deployment. This preservation must be secured through negotiations with local agencies of the Reich Führer SS."*

It is moreover known that one of the most important documents on the commencement of the so-called "Aktion Reinhardt," the letter by Fritz Reuter, advisor at the governor's office of the Lublin district, Department of Population Issues and Welfare, dated 17 March 1942, also provided for the selection of able-bodied Jews for labor and their utilization in a rational manner (Berenstein *et al*., p. 269):

> *"It would be expedient to divide the Jewish transports arriving in the Lublin district already at their railway station of departure into Jews fit and unfit for labor deployment.* […]
> *Hauptsturmführer Höfle is at work building a large camp in which the deployable Jews can be registered by profession in card files and can be requested from there."*

The letter furthermore states that "Piaski is being freed of Polish Jews and will become the collection point for Jews coming from the Reich." The non-deployable Jews, by contrast, were to be sent to Bełżec, "the outermost border station in Zamosc County," at a rate of four to five transports per day, at 1,000 persons each. Their fate is described as follows:

> *"These Jews would cross the border and never return to the General Government."*

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, this last sentence is said to have meant that the Jews in question were murdered at Bełżec, but this interpretation is already refuted by the definition of the camp as "the outermost border station in Zamosc County," in addition to which it obviously extended "over the border,"

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[171] Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 672, EM No. 111 of 12 Oct. 1941.

outside the General Government,[172] which would make no sense in reference to an "extermination camp."

Wolf Gruner informs us that "by April 20 [1942], the Lvov labor office had distributed 50,000 to 70,000 new identification documents for a total population of 86,000 Jews" (Gruner, p. 258).

Up to April 1942, it is therefore known that one National-Socialist policy consisted of the utilization of Jewish labor, which appears irreconcilable with the presumed Himmler order mentioned in the radio message of 18 May.

Peter Longerich hazards an explanation (Longerich 2004, p. 141):

> *"At the end of April or the beginning of May* [1942]*, the decision was seemingly taken to murder any Jews indiscriminately and with immediate effect. Apparently, at the end of April or in May 1942, the Nazi regime decided to extend the murder of the Jews of Lublin and Galicia to the entire General Government. At the same time, the decision must have been taken to murder en masse the Jews of Upper Silesia; in May and June, thousands were deported to Auschwitz and killed there immediately. The systematic mass murder of Jews in the General Government began in June, but then was broken off for a few weeks because of the transport hold-up."*

According to this, the decision to kill the Jews indiscriminately (therefore including those fit for labor) was taken at the end of April or the beginning of May 1942 (by whom?), yet only a few weeks after this Himmler is said to have exempted deployable Jews aged 16 to 32!

It goes without saying that the claimed order to indiscriminately mass murder the Jews is not supported by any document, and is furthermore refuted by the facts: between the 7th and 30th of June 1942, hence a month after the beginning of May, four transports carrying 4,696 Jews arrived at Auschwitz from France and one from Slovakia. All these Jews were registered, hence not murdered at all (cf. the dates in Czech 1990). After that date, moreover, many Jewish transports from Slovakia, from Vienna, Theresienstadt, Prague and the Old Reich continued to arrive at localities in the district of Lublin, while only very small numbers were sent to the (alleged) extermination camp of Sobibór. Of the 41 transports rolling between 5 May and 15 July, only 11 were sent directly to this camp; the others were sent to various other localities, such as Lubartów, Chełm, Izbica, Dęblin, Rejowiec, Puławy, Ujazdów and others (Mattogno/Graf, pp. 243f.).

Longerich then invokes a presumed reconsideration on the part of the SS authorities of the "complex of Jewish forced labor in the General Government" with the result of a "control of the prisoners who had been first excluded from annihilation as being 'capable of work'" (Longerich 2004, p. 142) that is, that even able-bodied Jews were to be killed, too, and adds:

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[172] The document considers the eastern borders of the General Government to coincide with the border of the Galicia District, although Galicia had already formed part of the General Government since 1 August 1941.

> *"At about the same time as this fundamental decision about the Jews of the General Government, and in any case before the middle of May, the major decisions on radicalising the entire murder programme must have been taken."* (*Ibid.*)

In support of this conjecture, he cites the document in question here:

> *"One significant indication of Himmler's order in May 1942 to extend the murders has been obtained. In the middle of May 1942, Gestapo chief Müller told the commander of the security police in Riga, Jäger, that, in accordance with a 'general order of the Reichsführer SS and chief of the German police,' any 'Jews and Jewesses fit for work aged between 16 and 32 are to be excluded from the 'special measures' until further notice. These Jews are to be assigned to use as closed labour. Concentration camp or labour camp."*
>
> *This exclusion rule contains an implicit indication of what treatment the older prisoners, the younger ones unfit for work, and children under 16 could normally expect within the concentration camp system: they were subjected to 'special measures.'"*

It should be noted first of all that Longerich's pretense of deducing the existence of a Himmler order for the general extermination of the Jews from the radio message of 18 May *relating to the General Government* and dating back to *the beginning of May* is quite dishonest: the most that one could deduce from all this is the existence of a preceding, but chronologically indeterminate, total-extermination order.

Longerich also claims that the presumed Himmler order "is not available in its original form" (*ibid.*), but never stops to wonder why an order of such importance would never have produced the merest echo in contemporaneous German documents, except in an obscure radio message in which it was, moreover, mentioned only in passing.

From a formal point of view, the radio message in question exhibits peculiarities which must be stressed appropriately. It refers to an event having occurred at Minsk, in the General Commissariat of Byelorussia, but is addressed to SS *Standartenführer* Jäger, who was commander of the Security Police of the General Commissariat of Lithuania. That these persons would also have been informed of a possible Himmler order is obvious, but the form of the radio message is unusual, to say the least. As presented, the text should have been addressed to the commander of the Security Police of the General Commissariat of Byelorussia, SS *Obersturmbannführer* Eduard Strauch, inspired precisely by the event at Minsk. But why repeat this event in a radio message addressed to Jäger? The second part of the text would have been more than enough:

> *"in execution of a general order by the Reich Fuehrer SS and German Police Leader, that able-bodied Jews and Jewesses aged 16 to 32 years be exempted from special measures in the future, pending further instructions. These Jews are to be assigned to closed labor deployment. Concentration camp or labor camp."*

The reference to the killings at Minsk is all the more out of place since the able-bodied Jews remaining in Lithuania were housed in the ghettos at Kaunas, Vilnius and Siauliai. It would have made more sense to inform Jäger that those aged

between 16 and 32 were not to be killed. But then, how does one justify these age limits? As we have seen above, Jews in good health were considered able to work if they were between the ages of 15 and 65.

Longerich's comment on the "older prisoners" in the concentration camp is clearly mischievous: he is, in fact, pretending not to know that – albeit only a few – inmates under the age of 16 and a vast number of inmates older than 32 were admitted to the concentration camps. For example, the statistics in the Auschwitz *Stärkebuch* drawn up by Judge Jan Sehn shows that, between 19 January and 19 August 1942, of 20,696 registered inmates, 13,286, *i.e.*, 64.2%, were aged 32 or over (13,286 inmates aged 33 to 90) while 72 were under 16 (from 8 to 15).[173]

No matter how you look at it, Himmler's presumed total-extermination order, with immediate exemption for able-bodied Jews aged 16 to 32, appears historiographically nonsensical. In the General Government, precisely within the framework of "Aktion Reinhardt," still in March, and again, of course, on 20 April 1942, German National-Socialist policy was still based on the conservation and utilization of Jewish manpower, so that over a period of only a couple of weeks, Himmler is said to have issued his total-extermination order, and then, immediately afterwards, an order exempting all Jews able to work!

It is true that Himmler's phantom order was "confirmed" with the well-known statement by ex-SS *Hauptsturmführer* Dieter Wisliceny (IMT. Vol. 4, p. 358):

> *"The Führer had ordered the final solution of the Jewish question; the chief of the Security Police and the SD and the inspector of concentration camps were entrusted with carrying out this so-called final solution. All Jewish men and women who were able to work were to be temporarily exempted from the so-called final solution and used for work in the concentration camps. This letter was signed by Himmler himself. I could not possibly be mistaken since Himmler's signature was well known to me."*

Wisliceny stated that the order dated back to April 1942.[174] In realty, this is not a confirmation, but a contradiction, because Wisliceny was speaking of a presumed general Führer order of extermination relating to the "Final Solution" dating back to April *1942*, from which able-bodied Jews were temporarily exempted, *without age limit*; Longerich, by contrast, is referring to a Himmler order from *May* 1942, which extended a general Hitler order to the General Government, but with temporary exemption for able-bodied Jews aged 16 to *32*.

Current mainstream historiography, as we have seen, places the presumed Führer decision in December 1941 (Gerlach 1998, p. 760). It follows that, from the orthodox Holocaust point of view, the Hitler extermination order from the beginning of December 1941 provided, at least temporarily, for the exemption of able-bodied Jews from the "Final Solution," which concerned "the liquidation of all Jews living in Europe" (*ibid.*), hence including those from the General Government. Therefore, the presumed Himmler order of May 1942 makes no sense,

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[173] Höss Trial, Vol. 10. NTN, 92, pp. 100-103.
[174] SNA, 36/48, p. 142, Wisliceny's statement dated 6 and 7 May 1946.

because both the extermination order, and the order of exemption, were (allegedly) already issued by Hitler in December 1941 *for the General Government as well*. Regarding Jews *unable to work*, the Himmler order presupposes a Hitler *total* Jewish-extermination order, able-bodied included, subsequent to that of December 1941 (which allegedly exempted able-bodied Jews from the extermination action), later modified by the *Reichsführer* SS in the sense of the exemption, specifically, of able-bodied Jews.

Regarding able-bodied Jews, by contrast, the Himmler order implied a total-extermination order which was rapidly amended, in the sense of exempting able-bodied Jews between the ages of 16 and 32, in a time slot of a couple of weeks, between 21 April and the beginning of May 1942.

There is not the slightest documentary trace for any of this, so that, even for the radio message of 18 May 1942, one may truly say that it causes more problems than it solves.

On 26 October 1942, Himmler intervened before the Main Office SS Court for the decision to punish Jews by shooting them without orders:[175]

> *"For shootings of Jews without order and authority, motivation will be decisive in deciding whether or not a punishment should be inflicted, and if so, which punishment.*
> *1) In case of purely political motives, no punishment will be inflicted unless the maintenance of order requires it.* […]
> *2) In case of sadistic and/or sexual motives, legal punishment ensues, even for murder or manslaughter, as the case may be."*

From the above, it may be concluded that individual shootings required an appropriate "order and authority," in the absence of which killings may or may not have been permitted based on the motive of the subject. This applied in the eastern territories in the struggle against "Judeo-Bolshevism," but even here the concrete applications of Himmler's decision shows various interpretations. The verdict against SS *Untersturmführer* Max Täubner, section leader of the First SS Brigade, is a perfect example. The SS and Police Supreme Court of Munich sentenced him to 5 years' imprisonment for the arbitrary killing of several hundred Jews, with the extenuating circumstance "that the defendant was motivated, not by pure sadism, but rather, by a real hatred of Jews" (Klee/Dreßen/Rieß 1988, p. 187). According to the court,

> *"The defendant is not be punished for the Jewish action as such. The Jews must be exterminated; none of the dead Jews is any great loss."* (*ibid.*, p. 189)

The Field Verdict of the Headquarters Court of the District of Proskurov dated 12 March 1943 against *Schachtmeister* (excavation specialist) Johann Meisslein, by contrast, takes a different tack. The defendant, who belonged to the Organization Todt's outpost Proskurov and was employed in the construction of Thoroughfare IV, was accused of ordering the killing of two Jews from a Jewish camp and received a very lenient sentence: 3 months' imprisonment for abuse of authority,

[175] YVA, O.53-171, p. 7.

because he was not authorized to issue such an order (Hoppe, Doc. 246, pp. 586-590):

> *"The shooting of Jews is, however, exclusively a police and SS matter. Under no circumstances are OT members authorized to make decisions in this regard."*

These provisions did not apply to the concentration camps, starting with Auschwitz, where all inmates, Jews included, were subject to a different set of regulations:[176]

> *"I am aware that only the Führer may decide upon the life and death of an enemy of the state. I may not physically harm or kill any opponent of the state (inmate). Any killing of an inmate in a concentration camp requires the personal authorization of the Reichsführer SS* [Himmler]*."*

A message dated 1 September 1942 intercepted and decrypted by the British fully confirms the above directive. This is an order from SS *Brigadeführer* Richard Glücks, Head of Office Group D of the SS WVHA (concentration camps) to the concentration camp commanders:[177]

> *"Camp commanders:*
> *Executions may only be carried out by order of the Reich Security Main Office. Signed GLUECKS, SS Brigadeführer and Major General of the Waffen SS."*

Hence, the discussed alleged Himmler order has nothing to do with the presumed "Final Solution."

[176] GARF, 7021-107-11, p. 30. Cf. Mattogno 2016a, p. 24, and Doc. 3, p. 303.
[177] TNA, HW 16-21. German Police Decodes Nr. 3, Traffic: 1 Sept. 42. ZIP/GPDD 223b/16.8.42.

3. Jews in Incident Reports and Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories

Contrary to the staged U.S. trial paradigm, the *Einsatzgruppen* did not concern themselves exclusively with Jews, and when they did deal with Jews, it was not just to shoot them. As for the executions, most of the time, as I have mentioned, the reasons for the killings are set forth in detail, which would make no sense if a general order had been received to exterminate the Jews as such. It is however important to observe the general context in which the killings were carried out. This will permit us to explore the entire complex of the *Einsatzgruppen*'s anti-Jewish activities and to better understand the processes that led to the various executions.

In the reports, the various actions of the *Einsatzgruppen* are interwoven in an almost inextricable manner. It is therefore helpful to divide them into basic themes.

3.1. The Great Flight

The first reports, up until the end of June 1941, speak of the flight of Jews before German troops:

EM No. 4 dated 25 June 1941:

> *"The Polish population in the occupied Soviet Russian territory have partially welcomed German troops in a friendly manner. In contrast to that, large numbers of Soviet Russians and in particular Jews have fled."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., p. 49)

The theme of the flight of the Jewish population before the advance of the German troops recurs in many other reports. Here some examples:

EM No. 11 dated 3 July 1941, EG A:

> *"Siauliai: 35,000 residents (12-15,000 Jews). Approximately 2,000 Jews still present. The others have taken flight. Prison empty. For now, the Wehrmacht cannot do without the still-remaining able-bodied Jews for the purpose of maintaining military enterprises and activities vital to the population."* (*ibid*., p. 70)

EM No. 26 dated 18 July 1941, EG A:

> *"The greater part of the Jews fled to Russia or the surrounding forests upon the* [German] *invasion of Russia."* (*ibid*., p. 140)
>
> *"The City of Zwiahel is almost completely empty due to the flight of Jews and communists."* (*ibid*., p. 141)

EM No. 37 dated 29 July 1941, EG C:

> *"In Zhitomir there were approximately 30,000 Jews, i.e., a bit more than 30% of the total population. The great majority of them fled prior to the occupation by German troops."* (*ibid*., p. 200)

EM No. 73 dated 4 September 1941, EG B:

This report expressed satisfaction at the circulation of rumors that the Germans were exterminating all the Jews:

> *"The rumor that all the Jews would be shot dead by the Germans is advantageous to us. This may be the primary reason that the Einsatzkommandos encounter fewer and fewer Jews. Thus, we now observe that 70-90% of the Jews originally present have fled. Contrary to what happened earlier, this does not just concern Jews who formerly occupied high offices."* (*ibid*., p. 441)

EM No. 81 dated 12 September 1941, EG C:

The same satisfaction at the phenomenon of fleeing Jews was also expressed in this report:

> *"While considerable numbers of Jews were present in the first few weeks, it was noted that in the territories of the central and eastern Ukraine in many cases 70-90% of the Jewish population, in some cases 100% had fled. This can be considered an indirect success of the Security Police's work, since the no-cost deportation of hundreds of thousands of Jews – by all accounts in most cases beyond the Ural Mountains – is a considerable contribution to the solution of the Jewish question in Europe."* (*ibid*., p. 452)

If the *Einsatzgruppen* had received an order to systematically kill the Jews, they hardly would have welcomed their mass flight to the East. Against the background of the National-Socialist documents and speeches speaking of a "final solution" of the Jewish question by means of evacuation the Jews beyond the Urals, the satisfaction of the *Einsatzgruppen* about the "no-cost deportation" of hundreds of thousands, "in most cases beyond the Ural Mountains," makes perfect sense.

However, there are also passages in the *Einsatzgruppen* reports that seem to contradict the completely unambiguous reports just quoted:

EM No. 31 dated 23 July 1941:

Browning cites this report as follows (Browning 2002, p. 139):

> *"Nebe reported that one and a half million Jews resided in the Byelorussian area. 'A solution of the Jewish question during the war seems impossible in this area because of the tremendous number of Jews. It could only be achieved through deportations.'*
>
> *If expulsion of the Jews was still being considered as the long-term solution, as Burrin and Mayer argue, and the Einsatzgruppe leaders had not yet received any indication of the final goal of extermination, Nebe's comment is puzzling. What was the intended solution made impossible by the large number of Byelorussian*

> *Jews? Why and to what* [end] *was deportation posed as the only possible alternative? The comment makes perfect sense, however, if Nebe knew he was ultimately responsible for killing these one and a half million Jews but despaired of achieving that goal with a meager force of 600–700 men scattered all over Byelorussia and including a Vorkommando that was expected to go all the way to Moscow."*

To understand the significance of Nebe's statement, we must first of all read the related text in full:

> *"The Jewish liquidations undertaken by the Einsatzgruppe have brought about a rapid change in the outward situation in this regard. The Jew nevertheless remains a hostile element in this area, not without danger. Due to his education and tradition, he is quite able and in most cases also willing to act also as an active wrecker.*
>
> *A solution to the Jewish question during the war does not appear feasible in this area, since it can only be achieved by means of resettlement in the overwhelming majority of cases."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, pp. 166f.)

In the first part, Nebe notes that the shootings carried out up to that time had produced a "change" in the arrogant attitude of the "Soviet Jews" – as shown by the passage immediately preceding, which I cited already in Chapter 2 (see p. 35), but notwithstanding that fact, Jews were continuing to act in an actively harmful manner. These considerations form part of a context aimed at the activities of Jews, not at their racial essence. If they were to be exterminated as Jews, their actions would always have been subordinated to their existence as Jews. Here, by contrast, expression is given to a contrary conception: their execution was determined primarily by their attitudes and their anti-German behavior as "Soviet Jews."

EM No. 107 dated 7 October 1941:

In this regard we may add the case of Zhitomir to the cases just discussed:

> *"In this regard, a conference with the field headquarters was therefore held on 18 Sept. 41, at which the decision was made to liquidate the Jews of Zhitomir once and for all, since all previous warnings and special measures had produced no perceptible relief."*

As a result, 3,145 Jews were shot on 19 September (*ibid.*, p. 641).

The second part of Nebe's text does not necessarily mean, as claimed by Browning, that the "solution to the Jewish question" consisted of the total extermination of the Russian Jews, but rather that this could not be effected during the war due to their enormous numbers, so that the only recourse was "resettlement"; the meaning could, on the contrary, be that the "solution to the Jewish Question" consisted precisely of "resettlement," but this could not be effected "during the war" because of the enormous numbers of Jews. In the light of Stahlecker's draft of provisional guidelines for the treatment of Jews dated 6 August 1941 (see Subchapter 2.2.), the phrase in question could only mean that it would not be possible to create temporary "Jewish reservations" and that the solution to the Jewish

problem would have to wait until after the war, followed by a "relocation into a non-European Jewish reservation."

The correctness of this interpretation is confirmed precisely by Nebe's observation of 12 September 1941 cited above, where he expresses satisfaction that the Jews were themselves contributing to this "resettlement" by deporting themselves beyond the Urals.

If we were to follow Browning's logic, since Nebe was unable to kill all the Jews in Byelorussia due to their huge numbers, he should at least have issued orders to kill the greatest possible number of them. Instead, Nebe's thoughts continue as follows:

> *"But to create a tenable basis for the near future, the following measures were taken by Einsatzgruppe B wherever they have commenced their work: in every town, an acting president of a Jewish council was appointed and charged with the formation of an acting Jewish council consisting of three to ten persons. The Jewish council in its entirety is held responsible for the attitude of the Jewish population. They furthermore had to begin immediately with the registration of all Jews residing in the given town. In addition to this, the Jewish council has to form labor units out of all male Jews between 15 and 55 years of age, who have to perform clearing-up work and other tasks for the German authorities and the armed forces. A few labor units of women of the same age range are also to be formed."* (*ibid*., p. 167)

All Jews over 10 years of age had to wear the yellow Jewish badge on the chest and back.

> *"Housing them in the ghetto must be seen as urgent and particularly difficult due to the large numbers of Jews. The implementation of this task is underway; the city districts suitable for this have already been selected in collaboration with the field and town headquarters."* (*ibid*.)

<u>EM No. 66 dated 28 August 1941:</u>

The *Einsatzgruppen* not only expressed satisfaction when large masses of Jews took refuge in flight (that is, allegedly fleeing from execution), but also rejected masses of Jews expelled eastward by Romanian and Hungarian Forces into German-occupied territory, as shown by this EM, where *Einsatzgruppe* for special deployment Lvov reports:

> *"Members of the 10th Hungarian Infantry Battalion expelled over one thousand Hungarian Jews into Galicia across the Dniester River; they were promptly re-expelled by the E. Troop Tarnopol."* (*ibid*., pp. 364f.)

In Subchapter 5.2. of Part Two, I shall discuss these re-expulsions in greater detail; they are obviously no indication of a policy of total extermination.

The already-mentioned EM No. 1, dated as early as 23 June 1941, noted in this regard:

> *"1,000 Jewish refugees were shipped over the border at Jarosław from the Russian side through the German armed forces."* (*ibid*., p. 40)

Felix Rühl, who had belonged to *Sonderkommando* 10b of *Einsatzgruppe* D until October 1941, described the atmosphere and difficulties in which these rejections took place. During a trip from Czernowitz to Mogilev, he encountered a column of evacuees escorted by Romanian soldiers:[178]

> *"Upon my arrival in Mogilev-Podolsk, I was told that this column consisted of Jews, and that these people originally came from Bessarabia and Bukovina, had been driven from their homes, and were to be left to their fate across the border. I tried to concentrate these people near Mogilev-Podolsk, to bring them back together. On this matter I had talks with the head of Einsatzgruppe D, Otto Ohlendorf, and it was decided to take this column back to Romanian territory. On the bridge that had been chosen to cross the river, however, there were Romanian forces with their commanding officer, a Romanian colonel, who told us that, if this column was taken to the bridge, he would open fire and kill the people.*
>
> *I went to Ohlendorf for another talk, and returned the next day with Ohlendorf's decision to lead the people downriver into the territory of Einsatzkommando 12, because in this territory there was a German bridge. In the morning, after my return, the column was assembled according to the order given to me by Ohlendorf, and I instructed the local commander of the partial unit, Obersturmführer Lippert, to lead the column to the border of the neighboring Kommando 12 and to hand over the column to Einsatzkommando 12. He already had orders to take these people back to their homeland across the German bridge. In my opinion, this column consisted of about 12,000 to 15,000 persons."*

Worth mentioning in this context is also a report by the Chief of the Security Group East of the Field-Police Group within the Reich Security Service (*Reichssicherheitsdienst*), signed by a certain Schmidt and sent to the head of the Reich Security Service Johann Rattenhuber (Hoppe, Doc. 56, p. 190):

> *"Another danger is that the Romanian government has gathered 60000 Jews on its border, which is only 35 km south of Vinnitsa. These Jews are housed in a small district bordering the district of Vinnitsa. According to the Romanian authorities, they are employed there as collective farm workers; but the fact is that the Romanian government is abandoning the Jews there to starve, as they shrink back from shootings following the German pattern. Because of the hunger and the poor housing, epidemics have broken out there, especially typhus. Some of the sick Jews were taken to German-occupied territories in order to be treated there. However, in order to prevent the outbreak of epidemics, they were and are being bumped off by the security police.*
>
> *Major Pomme further explains that it cannot be denied that under the given circumstances a large number of Jews are fleeing daily to the Ukraine, especially to nearby Vinnitsa, in order to escape starvation. These Jews are not only the best forces of enemy espionage and sabotage, but also the spreaders of epidemics and contagious diseases. In order to keep this danger away from Vinnitsa and its surroundings, the border must be better occupied or the Romanian government must*

[178] Affidavit by Felix Rühl dated 25 June 1947. NO-4149. Editor's remark: Since the author could no longer find his copy of the German original, this quote has been translated from the Italian translation.

> *be asked to solve the Jewish question as it is done in the occupied East (by shooting), or else to remove the Jews from the border."*

The document states at the beginning that Major Pomme had been very concerned about the Jewish question, since the military installation being built there (the Führer headquarters "Wehrwolf") had been endangered by the presence of Jews (*ibid*., p. 189). Thus, the killings were not carried out on the basis of racial criteria, but for security reasons as well as due to the sanitary considerations.

Who was this Schmidt who had signed the document? Wendy Lower refers to him as an SS *Sturmbannführer* (Lower, p. 151) and gives his first name as Friedrich in her index of names. How did this officer know that the "German pattern" of shooting applied in all German-occupied territories of the east? In a sense, the report itself refutes this claim, explicitly stating that there were about 5,000 Jews living in Vinnitsa at the time (Hoppe, p. 190).

On January 12, 1942, Schmidt wrote in another report (Lower, p. 152):

> *"In the village of Strishawka there were 227 Jewish residents. The large number of Jews is explained by the fact that a GPU camp was in that village. Since the Jews were a big danger for the site [Führer headquarters], I made a request to the Gebietskommissar to have the Jews evacuated. Because of special circumstances, an evacuation was not possible."*

Therefore, these Jews were shot. This case confirms that the German "pattern" applied only in special situations such as the one described above.

It is also worth pointing out that the Jews concentrated by the Romanians fled to the territory controlled by the Germans to escape starvation, and that the Jews suffering from typhus were deported (apparently by the Romanians) to the German occupation zone so that they could be treated there. Had German policy been based on a "pattern" of racially motivated extermination, the Germans would simply have killed the Jews coming into their sphere of influence without exception. In reality, however, the Germans limited themselves to driving back into the Romanian occupation zone those Jews whom the Romanians *wanted* to get rid of and whom the Germans *should have* gotten rid of according to the extermination thesis.

<u>EM No. 40 dated 1 August 1941, EG A:</u>

Let us return to Browning. The fallacy of his interpretation, according to which Nebe could not carry out the presumed extermination of all the Jews in Byelorussia due to their huge numbers, is categorically refuted in the case of Estonia.

EM No. 40 of 1 August 1941 contains a phrase from *Einsatzgruppe* A which contradicts Browning's assumptions:

> *"Since there are relatively few Jews in Estonia, solving the Jewish problem here will be no problem."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., p. 217)

It would therefore have been easy to exterminate them all, but this was not done:

EM No. 111 dated 12 October 1941, EG A:

With regard to *Einsatzgruppe* A, the already-mentioned EM No. 111 of 12 October 1941 reports:

> *"After occupying the country, there may have been still some 2,000 Jews in the country.* […] *From here, the following orders were issued:*
> *1. Arrest of all male Jews over 16 years of age,*
> *2. Arrest of all Jewesses fit for labor 16 to 60 years of age, residing in Tallinn and surrounding area, who were put to work cutting peat,*
> *3. Closed billeting of all Jewesses in Tartu and the surrounding area in the synagogue and a dwelling house in Tartu,*
> *4. Arrest of all Jews and Jewesses fit for labor in Pärnu and surrounding area,*
> *5. Registration of all Jews by age, sex and ability to work for the purpose of housing them in a camp now under preparation.*
> *The male Jews over the age of 16, with the exception of physicians and the appointed Jewish elders, were executed by Estonian vigilantes under the supervision of the* Sonderkommando. […] *The total number of Jews shot in Estonia amounts to 440 so far. Following the conclusion of this measure, approximately 500 to 600 Jewesses and children will still be alive. The rural communities are free of Jews already now. A camp is currently being prepared for the Jews residing in Tallinn and surrounding areas in Harku (district of Tallinn), which is to be expanded following the accommodation of the Jews from Tallinn and which is to house all the Jews in Estonia. All Jewesses fit for labor are employed in agricultural work and peat cutting on the grounds of the nearby penitentiary, which also solves the issues of nourishment and financial support."* (*ibid*., p. 672)

If we are to believe the execution figures in the Incident Reports, 2,000 persons could easily have been shot in a single day; instead, however, only 440 persons had been reported shot in Estonia by 12 October. The second Stahlecker Report confirms that, upon the entry of German troops into Estonia, there were approximately 2,000 Jews in the country, while by 31 January 1942 there was not a single Jew left in Estonia, but the total number of Jews reported shot amounted to merely 963.[179]

EM No. 86 dated 17 September 1941, EG C:

In favor of the existence of a presumed extermination order, a proposal by *Einsatzgruppe* C contained in this EM is often cited (I quoted the preceding passage of this report already in Subchapter 2.6.):

> *"In the western and central Ukraine, Jewry is almost identical with the urban workers, craftsmen, and trading class. If we are to refrain completely from using Jewish manpower, then the economic reconstruction of the Ukrainian and urban administrative centers will be almost impossible. There is only one possibility, which the German administration in the General Government has long failed to recognize: solution of the Jewish problem through comprehensive labor deployment of the Jews. This would result in a gradual liquidation of Jewry = a devel-*

[179] RGVA, 550-4-93, pp. 57 and 184.

> *opment corresponding to the economic circumstances of the country."* (*Ibid*., pp. 478f.)

From the preceding passage, it may be seen very clearly that the "main task" of the *Einsatzgruppen* was "destroying the Communist apparatus"; the Jewish population was not identical to that apparatus, which was obvious, but, as *Einsatzgruppe* C wrote in the report dated 1 August 1941, the Jews were seen as the "main carriers" of that apparatus at any rate, and as such were subject to execution – in the majority of cases for membership in Bolshevik institutions or for specific pro-Bolshevik anti-German actions.

The last sentence of the document is commonly understood in the sense of what is called "annihilation by labor," but that is not the only interpretation possible, and far from the most-coherent.

At that time, the common practice of the *Einsatzgruppen* consisted, apart from the executions carried out according to precisely defined criteria, of the creation of ghettos and using the labor of able-bodied Jews, but without any intention of "annihilation by labor" (see Chapter 5).

EM No. 32 dated 24 July 1941:

That the Germans aimed at concentrating the Jews in ghettos and putting them to work appears clearly in the report titled "The Jewish Question in the Byelorussian Settlement Area" annexed to this EM, in which Nebe's observations, set forth the day before, were reproposed in this form:

> *"Summing up, it must be stated: at least one and a half million Jews live in the Byelorussian settlement area; their sociological structure in the former Polish and former Soviet areas is not uniform. Immediate measures were implemented to solve the Jewish problem through the appointment of Jewish councils, the marking of all Jews over the age of 10, the creation of labor units of all Jews aged from 15 to 55, and the creation of ghettos largely prepared and already partially carried out."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., p. 178)

Here as well, we have a "Solution of the Jewish question" consisting essentially of "labor units" and "the creation of ghettos." At that time, there was no precedent for "annihilation by labor"; the concept only appeared – indirectly – months later, at the Wannsee Conference, but here the "natural reduction" was considered the eventual fate (not the principal objective to be pursued) of "a large part," but not of all Jews (NG-2586-G, p. 7).

Angrick asserts that "annihilation by labor" presumably proven by the text quoted above was not immediately adopted in the central Ukraine, "however, Fritz Katzmann, the SS and Police leader in District Galicia, had been charged with applying the idea on the stretch of Thoroughfare IV (*Durchgangsstrasse* IV; DG IV) under his purview, starting in October 1941." In Galicia, he adopted "the policy of using Jews for hard labor, thus complying in part with the strategy called for by *Einsatzgruppe* C." For Katzmann, "killing his Jewish workers was more important than their work," and he is said to have implemented this plan precisely through the construction of Thoroughfare IV. Angrick nevertheless rec-

ords Katzmann's statement that he had "only employed 20,000 Jews" in this project, with whose labor he had built 160 km of road. The number of Jews employed was therefore extremely small compared to the number of Jews present in Galicia; when the Germans entered the region, there were over 455,000 Jews;[180] starting on 15 October 1941, when work began in preparation for Thoroughfare IV, Katzmann first built seven labor camps with 4,000 Jews, then 15 with 20,000 Jews, who, as has already been stated, built 160 km of road.[181]

Hence, Angrick's conjecture does not hold water, and he himself proceeds to demolish it entirely by writing that "by spring 1942, there were 50,000 POWs, 50,000 civilians, and 10,000 Jews working on DG IV" (Angrick, pp. 194f., 201).

A more-careful reading of the Katzmann report shows that Angrick's claims are mutually contradictory. On 17 October 1942, Katzmann and the commander of the Armament Commando Lvov signed an agreement on the use of Jewish labor, whose guiding principle was expressed this way:

> *"The SS and Police Leaders in Galicia and Armaments Commando Lvov agree that it is necessary to keep the Jewish workers fit to work, which absolutely requires proper housing, clothing and medical care."*

The first point dealt with adequate housing, the second with "nourishment":

> *"Feeding of the Jewish workers is the responsibility of the factories. It has to take place exclusively in the factory. Apart from the main meal, breakfast and dinner are also to be provided. Full provisioning is to be ascertained even in case of sickness."* (Emph. added)

Point 4 concerned clothing. Jewish workers were granted permission to bring "sufficient clothing, particularly winter clothing" with them to the camp (IMT, Vol. 37, pp. 398-400).

Wendy Lower also addresses this issue in a quite convoluted paragraph ("'*Vernichtung durch Arbeit*'. Jewish Laborers on DG IV and Nazi Headquarters") but without providing a shred of evidence for this "extermination." She concludes her presentation with historically unsubstantiated estimates. She concedes that "[t]here are extremely few accounts and records about DG IV camp conditions and the experiences of Jews who labored on the road, though a few historians have begun to explore this emerging topic" (Lower, p. 146).

Wendy Lower's estimates are not based on documents and are probably greatly exaggerated, but even if her figures were correct, the mass killings and mass deaths in labor camps have by no means reached the scale claimed in orthodox Holocaust literature (*ibid*., p. 150):

> *"Upon the liquidation of the DG IV camps in late 1943-early 1944, the German SD, Order Police, and non-German auxiliaries had killed, according to one scholar's estimate, as many as 25,000 Jewish laborers in Ukraine. At the DG IV labor camps in Haisyn, about 7,000 Jews were worked to death and killed when the camps were liquidated. Thousands were killed in June 1943 and October 1943*

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[180] Report of SS *Gruppenführer* Katzmann dated 30 June 1943. L-22. IMT, Vol. 37, p. 401.
[181] *Ibid.*, p. 393.

> *at the former Khmil'nyk ghetto. A recent quantitative analysis of the Holocaust in Vinnytsia estimates that 10,000 Jews died in the labor camps during 1942-43."*

If we follow orthodox Holocaust historiography, "annihilation by labor" is said to have originated months later (Wagner, p. 720):

> *"The concept of 'annihilation by labor' probably originated in the year 1942. In the sources known so far, the expression appears in two file memos from September of that year, reproducing talks between the only recently appointed Reich Minister of Justice Thierack with Goebbels and Himmler. According to this, the thought of 'annihilation by labor' originated with Goebbels, with whom Thierack discussed, on 14 September 1942, the transfer of prisoners from prison to the SS and their subsequent extermination."*

It follows that the "gradual liquidation of Jewry" as a result of "labor deployment" could not signify physical liquidation, but rather the elimination of the role which Jewry had played so far, in exactly the same way as Hitler's "prophecies" on "the destruction of the Jewish race in Europe"[182] consisted of the fact that "Jewry as a whole will have come to an end playing its role in Europe."[183]

By way of ghettoization and consequent "labor deployment," Eastern Jewry *during the war* (the essential context in which the statements of the *Einsatzgruppen* commanders were made should be kept in mind) would have come to an end playing its role in the East.

EM No. 52 date 14 August 1941, EG C:

A similar perspective is made obvious by a remark of *Einsatzgruppe* C contained in this EM (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 290; unless and until noted otherwise, all subsequent page numbers are from this):

> *"Since the Ukrainians as a whole are to be regarded as more intelligent and more gifted than the Rumanians, the solution of the Jewish question is no doubt in worse hands with the Rumanians. Since the percentage of Jews is very high, it is a problem requiring the most careful examination, including from an economic point of view. Pending a final solution of the Jewish question for the entire continent, the problem can only be approached within a German-Ukrainian framework. The surplus Jewish masses can be used and used up splendidly, namely by cultivating the great Pripyat Swamps as well as the swamps on the northern Dnieper as well as the Volga."*

The "final solution of the Jewish question for the entire continent" was to come after the war; until that time, the enormous Jewish masses could be employed in large-scale public irrigation projects.

The "Situation Report of Field Headquarters 240, Detachment VII. Reporting period: 15 Sept. 41 to 15 Oct. 41," dated 19 October, refers to this matter as follows:[184]

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[182] Domarus, Vol. II, 1st half-volume, p. 1058. Speech before the Reichstag, 30 January 1939.
[183] *Ibid.*, 2nd half-volume, p. 1663, speech of 30 January 1941.
[184] YVA, O.53-6, p. 15.

> *"The Jewish question can be considered solved, at least as far as the City of Dnepropetrovsk is concerned. At the beginning of the occupation, some 35,000 Jews were still present. Approximately 15,000 were affected by measures of the SD, approximately another 15,000 fled due to these measures, and approximately 5,000 are still present."*

It is not possible to believe that 15,000 Jews fled without the consent of the Germans; after all, their flight, too, was a contribution to the "solution of the Jewish problem."

EM No. 111 dated 12 October 1941, EG A:

The flight of many Jews was also observed at Kremenchug and Poltava according to this EM:

> *"The city has approximately 89,000 residents, about 40% of them Jews. All persons of interest have fled, as usual, about 40% of them Jews.* […]
> *Also, in the region of Poltava, the Jews have mostly fled; a certain reflux of Jews and other persons of interest is expected only after a certain period of time."* (p. 673)

EM No. 135 dated 19 November 1941

This EM states that there were 100,000 Jews at Dnepropetrovsk to start with, 70,000 of whom fled before the arrival of the Germans. Of the remaining 30,000, approximately 10,000 were shot on 13 October by a squad of the Higher SS and Police leader, after which another 1,000 were shot by *Einsatzkommando* 6. The others were left alive "because of the considerable lack of skilled workers of Jewish craftsmen" (p. 818).

Later reports often returned to the topic of the flight of Jews:

EM No. 90 dated 21 September 1941, EG B:

> *"Particularly remarkable is the fact that in these cities, of which in particular Gomel and Chernigov previously had considerable Jewish populations – in Gomel, for example, of 100,000 inhabitants, 50% were Jews – hardly a Jew can be found. As could be established, during the evacuation that had begun weeks ago, the Jews were evacuated on a preferential basis, with Communist propaganda stressing that all Jews would be shot immediately after the occupation of the city by the Germans."* (p. 517)

EM No. 92 dated 23 September 1941, EG B:

> *"It's the same story with the Jews, who were always evacuated in a timely manner. In particular the already-mentioned announcement of the Moscow radio broadcasting station that the Germans would shoot all Jews caused, according to credible sources, many Jews who intended to remain in the cities to follow the evacuation order and flee."* (p. 541)

EM No. 94 dated 25 September 1941, EG A:

> *"In the old Soviet areas only a few isolated Jews turned up in the cities. The vast majority of resident Jews has fled."* (p. 555)

EM No. 111 dated 12 October 1941, EG A, Estonia:

> *"With the advance of German troops onto Estonian soil, approximately half the Jews made preparations to flee, and, since these Jews had cooperated with the Soviet authorities, they left the country with them in an easterly direction."* (p. 672)

EM No. 123 dated 24 October 1941, EG B:

> *"The refugee movement and planned evacuation of the Jews to the East is obviously growing steadily in magnitude. Thus, the VKM, advancing towards Moscow, reported that all the localities occupied so far were free of Jews, because the Jews had all been evacuated by the Bolsheviks."* (p. 727)

EM No. 133 dated 14 November 1941, EG B:

> *"The refugee movement of the Jews to the East, as could be observed in this reporting period, continues unabated. Thus, EK 9* [Einsatzkommando 9]*, on its advance towards Moscow, reported that in the City of Yartsevo, where approximately 3,000 Jews used to live, not a single one was left. Similar at Vyazma, Gzhatsk, Moshaysk, Yukhnov and Bryansk."* (p. 786)

EM No. 144 dated 10 December 1941, EG B:

> *"The Jewish population has fled to the last man. The Jewish proportion of the population in these regions was very low anyway."* (p. 868)

EM No. 146 dated 15 December 1941, EG B:

> *"Jews: During the current reporting period as well, it could be seen that the refugee movement of the Jews to the East continues. For example, when our commandos arrived in the cities of Orel, Medyn and Maloyaroslavets, they were free of Jews."* (p. 881)

EM No. 156 dated 16 January 1942, EG C:

> *"While communist elements appear to be present in considerable numbers, we got the general impression that most of the Jews had fled before the arrival of the commando."* (Mallmann 2014 *et al*., p. 100)

In this context, one may well wonder whether the more-fanatical commanders of the *Einsatzgruppen* and Police units may have invented executions of Jews who had already fled, or exaggerated the numbers of victims, in order to accelerate the Jews' fright and thus their flight.

3.2. Pogroms

Starting with the first few days of Operation Barbarossa, a number of pogroms were observed, some spontaneous, others instigated by the *Einsatzgruppen*. The

spontaneous pogroms were a reaction against the sufferings inflicted upon the population by the Soviet system:

EM No. 8 dated 30 June 1941, EG A, EK 1b:

> Kaunas: *"At night, heavy shootout between Lithuanian partisans, Jews and irregulars… several thousand Jews already shot* [by] *Lithuanian partisan groups in the past 3 days."* (p. 55)

EM No. 10 dated 2 July 1941, EG B:

> *"AOK 17* [Army Supreme Command 17] *has suggested, first to use the resident anti-Jewish and anti-Communist Poles for self-purging actions in the newly occupied territories. The leader of the Security Police and the SD gave the following order to all Einsatzgruppen on 1 July 41: 'Order No. 2. Poles residing in the newly occupied territories, particularly in the former Polish territories, will be both anti-Communist and anti-Jewish due to their experiences. It goes without saying that the purging actions are to encompass primarily Bolsheviks and Jews.'"* (p. 64)

EM No. 13 dated 5 July 1941, EG C, EK 9, Grodno:

> *"Pogroms initiated."* (p. 83)

EM No. 15 dated 7 July 1941, EG A, Riga:

> *"Apart from these auxiliary police troops, 2 other independent groups formed to carry out pogroms. All synagogues destroyed, so far 400 Jews liquidated."* (p. 90)

EM No. 19 dated 11 July 1941:

> *"The Higher SS and Police leader before the commander-in-chief of the Rear Army Area North, SS Gruppenführer… Prützmann reports:* […]
> *Following the withdrawal of the Red Army, the population in Kaunas rose in a spontaneous uprising. Another large number of Jews were shot by police auxiliary forces.*
> *Einsatzgruppe A: Location Riga.*
> *1) A total of 7,800 Jews have now been finished off in Kaunas, some by pogrom and some by shooting by Lithuanian commandos. All corpses have been disposed of. Further mass shootings are no longer possible; hence, a Jewish committee was summoned, and it was explained to them that so far we had had no reason to intervene in domestic conflicts between Lithuanians and Jews."* (p. 103)

EM No. 24 dated 16 July 1941, EK 2, Riga:

> *"600 Communists and 2,000 Jews are currently in prison. 400 Jews perished in Riga as a result of pogroms, while 2,300 were killed by Latvian auxiliary police and some by our own forces since the arrival of EK 2. The prisons will be completely cleared out in the next few days. Another 1,600 Jews were finished off by EK 2 in Latvia outside Riga."* (pp. 129f.)

Einsatzgruppe C:

> *"The Ukrainian population engaged in welcome anti-Jewish activity since the first hours after the withdrawal of the Soviets. Thus, in Dobromil, the synagogues were set on fire. In Sambor, 50 Jews were beaten to death by outraged mobs. In Lvov, the population drove approximately 1,000 Jews together while mistreating them and delivered them to the GPU prison, which is occupied by the German army."* (p. 132)

EM No. 40 dated 1 August 1941, EG A:

> *"In Lithuania, we very quickly succeeded in encouraging Lithuanian groups to a self-purge, resulting in the complete elimination of the Jews from public life. Pogroms occurred in every town."*

Latvia:

> *"Even though Jews have been entirely eliminated from public life, they can still be seen on the streets of Latvian cities. The shamelessness of the Jews has contributed to increased self-purging activities, so that pogroms, the destruction of synagogues and the liquidation of Jews and Communists were step by step occurring in all towns. In Jelgava and the surrounding district, the 1,556 Jews still present there were done away with to the last man by the local populace. The self-purges in Latvia are currently still under way."* (p. 216)

EM No. 43 dated 5 August 1941, EG A:

> *"Staging pogroms against the Jews has been nearly impossible due to the passivity and political stupor of the Byelorussians."* (p. 237)

EM No. 47 dated 9 August 1941, EG C, Zhitomir:

> *"Former attempts carefully to inspire pogroms against Jews unfortunately did not show the desired success. Only in Tarnopol and Khorostkov did they succeed in finishing off 600 and 110 Jews, respectively. The lack of success might be attributed, first of all, to the fact that the Ukrainian population is still too much intimidated by the former power of the Jews and still fears a possible return of the Russians."* (p. 264)

3.3. Soviet Atrocities and Reprisals

Starting with EM No. 11 dated 3 July 1941, mention began to be made of atrocities by the fleeing Soviets against the populations previously occupied by them, followed by acts of revenge by the local populations in the form of pogroms, and of German reprisals directed primarily against Communist-party officials and the Jewish intelligentsia:

EM No. 11 dated 3 July 1941, EG B, Lemberg:

> *"According to reliable reports from Russians prior to their withdrawal, approximately 30,000 inhabitants were shot. The corpses piled up in GPU prisons exhibited terrible mutilations. Excitement among the population; 1,000 Jews have al-*

ready been driven together. EK 6 reports the shooting of 133 Jews on 2 July 1941." (p. 70)

EM No. 13 dated 5 July 1941, EG B, Lvov:

"EK 4a: Location Lutsk…. 2,000 shootings in reprisal for murder of Ukrainians… EK 4b: Location Tarnopol. 5,000 Ukrainians kidnapped, 2,000 murdered. As a counter-measure, campaign of arrests initiated against Jewish intelligentsia, who were co-responsible for the murders and also acted as informants for the NKVD. Number [of victims] *estimated at some 1,000. On 5 July, approximately 70 Jews driven together by the Ukrainians and killed with satchel charges. Another 20 Jews slain in the streets by soldiers and Ukrainians, as a reaction for the murder of three soldiers who were found tied up in the prison with their tongues cut out and their eyes gouged out. Wehrmacht pleasantly good attitude towards the Jews."* (p. 86)

EM No. 15 dated 7 July 1941, EG A:

"In this context, it also turned out that one German soldier remaining unharmed after this execution was beaten to death by a Jew from Riga; hence, 100 Jews were shot on the same spot on 4 July 1941 by a squad from the Security Police and SD." (p. 90)

EM No. 19 dated 11 July 1941, EG C:

"Einsatzgruppe C: location Rovno.
EK 4a still in Rovno, where there were 240 executions of Bolsheviks, most Jewish officials, agents, etc. […]
EK 4b has ended its activity in Tarnopol. 127 executions. In addition, in the course of the persecution of the Jews inspired by the Einsatzkommando, liquidation of 600 Jews. In Zborov, 600 Jews liquidated by the Waffen-SS in reprisal for Soviet atrocities." (p. 104)

EM No. 20 dated 12 July 1941, EG B, Minsk:

"The houses were apparently set on fire by Jews, because the Jews were supposed to vacate their houses for the benefit of returning Byelorussian refugees. The population is now in the mood for pogroms. Their rage against the Jews has triggered certain actions. A number of Jews were liquidated for this deed." (p. 109)

Einsatzgruppe C, Rovno:

"On 5 July 41, 15 Jews were executed in Rudki in reprisal for the bestial murder of the Ukrainian nationalist leader Dr. Kirnyczny. The synagogue and Jewish houses were set on fire by the Ukrainian population. In Stryi, 150 Ukrainians were found murdered. Initiated investigations succeeded in the arrest of 12 Communists co-responsible for the murder of the Ukrainians. They consisted of 11 Jews and 1 Ukrainian, who were shot with the participation of the entire population of Stryi." (p. 109)

EM No. 24 dated 16 July 1941, EG A, Daugavpils:

This EM reports that Daugavpils was taken on 26 June; violent fires broke out over the 2-3 following days.

> *"The Jews were significantly involved in the arson itself. 5 Jews were caught in the act the first 3 days, and immediately shot. The Latvians jailed 1,125 Jews, 32 political prisoners, 85 Russian workers and 2 criminal women by 7 July, most of them only during the last few days, however.* […] *The actions against the Jews continue increasingly. Upon suggestion of the EK, all houses still standing are being cleared of Jews by the auxiliary police service, and the dwellings are assigned to the non-Jewish population. Jewish families are being driven out of the city by Latvians, while the men are being arrested. The food supply is difficult, since the supplies have been almost completely destroyed by fire. The arrested male Jews are being summarily shot and buried in already prepared graves. So far, 1,150 Jews have been shot in Daugavpils by EK 1b."* (p. 129)

This report also contains a detailed description of Soviet atrocities in the region of Lvov by *Einsatzgruppe* C, where approximately 20,000 Ukrainians disappeared, 80% of them from the intellectual class. The prisons were full of Ukrainian bodies, 3,000 to 4,000 according to a conservative estimate. 82 bodies were found in the prison of Dobromil, among them those of four Jewish informants. In the vicinity of the city, a salt mine was found, 80 meters deep, full of bodies. Nearby was a mass grave measuring 5 m × 15 m. The number of people murdered in the district of Dobromil was estimated at several hundred. At Sambor, the Soviets shot 400 Ukrainians. 120 persons were shot on 27 June.

> *"During the murders, the Russians and Jews acted with extreme cruelty. Bestial mutilations were routine. Women's breasts were cut off, men were castrated. Shootings were committed by a shot to the back of the neck. Hand grenades were often used to murder people, too. In Dobromil, women and men were killed by hitting them on the body with the bolt guns used to slaughter cattle. In very many cases, the prisoners must have been tortured to horrible extremes by breaking their bones, etc. In Sambor, the prisoners were gagged to prevent them from crying out during the torture. The Jews, who next to their economical predominance also occupied the public positions and made up the entire Bolshevik militia, were always involved in these atrocities."* (pp. 131f.)
>
> *"Approximately 7,000 Jews were driven together and shot by the Security Police in reprisal for the inhuman atrocities.* […] *Primarily all Jews between the ages of 20 and 40 were arrested, while craftsmen and specialist workers were exempted as needed. In addition to these executions in Lvov, reprisals were carried out in other localities as well; among others, 132 Jews were shot in Dobromil. In Yavorov, 32 Ukrainians were murdered, and 15 Jews were shot in reprisal."* (p. 132)

The City of Lutsk was largely destroyed by fires after the occupation:

> *"according to information from the local commanders, only Jews could have been responsible for the arson. According to the testimony of 19 Ukrainians who had*

survived the butchery with injuries of varying seriousness, the Jews, once again, were predominantly responsible for the arrests and shootings." (*ibid*.)

Jewish and Communist arsonists and looters were shot.

The Soviets locked up 4,000 Ukrainians in the local prison and shot 2,800 of them before retreating; the Jews were "once again predominantly" involved in the arrests and shootings (*ibid*.).

On 30 June, 300 Jews responsible for arson and 20 looters were shot.

At Zolochev, before retreating, the Soviets killed 700 Ukrainians, including all the intellectuals.

"At the request of the Wehrmacht, the militia arrested several hundred Jews, who were shot in reprisal for this. Between three and five hundred Jews were liquidated." (p. 133)

EM No. 26 dated 18 July 1941, EG A:

"The arsons in the city [of Rezekne] *were mostly the work of the Jews. Approximately 60 leading Latvians were found horribly mutilated upon the arrival of the German troops. 80 Jews were liquidated as a result."* (p. 140)

EM No. 28 dated 20 July 1941, EG A, Pskov:

"The population is of the opinion that the Jews must be held primarily responsible for the atrocities committed everywhere. […]

It is assumed that approximately 100 important Ukrainian personalities were murdered in the last days before the Russian withdrawal. In Kremenets, between 109 and 150 Ukrainians were murdered by the Russians. Some of these Ukrainians are said to have been thrown into a cauldron with boiling water; an indication that this is so is the fact that the bodies were found to be without their skin when exhumed. By way of self-justice, the Ukrainians slew 130 Jews with truncheons. In Dubno, where the actions are largely over, there were a total of 100 executions." (p. 150)

"Before their withdrawal, the Russians carried out a horrid bloodbath in Dubno just the way they did in Lvov. In Tarnopol, a total of 127 executions were carried out. There as well, before their withdrawal, the Russians committed atrocities in the same manner as in Lvov and Dubno. A total of 10 bodies of German soldiers were found during the exhumations. Almost all of them had their hands tied behind their backs with wire, while the bodies showed signs of the most horrible mutilations; e.g., their eyes were put out, tongues cut out and limbs cut off from the torso. The number of Ukrainians killed by the Russians, among them also women and children, is ultimately estimated at approximately 600. Jews and Poles were spared by the Russians. The total number of their victims since the occupation of the Ukraine is estimated at 2,000 by the Ukrainians. The deliberate deportation and kidnapping of the Ukrainians began as early as 1939. There is hardly a family in Tarnopol in which one or more members of the family have not disappeared. In the city, which has approximately 40,000 residents, among them 12,000 Ukrainians, 18,000 Jews and 10,000 Poles, 10,000 Ukrainians are simply missing. […] *Torture chambers were discovered in the basement rooms of the court-*

> *house building, just as was also the case in Lvov. Here as well, boiling-hot and ice-cold shower baths were evidently used for purposes of torture. Several corpses were found completely naked whose skin had burst and had torn off in many places.* […] *Troops marching through the district who had an opportunity to view these horrible sights, particularly the corpses of murdered German soldiers, slew approximately 600 Jews and set their houses on fire."* (pp. 150f.)

This report has as Appendix II a "Report on the Soviet-Russian State Prison at Dubno and the Blood Bath of 24 and 25 June 1941" (pp. 154-158).

EM No. 127 dated 31 October 1941, EG C:

This report also deals with these Soviet atrocities:

> *"Over 10,000 interrogations were conducted by the Communists over the course of these four months, during which it always turned out that precisely the Jews worked for the Soviets, if not themselves in responsible positions, then at least as agents, collaborators or informants. The huge number of mass graves did not even in one single case contain the body of a Jew. It is a fact, however, that precisely the Jews are co-responsible for the slaughter of the Ukrainian population. For the Security Police, this resulted in the need for special measures against Jewry."* (p. 741)

In 1941, the German *Auswärtige Amt* (Foreign Office) published a sort of "Black Book" titled *Bolschewistische Verbrechen gegen Kriegsrecht und Menschlichkeit. Dokumente Zusammengestellt vom Auswärtigen Amt* (*Bolshevist Crimes against the Laws of War and Humaneness: Documents Compiled by the Foreign Office*) containing 159 documents. The principal criticism was that of waging war in violation of all international conventions (Auswärtiges Amt, p. 3):

> *"On orders of the rulers in the Kremlin, the war is conducted with the greatest cruelty and in complete disregard of all the principles of international law."*

The Soviets later turned these accusations around and deployed them against the Germans.

3.4. Executions of Party Officials, Intellectuals and Activists

Among the first victims of the *Einsatzgruppen* were Party officials and Jewish intellectuals, as well as Jews suspected of being arsonists, saboteurs, looters, spreaders of false news, etc. These categories of victims appear as early as 3 July 1941:

EM No. 11 dated 3 July 1941, EG C:

> *"Komsomol officials and Jewish Communist Party officials liquidated."* (p. 70)

EM No. 13 dated 5 July 1941, EG C, EK 9, Grodno:

> *"Party officials have fled, leaders of the Jewish intelligentsia (especially teachers, lawyers, Soviet officials) liquidated."* (p. 83)

EM No. 19 dated 11 July 1941:

> *"Einsatzgruppe C: Location Rovno.*
> *EK 4a still in Rovno, where 240 Bolsheviks were executed, mostly Jewish officials, agents, etc."* (p. 104)

EM No. 21 dated 13 July 1941:

> *"In Bialystok, 215 Jewish and Bolshevik officials were shot, in addition to 35 NKVD agents.* […] *In Grodno and Lida, 96 Jews were initially executed during the first few days. I gave orders to intensify this considerably."* (p. 115)

EM No. 22 dated 14 July, EG D:

This report describes one of the first shootings of Jewish intellectuals:

> *"In Khotin, tasks accomplished by Xb. Leading intellectual personalities from the Soviet party and political life, Jewish agitators, teachers, lawyers, rabbis arrested and treated accordingly after a series of raids with the help of Ukrainian confidential informants. Jewish doctors were released to provide medical care for the residents"* (p. 118)

EM No. 24 dated 16 July 1941, EG A, Daugavpils:

As mentioned before (see p. 181), fires broke out after this town had been taken, leading to massive reprisals, but in addition to that:

> *"Finally, on 30 June, 183 Jewish Communists were arrested and liquidated with the help of reliable local Ukrainians."* (p. 129)

EM No. 28 dated 20 July 1941, EG D:

> *"In Rovno, all in all 240 executions have been carried out so far. The victims were mostly Jewish Bolshevik agents and NKVD informants."* (p. 150)

EM No. 32 dated 24 July 1941, EG B:

> *"Thus, in Baranovichi, another 381 persons were liquidated. These were mostly Jewish activists, officials and looters."* (p. 171)

This report then returns to the killing of intellectuals:

> *"In Minsk, the entire Jewish intelligentsia (teachers, professors, lawyers, etc., with the exception of physicians) has now been liquidated."* (p. 172)

EM No. 37 dated 29 July 1941

This report, in part already quoted on p. 167, explains why the *Einsatzgruppen* considered Jewish intellectuals enemies to be killed:

> *"According to careful estimates, there are still 5,000 Jews (9% of the population) in Zhitomir. Many Jews, particularly the intellectual classes, are mostly active as informants for the NKVD. The Soviet agencies treated them quite preferentially. They employed them primarily as administrative officials, managers of warehouses, kolkhozes and sovkhozes (80% of the Soviet officials in the Zhitomir district were Jews). In the practice of their religion, the Soviet authorities hardly gave them any trouble. In contrast to the Orthodox churches, their synagogues*

were always available to them for the practice of their religious rituals. Among the Jews, the hope still prevails that the Bolsheviks will return very soon. Due to the behavior of the Jewish population under Bolshevik rule, the population, with a few exceptions, is overtly anti-Semitic." (p. 201)

EM No. 38 dated 30 July 1941:

The commander of the Security Police and SD in Cracow reports:

"During the reporting period, another 416 persons, mostly Jews, were shot for Communist activities as political commissars in the Red Army, as murderers of nationalistic Ukrainians, or as NKVD agents." (p. 205)

EM No. 39 dated 31 July 1941:

With reference to the commander of the Security Police and the SD in Cracow, this report contains the following remark:

"A more loyal attitude is shown toward Jewish scholars, unless they were sympathetic to Bolshevism and hostile to the Ukrainians during the Soviet period." (p. 210)

This indicates that one could well argue that the shooting of Jewish intellectuals mentioned in other reports was due to the fact that they were considered compromised by Bolshevism or its supporters.

EM No. 43 dated 5 August 1941, EG B, Grodno:

"A large number of Jews who had worked for the NKVD under Soviet rule and who had stirred up the population to resist the German armed forces after the arrival of German troops were taken out." (p. 239)

Vilnius:

"The Latvian security force substantially participated in rendering harmless Jewish-Bolshevik officials and agents." (p. 240)

EM No. 47 dated 9 August 1941:

This report mentions many executions carried out by *Einsatzgruppe* B. 400 Jews were eliminated at Zhitomir in the past few days, "including mostly saboteurs and political officials" (p. 265).

"In Korostyshev, 40 Jews were eliminated for sabotage, spying and looting, for it has also become known that returning Jews tyrannized the population and maintained very close contact with armed bands in the region around Korostyshev." (*ibid*.)

At Berdichev:

"148 Jews were executed for looting and Communist activity." (*ibid*.)

"24 Jews shot in Miropol for refusing to work or for assisting the partisans." (*ibid*.)

"In Vinnitsa, where 30 buried murdered victims were found, 146 Jews were dispatched." (*ibid*.)

In the territory of Shepetovka-Rovno:

> *"370 Russians and 1,643 Jews shot as instigators and accomplices"* (p. 266)

EM No. 73 dated 4 September 1941:

Shootings of individual Jews or in small groups are also recorded in the paragraphs of this report dedicated to the anti-partisan struggle. For example, the persons shot included "a Jew who had destroyed German military cable installations near Minsk" (p. 403); a group of partisans in the district of Borisov who were "predominantly Jewish activists" (*ibid.*); 74 Jews "in reprisal for arsons committed by Jews in Nevel" (p. 404); another 20 were shot "for having been active in a communist sense" (*ibid.*); still others were shot for "anti-German whispering propaganda," "as NKVD informants and political officials," as saboteurs of *Wehrmacht* measures, for accomplices in the murder of three German soldiers at Vitebsk, or as arsonists and troublemakers in the Smolensk Ghetto (p. 405).

The paragraph "Combing through a Civilian Prison Camp" speaks of the liquidation of 733 civilians with this clarification:

> *"In all cases, the persons shot were thoroughly inferior elements, with predominantly Asian elements."*

Immediately afterwards, the text adds:

> *"While combing through the civilian prison camp in Vitebsk, 397 Jews were handed over by the Wehrmacht who had committed sabotage and had caused raids against German troops."* (p. 406)

It therefore appears that the criterion of elimination on racial grounds applied to Asian "inferior elements" rather than to the Jews.

The reasons for the killing of mental patients are not explained; one may well imagine a mix of theories relating to euthanasia combined with the theory of "useless eaters," which must have seemed particularly urgent in the Eastern territories due to the food shortage, aggravated by looting and fires caused by the fleeing Soviets. But perhaps the Germans were also taking account of the hazards constituted by these persons, since EM No. 94 dated 25 September 1941 and No. 108 dated 9 October mentions lunatics armed by the Soviets (pp. 554, 663).

EM No. 80 dated 11 September 1941:

This report deals with Jews supporting the partisans:

> *"As already reported, Jews play an important role in supplying these residual groups with provisions and in conveying information."* (p. 440)

EM No. 88 dated 19 September 1941, EG C:

This report mentions a shooting motivated by a sort of euthanasia combined with health concerns:

> *"On 6 Sept. 41, Commando 4a carried out a Jewish operation in Radomyshl. Jews had come together there from all over the region. All Jewish dwellings were therefore overcrowded. 15 persons in one room. The sanitary conditions had become intolerable as a result. Several Jewish corpses had to be removed from the houses every day. Feeding the Jews, including their children, was not possible.*

> *The result was an increasingly great danger of epidemics. To eliminate these conditions, 1,107 adult Jews were shot by Commando 4a, and 561 youthful Jews were shot by the Ukrainian militia."* (p. 496)

The same *Einsatzgruppe* C report describes an absurdly disproportionate reprisal:

> *"Inflammatory pamphlets and leaflets were distributed in Berdichev on 1 and 2 Sept. 41. Since the guilty parties could not be established, 1,303 Jews, including 876 Jewesses over the age of 12, were executed by a Commando of the Higher SS and Police leader."* (*ibid.*)

EM No. 94 dated 25 September 1941, EG A:

Shootings for health reasons are also mentioned in this report:

> *"As already mentioned, the actions taken against the Jews must differ depending on their population density in the individual sections. Particularly in the northern section of Einsatzgruppe C, very large numbers of fleeing Jews have shown up again in the villages, and are now a heavy burden on the food supply. The population does neither feed nor house them. They live partly in earth burrows or crammed together in old huts. This greatly increases the danger of epidemics, thus already for this reason necessitating the total cleansing of the localities concerned."* (p. 558)

This report also "explains" the reasons for the execution of Jews in Lithuania:

> *"Increased pro-Bolshevik propaganda activity by the Jewish population was observed at several villages by Einsatzkommandos 2 and 3 in the area of the civilian administration. Where such propaganda appears, the toughest measures are implemented, and all such villages are completely purged of Jews insofar as possible. Since this Jewish propaganda activity occurred especially in Lithuania, the number of persons liquidated in the area of EK 2 has risen to some 75,000."* (p. 554)

Communists were not necessarily doomed to die; rather, the position occupied by each person was carefully examined. Thus, EM No. 155 dated 14 January 1942, *Einsatzgruppe* A reported that up to 15,500 Communists had been arrested in Estonia so far, 1,000 of whom were shot, while 6,377 were held in detention and 3,785 were released because the accusations against them were considered to be relatively trivial (Mallmann 2014 *et al*., p. 75).

EM No. 51 dated 13 August 1941:

The "extermination battalions" subordinated to the NKVD constituted a separate case. EM No. 51 dated 13 August 1941 says in this regard (*ibid.*, p. 283):

> *"It is indicative that there are many Jews among the members of the extermination battalions.* […] *Just as everywhere else in the Soviet Union, the Jews play an important role here as well."*

The Germans stumbled across these Soviet units starting in July 1941. A file memo of an SS *Oberscharführer* (the signature is illegible) dated 28 July 1941

bearing the subject "Extermination battalions in the Latvian and Estonian SSR"[185] says that the *Wehrmacht* captured 260 members of one of these units in the district of Kallaste on 26-27 July. The interrogator's description of the event is as follows:

> *"The Battalions were for the most part formed immediately after the outbreak of the war. The members of these 'extermination battalions' are recruited mainly from former members of the militia, workers' guards, volunteers from the working class and conscripts. The conscripts were selected from previously prepared lists and for the most part assigned to labor battalions. The conscripts were, however, 90% members of Communist organizations, since they had to be particularly trustworthy persons. Tellingly, there are many Jews among the members of the extermination battalions.* […] *Most of the commissars were Jews. During interrogation, the Jews naturally claimed to have been merely nurses, bakers, typists or something of the like. By way of cross-examination and mutual snitching, however, the opposite could be established.* […] *The extermination battalions' task was the same everywhere. Their job was to destroy everything which the Red Army had been unable to destroy due to the lack of time."*

There were at least four of these extermination battalions operating in Riga, one in Jelgava and another five in Liepaja and Ventspils. Their strength was approximately 300 persons each. In Estonia there were at least eight such battalions, with altogether 2,900 men.[186]

In the light of this information, the shootings of Jews by the *Einsatzgruppen* for sabotage, considered by many to be a mere pretext, are explicable in quite a different sense.

3.5. Ghettoization

In parallel with the executions, the *Einsatzgruppen* undertook the task of creating ghettos and concentration camps at Kaunas starting at the end of July 1941.

EM No. 14 dated 6 July 1941, EK 1b, Kaunas:

> *"Two companies of them were subordinated to the Einsatzkommando. One of these companies guards the Jewish concentration camp established in the meantime at Kaunas Fort 7, and carries out the executions.* […] *Fort VII in Kaunas is being set up as a Jewish concentration camp with 2 divisions: 1) male Jews; 2) female Jews and children. Approximately 1,500 Jews are being housed in the fort at the present time. The watch is carried out by Lithuanian guards. The Central Prison houses the following inmates at the present time: 1,869 Jews, 214 Lithuanians, 134 Russians, 1 Latvian, 16 Poles. There are plans for the construction of another concentration camp for Jews in Fort IX in Kaunas."* (p. 86)

[185] SSR = Socialist Soviet Republic
[186] ERA, R 819-1-17, pp. 2f.

EM No. 19 dated 11 July 1941:

This report describes the "Prerequisites for a New Order" as follows:

> *"The construction of a Jewish ghetto, the marking of all Jews by a yellow Star of David measuring 8 x 10 cm in diameter on the left side of the chest, and the housing of women and children by a Jewish aid committee in the new ghetto, in case they are released by the Lithuanians on our orders. The City of Vilijampole has been selected to serve as the ghetto. The resettlement must be completed in 4 weeks. The prisons are now being combed once again; Jews, insofar as special reasons exist, are being arrested and shot. We are speaking of executions of smaller numbers in these cases, from 50 to 100 people. To prevent a backflow of Jews to Kaunas, an agreement was made with the Higher SS and Police leader that the ordinary police set up a guard belt around Kaunas and refuse entry to any Jew."* (pp. 103f.)

EM No. 21 dated 13 July 1941, EG B:

At Minsk, executions and the creation of ghettos proceeded at the same pace:

> *"First, 1,050 Jews were liquidated. Others were executed on a daily basis. With regard to the non-Jews still remaining in the camp, the liquidation of the criminals, functionaries, Asiatics, and so on was initiated. Moreover, a Jewish council was also formed, a ghetto was created, and the marking of all Jews was arranged for."* (pp. 113f.)

EM No. 32 dated 24 July 1941:

This report supplies additional information as to Minsk:

> *"A Jewish security service was formed to maintain order in the newly formed Jewish residential district. The Jewish security service is at the disposal of the council of Jewish elders to support the implementation of directives issued by the German agencies and the city administration of Minsk. To prevent the outbreak of epidemics, a Jewish health office was formed, subordinate to the city's health authority"* (p. 172)

The same report also contains some information on *Einsatzgruppe* B in Orsha:

> *"Together with the field and local headquarters, the creation of Jewish councils, the registration and residential concentration of the Jews as well as the recompilation of residential registration lists were carried out."* (p. 171)

EM No. 34 dated 26 July 1941, EG B:

This report mentions activities that unfolded at Vitebsk:

> *"The established Jewish council has registered approximately 3,000 Jews so far. Jewish marking introduced. Currently they are deployed in clearance operations. As a deterrent, 27 Jews publicly shot in the streets of the city for failure to show up for work. Approval from Byelorussian population. Comprehensive executions of Jews follows subsequently."* (p. 188)

EM No. 36 dated 28 July 1941, EG B:

This report also refers to its activity at Shklov:

> *"First measures have already been taken: 1) Evacuation of Jews from inhabited houses and resettlement in a ghetto (cases of leprosy among Jews discovered in the process)"* (p. 197)

EM No. 43 dated 5 August 1941:

Einsatzgruppe B continued the task of ghettoization while advancing into Byelorussia as well.

> *"In general, the population has feelings of hatred and rage towards the Jews and approves the German measures (construction of ghettos, formation of labor units, security-police measures, etc.) but is unable to take the initiative in handling the Jews themselves."* (p. 233)
>
> *"With the approval of the responsible local and field headquarters, ghettos were established, Jewish councils of elders were formed, the external marking of the Jews was carried out, labor units were formed, etc., wherever necessary and possible. To maintain order in the newly established residential districts, Jewish security services were formed. To prevent the outbreak of epidemics, it was necessary to create Jewish health offices in the Jewish residential districts."* (p. 237)

EM No. 54 dated 16 August 1941:

In the meantime; *Einsatzgruppe* A was proceeding in the same manner at Kaunas.

> *"The ghettoization of the approximately 25,000 Kaunas Jews is proceeding rapidly. A total of nearly 10,000 Jews have been resettled so far. Under German supervision, the address office (official office of the Lithuanian security police) has completed a card index comprising all the Jews in Kaunas."* (p. 307)

EM No. 63 dated 25 August 1941, Novoukrainka:

A similar activity was also being carried out by *Einsatzgruppe* C.

> *"The solution to the Jewish question, as one of the most important problems, is already being tackled, too, even if hesitatingly. In Kishinev there were approximately 60-80,000 Jews before the war. A large proportion of them moved out with the withdrawal of the Russians. When the city was occupied, only some 4,000 Jews were present, whose numbers were increased by influx. At the initiative of the Einsatzkommando, the Rumanian town major created a Jewish ghetto in the old city. The ghetto currently contains about 9,000 Jews. The Jews are being grouped into labor units and are being made available to the various German and Rumanian agencies for clearance work and other jobs."* (p. 350)

EM No. 64 dated 26 August 1941:

> *"Situation in the Khotin-Mogilev region. 1. Jewish question. In the City of Mogilev there are currently some 4,000 Jews who are residents of the city. In the immediate vicinity of M. there are some 7,000 Jews, who had been deported to the region by the time the Rumanians took over official business. A Jewish transport with a strength of some 6,000 persons was deported into the far side of the Dnie-*

ster region despite considerable objections by the Rumanian bridge commandant. As a result of backward migration into the city, the number of Jewish residents is increasing daily. It is intended to concentrate the Jewish residents in one Jewish district. The Jews deported here by the Rumanians are concentrated in 3 collection camps. Jews fit for labor have been deployed at clearance work in the city as well as during the harvest." (p. 356)

EM No. 73 dated 4 September 1941:

Ghettoization activity is commonly described in many other reports, as for instance in this one:

"Formation of labor units, Jewish councils, ghettos, etc.: In Nevel as well, as in the other cities so far, Jews picked up on routine patrols were pressed into labor units deployed to clean the city. A Jewish council was formed from the more intelligent ones. As their first job they were ordered to register all Jews of both sexes as well as to mark them with a yellow circle." (p. 406)

EM No. 91 dated 22 September 1941:

This report outlines the plan to make Pruzhany a completely Jewish city:

"Locking up the Jews of Bialystok has been carried out. The preparations for locking them up in the other city is to be considered completed. According to an agreement between the district presidents of Bialystok, the Einsatzkommandos, the Security Police and the Police presidents, it is planned to resettle the Jews of Bialystok to Pruzhany, except for 3,000 of them, who are needed as craftsmen. The resettlement of 20,000 Jews is to begin already this month. The intention is to turn Pruzhany into a purely Jewish city." (p. 524)

EM No. 122 dated 23 October 1941:

This report returns to the question in these terms:

"The evacuation of the Jews out of Bialystok to Pruzhany is progressing. Due to transport problems, only 9,000 Jews could be hauled away so far. According to a talk with the district president, an improvement of the transport possibilities is to be expected in the near future." (p. 722)

The intention of the Germans was to make Pruzhany a "*Judenstadt*" – "Jewish city," filling it in part with the 40,000 Jews from Białystok, which in this manner would have become "free of Jews." The project proved unfeasible and was abandoned at the end of October/beginning of December 1941 (Gerlach 1999, p. 535).

EM No. 93 dated 24 September 1941:

This report presents a recap of the activities of *Einsatzgruppe* A in the East:

"The Jewish question in the Eastern territories: The initial measures against the Jews in the Reich Commissariat of the East were carried out by the Security Police, also on the level of police administration. Following the takeover by the civilian administration, the Einsatzkommandos transferred the police administrative measures against Jews to the agencies of the civilian administration. The creation of ghettos had been prepared for throughout and is being carried on by the

> *civilian administration. Only in Vilnius, which was later taken over by Einsatzgruppe A, no preparations had been made to house the 60,000 Jews present there in a ghetto. EK 3 has now suggested the formation of a ghetto, and will now simultaneously carry out pacification measures still required to combat Jewish political activity. In Riga, even before the takeover by the civilian administration, the so-called Moscow district had already been put aside as a ghetto, and Jewish council of elders had been formed. The relocation of the Jews in the ghetto is progressing. The Jews in the cities are being used as a source of free labor by all German agencies.* […] *In the old Soviet areas, Jews have been encountered only in singular cases in the cities. The majority of the Jews formerly residing there have fled."* (p. 555)

EM No. 107 dated 8 October 1941, EG D, Nikolayev:

This report describes "the first steps towards the solution of the Jewish question" as follows:

> *"The first part of the Jewish question has already been solved. As early as 23 Aug. 41, the Jews were ordered by proclamation to wear the Jewish star and to register. By order of the Kommando, the registration was carried out by the council of elders, which had been set up for this purpose. Following the initial marking and a survey of the Jews, they were herded together in several streets for easier supervision, and those streets were cordoned off. Due to the registration, the armed forces' need for Jewish labor units could be met from the 2nd day onward. Jewish labor units of all types were made available on a daily basis; their strength increased from 120 at the start to three thousand in the last few days."* (pp. 652f.)

EM No. 125 dated 26 October 1941. EG B:

This report returned to the topic of ghettoization at Mogilev:

> *"EK 8 has finished setting up the Mogilev Ghetto. For its support, the Jewish council was required to set up a Jewish security force inside the ghetto with a strength of 15 men. It was furthermore ordered to fence off the ghetto from the rest of the district with barbed wire. The number of Jews still remaining in the ghetto amounts to barely 1,000 persons, including women and children."* (p. 733)

3.6. Judeo-Bolshevism and German Propaganda

In addition to those already mentioned above, other reports dwell on the close relationship between Judaism and Bolshevism.

EM No. 52 dated 14 August 1941, EG C:

> *"The Bolshevik apparatus rests upon the Jews and certain classes of officials and employees in the city; in the countryside, Bolshevik rule was propped up by a relatively small number of political operatives by means of the harshest terror methods."* (p. 287)

EM No. 78 dated 9 September 1941, EG B:

This report contains, among other things, a long evaluation on the "Soviet school system" and the "Position of the Jews within the Soviet Regime." The analysis it contains is not in complete conformity with the related National-Socialist propaganda:

> *"Following the outbreak of the Revolution, almost all important offices and positions were systematically filled with Jews under Lenin. Under Stalin, a struggle against Jewish preponderance set in. As a result, the Jews began to camouflage themselves and to partly withdraw from key positions."* (p. 427)

The Jews nonetheless maintained an excess of power in the Soviet apparatus, the report continues. In economic life, they held 90% of all powerful positions. For example, at Mogilev, of 120 warehouses of foodstuffs and basic necessities, 108 were directed by Jews; another 50 different types of warehouses were directed by Jews, and all the factories were directed by Jews. The proportion of Jews in the Party exceeded 50%, and at Minsk reached 90%. In the NKVD, the Jews held an average of 70-80% of all positions. In scientific research, they held 50-60% of all positions, while in medicine, they amounted to 75-80%. 35% of all personnel in opera and the theater were Jewish, and Jews held 65-75% of all positions in the orchestras. Against a background of a general closure of churches, the synagogues were also closed, but the Jews were permitted to continue their religious life with certain restrictions. In contrast to Orthodox Christians, the rabbis were not persecuted (pp. 428f.).

EM No. 85 dated 16 September 1941, EG C:

This report deals with agriculture in great detail as well as with the harvest in German-occupied Ukraine, agricultural conditions under the Soviet regime, and the settlements of ethnic Germans in the area around Krivoy Rog (pp. 464-469). The following comments are made in this regard:

> *"The Jews have imposed a regime of outright terror, exploiting the working strength of the* [ethnic] *German peasantry to the utmost. Anti-Jewish hatred is correspondingly massive here."* (pp. 468f.)

EM No. 80 & 81 dated 11 & 12 September 1941:

Even with regard to the ethnic Germans, the *Einsatzgruppen* demonstrated a certain independence of action. For example, contrary to the propaganda dictates, it is asserted "that perceptions present in Germany relating to the extermination or decimation of the ethnic German population were exaggerated" (p. 454; EM No. 81), and drastic measures against some ethnic Germans are also mentioned:

> *"Popular trust in the work of the EKs is further reinforced by the fact that, if need be, the severest measures are taken against ethnic Germans as well. Thus, in 2 cases, ethnic Germans proven to be vicious Bolshevik agitators were shot."* (p. 444; EM No. 80)

This should indicate the need for greater caution in the interpretation of claims of Jewish power in the Soviet Union as pure propaganda, such as the following, as already quoted:

> *"Experience to date confirms the earlier allegation that the Soviet state was a Jewish state through and through."* (p. 451; EM No. 81)

EM No. 133 dated 14 November 1941, EG B:

Even when the reports speak of the "total extirpation of the Jews," the context is always that of the struggle against Bolshevism. Thus, in this report we read:

> *"That Communist machinations were most warmly supported by the Jews need not be stressed particularly. Under the prevailing circumstances, the only way of putting an end to the machinations of the Jews in Volhynia and thus to deprive Bolshevism of its most fertile breeding ground is through the complete extirpation of the Jews, who are certainly less of a boon as workers than they are a bane as 'germ carriers' of Communism."* (p. 792)

EM No. 129 dated 5 November 1941, EG C:

Although in less detail, this report deals with the "Influence of Jewry on the Soviet-Russian living sphere" (pp. 750-753):

> *"a) General: Einsatzgruppe C found the role of Jewry in the USSR, in politics, the economy and culture to be even more dominant than assumed. There may be no other country that is so much subjected to the absolute rule of an ethnically foreign class of oppressors and exploiters than the Soviet Union. The rule of the Jews in the USSR extends to all areas of life without exception. There is nothing that is not influenced or controlled by the Jews. In politics, economics, art and spiritual life, insofar as there can be any talk of spiritual life at all, even in the private lives of Soviet citizens, relationships to Judaism and its influences played, not just a role, but were of decisive significance.* […]
>
> *b) The Jews in the Communist Party and other Communist organizations.*
>
> *It is well-known that the actual leadership of the Soviet Union is Jewish. It has turned out that the citizens of the USSR not only accept this fact with Slavic stoicism, but rather, that rejection of the Jews has increased to a definite but unorganized anti-Semitism, which is universally perceptible. (This anti-Semitism is by no means race-based, but is, rather, the result of Jewish economic advantages on the one hand, and the obviously Jewish leadership of Bolshevism, with its resulting oppression and terrorism). Therefore, it was necessary to litter the Party and its organs with Jews – not just in order to keep governmental power in Jewish hands, but to shore up Jewish dominion as such."*

The report then says that "at least 80% of all leading Party positions and their related bodies, as well as the various commissariats (NKVD) were occupied by Jews" and that "already [mentioning] the word 'Jew' was considered anti-Semitism and punished by lengthy terms of imprisonment."

Under point c), "The Jew in Economics," the report notes that, among 400 "Employees in the Upper Salary Ranks," 90% of them were Jews.

> *"Commodity speculation was, however, prohibited and strictly punished – when committed by non-Jews. For Jews, there was no danger, since all the supervisory officials were Jews. The judges were Jews and, in quite critical cases, the members of the highest responsible Party offices were Jews.* […]
> *d) The Jew in arts and sciences.*
> *In the Soviet Union, arts and sciences exclusively serve Bolshevik ideology. Art is a vehicle of propaganda. Science has practically only one single task: to shore up the 'discoveries' of Marxism and Leninism. It is no accident that Soviet artists, insofar as they have a* [*famous*] *name, are all Party members. It is also no accident that allegedly 90% of them were Jews.* […] *Jewish influence is very strong in philosophy, law, history, and partly even in medicine, particularly where university teachers are concerned. The influence in theater and film is perceptible not only through Jewish actors and actresses, but rather through its almost exclusively Jewish-Bolshevik bias."*

Point e), "The Jew in Popular and Youth Education," says that the principal Bolshevik organizations involved in youth education and training, the Komsomol (Leninist Young Communist League) and schooling "were both, for the most part, in the hands of Jews and members of the Communist Party." While the churches of other religions were closed and destroyed, "the majority of synagogues were spared, and the rabbis could continue to preach undisturbed." Finally, regarding the press, it was "also directed approximately 90% by Jews."

EM No. 141 dated 3 December 1941:

Regarding churches and synagogues, this report states:

> *"17 churches existed in the Taganrog district. Of the 12 Greek Orthodox churches, 9 were closed in the years 1922-1938, some destroyed, and some converted into grain warehouses.* […] *The Soviet administrative authorities converted the Jewish synagogue into a technical school for aviation."* (p. 853)

EM No. 134 dated 17 November 1941, EG D:

The same theme can be found in this report:

> *"In the Ukraine (probably also in the rest of Russia) the People's Commissariats for Culture were predominantly staffed by Jews. This explains why, although the synagogues were burdened by heavy taxes and closed as well, no rabbi was arrested or deported. Furthermore, in every city, there were normally 1-2 synagogues which were not closed."* (p. 808)

EM No. 144 dated 20 December 1941, EG A:

This report notes the resurgence of a typhus epidemic in Minsk and other localities. Among the population, the suspicion arose that this was the result of Soviet bacteriological warfare against German troops. This would have been a very nice propaganda topic to use against the enemy, but the *Einsatzgruppe* reports:

> *"Investigations in this regard carried out by the Einsatzgruppen since then have failed to produce any lead in support of this suspicion."* (pp. 864f.)

EM No. 141 dated 3 December 1941, EG D:

Another example of observations contrary to National-Socialist propaganda dictates appears in this report, in which *Einsatzgruppe* D admits the irrelevance of the Jewish presence in the scholastic and journalistic apparatus of the district of Mariupol:

> *"It is striking that only a very small percentage of the teaching staff and only 2 directors were Jewish.* […]
> *The editorial staff of the city newspaper consisted of 1 director, 1 sub-director and 6 editors; especially remarkable is the fact that there was not a single Jew among them. Even among factory newspapers, the number of Jews involved was very low."* (p. 851)

EM No. 31 dated 23 July 1941, EG A:

Even before the above, *Einsatzgruppe* A had already noted the following with reference to Borisov:

> *"Jews were relatively without influence here."* (p. 165)

No. 3 of the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories," dated 15 May 1942, contains a report titled "General Situation and Atmosphere on the Crimean Peninsula" which deals with the ethnic groups of the Crimea (Russians, Ukrainians, Tatars, Germans, Jews, Krymchaks, Greeks, Bulgarians and Armenians) from 1897 to 1939, discussing each ethnic group in detail. After explaining the difference between the Karaites (a Jewish sect that rejects the Talmud and was also distinguished by other aspects of Judaism, and that sided with the Loyalist Forces during the Revolution) and the Krymchaks (who were considered, and who considered themselves, genuine Jews), the report deals with the Jews:[187]

> *"The settlement of Jews on the Crimean Peninsula was strongly supported by the Bolsheviks. Here, as well, though, it proved impossible to turn the Jews into a people of peasants. In 1939, of the 65,000 Jews in Crimea (5.8%* [of the population]*), 44,000 lived in the 6 largest cities. As everywhere else in the Soviet Union, the Jews in the Soviet Union occupied the most important positions in economy, cultural life and the Party and governmental administrations. The following list is indicative of the influence exerted by the Jews in the governmental administrations of Crimea:*
>
> | | | | | | | |
> |---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
> | *In the Supreme Soviet of Crimea* | | | | | | *50% Jews* |
> | *"* | *People's Commissariat* | | *of* | *Crimea* | | *40% Jews* |
> | *"* | *"* | *"* | *for* | *Education* | *of Crimea* | *80% Jews* |
> | *"* | *"* | *"* | *"* | *Health* | *" "* | *80% Jews* |
> | *"* | *"* | *"* | *"* | *the Economy* | *" "* | *80% Jews* |
> | *"* | *"* | *"* | *"* | *Trade* | *" "* | *60% Jews* |
> | *"* | *"* | *"* | *"* | *Finance* | *" "* | *25% Jews* |
> | *"* | *"* | *"* | *"* | *Justice* | *" "* | *30% Jews* |
> | *"* | *"* | *"* | *"* | *NKVD* | *" "* | *some 45% Jews."* |

[187] NARA, T-175/235, 2724401f., pp. 10f.

EM No. 4 dated 22 May 1942:

This report supplies further information:[188]

> *"Jewry in Crimea*
>
> *The first noteworthy Jewish settlements in Crimea date back to the end of the 18th century, when the Crimea, with the exception of Sevastopol and the imperial summer residence of Yalta, was assigned to the Jews as a settlement zone.*
>
> *When Jewry attempted to set up the Jewish autonomous region of Birobidzhan in Asiatic Russia, an attempt was simultaneously made, with large-scale financial support from American Jewish organizations, to create a contiguous region of settlement for Jewry in the European part of the USSR as well, in Crimea. It was characteristic of the overall influence of the Jews in the USSR already at that time that the so-called 'Kosed,' a sub-section of the NKVD specifically created by the Reds as a supervisory organization, came to be ruled completely by Jews within a very short time. Jewish settlement to Crimea, which began chiefly at the same time as the collectivization of that period was increased (mainly around 1928), occurred almost entirely at the expense of the ethnic Germans and Tatars. In the westerly and central part of the steppe, entire German villages had to be vacated and left for the Jews. But the attempt to turn Jews into a peasant people failed in Crimea, just as it had in Birobidzhan. As early as 1939, of the 65,000 Jews in Crimea, 44,000 (that is, almost 70%) lived only in the cities of Simferopol, Sevastopol, Kerch, Yevpatoria, Yalta and Feodosia. In the countryside, they were mainly active as managers of large warehouses and distribution points, where they continued their usurious transactions through the purchase and sale of scarce or essential commodities.*
>
> *Starting with the cities, all habitable parts of Crimea were soon completely controlled by the Jews. If ever the chairmen of the individual commissariats were not themselves Jews, then the deputies or first secretaries were.*
>
> *Of the Krymchaks (about 6,000 of them), generally considered to be Jews, a good half of them lived predominantly in Simferopol (2,500) and Karasubazar. Their eradication, together with the Jews as such and the Gypsies of Crimea, occurred largely before the beginning of December 1941. Including the Krymchaks and Gypsies in the fate of the Jews did not stir much of an interest among the general population."*

The conclusion that emerges from these documents can be summarized as follows: One cannot seriously believe that Himmler ordered a group of 3,000 soldiers, as an exclusive task or even as a solely primary task, to exterminate millions of Jews over an area extending approximately 1,500 km in latitude and approximately 1,300 km in longitude, even if they were to be assisted by other SS or Police units, whose principal responsibility, incidentally, was to ensure the security of the *Wehrmacht* and carry out the struggle against the partisans.

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[188] NARA, T-175/235, 2724414f., pp. 5f.

4. The Jäger Report and the Executions at Kaunas and Riga

4.1. The Jäger Report

4.1.1. History of the Document

The history of this document is rather singular. Wolfram Wette informs us that the document

> *"had not yet been presented before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals, which tried German war criminals in the years 1945 to 1949. A copy of the report, namely the fourth of a total of five copies, fell into the hands of the Soviet Union already during the war, during the reconquest of Lithuania by the Red Army in 1944, but they maintained silence about it for some time. Only in the year 1963 did the Soviet Ministry for Foreign Affairs deliver this unique document to an authority of the Federal Republic of Germany, namely the Central Office* [Zentrale Stelle] *of the State Justice Administrations for the Investigation of National-Socialist Crimes in Ludwigsburg. There, the document was thoroughly examined and declared genuine."* (Wette, p. 28)

Wette not only does not explain why the Soviets behaved in this rather strange manner, he does not even raise the question. Someone else hazarded a quite bizarre explanation, or rather a guess: that the Soviets never produced the document because, as it referred for the most part to Jews, it was said to infringe a presumed Party directive against subdividing the dead by nationality or religion. It is not difficult to refute this assumption. As early as December 1942, the Soviets issued a report, later presented at Nuremberg, titled, in its German translation, "*Wie die Nazis die Juden ausrotten!*" – "How the Nazis Are Exterminating the Jews!" The text reads as follows, among other things:[189]

> *"The cannibalistic plan devised by Hitler at the beginning of this current year provides for the concentration of approximately four million Jews by the end of 1942, principally on Polish soil, with the objective of murdering them."*

The report concerned itself specifically with Jews – including those from France, Finland and Norway – mentioned the Warsaw Ghetto among others ("Entire ghettos destroyed"), spoke of the killing of Jews in the Baltic countries ("The Death Island near Riga") as well as of "Soviet Jews."

Even at Nuremberg, in the hearings of 18 February 1946, the Soviet prosecutors explicitly referred to the extermination of the Jews. I shall cite a few significant examples:

> *"My American colleague has already quoted Hitler's statement of 24 February 1942, that 'the Jews will be annihilated.' In a speech by the Defendant Frank, published in the Kraków Gazette on 18 August 1942, it is stated:*

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[189] USSR-44. *Offizieller Bericht, herausgegeben vom Informations-Büro des Volks-Kommissariats für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der U.S.S.R. am 19. Dezember 1942*.

> *'Anyone who passes through Kraków, Lvov, Warsaw, Radom, or Lublin today must in all fairness admit that the efforts of the German administration have been crowned with real success, as one now sees hardly any Jews.'*
>
> *The bestial annihilation of the Jewish population took place in the Ukraine, in Bielorussia, and in the Baltic States. In the town of Riga some 80,000 Jews lived before the German occupation. At the moment of the liberation of Riga by the Red Army there were 140 Jews left there."* (IMT, Vol. 7, pp. 192f.)
>
> *"'Terrible massacres and pogroms were carried out by the German invaders in the Ukrainian capital of Kiev. In the course of a few days the German bandits tortured and murdered 52,000 men and women, aged people and children, ruthlessly doing to death all Ukrainians, Russians, and Jews who in any way displayed their loyalty to the power of the Soviet. Soviet citizens who succeeded in escaping from Kiev give a shattering picture of one of these mass executions: A large number of Jews, including women and children of all ages, were assembled in the Jewish cemetery. Before shooting them the Germans stripped them naked and then beat them. The first group marked for execution was forced to lie, face downwards at the bottom of a ditch, where the Jews were shot with automatic rifles. The Germans then lightly sprinkled some earth over the dead bodies, made the next batch lie down in a row over the first and shot them in the same way.'"* (*ibid.*, p. 458)
>
> *"This fascist specialist on legal questions* [Hans Frank] *annihilated 3 million Jews in the territory under his jurisdiction which fell only temporarily into the hands of the fascist invaders."* (*ibid*., p. 470)

It is certainly true that in various Soviet documents, the victims of the Germans are generically defined as "peaceful Soviet civilians," but in the light of the examples cited above, it is inconceivable that the Soviet would have refrained from presenting the "Jäger Report" at Nuremberg in order to conceal that which they had already openly proclaimed on 19 December 1942 and which they reaffirmed repeatedly during the trial.

4.1.2. Jäger's Arrest and Interrogation

At the end of the war, Jäger did not flee abroad, like many SS officers, nor did he conceal himself under a false name, but lived "unrecognized in Allied-occupied Germany, or, more exactly, in the American Zone, in the vicinity of the old university City of Heidelberg." The only act by means of which he attempted to evade capture was filling out a "registration form" on 16 May 1946 with false data, but signed under his real name, in which he denied ever having been part of any SS organization. He lived undisturbed until his arrest on 10 April 1959. After his arrest, he was interrogated for approximately 23 hours in total, signing typewritten statements consisting of 29 sheets. During the night of 21-22 June 1959, he was found hanged in his cell.

Hence, Jäger could not be interrogated as to his report, since the Soviets, who were no doubt aware of his arrest, only made the document available to the German authorities four years after his death. The investigatory report drawn up on

Jäger was utilized to prosecute his successor as commander of the Security Police and SD in Kaunas, SS *Hauptsturmführer* Heinrich Schmitz, who was arrested in October 1959, but died of a stroke on 21 August 1963. During the so-called "*Einsatzkommando* 3 Trial," 17 other defendants were put on trial, who were all acquitted, because they could not be proven guilty of having committed any specific crimes (cf. Wette, pp. 157-167).

As to the reasons why the Soviet authorities delivered the report to the Germans precisely in 1963, there has been speculation that it was closely related to Babi Yar. There is undoubtedly a chronological coincidence at this point, but there is no evidence of any causal connection. In this regard, Erhard Roy Wiehn notes:

> *"During the so-called 'Anticosmopolitan Campaign' of 1948/49, official attempts were made to suppress the memory of Babi Yar. Yet a group of people gathered each year to commemorate the anniversary of the massacre. In October 1959, Viktor Nekrassov, opposing a newly envisaged plan to build a sports stadium on the location of Babi Yar, protested against the ordained silence and called for a monument to be erected there instead. A poem by the famous Russian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko titled 'Babi Yar', published on 19 September 1961, drew renewed attention to the massacre:* […]. *The poem was set to music by Dimitri Shostakovich in his magnificent choral 13th Symphony. It was first performed in December 1962. Whereupon Nikita Khrushchev, then leader of the Soviet Union, publicly and harshly and ominously criticized Yevtushenko on 8 March 1963 for his poem."* (Wiehn, p. 75)

Therefore, all those who demanded a memorial to the extermination of the Jews were accused of "cosmopolitanism" by the Party leadership in those years. In this context, it would be self-contradictory for the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs to have yielded to "cosmopolitan" pressure by providing West Germany with the "Jäger Report."

It can also be objected that the Soviet attitude regarding the "Jäger Report" and the examination by the *Zentrale Stelle* which ascertained the document's authenticity would rule out the hypothesis that the document may have been manipulated.

From the purely theoretical point of view, the Soviet attitude appears, on the contrary, rather suspect. As for the *Zentrale Stelle*, their opinion on the authenticity of the report must be taken with a grain of salt, if they don't produce their expert opinion. Anyway, while the question of the authenticity of the report is important, that of its truthfulness is no less so.

Jäger was interrogated by a special commission from the State Office for Criminal Investigations (*Landeskriminalamt*) of Baden-Württemberg between 16 and 19 June 1959. He declared that "a few weeks before the beginning of the Russian Campaign," he was summoned to a "Leadership meeting at the RSHA in Berlin," during which "Heydrich, in one speech, declared that, in the event of a

war with Russia, the Jews in the East would all have to be shot." He did not quite remember whether Heydrich was referring to "all Jews" or "the Jews."[190]

Later, 8-14 days before the start of the war against the Soviet Union, he attended the infamous Pretzsch meeting. Jäger recalled with certainty,

> *"that nothing was said about shootings of Jews. Heydrich's address in Berlin, in which he declared that the Jews were to be shot in the event of a war with Russia, was not repeated. Nor was it said that a strict order had been given to shoot the Jews in the East. I consider it completely out of the question that a written order would have arrived from any agency to shoot Jews. I myself have certainly never seen such an order, not even later in Kaunas."* (p. 3)

Since "the Einsatzkommandos were assembled in Pretzsch" (p. 4), the obvious conclusion is that they received no order to shoot the Jews. During this meeting, Jäger was appointed Commander of the Security Police and SD of Lithuania, headquartered in Kaunas. When he reached that city, the shootings were already underway and were carried out by Lithuanian auxiliary police. Jäger did not know who had ordered the shootings, but did not prohibit them, because, strangely, he considered Heydrich's statement at the meeting in Berlin as binding that the Jews of the East would have to be shot, although it was not confirmed at Pretzsch. He added:

> *"Apart from this speech by Heydrich, I had, as of this time, received a more detailed oral or written order neither from the RSHA nor from any other agency. I considered this statement by Heydrich a binding order to the effect that, upon commencing my activity in the East, the Jews were to be shot. I therefore took no action to prevent these shootings."* (p. 10)

Jäger considered it atrocious "that men were, or should be, killed simply for their religion and their race," and never ordered anyone "to shoot a certain number, or any Jews at all" (pp. 10f.).

At a meeting, Stahlecker allegedly explained the necessity for the shootings to Jäger as follows:

> *"the Jews are the carriers of Communism. They furthermore orchestrate acts of sabotage and thereby endanger the front. In order to protect the front, the rear areas and the homeland, they must be annihilated."* (p. 11)

No doubt this motivation, which is political and military in nature, is better suited to the context of an absence of verbal or written extermination orders than a racial motivation would be.

Jäger also made important statements as to how the reports relating to the shootings were compiled:

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[190] *Vernehmungsniederschrift* (Record of interrogation) of K. Jäger titled "z.*Zt. Hohenasperg, den 15.6.1959*." ZStL, 5 AR-Z 14/58, Vol. IV, p. 2. The document consists of 29 typewritten pages sequentially numbered from 1 to 29, with one non-numbered page. The margins are also hand-numbered, sequentially, from 1883 to 1941; p. 2 is indicated as 1887 (instead of 1884); from p. 2 to p. 16 the numbering contains only odd numbers proceeding in twos (1887, 1889, etc.), with other confusions. For this reason and unless stated otherwise, subsequent page numbers are the typewritten page numbers of the document.

> *"These were then reported in the incident reports, with other general situation reports, which were signed by me and transmitted to the RSHA through Stahlecker. The incident reports were compiled based on individual reports from the various divisions through my office – Sarge Porst – and presented to me for signature."* (p. 14)
>
> *"As already mentioned in my previous interrogations, so-called incident reports were drawn up about our overall activity, including the shootings carried out. These reports were issued by myself under the designation incident report of Einsatzgruppe* [sic; meaning *-kommando*] *3 – Arabic numeral 3 – to the Einsatzgruppe in Riga. Every Einsatzkommando reported independently to the group."* (p. 17)

If Jäger regularly sent Stahlecker reports on executions performed by *Einsatzkommando* 3, it is hard to see why the Incident Reports only mention absurdly small numbers of such shootings.

Jäger added that he had never issued "execution orders"; the shootings were carried out by his subordinate Joachim Hamann, apparently on his own initiative, with the assistance of a Lithuanian "execution squad" consisting of 50-100 persons (p. 11).

On shootings properly speaking, he reports that 3,000 Jews were shot by the Lithuanians in the days immediately before and after his arrival at Kaunas (p. 18). Regarding the places of execution used by Hamann, Jäger only recalled Raseiniai, Olita, Siauliai, Mariampol, Ukmerge, Vilnius as well as Aglona and Daugavpils, although the latter two are located in Latvia (p. 24). Jäger personally visited the Aglona execution site, which was "an insane asylum with about 200 mental patients." Arriving on the spot, he found "only one single doctor and one nurse left with a remnant of some 20 to 30 mental patients," who were still curable, as they were not seriously ill. He saw a mass grave measuring 4 meters × 4 meters and 2 to 3 meters deep, containing 20-30 bodies (pp. 24f.). It is not clear where the bodies of the other executed mental patients were buried.

Jäger strongly maintained that he had not hidden after the war to escape justice, but lived openly under his own name, adding:

> *"I say this because I would like to say with this that I am* [crossed out and replaced by "*feel*"] *not guilty because of the executions carried out in Lithuania."* (p. 23)

Jäger's statements contain various contradictions compared to the text of the "Jäger Report," making it all the more frustrating that he could not be interrogated on the text of that same report.

There is a preliminary draft of the "Jäger Report" titled "Complete List of Executions Carried Out to Date in the Region of E.K. 3," dated 10 September 1941, which lists executions for a total of 76,355 victims. The actual "Jäger Report" lists 62,986 victims by this same date. Here, the following dates are missing:[191]

– approximately 4,000 Jews killed by Lithuanian partisans prior to the arrival of *Einsatzkommando* 3;

[191] YVA, O.53-3, pp. 82-85.

– 5. Sept. 1941: Ukmerge: 4,709, including "1,123 Jews, 1,849 Jewesses, 1,737 [Jewish] children";
– 25 Aug. – 6 Sept. 1941: Georgenburg: 41 "Jews, Jewesses, Jewish children."

The last item of the Jäger Report states: "[6 Sept. 1941] in Georgenburg all [Jews, Jewesses, Jewish children] 412"

The total figure appearing in the Jäger Report is 137,346.[192] In response to a telegram from the Commander of the Security Police and SD in Kaunas dated 6 February 1942,[193] the leader of EK 3 communicated the following figures:

A: Jews	136,421
B: Communists	1,064
C: Partisans	56
D: Mental patients	653

E: Poles 44, Russian POWs 28, Gypsies 5, Armenians 1.

The total number of victims was therefore 138,272, including 55,556 women and 34,464 children.[194]

The abstract of the executions contained in "Summary Report of 16 October – 31 January 1942" of *Einsatzgruppe* A titled "Numbers of Executions Carried out by *Einsatzgruppe* A up to 1 Feb. 1942," lists precisely 136,421 Jews for Lithuania,[195] therefore, this enormous extermination was perpetrated by EK 3. In this regard, Jäger provides the following clarification:[196]

> *"According to the list of a raiding squad led by SS Obersturmbannführer Hamann and 8 – 10 seasoned men from E.K. 3, the following operations were carried out in collaboration with the Lithuanian partisans."*

This gargantuan massacre is therefore said to have been committed by 10-11 men from EK 3, with or without the assistance of 50 or 100 Lithuanian collaborators.

4.1.3. The Executions of the "Jäger Report"

The following table, prepared by myself, lists the executions listed in the "Jäger Report":

Table 8: 1941 Executions according to the "Jäger Report"

DATE	LOCATION	VICTIMS
4 July	Kaunas – Fort VII	463
6 July	Kaunas – Fort VII	2514
7 July	Mariampole	32
8 July	Mariampole	19
	Girkalnis (Girkalinei)	6

[192] There are two errors in the sums contained in the report. The total relating to the executions carried out on 13 August 1941 (Alytus) is given as 718 instead of 719; that relating to the executions carried out on 19 August (Ukmerge) is given as 643 instead of 645. The final total should therefore be 137,343.
[193] RGVA, 500-1-25/1, p. 169.
[194] *Ibid.*, p. 170.
[195] RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 184.
[196] RGVA, 500-1-25/1, p. 149.

DATE	LOCATION	VICTIMS
9 July	Vandziogala (Wendziogala)	38
	Kaunas – Fort VII	24
14 July	Mariampole	31
17 July	Babtei (Babtai)	8
18 July	Mariampole	53
19 July	Kaunas – Fort VII	28
21 July	Panevezys	103
22 July	Panevezys	1
23 July	Kedainiai	125
25 July	Mariampole	103
28 July	Panevezys	288
29 July	Raseiniai (Rasainiai)	257
30 July	Ariogala (Agriogala)	38
31 July	Utena	256
11-31 July	Vandziogala	15
1 Aug.	Ukmerge	300
2 Aug.	Kaunas – Fort VII	209
4 Aug.	Panevezys	422
5 Aug.	Raseiniai	279
7 Aug.	Utena	571
8 Aug.	Ukmerge	702
9 Aug.	Kaunas – Fort [sic]	534
11 Aug.	Panevezys	500
13 Aug.	Alytus	719
14 Aug.	Jonava	552
15-16 Aug.	Rokiskis	3207
9-16 Aug.	Raseiniai	298
27 June – 14 Aug.	Rokiskis	981
18 Aug.	Kaunas – Fort IV	1812
19 Aug.	Ukmerge	645
22 Aug.	Daugavpils	21
22 Aug.	Aglona	544
23 Aug.	Panevezys	7523
18-22 Aug.	Rasainiai (Raseiniai) District	1926
25 Aug.	Obeliai	1160
25-26 Aug.	Seduva	664
26 Aug.	Zarasai	2569
	Pasyalis	1349
	Kaisiadorys	1911
27 Aug.	Prienai	1078
	Dagda and Kraslawa	216
	Joniskis	355
28 Aug.	Wilkia	402
	Kedainiai	2076
29 Aug.	Rumsiskes and Ziezmariai	784
	Utena and Moletai	3782

DATE	LOCATION	VICTIMS
13-31 Aug.	Alytus and Umgebung	233
1 Sep.	Mariampole	5090
28 Aug. – 2 Sep.	Darsuniskis	99
	Carliava	247
	Jonava	1556
	Petrasiunai	125
	Jesuas	144
	Ariogala	662
	Jasvainai	282
	Babtei (Babtai)	83
	Vandziogala	252
	Krakes	1125
4 Sep.	Pravenischkis	253
	Cekiake	146
	Seredsius	193
	Velinona	159
	Zapiskis	178
5 Sep.	Ukmerge	4709
25 Aug. – 6 Sep.	Säuberung in Rasainiai (Raseiniai)	843
	Georgenburg	412
9 Sep.	Alytus	1279
	Butrimonys	740
10 Sep.	Herkine	854
	Varena	831
11 Sep.	Leipalingis	155
	Seirijai	953
12 Sep.	Simnas	414
11-12 Sep.	Uzunalis	43
26 Sep.	Kaunas – Fort IV	1608
2 Oct.	Zagare	2236
4 Oct.	Kaunas – Fort IX	1845
29 Oct.	Kaunas – Fort IX	9200
3 Nov.	Lazdijai	1535
15 Nov.	Wilkowiski	115
25 Nov.	Kaunas – Fort IX	2934
29 Nov.	Kaunas – Fort IX	2000
	Kaunas – Fort IX	34
Partial Unit of EK. 3 in Daugavpils, 13 July-21 Aug.	Daugavpils	9585
Partial Unit of EK. 3 in Vilnius, 12 Aug. – 1 Sep.	Vilnius	461
2 Sep.	Vilnius	3700
12 Sep.	Vilnius	3334
17 Sep.	Vilnius	1271
20 Sep.	Nemencing	403
22 Sep.	Novo-Vileyka	1159

DATE	LOCATION	VICTIMS
24 Sep.	Rieza	1767
25 Sep.	Jahiunai	575
27 Sep.	Eysisky	3446
30 Sep.	Trakai	1446
4 Oct.	Vilnius	1983
6 Oct.	Semeliskes	962
9 Oct.	Svenciany	3726
16 Oct.	Vilnius	1146
21 Oct.	Vilnius	2367
25 Oct.	Vilnius	2578
27 Oct.	Vilnius	1203
30 Oct.	Vilnius	1533
6 Nov.	Vilnius	1341
19 Nov.	Vilnius	171
	Vilnius	14
20 Nov.	Vilnius	3
25 Nov.	Vilnius	64
Partial Unit of EK 3 in Minsk, 28 Sep. – 17 Oct.	Pleschnitza, Bicholin, Scak, Bober, Uzda	3050
Prior to takeover	Pogrom	4000

4.1.4. Wolfram Wette's Analysis

How reliable are these data? This is a rather difficult question to answer, because, except for a very few cases, no other document exists to corroborate it with.

Wolfram Wette has attempted to validate the data, but his procedure is, for the most part, rather questionable. For the executions carried out on 4 and 6 July 1941 at Fort VII in Kaunas (2,977 victims) he has recourse to Jäger's statements during his interrogation in 1959 (Wette, p. 91).

In the following cases:

– 18 August 1941, Kaunas, Fort IV, 1,812 victims,
– 4 October 1941, Kaunas. Fort IX, 1,845 victims,
– 29 October 1941, Kaunas, Fort IX, 9,200 victims,

he refers to the statements of a self-proclaimed eyewitness, rendered before the Public Prosecutor's Office of Munich in 1959 (*ibid.*, pp. 96-99, 115, 119f.). For the executions at Rokiskis between 27 June and 14 August (981 victims) and 15-16 August 1941, he simply refers to the "Jäger Report" itself (*ibid.*, p. 102). The same applies to the executions at Kedainiai on 28 August 1941 (2,076 victims; *ibid.*, p. 109). Wette's "proof" of the executions at Georgenburg on 6 September 1941 (412 victims) is truly extraordinary: the Krelitz family died therein! (*Ibid.*, p. 111). Wette's "proof" of the executions at Fort IV at Kaunas on 26 September 1941 (1,608 victims) is based on the "Jäger Report" (*ibid.*, p. 115), as is his "proof" of the executions at Mariampole on 1 September 1941 (5,090 victims; *ibid.*, p. 118).

On the presumed execution of Jews from Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, Vienna and Breslau at Fort IX at Kaunas, Wette adds nothing new to our knowledge and is unable to prove anything. In two cases, he refers to Incident Reports: the executions at Zagare on 2 October (2,236 victims; *ibid.*, p. 111) and those at Aglona on 22 August (*ibid.*, p. 118).

The first is described as follows in EM No. 155 dated 1 January 1942 (Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, pp. 76f.):

> *"One particular activity was characteristic of the Jews of Zagare. On 2 Oct. 41, 50 Jews broke out of the sealed-off ghetto there. The majority could be captured and shot by way of an instantly conducted large-scale manhunt. During subsequent preparation for the execution of the entire Jewish population of Zagare, the Jews, at a given signal, physically attacked the guards and members of the security police deployment squads during the transport to the place of execution. Several Jews, who had not been searched sufficiently thoroughly by the Lithuanian guards, drew knives and pistols and attacked the policemen shouting slogans such as 'Long Live Stalin!' and 'Down with Hitler!' 7 policemen were wounded. Resistance was immediately broken. After 150 Jews had been shot on the spot, deportation of the remaining Jews proceeded smoothly to the place of execution."*

The total number of victims, however, is not mentioned here. The "Jäger Report" contains the following summary of this affair:[197]

> *"while escorting these Jews away, a mutiny occurred that was instantly crushed. 150 Jews were immediately shot during this. 7 partisans* [sic] *were wounded."*

The executions at Aglona are mentioned in EM No. 88 dated 19 September 1941 (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 494):

> *"On 22 Aug., a total of 544 mental patients, selected from among the inmates of the mental hospital at Aglona, were liquidated with the support of the Latvian militia. 10 men, considered to have been cured but still defective, will be released by the head of the institution, Dr. Borg, following their sterilization that has yet to be conducted. As a result of this measure, the mental hospital no longer exists."*

These two incidents, rather than shoring up the reliability of the "Jäger Report," actually increase one's perplexity as to the near-total absence from the Incident Reports of specific data as to the executions listed in this document. In effect, of 94 executions with each more than 100 victims listed in the report, including 42 executions with more than 1,000 victim each, the Incident Reports mention only ten executions with a total of 1,841 victims.

Overall, apart from these two cases, Wette's evidence is therefore entirely inconclusive.

4.1.5. Critical Analysis of the "Jäger Report"

A critical analysis of the document yields results which are disconcerting to say the least. I shall begin with a few observations of a general nature.

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[197] RGVA, 500-1-25/1, p. 113a.

The document is a carbon copy of an original which has never been found, more precisely, the "4th copy" of the claimed five copies in total. On page 1, in the upper-left margin, the words – probably a stamp – "*Der Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei u. des SD*" appear, followed, immediately below, by the typewritten words "*Einsatzkommando 3*." To the right is the date "*Kauen* [Kaunas], *am 1. Dezember 1941*." This post was occupied by the leader of *Einsatzgruppe* A, Stahlecker. As Jäger explained in his interrogation in 1959, he was supposed to send Stahlecker the execution reports relating to *Einsatzkommando* 3, which Jäger commanded. Stahlecker should therefore have been the addressee of the report, but there is no mention of him on the first page. Only on the last page does a round stamp appear – it is not very clear – probably containing the text "*Der Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei u. des SD*"; next to it, "SS *Standartenführer*," doubtlessly another stamp; above this is the handwritten signature "Jäger."

According to German standard bureaucratic practice, the author of the document should appear on page one, at the upper left, and the addressee ("*An den*…") should appear underneath, which is clearly missing here, while the date should appear on the right. At the bottom is the rank and signature, with or without stamp. I merely point to this anomaly without drawing any particular conclusion from it.

The "Jäger Report" gives the impression of the meticulous implementation of a plan to exterminate the Jews based on a specific order, if not expressly, then as least as an "objective." From this point of view, giving any other justification for the executions makes no sense, although this is exactly what we find in several cases:

On 18 August 1941, at Fort IV, Kaunas, "711 Jewish intellectuals from the ghetto [were shot] in reprisal for an act of sabotage";[198] the execution on 26 September of 1,608 Jews, also in Fort IV, concerned "sick persons and persons suspected of carrying epidemics" (p. 113); the execution on 4 October of 1,845 Jews at Fort IX was a "punishment operation for shooting at a German policeman in the ghetto" (p. 113a); the execution of 9,200 Jews carried out at the same location on 29 October was a "cleansing of the ghetto of superfluous Jews" (*ibid.*). On 2 September, the killing at Vilnius of 3,700 Jews was justified as a "special action, because Jews had shot at German soldiers" (*ibid.*).

Nor is there any shortage of meticulous justifications for the execution of very small numbers of victims. Thus, on 29 November, at Fort IX, "17 Jews and 1 Jewess" were shot "for violating the laws of the ghetto, 1 Reich German for converting to Judaism and visiting a rabbinical school [!]" (*ibid.*).

Jäger writes that the carrying out of the executions was "primarily an organizational issue" (p. 115). This is precisely the most dubious aspect of the entire report. If we check the position of the locations mentioned in the "Jäger Report" on a map, we see that the route followed by SS *Obersturmführer* Hamann's raiding squad – consisting, I repeat, of a mere eight to ten SS men plus 50 or 100 Lithua-

[198] *Ibid.*, p. 111. Subsequent page numbers from there, unless stated otherwise.

nian volunteers – was rather convoluted, jumping from one district to another, moving back and forth frenetically several times.

32 persons were shot at Mariampole on 7 July, and another 19 the next day. On the same day, they shot 6 persons at Girkalnis, which is located approximately 130 km north of Mariampole (distances by road). On 8 July, they shifted position to Vandziogala, which is approximately 40 km southeast of Girkalinei, to kill 38 persons. On the same day, they also appeared at Fort VII, Kaunas (some 30 km south of Vandziogala), where they shot 24 persons.

On the 14th, they traveled to Mariampole (some 60 km southwest of Kaunas), where they killed 31 people, then, on the 17th, they appeared at Babtei (Babtai, some 80 km northeast of Mariampole), where they killed 8 persons, before returning to Mariampole on the 18th to shoot another 53 people.

On 19 July, the Hamman squad traveled to Kaunas (some 60 km northeast Mariampole) and killed 26 people at Fort VII; two days later, they moved to Panevezys (some 105 km north-northeast of Kaunas), where they shot 103 persons. The next day, in this same locality, they killed one Jew.

Subsequent operations of the raiding squad unfolded as follows:

– July 23: Kedainiai (some 65 km SW of Panevezys); 125 victims.
– July 25: return to Mariampole (some 105 km SW of Kedainiai); 103 victims
– July 28: back to Panevezys (some 150 km NNO of Mariampole); 288 victims.

At this point, the raiding squad started playing a sort of ring-around-the-rosie by covering the route Panevezys – Raseiniai – Utena – Ukmerge – Kaunas twice. By this time, they had traveled almost 1,100 km by road to kill 857 people!

– July 29: trip to Raseiniai (some 110 km SW of Panevezys); 257 victims;
– July 30: Ariogala (some 30 km SE of Raseiniai); 38 victims.
– July 31: Utena (some 165 km NE of Ariogala); 256 victims.
– July 11 to 31 (sic!): Vandziogala; 15 victims (sic!)

Chronologically, this entry makes no sense, since the raiding squad only reached this location on 9 July. At any rate, on 31 July, they found themselves at either Utena or at Vandziogala, a locality approximately 110 km away.

– Aug. 1: Ukmerge (some 65 km SW of Utena); 300 victims
– Aug. 2: return to Fort VII, Kaunas (some 70 km SW of Ukmerge); 209 victims.

It then began circling around again:

– Aug. 14: Panevezys (some 105 km NNO of Kaunas); 422 victims.
– Aug. 5: Raseiniai (some 110 km from Panevezys); 279 victims.
– Aug. 7: Utena (some 195 km east of Raseiniai); 571 victims.
– Aug. 8: return to Ukmerge (some 65 km SW of Utena); 702 victims.
– Aug. 9: return to Kaunas (some 70 km SW of Ukmerge); 534 victims.
– Aug. 11: From Kaunas to Panevezys (some 105 km NNO from Kaunas); 500 victims.
– Aug. 13: From Panevezys to Alytus (some 170 km S); 719 victims.

– Aug. 14: From Alytus to Jonava (some 100 km NNE); 552 victims.
– Aug. 15 and 16: at Rokiskis (some 140 km NE of Jonava); 3,207 victims.
– Aug. 9 to 16: at Raseiniai (some 200 km SW of Rokiskis); 298 victims.

Between the 27th of June and the 14th of August, the raiding squad killed 981 people at Rokiskis – another chronologically nonsensical annotation, because it openly contradicts the chronology of the killings. Starting on the 7th of July, the raiding squad had only visited Rokiskis on 15-16 August, and it is impossible to understand when they had been there before, and why the possible preceding visits were not recorded. On the other hand, on 27 June, the raiding squad did not even exist yet.

– Aug. 16: the squad in Raseiniai and Rokiskis at the same time, which are some 200 km apart.
– Aug. 18: at Fort VII, Kaunas (some 175 km SW of Rokiskis and some 85 km SE of Raseiniai); 1,812 victims:
– Aug. 19: to Ukmerge (some 70 km NE of Kaunas); 645 victims.
– Aug. 22: Daugavpils (some 140 km NE of Ukmerge), 21 Victims. On the same day, the raiding squad was also at Aglona (some 50 km NE of Daugavpils), where it killed 544 mental patients.
– Aug. 23: Panevezys (some 210 km SE of Aglona); 7,523 victims.

Between the 18th and 22nd of August, it was operating in the Raseiniai district, where it killed 1,926 persons. But on the 18th, it was at Kaunas, on the 19th at Ukmerge, on the 22nd at Daugavpils and Aglona. Therefore, it could only have found itself in the above-mentioned district on the 20th and 21st, but it is not certain whether it was in this district to begin with, because Raseiniai is some 135 km east-southeast of Ukmerge, some 275 km east-north east of Daugavpils and some 320 km east-northeast of Aglona.

– Aug. 25: Obeliai, some 210 km SE of Aglona; 1,160 victims.
– Aug. 25 and 26: Seduva (some 145 km NE of Raseiniai); 664 victims.
– Aug. 26: at once in Zarasai (some 155 km east of Seduva: 2,569 victims), Pasvalys (1,349 victims) and Kaisiadorys (1,911 victims). Seduva is located some 185 km from Zarasai, which is some 150 km from Pasvalys, which is some 185 km from Kaisiadorys. Therefore, SS *Obersturmführer* Hamann's raiding squad traveled some 520 km on that day and killed 5,829 persons, plus at least some of the 664 people shot dead on 25 and 26 August!
– Aug. 27: Prienai (1,078 victims); Dagda and Kraslava (216 victims); Joniskis (355 victims). The distances between these localities by road are:
  – Prienai – Kraslava: some 300 km.
  – Kraslava – Dagda: some 35 km.
  – Dagda – Joniskis: some 310 km.

  Therefore, on 27 August, Hamann traveled 645 km but also had time to shoot 1,649 people.

If we suppose that Hamann's raiding squad was sub-divided into smaller units – for which we have no indication – this might no doubt explain its presence in dif-

ferent localities hundreds of kilometers apart on the same day, but it would not explain the chaotic organization of the executions, carried out at random, here, there and everywhere, and it would certainly not reduce the total mileage by one jot. Moreover, since the larger executions were obviously impossible even for the entire raiding squad over the stated period of time, as we shall see later, they would be no less impossible, in fact even less so, for smaller units.

According to the report, a partial unit of *Einsatzkommando* 3 at Vilnius killed 21,169 people between 12 August and 25 November, including 21,142 Jews. Arad maintains that *Einsatzkommando* 9 shot 5,000 Jews from Vilnius at Ponar between 8 and 20 July (Arad 1982, p. 77). This would have been the first massacre of Jews in this city, but the *Einsatzgruppen* reports do not mention it. The Germans created two ghettos at Vilnius, into which the Jews from the city were transferred at the beginning of September 1941. 29,000-30,000 Jews were housed in Ghetto No. 1, 9,000-10,000 in Ghetto No. 2, and another 6,000 were interned in the prison of Lukiszki, whence many of them were transferred to Ponar and shot. The residents of Ghetto No. 1 were killed between 4 and 21 October (6,942 persons according to the Jäger Report), while part of Ghetto No. 2 was eliminated between 22 October and 22 December (6,881 according to the Jäger Report; *ibid.*, pp. 139-148). The extermination concerned primarily Jews without work-passes (*ibid.*, p. 143), therefore, principally, adults unfit for labor and children. Nevertheless, only the palest traces of these enormous exterminations at Vilnius are reflected in the Incident Reports:

– EM No. 21 dated 13 July 1941, EG A: 321 Jews killed by EK 9 by 8 July (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., p. 114)
– EM No. 36 dated 28 July 1941, EG B: 193 Jews killed (*ibid.*, p. 195)
– EM No. 152 dated 7 January 1942, EG A: 385 Jews killed.[199]

A few of the figures relating to the numbers of persons shot in a single day, according to the "Jäger Report," are no doubt greatly exaggerated. If it is true, as Arad asserts, that the "new organizational method enabled the killing of 100 men per hour" (Arad 1982, p. 76), and if it is true, as Jäger claims, that "the path of approach from the collection point to the mass graves amounted to an average distance of 4 to 5 km" and that "the Jews were transported to the execution ground in groups of 500, at distances of at least 2 km," then it is difficult to believe that Hamann's raiding squad could kill 9,200 persons on 29 October 1941, or 7,523 persons on 23 August, or 5,090 on 1 September, or even 3,782 on 29 August.

EM No. 88 dated 19 September 1941 reports (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., p. 494):

"Operations in the counties of Raseiniai, Rokiskis, Sarasai, Perzai, Prienai were carried out by the Sonderkommando of Einsatzkommando 3, together with Lithuanian squad. All counties are now free of Jews. With these executions, the number of persons liquidated by Einsatzkommando 3 together with Lithuanian partisans increase to 46,692."

[199] NARA, T-175/234, 2723516, p. 9.

As I noted above, the "Jäger Report" (EK 3) reports 78,305 persons shot by this date. It also claims that there were no more Jews in Lithuania on 1 December 1941, except for the following "labor Jews and their families":

– at Siauliai: some 4,500
– at Kaunas: some 15,000
– at Vilnius: some 15,000.[200]

These figures are repeated identically in Stahlecker's "Summary Report of 16 October – 31 January 1942,"[201] and once again in No. 8 dated 19 June 1942 of the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories,".[202]

As I have already noted in another study (Mattogno/Graf, pp. 212f.), according to a census carried out at the end of May 1942, 14,545 Jews were living in Vilnius whose names (together with date of birth, occupation, and address) have been published by the Jewish Museum of Vilnius. It emerges from these documents that no fewer than 3,693 of these 14,545 Jews were children 15 years of age or younger. The number of children per age group is shown in the following table:

Year of Birth	Age [years]	No. of Children
1927	15	567
1928	14	346
1929	13	265
1930	12	291
1931	11	279
1932	10	216
1933	9	226
1934	8	195
1935	7	227
1936	6	229
1937	5	182
1938	4	188
1939	3	181
1940	2	117
1941	1	172
1942	a few months	12
	Total:	3,693

Furthermore, among the Jews registered by the census there were also 59 persons 65 years of age or older. The eldest was the 90-year-old Chana Stamleriene, born in 1852 (Žydų muziejus, p. 212, No. 163).

The children lived with their families in the ghetto. For example, the Michalowski family, which lived in Dysnos House 5-10, consisted of Nachman, born 1905, Fruma, born 1907, Pesia, born 1928, Niusia, born 1932, Sonia, born 1935,

[200] RGVA, 500-1-25/1, p. 115.
[201] RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 61.
[202] RGVA, 500-1-775, p. 164.

Mane, born 1904, Sonia, born 1903, Motel, born 1930 and Chana, born 1933 (*ibid.*, p. 85). The Kacew family, residence at Ligonines House 11-8, included the following members: Chaim, born 1909, Chava, born 1921, and Sloma, born 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 150). The Schimelevitsch family, living at Rudninku House 7-12, consisted of Abram, born 1896, Chawa, born 1909, Sora, born 1938, and Riva, born 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 213). Finally, the Cukerman family, residence at Stasuno House 12, had the following members: Kosel, born 1916, Sima, born 1912, Kusia, born 1932, Malka, born 1934, Abram, born 1904, Syfra, born 1909, and Bluma, born 1930 (*ibid.*, p. 329).

Since the 3,693 children were living with their families, it is clear that the number of those unfit for work and those who could not be employed (mothers who had to care for their children) was even higher. The survival of these 3,693 children is in open contradiction to the policy reflected in the "Jäger Report," according to which EK 3 had killed 34,464 Jewish children by 30 November 1941, as mentioned earlier.

Jäger asserts that these Jews were spared due to the intervention of the civilian administration and the *Wehrmacht*, but this does not explain why these 3,693 "useless eaters" were permitted to survive as well.

How little the threat of death was hovering over these children can be gathered from the following description of the school system in the ghetto of Vilnius, as furnished by Abraham Foxman (Foxman, pp. 90f.):

> *"Some days after the establishment of the ghetto, in 1941, a group of teachers founded a 'Farein,'* [Verein = association/club] *which later organized the educational system of the ghetto. At the first enrollment for the school, 3,000 children were registered. In the beginning, participation in classes was voluntary. In April 1943, it then became obligatory:*
>
> *'Directive No. 3, issued by the ghetto deputies on April 28, 1943, announces the attendance at the ghetto schools to be obligatory. All children from five to thirteen must attend the ghetto schools, which are free of cost.*
>
> […] *The block chief is responsible for seeing that all children of obligatory school age take part in classes.' In the first year of the ghetto, more than twenty educational units were founded, which comprised over 80% of the school-age children of the ghetto. Schools as well as H.K.P. – work institutions – were also founded in Kauen* [Kaunas]. *Gens* [203] *received permission from the Germans to fence-in an area in the woods outside of the ghetto. The teachers walked with groups of 100 to 150 children into the woods four times a week. Due to the outbreak of a scarlet-fever epidemic, there was a delay in opening the schools in 1942. In October they resumed operation, and 1,500 to 1,800 children took part in classes. Apparently there were 60 teachers who gave 42 hours each week. The remaining 18 hours were devoted to work in the kitchen, visiting students and parents in their homes, the repair of books and notebooks, as well as the conducting of various assemblies."*

[203] Jacob Gens, Chief of the Jewish Council of Vilnius.

Arad informs us that, starting on 26 March and ending on 2 April 1943, 1,250 Jews were transferred from the ghettos of Oshmyany, Mikhailishki and Swieciany to the Vilnius Ghetto, and another 1,459 from Oshmyany to the labor camps at Žasliai, Ziezmariai, Kena and Novo-Vileyka (Arad 1982, p. 359). Another 4,000 Jews from the ghettos at Swieciany and Oshmyany were shot at Ponar at the beginning of April (*ibid.*, pp. 362f.), because the Germans wanted to secure the border between Lithuania and Byelorussia, since the Jews maintained relations with the partisans.

Approximately 2,500 Jews housed in labor camps, such as Sorok-Tatar, Rzesza and Biala-Vaka, were killed between the end of June and the beginning of July 1943 (*ibid.*, pp. 367-369). If we follow the "Jäger Report," these 9,000 Jews or more should not have existed anymore, as they should have been killed much earlier.

With regard to the conference convened by Rosenberg in Berlin on 13 July 1943, in which *Gauleiter* Meyer announced "the resettlement of 22,000 Jews and the concentration of 50,000 Jews in concentration camps in the Eastern Territories,"[204] Arad asserts that, of these 72,000 Jews present in the East, 20,000 resided at Vilnius, 17,000 at Kaunas and 5,000 at Siauliai (Arad 1982, p. 402), for a total of 42,000, 7,500 more than those left alive by Jäger. Adding the above-mentioned 9,000 Jews, we arrive at 16,500 living Jews considered dead by the "Jäger Report."

The most important test of the reliability of this document is obviously that relating to the bodies: is there any documentary or physical proof of the burial of more than 137,000 bodies in the locations mentioned in the report? That question will be examined in Part Two of the present study.

4.2. The Execution at Kaunas of "Resettlers" from the Reich and the Protectorate

The massacre at Kaunas, considered as an established fact by orthodox Holocaust historiography, arouses additional perplexity. The "Jäger Report" states that 2,934 "resettlers from Berlin, Munich and Frankfurt upon Main" were killed in Fort IX, Kaunas, on 25 November 1941, and "2,000 resettlers from Vienna and Breslau" on the 29th.[205] The incidents involved transports from Munich (15 November), Berlin (17 November), Frankfurt upon Main (22 November), Vienna (23 November) and from Breslau (25 November), for a total of 4,934 persons. These transports were announced in advance by SS *Sturmbannführer* Rudolf Lange, commander of the Security Police and the SD for the General District of Latvia, in a letter sent to *Reichskommissar* Lohse on 8 November 1941:[206]

"Subject: Jewish transports out of the Reich to the East

[204] NO-1831. TWC, Vol. 13, p. 1021.
[205] RGVA, 500-1-25/1, p. 113a.
[206] Mallmann 2014 *et al*., pp. 232f.; YVA, O.17-158, pp. 1-4. PS-3931.

According to a communication from the Reich Security Main Office Berlin, the transport of 50,000 Jews to the East is being carried out. As reported, 25,000 of them will be sent to Riga and another 25,000 to Byelorussia. Transports are coming from all of the major cities in the area of the Reich and the Protectorate. The 1st transport of 1,000 Jews will arrive in Minsk on 10 Nov. 41. By 16 Dec. 1941, another transport will be sent to Minsk every other day. The remaining transports will be set in motion in the period between 10 and 20 Jan. 1942. The transports to Riga will begin on 17 Nov. 41. The first transport will get here on 19 Nov. By 17 Dec., another transport of 1,000 Jews will arrive here every day. The remaining transports will be sent during the period between 11 and 29 Jan. 1942. It is planned to accommodate the first five transports intended for Riga in the ghetto at Kaunas. It is not yet clear whether the train schedules will permit to direct these first 5 transports to Kaunas, or whether it will only be possible to branch off 5 transports to Kaunas starting with later transports. I will keep you informed in this regard. The construction of barracks in the vicinity of Salaspils will continue at the quickest pace. Since the barracks will not yet be entirely completed by the time the first transports arrive due to the many problems involved in procuring the materials and the shortage of skilled workers, the plans are to create housing possibilities for the first transports in the former military barracks in Jungfernhof (to the right of the road Riga-Daugavpils, between Riga and Salaspils). […]*"*

This document provides not a single hint at any exterminatory intention with regard to the five Jewish transports slated to arrive at Kaunas. Lange informs us that these five transports did not necessarily have to have been the first five, since provision was made for the possibility of directing five transports to Kaunas from among subsequent trains. Hence, whether they were sent to Kaunas or not was neither linked to the availability of housing at Riga (as provision was explicitly made to house them "in the former military barracks in the Jungfernhof" if need be), nor to any policy of extermination, but to mere logistical considerations of fitting those trains into the existing train schedules. Nothing speaks against the assumption that they were to be used there for labor deployment.

On 20 November, Lange, with reference to the letter quoted above, informed Lohse on these five transports:[207]

"The Jewish transports are continually arriving in Minsk as planned. Of the 25 transports originally intended for Riga, the first 5 are diverted to Kaunas."

On 17 November 1941, the State Police Office Berlin, IV D 1, sent the following message to the "Commander, Security Police, Dr. LANGE, Riga":[208]

"Regarding evacuation of Jews. 17 Nov. 41 at around 1825 hours, transport train No. D O 26 departed BERLIN direction KAUNAS with 944 Jews. Transport accompanied by 2 state policemen and 15 police officials. Transport manager and chief criminal assessor EXNER, who has duplicate transport list with him. Provisioning added to transport: 3,000 kg bread, 2,700 kg. flour, 200 kg. peas, 200 kg. processed foodstuffs, 300 kg. yeast flakes, 18 bottles soup spices… 52.5 kg. soup

[207] Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, p. 238; photocopy of the originals in YVA, O.18-166.1.
[208] TNA, HW 16-32, German Police Decodes: No. 1 Traffic: 17.11.41. ZIP/G.P.D.515/25.12.41, n. 35f.

paste, 100 packets…corrupt groups… 50 kg. salt, 1…corrupt groups… 1…corrupt groups… and 47,200 RM. in Reich certificates of deposit."

To this must be added the fact that the *Einsatzgruppen* reports contain not the slightest mention of this presumed massacre. In the "Summary Report of 16 October – 31 January 1942" we find the following remark in a paragraph titled "The Jews from the Reich":[209]

"Jewish transports have been arriving from the Reich at short intervals since December 1940 [recte: 1941]. *20,000 of these Jews were sent to Riga and 7,000 to Minsk. The first 10,000 Jews evacuated to Riga were housed partly in a provisionally extended collection camp, partly in a newly-erected camp of huts in the vicinity of Riga. The other transports were sent to a separate part of the Riga Ghetto at first. Deploying all Jews fit for labor, construction of the camp of huts is being carried out in such a way that by spring it will be possible to house all evacuated Jews in this camp who survive the winter. Only a small percentage of the Jews from the Reich are fit for work. Approximately 70-80% are women and children as well as elderly people unable to work. The mortality rate is constantly rising, also due to the extraordinarily hard winter.*

The performance of the few able-bodied Jews from the Reich is satisfactory. As a work force, they are more valuable than Russian Jews due to the fact that they speak German language and are relatively cleaner.

The Jews have a remarkable ability to adapt, trying to change the way they live to fit the circumstances.

The crowding of the Jews into the smallest space, which occurs in all ghettos, necessarily leads to a greater danger of epidemics, which we are attempting to prevent through the use of Jewish doctors, insofar as possible. In individual cases, infected, contagious Jews were separated on the pretext of taking them to an old peoples home or a hospital, and executed."

Therefore, these deportees were killed only in individual cases and not *en masse*.

EM No. 151 dated 5 January 1942 supplies further information on the transports in question:[210]

"The first five transports that came to Riga were diverted to Kaunas. The Riga Camp, which is to house approximately 25,000 Jews, is still being built and will be finished in a very short time.

Meanwhile, the Higher SS and Police leader in Riga, SS Obergruppenführer Jeckeln, has taken on a shooting operation, and on Sunday, 30 Nov. 41, eliminated some 4,000 Jews from the Riga Ghetto and from an evacuation transport from the Reich. Originally, the operation was to be carried out using the Higher SS and Police leader's own forces, but after several hours, 20 men from EK 2 commandeered for securing the perimeter were deployed in the operation."

Here, therefore, the document speaks of the shooting at Riga of an evacuation transport from the Reich, without any mention of the five transports sent to Kaunas.

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[209] RGVA, 500-4-92, pp. 63f.

[210] NARA, T 175/234/ 2723503 (p. 14 of the report).

Finally, Report No. 10 of the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories" dated 3 July 1942 states in the paragraph "Evacuation of Jews from the Reich":[211]

> *"In the period between 17 Nov. 41 and 6 Feb. 1942, 25,103 Jews were evacuated to Riga from the state police districts of Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt upon Main, Breslau, Nuremberg, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Dresden, Dortmund, Prague, Hamburg, Kiel, Danzig, Cologne, Kassel, Düsseldorf, Karlsruhe, Aachen, Münster and Hannover in 25 transports and housed in camps or ghettos there.*
> *The persons concerned are currently being covered by the general anti-Jewish measures in effect in the East."*

Not even this report confirms the presumed shooting at Kaunas of the five transports at the end of 1941. Yet the reports contain much less-important information on the fate of the Jews deported to Lithuania, such as the escape of 2 Jews from the Salaspils Camp (see next subchapter).

Apart from the fact that they are not confirmed by other sources, the presumed shootings at Kaunas are entirely unmotivated.

Gerlach maintains that

> *"Just three days before the first massacre, Dr. Peter Kleist, the section chief for the Ostland in the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Territories in the East (Ostministerium), met with Karl Jäger, the head of Einsatzkommando 3 in Kaunas, and expressed his satisfaction with the executions of Lithuanian Jews. We are thus justified in concluding that the Ministry for the East, which had been informed about the transports, was in agreement with the plan to execute the German Jews who were expected to arrive in Kaunas."* (Gerlach 1998, pp. 767f.)

It is unclear how "satisfaction with the executions of *Lithuanian* Jews" can prove the existence of a "plan to execute the *German* Jews." Kleist could just as easily have been satisfied because the executions of Lithuanian Jews created enough room to house the transports of Jews from the Reich in the Kaunas Ghetto according to the Berlin plan.

Wolfram Wette holds another theory which is just as inconsistent. He asserts that

> *"the local commander of EK 3, SS Standartenführer Karl Jäger, had – as far as is known – received no instructions from Berlin or from his direct superior Stahlecker as to what to do with the new arrivals. Jäger therefore found himself faced with the necessity to decide this matter for himself. It is to be assumed that he ordered on his own initiative to shoot the German and Austrian Jews as quickly as possible."* (Wette, p. 126)

Considering that Jäger was commander of the Security Police and the SD in Lithuania, one cannot seriously believe that the decision to divert the five transports to Kaunas, which had already been taken on 8 November 1941 and was repeated on the 20th, was not communicated to the superior concerned.

On the other hand, if it is true that, on 29 October, Jäger himself had already ordered the killing of 9,200 local Jews in Fort IX, Kaunas, to achieve the "cleans-

[211] RGVA, 500-1-775, p. 233.

ing of the ghetto of superfluous Jews," as quoted earlier,[212] this may have served to make room for the five transports in question. In that case, he was therefore fully aware of the fact that the Jews on the five transports in question were not to be shot. The question should be examined in greater depth.

Himmler's *Dienstkalender* contains the following entry for 30 November 1941 (Witte *et al.*, p. 278):

"From the Bunker [Wolfsschanze]
[T:] 13.30 SS O.Gr.F. Heydrich Prague *Arrest Dr. Jekelius*
Alleged Son Molotov.
Jewish transport from Berlin.
no liquidation."
[Recte: *No liquidation*]

Two messages intercepted by the British on 1 December 1941 supply further useful information required for a correct interpretation of this entry. The first message says:[213]

"OEJ de DSQ SSD DSQ Nr 3 1930 2 Tle 175 71 SPK1 3742.
SS Obergruppenführer JECKELN Higher SS and Pol. Leader East, RIGA. The Rf SS requests you to visit him for a talk on 4 Dec. 41. Please indicate when you get here or what form of transportation you will be using (re. pick-up).
Signed GROTHMANN, SS Hauptsturmführer and Adjutant."

The second is more important:[214]

"OEJ de DSQ DSAQ Nr 4 1930 2 Tle 177 75 DSPK1 3742
To the Higher SS and Pol. Leader East, Riga.
The Jews resettled in the Eastern territory are only to be dealt with according to the guidelines issued by myself and/or by the Reich Security Main Office on my behalf. Arbitrary acts and violations will be punished by myself personally.
Signed H. HIMMLER"

The entry in Himmler's *Dienstkalender* is commonly interpreted in the sense that "no liquidation" refers to the "Jewish transport from Berlin." In reality, however, this is a mere supposition. The original entry's text has a period after "Berlin" and "No" begins with a capital letter, not a lower case k, as Witte transcribed it (see Document I.4.1.).

It is most probable that this entry briefly summarizes four distinct themes dealt with during the phone call between Himmler and Heydrich; since there is no connection between "Arrest Dr. Jekelius" and "alleged son Molotov," there is therefore also no connection between "Jewish transport from Berlin" and "No liquidation."

Since the contents of the phone call are unknown, and the entry in the *Dienstkalender* only served as a reminder of the content of the phone call, and since a

[212] RGVA, 500-1-25/1, p. 113a; see here p. 201.
[213] TNA, HW 16-32, German Police Decodes, No. 2 Traffic: 1.12.41, p. 3, No. 24.
[214] *Ibid.*, No. 25.

few brief phrases were enough for that purpose, there is no way of knowing what the phrase "No liquidation" really referred to.

As has been suggested on the CODOH Forum, this expression could have referred to the domestic policy of the Protectorate, or the fact that the autonomy of Bohemia and Moravia was not to be liquidated, as was desired by some Party officials who wished to see the Protectorate incorporated into the Reich as a new Gau.[215] But the phone call between Himmler and Heydrich suggests rather a more specific problem, falling directly within Himmler's scope of authority, without intervention by Hitler. In fact, according to the *Dienstkalender*, Himmler met the Führer after Heydrich's phone call. This meeting lasted from 2:30 in the afternoon until 4 o'clock ("lunch with the Führer"; Witte *et al*., p. 278).

Arthur Butz's interpretation is no doubt original, but is based on the hypothetical assumption that "No liquidation" is linked to "Jewish transport from Berlin." He notes that

> *"in the Fall of 1941, as the deportations started, Riga was not prepared to receive the transports so they were diverted to Kovno (Kaunas) in Lithuania. The first five transports destined for Riga departed the Reich Nov. 15-23 and were diverted to Kovno. Thus in late November there must have been controversy over the wisdom of these transports, and calls for their suspension or cancellation. The transport of Nov. 27 from Berlin was the first destined for Riga that actually went there, and that is why 'no liquidation' of this transport could have been worth specific discussion between Himmler and Heydrich."* (Butz 2008)

However, there is no reason to believe that the transport of 27 November was ever cancelled (or that there was any intention to do so), in such a way as to require Himmler's intervention not to "liquidate" (cancel) the transport. The transport in question, in the event of reception difficulties at Riga, could have been diverted to Kaunas like the previous five, with no need for cancellation.

It is also possible to believe that the expression "No liquidation" referred, as I mentioned earlier, to a very particular problem falling within the fields of competence of Himmler *and* Heydrich. Robert Gerwarth supplies a useful starting point for a solution when he writes (Gerwarth, p. 230):

> *"In late October 1941, however, the first wave of terror officially subsided for 'optical reasons.' In order to give the outward impression of the Protectorate's complete pacification, the summary courts temporarily ceased to impose death penalties, although the SS secretly continued to carry out executions at Mauthausen concentration camp. On 29 November Heydrich went further in his propagandistic policy of 'positive gestures' by suspending the state of emergency in all regional districts of the Protectorate with the exception of Prague and Brünn."*

In fact, at a meeting with nine high-ranking officials on October 7, 1941, Heydrich had stated:[216]

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[215] https://forum.codoh.com/viewtopic.php?p=72751#p72751; based on a paper by Alice Teichová in Teich, pp. 273ff.

[216] YVA, O.51-54, "*Notizen aus der Besprechung über künftige Planungen im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren am 17. Oktober 1941, um 16.00 Uhr*", pp. 96f.

> *"For optical reasons, therefore – initially for eight days – the court-martial sentences are stopped altogether."*

These problems had already been discussed by Himmler and Heydrich during their meetings on 13 – 14 October 1941. The *Dienstkalender* entry for the 13th reads "15.40 Heydrich Berlin situation Czechia" (Witte *et al.*, p. 233); the next day "18 h-23 h SS Ogruf. Heydrich"; during the conversations, the word "*Exekutionen*" was also used (*ibid.*, p. 234). As noted by the editors of the work, "With the executions, Heydrich was pursuing a calculated policy of deterrence" (*ibid.*). It might be objected that the entry of 30 November does not mention the term "*Exekutionen*," but rather, "*Liquidierung*": the words no doubt differ, but the concept is the same to such a degree that orthodox Holocaust historiography considers "*Liquidierung*" as synonymous with "*Exekution*" of the Jewish transport from Berlin. Contrariwise, this objection obviously has some value: the entry of 30 November uses precisely the term "*Liquidierung*," not "*Exekution*."

In reference to the message of 17 November 1941 intercepted by the British (relating to the Jewish transport from Berlin to Kaunas), Stephen Tyas draws once again attention to the entry in Himmler's *Dienstkalender* of the same date, which records a meeting between Himmler and Heydrich from 12.15 to 12.30 h. The topics under discussion were: "Discussion with Rosenberg, conditions in the General Gov., removal of the Jews, legal experts only as advisors" (*ibid.*, p. 265). Tyas comments:

> *"earlier in the day Himmler had conferred with Heydrich between 12:15 and 12:30 about the 'elimination of the Jews' (Beseitigung d. Juden)*[217] *following difficulties and obstacles raised in Riga about the deportation program for German Jews. A decision was possibly made between Himmler and Heydrich about the killing of these Berlin Jews, and the train was directed to Kaunas rather than Riga, as previously intended."* (Tyas, pp. 218f.)

This, and the four subsequent transports (from Munich, Frankfurt upon Main, Vienna and Breslau), continues Tyas, were all directed to Kaunas, and all the deportees, 4,934 persons, were shot between 25 and 29 November in Fort IX by *Einsatzkommando* 3 led by Karl Jäger. He then adds that, on 20 November 1941, the Bremen Gestapo transmitted, also to Riga, a radio message announcing the departure, on 18 November, of a train carrying 971 Jews from Bremen to Minsk. Here the English translation of this radio message:[218]

> *"SPK1 of SPÖ BREMEN No. 1 0800 Tle 149 117 91*
> *Commander of the Police and SS, RIGA.*
> *Re. evacuation of Jews. Transport train DO 56 left BREMEN on 18 November 41 for Minsk with 971 Jews. Accompanying unit police BREMEN; transport leader*

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[217] In realty, the topics dealt with in 15 minutes by Himmler and Heydrich were four in number; it is difficult to believe that the presumed decision to kill the deportees on five transports was taken in just a few minutes between one topic and another. It is even more difficult to explain why such a decision should have been issued in the first place.

[218] TNA, HW 16-32, German Police Decodes Nr. 1, Traffic: 20.11.41. ZIP/G.P.D. 467 (rest illegible).

> *police sergeant BOCKHORN, is in possession of 2 lists of names and 48,700 RM. I bank checks. Jews are well supplied with food and equipment.*
> *State Police BREMEN."*

Tyas concedes that "all the Reich Jews arriving in Minsk in 1941 were not killed on arrival and instead housed in the Minsk Ghetto during winter" (*ibid.*, pp. 219f.). Therefore, the "*Beseitigung d*[*er*] *Juden*" – "elimination/removal of the Jews" – did not mean the extermination of the Jews. Tyas' interpretation is inconsistent due to the fact that it limits this general note, without proof, to the specific case of the Jews deported to Kaunas; in particular, it does not take account of the fact that as early as 8 November 1941 – as shown by Lange's letter to Lohse cited earlier – the plan was "to accommodate the first five transports intended for Riga in the ghetto at Kaunas." It therefore makes no sense for Himmler and Heydrich to agree nine days later to divert these five transports from Riga to Kaunas for the purpose of extermination.

Regarding the "removal of the Jews," the *Dienstkalender*'s editors summarize Tyas' hypothesis as follows in a footnote (Witte *et al.*, fn 58, p. 265):

> *"It is unclear whether this point in the discussion refers to the General Government. The note may possibly have referred to Heydrich talking to Hitler about the difficulties and obstacles during the deportation of Jews from the Reich, about which he also informed Goebbels the same day (see Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels, Part II, vol. 2, p. 309* [18 Nov. 1941]*)"*

This reference to Goebbels's annotation is quite misleading, however, because it says (Fröhlich, p. 309):

> *"Heydrich reported to me concerning his intentions relating to the deportation of the Jews out of the territory of the Reich. The problem turns out to be more difficult than we had initially assumed. 15,000 Jews have to stay in Berlin in any case, since they are engaged in dangerous and important work required for the war effort. Also, a number of elderly Jews can no longer be deported to the East; a ghetto is supposed to be built for them in a small city in the Protectorate. During the third installment, which is due at the beginning of next year, the procedure suggested by me is to be used, namely, to evacuate them city by city, so that, when the evacuation begins in a city, it is also over as soon as possible, and the strain caused by it on public opinion doesn't last too long and doesn't do too much harm. Heydrich is moving ahead consistently in this matter as well. He is really clever politically, generally speaking, which I really didn't know before. His orders in the Protectorate are well-thought out. They don't just depend on power, but on reason, and that is always something of great value."*

The sentence "The problem turns out to be more difficult than we had initially assumed" obviously has no connection to the difficulties of housing the transports at Riga, and only a twisted fantasy could connect it to them. The obvious sense is that Goebbels supported a radical solution to the "Jewish Question," *i.e.*, he advocated the deportation of all Jews to the East; but he now realized that doing so would be "more difficult," since Heydrich had notified him that Jews employed in vital areas of the German economy would have to remain in Berlin, and that

elderly Jews would be deported to the ghetto at Theresienstadt. Two days earlier, on 16 November 1941, an article by Goebbels had appeared in the periodical *Das Reich*, in which he had explained his thoughts regarding the Jews (Goebbels 1941):

> *"The historical guilt of world Jewry for the outbreak and expansion of the war has been so fully substantiated that we need not waste any more time talking about it. The Jews wanted the war, and now they have it. But the Führer's prophecy also proves to be true, delivered in the German Reichstag on 30 January 1939, that, if world Jewry succeeded in pushing the peoples into another world war, the result would not be the Bolshevization of the earth and therefore the victory of Jewry, but rather the destruction of the Jewish race in Europe.*
> *We are now experiencing the fulfillment of that prophecy, and with this, Jewry suffers a fate that, although hard, is more than deserved. Compassion or even regret in this regard is entirely uncalled-for. World Jewry, in provoking this war, entirely misjudged the forces available to it, and it is now suffering a process of gradual annihilation, which it had intended for us, and which they would also unhesitatingly carry out against us, if they had the power to do so."*

The "annihilation" mentioned here cannot be understood in a physical sense or even with a view to a future "Holocaust," because Hitler is only said to have taken his elusive "decision" in this regard at the beginning of December 1941 (Gerlach 1998, p. 784). The term "annihilation" referred therefore to the deportation of the Jews to the East, referred to by Rosenberg on 14 December 1941 as the "extermination of Jewry," as mentioned earlier. The "removal of the Jews" discussed here has the same meaning.

Angrick and Klein reconstruct the course of events which, in their view, led to the telephone call between Heydrich and Himmler. Here is their narrative in a nutshell:

On 30 November, when the Jewish transport which departed Berlin on the 27th arrived at Riga, Friedrich Jeckeln, the Higher SS and Police leader North and East Russia, had it shot, extending to the Jews of the Reich Himmler's order to kill the Lithuanian Jews. Lange attempted to prevent the shootings, since Jeckeln was in violation of the RSHA guidelines and had moreover arbitrarily interpreted Himmler's order to annihilate the Riga Ghetto. Lange turned to the RSHA, consulting SS *Sturmbannführer* Emil Finnberg, an official of the Commander of the Security Police and the SD East, who succeeded in putting him into contact with the RSHA. Here the matter was considered so important that it was decided to ask Heydrich directly. Heydrich was in Prague. He informed Himmler by phone at 13.30, who issued the order reading: "Transport of Jews from Berlin, no liquidation" (sic, note the wrong comma and lower case). But it was now too late: the Jews from Berlin had already been shot (Angrick/Klein, pp. 146-148).

The sentence from the Riga Trial dated 23 February 1973 reads (Fleming, p. 92):

> *"The shooting of the 'resettled' Jews from the Riga Ghetto began at 9.00 in the morning and was still going on in the large pit at dusk. Before this operation be-*

> *gan, between 8.15 and 9.00 AM, a transport with 1,000 Reich Jews from Berlin, who had just arrived in Riga some time earlier, had already been liquidated."*

This description implies that the shooting of the transport from Berlin and the liquidation of the Riga Ghetto occurred on the same day, meaning 30 November 1941. But in his "Summary Report of 16 October – 31 January 1942," Stahlecker writes that 27,800 Jews were shot "in early December 1941 during an operation ordered and carried out in Riga by the Higher SS and Police leader."[219] I will return to this matter in the next subchapter.

The exact date is important because the shooting of the Jewish transport early in the morning depended precisely on the large number of persons who were to be killed during the day. This has its logic, but if 45 minutes (from 8:15 to 9:00 AM) was enough time to kill 1,000 persons (according to the verdict in the Riga Trial), then why did it require more than seven hours to kill 4,000 people? At Riga, in fact, the sun only came up at 8:34 AM on 30 November, and it set at 3:50 PM.[220]

The timing, moreover, does not appear to confirm the reconstruction by Angrick and Klein. These two writers claim that

> *"the Berlin transport did not end at Skirotava Station, where Lange, representing the Security Police, initially expected it that morning and received the escort papers. The members of the Berlin Schutzpolizei who had accompanied the transport as guards stayed put at Skirotava and handed over the deportees to the waiting members of KdS Latvia. The transport was then routed to a siding at Rumbula station."* (Angrick/Klein, p. 146)

The train continued onwards to the execution site on Jeckeln's order, and the shooting started early the next morning, well before 8:15 AM. Due to the difference in time zones, Riga was one hour ahead of Berlin and Prague; therefore, when the 1:30 PM phone call occurred between Heydrich and Himmler, it was 2:30 PM at Riga. Since Lange was supposed to receive the transport, seeing it continue on its way to Rumbula, he immediately took action to find out what was going on, and we can be certain that at 9:00 AM he already knew that his transport was being shot. But can one seriously believe that the communication of such an important piece of information to the RSHA and to Heydrich required over six hours?

In this context, Himmler's diary entry is quite illogical, precisely because, for chronological reasons, Lange could not have communicated anything else to Berlin but the very fact that the transport had been completely liquidated. But if that is so, what sense does it make for Himmler to order "No liquidation" more than six hours after the fact, *i.e.*, that the completed shooting, which he knew had already happened, was not to take place? This order would only make sense if Lange had communicated to Berlin Jeckeln's mere *intention* to shoot the Jews on

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[219] RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 59.

[220] http://dateandtime.info/de/citysunrisesunset.php?id=456172&month=11&year=1991; the date refers to 1991.

the transport, but, as I have explained above, Lange, due to his position, must have known about the execution.

Therefore, even examining the matter from the orthodox point of view, the expression "No liquidation" cannot relate to "Jewish transport from Berlin." Having ascertained this fact, any subsequent discussion from an orthodox point of view becomes pointless.

Even Browning pointed out the illogical nature of the orthodox reconstruction of the claimed events, noting that

> *"the evidence is confusing. If the Kaunas killings represented a point at which Himmler had ordered the killing of all subsequent transports, but he then suddenly changed his mind again on November 30, why was he angry at Jeckeln for faithfully carrying out orders that had not yet been rescinded? If the Kaunas killings represented a special case and Jeckeln had no orders to destroy the Berlin transport, how did it even occur to Himmler and Heydrich on November 30 to discuss 'no liquidation' of this particular transport?"* (Browning 2004, pp. 396f.)

The presumed Himmler order also appears illogical in the context of the killing at Fort IX, Kaunas, of the five transports of "resettlers" referred to in the "Jäger Report." Even this killing was a blatant violation of the directive from Himmler and the RSHA regarding the "resettlers" intended for the East. Since Himmler had announced, as just quoted, that he would punish "arbitrary acts and violations," Himmler would have had to summon not only Jeckeln but also Jäger for a reprimand, because the first three transports from the Reich, including one from Berlin, would have been shot even earlier, on 25 November, and Himmler should have sent a "*Keine Liquidierung*" "No liquidation" order to Jäger as well.

It is of course true that Jeckeln, as Higher SS and Police leader, was one of Jäger's superiors, and as such, Jeckeln was also responsible for the presumed massacre at Kaunas. But Himmler sent Jeckeln the order to treat the Jews deported to the East according to his directives, that is, as "*Umsiedler*" "resettlers," by radio message on 1 December, which leads one to believe that the massacre of 30 November was the first (presumed) massacre of Jews from the Reich.

Another weighty argument against the interpretation of orthodox Holocaust historians is a letter sent by the Territorial Commissioner of Riga, Hugo Wittrock, to the Reich Commissioner of the Ostland on February 10, 1942. We read there (PS-579; see Document I.4.2.):

> *"The transport of Jews from Kauen arrived here on 8 February* [19]*42. However, instead of the 500 male workers requested, only*
>
> *222 male and*
> *137 female workers*
>
> *have been sent.*
>
> *However, since there is still a very considerable need for Jewish labor for transport and civil-engineering work, I once again ask that 1000 male Jewish workers be requested in Kaunas."*

There were "Jewish workers" in Kaunas, who were not under the control of a labor office, but of the police. These transfers of Jewish workers from Kaunas to

Riga cannot be reconciled with the alleged killing of all 4,934 Jews who arrived in Kaunas with the first five transports.

4.3. Jeckeln and the Order to Exterminate the Ghetto at Riga

Three of the *Einsatzgruppen* reports mention executions of Jews at Riga.

– The already quoted EM No. 151 dated 5 January 1942 states (Mallmann 2014 *et al*., p. 41):

"Meanwhile, the Higher SS and Police leader in Riga, SS Obergruppenführer Jeckeln, has taken on a shooting operation, and on Sunday, 30 Nov. 41, eliminated some 4,000 Jews from the Riga Ghetto and from an evacuation transport from the Reich."

Since the transport which was "eliminated" on 29 November 1941 was carrying 820 persons (Benz, p. 47), the total number of persons shot was 4,820.

– EM No. 155, dated 14 January 1942 states (Mallmann 2014 *et al*., p. 76):

"The number of the Jews remaining in Riga – 29,500 – was reduced to 2,500 by an operation carried out by the Higher SS and Police leader East."

There were therefore 27,000 victims of this operation.

– EM No. 156, dated 16 January 1942 states (*ibid.*, pp. 90f.):

"10,600 Jews were shot in Riga on 30 Nov. 41. The operation was supervised by the Higher SS and Police leader. Einsatzkommando 2 participated in the operation with 1/20."

Finally, as we have seen earlier, the "Summary Report of 16 October – 31 January 1942" claims that 27,800 Jews were shot "in early December 1941 during an operation ordered and carried out in Riga by the Higher SS and Police leader."

To sum up, there were 29,500 Jews in the Riga Ghetto, and 4,000 of them were shot on 30 November 1941, along with 10,600 at the same time; the total number of victims was 27,000, or 27,800, but now comes another problem. When were the remaining 23,000 or 16,400 or 23,800 or 17,200 Jews shot? The orthodox account of this execution is rather garbled.

Arad claims that "on November 30 and December 8-9, 1941, 25,000–28,000 Jews were removed from the large ghetto and taken 8 kilometers out of town to the Rumbula forest, where they were shot" (Arad 2009, p. 148); but he supplies no reference for the second execution.

Raul Hilberg, asserted in the 1985 edition of his opus magnum:

"Then, in the middle of labor allocations and the taking of inventory, Higher SS and Police Leader Jeckeln assembled his forces and struck without warning in two waves – on November 29-December 1 and December 8-9, killing 27,800 Jews. Space had now been created for transports from Germany inside the ghetto itself." (Hilberg 1985, Vol. I, pp. 353f.)

In a footnote he explains:

> *"The figure is given in an undated report of Einsatzgruppe A, PS-2273. See also Max Kaufmann,* Die Vernichtung der Juden in Lettland *(Munich, 1947), and Gertrude Schneider,* Journey into Terror *(New York, 1979)."*

I will return to Document PS-2273 below. Hilberg evidently considered this text unsatisfactory, because in the 2003 edition he changed it as follows:

> *"Then, in the middle of labor allocations and the taking of inventory, Higher SS and Police Leader Jeckeln assembled his forces and struck without warning to kill all but a remnant of Riga's Jews. Space had now been created for transports from Germany inside the ghetto itself."* (Hilberg 2003, Vol. I, p. 365; I underlined the changed phrase)

Moving backwards in time of orthodox Holocaust literature, the first historian who ever mentioned the execution of 8-9 December was no doubt Gerald Reitlinger. According to him, the first execution occurred on 30 November 1941 and involved 10,600 victims, a figure mentioned in EM No. 156 dated 16 January 1942. He then adds:

> *"This was the notorious 'Bloody Sunday,' but the second Riga action on December 8th was almost on the same scale.* […] *A third action, also on December 8th, took place not at Rumbuli, but at Bikernek, the 'little birch wood,' which was destined to become the permanent execution place for the Riga Ghetto."*

Reitlinger does not indicate the number of victims of these two executions, but claims that the total number was at least 24,000 persons, and refers to Stahlecker's figure of 27,800. As a source, he refers to Max Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland. Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettland*. Munich, 1947 (Reitlinger 1968, p. 231).

This memoir of a self-proclaimed eye-witness is, it seems, the origin of the story of the shootings on 8 December 1941. In it, the author claims that "the bloodbath was ended on Sunday, 30 November" and cost the lives of "more than 15,000 men, women and children"; the second execution occurred "on Monday, 8 December 1941" and involved 11,500 victims; the third took place "on Tuesday, 9 December 1941," on which day they killed 500 Jews, so that "during the bloody ten days we lost more than 27,000 people – men, women and children!" (Kaufmann 2010, pp. 63f., 68, 70f.)

Document PS-2273, to which Reitlinger also refers, is the so-called second Stahlecker Report, the "Summary Report of 16 October – 31 January 1942." Reitlinger affirms that this document was stolen by the Russians at Riga, is identical with Document USSR-357a, bears no date or letterhead, and begins on page 56 (Reitlinger 1968, fn on p. 612).

At Nuremberg, this truncated version was introduced into evidence as an "Undated secret report on the mass murders of Jews systematically carried out by Einsatz Group A in Western and White Russia and in the Baltic States, with figures showing the numbers killed" (IMT, Vol. 30, pp. 71-80, here p. 71). In practice, only Chapter III of the report ("*Juden*"), which goes from p. 56 to p. 64, was published, plus a document in an appendix, evidently to make the reader believe that the *Einsatzgruppen* activities consisted solely of exterminating Jews. In

Chapter 1, I showed that this document, which is 147 pages long with 19 annexes, concerns itself with a vast range of topics.

To conclude, it remains yet to be explained why the presumed execution of 12,000 Jews at Riga on 8-9 December 1941 has no basis in documentary fact.

The second Stahlecker Report states that there were still approximately 2,500 Jews in the Riga Ghetto,[221] adding up, together with the 27,800 persons presumed shot, to a total of 30,300 persons living in the ghetto before the executions. The statistics compiled by "The District Commissar in Riga" categorically refute this figure. The "Report No. 1a. Registration of Labor Force: Men:" dated 26 February 1942 contains a column titled "Available deployable Jews," listing 4,795 Jews, of whom 600 were "brought in from Germany."[222]

The statistics for women ("Report No. 1a. Registration of Labor Force: Women") lists a total of 1,224 deployable Jewesses, including 700 "brought in from Germany."[223] The total number of deployable Latvian Jews living in the Riga Ghetto was therefore 4,719, plus another 1,300 from Germany. The statistics in question therefore referred only to Jews fit for labor. The "Monthly Report on the Establishing of Ghettos in Jewish Work Camps, Labor Deployment and Treatment of Jews," sent by the *Generalkommissar* in Riga to the *Reichskommissar für das Ostland* on 20 November 1941, contains a paragraph on the "Labor deployment of Riga Jews," which supplies the statistics already mentioned earlier:[224]

"a)	*children up to 14 years of age*		
	boys	*2,794*	
	girls	*2,858*	*5,652*
b)	*fit for work from 14 to 65 years*		
	men	*6,143*	
	women	*9,507*	*15,650*
c)	*men unfit for labor*	*2,069*	
	women " " "	*6,231*	*8,300*
		together:	*29,602 "*

Jews fit for labor therefore made up a little less than 53% of the total. If, as we may assume, this proportion also applied at the end of February 1942, the ghetto contained more than 8,900 Latvian Jews, including 4,719 Latvian Jews fit for work, while the rest were "non-deployable Jews" (children up to age 14 and the elderly). In any case, Stahlecker's figure of 2,500 Jews in the ghetto is way too low.

Angrick and Klein sought to calculate the number of Jews living in the Riga Ghetto at the beginning of February 1942, after the first great wave of deportations from Germany. On 16 February, there were 4,717 Latvian and Lithuanian Jews in the ghetto; 15,073 deportees had already arrived by that time: 9,864 from the Reich, 3,207 from Vienna and 2,002 from Theresienstadt. Their theoretical

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[221] RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 59.
[222] LVVA, P-69-1a-18, p. 113.
[223] *Ibid.*, p. 117.
[224] LVVA, P-69-1a-19, p. 22.

number was therefore 19,790; but approximately 500 Jews were sent to Salaspils; 900, taken off the transports from Theresienstadt, "were – with great probability – shot the day they arrived (19 January) as were about 500 persons, either from Vienna or Berlin (30 or 31 January)." Approximately 800 Jews from the ghetto were shot on 5 February; there were therefore approximately 12,400 Western Jews left after that date (Angrick/Klein, pp. 219, 225). Since 19,790 – (500 + 900 + 500 + 800) = 17,090, it is unclear how they arrived at this total.

The fact is that, of the 9,864 Jews deported from the Reich, 3,984 were sent to the Jungfernhof Camp, so that, assuming the losses accepted by Angrick and Klein (2,700 persons), the Riga Ghetto should have contained (19,790 – 3,984 – 2,700 =) 13,295 persons. But precisely these two historians inform us that a "Report on an inspection of the Jewish ghetto in Riga on 3 Feb. 1942" explicitly states that "at present, the ghetto is occupied by 16,000 mostly German Jews" (*ibid.*, p. 314).

The execution of the persons mentioned is not attested to by documents. In particular, the authors make the following claim (*ibid.*, p. 225):

> *"On 5 February, an operation aimed at the 'overaged' inhabitants of the ghetto's Berlin St. cost another 800 persons their lives."*

In support of these presumed executions, the writers cite not one single source, which makes it very difficult to take the claim seriously.

Assuming 4,719 Jews in the ghetto on 26 February 1942 and adding the 15,073 deportees from Germany, Austria and the Protectorate, minus the 3,984 sent to Jungfernhof, we arrive at 15,808. If the Riga Ghetto housed 16,000 on 3 February 1942, the loss in manpower amounted to approximately 200 persons. With this in mind, the executions mentioned by Angrick and Klein must be considered unfounded.

If, by contrast, we base ourselves on the "Registrations of Labor Force" mentioned earlier, meaning that there were approximately 8,900 Latvian Jews in this ghetto, approximately 4,700 of them employed in labor and approximately 3,900 unable to work, these would have to be added to the 15,808 calculated above, the shortfall, in rounded numbers, would be roughly (15,800 + 3,900 – 16,000 =) 3,700 persons.

The conclusion is that there were either some 4,700 Latvian Jews in the Riga Ghetto in February 1942, in which case the figure accepted by Stahlecker (2,500) is erroneous, and the executions described by Angrick and Klein are unfounded; or, in addition to the approximately 4,700 Jews mentioned above, there were another 3,900 Jews unable to work, and in this case the executions accepted by the two historians are arithmetically compatible, but the number of Baltic Jews housed in the ghetto (8,900) is even more incompatible with the figure given by Stahlecker.

Orthodox Holocaust historiography asserts that the Baltic Jews from the Riga Ghetto were shot on Himmler's orders to make room for the Jews deported from the Great Reich. This presumed order is not attested to by any document, but is

based on a statement by Jeckeln (*ibid.*, p. 131). On 14 December 1945, during an interrogation by Major Tsvetayev of the NKVD, Jeckeln stated that he was summoned to Berlin by Himmler on the 10th or 11th of November 1941, and added (Christoforow *et al.*, p. 348):

> *"Himmler told me, the Jewish question in the East has come to an end. Only the un-liquidated ghetto in Riga is left, and I was supposed to carry out this liquidation. Himmler said, my predecessor* [Hans-]*Adolf Prützmann, SS and Police leader in the East before me, had said that Lohse was opposed to the liquidation of the ghetto. Himmler said, I should talk to Lohse about it, and that the Riga Ghetto was to be liquidated whether Lohse was against it or not. Tell Lohse, it is my order, which is also the Führer's wish."*

This meeting is rather implausible, since Himmler was in Munich on 9 – 11 November 1941, and visited Gmund on the 12th (Witte *et al.*, pp. 609-611). Jeckeln went on, telling his story as follows:

> *"Several days after my arrival in Riga, I was at Reich Commissar Lohse's, and said that Himmler was demanding the liquidation of the Riga Ghetto. Do you agree with it? Lohse answered that he has no objections and that I could take it as an order. After a bit of time, I gave the order to liquidate all Jews from the Riga Ghetto."*

In response to being asked as to the number of Jews in the ghetto, Jeckeln answered (*ibid.*, p. 348):

> *"Upon my arrival in Riga in November 1941, there were 20–25 thousand Jews in the ghetto. Apart from the Jews from the East, there were also Jews who arrived on transports from the Reich."*

As to the number of victims of the executions, he asserted "that all Jews from the ghetto were annihilated, apart from a few who worked in various workshops" (*ibid.*). Under pressure from the Soviet interrogator, Jeckeln stated (*ibid.*, p. 349):

> *"I believe they were no fewer than 20-25 thousand men.* […] *Only this number is known to me from the Reich Commissar for the East: 20-25 thousand who were annihilated from the Riga Ghetto on my order."*

He then explained:

> *"I issued the order to annihilate the Jews from the Riga Ghetto to Major General Stahlecker, commander of the Security Service and the Gestapo, and to Knecht, commander of the ordinary police in Latvia. This was at the end of November 1941."*

The shootings took place under the leadership of SS *Standartenführer* Rudolf Lange, commander of the Security Police and the SD in Latvia. The actual executioners were "10 or 12 German SD soldiers" (*ibid.*, pp. 349f.).

Jeckeln then described how, when he went to see Himmler at Lötzen in East Prussia at the end of January 1942, the *Reichsführer* SS told him that the Salaspils Concentration Camp would have to receive "several transports with Jews from the Reich and other countries," who were destined for extermination. Here "is where Jews were brought from Germany, France, Belgium, Holland,

Czechoslovakia and other occupied countries." These Jews were all exterminated (*ibid*., pp. 350f.).

In reality, Jeckeln was summoned by Himmler on 4 December 1941 and, after dinner, at 21.30 hours, discussed the "Jewish question" with him, among other things (Witte *et al.*, p. 284). As revealed by the editors of the *Dienstkalender*, we may assume that Himmler again verbally expressed his disapproval of the shooting of a transport of Jews from the Reich, for which he had, after all, previously threatened consequences (*ibid*.). Himmler therefore *prohibited* Jeckeln from carrying out any further executions of Jews from the Reich, precisely the opposite of what Jeckeln asserted during his interrogation.

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, the Salaspils Camp, in its initial phase from mid-December 1941 until the spring of 1942, was a "death camp for male Jews from the Reich," but no document exists in this regard. The camp is said to have contained "an estimated" 5,000 inmates, but it is not stated how many of them are said to have been killed (Verstermanis, p. 478). Regarding killings in this camp – as mentioned in the previous subchapter – the following event is mentioned in EM No. 152 dated 7 January 1942 (Mallmann 2014 *et al*., p. 46):

> *"on 30 Dec.* [1941]*, 2 Jews escaped from the hut camp under construction near Salaspi*[l]*s in which 1,000 Jews from the Reich are employed as laborers at the present time."*

EM No. 154 dated 12 January returns to the problem in the following terms:

> *"The Jews who escaped from the Salaspi*[l]*s hut camp near Riga were arrested at a post office counter in Riga. Execution carried out on camp terrain in front of 1,000 Jews from the Reich housed in the camp."* (*Ibid*., p. 69)

Angrick and Klein cite a "file memo" dated 20 October 1941 according to which the Salaspils Camp was intended to house 25,000 inmates (Angrick/Klein, p. 200). This, together with the fact that the 1,000 Jews who were housed there on 30 December 1942 were "employed as laborers," is more than sufficient to demonstrate the phantasmagorical nature of the Salaspils "Death Camp" epithet.

Jeckeln's claim regarding the total extermination of the Jews in the camp was therefore a craven concession to Soviet theorizing, worded with such exaggeration as to make it completely untenable (Christoforow *et al.*, p. 352):

> *"The first transports of Jews to Salaspils arrived already in November 1941. In the first half of 1942, transports arrived one after the other at regular intervals. I don't believe that more than 3 transports arrived in November 1941, but in the next 7 months from December 1941 and June 1942, 8-12 Jewish transports arrived every month. So the result is that at least 55 and at most 87 Jewish transports arrived at the camp in these 8 months. When considering that each transport contained thousand people, then that means that 55 to 87 thousand Jews from the Reich and other countries were killed."*

The reference to the arrival in Latvia in 1941-1942 of Jews from "France, Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia and other occupied countries" is not confirmed by Holocaust historiography, except for Czechoslovakia (Theresienstadt). It is

very strange, however, that deportations of Jews from all of these countries is attested to by various testimonies collected by the Soviets. An undated report makes claims about transports of Jews which allegedly arrived at the Šķirotava Railway Station in Riga. According to a certain N.S. Heimanson, between 10 December 1941 and 16 October 1943, there were 36 Jewish transports, carrying a total of 220,500(!) persons. This stands in stark contrast to the documented 25,103 Jews transported to Riga from Germany (see p. 217). The countries of origin given by Heimanson are Germany, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia (sic; there was no such country during the war), Holland, Belgium, France, Austria, Hungary and Romania. The figures are obviously absurd, and the dates of the transports are anachronistic:[225]

15 December 1941: Kaunas (Lithuania)
20 January 1942: France
25 January 1942: Holland
30 January 1942: Belgium
5 March 1942: France
6 March 1942: Belgium
10 March 1942: France
15 May 1942: Lithuania (Kaunas)
15 May 1942: France
20 May 1942: Holland
2 June 1942: France
15 June 1942: France
5 April 1943: Hungary and Romania
16 October 1943: Vilnius

Unless the witness, N.S. Heimanson, was a shameless liar and was lying for some unknown purpose, it is incomprehensible why he mentioned the transports from France, Belgium and Holland, unless he had also seen French, Belgian and Dutch Jews arrive at Riga, on various dates and in various numbers.

Thomas Kues has drawn attention to the February 1943 edition of the magazine *Contemporary Jewish Record*, which mentioned the presence of Dutch and Belgian Jews at Riga:

> *"Systematic deportation of all Jews who remained in Latvia, including those brought from Germany, Holland and Belgium, was reported Nov. 19. The first step in the policy of extermination was taken Nov. 28, 1941, according to the Manchester Guardian (Oct. 30), when the Nazis established an 'inner ghetto' in Riga, and began to use the main ghetto as a transit camp for Jews from Central Europe."* (Kues 2012)

But as early as 20 November 1942, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's *Daily News Bulletin*, citing the *Manchester Guardian*, had written (*ibid*.):

> *"Jewish relief organizations here today received information that all Jews living in the ghetto in Riga, Latvia, are being deported to Nazi-held Russian territory and that the Nazi administration has decided to make Latvia 'judenrein' within the next few weeks.*
>
> *Jews from Holland, Belgium and Germany who were deported to the Riga ghetto are among those being sent further east. Neutral non-Jews who visited the Baltic States recently attempted to ascertain to where the Jews from the Riga ghetto were being exiled, but no information could be secured from the local non-Jewish population which is afraid to furnish any information about the fate of their for-*

[225] LVVA, P-132-30-35, pp. 10f.

> *mer Jewish neighbors. Letters sent to Jews in the Riga ghetto from neutral countries have been returned recently stamped with a notice from the postal authorities that the recipient has 'left for the East.'"* (*ibid.*)

Returning to Jeckeln, he continued his "confession" in the classical style of Soviet show trials. Even Göring was guilty for the extermination of the Jews:

> *"In the first half of February 1942, I received a letter from Heydrich. In this letter he wrote that Reich Marshal Göring had intruded himself into the Jewish question, and that Jews could now only be sent for extermination to the East with Göring's permission."* (Christoforow *et al*., p. 351)

But this was only a distortion of Heydrich's letter of 25 January 1942 which I discussed in Subchapter 2.2.

Angrick and Klein assert that the extermination of the Jews from the Riga Ghetto was perpetrated without any regard for economic considerations, so much so that they killed 15,600 Jews fit for labor (Angrick/Klein, pp. 271).

Although it is quite true that Otto Bräutigam, to Lohse's related inquiry of 15 December 1941, replied on 18 December that "economic concerns are not be taken into account when dealing with the problem" (see Subchapter 2.9.), nevertheless the question cannot be resolved that simply.

As mentioned earlier, Jeckeln claimed that Himmler ordered him to shoot the Jews from the Riga Ghetto on 10 or 11 November 1941, but the "Monthly Report on the Establishing of Ghettos in Jewish Work Camps, Labor Deployment and Treatment of Jews" drawn up on 20 November and cited earlier, testifies to the organization of the ghettos of Riga, Liepaja and Daugavpils based on labor deployment. Regarding Riga, the document presents detailed statistics relating to the Jews in the ghetto, including a "breakdown according to occupational groups," and practical instructions for the use of labor; the object is described as follows:[226]

> *"A special labor-deployment office for Jews has been created at the regional commissar in Riga City, Department of Employment, to handle Jewish labor more systematically, i.e., to deploy the Jews in such a way that their labor is exploited exhaustively for German purposes, yet at the same time without constituting competition for Germans or Latvians."*

Can one seriously believe that the *Generalkommissar* in Riga, who issued these orders, had never heard of Himmler's alleged extermination order?

At that time, the ghetto housed 29,602 Jews, 15,650 of them, as noted earlier, were "fit for work." There were still 4,719 "deployable" Latvian Jews in the ghetto after the claimed executions on 26 February 1942, so that the Germans allegedly killed 10,931 Jews who were perfectly capable to work, resulting in a shortfall of 51,000 laborers at that time (Angrick/Klein, p. 273). At this point we may be permitted to ask why these 4,719 deployable Jews were spared, if it is true that the Jewish problem in Latvia was to be solved by annihilation without regard to economic considerations.

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[226] LVVA, P-69-1a-19, p. 23.

As for the shootings, Jeckeln declared that they were carried out by 10 or 12 soldiers. The method is said to have consisted of so-called "*Sardinenpackung*" ("sardine packing"). Thomas Kues cites the related description from the Latvian-American historian Andrew Ezergailis in his book *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944*:

> *"*[…]. *7) the victims were be driven* [sic] *directly into the pits, saving the labor of moving the bodies; 8) Russian submachine guns were used, because the clip had fifty bullets and could be set on single shots; 9) the victims lay face-down in layers, after which the marksman would kill them with a bullet in the back of the head. This method has been referred to as* Sardinenpackung *('sardine packing'), and even some of the EG operatives were horrified by its cruelty."* (Kues 2012; Ezergailis, p. 241)

Kues then reproduces the explanation offered by Ezergailis in another study (Ezergailis/Otto/Augusts, pp. 110f.):

> *"The killing was done by a twelve-man team that Jeckeln personally selected from his retinue, drivers, and bodyguards. While six men rested, the other six worked both sides of the pits. The killing was done with Russian (according to some witnesses Finnish) submachine guns set to fire single shots.* […]
> *The killing started at 8:00 in the morning and lasted until 7:00 at night, three hours after nightfall. Remarkably, the twelve-man killing unit managed to murder 12,000 people per day. The Jeckeln method of killing even surpassed the killing rates in the death-camp factories. To kill 25,000 people in two 10-hour days, it meant that 1,250 were killed per hour; or 21 per minute, or one person every three seconds. Each marksman killed more than 2,000 people during the two days. In comparison, using the Stahlecker method* [of *Einsatzgruppe* A] *in Liepāja, it took three days, from 13–17 December, to kill 2,749 people. At Rumbula more people were killed every three hours."*

At the end, Kues comments:

> *"Most remarkable indeed. Not only must each of the twelve marksmen have been a virtual killer robot, able to murder men, women and children for hours on end, at least 200 victims per hour or 3.3 victims per minute or 1 victim every 18 seconds (assuming that each marksman rested for half of the 'working day'), reloading his gun after every fifty shots, rarely or never missing a shot, and apparently remaining unaffected by the noise from the weapons and screams of the victims as well as the recoils from his weapon, but the victims must have acted like a uniform mass of drugged sheep, not putting up any resistance in the face of death, or even behaving in a panicky manner. Can the scenario painted by Ezergailis really be believed?"* (Kues 2012)

The question is obviously rhetorical in nature.

Angrick and Klein add further details from the trial sources (indictments and statements made by Germans in the 1960s and 1970s; Angrick/Klein, p. 145):

> *"Three pits were in operation at any one time. Several of them were smaller. In each of these, Jeckeln had posted one marksman, while three 'shooters' – the word used in the files and statements – worked in the larger pits.* […] *The 'tech-*

nical procedure' of the mass shooting itself took place exactly as the HSSPF had envisioned it. Having been led into the pit, the Jews lay down on the ground in rows 'like sardines.' At the smaller pit, the marksman fired into the pit from above, because he could not move about freely down below. In the large pits, the murderers walked over the people or past them and fired shots into the base of their necks. The victims who followed had to lie down between or on top of the warm bodies of those who had just been murdered."

That such a "method" would really permit the killing of one person every 3 seconds, or, more concretely, that each of the 12 "shooters" would take 36 seconds, working without letup for 10 hours a day, is utterly unbelievable. After the bottom of the ditch was covered by the first layer of bodies, the following group would have to walk over this layer of soft, pillowy bodies and lie down on top of them; the "shooters," in turn, had to walk over these living bodies and shoot every person in the back of the head. With every successive layer in the larger pits, the ground would have become increasingly unstable and each move slower and more difficult.

One last consideration on the method of "*Sardinenpackung*": the technique is normally attributed to Jeckeln. However, in his interrogation of 14 December 1945, he described the shootings as follows:

"Question: How was the order carried out in practical terms?
Answer: All Jews from the Riga Ghetto went to the execution ground on foot. On the ground not far from the ditches, they had to lay their clothing, which was sent to Germany after cleaning and sorting. The Jews, men, women and children, went through a German police cordon to the ditches where they were shot by German soldiers.
Question: What was done with the bodies?
Answer: Before the shootings, big ditches were dug by the German and Latvian police, and the bodies were buried in these ditches." (Christoforow *et al*., p. 350)

Jeckeln made not the slightest mention of the "sardine method," which is evidently a perverse fantasy. Richard Rhodes cites "a minor bureaucrat named August Meier" (probably SS *Obersturmbannführer* August Meier, although he was not a bureaucrat but rather the head of *Einsatzkommando* 5 of *Einsatzgruppe* C since late September 1941), who was allegedly present at the shootings at Shepetovka, and quotes a statement allegedly made by Meier, without giving source, but no doubt a trial document (Rhodes, p. 114):

"Jeckeln had ongoing permission to shoot Jews, one can say, at almost every location. As a result, he personally organized the executions of many thousand of Jews. I still particularly recall an Aktion in Shepetovka which stands out in my mind as extraordinarily gruesome. It involved about a hundred people. Women and children were among those shot. Jeckeln said: 'Today, we'll stack them like sardines.' The Jews had to lie layer upon layer in an open grave and were then killed with neck shots from machine pistols, pistols and rifles. That meant they had to lie face down on those previously shot [whereas] *in other executions they were shot standing up and fell into the grave or were dragged. During the execu-*

tion in Shepetovka I stood for some time beside Jeckeln and then managed somehow to slink away. I did not do any shooting myself. I don't know if Jeckeln did any shooting, but I don't believe so."

In EM No. 47 dated 9 August 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* C reported as follows regarding Shepetovka (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., p. 266):

"The police regiment deployed in the area around Shepetovka and Rovno has ended its operation. The Higher SS and Police leader has sent the following radio message to the Army Group South: 'Finished combing the area around Shepetovka-Rovno. 370 Russians and 1,643 Jews shot as instigators and accomplices."

It was not an isolated execution, therefore, but rather the final total of the "combing" operation. Using the most charitable interpretative approach possible, *i.e.*, assuming the truthfulness of Meier's account, it appears that Jeckeln, on a single occasion, carried out a shooting for unknown reasons, during which he ordered the victims to lie down in a ditch "like sardines," facilitated, under the circumstances of this one single case, by the small number of persons involved: "about a hundred people." But how and why did this practice, if it existed, become transformed into a "method"? And what proves that it was applied at Riga?

The fundamental question of whether or not the Soviets ever found the remains of the 27,800 Jews claimed to have been shot at Riga remains unanswered. I shall concern myself with this question in Subchapter 7.2. of Part Two.

4.4. The Liquidation of the Ghettos in the Baltic Countries

Arad writes:

"Liquidation of the Ostland ghettos according to Himmler's June 21, 1943, orders commenced in Generalkommissariat Lithuania, which had in Ostland the largest remaining concentration of Jews – some 40,000. In early summer 1943, the Jews were concentrated in three ghettos: Vilnius, Kaunas, and Siauliai. The first to be liquidated was the Vilnius ghetto, which housed between 18,000 and 19,000 Jews." (Arad 2009, p. 317)

This is how he describes the variations in manpower in the Vilnius Ghetto. On 6 August 1943,

"about 1,000 Jews were caught and loaded onto a train, but before the train set off, Gens came and promised that the people were being taken to work in Estonia. […] *A second shipment of Jews left for Estonia on August 24, 1943, not with the required quota but with only 1,400 to 1,500 men, women, and children on board.* […] *Between September 2 and 4, Gens and the ghetto's police succeeded by force and by persuasion to gather together some 5,000 men and women, and on September 5, they were sent to Estonia and Latvia.* […] *Some 12,000 Jews remained in the ghetto.*[227] *Within a fortnight, about 2,200 people were taken out of the ghetto. Workers and their families employed in the military vehicle workshop, in*

[227] In an older study, Arad claimed that 7,130 Jews were transferred from the Vilnius Ghetto to Estonia between 6 August and 5 September 1943, leaving 11,000-12,000. Arad 1982, p. 420.

> *the military hospital, and in the Kailis fur factory (all serving the German army) were sent to camps in the vicinity of their workplaces.* […] *The Vilnius ghetto, which still housed some 10,000 Jews, was liquidated on September 23 and 24.* […] *About 2,000 Jews remained in hiding, and 8,000 were assembled at Rossa Square, where the men were separated from the women and children; between 1,600 and 2,000 men were then sent to Estonia. On the following day, 1,400 to 1,700 of the younger women, some of whom had been torn forcibly from their children, were sent to the Kaiserwald camp (known in Latvian as Mezapark*[s]*), in a suburb of the Latvian city of Riga. Between 4,000 and 4,500 women and children were sent to the Sobibor extermination camp in the General Government, and several old people were shot in Paner*[i]*ai."* (*Ibid.*, pp. 318f.)

Adding up all the highest figures, and then all the lowest ones, we see that between 2,100 and 2,400 Jews remained, respectively; if, therefore, the phrase "about 2,000 Jews remained in hiding" should be understood in the sense that these Jews were not captured, the persons presumed shot at Paneriai would have amounted to 100 persons in the first case, and 400 in the second; if, on the other hand, all the Jews from the ghetto were captured, the number of Jews presumed shot (2,100 or 2,400) would still amount to almost half the victims presumed exterminated (meaning gassed) at Sobibór (4,000 or 4,500). Arad does not explain the difference in their fates: why weren't the Jews all shot at Paneriai or all "gassed" at Sobibor?

On the other hand, the presumed deportation of 4,000-4,500 Jews to Sobibór is in no way documented. In his study on the "Aktion Reinhardt" camps, Arad writes that 5,000 Jews arrived at Sobibór from Vilnius on 23-24 September 1943 (Arad 1987, p. 398). For this transport, Jules Schelvis takes recourse to two witnesses: Leon Feldhendler (in a 1946 statement) and Arkadij Wajspapir (in a 1984 statement; Schelvis, p. 276). Feldhendler's testimony is dealt with in the Dutch translation of a statement given in 1946 before the General Jewish Committee for the History of the Central Polish Jewish Committee of Lodz; here, the witnesses speak of transports from Minsk and Vilnius which arrived at Sobibór during the winter, "in snow over a meter high" (Rijksinstituut, p. 8). It is obvious that this mention, which refers to the winter of 1942-1943, cannot refer to September 1943, which isn't in winter, and because at that time of year, there is usually no snow on the ground, let alone more than a meter of it.

Arad does not even attempt to document the alleged shootings at Paneriai, so that he presupposes, without proof, that 6,400 or 6,600 Jews from the Vilnius Ghetto were shot. He then writes that

> *"Kaunas and the nearby camps still had a Jewish population of between 7,000 and 8,000 on the eve of the arrival of Soviet troops in the region. The man responsible for the camps in which Jews were held was one Sturmbannführer Wilhelm Gecke. In early July 1944 he summoned the chairman of the Jewish council, Dr. Elkes, and informed him that the Germans were about to liquidate the camps and that its inhabitants would be sent to work in East Prussia."* (Arad 2009, p. 330)

He then adds:

> *"From Kaunas between 5,000 and 6,000 Jews were transferred to East Prussia and to Stutthof, where some were put to death and others were deported to various camps in Germany."* (*ibid*., p. 330)

Therefore, of the presumed 7,000-8,000 Jews in the ghetto, 5,000-6,000 were evacuated, and the remaining 2,000 were killed, although Arad does not explicitly say so. The Israeli historian also claims that

> *"Between 12,000 and 13,000 remained in Generalkommissariat Latvia in early summer 1943. About 5,000 to 5,500 were local Jews concentrated in three ghettos: Riga, Daugavpils, and Liepaja, and the remaining 7,000 to 7,500 were Reich Jews."* (*ibid*., p. 321)

He explains that

> *"Some 2,000 of the ghetto inhabitants, together with people who had been returned from Kaiserwald because they were no longer fit for work, were deported to Auschwitz on November 2.* […] *By mid-1943, some 800 Jews remained in Liepaja, and on October 8 these were transferred to Kaiserwald. Some 400 Jews remained in Daugavpils; during the last week of October, they were transferred to Kaiserwald. In Liepaja and Daugavpils there remained only a handful of artisans who were held there until spring 1944, when they, too, were transferred to Kaiserwald. In late September 1943 a transport arrived in Kaiserwald with between 1,400 and 1,700 women from Vilnius; they were registered and sent straight to various camps. In May and June 1944, several months before the Soviet army liberated the region, several transports of Jewish women from Hungary (from the regions of Transcarpathian Ukraine and north Transylvania) were brought to camps in Latvia. At least 3,000 women came on these transports, all of them young."* (*ibid*., p. 322)

The deportation of 2,000 Jews from the Riga Ghetto deserves a deeper analysis. According to Danuta Czech, 1,000 Jews from Riga arrived at Auschwitz on 5 November 1943; 120 men were immediately registered (with numbers 160702-160821), as were 30 women (66659-66688); the remaining 850 were allegedly gassed (Czech, p. 519). Arad's figure of a total of 2,000 Jews arriving at Auschwitz at that time is undoubtedly based on trial records. Here is an example. On 29 May 1947, a certain I. Rosengarten testified in a preliminary investigation brought by a court in then-occupied Germany against former SS *Scharführer* Max Gymnich, the former chauffeur of the commandants of the Riga Ghetto, SS *Obersturmführer* Kurt Krause and SS *Obersturmführer* Eduard Roschmann, that on 2 November 1943 more than 2,000 persons, including himself and his family, were transferred from the Riga Ghetto to Auschwitz; there, Rosengarten stated, 120 deportees were immediately registered, while the rest of the transport, approximately 1,900 persons, were allegedly gassed on the same day.[228]

Hence, if we follow this witness, the number of those transferred from Riga to Auschwitz was 2,000, and not 1,000, as D. Czech writes. By the way, one does not really understand why these Jews, the great majority of whom were evidently

[228] TNA, FO 1060-598.

unfit for labor, were sent to Auschwitz, more than 1,000 km away from Riga, and killed there. It would have been much easier to shoot them on the spot!

However, even the number of 1,000 deportees is extremely doubtful. Czech mentions as a source a "Quarantine List" of the men's camp BIIa of Birkenau, which the prisoner Otto Wolken had furtively compiled. In this document, under the date of 3 (!) November 1943, the arrival of 120 Latvian Jews from Riga is recorded, to whom the numbers 160702-160821 had been assigned.[229] Subsequently, O. Wolken mentions 476 gassing victims,[230] but he simply made up this number, because he only had access to the documents of the quarantine camp. Based on this data, Czech arbitrarily determines that the entire transport consisted of approximately 1,000 deportees. If one follows her calculations, then it consisted of (120 + 476 =) 596 men and (1,000 – 596 =) 404 women; 20% of the men and 7.4% of the women were admitted into the camp. With regard to the women, however, another problem immediately arises.

The registration numbers given by Czech in her *Chronicle* are taken from a list prepared in secret by Kazimierz Smolen, the later director of the Auschwitz Museum. During his time as an Auschwitz inmate, Smolen worked as a scribe in the camp's Political Department, and in 1944, together with other prisoners, he copied the transport lists kept in this department, which were later destroyed. Since these lists of names were very long and could not be copied in their entirety, they were summarized by noting in each case only the date of the transport, the number ranges assigned to the prisoners, and their place of origin (NOKW-2824). For transports of Jews, however, the latter was not indicated, and the column in question remained empty. This was also true for the transport of 5 November 1943, but if the 120 prisoners mentioned above were registered on that date as claimed by Czech, it is not clear how they could have been admitted to the quarantine camp two days earlier, on 3 November. In addition to this, consider the following: According to the list of female prisoners, two transports of Jews arrived on 5 November (again, with no indication of their place of origin), who received the numbers 66659-66688 and 66702-67097.

Czech writes that the second series (396 Jewish women) referred to a transport from the Szebnie Labor Camp, which consisted of 4,237 deportees; in addition to the 396 women, 952 men were also registered from this transport, who received the numbers 160879-161830 (Czech, p. 520). The source is once again the "Quarantine List", but in that list, the arrival of the transport from "Schebnia" is given as 6 November.[231] It is therefore obvious that D. Czech was completely arbitrary when she claimed that the series 160879-161830 and 60702-67097 referred to the same transport from Riga.

The conclusion is therefore as follows: Of the transport of Jews from Riga to Auschwitz, we know only that 120 male prisoners were registered at Auschwitz;

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[229] AMPO, D-AuII-3/1, p. 3.
[230] GARF, 7021-108-50, pp. 64-66 (typed "*Quarantäne-Liste*," in which O. Wolken also mentions the number of those presumably gassed).
[231] APMO, D-AuII-3/1. p. 3.

we do not know the total number of those transferred, nor do we know the number of Jewish women registered.

After this digression, let us return to Arad. This is how he goes on to describe the liquidation of the Kaiserwald Camp (Arad 2009, pp. 330f.):

> *"Prior to the evacuation of Jews from the Latvian camps in early August, all the Jews from camps in the vicinity of Riga were concentrated in the Kaiserwald camp. Evacuation from Latvia was carried out by sea, either from the port at Riga or from Liepaja. The first ship to set off with a cargo of Jewish prisoners was the Bremerhaven, which left Riga on August 6, 1944. According to Gertrude Schneider, who was on this ship, 'We were almost 2,000 people (prisoners) — 1,100 men and 900 women. There were also more than 3,000 Jewish women from Hungary… Also, more than 3,000 Russian prisoners of war were on the ship.' The Bremerhaven arrived in Danzig (Gdansk) on August 8, and the Jewish prisoners were transferred from there to Stutthof. Further transports set off by sea on September 25 and 29, and the last transport set off in early October. By the time the Soviet army liberated Riga and Kaiserwald in mid-October 1944, there were no longer any Jews there. In some of the camps hundreds and perhaps even thousands of prisoners were murdered in August and September, before the Germans withdrew from the region."*

In reality, we do know for certain that 16 Jewish transports carrying 25,043 Jews from the concentration camps in the Baltic, precisely 10,458 from Kaunas and 14,585 from Riga, arrived at Stutthof between 12 July and 14 October 1944, as shown in the following table:

Table 9

DATE	ORIGIN	NUMBER OF DEPORTEES
12 July 1944	Sipo Kaunas	282
13 July 1944	Sipo Kaunas	3,098
13 July 1944	Sipo Kaunas	233
16 July 1944	Sipo Kaunas	1,172
17 July 1944	Sipo Kaunas	1,208
19 July 1944	Sipo Kaunas	1,097
19 July 1944	Sipo Kaunas	1,072
25 July 1944	Sipo Kaunas	182
25 July 1944	Sipo Kaunas	1,321
4 Aug. 1944	Sipo Kaunas	793
9 Aug. 1944	Sipo Riga	6,382
9 Aug. 1944	Sipo Riga	450
23 Aug. 1944	Sipo Riga	2,079
23 Aug. 1944	Sipo Riga	2,329
1 Oct. 1944	Sipo Riga	3,155
14 Oct. 1944	Sipo Riga	190
	Total	25,043

Source: AMS, I-IIB-8, p. 1; cf. Graf/Mattogno, p. 97

These transports, fragmentary lists of which survived with names, carried several predominantly Lithuanian Jews under 15 years of age, indicated in the above-mentioned lists under the heading "Boy" and "Girl." The transport from Kaunas on 13 July 1944 carried 3,098 deportees; the names of 510 of them have been preserved, including 80 children in this category. On the list covering the transport of 19 July of 1,097 deportees, also from Kaunas – with 1,095 known names – there were 88 children. The following table groups the number of children by age:

Table 10

AGE	1944 TRANSPORT OF		AGE	1944 TRANSPORT OF	
	13 JULY	19 JULY		13 JULY	19 JULY
15	3	–	7	5	7
14	7	4	6	9	8
13	4	28	5	7	–
12	8	13	4	8	3
11	2	6	3	8	2
10	4	9	2	1	–
9	10	2	Total	80	88
8	4	6			

On 26 July 1944, 1,893 inmates, most of them Lithuanian, were transferred to Auschwitz from Stutthof, consisting of 546 "girls," 546 "boys" and 801 "women,"[232] who were the children's mothers. A fairly large proportion of the name list relating to this transport has survived. Among the 1,488 inmates whose personal records have survived, there were 850 children, distributed among the following age groups:

Table 11

BIRTH YEAR	AGE	CHILDREN	BIRTH YEAR	AGE	CHILDREN
1929	15	31	1937	7	44
1930	14	117	1938	6	61
1931	13	146	1939	5	54
1932	12	94	1940	4	60
1933	11	36	1941	3	52
1934	10	61	1942	2	8
1935	9	26	1943	1	2
1936	8	58		Total	850

Source: AMS, I-IIC-3, transport name list dated 26 July 1944

This list includes 24 of the 80 children on the transport on 13 July and 84 of the 88 children on the transport on 19 July listed above.

[232] Teletype from the commandant of the Stutthof Camp, SS *Sturmbannführer* Hoppe, to the commandant of the Auschwitz Camp dated 26 July 1944. AMS, I-IIC-4, p. 94. "*Übernahmeverhandlung*" ("take-over negotiations") of the transport of 26-27 July 1944. AMS, I-IIC-3, p. 43.

The transport sent from Stutthof to Auschwitz on 10 September, whose name list has been in part reconstructed based on its related "*Einlieferungsbuch*" (registration book), was carrying at least 345 mostly Lithuanian children and boys aged 12 to 17 years of age, distributed as follows:

Table 12

BIRTH YEAR	AGE	CHILDREN	BIRTH YEAR	AGE	CHILDREN
1927	17[233]	56	1931	13	6
1928	16	136	1932	12	2
1929	15	119		Total	345
1930	14	26	Source: AMS, *Transportliste*, microfilm 262		

Since the transport lists are fragmentary, the number of "boys" and "girls" transferred from Kaunas to Riga in 1944 is undoubtedly greater than the documented figure of 1,250 boys and girls.

To summarize, for Kaunas, Arad presumes there were 7,800-8,000 Jews in the ghetto, but of the Jews in that camp, 10,458 were deported to Stutthof. He attributes 12,000-13,000 Jews to the *Generalkommissariat* for Latvia, most of them transferred to the Kaiserwald Camp. To these must be added the 1,400-1,700 Jews from Vilnius and 3,000 from Hungary via Auschwitz, while Arad claims that 2,000 Jews where sent to Auschwitz from the Riga Ghetto. Therefore, at the time of the evacuation, there were between (12,000 + 1,400 + 3,000 – 2,000 =) 14,400 and (13,000 + 1,700 + 3,000 – 2,000 =) 15,700 Jews at Kaiserwald; since 14,585 of them reached Stutthof, we may conclude that all the Jews in the Kaiserwald Camp were transferred, so that Arad's claim that "in some of the camps hundreds and perhaps even thousands of prisoners were murdered in August and September, before the Germans withdrew from the region," is entirely unfounded.

As for the Siauliai Ghetto, Arad makes the following claim:

> *"Some 4,500 Jews lived in the Siauliai ghetto on the eve of its conversion into a concentration camp. During the last week of September 1943 some 1,500 men and women were removed from the ghetto and transferred to small camps in the region. On November 5, after Jewish men and women left on their way to work, the SS together with Ukrainians and Lithuanian police entered the ghetto and removed 574 children, 191 old people, and a few dozen cripples and invalids from the ghetto and shot them. In the central camp there remained only 227 children whose parents had succeeded in hiding them."* (Arad 2009, p. 319)

There are two things worthwhile noting here. First of all, the figure of 4,500 is the same as that appearing in Stahlecker's "Summary Report of 16 October – 31 January 1942," which therefore remained unchanged until the summer of 1943. The second is that, among these 4,500 Jews, many were children, that is to say (574 + 227 =) 801 or 17.8 % of the total. Adding the 191 elderly and "a few dozen cripples and invalids," the percentage of persons unable to work rises to 23%. Ac-

[233] When *Einsatzgruppe* A entered Lithuania, the 17-year-old boys' age was 14.

cording to Stahlecker, the three ghettos of Kaunas, Vilnius and Siauliai had been set up for the exclusive purpose of exploiting Jewish manpower:[234]

> *"Since the total liquidation of the Jews could not to be carried out on the grounds of labor deployment, ghettos were created, which are currently staffed as follows:"*

This is followed by a list with the following figures: ca. 15,000 Jews at Kaunas, ca. 15,000 at Vilnius, and ca. 4,500 at Siauliai.

> *"These Jews were largely used for war-related work."*

The Jäger Report indicates that these Jewish workers lived together with their families in the Lithuanian ghettos. This provides a logical explanation for the high percentage of children and old people in the Siauliai Ghetto.

Several pages later, Arad returns to this topic:

> *"Some 2,000 Jews remained in the main camp in Siauliai, and between July 11 and 14, more than 1,500 Jews were returned from neighboring camps and 3,000 Jews from the camp at Panevezys. During those days, Soviet planes bombed Siauliai and dozens of Jews were killed. All the Jews of Siauliai were brought to Stutthof to face a fate similar to that of the Jews of Kaunas. On July 27, 1944, five days after the departure of the last transport, Siauliai was liberated."* (Arad 2009, p. 330)

It is not clear whether the total figure was 6,500 or 4,500; however, since "all the Jews of Siauliai were brought to Stutthof," this means that the only victims of the camp were the "dozens of Jews" who perished during Soviet bombardments.

The transport lists which have survived in part show that at least 1,097 German, 10 Austrian and 64 Jews from the Protectorate were deported to Stutthof from Latvia and Lithuania during the second half of 1944, broken down as follows:

Table 13

DATE	TOTAL	REICH	AUSTRIA	*PROTEKTORAT*
17 July	9	9	0	0
20 July	42	35	7	0
26 July	6	6	0	0
4 August	68	55	3	10
9 August	553	538	0	15
15 August	9	9	0	0
23 August	10	10	0	0
1 October	474	435	0	39
Totals	1,171	1,097	10	64

Source: AMS, I-IIB-10

Since the name lists are not complete, one must assume that the number of survivors was much higher.

[234] RGVA, 500-4-92, pp. 60f.

5. The Death Toll

5.1. The Statistics

5.1.1. Hilberg, Krausnick/Wilhelm, Arad, Curilla

Hilberg dedicates a great deal of space to compiling a death toll of the *Einsatzgruppen*'s activities. He writes (Hilberg 2003, Vol. I, p. 295):

> *"When the Einsatzgruppen crossed the border into the USSR, five million Jews were living under the Soviet flag. The majority of the Soviet Jews were concentrated in the western parts of the country. Four million were living in territories later overrun by the German army."*

These Jews, according to him, were distributed as follows:

Buffer Territories:	
Baltic area	260,000
Polish territory	1,350,000
Bukovina and Bessarabia	up to 300,000
	up to 1,910,000
Old Territories:	
Ukraine (pre-1939 borders)	1,533,000
Byelorussia (pre-1939 borders)	375,000
RSFSR	
Crimea	50,000
Other areas seized by Germans ca.	200,000
	ca. 2,160,000,
In Total:	4,070,000

He adds that "about one and half million Jews living in the affected territories fled before the Germans arrived" (*ibid.*) Regarding the massacres, Hilberg claims, first of all, with reference to the "first sweep" of executions, that "a half million people were shot by the *Einsatzgruppen*, the Tilsit Gestapo, the *Einsatzkommando*s dispatched by the BdS of the General Government, and the formations commanded by the SS and Police leaders, during the first six months of the mobile killing operations" (*ibid.*, pp. 304f.). He then clarifies (*ibid.*, p. 353):

> *"Of 4,000,000 Jews in the area of operations, about 1,500,000 had fled. Five hundred thousand had been killed, and at least 2,000,000 were still alive. To the Einsatzgruppen the masses of bypassed Jews presented a crushing burden."*

These were therefore destined for extermination in the "second sweep." However, in the final statistics, he asserts (*ibid.*, p. 408):

> *"These partial figures, aggregating more than 900,000, account for only about two-thirds of the total number of Jewish victims in mobile operations. The remainder died in additional shootings by Einsatzgruppen, Higher SS and Police Leaders, Bandenkampfverbände, and the German army, as results of Romanian*

operations in Odessa-Dalnik and the Golta camp complex, and in the course of privation in ghettos, camps, and the open woods and fields."

In a summary statement listing the number of victims, under the heading "open-air shootings," Hilberg supplies a figure of over 1,400,000, which includes a bit of everything (*ibid.*, p. 1320):

"Einsatzgruppen, Higher SS and Police Leaders, Romanian and German armies in mobile operations; shootings in Galicia during deportations; killings of prisoners of war; and shootings in Serbia and elsewhere."

But if 500,000 Jews had been killed in the "first sweep," and 2,000,000 Jews remained, and a total of 1,400,000 Jews had been exterminated by the end of the operations (including those killed in Serbia), then the victims of the "second wave" must have amounted to (1,400,000 – 500,000 =) 900,000, but then, what happened to the remaining (2,000,000 – 900,000 =) 1,100,000 Jews who are not listed, either among the dead, or among the survivors?

Hilberg supplies the following general picture of the victims of the *Einsatzgruppen* (*ibid.*, p. 407):

Ostland and Army Group Rear Areas North and Center (January 1942; based on the operational area, this is *Einsatzgruppe* A, but Hilberg does not say so):

Estonia:	963
Latvia:	35,238
Lithuania:	136,421
Byelorussia:	41,828
Russia:	3,600
Total:	218,050

Einsatzgruppe B (up to 15 December 1942):

SK 7a:	6,788
SK 7b:	3,816
SK 7c:	4,660
SK 8:	74,740
SK 9:	41,340
Trupp Smolensk:	2,954
Total:	134,298

Ukraine, Białystok, Army Group Rear Area South, and Rear Area Eleventh Army:

Einsatzgruppe C (SK 4a and 5):	95,000 as of early December 1941
Einsatzgruppe D:	91,678 as of 8 April 1942
Total:	538,826

To this figure Hilberg adds the data contained in Himmler's report to Hitler on 29 December 1942, which reports the following shootings of Jews in the Ukraine, southern Russia and Białystok:

August:	31,246
September:	165,282
October:	95,735
November:	70,948
Total:	363,211

Therefore, the total figure for the victims of the *Einsatzgruppen* and related units is said to have amounted to over 900,000 (*ibid.*, p. 408), or, for purposes of exactitude, at least 902,237.

Krausnick and Wilhelm write that the Germans killed "a total of over 2.2 million" of the 4.7 million Jews found in Soviet territory in the summer of 1942 (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 621).

Arad presents very detailed statistics on the victims, broken down by territory (Arad 2009, pp. 521, 524f.):

	under German occupation	victims
East Byelorussia:	230,000–240,000	224,000–233,000
East Ukraine:	680,000–710,000	667,000–693,000
Russia:	60,000–70,000	55,000–70,000
Total:	970,000–1,025,000 [sic]	946,000–996,000
Byelorussia and Ukraine:	1,135,000 – 1,200,000	1,115,000–1,175,000
Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia):	280,000–285,000	270,000–274,000
Bessarabia and North Bukovina:	227,000–232,000	176,000–179,000
Total:	1,642,000–1,717,000	1,561,000–1,628,000

Victims in the Occupied Soviet Republics under German occupation:

	under German occupation	victims
Byelorussia	570,000–600,000	556,000–582,000
Ukraine	1,475,000–1,550,000	1,452,000–1,518,000
Russia	60,000–75,000	55,000–70,000
Moldavia	227,000–232,000	176,000–179,000
Lithuania	205,000–210,000	196,000–200,000
Latvia	74,000–75,000	73,000–74,000
Estonia	1,000–1,500	1,000–1,500
Total:	2,612,000–2,743,500	2,509,000–2,624,500.

It is not very clear how these figures can be reconciled with those cited by Hilberg.

In Chapter 48 of his voluminous book, titled "An Attempt at Quantification" (of the number of victims), Curilla sets forth detailed statistics for each region and each SS or Police unit having carried out executions in Soviet territory (Curilla 2006, pp. 825-836). The total number of Soviet-Jewish victims, according to him, was 2,100,000, 975,997 of whom are said to have been attested to in

his statistics (*ibid.*, p. 836). He reports the following victim figures, which fall a little short of 975,997, however:

– Baltic:	92,361
– Byelorussia:	277,625
– Eastern Galicia:	94,724
– Russia:	17,153
– Poland:	179,370
– Southern Soviet Union:	303,764
– Total:	964,997

To this figure, he claims, must be added another 566,944 Jews deported to the "extermination camps," which are not, however, included among the group of victims of the *Einsatzgruppen* and other SS and Police units (*ibid.*, pp. 832f.). The statistics were compiled utilizing not only documents, but above all court findings and testimonies.

Even if one adds all 566,944 deportees as victims to the 964,997 or 975,997 victims listed by Curilla, one still does not arrive at a total of 2,100,000 Soviet Jewish victims. It is not clear where Curilla has found the missing about 570,000 victims.

5.1.2. The Korherr Report

In his report of 23 March 1943, Richard Korherr, the *Reichsführer* SS's Inspector of Statistics, writes (NO-5194, p. 10):

> *"6. According to information from the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, to this* [other evacuations listed] *has to be added the evacuation of... 633,300 Jews in the Russian territories, including the former Baltic countries, since the beginning of the Eastern campaign.*
>
> *The above figures do not include the occupants of the ghettos and concentration camps. The evacuations from Slovakia and Croatia have been initiated by these countries."*

Starting in 1953, Gerald Reitlinger called attention to this figure, considering it to refer to victims of the *Einsatzgruppen*, which he estimated at 700,000-750,000 (Reitlinger 1953, p. 499). Later, with the advent of a tendency to exaggerate the number of victims greatly, this figure from the Korherr Report became embarrassing for orthodox Holocaust historiography, so it was completely ignored, for example by Krausnick and Wilhelm in their study of the *Einsatzgruppen*, or it was "redimensioned." The principal architect of the latter attempt was Raul Hilberg (Hilberg 2003, Vol. III, pp. 1315f.):

> *"Korherr's report contains a single reference to the 'evacuation' of 633,300 Jews in the 'Russian areas, including the former Baltic countries, from the beginning of the Eastern campaign.' The figure, according to the report, was furnished by the RSHA, and in a postwar interrogation, Korherr called it a 'house number' in the jargon of the German statisticians for seeming exactness devoid of known mean-*

> *ing. There is a* [sic] *little question, however, that the RSHA meant to convey an overall toll of the Einsatzgruppen, and that a distant observer, working with available documents, might calculate a similar result. Korherr specifically states in the concluding paragraphs of his report that he was able to record 'death of the Soviet Russian Jews in the eastern territories' only in part. He did not have the statistics for killings organized by the Higher SS and Police Leaders, who reported to Himmler directly, and he did not attempt to estimate the ghetto dead."*

Further along in his document, Korherr explains (NO-5194, pp. 15f.):

> *"From 1937 until early 1943, the number of Jews in Europe was probably reduced by an estimated 4 million, partly through emigration, partly by an excess of deaths over births of the Jews in Central and Western Europe, and partly through evacuation particularly in the ethnically stronger Eastern territories, which are calculated here as deductions. In doing so, it should not be overlook that only a fraction of the fatalities of Soviet-Russian Jews in the occupied eastern territories have been recorded, while those in the rest of European Russia and at the front are not included. To this has to be added the migration stream of Jews within Russia towards the Asiatic regions."*

According to Hilberg, the figure of 633,300 constituted only part of the deaths in Russia. Korherr distinguished between "Reich territory," "occupied Eastern territories" and "European Russia." The "Reich territory" included the occupied and incorporated Polish territories (General Government and Wartheland), also called the "Eastern provinces," from which 1,449,692 Jews had been evacuated "to the Russian East" by 31 December 1942 (*ibid.*, p. 9). This figure was comprised of 1,274,166 Jews who had been "passed through the camps in the General Government" and 145,301 "through the camps in the Warthegau" (*ibid*.).

As shown by a telegram from SS *Hauptsturmführer* Hermann Höfle dated 11 January 1943, intercepted and decoded by the British, the first figure referred to the camps of Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka and Lublin-Majdanek (Witte/Tyas, p. 469), while the second, notoriously, referred to the Chełmno Camp. The "occupied Eastern territories" were the Russian territories under civil administration, that is, the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* and the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine. The part of Russia under military administration was referred to as "European Russia," and the deportations "toward the Russian East" also referred to this area.

In another study, I provided a detailed discussion of the significance of these evacuations (Graf/Kues/Mattogno, pp. 311-330). This is confirmed by the explanations provided by Korherr himself in a letter to Gerald Reitlinger dated 28 September 1955:[235]

> *"As I told you orally, I had one, or perhaps two, phone conversations with the department of the Reich Security Main Office which had compiled the statistics – despite my best efforts, I can no longer remember the name of the person I talked to. I inquired what the term 'special treatment' was supposed to mean. I was told that the expression was used for the evacuation of those Jews (Eastern Jews) who*

[235] TNA, Documents 054, Roll 9/46, p. 5 of the letter.

> *were deported to the Lublin district, where a kind of Jewish homestead was to be created in the region bordering Russia and Asia. The Jews evacuated to the district of Lublin, that is, to the border area with Asia (Russia), were no longer considered to form part of the European population, and I was orally ordered not to include them in my list on the development of European Jewry."* (Emphases in original)

The fact that these Jews were no longer to be included in the final balance of Europe is confirmed by the phrase "through evacuation particularly in the ethnically stronger Eastern territories, *which are calculated here as deductions*."

Having said this, however, to understand the significance of the phrase "fatalities of Soviet-Russian Jews in the occupied eastern territories," one must take recourse to the second, amended Korherr Report dated 28 April 1943 (NO-5193). In this document, the "Eastern territories (with Bialystok)" are listed with ca. 790,000 Jews in 1939, 233,210 of whom were still there on 31 December 1942. This figure can be traced back to the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*.

The table "Emigration, Excess of Deaths over Births, and Evacuation" under the heading "Eastern territories (with Bialystok)" provides a cumulative total of 334,673 Jews having emigrated or died more than were born, and 222,117 evacuatees (*ibid.*, pp. 3f.). Since this is the only place in the whole Korherr Report (both versions of it) where there is any mention of mortality (except for the table "Jews in the Concentration Camps," which also contains the heading "fatalities"; NO-5194, p. 12), one must conclude that the phrase in question refers to the "excess of deaths over births" in the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine, which is not even a statistical object in the Korherr Report; it is implicitly included under the heading "Soviet Russia" in the table relating to the number of Jews in the European countries, which records 4,600,000 persons, essentially European Jews plus eastern Poland (*ibid.*, p. 15).

But, as may be objected, if the figure of 633,300 does not refer to deaths, why does Korherr speak of evacuation "*in* the Russian Territories"? Here, he used the dative case ("*in den russischen Gebieten*"), meaning evacuation *within* the Russian Territories, not *into* the Russian Territories (which would be the accusative case in German: "*in die russischen Gebiete*)? For Korherr, Russian Territories referred to all the Soviet Territories except for the three Baltic General Districts (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), which constituted the "Eastern Territories" (without the Bialystok District), *i.e.*, the General District of Byelorussia, the Reich Commissariat Ukraine, and the part of Russia under military administration. Therefore, all evacuation operations that took place in this territory were for him evacuations "in the Russian territories", in terms of taking place *inside* the Russian territories.

But the reference to the former Baltic states merely complicates the matter: does the figure of 633,300 Jews include the Jews killed in these countries by *Einsatzgruppe* A?

In his letter to Gerald Reitlinger, Korherr commented as follows on the figure in question:[236]

> *"In reality, Himmler had the Reich Security Main Office convey this figure to me for the sake of including it in my report, together with the related written remark, 'exclusive of those who still remained in camps and ghettos.'"*

This demolishes Hilberg's claim that the figure of 633,300 did not include "statistics for killings organized by the Higher SS and Police leaders, who reported to Himmler directly," which would not make a great deal of sense from the orthodox point of view, because it was Himmler personally who entrusted Korherr with the task of drafting the report.

Equally fallacious is Hilberg's interpretation that Korherr "did not attempt to estimate the ghetto dead." The term used in the report is "the occupants of the ghettos," which obviously referred to living persons. The ghettos in question were in fact those of the two Reich Commissariats, because the section of the report titled "The Jews in Ghettos" only refers to Theresienstadt, Lodz and the General Government (NO-5194, pp. 10f.). Korherr only reported the number of Jews who were interned there at the end of 1942/beginning of 1943, a total of 472,287.

Vice versa, if the figure of 633,300 included the 218,050 Jews killed by the *Einsatzgruppe* by 1 February 1942 according to the "Summary Report of 16 October – 31 January 1942," then the entire figure would refer to murdered Jews – otherwise the result would be a senseless statistical mishmash of living and dead persons. But the documented figure of executions perpetrated by the end of 1942 is 902,237 according to Hilberg (2003, Vol. I, p. 408): why, then, did the RSHA provide Korherr with a figure of killed Jews which was almost 269,000 lower than the real figure? But there is also another problem.

The term "Eastern territories" in the Korherr Report refers to the General Districts of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, *i.e.*, the "former Baltic states," but 222,117 Jews were evacuated from these territories and from the General District of Bialystok, as I mentioned earlier. My analysis, see above, shows that 46,591 Jews were deported from the latter territory, including 8,500 to Auschwitz and 38,091 to the East (Graf/Kues/Mattogno, p. 318), while the number of the evacuees from the "Eastern territories" amounted to (222,117 – 46,591 =) 175,526. If the term "evacuation" were synonymous with "killing" here, then the Korherr Report would show 175,526 persons shot by *Einsatzgruppe* A in the three abovementioned General Districts – a figure very close, after all, to that which appears in the "Summary Report" of *Einsatzgruppe* A for the period from 16 October 1941-31 to January 1942: 172,622[237] – but since the figure of 633,300 also includes the "former Baltic states," this same figure would therefore represent the persons presumed shot from the "Eastern territories" after counting them twice,

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[236] *Ibid*., p. 7 of the letter. Korherr wrote his letter in German, but the last part of the sentence in English ("exclusive of those who still remain in camps and ghettos").

[237] RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 184.

and the figure relating to the "Russian territories" would amount to (633,300 – 175,526 =) 457,774.

The dilemma, therefore, arises here: either we consider all the "evacuations" to have been true and veritable "evacuations," in which case the Korherr Report could not be said to contain any mention of killings by the *Einsatzgruppen*; or we consider all the evacuations to have been "killings," in which case, apart from the above-mentioned incongruities, all the other "evacuations" mentioned above would have to be considered "killings" as well, starting with all the real "evacuations" which are not considered to have been anything else, such as those "from Baden and the Pfalz to France," while the evacuations to Lodz and Theresienstadt would also become "exterminations," and the 159,518 Jews deported to Auschwitz would all have to be considered "killed," even the 54,759 who were regularly registered! (Graf/Kues/Mattogno, p. 320)

5.2. The Himmler Report of 29 December 1942

As noted earlier (see on p. 244), approximately 40% of the documented victims, or 363,211 out of 902,237, are derived from "*Meldung* No. 51," relating to "Russia South, Ukraine, Bialystok," from the series "Reports to the Führer on fighting partisans." The report, dated 29 December 1942, concerns "Successes in fighting partisans, 1 Sept. to 1 Dec. 1942," but it also includes the month of August.[238]

For the year 1941, Alexander Kruglov supplies a detailed account of the numbers of Jews shot in the Ukraine, the locations and dates of the executions, and the units which carried them out. He reaches a total of 509,140 victims. He then summarized his data as follows:

> *"About 300,000 of the victims died at the hands of Police Regiment South, Police Battalions 304 and 320, and the 1st SS Infantry Brigade. Einsatzgruppe C shot more than 95,000 Jews, while Einsatzgruppe D killed at least 75,000. Some 100,000 Ukrainian Jews died as a result of killing operations and pogroms organized by Romanian forces."* (Kruglov 2008, p. 280)

He then notes that there were still 1,100,000 Jews in the Ukraine (according to its present borders) at the beginning of 1942, most of them in the Western regions: approximately 475,000 in Galicia, 170,000 in Volhynia, 175,000 in the regions of Khmelnytsky and Vinnytsia, 100,000 in Transcarpathia. The Rumanians had also expelled over 25,000 Jews into Transnistria from Southern Bucovina, 9,000 from the Dorohoi Region, 20,000-25,000 from Bessarabia, and 50,000-55,000 from Northern Bucovina (*ibid.*).

Notwithstanding these demographic premises, Kruglov's treatment of the victims in 1942 is rather superficial. In a table summarizing "Jewish Losses in 1942," he provides the following data (*ibid.*, p. 281):

– General Government: 338,000 victims

[238] NO-1128 /NO-511. For an abridged version of it see TWC, Vol. XIII, pp. 269f.

– *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine: 362,700 victims, distributed as follows:

Volhynia	101,000	Zhytomyr	4,000
Rivne	70,000	Kiev	10,500
Vinnytsia	90,000	Kirovohrad	3,500
Proskuriv	75,000	Mikolaiv	8,700

– *Wehrmacht* Administration: 48,000 victims, distributed as follows:

Chernihiv	1,500	Kharkiv	10,500
Sumy	1,000	Voroshilovhrad	2,000
Poltava	2,500	Stalino	6,000
Dnepropetrovsk	10,000	Crimea	8,000
Zaporizhzhia	6,500		

– Romanian Occupation: Northern Bukovina and Transnistria: 25,000 victims.

In a note, Kruglov explains (*ibid.*, pp. 289f.):

> *"Scholars differ over how to break down the total number of murdered Jews mentioned in this document. Most, for example, believe that of the 363,211 victims, the 292,263 Jews killed before November 1 were almost exclusively from Reichskommissariat Ukraine. Subtracting from this figure an estimated 70,000 Jews from those Belarusian lands attached to RKU leaves 222,263 Jews from within the borders of present-day Ukraine. The majority of the 70,948 Jews mentioned killed during November in Himmler's report are in turn thought to be from Białystok Region (Bezirk Białystok), a part of interwar Poland subordinated to East Prussia. The concentration of this region's Jews into larger ghettos for deportation to the death camps Treblinka and Auschwitz started on November 2, 1942, the very day after the Pinsk massacre in the RKU. HSSF Ukraine Hans-Adolf Prützmann was simultaneously HSSPF for East Prussia and as such responsible for the Białystok Region."*

In the 1941 treatment, Kruglov supplies various concrete examples of executions (*ibid.*, pp. 276f.):

– The Police Regiment South shot 4,414 Jews at Ostroh and Polonne on 2 September, 1,548 at Ruzhyn on 10 September, 1,255 at Koziatyn on 11 September;
– The Police Battalion 304 killed 2,200 Jews at Vinnytsia on 5 September, 486 at Lodyzhyn on 13 September, 1,438 at Haisyn on 16 September, 4,200 at Kirovohrad on 30 September;
– the 1st SS Infantry Brigade eliminated 5,397 Jews between 10 September and 10 November;
– "the brigade's maintenance platoon under SS *Untersturmführer* Max Täubner shot 969 people: 319 Jews in Novohrad-Volynsky (Zhytomyr Oblast), 191 Jews in Sholokhove (Dnepropetrovsk Oblast), and 459 Jews in Oleksandriia (Kirovohrad Oblast)";
– the Police Battalion 304 killed 305 Jews at Oleksandriia on 4 October, 6,000 at Uman on 8 October and 47 near Zniamianka on 14 October;
– a detachment of *Einsatzkommando* 5 shot 5,300 Jews at Proskuriv on 4 November;

– the Police Battalions 315 and 320 and a company from the 33rd Police Battalion killed 15,000 Jews at Rivne on 6 and 7 November.

This abundance of detail is in blatant contrast to the nebulous vagueness relating to the 363,211 presumed victims mentioned above. Hilberg claims that "there is little doubt that the large majority of these victims had lived in the Volhynian portion of the General District Volhynia-Podolia" (Hilberg 2003, Vol. III, p. 1312).

Arad asserts that at the end of 1941 there were still 270,000-290,000 Jews in Volhynia and Polesia and another 20,000 in Podolia (Arad 2009, p. 263). The *Generalkommissariat* Volhynia-Podolia, which formed part of the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine, included Volhynia, ex-Polish Polesia and the region of Kamenets-Podolsky.

Alexander Kruglov estimates at 101,000 the number of victims at Volhynia for all of 1942 (Kruglov 2008, p. 281). He also believes that those at Podolia could not exceed 20,000 in number, for a total of 121,000, which certainly does not fit to Hilberg's claim that "the large majority" of the (alleged) 363,211 victims lived this area.

Shmuel Spector states that, on the eve of the war against the Soviet Union, there were approximately 250,000 Jews in Volhynia, 12,000-13,000 of whom fled before the arrival of the German troops (Spector 1990a, p. 55). In a detailed statistical table, which refers to 68 locations in Volhynia that later became ghetto sites, he reports the demographic data relating to the 1931 census, to June 1941 and 1942. The respective figures are ca. 177,500, ca. 113,000 and ca. 154,700. It is not clear how these data are to be interpreted. From 1931 to 1941, 64,500 persons are missing: as for the increase of 41,700 from 1941 to 1942, we may imagine transports from Western Europe and/or fugitives who then returned to their home city. At any rate, since, according to Spector, there were only 2,838 surviving Jews in these localities (*ibid.*, p. 358), the number of victims at Volhynia, in 1942, could not have exceeded 151,900, and, adding another 20,000 possible victims from Podolia, we would arrive at a total of 171,900, still very far from the figure of 363,211.

Complicating the question is EM No. 193 of 17 April 1942, in which *Einsatzgruppe* C reports as follows (Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, p. 287):

> *"In the general district of Volhynia/Podolia – in the localities where they had not yet been resettled – the Jews form the most enterprising and active segment of the population as before. Not just trade, but the handwork trades are in their hands as well.*
>
> *In Volhynia/Podolia, approximately 40,000 Jews have been resettled so far. Today, the Jews are concentrated in the so-called Jewish districts in the cities, which are, however, not sealed off against outsiders. In the Jewish districts, therefore, there was a lively black-market trade, in which peasants visiting the city exchange agricultural products for clothes and everyday objects, which they badly needed. These nuisances were eliminated by strict state-police measures. The Jews are*

> *obsequious and solicitous in their dealings with German agencies. They are very largely indispensable as skilled workers and tradesmen."*

However one may wish to interpret the term "resettled," either literally or as a "euphemism" for death by shooting, the fact remains that 40,000 Jews are said to have disappeared from Volhynia as early as April 1942, and therefore cannot be included in the figure 363,211, which applies starting in August. It follows that this figure probably includes only (151,900 – 40,000 + 20,000 =) 131,900 Jews.

In this context, it should be noted that Report No. 5 dated 29 May 1942 of the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories" supplies data contradicting the statements made above (*ibid.*, pp. 351f.):

> *"Today, the total population of the general district of Volhynia and Podolia amounts to about 4,630,000, including 465,000 Poles and 326,000 Jews. In the cities, Jews and Poles make up the majority. Thus, the cities of Rovno, Dubno, Vladimir-Dolinsk* [Volynsky]*, Lutsk, Kovel, Kostopol, Odolbunov, Brest-Litovsk, Pinsk and Kobrin have a total of 243,000 residents, including 71,300 Poles (some 35%) and 103,000 Jews."* (Emphasis added)

Report No. 12, dated 17 July 1942, states that a partisan group had planned to liberate 8,000 Soviet officer POWs in the county of Vladimir-Volynsky, and that "the action was to be carried out with the help of the ghetto (approximately 15,000 Jews) and several Bolshevik agents living in the city" (*ibid.*, p. 385). Orthodox Holocaust historiography claims that these Jews were all killed, but no documentary proof is adduced in this regard.

Dieter Pohl asserts that "the massacre in Volodymyr-Volynsky in early September claimed an especially high number of victims, some 13,500 of the 15,000 Jews living there as of July 1942," but in a footnote he refers to the above-mentioned report, and to the heading "Wladimir Wolynski" in the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* (Pohl 2008, pp. 50, 71). In that encyclopedia, it is claimed that the ghetto was established in April 1942 and contained approximately 22,000 Jews. The massacres began in August, involving 2,400 persons at first, then 13,500. Of the 4,000 survivors, approximately 2,500 were killed in November 1942, while the remaining 1,500 were killed on 13 December 1943 (Gutman *et al.*, Vol. III, pp. 1610f.). In practice, though, 19,900 are said to have been killed after July 1942, when the ghetto had only some 15,000 occupants. As far as one can tell, no orthodox historian cares about such contradictions.

Regarding the claimed extermination orders, Arad adds (2009, p. 263):

> *"The Volhynia-Podolia Gebietskommissars met in Lutsk to discuss the extermination of the Jews. The office of the Generalkommissar issued a letter on August 31, 1942, according to which 'the Aktionen in this region… would be completed within five weeks… The director general of the Reichskommissariat government, Paul Dargel, told those present that the Reichskommissar* [Koch] *himself had expressed his personal and ardent wish that the cleanup must be 100 percent thorough. The Gebietskommissars are to act accordingly.'*
> *This letter referred to the total annihilation of Jews in the Generalbezirk."*

Christian Gerlach reproduces the German text of the document in question:

> *"The actions are to be accelerated in such a manner as to be completed within 5 weeks also in that area. At the meeting of regional commissars in Lutsk 19.-31 Aug. 1942, it was generally declared that complete solutions are to be carried out as a matter of principle. The regional commissars were also informed by the attending representative of the Reich commissar – District President Dargel – that such complete cleansing operations also represent the express personal wish of the Reich commissar."*

As a source, Gerlach cites the following (Gerlach 1999, p. 714):

> *"The general commissar for Volhynia and Podolia* [in reality, commander of the Security Police Volhynia-Podolia], *Ref.: Jewish actions to the KdS branch offices in Brest, Pinsk, Starokonstantinov, Kamenets-Podolsky (signed Lütz [i.e. Pütz]) dated 31 Aug. 1942 (copy), AGK, Collection of Fragments [Aktensplittern] from SS and police units, Vol. 77 (The originals are located in the PVAP Voivodeship Archives Poznan)."*

Martin Dean informs us that this archival source was found by Shmuel Spector and contains a series of document which "appear to be Polish transcripts of German originals, which may have been partially destroyed or even smuggled out by the underground. Efforts to trace the original documents have proved unsuccessful" (Dean 2000, fn 111, p. 195).

Leaving aside the dubious origins of the document (a Polish transcript of an unknown German original; the accuracy of the "transcript" is thus impossible to assess), only if assuming *a priori* that the "*Aktionen*" referred to mass exterminations of these same Jews, one could claim that the terms "complete solutions" or "cleansing operations" referred to a systematic annihilation of the Volhynian Jews. The alternative would mean that these Jews were evacuated from the region or from certain parts of the same, as suggested by the following news item from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of 28 April 1942, approximately one year before the alleged extermination of the Jews from the Volhynia Ghetto:[239]

> *"The Jews in the Wolhynian* [Volhynian] *district of Nazi-occupied Poland will soon be sent to forced labor in the Pripyat Marshes, in the Pinsk region, it is announced in the pro-Nazi Ukrainian newspaper Krakiwski Visti, reaching here today from Cracow.*
>
> *The paper reports that there are still many Jews living in the city of Rovno and other Wolhynian* [Volhynian] *cities which were formerly a part of Poland. They are required to wear a yellow circle on their backs in order to be distinguished from Jews in Nazi-held Galicia who wear a yellow Star of David. Some of them are employed at manual labor, but plans are being made to send all of them to do drainage work in the Pinsk swamps. Many Jews are also still living in Royzes, which was on the pre-war Polish-Russian frontier in the Ukraine, about twenty milew from Rovno, the Krakiwski Visti reports. It adds that practically no Jews are left in the Soviet part of Wolhynia because the majority of them retreated with*

[239] "Jews in Occupied Wolhynia Will Be Sent to Work in Pinsk Swamps, Nazi Paper Reports," in: *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, 28 April 1942.

the Russian army, and many others were killed when the towns were occupied by the German troops."

Therefore, the presumed order to exterminate the Jews of Volhynia is dubious, to say the least.

Arad diligently lists all the executions, real and presumed, which are said to have taken place in Volhynia in 1942; those falling into the period August-November are as follows (I'll give the highest number of victims; Arad 2009, pp. 263-271):

LOCATION	NUMBER OF VICTIMS	MONTH
Dubno	4,500	October
Kovel	8,000	August
Kremenets	9,000	August
Lutsk	16,000	August
Lutsk	2,000	September
Poleska camp	15,000	August
Vladimir-Volynsky	18,000	September
Kobrin	5,000	October
Brest-Litovsk*	19,000	October
Pinsk*	16,200	October-November
Dunaevtsy*	5,000	Autumn
Shepetovka*	6,000	September
Kamenets-Podolsky	5,000	August
Proskurov	6,000	End 1942
Total	134,700	

As we see, even if we take these statistics seriously, we still need approximately 228,500 victims to arrive at the figure of 363,211. What is more, of these 134,700 victims, those (partially) attested to by documents only amount to 46,200 (the figures corresponding to the localities with asterisks).

Among the few documented massacres listed in the table reproduced above is that of the Pinsk Ghetto, which, according to Arad, was home to 12,000-15,000 Jews (*ibid.*, p. 267). An "Experience Report" written in November 1942 by *Hauptmann der Schutzpolizei und Kompanie-Chef* Paier, commandant of Company 10a of Police Battalion 310, reported that the action began on 29 October with the shooting of approximately 10,000 Jews; over the next three days, on 30 and 31 October and 1 November, the total number of victims amounted to 15,000, in addition to 1,200 in the ghetto.[240]

There is also a related Himmler order:[241]

"The Wehrmacht High Command informed me that the railway line Brest-Gomel was increasingly suffering from partisan attacks, thus jeopardizing supplies for the fighting troops.

[240] YVA, O.53-13.1, p. 417; cf. O.18-4, pp. 4f. Document URSS 119a. In the Russian translation, the name Paier is incomprehensibly spelled as "Saur" (O.18-4, p. 10).

[241] Facsimile of the original document in Eisenbach 1961, documentary appendix outside of the text.

> *Based on the reports available to me, the Pinsk Ghetto is to be considered the center of the whole partisan movement in the Pripyat swamps.*
> *I hereby order you, therefore, to raid and annihilate the Pinsk Ghetto, despite the existence of economic objections. 1,000 male laborers are to be secured and transferred to the Wehrmacht for the manufacture of wooden huts, insofar as the operation permits it. The work of these 1,000 laborers may be performed only in a sealed, heavily guarded camp. If sufficient guard personnel cannot be guaranteed, these 1,000 are also to be destroyed."*

Himmler's order shows that the destruction of the ghetto was dictated by military considerations, not by a policy of exterminating Jews as such, and that, therefore, no general order to exterminate the Jews can have existed, because in that case the occupants of the Pinsk Ghetto, like all the other ghettos which existed until 1944, would have been killed right away without giving nay specific reason. Hence, when Himmler spoke about exterminations in case of necessity, he did so without "camouflage language" or "euphemisms," as also happened frequently in many *Einsatzgruppen* reports.

Notwithstanding Curilla's vast documentation, including its wide-ranging trial evidence and eyewitness testimony, he did not succeed in substantiating figures mentioned in the Himmler Report of 29 December 1942, with regard to which he limits himself to writing:

> *"Already in 1942, the Jews were almost completely annihilated in the Ukraine. On 26 Dec. 1942, Prützmann reported 363,211 murdered Jews in his district, which also included the district of Bialystok, in addition to the 1,337 partisans killed in battle, and 14,257 executed suspected partisans. 271,017 of them were killed in September and October 1942 alone, most of them in Volhynia and Podolia. At least 80,000 of them were killed in the Byelorussian part of the General Commissariats Volhynia and Podolia."* (Curilla 2006, p. 878)

As his source, Curilla refers to Gerlach, who asserts precisely that the majority of the presumed 271,017 victims of the months of September and October were killed in Volhynia and Podolia. In support of this conjecture, he mentions the fact that "Police Battalion 310 alone accounted for 41,837 murdered Jews in the districts Brest, Kobrin and Pinsk." (Gerlach 1999, p. 722). Gerlach cites two books written in Russian and an article by Gert Robel. The latter, with reference to a Russian text of 1945, writes that "the compilation of the 15th Police Regiment for the fall of 1942" mentions a figure of "41,848 Jews, Jewesses and Jewish children" murdered in the northwestern Ukraine (Robel, in: Benz, p. 548).

The "War Journal No. 1 Police Battalion 310 – former Police Training Battalion Oranienburg (as of 1 August 1941: III/Police Regiment 15)" runs from 1 October 1940 to 24 November 1942.[242] In October and November 1942, the battalion was committed to fighting "bandits" and Jews in the region of Kobrin. Regarding the latter, the journal contains the following entries:

[242] YVA, O.53-12.2; subsequent page numbers from there, unless stated otherwise.

– 15 October: "During the deployment in Brest, a total of 16,000 Jews were evacuated. There were no incidents." (p. 385) Here, the word "evacuation" must be understood literally, because the Jews in Brest were allegedly transported to Bronnaya Gora and shot there, so that these presumed 16,000 victims cannot be ascribed to Police Battalion 310.
– 16-18 October (exact date illegible): "One Jew was shot in Podlesye" (p. 385).
– 16-18 October (exact date illegible): 3 Jews shot at "Milolajewo," meaning Nikolayevo; "2 Jews shot by patrols in the area of the 10th Company" (p. 386).
– 19 October: "Jewish vagabonds shot near Belsk and in Korchitsy"; "5 Jews shot on the Atechina State Farm (on the road Brest-Kobrin)" (p. 386).
– 20 October: "10 fugitive Jews from Kobrin shot in Chobowicze (Khabovichi)" (p. 387).
– 21 October: at Lyakhchitsy "5 Jews are being shot. The 10th Company shoots 401 Jews in a camp on the Brest-Kobrin road" (p. 387).
– 22 October: 43 Jews shot near Franopol (p. 388).
– 23 October: "6 Jews shot near Antonovo"; "The 11th Company shoots 21 Jews in Kamenitsa-Zhirovetskaya" (p. 389).
– 24 October: "3 Jewish vagabonds shot near Khodynichi (5 km north of Novosyolki). […] One Jew shot in Podlesye" (p. 390).
– 25 October: "One detachment executes 8 Jews in Bloty-Wlk. [Bloty Vel'ki] and shoots 2 Jewesses in Khabovichi" (p. 390); "4 Jews from Brest are executed in Chernyany. […] 81 persons (Jews) from the road construction camp executed in Velikorita" (p. 392).
– 26 October: One Jew shot at Antonovo; "9 Jews are executed in Kamenitsa (8 km southwest of Brest) and 1 Jew at Pozhezhin" (p. 392).
– 28 October: "The 10th Company is reconnoitering the area northeast of Podlesye (15 km east of Brest) and shoots 6 Jewish vagabonds while trying to flee" (p. 393).
– 29 October: "2 Jews are arrested and handed over the SD in Kobrin. 3 Jews are arrested in Gr.-Korchitsy and executed after interrogation"; "The 10th Company is moves out to a special operation in Pinsk"; "1 Jew shot in a fire fight with a Jewish gang of partisans near Yazvin" (p. 394).
– 30 October: "10th Company deployed in Pinsk to get rid of Jews" (p. 394).
– 31 October: "The 10th Company is moving out towards Samary (24 km east of Mokrany) to rid the town of Jews. 3 Jews arrested and executed near Bloty-Wlk. [?] and Zakalnechye (11 km southwest of Kobrin) […] 2 Jews captured on the Khabovichi-Kobrin road and handed over to the SD" "10th Company continues ridding Pinsk of Jews" (p. 395).
– 1 November: "The 9th Company ends operation to rid Samary of Jews. 80 persons are executed. The 10th Company continues Jew-removal in Pinsk. The 3rd Platoon of the 11th Company arrests 2 Jews escaped from Brest and executes them" (p. 395).

– 2 November: "The 10th Company finishes up the Jewish operation in Pinsk without incident and returns to its bases" (p. 397).
– 9 November: "8 Jews escaped from Ratno are executed" (p. 409).
– 19 November: "1 Jewish bandit shot while attempting to escape, and 1 Jewish bandit arrested near Drochevo" (p. 412).

Even if Police Battalion 310 had been assigned to carry out the execution of the Jews from Brest on an exclusive basis (when in fact other units of the *Wehrmacht*, the *Gendarmerie* and 2nd Brigade Mounted Police also participated, according to orthodox Holocaust historiography), the number of victims could not have exceeded 41,000, both because the war diary contains no victim figure with reference to Brest, and because adding up all the other executions mentioned in the diary only yields 700 victims, or slightly fewer.

Hence, the "compilation of the 15th Police Regiment" attesting to the execution of 41,837 or 41,848 Jews, which is written in Russian and whose original has never been found, if it exists at all,[243] is therefore unreliable, and in no way able to corroborate Himmler's report dated 29 December.

According to Kruglov, the 70,948 executed persons mentioned in the Himmler report with reference to November 1942 concerned the Białystok District. Arad, in his discussion of the matter, mentions two Jewish transports carrying 4,000 and 5,000 persons from the Grodno Ghetto to Auschwitz on 15 and 21 November 1942. Moreover, between 10 November and 15 December, 16,300 Jews are said to have been transported from the ghettos in the area of Volkovysk to Treblinka and 2,000 to Auschwitz (Kruglov 2008, pp. 289f.).

Danuta Czech, in her *Auschwitz Chronicle*, records the following Jewish transports from the ghettos of the Bialystok district (Czech, pp. 266-272):

8 November 1942:	1,000, none registered;
9 November 1942:	1,000, 294 registered;
14 November 1942:	1,500, 661 registered;
18 November 1942:	1,500 from Grodno, 230 registered;
25 November 1942:	2,000 from Grodno, 433 registered.

None of these transports is documented, since D. Czech produces not a single source for any of them.

Regarding the 16,300 Jews deported to Treblinka, there is only a single list compiled by Arad, but on what basis he compiled it is unknown; there is certainly no documentary basis (Arad 1987, p. 397). But even supposing that all this were true, the deportees would only have amounted to 25,300 victims, and there would still be a deficit of 45,700 victims to reach the total of 70,948 mentioned in the Himmler report.

At any rate, trying to fit the Jews deported from the Białystok District into "*Meldung* No. 51," which refers to "Successes in fighting partisans," is even more nonsensical. Point 2 of the report regards "partisans supporters and suspect-

[243] The document to which G. Robel refers is in Russian.

ed partisans" and is subdivided into three headings: "a) arrested," "b) executed," "c) Jews executed": it is obvious that these refer to Jews shot. Lumping the Jews "deported" from the Białystok District together with the Jews "executed" would therefore require considering the "deported" Jews as having been killed, regardless of whether or not they were killed immediately upon arrival (which the authors of "*Meldung* No. 51" could not have known)… This is obviously absurd, all the more so since, according to Czech, at least 1,618 of these presumed "executed Jews" were regularly registered at Auschwitz and admitted to the camp alive and kicking!

As if that were not enough, from the orthodox point of view, the Jews deported to Auschwitz and Treblinka in November 1942 from the Białystok District are counted twice in the statistics: as victims of the *Einsatzgruppen* and associated units, and as gassing victims of Auschwitz and Treblinka.

The figures reported in the report dated 28 December 1942 are, therefore, for the most part, greatly exaggerated and in some cases probably invented from whole cloth.

5.3. Executions in the Incident Reports

Orthodox Holocaust historians, as shown by Hilberg's exposition, usually limit themselves to listing statements contained in the Incident Reports relating to the total number of executions for every *Einsatzgruppe*, up until the date upon which they draw the general total. As far as one can tell, no one has thought to analyze these statements individually and in detail.

The data relating to the *Einsatzgruppen* are annotated by generically indicating the letter distinguishing each unit, *i.e.*, "A," "B," "C" and "D," sometimes with a mention of the specific *Sonderkommando* or *Einsatzkommando*.

5.3.1. General Summary of *Einsatzgruppen* Executions

The following tables show the essential data from the Incident Reports for each *Einsatzgruppe*. It should be noted that it is not always possible to clearly assign certain executions to the individual *Einsatzgruppen*. Executions that were not carried out by units of the *Einsatzgruppen*, but were the result of pogroms or other units' activities, have been summarized in a separate table (Table 18). Although I have tried to reproduce as accurately and completely as possible the figures recorded in the Incident Reports, it cannot be ruled out that I have made mistakes.

The abbreviations used in the following tables have the following meanings:

Abbreviations

B = *bolschewistische Funktionäre*/Bolshevik functionaries
CC = Concentration Camp
F = *politische Funktionäre*/Political officials
G = *Geisteskranke*/Mentally ill
J = *Juden*/Jews
JG = *Juden, geisteskrank*/Jewish mental *patients*
JK = *Juden, Kriegsgefangene*/Jewish POWs
K = *Kommunisten*/Communists

M = *Minderwertige*/Inferior elements
P = *Plünderer*/Looters
Pa = *Partisanen*/Partisans
RA = *Rotarmisten*/Red Army men
S = *Saboteure*/Saboteurs
Σ = Total as of [Date]
Z = *Zigeuner*/Gypsies

Table 14: *Einsatzgruppe* A

Data in italics are the only data identical with those contained in the first "Jäger Report."

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
8	30/06/41	EK 1b	28/06/41	Kaunas	Thousands
15	07/07/41	EK 1a, 2		Riga	400
15	07/07/41		04/07/41	Riga	100
17	09/07/41		04/07/41	Vilnius	54
17	09/07/41		05/07/41	Vilnius	93
21	13/07/41	(EK 9)	Until 08/07	Vilnius	321
24	16/07/41			Riga	50
24	16/07/41	EK 1b		Daugavpils	1150
24	16/07/41	EK 2		Riga	2300
24	16/07/41	EK 2			1600
36	28/07/41			Minsk	200 ?
36	28/07/41				58
36	28/07/41				12
48	10/08/41		**Total**	Kaunas, Riga	**29000**
54	16/08/41		22/07/41	Pagiriai	1
54	16/08/41		*23/07/41*	*Kedainiai*	*125 including 93 J*
54	16/08/41		*25/07/41*	*Mariampole*	*103*
54	16/08/41		*28/07/41*	*Panevezys*	*288 including 249 J*
54	16/08/41		*29/07/41*	*Raseiniai*	*257 including 254 J*
54	16/08/41		*30/07/41*	*Ariogala*	*38 including 27 J*
54	16/08/41		*30/07/41*	*Vandziogala*	*15; 2 murderers*
54	16/08/41		*31/07/41*	*Utena*	*256 including 251 J*
54	16/08/41		*01/08/41*	*Ukmerge*	*300 including 296 J*
54	16/08/41		*02/08/41*	*Kaunas*	*209 including 205 J*
54	16/08/41		22/07-03/08		1592
88	19/09/41	EK 3 and Lithuanians	**Total**		**46692**
88	19/09/41		**Total**		**85000**
88	19/09/41		22/08/41	Aglona	544 G
88	19/09/41			Tartu	405 including 50 J
94	25/09/41	EK 3	**Total**		**75000**
94	25/09/41			Plyussa	7
94	25/09/41			Mogutovo	87 G. 11 including 6 J
96	27/09/41		30/08-05/09/41	Riga	186
96	27/09/41			Siauliai	44
96	27/09/41			Liepaja	38
96	27/09/41			Liepaja district	191; Total 459, including 237 JG

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
96	27/09/41	EK 2	**Total**		**29246**
111	12/10/41		**Total**	**Estonia**	**440**
111	12/10/41	SK 4b	07/09-05/10/41		207 F; 9 S; 125 J
111	12/10/41	EK 6	14-27/09/41		13 F, P; 32 S; 26 J
111	12/10/41			Kiev	1
111	12/10/41			Kiev	3
131	10/11/41		18-25/10/41	Riga	6
131	10/11/41		18-25/10/41	Riga	115 K
131	10/11/41		18-25/10/41	Valmiera	15
131	10/11/41		18-25/10/41	Valmiera	56 K
131	10/11/41		18-25/10/41	Liepaja	18
131	10/11/41		18-25/10/41	Liepaja	12 K
131	10/11/41	EK 2	**Total**		**31598**
131	10/11/41		23/10/41	Venden	3 + 9 K
131	10/11/41		23/10/41	Valmiera	10 + 12 K
131	10/11/41			Valka	10 + 15 K
131	10/11/41			Smiltene	7 K
131	10/11/41			Aluksne (Marienburg)	12 K
136	21/11/41		24/10-05/11/41		118
140	01/12/41		06-20/11/41		67
140	01/12/41		20/11/41		855
140	01/12/41	SK 1b	07-11/11/41	Minsk	6624
150	02/01/42			Leningrad area	93
152	07/01/42		28/12/41	Minsk	3
154	12/01/42		28/12/41	Vilnius	402 including 385 J
154	12/01/42			Novgorod	14
154	12/01/42		29/11/41	Kaunas	19
154	12/01/42		30/12/41	Salaspils	2
154	12/01/42	repetition 154	22/12/41	Vilnius	402 including 385 J
154	12/01/42		03/01/42	Vilkaviskis	50
155	14/01/42				1000 K
155	14/01/42			Riga	27800
155	14/01/42		02/10/41	Zagare	250
155	14/01/42		**Total**	**Byelorussia**	**33210**
155	14/01/42		02/01/42	Audrinu	391 civilians
156	16/01/42			Liepaja	20 K; 1J
156	16/01/42			Madona	28 K
156	16/01/42			Jekabpils	1 K
156	16/01/42	EK 2	**Total**		**33970**
156	16/01/42	HSSPF N; EK 2	30/11/41	Riga	10600
163	02/02/42				8
163	02/02/42	EK 2	**Total**		**34193**
165	06/02/42		01/02/42	Loknya	38 J and Z

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
168	13/02/42		04/02/42	Bakov	100
172	23/02/42				111 including 40 J
175	2/3/42			Baranovichi	1
178	9/3/42		02-03/03/42	Minsk Vileyka Baranovichi	3412 302 2007
181	16/3/42			Loknya	38 J; 1 Z
182	18/3/42		28/02/42	Daugavpils	21 J; 12 G
183	20/3/42		05-28/02/42		47 including 29 J
184	23/3/42		17/03/42	Ilya	520
186	27/3/42			Cherven	15000
191	10/04/42			Kaunas Vilnius	106 including 24 J 137 including 73 J
193	17/04/42			Kaunas	22 including 14 J
195	24/04/42				1272 incl. 997 J
195	24/04/42			Minsk	9
				Total:	89,023 ±3,500

Table 15: *Einsatzgruppe* B

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
11	03/07/41	EK 6	02/07/41		133
21	13/07/41			Minsk	1050
21	13/07/41			Vilnius	500
21	13/07/41			Bialystok	215 B
21	13/07/41			Grodno	96
31	23/07/41	EK 9	19/07/41		3386
31	23/07/41	EK 9	14/07/41		4234
32	24/07/41			Baranovichi	381
32	24/07/41	EK 9 OrPo		Slonim	1075
32	24/07/41	EK 9		Slonim	84
36	28/07/41			Vilnius	193
43	05/08/41		**Σ 31/7/41**		**11084**
50	12/08/41			Stolpce (Stolbtsy)	76
50	12/08/41			Vileyka	?
50	12/08/41			Oszmiana (Oshmyany)	527
50	12/08/41			Vitebsk	332
50	12/08/41			Vitebsk	97
50	12/08/41			Shklov	84
67	29/08/41			Monastyrshchina	26
67	29/08/41				74
67	29/08/41			Mogilev	80

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
67	29/08/41			Orsha	43
67	29/08/41			Szuchari [Sukhari] Yasna	11
67	29/08/41			Chausy	31
67	29/08/41			Bobruisk	?
67	29/08/41			Voroshilov	8
67	29/08/41			Velizh	1
67	29/08/41			Nowe Swieciany (Svencioneliai)	169
67	29/08/41			Vilnius	612
67	29/08/41			Vitebsk	1
67	29/08/41			Minsk	11
73	04/09/41				1
73	04/09/41			Borisov	118
73	04/09/41	SK 7a		Nevel	74
73	04/09/41				20
73	04/09/41			Bresk [?] Horsov [?]	?
73	04/09/41			Slutsk	1
73	04/09/41			Komarovka	115
73	04/09/41	EK 8		Minsk	214
73	04/09/41	EK 9		Yanovichi	149
73	04/09/41			Vitebsk	19
73	04/09/41	Vorkomm. Moskau			46 including 38 J
73	04/09/41	SK 7a		Minsk	2
73	04/09/41			Minsk	733 Asiatics
73	04/09/41			Minsk	397
92	23/09/41	VK Moscow		Monastyrshchina and Khislavichi	20 + ?
92	23/09/41	SK 7b			21
92	23/09/41	SK 7b		Zhlobin	31
92	23/09/41			Gomel	10
92	23/09/41			Novozybkov	1
92	23/09/41			Zlynka	27
92	23/09/41			Klimov	27
92	23/09/41			Minsk	2 and 11 Asiatics
92	23/09/41			Minsk	10
92	23/09/41	EK 8		Minsk	?
92	23/09/41			Logoysk	9
92	23/09/41	EK 9			3 + 1 half-Jews
92	23/09/41			Iviniec (Ivenets)	50

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
92	23/09/41	EK 8		Bobruisk	407
92	23/09/41			Borisov	176
92	23/09/41	EK 8 and 1 Kommando Div. SS Das Reich		Logoysk	920
92	23/09/41	EK 9			3
92	23/09/41	EK 9		Nevel	640
92	23/09/41	EK 9		Yanovichi	1025
92	23/09/41	EG B and OrPo Feldgendarmerie	in 3 days	Minsk	2278
92	23/09/41	EK 8			11 P
92	23/09/41	EK 8			23 Z
92	23/09/41			Minsk	377 M
92	23/09/41		**Σ 13/09/41**		**23084**
92	23/09/41	VK Moscow	**Σ 13/09/41**		**312**
92	23/09/41	SK 7a	**Σ 13/09/41**		**1011**
92	23/09/41	SK 7b	**Σ 13/09/41**		**1153**
92	23/09/41	EK 8	**Σ 13/09/41**		**11354**
92	23/09/41	EK 9	**Σ 13/09/41**		**9974**
108	09/10/41				1
108	09/10/41	VK Moscow		Khislavichi	114
108	09/10/41	SK 7b		Gorodnia	21
108	09/10/41			Lizny [?]	83
108	09/10/41			Lizny [?]	82
108	09/10/41			Chernigov	19
108	09/10/41			Berezna	8
108	09/10/41			Gomel	41
108	09/10/41			Rechitsa	216
108	09/10/41			Krugloye	31
108	09/10/41			Mogilev	80
108	09/10/41			Mogilev	552
108	09/10/41			Borisov	321
108	09/10/41			Smolevichi	1401
108	09/10/41			Borisov	118
108	09/10/41			Bobruisk	1380
108	09/10/41			Chernigov	21 G
108	09/10/41			Minsk	632 G
108	09/10/41			Mogilev	836
108	09/10/41		**Σ 28/09/41**		**30094**
108	09/10/41	VK Moscow	**Σ 28/09/41**		**2029**
108	09/10/41	SK 7a	**Σ 28/09/41**		**1252**
108	09/10/41	SK 7b	**Σ 28/09/41**		**1544**
108	09/10/41	EK 8	**Σ 28/09/41**		**15000**
108	09/10/41	EK 9	**Σ 28/09/41**		**10269**
123	24/10/41	EK 9		Ostrava	3

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
124	25/10/41	Gruppenstab and VK Moscow		Tatarsk	? + 3
124	25/10/41	SK 4a		Belovshchina	2726
124	25/10/41	EK 8		Mogilev	113
124	25/10/41	EK 8		Shidov [?]	627
124	25/10/41	EK 8			812 M
124	25/10/41	EK 8		Kuyashiche [?]	32
124	25/10/41	EK 8		Mogilev	2
124	25/10/41	EK 8		Mogilev	10
124	25/10/41	EK 8			4
124	25/10/41	EK 8			23
124	25/10/41	EK 8	03/10/41		42
124	25/10/41	EK 8		Talka	222
124	25/10/41	EK 8		Maryina Gorka	996
124	25/10/41	EK 8		Borisov	83
124	25/10/41	EK 8		Krupki	912
124	25/10/41	EK 8		Kholopenichi	822
124	25/10/41	EK 8		Bobruisk	418
124	25/10/41	EK 9		Vitebsk	4
124	25/10/41	EK 9	08/10/41	Vitebsk	~3000
124	25/10/41	EK 9		Borovlyany	5
124	25/10/41	EK 9		Ostrovno	169
124	25/10/41	EK 9	01/10/41	Gorodok	52
125	26/10/41	VK Moscow	**Total**		**2457**
125	26/10/41	SK 7a	**Total**		**1344**
125	26/10/41	SK 7b	**Total**		**1822**
125	26/10/41	EK 8	**Total**		**20108**
125	26/10/41	EK 9	**Total**		**11449**
125	26/10/41		**Total**		**37180**
133	14/11/41			Mogilev	55 including 22 J
133	14/11/41		16/10/41		2 (with names)
133	14/11/41		18/10/41		8 names
133	14/11/41		20/10/41		3 (with names)
133	14/11/41	EK 9	14/10/41		1 (with name)
133	14/11/41		17/10/41		1 (with name)
133	14/11/41		21/10/41		1 (with name)
133	14/11/41		17/10/41		1 (with name)
133	14/11/41		21/10/41		2
133	14/11/41		15/10/41	Mogilev	83 M
133	14/11/41		09/19/41		81
133	14/11/41			Gorki	2200
133	14/11/41			Mistislav [?]	900
133	14/11/41		23/10/41	Mogilev	279
133	14/11/41	SK 7a			173

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
133	14/11/41	VK Moscow	**Total**		**2457**
133	14/11/41	SK 7a	**Total**		**1517**
133	14/11/41	SK 7b	**Total**		**1822**
133	14/11/41	EK 8	**Total**		**28219**
133	14/11/41	EK 9	**Total**		**11452**
133	14/11/41		**Total**		**45467**
146	15/12/41				2 (with names)
146	15/12/41				7
147	17/12/41				8 + 62+ 9 + 1 + 5 (with names)
148	19/12/41				2
148	19/12/41				12
148	19/12/41			Mogilev	160
148	19/12/41			Mogilev	135
148	19/12/41			Mogilev	127
148	19/12/41			Mogilev	196
148	19/12/41			Bobruisk	5281
148	19/12/41			Patichi [?]	1013
148	19/12/41			Rudnya	835
148	19/12/41			Gomel	52
148	19/12/41			Gomel Rogachev Korma	2365
148	19/12/41			Klimovichi Cherikov	786
148	19/12/41			Lyubavichi	492
148	19/12/41			Borisov	146
148	19/12/41			Krichev	1213
148	19/12/41			Roslavl Shumyachi	510
148	19/12/41			Shumyachi	16 G
148	19/12/41			Vitebsk Ghetto	4090
149	22/12/41			Vitebsk CC	207
149	22/12/41			Sloboda Polotsk Bychikha Bislatovo [?]	286
149	22/12/41			Gorodok	394
149	22/12/41			Vyazma CC	117
194	21/04/42	SK 7a	06-30/03/42		1657 including 1585 J
194	21/04/42	SK 7b	06-30/03/42		82 including 27 J
194	21/04/42	SK M	06-30/03/42		52 including 7 J
194	21/04/42	EK 8	06-30/03/42		1609 including 1551 J
194	21/04/42	EK 9	06-30/03/42		273 including 170 J
194	21/04/42	*Trupp* Smolensk	06-30/03/42		60 including 18 J

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
				Total:	64,497

Table 16: *Einsatzgruppe* C

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
14	06/07/41	EK 4a		Lutsk	2000
19	11/07/41	EK 4a		Rovno	240 F
19	11/07/41	EK 4b		Tarnopol	127
19	11/07/41	EK 4b		Tarnopol	600
19	11/07/41	EK 6	08/07/41	Zolochev	3
20	12/07/41		05/07/41	Rudki	15
20	12/07/41			Stryi	11
24	16/07/41			Lvov	7000
24	16/07/41			Dobromil	132
24	16/07/41			Yavorov	15
24	16/07/41		30/06/41	Sokal	183 K
24	16/07/41		30/06/41	Lutsk	300
24	16/07/41		02/07/41		1160
24	16/07/41	EK 4a		Tarnopol	2
24	16/07/41				180
24	16/07/41				300-500
28	20/07/41			Rovno	240
28	20/07/41			Kremenets	130
28	20/07/41			Dubno	100
28	20/07/41			Tarnopol	127
30	22/07/41			Zhitomir	187 S J
37	29/07/41	EK 4a		Zhitomir	400
37	29/07/41	EK 4a	**Total**		**2531**
38	30/07/41				180
38	30/07/41			Proskurov	146
38	30/07/41			Vinnitsa	146
38	30/07/41			Berdichev	148
38	30/07/41			Shepetovka	17
38	30/07/41			Zhitomir	41
38	30/07/41			Khorostov	50
47	09/08/41			Tarnopol	600
47	09/08/41			Khorostkov	110
47	09/08/41			Zhitomir	400
47	09/08/41			Troyanov	22
47	09/08/41			Korostyshev	40
47	09/08/41			Chernyakhov	110 + 2
47	09/08/41	EK 4a	repetition 38	Berdichev	148
47	09/08/41	EK 5		Berdichev	74
47	09/08/41			Miropol	24

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
47	09/08/41			Vinnitsa	146
47	09/08/41			Makarov	14
58	20/08/41			Berdichev CC	1
58	20/08/41				13
58	20/08/41			Radomyshl	113
58	20/08/41			Chernyakov	31
58	20/08/41			Rudnya	26
58	20/08/41			Zhitomir	2
58	20/08/41	EK 4a		Zhitomir	402
58	20/08/41		**Total**		**8000 K and J**
58	20/08/41	EK 4a	**Total**		**4335**
59	21/08/41			Korosten	53
59	21/08/41			Starokonstan-tinov	439
59	21/08/41			Radomyshl	276
60	22/08/41			Chernyakov	13
60	22/08/41			Kozyatin Wezerajce [?]	22
60	22/08/41	EK 5			161
74	05/09/41				1
80	11/09/41			Fastov	50
80	11/09/41	SK 4a		Fastov	262
80	11/09/41	SK 4a	**Σ 24/08**		**7152**
86	17/09/41			Zhitomir	266
86	17/09/41			Korosten	160
86	17/09/41			Belaya Tserkov	68
86	17/09/41			Tarashcha	109
86	17/09/41	SK 4a	**Total**		**6584**
86	17/09/41			Chmielnik	229
86	17/09/41	EK 5	14 days		506
86	17/09/41	EK 6		Vinnitsa	600
86	17/09/41			Krivoy Rog	105
88	19/09/41	SK 4a		Radomyshl	1107
88	19/09/41	SK 4a	**Σ 06/09/41**		**11328**
88	19/09/41	*Vorkommando* 4b	23/08-05/09/41		519 including 435 J
94	25/09/41	SK 4a	**Total**		**15000**
94	25/09/41	SK 4b	06-12/09/41		13 + 290 J
94	25/09/41	EK 6	01-13/09/41		60
94	25/09/41	EK 5	31/08-06/09/41		90 + 72 + 161 J
101	02/10/41	SK 4a *Gruppenstab* 2 K.Pol. Reg.	29-30/09/41	Kiev	33771
106	07/10/41	repetition 101	29-30/09/41	Kiev	35000
106	07/10/41	repetition 101	29-30/09/41	Kiev	33771

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
111	12/10/41	SK 4a	**Total**		**51000**
111	12/10/41	EK 5	07/09-05/10/41		207 F P; 112 S; 8800 J
119	20/10/41	EK 5	22-23/09/41	Uman	1412
119	20/10/41	EK 5	19/09/41	Yustungrad [?]	35; 13 K
119	20/10/41			Shuealivka [?]	16
119	20/10/41		25/09/41	Tsybulov [?]	78
119	20/10/41	SK 4a	04/10/41	Pereyeslav	537
119	20/10/41	SK 4a	08/10/41	Yagotin	125
119	20/10/41	SK 4a	19/09/41	Ivankov	166
119	20/10/41	SK 4a	21/09/41	Ivankov	29
119	20/10/41	SK 4a		Korosten	177
119	20/10/41	EK 5	15/09/41	Boguslav	322 + 13 K
119	20/10/41			Kiev	1 J; 1 Pol.; 13 RA.
119	31/45/07				1
128	03/11/41		**Total**		**ca. 80000**
128	03/11/41	repetition 101		Kiev	30000
128	03/11/41		**Total**		**75000**
132	12/11/41	SK 4a	**Total**		**55432**
132	12/11/41	SK 4a	14/10/41		752
132	12/11/41	SK 4a	18/10/41		357 JK
132	12/11/41	SK 4a		Lubny	1865
132	12/11/41	SK 4b	4-10/10/41		161
132	12/11/41	EK 5	**Σ 20/10/41**		**15110**
132	12/11/41	EK 5	13-19/10/41		1047
132	12/11/41	EK 5	18/10/41		300 JG
132	12/11/41	EK 5	28/09-04/10/41	Krivoy Rog	179
135	19/11/41	SK 4a		Kozelets	125
135	19/11/41	SK 4a	23/10/41		116
135	19/11/41	SK 4a	24/10/41		144
135	19/11/41	SK 4a	28/10/41	Chernigov	49
135	19/11/41	SK 4a	24/10/41	Chernigov	270 G
135	19/11/41	SK 4a	29/10/41	Oster	215
135	19/11/41	SK 4a	11-24/10/41		205 including 181 J
135	19/11/41	SK 4b	25-30/10/41		381
135	19/11/41				565 G
135	19/11/41	EK 5	**Σ 02/11/41**		**21258**
135	19/11/41	EK 5	20-26/10/41		4372
135	19/11/41	EK5	26/10-01/11/41		2658
143	08/12/41	SK 4a	Up to 09/11/41		**57243**
143	08/12/41	SK 4a	07/11/41	Gornostaipol	385
143	08/12/41	SK 4a	07/11/41	Dymer	120
143	08/12/41	SK 4a	07/11/41	Oster	22
143	08/12/41	SK 4b	31/10-05/11/41		740 including 137 J; 599 G.

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
143	08/12/41	EK 5	**Σ 10/11/41**		**29644**
143	08/12/41	EK 5	02-08/11/41		10650 + 414 hostages
143	08/12/41	EK 5	09-15/11/41		1509, including 1422 J
143	08/12/41	EK 6	26/10-02/11/41		43
143	08/12/41	HSSPF, EK 5	06-07/11/41	Rovno	15000
143	08/12/41	EK 6	03-09/11/41		113
143	08/12/41	EK 6	10-16/11/41		47
143	08/12/41	EK 6	17-25/11/41		105 including 61 J
156	16/01/42	SK 4a, 4b	23/11/41	Poltava	1538
156	16/01/42	SK 4a	18/10/41	Lubny	34 K; 73 J
156	16/01/42	SK 4a	**Σ 30/11/41**		**59018**
156	16/01/42	EK 5	**Σ 07/12/41**		**36147**
156	16/01/42	EK 5a	23-30/11/41		64 F; 46 S
156	16/01/42	EK 5a	23-30/11/41		2615 J
156	16/01/42	EK 5a	01-07/12/41		60 F; 47 S
156	16/01/42	EK 5a	01-07/12/41		1471 J
156	16/01/42	EK 5			24 J
156	16/01/42	EK 5			20 K; 9 F; 3 Politrucks
156	16/01/42	EK 6	24-30/11/41		226
156	16/01/42	EK 6	24-30/11/41		19 F; 29 S
156	16/01/42	EK 6	**Σ 12/11/41**		**6800 incl. 1160 G from Igren**
164	04/02/42		14-16/12/41	Kharkov	305
173	25/02/42	SK 4b	14/1-12/02/42		861 including 139 J
173	25/02/42	EK 5	12-24/01/42		104 F; 75 S, P; 8000 J
173	25/02/42	EK 6			173 pol. Funkt.; 56 Sab. Plünd.; 149 J
173	25/02/42		10/01-06/02/42	Dnepropetrovsk	17 Berufverbrecher; 105 komm. Funkt.; 16 Partisanen; 350 J
173	25/02/42			Igren	400 G
173	25/02/42			Vasilkov	320 G
177	6/3/42	SK 4b			1317 including 1224 J
177	6/3/42	EK 5			1880 including 1580 J
177	6/3/42	EK 6		Stalino (Dontesk)	493 including 369 J
187	06/03/42				193 agitators
189	03/04/42		28-31/03/42		434 including 352 J
				Total:	132,905 ±100

Table 17: *Einsatzgruppe* D

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONER	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
22	14/07/41				?
40	01/08/41			Khotin	150
45	07/08/41	EK 10a		Kodyma	97
45	07/08/41	EK 10a		Yampol	9
45	07/08/41	EK 11a	Until now	Kishinev	551
45	07/08/41	EK 11 b		Tighina	155
58	20/08/41	EK z.b. V	12-15/08		4988
58	20/08/41	EK z.b. V	12-15/08	Pinsk	4500
61	23/08/41			Babchintsy	94
67	29/08/41			Stanitsa [?] Mogilev-Podolsky	1265
89	20/09/41		19/08-25/09/41[244]		8890
89	20/09/41		**Total**		**17315**
95	26/09/41	repetition 89	19/08-15/09/41		8890
95	26/09/41		**Total**		**13315**
101	02/10/41		16/09-30/09/41	Nikolayev Kherson	22467
101	02/10/41		**Total**		**35782**
106	07/10/41			Zhitomir	3145
107	08/10/41				400
107	08/10/41				10
107	08/10/41				17
107	08/10/41				11 criminals
117	18/10/41		01-15/10/41		4891 J; 46 K
117	18/10/41		**Total**		**40699**
129	05/11/41				11037 + 31 K
129	05/11/41		**Total**		**31767**
145	12/12/41				2910 + 19 K
145	12/12/41		**Total**		**54696**
150	02/01/42		16/11-15/12/42		17645
150	02/01/42		16/11-15/12/42		2504 Krymchaks
150	02/01/42		16/11-15/12/42		824 Z
150	02/01/42		16/11-15/12/42		212 K
150	02/01/42		**Total**		**75881**
153	09/01/42				3176
153	09/01/42				85 Pa; 12 P; 122 K
153	09/01/42		**Total**		**79276**
156	16/01/42		23/11/41	Buyuk Lambat and Alushta	30
157	19/01/42		01-15/01/42		685 J; 1639 K, Pa

[244] The exact date should be 15 Sep. 1941. See EM No. 95 and 101.

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONER	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION	VICTIMS
157	19/01/42		**Total**		**80160**
165	06/02/42		15-31/01/42		3601 including 3286 J
165	06/02/42		**Total**		**85201**
170	18/02/42		09/01-15/02/42	Simferopol	300
170	18/02/42			Simferopol	10000
170	18/02/42				100-200
170	18/02/42		01-15/02/42		1451 including 920 J
170	18/02/42		**Total**		**86652**
178	9/3/42		16-28/02/42		271 Komm.
178	9/3/42				199 Partisanen
178	9/3/42		16-28/02/42		1515 including 729 J
184	23/3/42				800 Z
184	23/3/42				2010 including 678 J
184	23/3/42			Orel	?
190	08/04/42		first half of March		1501 including 588 J
190	08/04/42		**total**		**91678**
193	17/04/42			Feodosia	16 J; 18
				Total:	114,449 ±50

Table 18: Other Units and Events

The following executions by other units or pogroms cannot always be clearly assigned to the area of operations of specific *Einsatzgruppen*, either because the *Einsatzgruppen*'s area of responsibility was not always sharply defined or because there is a lack of information about the exact location of the respective events. Where possible, the "Location (EG)" column indicates in each case the letter of the task force in whose area of operations the event probably took place.

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION (EG)	VICTIMS
12	04/07/41	Stapo Tilsit		(A)	200
14	06/07/41	Ukrainians	05/07/41	(C)	70
14	06/07/41	Stapo Tilsit		Gargzdai (A)	201
14	06/07/41	Stapo Tilsit		Kretinga (A)	214
14	06/07/41	Stapo Tilsit		Palanga (A)	11
19	11/07/41	Waffen SS		Zborov (C)	600
19	11/07/41	Lithuanian Pogroms		Kaunas (A)	7800
19	11/07/41	HSSPF N, Lithuanians		Kaunas (A)	2500
20	12/07/41	Belarusians		(B)	?
24	16/07/41	Pogrom		Sambor (C)	50
24	16/07/41	Pogrom		Riga (A)	400
25	17/07/41	Rumanians		(D)	hundreds
25	17/07/41	Rumanians	10/07/41	(D)	400
25	17/07/41	Rumanians		(D)	15
26	18/07/41	Polizeipräfekt		(A)	80

EM	EM DATE dd/mm/yy	EXECUTIONERS	EX. DATE dd/mm/yy	LOCATION (EG)	VICTIMS
		Matsch			
26	18/07/41	*Stapoleitstelle* Tilsit	**Total**	(A)	**3302**
28	20/07/41	*Wehrmacht*		Tarnopol (C)	600
32	24/07/41	OrPo		Brest-Litovsk (B)	4435 including 408 Russians
37	29/07/41	Rumanians	15/07/41	Beltsy (Balti) (D)	45
38	30/07/41	Pogrom		Khorostov (C)	110
38	30/07/41	BdS Cracow		(–)	416
40	01/08/41	Rumanians		Chernovitsy (D)	682
40	01/08/41	Pogrom		Jelgava (A)	1556
40	01/08/41	Pogrom	**Total**	Lithuania Latvia Estonia (A)	**20000**
43	05/08/41	BdS Cracow	21-31/07	(–)	3947
47	09/08/41	HSSPF S		Shepetovka-Rovno (C)	1643
47	09/08/41	BdS GG		Bialystok (B)	296
47	09/08/41	BdS GG		Brest-Litovsk (B)	510
66	28/08/41	*Einsatzgruppe z.b.V/ Einsatzkommando Lemberg*		Lvov; Brest-Litovsk; Bialystok (B)	2117 (Lvov: 1154; Brest: 769; Bial.: 194)
67	29/08/41	*Einsatzgruppe z.b.V*		(B?)	2739
78	09/09/41	BdS GG		(B?)	1308
80	11/09/41	Ukrainians		Korosten (C)	238
80	11/09/41	HSSPF S		Kamenets-Podolsky (C)	23600
88	19/09/41	Ukrainians		Radomyshl (C)	561
88	19/09/41	HSSPF S	01-02/09/41	Berdichev (C)	1303
91	22/09/41	*Stapostelle* Allenstein	25/08-09/09/41	(A)	595
94	25/09/41	*Gruppenstab*		(C)	4 + 6 Z + 55 J
94	25/09/41	HSSPF S	**Σ 31/8/41**	(C)	**44125**
95	26/09/41	*H.Gruppe Mitte*		(B)	80
125	26/10/41	Rumanians		Odessa (D)	10000
133	14/11/41	Pol.Regt. Mitte	19/10/41	Mogilev (B)	3726
135	19/11/41	HSSPF S	13/10/41	Dnepropetrovsk (C)	10000
143	08/12/41	HSSPF S and EK 5	06-07/11/41	Rovno	~15000
151	05/01/42	HSSPF Riga, Jeckeln		Riga (A)	1 transport from Reich (820)
151	05/01/42	HSSPF Riga, Jeckeln	30/11/41	Riga Ghetto (A)	4000
190	08/04/42	BdS Ukraine	1/3-3/4/42	(C)	1315 (no Jew)
				Total:	120,307 ±400

5.3.2. Analysis of the Data

I. *Einsatzgruppe* A

The sum of the individual casualty counts listed in Table 14 yields a total reported casualty count of 89,023 (±3,500) for *Einsatzgruppe* A.[245] This does not include duplicates (repetitions) or subtotals sometimes listed in the reports.

EM No. 88 dated 19 September 1941 supplies a grand total of 85,000 victims, but the individual figures only attest to 15,024 victims by that time (±3,500).

For EK 2 the following totals are given (Table 14):

– 29,246 victims by 27 September 1941
– 31,598 ″ ″ 10 November 1941
– 33,970 ″ ″ 16 January 1942
– 34,193 ″ ″ 2 February 1942

But only two executions are specifically mentioned in EMs (with date/location): 400 victims on 7 July 1941, and 3,900 on 16 July. The origin of the above total figures is unknown.

By 19 September 1941, EK 3 is said to have shot 46,692 persons according to EM 88, but until that date, the "Jäger Report" (EK 3) mentions 78,305 persons shot. On 25 September, the number of executions was 75,000 (EM 94), but it is unknown where these (75,000-46,692 =) 28,308 victims came from who are said to have been shot within just a single week.

The Summary Report covering 16 Oct. 1941 through 31 Jan. 1942 supplies the following statistics as of 1 February 1942 (I am citing only the total figures):[246]

Lithuania:	143,774	+ 5,500	(including 136,421 Jews)
Latvia:	39,212	(pogroms)	(including 35,238 Jews)
Estonia:	5,463		(including 963 Jews)
Byelorussia:	42,861		(including 41,828 Jews)
Former Soviet Territories (?):	3,600		(all Jews)
Total:		240,410	

Summarizing the records of the Incident Reports up to 31 January 1942 (all individual numbers of Table 14 up to and including EM 156), we obtain a figure of 65,859 victims (±3,500), leaving a deficit of (240,410 – 65,859 =) 174,551 victims (±3.500).

Even if one adds the victims murdered by other units or killed in pogroms in the area of operation of *Einsatzgruppe* A, as listed in Table 18, one arrives at a maximum of 38,377 additional victims up to 31 January 1942, *i.e.* a total of

[245] The first entry in Table 14 – "Thousands" – was set at a minimum of 2,000 and a maximum of 9,000, *i.e.*, a range of 7,000 or ±3,500. All total and partial victim totals cited for the incident reports of the individual *Einsatzgruppen* were taken from an Excel spreadsheet, which can be viewed online at www.HolocaustHandbooks.com/dl/Einsatzgruppen.xlsx

[246] RGVA, 500-1-775, p. 184.

104,236 (±3,500), which still corresponds to an unexplained deficit of (240,410 – 104,236 =) 136,174 victims (±3,500), for which no evidence is available.

Of the 137,346 victims listed in the "Jäger Report," the Incident Reports inexplicably mention only 1,593 (italic entries in Table 14). This means a deficit of (137,346 – 1,593 =) 135,753 victims in this regard.

Moreover, the above-mentioned Summary Report asserts that 27,800 Jews were shot at Riga by the Higher SS and Police leader Russia North in early December 1941; the Incident Reports only mention 10,600 victims, however (EM 156), leaving a deficit of (27,800 – 10,600 =) 17,200.

The Summary Report attributes 42,861 victims to Byelorussia; the only datum relating to this region appears in EM No. 155 dated 14 January 1942, where 33,210 victims are mentioned. These are mere numbers without any justification or explanation: when, where, and by whom were the 33,210 victims shot? The EM in question remains silent about this. The same questions might be asked for the remaining (42,861 – 33,210 =) 9,651 victims, who are not mentioned in the Incident Reports at all.

II. *Einsatzgruppe* B

There are at least six "Activity and Situation Reports" starting at the second half of 1942 indicating the number of victims claimed by this unit:

1. "Activity and Situation Report B for the period of 18-31 Aug. 1942"
2. "Activity and Situation Report B for the period of 1 Sep.-15 Sep. 1942"
3. "Activity and Situation Report B for the period of 16 Sep.-30 Sep. 1942"
4. "Activity and Situation Report B for the period of 15 Nov.-15 Dec. 1942"
5. "Activity and Situation Report B for the period of 16-31 January 1943"
6. "Activity and Situation Report B for the period of 1-28 Feb. 1943"
7. "Activity and Situation Report B for the period of 1-31 March 1943"

As we can see, Reports Nos. 1 through 3 are consecutive, and so are Reports Nos. 5 through 7. Report No. 3 contains no data on killings. Those from the other reports ("*Gesamtzahl der Sonderbehandelten*") are summarized in the following table:

Table 19

	1	**2**	**4**		**5**		**6**		**7**	
page:	404	423	499		521		544		574	
SK 7a	*6281*	89	160	*6788*	64	*7009*	2212	*9221*	69	*12436*
SK 7b	*3473*	762	86	*3816*	92	*4066*	30	*4096*	58	*4154*
SK 7c	*3268*	219	530	*4660*	124	*5030*	150	*5180*	234	*5414*
EK 8	*71446*	111	376	*74740*	125	*75019*	801	*75820*	221	*76031*
EK 9	*39297*	100	1167	*41340*	353	*42263*	289	*42552*	1772	*44324*
TS*	*2430*	156	108	*2954*	30	*3089*	57	*3146*	0	
Totals	*126195*	1437	2427	*134098*	788	*136476*	3539	*140015*	2354	*142359*
Calculated Totals			+3864	130059	+788	130847	+3539	134386	+2354	136740

* *Trupp* Smolensk; page numbers refer to Angrick *et al.*; numbers in italics are totals listed in the document; they do *not* result from the individual summands.

Hilberg, in his statistics, refers to the report for the period from 15 November to 15 December 1942 (see Section 5.1.1.).

The Incident Reports indicate a casualty figure of 64,497 for *Einsatzgruppe* B, plus a maximum of 10,776 additional casualties from other units, if my assignment in Table 18 is correct, thus a total of 75,273 casualties. In the summary section of EM 92, SK 7a is credited with 1,011 executions through 13 September 1941, and SK 7b with 1,153. However, as of that date, the Incident Reports only attribute 76 victims to SK 7a (EM 73), and only 52 to SK 7b (EM 29). SK 7c is not even mentioned, so that it is impossible to tell where the figure of 3.268 executions comes from that are mentioned in the "Activity and Situation Report B for the period of 18-31 Aug. 1942" for SK 7c.

EK 8 is listed with the following totals:

– 13 September 1941: 11,354
– 28 September 1941: 15,000
– 26 October 1941 [EM date]: 20,108
– 14 November 1941 [EM date]: 28,219

However, by 13 September 1941, only one single mass execution, producing 214 victims, is mentioned in the Incident Reports (EM 73). Summarizing all the executions carried out by EK 8 according to the Incident Reports, we arrive at only 7,287 victims.

The following figures apply for EK 9:

– 13 September 1941: 9,974
– 28 September 1941: 10,269
– 26 October 1941 [EM-date]: 11,449
– 14 November 1941 [EM-date]: 11,452

The individual entries for EK 9 in the Incidents Reports result in 8,928 victims by 13 September 1941; EM No. 92 of 23 September mentions the execution of 1,672 persons, which results in a total of (8,928 + 1,672 =) 10,600 victims by 28 September. From 29 September until 25 October, EK 9 is said to have shot 3,233 persons, but the total on 26 October is only 11,449 (instead of [10,600 + 3,233 =] 13,833).

The *Meldungen* supply no new data, which means a documentary deficit for the time period from end of October 1941 to the first of the aforementioned "Activity and Situation Reports", which begins with 18 August 1942. In that report, the number of victims executed by EK 8 up to that time is given as 71,446, so for EK 8 we are missing any data for (71,446 - 28,219 =) 43,227 victims, and for EK 9, any date for (39,297 - 11,452 =) 27,845 victims is missing.

The total for executions carried out by the *Kommando Trupp* Smolensk was 2,430 as of 31 August 1942, but the only action by this unit mentioned in the Incident Reports is the killing of 60 persons over the period of 6-30 March 1942 (EM 194).

The total number of persons declared killed by *Einsatzgruppe* B was 11,084 by 31 July 1941, which deviates only slightly from the total of the individual entries (11,132 victims), provided that one ignores the 4,435 victims executed by the *Ordnungspolizei* in Brest-Litovsk on July 24, 1941 according to EM No. 32 (see Table 18).

A total figure of 23,084 persons killed is given as of 13 September (EM 92); but between 31 July and 13 September, the total for individual recorded executions amounted to 10,155, a figure which, added to the claimed total as of 31 July (11,084), yields 21,239, and 21,287 when added to the actual total. Adding the victims of the *Ordnungspolizei* gives 25,722, not to mention additional executions by other units active in *Einsatzgruppe* B's area of activity during this period, as listed in Table 18 (a total of at least 3,003). Thus, it does not fit one way or the other.

The last total is from 14 November 1941 and is 45,467. Up to that date, an additional 20,827 executions have been recorded since 13 September, giving a total of (21,287+20,827=) 42,114 executions; an additional 22,168 executions were recorded after that date, so the declared total should be (45,467+22,168=) 67,635, but the calculated total of the individual numbers recorded is (42,114+22,168=) 64,282 – not including the casualties of other units (up to 10,776).

The last figures of the Incident Reports refer to the period from 6 to 30 March 1942 (EM 194). The total number of victims up to August 31, 1942, according to the first "Activity and Situation Report B," was 126,195 (see Table 19, total of Column 1), which would mean that during the months from April to August (126,195-75,273=) 50,922 persons were liquidated, but nothing is known about this. From September 1942 to March 1943, the number of those killed as listed in the documents increased from 126,195 to 142,359 (see Table 19, italic sum of Column 7), which is an increase of 16,164, but the individual figures yield only (1437+2427+788+3539+2354=) 10,545, which would give a total of 136,740 (see Table 19, last row and column).

It is true that the "Activity and Situation Reports" for the periods from 1 October 1941 to 14 November 1941 and from 16 December 1941 to 14 January 1942 are missing, but it is still true that the partial figures given do not confirm these totals. The partial figures contained in the "Activity and Situation Reports" have little historical weight, because neither the execution dates nor locations are indicated, meaning that the figures cannot be verified. The data consist of generic lists, such as (Angrick *et al.*, p. 423):

> *"Specially treated were:*
> *Special Unit 7a: 54 Gypsies, 21 bandits, 10 Communists, 3 criminals, 1 mental patient,*
> *Special Unit 7b: 46 Gypsies, 3 Communists, 13 mental patients,*
> *Special Unit 7c: 90 Gypsies, 101 bandits, 19 Communists, 9 asocials and mental patients,*
> *Mobile Task Force 8: 3 Gypsies, 70 bandits, 25 Communists, 8 criminals, 5 mental patients,*

Mobile Task Force 9: 10 Gypsies and asocials, 79 bandits, 1 Communists, 10 criminals,
Trupp Smolensk: 98 Gypsies, 43 bandits, 3 Communists, 12 asocials and criminals"

In practice, of the 142,359 executions carried out by *Einsatzgruppe* B, (142,359–75,273=) 67,086 are unverifiable. This problem, as we will see further along, is also true of the Incident Reports themselves.

III. *Einsatzgruppe* C

The total number of executions registered by the Incident Reports and attributed to *Einsatzgruppe* C amounts to 132,905 (±100). To this must be added the executions of other units, which, if correctly assigned in Table 18, amount in this case to 55,149 (mainly perpetrated by the Higher SS and Police Leader South). These reports contain many partial totals relating to the squads of these *Einsatzgruppen*; I have summarized them in the following table:

Table 20

EM	Date (dd/mm/yy)	EK 4a/SK 4a	EK 5	EK 6	EG C
37	29/07/41	2,531			
58	20/08/41	4,335			8,000
80	up to 24/08/41	7,152			
86	17/09/41	6,584			
88	up to 06/09/41	11,328			
94	25/09/41	15,000			
111	12/10/41	51,000			
128	03/11/41				80,000 75,000
132	12/11/41	55,432			
132	up to 20/10/41		15,110		
135	up to 02/11/41		21,258		
143	up to 09/11/41	57,243			
143	up to 10/11/41		29,644		
156	up to 30/11/41	59,018			
156	up to 07/12/41		36,147		
156	up to 12/11/41			6,800	

EM No. 80 dated 11 September 1941 gives 7,152 as the total number of victims for SK 4a by 24 August; EM No. 86 dated 17 September inexplicably indicates a total of 6,584. EM No. 128 reports two different totals only a few lines apart: 80,000 for "*Personen*," and 75,000 for "*Juden*." With regard to the first figure, the text says: "…approximately 80,000 persons have thus been liquidated by the *Einsatzgruppen* squads so far" (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 744). The number refers to the date of the related EM (3 November 1941). But the number of persons shot as of that date as given by the individual EMs results in a total of 67,971 (without casualties caused by other units, which total 28,834 at this time; thus, 96,805 combined).

Adding up the executions of the individual *Kommandos* mentioned in the EMs supplies the following picture:

SQUAD	CALCULATED TOTAL	DECLARED TOTAL
EK 4a/SK 4a:	45,431	59,018
EK 4b:	4,490	
EK 5:	56,342	36,147
EK 5a:	4,303	
EK 6:	2,116	6,800
Total:	112,682	101,965

The sum of the declared totals in the reports is therefore 101,965, as against 132,905 (±100) as the sum of all executions mentioned for the entire EG.

The *Meldungen* for 1942 contain extensive summaries of past activities, but statements relating to new executions (after April 3, 1942) are few and far between, and regarding all of *Einsatzgruppe* C we have the following data:

Table 21

M. No. 6	5 June 1942	727	Partisans
M. No. 12	17 July 1942	76	Jewish-Bolshevik officers
		340	Jews and Communists
		14	Jews/Jewesses
M. No. 24	9 October 1942	158 + 40	Bandits
	Total:	1,355	

The total number of victims of *Einsatzgruppe* C by 31 December 1942 therefore amounts to (132,905 (±100) + 1,355 =) 134,260 (±100). To this must be added those executed by other units in the territory of *Einsatzgruppe* C (55,149), giving a total of (134,260(±100)+55,149=) 189,409 (±100).

IV. *Einsatzgruppe* D

The Incident Reports from time to time supply many totals relating to the overall activity of *Einsatzgruppe* D; I have summarized them in the following table:

Table 22

EM	DATE DD/MM/YY	VICTIMS	EM	DATE DD/MM/YY	VICTIMS
89	20/09/41	17,315	150	02/01/42	75,881
95	26/09/41	13,315	153	09/01/42	79,276
101	02/10/41	35,782	157	19/01/42	80,160 [recte: 81,630]
117	18/10/41	40,699	165	06/02/42	85,201
129	05/11/41	31,767	170	18/02/42	86,652
145	12/12/41	54,696	190	08/04/42	91,678

EM No. 129 contains an obvious error, where the figure 31,767 should no doubt read 51,767.

In the case of *Einsatzgruppe* D, there is a striking discrepancy between the total number given and the sum of the individual reports; the latter is 114,449

(±50), which is 22,771 (±50) higher than the total number given in EM No. 190 of 91,678. If the number of those executed in the area of *Einsatzgruppe* D by other units is added (12,042), there is even a difference of 34,813 (±50).

An analysis of the individual data shows that they confirm the total figures only in a few cases. The first claimed total (EM No. 89) is 17,315, but the sum of the partial data gives either 11,809 if the execution of 8,890 carried out on August 19 is omitted, or 20,699 if it is added. (The Jews murdered by Romanians in the territory of *Einsatzgruppe* D during this period – 2,042 in number (Table 18) – change the picture only marginally.)

The total sum mentioned in EM No. 95 is an incomprehensible error, which, however, with the next execution of 22,467 mentioned in EM No. 101, results in the total number of 35,782 mentioned there, which absolutely does not agree with the individual executions listed (20,699 + 22,467 = 43,166).

If one adds to the total number of 35,782 mentioned in EM No. 101 the individual numbers up to the next subtotal (in EM No. 117), one obtains 44,302 instead of the 40,699 mentioned there. If one adds to the 40,699 the 11,068 victims mentioned in EM No. 129, one arrives at 51,767, which corresponds to the number I have just corrected in this report.

There is, however, perfect congruity for the partial data ranging from the total of 54,696 to that of 75,881; adding the partial data to the claimed 54,696 in fact results in (54,696 + 17,645 + 2,504 + 824 + 212 =) 75,881. The congruity is maintained until the next total: (75,881 + 3,176 + 85 + 12 + 122 =) 79,276. To this total the figures of 30, 685 and 1,639 must be added, yielding a sum of 81,630, not 80,160. Starting with 81,630, the next total, after adding 3,601 executions, in fact yields a total of 85,231 rather than the reported 85,201.

This analysis shows that the *Einsatzgruppen* reports contain chaotic and disordered numerical data which almost never coincide with the declared totals, the general reliability of which is therefore dubious to say the least.

V. Other Units and Events

As can be seen from Table 18, the executions registered in the Incident Reports were not exclusively perpetrated by the *Einsatzgruppen*, but also by various other units, and there were also victims of pogroms.

For the *Stapo* Tilsit, EM No. 26 of 18 July 1941 gives a total victim number of 3,302 up to that date, while the sum of the victims mentioned in the individual reports yields only 626, and thus one does not know when and where the remaining 2,676 perished. There is also a discrepancy with regard to the casualty record of the Higher SS and Police Leaders Russia-South: If one follows EM No. 94 of 25 September 1941, the unit in question killed 44,125 persons by the end of August, yet there are only three entries about this unit in earlier Incident Reports (EM Nos. 47, 80, and 88) with a total of (1,643+23,600+1,303=) 27,849 victims. Therefore, no information is available on 16,276 claimed victims.

Therefore, (2,676+16,276=) 18,952 executed victims appear in these two statistics alone of whom it is not known where they were killed and to which victim categories they belonged.

Another inconsistency concerns the pogrom victims in the Baltics. The Summary Report covering 16 Oct. 1941 through 31 Jan. 1942, mentioned when discussing the figures for *Einsatzgruppe* A, states that a total of 5,500 pogrom victims occurred in Lithuania and Latvia, but EM No. 40 mentions a total of 20,000 pogrom victims, although the individual figures listed in the Incident Reports only add up to 9,756.

5.3.3. Unverifiable Data

The Incident Reports contain very many entries without any indication of the day or place of execution, generally introduced by expressions such as this one: "X Jews and Y Communists etc. were executed during the period covered by the report."

These unverifiable executions are given as accounting for 7,150 victims for *Einsatzgruppe* A, approximately 12,800 for *Einsatzgruppe* B, approximately 45,000 for *Einsatzgruppe* C, and approximately 80,300 for *Einsatzgruppe* D, in total approximately 145,250 victims. Adding to this the numbers of executions of which we know nothing, as noted earlier, we have a total of [145,250 + 42,861 (EG A; see p. 275) + 67,086 (EG B; see p. 278) + 18,952 (Stapo Tilsit & HSSPF S, see above] =) 274,149 victims.

Summarizing, the individual data show the following executions:

– *Einsatzgruppe* A:	240,410 (see p. 274)
– *Einsatzgruppe* B:	142,359 (Table 19)
– *Einsatzgruppe* C:	134,260 (see p. 279)
– *Einsatzgruppe* D:	114,449 (Table 17)
– Subtotal:	631,478
– Other SS units:	120,307 (Table 18)
– Overall Total:	751,785

The unverifiable data (274,149) therefore amount to 36.5% of the total figure!

To these problems, problems of exaggeration must be added, because in the event that the executions are reported with date and precise location, in the great majority of cases there is no certainty that the figures indicated are exact.

A specific case of unverifiable data is the report by an armaments inspector in the Ukraine to General Thomas dated 2 December 1941, in which the following statement appears:

> *"In total, some 150,000 to 200,000 Jews may* [have been] *executed so far in the part of the Ukraine belonging to the Reich Commissariat, taking no consideration for these economic concerns."* (PS-3257. IMT, Vol. 32, p. 74)

By 3 November 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* C, as I have shown above, declared that 75,000 Jews had been killed, while *Einsatzgruppe* D declared that 54,700 Jews

had been killed by 12 December 1941; the total, 129,700, is at best barely compatible with the minimum figure contained in the above-mentioned report, *i.e.*, 150,000. But orthodox Holocaust historiography, in its statistics, ignores this document.

Mario Wenzel writes that, at the beginning of 1942, after the massacres committed by *Einsatzgruppen* C and D, by the Police Battalions, and by the 1st SS Brigade in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine, only some 325,000 remained of the original 650,000 Jewish natives. These survivors were for the most part concentrated in the General Commissariats of Volhynia-Podolia and Zhitomir. By the start of 1942, therefore, some 325,000 Jews had been killed (Wenzel, p. 138).

Dieter Pohl adopts a similar figure: by the start of 1942, the Germans had killed approximately 300,000 Jews and approximately 20,000 had fallen victim to pogroms (Pohl 2008, p. 57). Further along, he adds the figure of 300,000 victims, but this time, in a note, he attempts to justify this figure: *Einsatzgruppe* C had killed 108,000, *Einsatzgruppe* D 75,000-80,000; in addition to which "there were the massacres carried out by the Orpo [regular police] but not mentioned in the Reports on Events in the USSR, at least 6,000 victims of the 1st SS Brigade, and the murders committed by the Secret Field Police and other army units" (*ibid.*, pp. 43, 68). But with this, we arrive at 194,000, which means that 106,000 victims, a third of the total, are absolutely unspecified and unverifiable. The surprising fact is that, on the next page, Pohl cites the report of General Thomas without any comment whatsoever (*ibid.*, p. 44).

To sum up, the only way to evaluate the reliability of the figures in the Incident Reports remains the examination of bodies and/or their destruction within the framework of the so-called "Aktion 1005," which will be the subject of Part Two of the present study.

5.4. Daniel Goldhagen and the Police Battalions

Goldhagen asserts that at least 38 battalions of police contributed to the perpetration of the Holocaust and states that

> *"Of these thirty-eight battalions, at least thirty perpetrated* large-scale *slaughters or deportations. The following table contains only some of the major killing operations (over one thousand victims) of these thirty battalions. They and other police battalions carried out an enormous number of other killing operations, large and small, that are not listed."* (Goldhagen, p. 271)

This is followed by a 4-column table ("Police Battalion," "Location," "Date" and "Number of Victims") which numbers Battalions 3, 9, 11, 13, 22, 32, 41, 45, 53, 64, 65, 67, 96, 101, 133, 251, 255, 256, 303, 306, 307, 314, 316, 320, 322, in addition to the "Mounted Police Third Squadron," the "Motorized Gendarme Battalion," the "Police Guard Battalion I (Posen)" and the "Police Reserve Company Cologne" (*ibid.*, pp. 271-273; Goldhagen's subsequent death tolls are taken from

this table). The minimum total number of the victims, ignoring the repetitions,[247] is 829,000,[248] but the author declares (*ibid.*, p. 187):

> *"The Einsatzgruppen killed over one million Jews in territories conquered from the Soviet Union. The police battalion men among them, most of whom were reservists, fully contributed to this toll."*
> *"It cannot be said precisely in how many deaths police battalions were complicit. The number is certainly over one million, and could be three times as high."* (*Ibid.*, p. 202)

The table lists shootings, confirmed or presumed, as well as deportations without giving any sources. Although the author explicitly declares that this contains executions "perpetrated" by the police battalions, he also considers indirect participation, for example for purposes of surveillance during the executions. The table is therefore designed in such a way as to give the impression that it lists a series of executions committed by the police battalions, which should be added to those committed by the *Einsatzgruppen* and the *Kommandostab Reichsführer* SS and the three Higher SS and Police leaders (North, Center and South, each of which had three police battalions in its employ), while the respective actions very largely overlapped each other.

This, as we shall soon see, is the case in particular with Battalions 3 and 9, to which Goldhagen attributes 200,000 victims in the Soviet Union between June and December 1941.

In the pages that follow, I will examine a few of the more extraordinary assumptions adopted by Goldhagen.

5.4.1. Soviet Union in General

Battalions 3 and 9 are each considered responsible for 100,000 deaths in the Soviet Union by Goldhagen – Battalion 9 from June to December 1941, and Battalion 3 from December onwards. At the end of June, the four companies of Battalion 9 were assigned to each of the four *Einsatzgruppen* and participated in their activity. At the end of 1941, Battalion 9 was transferred first to Poland and then to Norway, and was replaced by Battalion 3: the 1st Company was assigned to EG B, the 2nd Company to EG C, the 3rd Company to EG D and the 4th Company to EG A. Therefore, the killings perpetrated by these two battalions overlap with those of the *Einsatzgruppen* and should not be counted separately.

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[247] Battalions 251, 255 and 256 are all three considered responsible for 25,000-30,000 victims at Białystok; Battalions 41 and 101, the "Mounted Police Third Squadron" and the "Motorized Gendarme Battalion" all appear, in different ways, as the executioners of 16,000 Jews at Majdanek and 14,000 at Poniatowa; Battalions 45 and 303 are mentioned separately for the 33,000 or 30,000 victims at Babi Yar, as are Battalions 316 and 322 for execution of 3,000 at Białystok on 12-13 July 1941, Battalions 96 and 320 for the execution of 21,000 at Rovno on 7-8 November 1941, Battalions 41 and 53 for the killings of several thousands in the Warsaw Ghetto in early 1943, and Battalions 306 and 320 for the murder of 16,200 victims in Pinsk.

[248] Assuming the minimum number of two, when Goldhagen speaks of "several". So 2,000 for "several 1,000", 20,000 for "several 10,000" etc. If using the maximum possible nine (9,000, 90,000, 900,000), however, a maximum total number of 2,342,000 results.

Goldhagen attributes the execution of 25,000 Jews at Riga between November and December 1941 to Battalion 22. I have already discussed earlier whether these executions are a historical reality. At this point I only wish to point out that Battalion 22 is not even mentioned in the *Einsatzgruppen* reports: the executions were carried out by units of the Higher SS and Police leader (who had Battalions 53, 319 and 321 in his employ) and by *Einsatzkommando* 2 of *Einsatzgruppe* A.

Angrick and Klein assert that Jeckeln requested the 2nd and 3rd Companies of the Reserve Police Battalion as "additional reinforcements for guard duty" on 22 November, and on 29 November the 2nd Company moved from Jelgava to Riga. These companies were limited to surveillance tasks for which their assistance had been requested (Angrick/Klein, pp. 140f., 144):

> *"There were even more policemen deployed around the actual killing site. Members of the 2nd and 3rd companies of Reserve Police Battalion 22 formed a dense cordon in the field in front of the woods to prevent access by unauthorized personnel and to make escape from the pits impossible."*

It therefore makes no sense to hold the 22nd Battalion directly responsible for the killing of 25,000 persons.

5.4.2. Rovno

According to Goldhagen, Battalions 96 and 320 are said to have shot 21,000 persons at Rovno on 7 and 8 November 1941. EM No. 143 dated 8 December 1941 says in this regard:

> *"On 6 and 7 November 1941, the long-planned Jewish operation in Rovno was carried out, in which roughly 15,000 Jews could be shot. The Organization lay in the hands of the ordinary police force by order of the Higher SS and Police leader."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., p. 860f.)

With reference to the crimes of Battalion 320, Curilla writes (2006, p. 619):

> *"Shooting of 18,000 to 21,000 Jews by the exterior units Rovno of EK 5, Police Battalion 320, the 1st Company of Reserve Police Battalion 33, Police Battalion 315 and Ukrainian militia on 6 and 7 Nov. 1941 in Rovno."*

The source consists of trial evidence only. The figure of the number of victims, as far as it exceeds 15,000, is based, in the last analysis, on trial testimony,[249] indicating that Curilla considered it more reliable than the documents. For the discovery of bodies at Rovno, please refer to Subchapter 5.4. of Part Two.

5.4.3. Stanisławów (Stanislavov, Stanislav; today: Ivano-Frankivsk)

Goldhagen imputes the murder of 12,000 persons at Stanisławów on 12 October 1941 to Battalion 133. The execution is entirely undocumented. Hilberg asserts laconically in this regard that "in Stanisławow, about 10,000 Jews had been gath-

[249] Curilla 2006, fn 9, p. 619, cites the other authors who adduce estimates of between 21,000 and 22,000 victims.

ered at a cemetery and shot on October 12, 1941" (Hilberg 2003, Vol. II, p. 517). His source is a little bit ridiculous, to say the least:

> *"See the statement by Alois Mund (Viennese agricultural specialist stationed in Stanisławow), December 5, 1947, and the statements by survivors and Order Police personel of Stanisławow, 1947 and 1948, in the collection of T. Friedmann on Stanisławow, Haifa, October 1957, 90 pp."* (*ibid*., footnote 61)

Arad also concerns himself with the executions and writes:

> *"The first large massacre was planned for the first half of October 1941, and reinforcements were brought to the town the night before from Police Battalion 133 and the Ukrainian police. Some 20,000 Jews were removed from their homes on October 12, 1941, and taken to the Jewish cemetery. Between 10,000 and 12,000 Jews were shot that day. At dusk, the remaining thousands were sent back to their homes from the cemetery. Throughout the day, while Jews were being murdered, the local rabble hunted for any Jews in hiding and looted the homes of those who had been taken to the cemetery. The Stanislav ghetto, which accommodated between 23,000 and 26,000 Jews, was established during the first half of December 1941.* […] *Groups of Jews continued to be brought to the cemetery and murdered there."* (Arad 2009, pp. 224f.)

The source is given as "Pinkas Hakehillot: Eastern Galicia, 370-73; Pohl [2004], 'Hans Krüger,' 190-91" (*ibid.*, fn 7, p. 577).

The account is quite implausible. The SS are said to have brought 20,000 Jews to the cemetery to shoot them, but only shot 10,000-12,000 and sent the remaining 8,000-10,000 witnesses of the massacre back home, so they could tell everyone of what had happened?

Omer Bartov dedicates an extensive paragraph to "Ivano-Frankivsk/Stanyslaviv/Stanisławów/Stanislav," but concerning the alleged massacre, he merely states (Bartov, p. 328):

> *"An initial execution of several hundred members of the Jewish 'intelligentsia' (professionals considered by the Germans to be potential leaders) was followed in October by the mass murder of about 10,000 Jews in a single day at the New Cemetery."*

The author asserts that his exposition "is based primarily on Dąbrowska, Pinkas Hakehillot, pp. 359-376," a work to which he refers by citing an English translation on the web (*ibid.*, fn 47, p. 349). This is the same source as that used by Arad. The English translation describes the alleged event in minute detail:[250]

> *"At dawn on October 12, 1941, the day of Hoshana Rabba*[251] *5702, the houses of the Jews in the center of the city were surrounded by German police, Ukrainians, and members of the 'Bahnschutz' armed with machine guns and police clubs.* […] *At the cemetery, the guards assembled the Jews near the wall, and commanded them to give over their valuables, and hid them in that place.* […]

[250] Online at www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/pinkas_poland/pol2_00368.html#part4 (25 August 2021).
[251] The "Great Supplication", the seventh day of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot.

The slaughter terminated at sunset. From among the more than 10,000 Jews who were brought to the cemetery, there were still a few thousand who had not been shot; these were sent back home.

Another tumult arose at the gates, and some others were killed. The communal grave was not covered over that night. Some of those shot who had remained alive, managed to crawl out from among the corpses. Some reached their houses, and others died on the way. About 10,000 people were murdered that day. The action did not include the distant neighborhoods such as Gorka and Meizle. Some of the Jews who resided in the center of the city had managed to hide. The local riff-raff chased after those who attempted to hide during the action, giving them over [to] *the Germans, and pillaging the deserted homes. The next day, the grave was filled with dirt, and those who filled the grave were shot as well. According to one version, the Jewish firefighters covered over the grave."*

The story is apparently based on eyewitness accounts, several different versions of which seem to exist.

Bartov, who visited the location in 2003, described a Soviet monument with a stone reading as follows in Ukrainian:

"At this site in 1941-1944, the German-Fascists executed over 100,000 Soviet citizens and prisoners of other lands."

He also mentions the English text of the only post-Soviet monument still in existence (Bartov, p. 329):

"In memory of 120,000 Jews victims of the Holocaust 1941-1944"

This inflation of the death toll is further confirmation of the incredible lack of sense and proportion – both among Soviets and post-Soviets.

Dieter Pohl dedicates a detailed paragraph to the matter, titled "The Stanislav Blood Sunday," in which he writes:

"The grisly climax of Krüger's operations was 'the Stanislav Blood Sunday' on 12 October 1941. The date was probably chosen because of the Jewish holiday Hoshana Raba. This horrible crime has been elucidated in detail by the post-war investigations of the state prosecutor's office in Dortmund. Although only one contemporary document on the 'Blood Sunday' has appeared to date, the number of eyewitnesses from among the Jewish community, the perpetrators and non-participating third parties is nevertheless considerable." (Pohl 1997, p. 144)

The only presumed "contemporary document" bears this reference: "IfZ Fb 101/01, Bl. 246, KTB Pol.bat. 310, 12. 10. 1941" (*ibid.*, fn 26). This is a "war diary" of Police Battalion 310. In the place indicated we read the following:[252]

"Lvov, 2nd Company, accommodation barracks. 12 Oct. 41. Looting of Jewish dwellings occurred during a Jewish operation in Stanislav. To restore order, one platoon of ordinary police from the 2nd Company Battalion 310 was assigned to the ordinary police command in the strength of 1/30."

[252] YVA, O.53-12.2, p. 246.

Hence, the only thing which has been documented is that some "Jewish operation" took place on 12 October at Stanisławów, and that it triggered some looting of Jewish property, which the Germans stopped.

Pohl reconstructs the matter based on trial maps prepared twenty and more years later. For the victims, "two big ditches" were dug (Pohl 1997, p. 145), or, rather, according to one witness, "2 or 3 ditches 20-25 meters long and about 6-8 meters wide" (*ibid.*, p. 147). Pohl also cites the account of the Jews released from the execution ground:

> *"The termination of the massacre temporarily saved the lives of thousands of Jews who had already been crammed into the cemetery. Completely paralyzed, but alive, they returned to their district in the city."* (*ibid.*, p. 146)

Pohl also dwells on the question of the number of victims:

> *"Today, the number of victims can no longer be determined exactly. Probably some 20,000 persons, hence two thirds of the Jewish community, had to take the path to the execution ground. According to determinations by the Jewish Council after the mass murder, roughly 12,000 persons were killed, among them 1,000 Jews from the Carpatho-Ukraine. A comparison with the few surviving population statistics points to a figure of roughly 10,000 victims, while the District Court of Münster assumed a judicially ascertained minimum figure of 6,000 victims, declared established on legal grounds, but which is too low from a historiographical point of view."* (*ibid.*, p. 147)

Thus, it is all a matter of the purest conjecture. In this context, Pohl also supplies one bit of important information:

> *"The two mass graves were opened by the Soviet authorities in 1944, but no body count could be made in that case either, since some of the bodies had been burnt in early 1944. The figure of 10,000 – 12,000 victims seems realistic."* (*ibid.*)

Unfortunately he fails to indicate the source for this Soviet "discovery." His 1998 article on Stanislawów is not helpful either, since it adds nothing to the discussion contained in his book and does not even mention the discovery of the mass graves by the Soviets (Pohl 1998).

The alleged presence of cremation residues of "a part" (!) of the bodies from the two mass graves raises another problem for orthodox Holocaust historiography, because it contradicts their narrative. Here, it is necessary to anticipate an issue that will be dealt with in Chapter 3 of Part Two of this book.

Hoffmann asserts that, after the shooting by the *Sonderkommando* from which the witness Leon Weliczker had fled, a new "1005 Squad" was formed "still before Christmas 1943," after which he adds:

> *"in March 1944, the workers from the 2nd squad were transported to the City of Stanislav (Polish: Stanisławów, Ukrainian: Ivano-Frankivsk), located about 100 km south of Lvov, in order to level the mass graves in the Jewish Cemetery, in which the victims of the executions had been buried,"*

referring to the alleged 10,000 Jews shot on 12 October 1941. Hoffmann then says that,

> *"when the Red Army surprisingly reached the City of Kolomea (Ukrainian: Kolomyia), some 50 km south of Stanislav, on 29 March 1944,* [unit leader] *Schallock terminated the leveling of the mass graves in the Jewish Cemetery and had the workers shot."* (Hoffmann, p. 104)

Hoffmann refers to Thomas Sandkühler, who explicitly asserts that the new "Squad 1005" was formed in order to carry out the "disinterment" at Stanislav. After long preparations, the squad's activity began as late as March 1944, with 25 Jews in its employ (Sandkühler, p. 279):

> *"Due to the weather, work progressed only very slowly; furthermore, Krüger's successor Brandt no longer knew the exact location of the mass graves. Since the Red Army occupied Kolomea already at the end of the month, the Jews were shot by Schallock or on his directive, by order of the commander of the Security Police, before the exhumations had even properly begun. There was only one surivivor."*

Hence, since "Squad 1005" performed almost no exhumations, only a few, if any, of the corpses could have been cremated. Hence, since almost all the victims' corpses should have been there, why would it then have been impossible for the Soviets to count the number of victims in the two mass graves they excavated?

5.4.4. Białystok

According to Goldhagen, Battalions 251, 255 and 256 scored 25,000-30,000 victims at Białystok between 16 and 20 August 1942. However, this does not refer to executions but rather to deportations. What is more, as I have shown earlier, the 24,000 Jews deported from this city over the period indicated cannot be directly counted among victims of the Holocaust, because, although the transports were scheduled to travel directly to Treblinka, in fact they continued to Majdanek (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 533f.).

5.4.5. Zhitomir (Zhytomyr)

For Goldhagen, Battalion 303 was responsible for the killing of 18,000 persons at Zhitomir in September 1941. The Incident Reports mention various executions at Zhitomir committed by *Einsatzgruppe* C:

- EM No. 30 dated 22 July 1941: "187 Soviet Russians and Jews" were shot;[253]
- EM No. 37 dated 29 July 1941:

  > *"In Zhitomir itself a total of some 400 Jews, Communists and supporters of the NKVD have been shot so far, in collaboration with Group Staff and Advance Unit 4a."* (p. 201)

- EM No. 38 dated 30 July 1941: "180 Communists and Jews" were shot (p. 207);
- EM No. 47 dated 9 August 1941:

[253] Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 163; subsequent page numbers from there, unless stated otherwise.

> *"In Zhitomir some 400 Jews, among them mostly saboteurs and political officials, were finished off in the past few days."* (p. 265)

This is evidently a repetition of the data contained in EM No. 37.

– EM No. 58 dated 20 August 1941: 2 Jews were hanged and 402 were shot (pp. 320f.).
– EM No. 86 dated 17 September 1941:

> *"In Zhitomir, 266 Jews were liquidated in reprisal for the rebelliousness of the Jews, who even sabotaged the nighttime blackout regulations and illuminated their windows during Russian air raids."* (p. 477)

The largest execution is described in EM No. 106 dated 7 October 1941, which reports that on 19 September 1941 "a total of 315 Jews were registered and executed" (p. 643). The total number of victims was therefore 4,582.

If we follow Goldhagen, Police Battalion 303 killed 18,000 people in Zhitomir in September 1941, while Police Battalion 322 supposedly killed 3,000 Jews at Białystok on 12 and 13 July 1941, 3,700 at Mogilev on 19 October 1941, in addition to 19,000 Jews at Minsk in November 1941, and 9,000 on 28-30 July 1942, for a total of 34,700 persons; nevertheless, as I explained in Subchapter 1.5., the battalion's war diary contains not even one mention of these killings.

In early July 1941, Battalion 307 is said to have shot between 6,000 and 10,000 Jews at Brest-Litovsk. The presence of this battalion at Brest is documented, as I will show in Subchapter 8.6. of Part Two, and it may have participated in an execution, which, according to EM No. 32 dated 24 July 1941, claimed 4,435 victims, including 408 non-Jews. In my calculation of Goldhagen's total victim count of the Police Battalions – 829,000 – the case of Brest-Litovsk tallies with his claimed lower limit of 6,000 victims.

5.4.6. Tarnów and Nowy Sącz

Police Battalion 322 is also held responsible by Goldhagen for another 34,000 victims: 16,000 at Tarnów in June 1942 and 18,000 at Nowy Sącz (German: Neu Sandez) in August of the same year. Both cases did not involve shootings but rather deportations to Bełżec. The best orthodox source for this camp is Robert Kuwałek. He mentions three transports from Tarnów to Bełżec on 10, 11 and 12 June 1942. The number of deportees is said to have been 9,000-10,000, plus "several thousand" Jews "unfit to travel" who are said to have been shot near Tarnów. The only source mentioned by Kuwałek is a "report from Leon Leser," the date of which he doesn't even indicate (Kuwałek, pp. 340f.). As far as one can tell, no documents exist as to the supposed mass shooting. Kuwałek moreover asserts that, between 24 and 28 August, 16,000 Jews were transported from Nowy Sącz to Bełżec. In this case as well, his source is of unimpeachable probity: a "report by Mojżesz Ginter" (*ibid.*, p. 346).

In regard to Tarnów, Curilla writes (Curilla 2006, p. 580):

> *"The first resettlement of the approximately 40,000 Jews in Tarnow occurred on 11, 15 and 18 June 1942. On that occasion, some 10,000 Jews were transported*

> *to the Belzec Extermination Camp, another approximately 10,000 Jews unable to work, sick and feeble were shot in the marketplace, the Jewish Cemetery and on some wooded terrain outside the city by members of the SD and a company of Waffen-SS from the military-training area at Debica."*

All of which is based solely on trial verdicts. The involvement of Battalion 307 is *per se* assumed, because starting in May 1942, its Company 3a was stationed partly at Tarnów and partly at Neu Sandez (*ibid*.).

5.4.7. Kharkov

Battalion 307 is said to have shot 10,000-20,000 persons at Kharkov in January 1942, but the Incident Reports only attest to the killing of 305 Jews. See Subchapter 8.4. of Part Two.

5.4.8. Minsk

Battalion 322 is implicated by Goldhagen in the killing of 19,000 persons at Minsk in November 1941. The only execution in this location and month mentioned in documents is found in EM No. 140 dated 1 December 1941:

> *"A total of 6,624 Jews were shot in Minsk in the period from 7 to 11 Nov. 41 by Skdo. 1b."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., p. 845)

Gerlach asserts that, since the Germans at Minsk were awaiting the arrival of 25,000 German, Czech and Austrian Jews, the German authorities decided to kill 12,000 Jews from the local ghetto. After referring to EM No. 140, Gerlach states that, because the prescribed number of 12,000 victims had not been reached, another 5,000 Jews were killed on 20 November and another 2,000 on 10 and 11 December 1941. Incredibly, the sources given by Gerlach are the Soviet *Black Book* and trial verdicts (Gerlach 1999, p. 625 and fn 685).

In the long paragraph titled "The History of the Minsk Ghetto," the *Black Book* claims that the execution, carried out on 7 November 1941, involved "about twelve or thirteen thousands Jews," and that "seven thousand Jews perished on November 20" (Ehrenburg/Grossman 1981, pp. 152, 155). This confirms that, for the Soviets, the figures were simple propagandistic embellishments. But the most surprising thing is that this account completely ignores the presumed shootings of 10-11 December 1941!

It is worth stressing that Miriam Novitch, in her detailed 1962 article titled "To Resist the Murders – In the Ghetto of Minsk," wrote:[254]

> *"On 7th November the streets and squares were surrounded, and those who were not killed on the spot were taken to nearby Totckinka* [sic; Putchino] *where open graves awaited the victims. 12,000 were killed on that one day. The second massacre took place on the 2nd March, 1942. The streets were literally coloured by blood and in spite of open resistance 5,000 were killed."*

The story of the 10-11 December shootings is therefore extremely dubious.

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[254] GFHA, Cat. No. 136, Registry No. 08145R"M, Appendix to p. 4.

5.4.9. Kielce

The "Police Reserve Company Cologne" is said to have racked up 20,000 victims at Kielce between 20 and 24 August 1942, if we follow Goldhagen. This does not concern shootings but presumed deportation to Treblinka, for which there is no documentary proof. Everything that is known about it is based on "eyewitness testimony." One of the first accounts appeared in 1946, in an article signed "J. Szmulewicz," which mentioned the deportation to Treblinka of 19,000 Jews in three transports, including 6,000 Jews on 20 August 1942 (Szmulewicz, p. 3). Based on eyewitness testimonies, Krzystof Urbański asserts that the deportation was carried out in three steps: the initial transport departed on 20 August 1942 and carried 6,000 persons; the second departed on 22 August with 6,000-7,000 persons; the third left Kielce on 24 August, carrying an unspecified but very large number of deportees, since the total number of deportees was 20,000-21,000. The deportees were allowed to take 20 kg of baggage each (Urbański, pp. 118-135).

Returning to Goldhagen, it is not even certain that "Police Reserve Company Cologne" was even involved in the deportation. Curilla attributes the operations in the Kielce Ghetto ("the cordoning off of the ghetto" and related operations) to the Reserve Police Battalion 65 (Curilla 2006, p. 188).

5.4.10. Slutsk

According to Goldhagen, thousands of Jews were shot in Slutsk. In fact, a mass execution by Police Battalion 11 took place there on October 27, 1941, contrary to the agreements with the Territorial Commissioner Heinrich Carl, and was carried out most brutally, with the result that the latter sent a detailed report about it to the Commissioner General of Belarus, Wilhelm Kube. Kube was outraged, and on November 1 prepared a report to the attention of the Reich Commissioner of the Ostland, Hinrich Lohse. He spoke of an "abysmal disgrace" that he considered so serious that he sent Rosenberg a copy of the report and demanded that Hitler and Göring also be informed about it. Kube urged Lohse to have Carl and his subordinates draw up an affidavit "to make an example and to undergird my criminal complaint against the entire officer corps of Police Battalion No. 11" (PS-1104).

5.4.11. Summary

All these examples indicate that Goldhagen's table is of rather limited historical value; this applies first to the activities of the police battalions in general, but to an even greater extent to the historical factuality and the numbers of victims of the executions listed in his table.

Nina Stein asserts that

> *"mass shootings of Jews are known to have occurred in connection with some 42 police battalions. The total number of Jewish victims with the participation of ordinary German police is estimated at 520,373."* (N. Stein, p. 4)

Here, the writer at least uses the noun "participation." The statistics which follow (*ibid.*, pp. 4f.) are structured in such a way that a verification of the numerically most important data is practically impossible.

In this context, we might mention Büchler's estimate relating to the *Kommandostab Reichsführer* SS (Büchler, p. 20):

> *"The documentary information on the SS First Brigade is also not clear regarding numbers of Jews killed. However, since it was largely responsible for the 44,000 killed reported by Jeckeln for August, as well as helping the Einsatzgruppen murder many thousands more in the later months of 1941, it probably killed at least as many Jews as did the Cavalry Brigade. When considering the above estimates, in addition to the unknown numbers of Jews killed by the Second Brigade, it seems that the units operating in the framework of the Kommandostab in 1941 killed at least 100,000 Jews."*

The reference to 44,000 persons killed may be found in EM No. 94 dated 25 September 1941 and is rather laconic (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 557):

> *"A total of 44,125 persons, mostly Jews, were shot in the month of August by units of the Higher SS and Police leader."*

The source and reliability of this entry remains unknown. Since 23,600 are said to have been shot at Kamenets-Podolsky between 27 and 30 August, all the other executions put together would have produced 20,525 victims, but we don't know when and where they could have been executed.

6. The Genesis of the "Gas Vans" and Their Use by the *Einsatzgruppen*

6.1. Preamble

Alfred Streim briefly summarizes the position of orthodox Holocaust historiography with regard to the presumed "gas vans" with these words:

> *"Next to shooting potential enemies, another method of mass murder came into use among the Einsatzgruppen around the turn of the year 1941/42: killing with the use of gas vans, the so-called S-vans (special vans). The reason for the use of these vans was, first, to accelerate the mass killings, and second, to release the members of the Einsatzgruppen from the steadily increasing psychological stress caused by the many executions."* (Streim 1971, p. 75)

The importance of the matter in question is made obvious by the fact that enormous numbers of victims are attributed to the *Einsatzgruppen*'s "gas vans." Thus, referring to the related article in the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*,[255] Achim Trunk declared that "half of the estimated 500,000 gas-van victims – that is, 250,000" perished "in these mobile murder chambers in the Soviet Union" (Trunk, fn 4, p. 24). If assuming an average of 75 victims per gassing batch,[256] this means that some 3,333 gassings are proposed to have been carried out using these vehicles. If this is so, the allegation should have found abundant confirmation in the extremely rich surviving documentation relating to the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen*. Precisely this documentation will be examined in this regard in the present chapter. But first, it is necessary to delineate the genesis and development of the "gas vans" according to orthodox Holocaust historiography.

6.2. Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski and Himmler's Visit to Minsk: Historiographical Interpretations

Orthodox Holocaust historiography dates the genesis of the "gas vans," although with a few dissenting voices, back to an order issued by Himmler to SS *Brigadeführer* Arthur Nebe, commandant of *Einsatzgruppe* B, during Himmler's visit to Minsk on 15 August 1941. Before examining the interpretations and positions of the most prestigious orthodox historians who have concerned themselves with this problem, it is worthwhile to note the only facts that can be attested to by documents, that is, the related entry in Himmler's *Dienstkalender*. According to this source, the *Reichsführer* SS – *i.e.*, Himmler – was at Baranovichi on the after-

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[255] "*Insgesamt wurden vermutlich über 500 000 Menschen in Gaswagen ermordet, wobei die eine Hälfte in den besetzten Gebieten der Sowjetunion, die andere Hälfte im Vernichtungslager Chełmno getötet wurde*." Gutman *et al*., Vol. I, entry "Gaswagen," p. 507.

[256] According to Mathias Beer, the largest model "gas van" could hold 100 persons, the smallest, 50. For the purposes of the calculation, he assumed an average value of 75. Beer 2011, p. 162.

noon of 14 August 1941 and departed by truck in the direction of Minsk, via Slutsk. This is followed by the entry: "dinner and overnight stay in the Lenin House in Minsk" (Witte *et al.*, p. 193). This is the entry for the next day (*ibid.*, p. 195):

"Friday, 15. August 1941
Morning presence at an execution of partisans and Jews near Minsk.
Tour of a prisoner transit camp.
14.00 lunch, Lenin House
15.00 drive through the Minsk Ghetto – tour of the insane asylum
Subsequently, drive to Sofiose [sic] *(managed by the SS)*
towards evening return to Minsk
Dinner and overnight stay at the Lenin House."

It is a rather neutral text from which, historiographically speaking, nothing can be deduced regarding any gassings without the recourse to testimonies. I will therefore discuss the most important eyewitness testimonies in this regard: that of SS *Obergruppenführer* Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, Higher SS and Police leader of *Heeresgruppe Mitte* (Army Group Center).

Raul Hilberg dwells on this well-known anecdote at great length. Given the great importance of the matter in present orthodox Holocaust historiography, and the late Hilberg's former privileged position in this regard, a particularly in-depth examination of his two assertions is essential. First of all, I report Hilberg's long account (Hilberg 2003, Vol. 1, pp. 343f.):

"On August 15, 1941, Himmler himself visited Minsk. He asked Einsatzgruppe B Commander Nebe to shoot a batch of hundred people, so that he could see what one of these 'liquidations' really looked like. Nebe obliged. All except two of the victims were men. Himmler spotted in the group a youth of about twenty who had blue eyes and blond hair. Just before the firing was to begin, Himmler walked up to the doomed man and put a few questions to him.
Are you a Jew?
Yes.
Are both of your parents Jews?
Yes.
Do you have any ancestors who were not Jews?
No.
Then I can't help you!
As the firing started, Himmler was even more nervous. During every volley he looked to the ground. When the two women could not die, Himmler yelled to the police sergeant not to torture them.
When the shooting was over, Himmler and the fellow spectator engaged in conversation. The other witness was Obergruppenführer *von dem Bach-Zelewski, the same man who was later delivered to a hospital. Von dem Bach addressed Himmler:*
Reichsführer, *those were only a hundred.*
What do you mean by that?

Look at the eyes of the men in this Kommando*, how deeply shaken they are! These men are finished (*fertig*) for the rest of their lives. What kind of followers are we training here? Either neurotics or savages!*
*Himmler was visibly moved and decided to make a speech to all who were assembled here. He pointed out that the Einsatzgruppe were called upon to fulfill a repulsive (*widerliche*) duty. He would not like it if Germans did such a thing gladly. But their conscience was in no way impaired, for they were soldiers who had to carry out every order unconditionally. He alone had responsibility before God and Hitler for everything that was happening. They had undoubtedly noticed that he hated this bloody business (*dass ihm das blutige Handwerk zuwider wäre*) and that he had been aroused to the depth of his soul. But he too was obeying the highest law by doing his duty, and he was acting from a deep understanding of the necessity for this operation.*
*Himmler told the men to look at nature. There was combat everywhere, not only among men but also in the world of animals and plants. Whoever was too tired to fight must go under (*zugrunde gehen*). The most primitive man says that the horse is good and the bedbug is bad, or wheat is good and the thistle is bad. The human being consequently designates what is useful to him as good and what is harmful as bad. Didn't bedbugs and rats have a life purpose also? Yes, but this has never meant that man could not defend himself against vermin.*
After the speech Himmler, Nebe, von dem Bach, and the chief of Himmler's Personal Staff, Wolff, inspected an insane asylum. Himmler ordered Nebe to end the suffering of these people as soon as possible. At the same time, Himmler asked Nebe 'to turn over in his mind' various other killing methods more humane than shooting. Nebe asked for permission to try out dynamite on the mentally ill people. Von dem Bach and Wolff protested that the sick people were not guinea pigs, but Himmler decided in favor of the attempt. Much later, Nebe confided to von dem Bach that the dynamite had been tried on the inmates with woeful results."

Hilberg refers to the following sources (*ibid.*, p. 344, fn 210):

"The story of the Himmler visit, as told by von dem Bach, was printed in Aufbau *(New York), August 23, 1946, pp. 1-2"*

I therefore report the text published by the magazine *Aufbau*, omitting, however, Himmler's long speech, which has been capably paraphrased by Hilberg ("Leben…"; see Documents I.6.1a-b):

"During my days in Minsk, I received a visit from Himmler, who had also ordered Gruppenführer Nebe from Smolensk to Minsk. Himmler lodged in the Lenin House in Minsk. In the presence of Gruppenführer Wolff and myself, Himmler asked Nebe, how many prisoners for liquidation he had in prison at that time. Nebe named a figure around a hundred. The Reichsführer *SS went on to ask whether it would be any 'particular trouble' to have these hundred executed the next morning. He wanted to watch such a liquidation to get an idea of what it looked like. He asked me to accompany him with Gruppenführer Wolff. The shooting took place the next morning in a forest close to Minsk, north of the Minsk-Borisov highway. The criminals were all partisans and their supporters, up to a third or half of whom were Jews. There were also two women among them.* [*One of them*

was a parachute agent, a teacher by profession, the other older woman had acted as a courier for a partisan group.[257]*] The shooting was carried out in a correct military manner. The condemned people were calm and met their deaths stoically, which made a visible impression on all spectators. Two incidents left me with indelible memories. Among the Jews there was a young man perhaps 20 years old, blond and blue-eyed. He was standing right in front of the rifle barrels, when Himmler intervened. The rifle barrels were lowered. Himmler came up to the young man and asked him a question. 'Are you a Jew?' – 'Yes.' – 'Are both your parents Jews?' – 'Yes.' – 'Do you have any ancestors who were not Jews?' – 'No.' – The* Reichsführer *stamped his feet and said: 'Then I cannot help you', and had the sentence carried out.*[258]

The firing squad lost their nerve during the shooting of the two women. Neither of the women had been killed outright. The Reichsführer *himself jumped among them and called out to the* Wachtmeister:[259] *'Don't you torture the women, come on, fast, shoot!' I was watching Himmler the whole time, because I wanted to see his real face; I was hoping he would change his mind after this shocking experience. Himmler was extremely nervous; he didn't stand still for a moment; his face was as white as chalk, his eyes were wandering around, but when the salvo was fired, he always looked at the ground. While we were still on the execution ground, I approached Himmler about it. I told him, '*Reichsführer*, that was only a hundred!' – 'What do you mean by that?' I answered: 'Look straight in the eyes of the squad's men, how deeply shocked they are! These men are done for the rest of their lives. What kind of followers are we rearing with this? Either nervous wrecks or ruffians!' Himmler was visibly moved, quite impulsively, he called all those present to gather around and gave a long speech.* […]

Afterwards, a small insane asylum near Minsk was visited with the worst kinds of mental patients. Himmler ordered Nebe to 'deliver' them as quickly as possible. In this context, Himmler and Nebe discussed the gentlest kind of death. Himmler said that today's experience had convinced him that shooting was not the most humane method after all. Nebe was to mull it over and submit a report based on experiences gathered. Nebe answered that he thought dynamite was a better way. He asked to be permitted to kill the mental patients that way for the first time. Wolff and I objected that the mental patients were not guinea pigs. Himmler decided that Nebe was permitted to try it.

I talked to Nebe about this again only in 1943 in Berlin. He admitted that I was right when I objected back then, since the experiment failed miserably, because the mental patients weren't killed immediately. A much more 'humane' method was being used now. He didn't want to tell me any more. When rumors emerged later ever more frequently about gassing establishments, I assumed that this was the method that Nebe had been talking about."

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257 This sentence of the original is missing in the *Aufbau* article; see footnote 264 below.

258 The transport of Jews from the Reich to Minsk did not begin until the beginning of November, so this blond Jew was definitely not German: Hence, in what language did this alleged direct dialogue take place? In White Russian? In Yiddish? This difficulty alone betrays the imaginary nature of the article.

259 German police rank corresponding in the army and SS to corporal (*Gefreiter*, *SS-Rottenführer*).

It should be noted that the historiographic value attributed to this anecdote has changed considerably over the past decades. In the early 1950s, the first mainstream Holocaust historian who mentioned it still considered it, according to the text, a sort of antecedent to the presumed stationary gas chambers:[260]

> *"This general* [von dem Bach-Zelewski] *was present at an execution near Minsk, where Himmler ordered Nebe to devise a new method for mass killings, and it is at least curious that the only film showing the working of a gas chamber should be found in Nebe's former Berlin flat. Even Gisevius admits Nebe's complicity in this matter. The gas-chamber plans were discussed at daily luncheons at RSHA headquarters between Ohlendorf, Mueller, Schellenberg, and Nebe."*

I will discuss the film footage mentioned by Reitlinger a little later. The need to find a credible point of departure for the nebulous story of the "gas vans" then led orthodox Holocaust historians to distort the text published by the magazine *Aufbau*, adducing it as a reason for their presumed construction. By the early 1980s, this new interpretation had solidified to such an extent that it was no longer necessary to cite the above-mentioned magazine:

> *"With the attack on the Soviet Union, the number of 'opponents' of the National Socialists to be destroyed increased many times over. The mass shootings of Jews, Gypsies and other Soviet citizens, however, led to a considerable psychic stress on the Einsatzgruppen carrying out these executions behind the fighting troops. Hence, they changed over to gassings."*

Here, "gassings" refers to "gas vans," as shown by the title of the contribution from which this quotation was drawn, which reads: "Killings in the Gas Vans behind the Front" (Spector 1993, p. 52). In 1987, the German expert on "gas vans," Mathias Beer, constructed the imaginative story of the origins of these presumed homicidal vehicles based on the Himmler anecdote, spiced up with subsequent testimonies accommodatingly created based on this anecdote, starting with that of Albert Widmann (Beer 1987, p. 407). Great historiographical importance is still accorded this story (Beer 2011, pp. 158f.), which I will examine later.

But what is the source of von dem Bach-Zelewski's statement as quoted by *Aufbau*? Since 1953, when Reitlinger mentioned it in a historiographical context for the first time, no orthodox Holocaust historian has ever bothered to verify it.

The statement, as I said, was published in the *Aufbau* magazine under the title "*Leben eines SS-Generals. Aus den Nürnberger Geständnissen des Generals der Waffen-SS Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski*" ("The Life of an SS General. From the Nuremberg Confessions of the General of the Waffen SS Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski"). The editors introduced it as "an initial extract from the written testimony of the SS General," given to the Allied prosecutors at the Nuremberg Trial ("Leben…," p. 1; see Document I.6.1.).

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[260] Reitlinger 1953, p. 188; he cites this reference: "Zalewski, Erich von dem Bach. *Leben eines SS Generals*. (A series of affidavits taken on commission, but not put in evidence at Nuremberg, published in *Aufbau-Reconstruction*, New York, 1946, Vol. 12, Nos. 34-36.)"; *ibid.*, p. 537. The "gas chambers" of the quoted passage have nothing to do with the alleged "Gaswagen," which Reitlinger calls "gassing vans" (see his index entry on p. 601).

Von dem Bach-Zelewski's statements made before the U.S. officials who interrogated him several times between October 1945 and March 1946 with a view to the Nuremberg Trial may be found in the National Archives in Washington.[261] Among those documents is, in fact, a handwritten note by von dem Bach-Zelewski which mentions Himmler's visit to Minsk. This is titled "*Die Judenverfolgung*" ("The Persecution of the Jews") and consists of six pages.[262] On the fifth page, under Point 6, we may read the following (see Document I.6.2.):

> *"Himmler comes to Minsk for 24 hours. Orders Nebe and myself to appear in his presence, accompanied by Himmler's* Gruppenführer *Wolff. Himmler is present at the execution of ca. 100 partisans, among them also Jews and 2 women, whom Nebe was ordered to present so that Himmler could get an idea.*
> *Himmler gives a rather long speech after the execution.*
> *Followed by a visit to a small lunatic asylum near Minsk. Himmler orders Nebe to 'deliver' the mental patients from their sufferings.*
> *Nebe is to employ a humane method of killing. Nebe suggests a dynamite explosion. Himmler orders him to proceed."*

In Point 7, von dem Bach-Zelewski recalls that in 1943, during one of his inspections in Mogilev, he was informed that a commission of civilians (perhaps from a company in Hamburg), equipped with a written authorization from Himmler, wished to appropriate his factory installation (*Fabrikanlage*) in Mogilev to install a "gassing establishment" (*Vergasungsanstalt*), but that he refused to deliver it.

The source of the declaration published by *Aufbau*, however, is an undated document of which I have found only the official English translation, 62 pages long. It is headlined "Declaration von dem Bach. Von dem Bach" and undoubtedly dates back to March 1946.[263] This declaration contains among other things, a version of the account of Himmler's visit to Minsk: It is, in fact, the text published by *Aufbau* with some omissions.[264]

As Reitlinger pointed out, Bach-Zelewski's highly cooperative attitude spared him extradition to the Soviet Union and thus a certain death sentence. In his prolific career as a witness, in interrogations and notes, he always tried to please the American investigators. In the interrogation of March 30, 1948, von dem Bach-Zelewski returned to the subject of the "gassing establishment," but with a different perspective:[265]

> *"A plan surfaced in Mogilev – I know this because I was based there – to build a gassing facility. I wondered why it should be built there, because there were no Jews in the area. It was certainly a plan to exterminate Slavs. At that time, the matter failed because they wanted me to build factories, namely a Hamburg company was to build a gassing facility. At that time, I was thinking of a delousing fa-*

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[261] NARA, RG 238, M1270, OCCPAC. Interrogation Records Prepared for War Crimes Proceedings at Nuernberg 1945-1947, von dem Bach-Zelewski.
[262] *ibid.*, pp. 37-42.
[263] YVA, O.18-90, pp. 20-81.
[264] One of them was added in brackets in the above *Aufbau* quote. YVA, O.18-90, p. 52.
[265] YVA, O.51-104, p. 23.

cility. There was only one in Kowel. I thought it was impossible to build a similar one in Mogilev, because it would have been impossible to bring the soldiers here on the single-track railroad. I asked the gentlemen from whom they had the order, and they said from the Reichsfuehrer. *I said that the* Reichsfuehrer *ought to contact me personally, and with this the plan was dropped."*

The mention of a "company from Hamburg" is a clear reference to Tesch & Stabenow, making it obvious that the object discussed here was a disinfestation gas chamber. The reason why von dem Bach-Zelewski ruled out this possibility is unconvincing, because it is not known for whom the envisioned facility was intended.

A message intercepted by the British on 12 December 1942 permits us to put von dem Bach-Zelewski's declaration in its true context:[266]

"OMX de OMQ
Radio message 157 to Higher SS and Police leader, Russia Center, Division IV, MOGILEV.
15 crates of 'Zyklon,' stored here until now, with another 2 boxes with devices of the AUER Company, ORANIENBURG,[267] *were loaded onto railroad car DRRU 327289, destination SS hospital MINSK. No reply received so far to radio message of 8.9.42. Regarding collection from MINSK, you are requested to get in touch with the SS hospital. The Director of the Waffen SS Medical Camp, Warsaw. Signed, Dr. Herzog, SS Hauptsturmführer."*

In his interrogation of 23 March 1946, von dem Bach-Zelewski stressed that, in German, "*Vergasungsanstalt"* (gassing establishment) could also mean "delousing plant," but, in his opinion, there was no reason to install such a plant at Mogilev, to which he was told that the representatives of the Hamburg company intended to set up "a different kind of gas plant. This plant is for the extermination of people, and not for delousing."[268] At that time he still thought of the Jews as the intended victims, but by 1948 the planned victims had become the Slavs.

Mentioning his fictitious meeting with Nebe in Berlin in 1943, von dem Bach-Zelewski, presented another change of perspective, turning the purported intention to build one "gassing establishment" into the construction of "gassing establishments" (*Vergasungsanstalten*, plural!), evidently homicidal ones, and forcibly linking them to Himmler's visit.

For precisely this reason, Reitlinger linked this visit to the stationary gas chambers. From the text published by *Aufbau*, one may in fact reach only one conclusion, so that – from the orthodox Holocaust point of view – the claim that Himmler's visit resulted in the introduction of "gas vans" as a "more humane" method of execution turns out to be utterly unfounded. Von dem Bach-Zelewski's note also renders Reitlinger's interpretation unfounded. These issues will be addressed again in Subchapter 8.1. of Part Two.

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266 TNA, HW 16-32, German Police Decodes Nr 3 Traffic: 12.12.42. ZIP/GPDD 325a/17.12.42.
267 The Auer Company produced gas masks and filters, among other things.
268 NARA, RG 238, M1270/R 1/296, *op. cit.* (note 261), pp. 3f.

As for von dem Bach-Zelewski, his eagerness to collaborate with his U.S. interrogators required him to provide them with more and more "new" information, which forced him to take up, expand, and embellish with much imagination what he had already stated. To give another example, during the interrogation of March 25, 1946, he agreed without hesitation to the suggestions of his interrogator, Captain Seymour Krieger, about the meaning of Heydrich's express letter of September 21, 1939 (see p. 32) and the "Memo on a Conversation with the Führer on 14 December 1941" (see p. 150), in which, in his opinion, reference was made to the extermination of the Jews and to a "decision" that had already been made.[269] Perhaps it was precisely this that gave von dem Bach-Zelewski the inauspicious idea that "that the destruction of the European Jews and the reduction of the Poles by force […] had already been planned before the war by Himmler."[270]

Let us return to Hilberg. Hilberg began to study the subject of the Holocaust at the end of 1948. For an entire year, between 1951 and 1952, he was employed at the Federal Records Center at Alexandria, Virginia, where he studied the German documents seized by the Americans and safeguarded there at Alexandria (In the District Court…, Vol. IV, p. 682). In the preamble to his book, Hilberg stated (Hilberg 2003, Vol. I, p. XII):

> *"My early probing had been concentrated principally on Nuremberg evidence and on stores of captured German records located in the United States at the time."*

From the very start of his career, therefore, he found himself in the most favorable position to track down the pre-trial interrogations of von dem Bach-Zelewski and his hand-written note; why, then, in a matter of such importance, did he content himself with the published text from *Aufbau*?

The matter becomes all the more mysterious when we learn that a sworn statement from von dem Bach-Zelewski, then a prisoner at Nuremberg-Fürth, dated 25 May 1961, was presented at the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem. Regarding Himmler's visit to Minsk, von dem Bach-Zelewski declared:

> *"The people captured by the Nebe Operations Unit were brought before a field court-martial. Himmler himself was present at the executions. Obergruppenführer Wolff and I were also present. He had accompanied Himmler from Baranovichi to Minsk. Himmler was very pale during the executions. I think that watching it made him feel sick. The executions were carried out by shooting with carbines."* (State of Israel…, Vol. V, p. 1963)

If Hilberg may justifiably be accused, at the very least, of contenting himself with a summary of von dem Bach-Zelewski's statement as published in a magazine without bothering to search for the original, which was readily available to him, Richard David Breitman, by contrast, searched for the document. In his study of Himmler, he writes, in fact, that the *Reichsführer* SS

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[269] YVA, O.18-90, pp. 10f.
[270] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

> *"flew on to Baranovichi, where Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski had established his headquarters."* (Breitman 1991, p. 191)

In a footnote, he provides the following reference, among others: "Interrogation of Bach-Zelewski NA RG 238, M-1270/R 1/296" (*ibid.*, fn 20, p. 295), which refers to the pre-trial interrogations mentioned above. He then puts forth a long, rather imaginative historical reconstruction, the essential points of which are as follows (*ibid.*, pp. 194f.):

> *"Himmler's pursuit of execution sites and techniques continued in August. In Minsk he had a meeting with Criminal Police Chief Arthur Nebe.* […]
> *Minsk, like Riga, was soon to become a dumping ground and killing center for German Jews, and Himmler probably wanted to see whether the facilities and the authorities were capable of handling the additional people."*

He then concludes by mentioning the anecdotes invented by *Aufbau* on Himmler's stay in the "Lenin House" at Minsk and the story of the blond Jewish boy with blue eyes (*ibid.*, p. 195, and fn 39f. on pp. 296f.). In this context, he introduces a comical note demonstrating the degree of scrupulousness of these historians (*ibid.*, p. 195):

> *"So Nebe picked out at least one hundred alleged partisans from the city's large jail; all but two were men. (By one account, Himmler told Nebe to seduce the two women before shooting them – in order to get information on what the partisans were planning.)"*

But this "one account" is just the U.S. translation of von dem Bach-Zelewski's hand-written note, mentioned above. In the phrase "*Himmler wohnt einer Exekution von ck.100 Partisanen, darunter auch Juden und 2 Frauen bei, die Nebe vorführen soll, weil Himmler sich ein Bild machen will*," the translator mistakenly read "*verführen,"* to seduce, instead of "*vorführen*," to introduce or present, resulting in the following, which is incomprehensible:[271]

> *"Himmler attends the execution of about 100 partisans, among them also Jews and two women, who are supposed to be seduced by Nebe, because Himmler wants to have a picture of what is going on,"*

while the correct translation is:

> *"Himmler is present at the execution of ca. 100 partisans, among them also Jews and 2 women, whom Nebe was ordered to present* [to him] *so that Himmler could get an idea."*

Therefore, Breitman, instead of checking this senseless translation of von dem Bach-Zelewski's handwritten note, endorsed it and falsified it, adding a fantastic story about the reasons for this presumed "seduction."

In making a fleeting mention of the "mobile gas vans" (Breitman 1991, p. 197), Breitman links the Himmler anecdote to the "extermination camps in the East" (*ibid.*, pp. 198f.). He then mentions Nebe's presumed "experiment" involving the annihilation of mental patients at Minsk using explosives, and then men-

[271] NARA, RG 238, M1270/R 1/296, *op. cit.* (note 261), p. 36.

tions "gas vans" again, but as unrelated events, which are also unrelated to the anecdote in question (*ibid.*, pp. 201f.).

It should be noted that von dem Bach-Zelewski asserted, as reported by *Aufbau*, that the extermination of the Jews "was deliberately planned by Heinrich Himmler already before the war" and that "Himmler consistently worked towards the war in order to carry out his plans" ("Leben…," p. 1). These are senseless assertions to which not even the most obtuse "intentionalist" would subscribe. Then follows the description of the shootings without even giving the year! (*Ibid.*, p. 2)

Connecting the genesis of the "gas vans" or the presumed stationary gas chambers to this anecdote of Himmler's visit to Minsk is therefore a simple fictional narrative which has nothing to do with the writing of history.

6.3. Mathias Beer and the Origins of the "Gas Vans"

In his article cited earlier, Beer summarizes the presumed origins of the "gas vans" as follows (Beer 1987, p. 417):

> *"1. Within four months, on Himmler's orders, a new killing procedure, the gas van, has been developed, in the following temporal sequence:*
> *– 15/16 Aug. 1941 Himmler's order*
> *– 16/18 Sep. Experiments in Minsk and Mogilev*
> *– Beginning of October commission to Office II D 3 a*
> *– 3 Nov. experimental gassing in Sachsenhausen*
> *– End of November and December, deployment of the first vans."*

It is best to examine these various phases individually. Beer honestly admits that the documents referring to the presumed "gas vans" only date back to 1942; therefore, nothing is known of their origins in 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 404):

> *"With the help of written sources, therefore, one can hardly say anything about the time period during which the gas vans must have been developed. The decision-making procedure leading to the construction and deployment of these vehicles is therefore cloaked in obscurity."*

As post-war trial testimonies go, Beer continues, they may be valid historical sources if confirmed by critically verified documentary sources, but since the latter do not exist, "not every question can be satisfactorily answered in this manner either" (*ibid.*). This means that the entire reconstruction of the origins of the "gas vans" outlined by Beer is necessarily conjectural.

Beer inevitably traces the technical development of the "gas vans" to euthanasia, through the intermediary phase of the *"Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen* (*ibid.*, pp. 404f.):

> *"There are eyewitness accounts that report about the use of a hermetically sealed trailer during the evacuation of mental hospitals in Poland in 1939/40, with the words 'Kaisers Coffee Company' painted on it, attached to a tractor unit. Patients are said to have been killed inside the trailer by means of pure carbon monoxide (CO) pumped in from steel bottles. The origins of these vehicles cannot be clarified, precisely because of the lack of documents. There are, however, some indica-*

> *tions of an answer to the question of whether there is any connection between 'Kaiser's Coffee' vans and the gas vans. For this reason, we will first discuss the few accounts that refer to the 'Kaiser's Coffee' vans before discussing the development of the gas vans."*

In reality, the story of the "gas vans" is unfounded from the very start. "*Kaisers Kaffee Geschäft AG*" was a commercial company founded by Josef Kaiser, who introduced coffee roasting into the family's colonial commodities business (*Kolonialwarengeschäft*) managed by his parents, first in hand roasters and later in increasingly larger drums, creating coffee blends which he distributed in his own vehicles. The company, which took on the name "*Kaisers Kaffee Geschäft AG*," in 1899, had over 1,600 subsidiaries in 1939.[272] He owned truck trailers painted with the words "*Kaisers Kaffee Geschäft*," but there is no connection between these vehicles – or painted signs – and the presumed "gas vans"; the only reasonable explanation is that the name in question was a distortion of "*LC-Koffer*." Gerlach supplies one valuable piece of information in this regard:

> *"In the autumn of 1941, the Gaubschat Company from Berlin-Neukölln, later commissioned to build the gas vans, supplied a special vehicle for the Waffen-SS, the so-called 'LC-Koffer,' evidently for military purposes.* […] *The 2nd SS Infantry Brigade had received two 'Opel Blitz' vehicles converted into 'LC-Koffer.' Such vehicles were still being converted into so-called first-generation gas vans in 1941."*

As references, Gerlach cites (Gerlach 1999, p. 648, fn 789):

> *"M. Beer, p. 414; exchange of correspondence between the Gaubschat Company with the RSHA II D 3 from 1942."*

But neither of these two sources concerns "*LC-Koffer*" vehicles, so that these could only be transformed into *"Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen* either accidentally by a misunderstanding or intentionally for propaganda purposes through the assonance between "*Koffer" and "Kaffee."*

The "*LC-Koffer*" vehicle was put into production in 1940 and was described as "a light-weight, rather large closed-panel truck" – a multi-purpose vehicle:

> *"The vehicles were used to some extent as workshop vehicles at the extensive airports near the front, and on some of the vehicles the cargo box was equipped with special devices for the widest variety of purposes of military intelligence for the army and air force. They were of very light-weight panel construction. For this, a light-weight wooden framework with so-called alveolate panels was fashioned clad on both sides with fiberboard."* (Ehrmann, p. 201)

A message intercepted by the British on 4 March 1942 mentions the LC-Koffer in relation with the Gaubschat Company:[273]

> *"OMV de C*
> *Communicate in which inventory list the LC Koffer converted by the GAUBSCHAT Company was entered. Please return inventory entry note by the fastest*

[272] Entry "Kaiser, Josef" in: Historische Kommission…, Vol. 11, p. 43.
[273] TNA, HW 16-17. German Police Decodes Nr 3 Traffic: 4.3.42. ZIP/GPDD 28/6.5.42.

> *means of communication possible. Chassis No. 1921, Motor No. 1850, Chassis No. 1947, Motor No. 1878, Chassis No. 1944, Motor No. 1878. SCHIEVELE VF LTFR II."*

These vehicles, which were also used to transport the wounded, were already equipped with a cargo box, so that they were in no way related to either the *"Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen* (a trailer hitched to a tractor unit), or the vehicles ordered by the RSHA from the Gaubschat Company (chassis upon which cargo boxes were mounted).[274]

Gerlach moreover claims to demonstrate that the "*Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen* really existed and cites two documents, which were still unknown when Beer wrote his article in 1987 (Gerlach 1999, p. 648):

> *"But two recently discovered radio messages show that Bach-Zelewski, only one and three days, respectively, before Himmler's visit to Minsk, requested the* [services of the] *specialist on murder methods using gas, SS* Sturmbannführer *Lange, from the HSSPF in the Wartheland, Wilhlem Koppe, since he wanted to have 'the procedure demonstrated by Lange personally' as soon as Lange 'was free.' Such a demonstration by Lange does not seem to have materialized, because Lange was not available. Perhaps the KTI murder experts were consulted only then, and perhaps Himmler did not assign Nebe with the task of experimenting with new murder methods in the Novinki mental hospital at all, but rather Bach-Zelewski. That Nebe accepted the assignment, has been attested to by several witnesses; that Himmler gave Nebe the assignment directly, only Bach-Zelewski seems to have claimed, who was perhaps attempting to exonerate himself."*

In practice, therefore, von dem Bach-Zelewski is said to have asked Koppe to have Lange carry out a "demonstration" of the presumed "*Kaisers-Kaffee"* van. In reality, however, the alleged importance of the documents mentioned by Gerlach is based on a simple subterfuge aimed at presenting Lange as a "specialist on murder methods using gas" precisely by virtue of the imaginary *"Kaisers-Kaffee"* vans.

The two radio messages in question Gerlach quotes as "Radio messages Bach-Zelewski to Koppe of 16 and 18 Aug. 1941" (*ibid.*, fn 791, p. 648). The first of them states:[275]

> *"DQH de SQF No. 17 1035 104 SQP 6900.*
> *Higher SS and Police leader POSEN.*
> *Request immediate departure of* Hauptsturmführer *LANGE, etc., to BARANOVICHI.*
> *Higher SS and Police leader Center"*

The radio message of 18 August 1941 presents this generic request:[276]

> *"5. DHQ de SQF Nr 2 0930 150 SQP 155*
> *Higher SS and Police leader POSEN.*

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[274] The head of the Sicherheitspolizei and SD II D 3 a (9) B.Nr. 668/42 to the Fahrzeugewerke Gaubschat dated 23 June 1942. NARA, T-175/254, 2747512.

[275] TNA, HW 16-32. German Police Decodes: 16.8.41. ZIP/G.P.D.325/20.8.41, No. 20.

[276] TNA, HW 16-32. German Police Decodes: 18.8.41. ZIP/G.P.D.326/20.8.41, No. 5.

> *Request LANGE be made temporarily available to me once available. I would like the procedure to be demonstrated to me by Lange personally.*
> *Higher SS and Police leader Center* [von dem Bach-Zelewski]*."*

The "procedure" in question could be anything, but was certainly not a *"Kaisers-Kaffee"* van, because in that case von dem Bach-Zelewski would have requested the vehicle itself.

Gerlach's embarrassment with regard to the request by von dem Bach-Zelewski instead of Nebe is obvious, because he is compelled to suppose that Himmler directly entrusted the phantasmagorical mission of finding "more humane killing methods" to Nebe instead of Zelewski. But in this case, he introduces a discordance within the most-commonly credited version of the Holocaust, since Nebe was not only the leader of *Einsatzgruppe* B, but also headed Office V (*Reichskriminalpolizei*) of the RSHA, to which the *Kriminaltechnisches Institut* (KTI, Institute for Criminological Techniques) of the Security Police Sipo was subordinate as Office V D.

It should furthermore be noted that, in the context of Himmler's visit to Minsk, the radio message of 16 August appears incomprehensible from the orthodox point of view. According to von dem Bach-Zelewski's order, in fact, Lange, with his presumed "*Kaisers Kaffee*" van, had to present himself at Baranovichi, but Himmler had left this location on the afternoon of 14 August; on 15 August, von dem Bach-Zelewski was at Minsk, together with the *Reichsführer* SS, who visited a museum in this city the next morning, and then flew to Rastenburg, the Führer's general headquarters (Witte *et al.*, p. 196). Why then did von dem Bach-Zelewski order Lange on 16 August to travel to Baranovichi?

In this context, orthodox Holocaust historiography adduces another document which Longerich presents this way (Longerich 2010, p. 290):

> *"At around the same time, presumably still in October 1941, the mass murder of indigenous Jews began in the district of Konin in the southern Warthegau. In late November, in an 'action' lasting several days, 700 Jews were murdered in gas vans in the Bornhagen (Kozminek) camp in the district of Kalisch. The unit deployed was the 'Sonderkommando' Lange under HSSPF Warthegau Koppe, which had already murdered thousands of inmates of institutions for the mentally ill in the annexed Polish territories in 1939/40 and again in June/July 1941.*
> *In October 1941 Lange's unit had been summoned to Novgorod by Himmler to murder patients in mental institutions there."*

The related reference is "PRO, HW 16/32, 4 Oct. 1941." Due to the person cited (Lange) and the dating, Himmler's request should relate to the "*Kaisers-Kaffee"* van. Nevertheless, the referred-to decryption by the British simply states the following:[277]

> *"20. DHQ de DPJ SQM Nr.7 1345 113 SQP 155. An Höheren SS und Pol.führer POSEN, Gruppenführer GOPPE* [sic].
> *The Sonderkommando is to be sent instantly. The request is to be granted.*

[277] TNA, HW 16-32. German Police Decodes: 4.10.41. ZIP/G.P.D.405/28.10.41.

Signed H. HIMMLER"

There is no mention of *Sonderkommando* Lange, or gas vans, or Novgorod, or mental patients to be killed!

The use of the "*Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen* appears decidedly nonsensical, because the distance from Soldau (present-day Działdowo), the presumed operational headquarters of *Sonderkommando* Lange, to Novgorod is over 900 km as the crow flies; obviously, the distance by road is even longer: who could seriously believe that Himmler would have ordered a similar trip to visit the temporary location of the presumed primitive "gas van" disguised as "*Kaisers Kaffee Geschäft*" to "gas" 100 persons who could easily have been shot by a firing squad?

Returning to Mathias Beer, in his reconstruction of the origins of the "gas vans," he sets forth the orthodox Holocaust theory on euthanasia, which, in the present context, is only important due to the alleged criminal function of the *Kriminaltechnisches Institut* (Beer 1987, p. 405):

> *"By letter dated 1 September 1939, Hitler authorized his attending physician Dr. Karl Brandt and Reichsleiter Philipp Bouhler from the 'Führer's Chancellery' to carry out the 'euthanasia.' The Institute for Criminological Techniques (KTI) in the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) was entrusted with testing appropriate killing procedures; it came to the conclusion that the most suitable was killing with CO. After an experimental gassing with CO was conducted in the former penitentiary at Brandenburg/Havel in early January – mental patients were killed with pure CO in a hermetically sealed room – this procedure also came into use in all other 'euthanasia' institutions. The Führer's Chancellery obtained the necessary CO based on a conversation between Department Heads Brack and Widmann, Head of Department V D 2 (Chemistry and Biology), disguised through the KTI. SS* Untersturmführer *Becker picked up the steel bottles from IG-Farben in Ludwigshafen on orders of Nebe – head of Office V (Combatting Crime) within the RSHA – and delivered it to the individual institutions. SS* Sturmbannführer *Heess, head of the KTI, was also aware of the close relationship between the Chancellery and the KTI."*

This reconstruction, as far as the use of steel cylinders of carbon monoxide for homicidal purposes is concerned, is based *exclusively* on testimonies, which were rather late in coming, it should be noted.[278] But as correctly noted by Beer, justice and historiography pursue different ends; and given the total absence of documents, these judicial testimonies are of a questionable historiographical value. Beer next returns to the *"Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen* (*ibid.*, pp. 405f.):

> *"The 'Kaisers-Kaffee'-Wagen worked on the same principle as the gas chambers in the euthanasia institutions. CO from a steel cylinder mounted on the tractor unit was introduced into the trailer through pipes. Hence, it was a gas chamber on wheels. Eyewitnesses testified that mental patients were killed in such vans by* Sonderkommando *Lange starting in December 1939 in mental hospitals in Pom-*

[278] Beer 1987, fn 14-18, p. 405. The sources are statements made by German defendants between 1959 and 1960 within the context of investigations by the *Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen* at Ludwigsburg.

> *erania, East Prussia and Poland. The name of the* Kommando *was derived from that of its leader, SS* Obersturmführer *and* Kriminalrat *Herbert Lange. The letter from Higher SS and Police Leader Koppe to SS* Gruppenführer *Sporrenberg illuminates the deployment of this* Kommando *in Soldau: 'The so-called* Sonderkommando *Lange, subordinate to me for special tasks, was commandeered to Soldau in East Prussia during the period between 21 May and 8 June 1940 according to the agreement with the Reich Security Main Office, and evacuated 1,558 sick people from the Soldau Transit Camp during this time.'*
>
> *Lange either brought one such van with him from the RSHA (this is indicated by the testimonies of Gustav Sorge and the major role of Group II D, Technical Issues, within the RSHA, in the subsequent development of the gas vans), or he himself had it built in collaboration with the RSHA."*

Beer then expresses his suspicion that Lange had been assigned the task of "conducting practical tests on these vehicles" and added that "*Sonderkommando* Lange was sent off on leave soon after its deployment in Soldau. No information is available as to the deployment of such vans from that time onward" (*ibid.*, p. 406). Beer concludes this discussion with the following observation (*ibid.*):

> *"The exchange of correspondence relating to outstanding payments in connection with the* Sonderkommando *Lange, which extends to February 1941, shows that Himmler was also aware of the whole matter. In Koppe's letter of 22 February 1941 to Karl Wolff, head of the* Reichsführer *SS's personal staff, it states 'that the decision relating to the payment of transport costs would be taken by you* [Wolff] *by order of the* Reichsführer *SS."*

The first document cited by Beer is a letter sent on 18 October 1940 by SS *Obergruppenführer* Wilhelm Koppe, Higher SS and Police leader of the Warthegau, to SS *Gruppenführer* Jakob Sporrenberg, Higher SS and Police leader Northeast. The question of payment, as discussed in the letter dated 22 February 1941, regarded the fact that Koppe had agreed, at the time, with SS *Gruppenführer* Wilhelm Rediess, whom Sporrenberg had succeeded in June 1940, on the payment of 10 RM for the evacuation of each patient, resulting in a total sum of 15,580 RM (NO-2908).

On 7 November 1940, Rediess wrote to Wolff (NO-2909):

> *"The letter of SS* Gruppenfuehrer *Koppe deals with the evacuation of 1,558 mental institution inmates of the provincial institutions of East Prussia. To these must be added, to my knowledge, about 250 to 300 insane persons (Poles) from the area of Zichenau, which has been annexed to East Prussia.*
>
> *At the time in question, on the occasion of an information visit to SS* Gruppenfuehrer *Koppe, I had, after first obtaining the consent of the* Reichsfuehrer *SS, asked to have the Lange detachment put at my disposal."*

This is the context surrounding Koppe's letter to Wolff dated 22 February 1941 as cited by Beer. That letter states, *i.a.* (NO-2911):

> *"In July 1940, I accepted 1558 bothersome persons from the Higher SS and Police leader Northeast for the purposes of accommodation elsewhere. To carry out this agreement with* Gruppenführer *Rediess, it was necessary for a squad from my*

> *office to spend 17 days in East Prussia. My Inspector of the Security Police and the SD, SS* Standartenführer *Damzog, agreed with the Inspector of the Security Police and the SD in Königsberg, SS* Brigadeführer *Rasch,* [upon the sum of] *RM 10 for transport costs and other expenses for every person to be transported away."*

This is followed by a discussion of who was to pay the total sum, which I omit here. Beer presupposes, therefore, even if he does not explicitly say so, that this correspondence is based on a presumed "camouflage language" in which "evacuation" is a "euphemism" for killing (in the specific case, by means of "*Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen*); otherwise, his reference to it would make no sense. Nevertheless, the letter mentioned above explicitly speaks of "accommodation elsewhere" and "transport costs," terms which evidently refer to a real transfer.

This is confirmed by a report titled "The Head of the Security Police and the SD" written in Berlin in February 1943. The day is not indicated, but the protocol stamp reads the 13th. It was addressed "To the SS Judge at the *Reichsführer* SS and Chief of the German Police," while the subject was "Events in the Soldau Transit Camp." The report, written on Himmler's orders ("*auf Weisung des Reichsführers-SS*"), states that on 20 and 23 November 1942 respectively, SS *Unterscharführer* Robert Holdack and SS *Hauptsturmführer* Hans Krause had been arrested. The officers arrested were essentially accused that "under their leadership, the most serious mistreatments and indiscriminate shootings were carried out in the Soldau Transit Camp," in addition to having caused a typhus epidemic through their neglect of sanitary measures, thus claiming 2 SS victims and 4 members of the police. Holdack was accused of participation in acts of mistreatment and shootings, while we read the following about Krause:[279]

> *"SS* Hauptsturmführer *Krause was head of the Soldau Transit Camp from 2 Feb. 1940 until 29 Sep. 1941, in which the inmates were chiefly Poles and Jews. Lithuanians as well as Polish and Jewish resettlers were also transited through the camp."*

That this particular camp was not in the grip of homicidal fury is evident from a letter from the Zichenau/Schröttersburg Office of the Gestapo dated October 1941 (the day is not indicated) reading:[280]

> *"Boruch and Lusek Krziwanowski were shot in the transit camp of the Inspector of the Security Police and the SD in Soldau by order of the Reichsführer SS dated 14 Sep. 41. The dead men's next of kin will be notified that the inmates had died."*

There is also the known case of the Pole named Dzienkelewski, who was arrested on 5 April 1940 and sent to Soldau Transit Camp, whence he was transferred to the Dachau Camp on 18 April.[281]

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[279] The first two pages of the document have been reproduced in facsimile by Datner/Gumkowski/Leszczyński, Doc. 23, pp. 288f.

[280] YVA, O.53-59, p. 85.

[281] *Ibid*., p. 98

A teletype from the Resettler's Central Agency (*Umwandererzentralstelle*) at Lodz dated 17 December 1940 states that Train No. 3143 had arrived the day before "with 1,000 Jews," who received "provisions" "from Soldau"; it then stated that "Train No. 3143, which departed for Biala-Bodlaska (sic) from this station, carried no Poles, but rather Jews (underlined) from Soldau."[282]

The teletype from the "Resettler's Central Agency Poland; Lodz Branch" dated 17 December 1940 mentions the arrival of Train No. 3145 "with 957 Jews" which had also received "provisions" "from Soldau."[283] Another teletype from the same office, sent on 6 December 1940, stated:[284]

> *"According to information from the leader on today's train, Kriminalsekretär Escher from Soldau, the last trains from Soldau should be carrying Jews."*

A "List of transport trains having departed carrying resettled Poles and Jews into the General Government within the framework of the Lithuanian Operation," undated but dating back to a little after 17 December 1940, lists 19 transports between 5 and 17 December, containing 6,687 Poles and 3,259 Jews. These Jews were all evacuated on the last four transports, Trains Nos. 3139, 3141, 3143 and 3145,[285] so that one may reasonably presume that they all passed through the Soldau "transit camp," that is, probably also including the first two not mentioned in the teletypes just quoted (Nos. 3139 & 3141).

In a radio message of September 5, 1941 intercepted by the British, Soldau is even explicitly referred to as a "transit camp".[286]

Therefore, the transit camp was real, just as the evacuations were real, and they fit into a real historical context.

According to the orthodox Holocaust narrative, as laid out by Beer, the presumed transmogrification of *"Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen* into "gas vans" is traced back to Himmler's visit to Minsk (Beer 1987, p. 407):

> *"On 15 and 16 August 1941, Himmler was in Baranovichi and Minsk and observed a shooting operation in the area assigned to* Einsatzgruppe *B. The Higher SS and Police Leader Russia Center present, von dem Bach-Zelewski, reported later that Himmler had been visibly moved. After that, Himmler visited a mental hospital and subsequently instructed the head of* Einsatzgruppe *B, Nebe, to look for ways to end these people's sufferings as quickly as possible, since after his experiences with shootings he had come to the conclusion 'that shooting was not the most humane method of killing.' Nebe was to submit a 'report' on it. Himmler turned to Nebe, since the KTI, which was subordinate to Office V, had already distinguished itself in experimenting with killing procedures within the framework of the 'euthanasia,' so that it was now possible to to have recourse to their experience."*

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[282] YVA, O.53-66, p. 247.
[283] *Ibid.*, p. 272
[284] *Ibid.*, p. 274
[285] *Ibid.*, p. 280
[286] TNA, HW 16-6. Summary of police activities in Russia for the period 11-30 September 1941, p. 9.

Apart from being unfounded from the very start, as I have noted earlier, this interpretation, regarding the reasons for Himmler's request, that is, the search for more-humane killing methods to protect the German perpetrators from suffering "emotional stress," is in contradiction to the directives of a secret order from the *Reichsführer* SS dated 12 December 1941:

> *"It is the sacred duty of senior leaders and commanders personally to ensure that none of our men who have to fulfill this heavy duty should suffer emotional or personal damage thereby. This task is to be fulfilled through the strictest discipline in the execution of official duties, through comradely gatherings at the end of the days which have included such difficult tasks. The comradely gathering must on no account, however, end in the abuse of alcohol. It should be an evening in which they sit and eat at a table, as far as possible in the best German domestic style, with music, lectures and an introduction to the beauties of German intellectual and emotional life to occupy the hour."* (Kwiet, p. 20; emph. added)

If Himmler had already issued the order to Nebe or von dem Bach-Zelewski in August 1941 to search for a more humane killing system than shooting so that no soldier "should suffer emotional or personal damage," why did he then repeat it almost four months later? Perhaps the presumed "gas vans," allegedly deployed since October or November 1941 and of which he – according to the orthodox point of view – must necessarily have been aware, were not suited to this purpose? But then why not mention that fact?

The above-mentioned interpretation moreover exhibits another obvious discrepancy, since the only "humane" killing method practicable in the East at that time, from the orthodox point of view, was the *"Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen*. Since Rediess had requested Koppe to make the *Sonderkommando* Lange available to him, "the whole matter" must have been known to the *Reichsführer* SS as well, as Beer correctly observed, because Rediess had requested Himmler's permission beforehand. Himmler must also have been aware of the claimed use of carbon monoxide as an institutionalized means of killing in euthanasia centers, but then why would he have asked Nebe to look for a different means? And why did Himmler, in his orders to Nebe, not mention the *"Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen* either? In this context, the claim that Himmler gave Nebe permission to perform a killing experiment on mental patients using dynamite, presupposes that Himmler, too, is claimed to have considered the possibility that "dynamite was a better way". But what lunatic could seriously think that blowing up people with explosives was a more-humane method of killing than shooting?

Another flaw in the orthodox Holocaust interpretation is the obvious fact that Himmler completely ignored the matter after the alleged order to Nebe or von dem Bach-Zelewski: He never asked anyone for a report on the new killing method, and no one ever reported to him, since no document has ever been found on the issue.

This story, quite without any objective confirmation, was picked up and embellished in the subsequent years for pseudo-legal and propagandistic purposes. The judiciary was, in effect, placed in the position of filling in the gaps left by

historiography. In this context, particular importance was accorded to the narrative version created by Albert Widmann, a chemist at the KTI, whom Beer uses as an important primary source. Using poetic license, this witness very freely developed the approved themes relating to the presumed orders issued by Himmler over the course of his visit to Minsk, to such an extent, in fact, that its general framework was already in conflict with the above-mentioned themes. Nebe's presumed assignment did not in fact consist of finding a more humane killing system for Jews and partisans, but exclusively for mental patients:[287]

> *"When Nebe was in Russia at the beginning of the Russian Campaign,*[288] *he called Berlin one day. He must have spoken with his deputy, Werner. Back then, Werner asked me to come to him and informed me of Nebe's call. He said I ought to come to Russia immediately on Nebe's orders. Nebe didn't know what to do with some mental patients present in his area. He couldn't ask his men to shoot these incurable mental patients. Nebe spoke of killing the mentally ill with explosives and gas."*

Widmann presents his account as a "sequel" to Himmler's alleged assignment to Nebe on August 15, 1941. From von dem Bach-Zelewski's apologue, he drew the insane reference to killing experiments with explosives, and he embroidered the gassing story with vehicle exhaust.

The story of the explosives is so nonsensical that Beer does not dare repeat it, limiting himself to fleeting reference:

> *"Nebe was also head of Office V within the RSHA. In this capacity, he ordered Widmann to come to Minsk with explosives and two metal pipes in early September."* (Beer 1987, pp. 407f.)
>
> *"When blowing up a bunker in which the mental patients were confined failed to produce the desired results …,"* (*ibid*., p. 408)

Widmann in fact recalled (p. 45):

> *"Werner also mentioned that I should take explosives along to Russia. He also indicated the quantity, namely 250 kg. Werner had the quantity 250 kg from Nebe. Werner also talked about Nebe getting in touch with the air force, so as to find out what quantity would be needed to achieve a corresponding effect using explosives."*

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[287] Interrogation of A. Widmann at Düsseldorf on 11 January 1960. ZStL, 202- AR-Z 152/59, Vol. I, p. 45; subsequent page numbers from there, unless stated otherwise.

[288] This is the only chronological reference in the interrogation. It contains a whole sequence of events in entirely indeterminate chronological succession: "*eines Tages*" "one day" Nebe phoned Berlin; "*damals*" "at that time" Widmann met Werner; "*am Tage danach*" "the day after" he spoke with Hees; it was "*dann*" "then" decided to purchase explosives; another indeterminate day Widmann went to Minsk; here, "*an demselben Abend*" "the same evening" he met Nebe; "*am nächsten Tage*" "the next day" Widmann visited a lunatic asylum in Minsk with Nebe; "*am Nachmittage dieses Tage*" "on the afternoon of this day" he experimented with explosives; "*am nächsten Tag*" "on the next day," Widmann left for Mogilev; "*am anderen Morgen*" "the other morning" Widmann and Nebe visited a lunatic asylum; "*am Nachmittag dieses Tages*" "on the afternoon of this day" preparations were made for the gassing; "am nächsten Morgen" "*the next morning*" the experimental gassing took place. Widmann does not even indicate the month of any of these events in a long sequence!

Already the beginning of this statement is completely unbelievable, because Nebe did not know yet on how many persons he should carry out his experiment with the explosive, and under which conditions. Accordingly, he could not possibly estimate the "corresponding effect using explosives."

Widmann then traveled to the company Westfälisch-Anhaltische Sprengstoff AG and purchased (sic!) not 250, but 400 kg of explosives, just to be prepared in case the first test turned out to be a failure (p. 46). Arriving at Minsk with the explosives, Nebe took him to visit an insane asylum:

> *"On the afternoon of this day, we drove into a forest near Minsk. There was a free area with two dugouts. These dugouts were each an estimated 3 x 6 m in sizes. When we got there, the dugouts were still empty. We then mounted the explosive charges, which were in boxes, and the cables. The boxes with the explosive charges were in the dugouts themselves."* (p. 47)

After describing the preparations for the explosion, Widmann claims that in Minsk he "had found a use for 250 kg [explosives] as planned by Nebe" (p. 48), and that the victims had amounted to "at most 18 mental patients" (p. 51), so that 13.9 kg of explosive had been used for every single person! And this, what is more, was in compliance with Nebe's plan!

The result of the experiment was described as follows by Widmann (p. 51):

> *"During the discussion with Nebe, we came to the conclusion that, although killing by explosives 'proceeds backward,' it was impractical due to the extensive preparation required, not to mention the intensive work in connection with filling in the explosion craters."*

But does this banal conclusion really require the performance of an experiment? And was there really any need to travel to Minsk for the experiment?

Without even counting the fact that Widmann completely forgot the main point, which was whether killing by explosives was more humane than shooting – apart from another subordinate, but not irrelevant questions, such as disposing of the body parts scattered over a wide area by this immense explosion.

A story as senseless as that, without any semblance of credibility, also throws discredit on the story of the experimental gassings at the lunatic asylum at Mogilev, which is just as senseless. Widmann explains that "the facility consisted of several individual buildings," but that one of them was chosen because it contained a "laboratory" and a "treatment room," without "patient halls or rooms." The most suitable area for the experiment was considered to be the "laboratory." Widmann then describes the preparations for the gassing:

> *"On the afternoon of this day, Nebe had the window bricked up and two openings for the gas pipe prepared."*

Widmann continues (pp. 49f.):

> *"The operation was then carried out the next morning.* […] *When we arrive, first, one of the hoses that I had with me in the car was attached. It was connected to a car.* […] *There were stubs of pipes in the holes in the wall, to which the hoses could easily be connected. There were initially no patients in the laboratory. They*

> *were carted in shortly afterwards using a horse-drawn cart. I can only remember one such horse-drawn cart; there may have been room for about 5 or at most 6 patients on this horse-drawn cart, who were brought into the laboratory. When the patients were in the laboratory, the vehicles to which the hoses were connected were kept running on Nebe's order. Nebe went into the building where one could see into the laboratory through a glass window in the door. After 5 minutes Nebe came out again and said that there was no effect that could be determined. Even after 8 minutes he was unable to see any effect, and he asked what should happen now. Nebe and I came to the conclusion that the vehicle was too weak. Nebe subsequently had another hose connected to a personnel van belonging to the ordinary police. Then it only took another few minutes until the people were unconscious. Then the two vehicles were kept running for another 10 minutes."*

The presumed gassing appears crudely improvised. Widmann's tale is rather evasive: into which room did the door with the window open? What were the laboratory's dimensions? What type of engine did the car and the van have? What was their cubic capacity? At which revolutions did they run? What was the engine's load, what was their fuel/air ratio? How were the two "metal tubes" connected to the vehicle's exhaust pipes? All this elementary data is required to draw at least an approximately justified conclusion relating to such an experiment which was, after all, conducted by a scientist from a prestigious national institute. Widmann must have been experienced on how to conduct, record and describe many types of experiments. But the way he describes this one gives the impression that he was either utterly ignorant of how to conduct experiments, or else he had no actual knowledge of what he was describing.

The choice of the location does not seem a lucky one, because the mental patients could easily have broken the "glass windows" in the laboratory door, a possibility which should have been foreseen. And why would Nebe have expected any effect from the exhaust gas of an ordinary automobile after just five minutes, when in the euthanasia centers the presumed gassing with *pure* carbon monoxide in possibly much smaller rooms required 10-15 minutes?[289]

As Widmann describes it, Nebe cannot have had any knowledge of the presumed technique of gassing mental patients in the German euthanasia centers, although as head of Office V of the RSHA and of Office V D, the Forensic Institute of the *Reichskriminalamt*, which was subordinate to him, Nebe is even said to have *developed and tested* (!) the killing system with carbon monoxide in steel cylinders in January 1940, if we follow orthodox Holocaust historiography.

The film, which according to Reitlinger was found in Nebe's Berlin apartment, was included in a U.S. documentary film titled *Nuremberg: Its Lesson for Today* (USA 1947).[290] Klaus Schwensen has given a general overview on this topic, to which I refer (Schwensen 2013a, esp. pp. 106-109). He posits that the

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[289] Morsch/Perz, p. 105: Grafenek, 15 minutes; p. 123, Hartheim, 10-15 minutes; p. 146, Hadamar, 10 minutes.

[290] Steven Spielberg Film and Video Archive, USHMM, RG-60.2416, Tape 67 [Nuremberg, 111 M 7596 USHM Tape 67], https://www.ushmm.org/online/film/display/detail.php?file_num=2151.

film was shot by Soviet propagandists, based mainly on the fact that the various shadows cast require the scene to be illuminated by professional spotlights. Further considerations will be made here. The film, which lasts only 33 seconds, first shows a log cabin, which is unrelated to the following images. These depict two themes: the alleged victims and the alleged gassing system. In the first scene, a horse-drawn wagon without side panels transports five healthy-looking adults dressed in what appear to be white pajamas. In the second scene, a similar cart is parked against a wall, and two people in white coats, a man and a woman, help a naked, extremely emaciated man out of the cart and cover him with a blanket; behind him stand two children, one of them also naked, and another person lying on the cart is wrapped in a blanket by the man in the white coat. In the background, a soldier looks on.

The third scene shows a brick wall in front of which there is a sedan with the license plate Pol-28545, of which only the rear with an open trunk lid can be seen; next to it is the left edge of a truck with the license plate Pol-51628. A pipe, apparently made of metal, comes out from under the sedan, runs over a stand, then bends about 90° toward a brick wall in the background, and then runs upward to a height of about 180 cm (about 25 brick rows from the ground), where the pipe enters the wall after bending about 90°. A second, thinner pipe comes diagonally from the direction of the truck, and joins a thicker pipe after about 40 cm. This winds partly out of the picture like a hose, then reappears at ground level and runs parallel to the other pipe up the wall, then enters the wall at the same height at a distance of about 50-60 cm from the other pipe.

The first thing to note is that the three scenes have no relation to each other. They do not contain any common detail that would indicate that they were taken at the same location or during the same time period. They are obviously completely different scenes that have been artificially spliced together. In order to create the impression of a continuity, the middle scene of the emaciated persons was inserted between two scenes with vehicles.

Secondly, it is remarkable that the gassing system is shown at all. At this point, one must ask why the film was made. From an orthodox point of view, the only plausible explanation is that the film was intended for the RSHA, in particular for the Institute for Criminological Techniques, so that it could evaluate the experiment with regard to the functioning of the "exhaust gas chamber". The film was thus intended to illustrate "the working of a gas chamber," as Reitlinger erroneously wrote, but it illustrates absolutely nothing: the interior of the "gas chamber" is not shown, the entrance to the "gas chamber" does not appear, the entry of the "sick" into the "gas chamber" is not seen, nor are their corpses. Thus, the film has no documentary value (because then it would have documented the above-mentioned essential aspects), but a exclusively propagandistic value.

It is most likely a Soviet "re-enactment" of events alleged by "eyewitnesses" before Soviet commissions of inquiry. Beer refers in this regard to a Soviet witness from 1946 (Beer 1987, p. 408):

> *"The event described* [by Widmann] *is also referred to in the testimony of the Russian physician N.N. Akimova of November 18, 1946, which gives September 18 as the date of the experiment."*

Akimova, who had worked as a doctor at the Novinki Psychiatric Hospital, had appeared as a witness at the Minsk Trial, which took place from 15 to 29 January 1946. A Soviet newspaper from that time summarized her testimony as follows:[291]

> *"On November 5, 1941, she reports, some cars with gendarmes and policemen arrived at the hospital. They ordered 200 sick people* [bol'nykh] *to be put in a bath* [v banyu] *in the hospital. When the doors were closed, the gendarmes connected generators* [generatory automashini] *to the bathroom via pipes and started the engines. The bathroom quickly filled with gas, and the patients died. 100 mentally ill people* [dushevnobol'nykh] *were shot."*

On November 18, 1946, Akimova made a statement in which she changed her story. The mentally ill had been killed in two phases. "The first time the sick were gassed, the second time the remaining sick were shot". At that time, the "colony" had included about 300 patients (Ebbinghaus/Preissler, p. 88). On September 18, the following occurred (*ibid.*, p. 89):

> *I* […] *met* […] *the colony's second physician, Doctor Kitayevich. He was terribly agitated and told me that about half an hour before my return an SS police officer accompanied by a chemist had come to the colony and had ordered Doctor Kitayevich. to prepare 20 sick people as test subjects to check the effect of some gas. It was ordered to take the sick people to the washroom, which was located in the colony, and to take all the inhabitants from the colony grounds to their residences.*
>
> *Together with Doctor Kitayevich, I went to the bath room, next to which trucks and passenger cars were parked. Next to the vehicles, the German who had claimed to be a chemist, was handling* [something]. *From one vehicle, a hose led to the door of the bath. From the window of the bath, another pipe led to the generator of a second vehicle. The bath was hermetically sealed, there were some sick people in it.*
>
> *After half an hour the Germans opened the doors of the bath and began to throw the bodies onto the vehicles.*

The witness asserted that "on that day" 120 chronically ill people were killed: those who were not gassed were shot. But immediately afterwards she added: "In this way, 200 sick people were killed the first time" (*ibid.*, p. 90). On November 5, 1941, the remaining sick were shot (*ibid.*, p. 91).

The contradictions with her testimony at the Minsk Trial are obvious: the date of the alleged gassing (here 5 November, there 18 September 1941) and the number of victims (first 200, then 20).

Even more glaring are the contradictions with regard to Widmann's testimony and especially with regard to the "reconstruction" of the alleged events as com-

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[291] *Izvestija Sovjetov deputatov trudjaščikhsja SSSR*, 20 January 1946, No. 18, p. 5.

piled in the 15 September 1967 verdict of the Stuttgart Jury Court sentencing Widmann (*ibid*., pp. 87f.). According to Widmann and the Stuttgart Court, the "gassing" was supposed to have been carried out in the "laboratory room" and not in the "wash room" or "bath room" or "bath" of the asylum, as Akimova claimed. According to Widmann, the window of this room was bricked up, and the gassing took place only "the next morning" by means of two pipes running through the wall into the "laboratory room," whereas Akimova insisted that one pipe ran through the door of the bathroom, while the other went through the window.

The number of victims, according to Widmann, was "5 or at most 6 [mental] patients," while according to Akimova there should have been 20 or 200. The Stuttgart verdict also said: "To be on the safe side, the gassing room was kept sealed for 1-2 hours.," but according to Akimova the process was over "after half an hour". According to Widmann, the pipes were connected to the exhaust pipes of two vehicles, but in Minsk, Akimova spoke cryptically of "generators"!

It is clear that the "gassing" myth was still in its infancy in 1946, but the idea was good propaganda material and was later recognized as an indisputable "self-evident fact" by German prosecutors, and consequently in the testimonies of defendants like Widmann.

Gerlach mentions another testimony (Gerlach 1999, p. 648):

> *"According to the head of the clinic in Mogilev, on one day about 500 to 600 sick people – all of them 'unfit for work', among them Jews – were murdered within about 13 hours by feeding exhaust gases from several cars or trucks through hoses into a sealed room."*

As a source he cites the interrogations of a certain "A.N.S." from 20 July 1944 and December 24, 1948 (*ibid*., FN 795).

Since the film in question dates from 1947, as mentioned earlier, the Soviet propagandists already had the script for this film.

The fact that the film shows only five actors, while Soviet witnesses spoke of hundreds of victims, can be explained by the difficulties inherent in a scene with hundreds of victims, since such a large number of people would have forced the cameraman, among other things, to widen the field of view considerably, making details in the foreground too small and thus hardly recognizable, such as the brick wall into which the two pipes led. The same applies to the two vehicles, of which only the rear half (the car) or only a small section (the truck) are shown, because both vehicles were war relics (war booty), the fronts of which may have been in poor condition.

Another important point to clarify is the strange correspondence between the scenes in the film and some of Widmann's statements. While the film initially shows five people on a horse-drawn wagon, Widmann spoke of "5 or at most 6 patients on this horse-drawn cart," and the film scene with a car and a truck, each with a metal pipe leading from the vehicles' back (presumably the exhaust pipe)

through a brick wall, matches what Widmann elaborated on. Does this confirm that Widmann was telling the truth? Not necessarily.

Beer, referring to the above quotation from G. Reitlinger, does not speak of a film, but erroneously of "negatives" found in Nebe's house, and adds (Beer 1987, FN 36, p. 408):

> *"According to E. J. Else, dispatcher of the K Squadron of the 1st Company, Police Battalion 3, the truck recognizable in one of the pictures belonged to his vehicle fleet. Statement of 13 December 1962, Public Prosecutor's Office Frankfurt upon Main* [...]*"*

It can therefore be stated with certainty that the German judiciary were already in possession of photographic sequences of the film in 1962 and showed them to the witnesses they questioned. In those years, a crude photomontage was also created showing the image of the two pipes connected to the vehicles and, inserted into it, the interior of the morgue of Crematorium I of Auschwitz (Friedländer 1967, photo outside text), a hoax that I denounced already in 1988 (Mattogno 1988, p. 32, and Doc. 12, unpaginated).

It is not likely that, nineteen years after the alleged event, Widmann could have remembered the details he described in his 1960 testimony. The most-obvious explanation is that he, too, was shown the photographic sequences of the film and did nothing more than put these images into his own words and pass them off as his memories, but this did not prevent him from making some mistakes.

The two pipes in the film have such bends that they could not have been hoses, as Widmann claimed, but only pipes made of metal; all the bends, even the most accentuated ones, are smooth, without constrictions, which makes one think of lead pipes. The shorter pipe, the one connected to the car, is estimated to be three meters long; the other is much longer, probably about five meters. It is very hard to believe that Widmann would have brought such bulky lead pipes from Berlin, and why two of them? It is even harder to believe that these two pipes were transported in an ordinary passenger car. Widmann stated in this regard:

> *"When we arrived, first, one of the hoses that I had with me in the car was attached. It was connected to a car. Whether it was one of the cars Schmidt and I brought along, I don't know anymore."*

Regarding gassing in general, Widmann stated (p. 46):

> *"He also talked with Heess*[292] *about the use of gas for the killing of mental patients, particularly about the fact that transporting CO bottles to Russia was impossible. I assume that Heess had already spoken with Nebe about this earlier. It must have been around the time when Nebe – as Heess informed me at that time – had fallen asleep in the garage in his car with its engine running and had almost died, if one were to believe his tales. Since transporting gas bottles to Russia was not possible, it was discussed with Heess that the killing of mental patients was to*

[292] Walter Heeß, director of the KTI.

> *be carried out with exhaust gas. Two metal hoses were then purchased, which I then also took with me on my journey."*

Since this is about mental patients, the most obvious killing system, from the orthodox point of view, would have been the one allegedly used in German euthanasia centers, that is, gassing by means of bottled CO in stationary chambers or by way of *"Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen.*

In 1960, when Widmann testified, the orthodox narrative in this regard had solidified and was well established, so he was well advised to stick to this storyline. (Gerlach notes, by the way, that "the operations in Minsk and Mogilev are often confounded and merged into one"; Gerlach 1999, p. 649), although it was quite nonsensical in such a context, therefore, to save himself, Widmann took recourse to an equally banal subterfuge: he peremptorily declared, at least twice, that the transport of CO cylinders to Russia was "impossible" (or "not possible"). This assertion has no technical or logistical justification.[293] Its sole purpose was to exclude the possibility of using "gas chambers" at Minsk identical to those at the euthanasia institutes or in particular the *"Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen*. It should be noted that, regarding this vehicle, which was mobile by definition, the above-mentioned logistical impossibility sounds even more absurd.

But how can the introduction of the "innovation" of exhaust gas from a motor as a method of killing be explained, which subsequently assumes an essential importance in the economy of the "extermination camps" of *Aktion* Reinhardt? Widmann's answer is ludicrously ridiculous: Nebe had fallen asleep in his garage, in his car, with the motor running, risking death by asphyxiation, and this is what gave him the idea of the new killing system! In this way, Widmann was compelled to depict Nebe as a phenomenal imbecile, but at least he supplied orthodox Holocaust historiography or at least judiciary "historiography" with the fundamental element it needed: the missing link between the bottled-CO "gas chambers" of the euthanasia institutes and the engine-exhaust "gas chambers" of the camps at Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka.

But even this account exhibits a basic incongruity: since the experimental killing system for mental patients "by exhaust gas" was decided upon from the very beginning within the context of the KTI (so much so that Widmann took "two metal hoses" with him to Minsk), how can one believe the Nebe anecdote about the garage? From this point of view, in fact, the first such gassing experiment would have been planned and carried out by the KTI in Berlin or in another locality of the Reich.

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[293] Beer reports that Widmann, in his interrogation on 27 January 1959, mentioned "the great distances in the Soviet Union as an obstacle to the transport of CO bottles" (Beer 1987, fn 42, p. 409), but this also applied to both Nebe's very experiments, which were incomprehensibly conducted at Minsk instead of in the Reich, and for which transporting 400 kg of highly dangerous explosive is said to have been no problem at all. The great distances also applied to the "gas vans," which had to travel immense distances. As we have seen above, the "*Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen* are said to have been sent, according to Longerich, from Soldau to Novgorod, over 900 km as the crow flies.

Turning back to Beer, he draws this conclusion from the tall tales told by Widmann (Beer 1987, pp. 408f.):

> *"The two experiments made it clear to Nebe that only the idea of killing with the help of exhaust gas – an idea very probably originating with him – was practicable. But the Einsatzgruppen, for which the new, 'more-humane' killing procedure was to be devised, could not use a stationary gas chamber, in which men could be killed with exhaust gas. In order to be able to carry out their mission, they had to be mobile. Based on these considerations and previous experience the plan evolved within the KTI of building gas vans. Nebe and Heess submitted such a proposal to their superior, Heydrich, head of the Security Police and the SD."*

As I have mentioned above, the presumed explosives experiment, even in its absurdity, was without doubt much more inhumane than shooting, but then why did Nebe carry it out, and what's more, even with Himmler's consent? On the other hand, seen from the orthodoxy's point of view, the most-humane killing method requested by Himmler necessarily had to be mobile, since it concerned Jews and partisans who had to be killed by the *Einsatzgruppen*. But then what was the purpose of the stationary gassing experiment in the mental hospital at Mogilev?

Beer tries to resolve the discrepancy between the orthodox Holocaust narrative on one hand, which I have laid out earlier and which concerns the circle of presumed victims of Himmler's order: partisans and Jews according to von dem Bach-Zelewski, a line followed by all orthodox historians (according to the text published by *Aufbau*: "partisans and their supporters, up to a third or half of whom were Jews"), yet on the other hand the mentally ill according to Widmann. The verdict of the Stuttgart Jury Court of 15 September 1967 in the trial against Widmann stated in no uncertain terms (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 550):

> *"Himmler had ordered him* [Nebe] *to find another method of killing the mentally ill."*

It is evident that the first group of victims required a mobile "gas chamber," while the second required a stationary "gas chamber," modeled after the euthanasia institutes, which are said to have been developed subsequently right there in Galicia.

Thomas Sandkühler mentions a correspondence between district physician Dr. Wilhelm Dopheide and Undersecretary Herbert Linden over the period of 28 November-17 December 1941, which is said to contain a request for "Personnel for a killing operation" for 1,200 mental patients from the psychiatric hospital at Lvov-Kulparków. Over the same period, according to him, "preparations were apparently made for another extermination center in a hospital or mental asylum, Novinki, in Byelorussian Mogilev" (Sandkühler, p. 159, and fn 136, p. 499).

It is worth pointing out in passing that the necessity for stationary gas chambers for mentally ill people is not evident at all, since the *Einsatzgruppen* regularly shot mentally ill people – for example, 632 at Minsk in early October 1941 according to EM No. 108 dated 9 Oct. 1941 (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 663).

Returning to Beer, since he sticks to the first prospect, his recourse to Widmann's story is inconsistent, because, faced with the problem of how to experiment with a *mobile* gas chamber, Nebe experimented with a *fixed* gas chamber. In this context, the only Holocaustically consistent solution would have been the use of a *"Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen* at Minsk. There are other incongruities, in particular relating to the location of the experiments: what need was there to travel the 1,150 kilometers from Berlin to Minsk with 400 kg of explosives and various pipes in tow in order to conduct experiments that could have been performed right there on the territory of the Reich at any gun range or euthanasia center or concentration camp?

Beer claims that, in October 1941, Heydrich turned to SS *Obersturmführer* Walter Rauff, head of Group II D 3, Technical Issues, whose department (*Referat*) II D 3a Motor Transportation of the Security Police was directed by SS *Hauptsturmführer* Friedrich Pradel, who

> *"gave* [Harry] *Wentritt* [head of the repair office at Referat II D 3 a] *the order to verify whether it was possible to introduce exhaust gas into the closed cargo box of a vehicle. After Wentritt had answered this question in the affirmative, Pradel forwarded the positive answer to Rauff, and received the order to get into contact with Heess. The latter explained to him how such a vehicle was to be modified and how it should function. On Rauff's order, Pradel and Wentritt then visited the Gaubschat Company in Berlin-Neukölln, which specialized in the manufacture of cargo boxes, where they pretended that they needed vehicles for the transport of bodies of victims of typhus epidemics."* (Beer 1987, p. 410)

There is no documentation on the relations between the RSHA and the Gaubschat Company in 1941. The first accessible document is a letter dated 27 April 1942 headed "*Reichssicherheitshauptamt II D 3 a (9) No. 668/42-121*" which has as its subject "Fast-unloading device for the special vehicles."[294] The letter, headed "*Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD II D 3 a (9) B. No. 668/42*" and dated 23 June 1942, explicitly mentions the original letter from the RSHA:[295]

> *"Acc. to case II D 3 a –1737/41– 30 special coachworks for the delivered chasses have been ordered from the Gaubschat Company. 20 vehicles have already been completed and delivered.*
> *The last 10 chasses have now been delivered and are to be equipped with coachworks."*

Thus, from the case number 1737/41 it can be deduced that some documentation for 1941 also existed, but has not been produced: perhaps it was lost, but perhaps it contained information on the true nature of the "special vehicles," therefore it may have been conveniently made to disappear.

Hardly was the first truck ready – continues Beer, always basing himself on simple testimonies during court proceedings – was it brought to the office of *Referat II D 3 a*, where it was converted into a "gas van" by connecting the exhaust

[294] NARA, T-175/254, 2747517.
[295] NARA, T-175/254, 2747512.

pipe to a pipe entering the vehicle's cargo box. This "gas van" was then brought to the KTI, where samples of exhaust gas taken from the vehicle's cargo box were analyzed.

> *"A short time afterwards, a test gassing was carried out in Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp (where the KTI had a workshop), at which, apart from Heess and the two chemists Leiding and Hoffmann, also a few SS Officers participated. Widmann did not participate."* (Beer 1987, p. 411)

Thus was constructed and accepted the prototype of the "gas vans," if we follow Beer's narrative. As for the use of these vehicles, he claims (*ibid.*, p. 412):

> *"If we assume the period of time elapsing from the date of the test gassing in Sachsenhausen, plus the necessary vehicle conversion time of approximately eight to fourteen days, as well as the time required to bring the vehicle to the deployment location, the result is that the first gas vans could not have been in use any earlier than late November or early December 1941. The first use of a gas van has been proven to have occurred in the area of operation of Einsatzgruppe C involving Sonderkommando 4 a in Poltava. According to eyewitnesses, a gas van was used there in the killing of Jews in November 1941."*

Nothing in this reconstruction is documented: the experimental gassing at Mogilev, the conversion of a truck into a "gas van," the experimental gassing at Sachsenhausen, the first use of gas vans, all this is "proven" by means of simple "eyewitness testimony."

As for the first presumed use of a "gas van" at Poltava, Beer's claim is rather pretentious, since absolutely none of all this can be proven here either: as always, everything is a matter of post-war testimony. And even worse for Beer: the documents clearly refute these unfounded claims.

In EM No. 156, dated 16 January 1942, *Einsatzgruppe* A provides a detailed summary of the events at Poltava (Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, p. 98):

> *"Activity of Partial Unit SK 4a in Poltava: The Partial Squad Poltava of the SK 4a took over the processing of the cases left behind by the SK 4b on 17 Nov. 1941. Together with the militia established in Poltava, future collaboration with the SD, the Secret Military Police, the Field Gendarmerie, Security Police and Headquarters East was discussed at a conference. The so-called political division with the Ukrainian militia in Poltava was dissolved in this connection. During the period leading up to 20 Nov. 41, a whole series of transferred Communists were interrogated, most of whom were shot. A large-scale Jewish operation occurred on 23 Nov. 41, after the Jewish population was called upon to register in a bill-posting action the day before. During that operation, a total of 1,538 Jews were <u>shot</u>. The accumulated items of clothing were given to the mayor of Poltava, who gave particular consideration to the ethnic Germans in distributing the clothing."* (Emph. added)

Therefore, regarding the first alleged use of a "gas van," SK 4a not only made *no* reference to this extraordinary event at all, but explicitly stated that all the victims were "<u>shot</u>," not "gassed"!

In conclusion, orthodox Holocaust historiography has absolutely nothing to say about the origins of the "gas vans" in documentary terms.

The presumed "experimental gassing" at Sachsenhausen is another fictitious event artificially created in this imaginary chain of events; over the course of the trial of this camp's former commandant, Anton Kaindl, and other 15 defendants, held in communist East Berlin in 1947, there was talk of two "gas vans," which were said to have been used as early as October 1941 for the presumed mass extermination of Soviet prisoners of war (Sigl, pp. 30f., 121f.; cf. Mattogno 2016b, pp. 161f.). These were considered a common practice as early as October 1941, and no one knew of the presumed "experimental gassing," which is therefore a mere pseudo-historiographical expedient.

As noted by Friedrich Paul Berg, gas-generating devices fueling vehicles with so-called "producer gas" were in common use in many European countries in the years between the two world wars and in particular during World War II. In Germany, these vehicles were called "*Generatorgaswagen*" or simply "*Gaswagen*," which back then was an innocuous term that is today almost exclusively used to describe homicidal gas vans. Although producer gas, whether created from wood or coal, produces an extremely toxic gaseous mixture very rich in CO – from 18 to 35%, while the CO emitted by a gasoline engine reaches 12% at most – strangely, it does not appear from the eyewitness testimonies that the KTI ever thought of using these vehicles for homicidal purposes (Berg/Rudolf, pp. 463-466).

6.4. Number and Distribution of the "Gas Vans"

As I mentioned above, there seems to be no documentation on the relations between the RHSA and the Gaubschat Company in 1941. The only document produced relates to 1942 and forms part of File R 58/871 f°1 from the German Federal Archives in Koblenz, which are available on microfilm also in the U.S. National Archives in Washington, D.C.

As mentioned earlier, the first document in the series is a letter dated 27 April 1942 headed "*Reichssicherheitshauptamt II D 3 a (9) No. 668/42-121*" with the subject "Fast-unloading device for the special vehicles."[294]

The letter, dated 30 April, which bears the same heading, concerns "Delivered 10 Saurer Chassis" and contains the following order:[296]

> *"As already discussed, a change of the floor grate of the above-mentioned vehicles is to be implemented."*

The answer from the Gaubschat Company dated 14 May, states:[297]

> *"We confirm receipt of your letter of the 30 of the previous month with which you inform us about a change to the 10 yet to be delivered vehicles of the above order."*

[296] NARA, T-175/254, 2747524.
[297] NARA, T-175/254, 2747526.

The already-mentioned letter headed "*Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD II D 3 a (9) B. No. 668/42*" and dated 23 June 1942 explicitly refers to the original letter from the RSHA:[295]

> *"Acc. to case II D 3 a –1737/41– 30 special coachworks for the delivered chassis have been ordered from the Gaubschat Company. 20 vehicles have already been completed and delivered.*
> *The last 10 chassis have now been delivered and are to be equipped with coachworks."*

The response from the company, received very late (18 September 1942), confirms acceptance of the order:[298]

> *"We confirm receipt of your letter of the 23rd of the current month with which you refer to the negotiation between your technical Senior Secretary a. Pr. Sukkel and our Mr. Ernst and Krieger.*
> *As an exception we are now prepared to engineer the remaining 10 vehicles while taking into account the seven points listed in your letter of the 23rd of this month."*

The estimated cost was 4,051.85 RM per vehicle. On 24 September, the Gaubschat Company informed RSHA:[299]

> *"We now intend to take into manufacture the remaining vehicles from the above order."*

Three certain facts may be deduced from this correspondence:

1. The original order from the RSHA to the Gaubschat Company of 1941 provided for the construction of 30 special vehicles.
2. By 23 June 1942, 20 special vehicles had already been built and consigned by the company.
3. The remaining 10 vehicles, on 24 September 1942, had not yet been placed in production.

It is not known whether or not these 10 vehicles were ever built and consigned to the RSHA and, it appears, no orthodox Holocaust historian has ever even bothered to raise the question.

As reported by Beer, the 6 "gas vans" from the first series (trademark name "Daimond" [*Diamond*] and Opel-Blitz) were presumably distributed at the end of 1941: one to *Einsatzgruppe* C, one to *Einsatzgruppe* D, two "Diamond" vans came to Riga, and two vans were sent to the Chełmno Camp (Beer 1987, pp. 413f.). The whole story is once more based on mere postwar trial declarations.

For 1942, from the very few documents adduced by orthodox Holocaust historiography, PS-501 and the Activity and Situation Report of *Einsatzgruppe* B for the time period 16 to 28 February 1942, dated 1 March 1942, supposing that they are authentic and have been interpreted correctly, the following distribution may be deduced:

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[298] NARA, T-175/254, 2747515.
[299] NARA, T-175/254, 2747516.

– 2 Saurer vehicles to *Einsatzgruppe* B between 16 and 28 February 1942; it already had two "smaller gas vans."
– 2 Diamond vehicles and 1 Saurer vehicle to *Einsatzgruppe* B before 15 June 1942.
– 1 Saurer vehicle promised to *Einsatzgruppe* B for mid-July 1942.
– 1 Saurer vehicle assigned to *Einsatzgruppe* B on 13 July 1942,[300] which is probably that mentioned in the previous point.

In the best of cases, the documents attest to 2 Diamond "gas vans" and 4 Saurer: 6 "gas vans" out of at least 26. There is no information at all about the remaining 20 vehicles. The question greatly concerns orthodox Holocaust historians, who make aggressive use of trial testimony without any objective confirmation in attempts to supply even the semblance of an answer.

The "gas vans" are said to have been developed essentially in order to facilitate the massacre activities of the *Einsatzgruppen*, to whom they had been delivered precisely for this purpose. According to Beer, of the six presumed "gas vans" from the "first series" (Diamond trademark) built in 1941, one was assigned to *Einsatzgruppe* C, one to *Einsatzgruppe* D, and two to Chełmno (Beer 1987, p. 413); in addition to which another thirty "gas vans" from the "second series" (Saurer trademark) are said to have been assigned in 1942, twenty of which are said to have been consigned in April (*ibid.*, p. 415), one at Chełmno, and the remainder were evidently delivered to the *Einsatzgruppen*.

It should be noted that the *Einsatzgruppen* have left an enormous quantity of documents on their activities. The "*Ereignismeldungen UdSSR*" amount to "more than 2,900 typewritten pages" (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 333). To these should be added the other hundreds of pages of the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories" and the "Activity and Situation Reports of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the Security Police and the SD in the USSR." In addition to these three series, there are extremely numerous individual documents. Notwithstanding all this, in this documentation, the "gas vans" are never even mentioned (with the sole exception mentioned earlier), and not one single victim ever appears to have been killed with a "gas van." As far as one can tell, no one has ever tried to address and solve this enormous contradiction.

Richard Headland tries to eliminate this problem with a tenuous explanation (Headland, p. 58):

> *"The gas vans were not specified in the Operational Situation Reports or the Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories as a means of killing people. The numbers killed by this method were thus part of the summary figures for this period in the reports."*

He returns to this question later (*ibid.*, p. 102):

[300] As may be deduced from the license-plate number, it belonged to the series sent to *Einsatzgruppe* B in February 1942.

> *"Gas vans were also not mentioned in the Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories, nor is it possible to ascertain to what extent these numbers may or may not have been subsumed in the fragmentary later figures available."*

Hence, the "gas vans" do not appear in the documents, but they existed anyway, and their gassing victims are included in the general number of people shot by the individual *Einsatzgruppen*!

Shmuel Spector's 1983 contribution "*Tötungen in Gaswagen hinter der Front*" ("Killings in the Gas Vans behind the Front" in the 1993 English edition), although a bit dated, is still very important for orthodox Holocaust historiography concerning the question of the use of "gas vans" by the *Einsatzgruppen*. I shall therefore begin my discussion of this aspect of the matter with Spector.

6.5. The Use of "Gas Vans" in the *Einsatzgruppen* Operational Zones

6.5.1. The *Reichskommissariat Ostland*

6.5.1.1. Jewish Deportations from the Reich to Byelorussia in 1942

Einsatzgruppen A and B were active in the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* subject to the authority of the commander of the Security Police and the SD (*Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD,* BdS) of the East, with headquarters at Riga.

Spector begins by asserting:

> *"In the middle of December 1941, three gas vans were brought from Berlin to Riga and put at the disposal of the BdS of the Eastern Territories. There were two small Diamond vans and one large Saurer van."* (Spector 1993, p. 57)

He documents this statement with recourse to two testimonies, rendered at the end of the 1950s/early 1960s, by two alleged drivers, Karl Gebl and Erich Gnewuch (*ibid.*):

> *"At the beginning of 1942 they were dispatched with two gas vans to the commander of the BdS regional office for Byelorussia, located in Minsk and known, like the other regional offices, by the initials KdS."*

I have explained at length elsewhere, and Beer confirms this, that post-war sworn statements entirely without documentary or physical confirmation, even if produced for trial purposes, have no value from the historiographic point of view (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 62-83). Recourse to such "proof" is therefore entirely unsubstantial.

Spector next relies on a teletype dated 15 June 1942, with a temporal hop of one half year. This teletype was included by the Americans assigned to select German documents for trial purposes in the series of documents classified as PS-501. Santiago Alvarez, who has analyzed it, considers it a probable forgery (Alvarez/Marais, pp. 58f.). I shall give the original text and the official American translation:

"Betrifft S. – Wagen. –
– Beim Kommandeur der Sipo u.d. SD Weissruthenien trifft wöchentlich ein Judentransport ein, der einer Sonderbehandlung zu unterziehen ist.
Die 3 dort vorhandenen S-Wagen reichen für diesen Zweck nicht aus. Ich bitte um Zuweisung eines weiteren S-Wagen (5 Tonnen). Gleichzeitig wird gebeten, für die vorhandenen S- Wagen (2 Diamond, 1 Saurer) noch 20 Abgasschläuche mitzusenden, da die vorhandenen bereits undicht sind. = = "[301]
"Subject: S-Vans
A transport of Jews, which has to be treated in a special way, arrives weekly at the office of the commandant of the Security Police and the Security Service of Byelorussia.
The 3 S-vans there are not sufficient for that purpose. I request assignment of another S-van (5-tons). At the same time I request the shipment of 20 exhaust-gas hoses for the three S-vans on hand (2 Daimond [sic], *1 Saurer), since the ones on hand are leaky already."*[302]

The signer was SS *Hauptsturmführer* Hans Trühe, head of the Supplies Department at the BdS at Riga. If the document is authentic and if it refers to "gas vans," the text is incorrect and makes no sense.

It should first of all be noted that the reference to the "transport of Jews" arriving "weekly" refers to transports which at that time arrived in Minsk, Byelorussia, from the Reich. In 1942, until 25 September, the transports were as follows:

Table 23

TRAIN	DEPARTURE	DEPORTEES	ARRIVAL/ DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	KILLED AT LEAST*
Da 201	Vienna	1,000	11/5/1942	Minsk	900
Da 202	*Vienna*	*1,000*	*12/5/1942*	*Minsk*	
Da 203	Vienna	1,000	26/5/1942	Minsk	900
?	*Reich*	*998*	*26/5/1942*	*Minsk*	
Da 204	Vienna	998	1/6/1942	Minsk	900
Da 205	Vienna	999	5/-9/6/1942	Minsk	900
Da 206	Vienna	1,000	15/6/1942	Minsk	900
Da 207	*Vienna*	*1,000*	*16/6/1942*	*Minsk*	
Da 208	*Vienna*	*1,000*	*23/6/1942*	*Minsk*	
Da 40	Königsberg	465	26/6/1942	Minsk	400
Da 209	*Vienna*	*1,000*	*30/6/1942*	*Minsk*	
Da 210	*Vienna*	*1,000*	*7/7/1942*	*Minsk*	
Da 211	*Vienna*	*1,000*	*14/7/1942*	*Minsk*	
Da 220	Theresienstadt	1,000	18/7/1942	Minsk	900
Da 212	*Vienna*	*1,000*	*21/7/1942*	*Minsk*	
Da 219	Cologne	1,000	24/7/1942	Minsk	900
Da 213	*Vienna*	*1,000*	*28/7/1942*	*Minsk*	
Da 221	*Theresienstadt*	*1,000*	*28/7/1942*	*Baranovichi*	

[301] PS-501. IMT. Vol. 26, pp. 106f. Facsimile of the document in: Alvarez/Marais, pp. 291f.
[302] NCA, Vol. 3, p. 420.

TRAIN	DEPARTURE	DEPORTEES	ARRIVAL/ DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	KILLED AT LEAST*
Da 222	Theresienstadt	993	10/8/1942	Trostenets	900
Da 215	*Vienna*	*1,000*	*11/8/1942*	*Minsk*	
Da 216	Vienna	1,003	17/8/1942	Minsk	
Da 223	Vienna	1,000	21/8/1942	Trostenets	900
Da 217	*Vienna*	*1,000*	*25/8/1942*	*Minsk*	
Da 224	Theresienstadt	1,000	28/8/1942	Trostenets	900
Da 218	*Vienna*	*1,000*	*1/9/1942*		
Da 225	Vienna	1,000	4/9/1942	Trostenets	900
Da 226	Theresienstadt	1,000	12/9/1942	Trostenets	900
Da 227	Vienna	1,000	18/9/1942	Trostenets	900
Da 228	Theresienstadt	1,000	25/9/1942	Trostenets	900

The normal numbers are taken from the verdict of the Koblenz District Court of 21 May 1963 (Sagel-Grande 1978, p. 195), while those in italics are from Mattogno/Graf, pp. 200f. * According to the orthodox narrative.

According to the teletype in question, these transports were allegedly intended for "special treatment." Was this a "euphemism" intended to conceal killing operations? Various documents from the period permit us to answer the question with certainty.

First, there is the letter by Wilhelm Kube, *Generalkommissar* for Byelorussia, to Hinrich Lohse, *Reichskommissar* for the East, dated 31 July 1942, according to which, among other things, the Germans in Byelorussia had shot 55,000 Jews in the 10 past weeks (that is, around mid-May; the letter makes no mention of the presumed "gas vans"). This letter implicitly mentions the policy of resettlement in effect at the time, which was overwhelming the capacities of the local administrations (PS-3428):

> *"In addition to this clear attitude towards Jewry comes the difficult task for the SD in Byelorussia of over and over again taking new Jewish transports from the Reich to their destination. This constitutes an excessive material and emotional strain on the men of the SD and removes them from their tasks, which lie in the region of Byelorussia itself.*
> *I would be grateful if the Reichskommissar could enable a halt to further Jewish transports to Minsk at least until the partisan danger has been finally vanquished. I need the SD one-hundred-percent against the partisans and the Polish resistance movement, which both fully occupy the SD units, most of which are not strong.*
> *Following the completion of the Jewish Operation in Minsk, SS* Obersturmbannführer *Dr. Strauch reported to me this night, with justified indignation, that, without notification from the* Reichsführer *SS and without any communication to the* Generalkommissar, *a transport of 1,000 Jews from Warsaw destined for the local air-defense district had arrived."*

Kube requested that transports not authorized by Himmler be stopped:

> *"Under no circumstances can Wehrmacht services of the Army or the Air Force, without permission from* Herr Reichskommissar, *introduce into an area of civil*

> *administration Jews from the General Government or elsewhere, who will endanger the entire political work and security of the General District."*

Since executed or incarcerated Jews cannot endanger anything, it is clear that it was expected that these Jews would neither be killed nor imprisoned, but would rather be able to contribute to any unrest in the region:

> *"I am in complete agreement with the commander of the SD in Byelorussia that we should liquidate every Jewish transport which has not been ordered or announced by the authorities superior to us in order to prevent further cases of unrest in Byelorussia."* (Emphasis added)

On 11 August 1942, Kube transmitted to the Reich minister for the occupied eastern territories, Rosenberg, a protest from the territorial commissar for Baranovichi concerning the arrival of "400 Jews from the Reich as Manpower." In the letter, which had as its subject "New Influx of Jews from the Reich," Kube expressed his support for the protest and concluded:[303]

> *"I therefore ask that the corresponding measures be taken so that further Jewish transports from the Reich are essentially ceased and also request an instruction* [to be communicated] *that such transports are not to be admitted into my General District."*

On 17 August, Kube requested instructions from the *Reichskommissar* for the East, Lohse,[304] who answered as follows on 24 August:[305]

> *"In his report from 31 July of this year, the general commissar of Byelorussia stood categorically opposed to further Jewish transports from the Reich to Byelorussia, as these* [transports] *significantly increase the danger posed by partisans, and the local Security Police is* [already] *fully utilized in the fight against partisans. The Reichskommissar has prohibited any remonstrances against the* [situation regarding the] *Jewish transports from the Reich. So long as I do not receive any instruction* [to the contrary], *I assume that the Jewish transports carried out on the directive of the Reichsführer SS* [Himmler] *and the* [Reich] *Main Security Office are to be accepted without any further protest. On the other hand, I believe it justified to object to the military commander against Jewish transports into the East which are carried out on grounds of labor deployment, as only a central agency may handle and decide upon the import of further Jews into the East."*

An internal memo from Lohse dated 21 September, addressed to the "Division II Administration" of the *Reichskommissariat*, informed all and sundry of the decision that "no protest was to be raised against the Jewish transports."[306] This decision was communicated to Kube on 30 September:[307]

> *"As personally decided by the Reichskommissar, he will abstain from voicing any objections against further Jewish transports to the East. This matter is exclusively the responsibility of the Security Police. It must be left to the commander of the*

[303] GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 84.
[304] *Ibid.*, p. 85.
[305] *Ibid.*, p. 86.
[306] *Ibid.*, p. 89.
[307] *Ibid.*, p. 90.

> *Security Police in Byelorussia, through his official channels, to raise objections to transports which are carried out without the approval of the responsible agencies of the Security Police."* (Emphasis added)

At the time, therefore, two types of Jewish transports were arriving in Byelorussia:

1. "Jewish transports occurring on orders of the Reichsführer SS and/or the Security Main Office," which were "regular" and allowed of no objections,
2. and those requested for manpower purposes by individual local authorities without the preliminary approval of the general commissar (Kube) or the competent SS and Police Leader (SS *Oberführer* Karl Schäfer[308]) – such as the transport of 1,000 Jews from Warsaw on 21 July 1942[309] and that of 400 Jews arriving at Baranovichi from the Reich "as manpower" on 11 August 1942, referred to in Kube's letter, mentioned above – which were "irregular."

Yet still, the commander of the Security Police in Byelorussia *could* only prevent such irregular transport by complaints filed using the regular hierarchical channels.

It follows that the first kind of transports had to be accepted without protest, while the second kind admitted the possibility of protest, in the absence of which they had to be treated like the first.

If Kube threatened to "liquidate" the second type of transports, it is obvious that he was not authorized, hence could not liquidate the first kind, which were precisely the transports to which reference was made in the teletype of 15 June 1942, and it is even more obvious that none of the Jewish transports arriving in Byelorussia was destined to be "liquidated," because it makes no sense to threaten to kill people who are already destined to die anyway.

This situation was reiterated in a letter addressed on 23 November 1942 by the *Reichskommissar* for the East to the Reich Ministry of the Occupied Territories with the subject "Jewish Question." After noting that the Jewish population in the General District Minsk had diminished by 30,000 persons during the first year of civilian administration, and that Jewish ghettos were located only in a certain number of larger cities, the letter states:[310]

> *"I have always rejected several attempts to make new Jews become residents of Byelorussia by means of Jewish transports from the Reich. I must point out in this regard that the Reich Commissar refuses to object against further Jewish transports to the East, since these matters lie within the exclusive competence of the Security Police. Since the commander of the Security Police and the SD lays claim to exclusive authority in all Jewish matters also in Byelorussia, I am restricted, in my handling of the Jewish question, to acting on suggestions from the Security Police."*

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[308] From May to July 1942, replaced in the month of July by SS *Brigadeführer* Curt von Gottberg.

[309] The transport is mentioned in the teletype sent the same day by Kube to Lohse (GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 80) and in Reichskommissar's answer dated 5 August 1942 (GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 81), as well as in the letter dated 17 August, cited earlier.

[310] YVA, O.53-49, p. 1.

The activity reports of an SS *Unterscharführer* Arlt, commander of the "2nd Platoon Waffen SS" of the "1st Comp./Batl. of Waffen SS f.s.d." (for special deployment) are in open contradiction to the above-mentioned directives and create a problem which orthodox Holocaust historiography has hardly even noticed. These reports mention the digging of pits at an estate near Minsk, and that Jews arriving at Minsk were brought to these pits or to this estate, thus suggesting, without expressly stating so, that these Jews were killed and buried there.

The four known reports – sent to unknown addressees and covering the period from 4 May to 25 September 1942[311] – record the arrival at Minsk of nine Jewish transports, the dates of which are set forth in Table 24 (Baade *et al.*, pp. 246-257):

Table 24

ARRIVAL DATE	ORIGIN	DEPORTEES	DESTINATION	FATE OF DEPORTEES
11/05/1942	Vienna	1,000	Minsk	"deployed directly at the pit"
20/05/1942	Reich	1,000	Minsk	"brought to the… pit"
01/06/1942	?	?	?	?
26/06/1942	Reich	?	?	?
17/07/1942	?	?	?	"brought to the estate "
24/07/1942	Reich	1,000	Minsk	?
1st half of August	?	2 transports	?	?
25/09/1942	?	?	?	?

The reports do not explain the reasons for the presumed killings, nor do they state on whose order the killings were carried out. It is, however, clear that the executions are believed to have been carried out arbitrarily and contrary to orders. But who would have dared to violate an order given by Himmler? Considering that four Jewish transports arrived at Minsk during the period which is not covered by any of the four reports (4-22 August), the reports mention the arrival of nine transports out of 25. The question this raises is: what happened to the remaining 16 transports?

Thomas Kues, who has examined these reports in depth in terms of both form and content, has reached the conclusion that their probative value is "questionable" (Kues 2011, Chapter 3), as they are very probably fabrications or contain interpolations. The reports form part of the same documentation which contains the report by Franz Magill dated 12 August 1942, which, as I have shown in Subchapter 2.8., is equally "questionable."

It is nevertheless a fact – to return to the theme of the present chapter – that the reports by SS *Unterscharführer* Arlt do not contain one single reference to any presumed "gas van."

[311] The reports are dated 17 May, 25 June, 3 August and 25 September. From an examination of the dates mentioned therein, we may conclude that we are missing the report for the period 4-22 August 1942. The date 4 May is the first indicated in the report of 17 May.

On the other hand, after all these presumed exterminations, a list of 878 Jews from the Minsk Ghetto in 1943 (the month is not specified) includes 225 children and babies distributed by age as follows:

Birth Year	Age	# children	Birth Year	Age	# children
1928	15	45	1936	7	11
1929	14	28	1937	6	17
1930	13	28	1938	5	12
1931	12	17	1939	4	17
1932	11	23	1940	3	4
1933	10	10	1941	2	2
1934	9	4		Total	227
1935	8	9			

The list also contains about ten elderly people, the oldest of whom was born in 1857 and was 86 years old (Chernoglazova 1999, pp. 289-310).

In view of these facts, it is historically senseless to suppose that the commander of the Security Police and the SD, SS *Brigadeführer* and Major General of the Police Heinz Jost, who issued the teletype dated 15 June 1942, would have requested "gas vans" for the "regular" deported Jews whom he was not allowed to exterminate; thus, since his local subordinate, the commander of the Security Police and the SD Byelorussia, SS *Obersturmbannführer* Eduard Strauch, did not formally protest against the "irregular" transports until 30 September, he could not even "liquidate" these.

If, therefore, the teletype dated 15 June 1942 is authentic, it possesses quite a different meaning: that the "special treatment" which it mentions was a form of favorable treatment, that is, that the Jewish transports sent by Himmler's order were not to be exterminated at all, as otherwise occurred with local Jews according to Kube's letter dated 31 July 1942.

This is confirmed by the analysis of Kube's statistics relating to the Jews who had been shot: 16,000 at Lida, 8,000 at Slonim, 10,000 in the area behind the front, 10,000 at Minsk on 28-29 July, including 6,500 Russians and the remaining 3,500 who arrived from the Reich in November 1941 (Mattogno/Graf, p. 200), in addition to "several thousand" in the territory of Slutsk, Novogrudok and Vileyka. Doing the math, hence arriving at a total of 55,000 victims, one would have to have killed 11,000 Jews in this location.

On the other hand, 18 transports carrying over 17,000 Jews reached Minsk between 6 May and 28 July 1942. Kube asserts that "2,600 Jews from Germany remained in the City of Minsk," with an obvious reference to the transports from November 1941 (6,100 in total, including 3,500 who were shot and 2,600 survivors). It follows that the over 17,000 new arrivals were not counted by Kube – neither among the persons shot nor among the survivors – so that the only possibility is that they were no longer in Byelorussia and had been transferred further east. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that the executions in the Minsk Ghetto were carried out in very large measure by the firing squad commanded by

SS *Unterscharführer* Arlt, who wrote as follows in the report dated 3 August 1942 (Baade *et al.*, p. 252):

> *"28.7: Large-scale operation in Russian ghetto at Minsk. 6,000 Jews brought to the ditch. 29.7: 3,000 German Jews brought to the ditch."*

Kube, who was obviously aware of these executions (in the letter dated 31 July, as we have seen earlier, he spoke of 10,000 executions), would not have been able to tolerate the execution of the above-mentioned 17,000 Jews by Arlt's firing squad, because it was in violation of superior orders, which is additional proof of the fact that Arlt's Activity Reports, insofar as they regard the Jewish transports, are not reliable.

Kube's execution statistics render the 15 June 1942 teletype even more nonsensical: if approximately 55,000 Jews were *shot* in the ten weeks prior to 31 July 1942, what would have prevented the shooting of another 1,000 per week? Why would gas vans have been needed? Taking Arlt's Activity Reports seriously, this would have been a piece of cake.

As shown by my remarks above, and by the text of Kube's letter of 31 July 1942, the killing of Jews did not form part of a general plan of Jewish extermination, but rather a context of brutal anti-partisan fighting (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 308f.).

According to the so-called "Just Memo", which orthodox historians consider very important, three "gas vans" are supposed to have eliminated 97,000 people in six months,[312] an average of over 4,000 per week, or approximately 2,700 per week in two "gas vans"; but then, how is it possible that the three "*S-Wagen*" parked in Byelorussia were not enough to gas 1,000 persons per week, and that a fourth was required for this purpose?

The absurdity of the request is indirectly illuminated by Gerlach. After declaring that, according to a witness, "between 350 and 400 persons could be murdered per day in one van," he states that "also for the killing of transports with Jewish deportees, which could hold 1,000 people – a principal function of the gas vans in the General District of Byelorussia – three vans still appeared insufficient, so that another one was requested" (Gerlach 1999, p. 767). In his footnote 1448, he refers precisely to the teletype of 15 June 1942, but neglects the relevant fact here that the request for a fourth "gas van" is in relation to a "Jewish transport" which arrived "weekly," but in one week the "gas vans" presumably already in existence could have "gassed" at least (3 × 350 × 7 =) 7,350 persons, so that, in this context, it is senseless to suppose that this would not have sufficed for the "special treatment."

But even that's not enough. Alvarez notes, among other things, that the document in question mentions 2 Diamond "S-Wagen" (the document misspells it "Daimond"), an American company, and stresses that Germany could not have obtained spare parts for these vehicles after the American entry into the war (Al-

[312] That document forms part of ref. R 58/871 f°1 of the German Federal Archives; reproduced in Alvarez/Marais, pp. 318-322.

varez/Marais, p. 59). In a memo (*Vermerk*) dated "Berlin, 29 January 1942," reference is made to a "truck manufactured by the Nash Company," stating:

> *"The car is of original American manufacture… It furthermore has to be considered that obtaining replacement parts for this van will be entirely out of the question."*

obviously due to American entry into the war the month before. The note in question bears the abbreviation II D 3a, Department II D 3a "Motor Transportation of the Security Police" of the RSHA and hand-signed by Rauff, head of "Group II D 3,"[313] who, according to orthodox Holocaust historiography, is said to have built the prototype "gas van." How can one seriously believe that Rauff would later have authorized the conversion of Diamond vehicles – American trucks – into "gas vans"?

Otto Ohlendorf, leader of *Einsatzgruppe* D until June 1942, under interrogation after the war concerning the above-mentioned teletype, replied as follows:[314]

> *"Q. In the first telegram, attached to the principal communication, this being dated 15 June 1942, reference is made to a transport of Jews, which has to be treated in a special way. What does that mean?*
> *A. The special treatment was the camouflaged expression for execution."*

Ohlendorf's answer resembles that of a Holocaust historian *ante litteram*, and his answer is completely false, as I showed earlier, because the "special treatment" in question meant exactly the opposite: keeping members of the transport alive.

Shortly afterwards, Col. Brookhart took up the same line of argument:[315]

> *"Q. The communication of 15 June, to which I have referred earlier, speaks of three vans as not being sufficient for the particular assignment in Byelorussia. How large an operation would be indicated to you as assumed by that comment?*
> *A. I don't think this refers to any particular action, but to the distance of up to 300 kilometers between the various commandos, and the difficulties arising from the repeated repairs which had to be carried out on these vans.*
> *Q. How were these vans used? That is, were the vans driven into the ghettos, or were the victims brought out to the vans?*
> *A. As I said before, when I arrived, the large executions had been completed and in my case people were obtained from prisons.*
> *Q. To what prisons do you refer?*
> *A. For instance, the prison at Simferopol, which was the only place where I saw this type of action."*

These incoherent replies were entirely irrelevant to the document in question, which explicitly spoke of weekly, *i.e.*, regular, "Jewish transports," which therefore originated from the Reich, and show that Ohlendorf in reality knew nothing about these presumed "gas vans."

Spector prefers to rely on the trial declarations of Hans Trühe:

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[313] NARA, T 175/254, 2747313f.
[314] Interrogation of O. Ohlendorf on 25 October 1945 by Col. Smith W. Brookhart; NARA, M1270 R 13, p. 12
[315] *Ibid.*, pp. 12f.

> *"He remembered that the gas vans – six in all – had been sent by the Reich Security Main Office from Berlin to Riga. He apparently did not know to which of the regional services they had been attached. The KdS in Riga was supposed to have received one or two of them."* (Spector 1993, p. 57)

Here, as well, these are simple assertions without any documentary confirmation. After referring to testimony by Dr. August Becker, to which I shall return below, Spector adduces another witness, the Jew Mendel Vulfowitsch of Riga, who signed a sworn statement before a Soviet War Crimes Commission on 9 December 1944 (*ibid.*):

> *"In February 1942, I saw with my own eyes, how 2,000 elderly Jews from Germany, men and women, were loaded into special gas vans. These vans were painted field grey and had a large sealed cargo box with doors that could be hermetically sealed. All those inside were killed by gas."*

Such declarations are clearly false. Since approximately 6,100 Jews arrived at Minsk from the Reich in November 1941, 3,500 of whom were shot on 28 and 29 July 1942, and since 2,600 were still left on 31 July 1942, it is not possible for 2,000 of them to have been "gassed" in February 1942.

Spector adds that we may suppose "that gas vans were also used in the *Einsatzgruppe* A sector, in Estonia, Latvia, and the region of Leningrad" (*ibid.*), and appeals to another teletype, dated 22 June 1942, included in Document PS-501:[316]

> *"To the Commandant of the Security Police*
> *and Security Service Ostland*
> *Riga*
> *Subject: S-Van*
> *The delivery of a 5-ton Saurer can be expected in the middle of next month. The vehicle has been at the Reich Security Main Office for repairs and minor alterations up to this time. 100 meters of hose will be supplied."*

Finally, he cites a "memo" dated 13 July 1942 which states:[317]

> *"The S van Pol 71463 is ready and is to be sent to Riga with the driver."*

I shall return to this document in the following Subsection. Spector concludes that there were five or six "gas vans" in the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*," distributed as follows: 1 or 2 at the disposal of *Einsatzgruppe* A (Riga and territory between Latvia and Leningrad) and four at Minsk, three of which were assigned to *Einsatzkommando*s 7b, 8 and 9, while the fourth was stationed at the City of Minsk. All this is based merely on statements made by Trühe, however (Spector 1993, pp. 57f.).

He then cites other trial testimonies and asserts that, "[a]ccording to Schlechte's estimates, about five thousand to six thousand people had been killed in *Einsatzkommando* 8's gas vans by the autumn of 1942." (*ibid.*, p. 58), out of respect for what I have elsewhere referred to as the superstition that testimony *creates* facts.

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316 PS-501. IMT, Vol. 26, p. 105. Facsimile of the document in: Alvarez/Marais, p. 289.
317 *Ibid.*, p. 110. The translation in NCA, Vol. 3, p. 422, is incomplete: "The S-truck Pol 71463 is ready."

It is worthwhile dwelling on the statements of driver Erich Gnewuch on the "gas vans" of *Einsatzgruppe* B:

> *"I was detailed with the gas van to about twelve convoys of arriving Jews. It was in 1942. There were about a thousand Jews in each convoy. With each arrival I made five or six trips with my van. Some of the Jews were shot. I myself never shot a single Jew; I only gassed them."* (*ibid*.)

The phrase "twelve convoys of arriving Jews" here refers to twelve of the 18 Jewish transports which arrived in Byelorussia from the Reich between 6 May and 28 July 1942. Hence, some 12,000 of them are said to have been "gassed" and some of them shot, if we follow Gnewuch. Even this extermination, in the light of what I explained above, turns out to be without foundation, first of all because the transports in question were accepted, and the deportees had to remain alive by Himmler's order, so why did they not appear at all in the statistics of murdered Jews drawn up by Kube on 31 July 1942?

Spector then dwells upon the transport of 1,000 Jews which arrived at Minsk from Theresienstadt on 31 July 1942. Based on mere trial declarations, he asserts that between 500 and 700 persons were killed in "gas vans" (*ibid.*, p. 59). Yehuda Bauer writes in this regard (Bauer, p. 120):

> *"We now have fairly precise information about this train: its number was Da 221, and it left Theresienstadt on July 28, 1942, with 999 persons on board. There is German documentation of the use of two gas vans in this killing. The Jews from Theresienstadt were murdered in Baranovichi because the day they arrived in the region, July 31, was the last day of the Aktion in Minsk, and the Germans did not want the train to continue there."*

The "German documentation" is said to consist of the sources indicated in two footnotes (*ibid.*, fn 64f.): the first refers to a "judicial investigation" against various German defendants and Gerlach's book; the second says:

> *"See YVS, M.41/2229, a letter from Obersturmbannführer Dr. Heuser of the Minsk Sipo to the management of the railways in 'White Ruthenia,' July 31, 1942:* […]*"*

This is followed by an excerpt from that document, the complete text of which reads as follows:[318]

> *"<u>Regarding:</u> Jewish transport Da 221 (Theresienstadt)*
> *<u>Reference:</u> none.*
> *For technical reasons, I have instructed my Field Office Baranovichi, SS* Untersturmführer *Amelung, to unload the above-mentioned Jewish transport already in Baranovichi. I request to issue the corresponding orders to the transport management of Baranovichi Rail Station. The other Jewish transports will then be taken over by myself again here in Minsk."*

[318] YVA, O.53-1, p. 133. Dr. Georg Heuser, who wrote "on behalf" of the commander of the Security Police and the SD Byelorussia, was an SS *Obersturmführer*.

The verdict of the Koblenz District Court dated 21 May 1963 in the trial of Georg Albert Wilhelm Heuser and ten other defendants dealt with this matter in these terms (Sagel-Grande 1978 *et al.*, pp. 213f.):

> *"The prosecution is of the opinion that the Jews transported by Da 221 were killed in Baranovichi immediately after their arrival. It holds the defendant Heuser guilty of participation for having ordered the killings. However, the fate of the train passengers remains unknown. From Heusers's letter to the Main Railway Administration Center, the authenticity of which cannot be doubted due to the conspicuous spelling mistake also contained in original documents (Der Kommandeur Der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD), does not indicate that the arriving persons were to be unloaded in Baranovichi for the purpose of a subsequent execution. Other certain leads don't exist either. According to a report by the General Commissar for Byelorussia to the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories dated 11 August 1942, the Regional Commissar for Baranovichi received 400 Jews at that time from the Reich as manpower. Due to this temporal correlation, they could have been the same persons from transport Da 221. Although this transport carried 1,000 persons, the figure of 400 evidently related only to workers, so that Jews unfit for labor may not have been mentioned. Perhaps they were not killed immediately either, but were first quartered in the existing Baranovichi Ghetto."*

The extermination of this transport at their arrival is not, therefore, a certain fact, not even for the judges handling the case. This extermination claim is based solely on testimonies and statements by Polish and Soviet war-crimes commissions; what is more, there is not even any unanimity as to the method of the presumed killings among orthodox historians. Bauer notes (Bauer, p. 119):

> *"The Jews were forced to strip and then were killed on the spot in gas vans (or by Belorussian or Lithuanian policemen, according to Lewinbok)."*[319]

According to Gerlach, Transport Da 221 was diverted to Baranovichi, "because the train arrived on the last day of the large-scale ghetto murder operation in Minsk" (Gerlach 1999, fn 1393, p. 759), but in what way could this transport have hindered this operation? If they could shoot 10,000 people in two days, they easily could have included a thousand more in that massacre. From the orthodox point of view, it would make more sense to unload and later shoot the 600 presumably unfit Jews at Minsk Station; instead, the entire transport was diverted to Baranovichi, but only exceptionally, because, as the above-mentioned document says, "The other Jewish transports will then be taken over by myself again here in Minsk." This means that the diversion of the transport was indubitably related to the executions which were then underway, but exactly opposite to what orthodox Holocaust historians claim: the transport, which arrived on Himmler's order and which could not be touched, was diverted to Baranovichi precisely to avoid its being involved in the execution.

[319] Dr. Zelig Lewinbok was camp physician at Koldyczewo from 1 September 1942; Bauer, p. 127.

Spector moreover pretends that at the end of October 1943, "gas vans" were used "in Minsk for the liquidation of the ghetto there" (Spector 1993, p. 59), but in this case as well, he is unable to adduce anything but trial testimony devoid of any objective confirmation.

The "special treatment" of the teletype of 15 June 1942 could therefore only have a positive meaning, a special treatment that exempted the transports from execution; but what is to be thought of the final sentence of the document? It called for "20 exhaust-gas hoses" for the three alleged "gas vans" already in place, because "the ones on hand are leaky already". Assuming that these were the alleged connection hoses between the engine's exhaust pipe and the body of the "gas vans", why were 20 required for three vehicles? Orthodox Holocaust historians have not even asked the question.

To conclude, either this document is authentic and then cannot have any criminal meaning, or else, and more likely, it is a manipulated document.

The only special vehicles which appear in the documents were assigned to disinfestation/disinfection. For example, on 26 March 1942, the Sanitation Department of Daugavpils possessed a "mobile steam disinfection chamber" suitable for clothing and objects.[320] A letter from the Acting City Council of Riga dated 17 May 1943, with the subject "overhauling the disinfection vehicle," mentions a "disinfection van."[321]

6.5.1.2. Activity and Situation Report of *Einsatzgruppe* B, 1 March 1942

A Polish book on Auschwitz published in 1946 cites a message from the camp resistance dated 21 September 1944[322] which said (Friedman/Hołuj, pp. 81f.):

> *"The sandy terrain around Maczki is currently home to the so-called* Sonderkommando *Ryryk, consisting of a gassing truck and motorized plough* [*pługu motorowego*]. *This vehicle, bearing the Saurer trademark, painted yellow-green (license plate number Pol.71-462, and driven by* Oberwachtmeister *Arndt) is built in such a way as to possess an interior cargo box 4 meters long and 2.5 wide, clad in sheet metal, a door without handles and a hatch in the floor and a shuttered opening with a grid in the right-hand corner for ventilation. In the rear, the vehicle has a pipe connected, in the present case, to a flexible hose leading from the exhaust pipe. When the motor is started at full throttle, it asphyxiates the victims in the cargo box by means of the combustion gases emitted by the engine, after which the victims are buried using the* Kommando*'s motorized plough, destroying all trace of the victims. This* Kommando *was created in Russia for the rapid liquidation of dangerous elements behind the front line. It then came from Lithuania and was deployed in the area around Auschwitz in carrying out executions as ordered by the police court martial. There are witnesses to such an execution in the area around Auschwitz, who saw the driver, Arndt, pacing alongside the truck,*

[320] LVVA, P-1023-1-4, p. 426.
[321] LVVA, P-1494-1-255, p. 17.
[322] The text reads erroneously "1943"; the exact year, 1944, is mentioned two lines earlier.

with the engine revved up at full throttle yet staying put, where he said with a smile that in the meantime 'the little birds inside are being smoked.'"

Eventually, this message was published on an Internet site, which was then repeated by Robert Jan van Pelt, thus rendering "official" the story of the "gas vans" said to have been in operation at Auschwitz (van Pelt, pp. 215f.). In the meantime, a document was found – the only one – which seems to validate the theory of the Auschwitz "gas vans." This is an "Activity and Situation Report of *Einsatzgruppe* B for the time period 16 through 28 February 1942" dated 1 March 1942. We read there:[323]

"The gas vans which arrived at Smolensk on 23 Feb. 42 were distributed as follows:
EK 8: Saurer Truck Pol 71462
EK 9: Saurer Truck Pol 71457
Both vehicles arrived at Smolensk in defective condition and were assigned to the Einsatzkommandos *after eliminating the defects.*
The two smaller gas vans will be transferred to SK 7a and SK 7b after finalization of their deployment at EK 8."

The most surprising thing is that this document, out of the enormous quantity of documents which have been found, is the only one that mentions gas vans, although, as noted above, 250,000 persons are supposed to have been killed in these mobile gas chambers in approximately 3,300 separate gassing operations in Russia alone, according to Achim Trunk. But this term, which looks like a solution, constitutes, in reality, the principal problem: what was a "gas van" for the author of the report? It is known, for example, that the term in Germany was already in use at the beginning of the 20th century, when this German term "*Gaswagen*" included "in general all automobiles with internal combustion engines […] regardless of whether they are fueled by gasoline, methylated spirits, benzol or any other liquid fuel" (Kuester, p. 36).

The question must therefore be rephrased as follows: *when* did the term "gas van" become a term denoting a murder weapon as it is in today's Holocaust terminology?

Mathias Beer, the expert on this topic, asserts in fact that "in contemporary terminology, the mobile gas chambers were referred to as 'special vehicles,' 'special trucks' and 'S vans'" (Beer 2011, p. 154). When did "gas van" become synonymous with "special vehicles" "special trucks" and "S vans"? And in what documents is this transition of the terms' meaning attested to?

In fact, this change in meaning, in which an already-existing word acquired the sense of "mobile homicidal gas chamber," was coined only after the end of the Second World War. During the Nuremberg Tribunal, the representative of the Soviet prosecution, Colonel Pokrovsky, stated in the afternoon session of 14 Feb-

[323] *Der Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Sicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, ZUV 9, Vol. 31, p. 159. The document has been published by Alvarez/Marais, p. 343. Transcript in: Angrick *et al*., Doc. 114, p. 293.

ruary 1946 that the "gas vans" were called "soul destroyers" ("*dushegubki*") by the Russian population (IMT, Vol. 7, p. 439),[324] and even Jeckeln, as late as December 1945, spoke of "*Gasautomaschinen*" (see Subsection 6.5.2.1.).

First, during the war, the term "gas van" was, as is well known, the abbreviation for "*Holzgaswagen*," producer-gas vehicle. One of these vehicles was also allocated to the motor pool of the Central Construction Office at Auschwitz. This motor pool's report for the month of July 1942 states that this particular vehicle had been driven for 1,435 kilometers with "wood gas," that is, producer gas ("*1435 Kilometer mit Holzgas*").[325] The report moreover mentions the repair of a "wood-gas tractor" unit ("*Zugmaschine Holzgas*").[326] A document dated 22 September 1942 lists the vehicles from the Central Construction Office based on the type of fuel: gasoline, Diesel, gaseous fuel ("*Treibgas*") and "wood gas" ("*Holzgas*"). This category included only one single vehicle, obviously the just-mentioned tractor unit.[327] The kilometers traveled with wood gas amounted to 662 in the month of October,[328] 470 in the month of November,[329] and the same again in the month of December.[330]

On 22 October 1942, the scarcity of fuel compelled Minister Albert Speer to launch an appeal to vehicle owners to convert their vehicles to function "with generator gas" on their own initiative (Kroll, pp. 14f.). Gas-generating propulsion systems for vehicles spread to the point where it is mentioned even in the *Einsatzgruppen* reports. In EM No. 182 dated 18 March 1942, *Einsatzgruppe* A reported:[331]

> *"With regard to the fuel situation, a certain improvement seems to have set in since the beginning of January. Although not often, motor vehicles can be seen again, but predominantly trucks fueled by wood gas."*

EM No. 189 dated 3 April 1942 states:[332]

> *"The Headquarters of Economics keeps pushing with high pressure the conversion of tractors to wood gas generator propulsion. 92 Russian and 65 Latvian skilled workers were deployed at the MTS. The retraining of many workers and tractor drivers to wood-gas propulsion is underway."*

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[324] The Russian term, which is not transcribed in the IMT text, is made up of the noun "*dusha*" (soul) and the verb "*gubit*" (to destroy), so that it almost corresponds to the German term "*Entwesung*" (disinfestation), which indicates precisely the removal (*ent-*) of a form of life (*Wesen*).

[325] "*Tätigkeitsbericht der Fahrbereitschaft der Zentral-Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei Auschwitz für den Monat Juli 1942.*" RGVA, 502-1-181, p. 275.

[326] *Ibid.*, p. 278.

[327] "*Aufstellung der im Dienste der Zentralbauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei in Auschwitz stehenden Transportfahrzeuge und Baumaschinen.*" RGVA, 502-1-181, p. 80.

[328] "*Tätigkeitsbericht der Fahrbereitschaft vom 1. bis 31. Oktober 1942.*" RGVA, 502-1-181, p. 246.

[329] "*Tätigkeitsbericht der Fahrbereitschaft vom 1. bis 30. November 1942.*" RGVA, 502-1-181, 235.

[330] "*Tätigkeitsbericht der Fahrbereitschaft der Zentral-Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei Auschwitz O/S für den Monat Dezember 1942.*" RGVA, 502-1-181, p. 227.

[331] NARA, T-175/235, 2724013.

[332] NARA, T-175/235, 2724133f.

The administration of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp was interested in such vehicles from the very start, as attested to by a message intercepted by the British on 18 March 1943:[333]

> *"To the SS FHA* [Leadership Main Office].
> *Subject: Conversion of trucks to wood-gas propulsion, SLT HKP 557. CC Auschwitz recalled today a local truck for conversion to wood-gas propulsion. According to past local experience, conversion to charcoal-gas propulsion should be carried out on a system of our own. For this reason, we request a decision as to whether this conversion should take place at the army's motor pool. Conversion to wood gas is not desired due to operating difficulties.*
> *Commander SS Military Training Area HEIDELAGER, VOSS, SS Brigadeführer and Major General of the Waffen SS"*

On 6 September 1944, the head of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office, SS *Obersturmführer* Werner Jothann, sent a letter to the district councilor from the office of economy at Bielitz to inform him that he had been assigned a gas-generator vehicle by the authorities in Breslau:[334]

> *"The truck in question is a generator vehicle. In view of the current difficult situation with liquid fuel, it is irresponsible for generator vehicles to be out of operation for lack of tires to the detriment of gasoline and Diesel vehicles."*

In this context, there is no reason why the alleged homicidal "gas vans" could not have been precisely this type of vehicle.

That the same vehicle was a "mobile gas chamber" is in fact only claimed by a message from the resistance at Auschwitz, but the document says only that the author had seen a truck bearing the license plate POL 71462.

The witness Bronisław Falborski mistook the innocuous truck parked in the courtyard of the Ostrowski Factory in 1945 for a "gas van" (Mattogno 2017, pp. 35-41). A gas-generator truck, with an unusual superstructure compared to normal vehicles, could more-easily be misunderstood, particularly due to the pipes which carried the producer gas from the gas generator to the engine inside the vehicle. Gas-generator vehicles were also built in Italy starting in 1934 (de Capitani 1940).

As for the specific case, it is tragically comical that the SS is said to have sent a mobile "gas chamber" to an "extermination camp" which was allegedly equipped with all the killing methods claimed by the orthodoxy (gas chambers, phenol injections into the heart, bullets in the back of the head).

As we will see at the end of Subchapter 6.7., the Auschwitz "gas van" was simply a propaganda story that originated on October 14, 1941.

In this context it is important to stress that the license-plate number of the vehicle mentioned in the above-quoted "memo" dated 13 July 1942 ("The S van Pol 71463 is ready and is to be sent to Riga with driver"[317]) no doubt belonged to the series of "gas vans" mentioned in the Activity and Situation Report of *Einsatz-*

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[333] TNA, HW 16-24. German Police Decodes. No. 3, Traffic: 18.3.43. ZIP/GPDD 421a/14.4.43.
[334] RGVA, 502-1-190, p. 416.

gruppe B for the time period 16 to 28 February 1942 dated 1 March 1942: The trucks with the license-plate numbers Pol 71462 and Pol 71457 mentioned in that document were therefore in all probability just *Generator-Gaswagen*.

Returning to the document in question, the simple presence of the term "gas van" therefore proves nothing about the nature and purposes of these vehicles. We therefore have to address the fundamental question: What were they used for?

Gerlach understands that "the two 'smaller gas vans' mentioned there had already been delivered before the delivery of two new ones on 23 Feb., and were also quite evidently present before the beginning of the reporting period on 16 Feb." (Gerlach 1999, fn 1435, p. 765). Therefore, EK 8 already had two small "gas vans" and, if these could only be assigned to SK 7a and 7b "after finalization of their deployment," this means that EK 8 at the time used them in a very intensive manner, so much so that another two, larger, "gas vans" were needed.

The Activity and Situation Report of 1 March 1942 should therefore have taken account of this intensive use. In reality, those who adduce this document as proof of the real existence and deployment of homicidal "gas vans" always forget that the report also mentions the executions carried out by *Einsatzkommando*s 8 and 9, but they do not contain the slightest reference to "gas vans."

Given the importance of the topic, it is advisable to discuss it in greater detail. Hence, here is a longer excerpt from that Activity and Situation Report (Angrick *et al*., Doc. 114, pp. 295f.):

> *"EK reports: From the area south of the road Mogilev-Berezino comes a report that 35 partisans on snow shoes had attacked the house of a member of the security services in the town of Utno. When he defended himself, he and his two children were shot, along with another member of the security services from a neighboring village, who was staying with him. His wife, seriously wounded, was able to flee. In the area of the Troop Borisov, the area north of the highway is considered particularly endangered, where troops with a strength of 4 to 50 men appear attacking and plundering the villages. In Sachistye, a member of the security services was shot and the municipal savings bank robbed. A partisan group of a strength of 60 to 70 men, well-armed, is causing unrest in the area west of the road Borisov-Lepel. This group has its stronghold in the vicinity of Lake Palik, about 40 km north-northwest of Borisov.*
>
> *EK 9 reports: Partisans have been reported from the areas around Surazh, Usvyaty and Liozno. The armed forces agencies have introduced the necessary measures. According to a report from EK 9, the security situation in the City of Vitebsk, although garrison defenses mode is still in effect, must be considered satisfactory. Since signal lights were observed during the heavy air raids on Vitebsk, the arrest of all males aged 15 to 60 was ordered by the city commandant. Armed forces, field police, secret field police and the Einsatzkommando participated in this operation. The population was made aware of the reason for the arrests by loudspeaker vehicles and bills posted on walls, and it was at once announced that 100 of the arrested persons would be shot immediately, if any more signal lights were observed."*

This is followed by several accounts of the executions:

> *"EK 8: 471 persons, among them 15 for supporting partisans, 3 Russians for stubbornly refusing to work, and 403 Jews. EK 9: 3,128 persons, among them 28 for membership in partisan groups or for supporting partisans, 17 Russians or Jews for making inflammatory statements, 1 Russian for theft, and 3,073 Jews."*

Why is it that the reports contain not one single mention of "gas vans" for homicidal purposes? Secrecy cannot be the reason, because in that case the arrival of the "gas vans" would not have been mentioned at all; not counting the fact that there would be no reason not to declare that a certain number of Jews had been "gassed" instead of "shot," as both would be evidence of killing. On the contrary, from the orthodox point of view, it would have been more logical for EK 7 and 8 to express an opinion on how the "gas vans" were functioning.

We need to keep in mind that, according to orthodox Holocaust historiography, apart from the two large and the two small "gas vans" mentioned in the report dated 1 March 1942, *Einsatzgruppe* B is said to have received another two Diamond vehicles and one Saurer vehicle prior to 15 June 1942, and at least one more Saurer vehicle on 13 July. By mid-July 1942, it therefore is said to have had at least eight of them at its disposal.

We also need to keep in mind that the series of reports known as "Activity and Situation Reports" by *Einsatzgruppe* B continues after the report dated 1 March 1942. In Chapter 5, I already mentioned seven later reports covering the periods from 18-31 August, 1-15 September, 16-30 September, 15 November-15 December 1942, 16 December 1942-31 January 1943, 1-28 February and 1-31 March 1943. All these reports provide detailed reports on the activities of the various units of *Einsatzgruppe* B, but without any reference to the use of "gas vans."

In particular, the "Activity and Situation Reports of *Einsatzgruppe* B for the time period 16 to 31 January 1943," which speaks at rather great length of "motor transportation," does not contain the slightest mention of "gas vans" (*ibid.*, Doc. 174, p. 508); the "Activity and Situation Report" of the same unit for the period from 1 to 31 March 1943 informs us in an even-more-detailed manner as to the vehicles assigned to them, but again without any reference to "gas vans" (*ibid.*. Doc. 180, pp. 552f.).

Another major problem which has been completely ignored by orthodox Holocaust historiography may be summed up in two simple questions: for what reason, and for which victims, were the homicidal-gassing trucks said to have been assigned to *Einsatzgruppe* B?

As I demonstrated in Chapter 5, the Incident Reports show that, from 14 November 1941 – hence before the presumed arrival of the homicidal "gas vans" – EK 8 had killed 28,219 persons and EK 9 11,452. The figures in the report dated 1 March 1942 are 60,811 and 23,509, respectively, and from the orthodox point of view, the great majority of these persons were shot without any complaint of resulting psychological stress suffered by the members of the execution squads.

Why, then, were two supposedly homicidal Saurer "gas vans" assigned to *Einsatzgruppe* B at the end of February 1942? And for which victims were they required? Which victims could not simply be shot, like the tens of thousands of others, but required, on the contrary, the employment of homicidal "gas vans"?

All this confirms that the simple presentation of the report dated 1 March 1942 provides nothing as to the existence of *homicidal* "gas vans." There is, moreover, the fact that no document attests to the *use* of a "gas van" for homicidal purposes. In other words, no document affirms that even one single person was ever killed in a "gas van."

6.5.1.3. "Gas Chamber" or "Gas Van"? Von Thadden's Letter of 15 May 1943

At last, Spector adduces a document which he introduces in the following manner (Spector 1993, p. 60):

> *"On 15 May 1943 representatives of the Italian Fascist party visited Minsk. The general commissioner for Byelorussia, whose name was Kube, showed them a church that was being used as a warehouse. A diplomat named von Thadden, who held the rank of legation counselor, first class, and was then stationed at the Foreign Office in Berlin, heard about this visit from another legation counselor, von Rademacher, and made the following note in his diary on 15 May 1943:"*

I reproduce the full text of the document further below; here, it is important to note only that Kube is said to have shown the Italians "a gas chamber."

Spector reproduces the quote as is, without comment, and this is perfectly understandable: for an intelligent re-entry into a discussion of the "gas van," in fact, the document should make precise reference to a "gas van," but the term "*Gaskammer*" can only refer to a stationary "gas chamber," which, however, never existed at Minsk.

His colleagues reproduce the document without bothering to examine the question in greater depth, giving the document fleeting mention. Browning, after summarizing the document, comments (Browning 1978, p. 150):

> *"Since taking his post as Generalkommissar in Minsk, Kube had been openly critical of Nazi Jewish policy. Many Jews were killed in the Minsk area by firing squad, but there is no record that the Germans actually erected gas chambers there. Kube must have known about the gas chambers elsewhere and used the Italian inquiry about the piles of Jewish baggage to present the Italians with a graphic, complete, and convincing information about the killing of Jews as he could. Whatever the veracity of the incident in Minsk, it is clear that rumors of the gas chambers circulated unofficially through the German bureaucracy and that Rademacher was privy to such rumors."*

Gerlach writes as follows in this regard: "Contrary to several statements, a stationary gas chamber has never existed in the area around Minsk," and in a note, precisely in relation to the Spector quote, he states: "It was probably a gas van" (Gerlach 1999, p. 768).

An Italian historian, Liliana Picciotto, adds the following concept (Picciotto, fn 13, p. 94):

> *"The gas vans functioned at Minsk at least until the summer of 1943. To this end, in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there exists a document according to which a group of fascist experts visiting Italian workers at the front, stopped at Minsk. During the visit, General Commissar Wilhelm Kube, Gauleiter for Byelorussia, showed the Italians a desecrated church. When the Italians asked about the packages and suitcases piled up inside, Kube explained that they were all that remained of the Jews deported to Minsk. Kube then showed the Italians the gas chamber in which the Jews had died."*

Notwithstanding the fact that interpreting the term "gas chamber" as meaning "gas vans" is an obvious distortion in an attempt to make the text fit into an agenda. Here now the full text of this document (T/341):

> *"Note.*
> *Herr Legation Councilor Rademacher informed me that* Gauleiter *Kube, on the occasion of a visit by fascist representatives in Minsk, was also shown a church used for worldly purposes by the Communists. In reply to a question by the Italians as to the meaning of the small packages and suitcases piled up inside, Kube declared that these objects were all that remained of the Jews deported to Minsk. Kube subsequently showed the Italians a gas chamber in which the Jews would allegedly be killed. The fascists were said to have been profoundly shocked.*
> *Herr Rademacher learned of this event through Herr Köppen, Adjutant of* Reichsleiter *Rosenberg. In his opinion, General Consul Windecker in Riga was said to be aware of the event as well, because as far as he, Rademacher, could recall, the event occurred when fascist representatives were sent to the East in order to see to the welfare of Italian workers.*
> *Berlin, 15 May 1943"*

Two elements are important here. The first is the fact that no direct statement of Kube about the visit of the fascist delegation is known, but only hearsay statements of third parties. The second element is the date. As far as the date is concerned, the first known document in which this matter is mentioned is a note from Thadden, dated May 17, 1943, to the representative of the German Foreign Office to the Reich Commissar for the East, Adolf Windecker, where we read:[335]

> *"As has become known here, during a trip of Italian fascists to Minsk, Gauleiter Kube is said to have explained to them, while looking at a pile of small suitcases and packages, that they were the last remains of deported Jews who had been killed in a gas chamber. Allegedly, such a gas chamber was then shown to the fascists. It is imperative that we be informed instantly whether more details about this matter have become known there."*

A handwritten note on this document states that a certain senior government councilor, who had apparently been questioned about this, was "also personally unaware of this matter."

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[335] Die gesamte Serie der hier erwähnten Dokumente befindet sich in PAAA, RZ 214, R 100848b, Blätter 272-278; zitiert nach https://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2019/01/mattogno-his-einsatzgruppen-book-and19.html.

Two other documents in this set of documents also refer to this matter. A letter from Lohse to Windecker dated July 19, 1943, as well as a note from the latter to the Foreign Office in Berlin dated July 27, 1943, have as subject lines, significantly, the words "Alleged statement by *Generalkommissar* Kube" and "Alleged statement by *Gauleiter* Kube." In other words, they were chasing a rumor that could not be verified.

The Italian side mentions the testimony of an eyewitness, a certain Aldo Vidussoni:[336]

> *"ACS* [= Central National Archive, Rome], *Fascicolo 242/R (Special Secretariat of the Duce):*
> *'(...) An absolute rigor is shown towards the Jews, harshly treated and subjected to restrictions of all kinds, even if there is no lack of those who work. I have been told by Italians living in those territories and sometimes by Germans who are inclined to talk that shootings are the order of the day, even for large contingents of individuals of all ages and sexes. In Minsk, at the Opera House, we have seen the stuff of thousands and thousands of murdered Jews piled up, which evidently will be distributed to the population. Only those who can work are exploited, they say, until they are physically exhausted.*
> *What struck the Italians most was the manner of the killing, to which the victims apparently have resigned themselves.*
> *Entire cities and villages have had their populations reduced by as much as a third or half, especially due to the elimination of the Jews.'"*

This testimony contains no reference to a "gas chamber" or to gassings, and it refers to September 1942: if Kube really made his "alleged statement" as quoted earlier already back in September 1942, why did it make such a fuss only eight months later, in May 1943?

The fact is that no execution gas chamber existed in Minsk that could be shown to anyone, so it is clearly an episode of black propaganda invented deliberately or concocted in the rumor mills.

6.5.1.4. The "Gassing" with "Lorpicrin"

The only "gassing" in the German-occupied eastern territories which appears in a document is mentioned in the Situation Report of the commander of the police Ukraine for the months of February and March 1942, signed by a certain Müller-Brunckhorst (Hoppe, Doc. 79, pp. 235f.):

> *"General District Nikolayev.*
> *On 2 Feb. 1942, 202 men, women and children from the ghetto of the town of Zlatopol (approximately 1.5 km north of Novomirgorod) were eliminated by the militia by gassing them with Lorpicrin on order of the district commissar. It was possible to eliminate the Jews without any disturbances and without causing a stir."*

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[336] ACS, SPD-CR 1922-1943, 50/fasc, quoted acc. to Schlemmer, S. 173; the Italian text is available online at http://www.storiaxxisecolo.it/deportazione/deportazionefascismo1i.htm.

The term "Lorpicrin" is meaningless, being an obvious distortion of "Ch*lorpikrin*," chloropicrine (trichloronitromethane). This did not prevent an historian like Dieter Pohl from quoting the above text with its "Lorpicrin," without any explanation (Pohl 2009a, p. 181).

Chloropicrin was used as an aggressive irritant gas during the First World War. Later it was used as an insecticide, fungicide, herbicide or pesticide, used in the control of grain weevils, fleas, flies, bedbugs and even mice. The substance has a density of 5.66 compared to that of air (hydrocyanic acid is 0.93) and a boiling point of 112°C (hydrogen cyanide – HCN – boils at 25.7°C; cf. Flury/Zernik, pp. 418f., 540f.; Peters 1942, pp. 81, 88). It is known that, during the Second World War, chloropicrin was no longer commonly used as a disinfestation agent, and therefore could not easily be obtained. Common disinfestation chemicals were: *Zyklon B*, *T-Gas* (a mixture of ethylene oxide and carbonic acid), *Tritox* (trichloroacetonitrile), *Ventox* (nitrile), *Cartox* (a mixture, in varying proportions, of ethylene oxide and carbonic acid), *Nitril, Calcid* (a substance with a high percentage of calciocyanamide) and *Cyanogas* (a substance with a low percentage of calciocyanamide). All these disinfestation products were regularly distributed by the Degesch Company (NI-9098).

Having said that, there is a need to explain how a mere "district commissar" was able to procure chloropicrin in a small town in the Ukraine, located approximately 80 km northeast of Kirovohrad, near Kiev; how he supposedly used it for the alleged "gassing," since the substance boils at 112°C, and how the operation could have proceeded "without any disturbance."

In 1942, the Health Institute of the Regia University of Padua performed experiments to prove the effectiveness of various disinfestation chemicals, including chloropicrin, with regard to which it was noted that (Mondini, p. 26):

> *"Chloropicrin moreover presents disadvantages: it is difficult to handle, given its lacrymogenous action, even if strongly diluted (1:200,000,000) and is highly toxic.* […] *Upon completion of the operation, the area must be ventilated for two or three days, because the lacrymogenous effect persists for an equal period of time."* (Emphasis in original)

6.5.1.5. Christian Gerlach and the "Gas Vans" in Byelorussia

Gerlach dedicates two chapters to the topic of interest to us here. The first is titled "Further Plans: Murder by Gas, Deportation of Central European Jews and Planned Extermination Centers." It starts by asserting that Byelorussia was of particular importance for the presumed extermination of the Jews for two reasons (Gerlach 1999, p. 646):

> *"as a testing ground for new extermination techniques and as destination for the deportation and murder of West and Central European Jews. The corresponding plans became more numerous in the fall of 1941."*

Nevertheless, continues Gerlach, there is a need to distinguish plans from reality:

> *"Actually, no more than an estimated quarter of Byelorussian Jews were killed with gas, far fewer Jews were deported from the West to Byelorussia than plan-*

> *ned, and no extermination camps existed there functioning internationally, apart maybe from the Maly Trostenets Camp near Minsk in 1942."* (*ibid.*)

But these presumed exterminations with gas do not belong to the realm of reality, so that it is permissible to doubt that any plans actually existed in this sense. Gerlach then sets forth his critical re-examination of the anecdote relating to Himmler's visit to Minsk (*ibid.*, pp. 646f.):

> *"According to the findings of past investigations, Himmler assigned Nebe in Minsk, on 15 August 1941, with the mission of participating in the development of other murder methods, since shooting was endangering the emotional well-being of his men. If that is so, he did this because the Institute for Criminological Techniques (KTI), which was subordinate to Nebe within the Reich Criminal Police Office, was already for some time participating in the development of the technique of killing mental patients in Germany and occupied Poland with gas. So-called 'gas vans' were already in use there, in which the victims were poisoned with carbon monoxide from gas bottles, and Nebe's idea, or that of the KTI, to do this by introducing exhaust gas into the vehicle's interior, likewise originated from the time before the attack on the Soviet Union.*
>
> *Of course, the 15th of August 1941 was not the point of departure for all considerations relating to the murder of European Jews with gas. Already on 8 August 1941, there were rumors in Liepaja (Libava), Latvia, that the Germans wanted to kill Jewish women with gas."*

With regard to these rumors, Gerlach refers to a work by Götz Aly (*ibid.*, fn 785, p. 647), who wrote (Aly, pp. 333f.):

> *"As indubitable as Himmler's order is, it cannot be interpreted as an isolated, authoritative act. For as early as 8 August, an official in the Economic Preparations Office* [*Wirtschaftsausrüstungsamt*] *learned the following during an inspection tour in the Baltics: 'In Liepaja, several thousand Jews have already been 'liquidated'. (...) So far, Jewish women have not been shot. There was talk about eliminating them later with gas.' Himmler had evidently not just ordered the expansion of the genocide on 15 August, but rather, it had already been discussed and requested by officers and members of the murder squads and to some extent even been put into practice. The rapid radicalization of anti-Jewish policies in the occupied territories of the Soviet Union is, looking back on it, already part of the Holocaust.* […] *To this extent, the 15th of August 1941, as shown by the following documents, cannot be interpreted as the date of an all-encompassing general extermination decision."*

Gerlach's and Aly's positions require a comment. Both writers reject the interpretation according to which Himmler's visit to Minsk coincides with the decision of the *Reichsführer* SS, which constituted the point of departure for the presumed extermination of the Jews of the Soviet Union using gas, but in the sense that the "gassings" had already been discussed and put into practice. For this purpose, both writers adduce the rumors mentioned in the above-mentioned report of 8 August. The quote from Aly, conveniently truncated, in fact gives the impression that there already existed a consolidated practice of Jewish extermination by the

Germans, in which "gassing" was or could be a simple option. This idea is, however, refuted by the text of the document in question and by its historical context. The document states (Hoppe/Glass, Doc. 56, p. 240):

> *"The Jewish question in Riga had hardly even been tackled yet. The Jews wear a yellow star for identification and are put to work clearing rubble and building roads, etc. In Liepaja, on the other hand, several thousand Jews have already been 'liquidated,' some by the German authorities, but mostly by the Latvians, who accuse the Jews of having collaborated with the Bolsheviks at the expense of the Latvians during the Russian time* [of rule]. *Jewish women have not been shot yet. There was talk of eliminating them later by way of gassing."*

Therefore, at Liepaja, the Jews were being "liquidated," but only in small part by the German authorities, and in large part by the Latvians themselves. This is confirmed by *Ereignismeldung* No. 96 dated 27 September 1941, in which the City of Liepaja is mentioned for the first time in relation to executions (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 587):

> *"Executions: In the period between 30 Aug. and 5 Sept. 1941, the following persons were executed:* […] *38 persons in the district of the Liepaja Field Office, and 191 persons in the rest of the province, for a total of 459 persons."*

The report then states: "All Jews in Liepaja are currently being registered" (*ibid.*, p. 588). Aly informs us as follows in a footnote (Aly, fn 22, p. 334):

> *"The mass executions in Liepaja were carried out by the* Sonderkommando *1a, led by Martin Sandberger – whose main occupation is head of the Central Office for Immigrants."*

But there is no documentation in this regard. So, what is the value of the rumors mentioned in the report of 8 August 1941 about a future "gassing" of Jewish women? How can such crass propaganda stories be taken seriously?

From the orthodox Holocaust point of view, an even greater problem still remains: for which kind of victims were the future gas vans intended? For the mass extermination of Russian Jews?

Another attempt, although much milder, to introduce a practice of homicidal gassing into this early context is offered by Browning, who mentions another document, also dated 8 August 1941 (Browning 2004, fn 329, p. 513):

> *"A file kept by Nebe's aide, SS-Obersturmbannführer Engelmann, confirms postwar statements that already in early August a chemist of the RSHA's Criminal Technical Institute was ordered to Smolensk by Einsatzgruppe B Commander Nebe."*

For obvious chronological reasons, this cannot have anything to do with the presumed Himmler order, which was issued a week later than this, so that the relevance of this document from the orthodox point of view is unclear.

Gerlach's short chapter on the use of "gas vans" in Byelorussia begins with two observations in this regard:

> *"On the one hand, there were more vans in use than previously known, on the other hand, their significance as a murder tool was numerically less prevalent than assumed."*

Gerlach then complains about the lack of sources:

> *"Due to the lack of sources, it remains unclear when the first gas vans arrived in Byelorussia. The value of post-war testimonies, for instance, is unclear, according to which they were first placed in service in Mogilev in October or November 1941, and in Minsk in December 1941."*

He then adds that (all Gerlach 1999, p. 764):

> *"the very first proven use of gas vans is said to have occurred in Poltava in November 1941. The first use supported by sources relates to the Chełmno Extermination Camp on 8 December 1941."*

The use of "gas vans" at Poltava is "documented" by Gerlach with three references (*ibid.*, fn 1433). The first points to Beer's essay, which I will examine below; the second is an article by Gert Robel, who writes the following in this regard:

> *"The first few of these vans, of whose existence and functioning the world was first informed through the Krasnodar Trial, were already in service at the end of 1941; their number was increased in the early summer of 1942."* (Benz, p. 540)

In footnote 263, he adds (*ibid.*, fn 263):

> *"In addition to Minsk and Krasnodar, the use of gas vans has been proven for Kharkov (Krausnick, Einsatzgruppen, p. 193).*
> *Mathias Beer (Die Entwicklung der Gaswagen beim Mord an den Juden, in: VjZ 35 [1987] p. 403-417) cites, as their first use on Soviet territory, the use by SK 4a in November 1941 near Poltava; he thus confirms this place of use which Krausnick (Einsatzgruppen) mentioned as probable."*

On the page indicated, Krausnick limits himself to saying (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 193):

> *"Just as evidently in Poltava, gas vans were also used in Kharkov for this and for other 'liquidations.'"*

so that it appears that the presumed fact is "evident," and therefore requires no proof!

Gerlach's third reference is the report of a Soviet War Crimes Commission on Kiev (USSR -243). As can be seen, the presumed use of "gas vans" at Poltava in November 1941 is based on incestuous sources and Soviet propaganda.

Beer, on the other hand, refers to a simple statement by Paul Blobel of 6 June 1947, which does not even mention this locality (NO-3824):

> *"Sonderkommando 4 A also shot women and children. In September or October 1941, I received a gas van from* Einsatzgruppe *C under Dr. Dr. Rasch, and an execution was carried out using the gas van."*

Longerich, by contrast, speaks in this context also of Poltava, but not of any "gas vans" (Longerich 2010, p. 241):

> *"All the commandos of Einsatzgruppe C can also be shown to have murdered the sick. In September 1941, at the request of the local commander's office in Vasilkov, Sonderkommando 4a shot 200 Jews but also a number of mentally ill women; a sub-commando of the same unit shot 270 mentally ill patients on 24 October in Chernigov, Sonderkommando 4b shot 599 inmates from the Poltava asylum at the beginning of November, and Einsatzkommando 5 murdered 300 mentally ill Jews on 18 October in Kiev. The incident reports say of Einsatzkommando 6 that 'by 12 November 1941' it had shot '800 of a total of 1,160' mentally disordered inmates of the asylum of Igrin* [sic; Igren] *near Dnepropetrovsk. Murders of asylum inmates by Einsatzgruppe D during 1942 are widely documented."*

As for Chełmno, the use of "gas vans" in this camp starting on 8 December 1941 is so solidly "proven by sources" that even the opening date of the camp is a mere conjecture not even supported by "eyewitness testimony"! (Mattogno 2017, p. 29)

Gerlach then continues his exposition (Gerlach 1999, pp. 764f.):

> *"According to most known testimonies, the first two gas vans were brought to Minsk in early 1942."*

Gerlach's reference (*ibid*., fn 1434, p. 765) is to p. 88 of Spector's 1983 German contribution mentioned earlier, which contains nothing, however, to support such an assertion; it appears, in fact, on the previous page, in which the Israeli historian, as we have seen above, calls upon the testimony of a driver, Erich Gnewuch.

Gerlach seems concerned by the lack of documents, judging by the manner in which he deals with one of the very few which actually exists, the one – already examined earlier – which mentions the term "gas vans"; on the same page, in fact, Gerlach quotes it three times in very different contexts (*ibid.*, p. 765):

> 1) *"It is certain that the two 'smaller gas vans,' that is, those from the first production series, were delivered to Einsatzgruppe B before 16. February 1942."*
> 2) *"Similar to these vans of the so-called first generation (presumably trademark 'Diamond') was the situation with the Saurer vans that arrived in Smolensk somewhat later, on 23 February 1942, which first had to be made operational due to defects."*
> 3) *"Three of the four gas vans were deployed on 1 March at EK 8, one Saurer at EK 9; the smaller ones were to be allocated to SK 7a and 7b 'following finalization of the deployment at EK 8.' Einsatzgruppe B does not seem to have obtained additional vans."*

In all three quotations, Gerlach adduces the same reference as his source: "EGr B, Tätigkeits- und Lagebericht für 16. bis 28. Februar v. 1.3.1942, BStU ZUV 9, Bd. 31, Bl. 159" (*ibid.*, fn 1435, 1437, 1438, p. 765). In footnote 1437, Gerlach writes:

> *"Also the memo* [RSHA] *II D3a (9) No. 214/42g.Rs., Subject: Technical modifications to the special vehicles deployed in service and in the process of construction (IMT, Vol. 26, pp. 102ff) assumed the possibility of repairing the vehicle at the deployment location."*

The subject line of the cited document is that of the so-called "Just Memo,"[312] but Gerlach's reference is to Becker's letter to Rauff dated 15 May 1942, which constitutes the principal element of PS-501. In it, Becker in fact writes of minor repairs to the "gas vans" to be performed on the spot, since transport to Berlin was too costly (PS-501. IMT, Vol. 26, p. 104). The reference moreover is irrelevant, because Gerlach introduces it in the wrong context (Gerlach 1999, p. 765):

> *"There can hardly be any doubt that some gas vans were actually assembled and manufactured on the spot, as already suggested in the draft letter from the racial advisor in the Ministry for the East, Wetzel, to Lohse, dated 25 October 1941. A German Jew deported to Minsk who worked in the KdS Building, gave detailed descriptions during his interrogation of the relevant construction elements which the German Jews had to fabricate in the KdS workshop in Minsk."*

It is in fact clear that vehicle "repair" is one thing, while vehicle "construction" is something quite different, so that Gerlach cannot cite a document which mentions only "repair" in support of his theory of "construction." In the light of the documentation on the topic at hand, which is no doubt authentic – the correspondence between the RSHA and the Gaubschat Company – Gerlach's theory appears entirely baseless.

Wetzel's letter to Lohse has already been discussed at length in Subchapter 2.10. In the present context, Gerlach's reference to Wetzel's letter appears rather forced. I remind the reader that the letter mentions "gassing devices," while another passage of the letter refers to "Brack's means": can one seriously believe that this is a reference to "gas vans"?

In the affirmative case, it would also be necessary to believe:

a. that the "gas vans" were already in use before 25 October 1941, although not "in sufficient numbers," while Beer's historical "reconstruction" claims that the first "experimental gassing" at Sachsenhausen took place on 2 November 1941 and that "the first gas vans can only have been put into service at the end of November and the beginning of December 1941" (Beer 1987, p. 412);
b. that Brack held a top-ranking position in designing the "gas van," while Beer, in his long article, does not even mention him in this context;[337]
c. that it was easier to construct "gas vans" at Riga rather than in the Reich, a supposition which the correspondence between the RSHA and the Gaubschat Company renders absolutely inconsistent;
d. that for the construction of "gas vans" at Riga it was sufficient simply to send a chemist to that city, which is an obvious absurdity.

If, therefore, Gerlach seriously believes all these incongruities, his critical sense is seriously deficient, which may be seen already from the fact that he accepts the authenticity of all the documents adduced in relation to "gas vans" without the slightest formal or material criticism.

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[337] Beer mentions Brack only to inform us that Becker "came to the RSHA in December 1941 due to a exchange between Brack and Himmler." Beer 1987, p. 413.

It is a very weak excuse that other experts in the field commit the same infraction, such as Dieter Pohl and Hartmut Weber, who have presented the transcript of Wetzel's letter with the imaginative heading "The Racial Advisor from the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories suggests on 25 October 1941 that Jews unfit for labor should be murdered in gas vans in the East"! (Hoppe/Glass, p. 564)

Arad, by contrast, introduces the "gas vans" almost as "compensation" for the absence of stationary "gas chambers" (Arad 1979, p. 278):

> *"Documents published by the Soviets and trials of war criminals conducted in the USSR and other countries have not proved that permanent gas installations, in which Jews and non-Jews were killed, were constructed and used in the Eastern territories. However, gas vans, in which Jews were killed, did operate in these areas."*

But back to Gerlach, who next turns to PS-501, which he initially uses in an inappropriate way in order to document that (Gerlach 1999, p. 765):

> *"two gassing vehicles of the 'Diamond' trademark first came to Minsk in 1942, followed separately by a third of the 'Saurer' trademark in spring. In June 1942, according to a report from the BdS, there were three gas vans in Minsk; another had been applied for, since the others were overloaded, and was promised by Rauff (RSHA) for mid-July."*

The first claim is said to be proved by the teletype dated 15 June 1942 (PS-501), but it makes no sense to mention this for the purpose of documenting what happened in early 1942; this is in fact based on a trial statement by driver Erich Gnewuch, cited by Gerlach in the same note (*ibid.*, fn 1439). In this regard, Spector declares:

> *"In the middle of December 1941, three gas vans were brought from Berlin to Riga and put at the disposal of the BdS of the Eastern Territories. There were two small Diamond vans and one large Saurer van. Two drivers, Karl Gebl and Erich Gnewuch, arrived from Berlin before Christmas 1941"* (Spector 1993, p. 57)

Mathias Beer, on the contrary, affirms (Beer 1987, p. 413):

> *"Already before Christmas of 1941, two smaller gas vans were brought to Riga from Berlin. Both vehicles were small 'Diamond trucks', referred to in SS* Hauptsturmführer *Trühe's letter to Rauff dated 15 July 1942."*

Yet Beer backs this up with a reference to the statement of "K. Gebel" (sic; *ibid.*, fn 69). Did these "gas vans" end up in Riga or in Minsk? In late 1941 or in early 1942? Were there two or three of them? In this regard, the above-mentioned historians show an obvious lack of clarity and consistency.

At this point it is necessary to open a brief parenthesis. In Subchapter 4.3. I cited the "Monthly Report on the Establishing of Ghettos in Jewish Work Camps, Labor Deployment and Treatment of Jews," which indicates that as late as 20 November 1941, an organization was active in the the ghettos of Riga, Liepaja and Daugavpils managing the labor deployment of the Jews, but which also dealt with those unable to work, starting with children. Considering this background,

the gossip about an intention to gas women and children at Liepaja (8 August 1941), and interpreting Wetzel's "gassing devices" at Riga (25 October 1941) as homicidal in nature makes no sense.

In the second place, according to orthodox Holocaust historiography, 27,800 Jews from the Riga Ghetto were shot between 30 November and 9 December 1941; why, then, did the RSHA feel the need to send 2 or 3 "gas vans" to Riga towards mid-December, that is, after the deed?

The chief prosecutor's indictment before the Hamburg District Court in the Riga case, dated 30 September 1949, does not contain any reference to "gas vans,"[338] and Angrick and Klein do not even discuss them in their document collection.[339] But then, what were the 2 or 3 "gas vans" doing at Riga? Going on a vacation trip?

Summing up, Gerlach speaks of the deployment by the KdS of Minsk of "five or six gas vans" on the basis of "two important witnesses"; one of these vans was allegedly used at Baranovichi (the sources are a Polish investigatory commission and Spector's article). In conclusion, in his words (Gerlach 1999, p. 766):

> *"it is proven by sources that, in the summer of 1942 not only four (according to the literature) but, rather, at least eight gas vans were in operation in Byelorussia."*

There were actually nine so alleged, because "another one was added to this later." In this regard, Gerlach writes:

> *"Because at the end of 1943, the head of Group 570 of the Secret Field Police, Heinz Riedel, had the idea of having a gas van built by his subordinates."*

This vehicle is said to have been used to "gas" inmates between late 1943 and early 1944 and in June 1944. Thus, "the *Wehrmacht* had its own gas van at their disposal, so to say" (*ibid.*).

I can only repeat that, in considering the correspondence between the Gaubschat Company and the RSHA, it requires a very poor critical sense to take seriously the story of the home-made "gas vans." The epilogue of the matter is almost comical:

> *"In 1947, the Kiel District Court managed to acquit Riedel, since the killings had not been committed in a cruel way."* (*ibid.*)

It is more likely, however, that the judges did not take the story of the home-made "gas vans" too seriously.

Gerlach finds himself in a tight spot, caught between the need to provide ample of documents for the existence of the "gas vans" to consolidate orthodox Holocaust historiography on the one hand, and on the other hand the difficulties arising from the extraordinary scarcity of sources. After all, more "gas vans" ought to mean also more documents… He then adopts a strategy which could be defined

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[338] TNA, FO 1060-598, pp. 11-23.

[339] The only reference to a "gas van," relegated to a footnote, regards a single testimony: "The lady was taken away and shot. A version of this episode involving a gas van is in Spielmann's statement, which sounds credible as well." (Angrick/Klein, fn 14, p. 428).

as "reductionist": he seeks to reduce, as much as he can, the presumed use of the "gas vans," and consequently the number of related victims. He claims that, according to one alleged perpetrator, a certain Karl Buchner – who was even "controller of extermination by gas vans at the commander of the Security Police in Minsk, Department IV B" – the victims "surveyed" by him at Minsk during the period of his activity amounted to 20,000-30,000.

Gerlach claims that "the great majority of Jews and other victim groups were not murdered by gas, but by shooting." The capacity of the "gas vans" was too low: one vehicle could kill 350-400 persons per day, but the majority of Jews from Byelorussia perished in massacres killing up to 10,000 victims in one or two days, so that "this would not have been feasible with three or four gas vans." The "gas vans" were "likewise not suitable" for extermination actions in the ghettos of the small cities "due to the great risk of a breakdown on the bad roads and due to possible partisan interference." Finally, there were "also other reasons against the deployment of the gas vans," such as the high fuel consumption and the problem of cleaning them (*ibid.*, p. 767).

Since these problems were easily foreseeable, orthodox Holocaust historians should ask themselves why the SS authorities would have equipped the *Einsatzgruppen* with "gas vans" in the first place.

For Gerlach, the use of these presumed killing vehicles was limited to two cases: the evacuation of the prisons, based on absurd sources,[340] and the "extermination of the Jewish transports arriving from Central Europe in the year 1942," which has no basis in historical fact, as I have shown earlier.

6.5.2. The Reich Commissariat Ukraine and Crimea

6.5.2.1. The Founding Myth of Soviet Propaganda

We return to the analysis of Spector's exposition on the "gas vans." Regarding the Ukraine, he claims with respect to the territory controlled by *Einsatzgruppe* C:

> *"At least five gas vans operated in their areas – two with Sonderkommando 4a, two with Einsatzkommando 6, and one in the area under the control of the commander of the Security Police in Kiev (where Einsatzkommando 5 worked)."*

He then supposes the presence of a sixth homicidal "gas vans" "in Sonderkommando 4b, which was in service south of the region where Sonderkommando 4a operated." (Spector 1993, p. 60). Here, however, there is no trace of any document: this is all dependent on post-war testimony, starting with Blobel's sworn declaration dated 6 June 1947 relating to the use of "gas vans" at Poltava which I have already discussed. The related treatment is therefore a simple hodgepodge of

[340] Here, for example, Gerlach mentions the gassing of 3,000 persons from the Polotsk area at Trostenets in February 1943; on pp. 1015f., he returns to the alleged massacre, asserting: "Between 17 and 26 February 1943, officials of the KdS Minsk murdered 3,000 people with gas vans, after transporting them from the Polotsk region to the camp at the Shirokaya Street." The sources are the interrogation of a Russian dated 18 July 1944, hence effected by a Soviet Commission, and Document USSR-38.

statements without any objective basis, and therefore entirely conjectural and inconclusive, which therefore is not worth dwelling upon. The only important point is Spector's reference to the Kharkov show trial held by the Soviets, in which the Germans were accused of committing a mass extermination of Soviet civilians "using gas vans and other means" (*ibid.*, p. 62). This, together with other Soviet trials or investigations, clearly prepared the way for the subsequent "confessions" of the presumed German perpetrators (see Subchapter 8.4. of Part Two for more).

The "Judgement of the Smolensk Trial of Ten Germans" from 15 to 19 December 1945 explicitly mentioned "suffocation by carbon monoxide in the gas vans."[341] It is not by chance that Spector closes the chapter with a reference to Vasily Grossman's and Ilya Ehrenburg's well-known propaganda volume *The Black Book* (Spector 1993, p. 64, and fn 45, p. 261).

The close link between Soviet propaganda and the "confessions" of German defendants is clear from the interrogation of the former Higher SS and Police leader East and Russia North Friedrich Jeckeln by the NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) on 21 December 1945. The interrogator was not familiar with the term "gas vans" and always spoke of "soul murderers," which is the literal translation of the Russian term "*dushegubka*," a compound term made up of "*dusha*" ("soul") and the verb "*gubit*" ("to destroy"). Jeckeln, the person under interrogation, was not familiar with the term "gas vans" either, and used a term translated from Russian, "*Gasautomaschinen*" ("gas auto machines"; Christoforov *et al.*, pp. 356f.):

> *"*[Question:] *From whom did you receive the order to use the soul destroyers in the Eastern territories?*
>
> [Answer:] *These orders were issued by Heydrich or Kaltenbrunner to the SD and Gestapo leaders subordinate to me, Jost or* [Achamer-]*Pifrader or also Panzinger (at the moment I can't quite remember exactly). But I do remember that I was informed by all these persons of the use of these gas auto machines during the extermination of the Jews in the East. Besides, in December 1941 in Lötzen, when I reported orally to Himmler the execution of his order relating to the shooting of the Jews in the Riga Ghetto, Himmler told me that shooting was too complicated an operation. To shoot people, he said, you need people who can shoot, and that this had a very bad effect on these people. Therefore, Himmler continued, it would be best to liquidate people using gas auto machines, which were manufactured in Germany according to his instructions, and that with the use of these gas auto machines all inconveniences connected to shooting disappear. I can no longer remember the exact words of Himmler's statements in this regard, but it gave the impression that the thought of using the gas auto machines originated from Himmler himself.*
>
> [Question:] *Where and when were the gas auto machines used in the East?*
>
> [Answer:] *I was informed by the above-mentioned leaders of the SD and Gestapo in the East that gas auto machines, at a quantity of 3–5 units, were used for the*

[341] USSR-87. German translation in: GARF, 7445-2-101, pp. 250f. The Russian text always uses the term: "*dushegubka*." Lebedeva/Raginsky, pp. 166-168; Document USSR-87, p. 168.

annihilation of Jews in Salaspils and Riga in the second half of 1942. At the end of 1942 and beginning of 1943, the leader of the SD in Latvia, Dr. Lange, during a conversation, told me about the use of gas auto machines and explained to me their design. He also invited me to drive to it for an inspection, which I declined. He also told me that the people inside the machine begin to scream loudly, knock at the walls of the machine with their fists after they had been inside for about 5 minutes, then lose consciousness, and finally die.

[Question:] *How many people were annihilated by you in this manner?*

[Answer:] *I cannot tell the number of Jews killed in this way, but I can tell that the number was not large, relatively speaking, since the SD and Gestapo preferred to shoot the Jews rather than to suffocate them in the gas auto machines. I can no longer exactly remember whether it was Lange or Fuchs who reported to me that the gas auto machines cannot be used on a large scale for the annihilation of the Jews due to a lack of fuel and their insignificant rate of use* [capacity]. *They said that the people killed in the machine suffered from serious nausea, and that cleaning the machine and unloading the bodies after every death trip was therefore a very unpleasant and dirty job, which also took a long time. In view of such inconveniences, Lange and Fuchs preferred shooting, since that would be a much easier and faster way of exterminating living people."*

Jeckeln therefore claimed to have been informed on the use of the "gas auto machines" by many superior officers in the SS, but strangely, as I have already noted, the numerous reports of the *Einsatzgruppen* and other police and SS units operating in the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* do not contain the slightest mention of this use. In his view, therefore, Himmler was practically the inventor of the "gas auto machines," yet not in order for the victims to die more humanely, but rather in order to prevent "all inconveniences connected to shooting."

It does not seem very plausible that the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* would have been assigned 3 or 4 "gas vans" only more than half a year after Himmler's order dated December 1941, a time at which these vehicles were presumably already "manufactured."

In response to the question as to the number of victims of the "gas auto machines," Jeckeln answered in the only manner possible, just as Otto Ohlendorf had already answered the month before when interrogated by the Soviet colonel Tupikov (to which I will return later), that is, by reducing the use of the "gas vans" to an irrelevant level, to do away with the need to provide details which he could not know. Thus, the "gas vans," which were presumably designed as a more humane method of killing, thus reducing the stress for the killers – more convenient than shooting anyway – revealed themselves to be even more inhumane and more inconvenient!

As I have shown above, this "reductionist" strategy was taken up by Gerlach with an explicit reference to this interrogation.

Regarding Crimea and the Caucasus, where *Einsatzgruppe* D was in operation under Otto Ohlendorf's command, Spector makes rather vague assertions, based

exclusively on witness statements before post-war trial, first of all those by Ohlendorf himself. According to the Israeli historian, therefore:

> *"At the beginning of 1942 the staff of EG D was in Simferopol. Three gas vans were also there at this time: two large Saurers and one small Diamond."* (Spector 1993, p. 64)

In support of these assertions, he takes recourse to a verdict handed down on 17 September 1975, 33 years after the presumed events! What I mentioned above as to the "propaedeutic" value of Soviet investigations applies as well to these testimonies, which is fully confirmed by Spector himself:

> *"This was not the first time, however, that Christmann's name had been mentioned in a war-crimes trial. It had already been brought up between 14 and 17 July 1943, after Krasnodar had been retaken by Red Army troops and a group of his 'Caucasian' auxiliaries were being tried by a Soviet court. Two of them, named Tishchenko and Pushkarev, had been given the rank of noncommissioned officer and been assigned to loading the gas vans used by Einsatzkommando 10a. They described these vehicles in close detail, and their statements coincide with the evidence presented to the Munich court thirty-seven years later. The trial of these Caucasian auxiliaries of EK 10a provided the first opportunity for the public in the Soviet Union and the Western Allied countries to learn the facts about the existence of the gas vans."* (Spector 1993, p. 67)

The purely propagandistic nature of this trial is obvious from what Spector pompously presents as "the most important proof" presented during the trial, the testimony of a survivor of "gas van," a certain Kotov, and adds:

> *"So far as we know, he is the only survivor of this operation."* (*ibid.*)

In a report regarding "The Mass Gassings" in Krasnodar, a Soviet commission asserted that, in this city, 6,700 Soviet citizens had been "murdered with carbon-monoxide poison gas in the cruelest manner," and that a medical examination of the bodies showed "that all the victims had been killed with carbon monoxide."[342] The manner in which the witness succeeded in surviving is a rather ingenious load of rubbish. "I tore off my shirt, wet it with urine, and pressed it to my mouth and nose" (*ibid.*). A home-made gas mask of zero effectiveness when it comes to carbon monoxide!

The Soviet War Crimes Commission which investigated Rovno even claimed to have found bodies in a mass grave, which, notwithstanding several months of interment and decomposition, still miraculously exhibited skin "of a bright pink color" (see Part Two, Section 8.4.3.). Since it is known that such a discoloration of the victims' skin is indeed a sign of carbon-monoxide poisoning (Trunk, p. 40: "pink coloration"), it is therefore considered that this propaganda trick physically "proves" the existence of the "gas vans."

In this context, note should be taken of Stefan Ivanovich Pilunov's description of a "dushegubka" (Beluga, pp. 170f.):

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[342] Taken from USSR-42. German translation in: GARF, 7445-2-97, p. 233.

> *"We spent the night near the cemetery in the 'dushegubka,' a three-axle automobile approximately 10 m long, 4 m wide and 3,5 m high.*[343] *The driver's cabin was very short and wide, with acoustically sealed doors and separated from the chassis by a sheet metal partition. The motor was constructed to correspond to the structure of the cabin, hence breadthwise.*
>
> *The vehicle exterior was clad with black-varnished sheet metal, while the interior had it in blue color. The 'dushegubka' was entered from the rear through double folding doors, similar in thickness to the walls of the chassis, about 6 cm thick. At the height of an average-sized person, the right folding door has a peephole, shaped like a slit, protected by a glass pane, and 4 x 6 cm in size. Under the door is a wooden step. The 'dushegubka' has no windows. The floor consists of metal, with a wooden grid on top. On both the compartment side walls, equidistant from the cabin and the doors, is a metal box about 40 x 40 cm in size, starting from beneath the floor and extending to the height of the grid. The side walls of these boxes have a series of apertures between the floor and the upper part, about 3 to 4 mm in size, through which the gas is conducted into the chamber of the 'dushegubka.'*
>
> *Two ordinary automobile headlights are mounted on the front wall of the chamber at the same height as the peephole. They can be turned on from the cabin by the driver. Apart from the features mentioned, the interior of the chamber contains nothing. But on the exterior, to the right and left of the cabin, rubber hoses of about 10 cm in diameter are mounted in the floor of the chamber leading from the engine into the metal box, which are equipped with a valve each to regulate the through-flow of the poisonous gases."*

In his description of the "gassing victims," Pilunov even mentions the color of the corpses (*ibid.*, p. 172):

> *"The skin on the bodies was a deep red, as occurs after a prolonged stay in a sauna."*

The description of the vehicle is very detailed, but so is the description of his presumed activity in an exhumation/cremation squad, which is a bit imaginative and does not increase the witness's credibility (see Part Two, Chapter 7).

The Soviet and Allied investigators and the German prisoners to be interrogated had, therefore, propaganda themes upon which to meditate.

Finally, Spector concludes as follows:

> *"From all we have been able to learn so far, a total of fifteen gas vans operated in the territories of the Soviet Union occupied by the German army."* (Spector 1993, p. 71)

In reality, from the documentary point of view, Spector bases his statements solely on PS-501, according to which (if the associated documents are to be considered authentic and if they are interpreted according to the orthodox Holocaust point of view), as I have already noted, no more than six "gas vans" were assigned to the *Einsatzgruppen*.

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[343] Since the maximum permissible width of road vehicles in Germany is 2.55 m, no road vehicle 4 m wide would ever have been manufactured.

6.5.2.2. Otto Ohlendorf and the "Gas Vans"

In his pre-trial interrogations, ex-SS *Brigadeführer* Otto Ohlendorf, former commander of *Einsatzgruppe* D until June 1942, made several statements regarding the "gas vans." In his interrogation dated 24 October 1945, conducted by Colonel Smith W. Brookhart, he declared:[344]

> *"Q. Was there any difference in the treatment of men, women, and children* [in the executions]*?*
> *A. No, only later, shortly before I left, it was decided that women and children – shortly before I left the RSHA delivered from two to three gas vans under our jurisdiction to the commandoes.*
> *Q. What department of the RSHA furnished you with those vans?*
> *A. I don't think it was handled by any department, but the gas van was developed by individuals who invented and developed them, and the wagons were then sent directly from Heydrich to the commandoes, because another department had nothing to do with such technical questions.*
> *Q. It is shown that department II had a motor transport section; was that also the procurement agency for the gas vans?*
> *A. I can not say that, because as I said before as this gas van was developed I already had left for more than six months."*

The interrogator returned to this question later (pp. 20-22):

> *"Were there any other methods used by action group* [= *Einsatzgruppe*] *D in the execution of persons in the territory in which it operated?*
> *A. Only the gas vans, as I told you, at the end, and only the gas vans which arrived after the last executions. And furthermore, the commandoes did not like to use the gas vans.*
> *Q. Who was in command of action group D when the gas vans were first introduced?*
> *A. It was an obersturmfuehrer. I don't recall his name, but I know that he had red hair. But he himself invented the contraption.*
> *Q. Let me be sure that I understand the last two answers. My question was: Who commanded action group D after you left and when the gas vans were first introduced, and I understand you to say that you didn't recall his name, but that he was red headed and he was the man who had invented the gas van; is that correct?*
> *A. No.*
> *Q. My question…*
> *A. Bierkamp.*
> *Q. And were the gas vans used under his direction?*
> *A. I can not say that. I don't know. I can't say that whether or not the gas vans were still in an operating condition.*
> *Q. At what time were they first used?*
> *A. In the spring of 1942. I can't tell you exactly when.*

[344] Interrogation of O. Ohlendorf dated 24 October 1945 by Colonel Smith W. Brookhart, pp. 16f. NARA, M1270 R 13; subsequent page numbers from there unless stated otherwise.

Q. You were still in command of group D at that time?
A. Yes.
Q. Did you use gas vans in group D?
A. Yes. If you express it that way then they were used the spring of 1942 while I was still in command of einsatz group D.
Q. How many vans of this character did you have assigned to your group?
A, Two to three.
Q. Two to three for the whole group or for each company?
A. For the whole group
Q. How did you determine who should operate those and to what extent were they used?
A. As I told before, the gas vans were not a part of our motor pool, but they were left separately under the direction of this obersturmfuehrer who also brought with him his own drivers: and the commandoes then requisitioned these vans from this particular unit, and they were then allocated depending on the demand.
Q. What kind of inspection or supervision did you exercise over yours?
A. Only a general supervision, and I had a doctor to look after the results of the gas vans and see what results they had.
Q. What was his name?
A. Doctor Schnopflager.
Q. What was the usual procedure in preparing for and executing the victims with gas vans?
A. There was nothing. According to the testimony of the doctor the victims involved did not feel anything, and consequently they were not told that they were to be executed, but that they were to be transported in these vans: and during the transportation they were then killed."

Ohlendorf also supplied an estimate of the number of victims of the "gas vans" presumably used by himself, and spoke of the psychological effects of the presumed killings on the perpetrators (p. 23):

"Q. In your figure in which you estimate 90,000 were killed within one year by group D, does that include the deaths by gas vans?
A. Yes.
Q. What proportion of that number you would say were killed by shooting and what proportion by gas vans?
A. I will say that it was only several hundred, maybe not even several hundred – several hundred – between two and four hundred. But I like to repeat that the commandoes did not like to use the gas vans.
Q. Did you find that to be an efficient means of execution?
A. Yes, for the ones that had to be executed, yes.
Q. Preferable to execution by shooting?
A. I can only state that according to the testimony of the doctor the people to be killed felt nothing when death came over them. But for the people who carried out the execution it was more nerve-racking to operate with gas vans rather than shooting them.
Q. Why do you say that?

A. They are the experiences, therefore they did not like to operate the gas vans."

As for the orders and the chain of command, Ohlendorf said (p. 27):

"In the spring of 1942 an order of Himmler arrived according to which women and children were to be liquidated in the future only in gas cars. For the carrying out of this order, the Einsatz Gruppe D had assigned to it two or three gas cars by the RSHA."

Use of the "gas vans" was decided upon by Himmler or Heydrich; the vehicles were then sent directly to the operational unit, which distributed them to the *Kommandos* "who had to gas women and children only in the gas vans" (p. 24).

The interrogation also dwelled at length upon the appearance of the "gas vans" (p. 29):

"Q. Can you describe these gas wagons?
A. Only from the exterior. It was a type of truck which had a hermetically sealed box, and it was constructed in such a way that the exhaust gases, whether through a filter or immediately, could be led into the interior of this box.
Q. Was is camouflaged in any way?
A. One could not recognize for what purpose the car had been constructed.
Q. What did it appear to be?
A. It had the appearance of a closed box truck.
Q. How many such wagons were there?
A. I cannot say.
Q. How many assigned to your group?
A. Two or three.
Q. Do you know that similar wagons were assigned to other groups?
A. I merely learned it from this one letter, a letter from the man who cared for these wagons with me, and he wrote to the responsible director and complained of defects in these vehicles."

In the interrogation of 25 October 1945, Colonel Brookhart returned to the same topic:[345]

"Q. What was the capacity of the individual gas vans?
A. It can be gathered from the document that there were two different sizes. I believe their capacity was between 15 and 25 people, approximately.
Q. How long did it take to execute a load of from 15 to 25 people?
A. I can't say exactly, but I think the putting to sleep[346] *took between 10 and 14 minutes."*

On 14 November 1945, Ohlendorf was interrogated by the Soviet Colonel Tupikov, who took up the theme of the "gas vans":[347]

"Q. Was the shooting the only means of execution?

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345 Interrogation of O. Ohlendorf dated 25 October 1945 by Colonel Smith W. Brookhart, p. 12. NARA, M1270 R 13.

346 This assertion is taken from Becker's letter dated 16 May 1942, with which I shall concern myself below.

347 Interrogation of O. Ohlendorf of 14 November 1945 by Colonel Tupikov, pp. 4-6. NARA, M1270 R 13.

A. In the spring of 1942 Himmler sent two or three gas vans to us and issued an order that from now on women and children should not be shot, but should be killed in these gas vans.
Q. Could you give us the approximate number of the Soviet citizens who were killed in gas vans?
A. Compared to the total, this number was rather small.
Q. What would be the approximate number?
A. I could not give you this figure, partly because these gas vans used to undergo frequent repairs, and also because just at the time when they were in use I spent some time in Germany. However, I assume that the number didn't amount to more that a few hundred. This was after the mass executions had taken place. And at this time the only people who were being executed were individuals who were picked up singly. An additional reason was that the Einsatz Kommandos didn't like using those gas vans.
Q. In other words, you do not deny that in compliance with a personal order from Himmler, you used gas vans in killing of Soviet citizens.
A. The gas vans were not assigned to my Einsatz Kommandos. They were sent as special units, and we had orders to turn over women and children to them for execution.
Q. However you made use of these gas vans?
A. The gas vans were assigned to the Einsatzgruppen at the head of which I was.
Q. That means that they were assigned to you.
A. That is right, but I had no choice in the matter, I had not asked for them. They were assigned to me and I had no say about it.
Q. That is not quite clear to me. You were the chief of the Gruppe, and the vans that were used were assigned to this Gruppe; in other words, the gas vans which were assigned to the Gruppe were assigned to you.
A. I still had no choice in view of the fact that there were orders from Himmler that women and children had to be killed in those gas vans.
Q. Through whom was this order transmitted and who received it?
A. I am not sure just now. The inventor of the gas vans arrived together with them and was in charge of the operation. At the same time we had the order from Himmler that the women and children should be killed in that manner. I would not know now whether we received the order separately or whether the order was transmitted by this person who brought the gas vans. […]
Q. What is the name of the inventor of the gas vans?
A. His name was Becker."

Ohlendorf's declarations clearly show that he had no real and direct knowledge of the presumed "gas van," but was, rather, attempting to embroider as best as he could the information deduced from PS-501, which had been shown to him. Like Jeckeln, he asserted that, for the SS executioners, shooting was far preferable to using the "gas van," which – from the orthodox point of view – contradicts both the alleged reason for Himmler's presumed order of 15 August 1941, and the effort of designing and building these vehicles. In his desire to please his interrogators, Ohlendorf overplayed his hand, among other things by inventing the story

about Himmler's order of spring 1942, while the rare usage of the "gas vans" was a simple loophole justifying his obvious ignorance, which went so far as to identify Becker as the inventor of the "gas vans."

In a sworn statement dated 30 October 1945, Erich Isselhorst, commandant of *Einsatzkommando* 1b between 30 June and October 1943, mentioned the "gas vans" in these terms:[348]

> *"I know that our group possessed 3 gas vans which were made available to the various Einsatzkommandos as needed to carry out executions. During my days, an order came to clear the Smolensk Ghetto of the Jews. There were about 1,200 Jews in it. The healthier ones were sorted out and sent to Lublin; more than 400* [others] *were gassed with the help of these 3 gas vans."*

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, the liquidation of the Smolensk Ghetto occurred in mid-July 1942 (Dean 2012, p. 1823):

> *"Throughout the day until the evening of July 15, 1942, the Jews were transported in groups to a prepared ditch in a wood near the village of Magalenshchina. According to the statements of local residents taken by officials of the military counterintelligence section (SMERSH), after the liberation of the city on September 25, 1943, some of the Jews were poisoned in three gas vans that transported them on four successive trips, and some were shot at the ditch."*

Nevertheless, the Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories contain no mention of this, and no other known document mentions it either.

These few words show that Isselhorst, like Ohlendorf, had no first-hand knowledge of the "gas vans."

6.5.2.3. Becker's Letter to Rauff of 16 May 1942 in its Context

The above exposition permits a more-accurate contextual analysis of the letter written in Kiev by SS *Untersturmführer* August Becker to Rauff dated 16 May 1942, which constitutes the central element of Document PS-501. I shall first of all reproduce the text of the document according to the official translation into English:[349]

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[348] YVA, O.53-136, pp. 60f.

[349] Alvarez/Marais, pp. 281-283. Transcript in IMT, Vol. 26, pp. 102-105; photo negative in NARA, 501-PS-HLSL_NUR_02459001 through 3; official U.S. translation in NCA, Vol. 3, pp. 418f.; this text is riddled with faulty translations which gloss over the at times absurd contents of the German original. A more-accurate translation can be found in Alvarez/Marais, pp. 43-46. The authors publish four versions of this letter, at least one of which, version B, has a different typescript layout than version A (which is supposed to be the original document), has two pages instead of three, and is unsigned.

"Field Post Office No 32 704 *Kiev, 16 May 1942*
B Nr 40/42 - *Top Secret!*

To
SS Obersturmbannfeuhrer R a u f f
in B e r l i n
Prinz-Albrecht-Str. 8

[handwritten:]
R[29]/5pers. Pradel n.R
erl b/R

[Handwritten in the margin:] *Sinkkel* [?] *b.R, p 16/6*
The overhauling of vans by groups D and C is finished. While the vans of the first series can also be put into action if the weather is not too bad, the vans of the second series (Saurer) stop completely in rainy weather. If it has rained for instance for only one half hour, the van cannot be used because it simply skids away. It can only be used in absolutely dry weather. It is only a question now whether the van can only be used standing at the place of execution. First the van has to be brought to that place, which is possible only in good weather. The place of execution is usually 10-15 km away from the highways and is difficult to access because of its location; in damp or wet weather it is not accessible at all. If the persons to be executed are driven or led to that place, then they realize immediately what is going on and get restless, which is to be avoided as far as possible. There is only one way left; to load them at the collecting point and to drive them to the spot.
I ordered the vans of group D to be camouflaged as house-trailers by putting one set of window shutters on each side of the small van and two on each side of the larger vans, such as one often sees on farm-houses in the country. The vans became so well-known, that not only the authorities, but also the civilian population called the van 'death van,' as soon as one of these vehicles appeared. It is my opinion, the van cannot be kept secret for any length of time, not even camouflaged.
The Saurer-van which I transported from Simferopol to Taganrog suffered damage to the brakes on the way. The Security Command [*S.K.*] *in Mariupol found the cuff of the combined oil-air brake broken at several points. By persuading and bribing the H.K.P.* [*Heereskraftfahrpark,* army motor pool] *we managed to have a form machined, on which the cuffs were cast. When I came to Stalino and Gorlowka a few days later, the drivers of the vans complained about the same faults. After having talked to the commandants of those commands I went once more to Mariupol to have some more cuffs made for those cars too. As agreed two cuffs will be made for each car, six cuffs will stay in Mariupol as replacements for group D and six cuffs will be sent to SS Untersturmfuehrer Ernst in Kiev for the cars of group C. The cuffs for the groups B and A could be made available from Berlin, because transport from Mariupol to the north would be too complicated and would take too long. Smaller defects on the vans are carried out by experts of the commands, that is of the groups in their own shops.*
Because of the rough terrain and the indescribable road and highway conditions the caulkings and rivets loosen in the course of time. I was asked if in such cases the vans should be brought to Berlin for repair. Transportation to Berlin would be much too expensive and would demand too much fuel. In order to save those ex-

penses I ordered them to have smaller leaks soldered and if that should no longer be possible, to notify Berlin immediately by radio, that Pol. Nr……. is out of order. Besides that I ordered that during application of gas all the men were to be kept as far away from the vans as possible, so they should not suffer damage to their health by the gas which eventually would escape. I should like to take this opportunity to bring the following to your attention: several commands have had the unloading after the application of gas done by their own men. I brought to the attention of the commanders of those S.K. concerned the immense psychological injuries and damages to their health which that work can have for those men, even if not immediately, at least later on. The men complained to me about headaches which appeared after each unloading. Nevertheless they don't want to change the orders, because they are afraid that detainees called for that work could use an opportune moment to flee. To protect the men from these damages, I request orders be issued accordingly.

The application of gas usually is not undertaken correctly. In order to come to an end as fast as possible, the drivers apply full throttle. By doing that, the persons to be executed suffer death from suffocation and not death by dozing off as was planned. My directions now have proved that by correct adjustment of the levers death comes faster, and the detainees fall asleep peacefully. Distorted faces and excretions, such as could be seen before, are no longer noticed.

Today I shall continue my journey to group B, where I can be reached with further news.

Signed: Dr. Becker
SS Untersturmfuehrer."

This letter was recognized as authentic by its addressee, Walter Rauff, in an affidavit dated 19 October 1945, in which he otherwise showed that he had no knowledge of the presumed "gas vans";[350] notwithstanding this fact, the authenticity of the document is very dubious. The letter says that due to an erroneous handling of the vehicle, the victims died of asphyxiation (*Erstickungstod*) instead of death by "dozing off" (*Einschläferungstod*) as intended. Such an assertion makes no sense, because death by "dozing off" is a mere fabrication:

> *"The clinical symptoms of CO poisoning vary depending on the percentage of hemoglobin saturated by the CO. The symptoms begin with increasingly severe headaches followed by tachycardia and tachypnea, with accompanying drowsiness progressing to true and proper coma."* (Giusti, p. 501)

In practice, therefore, the presumed victims would have died of asphyxia while suffering tremendously, especially considering the stinking hot smoke from the truck exhaust, which categorically excludes death by "falling asleep peacefully."

In order to achieve this alleged "death by dozing off," proper adjustment of "the levers" is said to have been necessary. In this regard, Alvarez and Marais note that the German term for the accelerator pedal is "*Gaspedal*" or simply "*Pedal*" (Alvarez/Marais, p. 54.). The use of the term "levers" ("*Hebel*"), on the other hand, refers to a different layout, conforming more to a "gas van" of the "first

[350] PS-2348. IMT, Vol. 30, pp. 256-258. Strangely, Rauff was not subjected to any pre-trial interrogation.

generation", where the flow of gas from steel cylinders was presumably regulated by valves or levers.

To the observations on this document already set forth by Alvarez and Marais (Alvarez/Marais, pp. 40-55), a few more should be added. The term "detainees" ("*Häftlinge*") to designate the victims of the "gas vans" is at least inappropriate; even if, according to Ohlendorf, the "gas vans" were used to kill people locked up in the Simferopol Prison, it would rather have been "prison inmates" ("*Gefängnisinsassen*"). "*Häftlinge*" were generally people under arrest in the service of the German authorities.

The fact that various commands (*Kommandos*) unloaded the "gas vans" themselves, putting their health at risk, is completely inconceivable, all the more so since the motivation for this is patently absurd: "because they are afraid that detainees called for that work could use an opportune moment to flee." But how could four or five prisoners who were unloading a few dozen corpses surrounded by a cordon of armed SS men have escaped?

Moreover, a German hardly would have said that a defect was "carried out" ("*ausgeführt*"), but rather it was repaired ("*repariert*"), and the use of the term "group" ("*Gruppe*") instead of "*Einsatzgruppe*" is very reminiscent of the common linguistic usage of Americans during interrogations and trials.

The letter mentions the frequent breakdowns that the "gas vans" suffered, and states that in cases a repair was not possible, Berlin had to be informed "by radio", but the British intercepts of these radio messages contain not a single message of this nature.

Even-more-important conclusions arise from an examination of the document in question in relation to Becker's testimony dated 26 March 1960 and the "Just Memo." In the present context, Becker's testimony is very important. I reproduce an extended excerpt from the salient part of it (Klee/Dressen/Riess 1991, pp. 69-71):

> *"When in December 1941 I was transferred to Rauff's department he explained the situation to me, saying that the psychological and moral stress on the firing squads was no longer bearable and that therefore the gassing programme had been started. He said that gas-vans with drivers were already on their way to or had indeed reached the individual Einsatzgruppen. My professional brief was to inspect the work of the individual Einsatzgruppen in the East in connection with gas-vans. This meant that I had to ensure that the mass killings carried out in the lorries proceeded properly. I was to pay particular attention to the mechanical functioning of these vans. I would like to mention that there were two types of gas-vans in operation: the Opel-Blitz, weighing 3.5 tonnes, and the large Saurerwagen, which as far as I know, weighed 7 tonnes. In the middle of December 1941, on Rauff's instructions, I left for the East to catch up with Einsatzgruppe A (Riga)… to inspect their Einsatzwagen [special vehicles] or gas-vans.* […]
>
> *On 4 or 5 January 1942 I received a message from Rauff asking me to report to him. On reporting to him I was instructed to depart immediately. This time I was to travel directly to Einsatzgruppe D in the south (Otto Ohlendorf) in Simferopol.*

I was originally to have traveled by aeroplane but this did not work out because of icy weather conditions. I thus left by train on 5 or 6 January 1942 traveling via Cracow and Fastov to Nikolayew. From there I flew in the Reichsführer's plane to Simferopol in the Crimea. The journey took me about three weeks and I reported to the head of Einsatzgruppe D. Otto Ohlendorf, sometime in January. I remained with this group until the beginning of April 1942 and then visited each Einsatzgruppe until I reached Group A in Riga.

In Riga I learned from Standartenführer Potzelt, Deputy Commander of the Security Police and SD in Riga, that the Einsatzkommando operating in Minsk needed some additional gas-vans as it could not manage with the three existing vans it had. At the same time I also learned from Potzelt that there was a Jewish-extermination camp in Minsk. I flew to Minsk by helicopter, correction, in a Fieseler Storch [light aircraft] *belonging to the Einsatzgruppe. Travelling with me was the Hauptsturmführer Rühl, the head of the extermination camp at Minsk, with whom I had discussed business in Riga. During the journey Rühl proposed to me that I provide additional vans since they could not keep up with exterminations. As I was not responsible for the ordering of gas-vans I suggested Rühl approach Rauff's office. When I saw what was going on in Minsk – that people of both sexes were being exterminated in their masses, that was it – I could not take any more and three days later, it must have been September 1942, I traveled back by lorry via Warsaw to Berlin.*

I had intended to report to Rauff at his office in Berlin. However, he was not there. Instead I was received by his deputy, Pradel, who had [in the] *meantime been promoted to Major… In a private conversation lasting about an hour I described to Pradel the working method of the gas-vans and voiced criticism about the fact that the offenders had not been gassed but had been suffocated because the operators had set the engine incorrectly. I told him that people had vomited and defecated.*

Pradel listened to me without saying a word. At the end of our interview he simply told me to write a detailed report on the matter."

Summarizing, Becker left for *Einsatzgruppe* D on 4 or 5 January 1942, reached Simferopol at the end of January, where he met Ohlendorf, and remained with him until the beginning of April. He later visited two other *Einsatzgruppen*, C and B, and reached *Einsatzgruppe* A at Riga on an unstated date; here he learned that at Minsk there was "a Jewish-extermination camp" commanded by a certain "*Hauptsturmführer* Rühl." Becker traveled from Riga to Minsk in the company of Rühl and visited the "extermination camp." He returned to Berlin three days later, in September 1942.

Who was *Hauptsturmführer* Rühl? The only known SS *Hauptsturmführer* Rühl was named Felix. This Felix Rühl was one of the defendants in the U.S. *Einsatzgruppen* Trial,[351] but he was a member of *Sonderkommando* 10b of *Einsatzgruppe* D, while the Rühl mentioned by Becker should have belonged to *Einsatzgruppe* A. Some writers have therefore theorized a reference to Adolf Rübe,

[351] He is named for the first time on p. VI, Vol. 4 of TWC.

who was *Kriminalsekretär* at the KdS of Minsk, but who bore the rank of SS *Hauptscharführer* and was certainly not the commander of an "extermination camp." He is cited twice in the records of the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial, but only as the author of an affidavit on Strauch,[352] that is, as a figure of secondary rank. Becker's reference to *Hauptsturmführer* Rühl is therefore unfounded in any case.

The "extermination camp," of which Rühl was presumably the commandant, must have been intended for Jews, and must, therefore, have been identical with Maly Trostenets, in which, according to orthodox Holocaust historiography, the Jewish transports arriving from Vienna and Theresienstadt were exterminated. The transports arriving in this camp during the period between August and September 1942, according to the verdict of the Koblenz District Court of 21 May 1963, 9 Ks 2/62, were seven in number and carried 6,993 deportees (see Table 24, p. 326).

Becker's narration turns out to be quite nonsensical. First of all, as I have noted above, these deportees were protected by Himmler's explicit order, and no one could "liquidate them."

In the second place, from Becker's narrative we deduce that the presumed visit to the "extermination camp" at Minsk took place in September 1942, and therefore refers to the presumed extermination of the four Jewish transports listed in Table 24. It follows that the three presumed "gas vans" present at Minsk, since "they could not keep up with exterminations," did not succeed in gassing 3,600 persons in 21 days, which is in contradiction to the claims made by Gerlach; if in fact each "gas van" could kill 350-400 persons per day, the three "gas vans" in use would have taken one day to exterminate one transport, four days to exterminate them all, but 21 days went by between the date of the first and the last transport. This means that, at least theoretically, even if assuming the minimum capacity, in this interval of time the three "gas vans" could have gassed (3 vans × 21 days × 350 victims/day=) 22,050 persons; also including the transports from the month of August (46 days), the total would have been (3 × 46 × 350 =) 48,300 compared to 6,300 newly arriving Jews. In practice, the "extermination camp" was overequipped compared to its needs, therefore it is absurd that Rühl would have requested Becker to "provide additional vans."

In the third place, the chronology of events is rather confused. Becker is said to have remained at *Einsatzgruppe* D from the end of January to the beginning of April 1942, then visited *Einsatzgruppe* C, where he remained until 16 May. The very day he wrote his letter, in fact, Becker continued his inspection trip to *Einsatzgruppe* B; at an unspecified date he went to Riga, where he learned that "the Einsatzkommando operating in Minsk needed some additional gas-vans as it could not manage with the three existing vans it had," and that in Minsk there was an "extermination camp". He flew to Minsk, saw the "extermination camp," and three days later, in September, he returned to Berlin. It follows that he went to Riga not earlier than the second half of August, assuming that he had returned

[352] TWC, Vol. 4, pp. 448, 564. The affidavit bears the date 23 October 1947 (NO-5498).

to Berlin at the beginning of September. But the request for the third "gas vans", which was supposed to be the result of Becker's advice (Rühl asked him for more "gas vans" and Becker told him to turn to Rauff) is dated June 15, 1942, at least two months earlier. It is therefore clear that Becker created a story off-the-cuff, as best he could, based on the documents he was shown.

Fourth, from the orthodox point of view: Based on what logic did the SS send entire transports of deportees from the Reich and the Protectorate to Minsk/Trostenets, in order to select only 10% of them for labor purposes and kill the remaining 90%? This inconsistency was noted even by von dem Bach-Zelewski, who, in the interrogation of March 25, 1946, declared:[353]

> *"It is to be noticed that Minsk did not have any extermination gas plant. It is strange, or inconsistent, that Jews who could have very well been liquidated in the Reich, should be sent to Minsk."*

As I have stressed elsewhere, the trains which arrived at Minsk from western Europe, depending on the rail lines they took, traveled right past Treblinka, which was only 4 km or 80 km away, or 100 km from Auschwitz, or 140 km from Sobibór (Graf/Kues/Mattogno, pp. 307f.). On the other hand, it is known that, precisely during this same period, on 17 August 1942, the RSHA, in the person of SS *Obersturmbannführer* Rudolf Siegert, had proposed the institution of a "collection camp in Western Germany" to reduce the costs of transporting Jews from France to Auschwitz (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 682-684). It therefore made no sense to transport deportees unable to work as far as Minsk who easily could have been killed in the above-mentioned "extermination camps."

The alternative would be that the deportees from these transports were killed on a local initiative in violation of Himmler's order: but on whose initiative? That of an SS *Unterscharführer* (sergeant)?

According to Becker's narrative, he traveled to Berlin in September 1942 in order to report to Rauff on his inspection of the *Einsatzgruppen*'s "gas vans"; but Rauff was not there, and his deputy, Pradel, advised him to write a detailed report. This report should have been Becker's letter to Rauff dated 15 May 1942. But the first problem is the date, which is in obvious contradiction to Becker's entire narrative. The letter in question moreover refers to the period spent by Becker with *Einsatzgruppen* D and C, because the first sentence says: "The overhauling of vans by groups D and C is finished," while the last sentence states: "Today I shall continue my journey to group B, where I can be reached with further news." Becker is therefore supposed to have stopped there from mid-May until the month of September with *Einsatzgruppen* B and A, but this is said to have required another report to Rauff, which does not exist, and which Becker does not even mention. The initial sentence, which mentions the completion of the modification of the vehicles of *Einsatzgruppe* D and C, presupposes that the recipient of the letter already knew when this overhaul had started and why it had been carried out. Logically, this requires the existence of an earlier report or

[353] YVA, O.18-90, p. 6.

communication containing this information. But Becker did not say anything about this.

Although Becker, according to himself, remained with Ohlendorf for a little over two months, Ohlendorf, for his part, knew practically nothing about it, so much so as to attribute to Becker the capacity of inventor of the "gas vans." But also vice versa: in the letter under discussion, Becker does not mention Ohlendorf or any other leader of *Einsatzgruppen* C, B and A.

While Becker, Rauff and Ohlendorf should have explained the letter of 15 May 1942, it happens on the contrary that it is this letter which explains their declarations, that is, they presuppose it from the very outset as their inspiring and informative principle, without which they would not have known what to say about the "gas vans."

Finally, we will examine Becker's letter of 15 May 1942 in relation to the so-called "Just Memo." As we have seen earlier, Becker's specific task at the *Einsatzgruppen* was "to inspect the work of the individual *Einsatzgruppen* in the East in connection with gas-vans. This meant that I had to ensure that the mass killings carried out in the lorries proceeded properly. I was to pay particular attention to the mechanical functioning of these vans."

The "Just Memo" is dated 5 June 1942 with the file reference number "II D 3a (9) No. 214/42 g.RS." and the subject line "Technical modifications to the special vehicles deployed in service and in the process of construction."[354] This proposed seven technical modifications to be made to the "special vehicles" based on the "other experiences made so far." If we consider that this memo is dated a little over two weeks after Becker's letter, we must conclude that the modifications were proposed precisely on the basis of the "experiences" gathered by Becker; in the contrary case, his mission to the East would have been in vain and would have made no sense. The "Just Memo" sets forth seven proposed modifications:

1. installation of slits in the rear part of the body
2. shortening of the body by 1 meter
3. connection of the gas inflow pipe to the body from above
4. installation of an outlet for liquids exiting the floor of the body
5. elimination of the peephole
6. protection for the lights
7. movable grid for unloading bodies.

Becker's letter does not mention any of the technical problems which had led to the proposal of these modifications, but indicates others, which, however, are ignored by the "Just Memo":

1. inability of the Saurer vehicles to drive on wet roads;
2. cracking of the "cuff of the combined oil-air brake";
3. loosening of "caulkings and rivets."

On the other hand, the "Just Memo" begins with the following words:

[354] NARA, T-175/254, 2747507.

> *"For example 97,000 were processed since December 1941 with 3 deployed vehicles without any defects in the vehicles becoming apparent. The known explosion at Kulmhof* [=Chełmno] *has to be assessed as a single case."*

If – as orthodox Holocaust historians insist – this is a reference to the Chełmno Camp, the proposed technical modifications contained in the document are inexplicable, since the 3 "gas vans" in this camp had functioned "without any defects […] becoming apparent." What is more, one of these "gas vans" was of the Saurer make (Montague, p. 204), which should therefore have presented the same defects as indicated by Becker for this series of vehicles:

> *"While the vans of the first series can also be put into action if the weather is not too bad, the vans of the second series (Saurer) stop completely in rainy weather. If it has rained for instance for only one half hour, the van cannot be used because it simply skids away. It can only be used in absolutely dry weather."*

The "Just Memo," by contrast, does not even mention this serious defect, but limits itself to reporting:[355]

> *"The vans' load usually amounts to 9 to 10 per m². Although no overloading occurs thereby for the spacious Saurer special vehicles, utilization in that form is not possible, because their off-road capability is highly reduced by this. A reduction of the load area appears to be necessary. This will be achieved by shortening the body by approximately 1 m."*

Here, the reduction in the vehicle's capacity for movement does not depend on the road surface, but on the body structure, so that the problem would have occurred on dry roads as well. Why doesn't the Just Document mention the serious problem of the wet roads raised by Becker's letter?

Alvarez has already stressed the absurdity of this observation in the context of the catastrophic condition of Russian roads in autumn and winter (Alvarez/Marais, p. 47). This fact is fully confirmed by a report from *Einsatzgruppe* C dated 17 September 1941:[356]

> *"Apart from the areas of Zhitomir, Vinnitsa and Kamenets-Podolsky, the road network in the eastern Ukraine is so wide-meshed that even large cities cannot be reached during inclement weather. Half an hour of rain is enough to make the unpaved roads Uman-Odessa, Pervomaysk-Kirovograd etc. impassible. East of the Kiev-Odessa line, roads which can still be traveled on after a rain are almost non-existent. In the fall and winter almost all 'roads' (shosseynye dorogi (highway roads), gruntovye dorogi (earth roads) or planer*[?]*) in the black-earth region, that is, the greater part of the Ukraine, are impassible by motor vehicles."*

Einsatzgruppe B also complained of the difficulties caused "by the roads and trails having become bottomless as a result of the bad and wet weather of the past weeks,"[357] as well as the impossibility of using motor vehicles after bad weather "on the long, bottomless and clogged roads" in the region around Smolensk.[358] In

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355 NARA, T-175/254, 2747508.
356 EM No. 86 dated 17 September 1941; Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 478.
357 EM No. 108 dated 9 October 1941; *ibid.*, p. 656.
358 EM No. 133 dated 14 November 1941; *ibid.*, p. 785.

the area of Mogilev, some *kolkhozes* were almost inaccessible "during bad weather."[359] *Sonderkommando* 4a of *Einsatzgruppe* C had to abandon the idea of traveling to Nezhin three times because "it was impossible to reach the town on the rain-softened roads, which were impassible for motor vehicles."[360]

The "Summary" of British intercepts "Covering the period 16 December 1941 – 15th January 1942" dedicates a paragraph to the transports, in which it speaks as follows about the roads:[361]

> *"The badness of the roads is the Leitmotiv of these decodes. It has been heard often enough already in this summary not to need further stressing."*

The following summary, which refers to the period 16 January to 15 February 1942, is even more explicit on this topic:[362]

> *"Even greater difficulties were caused by the heavy snow-falls which dislocated all transport through the month. Snow drifts blocked nearly all roads in the Ukraine interrupting rail and courier services through the whole region* […] *and preventing the cipher key for February from being delivered until very late. The Volksdeutschemittelstelle in Nikolajew was completely cut off for a long time and a series of messages to hand tells of frustrated attempts to restore communications with the outside world. 'Road to Dnjepropetrowsk completely blocked' (30.1.42). 'In spite of repeated attempts passage impossible for some time to come' (1.2.42). 'Further efforts to reach DNJEPROPETROWSK with 3 lorries have failed and all other roads are similarly snowbound' (4.2.42).* […] *'To Regional Commissar PROSKUROW. Roads in the general frontier region are completely snowbound. Courier service interrupted. Local population must be ruthlessly pressed into service to help ease the situation. General Commissar BREST.'"*

This area is the one where *Einsatzgruppe* D was operating, and the period is the one of Becker's alleged inspection, but in his letter there is not the slightest mention of this very serious problem of the communication routes because of the snow, which would have made the "gas vans" unusable.

But there is another serious incongruity which is no less serious. The memo dated 27 April 1942 headed "Reichssicherheitshauptamt II D 3 a (9) No. 668/42-121," which has as its subject "Fast-unloading device for the special vehicles,"[363] examines three plans to facilitate unloading the vehicle:

> *"a) Tilting mechanism for coachwork,"*
> *"b) Making floor grate tiltable"* and
> *"c) Extractable and retractable grate (suggestion)."*

The first two projects were discarded because they were technically cumbersome and costly. The third, however, was considered feasible and was set forth in minute detail. The "Just Memo," as I have explained before, suggests *seven* modifi-

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[359] *Ibid.*, p. 786.
[360] EM No. 135 dated 19 Nov. 1941; *ibid.*, p. 816.
[361] TNA, HW 16-6, ZIP/MSGP 32/14.2.42.
[362] TNA, HW 16-6, ZIP/MSGP 33/17.3.42.
[363] NARA, T-175/254, 2747517.

cations, however, the last of which, the one proposed precisely in the above-mentioned memo, is described as follows:[364]

> *"In order to achieve a faster and easier unloading of the vehicle, a retractable grate is to be installed. It is to be guided on small wheels in U-shaped iron rails. The extraction and retraction has to happen by means of a cable winch mounted below the vehicle."*

Since in the *Vermerk* of 27 April 1942 this design modification is described in 83 lines in this draft, the reference to this document would have been obvious and even inevitable. Why, then, does it not appear? But that is not enough: the memo dated 23 June 1942, which follows the "Just Memo" by little more than two weeks, completely abandons the idea of the retractable grid,[365] which this last document presents, by contrast, as a directive to be implemented, which is a contradiction.

This means that Becker's letter dated 15 May 1942 and the "Just Memo" have neither any reciprocal relation to each other, nor to the correspondence between the RSHA and the Gaubschat Company, which is certainly authentic.

All the other documents are in fact explicitly correlated, with the exception of the memo dated 27 April 1942 that refers to another, preceding letter which has not been preserved (see p. 322 for sources and translated excerpts from these documents):

– The letter from the RSHA ("*Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD II D 3 a (9) No. 668/42-121*") to the Gaubschat Company dated 30 April 1942, which regards "Delivered 10 Saurer chassis" requesting a "change of the floor grate" as proposed in the memo dated 27 April 1942.
– The response by the Gaubschat Company, dated 14 May 1942, confirming receipt of the change request.
– The letter from the RSHA (*"Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD II D 3 a (9) B. No. 668/42*") dated 23 June 1942 explicitly refers to the letter mentioned above: "Letter sales Wa/Ka. of 14 May [19]42." This document explicitly recalls the original, missing letter from the RSHA, stating that 20 vehicles have already been delivered and that ten more are to be equipped with the changed coachworks.
– The answer by the Gaubschat Company dated 18 September 1942 confirms acceptance of the order.
– The letter by the Gaubschat Company dated 24 September 1942, linked to the RSHA letter of the 23rd, informs about the company's intention "to take into production the remaining vehicles."

The two documents in question are therefore quite extraneous to the authentic documentation,[366] which amounts to further proof that these documents are fabrications, as documented, by the way, by Alvarez and Marais.

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[364] NARA, T-175/254, 2747510.
[365] NARA, T-175/254, 2747513, Point 3.
[366] This also applies to Rauff's letter dated 26 March 1942, see Mattogno 2016b, pp. 145-148.

6.6. "Gas Vans" in the British Intercepts

The enormous mass of British intercepts of German messages contains not a single mention of "gas vans," although several types of vehicles are mentioned. For example, a message dated 20 October 1941 mentions "2 HORCH ambulances" arriving at Zwickau, probably at the office of Higher SS and Police Leader von dem Bach-Zelewski for the SS *Kavallerie Brigade*.[367] Another message, dated 23 October, speaks of a "motor ambulance."[368] On 7 November, the British intercepted the following message:[369]

> *"DSO4 de SQF SQF Nr 34 2010 2 Tle 125 89 SRJ 3742*
> *To: Security Police WARSAW, forward to Obersturmführer MEPCE.*
> *The Obergruppenführer wishes to be immediately informed when the vehicle departs (MANDORCNY Truppenwirt XL. X.) or arrives here – special vans to be here until… 1*
> *Higher SS and Police leader Russia Center."*

Of particular importance is the intercept of 4 March 1942 cited in Subchapter 6.3., which mentions truck bodies in relation with the Gaubschat Company, but without reference to the presumed "*Gaswagen.*"

Vehicles powered by wood-gas generators are also mentioned, as in the message dated 7 May 1943:[370]

> *"To N. Headquarters, BOBRUISK.*
> *Wood gas generators 135016 for 1½ to. are available in the SS FHA in any quantity. In case of need, please indicate quantity. Send 2 men for transport SS Oberscharführer KRAFT to BERLIN. Report to SS Obersturmbannführer RADDATZ.*
> *KRAFT, SS Oberscharführer"*

Since the British intercepts contain multiple references to shootings of Jews in the East, it is impossible to believe that the absence of any mention of "gas vans" is attributable to secrecy.

6.7. "Gas Vans" in Allied Propaganda

Starting in 1940, the British Political Warfare Executive (PWE) organized a vast "Rumors and Whispers Campaign" based on the creation of false so-called "sibs"– from the English "sibilant," the soft hissing sound of whispers at a distance – which were then spread through agents scattered in cities in neutral countries, such as Lisbon, Stockholm, Istanbul and Zürich. The Joint Intelligence Committee, in dedicated meetings, selected the "sibs" which had been submitted to it by the Political Intelligence Department; those "approved for dissemination" were listed in special "most secret" lists.

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[367] TNA, HW 16-32. German Police Decodes: 20.10.41. ZIP/G.P.D.428/5.11.41.
[368] *Ibid.*: 23.10.41. ZIP/G.P.D.424/4.11.41.
[369] *Ibid.*: Nr. 1. Traffic: 7.11.41. ZIP/G.P.D.483/11.12.41.
[370] *Ibid.*: Nr. 3. Traffic: 7.5.43. ZIP/GPDD 472d/11.5.43.

Among the "sibs approved at the meeting held on 31.12.43," Number C/119, is this one:[371]

> *"A certain number of German gas-vans have been apportioned to Rumania and are waiting for the Russians to get nearer to the Roumanian frontiers before they are used against Roumanian citizens."*

This was just one aspect of Allied propaganda. "General Information No. 2 (Part 2)" of 16 February 1942 carried the following message:[371]

> *"A TASS report from Geneva, dated February 13th (published in the Moscow papers for February 14th), says that a Swede, who arrived in Berlin late in January, related that there is much talk in Berlin about the fact that severely wounded German soldiers are being killed in special gas chambers, which are provided in almost every German field-ambulance. German doctors and officers, friends of this Swede, have confirmed this fact."*

A secret telegram sent on 14 October 1941 by a "Delegate of the Government for the Cracow District," presumably to the Polish government in exile at London, stated that death was looming over 156,000 inmates at Auschwitz plus 12,400 deportees from Warsaw (these figures are quite imaginative), stating:[372]

> *"Mobile gas chambers installed on lorries so-called 'sonderkammer' /luryk/ already transport prisoners in the direction of Maczki."*

The direction taken by these alleged transports is rather curious, since "Maczki" is an absolutely insignificant village located 5 km north of Jaworzno, a locality approximately 20 km north of Auschwitz. The term "luryk" does not exist in Polish; the word "lora" denotes an open freight car; the term is apparently intended to recall the English word "lorry".

It is important to note that Maczki is the same place mentioned in the message sent by the Auschwitz Resistance on September 21, 1944, which mentions an alleged "gas van" (see Subsection 6.5.1.2.), the propaganda core of which evidently had already been created on October 14, 1941, meaning before the alleged "official" use of the first "gas van"!

6.8. British "Gas Vans"

The most-paradoxical thing about the story of the presumed mobile gas chambers is that the British, starting in 1936, built and used at least 36 gas vans for police and civilian anti-gas training purposes. The related documentation may be found in Brochure HO 45/18170 of The National Archives in London.[373] The decision to build gas vans was taken at the beginning of 1936, as deduced from the circular letter of The Under Secretary of State, Home Office (Air Raid Precautions Dept.), Horseferry House, dated 17 December 1936, which states:

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371 TNA, FO 898/69.

372 TNA, FO 371/39454.

373 Subsequent quotations are taken from this brochure; the pages are not numbered progressively; therefore, only the headings of the relevant sections are given here.

> *"With reference to the Home Office circulars of the 24th February and 31st August, 1936, on the subject of local anti-gas training, I am directed by the Secretary of State to communicate the following information regarding the availability of the Home Office gas vans – i.e. mobile gas chambers in which those under instruction can wear respirators in gas."*

The anticipated gas for training purposes was "the tear gas known as C.A.P., capsules of which are supplied by the Home office." According to this circular letter, apart from the gas vans, there also existed "fixed gas chambers" to which I will return later. The letter states that,

> *"where fixed gas chambers are available, they should be used in preference to a gas van, to avoid unnecessary journeys by the latter."*

"Appendix I" refers to the "Distribution of Home Office Gas Vans" and mentions the 26 cities in which the gas vans were located. "Appendix II" contains the "Instructions to Chief Constables in charge of Home Office Gas Vans as to control of the van and its programme of use." "Appendix III" reports the "Rules for instructors as to admission of trainees into gas," which, among other things, required:

> *"(c) Not more than 10 persons may be in the gas chamber at the same time: preferably not more than 8.*
> *(d) To conserve the concentration in the chamber, the door of the van should not be open while persons are entering or leaving the other end of the canopy.*
> *(e) The normal time in the chamber for each group should be 3 to 5 minutes."*

"Appendix IV" regards the "Instruction to drivers of Home Office Gas Vans," which deserve to be quoted at length:

> *"<u>Special Equipment Carried.</u>*
> *1. The following are to be kept in the locked cupboard over the driving seat:–*
> *– Tin of gas capsules.*
> *– Box of smelling samples.*
> *– A small bottle with olive oil.*
> *– Driver's respirator, and spare respirators if required.*
> *– A copy of these Instructions.*
> *This cupboard will always be kept locked, the key being in the charge of the drivers.*
> *<u>Preparation of Van for Use.</u>*
> *2. On arrival at the place where the van is to be used, the driver will report to the Instructor in charge of the trainees for whom the van is required, and consult him as to placing the van.*
> *3. The van should be placed with the front pointing towards the wind, and 20 yards clear of any occupied building or public street or place in the down-wind direction, and where possible, in all directions.*
> *4. Having settled with the Instructor the position of the van, the driver will fit the ramp and erect the canopy, and see that the window of the chamber is closed.*

Putting up Gas Cloud.

5. The gas cloud may be put up by the driver, unless the Instructor wishes to put it up himself.

6. One capsule is sufficient to fill the van, but the concentration may be reinforced with further capsules, one at a time, as required. The concentration created by one capsule should, in normal circumstances, be sufficient for two groups of trainees to pass through the chamber.

7. The capsule should be heated on a tin lid or tray over a small spirit lamp on the shelf provided. The capsule should first be pierced with a pin or knife. The capsule must not be allowed to catch fire: if it does, the lachrymatory effect of the gas will be lost.

8. When heating the capsule the driver or Instructor will always wear his respirator. In the event of any of the solid contents of the capsule coming in contact with the skin, the part should be immediately washed with soap and hot water, and smeared with olive oil.

Admission of Trainees into Chamber.

9. The Instructor and not the driver will be responsible for the admission of trainees into the chamber. The driver will stand at the foot of the ramp to give assistance to persons in the chamber, or leaving it hurriedly, as required.

10. The driver will draw the attention of the Instructor to the rules given at the end of these Instructions.

Clearing the Chamber.

11. Except in abnormal circumstances the clearing of the gas from the chamber will be effected before the van is moved. The decision will rest with the Instructor.

12. The process will not be done quickly unless the van is in a very large open space. The canopy will be kept in position and the window and door of the chamber, and the curtain at the back of the canopy, opened slightly. After 5 minutes or so the canopy may be removed and the window and door opened fully. The whole process should occupy 10 to 15 minutes.

13. In exceptional circumstances, the Instructor may require the van to be driven a short distance to a more open position before being cleared. If so, he will send a man with the van to guide and assist the driver. The van will return, after being cleared, to pick up the ramp and canopy.

14. While the van is being moved with gas in the chamber, the window and door must be kept shut. Special care must be taken in driving.

Box of Smelling Samples.

15. The box of smelling samples will not be used except under the direct supervision of the Instructor, who will return it to the driver before the van departs. The box when not in use must be kept locked, the key being in charge of the driver.
[…]

Records.

16. The driver will keep a record book in which he will enter the following particulars on every occasion on which the van is used:–

(i) Date and exact place where van is used: time of arrival at and departure from the place.

(ii) Name of Instructor in charge of trainees, and the authority or organization to which he belongs.
(iii) Total number of persons admitted into chamber when filled with gas.
(iv) Number of capsules used.
(v) Whether or not the Instructor obtained the use of the box of smelling samples.
When on the Road.
17. When the van is on the road, the window and door of the chamber will be kept shut.
18. One passenger only may be carried in the driving compartment, and no person may be carried in the chamber of the van.
In case of Fire.
19. In case of fire, every endeavour should be made to remove the tin of capsules as quickly as possible.
Cleansing the Chamber.
20. The ceiling, walls, and floor of the chamber will be thoroughly washed with soap and warm water at least once a week when the van is in use."

A form titled "Home Office Gas Vans Nos. 1-32. Record of use and mileage" summarizes the utilization data for the second half of 1936. The periods under consideration are "up to 30 September," "October," "November" and "December." The last column reports the sum of the data for the four items up to 31 December:

– No. of occasions on which van was used: 1,765
– Total number of persons who have passed through chamber: 34,625
– Total mileage run: 38,240.5
– Estimated drivers' time (in hours): 7,491.75.

There were also "naval gas chambers"[374] and "military gas chambers."[375] On 16 May 1936, the Chief Constable's Office, West Hill, Winchester, asked Assistant Adjutant General, Command Headquarters, Aldershot, if he could make the "Military Gas Chamber at Willems barracks, Aldershot" available for "Anti-Gas Training for Police." The commanders at Aldershot agreed to do so.[376] A circular letter dated 11 November 1939 also regulated the construction of "Fixed Gas Chambers,"[377] establishing the following "Instructions relating to Fixed Gas Chambers":

"(i) The cubic capacity should not be less than 500 cubic feet (as one C.A.P. capsule is sufficient to fill a chamber of this capacity) or greater than 1,000 cubic feet.
(ii) An air lock, external to the chamber itself, should be provided.
(iii) Adequate ventilation (e.g. through draught from door and window) should be provided in order to clear the chamber of C.A.P. after use.

[374] TNA, HO 45/18170, Plan Division, Naval Staff, Admiralty, S.W.1, 17 February 1937.
[375] *Ibid.*, The War Office, 1 March 1937.
[376] *Ibid.*, Headquarters, Aldershot Command. Aldershot, 2 June 1936.
[377] *Ibid.*, Ministry of Home Security, Air Raid Precautions Dept., Horseferry House, 11. November, 1939. A.R.P. Department Circular No. 303/1939. Fixed Gas Chambers.

(iv) The gas chamber should not be sited within a distance of 60 feet from the nearest occupied building, public street or place, in any direction."

The paragraph "Specification for a Fixed Gas Chamber" supplied detailed information on the construction design of the floor, walls, roof, doors, borrowed light and window. Brochure HO 45/18170 also contains two plant diagrams very similar to a "Fixed Gas Chamber," dated "July 1939" and "October 1939."

In the early 1950s, the English built a much-more-sophisticated gas van. Its history, described in a document titled "Adaptation of Home Office Gas Van to the Exposure of Human Subjects to GB [= Sarin] Vapour" drawn up by G.A. Kirkham and D. Thorp, was introduced as follows:[378]

"A mobile gas chamber was obtained on loan from the Home Office with a view to its use for the exposure of human subjects to controlled concentrations of GB vapour. Certain modifications were required, including the provision of vaporising and dispersing apparatus for the GB, in order to make the chamber suitable for the purpose in hand, and the present report embodies a description of the modifications made and the trials which were carried out to ensure that the characteristics of the chamber were satisfactory."

There followed a "Description of the original gas van":

"The Gas Van as received consisted of a closed chamber provided with an air-lock entry, the whole being mounted on a Ford Thames chassis. The sides and roof were double-skinned with a 2" cavity, being made of aluminium on a wooden framework. The interior was white enamelled and there was a small window on either side, only one of which could be opened. The only method of clearing the chamber was to open the air-lock doors and one window, and allow the concentration to diffuse out.

The dimensions of the chamber were as follows:

– Exposure chamber: 320 cm long × 210 cm wide × 195 cm high = 13 m³.

– Air lock: 95 cm long × 210 cm wide × 195 cm high = 3.9 m³."

A photograph showed the gas van after the modifications (see Document I.6.3.[378])

From the above, we may deduce important information on the presumed National-Socialist "gas vans." If they had really existed, knowing the proverbial German meticulousness, they would have been monitored at least as much as the British gas vans. There would have been general instructions on the use of the vehicle (use, maintenance, cleaning, safety standards, etc.), in addition to a vehicle log book in which the driver would have had to note all the data relating to its use: distance traveled, with stops, mileage, fuel consumption, number of persons "passed through chamber" from time to time and day by day, as well as monthly statistical summaries. Only in this way would the RSHA have been able to evaluate the efficiency and appropriateness of using the "gas vans."

One could, of course, take recourse to the usual loophole used by orthodox historians: "all these documents were destroyed." The insuperable problem is, however, that such allegedly destroyed documents were never mentioned by any

[378] TNA, WO 88/2693.

of the post-war witnesses, not even by the men who are said to have driven the vans.

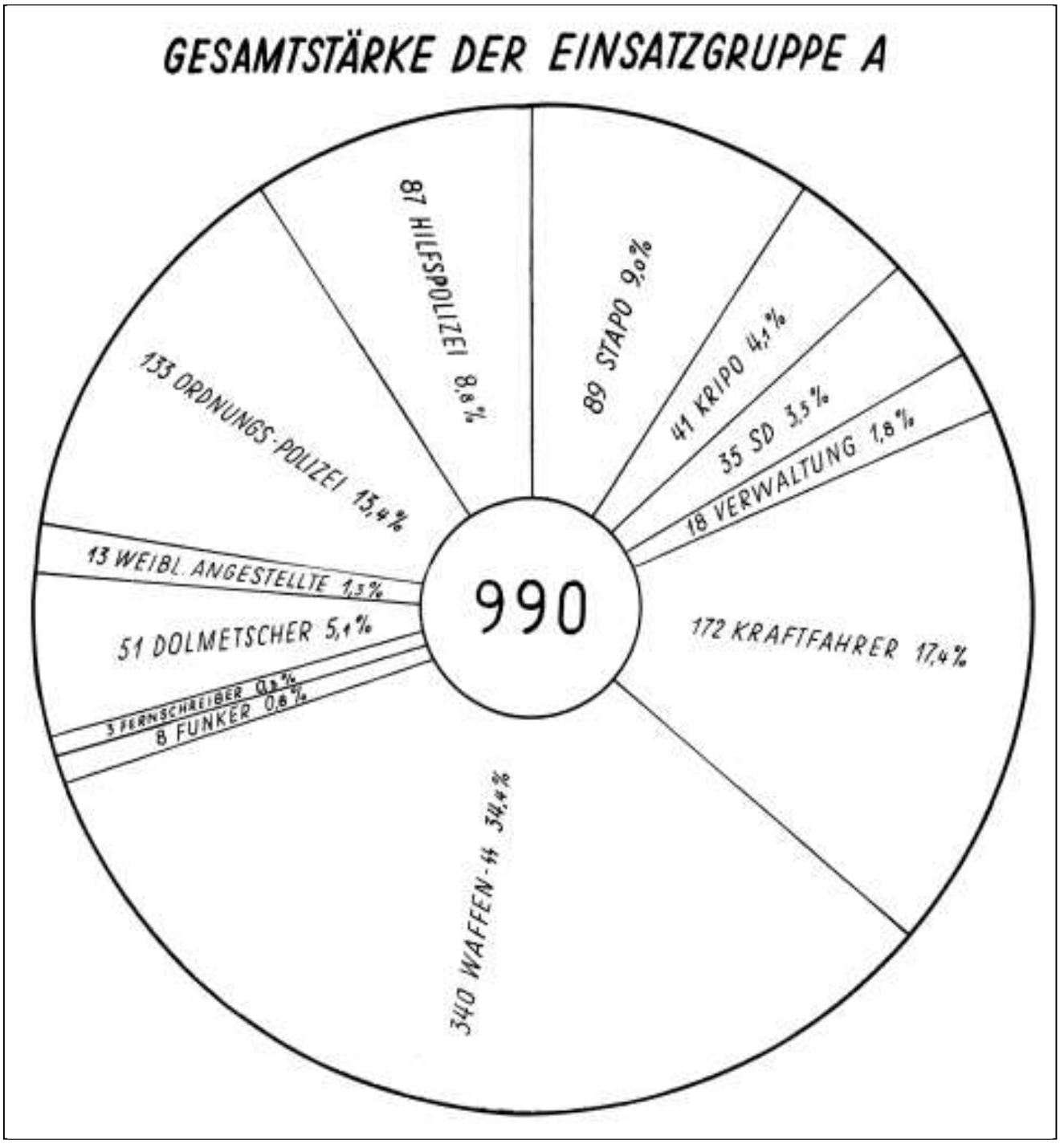
One might add that the British intercepts of German radio messages not only contain no trace about any homicidal "gas van," but also none about any kind of documentation of them.

In conclusion, the "gas vans" are not a matter of history, but fall within the realm of Holocaust fables.

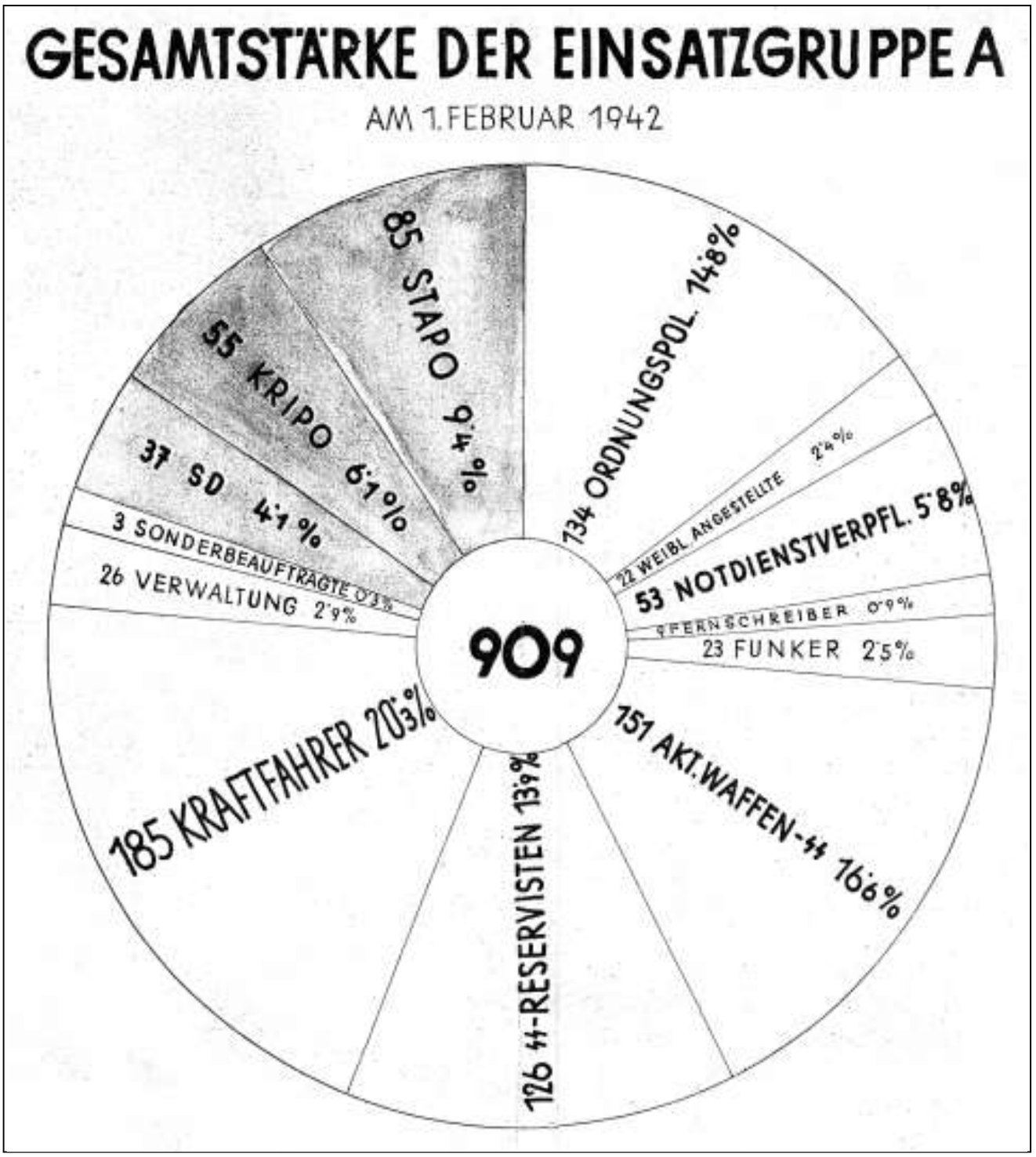
Appendix

A list of abbreviations, an index of names as well as a comprehensive bibliography can be found at the end of the second part of this work.

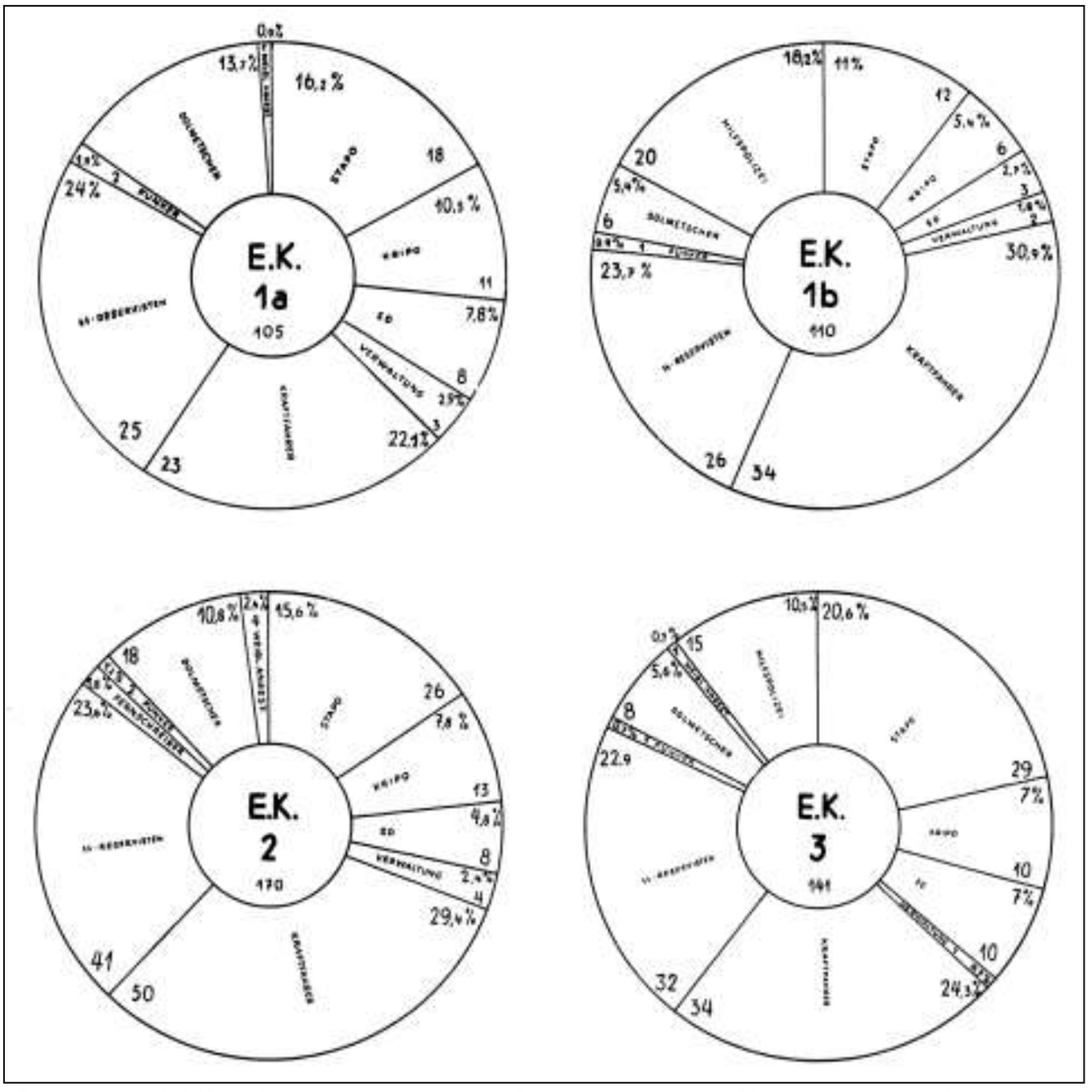
Documents



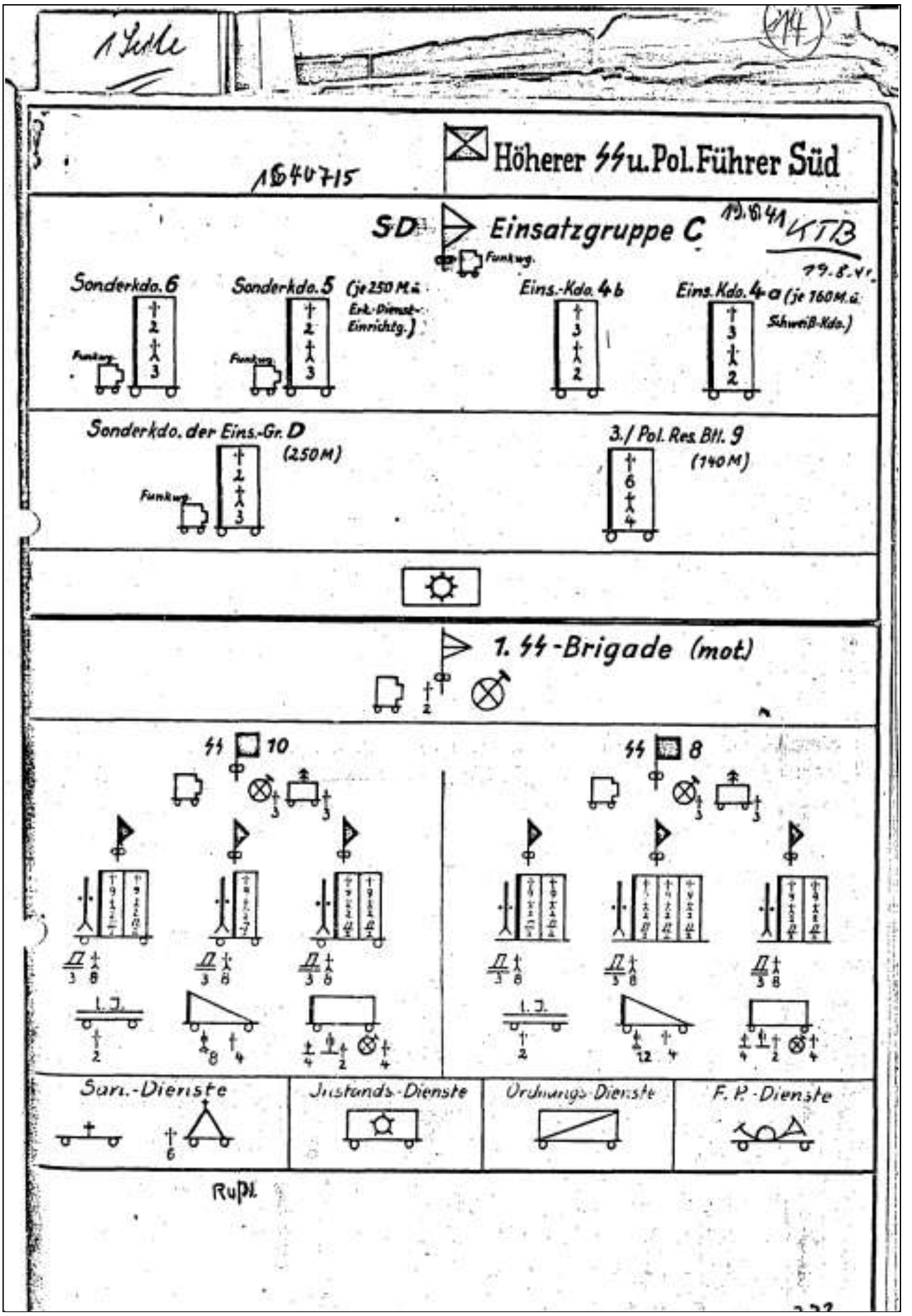
Document I.1.1. "Gesamtstärke der Einsatzgruppe *A" ("Total Strength of Einsatzgruppe A"), 15 Oct.1941, from: "Gesamtbericht bis zum 15.Oktober 1941" ("Summary Report up to 15 October 1941"). From: RGVA, 500-4-93, Annex 1a*



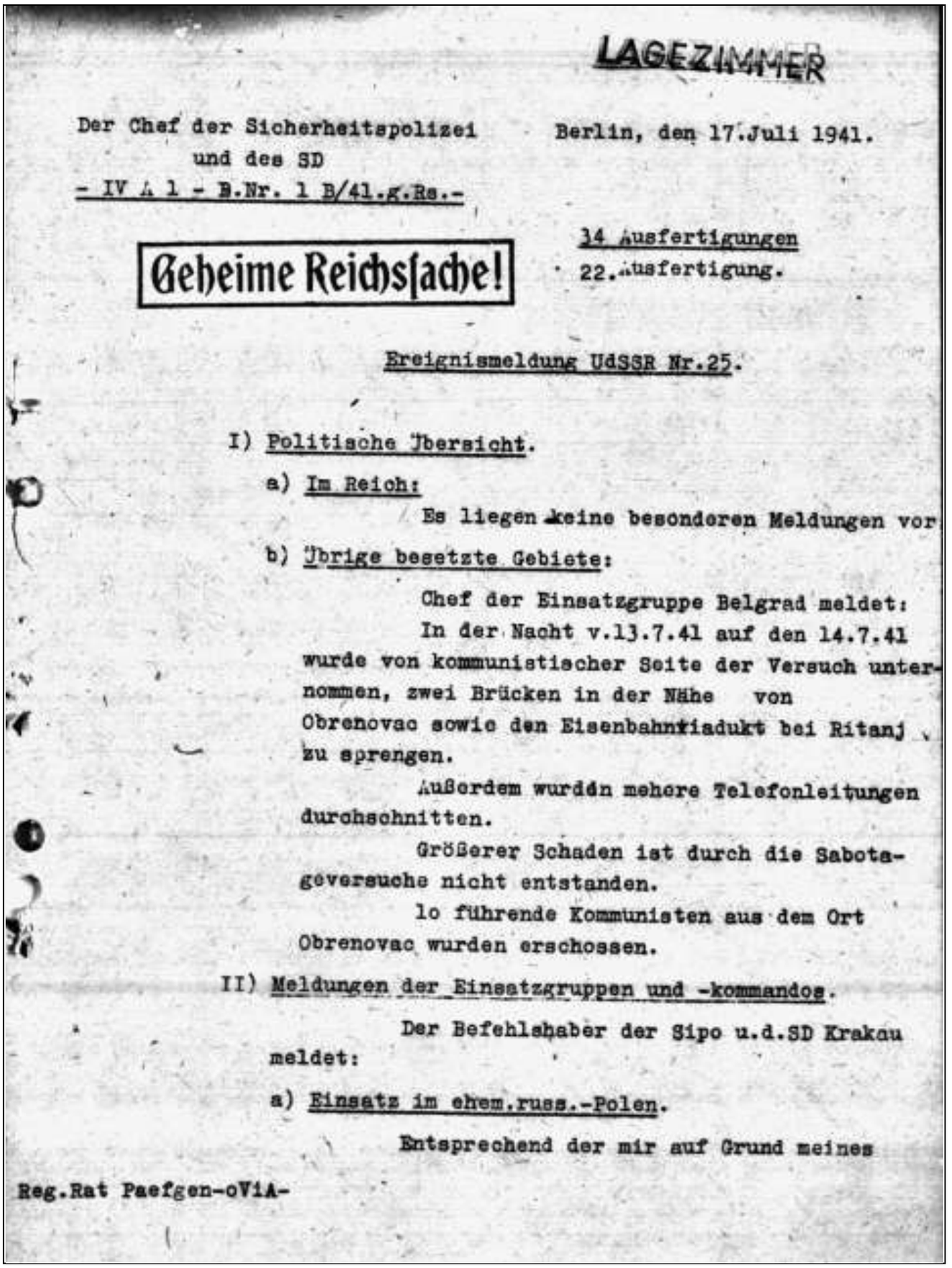
Document I.1.2. "Gesamtstärke der Einsatzgruppe *A" ("Total Strength of Einsatzgruppe A"), 1 Feb. 1942, from: "Gesamtbericht vom 16. Oktober bis 31. Januar 1942" ("Summary Report of 16 October* [1941] *– 31 January 1942")*, *Stahlecker. From: RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 183.*



Document I.1.3. "Verteilungsplan der Angehörigen der Einsatzgruppe *A auf die Einsatzkommandos." From: "Gesamtbericht bis zum 15.Oktober 1941" RGVA, 550-4-93, Annex 1b.*



Document I.1.4. "Höhere SS u. Pol. Führer Süd", organizational chart dated 18 August 1941. From: YVA, O.53-131, p. 14.



LAGEZIMMER

Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei Berlin, den 17.Juli 1941.
und des SD
- IV A 1 - B.Nr. 1 B/41.g.Rs.-

34 Ausfertigungen
22.Ausfertigung.

Geheime Reichssache!

Ereignismeldung UdSSR Nr.25.

I) Politische Übersicht.

a) Im Reich:

Es liegen keine besonderen Meldungen vor

b) Übrige besetzte Gebiete:

Chef der Einsatzgruppe Belgrad meldet:

In der Nacht v.13.7.41 auf den 14.7.41 wurde von kommunistischer Seite der Versuch unternommen, zwei Brücken in der Nähe von Obrenovac sowie den Eisenbahnviadukt bei Ritanj zu sprengen.

Außerdem wurdn mehere Telefonleitungen durchschnitten.

Größerer Schaden ist durch die Sabotageversuche nicht entstanden.

lo führende Kommunisten aus dem Ort Obrenovac wurden erschossen.

II) Meldungen der Einsatzgruppen und -kommandos.

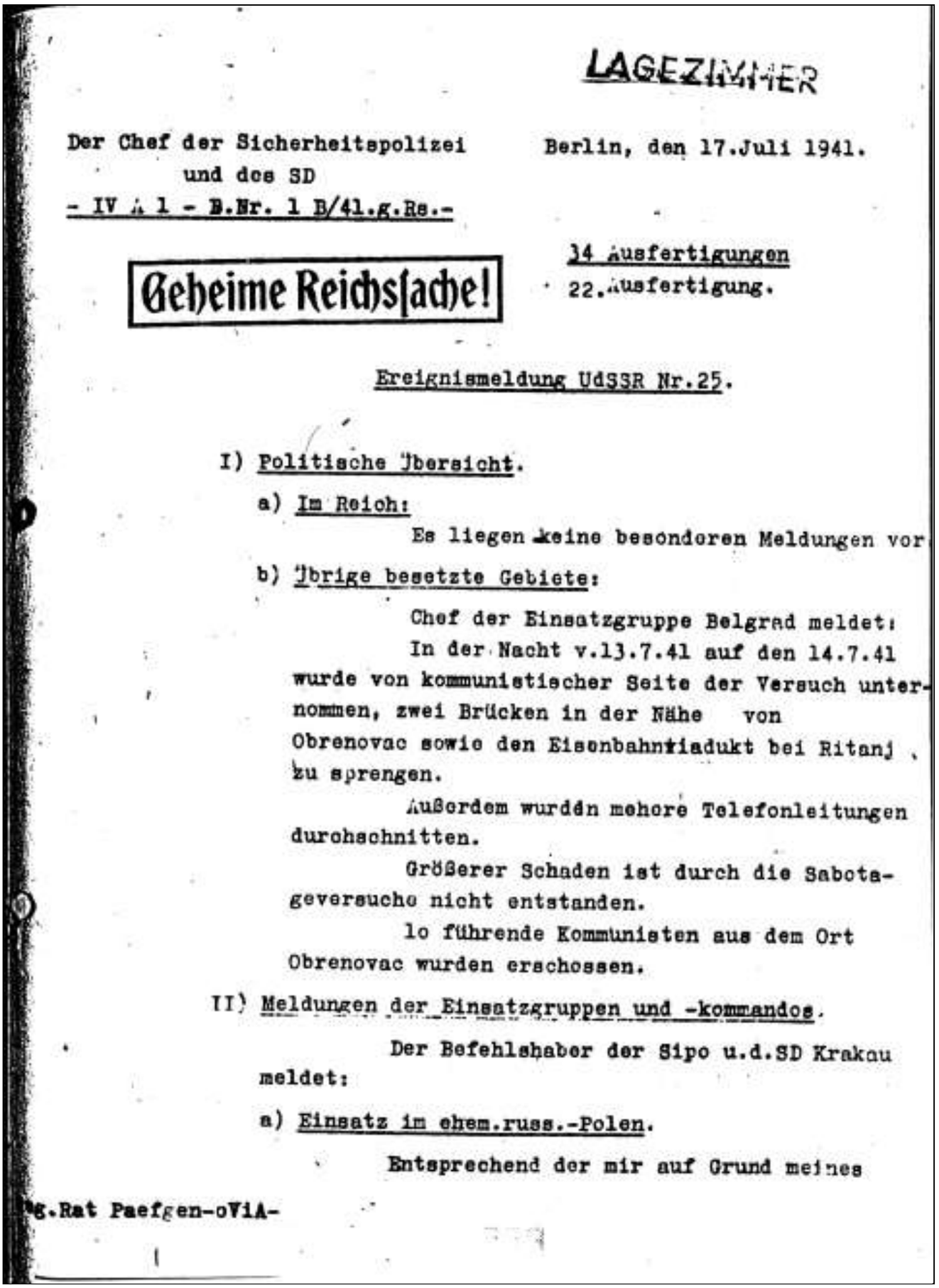
Der Befehlshaber der Sipo u.d.SD Krakau meldet:

a) Einsatz im ehem.russ.-Polen.

Entsprechend der mir auf Grund meines

Reg.Rat Paefgen-oViA-

Document I.1.5. Frontispiece of Ereignismeldung *No. 25 of 17 July 1941. From: NARA, T 175-233, 2721546.*



LAGEZIMMER

Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei
und des SD
- IV A 1 - B.Nr. 1 B/41.g.Rs.-

Berlin, den 17.Juli 1941.

14 Ausfertigungen
22.Ausfertigung.

Geheime Reichssache!

Ereignismeldung UdSSR Nr.25.

I) Politische Übersicht.

a) Im Reich:

Es liegen keine besonderen Meldungen vor.

b) Übrige besetzte Gebiete:

Chef der Einsatzgruppe Belgrad meldet:

In der Nacht v.13.7.41 auf den 14.7.41 wurde von kommunistischer Seite der Versuch unternommen, zwei Brücken in der Nähe von Obrenovac sowie den Eisenbahnviadukt bei Ritanj zu sprengen.

Außerdem wurden mehere Telefonleitungen durchschnitten.

Größerer Schaden ist durch die Sabotageversuche nicht entstanden.

lo führende Kommunisten aus dem Ort Obrenovac wurden erschossen.

II) Meldungen der Einsatzgruppen und -kommandos.

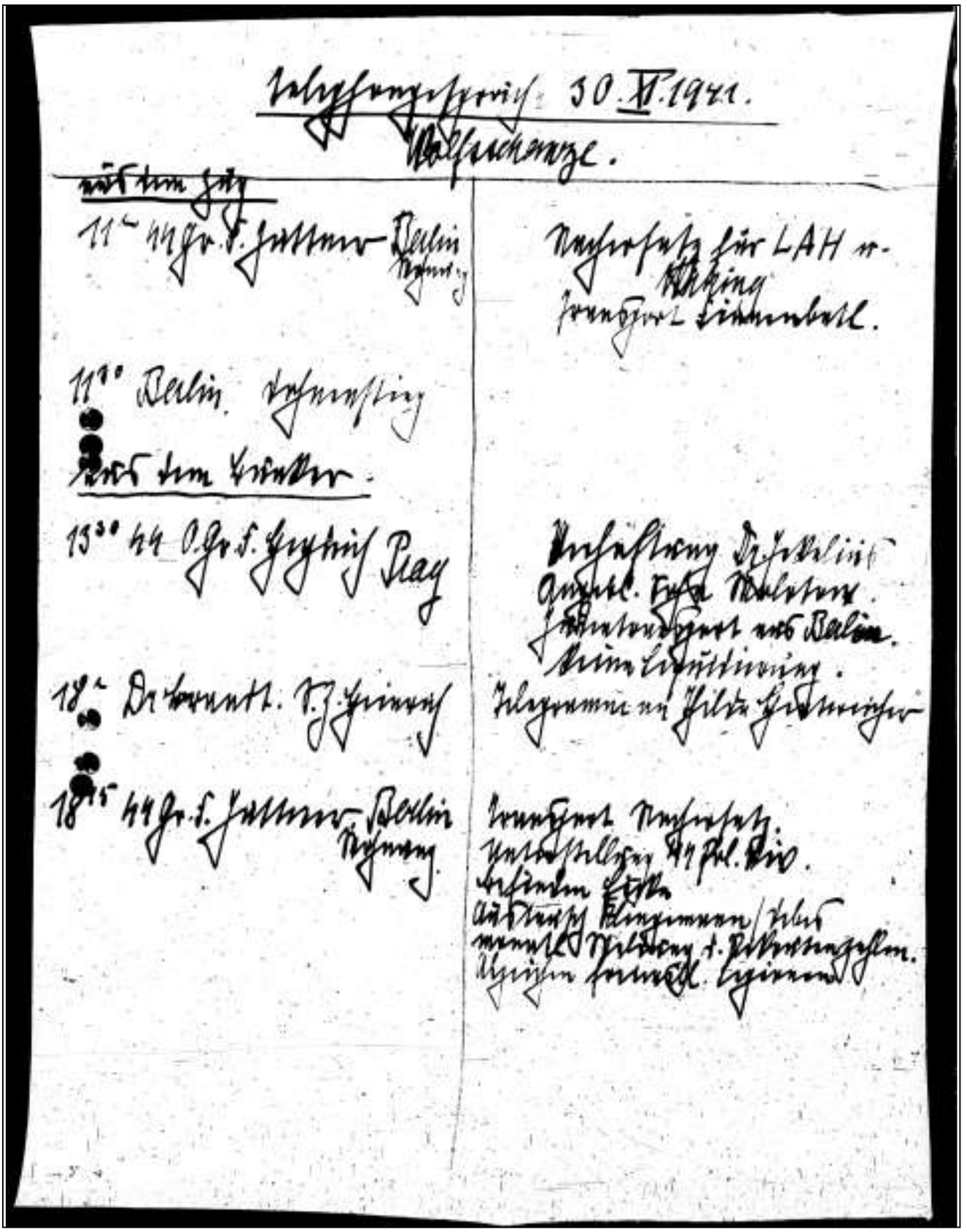
Der Befehlshaber der Sipo u.d.SD Krakau meldet:

a) Einsatz im ehem.russ.-Polen.

Entsprechend der mir auf Grund meines

g.Rat Paefgen-oViA-

Document I.1.5a. Frontispiece of Ereignismeldung *No. 25 of 17 July 1941. From: RGVA, 500-2-229, p. 76.*



Document I.4.1. Entries in Himmler's Dienstkalender *dated 30 Nov. 1941. From: NARA, T 84-26.*

DOCUMENT NO. 579-PS

Gebietskommissar in Riga — Riga, den 1o. Februar 1942

Der Leiter
des Arbeitsamtes Riga

An den

Herrn Reichskommissar für das Ostland
Arbeitspolitik undSozialverwaltung

R i g a

durchlaufend beim

Herrn Generalkommissar in Riga

Betrifft: Judentransport aus Kauen.

Vorgang: Ihr Schreiben v. 6.2.42

Der Judentransport aus Kauen ist am 8.2.42 hier eingetroffen. Es sind jedoch anstelle der angeforderten 5oo männlichen Kräfte nur

222 männliche und

137 weibliche Kräfte

gesandt worden.

Da jedoch noch ein sehr erheblicher Bedarf an jüdischen Arbeitskraften für Transport- und Tiefbauarbeiten vorliegt, bitte ich noch um 1ooo männliche jüdische Kräfte in Kauen anzufordern.

Wie mir vom Transportführer mitgeteilt wurde, werden die Juden in Kauen arbeitseinsatzmässig nicht vom Arbeitsamt betreut, sondern die Verteilung der jüdischen Arbeitskräfte nimmt die Deutsche Polizei vor.

Im Auftrage:

gez. Unterschrift

Oberregierungsrat

Document I.4.2. PS-579. Source: YVA, O.18-103, pp. 1-5

DOCUMENT NO. 579-PS

Der Gebietskommissar in Riga
- Arbeitsamt -

Riga, den 6. Juli 1942

Fachgebiet 2 (Arbeitseinsatz)

Ld/Wi

A k t e n v e r m e r k

Betrifft: Judeneinsatz;
hier: Zusammenarbeit mit den Wehrmachtdienststellen.

Seit den letzten 10 Tagen müssen fast täglich Juden für den Einsatz in der Torfwirtschaft von Wehrmachtseinheiten abgezogen werden. Dabei treten die erheblichsten Schwierigkeiten auf, weil sich die Angehörigen der Wehrmacht, die die Juden täglich vom Ghetto abzuholen haben, nicht den Anordnungen fügen wollen, die der verantwortliche Arbeitseinsatzmann trifft.

Es ist festgelegt, dass dieSoldaten die Juden in Kolonnen am Ausgang des Ghettos übernehmen. Tatsächlich aber betreten verschiedene Soldaten das umzäunte Ghetto und holen sich die für sie in Betracht kommenden Juden, ohne weiter zu fragen, ab.
In der letzten Woche sind Reg.Insp. Rottenberger und der Unterzeichnete früh bei der Abfertigung der Juden mit zugegen gewesen. Einige Soldaten kamen auch den Weisungen der reichsdeutschen Arbeitseinsatzkräfte nicht nach, betraten das Ghetto und holten sich die Kräfte heraus, die bisher bei den betreffenden Einheiten gearbeitet hatten. Sie wurden darauf hingewiesen, dass Arbeitskräfte für besonders vordringliche Massnahmen eingesetzt werden müssen. Diese Weisungen befolgten die Soldaten nicht, sondern schrieen im Beisein von über 1000 Juden herum und holten sich trotz des Verbotes die Kräfte einfach weg. In einem Falle kam ein Soldat am nächsten Tage in Stahlhelm und kam wiederum den Weisungen der reichsdeutschen Arbeitseinsatzkräfte nicht nach. Ein deutscher Polizeiwachtmeister wurde beauftragt, den Soldaten

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Document I.4.2. PS-579, continued.

DOCUMENT NO. 579-PS

3

- 2 -

aus dem Ghetto zu verweisen. Der Wachtmeister hatte kaum den Rücken gekehrt, betrat der Soldat erneut das Ghetto und holte sich wieder Juden, die er nicht erhalten sollte, und führte sie fort. - Der Unterzeichnete konnte in einem anderen Falle gerade noch verhindern, dass ein Gefreiter der Luftwaffe einen jüdischen Polizisten verprügeln wollte. Der judische Polizist hatte einen Juden, der nicht zu einer bestimmten Arbeit gehen wollte, geschlagen. Die Jüdische Polizei bewährt sich beim täglichen Einsatz von rund 4000 Juden gut. Deshalb muss auch vermieden werden, dass Deutsche im Beisein von tausenden von Juden sich an jüdischen Polizisten vergreifen.

Sobald erreicht ist, dass die deutschen Soldaten, die die jüdischen Arbeitskräfte täglich vom Ghetto abholen, den Weisungen der reichsdeutschen Arbeitseinsatzkräfte nachkommen und vor allen Dingen Disziplin wahren, ist eine bedeutend schnellere tägliche Inmarschsetzung der jüdischen Arbeitskräfte möglich. Zum mindesten ist nach meinem Dafürhalten erforderlich, dass täglich früh von ½6 - 8 Uhr ein deutscher Polizist am Eingang des Ghettos steht, der nicht zulässige Angriffe von deutschen Soldaten verhindern kann.

Nachrichtlich!

gez. Unterschrift

Document I.4.2. PS-579, continued.

(4)

Riga, den 21. Juli 1941

Wirtschaftskommando

für das Gebiet d.ehem.Lettland
Abteilung Arbeit.

Betrifft: Arbeitseinsatz der Juden.

Aktenvermerk.

In der Landwirtschaft Lettlands besteht nach Mitteilung der Gruppe Landwirtschaft erheblicher Arbeitermangel, der insbesondere die Rübenernte gefährdet. Nach meinen Feststellungen und auch nach den Feststellungen der Wi.-In. Nord stehen z.Zt. Kriegsgefangene für die Landwirtschaft nicht zur Verfügung. Es ist deshalb zunächst zu prüfen in welchem Umfange und unter welchen Bedingungen andere Einsatzmöglichkeiten gegeben sind.

Zur Klarstellung der Einsatzmöglichkeit der Juden fand heute zunachst eine Besprechung auf der Wi.-In. Nord mit Herrn O.K.V.R. Kilroth von der Abteilung Arbeit statt. Gemeinsam mit Herrn Kilroth wurde dann die SS. aufgesucht, und mit dem Leiter des SD. Sturmbannführer Batz, sowie seinem Stellvertreter Hauptsturmführer Mirsten verhandelt. Unser Vorschlag, die Juden zu kennzeichnen, sie in einem Ghetto zusammen zu fassen, danach einen Judenrat zu schaffen und mit diesem den umfassenden Arbeitseinsatz der Juden zu betreiben, wurde beifällig aufgenommen. Es wurde auch kein Einverständnis darüber erzielt, dass der Arbeitseinsatz der Juden nur durch die bei dem bezw. den Arbeitsamtern zu schaffenden besonderen Einsatzstellen betrieben werden soll um eine Führung nach den wehr- und staatspolitischen Notwendigkeiten sicher zu stellen. Die SS. behält sich lediglich die Entscheidung der politischen Fragen und die Durchführung politischer Aufgaben vor. Die Kennzeichen der Juden und die Zusammenfassung in einem Ghetto wird betrieben. Mitgeteilt wurde ferner, dass bereits Verhandlungen zwischen SS. - SD. einerseits und Feldkommandantur an-

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Document I.4.2. PS-579, continued.

- 2 -

(5)

derseits stattgefunden hätten mit dem Ergebnis, dass eine Registrierung der Juden bei den Polizei-revieren, eine tägliche Meldung der Juden dorteelbst und die Einrichtung einer besonderen Stelle zur Durchführung des Arbeitseinsatzes der Juden bei der Feldkommandantür erfolgen solle.

Daraufhin fand auch eine Besprechung bei der Feldkommandantur mit Kriegsverwaltungsrat Nachtigall statt, die das gleiche Ergebnis hatte. Auch die FK. ist damit einverstanden, dass nach der Registrierung der Juden der Arbeitseinsatz durch das Arbeitsamt erfolgt. Bei der Registrierung kann eine besondere Karteikarte für diesen Einsatz erstellt werden.

Im Verlaufe der Besprechung in der FK. ergab sich dann noch, dass der Befehlshaber des rückwärtigen Heeresgebietes bereits am letzten Mittwoch eine Preis- und Lohnstopverordnung erlassen hat, weil er auf dem Standpunkt steht, dass er allein Anordnungen mit wirksamer Strafandrohung erlassen kann. Es sind auch die ortsüblichen Preise und Löhne bereits festgestellt.

gez. Unterschrift

O.K.V.R.

Document I.4.2. PS-579, continued.

AUFBAU
RECONSTRUCTION

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...s geschieht in Deutschland...

Der Misserfolg unserer Denazifizierung

...C.M. Die Ausschaltung von Anhängern und Mitläufern des Hakenkreuzregimes aus dem öffentlichen Leben ist in der US-Zone Deutschlands sogenannten Spruchkammern übertragen worden. Diese sind ... in *Württemberg-Baden und Hessen nur schwer in Gang gekommen*, in *Bayern* aber werden sie geradezu *sabotiert*. Soeben wurden sie ... kommunistische Werkzeuge verdächtigt, weil der für sie zuständige "Befreiungsminister" ein Kommunist war. Die amerikanische Militärregierung hat ihr deshalb durch einen Christlich-Sozialen ersetzen lassen, was, nach dem Worte eines amerikanischen Journalisten, nur heißt den Bock zum Gärtner, wohl aber den Wilderer zum Wildhüter setzen hieße.

Infolge der allgemeinen Sabotage gibt es nicht genug Spruchkammern in Bayern, wo allein 800,000 Fälle anhängig sind. Seit 1. August ist die Militärregierung die Überwachung der Spruchkammern verschafft und ist bei allen Sitzungen und Urteilsverkündungen durch Beauftragte vertreten. Bisher haben die Spruchkammern in Bayern, nach Aussage eines hohen bayerischen Beamten, das Säuberungsgesetz in Genuss der Bösewichten ausgelegt, weniger zur Befreiung von Nationalsozialismus als vielmehr zur Rehabilitierung der Nationalsozialisten und zu ihrem Schutze.

Ein Beispiel für viele. Der ehemalige Chef der Münchener Frauenklinik, Professor *Heinrich Kyrner*, war, wie er angab, "zum Bezirksleiter" *Nationalsozialist* geworden. *Belastungszeugen* waren "nicht anwesend". Drei jüdische Ärzte, die gebeten waren, eine entlastende Aussage vor dem Termin wegen angeblicher Abreise nicht ablegen konnten, nach ihrer Heimkehr aussagen wollten, sich aber weigerten, als sich, gegen Kyrner auftraten, da sie *für ihre persönliche Sicherheit fürchteten*. Der Staatskommissar für die Universitäten, Dr. *Otto Graf* hatte, wie es im Pressebericht der deutschen Zeitungen so schön heißt, "nach einer Rücksprache mit seiner vorgesetzten Dienststelle diesen Antrag genommen, gegen Professor Kyrner auszusagen".

Der Zuschauerraum war mit Anhängern und Schülern Kyrners gefüllt, die es an *lärmenden Protesten nicht fehlen Genzen*, wenn der Vorsitzende oder der Ankläger ein Wörtchen wagten. Die Verteidigung hatte der Vorsitzende der Christlich-Sozialen Union übernommen.

So fiel das Urteil mild aus. Kyrner wurde als "minderbelastet" eingestuft und kam mit Abgabe von 40 Prozent seines Vermögens für Wiedergutmachung, zu lösigen zwei Jahren Bewährungsfrist, davon die Bewährungsfrist soll wohl bedeuten, dass er während ihrer Dauer nicht wieder Pg. werden darf. . . .

Natürlich hat der *Professor Berufung* eingelegt. Wie nun auch ihre Entscheidung ausfallen mag, sein bisheriger Verlauf illustriert die gründliche Sabotage der Spruchkammern in Bayern.

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Versagen die UN?

Von *MAX BEER*

Von den ersten Völkerbundsitzungen sagte vor etwa zwanzig Jahren ein witziger Spötter, dass er "eine wissenschaftliche Einrichtung für die Zeit zwischen den Kriegen" sei. Wird man von den zweiten Bund sagen, dass er nicht einmal in Friedenszeiten *funktionierte*?

Mit wachsender Sorge verfolgten in der Tat sowohl Jene, die sich vor einem Jahre für die Charter von San Francisco begeisterten, als auch die Gegner der neuen Satzung die bisher ziemlich verwirklichte Tätigkeit der "Vereinigten Nationen". Einige Optimisten meinen zwar, dass die aufgeheizte gegenwärtige Atmosphäre, die Sicherheitsrates sich aus den politischen Gegensätzen zwischen den Grossmächten erkläre, die man in dieser Umfange nicht vorausgesehen hatte und die nur eine vorübergehende Erscheinung bilden. Gründlichere, aber ebenfalls noch zurückhaltende

(Fortsetzung auf Seite 27)

Leben eines SS-Generals

Aus den Nürnberger Geständnissen des Generals der Waffen-SS Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski

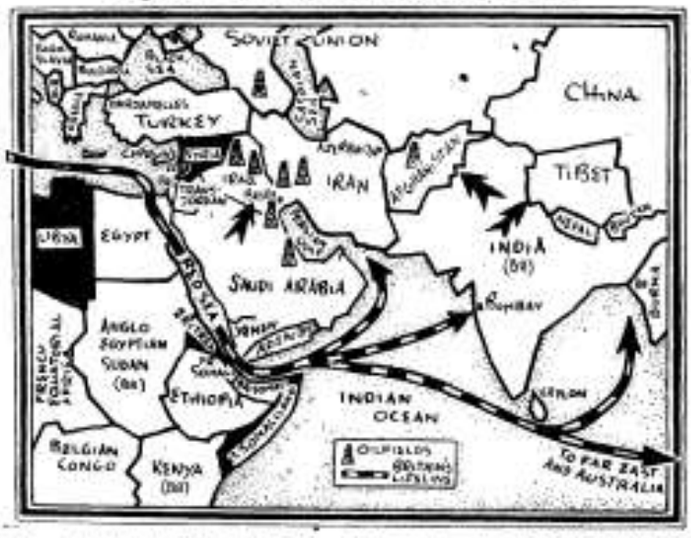
e. m. Einer der Kronzeugen der alliierten Anklagebehörde im Nürnberger Kriegsverbrecherprozess war Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, SS-Obergruppenführer und General der Waffen-SS. Dieser hohe Offizier aus dem engsten Mitarbeiterkreise Heinrich Himmlers hatte im Krieg militärische und polizeiliche Posten von solcher Wichtigkeit inne, dass sie ihn in ständigen Kontakt mit dem Reichsführer der SS wie mit der Generalität der Wehrmacht brachten. Von dem Bach-Zelewski war der Helfer nach Oberabschnittsführer und Führer der SS- und Polizeiführer in Schlesien; Führer SS- und Polizeiführer von Russland-Mitte; Chef der Bandenbekämpfungsverbände; Kommandeur der 3. motorisierten SS-Infanteriebrigade; Divisionskommandeur und Kommandant von Kowel; Kommandierender General von Warschau und Befehlshaber für Budapest; anschliessend bis Kriegsende Kommandierender General des XIV. SS-Korps, des X. SS-Korps und des Oder-Korps.

Von dem Bach-Zelewski, der übrigens, wie er in seinen Geständnissen offen zugibt, "jüdisch versippt" war und deshalb bei Himmler immer auf ein gewisses Misstrauen stiess, war also kein scheinheiliger SS-Offizier, sondern ein grosser Mann in der Privatarmee des "sanften Heinrich". Leben und Meinungen eines solchen Mannes sind daher für die historische Begutachtung der SS, deren Prozess bekanntlich noch bevorsteht, hoch zu bewerten, da er Einblicke in das innere Gefüge und Getriebe der schwarzuniformierten Mord-Armee gewinnen lassen wie kaum ein zweiter. Leider hat die amerikanische Presse den Aussagen und Geständnissen des SS-Generals bei weitem nicht den Platz eingeräumt, den sie im Interesse der Wahrheitsführung verdient hätten. Der "Aufbau", dem jetzt das volle Protokoll der Geständnisse von dem Bach-Zelewski zugänglich war, will diesen Versäumnis hier nachholen. Wir bringen heute einen ersten Auszug der von dem SS-General schriftlich niedergelegten Aussagen. Dieser Exzerpt lässt den Hitlergläubigen Heinrich Himmler in ebenso merkwürdiger wie aufschlussreicher Beleuchtung erscheinen, nämlich als einen Mann, dem bei einer Massenbetrachtung die Nerven vollkommen versagen.

General von dem Bach-Zelewski [illegible] gesetzt auf den Krieg hinarbeitete, um seine Pläne zu verwirklichen. Wie diese beschaffen waren, weiss man jetzt aus den Aussagen von Bach: [illegible] grossgermanischen Reich, bis Ostasien hin zum Ural reichend. In diesem ganzen eroberten Raum sollte die SS als Elite germanischer Edelmenschen, wie einst die Legionen Roms, befestigte Lager und Stützpunkte anlegen, kolonisieren und die neue Rasse [illegible]

(Fortsetzung auf Seite 3)

England baut seine Stellungen aus



Die Zeiten, da das britische Weltreich im Vorderen Osten mit der türkischen Herrschaft und den deutschen "Berlin-Bagdad"-Aspirationen zu rechnen hatte, sind vorbei. England beherrscht nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg, der die Vernichtung der französischen Militärmacht, der Mittelmeerflotte und die Vertreibung Italiens aus Nordafrika brachte, das Mittelmeer vollständig. Ein Blick auf die Karte ergibt das Bild der Situation. Griechenland und die Türkei sind von England abhängig, Syrien und Libanon nach dem Abzug der Franzosen ebenfalls. Libyen steht unter englischer Herrschaft, Palästina wird zur Zeit so zurechtgeschnitten und endgültig zu annektieren versucht, Transjordanien ist ein Vasallenstaat. Die Unabhängigkeit Aegyptens, an die augenblicklich noch Endverhandlungen gehen, ist somit in Wirklichkeit keine Unabhängigkeit. Zu dem Sudan, Kenya und Britisch-Somaliland kommt jetzt noch die englische Beherrschung von Eritrea und Italienisch-Somaliland. Sie vollendet die Einkreisung und Abhängigkeit Abessiniens. Das gesamte Nordostgebiet Nordafrikas ist somit ein einheitliches englisches Herrschaftsgebiet.

Dies setzt sich auf dem arabischen Kontinent in Asien, Yemen und Saudi Arabien fort. Die Vorgänge in Indien mit ihren Massakers zwischen Hindus und Muslems zeigen, wie weit entfernt die Möglichkeit eines sogenannten "freien" Indiens ist. Von einer Unabhängigkeit Burmas war nie die Rede. Zwischen dieser englischen Herrschaftszone und der Sowjetzonen und China liegen drei Staaten, um die das diplomatische Spiel der nächsten Zeit gehen dürfte.

Die gefährlichste Zone ist Iran, an dessen Nordgrenze russische, an dessen Südgrenze, im irakischen Basra, englische Truppen aufmarschiert sind. In Tibet und Afghanistan herrscht eine unruhige Stimmung. Die Tätigkeit der englischen und russischen Agenten um die Freundschaft dieser Staaten ist heftig im Gange. Sinn dieser englischen Politik ist die Absperrung der Russen vom Mittelmeer und vom persischen Golf, die Fernhaltung eines einheitlichen strategischen Gebietes, wie es bisher in dieser Dichtigkeit und unseren Kenntnissen nach nicht bestanden hat.

Der britische Kampf um Asien und gegen alle russische Expansionswünsche ist in vollem Gange. Er berührt die amerikanischen Interessen, abgesehen von den Oelinteressen, vor allem in der Frage, wer die ungeheuer grossen latenten Kräfte Chinas freisetzen und nutzen wird.

ZUR LAGE:
Gefahr auf der Hintertreppe

Von *MANFRED GEORGE*

Während wir mit grosser Mühe und dem ganzen Aufwand unserer Machtentfaltung die Front unseres Hauses zu sichern suchen, bedrohende Plattenarbeiten in das Mittelmeer als Wachthunde unseres Interesses senden und die arktischen Gefilde selbst Grönland und Island als Aussenposten unserer Verteidigung diskutieren, sind wir uns wenig bewusst, was sich vor der Hintertür, die unserer so in Verteidigungszustand gesetzten Behausung abspielt. Hinweise wie auf der detaillierten Pläne, die lasser darauf hinzudeuten, geeignete Flug- und Aufmarschplätze in Südamerika zu finden, so ist es keineswegs natürlich, sich mit der Tatsache der deutschen Niederlage friedlich aufrieden zu geben und sich beruhigt schlafen zu legen. Die Deutschen in Europa sind zwar besiegt, aber das gesamte Auslandsdeutschtum erhebt diese Niederlage keineswegs zu. Der nicht zu sehr neuer Heimatland assimilierte Auslandsdeutsche ist fast immer ein noch intensiverer Nationalist und Weltmachtplaner gewesen als der Deutsche selbst. Es war kein Zufall, dass die bedeutendsten der Hitlerschen Ratgeber im Ausland, in Aegypten etc. geboren waren, und ein Ueberblick William Shirers in der letzten Sonntagausgabe der "Herald Tribune" über die direkte und indirekte Bewachs- und Geldhilfe-Propaganda des grössten Teils der deutschsprachigen Presse Amerikas sendet tall dem war alles berechtigten Stossseufzer: "Wir verwenden viel Zeit, Mühe und Geld darauf, die Deutschen in Deutschland zu erziehen. Wie wäre es, wenn wir versuchten, auch die wenig netten Deutschen hierzulande aufzuklären?!"

Kein Wunder, dass Südamerika noch heute über die dichten und fest gewobenen Spinnen deutscher zunftlicher oder doktrinärer Organisationen verfügt, die in allen Sturmtruppspitzt sich "Nachlinkt" hatten und ihre Jugend zu bestes alten Hitlerzeit erziehen. Ein wenig Netzwerk alldeutscher Propaganda und weltanschaulicher

Document I.6.1a. Aufbau, *Vol. XII, No. 34, 23 August 1946, page 1.*

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Von MAX BEER

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(Fortsetzung auf Seite 27)

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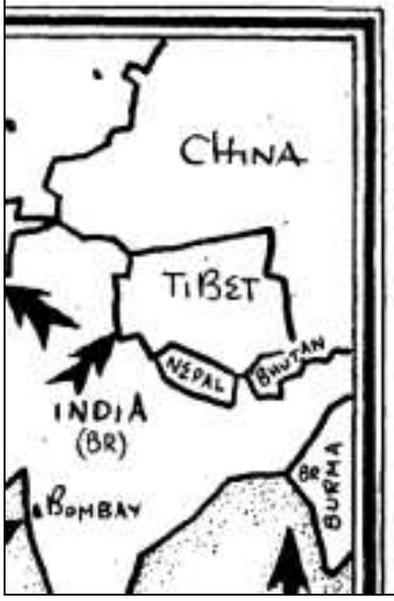

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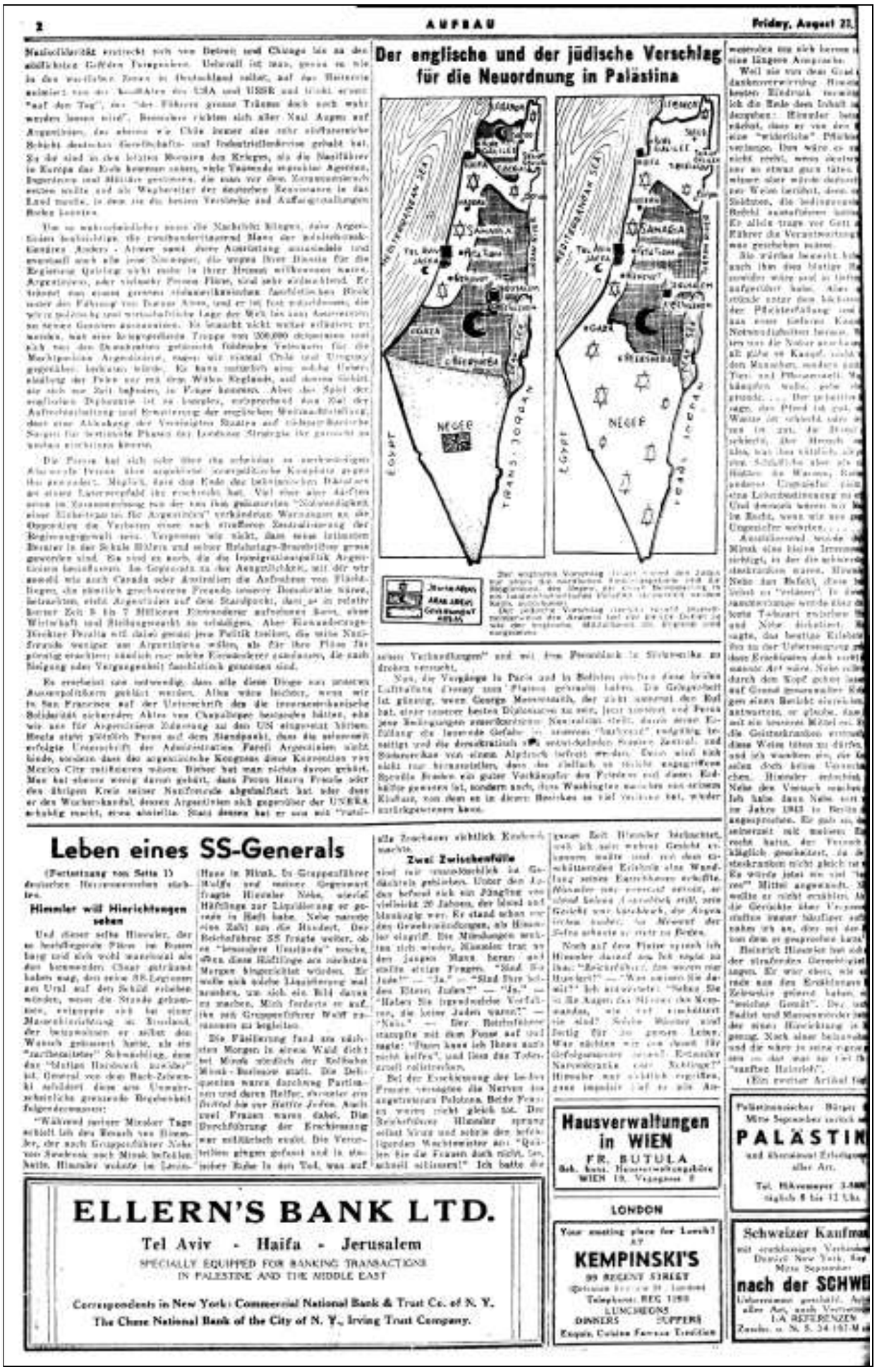
General von dem Bach-Zelewski betonte einleitend seine feste Ueberzeugung, dass die Vernichtung des Judentums in Europa sowie die gewaltsame Dezimierung der Polen keinem spontanen Entschluss während des Krieges — etwa als Folge des ungünstigen Kriegsverlaufs oder als Vergeltung für feindliche Kriegsmassnahmen — entsprang, sondern schon vor dem Kriege von Heinrich Himmler bewusst geplant worden ist. Ebenso ist er der Ansicht, dass Himmler *ganz konsequent auf den Krieg hinarbeitete*, um seine Pläne zu verwirklichen. Wie diese beschaffen waren, weiss man jetzt aus den Aussagen von Bachs: ein grossgermanisches Reich, im Osten bis zum Ural reichend. In diesem ganzen eroberten Raum sollte die SS als Blüte germanischer Edelmenschen, wie einst die Legionen Roms, befestigte Lager und Stützpunkte anlegen, kolonisieren und die neue Rasse des

(Fortsetzung auf Seite 2)

Document I.6.1a. Section enlargement of the previous document.



2 AUFBAU Friday, August 23,

Der englische und der jüdische Verschlag für die Neuordnung in Palästina

Leben eines SS-Generals

(Fortsetzung von Seite 1)

Himmler will Hierichtungen sehen

Zwei Zwischenfälle

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Document I.6.1b. Aufbau, *Vol. XII, No. 34, 23 August 1946, page 2.*

Document I.6.1b. Section enlargement.

Leben eines SS-Generals

(Fortsetzung von Seite 1)

deutschen Herrenmenschen züchten.

Himmler will Hinrichtungen sehen

Und dieser selbe Himmler, der so hochfliegende Pläne im Busen barg und sich wohl manchmal als den kommenden Cäsar geträumt haben mag, den seine SS-Legionen am Ural auf den Schild erheben würden, wenn die Stunde gekommen, entpuppte sich bei einer Massenhinrichtung in Russland, der beizuwohnen er selbst den Wunsch geäussert hatte, als ein "zartbesaiteter" Schwächling, dem das "blutige Handwerk zuwider" ist. General von dem Bach-Zelewski schildert diese ans Unwahrscheinliche grenzende Begebenheit folgendermassen:

"Während meiner Minsker Tage erhielt ich den Besuch von Himmler, der auch Gruppenführer *Nebe* von Smolensk nach Minsk befohlen hatte. Himmler wohnte im Lenin-Haus in Minsk. In Gruppenführer *Wolffs* und meiner Gegenwart fragte Himmler Nebe, wieviel Häftlinge zur Liquidierung er gerade in Haft habe. Nebe nannte eine Zahl um die Hundert. Der Reichsführer SS fragte weiter, ob es "besondere Umstände" mache, wenn diese Häftlinge am nächsten Morgen hingerichtet würden. Er wolle sich solche Liquidierung mal ansehen, um sich ein Bild davon zu machen. Mich forderte er auf, ihn mit Gruppenführer Wolff zusammen zu begleiten.

Die Füsilierung fand am nächsten Morgen in einem Wald dicht bei Minsk nördlich der Rollbahn Minsk - Borissow statt. Die Deliquenten waren durchweg Partisanen und deren Helfer, *darunter ein Drittel bis zur Hälfte Juden.* Auch zwei Frauen waren dabei. Die Durchführung der Erschiessung war militärisch exakt. Die Verurteilten gingen gefasst und in stoischer Ruhe in den Tod, was auf alle Zuschauer sichtlich Eindruck machte.

Zwei Zwischenfälle

sind mir unauslöschlich im Gedächtnis geblieben. Unter den Juden befand sich ein Jüngling von vielleicht 20 Jahren, der blond und blauäugig war. Er stand schon vor den Gewehrmündungen, als Himmler eingriff. Die Mündungen senkten sich wieder, Himmler trat an den jungen Mann heran und stellte einige Fragen. "Sind Sie Jude?" — "Ja." — "Sind Ihre beiden Eltern Juden?" — "Ja." — "Haben Sie irgendwelche Vorfahren, die keine Juden waren?" — "Nein." — Der Reichsführer stampfte mit dem Fusse auf und sagte: "Dann kann ich Ihnen auch nicht helfen", und liess das Todesurteil vollstrecken.

Bei der Erschiessung der beiden Frauen versagten die Nerven des angetretenen Pelotons. Beide Frauen waren nicht gleich tot. Der Reichsführer Himmler sprang selbst hinzu und schrie den befehligenden Wachtmeister an: "Quälen Sie die Frauen doch nicht, los, schnell schiessen!" Ich hatte die ganze Zeit Himmler beobachtet, weil ich sein wahres Gesicht erkennen wollte und von dem erschütternden Erlebnis eine Wandlung seines Entschlusses erhoffte. *Himmler war dasselbst nervös, er stand keinen Augenblick still, sein Gesicht war käsebleich, die Augen irrten umher, im Moment der Salve schaute er stets zu Boden.*

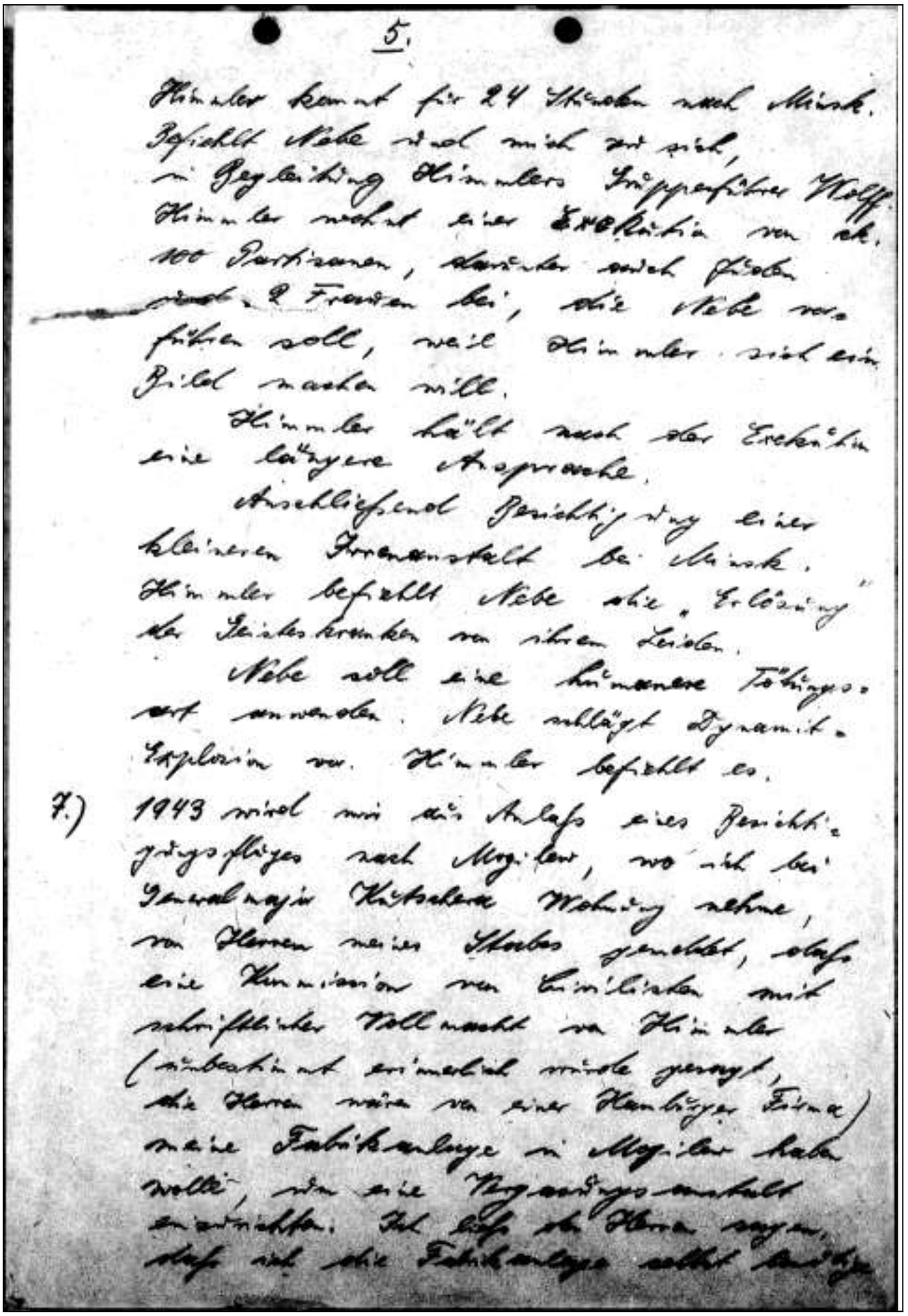
Noch auf dem Platze sprach ich Himmler darauf an. Ich sagte zu ihm: "Reichsführer, das waren nur Hundert!" — "Was meinen Sie damit?" Ich antwortete: "Sehen Sie in die Augen der Männer des Kommandos, wie tief erschüttert sie sind! Solche Männer sind fertig für ihr ganzes Leben. Was züchten wir uns damit für Gefolgsmänner heran? Entweder Nervenkranke oder Rohlinge!" Himmler war sichtlich ergriffen, ganz impulsiv rief er alle An-

Hausverwaltungen in WIEN

FR. BUTULA

Beh. konz. Hausverwaltungsbüro

WIEN 19, Vegagasse 5

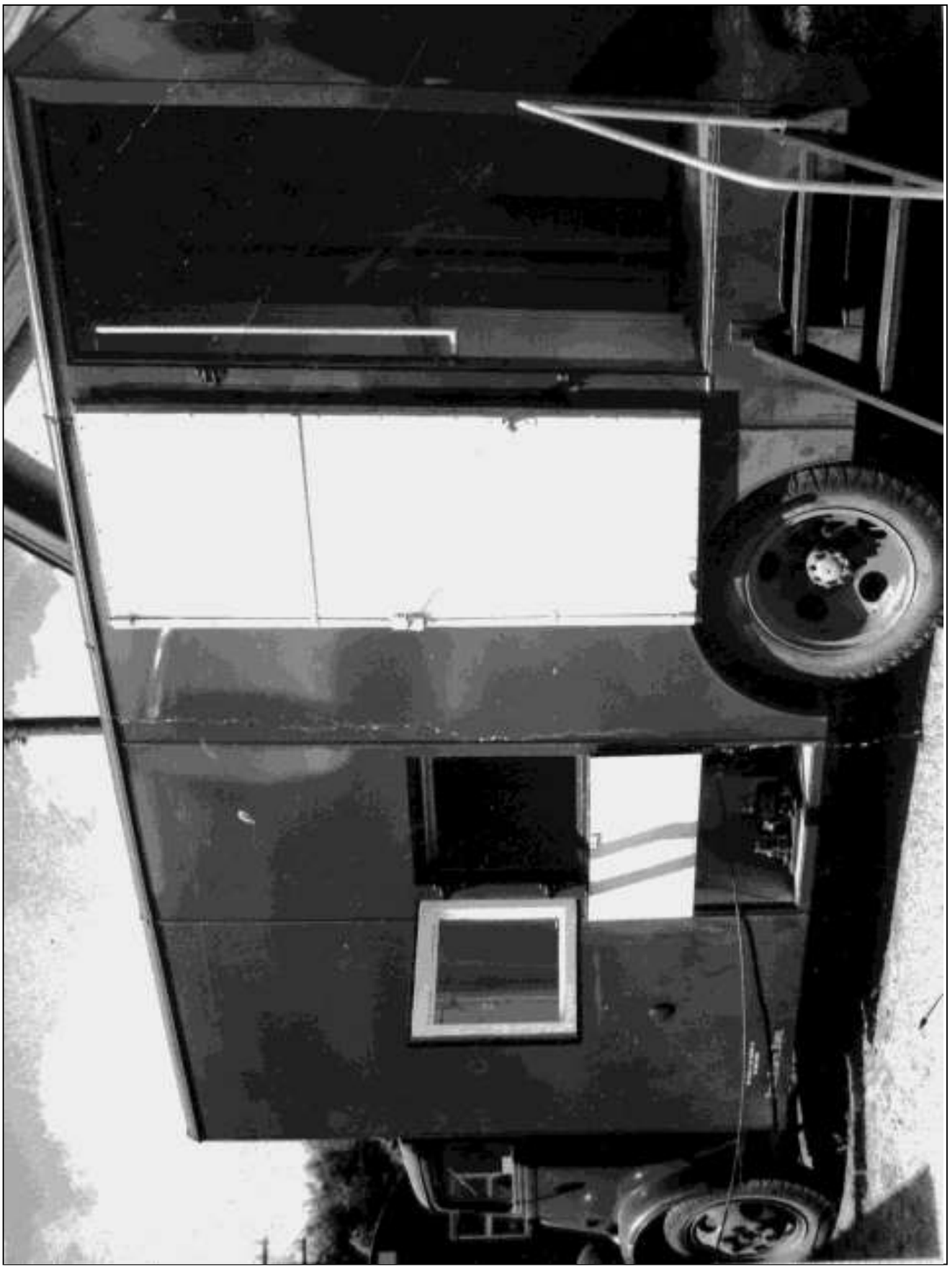


5.

Himmler kommt für 24 Stunden nach Minsk.
Befiehlt Nebe und mich zu sich,
in Begleitung Himmlers Hüpperführer Wolff.
Himmler meldet einer Exekutive von ca.
100 Partisanen, darunter auch Frauen
und 2 Frauen bei, die Nebe vor-
führen soll, weil Himmler sich ein
Bild machen will.
Himmler hält nach der Exekution
eine längere Ansprache.
Anschließend Besichtigung einer
kleineren Irrenanstalt bei Minsk.
Himmler befiehlt Nebe die Erlösung
der Geisteskranken von ihren Leiden.
Nebe soll eine humanere Tötungs-
art anwenden. Nebe schlägt Dynamit-
Explosion vor. Himmler befiehlt es.

7.) 1943 wird mir die Anlage eines Bericht-
erstattungsfluges nach Mogilew, wo ich bei
Generalmajor Hartenberg Meldung nehme,
von Herrn mein Flugbefehl gemacht, dass
eine Kommission von Ingenieuren mit
wissenschaftlicher Vollmacht von Himmler
(unbestimmt erinnerlich wurde gesagt,
die Herren wären von einer Hamburger Firma
meine Fabrikanlage in Mogilew habe
wollen, um sie Nürnberg-mustergültig
einzurichten. Ich bitte die Herren sagen,
dass mir die Fabrikanlage selbst [illegible]

Document I.6.2. Handwritten postwar statement by Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski; NARA, RG 238, M1270, OCCPAC, page 5.



Document I.6.3. British gas van for police and civilian anti-gas training purposes from the 1950s. From: TNA, WO 88/2693.

HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS · VOLUME 39

CARLO MATTOGNO

THE EINSATZGRUPPEN IN THE OCCUPIED EASTERN TERRITORIES

Genesis, Missions and Actions

Part 2: "Aktion 1005"

THE EINSATZGRUPPEN

Carlo Mattogno

The Einsatzgruppen
in the
Occupied Eastern Territories

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Cover Illustrations: Foreground: left and right: mass graves at Busk (see Documents II.1.1.-3.); top: photo taken in late September/early October 1941 at Babi Yar by Johannes Hähle, military photographer of the 637th Propaganda Company of the German Sixth Army (see Document II.4.25a); bottom: air photo of the Babi Yar Memorial Park at Denver, Colorado, USA. Background: clothing littered in the Babi Yar in late September 1941, photo by Hähle (see Document II.4.23).

PART TWO:

"AKTION 1005"

THE PRESUMED CREMATION OF MILLIONS OF BODIES IN THE GERMAN-OCCUPIED EASTERN TERRITORIES

(For a table of contents, see the first part of this work).

1. Mass Graves

1.1. Mass Graves in Soviet War-Crimes Reports

Orthodox Holocaust historiography treats the topic of mass graves by constantly pointing out, with extremely rare exceptions which will be examined later, the findings of the investigations of the various Soviet investigation commissions which operated in the formerly German-occupied, then reconquered territories. The decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of 2 November 1942 ordered the formation of the "Extraordinary State Commission on establishing and investigating the crimes of the German fascist invaders and their accomplices" and the gathering of the related documentary material (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 45f.). Some of these reports were then presented by the Soviets at Nuremberg, thus becoming indisputable "truth," because Article 21 of the London Statutes defining the IMT's legal framework mandated this (IMT, Vol. 1, p. 15):

> *"The Tribunal shall not require proof of facts of common knowledge but shall take judicial notice thereof. It shall also take judicial notice of official governmental documents and reports of the United Nations, including the acts and documents of the committees set up in the various Allied countries for the investigation of war crimes, and the records and findings of military or other Tribunals of any of the United Nations."*

The Soviet reports, being "official governmental documents" and "documents of the committees set up in the various Allied countries for the investigation of war crimes," could not be disputed legally during the IMT. But are they reliable?

Arad declared that, "from late summer 1943 until the end of their occupation, the Germans removed and cremated hundreds of thousands of corpses from mass graves throughout the occupied Soviet territories" (Arad 2009, p. 347). He stresses that

> *"Soviet sources, particularly those of the Special State Commission for Determining and Investigating the War Crimes Committed by the Fascist-German Occupiers in the Temporarily Occupied Soviet Territories (Chrezvychainaia Gosudarstvennaia Kommissia po Ustanovleniu i Rassledovania Zlodeianii Sovershennykh Nemetsko-Fashistskimi Zakhvatchikami, henceforth 'special commission') provide an estimate of the number of people murdered in various places. The local committees of inquiry that acted as branches of the special commission used a system by which mass graves were exhumed, corpses were counted in the topmost layer, and the number was multiplied by the number of layers of corpses; thus they were able to estimate the number of dead in any particular pit. This was hardly an accurate system, and often the local committees reported exaggerated numbers. Nonetheless and notwithstanding their inaccuracy, these documents also served in estimating the number of Jewish dead in certain places."* (*ibid.*, pp. 518f.)

The Israeli historian asserts that the Jewish victims in the Occupied Soviet Republics numbered between 2,500,000 and 2,600,000 (see Part One, Chapter 5). This obviously presupposes that this many bodies were buried in mass graves. When the Soviets reconquered the temporarily German-occupied territories, they found many mass graves. Arad accurately refers to these discoveries, which he summarizes as follows:

Artemovsk

According to a Soviet committee of inquiry formed on 3 October 1943, 3,000 bodies were found in "an elliptical cave about 20 meters long and 30 meters wide and 3 or 4 meters high" (*ibid.*, pp. 194f.). Based on this, Arad states that, when the Germans entered the city on 29 October 1941, there were approximately 3,000 Jews at Artemovsk, all of whom were shot on 9 January 1942. He nevertheless points out that EM No. 177 dated 6 March 1942 reports the execution of 1,317 persons, including 1,224 Jews (*ibid.*, p. 195), which is the only mention of this location in relation to executions, so that the Soviets found more than twice the documented number of victims.

According to another author, there were 4,300 Jews at Artemovsk: 100 were shot in December 1941, and the remaining 4,200 at the end of January 1942. The source for this presumed massacre is, however, a mere statement made in the 1960s (Oldenburg, pp. 252, 255). The fact appears implausible, because the above-mentioned EM states (Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, p. 195):

> *"1,317 persons (among them 63 political activists, 30 saboteurs and 1,224 Jews) were executed by Sonderkommando 4b. As a result of this measure, the town of Artemovsk became Jew-free as well."*

Novozybkov

> *"According to a Soviet report, several pits containing 2,860 corpses were discovered in the Karkhovsk forest near the town's railway station."* (Arad 2009, p. 200)

Yevpatoria

> *"According to the report of a Soviet committee that investigated Nazi war crimes in that district* […]*, the bodies of 97 old people, women, and children were found in a grave in Shumiana kolkhoz."* (*ibid.*, pp. 209f.)

Dunaevtsy

According to a Soviet committee of inquiry:

> *"The entire mine, as far as could be seen, was full of corpses."* (*ibid.*, p. 270)

Satanov

240 persons walled up alive in a basement:

> *"On June 19, 1944, the cellar was dug open and the tortured people were revealed."* (*ibid.*, p. 271)

Derzhinsk

> *"According to a Soviet committee of inquiry, a pit was found in the municipal cemetery in the Derzhinsk quarter containing the bodies of 516 men, women, and children. Another pit was discovered in the 'May 8' park near the regional German Ortskommandantur containing the bodies of 31 people, including children."* (*ibid*., p. 290)

Stavropol

> *"In February 1943, after liberation, the pit was opened to reveal the bodies of 483 Jews."* (*ibid*., p. 292)

In the related document, USSR-1, we read (IMT, Vol. 7, p. 539):

> *"During the inspection of a ravine in the vicinity of Koltso Hill and a distance of 250 meters from the high road…* […] *a washed-out grave was discovered, 10 meters in depth, from which protruded separate parts of human bodies. As from 26 to 29 July 1943, excavations were carried out at this spot and, as a result, 130 corpses were exhumed."*

Nalchik

> *"According to a Soviet committee of inquiry into German war crimes in Nalchik, a grave was found containing the bodies of 600 local inhabitants, and the names of the murdered included those of Jews."* (Arad 2009, p. 297)

Janowska (Camp)

> *"About 7,000 Jews were taken to Janovska, and some 3,000 corpses were later found among the camp's ruins."* (*ibid*., p. 336; see Chapter 3)

Kerch

> *"In the Crimean town of Kerch, which was liberated on December 30, 1941, Soviet forces found the graves of about 7,000 Jews, murdered in late November and early December 1941. Descriptions of the murders and photographs of the victims were published in the Soviet press."* (*ibid.*, p. 517; see Section 8.3.1.)

The total figure from these investigations adds up to not quite 18,000. The list is obviously incomplete. Two discoveries are particularly important regarding the packing density of the mass graves.

First, the "Report of the medico-legal examination of the mass grave in the vicinity of the town of Žagarė" in Lithuania and the "Report of medico-legal visual examination of the site of the mass grave in the vicinity of Žagarė," drawn up by the Soviets on 24 September 1944 (Yakovlev, pp. 50-54), mention three mass graves containing the bodies of Jews shot by the Germans, the largest of which measured 122 m × 4 m × 2 m and contained 2,402 bodies; of these, 20 were subjected to autopsy, while the remaining 2,382 were subjected to visual forensic examination; this group consisted of the bodies of 1,213 women, 524 men, 622 children up to 15 years of age and 23 infants. Since the layer of earth covering the grave was 30 centimeters thick, the effective volume of the grave was (122 m × 4 m × 1.7 m =) 829.6 m³, so that the packing density of the bodies in the grave was

(2,402 ÷ 829.6 =) 2.9 per cubic meter. The bodies in the grave were placed "without order." Women made up 51% of the visually examined bodies, while men made up hardly 22%, and the children up to age 15, including the infants, made up 27%.

Gerlach mentions the discovery of a mass grave measuring 1,092 m³ at Drogichin containing 3,816 bodies (895 men, 1083 women and 1,838 children), on average 3.5 bodies per cubic meter (Gerlach 1999, fn 1173, p. 718).

Other data may be found in Volume 7 of the IMT:

Maly Trostenets (USSR-38)

> *"The legal-medical experts discovered that there were bullet wounds in the necks of these bodies. In the barn and on the stacks of logs the Germans shot and burned 6,500 persons"* (IMT, Vol. 7, p. 568; see Section 6.6.1. below)

Smolensk (USSR-87)

> *"... which says that in 80 graves alone, which were opened up and examined by legal-medical experts in the town of Smolensk and in the district of Smolensk, over 135,000 corpses of Soviet citizens – women, children, and men of various ages – were discovered."* (*ibid*., p. 465)

Smolensk (USSR-56), PoWs

> *"A report of a medico-legal examination is appended, Your Honors, to the statement of the Extraordinary State Commission which I have just quoted. Experts such as Academician Burdenko, member of the Extraordinary Commission, Dr. Prosorovsky, chief medico-forensic expert of the People's Commissariat for the Care of Public Health in the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, Doctor of Medical Sciences, Smolianov, Professor of Forensic Medicine at the Second Moscow Medical Institute, and other specialists, conducted – from 1 to 16 October 1943 – numerous exhumations and medico-legal autopsies on the corpses in Smolensk and the vicinity of Smolensk. A great many mass graves were opened which contained the corpses of such persons who had been killed during the German fascist occupation. The number of corpses which were found in these graves was between 500 and 4,500 at each place where such mass executions took place.* […]
> *'The autopsies performed on corpses taken from graves in the area of the large and small concentration camps at Plant 35, of the former German hospital for prisoners of war, of a sawmill, and of concentration camps near the villages of Becherskaya and Rakytna, revealed that, according to the data of the autopsies, death in an overwhelming majority of cases could be ascribed to hunger, starvation, and acute infectious diseases.* […]
> *The considerable number of burial-pits opened (87), filled with masses of corpses, together with the estimated differences in the time of burial, differences ranging from the second half of 1941, 1942, and 1943, testify, to the systematic extermination of Soviet citizens.'"* (*ibid*., pp. 371-373)

On Smolensk, Laurie R. Cohen reports (Cohen, p. 100):

> *"Very soon after the German forces had left – over the course of the first two weeks of October 1943, that is – investigations by Soviet medical teams, under the auspices of the Extraordinary State Commission, exhumed the corpses they found in and around Smolensk. Many of the grave sites also included the remains of dogs and horses. They determined that during the occupation, approximately 100,000 Soviet prisoners of war had died in captivity and another 35,000 non-combatants perished as well. It is unclear from this report, however, how that total, 135,000, was calculated, since 'only' 110,000 can be accounted for from the list. (This excludes the estimated 230,000 Red Army soldiers who died on the surrounding battle fields.) Another commission report, prepared this time by the NKGB (the Soviet secret police force, existing from 1943 to 1946), lists additional sites, and puts the number of dead at 139,798 (although the numbers here actually add up to 139,780). The inclusion of places in the outskirts, such as Aleksandrovskoe (where 176 Roma were massacred) and Magalenshchina (where the close to two thousand Jews who had until then resided in the Smolensk ghetto were buried), might account for why this report has somewhat higher death tolls. The main cause of death given in Smolensk and its surroundings (including in Gedeonovka, Magalenshchina, Readovka, Red Army House, Lager 126, the area of the train station, Upper Iasennaia, Ianivo, and Krasny Bor), the report said, was hunger, infection, or illness. These figures were published in the Soviet daily Izvestiia six weeks after the German forces had left Smolensk."*

As far as is known, these bodies were fictitious and were never shown in film or photographs. Further along, the same author explains:

> *"The Extraordinary State Commission collected numerous and at times slightly contradictory statements regarding the massacre of the Jews in occupied Smolensk (I have located no German reports describing this massacre). A typical report, signed three days after the city was retaken by the Red Army, stated: 'Especially atrocious was the killing of the Jewish population – all living at Sadki, in the ghetto. On July 16, 1942,… about fifteen hundred Jews – men, women, the elderly, and children – were killed.' Statements differ in the numbers of Jews killed (from several hundred to three thousand) and on the date (from June to August 1942). Most witnesses recalled it happening in the early hours of the morning of July 15, the one-year anniversary of German forces entering the town."* (Cohen, p. 122; emph. added)

Einsatzgruppe B was garrisoned at Smolensk for all of 1942; nevertheless neither the Incident Reports (Nos. 150-194, 2 January through 24 April), nor the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories" (Nos. 1-35, 1 May through 23 December), although they mention Smolensk repeatedly, contain the slightest mention of executions of this city's Jews.

Rovno (USSR-45)

> *"I quote the results of the examination by legal-medical experts concerning the bodies of peaceful Soviet citizens murdered by the Germans and subsequently exhumed:*

'1. In all investigated burial places in the city of Rovno and its surroundings, over 102,000 corpses of peaceful citizens and prisoners of war, shot or murdered by other methods, were discovered. Out of this figure:
a) In the city of Rovno, near the timber yard on Belaya Street, 49,000 corpses were discovered.
b) In the city of Rovno, on Belaya Street, in the vegetable gardens, 32,500.
c) In the village of Sossenki, 17,500.
d) In the stone quarries near the village of Vydumka, 3,000.
e) In the area surrounding Rovno prison, 500.'" (IMT, Vol. 7, p. 529)

The "Act on Devastation, Plunder and Mass Killings of Soviet Citizens by the Nazi Invaders and Their Collaborators in the City of Rovno and Rovno Region" dated 11 March 1944 reports an "Act of Forensic Medical Examination Carried Out during the Investigation of Nazi Atrocities in the City of Rovno" which supplies further information (Denisov/Changuli, p. 130):

"1. In the gardens near the Belaya Street there are 26 burial pits of square and rectangular shape, 3 x 3 and 4.5 x 6 meters. The burial mounds are 30 centimeters high.
2. At the firewood storage near the Belaya Street there are 65 graves, mostly of rectangular shape, from 3 x 4 meters to 4 x 6 meters. The mounds are 10 to 20 centimeters high.
3. In the north-western suburb of the village of Sosenki, 4 kilometers from Rovno in the direction of the town Korets, 50 meters from the highway, there is one grave 100 m long and 5 m wide with earth partitions, half-meter thick, built in every 4 meters. The soil over the graves [is] *depressed by 20 to 25 centimeters.*
4. In the village of Vydumka, in sand pits, 2 kilometers from Rovno in the direction of the town of Korets, 1.5 kilometers from the highway, there is a burial pit over a ravine, 4 x 5 meters covered with earth with [sic] *depressed by 30 centimeters. Besides that, the commission discovered 3 spots of land, 4 x 5 meters, covered with 6 iron slabs, 4 rails running along their edges.* […]
5. In the south-eastern part of Rovno prison, near the fence, there are 3 graves 5 x 3 meters. The grave located closest to the fence was not fully covered with earth and human corpses could be seen in it."

And here are the results of the examination of the mass graves and the bodies:

"1. Graves on the Belaya St. are 5 meters deep. The upper layer of soil is impregnated with chloride of lime. Each grave has 500 to 2,000 corpses. The corpses in the graves lie naked, face down, in different postures. Male corpses prevailed in most graves.
Corpses of mostly young and medium age women and children of both sexes at the ages of 1 year and older were found in the grave containing 1,500 corpses. The corpses lie naked, chaotically on one another in eight layers altogether.
During the examination of corpses, including children's ones, and during the post mortem, it was established that in most cases the victims had bullet injuries of the skull with an inlet opening on the back of the head or in the neck. […]
Over 2,000 corpses were found in an open grave 2 meters to the south of a brick structure to the left from the gardens near the Belaya Street. 1,800 of them were

> *men's corpses, the rest – bodies of women aged from 20 to 45. The corpses lay naked in disorder with their faces down. The skin of all corpses was of bright pink color.* […]
> *2. In the village of Sosenki, in the north-western vicinity of the village, the commission found a grave (ditch) containing 17,500 corpses of both sexes, different ages, including children's ones bearing traces of bullet injuries in different parts of the body, most frequently in the head. The corpses were covered with mould and showed signs of decomposition and decay.*
> *3. In the village of Vydumka, a large number of charred and half-charred bones were found during the examination of places where the victims had been burnt in the sand pits. A comparative anatomic study proved that those were human bones. According to incomplete data and judging by the remains of bones, no less than 3,000 corpses had been burnt there. A 4-meter iron hook was found in a quarry near this place. It was used for dragging corpses to the cremation site (the hook was given to the local museum).*
> *4. Over 500 dead bodies were found in a grave on the territory of the prison. All corpses were dressed in clothes which preserved well and not worn much before.* […]
> *The corpses' age varied from 20 to 30. The corpses were in the initial stage of decomposition. All had bullet injuries of the skull with an inlet opening on the back of the head and an outlet on the face. Inlet openings were 6 to 8 millimeters in diameter, the outlets were of different form and size. Many corpses had bruises.*
> *The earth over the grave was impregnated with chloride of lime. Many used caliber 0.9 cartridge cases with a punch DNH…Goze 41-2 were found in the grave."* (*ibid*., pp. 130-132)

This is followed by the conclusions of the Soviet experts cited at Nuremberg ("over 100,000 shot") and their interpretation of the presumed findings. The victims at Sosenki were shot and buried "in the second half of 1941" (*ibid.*, p. 132), but then it is not possible that the bodies, in March 1944, would exhibit merely "signs of decomposition and decay." The presumed discovery of the bodies with the pink skin was intended to constitute clear proof of the gassings in the "gas van," as claimed, with one crude error:

> *"d) killings of people with CO_2 in gas chambers and the posterior cremation of corpses in the village of Vydumka, in the quarries, date back to the second half of 1943."* (*ibid*., p. 133)

Leaving aside the fact that the poisoning was supposed to have been committed with CO, carbon monoxide,[379] and not CO_2, carbon dioxide, can one seriously believe, even in this case, that the bodies, after several months of interment and hence decomposition, should still be intact enough to exhibit the "pink" skin color which could indicate a death by carbon-monoxide poisoning?

[379] Strictly speaking, this would have applied only to the "gas vans" model *"Kaisers-Kaffee"-Wagen*, which allegedly used a cylinder of CO, not to the models allegedly sent into Soviet territory, in which the lethal agent consisted of motor-exhaust gas, although its main lethal component was also CO.

The presumed cremation of 3,000 bodies is in contradiction to the story of "Aktion 1005": who is supposed to have cremated these 3,000 bodies, and when?

The discovery of 102,500 bodies "in the city of Rovno and its surroundings" is evidently at least a blatant exaggeration. According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, 21,000 Jews were shot in this location on 7 and 8 November 1941, and another 5,000 on 13 July 1942 (Gutman *et al.*, Vol. II, entry "Rowno," pp. 1246f.). Nevertheless, EM No. 143 dated 8 December 1941 supplies the following report (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, pp. 860f.):

> *"On 6 and 7 November 1941, the long-planned Jewish operation in Rovno was carried out, during which some 15,000 Jews could be shot. Organization lay in the hands of the police by order of the Higher SS and Police leader. The Rovno exterior squad of Einsatzkommandos 5 participated essentially in the shootings."*

The subsequent shooting of the remaining 5,000 Jews in the ghetto is based exclusively on a mere declaration, the affidavit of Hermann Friedrich Gräbe dated 10 November 1945 (PS-2992. IMT, Vol. 31, pp. 441-445). The witness, who according to his own statement was a manager and head engineer of a branch office of the Josef Jung Construction Company, stated (*ibid.*, p. 441):

> *"In the night of 13-14 July 1942, all residents of the ghetto in Rovno, which still had about 5,000 Jewish residents, were liquidated."*

Appended to the affidavit was published a secret order from the District Commissar in Rovno to the Jung Company of Rovno dated 13 July 1942 which states (*ibid*., pp. 445f.):

> *"The Jewish workers employed at your company are not affected by the operation. You have until Wednesday, 15 July 1942 to resettle them at a new workplace."*

Gräbe, from whom the document presumably originated, asserted that he had known about the "*Judenaktion*" and wished to save the approximately 100 Jews lodged in the Rovno Ghetto who worked for the Jung Company. He met with the representative of the District Commissar, Head of Staff *Ordensjunker* Beck, who promised him that the Jews from the Jung Company would not be included in the operation (*ibid.*, pp. 442f.).

Since there are no other known documents, one could even imagine a story embroidered by Gräbe based on the secret order by the District Commissar in order to make him look like a hero and escape the accusation of using Jewish slave labor. At any rate, these 100 Jews were presumably not shot, so that the total number of victims should have amounted to 19,900, compared to the 102,000 bodies ostensibly found by the Soviets.

Arad states that

> *"in Rovno, where some 18,000 Jews had been murdered during the second half of 1941, about 5,000 remained in the ghetto. These were transported on July 13, 1942, by train to a forest near Kostopol and shot,"*

but refers the reader to a work by Spector and to the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (Arad 2009, p. 264, and fn 6, p. 584).

According to another testimony, the shooting took place on 12 July, mostly in the Jewish quarter. According to this witness, the Jews captured alive were shut up in cattle cars and left for two days with nothing to eat or drink.

> *"A rather large group of people was put together and led away.* […] *We learned that the people taken away by rail were taken in the direction of Kostopol, but the exact destination is unknown."* (Angrick *et al*., Doc. 131, p. 323)

Pohl states that the presumed execution took place on 13-14 July, but refers to a book by Spector (Pohl 2008, p. 48, and fn 164, p. 70). We read there that,

> *"on June 14-15, 5,000 Rovno Jews were liquidated. They were assembled, marched to the train station, transported 30 kilometers north and murdered in the woods near Kostopol."* (Spector 1990a, p. 185)

No source is given for this. The alleged shooting, 30 km from Rovno, is moreover in contradiction to the presumed Soviet findings, since the mass graves further away were only 4 km from the city. The motivation for the presumed shooting is unknown.

On 15 January 1942, the Council of Jews compiled a list containing 5,355 names of persons inhabiting the ghetto.[380] On 23 February, the mayor of Rovno wrote to the city's District Commissar concerning the "resettlement" of the Jews "to the ghetto," according to an order dated 30 January, which had to be concluded by 15 February; until that date, some Jews had permission to reside in non-Jewish districts. The mayor asked whether these permits had expired and whether as a result one could proceed with "the resettlement of all Jews to the ghetto."[381]

On 5 May, the above-mentioned mayor turned to the service department of the police in Rovno to report the following case:

> *"The Jew Jakob Grabina with wife has not yet resettled to the ghetto, despite having been requested to do so repeatedly."*

He had given Grabina one last deadline for the transfer, the 6th, at 12 noon; if he failed to comply, he would be arrested immediately and held for 24 hours without anything to eat or drink (Hoppe, Doc. 97, p. 263). This sort of mild threat does not seem to accord with the alleged executions of thousands of Jews.

A document dated 8 May 1942, sent from said mayor of the City of Rovno to the chairman of the Jews, Dr. Bergmann, reports the compulsory-labor order for the Jews of the ghetto over age 14. It states:

> *"Jews over 65 years old and the chronically ill are excluded from this."*

Only "compulsory-labor tasks" were to be performed on Sundays, between 7 AM and 1 PM. There were 5,200 people in the Jewish quarter at the time, 3,000 of them over the age of 14.[382] The same day, in response to this order, the president of the Council of Jews, Dr. Bergmann, confirmed that there were 5,200 people in the ghetto, distributed as follows: "employed (men and women)": 3,747; "unable to work": 271; "children up the age of 14": 1,182 (Hoppe, Doc. 100, p. 268).

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[380] YVA, M.52-579, pp. 7-148.
[381] DARO Rivne, R-22-1-17, p. 1.
[382] DARO Rivne, R-22-1-17, p. 13.

Why would these 5,200 Jews have been shot a couple of months later?

Rostov

Another emblematic case is that of Rostov. As Arad reports, "on February 21, 1943, one week after the liberation of Rostov on the Don, Radio Moscow announced the discovery of a mass grave containing the bodies of 20,000 murdered people" (Arad 2009, p. 348); he also states that "according to a Soviet committee of inquiry, 'Preliminary findings show that the number of Jews murdered in Rostov between July 23, 1942, and February 13, 1943, was in the range of 15,000 to 18,000.'" (*Ibid.*, p. 289)

The *Enzyklopädia des Holocaust* reports that Rostov was captured by the Germans on 21 November 1941 and retaken by the Soviets eight days later. On 27 July 1942, it fell back into the hands of the Germans and was reconquered by the Soviets on 14 February 1943. There were 2,000 presumed victims, in addition to which "several dozens of Jews were captured later and murdered in gas vans." But the source for this massacre is nothing other than the *Black Book* – a volume of Soviet propaganda![383]

No known document mentions executions at Rostov. A "Protocol on German War Crimes in the City of Rostov on the Don" dated 30 November 1941 and signed by five Russians speaks generally of mistreatment and killings of Jews, without supplying any precise figures. The editors of the book which presents the document offer the following comment (Hoppe/Glass *et al.*, p. 387, Doc. 123):

> *"The Jews were shot by members of the main commando of Sk 10a, which had moved into the city together with the Wehrmacht. No concrete information as to the number of victims is available, but the number is estimated at around 1,000."*

The conjecture is highly random, since there is not the slightest documentary evidence in this regard.

On the other hand, EM No. 16 dated 14 August 1942 contains a lengthy discussion of Rostov, with a report from *Einsatzgruppe* D. The most important passages are reproduced below:[384]

> *"Until November 1941, the number of Jews in Rostov supposedly still amounted to 50,000. They occupied all trading professions. There was a high percentage of them among physicians, pharmacists and the legal professions. More than half of all judges in Rostov were Jews.*
>
> *On 1 Aug. 42, a Jewish council of elders was set up by the Sonderkommando deployed in Rostov, and 2,000 Jews have been registered so far. The other necessary measures are also being undertaken.*
>
> *The danger of epidemics for Rostov is being combatted effectively by the Sonderkommando's intervention. 350 doctors have already been registered and put to work in their profession in close cooperation with the Wehrmacht."*

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[383] Gutman *et al.*, Vol. II, entry "*Rostow am Don*," pp. 1242f.
[384] NARA, T-175/236, 2724711, p. 10.

Notwithstanding the gaps, the figures adopted by Arad are obviously significant for their order of magnitude, which corresponds to 0.7% of the total claimed number of bodies. No orthodox Holocaust historian would adduce 7,000 executions (0.7% of the total number of the approximately 976,000 victims of the *Einsatzgruppen* and other SS and police units) as an indication of the extermination campaign's dimensions. Adding the other exhumations mentioned at Nuremberg (excluding those relating to prisoners of war and those which are obviously false) we arrive at 51,000. Therefore, if we were to accept the premises of orthodox Holocaust historians, the overwhelming majority of bodies must have been destroyed by the Germans prior to their retreat. Under these circumstances, "Aktion 1005" represents an absolutely indispensable cornerstone of orthodox Holocaust historiography.

If we are to believe Dieter Pohl, the common graves should have been nearly intact, at least in the Ukraine, because he asserts that (Pohl 2008, p. 54):

> *"despite their efforts, the Germans never came close to opening but a small fraction of the mass graves in Ukraine, let alone burning the bodies and crushing the bones. After the Red Army's return, Soviet investigators were able to find almost all of the mass graves and to examine them."*

From the above, it is obvious that the Soviet reports are a mixture of a small amount of truth and a great deal of propaganda, and it would be very foolish to elevate them to the status of incontrovertible historical documents. A more-detailed examination of the Soviet reports, which will follow now, provides further confirmation.

1.2. Mass Graves in the Ukraine According to Soviet Experts

Voroshilovgrad

"Act on Excavation of the Burial Place of Victims of the Nazi Terrorism in an Anti-Tank Ditch in the Area of Ostraya Mogyla in the Town of Voroshilovgrad" dated 24 April 1943 (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 54f.):

> *"The commission discovered a heap of corpses of the tortured and shot victims burried* [sic] *under such a thin layer of earth that parts of human bodies, that is, arms, legs and heads could be seen on the surface. The commission counted the bodies of 1800 persons – men, women, children and old people."*

More bodies were found in other graves, so that the total number of victims amounted to 1,901 (*ibid.*):

> *"The commission believes it ascertained that the aforementioned corpses were the result of the massacre over civilians executed between 12 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Sunday, November 1,1942 and on January 21, 1943."*

Arad affirms that "on the eve of the German invasion, 11,000 Jews lived in Voroshilovgrad (Lugansk). The town fell on July 17, 1942, and on November 1 its remaining 2,000 to 3,000 Jews were led to a nearby antitank trench – at a place known as Ostraia-Mogila and Ivanishchev – and murdered; some were killed in

gas vans" (Arad 2009, pp. 287f.). Nevertheless, according to Dieter Pohl, in August 1942, there were only 1,038 Jews in Voroshilovgrad (Pohl 2008, p. 39).

Sumy

"From the Act of the Regional Extraordinary State Commission for the Establishing and Investigating the Crimes Committed by German-Fascist Invaders in the City of Sumy," 26 September 1943 (Denisov/Changuli, p. 82):

> *"On the whole, 15 pits were found where the shot and tortured Soviet citizens were buried. The total number of the exterminated Soviet citizens amounts to 5 thousand, including one thousand Soviet citizens of Jewish nationality who were shot near brick-yards Nos. 2 and 4."*

Six graves were opened and the bodies were examined. One contained "the remains of 650 bodies of citizens who had been burn alive"! (*ibid*.)

Arad affirms that Sumy was captured by the Germans on 10 October 1941 and that the number of Jews shot amounted to 350 (Arad 2009, p. 190).

Strelechnoye

"Act on the Atrocities and Crimes Perpetrated by the Nazi Invaders in the Psychiatric Hospital in the Village of Strelechnoye, Liptsy District, Kharkov Region," 20 October 1943 (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 94-101). On 21 and 22 November 1941, the Germans shot all 435 patients in a local hospital. This massacre is unknown to Holocaust historiography, and the material evidence is rather peculiar. The Soviets found a grave upon which there "stands a cone-shaped monument made of sheet iron and painted steel-blue with a red star on top. There is an inscription on the monument's pedestal reading 'Here lie 235 patients from the Strelechnoye psychiatric hospital brutally shot by the German murderers on November 21-22, 1941.'" Another grave is said to have had the inscription: "Here lie 200 patients from the Strelechnoye psychiatric hospital brutally shot by the German murderers on November 21-22, 1941" (*ibid.*, p. 100). Thus, we have 435 victims. But the zealous Soviet investigators did not content themselves with these discoveries and located two mass graves in the area, from which they exhumed a whopping 17 bodies (twelve from the first and five from the second); thus the murder of 435 persons is established by physical evidence consisting of two inscriptions and 17 bodies.

Romny

The "Act of the District Commission on the Investigation of Crimes Perpetrated by Nazi Invaders and Their Collaborators in the Town of Romny and Romny District" dated 1 October-6 November 1943 says that the Germans occupied the territory in question from 10 September 1941 to 1 September 1943. All the local Jews, approximately 3,000, were crammed into shacks. On 10 November 1941, they were taken out 2 km from the city and shot in "three big precipices" [sic], which the Soviets inspected meticulously (*ibid.*, pp. 102-105):

> *"After the examination of the precipices and exhumation of corpses it has been established that the first precipice 100 meters long and 40 meters wide, the second one –100 meters long and 1* [sic] *meter wide and the third one – 100 meters long, 20 meters wide and 10 meters deep were heaped with corpses up to the height of 6 meters.* […] *Some 1,000 victims were buried in the precipices. Judging by the structure and form of bones, those were men, women and children."* (p. 105)

If we are to take these data literally, the total surface area of the "three big precipices" was 7,000 square meters (the width of the second is an obvious error and should read 10 instead of 1); if the bodies formed a mass 6 meters high, the total volume was 42,000 cubic meters, and if every meter contained 3.5 bodies, the total number was 147,000!

The presumed massacre at Romny is unknown to Holocaust historiography. In his essay "The Murder of Ukraine's Jews under German Military Administration and in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine," Dieter Pohl refers in a note to *Nazi Crimes in the Ukraine 1941-1944*! (Pohl 2008, fn 219, p. 74)

Vasilkov

"Act on the Atrocities Perpetrated by the Nazi Invaders in the Town of Vasilkov, Kiev Region," 28 November 1943.

> *"During the entire period of the Nazi occupation of Vasilkov the Germans shot nearly 1,000 Soviet citizens besides Red Army POWs."*
> *"In the locality of Kovalevka there is one big pit 7 meters long, 5 meters wide and 6 meters deep. Witnesses told that 106 bodies of executed Soviet people had been buried there,"*

therefore the grave was not opened.

> *"In the gully 'Kruglik' there are three pits where over 50 corpses were buried."*

More than 200 mental patients were killed and "buried in two pits" (Denisov/ Changuli, pp. 110f.). Of 1,000 presumed victims, 356 bodies were mentioned, only 50 of which (perhaps) were exhumed. The presumed massacre at Vasilkov is unknown to Holocaust historiography.

Kremenchuk (Kremenchug)

"From the Act on Mass Executions and Massacre of Soviet Prisoners of War in the city of Kremenchuk, Poltava Region," 29 November 1943:

> *"In the territory of Pishchanaya Hill in the northeastern suburb of the city of Kremenchuk where 36 graves with the total number of 20,000 corpses were found. Most of the victims were civilians. There were also 5,000 bodies of POWs."*

The report adds that "736 corps[es] were examined in the course of excavations and it was established that the Nazis had killed 60,000 Soviet citizens in the camps near the city of Kremenchuk." Near Camp 346 A were 11 graves with the bodies of 30,000 Soviet prisoners of war; 4 graves containing 2,000 bodies were found near Camp 346 B (*ibid.*, pp. 116f.).

Arad states that, when the Germans took Kremenchuk on 8 September 1941, approximately 7,000 Jews were still in the city, but a census of the population on 26 September registered 3,500 persons as Jews and another 100 living in mixed marriages. There is no proof that there were really 7,000 Jews, just as there is no proof of the shooting of more than 3,000 Jews on 28 October 1941 and even less proof of further shootings until 7 November. Arad cites a single document, a report by *Feldkommandantur* 239 responsible for the Kremenchug Region referring to the period between October 15 and November 15, 1941 which says "Kremenchug is almost purged of Jews" (Arad 2009, p. 177). If the Jews of the city were all killed, there were 3,500 victims, but the Soviets claimed to have found 20,000 bodies, most of them civilians, that is, Jews.

Starokonstantinov

"Act on the Mass Extermination of Civilians and Soviet Prisoners of War in the Town of Starokonstantinov," 24 March 1944 (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 135f.):

> *"According to statistics, 20 thousand innocent Soviet civilians had been killed in Starokonstantinov. Numerous graves in the town and on its outskirts are terrible proofs of the crimes perpetrated by the Hitlerites. The commission examined the spots where the victims were killed and found that there were four such places in the town and the vicinity. The first was located 1 kilometer west of Starokonstantinov. There are 9 large graves and 20 ones of smaller size. According the evidence presented by I.I. Shokot, Te. O. Bartels, Dobrotvorsky and other people living near the station, Gestapo men shot close to 6,500 civilians here.* […]
> *3 big and 5 smaller graves were found at the distance of 2 kilometers from the town near the forest, to the right from the highway Shepetovka. As testified by residents of the village of Nove Misto, Starokonstantinov District, Y. Korovsky, M. Kostyuk, V. Ordynat and other people, more than 4,800 children, men and women had been shot here."*

D. Sandratsky, Chairman of Voroshilov Collective Farm, told Soviet investigators that the Germans had shot 300 civilians and hanged six persons in August 1941, then: "On December 29, 1942 the Germans assembled 4,000 men, women and children, old people and cripples" and shot them (*ibid*., p. 136). A third site had an imprecise number of mass graves; according to local residents, "the graves contained 155 bodies of the shot people, mostly children between the ages of 1 to 12 years from the invalids' home" (*ibid*., p. 137).

If we take these statement at face value, at least 11,455 civilians were killed at Starokonstantinov, of whom at least 4,155 were Jews (men, women and children), but the Soviets did not consider it necessary to open any mass grave. Pohl writes that 4,000 Jews were killed in this locality on 29 December 1942 (Pohl 2008, p. 50), but his source is precisely the Soviet report in question (*ibid.*, fn 176, p. 71).

The only documented shooting in this locality is mentioned in EM No. 59 dated 21 August 1941. It is best quoted in context (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 327):

> *"In Starokonstantinov, the current headquarters of the Higher SS and Police leader and commander of the Rear Army Area, the Jews were made to clean the barracks after the arrival of the German troops. Since the Jews had recently quit showing up for work, the military agencies proceeded to rounding up their workers at daybreak. The Jews were very impudent and flat-out refused to work. Of approximately 1,000 Jews enlisted for work in the fields, only 70 showed up the next day. Acts of sabotage against harvesting equipment were moreover discovered. In the end, the Jewish council of elders even spread the rumor that the Russians were coming back, which immediately caused the Jews to threaten and insult the Ukrainians publicly. Finally, it was discovered that the Jews were engaged in lively trade with stolen livestock and goods. In reprisal, the 1st SS Brigade carried out an operation against the Jews, in the course of which 300 male and 139 female Jews were shot."*

Everything can be said *except* that this shooting was a "pretext" to kill Jews for racial reasons. Thus, the documented victims are 439 of the presumed 11,455.

Novaya Odessa

According to the "Act of the Atrocities Committed by the Nazi Invaders Against Civilians in Novaya Odessa, Nikolayev Region," dated 3 April 1944, the Germans shot 104 persons in the village of Andreyevka on 14 March (the year is not given but should be 1942; Denisov/Changuli, p. 139):

> *"When the graves with the shot and tortured citizens of Novaya Odessa had been unearthed, the medical commission established that the majority of them were buried alive.* […] *The examination of corpses established that close to 70 percent of Soviet civilians got half-lethal wounds of legs, arms, the back and the body. Thus, the medical commission found that the victims has been buried in the pits alive."*

The report, however, does not even indicate the number of mass graves and tells us nothing about the exhumations. Official historiography is completely ignorant of this presumed massacre.

Zaporozhie (Zaporozhye)

"From the Act of the Extraordinary Commission on Establishing and Investigating Destruction, Pillage and Killings Perpetrated by the German-Fascist Invaders and Their Accomplices in the City of Zaporozhie," 20 April 1944 (*ibid.*, pp. 142-145).

On 14 October 1941, the Germans announced the registration of all the Jews in Zaporozhie, who were then compelled to wear an armband with a six-pointed star. On 24 March 1942, the German authorities gathered the entire Jewish population together under the pretext of transferring them to Melitopol.

> *"Having assembled thousands of Jews including old people, women and children, they marched them out of town to the Stalin State Farm, where they were shot on the same day."* (*ibid.*, p. 142)

There were 3,700 victims. The forensic medical-legal commission established that the number of victims amounted to 43,000, broken down as follows (*ibid.*, p. 144):

> *"1. 6,600 – at the stadium*
> *2. 400 – at an old cemetery near the POW camp*
> *3. 27,000 – to the north of the Stalin State Farm near Zaporozhie*
> *4. 7,200 – in quarry No. 1 to the north-east of the Stalin State Farm*
> *5. 1,800 – in quarry No. 2 to the north-east of the Stalin State Farm."*

Only 66 bodies were exhumed from the eight mass graves. Since there were only 3,700 Jews, and the prisoners of war probably amounted to 400 men, one must wonder who the remaining 38,900 victims were. It is also worthy of note that, out of 43,000 bodies, the Soviets only exhumed 66!

Pohl mentions the shooting of 3,700 Jews at Zaporozhie on the 21st or 24th of March 1942 (Pohl 2008, p. 38), but bases his statement entirely on this Soviet report (*ibid.*, fn 91, p. 66). This means that orthodox Holocaust historiography has no knowledge of this presumed massacre.

Vinnitsa (Mental Hospital)

"From the Act on the Execution of Patients of the Vinnitsa Mental Hospital by the German Invaders," 29 April 1944 (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 146-148). The Germans allegedly killed approximately 2,000 mental patients from the city "in the spring of 1941" (sic) by shooting, and by lethal injection in the winter-spring of 1942.

> *"The commission has examined the places where the murdered patients had been buried and established that a sand pit on the bank of Vyshenka River contained close to 800 corpses of mental patients, shot by the Germans.* […]
> *The poisoned patients had been buried on the hospital cemetery where the commission found 18 graves 3 to 4 meters long, 2 to 3 meters wide and 5 meters deep."* (*ibid.*, p. 146)

The bodies were arranged in superimposed layers, but, due to their condition "it was impossible to establish the number of layers," nevertheless: "According to the materials of investigation and the excavation of graves, the commission established that the number of the Nazi-poisoned mental patients buried in the hospital's cemetery is more than 700" (*ibid.*, p. 147). This crime, as well, is unknown to orthodox Holocaust historiography.

Vinnitsa

"Act of the City Commission on the Investigation of the Crimes Perpetrated by German-Fascist Invaders in the City of Vinnitsa," 18 May 1944 (*ibid.*, pp. 149f.). The report mentions the following executions carried out by the Germans:

1. 29 July 1941: 25 hostages
2. mid-August 1941: 350 people
3. 13 September 1941: 1,200 people

4. 19 September 1941: "15,000 residents of the city of Vinnitsa were brutally tortured to death in the Pyatnichanskiy Forest"
5. *"On April 16, 1942 by the order of Stadtkommissar Marinfeld, 10,000 civilians were gathered at Vinnitsa stadium and then herded to the Pyatnichanskiy Forest where old people, women, and children were shot, while the able-bodied population (1,000) were imprisoned. From the prison 500 persons were sent for labour in the Vinnitsa concentration camp and 500 others – to a concentration camp in Zhytomir."* (All *ibid.*, p. 149)

Of these 1,000 persons, 500 were shot on 25 August 1942 and the remaining 500 in September 1942 and 1943. The Germans also killed 12,000 Soviet prisoners of war and 250 patriots, so that the total number of victims amounted to 41,620 (although the figures only add up to 39,825). Oddly, the report makes no mention of mass graves (*ibid.*, pp. 149f.). The murdered Jews were those indicated in Points 4) and 5), a total of 23,000 persons.

Arad writes with regard to this locality (Arad 2009, p. 170):

"Over September 19 and 20, a large murder operation took place in the Piatnichansk forest; about 10,000 Jews, mainly women, children, and the old people, were murdered. This action was carried out by Reserve Police battalion 45 and Police battalion 314, aided by the local police. A ghetto was established in Vinnitsa in late September 1941; some 5,000 Jewish artisans and physically fit working Jews moved in."

Nevertheless, for the killings, the author does not refer us to any document, but rather to three publications, among them a 2000 paper by Pohl, the English translation of which I have cited frequently (Pohl 2008). In both editions, Pohl claims that a "*Restkommando*" of *Einsatzkommando* 6, together with Police Battalion 45 and 314 "probably" ("around" in the English text) killed 15,000 Jews on 19-20 September 1941. He notes that the massacre is not mentioned in the Incident Reports and refers to Denisov/Changuli's *Nazi Crimes in the Ukraine 1941–1944*![385]

Regarding the execution of 16 April 1942, Pohl writes (2008, p. 47):

"Shortly thereafter, the Reich Security Service, which was responsible for Hitler's personal security and is not to be confused with the SD, tried to have the remaining 5,000 Jews in Vinnytsia killed. Only three months later could Hitler's bodyguard report: 'As already reported, the Jews living in Vinnytsia were knocked off on April 16, up to 4,800 [in all]."

Zolotonosha

"From the Act on the Extermination of Soviet Citizens by the Nazis in the City of Zolotonosha," 18 May 1945 (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 151-155). On 22 November 1941, 3,500 Jews from the city were taken to a "deep ravine" 3 km from the city and shot by the Germans:

[385] The German article was republished, to which I refer: Pohl 2009a, p. 170; cf. Pohl 2008, fn 86, p. 66.

> *"Through the investigation, the commission discovered the graves of the shot people 3 kilometers from Zolotonosha in a ravine. The graves were 49 meters in perimeters and 12 meters deep."* (*ibid.*, p. 153)

No indication of the number of graves nor any exhumations. This locality is unknown to orthodox Holocaust historiography as the site of a massacre.

Poltava

"Extract from the Report of the Poltava Regional Commission on Establishing and Investigating the Crimes Committed by the German-Fascist Invaders and Their Collaborators and on the Damage They Caused to Citizens, Collective Farms, State Enterprises and Institutions of Regional Subordination," late 1944.

> *"Over the two years of their rule, the Germans shot, burnt, buried alive or tortured to death 221,895 Soviet people in the region, among them 152,279 men, 58,369 women and 11,256 children."* (*ibid.*, p. 166)

No mention of mass graves.

Chernigov

"From the Report of the State Regional Commission on Establishing and Investigating the Crimes Perpetrated by the German-Fascist Invaders in the Territory of Chernigov Region from September, 1941 to September, 1943," 16 March 1945 (*ibid.*, pp. 167-171):

> *"The occupation of Chernigov Region by German-fascist invaders was accompanied by savage tortures and extermination of the population. During the occupation the Germans killed and tortured to death 127,778 people and deported 41,578 people to Germany for slave labor. The city of Chernigov was one of the places where mass extermination of civilians took place. A considerable part of Soviet citizens had passed through the city prison. Out of the total number of victims 52,453 died in Chernigov."* (*ibid.*, p. 167)

The report mentions Jews in these terms:

> *"Shortly after the occupation of Chernigov in 1941, the Nazis carried out mass shootings of Jews. Prior to executions, the Jewish population was registered and proposed to assemble at the square for further deportation. All those who arrived were encircled by armed guards, marched to a certain place and shot there. Those who had not arrived for some reason were later arrested in their apartments, imprisoned and later shot."* (*ibid.*, pp. 167f.)

Other exterminations allegedly targeted mental patients and Gypsies:

> *"In January, 1942 a mass execution of patients of the local mental hospital was staged. Part of patients was shot, and the rest gassed in truck-mounted gas chambers.*
>
> *In the spring of 1942 the Nazis organized a registration of Gypsies and after registration all Gypsies were shot."* (*ibid.*, p. 168)

The report makes no mention of mass graves or the exhumation of graves. The number of victims attributed to Chernigov is quite implausible, if not downright

absurd, because it is higher than the number of inhabitants which the Germans found in the city: 40,000.

This location appears in the *Einsatzgruppen* reports in connection with execution only in EM No. 135 dated 19 November 1941 (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 816):

> *"On 23 Oct. 41, a partial unit of Sonderkommando 4a visited the city of Chernigov, which had 70,000 residents before the war, only 40,000 of whom remained. Of more than 1,000 Jews, not more than 260 remained. The city itself had been almost completely destroyed. The inner city is said to have been set on fire by the Jews before the arrival of German troops. Next to 8 Communists and partisans, who had been handed over by the town commandant, the commando shot 116 Jews on 23 Oct. 41 and 144 Jews the next day. When the same commando entered the city again on 28 Oct. 41, 49 Jews could be arrested who had thought the danger was over after the operation of 24 Oct. 41, and who had shown up again after their flight. On the same day, a request by the director of the local lunatic asylum in Chernigov was also granted to liquidate 270 incurably ill mental patients."*

The victims at Chernigov therefore numbered 587, including 309 Jews.

Ukraine in General

In 1945, the "Ukrainian Republican Commission," which assisted the Soviet "Extraordinary State Commission," established that the "German-fascist invaders"

> *"have exterminated and tortured to death 4,496,574 Soviet citizens, including 3,178,084 civilians, among them men, women and children, and 1,318,463 Soviet prisoners-of-war; 2,023,112 Soviet citizens were driven into German slavery."*

The report does not say how many bodies were found, or where (Denisov/Changuli, p. 172).

Among the crimes committed by the Germans in the Ukraine were the shooting of more than 100,000 people at Babi Yar, 175,000 at Rovno (city and region), 200,000 in the Yanov Camp at Lvov, and 133,000 Jews in the Lvov Ghetto (*ibid.*, pp. 176f.).

Kramatorsk

A "Report of the Extraordinary State Commission" dated 23 December 1944 relating to the Stalino Region mentions the exhumation of 812 bodies in three mass graves "in the old kaolin and chalk quarry in the northern suburb of Kramatorsk" on 25 September 1943. The graves contained the bodies of 740 men, 50 women and 22 children, only 126 of whom could be identified.

> *"'The inquest has determined that 761 bodies have penetrating bullet wounds in the skull, 40 bodies have penetrating bullet wounds of cervical vertebra. In all the 812 cases death was the result of shots from hand firearms in the back of the head at close range, almost point blank.'"* (*ibid.*, p. 192)

In EM No. 156 dated 16 January 1942, SK 4b of *Einsatzgruppe* C reported "that the Jews had mostly fled prior to the arrival of the commando at the city," adding (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 100):

> *"The number of Jews present in the cities occupied by SK 4b in the region around Kramatorsk is estimated at no more than 1,500."*

The Activity Report of the counter-intelligence officer at Department Ic dated 26 February 1942 reports: "SD carries out large-scale cleansing in Kramatorsk" (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 273), but there were still 340 Jews in the city in February 1943 (Oldenburg, p. 252). The aforementioned 1,500 Jews lived in various towns around Kramatorsk, however, which means that the discovery of 812 corpses in this city presupposes that the Jews had been brought there from nearby towns to be killed there. But no document mentions this transfer nor the number of people shot.

1.3. Conclusions of the Soviet Expert Reports

The basic problem is that the institution of the Soviet war crimes commissions was strictly propagandistic in intent, to the extent that they were intended to demonstrate the horrifying crimes of the "monsters," "hangmen," "cannibals," "German-Fascist invaders," etc. whose primary aim was to massacre the "peaceful," "Soviet citizens," who were "brutally tortured to death" or "burnt alive," "buried alive," or "gassed," for no reason at all. The aim formed part of an ideological mission in which there was no place for the truth.

The case of Katyn is typical in this regard. Number 51 of the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories" dated 23 April 1943 describes the Soviet reaction to the discovery of the mass graves (Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, p. 803):

> *"The German publication on the murder of Polish officers in the Katyn Forest was very inconvenient for the Soviets. In a TASS disclaimer, the German reports are dismissed as vile lies. These crimes were said to have been committed by the Germans themselves. According to this, the former POWs were doing construction work in the area west of Smolensk, and fell into German hands with the retreat of the Red Army. Soviet propaganda attempts to make these murders supposedly committed by the Germans more credible by harping on the other atrocities committed by the Nazis against the Soviet population."*

The same propaganda line was also followed during later cases. After recapturing the territory around Smolensk, the Soviets instituted a special commission to investigate the murders (the so-called Burdenko Commission), which performed its tasks between the 16th and 23rd of January 1944, releasing a long report on the 24th, which was later introduced into evidence at Nuremberg as Document USSR-054 (IMT, Vol. 39, pp. 290-332). "From statements by witnesses it clearly emerged," so the Soviet report claimed, that Katyn was a German "provocation" (*ibid.*, p. 292), and furthermore:

> *"In the winter of 1942-43, the general military situation changed fundamentally, and not in favour of the Germans. The military power of the Soviet Union was constantly increasing, and the alliance between the Soviet Union and the Allies consolidated. The Germans decided to initiate the provocation by taking the atrocities which they had committed in the forest of Katyn and putting the blame*

> *for them on Soviet authorities. They thus intended to divide the Russians and the Poles and obliterate the trace of their crime."* (*ibid.*, p. 304)

The Commission invited 20 foreign journalists, most of them British or American, including "John Melby, the Third Secretary of the American Embassy, and Kathleen Harriman, the 25-year-old daughter of the millionaire William Averell Harriman, who was US ambassador to the USSR at the time" (Sanford, p. 139), who were no doubt shown all or a part of the 925 bodies which the Soviets declared they had exhumed (IMT, Vol. 39, p. 324). Over the course of the debates at the Nuremberg Trial, at the hearing of 14 February 1946, Colonel Y.V. Pokrovsky read a summary of the Soviet forensic medical findings:

> *"'According to the estimates of medico-legal experts, the total number of bodies amounts to over 11,000. The medico-legal experts carried out a thorough examination of the bodies exhumed, and of the documents and material evidence found on the bodies and in the graves. During the exhumation and examination of the corpses, the commission questioned many witnesses among the local inhabitants. Their testimony permitted the determination of the exact time and circumstances of the crimes committed by the German invaders.'"* (IMT, Vol. 7, p. 426)

In their audacity, the Soviets dared to link Katyn to "Aktion 1005." At Nuremberg, Soviet prosecutor L.N. Smirnov asserted (*ibid.*, pp. 592f.):

> *"I terminate the quotation with the conclusion of the medical-legal experts. I quote the last paragraph on Page 340 of the text:*
>
> *'Thus the Hitlerite murderers adopted in the territory of the Lvov region the same methods for concealing their crimes which they employed earlier in connection with the murder of Polish officers in the Katyn Forest.*
>
> *'The expert commission ascertained full similarity of method in camouflaging the graves in Lissenitzach Forest with those used to camouflage the graves of the Polish officers killed by the Germans at Katyn.*
>
> *'To extend the experiments in exterminating people, cremating corpses, and camouflaging the crimes, the Germans set up in Lvov, in the Yanov Camp, a special school for the preparation of qualified cadre. The commandants of the camps of Lublin, Warsaw, Kraków, and other cities attended this school. The chief of the Sonderkommando Number 1005, Scherlack* [Schallock?]*, taught the commandants on the spot how to organize the exhumation of the corpses from the graves, how to pile them on stacks, burn them, how to scatter the ashes, to crush the bones, to fill up the ditches, and how to plant trees and brush wood on the graves as camouflage.'"*

Since the Germans, after their investigation of the murdered Poles whom they had discovered near Katyn in 1943, had reburied the bodies in the same graves where they had found them, the Soviets were able to exhume them again. Hence, it makes no sense to speak of "camouflage" of the mass graves or of "cremating corpses."

Referring to the mass graves of Ulla (Byelorussia), Katyn and Vinnitsa, all of which contain victims of the Soviet NKVD, Derek Congram notes:

> *"Despite the age of the documentation (in and around 1943) and the overtly political motivation of the* [German] *exhumations, they represent among the best publicly available data on mass grave excavations to date."* (Congram, p. 258)

In practice, in the field of exhumations and legal-medical expert reports, no other report comes even close to the quality of the expert reports compiled by the Germans in the cases of Katyn and Vinnitsa (Reichsministerium 1943 & 1944).

The Soviet manipulations are well illustrated by the case of Ozarichi. On 12 March 1944, the commander of the 35th Infantry Division of the *Wehrmacht*, *Generalleutnant* Johann-Georg Richert, ordered the Byelorussian civilian population to be collected in two camps of the administrative district near Ozarichi. The camps were without infrastructure, and the inmates were left under the open sky until 18 March, when the Soviet troops arrived and liberated 33,480 people, including 15,960 children below the age of 13.[386] Hans-Heinrich Nolte reports that

> *"the camps were taken up by Soviet propaganda; several newspaper articles report. The 'Extraordinary State Commission' for the Investigation of the Crimes of the 'German-Fascist Invaders' send a group of investigators"* (p. 272),

including military correspondents who took numerous photographs during the liberation of the camps (p. 14). It should be borne in mind that the bodies all lay under an open sky:

> *"The dead were not buried; those still alive lacked the strength for this. First, the soldiers on watch forced* [the inmates] *to throw or stack the dead into special ditches dug for this near the fence. But there were more bodies with every day, and they were left lying among the living."* (p. 8)

The fatality figures adopted by the Soviet reports are very discordant and range from 8,000 to 49,000:

– "Protocol on the Investigation of the Civilian Camp Near the Dert Settlement by the Military Commission," 18 March 1944:

> *"More than 8,000 people were tormented to death, shot or starved to death in these camps."* (p. 36)

– "Protocol of the Commission of Military Physicians on the Crimes of the Wehrmacht in the Ozarichi Camps," 18 March 1944:

> *"The victims of the Hitler fascists amount to hundreds of thousands. In the ditch at Camp No. 1, which is 100 meters long and 1.5 to 2 meters wide, lies a lot of bodies, thrown together by the Germans. According to the accounts of the prisoners and from the number of exhumed burials and the bodies found on the grounds of the camp, it is evident that over the course of the seven days of the camp's existence, and on the way to the camp, the Germans annihilated at least 9,000 Soviet citizens."* (p. 34)

– "Protocol of the Extraordinary Regional Commission on the Established Crimes of the Wehrmacht in the Ozarichi Camps," April 1944:

[386] Knatko, p. 10; subsequent page numbers and photos from there, unless stated otherwise.

> *"Out of a total of 52,000 people, 40% perished; they were thrown into the excavated ditches."* (p. 146)

The number of victims therefore amounted to 20,800.

– From the "Protocol of the Extraordinary Regional Commission on the Determination of Crimes of the Fascists in the Ozarichi Camps," 18 March 1944: Camp No. 1 held 45,689 people; No. 2 held 25,271 people, and a total of 33,434 people were liberated on 18 March, so that there were 37,526 victims among the 70,960 internees (53% death rate; p. 38).
– "Protocol of the Extraordinary Regional Commission on the Established Crimes of the Wehrmacht in the Ozarichi Camps," April 1944:

> *"Followng their arrival in the camp, there were approximately 70,000 people there.* […] *At the time of the liberation, i.e., until the 18th of March of the same year, no fewer than 70% of the peaceful Soviet citizens held in the concentration camp died."* (pp. 148-150; emph. added)

The deaths therefore amounted to at least 49,000.

The information on the actual discovery of bodies is scarce and vague. According to a "Telegram of the 65th Army's War Council" dated 29 March 1944, "according to preliminary information, up to 600 bodies of persons were discovered right on the camp grounds who had died of starvation and disease or in isolated cases had been killed by the Germans or Vlasov's followers" (p. 50).

The "Protocol of the Commission of Military Physicians on the Crimes of the Wehrmacht in the Ozarichi Camps" dated 18 March 1944 reports, as we have just seen, on the discovery of a mass grave 100 meters long and 1.5 to 2 meters wide in Camp No. 1, containing "a lot of bodies." Finally, the "Protocol of the Investigation of the Ozarichi Camp by the Commission of Military Physicians" states that the Germans forced the prisoners "to dig a gigantic ditch measuring 6 x 3 x 2 m, into which the bodies of 15 already shot inmates were thrown" (p. 44).

Therefore, the corpses were not destroyed or concealed and were visible to everyone. When the military photographers reached the spot, they found a horrifying spectacle, but obviously it was not enough. The most distressing scene which presented itself before their eyes was a group of seven bodies – four children and three adults – lying on the ground a short distance away from the others. It was an excellent propaganda topic, but the number of bodies was too small. So the photographers resorted to a little trick: they photographed the tiny group of corpses from nine different angles, and the resulting photographs were made to look like they depicted dozens of bodies.[387] In addition to the perspective, they also changed the caption: "Overview of the camp. Foreground: bodies of women and children who died of starvation and disease"; "Children's bodies"; "Bodies of women and children."

An isolated body lying a little way off appeared in four photographs (#8-11). Another four photographs show seven bodies not far apart from one another (#12-15). In practice, the first 15 photographs, which show the most-horrible scenes

[387] *Ibid.*, Photos 1-8 and 11 of the unpaginated insert titled "Photo documents."

witnessed by the photographers, show 15 bodies. Another horrifying scene shows a mass grave, the end of which is visible, with its bottom for the most part empty, and seven or eight bodies in the foreground (#22). The image corresponds well to the grave measuring 6 m × 3 m × 2 m with the 15 bodies mentioned. Another 14 photographs show a total of 16 bodies.[388]

Undoubtedly, the photographic documentation was a bit scant when it comes to materially documenting the deaths of 8,000-49,000 people, or even just the presence of 600 bodies on the ground!

There is another aspect of the matter which is worthy of note. None of the multiplicitous reports examined by myself ever mentions the discovery of mass graves containing Soviet soldiers killed in battle. But already as early as the beginning of August 1941, we find the following among the Administrative Regulations of the German Commanders of the Rear Army Center:[389]

> *"Burial of bodies and animal cadavers. The bodies of Russian soldiers and animals are still lying around near certain roads. For sanitary reasons, it is absolutely necessary to bury all corpses and animal cadavers immediately. The local commandants can draft Jews for this work."*

Yet the Soviets found only the bodies of "peaceful Soviet citizens" and POWs in the mass graves.

1.4. Patrick Desbois and the Mass Graves in the Ukraine

In this context, one immediately thinks of the research spearheaded by Father Patrick Desbois, performed in the Ukraine between 2002 and 2007. The results were summarized as follows in a folder from the temporary exhibition *Mass Shootings in Ukraine (1941-1944): The Shoa by Bullets* (*Les Fusillades Massives en Ukraine (1941-1944): La Shoah par Balles*), which was held at Paris from 20 June until 30 November 2007:

> *"Since 2004, Father Patrick Desbois and the Yahad-In Unum research team found numerous Ukrainian witnesses having seen the massacres or having been requisitioned during the executions of the Jews. The witness testimonies compiled by Yahad, systematically compared with information from written documents permitted the finding of more than 500 mass graves until then forgotten, and the gathering of material elements of the genocide (weapons, shells, bullets). It became possible at last to preserve and respect the burial places of the victims."*

In 2007, Desbois published a book, the title of which translates to *Carrier of Memories: Tracing the Shoa by Bullets* (*Porteur de mémoires: sur les traces de la Shoah par balles*), which aroused lively criticism by orthodox Holocaust

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[388] *Ibid.*, Photos #16-21, 22-26, 28, 31f. #18, "Body of an unknown girl," shows a body lying on straw with the face in an advanced state of putrefaction; in the background, we see two beams from a wooden shack. This photo has nothing to do with Ozarichi, partly because a body cannot putrify within a week in the Byelorussian winter (the snow is visible in almost all the photos), and because there were no shacks in either of the two camps.

[389] LVVA, P 70-5-23, p. 25.

scholars. Worthy of note is the review by Christian Ingrao and Jean Solchany, who focus primarily, as implied by the title of their paper, on the publicity-hogging exposition of Desbois's research, in particular the fact that the executions by the *Einsatzgruppen* and other units in the Ukraine were presented by the media as "the very recent discovery of just one man almost all by himself," ignoring "the fact – which is fundamental – that the material reality of the mass shootings was established a very long time ago, thanks to multiple sources" (Ingrao/Solchany, p. 7). Desbois felt himself flattered by so many undeserved praises and acted like the discoverer of "an essential dimension of the Shoah which had been ignored so far," a sort of "avenger of memory" (*ibid.*, p. 8).

Desbois and his editor remedied these criticisms, but only in part, in the English edition of the book, published in 2008 under the title *The Holocaust by Bullets*; the subtitle in fact presents the author in this manner: *A Priest's Journey to Uncover the Truth behind the Murder of 1.5 Million Jews*. From a historiographical point of view, the most important criticism concerned the victim counts and the locations of the mass graves. In this regard, Ingrao and Solchany noted (*ibid.*, p. 14):

> *"What has not yet been explained very clearly is the manner in which he proceeded with his victim count. Anxious to respect the Halakha, the Jewish law specifying that the bodies should be moved in no case, Father Desbois' team was unable to proceed with an exact count. At Lisinichi, near Lvov, the team identified one of the biggest extermination sites in the Ukraine, estimating the number of victims at ninety thousand. Nothing is said about the manner in which this figure was established. Concerning the total number of victims of the mass shootings, no figure has been advanced."*

I have thoroughly reviewed Desbois's book in question elsewhere (Mattogno 2015a). Here, I will briefly summarize it and add a few more remarks on the matter of mass graves.

First of all, Desbois's claim of having located more than 500 mass graves has no basis in fact, with one single exception. He has merely located areas of meadow, woods or agricultural land where he *assumes* that there are mass graves, and this is based on mere testimonies sixty years after the alleged events, the reliability of which is more than dubious. The exception concerns 15 mass graves at Busk, a city located approximately 45 km east of Lvov. Before examining Desbois's local archeological research, we must address the question of whether rabbinic law really prohibits the reburial of Jewish bodies. Desbois reports that on 5 October 2006 he went to London to meet Rabbi Schlesinger, with whom he had a conversation which he summarizes as follows:

> *"The Rabbi sat down slowly, silent and serious, and started to study the several handwritten documents in Yiddish on yellow and white paper that had been previously placed on the table. They were Rabbinical Court decisions that came from various Orthodox courts throughout the world regarding the laws and rules applicable to the bodies of Jews killed during the Holocaust. Picking up a yellow paper, Rabbi Schlesinger raised his eyes and explained to me in English that it*

> *had been ruled that the Jews assassinated by the Third Reich were tsadiqim, 'saints,' and that the plenitude of eternal life had been granted them. Because of this, their burial places, wherever situated – under a motorway or in a garden – should be left intact so as not to disturb their rest."* (Desbois 2008, pp. 129f.)

When Desbois decided in August 2006 to perform archeological excavations at Busk, he realized that he needed "the presence of an orthodox rabbi so that the excavations would not contravene Jewish law." He then turned to "the son of Rabbi Meshi Zahav, the founder of Zaka," who "accepted to come from Jerusalem in person to oversee the work in its entirety" (*ibid.*, p. 176).

Desbois stresses the difficulty which the observation of rabbinical law imposes upon scientific research (*ibid.*):

> *"The challenge was doubly complex. On the one hand we had to respect Jewish laws and on the other we wanted to obtain scientific results as precise as possible in terms of the identity of the victims, their number, and the cause of death. The Jewish law, the Halakha, specifies that bodies must not be moved under any circumstance, particularly the victims of the Holocaust. According to Orthodox Jewish tradition, these victims are resting in the fullness of God, and any movement of their bodies would disturb that peace.*[390] *Hence the archaeologist could only uncover the first layer of bodies, taking care not to move any bones. In addition, the bodies had to be covered up again as soon as the archaeologist finished working."*

With these precautions, the mass graves were opened, and the first layer of skeletons was brought to light. According to Desbois, the graves originally contained 1,750 bodies (*ibid.*). Further along, he writes that they "were able to measure the extent of the massacre: 17 graves next to the Jewish cemetery, which seemed very small in comparison to them" (*ibid.*, p. 178).

Strangely, Desbois never published a single photograph of the mass graves at Busk, although his book contains a 16-page insert with 29 color photographs (between pp. 120 & 121). But 14 photographs are dedicated to the witnesses, four to the cartridge casings found here and there, while two show a forest, one shows a hen house, another shows "the school yard where the Jews were assembled before being taken to the pit"; yet another shows "The track along which the victims went to the pit," one shows a meadow with a number of geese and a small canal with water in it, while the last shows a meadow with trees in the background behind a fence.

An aerial photograph of the Busk site which is accessible for consultation on the web, however, shows 14 graves (see Documents II.1.1. & 2. in the Appendix), and it is difficult to believe that the fifteenth shows a little hole located to the left of Mass Grave No. 3. The bottom of nearly all the graves is covered, wholly or in part, by white cloth, presumably a sheet, no doubt to protect the bones, but Grave

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390 This cause-and-effect relationship between bones and soul is more a matter of magic and superstition than of religion; it probably derives from the misinterpretation of the rabbinical doctrine of the *luz*, "the bone of immortality", the indestructible small bone located at the base of the spinal column from which, at the time of resurrection, the body of the deceased would be cleaned.

No. 6 is entirely uncovered, and one can clearly see that it does not contain any skeletons.

From the aerial photograph, we estimate that the 14 graves (comparing the dimensions of the graves to those of the persons shown), are rather small, and had a total surface area of approximately 300 square meters.[391] Another image (Document II.1.3), taken from the ground, shows bones in one grave.[392] This is an even bigger grave, with an estimated surface area of approximately 40 square meters. Another photograph depicts Desbois on the edge of the same grave.[393]

From a comparison with the aerial photograph we see that the grave in question can only be No. 10, the biggest. There are no more than about 30 visible, recognizable skulls, indicating an order of magnitude of dozens rather than hundreds of skeletons. In any case, since Desbois could not move the bones, his archeologists could not even know what lay beneath the layer of bones they were looking at. Hence, in this case they had no way of establishing the figure of 1,750 skeletons.

By a singular paradox, the only mass-grave location containing human bones found by Desbois was located precisely in the locality of Busk, with regard to which nothing is known from the Holocaust point of view. He presumes that the skeletons in question belonged to Jews shot by Germans, but nothing is known of any such shootings. Busk is not mentioned in the Incident Reports or in the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories," and is unknown to Krausnick and Wilhelm, as well as to Arad, and the various contributing authors of the work *The Shoah in Ukraine* (Brandon/Lower), starting with Kruglov and Pohl. In his documented study on the Galicia District, of which Busk formed part at the time, Sandkühler mentions this town only once, and not in connection with a massacre (Sandkühler, p. 197).

Hence, Desbois's finds are no "confirmation" of former research, but rather new "discoveries." It remains to be established what he really discovered there. Since rabbinical law does not permit a forensic examination of the remains of dead Jews, it was not only impossible to ascertain how many people there were in the graves, when they died, and what caused their deaths; it wasn't even possible to establish who they were. The tacit presupposition that any mass grave in the Ukraine would necessarily contain the remains of Jews is obviously unfounded, since the history of the last century is rich in mass graves and bodies, caused not even primarily by the Germans, but by the Soviets. Vinnitsa is only the most striking example.

In the same book by Desbois, a witness, Marfa Lichnitski, declares that "the [Ukrainian parliament] Rada recognized the genocide of the Ukrainian people during the famine of 1932–1933" (Desbois 2008, p. 143), the so-called *Holodo-*

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391 "Les fusillades massives des juifs en Ucraine 1941-1944. La Shoah par balles," in: http://memorialdelashoah.org/upload/minisites/ukraine/images/docu16_l.jpg.

392 Ebd., http://memorialdelashoah.org/upload/minisites/ukraine/images/expo5_04_l.jpg.

393 2006-07 Annual Report, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C., p. 10; in: https://ushmm.org/m/pdfs/20080102-06-07-annual_report.pdf.

mor, in which millions of Ukrainians died, including children, whose bodies were buried in mass graves. And it is clear that, based on such a presupposition, any human remains, even if of non-Jews, will remain untouchable on principle and will be exempt from any scientific examination. This can only favor the orthodox Holocaust myth surrounding these mass graves.

1.5. Rabbinical Legislation on Jewish Bodies and Post-War Exhumations

Without wishing to enter into Jewish questions of faith, we cannot help noting that *current* rabbinical legislation was not in effect during the immediate post-war period, because there have been many documented cases of Jews exhumed from mass graves and transported for proper burial in Jewish cemeteries. In this regard, I supplied various references in another study (Mattogno/Kues/Graf 2013, pp. 1088-1090), to which I add several more here, all taken from the *Ghetto Fighters House Archives*:

– *"Bodies exhumed from a mass grave, to be taken for proper burial."*[394]
– *"The exhumation of the remains of Jews from a mass grave in Mlawa, for proper burial in coffins."*[395]
– *"The bones of Jews exhumed from a mass grave at Utena (Utian), Lithuania."*[396]
– *"The excavation of mass graves in Czestochowa after the war, to exhume the bodies and give them a proper Jewish burial."*[397]
– *"The bodies of 54 Jews from Kurenets who were murdered during the Nazi occupation, exhumed to be transferred to the town's cemetery for reburial."*[398]
– *"The bodies of Jews exhumed from a mass grave, to be given proper burial."*[399]
– *"A funeral in Lublin for Jews whose bodies were exhumed from mass graves."*[400]
– *"Description of exhumation of victims' remains from a mass grave in Sandomierz, to be taken for proper Jewish burial."*[401]
– *"An exhumation in Plock of the remains of Jews who had been murdered by the Nazis and their henchmen."*[402]
– *"Members of the Holocaust survivor community from Biala, Poland, photographed beside bodies exhumed from a mass grave in order to be taken for proper burial."*[403]

394 GFHA, Catalogue No. 17217, Registry No. 03992p.
395 GFHA, Catalogue No. 31025, Registry No. 46683p.
396 GFHA, Catalogue No. 8037, Registry No. 37052צ.
397 GFHA, Catalogue No. 10854, Registry No. 04848צ.
398 GFHA, Catalogue No. 16737, Registry No. 29426p.
399 GFHA, Catalogue No. 17197, Registry No. 03970p.
400 GFHA, Catalogue No. 29170, Registry No. 50295p.
401 GFHA, Catalogue No. 38885, Registry No. 46685p.
402 GFHA, Catalogue No. 41030, Registry No. 53210צ.

– *"Members of the Holocaust survivor community from Hrubieszow, who exhumed bodies from a mass grave in order to be taken for proper burial."*[404]
– *"Members of the Holocaust survivor community from Lowicz exhuming the bodies of Jews from a mass grave, to be taken for proper burial."*[405]
– *"Exhumation of the remains of Jews murdered by the Nazis and their henchmen in the area of Piotrkow Trybunalski."*[406]
– *"The exhumation of the bodies of Jews killed in Kozienice (Kozhnits)."*[407]
– *"Exhumation of the remains of 20 Jews from Strzemieszyce Wielkie."*[408]

These examples, to which one could add many others, show that Jewish post-war authorities raised no objections against the exhumation of the bodies of their fellow Jews; on the contrary, they considered it a pious duty to give them a proper burial.

Gabriel N. Finder explains that these activities were part of a much wider general project, that of the "yizkor books" or "books of communal memory, which recorded the disinterment and reinterment of fellow Jews for posterity." These were compiled on the initiative of survivors of various Polish Jewish communities; 600 of them were published. On their origins, Finder writes:

> *"However, regardless of whether Polish Jewish survivors of the Holocaust stayed in Poland or left it, they took pains to afford the Jewish dead a proper burial, exhuming their corpses and then reburying them with dignity in accordance with Jewish ritual in, if possible, a Jewish cemetery, which itself generally required extensive restoration. Even Jews who harboured no intentions of remaining in postwar Poland returned to their home towns with this sole purpose in mind. Some returning Jews took snapshots of the exhumation and reburial of their relatives and friends, thereby etching the final resting place of their loved ones in their personal memories and for posterity. Others recorded the disinterment and reinterment of fellow Jews for posterity in communal memorial books or 'yizkor books.'*
> […] *Indeed, one theme in particular from the exhumation and reburial of Polish Jewish victims of the Holocaust throughout Poland in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust runs like a thread through scores of yizkor books: the single-minded effort of one man to give the Jewish dead a dignified burial in accordance with Jewish tradition. Such was the case in a large number of mid-size and small towns, in which one returning survivor seized the initiative to exhume and rebury the Jewish dead with honour in a Jewish cemetery, almost always restored after its desecration, and indefatigably pursued this objective. This fact is reflected in myriad yizkor books."* (Finder, pp. 35f.)

In many cases, continues the author, these were the acts of Jews who acted out of a sense of piety without previously consulting the rabbinical authorities, but he

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[403] GFHA, Catalogue No. 43519, Registry No. 04192צ.
[404] GFHA, Catalogue No. 43524, Registry No. 40791צ.
[405] GFHA, Catalogue No. 43545, Registry No. 09431צ.
[406] GFHA, Catalogue No. 43810, Registry No. 20539צ.
[407] GFHA, Catalogue No. 43841, Registry No. 25002צ.
[408] GFHA, Catalogue No. 43902, Registry No. 13150צ.

describes as follows the case of the exhumations at the town of Skierniewice, sponsored by Chaim Frenkel:

> *"Several Jewish dignitaries from Warsaw and Łódź attended the ceremony, which was led by Rabbi David Kahane, the chief rabbi of the Polish armed forces, in the presence of the Polish mayor of Skierniewice, who received the honour of unveiling the monument."* (*Ibid*., p. 41)

Finder stresses that

> *"Jewish law ordinarily forbids exhumation (except for reburial in Israel) and the transfer of corpses and human remains from one grave to another. Rabbinical authorities do recognize certain exceptions to the rule prohibiting exhumation and reburial. These exceptions include the reburial of a person to a grave close to his family and relatives and to a safer site should the grave be threatened by desecration."* (*Ibid*., pp. 47f.)

The most important advocate of these exceptions was Rabbi Ephraim Oshry:

> *"As rabbi of the surviving remnant of the Kovno Jewish community after the Russians' liberation of the city in August 1944, he led the search for Jewish bodies and human remains, which he and his helpers discovered scattered throughout Kovno. He supervised the reburial of approximately 3,000 corpses and bones and limbs. He had clearly recognizable bodies buried individually, but because it could not be determined which bones and limbs belonged to particular individuals, he buried them together in a collective grave. He also had the bones of Jews executed and buried hastily in a non-Jewish cemetery removed to a Jewish cemetery for burial. Clearly, the ubiquitous presence of mass graves and the scattering of human remains demanded a departure from regular Jewish law and practice.* […] *But there was a deeper level to his ruling permitting the exhumation and reburial of Jewish corpses even when Jewish tradition normally prohibits disinterment and requires an unclaimed, unburied corpse to be buried where it is found: a demand for divine justice and an appeal to memory."* (*Ibid.*, p. 49)

These facts lead one to suspect that the current rabbinical standard on the untouchability of Jewish bodies in mass graves is not motivated by exclusively religious feelings.

1.6. Mass Grave at Serniki

The Serniki case is a little different, but not by much. Richard Wright writes:

> *"The challenge and importance of the work pulled me into forensic archaeology – into practice that answers the question 'where are the bodies?' In January 1990 the Special Investigations Unit (the SIU) of the Australian Attorney General's Department was looking into the cases of three men in Adelaide. It was alleged that they had killed some hundreds of Jews in Ukraine in 1942, after Nazi occupation of the area. The SIU wanted to know if there was material evidence in the ground for one of these killings. Was there a mass grave at a place called Serniki in northwestern Ukraine? If so, what were its properties?"* (Wright, p. 98)

One witness, 16 years old at the time, claimed to have been compelled to help fill in a mass grave measuring approximately 50 m × 5 m × 2-3 m, containing approximately 800 bodies. In the capacity of forensic archaeologist, Wright was assigned to locate this mass grave. He found it, and established that it was 40 meters long and contained "some 550 bodies" (*ibid.*, p. 99).

Wright did not add any other information. But on p. 100, he published a photograph, reproduced as Document II.1.4. in the Appendix, with the following caption

> *"The whole length of the mass grave at Serniki in Ukraine, the murders dating from 1942 and excavated in 1991. (Photo by Richard Wright)."*

This strange photograph, in black and white, with a very dark background, shows a ditch which might well be 40 meters long. It contains only one layer of more-or-less-dismembered skeletons scattered about higgledy-piggledy, but the order of magnitude of the victims found may well be compatible with the grave's surface. Other publications supply more-detailed data on this mass grave (Congram, p. 260):

> *"The grave had a ramp, which according to a witness was used by victims to walk into the grave before being shot.* […] *The position of the bodies contrasted at the two different ends of the Serniki grave: at the end farthest from the ramp, victims were found lying parallel to one another, face down and in rows where they had been shot in the backs of their heads.* […]
> *Bevan (...) reports 410 of 553 (74%) victims with gunshot trauma to the head, 10 (1.8%) with depressed skull fractures, and 133 (24%) with undetermined cause of death. It is important to note that full exhumations and autopsies were not performed on these bodies; only skulls were examined and in situ. Bevan also mentions that many appeared to have been shot with German 9 mm (hand gun) ammunition. The two different body deposition types in the grave and the prevalence of cranial trauma at the base of the ramp indicate a diachronic change in the killings.* […] *Bevan (...) also notes that based on examinations of the skulls at Serniki, 407 of the bodies were estimated to be female, 98 male, and 48 undetermined."*

In a letter published by the NIZKOR website, Richard Wright supplied other important details:[409]

> *"After cleaning up some of the corroded machine pistol cartridge cases, and examining them with a lens, my colleagues found that the killers had used German ammunition stamped with the place and date of manufacture. The cases dated from the years 1939, 1940 and 1941. These cases were like coins found in conventional excavations. Thereby the team had a date of 1941, later than which the killings must have taken place."*

In this case as well, it is not known with certainty whether or not the victims were Jews and whether the killers were or were not Germans. The presence of German

[409] "Shofar FTP Archive File: places/ukraine/serniki-excavations," once at www.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi?places/ukraine/serniki-excavations, now (re)moved.

shell casings is not dispositive proof, because it is known that the Germans used captured Russian weapons and the Soviets used captured German weapons, and it is also known that the retreating Soviets perpetrated multiple massacres of Ukrainians, as reported at length in several *Einsatzgruppen* reports. But even assuming that the mass grave at Serniki contains the bodies of Jews, this would prove little in the light of the present study.

Since it is not disputed that the *Einsatzgruppen* and other German units carried out executions of Jews in the territory of the former Soviet Union, the general question is whether the mass graves confirm the order of magnitude of the figures indicated in the documents. There is also the more specific question, which can be summarized in this question: does the number of bodies found in one given mass grave correspond to the number declared in the documents?

The Busk and Serniki graves could be used for such a juxtaposition, were it not for the fact that, just as for Busk, there is a complete documentary vacuum regarding Serniki.[410] Hence, no comparison between the documented numbers of victims and those found on the spot can be made.[411]

One interesting fact can be drawn from the data of the Serniki mass grave: its maximum packing density. Ignoring the ramp on one side, if the walls of this grave were vertical, it had a volume (40 m × 5 m × 2.5 m) some 500 cubic meters. With its 550 victims, the packing density was 1.1 bodies per cubic meter. This value is well below what is usually claimed by witnesses or the various Soviet commissions.

1.7. Mass Graves in the Ukraine and in the Baltic Countries According to Jewish Institutions

In 2005, the "United States Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad" published a long list of "Mass-Grave Sites" presented as follows (U.S. Commission, pp. 133-142):

> *"Information in this table has been derived from survey forms completed between 1995 and 2000 by the Jewish Preservation Committee of Ukraine. This is the most complete list of Jewish mass burial sites in Ukraine ever compiled; however, we know that there may be other unidentified mass graves in the country."*

The list, in four columns, reports: "Commission Survey Number," "Oblast (Region)," "Town" and "Date of Survey"; the dates are almost all between 1995 and 1998. In the following table, I summarize the data by Oblast, comparing data from Patrick Desbois with data according to another source (Bruttmann, pp. 16f.).

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[410] The only reference to Serniki which I have found in Holocaust literature is by Gerlach in a footnote refering to the Australian legal case mentioned above. Gerlach 1999, fn 1177, p. 719.

[411] For this reason, I do not take into consideration the finding of a mass grave at Ustinovka, another locality unknown to Holocaust historiography, also because the archaeological work was much more superficial. The grave contained the skeletons of 19 children and 100-150 (sic!) adults; Congram, p. 260.

Table 25

OBLAST	SITES	DESBOIS	OBLAST	SITES	DESBOIS
Cherkaska	27		Mykolaivska	16	44
Chernihivska	15		Odeska	32	24 (Crimea)
Chernivetska	8		Poltavska	12	
Dnepropetrovska	4		Rivnenska	32	23
Ivano-Frankivska	7	12	Sumska	22	
Kharkivska	9		Ternopilska	9	21
Khersonska	10	7	Vinnitsa	84	
Khmelnytska	29	49	Volynska	29	28
Kirovohradska	17		Zakarpatska	1	
Kyivska	17		Zaporizka	12	11
Lvivska	17	60	Zhytomyrska	70	25

The total is 479 sites (325 according to Desbois), which would correspond to approximately 1,200 mass graves (*ibid.*, p. 15).

The localities mentioned number 375, but some are unknown to Holocaust historiography, such as Bohuslav, Chudniv, Korets, Marynivka, Melnytsia, Nikopol, Ovruch, Radomyshl, Shumsk, Vapniarka. Other localities were the headquarters of labor camps associated with Thoroughfare IV, the road over 2,000 km long which joined Berlin to the Caucasus, passing through Galicia and through the Ukraine; many cities would have been along that road, such as Bratislava, Haisyn, Krasnopilka, Ladyzhyn, Letychiv, Lityn, Mykhailivka, Nemyriv, Pechera, Tarasivka and Teplyk.

These mass graves fall into six categories (*ibid.*, pp. 6f.):

1. graves containing victims of the *Einsatzgruppen* and other units
2. graves containing victims of ghettos and other places of detention
3. mass graves "in the killing centers"
4. mass graves containing victims of concentration camps
5. mass graves containing victims of evacuation marches
6. mass graves containing victims of massacres

The above-mentioned list no doubt also reports large graves in Categories 2, 4 and 6.

Several sites have no relevance to the Holocaust. For example, Nikopol is supposed to be the site of mass graves. The "Act on the Atrocities of German-Fascist Invaders in the Village of Nikopol, Barvenkovo District, Kharkov Region" dated 3 October 1943 reports on the discovery of mass graves in this locality. At "20 kilometers east of the village of Nikopol […] 22 corpses were dug up from 10 pits"; in another "3 pits 0.5 meter deep" there were "3 corpses including 2 bodies of Red Army war prisoners," moreover, 7 bodies, consisting of 2 women and 5 Russian POWs, were exhumed "in a ravine 2 kilometers away from the village." "The total of 33 corpses were dug up out of 16 pits" (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 90f.).

A few cases blatantly contradict orthodox Holocaust historiography, if the expression "mass-grave site" means a site at which the remains of human corpses were really found. One typical case is that of Lviv, an Oblast in which 17 to 60 sites were said to exist, notwithstanding the presumed cleanup performed by the local "*Sonderkommando* 1005" (see below, Chapter 3).

The basic problem is precisely the following: are the "mass graves" merely symbolic or are they real? Or rather, do they contain the physical remains of real human beings? Jewish law renders this problem almost insoluble, as confirmed by another report on the Jewish graves in Lithuania (Chipczynska, p. 7):

> *"Known variously by the Hebrew bet kevarot (house of tombs), bet olam (house of eternity), bet chayyim (house of the living) and bet shalom (house of peace), Jewish burial grounds are sacred sites which, according to Jewish tradition, must remain undisturbed in perpetuity. As such, the term 'former Jewish cemetery' is erroneous. This is of the utmost importance for the Lo Tishkach project, meaning that all Jewish burial grounds, visible or otherwise, fall under its remit. Showing proper respect for the dead (kevod ha-met) is intrinsic to Jewish law. The connection between the soul and the human body after death*[412] *is an essential aspect of Jewish belief in the eternity of the soul. This manifests itself in prohibitions against autopsy, disinterring the dead (pinui met v'atzamot), deriving benefit (issur hana'ah) from a corpse or grave, or performing various practices thought to 'ridicule the helpless' (l'oeg l'rosh)."*

This problem, which is practically insoluble, leads directly to another: if it is impossible to verify the contents of the "mass graves," on what basis are certain sites declared to be "mass graves"? The location may be derived solely from Soviet war-crimes reports and/or from eyewitness testimony. The first source, as I have shown above, consists of propaganda exaggerated to ridiculous extremes, while the second, without objective confirmation, that is, without excavations, is worthless.

The problem, in practice, as in the case with Desbois's research, is that there is no proof of the existence of mass graves: rather, the existence of mass graves is simply asserted.

With this in mind, the information relating to the presence of mass graves in other countries is not a very weighty assertion. For example, it is claimed that

> *"there are also around 200 WWII mass graves in the Republic of Lithuania, located mostly in forests and rural areas as well as inside the sites of Jewish cemeteries where deep ditches were dug for murdered Jews."* (*ibid*., p. 9)

But the same is true for the 39 mass graves in Latgale, the southeastern region of Latvia, accurately described and photographed, but obviously only on the surface (Bindinger), as well as the 8 graves in Estonia (Bruttmann, p. 15) and all the other "mass graves."

These sites have an undoubted value as memorials, but under present conditions have only little historical or historiographical relevance, if any.

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412 A confirmation of what I pointed out in footnote 390.

1.8. Photographic Documentation

If the Soviet claims about their alleged extraordinary discoveries, of which I have used those relating to the Ukraine as an example, were true, they should be confirmed by hundreds of photographs of mass graves and of exhumations taken by the various war-crimes commissions, and showing hundreds of thousands of bodies. However, photographs of this type are incredibly scarce. This is also true for the most-prestigious among Holocaust archives, such as those at *Yad Vashem*, the *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum* and the *Ghetto Fighter House*. In fact, their photographic material is not only scarce, but often relates to sites which play hardly any role in Holocaust historiography, as shown in the following examples:

Iwje (Ivye)

Byelorussia, approximately 30 km east of Lida.

– Mass grave with about thirty bodies scattered over the bottom.[413]
– Same grave, far end, with about twenty bodies[414]
– Same grave, taken from the right-hand corner.[415]
– Same grave, near end, with 5-6 bodies and a group of onlookers.[416]

One of the very few authors who mention this locality is Spector, who writes (Spector 2001, Vol. II, p. 735):

> *"In fall 1941 they* [the Germans] *expelled all the Jews* [from Lipniszki] *to the Ivye ghetto. Most were murdered in the Aktion there on 12 May 1942. The rest were murdered after being transferred to Borisov around the end of the year."*

Keidan (Kédainiai)

Lithuania, approximately 40 km north of Kaunas.

– "Postwar. A mass grave in a field."[417] We are shown only a field.

Kaunas (Kovno), Lithuania

– "Jews who were murdered by Lithuanian nationalists in the Lietukis Garage on 27/06/1941."[418] About thirty bodies in front of a garage.
– "Bodies of Jews who were murdered by Lithuanian nationalists in Lietukis Garage on 27/06/1941."[419] In the image, we see 20-30 bodies.
– "German soldiers and Lithuanians looking at the bodies of the Jews murdered by Lithuanian nationalists in Lietukis Garage on 27/06/1941."[420] Image similar to the last, with a man standing head-bowed among the bodies. There were

[413] GFHA, Catalogue No. 6738, Registry No. 02339p.
[414] GFHA, Catalogue No. 8412, Registry No. 35568צ.
[415] GFHA, Catalogue No. 23309, Registry No. 46083p.
[416] GFHA, Catalogue No. 6739, Registry No. 02340p.
[417] YVA, Archival Signature 75AO6.
[418] YVA, Archival Signature 4360/48.
[419] YVA, Archival Signature 4360/49.
[420] YVA, Archival Signature 4360/50.

between 52 and 60 victims at Lietukis Garage, according to Christoph Dieckmann (Dieckmann, p. 360); therefore, not even for very small numbers do the photographs correspond to orthodox Holocaust estimates.
– "Bodies of Jews burned alive in the ghetto."[421] The photograph shows four bodies with burns, but they are not charred.
– "Jewish children's corpses in the ghetto 30/08/1944."[422] The image shows three or four bodies.
– "Lithuania, 1941, Bodies of Jews murdered next to the Seventh Fort."[423] In the foreground we see about twenty bodies, and perhaps another twenty a bit further away (the image is not very clear). The "Jäger Report" lists 3,238 executions at Fort VII, Kaunas.

Kozin (Kozyn)

Ukraine, approximately 25 km southwest of Dubno.
– Mass grave containing about twenty bodies, with onlookers.[424]
– Same grave, 3-4 meters in length, taken from the right side, showing 5-10 bodies and four people digging.[425]

Spector claims that

> *"the Germans took the town on 25 June 1941, murdering a number of Jews and burning down the synagogue. Another 372 (half the J. pop.) was taken from the ghetto and executed on 30 May 1942; the rest on 6 Oct."* (Spector 2001, p. 668)

The mass grave should therefore contain over 700 victims, or 653, the Jewish population of the city in June 1941 (Spector 1990a, p. 362).

Lenin

Polesye Region, Byelorussia, approximately 100 km east of Pinsk.
– "A mass grave of Lenin Jewry (in the Polesye region, on the Russo-Polish border)"[426] The photograph shows a mass grave a couple of meters long and about 3 meters deep, with a pile of bodies; four soldiers can be seen standing on the bottom of the ditch, in the foreground, which is clear of bodies; the pile reaches to between the belt and shoulders of these soldiers; correcting for perspective, one might calculate a height of approximately 2 meters. The length of the pile may be estimated at about 4-5 meters. The pile therefore contains approximately (2 m × 3 m × 5 m × 3.5 bodies/m³ =) 100 bodies.

Practically nothing is known of this locality. Based on the 1921 census, Lenin had a population of 928 resident Jews (Yad Vashem, p. 148).

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421 YVA, Archival Signature 1564/2.
422 YVA, Archival Signature 3497/8.
423 YVA, Archival Signature 2725/5.
424 GFHA, Catalogue No. 7349, Registry No. 04530p.
425 GFHA, Catalogue No. 7348, Registry No. 04529p.
426 GFHA, Catalogue No. 6889, Registry No. 25238p.

Mizocz (Mizoch)

Ukraine, approximately 30 km east of Dubno.

– "Mizocz, Poland [sic], women and children from the village getting undressed before they were murdered by German policemen and Ukrainian collaborators, 14/10/1942"[427] Small gorge showing about fifty people. This photograph is also attributed to Vinnitsa: "Jews from Vinnitsa in the Ukraine disrobing at the extermination site before they were killed."[428]
– "Mizocz, Poland, dead bodies of women and children from the village who were murdered by German policemen and Ukrainian collaborators, October 1942"[429] Same gorge with a group of about thirty naked bodies on the right and a group of about twenty bodies on the left. This photograph is also attributed to Vinnitsa: "German soldiers standing amid the bodies lying in the mass grave in Vinnitsa, Ukraine."[430]

There is no Holocaust-related information on this city, but it had a population of 1,048 Jews in June 1941, and 2,000 in 1942 (Spector 1990a, p. 363), so that the orthodoxy would assume some 2,000 bodies.

Rostov, Russia

– Red Army soldiers and civilians participating in a funeral service for Soviet citizens killed by the Germans. Approximately 35 coffins are shown lined up around a large circular pit, in the foreground is a crowd standing in front of perhaps another 15-20 coffins.[431] The coffins testify to the presence of 60-65 bodies. This is the only known photograph of exhumations or burials in this city.

As mentioned earlier, the Soviets claim to have discovered a mass grave at Rostov with 20,000 bodies in it, a figure later lowered to 15,000-18,000.

Rovno, Ukraine

– "A mass grave." The photograph shows only the sloping hillside with some loose dirt.[432] There are no other known photographs of mass graves.

The Soviets claimed to have discovered 102,500 bodies at Rovno and in the surrounding area.

Rudnya

Ukraine, approximately 60 km west of Smolensk.

– Mass grave measuring an estimated 3-4 m × 6-7 m, with a depth of 2-3 meters, partially filled, with a jumbled mass of bodies. Six men may be seen on

[427] YVA, Archival Signature 4613/32.
[428] GFHA, Catalogue No. 8380, Registry No. 29631צ.
[429] YVA, Archival Signature 4613/35.
[430] GFHA, Catalogue No. 8379, Registry No. 07831צ.
[431] GFHA, Catalogue No. 22996, Registry No. 19573p.
[432] YVA, Item ID 33001, Archival Signature 1869/470.

the edge of the pit, two of them with shovels. The number of bodies may be estimated at approximately 200.[433]

Arad states that 1,000 Jews were shot at Rudnya on 21 October 1941, and another 200 on 24 November (Arad 2009, p. 198).

Smolensk

– One photograph, captioned with the words "Smolensk Camp," handwritten in ink, showing 6-7 bodies.[434]
– In another photograph, we see a single body on a stretcher.[435]

Taganrog

Russia, on the Black Sea, approximately 60 km west of Rostov.

– "Bodies taken from a mass grave in Taganrog, Russia."[436] Here we see a small mass grave containing about ten bodies; in the background, we see diggers with shovels.

Arad writes that 1,800 Jews were shot in this city on 26 October 1941 (Arad 2009, p. 200), but adds that moreover "3,000 civilians" were killed on 27 October 1941" (*ibid.*, p. 537).

Trakai

Lithuania, approximately 20 km west of Vilnius.

– "A mass grave for 1800 dead in a cemetery."[437] The photograph shows a group of persons in front of a low embankment about fifty meters long; no trace of bodies.
– "A memorial service for 1800 dead at a mass grave."[438] The image shows the same group of persons, in the same zone, standing around in front of four wooden poles driven into the earth.

The "Jäger Report" claims that 1,446 people were killed at Trakai on 30 September 1941.

Utena

Lithuania, approximately 90 km north of Vilnius. There are several different photographs relating to this locality.

– "The exhumation of Jews' remains in Utena (Utian), Lithuania"[439] The image shows four men looking at four bodies lying on the bottom of a pit. The same photograph is also featured with a different caption: "Resse, Lithuania, November 1944. The exhumation of corpses of Jews murdered at the site."[440]

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[433] Maximum volume 84 m³ × 3.5 (bodies per cubic meter × filling coefficient of approximately ⅔).
[434] YVA, Archival Signature 23EO1.
[435] YVA, Archival Signature 23EO2.
[436] GFHA, Catalogue No. 22991, Registry No. 19568p.
[437] YVA, Archival Signature 1925/2.
[438] YVA, Archival Signature 1925/1.
[439] GFHA, Catalogue No. 8026, Registry No. 25958צ.
[440] YVA, Archival Signature 4085/1.

– Same caption as the one before. One man looking at body parts from three bodies.[441]
– "The remains of Jewish victims from Utena (Utian), Lithuania, being exhumed from a mass grave after the liberation."[442] There is a small mound of bones in the foreground in which it is possible to distinguish 13 crania.
– "Residents of Lithuania beside the bones of Jews found in a mass grave at Utena (Utian), Lithuania."[443] A group of twenty-six persons (including a child) are shown posing in front of a pile of bones; the proportions of these persons permit us to estimate that the pile of bones is no more than one meter high and two meters long.
– "Women and men beside the bones of Jewish victims exhumed from a mass grave at Utena (Utian), Lithuania."[444] This image is similar to the last one, taken a short time before or afterwards. In the foreground we see a pile of bones, and behind the pile we see about fifteen people, most of whom also appeared in the last photo, including the child.
– "Lithuanians and a Soviet officer stand among the remains of twenty Jewish atrocity victims, who were exhumed from a mass grave in the woods near Utena."[445] The photograph shows two rows of 20-30 bodies, wearing clothes, scattered over the ground, along with a third, shorter, row of bodies. The total number of bodies may amount to 70-80.

According to the "Jäger Report," 256 persons were killed at Utena on 31 July 1941, another 3,782 at Utena and Moletai on 29 August (see Part One, Chapter 4).

Vilijampole

Lithuania, approximately 5 km west of Kaunas.

– "Burnt bodies of murder victims in the ghetto, 18/12/1944."[446] The photograph shows about ten bodies scattered on the ground.

Christoph Dieckmann writes that a pogrom at Vilijampole on 25 and 26 June 1941 claimed the lives of 1,000 Jews (Dieckmann, p. 360).

Vinnitsa, Ukraine

– "An SS man shooting a man's head over a mass grave, probably 1941." This very well-known photograph shows a soldier pointing a pistol at the head of a man kneeling at the corner of a mass grave in which a few bodies are visible. This same image is archived several times with different references.[447]

[441] GFHA, Catalogue No. 8036, Registry No. 37051צ.
[442] GFHA, Catalogue No. 7959, Registry No. 21532.
[443] GFHA, Catalogue No. 8027, Registry No. 27978צ.
[444] GFHA, Catalogue No. 8038, Registry No. 37053צ.
[445] USHMM, Photograph Collection, 26951.
[446] YVA, Archival Signature 3150/147.
[447] YVA, Archival Signatures 2626/4, 81DO3, 85BO8.

– "German soldiers shooting Jews who are still alive in a mass grave in Vinnitsa, USSR."[448] Two soldiers, armed with rifles, are shown standing among 60-70 naked bodies.
– "Two uniformed men beside a vast mass grave containing the bodies of Jews killed in Vinnitsa, Ukraine."[449] Hundreds of naked bodies in the bottom of a ditch. Another two photographs from this series are attributed to Mizocz (see p. 440).
– "Exhumation performed by a Soviet investigation committee."[450] The image shows two workers exhuming a body.
– "Members of the Soviet Extraordinary Commission that was involved in exhumation at the site."[451] A large crowd of Soviet soldiers (two wearing white shirts) and civilians are seen posing with two exhumed bodies. The same photograph is also attributed to a different locality: "Civilians standing beside a mass grave of Jews in Zhmerinka, Ukraine."[452] Zhmerinka is located approximately 35 km southwest of Vinnitsa.

The Soviets, as I have pointed out, claimed that the Germans shot 41,620 people at Vinnitsa, plus 1,500 patients from the psychiatric hospital, and buried the victims in a mass grave which the Soviets claimed to have examined. The photographs of the exhumations do not quite measure up to the allegations of the persons killed, so that one must wonder whether or not they really were taken at the same locality.

Zarasai

Lithuania, approximately 50 km northeast of Utena.

– "A mass grave where Jews from the following towns were massacred: Zarasai, Dusetos, Antaliepte, and Salakas."[453] The image shows a large, deep ditch, approximately 3 meters wide and 10-15 meters long, on the bottom of which only 20-30 bodies are visible.

According to the "Jäger Report," 2,569 persons were killed at Zarasai on 26 August 1941.

Zbaraz (Zbarazh)

Ukraine, approximately 20 km northeast of Tarnopol (Ternopil).

– "Exhumation of the bodies of victims of the Nazis in Zbaraz."[454] The photograph shows the excavation of two graves. The dimensions of the grave nearest the camera may be estimated at approximately 3 × 4 meters, in the midst of which we see seven workmen. The edge of the pit is just below shoulder

[448] GFHA, Catalogue No. 8378, Registry No. 07830צ.
[449] GFHA, Catalogue No. 8376, Registry No. 04043צ.
[450] YVA, Archival Signature 1064/1; also 1051/1.
[451] YVA, Archival Signature 1051/2; also 1064/2.
[452] GFHA, Catalogue No. 8396, Registry No. 05701צ.
[453] GFHA, Catalogue No. 44426, Registry No. 28165צ.
[454] GFHA, Catalogue No. 6682, Registry No. 05995p.

height. The second grave is much smaller and shows two workmen in the midst of the pit. Five onlookers are standing along the edge of the pit.
– "The bodies of victims of the Nazis in Zbaraz, exhumed from mass graves after the liberation."[455] The image shows eight bodies lying on the ground. It is impossible to tell whether the site is the same as in the last photograph.
– "The remains of victims of the Nazis in Zbaraz, uncovered when mass graves were excavated after the liberation."[456] In the background, we see four skulls, two long bones and a few ribs.

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, 76 Jews were killed on 6 September 1941, 600 on 31 August and 1 September 1942, and over 1,000 on 7 April 1943 at Zbaraz (Spector 2001, Vol. III, p. 1495). There are no known documents confirming these assertions. The State Archive of the Russian Federation has about a dozen documents relating to Zbaraz, the most important of which is the "Labor-Deployment Report" from the local council of Jewish elders relating to 10 July 1942. At that time, there were 1,220 "men aged 16 to 60", 1,157 of whom were "fit for labor," and 663 "women aged 16 to 35 years," 640 of them "fit for labor." The Jews were broken down into 60 working categories (labor camps, office workers, laborers, physicians, etc.[457]). We do not know why these workers were allegedly shot nine months later.

Ziezmariai

Lithuania, approximately 55 km a West of Vilnius.

– "A mass grave a few kilometers from the city, where 2200 men were killed."[458] The caption is specious, since the photograph shows only a tombstone.

Zloczow (Zolochev)

Ukraine, approximately 60 km east of Lvov.

– "Jews of the Zolochev (Zloczow) ghetto being brought to the mass killing site beside the village of Jelichowice [Yelikhovichi]."[459] In the foreground, we see about twenty bodies lying on the ground. In the background is a long line of persons standing in line, seemingly prisoners of war.
– "The bodies of Jews from the Zolochev (Zloczow) ghetto, in a mass grave."[460] The photograph shows about fifty bodies lying on the ground.
– "Soviets exhume a mass grave in Zolochev shortly after the liberation."[461] About ten bodies are shown being examined by two men in white lab coats, with a small group of civilian onlookers.

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[455] GFHA, Catalogue No. 6683, Registry No. 05996p.
[456] GFHA, Catalogue No. 6684, Registry No. 05997p.
[457] GARF, 7445-2-108, pp. 56-59.
[458] YVA, Archival Signature 7159/127.
[459] GFHA, Catalogue No. 6695, Registry No. 19140p.
[460] GFHA, Catalogue No. 6696, Registry No. 19141p.
[461] USHMM, Photograph Collection, 86588.

– "The bodies of Jews from the Zolochev (Zloczow) ghetto, exhumed from a mass grave after the liberation."[462] The photograph shows 9-10 bodies scattered on the ground.
– "The bodies of Jews from the Zolochev (Zloczow) ghetto, exhumed from a mass grave after the liberation."[463] We see 20-30 exhumed bodies scattered in disorder on the ground.
– "A man and woman viewing the body of a child from the Zolochev (Zloczow) ghetto, disinterred from a mass grave after the liberation."[464] The photograph shows exactly one body.

The *Pinkas Hakehillot Polin* (List of Communities in Poland) says that the ghetto of Zolochev was liquidated on 2 April 1943, and that "in all, about 6,000 were killed" (Dabrowska/Wein/Weiss, entry "Zloczow," pp. 217-224).

Zolotonom (Zolotonosha)

Ukraine, approximately 140 km southeast of Kiev:

– "Zolotonom, Ukraine, 1944. An exhumation."[465] Exhumed bodies laid out in a row on the ground. There are eight bodies in the foreground. The second row, partially obscured by onlookers, consists of at most twice as many. Further along, other bodies are visible but indistinctly so, being partially obscured by other persons. The total number may amount to approximately fifty.

According to Soviet experts, as we have seen earlier, the Germans allegedly killed 3,500 Jews on 22 November 1941 in a "deep ravine" 3 km from the city. The Soviets claimed to have examined the mass grave and/or ravine. The same Soviets drew up a list of citizens of Zolotonosha murdered between 20 September 1941 and 20 September 1943. The list consists of 181 names, from No. 564 to No. 744.[466]

The above is a sample of photographs showing mass graves and exhumations. The list is not exhaustive, of course; but it is significant, nonetheless. Many other photographs exist, but the vast majority of them show merely a few dozen bodies or less, and therefore possess a quite marginal significance in the context of the present study. Other photographs of more well-known places, such as Babi Yar, Maly Trostenets, etc., will be examined in the related discussions in later chapters.

From this point forward, we hold that the existing photographic material neither confirms the order of magnitude of the killings mentioned in the *Einsatzgruppen* reports – not even remotely – nor the real and alleged mass graves discovered by the Soviets; nor the bodies really or allegedly exhumed therefrom.

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[462] GFHA, Catalogue No. 6697, Registry No. 19142p.
[463] GFHA, Catalogue No. 6698, Registry No. 19143p.
[464] GFHA, Catalogue No. 6699, Registry No. 19144p.
[465] YVA, Archival Signature 4147/54.
[466] YVA, M.33- JM/19972, pp. 12, 12a, 13, 13a.

2. "Aktion 1005"

2.1. The Sources

The much-improved German edition of the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, explains in its entry "Aktion 1005" (Gutman *et al*., Vol. I, p. 10):

> *"Cover name for an undertaking intended to wipe away the traces of the murder of millions of people in occupied Europe."*

The primary and essential source in this regard in Holocaust literature is a book by Jens Hoffmann whose German title translates to *"This Cannot Be Told:" "Aktion 1005" – How the Nazis Wiped out the Traces of Their Mass Murders in Eastern Europe*, which is very ambitious, since it dedicates ample space even to the presumed "extermination camps" at Kulmhof (Chełmno), Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka and Auschwitz.

The author nevertheless notes that all previous writers have dealt with the matter in a very vague and superficial manner (Hoffmann, p. 8):

> *"In contrast to the extensive literature on the Shoah, 'Aktion 1005' has so far only rarely been the subject of historical research. In comprehensive presentations – such as the works by Gerald Reitlinger, Raul Hilberg, Leni Yahil, Peter Longerich or Saul Friedländer – the eradication of murder traces by the German perpetrators is described either not at all or only briefly."*

This means that, prior to the publication of Hoffmann's book, no comprehensive study of "Aktion 1005" has ever existed. For this very reason, one could not even realistically affirm its historical reality, except through a Holocaust-related act of faith.

Hoffmann then explains the sources which inspired him (*ibid.*, pp. 9f.):

> *"What set the precedent for the concept of 'This Cannot Be Told' was the article 'Aktion 1005 – Effacing the Murder of Millions' by Israeli historian Shmuel Spector. References to most of the sources I used were found in Spector's text. I found further impetus to the clarification of conceptual problems in the paper 'L'opération 1005': Des techniques et des hommes au service de l'effacement des traces de la Shoah by Father Patrick Desbois and Levana Frenk."*

But the reference to these two sources cannot be any grounds for pride, because one is spurious, and the other is insubstantial.

In his brochure *Opération 1005*, Desbois and Frenk do not, in fact, have anything to say about "Aktion 1005," because they limit themselves to outlining Paul Blobel's biography. In fact, the aim of their brochure seems to be to establish a correlation between the above-mentioned operation and "negationism":

> *"The operation of erasing the traces and eliminating the bodies has direct implications on the development of negationism, on the one hand, and the phenomenon of memory on the other. Eliminating the traces was to deny the victims the right to*

> *burial and doom them to oblivion. Without graves to gather around, the task of mourning became impossible.*
> *On the other hand, negationism was already implemented in the process of 'Vernichtung', of reducing to a nullity and annihilating the traces of the dead, without precedent in the history of genocides."* (Desbois/Frenk, p. 5)

A 1990 article by Shmuel Spector sticks much closer to the topic, but what are the sources for the article? In his conclusion, the author summarizes them as follows (Spector 1990b, p. 171):

> *"Operation 1005 in the occupied territories of the Soviet Union, Poland and Yugoslavia was the final stage of the enormous Nazi crime – the murder of millions. This stage was designated to efface the crime, to hide it from the eyes of the world. The documentation on this operation is scarce, because of the secrecy involved. The verdict of the International Military Tribunal* [at Nuremberg] *contains little information about it. The American Military Tribunal in case 9 (Einsatzgruppen case), where Paul Blobel was put on trial, tried him only as the commander of Einsatzkommando 4a. His interrogation and depositions devote only a few lines to Operation 1005 and hence missed the opportunity to interrogate the commander of Operation 1005. The same situation emerged in the Soviet trial of Jeckeln in Riga, and of Macholl, before a Polish court in Bialystok. Operation 1005 was dealt with separately in West Germany trials, in the cases of Sohns and Zietlow, commanders of the Sonderkommandos 1005 in Ukraine, and of Krahner, commander of the Sonderkommando-Mitte. The interrogators and the judges tried to expand on the details of the operation, but with little success due to the scarcity of documentation."*

A few lines further along, the author adds (*ibid.*):

> *"The Nazis were not successful in removing the signs of the murder because of the vast numbers, the wide distribution of the mass graves, and because of the swift advance of the Soviet army. Moreover, desperate acts of escape by Jewish prisoners enabled survivors to tell the story. Knowing that they would be killed, they decided to escape at any cost and to tell of what they had seen. Those who remained alive, described Operation 1005 – the Nazis' effort to erase* [the trace of] *their crimes."*

The principal sources for "Aktion 1005" are therefore the post-war testimonies of former SS men and self-proclaimed "survivors," to which scanty documentary evidence was added, and this picture is true for Hoffmann's book as well.

Since Spector presents a more-concise and organic exposition of the presumed events, I shall stick principally to his article. But first we need a very clear idea of the order of magnitude of which we are speaking. In this regard, Hoffmann states (Hoffmann, p. 23):

> *"On their way through the Soviet Union, the Einsatzgruppen and other supporting units murdered at least 1.2 million Jews, most of them civilians, by the end of the war, without any particularly great losses themselves."*

Arad, however, speaks of 2.5-2.6 million as pointed out earlier.

2.2. Documentary Evidence

Spector adduces two documents on "Aktion 1005." The first is an exchange of correspondence dating back to February 1942 (Spector 1990b, p. 158):

> *"At the beginning of 1942, Martin Luther of the German Foreign Office transmitted a letter to Heinrich Müller – the head of the Gestapo, in which an anonymous German from the Warthegau district complained about Jewish corpses appearing in public places. On 28 February 1942 Müller responded to Luther: 'The anonymous letter sent to the Foreign Office concerning the apparent solution of the Jewish question in the Warthegau district, which was submitted by you to me on 6 February 1942, I immediately transmitted for proper treatment. The results will be forthcoming in due course. In a place where wood is chopped splinters must fall; and there is no avoiding this…' The letter had in the left upper corner, under the heading 'Head of the Security Police and SD' the inscription: IV B 4 43/42 gRs (1005). The first four letter are the number of Eichmann's department in the Gestapo, which dealt with 'The Final Solution of the Jewish Question', 43/42 is the number and year of the letter, gRs means 'Geheime Reichssache' – secret matter,* [of] *the Reich. The number 1005 was used later as the code name for the operation of erasing the mass murders."*

Before going any further, we need to quote the original text of the letter, dated 28 February 1942:

> *"Dear Comrade Luther!*
> *The anonymous letter addressed to the Foreign Office on alleged events relating to the solution of the Jewish Question in the Warthegau, which you forwarded to me with your letter of 6 Feb. 1942, I have instantly forwarded for appropriate processing. The investigations are currently going on.*
> *It is inevitable that, if you want to make an omelet, you have to break a few eggs. And it is evident that the enemy will always attempt to exaggerate, where expedient, the measures taken against him with the goal to arouse pity, hoping that the measures will be remedied. Ever since I took on the job of forcing this enemy out of the way, the Jews in particular have continuously tried to evade their deserved fate by sending anonymous letters to almost all agencies of the Reich."*

This document was introduced and accepted into evidence at the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem under the number T-245. The letter from the anonymous German, like that of 6 February 1942 with which Luther forwarded it to Müller, is unknown. No clarification in this regard was ever forthcoming during the trial. The document was only mentioned in the 24th Hearing (2 May 1961), when the attorney general presented the document and the presiding judge accepted it (State of Israel, Vol. I, p. 387), and at the 79th Hearing (26 June 1961), when Defense Attorney Dr. Servatius asked Eichmann whether he had written the document on Müller's order, but Eichmann replied in the negative (*ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 1424).

The anonymous German letter to Luther that "complained about Jewish corpses appearing in public places" is therefore a mere invention by Spector. In his commentary, he introduced two other fictitious elements: the general context

in which the above-mentioned letters appeared, and the significance attributed to the number 1005. Spector outlines the general context as follows (Spector 1990b, pp. 157f.):

> *"In December 1941 the Chelmno death camp started to operate in German-occupied Poland. The Jews were killed in gas vans, and buried in big pits. When winter 1941/42 ended, the running water from melting snow exposed the graves. Bodies floated around, the stench spread into nearby settlements, and both the local population and German army units encamped there complained about the stench."*

In practice, Spector implies that the anonymous letter referred to the situation at Chełmno (was this "extermination camp" therefore a "public place"?). But he is unable to document the alleged resurfacing of the bodies in this camp, because there are no documents or testimonies in this regard. On the other hand, it is not very plausible for the snow at Chełmno to have melted before 6 February 1942. Even less believable, if not nonsensical, is his claim that "bodies floated around": how could "the running water from melting snow" *expose* "the graves" and cause the bodies to rise to the surface, let alone make them float around?

It is obvious that Spector, by means of his description, fabricated a fictitious context simply in order to attribute a sinister meaning to the two above-mentioned letters. Since nothing proves that the letter from the anonymous German referred to bodies, and since the letter from Müller to Luther does not even mention them, not even implicitly, it is obvious that Spector's attempt to trace back the symbol of the alleged "Aktion 1005" to this document is completely unfounded.

To get an idea of the true value of Spector's narrative, it is necessary first to set forth his second document, which is a letter from Himmler to Müller dated 20 November 1942, to which Himmler had attached a propaganda speech given by Rabbi Stephen Wise in September of that year. Spector's translation of that letter reads as follows (*ibid.*, p. 158):

> *"(1) I am not surprised that **reports** like these circulate in the world **regarding** the great Jewish emigration. We **also** know that among Jews sent to work, mortality is very high.*
> *(2) Your responsibility is to see that **the** dead Jewish bodies are buried or cremated. **It is forbidden** to do anything else with the bodies.*
> *(3) Please investigate whether **somebody** had misused **our intentions** according to the above-mentioned first paragraph, and caused the spread of lies around the world. Every such misuse has to be reported to me under the oath of the SS."*
> (Emphases added)

Hoffmann reproduces the German text of this letter, which enables us to demonstrate the degree of Spector's manipulations (Hoffmann, p. 84). Here is my accurate translation of Himmler's letter:

> *"1. That such **rumors** would be circulating in the world at some point does not surprise me, **considering** the great emigration movement of the Jews. We both know that the mortality rate is increased among Jews who are deployed for work.*

> *2. You must assure me that the bodies of **these** deceased Jews are either cremated or buried **at every location**, and that nothing else can happen to these bodies **at any location**.*
> *3. Let it be investigated immediately whether any misuse such as the one of Point 1) has occurred anywhere, which has probably been spread all over the world as a lie. Every such misuse is be reported to me under SS oath."* (Emphases added)

Although the text is very reserved, the letter speaks of "emigration movement of the Jews" and "Jews who are deployed for work," among whom a very high mortality rate has been recorded. And the context unequivocally shows that the expression "the bodies of these deceased Jews" refers to Jews sent to work, and has therefore no connection to any supposed extermination. Precisely to prevent the reader from reaching this obvious conclusion, Spector has omitted the specific reference "these," writing only "the dead Jewish bodies."

Craftily, Spector does not mention the contents of Wise's speech. In fact, that content is based on information contained in the telegram sent on 3 September 1942 by Isaach Sternbuch, representative of an Orthodox Jewish group in Switzerland, to Jacob Rosenheim, chairman of the Agudah Israel World Organization with headquarters in New York. With reference to the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto, this telegram stated (Wyman, pp. 45, 51):

> *"The corpses of the murdered victims are used for the manufacturing of soap and artificial fertilizers."*

On 30 August 1942, the Geneva office of the Jewish Agency for Palestine sent a report to the U.S. government that was forwarded by the U.S. government to the Holy See on 26 September 1942. This report stated, among other things (Noble/Perkins, p. 775):

> *"Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto is taking place. Without any distinction all Jews, irrespective of age or sex, are being removed from the Ghetto in groups and shot. Their corpses are utilized for making fats and their bones for the manufacture of fertilizer. Corpses are even being exhumed for these purposes."*

Raul Hilberg reports other rumors relating to human soap which were circulating at the time (Hilberg 2003, Vol. III, pp. 1032f.):

> *"On July 29, 1942, the chief of the Ethnic Germans in Slovakia, Karmasin, had written a letter to Himmler in which he described the 'resettlement' of 700 'asocial' Ethnic Germans. One of the difficulties, wrote Karmasin, was the spreading of rumors (furthered by the clergy) that the 'resettlers' would be 'boiled into soap' (dass die Aussiedler 'zu Seife verkocht werden'). In October 1942 the Propaganda Division in the Lublin District reported the rumor circulating in the city that now it was the turn of the Poles to be used, like the Jews, for 'soap production' (Die Polen kommen jetzt genau wie die Juden Seifenproduktion dran)."*

In his 2004 paper on "Soap from Jewish Fat," Joachim Neander has summarized the entire matter as follows:

> *"In September 1942, Rabbi Dr. Stephen Wise, Chairman of the World Jewish Congress, wrote a memorandum in which he addressed these rumors. The New*

> *York Times quoted him on 26 November 1942 as the source of information for the report that the Germans were processing the fat from the bodies of deported Jews into soap and lubricants. Similar stories, in which 'glue' and 'fertilizer' were mentioned as the products of corpse-processing, were repeatedly purveyed by the media of the Allied countries over the following months. However, among official agencies in England and the USA – as well as in large sections of American journalism – these reports were met with great skepticism, which was also transferred to other reports relating to National-Socialist mass crimes. The Allied propaganda lies of the 'corpse exploitation facilities'*[467] *were still ringing in the ears of news analysts and journalists as well as the tardy apologies of the British government for them. It is part of the impact history of the soap legend that it contributed to the fact that the Allies were only made aware of the Holocaust when it was too late to intervene.*
>
> *In contrast to the Allies, Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler took Wise's memorandum very seriously and reacted immediately. Making explicit reference to it, he categorically demanded in a letter dated 20 November 1942 to the Gestapo chief Heinrich Müller:* […]*"* (This is followed by Point 3 of Himmler's letter.)

The context clarifies the real meaning of Himmler's letter: it had nothing to do with wiping out traces of crimes committed by the SS, but was a direct response to the story of the production of soap and fertilizer out of the bodies of deceased Jews. Spector, by contrast, draws the following incredible conclusion from this document (Spector 1990b, p. 158):

> *"Himmler's letter testifies to the fact that in the second half of 1942 the Nazis were cremating bodies, not only burying them."*

Did we really need Himmler's letter to learn something so obvious? Or perhaps Spector was unaware of the existence of cremation furnaces in the majority of German concentration camps in November 1942?

By contrast, the proper conclusion to be drawn is this: if Himmler – through Müller – had already ordered the elimination of mass graves in June 1942, this would have implied a formal prohibition against the continued burial of human bodies, but the above-mentioned letter shows exactly the opposite: that, in the second half of 1942, by order of the *Reichsführer* SS, the SS were permitted or rather required to *either* bury or to cremate the bodies. This conclusion is incontrovertible. Hence, when the Israeli author Alex Faitelson discussed "Operation 1005," he stated for a good reason that Himmler ordered "to burn all the bodies of the Jews who were murdered or to get rid of the corpses in some way or other" (Faitelson 1996, p. 217), a false translation that attempts to conceal the inconvenient words "or buried."

On the other hand, the heading of Himmler's letter bears no mention of the number 1005, which also invalidates Spector's claim that "the number 1005 was used later as the code name for the operation of erasing the mass murders."

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[467] These plants, "*Kadaverwertungsanstalten*" in German, really existed, but they treated "*Kadavers*", animal carcasses, not "*Leichen*", human corpses. Allied propaganda played on this term, mistranslating it as corpse.

In conclusion, Himmler's letter shows merely that the presumed "Aktion 1005" order supposedly issued by Müller and Himmler to Blobel is pure fabrication.

I might add that the number 1005, in the known documents, appears only in the file references of offices that had no relation to any activity of exhumation and cremation of corpses. One of these was the Department of Population Issues and Welfare of the General Government, Central Section, Internal Administration. A letter from this department dated 15 April 1942 bears the file reference "Akt.Z. IX – 1005 – 03 c/W"[468]; a subsequent letter, dated April 23, has the file reference "Az.I/2 – 1005 – 01 c/H/W."[469]

Spector also quotes a third document, almost in passing, which does mention "*Sonderkommando* 1005" (*ibid.*, pp. 166f.):

> *"Sonderkommando 1005-Mitte proceeded on 3 April 1944 to Pinsk where it was helped by the local Gebietskommissar Klein, as well as the headquarters of the Second German Army. Confirmation of this can be found in the intelligence report of army activities in April 1944: 'By special order of the Reichsführer SS, Sonderkommando 1005 arrived, to execute special duties in the area of the army."*

Dieter Pohl presents the original text of this information in a general context, which I translate as follows (Pohl 2009b, p. 330):

> *"Starting in the summer of 1943, the Security Police began to identify the mass graves of Nazi victims and have them opened by forced laborers. These 'Sonderkommandos 1005' were also active close behind the Eastern Front. Despite the strict secrecy obligation, a few military agencies also became aware that the Security Police was attempting to wipe out the traces of the mass graves. In one case, the Security Police opened a grave located in the midst of a barracks in Nikolayev; it is hard to imagine that these doings failed to attract the attention of the responsible military leaders. The AOK 2* [Army Supreme Command 2] *were even aware of this operation's cover name:*
>
> > *'Based on a special order of the* Reichsführer *SS,* Sonderkommando *1005 is assigned to special tasks in the army zone.'"*

The source is: "Tätigkeitsbericht AOK 2, Ic/AO, 25.4.1944." Pohl states that "at that time, the Second Army was in Polesye in the area of the Pripyat Marshes" (*ibid.*, fn 37).

Pohl's demonstrative method is clearly misleading. The story of a mass grave in the midst of a barracks is not, in actual fact, derived from any document, but from the interrogation of Gustav Herold on 21 September 1969 (*ibid.*, fn 36). In practice, he axiomatically presupposes that a *Sonderkommando* 1005 was employed in the exhumation and cremation of bodies from mass graves, and adduces the above-mentioned document as proof or confirmation of his own presupposition! In reality, the document only speaks of "special tasks" without specifying what they were! From the orthodox Holocaust point of view, one could claim that

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[468] YVA, O.21-3, p. 57.
[469] YVA, O.21-16-2, p. 57.

proof or confirmation consists of the fact that *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center was in Pinsk on 25 April 1944 (see Subchapter 6.6. below), in the area of the Pripyat Marshes, but this is not any "fact" attested to by a document, but merely a trial "truth" established exclusively by testimonies.

A document cannot be confirmed by a testimony; if anything, then the exact opposite is true. I shall return to this distorted interpretive method later.

Hoffmann reports a proposed conferral of "*Kriegsverdienstkreuze 2. Klasse*" (War Merit Crosses 2nd Class) written on 26 May 1944 at Lvov by an official in the Security Service containing this phrase (Hoffmann, p. 105):

> *"Furthermore, the men listed under consecutive Numbers 1 through 16 have been members of Special Squad 1005 (Secret Reich Matter) for months, and have been exposed to very special emotional and physical stress during this activity."*

Hoffmann moreover quotes a radio message from the commander of the Security Police Black Sea, SS *Sturmbannführer* Friedrich Hegenscheidt, who arrived at Lvov on 28 March 1944 (*ibid.*, p. 127):

> *"Deployment of* Sonderkommandos *1005 A and B, Secret Reich Matter assignment RFSS to SS* Standartenführer *Blobel in Region BdS Black Sea not possible. Recorded precipitation area only still in Area KdS Crimea. Deployment currently impossible due to front and partisan situation. Transport area for overall squad not available. According to current rumor, evacuation of Crimea now pending. Propose dissolution of both squads, or deployment in other area."*

Hoffmann explains that the term "'precipitation area' was a camouflage word for mass graves" (*ibid*., FN 75), but does not explain from which document this claimed terminological equivalence may be inferred. His purpose is clearly to link the radio message in question to the story of the alleged camouflage of the numbers of cremated corpses as "cloud height," as I will explain below. In the same footnote, Hoffmann moreover points out that this document is a mere "typed copy." It is completely unknown, who copied what and when. Such a document could just as easily have been rewritten or invented from scratch instead of copied in order to substantiate the thesis of orthodox Holocaust historians; both the reference to *Sonderkommando*s 1005 A and 1005 B as well as to a secret "assignment" assigned by Himmler to Blobel speak for this. But this rewriting was done rather foolishly, because to believe it, we are asked to believe that the leaders of the Reich were complete imbeciles.

As I shall explain later (Subchapter 6.3.), *Sonderkommando* 1005 B was active at Nikolayev near the Crimean Peninsula until the end of January 1944, and was then sent to Lvov, and thence into the holiday destinations of Zakopane and Krinica (Krynica). Its members were then assembled again at Lvov. Here, on 28 March 1944, the above-mentioned radio message was allegedly received. The distance by road between Nikolayev and Lvov is approximately 800 km; it follows that *Sonderkommando* 1005 B, although it was only a short distance from the Crimea while active at Nikolayev, was sent to Lvov with the intention of sending it right back to the Crimea a few months later!

Since the area to the north of the Crimea was under the competence of *Sonderkommando* 1005 B, why did the radio message also mention *Sonderkommando* 1005 A? Based on the document, it was in fact intended to deploy both units in the Crimea. That the commander of the Security Police Black Sea only knew about the imminent evacuation of the Crimea from "rumor," is absolutely unbelievable.

It is a fact that the British, who, thanks to the interception of German radio messages, were following events in the Crimea with particular attention at the time, knew nothing about it. There are no transcripts of individual messages for 1944. The messages were intercepted individually, but only summarized weekly. The report for the week of 25 March-1 April says that the ethnic Germans from Transnistria were being concentrated at Sambor, and that weapons and munitions were being transported from Nikolayev and Simferopol to Breslau.[470] The report relating to the following weeks concerned themselves specifically with the Crimea:[471]

> *"Internal evidence suggests that the HSSuPf and Bdo Black Sea have left TIRASPOL; they may be transferred to GALATZ where Vomi Headquarters are located on 27 March. Messages referring to the evacuation of Odessa by the Police point to considerable transport difficulties. The O.K.H. has put a ban on all transport from ODESSA to the North; Police authorities in Crimea are told to use the port of KONSTANZA."*

Arad mentions a document prepared by the Security Police in Lithuania, dated January 13, 1944, which discusses the situation in December 1943 (Arad 2009, p. 503):

> *"Thus, according to the report prepared by the Sipo in Lithuania and dated January 13, 1944, regarding the situation during December 1943: 'On the night of December 25, 1943, there was an escape from the fort of prisoners from enterprise 1005b. The escape was not felt at first, and when it was, there began an immediate manhunt for the escapees. So far, we have managed to catch 37 of the escapees, 5 of whom were shot trying to escape.'"*

There is also another document which refers to this event. This is an express letter sent on 3 February 1944 by "The Head of the Security Police and the SD IV B 4" (Eichmann) to the *Reichsführer* SS, with the subject "Escape of Jewish workers out of Kaunas"; only the salient portion of it are quoted here (the document is reproduced in Faitelson 2006, p. 268):

> *"Finally, on the escape of 64 Jewish workers from Fort Kaunas, I report the successful recapture of 37 of these Jews so far.*
> *The leader of Sonderkommando 1005 – SS Obersturmführer Radif – and the leader of the guard squad on duty at the time – Gendarmeriemeister Apelt – were arrested for negligence after the escape. Since the investigation has now been concluded, I commuted the imprisonment to house arrest."*

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[470] TNA, HW 16-68. Notes on German Police Decodes. Week ending 1 April 1944. PEARL/ZIP/P.85.
[471] *Ibid*., Week ending 8 Apr 44. PEARL/ZIP/P.86.

From the orthodox Holocaust point of view, this document might also be thought to find apparent confirmation. On 26 December 1943, eleven former prisoners at Kaunas wrote a memorandum in which they told a story which I shall examine in Chapter 7.3. These men claimed to have been assigned to participate in the exhumation and cremation of bodies in Fort IX, but they did not claim to have been members of any *Sonderkommando* 1005.

The date of their escape, the night of 25-26 December 1943, corresponds to the document cited by Arad (it is not clear to whom the escapees made their statement in the City of Kaunas on the very same date as their escape), but there are also notable discrepancies, particularly on the number and above all the nationality of the escapees. The escapees reported that their unit originally consisted of 72 prisoners, 34 Soviets, 14 Jewish partisans, 3 Russians, 4 women (3 Jews and one Polish woman) and 17 Jews from the Kaunas Ghetto; eight prisoners, one Jew and seven POWs, were later shot. On the day of the escape, the Jews from the unit were therefore 33 in number; the express letter states, however, that there were 64 Jewish escapees, almost twice the number of those present. It is therefore obvious that the statement of the eleven escapees is incompatible on an essential point with the document in question. It is also doubtful that this statement was already written on 26 December 1943. Furthermore, nothing is known of its origins.

Another document, relating to Otto Erich Drews, is comprehensible only if its background is briefly explained: In the summer of 1943, Drews was assigned to the 4th Platoon of the 9th Police Tank Company and was sent to Russia. Here, like most members of the platoon, he joined the *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center; on 1 January 1944, he was appointed *Polizeisekretär*. He was later transferred to *Einsatzkommando* 13 in Carinthia, Austria, and dealt with personnel economic and administrative affairs. On 18 November 1944, he wrote a letter addressed to the Police Administration in Kiel which was signed by Max Krahner, his superior and presumed head of *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center between December 1943 and October 1944. The following are the essential passages of his letter (Bracher/Rüter, pp. 14f.):

> *"For special deployment -Einsatzkommando 13-1 (12b) Klagenfurt, 18 Nov. 1944*
> *Ref. 10.10, Journal No. 16/44 - Geheime Staatspolizei - Burg.*
> *Registered mail!*
> *To the State Police Administration*
> *in Kiel*
>
> *Re: Assignment of Police Secretary Drews.*
>
> *Police Secretary Drews, from the Ordinary Police Command Kiel assigned on 25 March 1943 to long-term emergency service at the Police Reserve, as platoon constable of the Ordinary Police Reserve, has now been assigned to my staff, at my request, on order of leader of the 'Iltis' Group for Special Tasks – Reich Security Main Office – as leader I (personnel officer) and leader II (senior economic officer) due to his knowledge in administrative matters. With regard to his mili-*

tary experience during front-line deployment as platoon leader, with simultaneous exercise of incidental administrative tasks, Drews satisfied my expectations to the fullest. Since the beginning of his service in the East, he has been active in my unit and has been assigned to the Security Police.
With regard to the fact that all members of the ordinary police who during the deployment in the East were entrusted with carrying out the tasks within the framework of Secret Reich Matter 1005, an official assignment within the framework of ordinary police deployment is no longer possible based on orders issued by the Reichsführer SS – Reich Security Main Office – […[472]]
You are furthermore informed that political secretary Drews has been awarded the War Merit Cross Second Class with swords, by the Reich Security Main Office, effective as of 1 Sep. 44.
Please also find the photo in the attachment for issuing the new SS paybook.
1 attachment"

Blobel was appointed head of *Einsatzgruppe* "Iltis," a specialist anti-partisan unit in Yugoslavia, in September 1944. He therefore appointed Drews "Leader I (personnel officer) and Leader II (Senior Economic Officer)" of *Einsatzkommando* 13 "due to his knowledge in administrative matters." Drews therefore had acquired a remarkable range of experience in administrative matters during his long-term activity with *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center. But in what way could he have acquired that experience if the activity of the "*Sonderkommando*" consisted solely of the exhumation and cremation of corpses?

As for "Secret Reich Matter 1005," just what its "tasks" consisted of is not explained.

One might also add a British intercept from September-October 1944 which states:[473]

"d) Baltic. […] *Bds RIGA had a Sonderkdo 1005 under his command (2972DD11)."*

There is one more reference that is worth mentioning. In the distribution list of the Auschwitz Camp's Garrison Order No. 24 of 21 September 1944 appears – the only time in the entire series of orders – a "Sonderkommando 1005" (Frei *et al*., pp. 493-495, 556). This order referred exclusively to the Auschwitz Camp, and it contains no reference to exhumations or cremations of corpses. Hence, even if it was intended for a "Sonderkommando 1005," one cannot believe that it had any reference to exhumations and cremations. At this point, according to orthodox Holocaust historiography, there was only "Sonderkommando 1005b" left, which operated in Riga until mid-September 1944. Riga is about 1,000 road kilometers distant from Auschwitz: if this was "Sonderkommando 1005," what did it have to do with Auschwitz?

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[472] Followed by the request, which is irrelevant in the present context, to exempt Drews from "emergency service duty."

[473] TNA, HW 16-6, Summary. Covering information received between 1 Sept and 31 Oct 44. CIRO/PEARL/ZIP/MSGP 61, 5 November 1944.

The documents analyzed here show that there was a *Sonderkommando* 1005,[474] also referred to with the letters "A" and "B," which was a "Secret Reich Matter" and which corresponded to a "special order of the *Reichsführer* SS"; one might also concede that it involved an "assignment RFSS to SS *Standartenführer* Blobel," but none of this provides us with any knowledge of the fundamental questions:

1. When was it formed?
2. Why was it formed?
3. What were its duties?
4. Why was it referred to by the number "1005"?

Apart from the forced linking of the number 1005 with Müller's letter to Luther of 28 February 1942, orthodox Holocaust historians respond to these questions by referring exclusively to testimonies. These historians turn the commonly accepted rules of historiography on their head trying to explain documents based on eyewitness accounts. This is the distorted method which I mentioned earlier. This case is similar to that of the *Sonderkommando* of the crematoria at Birkenau: here as well, there are multiple documents which mention a *Sonderkommando* – but only one document with the specification "*Krematorium.*" Yet these documents never clarify what tasks these *Sonderkommandos* carried out. The collaboration in the gassing of inmates and the cremation of their bodies, as claimed by orthodox historians, is derived *exclusively* from testimonies. Once it has been determined *a priori* that a *Sonderkommando* assigned to such a task actually existed in the Birkenau crematoria, every document containing the term *Sonderkommando* is used to prove the "reality" of the homicidal gassings (cf. my study Mattogno 2020).

Similarly, documents attesting to the construction and operation of the Birkenau crematoria, which are taken by orthodox historians to be evidence for the existence of homicidal gas chambers, merely show that such crematoria existed, not that they were involved in any way in the mass extermination of human beings. In the same way, the above-mentioned documents are equally improperly referred to as proof or confirmation of the presumed exhumation and cremation activities supposedly carried out by *Sonderkommando* 1005, which is, in fact, supported solely by testimonies.

The orthodox Holocaust narrative presents other aspects which are just as surprising, to say the least. One relates to the fact that, as we have seen earlier, 16 members of *Sonderkommando* 1005 were recommended as potential recipients for the German military award medal "War Merit Cross 2nd Class," and at least Drews was actually awarded the medal on 1 September 1944; nevertheless, the leader of "Aktion 1005," Blobel, was not even considered deserving of promotion. His service record in fact lists his promotions up to the rank of SS *Untersturmführer* (21 March 1935), SS *Obersturmführer* (9 November 1935), SS

[474] In Mattogno/Graf, p. 228, I mistakenly wrote: "The designation '*Sonderkommando* 1005' was invented by the Soviets."

Hauptsturmführer (9 November 1936), SS *Sturmbannführer* (30 January 1938), SS *Obersturmbannführer* (20 April 1939), SS *Standartenführer* (30 January 1941). This was his last promotion. In the "rank" column of his service record, all the boxes indicating subsequent ranks are blank, starting with that of SS *Oberführer* (NO-3197, pp. 1, 3). The same document mentioning the decoration awarded to Drews confirms that Blobel was still a SS *Standartenführer* on 18 November 1944, when "Aktion 1005" was a thing of the past.

It should also be noted that the source situation in this regard is disastrous, to say the least. In support of a claimed operation which would have been enormous for the vastness of the territories concerned and for its duration, a handful of documents are presented, two of which have no connection to the matter at all, while the others contain only the term *Sonderkommando* 1005, but are entirely silent about what that unit's task was. The absurdity of the situation is obvious: this operation was so secret that it left almost no documents, but at the same time, the shootings which created the problem of the mass graves to be eliminated were carried out in the light of day; not only that, but Himmler is said to have issued the order to eliminate the mass graves, but not any documents relating to the shootings, starting with the *Einsatzgruppen* reports, which would have been a piece of cake compared to the challenges presented by eliminating zillions of mass graves!

From the orthodox Holocaust point of view, what may be considered conceivable is that Himmler, in August 1943, after the battle of Kursk, ordered "Aktion 1005" to prevent advancing Soviet troops from discovering the mass graves containing the bodies of the victims of the *Einsatzgruppen* and using them for propaganda purposes against the Germans, as the Germans had used Katyn against the Soviets several months earlier. But again, what is the sense of declaring such an operation a "Secret Reich Matter" and ordering the destruction of all the documents related to it, when the executions had been carried out in front of many witnesses, and were attested to by hundreds of documents, such as the *Einsatzgruppen* reports?

The United Nations Declaration of 17 December 1942 called attention to the crimes perpetrated by the Germans (IMT, Vol. 12, p. 364):

> *"From all the occupied countries Jews are being transported in conditions of appalling horror and brutality to Eastern Europe. In Poland, which has been made the principal Nazi slaughterhouse, the ghettos established by the German invaders are being systematically emptied of all Jews except a few highly skilled workers required for war industries. None of those taken away are ever heard of again. The able-bodied are slowly worked to death in labor camps. The infirm are left to die of exposure and starvation, or are deliberately massacred in mass executions."*

This was followed by an open threat of legal retribution:

> *"The above-mentioned Governments and the French National Committee condemn, in the strongest possible terms, this bestial policy of cold-blooded extermination. They declare that such events can only strengthen the resolve of all free-*

dom-loving peoples to overthrow the barbarous Hitlerite tyranny. They reaffirm their solemn resolution to ensure that those responsible for the crimes shall not escape retribution, and to press on with the necessary practical measures to this end."

The National-Socialist leaders, starting with Himmler, whose fates were now irremediably sealed, knew well what awaited them at the end of the war.

In this context, the idea of a presumed "Aktion 1005" to eliminate the material proofs of the executions, with the total destruction of all the related documentation, but leaving an enormous mass of documents attesting to the executions available to the enemy, appears even more absurd. This is so true that at the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial, the U.S. investigators were hardly interested in material evidence at all, that is, they didn't concern themselves with "Aktion 1005" itself at all, but based their accusations on the many documents on executions gratuitously bequeathed to them by the Germans.

Stephen Tyas discovered and later, in 2006, published English-language translations of two German messages dated 12 and 13 October 1943 intercepted by the British. In 2005, Robert J. Hanyok commented on them, supplying the orthodox Holocaust interpretation:[475]

"In late 1943, as the Axis forces retreated west all along the front before the resurgent Red Army, the Nazi authorities were faced with the problem of destroying the evidence of the earlier massacres perpetrated by the Einsatzgruppen, police and SS formations. In October 1943 intercepted and decoded radio messages of the SD revealed that the Germans were in the process of exhuming the sites of mass executions and destroying the remains. The texts of the intercepted messages were written in the obtuse language that the Germans used for all matters pertaining to the Holocaust. These messages indicated that such work, executed by Sonderkommandos (Special Detachments), and [sic] *included cleaning up 'special places of work' in the Baltic region southwest of Leningrad, near the cities of Novgorod and Pskov. Interestingly, in trying to identify the murder sites, SS officials had to rely on information from Latvian and Russian collaborators."*

And now the text of these messages, of which only the English translation is available; here is the first one:[476]

"GROUP XIII/27
BERLIN to CRIMEA area
RSS 49/15/10/43
LFC on 10223 kcs 1651 GMT 12/10/43
SSD Nr 18 1110 2220
For ROEDER. For the completion of urgent business of winding up in the sphere of the EK 1 and EK 2, exact details are required immediately concerning special places of work from November 1941 up to July 1943. Positional details, special

[475] Hanyok, p. 83. The source given is: "ZIP/ISOSICLE 7639, Berlin to Crimea Area, 12 October 1943 and ZIP/ISOSICLE 7654 (combined with 7684), 13 October 1943, PRO HW 19-238." *Ibid.*, fn 43, p. 112.

[476] TNA, HW 19-238.

places of work, particularly in GRIGOROVO near NOVGOROD, are to be transmitted at once to SS Stubaf. BLOBEL, at present B.d.S. RIGA and RSHA 4 B 4. All speed essential. GUENTER, SS Hastuf"

This is the second message's text from the same archival source:

"GROUP XIII/27
CRIMEA AREA TO BERLIN
RSS 45/15/10/43
LFC de KIF on 9280 kcs. 1210 GMT 13/10/43
Nr 1310/1020/21 2 Tle 1585
To RSHA IV. B [Written in ink] *4. Secondly. BdS. RIGA SS Stubaf. BLOBEL. Ref. W/T message of 11/10 No. 18.*
1) Ravine near air-force barracks SIEVERSKAJA close by to the north-west of the airfield, little material. 2) GATTSCHINA castle grounds about 200 m. distant from the former quarters of the Kdo. Ostuf. BOSSE, former Latvian interpreters, TONE, DZELSKELEJS, and others, all apparently ~~from~~[crossed out in ink] *RIGA, are able to give information concerning 1) and 2). Russian collaborator, RUTSCHENKO, can also give indications. At present PSKOV UZ [?*[477]*].*
3) Ref. PUSCHKIN, ZARSKOJE, SELO and TOSSNO.
Please question Stubaf. Dr. ? and Stubaf. Hubig, both RSHA I b.
4) GRIGOROWO at NOVGOROD not known to me. As EK 2 [is concerned], *perhaps Ostubaf. EHRLINGER of EGR. N can give information or else Hstuf. KRAUS brother of Stubaf. OTTO KRAUS, who is at present at PSKOV.*
Sgd. ROEDER, Stubaf."

Hanyok explicitly stated that "the intercepted messages were written in the obtuse language that the Germans used for all matters pertaining to the Holocaust," therefore their meaning is not clear at all, and the author claims that he has "decoded" it.

The first message, from Office IVB4 of the RSHA, was sent by SS *Hauptsturmführer* Rolf Günther – who was the deputy of the head of this office, SS *Obersturmbannführer* Adolf Eichmann – to SS *Sturmbannführer* Rudolf Oebsger-Röder, who was in the "Crimea area."

Tyas, who reproduces the transcript of the related texts, comments as follows (Tyas, p. 237):

"These two decoded messages provide details of a previously unknown perpetrator, the names of other perpetrators, the inability of the Security Police to trace all the execution sites (an event unplanned in every war), and the exact location of two execution sites.
Who was 'ROEDER' in the Crimea? This is SS-Major Dr. Rudolf Oebsger-Röder, in October 1943 the field-office commander based in the Crimean area for Unternehmen Zeppelin operations into the Caucasus and beyond on behalf of Schellenberg's RSHA VI C/Z. […] *The knowledge he provides in his answer to Guen-*

[477] Operation Zeppelin was instituted on 10 March 1942 by Office VI C of the RSHA and was intended to recruit opponents of the Soviet regime who were expected to undermine the Soviet population's will to resist behind the front lines; Angrick *et al.*, Doc. 116, pp. 305f.

ther and Blobel on 13 October 1943 can only have come from someone who was present at the executions; in other words, he was a perpetrator and at the very least complicit in the murders at Sieverskaja and possibly Gatschina. The other locations mentioned were not known to him, indicating that there was some information available to Eichmann's office from other sources about these special places of work."

He then wonders:

"Who were the victims at Sieverskaja and Gatschina and which unit carried out the execution?"

He answers these questions by saying that these two localities were located approximately 25-30 miles south of Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), and cites the only *Einsatzgruppen* report that mentions one of the two localities; I shall now provide the original text of the report:[478]

"The number of inspections carried out by squads of Einsatzgruppe A around Leningrad amounts to several hundred. A total of 93 persons were executed, among them a gypsy gang which had been causing trouble in the region around Siverskaya. Jewish civilian population is no longer present."

Tyas states that he does not know why the report uses the name Gatchina instead of Krasnogvardeysk and declares that he "could not find any reference to executions here." The names "Pushkin, Tsarskoye, Selo" all refer to Tsarskoye Selo – this town's name was changed to Pushkin in 1919 – where, he continues, "some individual Russians" were shot. He then cites EM No. 186 dated 27 March 1942, which dedicates a few lines to Pushkin, in order to tell the story of the "ethnic German Oleg Smilkow" who had committed "a murder with robbery against his likewise ethnically German aunt," and who was then captured and shot.[479] Tyas also cites EM No. 190 dated 8 April 1942, which contains the following passage relating to Pushkin:[480]

"The number of deaths has remained just about the same. In order to fend off the danger of possible epidemics during the coming spring, measures are being taken already now in order to collect the corpses lying in front of residences, to stack them up at certain locations in order to bury them later when thaw commences.
In Pushkin, for example, a squad was formed consisting of militia members who searched the houses for corpses. Some 400 corpses have been found so far which had not yet been buried. Insofar as possible, they have even been buried here already."

As for Tosno, Tyas adduces Document NOKW-1580, a report dated 3 November 1941 which mentions the reprisal shooting of "13 persons (selected from persons refusing to work and from known Communists)" by the Security Police (TWC, Vol. X, p. 1155), in addition to Document NOKW-2268, a report on the activity of the XXVIII Corps referring to the period from 29 November 1941 to 9 May

[478] NARA, T-175/234, 2723471, p. 9 of the report.
[479] NARA, T-175/235, 2724071, p. 10 of the report.
[480] NARA, T-175/235, 2724160, p. 8 of the report.

1942. The document reports about an "insane asylum located in the former monastery Makaryevskaya pustyn" which accommodated 240 patients in disastrous conditions, so that measures had to be taken (*ibid.*, p. 1197). On 3 January 1942, the headquarters of the XVIII Army communicated: "Insane asylum in Makaryevskaya. The matter has been settled" (*ibid.*, p. 1200). The document mentions a *Kommando* Hubig – named after the head of *Einsatzkommando* 1b of *Einsatzgruppe* A – which was to receive "the appropriate instructions for the implementation directly from Brigadier General Stahlecker with the army" (*ibid*.), so that, if the patients were shot, this would be attributed to *Einsatzgruppe* A, but this shooting is not mentioned in its reports. The document explicitly states that the monastery at Makaryevskaya, in which the "insane asylum" had been set up, was located "20 kilometers north-northwest of Lyuban" (*ibid.*, p. 1198), approximately 75 km southeast of Saint Petersburg, more than 60 km south east of Pushkin as the crow flies.

As for the killing of the mental patients, if it really took place, it marked the conclusion of a long and difficult decision-making process. On 2 December 1941, *Kommando* Hubig sent a report with the subject "Insane Asylum at Makaryevo" to the head of *Einsatzgruppe* A. The document reports the existence, since 1936, of a "House of Invalids" at Makaryevo in an old monastery, at that time containing 230-240 persons – mental patients as well as syphilitics and epileptics. Food and pharmaceuticals were almost exhausted. The female acting physician treating them had lost all control and feared that the patients might constitute a danger to the populace of the village of only 150 inhabitants. Even the physician of the 2nd SS Infantry Brigade, SS *Sturmbannführer* Dr. Blies, shared her fears, because the patients, if they escaped, could have attacked the townspeople and spread diseases, such as typhus. The report declared that he "was of the opinion that the patients would leave the asylum only step by step. There was no more food in the surrounding villages anyway, so that the patients would either be eliminated by the civilian population or brought back to the asylum." SS *Hauptsturmführer* Hubig requested a "review of the case" (Angrick *et al.*, pp. 248f.).

The problem, as we have seen, was "settled" on 3 January 1942, after a month of hesitation. This is in contrast to the terse information provided as to the execution of mental patients contained in other Incident Reports, such as the already-quoted passage in EM No. 88 of 19 September 1941, which relates to *Einsatzgruppe* A (hence the very unit which – presumably – liquidated the patients at Makaryevo):

> *"On 22 Aug., a total of 544 mental patients, selected from among the inmates of the mental hospital at Aglona, were liquidated with the support of the Latvian militia."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 494)

If it was so easy to eliminate mental patients, why did it take a month to issue an order for the (alleged) elimination of the mental patients at Makaryevo?

Finally, Tyas mentions "Activity and Situation Report No. 7 of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the Security Police and the SD in the USSR," relating to November 1941, which states the following:[481]

> *"13 hostages were shot at the crime scene in the presence of municipal representatives in reprisal for an act of arson against the sawmill in Tosno, in which building material for 5 German divisions was being prepared."*

This is obviously the same execution as the one mentioned in Document NOKW-1580.

All this raises numerous unanswered questions. To start with, Günther's message mentions one single locality: Grigorovo. Why, then, in Röder's response, did Röder speak of Siverskaya, Gatchina, Pushkin, Tsarskoye, Selo and Tosno? When was Röder asked any questions about these localities? Are there other messages whose existence has not been disclosed by Tyas?

The specific question as to Grigorovo, which Röder was actually asked, does not appear to make much sense, because this locality constitutes the northwestern perimeter of Novgorod, which is approximately 1,400 km north of the Crimea as the crow flies, approximately 160 km south-south east of Saint Petersburg. What could Röder possibly know about Grigorovo? Nothing, as the response stated: "not known to me." In fact, Tyas adds that "the known career of SS *Sturmbannführer* Dr. Rudolf Oebsger-Röder contains no inkling of a post with an *Einsatzgruppe*" (Tyas, p. 239). On the other hand, Günther's request for information referred "particularly" and precisely to Grigorovo, but Tyas is completely uninterested in this aspect of the matter and writes nothing about it.

From the orthodox Holocaust point of view, if the National-Socialist authorities were not afflicted with congenital cretinism, "Aktion 1005" should have been directed first and foremost at mass graves containing thousands of bodies and located near the much larger extermination sites, whether real or imagined. So what happened at Grigorovo-Novgorod that was so disturbing that a *Sonderkommando* 1005 had to be sent there? As far as I know, Novgorod was not the theater of any particularly tremendous massacre. The locality is mentioned in *Ereignismeldung* No. 136 dated 21 November 1941, only for the purpose of supplying a bit of innocuous service information:

> *"Einsatzgruppe A: garrison Krasnogvardeysk. Spanish Blue Division in the East: Blue Division already very conspicuous when moving into the signed positions on the Volkhov, between Novgorod and Chudovo."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., pp. 821f.)

The only "known" or presumed shooting is that of 387 persons declared by the Soviet State Extraordinary Commission, which presumably occurred on 6 January 1943 at Novgorod-Seversky (Weiss-Wendt 2015, p. 126). But even if that is true, can one seriously believe that Office IV B 4 of the RSHA was really concerned about a presumed mass grave containing a mere 387 bodies? And what is the connection between Novgorod and Röder? Why was the question directed precisely to him, who could not possibly have any knowledge about it?

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[481] YVA, O.53-3, p. 108 (p. 4 of the report).

For the localities discussed by Tyas, the situation is even more absurd, because the executions which can be said to have been carried out involved 93 victims at Siverskaya, 1 at Pushkin and 13 at Tosno, for a total of 107 people.

EM No. 186 dated 27 March 1942 and cited earlier, which mentions the killing of a murderer at Pushkin, mentions, almost in passing: "15,000 Jews were shot in Cherven."[482] Cherven (in Polish: Czerwień) is located approximately 55 km east of Minsk, along the road to Mogilev. Hoffmann mentions it, but only fleetingly in a quite irrelevant context, so that, as far as is known, no "1005" exhumation-cremation operation was ever carried out there.

This fleeting reference is all that is known of this massacre. With reference to EM No. 186, Gerlach asserts that it was a "typo in the victim figure ('15,000')" (Gerlach 1999, fn 986, p. 685), but does not say what the correct number should be. Arad, by contrast, considering himself an authority, corrects the figure: "Some 1,500 people were murdered in Cherven"! (Arad 2009, fn 5, p. 582) Who were the alleged victims? And when were they shot?

Hanyok and Tyas agree in concluding from the two messages in question that there was an "inability of the Security Police to trace all the execution sites," to such an extent that the "SS officials had to rely on information from Latvian and Russian collaborators." If this were true, Office IV B 4 of the RSHA would have to have sent several hundreds of messages to locate the mass graves, of which, according to generally accepted Holocaust opinion, no maps existed. If we assume the average figure of the presumed victims indicated by Arad – 2,550,000 people – how many mass graves should there have been?

The mass grave at Drogichin mentioned above contained 3.5 bodies per cubic meter, that at Zagare 2.9. It therefore follows that the 2,550,000 bodies mentioned above would have required (2,550,000 ÷ 3,816 =) 668 mass graves the size of that at Drogichin, or, in general, (2,550,000 ÷ 3,5 =) 728,571 cubic meters of grave space, or 1,061 mass graves the size of that at Zagare, or 879,310 cubic meters of grave space. If we were to assume the packing density as it was found in Serniki (1.1 bodies per cubic meter), that number would be roughly three times as high. The Incident Reports nevertheless mention many shootings of a few dozen or a few hundred Jews, so that the number of mass graves should be much higher. The order of magnitude of several hundred messages hypothesized above is therefore quite plausible.

Tyas, by contrast, has not found hundreds of messages confirming the underlying fact – not even dozens – but only two!

These two messages, I add, were drawn up "in the obtuse language that the Germans used for all matters pertaining to the Holocaust," because their real meaning is not obvious *per se*; they are only interpreted based on "Aktion 1005," because Blobel is mentioned in them; by virtue of this name, in the collective fantasy of orthodox Holocaust historians, the "special places of work" are transformed into work places (mass graves and cremation pyres) in the context of

[482] NARA, T-175/235, 2724069, p. 8 of the report.

"Aktion 1005." And this is done, although we don't even have the original German texts of the messages, but only the English translations by the code breakers!

From the orthodox Holocaust point of view, we also would have to deduce from the two messages that Office IV B 4 of the RSHA, and Eichmann in particular, played a primary role in "Aktion 1005." Nevertheless, the Jerusalem Tribunal, notwithstanding the enormous quantity of documents which it examined, never succeeded in establishing a link between Eichmann and Blobel's office, and, in Point 148 of the verdict declared (State of Israel, Vol. V, p. 2164):

> *"Wisliceny says of Blobel's unit that it 'was formally placed under Eichmann' (T/85, p. 9). The Accused denied that he was Blobel's superior. According to him, the only connection between his Section and Blobel was that Blobel himself and some of his men were housed in the building of Section IVB4 while they were in Berlin, and his Section dealt with them only from an administrative aspect (T/37, pp. 264, 390, 3044). He also mentions strained personal relations between himself and Blobel.*
>
> *We find that the evidence is not sufficient to place the responsibility for the activities of Blobel's unit on the Accused.* […] *The Accused's name is not mentioned by Blobel, and also in the nature of things it does not necessarily follow that the Section of the Accused, which was occupied with carrying out the Final Solution, should also be engaged in the special operation of covering up the traces. Accordingly, the Accused will have the benefit of the doubt in this matter."*

The court was far too generous, for Wisliceny had stated in his affidavit of 29 November 1945 (NCA, Vol. 8, p. 617):

> *"In November 1942, in Eichmann's office in Berlin, I met Standartenfuehrer Plobel* [sic]*, who was leader of Kommando 1005, which was specially assigned to remove all traces of the final solution (extermination) of the Jewish problem by Einsatz Groups and all other executions. Kommando 1005 operated from at least autumn 1942 to September 1944 and was all this period subordinated to Eichmann. The mission was constituted after it first became apparent that Germany would not be able to hold all the territory occupied in the East and it was considered necessary to remove all traces of the criminal executions that had been committed. While in Berlin in November 1942, Plobel gave a lecture before Eichmann's staff of specialists on the Jewish question from the occupied territories. He spoke of the special incinerators he had personally constructed for use in the work of Kommando 1005. It was their particular assignment to open the graves and remove and cremate the bodies of persons who had been previously executed. Kommando 1005 operated in Russia, Poland and through the Baltic area. I again saw Plobel in Hungary in 1944 and he stated to Eichmann in my presence that the mission of Kommando 1005 had been completed."*

This statement is patently unreliable, as is evident from the following points:

1. Wisliceny assumed the language of the victors, calling the alleged extermination the "final solution of the Jewish question" ("*Endlösung der Judenfrage*").

2. He asserted that *Kommando* 1005 began its activities at least as early as the autumn of 1942, which is contrary to the orthodox Holocaust chronology (first deployment in Lwów in June 1943).
3. The November 1942 conference is pure fiction.
4. The statement concerning the "incinerators" personally built by "Plobel" is pure fiction.
5. The statement regarding the use of "incinerators" by the "Kommando 1005" is pure fiction.
6. The meeting between Wisliceny and "Plobel" in Hungary in 1944 with the relative statements is pure fiction.

It is not by accident that Hans Safrian, in his 2010 study of Eichmann, never even mentions Blobel.

From the distribution list of the *Einsatzgruppen* reports, we can see that the following copies of the reports were sent to the various departments of Office IV of the RSHA, the Gestapo:

17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 33, 34, 35, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51

Among the copies found by the Americans, those of Office IV were 33, 34, 35, 47, 48 and 51. Nevertheless, no document relating to "Aktion 1005" was found in the archives of the Gestapo. We must therefore believe that the SS considered this operation so secret that all the related documentation had to be destroyed, but at the same time they left all the *Einsatzgruppen* reports (except for one); hence we may deduce that for the SS the exhumation and cremation of Jewish cadavers was much more secret than shooting the Jews in the first place!

Tyas dedicated the article cited several times here precisely to Eichmann, as is readily apparent from the title: "Adolf Eichmann: New Information from British Signals Intelligence." But apart from the two messages in question, he does not indicate the slightest link between Eichmann and Blobel, which confirms that the orthodoxy's interpretation of these documents is forced and therefore unsupported.

The total absence of documentary proof permits Holocaust historians to invent the most incredible stories. Thus, Hoffmann, summarizing a passage from the sentence of the Stuttgart District Court of 13 March 1969, says that Blobel, in a mythical "discussion of principles" which is said to have been held at Kiev in the first half of August 1943,

> *"reminded those present that the elimination of the murder traces has the status of a 'Secret Reich Matter' and that they therefore have to take steps to keep their activity secret. Apart from that, Office IV of the RSHA, directed by Müller, was to be informed daily, through the agency of local BdS offices, of the number of corpses eliminated. In this connection, Sohns* [483] *proposed to encode the reports as 'weather reports', and the number of burned bodies as 'cloud altitude.' The proposal was accepted."* (Hoffmann, p. 108)

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483 SS *Sturmbannführer* Hans Sohns, alleged commander of *Sonderkommando* 1005A and 1005B in the Ukraine.

Hoffmann later returned to the matter, citing the testimony of ex-radio activity director for the SK 7b, Walter Mayer, who spoke of ordinary "weather reports." He knew through a "member of the SK 7b typing pool" – whose name he could unfortunately no longer recall – that these reports had a different meaning. The witness recalled 4-5 of these radio messages (*ibid.*, fn 47, p. 158). The testimony dates back to 24 September 1967, really a bit too late.

Since *Sonderkommando* 1005 must have carried out several hundred alleged exhumations and cremations, if the orthodox narrative is correct, there must also have been hundreds of these coded "weather reports," and there was no reason to destroy them, precisely because they were encoded, but orthodox Holocaust historiography has never cited a single one.

This alleged "encoding," apart from the intrinsic difficulties, is rather foolish, because German meteorologists were constantly issuing real "weather reports," very many of which were intercepted by the British. Since the "coded" weather reports could not be distinguished from the real ones on their face, but contained obviously incorrect meteorological data, how did the various German units distinguish the real reports from the fake ones?

Here are a few examples of real weather reports (this is the forecast for the General Government and the Ukraine):

> *"General weather situation for 26 Oct. 42 15 hours.* […] *In the other territories of the Reich, the General Government and the Ukraine: sunny with cloudy intervals, largely due to a Russian high* [pressure system]. *Forecasts for tomorrow. Southern General Government: clear to cloudy weather tonight, with slight southwesterly wind. Ground temperatures may fall below zero degrees, particularly at higher altitudes. Tomorrow's daytime weather: sunny weather with predominantly high-altitude clouds. Early morning: local ground fog and haze, dissipating towards mid-morning. Temperatures unchanged. Sun tomorrow in CRACOW rising at 07:20 and setting at 17:27 hours. WBZ CRACOW"*[484]
>
> *"General weather situation, 16 Nov. 42, 15:00 hours.* […] *Before the cold front widespread precipitation in the form of rain and drizzle. In the East also as snow from closed stratified cloud cover of 300 to 500 m* [altitude]. *The front moves southwest. The Russian high and arctic cold air shift further southeastwards. Outlook for tomorrow in southern General Government: increasing westerly to northwesterly winds, overcast to cloudy, widespread rain and showers. Improved visibility over the course of the day; becoming slightly warmer. Sun tomorrow in CRACOW: rising at 06:54; setting at 16:54 hours. WBZ CRACOW."*[485]
>
> *"General weather situation for today in southern General Government. Continuing low-hanging clouds well below 300 m above ground. Early morning increasingly thicker haze. Visibility westwards of REICHSHOF, less than 3 km. Local fog. Temperatures 0 to -2 degrees, around 0 degrees during the day. Heavy icing*

[484] TNA, HW 16-21. German Police Decodes Nr 3 Traffic: 26.10.42. ZIP/GPDD 278a/6.11.42. The meaning of this acronym WBZ is unknown; perhaps it meant *Wehrbezirk* (defense district).

[485] *Ibid.*, 16.11.42. ZIP/GPDD 299a /6.2.43.

in clouds. Slight winds, around west; widespread local precipitation. Sunset 16:26 hours. WBZ CRACOW."[486]

I shall now conclude this subchapter with a rumor relating to the exhumation and cremation of bodies which some Holocaust devotees evidently take at face value:

"(708) SD Field Office Bad Neustadt
General attitude and situation

Bad Neustadt, 15 Oct. 1943

StA Wü, SD-Hauptaußenstelle Würzburg No. 14

According to a rumor traced to Münnerstadt, the hostile powers are said to have asked the Führer through the Red Cross where the Jews are who had formerly resided in the Reich. The Führer, as a result, is said to have had the Jews dug up and burnt, so as to prevent any propaganda material from falling into the hands of the Soviets in the event of a further German withdrawal in the East, as it did in the Katyn case. <3652>" (Kulkah/Jäckel, pp. 531f.)

That this rumor had nothing to do with any imaginary "Aktion 1005" is already obvious from the context and chronology: the presumed action is said to have been ordered in October 1943 and is said to have concerned the Jews who once lived in Germany. This is an obvious "sib," a false news item disseminated by the British (see in this regard Part One, Subchapter 6.7.).

On 31 March 1943, a British official described one of the sources of these "sibs" to a government official as follows:[487]

"As you may know, 'C' supplies us regularly with a list of stories and rumours circulating in Germany etc. They are stories which 'C' specifically states to be 'unfounded opposition propaganda.'"

A few "sibs" were equally macabre:

"About 200,000 amputations have been made in Vienna hospitals. The meat is very sensibly being rendered for its fat for soap."[488]

"The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute has worked out a method of extracting calcium from the bones of air raid victims. It will be used in special diets for children."[489]

2.3. The Origins of "Aktion 1005": Müller's Presumed Order to Blobel in 1942

In the article mentioned above, Spector writes about "organizing the headquarters of 'Operation 1005.'" On 13 January 1942, SS *Standartenführer* Paul Blobel was relieved of command of *Sonderkommando* 4a of *Einsatzgruppe* C. "He was relieved," says the Israeli historian, "for reasons of bad health; because of acute alcoholism his liver was badly infected." After medical treatment, he was assigned to Office IV of the RSHA, the Gestapo.

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[486] TNA, HW 16-23. German Police Decodes Nr 3 Traffic: 28.1.43. ZIP/GPDD 372a/12.2.43.
[487] TNA, FO 898-69.
[488] *ibid.*, "U.P. minutes for Friday 2nd July, 1943," I/755.
[489] *ibid.*, "U.P. minutes for Friday 9th July, 1943," K/542.

> *"In June 1942, after a long recuperation, Blobel was sent by Müller to Eichmann to study the scope of the 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question in Europe.' Following a short period of studies, he was appointed to head of the operation for obliterating all traces of mass murder, named 'Aktion 1005.'* […] *He started in June 1942, not in the East, but in the death-camps."* (Spector 1990b, p. 159)

Spector's source, as I shall clarify below, is Blobel's affidavit of 18 June 1947, NO-3947, with the addition of fanciful dates. For an event of such importance, this exposition is pathetic, to say the least.

Hoffmann is unable to do more. In this regard, he writes:

> *"Blobel learned the exact details of his assignment in March or April 1942, when he spent a few days in Müller's Office IV in Berlin, of which Adolf Eichmann, working in Department IV B4, was also a member. After his instructions, Blobel and Bauer drove back to the East."* (Hoffmann, p. 80)

It is unknown what the source of these fantasies is; let's hope it's not the same source as given in his Footnote 95, which follows the quotation a few lines down, because that source is in fact the interrogation on 4-5 July 1963 of a certain Julius Bauer, who was none other than Blobel's driver (*Fahrer*)!

Spector states that "in July 1942 Blobel organized a small staff in the City of Lodz (Litzmannstadt)" and explains that "Blobel chose the City of Lodz because of its proximity to the first death camp, Chelmno" (Spector 1990b, p. 159). This conjecture is a risky one to say the least, because the presumed "extermination camp" is located at a distance by road of approximately 60 km from Lodz. If the problem was "proximity," it would be more sensible to organize the "staff" at Dębie (approximately 7 km from Chełmno) or, if Blobel preferred, in a larger town, such as Koło (approximately 11 km away).

As is known, according to orthodox Holocaust historiography, Blobel is said to have performed cremation experiments at Chełmno in order to perfect an efficient system to eliminate the bodies from the mass graves left by the *Einsatzgruppen*. This system was also to be adopted later in the "extermination camps" in the East (and at Auschwitz).

I shall concern myself with Blobel's presumed activity at Chełmno in the next subchapter. Here, it is important to delimit the chronological boundaries as exactly as possible. In this regard, it should first be noted that Spector's claim of Blobel organizing his staff at Lodz in July 1942 is pure fabrication.

When did the experimentation at Chełmno cease? The only thing we know for sure is that these experiments, if they existed, must have been over when the mass cremations themselves began. On 30 March 1963, the Bonn Jury Court established that the cremations began "starting in the fall of 1942" (Rückerl 1979, p. 273). But Rückerl reports a testimony by Franz Schalling of 9 March 1961, a former senior police officer (*Polizeioberwachtmeister*) who had been a member of the guard personnel at Chełmno. Schalling gave an earlier date:

> *"In the summer of 1942, they began to open the graves and burn the bodies."* (*ibid*.)

We may therefore conclude that, from the orthodox Holocaust point of view, Blobel's preliminary activity was carried out between June (when he is said to have been assigned to the job) and September 1942 (end of summer).

Having established these limits, we may turn to Blobel's direct statements. In his affidavit of 6 June 1947, he declared (NO-3824):

> *"In January 1942, I was relieved of my post as head of Sonderkommando 4 A and transferred to Berlin for disciplinary reasons. I was left unoccupied there for a while. I was under the supervision of Office IV, under former Gruppenführer Müller. In fall 1942, as Müller's representative, I was assigned the task to drive to the occupied territories and eliminate the traces of the mass graves resulting from the executions by the Einsatzgruppen. I had this assignment until the summer of 1944."*

In a later affidavit, dated 18 June 1947, Blobel made the following statements (NO-3947):

> *"After I had been relieved of this assignment, I had to report to SS Obergruppenführer Heydrich and Gruppenführer Müller in Berlin and was entrusted by Gruppenführer Müller in 1942 with the task of eliminating the traces of executions by the Einsatzgruppen in the East. My order stated that I was to report personally to the commanders of the Security Police and SD and to give them Müller's order and supervise its implementation. This order was considered a Secret Reich Matter, and Gruppenführer Müller had ordered that due to the strict secrecy of this assignment no written correspondence was to be conducted.*
>
> *In September 1942, I reported to Dr. Thomas in Kiev and transmitted the order to him. The task could not be carried out immediately, for one thing, because Dr. Thomas was disinclined to carry out the order, and for another thing, because the material needed to burn the bodies was not on hand. In May and June 1943, I traveled to Kiev several times in this matter, and then, after consulting with Dr. Thomas and SS and Police Leader Hennecke, the task was carried out."*

These two statements provide us with two important bits of information:

1. The date of the presumed order is contradictory: June or fall 1942?
2. Blobel did not mention "Aktion 1005" or any *Sonderkommando* 1005.
3. He did not say a word about his alleged experimental activity at Chełmno.
4. Regarding his presumed order, he referred exclusively to the graves left by the *Einsatzgruppen*, without the slightest mention of Eastern "extermination camps."

As I have noted above, Himmler's letter to Müller dated 20 November 1942 shows that no exhumation-cremation order existed at all at that time, since the *Reichsführer* SS had ordered that the bodies of the Jews were to be "either cremated or buried"; this document demolishes Blobel's related fantasies.

The question of the secrecy borders on the ridiculous; the exhumation-cremation operation was so secret such that no "written correspondence" was to exist in this regard, but at the same time all the SS and Police units involved in the extermination of the Jews were to carry on calmly drawing up their reports on the shooting of the Jews! On 29 December 1942, Himmler himself is said to have

forwarded to Hitler a report which mentioned the shooting of 363,211 Jews! Himmler moreover is said to have ordered Blobel to begin the operation in September 1942, but this "Secret Reich Matter" was delayed for nine months without any objection from Himmler!

Not only that, but a copy of all the 195 Incident Reports, except for a single one – as I noted in Part One, Chapter 1 – were blithely left in the offices of the Gestapo in Berlin for the benefit of the Allies. Headland informs in this regard:

> *"The complete set* [of the Operational Situation Reports] *was found in seven folders, which were given file numbers by American investigators that resulted in the following distribution: Folder One (E328) Reports 1-30; Folder Two (E 330) Reports 31-78; Folder Three (E 329) Reports 79-100; Folder Four (E 327) Reports 101-129; Folder Five (E 325) Reports 130-150; Folder Six (E 326) Reports 151-173; and Folder Seven (E 331) Reports 174-195."* (Headland, p. 221)

He adds that "during the *Einsatzgruppen* trial the prosecution did not put a single witness on the stand. The evidence presented by the prosecution consisted of 252 exhibits" (*ibid.*, p. 161). The majority of this documentation consisted precisely of the *Ereignismeldungen* (*ibid.*, Appendix A, pp. 217-221).[490]

It follows that the office which was supposed to be careful not to allow any "written correspondence" relating to "Aktion 1005," and which was supposed to destroy all possible written documents in order to erase all proof of the shootings carried out by the *Einsatzgruppen* – the Gestapo, to be exact – was precisely the one which left the proof of these shootings practically intact!

The two following fundamental questions nevertheless remain to be examined:

1. Why did Himmler issue the exhumation-cremation order?
2. Why was this extremely important task entrusted to Blobel in particular?

As to the first question, it is not clear whether Spector traces the presumed order back to Müller's letter to Luther dated 28 February 1942, which is irrelevant in any case, as I have explained above. Molotov's declaration of 27 April 1942, in which he announced the killing by the Germans of 14,000 Jews at Kharkov (Spector 1990b, p. 158), is also a very weak motivation for the "Aktion 1005" decision.

Hoffmann's explanation is even more inconsistent. According to him, when Blobel was relieved as Commander of *Sonderkommando* 4a on 13 January 1942, he received the order to meet Heydrich at Warsaw (although Blobel said he had to meet Heydrich in Berlin). According to the already-cited Julius Bauer, Blobel's driver, his superior received a new assignment which originated from an order from Hitler. Arriving at Berlin, Blobel was informed in broad terms of Müller's new mission and, as I have already mentioned, he received all the related details in March-April 1942 (Hoffmann, p. 80).

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[490] Of the 194 existing reports, 185 were introduced into evidence as proof, and accepted by the court, which assigned NO classification numbers.

Based on this fanciful reconstruction, Hitler or Himmler is said to have decided on "Aktion 1005" as early as January 1942. This is one of the many absurdities of the orthodox Holocaust version. If, in fact, the presumed decision was taken already in January 1942 – but this applies equally to the month of June 1942, the dating indicated by Spector – it would be impossible to understand why the *Einsatzgruppen* and the other SS and Police units continued to shoot and bury Jews in common graves long after the presumed order. The same is also true for the victims of mass gassings allegedly occurring in the so-called extermination camps. These are said to have been buried until the summer of 1942 (Auschwitz, Sobibór) November 1942 (Bełżec) or even March 1943 (Treblinka).

I remind the reader also that this operation in the occupied Eastern territories is said to have begun only in May-June 1943, if we follow the orthodox narrative. If, therefore, the order to cremate the bodies from the mass graves already existed for a year or more, how does one explain why this was not done in these 14-15 or 11-12 months? Admitting for the sake of argument that there existed insuperable impediments for an immediate implementation of that order (although that would not apply to the alleged extermination camps), how does one explain why the units which carried out any executions from that time onward did not draw up precise maps of the mass graves in the East to be made available to Blobel?

In fact, orthodox Holocaust historians deduce from the radio messages of 12 and 13 October 1943 intercepted by the British – which I have examined earlier – the non-existence of such maps, since the Germans had to have recourse to information from Latvian and Russian collaborators.

But why was the decision made to exhume and cremate the bodies dug up from the mass graves? Hoffmann not only does not answer, but never even asks the question. In fact, nothing adumbrated the total defeat of Germany during the year 1942.

There is, moreover, another problem of no less importance which has been completely neglected by the orthodoxy: On 30 April 1942, a "Ministerial Decree" was issued (II 2 c – 3186), probably by Department IV (Healthcare and *Volkspflege*) of the German Ministry for the Interior. The document does not seem to have survived, but the text was cited in a letter by the "Reich Commissar for the East. Dept. 'Healthcare and *Volkspflege*'" dated "Riga, 27 May 1942." The letter, addressed to the general commissars at Riga, Tallinn, Kaunas and Minsk, had as its subject "Burial of Bodies and Carcasses" and made explicit reference to the just-mentioned Ministerial Decree:[491]

> *"I subsequently inform about a Ministerial Decree which concerns itself with the necessary measures for the burial of bodies and carcasses:*
>
> > *'The poor burial of human corpses and the insufficient disposal of animal carcasses, caused mainly due to snow and frost conditions, are bound to become a serious health hazard for the troops and for the civilian population with the onset of the warmer season. For the most part, the existing graves are not deep*

[491] LVVA, P-1023-1-4, p. 303.

> *enough, are located haphazardly and are not marked as graves. There is a danger that working the ground with the plough will tear the graves open again.*
> *I request that all necessary measures be taken to redress this bad state of affairs. First of all, human bodies and animal carcasses are to be buried so deeply in non-arable locations as to constitute no health hazard. If possible, the groundwater level must not be reached when arranging the graves.* [Drinking] *Water catchment areas must be avoided. Mass graves must be covered by a layer of dirt at least one meter thick. The earth can be piled up if local conditions do not permit deeper burial. The graves must be marked.*
> *The burial of Soviet army soldiers killed in action and the deceased of the civilian population, as well as the disposal of animal carcasses is to be performed by local civilians.'*
>
> *Please proceed in accordance with this decree and report its implementation by 1 July 1942."*

Since these dangers concerned all the mass graves located near any human settlements, or at least the majority of them, we need to bear in mind that the Ministerial Decree applied to all territories in which mass graves existed, hence not just the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, but also the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine. It follows that the county physicians of the various counties should have compiled maps of the mass graves existing in their territories of competence.

Some documents attest to the activities carried on by the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* to comply with the provisions of the Ministerial Decree.

On 17 June 1942, the administrative-health department of the Ministry of Health of Latvia sent the physicians direct instructions based on the letter of 27 May cited above. Among other things, it recommended that "corpses are to be buried at least 1 m deep without risk of groundwater pollution."[492] A letter from the district physician of Liepaja (Libava) and Aizpute dated 25 June reported that the graves containing the bodies of soldiers and civilians and animal carcasses satisfied the requirements of the letter of 17 June.[493] The head of the Riga health department communicated the same information on 27 June, with reference to the mass graves in Riga and surrounding areas, without further details.[494] On 29 June, the "*Veselības pārvalde*" (Health Department) of Jelgava (Mitau), in response to the letter of 17 June, stated that there were four mass graves in the district, three of which were located in a forest (the name is not indicated) and were covered by a soil layer 2 meters thick.[493]

On 2 July, the "Healthcare Administration of Vilnius County" transmitted the list of mass graves located in various municipalities to the District Commissar Vilnius-Land.[495] The letter from the Main Healthcare Administration (medical examiner of Trakai County) to the district commissar of Vilnius dated 8 July

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[492] LVVA, 4426-1-3, p. 16. The letter was written by Dr. E. Bušs, "*Veselības departamenta direktors*" (health department administrators).
[493] LVVA, P-1023-1-4, p. 276, "*Liepājas-Aizputes apriņķa ārsts*" ("district physician of Liepaja-Aizputes").
[494] LVVA, P-1023-1-4, p. 275.
[495] LVVA, R-613-1-10, p. 70-70a; "*Vilnius-Land*" refers to the rural area around the city of Vilnius.

1942 is very similar.[496] I shall return to these and other documents in Subchapter 7.1.

On 22 August the *Generalkommissar* in Kovno sent the city commissars in Kovno and Vilnius and the district commissars in Kovno-Land, Vilnius-Land, Siauliai and Panevezys a letter with the subject "Burial of Corpses and Carcasses" and the reference "Ministerial Decree of 30 April 42. - II 2 c 3186" which discusses the situation in detail:[497]

> *"In response to my former request for a report on the existence of mass graves, very comprehensive and excellent reports on the location and condition of mass graves in the general district have arrived from the district commissars. In examining the reports, it turned out that a large proportion of these mass graves fully satisfy all requirements relating to the prevention of epidemics. Some of them, however, do not exhibit the necessary security, since the covering layer of dirt is very thin.*
> *I hereby request to order the county leaders that all graves be examined based on the available documentation, and that all those not protected by a covering layer of at least 1 meter be heaped up accordingly.*
> *It is also necessary that each of these mass graves be marked as a grave in an appropriate manner. The manner of marking may be left up to you, but it must be such as to make it very clear to everyone that the site is a burial location.*
> *Hence, I request to arrange for necessary measures and for an implementation report by 15 September 1942.*
> *The county physicians have been similarly instructed by me through official administrative channels."*

According to the most-careful orthodox reconstruction, that by Hoffmann, the decision for "Aktion 1005" had already been taken at the beginning of 1942 and was communicated to Blobel in March or April. But the above-mentioned Ministerial Decree dates back to 30 April 1942. Since the object of both the Ministerial Decree and "Aktion 1005" were identical – the bodies in mass graves – how can one believe that there were two parallel chains, decisional and operational, the one aiming at the maintenance and conspicuous marking of mass graves and the safeguarding of public health, and the other at hiding and eliminating of the mass graves?

On the other hand, the documentation gathered by the county physicians would certainly have been transmitted to the various "*Sonderkommando*s 1005," but there is no trace of this, not even in the testimonies.

This fact is in blatant contradiction to Hanyok and Tyas's interpretation of the two German messages dated 12 and 13 October 1943 intercepted by the British, showing, as indicated earlier, that "the inability of the Security Police to trace all the execution sites," was such that "SS officials had to rely on information from Latvian and Russian collaborators."

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[496] LVVA, R-613-1-10, pp. 69-69a.
[497] LVVA, R-613-1-10, p. 58.

The Ministerial Decree of 30 April 1942 explicitly required the identification of *all* mass graves, in such a way that they would all be *recognizable* at such. In this context, one might mention the order of the commander of the district of Rezekne (Rēzeknes apriņķa priekšnieks; Rositten in German), which prohibited public gatherings at the "graves of Jews and Communists."[498] From this one may argue that these graves had not received any "camouflaging" at all, but were known to everyone.

All this is in blatant contradiction to the orthodox Holocaust claim of the extreme secrecy of the notional "Aktion 1005", and it effortlessly explains the absence of written documents. On the one hand, the Ministerial Decree ordered that the mass graves, including those of Jews shot by the *Einsatzgruppen*, had to be marked as such for health-sanitary reasons. This means that related documents were created on specific orders and could have been preserved – and in fact did indeed survive at least partially. On the other hand, orthodox historians maintain that, for reasons of eliminating the traces and keeping this state secret, documents were either never created or would have been destroyed.

Hoffmann's conjectures are nullified by Blobel's statements when claiming that he was "transferred to Berlin for disciplinary reasons" (NO-3824). His transfer was therefore a punishment, not a promotion, obviously because of his alcoholism.

Now to the second question: Why did Müller pick Blobel? No orthodox historian has ever explained why such an important mission, constituting a "Secret Reich Matter," was entrusted to a sick alcoholic, who, notwithstanding his "long recuperation" (barely two or three months according to Hoffmann's chronology), must not have inspired great confidence in his superiors. Patrick Desbois and Levana Frenk state that, toward the end of the war, Blobel "developed a stomach ulcer and cirrhosis of the liver, no doubt caused by his excessive reliance on alcohol, to which he resorted for its supposed analgesic properties" (Desbois/Frenk, p. 9).

His technical credentials, too, were rather modest. Blobel had not even studied architecture, as he falsely stated at Nuremberg during the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial at Nuremberg, but had only attended "a state technical school located at Barmen-Elberfeld (today's Wuppertal), where he began a half-year course of study during the winter of 1913-1914, before joining the army" (*ibid.*, p. 17).

When interrogated by U.S. Colonel Brookhart in 1945, Otto Ohlendorf expressed the following opinion of Blobel:[499]

> *"Q. Do you know what methods were used by Blobel to carry out his mission of removing traces of executions?*
> *A. According to what I know, it was his mission to find these graves, to take the corpses and burn them.*

[498] LVVA, 1371-1-49, p. 26.

[499] Testimony of Otto Ohlendorf taken at Nurnberg on 27 November 1945 by Colonel John H. Amen and Lt. Col. Smith W. Brookhart. NARA, M1270 R 13, pp. 13f.

Q. Do you have any knowledge or information as to Blobel's perfecting his own incinerator for this work?
A. I did not hear anything about that. He, himself, did not have any intelligence and I did not think him capable of anything like that.
Q. Blobel supposedly gave a lecture in November of 1942 before Eichmann's group of specialists on the Jewish question, in which he spoke of his special incinerators and generally commended himself on his work.
A. I did not hear about that."

In summary we can state that total darkness reigns on Müller's supposed order to Blobel regarding "Aktion 1005".

There is another fundamental point which no orthodox Holocaust historian has paused to consider in detail: Why did Hitler or Himmler merely order the elimination of the mass graves of the victims of the *Einsatzgruppen*? Why did they not care at all about the mass graves of Soviet POWs? There were enormous numbers of them. According to Christian Streit, 274.961 of them died in the theater of operations between December 1941 and April 1942 alone, 68,000 of them died in the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* in the period between the end of November 1941 and 1 January 1942, while 134,000 of them died in the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine in February 1942 alone; 292,560 of them died in the General Government between June 1941 and 15 April 1942; 1,400,000 of them died before the beginning of December 1941. Another 600,000 of them died between the beginning of December 1941 and 1 February 1942 (Streit 1997, pp. 133-136). The *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* estimates the total number of victims at 3,300,000.[500]

In practice, in the theater of operations in which the *Einsatzgruppen* and other SS and police units were active, there were mass graves with a number of bodies of prisoners of war practically equal to or greater than that of the Jews presumed shot. What was the sense of ordering the elimination of the bodies of a couple of million Jews, leaving intact those of millions of prisoners of war?

2.4. Judge Bednarz versus Orthodox Holocaust Historians

In the conclusions to his studies on the Chełmno Camp titled "*Vernichtungslager Chelmno in Polen*" ("The Chełmno Extermination Camp in Poland") dated 7 January 1946, investigating judge Władysław Bednarz wrote (USSR-340, p. 6):

"Until the spring of 1940 [recte: 1942] *the bodies were buried in large communal graves, one of which was 270 meters long, 8-10 meters wide and about 6 meters deep. In the spring of 1942, 2 cremation furnaces were built. Since this time, all bodies were burned."*

In the article published in the authoritative bulletin of the Central Commission Investigating German Crimes in Poland, Bednarz reiterated (Bednarz 1946a, p. 154):

[500] Gutman *et al.* Vol. II, entry "*Sowjetische Kriegsgefangene*," p. 817.

> *"In the period up to the spring of 1942, the bodies were buried in large ditches, each of which measured 270 meters long, 8-10 meters wide, and approximately 6 meters deep. In the spring of 1942, two cremation furnaces were built, in which all the bodies were burnt from that time onwards. (The bodies previously buried in mass graves were also cremated there.)"*

In a later report, Bednarz changed the claimed commencement period of the cremations without explanation (Bednarz, 1946b, p. 20):

> *"In the summer of 1942, the large quantity of putrefying bodies which had accumulated caused a typhus epidemic. The escalation was moreover so intense as to render the reception of new transports impossible. It was therefore necessary to find new means of prevention. The Germans therefore began to cremate the bodies. They then reinforced the numerical strength of the Waldkommando (deposition of the witness Kozanecki, p. 82) and they ceased to receive new transports* [footnote: *probably in June and July 1942*]. *Two cremation furnaces were built, whose chimneys overshadowed the forest (deposition of the witnesses on pages 13, 57, 61, 67 and others)."*

The fact remains that the judge who investigated Chełmno placed the commencement of cremations in this camp in a purely hygienic-health context and knew nothing about Blobel and "Aktion 1005." Being unable to ignore Bednarz's writings (if they knew them in the first place), orthodox Holocaust advocates of the "Western" version sought to eliminate the blatant contradiction with a compromise. Hoffmann attempts to resolve it as follows (Hoffmann, p. 11):

> *"Over the course of the summer of 1942, Blobel visited the 'forest camp' of Kulmhof several times in order to test corpse-cremation procedures. The local camp personnel were also interested in the experiments of Blobel, who, as a sapper during WWI, had learned something about flame throwers and incendiary bombs."*

Stop! The fact that Blobel had completed a course on the use of flamethrowers and incendiary bombs decades earlier is evidently intended to accredit him as a "specialist" in the cremation of bodies. This is like saying that the engineer from the Topf Company, Kurt Prüfer, was a specialist in the use of flamethrowers and incendiary bombs because he had knowledge of the cremation of bodies. Needless to say, this is utter nonsense. Now the continuation of Hoffmann's text:

> *"Due to the summer heat, the bodies of victims buried in mass graves had become a hygienic problem. The murderers were worried about the quality of the groundwater; some of them also objected to the noticeable odours and effluents from the graves on aesthetic grounds."*

Thus, the burning of corpses in Chełmno was done both for hygienic reasons and so that Blobel could acquire the necessary practice for the effacement of mass graves in the East! Patrick Montague's explanation is even more hare-brained (Montague, pp. 114f.):

> *"The problem of the decomposing corpses was so acute that all transports to Chełmno were stopped.* […] *To solve the problem, the notorious Standartenführer*

> *Paul Blobel soon arrived in Chełmno.* […] *Blobel required a location to experiment and develop a method to employ throughout the East, and Chełmno proved ideal; it was far from the front and therefore secure, and the site offered an abundance of material with which to work. Bothmann* [the camp's commandant] *also needed Blobel to solve his immediate problem of the decomposing corpses, as well as the longer term issue of erasing evidence of the mass murder in the forest."*

It is truly inconceivable that individuals with more or less profound historical knowledge seriously believe that Himmler could entrust the task of cremating the bodies from the mass graves to Blobel. History teaches that, every time institutional cremation was required (that is, not just localized improvised cremation), the German authorities always turned to specialist firms, such as H. Kori and J.A. Topf. Even the problem of cremation at Mogilev at the end of 1941 was dealt with by the competent authorities of the Reich with an order to the Topf firm for four 8-muffle furnaces (see Subchapter 8.1. below). This obviously does not mean that the RSHA should have used cremation furnaces to burn bodies from these mass graves, but in order to solve the problem of open-air mass cremations, they would have consulted a real specialist, such as the engineer Kurt Prüfer.

The preliminary phase of "Aktion 1005" at Chełmno and Auschwitz has no basis in historical fact, as I have abundantly shown in other studies.[501] Harping on the subject is therefore futile, and I shall now discuss something else.

2.5. "Aktion 1005": Organization and Working Plans

In this subchapter, I will examine how, according to orthodox Holocaust historians, Office IV of the RSHA prepared for "Aktion 1005." In the spring of 1943, Blobel visited Lvov to organize the operation. Relying on the statements by Leon Weliczker, which I will analyze in detail in Chapter 3, Spector writes that this was done between 15 June and 20 November 1943. This is said to have been the first *Sonderkommando* 1005.

In July 1943, Blobel went to Kiev, where he met Max Thomas, who was commander of the Security Police and the SD of the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine. During the meeting, it was decided to create two "*Sonderkommando*s" referred to as "1005A" and "1005B." The first was commanded by SS *Obersturmführer* Baumann, the other by SS *Obersturmführer* Fritz Zietlow.

In October 1943, Blobel's adjutant, SS *Hauptsturmführer* Arthur Harder, set up *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center, which he commanded for a few months. In November, he was replaced by Friedrich Seekel, who was in turn replaced by Max Krahner on 7 December. The task of this unit was to eliminate the mass graves in the *Generalkommissariat* Byelorussia.

According to Spector, the work force of these *Kommandos* was as follows:

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[501] Mattogno/Kues/Graf, Chapter 12, pp. 1169-1332; Mattogno 2017, Chapter 8, pp. 73-81; Mattogno 2008, Chapter 6, pp. 31-56; Mattogno 2020, Subchapter II.10., pp. 185-190.

– "*Sonderkommando* 1005-Lvov": 129 inmates
– "*Sonderkommando* 1005 A": 327 inmates, including 250 killed on 30 September 1943
– "*Sonderkommando* 1005 B": 50 inmates
– "*Sonderkommando* 1005-Center": 280 inmates
– "*Sonderkommando* Micholl": 43 inmates.

Therefore, in order to destroy approximately 2,500,000 bodies scattered over an area of over 1,200,000 square kilometers, the authorities of the Reich are said to have created four "*Sonderkommando*s" with a total strength of a few hundred inmates. Not only that, but they are said to have waited almost a year for no apparent reason before beginning the operations!

According to orthodox Holocaust historians, the number of bodies to be dealt with by each *Kommando* was as follows:

– *Sonderkommando* 1005-Lvov, Galicia District: This included the four administrative regions (in Polish: *województwa*, in Russian: *oblasts*) of Drohobych, Lviv, Stanyslaviv and Ternopil, currently part of the Ukraine. According to Alexander Kruglov, the number of victims was 529,400 (see below). Of these, approximately 250,000 were killed at Bełżec (Kruglov 2008, pp. 280f.), therefore the execution victims numbered approximately 279,000.
– *Sonderkommandos* 1005A and 1005 B operated in the *Generalkommissariat* Ukraine, for which Kruglov supplies data on the Jewish victims, year for year, which I have summarized in the following table (*ibid.*, pp. 278f, 281f.):

Table 26

OBLAST	1941	1942	1943	Total
Drohobych	4,500	60,000	80,500	280,000
Lviv	12,000	123,000		
Stanyslaviv	27,400	90,000	8,600	126,000
Ternopil	12,000	65,000	46,400	123,400
Volhynia	7,100	101,000	1,500	109,600
Rivne	24,500	70,000	/	94,500
Proskuriv	42,100	75,000	/	117,100
Zhytomyr	48,500	4,000	500	52,500
Kiev (Kyiv)	64,000	10,500	100	74,500
Vinnytsia	63,020	90,000	4,400	157,420
Kirovohrad	7,850	3,500	500	11,850
Mykolaiv (Nikolayev)	31,100	8,700	/	39,800
Dnepropetrovsk	24,000	10,000	/	34,000
Chernihiv	2,150	1,500	/	3,650
Poltava	9,000	2,500	/	11,500
Zaporizhzhia	3,400	6,500	/	9,900
Donetsk (Stalino)	9,500	6,000	/	15,500
Sumy	2,000	1,000	/	3,000
Kharkiv	2,000	10,500	/	12,500
Crimea	16,500	8,000	/	24,500

OBLAST	1941	1942	1943	Total
Voroshilovhrad (Luhansk)	/	2,000	/	2,000
Transcarpathia (Kamianets-Podilskyi)	23,600	/	/	23,600
			Total:	1,326,820

Subtracting the 529,400 victims of the first four oblasts, which were part of the Galicia District (but Drohobych was part of the Lviv Oblast), gives us 797,420 victims for the Ukraine, and an equal number of bodies to be eliminated.

– *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center: this squad is supposed to have dealt with Byelorussia, whose western territory was included in the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* as the *Generalkommissariat* Byelorussia. Arad estimates the number of victims in Byelorussia at 556,000 at least (Arad 2009, p. 525), including 224,000 in the eastern part of the area (*ibid.*, p. 521), and 332,000 in Byelorussia.

Faced with such a huge task, the way the authorities of the Reich are said to have organized "Aktion 1005" according to orthodox Holocaust historiography is outright pathetic. A few hundred inmates, divided up into four *Kommandos*, were supposed to run back and forth over a vast territory, I repeat: measuring over 1,200,000 square kilometers, in spasmodic search of mass graves. It is quite obvious that, if the story of the Himmler order to Blobel were true, there would have been not four, but dozens if not hundreds of such *Kommandos*, each operating concurrently in its area of competence, for example, one for every oblast, which would have meant 27 *Kommandos* for the Ukraine alone.

The absurdity of the orthodoxy's Holocaust-style "reconstruction" appears even more obvious if we follow the claimed movements of the individual *Kommandos*.

2.5.1. *Sonderkommando* 1005-Lvov

Dieter Pohl states that Blobel, once in the General Government, turned to the commander of the Security Police and the SD SS *Oberführer* Eberhard Schöngarth, who "ordered the registration of all mass graves and the formation of disinterment[502] squads by the KdS." For this reason, a "*Kommando* 1005" was organized under the command of SS *Unterscharführer* Walter Schallock and his adjutant SS *Oberscharführer* Johannes Rauch (Pohl 1997, p. 379). The most incredible thing is that two of the biggest Holocaust specialists on Galicia, Thomas Sandkühler and Dieter Pohl, never found the slightest trace, whether contemporary or dating back to immediately afterwards, of the presumed "Aktion 1005" apart from the statements by Leon Weliczker.

[502] The German term used hier – *Enterdung* – is presented by orthodox Holocaust historiography, almost always in quotation marks, as a technical term used to indicate the exhumation (and cremation) of bodies. In reality, the term originated during the post-war trials, and is not based on any document.

Concerning the chronology, Pohl summarized it as follows, without explicitly calling it so:

> *"They first began burning the bodies of the victims of the Lvov 'Julag', which had not even been buried. The Kommando then opened the mass graves in the 'Piaski.' This horrible work lasted more than three months. During this time, the smell of burnt human flesh spread over western Lvov almost every day. The residents were very soon talking about how this operation was unfolding – which should have been subject to the strictest secrecy. In September/October 1943, Schallock transferred his unit to the eastern edge of the city into the woods near Lyczakow and Lesienice, where most of the mass murders prior to the fall of 1942 had taken place. The Kommando once again participated there in the shootings of over 1,000 inmates from the Janowska Road* [Camp] *on 25/26 October 1943. Smaller groups of the unit simultaneously worked on various mass graves in and around Lvov."*

In a footnote, Pohl states that these graves were located at Bobrka, Brzuchowice (today: Bryukhovichi), Jaryczow (Jaryczów Nowy; today: Novy Yarychev), Szczerzec (today: Shchirets; *ibid.*, p. 380).

No one can seriously believe that Schöngarth, in order to destroy the mass graves of the entire Galicia District, ordered the formation of merely one single *Sonderkommando* 1005, the one where Weliczker claims to have worked. What is more, as we shall see in Chapter 3, Weliczker's presumed activity was limited to very restricted sectors of the territory of Lvov (Lviv). The presumed principal activity of *Sonderkommando* 1005 was carried out around this city, behind the Janowska Camp, in the forest of Krzywicki (or Lyczaków or Lesienice; today: Lychakov) and at Brzuchowice. The first site was located in the wooded periphery northwest of Lvov, approximately 8 km from the city center, while the other was located on the wooded periphery east of the city, approximately 6 km from its center.

Here, orthodox Holocaust historiography finds itself constrained to explain something absolutely implausible: how is it possible that many tens of thousands of bodies were exhumed and cremated a few kilometers from the city and nobody noticed anything? Why did the Polish resistance, which had thousands of eyes and always knew everything, knew nothing of this event?

One of the most important sources which published the reports of the Polish resistance was the *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, the Information Bulletin. In the second half of 1943, it repeatedly reported on the districts of Galicia and Lvov. Issue No. 30 of 29 July 1943 spoke of mass transfers of the Polish population to the Ukraine.[503] No. 45 of 11 November 1943 informed its readers that "the Jewish labor camp at Lvov was liquidated at the beginning of October" (p. 1596). Issue No. 46 of 18 November 1943 carried a noteworthy bit of news. In an article on "Lwów," it said that "the definitive liquidation of the Jewish labor camp began on

[503] *Biuletyn Informacyjny.* Part II: *Przedruk roczników 1942-1943*, Year III (LIV), Special Number 2 (195), Warsaw, 2002, p. 1466; the following three page numbers area also from there.

25 October. The bodies of those killed were cremated in the crematorium of Piaski Łyczakowskich" (p. 1604). Łyczakowski is a cemetery in Lvov (Lychakovskoye *kladbishche*). It is therefore possible that this referred to an actual cremation facility. Finally, No. 50 of 16 December 1943, with reference to the definitive liquidation of the Jews of Lvov, states that on 18 November, 2,000 Jews had escaped "from the camp," but were then captured by the Germans, and that all were killed (pp. 1639f.).

"*Sonderkommando* 1005," according to orthodox Holocaust historians, is said to have cremated at least 100,000 bodies, although Weliczker's book, the sole existing source, indicates approximately 22,000 (see Subchapter 3.2. below). But even if the former affirmation were exact, this would correspond to much less than half of the 279,000 bodies buried; there should therefore still be 179,000 bodies in the soil of Galicia.

2.5.2. *Sonderkommando* 1005 A

This unit operated at Kiev from 18 August until 29 September 1943. Its subsequent changes of location were ascertained in the Verdict of the Stuttgart District Court of 13 March 1969 (Rüter/Mildt, pp. 714-724), and repeated by Hoffmann. It is very useful to follow these changes of location on a map of the Ukraine (see Document II.2.1):

1. From Kiev, the *Kommando* moved to Berdichev, approximately 150 km southwest,
2. From Berdichev to Belaya Tserkov, approximately 110 km east of Berdichev,
3. Thence to Uman, approximately 125 km south of Belaya Tserkov. After this enormous job, the *Kommando* was sent on furlough to Zakopane and Krinica (Krynica).
4. In February 1944, it was sent to Kamenets-Podolsky (approximately 490 km from Zakopane as the crow flies), where it could not operate as it was threatened by the Red Army.
5. It was then sent to Zamość (approximately 330 km from Kamenets-Podolsky).

After six weeks, the activity of the *Kommando* ceased.

2.5.3. *Sonderkommando* 1005 B

1. From Kiev, this *Kommando* traveled to Dnepropetrovsk, approximately 400 km to the southeast.
2. It then traveled to Krivoy Rog, approximately 140 km southwest.
3. Thence to Nikolayev, approximately 140 km southwest.
4. Thence to Voznesensk, approximately 80 km northwest.
5. After this, this *Kommando* was also sent on furlough to Zakopane and Krinica.
6. On 9 April 1944, it was transferred to Riga, evidently because, for the three General Districts Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania of the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, there had been no provision for any *Sonderkommando* 1005, so that

it was necessary to repurpose *Sonderkommando* 1005 B! And yet, according to the second Stahlecker Report, more than 161,000 persons had been killed there up to 1 December 1941, and an equal number of bodies were therefore awaiting exhumation and cremation.

2.5.4. *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center

1. This *Kommando* began to operate at Maly Trostenets on 27 October 1943 and concluded its work on 15 December.
2. From the above location it moved to a location 10 km northwest of Minsk, on the road to Molodechno, where it remained from 16 to 22 December.
3. It then moved to Smolevichi (Samakhvalavichy), 20 km south of Minsk (17 January 1944).
4. It then turned back north, along the road from Minsk to Molodechno, 30 km from the capital (2 February 1944).
5. A partial unit under the orders of *Kriminalsekretär* Adolf Rübe was then sent back to Maly Trostenets in order to exhume and cremate the bodies buried near a cemetery used by the men of the Security Police and the SD to bury their fallen. The work here lasted 3-4 days and ended on 10 March 1944.
6. From 3 April to 28 May 1944, the *Kommando* operated at Pinsk.
7. A partial unit led by SS *Sturmscharführer* Paul Fischer moved to a Bereza-Kartuska and Brona-Gora.
8. On 2 June 1944, the *Kommando* traveled to Kobrin and worked there until the 16th or 17th.
9. It then traveled to Slonim, where it operated from 25 June until 5 July 1944.
10. From Slonim, the *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center was sent to Grodno, and then Augustowo (Augustów), where it was inactive from 6 to 14 July.
11. On 15 July, it traveled to Lomscha (Łomża), where it remained until mid-August. It was then sent to Litzmannstadt (Łódź) and ceased its exhumation-cremation activity.

2.5.5. *Sonderkommando* Micholl

Between 17 May and 13 July 1944, this *Kommando*, formed for the performance of exhumation-cremation work in General District Białystok, was active at Augustów, Grodno, Skidel, Łunna (today: Lunno) and around Białystok. The overlap of the paths traveled by *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center, which, in the final phase of its activity, traveled to Grodno and Augustów and then passed through Łomża, which also formed part of the General District Białystok and is located approximately 80 km west of this city, is therefore rather strange.

In summary, the Holocaust history of “Aktion 1005” cannot be true, unless we presuppose that the officials of the RSHA were complete idiots and that the operation was carried out under the reign of total chaos, disorganization and incompetence, as implied by the claimed sequence of events:

1. Müller transmitted the presumed order to Blobel in June 1942, but the work began only as late as June 1943 near Lvov.
2. There was not one single, uniform exhumation-cremation order sent to *all* presumed extermination camps. On the contrary, this order is said to have been transmitted to the individual camps over a period of several months: to Auschwitz in July-August 1942, to Sobibór in the summer of 1942, to Bełżec in November 1942, and to Treblinka in March 1943.
3. The presumed operation did not begin during the same period as the execution of a specific order, but in mid-June (Lvov), in mid-August (Babi Yar) and the end of September (Maly Trostenets).
4. The formation of four *Kommandos* consisting of a few hundred inmates in total to clean up a territory measuring over 1,200,000 square kilometers is quite ludicrous. Any remotely rational working organization would have required the formation of a number of *Kommandos* at least 10 times larger, since the District of Galicia and the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine were subdivided into 27 oblasts, the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* had 4 *Generalkommissariate* and the Białystok District consisted of 7 counties, in addition to the occupied Russian territories.
5. Not one German document mentions the exhumation-cremation operations, nor does any report from the various resistance movements.
6. Not a single aerial photograph and only a few ground photographs, which moreover do not substantiate the claimed extent of the action, show the excavation and cremation of bodies, although the territory in question was regularly overflown by both German and Soviet reconnaissance aircraft.
7. Nor are there any documents on the enormous quantities of wood which would have been required for the cremations; the wood would have had to be cut near the cremation sites or transported to them.

3. *Sonderkommando* 1005 in Galicia: Leon Weliczker and the "Death Brigade"

3.1. "Aktion 1005" in the Area of Lvov in Orthodox Historiography

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, "Aktion 1005" began in the General Government, in the area of Lvov, to be exact; Spector reports as follows in this regard (Spector 1990b, p. 161):

> *"In the spring of 1943 Blobel returned to the occupied Soviet territories, where he began to organize Operation 1005. He started at the Janowska camp in Lvov. Outside the camp in the area of 'Piaski' (sands) the Jews of Lvov and its surroundings were buried.* […] *The detailed operation in Janowska camp is known from the testimony of Leon Weliczker, a prisoner who worked there and survived."*

His exposition is based exclusively on the account of this one witness. Spector adduces information of every kind – starting with the number of members of *Sonderkommando* 1005, 75, a figure mentioned by Weliczker and repeated by orthodox Holocaust historians from generation to generation – except fundamental information regarding the number of victims exhumed and cremated (*ibid.*, pp. 161f.). The same thing is true of Hoffmann, who refers to Weliczker at even greater length (Hoffmann, pp. 92-96). Thomas Sandkühler dedicates a short paragraph to "Aktion 1005." He notes that

> *"written sources in this regard are very rare due to the strict secrecy of 'Aktion 1005.'"* (Sandkühler, p. 278)

In a footnote, he writes (*ibid.*, fn 428, p. 522):

> *"Weliczker's shocking notes have only little probative value."*

Notwithstanding this, he relies upon Weliczker's account, from which he also derives the number of members of the "death brigade" (*ibid.*, p. 277):

> *"…75 Jewish workers of the Janowska ZAL* [Zwangsarbeitslager = forced-labor camp] *were selected on 15 June 1943…"*

Even more clearly (*ibid.*, p. 279):

> *"The 'Death Brigade' worked approximately two and a half months in the 'Sands', according to Weliczker's notes, until 6 September, when they were transferred to the forest of Lesienice (suburb of Lyczaków), to eliminate about 45 mass graves."*

Sandkühler concludes (*ibid.*, pp. 279f.):

> *"The aim of wiping away the traces of the 'Final Solution' could not nearly be achieved, but the 'unearthing' has made an exact determination of the numbers of deaths based on subsequent exhumation impossible. If one follows Weliczker's notes, in the terrain behind the Jewish cemetery alone up to 100,000 bodies may have been burned, Heinrich Chamaides reports at least 70,000 victims in the*

> *'Sands' and another 45-50,000 in the Lesienice Forest. One must therefore assume between 100,000 and 120,000 Jews shot in Lvov."*

Later on, in the chapter "Death Numbers," he takes up the figure again (*ibid.*, p. 460):

> *"In Lvov alone, as we have seen, up to 120,000 Jews from the city and the district were shot."*

Incredibly, therefore, he takes at face value and as historical facts the assertions of two self-proclaimed eyewitnesses, and what is even worse, he himself considers the more important one of the two as being unreliable!

Hoffmann cites Sandkühler's critical comment but objects that reports such as that by Weliczker have "great probative value" (Hoffmann, fn 23, p. 94).

Dieter Pohl, in his work on the persecution of the Jews in eastern Galicia, deals briefly with *Sonderkommando* 1005 only briefly (Pohl 1997, pp. 378-381). His sources consist, above all, of court verdicts and interrogations from the 1960s.[504] In this context, among other things, one passage from the indictment of the district attorney's office in Stuttgart against Rudolf Röder dated 10 March 1965, which begins as follows:

> *"Under Schallock's supervision, the graves were opened based on available site plans."*

So site plans existed for the mass graves after all?

Pohl does not reject Weliczker either, whom he mentions under the pseudonym of Wells (Pohl 1997, fn 146, p. 379):

> *"The notes by the Janowska inmate* [Weliczker-]*Wells are considered the most important source* […]*, although they are problematical in their dating (presumably always a few weeks too late)."*

The end of his chapter is surprising:

> *"The object of the leaders of 'Aktion 1005', Blobel, to eradicate all traces was not even approximately achieved. His squad burned more than 100,000 corpses in Eastern Galicia; the related numbers were radioed to Berlin every week, disguised as 'water level reports.' But with the help of the population, the graves – even the ones filled with ashes – could be located by the Soviet authorities without difficulty."*

A brief excursus is necessary here. In his affidavit of 20 December 1945, former SS *Brigadeführer* Erwin Schultz, who had been the head of *Einsatzkommando* 5 of *Einsatzgruppe* D, stated the following (NO-3841):

> *"7. In about 1943, during my work as Chief of Office I of the RSHA, I learned that at that time SS-Standartenführer BLOBEL had to make unrecognizable the mass graves of those shot and liquidated in the areas to be cleared by the Wehrmacht.*

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[504] In order to document Blobel's presence at Chełmno, Pohl refers, among other things, to the brief 1980 article by Blanka Meissner (fn 141, p. 378). Meissner's article is not of great value, however, given that it is based primarily on German trials. The reference to Blobel originates with two Polish publications from the years 1950 (on Chełmno) and 1970 (on Warthegau): Meissner, fn 6, p. 415.

If I remember correctly, the cover designation for these mass graves was 'watering holes.'"

"to make unrecognizable" ("*unkenntlich zu machen*") means to disguise, to conceal, not to eliminate. Hence, as far as Schultz knew, Blobel's task was *not* to open the mass graves, exhume the corpses and burn them. The fanciful reference to the "watering holes" ("*Wasserstellen*") is not found in any other statement, and perhaps this is where the above-mentioned "water level reports" ("*Wasserstandsmeldungen*") came from, with a further effort of imagination. It is worth noting that Schultz had been head of Office I of the RSHA since February 1943. His office dealt with "general personnel matters" (*Allgemeine Personalangelegenheiten*), which concerned, among others, the Security Police (Group AI1), the Gestapo (Group AI2), the Criminal Police (Group AI3) and the Security Service (Group AI4). The head of the Gestapo, Heinrich Müller, is precisely the one who is said to have given Blobel the fateful order of "Aktion 1005". Schultz was therefore in charge of the personnel matters of Blobel and his men, but he knew nothing about his alleged assignment, which is not exactly conducive to the reality of such an assignment.

Returning to Sandkühler and Pohl, the figure of 100,000 victims originates from a secondary source: a member of the Security Police is said to have heard from Walter Schallock, the presumed head of *Sonderkommando* 1005, that 90,000 bodies had been cremated at Lvov (*ibid.*, fn 159, p. 381). It is not clear why Pohl speaks of "more than 100,000 corpses." The fiction of the "water-level reports," by contrast, is taken from an interrogation of Lothar Wandel on 24 July 1965.[505] Finally, if the Soviet authorities found mass graves full of ashes "without difficulty," why did Pohl not add a footnote in reference to these important discoveries?

The Soviet findings are described in the "Information of the Extraordinary State Commission on Atrocities of the German-Fascist Invaders in the Territory of Lvov Region" dated 23 December 1944. Here it is claimed that "in the Janov Camp the fascists shot more than 200,000 peaceful Soviet people." In the area of the camp, "the commission has discovered three pits with the bodies of Soviet citizens shot in the second half of July, 1944." It is not revealed how many bodies there were, nor whether any were exhumed and examined. The legal-medical commission established the following (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 212f.):

"3. On the territory adjacent to the Janov camp the Germans made mass burial and burning of the bodies. The burning of the bodies was performed for a long time in different parts of the camp, but the major part of the bodies was burned in the gully.

4. The soil in that gully at a considerable depth is impregnated with the body liquids and fats with stench of rot and burning.

5. The type of ash found, consisting of small parts of bones and softness of the larger bone fragments prove that the burning of the bodies was performed at a

[505] Pohl 1997, fn 160, p. 381. Due to an error, the year is given as 1945 instead of 1965.

> *high temperature. The ashes remaining after the burning of the bodies were buried in different parts of the camp grounds at the depths of up to 2 meters. Fifty nine such spots were discovered on the surface of almost the entire camp grounds that were examined. Considering the general area of the burial and scattering of the ashes and bones, which covers two square kilometers, the commission of experts believes that in the Janov camp more than 200,000 Soviet citizens had been exterminated."*

The claim to deduce the number of cremated bodies from the mere *surface area* of presumed mass graves filled with ashes, without any indication of the volumes, is clearly untenable. Moreover, the figure of 200,000 victims is exaggerated by a factor of two even from the orthodox point of view, and must therefore be considered purely propagandistic in nature. It moreover remains to be proven that the Soviets really found "fifty nine such spots" (with regard to which, incidentally, they have absolutely nothing to say). From the examination of the ashes they deduced "that the burning of the bodies was performed at a high temperature," but what is meant by "high temperature"? The alternatives were pyres or cremation furnaces, and of these two possibilities, "high temperatures" can be reached consistently only in the second.

The Soviet experts forgot the presumed grinder for human bones, allegedly in use precisely at Lvov, described by another commission of Soviet experts on 29 September 1944, which is mentioned a few pages later (see below). This report here contains no mention of the fact that the bones were allegedly crushed and pulverized with the machine in question. The topic of cremation is addressed again further along in the chapter "Special Measures Undertaken by the German Invaders to Cover Their Crimes." The Soviet counteroffensive, it is said, induced the German authorities to wipe out the traces of their horrible crimes (*ibid.*, pp. 221f.):

> *"Upon the orders of Germany's* Reichsminister *Himmler and Major General of the SS Police Katzmann, in the June of 1943 special measures were undertaken to dig out and burn the bodies of the tortured and shot peaceful citizens, Soviet prisoners-of-war and citizens of foreign countries.*
>
> *In Lvov the Germans set up a special* Sonderkom[m]ando *No. 1005 which consisted of 126 persons. The chief of that kom*[m]*ando was* Hauptsturmbannführer *Scherliak* [Schallock?], *and his deputy* – Hauptsturmbannführer *Rauch. The duties of the* Sonderkommando *included the digging out of the bodies of the peaceful residents and prisoners-of-war killed by the Germans and the burning of those bodies. The excavation and burning of the bodies was supervised by the* SD-Scharführer *Rauch and* SD-Oberwach[t]meister *Kapick.*
>
> *The bodies removed from the pits were placed on special platforms into piles, 1,200 to 1,600 bodies in each. The bodies were sprayed with tar, gasoline and then burned. The ashes and bones were sifted through special strainers with the purpose of collecting golden articles: dental bridges, false teeth, rings and watches. Witnesses Velichker, Khamaides and others testified that over the five months*

> *of their work in the 'death squad' 110 kilograms of gold was strained from the ashes of the bodies they had burned and sent by Germans to Germany.*
> *The ashes were scattered in the fields and also dug in the ground; large bones were collected separately and crushed in the bone-thrasher which was designed to speed up the 'work.' The Germans did not manage to destroy the bone-thrasher, it remained on the grounds of the former Janov camp as material evidence of the bloody crimes of the Hitlerite butchers. The chief of the bone-thrashing of the victims was a German,* SD-Scharführer *Elitko."*

This is followed by an extract from the deposition of "Velichker" (Weliczker), upon which I shall dwell at length below.

The "commission of medical examiners" which inspected "the burial and burning sites in Lisenitsy" established that "the symmetrical distribution of the sites where the pits with the ashes were discovered" and the young trees planted on the site demonstrated that the Germans pursued "the purpose of disguising these sites" (*ibid.*, pp. 222f.). Nothing is said about the discovery of these ashes, but the subsequent comment blaming the Katyn Massacre on the Germans suffices to disqualify the entire report (*ibid.*, p. 223):

> *"In that manner, the Hitlerite murderers in Lvov Region stuck to the same methods of concealing their crimes which they began earlier, by killing the Polish officers in a forest near Katyn. The commission of examiners has established full identity of the burial sites located in Lisenitsy with the same type of masking the graves of the Polish officers killed by the Germans in Katyn."*

3.2. Leon Weliczker and the "Death Brigade"

The book by Leon Weliczker, alias Wells, *Brygada śmierci (Sonderkommando 1005): Pamiętnik* (*The Death Brigade (Sonderkommando 1005): Diary*) is considered the fundamental orthodox source for everything regarding the so-called "Aktion 1005" in the area of Lvov and, as we have seen above, it is also used by scholars such as Sandkühler who consider it unreliable.

In 1944, the witness issued a statement for the Soviets, of which the following fragment is known (Denisov/Changuli, p. 222):

> *"In the 'death squad' on burning the bodies I had worked since June 6, 1943 till November 20, 1943. Over that period the squad burned more than 310,000 bodies on* [sic; of] *which about 170,000 were burned in the sand quarry of the Janov camp and more than 140,000 bodies in Lisenitsky Forest. That number includes the bodies dug out by the team from graves and also those which were not buried but were burned immediately after the shooting. On November 20, 1943 our whole squad ran away. The German butchers organized another squad from the inmates which continued the burning of the bodies. The number of bodies burned after my escape I do not know, but I do know that the burning of bodies in Lisenitsky Forest continued till January, 1944."*

These claims do not find any confirmation in his memoir *Brygada śmierci*, which appeared only two years later. The book has never been analyzed critically. Or-

thodox Holocaust historians have limited themselves to mining it for data which they considered useful, without checking it for reliability and correctness. Such an examination is therefore indispensable, which I will do here.

3.2.1. Captures and Escapes

Weliczker was born on 10 March 1925 at Stojanów in the Lvov District (Leopoli). His account begins with a series of amazing and quasi-miraculous escapes.

First Capture and Escape

> *"Following the German entry into Lvov, I get arrested on 2 July* [1941]. *For three days, I remain in prison without food, without even a drop of water. They beat me terribly, probably, by the way, like the 5,000 Jews who were in jail with me. On Friday, 4 July, they shoot the majority of those whom they have arrested, but I and a few others escape that evening."*[506]

Second Capture, Followed by Release

> *"Saturday, 5 July, I am in hiding at home, half dead. Sunday, 6 July, our house has been searched, some Ukrainians find me and take me to work on the Żołkiewska customs barrier. There were a hundred of us. Eighty-eight died on the spot due to torture, twelve of us returned home."* (p. 25)

Third Capture and Escape

> *"On 27 August, the day of the 'Perlura anniversary,' they come to our house with a list, containing my father's name, with orders to arrest him. My father is sick. He has damaged lungs. They beat him on 3 July, when I was arrested. He came to me in prison, they took him and beat him terribly. I went instead of my father. That day, more than 1,000 people were killed, but I escaped again."* (pp. 25f.)

Fourth Capture and Escape

> *"When they set up the first, the most-terrible camp in the territory of eastern Galicia at Lvov, at the Janowska Road, they come to arrest my father again. I volunteer for my father a second time, and they take me to the camp. I remain in Janowska Camp until 8 June 1942. On 5 June, I get sick with typhus and double pneumonia. On 8 June, they take me to be shot, along with 180 other persons. I dig the grave all by myself, naked, with a fever of 41 degrees* [105.8°F]. *They were already shooting people from our group, and it is almost my turn, but I run away and arrive at my house half naked, with a short bathing suit. I am lying unconscious for three weeks."* (p. 26)

Fifth Capture and Escape

After hiding in the woods, Weliczker returned to the Lvov Ghetto, where he was arrested a fifth time, but managed to escape again. In the ghetto, a "camp action" was carried out intended to obtain inmates for the Janowska Camp, during which Weliczker was captured as well:

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[506] Weliczker, p. 25; all subsequent page numbers from there unless stated otherwise.

> *"I stay in the camp for a day and then escape."* (p. 26)

He then returned to the ghetto, where he met his two brothers, aged 12 and 14. All this happened when Weliczker was 16.

Sixth Capture and Escape

> *"When they liquidate the ghetto, they take us, me and my two brothers, together with all the Jews, 'na piaski.'*[507] *It was 3 June 1943. One brother is killed in an escape attempt near the barbed wire fences of the place where we were all herded together. Me and another brother both show up for death* [to be killed]*, but they separate me from him. They send him to his death, and me to the camp."* (p. 27)

Weliczker was interned in the Janowska Camp, where he remained until 15 June 1943.

> *"From 15 June until 20 November, I am in the 'death brigade.' On 20 November 1943, I escape from this terrible brigade and remain in hiding until 27 July 1944, that is, until the entry of the Red Army into Lvov. I don't know where to go, I have no one in the world, I don't know anyone, I don't have a cent. I can't even stand up, because after eight months of sitting down and without moving, in a damp place of hiding, I suffer from weak muscles."* (p. 27)

Hence, the series of miracles allowing Weliczker to survive had its final highlight.

3.2.2. The Number of Bodies Exhumed and Cremated

Weliczker's book is presented as a diary written on a daily basis. He explains in this regard:

> *"I only wish to mention once again that a few days after my arrival at the shelter, I took out the notes I had compiled during my stay in the 'death brigade'; I had the possibility* [to make notes] *because, since I was the one who kept order in the barracks, I had a paper and pencil, intended for the accountant, who noted the number of dead cremated every day."* (p. 128)

Since his stay in the "brigade" lasted 158 days, the diary should have amounted to several hundred pages; and no one can seriously believe that no German ever noticed such voluminous notes, or the paper and pencil missing from the "accountant's" office supplies. In the book, this diary is highly fragmentary; of the 158 days in question, the notes only cover 25 days, and no more than 10 contain numerical data on the exhumations and cremations.

In the following table, I have listed the days given by Weliczker, the numbers of bodies exhumed and cremated, with the location and page number in his book where these data can be found.

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[507] "*Piasek*" means "sand"; "*na piaski*" is literally equivalent to "on the sand." "Piaski," the execution site, is the nominative plural and means literally "sands."

Table 27

DATE	BODIES	LOCATION	PAGE
15 June			29
[17-18 June]	1,450	"Piaski" (near Janowska Camp)	51
21 June			55
22 June			56
23 June	2,000		58
24 June			59
25 June	700		61
26 June			62
27 June			64
28 June			65
29 June	275		66
30 June			67
1 July			69
15 July	425		76
18 August	1,500		79
22 August	9,000	"Piaski," near Pilichowska St.	80
26 August	275		88
7 September			90
9 September	[2,000]	Krzywicki Forest: 5 weeks cremations on pyres of 2,000 bodies each; first and last pyre	94
8 October	[2,000]		96
9 October	2,000	Wólka (Rosnovka)	97
25 October	[400 camp inmates]		103
26 October			106
27 October			109
10 November			113
19 November			117

The total of the numbers mentioned by Weliczker amounts to 22,025; for this reason, Sandkühler's claim as reported earlier is quite incomprehensible that

> *"If one follows Weliczker's notes, in the terrain behind the Jewish Cemetery alone up to 100,000 bodies may have been burned."* (Sandkühler, pp. 279f.)

This is all the more incomprehensible since Sandkühler refers exclusively to "Piaski," which is located directly behind the Jewish Cemetery. Weliczker's book contains a plan of the Janowska Camp, which is reproduced in Document II.3.1. The same map, but with English labels, appears in an American edition of his book (Document II.3.1a.). "Piaski" ("Sands") is indicated by the dotted area north of the camp, to which it is connected by a "road through the valley of death," to which I shall return later. The two triangles with a cross seen in the right-hand margin of the drawing represent the extreme offshoots of the Jewish Cemetery, as may be easily seen in Document II.3.2.

The real point of Weliczker's note is that 15,625 bodies were cremated at "Piaski." In his statement of 1944, however, he claimed that the "death squad" cremated 170,000 bodies in this place alone, which completely disqualifies him as a witness and renders his statements quite unreliable.

Weliczker describes "Piaski" as a "long gully, very deep, which extends for several hundred meters" (p. 36). In the drawing which appears in his book, this gully is located north of the camp. A map of Lvov from 1936 shows the contours of the area around the camp, Document II.3.3.

East and north of the camp there were two little hills clearly depicted in the drawing of the Janowska Camp by Zeev Porath,[508] one of which reaches as high as 370 meters above sea level, and the other 340 meters. In front of these little hills was a third hill, 345 meters in height. In the middle, between these elevations, ran a valley, 500-600 meters in length, which extended from 325 meters to 290 meters above sea level.

As we see in the map of Lvov from 1943 (Document II.3.4.), the Janowska Camp was located along the northwest periphery of the city. Hence, one cannot but agree with Sandkühler's overly clever observation:

> *"The idea that one could conceal from the public the cremation of tens of thousands of corpses within the city limits of Lvov was naturally absurd per se."* (Sandkühler, p. 278)

There is not the slightest contemporary documentary evidence of this alleged enormous cremation activity, which is said to have lasted eleven weeks: no photographs, no documents, no testimonies.

With regard to the activity in the Krzywicki Forest, Weliczker supplies little information. The activity is said to have begun on 9 September with the cremation of 2,000 bodies:

> *"Stacks with 2,000 'figures' were prepared.* [[509]…] *Five weeks passed.* […] *Friday 8 October: we finished the work on the spot. Then there was the last stack of bodies and there were more than 2,000 of them.* […] *Saturday 9 October: We set fire to a stack of over 2,000 bodies, among them several dozens of the best sons of Poland."* (pp. 94-97)

There were four weeks between 9 September to 8 October, not five; if we start counting at the first mention of the site, on 26 August, when "a few persons" went there (p. 86), there would have been six weeks. At any rate, in the area were "*groby masowe*" – mass graves, plural, but Weliczker does not indicate the number.

The witness's data relating to the time required for the exhumation and cremation are contradictory, but we can take the highest number indicated as an example: in "Piaski", 9,000 bodies are said to have been cremated in 15 pits, starting on 22 August. Two "*Brandstellen*" (fireplace, pyres) were created designed for

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[508] GFHA, Catalogue No. 4215.

[509] "*figuri*": Polonization of the German term "Figuren," by which term the Germans, according to witness accounts, referred to the bodies.

1,000 bodies each, which functioned alternately: while one pyre was burning, the men were piling bodies onto the other. The work was supposed to terminate on 1 September, because the "brigade" was supposed to move to the Krzywicki Forest at that time (p. 81). Here, however, the activity, as we have said, began on 9 September, therefore the elimination of the 9,000 bodies in question evidently lasted 18 days. from 22 August until 8 September.

3.2.3. The Technology of Exhumation and Cremation

On these aspects of the work of the "brigade," initially consisting of 75 inmates (p. 32), Weliczker dwells at length several times. The first working day at "Piaski," on 15 June 1943, 44 inmates were brought into the "gully" (p. 35). Weliczker describes it as follows:

> *"This gully is a big mass grave which contains thousands of bodies. On one side of the mountain is a stack of wood. Not far away is a machine tended by a member of the Schutzpolizei*[510] *with black cladding.*[511] *Near the machine we see drums with olive oil*[512] *linked to the machine by aluminum tubes. The machine pumps the olive oil, which is blown onto the fire through an aluminum tube."*

Apart from this, there were two "fire pits" (*paleniska*) upon which the oil was pumped (pp. 36f.). It therefore appears that the activity of "Brigade 1005" had already begun when Weliczker joined, but he is rather vague in this regard. Together with two other inmates, he was sent to build a wooden shelter. The other surviving inmates, 42 in number (p. 42), were subdivided into two groups:

> *"One brigade worked with shovels, that is, they dug away the earth that covered the bodies. The second brigade worked on the bodies. It was a terrible job. The bodies were pulled out by hand. They were grabbed by a hand or a leg, and that's how they were pulled out. When you grabbed a body, very often they slipped out of your grip several times, or their skin came off in the hands of the guy who was pulling them.* […] *Thus, the bodies were pulled out using two men, one man grabbed him by the arm, while another man grabbed him by the leg. Each body weighed 70-80 kg. There were bodies that were relatively fresh, from about 2 weeks before, that is, from the period of the liquidation of the ghetto.* […] *They carried the bodies over to the fire. Over there was the 'Brandmeister'* [=fire master]. *His job consisted of making sure that the fire didn't go out while the others were throwing the bodies onto the fire. He put down the wood underneath, and moved the ashes out of the way. On the other side was the 'Zähler'* [=counter] *with a pencil and paper in his hand. His task was to note the number of bodies thrown onto the fire."* (p. 42)

We presume that this extraordinary olive-oil pumping machine was used on this occasion, but the witness does not explicitly say so, and does not mention it again.

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510 "*Szupowiec*," polonization of "SchuPo."

511 "*ferszalungu*," polonized phonetic transcription of "Verschalung."

512 "*oliwa*," similar to German and English "Olive," properly designates olive oil. Oil in general is called "*olej*," combustible oil is called "*olej napędowy*."

On 16 June, 85 inmates returned to the "gully." The date is derived from the remark that the "gully" was the same where they had worked the day before. They found damp, putrefying bodies, but did not perform any cremations (p. 46).

128 inmates were later compelled to open a grave containing 1,450 bodies. The work was finished in two days, Thursday and Friday, 17 and 18 June. At lunchtime on the 19th, the inmates were 122 in number. No cremations are mentioned (pp. 51f., 54).

On Saturday and Sunday (19 and 20 June), the men did not work (p. 55). Work resumed on Monday 21 June. Tombstones weighing 300-400 kg each were transported to the "gully" from the nearby Jewish Cemetery. They were arranged in such a way as to form a square, and the cracks were filled with cement. A few steps away, a small open space was leveled out and used to burn the bones which had escaped combustion. Weliczker carefully describes the work of the "*Aschkolonne*" ("ash labor gang"):

> *"A few persons carry the ashes to the open space in a basket. Others come along and dump the ashes into their sieves and take them to the sifting location. The fine ashes pass through the sieves, but the bones and metal remain in the sieves. (These sieves are the kind normally used to sift flour at home). After the first screening, the persons sit with the sieve on a bench and inspect the ash to see if there were any metal bits. They then throw the remaining bones onto the ground in the clearing prepared with the* [tomb]*stones and, using beechwood pestles, smash them until they are shattered. They then clean the tombstone by throwing the remains of the unsmashed bone dust into the pile from which they first took the ashes. The ashes are then sifted through the sieves once again, and the bones that don't pass through the sieve this time are thrown back on the fire."* (p. 56)

On 25 June, the inmates opened three mass graves containing a total of 700 bodies. Like the rest of the region, the graves were covered with vegetation, "but the administration had a map of the graves." Weliczker describes the preparation of the pyres, a topic to which he returned shortly afterwards with additional details:

> *"We prepare the fireplace to burn the bodies. We level an area of land 7 meters on one side. We build a platform along two sides, approximately one meter high. We place the so-called foundations on this cleared open space, that is, we put big logs at regular intervals on the ground, forming a scaffolding* [grate] *underneath the bodies. The fact is that the bodies must not lie flat on the ground, rather, there has to be air underneath them in order to burn well. All three graves were opened during today's workday, and everything was prepared for the exhumation of the bodies and to transport them to the fireplace, the so-called 'Brandstelle.' They brought us hooks, like those used to haul blocks of ice. They will be used to pull out the corpses. A brigade of 20 people is working on these preparations."* (p. 62)

The next day, 26 June, saw the exhumation and cremation of the 700 bodies:

> *"The work at the three graves is carried on in the following manner: 3 men with hooks descend down into the grave while 2 men remain above with another hook. The three men in the grave with hooks stick their hooks in the body and pull the body out from where it was. The two men on top also stick their hooks into the*

> *body in such as way as to avoid breaking the body in half, and pull it up. Up on top, the body-carriers place 2 to 4 bodies on stretchers prepared yesterday (like those in hospitals). Each stretcher requires 2 men, carrying the bodies to the 'Brandstelle', which is very close to the graves. The 'Brandmeister' pours gasoline and olive oil on the foundations prepared yesterday and sets fire to it. The stretcher bearers with their stretchers climb onto the prepared platforms and throw the bodies into the fire. Each pair of stretcher bearers step up on one side* [of the platform] *and step down on the other side, to avoid blocking the way of the next pair of stretcher bearers. The stretcher bearers have to rub their hands with sand continuously to keep their hands and the stretcher handles from getting slippery with grease. The 'Brandmeister', black* [from soot] *and smoked by the fire, with an iron hook in his left hand with which he continually stokes the fire, directs the traffic. He indicates where to throw the bodies, onto which platform to climb, and how to throw* [the bodies] *in order not to choke the fire out. Woe to you if you throw them incorrectly! Then you have to get down into the fire, pull them out and throw them in again. The fire is so big that it burns you already at a distance of more than 10 meters*.[513] *Near the 'Brandmeister' stands his assistant and the 'Zähler.' The 'Brandmeister's' assistant removes the burnt bones and adds wood continually."* (p. 62)

Weliczker then described the procedure for disguising the empty mass graves:

> *"Now that all the bodies have been pulled out, a few men (later a special brigade) probe the grave. They pick up every bone and every hair, and put it in a bucket with their hands, then throw them into the fire. After the exploration of the pit, they report to the Untersturmführer. The Untersturmführer inspects everything. Standing in the grave, they scrape the walls of the grave, which have turned green because of the bodies, and sprinkle the empty grave with chloride to lessen the odor. Now, the grave is filled up, and the ground is leveled. Then they pass over the area that had been a grave with a harrow, drawn by us instead of a horse. Finally, a mixture of various seeds of grass such as that growing in the area is sown here. After a few weeks, the area is covered by grass, so much so that it is impossible to see that anything has been touched."* (p. 63)

In the annotation for 29 June, Weliczker writes:

> *"The three graves opened Friday* [25 June] *were leveled today. The fire is* [nearing] *extinguishment. A few men can be seen carrying ashes to the ash labor gang in boxes."* (p. 66)

The complete elimination of 700 bodies, including the crushing of the osseous residues, therefore required four days.

On the same day, 275 Jews were shot "behind the fence at our camp, in front of the long side of the barracks." A fire was burning ten meters away. The Jews were killed in groups of five, with a gun shot to the back of the head. 20 of the strongest inmates from the "brigade" were forced to burn the bodies: "After an hour, all the bodies were burnt. There were 275 of them" (pp. 66f.).

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513 "*Kilkunastu*" indicates numbers from 11 to 19.

This tale is quite implausible, not just for the rapidity of the cremation. Only an insane person would build a funeral pyre right next to a wooden barracks when the whole "gully" of "Piaski" was readily available.

Weliczker claims that a new cremation technique was later introduced. The new worksite, the fourth, was located on the road between the camp and the "gully," approximately 30 meters from the gully. Before finding any bodies, they had to dig up a wagonload of dirt. The dressed bodies had been buried some 6-8 months earlier. Laid out in layers of 30-50 bodies each, the lowest ones were at a depth of 8 meters. The ditch was 25 meters long. This "*Brandstelle*" was structured differently from the others. Large logs about a meter apart were placed on the ground. Other logs were chopped into thinner pieces, which were arranged on top of the blocks like cross-beams, so that the bodies couldn't fall through. A layer of bodies was laid out on top, followed by more wood, "at average intervals of half a meter." In this way, funeral pyres were constructed, initially containing 500 bodies, then 750 and finally 2,000.

> *"The stretcher bearers go out onto the stack of wood on beams to which slats have been nailed, like what you see on a construction site. Standing on the stack, they throw the bodies off the stretchers and return to get others. Above are two so-called arrangers*[514] *who arrange the bodies in the right place, according to weight and size. They don't pull a lot of bodies out, because it often takes a whole day of digging to find 30-40 bodies. In this way, the pyre is ready for an entire week, and is ignited on Saturday."*

The height of the pyre and the length of time required for cremation depended on a variety of factors, such as whether the bodies were only of men or also of women and children, whether or not they were dressed, and whether they were more, or less, decomposed:

> *"The more putrefied they are, the worse they burn. At any rate, the difference in cremation time between a pyre of putrefied bodies and fresh ones is a day."*

A great deal, moreover, depended on experience. The same pyre whose cremation lasted an entire week using olive oil at the outset later burned in two days and without oil, moreover with a quarter of the quantity of gasoline and half the wood (pp. 72-74). This scenario refers to the beginning of July 1943.

Around 18 August, the work in the "gully" was finished, and the "brigade" moved "where the last executions had been carried out." The work lasted approximately a week and a half.

> *"There were 1,500 bodies. Within three days, a stack was set up with 750 bodies, and it was burnt."* (p. 79)

The work was therefore finished on 28 or 29 August, but according to Weliczker, on 22 August the "brigade" was already somewhere else, 25 meters from the Pilichowska Road, a side road off the Janowska Road leading to the Jewish Cemetery. There were allegedly 15 mass graves 50 meters long and containing 9,000 bodies in this place. The Pilichowska Road is mentioned by Weliczker at the be-

514 "*Układacze*," from "*układać*," to order, to arrange, to set up.

ginning of his account: when the "brigade" went out for the first time from the Janowska Camp, the truck carrying the inmates stopped specifically near the Pilichowska Road, "which leads to 'piaski'" (p. 35).

As may be seen from the city map in Document II.3.5., the road was in such a topographical position that the mass graves could only be located in the cemetery, but Weliczker does not say so. As I mentioned earlier, the elimination of the bodies took 18 days, from 22 August to 8 September.

At the end of their work in the "gully" of "Piaski," "a grey pile of minute bone fragments which we were unable to crush any finer" was left over. At this point, a machine similar to that used to grind gravel was brought in. It was powered by a Diesel engine, and had a sort of large closed cauldron, inside which were metal spheres; the cauldron rotated around its axis, and the spheres ground the bones. The bones were reduced to the finest powder, like the highest-quality flour. To finish the job by 1 September, the machine had to work from five in the morning until nine at night, and was as a result continually clogged, while the motor, which was old and cracked, was leaking. "The work was finished on the last Sunday of August" (pp. 84f.), that is, the 29th day.

Weliczker disposes of the brigade's subsequent work in a few lines. From 9 September to 8 October, as has been said, the brigade operated in the Krzywicki Forest. On 9 October, after the departure – it does not say whose – for Wólka, now Rosnovka (Rosnivka), which is located approximately 60 km west of Lvov, 40 inmates went to work at Jaryczów Nowy, now Novy Yarychev (Novyy Yarychiv), a locality approximately 20 km northeast of Lvov. Weliczker, who evidently was a member of this group, writes:

> *"I don't know where the bodies were exhumed over there, I only know that it happened in a forest. Even there, the bodies were loaded onto a refrigerated truck and transported back to us. Thus, today we departed by train for Brzuchowice* [Bryukhovichi], *Dornfeld* [Ternopolye] *and Bóbrka. We opened graves everywhere and transported the bodies back to us for cremation."* (p. 97)

In the Polish text, "*do nas*" – "to us" (verb of motion to a place) – probably designates the Janowska Camp, and in particular the "Piaski" area where the pyres were set up. The distances between the various localities mentioned above and the camp (see Subsection 3.2.4.5. below) confirm this interpretation. On the work of this group of inmates, Weliczker supplies no details, so that it is neither known how many mass graves there were, nor how many bodies were exhumed and burnt, nor how long the activity lasted. The first date mentioned later is the 25th of October, but in the related entry that location is no longer mentioned, hence this work there was carried out between the 9th and the 24th of October at the latest.

On 25 October, 2,500 inmates from the camp were allegedly shot. Weliczker ascertained the number this way: there was a "big pile of shoes, approximately 2,500 pairs," on the sand (p. 104). One cannot fail to admire the extraordinary computational capabilities of this witness. At any rate, only 400 bodies were ar-

ranged on the pyre that day. No one knows what happened to the remaining 2,100 corpses.

On 17 November, the inmates of the "brigade" prepared their escape (p. 113), and 19-20 of them managed to escape that night (pp. 117-121).

3.2.4. Critical Analysis of the Weliczker Account

3.2.4.1. The Exhumation of the Bodies

Initially, the mass graves were opened with shovels, and the bodies were extracted by workers using their bare hands, after which they were transported to the pyres bare-handedly at all times. Two inmates carried one body, grabbing the body by the arms and legs. This procedure is obviously rather primitive.

The technique changed over time, but the related description is even more implausible. Three inmates descended into a mass grave, equipped with a hook, while two other inmates, also equipped with one hook each, remained at the edge of the grave. The three inmates in the grave hooked a body and passed it to the two inmates at the edge of the grave, above. The bodies extracted were carried to the pyre on a stretcher by body-carriers (stretcher bearers), two persons for every stretcher, carrying 2-4 bodies. Since the pyre was "very close to the grave," the number of carriers had to be small, adequate to that of their colleagues who pulled out the bodies, because a couple of carriers would have had to wait a long time before they could load 2 to 4 corpses onto the stretcher. On the other hand, the stretcher bearers stepped down "on the other side" of the pyre's loading platform in order "to avoid blocking the way of the next pair of stretcher bearers," hence there were at least two sets of them.

This ice-hook system, in Weliczker's narration, was adopted to exhume 700 bodies. The entire operation was therefore carried out by as few as (3+2 + 2×2=) nine inmates!

3.2.4.2. The Cremation Technique

The initial cremation procedure, as described by Weliczker, appears quite absurd. They cleared an area of approximately 50 square meters (a square 7 meters on a side). In this square, they arranged large logs at regular intervals in such a way as to form a sort of grid for the bodies. On two opposite sides of the square, wooden platforms approximately one meter high were erected. This was the "*Brandstelle*." The "*Brandmeister*" poured gasoline and olive oil onto the grid and set it on fire. At this point a couple of body carriers transported 2-4 bodies by stretcher, which they had loaded at the edge of the grave, to the "*Brandstelle*," went out on one of the lateral platforms, and threw the bodies into the fire. Weliczker has the ingenuity to report that the "fire is so big that it burns you already at a distance of more than 10 meters," and this would no doubt have been true for a real combustion covering a surface area of approximately 50 square meters. It is obvious that the two lateral platforms would inevitably have caught fire. It is equally obvious that the body carriers would have been burned alive or mortally burned, not to

mention the *Brandmeister*, who was allegedly standing right next to the fire at all times, stoking it continually. He would not have been "black [from soot] and smoked," as Weliczker claimed, but burned to a crisp and quite dead. In addition, it is pure folly to claim that the body carriers who had failed to throw the body in the right spot had to "get down into the fire, pull them out and throw them in again." If they had been miraculously able to carry out their work without any inconvenience, they would have been able to throw the bodies no more than a few meters from the platform, so that the bodies would have piled up next to the two platforms. They would have been able to use only a small part of the approximately 50 square meters of pyre. It is also absurd to claim that the *Brandmeister*'s assistant was able to remove the "burnt bones" from this burning surface area of 50 square meters.

In other words, the whole story is clearly fictitious. The machine which squirted olive oil on the pyre is also from the realm of of Weliczker's excessive fantasy.

Another system of cremation was allegedly introduced later. A grid was set up with parallel logs arranged at one-meter intervals. Logs split into several pieces were placed cross-ways, and the bodies were placed on top of that. It is not clear whether one layer of wood and bodies was half a meter thick or whether this was the thickness of the layer of wood. Using this system, layers of wood and bodies were stacked until the "*Brandstelle*" contained a maximum of 2,000 bodies. Weliczker neither indicates the surface area of the pyre nor its height, nor how many bodies were arranged in every layer. To reach the top of the pyre, the body carriers used rudimentary gangways consisting of a cross-beam with individual planks nailed to them as rudimentary rungs. Since two inmates carrying one or more bodies on a stretcher were supposed to go out on one gangway, while carefully balancing themselves and their load on the stretcher, the slope could not have been excessive, and, as a result, the pyre could not be too high. Weliczker makes no mention of appropriate gangways for the return descent, which would have accelerated the procedure. Above the stack, there were two inmates who put "every body in the right place, depending on the weight and size." If we consider that two persons were supposed to arrange from 500 to 2,000 bodies with scrupulous attention, we can imagine how much time such a procedure would have required.

On the duration of the procedure of eliminating the bodies, Weliczker supplies contradictory data. A mass grave containing 1,450 bodies was opened in two days; as far as one can tell, the grave was only exposed. The exhumation and cremation of 700 bodies, including the crushing and pulverization of bone residues, required four days. The complete elimination of 9,000 bodies required 18 days. The elimination of 1,500 bodies required 10-11 days (a week and a half), but 750 bodies were cremated in there days. The duration of one week for the setting up of a pyre depended on the scarcity of bodies, so that this should not be taken into consideration.

From the above data we deduce the following daily activities: approximately 750 bodies extracted from the graves, approximately (700 ÷ 4 =) 175 bodies cremated, or (9,000 ÷ 18 =) approximately 500, or maybe (750 ÷ 3 =) 250.

3.2.4.3. The Ashes

The description of the ash-gathering procedure is based on the fiction that, after the combustion of the pyre, only osseous fragments would remain, which could be easily identified and collected. Weliczker gives not the slightest consideration to the ligneous ashes, which would have been greater by both weight and volume than human ashes. If, for example, we consider a pyre of 1,000 bodies, this would have produced (1,000 bodies × 3.7 kg residue per body =) 3,700 kg of ash and unburnt human mass, while a wood pyre needed to cremate those bodies would have produced (132 kg wood/body × 1,000 bodies × 8% wood ash × 1.67 =) 17,635.2 kg of wood ashes.[515]

In practice, the human ashes would have constituted 17.3% of the total weight of the ashes of approximately 21,335 kg. In a scenario as described by the witnesses – who only talk about crushing bones but no charcoal – a preliminary screening would have been required to separate the human remains from incompletely burnt wood. However, given the goal of concealing *all* traces of the cremations, any incompletely burnt wood would have had to be burned again or ground up and scattered just as much as the human remains, all the more so since both would have been thoroughly mixed, and separating them would have been both laborious and pointless. Weliczker, by contrast, pays no attention to this not-exactly irrelevant aspect of the presumed activity of the "brigade."

But even ignoring all that, the witness's account is decidedly incredible. The ashes were smashed with beechwood pestles (we don't know how many there were, just as we don't know the numbers of baskets and sieves). Ashes having an average bulk density of 0.5 kg/dm³ or 500 kg/m³ (Mattogno 2015c, p. 31), they would have corresponded to approximately (3.7 tons ash/1,000 bodies ÷ 500 tons/m³ =) 7.4 m³ for every 1,000 bodies, plus all the intermingled wood ashes and unburned, charred pieces of wood – at least another 43 m³ of material – and one can imagine how much time would have been required to smash the bone (and wood) remains using instruments consisting of simple logs of wood, to which a handle for manipulation had been added, such as those pictured by David Olère in his well-known drawing relating to Auschwitz (see Document II.3.6.).

Weliczker claims that the cremation residues were carried in boxes to the place where the "ash labor gang" worked with these pestles. These boxes may have been more or less similar to those depicted by Olère. Leaving aside the crazy figure declared by Weliczker when interrogated by the Soviets in 1944 –

[515] Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 1315f. Explanation of the data: 3.7 kg residue per body = ashes and unburnt human corpse material per average human body during pyre cremation; 132 kg wood/body = minimum mass of dry wood for the cremation of a human body; 8% wood ash = average mass percentage of ash from completely burned wood (80g/kg); 1.67 = experimental coefficient to calculate total unburned material.

310,000 bodies exhumed and cremated – even if we assume the figure adopted by Sandkühler and Pohl (100,000-120,000 bodies), we easily understand the absurdity of the "eyewitness account." In this case, the above-mentioned values must be multiplied by 100-120, resulting in approximately 2,133 to 2,560 tons of ashes and total unburnt material, 370-444 tons of which originating from the bodies, and 1,763-2,116 tons from wood.

The corpse and firewood remains – I repeat, 21,335 kg for every 1,000 bodies – were then sifted with ordinary flour sieves! Even supposing that every sieve could collect 10 kg of ashes and unburnt human-body material,[516] every 1,000 bodies would require the performance of 2,134 sievings, if ignoring the mixed-in wood ash, charcoal etc.! These ashes were brought to the "ash labor gang" using boxes, that is, a quantity of 20-30 kg at a time, using very large boxes. With these flour sieves, the men from the "brigade" would therefore have had to sift through 2.133-2.560 tons of human and firewood ashes!

Sifting the corpse-combustion residues with flour sieves is an obvious fiction, because these instruments have a mesh with openings no larger than 1 mm (see Document II.3.7.). Using the system described by the witness, it would be impossible to pulverize the residues in such a way that a large quantity would pass through the mesh of the sieves, because it is obvious that these sieves would be completely unsuited to the task, and the method described would be utterly impossible.

The ultimate in absurdity is that, even if one disposed of a machine to grind the residues, the Germans supposedly used it only at the end of their work in the "gully" of "Piaski," or around the middle of August, and only for residues which they had been unable to grind by hand!

3.2.4.4. Camouflaging the Graves

After a mass grave was emptied, a few inmates climbed down into it and examined it carefully; they picked up "every bone and every hair" that remained, scraping the putrid walls and carrying away the earth, sprinkling the grave with "chloride," after which they filled it up, leveled the terrain, harrowed it, and finally seeded it using the same species of grass and weeds as was growing all around. After a few weeks, it became impossible to identify the location of the grave – an impossibly short time for grass and weeds to form a dense cover. If this were true and had been the usual practice, we may wonder how the various Soviet investigating commissions were able to identify these mass graves so perfectly as to be able to indicate their exact dimensions. (Of course, fresh lawns planted with seeds are recognizable as such for months thereafter.)

In fact, a Soviet forensic medical report exists which is undated but was written after 30 September 1944, affirming that "in the territory of the Janowska Camp" two mass graves were found, the first 12 m × 4 m in area and 3 m deep,

[516] A very large sieve, measuring 50 cm in diameter by 15 cm in height, would contain the volume of 29.4 dm^3, or (29.4 dm^3 × 0.5 kg/dm^3=) almost 15 kg; 10 kg would correspond to a sieve 2/3 full.

containing 150 bodies; and the other, 19 m × 3 m in area, also 3 m deep, containing 250 bodies. 116 bodies were exhumed, *i.e.*, 96 men, 18 women, and 2 children.[517]

This is the same commission whose conclusions – summarized in another report – I have cited earlier: the absurd claim that the figure of 200,000 cremated bodies had been deduced from the surface area of alleged mass graves presumably filled with human ashes.[518] Here, the figure of 200,000 was written by hand, meaning that this determination was left to the zeal of some Soviet bureaucrat.

3.2.4.5. The Activities of the "Death Brigade" at Other Locations

In addition to the "gully" of "Piaski" and the Krzywicki Forest, Weliczker mentions other localities in the district of Lvov in which the "brigade" is supposed to have carried on its activity (Weliczker, pp. 97, 113; see Document II.3.8.).

- Wólka (Rosnovka): Locality approximately 60 km west of Lvov, unknown to Holocaust historiography.
- Jaryczów Nowy (Novy Yarychev), approximately 20 km northeast of Lvov. Sandkühler claims that 2,500 Jews were killed in mid-January 1942. He refers to an article by Tatiana Berenstein (Sandkühler, p. 235; fn 317, p. 515). In it, Berenstein states that approximately 2,500 Jews were shot on 15 January 1943 (not 1942) at Jaryczów Nowy, but the source consists of two "eyewitness testimonies" (Berenstein, Table 7).
- Brzuchowice (Bryukhovichi), approximately 10 km northwest of Lvov; for Sandkühler, this suffices to claim that "a shooting may have taken place there," but he supplies no further information, not even a source (Sandkühler, p. 231).
- Bóbrka (Bobrka), approximately 30 km southeast of Lvov. Berenstein claims that 63 Jews were killed in this locality in July 1941, and approximately 200 on 12 August 1942, when 1,260 were sent to Bełżec. This information originates from two witnesses (Berenstein, Table 7).
- Dornfeld (Ternopolye), approximately 30 km south of Lvov. This locality is also unknown to Holocaust historiography.
- Szczerzec (Shchirets), approximately 30 km southwest of Lvov. Berenstein only mentions a deportation of 180 Jews to Bóbrka in August 1942, and of an undetermined number of Jews on 29 or 30 November to Bełżec (*ibid.*).

It is therefore unclear what the "death brigade" was doing at these locations. Weliczker implies that the bodies exhumed there were loaded onto one or more refrigerated trucks – an implausible statement to say the least – and taken to the Janowska Camp, probably "Piaski," for cremation. It is mindboggling to imagine that the Germans sent refrigerated trucks to the East in order to transport corpses. If we were to take this far-fetched claim at face value, it is clear that the number of corpses transported this way must have been rather low.

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[517] File of the Forensic Medical Expert Report, City of Lvov. GARF, 7021-67-76, pp. 28-30.
[518] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

Filip Friedman reports that Weliczker, on an unspecified date but probably in 1945, published an article titled "Mogiła na Wólce" ("The Grave at Wólka"), but of this nothing is known. However, in 1947, this "witness" became transformed into an historian. That year, an article appeared written by him in Yiddish titled "*Lagern in Mizrekh-Galitsie*" (Camps in East Galicia), in which, among other things, he reproduces the map of the Janowska Camp already published in *Brygada śmierci*.[519] Nevertheless, his value as an historian does not exceed his value as a witness by much, because he writes:[520]

> *"In order to erase the traces of the crimes, on 3 June 1943, on the orders of SS* Reichsminister [sic] *Himmler, a special brigade was organized at the Janowska Camp for exhuming and burning the dead who were murdered there. In the German evidence, the brigade designated formally as 'Sonderkommando 1005,' and among the workers and the local population, it was called the 'death brigade.' In this special brigade, 126 Jews worked under the supervision of 120 Gestapo personnel. SS personnel from various camps and cities (e.g., Lublin, Warsaw, Kraków, etc.) used to come there to study and acquire the appropriate experience in order to be able to introduce such 'works' in other locations (23 Dec. 44,* Pravda*). On 19 Nov. 1943, the Jews who worked there made an uprising. Almost all of them fell in battle. Only a few saved themselves. After the uprising, a new brigade was put together which continued to work there. The workers in the new brigade thenceforth would wear chains on their feet while at work. The 'death brigade' burned, crushed the bones and scattered the ashes of around 350,000 people.* […] *700,000 East Galician Jews were burned there and their ashes scattered. And so shall facts and figures speak and demand a reckoning!"*

3.3. Leon Weliczker Wells at the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem

After Weliczker had studied in Munich(!), where he graduated with a PhD in engineering, he emigrated to the United States and changed his name to Wells. During the 22nd and 23rd Hearings of the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem (1 and 2 May 1961), he testified as a witness for the prosecution. His book *Brigada śmierci* was introduced into evidence as Document T-214. He supplied further clarification on how the book was published as follows:

> *"I wrote it during the War. But it was handed over the second day after the War to the Polish Historical Commission, which published it a year later.* […]
> *The original notes during the War were handed to Dr. Friedman, and he took it over, as the head of the Historical Commission, to be published in Lódź* [sic]. *From these original papers, which I never rewrote then, only a part was published as The Death Brigade. But these original papers contain the whole story of the whole time of the War."* (State of Israel, Vol. I, p. 361)

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[519] Welitschker, p. 21. In the text, the author's name is given as וויעליטשקר; the group טשק corresponds to the German sound "tschk," Polish sound "czk" (Weliczker) or English "chk" (Velichker).

[520] *Ibid.*, pp. 21-24. Translation from Yiddish by Kladderadatsch.

In his "Preface" to *Brigada śmierci*, Filip Friedman wrote that Weliczker, after his escape from the "death brigade," had brought with him notes that he had written in the form of a diary during the months of his stay in hiding. This diary was made available to the Extraordinary Soviet Investigatory Commission of German Crimes in Lvov, which used it for its report as published by *Pravda* on 23 December 1944. Weliczker moreover aided the above-mentioned Commission by serving as a guide for its members on the spot which he knew extremely well. For doing so, he received an official expression of gratitude:

> *"In the meantime, Weliczker's manuscript underwent corrections and was supplemented by the author thanks to many conversations which we had with him on the topic of his great misfortunes. Weliczker's memoirs regarding the Lvov Ghetto and the Janowska Camp were scrupulously transcribed, inserted into the archives of the Jewish Central Historical Commission, and constitute a precious source for the history of this period."*

The manuscript was "developed" ("*opracowany*") for publication and supplied with an explanatory note by Rachel Auerbach, limiting any literary and stylistic changes to a minimum (pp. 8f.).

As far as is known, no one has ever seen this precious manuscript, and it is amazing that the *Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna w Polsce* (Central Jewish Historical Commission in Poland) has only published a part of it, to be exact, that which appeared in the book *Brigada śmierci.*

Weliczker's/Wells's deposition at the Eichmann Trial is not of great interest, since it aims in large measure at secondary matters, and the few remarks relating to the brigade's activity almost always closely follow the book. Details not contained in this book are scarce and frequently contradict what he wrote in his book. For instance, he explained that at the beginning there was only one "*Brandmeister*," but later there were two, and that there were also two "*Zähler*"; he stated that "there was an exact list of how many people were killed." The "*Zähler*" kept precise accounts of the cremated bodies, and every evening he filed a report with *Untersturmführer* Scherlack (SS *Unterscharführer* Schallock?), or, in his absence, with *Hauptsturmführer* (= SS *Oberscharführer*) Rauch (State of Israel, Vol. I, p. 370):

> *"The report was given over with the pencil and paper – because we couldn't have with us anything left – and it was forbidden for anybody to tell the number, and he* [the '*Zähler*'] *had himself to forget. So that if the Hauptscharführer* [sic] *or Untersturmführer next morning asked: 'How many were burned yesterday?,' he couldn't any more tell. He had to say: 'I forgot.'"*

The witness declared that the "brigade" was supplied with "gasoline and oil and wood, piles of wood," but he said nothing of their origin, particularly of the wood, and from his book, nothing can be inferred on this subject either. There was also a "grinding machine." However, its use was a little different than that described in the book: here, it was introduced for the purposes of the activity in the "gully" of "Piaski," to grind the pile of residues which could not be crushed

using the wooden pestles; in the deposition, by contrast, after sifting the ashes (Weliczker insisted on the fact that "the sieves were like sieves we use for flour, to sift flour"), what remained "was put into the grinding machine." The list of persons killed was at once a list of corpses, and, as Weliczker wrote in his book, there also existed maps of the mass graves, so that the men from the SD knew exactly where they were and how many bodies they contained (*ibid.*, p. 371):

> *"*[Attorney General] *Who had lists of the bodies?*
> [Witness Wells] *I don't know who had the list, but it always came. They often, one of the SD people will uncover, it will be exactly the location of the grave… and we will even go and it will be said from this corner you will have to measure six steps, right, south, east and so on. We measured and here we started to make the grave. It was also written how many people had to be in this grave.*
> [Q.] *And they knew how many bodies were there exactly?*
> [A.] *Exactly, because we were looking to fit this number with the Zähler."*

At Krzywicki as well, "the SD knew exactly where the graves were located" (*ibid.*, p. 372). The topography indicated by the witness contains notable exaggerations, probably to make readers believe that the place was highly suited for executions and cremations (*ibid.*, p. 373):

> *"An area of about two miles radius – which is about six kilometers, in diameter – was closed off* […]. *We were normally allotted to a ravine. All around us were mountains and on top of the mountains were standing guards* […]*."*

He spoke of a "deep ravine." As I have noted above, the presumed "mountains" were three little hills with altitudes between 340 and 370 meters above sea level, while the "gully" was a narrow valley leading from an altitude of approximately 325 meters to where it terminated, at an altitude of 290 meters. The entire area containing the Janowska Camp and "Piaski" was marked off by a curving railway that formed a sort of semi-circle (see Document II.3.3.). The diameter of the semi-circle, from the camp in the west to the point opposite in the east, where I indicated the altitude of 290 m, was approximately 1,400 meters; the radius from the center of this circle to the "Piaski" extreme point in the north, where I indicated the other 290-m altitude, measured approximately 500 meters. The eastern quarter of the southern half of this circle contained two cemeteries, that of Janowski and the Jewish Cemetery, in addition to several roads, as may be seen from Document II.3.5.

Weliczker then adds (*ibid.*):

> *"In this ravine was also the Brandstelle as well as the Aschkolonne – all the work was done in the ravine. But even in this deep ravine, normally the fire could be seen for quite a few kilometers away when we started the fire."*

But according to his book, there was a "*Brandstelle"* at each of the locations in the "ravine" in which the "brigade" was working, that is, at least four. It would have been very inefficient to build only one single pyre and carry the bodies there from hundreds of meters away.

If, as the witness claims and as would have been inevitable, the cremation activity at "Piaski" could not have gone unobserved in the City of Lvov, there is a need to explain why there is no trace in the documentation from that time, no document of any kind, no witness report, no report from any partisan unit, no photographs of the columns of smoke, nothing.

The crucial question was left for last by the Attorney General Gideon Hausner (*ibid.*, p. 374):

> *"Now, my final question, Dr. Wells. Could you give the Court an approximate figure of the number of bodies burned by your brigade?*
> [Wells] *A few hundred thousand.*
> [Q.] *Could you tell us how many were executed in front of those fires, approximately?*
> [A.] *About 30,000 during the time that I was there. That was after the liquidation because there were no more Jews."*

These figures are not only ludicrously high, but also contradictory to what the witness wrote in his book. As I have laid out earlier, the total number of bodies mentioned by Weliczker is 22,025: how, therefore, does he come to declare a figure of "a few hundred thousand"? All these cremations should have been noted by him in his "diary," which would mean that Filip Friedman and Rachel Auerbach, in their publication, have omitted the great majority of the data noted by the witness – which is evidently an absurd assumption, and Weliczker himself has never complained about such a blatant act of censorship.

As for the number of persons shot "in front of those fires" – 30,000 – in his book, Weliczker only mentions less than one tenth of this number: seven inmates from the "brigade" shot on 18 June (p. 53), and 275 inmates shot on 29 June in front of the camp barracks, upon which event I dwelled at length earlier. Moreover, on 25 October, there was an execution of inmates in the Janowska Camp. During the trial, Weliczker said that there were "around 2,000 people" (State of Israel, Vol. I, p. 372), in the book he wrote that he saw a pile of approximately 2,500 pairs of shoes, but only mentioned the cremation of 400 bodies.

Hausner moreover asked when Weliczker Wells had learned that his group called itself "*Sonderkommando*"; the witness replied:

> *"I knew it during the time that I was there because every time it came in under an order, or it was sent, it was from Sonderkommando 1005."* (*ibid*., p. 374)

In his book, this designation occurs only twice; the first time, in the entry to 7 September 1943: "Our *Kommando* (*komenda*) is known as '*Sonderkommando 1005*.'" Then, almost at the end, in relation to 19 November 1943, Weliczker writes in German: "*Das ist unser Kommando 1005*" ("This is our *Kommando* 1005"; p. 115). The text contains a note by R. Auerbach explaining: "The German SD unit assigned to the elimination of the traces of German crimes in the region of Lvov appeared in the official documentation as *Sonderkommando* 1005" (fn 117, p. 133), but she does not mention any official German document. This

name is like a foreign body in the text, and Weliczker probably learned this during his talks with Filip Friedman.

In the preliminary discussion on the admissibility of the witness – a question raised by Eichmann's defense attorney, Dr. Servatius – the Presiding Judge Moshe Landau established that the witness was admissible, but that (State of Israel, Vol. I, p. 366):

> *"in this connection, the Prosecution has firstly to prove that all these acts were committed and secondly* – [that they were] *the responsibility of the Accused."*

In reality, as in all the trials of this type, the "proof" that the facts declared were real, consisted of the testimony itself; in the specific case, the "facts" were real because Weliczker had asserted them. As for the second point, the prosecution in no way demonstrated Eichmann's involvement in the alleged "Aktion 1005" at Lvov.

When he appeared before the Court, Weliczker Wells listed his professional and academic titles: "doctor's degree in mechanical engineering and post-graduate work in physics," "graduate from the School for Mathematics and Mechanics"; he had also formed part of the "Project Engineer at Curtiss-Wright Aeronautics"; starting in 1957, he was "Technical Director and Vice-President of Ark Projection Company," and had moreover published "many scientific publications" and held "several patents" (*ibid.*, p. 360).

The fact that Weliczker, despite the technological knowledge he gained after the war, repeated during his testimony in Jerusalem the technical nonsense he had served up in his book, and even exacerbated it with regard to the numbers, speaks volumes about this witness's bad faith.

3.4. *The Janowska Road*

In 1963, Leon Weliczker Wells published a prolix autobiographical book titled *The Janowska Road*, into which he inserted the text of *Brigada śmierci* (*The Death Brigade*) as "Part V" (Weliczker Wells, pp. 131-224), but here as well, the information in his "diary" is very limited:

> *"During this part of my imprisonment I was able to keep a diary. Thus I am able to give, to some extent, and as far as it proves useful here, a day-by-day account of what happened to me. Of course, if I had been caught keeping such a record I would have been shot. Later I shall explain how it happened that I was able to keep this journal of my experiences in what we inmates called the 'Death Brigade' – that group of Jews the Germans forced to burn the bodies of their countless victims."* (*ibid*., p. 133)

In fact, this book does not even contain the explanations supplied in the book *Brigada śmierci*, as reported earlier, because the related passage has been cut out (*ibid.*, p. 224).[521] Further along, Weliczker adds that, after his escape,

> *"my only possession was a package of papers tied together with a piece of string and fastened to my belt by a short length of rope. This was the day-to-day record I had kept of my experiences in the concentration camp and the Death Brigade."* (*ibid*., p. 249)

About the publication of his Polish book, Weliczker writes:

> *"A Central Jewish Historical Commission was established in Lodz with branches in all the main cities of Poland. The director was Dr. Philip Friedman, one of the few Jewish historians left in Poland after the war. The purpose of this Commission was to collect documents about Nazi crimes. The Commission also published documents and memoirs that were important contributions to the history of Nazi crimes. One of the first books to be published was my memoirs. Because of limited funds and scarcity of paper, only one part, namely, the 'Death Brigade,' which constitutes Part V of the present book, was published in the spring of 1946. To prepare this book for publication, I went to Lodz a few times. During this time Dr. Friedman and I became close friends, and our friendship continued until his death in 1960."* (*ibid*., p. 286)

Here is an obvious ambiguity: the diary written "day-to-day" regarded in fact exclusively Weliczker's presumed experience in the *Brigada śmierci*, as shown by the passage from the "Conclusion" omitted from the American translation, where he explicitly states that he had taken paper and pencil from the accountant's office supplies. If, therefore, in 1946, "because of limited funds and scarcity of paper," there was not the slightest possibility of publishing the entire diary, this was obviously not true in 1963, but not even then did Weliczker disclose the presumed unpublished pages of the diary. This feeds the suspicion that these alleged pages are purely imaginary.

In *The Janowska Road*, Weliczker mentions the destiny of a few survivors of the "*Brigada śmierci*":

> *"How many of us in the Death Brigade escaped is hard to say; I discovered that one man named Widder, who had worked in the shop in the Death Brigade, was caught shortly after our escape, but was not recognized. He was put into the new Death Brigade from which he escaped again a day before our liberation by the Russian Army. From his account, there were about twenty from our old group in the new Death Brigade. After we had escaped the whole guard had been changed. The inmates worked with chains on their feet. These chains were never taken off; they did not even have a lock; they were welded together. This Death Brigade was put to work in other cities, and near Stanislav (southwest of Lvov) the Russian Army finally caught up with them. The Germans shot the entire brigade; but one of the members, Widder, was not fatally wounded, and lay between the corpses*

[521] The final chapter (Chapter 37; in the Polish text "*Zakończenie*," Conclusions) is interrupted by the phrase "…we found twenty-two other Jews." In the Polish text, this is followed by two other phrases and then the passage in question. Weliczker, pp. 127f.

> *until next day, when he was liberated. I estimate that in our breakout over fifty had escaped, which, under the circumstances, was a very high percentage.*
> *The fate of forty-four of these people was as follows: Ten were liberated, of whom three now reside in the United States, four in Israel, and one in Australia; one I do not know of. Korn, with whom I escaped and hid in the stable, died of cancer a few months after liberation. Avrum, the fire tender, and Tierhaus, our 'conscience,' were also saved. Avrum settled in Israel, and receives a 90 percent mental disability pension. The twenty-six who escaped from Juzek's place on December 6, 1943, were finally captured in April, 1944, and of course killed. The two who had joined Korn and me on the railroad tracks during our escape had both been killed. Four were killed trying to get into Lvov. Still another drowned himself, and two young fellows who worked in the Death Brigade as 'carriers,' and were very much liked by all of us, were killed by the Ukrainian partisans, while hiding in the woods."* (*ibid*., pp. 255f.)

According to this account, after the escape of the inmates from "*Kommando* 1005" on 19 November 1943, the Germans instituted a new *"Brigada śmierci*." This presumed fact has been echoed in the literature through the indictment in the trial of Rudolf Röder, the former inspector of forced-labor camps in Galicia, who was sentenced to a ten-year prison term in Stuttgart in 1968. This indictment is cited as a source by Sandkühler for the following information (Sandkühler, p. 279; already quoted in part here on p. 288):

> *"An investigation was opened against Schallock and the police unit for this incident* [the escape of the inmates on 19 November 1943], *and a new Kommando 1005 was set up in the Janowska forced-labor camp before Christmas 1943, in order to continue the 'unearthing' in Stanislav. After lengthy preparatory work, this began only in March 1944 in the new Jewish Cemetery, with 25 Jewish inmates still, who were guarded by an entire company of military police. Due to the weather, work progressed only very slowly; furthermore, Krüger's successor Brandt no longer knew the exact location of the mass graves. Since the Red Army occupied Kolomea already at the end of the month, the Jews were shot by Schallock or on his directive, by order of the commander of the Security Police, before the exhumations had even properly begun. There was only one survivor."*

Hoffmann claims that this presumed shooting took place on 29 March 1944, and refers to Weliczker Wells and the verdict of the Stuttgart District Court of 9 May 1968 in the trial against Rudolf Röder (Hoffmann, p. 104).

The vacuity and incoherence of this trial account and the chronology confirm that his primary source is the passage from Weliczker Wells's book, which I have reported above. That such an account is the fruit of fantasy is demonstrated by the circumstances described by the author: He was the only person who spoke to the supposed survivor Widder, and although ever since he had ambitions to keep memoirs and even to write history – claiming to have jotted down even irrelevant events on a daily basis in his "diary," which he had already entrusted to the historian Filip Friedman (Weliczker Wells, p. 255; the story about Widder appears a

few lines further down) – he never bothered in the least to record the assertions of this allegedly unique, extremely crucial witness.

If we are to believe Weliczker Wells, at least ten witnesses from the first "*Brigada śmierci*" escaped, and he even gave the names of a few of them:

> *"*[…] *Max Hoening, who now lives with his wife and daughter in New York and works in the garment center as a cutter; a man named Gleich, who works as a bookkeeper in New York; David Manucewicz, who, with his wife and three children, resides in Israel where he has become a successful car dealer. Another, Mandel, lives with his family on the outskirts of Tel-Aviv and runs a shoe store."* (*ibid*., p. 256)

Manucewicz (pronounced Manusevich), who signed a statement for the Soviets (see Section 3.6.3.), does not appear in the text of Weliczker's Polish book, which nevertheless mentions another self-proclaimed member of the *Brigada śmierci*, Mojżesz (Moische) Korn (see Section 3.6.2.), who, after the escape of the inmates, joined Weliczker and a certain Buk (Weliczker, p. 122). There remain, therefore, another eight fundamental witnesses who never signed any statements on this important Holocaust event and who never even appeared during the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem, although some of them lived in Israel at the time, and it would seem permissible to wonder why they did not.

3.5. Weliczker Wells and Patrick Desbois

In his book about the mass graves in Ukraine, Desbois recalls his meeting at New York with Leon Wells, alias Weliczker (Desbois 2008, p. 114):

> *"A year later I went back to the United States and found, thanks to the Holocaust Memorial Museum of Washington, Wells's contact information. He is the author of one of the first accounts of the Holocaust by bullets. I couldn't get over it: He was living in New Jersey. This book that had guided us for years was for me a history book, an ancient testimony. I had never imagined that the author might still be alive."*

I shall now reproduce Desbois's dialogue with Weliczker, numbering Weliczker's responses to facilitate the discussion (Desbois 2008, p. 115):

> *"He told us how he had burnt other Jews with the commando of requisitioned Jews. He told me that the Germans had nicknamed him 'Baby.' He was 14 years old at the time.*[522]
>
> *I asked him: 'What did you do, Baby?'*
>
> [1] *He answered, 'I pulled out the gold teeth of the Jews who had been dug up, put them in a bag and gave them to the Germans in the evening.*
>
> [2] *That went on for a long time because there were 90,000 bodies.*
>
> [3] *There was also my friend who was younger than me, who was called the Tzeler* [Zähler], *the Counter. He was in charge of counting the bodies every evening, and writing the number in a little book.'*

[522] On the day of his entry into the "Death Brigade," on 15 June 1943, Weliczker was 18 years and 3 months old, having been born on 10 March 1925.

I asked: 'He counted the bodies? What happened to him?'
His expression fell. 'Of course they killed him.' I told him that I knew that they killed the counters.
'Yes,' he replied, 'that is why there is no record of the numbers.'
[4] *I asked: 'They made you sleep under some sort of canvas so that you wouldn't see who it was they were killing?'*
[5] *'Yes, but I was the smallest so I managed to peek under the canvas. I saw all the executions and afterwards we had to go out to undress and burn them. That went on for six months.'"*

Point [1]. In his book, Weliczker does not mention that "gold teeth" were pulled from the exhumed corpses, but rather "any precious metal… like gold or platinum," which were found while sifting the ashes *after the corpses had been cremated*. In all this, Weliczker performed no task at all, because in the evening the "brigadier" (= the leader of the *Kommando*) took away the sieve full of precious metals and consigned it to the *Untersturmführer*, who poured the contents into a linen sack (Weliczker, p. 56). The recovery of the precious metals was performed by the "ash labor gang," of which Weliczker was not a member.

Point [2]. The figure of 90,000 contradicts both the total of all the individual figures mentioned in the book, and the figure declared under oath in the Eichmann Trial, "a few hundred thousand," as well as the figure contained in his testimony to the Soviets in 1944: 310,000.

Point [3]. With regard to the *Zähler*, we read in Weliczker's book:

"On the other side was the Zähler, with a pencil and paper in his hand. His task was to note the number of bodies thrown into the fire. Not even the members of the Schutzpolizei [*szupowcom*] *can he tell how many bodies were cremated over the course of a day. In the evening, he provides the Untersturmführer with a precise report on the number of cremated bodies. He himself could not remember how many bodies were cremated the day before. If the Untersturmführer asked him the next day how many bodies were cremated the day before, he was supposed to answer by saying he had forgotten."* (*ibid*., p. 42)

No mention that the "*Zähler*" was shot.

To ensure that there was "no record of the numbers," the Germans, first of all, are supposed to have destroyed the several dozen reports from the acting "*Zähler*," for whose existence in reality we have only Weliczker's word, by the way. But his possible shooting would not have been at all sufficient to achieve this aim, because the "*Zähler*" could easily have communicated the number of cremated bodies to the other inmates every evening. As we have read earlier, Weliczker had "paper and pencil, intended for the accountant, who noted the number of dead cremated every day," therefore, he had direct contact with the "*Zähler*" precisely by virtue of his tasks in the barracks; since keeping a diary on his part would obviously have been intended to gather evidentiary material against the Germans, Weliczker could easily have recorded the numbers of bodies cremated daily, and thus presented a complete statistical record of the cremations in his dia-

ry. The simple truth is, however, the Germans wouldn't have created such records in the first place, if they did not want any record to survive.

Point [4]. The motivation, suggested by Desbois and declared true by Weliczker, for the fact that the "death brigade" slept in tents, was presumably to keep them from seeing the killings of the Jews. (But they were then assigned to undress and burn the bodies of those killed!). This is contradicted by the book itself, which says (Weliczker, p. 92):

> *"Every tent is 9 meters long and 6 meters wide. 80 people live in each tent, the rest in another, intended for specialists only, the* [corpse] *arrangers and a few workers in the ash labor gang, that is, persons who, for the most part, have no direct contact with the bodies. One third of the second tent is used as an office, separated from the rest of the tent by a partition. Next to the partitions of the tent, on both sides, there are single cots. In the middle, there is a bench. Here, we even have electricity. There are floodlights on all sides of the courtyard which remain lit all night."*

The tents, therefore, served merely logistical purposes, since they were used to house men and materiel.

Point [5]. In the book, several inmates, therefore not just Weliczker, observe the execution from within in a camp barracks, the door to which is covered "by a coat" (*ibid.*, p. 66):

> *"A few of us look through the cracks in the roof. They report everything they see."*

Weliczker later says that, after the tents had been pitched, during the executions of the Jews, the men from the "brigade" were compelled to go inside so as to prevent them from seeing the shootings, but on this occasion he does not declare that he spied through the cracks; he reports what he heard (*ibid.*, p. 106). He does not claim ever to have seen anything "under the canvas" because he was "the smallest."

If one were to draw up a summary evaluation of Weliczker's various testimonies, we could say that he made hare-brained statements for the Russians, wrote nonsense in his "diary," gave false testimony at the Eichmann trial, and told Desbois fairy tales which contradicted his previous stories.

3.6. Other Witnesses from the "Death Brigade"

3.6.1. Heinrich Chamaides

As mentioned earlier, Sandkühler not only relies on Weliczker's testimony, but also refers to the testimony of Heinrich Chamaides, according to which the victims of the Germans numbered "at least 70,000 in the 'Sands'," and another "45,000-50,000 in the Lesienice Forest." The testimony dates to 21 September 1944 and was published in German by Ernst Klee and Willi Dreßen, together with that of Moische Korn, under the title "Some 45,000 or 50,000 People Exhumed" (Klee/Dreßen, pp. 226-228).

In June 1943, Chamaides was assigned to the "*Todesbrigade*" (= *brigada śmierci*, death brigade), which consisted of 126 persons. This is how he describes the beginning of his activity:

> *"We had to open graves, exhume bodies and burn the exhumed bodies. There were 1,000 or 2,000 bodies in each grave. In addition, we found the bodies of about sixty or seventy thousand people in the 'Death Valley' who had been shot only a relatively short time earlier."*

This scenario must have played out in the "sand pit" mentioned a little while ago, which was located 1.5-2 km from the Janowska Camp. This "sand pit" or "Death Valley" is the locality which Weliczker refers to as "*na piaskach*"; in the map of the Janowska Camp published by "Welitschker" in the periodical *From the Last Extermination*, it was referred to in Yiddish as "*tojtn-tol*," the equivalent of the German "*Totental*" ("Death Valley"). Hence, Chamaides's and Weliczker's testimonies overlap. According to the latter, the "death brigade" was formed on 15 June 1943, and the work of exhumation-cremation in this locality terminated on 18 August. It therefore lasted a little over two months (64 days), and the number of bodies disposed of every day amounted on average to 937-1093. But as we have seen earlier, of the presumed 60,000-70,000 cremated bodies, Weliczker accounts for little more than 15,000.

Chamaides continues with his account as follows:

> *"In September 1943, after the conclusion of burying bodies, our Brigade was transferred to the Ligakovsk Forest* [?]. *In this forest, we also had to open graves. There were a total of 45 graves, in which we found corpses both clothed and unclothed. From the clothes I could conclude that the persons shot were Russian and Italian prisoners and civilians. I remember well that in one of these mass graves there were exclusively POWs, some 2,500 of them. We exhumed roughly 45,000 or 50,000 people from these graves.*
>
> *We also burned all the bodies by stacking up wood and bodies to piles 4-5 meters high and pouring gasoline over them. After the cremation, gold objects were separated, the bones were ground by means of a special mill, and the all the resulting ashes were scattered in the woods. In addition, the police shot between two and five hundred people daily, once, as I recall, it amounted to 2,500 people.*
>
> *After we had exhumed the bodies, we had to fill the graves with earth and plant young trees on them. We threw the ashes of burned bodies into some of the graves, so that there would be proof of the Germans' crimes in the event that any of us remained alive."*

The "Ligakovsk Forest" ought to be identical with that of Lyczaków, also known as the "*Wald von Lesienice*" or "*Krzywicki-Wald*."

Chamaides states that on 19 November 1943, the "death brigade" rebelled, and among 126 persons, there were only 12 survivors.

Let's compare this to Weliczker's account. According to him, the work in this forest began on 9 September and terminated on 8 October 1943, so that it lasted 30 days. From Weliczker's account, it seems that the brigade's daily "production

rate" was up to 750 bodies exhumed and 530 bodies cremated (maximum figures).

It follows that, in order to lay bare 45,000 bodies (meaning the mere removal of the earth covering the top layer of bodies in a mass grave), the "brigade" would have had to work for (45,000 ÷ 750 =) 60 days, while the bodies' cremation would have taken another (45,000 ÷ 530 =) 85 days, hence 145 days in total. It should be noted that the two activities allegedly did not overlap, in view of the remark that exhuming 750 bodies required the labor of the entire "brigade."

Chamaides's testimony collected by the Soviets contains no lack of the absurd fairy tales typical of crude atrocity propaganda:

> *"As an eyewitness, I experienced how a violent German criminal, whose name I do not know, shattered an eight-year old boy and threw him into a fire. Several one- and two-year old children were thrown into the fire alive. The criminals gave the victims a glass filled with water to hold and conducted their target practice by shooting at the glass: If they hit the glass, the victim was allowed to live. If they hit the victim's hand or arm, however, they went up to him, told him he was unfit for work, and as a result would have to be shot, after which they shot him right there on the spot. Small children were thrown into the air and shot while falling."*

3.6.2. Moische Korn

The statements of Moische Korn, made and signed on 13 September 1944 (*ibid.*, pp. 228f.), are even more inconsistent with those of his colleague. His account is very generic; we do not know when the witnesses came to form part of the "*brigada śmierci*," which consisted of 120 persons (as against 126 according to Chamaides); the only date mentioned in his testimony is that of the decision to escape, and the date of the escape itself (17 and 19 October 1943), over the course of which the majority of the inmates were killed, and only 12 survived (Chamaides also mentions 12 survivors, but for him, the revolt occurred on 19 November 1943). The working locations are never explicitly mentioned by Korn, but the context shows that, in general, his account overlaps with that of Chamaides. This begins as follows:

> *"After opening the graves, we prepared a special place next to the graves, where wood and bodies were stacked in layers on piles measuring 10 x 10 x 10 meters. Some 1,200 or 1,600 bodies were on each of these stacks. There were also stacks with 2,000 bodies. When such a stack was finished, we poured tar over it, in addition to which we poured a bucket of gasoline over it. Then we dipped a stick into gasoline, lit it and threw it onto the pyre from a certain distance away. A pyre like that, depending on the size, burned for three to five days."*

These statements are hard to believe, to say the least. How did the inmates build pyres 10 meters long, wide *and* high and load them with 1,200 to 1,600 corpses? How did the inmates put the wood and bodies onto the top layers of such a pyre, *i.e.*, those higher than 2 meters above the ground? They would have needed a crane at least, but the witness makes no mention of any such device. And when

burning it down, how did they make sure such a pile burned down absolutely evenly? Because if it didn't, it would have tipped to one side and eventually collapsed, spilling embers, burning wood and partially burned body parts all over the place!

A pile of wood and bodies that size would have contained ([10 m × 10 m × 10 m] × 0.9 t wood/m³ ÷ 1.4 =) approximately 640 tons of wood, or from (640,000 kg ÷ 1,600 bodies =) 400 to (640,000 kg ÷ 1,200 bodies =) 530 kg per body.[523]

If the "special place" created to accommodate the pyre was big enough to accommodate only one of the pyres described by Korn, and if, as he claims, it took three to five days (or four days on average) for the pyres to burn out completely before the next pyre could be built, then the cremation of the (60,000 to 70,000 + 45,000 to 50,000) 105,000-120,000 bodies alone would have taken from (105,000 corpses ÷ 1,600 corpses per pyre × 4 days per pyre =) 262 to (120,000 corpses ÷ 1,600 corpses per pyre × 4 days per pyre =) 300 days; therefore, if this sequential burning started on 15 June 1943, it would have been finished in mid-April 1944!

Moreover, if all 120 of the inmates were assigned to cutting wood in the forests, and if they had the skills, strength and drive of professional lumberjacks, which were rated as being able to cut up to 1.35 metric tons of wood during one workday,[524] then obtaining the 640 tons required for a single pyre would have required (640 t of wood ÷ [120 inmates × 1.35 t of wood/inmate/day] =) approximately four days. However, uncooperative prisoners not in the best shape were rated at only 0.63 metric tons per workday, which would double this time to eight days' work, resulting in (105,000 corpses ÷ 1,600 corpses/day × 8 days =) 525 days!

The witness dwells at length on the description of the "machine for grinding bones," to which I shall return later. His account also contains the usual pathetic Holocaust *haggadah* in which he is said to have found the corpse of his wife in the mass of bodies:

> *"I begged* Untersturmführer *Scherlak* [Schallock?] *to kill me, too, since life was meaningless now, after my wife and children had been killed. Then he forced me to throw my wife's body into the fire."*

3.6.3. David Shmulevich Manusevich (Manussevitch)

At the First Nuremberg Trial (or IMT), during the hearing of 13 February 1946, Colonel Y. V. Pokrovsky, Deputy Chief Prosecutor for the U.S.S.R., summarized the contents of Document USSR-6(c) (IMT, Vol. 7, p. 391):

> *"It seems to me sufficient to read into the Record extracts from the evidence submitted by D. Sh. Manussevitch, and I wish to state that this evidence is confirmed*

[523] The factor 1.4 considers the gaps between the stacked wood; for details on this see Section 4.3.3.

[524] On wartime values for the wood-cutting abilities of professional lumberjacks and usually uncooperative PoWs see Mattogno 2021, pp. 280f. According to Datner, "Kommando 1005," which was operating in the Białystok District, worked from 6 AM until 6 PM, with a one-hour break for lunch, hence for 11 hours a day; Datner 1976, p. 73.

by the testimony of two other witnesses: F. G. Ash and G. Y. Khamaydes. I am presenting all three documents as Document Number USSR-6(c).
Witnesses Manussevitch, Ash, and Khamaydes worked for some time in the detachment which cremated the dead bodies of men shot by the Germans in the region of Lvov and particularly in the Lissenitzky camps. Witness Manussevitch states […]*:*

'When we (the Brigade of Death) had completed the cremation of the corpses, we were conveyed at night in cars to the Lissenitzky forest, opposite the yeast factory at Lvov. There were about 45 pits in this forest, containing the bodies of people previously shot in 1941-42. There were between 500 and 3,500 bodies in the pits. These were not only the bodies of soldiers of the Italian, French, Belgian, and Russian armies, that is, of prisoners of war, but of peaceful inhabitants as well. All the prisoners of war were buried in their clothes. Therefore, when digging them out of the pits, I could recognize the dead by their uniforms, insignia, buttons, medals, and decorations, as well as by their spoons and mess cups. All these were burned once the corpses had been exhumed. As in the camp at Yanovsky, grass was sown on the site of the pits, and trees and dead tree trunks were planted so as to erase any trace of the crimes, which are certainly unprecedented in the history of mankind.'"

Manusevich had been interrogated on 13 September 1944. The text of the interrogation in my possession is a poor-quality carbon copy.

He was interned in the camp at Brody, a locality approximately 100 km northeast of Lvov, from November 1942 to May 1943, when the camp was liquidated, and the inmates, including the witness, were sent to Bełżec. Here, he claims, operated a human soap factory producing "soap from human bodies." Persons were sent for extermination from Italy and France and moreover from the camps in the area around Lvov. At Bełżec, "2 million people were exterminated." Manusevich learned this from the residents of Bełżec who were deported to the Janowska Camp when he was there, too. The circumstances which brought him there are not clear. He seems to have succeeded in escaping in a freight car, and was later captured by the German police and transported to the Janowska Camp to be shot. "This happened at the end of May 1943." Instead of being executed, he was enrolled in the "death brigade for the cremation of the bodies" which consisted of 126 inmates.

In June 1943 the commandant of the Janowska Camp, Willhaus, ordered the exhumation and cremation of all the bodies. The description of the exhumation procedure is even more laconic:

"The cremation was effected according to the following procedure: a special open space measuring 6 x 8 square meters was prepared, upon which a layer of bodies was laid out, then a layer of wood, and so on, so as to form a stack 4-5 meters high. Gasoline was poured on top of this and it was set on fire. The burnt ashes were passed through a special sieve."

The incombustible osseous residues "were smashed in a specially constructed grinding machine [*mashina-drobilka*]," and then scattered on the spot together with the ashes.

In the area where the shootings took place in the Janowska Camp, "an entire lake of blood has formed, measuring 4 x 5 meters and 1 meter deep." In the Lisenitski Forest (or Lesienice or Krzywicki Forest), not just exhumations and cremations were performed, but executions as well. Here, training courses in cremation were held with the participation of German officers from the Lublin Camp, the Warsaw Camp and others. The courses were directed by Colonel (in fact, *Unterscharführer*) Schallock, who explained on-site how to exhume and cremate the bodies and disperse the ashes. In the Janowska Camp, between 50 to 3,500 people were shot every day, sometimes as many as 8,000. The total number of persons shot at the camp and in the Lisenitski Forest was roughly 200,000. On 19 November 1943, the 126 men from the "death brigade" rebelled and escaped, but there were only 12 survivors.[525]

These absurdities refute themselves.

It is worth noting that the bit about the "training courses in cremation" is a recurrent theme. Weliczker speaks of contingents consisting of personnel from the Security Service (Weliczker, p. 107):

> *"These contingents arrived from various parts of Poland in order to learn from us how to conduct executions and cremations. After a few weeks, they went away again for various cities in the provinces to which they had been assigned to carry on the same work."*

If this were true, there would have existed several other *Sonderkommando*s 1005 in Poland, of which Holocaust historiography, however, knows nothing.

3.7. The Bone-Grinding Machine

The four witnesses examined in this chapter all mention a machine to grind the residues of cremation. The machine, which was found at the end of September 1944, presumably in the Janowska Camp, was given tremendous publicity by the Soviets. The machine was examined by a group of experts, and the related report constitutes Document USSR-61. The following are the report's conclusions (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 204-206):

> *"1. The machine for the thrashing of burned bones has been fixed on a platform of a tractor trailer upon a special order. The machine is easily moved at any distance without being dismantled, tugged by a truck or any other vehicle. It is operated from a motor fixed on the same platform, through a rope transmission. The machine consists of a thrashing drum, transmission, elevator, Archimedes' screw and the motor. The thrashing drum is a manufactured and massproduced type designed for thrashing any material. It consists of three parts: the cylinder and side*

[525] Record of interrogation of D. Sh. Manusevich dated 13 September 1944. GARF, 7021-67-76, pp. 2-5.

walls.[526] *The cylinder part is cast iron, screwed to the side walls, also cast iron and heavy. The side walls are fixed rigidly on the axis. One disc has an opening in which there is a screw for transporting the bones inside the drum. The inner part of the drum is faced with steel slabs, and the outer one covered with a metal fine grate. The drum is put in a case the lower part of which serves as a receiving bunker for the thrashed bones. The measurements of the drum are as follows: the inner diameter is 900 mm, width – 600.*

2. Transmission. The axis of the drum, 70 mm in diameter, on the side of the motor has a gear 375 mm in diameter which is fixed with a gear 160 mm in diameter setting on the intermediary axis together with a four-groove pulley, 730 mm in diameter, set in motion by the motor.

The elevator consists of a tow chain with ladles on it 300 mm apart. The chain moves between two spro[c]*kets fixed on the frame of the elevator. The chain is set in motion from the upper spro*[c]*ket 370 mm in diameter resting on the axis together with another spro*[c]*ket, connected with the tow chain with a spro*[c]*ket fixed to the center of the drum axis from the side the bones are transported.*

The Archimedes' screw is meant for transporting the bone powder from the bunker beneath the drum to the side of the platform where the unloading opening is. The screw is set in motion by a transmission system from the axis of the lower sprocket of the elevator.

The motor is diesel of the approximately 5 hp rate.

Method of work. The burned small bones are loaded in the receiving part of the elevator from which the ladles on the tow chain deliver it to the receiving bunker. From the receiving bunker the screw takes the bones inside the drum. During the spinning of the drum the bones are thrashed like in a steam mill. The bone powder through the openings in the cylindrical part of the drum is dusted on a grate through which it falls into a receiving bunker. From that bunker the Archimedes' screw gets it to the unloading opening.

The cynematics of the machine. The shaft of the motor has a four-groove pulley 220 mm in diameter which, through the trapezoid belts, sets in motion the axis of the drum 730 mm in diameter. The axis of that pulley has a small gear 160 mm in diameter which, fixed with a large gear 375 mm in diameter, is moving the drum. The opposite side of the drum axis has a spro[c]*ket which, through the tow chain, moves the spro*[c]*ket on the upper shaft of the elevator. The same shaft also has a spro*[c]*ket which sets the elevator chain in motion. From the rotation of the lower spro*[c]*ket of the elevator a transmission system sets the Archimedes' screw in motion.*

The machine can work in any chosen place and does not need a specially preparated side. It is transported by a truck or any other vehicle.

3. In the given dimensions the machine has a productivity of approximately 3 cu. m. of burned small bones an hour.

4. The machine has been made upon a special order and designed for thrashing burned bones in any place. The drum used is the general purpose one, from the

526 The Russian text states that there were two "side walls," which, together with the cylinder, formed precisely three parts. *Nyurnbergsky protsess*, Vol. I, p. 640.

> *steam mills. The task of the designers was to choose the type of the drum, and also the unloading of the powder. A compact fixing of the machine had been envisaged with its possible employement in any place."*

The Commission did not declare that this machine had been found in the Janowska Camp. The report limited itself to stating that "the commission made [up] of […followed by the names of the members] has conducted an examination of the machine for crushing the bones of the peaceful Soviet citizens shot and burned by the German-fascist villains" (*ibid.*, p. 204). As far as one can tell, this commission did not even have the curiosity to see what was inside the drum other than metal spheres – for example, to find possible human-bone residues. They never mentioned the fact that the machine was very badly damaged, as may be seen from the photographs taken of it.

In a 2013 paper, Klaus Schwensen (pen name of Ludwig Fanghänel; see Graf 2017) investigated claims about this machine in a very detailed and in-depth manner, and arrived with certainty at several conclusions, two of which are particularly important. Above all, the machine was a standard "ball mill," produced by the Grusonwerk Company of Magdeburg. In the second place, the machine was found in an indeterminate location, certainly not in the Janowska Camp: no photograph shows the machine against a recognizable background, and one photo, in which Moses Korn is depicted as standing right next to it, is a clumsy photomontage (*ibid.*, pp. 318-323 and 327).

The Soviet commission's claim that the machine was designed specifically to grind human bone fragments is without basis in fact; the structure and functioning of ball mills is innocuously illustrated in the prestigious German engineering manual *Des Ingenieurs Taschenbuch* (Akademischer…, p. 356).

Several photographs exist of the machine in question. One shows it without any people standing around it (see Document II.3.9.). In the book already cited, which contains documents presented by the Soviets at Nuremberg, this same photograph was published with the following caption (*Nyurnbergsky protsess*, Vol. I, photo between pp. 640 and 641):

> *"The 'kostedrobilka'* [bone-grinding] *machine to grind the bones of the bodies burnt by the Hitlerites. This was done to conceal the* [traces of the] *mass executions. The machine remained in the territory of the Janowska Camp and is preserved at Lvov (From the documents of the Extraordinary State Commission)."*

Klaus Schwensen's research confirms that the machine in question remained at Lvov until the 1960s, when it was moved to Kiev; he published several photographs along with his article (Schwensen, pp. 314-318, 324).

Although nothing would prevent this machine from being used to grind human-bone residues, it is also true that nothing indicates that it was so used. The testimonies not only do not constitute proof that it was used for this, but they themselves require proof showing that they are reliable.

The ball mill, since it does not appear that it was brought specifically to Lvov from some other locality, was most likely already present in that city in order to perform its function. So what was its function?

Klaus Schwensen proffers the hypothesis that it was used for roadwork on Thoroughfare IV (*ibid*., pp. 325f.), which was being built to link Lvov to Taganrog through a stretch of highway 2,175 km in length. The first stretch – Thoroughfare IVb – was to link Lvov to Rovno via Brody and Dubno (Angrick, p. 192). The section of this highway over which the General Government had jurisdiction was to run from Breslau to Lvov via Cracow, and a report dated 22 June 1942 sent by the "Administration of the Government General – Main Department Construction" to the local "Main Department Labor" very probably referred to the related work. The report informs us that 18,365 Jews in pursuance of "important work on the strategic thoroughfares of the General Government" were assigned to "road maintenance and expansion work in the districts of Cracow, Warsaw, Lublin, Radom and Galicia."[527]

In his famous report of 30 June 1943, Friedrich Katzmann wrote (L-018; IMT, Vol. 37, p. 393):

> *"The best way to handle this was by forming forced-labor camps by the SS and Police leader. Working possibilities presented themselves above all at the extremely important upgrading of Thoroughfare 4, which was in a catastrophic condition but was necessary to the entire southern section of the front. On 15 October 1941, construction on the camps along the highway was begun, and in spite of considerable difficulties, 7 camps manned by 4,000 Jews emerged already after only a few weeks. These first camps were soon followed by others, so that 15 such camps could be reported to the Higher SS and Police leader in the shortest time. Roughly 20,000 Jewish workers have passed through these camps over time. Despite the difficulties of all kinds which have arisen in connection with this problem, it has been possible to report today that some 160 km of road have been finished."*

Weliczker himself supplies important clues that support this explanation when he speaks of camp *Kommandos* assigned to the "Kulikov-Zholkva road construction." he also mentions a "cemetery work gang" which was "breaking up the tombstones and building the main road with the broken rock" (Weliczker, pp. 32f.). The tombstones were therefore reduced to gravel, which naturally required a "ball mill."

The witnesses who mentioned the machine, beginning with Chamaides, Korn and Manusevich, who had themselves photographed beside it (see Klee/Dreßen, p. 225), probably really had something to do with it, but in the context of road construction or other such work.

One cannot seriously believe that the Germans would have left the Soviets in possession of a machine which they had used to conceal the traces of their

[527] APL, sygn. 746, p. 387.

crimes, *i.e.*, physical "proof" of that concealment, and which they could have reduced to a thousand pieces with a simple explosive charge.

3.8. Abraham Beer and the "Brigade 1005"

In 1945, a former inmate of the Janowska Street Camp, Abraham Beer, made a deposition that was published under the title "Willhaus and Heinen. Action. Brigade 1005." The text is rather chaotic, but it clearly contains the first, still-very-rough nucleus of the story that was later developed and embroidered by Weliczker (Wulf *et al*., pp. 229-232):

> *"At that time the funerary brigade* [*brygadę pogrzebową*] *1005 was also established. They dug up the remaining bones of various actions* [executions]. *No one was allowed to approach them, because a special barracks had been built for them in Piaski, and food was brought to them there. In November 1943, this brigade threw themselves on the Gestapo men guarding them, disarmed them and fled into the woods. Then it became clear that there was no chance of surviving the camp. Everyone began to think about saving themselves, trying to get weapons beforehand. In our brigade there was one who had begun to prepare the group's escape with weapons in the woods. It was our Sergeant Herman, who had made connections with the right people. Meanwhile, one day in June, our brigade was detained at the camp. The camp commandant, Warzog, ordered a search of the camp workshops, where two pistols and a blunt weapon were found. Sergeant Herman was suspected of conspiring to supply the weapons, was locked up in the bunker, and then disappeared.*
>
> *In the summer of 1943, the companies working for the Wehrmacht were being liquidated. This was done by deception, in pure German style. That same day the brigade took a bath and, as usual, returned by car from work at Janowsla Góra. Suddenly the vehicle swerved to the right, towards Pilichowska Street. There, on the corner, machine guns were set up. The surprise was so great that, before anyone knew it, they were already in Piaski (the place of execution), and in the camp they systematically liquidated one group after another. After that, at the Gross-Rosen Camp, a German from Saxony, a Kapo of the camp, told me: 'We Germans are a bloodthirsty people, but there is something beautiful, something sublime in that.'"*

4. *Sonderkommando* 1005 at Babi Yar

4.1. The Legal Context and the Witnesses

From 9 December 1968 to 13 March 1969, the Stuttgart Jury Court heard the criminal case of four former SS members for their alleged complicity in the claimed mass murder at Babi Yar near Kiev: SS *Sturmbannführer* Hans Sohns, SS *Obersturmführer* Fritz Zietlow, SS *Hauptsturmführer* Walter Ernst Helfsgott and SS *Sturmschaführer* Fritz Kirstein.

Sohns was sentenced to 4 years' imprisonment for sustained complicity in the murder of at least 280 people; Zietlow received 2 years 6 months for complicity in the murder of at least 30 people, while the other two defendants were acquitted.

The verdict states that Fritz Zietlow and Fritz Kirstein, who formed the core of the future *Sonderkommando* 1005 B, remained at Babi Yar until the end of August 1943, in part to practice for the tasks incumbent upon them. The two defendants, together with another 4-5 SS men, then left Kiev for Dnepropetrovsk, where they took charge of *Sonderkommando* 1005 B:

> *"Unit 1005 B was actually put together in Dnepropetrovsk. 40-50 ordinary policemen were mustered there around mid-August 1943. The head of the police unit was District Lieutenant (later Senior Lieutenant) Winter."* (Rüter/Mildt, p. 714)

On 17 October 1945, a certain Gerhard Adametz, who by his own statement had been a member of Reserve Battalion 83, signed a written statement in which he referred precisely to these events (USSR-80, pp. 1, 4):

> *"On 24 August 1943, I and Franz Matyssek, Revieroberwachtmeister of the Reserves, received an order from our commanding officer of the police, Major Peter Burgfels, to hand in all our superfluous equipment and to report to Dnepropetrovsk. We thought we would be sent to the front. In Dnepropetrovsk, we reported to Lieutenant Winter of the police, and together with about 40 other policemen, we were put together to form a platoon.* […]
> *We 40 comrades from the police were mostly commanded from cities in the general district of Dnepropetrovsk at a rate of 2-4 from each urban SO-Kdo* [sic]*; later we stayed together with the 6-8 SD men as a group known as 1005 b.* […] *We 40 policemen from Detachment 1005 b left Dnepropetrovsk on or about 5 September 1943 and were marched off to Kiev.* […] *On or about 10 September, we were told that we were to move out to reinforce a group doing service in the vicinity of Kiev, but we were not told what kind of duty we would be assigned to. This group, as we later found out, was referred to as 1005 a."*

This statement could seem to constitute confirmation of the verdict mentioned above. In reality, however, the Stuttgart District Court merely incorporated Adametz's statement, which appears among the verdict's sources merely as "Statement given by the witness Ad. in Dachau Prison Camp on 25 Oct. 1945"

(Rüter/Mildt, p. 734). Its procedural importance, as we shall see, is even greater. I shall return to this witness later. At this point, I will merely analyze the general context of his statement.

The witness asserted that he was a member of the 4th Company of the 83rd Police Reserve Battalion, and that he had done service, first as *Wachtmeister*, and then as *Oberwachtmeister*, from mid-December 1941 until 24 August 1943, with the police command of Dneprodzerzhinsk (present-day Kamenskoye), a city some 40 km west of Dnepropetrovsk (USSR-80, p. 1). On 24 August 1943, he was sent to Dnepropetrovsk with his colleague, Franz Matyssek, an utterly unknown person, by the "commanding officer of the police, Major Peter Burgfels," another unknown person in spite of his relatively high rank.

The 83rd Police Reserve Battalion, as noted by Curilla, "was based in Gleiwitz" and escorted Jewish transports from Slovakia to the Lublin district in 1942, and perhaps also from Slovakia to Auschwitz and Sobibór between the end of May and the beginning of July. In July 1942, the battalion was at Lvov (Curilla 2011, p. 142). Here it became the 1st Battalion of the 24th Police Regiment and as such received a mission order on 24 August to combat robber gangs in the territory of Logoysk (*ibid.*, p. 400).

In May 1943, the 24th Police Regiment was subordinated to the Higher SS and Police leader Russia Center headquartered at Mogilev (*ibid.*, p. 585), while Dnepropetrovsk was under the jurisdiction of the Higher SS and Police leader Russia South. But first, Adametz does not claim to have belonged to the I. Battalion of the 24th Police Regiment, and secondly it is not clear how he ended up at Dneprodzerzhinsk/Kamenskoye as early as December 1941. In addition, it is not plausible that his unit, consisting of 40 men, would have been sent to Kiev, 475 km away by road, merely for surveillance duty. Weren't there 40 policemen able to do this already at Kiev?

At any rate, Adametz was familiar with the designations "1005 a" and "1005 b," but not with those of "*Sonderkommando*" or "*Kommando*"; he called it "*Abteilung*" (detachment). On the other hand, the statement that there was an "*Abteilung*" (which later became a "*Sonderkommando*") 1005a and 1005b operating at Kiev originates precisely with Adametz, so that it does not constitute a "confirmation" of anything.

It is important to note that the designation "*Abteilung* 1005 b" is dubious, because according to the orthodox version, *Sonderkommando* 1005 B should have consisted entirely of inmates doing the work and of guards doing the surveillance; Adametz, by contrast, asserts that this designation was only attributed to the 40 policemen transferred – without inmates – from Dnepropetrovsk. The question will be examined in greater depth in Section 4.2.13. dedicated to the witness Adametz.

The verdict of the Stuttgart District Court established that at Babi Yar *Sonderkommando* 1005 A began its activity on 18 August 1943 and concluded it on 29 September. In the ravine near the Jewish Cemetery, there were "mainly two large

mass graves with together at least 50,000 bodies of killed civilians, mostly murdered Jews, of whom more than 33,000," were shot on 29-30 September 1941, in addition to approximately 25,000 "Russian people" (Rüter/Mildt, pp. 718f., 722). 327 inmates were used for the work, with chains 75 cm long around their ankles. The operations are described as follows (*ibid.*, p. 716):

> *"Before the various mass graves were opened, the terrain had to be completely cordoned off according to Blobel's orders, and visual shields had to be set up through the erection of appropriate protective fencing or reed screens as a visual barrier, insofar as the terrain's features required it. Where in doubt, 'trial digs' were performed to determine the location of the graves. After exposing the bodies or their remains, the inmates began to pull them out of the mass graves with special hooks, and to pile them up in gigantic stacks. By their very nature, the pyres were not always exactly the same size; as a rule, however, about 2,000 bodies were burned in a pile several meters high covering a ground area of at least 50 square meters on average. To ensure a complete and thorough combustion, T-bars (railroad rails) or large steel grates were put onto a stone base, and on top of this, then, wood and the exhumed bodies were stacked in layers. Every pyre was then sufficiently soaked in tar oil and set on fire. It usually burned for more than 24 hours. Subsequently, any bones or other residue left over had to be pulverized by the inmates. The ashes were sifted through in search of precious metals, and finally scattered or buried."*

60 pyres are said to have been constructed; the tar oil was sprayed over them "with an apparatus connected to a compressor, like in road construction"; moreover, to accelerate the work, Blobel asked the Organization Todt for a big steam shovel (*ibid.*, p. 719).

The first report on the exhumations-cremations at Babi Yar is found in the "Information of the Extraordinary State Commission on Destruction and Atrocities Perpetrated by the German-Fascist Invaders in the City of Kiev," dated 29 February 1944. In the paragraph headed "Mass Extermination of Peaceful Civilians and Soviet Prisoners-of-War," we read the following (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 201f.):

> *"In 1943, sensing their instability in Kiev, the invaders tried to cover the traces of their crimes. They dug out the graves of their victims and burned them. The Germans sent the inmates of the Syrets camp to do the job of burning the bodies in Babi Yar. That work was supervised by SS officer Topaide, officers of Gendarmes Johann Merkel, Focht and SS platoon commander Rewer.*
>
> *Witnesses L.K. Ostrovsky, S.B. Berlyand, V. Yu. Davydov, Ya. A. Steyuk and I.M. Brodsky who escaped the shooting in Babi Yar on September 29, 1943 have testified the following: 'As prisoners-of-war we were kept in the Syrets camp in the outskirts of Kiev. On August, 18, 100 of us were sent to Babi Yar. There we were chained into shackles and ordered to dug* [sic] *out and burn the bodies of Soviet citizens exterminated by the Germans. The Germans brought there granite tombstones and iron grates from the cemetery. From the tombstones we made platforms on which we placed rails, and on top* [of] *the rails we put the grates, using*

> *them as fire-grates. We put a layer of logs upon the grates, and on the logs a layer of bodies. Upon the bodies we again put a layer of logs and poured crude oil over it. In this order several rows of bodies were laid, and then set on fire. Each such furnace contained up to 2.500-3.000 bodies. The Germans set up special teams which removed from the bodies earrings, rings, pulled out gold teeth. After all the bodies were burned, new furnaces were piled up, and so forth. The bones were crushed into small fragments. We were made to scatter the ashes across the ravine so that no traces were left. We worked there 12-15 hours every day. To speed up work, the Germans used an excavator. Over the period since August 18 till the day of our escape, September 29, approximately 70,000 bodies were burned. They also burned here the just delivered bodies of men, women and children killed in Gasenwagens* [sic]*.'"*

The Extraordinary State Commission investigating Kiev compelled a few German prisoners of war to conduct excavations in the Syrets Camp, at Babi Yar, Darnitsa and other places. These prisoners then issued a proclamation in perfect Soviet propaganda style, in which they thanked the Soviet authorities for having turned them into "witnesses of the atrocities committed over the Russian population during the German occupation of Kiev." The results of the excavations are summarized as follows:

> *"In two pits alone we discovered 150 killed Soviet citizens. In other places we came across numerous remains of the burned bodies, clothes and bones."*

The report then avers that a "Special Commission"

> *"has established that, according to incomplete data, more than 195,000 Soviet citizens were tortured to death, shot and poisoned in Gasenwagens in Kiev, including:*
>
> *1. In Babi Yar more than 100,000 men, women, children and old persons.*
>
> *2. In Darnitsa – more than 68 thousand Soviet prisoners-of-war and peaceful civilians.*
>
> *3. In the anti-tank ditch, near the Syrets camp and in the camp itself – more than 25 thousand peaceful Soviet civilians and prisoners-of-war.*
>
> *4. In the territory of the Kirillov mental hospital – 800 patients.*
>
> *5. In the territory of the Kiev-Pechersk Monastery – about 500 peaceful civilians.*
>
> *6. In Lukvanovka cemetery – 400 peaceful civilians."* (*ibid*., pp. 202f.)

All this is obviously such crude propaganda that it does not even shrink from the most blatant contradictions. First of all, if 195,000 people had been murdered and buried in the region around Kiev, but only 70,000 were exhumed and cremated, there should still have been 125,000 bodies in mass graves, but the excavations conducted by the German POWs only found 150. Secondly, if 100,000 bodies were buried at Babi Yar, but only 70,000 had been exhumed and cremated by 29 September, there should have been 30,000 bodies still in the ground; since the Soviets did not find them after reconquering Kiev on 6 November 1943, one must conclude that the exhumation-cremation continued after that date, and one can even calculate how long that would have taken, if we take the data supplied by the Soviets:

Since 70,000 bodies were eliminated in 42 days, an average of 1,666 per day, extracting the remaining 30,000 would have required (30,000 ÷ 1,666 =) 18 days, and the operation would have been concluded on or around 17 October 1943. That final date, as we shall see, is also important for another reason.

Note that the Soviet report was drawn up barely five months after the official conclusion of the exhumation-cremation activities (29 September 1943), but that the witnesses were interrogated already on 9 November 1943, hence right after the German retreat. Since their memory was still fresh back then, their statements should have been the most-reliable ones.

4.2. The Witnesses

Since several witnesses made more than one statement, the subsequently quoted statements are numbered in brackets.

4.2.1. Vladimir Yuryevich Davydov (Davidov)

[1] This witness was interrogated at Kiev on 9 November 1943[528] by the head of the NKGB (People's Commissariat for State Security), Major Lavrenko. The witness had been interned in the Syretsky (Syrets) Camp, 5 km from Kiev, from 15 March to 16 August 1943. The witness described his experiences as follows:[529]

> *"On 18 August, during morning roll call, 100 persons were selected from amongst us prisoners, including myself. By and large, Jews suspected of membership in the* [Bolshevik] *party were placed in a separate group, but also entirely innocent geriatrics. After the 100 persons had been counted, we were escorted by 'SS' men and taken to Babi Yar.*
>
> *We all assumed that we were being taken to 'Babi Yar' to be shot, but one and a half hours after we got there, we were divided up into groups of five and led away. When it was my turn, I saw that my comrades, who had been led away before, had not been shot, but that they were all sitting there in chains. Hence, we were all out in chains, that is, all 100 persons, including myself, and crammed into so-called earth huts.*
>
> *The entire guard detail at Babi Yar consisted of lower- and middle-ranking SS men.*
>
> *Afterwards, we found out that the planned action was subject to the greatest secrecy, and that no one was allowed to get closer to Babi Yar than one kilometer. For this reason, there were also screens there. From conversations among the*

[528] The text only gives the month, "9 November." In Mattogno/Graf (p. 220); I assumed that the year was 1944, but the Soviet report is dated 29 February 1944 and mentions Davydov's testimony, hence is must be 9 November 1943.

[529] Hoppe, Doc. 275, pp. 653-659; quotations: pp. 656-658. The editors of this work erroneously read the name of the NKGB major who interrogated the witness: Davrenko instead of Lavrenko. "Protokol doprosa" (record of interrogation) of Valdimir Davidov, Kiev, 9 November 1943. GARF, 7021-65-6, pp. 13-16. Copies of the document can be found in GDA SBU, 7-8-1, pp. 86-93, and in DAKO, FP 5-2-21, pp. 23-32.

Germans I gathered that this work was to be kept secret on Hitler's orders, and that no one except the above-mentioned persons was to learn about it.
Initially we didn't know what our work was to consist of exactly, but when we started excavating, we noticed that we were exposing the bodies of those who had been shot in 1941.
After a few days, a horrible sight met our eyes during the exhumation activities (during that time we were already in chains): we saw and heard as well the stench of decomposing bodies. We were driven to work very quickly, and didn't even have time to straighten up.
There were tens of thousands[530] *of bodies in this ravine. There were two big ditches with about 50,000 bodies of Jews, and then there was another pit with shot persons at 'Babi Yar,' about half a kilometer away. To be more exact, this was an anti-tank ditch containing the bodies of killed commanders of the Red Army, probably commissars. That could be seen from the rank insignia and sabers. There were about 20,000 bodies in this ditch. These were persons in pilot's uniforms and overalls. It was obvious that many of these shooting victims had been wounded, since they either had crutches with them or wore bandages on their arms or legs.*
Every time we had dug up 2,000 bodies, we had to build a furnace,[531] *for which we piled up wood. Granite tombstones were brought from the Jewish Cemetery and arranged on the ground in the form of a square. Railroad rails were laid on top, which were covered with a layer of wood, onto which a layer of bodies was stacked in a certain way (a German, an engineer, who was very knowledgeable, occupied himself with this working process). The result was a stack 10 to 12 meters high, consisting of up to 3,000 bodies. A torch was then put to the stack, and it began to burn. This is how the bodies were burned, and only bones remained, which did not burn completely. The bones were pulverized on metal sheets with special stamping tools and scattered in the empty ditch, which was filled up with this.*
Initially, always only one such furnace burned, and each time a stack had burned down, the furnace was destroyed, since the stones melted[532] *and the rails got warped. For this reason, a new furnace had to be built for every stack. Since the number of bodies was very high and there were only a few furnaces, they started to burn the bodies in three locations at once. The number of the furnaces burning simultaneously, was later increased to four. Some 75 furnaces were built over the entire span of time in which the cremations were going on.*
Because I was in 'Babi Yar' this entire time, I can say that roughly 70,000 bodies were burned in these furnaces. […]
On 25 or 26 September,[533] *when the work was almost finished, we were supposed to build one more furnace, for our own destruction. We realized this, because there were no more bodies in Babi Yar, but we were still building a furnace."*

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530 In the Russian text, "десятки тысяч", "*desyatki tysyach*", tens of thousands.
531 In the original text, "печка", "*pechka*," literally "furnace, stove."
532 In the original text, "сгорал", "*sgoral*", "burned."
533 In the original text, erroneously, "August."

On the night of 28-29 September, Davydov escaped with a group of inmates, but only 10 of them succeeded in getting away.

It is obvious that the sums are not correct: if 2,000 bodies were cremated on a single "furnace" at one time, and if 75 of these furnaces were built, the number of cremated bodies would have equaled (75,000 × 2,000 =) 150,000, not 70,000; vice versa, if there were 70,000 cremated bodies, then each "furnace" only destroyed on average (70,000 ÷ 75 =) 933. The calculations get even more confused since up to 3,000 bodies were said to have been placed on a single "furnace."

That the Germans are said to have recruited even old men for the exhausting excavation work ("By and large, Jews suspected of membership in the [Bolshevik] party were placed in a separate group, but also entirely innocent geriatrics.") is rather unlikely.

The height of the "furnaces," given by Davydov as 10-12 meters, is so implausible that it does not even deserve comment. One possible attempt at explaining this away is by positing that the witness, who just prior to this spoke of "layers," actually meant 10 to 12 layers rather than meters. This, is, however, first of all refuted by the fact that the record of interrogation was signed by witness Davydov in his hand on every single page. Hence, this possible error could not have escaped him. In addition, even if it were layers rather than meters, in order to reduce the size of the pyre to a more reasonable height of, say, four meters, each layer could not have been higher than some 0.3 to 0.4 m. Since each layer of corpses alone would have been 0.2 to 0.25 m high, there would have been hardly any space left for the firewood. Hence, no matter which way we look at it, it remains absurdly implausible.

[2] On 17 January 1946, the newspaper *Pravda Ukrainy* published an account of Babi Yar by the "engineer V. Davydov." The account is a little short on information, but it still contains details worthy of note. The total number of bodies amounted to "tens of thousands," and their exhumation was effected using shovels:

> *"The Germans decided to cremate these tens of thousands of bodies. Two layers of bodies were placed on one layer of wood, about two hundred in each layer. The whole thing was then soaked in naphtha. On top of the bodies, layers of wood were again placed, and on top of them more corpses, and it was again soaked in naphtha. The stack grew to the height of a two-story house. Everything was again soaked with naphtha,* [then] *the Germans set fire to this enormous pyre. It burned for several days."*

The mass grave with the bodies of the Soviet soldiers, which in the previous deposition was found half a kilometer from Babi Yar, is one kilometer away here. Here, 15 inmates succeed in escaping, as against 10 in the previous deposition.[534]

[3] On 9 February 1967, Davydov was interrogated by the German judiciary, and declared, among other things (Trubakov, pp. 315f.):

[534] TsDAVO, 4620-3-278, pp. 13-15.

"In one kiln we stacked about 2000 cadavers mixed with layers of wood, doused them with oil and set [them] *on fire. Stacks of firewood and the corpses were piled up to 4 meters high. Bonfires of the corpses burned for one to two days; then we shoveled it, crushed the burned bones with slabs and poured them through metal sieves in order to find valuables. Ashes were carried on stretchers and scattered in the fields near the ravine; several such furnaces were burning at the same time.*
To speed up work on the incineration of corpses (the Soviet troops were approaching Kiev), the Germans increased the number of prisoners to 330 and also used tractors and dynamiting techniques.
During the period when we worked in the ravine in Babi Yar, the Germans, in addition to burning up the dug-up corpses, brought people in gas vans and asphyxiated them in front of us and then threw them into the same burning ovens. From other locations adjacent to Babi Yar, the Germans brought a lot of corpses, and also burned them in the kilns.
We – the prisoners who were a part of the so-called 'Sonderkommando' – were subjected to severe torture, beatings, shootings and burning at the site. […]
Over the entire period in Babi Yar 50 to 60 furnaces were built and about 125,000 dead were burned."

[4] On 22 May 1980, Davydov was interrogated at Kiev by a section of the KGB. He declared that "no fewer than 2,000 bodies" were placed on a pyre (which he called "stove" or "oven"), that 55-60 such pyres were built, and that the total number of bodies cremated was "no fewer than 120,000."[535]

The contradictions between these three witness statements are obvious. The number of pyres is given as 50-60, 55-60 and 75, with a body count that drops from 3,000 to 2,000; the total number of cremated bodies is given as "tens of thousands," 70,000, 120,000 and 125,000! The height of each pyre varies from 10-12 meters, to the equivalent of a two-story house, which is approximately 6 meters, down to 4 meters.

Finally, it is worth noting the not-insignificant fact that the "gas vans" in which, according to Davydov's 1967 statement, people were "asphyxiated" before the eyes of the prisoners cremating the corpses, had been mentioned in the Soviet commission's report of February 29, 1944, but not in Davydov's statements of 1943 and 1946.

4.2.2. Leonid Kivovich Ostrovsky

[5] This witness was interrogated by the NKGB on 12 November 1943. He said that, on 16 August 1943, he was taken from the Syretsky Camp to Babi Yar together with 100 other inmates, Jews and Soviet partisans:

"At Babi Yar, all of us were in chains. The distance between the chains was 50-60 cm and permitted us to move about with difficulty and to excavate the ground using shovels. This same day, they forced us to excavate the ground at Babi Yar. Then, when the earth was removed to a depth of 0.5-3 meters, the bodies of Soviet

[535] GDA SBU, 7-8-1, pp. 133-138.

citizens began to appear from underneath. Blocks of stone were brought from the Jewish Cemetery upon which we built a rectangular platform measuring approximately 30 x 40 meters. Railroad rails were placed on top of the platform, and grids were arranged on top of the rails. A layer of wood was placed on top of the grid, upon which we placed the bodies exhumed at Babi Yar. The bodies were placed with their heads pointing outwards, in two rows, after which the bodies were covered by another layer of wood and the whole thing was soaked with naphtha. In this way, we piled the bodies up to a height of 2-2.5 meters, and then we set fire to it. Then, when all the bodies were burned, we built another furnace [*piech*] *upon which bodies were again placed, as before.* […]
A total of 25-30 furnaces were built, upon each of which 2,500-3,000 bodies were cremated in this way."

The number of inmates in the squad amounted to 100 persons, but "at the beginning of September" this number was increased to 321. During the night of 29 September, 15-18 inmates escaped, but all the others were killed.[536]

4.2.3. Yakov Andreyevich Steyuk

[6] The witness was interrogated on 12 November 1943 by the NKGB:

"On August 18, 1943, among other 100 people, I was sent to work in Babi Yar (a place of mass executions of the population of Kiev), under the authority of the SD. Upon arrival at Babi Yar, we all were shackled; we never returned to the camp.
[…] *The first time we did not know the meaning and purpose of our 'earth works' ('excavations') until on the sixth day, when digging a pit about 4 meters deep, we found a large number of human corpses, including women, children and the elderly.*
Yes, I know well the place of the excavations in Babi Yar and can even specify where they buried the metal for constructions on which the bodies were burned.
Partially the corpses were pulled out from holes with hooks, often by mechanical means using an excavator type 'Polik.' The exhumed corpses were stacked in layers on a specially constructed platform in the following order: on each layer of corpses was put firewood, which was doused with engine oil mixed with kerosene, and then, when several layers of corpses and wood were arranged reaching the overall height of four meters, the platform was set on fire, and thus about 5000[537] *corpses were consumed at the same time. There were no less than ten such platforms set up between August 18 and 29."* (Trubakov, pp. 235f.)

The number of cremated bodies is not indicated, but if 10 pyres were built, and approximately 5,000 bodies were put on each of them, the total number is obviously 50,000.

[7] Two days later, on 15 November 1943, Steyuk was interrogated by Colonel Rudenko. Steyuk declared:

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536 TsDAVO, 4620-3-282, pp. 1-7.

537 The translation reads 3,000, but this is a transcription error; the Russian text says in fact "*okolo 5 tysyach trupov*" ("около 5 тысяч трупов" = "about 5 thousand corpses"). TsDAVO, 4620-3-243/6, p. 13.

> *"On 18 August 1943, the inmates transported to Babi Yar were chained up, given shovels and put to work excavating a large ditch. After digging along a length of 10-15 meters, a mass of bodies appeared at a depth of 3-4 meters. For the first 5-6 days, there were 100 working inmates, but two were shot. Then, gradually, groups of 20-40 inmates arrived, and on 28 September there were 321 of them."*

In response to the question of how many bodies were removed from the mass graves at Babi Yar, the witness replied:

> *"In can't say regarding all the bodies, because I went and saw bodies only where I was working personally, that is, at Babi Yar itself,"*

but, he added, excavations and exhumations were also carried out by the Germans in the so-called anti-tank ditch ("*protivotankovy rov*", see Document II.4.11) , located in front of the ravine, as well as at another location, where from 50 to 85 inmates had worked every day for 20 days. But the question related to Babi Yar in particular, and was repeated. Steyuk then declared:

> *"Approximately 45,000 bodies were exhumed and then cremated before my very eyes and with my participation, including 500 bodies extracted from the ground near the forest of Kirillovskaya Bolnitsa* [Hospital]*; the rest were all at Babi Yar."*

When he was asked how the bodies were cremated, technically speaking, the witness declared:

> *"For the cremation of the bodies, no fewer than 10 stone platforms were specifically built with grates made of iron and sheet metal. The bodies were placed on the grids in layers, together with the wood, in about 20 layers, and then, as I have already explained, the whole thing was drenched with fuel, layer by layer, and set on fire."*

But, he was asked, how did he know that 45,000 bodies had been cremated? Steyuk replied that

> *"for the cremation of the bodies, with my participation in the work, no fewer than 10 platforms were built upon which the bodies were cremated. An average of 5,000 bodies were placed on each platform and then cremated."*

The work continued from morning till night. During their stay at Babi Yar, the Germans shot 24 inmates.[538]

[8] On 11 June 1980, Steyuk was subjected to further interrogation by the KGB:[539]

> *"On August 18, 1943, to Syrets Camp came a large group of Germans with dogs and took away 100 prisoners. I was one of these prisoners. We were taken to nearby Babi Yar, which seemed to have been divided into many sectors. All around there were many Germans with machine guns who were guarding the area. One of them asked if there were locksmiths and black-smiths among us. Several people responded, and they were taken over an earth escarpment; five more*

[538] TsDAVO, 4620-3-243/6, pp. 42-47.
[539] Trubakov, pp. 335-337; all subsequent page numbers from there unless stated otherwise.

men from our hundred were led away with them. Then again five men were taken, I was among them.

Behind the mound was a heap of metal chains and long rails, next to which sat a fascist with a hammer in his hand and a few prisoners, also with hammers; they fitted all others with fetters. After that, everybody was given a shovel, led into a ravine and was forced to dig deeply. On this day, we did not get to the bottom; after dark they took us to sleep in the prepared dugout, which had no windows, and in place of a door, was lattice, taken from the cemetery fence. On the lattice hung a large padlock, and in front of the dugout was a watchtower with a machine gun fixed on it.

The next day they took us into the same ravine, and forced to dig again. At this time came an SS officer whom the guards addressed by his surname, Topaide. He began to give orders and under his leadership we soon got to the bottom layer of corpses, which were extracted from the ravine with special hooks, loaded on motor vehicles and taken to the ovens. These kilns were built of tombstones, rails and bars according to Topaide's instructions. On the stove we stacked firewood, then layers of dead bodies, then a layer of wood and corpses again. This way we made a stack of three or more meters high. In each stack fit at least 2,000 corpses, which were then drenched in oil and set on fire. From personal observations I can say that in Babi Yar were built up to sixty such furnaces in which dead bodies were burned.

Given the fact that the Germans forced us to lay two thousand and more dead bodies on every stove, I came to the conclusion that over 100 000 dead were burned in Babi Yar. To speed up work on the extraction and burning of corpses an excavator was delivered in the ravine and the number of employed in this work was increased to 325 people.

Personally, I repeatedly saw how gas vans, filled with living people, came from the city. These people were either shot from [with] *rifles or killed by gas."*

These statements also contain obvious contradictions. The number of pyres has increased from 10 to 60, and the number of bodies cremated has increased from 45,000 to 100,000, which is not a very intelligent thing to say: if a furnace contained "two thousand and more dead bodies" and "up to sixty" of them were built, the number of cremated bodies should have been at least 120,000, not 100,000. The height of the pyres, however, has decreased from 4 to 3 meters.

4.2.4. Semen Borisovich Berlyant

[9] The witness was interrogated on 16 November 1943 during the investigations at Kiev, during which he declared (pp. 249f.):

"After that I was sent in [to] *a suburban town called Myshelovka (Mousetrap),*[540] *where I worked at a subsidiary farm for the Gestapo until September 1943. From this farm in September 1943 I and 8 other people, all ethnic Jews, were sent to Babi Yar, where we first of all were fettered, and approximately from September*

[540] No such suburb of Kiev is known.

2-3 1943, I worked with others on the excavation and incineration of corpses of Soviet citizens and prisoners of war buried in the ground.
At first, there were 320 people working there, then the number changed. We worked 12-15 hours a day. We dug pits, pulled the bodies out of them, above these pits we arranged iron bars – a temporary 'kiln' – on which we laid the pinewood planks, on top of them – about three hundred human corpses in one row, on top of the corpses again a layer of wood, then drenched all of it with oil and ignited. The arrangement of one such furnace consisted of about 3,000 dead because the corpses were arranged in several superimposed rows. This way were burned about 70,000 corpses.
Once all the bodies had been exhumed and burned, the Germans began to bring from the Gestapo people asphyxiated in gas vans, 70-80 dead in one van; they also were burned.
All of us, 180 people, worked shackled in the iron chains."

4.2.5. Isaak Moiseyevich Brodsky

[10] This witness was interrogated in November-December 1943 (p. 265):

"In early June 1943 we, in the number of [unclear] were sent to Babi Yar to dig corpses [the following is unclear].
People who have worked there were shackled in chains, with special clamps. While working in the Yar, we burned piles of dead people on a specially prepared kiln, doused with oil, then set on fire and people were burned to ashes, then the ashes were sifted through a special lattice and if we found valuable items, the Germans would take them. In my opinion, that during my work on the incineration of corpses in Babi Yar, the Germans burned 70 000 of corpses."

4.2.6. Vladislav Frantsevich Kuklia

[11] This witness was examined on 4 February 1944 (pp. 269f.):

"On August 22, 1943, I, together with 22 other condemned to death prisoners, was put into the gas van, brought to Syrets concentration camp, where we spent three days in the same dugout under strict surveillance of the guards. Every minute we expected to be executed, but on the fourth day we all were brought to Babi Yar; we believed that finally we would be shot there, but it turned out we were driven to work on the excavation of buried in the ravine [sic] *corpses of Soviet citizens shot in 1941-1943.*
Our legs had been bound in fetters and we were forced to dig up the corpses and burn them in furnaces prepared for this purpose. We built these furnaces ourselves from stone monuments of the Jewish cemetery and grids, which we put on rails, and on top of the rails we put wood and then put the bodies, and each row of wood and bodies was drenched in oil specially delivered for this purpose.
Thus, the layer of dead bodies laid on the furnace grew to 4 feet [sic; probably meters] *in height, a length of about 10 meters and 5 meters in width. There were 70-80 such furnaces in the ravine, in each furnace fit from 2 to 4 and more thousand of corpses. Then we set them on fire, and these furnaces were burning day*

and night. After burning, the bones of [the] *corpses were ground into a powder by slabs, sifted through a sieve, and the powder was scattered on the soil surface and mixed with the ground. In addition to burning exhumed from the ravine, we had to throw into fire the bodies of people asphyxiated in the gas vans, which delivered them from the city every half an hour. There were men and women of different ages, including very elderly and babies. The total number of burned corpses in Babi Yar by our calculation was 95,000 to 100,000."*

[12] On 1 March 1944, the witness had a conversation with the secretary of the Kiev Regional Komsomol Committee, P. Tronk, whom he told the following (pp. 282f.):

"So all this happened around August 18-23. After we had been chained they led us to the bunker, where 100 people were housed. […] *There were already 100 people, and now the 22 of us were added – 21 from the Gestapo death row cell plus one Jew from Syrets camp.* […]

The corpses had been already un-earthed, but not burned yet. When we were building the escarpment, we felt a terrible smell, we suspected what people were doing there, but we did not know for what purpose. The stench was awful.

The next day we went down to work at 5:00 in the morning, began to build the furnace, arranged monuments from the Jewish cemetery and stones, then placed grating (fences from the cemetery), then a layer of firewood, twigs, doused them with oil and some other special igniting components. When I was pouring it, I dipped my hand in it, then rubbed my eyes and now my left eye sees poorly. On top of all that we put a row of 250 people, then again 250 corpses, and then wood and again poured the liquid over the wood. Then another such row on top of it so that, in general, there were two thousand corpses. Then [we] *poured more gasoline (in the corners). The height of the furnace reached approximately the height of this room, the width too, only that it was a little narrower. There were 70-80 such furnaces, in some of them would fit 3-4 thousand people.* […]

For the first time we burned bodies on August 25, the first furnace was burning for 24 hours, after that there were only bones. Then the bones were crushed, put through a sieve, taken up the slope and covered with earth.

According to our estimates, 90 to 95,000 corpses were burned. We ran away from there on September 28-29.

We burned the corpses from the anti-tank ravine, where lay 35,000 of our POWs and the bodies of the Jews shot in '41."

"This work was completed on August 28." (p. 284)

4.2.7. Iosif Yakovlevich Doliner

[13] The witness was interrogated on 4 February 1944 (pp. 274-276):

"On August 18, 1943, they selected 100 people – about 50 Jews and the others were Russian – and took us to Babi Yar, and began to shackle our feet in chains; for this work they selected two fitters from our midst, and they fitted the shackles. After that, we were ordered to dig. At first I did not know for what purpose we were digging a pit, but when on the third day of our work we got the corpses of

people, I realized that the purpose was to unearth these bodies. When the bodies were exhumed, we were forced to manufacture a furnace, i.e., we brought a number of monuments from the Jewish cemetery, which we laid out right there in the ravine on the specially leveled off sites; on these plates we placed rails and lattice fences from the cemetery, on the lattice we put wood, which we doused with oil; on the wood we placed the bodies, on which we also poured oil and so this pile grew to two meters in height and 2-8 meters in diameter; such stoves were made three in a row and each held up to 2,000 corpses, but the excavations were carried out in three places, and everywhere stood the furnaces; when the required number of bodies was stacked, the furnace was ignited and burned in one night, and the bones were turned to powder by ramming and scattered on the slopes of the cliffs and mixed with the ground. When all the corpses had been burned, these furnaces were dismantled and the rails, bars and stones were carried in different parts of the ravine and covered with earth.

In addition to burning corpses dug out of the ravine, the Germans brought daily 5-6 gas vans full of asphyxiated people: men, women and young children who were immediately stacked on these furnaces, doused with oil and burned. Often people taken out of the gas vans were still alive but, without paying any attention to it, the Germans threw them into the fire.

This lasted until September 29, 1943. During the period from August 18 until September 29, about 100,000 cadavers of people of different ages and gender were burned."

4.2.8. Yakov Abramovich Kaper

[14] The witness was heard by German court officials on 13 February 1967:

"In August 1943, we were taken to Babi Yar, shackled in chains and forced to pull out the corpses, to build special furnaces and burn in them the remains of victims. […] *In Babi Yar there were more than 300 such prisoners.*

After excavation of the pits we pulled the corpses with hooks and packed them into the furnace, built of stone slabs, rails, rods and sections of wood, drenched with oil. Between these layers lay the dead. The kilns were set on fire, and they burned for a day and more. At the same time elsewhere in the ravine, we were forced to build new kilns. This was repeated many times. The bones that remained after the burning of corpses we crushed with mortars, sieved through a mesh, mixed with sand and scattered them with ashes, to level off the road.

Prisoners were also forced to pull out gold teeth and other valuables before burning the corpses.

I saw how a gas van came to the ravine, stayed for a few minutes with the engine running, and then we had to unload corpses from the van and throw in the burning oven. Often people in gas vans did not die and they were thrown into the fire alive. From the bonfires we could hear shouts and groans.

In addition, we saw how people were brought to the ravine of Babi Yar in the vans and shot here, not gassed; then their corpses were burned too. The victims of gassing and shooting in Babi Yar were civilians, partisans, and Soviet activists.

In Babi Yar, I and other prisoners were about two months. During this period about 120,000 dead were burned." (pp. 319-321)

[15] Upon a suggestion from Erhard Roy Wiehn, Kaper and Budnik (see Section 4.2.10.) compiled a memoir between late 1992 and early 1993, which was published in a trilingual edition in 1993 (English, German, Russian). In the English translation, Kaper's account is titled "Thorny Road," and Budnik's "Under a Lucky Star." Kaper added a few other details in his account:

"When everything was ready we were ordered to pull the corpses out and put them on the furnaces. For this special tools were prepared. There was a handle in the form of [a] *ring and a rod 50-60 centimeters long with the hooked sharpened end* [sic]. *We were shown how to insert this hook under the chin and pull the corpse out. All this work was done very quickly since every five prisoners were supervised by a German with a whip. If he struck he could kill. And all the time we heard the cries 'Schnell!' We pulled out the corpse and brought it up to the ground*[.] *There other people picked it up. They opened the mouth first. If there were golden teeth, they were pulled out. Then they took off the footwear and then accurately laid it* [down] *the head. Several layers of corpses were put together and then all were doused with oil. Logs were laid and then more corpses and so forth. So at the end it was 2.5 or 3 meters in height. In order to put corpses on the top, a special scaffolding was erected. Thus, during the day we prepared for each furnace about two and a half to three thousand corpses. When everything was ready once again oil was poured over everything and the furnace was lit with torches. At first the bright flame lit the whole ravine but gradually the black smoke covered the flame. The air filled with smoke and the sweetish smell of burning. It became impossible to breathe. At first hair was burning then the bodies caught fire.*

Germans who were with us there also couldn't breathe and were very often replaced. They also carried flasks with water and they drank it constantly. At the same time another furnace was being prepared in another place, and while one furnace was burning down another was lit. Bones remained almost untouched though they were in [the] *fire. They were gathered and put on a special ground lain* [sic] *with granite plates. A special team was crushing those bones into small pieces with special mortars. Then they were sieved and big bones were again crushed then mixed with sand and were scattered on the road.* […]

Our team in charge of burning corpses counted 330 persons. Each day three times a day our chains were checked and they reported to Topaide with humor that in the heavenly team there were so many figures. In German the word figure means corpse. They reported it and laughed since they considered us live corpses." (Budnik/Kaper/Wiehn, pp. 282f., 285)

However, the German term "*Figuren*" does not refer to corpses. Since they could not possibly print such nonsense in the German translation of that text, they simply changed the text there to read:

"They reported and laughed. They did not consider us to be people; we were 'figurines', toys." (Budnik/Kaper/Wiehn, p. 226)

4.2.9. Ziama Abramovich Trubakov

[16] The witness was examined by German court officials on 14 February 1967:

"I was in this camp [Syrets] *until August 18, 1943, and then, along with hundreds including Jews, communists and partisans, was sent to Babi Yar, where we were put into a pit which had an exit on one side, heavily guarded exclusively by officers from the SS troops. […]*

During the 3 days we were digging a hole, then we got to what we thought was solid ground, but it turned out to be corpses. Tombstones and iron fences were brought from the Jewish cemetery, and then an area 10 x 10 m was planned, where they were laid in checker board pattern so that they formed an ash pan; rows of firewood and corpses were stacked and drenched with oil.

Between 2000 to 2500 corpses would fit in this furnace; they were set on fire simultaneously on all four sides, at first creating a lot of smoke, and then burning without smoke, and at the bottom, from under the ash pan, a thick black mass flowed to a specially adapted pit and then was buried [sic; burned?].

We were forced to grind the remaining unburned bones and sift them through a sieve, after that the powder was scattered on the nearby vegetable gardens.

I, together with Rappoport (deceased), was forced to check the corpses before burning for the extraction of gold and other valuable items.

Gradually, our team increased to 320 people in 2 dugouts.

I stayed with this team until September 28, 1943, i.e. till our escape.

During this time I witnessed the burning of about 125,000 of corpses that we were forced to dig up and burn, as I have said above." (pp. 329f.)

[17] On 28 May 1980, the witness was interrogated by the KGB:

"On August 18, 1943 I was among a group of prisoners sent to Babi Yar. Altogether 300 men had been escorted there. In this camp we all were put in fetters, which were a piece of ordinary metal chain 70 centimeters long. The ends of the chains were put around our ankles encircling both legs and secured with a cut link.

Then we were forced to exhume and burn the bodies of people who were executed in September 1941 and later. The SS officer Topaide supervised the exhuming and the subsequent burning of corpses. According to his schemes special hooks were made for pulling corpses; on his directions special kilns for burning corpses were built. Tombstones and monuments, rails or metal beams and fences were used for the construction of these ovens. On the grid were stacked layers of wood, then the corpses, then wood and corpses. On each such oven were put 2000 or more dead bodies, then they were all drenched with oil and ignited. I was in a group of several prisoners, whom the Nazis singled out to search the corpses and take the gold teeth, jewelry and other valuables. Laughing at me, the Germans used to call me 'the prospector.' Here I saw that some corpses were only in their underwear, and some were fully dressed. In the pockets of clothing I found small amounts of jewelry, coins, and other valuables and passed all of those items to the SS officers.

From my personal observations over the entire period about 60 such furnaces were built and at least 120,000 dead were burned." (pp. 333f.)

4.2.10. David Iosifovich Budnik

[18] The witness was interrogated on 14 February 1967:[541]

> *"In mid-August 1943 I was sent to the Babi Yar Camp together with a group of inmates. There, we were chained and forced to exhume bodies of persons previously shot in this ravine, and then we burn them in furnaces. The furnaces were constructed out of disassembled funereal monuments and metal gratings, upon which a layer of wood and a layer of bodies were arranged. The construction of the furnaces was overseen by German specialist instructors. The parts of the job consisting of the exhumation of the bodies and supplying the naphtha were mechanized. We were forced to build these furnaces in various places and burn them in turn. We arranged up to 2,000 bodies in a single furnace. Following the complete combustion of the furnace, we crushed the unburnt bones with special rammers and passed them through a sieve. In so doing, the Hitlerites gathered the objects of gold which appeared and, in particular, the gold fillings from the teeth. The inmates scattered the remaining ashes at the bottom of the ravine.*
>
> *During the period in which we were burning the bodies, the Germans brought living inmates in gas vehicles* [dushegubki] *no less often than twice a week, 8-9 trips a day, and then poisoned them with gas in the vehicles, and the bodies were then disposed of by ourselves in the cremation furnace. We were also forced to exhume bodies in the anti-tank ditch located near Babi Yar as well as in the territories of the psychiatric hospital on Pavlov Street, and cremate them in the above-mentioned furnaces. Some of the inmates in our group were shot and cremated on the spot. In all, 120,000-125,000 bodies were cremated at Babi Yar within a month and a half."*

[19] On 22 May 1980, Budnik was examined by Major Pluzhnik of the KGB. He described the structure of a furnace and explained:[542]

> *"On top of such a foundation, a layer of wood was laid, followed by a layer of bodies which we had just exhumed, then the bodies were drenched in naphtha. Various layers were stacked atop each other in this way. To get the maximum number of bodies on one furnace, we had to build wooden platforms and carry the bodies to the top of the platforms and lay them out correctly. The preparation of the furnaces and the arrangement of the bodies on top of them was directed by fascist instructors specifically assigned to the job. We extracted the bodies with special hooks, and, when the Hitlerites began to burn the bodies at a sustained pace, the camp procured an excavator, and this part of the work of exhumation of the bodies and supplying the naphtha with which the bodies were soaked was mechanized. During the arrangement of the bodies, a few Hitlerites specifically assigned to the task watched us carefully. On their orders, we placed no fewer than 2,000 bodies on each furnace."*

According to the witness, approximately 55-60 furnaces were built at Babi Yar, upon which "no fewer than 120,000 bodies were cremated."

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[541] GDA SBU, 7-8-1, pp. 129-132.
[542] *Ibid.*, pp. 133-138.

[20] The account published by Erhard Roy Wiehn contains further implausible details, such as this one:

> *"We were guarded by 18 SS officers, none of them less than a junior lieutenant. That was in addition to the regular guards around the entire territory."*

Budnik adds that "the shooting went on until the last day. Even when we were taken to Babi Yar, we saw the vans filled with prisoners passing by and heard the shots," which is a bit dubious even from an orthodox point of view.
The "gastruck" ("*Gaswagen*", газенваген, "*gazenvagen*")[543] "had room for 110 people," which means that (8-9 × 110 =) 880-990 persons were "gassed" every day, at least twice a week, which means 3,520-3,960 total over the four weeks of activity at Babi Yar – and these are the minimum figures. I shall return to this question later in an appropriate section.

The witness was assigned to the exhumation of the bodies as well as to the construction of the pyres. In this regard, he writes:

> *"Besides digging, we also helped the team that built the furnaces. For this, tombstones and iron fences brought over from the neighboring Jewish cemetery were used. These tombstones were laid on the site 10 meters across by 10 meters in width, like a chessboard. Rails and fences were laid on top of them. Then two rows of logs were put down and then a layer of corpses, then more logs and then more corpses. After this everything was doused with oil and burnt.*
> *The furnaces were of differing sizes, but not less than three meters high. The corpses were laid with their heads on the outside. Any remaining bones were crushed with iron hammers and then sifted with special sieves to remove gold and jewels. The ashes were then mixed into the ground.* […]
> *We worked 12 to 15 hours every day. The Germans made us hurry. The black smoke was rising above Babi Yar from the 60 furnaces that were built and in each one over two thousand people were burnt.*
> *We did not suspect that there even existed a special German firm for designing crematoria. A real industry of annihilation."* (Budnik/Kaper/Wiehn, pp. 113-115)

4.2.11. Mikhail Fyodorovich Matveyev

[21] On 12 October 2000, this witness wrote his "Memoirs," which are rather generic with regard to the exhumation-cremation activity at Babi Yar, in which he nevertheless "recalled":[544]

> *"Approximately 100 ovens burned day and night at Babi Yar for a month and a half."*

Before proceeding, it is worth quickly mentioning the only attempt known to me to explain the contradictory death-toll numbers mentioned by the witnesses. Stanislav Aristov states that "the testimonies of surviving participants in Aktion 1005 – which some researchers have judged 'contradictory' – in fact offer an unequiv-

[543] By the early 1990s, the witness was obviously aware of the official Holocaust term "gas vans" ("*Gaswagen*").
[544] www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/documents/doc97.html (last accessed on Sept. 12, 2021).

ocal picture." Apart from the case of Steyuk, who explicitly mentioned 45,000 corpses exhumed and cremated before his very eyes, in order to reconcile the numbers given by Berlyant, Brodsky and Davydov (about 70,000 cremated) with those of 80,000-100,000 of other witnesses, Aristov resorts to the loophole of the "gas-van" victims, claiming that due to this,

> *"between 10,000 and 20,000 more prisoners were exterminated in or near Babi Yar, permitting D. Budnik and V. Kukla to put the death toll at 80,000 to 90,000. I. Doliner probably rounded these figures, increasing them to 100,000."* (Aristov, pp. 447f.)

When starting with 70,000, 10,000-20,000 gassing victims clearly is a convenient number in order to arrive at a total of 80,000-90,000. Witnesses speak of 70-80 persons crammed into a "gas van" with each batch, and of 5 to 6 or 8 to 9 transports per day. In the first case the minimum and maximum figures are (70 to 80 victims × 5 to 6 batches/day × 42 days =) 14,700 to 20,160 victims, in the second case (70 to 80 victims × 8 to 9 batches/day × 42 days =) 23,520 to 30,240. These figures obviously have no historical basis. But the exhumation and cremation figures given by the witnesses concern the *total* number of cremated corpses and obviously include those presumably gassed. That only some witnesses claim to have counted these alleged gas-van victims while others did not has no influence for their total numbers of victims, and claiming otherwise is a simple subterfuge. Finally, regarding the figure of 100,000, not knowing what else to appeal to, Aristov simply claims that this was probably simply a result of rounding up those numbers!

4.2.12. Paul Blobel

[22] Blobel, the alleged German outdoor-cremation specialist, dwelled on the question of the exhumation and cremation of bodies in his statement of 18 June 1947. The cremation technique described by him is in total contradiction to that indicated by all the witnesses mentioned above. In this regard, he declared (NO-3947; the first half of which I already quoted on p. 470):

> *"In September 1942, I reported to Dr. Thomas in Kiev and transmitted the* [Müller's] *order to him. The task could not be carried out immediately, for one thing, because Dr. Thomas was disinclined to carry out the order, and for another thing, because the material needed to burn the bodies was not on hand. In May and June 1943, I traveled to Kiev several times in this matter, and then, after consulting with Dr. Thomas as well as SS and Police Leader Hennecke, the task was carried out.*
>
> *During my visit in August, I personally inspected the burning of bodies in a mass grave near Kiev. This grave was approximately 55 m long, 3 m wide and 2 1/2 m deep. After the top cover had been removed, the bodies were drenched with fuel and set on fire. It took about two days before the grave was burned down. I personally saw that the grave had smoldered through all the way to the bottom. After that, the grave was covered up, and with this all traces were as good as erased."*

The bodies were not, therefore, cremated on the furnaces described above, but inside the very grave in which they were found! Moreover, adopting the parameter of 3.5 bodies per cubic meter, Blobel's grave, assuming a minimum top cover of 20 cm of sand, would have contained (55 m × 3 m × 2.30 m × 3.5 corpses/m³ =) approximately 1,330 bodies. In order to contain the bodies of the presumed 33,771 Jews, (33,771 corpses ÷ 1,330 corpses/grave =) 25 graves of equal size would have been needed. The burial of the 70,000 bodies allegedly exhumed and cremated at Babi Yar (the lowest figure indicated by the "eyewitnesses") would have required (70,000 corpses ÷ 1,330 corpses/grave =) more than 52 such graves.

On 9 October 1947, Albert Artl, a Gestapo official, signed a sworn statement in which he stated (NO-5384):

> *"In March or April 1942, I met Paul Blobel in Kiev. On a car trip together to the Kiev estate of the commandant, Dr. Thomas, on the edge of the city near the cemetery, Blobel showed me a place and told me that Jews lie buried there who had been executed by his kommando. It was an old anti-tank ditch, which was later filled in."*

If this were true, it would be necessary to conclude that Blobel had no idea where the Jews lay buried whom he had shot, since the "anti-tank ditches" were located outside the Babi Yar Ravine (see Document II.4.11, where they are called "protivotankovy rov") and, according to the witnesses, contained the bodies of Soviet officers rather than Jews.

4.2.13. Gerhard Adametz

[23] I take the account of this witness deposited in his statement of 17 October 1945, which I already mentioned earlier. Having reached Kiev around 10 September 1943, the group of 40 policemen, which became "Detachment 1005 b," was taken "to an old cemetery about 5 km from Kiev," evidently the Jewish Cemetery.

> *"We were led out of the cemetery into the adjacent field. The path leading through this field was cordoned off on both sides by policemen, who turned back everyone who approached. We saw about 100 inmates in the field, who were resting from their work. Every prisoner was shackled by both legs by a chain three quarters of a meter long. The prisoners were dressed in civilian clothing. As far as I can judge, the prisoners were Jews* […].
>
> *As we found out later, the inmates' work consisted of exhuming bodies buried in two large graves on this spot, transporting them, stacking them onto huge piles, and burning them. It is hard to say, but I believe that 40-45,000 bodies were buried here on this spot. One mass grave was in an anti-tank ditch, which was partially filled with bodies. The ditch was about 100 m long, 10 m wide and 4-5 m deep. The second mass grave was on the other side of the path, about 200 m from the anti-tank ditch. In the second mass grave, there were about 15,000 bodies. These were smaller and bigger bodies, and one must assume that these were men,*

women and children. I have never been able to learn when and how these people died or were killed. I believe that they were all Jews and probably all civilians, but this could not be determined because the bodies were badly decomposed. There were no longer any signs of any clothing. The bodies had probably been buried for more than a year, and there was nothing left but skeletons. I never did more than throw a fleeting glance at the bodies, because the awful smell made me sick, and I lost my appetite for months.

On the day we arrived at this place (about 10 Sept. 43), there were about 3 to 4 small piles of bodies stacked up in the field. Each of these small piles consisted of about 700 bodies and was about 7 m long, 4 m wide and 2 m high. In the anti-tank ditch itself, which had already been partially emptied, there were three large piles of bodies of about 2,000 bodies, about 8 m long, 8 m wide and 3 m high. We were told later that Detachment 1005 b had begun this work (the exhumation and cremation of bodies) about a month earlier.

Here, as well as at other locations, I saw that the following working method was in use. (Burning of bodies). The bodies were dragged to a certain place with iron hooks and laid on a wooden base. More wood was then leaned up all around the finished pile, the whole thing was then drenched with oil and gasoline and set on fire." (USSR-80, pp. 4-6)

"Detachment 1005 b" was supposed to cooperate with "Detachment 1005 a," consisting of 40 policemen and between 4 to 8 SD men, in the formation of two cordons, one external, which prevented outsiders from approaching, and one internal, which kept the inmates under surveillance.

"This chain was formed in a big circle about 100 m from the middle of the worksite."

The work continued "until around 1 October 1943." *Standartenführer* Blobel inspected the work around 20 September 1943 (but Blobel declared that this took place "in August").

"The piles of bodies were not set on fire at regular intervals, but every time when one or more piles were ready, covered with wood and drenched with oil and gasoline. The inmates received rich and rather good food, and I have seen how they once got schnapps to drink during their work. They worked from 7 in the morning until 6 in the evening, and had a 1-2 hours' lunch break. […] *In Kiev, at first about 100 inmates were at work, but this number was later increased to about 330 inmates."* (*Ibid*., pp. 6f.)

Around 29 September 1943, 30 inmates escaped, 6 of whom were killed, and the others vanished in the fog. 14 policemen were on duty that night, one of whom was Adametz. The policemen were arrested and threatened with being shot. They remained in prison at Kiev roughly between 1 to 10 October, and were then released and reassigned to guard duty; they were sent to Berdichev rather than Kiev, though, because they were told that "Group 1005 b" was already there. Adametz summed up his work at Kiev as follows:

"On about 30 September 43, the work (exhumation and cremation of corpses) was concluded, and all 330 inmates who had worked here were killed." (*Ibid*., p. 7)

> *"I believe that roughly 100,000 bodies were exhumed from mass graves and burned by the SD men from 1005 a and 1005 b."* (*Ibid.*, p. 12)

From this account, it is clear that Adametz had never been at Babi Yar. In fact, he not only never mentioned the name, but did not even know that the mass graves were supposed to have been located in a ravine. By contrast, he spoke of a "field," as if the area had been flat. His account has unmistakable similarities with those of witnesses having rendered their statements before him, but also exhibits various distortions.

The initial number of inmates working in the ravine, 100, coincides with that of the other witnesses; similarly, the final figure of 330 is the same as that mentioned by Davydov. Adametz says nothing of the origins of the other 230 inmates added to the labor crew after 10 September 1943, which is incomprehensible, because, if there were any logic to this story, the group of 40 policemen of which he claims to have been a member had been transferred to Kiev precisely to keep these additional 230 inmates under surveillance. Moreover, if there were 330 inmates, and 20 fled the day before, how could 330 of them be shot?

The witness declared that the bodies had been reduced to skeletons, but he had only given them a fleeting glance; what is more, the internal chain of sentinels was posted at approximately 100 meters from the workplace: it is therefore far from clear how much of a "glance" Adametz could have given the bodies.

The previous witnesses spoke of pyres consisting of 2,000 bodies. Adametz only described "pile of bodies," which were simply bodies all piled up, not pyres of bodies; to describe a pyre, he in fact uses the rather curious term "wooden base," which was evidently not built on a foundation of tombstones and steel rails. Adametz claims to have seen three to four small "piles of bodies" consisting of approximately 700 bodies and measuring 7 m × 4 m × 2 m, and another three big body piles consisting of 2,000 bodies and measuring 8 m × 8 m × 3 m.

The first type of body pile had a volume of 56 m^3, and one body occupied a volume of (56,000 dm^3 ÷ 700 bodies =) 80 dm^3 or 80 liters. In the second type, the volume was 192 m^3, and the volume available for a body was (192,000 dm^3 ÷ 2,000 bodies =) 96 liters. Since the specific weight of a human body is considered approximately equal to 1, and assuming a factor of 1.4 for the gaps between them when stacked (similar to stacked wood; Francescato *et al.*, p. 11), it may be seen that a body weighed approximately (80 ÷ 1.4 =) 57 or (96 ÷ 1.4 =) 68 kg, a little too much for mere skeletons.

The "body-pile" procedure was clearly nonsensical, if it was supposed to save time, and if, as is said, *Sonderkommando* 1005 B had been sent to Kiev for precisely this reason: they wasted time building these enormous "body piles" and then wasted more time disassembling them, taking all the bodies and transporting them – presumably using hooks – to the pyres. It would have been easier to exhume the bodies and place them directly on the pyres, without the needless intermediate procedure.

The witness reported observing two mass graves containing a total of 40,000 to 45,000 bodies. One was in a "anti-tank ditch" measuring 100 m × 10 m and 4 to 5 m in depth; the other, of unknown dimensions, contained approximately 15,000 bodies. In the first, therefore, there were (40,000 to 45,000 – 15,000 =) 25,000 to 30,000 bodies. A total of 100,000 bodies were cremated – just accidentally a figure identical to the number of bodies buried at Babi Yar according to the Extraordinary Soviet Commission –, including a maximum of 45,000 from when Adametz began to render service (on 10 September), and 55,000 in the 22 previous days, during which an average of (55,000 bodies ÷ 22 days =) 2,500 bodies were cremated per day. From 11 to 30 September, in 20 days, by contrast, the remaining 45,000 bodies were cremated, an average of (45,000 ÷ 20 =) 2,250 per day. When, therefore, the exhumation-cremation *Kommando* was "reinforced" to increase its productivity, the latter actually diminished!

There is basically no description of the term "wooden base"; the witness does not say how they were built, nor how many bodies they supported, nor how long the combustion lasted, nor where they got the wood. Adametz's account, more than a report of an experience he actually had, rather resembles the incoherent assemblage of fragments of stories of third persons (including the reference to "Detachment" 1005a and b), probably learned by him during his post-war imprisonment at Dachau,[545] perhaps from Ukrainian collaborators who had learned of the "investigations" of the Extraordinary State Commission on Babi Yar from newspapers.

Adametz's written statement was entered into evidence during the hearing of 19 February 1946 at the IMT by the Soviet Deputy Prosecutor Smirnov, who introduced it as follows (IMT, Vol. 7, p. 593):

> *"I omit the next four pages of the report, and submit to the Tribunal as evidence the original record of the interrogation of Gerhard Adametz (Exhibit USSR-80, Document Number USSR-80), taken by an American army lieutenant, Patrick McMahon. Gerhard Adametz was interrogated under oath. I dwell especially on this document, which has been put kindly at our disposal by our American colleagues, because Adametz' testimony, to use a legal term, in some points corroborates our own evidential material. The testimony is very lengthy, and I will limit myself to a few short quotations."*

The document, USSR-80, is a 12-page manuscript in German bearing the following English heading (USSR-80, p. 1):

> *"Before me, Patrick W. Mc Mahon, 2nd Lt., being authorized to administer oaths, appeared Gerhard Franz Adametz, who, beeing* [sic] *by first* [sic] *duly sworn in GERMAN, made and subscribed the following statement in his own handwriting."*

On the last page (12), we may read as follows:

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[545] The show-trial character of the U.S. war-crimes trials at Dachau staged right after the war, and the pervasive torture used against defendants as well as many witnesses are legendary; cf. Rudolf 2019a, pp. 88-92.

> *"This declaration was written by myself, on 36 pages, in my own hand, at Dachau, Germany, on 25 October 1945, at 2:00 PM, voluntarily and without compulsion."*

The original text is therefore a 36-page manuscript which has apparently been lost (nobody seems to know where it is), of which Document USSR-80 is supposed to be the transcript. Moreover, the date which appears on page 1, immediately below the heading, reads "Dachau Camp [instead of German *Lager Dachau*], 17. October 1945." The reason for this dating discrepancy is unknown; perhaps the text was written on 17 October and delivered to Mc Mahon on the 25th, in which case it is not an interrogation.

Adametz's statement is practically unknown in Holocaust literature. Document USSR-80, which was introduced into evidence at Nuremberg, was a translation into Russian (*Nyurnbergsky protsess*, Vol. I, pp. 641-645), and for precisely this reason, the quotations appearing in the German edition of the Nuremberg Trial transcript (IMG, Vol. 6, pp. 652-656) do not correspond to the original text, as it is a re-translation. A long extract from Adametz's statement in Russian was published by Alexander Kruglov with the reference GARF, 7021-148-256 (Kruglov 2011, pp. 112-117). As far as one can tell, the only partial transcript ("*Auszugweise Abschrift*") of the original text is found in a 1949 German book (with umlauts added and minor transcription errors: Meyer-Abich, pp. 70-75). The German text of Adametz's statement is riddled with anglicisms both by choice of words and by sentence structure. An analysis of his text in this regard is included in the German edition of the present study. It was not included in this edition, because these glaring flaws in the German text get completely lost when translating them into English. The import of these anglicisms is that the original text of Adametz's statement clearly was not written by a German in German, but in English, after which it was incorrectly translated into German by an inexperienced translator. In other words: If Adametz ever wrote a handwritten text, he did not write down his own words, but copied a poorly translated, originally English-language text. He would never have done this voluntarily.

[24] There are moreover at least four other testimonies of defendants mentioned by Hoffmann, which I cannot access: the interrogation of Fritz Zietlow dated 7 November 1961, of Max Hanisch dated 7 August 1962, of Franz Löbbert dated 28 January 1964, and of Hermann Kappen dated 21 February 1964 (Hoffmann, pp. 110-117). Considering Hoffmann's selected quotations from them regarding insipid fragments, these testimonies probably do not possess great value. They were all, moreover, issued 18-21 years after the alleged event in a trial context when the story of Babi Yar had crystallized in orthodox Holocaust literature and formed the basis for the accusations directed against the defendants. It was therefore inevitable that the defendants were conditioned by these factors. In these quotations, only Löbbert makes reference to exhumation-cremation work, mentioning a "grab excavator" which extracted bodies from the earth (*ibid.*, p. 112). The majority of the witnesses speak of shovels, however, while Budnik and

Steyuk mentioned an excavator, while Davydov mentioned tractors and, insane as it sounds, of dynamiting techniques, which would have scattered corpse parts all over the place but certainly would not have helped with anything else. While an excavator could be used to move the claimed 3 to 4 meters (!) of earth covering the mass graves, it certainly could not have been used to extract the bodies, because the excavator would have pulled out a cluster of earth and crushed bodies. The "hook" technique remains the most sensible, albeit primitive, method, although it would have taken an enormous amount of time in view of the claimed huge number of corpses.

4.2.14. Davydov (Davidov), Budnik and Kaper at the Stuttgart Trial

[25] In his "memoir" of 1992-1993, Kaper describes Davydov's, Budnik's and his participation in the trial of the defendants Sohns, Zietlow, Helfsgott and Kirstein before the Stuttgart District Court, held between late 1968 and early 1969. The story is verbose and full of irrelevant anecdotes. I shall report only the essentials (Budnik/Kaper/Wiehn, pp. 303-305):

> *"In 1969 Budnik, Davidov and I were sent to Stuttgart, Germany to testify against the fascists. We were supposed to recognize three leaders who orchestrated the atrocities in Babiy Yar.*
> *We flew to Warsaw then to Zurich (Switzerland). In Zurich we had a four-hour lay-over so we managed to see the city.* […]
> *The judge received us very cordially* [and] *asked us what the weather was like in Moscow, what type of climate there was. We talked a bit. Thus, we made our acquaintance with the judge. He told us that the hearing of the case would begin on Monday and that we would have to stay there for 10 days. Here in the court we got money for our trip and for 10 days stay.* […]
> *When we arrived at the court the hearing began and we were summoned to the hall. The judge and the jury were wearing black gowns and high caps. We were offered to swear on the Bible that we would tell the truth but since we didn't believe in G-d we were told to lift our hand with two fingers raised and swear that we would tell only the truth.*
> *In the hall there were schoolboys and* [-]*girls from the sixth to the tenth classes.*
> *We were told to go to the adjoining room so as not to hear what was said.*
> *Davidov was called first. He was kept there very long and Budnik and I became very nervous. Then Budnik was called and I was left alone.* […]
> *At that moment* [a] *recess was announced. We went to have a snack. After the recess, Budnik was called again and then me. When I came into the hall Budnik and Davidov were sitting on the benches for witnesses. I was asked to approach the judge and an interpreter sat nearby. The questions were asked in German and the interpreter translated. The first question was whom I recognized among the charged. They were ordered to stand up but I didn't recognize anybody. Then they asked questions about what I knew about Babiy Yar to check that I were not a fake. I answered all their questions. After this I was told that there was an album on the table and asked whom I recognized in it. I opened the album with photos*

which had no names on them but only numbers. I looked through it and only at the end of it I saw a picture in which I recognized sturmbahnfuhrer [sic] *Radomsky. I said that under the number such and such was Radomsky. I was asked if I recognized anybody else, but I did not. This was the first day of the trial.* […]
For two more days we went to the court to present our testimonies. I want to mention that the charged came to the court in white shirts and ties in their own cars. They were not imprisoned.
With the permission of the court we left for home not having waited for the end of the trial.
In Moscow we were gathered in the USSR Procurator's office and we told how the trial went. They listened with great interest.
Only some time later from the newspapers did we learn about the sentence [sic] *of the German criminals."*

Budnik also recalled this event, but his discussion of it is more concise:

"At the end of 1968, my past knocked at my door in the person of a postman. The letter he carried was completely unexpected to me. I was asked to testify to speak in front of the jury in Stuttgart on January 7th, 1969 at 9 o'clock. The charged were Sturmbannführer SS Gans Sons [sic: Hans Sohns], *Hauptsturmführer SS Fritz Zi*[e]*tlow, Hauptsturmführer SS Walter Helfsgot*[t] *and Sturmbannführer Fritz Kirstein* [sic]. *As it turned out, they were part of the group that designed crematoria in the concentration camps* [utter nonsense]. *It was they who financed* [sic!] *and organized the cover-up of Babi Yar during the retreat.*
The letter read as follows 'The evidence given by you earlier can not substitute for the interrogation at the hearing, as according to the rules of the German Criminal law procedure charter for sentencing only the evidence given before the jury at the hearing is acceptable.'
So Davidov, Kaper and I went to Stuttgart. The process was very well organized. Everything was done very properly without any excess. I liked one of the prosecutors. He spoke Russian very well and could communicate with us without an interpreter. I was very surprised that there were many young people in the courtroom. When I asked the prosecutor about it, he explained that it was necessary to bring young people here so that they know what their parents and grandparents did. They had to learn.
Even now I still have a yellowed and aged issue of the newspaper 'Stuttgarter Zeitung' dated February 14, 1969. One of the columns contains a big headline: 'Process over sonderkomand 1005; three Russian witnesses in Stuttgart; genuine and precise description of prisoner's activities; nobody knows the accused.'
We did not know either Sons or Helfsgot or Zitlov or Kirstein even if we had seen them in Babi Yar. Each of us were given photographs of Radomsky and Topaide for identification. I recognized Radomsky at once, but Topaide did not look like he did when he was young and had a crew cut. His appearance, for us, was always associated by the fact his head jerked. That was why we could not state if it was him.
We gave our testimony to the court and told how the corpses were burnt and how we escaped. All this was published in Stuttgarter Zeitung." (*Ibid.*, pp. 128f.)

The *Stuttgarter Zeitung* of 14 February 1969 in fact published an account of the hearing during which Davydov, Budnik and Kaper were interrogated; the headline was "Sonderkommando Trial 1005: Three Russian Witnesses in Stuttgart. Abominable and Precise Descriptions of the Inmates' Activities. No One Knows the Defendants." The article stated, among other things (*ibid*., pp. 311-313, facsimile of the article):

> *"The witnesses reported on the cremation of some 124,000 bodies. The names of the defendants, however, were entirely unknown to them; nor were they able to identify even a single defendant during their otherwise very precise descriptions."*

The first witness interrogated was Davydov, who described the technical procedure of the exhumations and cremations as follows:

> *"There were about ten gravesites in the Babi Yar ravine. The bodies of some 60,000 Jewish men, women and children were taken out of the main grave, and burned on 30 fireplaces. The witness estimated the total number of fireplaces at 62. Some 2,000 bodies were burned on each fireplace."*

The newspaper then referred to the question of recognizing the defendants:

> *"Basically the most interesting question, that is, whether the defendants' names were known to the witness, was answered in the negative. 'Neither the defendant Sohns's name?', the witness was asked again, who then responded very clearly and unmistakably: 'I heard this name for the first time when I received the summons to appear in court.' The attempt to identify the defendants in the courtroom as suspected SS guards in Kiev was also unsuccessful: 'I don't know anyone.'"*

The article dedicated very little space to the two other witnesses, no doubt because their interrogation was much shorter.

Budnik "spoke of some 120,000 bodies burnt on pyres, and then gave a vivid description of the escape."

Lastly, Kaper deposed as follows:

> *"Regarding the most important facts, his statements are in accordance with the testimonies of the two other witnesses.* […] *Not a single defendant was known to the witness Kaper."*

Two points should be noted. The witnesses did not recognize any of the defendants, with the exception of *Sturmbannführer* Paul Radomsky, who had been the commandant of the Syretsky Camp, where Davydov, Budnik and Kaper were interned. For the rest, they supplied names completely unknown to Holocaust historiography: *Sturmscharführer* Topaide or Topeide, *Hauptwachtmeister* Merkl or Merkel, *Hauptwachtmeister* Vogt, SS *Rottenführer* Rewer, SS *Rottenführer* Reed, and *Oberleutnant* Hanisch. Jens Hoffmann, who has studied the pre-trial investigation files of the "1005" trials, only knows the last defendant of them all, *Bezirksoberleutnant der Gendarmerie* Max Hanisch (Hoffmann, p. 109).

The second point is that the witnesses, in view of the trial, had come to agree on the number of bodies cremated: 120,000-124,000. The second figure resulted from simple arithmetic: 62 pyres × 2,000 bodies = 124,000 bodies. As a matter of fact, after the jumble of contradictory figures from their previous statements,

which I have discussed earlier, the streamlining of this figure had occurred early in 1967, when the German investigators, over the course of the preliminary investigations for the impending Stuttgart trial, interrogated Kaper (13 February),[546] who then claimed 120,000 cremated bodies, Budnik (14 February) with 120,000 to 125,000 cremated bodies, and Trubakov (14 February), who mentioned 125,000 cremated bodies.

4.3. Discussion of the Testimonies

4.3.1. The Number of Victims

Hoffmann asserts that "a total of between 100,000 and 125,000 bodies were burned on pyres during trace elimination at Babi Yar" (Hoffmann, p. 111). This means that, in addition to the almost 34,000 shot there, as attested to by documents, another 66,000-91,000 were shot at Kiev without leaving the slightest documentary trace! On the total number of victims at Kiev, orthodox Holocaust historiography is unable to propose anything but disparate and contradictory conjectures. This is shown clearly by one of the most important works on the "Shoah in Ukraine," the volume by Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower. Pohl declares that "the Germans continued to kill Jews at Babi Yar after the first massacre. In all, the total number of Jews killed at the site could be as high as 50,000" (Pohl 2008, fn 77, p. 65), but as his source he refers to a simple Holocaust article. Kruglov, by contrast, claims that 64,000 Jews were killed in the Kiev Oblast in 1941, 10,500 in 1942, and 100 in 1943 (Kruglov 2008, pp. 279, 281f.), a total of 74,600. He then writes that there were a total of 77,000 "indigenous Jewish victims" in this same oblast (*ibid.*, p. 284). In his study on Babi Yar, he reviews the figures cited by Soviet investigatory commissions and historians and concludes that "the figure of 40,000 Jews murdered in the city [of Kiev] does not seem too low" (Kruglov 2011, p. 42).

However, in the "Incident Reports," in addition to the figure of 33,771 Jews mentioned on 29 and 30 September 1941, there is no mention of any numerically relevant executions, either before or afterwards. And yet there appear communications such as these:

> *"In Kiev, 3 persons were publicly hanged for sabotage"*[547]
>
> *"The bandit Dmitry Ivanovich Semenov was shot during the attempted robbery of a district financial office in Kiev."*[548]

No. 21 of the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories" (18 September 1942) gives extensive coverage to Kiev. According to a census of 1 July 1942, there were 293,000 persons in the city, including 75,000 children up to 15 years of age; 96,000 were supplied with labor ID cards, another 60,000 were "key personnel," indispensable to the armaments industry and the *Wehrmacht*. There is no

[546] German interrogation text in Klee/Dreßen, pp. 133-136.
[547] EM No. 187 of 30 March 1943; Angrick *et al.*, p. 246.
[548] "Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten," No. 50 of 16 April 1943; *ibid.*, p. 785.

mention of killings of either Jews or non-Jews (Angrick *et al.*, p. 448). The number of victims attested to by contemporaneous German documents therefore remains approximately 34,000; all the rest is conjecture and fantasy.

It follows that the enormous figures of bodies exhumed and cremated mentioned by the witnesses are completely invented; and since these figures are inextricably linked to the number of pyres, this is not a matter of mere exaggeration, but of deliberate lies.

But should the official figure of 33,771 victims be considered reliable? It is not easy to answer this question, but a few German documents may assist us in gaining an idea of the question.

EM No. 106 dated 7 October 1941 reports that 3,145 Jews were shot at Zhitomir and that 25 to 30 tons of clothing belonging to the victims were then gathered (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 643); thus, on average, every victim wore (25,000 to 30,000 tons ÷ 3,145 =) 8.75 kg of clothing.

EM No. 135 of 19 November says (*ibid.*, p. 777):

> *"187 truckloads of clothing accumulated over the course of the Jewish action undertaken in Zhitomir and Kiev were placed at the disposal of the NSV for further use."*

Activity and Situation Report No. 7 dated November 1941 provides the same information, but with a different number of truckloads:[549]

> *"Over the course of the Jewish action in Kiev and Zhitomir, 137 truckloads of clothing were secured and made available to the NSV."*

According to Document NO-1257, 400 railway cars of "old clothes" had a mass of 2,700,000 kg, and one railway car transported 6,750 kg. The letter which Otto Luchterhandt, deputy executive director of the Lodz Ghetto, sent on 27 May 1942 to the Office of Agriculture at Posen informs us that there were approximately 370 railway cars of clothing at *Sonderkommando* Lange, and that this clothing required approximately 900 trucks with trailers for transport (Eisenbach 1946, pp. 233f.).

From these data we may deduce that 370 railway cars corresponded to about 900 trucks + trailers, or 1,800 trucks, or (1,800 trucks ÷ 370 cars =) one railway car to some five trucks. Therefore, the 187 trucks mentioned above were equivalent to (187 trucks ÷ 5 trucks/car =) 37.4 railway cars, or (37.4 cars × 6,750 kg/car =) 252,450 kg; of these, some (25,000 + 30,000 ÷ 2=) 27,500 kg referred to Zhitomir, so that 224,950 kg remained for Kiev, or (224,950 kg ÷ 33,771 victims =) approximately 6.7 kg of clothing per person. 137 trucks would have amounted to just some (27.4 cars × 6,750 kg/car – 27,500 kg =) 157,450 kg of clothing, or (157,450 kg ÷ 33,771 victims =) 4.7 kg of clothing per person.

Consider that a normal set of clothing worn indoors during fall (light shoes, socks, underwear, t-shirt, sweater, pants) already weighs some 3 kg. Adding to this a second set of clothes and a coat, this already exceeds the 4.7 kg per person

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[549] YVA, O.53-3, p. 126 (p. 22 of the report). Underlined in the original. NSV = *Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt*, National-Socialist People's Welfare Organization.

corresponding to 137 trucks in total, and easily reaches the 6.7 kg per person corresponding to 187 trucks in total. But not even this figure is realistic, because the Jews at Kiev believed that they would be resettled in another locality and, according to the German proclamation, they had to bring "warm clothing, underwear, etc." with them. Keep in mind that we all tend to take along way more clothes than this just for a brief one- or two-weeks' vacation. (A standard suitcase contains some 20+ kg of clothes.)

The photographs of the persons who were being taken to Babi Yar, according to orthodox Holocaust historiography, show that they were dressed in heavy clothing, with caps or overcoats. If each of these victims had brought an average of 8.75 kg of clothing along, as in the case of Zhitomir, this would have amounted to some (33,771 victims × 8.75 kg/victim =) 295 tons of clothes or some 219 truckloads from Kiev alone (plus some 20 truckloads for the 27.5 tons of clothes from Zhitomir). Vice versa, if assuming 8.75 kg of clothes per victim and assuming 137 truckloads, we arrive at some (157,450 kg ÷ 8.75 kg/person ≈) 18,000 victims, while 187 truckloads amount to some (224,950 kg ÷ 8.75 kg/person ≈) 25,700 victims. But, as I have mentioned above, these people believed that they were going to be resettled, and therefore took warm clothing and spare clothing with them, hence maybe 10 kg per person or even more; this means that even the two reduced victim figures calculated here are probably still too high.

These calculations, without claiming to establish the exact number of victims, nevertheless permit us to say that the figure of 33,771 is an exaggeration.

4.3.2. "Gas Vans" at Kiev in 1943?

Orthodox Holocaust historiography knows nothing about the alleged use of "gas vans" at Kiev in 1943; in this context, the only reference cited is a very late statement by Wilhelm Findeisen, the purported driver of a "gas van" (Spector 1993, p. 62). As Walter Kornfeld informs us, Findeisen was tried by the Darmstadt District Court together with Theodor Christensen and Karl Kretschmer (10 December 1968 – 18 April 1969). Findeisen was accused "of participating in several gassing operations of Jews as a gas-van driver in the fall of 1941 in Kiev and in early 1942 in Kharkov" (Kornfeld, p. 80).

If we consider that the only proof of the use of "gas vans" at Kiev, relating solely to the year 1941, is a statement signed in 1967, we can easily judge the reliability of the use of several "gas vans" (the witnesses always use the plural) in that city in 1943.

4.3.3. The Exhumation and Cremation Technique

An analysis of the testimonies reveals the following pattern: The inmates were taken to Babi Yar and chained up on 18 August 1943. During the first two days they removed the soil covering a mass grave using shovels, and on the third day they reached the first layer of bodies. The soil cover of the mass graves reached a

thickness of 3 to 4 meters, which is implausible. Three witness moreover mentioned an excavator.

The number and dimensions of the mass graves are not clear. Davydov speaks of four graves with a total of 80,000 bodies (one with 10,000, two with together 50,000 and one with 20,000); Blobel mentioned a grave measuring 55 m × 3 m × 2.5 m, while Adametz spoke of two graves with 40,000-45,000 bodies, one of which was 100 m long, 10 m wide and 4-5 m deep.

If we follow the majority of witnesses, then the bodies were extracted from the graves with suitable hooks. Some claim indirectly[550] or explicitly (Adametz) that the exhumed corpses were first deposited somewhere before they were put onto pyres. According to Adametz, these intermittent corpse deposits were either small piles measuring 7 m × 4 m × 2 m and containing 700 bodies, or big piles with 2,000 bodies measuring 8 m × 8 m × 3 meters. From these piles, the bodies were transported to the pyres, according to Steyuk "on motor vehicles." The pyres, often referred to by the witnesses as "furnaces," are described as having consisted of a stone base with railroad rails laid on top; metallic grates were placed on top of the rails, upon which alternating layers of wood and bodies were piled up to a height that varied between 2 and 4 meters. Davydov is completely out of line with his claim that the pyres were 10 to 12 m high.

The number of bodies thus arranged on the pyre ranged from 2,000 to 5,000; many witnesses agreed in saying 2,000. For Kuklia, these pyres were "4 feet in height, a length of about 10 meters and 5 meters in width." Since 4 feet correspond to only 1.22 m, it is obvious that this should be intended to mean 4 meters. Trubakov mentions a "planned" area measuring 10 m × 10 m, but it is not certain whether this corresponds to the total surface area of the pyre. Doliner mentions a "pile" measuring "two meters in height and 2-8 meters in diameter"; it was therefore round and of very variable diameter, as far as one can tell. Ostrovsky describes a platform[551] measuring 30 m × 40 m and 2 to 2.5 m high.

First of all, let us examine the dimensions of 10 m × 5 m × 4 m for a minimum of 2,000 bodies. Of these 200 cubic meters, at least 52 were *theoretically* occupied by bodies (assuming a minimum weight of some 26 kg for every heavily decomposed body;[552] hence a total mass of some 52,000 kg for the bodies). The remaining 148 cubic meters, with an average specific weight of 0.9 for green wood, in addition to a factor of 1.4 for the gaps in stacked wood (Francescato *et al*., p. 11), it would have contained around (148 m^3 × 0.9 kg/dm^3 ÷ 1.4 × 1,000 dm^3/m^3 =) 95,150 kg of wood; in reality, the bodies must have been arranged in layers like the wood, so that the factor of 1.4 also applies to them. It follows that the ef-

[550] Davydov: "Every time we had dug up 2,000 bodies, we had to build a furnace"; Kuklia: "The corpses had been already unearthed, but not burned yet"; Doliner: "When the bodies were exhumed, we were forced to manufacture a furnace."

[551] The witness used the term "*ploshchadka*", which can also mean "surface" or "small place," but it probably referred to the pyre's foundation of stones and rails.

[552] This is the average weight of decomposed bodies which a fan of Holocaust stories attributes to the camps at Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka. Cf. Mattogno/Kues/Graf, p. 1292.

fective volume occupied by the bodies was (52 m³ × 1.4 =) 73 cubic meters, leaving a volume of (200 m³ – 77 m³ =) only 127 cubic meters for the stacked wood. The available wood was therefore (127 m³ × 0.9 kg/dm³ ÷ 1.4 × 1,000 dm³/m³ =) some 81,650 kg of wood. Hence, there would have been only about (81,650 kg ÷ 2,000 bodies ≈) 40.8 kg of wood per body, or (40.8 kg wood/body ÷ 26 kg ≈) 1.6 kg of wood per kg of body.

The requirements in green wood for the cremation of an exhumed body, depending on its state, varies from some 250 to some 370 kg. As mentioned before, an average lumberjack is rated at some 1.35 tons of green wood per day, while ill-motivated PoWs are rated at only 0.63 tons daily (Mattogno 2021, pp. 280f.). Assuming the lower amount of wood requirement, the cremation of 2,000 bodies would have required (2,000 bodies × 250 kg/body =) 500,000 kg of wood, a quantity more than six times higher than what is inferred. A real pyre assembled according to the pattern described by the witnesses would have been much larger: (500,000 kg ÷ 0.9 kg/dm³ × 1.4 ÷ 1,000 dm³/m³ =) some 778 cubic meters for the wood, plus 73 for the bodies, for a total of 851 cubic meters. If the pyre was 4 meters high, the base would have had to measure some 213 square meters. If, therefore, at least one side of the pyre measured 10 meters in length, the other had to be more than 21 meters long. Obviously, if the number of bodies placed on this pyre was 4,000 or 5,000, the absurdity would be even more obvious.

If, on the other hand, the pyre measured 30 m × 40 m × 2.5 meters, its volume was therefore 2,400 to 3,000 m³, a blatant exaggeration in contradiction to the 851 cubic meters calculated above.

All this vitiates Budnik's assertion that the stone platform measured 10 m × 10 m (and was 3 m high), in the event that these were the dimensions of the pyre. With these data, the pyre containing 2,000 corpses would have contained ([300 m³ – 73 m³] × 0.9 kg/dm³ ÷ 1.4 × 1,000 dm³/m³ =) some 146 tons of wood, less than a third of the actually required 500 tons.

Davydov, Berlyant and Kuklia also indicate the number of bodies in every layer of the pyre, at 200 and 300 for a pyre of 3,000 bodies, and 250 for a pyre of 3,000-4,000 bodies. If the pyre was four meters high, it would have had to consist of (3,000 ÷ 300 =) 10 layers of bodies and wood, and every layer would have had to be (400 cm ÷ 10 =) 40 centimeters thick! In a real pyre, just the wood alone would have been (300 bodies × 0.25 t/body ÷ 0.9 t/m³ × 1.4 =) approximately 116 m³ in volume, and if the surface area of the pyre were (10 m × 5 m =) 50 m², then each layer of wood would be (116 m³ ÷ 50 m² =) 2.32 m in height, or, in round numbers, approximately 2.5 m, including the layer of bodies above the wood.[553]

The naphtha and kerosene presumably employed in the cremations influences the above-mentioned calculations in no significant way: they were used above all to initiate the combustion of the wood. On the other hand, I assumed the lowest quantity of green wood as the requirement for the cremation of a body. Many

[553] Each layer of bodies would add (300 bodies × 0.026 t/body ÷ 1 t/m³ × 1.4 =) some 11 m³ or a mere (11m³ ÷ 50m² =) 0.22 m of height, hence a total of 2.54 m per layer.

witnesses mention this pouring of fuel onto the pyres, but no one explains how, from where, and by whom all these things were transported to Babi Yar.

Steyuk mentions 20 layers for 5,000 bodies in relation to the height of a two-story house, approximately 6 meters, so that every layer would have had to be (600 cm ÷ 20 =) 30 centimeters thick! Vice versa, 20 layers of green wood and bodies would have reached a height of (2.5 m × 20 =) 50 meters, or a 20-story house!

Three witnesses mention 70,000 cremated bodies, while one mentions 70,000 to 80,000. The cremation of 70,000 bodies would have required (70,000 bodies × 0.250 t/body =) 17,500 tons of green wood. Where did they get it? Very significantly, the witnesses maintain strict silence in this regard: the wood was just there, by a sort of magic Holocaust trick.

The trucks which transported wood from Radostowice, near Pszczyna, to Auschwitz had a capacity of 5 metric tons each (see Mattogno 2021a, pp. 57-59). To transport the wood required for the cremations to Babi Yar would therefore have required (17,500 t ÷ 5 t/truck =) 3,500 trips, assuming a truck of a similar design.

If the 330 inmates (this is the maximum figure) had been assigned to cutting the wood in nearby forests, and if they were all cooperative lumberjacks, they could have supplied (330 men × 1.35 t/man/day =) 445.5 tons in one day. As unwilling prisoners, however, their yield would have been more likely about (330 men × 0.63 t/man/day =) 207.9 tons of green wood daily. To obtain the total requirement would have taken (17,500 t ÷ 207.9 t/day =) some 84 days, or two and a half months, hence longer than they claim to have been deployed there in total. Even if they all were diligent, ambitious lumberjacks, this work would have lasted (17,500 t ÷ 445.5 t/day =) some 39 days, after which they would have had only three days left in which to exhume and cremate the 70,000 bodies. The story is even more absurd, since it is claimed that between 50 and 85 of the inmates were working elsewhere for 20 days.

Finally, the witnesses do not explain how the upper layers of wood and bodies were placed on pyres 3 to 4 meters high or even higher. Kaper limits himself to a very generic reference to “a special scaffolding” with no further details.

Even more enigmatic is how the bodies of the victims of the “gas vans” could have been “throw[n] in the burning furnace,” which not only had a height of 3-4 meters, but moreover would have been impossible to approach because of the intense heat.

The burning time for one pyre (from a minimum of one night to a maximum of 1-2 days) is rather meager and, at any rate, to proceed with the processing of the ashes, it would have been necessary to either cool the embers with abundant water – which would have turned the ashes into a slurry that could not have been processed with sieves – or to wait several days, but in this regard the witnesses have nothing to say.

All the exhumation and cremation procedures were standardized, supervised by specialist German instructors, so that all the contradictory data cannot be explained by procedural variations.

In conclusion, from whatever point of view you look at it, the story of the cremation of a minimum of 70,000 bodies at Babi Yar is implausible and utterly absurd, to say nothing of the cremation of 100,000 to 125,000 bodies as mentioned by Hoffmann.

4.3.4. The Alleged Cremation of 33,771 Executed Jews

If we assume that only the 33,771 Jews mentioned in the relevant *Einsatzgruppen* report were killed at Babi Yar and not, as the witnesses claim, 70,000 or even more, the disposal of the corpses would have been correspondingly easier. Let us now examine the technical requirements for a corpse cremation of this magnitude.

In this case, since no witness mentions a squad of wood-cutters assigned to supplying wood for the pyres, if we exclude Holocaust magic, we must assume the use of dry wood from some warehouse. Since 1 kg of dry wood is equivalent to about 1.9 kg of green wood, the requirement for the cremation of one body can be fixed at (250 kg/body ÷ 1.9 =) some 130 kg per body. This alters the order of magnitude of the results of the calculations set forth above in no significant way. Substituting 130 for 250, a pyre of 2,000 bodies would have measured 10 m × 12 m × 4 m; one layer of wood would have been 1.2 meters thick, or approximately 1.4 including the bodies. It follows that, in the most favorable hypothesis, the 10 to 12 *layers* of the pyre mentioned by Davydov (according to a charitable interpretation, since he is speaking explicitly of meters) would have been (1.4 m/layer × 10 to 12 layers =) 14 to 16.8 meters high!

The cremation of the bodies of the persons shot would therefore have required (33,771 bodies × 0.13 t/body =) 4,390 tons of seasoned wood, the equivalent of (4,390 t ÷ 5 t/truck =) 878 trips by truck. I shall return to the question of transport later. If the bodies were cremated on pyres consisting of 2,000 bodies each, this would have required (33,771 bodies ÷ 2,000 bodies/pyre =) 17 pyres in 42 days of activity, on average one pyre every 2.5 days. In practice, Babi Yar would have smoked for 42 consecutive days, day and night, filling the air around Kiev with the stench of the exhumed cadavers and the stink of the burnt bodies.

If this had really happened, there would be numerous objective confirmations, such as photos, reports and diary entries.

a) Residues of the Equipment Used for the Construction of the Pyres

On 13 November 1943, Steyuk declared to a representative of the KGB:

> *"Yes, I know well the place of the excavations in Babi Yar and can even specify where they buried the metal for construction on which the bodies were burned."*

On 4 February 1944, Doliner confirmed:

> *"When all the corpses had been burned, these furnaces were dismantled and the rails, bars and stones were carried in different parts of the ravine and covered with earth."*

Therefore, the rails and grids (pieces of metallic fencing from the Jewish Cemetery) and the tombstones were also buried at Babi Yar, and at least two witnesses knew exactly where they were. And yet the Extraordinary State Commission did not even take the trouble to bring to light these important instruments from the crime scene, which most likely means that they were not buried in the soil at Babi Yar. This is also true of the tombstones allegedly used as the base for the pyres. The Soviet Commission did not even take the trouble to inspect the Jewish Cemetery to verify whether any iron fencing or tombstones was actually taken away from there.

b) Obtaining the Wood

No. 43 of the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories" dated 26 February 1943 refers to the difficulties of supplying the civilian population of the General Commissariat of Kiev with firewood for fuel, but also, from the same city (Angrick *et al.*, p. 697):

> *"In Kiev, the population could only be supplied with firewood to a minor extent, since there was no transport available for the delivery of peat and firewood."*

There is neither any documentary trace of the presumed deliveries of 4,390 tons of wood to Babi Yar, nor, we must add, of the tanks of naphtha and kerosene with which the pyres were allegedly soaked.

c) Impossible Ignorance on the Part of the Resistance and the Civilian Population

Karel C. Berkhoff has documented the fact that the Soviets were immediately informed of executions at Babi Yar, thanks in particular to two reports written immediately afterwards. Andrei Ivanovich Maremukha, a junior lieutenant in the militia, authored a report on 4 November 1941 stating, in part, that

> *"on September 23 of this year, the German police arrested about a hundred Jews, took them outside the city of Kiev to the sapper field, where there was a deep pit. Mines had been placed, and all were taken there. The mines were detonated and the entire group of people perished."* (Berkhoff 2015, p. 254)

On 16 November 1941, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency published an article with the headline "Nazis Execute 52,000 Jews in Kiev; Smaller Pogroms in Other Cities," reading:

> *"Fifty-two thousand Jews, including men, women and children, were systematically and methodically put to death in Kiev following the Nazi occupation of the Ukrainian capital, according to information received today by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency from an unimpeachable source.*
>
> *The details available here establish that the victims did not lose their lives as the result of a mob pogrom, but by systematic, merciless execution carried out in accordance with cold-blooded Nazi policy of Jewish extermination. Similar measures, though on a smaller scale, have been taken in other conquered towns."*

Berkhoff then notes that this news item was reproduced on 19 November by the two Soviet newspapers *Pravda* and *Izvestia* (Berkhoff 2015, p. 252):

> *"As a correspondent of the Overseas News Agency reports from a location in Europe, information that the Germans in Kiev killed 52,000 Jews – men, women, and children – has been received from reliable sources."*

If the source was Maremukha's report, as it seems to be, his "about a hundred Jews" was now transformed into 52,000. The grotesque killing method described by Maremukha – driving the victims into a mined pit – is also not found in later reports.

The second, more-important report was compiled on 4 December 1941 by the regiment commissar Aleksei Popov. As noted by Berkhoff, "two months after the massacre of Kiev's Jews, Popov was the first Soviet informant to mention the ravine in this regard and to name it Babi Yar" (*ibid.*, p. 256). The information in the report was repeated with various changes by the Soviet newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* in an article dated 10 December headlined "Unprecedented Crimes of the Fascists in Kiev" (*ibid.*, pp. 261f.).

Soviet knowledge relating to Babi Yar stops here. In the summer of 1943, when the stench of the bodies and cremations purportedly blanketed the city for 42 days, when the glow of the pyres allegedly lit up the skies at night, when innumerable trucks full of firewood with the destination Babi Yar supposedly passed by in the streets every day, no one noticed; no one wrote a report; no citizen of Kiev ever wrote a diary entry or took a photograph of the smoke rising constantly from Babi Yar; no Soviet or any other reconnaissance plane ever photographed it from the air.

Udo Walendy (1992) has called attention to the fact that, during this period, the front was very close to Kiev. From the *War Diary of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht* (*Kriegstagebuch des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht*) it can be derived that on 17 September 1943, the Soviets were only "60 km from Kiev."[554] Over the following days the front got increasingly closer to the city:

- 19 September: "Enemy attacked near Kiev; retreat was successful" (p. 1121)
- 20 September: "The situation is unfavorable in Kiev Region and on the right wing of the 2nd Army" (p. 1123)
- 21 September: "They [the 2nd Army] withdrew to a bridgehead near Kiev and northwards" (p. 1125)
- 22 September: "Enemy follows retreat movement; north of Kiev they advanced across the Dnieper" (p. 1128)
- 23 September: "He [enemy] crossed Dnieper with weaker forces south of Kiev" (p. 1131)
- 24 September: "Diminishing air activity on both sides due to deteriorating weather conditions" (p. 1135)
- 26 September: "Further north, enemy attacks on Kiev could be repulsed" (p. 1143)

[554] Schramm 1982b, p. 1111; all subsequent page numbers from there unless noted otherwise.

– 27 September: "At 8th Army, bridgeheads north of Kiev had to be scaled back" (p. 1145)
– 28 September: "Our own bridgehead near Kiev managed to hold out against enemy attacks." (p. 1148)
– 29 September: "4th Tank Army evacuates bridgehead at Kiev." (p. 1151)

On 7 October 1943, the following information appeared:

> *"Our own air activity approximately equal to previous day with a total of 2,212 missions."* (p. 1180)

Therefore, over the period of the presumed exhumation and cremation of bodies at Babi Yar, the front line was relatively close to Kiev, and there was intense air activity on both sides, German and Soviet. Can we seriously believe that Soviet reconnaissance planes never photographed Kiev, as the Germans did? As I will show in the next subsection, and as far as is known, German reconnaissance planes flew at least three missions over Kiev in the second half of 1943, on 26 September, 6 November and 27 December.

Orthodox Holocaust historiography adduces at least two diaries from residents of Kiev which mention the 1941 shootings at Babi Yar. From the diary of L. Nartova, the entries relating to 26 and 28 September 1941 are quoted;[555] from the diary of Irina A. Khoroshunova, the entries of 30 September and 2 and 10 October 1941 (Hoppe/Glass, Doc. 94, pp. 311-315).

In contrast to this, no diary entries by Kiev residents about the alleged corpse exhumation and cremation are known.

An article in the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of 28 October 1942 headlined "Systematic Execution of Jews in Nazi-occupied Russia Reported by Partisans" shows in an exemplary manner that it was not difficult for the Soviets to receive information directly from Kiev. The article in fact narrates the story of "a Jewish partisan who succeeded in slipping into Kiev, dressed in peasant clothes," and then wrote a report to the *Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee*; the information supplied was very general and without reference to any shootings at Babi Yar.

New information on Babi Yar only began to appear after the Soviets retook Kiev. On 16 November 1943, the Soviet newspaper *Izvestia* published an article by Evgeni Krieger headlined "*Yak bylo v Kieve*" ("Thus It Was at Kiev"); on 20 November, it was republished by the newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* (*Red Star*), with an article by A. Avdeyenko and P. Olender under the headline "Babi Yar" (Berkhoff 2012, pp. 149, 338).

On 29 November 1943, *The New York Times* dedicated an article to Babi Yar by William H. Lawrence under the headline "50,000 Kiev Jews Reported Killed." The author reports:

> *"Kiev authorities asserted today* [22 October] *that the Germans machine-gunned an estimated 50,000 to 80,000 Kiev Jewish men, women and children in late September, 1941, and two years later – when Kiev's recapture by the Red Army*

[555] Hoppe/Glass, Doc. 84, p. 296. The original Russian is an extract containing the entries for 26, 28 and 29 September, followed by 16 and 19 October 1941. TsDAGO 1-22-347, pp. 1f.

> *seemed imminent – forced Soviet war prisoners to burn all the bodies, destroying all evidence of this crime.*
> *This was the story told to the Kiev Atrocity Commission and a group of Anglo-American-Soviet correspondents in bleak Babi Yar, deep in a ravine northwest of Kiev where the massacre allegedly took place."*

The story had been told by three Soviet soldiers who had participated in the cremations. Lawrence revealed that

> *"no witness to the shooting appeared before the commission or talked with the correspondents,"*

before commenting as follows:

> *"On the basis of what we saw, it is impossible for this correspondent to judge the truth or falsity of the story we were told. It is the contention of the Kiev authorities that the Germans with characteristic thoroughness not only burned bodies and clothing but crumbled bones, and shot and burned the bodies of all the war prisoners participating in the burning except the handful who escaped; so evidence of their atrocity will not be available for the outside world."*

At the end of the article, Lawrence described his own direct observations:

> *"If this were the German intent they succeeded well, for there is little evidence in the ravine to prove or disprove the story. We did see a few isolated bones, including a skull, some matted hair, a shoulder bone, an arm, a gold tooth, bridgework and some spots on the ground which we were told was blood of prisoners who were shot by Germans after the Jew-body burning had been completed. There were spectacle cases, handbags and other evidence left in Babi Yar.*
> *Freshly excavated earth in the ravine's floor left no doubt that something had happened there."*

The problem was determining precisely what had happened there, and the freshly excavated earth could have originated from research excavations carried out by the Soviets.

This meticulous elimination of all traces is in open contradiction to the traces the Germans left in the Syretsky Camp, very close to Babi Yar, where the Soviet Commission exhumed and photographed many dozens of bodies,[556] which had not, therefore, been cremated.

Furthermore, the events said to have transpired in August-September 1943 were described only *after* the Soviet recapture of Kiev. On 15 November 1943, the witness Ivan Stepanovich Yanovich declared (Trubakov, p. 240):

> *"Q*[uestion]*: Did you see how the Germans dug up corpses from the graves and burned them in the fire?*
> *A*[nswer]*: I did not see because it was impossible to see, first of all, guards stood around the ravine, and there is a tall sand escarpment around it, so it could not be seen what they were doing there, but starting from August 1943 to October 1943 a fire burned in this ravine, day and night – with black smoke and the smell*

[556] Babi Yar Album, GARF, 128-132. Two photographs show "bodies exhumed from a garbage pit," while another shows "bodies exhumed from a pit."

> *was unbearable, there was talk among residents that the Germans had dug up all the dead bodies with a machine like an excavator, poured oil on them and burned."*

If this had been true, many of the several-hundred-thousand inhabitants of Kiev would have made some reference in their diaries to this infernal spectacle, or would have made photos of it as early as August and September 1943.

In conclusion, this sort of ignorance on the part of the Soviets of all the essential elements of the presumed exhumation-cremation operation would be inexplicable, if this operation had really occurred even remotely to the extent claimed.

d) The Aerial Photograph of 26 September 1943

In 1992, Canadian geologist John C. Ball published an aerial photograph of Babi Yar taken on 26 September 1943. He wrote that the exhumation-cremation activity was carried on from 18 August to 19 September 1943, and that the photograph in question was taken "one week after the end of the supposed mass cremations in the ravine." His comment was that the photograph shows no trace of any such activity and that there is no visible vehicle traffic (Ball, pp. 106-108).

Two principal objections have been raised against Ball's assertions. The first is that he has only reproduced part of the aerial photograph in question, leaving out a large part of the ravine. It is moreover objected that the witness Davydov declared that on 25-26 September the operation was almost over, so that the aerial photograph could not have shown the cremation activity in any case.

I shall begin with the second objection. Let's recall what Davydov actually stated:[557]

> *"On 25 or 26 August* [correct: September], *when the work was almost finished, we were supposed to build one more furnace, for our own destruction. We realized this, because there were no more bodies in Babi Yar, but we were still building a furnace."*

But he also asserted that there were four mass graves containing 80,000 bodies, and that a total of 70,000 bodies were cremated. Since the Soviets did not find the remaining 10,000 bodies, either the figure of the exhumed bodies or that of the cremated bodies is incorrect. In any case, the Russian adverb "*pochti*" (almost) obviously means that on 25-26 September, the work was not yet finished, and that a small fraction of the bodies were still awaiting cremation; in fact, the inmates were ordered to build another furnace, according to Davydov, in order to cremate their own bodies, but this is only his supposition. This additional pyre no doubt could have been planned to serve for the cremation of the remaining bodies. If, moreover, a pyre burned up to 1-2 days, on 26 September there should also have been one or two recently lit pyres which were still smoking.

A Soviet map from 1947 clearly shows the contours of the Babi Yar Ravine (see Document II.4.1.). Compare this with a German map from 1943 (see Document II.4.2.). This permits us to establish that the ravine was delimited by the fol-

[557] GARF, 7021-65-6, p. 16.

lowing streets: Lagerna and Dorohozhytska to the south, Kasarmenna to the northwest, Petropavlivska to the north, and Vrubelivskyi uzviz (Russian: Vrubelevsky spusk) to the east. The principal ravine at Babi Yar was located to the west; to the east, flanked by Vrubelivskyi Uzviz, which was a secondary branch. To the south, between the two branches of the ravine, was the "Jewish cemetery." To the south of this latter, separated by the Dorohozhytska Road, was the "Bratske cemetery," and further south, separated from the Bratske cemetery by the Lagerna Road, was the "Lukyanivka (Lukyanovka) cemetery." A German map from 1941 (see Document II.4.3.) reports the three cemeteries with the simple designation "*Friedhof*." However, the name of the street which separated the first two is "vulitsya Melnikova," which was therefore another name for the Dorohozhytska Road. (I will return later to the question of the names of the road.)

The above permits us to establish the coordinates for an examination of the photograph published by J. Ball (see Document II.4.4.). These are the captions to the photos: "location of alleged shootings and cremations was at edge of Jewish cemetery at Babi Yar Ravine"; "Babi Yar Ravine." "orthodox cemetery" "Jewish cemetery"; and "Melnik[ova]) Street." The "orthodox cemetery" is that shown on the 1943 map, known as the "*Bratske Friedhof*." The road at the bottom which cuts the right corner of the photograph is the Lagerna Road, which follows the southern edge of the ravine, as clearly shown in the 1947 map. It follows that the photograph published by John Ball depicts the entire Babi Yar Ravine, so that the accusation made against him is unfounded.

The enlargement of the photograph examined by Ball, however, covers only a part of the ravine (*ibid.*, p. 135). And it is true that the branch of the ravine indicated by Ball is not the location where the 33,771 Jews are said to have been shot, buried and cremated (see further below).

German reconnaissance planes flew over Kiev at least four times between September and December 1943, and took hundreds of photographs. According to the available partial data,[558] the missions were as follows:

Reference numbers[559]	Date	Photographs
No. 1979	26 September 1943	1-151
No. 3482	26 September 1943	1-176
No. 6726	6 November 1943	1-111
No. 4235	17 December 1943	1-146

The ravine at Babi Yar appears very clearly in two photographs taken on 26 September 1943, No. 1979/104 and No. 1979/105. In the first (Document II.4.5.), the ravine is visible in the upper margin of the image; in the other (Document II.4.6.), it is visible in the lower part, well centered, showing the entire district. Documents II.4.7 and II.4.8. show an enlargement of the ravine.

[558] Now archived online at https://web.archive.org/web/20160307133951/http://www.kievograd.org/karty (last accessed on 13 Sept. 2021).

[559] These numbers are located in a small square panel in the upper left-hand corner of the photographs, but it is not clear what they mean.

It is not easy to interpret these images with certainty. In both, in the left-hand branch of the ravine, we see something which could appear to be a thin wisp of smoke originating from a square or rectangular white object. Nevertheless, in both images, taken in sequence, the contours of the presumed smoke are practically identical; not only that, but section "D" (see Documents II.4.9 and II.4.10) is linear, which is not compatible with the theory that this is a vertical column of smoke.

It is therefore much more probable that the "smoke" is an artifact of color of the soil. In any case, a pyre consisting of 2,000 bodies, that is, a pile made up of (2,000 bodies × 130 kg wood/body =) 260 tons of wood, would have generated a column of smoke enormously bigger and more intense, even during the final phase of combustion. Moreover, the presence of more than 300 inmates supervised by dozens of German guards, as well as vehicles used for the transport of wood and liquid fuel inevitably would be visible in the photographs, but the images do not show any trace of them.

There is another even-more-convincing argument. According to the most meticulous reconstruction, the pathway of the Jews destined to be shot is said to have been that which appears outlined in Document II.4.11. According to this, the victims' procession would have run along Dorogozhitska Road, turned left (taking the road which in the map is referred to as Lagerna Road in Documents II.4.1. and II.4.2.), skirting the "Bratske Cemetery," and entered the area of the ravine at the southeast end at the corner between Dorogozhitska Road and Oranzhereina Road (dashed line and black arrow in Doc. II.4.11).

Document II.4.12 shows in a more-meticulous way the ravine in a map similar to that in the preceding document. The arrow marks the victims' claimed entry point to the ravine at the corner of the two roads mentioned above. The continuous line in Document II.4.11. running along the Melnikova Road indicates the pathway of the (presumed) subsequent victims between 1941 and 1943. Below, I supply additional explanations on the changes in the names of these roads over time.

If we now return to the aerial photographs, it is easy to notice that the point of the presumed smoke (top ellipse in Document II.4.13.) is located in an area completely different from that of the claimed shooting (and eventual cremation) of the Jews (bottom ellipse). This point of the presumed rising smoke is not even compatible with the entry into the ravine of the claimed additional victims from Melnikova Road, which is indicated by the double-arrow line in the center of Document II.4.13.

One may therefore conclude that the two photographs of Kiev taken on 26 September 1943 do not at all confirm the story of the cremations; on the contrary, they refute it.

4.4. The Executions in the Light of German Documents

From what has just been explained, it may be seen that it is quite implausible that the bodies of (some) 33,771 Jews were exhumed and cremated at Babi Yar; consequently no such large number of persons was ever buried there and therefore not even shot there, notwithstanding the German documents which mention this figure.

EM No. 101 dated 2 October 1941 reports the following scanty bit of information (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 615):

> *"In collaboration with Group Headquarters and two squads from the Police Regiment South,* Sonderkommando *4a executed 33,771 Jews in Kiev on 29 and 30 Sept. 41."*

"Activity and Situation Report No. 6 of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the Security Police and the SD in the USSR" relating to the period 1-31 October 1941 reads:[560]

> *"In reprisal for acts of arson in Kiev, all Jews were arrested and a total of 33,771 Jews were executed on 29 and 30 Sept."*

According to this document, the shooting occurred for a very well-defined reason: reprisal. However, none of these documents specify where exactly the executions took place at Kiev.

Victoria Khiterer has reconstructed the background to the matter in an article. First she asks, "why did the Nazis in Kiev switch from their policy of concentrating Jews in ghettos" suddenly to a general massacre (Khiterer, p. 1), and explains the fact as follows:

> *"In Kiev the Nazis met more severe resistance than they had experienced in their prior occupations of other European capitals. On September 24, several large buildings in the downtown area of Kiev, on Kreshchatik Street and Proreznaia Street, were blown up, including the German Army headquarters and the hotel 'Continental' where many Germans officers were quartered. On September 25 the resulting fire continued to spread in the center of the city. The explosions and fire destroyed the area about one square mile.* […]
>
> *Hundreds of German soldiers were killed in the explosions and fires. Several partisan groups worked underground in the city. Kiev was turned into an arena of total war.*
>
> *The Nazis blamed the Jews for these explosions. During the fire on Kreshchatik Street they caught and killed one young Jew, who had cut the water hose that the Germans were using to suppress the fire. This case was used by the Nazis to justify the massacre of the Jews in Babi Yar as revenge against the Jews for the terrorist explosions in the city."* (*Ibid.*, p. 5)

At Nuremberg, General Alfred Jodl declared that the explosions were the work of a Soviet commando, so that the Jews of Kiev were innocent.

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[560] "*Tätigkeits- und Lagebericht Nr. 6 der Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD in der UdSSR (Berichtszeit vom 1.-31.10.1941).*" RGVA, 500-1-25/1, p. 15.

> *"Therefore, the explanation of the massacre of Jews in Babi Yar as an act of retaliation for the explosions in the city was designed as a bureaucratic justification for the killing."* (*Ibid.*, p. 6)

But if *Einsatzgruppe* C needed "a bureaucratic justification" to kill Jews, then they had obviously not received any extermination order for all Jews as Jews.

EM No. 106 dated 7 October offers another explanation. After delving into the damage caused by the explosions, the author of the report informs that

> *"approximately 25,000 people had become homeless as as result of the destruction particularly of houses, and the resulting forced evacuation of endangered blocks of houses, and had to spend the first few days of the occupation under the open sky."*

In the meantime, dwellings undamaged by the explosions or the fire were made available to the population, the report continues:

> *"On the other hand, corresponding numbers of dwellings were made available through the liquidation of some 35,000 Jews on 29 und 30 Sept. 41, so that housing the homeless has now been ensured, and has actually been accomplished in the meantime."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, pp. 639f.)

A little bit further on, the report sets forth the background to the shootings:

> *"There was particularly great excitement on the part of the population against the Jews at that time, for one thing due to the economically privileged situation of the Jews under Bolshevik rule, and for their services as informants and agents for the NKVD, as well as because of the tensions in Kiev and the great fire resulting from them. Add the fact that the Jews had demonstrably participated in setting the arson. The population therefore expected the German authorities to carry out appropriate reprisals. For this reason, by arrangement with the city commandant, all Jews of Kiev were ordered to gather at a certain place at 8.00 AM on Monday, 29 September. These proclamations were bill-posted all over the city by members of the Ukrainian militia. At the same time, it was orally announced that all the Jews in Kiev were to be resettled. In collaboration with the group headquarters and 2 squads of the Police Regiment South, Sonderkommando 4a executed 33,771 Jews on 29 and 30 Sept. Money, valuables, underwear and clothing were secured and partly made available to the NSV to supply ethnic Germans, partly to the provisional administration of the city for distribution to needy members of the local population.*
>
> *The operation itself proceeded without friction. There were no incidents. The 'resettlement measures' carried out against the Jews has definitely met the population's approval. That the Jews were really liquidated has hardly become known so far, and in the light of previous experience would hardly have met any disapproval."* (*ibid.*, pp. 641f.)

EM No. 97, dated 28 September 1941, also refers to the explosions at Kiev, and states (*ibid.*, p. 598):

> *"Demonstrably, Jews significantly involved in acts of arson. Supposedly 150,000 Jews present. Verification of these data not yet possible. 1,600 arrests during first operation. Measures introduced to register entire Jewry. Execution of at least*

> *50,000 planned. Wehrmacht welcomes measures and requests radical course of action."*

A German proclamation required all the Jews in the city to appear at the collection point. The German text said:[561]

> *"All Jews of the City of Kiew and surroundings are to appear by 8:00 AM on Monday, 29 September 1941, at the corner of Melnik and Dokteriwski Street (next to the cemeteries). Documents, money and valuables are to be brought along, as well as warm clothing, underwear, etc."*

Nevertheless, EM No. 128 dated 3 November 1941 says that *Einsatzgruppe* C was expecting the arrival of only 5,000-6,000 Jews, but surprisingly 30,000 of them showed up:

> *"The biggest of these operations took place immediately after the capture of Kiev; for this, only Jews with their entire families were used. The problems arising in carrying out such a large-scale operation – particularly with regard to registration – were overcome in Kiev by ordering the Jewish population with bill-posting to be resettled. Although initially a participation of only some 5,000 to 6,000 Jews was expected, more than 30,000 Jews showed up, who, because of the extremely skillful organization, kept believing in their resettlement until immediately before the execution."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 744)

The Germans, therefore, invited *all* the Jews in the city – presumably 150,000 of them – yet they only expected 5,000 to 6,000 to show up, and were amazed when they saw that more than 30,000 of them came!

Other documents mentioned shootings in Kiev with a similar order of magnitude, but with direct or indirect reference to the first source. For example, the report by Department VII of the 454th Rear-Security Division of 2 October 1941 reports (Hoppe/Glass, Doc. 90, pp. 306f.):

> *"The Jews of the city had been ordered to appear at a certain place for the purposes of registration and internment in a camp. Approximately 34,000 of them appeared, including women and children. After having had to hand over their valuables and articles of clothing, all were killed, which took several days."*

Another document, "Report 10" by Erich Koch, dated 5 October 1941, states:[562]

> *"The Kiev fire (24.-29. September 1941) destroyed exactly the center, i.e., the most beautiful and most representative part of the city with the two biggest hotels, the main post office, the radio station, the telegraph office and a few department stores. The area affected is about 2 km square, rendering about 50,000 people homeless; they were provisionally lodged in abandoned quarters. In retribution for this act of obvious sabotage, the Jews of the city were liquidated on 29 and 30 September, a total (according to data from the SS Einsatzkommandos) of some 35,000 people, half of them women. The population took the executions calmly – insofar as they even found out about of them – frequently even with satisfaction;*

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[561] TsDAVO, 4620-3-243-a, p. 141. The poster is written in Ukrainian; in the background, in very small letters, is the German text.

[562] "Bericht 10 (abgeschlossen am 5. Oktober 1941)." GARF, 7445-2-138, p. 269.

> *the vacated Jewish residences were mainly used to ameliorate the housing calamity."*

All these documents, which mention an order of magnitude of the victims of 34,000, are therefore mere repetitions of the initial information and, therefore, do not constitute subsequent confirmation. It is peculiar, however, that Koch thought that "the Jews of the city", evidently all the Jews of Kiev, had been shot.

The British never intercepted any radio messages in this regard, and those transmitted, as far as one can tell, made no mention of shootings. Kruglov published a series of radio messages in Russian translation from the Higher SS and Police leader Russia South, Friedrich Jeckeln, from 26 September (No. 136/37) to 14 October 1941 (no. 195) which do not contain any reference to claimed events at Babi Yar (Kruglov 2011, pp. 56-59).

Khiterer disputes the exactitude of the above-mentioned figure of 33,771 persons shot. The principal reason is that

> *"the Nazi report of an exact number of executed Jews cannot be correct, because there is no evidence that the Nazis registered their victims or kept an exact count."*

Khiterer posits that the actual death toll was much higher. On the one hand, the shootings lasted not two but five days according to some witnesses. On the other hand, the above-mentioned figure does not explain the disappearance from the city of the remaining 115,000-135,000 Jews, so that the above-mentioned writer concludes that at Babi Yar "more than 100 thousand Jews were murdered there, not 33,771 as claimed in the Nazi report" (Khiterer, p. 7). Or rather, better still, according to her, "until the liberation of Kiev by the Red Army on November 6th 1943, almost 200,000 people may have been murdered in Babi Yar," including 115,000-135,000 Jews (*ibid.*, p. 8).

In an article published in Volume 49 of the *American Jewish Year Book*, George J. Gliksman writes that the Jewish population of Kiev was 120,000 (Gliksman, p. 396). Therefore, the failure to register the victims can also mean that there were fewer than 33,771 victims. Blobel himself, the principal architect of the shootings, asserted:[563]

> *"I think that the figure of 33,771, mentioned to me as the number of persons executed in Kiev, is too high. In my opinion not more than half of the mentioned figure were shot."*

Those insisting that these disproportionate death-toll claims are real – and consequently also that the related statements are credible concerning the exhumation and cremation of corresponding numbers of corpses as set out earlier – should ask themselves why the shooting of about a quarter of these assumed victims is amply documented, while on the murder of the remaining three quarters of all victims no document exists at all.

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[563] Affidavit of P. Blobel dated 6 June 1947. NO-3824. TWC, Vol. IV, p. 213.

4.5. The Execution Procedure

Regarding the perpetration of the actual executions at Babi Yar, the testimonies – whether given by perpetrators, surviving victims and bystanders – exhibit an essential divergence. There are in fact two versions, which we can call the "Soviet" version, sponsored by the Soviets since the very beginning and based on their witnesses, and the "German" version, based on much-later testimonies and trial findings.

4.5.1 The Soviet Version

With reference to "an article based on documentary materials and depositions from the people of Kiev. Prepared for publication by Lev Ozerov," the *Black Book* sets forth the following picture (Ehrenburg/Grossman 2002, p. 8):

> *"An office with many desks was set up in the open air. From the gates that the Germans had placed at the end of the street, the crowd could not see these desks. People were separated from the crowd in groups of thirty to forty and escorted under guard to be 'registered.' Their documents and valuables were taken away from them. Indeed, at this point, the documents were thrown to the ground. Witnesses say that the area was covered with a thick layer of discarded papers, torn passports, and union cards. Then the Germans ordered everyone, without exception – girls, women, children, and old men – to strip naked; their clothes were gathered up and placed in neat piles. Rings were torn from the fingers of the naked people, both men and women. Then the executioners placed the doomed people in rows along the edge of the deep ravine and shot them at point-blank range. The bodies fell over the cliff. Small children were pushed into the ravine alive."*

Udo Walendy reports a Soviet document cited by Erhard Roy Wiehn:

> *"The leading member of the University of Kiev, Professor Aloshin, and several other professors of the University, a few physicians and citizens of the city, declared under oath:*
>
> > *'On 28 September 1941, the German city command in Kiev issued an order that all of Kiev's Jews (men, women and children) were to gather in a suburb of Kiev on 30 September. They were to bring their movable property along. From there, the Sonderkommando of the SS took the unhappy people in columns of 1,000 persons each to a ravine located immediately outside the city. Heavy machine guns had been set up on both sides of the ravine, and immediately after the men, women and children had entered the ravine, concentrated fire was directed at them, until they had fallen to the ground. Then, Russian POWs, standing on both sides of the ravine equipped with shovels, had to throw sand on top of the victims under the threatening muzzles of the machine guns, so that the whole thing became a mass grave.'"* (Walendy 1992, p. 18; see also Tiedemann 2019)

However, it would have been very difficult to spread a layer of sand three to four meters thick over the bodies of the victims. This is also in stark contrast to the anecdote reproduced by Gitta Sereny: Albert Hartl, the former head of the Church

Information Services at the Reich Security Main Office told her that in January 1942 he was invited to lunch at the dacha of Brigadier Max Thomas near Kiev (Sereny, p. 97):

> *"'I was going with Standartenführer (Colonel) Blobel,' he said. 'I hardly knew him but he was invited to dinner too, so we went together. It was evening and just getting dark. At one moment – we were driving along a long ravine. I noticed strange movements of the earth: clumps of earth rose into the air as if by their own propulsion – and there was smoke: it was like a low-toned volcano; as if there was burning lava just beneath the earth. Blobel laughed, made a gesture with his arm, pointing back along the road and ahead of us, all along the ravine – the ravine of Babi Yar – an said: 'here lie my 30,000 Jews.'"*

As is well known, Elie Wiesel, the Key Witness of the Shoah, further embroidered these rantings (Wiesel, p. 86):

> *"Later, I learned from a witness that, for months and months, the ground had not stopped shaking; and that, from time to time, geysers of blood had spurted out."*

Nadezhda Trofimovna Gorbacheva declared as follows on 28 November 1943:[564]

> *"On 22 September 1941* [sic], *at Babi Yar, I personally saw approximately 40 trucks passing by, for an entire day, loaded with Jews from Kiev – men, women and children, in addition to which there were also women holding infants in the arms. I, and a few other women who lived near Babi Yar, without being seen by the German guards, approached the place where the trucks were stopping and unloading the persons being carried on them. We saw that 15 meters from the beginning of Babi Yar, the Germans were forcing the Jews who had been transported there to undress, after which they were ordered to run along the ravine, while the Germans shot at them with automatic rifles and submachine guns. I personally saw that the Germans threw infant babies into the ravine. In the ravine, there were not only the bodies of people who had been shot, but also those of wounded people and even living children. The Germans nevertheless buried* [them in] *the ravine while at the same time, we saw a small layer of dirt which was moving due to the movements of living persons."*

The most-important testimony is considered to be that of Dina Pronicheva, for its quality of being the statement of a person who claims to have survived the shooting. Between the 1940s and 1960s, she signed a good 12 sworn statements, which have been analyzed by Karel C. Berkhoff. He summarized the matter of the witness's stories as follows:

> *"On September 29, 1941, she went to Babi Yar with her parents and her younger sister, all of whom were murdered there. Dina Pronicheva, one of the tiny number of survivors of the massacre, is the only person known to have fallen into the ravine unwounded and feigned death. Assuming various non-Jewish identities and surmounting incredible obstacles, she survived the Nazi regime and after the war resumed her work at the Puppet Theater."* (Berkhoff 2008, p. 294)

[564] GDA SBU, 7-8-1, p. 18.

In the twelve above-mentioned statements, the witnesses describe the shootings in rather vague terms. Berkhoff has supplied the following comparative analyses. I omit the references in parentheses to the individual statements, which Berkhoff refers to as PR 1 through 12 (*ibid*., pp. 301f.):

> *"After reaching the intersection, the great mass of people walked on (obviously along Melnyk Street) and came upon a roadblock near the gate of the Jewish cemetery, which was on the right side of the street (…). The guarded checkpoint consisted of barbed wire and (Soviet) anti-tank obstacles, and there was a gap in it that anyone could walk through.* […]
> *The Jews were steered left, evidently down Kahatna Street (today Simi Khokhlovykh Street), which had a long fence on the left and the small Orthodox Bratske Cemetery on the right. The Jews then turned right into another street, evidently the wide Laherna Street (today Dorohozhytska Street), which separated the Bratske Cemetery from the large (and also Orthodox) Lukianivka Cemetery.* […]
> *Seven accounts state that the Jews then arrived at a horrible 'corridor', or gauntlet, of Germans with rubber clubs, big sticks, and vicious dogs (…).* […]
> *In any event, the seven accounts that mention the gauntlet state without exception that none of the Jews could avoid running it; all of them were beaten severely, and those who fell were attacked by the dogs.* […]
> *Most versions of Pronicheva's testimony state or imply that the gauntlet led to a large 'space cordoned off by troops, a sort of square overgrown with grass' (…), where policemen who were not German gave the Jews an equally terrifying reception (…)."*

According to the interrogation on 12 January 1946, the police

> *"chased the fully undressed people one by one up a hill. The people reached the crest and there, through a cut in a wall of sand, neared the ravines… Before my very eyes people went insane, they turned gray, all around there were heartrending cries and moans. All day long, there was machine-gun fire. I saw how Germans took children away from their mothers and threw them from the precipice into the ravine."* (*Ibid*., p. 303)

On a testimony published in 1963, Berkhoff reports that Pronicheva asserted:

> *"The* [Jewish] *cemetery was fenced off by a high stone wall. One side of that stone wall borders on a rather deep ravine called Babi Yar. In this wall was a gate. All of the Jews, having undressed down to their underwear and having taken off their shoes, had to walk along a path toward the gate. But somewhere behind the gate stood a machine-gun. Right after people walked through the gate they came under fire and fell into the ravine. Dina saw how her entire family came under fire and fell into the ravine. Fortunately, the bullets somehow missed Dina, and she was not wounded when she fell into the ravine."* (*Ibid*., p. 306)

The witness turned to a Ukrainian guard and told him that she was not Jewish, but Ukrainian; while waiting for the commandant, she was kept aside until after the executions, after which the commandant decided that she was to be shot as well.

> *"'When only one person was left before me* [to be shot], *I gathered all of my strength and jumped into the pit,' Pronicheva said in Darmstadt. (…) Other re-*

ports also say that she dropped down before being hit, landed on people covered in blood, and pretended to be dead (…).'" (*Ibid*., pp. 304f.)

The bodies were then covered with a thin layer of sand. "Somewhat later," – concludes Berkhoff – "Pronicheva snuck out of the mass grave" (*ibid.*, p. 307).

Klee and Dreßen published a "Report in the Soviet newspaper 'Yunost'" which contains the account "How Dina Mironovna Pronicheva survived Babi-Yar" (Klee/Dreßen, pp. 118-133). This is an elaboration on an interview with the witness by Anatoly Kuznetsov and published in the newspaper *Yunost* (*Youth*) in August 1966. The text is as long as it is vague. The description of the shootings is limited to a few lines which leave the event itself in uncertainty:

"At this moment she reached a long passageway between two rows of soldiers and dogs. This passageway was narrow, about one and a half meters. The soldiers stood shoulder to shoulder, with their sleeves rolled up; all of them had rubber truncheons or large cudgels." (*Ibid*., p. 124)

What happened afterwards is not very clear, because the following scenario is this:

"The naked people had to form small lines. They were then led into a cut that had been dug into the steep, sandy berm. One couldn't see what was behind it, but in any case, that is where the shooting was coming from." (*Ibid*., p. 127)

This account is a rehash of the statement signed by the same witness on 24 April 1946. Here as well, she describes the "corridor" formed by the two lines of soldiers with dogs, which terminated with a "door":[565]

"Exiting through this so-called door, there was a protrusion, not very big, where the persons were lined up and killed with a machine gun from the opposite side."

On 2 February 1967, Dina Pronicheva was interrogated by the German judiciary and put forth a rather clear description of the events (Kühnl, pp. 398-400):

"As we approached the collection point, we saw the encirclement by German soldiers and officers. Among them were also policemen there. On the cemetery grounds, the Germans took the luggage and valuables from us and the other citizens and led us in groups of 40-50 people each into a so-called 'corridor' of about three meters' width formed by Germans standing tightly together on both sides with cudgels, rubber truncheons and dogs. My father, my mother and my sister had been pushed ahead; they were walking already much further ahead, and I could no longer see them. All those who passed the 'corridor' were cruelly beaten by the Germans; they crowded onto the space at the end of the 'corridor', and there they were undressed by policemen; they were forced to take off all their clothes, except for the undergarments. During that, the people were also beaten. Many people were already killed when passing through the 'corridor.' Then, the beaten and undressed people were taken in groups to the Babi Yar Ravine, to the execution site.

At the place where they undressed us, I turned to one of the policemen and explained to him that I was not a Jewess, but allegedly of Ukrainian nationality, and

[565] TsDAVO, 4620-3-281, pp. 3-5.

that I had only accompanied my acquaintances. After that, they took me to a group of about 30-40 people sitting on a hillock, to the side of where the people were being undressed. I myself saw how the Germans took the children away from the mothers and threw them alive into the ravine; I saw beaten and slain women, elderlies and sick people. Young people turned grey right before my eyes. I heard endless shooting from machine pistols and machine guns; I was an eyewitness to the most frightful act of violence against completely innocent people. Towards the end of the day, a German officer came to our group with an interpreter, and in response to his question, the policemen answered that we had come here as accompanying persons and had gotten to this place by accident and should be released. But the officer shouted around and ordered that we were to be shot, too; nobody was allowed to get released, because we had seen everything that had happened at Babi Yar.

And so they took us all to be shot. I was almost the last one in the group in line. They led us to an overhang over the ravine and started to shoot us with machine pistols. Those standing in front fell into the ravine, and when it was my turn, I threw myself into the ravine alive. It seemed to me as if I was flying into eternity. I fell onto human bodies which were there in a bloody mass. Moans arose from these victims; many people were still moving; they were only injured. Here, too, Germans and policemen walked about who shot or slew those still alive. This fate awaited me as well. One of the policemen or Germans turned me over with his foot, so that I was lying with my face upwards; he stepped on my hand and on my chest; after that they walked away and were shooting somewhere further behind.

After that, they started covering the bodies with earth and sand from above. I couldn't breathe anymore, freed myself from the earth with one hand, and crawled to the edge of the ravine. During the night, I crawled out of the ravine, I met a boy named Motja there, about 14 years old, who told me that he was to be shot together with his father."

4.5.2.The German Court Version

The former truck driver Fritz Höfer testified as follows on 27 August 1959 (Klee/ Dreßen/Rieß 1988, pp. 66-68):

"One day I received the order to drive with my truck to just outside the city. I had a Ukrainian with me as passenger. It must have been about 10.00 AM. On the way there, we overtook Jews walking on foot with luggage who were marching in the same direction. There were entire families. The further we got outside the city, the thicker these columns became. Huge piles of clothing lay around on a large open field. These were my destination. I was guided there by the Ukrainian. After stopping at the place, near the piles of clothing, the truck was immediately loaded with articles of clothing. This was performed by the Ukrainians present there. I saw at that place that the arriving Jews – men, women and children – were received by the Ukrainians. They were led past various stations, where successively they had to lay down first their luggage, their overcoats, shoes and outer clothing and also their undergarments. They had to lay down their valuables in the same

way at a certain spot. For every article of clothing, a special pile had been created. […]
The undressed Jews were led to a ravine measuring about 150 meters long, 30 meters wide, and a good 15 meters deep. 2 or 3 narrow entranceways led to this ravine, through which the Jews were channeled down. When they got to the edge of the ravine, they were grabbed by officials of the police and laid on top of already-executed Jews. This all happened very quickly.
The bodies were truly stacked up. As soon as a Jew lay there, a gunman from the police came with a machine gun and shot the person lying there in the back of the neck. […]
There were only 2 gunman who carried out the shootings. One gunman was active at one end of the ravine, and the other at the other end. I saw the gunman standing on the already stacked-up bodies while shooting alternatingly. As soon as one Jew was killed by a shot, the gunman walked on the bodies of those shot to the next Jew, who had been laid down, and shot this one. It went on this way nonstop, without distinction between men, women and children. The children were left with their mothers and shot with them. […]
In the pit, I saw already 3 rows of bodies stacked up at a length of about 60 meters. I couldn't see how many layers were already stacked up on top of each other. […]
Besides the two gunmen, there was a 'packer,' a policeman, at each entrance to the ravine, who laid the victims on top of the other bodies in such a way that the gunman walking by only needed to fire one shot."

Kurt Werner, former member of SK 4a, testified that he was one of the gunmen at the executions. On 28 May 1964, he declared (*ibid.*, pp. 69f.):

"After one kilometer, I saw a large natural ravine. It was sandy terrain. The ravine was approximately 10 meters deep, about 400 meters long, about 80 meters wide at the top and about 10 meters wide at the bottom. Right after my arrival at the execution grounds, I had to go down into this depression, together with other comrades. It wasn't long before the first Jews were led to us down the ravine's slopes. The Jews had to lie down faces-down along the walls of the depression. There were three groups with gunmen in the depression, with a total of about 12 gunmen. At the same time, Jews were continually led towards these shooting groups from above. The following Jews had to lie down on the bodies of the previously shot Jews. The gunmen stood behind the Jews in each case and killed them with shots to the back of the neck. […]
I had to remain down in the ravine the whole morning. There, I had to shoot repeatedly for a while, and then I was busy reloading the machine pistols' magazines with ammunition. During this time, other comrades were assigned as gunmen. Toward noon, we were withdrawn from the depression, and in the afternoon, I, with others, had to lead the Jews to the depression from above. During this time, other comrades did the shooting down in the depression. The Jews were led by us to the depression's edge; from there they ran down the slopes by themselves. The whole shooting operation may have lasted up to about […] *5 or 6 PM that day."*

Anton Heidborn, another member of SK 4a, made the following statements on 1 November 1963 (*ibid.*, p. 70):

> *"On the third day after the execution, we were driven once more to the execution ground.* […] *On this day, they began covering up the piles of bodies. Civilians were deployed for this. To some extent, the walls were even dynamited off. I didn't return to the execution ground after this day."*

Another witness, a "platoon constable of a police company cordoning off the execution site," was interrogated by the German judiciary on 19 November 1965 (Kühnl, p. 397):

> *"Posters in Russian appeared in Kiev stating that the Jews were to gather for resettlement at a certain location in the city. We all had to report to the barracks' courtyard – I believe it was the end of September 1941. Everyone belonging to the* Kommando *was there, even the typing pool and the people from the sick bay. All the officers were there, too. Blobel made a speech, to the effect that the orders to be carried out on that day were to be obeyed under any circumstance, otherwise we had to reckon with the most severe measures, in particular execution for cowardice and punishment of our families. We were then driven on trucks through the City of Kiev to a big poplar boulevard. On our way we already saw that long columns of Jews of all ages and both sexes were moving toward this boulevard. This boulevard led to a high plateau. On this plateau, the Jews had to undress. The Jews were watched by units from the* Wehrmacht *and by a Hamburg police battalion, which bore the number 303, as far as I can remember. Blobel was in charge of the whole organization and implementation of the executions. The Jews had to lay down their clothes; large heaps were piling up. Following this, they had to walk to the edge of the pit and lie down. Then they were shot. The shootings were done by taking turns. The shooting extended over the length of the entire ravine. The individual gunmen were issued loaded machine-gun magazines by other members of the unit. The shootings lasted 2 days. Thousands upon thousands of Jews were shot. They all went calmly to their deaths. There was no crying and no wailing."*

The Soviet and the German versions of events set forth above present a radical and irreconcilable contradiction, which, as far as one can tell, no orthodox Holocaust historian has dwelt upon. The Soviet version claims that the victims were shot at the edge of the ravine and fell into it after having been shot, with the variant that they had to run along the ravine and were shot from the top, from both sides. The German version, by contrast, says that the victims were brought into the ravine, made to lie down and were killed with a bullet to the back of the neck. I shall examine the shooting technique described in the two versions later.

The only concordant claim is that the victims were made to undress before being executed or before entering the ravine.

4.5.3. The Executions in the Light of Hähle's Photographs

Some of the events unfolding in Kiev and at Babi Yar were photographed between 29 September and 1 October 1941, apparently by Johannes Hähle, military

photographer from the 637th Propaganda Company of the Sixth Army. There are at least four series of photographs which show groups of persons walking.

1. At least three photographs taken by Hähle depict the passage of a long column of persons marching along a long platform. In front, seen from the side, is a body (see Document II.4.14.). The second photograph shows the same column, seen from the right;[566] in the third photograph, the column is further away.[567] These three photographs were published by Klee and Dreßen, but printed in reverse, that is, the right side on the left and vice versa, and with erroneous captions (Klee/Dreßen, pp. 101, 104f.). The photograph reproduced as Document II.4.14 in the Appendix of this study has been given the following caption by Klee/Dreßen (*ibid.*, p. 101):

   "In a Soviet city (Lubny?): Jews on their way to the collection point and to their execution. They have to walk past corpses lying around on the ground."
2. Two photographs, also by Hähle, showing a group of persons; the group is numerically considerable but certainly not large (see Document II.4.15.). The second photograph is a close-up image.[568]
3. A group of approximately 60 men marching in formation, four abreast, along a road escorted by four German soldiers (see Document II.4.16.).
4. Another photograph shows a group of 50-60 women with purses and bundles along a country road in a disorderly column (see Document II.4.17.).

This series of photographs shows at most one hundred persons, very far from the figure of over 33,000. Since the persons depicted walk in rather sparse columns of three to four persons per row, with a distance of some 3 meters between each row, at most two persons are on one square meter, and only up to 1.33 persons per linear meter of the column. With this kind of column, the presumed 33,771 persons shot would have formed a column (33,771 ÷ 1.33 =) over 45 kilometers long (28 miles)!

According to the German proclamation mentioned above, the Jews of Kiev were ordered to assemble by 8 in the morning at the "corner of Melnik and Dokteriwski Street (next to the cemeteries)." On the map of Kiev from 1943, Dokterivskaya Road is referred to as "*Dechtjatiwska-Strasse*," while Melnikova Road is another name for Dorohozhytska (Dorogozhytska, Dorogozhitskaya) Road. In the map shown in Document II.4.11., Melnikova Road corresponds to the old Dorogozhytska Road, and this is the old Degtyarivska (Degtyarevskaya, Dokterivskaya) Road. The circle closes the angle of the two streets, the place indicated by the German proclamation. Dorogozhytska Road (called Melnikova on the map) flanks the Jewish Cemetery (*Evrejskoe kladbiše*), Degtyarivska Road (Dorogožytska on this map) passed in front of the "Fraternal Cemetery" (*Bratskoe kladbiše*). The Jewish Cemetery's entrance gate must have been locat-

[566] In: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo2.html
[567] In: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo3.html
[568] In: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo18.html

ed where the black rectangle appears, since it designates the "*kontora kladbishcha*," the cemetery office.

A photograph from the time shows this road with the cemetery entrance gate (Document II.4.18.). If over 33,000 people had really appeared at the point indicated, the resulting crowd would have resembled that depicted in Document II.4.19 showing the crowds gathered during a 1979 demonstration against nuclear weapons.

As anticipated above, the only concordant fact in the two versions of events is that the victims were forced to disrobe before entering the ravine or falling into it. This is confirmed by Klee and Dreßen, who published two photographs relating to this fact. The first – Document II.4.20 – shows a few dozen persons and a few soldiers, with this caption:

> *"Babi Yar, September 1941: Jewish Soviet citizens above the ravine. Before the murder, they are forced to undress."* (Klee/Dreßen, p. 125)

In the other photograph (Document II.4.21) we see a long pile of clothing in a wooded area, with a few persons standing around the edges; the caption says:

> *"Babi-Yar, September 1941: The murderers rummage through the victims' property."* (*ibid.*)

Various photographs taken by Hähle nevertheless present a vast assembly of clothing lying *inside* the ravine. I shall discuss the two most significant photographs.

In the first photo reproduced in Document II.4.22, the layer of clothes at the top travels through the ravine transversely and continues, closer up, in the photo reproduced in Document II.4.23. If all the sources agree that the victims undressed *before* entering or falling into the ravine, then why are the clothes *inside* the ravine? This is another question which no orthodox Holocaust historian has addressed publicly.

From the maps of Kiev, it may be seen that the width of the ravine at its widest point was 120 meters; in the two photographs reproduced in Documents II.4.22f., we see a long strip of clothing, first very close together, running along in the longitudinal direction of the ravine; further along, there appears another strip which crosses the ravine transversely: up to a little less than half, it is rather wide, but then it thins out up until the opposite wall at 2-3 meters.

The transverse strip could therefore be a maximum of 120 meters long, and 15-20 wide for the first half and no more than 10 meters wide for the second half, for a total of approximately 1,800 square meters. The longitudinal strip may be seen only at the beginning, and it we cannot tell whether it joins the transversal strip. In this hypothesis, based on the proportions of the image, it would be more or less as long as the transversal and 5-10 meters wide, so that it would cover at the most 1,200 square meters. There would therefore have been a total maximum surface area of 4,000 square meters, corresponding to a column of approximately 4,000 persons, each of whom undressed in a square meter.

In practice, the order of magnitude resulting from the photographs would be little more than one tenth of the official number of victims (33,771).

Other photographs taken by Hähle depict several dozens of men – judging by their uniform clothing probably Soviet POWs – equipped with shovels working at the bottom of the ravine. One shows two women in the foreground speaking with a German soldier on the edge of the ravine (Document II.4.25 and 25a). Two other photographs also depict the PoWs working inside the ravine (Document II.4.26f.).

The scenario underlying these photographs must be evaluated in the light of the two versions of events set forth above. According to the Soviet version, the victims were taken in groups of one hundred (Khiterer, p. 7) to the edge of the ravine and shot in such a way that the bodies fell down (*ibid.*, p. 6). In this case, the bodies would have fallen into the ravine all higgledy-piggledy, after which it would have been necessary to take the bodies out one by one and place them in mass graves. Assuming that the PoWs shown in the photos are digging or covering mass graves, then there would have been at the end of both slopes of the ravine one single grave, or a series of successive graves (since the digging PoWs are arranged one after the other) in a very long and sinuous arrangement (the line of PoWs in fact meanders following the meandering edges of the two walls of the ravine). In this case, the shootings would have been carried out from both sides of the ravine, which contradicts the testimonies. This version is obviously implausible and cannot explain the scenario of the photographs.

As mentioned before, one photograph (Document II.4.25) shows two women, one with a child in her arms, speaking calmly with a German sentry on the edge of the ravine, while the PoWs in the ravine are working diligently below them, with very little surveillance (only two other German guards visible in Document II.4.25a)s. This image testifies to the fact that this work was not secret at all, that the alleged cordon of guards around the ravine to keep outsiders away did not exist, and that consequently anyone could approach without danger.

Let us now look at the German version of the events. According to this version, the victims were taken in small groups "to the edge of the pit," after which they had to enter the grave and lie down on the bottom, face down; the "gunmen" fired a shot at each victim in the back of the neck; the next group had to lie down as well, on top of the bodies, and they were also shot in the back of the neck; there was at least one mass grave approximately 60 meters long which contained "3 rows of bodies" and finally "The shooting extended over the length of the entire ravine." Assuming this to be true, the POWs shown in the photos would have been in the process of filling the mass graves and leveling the terrain. This implies, as in the preceding case, the presence of a very long grave, or a series of successive graves, on both sides of the ravine. But the only witness who spoke of what happened after the shootings, Anton Heidborn, asserted that just that day they "began covering up the piles of bodies," that "civilians" were being employed for the work, and that "to some extent, the walls were even dynamited

off." Now, the word "piles of bodies" makes one think of bodies piled up on the surface of the ground rather than of bodies piled up one on top of the other in an orderly arrangement in mass graves; the term "civilians" means that the workers cannot have been prisoners of war, and in the photographs reproduced there is no obvious sign that any part of the ravine's walls had been "dynamited off."

Witnesses reported that the bodies were covered by a layer of sand four meters thick. This presupposes that the entire bottom of the gorge was raised by four meters, if this "camouflage" was to have had any effect at all. But if the gorge was 400 m × 10 m (Kurt Werner), then about 16,000 cubic meters of sand were poured in with shovels (!) – but where did this huge amount of sand come from? The Soviet investigation commission knew nothing about these allegedly huge earthworks and sand transports. One can add that the aerial photographs of 26 September 1943 should show at least hundreds of POWs working in the ravine, hence an overhead view of what can be seen in Hähle's photographs (Documents II.4.24-26), but nothing appears there.

Hence, not even the German version satisfactorily explains the scenario of the photographs.

4.5.4. The Execution Procedure According to the German Court Version

It remains to examine the feasibility of an execution of over 33,000 persons in the manner described by the German witnesses. Höfer claims that the executioners were "only 2 gunmen," but the witness Werner has more credibility, because he claims to have participated directly in the shooting: according to him, the shooting was carried out by "three groups with gunmen in the depression, with a total of about 12 gunmen." During the first day, these gunmen executed people until about 5 or 6 PM. The proclamation required the Jews of Kiev to assemble at the pre-established point by 8 in the morning, so that the time available for the first day of the executions was at most 10 hours. If there is any consistency between the accounts of Höfer, Werner and those of the "platoon constable," the events played out as follows:

- the large boulevard, that is, Degtyarivska Road, "led to a high plateau. On this plateau, the Jews had to undress." This is the place indicated by the arrow in Document II.4.12a.
- "The Jews had to lay down their clothes; large heaps were piling up."
- The guards escorted the undressed victims "to the depression's edge; from there they ran down the slopes by themselves."
- At the bottom of the ravine, "at each entrance to the ravine," there was "a 'packer,' a policeman, at each entrance to the ravine, who laid the victims on top of the other bodies in such a way that the gunman walking by only needed to fire one shot."

It is pertinent to recall that this reconstruction is in direct contradiction to the photographs which show the clothing in the ravine, placed in such a manner as if there had been a line of a few thousand persons who had undressed on the spot.

Alternatively, it would be necessary to suppose that the clothing left by the victims on the edge of the ravine was transported to the interior of the ravine only to be transported away later. The conjecture is obviously implausible.

Since there were twelve executioners, the 33,771 victims were subdivided into (33,771 ÷ 12 =) 2,814 dozens. Assuming that the same number of victims was killed on both days, dividing them up equally results in 1,407 dozens on both 29 and 30 September 1941. The time available was 10 hours or 36,000 seconds. It follows that, for 10 hours at a time, each of the twelve executioners shot one victim every (36,000 ÷ 1,407 =) approximately 26 seconds. In this very brief period of time, the twelve victims were taken in charge by the "packer," frog-marched to the place of execution, made to lie down on the bodies, and killed with a shot to the back of the neck. Not only the victims were moved during the shooting, but the executioners moved as well, because "The shooting extended over the length of the entire ravine," which was 150 meters long (Fritz Höfer) or maybe even 400 meters long (Kurt Werner). The 26 seconds therefore must include the time required to walk from each execution site to the next, but also include the changes in function and shift. Repeatedly, the executioners had to stop firing, get new magazines and reload, and at times they even had to replace their overheated weapons. It follows that the actual time required for the executions was even less than the above-mentioned 26 seconds. Who can seriously believe that a massacre of such dimensions could be perpetrated using the methods described by the witnesses?

But there is another problem. On the first day, the shootings stopped at 5 or 6 PM. If half the Jews who appeared in response to the German proclamation had been killed, 16,800 more Jews were still alive; where did they spend the night? What was done with them? How were they prevented from escaping? And can one believe that, after listening to rifle fire all day (more than 16,800 shots), such a mass of people would continue to await death quietly without reacting? Without rebelling? Without any attempt to escape *en masse*?

Did they all go like sheep to the slaughter?[569]

In conclusion, there was no doubt an execution of Jews in Kiev, but all the physical evidence leads to the conclusion that its order of magnitude cannot have been more than a tenth of that asserted.

[569] See the well-known book by Hermann Langbein *...nicht wie die Schafe zur Schlachtbank* (*...not like sheep to the slaughter*).

5. *Sonderkommando* 1005 A: Other Activities

5.1. Berdichev, Belaya Tserkov and Uman

Having finished at Kiev, *Sonderkommando* 1005 A moved approximately 150 km southwest to Berdichev (Ukrainian: Berdychiv), and then traveled another 110 km east to Belaya Tserkov (Bila Tserkva) and then Uman, 110 km south. The verdict of the Stuttgart District Court of 13 March 1969, the only Holocaust source on these three sites, is extremely laconic (Rüter/Mildt, p. 714):

> *"Sonderkommando 1005 A moved further to Belaya Tserkov and Uman by way of Berdichev – one last part of the members of the ordinary police of Unit 1005 B may possibly have been separated only here from Unit 1005 A. At least in the first two cities mentioned, bodies were exhumed and cremated during the remaining time of the year 1943 until January 1944."*

The number of bodies exhumed and cremated is not indicated in the verdict. A few pages further along, the verdict returns to the subject of Belaya Tserkov (it adds nothing where Berdichev is concerned), with this brilliant consideration (*ibid.*, p. 723):

> *"More precise information on formation, start, duration and exterior circumstances of this deployment could not be established."*

On Uman, by contrast, it is stated that "some 5,000 bodies were probably exhumed and burned in Uman" (*ibid*.). This is obviously mere conjecture on the part of the court.

In practice, nothing is known of the activity of this unit over the three-month period from October 1943 until January 1944. Hoffmann accepts the Stuttgart District Court's arbitrarily conjured-up figure of 5,000 supposed bodies, but claims that these were only a part of the victims, who really numbered 24,000; these were "driven together and murdered at the city airport" in September and October 1941 (Hoffmann, p. 119). This splendid historian doesn't even wonder why only 5,000 of these 24,000 victims were ever exhumed and burnt, and, above all, why the Soviets did not find the remaining 19,000.

According to Arad, when Berdichev was captured by the Germans, there were between 16,000 and 17,000 Jews in the city. On 25 August 1941, a ghetto was established, and on 4 September, 1,500 Jews were shot, and another 12,000 during the night of 14-15 September (Arad 2009, pp. 169f.). The total number of victims amounted to 13,500. The source for this enormous massacre is nothing less than Ehrenburg's *Black Book*! (*Ibid.*, fn 31, p. 567)

The Incident Reports do not at all confirm a massacre of such proportions. In EM No. 38 dated 30 July 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* C reported the execution of 148 persons at Berdichev by *Einsatzkommando* 4a (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 208). EM No. 47 dated 9 August 1942 reports (*ibid.*, p. 265):

> *"A detachment of* Einsatzkommando *4a was active in Berdichev until the arrival of* Einsatzkommando *5. 148 Jews were executed for looting and Communist activity. Furthermore, 74 Jews have been shot there by* Einsatzkommando *5 so far."*

This report about the execution of the 148 Jews is therefore a repetition. The most substantial execution took place at the beginning of September 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 496):

> *"Leaflets and inflammatory pamphlets had been distributed by Jews in Berdichev on 1 and 2 Sept. 41. Since the offenders could not be determined, 1,303 Jews, including 876 Jewesses above the age of 12, were executed by a squad of the Higher SS and Police leader."*

At Belaya Tserkov, reports Arad, the entire Jewish population of the city, 5,000-6,000 persons, was exterminated in mid-August 1941. He refers to "a Soviet committee of inquiry" which is said to have "determined" the killing of 6,000 persons in this locality (Arad 2009, p. 171; fn 41, p. 567). The only document referred to by Arad is a report from the field headquarters of Belaya Tserkov dated 11 September 1941, which states (*ibid.*):

> *"Many of the Jews in Belaya Tserkov were shot. All the others escaped. In fact, no more Jews remain there."*

This only shows that the 5,000 or 6,000 Jews of the city were not all killed. Klee, Dreßen and Rieß assert that at Belaya Tserkov "between the 8th and 19th of August, the Waffen-SS platoon – with help from the Ukrainian militia – shoots several hundred Jewish men and women" (Klee/Dreßen/Rieß 1988, p. 132). Liebe, who back at the time of the event was an officer candidate, declared on 14 June 1965 that the victims of the executions at Belaya Tserkov amounted to 800-900 people. Some 90 children of the executed persons were gathered together in a house under inhumane conditions and were then shot, too (*ibid.*, pp. 135-142). There were, therefore, approximately 1,000 victims according to Liebe.

EM No. 119 dated 20 October 1941 concerns itself with Uman at great length. The document informs us that, prior to the outbreak of the war, the city had approximately 55,000 inhabitants, including approximately 10,000 Jews. After that, 8,000 still remained. These had formed "a well-functioning intelligence network," which attracted the attention of the Germans. On 21 September, there were "excesses against the Jews by members of the militia with the participation of numerous members of the *Wehrmacht*," which consisted above all of looting and demolishing Jewish houses. As a result, "a great number of Jews were now warned in advance and hastily left town." The conclusion of the matter was that "apart from that, 1,412 Jews were executed by *Einsatzkommando* 5 in Uman on the 22nd and 23rd of September 1941" (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, pp. 704f.). The report makes no mention of the purported executions on the 4th and 14-15th of September, and says that a great number of Jews had fled, so that under these circumstances the 1,412 Jews shot were probably those remaining in the city.

Summarizing, there were 1,525 documented victims at Berdichev and approximately 1,000 at Belaya Tserkov. If the figure of about 1,000 Jews killed in Be-

laya Tserkov as mentioned by former Ensign Liebe in 1965 is true, the total number of Jews killed in these three towns thus amounts to somewhat over 3,900.

If we consider the following facts:

– there should have been the bodies of almost 4,600 documented victims at Zhitomir alone – which is located some 40 km north of Berdichev by road (see Part One, Section 5.4.5.);
– if we are to believe Arad (2009, p. 170), the Germans killed 10,760 persons at Vinnitsa, some 86 km away from Berdichev to the south, from the beginning of August until 20 September 1941 (although there were only 6,000 victims according to Pohl 2008, p. 47);
– if we follow Dieter Pohl (*ibid.*), 8,000 Jews were moreover shot at Khmelnik (Khmilnyk) in January 1942 (this town is around 65 km southeast from Berdichev);
– for none of these three locations, any "1005 activity" is claimed by anyone;

then it becomes clear that the activity of *Sonderkommando* 1005 A appears quite nonsensical: the *kommando* is supposed to have focused on the elimination of traces of fewer than altogether 4,000 bodies in Berdichev, Belaya Tserkov and Uman, while leaving untouched the traces of over 23,000 claimed victims in the same district.

5.2. Kamenets-Podolsky

After finishing their work at Uman, *Sonderkommando* 1005 A was transferred to Lvov, whence it was sent on furlough to the Polish tourist locales of Zakopane and Krinica. Over the following period, the verdict of the Stuttgart District Court of 13 March 1969 ascertained the following (Rüter/Mildt, p. 729):

> *"Towards the middle of March 1944, Partial Unit 1005 A assembled in Lvov once more. It then moved on to Kamenets-Podolsky to continue the unearthing operation. 'Sounding digs' were performed at a causeway on the edge of the city, near a large grain warehouse. The actual work was not commenced, however, since Soviet troops had encircled the city. After days of combat deployment, the squad members finally succeeded in fighting their way through the encirclement in small groups toward Lvov."*

It follows that *Sonderkommando* 1005 A did not open the mass graves, did not exhume the bodies and did not cremate them; the graves therefore remained intact, containing at least 27,600 bodies according to Hoffmann (Hoffmann, pp. 124f.). But was this enormous number of bodies ever found by the Soviets? This is an essential question which neither Hoffmann nor any other orthodox Holocaust historian has ever even raised. Before answering, it is advisable to outline the rather self-contradictory orthodox narrative of the massacre of Kamenets-Podolsky. Randolph L. Braham summarizes the events in this locality as follows:

> *"The extermination of the Jews deported from Hungary was carried out on August 27-28. According to an eyewitness account, the deportees were told that in*

view of a decision to clear Kamenets-Podolsk of Jews, they would have to be relocated. Surrounded by units of the SS, their Ukrainian hirelings, and reportedly a Hungarian sapper platoon composed of Swabians, they, together with the indigenous Jews of Kamenets-Podolsk, were compelled to march about ten miles to a series of craters caused by bombings. There they were ordered to undress, after which they were machine-gunned. The number of victims executed at Kamenets-Podolsk cannot be established with any degree of accuracy. In his Operational Report USSR No. 80, dated September 11, 1941, Jeckeln put the total number of those shot at Kamenets-Podolsk at 23,600 – the first five-figure massacre in the Nazis' Final Solution program." (Braham 2000, p. 34)

In fact, EM No. 80 dated 11 September 1941 says (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 444):

"Within 3 days, 23,600 Jews were shot by a squad of the Higher SS and Police leader in Kamenets-Podolsky."

In this regard, there also exist four telexes from Jeckeln addressed to the *Kommandostab* of the *Reichsführer* SS. The first is dated 27 August 1941 (Sauer, pp. 56f.):

"The 1st SS Brigade is engaged in cleansing operations north of the highway Korosten – Belokorovichi, Mikhaylovka, Nudniawyzranka, Stepanovka and Zere, during which they take 99 prisoners and shoot 16 Jews and partisan members.
Police Regiment South provides for rail security, arrests 22 former prisoners of war and shoots 914 Jews.
Police Battalion 320 with Einsatzgruppe *of the headquarter's company undertakes a special operation in Kamenets-Podolsky: 4,200 Jews were shot."*

This telex was intercepted by the British, who summarized it as follows:[570]

"Slaughter of Jews is again reported in messages of 27.8.41, referring to area round KAMENEZ-PODOLSK (that is the corner of the Ukraine where Poland and Rumania meet). Regt. SOUTH claims 914 shot and Special Action Staff operating with the Police Battalion 302 claims to have shot 4200 Jews without loss to themselves. To have shot 174 looters and 21 members of the Red Army, claimed by S.S. Kav. Regt. 1 in the MINSK area, pales by comparison."

The wrong number of the battalion (302 instead of 320) is probably a transposition of digits. The second telex is dated 28 August (Sauer, p. 57):

"SS Brig. Forces through cleansing operation north of Korosten – Belokorovichi: 42 prisoners made, 12 Jews and 1 partisan shot.
Police Regiment South takes 4 prisoners and shoots 369 Jews.
Police Battalion 320 continues special operation in the Kamenets-Podolsky region and shoots 5,000 Jews in the process."

On 29 August, Jeckeln sent this teletype:[571]

"1. Locations unchanged.

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[570] TNA. HW 1/35, "German Police," 11.9.1941.

[571] Original on the web at: www.yadvashem.org/untoldstories/database/germanReports.asp?cid=278&site_id=288; the transcript reproduced by Sauer, p. 57, is not very accurate.

2. Activities: 1st. SS Brig. continuation of cleansing operations north of Korosten – Belokorovichi […]. *Stabskp. HSSUPF Russia South concludes operation under leadership of SS Obergruf. Jeckeln in Kamenets-Podolsky.*
3. Successes: 1st SS Brig. makes 18 prisoners and shoots 77 Jews. Stabskp. again shoots 7,000 Jews, so that total number of Jews liquidated during the operation in Kamenets-Podolsky about 20 thousand. Change in activity report of 26 and 27 August 1941 instead of Pol. Batl. 320 put Stabskp. in report of 27 August instead of 5 thousand 11 thousand. Pol. Batl. 320 only deployed for cordoning off. […]*"*

The last telex dates back to 31 August 1941 (Hoppe/Glass, pp. 270f., Doc. 70):

"1. Locations unchanged.
2. Activities: 1st. SS Brigade – continuation of cleansing operations north of highway Ignatpol, Malakhovka, Usovo. Pol.-Regt. South – cleansing operations in region south of highway Zwiahel, Zhitomir concluded. Pol.-Batl. 320 – reconnaissance and preparations for operation in Kamenets-Podolsky region.
3. Successes: 1st. SS Brig. – 1 prisoner, 36 rifles captured. P. platoons rebuild 3 destroyed bridges. Pol. Regt. South – in Slavuta 3 Ukrainians and 4 Russians, probably dropped by parachute, arrested and handed over to SD. 65 Jews shot. Addendum: the number of Jews shot by [the] *State Comp.* [of] *HSSPF. Russia South in Kamenets-Podolsky increased to 23,600.*
4. Losses: […]*"*

As far as one can tell, Jeckeln had no clear ideas about the Kamenets-Podolsky massacre; it lasted three days, starting on 27 August, when Police Battalion 320 and Jeckeln's *Stabskompanie* shot 4,200 Jews; the day after, Police Battalion 320 killed another 5,000; on 29 August, the action concluded with the murder of another 7,000 Jews, making a total of 16,200 victims, but Jeckeln announced 20,000; he moreover corrected himself, in that the shooting on the first day had been carried out by the *Stabskompanie* instead of Police Battalion 320, and that there were 11,000 victims instead of 5,000. These gross errors certainly do not increase faith in the credibility of the reports. With this correction, the total number of victims rises to 22,200, but in the radio message of 31 August, Jeckeln assured that the total was 23,600, although, according to him, the action terminated on the 29th.

How reliable are these figures?

Even Klaus-Michael Mallmann, author of a documented article on Kamenets-Podolsky, asks (Mallmann, p. 242):

"Was Jeckeln really so blind that he needed two days to understand who shot and who cordoned things off?"

As we shall see, he not only does not answer this question, which for him was obviously rhetorical in nature, but adds additional contradictions.

Kamenets-Podolsky is also the subject of Document NOWK-1554 submitted in connection with the trial of the former commander of the rear army area of Army Group South, General Karl von Roques, who collaborated with Jeckeln. We read there:

> *"On 2 September von Roques's chief of staff had a conference at the headquarters of Army Group South in which the figures 'concerning the settlement of the Jewish question in Kamenets Podolsk' were discussed. (NOKW-1554, Pros. Ex. 938.)."* (TWC, Vol. XI, p. 363)

The background to the executions shows that the SS were *not* particularly anxious to get their hands on the greatest possible number of Jews so as to shoot them, and this is particularly true of those whom the Romanians were unloading into the territory controlled by the Germans. Matatias Carp's opus *Cartea Neagra* provides plentiful information on this singular attitude on the part of the Germans:[572]

> *"5 August 1941. The Bessarabian Jews chased over the Dniester by Romanian troops are now being sent back by German troops to the western side of the river. The first convoy of 3,000 people is being taken from Mogilev-Podolsky to Otaci.*
> *6 August 1941.* […] *The Germans no longer permit the transfer to Transnistria, so that the Jews are being driven back in the direction of Secureni.*
> *7 August 1941. The Germans are attempting to bring over there a new convoy of 4,500 Jews, but the Romanian troops are refusing this. The Jews are being led back to Mogilev-Podolsky, and the Romanian military authorities are demanding that military units be shifted further south, in order to foil a possible German plan to re-introduce the Jews back at another location.*
> *8 August 1941. The conflicts between the local German and Romanian troops in the Mogilev-Podolsky – Otaci Region have been decided in favor of the Germans. The Great Praetor of the* [Romanian] *Army ordered that the return of the Jewish columns driven over the Dniester by the Germans should be admitted: naturally, he added that all returned Jews were to be gathered and interned."*

On 16 August, Manfred von Killinger, German ambassador at Bucharest, sent the following message to the German Foreign Office (Rothfels 1970a, p. 264):

> *"General Antonescu complained today that Bessarabian Jews taken along by Soviet troops would now be shoved back by German military headquarters from the Ukraine to Bessarabia. To start with, this was about 11,000 Jews waiting for entry visas in the vicinity of Soroca on the Bessarabian border. The General urgently requests that the return of these Jews to Bessarabia, which is in violation of the guidelines given to him in Munich by the Führer on the treatment of eastern Jews, be prevented, and that the German authorities be instructed to arrange for the deportation of the Jews in another direction. I remark in this regard that, also in domestic political terms, the return of Jews to Bessarabia would constitute an undesirable burden upon Roumania. Please advise by wire."*

On 8 September, Franz Rademacher, legation councilor to the Foreign Office, called the Bucharest delegation's attention to the decision of the *Wehrmacht*'s High Command (Rothfels 1970b, p. 431):

> *"Insofar as this is about the deportation of Jews between Romanian territory and the areas between Bug and Dniester soon to be transferred to Romanian admin-*

[572] Carp 1946, Vol. III; translation of extracts for trial purposes from the Treichel Public Prosecutor's Office. YVA, O.53-157, pp. 161f.

> *istration, interventions by German agencies must not occur. Deportations from these areas into the occupied territories under German administration and vice versa must be prevented in the future."*

At a conference of the German Army's High Command relating to the preparation for the transition of the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine to civilian administration, which took place on 25 August 1941, Major Wagner also referred to the question raised above (PS-197. NCA, Vol. 3, p. 211):

> *"Near Kamenez-Podolsk, the Hungarians* [recte: Romanians] *have pushed about 11,000 Jews over the border. In the negotiations up to the present it has not been possible to arrive at any measures for the return of these Jews. The higher SS and Police leader (SS-Obergruppenfuehrer Jeckeln) hopes, however, to have completed the liquidation of these Jews by the 1.9.1941."*

The date was that anticipated for the transfer of power from the military administration to the civilian administration. The "liquidation" of the 11,000 Jews mentioned above therefore depended exclusively on the fact that it was not possible to return them to Romanian territory.

EM No. 67 dated 29 August 1941 reports (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 378):

> *"Roumainia had driven thousands of selected frail persons and children out of Bessarabia and Bucovina into the German sphere of interest. In total, about 27,500* [*were*] *driven back into Romanian territory near Swaniza-Mogilev-Podolsky and Yampol, and 1,265, in part younger people, were shot."*

A report from Otto Ohlendorf dated 2 September 1941 confirms (Angrick *et al.*, pp. 122):

> *"Prior to the closing off of the Dniester bridges, the Romanians had driven about 35,000 Jews into the section east of the Dniester, which was considered part of the German sphere of interest until 28 Aug. 41. As already reported, some 27,500 Jews were brought back into Romanian territory near Mogilev-Podolsky and Yampol by deployed squads of Einsatzgruppe D."*

If Jeckeln really intended to execute these 11,000 Jews mentioned above, then why did he refer, with the numerical contradictions mentioned earlier, to having killed 23,600 of them? And why weren't the 27,500 Jews shot, rather than driven back into Romanian territory?

Mallmann adduces various motivations for the executions at Kamenets-Podolsky: the risk of epidemics, the scarcity of food, and even perverted ambitions: von dem Bach-Zelewski had announced a higher number of victims than the figure cited by Jeckeln, and Himmler was presumably unhappy with the latter, so much so that on 12 August he ordered him to report to him; Jeckeln – hypothesizes Mallmann – took advantage of the meeting to put himself in a good light towards Himmler by proposing a radical solution of the "problem" at Kamenets-Podolsky, but this is only a conjecture, because the pertinent annotation of Himmler's service diary merely states: "Jeckeln's visit to Himmler" (Witte *et al.*, p. 191).

The purported decision for a total liquidation of the Jews is said to have been made on a local level between von Roques and Jeckeln, and is said to have been favored by the former with three decisions. In contrast to this, however, is the second of them, dated 28 August, about the "Creation of ghettos in towns with larger Jewish population proportions, especially in cities" (Mallmann, pp. 243-250; here p. 250).

I conclude this cursory survey by addressing the issue of victim numbers. Mallmann maintains that, in July 1941, when the Germans captured Kamenets-Podolsky, there were 12,000 Jews in that city (*ibid.*, p. 242), a figure which rose to 26,000 a month later (*ibid.*, p. 243), because 14,000 Jews expelled from Romania were added to it. Of these, 4,800 were provisionally left alive in a ghetto until November 1942, when they were all shot (*ibid.*, p. 254). If that is so, it follows that the victims during August 1941 numbered (26,000 – 4,800 =) 21,200. This figure is somewhat lower than the one given by Jeckeln (23,600), but Mallmann has nothing to say in this regard.

Executions did indubitably take place, but to what extent? The only objective confirmation could be found in the mass graves, which were left intact by the Germans. I shall now return to the initial theme, which I had left in suspense.

On 27 May 1944, the Soviets drew up an "Act on the Crimes Perpetrated by the German-Fascist Invaders in the City of Kamenets-Podolskiy" (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 157-162). It is characterized by the same crude propaganda not only regarding the death toll, but also for the "bestial acts" purportedly committed by the Germans, such as this (*ibid.*, p. 159):

> *"As a rule babies were thrown into the pit alive where they died not from bullets but of suffocation under a heap of dead bodies and earth. There were cases when babies were tossed over the pit and fired at in the air."*

With regard to the specific theme under discussion, the Soviets made this "establishment of fact" (*ibid.*):

> *"On the whole, during the Nazi occupation the Germans shot, tortured to death and buried alive over 85 thousand people in Kamenets-Podolskiy, among the Hungarian, Czechoslovakian and Polish Jews, local residents, POWs, women, children and old people.*
>
> *The commission has discovered seven places of common burial of civilians and POWs consisting of 30 common graves. The place of the burial places is annexed."*

A certain Captain Salog, commander of the police squad which participated in the executions, declared (Ehrenburg/Grossman 1981, p. 533):

> *"The pit was approximately twelve by six meters and about one-and-a-half meters deep. On the side that was closer to Kamenets-Podolsky, the pit's entrance was about two meters wide, with a slope to the bottom, along which the condemned walked."*

Assuming the filling coefficient of 3.5 corpses per m^3 established by experience, the grave described by the witness, with an earth coverage of 20 cm, would have

had a useful volume of (12 m × 6 m × 1.3 m =) 93.6 cubic meters and would have contained (93.6 m³ × 3.5 bodies/m³ =) 327 bodies. Hence, the claimed 85,000 bodies mentioned earlier would have required (85,000 bodies ÷ 327 bodies/grave =) 260 mass graves like the one described by the witness.

The Soviet report makes a distinction between the shooting of foreign Jews and of local Jews from Kamenets-Podolsky (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 159f.):

> "Shooting of Foreign Jews
>
> *Starting from late July, 1941 Jews from Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland were brought in trucks allegedly for labour in Kamenets-Podolskiy. They were placed in the special ghetto set up for them in Stariy Gorod (literally 'old town' – Transl.) and in the former Cossack barracks. After a month's stay in the hard conditions of* [the] *ghetto, more than 7,000 men, women, children and old people were shot on September 27, 1941 near the former gunpowder depot."*

This "fact" was confirmed by several witnesses (*ibid.*, p. 160). The report then states that

> *"the total number of the shot foreign Jews reached 18 thousand people. Their graves were found in the area of the former training battalion and gunpowder depot."* (*ibid.*)

On the second category of victims, the report states:

> "Extermination of Local Population
>
> *On August 28, 1941, more than 12,000 heavily guarded residents of Kamenets-Podolskiy and neighboring villages were marched to the gunpowder depot, and machine gunned according to the Nazi established pattern and buried in common graves."* (*ibid.*)

The report then indicates other executions: in July 1942, 53 students were shot, in the month of November 4,000 civilians, 2,000 persons in February 1943, and 91 the following month (*ibid.*).

The report then asserts that

> *"In the* [sic] *late 1942 the Germans forcibly assembled many children at the age of 4 to 8 at the Jewish cemetery and buried them in a common grave which contained more than 500 children's corpses.*
>
> *It was established for certain that the majority of children had been buried alive."*

This was all "confirmed" by several witnesses (*ibid.*, p. 161). The report adds:

> *"In the old Orthodox cemetery near the POW camp, the commission has found 4 trenches where more than 6 thousand POWs are buried,"* (*ibid.*)

and then states that "[a]ccording to evidence" of 15 witnesses, "over 6 thousand POWs died in the camp over the entire period of the camp's existence" (*ibid.*). This means that the Soviets found exactly the number of victims asserted by the witnesses. This continual recourse to the witnesses, however, raises the suspicion that the Soviets did not actually find the claimed number of graves containing the number of victims declared by them. This suspicion is confirmed by the use, or more exactly, by the non-use of such extraordinary finds at trial. At the Nurem-

berg Trial, in fact, the only mention of Kamenets-Podolsky appears in a list of concentration camps (IMT, Vol. 7, p. 173):

> *"I must name the concentration camps of Smolensk, Stavropol, Kharkov, Kiev, Lvov, Poltava, Novgorod, Owl, Rovno, Dniepropetrovsk, Odessa, Kamenetz-Podolsk*[y], *Gomel, Kerch, of the Stalingrad region, of Kaunas, Riga, Mariampol (Lithuanian) of Klo*[o]*ga (Estonian) and many others, in which hundreds of thousands of Soviet nationals belonging to the civilian population, as well as soldiers and officers of the Red Army, were tortured to death by the Hitlerites."*

Can one seriously believe that, if the Soviets had really found 85,000 bodies at Kamenets-Podolsky, they would have limited themselves to this fleeting reference?

The Yad Vashem Institute is in possession of three photographs showing mass graves full of bodies, allegedly of Jews from Kamenets-Podolsky. These photographs show at least two mass graves linked by a narrow trench (Documents II.5.1.-3.). One of these photos shows a corner of one of the graves (Document II.5.2.). The third photograph probably does not belong to the same scenario (Document (II.5.3.), an assumption supported by the fact that the first two photographs originate from a certain Moshe Fuks, while the third was taken by a certain Masha Oembruski.

At any rate, the bodies visible in the three photographs are about 160 in number, total. Even if the respective mass graves each contained 10 layers of bodies, the total number of bodies would have amounted to approximately 1,600. These photographs therefore show that there was a massacre, but they do not substantiate the enormous scale in question here.

In addition, the bodies shown are fresh, with no trace of any sand or soil anywhere in sight, which means these photos do not show exhumations years after the graves were filled, but rather a (still) uncovered mass grave that was filled only shortly before the photos were taken. That these photos were taken at Kamenets-Podolsky is merely asserted by Yad Vashem, obviously based solely on the assurance of the two persons who supplied the photographs.

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, as mentioned earlier, *Sonderkommando* 1005A was transferred to Kamenets-Podolsky in February 1944. During this period, the British intercepted a German radio message which stated:[573]

> *"Russia.* […] *Reference is made to exhumations being carried out at KAMENEZ-PODOLSK. The Minister of Propaganda for East Prussia requires a full report (2477EE19)."*

Two things are important here: First, the message speaks only of "exhumations" but makes no mention of "cremations/burning," but most of all, which is even more important, the "Minister of Propaganda for East Prussia" requested "a full report" in this regard: it is therefore clear that the exhumations underway at Kamenets-Podolsky were expected to be propagandistically exploited by the

[573] TNA, Notes on German Police Decodes: Week Ending 18.3.44. PEARL/ZIP/P. 83.

Germans such as were those at Katyn. Hence, they could not refer to Jewish victims of German executions from 1941, and if *Sonderkommando* 1005 had really been involved in the affair, it would not have had the tasks that orthodox Holocaust historiography attributes to it.

5.3. Zamość

Having arrived at Lvov, continues the verdict of the Stuttgart District Court, *Sonderkommando* 1005 A was transferred to Samocz (Zamość; Rüter/Mildt, p. 729):

> *"The next deployment began around mid-May 1944 in Samocz. Outside the city, surrounded by an old circular wall – probably from an earlier military ring of fortifications – there was a larger mass grave, which was being cleared out. A second 'construction site' was located in a forest cutting. Overall, the deployment in the Samocz region lasted about 6 weeks. An estimated 50 inmates, most of them Jewish, were deployed here. They were killed at the end of the unearthing, possibly in a gas van."*

Hoffmann adds that "all in all about 2,000 dead were lying at both locations," for which he relies on the interrogation of Max Hanisch dated 7 August 1962 (Hoffmann, p. 126). 50 inmates therefore needed (6 weeks × 7 days =) 42 days to exhume and cremate 2,000 bodies, with an average ratio of (2,000 bodies ÷ [42 days × 50 inmates] =) around 1 body per day per inmate!

Who were the presumed 2,000 victims? When were they killed? The verdict does not supply this information, and even Hoffmann remains silent. Since "Aktion 1005" allegedly concerns exclusively the exhumation and destruction of Jewish corpses, we must consider that the victims were Jews from the local ghetto. According to a Polish source, the *Encyclopaedic Informer*, this ghetto was formed in the spring of 1942, but already liquidated in the month of October of that same year. Over the course of the liquidation, the Germans are said to have shot 500 persons, not 2,000.[574] Other executions are not mentioned. Sending *Sonderkommando* 1005 A to Zamość was therefore quite nonsensical when considering that, if we follow the orthodox Holocaust narrative, the *Sonderkommandos* 1005 were deployed only to locations where there were mass graves containing at least several thousands, if not tens of thousands of corpses.

At any rate, *Sonderkommando* 1005 A's exhumation-cremation activity is said to have ended here, because it was subsequently transferred to Litzmannstadt (Łódź), where it accompanied the Jewish transports to Auschwitz (Rüter/Mildt, p. 729).

[574] Pilichowski *et al.*, entry "Zamość," p. 583.

5.4. "Documents" on "Aktion 1005" in Volhynia. The Rovno "*Sonderkommando* 1005" Phantasm

On 11 March 1944, Radio Moscow broadcast a long program in which it spoke of German documents allegedly captured by the Red Army; some of these allegedly related to "Aktion 1005":[575]

> *"Later, when the Red Army began to purge Soviet territory of German fascist detachments, and when the Soviet authorities began to uncover the terrible misdeeds of the fascist fiends, when they found the numerous graves of the Soviet citizens, fighters and officers tortured to death, the German high command carried out frantic measures to conceal and destroy the traces of their crimes. To this end, the German high command organized the exhumation of the graves and the cremation of the exhumed bodies everywhere.*
> *In the special order by the* Obersturmführer,[576] *dated Rovno 3 August 1943, IVa 1, No. 35/43 SS, to the district leader of the* Gendarmerie *Kamen-Kashirsky, it was commanded to report immediately the location and number of the graves located in this area, especially …*[577]
> *Among the documents found in the Gestapo buildings in the Rovno Region were reports in reply to the above-mentioned order with some 200 points with which such graves had been recorded. This register indicates that the German-fascist hangmen had sought such locations for the graves as were inaccessible to unauthorized persons. Here is a partial list of these locations:*
> *78 Shepetovka, in the forest, 3 graves,*
> *79 Slavuta, gravel pit, 1 grave,*
> *80 Slavuta, in the forest, 1 grave,*
> *121 Gorokhov, 1 km south of Gorokhov (ph), 100 m from roads to Breshkopol (ph), 1 grave; city cemetery, in the western corner, at right 1 grave, in the clay pits, south of Gorokhov, 1 grave.*
> *123 Berestechko, in the courtyard of the police barracks about 500 m north of the Narynchin sovkhoz, 1 grave.*
> *124 – Lokachi, 1 km south of the city, in the clay pit, 1 grave.*
> *125 – Iselin, about 1 km northwest of Iselin, next to the ruins of the building, 1 grave.*
> *140 – … Nagornaya Street, sand pit, 400 m behind the northern barracks, 1 grave; Nagornaya Street, northwest of the city, in the sand pit to the right of the road, 1 grave; Vladimirskaya Street, next to the Jewish Cemetery, 1 grave; in the prison yard, 1 grave; Ploshchadnaya Street, next to the old cemetery 1 grave.*
> *142 – …, 3 km west of the city, 1 grave.*
> *143 – …, 2 km southwest, beside the lake, 1 grave,*
> *144 – …, next to the security police, 1 grave.*
> *145 – …, 4 km northwest of the city …*

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575 Hoppe, Doc. 282, "Transkript (geheim) einer von Interradio-Sonderdienst Seehaus (NPo 69/Brm, Bericht: Wörtlich, Stichwort: Deutsche Greuel) abgehörten Sendung von Radio Moskau vom 11.3.1944, Beginn: 6.37 Uhr MEZ (Auszüge)," pp. 686-688.

576 No name is given.

577 Ellipses in original.

> *146 – Melnitsa, 2 km west of Melnitsa, in the sand pit, 1 grave.*
> *147 – ...*
> *At the end of the register it stated that all graves were listed in the register, including the graves of the squads who had formerly worked here.*
> *The bodies of persons shot and prisoners of war as well as POWs and peaceful Soviet citizens tortured to death were burned by the tens of thousands in Kharkov, Kiev, Rovno and a great number of other cities and districts along the path of withdrawal of the Hitlerite army."*

The order to list all the mass graves in the territory was therefore sent from Rovno to the district leader of the Kamen-Kashirsky Police on 3 August 1943. Kamen-Kashirsky (Polish: Kamień Koszyrski) is located in Volhynia, approximately 100 km southeast of Brest (see Documents II.2.1. and II.8.24.).

The editors of the work containing the above document inform their readers in footnote 16 on their page 687:

> *"There is an earlier, identical order by Blobel to these recipients: Letter (Secret State Matter, IV A 1 No. 35/43 SS) from the Heads of* Kommando *1005 to the District Police leader in Kamen-Kashirsky, undated (before 15 July 1943)."*

Notwithstanding the obvious importance of this document – the exact archive reference for which they supply – the authors, strangely enough, did not publish it. There must have been some good reason for this omission, and perhaps the fact that the document is a mere translation into Russian was perhaps not even the most important reason (*ibid.*). No doubt, as I shall explain, Blobel had nothing to do with it, and the nature of the document was entirely different.

"Reports," in the plural, relating to the registration of mass graves in 200 localities are moreover supposed to have been found in the territory of Rovno, which means that the number of mass graves cannot have been less than 200. The fragmentary list made known by the Soviets relates to only a small portion of these localities; it is neither clear whether this originates from one or more reports, nor whether the phrases quoted are a translation or a summary.

In Document II.2.1. I have indicated the few localities mentioned:

- Slavuta and Shepetovka (Shepetivka), Proskuriv Oblast: Slavuta is located some 55 km southeast of Rovno (Rivne), while Shepetovka is about 20 km southeast of Slavuta;
- Melnitsa is some 100 km northwest of Rovno, about 30 km southwest of Kovel, in the center of the Volhynia Oblast;
- Berestechko, Gorokhov (Horokhiv), Druzhkopol and Lokachi are located in the southern part of the Volhynia Oblast; Berestechko is located some 85 km southwest of Rovno, while Gorokhov is about 30 km northwest of Berestechko; Druzhkopol is ca. 10 km southwest of Gorokhov, Lokachi is roughly 30 km north of Gorokhov; this locality is around 90 km northeast of Lvov.

The "reports" in question are therefore said to have listed mass graves in the Volhynia Oblast, but no Holocaust historian has ever claimed that any *Sonderkommando* 1005 ever operated in this region. Hoffmann states that, on an unstat-

ed date but probably in the first half of June 1943, Blobel went to Lvov accompanied by his adjutant Arthur Harder, and there they formed the "*Kommando*" spoken of by Weliczker (Hoffmann, pp. 92f.). Blobel is then supposed to have continued on to Kiev, where he is thought to have organized *Sonderkommandos* 1005A and 1005 B, presumably in the second half of July. These trips are not attested to by any document, and one would be fully entitled to consider them merely the fruit of fantasy. From the orthodox point of view, they lack all logic: Rovno is located between Lvov and Kiev, but much closer to Lvov. The localities listed in the Soviet radio broadcast are even closer to Lvov, being located beyond the southern confines of the Galicia District. If, therefore, on 3 August 1943, and even before that, the police of Kamen-Kashirsky had received Blobel's order to carry out a mapping of the local mass graves, we cannot understand why Blobel didn't go to Volhynia to set up an appropriate exhumation-cremation squad, before continuing on to Kiev. Even after his return from the Ukrainian capital, he did not set foot on Volhynian soil.

Another curious fact relates to the designations of the various "*Kommandos*" allegedly set up by Blobel. The one at Lvov was called simply *Sonderkommando* 1005, while, being the first in a planned series, it would have deserved the term *Sonderkommando* 1005 A. Weliczker knew nothing of Blobel and never even mentions him in his "diary." At Kiev, Blobel is said to have organized two other *Sonderkommando*s A and B, but none in Volhynia, notwithstanding the alleged mapping of the local mass graves already begun.

Why did Blobel neglect Volhynia? Why didn't he set up a specific "*Kommando*" for this region? Orthodox Holocaust historians never even notice this problem.

Let us return to the Soviet radio broadcast. In this regard we only know that "the document" – is a "transcript" of the "Special Services Seehaus," which was a German radio monitoring service based in Berlin; its task was "the procurement and evaluation of intelligence through the monitoring of foreign radio stations" (Granier *et al.*, p. 69). Nevertheless, the existing text "is a contemporary translation from Russian" (Hoppe, p. 684, fn 1). Therefore, a Radio Moscow broadcast, for which the document in question had been translated into Russian, was listened to and translated back into German by a German agency, but this German translation has disappeared without a trace, and all we have now is allegedly a re-re-translation of this German re-translation back into Russian!

It is a fact that the original German text of this and other presumed "reports" were never published by the Soviets, notwithstanding their importance; although they would have been formidable incriminating evidence against the Germans. In fact, these "reports" never even enjoyed a fleeting reference at Nuremberg. This gives rise to the justified suspicion that these documents, if they really existed, were simple requests for information in the field of health, like the documents I will analyze in Subchapter 7.1.

Such documents would require the heading "IVa 1, No. 35/43 SS," but checking the original text is not possible. On the other hand, "Office IVa 1" formed part of the RSHA, but constituted the sector of the Gestapo which concerned itself with Communism. The heading also lacks the ominous figure "1005," which, for orthodox Holocaust historiography, characterizes the related presumed secret correspondence.

The inescapable conclusion from all this is that the Soviet radio broadcast does not provide any usable information about any activities in the context of the alleged "Action 1005."

6. *Sonderkommando* 1005 B and 1005 Center

6.1. The Activities of *Sonderkommando* 1005 B According to the Verdict of the Stuttgart District Court

In Chapter 4 of Part Two of this study I quote in the verdict of the Stuttgart District Court, according to which Zietlow and Kirstein tarried at Babi Yar until the end of August 1943, then traveled to Dnepropetrovsk, where they set up *Sonderkommando* 1005 B. But already "during about the second week of September," a part of that *Kommando*, in fact "the majority," were sent back to Babi Yar to reinforce the inmate squads working there (Rüter/Mildt, p. 714). It is clear that SS *Sturmbannführer* Baumann, who directed the exhumation-cremation work, was perfectly incompetent, even incapable of evaluating how many staff he needed, so that he made the majority of this *Kommando* travel 950 km uselessly (round trip to Kiev and return to Dnepropetrovsk). What was the partial unit remaining at Dnepropetrovsk doing? The verdict does not say, and limits itself to asserting (*ibid.*):

> *"Zie.*[tlow] *and Kir.*[stein] *remain – to what purpose is unclear – with the rest in Dnepropetrovsk, until the others return from Kiev in the early days of October."*

Hoffmann confirms (Hoffmann, fn 19, p. 112):

> *"Whether the rest of Kommando 1005 B remaining in Dnepropetrovsk eliminated any traces of mass murder there could not be definitely established during the Stuttgart trial against Sohns et al."*

Further along, the verdict asserts (Rüter/Mildt, p. 724):

> *"Sonderkommando 1005 B was transferred to Krivoy Rog immediately after conclusion of the unearthings in Kiev."*

It is hard to see how one can reconcile this with the preceding statement that the Kiev *Kommando* had returned to Dnepropetrovsk at the beginning of October. Further along, the verdict reiterates that a "partial unit" went to Krivoy Rog, but this was no doubt a confusion, because the "partial unit" of Dnepropetrovsk is not mentioned anymore in the verdict. It is therefore necessary to understand that the two partial units met at Dnepropetrovsk at the beginning of October and then went to Krivoy Rog, which is also supported by the court's chronology, as we shall see in the next subchapter. Because *Sonderkommando* 1005 B had to leave the area toward the middle of October, it follows that it was active at Dnepropetrovsk starting with the beginning of September until a little before mid-October, and starting with the beginning of October it was reduced by the larger part, which worked at Babi Yar. All this makes very little sense.

EM No. 135 dated 19 November 1941 reports the following ratio of *Einsatzgruppe* C (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 818):

> *"Of the roughly 100,000 Jews originally present in Dnepropetrovsk, about 70,000 fled before the arrival of our troops. Of the roughly 30,000 remaining* [Jews], *about 10,000 were shot on 13 Oct. 41 by a squad from the Higher SS and Police leader."*

Kruglov, as we have seen earlier, states that there were 34,000 victims in the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast, more than at Babi Yar. Yet from the "*Sonderkommando*" supposedly dispatched to Dnepropetrovsk in order to eliminate the bodies there, the majority was immediately sent back to Kiev! And the smaller "partial unit" left behind in Dnepropetrovsk is supposed to have operated in this area for little over a month.

6.2. Krivoy Rog

If we follow the orthodoxy, then *Sonderkommando* 1005 B was moved from Dnepropetrovsk to Krivoy Rog (Ukrainian: Kryvyi Rih), where the victims of an execution had been thrown into a well, and the bodies could not be extracted. The heads of the *Kommando* then decided to cover the well with a layer of cement. But when they were just about to carry out this plan, there was a sudden incursion by Soviet troops in the direction of Krivoy Rog, therefore, the "partial unit" (in fact, the entire *Sonderkommando*) had to withdraw (Rüter/Mildt, p. 724).

How many persons were killed at Krivoy Rog? Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower, in the "Introduction" to their book *The Shoah in Ukraine*, assert that 4,000 persons were killed at Krivoy Rog on 14-15 October 1941 (Brandon/ Lower, fn 21, p. 20). Alexander Kruglov says that there were 3,300 victims (including 800 POWs) on 15 October 1941 (Kruglov 2008, p. 277). No source is given, but the comparison with Arad's texts solves the enigma. The Israeli historian in fact appeals, with regard to the executions of 14-15 October 1941, to "an eyewitness"! (Arad 2009, pp. 180f.) This "eyewitness" mentioned two executions, one of 3,000 persons on 14 October, and the other of 2,000 (including 800 prisoners of war) on 15 October.

The Incident Reports make two references to executions at Krivoy Rog. EM No. 86 dated 17 September 1941 records the killing of 105 Jews, in addition to 39 officials and 11 saboteurs and looters (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 477). EM No. 135 dated 19 November 1941 mentions the killing of eight political officials and two saboteurs during the period from 28 September to 4 October (*ibid.*, p. 777). Since *Einsatzgruppe* C regularly reported also small executions with few victims and even quite-irrelevant data, how can one believe that it would have remained silent about the shooting of 3,000 or 4,000 Jews on 14 and 15 October 1941?

In view of these facts, the claim that *Sonderkommando* 1005 was sent to Krivoy Rog to carry out exhumations and cremations cannot possibly be true.

6.3. Nikolayev

From Krivoy Rog, *Sonderkommando* 1005 B traveled to Novy Bug (Novyi Buh), approximately 90 km west-southwest. Holocaust literature does not tell us what they did there to pass the time, but it does tell us that it next continued on to Nikolayev (Mykolaiv). With regard to this town, the Stuttgart District Court stated:

> *"On the western edge of the City of Nikolayev, at least some 3,000 to 4,000 bodies lay on the grounds of an unobstructed barracks. These were men and women who had presumably been shot as Ukrainian nationalists or for racial reasons by members of the security police and the SD at the beginning of the German occupation. The bodies had been thrown together in several mass graves immediately behind a wall."*

The exhumation and cremation work was performed by a *Kommando* of at least 30 inmates, "at the latest during the last third of November 1943" (Rüter/Mildt, p. 726), and concluded "shortly before Christmas 1943" (*ibid.*, p. 727).

Kruglov states that the Germans killed more than 7,000 Jews at Nikolayev in 1941, and over 8,000 at Kherson (Kruglov 2008, p. 275). According to him, there were 31,100 victims in the entire Nikolayev Oblast in 1941, and 8,700 in 1942 (*ibid.*, pp. 278 and 281), for a total of 39,800.

From the orthodox Holocaust point of view, the surprising thing is that Kherson, a town 65 km southeast from Nikolayev by road, was largely neglected by *Sonderkommando* 1005 B, which limited itself to processing 3,000-4,000 bodies, which means that the Soviets should have found these 35,800-36,800 bodies. However, orthodox Holocaust historians do not agree on the narrative about the claimed massacres at Nikolayev. I shall return to this matter later, in Subchapter 8.2.

6.4. Voskresensk and Voznesensk

Sonderkommando 1005 B then is said to have moved to Voskresensk, which is approximately 15 km north of Nikolayev. Here, it found three to four mass graves with 1,000 bodies, which were exhumed and cremated between 12 to 20 January 1944 (Rüter/Mildt, p. 728). It is not known who the victims were, because this town is completely unmentioned in to Holocaust literature.

The Stuttgart Court rejected the prosecution's conjecture that *Sonderkommando* 1005 B had also operated at Voznesensk, a locality located approximately 82 km northwest of Nikolayev, because it could not establish anything in this regard (*ibid.*, p. 729). On the other hand, Voznesensk was not the site of any execution. Krausnick and Wilhelm mention it only twice, but only in connection with its transit by *Sonderkommando* 10b towards the middle of August 1941 and for the securing of "bridge crossings" (Krausnick/Wilhelm, pp. 200, 242).

During the last week of January 1944, *Sonderkommando* 1005 B was transferred to Lvov and was then sent on furlough to Zakopane and Krynica (Rüter/Mildt, p. 728).

6.5. Key Witness Gerhard Adametz

The verdict upheld the greater part of the charges in the indictment, based essentially on a statement allegedly written by Gerhard Adametz, but more likely authored by an anonymous anglophone ghostwriter. As I mentioned earlier, Adametz claims to have stayed at Kiev until 12 October 1943. The account continues as follows (USSR-80, pp. 8-10):

> *"The next morning we departed by motor vehicle for Bielu-Gerkw* [Belaya Tserkov]. *There we met people from Detachment 1005 a, and we spent the night there. We, from Division 1005 b, then traveled onwards by motor vehicle to Krivoy Rog. When we got there, we were told that there were mass graves there. I saw some 40-50 inmates there under SD guard in a bunker in the vicinity of the mass graves. But since the front was getting closer, the work (the exhumation and cremation of the bodies) wasn't even begun. I don't know, and I also never heard, how many bodies were buried there; it was a smaller grave, perhaps 1,000, perhaps 10,000 bodies."*

Around 16 October, Adametz is said to have been transferred to Nikolayev with his unit.

> *"We stayed there a few days in an old prison and started with the work. There were mass graves on the other side of the Bug River. After a few days, our quarters were transferred there to an old potato cellar. About 40-50 inmates worked there together* [for] *the Division 1005 b, guarded by the SD and police."*

Hauptsturmführer Zietlow, who had taken over command of "Detachment 1005 b" at Berdichev, and *Sturmscharführer* Kirstein were also present:

> *"Here, there were about 3-4000 bodies. I believe most of them were Jews, but I don't know exactly.* […]
> *The work in Nikolayev, which is between Kherson and Odessa in the Ukraine, lasted about 8 days. The bodies there were of men, women and children of all ages. They were burned in the same way as I described under Kiev."*

When the work was finished in the early days of November, the 40-50 inmates were shot. At that time, the front was approximately 200-300 km away from Nikolayev.

> *"Group 1005 b then took the train to Voskresensk. At this location, there were several mass graves in a sand hollow behind the village; there about 1,000 bodies in these 3-4 graves."*

Here again, the 40-50 inmates are said to have been shot:

> *"The shootings took place about mid-December 1943, after the work (exhuming and burning the bodies) had lasted about 3 weeks."*

At that time, Zietlow was "commander of the SD people of 1005 b." With regard to the locality, however, Adametz was a little bit doubtful:

> *"But I can no longer remember whether this was in Voskresensk or Voznesensk."*

Adametz asserted in fact that he had been in both towns:

> *"Our Detachment 1005 b spent about 2 weeks in Nikolayev until about 3 January 1944, and then we took the train to Voznesensk. There existed mass graves as well with an estimated 1,000 bodies. Here, also about 40-50 inmates were working in the same manner as in Kiev, Nikolayev and Voskresensk."*

The inmates were shot around 20 January 1944. The text carries on as follows:

> *"We of Detachment 1005 b then went to Nikolayev for about 3 days, and from there to Zakopane, south of Cracow, where we had to stay for recovery from the end of January until the end of February 1944. We subsequently got 4 weeks' furlough and reported to Lvov (Poland) at the end of March 1944."*

In the meantime, Zietlow, Kirstein and another non-commissioned officer from the SD were arrested for pilfering Detachment 1005 b's food rations. The text continues:

> *"After we arrived* [back] *from our furlough in Lvov (Poland), we stayed there until mid-April 1944; from there we drove to Kattowitz (Poland)* [sic; back then, Kattowitz was in Germany] *where we stayed 2-3 days in the police barracks in Laurahütte near Kattowitz, and then took the train to Riga in Latvia."*

The text declares that Adametz's "Detachment" went from Kiev to Belaya Tserkov, which is approximately 40 km south of the Ukrainian capital, while the verdict of the Stuttgart District Court claims that most of the members of *Sonderkommando* 1005 B were at Dnepropetrovsk, approximately 450 km southeast. Since Belaya Tserkov was in the territory assigned to *Sonderkommando* 1005 A, we do not understand why Adametz was sent to this locality. His statement that the bodies in all the locations mentioned were cremated "in the same way as I described under Kiev" confirms his ignorance of the cremation procedure, because when talking about Kiev, he limited himself to mentioning a "wooden base," without stone supports, railroad rails and gratings.

The claim that, each time the work was done at one location, the 40-50 inmates of every *Kommando* were shot on the spot is not credible at all: in that case, every time, in every new locality, it would have been necessary to recruit and train a new set of 40-50 workers, when it would have been much easier to create a stable *Kommando* of personnel experienced with this kind of work who could be shot at the end of the entire operation.

The chronology of events described in this text presumed to have been penned by Adametz is somewhat dubious. On 12 October 1943, Adametz was at Kiev; on the 13th he was transferred to Belaya Tserkov, where he remained until the 15th; on the 16th he went to Nikolayev, where he spent eight days, therefore until the 24th, at which point the inmates, after finishing the job, are said to have been shot, but that allegedly happened only at the beginning of November, which doesn't fit together. Adametz then traveled to Voskresensk, where he remained for three weeks, which brings us either to the middle of November or to the beginning of the last third of that month. The shooting of the inmates after the end of that operation, however, allegedly occurred in mid-December. Adametz then returned to Nikolayev, where he remained for two weeks until 3 January 1944.

The course of the last legs of his journey is somewhat peculiar. From Nikolayev, Adametz was sent to Voskresensk, 15 km away, then returned to Nikolayev, then traveled to Voznesensk, 82 km from Nikolayev, passing through Voskresensk again, traveling over 67 km.

From 21 January to mid-April 1944, "Detachment 1005 b" remained inoperative. Since its activity began on 10 September 1943, it follows that it was only active for a bit less than four and a half months, and remained inactive for almost three months (to which two weeks and three days of inactivity at Nikolayev should be added). During this long period of "recovery" and "furlough" it was not replaced by another *Kommando*, so that the exhumation-cremation operations were completely suspended. If these statements attributed to Adametz are true, then this behavior proves the utter insanity of Blobel and his collaborators and subordinates directing the operations on the spot.

The activity times and implied work performances also leave us perplexed. The *Kommando* of inmates always consisted of 40-50 persons, but eight days were nevertheless sufficient for the elimination of 3,000-4,000 bodies at Nikolayev, while the elimination of 1,000 bodies at Voskresensk required three weeks, and the elimination of 1,000 bodies at Voznesensk required 16 days.

From 16 October 1943 to 20 January 1944, during more than three months, "Detachment 1005 b" exhumed and cremated an unimaginable number of bodies – fully 6,000 or (6,000 bodies ÷ 97 days =) just under 62 bodies per day, hence just over one body per man per day!

6.6. *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center

All the information relating to this *Kommando*, as in the last case, is derived from a trial, specifically from the verdict of the Hamburg District Court of 9 February 1968, which was handed down at the end of the trial of three ex-members of said *Kommando*: Max Hermann Richard Krahner, Otto Hugo Goldapp and Otto Erich Drews.

6.6.1. Maly Trostenets (Trostinets)

Spector dedicates hardly two lines to this affair (Spector 1990b, p. 166):

> *"From 27 October to 15 December 1943 the Sonderkommando burned 40,000 bodies in Maly-Trostinets."*

Hoffmann dwells on this for many pages, but without saying much more than this. The number of victims fluctuates from 150,000 (Soviet claim) to 60,000 (C. Gerlach's "rough estimate"; Hoffmann, p. 173). The operation's beginning and end dates coincide with Spector's. According to him, there were 15-18 mass graves in the Blagovshchina Forest, containing 40,000-55,000 bodies (*ibid.*, p. 176). It is not clear how three more graves (+20%) could imply an increase of 15,000 bodies (+37.5%). In the specific case, the increase in the number of bodies should have been 20% of 40,000, hence 8,000, leading to 40,000-48,000.

The verdict of the Hamburg District Court of 9 February 1968 enshrined the following in this respect (Bracher/Rüter, p. 38):

> *"The work at the burial location in the little forest near the Mala* [sic] *Trostenets estate lasted from the end of October until mid-December 1943. Tens of thousands of bodies had to be eliminated: their minimum number has to be set to 26,500.* […] *The number of workers employed until the end was either 100 or some 50, but definitely not lower than 45."*

On the cremation technique, we learn the following (*ibid.*, p. 30):

> *"When the laborers and SD members assigned to instruct them had gathered some experience in the construction of pyres, larger pyres with up to 200 bodies were built. They also proceeded to use green wood for the outer edges of the pyres, which burned more slowly than the wood in the middle. This was done because they wished to prevent the outwards collapse of a burning pyre, as had happened at least once."*

It is worth noting that, according to the verdict, after every "operation," the inmates of the related *Kommando*, who had gathered a few experiences in the technique of cremation, were unfailingly killed, so that it was necessary to recruit and train new personnel every time. As I pointed out earlier, it would have made more sense to maintain the same *Kommando*, consisting of experienced workers, for the entire activity, and to kill them only at the end.

Another fact worth noting is that the court considered the burning of 200 bodies on one pyre as a notable advance, the fruit of experience. This is in open contradiction to the statements of many self-proclaimed eyewitnesses, who spoke of 1,000 bodies or more. Not only that, but if the cremated bodies really numbered at least 26,500, then there must have been at least 132 such pyres, burning continuously for over a month and a half, without anybody noticing anything. Yet Maly Trostenets was on the southeast edge of Minsk, in an area surrounded by villages, as we see in Document II.6.1.

The cremation technique did not provide for the famous grid, according to the system allegedly contrived by Blobel and introduced in the "extermination camps" and with the *Sonderkommando*s 1005, but a base of rough tree trunks and smaller pieces of wood; it was provided with seasoned wood and green wood, but the court did not inquire where they obtained the enormous quantities of wood required for the cremation of so many bodies.

On 15 December 1943, at least 45 inmates of the *Kommando* were allegedly killed in one or two "gas vans" (*ibid.*, pp. 38f.). With rather odd logic, the verdict established that, if there were two "gas van," 100 inmates were killed; if, by contrast, there was only one "gas van," only 50 inmates were killed (*ibid.*, p. 76). In practice, the verdict sheds no light whatever on the alleged exhumation-cremation activity at Maly Trostenets. To learn more, it is necessary to resort to a few testimonies.

On 9 August 1944, Brigadier General Burdenko interrogated the witness Lev Shaevich Lansky, who had been deported to the Trostenets Camp on 17 January

1942. Here are two pearls from the interrogation (Ehrenburg/Grossman 1981, pp. 194f.):

> *"Burdenko: Did you see the Germans burning people alive?*
> *Lansky: Yes, they burned people alive.*
> *Burdenko: Where did they burn people alive?*
> *Lansky: In the camp. They would set a storehouse on fire and force people into it. Meanwhile they were gassing people in the mobile vans all the time.*
> *Burdenko: When was the last time they burned people?*
> *Lansky: The 28th of June.* […]
> *Burdenko: How many were burned in Trostyanets* [sic; Trostenets]*, besides the Jews from Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia?*
> *Lansky: Around 200,000 people. I don't know exactly how many were shot before I got there; 299,000 people were shot while we were there."*

This is another confirmation that, in a Soviet context, neither the interrogators nor the persons under interrogation had any sense of the ridiculous.

Another witness, Piotr Nikiforovich Golovach, made the following statement in 1944:[578]

> *"I was also a witness to the fact that in the fall of 1943, all the graves in the area of Blagovshchina were opened, the bodies were cremated and the ashes were taken away somewhere. For the cremation of the bodies, the peasants of a series of rural localities were mobilized (to supply the wood). I know that 5,000 cubic meters of wood was taken from the Lyubavshchina and Danilovshchina Districts, and 2,000 cubic meters from the pine forest of Apchak. Near the area of Blagovshchina, the Germans built a 'furnace' on the edge of the forest near the village of Maly Trostenets, upon which they cremated the persons (until the Germans were driven out). But before the withdrawal, at the end of June 1944, around 28 June, the Germans filled the barracks of the Karl-Marx kolkhoz to the brim with shot persons and burned it. I personally heard the cries and laments of the persons being shot and burned. It is necessary to say that the Germans built a suitable junction leading from the 'furnace' to the road leading from Minsk to Mogilev. The persons being taken to be shot and cremated were taken along this road."*

This is the only known statement which takes concrete account of the fundamental question of the wood required for the cremations. The 7,000 cubic meters mentioned above correspond to (7,000 m^3 × 0.9 t/m^3 ÷ 1.4 =) some 4,500 tons of green wood, enough for the cremation of (4,500 t ÷ 0.25 t/body =) 18,000 bodies. It is advisable to clarify that we are not talking about actual supply of wood, for the existence of which no objective evidence exists, but about a mere assertion. At any rate, the quantity mentioned by Golovach would not have been enough to burn the claimed 40,000 to 50,000 corpses.

Golovach's statement obviously has no documentary confirmation. The most-probable scenario is that he was present at a real cremation carried out in June

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[578] "Record of interrogation of P. N. Golovach, Bolshoy Trostenets, Minsk region, 19 July 1944," in: Beluga, p. 209.

1944, which I will address later, and that he has projected this event backwards in time to the fall of 1943.

Hoffmann reports a statement by Adolf Rübe dated 10 June 1961 on the cremation technique (Hoffmann, p. 179):

> *"The pyres were built in the following manner: First, two tree trunks 6-8 m in length were laid 6 m apart and parallel to each other. Two tree trunks were again laid crosswise on top of these, again about 6 m apart. A layer of dry pole wood was now laid out on top of these, and then two more tree trunks on top of those, 6 m apart. The space in between was now filled with bodies, which were laid tightly packed to one another. This was followed by yet another layer of dry pole wood. Then, again, two tree trunks were laid on top. The space in between was again filled with bodies. This procedure was continued until the pyre was 3-4 m high. In the case of particularly large pyres, a chimney was left open in the interior. At first, when the pyre was finished, gasoline or Diesel oil was poured over it. A pyre like this, however, burned very slowly and incompletely. To accelerate the combustion process, we later proceeded to pour flammable oil over every layer of bodies, so that the pyre was drenched with it. Harder had demonstrated this and practiced it with us."*

There is no doubt that, with such a system of construction, the pyre would have burned "very slowly and incompletely," but it would not have made much sense to remedy its inefficiency through the use of flammable oil instead of changing the system of construction. If we consider the structure of the pyre and its vertical section, its inefficiency is immediately obvious. At the base, it was delimited by two pairs of tree trunks, overlaid and criss-crossing each other. The internal space was left empty, instead of filling it with branches and other firewood. On top of the second pair of tree trunks, a layer of pole wood was placed, and on top of that, again, another two tree trunks; the space between them was filled with bodies. This was followed by another layer of pole wood and then two more tree trunks, and so on. The first layer of the pyre was therefore constructed of six external tree trunks and pole wood, and those following of two tree trunks and pole wood. It is easy to see that the heat produced by the eventual complete combustion of the tree trunk – since these were on the outside – would have been lost, most of it through convection and irradiation, with an insignificant contribution to on the combustion of the bodies on the inside.

It should also be noted that the witness, like the others, with very few, rare exceptions, always speak of wood and liquid fuel without ever explaining where it came from.

A few pages further along, Hoffmann quotes an excerpt from a book on Maly Trostenets by Paul Kohl, which contains the following description of the "furnace" (*ibid.*, p. 181):

> *"A pit about 8 x 8 and 3 m deep was dug, and a ramp was put in on one of the four walls, upon which the trucks with the victims could drive backward into the pit. Since the Red Army was constantly getting closer to Minsk, starting at the end of October we no longer buried the persons shot, but rather burned them immedi-*

ately. To do so, a grid of railway rails was built above the ground, and the pit's walls were covered with metal plates. The whole thing was a gigantic furnace. To block the view, a 3m-high wooden fence was set up around the area with barbed wire, and signs were posted saying 'No Entry! Trespassers Will Be Shot!' The 30 workers who had built this furnace were the first to be shot and cremated in it upon completion. The victims brought there by truck were made to lie face down in the pit and were killed with a bullet in the back of the neck. To increase the heat of the fire for the combustion, tar was poured over the bodies and phosphorus bombs and hand grenades were thrown into the flames. […] *Some 50,000 people were shot and cremated in this furnace at Shashkovka until the end of June 1944, before the dissolution of the camp."*

One of the principal sources for this account was the interrogation of Anna S. Kareta by Lieutenant Colonel Krasnov of the NKGB on 17 July 1944:

"In the winter or spring of 1944, the Germans built a 'furnace' on the edge of the Shashkovka Forest, which is half a kilometer from the Karl-Marx kolkhoz of the village of Maly Trostenets. Here, those peaceful citizens were burned who had been shot or asphyxiated. I didn't see how this furnace worked on the inside. I only saw it from the outside. It was concealed by a high wooden fence and barbed wire. A gate was included in the north side, through which open and enclosed vehicles of the type 'Black Raven'[579] *could drive with living or shot victims. After the arrival of the vehicles, the gate was shut, and we did not see what happened inside the 'furnace.' Shots were only heard occasionally, when people were being shot who had been transported while still alive. Also on the northern side, by the side of the road, about 20 meters from the 'furnace', was a sign fixed to a pine tree reading 'Access to this area is prohibited.' I personally saw the smoke rising from the 'furnace' when people were being burned."* (Hoppe, Doc. 288, p. 695)

Hoffmann explains that the Blagovshchina Forest could no longer be used as an execution ground because of the daily presence of *Sonderkommando* 1005; therefore, in order to continue with their "plans of extermination," the Germans built a "crematorium" in the Shashkovka Forest (Hoffmann, pp. 180f.). This alleged incompatibility between exhumation-cremation and executions appears to have been devised in order to have a pretext for the introduction of more horror sites: In fact, one fails to understand why executions could not be carried out precisely where the above-mentioned "*Sonderkommando*" was working, so as to cremate the bodies right away on the pyres built by the "*Sonderkommando*."

On 15 July 1944, the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia, Panteleimon Ponomarenko, wrote to Stalin to inform him of the discoveries at Minsk:

"In the vicinity of Minsk, mass graves have been discovered containing more than 130,000 bodies. Today, together with a number of governmental and military representatives, I visited one of the above-mentioned mass graves and a cremation location near Trostenets, 7 km east of Minsk. 40 gigantic graves full of bodies of our citizens are located there. It is difficult to convey the terrible impression left

[579] Nickname for the prisoner transport vehicle used by the NKWD.

by the thousands of burned and half-burned, stacked-up corpses as well as skeletons, skulls, distorted arms, legs separated from the torso. Residents report that the occupiers began to burn the bodies from the mass graves in mid-1943. The excavation work was carried out by Soviet POWs who were shot and burned afterwards in turn, as were chance witnesses."

He requested that members of the Extraordinary Soviet Commission, such as Burdenko and Tolstoi, be sent to Minsk (Hoppe, Doc. 287, pp. 693f.). This request was granted, and the Soviet Commission subsequently investigated the area of Minsk, and wrote a report dated 23 August 1944 which speaks of the discovery of 34 graves concealed with tree branches:

"A few graves were as much as 50 meters long. Upon partially opening 5 graves, burnt and carbonized human bones was found at a depth of 3 meters, and a layer of ashes from 0.5 to 1 meter thick.

Beneath the layer of ashes was a dark brown liquid. At the bottom of some graves, there were carbonized tree trunks with bones of bodies lying above these and rails. Around all the graves, the Commission found a large quantity of human bone fragments with combs, dentures and a multitude of small everyday personal effects of all kinds (forks, knives, mess kits, wallets, etc.)."

Based on undisclosed evidence, the Commission "established" that the total number of victims was 150,000 (Beluga, p. 225). The report speaks of tree trunks on the bottom of some graves. When interrogated by Brigadier General Burdenko about this, the witness Lansky declared (Ehrenburg/Grossman 1981, p. 195):

"Burdenko: Did you know there was an oven there?

Lansky: There was a pit nine meters by nine meters. We dug it ourselves. That was about eight months ago.

Burdenko: Can you describe how the oven was built?

Lansky: I was not involved in its construction myself, but I could tell from a distance that they used iron rails. They would start it with a small incendiary bomb and then on large pieces of wood."

The book in which the Soviet report was published also contains a photograph of the remains of a pyre at Maly Trostenets. The image was cut off at the left (Beluga, unpaginated appendix). The full uncut photograph is reproduced in Document II.6.2.[580]

There are also other photographs which show the same scenario.

– A person in a white lab coat, probably a Soviet physician, examines charred bodies placed on top of large tree trunks.[581]
– Foreground shot of three to four charred bodies lying on tree trunks.[582]
– A cluster of charred corpses whose skulls are clearly distinguishable. (Document II.6.3.).

[580] USHMM, Photograph Collection, 71958.
[581] *Ibid.*, 71956.
[582] *Ibid.*, 71950.

– Foreground shot of tree trunks with charred bodies lying on top of them (Document II.6.4.).

These photographs undoubtedly refer to a real pyre, and one may even admit that they refer to Maly Trostenets. The Soviet investigatory commission asserts that it found "127 bodies of men, women and children, not entirely burned, in various degrees of carbonization" and based on the photographs, this appears plausible. It is nevertheless a fact that the pyre was located on the surface of the terrain and not at the bottom of a pit, as declared by the witness Lansky.

The real issue is whether this incomplete cremation fits into the picture of "Aktion 1005" and can therefore constitute material proof of its historical reality. The photographs which I have reproduced categorically rule this out. According to orthodox Holocaust historiography and the testimonies examined, the *modus operandi* of the various *Kommandos* 1005 invariably provided, at the end of every operation, for the meticulous elimination of all traces, which consisted of gathering and grinding up all osseous residues of the bodies and the removal of the ashes from the pyre; the whole was scattered in the fields or buried in ditches, over which grass or saplings were often planted.

The above-mentioned photographs, on the contrary, show that a hasty last-minute action was abandoned before it was finished. They remind us also of the photographs taken by the Soviets at the Estonian camp at Klooga (see Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 1339-1344 for details).

The historical context of this cremation could only be the one described by Paul Kohl and repeated by Hoffmann (Hoffmann, pp. 198f.):

> *"The first victims had to stand on top of a layer of tree trunks in this barn and were shot down with machine guns. More tree trunks were placed on top of the bodies, onto which the new arrivals had to climb, to be shot down in turn. The process was repeated until the last ones were standing right under the rafters. 6,500 bodies were piled up inside the barn. Then they set fire to them, three days before the Red Army liberated Minsk. When the first Soviet units entered Trostenets, the pile of bodies was still burning. All the barracks and wooden structures in the camp and the estate were also in flames, having been set on fire by the Germans before fleeing."*

Nevertheless, both the number of victims and the method of killing seem very dubious. It would be more reasonable and sensible to shoot the inmates in the open, in front of the barn, and then arrange the bodies on the pyre, because already at the second or third layer of wood and bodies, the executioners would have had to climb up onto the pyre together with the next set of intended victims and would have had to shoot while keeping their balance between the inevitably unstable pile of wood and bodies with the living victims allegedly standing on top of that pyre, an obviously unworkable scenario.

The witness Anna S. Kareta reported the following in this regard:

> *"On 29 and 30 June as well as on 1 July 1944, the Germans filled a barn to the top with suffocated and shot people, and set it on fire on 1 July. Thousands of*

> *bodies were burned. I myself saw how the Germans stacked up killed Soviet persons in the barn. First they put a layer of people down, then a layer of straw, and then another layer of people. And so on right up to the top. Next to the barn lay a pile of fallen trees. That was in an easterly direction, near the Sinyavka River. The Germans piled up the bodies of asphyxiated and shot people on these trees as well and set fire to them. The trees didn't burn completely, and the half-burned bodies are lying on them now."* (Hoppe, p. 696)

Therefore, according to her, only bodies were piled up in the barn but no wood. From the few existing photographs, which are not very clear, it is difficult to judge whether the scenario they depict is compatible with that of the pyre inside a barn or not. A few clues would seem favorable: in one photograph (see Document II.6.2), we see the remains of a cart, three wheels of which are visible, along the left-hand margin. Furthermore, seven poles in a row rise from the center of the pyre, while another four form the right-hand margin of the photograph. These could be the support poles of the barn, in which there was also a cart. Another photograph, however (Document II.6.4), shows an intact tree trunk in the foreground, the bark of which can still be distinguished. If it had been inside a wooden barn consumed by fire, it would have been carbonized at least, and also the above-mentioned poles would only with great difficulty have escaped the flames. Be that as it may, this scenario closely follows the Klooga scenario, and like it, has nothing to do with "Aktion 1005."

On 19 September 1944, some 2,000 inmates from this camp are said to have been shot by the Germans; we neither know by which unit nor why. The massacre was completely outside the political line followed by the authorities of the Reich at the time: between 12 July and 14 October 1944, the Security Police of Kovno (Kaunas) and Riga evacuated over 25,000 Jews to the Stutthof Camp (transports list in Graf/Mattogno, pp. 97f.).

According to Soviet data, approximately 1,200 bodies were cremated on large pyres measuring 6 m × 6.5 m, but they did not burn completely, and many charred corpses remained. Speaking of that, Hoffmann admits that the direct participation of Blobel's men in the cremation work "could not be proved thus far" (Hoffmann, p. 334). In this regard I refer to what I have written elsewhere (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 1339-1344).

The extremely rare photographs showing remnants of pyres in fact have nothing to do with "Aktion 1005." Apart from those already mentioned, as far as is known, two other photographs exist of remnants of large cremation sites. One refers to the Krępiecki Forest, near Lublin, and the other to the Stutthof Camp.

The photograph relating to the Krępiecki Forest dates to 1943 and shows a pile of charred bodies (with an order of magnitude of a few dozen), laid out on a grid made of metal beams about half a meter off the ground; the beams have bent and collapsed under the weight, spilling the bodies on the ground. The left-hand corner of the grid consisted of two pairs of concrete blocks laid on top of each other, with a metal beam bent by the heat (Mencel, unpaginated illustration pages).

Because of the very high mortality rate at the Stutthof Camp, especially starting in early 1943, the camp authorities improvised an open-air cremation site consisting of a grid of rails, which warped due to the heat, as can be seen in the relevant Soviet photograph of May 1945 (see Document II.6.5.).

Hoffmann cites a postwar statement by Erich Muhsfeldt, crematorium director at Majdanek, according to which, on 19 April 1943, he, by order of the camp commandant, Hermann Florstedt, traveled to Auschwitz to familiarize himself there with the technique of open-air cremation of corpses and then use the acquired knowledge to cremate the corpses in the Krępiecki Forest. Returning to Lublin, he designed his own cremation installation, upon which he placed approximately 100 bodies at a time. The operation lasted until the end of October 1943. It was supervised by an SD man forming part of *Kommando* 1005, who supplied equipment to grind the osseous residues. Hoffmann suspects that this man was none other than Blobel (Hoffmann, pp. 255f.).

Muhsfeldt's statement must be considered in its historical context. He stated that the first, naphtha-fired crematorium, from June to October 1942, cremated approximately 5,000 bodies; at the beginning of November, it was closed due to a shortage of naphtha. He then added that "over the period between November 1942 and February 1943, an approximate total of 2,000 bodies were buried in the forest." Further along, without any explanation, Muhsfeldt described his alleged visit to Auschwitz, which he then claims took place in February 1943. It is at this point that the excerpt cherry-picked by Hoffmann begins (taken from the well-known history of Majdanek by Józef Marszałek). The last few lines, which are the most important, are missing:[583]

> *"According to my calculations, I burned approximately 6,000 bodies in the forest and approximately 3,000 bodies in field five* [Feld V]*."*

It therefore took Muhsfeldt seven and a half months to cremate 9,000 bodies, from mid-February until the end of October 1943.

The reference to the presence of a man from "*Kommando* 1005" was no doubt a mere result of this having been suggested to him by his interrogators. If this had been true, the man would not have brought along merely his bone-grinding equipment, but first and foremost his knowledge about the famous cremation "technique", contrived by Blobel at Chełmno, and it would not have been necessary for Muhsfeldt to travel to Auschwitz.

The other photograph was taken by the Soviets at the Stutthof Camp in May 1945. It shows a structure of distorted steel rails, criss-crossed and superimposed so as to form a large gridwork (see Document II.6.5.). While at Majdanek the bodies were buried when the old crematorium was inoperable due to a lack of fuel, at Stutthof, when the camp's mortality skyrocketed in early 1943 and that camp's crematorium proved insufficient, the camp authorities improvised by creating an outdoor cremation pit. In both camps, "regular" cremations, which had

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[583] Record of interrogation of E. Muhsfeldt dated 14 August 1947. AGK, NTN, 144, pp. 66f. Only the Polish text of the interrogation exists.

nothing to do with "Aktion 1005," were already underway, of which the open-air cremations of bodies, whether exhumed or fresh, were an extension, hence they followed the same logic.

Regarding Stutthof, it is worth reporting Alex Faitelson's imaginative story that he took from a 1965 Soviet book (Faitelson 1996, p. 219):

> *"'In the autumn of 1944 the crematoria in Stutthof had not been able to burn the increasing number of Jewish inmates. Despite the fact that they worked day and night, they could not accommodate the growing numbers of dead prisoners.'"*

The ubiquitous Paul Blobel rushed to the camp to provide his valuable advice (*ibid.*):

> *"A group of Danish prisoners were ordered to dig a large pit beyond the barbed-wire fence. Railway lines were placed above the pits crossing lengthwise and breadthwise and thus forming a network, and coals were then placed on these grills. When the Danes found out what this was for, they refused to participate. As the Danes were an 'Aryan' race, they were relieved of this duty and returned to their former work crews."*

This presupposes an enormous number of Jews murdered, meaning "gassed." However, according to orthodox sources, less than 900 Jews are claimed to have been killed in the Stutthof "gas chamber" in the fall of 1944 (600 plus a few dozen in October and 250 in November, which is said to have been the last "gassings"; Graf/Mattogno, p. 65).

In other words, this story reported by Faitelson was a fictitious elaboration based on fantasies triggered by the already-mentioned 1945 Soviet photograph (Document II.6.5.). In it, we see the cremation grate, with rails warped by the heat, positioned just above the ground, so that it would be reckless to speak of a "cremation pit." There are 16 transversal beams; if they were placed at a distance of half a meter from each other, in order to give three points of support to a corpse little taller than 1.50 meters, the total length would have been 7.5 meters. This device was built when at least 6,550 inmates died from the end of January until 23 April 1945 due to a typhus epidemic raging at the camp (*ibid*., p. 89). The victims of this epidemic could not be cremated in the two Kori Furnaces due to their small cremation capacity and lack of coke.

Alex Faitelson delights us with another tale (Faitelson 1996, p. 255):

> *"In the concentration camp at Stutthof, there were corpse-burners who cooked potatoes on the flames while living people were burning together with the naked corpses. Rudolf Colding tells of this some time later: 'In the Stutthof Camp we all became callous and hardened. Nevertheless it was difficult to understand what we were witnessing. I do not know what was worse: when the prisoners were placing their tins of potatoes on the burning coals, or when we once saw living people on the fire together with the naked corpses.'"*

Considering that the minimum combustion temperature of a corpse is about 600°C, it would be instructive to know how the "corpse-burners" managed to cook potatoes without cooking themselves at the same time.

There is an important lesson to be learned from the Soviet discoveries at Maly Trostenets and Klooga: when the Germans really need to carry out mass cremations, as in these two cases, the results were far from satisfactory, and obvious evidence of the cremations remained.

6.6.2. "Smaller Burial Site Northwest of Minsk"

The verdict of the Hamburg District Court then dwells on the second site of claimed operations of *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center. Before Christmas 1943, it was transferred "to a smaller burial site"; unfortunately, "the location has not been established with certainty; there is an overwhelming probability that it was located a few kilometers northwest of Minsk, next to the road to Molodechno and further towards Vilnius." Not even the number of bodies exhumed and cremated can be established, but "there were probably a few hundred of them at least, possibly 2,000," an estimate no doubt based on the duration of the operation of "just a few days." It was already finished a few days before Christmas. The inmates in the *Kommando* numbered about 20. At night, they slept in the SD prison at Minsk, and every day they traveled back and forth in a "gas van"! Strangely, at the end of their activity, the inmates, instead of being "gassed" (during the last transport by "gas van" from the prison to the graves), were shot.

The fact that the court did not succeed in identifying the site of the mass graves, notwithstanding the self-proclaimed witnesses, doesn't make much sense, because the only forested area northwest of Minsk extended south of Zaslavl, a locality 25 km from the center of Minsk, on the road to Molodechno, but there were at least fifteen or so villages in the area of varying size. Therefore, it should not have been overly difficult for the witnesses to identify the site of the mass graves with precision.

In conclusion, the least that one can say is that the story is a pathetic historical "refabrication."

6.6.3. Smolevichi

After completion of their activity at Minsk, Krahner, Goldapp and Drews went on furlough. Upon their return, the weather conditions did not permit *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center to operate, and it was necessary to wait until 17 January 1944 to resume work. The new site was located at Smolevichi, a locality 35 km northeast of Minsk on the road to Smolensk. The work was completed with the help of 20 or 40 inmates, and lasted until 26 or 28 January 1944. Upon completing the work, the inmates were killed in a "gas van." The court did not even succeed in establishing the number of bodies exhumed and cremated, but "it may have been nearly 1,000." Upon what evidentiary basis this claim rests is utterly unknown (Bracher/Rüter, pp. 41f., 80).

Spector writes that "between 17 and 26 January 1944 5,000 bodies were eradicated in the area of Smolevichi, and the prisoners who worked there were killed in a gas van" (Spector 1990b, p. 166). The source for this information is the

Krahner trial,[584] yet not the verdict, but the "indictment," as may be deduced from Hoffmann; with regard to the presumed 40,000 to 55,000 victims at Maly Trostenets, he notes with reference precisely to the indictment that Spector, on p. 166 of his article, had adopted the minimum figure of 40,000 (Hoffmann, fn 18, p. 176). The repeated use[585] of an *indictment* as a historical source, the correctness of which had yet to be confirmed by the court in its *verdict*, is obviously abusive and illicit.

Neither Spector nor Arad, who recycled Spector's figure, ever wondered who these presumed 5,000 victims were. The case of Arad is even more egregious. Picking up Spector's narrative, he asserts that, "following a brief Christmas break, the *Sonderkommando* on January 17–26, 1944 resumed its work in the Smolevichi Region northeast of Minsk, where it incinerated about 5,000 corpses" (Arad 2009, p. 352). In all of Arad's work, Smolevichi appears only twice; once here as "Smolevich" and once earlier with the spelling "Smolovich" (*ibid.*, p. 216):

> *"Near Smolovich, the Jews were under suspicion as well of having several times, together with the partisans and other criminal elements, blown up the Minsk-Smolensk railway line. In conjunction with the Kommando from Minsk, 1,401 Jews were shot during large-scale operations carried out in Smolovich.."*

EM No. 108 dated 9 October 1941 tells us, in fact (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 662):

> *"Also in the vicinity of Smolevichi, the Jews were under heavy suspicion to have blown up several times the railway on the stretch between Minsk and Smolensk in cooperation with partisans and other criminal elements. 1,401 Jews were shot in a large-scale operation in Smolevichi, with the help of a rear unit from Minsk. Following the implementation of this cleansing action, there are no more Jews left north, south or west of Borisov."*

Therefore, at Smolevichi, located approximately 40 km southwest of Borisov, there were no more Jews; but then how could there have been 5,000 bodies of Jews in local mass graves?

6.6.4. "Large Burial Site Northwest of Minsk"

On this point, the verdict says (Bracher/Rüter, p. 42):

> *"Between 2 February 1944 and about 2 April 1944, the Kommando was deployed at a large burial site northwest of Minsk, on the road to Molodechno and Vilnius; this burial site was about 30 km from Minsk."*

In this case as well, the incompetence of the court in failing to find the burial site is amazing. Document II.6.6. shows the area around the road from Minsk to Molodechno, from Dekhnovka, some 25 km northeast of Minsk, to Radoshkovichi, some 40 km to the north. The site should therefore have been located inside the

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[584] Spector indicates, as his source, "YVA, Tr-10/761." *Ibid.*, fn 24, p. 172. The archive reference Tr-10 regards legal documentation from trials of Nazi criminals.

[585] In the 37 pages which Hoffmann dedicates to "*Sonderkommando* 1005-*Mitte*" (pp. 171-207), he mentions the "indictment" as an historical source at least 16 times.

circle, where there are many towns and villages, so that it would not have been difficult for the witnesses to locate the area with the mass graves.

There were reportedly 10,000-20,000 bodies at this site. The slave-labor inmates, at least 33 of them, are said to have been killed in a "gas van" (*ibid.*, p. 43). Where these 10,000-20,000 Jews came from, and why they were shot precisely at this site, remains a Holocaust enigma. Krausnick and Wilhelm make a single mention of one of the two localities cited above, Radoshkovichi. No. 38 dated 21 (correct: 22) January 1943 of the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories" refers to an "Operation 'Munich' in the region north of Radoshkovichi" over the course of which the partisan bands suffered 63 deaths (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 523), and that is all.

6.6.5. The "Partial Unit Rübe"

Between the end of February and the beginning of March 1944, a "partial unit" of *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center, under the command of *Kriminalsekretär* Adolf Rübe, is said to have been deployed in the vicinity of Maly Trostenets, where Jews and other persons had been killed and then buried in bomb craters. "These bomb craters" – asserted the verdict in the Krahner Trial – "were located next to a small cemetery set up by the Minsk agency of the Security Police and SD for German military dead and other deceased staff members." The exhumation and cremation work supposedly lasted three to four days and concerned 200-300 bodies (Bracher/Rüter, p. 44). To deploy a "partial unit" and have it work for three to four days to cremate such a small number of bodies fits perfectly into the bizarre logic attributed to the organizers and executors of "Aktion 1005" by orthodox Holocaust historians.

6.6.6. Pinsk

The orthodox narrative has it that *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center was then transferred to Pinsk, some 300 km southwest of Minsk (by road). There existed "at least two large burial sites with about 2,000 bodies of Jewish victims." The work was carried out between the beginning of April and 27 May 1944 (according to Hoffmann, p. 195, from 3 April until 28 May). Initially, to exhume the bodies, they used an excavator from the Organization Todt, but they soon abandoned this approach since it tore the bodies to pieces. 25 inmates were employed in the work; they were killed on 27 May 1944 (Bracher/Rüter, pp. 44f.).

6.6.7. Brona Gora (Bronnaya Gora)

The verdict in the Krahner Trial quickly settled the question of Bronnaya Gora (*ibid.*, p. 46):

> *"After his return from furlough, Krahner had to supervise, aside from Sonderkommando 1005-Center, another Sonderkommando active within the framework*

of Aktion 1005 which was working northeast of Brest-Litovsk, in the region of Bereza-Kartuska and Brona-Gora (see following, under V.G.).”

Point “V.G.” states (*ibid.*, p. 87):

“The findings on the activity of the sub-unit under SS Sturmscharführer Paul Fischer northeast of Brest-Litovsk, in the region of Brona-Gora and Bereza-Kartuska, are based primarily on a statements of the deceased witness Sc. As read into the record, the testimony of the witness Schu. and the statements of the defendant Krahner. This evidentiary base is supplemented by the statements of the witnesses Alb. and Rübe.”

But if the court did not succeed in learning anything of substance in this connection (when the work started and ended, number of bodies cremated, number of inmates employed), this “evidentiary base” cannot be of any great value to historiography.

Hoffmann dedicates only a few lines to this site (Hoffmann, p. 194):

“According to statements by the Public Prosecutor’s office during the Hamburg Proceedings vs. Max Krahner et al., the Kommando, in addition to other mass-murder locations, also processed graves near Brona-Gora, a railway station north of the Byelorussian City of Kobrin, where at least 15,000 Jewish men, women and children were shot and buried between 14 and 17 August 1942.”

The work is said to have been carried out by the “sub-unit Fischer.” Hoffmann relays a decisive piece of information in a footnote: “The work of the sub-unit Fischer was not taken into consideration in the verdict of the trial against Max Krahner *et al*.” (*ibid.*, fn 72, p. 195). Thus does he invert the normal order of values: the verdict, which is much more important than the indictment, should appear in the text, and the reference to the indictment should appear in a footnote.

Spector is only a little more loquacious (Spector 1990b, p. 166):

“Towards the end of this operation in the north of Minsk, a small sub-unit [of *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center] *was set aside, and sent to the area of Brest-Litovsk. It was headed by Fischer and consisted of a few SD-men, interpreters and one policeman who specialized in burning bodies. Additional local German policemen, soldiers of the Waffen-SS, as well as a hundred prisoners taken from the local prison joined the unit. The work began in Brona-Gora, in the area of Bereza-Kartuska, where 48,000 Jews originally from Brest-Litovsk, Pinsk, Bereza-Kartuska, Drohiczyn, Janov, Horodetz* [Gorodets], *and various other places were murdered. The operation ended in the middle of May 1944, the prisoners were killed, and the unit moved to Łomza.”*

As I have mentioned earlier, *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center was active at Pinsk from 3 April to 28 May 1944. Then, starting on 2 June, it worked at Kobrin, where it processed 2,000 bodies (see next section). It follows that exhuming and cremating (20,000 + 2,000 =) 22,000 bodies at Pinsk and Kobrin required most of the staff of *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center, but to process 48,000 bodies (as claimed by Spector), a mere “sub-unit” was created! This is also a perfect reflec-

tion of the madness which orthodox Holocaust historians are compelled to implicitly attribute to the executors of "Aktion 1005."

Spector's source is Beluga's book *Prestupleniya nemetsko-fashistskikh okkupantov v Belorussii 1941-1944* (*The Crimes of the German-Fascist Invaders in Byelorussia 1941-1944*), which reproduces an extensive excerpt from the record of interrogation of a resident of Bronnaya Gora, R.S. Novis, dated 12 September 1944. The witness declared (Beluga, p. 233):

> *"In March 1944, the Germans brought about 100 civilians on foot. Nobody knew where they came from. They were all housed in the camp near the Bronnaya Gora Station and were subjected to strict surveillance. At the beginning of May 1944, these persons reopened the graves near the railway branch in which the executed citizens had been buried, who had been brought earlier by train. After the exhumation, the bodies were burned. For the cremation of the bodies, the Germans dismantled 48 military barracks. Moreover, obviously, they also used a few liquid* [as fuel]. *This I infer from the fact that at night we could see a blue* [glow] *color. During the cremation of the bodies, the intolerable odor of the* [burnt] *bodies could be smelled all the way to the inhabited center of Bronnaya Gora; this can be confirmed by every citizen of the village. The cremation of the bodies continued for 13-14 days. They burned continuously, day and night.* […]
>
> *After the end of the work of exhuming and cremating* [the bodies], *I didn't see any of the citizens whom I had recognized in the group of 100 persons*.[586] *I suppose they were shot and cremated like the others. At Bronnaya Gora station, a total of 186 railway carriages arrived with Soviet citizens who were shot.* […] *Thus, in a conversation, he*[587] *told me that the Soviet citizens who were taken away and were shot numbered over 48,000."*

In the respective Soviet report published in the *Black Book*, to which I shall return later, this statement was reworded as follows (Ehrenburg/Grossman 2002, p. 180):

> *"In order to hide all traces of their savagery, the Germans brought more than one hundred people from various villages in the Brest district to the camp at the Bronnaya Gora train station; these people were given the task of digging up the mass graves and burning the bodies. The bodies were burned in the vicinity of the mass graves, where our citizens had been shot. They burned day and night for fifteen days. In order to fuel the flames that consumed the bodies, the Germans dismantled forty-eight military warehouses and barracks located nearby. They also used a flammable liquid that burned with a dark blue flame. After the work of burning the bodies was finished, the Germans had to shoot and burn all the workers who had dug up and burned the bodies; there were more than a hundred of them. The Germans planted saplings in the area where the graves had been and the burning had taken place. All around were found charred bones, barrettes for women's hair, children's shoes, Soviet money, a shoulder blade, and a baby's arm eighteen centimeters in length."*

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586 The witness had recognized two persons.

587 The stationmaster at Bronnaya Gora, a certain Khajlem .

The description by witness Novis evidently excludes the presence of any *Sonderkommando* 1005, which is said to have consisted of experienced staff and deployed Jews and/or Soviet POWs, not civilians randomly picked up in the surrounding areas. The references to a few body parts discovered on the spot – "charred bones," "a shoulder blade, and a baby's arm eighteen centimeters in length" – the remains of the cremation of 48,000 bodies! – only denotes the proverbial absence of any sense of the ridiculous in Soviet propaganda.

Even assuming the most-dubious data proposed by a few supporters of the orthodox Holocaust narrative, that is, an average weight of the bodies of approximately 36.5 kg, the requirement in *dry* wood (barracks, etc.) for the cremation of 48,000 bodies would have been (132 kg/body × 48,000 bodies =) 6,336,000 kg or 6,336 tons, and would have produced (3.7 kg ash/corpse × 48,000 corpses =) 177,600 kg or 177.6 tons of human ashes and unburned remains, plus (6,336 t wood × 0.08 t ash/t wood × 1.67 =) 846 tons of wood ash and incompletely burned wood. At a density of 0.5 t/m³, the human ashes would have amounted to some 355 cubic meters, and the volume of the wood ash plus incompletely burned wood to some 1700 m³, hence together some 2,055 m³.[588] Where did the Germans conceal this immense quantity of ashes? Even considering the figure of "at least 30,000" victims accepted by Gerlach (Gerlach 1999, p. 723), this would still require some 4,000 tons of wood and produce some 1,300 cubic meters of ashes and unburned remains.

The Soviets had been preceded by the Polish resistance, which had already set the propaganda tone for Bronnaya Gora two years earlier. The *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, No. 50, 24 December 1942, wrote in this regard:[589]

> *"Since 15 Oct., the liquidation of the Jews of Brest continues. The execution site was Bronna Góra, where 12,000 persons were shot during the first three days of the operation."*

The question of the deportations and mass graves at Bronnaya Gora will be dealt with in Subchapter 8.6.

6.6.8. Kobrin

According to the verdict of the Hamburg District Court, *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center began its activity at Kobrin on 2 June 1944. "There was a smaller burial site with about 2,000 victims to be eliminated." The operation is said to have been terminated on 16 or 17 June, and the 30 inmates deployed for this work were allegedly shot afterwards (Bracher/Rüter, pp. 47f.).

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[588] Using the data as indicated in footnote 515. The density of wood ash is only about 0.34 kg/m³, but that density increases due to the presence of unburned and partially burned wood pieces (charcoal); I use an average density of 0.5 kg/dm³ for this as well for simplicity's sake.

[589] *Biuletyn Informacyjny, op. cit.* (note 503), p. 1193.

6.6.9. Slonim

On 25 June 1944, *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center was at Slonim and was active there until 5 July. The investigative "results" of the Hamburg District Court were rather deficient in this regard:

> *"How many bodies had been exhumed and cremated by that time could not be ascertained more exactly; it may have been several thousand."*

The work was terminated "before all local mass graves had been eliminated"; the 30 inmates who had done the work were then shot (*ibid.*, p. 49).

6.6.10. Lomscha (Łomża)

Sonderkommando 1005-Center was then transferred via Grodno to Augustowo (Augustów), where it remained inactive until 14 July 1944. The next day it was sent to clean out the mass graves at Lomscha. The work was done "a few days after 14 August 1944." The court did not announce any concrete facts regarding this site:

> *"The Jury Court was unable to determine anything in detail about the number of bodies exhumed from the mass graves at Lomscha. But there may have been at least several thousand of them."*

The work was carried out by more than 20 inmates, who were killed when they were done, or so the court decreed (*ibid.*, p. 51).

This is said to have been the last operation of *Sonderkommando* 1005-Center; from Łomża, it was in fact transferred to Lodz (Łódź, Litzmannstadt), where it was assigned to escort transports of ghetto Jews to Auschwitz (*ibid.*).

6.7. "Aktion 1005" in Western Byelorussia

6.7.1. The Witness Stefan Ivanovich Pilunov

Hoffmann asserts that "Aktion 1005" began in Byelorussia in the summer of 1943, with the

> *"Compilation of information on the geographical locations and sizes of the existing mass graves by Department IVb of the KdS Office Minsk, headed by SS* Obersturmführer *Müller."*

There, Blobel created "several units" under the command of Friedrich Seekel. At that time, the eastern part of Byelorussia, with a land area of approximately 100,000 km², was under German military administration, while the western part of some 60,000 km² formed the "*Generalkommissariat* Byelorussia." Blobel and Seekel are said to have concerned themselves with the eastern area, while Arthur Harder, Blobel's adjutant, presumably concerned himself with the western area. This reconstruction is based solely on "Findings of the Public Prosecution in the Proceedings against Max Krahner *et al*., Hamburg" (Hoffmann, pp. 139-141). I have already pointed out Hoffmann's illicit use of a mere indictment – which had

yet to be adjudged by the court – as a historical source. And in fact, the court verdict says nothing about the eastern part of Byelorussia. Hoffmann is in fact compelled to admit that in this regard

> *"only statements of varying precision exist concerning the individual squad deployments in the militarily administrated eastern part, from which the actual scope of evidence elimination can hardly be deduced."* (*ibid.*, p. 141)

Spector says more frankly that "unfortunately, there is very little information about this," and refers the reader to a single source, the statement of a certain Stefan Ivanovich Pilunov (Spector 1990b, p. 165), which is also the only source cited by Hoffmann.

On 20 May 1944, Pilunov, who lived in the village of Prisna in the district of Mogilev, signed a statement before the chief of staff of the Byelorussian partisan movement, P. S. Kalinin.

According to Pilunov's account, he was arrested in July 1943 for partisan activity and was held in the Gestapo headquarters at Mogilev for two months. He was then transferred to the local prison and remained there from 15 September until 4 October 1943. Notwithstanding its length, I translate the essential part of his testimony concerning the subject of exhumation-cremation (Beluga, pp. 165-174):

> *"On 4 October, around 6 AM, after the 'evacuation', 280 persons were loaded into four vehicles weighing 3 tons each, after being provisionally (not completely) equipped with tools – spades, axes, saws – and transported off in the area of the village of Pashkovo, district of Mogilev. We stopped in a meadow near the forest of Pashkovo, next to an open anti-tank ditch, which began 200 m from the Minsk-Mogilev road, and led to a swamp north of the two last-named places, between the old and new Pashkovo.*
>
> *Around 8 AM, after breakfast (bread and a cup of black ersatz coffee) some of us (about 40 persons) were led to the anti-tank ditch. The interpreter (a Volga German named Vasily, I don't remember his family name, about 30 years old, of average stature, gaunt, pimply-faced, long nose, blue eyes, reddish hair), explained, without going into detail, that we were to dig an anti-tank ditch.*
>
> *The second group (about 20 persons) started digging construction pits, which, as it later turned out, were intended for the cremation of bodies.*
>
> *Every one of the construction pits was 7 to 8 m long and 1 meter both wide and deep. Two construction pits, dug parallel to each other at 2 meters apart, crossed a second pair of such parallel ditches at right angles. The result was a square with four continuations jutting out of its corners, each perpendicular to the other (extensions of the construction pits after mutually intersecting). The ends of the latter were sloped, and over the length of half a meter, it descended continually and steadily from the ground level to the bottom level of the construction pit.*
>
> *A number of planks or wooden sticks were laid on top of this system of construction pits, with split wood on top. On top of this was an intermediate layer of pitch, mixed with bituminous coal, upon which the bodies dragged out of the grave by the work party were laid next to each other in a row. On the latter were laid, in*

the same sequence, wooden sticks, split wood, pitch and bituminous coal, and on top of this a layer of bodies. In the end, the pile reached a height of 8 to 10 meters and consisted of up to 20 rows [layers] *of bodies."*

The description is accompanied by a drawing (see Document II.6.8) which I will analyze later.

"The above work required special contraptions reminding of a primitive scaffolding such as used when building houses. Some of the workers fell from the scaffolding, were injured and were taken away to be shot under the pretext that they were being sent to a hospital. The furnace was ignited from three sides, and the combustible material at the ignition spots was first doused with large quantities of gasoline. The supply of sufficient quantities of air into the construction pits beneath the lower layers of combustible material was assured by the slope depicted in the drawing.

The third group – about 35 men – chopped the firewood needed to burn the bodies. The others were occupied with getting planks, wooden sticks, bituminous coal, pitch and other combustible materials, which was brought from Mogilev and the villages near our worksite.

When we started the job of excavating the ditch, we discovered at a depth of half a meter buried corpses which were already so badly decomposed that many of us had to throw up. The bodies in the ditch were stacked up on top of each other in 6 to 8 or in some places 12 layers – the first layer with their feet forwards, the next with their heads forwards, and so on, in the same order. On the first day, working until dusk, we pulled no fewer than 4,000 corpses out of the ditches. On spots flooded with water, the bodies were pulled out either with iron rods half an inch thick and two meters long, whose tips were bent to form hooks, and equipped with ring-shaped handles, or with ordinary pitchforks with wooden handles. In the dry places, the bodies were pulled out without tools, with the bare hands. At first, the Germans forced those who didn't want to hold a corpse or a single piece of half-rotten flesh in their hands to lie face down on top of a corpse and to breathe in the smell for five or ten minutes. In particular, the Germans proceeded four times in this manner with Paratroop Captain Bondarev (I'll get around to speaking about him later), to whom the stench of the corpse caused strong urges to vomit and a complete loss of appetite for a long period of time.

Insofar as one can judge from the remaining objects, those murdered and buried in the ditches were soldiers and a large number of civilians as well. Among them were many infants, old people, adolescents and women.

Interpreter Vasily explained to us that we had to gather and hand over to him any valuables found on the bodies – watches, gold, including gold teeth, money, etc. The compliance with this order was supervised by the policeman Lyakhov (who was later shot and burned by the Germans), a resident of the City of Bryansk, who was forced to extract from the mouths of the corpses not only gold, but also artificial teeth made of white metal. […]

In this zone, I worked from dawn to dusk; I was there until and including 19 October 1943. As of this time, more than 25,000 bodies had been pulled out of the

pits, and burnt in four furnaces. Every furnace burned for three or four days. As Interpreter Vasily told Lyakhov, some 35,000 bodies were buried in this zone.
On 19 October, a fifth furnace was set up and filled with bodies. Four of them were set west of the ditch and one, the tallest of them all, was built directly in the ditch. When the next furnace was burned out completely, a Sonderkommando of 15 to 20 inmates was formed, whose members gathered all those bone fragments which had survived the fire, and chopped them on a wooden rack with special pestles, similar to those used during road repairs, and then mixed them with soil. The guards consisted of 68 Germans equipped with machine pistols and four heavy machine guns. There were also eight tracker and guard dogs, four of whom were used to cordon off the working area, and four for guarding of the inmates directly. 12 policemen were assigned to guard our group. […]
On 20 October 1943, as a member of a group consisting of 35 of the strongest men, I was sent to some agricultural settlement about 12 km northwest of Gomel (I don't know the exact name of this settlement), while the rest of the Kommando continued to work at the old location.
According to the interpreter Vasily, some 35,000 shot people were buried in the vicinity of the Pashkovo Forest. Consequently, the remaining prisoners were faced with the task of exhuming roughly 10,000 more bodies.
Everyone of those sent to the new place was given a kilo of bread and was once allowed to drink directly from the brook along the way. After arriving, one of the prisoners, a teacher from the Chaussky District who had eaten too much bread after a period of starvation, died from a twisting of the bowels. The Germans forced one of the prisoners, a Jew, to make a cross for the deceased, and after the burial (in the village where they were billeted, in a vegetable garden), also under orders from the Germans, we all sang a dirge.
In the zone south of the agricultural settlement, about half a kilometer away, we brought to light more than 6,000 bodies from four graves within five days (in total, according to the interpreter Vasily, up to 8,000 bodies are supposed to be there). In the second grave were 1,500 to 1,600 bodies, mainly soldiers, about 800 in the second, soldiers and civilians, more than 1,000 in the third (mainly Jews – women and children, to a smaller extent men). I have no information about the fourth grave. In view of the fact that the ground is dry at that location, the bodies were less strongly decomposed than in the area of the Pashkovo Forest.
All exhumed bodies were burned in two piles, onto which, during this combustion process, corpses were laid which had also been taken from the graves in the meantime. The size of the furnaces and the type of contraption were the same as in the Pashkovo Forest.
We were guarded by 20 Germans, who had 4 dogs with them. To spend the night, they brought us in a 'dushegubka' (gas van) to the nearest village, whose name we did not know, because there were no civilians there. The 'dushegubka' was accompanied by two armored vehicles, one ahead and the other behind.
On the second day, after work, the head of the Gomel Gestapo drove hither (his family name starts with the letter B); he gave every one of us a piece of bread, whereupon we all, while sitting near a burning pyre, sang the songs 'Stenka Razin' and 'Katyusha' and others on the order of this German. The German was

moved to tears and told us through the interpreter that he loved Russian songs very much; he thanked us, gave every smoker among us a cigarette, and drove away.

On 26 October, we, 34 men, were taken in the same 'dushegubka' to the town Ozarichi, where we exhumed about 4,000 bodies within five or six days from three graves located about half a kilometer from the Jewish Cemetery (I am unable to give the cardinal directions with much precision). In total, according to German data, some 6,000 shot people lay buried in this area.

The first and second graves were dug in an anti-tank ditch, the third in a big crater caused by the explosion of an aerial bomb. The bodies of the Jews in this grave had been thrown in in complete disorder, but in the first two graves they had been arranged in rows, in which the heads of the bodies in the second row lay between the legs of the bodies in the first and third row. Due to the dry consistency of the soil, the bodies were only slightly decomposed; with many of them clothing and shoes were still present. […]

We did our work the same way as at the old location. Within two days, all the bodies were burned in a furnace whose base formed a cross, since it did not consist of four, as in the last case, but only of two construction pits, which had the same dimensions as the previous ones.

On the 3rd or 4th of November 1943, we arrived in the area of the village Polykovichi, Mogilev District, but we stopped a kilometer to the east at the edge of the forest. Part of our prisoner squad was already in action there, who had arrived there after finishing their work in the area of the Pashkovo Forest. The Germans told us that we had to recover about 11,000 bodies from six graves in the anti-tank ditch, but we dug up about 8,000, mostly soldiers. Among the civilians were a few Gypsies."

Having finished the job of exhumation and cremation of bodies – the witness continues – the *Kommando* was divided into two groups: one was loaded into two "*dushegubki*" (gas vans), taken away and killed. Of the remaining group, six inmates were selected, including Pilunov, while the others, more than 100 persons, were gassed in another "*dushegubka*." The six survivors were compelled to unload the bodies from the "gas vans" and to throw them onto the burning pyre. The Germans then fired on these inmates as well, but Pilunov was only wounded in the head and lost consciousness. When he woke up, he found himself on a pyre which had just been lit. The flames were getting closer, but he succeeded in fleeing, and thus became the sole survivor of the 280 men in the *Kommando*.

In May 1975, Pilunov was interrogated by two court officials from the Federal Republic of Germany. Hoffmann reproduces an excerpt of the interrogation, which contains several differences compared to the statement made in 1944. The most-relevant ones relate to the use of railroad rails in the construction of the "furnaces," and their height, now reduced from eight to ten meters down to only four meters (Hoffmann, p. 143):

"First, we dug pits, upon which railroad rails were laid, onto them in turn wood and tar, then bodies were laid [on top], *then again the wood, tar and bodies. In this way, a stack of wood and bodies resulted that was about 4 m high."*

6.7.2. Pilunov's Assertions and the Orthodox Holocaust Narrative

I shall now summarize the activity of the *Kommando* based on Pilunov's chronology.

– 25,000 to 35,000 bodies were exhumed and cremated from the mass graves at Pashkovo between 4 and 19 October 1943; the work was later completed in an unindicated period of time;
– During five days between 20 and 25 October, at an unspecified location 12 km northwest of Gomel, 6,000 of the 8,000 bodies allegedly buried there were exhumed and cremated; Pilunov says nothing about the remaining 2,000;
– 4,000 bodies out of the 6,000 present were exhumed and cremated at Ozarichi between 26 October and 2 November; the work was finished within two days; Pilunov keeps silent about the remaining 2,000 bodies in this case as well;
– 8,000 of the 11,000 bodies present were exhumed and cremated at Polykovichi between 3 or 4 November and a later, undetermined date; nothing is known of the remaining 3,000.

It is not clear whether the *Kommando* left (2,000+2,000+3,000=) 7,000 bodies in the mass graves, or whether they eliminated all of them and there were simply overstatements of the numbers of bodies present at the various sites. This seems the most reasonable scenario.

Before analyzing Pilunov's statements in greater detail, we must examine the Holocaust-related relevance of the localities mentioned by him.

Pashkovo is a village located on the northwest periphery of Mogilev, consisting of two neighboring agglomerations, Novo-Pashkovo and Staro-Pashkovo (see Document II.6.7., top left). Some 35,000 bodies had been exhumed and cremated in this area, according to Pilunov, 25,000 of them in his presence, while the remaining 10,000 were exhumed and cremated while he was in Gomel.

8,000 bodies were exhumed and cremated at Polykovichi, which formed the northern periphery of the city (see Document II.6.7., center top). Gerlach, in his powerful work on Byelorussia, mentions "Novopashkovo" only three times. The first mention says that "the people murdered by the SS and Police in Mogilev were buried in mass graves near the villages of Novopashkovo and Polykovichi, and cremated by *Sonderkommando* 1005 in 1943." The source is the "Report of the Mogilev Investigatory Commission of 8 Oct. 1944" (Gerlach 1999, p. 652). Later, with reference to the Mogilev "death camp," he writes:

> *"The shooting and unloading of persons murdered in gas vans were no longer taking place in Novopashkovo, as they mostly had in 1941, but near the village of Polykovichi."*

In a footnote, Pohl again refers to the above-mentioned Soviet investigatory commission, which estimated the presence of 10,000 bodies in the mass graves of of Polykovichi, and 17,000 in those at Novopashkovo (*ibid.*, p. 772). Finally, Gerlach reports that the investigatory commission was said to have "found in the anti-tank ditches of Novopashkovo […], among other things, the corpses of insti-

tutional inmates evidently killed by gas" (*ibid.*, fn 82, p. 1070). In practice, what Gerlach claims to know about Novopashkovo and Polykovichi is for the most part drawn from the report of a Soviet commission (see also Subchapter 8.1.).

6.7.3. The Soviet Report on Mogilev

The Soviet report on Mogilev dated 8 October 1944 was published with a few abridgements by Ernst Klee and Willi Dreßen. According to this, the Germans killed 30,000 civilians at Mogilev, among them 10,000 Jews, plus 40,000 Soviet POWs (Klee/Dreßen, p. 186):

> *"To conceal the traces of their crimes, the German-fascist aggressors carried out mass cremations of the bodies of exterminated Soviet citizens in the villages of Polykovichi and Novopashkovo in the fall of 1943 after extracting the bodies from mass graves. Mass graves from which the bodies could no longer be exhumed (village of Polykovichi) were meticulously masked by the occupiers: They built roads across the graves, sowed them with grain cultures, etc. Similar disguises were carried out at the sites in the village of Novopashkovo where the bodies had been burned."*

After an outtake, the text continues as follows:

> *"10,000 Soviet citizens, among them also children, were exterminated during the occupation era at a distance of 6 km from the City of Mogilev. The exterminations occurred near the anti-tank ditches in the wooded 'Bezvoditsa' area by shooting or in so-called 'gassing vehicles.'"*

Most of the text reproduced by the two authors is a sequence of testimonies which should have constituted the basis for the findings of the report, but which, at least regarding the figures, have little value, if any. In fact, these individuals were only accidental witnesses of the claimed shootings, hence they could not possibly know the total number of persons shot. These witnesses include Sidor Romanovich Boldov, who declared that 6,000-7,000 persons had been shot at Polykovichi "in my opinion," and Daria Danilovna Kondratyeva and Sofia Vasilyevna Asotina, who spoke of more than 10,000 persons killed at Novo-Pashkovo (*ibid.*, pp. 186, 193f.). Further along, the Soviet report dwells upon precisely this locality:

> *"The German-fascist aggressors and their lackeys annihilated more than 10,000 in the anti-tank ditches of the village Novopashkovo, and more than 7,000 Soviet citizens in the forested area of the Kazimirovo sovkhoz* [state-owned farm]. *The killings were carried out by shooting or through the use of 'gassing vehicles,' furthermore by blowing up the doomed persons with mines, by strafing them with shell fire, etc."*

This is followed by a description of the exhumation-cremation of the bodies clearly taken from Pilunov's account, but Pilunov was explicitly mentioned only in the following statement by Maria Vasilyevna Polyakova, who lived at Novo-Pashkovo with her husband. In the fall of 1943, an unknown person introduced himself at her house (*ibid.*, p. 194):

> *"He called himself Pilunov, Stepan, and stated that he, as an arrested Soviet citizen, was being used by the Germans to burn the corpses in the village of Polykovichi and near us. That night, Pilunov was shot together with other workers, but because he was only wounded and was placed on the pyre to be cremated with the other shooting victims, he ran away from the cremation site under the cloak of darkness and the heavy smoke. Pilunov was also surrendered to the partisans."*

This more or less accords with Pilunov's account (Beluga, p. 174):

> *"During the day, I fought my way through to the village of Staro-Pashkovo, where I stayed with Nikolai Pavlovich Polyakov, who was in contact with the partisans. The last evening, until the evening, I was sitting in the hut underneath the floor, when two partisan scouts from the 121st Partisan Division came by Polyakov. From local residents, they had received information on me in their division, and a vehicle came to fetch me around 8 PM."*

The fact that both accounts correspond does not necessarily confirm the reliability of Pilunov's account, however, because the Soviet investigatory commission certainly possessed Pilunov's account, so that the witness could have learned the details she described from Pilunov's account.

The text reproduced by Klee and Dreßen contains not one single reference to any discovery of "corpses of institutional inmates evidently killed by gas" mentioned by Gerlach; in the passage relating to the "psychiatric hospital" at Mogilev, they mention the "gassing chamber," in which 700 victims were presumably killed in the fall of 1941. On the bodies, the report says (Klee/Dreßen, p. 195):

> *"The bodies of the patients killed by gas were transported away on motor vehicles and buried in the anti-tank ditches of the village of Novopashkovo and in the forested area of Kazimirovka."*

There is no mention of their discovery, and it is strange that Klee and Dreßen should have omitted this detail. Instead, and equally strangely, they published two photographs showing three rows of exhumed bodies arranged on the surface of a grassy area without trees. The first two rows contain 25-30 bodies each; in the third, shorter than the other two, we see 7-8 bodies; the total number of bodies is around 70. Standing around are civilians and men in white coats. The photographs are accompanied by the following caption (*ibid.*, p. 188):

> *"Forensic physicians from a Soviet investigatory commission in the village of Polykovichi, near Mogilev. Among the murdered were also infants and children. For comparison, the body of an adult was laid down in the foreground."*

If the two photographs really are of Polykovichi, then we must wonder why the Soviet report of 8 October 1944, which speaks of the killing of 10,000 persons in this locality, makes no mention of these exhumations. On the other hand, the number of exhumed bodies does not at all correspond to Pilunov's statements, according to which 8,000 bodies were exhumed and cremated out of 11,000 buried bodies. I have already stressed the ambiguity of such a statement; if it be taken literally, that is, if the figure of 11,000 is not an exaggeration but the actual number of bodies, it is impossible to understand why Pilunov's *Kommando*

would have left 3,000 bodies in the ground. And if they were exhumed by the Soviets later on, than why do these two photographs show far fewer than 100 of them?

The assertion in the Soviet report that a few of the mass graves were left intact and then "camouflaged" because "the bodies could no longer be exhumed" is contradicted by Pilunov's account when he says that the bodies around Gomel were "less strongly decomposed than in the area of the Pashkovo Forest," which implies that the bodies in the Pashkovo Forest were "strongly decomposed," a fact that could have been established only after these corpses had been exhumed after all!

With regard to finding the mass graves, Pilunov himself described a system of surveys which would have failed only with difficulty to notice any mass grave containing 3,000 bodies (Beluga, pp. 171f.):

> *"In all the cases known to me, the Germans located the graves in the following manner. After establishing the approximate location of a mass grave on a map, a squad of five or six men supervised by a German dug exploratory ditches on an area of 1,000 x 250 m with a diameter of some 4 meters and a depth of a half to a full meter, which were each 5 to 10 m apart, depending on the circumstances. Since the Germans knew the position of the mass graves only approximately and not very accurately, it took two or three hours to excavate the exploratory ditches in each case."*

The identification of all the mass graves, whether by the Germans or the Soviets, would have been further facilitated by the fact that, according to the above-mentioned report, the executions took place "before the eyes of the population," and a few inhabitants of the adjacent villages, such as Daniel Andreyevich Loktorov, who is said to have participated "on repeated occasions" in digging the mass graves (Klee/Dreßen, pp. 186, 188).

The identification of the two photographs as showing scenes at Polykovichi is therefore a mere attestation on the part of Klee and Dreßen, who have a bad habit of committing such errors. I only point out the more-obvious:

– Two photographs of the ravine at Babi Yar bear the caption "photograph from 1941" (*ibid.*, p. 117), while they were in fact taken by the Soviets after the re-capture of Kiev (GARF, 128-132).
– As mentioned in Chapter 4 of the present part, they published three photographs of Babi Yar and printed them reversed with misinformative captions (Klee/Dreßen, pp. 101, 104f.).
– Another two photographs depicting an open mass grave bears the caption: "Babi Yar, 1944. Soviet experts at an opened mass grave" (*ibid.*, p. 135). Both are commonly referred to as having been taken at Kharkov (see Subchapter 8.4).
– Finally, Klee and Dreßen attribute a photograph mentioned earlier by myself bearing the caption "Jews of the Zolochev (Zloczow) Ghetto being brought to the mass killing site beside the village of Jelichowice [Yelikhovichi]" (see

Subchapter 1.8.) to the "Forced-labor Camp in the Janowska Road at Lvov" (*ibid.*, p. 145).

Returning to Pilunov's account: For Mogilev, as I will show later (see Subchapter 8.1.), a maximum of 7,471 victims are attested to by documents, so that one must wonder where the presumed (35,000 + 8,000 =) 43,000 persons came from whose bodies are said to have been exhumed and cremated according to Pilunov's account.

6.7.4. Gomel

As for Gomel, Arad asserts that approximately 4,000 Jews remained in the city when it was captured by the Germans on 19 August 1941. He then states (Arad 2009, p. 189):

> *"The major murder operation, in which 2,500 Jews were annihilated, took place on November 4, on the outskirts of town. The other Jews had been murdered earlier in the course of smaller actions."*

The source given by Arad is "YVA, M-33/481" (*ibid.*, fn 26, p. 570), but the reference "M-33," according to the online "Listing of the record groups in the Yad Vashem Archives" concerns "Records of the Extraordinary State Commission to Investigate German-Fascist Crimes Committed on Soviet Territory." The figure of 4,000 Jews remaining in the city is also taken from a Soviet war-crimes report.[590]

In EM No. 148 dated 19 December 1941, *Einsatzgruppe* B reports:

> *"52 Jews without identification papers were found in Gomel, some of whom attempted to disguise themselves as Russians. Among them were also Communist agitators. They were shot. V-men reported that the partisans still numerous around Gomel were supported by Jews in all respects. Hence, a special operation had to be carried out in Gomel, Rogachev and Korma. A total of 2,365 Jews and Jewesses were shot."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 889)

Still, Rogachev is located approximately 115 km northwest of Gomel (by road), while Korma is approximately 100 km to the north; hence, it is not plausible that all the 2,365 bodies were buried 12 km from Gomel, as Pilunov claimed.

Moreover, the claim that the remaining 1,500 Jews were killed beforehand, for which Arad refers to EMs 92; 108; 148 and 179 (Arad 2009, fn 18, p. 570), is utterly groundless.

EM No. 92 dated 23 September 1941 says (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 545):

> *"Only 10 Jews could be identified in Gomel who were suspected of carrying out acts of sabotage and of having acted as partisans."*

EM No. 108 dated 9 October 1941 reports the following information:

> *"In Gomel, 41 Jews and 9 Russians were liquidated for sabotage and looting in the possession of firearms."* (*ibid.*, p. 661)

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[590] Report of 9 June 1945 of the Soviet investigatory commission on the Gomel Oblast. Beluga, p. 312.

EM No. 148, cited earlier, mentions 52 Jews shot in addition to the above-mentioned 2,365; finally, EM No. 179 dated 11 March 1942 contains no mention of killings at Gomel. Here is the English translation of the related German passage which appears in the work cited by Arad, of which he is also a co-author (Arad/Krakowski/Spector, p. 310):

> *"The following report is available on Gomel: because of the present situation at the front, increased anti-German tendencies are noted, finding expression in Gomel on posters, calling upon the population to come out and fight against the German Army. These calls are enhanced by vivid whisper propaganda, transmitted by partisans in transit and Jews who are still on the move in the area."*

There were therefore 103 victims in total, and if the initial number of Jews present at Gomel was 4,000, then (4,000 – 2,365 – 103 =) 1,532 victims are missing; in reality even more, however, because the above-mentioned 2,365 victims did not all live in Gomel, but in three separate towns: Gomel, Rogachev and Korma. Furthermore, Rogachev (Rahachow) is 115 km northwest of Gomel (by road), while Kormu (Korma) is about 100 km north; it is therefore unlikely that the 2,365 victims were all buried 12 km from Gomel.

From the geographical point of view, while it makes sense for the Germans to take the *Kommando* to exhume and cremate bodies at Pashkovo and Polykovichi, which were suburbs of Mogilev, the claim of detachments having been sent to Gomel and Ozarichi is quite implausible. Gomel is in fact located 180 km south of Mogilev (by road), while Ozarichi is approximately 120 km west of Gomel. A transfer of such a distance presupposes among other things that no *Sonderkommando* 1005 was in operation in the area of Gomel.

6.7.5. Ozarichi

The story about Ozarichi was no doubt invented by Pilunov because the Red Army had entered this city on 18 March 1944. The report "The mass extermination of the peaceful Soviet citizens by the Hitlerite invaders in the concentration camps near the City of Ozarichi, Polesye Region, in March 1944" is dated 18 March – 30 April 1944 (Beluga, p. 142). The news was disseminated by the Soviet press. *Pravda* mentioned it in Issue No. 104 of 30 April, followed by the newspaper *Stalinsky udar* in Issue No. 106 of 6 May 1944.

The purely propagandistic character of Pilunov's account is confirmed by the fact that Ozarichi was not the theater of any extermination on a scale such as to justify sending a "1005" detachment to that place from 120 km away.

In this regard, Arad limits himself to writing that "on October 26, this subunit moved to Ozarichi, west of Gomel, where it burned 4,000 corpses over four or five days," but as a source he adduces the related passage from Spector, based on Pilunov's statement (Arad 2009, p. 352 and fn 16, p. 597). It is therefore clear that Arad had no other information of any extermination at Ozarichi.

Hoffmann is hardly less laconic (Hoffmann, p. 146):

> *"On the mass murders by German perpetrators in Ozarichi, information of varying exactitude is available. Thus, at an undetermined time, 2,000 to 4,000 Jewish civilians were killed in the vicinity of the municipality; possible perpetrators are members of Einsatzkommandos 8 and 5, or of Sonderkommandos 7b and 4a."*

He then reports on the killing of 6,000 persons, "mostly Byelorussian civilians," within the framework of the "Bamberg" anti-partisan operation between 26 March and 6 April 1942, while referring to Gerlach. He then continues (*ibid.*, pp. 146f.):

> *"In Ozarichi, in an area about 500 m from the local Jewish Cemetery, the inmates had to exhume a total of about 4,000 bodies from three corpse pits and had to burn them on a pyre."*

What is the source for this alleged Jewish extermination? As I mentioned above, it is Gerlach's book *Kalkulierte Morde*. In this work, the first mention is as follows (Gerlach 1999, p. 608):

> *"Thus, the date and responsibility for the murder of Jews at Ozarichi (2,000 to 4,000 victims) and Osipovichi (1,000 to 2,000) must remain unclarified."*

The other reference concerns the chapter titled "*Pilotunternehmen* 'Bamberg'" and addresses precisely the anti-partisan operation which I mentioned earlier. In the related pages (*ibid.*, pp. 885-893), Ozarichi appears only in one map and one footnote: "In Karpilovka, a designated 'collection point for Jews from Bobruisk, Ozarichi and Parichi,' 133 Jews were murdered, for a total, insofar as mentioned, of about 200" (*ibid.*, fn 146, p. 889; Karpilovka/Oktyabrsky – today's Akciabrski – is some 30 km northwest of Ozarichi – today's Azarychy – as the crow flies). Krausnick and Wilhelm, cited by Gerlach, say that Infantry Regiment 727 "reported, under 2 April 1942, during [anti-]partisan operations, the shooting of 133 Jews ('no weapons captured'), in addition to the shooting of 224 partisans ('no weapons captured'), under 4. April, the shooting of 47 Jews, in addition to 651 partisans" (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 275). There is no mention of Ozarichi in their work. There are supposed to have been 180 deaths. A Soviet list of Jews killed at Ozarichi in 1942 and in the surrounding villages contains 262 names,[591] a figure notably short of the 4,000 or 6,000 bodies mentioned by Pilunov.

6.7.6. Pilunov's Claimed Cremation Technique

Turning back to the witness's account, one should first of all note that his description of the cremation contraption is a little unusual, to say the least. Document II.6.8. in the Appendix reproduces Pilunov's drawing. On the left is Pilunov's diagram of the "furnace," with the 0.5-m-long inclined slopes at each ditch's beginning and end represented by the eight external rectangles. The image to the right is the vertical Section A-A. This is a system of four intersecting ditches, 2 meters apart, 1 meter deep and wide, 7 to 8 meters long.

[591] YVA, M 33, File Number JM/20018.

The ditches, except for the sloping ends which served to supply air for the combustion, were covered with tree trunks, boards or sticks, forming a base upon which a layer of firewood, pitch and coal was placed, then a layer of bodies, then another layer of fuel and then another one of bodies, and so on, until it reached 20 superimposed layers to a height of 8 to 10 meters. The "furnace" covered a total surface area of some 49 to 64 m², but the usable surface area was only some (6 to 7 m² × 4 – 4 m² =) 20 to 24 m², therefore, in practice, the majority of the occupied area remained unused. That the cremations occurred only above the system of ditches is confirmed by the fact that the combustion air flowed "into the construction pits beneath the lower layers of combustible material." It is clear that such a design would have made it practically impossible to stack up 20 layers of fuel and bodies up to 8-10 meters high. Because the base was only 1 meter wide, the stack would inevitably have collapsed well before the height of 8 meters was ever reached, unless the inmates who had to build it had wasted entire days exactly calculating the weight and equilibrium, but even in this case the equilibrium would have been rather precarious.

Assuming a height of 10 meters, a layer of fuel and bodies would have been (10 ÷ 20 =) 0.5 meters thick. If the bodies were 15 cm thick, only 35 cm would have remained for the fuel, which is very little – as I have shown in the case of Babi Yar – even if they used pitch and coal in this case, in addition to wood.

Assuming four bodies in ten rows on one square meter of "furnace," the total number was (22 m² × 4 bodies/m² × 10 rows =) 880 bodies. Since a "furnace" burned for 3-4 days, in the 15 days between 4 and 19 October one could cremate a maximum of (15 ÷ 3 × 880 =) 4,400 bodies, while Pilunov mentions the figure of 25,000. The fact that a fifth "furnace" was added on 19 October changes little, because this fifth ditch could have cremated at most as many as each one of the four existing ditches, that is, (880 ÷ 4 =) 220 bodies in 3-4 days; even if these bodies were cremated on the 19th, the total figure would still be 4,620 as against 25,000.

In fact, the number of bodies cremated in these 15 days would have been even lower, because the above-mentioned 3-4 day period does not include the time required for the preparation of the "furnace."

It is not clear from Pilunov's account whether "the tallest of them all" was the fifth kiln; either way, if the other four were 8-10 meters high, a taller stack than that is even less possible.

The *Kommando,* as we have seen, consisted of 280 inmates. Their subdivision into the various work groups creates additional perplexities. One group of 40 inmates was assigned to exhuming the bodies, while another consisting of 20 inmates was assigned to digging the cremation ditches, and another group of 35 inmates was assigned to chopping wood, while another of 15-20 was ordered to gather and crush the cremation residues. This makes a total of 110-115 inmates. The others, a good 165-170 inmates, were supposed to procure the boards, sticks, coal, pitch and other fuels at Mogilev and in the nearby villages. This is all quite

incredible, also because the German surveillance consisted of only 68 policemen – for 280 inmates who had to run all over the area and were not even chained. The inmates had been taken out of prison at Mogilev in four trucks, hence (280 ÷ 4 =) 70 persons per truck, with (almost) all their tools!

Hence, to travel to Mogilev and elsewhere in search of fuel, the squad of 165-170 inmates would have had to ride in at least 3 trucks, escorted only by a fraction of the 68 policemen, since the rest of the policemen had to supervise the inmates in the other squads; the group performing the exhumations, consisting of 40 inmates, was controlled by 12 policemen; the group sent to Gomel consisted of 35 inmates, guarded by only 20 policemen. Finally, it is too obvious that 165-170 persons sent out to procure various types of fuel in Mogilev and its surrounding villages would have been completely out of control; therefore this story cannot be true. All the more so since these inmates were "bearers of the secret," and the Germans absolutely could not run the risk of their escaping.

On the first day, the squad of 40 inmates engaged in performing the exhumations, including Pilunov, working from dawn to dusk, extracted 4,000 bodies from the mass graves. From 4 October to 19 October, *i.e.*, within 16 days, the *Kommando* cremated a total of 25,000 bodies, an average of (25,000 bodies ÷ 16 days ÷ 280 inmates =) 6 bodies per day per inmate, but at Gomel, 35 inmates cremated 6,000 bodies in 5 days, an average of (6,000 ÷ 5 ÷ 35 =) 34 bodies per inmate. The cremations occurred on two "stacks," which were "furnaces" equal to the ones used until 19 October, and which therefore required an equal amount of work for their preparation. At this rate, the 280 inmates from the entire *Kommando* were said to have exhumed and cremated the above-mentioned 25,000 bodies in three days. Even if the bodies were "less strongly decomposed," this fact cannot explain the immense disproportion involved.

Pilunov's statement is therefore a typical expression of fantastic Soviet propaganda.

6.7.7. "Aktion 1005" at Krupki

U.S. Holocaust historian Waitman Wade Beorn supplies the following information (Beorn, p. 90):

> *"Vladimir Baranchik from Krupki recalled in December 1945 that 'German thugs burned the bodies of killed Jews before retreating. Burnings were carried out with the involvement of arrested Soviet citizens who were brought from* [the] *prison in Borisov. They were also burnt afterwards. I can't give you the exact number of bodies burnt, but the number of Jews was about 2,000.' Margarita Kosenkova remembered that the 'smell was terrible and the villagers saw (the burning operation) from the roofs of their houses.' The Red Army entered the town on 28 June 1944. As elsewhere in the Soviet Union, they uncovered the crimes of the 'fascist occupiers', including the murder of the Jews of Krupki."*

Krupki is located on the road leading from Minsk to Orsha, approximately 130 km northeast of Minsk and approximately 90 km northwest of Mogilev. In 1943,

this locality was outside the *Generalkommissariat* Byelorussia, in the eastern part of Byelorussia, and was part of the territory assigned to Pilunov's *Kommando*. This witness, however, makes no mention of this locality; therefore, we do not know by whom and when these bodies are supposed to have been cremated.

Beorn's assertion that the Soviets discovered crimes at Krupki is without source references and is not reflected by the documents. EM No. 124 of 25 October 1941 mentions this locality under the name "Krupka":

> *"The squad carried out two rather larger operations in Krupka and Kholopenichi. In the first town, 912 Jews were liquidated, and 822 in Kh. Krupka County may therefore be considered Jew-free."*

Even in this case, the motivation adopted was not racial, but security-related (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 732):

> *"The complete liquidation of the Jews in the towns named was necessary to withdraw all support for the partisans and parachutists, who were numerous there, who were assisted by the Jews in every conceivable way."*

Kholopenichi is located approximately 30 km north of Krupki, so that the victims cannot have been buried at the same site.

Leonid Smilovitsky, in an encyclopedia article on Krupki, writes as follows in this regard (Dean 2012, p. 1693):

> *"After the shooting, local Byelorussians were ordered to bury the corpses. According to Anton Krukovsky (born 1883), the bodies of the dead were placed in rows in two pits: one 60 meters long and 3 meters wide (197 by 9.8 feet), the other 15 meters by 3 meters (49 by 9.8 feet) and just over 1 meter (3.3 feet) deep. The corpses were packed almost to the top of the pits."*

Shortly afterwards, he adds (*ibid.*):

> *"In 1943, the Germans, with the help of Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), exhumed the mass grave and burned the corpses. Afterwards, the Soviet POWs were murdered."*

The theoretical volume of the two mass graves was therefore 225 m^3, but the effective volume, if assuming a cover layer of 20 cm of soil, was much less, 180 m^3. Applying the coefficient of 3.5 bodies per cubic meter ascertained earlier, they could have contained approximately 630 bodies.

The reference to the cremation of the bodies is made without giving any source, which is probably Baranchik's statement as mentioned by Beorn. The article in question contains no mention of any inspection of the mass graves by the Soviet investigatory commission.

6.8. "*Sonderkommando*" Macholl in the Białystok General District

6.8.1. Spector and His Polish Source

Spector writes as follows in this regard (Spector 1990b, p. 168):

> *"At the beginning of May 1944, Harder arrived in Bialystok, with instructions to begin Operation 1005. He instructed SS Captain (Hauptsturmführer) Waldemar Macholl, the commander of the local Sonderkommando 1005. The unit had a few SD-men, 50-60 German policemen from the mobile gendarmerie and 40-50 Jewish prisoners. The prisoners were young men discovered after the liquidation of the ghettos in Bialystok, Grodno and vicinity. At the beginning of the work they were chained by their feet, but when it became obvious that this slowed down the operation, the chains were taken off. In the second half of May 1944 the unit opened between 11 and 16 graves in the area of Augustów, and burned 5000-6000 bodies. They proceeded to Grodno, where they burned 10,000 bodies in two weeks, and then to Skidel, where they burned 4000 bodies in a few days. The unit then returned to Bialystok, where it worked mainly in Grabowka, and burned about 10,000 bodies. Altogether, the unit exhumed between 25,000 and 29,000 bodies. On 13 July 1944 the work was completed, and the prisoners were brought to a pit to be executed. In broad daylight and in the presence of 50 German policemen, 43 Jews tried to escape. Eleven succeeded, and after the war they were witnesses at the trial of Waldemar Macholl."*

Spector's source is a Polish article by Szymon Datner published in 1976, which I will address later, but Datner's figures are different, in that he assures us that the result of "Aktion 1005" in the Białystok District "was the cremation of 29,500-35,000 bodies of murdered Poles, Jews, Byelorussians and Soviet prisoners of war" (Datner 1976, p. 75).

Orthodox Holocaust historians faithfully repeat Spector's account, but no one wonders which executions resulted in which presumed bodies, and which German unit shot them. The following are two examples.

Arad takes up the story with the appropriate variations: Grodno becomes "in the Grodno region" and Skidel becomes "in the region of Skidel and Luna" (Arad 2009, p. 353); but these adjustments were not enough, and evidently he felt compelled to ignore Grabówka. His embarrassment is easily understandable: in all his writings, Skidel appears only in this context, and Grabówka and Augustów are never mentioned. This means that the Israeli specialist had not the slightest clue as to any alleged massacre in these localities.

As for Grodno, in Chapter 18, headlined "The Killing Actions in Ostland and the Grodno-Volkovysk Region (Bialystok General District)," Arad only refers to deportations from Grodno, without mentioning any executions in the city (*ibid.*, pp. 251-258). This is actually true for his discussion of the entire "*Generalbezirk* [General District] Bialystok," where he only speaks of deportations, without mentioning shootings on the spot (Arad 2009, pp. 258-260). For this reason alone, from the orthodox point of view, there did not seem to have been any necessity for the Germans to create any *Sonderkommando* 1005 in the General District of

Bialystok. Hilberg mentions the killing of approximately 1,000 Jews in the Białystok Ghetto in February 1943 (Hilberg 2003, Vol. 2, p. 541), but refers to a testimony of Avraham Karasik during the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem on 4 May 1961 (State of Israel, Vol. I, p. 468), an evidentiary basis which is rather thin.

Hoffmann, who repeats Macholl's account in a rather fleeting way (less than three lines), mentions the locality of Augustów, Grodno, Skidel and Grabówka (Hoffmann, p. 379), the last two only in this context, and the other two in a context of executions.

Curilla repeats the account of Waldemar Macholl's presumed activity, and only in this context does he mention the names Grabówka and Skidel, but not Augustów,[592] perhaps because in that locality only one single execution is attested to, that of 316 persons on 26 June 1941, by the EK Tilsit (*ibid.*, p. 840), mentioned in EM No. 19 dated 11 July 1941 (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 102).

Nothing is known of huge executions as claimed by Spector (on the order of 10,000 victims) at Grodno. EM No. 21 dated 13 July 1941 merely reported: "In Grodno and Lida, only 96 Jews were initially executed during the first few days" (*ibid.*, p. 115). The Activity Report of *Einsatzgruppe* B of 14 July for the period of 23 June to 13 July 1941 mentions Grodno, but without reference to executions (Angrick *et al.*, Doc. 19, pp. 54-61).

If, as Spector claims, (5,000 to 6,000 + 10,000 + 4,000 + 10,000 =) 29,000 to 30,000 Jewish corpses were cremated in the General District of Bialystok, a corresponding number of Jews must have been killed beforehand, but the documents speak only of (316 + 96 =) 412!

6.8.2. The Witnesses Szymon Amiel and Salman Edelman

Hoffmann refers to the testimonies of Simon Amiele and Salman Edelman published in the infamous Soviet propaganda book *The Black Book*. This is merely a single account titled "The 'Brenners'[593] from Bialystok. (The Story of the Workers of Bialystok, Zalman Edelman and Shimon Amiel)" (Ehrenburg/Grossman 1981, pp. 242-245). I will summarize it now with a few comments.

In August 1943, the Germans selected 43 persons from among the inhabitants of the Białystok Ghetto, among them the two witnesses who were held in prison until 15 May 1944. They "were put into a 'death machine' (something like a gassing truck) and were taken in the direction of Augustow" (*ibid.*, p. 242). These inmates were therefore transported to their workplace in a "gas van"! The witnesses do not explain how they understood that the vehicle was a "death machine." Arriving at their destination, they were met by 50 policemen – to guard 43 inmates who had, what is more, chains two meters long on their hands and legs! (*Ibid.*, pp. 241-243)

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[592] Curilla 2006, p. 765. Skidel is mentioned four times in the work, but never in connection with executions.

[593] German term (from the verb "*brennen*," to burn) purportedly used for those in charge of cremating the remains of victims exhumed from mass graves.

The witnesses knew nothing of any *Sonderkommando* 1005, but belonged to it anyway, because Spector said so. And here is their description of their work:

> *"When we began to dig the earth, we came upon the corpses at a depth of 15 centimeters. We were ordered to drag these bodies out with hooks and stack them on two-meter-high heaps of wood. The stacking took place in the following fashion: each row of corpses was alternated with a row of wood. (We cut the wood in the forest.) When the height of the bonfire preparation reached three meters, kerosene or gasoline was poured over the wood, inflammatory* [incendiary] *cartridges were inserted in a few places, and the entire structure was set afire. An hour later it was impossible even to approach the fire, since clothing caught fire at a distance of one meter. The burning of a group of corpses took 12-18 hours. After that the bones were removed from the ashes and were ground to dust in large mortars. Then the ashes were sifted through sieves to discover melted crowns of teeth or the gold or silver objects that the murdered people may have had on their persons. Then the ashes were buried in the same pits from which the bodies had been taken for burning. The Gestapo men ordered that the hills above the pits be levelled and the surface planted with trees and flowers."* (*Ibid*., p. 243)

The first three graves in the forest near Augustów contained 2,100 bodies, dressed, "in a state of decay," particularly the upper layers; by contrast, "the skin and fatty tissue were soft and had the appearance of raw white soap" (*ibid.*, pp. 243f.). The technique of extracting the bodies is described as follows (*ibid.*, p. 244):

> *"The bodies were dragged out with the aid of hooks attached to ropes. One or two hooks were thrown into the pit and would snag a corpse."*

From Augustów, the inmates were taken to an area with villages inhabited mainly by Byelorussians.

> *"Near every village was a distinctive hill under which were buried murdered Jews. It was impossible to count those graves. We could bury* [sic; burn] *200-300 bodies and bury the ashes in the pits by working from morning till late at night. In the vicinity of Grodno, near Staraya Krepost, we burned several thousand corpses. We burned a particularly large quantity of corpses fourteen kilometers from Bialystok, in the small towns of Novoshilovki and Kidl."* (*Ibid*.)

The irresistible allure of crude atrocity propaganda is easily perceptible in this account (after the story of the "gas vans" used for transport). Near Białystok, the inmates claimed to have excavated the bodies of 700 mutilated women (*ibid*.):

> *"The bodies were absolutely naked. The breasts of many of the victims had been cut off and were lying beside them in the pit."*

6.8.3. Szymon Amiel's 1945 Testimony

Simon Amiele, whose real name was actually Szymon Amiel, was interrogated twice at the end of 1945 by Judge Leon Damulewicz of the Białystok Court dur-

ing the legal proceedings relating to mass executions and mass graves in the area of Białystok. The first interrogation is dated 12 October 1945.[594] We read there:

> *"During the German occupation, I was living in the so-called Bialystok Ghetto. In the month of October 1942, I was captured during a 'raid' by the Jewish militia together with another 20 Jews and taken to Nowosiołek. We traveled in an uncovered truck under surveillance by three SD officers. Upon arriving at our destination, we noticed 5 or 6 filled graves. We were put in charge*[595] *of a grave of 10 x 3 x 2* [meters] *and were told to finish within 3 hours, that is, from 3 to 6 in the afternoon, and in this period of time we opened the grave, after which we were taken back to the ghetto and were given 1 kg of bread for our work."*

According to the witness, the graves were located in the Nowosiołek District (Nowosiółki); he said nothing of Grabówka and Baciaczki (Bacieczki). The ghetto was liquidated on 16 October 1943. A group of approximately 30 persons, among them the witness, was sent to the prison at Białystok. The group worked for nine weeks on the construction of an administrative building for the police leader at Markowszczyzna. On 1 November 1943, Amiel escaped, but after six days he was recaptured and locked up in prison again. He was supposed to be hanged as punishment, but in prison there was a selection among all the Jews, and he was assigned to a group of 40 inmates deployed for construction work and supervised by *Hauptsturmführer* Makol (Macholl). The group was kept in prison for 6 months and was only let out to work.

On 21 November 1943, 20 children from 1 to 12 years of age were transported from the prison toward Grabówka and shot. The witness remained in prison from August 1943 until mid-May of 1944. In the months of September and October 1943, inmates destined to be shot were frequently transported out of the prison. He counted some 10 transports with at least 70 inmates each.

The following is his account of his exhumation-cremation activity:

> *"In mid-May 1944, our group was transported in a big covered truck (the same truck used to transport people on their way to be shot) to Augustów. We were under surveillance by 60 policemen armed with automatic rifles and grenades. We were ordered to open the mass graves, pull out the bodies, stack them up, sprinkle them with bitumen and gasoline, and set fire to them. We placed up to 1,000 bodies on a pyre measuring 6 x 7 x 5 meters. At Augustów we burned 5 or 6 pyres of this kind, I don't remember. After burning the pyres, we had to grind the bones into dust with special tampers and sift the ashes in search of teeth, rings and golden earrings, which were immediately seized by the men of the Gestapo. At Augustów, we opened three big mass graves and one smaller one* [singular]. *The big graves were 15 meters long, the smaller ones* [plural] *5-6 meters."*

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[594] Record of interrogation of Szymon Amiel dated 12 October 1945. YVA, O.53-94, pp. 7-9.

[595] The original text says: "*Nam dano wymiar grobu*…" = "We were given the dimension of the grave…", with "*wymiar*" = "measure," "dimension," but this way the phrase does not make much sense; I have therefore used the rarer sense of "administration" (for example, of justice), in the sense that the inmates received the assignment to handle the work in that grave.

In the graves were the bodies of Poles, Jews and Soviet soldiers who had been shot, and hundreds of bullets. In one grave, they found more than 100 prostheses of invalids, old people and cripples. Their old age could be inferred from their long beards.

> *"We spent 10 or 11 days at Augustów (from 17 May to 28 May 1944). I recall the following fact from this period:"*

An entire Polish family was shot, and the inmates had to place the bodies "on a burning pyre." The undertaking cannot have been easy, "since clothing caught fire at a distance of one meter."

> *"The bodies were burned in 10 minutes. After cremating the bodies at Augustów, they took us 10 km away, to a place called* [illegible name]. *I don't know the place. There we opened 10-12 graves; on average, there were 400 people in each grave. We burned bodies there for perhaps 5 or 6 days."*

During the night, the inmates were taken to Augustów. They were then transferred to Grodno.

> *"There, we cremated bodies in 3 or 4 places. The biggest graves were at Fort 9. We cremated some 10,000 bodies in total. From there, we were taken to Skidel and Puszcza, where we cremated the bodies from 4 mass graves of executed residents from 4 villages. There were approximately 1,000 persons in every grave. We were later taken to Białystok, more or less on 12 June 1944.* […]
> *Towards 15 June 1944 we were taken to Nowosiołek. We worked there for 10 days. We opened 18 graves there. The graves varied; in one, there were up to 500 persons, in others 300 or even less. All in all we burned 5 or 6 pyres there, with 1,000 bodies in each one. There were cases in which, in one place, after setting one pyre aflame, we prepared another one and burned that one down, too. From there, we were taken to the other side of the road, I don't know what the locality was called, but it wasn't far from Białystok. I think it was Baciczki. There, we exhumed, it seems to me, 8 graves, each of which contained some 500-600 bodies. I recall that we prepared 4 pyres, with about 1,000 bodies in each one. We worked for 5 or 6 days, the pyres burned for 2 days, but the preparation and then the bone grinding and burial lasted so long that it took 6 days."*

The second interrogation dates to 22 November 1945.[596] The witness declared that, after concluding the work at Baciczki (Bacieczki), he and the other inmates were taken to Grabówka at the end of June 1944. There, they were divided into groups, and every group was assigned the task of opening the graves and arranging the bodies on the pyres.

> *"We opened an approximate total of 10 graves and cremated the bodies from 3 large mass graves, including a grave containing several thousand bodies; this grave was very large, the other two were smaller. Apart from these three large mass graves, we burned* [the contents of] *four smaller ones; there were about 200 people in each one."*

[596] Record of interrogation of Szymon Amiel dated 22 November 1945. YVA, O.53-94, pp. 10f.

The three remaining graves are not mentioned. The witness then reports on the cremation of the bodies from seven mass graves, including three large ones (one of them contained the bodies of 700 women) and four small ones; the victims were presumably Jews from the Białystok Ghetto.

> *"We extracted some 1,500 people from the first grave, and 1,500 from the other two. In all, we cremated about 4,000 bodies from these three large graves. There were around 1,200 bodies in the 4 remaining graves."*

The work at Grabówka was suddenly interrupted on 13 July 1944.

The account published in the *Black Book* and Amiel's two statements are in open mutual contradiction:

The activity at Nowosiołek (opening of a grave measuring 10 m × 3 m × 2 m in 3 hours!) is not mentioned in the account quoted in *The Black Book*. In mid-May 1944, the squad of inmates consisting of 40 or 43 men and guarded by 50 or 60 policemen, was either taken to Augustów in a "death machine" (*Black Book*) or in the truck used to transport inmates from prison on their way to be shot.

"*The first three* pits in the forest near Augustow contained 2,100 bodies" (Ehrenburg/Grossman 1981, p. 243), but Amiel and Edelman do not mention any others. However, Amiel asserted that he had opened four mass graves, three large ones (15 meters long) and a small one (5-6 meters long); the exhumed bodies were arranged on five or six pyres consisting of 1,000 bodies each, so that there were four graves and not three, and there were 5,000-6,000 bodies and not 2,100. When the pyre "reached *three meters*, *kerosene* or gasoline was poured over the wood" (*Black Book*); Amiel, by contrast, declared that the pyres measured 6 m × 7 m × 5 m (hence they were 5 m high, not 3) and that they were ignited with "bitumen" (not kerosene) and gasoline. The squad remained at Augustów for 11 days, from 17 to 28 May. Working from morning until evening, it succeeded in eliminating 200-300 bodies, therefore, for the 5,000-6,000 bodies mentioned above, it would have required ([5,000 to 6,000] ÷ 300 =) 16-20 days. But these data are purely fictitious.

As I mentioned earlier, the requirement in green wood – "We cut the wood in the forest" – for the cremation of one exhumed corpse, based on the condition of the body, varies from about 250 to about 370 kg, and one skilled and willing worker can cut some 1.35 tons of wood in one day, whereas resistive prisoners are rated at only 0.63 tons per day (Mattogno 2021, pp. 280f.). Assuming the lowest value for the wood, the burning of 1,000 bodies would have required at least 250 tons of green wood, or 1,250-1,500 tons for the five or six pyres. Just cutting this quantity of wood, if the entire squad of 40 or 43 inmates had been assigned to this task, would have required ([1,250 to 1,500 t ÷ 43 inmates ÷ 0.63 t/inmate/day =]) from 46 to 56 days. But apart from felling trees, they also had to carry out many other tasks: exhuming the bodies, preparing the pyres, burning them down, crushing the bones, sifting the ashes, burying them, leveling the ground and planting trees and flowers over them (evidently, *Sonderkommando* 1005 was equipped even with a squad of gardeners and landscapers).

The total volume of a pyre was (6 m × 7 m × 5 m =) 210 cubic meters. Subtracting a minimum volume of 26 cubic meters for the bodies and assuming an average specific weight of 0.9 for the green wood, in addition to a factor of 1.4 per stacked cubic meter, the pyre contained approximately 120 tons of wood, an average of approximately 118 kg of green wood per body: very little, if one considers that the Mokshda Green Cremation System, a true and proper cremation furnace, requires approximately 150 kg of green wood for the cremation of a 70-kg body (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 1227-1230).

With the technique described by Amiel and Edelman, the exhumation would have required a very long time; it was like fishing: tossing "one or two hooks" tied to "ropes" into the uncovered pit, which may or more likely may not have caught a body, and was then extracted this way from the grave!

The claim is simply absurd that the cremation of the bodies of the Polish family shot by the Germans took only 10 minutes.

Having finished work at Augustów, presumably on 29 May, Amiel's squad was transferred to an unknown locality 10 km away. There, they opened 10-12 mass graves, each containing 400 bodies, and cremated these 4,000-4,800 bodies in five or six days, or until 3-4 June. This, too, is quite implausible. Amiel and the others then eliminated 10,000 bodies at Grodno and another 4,000 (four graves, each containing 1,000 bodies) at Skidel and Puszcza, and on 12 June they were transferred to Białystok. This work was performed in eight days at most (from 4 to 11 June 1944), which is, again, implausible.

Towards 15 June, Amiel's squad was transferred to Nowosiołek, where they had already worked before May 1944; within ten days, they opened 18 mass graves and prepared five or six pyres, each containing 1,000 bodies. As in the preceding case, this work would have required much more time. Then the squad was taken to Bacieczki, where it opened eight graves and prepared four pyres, each with 1,000 bodies. The work lasted six days, including four for preparation and two for true and proper cremation. In reality, the squad would have needed (4 × 1,000 corpses × 0.25 t/corpse ÷ 43 inmates ÷ 0.63 t/inmate/day =) 37 days just to cut the wood.

During his interrogation on 12 October, Amiel declared: "I heard nothing about Grabówka and Baciczki at that time,"[597] but described his squad's work in the first-named locality. On 22 November, perhaps by a prodigious recovery of memory, he spoke of Grabówka, too. Here, at the end of June 1944, Amiel and the other inmates supposedly opened the ten mass graves, including three large ones (with thousands of bodies each), in all no fewer than 6,000 bodies, and four smaller ones, with some 200 bodies each (= 800 bodies total); then another seven graves containing approximately 5,200 bodies. The work was finished on 13 July. The time available was therefore from 26 June to 13 July, 18 days. This task would have been unfeasible as well.

Amiel's chronology is summarized in the following table:

[597] Record of interrogation of Szymon Amiel dated 12 October 1945. YVA, O.53-94, p. 7.

Period	Working days	Locality	Number of bodies exhumed and cremated
17-28 May 1944	11-12	Augustów	5,000-6,000
29 May to 3/4 June	6-7	Locality unknown	4,000-4,800
4/5 to 11 June	8-9	Grodno	10,000
		Skidel & Puszcza	4,000
12 June	–	Białystok	–
15-25 June	11	Nowosiołek	5,000-6,000
26 June – 13 July	18	Grabówka	12,000
Totals:	54-57		40,000-42,800

Amiel's squad therefore exhumed and cremated at least 40,000 bodies in a maximum of 57 days. Just to cut the necessary wood would have taken (40,000 bodies × 0.25 t/body ÷ 43 inmates ÷ 0.63 t/inmate/day =) 369 days, more than an entire year!

It should be noted that, according to Datner, Macholl's *Kommando* was divided up into three groups of inmates: "one excavated the graves with shovels, the second extracted the bodies with iron hooks, arranged them on stretchers (*tragi*[598]) and (in a hurry) carried them to the stack, the third cut the wood, built the stacks with the trees they had cut down, arranged them on top of the bodies and burned them" (Datner 1976, p. 73). Therefore, only a part of the *Kommando* was even assigned to cut the wood. What is more, the work was performed from six in the morning until six in the evening, with a one-hour break for lunch (*ibid.*), and the inmates wore chains two meters long which weighed twelve kg! (*Ibid.*, p. 71) One can therefore easily imagine their working efficiency. Under such circumstances, just logging the required wood would probably have taken two years or even longer.

According to Sz. Datner, the *Kommando*'s activities were carried out in the following order:

Augustów – Grodno – Skidel and Łunna – Białystok – Dzikie – Fasty – Nowosiólki – Bacieczki – Grabówka. Document II.6.9. shows the position of these locations.

Grodno is located approximately 95 km southeast of Augustów (by road), while Skidel is approximately 30 km southeast of Grodno, Łunna is approximately 20 km south of Skidel, Białystok is approximately 110 km east of Łunna; Dzikie, Fasty and Bacieczki are three suburbs of Białystok, northwest of the city, and Grabówka is a suburb to the east, and finally, Nowosiólki is located in a wooded area approximately 25 km from Białystok (as the crow flies). *Puszcza* is not the name of a locality; in Polish, it means "dense forest," and probably refers to the "*puszcza grodzieńska*," Grodno Forest, which extends southeast of Grodno towards Skidel. Since the *Kommando* was transferred to Białystok on 12 June, then back to Nowosiołek on the 15th, to work at Dzikie, Fasty and Bacieczki, only two

598 This is supposed to be the German term, which is, however, "*Tragen.*"

days, the 13th and 14th, were available to them; but it took them five or six days to exhume and cremate 4,000 bodies just at Bacieczki.

6.8.4.The Testimony of Avraham Karasik

On 4 May 1961, Avraham Karasik, another self-proclaimed member of the Macholl *Sonderkommando*, testified during the 28th session of the Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem. He related that in May 1944 he was taken from the Białystok Penitentiary, where he had been incarcerated, to Augustów, where he was forced to open mass graves with a group of 40 other prisoners, some of whom were added later. He stated:

> *"Each grave was eight meters long and two meters wide. In such a grave there were normally 250 - 300 bodies.* […] *On the first day we exhumed about 1,700, for the Germans gave us orders to count each body, and if the body was decomposed, they ordered us to count the skulls."*

There are said to have been seven or eight pits. The unit was simply called *Sonderkommando*. The next day, a special grave was opened, which contained eight corpses. At an unspecified time, the group moved to another location in Augustów. "There were eight or nine such graves." The exhumation and cremation activity lasted until 13 July 1944, and was carried out in the areas of Białystok, Augustów and Grodno. According to the witness's precise information, a total of 22,000 bodies had been cremated. A year after he miraculously escaped the liquidation of the *Sonderkommando*, Karasik claims to have written down all the numbers because he could still remember every single place. "Later on, when I lay wounded in hospital, I recorded this on paper, hence I have the numbers" (State of Israel, Vol. I, pp.471-474).

The witness's claims are in stark contrast to those by Amiel for Augustów: Karasik's 15 or 17 mass graves, 8 m × 2 m, with 250-300 bodies each, totaling between a minimum of 3,750 and a maximum of 5,100 bodies, contrast with Amiel's three large graves, 15 meters long, and one small one, 5-6 meters long, with 5,000-6,000 bodies. The total number of bodies burned is also contradictory: about 22,000 according to Karasik, but at least 40,000 according to Amiel. In addition, Karasik mentioned a grave with the bodies of 750 Polish officers in uniform (*ibid*., p. 473), but Amiel knew nothing of this. Instead, he claims to have seen a grave with the bodies of 700 women, many with their breasts cut off, a horrible fact that Karasik in turn did not mention.

6.8.5. Szymon Datner and "Aktion 1005" in the Białystok General District

In the article cited earlier, Datner notes that "the data regarding 'Aktion 1005' in the territory of the District of Białystok are scarce, including archival data and also those contained in publications"; everything that exists in this regard "is the result of a post-war reconstruction in the form of trial materials and the like, for which one advantageous circumstance was the fact that the director responsible

for this action in the Białystok District (W. Macholl) ended up in the hands of the Polish authorities and made important statements or written annotations in his own handwriting" (*ibid.*, p. 70).

Datner based himself on the trial proceedings staged by the Poles against Waldemar Macholl (the verdict was handed down on 25 March 1949), yet cites neither the defendant's "statements" nor his "annotations," but merely the testimonies of former inmates: Izrael Felder, Abraham Karasik, Mojżesz Gerszuni, Ch. T. Wróbel and Szymon Amiel; nevertheless, the data set forth in his article are practically those supplied by the last-named witness. Datner in fact writes of the cremation of 5,000-6,000 bodies at Augustów from 15-17 and the end of May 1944, of 10,000 at Grodno within two weeks, of 4,000 at Skidel and Łunna within a few days, of 5,000-6,000 at Nowosiołek and another two localities within ten days, of 4,000 at Bacieczki within five to six days, of 1,500 (according to Gerszuni) or 5,000 (according to Amiel) at Grabówka, resulting in a total of 29,500-35,000 (*ibid.*, p. 75).

Datner also supplies details as to the cremation technique (*ibid.*, p. 74):

> *"While at the camps* [at Treblinka, Bełżec and Sobibór] *the base of the pyre consisted of grids made of railway rails with layers of bodies placed on top of them, here, this function was carried out by huge tree trunks 6 meters long (the pyre was 6-7 meters wide, and 5-8 meters high* [sic!]). *A layer of bodies was placed on top of the tree trunks, sprinkled with tar or gasoline, and on top of this another layer of wood and more bodies, etc."*

Hence, Datner strikes another blow against the fairy tale of the cremations using metal grids allegedly excogitated by Blobel and extended to "Aktion 1005."

It is therefore clear that the presumed activity of *Sonderkommando* 1005 in the Białystok District is based on contradictory and absurd witness statements, and it is not supported by any documents regarding the death toll claimed in orthodox Holocaust literature.

7. "Aktion 1005" in the Baltic Countries

7.1. "Aktion 1005" in Lithuania and the "Jäger Report"

The second "Stahlecker Report" lists a total of 143,774 victims for Lithuania by 1 February 1942 (including 136,421 Jews). How many of these bodies were cremated? And how many were found? This subchapter is dedicated to an examination of these questions.

I mentioned earlier the letter sent by the Main Healthcare Administration (medical examiner of Trakai County) to the district commissar Vilnius dated 8 July 1942, and I have examined it in the context of the presumed orders issued by "Aktion 1005" (see p. 473). I will now discuss the specific content of that letter. The letter, signed by Dr. Paskevicius, was directed by the district commissar Vilnius-Land, Wulff. The text is as follows:[599]

"Re: Burial of corpses and cadavers
Dr.Di. /F.
Ref.: Ministerial Decree of 30 April 42 - II.c.3186.
To the Herr District Commissar Vilnius-Land in Vilnius

Answer to the letter of 16 June 1942 as follows:

1. Borough of Trakai.
In an easterly direction, 2 km. from Trakai, 1 km. from the village of Wornicken, 1 km from the forest, 1 km. from the sea, in a sandy depression, is located a Jewish mass grave, 80 meters long, 4 meters wide and 4 meters deep.

2. Borough of Semeliskes.
In a northerly direction, 1 km. from Semeliskes am Walde, 50 meters from the road, 2 km. from the Streva River, on a sandy hillock is located a Jewish mass grave 30 meters long. Drains in the direction of Semeliskes.

3. Borough of Ziezmariai.
1/ In a northerly direction, 3 km. from Ziezmariai, in the area belonging to the village of Trilischken, 1 km. from the Zalsen-Ziezmariai road, on a sandy hillock is located a Jewish mass grave 33 meters long.
2/ In a northerly direction, 5 km. from Ziezmariai, 2 km. from the road Kaisiadorys- Ziezmariai, in the Bladukishk Forest is located a Jewish mass grave 30 meters long.
The mass graves were strewn with lime and covered with soil in 1941. In the spring of 1942, the graves were uncovered and strewn with chlorinated lime and covered with a 1-m layer of soil and fenced off.

[599] LVVA, R-613-1-10, pp. 69-69a. Cf. Hoppe/Glass, Doc. 239, pp. 623f.

Individual graves.
1. Borough of Kaisiadorys.
1/ In a southern direction, 2 km from Kaisiadorys, on the road Kaisiadorys-Ziezmariai, is located in the forest a shallow grave with 8-10 bodies, covered with a layer of soil up to 1 meter thick.
2/ In the village of Palomene, 12 km. north of Kaisiadorys, on the road Palomene – Zasliai is located a grave with 8-12 bodies.

2. Borough of Zasliai.
In a northerly direction, 1 km. from Zasliai, on the road Zasliai – Gegusien, is located a grave with 15-20 bodies. The grave is covered with a layer of soil up to 1 meter thick.

3. Borough of Rudiskes.
In a northerly direction, 3 km. from Rudiskes, 200 meters from the road Trakai – Rudiskes, in the forest is located a grave with 15-20 bodies. The grave is covered with a layer of soil up to 1 meter thick.

In 1942, I sent a letter to the county chief in Trakai in which I informed him that he ought to order the borough provosts of the Trakai County to bury all the corpses and cadavers not yet buried in the spring.
Furthermore, all graves already in existence were to be inspected and improved.
I further remarked that the borough provosts ought to be instructed as to how to handle cases such as the above in the future."

The first part of the letter mentions three boroughs: Trakai, Semeliskes and Ziezmariai; the first two formed (and still form) part of Trakai County, while Ziezmariai was part of Kaisiadorys County. It is not clear why Ziezmariai is included in this letter by the medical examiner of Trakai County.

According to the "Jäger Report," 1,446 Jews were killed at Trakai on 30 September 1941; 962 at Semeliskes on 6 October; and 784 at Ziezmariai and Rumsiskes on 29 August.

In the Trakai area, there was a mass grave measuring 80 m × 4 m × 4 m = 1,280 m³, no doubt compatible with the 1,446 victims declared by the "Jäger Report." The mass grave in the area of Semeliskes was 30 meters long; if, as seems probable, the dimensions of the mass graves were similar to the former in terms of width and depth, the volume of this one would have been 480 m³, and thus equally compatible with the 962 victims from the that locality.

At Ziezmariai, there were two mass graves, one 33 meters long, the other 30. In the hypothesis assumed above, the first measured 528 m³, and the second 480 m³, for a total of 1,008 m³. It is hard to understand why two mass graves of such large size were required for the 784 victims from Rumsiskes and Ziezmariai. But then again, they could have been narrower and/or shallower.

At any rate, the above-mentioned data appear to confirm these specific points in the "Jäger Report," but there are things that do not fit. Above all, in the Borough of Kaisiadorys was located only one single grave with eight to ten bodies in it, while, according to the "Jäger Report," 1,911 Jews were shot in this locality on

26 August 1941. If the burial of the 1,446 bodies of the victims from Trakai required a mass grave measuring 80 m × 4 m × 4 m, the bodies of the victims from Kaisiadorys would have required an even bigger grave.

The second strange aspect of this matter is the claimed course of events. The locations in question are all very close together: Semeliskes is located approximately 22 km east of Trakai, Kaisiadorys is approximately 33 km northwest of Semeliskes, Rumsiskes is approximately 21 km west of Kaisiadorys; Ziezmariai is approximately 7 km south of Kaisiadorys and approximately 19 km east of Rumsiskes.

In the chronology of the "Jäger Report," the first locality mentioned is Kaisiadorys (26 August), followed by Rumsiskes-Ziezmariai (28 August), Trakai (30 September) and Semeliskes (6 October). Therefore, it took 41 days to shoot the Jews in these boroughs, which were very close together! Within three consecutive days, any raiding squad which really took its "organizational matters" seriously would have carried out its task without wasting time and fuel.

The executions on 29 August give rise to further perplexity. 784 Jews were shot in these two localities, but, as we have seen, there were two mass graves at Ziezmariai, one 3 km north of the city (near Triliskes), the other 5 km also to the north, not far from the road to Kaisiadorys. It follows that the Jews of Rumsiskes were buried at least 15 km from the city, while, according to the "Jäger Report," the average distance of the mass graves from the collection point was 4-5 km.

There was also an earlier letter, dated 2 July 1942, which was sent by the "Healthcare Administration of Vilnius County" to the district commissar Vilnius-Land. This letter had as its subject "Existence of corpses and cadavers"[600] and as its reference the "Ministerial Decree of 30 April 42. - II 2 c. 3186, and your letter of 16 June 1942." The medical examiner of Vilnius County informed the recipient that various mass graves had been found, "after a performed investigation." He listed these, indicating the position of each:

1. In the town of Nemenčine: a grave measuring 50 m × 30 m;
2. In the town of Mickūnai: a grave measuring 50 m × 12 m;
3. In the town of Rieše: a grave measuring 25 m × 4 m;
4. In the town of Jašiūnai: a grave measuring 30 m × 10 m.

The above is followed by this observation:

> *"All mass graves are under continual surveillance by the police. In case of need, the graves have been covered with additional soil. There is no risk of epidemics."*

The letter does not specify whether the buried bodies were those of Jews, POWs, Soviet combat casualties or civilians, nor how many of them there were. The most important piece of information concerns Ponary (Paneriai), today a Vilnius neighborhood:[601]

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[600] "*Bestelung v Leichen u Kadavern*" in the Original; the correct spelling is either "*Bestellung*" ([purchase] order) or "*Bestehung*" (existence); the latter was probably meant.

[601] LCVA, R-613-1-10, p. 70.

> *"5) In the borough of Rudamina, in the Paneriai Grove (near the railway station Paneriai), the mass graves were laid out a bit higher on the sandy bend. There are several round-shaped burial sites about 30 meters in circumference. In the event of subsidence, these locations are topped up with earth. The burial locations are fenced off and under constant guard, and subordinate to the German Security Police."*

The number of graves is not indicated, and it is not specified whether any Jews were buried there.

These documents raise another important question: although the district commissar Vilnius-Land was in possession of all the documentation relating to the location of the mass graves in the territory of his competence, "*Kommando* 1005," which operated in Lithuania, apart from the Ponary site, never took the slightest pains to clean up the graves listed, which must therefore still exist, and the information in this letter is quite sufficient to locate them, although until now this has never been done, as far as I know.

This fact is moreover in diametric contradiction to Blobel's declarations. Blobel asserted in his affidavit of 18 June 1947 (NO-3947):

> *"Due to the approach of the front, it was not possible to destroy the mass graves caused by the executions of the Einsatzgruppen and located further south and east. Because of this, I drove to Berlin to report, and was then sent to Estonia by Gruppenführer Müller. I gave the same order to Oberführer Dr. Achamer-Pifrader in Riga as well as to Obergruppenführer Jeckeln. To procure fuel,*[602] *I returned to Berlin. The cremation of the corpses began only in May or June 1944. I remember that these cremations took place in the region of Riga and Tallinn. I was present at a number of these cremations in the region around Tallinn, but here the graves were smaller and only contained 20 to 30 bodies. The graves in the region of Tallinn were about 20 or 30 km east of the city, in a swampy area, and I believe that four or five such graves were opened and the bodies burnt."*

This account is extraordinary. Leaving aside the fact that Riga was located in the General Commissariat of Latvia, it is absolutely implausible that Blobel was sent into the General Commissariat of Estonia to begin exhumation-cremation activities there. According to the Stahlecker's Summary Report relating to the period from 16 October 1941 until 31 January 1942, "some 4,500 Jews lived in Estonia at the beginning of 1940." However, "with the advance of German troops, the majority of Jews left the country, together with the Soviet Russian authorities. About 2,000 Jews stayed behind." On 31 January 1942, there were no longer any Jews in Estonia.[603]

Dov Levin asserts that the number of Jews present in Estonia claimed by Stahlecker, approximately 4,500, is correct, but that the Stahlecker Report did not take account of the hundreds of Jews exiled to the interior of the Soviet Union before the start of the war, so that "altogether about 3,500 Jews fled or were evacuated and deported from Estonia, and about one thousand remained under German

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[602] No document exists referring to this.
[603] RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 57.

occupation" (Levin, pp. 273, 283). In reality, he confirms the above-mentioned report, because the "coffin map," headed "Executions carried out by *Einsatzgruppe* A," attributes 963 victims to Estonia, which was now defined as "free of Jews."[604]

It is worth noting, *en passant*, that Estonia suffered more under Soviet rule than under German rule. In fact, the Germans arrested 18,893 Estonian citizens, 7,798 of whom (including the Jews and 243 Gypsies) were executed or perished in concentration camps during the three years of German occupation. Adding "all those who perished while fighting in the Red Army, Finnish army, German army and the units," we arrive at 32,000 victims, but "the human losses of Estonia caused by the repressive measures of the first Soviet occupation [1940/41] totals 48,000, according to the latest information" (Estonian State…, pp. 16, 19).

After the *Generalkommissariat* Estonia was declared "free of Jews," Estonia started receiving thousands of Jews during the second half of 1942. A transport of 1,000 Jews arrived at Raasiku from Theresienstadt at the beginning of September 1942 (Kárný, Vol. I, p. 66; the transport had departed on 1 September), another transport from Frankfurt upon Main and Berlin carrying 1,049 Jews arrived at the end of the same month (Weiss-Wendt 2009, p. 233). Furthermore, 500 French Jews from Transport No. 73 of 15 May 1944 were diverted to Tallinn,[605] while at least 12,309 Jews in seven transports (four from Vilnius,[606] two from Kaunas and one from Kaiserwald) were transferred to camps in Estonia in 1943 (Weiss-Wendt 2009, p. 321).

A letter from the *Baltische Öl Gesellschaft* (Baltic Oil Corporation) dated 2 June 1944 addressed to the "Labor [Deployment] Office Baltöl of the GBA[607] in Kiviõli" bearing the subject "Deployment of Hungarian Jews" sets forth the labor project for 2,310 Jews and 240 Jewesses.[608] The "Memo on [the] Conference at the Labor Deployment Office of the GBA in Kiviõli on 26 June 44," written the day after, states under Point 2, "Jewish inmates":[609]

> *"An exchange of the inmates present for POWs is no longer an option. – Additional inmates from Hungary have… been rejected due to poor performance caused by insufficient supervision."*

According to Ruth Bettina Birn, 500 Jewesses from Hungary arrived in Estonia in June 1944 (Birn, fn 16, p. 144).

According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, the majority of the Jews deported from Theresienstadt and Germany to Raasiku in 1942 were either shot immediately upon arrival or later (French Jews at Tallinn), but the others were distributed through the transit camp of Vaivara to various Estonian labor camps.

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604 *Ibid.*, p. 184.
605 Klarsfeld (unpaginated), comment on "Convoy No. 73 dated 15 May 1944."
606 Arad asserts that 7,130 Jews were deported to Estonia from the local ghetto between 6 August and 5 September 1944 (Arad 1982, p. 420).
607 *Generalbevollmächtigen für den Arbeitseinsatz* = Plenipotentiary for Labor Deployment.
608 ERA, R-187-1-33, p. 58.
609 *Ibid.*, p. 60.

The above-mentioned Jews amounted to at least 15,000 persons. As noted by Arad, between 8,000 and 9,000 Jews were evacuated to Stutthof from Estonia starting in April 1944 (Arad 2009, p. 331), therefore, the maximum number of bodies present in the mass graves of the General Commissariat Estonia could be 8,000.

Keeping in mind that the above-mentioned "coffin map" for the General Commissariat Latvia supplies a total of 35,238 victims, and a total of 136,421 for the General Commissariat of Lithuania, as has already been noted at the very beginning of this chapter, can anyone seriously believe that Müller, pressed hard by the unstoppable advance of the Red Army, would have given priority to the exhumation-cremation of the presumed 8,000 bodies from Estonia, but ignored the more-than-20-times-higher number of victims in Latvia and Lithuania? The conclusion is that either Müller was a perfect imbecile or that Blobel told quite an implausible story.

Following the assertion which I quoted earlier, Blobel made no mention of Latvia and Lithuania, and closed his sworn statement as follows (NO-3947):

> *"According to orders, my tasks should have extended across the entire area of the Einsatzgruppen, but due to the withdrawal from Russia I was unable to carry out my order completely."*

7.2. Riga and Latvia

As noted earlier, the RSHA initially had not anticipated any *Sonderkommando* 1005 for the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*. To carry out the work of exhumation and cremation, *Sonderkommando* 1005 B was reactivated. Orthodox Holocaust historiography knows practically nothing about any of this. Spector limits himself to mentioning Jeckeln's statements during his trial at Riga in 1946, but supplies no information on exhumation-cremation activity (Spector 1990b, p. 168), which is quite understandable, because his source, in turn, knew nothing about it either. In his interrogation on 14-15 December 1945 by Major Tsvetayev of the NKVD, Jeckeln stated:[610]

> *"In January 1944, the Gestapo staff member Blobel from Berlin visited me in Riga and said that he had personally received a secret order from Himmler to destroy all Jewish corpses in the occupied territories by burning. Blobel said that this is a very serious task, and that all who belong to this* Kommando *are loyal people responsible for maintaining secrecy. I told Blobel where the bodies of the Jewish corpses from the Riga Ghetto were, and asked how the bodies will be destroyed? Blobel said that bodies are exhumed and stacked up in piles. One row of bodies, the other wood, etc. The piles are drenched with fuel and set on fire. Such a process lasts until no traces are left of the human corpses. This task was so secret that the* Kommando *was even referred to by a number, 1189.*
>
> [Question:] *Did Blobel carry out Himmler's order?*

[610] "Ausforschungsprotokoll des Verhafteten Friedrich Jeckeln, Riga, 14. December 1945," in: Christoforow *et al*., pp. 354f.

> [Answer:] *Yes, he started to carry it out. To this end, Jews from several camps were used who exhumed the bodies. The Jews were shot afterwards and set on fire with the other corpses. No one, not even the Higher SS and SD leaders, could come to these sites without a written certificate from Blobel."*

These statements blatantly contradict those of Blobel quoted earlier, since Blobel said that they operated only in Estonia and that he had transmitted Müller's order also to Jeckeln, who was therefore supposed to provide personnel for the exhumation-cremation.

It should also be noted that the made-up designation "*Kommando* 1189" can hardly be explained on the basis of any confusion with "*Kommando* 1005," and it is not by chance that Krausnick and Wilhelm omitted this in the passage of Jeckeln's interrogation they quoted (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 569).

Hoffmann dedicates a few pages to this question, but essentially without giving any useful information (Hoffmann, pp. 127-133), limiting himself to summarizing the findings of the trial against Hans Friedrich Sohns, Fritz Otto Karl Zietlow, Walter Ernst Helfsgott and Fritz Karl Kirstein. The verdict of the Stuttgart District Court of 13 March 1969 dedicates the paragraph headed "Deployment of *Kommando* 1005 B in the Riga Area under the leadership of the defendant Helfsgott" to this question (Rüter/Mildt, pp. 729-732).

According to the Stuttgart judges, *Sonderkommando* 1005 B, after having spent a furlough period at Zakopane and Krinica, met at Lvov awaiting new orders. In the first week of April 1944, the unit, commanded by Helfsgott, who had in the meantime been promoted to SS *Obersturmführer*, was transferred to Kattowitz and on 9 April from there to Riga. For a few weeks, Helfsgott found lodgings for his men in the labor education camp of Salaspils, not far from the Latvian capital, until they went into action in the wooded territory east (southeast) of Riga, that is, Rumbula. Apart from this scanty information, the verdict says nothing at all. Hoffmann comments as follows:

> *"In the Stuttgart Trial of Sohns and others, the judges were, however, unable to determine with exactitude the duration of the elimination of traces in the Rumbula Forest and the number of bodies cremated there."* (Hoffmann, p. 132)

The term "exactitude" is a deceptive characterization, because the verdict in fact supplies no such facts at all.

At Rumbula, as Hoffmann claims, 13,000-15,000 bodies were buried on 30 November 1941, and 10,000-12,000 on 8 December (*ibid.*, pp. 131f.), for a minimum total of 23,000.

Angrick and Klein dedicate a few pages to the activity of *Sonderkommando* 1005 B at Rumbula, but add nothing essential; neither do they say anything about the number of mass graves and the number of bodies exhumed and cremated (Angrick/Klein, pp. 405-407).

The oft-quoted witness Gerhard Adametz recalled that "Detachment 1005 b" met at Lvov towards mid-April 1944, then moved to Kattowitz, where it re-

mained for three days, and was then transferred to Riga. With regard to this location, he declared:

> *"We from Detachment 1005 b were quartered in a barracks, in a labor education camp, about 18 km from Riga. The work was begun there with about 50-60 inmates. The work there consisted of exhuming and burning bodies (about 12-20,000), of men, women and children of all ages. These bodies lay there in 6-8 mass graves, about 8 km from Riga, and about 100 m from the road Riga-Daugavpils.* […] *The work at this location began about the end of April 1944, continued in May and ended around the beginning of June 1944.*
> *The working method, how the bodies were burned, was the same as before, except that here, we burned mostly 2 piles at the same time."*

The 50-60 labor inmates were killed in early June 1944 (USSR-80, pp. 10f.).

The verdict of the above-mentioned trial also dwelt upon the activity of *Sonderkommando* 1005 B in the Bikernieki Forest (Rüter/Mildt, p. 733):

> *"Around mid-May 1944, the Kommando moved into the hut camp which had been set up only a few kilometers east of Riga. Sonderkommando 1005 B 'cleaned up' at least two large mass graves with at least 20,000 bodies in the Bikernieki Forest, over the following months, until about mid-September 1944. Of the number of bodies eliminated, Helfsgott notified the KdS, Dr. Lange, weekly in so-called 'wood reports.'*[611] *Apart from that, the work went on in the usual manner. For that, two groups of at least 30 Jewish inmates from a camp – possibly the Kaiserwald Concentration Camp – were employed, one after the other. The first group might have consisted of at least 30 prisoners who had to participate in the activities of the preceding group."*

Document II.7.1. in the Appendix shows the position of the localities in question.

Since it is presumed that *Sonderkommando* 1005 B had already accomplished its mission at Rumbula before proceeding on to Bikernieki, it follows that it eliminated at least 23,000 bodies within a month (mid-April to mid-May), but it took four months, from mid-May until mid-September, to eliminate 20,000 bodies at Bikernieki!

Adametz reports in this regard:

> *"We from Detachment 1005 b, were then ordered to walk toward some newly erected shacks that were about 250 m away from 6 or 7 mass graves. These* [graves] *were located about 4 km from the edge of the City of Riga, in the Bikernieki Forest. About 10,000-12,000 bodies were located there. A new detachment of 50-60 inmates was brought there by the SD, and the work (excavation and burning of bodies) was begun in the same way as described before, in mid-June, and ended at the end of June* [sic; recte: July] *1944. I believe that the front was about 300 km away at that time."*

The inmates were killed at the end of July. Adametz continues:

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611 No longer, therefore, weather reports (*Wettermeldungen*), but wood reports (*Holzmeldungen*)! The fantasy of judges and historians really knows no bounds!

> *"We from Detachment 1005 b were then ordered to go to another site in the Bikernieki Forest, where there were 7-8 other mass graves. Here were also about 10-20,000 bodies, smaller and bigger ones, perhaps of men, women and children. The work of excavating and burning corpses was begun about the start of August 1944 and ended about mid-September 1944."*

After the operations had been finished, the inmates were shot, and "Detachment 1005 b" embarked at Riga with destination Danzig (USSR-80, p. 11).

In these three sites, therefore, between a minimum of 32,000 and a maximum of 52,000 bodies were supposedly exhumed and cremated.

Regarding the mass graves in this locality, the witness Hermann Heymann declared that "in the period from the end of February until June or August 1942," at Bikernieki, there were "10 pits filled with corpses" (Angrick/Klein, p. 321). As for the number of persons killed and buried at Bikernieki, Hoffmann asserts that the number is not known, but mentions that the Soviet propaganda figure is 46,500 (Hoffmann, p. 134).

Arad mentions Bikernieki one single time, in this context (Arad 2009, p. 148):

> *"In Riga, thousands of Jewish men were snatched off the streets and out of their homes; they were taken in groups to the nearby Bikernieki forest and shot. By the end of July 1941, some 4,700 men had been murdered."*

It is a fact that EM No. 24 dated 16 July 1941 asserts that 2,700 Jews had been killed at Riga as of that time, including 400 during pogroms (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 130), and until the end of November, small-scale executions of a few hundred persons were recorded. Angrick and Klein moreover mention a mass shooting said to have taken place on 5 February 1942, which is not, however, documented; they mention witnesses who estimate the number of victims at between 800 and 1,500 (Angrick/Klein, p. 224). Therefore, even the lowest figure of 20,000 bodies exhumed and cremated, as posited by the Stuttgart Court, is doubtlessly much exaggerated.

One cannot seriously believe that *Sonderkommando* 1005 B was operating along the southeast periphery and east of Riga for five months, exhuming and cremating at least 43,000 bodies, without anyone in the city realizing this. In fact, there are no reports from witnesses or from the various resistance movements about the persistent stench and smoke that must have afflicted the city for this extended period of time. The only known document is a letter from the head of the 4th District to the commandant of an outpost at Jekabpils dated 17 May 1944, which says in Point 13:[612]

> *"Among the public have appeared rumors that the Germans in secret are excavating the Jewish 'E' site and are removing corpses for burning. This also happens near Riga."*

Jekabpils is located approximately 120 km southeast of Riga as the crow flies; nothing is known of exhumation-cremation in this locality, and these rumors are not confirmed by any documents or testimony.

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[612] LVVA, P-252-1-44, p. 89.

Another problem is that of wood procurement. The cremation of 43,000 bodies would have required approximately (43,000 corpses × 0.25 t/corpse =) 10,750 tons of green wood. The situation at the time in Riga and in all of Latvia, however, was not very prosperous. A "Headquarters Special Order" from the "Local *Wehrmacht* Headquarters Riga" dated 16 June 1944 bearing the subject "Supply with Heating Material 1944/45" conveyed the order issued by the *Kommandant* of the Security Region Latvia that all units of the *Wehrmacht*, with a few exceptions, had to "cut their own firewood." Major General and *Kommandant* Ruff, who signed the document, issued the following detailed orders in this regard:[613]

> *"2.) Logging*
> *It does not appear practicable for every unit and agency to log their own wood requirements independently. At least the small users must be pooled together into logging squads professionally supervised by trained forestry personnel and equipped with the necessary working equipment and power saws.*
> *The local* Wehrmacht *headquarters has been assigned to form such logging squads for the Riga garrison. Those units and agencies which do not log their own wood, but rather wish to participate in pooled logging squads, report their anticipated logging totals, and the numbers of soldiers, volunteers, POWs and other manpower to be deployed for this by 25 June to the 4th Detachment of the L.W.H. When calculating the necessary workforce, it is to be assumed that one soldier or volunteer can prepare 1.5-2 cubic meters per day, a POW or other workers 1 cubic meter, and for now that the logging must be carried out by the end of September. For this, one week is to be considered to consist of 5 full working days.*
> *Logging sites favorably located for hauling off the wood are to be selected with the approval of the forestry administration. Quantities up to 200 cubic meters can be released for logging by the chief forest ranger's office based on an order from a billeting administration office (see 3). Any quantities in excess will require the approval of the general commissar in Riga, FoHo* [Logging] *Division. Applications for this are to be filed with the headquarters of the Security Region Latvia via the billeting administration office in charge. In urgent cases, application by phone directly with the* Kommandatur *Latvia suffices.*
>
> *3.) Release*
> *Chief foresters are instructed to release prepared firewood and wood for self-logging only based on an order from the billeting administration office* […]*."*

These extremely detailed instructions could not have been circumvented by *Sonderkommando* 1005 B, and releasing almost 11,000 tons of wood would have left obvious traces in the documents, although possibly without specifying what it was needed for. Hence, *Sonderkommando* 1005 B would have had to form its own regular logging unit of inmates, and this unit could have started with its work only after having received the necessary release order.

The volume unit used in the original German text – "rm" – stands for "*Raummeter*," "stacked cubic meter," a unit of measurement which corresponds to ap-

[613] LVVA, P-752-2-1, pp. 221-221a.

proximately 1/1.4 cubic meters of solid wood. Starting with a specific weight of 0.9 for green wood (900 kg per 1 solid cubic meter), one *Raummeter* of wood would weigh (900 kg/m³ ÷ 1.4 =) approximately 640 kg. Prisoners of war and inmates were assigned a production quota of one *Raummeter* per day, therefore, approximately 640 kg per day. It follows that, if all the inmates of *Sonderkommando* 1005 B, assuming the maximum figure of the number mentioned in Holocaust historiography – 60 inmates –, had been sent to gather wood, to reach the quantity of 10,750 metric tons would have required (10,750 t ÷ 60 inmates ÷ 0.640 t/inmate/day =) 280 days!

One documentary proof of the extermination is said to consist of a photograph which purportedly shows a mass grave in the Bikernieki Forest (Document II.7.2.). Whoever invented this caption did not possess brilliant acuity, since the local graves must have been located in a forest, as shown by the drawing reproduced in Document II.7.3. The "existing mass graves" ("*vorhandene Massengräber*") are located at the right; the photograph in question, by contrast, shows only one tree, standing out alone on the horizon. What is more, the Yad Vashem photographic archive registers this same photograph with the following caption:

> *"Bobruisk, Belorussia. Burial of corpses in a mass grave, probably of Soviet POWs in Dulag* [= *Durchgangslager* = transit camp] *131, winter 1941."* (see Subchapter 8.5)

The Soviets, as usual, are distinguished by the crudity of their propaganda. In a report dated 12 December 1944, the Soviet forensic commission which operated at Riga listed the number of victims buried in six sites:

1. Bikernieki Forest:	46,500
2. Rumbula Forest:	38,000
3. Dreylinsky Forest (Dreiliņu mežs):	13,100
4. Škirotava (Šķirotava) Station:[614]	450
5. Bišu-Mujża [?]:	4,650
6. Rope works:	13,900
Total:	116,600

From 24 November until 6 December 1944, the Commission examined 10 burial sites: Bikernieki, Salaspils (camp and site near the cemetery), new and old Jewish Cemetery, Bišu-Mujża, tank barracks, Ziepnieku Kalns, Rumbula and Dreylinsky. 549 bodies were exhumed at these locations.[615] This means 549 (presumably) real bodies as against 116,600 claimed ones!

There is also a list of these mass graves, presumably discovered at Riga, city and district, with an indication of dimensions and surface area[616] (I have added the presumed number of bodies in the last column):

[614] Railway freight yard, Riga.
[615] LVVA, P-132-30-35, pp. 28-28a.
[616] "Perechen" (List), undated. LVVA, P-132-30-35, pp. 200-202.

Location	# of graves	Total surface area [m²]	# of bodies
Bikernieki	55	2804.85	46,500
Salaspils	33	2648	
Salaspils	9	3043	
New Jewish Cemetery	3	1026	
Ziepnieku kalns	18	1687	
Ziepnieku kalns	1	1	
Bišu-Mujža [?]	3	272	4,650
Rumbula	12	1350	38,000
Dreylinsky	3	220	13,100
Škirotava km 6	1	16	
Škirotava km 9	1	16	
Prison	1	198	
Mežu-park	4	65	

The depths of the graves are not indicated, but the huge differences between the individual bodies-to-surface ratios is very obvious:

46,500 ÷ 2804.85 m² = 16.5 bodies per square meter of grave
38,000 ÷ 1,350 m² = 28.1 bodies per square meter of grave
4,650 ÷ 272 m² = 17.1 bodies per square meter of grave
13,100 ÷ 220 m² = 59.5 bodies per square meter of grave

The first 43 graves in the Bikernieki Forest were depicted by the Soviets in a detailed map on a scale of 1,500.[617] This map represents so-called "Site B" (the southwestern section of the forest), which allegedly contains the bodies of the Jews deported from the Reich and killed in 1942. "Site A" (the northwest section), consisted of the remaining 12 graves, in which the Jews from Riga killed in 1941 are said to lie buried. It is not clear how all this can be reconciled with the current orthodox Holocaust narrative (Document II.7.3.).

There is also the possibility that some of the graves contained bodies killed by the Soviet NKVD. A note from the Department of Health in Riga dated August 1941 revealed that "a few graves completely filled with corpses and one empty grave" had been found in the Bikernieki Forest and that it remained to be found out how many corpses were in them.[618] Although 4,700 Jews were shot at Bikernieki by the Germans since the end of July 1941, as asserted by Arad, it is quite implausible that the above-mentioned note refers to the "discovery" of the related mass graves a few weeks afterwards; the context clearly shows that the bodies were of persons killed and buried by the Soviets.

An undated list titled "Summary Information on the Victims of German-Fascist Crimes" and relating to Latvia reports the number of victims of 24 dis-

[617] LVVA, P-132-28-10, p. 1.
[618] LVVA, P-1494-1-276, p. 47.

tricts: 313,798 (!) "peaceful citizens tortured to death," including 39,831 children. More than half, 170,000, were from Riga.[619]

According to the report "Jews in Latvia 1940," 7,552 Jews were living at Liepaja (Libava) at the time.[620] The letter from the *Generalkommissar* in Riga to the Reich Commissariat for the East dated 20 October 1941 said that "there are around 5,500 Jews in the entire Kurzeme (Courland) region," for whom a ghetto was being set up at Liepaja.[621]

On 20 November 1941, the *Generalkommissar* in Riga sent the Reich Commissar for the East a letter bearing the subject "Monthly Report on Formation of Ghettos in Jewish Labor Camps, Labor Deployment and Handling of the Jews," in which he informed him that there were 3,890 Jews at Liepaja.[622] The number of the Jews killed between these two dates was approximately 100 (see below); the fate of the 1,500 Jews missing is unknown.

The so-called second Stahlecker Report states that "2,350 Jews were… executed in Liepaja in mid-December 1941," 300 of which were from the local ghetto.[623] But the "War Diary No. 1 of the SS and Police Garrison Leader Libau (Liepaja)," which extends from 20 September 1941 to 30 November 1943, contains the following entry:[624]

> *"15 Dec. 1941. On 15 Dec. 41, one member of the* Wehrmacht *was shot by unknown perpetrators at the naval base. Start of Jewish operation. On the same day, 270 were shot on the beach at Liepaja behind the naval base terrain.*
> *3 members of* Wehrmacht *arrested for closer relations with Jewesses.*
> *16 Dec. 1941. Continuation of the Jewish operation.*
> *Transfer of the concentration camp from Liepaja to Frauenburg.*
> *Arrest of 26 members of Jewish organizations.*
> *Confiscation of 425 kg meat and 40 kg bacon by price-control agents.*
> *17 Dec. 1941. End of the Jewish operation. A total of 2,749 Jews were shot. Courland is therefore free of Jews, except for about 350 Jewish artisans needed for urgent work projects."*

The "Situation Report of the SS and Police *Standartenführer*" at Liepaja dated 3 January 1942 agrees with this figure, saying:[625]

> *"2,772 persons were executed in Liepaja between 14 and 16 Dec. 41, namely 23 Communists and 2,749 Jews. The total number of Jews still living here can only be given after a registration to be carried out soon."*

The source for these data seems to be the report from the Libau (Liepaja) branch office of the Security Police dated 3 November 1941. However, the figures in it are inexplicably slightly different (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 574):

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619 LVVA, P-132-30-44, pp. 3-3a.
620 LVVA, P-1026-1-3, p. 213.
621 GARF, 7445-2-145, p. 46.
622 LVVA, P-69-1a-19, p. 21.
623 RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 59.
624 LVVA, P-83-1-21, p. 23b. Transcript in: Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 572. Written erroneously here as 2746 instead of 2749.
625 LVVA, P-83-1-22, p. 59.

"2,754 persons were executed in Liepaja between 14.-16.12.41, namely 23 Communists and 2,731 Jews. The total number of Jews still living here can only be given after a registration to be carried out soon at the police stations."

The "War Diary No. 1" mentioned earlier records 3,218 Jews shot by 1 February 1942; since there were 3,890 Jews in Liepaja on 20 November 1941, it follows that there were 672 survivors (3,890 – 3,218 =), not 300 or 350.

A report attributed to *Gebietskommissar* of Liepaja Walter Alnor, an undated document without letterhead and without signature, supplies no additional information:[626]

"2,700 Jews were shot in Liepaja between 14 and 17 December. In the other towns in the county, for example, in Ventspils, comprehensive shootings took place. These were mainly women and children. The implementation of the shootings, which went on for days within the territory of the town, namely on the grounds of the naval base, caused great excitement among the population, as all sides confirmed to me. There can be no doubt that the German reputation has suffered considerably as a result. It has been pointed out to me repeatedly that women and children and infants were shot in a nearly naked condition, which hardly differs from the Soviet methods. The view is held among naval circles that the shootings were taking place by order of the Reichskommissar, who intended to inform the Führer of a Jew-free country on 1 January.

Extensive shootings are once again taking place at the present time, again causing considerable unrest. It is incomprehensible to me why this cruel method of execution is being used. During the December shootings, about 2,800 people were thrown into a single mass grave measuring 100 meters in length, 3 in width and 3 m deep. The shootings took place without the presence of a doctor and officer, so that in two cases [presumably] *dead shooting victims were able to get out of the grave and into the city by night dressed in a shirt."*

The Jews shot at Liepaja were buried at Šķēde, a locality located approximately 10 km north of Liepaja (Libava). This site was the object of an investigation by a Soviet commission which drew up a "File" dated 10 June 1945. Their conclusions were:[627]

"During the inspection of the location, it was ascertained by us that, as many witnesses also testified, mass graves were actually located there with peaceful citizens of the City of Liepaja [Libava] *exterminated by the Germans. 50 meters from the sea, all in all 11 mass graves with the following dimensions were found:*

Grave No. 1 – 50 meters in length and 4 meters wide
Grave No. 2 – 265 " " 8 " "
Grave No. 3 – 25 " " 15 " "
Grave No. 4 – 50 " " 10 " "

The remaining 7 graves measured 70 meters in length and 5 in width.

On the surface of the above-mentioned graves were found a large quantity of human bones, shreds of clothes, and shoes reduced to dust, things testifying to the

[626] LVVA, P-69-1a-17, p. 425.
[627] LVVA, P-132-30-22, p. 24.

fact that the shootings were carried out at the beginning of the occupation of the City of Liepaja.
Moreover, near the trigonometry tower, in the pine forest on the left side of the road, an isolated grave was discovered with a total surface area of 35 square meters."

Another "File" with the same date, also regarding the mass graves of the "peaceful citizens" killed at "Liepaja" by the "German-fascist invaders," says that the site measured 2,000 square meters and contained three graves measuring 70 m × 2 m and 50 m × 2 m.[628] Another, later "File" of 30 June 1945 lists the four above-mentioned graves and indicates the depth: two meters for all of them. The other seven graves measured 7 m × 5 m × 2 m. The report confirms the presence of a grave measuring 35 square meters near the trigonometry tower.[629]

According to the Walter Alnor report mentioned earlier, the approximately 2,800 Jews killed at Liepaja between 15 and 17 December 1941 were buried in one single grave measuring 100 m × 3 m × 3 m (= 900 cubic meters, approximately three bodies per cubic meter), but strangely, none of the graves allegedly located by the Soviets possessed even approximately similar dimensions. Not only that, but the 11 graves mentioned above had a total volume of 11,290 cubic meters, which would mean that they should have been capable of accommodating approximately (11,290 m³ × 3 bodies/m³ =) some 33,870 bodies! But the most-surprising thing is that no grave was opened and not a single body was exhumed.

Which bodies were the 11,290 cubic meters of mass grave supposed to contain? The above-mentioned "war diary" lists all the executions carried out over the period between 20 September 1941 and 30 November 1943. The following is a reproduction of the table (dates in d/m/y format):

Date [d/m/y]	Jews	Non-Jews	Date [d/m/y]	Jews	non-Jews
22/9/1941	61		11/10/1941	67	6*
24/9/1941	37		1/11/1941	123**	
25/9/1941	123		6/11/1941	2	2
26/9/1941	137*		10/11/1941	30	26
30/9/1941	21		15-17/12/1941	2,746	
3/10/1941	37		2/5/1942	40	
4/10/1941	18	2	21/5/1942		19
8/10/1941	36				

* Ventspils; ** Priekule/Weinoden

The total number of persons killed at Liepaja was therefore 3,267 (including 3,218 Jews), less than 10% of the presumed content of the mass graves allegedly discovered by the Soviets. It does not appear that any bodies were ever exhumed from these mass graves, nor are there any known photographs of the mass graves or bodies.

[628] LVVA, P-132-30-22, p. 27.
[629] LVVA, P-132-30-22, p. 20.

The Soviet forensic commission which investigated Daugavpils "ascertained" in its report dated 14 November 1944 that over 40,000 "peaceful Soviet citizens" were killed there, a term designating civilians, particularly Jews. Some 3,000 Jews were shot in the district of Srednyaya Pogulyanka (Viduspoguļanka) in September-October 1941, after which they were buried in a grave measuring 100 m × 4 m × 3 m. Another 10,000 persons, including 7,000 Jews, had been killed during the month of June. It seems that the Soviets did not manage to locate the mass graves associated with that mass execution. In this connection, the report merely comments:

> *"In order to conceal the crime, this location was covered by a thick layer of slag."*

In the district of Zolotaya Gorka, the Soviets claimed to have discovered 30 mass graves measuring 15-30 meters in length, 3 meters in width, and 2.5-3 meters in depth; 15,000 civilians and POWs were presumably shot here. In another site, eight mass graves were presumably found, one measuring 120 m × 4 m × 2-3 m, five circular mass graves, each 10 meters in diameter and 2-3 meters in depth, plus two more measuring 60 m × 4 m × 3 m, which are said to have accommodated 12,000 persons shot between June and August as well as during November 1941. Among the victims were said to have been the elderly, women and children, that is, Jews. At the end, the report refers to future annexes relating to exhumed bodies of civilians and prisoners of war "in the form of 1,027 protocols" of an unspecified type.[630] If these protocols were ever written, then these 1,027 exhumed bodies still would not prove the burial of 40,000 bodies. Since nothing is known of any "Aktion 1005" at Daugavpils, the bodies of the Jews shot there must have remained in the mass graves, and have never been found or photographed.

Serious doubt about the Soviet procedures is more than permissible, because the "Summary Diagram" relating to the burial site at Srednyaya Pogulyanka contradicts the related description; the diagram only shows two rectangular graves and perhaps another two elliptical ones.[631]

All this documentation relating to the mass graves (forensic reports, diagrams of the mass graves, exhumation records) render even more damning the total absence of photographs, which should have visibly confirmed the alleged Soviet discoveries.

7.3. Kaunas

7.3.1. A Report by Eleven Escapees

On 26 December 1943, a group of eleven former inmates authored a statement relating to the exhumation-cremation of bodies in the vicinity of Fort IX, Kaunas.

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630 LVVA, P-132-30-13, p. 5.

631 "Summary diagram of the position of the graves of peaceful citizens shot at Daugavpils during the period of the German occupation (1941-1944)." LVVA, P-132-30-14, p. 16.

According to this, the local Gestapo had recruited 72 persons in late October/early November 1943 to do the work; but eight of them were shot on 13 November, and only 64 remained. The area of the mass graves was fenced off with canvas to block it from sight. The report continues as follows:[632]

> *"5. In the course of the work – that is, from 1 November to 25 December (the day of our escape) – 4.5 pits were dug up, each one 100 to 200 meters long, 3 meters wide, and 1.5 meters deep; more that 12,000 bodies of men, women, and children were extracted from them. The bodies were stacked on huge piles of wood about 300 at a time and burned. What was left of the fires (the charcoal and bones) was ground into dust. The dust was mixed in with the soil, so that no trace would remain.*
>
> *6. In order to prevent them from escaping, the workers were chained together while they did their work. Machine gun towers were set up. The guards were armed with submachine guns and pistols.*
>
> *7. Among the 12,000 bodies that were burned, approximately 5,000 were Jews brought from Vienna, Frankfurt-am-Main, Düsseldorf, Hamburg and other German cities; another 150 were Jewish Soviet prisoners of war, and about 7,000 were Jews from Kovno* [Kaunas]. *The Jews from Germany were shot and buried in their clothing; the rest were forced to strip to their underwear before they were shot.*
>
> *8. The position of the bodies indicated that the people were herded into the pits in groups, forced to lie down, and then were shot. It was evident that many of those who were buried were either lightly wounded or not wounded at all.*
>
> *9. At the time of our escape there were still 9.5 pits left to be dug up. The overseer from the Gestapo estimated that the job would not be finished until 1 February 1944.*
>
> *10. Judging from the fact that there were 12,000 bodies in 4.5 pits and that 9.5 pits remained, it may be assumed that in the area surrounding the Ninth Fort there were approximately 40,000 victims of the savage terror that the Germans inflicted upon the civilian population. Forty thousand is also the figure mentioned in conversations by the representatives of the Gestapo.*
>
> *(Eleven signatures appear at the end of the report.)"*

Hoffmann utilizes this source to the fullest extent (Hoffmann, pp. 347-350), although it is in obvious chronological contradiction to Blobel's own statement, which I have quoted earlier. The remarkable thing is that Hoffmann presents Blobel's 13 pages earlier (*ibid.*, p. 330), evidently without noticing the contradiction.

The above-mentioned report is written in the classical style of Soviet propaganda. It states, in summary, that there were 14 enormous mass graves in the vicinity of Fort IX; the four and a half (!) graves which were opened contained 12,000 bodies, with 28,000 bodies in the remaining nine and a half (!) graves, since the total number of deaths was estimated at 40,000.

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[632] Ehrenburg/Grossman 2002, pp. 319f. The document is also reproduced in Arad/Gutman/Margaliot, pp. 473-475.

If we take the "Jäger Report" at face value, a total of 16,013 persons were shot at Fort IX, so that the escapees' total number of victims is incorrect, as is the number of graves. If, then, 12,000 of these approximately 16,000 bodies were exhumed and cremated, this means that the remaining 4,000 should still be there in the mass graves, but until the present time, it does not appear that they have ever been found.

As for the cremation technique, one should note a rather odd remark by the editors of the *Black Book*, who inform us in all seriousness that "in the autumn of 1943, peasants delivered to the fort about five hundred kilograms of firewood, a large quantity of gasoline, and various chemical fuels and explosives" (Ehrenburg/Grossman 2002, p. 318). How the "peasants" could possess "a large quantity of gasoline, and various chemical fuels and explosives" remains an enigma. On the other hand, they certainly had some "firewood," but the quantity they possessed is miniscule: 500 kg. It is however possible that this is a translation error. Hoffmann, citing the German edition of the *Black Book*, speaks of "500 solid cubic meters" or about 450 tons (Hoffmann, p. 347). This quantity should have been sufficient for the cremation of approximately 1,800 bodies, with a requirement of 250 kg of green wood per body. Regardless of the fact that there is no proof of the actual delivery of this wood, where did the remaining 2,550 tons required for the cremation of the remaining 10,200 bodies come from?

The cremation of the bodies took place simply on "huge piles of wood," therefore without any metal grill. This system is in open contradiction to the fantasies of certain orthodox Holocaust scholars who attribute to Blobel the invention of "a certain technique for cremating corpses *on the grates*," a phrase borrowed with extreme nonchalance from an interrogation of Fritz Ismer relating to Chełmno on 1 August 1961, credit for the discovery of which is, however, attributed to the camp *Kommando*, not to Blobel (*ibid.*, p. 81). From here this technique is said to have been extended to the "extermination camps" (although it was never used at Auschwitz) and then to "Aktion 1005," since Blobel's presumed task at Chełmno was precisely that of perfecting a cremation technique for the bodies of *Einsatzgruppen* victims.

Every pyre, according to the authors of the report, measured 4 m × 4 m and could contain 300 bodies. This means that, to cremate the 12,000 bodies mentioned above, (12,000 ÷ 300 =) 40 pyres would have been required, or in practice one pyre every day and a half (the operation lasted 55 days). Minus nighttime and lunchtime, little more than 24 hours remained for every pyre. During this time span, the inmates had to do the following, typically:

– exhume 300 bodies
– procure the wood (in what manner, no one knows)
– prepare the pyre, with wood and bodies
– ignite the pyre and have it burn down
– pulverize the incombustible residues from the bodies
– mix the residues with earth from the soil.

To render this undertaking even more difficult, "the workers were chained together while they did their work"!

The preparation of the pyre, in turn, was entirely implausible. Assuming a requirement of 250 kg of green wood per body, an average specific weight of 0.9 for the wood and a factor of 1.4 for every stacked cubic meter, the volume of the wood would have been (250 kg/body × 300 bodies ÷ 900 kg/m³ × 1.4 =) approximately 117 m³; plus another 8 m³ for the bodies (average weight: 26 kg), the pyre would have been (125 m³ ÷ 16 m² =) almost 8 meters high!

Needless to say, not a single documentary trace remains of this laborious activity.

7.3.2. The Witness Alex Faitelson

Alex Faitelson, one of the escapees from Fort IX, who was among the signers of the declaration of 26 December 1943 mentioned earlier, published his memoirs in 1996, in which he narrated the events in the form of a diary. The story, long-winded and confused, interspersed with quotations from books and various other digressions, begins suddenly with a paragraph titled "The Corpse-Burners" which starts with an ellipsis: "… and the Ninth Fort received us into its bloody arms."[633] Without any chronological reference, he then describes the place of the events, which was called the "battlefield" (pp. 221f.):

> *"The earth is muddy. One must dig with a pick-axe and use a shovel or rake to move the earth to the pit. The length of the pit is almost a hundred meters, it is 2.5 meters wide, and some three meters in depth. The 'battlefield' occupies an area of approximately 100 by 120 meters, enclosed by a fence three meters high and made of cloth attached to wooden poles.* [...] *Towards the back, there is a mound of ash taken from the pit which had been worked on by the bulldozer, which lifts off the upper layer of ash from the adjoining pit. From time to time a thick vapor rises from the earth and the smell of rotting flesh pervades the area. That is where the bulldozers reach the level of murdered corpses. Again, it is the same putrid smell that permeates the cells in the sector. A large fire is blazing near the bulldozer. I cannot see anything and the air is filled with the smell of burnt flesh. I sense that something terrible is going on here."*

This report of the deployment of a bulldozer, a rather uncommon sight in the German-occupied East during the war, is quite unique. The experience described by the witness should have been the first day at work for the group of inmates locked up in Fort IX of Kaunas, that is, on the basis of the declaration of December 26, 1943, it was 1 November 1943. According to the above quote, however, these inmates already found burning pyres when they arrived. This implies that another group of prisoners had already been in action earlier, of which nothing is known. On the first day, Faitelson and his companions were employed to fill a mass grave whose bodies had already been exhumed, although no one knows by whom (p. 222):

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[633] Faitelson 1996, p. 220; subsequent page numbers from there unless stated otherwise.

> *"Without any doubt, we are filling a pit from which the bodies of murdered Jews were removed. The bulldozer removes the upper layer after the fire seen from afar has cremated the corpses of the murdered Jews taken from their graves. A new and blazing bonfire rages."*

Hoffmann, however, accepts the dating of the aforementioned declaration and states that the first mass grave was opened on 1 November 1943 (Hoffmann, p. 348). Faitelson's account does not imply a chronological contradiction, but presupposes that there was already another group involved in exhumation-cremation work that is totally unknown to orthodox Holocaust historiography.

Faitelson's "diary" describes for the most part and with an exhausting prolixity the silly events inside his cell, including the dialogues, after returning there from work, while only a few lines are dedicated here and there to the work itself.

The first entry of the "diary" referring to events with a date is November 19 (p. 224). For the previous 18 days (1-18 November), no entry appears in the "diary" other than the one mentioned earlier which should refer to the first day.

In the following table I list the dates of the entries in the "diary" until December 24, the day before the prisoners' escape. The entries mentioning exhumation-cremation activities are rendered in italics:

19 November	24	30	4	*13*	19
20	25	31	5	15	21
21	*27*	*1 December*	8	16	22
22	28	2	10	17	23
23	29	*3*	11	18	24

This means that, of the 50 days of exhumation-cremation activities which his group of prisoners is said to have carried out, Faitelson wrote something down about it only on four days.

The chapter "Erasing the Traces of Mass Murders" explicitly refers to 27 November:

> *"From November 27 until the day of the escape, December 25, 1943, there were 64 prisoners in the fort."*

This is followed by a listing which almost perfectly corresponds to that of the declaration of December 26, 1943, but that does not mean much, since Faitelson wrote his book many years later and, as we shall see, he was quite familiar with that declaration. Starting 27 November, 20 inmates were placed in each of the fort's Cells Nos. 3, 6 and 7. The four women were locked up in Cell No. 5. The Germans decided to improve the prisoners' food. Then we read (p. 236):

> *"For breakfast, each prisoner received a quarter of a loaf of bread, black coffee, honey substitute, Swiss-cheese spread or Norwegian herring. After work at the 'battlefield,' they would receive two liters of thick soup with noodles and meat. The better-quality food was one of Paul Blobel's tactics to spur on the workers and thus do away with the traces of the Nazis' murders as quickly as possible."*

It remains unexplained why this happened only on 27 November rather than already at the beginning of this inmate group's activities. On the other hand, Faitelson at this point provides one of the rare concrete descriptions of his activities (pp. 237-239):

> *"Work at the 'battlefield' was conducted according to the German system whereby each task was given a special name. The bulldozer would remove the upper layer of the clay-like earth. Afterwards, the 'gravediggers' would turn up with shovels to uncover the 'dolls.' They are followed by the 'drawers' who, with the help of long poles with hooks at their ends, would lift the 'dolls' from the pits' surface. At this point, they were awaited by the 'checkers', who would look for valuable items among the 'dolls,' especially gold, diamonds, jewelry or money. They would extract gold teeth and dentures from their mouths. The items they found were put into a box watched over by a guards officer. After the 'checkers' came the 'porters' with stretchers, loading two 'dolls' on a stretcher and taking them to the site of the conflagration* [sic]. *A group of 'firefighters' headed by the chief firefighting officer dealt with the fire that was being prepared near the pit. It was arranged in layers, a layer of wood and a layer of 'dolls' forming a square. A narrow ditch was dug around the fire, into which the fat and fuel from the bodies would drip. The 'chief firefighter' would register the number of 'dolls' brought to the fire and when he had marked down 300 'dolls,' they would pour fuel on the pile, placing lighters and mines* [sic] *under the lowest layer of wood. Lighting the fire marked the end of the working day at the 'battlefield.'*
>
> *The fire would burn throughout the night. On the following day, the 'grinders' would crush what remained of the bones on a metal plate with the aid of special mortars used for paving roads, and the ash was scattered to the winds. Forty-two men worked at the 'battlefield' burning corpses, twenty were employed doing other jobs in the fort building itself and only two were permitted not to work because of illness."*

The first thing to note is that Faitelson had obviously misunderstood the books he used as sources when attributing to cadavers the name of "dolls." This has its origin evidently in Weliczker's "*Figuren*," a term purportedly used by the Germans when referring to corpses. But the German equivalent of "doll" is "*Puppe*," while to the German noun "*Figur*" corresponds to the English noun "figure" (in the sense of figurine, not number).

The work of the "checkers" contrasts with Weliczker's stories and those of other witnesses, and moreover makes little sense: the Jews are said to have been shot naked or half naked *after* having been deprived of all their possessions, especially "gold, diamonds, jewelry or money." In addition, the other witnesses claimed that gold teeth were not harvested by checking every single corpse, but they were recovered when the ashes were sieved.

The fire is called "the site of the conflagration," quite a theatric expression to use, unless Faitelson wanted to allude to the explosion of the "mines" allegedly placed underneath the first layer of wood. But that claim in itself is utterly absurd, for mine explosions would have scattered the firewood and body parts several

tens of meters all around instead of lighting a conflagration, let alone incinerating the corpses.

The tale of the "narrow ditch […] dug around the fire, into which the fat and fuel from the bodies would drip" is a clear echo of similar testimony relating to Auschwitz. That the corpses' melting fat could somehow flow through the burning wood and embers without catching fire and end up in a "narrow ditch" is even more absurd. And what about the "fuel" allegedly oozing out of the pyre? No doubt it did not stem from the corpses, so it was presumably fuel poured "on the pile": was it gasoline? Kerosene? Petroleum? Olive oil? Whatever it was, it would have caught fire when poured onto the pyre, just like the body fat, and certainly would not have flowed into any ditch.

Only 42 of the 64 prisoners were carrying out the exhumation-cremation work; 20 were employed in construction work at Fort IX, and two were not working because they were sick. So the ruthless Germans held these two inmates, true "useless eaters," without shooting them on the first day.

I will return to the pulverizing of cremation residues later.

On 1 December, Faitelson was sent to the "battlefield." When the "corpse-burners" saw him, they were amazed. It follows from this that Faitelson had not been part of this unit until then. He recounts the events of that day as follows:

> *"I was put to work carrying the corpses, that is, the 'dolls,' to the fire. With my bare hands, I had to take the dead corpses from the 'checkers,' lay them down two by two on the stretcher and take the pile to the fire that was just lit. I had to carry the corpses from two pits: one that was almost empty and the other, which was only at first stage of being emptied. When I approached the grave which was almost empty, I stood there petrified: all the murdered were dressed and they looked as if they were alive, that they had fallen asleep from exhaustion."*

Among the corpses were those of Viennese Jews; not all had been killed by bullets and some only had injuries. Some corpses were different due to their mouths being open in a desperate attempt to breathe. From this could be inferred that they had been buried alive.

In the second pit, the corpses, dressed only in their underwear, were half-decomposed. These were Jews of Kaunas (p. 242). It was a terrible scene, and it was difficult to separate the bodies (pp. 242f.):

> *"With my bare hands, I placed the 'dolls' two by two, or parts of them, on the stretcher together with another corpse-burner and brought them to the fire. The 'dolls' would slip out of my hands. Their limbs exuded a strange fat, and it was difficult to hold them with my bare hands. Other 'porters' had prepared special gloves for this purpose, in order to make it easier for them to perform this 'work.' Now a new pile is being prepared for burning the 'dolls.' On the ground is a layer of square pieces of wood on which we 'porters' place the 'dolls' we have brought. Nearby stands a 'firefighter' supervising the placing of the 'dolls' in the proper order. The chief 'firefighter' registers in his thick notebook the number of 'dolls' heads, for the other parts of their bodies do not interest him. These are the Germans' instructions."*

The entry of December 3 states (p. 247):

> *"The corpse-burners were returning from work at the 'battlefield' and were so weary that they could hardly drag their feet and their shoulders sagged from carrying loads of firewood. They moved slowly, lifting their chained feet with difficulty, physically exhausted, and emotionally broken after another day of suffering. Another day had passed and with it another three hundred Jews who had been murdered. Tomorrow their bones would be ground and together with the ash, scattered over the large field and forgotten."*

Here we learn that the inmates carried "loads of firewood," and that the complete elimination of 300 bodies required two days.

Under the date of 13 December, Faitelson says that in Fort IX there was a tunnel that was used to store wood, presumably for the needs of the garrison. There was "a pile of wood," "bushes," "branches" and also "two tall trees." Apparently, this wood was brought by the "corpse-burners" on their return from the "battlefield" (p. 256):

> *"When we had collected a sufficient number of branches, we returned to the fort accompanied by a downpour of German curses on the part of the officer. After the return of the corpse-burners from the 'battlefield' the police chief repeats his speech. He mentions that a committee headed by a general visited the fort and they expressed their satisfaction with our work. We work better than the crews at Ponar*[y]. *But we can achieve more. The general decided that we could manage two fires a day, that is, we could burn 600 'dolls' in a day. I realized immediately what their aim was and* [he] *gave an order to tell the 'burners' to demand dry wood and then they would be able to manage two fires per day.*
>
> *Tuesday, December 14. Dry wood could only be found in that tunnel which we hope to use for our new plan of escape. The Chief of Police ordered the corpse-burners to take the wooden logs from the tunnel with them when they go out to work, which meant that the tunnel would be emptied in a short time. The workers took as many as they could. On their return, they were only permitted to take one log. Now there are two fires blazing in the 'battlefield' – i.e. 600 'dolls.' The Gestapo is pleased and the police chief rubs his hands triumphantly."*

So until 13 December a single pyre was built every day with 300 corpses, fed with green wood; from 14 December onward, two pyres were built each day. For at least one of them, the dry wood piled up in the tunnel was used. Given the late date of this alleged event, it does not significantly affect the calculations I will outline now.

The 42 prisoners were divided into six teams: "gravediggers," "drawers," "checkers"," "porters," "firefighters" and "grinders." The breakdown is not known; the average is seven for each team, but the "porters," who worked in pairs, had to be an even number. We immediately notice that Faitelson forgot the "loggers." That the wood was supplied by local peasants is not only never claimed by him, but is excluded by the fact that the wood cache in the tunnel was supplied by the prisoners, who evidently had to pick up branches in the woods

and bring them to Fort IX at the end of their work day. With seven different teams, therefore, each unit would have consisted on average of six inmates.

It is not mentioned how the detainees got to the "battlefield." This is important for transporting wood to and from the tunnel. The expression "the workers took as many as they could" makes it clear that the prisoners were loading wood onto their shoulders. If everyone carried 50 kg, to get to the daily required (132 kg/body × 300 bodies =) 39,600 kg of dry wood necessary to cremate 300 corpses, the 64 prisoners would have had to make (39,600 kg ÷ (64 inmates × 50 kg/inmate) =) 12 trips every day between the tunnel and the "battlefield" to carry enough wood to the pyres.

Since the cremation of 12,000 corpses would have required at least (0.25 t × 12.000 =) 3,000 tons of green wood, if the entire group of prisoners had devoted all its time exclusively to this work, given that their productivity would have been similar to that of PoWs – *i.e.*, according to the "Headquarters Special Order" of 16 June 1944 quoted in the previous chapter: 1 m³ per day (see here on p. 650) – they all would have been busy for (3,000 t ÷ 64 inmates × 1 t/inmate =) about 49 days, out of the 55 available. But a potential "logger" unit could have consisted only of some six members. With such a much-smaller workforce, the logging time needed would have increased by more than a factor ten.

In this context, as I mentioned earlier, the use of dry wood for an additional pyre allegedly maintained between 13 and 24 December would have had only a negligible influence.

Faitelson does not provide any data about the results achieved in the operation: no indication of the number of reclaimed pits and the number of cremated corpses. He is also reticent about the declarations of one of his comrades of misfortune, a certain Anatoli Garnik, and without a doubt for good reasons.

Garnik had made a declaration already on 3 February 1944, yet it evidently did not satisfy the Soviets. This "confession" (it is unclear of what) consisted of 18 pages and includes details on the exhumation-cremation activity, omitted by Faitelson, who published only the final part of the "confession" (pp. 392-394). On 8 February, a Major Valeri of the Soviet "State Security Services" questioned Garnik. In the pertinent transcript, the aforementioned activity is mentioned only once briefly (p. 395):

> *"Q: When you were at the Ninth Fort, why were you always left behind and the newcomers who were brought, were shot?*
> *A: We were left as a group of eleven people. Our work was to bury those who had been shot. This group was always maintained. The Germans did not want to uncover their crimes.*
> *Q: You worked digging up the bodies of those who were shot from their graves and despite the strict control and the small number of workers, the Germans tied you in chains. Why did they do this?*
> *A: The Germans tried to keep the work of digging up the bodies and burning them in utter secrecy and in order to prevent anyone from escaping, they would tie us*

> *in chains every day from 7 a.m. to 16 hours, at which time they would remove the chains."*

Hence, the inmates worked only nine hours a day (including a lunch break), which makes the whole operation of exhuming and cremating 12,000 bodies even less likely.

Already these few sentences contain a clear contradiction: while Garnik claims that for the trace-elimination work the Germans left only "a group of eleven people," Faitelson speaks of a group of 64 inmates. Nor can it be supposed that the witness referred to the group of prisoners in his cell, because Faitelson explicitly states that the 60 male inmates had been divided into three groups of 20 people, each of whom had been assigned a cell.

On 14 February 1944, Garnik was transferred to the headquarters of the Byelorussian partisans with an accompanying letter. The letter referred to the witness's testimony of 3 February (pp. 396f.):

> *"During the interrogation, Garnik gave us some very important information of value to the state. Here is a direct witness who carried out the last orders from Berlin to dig up and burn the corpses of those who were shot and buried in pits at the Ninth Fort, a branch of the Kovno* [Kaunas] *prison.*
>
> *His evidence reveals the Germans' method of eradicating the traces of their crimes. The uncovering and burning of their bodies was carried out in utter secrecy. The number of workers executing the work was limited. When the work was at an end, the workers were killed."*

In spite of these credentials, Garnik was shot by the Soviets as a traitor shortly afterwards (p. 398).

Faitelson reproduced the drawings made by Garnik during his interrogation of 8 February 1944. The first shows a burning pyre with a German beside it writing in a notebook. The other has a wider perspective (see Documents II.7.4f.). In the foreground, we see a burning pyre and another pyre next to it in preparation; on the right is shown a prisoner with a pestle for crushing bone residues. Next to the stack in preparation, an inmate is shown standing in front of a barrel (which can also be seen in the first drawing, perhaps a fuel container). Further back, two inmates carry two corpses on a stretcher. Behind them, an excavator stands out, and the "battlefield" fence is drawn behind it.

This scenario shows a small-scale activity and is compatible with a team consisting of eleven prisoners in total, six of whom are shown at work.

The system of transporting corpses with a stretcher is clearly primitive and inefficient. The crushing of cremation residues was to take place "on a metal plate," which had to have a very limited surface of a few square meters at best, on which one or two prisoners could operate, so that the drawing reflects well the miniaturized fantasies of the witness.

All in all, these drawings do not correspond to the statements of the other witnesses.

7.3.3. The Witnesses Mikhail I. Geltrunk (Gelbtrunk), Makar E. Kurganov and Dmitrii Gelpern (Gelpernas)

The "Report of the Extraordinary State Commission for the Determination and Investigation of the Misdeeds of the German-Fascist Invaders and Their Accomplices on the Crimes of the Hitlerite Invaders in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Lithuania" cites a brief excerpt from the deposition of Mikhail Ilyich Geltrunk, one of the eleven signatories of the report examined earlier (*Zverstva…*, p. 24):

> *"We exhumed and cremated 600 corpses a day. This was the rule established by the Germans. Every day two large fires burned, into each of which 300 corpses were placed. After the cremation of the corpses, the bones were crushed with metal objects and buried in the ground. Within six weeks, three and a half pits were opened by us, from which 12,000 corpses were taken and cremated; nine and a half pits and a very small pit were left to be opened; no less than 40,000 corpses were in them."*

Here, the figure of 40,000 does not refer to the total number of victims, in the report by the seven escapees calculated with an arithmetical operation (12,000 ÷ 4.5 × 9.5 ≈ 25,300 + 12,000 ≈ 37,300, rounded to 40,000), but to the number of corpses still contained in the unopened mass graves. Therefore, the total number of victims would have amounted to roughly 52,000. The Soviets, however, were unsatisfied even with this figure, because they "ascertained" that the total number of victims of Fort IX was 70,000 (*ibid.*, p. 25).

On an unspecified date, but prior to 1959, a certain Mikhal Gelbtrunk, evidently identical with Mikhail I. Geltrunk, made the following statement (Segalson, p. 42):

> *"On 28 November 1943, a large guard unit of S.D. men transferred us to the 9th Fort. Here we joined a detachment engaged in exhuming bodies from the Jewish mass graves and burning them. The detachment consisted of 58 Jews, including 10 Jewish Red Army soldiers, who had been in captivity since the first days of the war. They were the remainder at the fort of thousands of prisoners who had been poisoned or even buried alive. Later, another 15 Jewish Red Army soldiers of higher military ranks joined them. They lived as Russians in the prison camp for an extended period of time until they were denounced as Jews. In addition, there were also Jews from the Kaunas Ghetto in this detachment. There were also baptized Jews among them. There was also a boy from Czechia among them who had been hiding for some time in the surrounding woods. He was called the 'forest man.'*
>
> *The work of cremating the dead took place under the strict surveillance of SD men. In the morning, when we had to go to work, chains were put on our feet. This impeded the work severely. The SD men 'comforted' us by saying that our end would be the same as that of our brethren we were dealing with then. The victims lay in long pits of 25 meters in length. The hardest work was that of the so-called 'extractors' (Zieher), who had to pull out the corpses, because the bodies were entangled with each other. According to the stories of the first ten prisoners who had been present at all the executions – the Jewish experts there – most of them*

> *had been tossed into the graves half alive. The victims had been twisting and turning for a long time in their agony. Not enough soil had been thrown onto the victims, so that screams of pain and shouts for help were heard for a long time. While pulling out the bodies, we also saw that their hands were pressed onto their mouths, as if they had suffocated by a lack of air. The same prisoners told us that it sometimes happened that, on the day after an action, some children had crawled out of the pits, because they had been tossed onto the upper layers of the mass graves, and precisely in the seventh row. They* [SD men] *had ordered to throw them back into the 'holes' immediately."*

In this story, the emphasis of atrocities lies more on the killing of the victims than on the activity of exhumation and cremation, which is relegated to the background. The length of the pits – 25 meters – is in contrast to that claimed by his comrades – 100 or 200 meters – as is the number of prisoners employed – at least 73. In order to describe the mass killings, the witness is forced to introduce the *deus ex machina* of ten Soviet prisoners who had been captured at the beginning of the war and had witnessed *all* the executions, although it is not clear how they could have witnessed them all.

On May 12, 1959 another escapee, Makar Eftropevič Kurganov, made a statement that focused on Faitelson. Kurganov had been imprisoned with Faitelson in Fort IX as part of a group of 64 inmates who had fled during the night of 25 to 26 December 1943. On his activities, Kurganov limited himself to saying:[634]

> *"These people were forced to unearth and burn on pyres hundreds of thousands of shot Soviet citizens, and to conceal in this way the misdeeds of the fascists."*

Dmitrii Gelpern (Gelpernas) was not a direct witness to the alleged exhumations and cremations at Kaunas, but was in contact with "reliable witnesses" who "both lit up flames of bonfires in the 9th Fort and shed light on what had happened there for the rest of the world," which is a clear reference to the escapees mentioned earlier. In 1948, the Moscow magazine *Der Emes* published an article written in Yiddish titled "Partizaner fun Kaunaser geto" ("Partisans from the Kaunas Ghetto") which has been translated with the title *The Gelpernus Diary. Resistance in the Kovno Ghetto*. I quote the passage that pertains to the present context:[635]

> *"To carry out the obliteration of mass graves 72 people, mainly Jews from the ghetto and prisoners of war, were brought to the 9th fort.*
> *The opening of the pits and burning of the remains proceeded in the following manner: the top soil was removed by excavators. A group of prisoners cleaned bodies of stuck soil. The next group removed bodies from the pits. There the bodies were inspected. A specially designated person (*doctor Neimionov) pulled out gold teeth. Pockets were also inspected. The next turn was for the carriers – they*

634 GFHA, Catalogue No. 3366.

635 The Gelpernus Diary. Resistance in the Kovno Ghetto. Part IV. To the "Partisans Forest", in: www.holocaustresearchproject.org/revolt/gelpernusdiary5.html.

> *took the bodies to the bonfires. When the pit was emptied the Germans checked it and ordered to fill it up.*
> *The bonfires for body burning was* [sic] *arranged in the following manner: logs were put in a 4x4 meters square. Underneath a channel was dug up which was filled with inflammable liquid. A layer of bodies was put onto a layer of logs, then another layer of bodies and another layer of logs. 300 (*according to more correct information – 250) bodies, a 'norm' for each bonfire, were put together. To light up the fire several charges were put into the channel and then exploded. A bonfire would burn for 24 hours. The fire was seen several kilometers from the place and its smoke stretched out a long way."* (Commentary added by the translator is marked with *.)

This version contains additional imaginative and senseless elements: Merely one man was involved in extracting the gold teeth from the corpses, so he had to process about 40,000 corpses all by himself! In the channel underneath the pyre, explosive charges were placed to light the fire! In addition, the number of prisoners of the detachment (72) is in contrast to the number claimed by the eleven escapees.

7.3.4. Escape from Fort IX

The one aspect common to all the stories that is actually true is the escape of the prisoners who were held in Fort IX. Faitelson refers to various documents confirming this. A radio message sent by the police at Rokishkis on 26 December 1943 informs us that "On 25-26 Dec. 1943, 63 Jews escaped from the Ninth Fort near Kovno" (Faitelson 1996, p. 367). Other confirmations come from a 26 December letter by the Chief of the Lithuanian Constabulary, and a message from the police headquarters at Vilnius dated 27 December (*ibid.*, pp. 367-370).

Two documents mentioned earlier, the report of 13 January 1944 and the "express letter" of 3 February 1944 (see p. 454) make explicit reference to an "enterprise 1005b" or "*Sonderkommando* 1005." But the 11 prisoners who wrote the declaration of 26 December 1943 did not mention any "*Sonderkommando* 1005." Faitelson was aware of the original text of the declaration – a manuscript in Russian, from which he publishes an extract (*ibid.*, p. 281) – but he does not claim that it contained such terms (which could have been lost in translation). Therefore, the escapees, who must have been aware of having belonged to a "*Sonderkommando* 1005" – if that was in fact so – deliberately omitted it, perhaps because at the time it was well known that this unit carried out completely different tasks.

None of the documents mentioning a "*Sonderkommando* 1005," as noted earlier, puts it in any way in correlation with any exhumation-cremation activities, which remain always presupposed, but are never documented.

7.4. From Leningrad to Vilnius

What little is known to Holocaust historiography about the presumed exhumations-cremations in the area of Leningrad originates from the declarations of two former German policemen, Peter Fuchs and Otto Knipp, both dating back to May 1962. The related *Sonderkommando* was probably formed on 1 October 1943; of how many men it consisted is unknown. Hoffmann, who reports in this regard, hastens to warn us that

> *"detailed information on the location of the crime scene, the origin and treatment of the workers, or the number of cremated bodies in the vicinity of Leningrad were not provided by the interrogated persons. Remarkably, their testimony also contains no comments on conditions at the worksites, such as the stench, the appearance of the bodies or the construction of the pyres."* (Hoffmann, p. 335)

It is obvious that the two interrogatees had no idea of what "Aktion 1005" allegedly was. It is a fact that "nothing has been found out yet" of the inmates presumably working in the vicinity of Leningrad either (*ibid.*, p. 337). In other words, practically nothing is known of this entire matter.

Hoffmann then informs us that, a few days before Christmas 1943, Knipp and Fuchs left the region "and drove about 600 km [!] in a southwesterly direction to Vilnius" (*ibid.*). It is not clear how to interpret this 600-km transfer; obviously, in this vast area which this unit crossed during their journey, there cannot have been any mass graves at all, or, if there were, they were insignificant. The *Kommando* remained at Vilnius "until the start of May 1944."

7.5. Ponary (Paneriai)

7.5.1. Claims of Orthodox Holocaust Historians and their Sources

Hoffmann asserts that "the number of persons murdered in Ponary by July 1944 is estimated at 70,000 to 100,000," but, unfortunately, "more exact information are hardly possible, not least due to the activity of the 1005-*Kommando*"; in fact, he says absolutely nothing in this regard (*ibid.*).

Arad is a bit more talkative. He writes that "*Sonderkommando* 1005 began its activity in Paneriai near Vilnius in late September and early October 1943, immediately following the liquidation of the Vilnius ghetto" (Arad 2009, p. 354). However, if this *Sonderkommando* left the region of Leningrad a few days before Christmas 1943, as Hoffmann claims, how could it commence its activity at Paneriai at the end of September/beginning of October 1943? After supplying the above-cited few bits of information on the *Sonderkommando*, Arad refers to the testimony of the "Jewish POW Yuri Farber," who claims that the inmates attempted to escape during the night of 15 April 1944, but only 15 succeeded. He then concludes (*ibid.*, p. 355):

> *"In Paneriai, in the space of nine months, around 60,000 corpses were incinerated."*

As a source, Arad refers to a page from his *Ghetto in Flames* and to the *Black Book* (*ibid.*, fn 28-30, p. 597). The sources cited in *Ghetto in Flames* consist of two books in Hebrew, one in Russian, and two pages from the documentation of the trial against Martin Weiss (a member of EK 3 who is alleged to have directed the executions at Ponary between October 1941 and July 1943) before the Würzburg District Court in February 1950 (Arad 1982, p. 445). Even Spector refers to a work in Hebrew by Arad, on the basis of which he claims that "altogether 56,000-68,000 bodies were burned in Ponary" (Spector 1990b p. 167). This incestuous quotation cartel obviously lacks all reliability.

7.5.2. The Testimony of Yuri Farber (*The Black Book*)

Yuri Farber issued a long and detailed declaration, probably in 1944. Before examining the corpse-exhumation-cremation technique, it is instructive to summarize what he stated about his time as a forced laborer in order to gain an idea of his trustworthiness.

Farber was transported to Ponary on 29 January 1944.[636] The exhumation-cremation operations are said to have begun immediately afterwards, and were purportedly entrusted to a *Kommando* of 80 persons, including four women (pp. 463f.). When he reached Ponary, the entire site had been fenced in. The vehicle in which he was a passenger passed through the first checkpoint, and then, after "approximately three-hundred meters came to a second gate." Further along, within the fenced-off area, was a narrow passageway leading to an "enormous pit which used to be a foundation area for an oil reservoir; its diameter measured twenty-four meters. The pit was four meters deep, and its walls were lined with concrete" (p. 459). This circular pit, partially covered, served as the *Kommando* barracks. The men were subjected to strict surveillance, and their legs were chained together (*ibid.*).

Farber asserts that three days after his arrival, on 1 February , the inmates had already begun to dig an escape tunnel. The story of this tunnel is obviously absurd. It was "seventy centimeters wide and sixty-five centimeters high" (p. 471). In a little over two months, the inmates excavated 200-250 meters from the ditch (p. 474), and on 9 April 1944, the tunnel finally opened up into an area not subject to surveillance (p. 472). But if Farber's earlier claims are correct, the tunnel would have led to an exit inside the outer fenced perimeter, and if it is true that "Ponary was impenetrable" (p. 459), this was true not only for the entry, but the exit as well. The tunnel started at the bottom of the pit, four meters below the surrounding surface, and ended just at the surface. Therefore, it would have been necessary to calculate exactly the slope of the tunnel based on its projected length, that is, something almost impossible to tell under the circumstances.

Two inmates each worked in the tunnel for an hour or an hour and a half at night – with their legs chained. What did they dig with? Where did they put the

[636] Ehrenburg/Grossman 1981, p. 459; subsequent page numbers from there unless stated otherwise.

soil they extracted from the tunnel? I remind the reader that the walls of the grave were "lined with concrete." To penetrate this, it would have required special tools which the inmates could not have had.

Farber mentions other serious problems, but the solutions he describes are quite implausible. One is the lack of air in the tunnel: "The difficulty was that there was not enough air, so matches and cigarette lighters would not burn." Here is the solution: "We managed to install electricity" (p. 472). Even if it were true that the grave-barracks "had electric lighting," where would the inmates have obtained 200-250 meters of electrical cable? Of course, electrical light could have solved the illumination problem, but certainly not the lack of air. It is well known that a flame becomes extinguished when the concentration of oxygen falls below 16%, but this concentration, and the proportional increase in carbon dioxide in the tunnel, is dangerous in itself, especially for hard-working adults. Without adequate ventilation, the undertaking could have been suicidal.

A tunnel of this type would have required intensive propping of the walls and roof. Farber fleetingly mentions this fact: "First we installed two posts and upright supports – this part of the work had to be done by two people" (p. 471). He does not, however, explain where the inmates could have obtained hundreds of posts made to measure – plus the boards needed for the tunnel roof.

Another problem is the excavated earth: (0.70 m × 0.65 m × 200 m =) at least 91 cubic meters. How was it extracted from the tunnel, and what did they do with this huge mount of soil? As we see, the story of the tunnel is a series of absurdities.

These are the witness's credentials. Having noted that, let's examine his testimony on exhumation-cremation (pp. 461f.):

> *"There was a technique for burning the corpses: on the edge of the pit was a small hearth, measuring 7 meters by 7 and built out of pine logs, a scaffold, one row of tree trunks stacked across other tree trunks, and in the middle a chimney made from pine trunks. The first operation was to shovel the sand until a 'figure' was uncovered; that is what the Germans ordered us to call the corpses.*
>
> *The second operation was performed by the hook-man, which is what they called the worker who extracted the bodies from the pit with an iron hook. The bodies lay close together. Two hook-men, who were usually the strongest men from the work unit, would throw down a hook and pull out a corpse. In most cases the bodies came apart in pieces.*
>
> *The third operation was done by the carriers – the* Träger. *They had to put a corpse on a stretcher, and the Germans made sure that they had a whole corpse on the stretcher, i.e. two legs, two arms, a head and torso.*
>
> *The Germans kept a strict account of how many bodies had been removed. Our task was to burn eight hundred corpses a day; we worked from dawn to after dark. The* Träger *carried the bodies to the wooden hearth. There the figures were piled up in rows, one on top of the other. When one layer was stacked, spruce branches were put on top; a special worker, a* Häufenmeister [sic], *looked after the fuel and added dry logs to the fires.*

> *When the logs and branches had been piled on, black fuel oil was poured all over them, then a second layer was piled on, then a third, etc. In this way, the pyramid would reach four meters in height, sometimes even higher. A pyramid was considered ready when it contained three and a half thousand corpses.* […]
> *A pyramid usually burned for three days.* […]
> *A* Feuermeister *would stand nearby with a spade. He had to make sure that the fire did not die out. After three days a heap of ashes would form, containing small bone fragments that had not burned through. The very old men and people who were physically feeble were used to tramp down the ashes. The burned bones were shoveled onto a huge iron sheet where they were crushed by the stampers so that not a single piece of bone would remain.*
> *The next operation was to shovel the ground bones through a fine-mesh metal net.* […]
> *When a corpse was lifted out of the pit, a special worker inserted a metal hook in the corpse's mouth, and if he discovered any gold crowns or bridges, he ripped them out and put them in a box.*
> *There were pits that contained twenty thousand corpses each."*

The witness does not say how many bodies were exhumed and burned with this system. However, if assuming that the work began on 30 January 1944 and lasted until 15 April – the day of the escape – hence 76 days, and if we follow Farber's claims that they "processed" 3,500 bodies every three days, this results in (76 days ÷ 3 days/batch × 3,500 bodies/batch =) approximately 88,700 bodies cremated. However, this contradicts the witness's statement that the task of the *Kommando* was to exhume and cremate "eight hundred corpses a day"; assuming this, the maximum number of bodies would have been (76 days × 800 bodies/day=) 60,800 bodies. But then again, this figure of 800 corpses per day cannot be considered an average day's work, as Farber's other number (3,500 bodies/batch ÷ 3 days/batch =) amounts to 1,150 bodies per day.

Farber's description of the corpse-cremation technique does not appear more credible than the story of the tunnel. Farber speaks of the members of the various units, but does not say how many men there were to a unit. He mentions only two "hook-men," an unspecified number of "*Träger*" (carriers), one "*Häufenmeister*" (pile master) one "*Feuermeister*" (fire master), one "dentist" and the "chief *Brenner*" (head burner). Since the pyre burned for three days, let's presume that it was prepared in one day. All the operations to be completed were

a. the exhumation with "shovels,"
b. fishing for bodies with "hooks,"
c. inspecting the mouths of the bodies and removing gold teeth or bridge work (all these operations were performed by one single inmate!),
d. carrying the corpses to the pyre on a stretcher borne by two inmates,
e. arranging the bodies on the pyre up to a height of four meters (how, is not explained),
f. burning the bodies,
g. recovering and crushing the ashes,

h. sifting the pulverized ashes using a metal mesh.

All these operations for 3,500 bodies were performed by only 76 inmates, whose legs had been shackled to boot, but at least they got a good night's rest, since they were working only "from dawn to after dark"!

The description of the pyre is rather bizarre. Farber mentions a stack of wood measuring 7 m × 7 m and up to four meters high and more, consisting of many layers of wood with bodies on top. It is hard to understand why he refers to such a pyre as a "pyramid"; he may have meant a truncated pyramid, because it would have been impossible to place any bodies onto the tip of a pyramid. If we assume a cuboid pyre shape instead, the maximum total volume of the pyre would have been (7 m × 7 m × 4 m =) 196 cubic meters; much less, however, if it tapered off at the top; if there were 3,500 bodies on that pyre, these – according to the preceding assumptions – would have occupied (3,500 bodies × 0.026 m³/body × 1.4 =) around 127 cubic meters, leaving less than 70 m³ for the wood – less than 0.02 m³ of wood per body – and even less in case the pyre was indeed shaped like a (truncated) pyramid.

That a "*Feuermeister*" could then have regulated the cremation process while simply standing "nearby with a spade" is simply absurd: given the enormous heat of the pyre, if he had approached it, he would have been burned alive. For the same reason, the "*Häufenmeister*" would not have been able to add "dry logs to the fires" when the pyre was four meters high (p. 462).

That people who claim to be recognized as serious historians swallow the brazen nonsense of the witness Farber speaks volumes about the concern for factuality of these "historians".

7.5.3. The Testimony of Yuri Farber (NKGB)

Yuri Farber's testimony is an obvious re-elaboration of an NKGB report on the atrocities at Ponary dated 14 August 1944.[637] The report contains the account of a Soviet POW whose name is not given, but is clearly Yuri Farber. The narration begins with the arrival at Ponary on 29 January 1944; in the *Black Book*, before getting to this point, there are six introductory pages. The two accounts are presented very differently, but overall, the general data contained in each one are rather similar; the NKGB report contains noteworthy additions and variations, however. The most important of these are the following:

The "cremation technique" is described in sparse phrases here and there; the first such phrase introduces the new data on the enormous mass grave:[638]

> *"We go to work. An excavation of up to 100 meters in diameter is filled with sand. If you dig a couple of shovels of it, you discover… decayed human remains, 'figures' in the Germans' terminology. A fireplace is built near the excavation. It is a wooden scaffold 7 x 7 meters with a chimney in the middle."*

[637] Organy…, pp. 146-158; see also: *Tragediya Litvy*, pp. 24-45; English translation: Yakovlev, pp. 18-31.

[638] Yakovlev, p. 19; subsequent page numbers from there unless stated otherwise.

Further along, another important datum appears (p. 30):

> *"The fireplace was built in the centre of the territory, and we had to carry the corpses there, which was about 400 meters away. The Germans could not show a bonfire of 3,500 human corpses to civilians passing along the highway: it was 1944, not 1941. Some time, back in February, the Sturmführer ordered* [us] *to carry out 800 bodies a day."*

Therefore, every cadaver, individually fished from the mass graves using a hook, had to be carried 400 meters to the pyre, obviously on the stretchers mentioned by the witness Blyazer (see next section). This absolutely implausible practice openly contradicts the assertion immediately preceding, according to which the pyre was built "near the excavation."

Farber repeatedly returns to the question of the 800 bodies (*ibid*.):

> *"On this day, we finished our work precisely on time. The goal was exceeded (something about 820–830 bodies). And then we saw a whole procession of commanding officers coming."*

And again (p. 31):

> *"We were lined up in two ranks. Sturmführer made a speech. His speech was mostly devoted to self-praise, but the main thing appeared to be that, owing to the brilliant organization of the work, the number of 800 figures a day was reached, which was the best achievement for all the numerous working areas in all Lithuania."*

Here it should be remembered that Faitelson attributed the "record" – 300 corpses a day – to the *Kommando* of Kaunas ("[…] the police chief repeats his speech. He mentions that a committee headed by a general visited the fort and they expressed their satisfaction with our work. We work better than the crews at Ponar[y]"). According to Farber, however, the maximum daily ceiling on cremations at Ponary, reached with great effort, was a little over 800 bodies. In contradiction to that, the witness also asserted (p. 27):

> *"In a couple of days, we ignited the next fire of 3,500 corpses."*

According to his data, the exhumation of 3,500 bodies would have required over four days, and their cremation another three days, a fact which he emphasizes:

> *"When the fire contains 3,500 figures, it is covered by dry Thermit bombs on every side and ignited. Figures burn for more than 72 hours, until there is a heap of ashes with completely burned bones."* (p. 19)

On the number of victims, the witness declares (*ibid*.):

> *"The capacity of the Ponar pits is hard to estimate. The Germans gave a figure of 80,000. Among them 55,000 are of Jews. Several thousand (up to 10,000) Russians, Lithuanians, and people of various nationalities."*

Nevertheless, in contradiction with the above, he says (p. 20):

> *"During December 1942 and January 1944, 18,000 bodies were burnt. Before April 15, 1944, with the participation of the author of these lines, 38,000 figures were burnt; how many of them still remain unburnt – is unknown, but it is known*

> *for sure that all these are innocent victims of brutal bandits, all this senselessly spilled blood calls for revenge."*

Nobody knows who cremated the 18,000 bodies before 29 January 1944, since there was no *Sonderkommando* 1005 at the time. On the other hand, that which was in operation from January to April 1944 cremated only 38,000 of the 80,000 bodies (or 56,000, including the above-mentioned 18,000).

The NKGB report supplies important clarifications on the tunnel, in partial contradiction to the account published in the *Black Book*. As far as one can tell, the tunnel was only 30 meters long: "And then a tunnel sideways was dug, with a 30-meter upwards slope" (p. 23), and required meticulous preparation and appropriate materials:

> *"70 cm-long boards were placed on the ceiling supported by 65 cm-high pine poles. We had to prepare boards (7–8 pieces for a linear meter of the tunnel), poles (14–16 pieces for a meter of the tunnel) and carry out the sand."* (p. 24)

This means 210-240 boards and 420-480 poles, which the inmates are supposed to have procured in a rather implausible way (*ibid.*):

> *"Our tool warehouse was… the dead bodies. Under the vigilant supervision of the chiefs we managed to extract knives, scissors, files, candles, and cutting nippers from the pockets of not undressed figures. Under the guise of firewood we made poles, brought firewood ostensibly for repairing plank beds. In the evening, all of us sang for the sound masking, and one would saw boards and poles under plank beds."*

This means that the persons who were shot while dressed (it is not known why, since the majority of them had to undress) were not searched first, so that they could have carried knives or pistols in their pockets; it is obvious that the Germans would not have been so stupid as to expose themselves to this risk. If we were to believe Farber, some of the doomed persons arriving at Ponary carried with them even bottles of acetic acid in their pockets (p. 26):

> *"In case of collision with patrol, the first men were armed with knives and 2 bottles with acetic acid that they were supposed to splash in the eyes. Besides, there were 2 pairs of cutting nippers to cut the barbed wire protecting the territory. All of these arms were obtained from the corpses."*

If the inmates did not find these bottles in the mass grave, one must wonder where else they obtained them in their "bunker."

The pretense that they obtained the necessary boards and poles required to shore up the tunnel "under the guise of firewood" is even more incredible, since in the forest they would only have been able to find branches wholly unsuited to their purpose, and what is more, which would also have been difficult to cut to measure with the few tools available to them.

Regarding the electrical system, the witness recalls (p. 26):

> *"Electric light was installed in the tunnel (one bulb was on the 13th, and the other – on the 25th meter of the tunnel). As soon as a German lowers the ladder to get*

> *down, the bulb in the tunnel starts to flash. The workers come back up. In case of a roll-call everything will be all right."*

He does not say how the inmates procured the wires, bulbs and sockets, nor does he supply information on the electrical network at Ponary: was it connected to the city's electrical network? Or did it function with an autonomous generator? If inmates deprived of all possible means succeeded in installing such an installation in the tunnel, why did the Germans not install electrified fences around the site at Ponary?

The witness then describes the technical difficulties encountered by the inmates in digging the tunnel (p. 25):

> *"The difficulties were not only physical. Going to work, we determined the place of rise to the surface. The only place inconspicuous for the guards was on the slope of the mountain, behind a stub. The question was how to get into that place. Outside, the distance was determined by sight. Measured by steps that were limited by the chain. The direction was measured by a compass stolen from one of the Germans. We measured the bottom of the tunnel by a steel meter found with one of the corpses; horizontal angles were determined, of course, by the same compass, and for defining the height of the lift we constructed a water-level. The data of the external measurements were, certainly, rather approximate. That was why at the beginning of April a crisis occurred in our work. On the one hand, it became clear that the work on the corpses was coming to an end. Our turn to burn on* [the] *fire was approaching. On the other hand, workers became exhausted."*

In effect, under such conditions, the calculations relating to the excavation of the tunnel would inevitably have been very approximate; nevertheless,

> *"on April 9, we found the root of the destination stub. It became clear that we came precisely in the planned place."* (*Ibid.*)

One has to savor this slowly! The one absolutely indispensable tool for establishing the direction of the tunnel – a compass – had supposedly been "stolen from one of the Germans." This, in the witness's account, would have been impossible, since there was never and could never be any contact between the inmates and the Germans (pp. 20f.):

> *"Aryans are pure people and the workers are impure, therefore any contact is inadmissible. To descend into the habitation pit, there were two separate ladders: for the workers and for the Germans. The Germans did not touch ours, and it was forbidden for us to touch the Germans' ladder. If a German needs to give something to a worker, he does not hand it. The worker should take off his cap and the German will throw in it whatever it is. If a German needs to pass by, he moves the worker aside by a rod at a certain distance. Inspection of chains that was performed several times a day was also performed with the use of a rod."*

Equally contradictory is the assertion that "it became clear that the work on the corpses was coming to an end." From what did "it became clear"? And how was that possible if they had estimated that only 38,000 bodies had been exhumed and cremated? As we shall see below, according to the Soviets, and parroted by Arad,

the work at Ponary continued for months after the escape of the inmates. Many bodies therefore remained to be exhumed and cremated.

The story of the final phase of the tunnel construction is equally implausible (p. 26):

> *"On April 15, we removed 40 more cm of sand; there were 10 cm left, which separated us from the surface."*

Therefore, one layer of sand, first 40 centimeters in thickness, then 10, over a surface area of (0.70 m × 0.65 m =) 0.455 square meters could be held up without a single support! This would make sense only if it had been dug into volcanic tuff, for instance, like the Etruscans did.

At the end of the testimony comes a revelatory story (p. 26):

> *"There are no other desires, but there are duties. The main* [one] *of them is to expose the Ponar crematorium. The present article is written to carry out this duty, so that all the Soviet people under the impression of* [the] *dreadful Ponar corpses would even more actively assist* [in] *the crushing defeat of* [the] *Hitlerite gangs."*

In other words: We have here before us a propaganda pamphlet which had the purpose of infuriating Soviet citizens against National-Socialist Germany. It is no accident that it was presented by an NKGB officer, namely by the "Chief of the 8th Department of the 4th Office of NKGB USSR."

7.5.4. The Witness A. Blyazer (Blazer)

Next to Yuri Farber, the above-mentioned "Special Report of the 8th Department of the 4th Office of NKGB USSR on Atrocities in Ponar" of 14 August 1944 mentions another witness (the Cyrillic name Блазер is spelled "Blazer" here):

> *"The territory of the Ponar massacre was not guarded at all. Blazer, one of the workers, was shot in Ponar in 1941. Together with a large group of prisoners he was driven to the edge of the pit. There were no 'voluntary' donations of clothes to the 'Winter Help to the Front Fund' back then, and that was why people weren't undressed before the execution. Blazer guessed to fall down into the pit before the shooting. Killed people dropped from above. After the execution was finished, the pit was covered by some sand. There was so little sand that the air got to the bottom of the pit. Blazer lay for more than 4 hours in the pit. After dark, he made his way through the layers of corpses lying on top of him, raked sand and went back… home in Vilno. In 1943, Blazer was punished for this mistake. He was directed to Ponar to burn* [the] *corpses of his comrades. In 1944, Blazer left Ponar for the second time. This time, he went towards the forest, to the partisans."* (p. 29)

The witness's own account, however, is less colorful (p. 37):

> *"I pulled myself together, dumped a heap of corpses from myself and, as I climbed from the pit, ran away to the forest."*

This witness was interrogated by the Soviet investigatory commission which carried out an inquiry on Ponary; the report, titled "Act on Atrocities Committed by Fascist Aggressors in the Ponar District, near Vilnius," bears no exact date, but it

is known to have been drafted no earlier than 26 August 1946. Blyazer, who was brought to Ponary by the Germans in November 1943, declared as follows (pp. 38f.):

> *"After we arrived in Ponar, all of us were fettered. Our work included digging out all corpses that accumulated there from the very beginning of the executions, and burning them on the fires specially built for this purpose. The work was organized in the following manner: 15 people prepared firewood; 10 people dug out corpses from the ground, 6–8 were given special hooks 1.5 m long and 25 cm thick with sharp tips. They were to thrust this hook into a corpse to be dug out and drag the corpse from the pit using this hook. Sometimes the corpses we found were not decayed, but dried-up. In this case it was possible to distinguish the color of the hair. The strongly decayed corpses were dragged by pieces: separately the head, separately a hand, a leg, etc. We worked with a stretcher, 2 men for one stretcher. 1-2 corpses could be put on a stretcher. Two persons continuously worked at the fire on which they piled the brought corpses. Corpses were piled in rows, and a row was then poured over with fuel. One person with a two-meter poker constantly maintained the fire, adjusting the fire and clearing channels of the fire from ashes.*
>
> *18,000 corpses of men, women and children were dug out from the first pit. Most of them were shot in the head. The first pit was the result of liquidation of the 2nd Vilnius ghetto. There were many Poles, whom we recognized by the crosses on their bodies. There were also priests, which was proved by their clothes. Most of the Poles had their hands tied by ropes, belts, frequently by barbed wire. Some corpses were absolutely naked, others half-naked, some only in stockings. We dug out 8,000 corpses out of the fourth pit, exclusively young men, frequently blindfolded by towels or shirts. In the fifth pit, 25–30 wide and 6 meters deep, there were about 25,000 corpses. In this pit we found corpses of tenants of an almshouse, and also patients who were brought together with the personnel of the hospital – we found that out by the hospital clothes. Children from the orphanage were shot in the same pit.*
>
> *Thus, from 8 pits we dug out about 68,000 human corpses."*

The witness mentions the first mass grave and then jumps to the fourth and fifth, but asserts that there were altogether eight graves, containing a total of 68,000 bodies. But the sum total of all the figures cited by him is only 51,000. It is not clear whether these omissions are to be attributed to the witness or to the editor of the testimony. The translation accords with the Russian text (*Tragediya Litvy*, pp. 57f.).

The subdivision of the inmates in the various work groups is particularly important, since it supplies additional opportunities for testing the reliability of the testimony. The groups were as follows:

– 15 inmates "prepared firewood". It should be noted that the English translation is not very exact: the transliterated Russian phrase is "*rabotali na raspilke drov dlya kostrov*," where "*raspilke*" means "sawing" (the term is derived

from "пила" (*pila*), saw). Because these inmates were assigned to saw branches and trees in the forest.
– 10 inmates disinterring bodies.
– 6-8 inmates harpooning bodies with hooks and extracting them from the grave.
– an unknown number of inmates carrying bodies on stretchers to the pyres.
– 2 inmates placing bodies on the pyre.
– 1 inmate stoking the fire.

The cremation of 68,000 bodies would have required a minimum of (68,000 bodies × 0.25 t/body =) 17,000 tons of green wood; cutting this quantity would have taken the 15 wood-cutting inmates (17,000 t ÷ [15 inmates × 0.63 t/inmate/day] =) some 1,800 days, or some five years.

The alleged use of liquid fuels (gasoline, kerosene, petroleum), of which the witnesses do not say one single word, would not have changed this order of magnitude by much, since I have assumed the lowest quantity as green wood requirement for the cremation of a body.

68,000 bodies are said to have been disinterred by 10 inmates, hence 6,800 each, and extracted with hooks by six to eight inmates, therefore 8,500-11,300 bodies per harpoonist. Un unknown number of inmates with stretchers is supposed to have carried the bodies (for 400 meters, as claimed by Farber?) to the pyre, making 13,600 trips with a single body, or 6,800 with a payload of two. If we take Farber's statement seriously, they are supposed to have walked together at least (6,800 × 0.4 km × 2 =) 5,540 km, if we assume 800 meters for a round trip. Another two inmates are said to have arranged 68,000 bodies on the pyres, 34,000 for each inmate, and one single inmate is said to have stoked the fire, on a pyre consisting of 3,500 bodies, and himself going up in flames in the process!

If this is not madness, then what is?

7.5.5. The Witness Matvey Fedorovich Zaydel

The above-mentioned "Act on Atrocities Committed by Fascist Aggressors in the Ponar District, near Vilnius" reproduces the narration of another witness, named Zaydel ("Zeidel" in the English translation; Yakovlev, p. 38):

> *"In September, 1943, Gestapo arrested me, and I was imprisoned for 4 weeks. In October, 1943, I was taken to the Ponar railway station and placed in a bunker. Here Germans used us for preparing firewood and burning corpses. In December, 1943, we were fettered and began burning corpses. First, we put the firewood, and then up to 100 corpses of people, poured kerosene and gasoline on them, and then we laid a layer of corpses again. Thus we put together about 3,000 corpses, lay* [sic; laid] *firewood around them, poured petroleum, put incendiary bombs on four sides, and ignited it. This fire was burning for 7–8 days. Among the heap of corpses I recognized the mother and the sister of my comrade Kovmaski Lib. Most of these three thousand corpses were Jews. About 2,000 more corpses were laid on another fire, generally Red Army men and officers, and also 500 corpses of*

> *monks and priests. A total of 19 fires were made. Men, women and children were burnt on these fires. Then* [we were forced] *to gather up what remained from the burnt corpses, for example teeth, rings, etc.*
> *We continued the incineration till April, 1944, when I managed to run from Ponar. For 5 months Germans had destroyed about 80–90 thousand corpses."*

The witness asserts that, for a couple of months, he, together with an unspecified number of inmates, was assigned to the preparation of wood for the pyres. The number of cremated bodies is said to have been 80,000-90,000. This would have required (80,000 to 90,000 bodies × 0.25 t/body =) 20,000 to 22,500 tons of green wood. Even if all of Farber's 80 inmates, including the four women, had been assigned to this task exclusively, its completion would have required no less than (20,000 t ÷ [80 inmates × 0.63 t/inmate/day] =) 397 days, or more than a year.

If 19 pyres were then built, each with 3,000 bodies, the total number of bodies was (19 × 3,000 bodies =) 57,000 bodies, not 80,000 to 90,000.

Finally, the witness Zaydel claimed that a pyre of 3,000 bodies burned for 7-8 days, while a pyre consisting of 3,500 bodies is said to have burned for 72 hours, *i.e.*, 3 days, according to the witness Farber. If a new pyre began to burn right after the last one had burned out, the combustion time alone would have been (7 to 8 days/pile × 19 piles =) 133 to 152 days, that is, the entire period of five months or the greater part of the same. For this entire time, the Ponary site would have been smoking continually, day and night, but there is no contemporary indication that anyone noticed anything: neither physical evidence (documents, photographs) nor testimonies.

7.5.6. The Witness Szloma Gol

Szloma Gol was a Jew who lived at Vilnius. On 10 August 1946, he signed an affidavit on his experiences from December 1943 to June 1944. The following are the salient passages of it:[639]

> *"3. In December 1943, 80 Jews from the ghetto, including four women, myself and my friend Josef Belic, were selected by an SA* Sturmführer *whose name I have forgotten, and on his orders we had to live in a rather broad pit at some distance from the city. This pit was dug to serve as an underground gasoline container. This pit was circular, 60 m in diameter and 4 m deep. While we lived in this pit, it was partially covered with boards. Two living areas were set off with boards, and also a kitchen and a latrine. We lived six months in this ditch before we escaped."*

The *Sturmführer* made a deceptive speech on their destiny before the inmates; then:

> *"5. SA men subsequently threw chains into the pit, and the* Sturmführer *ordered the Jewish foremen (we were a labor collective) to put the chains on. The chains were attached to my ankle as well as around the waist. They weighed 2 kg each, and we were only able to take short steps with them. We wore these chains con-*

[639] D-964; a transcription of this document with stylistic corrections can be found in Meyer-Abich, pp. 75-78.

stantly for six months. The SA told us that anyone taking off the chains would be hanged. The four women working in the kitchen were not included.
6. After this, we were led to work. We marched 5-600 m in chains.
7. Our work consisted of opening mass graves and extracting the bodies in order to burn them subsequently. My job was to dig up the bodies. My friend Belic was assigned to sawing and trimming wood.
8. We excavated a total of 80,000 bodies. I know this because two Jews, who lived with us in the pit, had been hired by the Germans to count the bodies. That was the only job of these two. The bodies consisted of a mixture of Jews, Polish priests and Russian POWs. Among those I exhumed was my own brother. I found his ID card with him. When I dug him out, he had been dead for two years. I know this because he belonged to the bunch of 10,000 Jews who came from the Vilnius Ghetto and were shot in 1941.
9. The burning of the bodies occurred absolutely methodically. Parallel ditches 7 meters long were dug; boards were laid across them; one layer of bodies was placed on top of it, the bodies were drenched in oil, then branches were spread out on top of them, then blocks of wood on top of the branches. A total of 14 such layers of bodies and fuel on top of each other were piled up to form a pyre.
Every pyre was built like a pyramid, with a wooden chimney sticking out at the top. Gasoline and oil was poured out from this chimney, and incendiary bombs were placed all around the pyre. All this work was carried out by us Jews. When the pyre was finished, the Sturmführer *ignited it himself or had it ignited by his assistant named Legel (who was also an SA man), using a burning rag on the end of a stick.*
10. The work that consisted of opening the graves and building the pyre was supervised by about 80 guards. More than 50 of these were SA men in brown uniforms armed with pistols and daggers and automatic weapons (the weapons were ready to fire and pointed at us at all times). The 30 other guards consisted partly of Lithuanians and partly of SD and SS men.
Over the course of this work, the Lithuanian guards were themselves shot, probably so they could not blab about what had happened. […]
The commander of the whole site was SA.-Führer *Murer.* […] *During the night, our pit was guarded by 10 or 12 of these guards."*

The guards beat the inmates. On one occasion, the witness fell unconscious onto a layer of bodies, but his companions carried him away. The story continues:

"Then I got sick. We were allowed two days' sick leave; on the third day we were hauled out of the pit and taken to the hospital – that meant to be shot.
Of the 76 persons living in the pit, 11 were shot at work. 43 of us dug a tunnel out of our pit with our bare hands, broke our chains and escaped into the forests. […]
I declare that the above declaration is correct."

In a "Supplement," also dated 10 August 1946, the witness declared that two inmates yanked gold teeth out of the bodies with pincers on the way from the mass grave to the pyre; another two or three threw the extracted teeth into gasoline. Three boys aged 12-13, who formed part of the 80 inmates, then washed the gold teeth. After that, they were packaged (Meyer-Abich, p. 78):

> *"The gold was packed in boxes weighing 8 kg each. During the duration of my stay in the pit, 7 or 8 of these boxes were filled with gold teeth."*

Farber asserted that the inmate *Kommando* stayed at Ponary from 29 January until 9 April 1944, for two months and eleven days. Gol, by contrast, stated, and then repeated, that this stay had amounted to "six months," therefore until June 1944. Zaydel spoke of five months, but according to him, the cremation of the bodies began in December 1943.

That the inmates were under surveillance by 50 *SA* men (so-called brownshirts for the color of their uniform), in addition to members of the SD and SS – meaning that there was pretty much one guard for every inmate – is not confirmed by any historian, and neither is the execution of the Lithuanian guards at the end of the operation and the killing of Polish priests at that site.

The cremation technique is not very clear. The installation consisted of "parallel ditches 7 m long": how many ditches there were, how far apart and how wide they were, he didn't say. At any rate, on these ditches, they placed several layers of planks, branches and bodies, until they arrived at 14 superimposed layers. If they placed an average of four bodies on each square meter of pyre, the green wood requirement would have been 1,000 kg per m^2, corresponding to a stacked volume of (1 t ÷ 0.9 t/m^3 × 1.4 =) some 1.56 m^3, or some 1.6 m^3 if considering the volume of the bodies. It follows that one stack of 14 layers would have been (14 × 1.6 m^3/m^2 =) some 22 meters high!

The witness Farber mentions a stack of wood measuring 7 m × 7 m, and up to four meters high, but without any underlying ditch.

As I shall show later, the story of 80,000 exhumed and cremated bodies is completely unfounded. Other claims are completely implausible: the claim that the inmates excavated the tunnel with their "bare hands," the assertion that only two inmates were assigned to the job of extracting gold teeth from the bodies (two for 80,000 bodies to be examined!); finally, that the gold extracted from the teeth amounted to 56-64 kg, like all the rest of it, is entirely unconfirmed. The claim that the inmates were allowed "two days' sick leave" is in open contradiction to Farber's testimony, who declared as follows in this connection (Yakovlev, p. 21):

> *"The thing is that when a person was ill and not able to work, he would be sent to the 'infirmary.' Usually on Sundays a person had his chains removed and* [was] *taken from the habitation pit, somewhere near, then we would hear a shot, meaning the patient 'was cured.' There was even a special doctor with a submachine gun for cases like this. After a couple of such 'cures' people stopped being ill. The author of these lines also had to work for two days with a fever of 39 degrees Centigrade, trying to look robust."*

7.5.7. The Witnesses Motle Zaidl (Zaïdel) and Itzhak Dugin (Doughin, Dogim)

For his first film on the "Shoah," Claude Lanzmann interviewed, presumably in the first half of the 1980s, two self-proclaimed witnesses of exhumations and cremations at Vilnius, Motle Zaidl, identical to the already-mentioned Matvey Fedorovich Zaydel, and Itzhak Dugin. In the text of the film, their statements are fragmentary and confused (Lanzmann, pp. 21, 23-25), but a complete transcript of the interview, prepared by Lanzmann, is available online.[640] In general, the narration of the two witnesses closely follow Farber's narration, but diverge on certain points which are far from irrelevant. The strange thing is that Farber mentions these two persons, named Isaac Dogim and Motl Zaydel (Ehrenburg/Grossman 1981, p. 464), but these persons in turn make no reference to him. Their respective accounts give the impression not so much of originating from real lived experiences, but of a type of Holocaust *Haggadah*: an edifying narration stylized according to a certain set of canons which everyone fleshes out in their own way.

Between Farber's account and the two narrations analyzed here, the following contradictions are conspicuous:

For Farber, the exhumation of the bodies started after 29 January, while Zaidl and Dugin have it commence on 10 January (p. 33).

Around the *Kommando*'s live-in pit, which the two witnesses call the "Bunker," there were at least two fences approximately 300 m apart according Farber), but for Zaidl and Dugin, there was a mine field seven meters wide between the first and the second fence (p. 43).

For Zaidl and Dugin, the more-distant fence was at least 35 meters distant from the pit, because the tunnel planned for the escape had to be 35-40 meters long (pp. 47f.); thus, between the "Bunker" and the first trees, obviously outside the second fence, there was a little over 30 meters (p. 43). This tunnel, which for Farber was 200-250 meters long, measured only 35 for these two witnesses (p. 51).

Also, the tunnel's cross section is contradictory: 70 cm × 65 cm for Farber as opposed to 50 cm × 50 cm (Zaidl-Dugin; p. 46). The absurdities resulting from these dimension will be revealed later.

For Farber, excavation of the tunnel commenced on 1 February 1944, the day after his arrival, but for Zaidl-Dugin, the plan was contrived only after one month after their arrival ("We had already been there for a month when we came up with the idea"; p. 41).

According to Farber, the designer and sponsor of the idea was he himself, of course, while Zaidl and Dugin attribute this idea to themselves.

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[640] Claude Lanzmann, transcript of *Shoah: Zaïdel et Doughin*. US Holocaust Museum Archives: http://data.ushmm.org/intermedia/film_video/spielberg_archive/transcript/RG60_5050/EB687219-2C21-4E8A-AEEF-A68D7FA3CBE6.pdf; subsequent page numbers in the text from there unless stated otherwise.

For Farber, the pit, aka "Bunker," was four meters deep, some 24 meters in diameter (hence with a surface area of about 450 square meters), and had walls "lined with concrete"; Zaidl and Dugin, by contrast, declare that the ditch was five meters deep, with a surface area of approximately 50 square meters (8 m diameter), and the walls were clad with stone ("with stones all around on the walls"; p. 20).

But this is trifling considering the enormous blunders proffered by the two witnesses. Lanzmann often avails himself of the possibility, which he had, of questioning minor points in the narration of the two witnesses which may have seemed unclear to him. Almost always, the responses turn out to be improvised and artificial, and most often lead to a garbling of the account later on, instead of clarifying it. Often, moreover, the witnesses change their story, contradicting themselves, to evade the questions. I will limit myself to examining two specific points.

The pyres were built before the exhumation of the bodies began (p. 23):

> *"But even before we could start working and burning the martyrs, they made us start building these types of large pyres upon which we had to burn the Jews, and that was our job, too, building these pyres.*
> [Question by Lanzmann] *They built the pyres before opening the graves?*
> [Answer] *Before.*
> [D.] *How many pyres did they build?*
> [R.] *In fact, there were 15 to 17 pyres, because they burned about 3,500 Jews on each pyre, in total, 64,000."*

This nonsensical practice was perhaps related to the implausible fact that the Germans "knew exactly" how many bodies there were in each grave! (p. 31) Faced with Lanzmann's perplexity, the witnesses promptly changed their story: the construction of the pyres consisted of preparing the ground, "we dug the ditch that made up the pyre, and as soon as everything was ready, we hauled the bodies out and started the work" (p. 26) therefore each pyre was built simultaneously with the opening of a grave, not before.

On the other hand, if 15-17 pyres were built for 3,500 bodies each, the maximum number of cremated bodies would have been (3,500 × 17 =) 59,500; the 64,000 cremated bodies presuppose, in fact (64,000 ÷ 3,500 =) around 18 pyres.

In the testimony examined earlier, Zaidl (Zaydel) asserted, on the contrary, that the Germans "destroyed" 80,000-90,000 bodies, that 19 pyres were built, and that a maximum of 3,000 bodies were placed on each pyre.

The witness's narrative on the technique of pyre construction is rather obscure. As far as one can tell, one pyre was constructed inside a ditch ("the pyre ditch"), but, incomprehensibly (p. 25):

> *"We therefore dug seven ditches for each pyre, each eight meters long; on these seven ditches, which were half a meter deep, we piled up logs one meter thick, and on these piles…"*

It is not clear why seven ditches were dug for *each* pyre, instead of just one.

It is a fact that, according to the witnesses, one pyre was as much as seven meters in height: "the pyre was 7 meters high"; "in fact, there was a layer of wood, a layer of bodies, a layer of wood, a layer of bodies, until it was seven meters high" (p. 25). At this point, Lanzmann asked, quite properly, how the inmates got up on top of it. This is the answer (p. 26):

> *"In fact, we climbed up with… with the aid of beams that we had placed against the pyre, of course, we climbed.*
> [D.] *And how did you get the last layer of bodies up there?*
> [R.] *In fact, that didn't reach up to seven meters, that is, to the height of the pyre; we climbed… the beams reached up to about four meters.*
> [D.] *And the corpses, how did you get them up there?*
> [R.] *We took the stretchers, exactly the same way that seriously wounded people are taken; first, we built a type of ladders, and with these stretchers, we took the… in fact, when we got up to three or four meters, there were already 3,500 bodies on the pyre, and then we started to pour inflammable materials and it was set on fire."*

This shows clearly that the two witnesses improvised contradictory and nonsensical answers in their attempts to answer the questions. They first lied by saying that the pyres were seven meters high, a measurement repeatedly confirmed (four times); not knowing how to reply to Lanzmann's question, they then reduced the height of the pyres to three to four meters; already at this height they allegedly contained 3,500 bodies, but then it is incomprehensible why they needed to be piled up to seven meters high.

The reference to "beams" confirms the nonchalance with which the witnesses changed their stories to adapt them to Lanzmann's questions. In fact, the beams appear in their narrative for the purpose of answering a preceding question: if the pyre was in a ditch, how could one assure the inflow of combustion air? The witnesses then introduced the beams, which were positioned "cross-ways" or "perpendicularly" to the ditches; one must presume (the witnesses do not explicitly make this claim) that they built the pyre on top of that. In reply to the next question, from this function the beams transmogrified to act as ramps in order to facilitate climbing up onto the pyres. We are compelled to imagine that these beams were set up in such a way as to lean against the pyres, forming a narrow inclined plane upon which the inmates climbed upwards, obviously carrying wood and bodies! Such an image seems too daring even to the witnesses, so they promptly changed their story! To climb up onto the pyre, there were some kind of "ladders," which can only mean ladders with rungs: I leave to the reader's imagination how it would have been possible, if at all, to carry a body on a stretcher up onto the pyre using a ladder with rungs, and how long such an operation would take…

Another implausible claim is that the inmates are said to have been forced to open the graves with their bare hands during January, at least initially and for the first two days (pp. 29f.), even though at that time the soil at Ponary was frozen (p. 34).

In total, they cremated 64,000 bodies, but there was still one mass grave left containing 16,000 bodies (p. 35), so that the total number of victims at Ponary is supposed to have amounted to 80,000! At the beginning of the interview, Zaidl und Dugin asserted that one single grave contained 24,000 bodies, and that there were eight graves (p. 3). Since the grave left intact contained 16,000 bodies, it follows that these two graves all by themselves already totaled 40,000 bodies, and that the six remaining graves contained the remaining 40,000 bodies (an average of approximately 6,700 bodies for every grave). Another admirable example of "German efficiency"!

It should be recalled that Blyazer asserted that the first grave contained 18,000 bodies, the fourth 8,000 bodies, and the fifth 25,000 bodies; according to him, the total number of bodies amounted to 68,000.

The grave with the 24,000 bodies (according to Zaidl and Dugin) must have been the same as that to which Blyazer attributed 25,000 bodies, because in the contrary case the total number of bodies would have been (16,000 + 24,000 + 25,000 + 18,000 + 8,000 =) 91,000 in five graves out of eight. There were, therefore, (24,000 + 16,000 + 18,000 + 8,000 =) 66,000 bodies in four graves; it therefore follows that the remaining four graves contained (80,000 – 66,000 =) 14,000 bodies, an average of 3,500 bodies per grave. This is quite inconsistent with the order of magnitude of the above-mentioned four graves.

Before becoming fascinated by their fairy tales, the witnesses assert that they had to exhume a precise number of bodies per day, *i.e.*, 300-400 (p. 3). To total the 3,500 bodies required for one pyre, therefore, required (3,500 ÷ 400 =) eight and a half days. On the other hand, "the pyre usually burned for 7 or 8 days" (p. 26), so that the exhumation-cremation of 3,500 bodies would have required 15.5 days, while ignoring the time required to get the necessary wood and build the pyre. Since the cremation of 64,000 bodies required 18 pyres, to complete the entire task would have required at least (15.5 days/pyre × 18 pyres =) 279 days, approximately nine months, but the actual claimed time was some three months, from the first 10 days of January to the first 10 days of April 1944.

Zaidl and Dugin's tale of the tunnel is even more nonsensical. Their tunnel, as mentioned earlier, had a cross section of 50 cm × 50 cm. It was dug to two meters' depth from the floor of the "Bunker" (p. 46), or to seven meters from the surrounding terrain's surface, since the "Bunker" was five meters deep (p. 51). Lanzmann asked how the inmates could have established the correct direction, and here comes the entry onto the scene of the *deus ex machina*: the engineer Youri (Yuri) had a compass which he had succeeded in stealing! (p. 49) That an inmate under these conditions should succeeded in *stealing* a compass is only believable in the miraculous landscape of Holocaust fairy tales. How the inmates managed to calculate the precise length of the tunnel is not given to us to understand, but this, too, forms part of the above-mentioned miraculous Holocaust landscape. Notwithstanding the compass, after digging for approximately 20 meters, they realize that the direction was erroneous, and they then made a sudden

turn to the right; after excavating another 15 meters, they come out "exactly" where they had planned (p. 51); or, rather immodestly (p. 64):

> *"the exit from the tunnel was one half-meter, fifty centimeters, from the spot we had intended. I think that today engineers with the most perfected instruments could not achieve such precision."*

This sort of assertion is absurd, not just because the inmates lacked the tools required to work with such precision, but above all because they could not have established the precise exit point of the tunnel without a topographic map.

Another problem, no less serious but ignored by Lanzmann, is the fact that the tunnel had to be constructed on a slope slowly ascending from seven meters below to the ground surface. In fact, Dugin claimed that he poked holes in the ground with an "iron bar" (another *deus ex machina*) at the end of the tunnel to widen the opening (p. 64), which means, precisely, that the tunnel arrived just below the surface of the ground. How was it possible to calculate the slope of the tunnel based on the length? Here as well, we are in open Holocaust Wonderland.

The excavation of the tunnel, in the witnesses' narrative, is even more absurd. What did they dig with? Did the inmates have tools? Not knowing how to reply, the witnesses resorted to hasty improvisation (p. 41):

> *"Yes, we were able to recover tools from the bodies of martyrs, there was a certain number of martyrs who had been taken away at the moment when they were leaving for work, so we retrieved their tools."*

The reference to work gives the impression of working tools, such as hammers, chisels, etc. Instead, the witnesses claim shortly afterwards that at the beginning they had started to dig with their bare hands, but then they had to stop because they bled; "then we retrieved spoons from the bodies of the victims," and they continued to dig with spoons. Therefore, the "tools" were spoons!

Faced with Lanzmann's perplexity, the witnesses explained that "the earth was sandy, it was a little bit like flour" (p. 48), but this does not solve the digging problem; rather, it introduces an even bigger problem: with such friable earth, how did they keep the tunnel from collapsing? Here as well, Zaidl and Dugin improvised rather clumsily (p. 46):

> *"The earth was sandy, so much so that we were obliged each time, all along the tunnel, to reinforce, to fill in the ground with beams."*

But where did the inmates obtain these beams? The answer is downright risible: the inmates collected firewood for the kitchen, and they set aside part of it for the tunnel! (p. 46) For the kitchen they could gather dry branches, but for the tunnel they needed sturdy beams, straight and cut to measure. And all of it was swiped from the kitchen firewood without tools to work the wood! I have already explained how all this is absolutely implausible. Here again we are full and complete in Holo Wonderland.

The problem of the lack of air is mentioned by the witnesses, but the solution is not explained. After the first four or five meters of the tunnel, there was no more air, and it was impossible to light a candle. The situation described by the

witnesses is further strained by the fact that, if the support beams were a minimum of 5 cm in diameter, the dimensions of the tunnel would have been reduced to 45 cm × 45 cm. Into such a constricted space entered four inmates with chains on their feet (the inmates were chained day and night; p. 23). The first inmate excavated with the tablespoon and "passed the sand underneath his own body and passed it to the second inmate, who took it away," etc. (p. 47). Further along, the witnesses supply additional details: the inmates crawled into the tunnel in groups of four, five or six; the first inmate dug, and passed the excavated sand "under his belly," until it reached the second inmate, who repeated the operation until the sand was out of the tunnel, where it was gathered in a bucket. Under such conditions, the air would have penetrated even the interior of an empty tunnel only with extreme difficulty, let alone one which was obstructed by the bodies of five or six inmates. Any exchange of air would have been nigh unto impossible. Notwithstanding this fact, the excavator was able to work for an entire hour! (p. 50) The excavator had to proceed crawling on his stomach, with chains on his feet, and, to get out, he had to crawl backwards, since there was no room to turn around.

Even in this account, they speak of lighting in the tunnel. Dugin was an electrician and "since I still had tools, I built a sort of electrical system" (p. 47). Another *deus ex machina* – just like the "pliers" which suddenly appeared and which were used to cut the chains in a great hurry! (pp. 60, 63) Where Dugin had tens of meters of electrical cable and various bulbs and sockets, and how they could cut the chains in a hurry with ordinary pliers, is not explained.

Lanzmann moreover lost his chance to ask where, how and by whom the wood for the cremations was cut, and how much was required for each pyre. The witnesses have nothing to say in this regard.

In response to Lanzmann's question whether they knew that the unit assigned to the job of exhuming and cremating the bodies was called "*Kommando* 1005," the witnesses replied: "No, nobody knows." They did know, however, that "there was an equivalent unit at Kaunas" (p. 35). They therefore know that a "*Kommando* 1005" was in operation at Kaunas, but they did not know that the squad in which they themselves were active at Ponary must also have been a "*Kommando* 1005."

7.5.8. The Witness Pflüger

The shooting technique at Ponary is not very clear. The testimony of a German "motorcyclist" who was on the spot at the beginning of July 1941, a certain Pflüger, who was interrogated on 18 June 1959, arouses much perplexity (Klee/Dreßen/Rieß 1988, pp. 44-49). There were "2 larger sand pits" separated by the road and also by a strip of land. 400 Jews were taken into the quarry on the right, which had an adequate accessway:

> *"On the edge of the pit was a ditch which the Jews had to enter. The ditch had a circular shape. Among other things, the ditch was about 1.5 meters deep and of about the same width."*

Since the terrain was sandy, the outer ditch was propped up with boards. The condemned persons were first pushed into the outer ditch, then pulled out 10 at a time and taken to the place of execution. They had their heads covered by a cloth and embraced the chest of the prisoner ahead of them with their arms. With regard to the place of execution, the witness asserted:

> *"The pit into which the executed persons fell was about 15-20 meters in diameter and was 5-6 meters deep, as far as I know."*

The publishers of the work which contains this testimony also published three photographs of the "sand pit" (*ibid.*, pp. 45-47), which are in the archives at Yad Vashem, together with others. One shows the "sand pit" with a long access gangway and a line of people having their hands on the hip of the person in front of them (Document II.7.6.). In another photograph, the circular outer ditch is visible which the Jews were made to enter (Document II.7.7.). A third photograph shows a line of persons with their hands behind their necks (Document II.7.8.).

The extermination technique described by Pflüger does not seem very sensible. We do not understand why the victims were made to go down into the circular lateral ditch only to be pulled out again later to be shot; since there was no avenue of escape in the "sand pit," would it not have been more logical to mass them together in the center? As far as one can understand, the place of execution was another "sand pit," presumably the one set up on the left. The victims therefore went down into the "sand pit" by means of the wooden gangway, then into the circular lateral ditch to await their turn; once it was their turn, they climbed up out of this ditch, were then hooded (for what reason?), climbed up out of this "sand pit" by means of the wooden gangway and went onto the edge of the second "sand pit," where they were shot, and their bodies fell into the ditch. Who would ever have organized such a pointlessly intricate system of extermination?

The most-probable explanation is that Pflüger, during the interrogation, was shown the photographs published by Klee, Dreßen and Rieß and, not knowing what to say, improvised totally senseless explanations.

7.5.9. Yitzhak Arad and the "Cremations at Ponar"

In his book *Ghetto in Flames*, Arad devotes a chapter titled "Cremations at Ponar" to an examination of this question (Arad 1982, pp. 444f.). He asserts that

> *"A special unit was established in Vilna at the end of September 1943 to dig up the graves at Ponar, exhume the remains and burn them."*

The inmates excavated a tunnel "35-40 yards long… by hand and with spoons." Arad adds that

> *"the digging lasted about three months, and the escape from the bunker took place on the night of April 15, 1944. They removed the fetters around their feet with the aid of a file they had found."*

At least a file is more believable as a means of cutting chains than mere "pliers." 40 inmates fled; 25 were recaptured, and the remaining 15 joined the partisans. Next follows an item of information reported only by Arad:

> *"On April 20, 1944, seventy people were taken from the 'Kaili' camp to continue cremating the corpses. They were murdered before the Germans retreated from Vilna. Commando 1005 cremated between 56-68,000 bodies at Ponar."*

The continuation of the exhumations-cremations (until when?) should have been attested to by other witnesses, but it does not appear that anyone else ever made any statements of the sort. Only a laconic affirmation from the above-mentioned Soviet report is known (Yakovlev, p. 39):

> *"Witness Ostrovski Edward testified that he saw light from the fires on which the corpses were burnt, from October, 1943 till July, 1944."*

Since Ostrovski was not a member of any *Sonderkommando* 1005, his statement has no value, since no outsider was allowed to get anywhere close to the Ponary site.

Arad's figure of 68,000 cremated bodies coincides with the figure cited by Blyazer, that of 56,000 was not asserted by any witness known to me.

7.5.10. How Many Victims Were There at Ponary?

From the German documents, it appears that approximately 24,300 persons were killed at Vilnius and elsewhere in the district; a little over 3,100 are recorded in the Incident Reports and in the "Reports from the Occupied Eastern Territories," plus 21,169 in the "Jäger Report." If the minimum number of victims at Ponary was 70,000, who were the remaining 45,700 persons, where did they come from, and when were they killed?

Arad asserts that *Einsatzkommando* 9 shot 5,000 Jews at Vilnius between 4 and 20 July (Arad 1982, p. 77), but EM No. 21 dated 13 July 1941, called into question by Arad himself, says that EK 9 shot 321 Jews by 8 July and had begun to liquidate "about 500 Jews and also Saboteurs" (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 114).

He moreover claims that 2,220 Jews were shot at the beginning of October 1941 (Arad 1982, p. 137), but this execution does not fit in with those listed by the EK and in the "Jäger Report"; the source in fact consists of books and diaries.

Arad moreover says that by mid-October 1941 there were 27,000-28,000 Jews in the Vilnius Ghetto, 15,000-16,000 of whom had been sentenced to death (*ibid.*, p. 147). By the first week of November, 12,000 "legitimated" Jews remained (*ibid.*, p. 156). According to the "Jäger Report," 9,997 Jews were killed at Vilnius between 16 October and 6 November 1941 (plus another 234 by 25 November). If these numbers are correct, the minimum number of "legitimated" Jews should have amounted to some 17,000, and we do not know what happened to the surplus 5,000 Jews.

Assuming Arad's figure of 12,000, increased to 13,250 by the arrival of a transport from small ghettos over the period from 26 March and 2 April 1943 (*ibid.*, p. 359), since 1,000 Jews were deported to Estonia on 6 July 1943 (*ibid.*, p.

405), and another 7,130 between 6 August and 5 September (*ibid.*, p. 420), the maximum number of possible victims at Ponary amounted to (13,250 – 1,000 – 7,130 =) 5,120, provided that epidemics, malnutrition, etc. did not reduce the number of ghetto dwellers, as one would expect.

Considering the deportation of these 7,130 Jews, it is impossible to understand how 11,000-12,000 Jews could still remain in the Vilnius Ghetto (*ibid.*).

Even if the 5,000 Jews mentioned above, whose fate is unknown, are considered to have been shot, the victims for this period would have amounted to 10,120, and the total figure would have been 34,320. It is beyond comprehension how one can then "estimate" the number of victims exhumed from the mass graves at Ponary at 56,000, 68,000, 70,000 or even 100,000?

7.5.11. The Soviet Investigations and Post-War Photographs

The August 1944 "Act on Atrocities Committed by Fascist Aggressors in the Ponar District, near Vilnius," cited earlier, also reports the results of the Soviet investigations at the Ponary site (Yakovlev, pp. 39-41):

> *"The Commission made the excavation of the pits in Ponar.*
> *From the round shaped pit 1, 34–35 meters wide and more than 5 meters deep, of capacity of 4,000 cubic meters, after removing the upper layer of the ground, mixed with ashes and burnt bones of people, 486 corpses were dug out and examined. After establishing the exact reason of death of the dug-out remains, which had a common character of death, further excavation of pit 1 was ceased. On the edges of the pit sand was removed from several corpses, and they were left to lie there. Thousands of Vilnius residents have seen the corpses.*
> *After the excavation of a round shaped pit 2, of capacity of about 2,000 cubic meters, no corpses were revealed in it, however, the ground had the odour of corpses, and particles of burnt bones were found in the sand.*
> *The bottom of the circular pit 3, with the same capacity as pit 1, was overgrown with grass. The pit had the smell of corpses, and its sand was mixed with burnt human bones. Near the pit there was a large amount of dentures. After the excavation of the pit, 27 tightly compressed corpses were found.*
> [Pit 4] *In a ditch 100 meter*[s] *long, 2 meters wide and 1 meter deep two corpses in military clothes were found.*
> *A total of 515 corpses were dug out and examined.*
> *Besides, in many places of the Ponar pine forest, in the surface layer of the sand, lots of burnt human bones were found.*
> *Burnt bones were found in pit 5 of capacity of 8,000 cubic meters, and also on the site prepared for communal graves of the exhumed corpses.* […]
> *Considering the huge quantity of burnt human bones spread on the surface of all the camp area, the corpses found in the pits that were not yet burnt, and witnesses' testimonies, the total number of corpses is determined to be no less than one hundred thousand."*

It should first of all be noted that the witnesses speak of eight mass graves, while the Soviets, in turn, claim to have found only five. The total volume of these

graves was 18,200 m³. Assuming a packing density of 3.5 bodies per cubic meter, there would have been (18,200 m³ × 3.5 bodies/m³ =) 63,700 bodies; but the Soviets estimated at least 100,000 based on the "huge quantity of burnt human bones spread on the surface of all the camp area," which is blatantly ridiculous. One should add that the witnesses, according to their statements, did not leave burnt bones, because they collected them, crushed them and sifted them until they were reduced to little more than powder. Furthermore, none of the photographs of the Ponary site show this immense quantity of presumed burnt bones, as we shall see later.

The Soviets claimed to have exhumed and examined 515 bodies. These bodies had obviously not been cremated. The reason for this could be what the witness Farber stated at one point in his testimony (*ibid.*, p. 20):

> *"The whole world should know about the Gestapo crimes. For the sake of this, a group of Soviet people, despite the vigilant supervision, saved from burning and buried in secret places in the sand several dozens of bodies."*

But if that was so, and if the Soviets found them so easily, the Germans should have noticed this burying activity even more easily while it was happening. But how can one seriously believe that chained and guarded prisoners, under constant surveillance, could spirit away and conceal 515 bodies at other locations?

There is also another problem, though. In the summer of 1944, Major N.G. Kuznetsov and other Soviet officials inspected what they called the Ponary "Depot," and wrote a report dated 14 July 1944, hence exactly one month prior to the above-mentioned "Act." Let us summarize the most-important "discoveries":

> *"In three years of German occupation no fewer than 100,000 persons were taken away and killed at Ponary.* […]
>
> *The following discoveries were made in the 'Depot': 7 enormous round graves, 6 meters deep and 14 meters in diameter in the smaller part and 25 meters in the upper part, 4 graves of smaller size and 7 ditches 4 to 1.5 meters in depth, 4 to 2.5 meters wide and from 20 to 50 meters long. The wounded were buried together with the murder victims.* […]
>
> *The last mass shooting was carried out by the Germans on 3-4 July 1944. Those doomed to die, 4,000 persons in all, were taken away on trucks to Ponary. The Germans did not have time to burn the bodies. They were completely buried in one of the larger graves and covered up with a thin layer of sand."* (*Zverstva*…, pp. 38-40).

It is obvious that the figure of 100,000 victims was already pre-established and had no relation to the presumed discoveries of burnt bones. As far as numbers, shapes and dimensions are concerned, the mass graves allegedly located obviously contradict the data cited in the report dated 14 August 1944. Finally, what is even more serious, the Soviet forensic commission did not find these 4,000 bodies, so that, here again, we are confronted with typical propagandistic assertions.

If the Soviets really exhumed the 515 bodies mentioned earlier, they would have been depicted in some of the many existing photographs of Ponary. Let us examine a few of the more significant photos:

– "Bodies at the Ponary mass extermination site near Vilnius (Vilna)."[641] 10-12 fresh bodies on sandy ground.
– "Corpses exhumed from mass graves at the Ponary mass extermination site near Vilnius."[642] In reality, the photograph depicts 50-60 fresh bodies lined up in a wooded area.
– "Ponary, Poland [sic]. A pile of corpses and skulls at the time of liberation."[643] A pile of fresh bodies, rather emaciated, with a wall in the background. In the foreground, we clearly see a body wearing a striped uniform; the photograph was clearly taken in a German concentration camp.

Some photographs show exhumed bodies, but are totally irrelevant from the point of view of the present study, because they show:

– a single body,[644] three to four bodies;[645] earth removed, with one skull;[646] the edge of a grave, from which hang a few fragments of clothing, partially covering human long bones in two or three cases;[647] one small grave, at the bottom of which we see about twenty objects, mostly shoes.[648]

None of these photographs, therefore, confirms the Soviet claims. Other photographs no doubt refer to Ponary and depict the circular ditches mentioned above.

– "A mass grave at the Ponary mass extermination site near Vilnius (Vilna)."[649] The photograph shows a circular ditch with sandy walls sloping down slightly towards a flat floor. Nothing shows that this was a mass grave.
– "A bunker at the Ponary mass extermination site, which housed the Jewish '*sonderkommando*' men."[650] Another circular ditch, but much deeper, with the walls clad with large stones; in the center of the image we see a long ladder, in the background, the trees of a forest (see Document II.7.9.).
– Another photograph shows a ladder in the foreground, upon which a civilian is seen in the act of climbing upwards.[651]
– The last photograph depicts the same circular ditch, but from a different angle (Document II.7.10.).[652]

This circular ditch corresponds well to the witness testimony, but it is also true that the ditch was accessible to everyone, the witnesses included, after the arrival of the Soviets.

The two photographs reported above are moreover important because they supply obvious proof of the absurdity of the "tunnel" story: it provides visible

[641] GFHA, Catalogue No. 5899, Registry No. 00237p.
[642] GFHA, Catalogue No. 5904, Registry No. 09231p.
[643] YVA, Archival Signature 1869/478.
[644] GFHA, Catalogue No. 5900, Registry No. 00467p.
[645] GFHA, Catalogue No. 5901, Registry No. 00766p.
[646] GFHA, Catalogue No. 5911, Registry No. 30762p.
[647] GFHA, Catalogue No. 5912, Registry No. 30763p.
[648] GFHA, Catalogue No. 5910, Registry No. 30761p.
[649] GFHA, Catalogue No. 5906, Registry No. 16560p.
[650] GFHA, Catalogue No. 5914, Registry No. 09220p.
[651] GFHA, Catalogue No. 5913, Registry No. 00017p.
[652] GFHA, Catalogue No. 5915, Registry No. 30759p.

proof of the obvious impossibility of digging a tunnel – with their bare hands or with simple spoons – through the wall of stone or underneath the same, with a length and slope so exact that it came out exactly at a precise point in a wooded area which can be seen in the background. The dense roots of the trees alone would have thwarted any digging with spoons.

7.6. The Controversy Concerning the Mass Graves at Mariampole (Marijampole)

Under the date 1 September 1941, the "Jäger Report" records the shooting at Mariampole of:

> *"1,763 Jews, 1,812 Jewesses, 1,404 Jewish children, 109 mental patients, 1 German national who was married to a Jew, 1 Russian woman,"*

for a total of 5,090 persons (see Part One, Chapter 4). Orthodox Holocaust historiography does not claim the bodies were exhumed and burnt by the phantasmagorical *Sonderkommando* 1005, so that they should still be found in the local mass graves.

In an article titled "The Controversy about the Extermination of Jews. An Introduction," Germar Rudolf published the following information (Rudolf 2003, pp. 44f.):

> *"In the summer of 1996 the town of Marijampol, in Lithuania, decided to erect a Holocaust Memorial to the tens of thousands of Jews allegedly slaughtered and buried there by German Einsatzgruppen. In order to build the Memorial at the correct location, they tried to find where the mass graves are. They excavated the site described by the witnesses, but did not find a trace. Further digging throughout an entire year, all around the alleged killing site, has revealed nothing but undisturbed soil."*

As sources, the author cited "*Lietuvos Rytas* (Lithuania), August 21, 1996" (footnote 145) and "Personal communication of M. Dragan" (footnote 146).

The article *Lietuvos Rytas* (*Lithuanian Morning*) was headlined "*Marijampolėje, žydų sušaudymo vietoje, neratsta jokių palaikų*" ("At Mariampole, no human remains have been found at the Jewish-execution site") and written by Algis Vaskevicius. Among other things, Vaskevicius wrote as follows:

> *"During the press conference organized at the city hall of the City of Mariampole, the sensational findings of the archaeological investigations and prospecting were announced which had been performed with regard to the subject of the genocide of the Jews that had taken place in the city. At the emplacement considered to be that of the burial of the Jews and where a monument has been erected, archaeologists have failed to find any human remains, although historical sources affirm that five to ten thousand persons of Jewish or other nationalities were shot there.*
>
> *'We have long suspected that the limits of the burial site were defined inexactly,' said the head conservator of monuments of the arrondissement of Mariampole,*

Gediminas Kuncaitis. 'Various rumors were in circulation and needed to be dispelled.'
G. Kuncaitis has affirmed that the object of the archaeological expedition was to establish the exact location of the massacre, to prepare a grave-refurbishment project and to render homage to the victims. The most-reliable documents show that, in July 1941, 239 persons were shot at this location, in this place on the edge of the Scheschuppe, and 5,087 others on 1 August of the same year, among them 109 mental patients.
The conservator of monuments recalled how, after the war, documents were fabricated indicating an incorrect execution date and a false number of victims. According to the research director, A. Merkevicius, a Ph.D. from the University of Vilnius, it has become clear that the monument protected by the State, for the maintenance of which budgetary resources are allocated, and near which commemorations of the genocide of the Jews have been held, 'is a falsity, because there are no remains at this location. One may think that not thousands were shot there, but perhaps a few hundred persons.'"

The information published by Rudolf had already appeared a few years before in the article written by Rudolf himself and by Sibylle Schröder, with a German text which is practically identical (Rudolf/Schröder, p. 150). Motivated by this article, or more exactly by the Internet version of it, the blogger Roberto Muehlenkamp ventured to examine the matter more deeply. On 19 May 2003, he wrote to the "Mayor of Marijampolè Municipality, Mr. Vidmantas Brazys" requesting information on the excavations referred to in the article by *Lietuvos Rytas* cited by Rudolf. Muehlenkamp made the following request:[653]

"I would be very glad if you could give me further information about this site of mass killing, such as when it was discovered, what excavation or other investigations were conducted here, what human remains were found, the measurements of the graves, etc."

The next day, Brazys replied (errors in the original):

"In 1970 the cemetery were included into the list of Culture Monuments. The area, where is thought were graves, is planted with olive trees and placed the monument.
Because the exact location of the graves was not known, in 1996 were done archeological excavations and the place of fusillade was found (about 50 m to the west from registered graves).
Doctor of Archaeology Science of Vilnius University Mr Algimantas Merkevicius did archaeological excavations. All the documents of excavation keep Chief Specialist of Architecture and Urbanity Division of Marijampole Municipality Mr Gedeminas Kuncaitis.
Facts in the article of Germar Rudolf are primary and not final results of archaeological excavations."

On 16 June, Muehlenkamp addressed himself to Merkevicius:

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[653] Discussion thread "Mass grave(s) at Marijampole"; http://holocaustcontroversies.yuku.com/topic/2032/Mass-graves -at-Marijampole#.U1ePKmWV81F.

> *"The reason why I'm writing to you, as you have probably guessed already, is that I would like to know as much as possible about the excavations you conducted at Mariampole Municipality in the summer of 1996. I would be particularly interested in the dimensions of the mass graves found and a quantification of the human remains – skeletons, ashes, bone fragments, teeth etc. – discovered therein, by what methods it was established when and how the people had been killed, as well as what belongings of the victims, and what traces of the ammunition and other artefacts belonging to the killers (including devices used to destroy the bodies in order to erase the evidence) were detected.*
>
> *If you could send me a comprehensive summary of the results of your excavations, which I would of course share with the above-mentioned organization I volunteer for, this would be a significant contribution to the upholding of historical truth and the honest historical research and scholarship that my organization and myself are proudly trying to promote."*

Merkevicius replied the following day, saying (emphases added):

> *"Yes, I excavated mass graves in Marijampole in 1996. The purpose was to find an exact place of the graves. The supposed burial place was empty and I found the mass graves about 100 m outside of this supposed territory. People were killed and buried in a big ditch. But after finding the exact place, my work was over. I don't know how much people were killed and how big the mass grave territory."*

On the same day, on 17 June, Muehlenkamp upped the ante:

> *"I presume, however, that there is a written report on the result of your investigation, which I would like to see, if this can be arranged. I expect it to be in Lithuanian language, and I would take care of the translation into English myself. Would it be possible for you to send me a copy of the report, if I give you my mailing address?"*

In his final reply, dated 25 June, Merkevicius wrote:

> *"Yes, I can send report about excavation in Marijampole, but bit late, because now I am excavating. But you will found very little information about these graves in this report."*

In reply to Muehlenkamp's question whether he was familiar with the article published on *Lietuvos Rytas*, Merkevicius said that he was aware of it, but did not have a copy of it.

Muehlenkamp triumphantly published this correspondence, as if he had refuted the information made available by Germar Rudolf, but the only possible deduction from what the two Lithuanians shared is that the excavations had failed to lead to any discovery of any importance. The great embarrassment becomes apparent from Brazys's and Merkevicius's replies which clearly show the insubstantiality of the discoveries.

Muehlenkamp raised at least ten precise questions:

1. When was the site of mass killing discovered?
2. What excavation or other investigations were conducted there?
3. What human remains were found?

4. What are the dimensions of the mass graves found?
5. What is the quantification of the human remains discovered – skeletons, ashes, bone fragments, teeth etc.?
6. By what methods was it established when and how the people had been killed?
7. What belongings of the victims were found?
8. What traces of ammunition were found?
9. What other artefacts belonging to the killers were found (such as devices used to destroy the bodies in order to erase the evidence)?
10. What means to destroy the evidence were detected?

The two Lithuanian respondents gave only evasive responses, without confronting any of the questions raised by their inquirer; the "mass graves," plural, were located "about 100 m outside of this supposed territory" and "people were killed and buried in a big ditch" (singular); nevertheless, Merkevicius knew neither the number of people killed, nor the surface area of the "mass grave territory," which is very odd, since his principal task was precisely to find and delimit the site of the mass graves. Then, to say that once the site was identified his work was finished is not only not very believable but even contradictory, because he informed Muehlenkamp that he could not send a report on the excavations "because now I am excavating"; what is more, incredibly, there was "very little information about these graves in this report."

In practice, the alleged discovery of the mass graves was a pathetic pretense, evidently made on the background of the assumption that there simply had to be a mass grave which should contain at least 5,090.

Muehlenkamp himself was perfectly well aware of the inconsistency of the responses of the two Lithuanian individuals. In fact, in the eBook *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: Holocaust Denial and Operation Reinhard. A Critique of the Falsehoods of Mattogno, Graf and Kues*, readily available on the Internet (Harrison *et al.*), just like our response (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, which also exists in a printed edition), Muehlenkamp prudently dropped the matter in his chapter on the "mass graves," although there is a reference to the above-mentioned article by Germar Rudolf and Sibylle Schröder in footnote 25 on p. 97.[654]

Only two articles are available on the matter, after 1996, both dated 15 August 2008. The first appeared in *The Baltic Times* ("Jewish Execution…"):

> *"VILNIUS – Authorities of the Lithuanian Jewish community and municipality administration of southern Lithuanian city Marijampole agreed there will be no more digging in the location of mass extermination of Jews. The remains of the killed will be buried, Lietuvos Zinios daily reported.*
>
> *According to the Marijampole Municipality official in charge, Gedeminas Kuncaitis, mass killings of inhabitants on the bend of* [the River] *Sesupe behind a military town built during the reigning of the tsars, took place in 1941.*

[654] In Rudolf's current book contribution, the topic was deleted altogether, as it is now dealt with in detail here (see Rudolf 2019, pp. 15-59).

On September 1st of that year alone, Germans, with the help of some Lithuanians, killed over 5,000 inhabitants here, most of whom were Jews, also killing some Lithuanians and Marijampole's inhabitants of other ethnic origins.

'Approximately some 8,000 people were killed here. The killing site is marked by a memorial, but there are no burial grounds of the victims in the area that is identified in documents as a protected Jewish extermination territory, as they [are] *all buried under the buildings of the former military town and its vicinities. This was confirmed by archeological inquiries conducted in 1996,' Kuncaitis said.*

According to the chief specialist, officers had erected a few military equipment storehouses and an ammo warehouse, and made embankments on the massive killing sites during the Soviet times. After the occupational army left Lithuania following the restoration of its independence, the said buildings were given over to the State Property Fund. A company owned by Vidas Kalasinskas and Daiva Kalasinskiene bought the buildings this year for demolition. Officials of the Municipality of Marijampole issued a permit for taking down the buildings without prior coordination with specialists of the Department of Cultural Heritage. Human bones were found when tidying up the area and dismantling the concrete pavement. Even though construction works were halted at once and bones lying around on the ground were all gathered, any larger downpour of rain washed new bones afloat to the surface.

According to Kuncaitis, no more demolition works are planned on the burial ground site of massive Jew killings, even though a part of it is still covered in concrete. 'It is about a meter thick there, therefore it will be impossible to dismantle it without heavy machinery. It hasn't been decided what to do with embankments made by Russian officers, which also contain the remnants of a large number of people's remains.'" (Emphases added)

The other article is by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency ("Construction Halted…"):

"Construction plans at the site of a Jewish mass grave in Lithuania have been scrapped. A site near Marijampole where tens of thousands of Jews were killed during the Holocaust recently had been sold to a company that had begun demolishing buildings at the site, disturbing the remains there. Bones began to appear after concrete pavement at the site was dismantled. Heavy rains sometimes would wash new bones to the surface. Jewish community leaders asked that the town halt work at the site, and Lithuanian authorities said this week the construction work would cease.

A local newspaper, Lietyvoa Zinios, reported that the remains that had risen to the surface would be buried with the cooperation of Jewish community leaders. The site is located behind a czarist-era military town near Marijampole. Most of the Jews and other victims of the massacre there were killed by Nazis and their Lithuanian collaborators on a single day: Sept. 1, 1941. The site had been marked by a memorial, and the bodies had remained under heavy slabs of concrete and buildings." (Emphasis added)

This account is not very clear; nor is it very credible. Leaving aside the number of presumed victims, rising from 5,090 to 8,000 and then becoming "tens of thousands," it is obvious that the certainty that the bodies would be found "under the

buildings of the former military town and its vicinities" was only obtained in 2008, with the incipient dismantling of the buildings: "Human bones were found when tidying up the area and dismantling the concrete pavement"; more exactly, "bones began to appear after concrete pavement at the site was dismantled." Therefore, if not all, at least a good proportion of the bones were located under the "concrete pavement."

This openly contradicts the statements by Merkevicius to Muehlenkamp: if the bones (which permitted the localization of the site of the mass graves) were only found in 2008, how could Merkevicius locate them in 1996? And why did he make no mention of the buildings built by the Soviet army? Evidently, we are dealing here with two distinct sites with human remains.

But there is also another, no less important problem; to return to Muehlenkamp's question, "by what methods it was established when and how the people had been killed" and, more exactly, based on which methods was it established that the bones that came to light under the "concrete pavement" belonged to Jews shot by the Germans? The thing does not make much sense, because no one can seriously believe that the Soviets would have built buildings on top of one or more mass graves containing Jewish victims killed by their enemies: what for? To cover up enemy crimes? Nor can one believe that the tomb of over 5,000 bodies was not recognizable as such, and therefore easily identifiable a few years after its closure. If the story of the discovery of the human bones is true, one cannot exclude that they belonged to Lithuanian citizens killed by the Soviets. In that case, one would understand why they covered up the mass grave with a "concrete pavement" one meter thick. That this possibility is anything but random, is confirmed precisely by another article in *The Baltic Times* dated 18 November 1999, headlined "Killing Field Found in Marijampole," written by Rokas M. Tracevskis, which begins as follows:

> *"Marijampole – A grave site of Soviet terror victims has been found in the town of Marijampole in south-western Lithuania. Six skeletons have already been found. There are suspicions that hundreds of tortured and massacred people were buried there at the end of the 1940s. In October Vilnius University archaeologists found six skeletons in the yard of former Soviet NKVD (predecessor of KGB) headquarters in Marijampole."*

7.7. The Zichenau (Ciechanów) District

Spector (1990b, p. 169) asserts that

> *"this county known under the name of Ziechenau* [sic] *was incorporated into East Prussia, and a camp for Poles was opened in Działdowo (Soldau). About 3000 prisoners were murdered there and buried in the vicinity of the camp. After the war one of the prisoners, Stephan Runo, testified before the regional Commission for Investigation of the Nazi Crimes, that in April 1944 a special group of prisoners from the camp opened the graves and burned the bodies near the village of Białut*[y]. *After the work was over the prisoners were liquidated."*

His source is an article in Polish by Janusz Gumkowski published in 1958. The author asserts that the camp near Soldau in East Prussia (today's Działdowo) was a transit camp through which 20,000 people passed. Between February 1940 and January 1945, approximately 3,000 persons were killed there, after which they were buried in the forest near Kämmersdorf (today's Komorniki, a village located some 3 km northeast of Soldau), in the Jewish Cemetery of Soldau, in the forest near Bialutten (today's Białuti, a village approximately 20 km east of Soldau) and Bursch (today's Bursz, a village approximately 15 km south of Soldau) and in another forest near the city ("lasek Żwirskiego"). Gumkowski then writes that

> *"over the course of the exhumation of a part of the mass graves effected in 1947, approximately 500 bodies were extracted and transferred to the cemetery. The bodies examined showed that the cause of death of the victims was gunshot wounds."*

In this context, he makes reference to the witness cited by Spector:

> *"From the testimony of Stefan Runo, interrogated during the investigations conducted by the District Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, it is apparent that in April 1944, such an action* [Aktion 1005] *was effected in the forest near Bialutten. A part of the bodies buried there was exhumed and burned by the inmates of the Soldau Camp. A few dozen prisoners who had carried out this work were liquidated upon termination of the work."* (Gumkowski, p. 87)

Trying to make these operations, whether real or merely alleged, form part of "Aktion 1005" is clearly senseless, because, instead of exhuming and cremating all the alleged 3,000 bodies, the *Kommando* operated in one single location (Bialutten) and only opened a part of the graves. The other bodies were obviously neglected. If, then, the Polish Commission found only 500 bodies in spite of all the witnesses, one may consider that these were the only victims of the camp.

The encyclopedic dictionary of the *Central Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite Crimes in Poland*, asserts under the heading "Działdowo" that 300 inmates died of typhus and 300 were shot in this camp, but it then nevertheless adopts the figure of 3,000 victims based on Gumkowski's article. The article reiterates that approximately 20,000 inmates transited through this transit camp until 1941, including Jews (Pilichowski *et al.*, p. 165).

7.8. "Aktion 1005" in Yugoslavia

7.8.1. Shmuel Spector's Exposition

Spector asserts that the Germans killed 80,000 persons, including 1,000 Jews, not far from the camp at Sajmište (Semlin) near Belgrade, and continues (Spector 1990b, p. 170):

> *"On 6 November 1943 a group of prisoners (among them Jews) were brought in* [to the execution site Jajinci] *from the Semlin camp. One of them, Momcilo Damjanovic, escaped close to the end of operation. After the war he testified how the burning of bodies was done. The bodies were laid out in mounds whose base was*

> *7-8 m by 4 m and whose height was 1,5 m. Underneath and above the bodies were layers of wood saturated with flammable liquid. Before the fire was lit the prisoners were forced to collect jewelry from the bodies and to remove any gold teeth. Until the escape of the witness, some 68,000 bodies were burned."*

Spector's source is a work published at Belgrade in 1952. Hoffmann refers to Spector, but adds that the former Higher SS and Police leader of Belgrade, August Meyszner, asserted in a statement written in September 1946(!) that a *Kommando* for the cremation of buried bodies was created in Serbia in 1943 (Hoffmann, p. 324). His source, a contribution headlined "Jugoslawien" ("Yugoslavia") by Holm Sundhaussen, says that Meyszner reported on a "Special Squad for the Cremation of Bodies in Serbia" which began to operate precisely in 1943 (Sundhaussen 1991, p. 320). The author refers to the "Eichmann Trial, Doc. 1435," which is the number attributed to the document by the Israeli police. The document, introduced into evidence during the Eichmann Trial by the Jerusalem Tribunal as T-896, is a 4-page Record of Interrogation of August Meyszner, spelled Meisner in the document, drawn up in Belgrade on 4 September 1946 by the Judge Advocate General's Corps of the Yugoslavian Armed Forces. Meyszner recalled the arrival of a "motor vehicle with the gassing chamber" at the Semlin Camp, "by means of which the Jews of the camp were gassed." He adds:

> *"The liquidated persons were buried on the firing range at Jajinci. The number of those liquidated this way is unknown to me, but I assumed that they amounted to no more than 2,000, because a large part of the Jews had already died earlier of typhus and other diseases or had been deported to the East."*

In Jajinci, there had also been reprisal shootings, but not in significant numbers. Here is the crucial passage from Meyszner's account (T-896):

> *"I also learned from Schefer that in 1943 a special squad for corpse cremation was formed that had the task of burning the bodies from mass graves. I don't exactly know the reason that gave rise to this, but I suppose that back then, in the course of the Kantiner Company* [? 'Katyn Campaign']*, they wanted to erase all traces of mass murder. I don't know the number of corpses cremated for this purpose, but I assume that Schefer registered them; I cannot possibly know the figures already because the work continued even after I left."*

7.8.2. The Witness Momčilo Damjanović

Meyszner's assertion, which is from hearsay and rather general, is not confirmed by any documents, so that the sole source for the alleged exhumation-cremation of bodies in Yugoslavia is Momčilo Damjanović's statement. This declaration is a "Record of interrogation" written by the Yugoslav "State Commission" on 7 February 1945. The original text was published on a web site with an English translation. There is also an official translation, evidently the English translation

of a Russian translation,[655] which is clearly incomplete, so I rely on the one posted online instead, which was made directly from the original text:[656]

> *"As soon as we came to Jajinci, we were chained, while a German lieutenant gave us a short speech telling us that we were doing a job that was useful for the German Reich and that we would be compensated, but if one of us tried to escape, he would be immediately executed. As it was already evening, they took us and closed us up in a room where there were another 90 people of which 55 were Jews and 35 Gypsies. From them, we heard that we would be working on digging up and burning corpses.*
>
> *The next day, we were all taken from the room and began work under the supervision and guidance of the Germans. Our work consisted of exhuming bodies from the graves. Corpses were placed on a canal bed in the same manner as you would stack wood. First one line, then a second across it and so on. By dinner, we managed to make a stack that was 7 to 8 meters long, 2 to 2.5 meters high, and 4 meters wide (because two dead bodies were placed next to each other, usually head to head). This one stack consisted of about 700 corpses. This large number of corpses could fit in such a small space because the bodies were dry. For this heap alone, a bonfire was built up a half meter from the ground and we laid out wood and poured motor oil on it. When this was completed, we ignited the pyre. We added oil until the fire was well lit. As the bonfire began to burn, we were counted and taken to eat dinner. Our dinner came from the camp in Banjica brought by Germans themselves, since no one else had access. As it appeared to the Germans that the work was not progressing quickly enough, the next day we were ordered to build two bonfires. We acted in the same fashion, working on the third day after my arrival in Jajinci.*
>
> *On the fourth day, the Germans received a coal wagon.*[657] *On that wagon, there were four beams which were connected in the middle as one, about a meter and half tall, and on those beams there was a metal bar about 6 to 7 meters long, and on its front end, there was a large shovel. This lever could move up and down, like a seesaw, and was also able to move left and right.*
>
> *When they brought in this wagon, first a small bonfire was made, to which the vehicle continuously transported corpses to be burned. This job was done in the following manner: 3 to 4 meters from the bonfires, rails were built for the wagons with the devices as I described. Then, the upper arm of the lever would come forward and two corpses would be placed on the shovel. As the lever came down, the bodies would be lifted and the wagon would glide toward the fire, then the shovel would turn and the corpses would fall into the fire. In this way, the job went much faster so that it was possible to burn 1200 corpses daily. Thus we worked all the way up until my escape. I escaped after 36 days. Overnight, the fire stopped burning and work began again at 6:30 a.m. with a new fire. The bonfire was always in the same place the entire time that the bodies were brought from pits, which were*

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655 USSR-192. Translation of Document J/58 Office of the Yugoslav Delegation.

656 www.serbianholocaust.org/Momcilo%20Damjanovic/momcilodamjanovic.html

657 In the original text "један вагонет", "*jedan vagonet*". The term "*vagonet*" actually means truck, but since a few lines later "шине" ("*šini*"), "rails" are mentioned, it must be understood as a railroad car.

nearby. Once a pit was emptied, then the fire was moved closer to newly excavated graves. For the time taken to build a new bonfire, one group worked on excavating, placing, and transporting corpses (using the wagons)[658]*; one group on the field collected scraps of rotten clothing that remained as evidence of the corpses and threw them into the fire; while another group was distributing ashes from burnt corpses in the field. If one found unburned bones or remnants of burned bones, those bones would be crushed and spread in the field like sand for mortar, but the sieve was small and the ashes were also scattered on fields in Jajinci. As I worked on mining and burning corpses, I noticed that the bodies had no signs of being shot. I found that their clothes were not bloody, the bodies had no wounds on them, and I suspected that these were the bodies of people who had been suffocated. This is my opinion, supported by the fact that the bodies were completely naked, while, when I was working on the Jajinci excavation, in two or three graves, victims had been stripped of outer-clothing and I saw traces of blood on their underwear and wounds on their bodies. In addition, the pits where people were executed* [shot] *were characterized by blood visible on the pit walls, while in most of the pits we excavated, there was none.*

During the excavation of the bodies, we were ordered to take gold teeth, rings, and watches from the cadavers. These things were all sorted, and in the evening after the end of our work day, presented to the Germans. One time, we found the corpse of a woman holding a box that resembled a 100-cigarette box, in which there were brilliant [diamond] *rings and other jewelry worth 22,000,000 dinars (according to the Germans) and which they took.*

When one of us who worked in Jajinci grew weak and could no longer work, he would be killed and thrown on the bonfire. I was present when a tall, swarthy Jew, who was rumored to be a musician, was so exhausted that he could not even refill the pits from which corpses had already been removed and burned, and Dr. Jung, who attended the burning, was disgusted and grabbed the young man and pushed him toward the fire. As the victim struggled and finally jumped from the shovel end of the lever, Dr. Jung ordered the boy to take off his coat and to lie face down on the ground. When this was done, he ordered Sergeant Stageman to kill him, which he did by shooting him in the head. After this, the young man was put on the shovel on the pyre.

As I suspected that the Germans would shoot all of us once we had finished the job, I along with Bozidar Drcan, Radoslav Zecevic and Zlativoje Jakovljevic agreed to make a plan for an escape, which we eventually accomplished.

As we were told to count the corpses that were burned, to my knowledge, in Jajinci 68,000 corpses were burned, and there remained 1400 corpses unburned, one pit with another 1200, and two other pits with 100 bodies in each."

The original document bears, at the beginning and the end, a stamp indicating its classification: "Jevrejski Istorijski Muzej – Beograd [Jewish Historical Museum Belgrade] 159/2 K.24-2-2/17." It should immediately be noted that the date of 6 November 1943 indicated by Spector is not confirmed by the text.

658 Translator's comment.

Regarding the statements of the witness, according to him, 69,400 bodies were buried at Jajinci, 68,000 of which had been exhumed and cremated by the time of his escape. At Jajinci, inmates of the Semlin and Banjica Camps are said to have been killed. 7,000 Jews are supposed to have been "gassed" in the first camp (Sundhaussen 1991, p. 320); as for the second, Sundhaussen asserts that "the camp register contains the names of 23,697 persons, about 4,200 to 4,700 of whom were murdered in Serbia, while several thousands inmates were sent to Mauthausen and Auschwitz" (Sundhaussen 2009, p. 345). Hence, even if these numbers are correct, fewer than 12,000 bodies are therefore said to have been buried at Jajinci. The figure of 69,400 is all the more ridiculous since the Jewish victims from all over Yugoslavia amounted to 60,000-65,000, including 10,700 in Serbia (Sundhaussen 1991, p. 330).

Damjanović's account appears rather fantastic at first glance. To start with, the fettered inmates had to open the mass graves by hand, extract the bodies and arrange them in a pile – without wood. The pile measured 7-8 meters long, 4 meters wide and 2 to 2.5 meters high. After that, a pyre was built, consisting solely of wood *on top* of the bodies, as far as one can tell, since the witness speaks only of wood and not bodies. This amounts to a rather curious and no doubt highly inefficient burning technique, because most of the heat would have dispersed without even touching the underlying bodies.

Nevertheless, they proceeded this way for three days; on the fourth day the *deus ex machina* arrived. It's difficult even to imagine it based on the witness's description. A railroad car (probably of a narrow-gauge railway) carrying "four beams," presumably coupled and stacked, and connected to the center in such a way as to form one single beam with 4 arms, "about a meter and half tall": 1.5 meters above the rails? We do not understand. On top of this quadruple beam there was "a metal bar about 6 to 7 meters long," which finished with "a large shovel," which was a "lever," completely articulated, capable of moving, not only up and down, like a swing, but also left and right. Unfortunately, the witness does not reveal what mechanism permitting the "shovel" to perform these movements, no doubt a complex system of steel cables, guy wires and levers. With the railroad car thusly equipped – a unique feature in the history of cremation – the work could be very much accelerated, so much so that they were able to cremate 1,200 bodies a day.

Even at this point, the story is rather chaotic, but if interpreting this tale according to the least-irrational possible procedure, one may assume that there was a change in technology by first building the pyre of wood and then placing the bodies on it – thanks to the special railroad car. First of all, they built a set of train tracks from the grave to the pyre, up to a distance of 3-4 meters from the pyre. The railroad car traveled to the grave, two bodies were loaded onto the "shovel," then the car traveled towards the pyre, and when it was at a safe distance, thanks to the long "metal bar," the "shovel" was moved into position above the pyre and

turned in such a way as to dump the two bodies onto the pyre. One must acknowledge the technical ingenuity of this operation!

To load 1,200 onto the pyre with this system, the railroad car had to move 600 times forth and 600 times back between grave and pyre; if the distance between grave and pyre was only 10 meters, every day the railroad car must have traveled 12 km. Since the witness never mentions a locomotive, one must assume that the car was pushed along by hand by the prisoners.

Since the pyre burnt out completely during the night and the inmates had to start building a new one the next morning at 6:30 AM sharp, this means the work lasted 18 hours, or 1,080 minutes or 64,800 seconds. It follows that each round trip of the rail cart could on average not last longer than (64,800 ÷ 600 =) 1 minute and 48 seconds. During that time, the railroad car was supposed to:

a. be loaded with two bodies near the grave;
b. be pushed to the pyre by hand by the prisoners;
c. be unloaded of the two bodies, which were thrown onto the pyre;
d. be pushed back to the grave.

Only a lunatic could have thought up such a crazy system.

But even that's not enough. Every time one grave was emptied and they went on to another, they had to lay more tracks, thus moving the tracks they had just laid before, because the location of the pyre changed every time, too. The witness does not say how many mass graves there were and how many bodies they contained, but he informs us that at the end, three mass graves remained, one with 1,200 bodies, and the other two with 100 bodies each.

Even if we assume an average of 2,400 bodies per grave, the railroad car would have worked two days at the same site; the third day would have been spent moving to another site, with all the related procedures. Since 2,100 bodies were presumably cremated over the first three days, the remaining (68,000 – 2,100 =) 65,900 bodies allegedly cremated after this using the railroad-car system would have required (65,900 ÷ 2,400 =) over 27 changes of position for the car, including re-arranging the tracks. The undertaking would not have been simple, because, if the first and last graves were several hundred meters away from each other, as seems probable, the job of laying the tracks would have been very difficult.

How can anyone believe such a simple-minded fairy tale?

8. Shootings, Gassings, Exhumations, Cremations and Soviet Investigations: Other Significant Examples

8.1. The Mogilev "Death Camp"

As we have seen in Subchapter 6.2. of Part One of the present study, von dem Bach-Zelewski casually stated during his pre-trial detention that a commission consisting of civilians had visited Mogilev in order to establish a "gassing establishment" at Minsk. This statement later developed into the fable of the Mogilev "Death Camp." Richard Breitman, one of its the most-zealous advocates of this legend, reconstructed its alleged genesis with vivid fantasy:

On 23 October 1941, Adolf Eichmann chaired a meeting in Berlin regarding Hitler's order to evacuate 50,000 Jews from Germany and the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia to Riga and Minsk (see Part One, Subchapter 2.2.). On the same day, Himmler flew to Mogilev, Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski's general headquarters. 3,726 Jews had been shot four days earlier in the local ghetto, and approximately 1,000 remained alive. "Bach-Zelewski" – Breitman notes – "apparently had high hopes of making his region into a major killing center for German and European Jews and of improving the process of mass extermination" (Breitman 1998, pp. 74f.). Breitman's conviction of von dem Bach-Zelewski's presumed hopes are based on these data (*ibid.*, p. 75):

> *"He had pressed Himmler in mid-August in Minsk about the psychological problems caused by mass shootings, with some effect. He also had got Himmler's approval for a large budget for urgently needed provisions. But he had to pry the money loose from the SS bureaucrats, which took time."*

I have already dwelt at sufficient length on the first point mentioned. As for the second, the reference, provided in the associated footnote, reads: "German Police Decodes, 25 Nov. 1941, item 5, PRO HW 16/32" (*ibid.*, fn 29, p. 269), which is nothing but the announcement of a "blessed event" (*i.e.*, the wife of *Wachtmeister* Simmert, Breslau, had had a baby).

After misleading his readers with such chutzpah, Breitman continues as follows (*ibid.*, pp. 75f.):

> *"In 1946, Bach-Zelewski falsely testified that a commission from Hamburg came to Mogilev in 1943 (!) with an order to build a gassing facility. He said that he demanded an order from Himmler before proceeding and that his insistence stymied the project. He said that he had no previous knowledge of gassings.* […]
> *The discussion of gassing occurred in the fall of 1941, and German radio messages (intercepted by the British) offered some traces of it. Upon his return to Germany, Querner* [659] *placed an order with the Hamburg corporation Tesch and Stabenow for a large supply of Zyklon – the commercial insecticide based on prussic acid already tested for its ability to kill humans at Auschwitz."*

[659] Rudolf Querner, Higher SS and Police Leader in Hamburg for *Wehrkreis* 10.

The "traces" of the British intercepts are described as follows (*ibid.*, fn 33, p. 269):

> *"Head physician for the Higher SS and Police leader Riga to SS Oberabschnitt North Sea, 13 Nov. 1941, and Higher SS and Police leader East to Sugar Works Dessau for Zyklon and Chemical Zyklon, Dessau, 13 Nov. 1941, German Decodes, items 10 and 52, PRO HW 16/32."*

These are the two messages which I quoted in Chapter 1 of Part One; but they are unrelated to either von dem Bach-Zelewski or Mogilev. Breitman himself admits this by noting (*ibid.*, p. 76):

> *"This order was not just for Bach-Zelewski, since Dr. Bruno Tesch, the head of the firm, went off to Riga to give directions to Jeckeln's medical officer on how to use the poison safely and effectively."*

Regarding the claim that Zyklon B had already been tested at Auschwitz "for its ability to kill humans," as is known, the most-representative source on this presumed event is a declaration by Rudolf Höss, ex-commandant of Auschwitz, dated November 1946 (Höss, pp. 207f.):

> *"When I was absent on duty my representative, Hauptsturmführer Frit*[z]*sch, on his own initiative, used gas for killing these Russian prisoners of war. He crammed the underground detention cells with Russians and, protected by a gas mask, discharged Cyclon B gas into the cells, killing the victims instantly."*

Even if that statement were true, this would have been a presumed accidental and episodic event by a subaltern on his own volition, which does not prove institutional experiments decreed by German authorities on the effects of Zyklon B on human beings within the context of a plan of extermination, as Breitman would have us believe. Nevertheless, he seeks at all costs to find a link between this (non-)event and Mogilev:

> *"The order was for seven hundred kilograms of Zyklon, a substantial amount. At the time, Auschwitz had ordered only five hundred kilograms. Some later shipments of Zyklon went directly to the SS hospital at Minsk, in Bach-Zelewski's region."* (Breitman 1998, p. 76)

Breitman refers to Documents NI-14163-14164. The first is a letter from the Heerdt-Lingler Company to the Friedrich Boos Company, which was responsible for the construction of the Zyklon-B disinfestation chambers in the "laundry and admission building with delousing facility and inmate bath" (Building 160) at Auschwitz,[660] dated 26 November 1941. The subject is indicated as "K.L. A.[uschwitz] delousing facility." The decisive sentence in that letter states that "the above concentration camp has ordered 500 kg of ZYKLON in 200-g cans, hence evidently wishes to carry out delousings on a large scale" (NI-2084).

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[660] As early as 1 July 1941, the Heerdt-Lingler company sent the SS *Neubauleitung* at Auschwitz "on the initiative of the Friedrich Boos Company" ("*auf Veranlassung der Firma Friedrich Boos*") two specialist articles on disinfestation with "Zyklon hydrogen cyanide" ("*Zyklon-Blausäure*"). RGVA, 502-1-332, pp. 86-90.

The other document is a letter from Heerdt-Lingler to Degesch dated 2 December 1941 regarding "K.L. Auschwitz." The order for 500 kg of Zyklon B is confirmed, and the reply confirms that construction of the "delousing facility" has not yet begun, and that Heerdt-Lingler did not know the purpose for which Auschwitz Concentration Camp had made the order (NI-2085). Hence, this company was not informed that buildings were disinfested on a regular basis with this pesticide at that camp, which already began in July 1940 with "Building No. 54" ("fumigated against vermin and disease").[661] In actual fact, Auschwitz received 3,000 kg of Zyklon B in November 1941 (Bartosik *et al.*, p. 51).

Breitman then observes that

> *"on December 15, Magill* [acc. to Breitman: Franz Magill, commander of the 2nd SS Cavalry Regiment] *was sent to the Oranienburg concentration camp to receive instruction from Tesch and Stabenow personnel regarding the use of Zyklon. (The only evidence of the posting comes from a radio message decrypted by the British)."* (Breitman 1998, p. 77)

The message in question said:[662]

> *"DSR de DQB SPK1 Nt 10 1300 145 DSR 155*
> *To SS Oberabschnitt North Sea, for TESCH & STABENOW Company. MAGILL training takes place 20 Dec. 41 ORANIENBURG. Issued Higher SS and Pol. Leader East."*

This simply shows that Magill had been educated in disinfestation procedures. In the end, Breitman puts aside all grey areas and insinuation and speaks clearly (Breitman 1998, p. 77):

> *"Bach-Zelewski may not have been able to afford top-of-the-line gas chambers. Himmler had given him only 100,000 marks, and the cost of the gas-chamber apparatus later built at Auschwitz-Birkenau was about 310,000 marks. There was the option of converting an existing building into an improvised gas chamber (using Zyklon B),"*

and there were, of course, the "gas vans." Breitman's reference to Auschwitz-Birkenau is incomplete to say the least: "Baubeschreibung [construction description], Kriegsgefangenenlager [POW Camp] Auschwitz, Military Archive, Prague, OT, Carton 9" (*ibid*., fn 44, p. 270). This refers to a project description for the Birkenau Camp dated 28 October 1942 titled "Project: POW Camp (Implementation of Special Treatment)." Breitman refers to the "Construction Description" No. 1 (the document contains 12 of them) relating to "Accommodation, Personal effects, washing, toilet and administrative barracks. Guardhouse and headquarters building, warehouse, disinfestation facility, wire fence, crematoria and morgues, boilers and cauldrons" which, at number 16a, mentions a "delousing fac.[ility]" which was "not yet begun," but had a volume of 8,449 m³ and "total construction

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[661] "*Tätigkeitsbericht vom 5. Juli bis 11. Juli 1940*" authored by *Bauleiter* August Schlachter on 12 July 1940. RGVA, 502-1-214, p. 97.

[662] TNA, HW 16-32, German Police Decodes, No. 1 Traffic: 11.12.41. ZIP/G.P.D.550/6.1.42.

costs" of 310,000 RM. The related "cost estimate" specifies that this "disinfestation facility" was intended "for special treatment."[663]

As I have documented in another study, the installation in question was the so-called *Zentralsauna* (BW 32), the most-important health and sanitation facility inside the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp (Mattogno 2016c, pp. 39-42 and Docs. 11f., pp. 132-134). Breitman therefore turns the camp's central disinfestation facility into an alleged homicidal "gas chambers" of Auschwitz! But that's not enough. The "laundry and admission building with delousing facility and inmate bath" was originally intended to house 19 standard-model Zyklon-B-disinfestation gas chambers (*Degesch-Kreislauf-Anlage*). The Friedrich Boos Company commissioned to carry out the construction calculated a total cost of 34,518.65 RM in its "Cost Estimate V" dated 12 September 1942.[664] This means that Bach-Zelewski, with his 100,000 marks, could have afforded 55 gas chambers of this type!

Since Breitman was obviously unaware of these certainly not-irrelevant facts, his attempt to establish a connection between this building and Mogilev are doomed to failure, as all his references about Zyklon B unequivocally refer to disinfestations.

Not even the order of cremation furnaces for Mogilev as mentioned by Breitman are any kind of evidence for human gassings at Mogilev (Breitman 1998, p. 77):

> *"In mid-November, the SS Main Office for Budget and Building in Berlin placed an order with the Topf Company of Erfurt to build a huge crematorium – an oven with four cremation chambers – in Mogilev. The cost was billed to Bach-Zelewski's building administration."*

In fact, the order was issued on 4 December 1941 and concerned "4 pieces Topf double 4-muffle cremation furnaces," hence four furnaces with eight muffles each.[665] Breitman relies in this regard on an article by Gerlach (1997), the total baselessness of which I have already demonstrated elsewhere (Mattogno 2012). Hence, this issue does not deserve any further discussion here.

From Gerlach's article, Breitman also derives his inspiration for his own theory on the "gas chambers" at Mogilev (Breitman 1998, fn 45, p. 270):

> *"Gerlach, 'Failure of Plans,' 65, suggests that gassing experiments in improvised stationary gas chambers were conducted in Mogilev at this time. It now appears that the experiments were extensive and that they involved the use of Zyklon B."*

Ironically, Breitman's lucubrations have been refuted by Gerlach himself, who wrote two years after his 1997 paper (Gerlach 1999, p. 651.):

> *"New findings by Richard Breitman show connections between Querner and the Tesch & Stabenow Company in Hamburg, which shortly thereafter sent representatives on the use of Zyklon gasses* [sic] *to Mogilev and Riga. However, the*

[663] VHA, Fond OT 31(2)/8. The pages are not consecutively numbered.
[664] RGVA, 502-1-137, pp. 13-16.
[665] RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 47f.

> *materials discovered by Breitman point to the relatively harmless explanation that these gases were used in Mogilev and Riga in accordance with their actual function for the disinfection of textiles or buildings, especially for* Waffen-*SS units as well as the police in the central section of the front."*

In a footnote, Gerlach has set forth an even-more-decisive critique (*ibid.*, fn 811):

> *"There are no indications at all that Zyklon B was ever used at Mogilev for the murder of human beings as Breitman conjectures, 1998, p. 270, footnote 45."*

Breitman was not the only one having delusions about homicidal gas chambers in the eastern territories. As early as 18 May 1943, the British received a "Memorandum" from Stockholm containing the statements of "two Belgian prisoners of war, L.H. and R.C., who escaped from Germany on 28th April and arrived in Sweden on 5th May" and who had been "in the penal camp at Rawa Ruska (Rava-Russkaya)." They allegedly stated that

> *"the Germans themselves boasted that at Lvov they had specially constructed gas chambers where Jews were systematically killed and buried. The total number was said to exceed 80,000."*[666]

Regarding Mogilev, Gerlach abandoned any hope for gas chambers, but he did not abandon his theory of the "Death Camps" (Gerlach 1999, pp. 771f.):

> *"Another large death camp existed in the midst of Mogilev. Created around late September/early October 1941 and temporarily planned as a nucleus for a transit and extermination camp with international functions, it was expanded after Himmler's visit on 23 October 1941. Until 1943, a changing number of people from the region and possibly from Poland were imprisoned there – according to witness statements roughly between 1,000 and 4,000; according to a reconnaissance report by Soviet partisans, 500 people, among them 276 Jews, in early September 1943, before the evacuation. At a point in time that cannot be determined, presumably 1942, up to 4,000 Jewish inmates of the camp were shot at one stroke on von dem Bach-Zelewski's orders – not the only operation of this kind. The shootings and unloading of murder victims from gas vans no longer took place predominantly in Novopashkovo, as in 1941, but in the village of Polykovichi."*

Even if this story were true as well, it is impossible to understand why it is necessary to postulate the existence of a "death camp" for the shooting of 4,000 people. But is this story true? The presumed shooting is not attested to by any document, and Gerlach, who does not even know the year with certainty, is compelled to refer to wholly unreliable sources, such as partisan reports or witnesses interrogated in 1958 and 1959 (*ibid.*, fn 1478f.).

In the Incident Reports, the first execution of a significant number of persons at Mogilev was recorded on 9 October 1941, carried out by *Einsatzgruppe* B (EM No. 108; Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 662):

> *"A resistance movement of the Jews became increasingly noticeable in Mogilev as well, so that it became necessary to crack down hard by shooting 80 Jews and*

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[666] Memorandum. To: Political Intelligence Department. From: Press Reading Bureau, Stockholm. 18th May, 1943. TNA, FO 371-34430, C 5895, 26 May 1943.

> *Jewesses. When this measure also failed to help and false rumors continued to be spread by the Jews, and orders issued by the German occupation forces were sabotaged, 215 Jews and 337 Jewesses were shot."*

In this case as well, the motivation was not a mere "pretext" to kill Jews for racial reasons. The "War Diary" of Police Battalion 322 dated 3 October 1941 contains the following entry:[667]

> *"7th and 9th Company together with staff of Higher SS and Police leader Russia Center – execution of a total of 2,008 Jews and Jewesses outside Mogilev near forest camp (7th Company 378, 9th Company 545 executions)."*

It is not known with certainty whether the 2,008 victims also included the 552 victims indicated by *Einsatzgruppe* B. The fact that the "War Diary" does not mention this unit leads one to think that they were not. 80 Jews had already been killed beforehand (EM No. 67; Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 376). EM No. 108 also reports the killing of 836 mental patients at Mogilev (*ibid.*, p. 663).

EM No. 124 dated 25 October 1941 reports on other executions by *Einsatzkommando* 8 (*ibid.*, p. 731):

> *"Also in Mogilev, the Jews attempted to sabotage their resettlement into the ghetto by initiating a wholesale emigration away* [from the city]. *With the assistance of the police, EK 8 therefore blocked all outbound roads and brought in 113 Jews for liquidation.* […] *Another 2 Jews were liquidated in Mogilev for kicking wounded German soldiers and for not wearing the prescribed insignia. 10 further Jews and Russians were liquidated as communist officials and agents."*

Again, these Jews were not killed based on mere "pretexts."

EM No. 133 dated 14 November 1941 mentions the killing of 55 persons, including 22 Jews, for membership in a "partisan organization" (*ibid.*, p. 786). The largest execution took place on 19 October 1941 (*ibid.*, pp. 788f.):

> *"On 19 Oct. 1941, a Jewish operation of a larger scale was carried out in Mogilev with support from the Pol. Regt. Center, during which 3,726 Jews of both sexes and all ages were liquidated. This measure was necessary because ever since the occupation of the City of Mogilev by German troops, the Jews,* [sabotaged] *the concerns of the occupation authority, and despite the measures already taken against them, they did not only* [not] *back away from such activity but continued their anti-German activities (sabotage, support to partisans, refusal to work, etc.) with such tenacity that it could no longer be tolerated in the interests of pacifying the areas behind the lines."*

Here again, the motivation for the execution had no connection to the racial factor.

On 23 October 1941, another 279 Jews were shot "in the struggle against the partisans and in order to prevent acts of sabotage" (*ibid.*, p. 789). The last executions carried out at Mogilev (483 persons) were recorded in EM No. 148 dated 19 December 1941.

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[667] YVA, O.53-127, p. 111.

Arad asserts that a census taken in August 1941 registered "over 6,430 Jews" at Mogilev. A ghetto was set up at the end of September. In the three most-important actions (750 + 2,208 + 3,726 =) 6,684 Jews were shot according to the German documents, hence more than the number registered. Arad concludes (Arad 2009, p. 188):

> *"In Mogilev, 200 skilled Jewish workers were left alive in a 'civilian prison camp' (Zivilgefangenlager), along with several hundred gentiles, to serve the needs of the German administration. Their families were not spared."*

Hence, if there were only 200 Jews in Mogilev by late October 1941, it is not clear how 4,000 could have been killed in 1942. The story recounted by Gerlach is therefore without foundation.

The above-mentioned documents indicate a maximum of 7,471 victims. I have shown earlier that the Soviet Commission which investigated Mogilev attributed 70,000 victims to this locality, including 10,000 Jews. For his part, Pilunov spoke of 46,000 bodies, 35,000 buried in the suburb of Pashkovo and 11,000 in the suburb of Polykovichi (see Sections 6.7.1-6.7.3.).

8.2. The Mass Graves at Kherson

Arad writes as follows concerning this locality (Arad 2009, pp. 178f.):

> *"EG D operated in the Nikolaev-Kherson region, and according to the Einsatzgruppen report, the remaining Jewish population of each of these towns stood at about 5,000. They were murdered on September 14. The town's military commander reported that, 'in accordance with Sipo orders, the Jews of Nikolaev have been evacuated (their execution will follow).' A priest from Nikolaev testified that 'on the morning of September 14… I witnessed a procession of condemned Jews… The Gestapo, the police, and gendarmerie transferred the Jews… to the ravine and shot them.'"*

EM No. 89 dated 20 September 1941 reports in connection with the activity of *Einsatzgruppe* D (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 511):

> *"*Kommando*'s area of operation free of Jews. 8,890 Jews and Communists were executed between 18 Aug. and 25 Sept. Total number 17,315. Jewish question currently solved in Nikolayev and Kherson. About 5,000 Jews arrested in each city."*

Krausnick and Wilhelm, to whom Arad refers in footnote 83 on p. 568, write:

> *"Nothing can be read in the files of the Army High Command II/Dept. Ic/AO on the mass shootings carried out in September in Nikolayev and Kherson, to which thousands of Jews fell victim."* (Krausnick/Wilhelm, pp. 224f.)

Further along, on the page mentioned by Arad, the two authors noted that on 15 September 1941, the local commandant of Nikolayev communicated a message stating:

> *"'by order of the Security Service… the Jews residing in Nikolayev had been evacuated on 14 Sept. 41.'"*

These Jews are said then to have been killed, but there are no documents in this regard. Regarding Kherson, Krausnick and Wilhelm mention only the proclamation of the garrison commander to the population of Kherson dated 29 August 1941 that "100 Jews and 10 Bolshevik leaders" had been shot that day in reprisal (*ibid.*, p. 242).

An "Order to the Jews of the City of Kherson" from the first 10-day period of August 1941 required the Jews of the city to wear the Jewish star on their clothing starting on 12 August; in addition, all the Jews in the city were to report for registration at a certain location between 24 and 27 August. The registration was to be performed by the "Jewish Committee" (Angrick *et al.*, Doc. 31, p. 85). The "Report on the Activities of the S.Kdo. 11a in Kherson between 22 Aug. and 10 Sept. 1941" reports what happened afterwards:

> *"Because of the registration, the* Wehrmacht*'s desires for Jewish labor units could be satisfied from the 2nd day onward. Jewish labor squads of all kinds were made available every day, whose strength, from initially 120, reached up to a thousand persons in the final days."*

The report also says that "400 Jews and 10 Jewesses were shot in reprisal for acts of sabotage and communication links" (*ibid.*, Doc. 59, pp. 140f.).

EM No. 101 dated 2 October 1941 reports on these two localities specifically (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 615):

> *"In particular the cities of Nikolayev and Kherson were made free of Jews during the reporting period, while remaining officials were treated accordingly. 22,467 Jews and Communists were executed between 16 Sept. and 30 Sept."*

It is not clear whether this number refers to the two cities or, as is more likely, to the general activity of *Einsatzgruppe* D.

No one has ever claimed that any *Sonderkommando* 1005 ever concerned itself with eliminating the bodies at Kherson, and not even the Soviets knew of the presumed massacre. The Soviets were informed of the massacre in 1944 by the British,[668] who in turn learned of it from a German POW, *Hauptscharführer* P.W., who was a member of the security police but was "definitely anti-Nazi," or so he claimed. The interrogation was summarized in a long report which states the following, among other things:[669]

> *"PW also stated that he saw a big anti-tank ditch about 3 or 4 km from Cherson, where they buried a large number of corpses. He estimates that at least 5000 people (all of them Jews) lie buried in this mass grave. They had all been shot – men, women and children, even pregnant women carrying a child in their arms and leading another by the hand. The actual shooting which PW himself saw was done by the Police, the Waffen-SS and also by members of the Security Service. The victims were brought up and shot in batches of ten in the immediate vicinity of the anti-tank ditch which was near a small strip of woodland and an open field with a*

[668] TNA, FO 371/43374, communication from the British Embassy at Moscow to the Foreign Office.

[669] Report on further information obtained from PW M 320, Hauptscharführer, Sicherheitspolizei, captured at Foggia 31 Oct 43. TNA, FO 371/43374, pp. 28 and 35.

> *road running in between. PW adds that these massacres, of which, as he explains, he was forced to be an unwilling spectator, and which not only revolted him as a married man with children, but, in his opinion, 70% of those present, must have ceased in May or June 43 when an order came out whilst PW was in Croatia that no more executions were to take place, but that the people should be sent instead to the Reich to work."*

That a SS *Hauptscharführer* in the security police should have been forcibly present at a shooting without directly participating is not very believable. The shooting "in batches of ten" would have required 500 "batches" and is equally improbable, always assuming that the number given by the witness is correct, although it is unclear how he could have had knowledge of that number of 5,000 bodies. Initially, it appears that the witness first saw the ditch, in which case any estimate of the number of bodies which it contained would have been highly random; it then appears that he witnessed the executions. But in that case, in order to draw up his estimate, he would have had to count all, or almost all, the "batches," and this, too, is not very plausible.

On 6 May 1944, the British ambassador in Moscow delivered a note to Molotov stating:[670]

> *"Dear Monsieur Molotov,*
> *My government have instructed me to pass on to the Soviet Government, for such enquiry as they may see fit to make, the following information which has been obtained from the interrogation of German prisoners of war:*
> *'Not less than four kilometers, and not more than ten kilometers, from Kherson, probably to the north-east, the main road runs through a collective farm. Near here there is a wood on one side of the road and on the other side is a large anti-tank ditch. This ditch is estimated to contain the bodies of at least 5,000 Jews who were shot by the Germans.'"*

On 13 May, Andrey Vyshinsky, Molotov's deputy, replied to the British ambassador that

> *"the circumstances described in the information have been communicated to the competent Soviet authorities for investigation."* (p. 57)

On 15 June 1944, the British ambassador communicated to the Foreign Office in London a Soviet report from the day before saying:

> *"This information was communicated to Mr. Vyshinski who has now informed me that investigations by Soviet authorities have established that in September 1941 6,700 Jews were shot by an S.S. detachment under command of* [an] *officer named Hanze in an anti-tank ditch 12 kilometers south of Kherson. Vyshinski confirmed this fact."* (p. 59)

Vyshinsky's confirmation, dated 12 June, mentioned the shooting of 6,700 Jews, stating that "the fact of this shooting is confirmed by evidence furnished by collective farmers of the neighbouring village" (p. 57).

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[670] TNA, FO 371/43374, p. 51; next three page numbers from there.

Two days afterwards, the Soviets drew up a report titled "File. 14 June 1944, City of Kherson," which can be summarized as follows: An investigatory commission had examined the site on the spot between 9 and 11 June, and had found two mass graves. The first measured 112 m × 3 m × 3 m (= 1,008 m³); this grave was opened lengthwise for a distance of 7 m (= 63 m³), and 268 bodies were exhumed. The second grave measured 280 m × 3 m × 3 m (= 2,520 m³) and was opened lengthwise for a distance of 3 m (= 27 m³); from which 48 bodies were exhumed. The commission estimated that the two mass graves contained a total of 8,780 bodies, a figure obtained by means of a simple arithmetical operation; in the first case, the result comes to (1,008 m³ × 268 corpses ÷ 63 m³) = 4,288 bodies; while in the second case, the result comes to (2,520 m × 48 ÷ 27 m³ =) 4,480 bodies; adding the two figures, we obtain 8,768, rounded off to 8,780.

The two graves were located 8 km from the city. The discovery was made based on the message from the British ambassador dated 6 May 1944 cited earlier. But *Hauptscharführer* P.W. spoke of one single mass grave, 3-4 km from Kherson, with at least 5,000 bodies, while the Soviets, based on this information, found two graves, 8 km from Kherson, containing some 8,780 bodies.

This report also contains a statement by the witness Boris Vladimirovich Klyerman according to which the Germans shot "4-x [sic] thousand persons" (Jews), probably 4,000 to 5,000 persons, on 24 September 1941.[671]

The "Report on the General Destruction, and Investigations Relating to the Misdeeds of the German-Fascist Occupiers and their Lackeys in the Kherson Oblast," undated but no doubt written earlier, says that "10,000 members of the Jewish population" were killed at Kherson in the fall of 1941.[672]

There is nothing to confirm the truthfulness of the Soviet discoveries, particularly regarding the two mass graves and the 316 exhumed bodies: as far as is known, there is no photograph or film documentation of either one of the two mass graves.

8.3. The Crimea

8.3.1. The Fantastic 7,000 Bodies at Kerch

On the execution of the Jews at Kerch on the Crimean Peninsula, Arad reports as follows (Arad 2009, p. 206):

> *"According to a report of the military administration in Kerch, between 10,000 and 12,000 Jews registered in the population census. A decree was posted on November 28, 1941, calling on all the Jews to report the following morning between 8 a.m. and noon at Sennaia Square, with food for three days. About 7,000 turned up as ordered, believing that they were being sent to work. The Jews were taken to the municipal prison and, on December 1, a three-day operation began in*

[671] DAKO, R-1479-1-118, pp. 2-4.
[672] DAKO, R-1479-1-119, pp. 17f.

> *which they were driven to an antitank trench near the village of Bagrovo, about 4 kilometers west of Kerch, where they were shot."*

Regarding the number of victims, Arad's primary source for this massacre is a newspaper special report, later recycled as Document USSR-63, upon which I will dwell later. As reported by Karel C. Berkhoff, the death toll was initially very limited (Berkhoff 2012, p. 127):

> *"On December 31, 1941, the Red Army recaptured the Crimean city of Kerch. Within a week* Pravda *quoted a local who had discovered 'heaps of corpses of shot Jews' at the cemetery. 'Among them were many elderly, women, and children. Many corpses were with severed heads, arms, and twisted jaws.'"*

David Shneer says that Dmitrii Baltermants was one of the first Soviet photographers to travel to Bagerovo Trench (Russian: Bagerovsky rov) in January 1942, where he "saw dozens of corpses littering the bleak, frozen wintertime landscape." His photographs, together with those of his colleague Israel Ozerskii, appeared in the 2 March 1942 issue of the magazine *Ogonyok* (see Document II.8.1.).

Another photographer present on the spot was Evgenii Khaldei. In his journal, he noted that "the trench was two kilometers long," and that the victims were "7,000 women, children, and elderly." Another journalist, Ilya Selvinsky, wrote the following in his diary in January 1942 (Shneer 2014, p. 69):

> *"I got to Kerch with the landing troops of the second echelon. The city is half-destroyed. That's that – we'll restore it. But near the village of Bagerovo in an anti-tank ditch –* [there were] *7000 executed women, children, old men and others. And I saw them. Now I do not have the strength to write about it in prose. Nerves can no longer react. What I could – I have expressed in verse."*

The caption accompanying the photographs of Baltermants and Ozersky published by *Ogonyok* said: "7,500 residents from the very elderly to breast-feeding babies were shot from just a single city" (Shneer 2011, pp. 100-104). The story of the 7,000 bodies therefore originated immediately after the discovery of the Bagerovo Trench, although Baltermants had only seen "dozens of corpses." And his photographs, and those of his colleagues, show only that many.

Document II.8.2. shows a photo taken by Baltermants that was accompanied by the following caption (Shneer 2014, p. 64; 2011, p. 101):

> *"Kerch Resident P.I. Ivanova Found Her Husband, Who Was Tortured by the Fascist Executioners."*

Document II.8.3., a photo taken by the same photographer, shows "Residents of Kerch Search for Their Relatives. In the photo: V.S. Tereshchenko digs under bodies for her husband" (Shneer 2011, p. 102).

Document II.8.4., by contrast, shows a photo by Khaldei captioned "Soviets Dig a Grave" (*ibid*., p. 103). This shows a small grave with 8-10 bodies lying in front of it.

Document II.8.5.[673] is a larger version of the illustration at the lower left of Document II.8.1. According to the caption, it shows "One of the mass graves where the Hitlerites threw the inhabitants shot by themselves from the city of Kerch." This is obviously a drawing, inspired by the photograph reproduced in Document II.8.6.,[674] in which we see a small grave with about a dozen bodies.

At least two photographs showing small mass graves refute the story of the anti-tank ditch 1,000 meters long, as claimed by Document USSR-63.

Not without reason, the July 1942 issue of the US news magazine *Life* published an article by Cyrus L. Sulzberger, war correspondent for the *New York Times*, who mentioned the discoveries at Kerch in these terms:

> *"When Timoshenko's troops returned to Kerch they found, frozen in the snow-covered streets, the bodies of dozens of civilian peasants sprawled in the final agonies of death."*

It is not even clear who the victims were that appear in the photographs. They are all dressed, but according to a Jewish witness who miraculously survived the execution, Joseph Weingartner, the Jews had to undress before being shot; in fact, he saw "a mountain of clothing" near the graves (Ehrenburg/Grossman 1981, p. 274).

In the afternoon hearing of 15 February 1946 of the First Nuremberg Trial, Chief Counsellor of Justice of the Soviet Union L.N. Smirnov read a few extracts from Document "USSR-63, which is a report of the Extraordinary State Commission for the Investigation of German Atrocities in the town of Kerch." The reports says that the Germans gathered "over 7,000 people" in the City of Kerch on 29 November 1941 (IMT, Vol. 7, p. 493), and elaborated:

> *"'As a site for the mass execution, the Hitlerites selected an antitank ditch near the village of Baguerovsko* [sic; Bagerovo] *where for 3 days on end autobuses brought entire families which had been condemned to death.*
>
> *'When the Red Army entered Kerch, in January 1942, the Baguerovsko trench was investigated. It was discovered that this trench—1 kilometer in length, 4 meters in width, and 2 meters in depth—was filled to overflowing with bodies of women, children, old men, and boys and girls in their teens. Near the trench were frozen pools of blood. Children's caps, toys, ribbons, torn-off buttons, gloves, milk bottles, and rubber comforters, small shoes, galoshes, together with torn-off hands, feet, and other parts of human bodies were lying nearby. Everything was spattered with blood and brains.*
>
> *'The fascist savages shot down the defenseless population with dum-dum bullets. Near the edge of the trench lay the mutilated body of a young woman. In her arms was a baby carefully wrapped up in a white lace cover. Next to this woman lay an 8-year-old girl and a boy of 5, killed with dum-dum bullets. Their hands still gripped the mother's dress.'"* (*ibid*., p. 494)

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673 YVA, Digital Collections, Archive Signature 5965.
674 *Ibid*., Signature 7265/175.

This system of killing and burial is not very sensible; to fill the whole ditch uniformly, the victims had to be arranged in groups of seven for every linear meter of ditch, and the executioners had to walk a kilometer shooting them; this way, the ditch, assuming a cover layer of 25 centimeters, would have held 7,000 bodies, one per cubic meter! Assuming the experimental fill rate of 3.5 bodies per cubic meter on the other hand, the trench could have held over 27,900 bodies, assuming a cover layer of 20 centimeters; conversely, 7,000 bodies would have occupied only approximately 250 meters of trench.

The Soviet report was crude propaganda, which appears clearly from the additional "atrocities" attributed to the Germans, among them the use of dum-dum bullets and the poisoning of children (*ibid.*, p. 493):

> *"'According to instructions issued by the German commandant, all the school children were ordered to appear at the school at a given time. On arrival, the 245 children, school books in hand, were sent to a factory school outside the town, allegedly for a walk. There the cold and hungry infants were offered coffee and poisoned pies. Since there was not enough coffee to go round, those who did not get any were sent to the infirmary where a German orderly smeared their lips with a quick-acting poison. In a few minutes all the children were dead. School children of the higher grades were carried off in trucks and shot down by machine gun fire 8 kilometers outside of the town. The bodies of the first batch of murdered children were brought to the same spot—a very large, very long, antitank trench.'"*

There are two documents on the executions at Kerch, but only one is explicit. This is the Activity Report of Local Headquarters I/287 Kerch, Journal No. 328, signed Neumann, for the period of 28 Nov.-7 Dec. 1941 to the commanders of Rear Army Area 553 of 7 Dec. 1941, which contains this announcement:

> *"The resettlement of the Jews, about 2,500 in number, was carried out on 1, 2 and 3 December. Subsequent executions must be expected, since part of the Jewish population has fled, is in hiding and must first be captured."*

The editors of the documentary compendium in which this report appears inform us that the text originally contained the word *Exekutierung*, which was deleted and replaced by the word *Umsiedlung* (resettlement; Hoppe/Glass, p. 390). For Krausnick and Wilhelm, the original word was "presumably 'liquidation'" (Krausnick/Wilhelm, p. 272), which means that it is not clearly legible. In fact, in the original document, this word has been meticulously crossed out with black ink and is therefore illegible (reproduced in M. Stein, p. 351).

In view of the presence of the word *Exekutierungen*, introducing a word such as "resettlement" as a presumed "camouflage word" – as orthodox historians insist it was – would have been in vain. In fact, the text may mean that 2,500 Jews were shot and that they were anticipating a second round of executions of those who had fled, but is not in contradiction to a real resettlement either; in this case, it may mean that 2,500 Jews were resettled and they were anticipating the later execution of those who had concealed themselves, precisely because they had evaded the resettlement. In fact, it is known that during resettlement operations,

real or feigned, shooting was the punishment for Jews who fled or concealed themselves.

The second document mentioning Kerch is EM No. 150 dated 2 January 1942, which says:[675]

> *"Jews.*
> *Simferopol, Yevpatoria, Alushta, Karasubazar, Kerch and Feodosia as well as other parts of West Crimea have been made Jew-free. 17,645 Jews, 2,504 Krymchaks, 824 Gypsies and 212 Communists and partisans were shot between 16 Nov. and 15 Dec. Total number of executions 75,881."*

Let's take a closer look at the individual EMs. No EM dated 16 November 1941 exists; No. 133 is dated the 14th, and No. 134 the 17th. The following subsequent EMs were issued by the end of the year:

– No. 135 dated 19 November 1941
– No. 136 dated 21 November 1941
– No. 137 dated 24 November 1941
– No. 138 dated 26 November 1941
– No. 139 dated 28 November 1941
– No. 140 dated 1 December 1941
– No. 141 dated 3 December 1941
– No. 142 dated 5 December 1941
– No. 143 dated 8 December 1941
– No. 144 dated 10 December 1941
– No. 145 dated 12 December 1941
– No. 146 dated 15 December 1941
– No. 147 dated 17 December 1941
– No. 148 dated 19 December 1941
– No. 149 dated 22 December 1941

The report from *Einsatzgruppe* D is only missing in EMs Nos. 136, 137, 144, 147 and 148; it is present in all the others, even those with rather long texts (such as EM No. 141, and even more so No. 134). In EMs containing these reports, Jews are only mentioned in two:

EM No. 145 (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 876):

> *"Shootings: Another 2,910 Jews and 19 communist officials were court-martialed and shot. The total number of executions has thus risen to 54,696."*

EM No. 149 (with reference to Yevpatoria; *ibid.*, p. 895):

> *"Jews: After installing a Jewish council and the registration of the Jews, who amount to 750 persons, their concentration was carried out on 21 Nov. 41. In connection with the Jewish operation, six villages and several kolkhozes in the vicinity of Yevpatoria, in which there are still Jewish families, are to be searched."*

A little bit further along, the report states (*ibid.*, p. 896):

[675] NARA, T-175/234, 2723482, p. 20; Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, p. 30.

> *"The* [grain] *warehouse was set on fire by the retreating Russian. To fight the fire, 300 Jews were put to work, who salvaged 6,000-7,000 tons of usable grain."*

Hence, of these 17,645 Jews killed between 16 November and 15 December 1941, only 2,910 are mentioned in the reports from *Einsatzgruppe* D; moreover, the figure of 54,696 persons killed is found in the EM dated 12 December, and nothing indicates that it refers to a preceding period; adding this figure to the 17,645 mentioned above, we obtain a total figure of 72,341, not 75,881. On the other hand, if 54,696 persons were killed by 12 December, it is hardly credible that the number of victims rose to 75,881 by the 15th. What is more, EM No. 129 dated 5 November 1941 attributes a total figure of 31,767 executions to *Einsatzgruppe* D (*ibid.*, p. 753), so that 22,929 persons would have been shot between this date and 12 December.

With regard to Kerch, no document mentions executions later than 3 December 1941, therefore the maximum number of Jews shot would have been 2,500. If this were really true, it remains to be explained why the Soviets did not exhume the bodies, did not photograph them, and did not perform a forensic examination. They would have had plenty of time for this, as Kerch was not recaptured by the Germans until May 1942.

The photograph transmitted to the British in 1942 with the caption "Hitlerite Atrocities in Kerch. Bodies of Residents Shot by Germans" (Struk, p. 47; see Document II.8.7) is none other than Baltermants's photograph depicting V.S. Tereshchenko (see Document II.8.3.), where we see 8-10 bodies.

In 1944, a Soviet investigatory commission drew up a "List of Victims of the German-fascist Invaders at Kerch," containing 1,202 names, numbered progressively from 4,795 to 5,996,[676] which is in blatant contradiction to the photographs showing a few dozen bodies in total.

8.3.2. Simferopol

The *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* asserts that *Sonderkommando* 11 b of *Einsatzgruppe* D and the 3rd Police Battalion shot 12,500 Jews at Simferopol between 11 and 13 December 1941 (Gutman *et al*., Vol. III, p. 1318). This data does not come from documents; regarding the number of victims, the Local Headquarters I/853 informed the *Kommandant* of the area behind the front of the 11th Army on 14 November 1941 (NOKW-1573; TWC, Vol. X, pp. 1258f.):

> *"Simferopol had about 156,000 inhabitants, of whom about 120,000 remained. Among these were 70,000 Russians, 20,000 Ukrainians, 20,000 Tartars, 20,000 Jews; the remainder is divided into various racial strains; scarcely 100 racial Germans, whose registration was begun by the Ortskommandantur.*
>
> *The city is slightly damaged but all plants and businesses have been plundered.*
>
> *The 11,000 Jews remaining are being executed by the Security Service."*

EM No. 170 dated 18 February 1942 reported (Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, pp. 167f.):

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[676] YVA, M.33 – "Records of the Extraordinary State Commission to Investigate German-Fascist Crimes Committed on Soviet Territory and similar items." File Number JM/19683.

> *"More than 300 Jews were arrested and executed in Simferopol between 9 Jan. and 15 Feb. The number of executed Jews in Simferopol has therefore risen to nearly 10,000, and is about 300 higher than the number of registered Jews."*

EM No. 149 dated 22 December 1941 contains an extremely long report on the activity of *Einsatzgruppe* D – in particular *Sonderkommando* 11a, Advance Unit Yalta – on the struggle against the partisans. The only reference to Jews is the passage already quoted earlier (see p. 719).

It is known that Reginald Paget, one of the British defense lawyers of General Erich von Manstein at his trial held at Hamburg between 23 August and 19 December 1949, cast doubt upon the scope of the execution at Simferopol. Marcel Stein concerned himself with it, although in a summary manner. Here is what Paget wrote (Paget, pp. 170f.):

> *"In one instance we were able to check their figures. The S.D. claimed that they had killed 10,000 in Simferopol during November and in December they reported Simferopol clear of Jews. By a series of cross checks we were able to establish that the execution of the Jews in Simferopol had taken place on a single day, 16th November. Only one company of S.D. were in Simferopol. The place of execution was 15 kilometers from the town. The numbers involved could not have been more than about 300. These 300 were probably not exclusively Jews but a miscellaneous collection of people who were being held on suspicion of resistance activity. The Simferopol incident received a good deal of publicity because it was spoken of by the prosecution's only live witness, an Austrian corporal called Gaffe who said that he heard anti-Jewish activities mentioned in an engineers' mess when he was* [an] *orderly and had passed the scene of the Simferopol execution. As a result we received a large number of letters, and were able to call several witnesses who had been billeted with Jewish families and also spoke of the functioning of a synagogue and a Jewish market where they bought icons and similar bric-a-brac right up to the time that Manstein left the Crimea and after. It was indeed clear that the Jewish community had continued to function quite openly in Simferopol, and although several of our witnesses had heard rumours about an S.D. excess committed against Jews in Simferopol, it certainly appeared that this Jewish community was unaware of any special danger."*

Stein comments (M. Stein, p. 358):

> *"Witnesses? Not a single survivor from Simferopol testified at Manstein's trial."*

This may also be true, but Paget did not speak of "survivors," or of Jews; from what he wrote it may be deduced that the testimony concerned was that of non-Jews who had lived with Jewish families or frequented the Jewish market.

And here Stein's second and final objection (*ibid.*, p. 358):

> *"Paget then adds:*
>
> > *I am of the opinion that at the time, when the Germans arrived in the Crimea, extermination policy had given way to security police. Jews were no longer killed because they were Jews. Some Jews were selected and killed because they belonged to sabotage groups. Jews who were not under suspicion continued to live in full security in the townships.*

This sentence would have given pleasure to David Irving."

Stein counters Paget's assertions with the *Einsatzgruppen* reports, which, in the specific case of Simferopol, he considered himself able to invalidate. It does not appear that any Holocaust historian ever took Paget's theory seriously enough to search the trial records of the defense to establish the actual value of the evidence found by the defense.

The fact of the matter is that the trial testimonies of the presumed executioners and instigators are more favorable to Paget than the *Einsatzgruppen* reports.

Former SS *Sturmbannführer* Werner Braune commanded *Sonderkommando* 11b between October 1941 and the beginning of September 1942. The executions at Simferopol were carried out under his command. He was one of the defendants at the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial, where he declared the following as to this specific case when being cross-examined (TWC, Vol. IV, p. 327):

"Q. Can you give me an approximate figure?

A. No. I cannot do that either, unless I can just work it out this way. There were approximately 10,000 before, half of whom had escaped and from that I can deduce that in all circumstances there must have been fewer than 4,000 to 5,000, but I cannot give you an exact figure.

Q. Then there were more than 1,000 executed during this one instance, is that what I am to gather?

A. I think I am certain that there were more than 1,000."

In his affidavit of 8 July 1947, Braune described the execution, but without indicating the number of victims; he nevertheless stated that the execution squad consisted of eight to ten men (*ibid.*, p. 215, NO-4234).

SS *Obersturmführer* Heinz Hermann Schubert, Ohlendorf's adjutant, reported as follows as to the execution at Simferopol in his affidavit of 24 February 1947 (*ibid.*, p. 207, NO-3055):

"In December 1941 – I do not remember the exact date – I was assigned by Ohlendorf or Seibert to supervise and inspect the shooting of about 700 to 800 people, which was to take place in the close vicinity of Simferopol. The shooting was undertaken by the special Kommando 11b, one of the formations of the Einsatzgruppe D."

General Otto Wöhler had been chief of the general staff of the 11th Army under the command of *Generalfeldmarschall* Erich von Manstein. In an "Affidavit. Concerning testimony Ohlendorf of 3 Jan. 46 on S.D. and Headquarters of the 11th Army," dated "Nuremberg, 25 June 1946," he asserted (IMT, Vol. 42, pp. 255-257):

"3. None of the 3 military leaders notified me or the army of anything.

A. About an agreement between the R.S.H.A. on the one hand and the High Command of the Armed Forces or the Army on the other.

B. About any oral or written order from Hitler or Himmler regarding liquidation of the Jews. […]

6. It is unknown to me that any of the commanders-in-chief named under §2 or anyone else gave the order to carry out the liquidation of the Jews only outside of

a certain circle – 2½ km acc. to p. 1858, 200 km acc. to p. 1818. If this had been ordered, I would know it. On the contrary, I remember with certainty that Field Marshal von Manstein, in the first few days after taking over supreme command, in reaction to the rumor that, in the past, Jews are said to have been murdered somewhere, clearly prohibited this. Since this event allegedly took place behind the theater of operations – I think it was Kishinev, but I can't swear it – Field Marshal von Manstein immediately sent his ordinance officer to the O.Qu.[?] *and made him responsible for ensuring that 'such a disgrace in the army's area would be made impossible once and for all.' This order was in no way issued with a wink of the eye, but most seriously and with the strongest emphasis. The High Command of the Army has heard nothing about any Jewish liquidation after that.*

7. It is out of the question that the High Command of the Army ever gave orders to accelerate the liquidation in Simferopol. The justification of a 'great housing shortage' is totally wrong. Nothing at all was known of a liquidation of the Jews, but rather of a 'resettlement.' – Compare also testimony Ohlendorf on page 1820 –.

8. I have never heard anything about gas vans, just as I have never heard that the Army had demanded Jewish watches for its soldiers. Should individual Jewish watches have been delivered for soldiers of the Army, they can only have been accepted under the condition that these had been legally confiscated."

It is worthwhile dwelling on the question of these watches. On 12 February 1942, Ohlendorf sent the 11th Army's High Command a letter with the subject "Watches," saying (Hoppe/Glass, Doc. 148, p. 436):

"Through a call from the local commanders of Simferopol, I learned that the commander-in-chief have requested the watches left over from the Jewish operation for official use by the Army. I herewith hand over to the Army 120 watches which in the meantime have been made usable by repairs. There are still about 50 watches in repair, some of which can be restored. If the Army still needs the remaining watches, please let me know."

In this letter, the word "*Ja*" has been added by hand, followed by "W" (for "Wöhler") and vm" (for "von Manstein"; M. Stein, p. 361), which was the response to Ohlendorf's final request.

What is of interest here is not the meaning attributed to this letter by the American and British prosecutors, or the meaning subsequently attributed to it that same day by Ohlendorf.[677] What is important is the loot: how can one reconcile loot consisting of a few hundred watches with the execution of 12,500 persons?

[677] The original text is reproduced in: M. Stein, p. 361. The letter was introduced into evidence as NOKW-631 during the trial proceedings against the *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*, TWC, Vol. X, "High Command Case," pp. 1259f.; see also p. 1306, where Wöhler provided his explanation for the document in question.

8.3.3. Other Executions in the Crimea

The report on the activity of *Einsatzgruppe* D at the 11th Army High Command on 16 April 1942 contains the following statistical picture of the Jewish population of the Crimea. In 1939, there were 65,000 Jews in the Crimea, including approximately 44,000 in six cities, or more exactly (Angrick *et al.*, Doc. 121, p. 324):

Simferopol:	22,791
Sevastopol:	6,040
Kerch:	5,573
Yevpatoria:	4,229
Yalta:	2,109
Feodosia:	2,922

EM No. 145 dated 12 December 1941 asserts that "the total number of Jews amounts to an estimated 40,000; about one quarter of these live in Simferopol." The total number of listed executions amounted to 54,696 (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 876). According to the 1939 statistics, there were approximately 21,000 Jews in the other five cities, but Sevastopol was captured by the Germans only on 3 July 1942. As quoted before, EM No. 150 of 2 January 1942 reports (Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, p. 30):

> *"Jews.*
> *Simferopol, Yevpatoria, Alushta, Karasubazar, Kerch and Feodosia as well as other parts of West Crimea have been made Jew-free. 17,645 Jews, 2,504 Krymchaks, 824 Gypsies and 212 Communists and partisans were shot between 16 Nov. and 15 Dec. Total number of executions 75,881."*

Starting with the preceding total of 54,696 and adding the figures indicated in this report, we arrive at precisely 75,881. This means that EM No. 150 includes all the executions, including those at Simferopol. The killing of 17,645 Jews had made the City of Simferopol "Jew-free" (10,300 victims), Yevpatoria (750 Jews present: EM No. 149), Alushta, Karasubazar, Kerch (2,500 victims according to the Activity Report of the Local Headquarters I/287 Kerch dated 7 Dec. 1941) and Feodosia. The Local Headquarters of Karasubazar communicated the presence of 76 Jews on 14 December 1941 (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, fn 3, p. 877). There were a total of 240 Jews in the region of Alushta before the war (Hoppe/Glass, Doc. 147, p. 460). However, the sum of these individual figures only yields (10,300 + 750 + 2,500 + 76 + 240 =) 13,866; the figure of 17,645 must therefore be understood to include approximately 3,800 Jews who lived in "other parts of Western Crimea."

The following EMs supply the following picture of executions of Jews:

- EM No. 153 dated 9 January 1942: 3,176 between 16 and 31 December 1941 (Mallmann 2014 *et al.*, p. 58);
- EM No. 157 dated 19 January 1942: 685 between 1 and 15 January (*ibid.*, p. 106);

– EM No. 165 dated 6 February 1942: 3,206 between 15 and 31 January (*ibid.*, p. 141);
– EM No. 170 dated 18 February 1942: 920 plus 300 at Simferopol between 1 and 15 February 1942 (*ibid.*, p. 168);
– EM No. 178 dated 9 March 1942: 729 between 16 and 28 February 1942 (*ibid.*, p. 202);
– EM No. 184 dated 23 March 1942: 678 in the first half of March 1942 (*ibid.*, p. 224);
– EM No. 191 dated 10 April 1942: 588 in the second half of March 1942 (*ibid.*, p. 276).

The total number is 28,007 persons. EM No. 145 dated 12 December 1941 records the execution of the first Jews: 2,910 (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 876), totaling 30,917. This does not include the presumed victims at Sevastopol (where 6,040 Jews lived in 1939), of whom the reports say nothing. Arad asserts that 4,200 Jews were killed in this city (Arad 2009, p. 288). Hence, in practice, all, or nearly all, the 40,000 Jews in Crimea were supposedly killed upon the arrival of the German troops.

No *Sonderkommando* 1005 operated in Crimea according to Holocaust historiography, and no known mass graves were discovered by the Soviets. In his book, Jens Hoffmann mentions neither the Crimea itself nor any of the above-mentioned localities in particular.

8.4. Kharkov

8.4.1. The Graves of "*Sonderkommando* Spacil"

A rather enigmatic British intercept exists relating to the period between 8 May and 8 June 1943, which, as far as I know, has never been mentioned by orthodox Holocaust historians:[678]

> *"Einsatzkdo 5 at CHARKOW is asked to send photographs of graves to Sonderkdo SPACIL at KIEW (1480 FF 10, of 11)."*

Of what use were "photographs of graves"? It is difficult to provide a direct answer to this question, but one can easily establish what they were *not* good for. From the orthodox historians' point of view, in fact, the message cannot be related to *Sonderkommando* 1005. First of all, there was no known "*Sonderkommando* Spacil." Although it is true that an SS *Standartenführer* Josef Spacil had been working for the Higher SS and Police Leader Russia-South, based in Kiev, as an SS economist since August 1, 1942,[679] this was the position of a pencil pusher, responsible for equipment and supplies of this unit, thus having nothing to do with executive activities, and certainly not with erasing traces of past mass shootings. Spacil's responsibilities for supplies and equipment is confirmed by another,

[678] TNA, HW 16-6, Summary. Covering information received between 8 May and 8 June 1945. ZIP/MSGP 48/10.6.43.
[679] See https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josef_Spacil.

earlier British intercept, dated 25 November 1941, which mentions Spacil, back then a simple SS *Sturmbannführer* serving with the SS and Police leader in Kiev, in connection with the transport of barracks.[680]

Hoffmann reports that Blobel traveled to Kiev in July 1943. He then is said to have revealed briefly to his colleagues their upcoming task, and illustrated "the details of 'Aktion 1005'" before mid-August; "*Kommando* 1005A" was then set up, commanded by SS *Sturmbannführer* Baumann, and "*Kommando* 1005B," headed by SS *Sturmbannführer* Hans Sohns (Hoffmann, pp. 107-109).

Hence, the intercepted German message could not refer to "Aktion 1005," because at that time Blobel had not yet communicated his decision regarding Kiev, but notwithstanding that fact, it speaks of "photographs of graves." If the graves contained the remains of Jews shot in Kharkov, what was the need to obtain photographs of them? If this was about mass graves of Jews shot in Kharkov, and if the authors of the report already prophetically had in mind the future activities of the – not yet established – "Sonderkommando 1005", it would have been more logical to indicate the location of the grave on a map or indicate it by means of identifying signs directly on the spot.

If this was a question of photographically documenting the existence of mass graves, indeed, it is possible that the Germans had discovered a few of the mass graves in which the Soviets buried the bodies of persons killed by the NKVD at Kharkov. The Poles, who suffered many victims there, began their search for mass graves in 1991, and continued it in 1994 and 1995. In 1996, their search activity was taken over under the direction of Prof. Andrzej Kola, known for his archaeological investigations at Bełżec and Sobibór, conducting his search activity from 27 May until 14 September. Thanks to 596 probes, 60 mass graves were located in the area of the cemetery; 15 contained a total of 4,302 bodies of Poles; the bodies of another 2,098 persons of various nationalities were also found (Kola, pp. 34f., 38, 42, 44).

This intercept must therefore be seen in connection with the intercept from March 1944 discussed in Chapter 5, which mentions exhumations in Kamenets-Podolsky, about which the propaganda minister of East Prussia requested a complete report for the purpose of propagandistic exploitation of photographic material on Soviet mass graves (see p. 589).

8.4.2. Executions and Mass Graves

Very little is known of these executions. Arad reports that "Yordan, an intelligence officer with the Sixth Army, testified at the trial of members of *Sonderkommando* 4a that 21,685 Jews had been murdered in Kharkov by January 1942" (Arad 2009, p. 192), but the German documents do not confirm the enormous massacres declared by orthodox Holocaust historiography. The Incident Reports mention the Jews of Kharkov several times.

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[680] TNA, HW 16-32. German Police Decodes: No. 1. Traffic: 25.11.41. ZIP/G.P.D.522/27.12.41.

EM No. 156 dated 16 January 1942 speaks of them as follows:[681]

"Jewish question in Kharkov.

On this question, considerations are currently being given to a registration of the Jews as wholesale as possible. According to past experience, connections to the saboteurs and partisans are maintained primarily by Kharkov's Jewish population. The registration of all Jews is expected to contribute considerably to the elimination of partisan activity in this region. In consultation with the responsible general staff and field headquarters, the preparatory work for a major Jewish operation is being initiated by SK 4a, as soon as the set-up work for quartering the Kommando is taken care of."

EM No. 164 dated 4 February 1942 contains a paragraph, reproduced below, titled "Registration of Jews in Kharkov":[682]

"In the framework of Sonderkommando 4a, extensive preparations required in connection with the general registration of Jews in Kharkov are being accelerated. Suitable terrain first had to be found for the evacuation of the Jews in close collaboration with city's housing office. A section of land was selected where the Jews could be accommodated in the barracks of a company housing estate. On 14 Dec. 41, a proclamation by the city commandant was issued to the Jews of Kharkov, with which they were summoned to show up at the settlement indicated in greater detail in the proclamation by 16 Dec. 41.

The evacuation of the Jews proceeded without friction, with the exception of a few incidents of looting which occurred while the Jews were marching to their new quarters and which involved almost exclusively Ukrainians. No numerical survey of the Jews encompassed by the evacuation has yet been made available. A census of the Jews has been initiated. At the same time, preparations for shooting the Jews are underway. 305 Jews were immediately shot for spreading rumors harmful to the German armed forces."

The last reference to Kharkov appears in EM No. 191 dated 10 April 1942:[683]

"After it has been resettled, Jewry no longer manifests itself in Kharkov."

The "Activity and Situation Reports" referring to this period (No. 8, 1-31 December 1941; No. 9, 1-31 January 1942; No. 10, 1-28 February 1942; and No. 11, 1-31 March 1942) contain no mention of executions at Kharkov.

Krausnick and Wilhelm mention a figure of 10,000-20,000 persons shot, but this is solely a conjecture unsupported by any document (Krausnick/Wilhelm, fn 204, p. 193).

I take no account of the "truths" established in post-war trials (the verdicts of the Darmstadt District Court of 29 November 1968 and of the German Federal Supreme Court (*Bundesgerichtshof*) of 5 April 1973, which appear in Vol. XXXI of the series *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*), because they are based on testimonies which were, to start with, quite late in coming; what is more, the witnesses had no

[681] NARA, T 175/234, 2723678, p. 45 of the report.
[682] NARA, T 175/234, 2723787, p. 10 of the report.
[683] NARA, T 175/235, 2724217, p. 29 of the report.

way to realistically estimate the number or even the order of magnitude of the victims directly, so that they could only repeat hearsay.

In June 1942, when the British intercepted the message mentioned earlier, *Einsatzkommado* 5 had already been dissolved; Kharkov was the garrison of *Sonderkommando* 4a of *Einsatzgruppe* C, commanded by SS *Obersturmbannführer* Erwin Weinmann.[684]

Hoffmann writes that at least 15,000 Jews were murdered by the Germans at Kharkov, and refers to the related article in the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaus*t (Hoffmann, p. 79), which mentions the report of the Soviet commission that investigated Kharkov. The commission claims to have opened the mass graves at the Drobitsky Ravine, and stated that 15,000 bodies lay buried there; on the other hand, the counter-intelligence officer for the 6th Army declared that the actual number of victims was 21,685 according to Blobel (Gutman *et al.*, entry "Charkow," Vol. I, p. 279).

The Soviets recaptured Kharkov on 16 February 1943, but it was recaptured again by the Germans on 15 March, who maintained control over it until 23 August, when it was definitively abandoned to the Soviets. During these final months, the Germans, inexplicably for orthodox Holocaust historians, missed their last chance to clean up the local mass graves.

On 5 September 1943, the Soviet Investigatory Commission drew up the report cited by Hoffmann, which is, in practice, the source for all that is known of the alleged massacre at Kharkov, the most-important passages of which are quoted here (Arad/Gutman/Margaliot, p. 421):

> *"During the occupation of the city of Kharkov by the German-Fascist invaders the peaceful population was destroyed one by one. According to incomplete records, upwards of 15,000 Jewish residents of the city of Kharkov were shot during the months of December 1941 and January 1942 alone near the village of Rogan, 8 kms. from the city of Kharkov in the so-called valley of Drobitzki."*

And here is the description of the alleged discoveries (*ibid.*, p. 424):

> *"The Commission opened up two pits near the village of Rogan in the valley of Drobitzki, one of 100 meters long and 18 to 20 meters wide, and the second 60 meters long and 20 meters wide. According to the findings of the Expert Medical Commission, upward of 15,000 bodies were buried in these pits (attached: the report of the Medico-legal Commission* [not published]*). Five hundred bodies were removed from the pits, of which 215 were submitted to medico-legal examination. They included the bodies of 83 men, 117 women and 60 children and infants. It was established that the cause of death of almost all these persons whose bodies had been examined was a wound and hole in the back of the skull caused by the passage of a bullet. This indicated that the shooting was carried out from behind the person to be killed and from a short distance away."*

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[684] Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten, No. 6, 5 June 1942. NARA, T 175/235, 2724444, p. IV (appendix to the report).

There is also an "Act on the Deportation and Extermination of Prisoners from Kharkiv Jail in the Period of the German Occupation" dated 13 September 1943, which refers to other mass graves (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 70f.):

> *"The Commission has opened six pits in the forest zone. The first pit, 20 by 12 meters, is two meters broader in the middle section; the second is 6 by 3.5 meters; the third – 6 by 7 meters; the fourth – 6 by 9 meters; the fifth – 7 by 6 meters; the sixth – 9 by 5.5 meters. All pits are 2-2.5 meters deep.*
> *Considering the size of the pits, the depth and the density of the layers of bodies, the coroner has determined that all the pits contain approximately 4,000 bodies, of this 506 have been exhumed and 173 examined by the coroner."*

It is clear that the discovery of the bodies had to coincide with the number of victims allegedly shot between June 1943 and July 1943, or exactly 4,000 (*ibid.*, p. 70).

8.4.3. The Kharkov Trial

Three months later, the Soviets tried three German soldiers and one Ukrainian collaborator, counter-intelligence officer SS *Hauptsturmführer* Wilhelm Langheld, SS *Untersturmführer* Hans Ritz, a member of the SD, Corporal Reinhard Retzlaw of the Secret Field Police, and Mikhail Bulanov. The trial was held between 15 and 18 December 1943. The Soviets set up a Commission of Medico-Legal Experts which drew up a report on the mass graves that had been discovered (Bazyler/Tuerkheimer, p. 30):

> *"In the 13 grave-pits opened in Kharkov and its immediate vicinity were found a huge number of corpses. In most graves they lay in extreme disorder, fantastically intertwined, forming tangles of human bodies defying description. The corpses lay in such a manner that they can be said to have been dumped or heaped but not buried in common graves. In two pits in the Sokolniki forest park bodies were found lying in straight rows, face downward, arms bent at the elbow and hands pressed to faces or necks. All the bodies had bullet wounds through the heads. Such a position of the bodies was not accidental. It proves that the victims were forced to lie down face downward and were shot in that position.* […]
> *The fact revealed by the investigation – namely, that before being murdered Soviet citizens were stripped of their footwear – is fully confirmed by the medico-legal examinations: during exhumation the experts in most cases discovered naked or half-naked bodies. In order to ascertain which Soviet citizens were exterminated and in what manner, the experts exhumed and examined 1,047 bodies in Kharkov and its environs. These included the bodies of 19 children and adolescents, 429 women and 599 men. The dead ranged in age from two to 70 years. The fact that the bodies of children, adolescents, women and old men as well as invalids were discovered in grave-pits with civilian clothes and articles of domestic use and personal effects on the bodies or near them proves that the German fascist authorities exterminated Soviet citizens regardless of sex or age."*

As far as one can tell, this discovery went unobserved in Western media, and it does not appear that Allied journalists were invited to see the mass graves. Karel C. Berkhoff writes in this regard (Berkhoff 2012, p. 150):

> *"Reports about recaptured Kharkiv more typically omitted Jews entirely. A favorable review of Oleksandr Dovzhenko's documentary* The Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine, *released in October 1943, two months after Kharkiv's recapture, quoted the voice-over accompanying footage of an unearthed mass grave: 'Look, living ones, do not turn away from our terrible pits… There is a great multitude of us in Ukraine. Do not forget us. Seek vengeance against Germany for our sufferings.'"*

The documentary, to which I will return later, showed one single mass grave. The two alleged mass graves mentioned in the commission's report measuring 100 m × 18 to 20 m and 60 m × 20 m, allegedly containing 15,000 bodies, were not shown in this documentary. It is worthwhile noting in this connection that a very similar death-toll figure had already been mentioned by the Soviet Union's foreign minister, Molotov, in his declaration of 27 April 1942 (Molotov, p. 20):

> *"In the city of Kharkov alone, the Hitlerites executed 14,000 persons during the first days of the occupation."*

It is obvious that the order of magnitude of the number of bodies which had to be "found" was already pre-established in April 1942.

A few months before their retreat from Kharkov, the Germans discovered mass graves at Katyn (on 13 April) containing 4,143 bodies of Polish officers, and at Vinnitsa (in early June 1943) with 9,432 bodies of Ukrainian citizens. The Katyn Affair, as Berkhoff stresses, put the Soviets in a tight spot, especially in their relations with the other Allies (Berkhoff 2012, p. 131):

> *"In April 1943 Nazi Germany publicly launched an investigation into the mass graves of Polish victims of the NKVD found in the Katyn Forest near Smolensk and linked them to a new wave of propaganda against 'Jewish Bolshevism.' The Nazis wanted to discredit Moscow in the eyes of the Western Allies and seemingly timed the announcement of their discovery to drown out British and American media reports of the imminent German destruction of the Warsaw ghetto and the killing of its last inhabitants. A special Bureau statement quickly denounced the 'foul fabrications of the German-fascist hangmen.' Stalin had personally edited it."*

But mere denials were propagandistically ineffective: can one seriously believe that the Soviets would not have organized a similar international media campaign as the Germans did – if they had really discovered mass graves containing the bodies of 33,000 people killed by the Germans in the second half of 1943?

David Shneer supplies important information in this regard. He asserts that the journalist David Zaslavsky, in his diary, "discussed the debates about the number of Jews killed in Kharkov, suggesting that the Tolstoi Commission, the Extraordinary Commission investigating Kharkov, headed by the writer Alexei Tolstoi, exaggerated the number of Jewish dead" (Shneer 2011, p. 143). He then describes

the Soviet propaganda technique: the use of photographs of mass graves at Krasnodar to "document" the massacre at Kharkov:

> *"The December 1943 trial in Kharkov provided even more vivid descriptions of atrocities, especially since the massacres at Kharkov were on a scale that dwarfed what the public saw in Krasnodar.* […]
> *Photographs from the report about Krasnodar were published in the newspaper and presented at the trial. A photo essay by Boris Tsetlin did not shy away from brutality (Fig. 5.1). The photograph at the top of the page shows 'corpses of those Soviet citizens tortured by the German bandits. The corpses were exhumed from an antitank ditch on the land of a state farm not far from Krasnodar.' The photograph highlights some of the common tropes of Soviet Holocaust liberation photographs – large expanses of space filled with dead bodies and investigators at the scene. Beneath the panoramic shot are photographs of dead children, again highlighting the evil nature of the enemy and simultaneously humanizing the victims. Finally, the editor included a photograph of the city's Gestapo headquarters and of a man giving testimony to the Extraordinary Commission. With photo layouts like this from Krasnodar and graphic descriptions from Kharkov, the Soviet press widely publicized images of Nazi mass murder and began shaping what would become common tropes in Soviet Holocaust photography: excavations, investigations, corpses, and those doing the investigating."* (*Ibid*., pp. 142f.)

The photographs of Krasnodar published by the magazine *Ogonyok* on 20 August 1943, although terrible, clearly showed an order of magnitude of exhumed victims immensely inferior to that adopted by Soviet propaganda. The largest-scale photograph, taken from a distance, shows approximately 100-150 bodies arranged haphazardly on the ground. In the background, nine or ten individuals are seen posing in white coats. Another two photographs depicted details taken from close-up, that is, two small groups of three to five bodies (*ibid.*, p. 144).

The Commission of Medico-Legal Experts at Kharkov did not, therefore, have much to show in terms of mediatic discoveries that could be propagandistically exploited. It is furthermore known that there were also several non-Jewish victims in this locality; from January to August 1942, out of a total of 18,306 deaths, 11,183 cases were attributed to starvation (Hilberg 1992, p. 202). One may assume that at least some of these bodies were buried in mass graves. Consequently, the discovery of corpses in no way proved that mass murders had taken place in Kharkov on the part of the Germans, because no real forensic medical examination was carried out, such as those conducted under German auspices at Katyn and Vinnitsa. We also need to consider the 3,820 Ukrainians killed by the NKVD at Kharkov, who no doubt also exhibited bullet holes in the back of the neck and who were also buried in mass graves. A letter from Aleksandr Shelepin, then head of the KGB, to Khrushchev, dated March 3, 1959, stated that, on the basis of the decision of the NKVD Special Troika of the USSR of 5 March 1940, a total of 21,857 people were shot, 4,421 of them in the Katyn Forest (Smolensk Oblast), 3,820 in the Starobelsk Camp near Kharkov, 6,311 in the Ostashkov Camp

(Kalinin Oblast) and 7,305 people were shot in other camps and prisons of western Ukraine and western Byelorussia (Cienciała *et al*., pp. 332f.).

As we have seen from numerous examples, Soviet claims about German war crimes were notoriously unreliable, and this is true for the Kharkov Trial as much as for anything else. Three days after the end of the trial, on 21 December 1943, John Balfour, a British diplomat in Moscow, drew up a meticulous record for Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden. Given its importance, and because it is an unpublished document, I quote most of it, notwithstanding its length:[685]

> *"Sir,*
> *In my telegram No. 1570 of the 19th December, I had the honour to describe the motives which had prompted the Soviet authorities to stage the atrocity trial at Kharkov, where, for the first time, members of the German armed forces appeared in the dock along with a Russian civilian. In the present despatch I propose to recapitulate the charges brought against the accused, to analyse the reports on the affair in the Soviet press, and to dwell more fully upon the reasons for the trial and its attendant publicity.*
> *2. The first public notice of the impending trial appeared on the 13th December in* Pravda, *which reproduced a statement by the Extraordinary State Commission on Atrocities recording German atrocities perpetrated in the Kharkov province, naming those responsible and announcing that the commission had placed the evidence in its possession at the disposal of the Public Prosecutor. A translation is enclosed of this statement, which mentioned by name nine members of the German armed forces and one Russian civilian.*
> *3. On the 16th December, the Moscow newspapers reported that three of the above-mentioned Germans and Russian had been charged with committing crimes of the kind foreseen in an Ukase promulgated by the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. on the 19th April, 1943, the text of which has not been published. The persons accused were Reinhardt Retslaw, aged 36, a corporal of the German Secret Field Police, Hans Ritz, aged 24, an 'S.S. Untersturmführer,' Wilhelm Langheld, aged 52, a captain in the German counter-espionage service, and Mikhail Petrovich Bulanov, a Soviet citizen who worked as chauffeur for a German 'Sonderkommando' at Kharkov and Nizhne-Cherskaya from October 1941 to February 1943. All the German defendants were accused of having directly participated in the mass-extermination of Soviet civilians by means of 'gas vans' and of having taken a personal part in mass-shootings, hangings, lootings and outrages against Soviet citizens. Retslaw was alleged to have tortured Soviet citizens as a means of extracting false confessions. He was charged with fabricating false evidence against them and with complicity in the use of 'gas vans' to suffocate Soviet civilians. Ritz was accused of participation in the torture and shooting of Soviet civilians. Langheld was said to have shot Soviet prisoners of war and civilians and to have used torture and false accusations to compass the death of innocent persons. Bulanov was charged with treason and with complicity in the murder of Soviet citizens by means of 'gas vans' and shooting.*

[685] TNA, FO 371/43374, pp. 4-8.

4. In accordance with normal Soviet criminal procedure, the actual public trial was preceded by a preliminary investigation, extracts from the procès-verbal of which were published in the newspapers on the 16th December. To judge from the references given at the end of each extract, the procès-verbal must have been a bulky document in at least three volumes. It is clear that far more evidence was considered during the preliminary investigation than during the public trial, and that the verdict was a foregone conclusion. The trial itself served as a means to emphasise the strict legality of the proceeding and to draw the widest possible attention to those aspects of the case which the Soviet authorities wished to impress upon the public both in the Soviet Union and abroad.

5. The trial was held in the main theatre of Kharkov by the Military Tribunal of the Fourth Ukrainian Front. Major-General of Justice Myasnikov, assisted by two military jurists, presided over the proceedings. The prosecutor was Colonel of Justice Dunayev. In accordance with normal criminal procedure, each of the accused was defended by a Soviet lawyer appointed by the court. Admission to the court-room, packed each day with spectators, was by way of tickets, valid for one session only, issued through trade union and other organizations. Loudspeakers and arc-lamps were installed in the auditorium and a film was made of the trial. Certain foreign journalists from Moscow were admitted to the last day of the court proceedings and witnessed the execution of the accused. The interrogation of the accused was conducted in such a way as to show that their individual crimes were part of a grandiose German plan for the extermination of Soviet citizens in the occupied areas. The President of the Court and the State Prosecutor, who conducted almost the whole cross-examination (the defendants played a very minor role), induced the accused to confirm the following important statements regarding German malpractices: The Germans had manufactured false charges against Soviet prisoners of war and subsequently shot the persons so accused. They had tortured prisoners of war and persons visiting them in order to extract false confessions. They had interned civilians in the same camps as prisoners of war. They had left the inmates of these camps to die from hunger and lack of medical treatment. They had allowed prisoners to make fires during the black-out and then fired on those who gathered round to warm themselves. They had robbed prisoners of war of anything valuable in their possession. They had set dogs on to attack them. They had followed a policy of exterminating Soviet citizens as a means of establishing German hegemony. With this end in view they had made use of 'gas vans,' in which batches of about fifty people could be suffocated while they were being transported from their prisons to a common grave. They had shot tens of thousands of men, women and children in the Kharkov province as part of the same policy. In some of these mass executions, in which they showed the greatest barbarity, they had buried people alive and particularly children. In December 1941 they had murdered about 435 patients in a Kharkov hospital. In March 1940 [evidently a typo] *they had shot or burned alive some 800 wounded Red Army men in another Kharkov hospital.*

7. The witnesses, who were called after the accused had been cross-examined, included three German prisoners of war. They described some of the atrocities in which the defendants were alleged to have taken part. Their statements, which

had an atmosphere of reality absent from the replies of the accused, were at times horrifying in the extreme.
8. The defendants did not deny any of the charges preferred against them and, in accordance with the tradition of important Soviet public trials, they confirmed and amplified the accusations of the prosecutor. Their readiness to subscribe to statements placed in their mouths by the Public Prosecutor was used to bring charges against the German High Command, the German Government and the German nation. The High Command was accused of observing no legal forms on the Eastern Front and encouraging German officers to violate the requirement of international law relating to the treatment of Soviet civilians and prisoners of war. The German Government was accused of training special troops in the methods to be employed for the massacre of Soviet citizens. The German people was accused of having allowed itself to become accustomed, thanks to National-Socialist propaganda, to the idea that the population of the Soviet Union should be exterminated.
9. The sole excuse which the defendants advanced to justify their crimes was the plea that they were acting under the orders of their superiors. Although disallowed as an argument exonerating the defendants from blame, this plea was used by the court as evidence that the German High Command was largely responsible for the Kharkov atrocities.
10. On the 18th December, after every witness had been heard and the counsels for the prosecution and the defence had stated their cases, the Military Tribunal condemned all four accused to death by hanging. The execution took place on the following day in the main square at Kharkov before a crowd of some forty thousand people. I am informed by an American correspondent who witnessed the event that a murmur of approval went up from this vast concourse when the criminals were hanged.
11. The Soviet press and radio gave the widest publicity to the affair. From the 16th to 20th December all newspapers devoted their centre pages to reports on the proceedings. Most Moscow newspapers of the 16th, 20th and 21st December published leading articles by the best-known authors of the Soviet Union who were present in the court-room as eye-witnesses of the trial. Verbatim reports of the proceedings were broadcast in Russian and in foreign languages. During the first days of the trial revolting photographs of corpses in the common graves round Kharkov appeared beneath the press accounts of the proceedings. Nothing was overlooked which might serve to inflame public indignation. […]
18. It would seem probable that the self-confessions of the accused Germans in this instance, which struck a somewhat artificial note in the proceeding, arose from the fact that, out of a number of miscreants under detention, the authorities had selected for public arraignment those individuals who were most disposed to make whatever reply was expected to the questions put to them. I learn from The Times *correspondent that one of the attorneys for the defence informed him that the prisoners had never seriously expected that they would be condemned to death. They had supposed that the trial had been staged as an elaborate piece of propaganda and that, once they had discharged their role as the principal actors, they would be permitted to return to the camps from whence they had come."*

On 30 December 1943, the Canadian legation at Moscow sent the Secretary of State for External Affairs at Ottawa a record of the trial. The following is a summary of the most important points:[686]

> *"2. It will be noticed that the main facts constituting guilt were established before the trial began by preliminary investigations, and that all four accused pleaded guilty and fully admitted their responsibility. Indeed in the course of the trial the accused seemed remarkably willing to make the most damaging admissions regarding their previous activities, and to supply details of atrocities committed by themselves and their colleagues. In this matter there is a striking similarity between this trial and the main 'purge' trials held in Moscow in 1937-1938.* […]
> *3. Certain members of the diplomatic corps in Moscow are of the opinion that the reported behavior of the accused at the trials was 'psychologically impossible' and that the trials or reports must have been faked in some manner. On the other hand most of the diplomats and the foreign newspapers correspondents (many of whom attended the latter half of the trials) have no doubts whatever about the facts brought out in the* [Kharkov] *trial or the accuracy of the verbatim reports of the proceedings. The correspondents who attended the trial say that the accused showed no sign of any ill treatment and their behavior appeared quite voluntary throughout. Bulanov, the Russian, who was a man of very limited intelligence and little character, was the only one of the prisoners who showed signs of being at all aware of his probable fate, the three Germans apparently being convinced that somehow or other they would get off.*
> *4. It is quite clear, however, that the trial was carefully prepared for propaganda purposes in the sense that the four accused must have been selected after a careful sifting of thousands of other possible prisoners as those whose behavior at the public hearings would be most in line with what the Soviet authorities desired. The dramatic feature that three of the accused represented three distinct generations of Germans and the fourth a Russian 'quisling' is an obvious illustration of this. Moreover in the case of these four each one of them admitted his guilt, and further there were available a number of witnesses, both German and Russian, so that at no time was the court faced with the problem of choosing between the word of a Russian and the word of a German."*

The verdict of the Military Tribunal of 15-18 December 1943 established that

> *"During the temporary occupation of the city of Kharkov and Kharkov Region, the German-fascist invaders had shot, hung, burned alive and poisoned by carbon monoxide gas more than 30,000 peaceful completely innocent citizens, including women, old people and children.* […]
> *The German-fascist invaders used the so-called 'gazenwagens' – large enclosed trucks – for the mass killing of Soviet citizens. (The Russians called them 'dushegubki', i.e. murdergas vans.) The German-fascist invaders forced Soviet citizens into these gas vans and suffocated them by filling the vehicles with a special deadly gas – carbon monoxide.*

[686] *ibid.*, p. 21.

> *With the purport of covering up the traces of their monstruous crimes and mass extermination of Soviet people by way of poisoning them with carbon monoxide in the 'gazenwagens', the German-fascist criminals burned the bodies of their victims."* (Denisov/Changuli, pp. 280f.)

The cremations at Kharkov are pure fantasy even from an orthodox Holocaust point of view, but they have a precise propagandistic function: they exonerate the Soviet legal-medical experts from the necessity of inventing an expert report on the bodies of the alleged gassing victims. A year later, in 1994, the propagandistic technique changed somewhat; in the case of Rovno, as I have documented earlier (see p. 409), the legal-medical experts pretended to have discovered the "proof" of the gassings in the "*gazenwagens*," that is, a mass grave containing 2,000 perfectly intact bodies, months after burial in the mass grave, so much so that the experts were able to state that "the skin of all corpses was of bright pink color"!

8.4.4. Soviet Photographs

The *Ghetto Fighters House Archives* contain two photographs of rather poor quality which are said to show a mass grave at the place of execution, Drobitsky Ravine. The documents show clear signs of having been retouched to make some of the skulls show more clearly. The first shows a section of a pit full of human skeletons (see Document II.8.8.). The second is an image taken closer up (see Document II.8.9.).

The documentary *The Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine*, produced by the Soviets in October 1943, referred to by Karel C. Berkhoff, was broadcast by the Italian TV station RAI 3 on 28 August 2010 and is available online.[687] Documents II.8.10. through II.8.17. show stills taken form that broadcast. All these stills, as far as one can tell, probably relate to the same site.

First, I wish to state that Document II.8.13. appears in the book already cited several times (Denisov/Changuli, photographic insert between pp. 352 and 353) with the following caption:

> *"The excavation of a grave in Babi Yar in Kiev where thousands of Soviet citizens had been shot by the Hitlerites, Kiev, 1944."*

Documents II.8.11. and II.8.13, as indicated earlier, are also attributed to Babi Yar by E. Klee and W. Dreßen. Document II.8.11. is captioned with "Babiy Yar, Ukraine. Corpses in a mass grave" in the Yad Vashem photo archives.[688]

The first thing to note is that there is no proof that the mass grave shown in the stills was located at the Drobitsky Ravine, and there is no proof that the bodies are those of Jews – quite to the contrary: As shown by the photographs, the victims were dressed; in Document II.8.16, a Soviet physician in a white coat looks at an ID card taken from a body lying stretched out in front of him, apparently in uniform. It is therefore much more probable that the victim is a POW, although it

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[687] Ukraine 1943 (7/8) "Битва за нашу Советскую Украину" ("The Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine"): www.youtube.com/watch?v=4agw5_oiwUw.

[688] YVA, Digital Collections, Archival Signature 4221/5.

is not impossible that the victims were some of the Poles murdered by the NKVD. The fact that no children's bodies are seen seems to argue against the hypothesis of Jewish victims. It is true that the images are not clear enough to exclude it categorically, nevertheless, the only two frames taken close up clearly show adult bodies. If the grave had contained children's bodies, the Soviet film maker would not have failed to include them to document the bestial atrocities of the "German-fascist invaders," and this is particularly true for the "60 children and infants" or "19 children and adolescents" allegedly exhumed and subjected to forensic examination.

The grave depicted in all the photographs is apparently the only mass grave discovered by the Soviets, since no others are shown, not even fleetingly.

From the images we deduce that the grave was no more than three meters wide; as for the length, it is true that it is never shown in its entirety, but Document II.8.12. is taken more or less from the center of one end of the grave. Although this end is not visible in the photograph, the photographer taking this picture, and thus the grave's end, must have been just a few meters away from the bodies. In this image, in the line arranged along the right edge of the grave, we can count about thirty bodies. This order of magnitude is confirmed by the fact that in Document II.8.13., along this edge, there are 14 persons standing next to each other for almost the entire length of the grave. From this we can establish that the visible length of the grave was about 20-25 meters in total, and some 30 meters when including the part not appearing in the photo. Even assuming a depth of three meters, the grave could contain maybe some (30 m × 3 m × 3 m × 3.5 bodies/m³ =) 945 bodies. This order of magnitude is simply risible compared to the numbers and dimensions of the graves and the number of bodies declared by the Soviets: After all, they had spoken of two graves, the first of which was said to have measured 100 m × 18-20 m and the second 60 m × 20 m; in addition, there had been another 13 graves whose dimensions were not mentioned. The total number of victims the Soviets had put at 15,000 or even 33,000.

The case of Kharkov therefore constitutes another confirmation of the total unreliability of Soviet statements relating to the discovery of mass graves with corpses of victims of the Germans. In case additional proof for this is needed, it should be recalled that, according to the Soviets, 10,000 to 20,000 Jews were killed in Kharkov and its surroundings, but their remains were never discovered. And no one claims that the Germans cremated these 10,000 to 20,000 corpses before their departure.

8.5. Bobruisk

Therkel Stræde, a researcher from the University of Southern Denmark, has devoted an article to the Germans' victims of Bobruisk, in Byelorussia. He recalls the largest massacre of Jews ever committed in this locality (Stræde, p. 25):

> *"It was conducted on 5-7 November 1941. Members of the German Einsatzkommando 8 and Police Battalion 316 aided by mainly Ukrainian-staffed auxiliary*

police murdered Jewish men, women and children – a total of 5,281, as the SS officer in charge proudly reported to the Einsatzgruppe B headquarters after the action."

In EM No. 148 dated 19 December 1941, the report from *Einsatzgruppe* B reports as follows (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 889):

"As results from confidential reports, the Jews of Bobruisk, following the withdrawal of the partial unit, instantly became active again. Some of them stopped wearing the required Jewish insignia, there were increased cases of refusal to work, connections to partisans were detected and finally also a provocative attitude towards members of the German occupation forces. To prevent these Jewish machinations, which are a serious threat to public security and order, the severest measures had to be taken. By carrying out a special operation, a total of 5,281 Jews of both sexes were shot. The City of Bobruisk and its close vicinity are free of Jews."

The author appeals to "Activity and Situation Report No. 8 of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the Security Police and the SD in the USSR" relating to December 1941 and published by P. Klein (Stræde, fn 5, p. 36), although this appears to be a simple summary of the text of EM No. 148 (Klein 1997, p. 268), so that no one knows whence Stræde got the date 5-7 November 1941.

The preceding reports mention executions on a smaller scale, but only partially of Jews: EM No. 67 dated 29 August 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 377):

"Among others, an NKGB informant could be liquidated in Bobruisk who has some 200 persons on his conscience according to witness testimony. A number of Jews who created unrest among the population by spreading rumors were also shot."

EM No. 92 dated 23 September 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 546):

"A number of Jewish members of the Communist Party were also arrested in Bobruisk, among them a Jewish medical corpsman who, according to his own confession, had poisoned two wounded German officers and 4 wounded German soldiers. […] *In total, more than 600 persons were arrested by the squad of EK 8 in Bobruisk and surroundings. 407 of these persons were liquidated."*

EM No. 108 dated 9 October 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 662):

"In Bobruisk and surroundings, a total of 1,380 persons were liquidated during the reporting period, including 20 shot while attempting to escape."

EM No. 124 dated 25 October 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 732):

"In Bobruisk, a squad of EK 8 executed another 418 persons during the reporting period."

Adding these numbers together results in a total of a little over 7,500 victims. Stræde claims two other massacres of Jews (Stræde, p. 26):

"The November 5-7 massacre was not the first mass killing the Germans carried out in Bobruisk. Previously, on 5 August 1941, it seems, Sonderkommando 7b – a forerunner of Einsatzkommando 8 – conducted one on the same spot. The victims

> *were 250-800 Jewish able-bodied men (testimony differs) who had been selected on the pretext of having to do out-of-town forced labour."*

This alleged execution, however, is not mentioned in any document, and must therefore be considered fictitious. The author then speaks of the second alleged massacre (*ibid.*):

> *"So a second large-scale massacre was conducted at a different location on 30-31 December 1941 which killed another 5-7,000 Jews and left only a few hundred Jewish craftsmen as well as some hidden Jews alive in Bobruisk, a city which in 1939 was home to more than 26,000 Jews, equalling one third of the total population."*

Here again, there is no reference to documents. The author does not even wonder where these 5,000-6,000 Jews came from, since Bobruisk had been declared "free of Jews" no later than 19 December.

Henning Herbert Pieper asserts that the alleged massacre of 7,000 Jews "has not been documented at the time and could only recently be reconstructed by historical research," but the author dates it to 4-9 September 1941 (Pieper, p. 174). Arad writes succinctly (Arad 2009, p. 187):

> *"According to some sources, about 7,000 Jews were murdered in September 1941 by the SS Cavalry Brigade."*

As source, he adduces two articles (*ibid.*, fn 17, p. 570):

> *"Gerlach, 'German Economic Interests,'* [p.] *221; Büchler, 'Kommandostab RFSS: Himmler's Personal Murder Brigades in 1941,' relates to the murder in Bobruisk carried out by SS Cavalry Brigade."*

In the article cited by Arad, Gerlach makes an extremely fleeting reference to the execution of "7,500 [Jews] in Bobruisk" by the SS Cavalry Brigade, with reference to yet another article (Gerlach 2000, p. 221, and fn 57, p. 235).

Arad's second source, an article by Yehoshua Büchler contains this brief mention (Büchler, p. 16):

> *"Another type of auxiliary activity of the SS brigades can be seen in the murder of 7000 Jews at Bobruisk, where the special brigades provided the execution squads, while* Einsatzgruppen *units concentrated the Jews and brought them to the execution site, and the army provided the transportation."*

One would expect a reference to some document to back this up, but in reality, the only reference is as follows (*ibid.*, fn 51, p. 23):

> *"The murder of the Jews in Bobruisk by the SS Cavalry Brigade is described in Karla Miller-Tupath* [recte: Müller-Tupath], Reichsführers gehorsamster Becher *(Fulda, 1982), p. 62. The description is based upon the testimonies of the men who took part in this massacre."*

The SS Cavalry Brigade formed part of the *Kommandostab Reichsführer* SS and consisted of SS Cavalry Regiments 1 and 2 which were combined on 2 September 1941.

The "War Diary No. 1" of *Kommandostab*-RFSS, which covers the period from 16 June to 31 December 1941, summarizes the reports from all subordinate

units, therefore including the SS Cavalry Brigade, but does not contain any mention of the shooting of Jews at Bobruisk; not even the city itself is mentioned.

Therefore, as so often before, one orthodox Holocaust historian has copied claims from another, but at the end it turns out that the entire incestuous citation cartel does not refer to any document, but to simple testimonies.

Another massacre, according to Stræde, concerned Soviet POWs. In the related chapter titled "The 8 November 1941 Massacre of Soviet Prisoners-of-War," he asserts (Stræde, p. 30):

> *"Here the number of victims is uncertain, but it probably exceeds 4,000 on this single day. Subsequently, the dead bodies, or at least some of them, were stripped of clothes to be given to other prisoners and buried elsewhere in the citadel area."*

Therefore, the mass graves at Bobruisk should have contained at least 12,750 bodies, if we follow orthodox Holocaust historiography. The most important aspect of Stræde's article concerns the mass graves. In this regard, he writes (*ibid.*, p. 25):

> *"A map sketch drawn in January 1945 by a Soviet war crimes commission that investigated the atrocities committed by the Germans during their three years' rule in Bobruisk shows the location of the mass graves 400 meters off the main road between Bobruisk and Slutsk next to the village of Kamenka. The map is not accurate and not all buildings were marked."*

The Yad Vashem Archives are in possession of a copy of the drawing showing four mass graves,[689] one measuring 50 m × 3 m × 3 m = 450 m³, the other three 6 m × 4 m × 3 m = 72 m³, for a total of 666 m³, which according to this drawing are said to have contained 10,600 bodies. Assuming a cover layer of 20 cm (= some 44 m³), this would amount to a packing density of about (10,600 bodies ÷ 622 m³ =) 17 bodies per cubic meter! From the above we may deduce the reliability of this drawing.

Stræde cites the testimony of a certain Pavel Fomichenko, who, in January 1944, made the following statement before the above-mentioned commission (Stræde, pp. 25f.):

> *"I know of a site of mass murder of innocent Soviet citizens. The site is nine kilometers from the city of Bobruysk, 400 meters right of the road. For a few days before the killings, Russian prisoners of war dug three pits forty to fifty meters long, three meters wide and up to three meters deep. After a few days, the Germans brought the innocent citizens of Bobruysk there in closed trucks, and killed them on the spot. On the third day of the murders, I visited the site and saw the pits filled with bodies."*

Even if the data only fit together in part (there were three large graves measuring 40 to 50 m × 3 m × 3 m, instead of just one; in this fragment of the deposition a fourth grave is not mentioned), it seems that the drawing was redacted by Fomichenko, or by the commission on his instructions, as a simple sketch of the loca-

[689] YVA, JM/2000.

tion of the mass graves, rather than as the product of a real forensic examination of exhumations, of which nothing else is known.

Stræde also mentions a "*Sonderaktion* 1005 in Bobruisk" in 1943, but without saying anything precise. Orthodox Holocaust sources are in fact particularly arbitrary in this regard. Spector, the primary source, limits himself to stating (Spector 1990b, pp. 165f.):

> *"Thus, the bodies of the Jews of Bobruisk and the surrounding district were burned in autumn of 1943 and the beginning of 1944,"*

and this is all, without even a reference!

Hoffmann, for his part, concerns himself with the matter in a footnote, referring simply to Spector. He notes correctly that the Israeli historian writes "without source references" (Hoffmann, fn 18, p. 144).

Stræde then analyzes the few photographs of the mass graves at Bobruisk:

> *"The Yad Vashem photo archive in Jerusalem holds a number of photos depicting the victims of the massacre as well as the everyday mass death by starvation and random violence by guards that occurred in the* Dulag 131 *POW camp of Bobruisk during Autumn 1941. Originally the photos were ascribed to the Kamenka massacre of the Jews of Bobruisk, but the fact that they display only dead bodies of men of military age, and that almost all of them are in a state of extreme emaciation, convinced the Yad Vashem archivists that the photos actually depict victims of the POW camp."* (Stræde, p. 30)

He supplies an accurate description of the first photograph, which bears as reference Yad Vashem Photo Archive 143B03 (see Document II.8.18). The photograph shows "some fifty or more dead bodies," which are compatible with the disastrous situation of the POW camp complex at Bobruisk in 1941, with a very high mortality rate due to starvation, hardship and killings (*ibid.*, pp. 30f.).

Although, as the author says, the photograph only shows part of the grave (in reality, the bodies are lying on a grassy surface) and his body estimate is generous, the general order of magnitude of victims deducible from this photo could be at most in the hundreds, certainly not thousands.

Stræde continues:

> *"A second photo from the same series has obviously been taken close to the first spot and displays more or less the same topographic character.* […] *The photo most probably depicts an intermediate stage between the immediate disposal of the bodies and their burial in mass graves."* (*ibid*., p. 31)

The related photograph is reproduced in Document II.8.19 in the Appendix. Here as well, the order of magnitude might be in the hundreds, but certainly not thousands.

Stræde then describes the last photograph (*ibid.*):

> *"A third photo depicts the burial itself. A larger number of similarly dressed POWs – some wearing fur hats commonly used by members of the Red Army – gather at the rim of a 3-4 meters deep and 2-3 meters wide mass grave that*

> *stretches 5-10 meters or more from the far end of the photo towards the camera standpoint."*

And in fact, the grave that we see in the photograph reproduced here as Document II.8.20. has roughly these dimensions.

But what about the graves with the bodies of Jews? No doubt these were not found by the Soviets. On the other hand, Holocaust historiography knows nothing about their elimination by any *Sonderkommando* 1005.

Stræde then offers us a bit of information of a certain interest (*ibid.*, p. 34):

> *"In 1964, during excavations to the foundations of what is today the Belshina Tire factory in Jeloviki/Bobruisk, remnants of what turned out to be several mass graves were discovered. At this site the Germans had conducted a number of mass killings, mainly of Soviet POWs. A local Jewish man, Meïr Zeliger, managed to gather a group of volunteers and get permission to exhume the bodily remains and move the skulls and bones to Kamenka where a modest memorial had been established early after the war. Here they were reburied in the mass graves where Jews had been buried in 1941, and which* Aktion 1005 *had emptied in 1943 and refilled with their ashes. A picture from a private photo album of his own shows Meïr Zeliger in the middle of this reburial work that was barely tolerated, and only much later recognised, by the Communist authorities."*

The associated photograph is shown in Document II.8.21. Here we see six or seven sacks full of skulls and other bones. Where are the bodies of the 12,750 Jews murdered at Bobruisk?

The Soviet investigatory commission which studied the "misdeeds of the German-fascist invaders and their lackeys" in the Bobruisk Oblast, declared:

> *"For the purpose of concealing the traces of their misdeeds, the German bandits, over the course of the autumn of 1943 and at the beginning of 1944, exhumed the bodies buried by the place of mass execution in the villages of Kamenka, Eloviki and others, and also along the periphery of Bobruisk, placed the bodies in stacks and under threat of death forced Soviet prisoners to burn them, then destroyed the prisoners as well. Not having enough time to effect the cremation of all the bodies, the Hitlerites scrupulously camouflaged the graves, building roads over them, sowing grain crops over them, etc."* (Beluga, p. 328)

There is not a single witness statement about the burning of the corpses. From this one can only conclude that the Germans had indeed "scrupulously camouflaged" the graves so well, because otherwise the Soviets would certainly have discovered them...

8.6. The Brest Ghetto and the Bronnaya Gora "Extermination Site"

John and Carroll Garrard assert that the biggest execution of Operation Barbarossa occurred at Brest-Litovsk on 10 July 1941. Their reconstruction of the event is based on the "eyewitness testimony of a serviceman in the 307 Police Battalion, named Heinrich [Meier], who provided escort and supporting services to the

shooters" (Garrard, p. 19). Regarding the number of victims, the witness first spoke of 10,000, then 6,000 (*ibid.*, pp. 21f.).

With reference to Brest, Arad writes that

> *"in late June and early July, about 5,000 Jews were arrested and taken to the Kotelna suburb, where they were murdered by Sonderkommando 7b and Police Battalion 307. According to a policeman who participated in the action, 'The site of the executions was south of Brest-Litovsk… Some 6,000 Jewish men were shot… The action ended at 4 p.m… The Jews in question went to their destiny in stoic silence and heroic behavior.'"* (Arad 2009, p. 163)

He does not indicate the source, but it is evidently taken from the same witness as mentioned above, Heinrich Meier.

Gerlach states on the same topic that

> *"4,000 to 6,000 Jewish men roughly between 19 and 60 years of age were arrested, collected and driven to the pre-arranged execution site in trucks during a big raid on 6 July and during the following night by parts of the 162nd Infantry Division and by the 307th Police Battalion, which had arrived in the city three days before."*

The first source mentioned in the associated footnote is a reference to the "testimony Heinrich M.[eier]" (Gerlach 1999, p. 547). Always the same witness!

Nevertheless, EM No. 32 dated 24 July 1941 reports:

> *"With support from local deployment squads, the police liquidated 4,435 persons in Brest-Litovsk. Among them were 408 Russians and Byelorussians."* (Mallmann 2011 *et al*., p. 171)

The murdered Jews therefore numbered 4,026. If there were 408 "Russians and Byelorussians" among the victims, and if those selected were between 19 and 60 years of age, the execution must have been motivated by security considerations.

Browning describes the context as follows:

> *"Police Battalion 307, under the command of Major Stahr, arrived in Brest on July 2, and 2 days later, Major General Stubenrauch established himself as local military commandant (Feldkommandantur 184). On July 5, both Stahr and Stubenrauch sent alarming reports concerning the very insecure situation in and around Brest. There were many Soviet soldiers still roaming the area, the citadel and city still had to be cleared of weapons and ammunition, and both warehouses and some 500-600 train cars in the railyard were loaded with valuable goods that needed to be guarded."* (Browning 2000, p. 119)

On 7 July, Rear-Security Division 221 forwarded the following request to the Higher SS and Police leader Russia Center:

> *"Field HQ 184 in Brest reports that it had called on a company of the 307th Motorized Police Battalion, which was billeted in Brest, for assistance in the cleansing operation in Brest. The Division requests retroactive approval for this."*

Approval was granted by von dem Bach-Zelewski the next day (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, pp. 178f., fn 6).

The West-German judiciary outlined the story of the event based on the testimony of ex-members of the 307th Battalion, among them that same Heinrich Meier. It is documented that this battalion reached Brest on 3 July 1941 from Biała Podlaska, and was transferred to Baranowicze (Baranovichi) on 18 July. Based on the testimonies, the most-probable date of the shooting was the 13th. Twelve mass graves 10 meters long, 2.5 meters wide and 3-4 meters deep, each of which could contain 600 bodies, were dug for this purpose. Regarding the number of victims, we read in the final report of the pre-trial investigation that "the statements of participants in the shootings as to the total number of persons shot during these actions range from 6,000 to 10,000."[690]

It does not appear that any *Sonderkommando* 1005 ever concerned itself with these twelve mass graves, nor that they were ever discovered by the Soviets.

The mass graves must have been even more numerous, because *Einsatzgruppe* z.b.V. shot 769 persons in the second half of August 1941 at Brest-Litovsk, according to EM No. 66 of 28 August 1941 (Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 364).

When the Brest Ghetto was set up at the end of 1941, the Germans adopted a most-unusual procedure described by John and Carroll Garrard as follows:

> *"And indeed the authorities did go to a considerable amount of trouble in issuing papers (with photographs) to all Jews fourteen years of age or older before ordering them to move into the ghetto. The process of issuing identity papers and photos began on 10 November 1941. Polish clerks took down each person's name in a ledger of over 560 pages, adding his or her date of birth and parents' names. Then each person signed acknowledging receipt of an ID, which included a photo and finger print of the holder. Even after Jews living in Brest had been issued their photo IDs and entered the ghetto, the authorities continued to issue the identity papers at increasing intervals until 5 June 1942."* (Garrard, p. 27)

The authors of the article correctly note that this procedure was a reassuring one:

> *"Why would the Germans order the Poles to create such a ledger – carefully ticking off each line when the pass had been signed for – if the people so methodically listed were to be annihilated?"* (*Ibid.*, p. 28)

Andrea Simon comments, with equal clarity (Simon, p. 169):

> *"The documents of the German administration between 1941 and 1942 provide evidence of the political attitude towards the Jews. From the beginning of the occupation, Jews were given special IDs and recorded by the Germans. This 'passport registration book' lists 12,260 Jews, including teenagers born before 1928, who were living in the ghetto from November 10, 1941, to June 5, 1942. This is the list of Jews known to have been taken from the Brest ghetto to Brona Gora."*

The ledger was not destroyed by the Germans and still exists today; according to John and Carroll Garrard, it contains 12,465 names (Garrard, p. 28).

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690 "*Abschlußbericht. Das Polizeibataillon 307 und seine Teilnahme an Judenerschiessungen und Judenaktionen im Osten, insbes. in Brest-Litowsk.*" YVA, O.54-41, pp. 115-123, text cited on p. 123.

On a list of almost 9,800 of these names (a little over 9,000 of them give the year of birth), registered over the period from 10 November 1941 to 5 June 1942, 932 were aged 65 or older, falling into the following age groups:

Year of birth	Age	Number of persons
1872-1876	66-70 years	397
1867-1871	71-75 years	309
1862-1866	76-80 years	152
1857-1861	81-85 years	57
1852-1856	86-90 years	14
1850-1851	91-92 years	3
	Total:	932

In the ghetto, there were, moreover, 380 boys aged 15 (year of birth: 1927), 128 aged 14 years (1928), 4 aged 13 years (1929), 1 aged 12 (1930), 1 aged 11 (1931), 1 aged 10 (1932) and 2 aged 9 (1933) (Chernoglazova 1997, pp. 274-378).

The original ghetto was called the "Big Ghetto" (Bolshoye getto), while the area added later was referred to as the "Small Ghetto" (Maloye getto). According to Arad, the two ghettos housed 18,000-20,000 Jews in the spring of 1942 (Arad 2009, p. 267).

Based on the surviving documents, the number of Jews at work during that time, although constantly growing, was relatively small: 4,956 in January 1942, 5,490 in February, 5,843 in March, 6,722 in April, 7,248 in May. On 5 June, there were 7,994 Jews working, including 1,571 "qualified personnel," 1,384 manual laborers and 5,039 women and boys (Garrard, p. 31).

Andrea Simon writes that "the statistics report for the Brest town council on the distribution of provisions indicates that from March 24, 1942, to April 23, 1942, four bakeries served 17,724 Jews from the ghetto" (Simon, p. 170). If the working Jews over these two months amounted to 5,843 and 6,722 respectively, the "useless eaters" in the two ghettos amounted to between 62 and 67% of the total. Why were these Jews kept alive for all these months in the two ghettos?

Another enigma concerns the liquidation of the ghetto, since it is not known which German authority would have ordered the shooting of its inhabitants, and for what reason. At any rate, to carry out the shootings, the Bronnaya Gora site on the Brest-Litovsk railway line, 147 km from Brest, is said to have been selected. Nothing is known about this decision or this choice.

The number of (actual or alleged) victims is drawn from the population-movement register of Brest kept by the Brest City Hall. In an entry for 15 October 1942, the total population is shown as 41,091 persons, including 16,934 Jews. This figure was later crossed out, because the Jews had "departed." John and Carroll Garrard moreover inform us that

> *"according to documents in the Brest archives, from late June to November 1942 a total of seven trains transported Jews to be executed at Bronnaya Gora. Three*

> *of these trains are said to have carried people from Brest – two trains consisting of 40 and 13 cars in July, and a third consisting of 28 cars in October. How many Jews from Brest ghetto were transported in the three trains? If we say that close to 200 people were crushed into each car, then we arrive at a total of 8,000 people in the first train, 2,600 in the second, and 5,600 in the third,"* (Garrard, p. 33)

and the sum total – 16,200 persons – is practically identical to the total number of "departed" Jews, 16,934. But why were these latter removed from the Brest population register all together on 15 October 1942? John and Carroll Garrard hypothesize that "the SS Commandant did not confide in the Polish clerks but waited until the final liquidation of the ghetto and the third and last train had departed, then ordered that the figure for all Jews in the ghetto be erased" (*ibid.*, p. 33, fn 45), but this explanation is not very plausible. First of all, as Andrea Simon has discovered, statistical reports existed on the distribution of provisions on the basis of which the bakeries in the cities supplied the Jews with bread, so that, if there had been a decrease in the ghetto population of (8,000 + 2,600 =) 10,600 Jews in July, the Polish clerks would have noticed it immediately. In the second place, as we shall soon see, the reports from the 310th Police Battalion, which participated in the operation, mentioned exclusively October 15 and 16, 1942. It is therefore certain that the roughly 16,000 Jews in the ghetto of Brest were all evacuated in October, while only 5,600 were taken to Bronnaya Gora, if we follow John and Carroll Garrard's hypothesis. But then, where did the others go?

Edward B. Westermann supplies further information in this regard in relation to the activity of the 11th Company of the 3rd Police Regiment 15 (310th Police Battalion; Westermann, p. 58):

> *"The report also indicates that 'all available men from the company were detailed to a special action (Sonderaktion) in the city of Brest' on October 15. The report further states that the company returned from the 'special mission' (Sondereinsatz) on October 16. What the report fails to mention is that on October 15 and 16 police and auxiliary units summarily executed thousands of Jews in the Brest ghetto. Additionally, between 10,000 and 15,000 Jews were taken to the train station for transportation to execution sites in the area of Brona-Gora."*

The "report" in question, according to the related footnote, is the "Lage- und Tätigkeitsbericht der 11. Pol. 15 für die Zeit vom 12. bis 18.10.42" (*ibid.*, p. 67, fn 98). The entries cited by Westermann are as follows:[691]

– 15 October: "All available forces of the company were sent to Brest to carry out a special operation";
– 16 October: "The company returned from the special deployment Brest around 18.00 hours." This entry continues as follows: "In Chernyany, a Jew was arrested who had been caught without identity documents. The Jew was shot."

[691] YVA, O.53-13.1. This set contains copies of volume 412 of the Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltung von Ludwigsburg, USSR Collection, the source indicated by Westermann.

It is difficult to imagine that the author of the report, *Hauptmann* Pohls, after allegedly having shot thousands of Jews at Brest without saying a word, felt himself compelled to refer explicitly to the shooting of one single Jew.

The "War Diary" of the 310th Police Battalion (see Part One, Subchapter 1.5.) says explicitly:[692]

– 15 October: "The Battalion is deployed at Brest to evacuate the ghetto";
– 16 October: "A total of 16,000 Jews are being evacuated during the deployment in Brest."

There is also a "Activity and Situation Report for the time between 12 and 18 October 1942" headed "10./Pol. 15," hence issued by the 10th Police Battalion. The following entry concerns Brest:[693]

– 15 October: "The company was deployed in an operation at Brest-Litovsk within the framework of the Battalion";
– 16 October: "A part of the forces deployed for the operation in Brest-Litovsk returned to the bases today";
– 17 October: "The rest of the men returned from the operation in Brest-Litovsk today."

Finally, the "Situation Report of the District Police Leader Brest-Litovsk to the Police Commander in Lutsk" dated 8 Nov. 1942 states:

> *"The Jewish operation was carried out in Brest-Litovsk on 15 and 16 Oct. 42. Subsequently the complete resettlement of the Jews in the county area of Brest-Litovsk took place as well. In total, 20,000 Jews are said to have been resettled by now. The population of Brest-Litovsk has been reduced from 52,000 to 33,000 as a result of the Jewish operation."* (Hoppe, Doc. 221, p. 533)

In practice, there is no documentary evidence that the 16,934 Jews from the ghetto of Brest were shot.

It would be very useful to obtain detailed information on train traffic to Bronnaya Gora between June and November 1942: are these German documents? Are the precise departure dates indicated? If only three transports out of seven departed from Brest, where did the other four come from and who were the passengers? Incredibly, John and Carroll Garrard are completely uninterested in these essential questions.

According to the *Black Book*, to which I will return later, "from June to November 1942, the Germans shot more than thirty thousand peaceful Soviet citizens in the area of Bronnaya Gora" (Ehrenburg/Grossman 2002, p. 180).

Gerlach cites a Bronnaya Gora Investigative Report dated 15 September 1944 which speaks of 50,000 victims (Gerlach 1999, fn 1194, p. 723). Nevertheless, the extermination site of Bronnaya Gora is practically unknown to orthodox Holocaust historians.

Lucyna Radlo dedicates a little over 10 lines to the matter (Radlo, p. 99):

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[692] YVA, O.52-12.2, p. 385.
[693] YVA, O.53-14, p. 109.

> *"Early in the morning on October 15, 1942, Nazi soldiers surrounded the Brest Ghetto. The entire population of the ghetto was rounded up at gunpoint, loaded into cattle cars and transported to Bereza Kartuska (a town northeast of Brest). Groups of Jewish men, women and children were unloaded and marched to an area (Bronnaya Gora) where a huge, long trench had been prepared. At the edge of the trench the people were ordered to disrobe. Naked, they were then pushed into the trench and machine gunned by the Nazi soldiers who surrounded them. The killings went on all day, trainload by trainload, and it is estimated that 50,000 Jews were shot and buried that day."*

It is not clear how this description can be reconciled with the three trains mentioned by John and Carroll Garrard and the eight mass graves allegedly discovered by the Soviets.

In Petra Rentrop's discussion of the "extermination sites" in Byelorussia, she deals with Bronnaya Gora in the following terms (Rentrop, pp. 384f.):

> *"Another extermination site in occupied Byelorussia was the railway station of Bronnaya Gora near Bereza-Kartuska on the rail line between Brest-Litovsk and Baranovichi. Here, hitherto unknown German agencies built a sort of 'killing infrastructure' (Christian Gerlach) in May and June 1942: local residents were forced to dig enormous pits.*
>
> *The path from the railway station to these pre-arranged mass graves was allegedly fenced off with barbed wire. Between June and November 1942, at least 30,000, and possibly 50,000 people were brought in freight cars to Bronnaya Gora and shot there. Victims were Jews from Brest-Litovsk, furthermore a part of the Jewish residents of Kobrin, Antopol and Bereza-Kartuska. Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto were possibly among the victims as well. To date, it is uncertain whether the Brest-Litovsk branch office of the commander of the security police was in charge in Bronnaya Gora or the deployment staff of the police commander in Kobrin, and which agency provided the execution squad."*

Longerich limits himself to stating (Longerich 2010, p. 352):

> *"In the district of Kobrin, at a date that can no longer be precisely established, between 11,000 and 14,500 Jews from Kobrin Bereza-Kartuska, Antopol, Drogitschin (Drogichin), and other towns were shot. Some of the people were deported in railway trains to the vicinity of the town of Bronnaja (Bronnaya) Gora, where a shooting facility had been set up."*

Yitzhak Arad is a little less succinct, but equally generic (Arad 2009, p. 267):

> *"In the spring on 1942, the two ghettos in Brest-Litovsk housed between 18,000 and 20,000 Jews.* […] *In early October 1942 large numbers of German, Ukrainian, and Lithuanian police forces congregated in the town. The ghetto was cordoned on the night of October 15-16, and the massacre began at dawn."*

After having quoted a passage from a testimony, Arad concludes (*ibid.*):

> *"No Jews remained in Brest-Litovsk after the October-November 1942 murder action."*

It is highly symptomatic that this huge massacre is not mentioned in any archival source. Arad tries to convince the reader that the material traces were eliminated (*ibid.*, p. 352):

> *"In early April* [1943]*, a subunit of the Sonderkommando 1005 Mitte was sent to Brest-Litovsk region, and the local authorities placed about 100 prisoners at its disposal. The body-burning operation began in Bronnaya-Gora, where 48,000 Jews from Brest Litovsk, Pinsk, and other towns had been murdered."*

In Curilla's voluminous work, only a few lines are dedicated to Bronnaya Gora, asserting that the Jews of Brest

> *"were driven together, loaded onto trains destined to the railway station at Bronnaya Gora, immediately north of Bereza-Kartuska on the railway line from Brest-Litovsk to Baranovichi, and murdered upon arrival."* (Curilla 2011, p. 667)

As his sources, Curilla refers, incredibly, to the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* and the *Black Book* by Ehrenburg and Grossman (*ibid.*, fn 179).

Hence, there are practically neither documents nor material traces. In fact, as Andrea Simon writes (Simon, pp. 189):

> *"the official word on the Brona Gora massacre can be obtained from the 1944 report by the Extraordinary State Commission to Investigate Nazi Crimes Committed on the Territory of the Soviet Union."*

In practice, the propagandistic *Black Book* is the primary source for the Holocaust narrative relating to Bronnaya Gora. It is therefore worthwhile examining it more closely. It contains "A Report on the Savagery, Plundering, Torment, and Destruction Perpetrated by the German-Fascist Invaders in the Area of Bronnaya Gora in the Berezovsky Region of the Brest District Chaired by Arkady Ivanovich Taraseivich, the Commission consisted of Vasily Nikolaevich Bury, Chairman of the District Executive Committee; partisan representative Ivan Pavlovich Kashtelyan; and Comrade Novik from the Berezovsky Region." The essential passages are as follows (Ehrenburg/Grossman 2002, p. 179):

> *"The following is based on an examination of the sites of mass torture and shooting of Soviet citizens by the German-Fascist invaders and on a series of interviews with local citizens.*
>
> *In accordance with plans previously drawn up by the German-Fascist invaders, in May-June 1942 the Germans began digging mass graves covering an area of 18,000 square meters; the graves were dug four hundred meters northwest of the Bronnaya Gora train station.*
>
> *Each day the Germans mobilized six to eight hundred citizens from the villages in the Berezovsky region to dig the graves. In order to finish the job as quickly as possible, the Germans used explosives such as tolite.*
>
> *Once the digging of the graves was completed in mid-June 1942, the Germans began transporting Soviet citizens to the Bronnaya Gora train station. These citizens were of various nationalities: Russians, Belorussians, Jews, and Poles, from infants to old people.*
>
> *As the trains pulled into the station, special SD and SS Units escorted the cars. The cars came from various parts of Belorussia: from Bereza, Brest, Drogichin,*

Yanovo, and other places. Soviet citizens were also rounded up and brought to Bronnaya Gora on foot.

The cars in the arriving transport were extremely overcrowded, so that there were dead people among the exhausted citizens. As the transports came in they were directed to side tracks leading to military depots about 250 meters from the main line at the Bronnaya Gora station. The transports pulled up to mass graves; then the Germans unloaded the cars in a special area enclosed by barbed wire.

During the unloading people were forced to strip naked and toss their clothes into a pile. They were taken down a narrow barbed-wire corridor to the pits; after going down the steps into the pits, they were forced to lie faced [sic] *down close to each other. Once the first row was ready, Germans in SD and SS uniforms shot the people with submachine guns. And so it went with the second and third rows, until the grave was full.*

All this was accompanied by the heartrending screams of men, women, and children. After a transport had been completely unloaded and all the citizens shot, their clothing and belongings were loaded into train cars and sent to an unknown destination. The scheduling of transports going to and from the execution area was strictly controlled by Heil, the stationmaster at the Bronnaya Gora train station, and by duty officers Pike and Schmidt. (All three were German).

In order to hide every trace of the crimes committed in the Bronnaya Gora region, the Germans shot the entire civilian population – about one thousand people – living in the vicinity of the former military depots. Altogether there were eight mass graves in the area where the mass shootings took place. The first was 63 x 6.5 meters, the second 36 x 6.5, the third 36 x 6, the fourth 37 x 6, the fifth, 52 x 6, the sixth 24 x 6, the seventh 12 x 6, and the eighth 16 x 4.5. All the graves were 3.5 to 4 meters deep."

To sum up, Holocaust historiography is completely silent as to which German authority created this alleged extermination site, which unit or units carried out the executions, as well as where the clothing and personal effects of the victims were taken. I will deal with the question of where the bodies are further on.

Another question remaining open is that of the rail transports. The witness R.S. Novis, already mentioned in Section 6.6.7., drew up a detailed list of rail transports at Bronnaya Gora. According to this, five trains arrived at Bronnaya Gora in June 1942, made up as follows:

1. one train with 16 cars originating from Ghetto "B" of Kartuz-Bereza (Bereza-Kartuska); each car carried 200 people;
2. one train with 46 cars full of deportees from Drogichin, Yanov and Gorodets; every car carried 200 people;
3. one train with 40 cars from Brest-Litovsk, "extraordinarily full" of persons;
4. one train with 18 cars full of deportees from Pinsk and Kobrin;
5. one train with 13 cars from Brest-Litovsk.

Upon arrival at the Bronnaya Gora station, the cars were shunted off onto a spur; in the unloading area there were six large mass graves 25-30 meters long, 10-12 wide and 4 meters deep. Here, the deportees were shot, and their bodies were

thrown into the graves. All these activities Novis claims to have observed from a distance of no more than 250 meters.

Moreover, the witness continued, 800 workers who had worked in military supply dumps were shot in June 1942, in the month of September a train with 25 cars arrived from Kartuz-Bereza, and at the beginning of October another train with 28 cars arrived from an unknown locality. In total, 186 cars arrived, carrying 48,000 persons (Beluga, pp. 231f.). Hence, every car is said to have carried on average 258 persons, a rather excessive load.

It is a fact that, although the Jewish transports from the Greater Reich to Minsk are well-documented, there are no documents concerning transports to Bronnaya Gora.

It should be noted that this town is located some 100 km southwest of Baranovichi on the Brest-Minsk rail line, some 110 km northeast of Brest (by road). Now, the convoys that passed through Czeremcha and Białystok continued to Volkovysk and Minsk via Baranovichi. No document attests to the passage of Jewish transports from Brest to Baranovichi or vice versa, that is, in the direction of Bronnaya Gora (see Document II.8.23.).

If the transports from the Greater Reich were destined for extermination (which according to orthodox historiography took place at Maly Trostenets), it is hard to understand why, after arriving at Baranovichi, they were not shunted for some 100 km to the southwest to Bronnaya Gora, instead of continuing east for about 240 km to Minsk. The transports which passed through Czeremcha could then have proceeded more easily to Brest and would have reached Bronnaya Gora more rapidly. Since the Bronnaya Gora site, according to orthodox Holocaust historiography, was in operation starting in July 1942, the following transports could easily have been sent straight there:

– Transports Da 210-218, which departed Vienna between 10 July and 4 September, each carrying 1,000 Jews;[694]
– Transports Da 219-222, also carrying 1,000 Jews each, scheduled for the period between 16 July and 6 August from Theresienstadt and Cologne;[695]
– Transports Da 223-230, which left Vienna and Theresienstadt between 19 August and 7 October[696] for Volkovysk-Minsk.

This makes a total of 21 transports carrying a total of 21,000 Jews. If the Germans really shot 50,000 people at Bronnaya Gora without any difficulty, they could easily have shot another 21,000 just by digging a few more graves.

Thomas Kues has observed that, despite the claim that many tens of thousands of Jews were deported from as far away as France, Greece, Macedonia and the Netherlands in order to be "gassed" *en masse* at Treblinka and Sobibór, for some inexplicable reason it never occurred to the German authorities to send even a

694 "*Haupteisenbahndirektion Mitte, Fahrplananordnung Nr. 40*" of 13 May 1942. NARB, 378-1-784, page number illegible.
695 *Deutsche Reichsbahn. Reichsbahndirektion Königsberg.* "*Fahrplananordnung Nr. 62*" of 13 July 1942. NARB, 378-1-784, page number illegible.
696 *Haupteisenbahndirektion,* "*Fahrplananordnung Nr. 62*" of 13 August 1942. NARB, 378-1-784, p. 27.

portion of the hundreds of thousands of Jews still remaining in the western Ukrainian provinces of Volhynia and Podolia in the summer of 1942 to the Reinhardt Camps, despite the fact that the ghettos in this region were located only a short train ride from these camps (Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 648f.). This mystery has also been discussed by orthodox Holocaust historian Shmuel Spector (Spector 1990a, pp. 173f.):

> *"The question arises, why weren't the Jews of Volhynia sent to the extermination camps such as Sobibór, situated a few kilometers away across the Bug River, and Belzec – a distance of 60 kilometers from the border of Volhynia. The railroad distance between Rovno (the eastern end of Volhynia) and Sobibor was about 260 kilometers and between Rovno and Belzec (via Vladimir Volynski and Zamość) 250 kilometers. Central and western Volhynia were even closer. Thus, for example, Luboml was just 80 kilometers away from Sobibor (via Chełm).*[697] *The natural frontier of the Bug River couldn't have posed great difficulties. Neither was the transport of Volhynian Jews to the west a great problem, since the* [troop transport] *trains returned from the front empty.*
>
> *The question of why weren't the Volhynian Jews transferred to the extermination camps remains difficult to answer, as we know very little about the details of Heydrich's plans. The liquidation was planned on a very large scale and it appears that a decision was taken to use a wide range of methods and ways of killing. It seems that the planners of the 'Final Solution' believed that in the Ukraine, whose population remained indifferent or hostile to the Jews and collaborated with the occupier, the slaughter could be carried out locally without any reactions or troubles. The killings and the Aktionen carried out in the initial phase of the occupation* [of the Soviet territories] *demonstrated to the Germans that liquidation on the spot fitted the local conditions. Consequently, the liquidation Aktionen employed the same methods as before, i.e., the removal of the Jews to a site nearby the ghetto and executions in the shooting pits."*

Kues notes that the Jews of Brest could have been gassed at Treblinka, which is located less than 200 km away by road. He does not mention Sobibór, which is even closer; in fact, Brest is located some 80 km from Sobibór.

Jules Schelvis, the most-renowned Sobibór expert among orthodox Holocaust historians, believes that this camp was not accessible by train at that time (Schelvis, p. 59):

> *"although sufficient rolling stock was available at the time, the trains could not travel to Sobibór during the period between the end of July and the beginning of October since the tracks had sunk into the swampy soil in several places between Chełm and Włodawa and could not be used. The rail stretch between Lublin and Chełm was also not passable or only with difficulty until 1 November."*

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697 It could be argued that Sobibór was temporarily out of service due to construction work on the railway line between Lublin and Chelm, but this situation lasted only until the end of September 1942, while the alleged wave of massacres in Volhynia continued until October 1942. After this pause in its operations, Sobibór reopened, purportedly equipped with a new gas chamber building with a killing capacity of 1,300 people per batch. Despite this, only about 21,370 Jews were sent to this camp during the three months of October-December of that year. Graf/Kues/Mattogno, pp. 116f., 149f.

On second thought, this only accentuates the absurdity of the orthodox Holocaust narrative. If we follow Schelvis, the camp at Sobibór would therefore have been idle between July and October 1942, as it couldn't be reached by train. For precisely this reason, and all the more so, it could have easily exterminated the Jews from Brest, who could easily have been unloaded at Włodawa Station (70 km from Brest) and transported the remaining 10 km by truck, or they could have been made to walk on foot. Instead, notwithstanding this great extermination opportunity, they are said to have been transported 110 km away to Bronnaya Gora, in the opposite direction (see Document II.8.23. & 24.).

In this context the shootings of Jews at Domachevo and Tomashovka are even more incomprehensible. In this regard, Martin Dean cites a monthly report from the head of the *Gendarmerie* of Brest County, which states (Dean 2008, p. 259):

> *"On September 19-20, 1942, an anti-Jewish* Aktion *was carried out in Domachevo and Tomashovka by a special commando of the SD together with the cavalry squadron of the Gendarmerie and the local police stationed in Domachevo, and in total, some 2,900 Jews were shot. The action took place without any disturbance."*

Tomashovka is located 5 km east of Włodawa, with which it shares the railway station, and less than 10 km north of Sobibór; Domachevo is located some 25 km north of Tomashovka (see Document II.8.25.).

The period during which the shootings are said to have taken place, 19-20 September 1942, fits into the period of inactivity at Sobibór, when no transports arrived from the west. Hence, although the Germans had an "extermination camp" with nothing to do in close proximity, they supposedly preferred to shoot the Jews on the spot!

But there is another fact which is even stranger. Only a few months afterwards, between the end of January and the beginning of February 1943, four Jewish transports left Oranczyce Station on their way to Auschwitz. Oranczyce (present-day Oranchitsy) is located a few kilometers from Prużana (now Pruzhany), for which it functions as a train station, on the Brest-Baranovichi line, some 40 km from the station at Bronnaya Gora (see Documents II.8.22. and II.8.23). The transports, designated PJ (*polnische Juden* – Polish Jews) 99, 101, 103 and 105, departed on 29, 30 and 31 January and 1 February 1943, respectively, and traveled via Oranczyce-Brest-Siedlce-Warsaw-Skiernewice (Skierniewice)-Tschenstochau (Częstochowa) to Auschwitz.[698] Hence, even though the Germans allegedly had an operating execution site nearby at Broannaja Gora, they decided to send these alleged victims to the far-more-distant Auschwitz Camp, which is utterly incomprehensible from an orthodox point of view.

The question of the mass graves and the bodies is no less enigmatic. First of all, as we will see shortly, the bodies were allegedly cremated. This presupposed

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[698] *Deutsche Reichsbahn, Bahndiensttelegramm*, Minsk, 27.1.1943; *Deutsche Reichsbahn, Bahndiensttelegramm*, Minsk, 28.1.1943; *Reichsverkehrdirektion Minsk, Abschrift! Bahntelegramm!* Minsk, 29.1.1943; *Bahnhof* Oranczyce, communications transmitted to the *Reichsverkehrsdirektion* Minsk dated 29, 30 and 31 January and 1 February 1943. YVA, 053/1, pp. 176-186.

that the mass graves were emptied and refilled with earth; they were then allegedly leveled, and over the area were "planted saplings" (see Section 6.6.7.). In this case, one must wonder how the Soviet commission, a few years later, could have located them with such precision, indicating their exact dimensions. What is more, the witness Novis spoke of six graves, instead of the Soviet Commission's eight, with completely different dimensions.

According to the Incident Reports, at Brest-Litovsk in July 1941 the police, in conjunction with *Einsatzgruppe* B, killed 4,435 persons (including 4,027 Jews).[699] The commander of the Security Police and the SD Cracow had 1,280 of them killed between 21 and 31 July,[700] and another 510 persons at the beginning of August.[701] 1,296 Jews were shot between 5 and 11 August,[702] 769 in the second half of August,[703] and 548 at the beginning of September.[704]

According to Heinrich Meier, the July victims were buried in twelve graves 10 meters long, 2.6 meters wide, and 4 meters deep. Relying on Meier, John and Carroll Garrard state (Garrard, p. 20),

> *"as far as can be ascertained, this massacre site has not been identified by local researchers into Nazi activities during the occupation of Brest. It was almost certainly located along a river bank where the sandy earth was easy to dig out."*

The final statement implies a clear delimitation of the scope of research; notwithstanding this fact, the graves were not found. Furthermore, the number and sizes of graves mentioned by Heinrich Meier would not have been enough to bury the total number of 8,838 bodies, there must have been at least twice as many graves, or they must have been twice the size. Last but not least, "Sonderkommando 1005-Mitte", which exhumed and burned the bodies according to Arad, also did not leave the slightest documentary traces.

It is important to note in this context that the police battalions operating in the region around Brest not only carried out shootings of Jews, they also participated in real evacuations or transfers. The war diary of the 1st Company of the 13th Reserve Police Battalion contains the following entry on 5 November 1942:[705]

> *"As ordered, Squad Milejczyce had transported the Jews from the ghetto to Kleskale* [Kleszczele]. *The transport proceeded eventlessly."*

The next day, the unit returned to its headquarters (p. 217):

> *"Return of Squad Milejczyce. Following transfer of Jews to Kleskale, the squad returned to Wisokie."*

Milejczyce is a small town south of Bielsk Podlaski, a few kilometers west of Czeremcha. Kleszczele is located 6 km east of Milejczyce (distance by road).

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699 Mallmann 2011 *et al.*, p. 171. EM No. 32 dated 24 July 1941.
700 *Ibid.*, p. 231. EM No. 43 dated 5 August 1941.
701 *Ibid.*, p. 261. EM No. 47 dated 9 August 1941.
702 *Ibid.*, p. 310. EM No. 56 dated 18 August 1941.
703 *Ibid.*, p. 364. EM No. 66 dated 28 August 1941.
704 *Ibid.*, p. 424. EM No. 78 dated 9 September 1941.
705 YVA, O.53-15, p. 215; next four page numbers in the text are from there.

On 12 November, the division was involved in a transfer operation on a broader scale (p. 219):

> *"The company transported 2,500 Jews from the Wisokie-Lit. Ghetto to the train station. The operation began around 6^{00} hours and was over by 9^{00} hours. No particular incidents.*
> *The transport with 2,500 Jews from Kamienec-Lit.* [Kamjanec] *arrived at Wisokie-Lit. after marching for 31 kilometers. The transport proceeded eventlessly.."*

Another Jewish transport was organized on 17 November (p. 220):

> *"Transport of 1,000 Jews to railway station. Rest of the Jews loaded."*

The entry dated 19 November says (*ibid.*):

> *"Company deployment in Bielsk* [Podlaski]. *A transport of 600 Jews was transferred to Bialystok."*

On 20 November, a *Kommando* "took over the transport of 3,600 Jews by rail from Bialystok to Malkinia [? name unclear]" (*ibid.*).

A report from the 3rd Company, 322nd Police Battalion, dated 15 August 1941, reports (p. 91):

> *"The Jewish operation in Narewka-Mala was carried out by the 3rd Company on 15 Aug. 1941. In the process, 899 women and 162 children were resettled to Kobrin.*
> *All males between the ages of 15 and 65 were shot. On 15 Aug. 1941 were shot:*
> *1 Pole for looting*
> *282 Jews.*
> *The Jewish operation took place smoothly and without incident."*

This can only mean that the 899 women and 162 children were actually resettled and that "resettlement" was by no means a camouflage term for "extermination".

8.7. A Mass Cremation in the Golta District?

As far as one can tell, in at least one case, the Rumanians anticipated the presumed "Aktion 1005." The *Cartea Neagra* reports (Carp 2000, p. 198):

> *"December 21, 1941*
> *With the help of Lieutenant-Colonel Modest Isopescu, prefect of Golta county, the extermination of Jews in the camp of Bogdanovca is started. The first victims are chosen from among the sick and crippled. They are locked up in stables, which are filled with straw, then petrol is poured on before they are set ablaze. While the stables are burning with the people locked inside them, they take the other interned people (approx. 43,000) to the nearby forest in groups of 3-400, where they are killed with exploding bullets. The massacre continues on December 21, 22 and 23; it is stopped at Christmas time and restarted on December 28, and finished on December 29.*
> *The corpses are put together in piles 4 – 5 meters long and 2 meters high so that they can be cremated. This terrible act is carried out by a group of 200 Jews for 2 months. Having finished with this work, 150 of them are shot dead."*

Other sources permit the completion of the picture to a small extent. Dennis Deletant writes (Deletant, p. 181):

> *"The massacre began the following morning. According to the prosecutor's statement at the postwar trial, the intended victims were split into two groups. The first were the sick, elderly and infirm, who were crammed into stables. Hay was scattered on the stable roofs, doused with petrol and then torched. It was estimated that between 4,000 and 5,000 perished in the inferno. The remaining 43,000 Jews were driven in groups to a nearby forest, stripped of their belongings, made to kneel at the edge of a ravine and shot in the nape of the neck. The murders took place over several days. On the orders of Isopescu the bodies were cremated. Such was the number of dead that the cremations continued throughout January and February 1942."*

Radu Ioanid has supplied a few bits of additional information on this enormous cremation (Ioanid, p. 184):

> *"In view of the large number (43,000-48,000) of people who were massacred, the accused, Modest Isopescu, gave the order to cremate the corpses, hoping to erase all traces of what had happened. For that, he chose the strongest two hundred men from among the inmates. The cremation took two months: January and February 1942.*
>
> *The cremation took place as follows: they formed a layer of straw and wood, upon which they laid down the corpses, then they placed on top of them another layer of straw and another layer of corpses, so that the stacks were two meters tall and four to five meters wide. The corpses were set up in the following order: a thin corpse next to a fat corpse, so that the latter's fat helped burn the thin corpse more quickly. That is how two hundred inmates spent their time trying to erase all signs of this crime for two months. Afterward 150 of those 200 inmates were executed, the pretext being that they had not carried out fast enough the cremation of the corpses."*

These tales have all the characteristics for entering the Holocaust Fairy Tale Hall of Fame with full honors: here, even the witnesses are missing, and we do not know if any traces of this huge cremation were ever found. Since the above-mentioned historians did not even mention the discovery of any remains, we must conclude that they were meticulously pulverized and made to disappear, so that the entire operation was carried out in perfect "Aktion 1005" style.

In compensation, we learn that large numbers of "fat" Jews existed in the camp at Bogdanovca. The work done – 43,000-48,000 bodies cremated in two months – is not to be underestimated. It is amazing that the RSHA would have sent Blobel to Chełmno to carry out his mass cremation experiments. Wouldn't it have been simpler to send him to school with Lieutenant-Colonel Modest Isopescu? The Rumanians were obviously far more intelligent and capable than Blobel, since they succeeded in cremating this enormous number of bodies without any preliminary experiment whatever: on 29 December 1941 he finished the shooting, and at the beginning of January 1942 the cremations began. A true model of efficiency!

Conclusion

The time has come to recapitulate what I have set forth in the present study.

The *Einsatzgruppen* in the occupied eastern territories performed many intelligence and administrative missions. The first concerned all the vital functions of the occupied territories, namely the political, economic, social, cultural, religious and commercial sphere, among others, including the collection of important Soviet documents. The administrative tasks consisted on the one hand in the restoration of the administrative, social and economic structure in the regions devastated by the retreating Soviets or by the fighting, on the other in the search, identification and control of all those who were considered ideological or political enemies of Germany or who carried out acts hostile to the German troops or to the populations of the occupied countries, first and foremost the partisans. Most Jews tragically fell into this category. The *Einsatzgruppen* never received an order to exterminate the Jews as such, and the executions of Jews they perpetrated did not have a racial character; Jewry was rather considered the fertile breeding ground of Bolshevism, which was the primary enemy of the National-Socialist regime, and as such the Jews were ruthlessly combatted in pursuance of that view.

Regarding the number of victims, over 40% of the approximately 728,000 killings listed in the *Einsatzgruppen* reports are not verifiable, and there is a serious possibility that many figures listed in these documents were exaggerated or even invented, as inflated numbers allowed the various commanders to receive kudos from Berlin as the destroyers of Bolshevism's breeding ground, hence as heroes who had thus inflicted a severe blow on the enemy regime.

After a thorough analysis, we find that the hypothesis of the deployment of "gas vans" in the occupied eastern territories is an unfounded and nonsensical fable, which further undermines the already-shaky foundations of the orthodox Holocaust narrative.

Regarding the alleged activity to exhume and cremate the execution victims, the following points can be established with certainty:

1) Orthodox Holocaust historiography has never proven that the authorities of the Reich planned and carried out a general plan on an institutional level to eliminate the bodies of the victims of the *Einsatzgruppen* and other associated units by means of a systematic operation of exhumation and cremation of bodies. The cutting edge of such historiography, Shmuel Spector and Jens Hoffmann, have limited themselves to presenting, without the slightest critical reservations, a mass of absurd and contradictory testimonies, very often rendered many years and even decades after the alleged events. For these historians, no absurdity is too absurd

and no contradiction is too contradictory as to require changing their opinions. This attitude of supine acquiescence and compliance renders them worthy disciples of Soviet propaganda.

2) Soviet propaganda proclaimed the discovery of innumerable mass graves and hundreds of thousands of bodies, but those which are documented and may be considered real are only a tiny fraction of these claims.

3) The same is true for the innumerable photographs of executions, mass graves and bodies, which document events of an order of magnitude relatively insignificant compared to what is asserted.

4) There is such an immense disproportion between the execution figures proclaimed in the various German reports and the corpses actually found that one can reasonably consider the proclaimed death toll to be greatly exaggerated.

5) There is no doubt that the Germans carried out individual cremation operations, but these left more-than-obvious traces on the one hand, and they resulted from local initiatives on the other hand.

It is permissible to doubt how much sense it would make, for the *Einsatzgruppen* and associated units, to exaggerate the number of executions, particularly with regard to the Jews. The principal motivation is probably the fact that the Jews were considered by the National Socialists to be the creators and sustainers of Judeo-Bolshevism and, by virtue of this conception, they represented the quintessence of Bolshevism, the enemy by antonomasia; consequently, so National Socialists thought, the more the Jewish element was destroyed, the more this would undermine the foundation of Bolshevism. Military considerations were intermixed here with ideological, political and career considerations.

As is shown in Chapter 1 of Part One, the compilation of the final reports handed down to us is comparable to a river made up of many small rivulets: various *Teilkommandos* sent reports to their superior units, who summarized them and transmitted them to the central command – from the *Teilkommandos* to the *Einsatzkommandos* or *Sonderkommandos* right up to the respective *Einsatzgruppe* – which sent them to Department IV A 1 of the RSHA, which reprocessed them. It was a chain in which every link could have an interest in exaggerating the figures to show its own efficiency, and this is even more true for the Gestapo.

At the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial, a few former heads of these units spoke openly of such exaggerations in the Gestapo's final reports, but one cannot exclude the possibility that they had already received exaggerated or even invented figures from subordinate units.

Appendices

1. SS Ranks and U.S. Army Equivalents

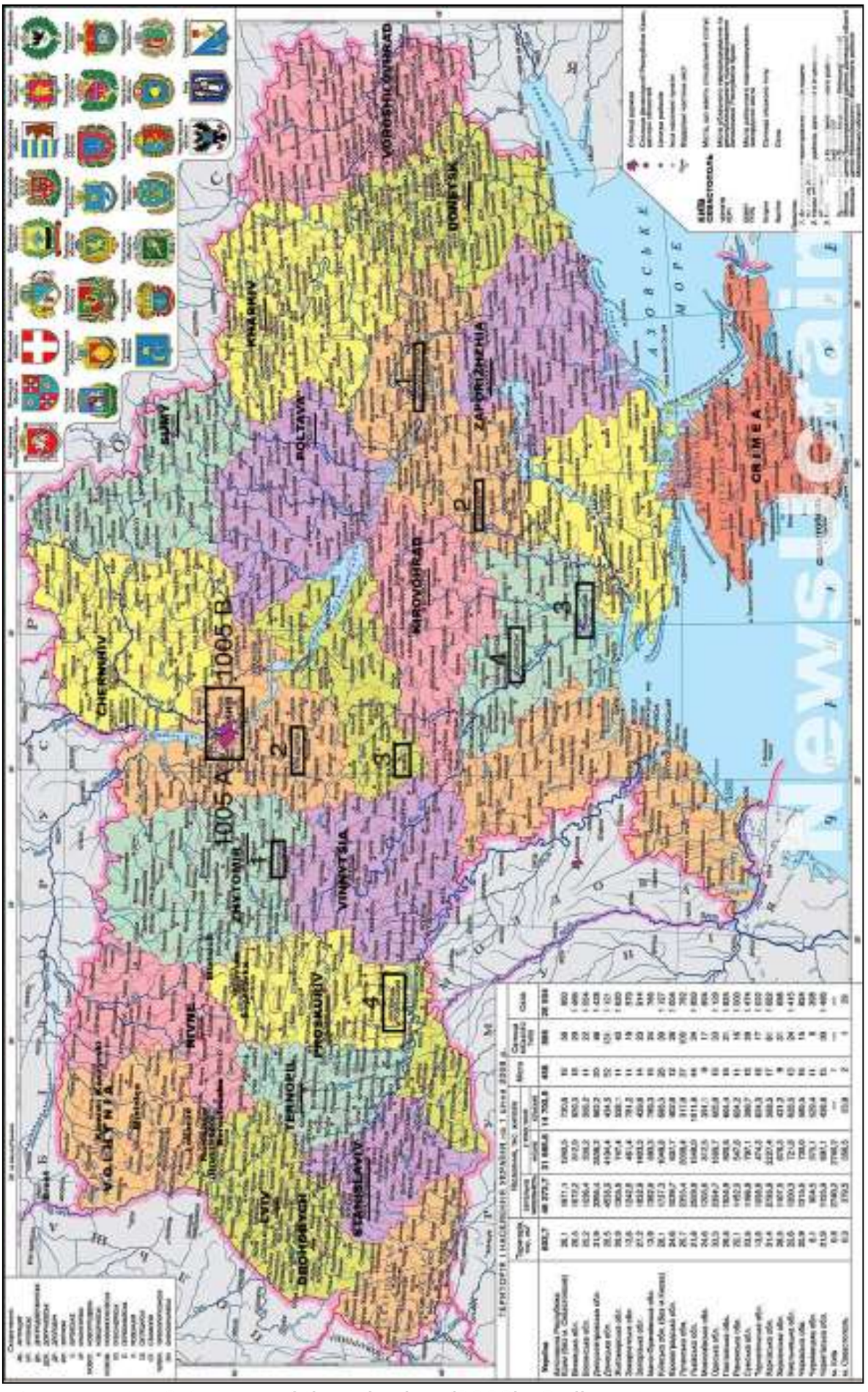
SS	U.S. ARMY
SS Mann	Private
Sturmmann	Private First Class
Rottenführer	Corporal
Unterscharführer	Sergeant
Scharführer	Staff Sergeant
Oberscharführer	Technical Sergeant
Hauptscharführer	Master Sergeant
Sturmscharführer	First Sergeant
Untersturmführer	Second Lieutenant
Obersturmführer	First Lieutenant
Hauptsturmführer	Captain
Sturmbannführer	Major
Obersturmbannführer	Lieutenant Colonel
Standartenführer	Colonel
Oberführer	Colonel
Brigadeführer	Brigadier General
Gruppenführer	Lieutenant General
Obergruppenführer	General
Oberstgruppenführer	General of the Army

2. Documents

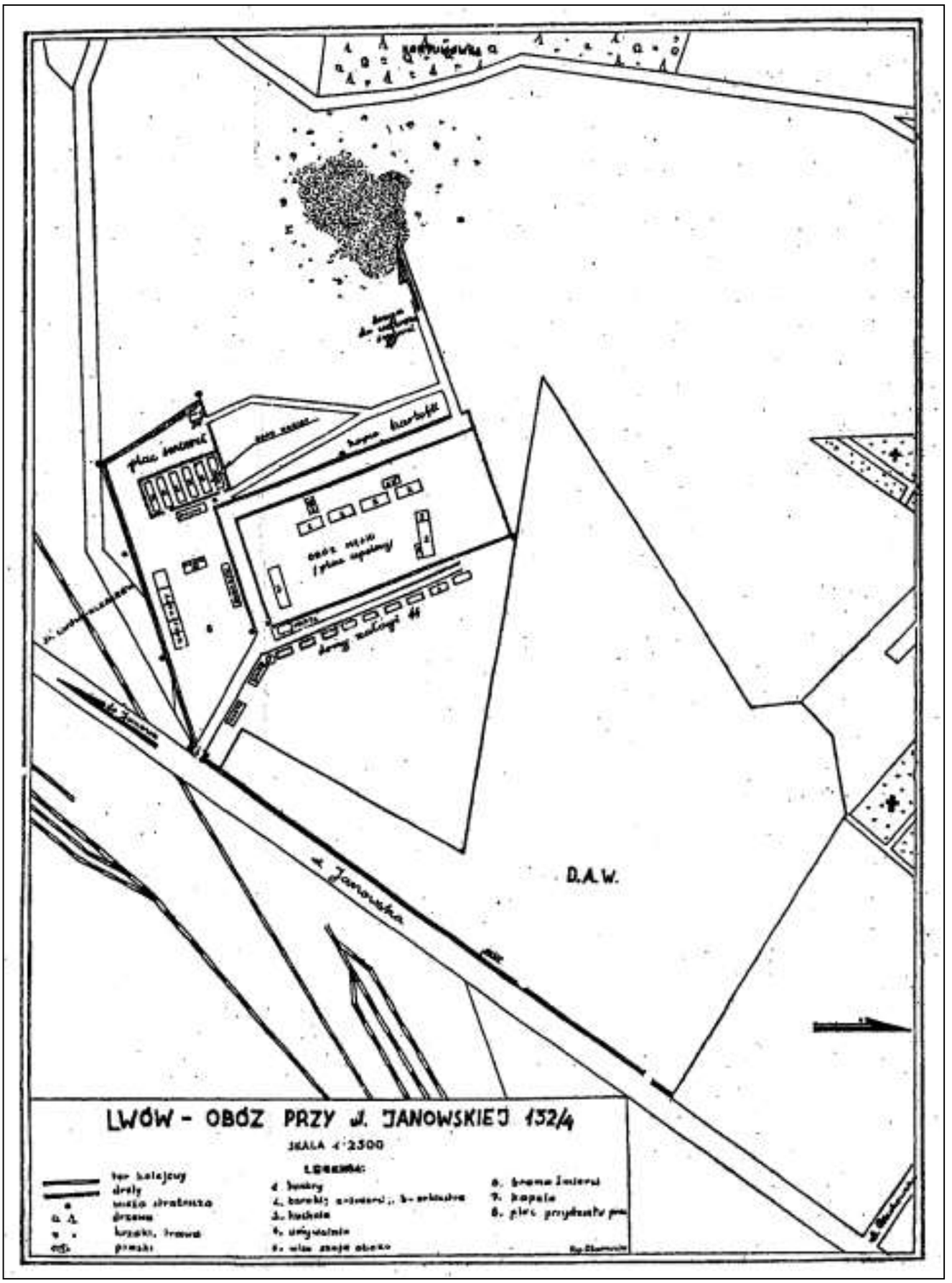
Document II.1.1. & 2: The mass grave at Busk (numbered inset added). From: "Les fusillades massives des juifs en Ucraine 1941-1944. La Shoah par balles," in: http://memorialdelashoah.org/upload/minisites/ukraine/images/docu16_l.jpg

Document II.1.3. One of the mass graves at Busk. From: The 2007 annual report of the Holocaust Museum in Washington, in: http://memorialdelashoah.org/upload/minisites/ukraine/images/expo5_04_l.jpg

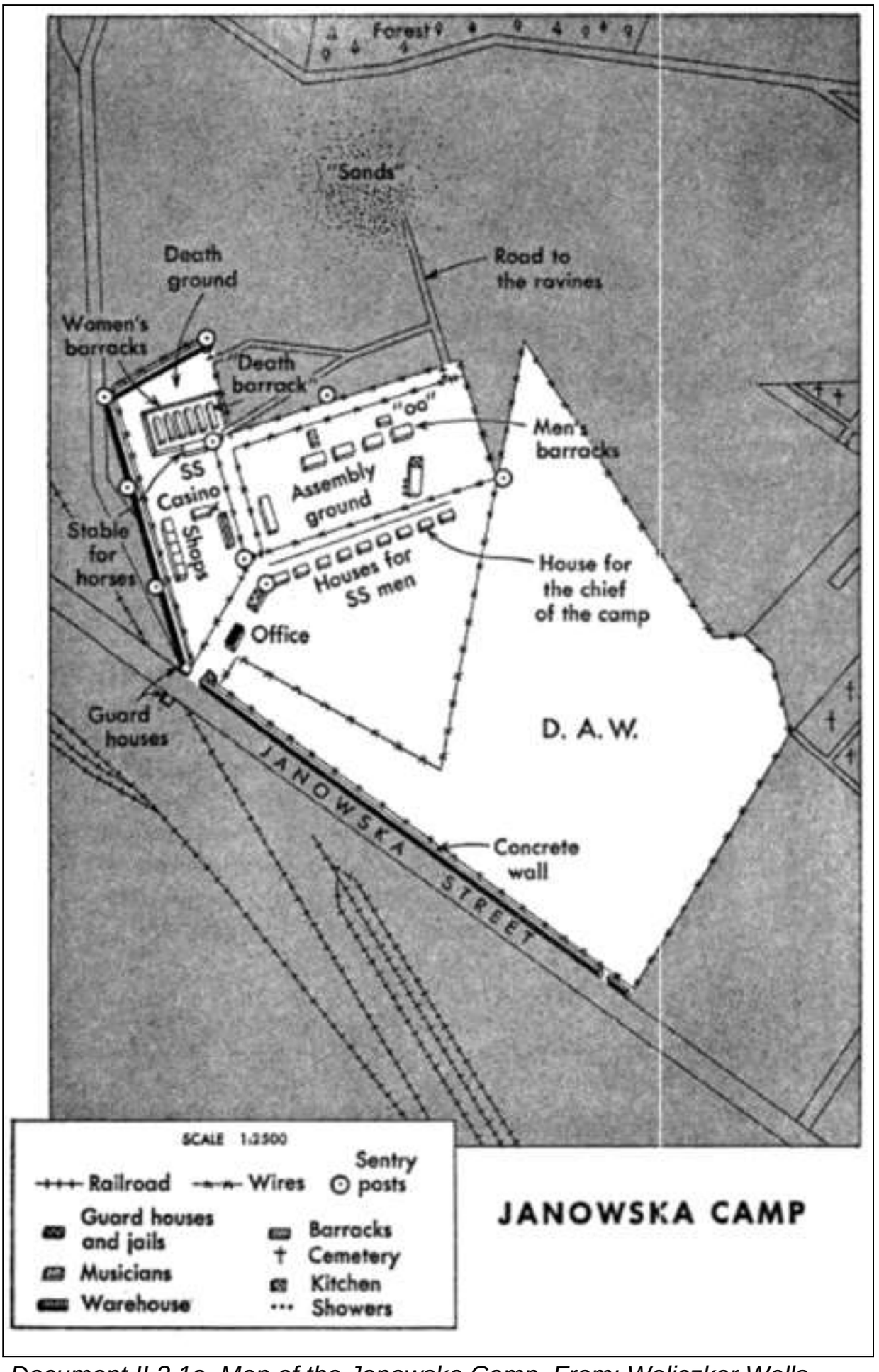
Document II.1.4. The mass grave at Serniki. From: Wright, p. 100.



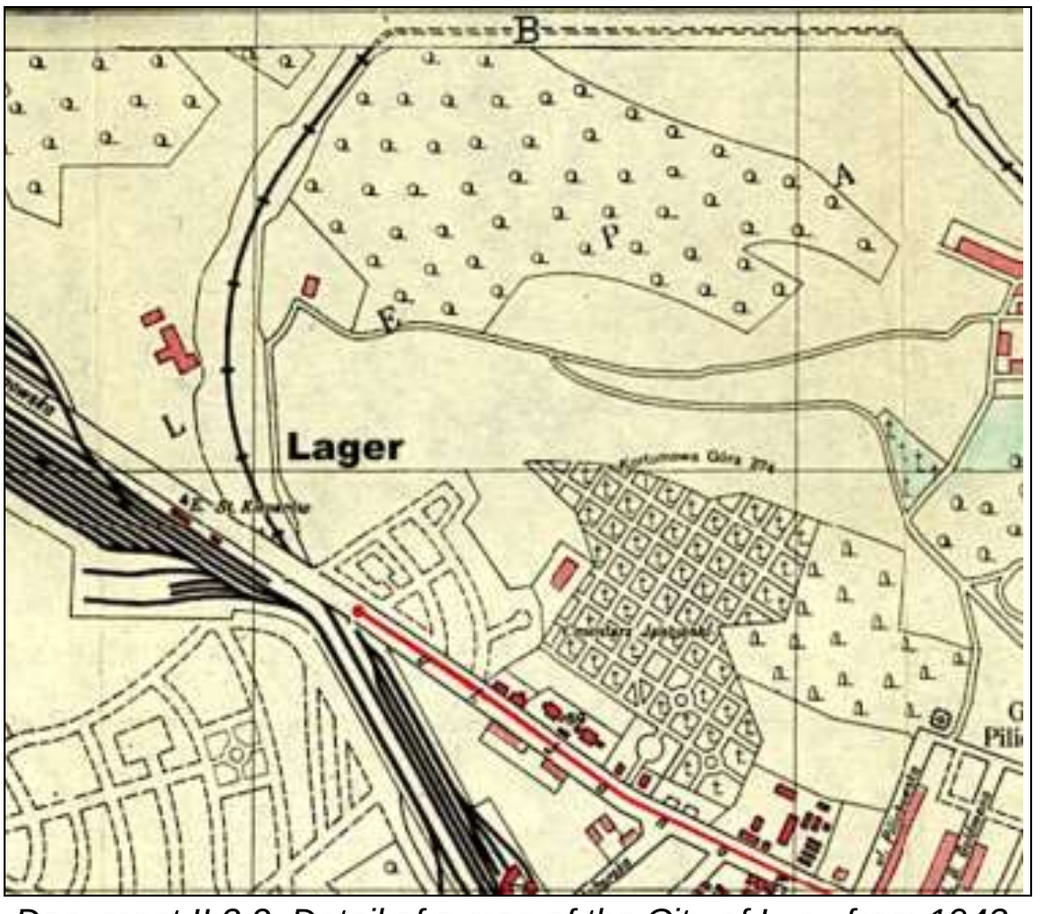
Document II.2.1. Map of the Ukraine (2008). Online at: http://i1.wp.com/newsUkraine.it/wp-content/uploads/pep-vn/newsUkraine.it/post-2106/Cartina-Ukraine-0db.jpg



Document II.3.1. Map of the Janowska Camp. From: Weliczker, p. 129.

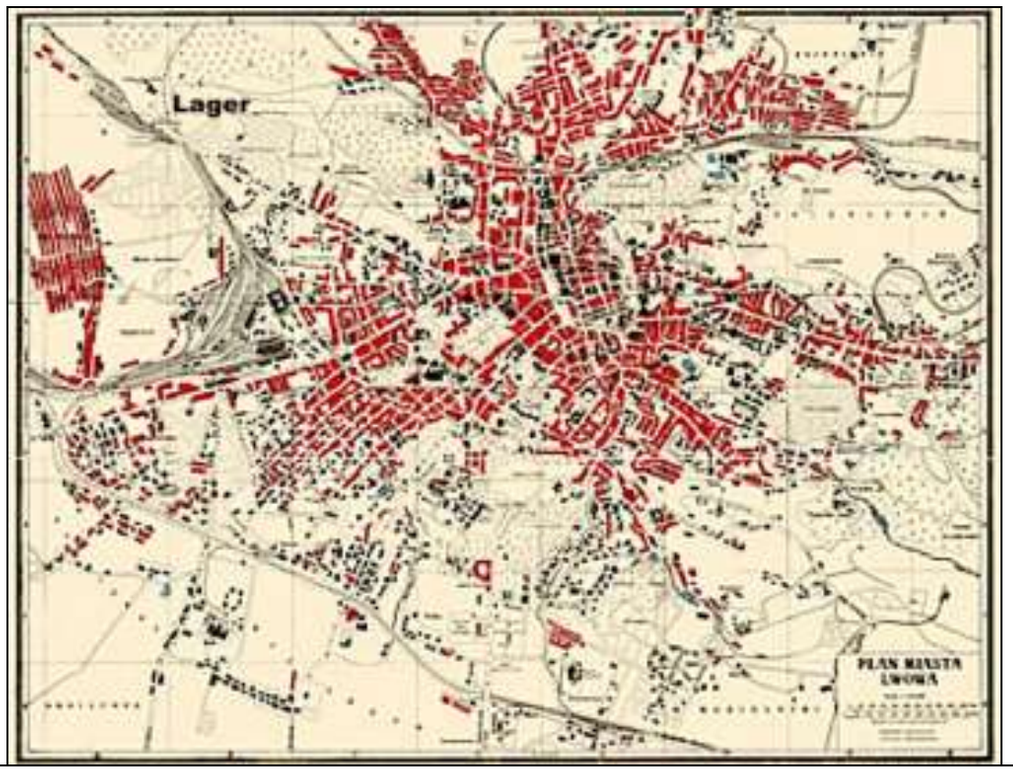


Document II.3.1a. Map of the Janowska Camp. From: Weliczker Wells, unnumbered page.

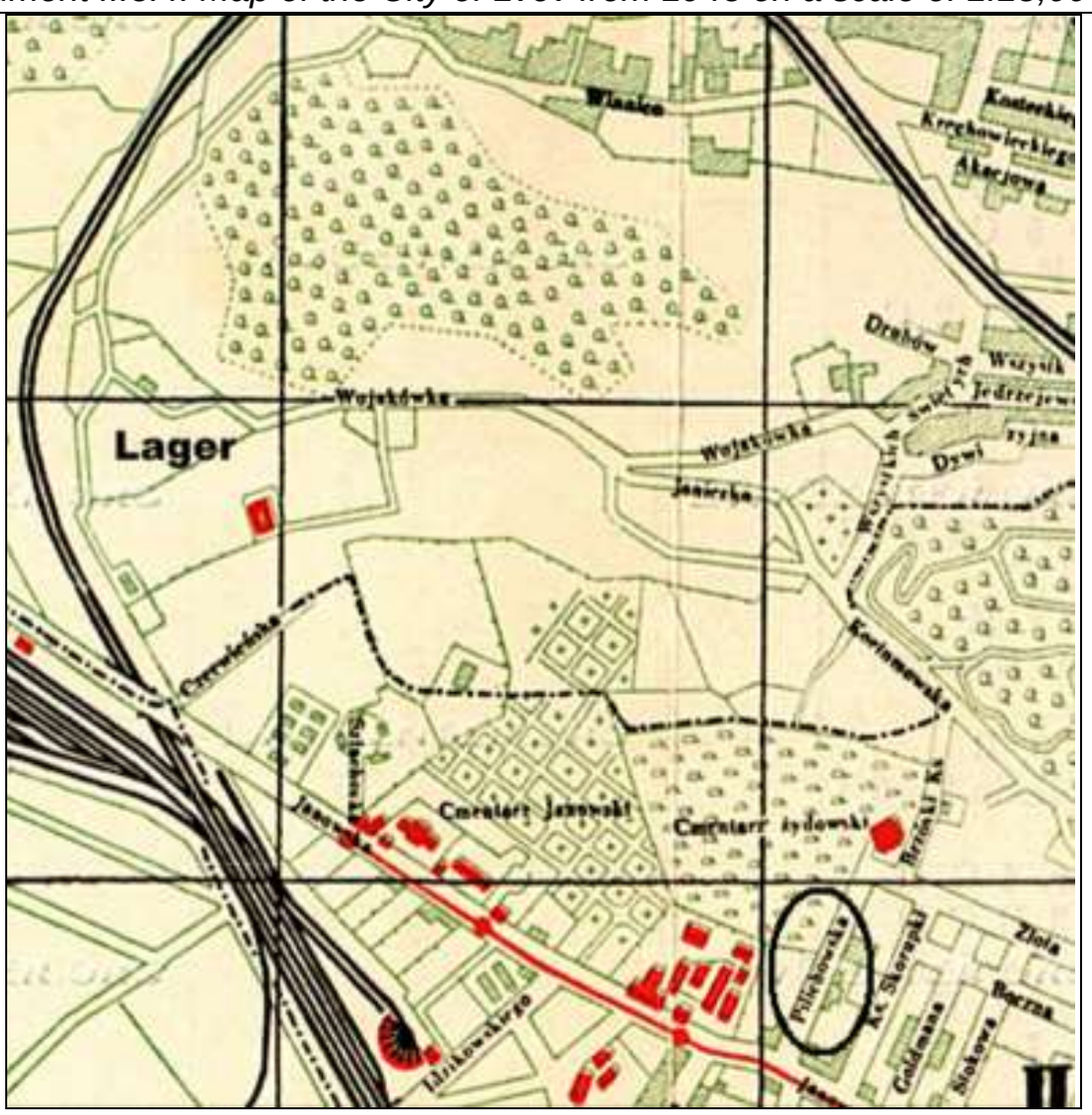


Document II.3.2. Detail of a map of the City of Lvov from 1943, on a scale of 1:15,000.

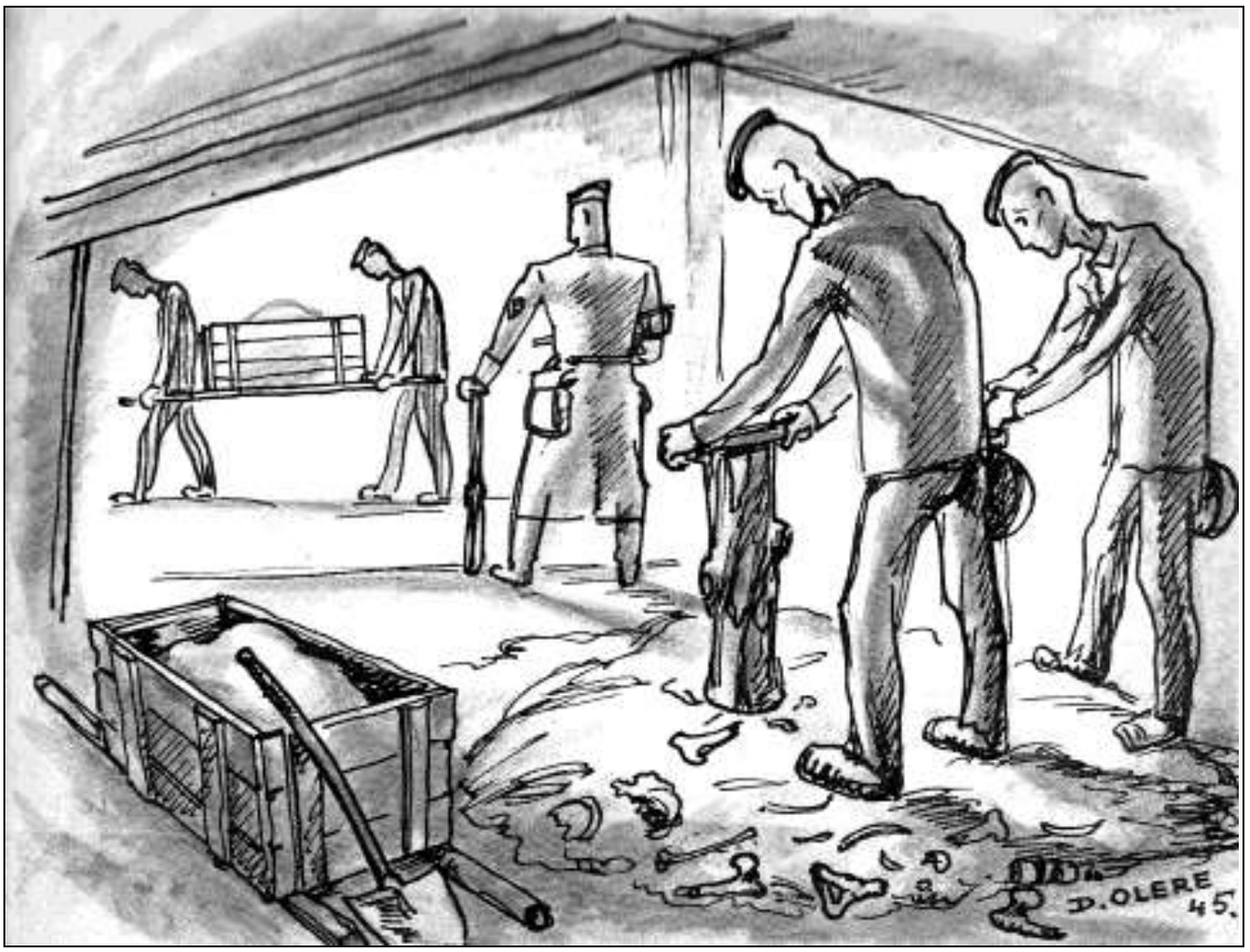
Document II.3.3. Map of the City of Lvov from 1936 on a scale of 1:10,000.



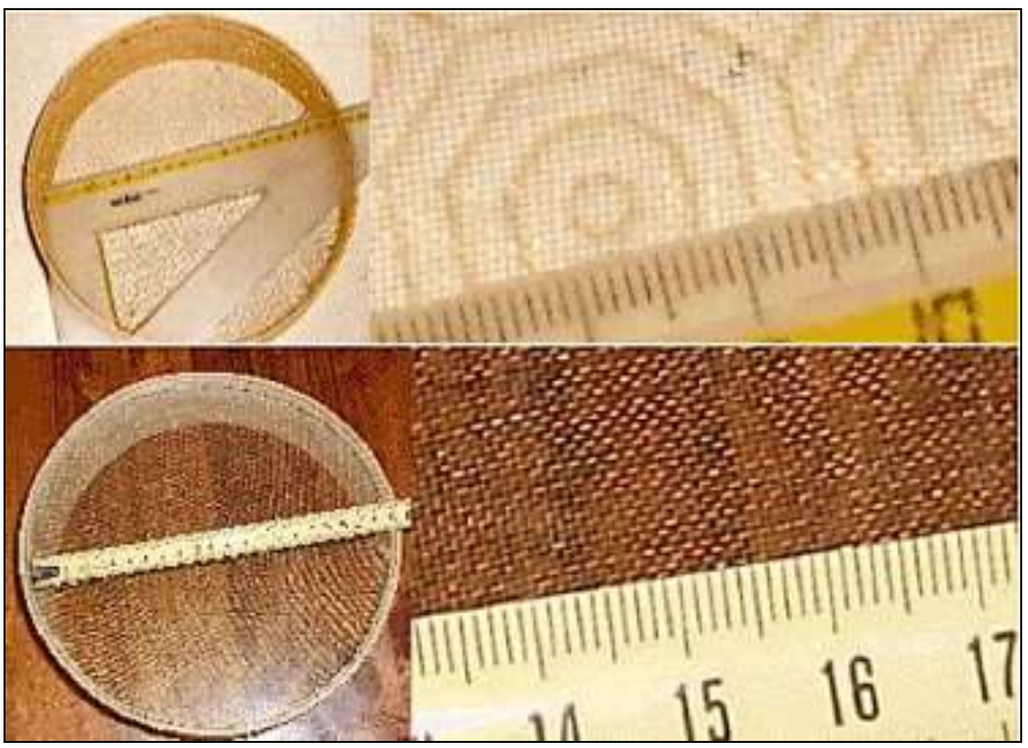
Document II.3.4. Map of the City of Lvov from 1943 on a scale of 1:15,000.



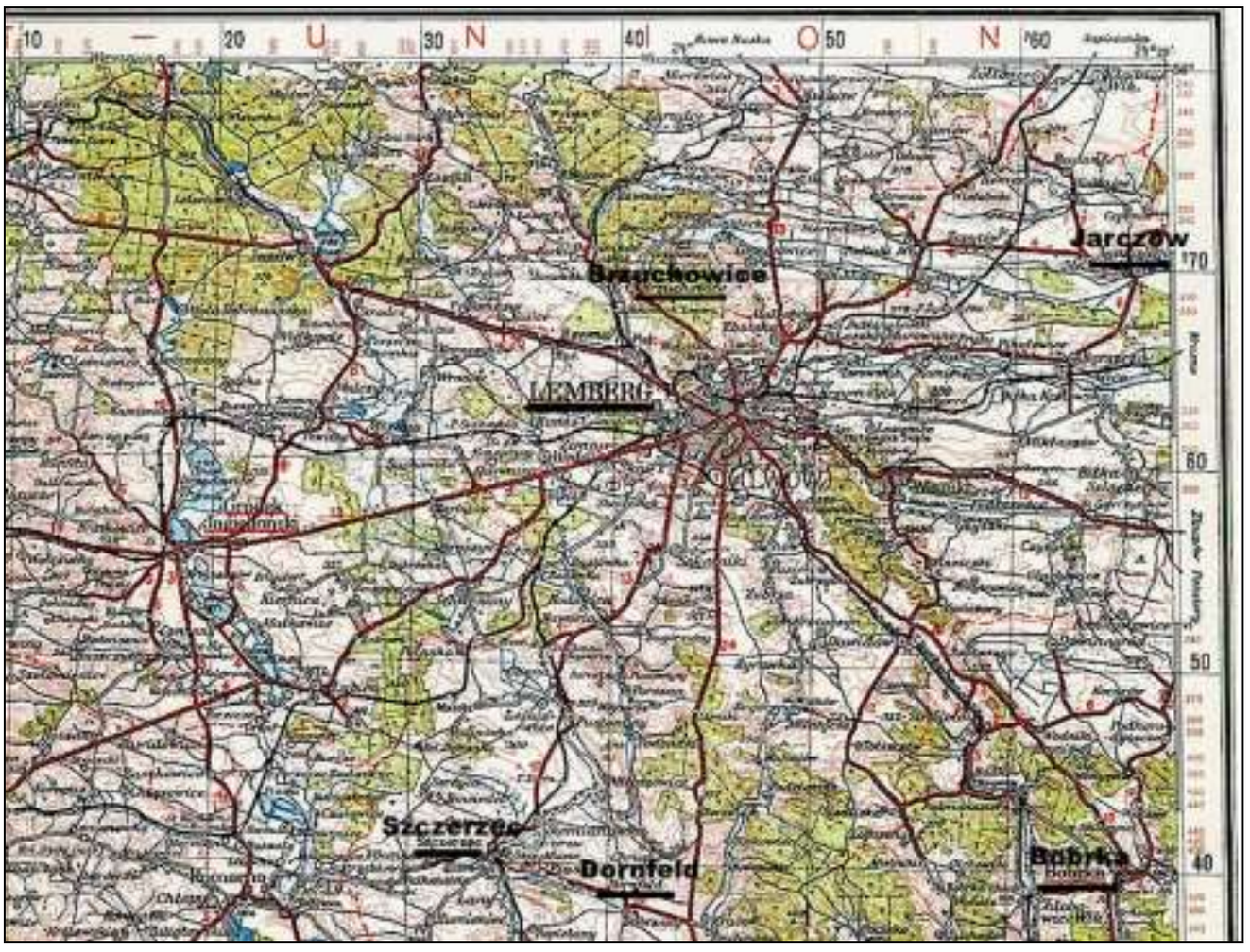
Document II.3.5. Map of the City of Lvov in 1937, on a scale of 1: 20,000. In the oval, Pilichowska Road.



Document II.3.6. Crushing osseous residues in Crematorium V at Auschwitz. From: Olère, p. 77.

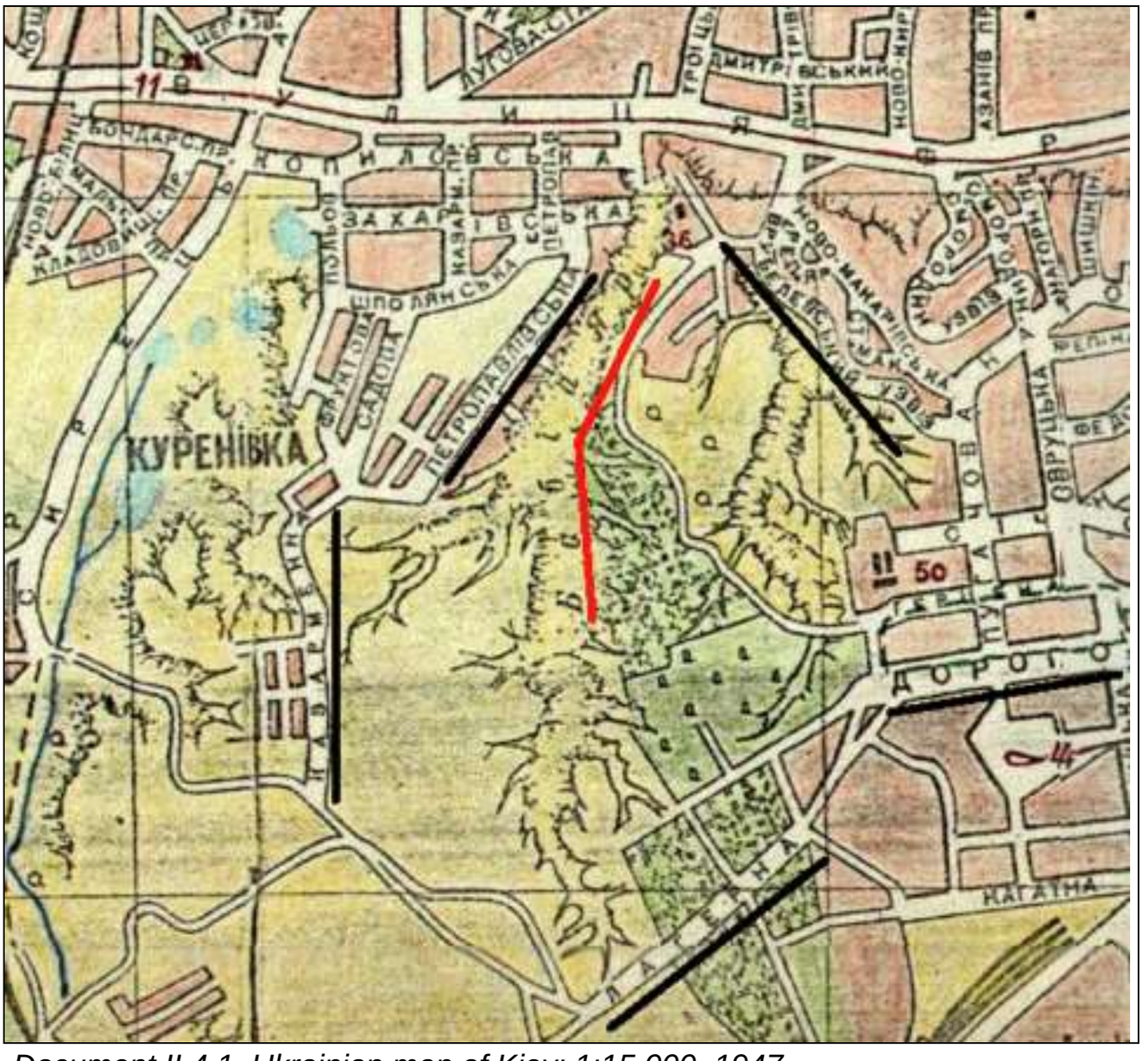


Document II.3.7. Two normal flour sieves.



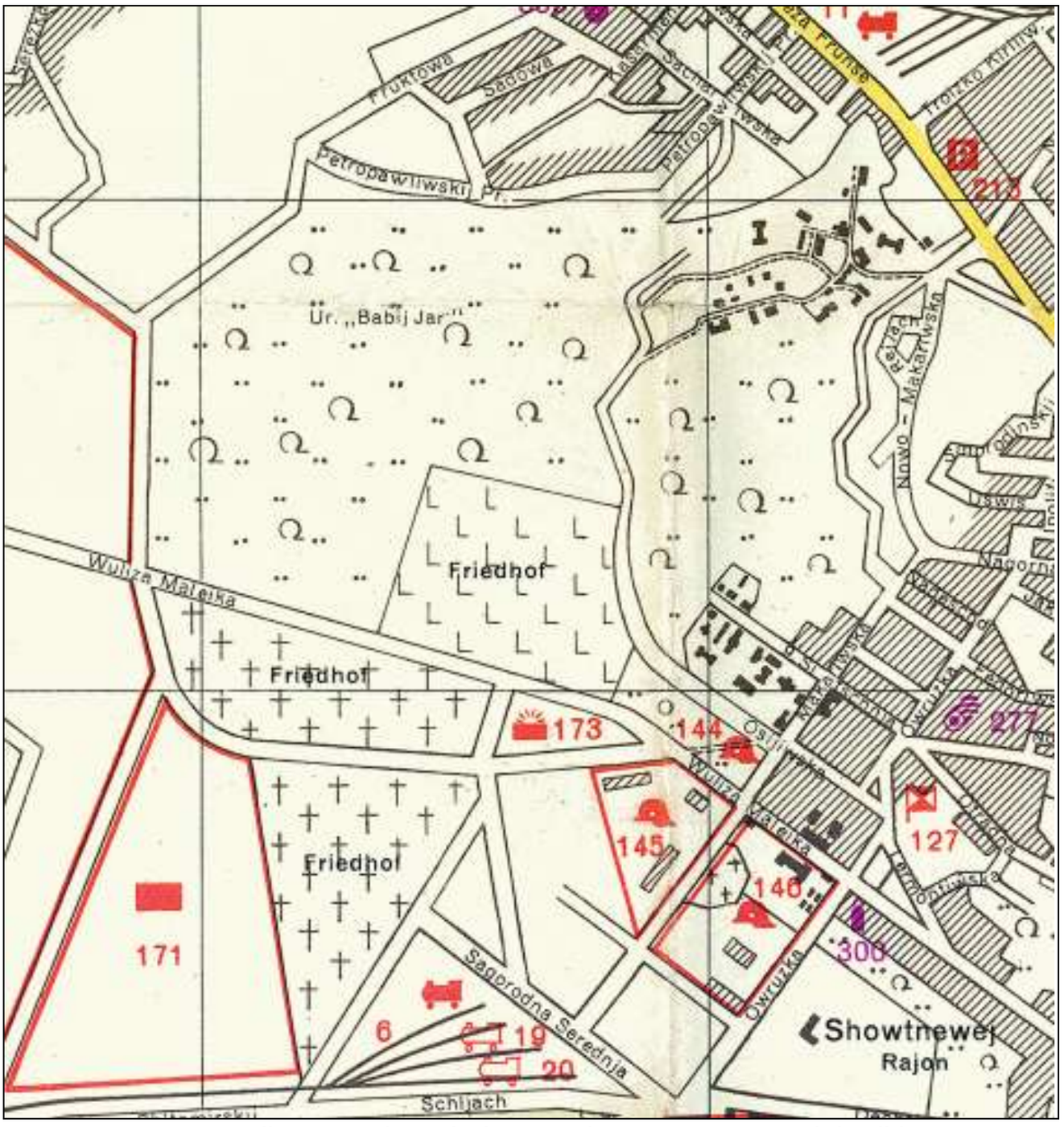
Document II.3.8. General map of Central Europe. Special Edition September 1940, 1:300,000, Lvov (Lemberg).

Document II.3.9. "Bone-crushing machine used to grind human bones in order to obtain fertilizer in the Janowska Concentration Camp. August 1944." From: USHMM, Photograph Collection, 69978.



Document II.4.1. Ukrainian map of Kiev; 1:15,000, 1947.

Document II.4.2. City map of Kiev. Scale 1:25,000. "Sonderausgabe A. Ausgabe Nr. 1, Stand: I. 1943."



Document II.4.3. Mil.-Geo.-Plan of Kiev. Scale 1:25,000. Special edition IV.41.

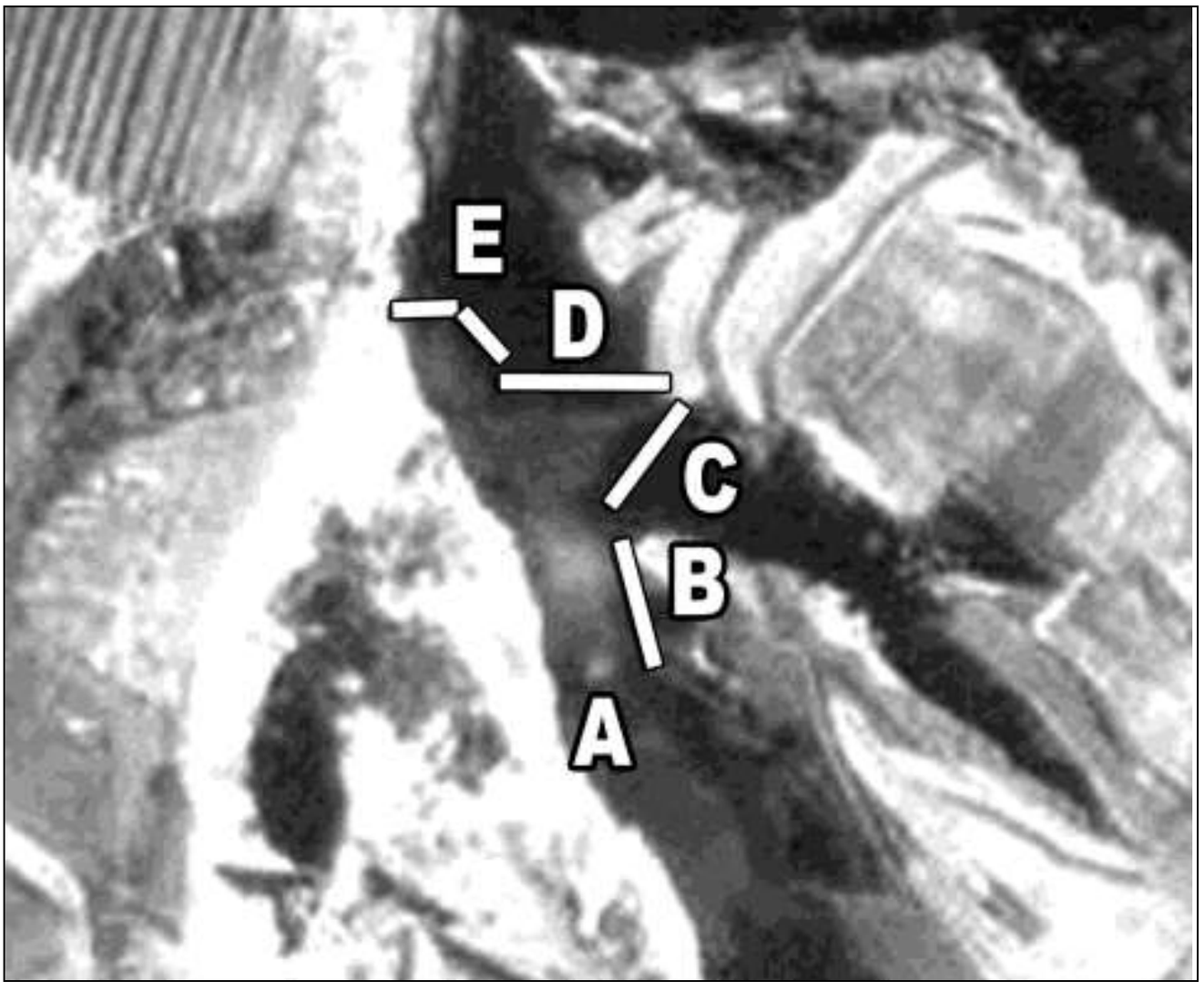
Document II.4.4. Aerial photograph of Babi Yar of 26 September 1943 published by J. C. Ball, p. 153.

Document II.4.5. German aerial photograph of Kiev taken on 26 September 1943, No. 1979/104.

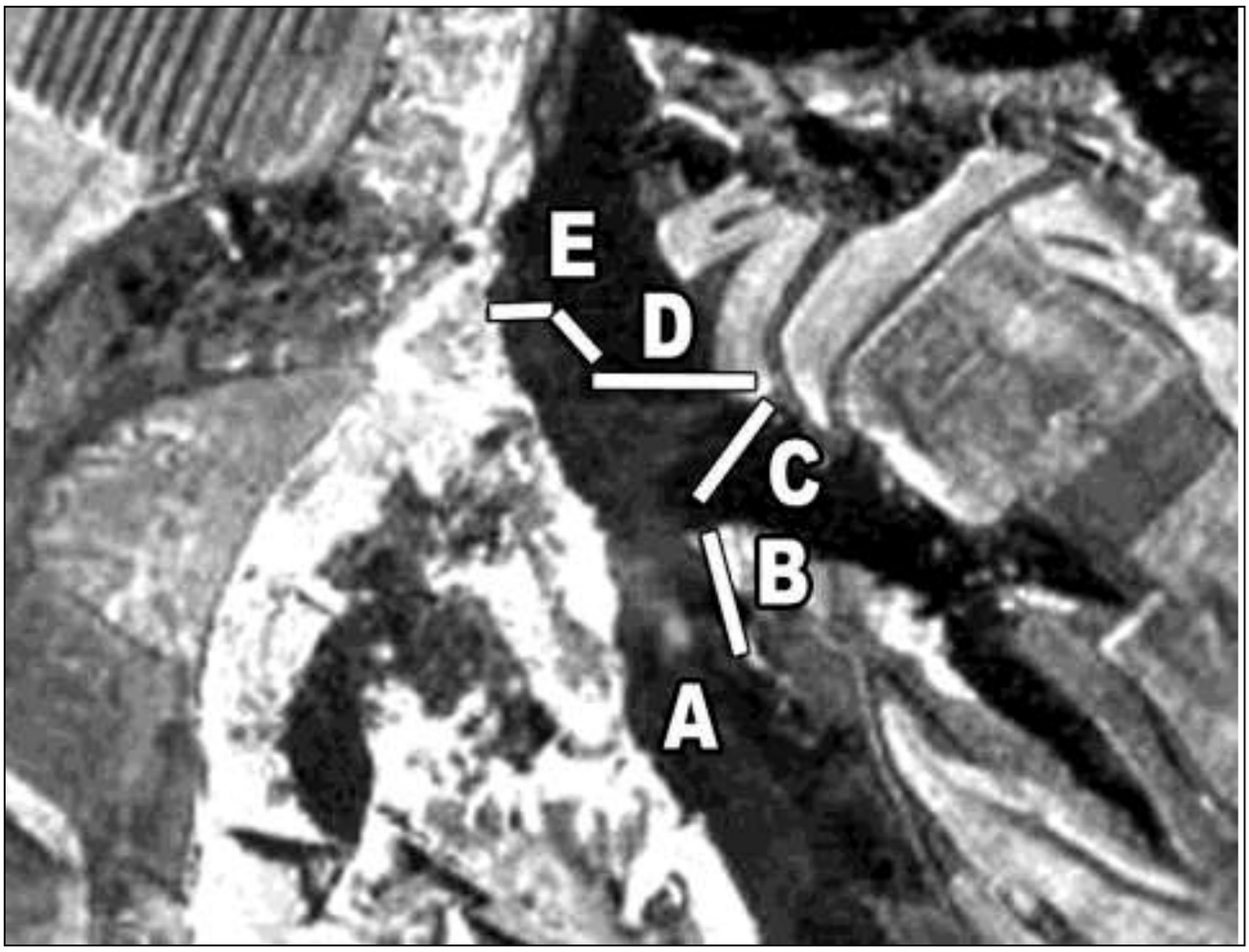
Document II.4.6. German aerial photograph of Kiev taken 26 September 1943, No. 1979/105.

Document II.4.7. German aerial photograph of Kiev taken 26 September 1943, No. 1979/104. Section enlargement Babi Yar.

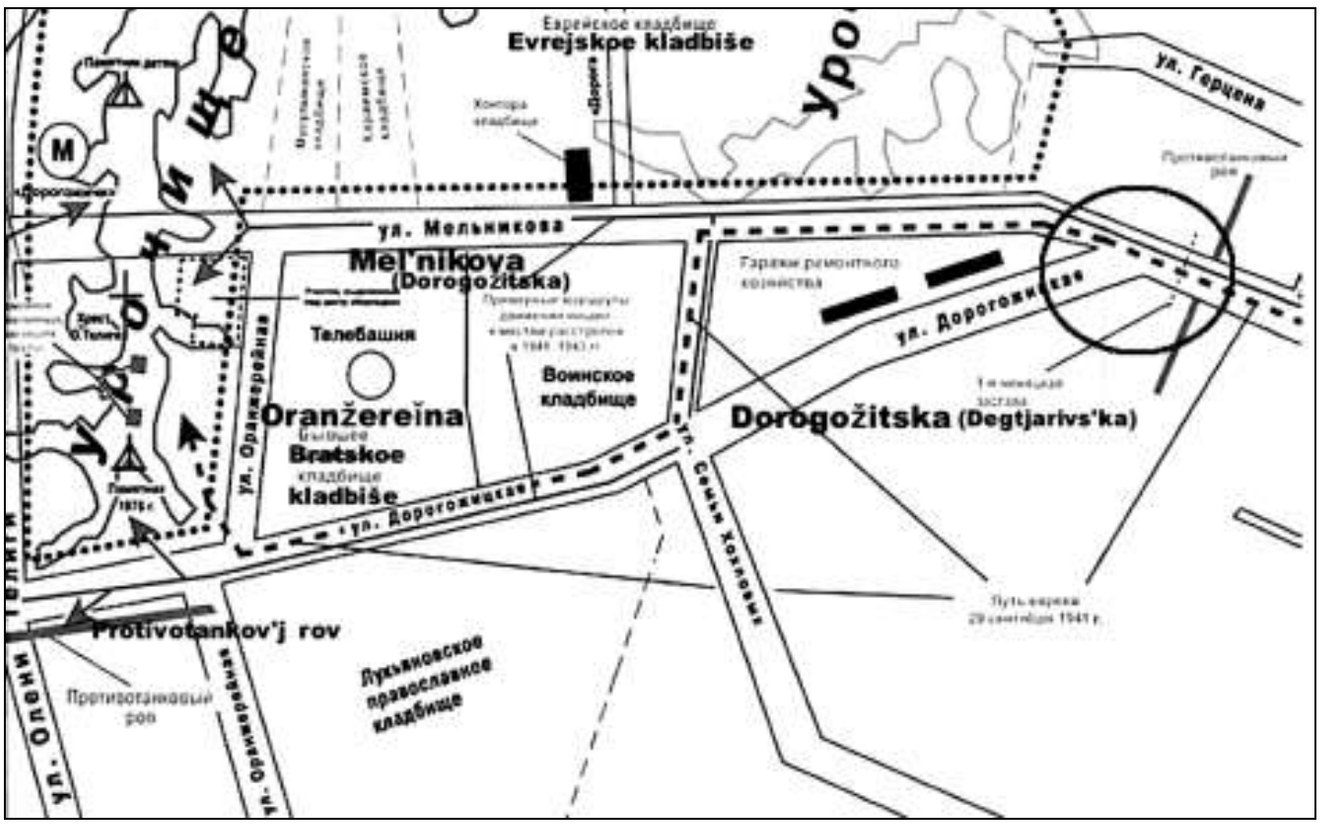
Document II.4.8. German aerial photograph of Kiev taken 26 September 1943, No. 1979/105. Section enlargement Babi Yar.



Document II.4.9. German aerial photograph of Kiev taken 26 September 1943, No. 1979/104. Section enlargement of Babi Yar with greyish area.

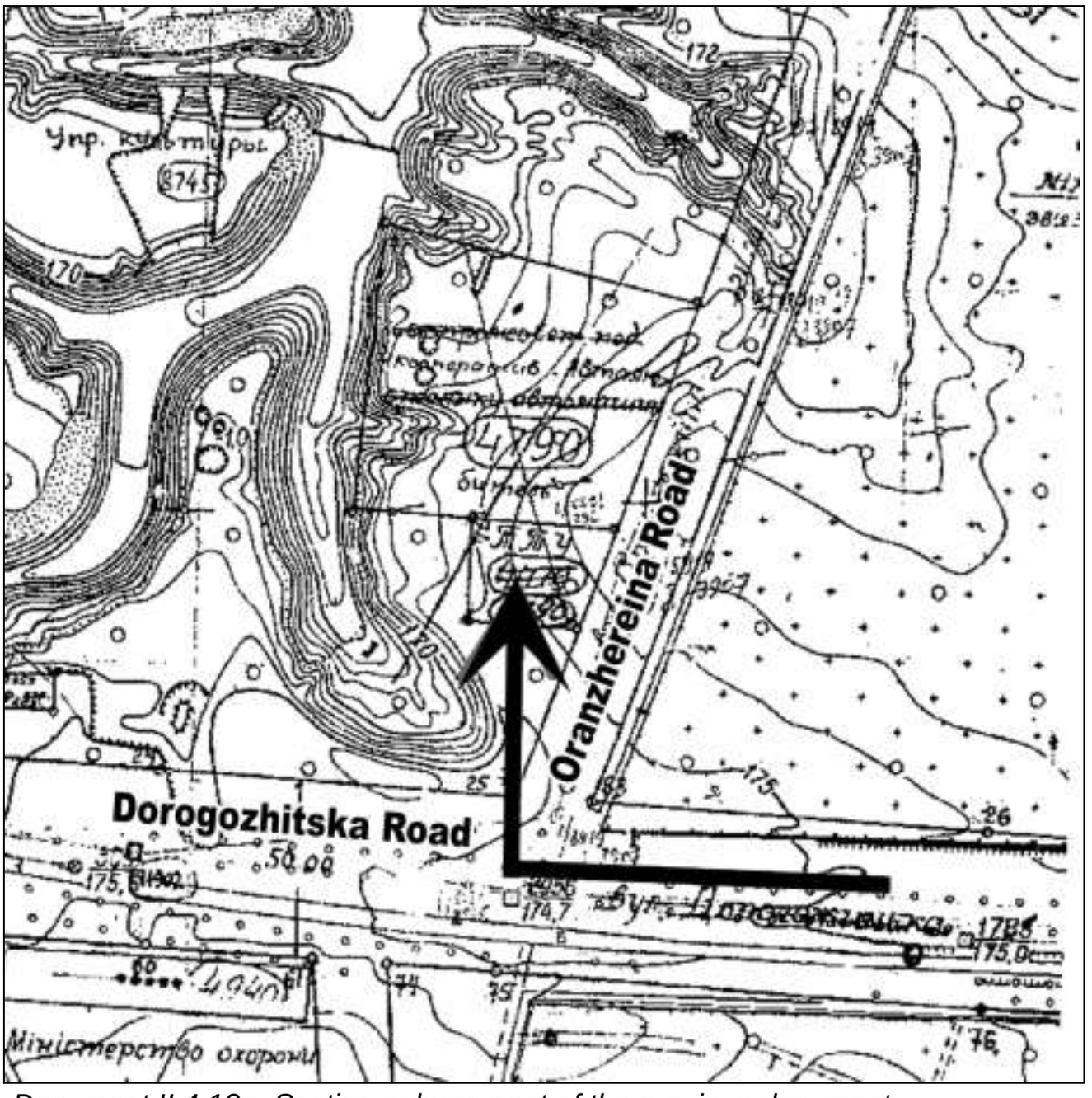


Document II.4.10. German aerial photograph of Kiev taken 26 September 1943, No. 1979/105. Section enlargement of Babi Yar with greyish area.



Document II.4.11. Pathway of the Jews to Babi Yar. From: Kruglov 2011, p. 28; Kruglov took this map from Evstafyeva/Nakhmanovich.

Document II.4.12. and 4.12a: Pathway of the Jews to Babi Yar. From: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/indexes/fund/archive5.html, Annex No. 33 (last accessed on 13. Sept. 2021).



Document II.4.12a: Section enlargement of the previous document.

Document II.4.13. German aerial photograph of Kiev taken 26 September 1943, No. 1979/105. Section enlargement with alleged smoke (top ellipse), location of claimed initial mass execution and subsequent excavations and cremations (bottom ellipse), and entry point of victims of subsequent executions (split line with two arrows).

Document II.4.14. Photo by Johannes Hähle, military photographer, 637th Propaganda Company, German Sixth Army. From: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo1.html

Document II.4.15. Photo by Johannes Hähle, military photographer, 637th Propaganda Company, German Sixth Army. From: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo17.html

Document II.4.16. A group of approximately 60 men marching in formation, four abreast, along a road escorted by four German soldiers. From: Kruglov 2011, p. 143.

Document II.4.17. A group of 50-60 women with purses and bundles along a country road in a disorderly column. From: Kruglov 2011, p. 144.

Document II.4.18. Dorogozhytska Road (now Melnikova Road) at the height of the cemetery gate. From: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo40.html

Document II.4.19. "30,000 people turn out for a June 30, 1979 No-Nukes Rally in San Luis Obispo." From: http://foundsf.org/index.php?title=Diablo_Canyon_Blockade_Tales

Document II.4.20. "Babi Yar, September 1941: Jewish Soviet citizens above the ravine. Before the murder, they are forced to undress" (Klee/Dreßen, p. 125).
From: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo39.html

Document II.4.21. "Babi-Yar, September 1941: The murderers rummage through the victims' property" (*ibid.*).
From: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo38.html

Document II.4.22. Photo by Johannes Hähle, military photographer, 637th Propaganda Company, German Sixth Army.
From: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo4.html

Document II.4.23. Photo by Johannes Hähle, military photographer, 637th Propaganda Company, German Sixth Army.
From: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo5.html

Document II.4.24. Photo by Johannes Hähle, military photographer, 637th Propaganda Company, German Sixth Army. From: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo6.html

Document II.4.25. Photo by Johannes Hähle, military photographer, 637th Propaganda Company, German Sixth Army.
From: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo15.html

Document II.4.25a. As before. From: Kruglov 2011, p. 146.

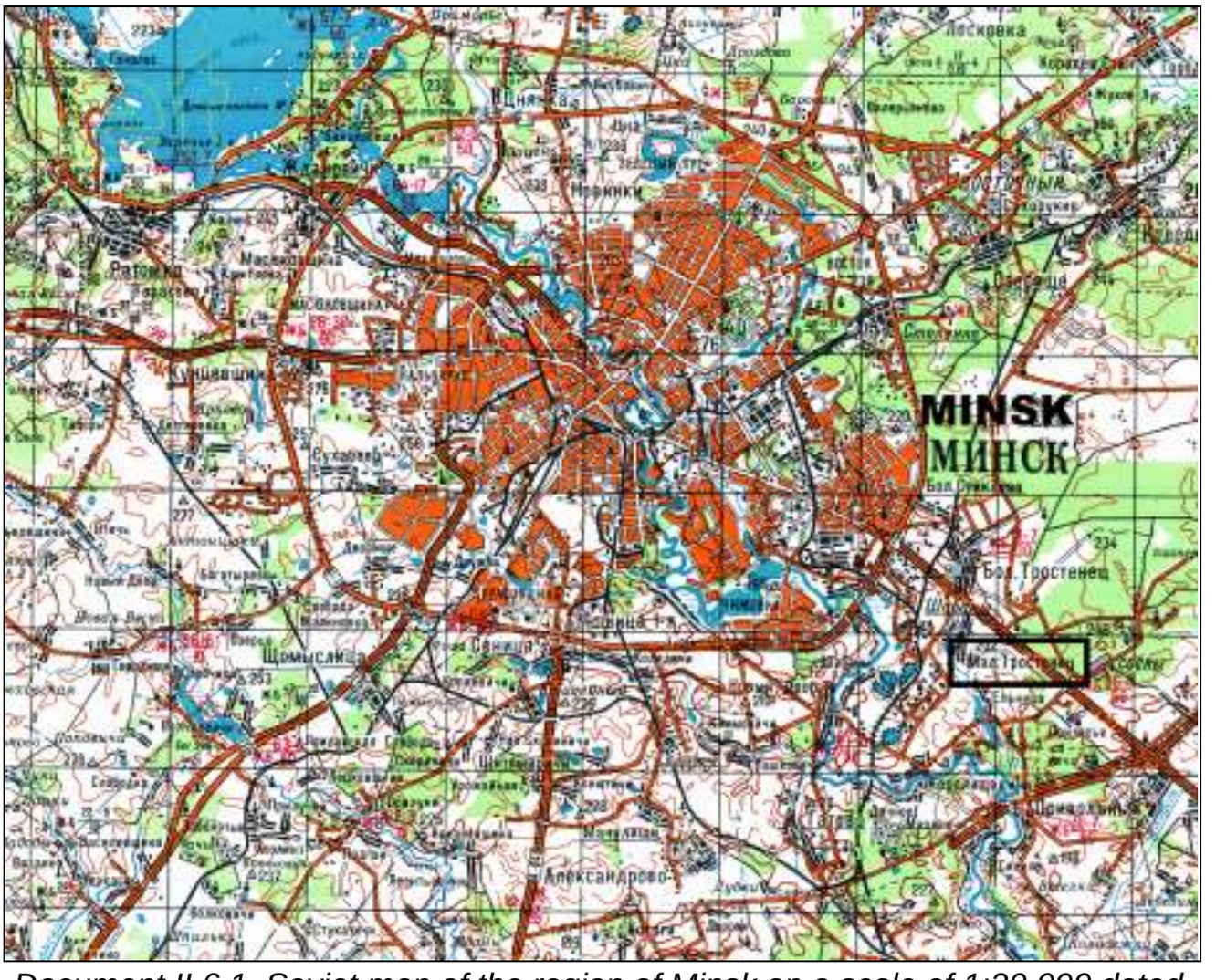
Document II.4.26. Photo by Johannes Hähle, military photographer, 637th Propaganda Company, German Sixth Army. From: www.kby.kiev.ua/book1/illustrations/photo/photo14.html

Document II.4.27. Photo by Johannes Hähle, military photographer, 637th Propaganda Company, German Sixth Army. From: Kruglov 2011, p. 146.

Document II.5.1. Mass grave at Kamenets-Podolsky. From: YVA, Item ID 25416, Archival Signature 1627/1.

Document II.5.2. Mass grave at Kamenets-Podolsky. From: YVA, Item ID 26286, Archival Signature 1627/3.

Document II.5.3. Mass grave at Kamenets-Podolsky. From: YVA, Item ID 26286, Archival Signature 1627/3.



Document II.6.1. Soviet map of the region of Minsk on a scale of 1:20,000 dated 1986. Table N-35-XXII. Detail.

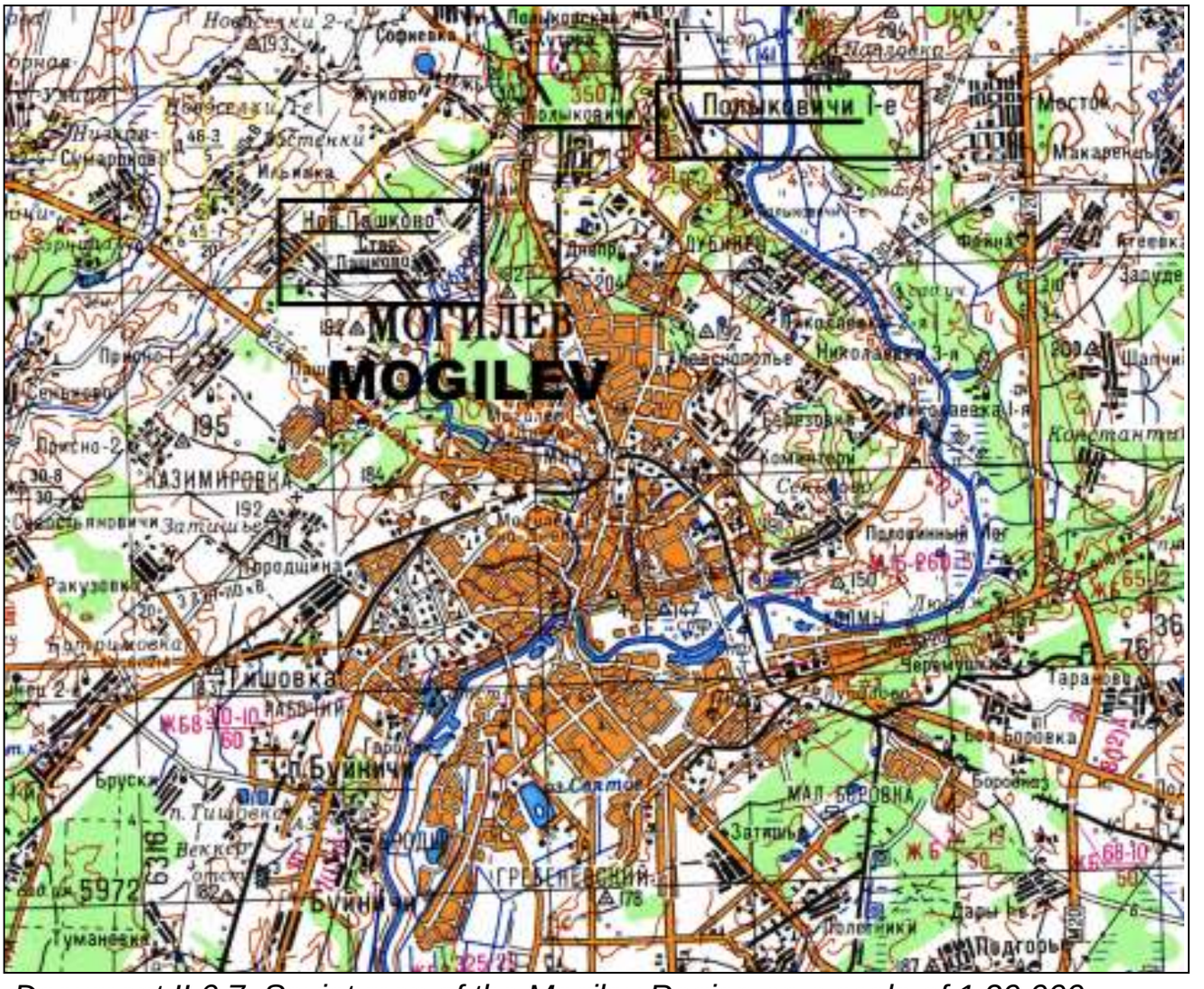
Document II.6.2. Remains of a cremation at Maly Trostenets. From: USHMM, Photograph Collection, 71958.

Document II.6.3. Remains of a cremation at Maly Trostenets. From: USHMM, Photograph Collection, 71959.

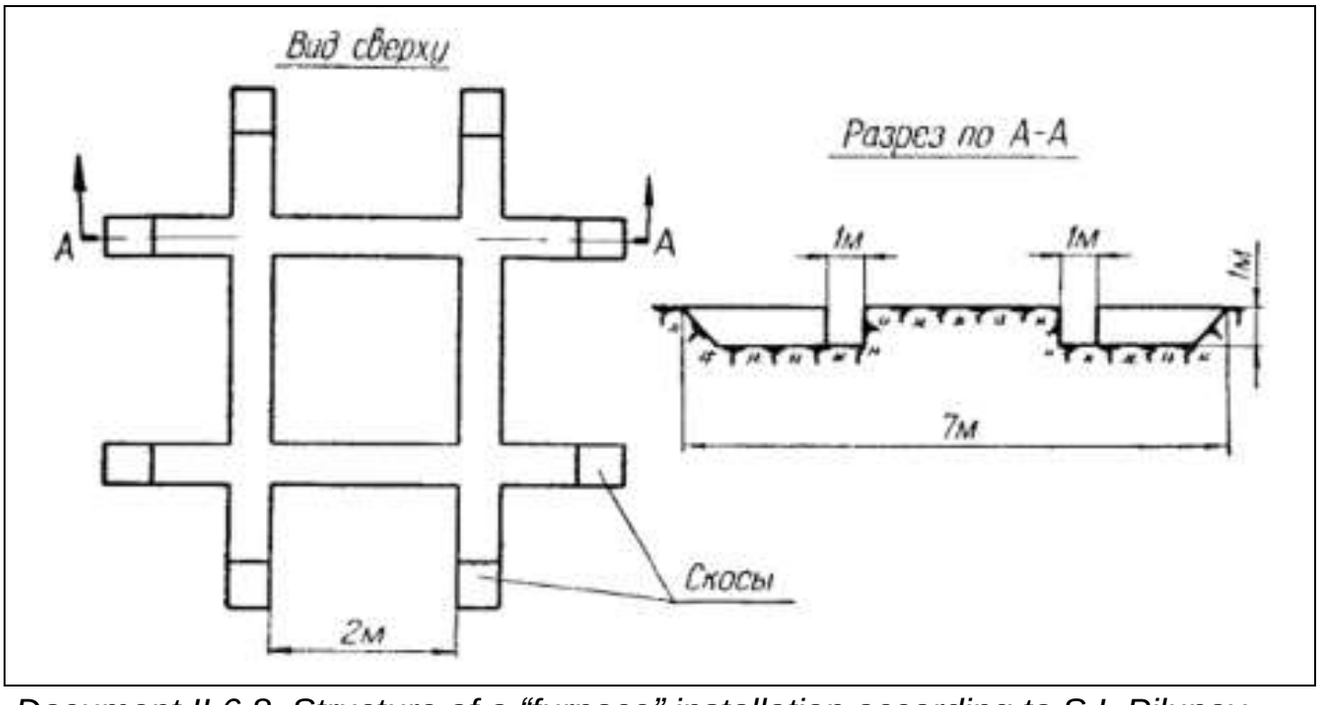
Document II.6.4. Remains of a cremation at Maly Trostenets. From: USHMM, Photograph Collection, 71947.

Document II.6.5. Warped rails at an outdoor cremation pit at the Stutthof Camp. From: GARF, 7021-128-252, p. 14.

Document II.6.6. Soviet map of the environs of Logoysk on a scale of 1:20,000 dated 1993. Table N-35-XVI. Detail.

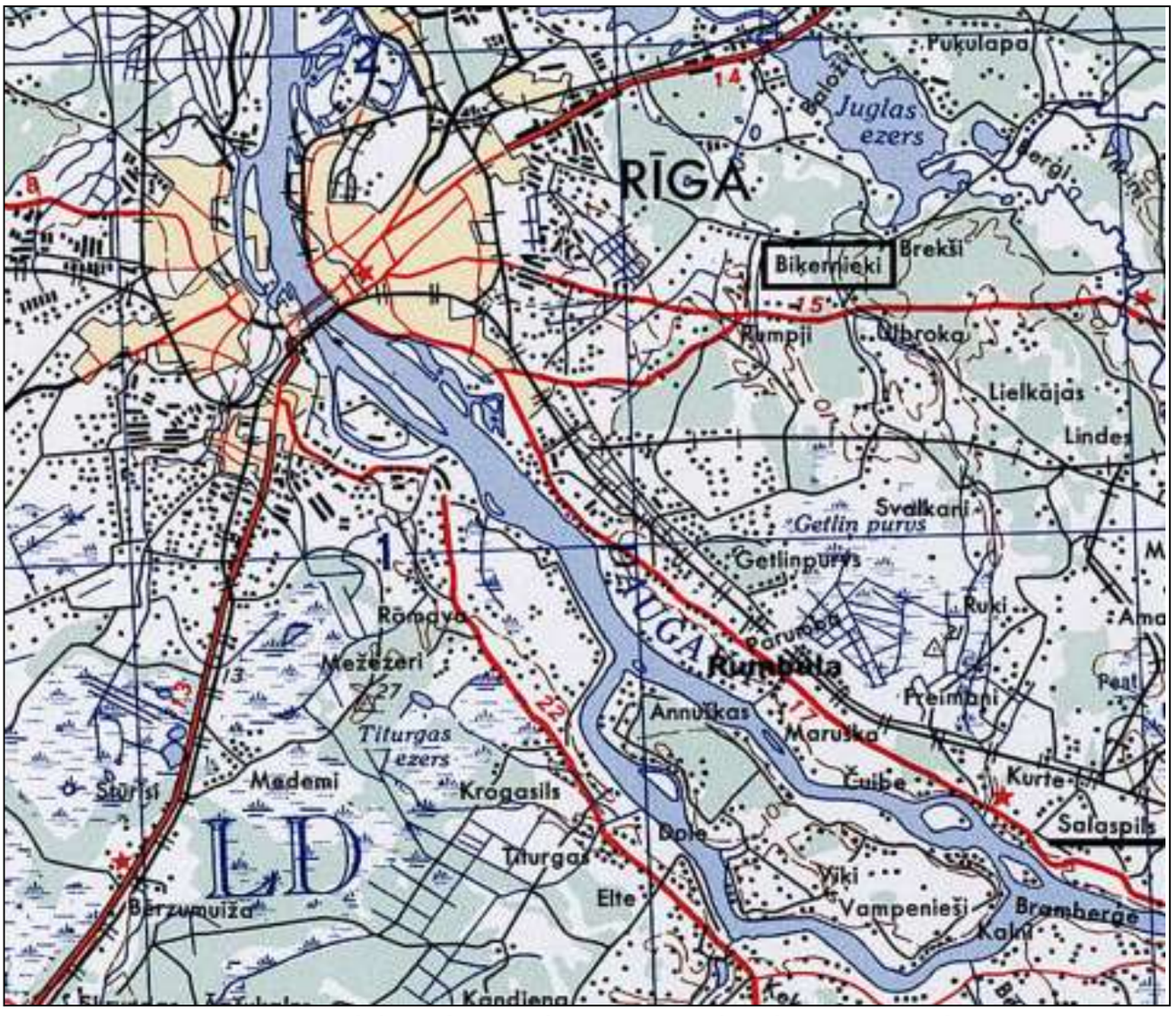


Document II.6.7. Soviet map of the Mogilev Region on a scale of 1:20,000, dated 1997. Table N-36-XIX. Detail.



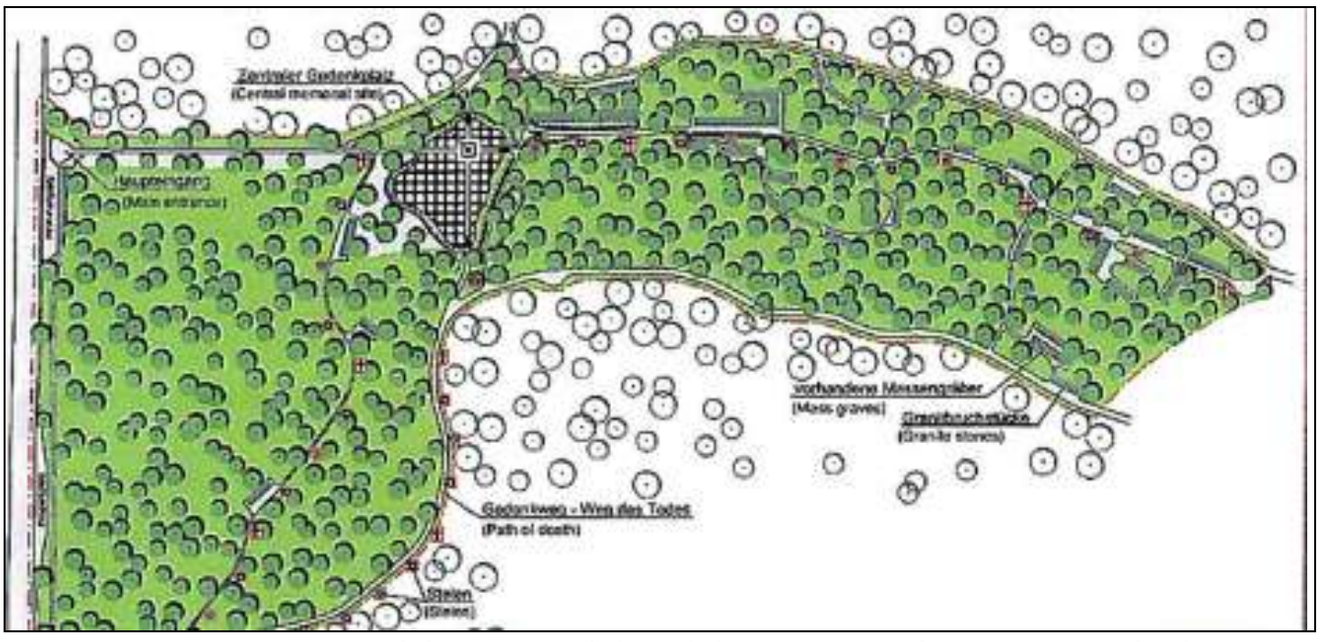
Document II.6.8. Structure of a "furnace" installation according to S.I. Pilunov. From: Beluga, p. 167.

Document II.6.9. Map of Byelorussia on a scale of 1:750,000, 1996.



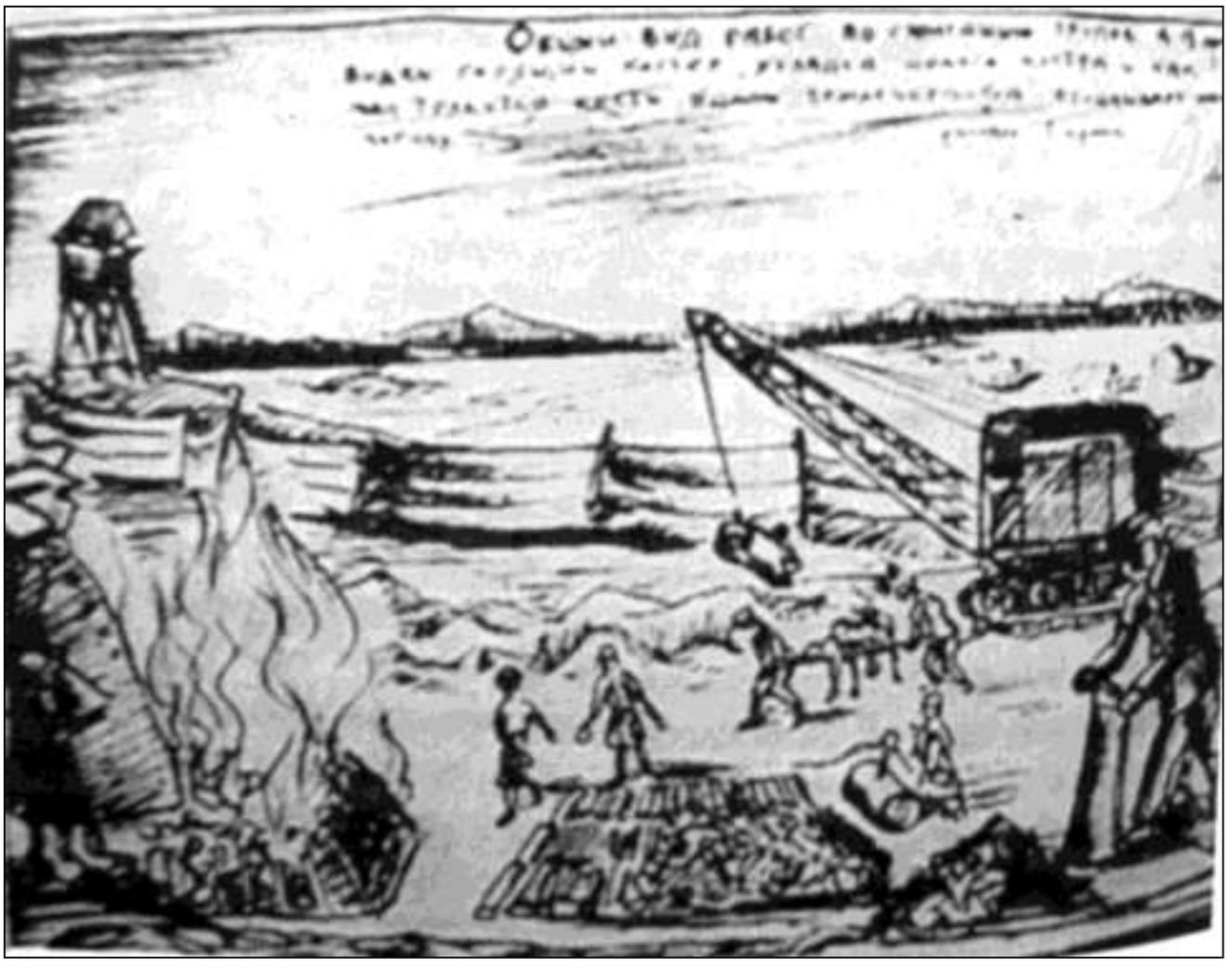
Document II.7.1. Map of the Riga region on a scale of 1:125,000 from 1954. Detail.

Document II.7.2. Purportedly a mass grave in the Bikernieki Forest. From: Deutsches Riga Komitee, p. 3.

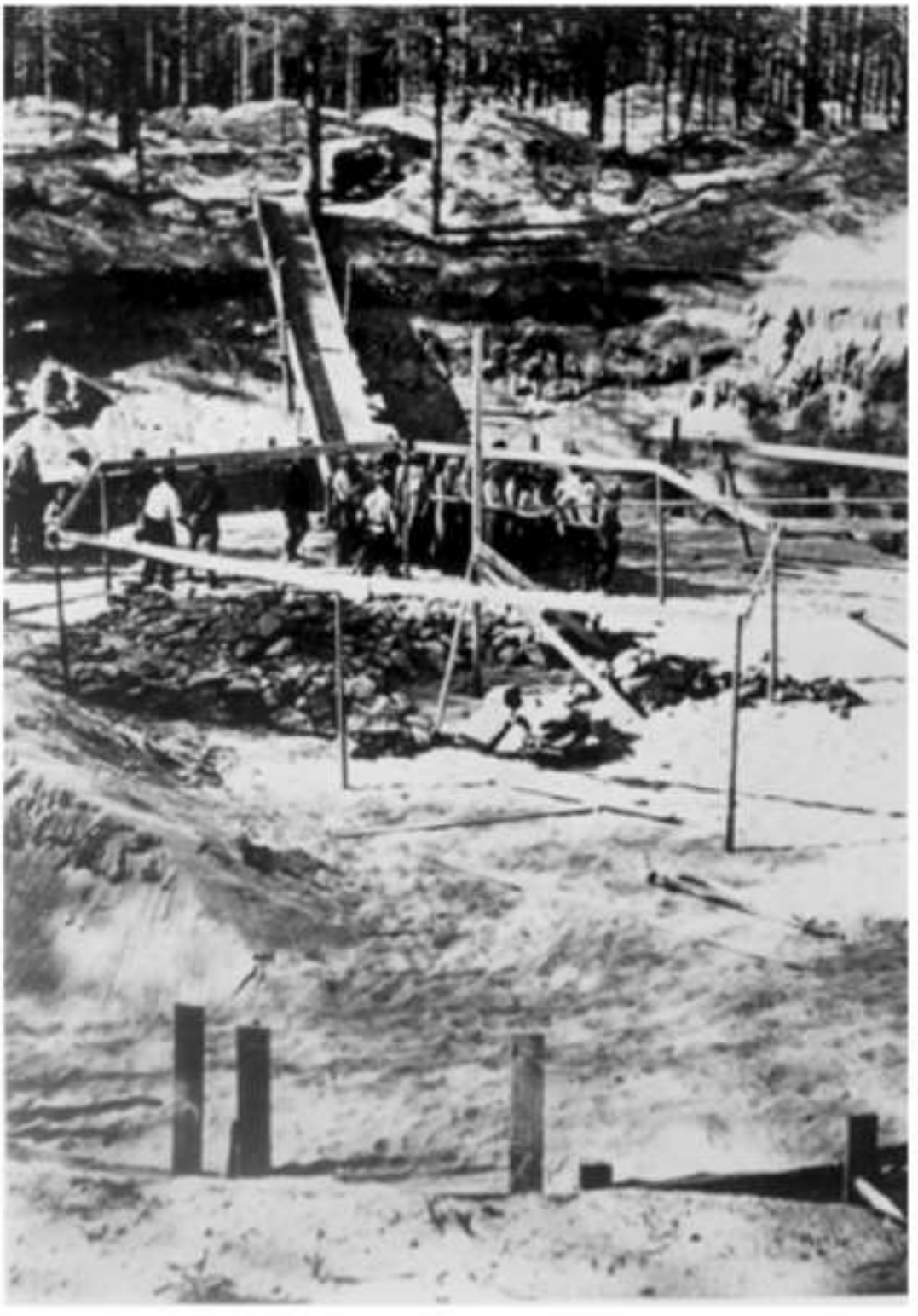


Document II.7.3. Map of the memorial and the presumed mass grave in the Bikernieki Forest. From: Deutsches Riga Komitee, p. 8.

Document II.7.4. Drawing by Anatoli Garnik showing a corpse-burning pyre. From: Faitelson 1996, p. 238.



Document II.7.5. Drawing by Anatoli Garnik showing corpse-burning pyres. From: Faitelson 1996, p. 238.



Document II.7.6. Executions at Ponary. From: YVA, Item ID 26903, Archival Signature 4613/916.

Document II.7.7. Executions at Ponary. From: YVA, Item ID 22292, Archival Signature A2725/22.

Document II.7.8. Executions at Ponary. From: YVA Item ID 23577 Archival Signature 2725/23.

Document II.7.9. "A bunker at the Ponary mass-extermination site, which housed the Jewish 'sonderkommando' men." From: GFHA, Cat. No. 5914, Registry No. 09220p.

Document II.7.10. "A bunker at the Ponary mass-extermination site, which housed the Jewish 'sonderkommando' men." From: GFHA, Cat. No. 5915, Registry No. 30759p.

Document II.8.1. Bodies found by the Soviets at Kerch. From: Shneer 2015, p. 63.

Document II.8.2. Bodies found by the Soviets at Kerch. "Kerch Resident P.I. Ivanova Found Her Husband, Who Was Tortured by the Fascist Executioners." From: Shneer 2014, p. 64; 2011, p. 101.

Document II.8.3. Bodies found by the Soviets at Kerch. "Residents of Kerch Search for Their Relatives. In the photo: V.S. Tereshchenko digs under bodies for her husband." From: Shneer 2011, p. 102.

Document II.8.4. Bodies found by the Soviets at Kerch. "Soviets Dig a Grave." From: ibid*., p. 103.*

Document II.8.5. Drawing of the bodies found at Kerch, published in the newspaper Ogonyok*: "One of the mass graves where the Hitlerites threw the inhabitants shot by themselves from the city of Kerch." From: YVA, Digital Collections, Archive Signature 5965.*

Document II.8.6. Actual scene of the drawing of Document II.8.5. Section enlargement of Document II.8.1. From: Ibid.*, Signature 7265/175.*

Document II.8.7. "Hitlerite atrocities in Kerch. Bodies of residents shot by Germans." From: Struk, p. 47.

Document II.8.8. Retouched photo of bodies allegedly found at the Drobitsky Ravine. GFHA, Cat. No. 8417.

Document II.8.9. Bodies allegedly found at Drobitsky Yar. From: GFHA, Cat. No. 8418.

Document II.8.10.-17. Stills from the documentary The Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine. From: *www.youtube.com/watch?v=4agw5_oiwUw*

II.8.10: at 3:38

II.8.11: at 3:46

II.8.12: at 3:50

II.8.13: at 3:56

II.8.14: at 4:01

II.8.15: at 4:03

II.8.16: at 4:06

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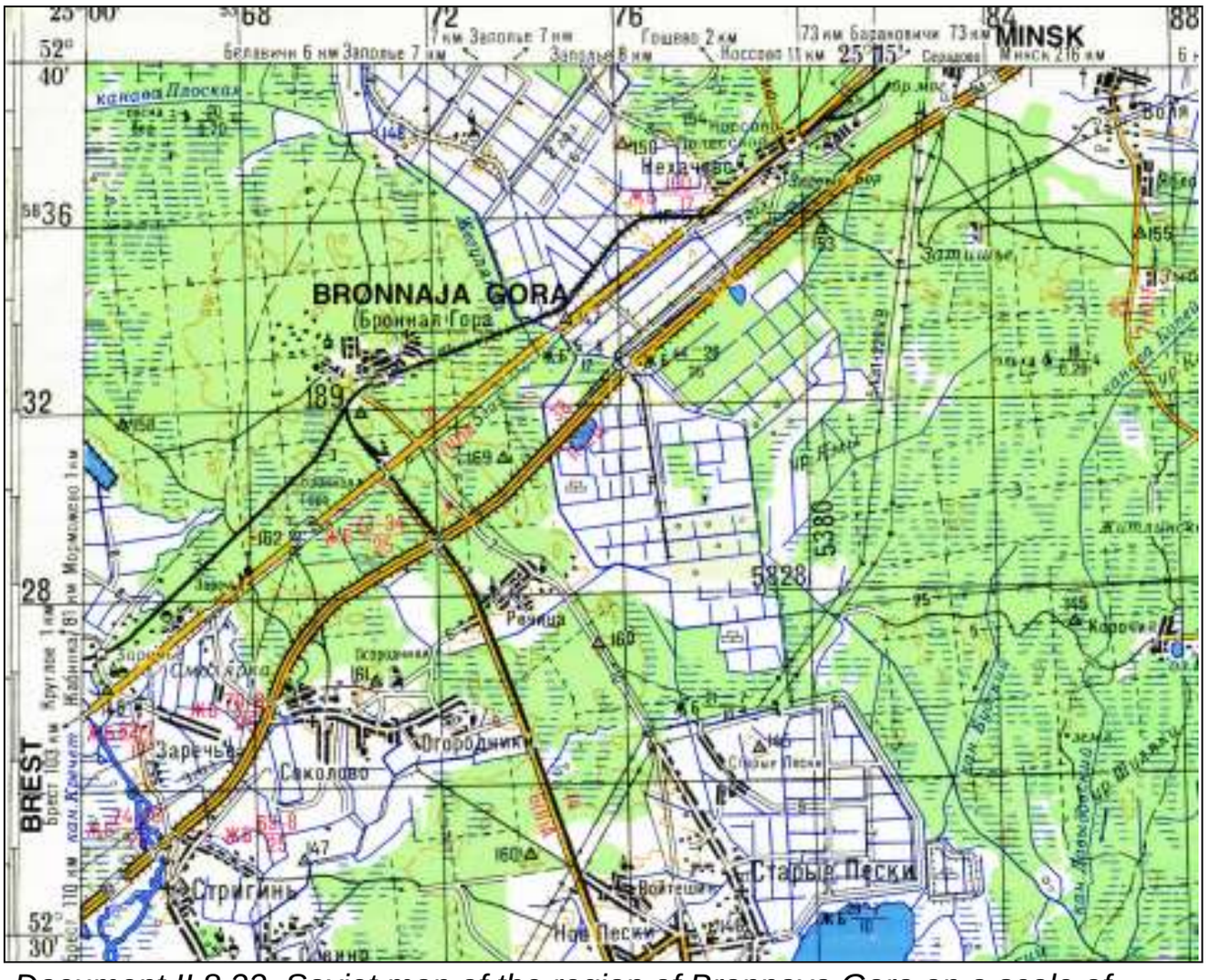
Document II.8.18. Dead Soviet PoWs in the PoW camp complex at Bobruisk in 1941. From: Yad Vashem Photo Archive 143B03.

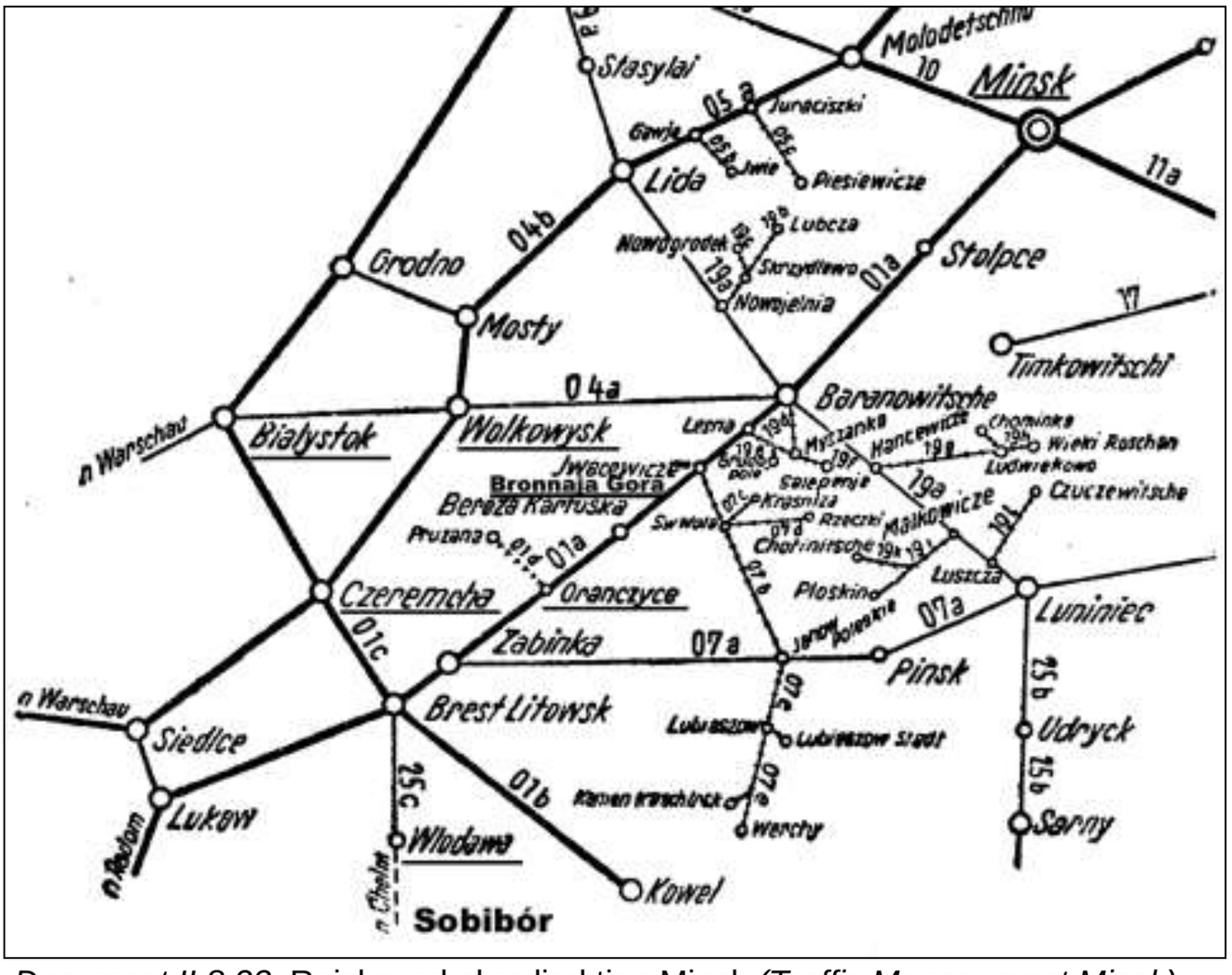
Document II.8.19. Piled-up dead Soviet PoWs in the PoW camp complex at Bobruisk in 1941. From: Yad Vashem Photo Archive 143B04.

Document II.8.20. Burial of dead Soviet PoWs in the PoW camp complex at Bobruisk in 1941. From: Yad Vashem Photo Archive 143B02.

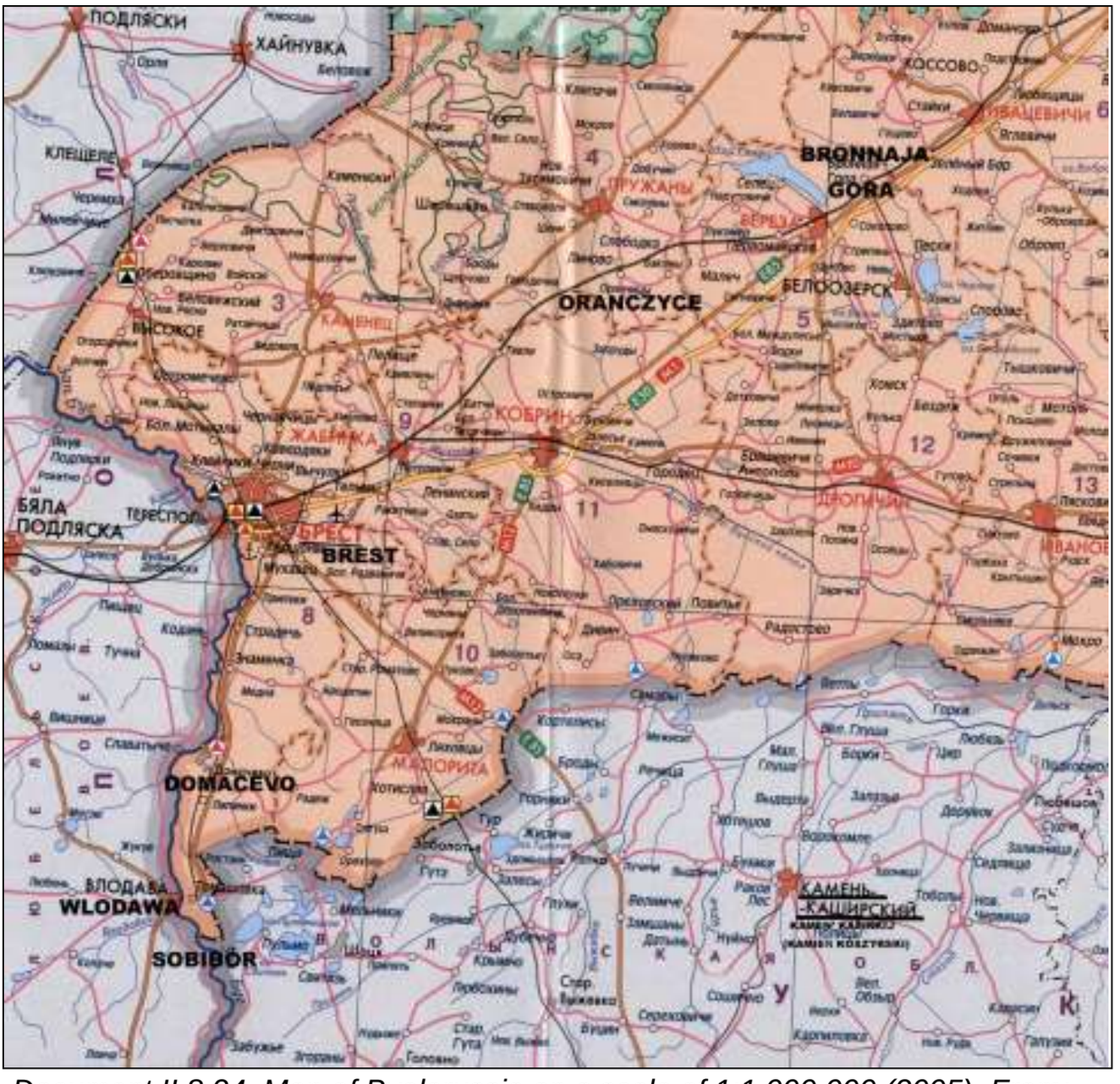
Document II.8.21. Human remains recovered in 1964 from mass graves of deceased Soviet PoWs at the former PoW camp complex at Bobruisk. From: Yad Vashem Photo Archive, FA 372/6.



Document II.8.22. Soviet map of the region of Bronnaya Gora on a scale of 1:20,000 of 1997. Table N-35-XXXII. Detail.



Document II.8.23. Reichsverkehrsdirektion Minsk *(Traffic Management Minsk).* Übersichtkarte der Strecken und Bahnhöfe des Bezirks der Reichsverkehrsdirektion Minsk *(General Map of the Rail Lines and Stations of the Reich Traffic Management District of Minsk). From: Hilberg 1981, p. 256.*



Document II.8.24. Map of Byelorussia on a scale of 1:1,000,000 (2005). From: http://pravo2000by.narod.ru/belarus_map1.jpg

Document II.8.25. Soviet map on a scale of 1:100,000 of the Brest Oblast (1977), M-34-VI.

3. Abbreviations

3.1. Archives and Collections

ACS	*Archivio Centrale dello Stato* (Central National Archives), Rome
AGK:	*Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu Instytutu Pamieci Narodowej* (Archives of the Central Commission for the Investigation of the Crimes against the Polish People – National Memorial), Warsaw
AMS:	*Archiwum Muzeum Stutthof* (Archive of Stutthof Museum), Sztutowo (Stutthof)
APL:	*Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie* (Lublin State Archive), Lublin
CDJC:	*Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine*, Paris
DAKO:	*Derzhavny arkhiv Khersonskoyi oblasti* (State Archive of the Kherson Oblast)
DARO:	*Derzhavny arkhiv Rivnenskoyi oblasti* (State Archive of the Rivne Oblast)
ERA:	*Eesti Riigiarhiiv* (Estonian State Archive)
GARF:	*Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiskoi Federatsii* (National Archives of the Russian Federation), Moscow
GDA SBU:	*Galuzevy derzhavny arkhiv Sluzhby bezpeki Ukrayiny* (Departmental State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine)
GFHA:	Ghetto Fighters' House Archive, Kibbutz Lohamei Haghetaot
IMT:	Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal Nuremberg, 14 November 1945 – 1 October 1946 (Blue Series); published trial protocols of the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg
LCVA.	*Lietuvos Centrinis Valstybės Archyvas* (Lithuanian Central State Archive)
LVVA:	*Latvijas Valsts Vestures Arhivs* (Latvian State Historical Archives)
NARA:	U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.
NCA	U.S. Office of Chief of Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality (ed.), *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression: Collection of Documentary Evidence and Guide Materials*, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1946
NMT	Official Transcript of the U.S. Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, University of Georgia Law, Digital Commons
PAAA	*Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts* (Political Archives of the German Foreign Office), Berlin
PRO:	Public Record Office, London; now: TNA, The National Archives
RGVA:	*Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv* (Russian National War Archives), Moscow
SNA:	*Slovenský Národný Archív* (National Archive of Slovakia), Bratislava
TNA:	The National Archives, London
TsDAVO:	*Tsentralny derzhavny arkhiv vyshchykh ograniv vladi ta upravlinnya Ukrayiny* (Central State Archive of the Supreme Bodies of the Ukrainian Authority and Government), Kiev
TWC	*Trials of War Criminals before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals, Nuernberg, October 1946 – April 1949* (Green Series); published trial protocols of the U.S. Military Tribunals at Nuremberg
USHMM:	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C.
VHA:	*Vojenský Historický Archiv* (Archives of Military History), Prague
YIVO:	YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York
YVA:	Yad Vashem Archives. Jerusalem
ZStL:	*Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen* (Central Office of the State Justice Administrations for the Investigation of National-Socialist Crimes), Ludwigsburg

3.2. Acronyms

AOK	*Armeeoberkommando* [*X*] – High Kommando of Army No. X
BdS	*Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD* – commander of the Security Police and the SD
BW	*Bauwerk* – building, structure
DG	*Durchgangsstraße* – thoroughfare
EG	*Einsatzgruppe* – deployment group
EK	*Einsatzkommando* – deployment squad
EM	*Ereignismeldung* – Incident Report
GG	*Generalgouvernement* – Government General – German-occupied Poland
H.K.P.	*Heereskraftfahrzeugpark* – motor pool of the army
HSSPF (HSSuPf)	*Höherer SS- und Polizei-Führer* – Higher SS and Police leader
KdS	*Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei* – commander of Security Police
KL	*Konzentrationslager* – concentration camp
KTI	*Kriminaltechnisches Institut* – Institute for Criminological Techniques
NKGB	*Narodnyy Komissariat Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* – The People's Commissariat for State Security
NKVD	*Narodnyy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del* – People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (1934-1946)
MbO	*Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten* – Reports from the occupied eastern territories
Oflag	*Offizierslager – PoW camp for officers*
OKH	*Oberkommando des Heeres* – High Command of the Army
OKW	*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* – High Command of the Armed Forces
OrPo	*Ordnungspolizei – regular German police*
RKO	*Reichskommissariat Ostland* – Reich Commissariat for the East
RKU	*Reichskommissariat Ukraine* – Reich Commissariat Ukraine
RMbO	*Reichsminister für die besetzten Ostgebiete* – Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, Alfred Rosenberg
RSHA	*Reichssicherheitshauptamt* – Reich Security Main Office
SchuPo	*Schutzpolizei* – Protective Police, police patrols
SD	*Sicherheitsdienst* – Security Service
Sipo	*Sicherheitspolizei* – Security Police
SK, S.Kdo.	*Sonderkommando* – special squad
SS	*Schutzstaffel* – Protection Squad
Stalag	*Stammlager* – PoW camp for soldiers and NCOs
Stapo	*Staatspolizei* – state police; German federal police
VK, Vorkomm.	*Vorkommando* – advance unit
VKM	*Vorkommando Moskau* – Advance Unit Moscow
WFSt	*Wehrmachtsführungsstab* – Wehrmacht Operations Staff
WVHA	*SS Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt* – SS Main Office of Economy and Administration
ZAL	*Zwangsarbeitslager* – forced-labor camp

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HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS · VOLUME 5

CONCENTRATION CAMP MAJDANEK

A HISTORICAL AND TECHNICAL STUDY

JÜRGEN GRAF & CARLO MATTOGNO

CONCENTRATION CAMP MAJDANEK: A HISTORICAL AND TECHNICAL STUDY

Concentration Camp
Majdanek

A Historical and Technical Study

Jürgen Graf and Carlo Mattogno

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Cover illustrations: top: the new crematorium at Majdanek, reconstructed after the war, once falsely claimed to have contained a homicidal gas chamber (Goku122, 17 March 2006, Wikipedia Commons); center left: shower room in Barracks No. 41, once falsely claimed to have been used as a homicidal gas chamber; center right: clothing-fumigation chamber close to Barracks No. 41, still falsely claimed to have been used as a homicidal gas chamber. The blue staining originates from exposure to hydrogen cyanide (Zyklon B) during fumigations; bottom: Majdanek "Mausoleum" near the crematorium allegedly containing ash from victims (Jolanta Dyr, 16 June 2013, Wikipedia Commons).

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Introduction

1. Concentration Camp Lublin-Majdanek

In July 1941 the National-Socialist occupation administration decided to set up a large concentration camp near the city of Lublin. As of October of that year the camp developed in the southeastern outskirts of the city. The Poles called it "Majdanek" from the start; the name can be traced back to the city district Majdan Tatarski. Eventually the name came to be generally used, and it is also the name of choice today in academic historiography.

In time, Majdanek became by far the largest concentration camp on the territory of the General Government.[1] Non-Jewish and Jewish Polish citizens made up the bulk of the inmates, but prisoners from many other nations were also detained there, as well as a number of Soviet prisoners of war.

On July 23, 1944, Majdanek was overrun by the Red Army, which, however, discovered only some 1,500 inmates there;[2] the others had been evacuated to the west in the preceding months.

It was not long after the capture of the camp that the Soviets and their Polish allies began reporting about horrific mass murders which Germans had allegedly committed there. In a Lublin Special Court's indictment of six guards who had failed to flee in time, it was averred that 1.7 million people had been murdered in Majdanek.[3] At the Nuremberg Tribunal in early 1946 there was talk of 1.5 million victims.[4]

No serious student of the matter accepts these figures anymore; today they are considered unanimously to be fantastic exaggerations. But official historiography continues to hold that aside from those inmates who died of 'natural' causes and those who were individually tried, convicted, and then executed by shooting or hanging, there were very great numbers of (mostly Jewish) people who were murdered in Majdanek by gassing, or by execution without having been tried or convicted.

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1 Auschwitz, in Upper Silesia, was not located in the General Government, but in the area that was annexed to the German Reich after Poland's defeat in 1939.

2 This is the figure given in the Polish literature (*e.g.* see Anna Wiśniewska and Czesław Rajca, *Majdanek. Lubelski obóz koncentracyjny, Panstwowe Muzeum na Majdanku,* Lublin 1996, p. 32). Gerald Reitlinger cites a higher figure, namely 6,000 (*Die Endlösung. Hitlers Versuch der Ausrottung der Juden Europas 1939-1945,* Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1983, p. 512).

3 *Sentencja wyroku. Specjalny Sad Karny w Lublinie,* December 2, 1944 (Reasons for Sentence in the Trial of Hermann Vogel *et al.*), Archiwum Panstwowego Muzeum na Majdanku (Archive of the State Museum in Majdanek, henceforth abbreviated as *APMM*), sygn. XX-1, p. 100.

4 *IMT*, vol. VII, p. 590.

Let us first examine how Majdanek is represented in official western historiography, in Polish historiography, and in Revisionist historiography.

2. Majdanek in Official Western Historiography

According to official western historiography, Majdanek served concurrently as labor and extermination camp.[5] The inmates there, it is claimed, were differentially processed by selection; those who were judged fit to work were put to forced labor, those who were unfit to work were "liquidated." As of early fall 1942, Jews were allegedly murdered *en masse* in gas chambers, some with Zyklon B and some with carbon monoxide. Further, some 18,000 Jews were allegedly shot in Majdanek on November 3, 1943.

The well-known anthology *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas*, edited by Kogon, Langbein, and Rückerl, states:[6]

> *"Much like in Auschwitz – if not for quite as long and to as shockingly great an extent as there – the administration of the Majdanek concentration camp near Lublin made use of gas chambers to murder great numbers of people. As soon as these chambers had been installed, the Jews were subjected to selection upon arrival: those who appeared unfit to work were escorted off to be gassed."*

Somewhat more cautiously, but along the same lines, the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* states:[7]

> *"Some prisoners were taken to the gas chambers immediately upon arrival: in this respect Majdanek was an extermination camp."*

Since 1945 tens of thousands of books have been published about the 'Holocaust'. The focal point of the 'Holocaust,' it is claimed, were six so-called 'extermination camps' in Poland. One would therefore expect to find veritable mountains of literature about all these 'extermination camps' and consequently also about Majdanek, but far from it: western historiography has completely neglected the Lublin camp. Since 1945 not one West European or American historian has been moved to author a work about Majdanek which even remotely approximated to scientific and academic standards!

Aside from the memoirs of former inmates, which are necessarily subjective and can never take the place of historical research striving for objectivity, Heiner Lichtenstein's work *Majdanek. Reportage eines Prozesses*[8] is the only

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[5] The German term for this – *"Vernichtungslager"* – does not appear in so much as one German war-time document. It arose from Allied terminology and is a direct translation of "extermination camp."

[6] E. Kogon, H. Langbein and A. Rückerl (eds.), *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas*, Frankfurt/M.: S. Fischer Verlag, 1983, p. 241.

[7] Eberhard Jäckel, Peter Longerich and Julius H. Schoeps (eds.), *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*, Berlin: Argon Verlag, 1993, p. 918.

[8] Heiner Lichtenstein, *Majdanek. Reportage eines Prozesses,* Frankfurt/M: Europäische Ver-

German-language book about this camp which has achieved notable circulation. Categorically the book is in no way a scientific analysis. Lichtenstein accepts the mass extermination of human beings in Majdanek as an axiom and takes the Düsseldorf trial of former members of the camp staff (1975-1981) as an opportunity to rail in journalistic style against the National Socialist system, the defendants, their defense counsels, and the Federal German justice system, which he feels was too lax in prosecuting National Socialist offenders. Emotional outrage takes the place of sober historical inquiry in this work.

There are perhaps two main reasons for the total neglect Majdanek has experienced in western historiography:

- The almost complete domination of the 'Holocaust' debate by the Auschwitz camp;
- The reluctance of historians to master the Polish language, without which serious work in this field is impossible.

3. Majdanek in Polish Historiography

Since the Majdanek camp was located in Poland, it is only logical that numerous books and studies on this topic were published there. Some of the literature in question is of excellent historiographical quality – except on two vital and closely related issues, namely the number of victims of the camp and the matter of the mass extermination of inmates by gassing or shooting. As we shall see in the following, the evidence presented for these issues does not stand up to critical examination.

Aside from a few titles which have been translated into western languages, this literature is unknown outside of Poland. We shall refer to it frequently in the following.

The Polish researchers, just like the western ones, portray Majdanek as a combination labor and extermination camp. The fact that under Communist rule historiography had to adhere to political guidelines and handicaps is freely admitted in Poland today; for example, Czesław Rajca of the Majdanek Museum conceded in a 1992 publication about the number of victims of the Lublin camp that these numbers had been inflated, not only by the Soviets but also by Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz, the author of the first historical study of Majdanek.[9]

The figure of one and a half million or even more victims of Majdanek was so incredible that it fell into disuse soon after the war. In 1948 Łukaszkiewicz

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lagsanstalt, 1979.

9 Czesław Rajca, "Problem liczby ofiar w obozie na Majdanku," in: *Zeszyty Majdanka* (Majdanek Periodical; henceforth abbreviated as *ZM*) XIV, 1992, p. 127-132.

spoke of 360,000 dead. Of those, some 60% "succumbed to camp death," a euphemism for death due to epidemics, debilitation, malnutrition etc.; 25% were said to have been murdered in the gas chambers, and the remaining 15% were killed by other means (shooting, hanging, lethal injection, etc.).[10]

For decades, Łukaszkiewicz's figure was considered final, but for some years now historians no longer hold to it. In his aforementioned article, Rajca suggests that approximately 235,000 people actually died in Majdanek. This figure has also been adopted by the authorities of the Majdanek Memorial.

We shall show later how the Polish historians arrived at their statistics, and we shall compare these completely untenable figures with those which we ourselves have calculated on the basis of the relevant documents.

Neglecting Majdanek is not something of which one can accuse the Polish contemporary historians – quite unlike their western colleagues. Their basic weakness is that they have not been able to shake off the fetters of doctrinal Stalinist historiography, which created a propagandistically distorted picture of the camp from the start. The Polish reductions in the victim count, first in 1948 and then again in the early 1990s, are nothing more than reluctant and utterly inadequate steps towards overcoming a historiography tied to the marionette strings of politics.

4. Majdanek in Revisionist Literature

Just like orthodox western historians, the Revisionists have completely neglected Majdanek. As of the late 1990s, this side had produced only one single German language book devoted exclusively to this camp. Its title is *Majdanek in alle Ewigkeit?* (Majdanek in All Eternity?), and it was written by Josef Gideon Burg, an anti-Zionist Jew. This work was published in 1979 against the background of the Majdanek Trial taking place at that time in Düsseldorf, and made no claims to academic status; Burg relied primarily on eyewitness accounts and newspaper articles. He accused the Zionists of misusing the tragic events in Majdanek for purposes of moral and financial blackmail of the German people, and insisted that there had been no gas chambers in that camp. Writing rebelliously in German – his mother tongue was Yiddish – he stated:[11]

> *"During my stay at the Breslau training school for propagandists, where we were shown soap made from Jews and were taught the gas chamber and extermination theories, a young man there drew my attention by his courageous honesty. I*

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[10] Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz, "Obóz koncentracyjni i zagłady Majdanek" (The Concentration and Extermination Camp Majdanek), in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce* (Bulletin of the Commission to Investigate the German Crimes in Poland), v. 4 (1948), pp. 63-105.

[11] Josef Gideon Burg, *Majdanek in alle Ewigkeit?,* Munich: Ederer Verlag, 1979, p. 96.

later met him again during a commemorative campaign in Hildesheim. He complained that his completed form had already been returned to him twice and that he had been threatened that he would be prevented from emigrating to the United States unless he reported 'in detail' about his work in the gas chambers. R.W., now 30 years of age, told me in tears that he could not lie, not even to the detriment of goyim. He, being an orthodox believer, was forbidden to do that by the commandment of Exodus 20:16, which states: 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.' He told me that he had been in charge of a delousing chamber in Majdanek and later in Birkenau. Even at that time he already had trouble with his Jewish supervisors because he had refused to participate in stealing items delivered for delousing. R.W. complained that in the questionnaires he was supposed to turn lice into people and the misappropriated bundles of clothing into witnesses to the extermination."

In the structure of its argument and in its highly emotional and polemic tone, Burg's book is the Revisionist counterpart, so to speak, of Heiner Lichtenstein's. Burg also dealt partly with Majdanek in another German language book which he titled *Zionazi Zensur in der BRD*.[12]

The Revisionist side has published two studies of the alleged execution gas chambers of Majdanek. In his famous expert report of 1988, the American Fred Leuchter focused primarily on those structures in Auschwitz I and Birkenau which the standard literature calls "gas chambers," but the last section of his report also dealt with the gas chambers of Majdanek. Leuchter concluded that for reasons of construction engineering the structures in question could not have been used to gas human beings.[13]

Whereas Leuchter's conclusions with regard to Auschwitz prompted several replies, only one author – the Frenchman Jean-Claude Pressac – responded to the section of the *Leuchter Report* devoted to Majdanek.[14]

In the context of the discussion of the alleged 'gas chambers,' we shall refer to the portion of the *Leuchter Report* relevant to this topic, as well as to Pressac's critique of the same.

And finally, Germar Rudolf, a German, has dedicated four pages in an article about homicidal gas chambers to those allegedly operated in Majdanek.[15] In his view, toxicological, chemical, and structural factors as well as the contradictory nature of the eyewitness testimony speak against the factuality of the alleged execution gassings in these facilities. We shall come back to this study later as well.

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12 Josef Gideon Burg, *Zionazi Zensur in der BRD,* Munich: Ederer Verlag, 1980.

13 Fred A. Leuchter, *An Engineering Report on the Alleged Gas Chambers at Auschwitz, Birkenau and Majdanek, Poland,* Toronto: Samisdat Publishers Ltd., 1988.

14 Jean-Claude Pressac, "Les carences et incohérences du rapport Leuchter," in: *Jour J,* December 12, 1988, pp. I-X.

15 Germar Rudolf and Ernst Gauss, "Die 'Gaskammern' von Auschwitz und Majdanek," in: Ernst Gauss (ed.), *Grundlagen zur Zeitgeschichte*, Grabert, Tübingen 1994, pp. 276-279.

5. The Purpose of the Present Study

As we have shown, 52 years after the war's end there still exists not one comprehensive study of the Majdanek camp – neither by the orthodox nor by the Revisionist side – that measures up to scientific and academic requirements. We intend the present volume to fill this significant gap. In doing so we shall draw on the findings of the voluminous Polish literature on this subject, but we shall also deal critically with the weaknesses inherent in this literature.

The starting point for this study was a visit to Lublin in June 1997. Naturally, the state of evidence for the alleged mass extermination of human beings and the related question of the number of Majdanek victims are the main emphasis of our work.

The fact that we have chosen the conservative title *Majdanek Concentration Camp: A Historical and Technical Study* for this work indicates that we do not in any way claim this to be a history of the entire Majdanek camp. That, incidentally, would be quite a difficult task, since unfortunately the events in the camp are poorly documented; many documents were destroyed prior to the camp's dissolution or have disappeared since. For this reason many important aspects of the history of Majdanek will remain forever unclear, unless documents which have been lost or, for whatever reason, have been kept hidden, will one day turn up. For example, the fundamental question of how many inmates were sent to the camp during its entire existence cannot be answered precisely under the conditions at hand, so that estimates must suffice for the time being.

Our book cannot reveal 'the truth about Majdanek,' but it shall help us to come a good step closer to that truth. That many a long and widely accepted idea will fall by the wayside in the process can hardly be avoided.

Carlo Mattogno assumes responsibility for chapters IV, V, VI, VIII and IX of our book. Jürgen Graf is responsible for chapters I, II, III, X, the Introduction and the Conclusion. Chapter VII was written by both authors jointly.

January 7, 1998
Carlo Mattogno
Jürgen Graf

Chapter I: A Brief Overview of the History of the Majdanek Camp in Historical Context

1. The Function of the Concentration Camps in the Third Reich

During the six years of peace that the Third Reich was granted, the concentration camps had no economic significance. Their purpose was to isolate habitual criminals, as well as opponents of the regime who were considered incorrigible, from the general population, and to reform those regarded as re-educable to become good citizens in the spirit of National Socialist ideology. In pre-war times the number of concentration camp inmates was relatively small; in the summer of 1937, for example, the population of all concentration camps, including the criminals and the "anti-socials" (vagrants, beggars etc.), totaled 7,500.[16]

After the war broke out, more and more concentration camps were set up and the number of inmates skyrocketed. The war brought an internationalization of the camps; aside from resistance fighters from the nations under German occupation, ever-increasing numbers of prisoners-of-war were also committed, and as of 1941 numerous Jews also joined the inmate population.

Constantly more Germans were called to fight at the front as the war dragged on. Manpower shortages became a problem of paramount importance for the economy of the Third Reich. This resulted in a change of the concentration camps' function. The re-education function was pushed into the background, and the economic aspect grew in importance.

On April 30, 1942, SS-*Obergruppenführer* Oswald Pohl, Chief of the WVHA (*Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt*, the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office), wrote to the *Reichsführer*-SS Heinrich Himmler:[17]

> *"The war has brought a visible change in the structure of the concentration camps and has fundamentally altered their responsibilities with regard to the use to which the inmates may be put. The detention of inmates solely for security, educational or preventive reasons is no longer in the fore. Emphasis has shifted to economic concerns. Mobilizing all inmate labor, first of all for war-related tasks (increased armaments production) and later on for tasks of peacetime, is becoming more and more important.*

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16 Arno Mayer, *Der Krieg als Kreuzzug,* Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1986, p. 245.
17 R-129.

This realization results in certain necessary measures requiring a gradual restructuring of the concentration camps from their former, one-sidedly political form into an organization appropriate to the economic tasks."

Jews in particular were detailed to work in the camps. In a letter to SS-*Gruppenführer* Richard Glücks, the inspector of the concentration camps, Himmler stated in late January 1942:[18]

"Be prepared to admit 100,000 male Jews and up to 50,000 Jewesses into the concentration camps in the next four weeks. Great economic orders and tasks will be put to the concentration camps in the next weeks."

A wealth of documents demonstrates the role of the Jews in the National Socialist war economy.[19] On May 11, 1944, for example, Adolf Hitler personally ordered 200,000 Jews employed within the framework of the Fighter Plane Construction Program.[20] Of course the extremely high death rates in the camps, resulting primarily from diseases but also from inadequate rations and clothing as well as from overwork, detracted severely from the economic efficiency of the camps. For this reason, Richard Glücks sent a circular to all concentration camp commandants on December 28, 1942, making them personally responsible for maintaining the inmates in a work-fit condition. Glücks wrote:[21]

"The First Camp Physicians are to use all means at their disposal to effect a considerable decrease in the mortality figures in the individual camps […]. *The camp physicians are to pay greater attention to the inmates' rations than heretofore, and shall submit proposals for improvements to the camp commandant, in agreement with the administration. These improvements must not remain on paper only, but must be regularly verified by the camp physicians. Further, the camp physicians shall see to it that working conditions at the various work sites are improved as much as possible* […]. *The Reichsführer-SS has ordered that mortality absolutely must decrease."*

In fact, this order did result in a very considerable improvement in the conditions in most camps, and mortality decreased by almost 80% within eight months.[22]

Aside from the economic significance of inmate labor to the Third Reich, security considerations were the second most important reason for the expansion and consolidation of the concentration camp system. In many occupied nations the Germans found themselves faced with growing and increasingly active resistance movements. To these activities they responded by protecting their troops and facilities just as every occupation power has responded before

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18 NO-500.

19 Carlo Mattogno mentions numerous relevant documents in *Il mito dello sterminio ebraico,* Monfalcone: Sentinella d'Italia, 1987.

20 NO-5689.

21 NO-1523.

22 PS-1469.

and since, namely by increasing repression. One main instrument of repression was the camp.

Armed resistance was particularly powerful in Poland, and most especially in the vicinity of the city Lublin. A Polish source comments:[23]

> *"As of early 1942 a partisan movement also began, within the framework of which some 20,000 armed soldiers from various underground organizations fought in 1944 in several dozen partisan units: AK* [*Armija Krajowa*, Home Army], […] *AL* [Armija Ludowa, People's Army]. *Among them there were also Soviet partisan units who came, invasion-style, from beyond the Bug River or who consisted of prisoners-of-war who had escaped from Hitler-camps* […]. *Together with aerial units (they operated in treeless regions) as well as garrisons, they tied up extensive enemy resources and inflicted heavy damage. This forced the occupiers to employ especially numerous police and army units in the Wojwoden area* [county]. *Even though the occupiers combated the resistance movement with the most drastic of measures (pacification, burning of villages, executions, deportations etc.), they failed to bring the situation under control. We shall only point out that, according to German sources, no fewer than 27,250 'attacks' of various kinds were committed in the territory of the* [Lublin] *District from July 1942 to December 1943, that several great partisan battles were fought there* […]*, that 254 trains were derailed or blasted, 116 train stations and rail facilities were attacked, and 19 transports were stopped or shelled, in the first months of 1944 alone."*

For the time from January 1, 1941, and June 30, 1944, the American historian Richard C. Lucas details the damage inflicted on the Germans by the Polish resistance as follows:[24]

Locomotives damaged	6,930
Locomotives delayed in overhaul	803
Trains derailed	732
Railroad cars destroyed	979
Railroad cars damaged	19,058
Railroad cars set on fire	443
Disruptions of electric power in Warsaw	638
Military vehicles damaged or destroyed	4,326
Railroad bridges blown up	38
Aircraft damaged	28
Aircraft destroyed	68
Tons of gasoline destroyed	4,674
Oil refineries incapacitated	3
Carloads of wood burned	150
Military warehouses burned	122

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[23] Zygmunt Mankowski, "Obozy hitlerowskie – Majdanek – Lubelszczyna. Ruch oporu" (Hitler camps – Majdanek – Lublin area. The Resistance Movement), in: Tadeusz Mencel (ed.), *Majdanek 1941-1944,* Lublin: Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1991, p. 35.

[24] Richard C. Lukas, *The Forgotten Holocaust. The Poles under German Occupation,.* Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1986, pp. 67ff.

Military food storage warehouses burned	8
Production in factories brought to halt	7
Factories burned	15
Defective parts for aircraft engines produced	4,710
Defective cannon barrels produced	203
Defective artillery shells produced	92,000
Defective aircraft produced	107
Defective parts produced for electrical appliances	570,000
Important plant machinery damaged	2,872
Various acts of sabotage	25,145
Attacks on Germans	5,733

General Eduard Bor-Komorowski, the leader of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising (who, after being taken prisoner, was well treated on the personal order of Adolf Hitler, and survived the war), commented on this listing as follows:[25]

> *"This summary gives only the more characteristic acts of sabotage and is only half the picture of the scope of our activities."*

Faithful to the time-honored pattern of terror and counter-terror, these activities of the armed resistance resulted in ever harsher and more extensive reprisals against the civilian population: not only people suspected of co-operating with the partisans, but hostages as well, were arrested *en masse* and sent to the concentration camps.

2. The Lublin Region in National Socialist Polish Policy

This is the backdrop against which the origin and history of the Majdanek camp near Lublin must be seen. But first, a few words about National Socialist Polish policy for the region in which the city of Lublin is located.

In 1939 Lublin fell into German hands after Poland's military collapse and partition. Where the Lublin region was concerned, National Socialist Polish policy alternated between two diametrically opposed goals, neither of which succeeded beyond the initial stage.

On the one hand, this region was supposed to become a German settlement area. The National Socialists planned a step-by-step Germanization of the region, basing this on the city of Lublin's original, pronouncedly German character. In 1942 Ernst Zörner, Governor of Lublin District, wrote in his preface to a book about the city Lublin:[26]

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[25] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

[26] Fritz Schöller, Max-Otto Vandrey, *Führer durch die Stadt Lublin,* Cracow, 1942, p. 5. Quoted as per Marszałek, "Geneza i początki budowy obozu koncentracyjnego na Majdanku" (Genesis and Beginnings of the Construction of the Majdanek Concentration Camp), in: *ZM*, I, 1965, p. 22.

"Fully six centuries ago German artisans and merchants began developing this area. As late as the mid-15th century, old Lublin still had a mostly German majority, a German city council, and it lived in accordance with German law."

As initial step and focal point of the Lublin region's Germanization, large SS settlements were to be established there, intended not only for the SS members themselves but for their families as well. Further, ethnic Germans from Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Rumania were to be settled there.[27] And finally, Poles of German extraction were to be identified and incorporated into the German ethnic whole. In a July 21, 1942, letter which we shall quote in the following, Himmler described this as "a search for German blood."

On the other hand, the Lublin region was also supposed to become a catch basin for Jews. In July 1942 Himmler ordered an acceleration of the resettlement (already in progress at the time) of the General Government's Jewish population into a few collection zones:[28]

"Lublin, July 19, 1942

To the
Higher SS and Police Chief East
SS-Obergruppenführer Krüger
Cracow.

I hereby order that the resettlement of the General Government's entire Jewish population is to be completed by December 31, 1942.

As of December 31 no persons of Jewish extraction may remain in the General Government, unless they are in the collection camps of Warsaw, Cracow, Czestochowa, Radom and Lublin. All other work projects employing Jewish labor forces are to be completed by that time, or, if completion is not possible, are to be transferred into one of the collection camps.

These measures are necessary towards the ethnic separation of races and peoples in the interests of the new European order, as well as towards the security of the German Reich and its spheres of interest. Every violation of this regulation represents a danger to law and order in the entire German sphere of interest, a starting point for resistance movements, and a moral and physical center of disease.

For all these reasons a complete resolution is necessary and thus to be implemented. Any cases where the deadline is expected not to be met must be reported to me so that I may remedy the matter promptly. All applications from other offices, requesting exclusions or exemptions, are to be submitted to me personally.

Heil Hitler!
[sgd.] *H. Himmler"*

Originally the Lublin District was to take in not only Polish Jews but also Jews from all of Europe. This plan had been drawn up as early as 1939. With

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[27] The decision to bring in ethnic Germans from these countries was made in mid-July 1941 at an NSDAP conference in Zamość (*Krakauer Zeitung* of July 17, 1941, quoted as per Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 25).

[28] NO-5574.

reference to Adolf Hitler, Reinhard Heydrich, the Chief of the RSHA (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*, the Reich Security Main Office), announced on September 21, 1939, that the part of Galicia located east of Cracow and north of the Slovakian border was to become "a Jewish state under German administration."

In October of the same year, the chief of the Gestapo's resettlement department, Adolf Eichmann, who had set up an office in Prague for the emigration of the Jews from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, organized the first small-scale deportations of Jews from the Protectorate to Nisko, a town in the Lublin District. Nisko was to serve as transit camp for the distribution of the arriving Jews. The deportations were halted on the order of Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, the Higher SS and Police Chief of the General Government, and in April 1940 Nisko was closed.

In an April 1940 meeting with Hans Frank, Hermann Göring and Arthur Greiser, the Reich Governor of the Warthegau, Himmler again brought up the plans for a Jewish reservation in Lublin, and deportations were scheduled for August of that year. After Hitler expressed doubts about the suitability of this project, it was dropped and more distant areas were considered for taking in the Jewish masses to be banished from Western and Central Europe.[29] Indeed it was difficult to see how one and the same region should have been Germanized and transformed into a reservation for the European Jews, both at the same time!

3. Establishment of the Majdanek Camp

The internal contradictions of National Socialist Lublin policy is one of many examples that show how little the cliché of the Third Reich as a perfectly organized state construct under a tight, centralized leadership actually reflects reality. The history of the camp which is the subject of our study was no less conflicted than the National Socialist policy for the Lublin region. There was no sense of clear and consistent planning: rivalries between various institutions as well as the ever-changing wartime situation resulted in the Majdanek concentration camp never being assigned a clear-cut purpose. It remained a stop-gap measure until the end.

In our discussion of the origins of the Lublin camp we refer first of all to German war-time documents which have been discovered in the Majdanek Museum and in the Lublin City Archive, and then, to an even greater extent, to an important article which Józef Marszałek, for many years the head of the

[29] Regarding the Lublin Plan, cf. *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*, *op. cit.* (note 7), pp. 1011-1013.

Majdanek Memorial, has written on this topic.[30] However, we shall disregard Marszałek's obtrusive comments about Majdanek's role as 'extermination camp'; the reason why we simply ignore these outright will become perfectly apparent later on.

As far as one can tell based on the incomplete documentation available, the starting point for the genesis of the Lublin camp seems to have been Heinrich Himmler's visit to Lublin in July 1941. A memo dated the 21st of that month notes the following instructions by Himmler:[31]

> *"On the occasion of his inspection of Lublin and Zamość on July 20, 1941, the Reichsführer-SS has ordered the following:*
>
> 1. *The representative of the RFSS sets up a concentration camp for 25,000 to 50,000 inmates as labor force for workshops and buildings of the SS and Police. The concentration camps are converted to secondary camps, depending on location. Is the concentration camp to be set up by the Camp Inspector?*
> 2. *German equipment manufacturing plants.*
>
>   *The camp as it has existed to date is to be converted to serve exclusively as automobile repair and carpentry shops.*
>
>   *A new labor camp with the required shops for clothing, metalworking, tannery, cobblers, cartwright's workshop (sled manufacture) is to be set up east of Lublin.*
> 3. *The uniform store of the Waffen-SS shall fill its requirements from the Lublin workshops for clothing of all kinds. The uniform store at Berlin shall set up a branch office in Lublin which will see to all supply matters.*
> 4. *In accordance with the suggested plan, the new buildings of the SS and Police Quarter will be erected on the grounds of the former Lublin airfield. The old German city is to be incorporated into the overall construction plan for the SS and Police Quarter. Within the framework of the general construction plan, work is to begin at once on the renovation of the old buildings, as far as technically and economically feasible, as well as on construction for the new Quarter. Amt III will provide the necessary technical manpower with police reservists. The SS houses are to be included.* […]
> 8. *The equipment manufacturing plants are responsible for training bricklayers, carpenters etc. (construction workers) for employment in the east. Further, large tailors' workshops are to be set up, and staffed with Jewesses.* […]
> 11. *The operation 'Search for German Blood' will be expanded to include the entire General Government, and a large settlement area shall be established in the German colonies near Zamość.* […]
> 13. *Until fall of this year, the Reichsführer's representative shall implement primarily command measures with regard to the establishment of the SS and Police bases in the new eastern territory. Especial consideration is to be given to the creation of the necessary accommodations for the family members of the SS and Police.* […]*"*

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30 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), pp. 15-59.

31 NO-3031.

The "representative of the RFSS" was SS-*Brigadeführer* Odilo Globocnik, a close acquaintance of Himmler's, whom the latter had appointed on July 17, 1941, as his authorized representative in matters relating to the establishment of the SS and Police bases in the "new eastern territory." In spring of 1941 Globocnik had established an SS Special Unit in Lublin, consisting of young architects, demographers etc.; these were to redesign the city and its environs.[32]

The "camp as it has existed to date" referred to the so-called 'Jewish camp,' which was located on Lipowa Street in the city of Lublin and which was probably a sort of prison with adjoining workshops. Jewish soldiers from the Polish army who had fallen into captivity worked there in plants of the German equipment manufacturer DAW. – The grounds of the former airfield mentioned by Himmler, where new buildings for the SS and Police Quarter were to be erected "in accordance with the suggested plan" (i.e., probably a project designed by Globocnik's team), eventually became the site of the so-called 'airfield camp,' a branch of Majdanek.

Amt II (Construction), responsible for the construction of the new buildings on the grounds of the old airfield, was part of the SS Main Office for Budget and Construction. Its Chief was SS-*Obergruppenführer* engineer Hans Kammler. This *Amt II* was subordinate to the local Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police of Lublin.

The question raised by Himmler – "Is the concentration camp to be set up by the Camp Inspector?" – is significant. This would have been the normal procedure. Evidently Himmler was considering putting his personal friend and representative Globocnik in charge of establishing the camp. This inevitably brought him into conflict with Hans Frank as well as with the civilian administration of the city Lublin, neither of whom could have wished to see Himmler and his man Globocnik manage things whichever way they saw fit.

Lublin's Governor Zörner expressed displeasure at Globocnik's excessive authority. In an August 30, 1941, letter to Globocnik he protested against the fact that the 'Jewish camp,' located in the city of Lublin, was evidently to be replaced by a concentration camp, and without his permission.[33]

The camp whose construction was begun in early October 1941 was initially called "Prisoner-of-war camp of the Waffen-SS Lublin" (*Kriegsgefangenenlager der Waffen-SS Lublin*, abbreviated as *KGL*); this name appears for the first time in a document dated October 7, 1941.[34] The term concentration camp (*Konzentrationslager*, abbreviated as *KL*) was not used. Marszałek hypothesizes that Globocnik hoped to appease Zörner with this alternate name,

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[32] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 21.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

[34] *WAPL*, Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Lublin, henceforth referred to as Central Construction Office, sygn. 58.

since the construction of a prisoner-of-war camp was nothing unusual, given the great numbers of Soviet soldiers who had fallen into German captivity; at that time as well, several POW camps had already sprung up in the Lublin district.[35]

Since the captured Red Army soldiers could not be put to work in POW camps – or could be used as a labor force only to a very limited degree – it was a logical measure to send some of them to help set up the Lublin camp and to put them to work there later in the planned industries as part of the war effort. And indeed, Soviet POWs who were brought in from the local POW camps were among the first inmates of Majdanek. Łukaszkiewicz gives their number as approximately 5,000,[36] which is probably too high. Aside from the Red Army soldiers, Jewish prisoners from the camp on Lipowa Street had to help in constructing the camp.

Himmler belatedly confirmed the camp's dual function in an April 14, 1942, letter to the Reich Ministry of Transport, stating that the POW camp served also as a concentration camp.[37]

It was not until April 1943, when the prisoners of war had long been a minority among the inmates, that the camp was officially renamed "Concentration Camp Lublin."

We recall that Himmler had originally announced that the camp should be able to accommodate 25,000 to 50,000 inmates. However, when the construction of the "prisoner of war camp" was formally ordered, there was already talk of 125,000 inmates. On November 1, 1941, in other words after the first prisoners had already arrived at the camp-to-be, SS-*Obergruppenführer* Hans Kammler, Chief of *Amt II* (construction) of the WVHA's Main Office for Budget and Construction, wrote to the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Lublin:[38]

> *"The order is hereby given to set up a prisoner-of-war camp in Lublin to house 125,000 POWs. An initial funding installment of RM 5,000,000 is being provided by Chap. 21/7. Application for the total amount required is to be submitted without delay to Amt II, together with the relevant documentation."*

Five weeks later, in a December 8, 1941, addendum to this letter, Kammler spoke of "150,000 POWs" and ordered the provision of supply, economic and production facilities required for the camp, for example "high-capacity laundry, delousing facilities, incineration plant, large workshops, etc."[38]

In his note of July 21, 1941, Himmler did not commit himself to the precise location of the camp to be set up. It was established south-east of Lublin, some 5 km from the city center on level ground sloping slightly south and

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35 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 28f.
36 Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *op. cit.* (note 10), p. 64.
37 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 27.
38 *APMM*, Central Construction Office, sygn. 120.

west, and was bordered in the south by the villages Abramowice and Dziesiata.[39]

The choice of this location was probably motivated by practical considerations. The camp's proximity to the Lublin train station meant that inmate transports could be marched in, obviating the need to construct a rail line to the camp. Further, the grounds of the former airfield, where a large SS settlement as well as DAW production plants were to be built, were only a few hundred meters from the camp boundary. In other words, very close to the quarters of those inmates who were to build these structures.

Of course the existence of this camp could not have remained hidden from even the most superficial observer. Accordingly, Marszałek states clearly:[40]

> *"The entire region is completely open. There are no natural obstacles in the form of larger rivers or forested areas. By the nature of its location, the camp could be seen into from almost every direction. Its northern boundary lay along the heavily traveled road Lublin-Chelm-Zamość-Lvóv; the southern one ran along the northern outskirts of the settlements Dziesiata and Abramowic; the western edge almost abutted the first buildings of the suburb Kosminek; only the eastern side crossed the fields of the village Kalinowka. The reasons for the decision to locate the camp here, of all places, have not been clearly established, but an intent to hide it from the eyes of the public certainly did not play a part in this decision."*

The first surviving plan of Majdanek dates from October 7, 1941,[41] and shows the camp as "prisoner-of-war camp."[42] It provided for the construction of ten compounds of inmate barracks covering a total of 62.9 hectares (155.4 acres); the five western compounds are rectangular, the five eastern ones irregularly trapezoidal. A double barbed-wire barrier as well as 25 guard towers 110 to 140 meters apart were to prevent breakouts.

The plan provided for a total of 236 barracks, including 207 residential barracks.[43] If one assumes a population of 250 inmates per barrack, this would indicate a total camp population of just over 50,000 inmates, which agrees with Himmler's note of July 21, but not with Kammler's order of November 1, 1941, which mentioned 125,000 prisoners. Nonetheless the plan of October 7, 1941, was in force at least until March 1942. This conclusion follows from the fact that the projects from February and March 1942 to connect the camp to the city's sewer system are based on precisely this first plan.[44]

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39 See Document 1 and Photographs I, II.

40 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 32.

41 *Ibid.*, p. 33.

42 See Document 2.

43 There were three kinds of barracks: the "Schneider Barracks," which measured 30 m × 10 m × 2.60 m, the "Schönbrunn Barracks," 32.50 m × 12.50 m × 2.70 m in size, and the "Werner Barracks," which measured 32.05 m × 12.50 m × 2.60 m. The reason for this was the lack of prefabricated parts for a consistent barrack style; construction had to be done with the materials at hand. Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), pp. 37f.

44 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 35.

Meanwhile, construction of the first camp was in full swing. The first inmate transports, consisting of Soviet as well as Polish-Jewish prisoners of war, as mentioned before, were assigned the task of leveling the terrain and erecting the barracks on the first compound. In late November, when the first Polish functionary inmates[45] arrived from camps located in the Reich, such as Dachau, Buchenwald, Auschwitz, and Gusen (a satellite camp of Mauthausen), the southern row of barracks as well as some of the barracks in the northern row on Compound I were already set up.[46] For the prisoners assigned to this work, the working conditions were very harsh and inhumane, since they had to sleep under the open sky until the first barracks were completed, and were thus exposed to the autumn cold as well as to the rain.

The Central Construction Office normally commissioned private firms with the work to be performed. Generally the commissions were given to whichever firms tendered the best cost estimate. The private firms usually provided only the skilled labor; simple manual labor requiring no special training was often performed by inmates. The Central Construction Office was responsible for providing the private firms with construction materials.

A summary drawn up by the Central Construction Office in September 1941 about the construction bills of that month lists no fewer than 22 such private firms, the majority of them Polish ones.[47] One permanent employment relationship which the Central Construction Office entered into was with the Polish carpenter and building contractor Michał Ochnik. Ochnik, a member of the United Guilds of Construction Workers in Lublin, applied for commissions on October 13, 1941:[48]

> *"I hereby offer you my services for construction work and would cordially ask you to consider my firm when giving out these commissions. I have performed numerous jobs for the local authorities to date: in the past year I was commissioned with various tasks for the SS and Police Chief, Major General of the Police, Globocnik* […] *I employ a work force of 20 and can assure you that any work you may give us will be done well, promptly, and in accordance with your deadlines."*

Evidently a large part of the Polish civilian population had come to terms with the occupation forces.

Several Polish firms were commissioned with construction tasks inside the Majdanek camp. Michał Ochnik's firm was one of them; as we shall see later, this firm contributed to the construction of the delousing chambers which, ac-

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45 Functionary inmates were inmates who served as liaison between their fellow prisoners and the camp administration – for example, interpreters. That Polish prisoners from camps located farther west were sent to Majdanek in late 1941 was no doubt due primarily to the fact that they were needed as interpreters. Also, there were many doctors among them (cf. Chapter III).

46 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), pp. 36f.

47 *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 30, p. 3.

48 *Ibid.*, 9, p. 27.

cording to the official account of Majdanek, also served to mass-murder human beings.[49]

At least some of the construction contracts assigned to these firms were considered secret, as derives from a document they had to sign:[50]

> *"The firm agrees that any news, even if minor, which it may learn and which may harm or hinder completion of the secret construction contracts assigned to it, will be immediately reported by the firm to the military authority issuing these secret construction contracts."*

In light of the circumstances – a state of war, as well as resistance activity – this sort of stipulation was not out of the ordinary and in no way indicates that Majdanek had any function as an extermination center. Even more so than the camp's proximity to the city of Lublin, the constant presence of Polish civilians on the camp grounds categorically ruled out any clandestine mass murders.

Important clues as to Majdanek's real functions may be found in a letter that Deputy Reich Minister of Transportation Kleinmann wrote to Himmler on March 7, 1942. This letter was prompted by practical difficulties resulting from the strain of excessive demand on the Eastern Railroad and the Lublin train station.

Kleinmann's letter indicated that a camp for 150,000 inmates was being built in Lublin. For the moment it was still a POW camp, but was to be reconfigured into a concentration camp in the future. The inmates were to be employed in the manufacture of clothing, shoes etc. intended for the SS in the eastern territories.

According to Kleinmann, the SS group in Lublin needed so much construction material that jams and congestion had occurred ever since late November 1941 in unloading the wagons. Discussions with representatives of the SS had indicated such extensive construction plans of the SS for Lublin that at present neither the capacity of the Eastern Railroad nor that of the Lublin train station sufficed to bring in all the needed materials. Therefore, Himmler wanted to hold off on these construction projects.

According to the information available to him, Kleinmann said, Lublin was to become a junction in a network of SS bases in the east. Plans called for a veritable city with barracks for three regiments of the Waffen-SS as well as accommodations for their families. This SS city was to have its own sewer system and electrical net and would have numerous large arms depots.

On April 14, Himmler responded to this letter. He wrote that as a consequence of the shortage of raw materials and the transportation difficulties, the capacity of the camp would be reduced. He also mentioned that the planned bases of the Waffen-SS, as well as of the Police in Lublin, were intended for

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[49] See Chapter VI.

[50] *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 14, p. 266.

after the war. For this reason, he wrote, he had halted the preparations for their construction and ordered their postponement.[51]

We do not know when Himmler issued this order to stop preparations for the construction of the SS city. In any case, this project was a subject for discussion as late as January 1942, at a conference in Berlin attended by representatives of the WVHA as well as of the Lublin City Council and the Lublin Central Construction Office. On that occasion the Chief of the latter organization, Naumann, announced that the future SS city would have a population of 60,000.[52]

While this SS city remained a castle in the sky, the construction of a supply camp in Lublin for the region of Russia-South was purposefully hurried along. On April 24, 1942, the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police issued a report to the Higher SS and Police Chief for Russia-South in Lublin, stating:[53]

> *"According to the construction order of November 26, 1941, the representative for the construction of the SS and Police bases in the new eastern territory, SS-Brigadeführer Globocnik, commissioned the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Lublin with the construction of a transit supply camp for the Higher SS and Police Chief for Russia-South in Lublin. This camp includes a total of 11 camp barracks and one administrative and housing barrack.* […] *Except for the water supply and drainage system, the supply camp is 75% complete, and the remaining work will be finished in approximately six weeks, since most of the materials required have already been delivered."*

To summarize: the German documents which have survived (and which are consistently reproduced correctly in the official Polish literature) verify without the slightest doubt that the Lublin camp was intended to meet economic needs, especially such as related to the war effort. It was intended on the one hand to supply the SS units stationed and fighting in the east, specifically in southern Russia, with a constant supply of clothing, shoes, materiel of war, etc., and on the other hand, to contribute to the construction of the planned SS city near Lublin.

Not so much as one single document gives even the slightest indication that Majdanek was to function as an 'extermination camp'. And it was profoundly unsuitable as such anyhow, since its close proximity to the city of Lublin as well as the constant presence of Polish civilian workers on the camp grounds would have made it utterly impossible to keep any extermination efforts secret.

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51 The correspondence between Kleinmann and Himmler is quoted as per Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), pp. 39ff.; pp. 50f.

52 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 40.

53 *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 168, p. 10.

4. The Structure of the Lublin Camp

In September 1941, SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Hermann Heinrich Hackmann and two other SS officers were transferred from Buchenwald to Lublin to take over the organization of the camp being built there. SS men from other concentration camps followed; they were to make up the garrison of Majdanek. This was structured in accordance with the guidelines set up by the Concentration Camp Inspectorate. The organization consisted of six divisions and several auxiliary divisions.[54]

Division I: Command Headquarters

Management of the concentration camp was the responsibility of the camp commandant, who was appointed by the Chief of the Concentration Camp Inspectorate. He was in charge of staffing the administrative positions within the camp as well as of the inmates' work details.

In the course of its scant three years' history, Majdanek had no fewer than five commandants.[55] The first was SS-*Standartenführer* Karl Otto Koch, who had served in Esterwegen during the first years of National Socialist rule and in Buchenwald from 1937 to 1940. In August 1942 he was arrested by the SS for crimes committed in Buchenwald (corruption and murder), and replaced as commandant of Majdanek by SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Max August Koegel, who had previously been posted to Ravensbrück in October 1942 after a brief intermezzo in the Lublin camp. His successor in Majdanek was SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Hermann Florstedt, who had been brought in from Sachsenhausen. This arrangement lasted until September 1943, when Florstedt was arrested by the SS for embezzlement. He was temporarily replaced by SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Markus Melzer who, however, never officially bore the title of camp commandant.[56] In November 1943 the fourth camp commandant took up the post: SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Martin Weiss, who had formerly been commandant of Neuengamme and Dachau. He was recalled in April 1944 and replaced by SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Liebehenschel, who had previously been the head of the Auschwitz camp, where he had succeeded Rudolf Höß. Liebehenschel had command of Majdanek until the end, in July 1944.

None of the five successive commandants of Majdanek was granted a happy end. Karl Otto Koch was sentenced to death by an SS court in 1945 for his misdeeds in Buchenwald, and executed. Max August Koegel was sentenced to

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54 Józef Kasperek, "Organizajca. Komendatura" (Command), in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 59f.

55 Regarding the various commandants of Majdanek and their fate, see Józef Kasperek, "Oddział I – Komendatura (Komandatur). Komendant obozu" (Division I – Camp Commandant), in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 60ff., as well as: District Court Düsseldorf, *Urteil Hackmann u.a., XVII 1/75,* v. I, pp. 65f.

56 J. Kasperek, *op. cit.* (note 55), p. 62.

death by a British military court in the course of the Ravensbrück Trial. The verdict of the Düsseldorf court in the Majdanek Trial states that Koegel committed suicide in June 1946;[57] according to the Polish historian Czesław Pilichowski, however, that was the month in which his death sentence was carried out.[58] Regarding the fate of the third commandant, Hermann Florstedt, we found three different accounts. The Düsseldorf court states that he was executed by the SS shortly before the end of the war.[59] Burg reports that Florstedt was hanged in Majdanek before the assembled inmates.[60] If this version is correct, then the execution must have taken place considerably earlier than "shortly before the end of the war." And finally, Pilichowski claims that Florstedt survived the war and lived in the Federal Republic of Germany, where the public prosecutor's office of Cologne investigated him, without a case ever coming to trial.[61] This version seems to us to be the most unlikely.

Martin Weiss was sentenced to death by the Americans in Dachau, and was executed in May 1946. And Arthur Liebehenschel was tried in Cracow in 1946 for his activities in Auschwitz, and was executed by hanging in January 1947.

Division II: Political Section

This division included the Security Police and incorporated functionaries from the Gestapo and the criminal police. It punished crimes committed by the inmates[62] as well as by the camp guards and was authorized to hand down death sentences. Political prisoners were interrogated by the Gestapo functionaries. Division II also maintained the inmate card file where the inmates' personal data was recorded.[63]

Division III: Protective Detention Camp

The third division was responsible for housing, clothing and rations for the inmates. Together with the camp physician, it decided on the inmates' fitness for manual labor, and supervised their work. It also supervised civilians employed in the camp. Hierarchical levels of offices (camp office, compound office, block office) kept track of the numbers of inmates. The records keeper in charge of the camp office had to give daily reports on changes in the inmate population.

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57 District Court Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 55), v. I, p. 66.

58 Czesław Pilichowski, "Zbrodniarze z Majdanka przed sądem" (The Majdanek Criminal in Court), in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 428.

59 District Court Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 55), v. I, p. 65.

60 J. G. Burg, *op. cit.* (note 11), p. 28.

61 C. Pilichowski, "Zbrodniarze z Majdanka przed sądem," in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 428.

62 *I.e.* actions considered crimes by the SS.

63 Regarding Division II, see Zofia Leszczyńska, "Oddział II – Polityczny," in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 64-66.

In Majdanek every compound had a "camp elder," appointed by the camp commandant. Initially these camp elders were mostly German inmates who were deemed trustworthy, and their task was to maintain discipline among their fellow inmates in their respective compounds. The "block elders," who had to ensure order in their respective blocks, were one level down from the camp elders. Every work detail was under the charge of a so-called *Kapo.* At first the *Kapos* were predominantly German criminal inmates, but Slovakian Jews were also put in these positions later; they were assisted by foremen.[64]

Division IV: Administration

This division saw to the camp's supply of food, clothing and heating materials. It was in charge of the supply depot and saw to the safekeeping of the cash and valuables confiscated from the inmates. Placing orders for the insecticide Zyklon B was also one of its responsibilities. And finally, this division had to ensure the maintenance of the technical equipment in the camp.[65]

Division V: Camp Physician

The SS garrison physician was the highest medical authority, to whom the troop physician, the camp physician, the dentist and the camp pharmacist were subordinate. He was responsible for conditions of hygiene and sanitation in the camp, and had to be present at executions as well as when corporal punishment was administered.[66]

Division VI: Ideological Studies

The sixth and last division organized world-view training courses, social events, artistic exhibitions, as well as the camp personnel's attendance of movie and theatre events; it also maintained the camp library, which was also accessible only to the camp staff.[67]

Auxiliary Divisions

These included the postal service, court, transportation (*i.e.*, the pool of motor vehicles), as well as the SS-*Totenkopf-Sturmbann*. The latter saw to the organization of the camp guards, which were 130 in number in mid-1943 and 240 in fall of the same year and also included non-Germans (Lithuanians,

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64 Regarding Division III, see Zofia Leszczyńska, "Oddział III – Obóz więźniarski," *ibid.*, pp. 66-70.

65 Regarding Division IV, see Józef Kasperek, "Oddział IV – Administracja," *ibid.*, pp. 70-72.

66 Regarding Division V, see Zofia Leszczyńska, "Oddział V – Lekarz obozowy," *ibid.*, pp. 72-74.

67 Regarding Division VI, see Józef Kasperek, "Oddział VI – Propaganda," *ibid.*, p. 74f.

Ukrainians, Rumanians). A total of 1,160 guards, both male and female, served in Majdanek in the scant three years of its existence.[68]

Central Construction Office

The Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Lublin deserves special mention. On August 9, 1941, it already had 22 members.[69] In February 1942 it was subdivided as follows:

Division I: General
Division II: General building matters
Division III: Building administration
Division IV: Structural engineering
Division V: Civil engineering
Division VI: Machinery
Division VII: Higher offices, correspondence
Division VIII: SS Construction Offices
Division IX: SS-V Construction Offices
Division X: Police Construction Offices.[70]

The Central Construction Office's main task was the construction and development of the Lublin concentration camp, but its authority extended into four other areas as well:

1. Work for SS and Police on the SS properties in the Zamość and Lublin districts;
2. Work for the SS Research Center for Housing in the East in the southern zones of the Lublin region;
3. Construction tasks for the supply camp of the Higher SS and Police Chief Russia-South and the Caucasus;
4. Construction of labor camps in the Lublin district as well as of SS-led factories, including fur and clothing industries in the city of Lublin.

From October 1941 to September 1943 the Central Construction Office employed a daily average of 5,000 inmates in construction projects; as of October 1943 this number decreased to 1,000. Further, the Central Construction Office depended on at least 35 civilian companies with some 1,000 employees, and maintained supply relationships with at least 78 civilian suppliers.[71]

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[68] Regarding the auxiliary divisions, see the chapters by Józef Kasperek, Zofia Murawska, Henryka Telesz, *ibid.*, pp. 75-83, 91.

[69] *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 4, p. 3.

[70] *Ibid.*, 6, p. 1-5. Plan of the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Lublin, of Feb. 12, 1942.

[71] cf. the two detailed studies by Marszałek, "Centralny Zarząd Budowalny SS i Policji w Lublinie," in: *ZM,* VI, 1972, pp. 5-41, and "Rola Centralnego Zarządu Budowalnego SS i Policji w Lublinie w budowanie obozu na Majdanku," in: *ZM,* VII, 1973, pp. 51-89.

5. Development of Majdanek in 1942-1944

When Karl Otto Koch assumed his post as the first commandant of the Lublin camp in fall 1941, he found himself faced with other tasks besides the camp's construction. He had to expand the clothing manufacturing plants of the Waffen-SS Lublin branch, to organize the supply camp Russia-South, and to assume control of the so-called 'V-camp' on the grounds of the former airfield 500 m northwest of the camp. In the absence of any documents on the subject, we do not know what this V-camp was all about. While the V-camp and supply camp were incorporated into the Majdanek concentration camp , the clothing manufacturing plants continued on their own for the time being. In February 1942, transports of Polish Jewesses arrived there who were put to work in the production of the clothing.[72]

For the civilian city administration of Lublin, the development of such a large camp was a thorn in their side. On January 16, 1942, at a discussion in which both the representative of the Central Construction Office and the deputy Mayor of Lublin, Dr. Steinbach, participated, it was decided that during the first stage of the construction projects the city would have to provide 1,500 m^3 of water daily for the camp (400,000 gallons); the Central Construction Office would see to laying the water pipes. At first, Steinbach approved the connection of the camp to the municipal sewer system. At a follow-up conference on February 12, however, he announced that the city administration would make its agreement to this project dependent on its approval by the Governor-General.[73]

It seems that this condition was related to a dispute between Globocnik and the Governor of Lublin. Testifying as witness at the Nuremberg Tribunal in February 1946, Josef Bühler, secretary-of-state in the administration of the General Government, stated that Zörner had opposed the establishment of a camp for 150,000 inmates because it required so much coal, electricity and gas that the supplies to the city suffered because of it. Furthermore, there was the danger of epidemics.

To what degree Bühler's testimony was accurate may remain an open question. In any case, the city administration informed the Central Construction Office on March 3 that, as long as the plan for the camp's expansion had not been submitted to Governor Hans Frank and been approved by him, the Central Construction Office could not expect any support from the municipal authorities. At the same time, Steinbach forbade the Central Construction Office to perform any work within city limits aimed at connecting Majdanek to the municipal sewer system.[74]

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[72] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 45.
[73] *Ibid.*, pp. 46f.
[74] *Ibid.*, pp. 47f.

For the inmates these quarrels had dire consequences: the sanitary conditions in Majdanek defied description and resulted in an incredibly high mortality rate.[75]

We do not know if the plans were ever submitted for the Governor's approval.

Himmler's confidant Globocnik, with whom both Frank and Zörner were on poor terms, was recalled from his position on March 31, 1942, and assigned to the leadership of Operation Reinhard.[76]

Meanwhile the number of Majdanek inmates grew steadily. Aside from Polish inmates, numerous Czech and Slovak Jews arrived there as of late March.[77] On March 23, 1942, a new camp plan was submitted; this time it corresponded to the dimensions envisioned by Kammler on December 8 the previous year.[78] It provided for a subdivision of the camp into three parts:

1. The Prisoner-of-War Camp. 16 rectangular compounds – 14 larger, 2 smaller – were to be set up in four sections covering a total of 120 hectares (296.4 acres). Sections 1 and 4 were to include five compounds each, and Sections 2 and 3 three compounds each. 24 barracks (22 housing barracks, one kitchen and one laundry and toilet barrack) were to be set up on each of the larger compounds. 16 barracks (14 housing barracks, one kitchen and one laundry and toilet barrack) were planned for each of the two smaller compounds.

   Given a population of 250 inmates for each of the 336 housing barracks, this puts the capacity of the prisoner-of-war camp at some 85,000 inmates. Large workshops, a food storage depot, a hospital, a high-capacity laundry etc. were to be built in the center of the camp.
2. The POW Camp Annex. This was a building complex east of the Prisoner-of-War Camp. The Annex in turn was to be divided into three parts, the first and third of which included workshops and other buildings for productive purposes; the second section consisted of eight rows of 16 housing barracks each, for approximately 350 inmates per barrack, which amounted to a total capacity of about 45,000 inmates.
3. The Clothing Manufacturing Plants of the Waffen-SS Dachau, Lublin Branch. 102 barracks were planned here, 80 of them housing barracks for 250 prisoners each, totaling 20,000 inmates. The clothing manufacturing plants were separated from the POW Camp Annex by the railway line to Chełm.

In total, then, the camp could have taken in approximately 150,000 inmates, just as Kammler had envisioned on December 8, 1941. (In several

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75 See Chapter II.

76 As far as the incomplete sources would indicate, "Operation Reinhardt" seems to have involved the confiscation of Jewish property.

77 See Chapter II.

78 *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 63. See Document 3.

places Marszałek speaks of 250,000; however, this figure is not based on any documentary evidence but merely on the theoretical maximum capacity of the camp under conditions of extreme overcrowding of the barracks.) This figure was never approached even remotely, since the plan of March 23 remained on paper only. Already on May 14 it was decided that only Compounds I through VIII would be built – the first five in one construction stage and the last three in a second.[79] Aside from the shortage of raw materials and the transportation problems, the uncertain situation at the eastern front probably also contributed to this decision.

Meanwhile, the efforts to connect the camp to the municipal Lublin sewer system were finally being pursued with vigor. On May 15, 1942, the Central Construction Office submitted an appropriate construction proposal to Construction Inspectorate East of the Waffen-SS and Police in Cracow. The cost estimate was based on Polish prices and set at one million Reichsmark. The Central Construction Office noted:[80]

> *"If inmates and prisoners* [*i.e.*, prisoners of war] *can be extensively employed in the excavation of culverts in the city streets, construction costs will be significantly reduced. The number of inmates required would be up to 500 men per day, but they could only be engaged in individual groups of 50 to 100."*

The intolerable sanitary conditions in the camp had been sharply criticized by a team of experts whom the Berlin Sanitation Institute of the SS had sent to Majdanek. In a report provided to the Central Construction Office on May 29, 1942, the sanitation officers stated that the well by the Infirmary (Hospital Block) on Compound I was in a most unsuitable location since the sick people's excretions could contaminate it. The second well, located near the camp physician's quarters, must be closed immediately since it was crawling with e. coli bacteria. The camp, they said, was courting an epidemic. The only way to effectively eliminate this danger would be to connect the camp to the municipal sewer system, and this should be done with utmost urgency.[81]

The construction proposal, submitted on May 15, was not approved until July 27;[80] those responsible took their time for another two and a half months. Regarding implementation of the project, the Central Construction Office turned to several private firms, among them the Continental Society for Trade and Industry in Cracow and the Technical Engineering Office for central heating and sanitation facilities in Warsaw. The building materials were also purchased from these firms,[82] while all construction work not requiring special

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79 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 54.

80 *APMM*, Central Construction Office, sygn. 120.

81 Marszałek, "Budowa obozu na Majdanku w latach 1942-1944" (Construction of the Majdanek Camp in 1942-1944), in: *ZM,* IV, 1969, pp. 70f.

82 495 tons of pipe sections, 50,000 bricks, 230 tons cement, 50m^3 mortar, 30 tons lime, 160m^3 wood and 17 tons iron and steel were needed.

skills was performed by inmates, whom the Central Construction Office rented out to the firms in question for 60 pfennigs a day.

Due to the constant shortage of transportation, completion of the work was endlessly delayed: trucks and trains were needed for the eastern front, and there were not enough wagons to transport the required building materials to Lublin. It took until January 1943 for the connection to the municipal sewer system to be completed,[83] and it was not before fall of that year that every barrack finally had running water.

Aside from the scarcity of raw materials and transportation, manpower shortages were another chronic problem for the SS, so that efforts were made towards a more judicious application of inmate labor. Himmler issued the following instructions in a May 20, 1942, circular to all Central Construction Offices and Building Inspectors of the Waffen-SS and Police:[84]

> *"As per the order of the Chief of the Main Office, effective immediately, the entire inmate population will be centrally managed. Consequently it is absolutely necessary that all offices report by May 30, 1942, how much inmate or POW labor they require for the projects under way. Manpower requirements are to be detailed by subject areas, separately for each construction project. In the own best interest of the Construction Administrations, this deadline must be met, since otherwise the required inmates may be reassigned without notice. In future, the raw materials requisition for every construction proposal is also to include the inmate manpower as per the above."*

The highest authority in the allocation of concentration camp inmate laborers was *Amt DII* of the WVHA under SS-*Standartenführer* Gerhard Maurer. In this capacity, Maurer was authorized to order the transfer of inmates from one camp to another or to facilities of the civil or war industry. On March 2, 1943, for example, Maurer ordered that 2,000 Polish inmates physically fit to work were to be transferred from Majdanek to the Reich.[85] As already mentioned, in the Lublin camp itself the allocation of inmate labor was within the province of Division III (Protective Detention Camp). From April 1942 to April 1944 it was under the leadership of SS-*Hauptscharführer* Troll, who was succeeded by SS-*Oberscharführer* Herbert Abraham.[86]

As in other concentration camps, the inmates who were assigned to labor projects fell into two main categories, the 'inside units' and the 'outside units'. The former had to build and expand the camp itself; they were put to work in excavation, construction and transportation. 280 buildings were built in Majdanek altogether.[87] Other units had to see to camp maintenance (cleaning, gardening, kitchen, laundry, delousing chambers, etc.). There was even a unit as-

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83 Cf. the report of SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Krone, quoted in Chapter III.

84 *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 54, p. 12.

85 Anna Wiśniewska, "Praca więźniów" (The Inmates' Work), in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 172.

86 *Ibid.*, p. 173.

87 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 81), p. 82.

signed by SS-*Obersturmführer* Anton Thumann to the artistic beautification of the camp; this unit was under the charge of the Polish sculptor A.M. Boniecki.[88]

The 'outside units' worked for various firms. Sometimes these maintained workshops on the camp grounds. If the workshops were located at a distance from the camp, the inmates were quartered in company facilities; otherwise, they returned to the camp after work.

In the following we shall give a brief outline of the various construction stages in Majdanek, with primary reference to a 1969 article by Marszałek.[81]

The construction plan of May 14, 1942, which provided for the construction of barracks on eight compounds, was modified in July of that same year. According to the new plan (which was already the fourth!) buildings were now planned for only the first five compounds. Between Compounds IV and V, two new intermediate compounds were planned, the first of which was to become the site of the crematorium and the laundry building. The economic section was to be set up west of the inmate compounds, where barracks would be built to store the possessions confiscated from the internees; further buildings included baths, four large economic and administrative barracks, sheds for storing potatoes, a riding arena, a shooting gallery, and finally, the construction yard, a complex of several buildings to store building materials.[89]

A camp constructed on the basis of this plan could have held some 50,000 inmates – again, the figure Himmler had mentioned a year before. But not even this population level was ever attained: as we shall see in the next chapter, there were never more than approximately 22,500 inmates in Majdanek at any one time.

Construction on the various compounds proceeded as follows:

Work on Compound I was begun in October 1941 by the first inmate transports to arrive in Majdanek, and was completed in early 1942. It was the site of two rows of 10 barracks each. Compounds II through V had 22 barracks each. Compound II was completed by early 1942, Compounds III and IV in spring and summer respectively, and Compound V in September 1942. In total, therefore, there were 108 barracks on these compounds by the last-mentioned date.[90]

On Compound VI – which had not figured into the plan of July 1942 – barracks were built much later, between fall 1943 and early 1944, while the plans for Compounds VII and VIII were never implemented.[91]

Each compound was a separate administrative unit. Majdanek was the only camp structured in this way; no other National Socialist concentration camp

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88 A. Wiśniewska, *op. cit.* (note 85), p. 178.
89 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 81), p. 22.
90 See Document 4.
91 Regarding the genesis of the various compounds, see Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 81), pp. 32ff.

had a comparable system of compounds. The SS officer in charge of a compound bore the title *Feldführer*, or compound leader; he was responsible for maintaining order, carrying out roll calls, and managing the compound office. As already mentioned, he was assisted by a "camp elder," *i.e.*, a trusted inmate. The next administrative level down were the "block elders," who were each responsible for one block and were in turn assisted by trusted inmates with lesser responsibilities (block leader, block secretary, *Kapos*).[92]

A brief summary of the population of the various compounds follows.

Compound I

Initially, Compound I housed those Soviet POWs who, together with the Polish-Jewish POWs from the 'Jewish Camp' on Lipowa Street, carried out the first construction projects on the Lublin camp grounds. Civilian inmates were added later. As early as November 1941 an "infirmary" (hospital block) was set up there, which grew constantly and eventually took up all 10 barracks comprising the northern side of the compound; the southern row continued to be inhabited by inmates fit to work. In September 1943 the infirmary was transferred to Compound V and the male prisoners who were fit to work were moved to Compounds III and IV. Compound I was now reserved for female inmates; the Women's Hospital, consisting at first of 6 and later of 11 barracks, also became established here.[93]

At this point some remarks on the female inmates of the Lublin camp are in order. While Majdanek had originally been intended exclusively for men, the construction of a separate women's camp was proposed in July 1942. The project was approved by Glücks. On October 29, 1942, Kammler wrote to Krüger:[94]

> *"In the aforementioned letter, the Chief of Amtsgruppe D, SS-Brigadeführer and Major General of the Waffen-SS Glücks, has submitted to me the October 6, 1942, proposal of the commandant of the Lublin POW camp to construct a new women's concentration camp on the grounds of the clothing manufacturing plant of the Waffen-SS in Lublin.*
>
> *In view of the urgency of this matter, the appropriate construction office is to be instructed to work together with SS-Obersturmbannführer Koegel, commandant of the Lublin POW camp, to draw up the required construction proposal and to submit it without delay. The camp plan submitted together with the abovementioned request is enclosed herewith."*

The first female inmates had already arrived in Majdanek on October 1, in other words before the request to set up the Women's Camp had even been formally made. At first they were housed on Compound V. As Kammler's letter to Krüger shows, Koegel envisaged the clothing manufacturing plant on

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92 *Ibid.*, p. 38.
93 *Ibid.*, pp. 40ff.
94 *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 95.

the former airfield as the location for the Women's Camp. 22 barracks were to be added to the camp beside the workshops, which amounts to a capacity of approximately 5,000 inmates. In November 1942, the women who had arrived in Majdanek the previous month were transferred to the grounds of the clothing manufacturing plant. It is typical of the chaos reigning in the Lublin camp that this decision was soon reversed again, in early January 1943. As of the 8th of that month, newly arrived transports of women (initially these inmates were mostly Polish political prisoners, later also Jewesses and Soviet nationals) were once again quartered on Compound V in Majdanek, so that now there were again two Women's Camps. In September of that year, the Women's Division of Majdanek was transferred to Compound I.

The total of 25 female guards were mostly brought in from the women's concentration camp Ravensbrück. Head guard among them was Elsa Ehrlich.[95]

Compound II

Compound II was primarily populated with Jewish inmates. Later, a special "field hospital for war-disabled Soviet Russian ex-servicemen" was established there; these were Soviet soldiers who had gone over to the German side and then been crippled at the front. Himmler personally ordered the establishment of this field hospital on January 6, 1943. He decreed that the barracks were to be equipped like hospitals and only Russian doctors and orderlies should serve as care-givers. The humane treatment of the Russian war-disabled was to be highlighted appropriately in propaganda reports.[96]

Compound III

At Compound III as well, a large proportion of the inmates were Jews. In spring 1942 the first "hostages" were also brought in. (As we have seen, the activities of the armed Polish Resistance against the occupation power resulted in the internment of civilians as well, even if it could not be proven that they had assisted the resistance movement. In many cases these hostages were released again after only a short time.)

The so-called 'Decrepit Block' (*Gammelblock*) was also set up on Compound III. 'Decrepits' or 'Muslims' were terms in camp jargon for sick inmates in the last stages of emaciation, for whom there was little hope of recovery. And finally, some barracks on this compound were set aside from time to time for inmates suffering from typhus.

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[95] Zofia Murawska, "Obóz kobiecy" (The Women's Camp), in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 84-86.

[96] Henryka Telesz, "Lazaret dla inwalidów – byłych jeńców radzieckich" (The Field Hospital for Former Soviet Prisoners of War), in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 88-91.

Compound IV

Initially, Compound IV housed political prisoners and Soviet POWs. As of fall 1942 a special section there was set up to house hostages. This section was called the "Overflow Camp."[97]

Compound V

As mentioned before, Compound V served at first to house women (and children). After these had been transferred to Compound I in September 1943, a hospital for male patients was set up on Compound V with a final total of 22 barracks, including ones for surgery, tuberculosis patients, inmates suffering from infectious tuberculosis, and rehabilitation.

Initially, the command headquarters were in the city of Lublin, at 12 Ogrodowa Street in a house that had previously been under Church ownership. The camp guards also lived in Lublin at first. The plan of March 1942 did not yet provide for separate accommodations for the camp administration and staff on the Majdanek camp grounds. They were not built until the second half of 1942, southeast of Compound I. A total of 12 barracks housed the camp administration, while a separate block to the west of these provided 14 barracks for the guards, three for SS officers, SS NCOs, and SS men employed in the administration; one additional barrack was provided for the female guards.[98]

All these buildings were constructed by inmates. Aside from the total of 280 buildings on the camp grounds, they also set up the sewer system and built the roads inside the camp complex. The first street connected the block housing the Administration with the road from Lublin to Zamość; the second ran from this same block to the inmate compounds, and the third from the inmate compounds to the Lublin-Zamość road. All in all, 4,500 meters of roads were built.[99]

The Polish historian Anna Wiśniewska has examined the surviving documents to determine what percentage of the Majdanek inmates were employed in the construction and maintenance of the camp itself. In September 1942, 42% of the inmates were assigned to construction projects, while 18% served as cleaning staff, gardeners, cooks, laundry personnel etc. as part of camp maintenance. In September 1943, when new barracks were being built only on Compound VI, the proportion of inmate labor in construction had dropped to 18%, while all of 42% were now employed in maintenance work; in other words, the relationship had reversed. For March 1944, the figures were 10% and 65%(!), respectively.[100] 40% of the inmates worked for outside firms in

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97 Henryka Telesz, "Obóz dla zakładników" (Security Overflow Camp), in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 91f.
98 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 81), pp. 59ff.
99 *Ibid.*, pp. 79f.
100 A. Wiśniewska, *op. cit.* (note 85), p. 186.

September 1942 and September 1943, but this figure had dropped to 25% by March 1944. Since one can assume that by far the most inmates were sent out for construction work in the beginning, these figures indicate that only about a third of all the man-hours of work performed in Majdanek were economically productive. In practice, therefore, the camp had become largely an end in and of itself. That was certainly not what Himmler had had in mind when he gave the go-ahead for the camp's construction in July 1941!

The most significant firms to profit from inmate labor were the fur and clothing manufacturers, DAW, and Eastern Industries, which the SS established only in March 1943. The clothing manufacturing plants produced clothing and shoes for the soldiers at the eastern front; DAW maintained the workshops of the Jewish Camp in Lublin, as well as facilities on the grounds of the former airfield; and Eastern Industries owned workshops on the former airfield where weapons were repaired. Further, their plants manufactured brushes, ammunition baskets, etc. Women had to contribute to this work, as did children.

These three firms were also represented on the Majdanek camp grounds. In 1943, almost half of all the barracks on Compound IV were put to economically productive use. On Compound VI, the DAW converted several barracks into cobblers' shops where worn-out shoes, shipped in from the front, were repaired.[101]

During the entire existence of the camp, Jewish laborers from various countries, particularly from Poland itself, played a decidedly important role. In spring 1943 Jewish laborers were transferred, for security and strategic reasons, from Warsaw to Majdanek and its satellite camps. On March 31, 1943, a representative of Eastern Industries wrote to the Central Construction Office of Lublin:[102]

> *"As per the order of the Reichsführer-SS, those factories essential to armaments production which are located in the Warsaw ghetto and operate with Jewish labor shall be relocated without delay, for security reasons and in the interests of an increase in the utilization of Jewish labor. Relocation shall be to Poniatowa, Trawniki and Lublin, into buildings already extant."*

We conclude with a few words about Majdanek's satellite camps.

Reports of their number vary, since the boundaries between a satellite camp and an 'outside unit' were fluid. The Polish historian Czesław Rajca postulates a total of "13 subcamps" of Majdanek.[103]

In Puławy, Radom and Blizyn the inmates worked in DAW plants. In the city of Lublin, prisoners were put to work in the local DAW branch as well as in several smaller work details. The Heinkel Works were in Budyn, where

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[101] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 81), p. 48.
[102] *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 268, p. 1.
[103] Czesław Rajca, "Podobozy Majdanka" (The Satellite Camps of Majdanek), in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 379-398.

mostly Jewish inmates manufactured airplane parts. In Trawniki, which served jointly as labor camp and as training camp for SS-men, construction and excavation work needed to be done. In Piaski near Lublin, the inmates worked in a sawmill. And finally, in April 1944, the concentration camp Warsaw, which had been set up in May 1943, was subordinated to the Lublin camp. Primarily non-Polish prisoners were interned there, and put to work such as tearing down the ruins of houses on the territory of the destroyed Jewish ghetto and salvaging reusable building materials such as bricks.

Neither the inmates in the main camp nor those in the outside units would have hurried to complete their work. When the Polish sculptor Boniecki and his team of artists were put to the task of beautifying the camp, they created, among other things, a pillar with three eagles as well as a concrete lizard and a tortoise.[104] The eagles symbolized the idea of freedom and the lizard that of conspiracy and going underground, while the tortoise embodied the principle of 'work slowly and poorly'. No doubt the Majdanek inmates lived up to this principle wherever they possibly could.

At the time when Warsaw was subordinated to Majdanek, the latter camp was already approaching dissolution. The eastern front was drawing inexorably closer, and the evacuation was in full swing: one inmate transport after the other left for the west. On July 23, 1944, the arrival of the Red Army heralded the end.

The history of National Socialist policy for the Lublin region and the Majdanek camp is the story of a long sequence of ambitious projects, hardly any of which could be realized. The region surrounding Lublin was to be Germanized, an SS-city with 60,000 inhabitants was to be established; both plans remained wishful thinking. Other plans called for making this area a catch basin for European Jewry, but this concept also did not make it past the beginning stage. In Majdanek, 150,000 inmates were supposed to create a dynamic economic center which would supply the German wartime armies (and, after their victory, the German civilian industries) with an endless flow of products, but the hoped-for number of inmates was never even remotely approximated. The greatest part of the forced laborers' efforts went towards the consolidation and maintenance of the camp itself – a camp that ultimately became a giant complex of ruins and which cost a very great number of people their lives.

The reason for the high death toll claimed by this ugly runt at the outskirts of Lublin was not so much brutality and sadism (though no doubt there was some of this as well among the lower-ranking SS personnel and especially the *Kapos*) as the lack of planning (for example, the frequent change of commandants, which rendered a long-term and goal-oriented leadership policy in the camp impossible) as well as rivalries among the various authorities who, for example, kept postponing the camp's badly needed connection to the munici-

[104] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 81), p. 40.

pal sewer system. And finally, the poor living conditions and thus the high mortality rate were also exacerbated by factors which one cannot blame on the camp administration and the Central Construction Office, such as the lack of transportation facilities resulting from the developments on the eastern front, which caused additional delays in bringing in the materials needed for building the sewer system.

Chapter II:
Transports and Camp Population

1. The Official Version of Majdanek

According to the official present-day account of events in Majdanek, a total of some 300,000 inmates were admitted to the camp, of which approximately 235,000 died, 45,000 were transferred to other camps, 20,000 were released by the Germans and 1,500 were liberated by the Red Army on July 23, 1944.[105]

The remarkably high figure of 20,000 released inmates is not documented anywhere in the pertinent literature. Since we cannot conceive of any reason why official Polish historiography could possibly wish to inflate this figure, we shall accept it as correct.

In the following we will critically examine the claims made in the Polish literature about the number of inmates admitted to Majdanek.

According to a 1973 study by Czesław Rajca,[106] we know the names of 47,890 inmates of Majdanek, including 7,441 women. These names, Rajca states, were gleaned from the following sources:

- surviving documents from the camp office, as well as files kept by the gendarmerie of the Lublin District;
- documents from Polish charities as well as overt and covert correspondence by inmates;
- materials drawn up after the war (memoirs, accounts and questionnaires of former internees).

Of the inmates known by name, Rajca states, 59.8% were Polish, 19.8% Soviet, 13.3% Czech and Slovak, and 4.0% German citizens. The remainder included another 20 different nationalities;[107] 25.2% were Jews.[108] As Rajca himself stresses, the percentage of Jewish inmates recorded here is clearly below the actual level.

Rajca claims that the 47,890 names corresponded to approximately 14% of the total number of inmates admitted into the camp, whose number he gives as 340,000, stating that another 160,000 unregistered Jews who were murdered

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[105] Anna Wiśniewska, Czesław Rajca, *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 32.
[106] Czesław Rajca, "Analiza Danych Personalnych Wiezniów," in: *ZM,* VII, 1973, pp. 38-47.
[107] *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[108] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

immediately upon arrival must be added to these 340,000 registered inmates – for a total of half a million people who had come to Majdanek.[109]

If one reduces the latter figure to 300,000, in accordance with modern-day official historiography, the percentage of known names increases considerably.

We have reason to believe that the number of 300,000 inmates deported to Majdanek is still a gross exaggeration. First, however, we must show how official Polish historiography supports its figures. To do so we shall refer primarily to two accounts by Zofia Leszczyńska, the first from 1969 and the second from 1980. The first deals with the transports to Majdanek,[110] the second with those leaving Majdanek.[111]

In an article in the anthology *Majdanek 1941-1944*, published in 1991, Leszczyńska provides a synthesis of her two earlier studies and modifies her figures from those studies slightly,[112] but since she does not add anything new of significance, we shall dispense with a detailed discussion of her contribution to this anthology.

2. The Transports to Majdanek

First, let us summarize the article from 1969 which deals with the transports to the Lublin camp. For simplicity's sake, where the figures themselves are concerned, we shall simply dispense with the frequently applied qualifiers "approximately," "estimated," etc.; as the author herself freely admits, by far the majority of these figures are estimates. Zofia Leszczyńska groups her transports to Majdanek into eight distinct phases:

a) First Phase (October 1941 – March 1942):

In the first half-year of its existence, the camp took in 8,300 people, including 2,000 Soviet POWs who were the first to arrive in October.

As of November, smaller transports arrived at Majdanek from other camps. Among these were doctors and orderlies, as well as Polish, Czech, and German inmates who could speak German and Russian; the latter were needed as 'functionary inmates'.

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[109] *Ibid.*, p. 39.

[110] Zofia Leszczyńska, "Transporty wiezniów do obozu na Majdanku," in: *ZM,* IV, 1969, pp. 174-232.

[111] Zofia Leszczyńska, "Transporty wiezniów z obozu na Majdanku," in: *ZM,* X, 1980, pp. 118-134.

[112] Zofia Leszczyńska, "Transporty i stany liczbowe obozu," in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 93-128.

As of December, larger transports of Polish male inmates arrived (political prisoners from Lublin Castle, as well as hostages taken in reprisal against attacks perpetrated by the Resistance movement).

Between January and March 1942, eight Jewish transports arrived at the camp; the Jews in question were mostly from the Lublin ghetto and from towns surrounding Lublin.

b) Second Phase (April – June 1942)

21,700 people were taken to Majdanek from April to June 1942, including 3,600 Polish political prisoners. The reasons for their arrests were generally either support they had rendered to the partisans, or their failure to report partisan activity to the occupation authorities. Most of those deported to Majdanek during this time were Slovak and Czech Jews. In total, 18,100 Jews from Slovakia and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia were sent to Majdanek during these three months.

c) Third Phase (July – December 1942)

Majdanek absorbed 22,600 new arrivals in the second half of 1942. Of these, 7,000 were Poles, most of them farmers from the Lublin area, who had been sent to the concentration camp in reprisal for attacks and acts of sabotage by the Resistance movement. Of the remaining arrivals, by far the most – 15,000 – were Jews, primarily Polish. According to eyewitnesses this figure was even higher, but many Jews were allegedly murdered immediately upon their arrival, without first being registered. Particularly large transports came from Warsaw. Further, 1,700 Jewesses from Bełżec arrived in Majdanek in October. And finally, French, Belgian and Dutch Jews were also brought to Majdanek during this period.

d) Fourth Phase (January – April 1943)

In the first four months of 1943, 52,700 persons were deported to Majdanek; the number of Jews (5,600 inmates) was proportionately small this time. 5,000 of these Jews came from the collection camp Drancy in France. Among the remaining 600 Jews there were 104 women from Grodno and Bialystok who had been sent to Majdanek via Treblinka. But the vast majority of those who were brought to Majdanek during this time were members of Slavic peoples. In January, large-scale raids had been carried out in numerous Polish cities, and for some of those arrested the destination was Majdanek. Many inmates also arrived from the east: Russians, White Russians, Ukrainians, as well as Poles from the regions east of Lublin.

e) Fifth Phase (May – August 1943)

Within these four months 62,300 prisoners arrived in Majdanek, among them 24,850 Jews. The latter were mostly from the Warsaw ghetto, where the SS had crushed the uprising of the Jewish resistance movement in April and May and leveled the ghetto. On May 13 the new arrivals included a convoy of 308 Jewish men who had been taken from Warsaw to Treblinka, and thence, after a selection, to Majdanek. Further, approximately 6,500 Jews from the Bialystok Ghetto came to the Lublin camp.

Concurrently, Polish prisoners arrived in Majdanek almost on a daily basis. A total of 110 transports of Polish inmates have been documented for this period. In June and July the number of inmates in the camp reached its highest point. Finally, the trains from the east, crowded with White Russians, Russians and Ukrainians, also continued.

f) Sixth Phase (September – November 1943)

During these three months the Lublin camp took in 24,800 prisoners. This time, deportees from the east (*i.e.*, again Ukrainians, White Russians and Russians) made up the largest group with 11,600. Poles from Lublin Castle, the city of Lublin and its environs, and from other cities were also admitted. Particular mention must be made of the "death transports," which arrived during this time. Immediately upon arrival, the victims were taken to the crematorium and shot. The Jews who were brought to Majdanek on November 3 from labor camps in the Lublin region and who were killed together with the Jewish inmates must also be counted among the victims of these death transports.

g) Seventh Phase (December 1943 – March 1944)

The number of those deported to Majdanek during this time approximates 40,500. For security reasons the SS sent no more Polish inmates to Majdanek after December 24, 1943, except for those from towns in the vicinity of Lublin. They were some 5,600 in number. The transports from the east still continued, involving some 9,850 deportees. After almost all Jews had been killed on November 3, 1943, another 4,200 German, Polish and Hungarian Jews arrived between December 1943 and March 1944, including 200 members of the Auschwitz *Sonderkommando*, who were all killed upon arrival.

The largest group of new arrivals was made up of 20,850 ill and invalid prisoners who were transferred to Majdanek from camps in the German Reich (Buchenwald, Dora-Mittelbau, Neuengamme, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück, Sachsenhausen, Auschwitz and Flossenbürg). These also included 300 blind inmates (on a transport arriving on March 11, 1944, from Flossenbürg).

h) Eighth Phase (April – July 1944)

Even though the evacuation of the camp had already begun in March, another 14,800 inmates arrived between April and July: 14,200 Poles and 600 Jews. As late as July 20 and 21, in other words shortly before the Red Army arrived, 800 prisoners were taken from Lublin Castle to the camp, where they were shot.

In total, then – the author concludes – 246,900 people were taken to Majdanek in 694 convoys. Of these, 99,500 were Poles from the General Government, 77,150 were Jews, 51,650 White Russians, Russians, Ukrainians and Poles from the eastern territories; the remaining 20,600 were of various other nationalities.

However, the author adds, these statistics hardly encompass all the transports that actually arrived at the camp; many of them, she says, were not recorded, and accordingly the real number of inmates admitted to Majdanek is much greater than 246,900.[113]

So much for Leszczyńska's data regarding the transports to Majdanek. Let us now take a look at the sources on which this Polish historian bases her arguments. They may be grouped into four categories:

- German documents. Regrettably only very few of these exist, since most of them were destroyed or have vanished;
- certain studies published in Poland (which are not accessible to us, with one exception);
- news reports of the Polish Resistance about transports arriving in Majdanek;
- reports from inmates, smuggled out of the camp during its existence, as well as eyewitness testimony given after the camp's liberation.

Here is one example of a solidly documented figure regarding deportees to Majdanek. In her study Leszczyńska reproduces a copy of a March 24, 1942, telex no. 803 from the Inspector of the Concentration Camps in Oranienburg to the then commandant of Majdanek, Karl Otto Koch; the telex reads:[114]

> *"Re. Jews from Slovakia*
>
> *As already stated, the 10,000 (ten thousand) Jews from Slovakia destined for the camp there* [Lublin] *will be moved in with special trains as of March 27, 1942. Every special train carries 1,000 (one thousand) inmates. All trains will be routed via the border train station Zwardon (Upper Silesia) where they will each arrive at 6:09 a.m. and, during a two-hour layover, will be routed on to their destination by Security Police escorts and under supervision by the Kattowitz division of the State Police.*
>
> *The leaders of the escort units carry transport lists detailed by name. For the time being, the following schedules have been worked out with the Reichsbahn for the first 4 transports.*

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[113] Zofia Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 110), p. 211.
[114] *Ibid.*, p. 182.

DA 67 on March 27, DA 69 on March 30, DA 70 on March 31, DA 72 on April 5. On these days: arrival in Zwardon at 6:09 a.m., departure from Zwardon at 8:20 a.m., arrival in Lublin at 6:30 a.m. the following day. Schedules for the other six transports are to be announced.

As already ordered via telex no. 886 of March 23, 1942, the arrival and reception of each individual transport shall be confirmed by telex to this office, verifying numbers and the provisions brought along by the transport.

Chief, Central Office
[sgd.] *Liebehenschel*
SS-Obersturmführer."

If we also had the transport name lists mentioned in this telex, documentation would be complete.

Leszczyńska now proceeds to take each and any witness statement as to convoys arriving in Majdanek and their numerical strength, and credits these statements with equal evidential value as this document! She clearly does not categorize evidence according to its credibility. And this is the Achilles heel of her statistics, which robs them of all value.

For example, the author supports her utterly unrealistic figures of Russians, White Russians and Ukrainians deported to Majdanek with reports from the Polish Resistance movements, which naturally had a vested interest in inflating the number of deportees as much as possible in order to support its claims about National Socialist tyranny. For this reason alone, all statistics based exclusively on eyewitness testimony are suspect from the start, and have no value as evidence.

Regarding the Polish books and articles consulted by the author, one can make the fundamental assumption that the figures given therein, and quoted by her, are based on eyewitness accounts rather than on documents, for if there were any of the latter, Leszczyńska would very likely have cited them directly. The only one of these studies which we have been able to access ourselves is Tatiana Berenstein's and Adam Rutkowski's *Żydzi w obozie koncentracyjnym Majdanek* (Jews in the Majdanek Concentration Camp), published in 1966.[115] Leszczyńska repeatedly cites this work as her source. On the basis of one example, namely the figures which Berenstein and Rutkowski give regarding the Polish Jews deported to Majdanek in 1942, we can see that these two authors rely primarily on eyewitness accounts.

In that year – so they write – 36,500 Polish Jews were sent to Majdanek.[116] Most of them were murdered immediately upon arrival without ever being registered, which is why the camp documentation contains no references to them. Almost all figures given are based on witness statements: for example, the May 1942 deportation of 2,000 Jews from the towns of Belzyc,

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[115] Tatiana Berenstein and Adam Rutkowski, "Żydzi w obozie koncentracyjnym Majdanek (1941-1944)," in: *Biuletyn żydowskiego instytutu historicznego,* no. 58, Warsaw, 1966.
[116] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Międzyrzec and Zamość is 'documented' with the statements of one Mordechai Sztrygler and one Golda Teich; the deportation of 2,000 Jews from Piaski in September is established on the basis of statements by the selfsame Golda Teich and one Maks Auerbach; and the deportation of 3,000 Jews from the ghetto of Majdan Tatarski in November is verified on the basis of statements by one Ida Gliksztejn, one Julia Celinski, one Rywka Grynwald, and one Symcha Turteltaube.[117]

Leszczyńska is very well aware of the unreliable nature of this source. For example, she gives the number of Jews deported from the ghetto of Bialystok to Majdanek as 6,500[118] and adds a footnote pointing out that Berenstein and Rutkowski speak of 24,000 Jews deported from the Bialystok ghetto to the Lublin camp. The sources cited in this instance by Berenstein and Rutkowski are the witness statements of one Szymon Amiel and one Efraim Nachumowicz.[119] If Leszczyńska's figure is correct, then that given by Berenstein and Rutkowski is grossly exaggerated, which also makes all their other figures suspect from the start. But as we have pointed out, this does not stop Leszczyńska from quoting this source time and time again! It is safe to assume that the statistics quoted from other books and articles as well are based exclusively on eyewitness testimony.

When the eyewitnesses leave her in the lurch and fail to provide figures, the author does not hesitate to offer estimates of her own. One example:[120]

> *"The first inmates of Jewish nationality were imprisoned in Majdanek on December 12, 1941. They had been arrested in the course of street raids in Lublin. 150 Jews fit to work were arrested, and after being deloused and issued prison clothing they were taken to Majdanek by truck that very same day. From January to March 19* [1942] *another eight transports of Jews arrived at Majdanek; these Jews had been arrested in raids in the Lublin ghetto as well as in other towns in the Lublin region. The number of people on each transport cannot be precisely determined from the surviving documentation. The only thing known for certain is that the transport of January 5, 1942, included several hundred persons. The prisoners on many Jewish transports were murdered immediately upon arrival. This was the fate of the aforementioned transport of January 5, for one, as well as of another transport of February 22, 1942.*
>
> *If we assume that each of these transports included at least 200 people, this means that approximately 1,800 Jews arrived in Majdanek during this time."*

The figure of 150 work-fit Jews who were imprisoned on December 12, 1941, is proven by a memo issued by a German official on December 23 of that year, in other words with an actual document. Regarding the transport of January 5 the author states that it is "known" to have included several hundred persons, but she neglects to tell us the source from which this is known. Her

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[117] *Ibid.*, pp. 12f.
[118] Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 110), p. 197.
[119] T. Berenstein, Rutkowski, *op. cit.* (note 115), p. 17.
[120] Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 110), pp. 181-183.

"assumption" that each of the nine transports included at least 200 people is also not documented. (After all, it goes without saying that the murder of entire transports immediately upon arrival can only be 'proven' by eyewitness testimony.)

The following concrete example clearly reveals the utterly unfounded nature of Leszczyńska's putative figures:

The author claims that between January and August 1943 the Lublin camp took in 115,000 prisoners (52,700 in the first four-month period and another 62,300 in the second). However, from the September 30, 1943, report of WVHA Chief Oswald Pohl to the *Reichsführer*-SS Heinrich Himmler, in which camp population and mortality figures in the various concentration camps are discussed,[121] the following becomes apparent:

1. In the time in question, the total number of inmates in all the concentration camps rose from 123,000 to 224,000, *i.e.*, by 101,000.
2. In the same time period, 62,700 inmates died in all concentration camps together.

If all those who died had been interned before January 1, 1943, it would mean that (101,000+62,700=) 163,700 inmates had been newly admitted to the camps in the eight-month period at issue. Naturally, however, part of the deaths must have involved new arrivals, *i.e.*, inmates who had not been imprisoned prior to 1943. Thus, the total of all inmates inducted between January and August 1943 must have been significantly less than 163,700.

Of the new arrivals in the first eight months of 1943, no less than 97,850 were sent to Auschwitz.[122] Consequently, all the other camps put together took in significantly fewer than (163,700 – 97,850=) 65,850 deportees, and again, only a part of these can have been sent to Majdanek. Therefore, Leszczyńska's statistic is exaggerated by several orders of magnitude!

The fact that the author, drawing on highly questionable sources, inflates the number of deportees so extremely is not difficult to explain in light of the political constraints within which she had to work. At the time she wrote her analysis, the figure of 360,000 Majdanek victims was a dogma which it was anathema to question. Now, if 360,000 inmates died in Majdanek while 45,000 were transferred to other camps, 20,000 were released by the Germans and 1,500 were encountered by the Red Army, then simple arithmetic would require that Lublin camp took in a total of 426,500 inmates. Despite her best efforts, Leszczyńska can only come up with 246,900, and so she conjures up the missing 179,600 by commenting that her figure is by no means complete!

In her publication on the same subject authored 22 years later, Leszczyńska now counts fully 827 transports (up from her previous 694), which now in-

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[121] PS 1469.

[122] Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945,* Reinbek: Rowohlt 1989.

cluded "at least 275,000" people, and adds this time, as well, that the actual figure was much higher.[123]

This study may be found in the voluminous anthology *Majdanek 1941-1944*, published in 1991 by T. Mencel. This book contains an index of 816 transports that arrived in Majdanek.[124] Only 414 of these entries give the number of inmates on the transport at issue. If one adds the numbers given for these 414 transports, one arrives at a total of only 81,500 prisoners.

Summarizing the data given in the Polish literature on this subject (as of 1991) produces the following bottom line:

- 47,890 inmates of Majdanek are known by name;
- 414 transports with a total of 81,500 inmates have been established.

All other figures beyond these are undocumented and thus merely estimates.

We shall submit our own estimates of the total number of inmates inducted in Majdanek in Chapter IV.

3. Transport from Majdanek

For her 1980 article about inmates transferred from Majdanek to other camps, Leszczyńska relied much more extensively on actual documents than for her article on transports to Majdanek, since the arriving convoys were registered in the records of the receiving camp and these records have largely survived to our time. Accordingly, this article is also much sounder.

In 1943 inmates were transferred on the orders of the SS-WVHA's Group D. Initially, the camp administration of Majdanek itself selected the inmates to be transferred. Later the internees were given the chance to volunteer for transport to other camps. In general they did not want to leave, as they feared change and did not know what awaited them elsewhere.[125]

It is likely that most Polish prisoners did indeed regard a concentration camp in their own country as the lesser evil when compared to a camp abroad, especially since it was not easier for them to maintain some contact with their families and friends living in freedom.

However, non-Polish and particularly western European inmates would probably have been only too happy to volunteer for a transfer, since there was hardly a camp anywhere where conditions were as bad as in Majdanek. Accordingly, the anthology *Majdanek 1941-1944* states (translated from the German-language abstract):[126]

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[123] Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 93.
[124] T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 437-454.
[125] Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 111), p. 120.
[126] T. Mencel, "Konzentrationslager Majdanek. Allgemeine Charakteristik," in: T. Mencel, *op.*

"Compared to the camps in the Reich – for example the concentration camps Buchenwald or Sachsenhausen, where the barracks were relatively clean and living conditions for the inmates were better – the conditions and facilities in Majdanek were extremely primitive. This annoyed [sic!] *prisoners brought in from other camps (Buchenwald) or pleased those inmates being transferred to another camp (Groß-Rosen, Sachsenhausen)."*

As of May 1942 transports left for Auschwitz, where the inmates worked in the Buna rubber plants in Monowitz. In 1943 the number of prisoners transferred to the various concentration camps in the Reich increased sharply, because there was little industry in Lublin and the ordnance factories in the Reich depended to an increasing extent on imported manpower. Other inmates from Majdanek were sent to smaller camps in the General Government or posted to work in agricultural enterprises.

In total – according to Leszczyńska – the transports leaving Majdanek included some 45,000 prisoners.[127] We see no reason to doubt this figure, especially since there is no apparent motive for deliberate exaggeration here.[128]

4. Camp Population

The camp population – that is, the number of inmates detained there during the various periods of Majdanek's camp history – is the subject of another study by Leszczyńska, this one dating from 1973.[129] Her conclusions are summarized in a table inserted between pages 16 and 17 of her article.[130] This table indicates that the camp population reached its high point in July 1943, with an average of 22,500 inmates.

A total of 207 document fragments survive from the camp register for 1943 and give important clues as to the level of the camp population at the times in question. The Polish historian comments as follows on these fragments, which form the cornerstone of her work:[131]

"Of the surviving files from the camp office, noteworthy documents include some from the camp labor office which provide data regarding the total inmate population. On July 22, 1944, in the final stage of the camp's evacuation, the documents held there were carried out of the office facilities, thrown into a pit dug es-

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cit. (note 23), p. 507.

[127] Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 111), p. 131.

[128] Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 93. However, p. 455 of T. Mencel's anthology includes a table of transports to leave Majdanek; this table indicates only a little over 35,000 transferred inmates. Of course this table is not necessarily complete, so that the actual figure may well have been 45,000, or even greater.

[129] Leszczyńska, "Stany liczbowe wieźniów obozu koncentracjynego na Majdanku," in: *ZM,* VII, pp. 6-25.

[130] See Documents 9 and 10 in Appendix.

[131] Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 129), pp. 6f.

pecially for this purpose, burned, and then covered over with a thin layer of soil. The partially charred papers remained there until the first days of May 1948 when they were accidentally discovered in the course of some excavations.

Among the fragments to survive were daily population reports for the men's camp for 1943, which were drawn up by the camp office and submitted to the labor office in single copy. These reports contained a daily overview of the numbers of concentration camp inmates and their assignment to various tasks.

After being recovered, these materials – partly burned, and stuck together due to four years' exposure to the damp – crumbled to pieces. This was the condition in which they were secured and taken to the Museum archives. At first it seemed that it would not be possible to restore them even partially; nonetheless, painstaking efforts were begun towards this goal. After piecing together more than 2,000 charred fragments of various sizes, the reconstruction of individual daily reports was begun. The result of this meticulous poring over detail was the recovery of 207 documents."

As strange as all this may sound, there can be no doubt about the authenticity of these documents!

A camp population report included the following information, *inter alia*:

- The number of inmates at morning roll call;
- Arrivals (*i.e.*, inmates newly arrived in the course of the day);
- Departures through transfer, discharge and death;
- Number of inmates in the evening.

The inmates were divided into Reich Germans (RD), Poles, and citizens of the Soviet Union, and for the Reich Germans the inmate category (politicals, criminals, anti-socials etc.) was also specified. Oddly, non-Jewish members of other nations were included with the Reich Germans, and for some reason the Ukrainians were listed separately from other Soviets as of May 1943. The Jews were a special category, but were listed separately according to their nationalities. For example, the breakdown of the Jews in the camp on July 22, 1943, was as follows:[132]

Poles:	3,221	Czechs:	63	Germans:	11
Slovaks:	883	French:	51	Dutch:	8
Greeks:	449	Russians:	26	Serbs:	6

Further data referred to the work to which the inmates were put.

We shall show one of these camp population reports.[133] It is actually one of the most complete – which gives an indication of the difficulties a researcher is faced with here.

The document in question dates from December 9, 1943. According to it, there were a total of 6,847 inmates in Majdanek that evening, including 2,248 (Soviet) prisoners of war, 4,466 concentration camp inmates and 126 members of a different category (we do not know which, since the pertinent line is only

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[132] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[133] *APMM*, sygn. 1-c-2, vol. 1, Dec. 9, 43. See Document 8.

partly legible). In the (also only partly legible) left-hand column second from the top, below the 4,466 concentration camp inmates, *"SU. Kr.-Gef."* (Soviet POW) are mentioned; evidently these were counted separately from the remaining Russian POWs, and again we do not know what group this was.

Of the 4,466 camp inmates, 2,052 were in the Protective Detention Camp and 824 were employed in a total of 32 work details (which probably also included the satellite camps of Majdanek). 537 were not assigned to work, and no fewer than 1,053 were in the infirmary!

Further, the fragment shows that three men – one Soviet POW and two Polish inmates in protective detention – died that day and that one Polish inmate as well as three Polish hostages were released.

Such German documents, representing meaningful evidence despite their incompleteness, are quite rare for the reasons previously mentioned, and so Leszczyńska, in her article about the camp population levels, perforce refers primarily to reports issued by the Resistance movement, to messages smuggled out of the camp during the time of its existence, and to post-liberation witness statements. Where actual documents exist, a comparison with the estimates quoted shows that the latter somewhat exceed the figures in the former.

For August 1943, for example, Leszczyńska speaks of an average of 11,700 male and 6,500 female inmates.[134] According to Pohl's report to Himmler, which we have already mentioned repeatedly, the number of inmates at that time was about 11,500 men and 3,900 women.[135] So, while the estimate is extraordinarily accurate for the men, there is a considerable difference for the women.

5. Numbering of Inmates

Finally, a word regarding the number of the inmates. According to Polish historiography, the numbers assigned to the registered inmates in Majdanek did not exceed 20,000. If an inmate died, his number was allegedly assigned to another inmate.[136]

As odd as this system may sound (nothing of the sort was done in any other German concentration camp), it is nonetheless a fact that not one inmate number greater than 20,000 is recorded in the surviving documents.

However, on the basis of 1,250 names given in the various lists of inmates who died in 1942, we found only five numbers that were used twice.[137] One

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[134] Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 129), p. 18.
[135] PS 1469.
[136] Leszczyńska, "Sposoby ewidencji więźniów w obozie koncentracyjnym na Majdanku," in: *ZM,* VIII, p. 38.
[137] These numbers were: 1298, 5745, 7016, 11034, 16654.

should have expected a much greater number of identifiers that were assigned twice or even more often. This is one of the most significant unsolved problems in the context of the history of Majdanek.

Chapter III: Living Conditions

1. The 'Temporary Nature' of the Camp and Its Effects on the Inmates

As we have shown in Chapter I, the history of the Majdanek concentration camp was extraordinarily chaotic. There could be no sense of any clear and consistent development, since the camp's function was continually changing. Majdanek remained a temporary measure to the end.

Alert observers had not failed to notice this. One 1943 report of the Polish Resistance movement, which we will quote later, stated that the lack of interest on the part of the German authorities showed that the situation in Majdanek was temporary. For the inmates, this circumstance had very definite consequences – some were positive, but significantly more were not.

One of the potential positive effects was that at times there was not enough work in Majdanek for all the inmates. For example, as we saw in the last chapter, on December 9, 1943, 537 of the 4,466 inmates of the "Protective Detention Camp" were healthy but not assigned to any work.

Another advantage which the "lack of interest on the part of the German authorities," to use the Resistance movement's expression, had for the internees was the ease with which messages could be exchanged with the outside world.

At least part of the time, the inmates were able to correspond with their kin legally, though of course in a form censored by the camp authorities.[138] Aside from this, the exchange of letters and secret messages by covert means flourished, and the camp authorities obviously made no attempts to stop it: it seems that they could not care less. Józef Marszałek comments:[139]

> *"During the expansion of Majdanek, beginning in spring 1942, about twenty* [approx. translation of the Polish "*kilkanaście*"] *construction companies appeared on the camp's property and employed civilian laborers from the city. In no other camp except for Auschwitz did they play as extraordinarily important a role in the everyday life of the camp as they did at Majdanek. They became a secret bridge*

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[138] Regarding the inmates' correspondence with their kin, as well as the censorship of this correspondence, see the chapter by the Norwegian Erling Bauck, "Norwegische Facharbeiter," in: Tomasz Kranz (ed.), *Unser Schicksal – eine Mahnung für Euch… Berichte und Erinnerungen der Häftlinge von Majdanek.* Lublin: Panstwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 1994, pp. 182-184.

[139] Józef Marszałek, "Konspiracja w obozie," in: Tadeusz Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 346, 349.

between the inmates and their families, underground organizations, fellow citizens who wanted to help, and charitable organizations. They informed the families of individual inmates that these were in fact detained in the camp, and brought the prisoners food, medicine and, most importantly, secret messages from their families. […] *The members of the Polish Red Cross arranged the exchange of information between the camp and the outside world* […] *Young, unusually courageous Ludwik Jurek, who delivered the Red Cross parcels, acted as 'camp mailman'. He accepted secret messages and passed them discreetly on. Janina Suchodolska, who was in charge of soup deliveries,* […] *smuggled the underground press, political news, secret messages and money into the camp. While distributing the soup as well as cleverly hidden secret material in the presence of SS-men, she also managed to ask the inmates on the various Compounds, in a whisper, what they needed most, whether she should pass a message to someone,* […] *she even managed to pass on political information."*

Marszałek demands a bit too much credulity from his readers: the SS were certainly not blind men in whose presence one could "distribute cleverly hidden secret materials" without their noticing. The only possible conclusion is that they did not care about the distribution of the "secret material."

But this obvious indifference of the administration to the activities in the camp had a fateful counterpart: they also behaved with indifference towards brutal excesses committed against the prisoners by the guards.

Accounts of cruel mistreatment of inmates, right up to casually committed murder, run like a red thread through the official (postwar) literature on Majdanek. The basis for these accounts are statements of former camp inmates.

Now there are good reasons to assume that at least some of these accounts are greatly exaggerated. Anyone who had lived through Majdanek quite naturally felt a deep hatred of the SS who had deprived him of his freedom under the basest of circumstances, and was thus almost inevitably inclined to give the most lurid accounts of their brutality. Furthermore, the tendency to dramatize bad experiences is a general human trait.

Accordingly, the French Resistance fighter and Socialist Paul Rassinier, inmate of the Buchenwald and Dora-Mittelbau camps, titled a book about his camp experiences in which he critically examined his former fellow-prisoners' accounts, *Le mensonge d'Ulysse* (The Lies of Ulysses),[140] referring to the self-promoting hero Ulysses (Odysseus) who augmented a hundred torments he had really suffered with a thousand more of his own invention.

Therefore, the claims made by the eyewitnesses must be treated with some reservations. If, for example, former Majdanek inmates claim that the SS-man Arthur Gossberg had played 'William Tell' when drunk, placed apples on inmates' heads and then fired at them with his pistol, or that the SS-man Anton Thumann as well as the physician Heinrich Schmidt had fired shots through

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[140] *Le mensonge d'Ulysse*, La Librairie française, Paris 1950 (online: abbc.com/aaargh/fran/ archRassi/prmu/prmu.html)

the windows into the Women's Hospital for fun,[141] this is no doubt simple hyperbole. Reports of a "William Tell" have also been imputed to the German Gottfried Weise, stationed in Auschwitz,[142] and the tale of SS-men taking shots into a hospital for fun is strikingly reminiscent of that scene in Steven Spielberg's Hollywood film *Schindler's List* where the director has Ammon Göth, the commandant of the labor camp Płaszów, pass the time by shooting down inmates from his vantage point on the balcony of his villa. This kind of morbid fantasy has nothing to do with historiography.

In principle, the SS-men were strictly forbidden to mistreat inmates. In Auschwitz, all members of the SS had to sign an agreement that they would not harm inmates physically; severe punishment was threatened in cases of noncompliance.[143] Even though no similar documents are known to us for Majdanek we suspect that the rules were the same there.

Often enough, however, rules are on paper only. We do not doubt that mistreatment was in fact a widespread problem in Majdanek. One of many pieces of circumstantial evidence for this is provided by the memoirs of the Norwegian Erling Bauck, whose objective and matter-of-fact tone is a welcome contrast to other, entirely incredible witness accounts. Bauck worked in an outside labor detail in Majdanek. When a thoroughly down-to-earth witness such as Bauck, who always expressly identifies rumors *as* rumors, writes that one records officer constantly beat the inmates with a whip,[144] we really see no reason to take this as a figment of an excessively creative imagination.

Therefore, there are grounds to suspect that the camp administration's indifference resulted in frequent abuse of inmates in Majdanek, but that this did not reach the degree that is alleged. Due to the lack of documents, not much more can be said on this topic.

The lack of any and all documentary source materials also limits our observations about the number of executions carried out in the Lublin camp via shooting or hanging. We can only say that no doubt the number was great, particularly since inmates who were sentenced to death for actual or alleged crimes were not the only ones to be executed there. Resistance fighters sen-

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[141] Zofia Murawska, "Warunki egzystencji wieźniów. Szykani i kary" (Conditions of the Inmates' Existence. Harassment and Punishments), in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 167.

[142] Claus Jordan, "Politics and the Justice System. A Case Study," in: Germar Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust: The Growing Critique of 'Truth" and 'Memory,'* 2nd edition, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, IL, 2003, pp. 147-181

[143] The agreement which the SS-men had to sign stated:
"I am aware that the Führer alone can decide on the life and death of an enemy of the state. I may not physically harm or kill an enemy of the state (inmate). Every instance where a concentration camp inmate is killed requires permission from the Reichsführer-SS personally. I am aware that in the event of a violation of this agreement I will be severely called to account." GARF, 7021-107-11, Sheet 130.

[144] E. Bauck, *op. cit.* (note 138), p. 180.

tenced to death outside the camp were also sent to Majdanek (or to the nearby forest of Krepiecki) to be executed.

The decisive factor which made Majdanek the worst of all the National Socialist concentration camps, at least part of the time, was probably neither the mistreatment of inmates – the scale and scope of which cannot be determined – nor the executions, which of course also took place in other camps. Rather it was the sanitary conditions, which were dreadful until early 1943 and still very bad from that time until autumn of the same year, and which inevitably triggered epidemics and thus the incredibly high mortality rate in the Lublin camp. This too was a result of the 'temporary nature' of this camp: as we have seen, Majdanek's connection to the municipal sewer system of Lublin was greatly delayed by squabbling among various authorities, and carried out at a snail's pace even once it had finally been decided upon.

2. Sanitary Conditions and Disease

Where people live closely crowded together, the danger of disease grows. Epidemics, particularly typhus transmitted by lice, were the main reason for the at times staggering mortality rate in the National Socialist concentration camps.

Admittedly, where sanitation and medical care were concerned, there were great differences between the camps. This is already shown by the mortality rates, which often differed greatly even for the same time period. Important information about these mortality rates is provided particularly by the September 30, 1943, report of SS-*Obergruppenführer* and WVHA Chief Oswald Pohl to Heinrich Himmler,[145] which discussed the measures taken to reduce mortality rates in the concentration camps, and the results achieved by them. Pohl informed his superior that by improving sanitary conditions as well as the rations and clothing of the inmates, the mortality rate in the camps had successfully been reduced from 10%(!) in December 1942 to 2.09% in August 1943.

As Document PS-1469 shows,[146] not one of the 2,500 inmates in the Dutch concentration camp Hertogenbosch died in August 1943, only one out of 3,000 in the Riga camp, and 40 out of 17,500 in Dachau (which corresponds to a death rate of 0.25%). The Lublin concentration camp had the highest death rate by far: 7.67% for the men and 4.41% for the women. (For the sake of comparison: in Auschwitz, the mortality rate for men was 3% that month, and for women it was 3.61%.)

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[145] PS-1469.
[146] See Document 11.

As already pointed out, the catastrophic sanitary conditions were the main reason for the abnormally high death rates in the Lublin camp.

In the anthology *Majdanek 1941-1944* Zofia Murawska devotes several pages to the sanitary conditions in the camp.[147] She sketches the following overview:

- Until spring 1942 there were no sanitary facilities and no running water in Majdanek. The first two wells on the camp grounds were not finished until May 1942.
- There were no laundry facilities until January 1943. Up to that time, the inmates had to do their laundry by hand, insofar as there was even any water available for this purpose. In the winter they obtained water by melting snow or ice.
- As of spring 1942, new arrivals were given shower baths. The camp inmates had only very irregular access to the showers. Weekly showers were not scheduled until late autumn 1943.
- Flush toilets were available only as of August 1943. Before that, the internees had to make do with primitive latrines in the form of pits with boards laid across. At night the prisoners were forbidden to leave the barracks and had to relieve themselves into boxes that were emptied in the morning.
- Due to the lack of water, soap and disinfectants, lice and other vermin were everywhere.
- In the second half of 1943 sanitary conditions improved noticeably. By autumn of that year, every barrack had faucets as well as stone wash basins.

Although these findings are based primarily on witness reports, they are probably quite realistic; they are also confirmed by German documents. We shall quote two of these documents – excerpts from one, and the other in its entirety.

On January 20, 1943, SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Krone traveled to Lublin on business and subsequently drew up a report in which he recorded the following:[148]

> *"1. Water supply*
>
> *The connection to the Lublin municipal supply net is finished. Also, all water-consuming facilities such as kitchen, bath, laundry and the crematorium are connected. At the moment, therefore, there are no water supply problems in the camp. Work is proceeding on the connections for the washing and toilet barracks.*
>
> *The installation of washing and toilet facilities in all housing barracks, requested at the urging of the camp commandant, for reasons of security, is feasible. Steps have already been taken to obtain the required materials.*
>
> *The connections for the quarters of the command staff and the guard battalions are also finished, and work is proceeding on the inside fixtures* […]

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[147] Zofia Murawska, "Warunki egzystencji wieźniów. Warunki sanitarne," in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 134-140.

[148] *APMM*, micr. no. 816, pp. 9f.

5. Sanitary facilities

The delousing, disinfection and bath facilities present at this time are adequate for the current population of 5,000 inmates, However, according to the camp commandant, a larger population is to be expected shortly. At this time, Amt CIII has access to some steam disinfection apparatus [for disinfestation purposes] *and steps have been taken towards providing three larger facilities.*

Division of the delousing facility into a clean and a contaminated side has been done.

6. Laundry facilities

At this time, the POW camp has only a hand-laundry facility. This must be considered inadequate for purposes of ensuring the sanitary and thorough cleansing of laundry and clothing.

The commandant of the POW camp Lublin pointed this out with particular emphasis and stressed that typhus, which has been on the rise – especially recently – among members of the SS (at this time some 40 SS-men are suffering from typhus), can only be brought under control by means of an adequate and thorough cleaning of the laundry. […]

Over the next weeks the firm Poensgen, Düsseldorf, will provide four small laundry facilities, each consisting of one machine, one spin dryer and one mangle, which had been intended for police bases in the east. These facilities shall be used to process only the laundry of the command staff and the members of the guard battalion."

Two months later, on March 20, 1943, SS-*Untersturmführer* Birkigt followed up on an inspection conducted on February 23 and 24 by drawing up a report on the sanitary conditions in Majdanek. He wrote:[149]

"A) Current conditions (Population approximately 7,000 inmates)

1. *At present, just under 10% of the camp population is ill. For the more than 600 patients, including some 200 surgical cases (frostbite, etc.), there are 3 infirmary barracks available on Compound I. This compound is described as a model compound. The infirmary barracks are separated from the housing barracks of Compound I by no more than an ordinary barbed-wire fence. In terms of laundry, rations etc., the infirmary barracks are supplied by the facilities of Compound I, i.e., they do not have their own kitchen, laundry, disinfection facility, etc. Currently each of the infirmary barracks houses more than 200 patients. Due to the triple-decker bunks, the barracks are overcrowded and lack adequate ventilation.*
2. *To date the only toilet facilities were dry (non-flush) toilets, located in a special barrack at the east end of each Compound. The feces were carted out onto the fields located towards the west. Since autumn last year, a sluice system has been set up, which joins the municipal sewers via a 24-inch-diameter drain canal. This sluice system still lacks two feeder pipes for Compound V, which could not be installed due to the onset of frost.*

   The Construction Office and Command arranged for the construction of latrine pits with one or two seats at various points above the sluice feeders so as to be

[149] *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.

able to begin using the sluice system even prior to completion of the planned flush toilets. The final plan provides for eight fixed toilets with ring-flush system at one end of each housing barrack [illegible section follows].

3. *To date there are no washing facilities in the barracks or washing barracks. The inmates are to wash themselves in wash bowls or buckets, using water brought in from the well. A new water pipe is in place and connected to the municipal water supply. Pressure is very low, since the municipal waterworks has a single functional pump said to manage only 8,000 cubic meters per day. A reserve pump exists, but is out of order.*
   Plans provide for washing facilities with two washing barracks (approximately 20-24 places) or with washing channels (approximately 40-50 places) at one end of each accommodation. At the moment, to provide for the interim, the toilet barrack at the eastern end of each barracks compound is equipped with a washing facility with wooden channels which, however, will probably not have a sufficient lifespan even for the interim. These temporary washing facilities have been ordered completed by March 3, 1943. However, since there appears to be a shortage of equipment and skilled labor, it seems that all the work will not be finished by the end of March.
4. *At present the only effective body cleansing for inmates consists of bathing (showering) in combination with body disinfection via an antiseptic bath in the two disinfection barracks. Each disinfection barrack has 40 showers. According to the camp physician and the SDG* [medics] *240-520 inmates can be channeled through the disinfection facilities daily.*

B) The concentration camp is to be enlarged to hold 25,000 prisoners.

1. *The infirmary must be made large enough and must be flexible enough for expansion in case of epidemics. It must continue to be separated from the rest of the camp by a quarantine strip and must receive its own supply facilities (kitchen, laundry, disinfection etc.).*
   Assuming a normal-case average of 3% patients, infirmary barracks must be adequate to permanently accommodate some 750 inmates. In the case of an epidemic, it must be possible to supplement this permanent infirmary with enough barracks to accommodate 10% of all inmates in infirmary or quarantine barracks – i.e., with a capacity of 2,500 inmates.
   To allow the additional infirmary barracks to be used as regular accommodations under normal conditions, they must be set up singly or in groups of two, divided by quarantine strips, so that they may be added to the infirmary facilities if and as needed.
2. *The washing conveniences for the inmates, as well as the toilet facilities, must be built as planned, and with all due speed.*
3. *The disinfection facility must be enlarged to reflect the future size of the camp, and must be equipped properly. It must be large enough so that*
   a) it can accommodate a larger-scale, batch-processing operation,
   b) clean people do not come into contact with dirty laundry,
   c) the inmates performing the disinfection cannot but undergo the cleansing process themselves.

It seems important that the infirmary should receive its own disinfection facility and that if possible the crematorium be transferred into the area of the camp infirmary as well.

Birkigt
SS-Untersturmführer (F).”

These two documents clearly show not only that sanitary conditions continued to be unacceptable even after the camp’s connection to the municipal water supply was complete, but also that SS authorities in charge strove earnestly to improve the situation. No doubt this was a result of Pohl’s December 1942 order to improve the living conditions of concentration camp inmates.[150]

The sanitary conditions described perforce brought all sorts of diseases with them. The Polish historian Jolanta Gajowniczek wrote an article on this topic, stating:[151]

1. The worst health problem in Majdanek was typhus. (In view of the utmost importance of this point we shall quote her subsection on typhus in Majdanek almost in its entirety later on.)
2. Tuberculosis claimed a very great number of lives. In the first months of 1944, the number of cases in the camp itself was further increased by the fact that many tuberculosis patients were brought to Majdanek from the Reich.
3. Poor rations resulted in massive cases of dysentery.
4. Scabies was very widespread due to inadequate personal hygiene resulting from the lack of water.

In her discussion of the men’s and women’s infirmary the author gives the following account of the medical care inmates received as of late 1941:[152]

- On November 27, 1941, a little over one month after the arrival of the first transports of prisoners, eight inmate doctors (seven Poles and one Czech) were sent to the Lublin camp from the Concentration Camp Sachsenhausen. Three more doctors from Sachsenhausen followed in December 1941, as well as one each from Dachau and Buchenwald.
- For the first months these doctors could not do anything for the patients since there was no medication and no bandages.
- In early 1942, the first isolation compound for typhus victims was set up. In February of that year, one barrack (Block 1 on Compound I) was set aside to house the patients.
- Also in February 1942, more inmate doctors arrived, this time from Auschwitz. In the second quarter of the same year they were followed by Jewish doctors from Slovakia and from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

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[150] See Chapter I.
[151] Jolanta Gajowniczek, “Choroby i epidemie. Rewir” (Illnesses and Epidemics. The Infirmary), in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), pp. 196-225.
[152] *Ibid.*, pp. 203ff.

These doctors brought medical instruments, medications and bandages with them.

- In March or April 1943 there were a total of 5 infirmary barracks. Barrack 1 included the quarters of the inmate doctors as well as the (German) camp physician's office, Barrack 2 contained the surgery, Barracks 3 and 4 served to accommodate bed-ridden patients, and Barrack 5 housed patients with infectious diseases. Another five barracks (numbers 6 through 10) were intended as emergency reserve, in other words probably for the case of an epidemic.
- In addition to these barracks, every compound had small "sick huts."

For October 1943 the author gives an indication of the nationalities of the doctors. At that time 120 assistants as well as the doctors did duty in the infirmary. Most of the doctors were Polish political prisoners, whereas the vast majority of the assistants were Jews.

Between December 12, 1943, and March 22, 1944, transports of sick inmates arrived in Majdanek from various camps in the Reich. Gajowniczek writes that there are no documents that indicate whether these sick inmates had been sent to the Lublin camp for elimination or for treatment, but she considers the former to be likely. On the other hand, she also mentions an April 13, 1944, transport of patients, doctors and assistants leaving Majdanek for Auschwitz.

When the camp was closed down on July 22, 1944, the sick inmates who were unable to travel were released and the rest were sent to Auschwitz.

In the women's division of the camp, the medical conditions seem to have been better than in the men's division; in the women's section a medical service was set up relatively promptly, and it also had some of the requisite equipment.

The compulsion to reinforce the orthodox image of Majdanek as an "extermination camp" prompts the author to make all sorts of comments about "selections for the gas chamber" and the like. For example, she writes:[153]

> *"The awareness of the imminent danger of being selected for gassing or of being killed by an injection of phenol resulted in most sick inmates trying to avoid hospital care. Those whose sensitivities had already been dulled, those with high fever (e.g. with typhus), the excessively worn-down, and those who had made their peace with the thought of death, were the only ones to report to the infirmary. For the majority of them the infirmary became the waiting room of death. For the Hitlerian camp authorities the infirmary no doubt represented an important way station for the selection of inmates to be sent to the gas chamber, but for many sick prisoners it meant a reprieve from death. Sick inmates were admitted to the infirmary to preserve them from selection in the barracks on the inmates' compound, and the inmate doctors did their best to protect the convalescents from selection and to send them to the 'easiest' labor unit where they could regain their strength.*

[153] *Ibid.*, p. 207.

The outpatient department and the infirmary were also the only salvation for cripples, as well as for those who had various physical injuries because they had been beaten at work. In the view of former inmate Dr. Romuald Sztab, the infirmary, to the Polish doctors, was an opportunity to save people's lives. And this is exactly the role it played as far as possible, which is demonstrated by the large number of inmates who survived their bouts with typhus and recovered in the infirmary after their treatment. Thanks to the secret procurement of typhus vaccine, which they had received from the Polish underground, the Polish doctors were able to save the lives of a certain number of inmates."

All this seems to come down to a muddle of contradictory nonsense. If the infirmary was an "important way station for the selection of inmates to be sent to the gas chamber," then it would have been quite impossible to take refuge there from "selection in the barracks." If those inmates who were unfit to work were being culled for the gas chamber at such selections, then the "cripples," in other words those who were thoroughly unfit to work, could hardly have found a sanctuary from death in the infirmary. And patients "with high fever (e.g. with typhus)" would have been the last to report to the infirmary if there had been an "imminent danger of being selected for gassing" there.

Of course the author could not fail to see the contradictory nature of her own claims. She tries to explain these inconsistencies as follows:[154]

"One might get the impression that it must have been impossible to reconcile the selection of inmates, the need for as many laborers on the one hand and the desire for the most thorough solution possible to the Jewish Question (meaning the extermination of the Jews) on the other. One way out of this conflict of interests was the predominance of one of these goals. In the case of Majdanek, the desire for extermination was undoubtedly predominant from the beginning of the camp's existence until autumn 1943. It was not until late 1943 that the inmates began to be considered as manpower needed in the ordnance factories of the Reich."

Gajowniczek mentions the transports of sick inmates who arrived from the Reich between December 1943 and March 1944. Danuta Czech's *Kalendarium* tells us of similar transports that had already arrived earlier.

For June 3, 1943, this *Kalendarium* states:[155]

"542 male and 302 female inmates suffering from malaria were transferred from Auschwitz to the Lublin concentration camp (Majdanek)."

and on November 25, 1943:[156]

"[…] *the registration was ordered of those inmates suffering from malaria who were quartered in the inmates' infirmary and the recovery blocks; the malaria patients were to be transferred to the Lublin camp (Majdanek)."*

On the other hand, two transports of sick inmates leaving Majdanek for Auschwitz are also recorded. According to the *Kalendarium*, 750 Jews and 750 Jewesses arrived in Auschwitz on July 8 of that year. Of these, the Ausch-

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[154] *Ibid.*, p. 219.
[155] Danuta Czech, *op. cit.* (note 122), p. 511.
[156] *Ibid.*, p. 663.

witz doctors admitted 49 men to the inmates' infirmary or the convalescent block for exhaustion, bacterial tissue inflammation and severe hernias, and declared 80 women unfit to work. Beyond that, it was "found that the overall condition of the transferred inmates prevents full utilization of labor capacity in the Concentration Camp Auschwitz." And for July 11, 1943, the *Kalendarium* records the arrival of 763 male and 568 female prisoners from Majdanek, many of whom were ill and unable, or largely unable, to work.[157]

Now, if we ignore the extermination tales, which are not supported by so much as one single document, we arrive at the following picture of the sanitary conditions in Majdanek:

The camp administration – which was no doubt chiefly to blame for the scandalous conditions – did make a number of efforts, albeit belatedly, to improve health care in the camp and thus to reduce the mortality rate. Towards this goal it brought doctors from other camps to Majdanek, set up infirmary barracks, installed disinfection facilities. For this reason as well it let charitable organizations distribute vaccine against typhus. (The claim that this vaccine had to be smuggled into the camp by the Resistance movement is another one of the author's fairy-tales which, incidentally, contradicts her earlier statements: as she herself notes only a few pages earlier, in her subsection "Typhus," this vaccine was brought into the camp perfectly legally by the Polish Red Cross and other humanitarian organizations.)

Gajowniczek's expositions on the typhus epidemic seem to us to be so significant that we shall include them here in only slightly abbreviated form:[158]

> *"One of the consequences of starvation-induced illnesses was the almost total loss of the body's natural resistance, which facilitated the spread of infectious diseases. In Majdanek, as in many other camps, the most frequent epidemic was typhus. The inmate physicians identified the first cases of this disease in Majdanek in December 1941 during an examination of the state of health of the Soviet POWs. It turned out that half of those examined were suffering from this disease, or had recovered from it and were still totally exhausted. The strenuous work to which the sick inmates were put in the inmate work units would have resulted in another increase in the number of cases of this disease. On the other hand it would also have been dangerous to leave the sick in the barracks; for these reasons, the Germans murdered those suspected of having typhus as a matter of policy. However, eradicating the typhus-transmitting lice together with those they had infested was no way to overcome the epidemic. The arrivals of new transports caused another rise in the number of cases. In June 1942 2,000 inmates already suffered from typhus. Since they had failed to get the situation under control, the camp authorities carried out a selection that claimed the lives of 200 inmates. They were led into Krepiecki Forest and shot. In late July that year, a general selection of all the inmates was ordered; as part of this process, 2,500 typhus victims were mur-*

[157] This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter IV.
[158] J. Gajowniczek, *op. cit.* (note 151), pp. 197-200.

dered in Krepiecki Forest. In a secret message smuggled out of the camp in July 1942, the inmate physician Dr. Jan Nowak wrote about this selection:

'The Infirmary Kapo (Benden) carried out a selection of typhus patients on the entire Compound I – more than 1,500 invalids were driven into Krepiecki Forest in cars and farming vehicles, and as I found out in the evening they were murdered and buried in this forest. This is how the typhus epidemic is combated in Majdanek. The epidemic has wiped out a transport of 12,000 Slovak Jews; only a few thousand of them are left. In the face of this campaign it is not permitted in our pseudo-hospital to diagnose typhus – we have to use the code word 'pneumonia'. The first to fall ill with typhus in the course of this 'epidemiological campaign' was the Infirmary Kapo; he is kept in isolation in Block I, and the entire camp hopes he will die.'

But the typhus epidemic continued to rage, not only among the inmates but also among the SS men who made up the camp guard. Disturbed by this state of affairs, the camp authorities carried out selections regularly every 14 days and obliged the block leaders to pick out the typhus patients and to transfer them to the camp infirmary, which was already organized and where selections took place even more frequently.

In autumn 1942 the authorities ordered a general disinfection of Compound I, for which all inmates were transferred to Compound II. It seems that this shift was dictated by an order from higher up (exact source not known), since a similar delousing operation in combination with the murder of the patients also took place in Auschwitz on August 28. In Auschwitz as well as in Majdanek, the transfer of people from one compound to another did not reduce the number of typhus cases. More new transports kept arriving; the sanitary conditions did not improve, and neither did the means for curing typhus. Thus the epidemic was not contained.

It is difficult even to estimate roughly how many prisoners succumbed to typhus in Majdanek in 1941 and 1942. In determining the victim count one must consider not only those who indirectly died of the disease, but also the healthy Jews who were shot during this time in Krepiecki Forest [sic!] *as well as the victims murdered in the gas chamber.*

In 1943 there was no change with respect to the epidemics, even if the camp authorities now resorted to isolating typhus patients to a greater extent. In February 1943, in place of two barracks on Compound I, Barrack No. 8 on Compound II as well as No. 12 and, for a few days, No. 13 on Compound III as well as Nos. 7 and 9 on Compound IV were set aside for the sick inmates. After the bath, the inmates were given a sulphurous cream which they had to rub on themselves. After evening roll-call a search for lice was often conducted in the blocks, and anyone on whom lice were found was punished. But all these measures failed, as the living barracks, blankets and straw pallets were infested with lice, and baths were administered in such a way that they only amounted to additional harassment and resulted in many inmates falling ill. On February 3, 1943, a temporary quarantine of the camp was imposed, since the number of typhus cases had skyrocketed again.

In spring 1943 only two barracks on Compound I were set aside for the typhus patients, and as the memoirs of former inmates show, this was the reason for the murder of most of the seriously ill patients – including a considerable number of typhus patients – in the gas chambers. Also, sick inmates from Compounds III and

IV were transferred to Compound I; together with harassment, this measure resulted in many patients dying within a short time, even though the living barracks on Compound I were much cleaner than those on Compounds III and IV. Nor did the typhus epidemic spare the doctors for the barracks for the epidemic victims: Józef Jakowski, Marian Jastrzebski, Edward Nowak, and Johann Řiha died in 1943.

In summer and autumn 1943 the typhus epidemic continued unabated, especially in Compound III, which resulted in the disinfection of the Compound being followed up with a quarantine of the camp lasting from October 25 to November 25. At that time, Barracks 20, 21 and 22 were reserved for the patients. Polish inmates made up the medical personnel. But the 'typhus blocks' continued operating. Not until December 26 were the remaining patients taken to Compound V, together with the staff. Soon afterwards, sick inmates who had been transferred to Majdanek from camps in the Reich were quartered there without prior disinfection. The infirmary barracks were given almost no medication and no fuel, and several dozen of the new arrivals died every day.

After the inmates there were evacuated in April 1944, the typhus still did not disappear. Since inmates in the commando charged with cleaning up the undisinfected barracks contracted typhus, the camp authorities saw themselves forced to set up a temporary isolation ward for the sick in Barrack 15 on Compound I. It was not possible to exterminate the lice in the camp barracks, which resulted in a continual spread of the typhus.

The typhus epidemic did not spare the women's compound either. […] *The largest number of cases among the women was recorded in spring and summer 1943, when numerous transports of Jewesses from the Warsaw ghetto as well as women evacuated from Ukrainian and White Russian territories arrived* […].

Only a radical change in the sanitary conditions as well as the strict isolation of patients and a better supply of medication to the infirmary could have brought results. Without these conditions being met, the only inmates who could survive their bouts of typhus were those that had a strong constitution or who received adequate care in the infirmary during their convalescence.

Polish inmates were better off than others, for as of October 1943, i.e., in the final stage of the camp's existence, they were cared for by charitable organizations from Lublin that supplied the infirmary with medication and medical equipment. The typhus vaccine, which was distributed to the Poles twice, was of major significance. As early as May 1943 the camp had been supplied with 1,000 units of antityphus vaccine, and on October 20 that year the Polish Red Cross delivered a second batch of this vaccine. Understandably, only a small number of inmates could reap the benefits."

In the next chapter we shall come back to the evidence for the extermination of the sick inmates in Majdanek. Gajowniczek is not alone in alleging this extermination; it is generally claimed by orthodox historians.

For the moment we shall make only a simple, logical objection: If "the desire for extermination was undoubtedly predominant" in Majdanek at least until autumn 1943, it would have been preposterous to build a hospital. It would have been preposterous to reassign inmate doctors from Sachsenhausen, Bu-

chenwald, Dachau, and Auschwitz to Majdanek. It would have been preposterous to set up disinfection facilities and thus to protect the inmates to be exterminated from dying of typhus. It would have been preposterous to send inspectors to Majdanek and have them draw up lengthy reports about the sanitary conditions and about the measures to be taken for their improvement. Finally, it would have been preposterous to allow the Red Cross to distribute the typhus vaccine.

Chapter IV: The Mortality

1. The 'Natural' Mortality. Determining the Number of Victims on the Basis of Documentary Sources

While German documentary sources have only been preserved in fragmentary form, they nonetheless permit an approximation of the number of Majdanek inmates to die of 'natural' causes (*i.e.*, from disease, exhaustion etc.). The documents in question are:

- The "Death Book" for the months of May to September 1942;
- The "Death Report for the Personal Effects Depot" of October 20 as well as for the time from November 29 to December 5, 1942;
- The "List of the Deceased for the Majdanek Camp" from November 20 until December 1942;
- The "Camp Population Report" for several days in 1942;
- A register of the dead and of their valuables for October 1943;
- The "Death Book" for March and April 1944;
- Document NO-5194;
- Document PS-1469.

Regarding the first "Death Book"[159] there exists a statistical analysis[160] drawn up by Janina Kiełboń, as of 1998 the Director of the Majdanek Memorial. We shall reproduce this analysis in the following, and supplement it with a direct examination of the document.

This document contains the names of 6,716 inmates in chronological order by death date (with a single exception). Every name is matched to a registration number.[161] The first number, assigned on June 8, 1942, is 328, the last, assigned on September 29 of the same year, is 7,044. Of the total 6,716 registered names,[162] 123 are illegible, so that Janina Kiełboń was able to statistically analyze the entries for 6,593 inmates. In the register for June, the names of 92 inmates who died between May 18 and 27 are inserted,[163] corresponding

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[159] *APMM*, sygn. I, d-19.

[160] "Księga wieznów zmarłych na Majdanku w 1942 r.," in: *ZM,* XV, 1993, pp. 111-115.

[161] Cf. Document 12.

[162] No name is assigned to number 706, so that the sum total of registered names is (7,044-327-1=) 6,716.

[163] Probably an earlier register existed, and the names from that were transferred to the Death Book.

to numbers 662-754. The Polish historian's statistical analysis yielded the following data:

MONTH	# OF DEAD	MONTH	# OF DEAD
May	92	August	1,863
June	638	September	2,531
July	1,469		
		Total:	**6,593**

Of these 6,593 dead, 5,842 (=88.6%) were Jews and 136 non-Jews; the Death Book gives no clues as to the remaining 615.

Admittedly, the statistical data listed above do not correspond entirely with the document they refer to. We summarize this in the two following tables:

THE DEAD OF THE MAJDANEK CONCENTRATION CAMP FROM MAY TO SEPTEMBER 1942[160]

Date	Registration Number	# of registered names
/	327	327
May 8-21	328 - 661	334
May 18-27	662 - 754	92 [163]
June 22-30	755 - 1,083	329
July 1-31	1,084 - 2,583	1,500
August 1-31	2,584 - 4,595	2,012
September 1-29	4,596 - 7,026	2,431
	Total:	**7,025**

THE DEAD OF THE MAJDANEK CONCENTRATION CAMP FROM MAY TO SEPTEMBER 1942[159]

Date	# of registered names	Daily average
/	327	/
May 18-27	92	9.2
June 8-30	663	28.8
July 1-31	1,500	48.3
August 1-31	2,012	64.9
September 1-29	2,431	83.8
Total:	**7,025**	

The question of which period the first 327 deaths relate to remains to be answered. If one considers that the average mortality for the first ten days of May was 9.2 and then increased continually, it is logical to assume that it was as yet below this number in April, and that the Death Book began on April 1.

Accordingly, the initial 327 deaths correspond to the period from April 1 to May 17, placing the average daily death rate at 6.9. This fits very well with the statements of SS-*Oberscharführer* Erich Mußfeldt, the only source for the

mortality figures during the camp's initial phase, who spoke of 5 to 10 deaths per day around the end of March 1942.[164]

For the last four days of May and the first seven days of June, which are not covered by the Death Book, one can postulate 300 as the approximate maximum number of deaths, based on the average daily mortality in June.

In the first three months of 1942, the average camp population was approximately 2,000 prisoners,[165] so that the number of deaths for this period probably amounted to a few hundred. For 1941, the Polish sources speak of some 2,300 deaths and an average population of 3,000;[166] on the other hand, Mußfeldt's statements indicate that approximately 1,400 camp inmates died between mid-November and late March 1942.[167] This figure strikes us as quite credible. Mußfeldt reports that typhus raged in the camp in November 1941 and that from 10 to 20 inmates died per day.[167] In late December the epidemic had by no means subsided, for the administration planned "a gassing" of the camp.[168] Thus, one can assume[169] that perhaps half the postulated 1,400 deaths were still recorded in 1941, while the other 700 fell into the first three months of 1942; this corresponds to an average of 5 to 10 dead per day and agrees quite well with Mußfeldt's statements.

The "Death Report for the Personal Effects Depot"[170] was a daily register of names (and inmate numbers) of "lost" (*i.e.*, deceased, released, or escaped) inmates – mostly those from the various sectors of the Majdanek camp.[171] The following table reflects the data contained in the eight surviving lists:

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164 Anna Zmijewska-Wiśniewska, "Zeznania szefa krematorium Ericha Muhsfeldta na temat byłego obozu koncentracyjnego w Lublinie (Majdanek)" (Statements of the Head of the Crematorium, Erich Muhsfeldt, regarding the former Concentration Camp in Lublin (Majdanek)), in: *ZM,* I, 1965, p. 139.

165 See Documents 9 and 10.

166 T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 126), p. 500.

167 According to Erich Mußfeldt's statements, made in Polish captivity, there were 1,200 Soviet prisoners of war in the camp on November 15, 1941; according to Mußfeldt, 300 had already died. Further, 100 to 200 Jews were allegedly there at that time. At the end of March 1942 only 300 Soviet prisoners of war remained. Anna Zmijewska-Wiśniewska, *op. cit.* (note 164), pp. 138, 139.

168 See Chapter VIII.

169 Assuming a daily average of 15 dead.

170 *GARF*, 7021-107-3.

171 See Document 13.

DATE	NUMBER OF DEAD IN COMPOUND #					
1942	I	II	III	TOTAL	RELEASED	DEPARTED
Oct. 20	37	109	5	151	6	11
Nov. 29	11	122	-	133	-	20
Nov. 30	9	81	28	118	1	-
Dec. 1	14	51	118	183	-	-
Dec. 2	21	60	23	104	1	4
Dec. 3	15	67	32	114	-	-
Dec. 4	25	63	63	151	2	-
Dec. 5	17	55	-	72	-	-
Total	**149**	**608**	**269**	**1,026**	**10**	**35**

The "List of the Deceased for the Majdanek Camp"[172] is the transcript of an original German document (specifically, a fragment from a Death Book) which was drawn up in 1946 on the behest of the Chairman of the "District Commission for the Investigation of the German Crimes in Lublin." The document refers to the time from November 20 to December 31, 1942, and records the deaths of 6,009 inmates. The pages of this list are divided into seven columns, detailing the following data: Serial number, Surname, First name, Date of birth, Type of imprisonment, Date of death, Cause of death.[173] The column "Type of imprisonment" notes the nationality of the deceased. The first running number is 12,005 and dates from November 20; the last is 13,740, for December 31. The following note appears at the end of November:

"Month November 1942
deaths of Jews in the Lublin concentration camp *2190*
various inmates in protective custody *890*
/-Poles, Greeks, Russian civilians
total *2999*
previous *10236*
13235."

The following note appears at the end of December:[174]

"Month December 1942 *last number* *Nov. 1942* *13235*
last number *Dec. 1942* *13713*
Dead Inmates *478*
deaths of Jews in conc. camp Lublin various inmates in protective custody /-Poles, Greeks, Russian civilians etc./ *2505* *478*
total *2983* *dead in December 1942."*

[172] Archiwum Glownej Komisij Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 626 z/OL3, "Wykaz wiezniów zmarłych w obozie na Majdanku" (Index of Inmates Deceased in the Majdanek Camp).
[173] See Document 14.
[174] See Document 15.

Following this note, however, another 27 names are recorded, making the last number 13,740. Thus, the numbers recorded in this list total 1,736, corresponding to 1,735 deaths.[175]

Since the last number for October was 10,236 and the last for September 29 was 7,026, this means that a total of 3,210 prisoners died between September 30 and October 31, 1942.

For the last three months of 1942, therefore, the death statistics look as follows:

MONTH	# DEATHS	DAILY AVERAGE
October[176]	3,210	100
November	2,999	100
December	3,010	97

The names of the 2,505 Jews who died in December 1942 are not on this list – no doubt because they were entered into a separate register intended for that purpose.

Thus, we conclude that there were some 17,200 deaths in 1942, distributed chronologically as follows:

January 1 to March 31	ca. 700
May 18 to September 29[177]	7,025
May 28 to June 7	ca.. 300
September 30 to October 31	3,210
November	2,999
December	3,010
	17,244

This figure agrees in its magnitude with that given by Dr. Richard Korherr, the Inspector for Statistics for the *Reichsführer*-SS, in his March 1943 report "The Final Solution of the European Jewish Question." One section of this document is titled "Jews in the Concentration Camps" and presents statistics about the Jews deported into the various German concentration camps up to December 31, 1942. Regarding the Lublin camp, the following data are given:[178]

	ARRIVALS	RELEASES	DEATHS	POPULATION ON DEC. 31, 1942
Lublin / men	23,409	4,509	14,217	4,683
Lublin / women	2,849	59	131	2,659
Total	**26,258**	**4,568**	**14,348**	**7,342**

[175] The death of one inmate – Otto Winternitz, No. 13,233 – was registered twice.
[176] Including September 30.
[177] Not including May 28 to June 7.
[178] NO-5194, p. 12.

With reference to these statistics, Korherr adds:[179]

"The Jews who were quartered in the concentration camps Auschwitz and Lublin in the course of the evacuation proceedings are not included."

In the case of Majdanek, however, this hardly makes a difference. The Death Book shows that the percentage of Jews among the deceased was 88.6%, and the Jewish proportion of the dead listed in the Death Report for the Personal Effects Depot was 85%. Among the deaths figuring on the list analyzed previously, Jews make up 78% (4,695 of 6,009 deceased). One is thus justified in assuming that the percentage for the entire year was of the same order of magnitude. Indeed, the 14,348 Jews who died in Majdanek in that year, as given in the Korherr Report, correspond to the (14,348 ÷ 17,644 × 100 =) 83.2% which we ourselves have calculated as being the total victim count.

For 1943, only the mortality figures for August and October are documented. The report of SS-*Obergruppenführer* Oswald Pohl to Heinrich Himmler, discussing the "deaths in the conc. camps," contains a "comparison of the deaths in the concentration camps from July 1942 to June 1943," noting the average population, the number of deaths, and the respective percentage of the total deaths, for all the camps. Furthermore, the report gives the number of deaths for each concentration camp for August 1943, again together with the corresponding camp population and the percentage of deaths. And finally, the percentage of deaths is also recorded for July. For Majdanek the figures are as follows:[180]

MORTALITIES FOR MAJDANEK CONCENTRATION CAMP IN AUGUST 1943

Conc. camp	Average population	Deaths	%	% (July)
Lublin – men	11,500	882	7.67	4.62
Lublin – women	3,900	172	4.41	2.01
Total	**15,400**	**1,054**	**6.84**	

For July the number of victims can be calculated with a fair degree of accuracy, since the Pohl Report specifies the percentage of deaths, and we also know the average concentration camp population.[181] We arrive at the following data:

MORTALITIES FOR MAJDANEK CONCENTRATION CAMP IN JULY 1943

	Average population	% deaths	Deaths
Lublin – men	12,300	4.62	568
Lublin – women	10,000	2.01	201
Total	**22,300**	**3.44**	**769**

[179] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[180] PS-1469, p. 4.
[181] See Chapter II.

For the first six months of 1943 the calculation of deaths in Majdanek is more complicated, but in this case as well, we arrive at a statistical magnitude on the basis of confirmed figures. The Pohl Report records the deaths in all the concentration camps together, as follows:

MONTH	DEATHS	MONTH	DEATHS
January	9,839	April	8,358
February	11,650	May	5,700
March	12,112	June	5,650
	Total	**53,309**	

The actual mortality figures for these six months are known for the following camps:

Dachau[182]	815	
Sachsenhausen[183]	2,754	
Mauthausen/Gusen[184]	5,550	
Auschwitz[185]	ca. 23,600	
Stutthof[186]	2,376	(to June 1, 1943)

For Buchenwald we only know the total for the entire year; it is 3,516.[187] We shall assume half this figure for the first six months: approximately 1,750 deaths. Regarding Stutthof, in view of the average mortality there in May (15 deaths per day), a victim count of approximately 450 seems reasonable for June. Accordingly, roughly 37,300 inmates died in the above-named camps in the first half of 1943.

If one subtracts this number from the total of all deaths occurring (according to the Pohl Report) in all camps between January and late June 1943, this leaves (53,309-37,300=) approximately 16,000 deaths, of which the majority fall to Majdanek and the rest to the total of eight small camps (Flossenbürg, Neuengamme, Groß-Rosen, Natzweiler, Bergen-Belsen, Ravensbrück, Riga and Herzogenbosch). In August 1943, these eight concentration camps held 21.34% of the total number of inmates. They were the site of 10.44% of the total deaths recorded in the concentration camps.[188] On the basis of this data, we can estimate that up to 90% of the total deaths calculated above for the

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[182] Johann Neuhäusler, *Wie war das im KZ Dachau?*, Dachau: Kuratorium für Sühnemal KZ Dachau, 1981, p. 27.
[183] *GARF*, 7021-104-4, p. 58 (update for 1942).
[184] Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen. Dokumentation.* Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1980, p. 157.
[185] *Death Books of Auschwitz.* Published by the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Munich, New Providence, London, Paris: K. G. Saur, 1995, v. 1, pp. 236f.
[186] PMS, sygn. Z-V-10/14 (Death Books).
[187] Eugen Kogon, *Der SS-Staat. Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager*, Munich: Karl Alber, 1946, p. 120.
[188] PS-1469, p. 4.

nine camps (Majdanek plus the eight smaller camps) occurred at the Lublin camp. Accordingly, some (16,000×0.9=) 14,400 internees died there in the first half of 1943; together with the victims from July and August, this totals (14,400+1,054+769=) approximately 16,200 dead.

For October 1943 there exists a register in which "Date, Name, Number, Money, Valuables" of the deceased inmates are recorded. It includes 750 names.[189]

In December the mortality was quite low, due in part to the reduction of the number of inmates and in part to the improvement of sanitary conditions. The fragmentary population reports for that month indicate the following death figures:[190]

DATE	# DECEASED
Dec. 9	3
Dec. 11	7
Dec. 12	5
Dec. 13	9
Dec. 16	9
Dec. ? (illegible)	7
Dec. 22	1

Extrapolating from these figures, one arrives at approximately 180 deaths for December 1943.

The second Death Book[191] refers to March and April 1944 and contains 1,940 names, distributed as follows:

RUNNING NUMBER	TIME PERIOD	# DEATHS
20,686 – 22,339	March 1-31	1,654 [192]
22,340 – 22,625	April 1-6	286
	Total	**1,940**

The number of dead for March corresponded to 12.72% of the average camp population of 13,000 inmates. That the mortality was so extremely high during this period can surely be explained by the fact that Majdanek had been partially converted into an infirmary camp at that time.[193]

Registrations begin with number 20,686 (March 1) and end with number 22,625 (April 6). If one considers that a maximum of 16,200 people died at the Lublin camp between January 1 and August 31, 1943, and that the mortality in December 1943 was very low, one cannot but conclude that this Death

[189] *APMM*, sygn. I. d. 19a.
[190] *APMM*, sygn. I-c-2, vol. 1. See Document 8.
[191] *GARF*, 7021-107-9.
[192] See Document 16.
[193] cf. Chapter II.

Book began with January 1, 1943. Accordingly, 22,625 prisoners died in Majdanek between January 1, 1943, and April 6, 1944.

In April 1944, the average camp population (which had been approximately 13,000 only the month before) dropped to 4,350, as the evacuation was already in full swing at that time. Assuming the same percentage of deaths as in March, one arrives at (4,350×0.1272=) approximately 550 deaths, but since 286 deaths were recorded in the first six days of April alone, this figure seems too low. One will thus be well advised to apply the percentage from March only to the last 24 days of April; April then totals some 900 deaths. In May the average camp population was approximately 2,500, in June it was roughly 4,500 (despite the ongoing evacuation, inmates continued to arrive). Under these circumstances, the number of inmates who died in May, June and the first 22 days of July was likely not greater than 1,000.[194]

Therefore, taking all this into account, the total number of deaths in Majdanek from the time of its establishment to the day of its liberation on July 23, 1944, was (700 + 17,244 + 22,339 + 900 + 1,000=) approximately 42,200.

2. Soviet and Polish Claims: Propaganda, Historiography, and Revision

a) Propaganda

In its closing report[195] the Polish-Soviet Investigative Commission, which was formed soon after the dissolution of the camp, claimed that 1,500,000 people had died in Majdanek in the duration of its existence. The bodies of the victims had allegedly been cremated as follows:

600,000	in the new crematorium
400,000	on pyres near the new crematorium
300,000	in the forest of Krepiecki
80,000	in the old crematorium
1,380,000 [196]	

The Commission does not tell us what allegedly happened to the remaining 120,000 bodies; since they did not figure among those cremated, it was probably assumed that they had been buried.

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[194] This would correspond to approximately 14% of the camp population.

[195] This report was also published as a brochure: *Communiqué of the Polish-Soviet Extraordinary Commission for Investigating the Crimes Committed by the Germans in the Majdanek Extermination Camp in Lublin,* Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1944. Later the Soviets submitted this report at the Nuremberg Tribunal as Document USSR-29; cf. *IMT*, vol. VII. p. 590.

[196] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

These figures – which are pure propaganda, as goes without saying – stand in stark contradiction of the material investigations that were supposed to have substantiated them: in actual fact, the Polish-Soviet Commission, in its search of the camp grounds and Krepiecki Forest, discovered 467 bodies and 266 skulls, which were subjected to forensic analysis. The Commission also discovered 4.5 m^3 (5.9 cubic yards) of ashes and bones,[197] which cannot have corresponded to any more than 3,000 cremated corpses. So the discrepancy between the actual finds and the propagandistic allegations is glaring: (467+266=) 733 buried bodies rather than the alleged 120,000, and at most 3,000 cremated corpses as compared to the alleged 1,380,000!

In the Reasons for Sentence given on December 2, 1944, in the Lublin trial of Hermann Vogel *et al.*, an even greater number of victims was alleged: 1,700,111.[198] This figure was taken up in the charges that the Polish government had drawn up for the Nuremberg Tribunal, where it was claimed:[199]

> *"It has been proven that 1,700,000 people were murdered in Majdanek, and that Majdanek was an execution camp in the full sense of this term."*

b) Historiography

The Polish "Commission to Investigate the German Crimes in Poland" (later renamed "Commission to Investigate the Hitler Crimes in Poland," and then again renamed "Commission to Investigate the Crimes against the Polish People" after the end of Communist rule, since Soviet crimes were now also being investigated) reduced the aforementioned propagandistic figures greatly. In 1948, Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz, a member of this commission, published an article about Majdanek,[200] which set out the results of this Commission's investigation of Majdanek. In other words, this was an official publication, and despite its major shortcomings it does represent an initial step away from pure propaganda and towards proper historiography, even if only in the sense that the author went to the trouble of calculating the number of victims of the camp rather than simply inventing a figure out of thin air. Admittedly, his method still bears the unmistakable stamp of propaganda – which is not surprising in view of the political climate of the time – and is devoid of any scientific and academic value. Łukaszkiewicz bases his arguments almost exclusively

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[197] *Ibid.*, p. 13, as well as Protocol No. 1 of the forensic examination of the crematorium, from August 4 to 23, 1944, *GARF*, 7021-107-9, p. 258. The heap of allegedly 1,350m^3 "compost of soil, the ashes of burned corpses, and small human bones," which the Commission mentions on p. 20 of its aforementioned Communiqué and which today is located in the camp mausoleum not far from the new crematorium, consists for the very most part of sand.

[198] "Na samym Majdanku wymordowano 1,700,000 ludzi" (1.7 Million People Were Murdered in Majdanek Alone). *Sentencja wyroku*, *op. cit.*, (note 3).

[199] The Republic of Poland vs.: 1. German war criminals. 2. Their formations and organizations, identified in Charge 1 at the International Court-Martial, p. 44. This report was submitted as Document USSR-93 at the Nuremberg Tribunal. Cf. *IMT*, vol. VII, pp. 214.

[200] Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz, *op. cit.* (note 10), pp. 63-105.

on eyewitness testimony and distorts the sum and substance of the few documents he does use. We shall restrict ourselves here to a discussion of the figures he gives.

Łukaszkiewicz subdivides the time of Majdanek's existence into four periods.[201] For the first period, from the establishment of the camp until the end of 1942, he gives the following victim counts:

- 5,000 Soviet prisoners of war, who were allegedly sent to the camp at the very beginning but were not registered;
- 2,000 Soviet prisoners of war, admitted in 1942 in small groups;
- 9,000 registered Czech and Slovak Jews;
- 3,000 unregistered Jews from western and central Europe;
- 15,000 unregistered Polish Jews;
- 12,000 registered Polish Jews;
- 7,000 registered Jews;
- 57,000 unregistered Polish Jews;
- 3,000 Poles inducted in small groups.

For this first period, Łukaszkiewicz cites a sum total of "approximately 100,000" victims.[202] Of course, if one adds up the above numbers, the total is actually 113,000.

The second period lasted from early 1943 until June of the same year; according to the author, the victims to die in this time were:

- 116,000 registered inmates;
- 30,000 unregistered Jews.

Thus, the total for this period has reached 146,000.

The third period covers the time from July 1943 until April 1944; the victims for this period were:

- 71,000 registered inmates;
- 4,000 unregistered Poles;
- 20,000 unregistered Polish and Russian Jews;
- 18,000 Jews shot on November 3, 1943, among them 4,000 who had been registered.

That makes 113,000 victims for this period.

The fourth and last period covered the time from April to July 22, 1944. During that time, 2,000 Poles died.

Thus, Łukaszkiewicz arrives at a total of 360,000 dead,[203] and concludes:[204]

> *"Based on an analysis of the evidence, one can say with considerable certainty that approximately 60% of the 360,000 victims died a camp death,*[205] *while some*

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[201] *Ibid.*, pp. 86-91.
[202] *Ibid.*, p. 88.
[203] *Ibid.*, p. 91. If one adds the subtotals, one arrives at a total of 374,000 dead.
[204] Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *op. cit.* (note 10), p. 91.
[205] Meaning those who died of 'natural' causes.

25% were gassed and the rest were shot or killed by other means (hanging, lethal injections).”

As we can see, the number of those who, according to the author, died of ‘natural’ causes is much greater than those who were murdered: 216,000 versus 144,000 (including 90,000 gassed). The component parts of his statistics indicate that 215,000 registered and 159,000 unregistered inmates died.

Łukaszkiewicz’s methodology is decidedly clumsy and is based on two principles: eyewitness accounts and extrapolations. The component figures and sum total of the allegedly unregistered victims are based entirely on eyewitness testimony, which deprives them of any and all evidential value. The sum total of those who died of ‘natural’ causes, on the other hand, is based on completely arbitrary extrapolations of two German documents: from the 9,216 deaths recorded in these documents, Łukaszkiewicz concludes that the total was 215,000! Let’s take a look at his method.

The author proceeds from the assumption that 10,000 Czech and Slovak Jews were deported to Majdanek in April 1942. Since 90% of the 7,026 dead recorded in the “Death Book” for June 1 to September 28, 1942, were Czech and Slovak Jews, he assumes (10,000×0.9=) 9,000 dead for April to September, which is not that much in excess of the actual figure. To calculate the victim count for October, November and December he refers to a section of the “List of Inmates Deceased in the Majdanek Camp,” which covers the time from November 20 to December 5 and contains the following note: “Month of November 1942, deaths of Jews in the Lublin concentration camp – 2,190.”[206] He uses the same figure for October and December and thus arrives at (2,190×2+2,190=) 6,570 dead for that three-month period; he rounds this number up to 7,000. This figure is still too low. But he arbitrarily adds another 12,000 dead, which he arrives at as follows: on the basis of eyewitness testimony he assumes that 15,000 Polish Jews arrived at Majdanek, of which 3,000 were allegedly still alive in November; the others purportedly died.

Łukaszkiewicz’s reasoning is quite haphazard; as he himself states, the 3,000 inmates who were still alive in November included 1,000 foreign and 1,500 Polish Jews as well as 500 inmates of other nationalities, so that he should actually assume (15,000-1,500=) 13,500 deceased Polish Jews, not 12,000. Furthermore, the alleged 12,000 deaths already include the number for October – but the author adds another 2,190 dead to these.

As an aside, it should be noted that Łukaszkiewicz derives a further 57,000 deaths from the number of registered Jews who died, by assuming from eyewitness testimony that the (12,000+7,000=) 19,000 registered inmates who died made up 25% of the total number of deportees. This total number, he therefore claims, was 76,000, of which 75%, or 57,000, were murdered without having been registered.

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[206] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

Łukaszkiewicz's number of 116,000 registered inmates who died during the second phase is truly amazing. For September 1942, when the camp population was 11,000, Łukaszkiewicz postulates 180 deaths per day, which would mean a daily mortality of fully 1.6%. Drawing on eyewitness testimony, he proceeds to calculate an average camp population of 36,000 for the first six months of 1943, setting the daily mortality at 1.8% due to the overcrowded conditions. In this way he arrives at 36,000×0.018×180= 116,640 or, rounded off, 116,000.

In actual fact, the average mortality in September 1942 was 84 per day, not 180; even assuming an average camp population of 11,000, this means that the daily mortality was 0.8%. Furthermore, the alleged average camp population of 36,000 for the first half of 1943 is pure fantasy; according to Leszczyńska's statistics, discussed here in Chapter II, it was approximately 15,300.[207] A *daily* average mortality of 1.8% for a camp population of 36,000 would amount to 648 deaths per day, or 19,940 per month, meaning a *monthly* mortality of 54%! Also, the hypothesis suggesting that the mortality remained consistently at the same high level for six months is arbitrary and unfounded.

Łukaszkiewicz uses the same method to calculate the number of registered inmates who died during the third period. He assumes an average camp population of 22,000 and a daily mortality of 1.2%, whereby he calculates (22,000×0.012×270=) 71,280 dead – rounded off to 71,000 – for the nine months in question. Here as well, his method is completely arbitrary and devoid of any serious foundation. We would just point out that according to Łukaszkiewicz the monthly mortality was approximately 7,900, or almost 36%, whereas we know from Pohl's September 30, 1943, report to Himmler that fewer than 800 people died in Majdanek in July 1943, and 1,054 in August. The Pohl Report also refutes Łukaszkiewicz's postulated mortality; in actual fact it was 3.4% in July (or a little over 0.1% per day) and 8.84% in August (a little over 0.2% per day) – which is still very high.

Polish historiography proceeded to elevate Łukaszkiewicz's statistics to the status of unimpeachable truth, so that as late as 1979 the "Commission to Investigate the Hitler Crimes in Poland" maintained the figure of 360,000 victims in its most important official publication about Majdanek.[208]

After Łukaszkiewicz, who was a judge by profession, Marszałek, then the Director of the Majdanek Memorial, was the first historian to take a detailed look at the number of the Lublin camp's victims. In his book about the history of Majdanek,[209] he devoted a section to the 'natural' mortality factor, in which he wrote:[210]

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[207] Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 129), pp. 13-16.

[208] Glowna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939-1945. Informator encyklopedyczny.* Warsaw: Panstwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1979, p. 309.

[209] Józef Marszałek, *Majdanek.* The Polish original was published in 1981 under the title *Maj-*

"In the case of Majdanek, it is impossible to describe this form of extermination[211] *in figures, for we do not have complete records of those who perished in the camp."*

Despite this "impossibility," he sets the number of those who died of 'natural' causes at 160,000. Let us now see how he arrived at that figure. To start, Marszałek mentions the two Death Books, and states correctly:[210]

"On the basis of the fragments of these two books, the mortality in the second half of 1942 can be estimated at 15,000 persons."

With reference to the year 1943, Marszałek writes:[212]

"In 1943, notably in its first three quarters, when the average number of prisoners rose to 20,000 and a typhus epidemic raged, the mortality increased considerably. […] *According to a secret letter from Oswald Pohl to Himmler, of September 30, 1943, the mortality in Majdanek was the highest among all concentration camps and in August amounted to 7.47 per cent among men and 4.41 per cent among women. Thus, one can assume that in the first three quarters of 1943, an average 300 persons died each day, which gives a total of about 90,000 deaths throughout that period."*

Both the method of calculation and the result are statistically invalid, for the following reasons:

1) Even if the average daily mortality had been 300, then from early January until late September (273 days) the total number of inmates to die would have been (300×273=) 81,900, not 90,000;
2) Even if one accepted Marszałek's extremely high figures – an average camp population of 20,000 and an average mortality of 7.47%[213] – then from January to September (9 months) a total of (20,000×0.0747×9=) 13,446 people would have died, not 90,000;
3) As we have seen in the previous section, the actual mortality for the entire camp, according to the Pohl Report, was 6.84%; accordingly, the number of dead would have been (20,000×0.0684×9=) 12,312.
4) The average camp population during this time was 16,700,[214] so that the number who died would be (16,700×0.0684×9=) 10,280.
5) The figure of 300 dead per day, or 9,000 per month, would amount to (9,000÷20,000×100=) 45% of the average camp population cited by Marszałek and would therefore be six times larger than the maximum death rate of 7.47% cited by Pohl. If one considers the actual average camp population, then according to Marszałek (9,000÷16,700×100=) 53.89% of the inmates would have died every month!

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danek. Obóz koncentracyjny w Lublinie. We quote from the English translation: *Majdanek. The Concentration Camp in Lublin*, Warsaw: Interpress, 1986.

210 *Ibid.*, p. 124.

211 Marszałek considers 'natural' mortality to be an indirect form of extermination.

212 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 209), pp. 214f.

213 The average mortality rate was 6.84%.

214 See Documents 9 and 10.

The Pohl Report indicates a total of 1,054 dead for the month of August, signifying a daily mortality of (1,054÷31=) 34 inmates, not 300!

But the oddest thing about all this is that Marszałek assigns a greater number of victims to Majdanek in the first six months of 1943 than the Pohl Report indicates died during that time in all German concentration camps put together! For the time from January to June of that year, Marszałek calculates a sum of (300×180=) 54,000 victims, but the Pohl Report – which the Polish historian quotes from and must therefore be familiar with – shows that during the time in question the death count in *all* concentration camps (there were 17 of them) was 53,309.

The following figures apply to the next three months: in July approximately 4,700 inmates died;[215] 4,699 in August; for September, considering the fact that the mortality dropped and the camp population grew, one can assume a maximum of 5,000 dead, so that approximately 14,400 prisoners may have died altogether in these three months. Marszałek, on the other hand, comes up with (300×90=) 27,000 victims for Majdanek alone, to make no mention of the extra 9,000 which he generously invents in addition.

Regarding the following period, Marszałek writes:[216]

> *"In the fourth quarter of 1943, mortality declined as a result of a decrease in the number of prisoners and a certain improvement of living conditions. However, in the first two months of 1944, it rose again following the arrival in Majdanek of thousands of sick prisoners from other concentration camps. During these two months, between 6,000 and 8,000 prisoners died. According to the extant death book for March 1944, 1,502 persons died at the camp in that month, among them 128 women."*

As we have already shown, some (20,686-16,200=) 4,500 inmates died in Majdanek from September 1943 to February 1944, so that Marszałek's figures for January and February 1944 are grossly inflated. On the other hand, he set the figure for March a little too low; it was 1,654, not 1,502.

From the above data, Marszałek concludes:[216]

> *"Altogether, during the whole period of the camp's existence, about 160,000 prisoners perished as a result of indirect extermination."*

To be sure, if one adds up his figures, one arrives at a maximum total of (15,000+90,000+8,000+1,500=) 114,500 dead. Marszałek adds the extra (160,000-114,500=) 45,500 simply by decree, without even trying to account for them somehow. And what adds even more confusion is that these 45,500 must have died in the last three months of 1943 – at a time when Marszałek himself admitted that the living conditions in the camp had improved and the inmate population had decreased – as well as in the last four months of the

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[215] Calculated based on the average camp population and the actual mortality rate, which was 2.23% in July.

[216] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 209), p. 125.

camp's existence, when the evacuations continued to massively decrease the camp population and mortality thus dropped yet again!

Marszałek's figure of 160,000 deaths from 'natural causes' does represent a revision of the figure of 216,000 postulated by Łukaszkiewicz 33 years earlier, but since the former accepts the latter's calculated total of 360,000 without exception,[217] the entire exercise merely amounts to a redistribution of those "indirectly exterminated" (as Marszałek puts it) and the "directly exterminated," *i.e.*, those allegedly murdered without having been registered. Łukaszkiewicz set the number of these latter victims at 144,000, while Marszałek sets it at 200,000.

c) Revision

Naturally, Łukaszkiewicz's number of victims was dictated by important political considerations to which historians of that era had to submit whether they liked it or not. It was not until the early 1990s that Polish historiography made a first tentative attempt to shake off the fetters that had been placed on it by the now defunct Communist regime, and to revise the number of Lublin victims. This arduous process was initiated by Czesław Rajca with a 1992 article whose title translates as "The Problem of the Number of Victims of the Majdanek Camp." Rajca wrote:[218]

> *"The loss of human life in Hitler's camps, including Majdanek, was a taboo topic until the late 1980s. It was practically impossible to modify the post-war claims which, given the lack of historical analyses of this topic, were based on very meager sources. Both the Commission to Investigate the Hitler Crimes in Poland and the former inmates of Hitler's camps opposed any such modification. This is the reason why, in the monograph 'Majdanek 1941-1944' which I co-authored, I accepted without demurrer the figure calculated by Z. Łukaszkiewicz in 1948; according to him, some 360,000 people died in the Lublin concentration camp. Now that the aforementioned restrictions dictated by non-scientific considerations have fallen by the wayside, a re-examination of the number of victims of the Lublin camp is possible."*

Rajca denounces the grossly exaggerated figure of fully 1.5 million Majdanek victims proclaimed by the Polish-Soviet Extraordinary Commission in September 1944; the Commission, he says, had had access to only "a small number of documents from the camp bureaucracy, as well as a few statements from former inmates." In addition, it had been provided with expert reports on the gas chambers and the crematorium, but these reports had been false since the capacity of the facilities in question had been exaggerated, and since it had been falsely alleged that both facilities had operated without interruption and in parallel from the time of their first use to the time when the camp was dissolved. And finally, 800,000 pairs of shoes had been found there, and the au-

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[217] *Ibid.*, p. 142.
[218] Czesław Rajca, *op. cit.* (note 9), p. 127.

tomatic assumption had been that they had belonged to murdered inmates, whereas documents discovered later showed that there had been a storeroom in Majdanek where shoes were sent from other camps. (Also, as we have seen in Chapter I, worn-out shoes were sent from the eastern front to Majdanek for repair.)

Rajca criticizes Łukaszkiewicz's aforementioned article in general terms but quite severely. He acknowledges correctly that, compared to that of the Polish-Soviet Commission, Łukaszkiewicz's work was groundbreaking, but also stresses the unreliable nature of the documentation his work was based on and which threw his entire line of argument into a very questionable light: almost every figure is inflated; that of the deportees to Majdanek, the camp population in the first half of 1943 as well as in the first quarter of 1944, the mortality of 1.8% per day, and the number of Jews sent to the camp.

After Rajca has thus undertaken to banish the ghosts of the past, he explains the approach on which his own calculations are based:[219]

> *"Given the lack of documentary material relating directly to the extent of the crime committed in Majdanek, the only rational means of calculating the number of victims is to subtract from the total number of prisoners sent to the camp the number of those transferred to other camps, those released, and those who escaped."*

The figures with which the author works are those given by Leszczyńska in her studies of the transports to and from Majdanek.[220] According to Leszczyńska, it is a documented fact that approximately 275,000 inmates were deported to Majdanek and 45,000 were transferred to other camps. But as she claims that the first of these figures is incomplete, Rajca increases the first figure (arbitrarily) to 300,000. Since the sum of all transferred, released and escaped inmates, according to Rajca, totals some 65,000, he arrives at a victim count of 235,000. Of the 300,000 inmates brought to Majdanek, he states, approximately 120,000 were Jews, 100,000 were Poles, 40,000 were Soviets, and approximately 30,000 were western Europeans. About 110,000 of the victims were Jews.[219]

As we have seen in Chapter II, Leszczyńska's statistics regarding the inmates deported to Majdanek are utterly unrealistic, and thus Rajca's calculations, based on precisely these statistics, are devoid of any rational foundation.

Rajca concludes his article with a look to the future:[221]

> *"The above balance sheet of Majdanek victims represents the current state of research into this subject. It is not out of the question that the discovery of new sources (we may yet hope that the documents that were taken to the Soviet Union in 1944 will become accessible) will require a correction of this balance sheet, but it does not seem that drastic changes are likely."*

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[219] *Ibid.*, p. 129.
[220] See Chapter II.
[221] Czesław Rajca, *op. cit.* (note 9), pp. 129f.

In a brochure published by the Majdanek Museum the matter is portrayed thus:[222]

> *"Of the approximately 300,000 inmates sent to Majdanek, roughly 235,000 died in the camp, 45,000 were transferred to other camps, 20,000 were released, 500 escaped, and 1,500 were liberated* [by the Red Army]*."*

Both authors remain silent as to the source of these statistics.

Leszczyńska cites a former inmate named Andrzej Stanisławski, who had worked in the camp registry, and reports that a total of 240,000 prisoners had been recorded in said registry.[223] If this claim were correct, the breakdown of inmates admitted to the camp would look as follows:

Total admitted:	300,000
Registered:	240,000
Unregistered:	60,000
Dead:	235,000 (including 175,000 registered)

In this case, the number of those who died from 'natural' causes would be more than four times the number actually documented – which says it all where the credibility of the 'information' provided by Stanisławski is concerned.

At this point we would like to add our own estimates of the number of inmates deported to Majdanek during the time of the camp's existence. If one accepts – as we do – the official Polish figures of 20,000 released and 45,000 transferred inmates, then one arrives at the following breakdown:

Released:	20,000
Transferred:	45,000
Dead:	42,200
Liberated on July 23, 1944:	1,500
Total admitted, ca.:	**109,000**

d) The Numbers Given by Western Historians

As we have already pointed out in the Introduction, there is no scientific literature about Majdanek to be found in the western world at all. The historians of renown have never looked into the question of the number of victims of the camp, and the wildly divergent figures they offer depend entirely on which source they used. In some cases they have even "corrected" these sources in accordance with their own personal preference. Added to this is the fact that some of these historians are interested exclusively in the Jews, the alleged victims of the "Final Solution" – as though the non-Jewish inmates who died of diseases, exhaustion etc. did not merit any attention at all. The following examples illustrate the morass of western historiography in this area.

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[222] Anna Wiśniewska, Czesław Rajca, *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 32.
[223] Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 136), p. 37.

The most discreditable character among the western historians is no doubt Lucy Dawidowicz, who even as late as 1979 had the effrontery to write of 1,380,000 murder victims in Majdanek;[224] quite obviously she adopted the Polish-Soviet Commission's propaganda figure of 1.5 million victims[225] and arbitrarily deducted 120,000 who died of 'natural' causes. Other historians, such as Lea Rosh and Eberhard Jäckel, have taken up Łukaszkiewicz's figure of 360,000 dead.[226] Wolfgang Scheffler, who for whatever reason does not like Łukaszkiewicz's statistics, offers a total victim count of 250,000.[227] This same figure appears in the article "Majdanek" in the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*;[228] the author of this article, however, is most likely the Polish historian Czesław Madajczyk. The District Court of Düsseldorf, which in the Majdanek Trial made reference to an expert report by Scheffler as well as to various witness statements, reduced the victim count yet again and spoke of "at least 200,000 victims, including at least 60,000 Jews."[229]

Certain authors regard the Jewish victims as the only ones worthy of note. Aharon Weiss estimates their number as 120,000 to 200,000,[230] Martin Gilbert speaks of 125,000,[231] Raul Hilberg of 50,000.[232] And finally, Adam Rutkowski, the author of the chapter on Majdanek in the well-known anthology *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas*, makes do with the succinct comment that "only estimates exist"[233] with regard to the number of victims of the gas chambers; Rutkowski is also cautious enough to refrain from mentioning any numbers of victims of 'natural' causes.

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[224] Lucy Dawidowicz, *The War against the Jews 1933-1945,* Pelican Books, 1979, p. 191.
[225] The German version of the relevant report is listed among the sources used by L. Dawidowicz, *ibid.*, p. 528.
[226] Lea Rosh, Eberhard Jäckel, *Der Tod ist ein Meister aus Deutschland*, Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1991, p. 217.
[227] Wolfgang Scheffler, *Judenverfolgung im Dritten Reich,* Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1964, p. 40.
[228] *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust, op. cit.* (note 7), v. II, p. 918.
[229] District Court Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 55), v. I, p. 90.
[230] Aharon Weiss, "Categories of camps – Their character and role in the execution of the 'final solution of the Jewish question,'" in: *The Nazi Concentration Camps. Proceedings of the Fourth Yad Vashem International Historical Conference,* Jerusalem, January 1980, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984, p. 132.
[231] Martin Gilbert, *Auschwitz und die Alliierten,* Munich: C. H. Beck, 1982, p. 437.
[232] Raul Hilberg, *Die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden,* Frankfurt/Main: S. Fischer, 1990, v. II, p. 956; the original English edition (*The Destruction of European Jewry,* Chicago: Quadrangle, 1967) speaks only of "tens of thousands," p. 572.
[233] E. Kogon *et al.* (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 6), p. 244.

3. Death from 'Non-Natural' Causes

In Polish historiography the expression 'death from non-natural causes' refers to various groups of victims which fall into two main categories: the *registered* and the *unregistered* victims.

The first category is that of the registered inmates who became unable to work – particularly those inmates suffering from typhus – who were allegedly "selected" and killed in the camp.

The second category includes two groups of victims: Poles arrested for activities against the occupation forces and executed in accordance with the sentence handed down by a Special Court, and Jews deported to Majdanek but judged immediately upon arrival as being unfit to work (old men, children and women).

Whereas the mortality due to 'natural' causes is largely documentable and a number of executions of registered Majdanek inmates are also documented, all claims made with regard to mass killings without individual trials and without court sentences are based on witness statements (with the possible exception of executions in Krepiecki Forest, to which we shall return later).

Orthodox historiography's allegations of the mass extermination of tens or even hundreds of thousands of people in Majdanek are not only not supported by any documentation whatsoever, but are also refuted by a number of verifiable facts.

a) The Alleged Mass Extermination of Registered Inmates

As we have already noted earlier,[234] Polish historiography itself demonstrates with numerous examples that the sick inmates in Majdanek were *not* exterminated. We remind the reader of the camp for disabled Soviet ex-servicemen, established in 1943 and also mentioned in the July 3, 1944, letter[235] of the garrison physician of the SS and Police Lublin; of the war-disabled there, 1,250 were transferred to Mauthausen on July 7, 1944, and 500 were still there when the Red Army occupied the camp. We have also already mentioned the June 3, 1943, transfer, ordered by the WVHA, of malaria patients from Auschwitz to Majdanek. The camp physician of Auschwitz I explained the reason for this transfer in the December 16, 1943, "Quarterly Report on Medical Services in the Concentration Camp Auschwitz":[236]

> *"To prevent the spread of malaria, an extermination of flies and mosquitoes was carried out with the insecticide GIGS at the end of the quarter-year to which this report pertains. The malaria patients, or inmates who have recovered from*

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[234] See Chapter III.

[235] Letter of the garrison physician of the SS and Police Lublin to the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office, *Amt III*, of July 3, 1944. *APMM*, sygn. I.d.2, v. I, p. 1. See Chapter VIII.

[236] *GARF*, 7121-108-32, p. 97.

malaria treatment, were transferred to the Lublin concentration camp, which is considered to be freer of anopheles[237] *than Auschwitz."*

There can be no doubt about the accuracy of this explanation, since it would have been quite nonsensical to spare these sick inmates the trip into the gas chambers of Birkenau, only to send them into the gas chambers of Majdanek!

Towards the end of its existence, Majdanek was at times turned into a veritable sickbay. As early as 1944, many sick inmates were sent there from other camps:

2,993 from Dachau (January 8 and 17, February 6); approximately 3,000 from Buchenwald (January and February); approximately 800 from Ravensbrück (January and February); approximately 2,500 from Neuengamme (January 26, March 13); 2,700-3,000 from Sachsenhausen (January 26, March 16); 300 from Flossenbürg (March 11).[238] This explains the extremely high mortality in Majdanek in March 1944. In the course of the evacuation, the surviving patients were transferred to Auschwitz: on April 9, 1944, 1,980 sick inmates arrived there, 99 of whom died *en route*;[239] on April 16, 988 sick women with 38 children were assigned to the infirmary in Sector BIIa of Birkenau.[240] The last patients who were fit to be transported were taken out of Majdanek by bus on July 22, together with 30 women and children.[241] These facts disprove the allegation that sick inmates in Majdanek were put to death.

Beyond that, there were many young children in Majdanek who naturally could not be put to work. In early 1943 the higher SS authorities even made plans to establish a regular Children's Camp there. In the western regions of the Soviet Union, partisan warfare had turned many children into orphans, and the Command of Army Unit South turned to the *Reichsführer*-SS with the request to decide on their fate. On January 6, 1943, Himmler ordered that "racially worthless" children were to be turned over to the economic enterprises in the concentration camps, where they would be trained to work and raised to be obedient and disciplined. Himmler entrusted Pohl with the task of setting up a collection camp for children and minors from the occupied Soviet territories. Pohl chose Compound V of Majdanek for this purpose, and informed Himmler of his decision on January 25. But this project was never put into effect, perhaps due to engineering problems or to squabbling over responsibilities among various authorities.[242]

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[237] Malaria-transmitting mosquito.
[238] Zofia Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 116. See Chapter III.
[239] Danuta Czech, *op. cit.* (note 122), p. 752.
[240] *Ibid.*, p. 757.
[241] Zofia Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 111), p. 127.
[242] Zofia Murawska, "Dzieci w obozie koncentracyjnym na Majdanku" (Children in the Majdanek Concentration Camp), in: *ZM,* X, 1980, pp. 141f.

As of 1943, numerous transports of White Russian women and children arrived in Majdanek. Zofia Murawska has partly reconstructed the events in question. According to her, the first transport arrived in the Lublin camp on June 13, 1943. The next group, of 61 women and children, was received on October 9. Approximately 200 children between the ages of 2 and 10 years were brought in on October 31, and roughly 2,000 women and children of various ages two months later.[243]

On the intervention of the Polish Red Cross, 2,167 people (957 children and 1,210 women) were released from the camp between July 19 and September 20, 1943. The children, who were in a very poor state of health, were then admitted to the hospital in Lublin, where a high percentage especially of the youngest among them died: 44 of 134 children up to two years of age died, 35 of 173 between the ages of three and five, and 4 of 75 between the ages of six and ten.[244]

Since the hospitals of Lublin, like the entire city, were under SS control, it is logical to assume that they were discharged to the civilian hospitals to promote their recovery.

b) The Alleged Mass Extermination of Unregistered Inmates: the Jews

Unfitness to work was allegedly also a reason for extermination where the Jews who were deported to Majdanek were concerned. This presupposes that only those who were fit to work were admitted to the camp and registered. However, this assumption is not supported by so much as a single document. Another factor that speaks against it is that at least a part of the Jews brought to Majdanek from the Warsaw ghetto were admitted as a body, without any selection.[245] The Düsseldorf Court, which found itself faced with the task of reconciling this fact with the extermination theory, dreamed up the following explanation:[246]

> *"In spring 1943, when the mass transports primarily of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto arrived in the camp and, unlike in previous times, included not only many*

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[243] *Ibid.*, p. 145.

[244] *Ibid.*, pp. 148f.

[245] In other cases, the selection was performed in Treblinka, even though according to the official 'Holocaust' literature that camp was "strictly an extermination camp"! T. Berenstein and Rutkowski (*op. cit.*, note 115) comment: "A few transports from Warsaw arrived in Lublin via Treblinka; a selection of the deportees had been carried out in Treblinka." The authors also mention that in February 1943, 104 Jewesses were sent to Majdanek from Treblinka, and similarly, in March of the same year, 35 Dutch Jews were sent there from Sobibór (also "strictly an extermination camp"! *op. cit.*, note 115, p. 16). And finally, Leszczyńska reports that 1,700 Jewesses were sent to Majdanek from Bełżec (the third "strict extermination camp"! *op. cit.*, note 110, p. 189). According to the statements of Rudolf Vrba, a transport of Slovak Jews that arrived in Majdanek on June 16, 1942 was selected at the Lublin train station; only those who were judged fit to work were taken into the camp (*APMO*, RO, t.XXa, pp. 37f).

[246] District Court Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 55), v. II, p. 405.

older people but also numerous mothers with children, the immediate liquidation of all these people 'useless for labor purposes' was no longer always possible due to the 'limited' capacity of the gas chambers and the cremation facilities. From time to time this forced the camp administration to temporarily admit Jewish mothers and children to the Women's Compound, and to send the children to the gas chambers only later, when a 'suitable opportunity' arose."

This attempt at an explanation is downright pathetic. After all, the facilities considered by the court to be execution gas chambers had a total "batch" capacity of 600 adults,[247] and the rest of the new arrivals marked for death could simply have been shot in Krepiecki Forest.

Since the Jews who were admitted to the camp without being 'selected' were registered normally, their 'belated' murder would have had an impact on the 'natural' mortality in the camp, but such was not the case.[248]

For November 1943, the Düsseldorf Court remarked:

"The barracks to the right housed Jewish workmen, supposedly from Czechoslovakia [sic!]*, together with their families which also included children and toddlers."*

This also does not agree with the theory of selection and the extermination of children and other people unfit to work!

On Compound V there were two barracks that served to house pregnant Jewesses and small children, which represents another blow against the extermination theory. In an attempt to explain this incongruity, the eyewitnesses claim that the sanitary conditions in these barracks defied description and that the inhabitants of these barracks were all gassed within three weeks anyway;[249] if this were true, then there would have been no reason for these two barracks to have existed in the first place, since there could have been no reason to register the women and children already marked for death, rather than "selecting" and killing them immediately upon their arrival.

c) The Alleged Mass Extermination of Unregistered Inmates: the Poles

According to Polish historiography, this category included, first and foremost, partisans, hostages, and citizens sentenced to death by Special Courts for acts of resistance against the occupation power. Even though these executions are not documented, we have no doubt that such took place, given the political climate at that time.

As an aside, the autopsies conducted by the Polish-Soviet Commission on the 733 bodies discovered in Krepiecki Forest showed that 349 of the dead exhibited bullet wounds.[250] In this particular instance we do not question the credibility of the Commission's claims. We do not know whether some of

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[247] *Ibid.*, v. I, p. 80.
[248] *Ibid.*, v. II, p. 463.
[249] Zofia Murawska, *op. cit.* (note 242), p. 144.
[250] Communiqué…, *op. cit.* (note 195), p. 13.

these execution victims may have been Majdanek inmates sentenced to death for violations of camp rules.

How many Poles were killed in this way is not known. Marszałek speaks of approximately 10,000,[251] but this figure (based exclusively on eyewitness testimony) is likely to be inflated for propaganda reasons. The Düsseldorf Court mentioned 10 transports, each with 30 to 50 persons to be executed.[252] The actual figure may very well have been higher.

[251] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 209), p. 135.
[252] District Court Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 55), v. II, p. 505.

Chapter V:
The Crematoria of Majdanek

1. History of the H. Kori Company

The two crematoria installed in the Majdanek concentration camp were equipped with furnaces manufactured by the firm H. Kori,[253] headquartered in Berlin, Potsdam Street no. 111. This company, established in 1887, soon specialized on the construction of incineration furnaces for the elimination of animal cadavers. It constructed the first facility of this type in autumn of 1892 in the Nuremberg slaughter house.

In November 1901, at a meeting of the Brandenburg Provincial Medical Board, Dr. Th. Weyl suggested cremating the bodies of the victims of the plague epidemic raging there at that time. He consulted the engineer Hans Kori, who had relevant experience. Kori replied that he could set up a cremation oven, valued at 2,750 marks, within 36 hours and put it into operation immediately.[254] We do not know whether such a facility was then actually set up.

By 1905 the firm Kori had installed 55 "animal cadaver incineration ovens"; nine years later the figure had already risen to 160.[255] The company's activities gradually expanded to include the construction of facilities to incinerate all kinds of garbage. By 1927 the number of such installations sold by Kori was about 3,500.[256]

Not until relatively late did Kori begin building crematoria. At that time the German market in this area was controlled by four companies. In early 1925, 142 cremation furnaces existed in Germany. Of these, the firm Richard Schneider-Didier, Stettin, had manufactured 64, the firm Gebrüder Beck of Offenbach 42, the firm J. A. Topf & Söhne of Erfurt 21, and the firm Wilhelm Ruppmann of Stuttgart 15.[257] The first two companies were in decline at that time, while Topf was enjoying rapid growth. Kori managed, albeit with difficulty, to secure a share of the market by spending the first five years of its ac-

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253 *"Technisches Büro und Fabrik für Abfallverbrennungsöfen aller Art und vollständige Verbrennungsanlagen. Kesseleinmauerungen – Schornsteinbau. Glüh-, Schmelz-, Muffel- und Wärmeöfen, sowie sämtliche Feuerungsanlagen der Metallindustrie, Einäscherungsöfen für Krematorien."*

254 To the German Reichstag. Petition of February 20, 1902, regarding cremation of the bodies of plague victims. Enclosure II.

255 "Bau und Betrieb von Krematorien. 1. Neue Wege und Ziele," by engineer H. Kori, Berlin, in: *Die Wärmewirtschaft,* yr. 1, issue 8, 1924, p. 115.

256 H. Kori GmbH, Berlin. *Verbrennungsöfen für Abfälle aller Art.* Advertising brochure from 1927. *APMM*, VI-9a, v. 1.

257 *Die Wärmewirtschaft,* yr. 2, issue 6, 1925, p. 90.

tivities as manufacturer of crematoria by also installing many furnaces: two in 1926 in Hagen (Westphalia), one in 1927 in the crematorium of Weissenfels, and another two in 1930 in the crematorium of Schwerin.[258] By the early 1930s Topf had become the leading manufacturer of such furnaces, while Kori was in last place behind the companies Gebrüder Beck, Schneider-Didier and Ruppmann.[259]

Nonetheless the contribution of the company's founding engineer, Hans Kori, to the development of cremation technology in Germany was very significant. The Prussian law of September 14, 1911, permitted only the hot-air cremation method devised by Friedrich Siemens (the so-called "completely indirect process"), in which the body was turned to ash in the recuperator by air heated to 1,000°C without the generator's combustion products being allowed to enter the muffle. In February 1924 Kori turned to the Berlin-Schönberg police headquarters with the request to revise the law of September 14, 1911. From his experience with his animal cadaver incinerators, where the cadavers were exposed directly to the generator's combustion products, Kori had found that this method required considerably less fuel than the "completely indirect process."

The engineer explained that the reasons which had prompted the passing of the law in question had not been valid, if only because the body was loaded into the oven together with the coffin; once the coffin had caught fire, it naturally envelops the body in flames. Besides, once the body's moisture content had evaporated, it burned by itself. Another factor was that during the "completely indirect process" the temperature dropped sharply while the body fluids evaporated; this could only be avoided by channeling the generator's combustion products into the combustion chamber.

Therefore, Kori proposed that the "direct process" should also be legally recognized as a legitimate cremation process. The Berlin police headquarters notified the Ministry of the Interior, which showed lively interest. On July 19, 1924, Kori sent them a detailed report on his proposal.[260] The matter was investigated by the Berlin Association for Fuel Conservation, which assessed Kori's proposal favorably. The Ministry of the Interior seconded this opinion and passed a decree on October 24, 1924, declaring the "intermittently direct introduction of generator gases into the corpse chamber" to be legally acceptable.[261]

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[258] *IV. Jahrbuch des Verbandes der Feuerbestattungs-Vereine Deutscher Sprache 1928,* Königsberg Pr., 1928, p. 82; *Einäscherungsofen System "Kori" im Krematorium der Stadt Hagen/Westf.; Einäscherungsöfen System "Kori" im Krematorium der Hauptstadt Schwerin* (advertising brochure from the 1930s). *APMM*, VI-9a, v. 1.

[259] Friedrich Hellwig, "Vom Bau und Betrieb der Krematorien," in: *Gesundheits-Ingenieur,* yr. 54, issue 24, 1931, p. 370.

[260] *Op. cit.* (note 255), pp. 115-119.

[261] "Amtliches. Bau und Betrieb von Krematorien," in: *Die Wärmewirtschaft,* yr. 2, issue 7,

Ironically enough, the most intense resistance to Kori's suggestion came from the Topf company,[262] which was to become Kori's chief competitor in the construction of cremation ovens for the German concentration camps in the early 1940s.

2. Structure and Function of the Coke-Fueled Kori Furnaces for the Concentration Camps

The coke-fueled Kori furnace in the concentration camp Mauthausen which was put into operation on May 4, 1940, was probably the first model of the furnaces designed by Kori for the concentration camps.

The furnace stands on a brick platform, with its right side adjoining the wall of the service room. A typical double door for closing the muffle is at the front.

The muffle is equipped with a grate of three bars made of fire-resistant firebrick. They run crosswise and are joined in the middle by a bar running lengthwise. Underneath the grate is the ash pit, which may be closed off by a small door at the front. The generator is located at the back of the furnace section; the small door through which it is stoked, as well as the firing door beneath it, are located on the left side of the furnace.

The firing grate consists of 14 cast-iron bars and two crossbars for support. The supply shaft for the generator opens onto a sloping grate of broad bars, constructed in such a way that not only coke, but wood as well, can be used as fuel. No auxiliary devices are mounted on the furnace's back wall. The system for drawing off the flue gases includes an opening on the muffle vault in the front part of the oven as well as a horizontal smoke channel that can be shut with a metal damper. The system for loading the corpse consists of the bier, of a device on wheels to support it, as well as of a "firebrick barrier"; the latter is a device for closing off the body in the muffle.

The Kori oven to follow after this prototype was an improved model, which is why it was called the "improved cremation oven." We quote a May 18, 1943, letter from the Kori company to *Amt CIII* of the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office in which this model is advertised as follows:[263]

1925, p. 108.

[262] On December 24, 1924 the Topf company appealed the Ministry of the Interior's decree, but the appeal was rejected. *Die Wärmewirtschaft,* yr. 2, 1925, pp. 89-91 and 95, 96; issue 7, 1925, pp. 107f.

[263] Letter from the Kori company to engineer Waller of *Amt C III* of the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office. Archive of the Curatorship for the Concentration Camp Dachau Memorial, 660/41.

"Re. Cremation Ovens

Pursuant to our verbal discussion with you regarding the purchase of a basic cremation facility, we recommend to you our coal-fueled Improved Cremation Ovens, which have proven themselves very well in practical application to date. – For the construction project planned, we suggest two cremation ovens, but we recommend double-checking to confirm that these two ovens would suffice. The specific arrangement of the ovens must also be decided on, since this determines how the fittings and the anchor frame are set up. If possible, the oven should be located in a closed room and connected to an existing smokestack. – If the location for set-up has already been chosen, we would ask you to send us a plan of the site so that we may provide you with an appropriate layout. From the enclosed diagrams you can see the area required for the ovens with service and stoking areas. Diagram J.-No. 8998 shows the layout for two ovens, whereas Diagram J.-No. 9122 shows how four ovens were set up for Construction Project Dachau. Another diagram – J.-No. 9080 – shows your Lublin facility, with five cremation ovens and two fitted furnace chambers.

Regarding the cost of two crematoria, we are pleased to make you the following quotation:

1) 2 Improved Cremation Ovens of the latest design, with vaulted coffin chamber and horizontal ash pit floor, including all fittings, insertion, service and maintenance doors, air valves, heating fixtures for the main furnace unit and embers grate, the complete anchor frame of strong angle-iron rails and U-iron rails connected via anchor rails, all building materials i.e., high-quality firebrick form and regular bricks, refractory mortar, facing and backing bricks, brick mortar and cement, as well as complete installation by our heating engineer with the support of all technical assistants,
RM 4,500 each = RM 9,000.

In the event that the second oven is to be set up adjoining the first, the price for the second oven is reduced […] *to RM 4,050.*

However, this amount does not include the expenses for freight and carriage of the material to the site, traveling expenses for the installer, other traveling expenses, or posting rates. We would bill these expenses separately for your convenience.

Our cost estimate also excludes: extra construction-related tasks on-site, such as excavation, foundation for the ovens, construction of the room where the ovens are to be set up, as well as the flues from the ovens to the smokestack, and the stack itself.

As soon as the questions regarding location and set-up of the ovens have been resolved, we will be happy to provide you with a supplementary quotation for the manufacture of the flues.

To facilitate the loading of the bodies into the oven's incineration chamber, we suggest in addition:

1) 2 cremation carts, trough-shaped, with rollers and handles, RM 160.-- each
RM 320
2) 2 castered trestles to support the cremation carts, RM 75.-- each
RM 150
RM 470

We fully guarantee the effectiveness of the cremation furnaces to be supplied, as well as their stability, and also the supply of only first-rate materials and the quality of workmanship.

The cast-iron fittings and anchor hardware as well as the fireclay form bricks can be supplied on short notice if we are provided with a Wehrmacht waybill for this purpose.

To supply the iron furnace parts we require 1,460 kg [iron] *per furnace, i.e., 2,920 kg for two furnaces. Enclosed please find the requisition forms for the iron.*

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Heil Hitler!

H. KORI GmbH

Encl.: 3 diagrams – J.-No. 8998, J.-No. 9122, J.-No. 9080 –
Requisition form for iron."

Today the three diagrams enclosed with this letter are held in the Belgrade archives of the "State Commission for Investigation of the Crimes of the Occupiers as Well as Their Accomplices."

Diagram J.-No. 8998 was a project for the crematorium of the SS New Construction Office of the Concentration Camp Neuengamme, which had two furnaces connected to the chimney via an ordinary flue.

Diagram J.-No. 9122 shows the project on the basis of which the four furnaces of the new crematorium ("Barrack X") in Dachau were built. The two furnaces of the crematorium in the concentration camp Stutthof were structured similarly to the two central furnaces of the Dachau crematorium. The four furnaces of the crematorium in the concentration camp Sachsenhausen were of the same shape as the five-muffle furnace built later in Majdanek.

3. The Crematoria of the Majdanek Concentration Camp

a) Construction of the Crematoria

Even though none appears on any known blueprint from the Central Construction Office, the installation of a crematorium had been planned for Majdanek (then called "prisoner-of-war camp") as early as October 1941. The original project, which, however, was not put into effect until two years later, and then with only one modification, provided for five coke-fueled Kori furnaces which were to form a single unified brick unit. This is apparent from Diagram J.-No. 9079 of October 16, 1941.[264] In an October 23, 1941, letter to SS-*Sturmbannführer* Lenzer, the Kori company described it as follows, with reference to exactly this diagram:[265]

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[264] See Document 17.
[265] *APMM*, sygn. VI-9a, v. 1.

> *"Our diagram, sheet 2 (J.-No. 9079), shows the solution to the space problem for a total of 5 cremation furnaces, of which furnace 5 in the middle is intended as reserve unit. In other words, only furnaces 1 through 4 are meant for regular use; they are built in two groups, with a common heating chamber located between two units for better utilization of the flue gases. Each group, consisting of two furnaces and one heating chamber, takes up an area of 4.80 x 3.00 m. The doors through which the bodies are loaded are at the upper front of the furnaces, and the service door for ash removal is located below them. Installed opposite them, i.e., at the upper back of the furnaces, is the fuel input, which is operated from the common maintenance and stoking area. The floor here is 0.40 m lower than in the anteroom, to which the stone steps to the left and right of the furnaces give access and which also equalize the difference in height. The joint flue for 2 furnaces each is located above the furnaces, with a diversion flue that permits channeling the flue gases either directly to the stack or through the heating chamber for purposes of utilizing the* [heat from the] *flue gases."*

The aforementioned diagram shows only the incineration chamber, which measures 11.50 m × 14.50 m. The other locations, including the coke hopper, are only sketched in. The following diagram, J.-No. 9080, dating from March 31, 1942,[266] shows the actual shape of the furnace. The facility corresponds to that on the earlier plan, with the exception of the system for drawing off the flue gases. This now consists of two flues opening into a single stack equipped with two flue pipes. Each of the two pipes is outfitted with a ventilator located in a room next to the incineration chamber.

We shall return to the structure and function of this installation later. According to the diagram, the crematorium measured 30 × 10 m. Of that, the incineration chamber took up 10 m × 16.30 m; besides that, there was also a mortuary 10 m × 5.50 m in size, a 3.75 m × 5.50 m room for inmates working in the crematorium, an office of the same size, a hallway measuring 2.50 m × 4.50 m, and a room for the supervisor of the crematorium; this room measured 4.50 m × 5 m.

Since the implementation of this project would have required a great deal of time, whereas the increasing number of deaths among the camp's inmates made a crematorium an ever more immediate necessity, the Central Construction Office decided to construct a temporary crematorium with two mobile, oil-fueled Kori furnaces. For this purpose, as we shall see, it adopted the project from the diagram of March 31, 1942, modifying it accordingly.

Only one document regarding the planning and construction of the first crematorium in the Majdanek concentration camp has been preserved. The few references the Polish literature makes to this topic[267] are all based on the August 14, 1947, statements of SS-*Oberscharführer* Erich Mußfeldt.[268]

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[266] See Document 18.

[267] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 81), pp. 55, 56; Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 209), p. 33.

[268] Mußfeldt was promoted to SS-*Oberscharführer* on June 1, 1943. The relevant note of the Majdanek camp office (*GARF*, 7021-107-5, p. 283; cf. Document 26) includes the spelling

Mußfeldt stated that the two furnaces had been brought to Majdanek from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, and that the crematorium was brought into service in June 1942[269] and remained in operation until late October of that year. As of November – Mußfeldt stated – no more cremations were carried out there because there was a lack of fuel, *i.e.*, oil, and in early 1943 the two furnaces were dismantled and taken over by the Central Construction Office.[270] After the old crematorium was shut down, and before the new one was brought into service, the bodies of those who died in the camp were buried in the woods. He himself, Mußfeldt stated, had been in charge of the unit that performed this work.[271]

Mußfeldt testified that both oil-fueled furnaces had been taken to the Płaszów labor camp near Cracow, but in fact one remained in the camp; today it is kept in the building of the new crematorium. Afterwards, the barrack where the first crematorium had been located was also torn down. Only its concrete floor remained after the camp was overrun. The first crematorium had been located in Intermediate Compound I, in front of the southeast side of the Laundry.[272] On the official plan of the Majdanek Memorial it is erroneously shown at the southeast corner of the Drying facility, a small barrack approximately 15 m × 8 m in size which said plan incorrectly shows as an inmate barrack of normal size.[273]

In late November 1942 the Central Construction Office of the Majdanek concentration camp decided to restructure the crematorium – or, more precisely, its furnace room; several alternatives were considered. The diagram of December 1, 1942, shows four mobile, oil-fueled furnaces, located in pairs to either side of a central brick chimney and connected to the latter via flues affixed above the furnaces.[274] Considering how scarce oil was at that time, this project seems rather unrealistic. In reply to an inquiry by the Central Construction Office, the Kori company suggested retaining the two old, oil-fueled furnaces and installing two further units of this type, albeit coke-fueled ones

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"Mußfeld," which is also used in another German document. The latter originated in 1944 in Auschwitz; it is an undated pay sheet for NCOs and soldiers and begins with the name "Osch. (Oberscharführer) Mußfeld." However, the box marked "Receipt" on the same sheet contains the hand-written signature "Mußfeldt" (GARF, 7021-108-54, p. 96). For this reason we are using this spelling rather than "Mußfeld" or "Muhsfeldt," even though the latter incorrect spelling is consistently used in Polish subject literature.

269 According to a German document, the Crematorium (Bldg. XV) was 80% complete on July 1, 1942 (*WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 8, p. 3), but it is conceivable that the Furnace Room was already finished in June, so that Mußfeldt's statement may be correct.

270 This claim by Mußfeldt contradicts SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Krone's report of January 20, 1943, according to which the two furnaces were still in operation at that time. We shall discuss the relevant section of the Krone Report later in this chapter.

271 Anna Zmijewska-Wiśniewska, *op. cit.* (note 164), p. 140.

272 See Document 4a and Photographs III, IV.

273 See Document 7.

274 See Document 20.

this time, which would require the addition of a coal generator in the rear section. The construction system is shown on Diagram J.-No. 9239.[275]

The diagram drawn up by Kori on December 10, 1942,[276] shows two possible configurations of the installations in the furnace room. In Sketch 1 they are set up lengthwise, and breadthwise in Sketch 2. Both options provide for two sets of adjoining furnace pairs, each with a brick stack located between the two units. The stack is rectangular; its exterior dimensions are 1.20 m × 1.40 m, its interior dimensions 0.40 m × 0.50 m. One of two furnace pairs is intended to be coal-fueled, the other is oil-fueled. No doubt the two furnaces already present were connected in this way.

The incineration chamber is 12 m × 10 m in size. The arrangement of the furnaces as per Sketch 1 agrees very well with the Central Construction Office's plan of November 23, 1942,[277] which shows an incineration chamber 12.15 m × 9.74 m in size, with two chimneys measuring 1.20 m × 1.20 m outside and 0.45 m × 0.45 m inside and aligned along the longitudinal axis of the incineration chamber. As noted above, this plan is nothing other than an adaptation of that of March 31, 1942, whose overall size (30 m × 10 m) and interior divisions were retained. The size of the incineration chamber was reduced to 9.74 m × 12.15 m because the two oil-fueled furnaces were less massive than the five coke-fueled ones that had been planned for originally. The mortuary, on the other hand, was enlarged to 9.46 m × 9.60 m. The sizes of the other subdivisions (inmates' room, office, hallway, and the room for the supervisor of the crematorium) remained the same.

Very soon, however, the Central Construction Office dropped its plan to restructure the crematorium's furnace room, and returned to its original project providing for the construction of five coke-fueled furnaces. On January 8, 1943, Kori sent *Hauptamt CIII* of the Economic-Administrative Main Office a letter in which it enclosed its quotation from April 9, 1942; this was based on five coke-fueled furnaces and drew on the diagram from October 16, 1941. The system for drawing off the flue gases had been modified and was set out in a diagram (J.-No. 9112) which, while it has been lost, was most likely identical to Diagram J.-No. 9080 of March 31, 1942.

In its letter of January 8, 1943, Kori stated that it had provided for two blower installations. The flue gases, it said, cooled in the course of their passage through the heating coils (this mechanism was used to heat the water), and this drop in temperature could adversely affect the strength of the draft during the summer months. (The strength of the draft depends primarily on the

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[275] H. Kori GmbH, *Anbau einer Kohlenfeuerung am ölbeheizten Krematoriumsofen,* Berlin, Dec. 14, 1944. ÖDMM, N 17, no. 6.
[276] See Document 21.
[277] See Document 19.

temperature difference between the flue gases and the outside air; the warmer the latter, the less the temperature difference, therefore the weaker the draft.)

Kori added that the fittings for the furnaces were almost ready, and that it awaited the *Hauptamt CIII*'s order confirmation so that it could go ahead and order the refractory materials, which were being supplied by a company in Upper Silesia.[278]

On January 21, 1943, the Chief of the Central Construction Office sent the following telegram to SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Krone of *Amt CIII* of the Economic-Administrative Main Office:[279]

> *"The Central Construction Office Lublin requests that diagrams be forwarded of the water heating installation for the 5 stationary incineration furnaces to be shipped here by Kori, so that preliminary work can be completed."*

However, the new crematorium was not built until two months later. The first known diagram of the installation dates from June 24, 1943;[280] a diagram titled "Sketch of the Crematorium for Concentration Camp Lublin,"[281] drawn up five days later, on June 29, shows a T-shaped building and gives a view of it from a 'bird's-eye' perspective. The roof section is labeled:

> *"Notes: bring mortuary to same level as boiler house. Coal shed must have same width as dissection room. Therefore, same elevation of roof ridge, and clean roof shape!"*

In August 1944, following an examination of the building, the Polish-Soviet Commission drew up a plan of the crematorium[282] which reveals the following:

Where its exterior dimensions and the arrangement of its subdivisions are concerned, the long section of the crematorium, where the furnaces were located, was constructed as per Diagram J.-No. 9080 of March 31, 1942. This section indeed measured 10 m × 30 m,[283] while the sizes of the interior subdivisions had been slightly modified: The mortuary was 9.40 m × 5.70 m in size, the incineration chamber 9.40 m × 16.80 m, the inmates' room 5.46 m × 3.40 m, the office 5.46 m × 3.40 m, the hallway 4.30 m × 3.30 m, and the room for the supervisor of the crematorium 4.30 m × 3.40 m.

Two symmetrical annexes of 10 m × 10 m each were added to this section, joining crossways with the mortuary, so that together with the mortuary they formed a T-shape whose upper, lengthways part also measured 30 m. The annex on the side where the furnaces were located consisted of one single section, the coal shed; the annex located opposite, on the side of the chimney, was subdivided into five sections, the purpose of which is only known for three:

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[278] *GARF*, 7021-107-9, p. 250. See Document 22.
[279] *APMM*, sygn. VI-9a, v. 1.
[280] See Document 23.
[281] See Document 24.
[282] See Document 25.
[283] According to the measurements taken by the Commission, the length was 29.89 m.

the dissection room (3.35 m × 5.70 m), the bath (3 m × 2.20 m) and the washroom (3 m × 1.35 m).

The Polish-Soviet Commission christened the remaining rooms "Pre-Dissecting Room" and "Gas Chamber." The latter room measured 6.10 m × 5.62 m and allegedly served as a Zyklon B gas chamber for murdering human beings. Of course, even if only from a technical point of view, the use of this room for such a purpose would have been utter madness, as we shall show later.[284] In actual fact it was probably a sort of funeral parlor or urn room.[285] The room which the Polish-Soviet Commission dubbed "Pre-Dissecting Room," to which the main door gave access and which one perforce had to cross to get from the dissecting room to the supposed funeral parlor or urn room, was nothing more than a relatively large anteroom.

b) The Structure of the New Crematorium

The Polish-Soviet Commission provided the following description of the new crematorium as it appeared in July and August 1944:[286]

> *"The furnaces for cremating dead bodies are located in the southeastern part of the concentration camp at a distance of 60 m from the internees' living barracks. The building's yard is behind a triple barbed-wire barrier serving primarily to contain the inmates. The yard fencing consists of two rows of barbed wire, 3 m high.*[287] *The yard covers an area of 3,600 m² (60 x 60 m). The layout of the entire complex is T-shaped and divided into 12 major rooms; further, a wing had been set up around the chimney to house the blowers.*
>
> *At the time the building was examined, it was found that all wooden parts of the building were burned, and the room formerly used to lay out the corpses /No. 4/ as well as the furnace room /No. 1/ contained numerous charred corpses. Only those facilities and building parts of brick, concrete and reinforced concrete survived the conflagration, including:*
>
> *a) The incineration furnaces with the upper smoke flue and connector flue;*
> *b) Smokestack with two blowers;*
> *c) The concrete gas chamber with reinforced concrete overhang and two small windows on the mortuary side;*
> *d) Brick wall separating the bath and the washroom from the pre-dissecting room;*
> *e) Brick wall separating the dissecting room from the pre-dissecting room;*
> *f) Part-brick walls outside the entrance to the bath, and*
> *g) Foundations, brick bases and concrete floors for all 12 rooms mentioned, and the dissecting room table mounted on a stone base.*
>
> *The buildings not affected by the fire and adjoining the burned facilities, as well as the aforementioned separate rooms which survived entirely intact, allowed*

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[284] See Chapter VI.
[285] See the photograph of the urns in T. Mencel's book, *op. cit.* (note 23); the photograph is on an unnumbered page.
[286] *GARF*, 7021-107-9, pp. 235-237.
[287] The crematorium was located outside the camp fence, and had its own enclosure.

the reconstruction of an outline sketch of all buildings after on-site measurements, an assessment of the purpose of each object, and a schematic representation of the technical function of the incineration furnaces.

Listing of the rooms:

# of the rooms, as per layout plans	*Description of rooms*	*Dimensions*	*Area in m^2*
1	*Incineration room*	*16.80 x 9.40*	*157.92*
2	*Dissection room*	*5.70 x 3.45*	*19.67*
3	*Gas chamber*	*6.10 x 5.62*	*34.28*
4	*Morgue*	*9.40 x 5.70*	*53.58*
5	*Fuel room*	*9.70 x 9.40*	*91.18*
6	*Pre-Dissection room*	*6.55 x 3.55*	*23.25*
7	*Bath*	*3.00 x 2.20*	*6.60*
8	*Washroom*	*3.00 x 1.35*	*4.05*
9	*Blower room*	*6.20 x 5.25*	*32.55*
10	*Room*	*5.56 x 3.40*	*18.56*
11	*“*	*5.46 x 3.30*	*18.02*
12	*“*	*4.30 x 3.40*	*14.62*
13	*Hallway*	*4.30 x 3.30*	*14.19*

The block of incineration furnaces is set up in the Incineration Room /No. 1/ and consists of 5 chambers for the cremation of corpses and 2 utility chambers for exploiting the heat from the exhaust gases. /The installation of equipment in these utility chambers was not completed./

Dimensions of the incineration furnace block within the brickwork:

Length	*11.60 m*
Width	*3.00 m*
Height	*1.90 m*
Height of furnaces to upper smoke flue	*2.64 m*

Interior dimensions of the cremation furnaces:

Pre-heating furnace /a	*0.384m^3*
Incineration chamber /b	*0.834m^3*
Ash pit /c	*0.655m^3*
Cross-section of smoke flue /d	*0.216m^2*
Ash box /d	*0.0625m^3*
Ash box /d1	*0.0833m^3*
Area of grate in incineration chambers	*0.65m^2*

Materials used in the brickwork of the incineration furnaces: pre-heating furnace a), incineration chamber b), ash pit c), and smoke flue d) consist of DIN-brick.

The DIN-grating rails in the incineration chamber are melted and the firebrick is structurally deformed.

Some of the components in the upper horizontal channel are deformed, and melting has taken place in the lower part.

The base surface of the pit beneath the grate b) and the brick components of all door frames of the incineration furnaces are of firebrick. The exterior walls of the furnaces are of red brick.

The entire construction of the incineration block is held together at the top and bottom by 4 horizontal and 20 vertical anchor bolts and is reinforced by iron girders (No. 10).

The heating system and the ash pits of the furnaces are closed off with cast-iron double doors. The furnaces contain a large number of charred bones. In front of each oven there are iron rolling tracks in the form of vertical frames with two rollers. Five metal gurneys are present by the furnaces, four of which have suffered heat deformation due to the fire. Metal rods are next to the furnaces."

4. Structure and Function of the Cremation Furnaces

a) The Coke-Fueled Furnaces

The coke-fueled five-muffle furnaces of the Majdanek concentration camp[288] consist of two pairs of muffles to either side of one central muffle.[289] Two heating chambers are installed between the two pairs to either side. The construction of the individual furnaces reveals additional modifications as compared to the furnaces of Dachau and Sachsenhausen. The standard double door through which the bodies were loaded is located at the front of the furnace; it measures 0.55 m × 0.65 m and exhibits the typical round ports for observing the cremation process and for supplying air to aid this process. The incineration chamber is 0.77 m wide and 0.67 m high. A fireproof grate of 9 pairs of crossbeams of standard type forms the bottom. The muffle's utilizable depth is 2.17 m.

Beneath the fireproof grate is the ash pit, whose front section is equipped with an embers grate. The ash pit can be closed off at the front by two doors. The upper one, located directly below the door for loading the corpse, allows the operator to use a scraper to reach pieces of the body which have dropped through the gaps of the fire grate and to drag them onto the afterburn grate, where they burn up completely. The second door, located beneath the first, allows removal of the ashes. On the sides of the upper door there are two air valves which close the vents of the two air channels through which combustion air enters the muffle.

These air channels run horizontally through the furnace brickwork, whence they turn off at right angles upward, and again at a level with and parallel to the muffle, to which they are connected by means of four 8 cm × 8 cm openings – two on either side.

The generator is located at the rear of the furnace; the main heating system consists of a level grate 0.68 m × 0.63 m = 0.43 m² in size. Without blower

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[288] See Document 18.
[289] See Photograph VI.

pressure, approximately 50 kg of coke fuel could be burned on this grate per hour. At the rear of the furnace there is a double door, the so-called generator stoking shaft door, and the firing door.

The firebrick is 12 cm thick. The flue gases are drawn off in a manner very similar to that for the furnaces of the Sachsenhausen camp, with the one difference that the muffle is directly connected, via a vertical pipe, to the horizontal smoke channel in the upper part of the brickwork. Two cleaning hatches are located on either side of the smoke channel.

Six smoke exhaust dampers of 0.60 m × 0.45 m each are located in this smoke exhaust. Two heating chambers are installed between furnaces 1 & 2 and 3 & 4; each chamber consists of two sections, each of which is equipped with a heating coil with 15 m² surface area, for heating water. These heating coils are connected to two horizontal pipes installed outside the furnace; the connections are made by 8 vertical pipes of smaller diameter. An observation hatch is installed beneath the second horizontal pipe. These two pipes were connected to two boilers located above the two heating chambers. If five furnaces were in operation, this provided a heating surface of 30 m², with an hourly output of 300,000 Kcal (1.2 million BTU). In this way enough hot water for 50 showers could be supplied; if these showers were in use 20 hours a day, then given an effective shower time of 5 minutes and five shower cycles per hour, 5,000 to 6,000 people could take a shower each day.[290]

The flue gases from furnaces 1 and 2 (and potentially 5) and from numbers 3 and 4 crossed the heating chamber from top to bottom, giving off their heat to the heating coil, thereby producing hot water. They then entered two underground smoke exhausts 0.70 m × 0.75 m in diameter, which led to two blowers. These consisted of a pipe and an elbow, and a horizontal damper to close the system off, as well as a blower and a motor. Each blower was connected to one of the two draft pipes into which the chimney was subdivided.

The system for loading the body consisted of the gurney, the rollers and the castered trestles, whereas the firebrick damper is absent.

In the front, beneath the loading door, the muffles exhibit two doors, one above the other, because the afterburn chambers are equipped with an afterburn grate. The upper door allows an operator to move body parts which have dropped through the muffle grate into the afterburn chamber, onto the afterburn grate; the lower door allows removal of the ashes.

The generators are located at the rear of the furnace, where the generator filling shafts and (directly beneath these) the stoking doors are installed; the latter give access to the firing grates.

The system for drawing off the combustion gases consists of an opening in the muffle vault in the front part of the furnace. This arrangement recalls the

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[290] Letter from the Kori company to SS-*Sturmbannführer* Lenzer, October 23, 1941. *APMM*, sygn. 9a, v. 1, pp. 3f.

design of the furnaces at Dachau, with the difference that the smoke exhaust is installed inside the brickwork above the furnace and runs along the entire furnace. At the ends of this set-up there are two doors, one to permit observation and one to facilitate cleaning the smoke exhaust.

The latter is connected via special openings to two heating chambers between Furnaces 1 & 2, and 3 & 4, respectively, which in turn are connected via openings in the bottom to two smoke exhausts installed in the floor of the furnace room.

The two smoke exhausts lead into the right and left chimney pipe, respectively. The chimney was about 20 m tall and equipped with two draft pipes whose arrangement is shown on Diagram J.-No. 9098.

The new crematorium was not brought into service until January 1944. Nonetheless the five furnaces had technical flaws, which Karl Müller, the Kori company's master installer, listed precisely. On February 4, 1944, Hans Kori sent the command of the Majdanek camp a long letter, explaining the reasons for these flaws and giving instructions on how to remedy them.[291]

b) The Oil-Fueled Furnaces

The structure and function of the mobile oil-fueled Kori cremation furnace are well explained in a diagram which the Institute for Heat and Fuel Technology of the Cracow Mining Academy drew of the furnace at Trzebionka, a satellite camp of Auschwitz, which it no doubt based on original documents from Kori.[292] Furnaces of this type were installed in Sachsenhausen, Stutthof, Groß-Rosen and Ravensbrück, among others. The two furnaces in the first crematorium of Majdanek were of this type.

The furnace,[293] which is shaped like a muffle, is lined with sheet iron on the outside. At the front we find the standard double door for loading the bodies. Beneath is the door to the ash pit, on whose sides two air valves are affixed to admit the air necessary for combustion. The incineration system is the same as that for the coke-fueled furnace.

The nozzle of the main oil burner is in the rear part of the muffle. The muffle grate consists of 20 fireclay rods resting on two rails and joined in the middle. The grate ends 25 cm short of the rear wall.

Underneath the grate is the ash pit, under whose rear wall the nozzle for the auxiliary oil burner is located. Above, at the inside left of the furnace, the blower and electric motor are installed; they supply the two incineration chambers, located towards the back of the furnace, with the needed combustion air via pipes. Beside the blower, in the right-hand part of the furnace, is

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[291] *APMM*, sygn. VI-9a, v. 1, pp. 25f.

[292] *Obozowe krematorium w Trzebionce* (The Camp Crematorium of Trzebionka), *APMO*, nr. Neg. 6671.

[293] See Photograph VII.

the oil reservoir, whence the fuel travels to two combustion chambers through a pipe of smaller diameter. At the lower right side of the furnace is an observation port, above which the air valve for the ash pit is located.

The system for drawing off the flue gases consists of an opening on the muffle vault towards the front of the furnace, and a short smoke channel leading from the furnace into a small pipe. The latter is square and of cast-iron; a regular chimney is installed on top of it, in the form of a cast-iron pipe. The bodies were loaded via a castered trestle, just as for the coke-fueled furnaces.

5. Capacity of the Cremation Furnaces

a) Capacity of the Coke-Fueled Furnaces

In August 1944, the Polish-Soviet Commission of engineers, including the engineers Kelles-Krause, Teljaner, and Grigorev, examined the cremation furnaces of Majdanek. They then drew up a technical expert report, concluding as follows:[294]

"a) The temperature in the cremation chambers was 1,500 °Celsius;

b) Loading the bodies into the furnaces and cleaning the ash pits took no longer than three minutes;

c) Four 'treated' bodies – i.e., bodies whose arms and legs had been chopped off – could be burned at one time, together with the cut-off extremities;[295]

d) The time required for cremating such a load did not exceed 12 minutes;

Therefore, when the furnaces were operating 24 hours a day, their capacity for this period amounted to ((24 x 60 x 4 x 5) / 15 =) 1,920 bodies."

According to this report, the capacity of the furnaces depended on the following factors:

- the temperature in the incineration chamber;
- the time required to load the bodies;
- the number of bodies burned at one time;
- the time required to incinerate a 'load'.

Since these factors are interdependent, we must examine all of them together.

The experts claimed that the coke-fueled cremation furnaces of Majdanek had a normal operating temperature of 1,500 °Celsius, but technically this is incorrect. A recognized authority in this field, engineer Richard Kessler, who

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[294] *GARF*, 7021-107-9, pp. 245-249. See Document 27. The numbers mean: 24 hours, 60 minutes, 4 corpses, 5 muffles, 15 minutes (cremation time).

[295] The crematorium staff's notional practice of cutting the arms and legs off the corpses prior to cremation will be discussed later.

carried out a series of test cremations in the crematorium of Dessau, emphasizes:[296]

> *"Loading temperatures of 1,200 to 1,500 °Celsius, though they are frequently mentioned in reports about crematory operations (the publication 'Die Flamme' even mentioned 2,000 degrees) would seem to be incorrectly estimated, not measured temperatures. At temperatures such as these, both the bones and the firebrick material would soften and fuse with each other. The most expedient loading temperatures, as determined in the Dessau tests, are between 850 and 900 °Celsius."*

Contrary to what the experts appointed by the Polish-Soviet Commission claim, the fireclay brickwork of the muffles is still in good shape even today and shows no trace of any such fusion. This becomes apparent from a comparison with the brickwork of the two generators in the Topf double-muffle furnace of Gusen. Besides, the smoke exhaust dampers were of fireclay, not cast iron.

The experts arrived at the time required for cremation on the basis of an "Orientation Diagram to Determine the Time for Cremation of Bodies in Various Cremation Furnaces, Depending on Temperature," which they enclosed with their report. This diagram starts with a muffle temperature of 800 °Celsius and goes up to 1,500 degrees. The relationship between temperature and incineration time is represented as follows:

800°C	120 mins	(Klingenstierna furnace)
900°C	105 mins	"
1,000°C	90 mins	(Siemens furnace)
1,100°C	75 mins	"
1,200°C	60 mins	(Schneider furnace)
1,300°C	45 mins	"
1,400°C	30 mins	"
1,500°C	15 mins	"

Which sources the experts based this on remains a mystery, but it is a fact that the times given for temperatures over 1,000 degrees are ludicrous.

The diagram mentioned above attributes to the Klingenstierna furnace a cremation time of 120 minutes at a temperature of 800 degrees, to the Siemens furnace a time of 90 minutes at 1,000 degrees, and to the Schneider furnace a time of 60 minutes at 1,200 degrees.

These three furnace types were designed according to the principle of the "indirect process," wherein the body was exposed only to heated air. In this process, air passed through the recuperators or regenerators, which were heated to a temperature of 1,000 degrees, and then, heated to the same temperature, it entered the muffle, where it effected the incineration of the corpse. Ac-

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[296] Richard Kessler, "Rationelle Wärmewirtschaft in Krematorien unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Leuchtgasfeuerung," in: *V. Jahrbuch des Verbandes der Feuerbestattungsvereine Deutscher Sprache,* Königsberg Pr., 1930, p. 136.

cording to the architect E. Beutinger, cremation in the Siemens furnace of Gotha took 90 minutes at a temperature of 900 °Celsius, 60 to 90 minutes at 1,000 degrees in the Klingenstierna furnaces, and 45 to 90 minutes at 1,000 degrees in the Schneider furnaces.[297]

According to a report of the Stuttgart Municipal Planning Department and Building Control Office about 48 cremations carried out between July 20 and September 15, 1909, in a hot-air cremation furnace of the Wilhelm Ruppmann type, the maximum temperature achieved in the incineration chamber was 1,120 °C.[298]

In the course of the test cremations carried out by Richard Kessler between November 1, 1926, and January 12, 1927, in the crematorium of Dessau in a furnace manufactured by the firm of Gebrüder Beck (it was an improvement on the Klingenstierna model), a maximum temperature of 1,100 °Celsius was attained in the cremation chamber, but only for a short time, namely while the coffin burned up.[299]

Therefore, it is certain that temperatures greater than 1,100 degrees were hardly ever reached in the cremation chambers of the civilian crematoria to which the Soviet experts referred. Temperatures of 1,500 degrees could only have been reached directly above the generator grate.[300]

This means that the figures given in the Soviet diagram for temperatures greater than 1,000 degrees were nothing more than unfounded extrapolations.

The experts committed another untenable extrapolation in the context of the 'loading' of the furnaces, *i.e.*, the introduction of the corpses into the incineration chamber. Since the simultaneous cremation of two or more bodies in one muffle in civilian crematoria was forbidden (after all, the ashes were to go to the deceased's next-of-kin), the subject literature contains no information about such multiple cremations. Accordingly, the Soviet experts perforce based their diagram on data from the cremation of single bodies and then incorrectly extrapolated these onto the hypothetical cremation of multiple bodies in one and the same muffle. The fact that the results thus obtained are completely wrong is easily proven with reference to the Kori-built furnaces for the cremation of animal cadavers. While such a comparison may seem sacrilegious, we cannot help but draw it, since it does provide reliable information regarding the time that would be required for the cremation of multiple bodies in one muffle.

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[297] E. Beutinger, *Handbuch der Feuerbestattung,* Leipzig: Carl Scholtze Verlag, 1911, pp. 106, 110, 113, 115.

[298] E. Nagel, *Wege und Ziele der modernen Feuerbestattung,* Stuttgart: Verlag Wilhelm Ruppmann, 1922, p. 37.

[299] Richard Kessler, "Rationelle Wärmewirtschaft in den Krematorien nach Maßgabe der Versuche im Dessauer Krematorium," in: *Die Wärmewirtschaft,* yr. 4, issue 9, 1927, p. 155.

[300] Hans Keller, "Versuche an einem Feuerbestattungsofen," special reprint of the periodical *Archiv für Wärmewirtschaft und Dampfkesselwesen,* yr. 10, issue 6, 1926, p. 3.

It should be noted at the start that the furnaces for incinerating animal cadavers were more efficient facilities for cremating organic material than the crematoria were, since the only factor to consider in their design was maximum economy. Kori manufactured eight such incinerators of various sizes. Model 2b, whose incineration chamber measured 1.38m² (which approximates that of the Kori crematoria, where the corresponding area was 1.5m²), was able to reduce a maximum of 450 kg flesh to ashes in an eight-hour period; the process required 170 kg of coal.[301] This corresponds to the incineration of one kg of flesh in 64 seconds at a consumption of 0.37 kg coal. Accordingly, the cremation of several bodies with the maximum total weight possible – 450 kg – would have required approximately 74 minutes and 24.6 kg coal per 70-kg body.

The largest animal cadaver incinerator manufactured by Kori had a capacity of 900 kg flesh in 13.5 hours. The process required 300 kg coal. This corresponds to an incineration time of 54 seconds and a coal consumption of 0.333 kg per kilo of flesh.[301] To simultaneously cremate 13 bodies weighing (900÷13=) 69.2 kg each, the process in this furnace would have required an average of 62 minutes and 23 kg fuel per body.

Based on this data, we can conclude with certainty:

a) the average minimum time to cremate a body weighing approximately 70 kg was roughly 62 minutes;
b) increasing the load (450 kg for Model 2b, 900 kg for Model 4b) resulted in maximum savings of approximately 12% fuel and 16% time.

Thus, experimental evidence shows that the simultaneous cremation of multiple bodies in one and the same muffle would have increased the capacity of the Majdanek crematoria only by an insignificant degree.

These data are confirmed by the testimony of Erich Mußfeldt, who stated in this context:[302]

> *"Only one body was inserted into each muffle; cremation took about one hour."*

This is also exactly how long it took to cremate a body in the Topf furnaces of the crematoria at Auschwitz-Birkenau.[303]

To summarize: since no cremation furnace achieves temperatures greater than 1,000 °Celsius in the cremation chamber, and since the insertion of multiple bodies into one muffle would have increased the cremation time by almost the same factor, the Soviet diagram is devoid of any scientific value.

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[301] Wilhelm Heepke, *Die Kadaver-Vernichtungsanlagen,* Halle a.S.: Verlag von Carl Marhold, 1905, p. 43.

[302] *APMO*, ZO, sygn. D-pr-20/61a, p. 76: "Do jedney retorty wkladano tylko jedne zwłoki, spalenie ich trwało około 1 godziny."

[303] Carlo Mattogno, "The Crematoria Ovens of Auschwitz and Birkenau," in: Germar Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 142), pp. 373-412.

It should be emphasized that not even the experts appointed by the Polish-Soviet Commission dared suggest an incineration time of less than 60 minutes at the effective cremation temperatures. According to them, cremation took 75 minutes at 1,100 °C. Their own diagram shows that at the actual temperature (800 °C) a cremation takes no less than two hours!

The reason for the Polish-Soviet experts' grotesque exaggeration of the crematoria's capacity is obvious: if 600,000 bodies had really been incinerated in the new crematorium, as the Polish-Soviet Commission claimed, then the furnaces *had* to have an incredible capacity! Of course even the fantasy figure of 1,920 bodies (the capacity imputed by the Commission to the crematoria, an exaggeration 19 times greater than the actual fact) would not have sufficed to cremate 600,000 bodies: since the crematorium was not brought into service until January 1944 (we do not know on what day), and was thus operational for only six or at most barely seven months, then even operating at the aforementioned fantasy figure capacity it could hardly have managed more than 300,000 bodies.

Incidentally, to this day the new crematorium of Majdanek sports a plaque on which the capacity of the five furnaces is given as 1,000 per day. The actual figure is approximately one-tenth of that!

b) The Capacity of the Oil-Fueled Furnaces

Regarding the capacity of the two oil-fueled furnaces, SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Krone, attached to *Amt CIII* of the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office, wrote in his January 20, 1943, report, which we have already mentioned in Chapter III:[304]

> *"Crematorium.*
>
> *At this time two oil-fueled cremation furnaces are in operation. Together, these furnaces can dispose of some 100 bodies in a 12-hour period."*

This corresponds to a capacity of 4 bodies per hour. Pressac comments:[305]

> *"Comparing this capacity with that of the Topf double-muffle furnaces in Crematorium I of Auschwitz (which were more efficient than the furnaces of Majdanek), one finds that it is exaggerated to twice the actual capacity."*

Pressac's comparison is not sound, since oil-fueled furnaces most certainly did have a noticeably greater throughput capacity than coke-fueled ones. The reason for this is that in the former, the flame in the combustion chamber could be regulated independently of the furnace draft. As an aside, Mußfeldt also gave the capacity of each of the two oil-fueled furnaces as being approximately 100 bodies per 24 hours.[306]

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[304] *APMM*, microfilm no. 816, p. 10.
[305] Pressac, *op. cit.* (note 14), p. VII.
[306] Anna Zmijewska-Wiśniewska, *op. cit.* (note 164), p. 140.

The oil-fueled Kori furnace was designed to cremate one body at a time. Further, the fairly small openings in the grate (7.5 cm × 24 cm) show that the incineration of the body had to take place more or less completely in the incineration chamber before the small remnants could drop through the mentioned openings and into the ash pit. This means that the cremation process took approximately one hour from start to finish.

The two oil burners did ensure a steady and considerable supply of heat, and further, the temperature could be regulated and adjusted as needed for each stage of the cremation process. If one had aimed for the maximum temperature, and if one had made use of the scraper to push the dried-out and disintegrated body to the back of the muffle where it could drop through the 25 cm × 65 cm opening there into the afterburn chamber before the main cremation process was even complete, one could have reduced the time required for this main cremation process to about 30 to 40 minutes. This corresponds to the minimum time required in the main incineration chamber in today's state-of-the-art crematoria.[307] In practice, the normal cremation time could be cut in half since the main cremation process continued in the ash pit, so that this practically assumed the function of a second muffle. Whether or not two bodies could have been cremated at the same time in this way without an increase in the time required depends on the capacity of the two oil burners, which is not known. If these burners were powerful enough, the possibility of simultaneous cremation of two bodies in special cases – for example, given small or emaciated bodies[308] – can not be ruled out.

In such a case, the two bodies would have dried out in the muffle within half an hour, and incineration would then have finished in the ash pit in the same length of time.

6. The Polish-Soviet Commission's Forensic Report on the New Crematorium's Furnaces

In August 1944 the Polish-Soviet Commission appointed a committee of experts to draw up a forensic assessment of the furnaces in the new crematorium, or, more precisely, of the human remains that had been found there. We shall quote the salient points of their report:[309]

"Furnace No. 1

[307] C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 303), p. 397.
[308] In such a case, the low calorific value of the bodies would be compensated for by the heat supplied by the two oil burners.
[309] *GARF*, 7021-107-9, pp. 256-259.

A small quantity of light-colored ash was found in this furnace, as well as some charred human bones, which have retained their structure well but crumble readily to ash when they are squeezed with the fingers. In the space beneath the grate of this furnace there is ash and a large number of gray, charred bones which fill the entire space under the grate, right up to the latter. In the ash pit of this furnace a small quantity of charred human bones was also found, mixed with coke fuel.

Furnace No. 2

Approximately 0.5m³ of gray ash as well as charred human bones were found in this furnace. Among the bones there is a large number of well-preserved heel bones, metacarpal bones, and individual metatarsal bones. There is also much ash and charred human bones in the space beneath the grate, including forearm, shoulder and finger phalanx bones, which have retained their shape well. The entire space beneath the grate is full of burned bones and ash.

Furnace No. 3

The furnace contains approximately 0.5m³ of gray ash as well as charred human bones, among them well-preserved shin bones, thigh bones, sacral and individual vertebral bones. The space beneath the grate is half-filled with gray ash and small, burned human bones. In the ash pit there are smaller quantities of ash and splinters of burned human bones.

Furnace No. 4

Approximately 0.5m³ gray ash and charred human bones were found in the furnace, including charred pieces of large long bones, pelvic bones and individual vertebrae. The space beneath the grate contains ashes and fragments of human bones, filling the space up to the grate. Small quantities of ash and fragments of charred bones are in the ash pit.

Furnace No. 5

A small quantity of gray ash as well as charred fragments of human bones were discovered in this furnace. The furnace also contains a special iron gurney for inserting the corpses. The space beneath the grate contains ashes and parts of charred human bones: thighs, pelvises, shoulders etc.; they fill the entire space below the grate. The entire ash pit is filled with ashes and small parts of bones.

Twelve charred corpses are laid out in the area in front of the furnaces, lined up with their heads towards the furnaces. On many of the bodies the remnants of individual muscles are well-preserved on the torso as well as on the extremities. On all the bodies, the lower extremities have been chopped off at the level of the middle third of the upper thigh; in fact, the preserved bones exhibit cut marks at the same place. Some of the internal organs are preserved in the form of a charred, dry, crumbling mass. On all bodies the skulls are crushed and charred. Judging from the shape of the pelvis, and from the sexual organs which were well preserved in some cases, one may conclude that the 12 bodies were those of 7 males and 5 females.

A small quantity of coke fuel was found in the adjoining area by the opening to the heating system. Four bent iron gurneys, with which bodies were inserted into the furnaces, stand in the same location. Approximately 50 metal urns, most of

which are filled with ashes and small fragments of charred human bones, stand in the corner of this area beside the fifth furnace.

A total of 4.5m³ of ashes and charred human bones was found in the furnaces and the spaces beneath the grates."

It is difficult to imagine that the supervisor of the crematorium should have been so negligent as to permit half a cubic meter of bones and ash to pile up in ash pits. There would have been no practical benefit; the ashes could be easily removed by an operator after the cremation was complete. Two photos published by Konstantin Simonov show a muffle from the Majdanek furnace, full of bone fragments; they completely cover the grate.[310] Such a massive accumulation of human remains would perforce have resulted in a drastic retardation of the cremation process. The presence of coke in the ash pit of Furnace 1 is also inexplicable, since the generator's stoking shaft was separate from the ash pit. And finally, the parts of large bones (thigh, pelvic and shoulder bones) could hardly have dropped through the small 18 cm × 6 cm openings in the muffle grate. There is only one explanation for these oddities:

After the SS had fled, the ashes and bones were taken out of the ash containers – where the coke slag had evidently also been put – and were placed into the furnaces. This was no doubt an organized stage production by the inmates remaining in the camp after the German retreat and was intended to make the crematorium appear as gruesome as possible. A similar production was staged in the alleged gas chambers in Barrack 41.[311] The "Polish Resistance Committee," which according to Gerald Reitlinger took control after the withdrawal of the SS and which had handed Majdanek over to the Soviets, was probably the party responsible for these creative embellishments.[312]

Probably the twelve bodies which the Commission found in front of the furnaces were also put there by that same Resistance Committee as a crowning touch. Whatever the case may be, the photograph[313] published by Marszałek shows only a confused jumble of bones. The bodies intended for cremation were probably charred in the fire that gutted the crematorium, and if they were missing the legs then it was because they had burned off in whole or in part.

The Polish-Soviet Commission then proceeded to claim that the Germans had mutilated the dead in order to be able to cremate four bodies at a time in one and the same muffle. It goes without saying that this "finding" by the committee of experts was a lie which served to give the illusion that the crematorium in fact had an immensely great cremation capacity.

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[310] C. Simonov, *Il campo dello sterminio* (The Extermination Camp), Moscow: Edizione in lingue estere, 1944. The photographs are on several pages.

[311] cf. Chapter VII.

[312] Gerald Reitlinger, *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 512.

[313] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 209). The photographs are on unnumbered pages.

Chapter VI: The Gas Chambers

1. Structure and Purpose of the Gas Chambers: The Polish-Soviet Expert Report of August 1944

The joint Polish-Soviet Commission, which we have already mentioned repeatedly in the previous chapter and which apparently was constituted on Polish initiative,[314] drew up a technical and chemical expert report about the alleged facilities for the mass extermination of humans. The Commission began its work on August 4, 1944, and concluded on the 23rd of that same month. In the following we shall quote the text of this historically very significant, yet to date unpublished document, which seems to be unknown even in Polish historiography. In the previous chapter we have already quoted the section dealing with the (new) crematorium, which has no relevance to the subject here at issue.

Now, the expert report about the gas chambers:[315]

"File

August 4 to 23, 1944, city of Lublin

Technical and chemical forensic expert report by the Commission, consisting of the following members:

– Chairman: engineer and architect for the city of Lublin, KELLES-KRAUSE;
– Chief engineer and lecturer for building and construction matters, D. M. TELJANER;
– Chief engineer, Candidate for the technical sciences, and lecturer for fire studies, G. P. GRIGOREV;
– Chief engineer, Candidate for the chemical sciences, and lecturer for organic chemistry, P. S. PELKIS; and
– Colonel of the Medical Corps, W. A. BLOCHIN,

who, acting in agreement with and on the suggestion of the Polish-Soviet Commission, and in order to further the investigation of the German atrocities and misdeeds in the city of Lublin and its environs, have drawn up a technical and chemical forensic expert report about the gas chambers, lethal agents and cremation furnaces located on the territory of the Lublin SS concentration camp.

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[314] The "Communiqué" of the agency Polpress states:
"Considering the fact that the Germans have committed mass murders and killings of Soviet prisoners of war, the Polish Committee of National Liberation turned to the Soviet government with the following suggestion: an Extraordinary Polish-Soviet Commission should be set up to investigate the German misdeeds in Lublin, and the Soviet Union itself should appoint representatives for this purpose." Text quoted in: Simonov, *op. cit.* (note 310), p. 18.

[315] *GARF*, 7021-107-9, pp. 229-243.

DESCRIPTION OF THE OBJECTS

Facility: Plan of the Concentration Camp Lublin[316] *and Diagrams No. 1,*[317] *2, 3 and 4*

Altogether, the following were inspected and pencil-sketched on tracing paper:

1. *Six gas chambers / cf. Diagram No. 1*

Including: three gas chambers (Nos. I, II and III), located at the northeastern end wall of the Bath; one gas chamber (No. IV) immediately adjoining the Bath and forming an entire building wing as seen from the exterior. / On the plan of the concentration camp, gas chambers I, II, III, IV and the Bath, which actually consisted of Barracks No. 41 and 42, are labeled No. 16. / Two gas chambers (Nos. V and VI), located on the area between Compounds 1 and 2.

2. *Arsenal of chemical substances.*
3. *Crematorium, with adjoining rooms.*

The GAS CHAMBERS Nos. I, II and III (see Diagram 1) are actually separate facilities of rectangular shape, with a room (No. 14) protruding from the southwest side, serving to store gas bottles, and another room (No. 4) adjoining the northwest side, in which an air heater was installed.

These chambers, and Room 14 for the storage of gas bottles, have massive concrete walls 50 cm thick, as well as dividing walls 20 cm thick. Except for the heating system, the entire facility is lined with a layer of reinforced concrete, 15 cm thick. The walls and ceiling are neatly plastered, the floors consist of concrete with stud screws. A layer of clay covers the reinforced-concrete walls.

Room No. 4 where the air heater is installed / Air Heater Room / is a simplified kind of wooden annex. The entire room is built of wooden slats and can be dismantled.

On the plan, the layout of the gas chambers is divided into three subsections, two of which (Nos. I and II) are the same size, measuring 4.75 x 3.60 m each. The third subsection (No. III) measures 9.70 x 3.70 m. The interior height of the room is 2.2 m.

Therefore, the areas and volumes of the gas chambers Nos. I, II and III are as follows:

# of the chamber	*Area in m^2*	*Volume in m^3*
I	*17.1*	*37.6*
II	*17.1*	*37.6*
III	*36.6*	*79.8*

GAS CHAMBER NO. I. It has a door measuring 2 x 0.9 m in the south wall, as well as a hermetically closable ventilation opening (20 x 20 cm) in the ceiling. Within the gas chamber there is a galvanized gas pipe 1.5 inches in diameter, with openings 6 mm in diameter. The distance between these openings is 25 cm each along the entire length of the gas pipe. The pipe is installed at a height of 30 cm above floor level and runs along all four walls of the chamber, with the exception of the space taken up by the door. One end of the gas pipe is 'blind,' while the oth-

316 See Document 5.
317 See Documents 34 and 35.

er leads to the chamber where the gas bottles were stored / Equipment Room No. 14.

The chamber door is of boiler plate iron 12 mm thick, with a rubber lining and locking levers that allow it to be hermetically sealed. The iron door contains a glass peephole 85 mm in diameter, surrounded with a screen.

To allow observation of the events in Gas Chamber No. I, the wall of the same contains an observation window 20 x 12 cm in size, through which one can see out of the gas bottle storage room / Equipment Room No. 14 / and into the gas chamber. It is glazed on the side of the Equipment Room. On the side of Gas Chamber No. I it is protected with a grid of iron rods 10 mm in diameter. The chamber is illuminated by two electric lights mounted in niches to either side of the entrance door and protected by a double iron grate. The connection for the switch is in the Equipment Room.

GAS CHAMBER NO. II. Its interior has no gas pipe, no electric lights and no peephole. There is a 20 x 20 cm opening in the ceiling. This opening can be hermetically sealed with a lid located above the room. The chamber door is of iron and outfitted with locking levers and rubber gaskets, allowing it to be hermetically sealed.

GAS CHAMBER NO. III. It has two entrances, located on the longitudinal axis of the chamber on opposite walls. Both measure 2 x 0.9 m. In the wall on the heating side there are two round openings 25 cm in diameter, by which Gas Chamber No. III is connected to the heating system installed in the adjoining room. There are no openings in the opposite wall of Gas Chamber III or in the ceiling. Gas Chamber No. III is equipped with a gas pipe of galvanized iron, 1.5 inches in diameter. It spans the entire length of the room at a height of 30 cm above the concrete floor. Both ends of the pipe have openings through which the gas is discharged. These openings are protected with cast-ion gratings cemented into the wall. The pipe leads from the room where the gas bottles were stored / Equipment Room No. 14 / into the Gas Chamber.

The construction of the doors and the means for sealing them hermetically are as for Gas Chamber No. I. One of the doors is fixed with an iron casing to hold a thermometer.

The chamber is illuminated by an electric light mounted in a niche on the wall, protected by two iron grids. The switch leads to the gas bottle storage room.

EQUIPMENT ROOM / chamber for storage of gas bottles, No. 14 / adjoins Gas Chambers I and III. The gas pipes from chambers I and III lead into this Equipment Room. Each of the pipe ends is equipped with a special copper socket for the rubber connector hoses to the bottles. The wall of the Equipment Room has an observation window through which one can see into Gas Chamber I; it is surrounded with a metal grate on the gas chamber side, and glazed on the side of the Equipment Room. Beside the window is the switch for the electric lights of Gas Chambers I and III. The area of the Equipment Room is 2.9m².

All three chambers as well as the Equipment Room / No. 14 / are covered by a pole-support roof, i.e., one erected on wooden posts, 6.5 m high and with an area of 855m². The pole-support roof is surrounded by a 3-m-high barbed wire barrier

with two gates to admit vehicles. The pole-support roof is only accessible through said gate or through the immediately adjacent Undressing Room of Barrack No. 42 and the gas chamber of Barrack No. 41 / see Diagram 1 /.

GAS CHAMBER NO. IV. Gas Chamber No. IV is located in Barrack 41, which in part leads directly to the Canopy. Gas Chamber No. IV consists of a wooden porch / No. 7 / and Room No. 5, separated by a plastered wall. Room 5 and Gas Chamber IV together take up an area of 28.8 + 72.2 + 6.7 = 107.7m². The Heating Room / No. 15 / is located at Chamber IV.

Gas Chamber IV leads directly to the northern wall of the Shower, together with which it forms an entire wing of the building as seen from outside. Inside, the gas chamber can be reached from the Shower only through a door that can be hermetically sealed with clamps affixed to the side facing the Shower.

The door on the canopy side is of wood; on the inside it is lined with roofing felt. It can be locked from outside with a bolt, and is equipped with screws for the clamps. The outside of the door is lined with felt.

Gas Chamber No. IV, and Room No. 6 which leads to it, are of wooden construction; they are lined on the outside with 'wagonka' [unknown term]*, on the inside with thin slats, and the gaps in the paneling are filled with pressed wood shavings. The average thickness of the outside walls, with plaster, is 10 cm.*

On the ceiling of Chamber No. IV there are two hermetically sealable, retractable openings 20 x 20 cm in size. The wall adjoining the Heating Room contains two round openings of 25 cm diameter each, with permanently installed pipes for the intake of hot air from the heating system installed in Room 15.

The following is a tabular summary of the area and volume of the gas chambers as well as of the adjoining Shower and the remaining rooms of Barrack 41:

No.	*Description of room*	*Numbering*	*Area in m²*	*Volume in m³*
1.	*Gas chamber No. IV*	*8*	*72.2*	*180.6*
2.	*Gas chamber No. IV*	*5*	*28.8*	*72.0*
3.	*Vestibule for g.ch. IV*	*7*	*6.7*	*16.9*
4.	*Zyklon storage room*	*6*	*6.6*	*16.5*
5.	*Heating*	*15*	*6.9*	*15.2*
6.	*Room for 72 shower heads*	*9*	*105.6*	*264.7*
7.	*Boiler room*	*11*	*33.7*	*84.4*
8.	*Undressing room*	*12*	*64.9*	*162.2*
9.	*Hallway*	*10*	*20.6*	*51.5*
10.	*Porch*	*13*	*6.6*	*16.5*

The shower room for 42 shower stalls in Barrack 42 (set up parallel to the Shower in Barrack 41) includes a heat chamber for disinfecting the clothing of those showering. The Shower is set up as follows: on the southern side is the Undressing Room, from which one door opens onto the vestibule in front of the disinfecting chamber and another opens into the Shower.

The opposite wall of the Shower contains a door leading to the Dressing Room. In this room, one door opens into the porch of the Disinfecting Chamber, while another, an exit door, opens under the Canopy. From this exit, the ground underneath the Canopy is traversed by a 1.5-m-wide boardwalk that leads to the doors of Gas

Chambers I and III. At the time of inspection, the Disinfection Chamber was being renovated.

GAS CHAMBERS Nos. V and VI. (See Diagram 1.) Located on the area of the mechanized laundry between Compounds I and II, in Barrack 28. Each chamber has a heating system, which is installed in the corridor. The chamber's walls on the side where the heating systems are installed are built of red brick. Inside, the walls are plastered with cement stucco. All of Barrack 28 is built of wood slats, and the outside walls are lined with pressed wood shavings. On the inside, Chambers Nos. V and VI each measure 70.5m^2, with a volume of 170m^3. The doors of both chambers are of wood, lined with flat iron and equipped with the requisite accessories to permit air-tight sealing. On the ceiling of each chamber is a telescoping valve 30 x 30 cm in size, exiting above the ridge of the roof constructed of roofing felt. The telescoping valves are hermetically sealable with lids.

2. Chemical Arsenal

Barrack No. 52 served as storage room for various chemicals. Aside from numerous chemicals generally used for disinfestation and disinfection, the following were discovered there:

a) Five bottles, dark red in color. The following is stamped on them in German:
'Carbon monoxide. Bottled at 150 atmospheres; July 8, [19]*42, Schönerwein and Brenen. Berlin B. 9. Tested at 225 atmospheres. Empty weight 75.8 kg. Volume 40.6 liters.'*
On examination of the bottles it was found that the gas contained therein had been used up, but that a small remnant still remained.

b) A box of anti-gas material specifically labeled as protection from carbon monoxide. The box has a diameter of 12.8 cm, its height is 25.4 cm. The box is cylindrical in shape and is coated with dark protective paint.
The box of anti-gas material is inscribed in German:
'CO filter number 86. Protects against carbon monoxide. Also against all chemical warfare agents and against acidic gases, fumes and dust. (1-38)25. Use in accordance with §8 of Air Raid Regulations. Company AUER A.G. of Berlin.'
Aside from the inscription, a label is also glued onto the box of anti-gas material, with the following text in German:
'AUER, CO filter No. 09903. Not for use later than June 1944. Can be used for two years from the time of first use. No more than 40 hours total. First use: Date: Use: Hours:
from: to:
Note: After each use, close box tightly, top and bottom. Store in a cool dry place.'

c) 135 metal cans containing the substance 'Zyklon'. Each can weighs 1,400 grams. More than 400 cans containing the substance 'Zyklon'. Weight per can, 3,750 grams.
The cans are labeled with the following text, in German:
'Zyklon B. German patent: 438818, 447913, 490355, 524261, 575293. POISON GAS! Cyanide substance! Store in a cool dry place! Keep away from sunlight and open flame!

To be opened and used only by trained personnel. Cyanide content 1,500 grams. Main supplier for Germany east of the Elbe, General Government, Poland, Denmark, Norway and border states: TESCH & STABENOW. International Company for Pest Control. Hamburg. 1 / Messberghof. German Company for Pest Control. Frankfurt am Main. Use within three months.'
Tin cans, painted grayish-green, cylindrical in shape.
Among the large cans some were found whose label text differs from that of those mentioned in the previous, in that the description 'Zyklon B' is replaced with 'Zyklon' and reference is made to the last German patent number 575293.
90% of all cans found had been opened and used in the camp.
[…[318]]

[…] *The concrete gas chamber, with reinforced-concrete roofing and two small observation windows on the side of the mortuary.* […]

[…] *Gas Chamber: 6.10 x 5.62 m, 34.28m².* […]

(Signatures)

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the technical examination of all hermetically sealable chambers located on the grounds of the SS-administered Lublin concentration camp, on the results of an expert chemical analysis similarly carried out for all special facilities of the camp and for the chambers, and on the examination of the chemical substance 'Zyklon' and the bottles of carbon monoxide, but also taking into account the reports of eyewitnesses, the Commission arrived at the following conclusion:

A) The chambers set up on the grounds of the camp were designed and used primarily for the mass poisoning of human beings, *which becomes apparent from the following:*

1. *For Chamber No. I, with an area of 17.1m² and a volume of 37.6m³, notable elements of construction and equipment are:*
   a) *The presence of the gas pipe;*
   b) *The presence of a special room with devices for opening the gas bottles and for channeling the gas into the chamber;*
   c) *The presence of a peephole, which was protected by a massive chamber-side iron grid, of two electric lights installed in niches in the wall and also protected by double iron grids, and the absence of any other apparatus or devices inside the chamber, indicate that Chamber No. I was intended ONLY for the poisoning of human beings with carbon monoxide and hydrocyanic acid; therefore, its immediate and direct purpose was THE EXTERMINATION OF HUMAN BEINGS.*
2. *Chamber No. II, with an area of 17.1m² and a volume of 37.6m³, is a room of reinforced concrete, with a single massive hermetically sealable door and a hatch in the ceiling, and lacking any kind of equipment or devices (heating system, racks, coat hooks etc.). This design indicates that this chamber was intended* exclusively for poisoning human beings with hydrocyanic acid.

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[318] The section omitted here, which deals with the new Crematorium, is quoted in Chapter V. At this point we quote only those few lines that refer to "Gas Chamber VII."

3. *Chamber No. III, with an area of 36.3m² and a volume of 79.8m³, was similarly designed FOR POISONING HUMAN BEINGS WITH CARBON MONOXIDE, as indicated by its construction and by the heating system and gas pipe which comprised its equipment. This chamber could also have been used to disinfest the clothing of the poisoned victims, but not to disinfest the clothing of people washing themselves in the Shower, since it is not connected to the Shower; it is a detached building and is separated from the Shower by a barbed wire barrier.*
4. *Chamber No. IV, the largest, has an area of 107.7m² and a volume of 269.5m³. A door leads directly from this chamber into the Shower, but it cannot be considered a regular disinfection chamber associated with the Bath because it was designed to make use of the substance 'Zyklon'. (The use of 'Zyklon' is prohibited if the* [gas] *chamber is directly connected to a facility where there are people.) The heating system was set up in order to warm the air in winter, which is indispensable for the optimal use of the substance 'Zyklon'. In view of the particular location of the chamber as described above, the possibility that this chamber was used for hot-air disinfestation purposes can be ruled out.*

   Consequently, this chamber also served the purpose of exterminating human beings.

   According to eyewitnesses, this chamber was the chief location used for the mass poisoning of human beings.
5. *Chambers V and VI, located between Compounds I and II near the Laundry, were equipped with heating systems and also suited to the use of 'Zyklon'. Accordingly, they too could have been used as chambers for* poisoning human beings**,** *but in view of their location / proximity to the Laundry, where the clothing that had belonged to the murdered people was taken to be washed, it follows that these chambers were also used for disinfestation.*

In this way, the technical and sanitation-chemical examination of the hermetically sealable chambers of the Lublin concentration camp fully confirms the fact set out herewith, that all these chambers, and especially Nos. I, II, III and IV, were designed and used as sites for the systematic mass extermination of human beings by means of poisoning *with poison gases such as hydrocyanic acid (the substance Zyklon) and carbon monoxide. If Chambers V and VI were also used for disinfestation purposes, then they were used only for the treatment of the clothing of exterminated victims.*

B) Assuming that up to six standing people can fit into an area one meter square, then given the simultaneous operation of all chambers designed for poisoning, 1,914 people could be poisoned all at once.

Number	*Area in m²*	*# of people per m²*	*Total # of people fitting into the chamber*
I	*17.1*	*6*	*102*
II	*17.1*	*6*	*102*
III	*36.3*	*6*	*208*
IV	*107.7*	*6*	*646*
V	*70.5*	*6*	*423*
VI	*70.5*	*6*	*423*
Total	*319.2*	*6*	*1,914 people*

Poisoning people with hydrogen cyanide in hermetically sealed chambers takes 3 to 5 minutes; poisoning with carbon monoxide takes 5 to 10 minutes.

A hydrocyanic acid concentration of 0.3 milligrams per liter suffices as lethal dose. To attain such a concentration in all chambers equipped for the purpose / Nos. I, II, IV, V and VI / with a total volume of 684.7m³, 684.7 x 0.3 grams = 205.4 grams are required, i.e., less than half the contents of a small can of 'Zyklon'.

A carbon monoxide concentration of 5.6 milligrams per liter / i.e., 0.5% air volume / is lethal within 5 to 10 minutes. In Chambers Nos. I and III, which were equipped for poisoning with this substance and totaled a volume of 116.4m³, this concentration could be attained with the use of 0.1 bottles of carbon monoxide.

FILE

of the forensic chemical laboratory analysis.

In 1944, from August 4 to 21, a committee of experts consisting of

Colonel of the Medical Corps W. A. BLOCHIN, Chief engineer, Candidate for the chemical sciences, and lecturer for organic chemistry, P. S. PELKIS, and Chief engineer, Candidate for the technical sciences, and lecturer for fire studies, G. P. GRIGOREV

conducted a forensic chemical laboratory analysis of the contents of the cans labeled 'Zyklon B' and of the bottles labeled carbon monoxide, which had been discovered on the grounds of the SS Lublin concentration camp.

1. 535 cans of the substance 'Zyklon B' were found on the camp grounds. These included 135 cans for contents weighing 1,400 grams and 400 cans for contents weighing 3,750 grams. 90% of all the cans had been opened and used in the camp.

The cans bore the manufacturers' labels with the following text / labels and text in German are enclosed:

'Zyklon B. German patent: 438818, 447913, 490355, 524261, 575293. POISON GAS! Cyanide substance! Store in a cool dry place! Keep away from sunlight and open flame!

To be opened and used only by trained personnel. Cyanide content 1,500 grams. Main supplier for Germany east of the Elbe, General Government, Poland, Denmark, Norway and border states: TESCH & STABENOW. International Company for Pest Control. Hamburg. 1 / Messberghof. German Company for Pest Control. Frankfurt am Main. Use within three months.'

Labels with the same text are also affixed to the small cans, along with a specification of the cyanide content: 500 grams.

Among the large cans, some were found with labels whose text differs from that quoted above in that the description 'Zyklon' is given instead of 'Zyklon B' and that reference is made to only one German patent, 575293.

All cans are of tin, cylindrical in shape and gray-green in color.
Weight of a full large can: 3,750 g.
Diameter of the can, 15.4 cm
Height, 31.5 cm
Weight of a full small can: 1,400 g.
Diameter of the can, 15.4 cm
Height, 12.5 cm.

The contents of the cans were tested for the presence of hydrocyanic acid: with indicator paper dipped in benzidine acetate as well as with sodium picrate, the formation of Prussian Blue was effected.

Samples were taken from 18 cans, and 48 individual tests were performed. All samples clearly indicated the presence of hydrogen cyanide by means of reactions specified above.

Two cans of 'Zyklon' weighing 1,750[319] *grams were opened, and the hydrogen cyanide was driven out for two hours by means of heating to a temperature of 23 to 28 °C; the remnant, including the can, weighed:*

1. – 2,330 grams
2. – 2,310 grams

An empty can weighs 600 grams.

Therefore, the evaporable component of the substance 'Zyklon B' weighs from 1,430[320] *to 1,440 grams per large can.*

Since hydrogen cyanide becomes partly polymerized during storage – which becomes evident in an analysis due to the reduction of the hydrogen cyanide content – one can assume with a fair degree of certainty that the quantity of hydrogen cyanide in a can weighing 3,750 grams is in fact 1,500 grams. This is also the quantity of hydrogen cyanide stated on the manufacturer's label.

For the small cans, removal of the evaporable portion at 28 °C for two hours yielded the following values for two cans thus analyzed:

Weight of the remainder including the can, 930 to 950 grams
Weight of the empty can, 350 grams
Weight of the hydrogen cyanide, 450 to 470 grams.

This also approximates the weight of the hydrogen cyanide stated on the manufacturer's label, namely 500 grams.

Therefore, the contents examined are in fact the substance 'Zyklon,' which consists of a special preparation of diatomaceous earth in the form of granules 1 cm in diameter, which are infused with stabilized liquid hydrocyanic acid.

The contents of the cans labeled 'Zyklon,' of which a small number were found in the camp, are identical to those of the cans labeled 'Zyklon B'.

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319 Misprint; read 3,750.
320 Misprint; read 1,420.

Hydrocyanic acid / the substance 'Zyklon' / is primarily used to combat pests in grain silos / mealworms, ephestia moths, and fumigation of plants.

Since 'Zyklon' contains a high percentage of hydrogen cyanide and since it also affects the human organism with its usual toxicity, only specially trained personnel are permitted to handle it.

Aside from the cans containing 'Zyklon,' five dark red bottles were also discovered in Barrack No. 52. They bear the manufacturer's imprint with the following text:

'Carbon monoxide. Bottled at 150 atmospheres; July 8 [19]*42, Schönerwein and Brenen. Berlin B. 9. Tested at 225 atmospheres. Empty weight 75.8 kg. Volume 40.6 liters.'*

The bottles are numbered: 10, 17, 44, 52, 60.

An examination of the bottles determined that the gas they had contained was largely used up. To permit a chemical analysis of the remaining gas, the bottles were exposed to sunlight and warmed. The residual pressure thus achieved in the bottles sufficed to permit the drawing of gas samples.

The samples taken from all five bottles were analyzed to determine the presence of carbon monoxide by means of reactions with iodine pentoxide as well as indicator paper with palladium chloride. In total, ten reactions were performed with iodine pentoxide and ten with palladium chloride.

All tests for these reactions clearly showed the presence of carbon monoxide.

CONCLUSION

1. *The substance 'Zyklon' which was discovered in the storage rooms at the gas chambers of the Lublin concentration camp consists of specially prepared diatomaceous earth infused with stabilized liquid hydrogen cyanide.*
2. *The quantitative content of hydrogen cyanide in the cans labeled 'Zyklon' corresponds to the data given on the manufacturer's labels. The larger cans contain 1,500 grams, the smaller ones 500 grams.*
3. *Chemical analysis shows that five bottles numbered 44, 52, 10, 60 and 17 contained carbon monoxide.*

Therefore, the results of the chemical analyses substantiate the correctness of the information marked on the bottles.

[Signatures]*"*

2. Design, Construction and Purpose of the Gas Chambers

The original documents surviving to this day verify the exact opposite of the Polish-Soviet Commission's conclusions: *all* the gas chambers in the Majdanek concentration camp were designed and built exclusively for sanitary purposes, as disinfestation chambers.

One March 23, 1942, plan by the Central Construction Office provided for three disinfestation facilities. The first was an H-shaped facility, called "De-

lousing," at the center of the camp next to the Laundry;[321] the second was a barrack also called "Delousing" but located outside the camp on its northwestern side; the third was in that part of the camp which, as the detailed plan of this sector shows, was described as "Waffen-SS Clothing Manufacturing Plant."[322]

The aforementioned H-shaped facility had already been designed in October 1941. The blueprint was drawn by the firm of Hans Kori and provided for a large hygiene and sanitation complex consisting of two delousing facilities, set up as mirror images of each other within the aforementioned facility. The one intended for the inmates was located in the left wing while the other, which included eight delousing chambers for clothing, took up the right wing.

The delousing facility for the inmates is shown on Diagram J.-No. 9082,[323] which the Kori company drew up on October 23, 1941, and is described in a letter sent that same day by Kori to SS-*Sturmbannführer* Lenzer. The letter stated:[324]

> *"Due to your sudden departure from Berlin we had no opportunity to review with you the unresolved issues regarding the delousing facility. Therefore we are writing to you in this matter to inform you of the following:*
>
> *The floor plan for the left building section with disinfection chamber is divided functionally as shown on the enclosed sketch, Page.*[325] *The Shower is reduced in size whereas the Drying Room is enlarged. We consider an anteroom of the same shape and size as that between the Undressing Room and the Shower to be a desirable addition between the Disinfection and the Drying Room. The space apportionment in front of the Shower and Drying Room can be done as you like, and is suggested on our sketch J.-No. 9082."*

The description and the enclosed diagram indicate that the building's left wing, intended for delousing the inmates, provided for the following sequence of rooms: Undressing Room with clothing drop-off, Anteroom, Shower, Drying Room, Anteroom, Disinfection. After being disinfected,[326] the inmates proceeded into the building's right wing, where their deloused clothing was returned to them.

The delousing facility intended for the right wing is described as follows in the aforementioned letter from Kori:[327]

> *"Regarding the layout of the delousing chamber in the Delousing Facility, we wish to point out that we are currently working on numerous such facilities in the*

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321 See Document 3a.
322 See Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 26), map on unnumbered page.
323 See Document 28.
324 *APMM*, sygn. 9a, v. 1, p. 1.
325 This document has been lost.
326 Disinfection was done with chemical substances dissolved in water. See Walter Dötzer, *Entkeimung, Entseuchung und Entwesung, Arbeitsanweisungen für Klinik und Laboratorium des Hygiene-Instituts der Waffen-SS*, Berlin. Published by SS-*Standartenführer* Ass't. Prof. Dr. Mrugowski. Berlin and Vienna: Verlag von Urban und Schwarzenberg, 1943, pp. 48ff.
327 *APMM*, sygn. 9a, v. 1, p. 3.

service of the relevant Wehrmacht offices. There are usually two delousing chambers, powered by a Kori Kalorifer, but often there are also several delousing chambers, adjoining in sequence and operated with one or more Kalorifers, depending on the size of the facilities. For the project at issue, we consider the arrangement of the 8 delousing chambers as per the enclosed Diagram J.-No. 9081[328] *to be the most functional. While the preliminary plans had projected 10 delousing chambers, these were only 1,400 to 1,500 mm wide. Practice has shown that one must make the delousing chambers at least 2,000 mm wide, if not a bit wider, to allow for easy movement of adequately large carts both in and out. Our Diagram J.-No. 9081 reflects this. Between each of two delousing chambers an air heater is installed at 1,000 mm below floor level. This same lowering also applies to the small Anteroom, from which a few stone steps lead to the main entrance to the Contaminated Side. This is also where the entranceways to the 4 coke bunkers are planned, which, however, are joined into one common bunker along the length of the Delousing Room so as to be able to accommodate a larger supply of coke – as the ground plan on Diagram J.-No. 9081 indicates. Cross-section e-f shows details of the arrangement of the warm-air vent and circulation grates, while cross-section c-d shows the differences in height of the floors in the various rooms."*

As per this project, the eight delousing chambers were each 2 m wide, 2.10 m high and 3.5 m long and were heated with a coke-fueled "Kalorifer" or air heater located between each pair of chambers adjacent to the outside walls. On the inside an opening in the top allowed warm air to return to the heater; on the opposite side, on the floor of each pair of chambers, was an opening for hot air from the air heater via an underground air duct. In structural terms the facility was very similar to the model designed by Kori on July 5, 1940, for the delousing facility of Alt-Drewitz.[328] Delousing proceeded not with Zyklon B, but with hot air.

Kori's projected delousing facility, described above, never became reality.

A March 31, 1942, plan by the Central Construction Office, depicting the "Temperature Delousing Facility of POW Camp Lublin,"[329] shows 8 delousing chambers, considerably smaller and without an air heater; most likely they were metal disinfection devices such as were installed in Buildings 5a and 5b of Birkenau.

On this plan, the eight small cells are set up side by side in a structure called "Delousing," 13.5 m × 4 m in size. They separate the "clean" side from the "contaminated" side leading outward. The delousing facility consists of a barrack 40.76 m × 9.56 m in size. The path taken by the inmates through this structure was: Entrance/Registration → Shaving/Undressing Room → Shower → Dressing Room → Exit. For clothing the cycle was as follows: Clothing Collection → Delousing ("contaminated" → "clean") → Clothing Return. The

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328 See Document 29.

329 *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 41, p. 5.

Shower included 40 shower heads; the hot water was supplied from the Boiler Room.[330]

This was the original plan of March 23, 1942, for the delousing facility intended to be established outside the camp. As far as one can tell from looking in through the windows of this building, which is off-limits to visitors, this plan was realized, with a few modifications, in Barrack 42 (Building XII). In this barrack one can see[331] the Boiler Room[332] as well as a cement-lined chamber[333] which seem much larger than those sketched on the aforementioned plan.

According to a report of the Central Construction Office, Building XII was 40% complete on July 1, 1942. The report states:[334]

> *"Building XII Delousing and Bath – meanwhile a second horse stable barrack, with shower facility, has been added."*

This second facility was Barrack 41, Building XII^{A}, set up south of Barrack 42. Several documents exist about Barrack 41 which shed some light on its design, its construction and its purpose.

On June 19, 1942, SS-*Sturmbannführer* Lenzer, Chief of the Central Construction Inspection Office of the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office,[335] forwarded to the Building Inspector of the Waffen-SS and Police of the General Government a May 27 request from *Amt BII* regarding the construction of a disinfestation facility for the Lublin Clothing Plant:[336]

> *"In the aforementioned letter*[337] *Amt BII submitted a request for the construction of a disinfestation facility as per the system of disinfestation with hydrogen cyanide.*
>
> *As I intend to approve this request, considering its urgency, the appropriate Building Office is to be instructed to draw up and submit a construction proposal without delay. The local office of Amt BII is to be involved in this project.*
>
> *According to information I have been given, the required furnace is available through Amt BII. This letter is to accompany the construction proposal as official recommendation.*
>
> *Date for submission, June 30, 1942."*

On June 27, 1942, the Chief of the Construction Inspectorate of the Waffen-SS and Police for the General Government informed the Lublin Central Construction Office that the "preliminary design and cost estimate" for the disinfestation facility for the Lublin Clothing Plant would have to be submit-

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330 See Document 30.
331 This barrack is closed to tourists, but it is possible to look in through the windows.
332 See Photograph VIII.
333 See Photograph IX.
334 *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 8, p. 3.
335 *Amt C/V*, Central Construction Inspection.
336 *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 141, p. 3.
337 This refers to the May 27, 1942 letter from *Amt BIII*.

ted to him "as supplement to the preliminary design for the construction of the Fur and Clothing Works by July 10, 1942."[338]

On July 10, 1942, the Chief of the Central Construction Office provided the Construction Inspectorate of the Waffen-SS and Police for the General Government with the entire administrative documentation for the disinfestation facility, namely: official recommendation, explanatory report, planning draft A, cost estimate, floorplan 1:500, sketch of the delousing barrack. The accompanying letter stated:[339]

> *"Enclosed as per the order of June 27, 1942, please find the supplement to the construction proposal for a disinfestation facility as Building XII in the Fur and Clothing Works of Lublin, to the amount of RM 70,000, with the request for review and provision of the financial and material means. The Polish contractors' prices were used as basis for the cost estimate."*

Of the documents enclosed with this letter, the explanatory report and the cost estimate are the only ones to have survived; both were drawn up by Chief of the Central Construction Office on July 10, 1942. The first, reproduced in its entirety below, explained the purpose of this facility:[340]

> *"Explanatory Report*
>
> *for the Construction of a Disinfestation Facility for the Fur and Clothing Works of Lublin.*
>
> *For purposes of disinfesting the arriving items of fur and clothing, a disinfestation facility as per the diagram provided by the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office is to be built on the grounds of the Fur and Clothing Works of Lublin. As the enclosed diagram shows, the disinfestation chamber is to be constructed solidly with a ceiling of reinforced concrete. A so-called pole-support roof must be built above this delousing chamber. This pole-support roof is to be 60.0 x 18.0 m in size to allow the disinfested materials to be spread out and stored. The furnace as well as the remaining equipment is provided by Amt BII. Everything else results from the drawing."*

The "Cost Estimate for the Construction of a Disinfestation Barrack for the Fur and Clothing Works of Lublin" comprises 27 sections and cites a sum total cost of 140,000 Złoty. Section 18 reads:[341]

> *"4 air-tight iron* [sic] *doors, delivered by the contractor and installed with the fitter's aid, including all work involved in caulking and plasterwork."*

The original project, of which a subsequent diagram has been preserved – namely, the August 1942 diagram "Prisoner-of-war Camp Lublin. Disinfestation Facility. Building XIIA," by the Central Construction Office – shows a rectangular block 10.76 m× 8.64 m × 2.45 m in size, containing two disinfestation chambers 10 m long, 3.75 m wide and 2 m high. Each chamber has two doors 0.95 m wide and 1.8 m high, located opposite each other in such a way

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[338] *Ibid.*, p. 4.
[339] *Ibid.*, p. 2.
[340] *Ibid.*, p. 5.
[341] *Ibid.*, pp. 7f.

that each of the shorter sides of the chambers included a pair of doors 3 m apart. Above the block with the two disinfestation chambers is a similarly rectangular pole-support roof of 18 m × 60 m, which is divided down the middle into two halves of equal size, corresponding to the "contaminated" and the "clean" sections. Between the two doors of the disinfestation chamber on the smaller side of the "clean" sector, a coke-fuelled furnace is installed whose structure resembles the previously described Kori air heaters. The furnace is sunk 0.66 m; its lower part includes a trap door and a stoking door. Four steps lead down to it. Its upper part includes the pipe for exhausting the smoke. The furnace is connected to the two disinfestation chambers via two round openings of 35 cm diameter each. The latter are located sideways to the left and right of the wall dividing the two sectors, 33 cm away from this wall and 1.72 m above the floor.[342] Since the disinfestation facility was operated with hydrogen cyanide, this furnace served to heat the air and to accelerate the circulation of the air-gas mixture.

The actual construction of the facility adhered to this plan, with the exception of the heating system:[343] the central furnace described above was replaced by two air heaters manufactured by the Theodor Klein Maschinen- und Apparatebau Company, headquartered in Knollstrasse no. 26 in Ludwigshafen. The Central Construction Office had ordered it on September 11, 1942.[344] One of them was installed in front of the outside wall of the westward-facing delousing chamber described in the Soviet expert report as "Chamber III."[345]

The Klein hot-air device was a coke-fueled air heater. It consisted of a stoking system underneath a heating chamber, within which a recuperator was installed. This recuperator was composed of a number of ridged vertical heating tubes connected to the stoking chamber below and to the air exhaust above.

A blower was installed in the heating chamber, and underneath the blower, beside the heating system, was a chamber out of which the pressurized-air duct extended; in front of the blower was the opening of the intake duct, which was equipped with a flap to regulate the air flow. Both ducts – pressurized-air and intake – were 31 cm in diameter and were connected via two round openings in the wall to the chamber where the air heater was installed. The system worked as follows: the smoke from the stoking chamber flowed through the recuperator tubes, giving off some of its heat in the process, and then escaped through the chimney. If the intake was open, the air flowing through the intake duct came into contact with the hot recuperator tubes,

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[342] See Document 31.

[343] The dimensions of the various rooms were also modified slightly: the Commission speaks of 9.70 m × 3.70 m, whereas the Polish reports give the measurements as 9.27 m × 3.80 m.

[344] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 81), p. 53, his note 117.

[345] For practical reasons I have adopted the room numbering system used in the Polish-Soviet Report; the southward-facing delousing chamber is Chamber IIIa. See Table on page 124.

warmed up, and was pumped by the blower through the pressurized-air duct and into the room. In this way a constant circulation of hot air was ensured. The air heater could produce 80,000 Kcal per hour; the air temperature was 120°C. Air temperature could be regulated with the air flap as well as with suitably timed additions of fresh outside air into the circulation system.[346]

If the air temperature was kept low, the air heater served the same function as the DEGESCH circulation system for delousing with the hydrogen cyanide product Zyklon B.

Pressac believes that the second hot-air device was installed in the other delousing chamber symmetrically to the first,[347] but this hypothesis is incorrect since the east wall of this chamber,[348] which was later subdivided into two sections, bears not so much as a trace of round openings for warm-air input and circulation. We shall return to this point in Section 3. A hot-air device similar to the one just described was installed in Building 20L of the Protective Detention Camp in Auschwitz in autumn of 1942.[349]

On October 22, 1942, the Chief of the Central Contruction Office sent the SS-Economist of the Higher SS and Police Chief in the General Government a progress report about the camp's various construction projects. The work in progress for the building project Lublin POW Camp included the construction of

> *"2 delousing barracks with baths, erected partly on wooden post supports and partly on solid foundations."*

Regarding the building project of the Lublin Fur and Clothing Works, the report mentions the "construction of a disinfestation facility" among the jobs completed; the work still to be performed after November 1 included "installation of 4 disinfestation chambers."[350] The disinfestation facility in question was the one installed beside Barrack 41, with two delousing chambers, *i.e.*, Barrack XII^{A}.

From the Central Construction Office's aforementioned report about the "Completion, in %, of the Buildings on July 1, 1942," it follows that the two delousing barracks of the POW Camp Construction Project were Barracks 42 and 41. However, this document simply describes Barrack 41 as "Horse Stable Barrack with Shower Facility," which means that the delousing facility must have been set up there in the following months.

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[346] Instytut Techniki Cieplnej. *Ekspertyza dotycząca konstrukcji i przeznaczenia pieców zainstalowanych przy komorach gazowych w Obozie na Majdanku w Lublinie*, Lódz, 1968. *APMM*.

[347] See further below.

[348] Henceforth this locale will be referred to as Chamber IIIa.

[349] TCIDK, 502-1-332, p. 46.

[350] *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 8, p. 22.

The November 18, 1942, cost estimate from the Polish company Michał Ochnik, Contractor, headquartered in Sliska Street no. 6/3, Lublin, refers to this facility:[351]

"Cost Estimate

for the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police in Lublin, regarding commissions for the Fur and Clothing Works.

Brick construction of two chimneys in the gas chamber, dimensions 0.75 x 0.75 x 1.70, including cutting through the concrete ceilings.

Estimate, zl. [=Złoty] *285.00."*

The Central Construction Office accepted the company's offer, and the work was probably carried out in December. On January 8, 1943, Michał Ochnik submitted the following bill to the Central Construction Office, "for the Clothing Works of the Waffen-SS in Lublin":[352]

"Re.

For brick construction of chimney and connecting the draft pipes from two sides to the chimney in the gas chamber in the brick building. Cutting 2 openings in the concrete ceiling, brick construction of the chimney, dimensions 0.75 x 0.75 x 1.70.

Amount, Złoty 285.00.

In words: two hundred eighty-five Złoty."

In fact, the ceiling of the site mentioned still exhibits two openings 60 cm × 60 cm and 40 cm × 40 cm in size respectively, approximately 4 meters apart. According to the bill quoted, two pipes were installed in the two openings, which led to the central chimney 0.75 m in diameter and 1.70 m high.

Evidently the disinfestation facility of Building XII^{A} turned out to be insufficient for the Fur and Clothing Works' requirements, for, as mentioned previously, the Central Construction Office planned a further four disinfestation chambers for this construction project. Two civilian companies – the Lublin construction firm Michał Ochnik, which we already know, and the Warsaw firm "Polstephan" Construction Ltd. – were commissioned by the Central Construction Office with converting an existing building into a disinfestation facility. Both companies submitted a "Cost Estimate for the Construction of 4 Disinfestation Chambers in an Extant Building on the Grounds of the Former H.K.P.."[353] The text of these two cost estimates is identical, and subdivided similarly into eight paragraphs, which indicates that it was drawn up by the Central Construction Office as a sort of form, with the column "Amount" being left blank; the two companies then completed this column with their cost estimates for the work specified in each paragraph. The November 7, 1942, estimate of the Ochnik company totaled 8,855 Złoty,[354] while that of "Polste-

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[351] *Ibid.*, 145, p. 13. See Document 32.

[352] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[353] Probably *Heereskraftfahrzeugpark* – army vehicle pound.

[354] *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 145, pp. 1f.

phan," submitted on November 10, 1942, totaled 10,345 Złoty.[355] These two documents show that the four disinfestation chambers had to be outfitted with cast-iron doors, whose openings were to measure 0.83 m × 1.93 m. Each chamber had to be connected to a "disinfestation furnace," also called "gas furnace," which was protected by a projecting roof.[356] We do not know whether this set-up was ever put into effect.

Another document dating from this period is the November 12, 1942, "Registered Letter" from the Chief of the Central Construction Office to the Bernhard J. Goedecker company in Munich, touching on the "delivery of air heaters for delousing cells":[357]

> *"With reference to the letter from the SS-Economist, Group C, Construction, Cracow, please find enclosed the 3 requested waybills for shipment of the 10 coal-fueled air heaters for delousing cells as ordered by the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office Berlin.*
>
> *The Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Lublin asks that you please proceed with shipment immediately upon receipt of the waybills, as these materials are urgently needed here."*

The surviving documents do not allow any conclusions regarding which delousing cells these ten air heaters were destined for. All we know is that another two delousing barracks were planned for the Women's Camp. Their construction had been ordered on October 29, 1942, by the Chief of *Amtsgruppe* C of the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office, SS-*Brigadeführer* and Major General of the Waffen-SS Kammler. The Women's Camp was to be set up "on the grounds of the Clothing Works of the Waffen-SS Lublin."[358] Building IX of the Women's Camp was to accommodate these two delousing facilities, whose cost had been estimated at RM 45,000.[359] The project encountered serious difficulties and remained "on paper only" for fully nine months. In fact, the Chief of the Central Construction Office did not even send the "outline proposal for the construction of a Women's Concentration Camp" to the SS-Economist of the SS and Police Chiefs in the General Government until July 10, 1943.[360] Only two of the documents enclosed with this letter have been preserved. "Construction Notice A" defines the camp's purpose as "housing for female inmates to be employed in the armaments factories" and refers to the list of buildings confirmed on November 20, 1942, by the Chief of the Central Construction Office, including Building IX with "2 delousing bar-

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[355] *Ibid.*, pp. 5f.
[356] *Ibid.*, Sections 1, 3, 4 and 7.
[357] *Ibid.*, 12, p. 85.
[358] *Ibid.*, 95, p. 3. Letter from Kammler to the Higher SS and Police Chief in the General Government, SS-Economist Building Group.
[359] *Ibid.*, p. 8. Building distribution for the establishment of a Women's Camp in Lublin, drawn up on November 20, 1942 by the Chief of the Central Construction Office.
[360] *Ibid.*, 96, p. 2.

racks."[361] The "Explanatory Report on the Construction of a Women's Concentration Camp for 5,000 Inmates in Lublin" contains a precise description of the individual buildings. Regarding Building IX it states:[362]

> *"Building IX – 2 Delousing Chambers.*
>
> *2 RAD* [Reich Labor Service] *barracks are set up and subdivided into disinfestation chambers for purposes of delousing the newly arrived inmates and for keeping articles of clothing clean. Equipment is provided by Amt BII but must be paid for from here. The foundation is a piling support. Exterior walls are similar to those of the other barracks."*

Therefore it is certain that the aforementioned 10 air heaters were not intended for the Women's Camp. According to Zofia Murawska, this was put into service on October 1, 1942, on Compound V of the Majdanek camp; two months later the women interned there were transferred to a new Women's Camp, which was being built approximately 500 m distant from Majdanek on the air field, but on February 22, 1943, they were again transferred, for a final time, to Majdanek.[363] It is quite possible that Barrack 28 on Intermediate Compound I was converted into a disinfestation facility for this Women's Camp; in this case it would have replaced the two delousing barracks provided for in the airfield-camp project. It is also conceivable that it was divided into smaller subsections for this disinfestation facility, and that the 10 air heaters were intended for these; however, the description given by the Polish-Soviet Commission, and especially its sketch of this facility,[364] is more indicative of a drying facility for the Laundry than of a delousing installation, since the air heaters were connected to the respective barrack subsections via only a single pipe – which means that they were not intended to provide circulation of hot air but only the constant input thereof: the hot air entered from the air heater and exited through the small opening in the ceiling. The air-tight lid[365] made it possible to keep the hot air in the sub-chambers longer while the air heaters were off, for example when clothes were being dried overnight. The Polish-Soviet Commission partially confirms this interpretation: on its sketch of Majdanek it describes the barrack containing "gas chambers" V and VI as "*suschilka*" – drying facility.

Łukaszkiewicz has published an undated sketch titled "Project for the Irrigation, Drainage and Water Supply Installation in the Building of the Gas Facility in Lublin,"[366] showing eight "gas chambers for Cyklon hydrocyanic acid" and six "gas chambers for Ventox";[367] it also shows a set-up for heating

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[361] *Ibid.*, pp. 10f.
[362] *Ibid.*, p. 14.
[363] Zofia Murawska, "Kobiety w obozie koncentracyjnym na Majdanku," in: *ZM,* IV, 1969, pp. 94-97. Cf. the information given in this regard in Chapter I.
[364] See Documents 34 and 35.
[365] See Photograph X.
[366] See Document 33.
[367] The plan published by Łukaszkiewicz is displayed in halves, with four chambers in the mid-

water. The installation designed by the Ludwig Rechkemmer company in Warsaw, for the "Central Construction Inspection of the Waffen-SS and Police Lublin,"[368] was never actually built.

3. Using the Gas Chambers to Kill Human Beings

In the previous section we have shown that contrary to the Polish-Soviet Commission's conclusions, the gas chambers of Majdanek were designed exclusively for purposes of hygiene and sanitation. Of course it is conceivable that they were restructured later to serve for the mass extermination of human beings. In this section we shall examine this possibility from a historical and technical perspective. In his reply to the *Leuchter Report*, Jean-Claude Pressac provided a detailed and at times quite astute analysis of the gas chambers of Majdanek,[14] which is an excellent starting point for the discussion to follow. Pressac deals with the various facilities in the chronological order of their construction. We shall subdivide his arguments into sections, captioned based on the numbering system used in the Polish-Soviet experts' report. The following table explains and summarizes this:

NUMBER	LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION	DIMENSIONS	AREA
Chamber I	Barrack 41, facility in the south-east	4.50×3.80 m²	17.1 m²
Chamber II	Barrack 41, facility in the north-east	4.50×3.80 m²	17.1 m²
Chamber III	Barrack 41, delousing chamber in the west	9.27×3.80 m²	35.2 m²
Chamber IIIa	Barrack 41, delousing chamber in the east	9.27×3.80 m²	35.2 m²
Chamber IV	Barrack 41, gas chamber beside the shower		107.7 m²
Chamber V	Barrack 28, drying facility	11.75×6.00 m²	70.5 m²
Chamber VI	Barrack 28, drying facility	11.75×6.00 m²	70.5 m²
Chamber VII	Crematorium, facility between morgue and dissecting room	6.10×5.62 m²	34.9 m²
Cell 14	Barrack 41, cell south of chambers I and III	1.80×1.30 m²	2.3 m²

a) Chambers V and VI and the "First Homicidal Gassings"

Regarding these two chambers, Pressac comments:[369]

"The first so-called homicidal gas chambers, which were allegedly set up in a wooden barrack, were located on the Intermediate Compound (a strip of land between Compounds I and II). They were near a Laundry and the first Crematorium, which was also located in a wooden barrack with concrete floor and contained two mobile single-muffle furnaces, manufactured by the Berlin firm H. Kori and

dle duplicated in both halves. Łukaszkiewicz failed to notice this anomaly, and arrived at a total of 12 Zyklon B gas chambers rather than 8; he also specified the former number in the diagram's caption.

[368] Incorrect term for the "Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Lublin."

[369] Pressac, *op. cit.* (note 14), p. VII.

heated with heavy oil (fuel oil) […]. *The two gas chambers are said to have been operated partly with HCN, partly with CO. Later, it is said, they were converted into a drying room for clothing. Today the barrack in which they were located still exists,*[370] *but it is off the route suggested to tourists. Evidently the Poles never searched for cyanide residue there.*

In its present condition, the barrack has numerous windows, which would have made any homicidal gassings impossible. What is even more significant are the reports of the former camp inmates who claim that several dozen [approximate translation of "*quelques dizaines*"] *sick inmates and emaciated 'Muslims,' of whom groups were taken to the first crematorium daily at that time, were not in fact gassed but rather killed with blows to the neck with an iron bar. Probably these two improvised gas chambers served to delouse articles of clothing with Zyklon B (HCN). The facility's proximity to the Laundry is another argument in support of this interpretation."*

As early as 1969, Józef Marszałek attempted to explain these inconsistencies. His resultant article served as the basis for Pressac's studies. Marszałek wrote:[371]

"One problem remaining to be solved is that of the location of the entire chamber complex. It is odd that the chambers were joined to the Bath and not, as in Auschwitz-Birkenau for example, to the crematoria building. The chambers adjacent to the crematorium on the so-called Intermediate Compound I were not adequate to their task since there were too many witnesses to the homicidal gassings. The Laundry, where a considerable number of people worked, was also near the crematorium; the inmates arriving on Compounds I and II could also observe the camp authorities' criminal activities. And finally, the location of the chambers near or in the crematorium could have prompted the people marked for death to revolt. On the other hand, the location adjacent to the baths and the disinfestation chambers, which actually did serve that purpose, camouflaged their true purpose much better. The procedure of cutting the hair and bathing prior to gassing had a calming effect particularly on the new arrivals. This is exactly why the entrance to the bath was labeled 'Bath and Disinfection'. The short distance between the chambers and the crematorium (150 m) ensured that no major difficulties arose during transport of the bodies to the cremation furnaces."

Pressac was completely justified in drawing radical conclusions from these rather far-fetched attempts at an explanation.[372] His arguments, which strike us as perfectly logical, can be supplemented with other, even more logical ones.

First of all, we note that the official literature does not even know the precise location of the first two alleged execution gas chambers! In his above-mentioned article, Marszałek contents himself with saying that they had been

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370 This is an error. Barrack 28 no longer exists. Presumably Pressac confused it with another.

371 Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 81), pp. 54f.

372 The 150 m distance from the alleged gas chambers would have exacerbated the problems mentioned by Marszałek: due to the proximity to Barrack 42 (delousing facility with baths), which *all* inmates taken into the camp had to go through, all new arrivals would have been potential witnesses to the homicidal gassings!

located on Intermediate Compound I; the reader is left in the dark as to anything else. In his later book *Majdanek* he touches on this matter again in his section "The Gassing of Prisoners":[373]

> *"The concrete gas chambers in Majdanek adapted for the use of Cyclone B, were opened in October 1942. Earlier, however, exploiting Auschwitz experience with the use of that gas for killing Soviet prisoners of war, gassing was begun in a makeshift chamber. Evidence thereof is offered by the efforts of the camp administration to obtain Cyclone B. On July 25, 1942, the administration applied to the Tesch und Stabenow Internationale Gesellschaft für Schädlingsbekämpfung (International Company for Pest Control), abbreviated toTesta and performing the function of an intermediary in supplying camps with poison gas, for the allotment of 1,474 cans of Cyclone B."*

In the most extensive study of Majdanek, Czesław Rajca, discussing the so-called "direct extermination" of the inmates, writes:[374]

> *"At the time the concrete* [gas] *chambers were completed – this was in October 1942 – the inmates were being murdered in a gas chamber with Zyklon B, located near the Bath*[375] *and probably* [in original: "*prawdopobnie*"] *in a barrack on Intermediate Compound I, which was also the location of the so-called small crematorium."*

As source, Rajca cites an article by Adela Toniak about the deliveries of Zyklon to the Majdanek camp,[376] but the cited page of this article merely states, without any sort of documentation:[377]

> *"The first two gas chambers of the Majdanek camp were built in 1942 on Intermediate Compound I."*

Łukaszkiewicz is the only one to have specified the exact location of these two first gas chambers. He places them in the first crematorium:[378]

> *"In May 1942, two gas chambers measuring 10 x 6 x 2 m are set up in a wooden barrack between Compounds 1 and 2. The chambers are intended for the use of Zyklon B. In June 1942 the first temporary crematorium, consisting of two separate furnaces, is set up in the same location."*

On the camp plan which is appended to this article (on an unnumbered page),[379] a barrack marked with a "J" is in fact described as *"stare krematorium i komory"* – old crematorium and (gas) chamber.

These claims are devoid of any historical foundation. As we have already shown,[380] the old crematorium was located in a barrack (later torn down)

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[373] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 209), p. 140.
[374] Rajca, "Eksterminacja bespośrednia," in: T. Mencel, *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 270.
[375] The author is confusing the Bath with the Laundry.
[376] Adela Toniak, "Korespondencja w sprawie dostawy gazu cyklonu B do obozu na Majdanku" (Correspondence Regarding the Shipment of Zyklon B Gas to the Majdanek Camp), in: *ZM,* II, 1967, pp. 129-170.
[377] *Ibid.*, p. 130.
[378] Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *op. cit.* (note 10), p. 66.
[379] See Document 6.
[380] See Chapter V.

southeast of the Laundry, while the two alleged homicidal gas chambers, according to the Polish-Soviet Commission, were located in Barrack 28, northwest, not southeast, of the Laundry. The barrack labeled "J" on the plan published by Łukaszkiewicz never had the same dimensions as the other barracks in the camp, and was only 15 m long.[381]

The evidence supporting Pressac's view is rounded off by what is perhaps an even more compelling argument:

The aforementioned October 22 report of the Chief of the Central Construction Office only mentions the construction of "2 delousing barracks with baths." These barracks, the reader will recall, were Barracks 41 and 42.[382] This means that as late as October 22 there was no gas chamber in the Barrack labeled "J," and consequently no gassings, of humans or anything else, can have taken place prior to that day. If delousing chambers were ever set up there at all, it was not until later.

Finally, where Marszałek's 'proof' is concerned, how one can conclude the existence of a *homicidal* gas chamber merely from an order for Zyklon B remains a mystery.

b) Chambers I – III

Regarding these facilities, Pressac comments:[383]

> *"The block of three homicidal gas chambers in the northeastern* [actually: northwestern[384]] *extension of Section 'Bath and Disinfection I' has undergone interior and exterior modifications which one must deconstruct in order to understand its layout and its later functions.*
>
> *Construction was begun in August 1942 and completed in September or October of that year. The block, whose intended dimensions were 10.60 x 8.64 x 2.40 m, was to contain two chambers for exterminating vermin. After completion, each measured 9.2 x 3.62 x 2.05 m inside, with a volume of 73m³.*[385] *Disinfestation was done with dry, hot air which was produced by two furnaces supplied by the Ludwigshafen firm of Theodor Klein for a total price of RM 1,400.00. One was set up along the north wall* [sic; actually: the east wall] *of the block and heated the first section (which is arbitrarily labeled 'Section A' on the accompanying sketch).*[386] *The other was installed along the south wall* [actually: the west wall] *and served to heat the second section (called 'Section B'). The temperature produced was 120 °Centigrade (the normal temperature for disinfestation in autoclaves), which re-*

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381 See Photographs III and IV.

382 This follows from the aforementioned Chief of the Central Construction Office's October 1942 report, which only mentions the construction of "2 delousing barracks with baths"; as we saw in the previous section, these were Barracks 41 and 42.

383 Pressac, *op. cit.* (note 14), pp. VII, VIII.

384 The bearings given by Pressac are wrong.

385 The two facilities originally measured 9.27 m × 3.80 m × 2 m = 70.45 m^3. The dimensions given by Pressac indicate a volume of 68.27 m^3.

386 See Document 36.

quired monitoring with a thermometer. The hot air was forced into the rooms by means of ventilators (one per furnace).

The block was at ground level. Its walls were of brick, the floor of cement and the ceiling of concrete. Each section, A and B, had two heavy, tightly sealing iron doors with peepholes in the east [actually: north] *and west* [actually: south] *end. The west* [actually: south] *doors also had an opening where a thermometer could be inserted to check the temperature. The doors had been supplied by the Berlin firm Auert. The block, as well as the northeastern* [actually: northwestern] *extensions of the two 'Bath and Disinfection' barracks were protected against the elements by a large pole-support roof, 60 x 18 m in size and 4 or 5 m above the ground. At that time the facility was used for nothing other than disinfesting clothing with 120°C hot air, to which the clothing was exposed for half an hour. The pole-support roof made it possible to carry clothing back and forth between the block and the two barracks without exposing it to rain and snow. In the configuration they were in at that time, Sections A and B can be compared to two enormous autoclaves.*

Either because touching the doors, which were still blazing hot after a disinfestation cycle, was no doubt problematic, or because the furnaces failed to produce the desired temperature, this technique was abandoned, and replaced with clothing disinfestation with hydrogen cyanide gas (Zyklon B). The furnace mechanism was simplified to match the new method, since 30°C sufficed to effect the vaporization of the hydrogen cyanide gas. Therefore, the blowers were dismantled.[387] *A man wearing a gas mask placed the Zyklon disks or granules on the floor of the chambers, and the doors were closed. After the product had served its purpose, the rooms were ventilated naturally, by opening the eastern* [actually: the northern] *and the western* [actually: the southern] *doors, which caused a cross-draft. The service personnel then either had to leave the building until ventilation was complete, or to resume their work wearing gas masks as soon as the gas concentration had thinned sufficiently. The fact that Sections A and B were used for disinfestation with HCN is readily proved by the phenomenon of the 'blue walls' (Prussian Blue). The color is even more intense than in the Disinfestation Facilities (Buildings 5 and 6) of Birkenau because hot air was admitted directly into the rooms (rather than these merely being heated from inside, as was the case in Birkenau). The blue discoloration spread to all the dividing walls of Section A as well as to part of those of Section B."*

Pressac's interpretation lacks any and all historical foundation: as we have seen in the previous section, the delousing chambers of Barrack 41 had been designed "for the system of hydrogen cyanide disinfestation" from the start, so that the site was never converted from a hydrogen cyanide facility to a hot-air facility; if ever there was a conversion, then at most it went the other way around. We shall return to this point later.

Pressac continues:[388]

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[387] Actually this was not done until after the camp was captured, when everything that could still be used was dismantled.

[388] *Ibid.*, pp. VIII, IX.

"One last renovation of the block resulted in the creation of gas chambers in which human beings were killed with carbon monoxide. There can be no doubt at all that this set-up served criminal purposes, for CO is fatal to warm-blooded creatures – and thus also to man – but utterly useless for combating lice.

Section B was subdivided into two identical rooms, which I call B1 and B2. Only B1 had a system for introducing CO. It consists of a perforated metal pipe running along three sides of the room, 30 cm above the floor. Initially it was connected to a steel bottle containing liquid CO. An external annex was added halfway along the western [actually: southern] *side of the block. It contained two bottles of CO – the second for Section A* [=Chamber III] *– as well as a glass peephole protected by a grid. The gassing of the victims could be observed only in Room B1. No observation device was installed in Room B2. The ceiling of the two newly-created chambers each had an opening. The furnace which earlier had heated Room B* [=Chamber IIIa] *now no longer served a purpose; it was moved, and reinstalled on the south wall* [actually: east wall] *of Room C. The fact that Room B was subdivided only after it had already been used as a Zyklon B gas chamber is shown by the blue spots which cover its walls and of which one is separated into two parts by the dividing wall. The dividing wall itself has no blue discoloration.*

Regarding section A, it too had a device for distributing CO; the carbon monoxide came from the second steel bottle in the annex. The set-up consists of a pipe (of a lesser diameter than that in Room B1) running along the south wall [actually: east wall] *30 cm above the floor. On either end of the pipe the gas flowed out through the perforated metal plates affixed in the corners of the room. There were no openings in the ceiling, and it was not possible to see into this room from the adjoining one.*

It is difficult to say whether the rooms A, B1 and B2 were used as homicidal hydrogen cyanide gas chambers. This question remains open. In rooms B1 and B2, it is said, the Zyklon granules were poured in through the opening in the ceiling. As far as I know, no witness has ever claimed to have seen an SS-man climb a ladder up to the roof. In the absence of openings other than that in the ceiling, and the door, and also due to the lack of artificial ventilation, airing out these rooms measuring 36m³ each perforce took a long time.

Introducing the Zyklon B into room A posed problems which a historian at the Majdanek Museum has characterized as follows: 'The Zyklon was not thrown in through an opening in the ceiling, as in the previous chamber [B1]*, since there was no such opening. Instead, it was thrown in through the door just before the door was closed.' To be honest, it is difficult to imagine an SS man, wearing a gas mask and holding a can of Zyklon B in his hand, throwing the granules into the 30 cm headspace between his victims' heads and the ceiling (and, in the process, taking the chance of the pellets dropping outside the gas chamber) and then trying to slam the door, without this operation resulting in a desperate attempt by the victims to break out.*

For these reasons I do not believe that Section A could have served for homicidal Zyklon B gassings. In rooms B1 and B2 this seems to have been technically possible, but it is unlikely that these facilities were really used for this purpose. Rather, it seems that the SS wanted to have two different carbon monoxide gas chambers (A and B1) that could be used for different numbers of victims: Chamber

A (36m²) for groups of 250 to 350 people, Chamber B1 (18m²) for 125 to 175 people. These figures have repeatedly been mentioned by survivors giving the numerical strengths of the transports sent to the gas chambers. Finally, the openings in the ceilings of rooms B1 and B2 probably served to speed up ventilation rather than to insert the Zyklon. This interpretation goes only for Room B1. In setting up the block for homicidal purposes, B2 seems to have had only a passive purpose as 'dead space,' despite the opening in the ceiling.

During liberation, the pole-support roof which protected the block was damaged. The annex was empty. At first, Zyklon B cans had been stacked there in order to give the impression that their contents could be poured into the pipe of room B1 (instead of through the ceiling hatch). Five steel CO bottles were found in the camp. After their contents were analyzed chemically, two of them were put into the annex."

To summarize: Pressac considers it theoretically possible that Zyklon B was used to kill human beings, but he practically rules it out for Chamber III and considers it "unlikely" for Chambers I and II.

Here too we cannot help but second the French historian's expositions, and we would add another argument: if the camp authorities had wanted to use the two delousing chambers *also*, if not exclusively, for murdering people, they would have equipped both locales with an opening for introducing Zyklon B. On the other hand, the absence of an opening rules out any possibility that Chamber III was used for such a purpose – for the reasons given by Pressac. The existing openings in Chambers I[389] and II[390] are so small (26 cm × 26 cm and 29 cm × 33 cm respectively) that contrary to Pressac's opinion they could hardly have been an aid to ventilation. Furthermore, they were cut through the ceilings in a downright crude manner, especially in Chamber II where there is not even so much as a wooden frame for the hole. All indications are that these openings were hastily added for the Polish-Soviet Commission.

The following description of Chamber I by Konstantin Simonov, a correspondent for the Soviet army paper *Red Star* who visited Majdanek right after liberation, is of great interest:[391]

"But let us open the next door and enter the second disinfestation chamber, which has been built along completely different criteria. It is a square room, not much higher than two meters, and approximately 6 x 6 m in size. The walls, the ceiling, the floor – all are of gray, monotonous reinforced concrete. There is no rack for clothing such as we saw in the previous room: here, everything is bare and empty. A single large steel door hermetically seals the entrance to the room; it is closed from the outside with strong steel bolts. The walls of this reinforced-concrete crypt contain three openings: two of them are pipes entering from outside, the third is a porthole, a square little window barred by a large, thick steel grid so-

[389] See Photograph XI.
[390] See Photograph XII.
[391] C. Simonov, *op. cit.* (note 310), p. 8.

lidly anchored in the reinforced concrete. The thick glass is on the outside so that it cannot be reached through the grid."

Simonov had just left Barrack 42, which he described as follows:[391]

"Then we arrive at the chambers where the clothing taken from the inmates was disinfected. Pipes are affixed in the ceiling, and the disinfestation agent was introduced through these. *Then they were closed off, the doors were sealed airtight, and disinfestation proceeded. In fact, the barrack walls, constructed of wooden slats, and the doors, which were not lined with metal, were not nearly solid enough to have served for any purpose other than disinfesting clothing."* (Emphasis added.)

So if Simonov mentions the openings in the ceiling of the disinfestation chambers in Barrack 42, but not the opening in Chamber I which he entered immediately thereafter, this can only mean that that opening did not yet exist at the time.

To summarize: the delousing chambers of Barrack 42, which are acknowledged to have served exclusively for disinfesting clothing, had openings in the ceiling for pouring in the Zyklon B, even though such openings were not absolutely necessary (the pellets could just as well have been thrown on the floor). On the other hand, Gas Chambers I and III of Barrack 41, which allegedly served only for killing people, were not equipped with any ceiling openings for introducing Zyklon, even though such openings would have been utterly, unequivocally necessary!

The next point to examine is the alleged reconfiguration of Chambers I and III to serve as homicidal CO gas chambers. Pressac has no doubts about their use for criminal purposes, but his certainty rests on a pure hypothesis: namely, that the facilities were in fact used for CO. Actually, the Polish-Soviet Commission's allegation that these rooms were used for gassing human beings with CO is not supported by so much as a single proof. On the contrary, two arguments speak against it: the first is based on a witness statement, the second on material evidence.

First of all, as Pressac rightly points out, there were no bottles in the cell outside Chambers I and III immediately after the camp's capture – there were only cans of Zyklon B. These had been placed there by the newly liberated inmates to give the impression that people had been killed in these facilities by means of Zyklon B poured in through the pipes. We shall return to this in more detail in Section 4; for the moment, this statement will suffice.

Second, two of the five steel bottles which the Soviets found in Barrack 52 were later set up in Cell 14. According to the Polish-Soviet Commission's report, these five bottles had contained CO, but the two bottles presently stored in the cell are engraved with the label "CO_2," *i.e.*, carbon dioxide.[392] It is common knowledge that carbon dioxide is not poisonous.

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[392] *"Dr. Pater Victoria Kohlensäurefabrik Nußdorf Nr 6196 Full. 10 Kg* […] *und Fluid Warszawa Kohlensäure* […] *Fluid Warszawa Lukowski. Pleschen 10,1 kg CO_2 Gepr."* (The

These plain and simple facts permit two conclusions: if two of the five CO bottles actually contained CO_2, then for one thing it is logical to suspect that the Polish-Soviet Commission lied on this point – as it did in a number of other matters as well.[393] Second, even if the other bottles had actually contained CO, there is still no proof that the facilities in question were really used for CO and not for CO_2. This alone suffices to cast grave doubts on the alleged criminal purpose of these installations.

The Auer filter which the Commission discovered in the arsenal of chemicals closely matches the description of a CO filter, both in terms of its size as well as regarding its storage method. An expert on this subject writes:[394]

> *"A common hazard in the various filters against CO is the noticeable hygroscopicity of the adsorbing substances: This results in a modification of the distribution of the filtering and adsorbing substances in the filters, in their limited usability in damp surroundings, as well as strict measures required to conserve the filters themselves in order to prevent their premature wearing-out as a result of dampness; prior to use, the filters are stored in a hermetically sealed box."*

In the case of the filter here at issue, these rigorous measures seem to have been strictly enforced; it was stored in a hermetically sealed metal box bearing the following label:

> *"AUER, CO filter No. 09903. Not for use later than June 1944. Can be used for two years from the time of first use. No more than 40 hours total. First use:*
> *Date: Use: Hours:*
> *from: to:*
> *Note: After each use, close box tightly, top and bottom. Store in a cool dry place."*

Since the spaces for *"Date," "Use"* and *"Hours"* were blank, one can assume that the filter was unused; the camp physician, who was in charge of storing the protective gear against gas, certainly would not have permitted use of the filter without recording the required data on the label.

On the other hand, the CO filter was polyvalent in nature and offered protection from other gases as well, such as ammonia, benzol, chlorine, phosgene, sulfur dioxide, hydrogen sulfide and carbon tetrachloride. It could even be used against hydrogen cyanide: the Degea CO filter could absorb 6 grams of HCN, the Dräger CO filter 3.3 grams.[395] Thus, the mere presence of such a filter by no means proves that it was used for protection specifically against CO.

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inscriptions are only partly legible.)

[393] This suspicion is all the more well-founded in that the other three bottles are no longer to be found on the camp grounds. We do not know where they may have got to.

[394] Cap. Dott. Attilio Izzo, *Guerra chimica e difesa antigas,* Milan: Editore Ulrico Hoepli, 1935, p. 183.

[395] Ferdinand Flury, Franz Zernik, *Schädliche Gase, Dämpfe, Nebel, Rauch- und Staubarten,* Berlin: Verlag Julius Springer, 1931, p. 617.

Historically as well, Pressac's hypothesis is flawed. He believes that the installation of the pipes in Chambers I and III was the last step, after the two locales had been used first as hot-air disinfestation chambers and then as Zyklon B disinfestation chambers. Yet the pipe fixed to the east wall of Chamber III is lined in its full length by plaster that is stained an intense blue,[396] as though it had acted as a sort of catalyst for the formation of ferrocyanides. Chamber I, on the other hand, shows no traces of blue discoloration; in Chamber II, blue spots are to be found only on the east wall, between the door and the interior dividing wall in the middle as well as on the lower part of this dividing wall itself, in other words at the place where the pipe is located in the adjoining room.[397]

From this we may conclude that HCN was used in Chamber III *after* the pipe was installed, while HCN was never used at all in Chamber IIIa: the spots of Prussian Blue are too small and are evident only in a few places in Chamber II, so that what we are seeing here is no doubt the phenomenon of diffusion of Prussian Blue, or rather its precursors, similar to that which caused the formation of ferrocyanide stains on the exterior of the north wall.[398] Chamber IIIa was subdivided into Chambers I and II even before the disinfestation facility was brought into service, which follows from the fact that the planned air heater was not installed.

All these points go to show that Pressac's hypothesis of the criminal use of these facilities proceeds from false premises, and is inadmissible from a purely technical perspective as well:

Even though they had two *real* hydrogen cyanide gas chambers which could have been converted to homicidal execution gas chambers merely by adding ceiling openings for the introduction of the Zyklon B, the SS allegedly hurried to install a method of gassing with CO – whatever for? If, as we are told, homicidal gassing with Zyklon B worked perfectly in Auschwitz, then why should the would-be murderers in Majdanek need to resort to CO?

From a technical perspective, Pressac's explanation – the subdivision of Chamber IIIa into two rooms to serve as gas chambers, one of which (measuring 17.1m²) was used to gas groups of 125-175 people, while the other (35.2m²) was used for groups of 250-350[399] – is quite nonsensical. Not only would such a strategy have brought no advantages (groups of 125 to 175 victims could very well also have been murdered in the larger chamber, without any noteworthy additional usage of gas), it would also have added considerable difficulty to the gassing process. For one thing, the dividing wall inhibited

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396 See Photograph XIII.

397 See Photograph XIV.

398 This is even more noticeable on the outside walls of the disinfestation chambers of Buildings 5a and 5b in Birkenau.

399 In both cases, for the facilities mentioned, Pressac inexplicably assumes a maximum capacity of 9.72 people per square meter! In comparison, the Polish-Soviet Commission contented itself with 6 victims per square meter.

the natural ventilation of Chambers I and II, which would have resulted from opening the doors on opposite sides of the room. For another, as Pressac himself conceded, Chamber II was reduced to a mere "dead space."

The small window in the south wall of Chamber I poses further insoluble problems. In its present state, it is protected by a grate, but there is no way to seal it hermetically.[400] After the capture of the camp, as both Simonov and the Polish-Soviet Commission report, it had a glass pane on the observer side in Cell 14. If this is correct, then the pane had not been initially installed, but rather was merely inserted into the window, for this window has no permanent frame or even fixative clamps for a frame. Thus, not only could the pane not be hermetically sealed, it could even be removed. Further, since the wall is only about 40 cm thick, the victims could easily have smashed it, since it is possible to pass a hand through the grate. And finally, if the point of the window had been to permit observation of the gassing victims, there is no indication why it should have been required for Chamber I but not for Chamber III.

Thus, we may rule out the use of CO. What remains to be explained is why the facility was altered at all. Given the lack of documents, we must make do with another hypothesis, albeit one far more plausible than Pressac's. Based on the fact that the two bottles contained CO_2, and considering the time during which the alteration was performed, the following explanation seems the most likely:

As of July 1942 the camp's 'natural' mortality increased steadily, so that September already saw 2,431 deaths; in October this figure skyrocketed again, to 3,210.[401] The "old crematorium" existing at that time only had two (oil-fueled) furnaces which could no longer handle the increasing number of bodies. Added to this was the lack of fuel oil which, as the supervisor of the crematorium SS-*Oberscharführer* Erich Mußfeldt reported, ultimately resulted in the crematorium being closed in November 1942; admittedly this is contradicted by the Krone Report, according to which the facility was still operating in January 1943.[402] As an aside, the Mortuary, Building XIV,[403] was a semi-underground barrack of modest size, measuring only 11.50 m × 6.50 m,[404] and could hold only a limited number of bodies. Faced with this alarming situation, the Central Construction Office decided to convert the disinfestation facility beside Barrack 41 into two additional mortuaries, one of which (Chamber III) was temporary and the other (Chamber I) permanent. Thanks to the

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[400] See Photograph XV.
[401] See Chapter IV.
[402] See Chapter V.
[403] On July 1, 1942, work on this building was already 70% complete. *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 8, p. 3.
[404] These dimensions follow from the corresponding plan: Lublin POW Camp, Mortuary, Bldg. XIV, scale 1:100. *Ibid.*, 47, p. 14.

pipes, hooked up to two bottles of CO_2, both rooms could be cooled[405] to the desired temperatures.[406] Further, CO_2 has the ability to considerably retard oxidation processes and thus also the rate of decomposition of dead bodies.

When it was not required as temporary mortuary, Chamber III could be returned to its original purpose, namely HCN disinfestation, to which the strip of ferrocyanide pigment on the east wall along the entire length of the pipe bears telling witness.

As for the little window in the south wall of Chamber I, when the bodies had to be removed it could have aided in airing out the locale, since the glass pane could be taken out. But there is nothing to prove that it already existed at the time the pipes were installed in Chambers I and III. Since Chambers I and III lost their auxiliary function as mortuaries when the new crematorium was opened in January 1944, they were no doubt assigned a new function. Given the chronic shortage of Zyklon B, Chamber III was probably used as a hot-air disinfestation chamber, which also made use of the air heater. Chamber I could well have been used as a storeroom for materials that required visual monitoring, for example weapons and ammunition.

c) Chamber IV

Pressac writes:[407]

> *"The sixth gas chamber (labeled C) is in the 'Bath and Disinfection I' barrack, which was used primarily for showering. This locale is in the farthest northeast* [actually: north] *part of the building, beside the Shower. In the 1950s and 60s this proximity resulted in some unfortunate confusion because at that time the Shower itself was often portrayed as a homicidal gas chamber in which the poison came through the shower heads. Locale C has a surface area of 75m², a height of 2.90 m and a volume of 217m³. It was closed with two tight wooden doors (the model was similar to that used in the cells of Auschwitz-Birkenau). There were two openings in the ceiling; two more were in the south wall* [actually: east wall]*, where a solid window at eye level lit the room. After the delousing block was renovated as a homicidal gas chamber, the furnace of Room B was reassigned to Room C and reinstalled on the south wall* [actually: east wall]*. The fact that Room C was used intensively for delousing with hydrogen cyanide is shown by the unusually strong blue discoloration of its walls.*
>
> *That this facility could have been used for homicidal purposes is conceivable only with two prerequisites: the removal of the window, which the victims would immediately have broken, and the installation of a mechanical ventilation system. After the delousing cycle, opening the two doors could have produced a cross-draft which would have spread gaseous poison to other parts of the barrack. For this reason it was vitally important to keep the door leading to the Shower closed. If ventilation had been restricted only to the two upper openings and the door, it*

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[405] The expansion of compressed and liquefied gases causes a decrease in ambient temperature.
[406] The door of Chamber III has an opening where a thermometer could be inserted.
[407] Pressac, *op. cit.* (note 14), p. IX.

would have taken a long time and been quite inefficient. If both doors were kept closed, the room could be aired out by pumping hot air into it (with the furnace's blower). This made the hydrogen cyanide gas lighter than air and thus able to escape through the two ceiling openings, after which it dissipated in the atmosphere. After a short time the remaining concentration of HCN was low enough that the two doors could be safely opened, whereupon the resultant cross-draft dispersed the last traces of the gas and cooled the facility. Therefore, Locale C served as a clothing delousing facility.

It could have become a most 'efficient' homicidal gas chamber if the window had been removed. Whether or not this window existed at the time of Majdanek's liberation is the deciding factor in the question of whether the locale could have been used to gas human beings; since I do not know the answer to this point, I must reserve judgement."

As we have seen in the previous section, Barrack 41 was originally constructed as a humble *"horse stable barrack with shower,"* which was the function it still served on July 1, 1942. If one compares a sketch of its final state with the original plan for Barrack 42 ("Temporary Delousing Facility for Prisoner-of-war Camp Lublin" of March 31, 1942), one comes to the conclusion that the latter, except for the central portion that was used for delousing, was originally designed as the mirror image of the former and was to include the following sections (from north to south): Landing/Entrance, Registration, Hair cutting, Undressing room, Shower, Dressing room, Landing/Exit. This is also confirmed by the fact that the four main sections of the two buildings – Vestibule/Undressing room, Shower/Clothing return, Boiler room, Dressing room – have virtually identical measurements:

Entrance	Showers	Boiler house	Dressing Room (Barrack 42)
13.5 m	13.5 m	4.5 m	9.0 m
Undressing room		Clothing distribution (Barrack 41)	
13.5 m	13.7 m	4.5 m	9.2 m

In late September or early October 1942 a hydrogen cyanide gas chamber was set up in Barrack 41, with an air heater joined to the east wall. Work was completed on October 22, and the locale was called "Delousing barrack with bath." The area which had previously served as an undressing room was used as a gas chamber, without any extensive architectural modifications, which proves that it was a temporary facility. Chamber IV as it appears today has a very irregular shape, with two corners closed in on three sides (and therefore very difficult to ventilate) as well as an interior room equally difficult to air out. This room, which corresponds in mirror image to the haircutting room in Barrack 42, would have to have had a gas-tight door; it is a fact that it has blue spots on the ceiling and also on the plaster of the north wall. Similar spots are also to be found on the plaster of the south wall, in Chamber IV. Even more distinct blue spots appear on the plaster of the east wall, in the vestibule area.

Probably this gas chamber was difficult to air out, since the Central Construction Office decided to install a ventilation chimney on the roof, for which purpose it turned to the Polish company Michał Ochnik which we have already encountered. The pertinent cost estimate of November 18, 1942, provided for the construction of two chimneys 0.75 m × 0.75 m × 1.70 m in size, with holes to be cut through the concrete ceiling. However, according to the invoice of January 8, 1943, only one chimney was actually built on the roof of the gas chamber; this chimney was connected "to 2 openings in the concrete ceiling via pipes on two sides." There is no doubt that this was a ventilation system; this already follows clearly from the fact that the two openings in the gas chamber roof were installed along the extended axis of the air heater intake duct.

The gas chamber was not intended for homicidal purposes:

For one thing, the chimney as it is described on the aforementioned invoice from the Michał Ochnik company could not have been used to introduce Zyklon B, because the HCN-soaked pellets would have landed on the floor of the chimney without getting into the two parallel pipes in the concrete ceiling. For another, while the gas-proof door on the south side (leading into the Shower) is closed from the outside,[408] the one opposite it, on the north side, is closed from inside.[409] This means that the disinfector who had to distribute the Zyklon B had to enter the area wearing a gas mask, close the north-side door, pour the Zyklon out of the can, leave the room through the south door, and close it from the Shower. In a homicidal gassing scenario it would not have been possible to open the north-side door due to the piles of bodies blocking it from within. Given Pressac's postulated number of victims per square meter, 520 to 729 people would have been gassed at one time in this 75m² (or 72.2m², according to the Polish-Soviet Commission) large room! But if only one of the two doors could be opened, ventilation would have taken forever.

Today, the two openings in the room's ceiling measure approximately 60 cm × 60 cm (eastern opening)[410] and 40 cm × 40 cm (western opening).[411] Both hatches open into a wooden shaft in which a small chimney of wooden slats is installed; it is closed off with a lid, also of wood, on the barrack roof. Measured from the room's ceiling, the two chimneys are approximately 1.15 m tall. Except for their size, their present condition reflects the project outlined in the cost estimate of November 18, 1942, meaning that the actual, original structure must have been altered later. This also follows from the fact that, in the room's interior, the wooden frames surrounding the openings interrupt the spots of Prussian Blue on the ceiling plaster. The plaster in many places

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[408] See Photographs XVI and XVIa.
[409] See Photograph XVII.
[410] See Photograph XVIII.
[411] See Photograph XIX.

around the frame was renewed, which is evident from its clean white color. And finally, not even the faintest trace of blue discoloration is evident on the frames themselves – quite unlike the window frames.[412] This proves conclusively that the frames were installed at a time when Zyklon was no longer being used in this room. The presence of blue spots on the window frame, on the other hand, shows that this window already existed *before* the camp was overrun. Therefore Pressac's question, on which he hinges his verdict about the possibility of execution gassings in this room, is answered.

It is possible that the reasons for the modifications described were that the use of Zyklon B was discontinued and that delousing in Chamber IV was continued with hot air, for which purpose the air heater behind the east wall was used.

This hypothesis is supported by the constant shortage of Zyklon B, which was a severe hardship for the camp especially in the summer of 1943. At that time a devastating typhus epidemic was raging in Majdanek, and enormous quantities of Zyklon were needed "to disinfect the camp."[413] The modifications described were most likely done during this time: since the meager quantities of Zyklon which the camp received were used to disinfest the barracks, the hydrogen cyanide disinfestation chambers III and IV were converted to hot-air delousing chambers.

This hypothesis, which explains the modifications of Chambers III and IIIa, also permits an explanation for the set-up of Chamber IV. During the construction of the disinfestation facility, which had actually been intended for the Fur and Clothing Works, the Central Construction Office decided to use two rooms in the facility as additional mortuaries – one (Chamber I) permanently, the other (Chamber III) temporarily[414] – which meant that the original Chamber IIIa could no longer be used for Zyklon B delousing. To make up for this loss, and to come up with a replacement for Chamber III which at times could not be used, another (temporary) hydrogen cyanide delousing chamber was installed at that time in Barrack 41; the surface area of this chamber corresponded more or less to those of Chambers III and IIIa. From an administrative and technical perspective, this was part of the Fur and Clothing Works, even if it did happen to be located in a building which was part of the POW camp construction project. Barrack 41 was chosen as site for the gas chamber because the disinfected clothing could easily be moved from there into the "clean" sector, under the protective roof located above the original disinfestation facility. Subsequently the Fur and Clothing Works were assigned a

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[412] See Photograph XX. This was pointed out by C. Mattogno after his first visit to Majdanek in July 1992. Cf. the discussion by G. Rudolf, whom Mattogno gave access to his documents, in his article, *op. cit.* (note 15).

[413] See Chapter VIII.

[414] Of course these two mortuaries became superfluous when the new crematorium was completed.

permanent installation in the form of a four gas chamber delousing facility, which had already been designed on October 22, 1942, and which figured in the two cost estimates of November 7 and 10 of that year.

We remind the reader of SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Krone's January 20, 1943, report about the camp's "sanitary facility," in which Krone noted that the extant delousing, disinfection and bathing facilities sufficed for the time being but would no longer be adequate for the increase in population that was expected, which was why three larger disinfection facilities would shortly be shipped to Lublin.[415]

This document shows that the camp administration's interests were in disinfestation facilities, not in gas chambers with which to murder people. The same goes for SS-*Untersturmführer* Birkigt's report which also touches on the inmates' physical cleanliness and on the disinfestation facilities.[415]

d) Chamber VII

Here too we shall begin with a quote from Pressac:[416]

> *"The seventh alleged execution gas chamber is located in the new crematorium, in which a massive complex of five Kori single-muffle furnaces is installed which could cremate approximately 300 (or 1,000, according to official sources) bodies per day in a 24-hour operation.*[417] *The acting Director of the* [Majdanek] *Museum has informed this author that this gas chamber saw only little – really very, very little – use, which means, plainly speaking, that it was not used at all. This fiction is maintained in order to preserve the popular belief that a crematorium must necessarily have included a gas chamber (as for example the crematoria of Auschwitz-Birkenau).*
>
> *Aside from this verbal information, the existence of a gas chamber is not alleged in any description of the interior features of the new crematorium, and with good reason, for the German plan of the building labels the room in question as a mortuary.*
>
> *If anyone had wanted to kill human beings with Zyklon B in this locale, its enclave-like location inside the building – between the autopsy room, a corridor and the funeral parlor – would perforce have required an artificial ventilation system, of which, however, there is not a trace to be found. If one assumes natural ventilation by means of cross-draft, the entire crematorium would have to have been completely evacuated for a period whose duration is difficult to estimate."*

Pressac is quite correct. This may be seen from the plan of the crematorium which the Polish-Soviet Commission drew up after an inspection of the facilities,[418] and it also becomes apparent from first-hand examination of the "murder site." Chamber III, the room called the "gas chamber" (*"komora gazo-*

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415 See Chapter III.
416 Pressac, *op. cit.* (note 14), p. IX.
417 The actual capacity was perhaps one hundred bodies per day; see Chapter V.
418 See Document 25.

wa"), is indeed located between the pre-dissection room (Locale 6) and the mortuary (Locale 4).

We would add the following observations of our own:

a) The walls of the room in question show not even the slightest trace of Prussian Blue;
b) The Polish-Soviet Commission did not see fit to mention the opening (26 cm × 26 cm) cut through the ceiling, whereas it certainly did consider those in Chambers I, II, IV, V and VI worthy of note. The opening in the room in question was added after the fact, in an extremely crude manner; the person/s making this alteration could not even be bothered to trim back the iron bars in the reinforced-concrete ceiling and to install a wooden chimney with a lid,[419] such as in Chamber IV. Since the ceiling is 2.2 m above the floor, this would have resulted in the same problems during a homicidal gassing as Pressac indicates for Chamber III.
c) Two open peepholes are located in the dividing wall to the mortuary.[420] The Polish-Soviet Commission discovered no mechanism with which to close them, so there surely was no such thing when the camp was captured. Therefore, the gas would have spread to the mortuary and the incineration chamber during execution gassings.

The Commission was determined to find an execution gas chamber in the new crematorium at any cost, for if the camp administration had indeed planned a mass extermination of inmates, the sequence "gas chamber – mortuary – incineration chamber" would have been the most logical. Even though the new crematorium was constructed at a time when the gassings were allegedly already in full swing, the administration did not plan for any gas chamber for this building at all, neither for murder nor for disinfestation. And as if that were not enough: even though the camp administration had already planned the installation of a Kori furnace with five muffles at a time where according to Polish historiography the camp was not yet even supposed to become a death factory, the plans for precisely this Kori furnace were maintained unchanged after Majdanek's alleged conversion into a death camp, with not so much as a thought being given to increasing its cremation capacity! This proves conclusively that the camp administration did not foresee the enormous increase in mortality which a mass extermination would have involved.

Incidentally, in his report which we have already quoted several times, SS-*Untersturmführer* Birkigt clarified the direct relationship of the crematorium to the sanitary conditions in Majdanek by commenting, with regard to its expansion in order to take in up to 25,000 inmates:[421]

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[419] See Photograph XXI.
[420] See Photograph XXII.
[421] See Chapter III.

"It seems important that the infirmary should receive its own disinfection facility, and that the crematorium also be transferred into the infirmary section if possible."

4. The Gas Chambers of Majdanek in Revisionist Literature

As we have noted in the introduction, the only Revisionists to have commented on the technical aspects of the alleged homicidal gas chambers of Majdanek by the mid-1990s were Fred A. Leuchter and Germar Rudolf.

On the occasion of his visit to Majdanek on March 2, 1988,[422] Leuchter examined the new crematorium as well as the facilities known as "Bath and Disinfection I" in Barrack 41. He subsequently drew up his well-known Report in which he concluded that the facilities mentioned were "not suitable […] for execution purposes,"[423] *i.e.*, could not have been used to kill human beings. To support his thesis, Leuchter produces a number of arguments which Pressac assesses as follows:[424]

"Here, Leuchter's historical incompetence becomes perfectly clear. […] *After the only scientific element of his investigation was omitted,*[425] *Leuchter further dilutes the value of his comments by basing them on the current state of the facilities without taking into account the changes which were made to the buildings since liberation in order to protect them from the harmful effects of weathering. Leuchter stubbornly insists on his erroneous calculations, and has the crematoria explode as soon as he suspects the use of hydrogen cyanide in a morgue. Furthermore, he has neglected to make a complete visit to the camp, failing to pay any attention to one of the three gas chambers of the block in the north-east* [actually: north] *section of Barrack 41 (Bath and Delousing I). He has also neglected to study the model of the camp which would have enabled him to understand the original layout of the facilities he was to 'expertly assess'. He failed to consider the mobile Kori furnace (one of the two such furnaces in the first crematorium), which today is located in Barrack 50 of the Memorial Site. Since Leuchter's comments on the gas chambers and the new crematorium of Majdanek are negatively influenced by these omissions, errors, and oversights, they have lost any serious foundation and are devoid of value."*

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[422] The date is given by Leuchter himself in his article "The Leuchter Report: The How and the Why." This article was published in *The Journal of Historical Review*, no. 2, 1989, pp. 135-137.

[423] Fred A. Leuchter, *op. cit.* (note 13), 12.002.

[424] Pressac, *op. cit.* (note 14), p. VII.

[425] This refers to samples of mortar taken from the brickwork of the facilities described as gas chambers. Leuchter was able to take such samples in Auschwitz I and Birkenau, but not in Majdanek.

Pressac's criticism is thoroughly justified. Leuchter claims that in the new crematorium "the furnaces are the only portion of the original facility which has not been rebuilt."[423] If this were the case, it would mean that even the alleged gas chamber was reconstructed later, which is not so. Further, he believes that in a gassing scenario using Zyklon B in such a place, the gas would have reached the furnaces, killed the operating personnel, and caused an explosion that leveled the building,[423] which is technically impossible.[426]

Leuchter dismisses the possibility that Barrack 42 could have been used for criminal purposes – which no one has ever claimed anyhow. He reasons:[427]

> *"For Bath and Disinfection #2, although closed, an inspection through the windows confirms its function was only a delousing facility, similar to those at Birkenau."*

In fact, a look in through the windows permits no such conclusion.

Regarding Chamber IV, Leuchter notes the Prussian Blue on the walls and ceilings and hypothesizes that this might have been a *"delousing room or storage room for deloused materials,"* but categorically dismisses the possibility that it was an execution chamber.[428] The arguments he cites to support his thesis – lack of a chimney for ventilation, inadequate air circulation system, lack of air-tight gasketing of the doors – are not sound, for if this were the case, no Zyklon B could have been used in this facility at all, neither for execution nor for delousing. This in turn contradicts Leuchter's own statement that it might have been a delousing room, and is also disproved by the presence of the blue splotches that clearly indicate an intensive use of Zyklon B in this chamber.

In his discussion of Chamber III (which he calls #1), Leuchter advances even more implausible arguments. Though he certainly did notice the "characteristic blue ferric-ferro-cyanide staining" of the walls,[429] he claims that this chamber was not designed to be used with HCN[430] and rules out its use not only for homicidal purposes but even as a simple delousing chamber.[431] But then what could explain the Prussian Blue on the walls? According to Leuchter, Chamber III could not even have been used for gassings with carbon monoxide since it would have been necessary "to pump in 4,000 parts per million (the lethal concentration) at a pressure of 2.5 atmospheres."[430] Technically, this is nonsense.[432]

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[426] Regarding the explosiveness of hydrogen cyanide gas, cf. Carlo Mattogno, *Olocausto: dilettanti allo sbaraglio,* Salerno: Edizioni di Ar, 1996, pp. 212-215.
[427] Leuchter, *op. cit.* (note 13), 17.001.
[428] *Ibid.*, 12.003 and 17.002.
[429] *Ibid.*, 17.004.
[430] *Ibid.*, 12.005.
[431] *Ibid.*, 17.005.
[432] One atmosphere corresponds to a pressure of 10,333 kg/m^2, 2.5 atmospheres to 25,825 kg/m^2. Therefore, the pressure exerted on each of the two doors of Chamber III (their surface area was 1.90m^2) would have been approximately 49,000 kg, which would simply have blasted them off their hinges!

Elsewhere, contradicting his own statements, Leuchter writes that this same room "is operational for carbon monoxide."[430]

For Chamber I (which he calls #2), Leuchter considers that homicidal gassings with carbon monoxide would have been impossible because "the piping is incomplete" and "the vent has never been opened in the roof."[431] The first argument is unclear, and the second is unfounded since the current roof was built after the end of the war.

Superficiality and ignorance of the historical starting point also mark the following comments about the block consisting of Chambers I, II and III, surrounded by a rainwater drainage ditch:[433]

> *"A special characteristic of this complex is a depressed concrete walkway surrounding the chambers outside, on three sides. This is completely at odds with an intelligent handling of gas, since gas seepage would collect in this depressed ditch and, being protected against the wind, would not disperse. This would have made the entire area a death trap, especially given the use of HCN."*

In actual fact this drainage ditch was built in response to a 1965 technical expert report by the engineer and architect T. Makarski in order to protect the delousing facility's foundations from dampness.[434] Of course one cannot expect Leuchter to have known this, but his argument is untenable in chemical and technical respects as well: since HCN disperses readily, it is hard to see how such a ditch could have posed a danger.

Unlike Leuchter, Germar Rudolf never personally visited the alleged extermination facilities of Majdanek, and his critical analysis is partly based on photographs which we took in July 1992 and later put at his disposal. Rudolf published five of them in his article.[435] In his "Critique of the Accounts"[436] he also gave a schematic summary of some of the observations we made about our first visit to the camp, and in doing so added the occasional error. He gave particular attention to the retroactive addition of two openings in the ceiling of Chamber IV, which we had stressed, to the blue pigmentation of the window frame in the same room, and to the label "CO_2" on the steel bottles in Cell 14.

Rudolf supplements these arguments with others which, however, pertain not to impossibilities but mere improbabilities, and some of these are historically inapplicable. For example, he writes:

> *"Marszałek recounts the Lublin Town Council's unsuccessful attempt to prevent the Majdanek Camp Administration from connecting the concentration camp to the town gas mains of Lublin. Thus, the camp had access to the highly toxic and CO-rich town gas, at a price of only a few pfennigs* [cents] *per cubic meter. Under these conditions, mass gassings with costly bottled CO are not believable."*

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[433] *Ibid.*, 12.006; retranslation from the German edition.

[434] T. Makarski, *Orzeczenie techniczne sposobu zabezspieczenia i konserwacji* (Technical Report on the Manner of Protection and Conservation), June 1965, p. 4. *APMM*, Pracownie Konserwacji i Zabytków, No. zlec. 8735/W-1.

[435] *Op. cit.* (note 15), Photographs 13 on p. 276 and 14 through 17 on p. 278.

[436] *Ibid.*, pp. 277f.

But Rudolf evidently misread. Marszałek did not speak of the camp being connected to the municipal gas mains, but to the municipal sewer system.[437]

Rudolf's subsequent argument is also based on a misunderstanding:

> *"The installation of hot-air blowers which allegedly blew hot air of 250 °F into the chambers indicates that Rooms A and B were hot-air delousing chambers. Nobody would outfit an execution gas chamber with CO ducts for murder with carbon monoxide and hot-air blowers for murder with hot air and Zyklon B input holes for murder with hydrocyanic acid, to inflict upon his victims three kinds of death at once."*

As we have shown in Section 2, Chambers A and B (=IV and V) were not designed as hot-air delousing chambers, but as Zyklon B gas chambers. No one has ever claimed that the two air heaters connected to these locales were used to murder people with hot air; rather, they clearly served to accelerate the evaporation of the hydrogen cyanide in Zyklon B delousings. Where Chamber III is concerned, speaking from a purely theoretical perspective there is no reason why a HCN gassing facility could not be replaced with a facility for CO (or vice versa); besides, this locale has no input hatch.

Rudolf's following hypothesis is possible, though rather unlikely:

> *"There were in fact some delousing methods where the gas was introduced via pressure cylinders (e.g. SO_2). What is more, in a delousing chamber a window would not have been a problem."*

In this case, the most effective kind of bottled gas would have been T-gas, a mix of approximately 10 parts ethylene oxide and 1 part carbonic acid, bottled and delivered in steel cylinders. The steel cylinders could be filled by first using one bottle ethylene oxide and then two bottles CO_2, as per the model illustrated by Lenz and Gassner.[438] Since there was, after all, at least one bottle of CO_2 in the camp, this would also be a compelling explanation for the pipes installed in Chambers I and III – if there were not compelling chronological reasons why this cannot be the case.

Rudolf's most important argument is of a chemical nature:

> *"Finally, one must ask what might be the explanation for the high levels of cyanide present in the walls of Rooms A and B (Ill. 12), which are also readily apparent visually from the blue staining we have already encountered in the delousing chambers of Birkenau. There are two possible explanations:*
>
> *a) The residue is the result of the few execution gassings with Zyklon B which are postulated for these chambers today. If this is the case, then the only explanation for the absence of any such residue in Auschwitz would be that no gassings took place there. All eyewitness testimony telling of homicidal gassings in these rooms in Auschwitz would therefore be false. This begs the question why the identical eyewitness testimony regarding Majdanek should then be true.*

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[437] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 209), p. 35.

[438] Otto Lenz, Ludwig Gassner, *Schädlingsbekämpfung mit hochgiftigen Stoffen,* issue 2: Aethylenoxyd (T-Gas). Berlin: Verlagsbuchhandlung Richard Schoezt, 1934, pp. 17-19.

b) The residue is the result of disinfestations with Zyklon B. Therefore these rooms are not execution gas chambers for human beings, but rather delousing chambers. In other words, the witnesses for Majdanek did not tell the truth. This in turn begs the reciprocal question, why the witnesses should then have told the truth for Auschwitz."

Rudolf concludes:[439]

"If the execution gas chambers of Majdanek existed, then those of Auschwitz cannot have existed, for the Iron Blue which one finds in Majdanek is absent in Auschwitz. But if there were no homicidal gas chambers in Auschwitz, in other words if all the eyewitness testimony affirming them is false, then who or what is there to prove the homicidal gas chambers of Majdanek existed at all?

And vice versa: if the execution gas chambers of Auschwitz existed, then those of Majdanek cannot have existed, for the Iron Blue which one finds in Majdanek could then only be explained by delousing chambers. But if there were no homicidal gas chambers in Auschwitz, in other words if all the eyewitness testimony affirming them is false, then what is there to prove the homicidal gas chambers of Auschwitz existed at all?"

But this seemingly flawless observation by Rudolf is undermined by the fact that a third possibility was ignored:

Since the two rooms were demonstrably designed and built as Zyklon B delousing chambers, there is no reason, *from a strictly chemical perspective,* why the Prussian Blue could not have been caused by delousing gassings *and* by homicidal gassings. If one were to proceed from this hypothesis, then *from the point of view of chemistry* homicidal gassings in Majdanek would by no means rule out the same in Auschwitz.

Of course one must not overlook the fact that media accounts in particular, and unfortunately court verdicts as well, often pretend that the descriptions and design plans of these facilities as delousing installations only served as camouflage. The historical manipulation hiding behind this strategy is aimed at preventing its consumers from coming up with the sort of critical thinking that might arise if it were generally known that Zyklon B delousing facilities were used intensively almost everywhere in the German concentration camps for the sake of protecting the inmates. In this respect, Rudolf's provocative thesis, which stands in stark contrast to the one-sided accounts of the media and all too often also of the legal system[440] and of science and academia, at the very least provides food for thought and discussion.[441]

The fragile nature of Revisionist arguments as of the mid-1990s was largely due to the fact that most Revisionists had neglected the study of the Majdanek concentration camp just as the orthodox western historians have done.

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[439] G. Rudolf, E. Gauss, *op. cit.* (note 15), p. 279.

[440] For example, G. Rudolf, *ibid.*, p. 125, footnote 125, rightly points out that the defendants who testified that the alleged "gas chambers" were only delousing chambers incurred the wrath of the Court. Cf. Chapter X.2, this volume.

[441] And that was probably also its purpose; pers. comm. G. Rudolf.

Under these circumstances, the extent to which the Revisionists have dealt with such a fundamental aspect of concentration camp history must perforce be superficial, and scientifically unsatisfying.

Chapter VII: Homicidal Gassings: Genesis and Reasons for the Charge

1. Origins of the Homicidal Gassing Story

Having determined that the alleged extermination facilities in Majdanek were not technically suitable for mass destruction of human beings with poison gas, and consequently that such a mass destruction never took place, the question remaining to be answered is: how did this story come about?

To answer this, we must examine the relevant wartime sources.

In his book *Il campo della sterminio* (The Extermination Camp), which we have already quoted repeatedly, Konstantin Simonov wrote:[442]

> *"There is no doubt that rumors about the existence of the camp as such, as death camp, inevitably circulated among the inhabitants of the surrounding areas, but this did not worry the Germans. They felt quite at home in Poland. To them, the 'General Government Poland' was a region conquered for all time. Those who had remained alive within its boundaries were supposed to regard the Germans with fear, first and foremost, and for this reason the gruesome reports about the Lublin camp that made the rounds throughout Poland were almost welcomed by the Germans. On those days when mass exterminations took place, the stench of corpses spread throughout the environs of the camp; it forced the camp's inhabitants to plug their noses with handkerchiefs, and plunged the area's population into fear and terror. This was supposed to imbue all of Poland with a sense of the power of the German rulers, and of the horrors awaiting anyone who dared offer up resistance. The pillar of smoke rising for weeks, even months from the tall smokestack of the main Crematorium could be seen from afar, but the Germans did not care about this either. Just like the stench from the bodies, this horrible smoke was also used to spread terror. Many thousands of people, seeing all this, marched along the road to Chelm, and once they had passed through the gate to the Lublin camp they never returned; this too must have been an effective demonstration of the German power, which could indulge in anything it wanted without having to account to anyone."*

No doubt this lurid propaganda image[443] could have been accurate if Majdanek had really been an 'extermination camp,' especially if homicidal gassings had taken place there.

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[442] C. Simonov, *op. cit.* (note 310), pp. 12f.

[443] Elsewhere Simonov contradicts what he writes here, and claims instead (p. 16.):

> *"At night, the tractors roared in the camp; they were being run on purpose to drown out the rattle of the submachine guns and the screams of the people who were shot."*

As we have already pointed out, the entire grounds of the camp were completely open to sight, and the camp itself was surrounded by the towns Dzesiąta, Abramowice, Kosminek and Kalinowka as well as the Lublin-Chełm-Zamość-Lwów road. Any mass murders actually taking place in Majdanek could not have been kept secret, particularly – but not only – because of the steady flow of information leaving the camp on a daily basis and by various means:

- Reports by released inmates (approximately 20,000 of them!).[444] Most of these were Poles who had been arrested and sent to the camp in the course of police raids, on suspicion of being members of the Resistance. Many of these prisoners were released after a short time.
- Letters and secret messages smuggled out of the camp by the inmates (cf. Chapter III).
- Reports by the free civilian laborers employed in the camp. We have already seen in Chapter I how numerous these were in Majdanek.
- Reports by the food suppliers who came to the camp every day with their wares.

All the information obtained via these channels was collected by the local cells of the secret Polish Resistance Movement and passed on to the *Delegatura.* A few words about this:

In September 1939, Poland was overrun by German armed forces in the west and by Soviets in the east, and vanished as an independent national entity. The government went into exile in London.

An underground shadow government, subordinate to the government-in-exile in London, was set up: the *Delegatura Rządu* (stand-in government). The *Delegatura* supplied its London contacts with an unbroken flow of news about the situation in Poland. Naturally it worked closely with other illegal organizations, especially with the *Armija Krajowa* (AK, national army), *i.e.*, with the armed Resistance. Even though tens of thousands of members and helpers of the Resistance were arrested, the Germans never succeeded in completely halting its activities.

It goes without saying that the *Delegatura* took especial interest in the occupation power's concentration camps from the start, and strove to find out what was going on in them.

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[444] It must be pointed out that the number of 20,000 released inmates is quite impossible to reconcile with the image of an "extermination camp." Each of these released inmates would have observed mass murders or at least heard about them from fellow prisoners. The news of the massacres would have spread like wildfire throughout Poland, and from there through all of Europe! The very same historians that expect us to believe this also tell us that the National Socialists used code words in their documents to cover up their atrocities. What on earth would have been the point of these amateurish attempts at camouflage in light of the fact that the Germans continually released eyewitnesses to the alleged genocide?

The news collected in these ways were summarized by the *Delegatura* in official reports and published in various press organs, including that of the government-in-exile, the *Polish Fortnightly Review*, published by the Polish Ministry of Information. This aimed at influencing the Allies' policy in favor of Poland. Naturally, the leitmotif of these reports was the Germans' – factual as well as fictitious – acts of cruelty against the Poles and the Polish Jews in the entire occupied territory and primarily in the concentration camps, about which the *Delegatura* was very well informed.

The reports issued by the *Delegatura* have been examined by Krystyna Marczewska and Władysław Ważniewski, who published a lengthy article about the information these reports contained about the Majdanek camp. These reports cover the time from November 30, 1941, to July 7, 1944, but the bulk of them date from 1943. In the introduction to this article, Józef Marszałek comments on the origin of this information:[445]

> *"The system by which the Polish Resistance Movement gathered information about the Majdanek camp has not yet been adequately studied. The major problem is the lack of accessible sources, namely so-called primary documentation. Most of what we have are reports that were drawn up in the offices of the Delegatura, which based them on various accounts which were then destroyed for conspiratorial reasons* [*i.e.*, so as not to endanger the informants]. *The published documents mention only indirectly that the regional branch at Lublin included a special cell ('Lublin circle') which dealt with matters relating to the Majdanek camp, among other things. A similar cell existed as part of the AK's Lublin District commando; it was known as Centralna Opieka Podziemna (Central Underground Supply) or 'OPUS'. Special couriers were also sent from Warsaw to scout out the Majdanek camp. Some documents contain a note stating that they were based on the accounts of prisoners released from Majdanek. The memories and recollections of the participants in this endeavor are one concrete option for filling in the gaps in the sources relating to this topic."*

Jolanta Gajowniczek has also dealt with the question of what the London-based Polish government-in-exile knew about Majdanek. She has examined the reports about the Lublin camp that were published in two Polish exile newspapers in Great Britain.[446]

Contradicting even the most obvious facts, the author Gajowniczek opens her article with the claim that the existence of the concentration camps was "most painstakingly kept from the sight of unauthorized witnesses."[447] She then describes how news from Poland was conveyed to the government-in-exile in London. Besides the couriers, who could take a message from Warsaw to

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[445] Krystyna Marczewska, Władysław Ważniewski, "Obóz koncentracyjny na Majdanku w świetle akt Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraj," in: *ZM,* VII, 1973, pp. 164-241.

[446] Jolanta Gajowniczek, "Obóz koncentracyjny na Majdanku w świetle 'Dzennika Polskiego' i 'Dziennika Polskiego i Dziennika Żołnierza' z latach 1940-1944," in: *ZM,* VII, 1973, pp. 242-261.

[447] *Ibid.*, p. 242.

Paris in only ten days, illegal radio transmitters played an increasingly important role. As of early March 1940, the Resistance regularly broadcast news abroad, and as of December of that same year such news was transmitted directly to England. In other words: anything they knew in Poland, London also knew just a few days later.

The first issue of the newspaper published by the government-in-exile, *Dziennik Polski* (*Polish Daily*), appeared in the British capital on July 12, 1940. Parallel to this, another Polish exile paper appeared in Scotland as of June or July that same year: the *Dziennik Żołnierza* (*Soldiers' Daily*). On January 1, 1944, the two papers merged to become the *Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza*.

In her study, Gajowniczek includes partial or full reprints of the reports about Majdanek which were published in the *Dziennik Polski* (1941-1943) and the *Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza* (1944). In 1941 and 1942, all of three brief reports about the camp had appeared. In 1943 there were 16 reports, including a few longer ones; and in 1944 there were a further eight.

Let us take a closer look (in chronological order) at the sources mentioned.

The first reference to a gas chamber appears in the following laconic report from the *Delegatura*. It is dated December 15, 1942:[448]

> *"Lublin. Work on the camp at Majdanek proceeds at full steam. At present it can hold several tens of thousands of people. Aside from Poles, there are also Jews there (scattered from Lublin), Germans, as well as English and French.*[449] *A gas chamber and a crematorium are in service."*

What is remarkable about this first reference to a homicidal gas chamber (and that it is supposed to be a homicidal one follows from the fact that it is mentioned together with the crematorium) is the unusual brevity of the report: if such an instrument for murder had really been brought into play, it would have been fodder for gruesome and deeply shocking news bulletins; consequently, the Polish informants would have been highly motivated to focus on and emphasize such a tragedy, and to give the appropriate attention to a description thereof. Yet the information is given in a downright businesslike tone, as though it were an insignificant detail.

In the months that followed, no mention at all was made of the gas chamber(s). But the situation in which the Jews found themselves was touched on time and again. For example, a report of December 20, 1942, states:[450]

> *"The camp extends for several kilometers and could hold approximately 80,000 people at present, but is only filled to a small part of its capacity. It cannot be meant for Jews, as the destruction of the Jewish element is almost complete and*

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[448] Since the Polish language does not have an article, the last sentence can also be translated as "the gas chamber and the crematorium are in service."

[449] As the authors comment in a footnote, the presence of English and French inmates in Majdanek at that time is not proven (p. 168).

[450] Krystyna Marczewska, Władysław Ważniewski, *op. cit.* (note 445), p. 169.

is being carried out in the camps in Treblinka, Bełżec, Kole[451] *and Sobibór. For this reason it is assumed in Poland, and especially in Lublin, that the consolidation of the Majdanek camp has something to do with comprehensive anti-Polish plans of the German authorities."*

Here, in other words, the possibility of Majdanek being planned as extermination camp is expressly ruled out. As an aside, note that Auschwitz is missing from the list of the alleged extant extermination sites for Jews, even though according to official historiography the mass murders in that camp had already been going on for more than half a year at that time!

On December 31 the arrival of several thousand French Jews in Majdanek is reported. Furthermore, old and infirm Jews were allegedly taken into the camp. The same report states that according to unconfirmed accounts 5,000 Poles were shot in Majdanek between November 8 and 20.

The authors of these reports repeatedly commented in a decidedly critical tone on the behavior of the Jews in the Lublin camp. On February 6, 1943, for example, a report states with reference to the Czech-Jewish functionary inmates that they were particularly cruel to the prisoners;[452] on February 25, 1943, it is reported that the criminal German inmates and the Jews beat and tortured their fellow inmates on the flimsiest of pretexts,[453] and a report from March 31, 1943, refers to the "camp terror," a "Jewish boy" and "the commandant's darling" who enjoyed unlimited rights to beat people and who made full use of this privilege.[454] (This was a young Jewish sadist named Bubis, whom many witnesses also mentioned.)

On April 1, 1943, the arrival of a large number of Jews from western Europe is noted. Also, many western Jews arrived from Treblinka and Bełżec.[455] Since official historiography states that Bełżec was already shut down in December 1942, this latter claim is rather odd.

On May 5, 1943, the informant reported that sick people were being murdered *en masse* in Majdanek, via lethal injections given in the crematorium, whereupon their bodies were immediately burned. Between December 20, 1942, and May 5, 1943, the *Delegatura* disseminated a total of 25 reports about Majdanek. Not one of them mentioned gassings.

Despite its considerable length, one of these reports – titled "Location and Organization of the Camp, Inmates and Living Conditions, Camp Life, Jews and Poles in the Camp, Inmate Transports" – is reproduced below almost in its entirety; we only omit the final section, which adds no further information rel-

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451 This refers to Chełmno, also called Kulmhof.
452 *Ibid.*, p. 172.
453 *Ibid.*, p. 177.
454 *Ibid.*, p. 179.
455 *Ibid.*, p. 181.

evant to Majdanek. The report is undated, but according to its publishers it is from late January or early February 1943:[456]

*"**The Concentration Camp in Lublin.***

***Location.** The concentration camp in Lublin is located in the suburb of Majdanek, three to four kilometers distant from the old part of the city. It is located along the road leading to Chełm and covers an extensive parcel which is occupied by the army and borders immediately on the road. A side road crosses the camp and leads to the village Piaski, which civilians can only reach with a permit. Numerous housing and other barracks (probably storehouse magazines) have been set up to either side of this road, some of them standing alone, others in groups and surrounded by barbed wire barriers. The ground has been leveled over the entire area, and further barracks are being built. The camp is on the left side of the aforementioned village road, close to it and approximately 1.5 km from the road to Chełm, on a tract of land occupied by the army.*

Appearance of the Camp: The camp is divided into three separate but adjoining compounds surrounded by a double barbed-wire fence 3 m high. Inside the fence a barbed wire net has been strung up, and the wire is under high voltage – at least that is what the warning signs say. Along the camp fence, especially where it curves, there are numerous wooden towers with crows' nests for guards and machine guns. On the inside, parallel to the fence, each Compound is surrounded by a single wire marking the proximity to the nearby fence. The first two Compounds are built up with two rows of barracks, with 11 barracks per row; the space between the rows is approximately 70 m wide and is used for gatherings.[457] *Compound 3 has only one row of barracks. The crematorium is located at the edge of Compound 1.*[458] *On each Compound, two (sideline) barracks are used as stations, one for administrative purposes, and one as kitchen; the prisoners are housed in the rest.*

***Inmates.** From the time of the camp's establishment – which was soon after the Germans captured Lublin – the camp served to detain Jews from the vicinity, but also some that were brought in from Warsaw and other places. Later, Poles were also imprisoned there – for a limited time, for example for failing to meet their supply obligations, etc. At that time the camp was run as a penal and labor camp, and the inmates were put to all kinds of work. After the war with the Soviets broke out, Soviet prisoners of war arrived. Some time ago there were only Jews in the camp – about 2,000 of them. In early January* [1943] *the first transport of Poles arrived in the camp; there were about 3,000, and they had come from the provincial prisons. After January 18, further transports from Warsaw and other cities began to arrive. By the end of January there were approximately 3,000 Jews, 2,000 Jewesses and roughly 5,000 Poles – about 3,000 of them women – in the camp. At full capacity, the camp can hold up to 30,000 people.*

***Living Conditions.** The barracks are mass-produced. They were initially intended as horse stables, and their conversion to accommodations for human beings remains incomplete. In only a few of them, three-story wood-slat construc-*

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[456] *Ibid.*, pp. 221-226.

[457] *I.e.* the roll calls.

[458] Reference to the old crematorium, which was located on Intermediate Compound I.

tions have been set up as makeshift plank beds. In most of the barracks the inmates sleep on straw pallets spread out on the wooden floor. The barracks are not very wind-proof; for heating, 4 small iron stoves are installed, but the fuel rations are so small that they suffice for heating three hours a day at most. For that reason, the temperature inside the barracks is somewhat lower than that outside. The straw pallets are padded quite insufficiently, and long-term inmates are given a blanket. So far the Poles have not received blankets; in several barracks ten to twenty spare blankets were available, but they were so louse-infested that no one wanted them. On the other hand, the barracks are fairly well lit; the electric lights are turned out at night.

The barracks are old; before the Poles arrived they were not disinfected, consequently they are incredibly dirty and crawling with lice. The unsanitary conditions are aggravated by the open boxes at the end of the barracks into which the inmates relieve themselves at night when no one is allowed to step outside. The unsanitary conditions are worsened further by the complete lack of water. The few wells on the camp grounds are closed, as they are said to have been contaminated by the typhus epidemic that raged in the camp recently. As a result, there is no water for washing or even for drinking; the one well by the kitchen provides at most one or two buckets of water for more than 400 people, and the dishes must be washed in that first. Due to this lack of water, the inmates – especially the new arrivals who have not yet received anything to eat on their first day in the camp – quench their thirst with snow, which they sometimes melt for that purpose. There can be no talk of washing; some people rub themselves down with snow, while the women use tea to wash themselves. At mealtimes, tin bowls are handed out, one per four or so inmates, because water is not the only thing in short supply – time is too (meals are distributed in a great hurry). Therefore the inmates perforce eat one after another, without washing the bowls in-between or even wiping them out with paper (for there is none of that either). All meals are eaten in the barracks; the soup is brought in insulated pots so that it does not get cold. The inmates receive neither knives (there is only one knife per barrack) nor spoons, so that they must make do with their fingers, with pieces of wood, etc. All this creates ideal conditions for the spread of all sorts of diseases, particularly when one considers that the camp has no infirmary at all and that the sick inmates share the barracks with the healthy. It must also be noted that between 400 and 500 people live in one barrack.

Camp life. *Reveille is at 4:30 a.m., but the inmates may not leave the barracks for fully one hour (until the lights are on in the camp). Roll-call is twice daily, at 6:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.; the red lights go on at 7:00 p.m., and from that point on it is forbidden to leave the barracks. Bed times are not precisely fixed; they are determined by the rules in each barrack, which is set by the Barracks Elder. Previously, rations were quite meager but recently they have improved and are of better quality than they were, for example in the POW camps in 1940. At about 6:00 a.m. the inmates receive half a liter of barley soup (peppermint-flavored herb tea two days a week). For lunch at 1:00 p.m. half a liter of fairly nutritious soup is given out which has even been thickened with fat or flour. The evening meal is at 5:00 p.m. and consists of 200 g bread with a spread (jam, cheese or margarine, 300 g sausage twice weekly) and half a liter barley soup or soup made from the*

flour of unpeeled potatoes. Potatoes are passed out individually, a few per person. There is practically no food trade in the camp, but it is possible to buy a little flour or groats for approximately 400 Złoty per kg; some will sell bread for 30 to 50 Złoty per 100 g. In principle, smoking is banned in the camp, especially in the barracks and during work, but nonetheless the Germans themselves will sell cigarettes. At first the price per cigarette was 10 Złoty; later, 3 Złoty for one Machorkowy.[459] *Bulgarian cigarettes were also offered for sale (at 5 Złoty each).*

Camp organization is managed by the SS Death's Head Units, which incidentally are not very strong, numerically speaking; they fill the leadership positions and do duty on the guard towers. A division of Ukrainians and former Soviet prisoners-of-war who chose the German side serve as their auxiliary troops. The latter (the former Soviet POWs) are detailed to guard duty outside the fence, and to escort duty for arriving transports – at least for Polish ones – but they do not enter the camp themselves. From the way they handle their weapons and particularly from their behavior one may conclude that they do not have live ammunition. They do their duty indifferently, their behavior towards the Poles is not marked by animosity but they are ruthless towards the Jews. The SS-men in the camp only do roll-calls, spot-checks etc.

The real thugs are the so-called Kapos, of which there are four in Majdanek.[460] *They are Germans, themselves prisoners, who have been convicted for Communist activities or criminal misdemeanors. They are set apart from their fellow prisoners by their colorful clothing: long boots, red cloth pants (Communists) or green pants (criminals), blue jackets with the letters 'KL' painted in red on the back, a ribbon on one shoulder bearing the word 'Kapo' (black on white), a number on their chest and beneath it a triangle of the same color as their pants; they always carry leather truncheons, impose punishments and keep order in the camps, supervise the work, etc.; they must greet the German soldiers by taking off their caps. The Kapos are assisted by a house-elder, nominated for each barrack, who is dressed like all the other inmates but wears a ribbon on the left (text: St.Al. on a yellow background). Their job is to keep order in the barracks and to supervise the people. They live in the barracks, where they and their helpers have special plank beds, and they are authorized to impose on-the-spot punishments, for which they also use the truncheons or thick sticks.*

There is another intermediary rank between the Kapos and the house-elders whose role is not precisely defined. In Majdanek this function is served by a 15-year-old Jewish boy who is dressed like a Kapo but whose ribbon reads 'V' [= *Vorarbeiter*, foreman]. *He seems to be the protege of the camp commandant, who has created this function just for him. Recently one of the Poles received a similar ribbon. The last group that is different than the rest is the functionary inmates, who are employed in the kitchens, the office etc. They have separate quarters, enjoy better food and housing, and join the house-elders for roll call.*

Among the outsiders in Majdanek are the food merchants, who are admitted after showing their passes. They come every day with their carts. They have the opportunity to bring the prisoners the current news, cigarettes and even food.

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459 Probably a brand of cigarettes.

460 Author's mistake; there were considerably more.

The Jews *in Majdanek are treated brutally and inhumanely. They wear inmates' clothing with white and blue belts as well as caps, and beneath the number on their chest (to date the numbers go up to 16,000) they wear a star. The clothing, made of hemp, offers little protection from the cold, and they have almost no warm underwear. All of them wear shoes with wooden soles. The Jews are used for all kinds of work, and the block wardens and Kapos urge them on with blows and kicks. They must take off their cap to every German, even a Kapo. Their demeanor is strangely passive; they do their work stoically and even bear the blows meekly; they do not try to avoid these, but lie down on the ground and play dead, which usually results in them being badly beaten. The sick who are still able to work are made to do so just like the healthy; in any case, everyone must line up for roll call or be carried out for this purpose, even the dead. Mortality among the Jews is enormously high and was especially so during the typhus epidemic that recently raged. On average, 10 to 12 die per day. At present all Jews are quartered in Compounds I and II. Since the Poles who were arrested during the raids in Warsaw have arrived, only Jews serve as working inmates.*

The Poles. *The first transports of Poles arrived in early January. Prisoners were brought in from a number of provincial prisons (Kielce, Radom, Piotrkow), 800 people altogether, and were quartered in Compound II. They were registered but received no inmate clothing (they sewed their numbers onto their clothing and caps) and were not relieved of their possessions. They were put into barracks; the Block Leader of one is a Jew and that of another is a Pole who recently received his own ribbon with the letters 'SV'* [=*Sicherheitsverwahrung*, Security]. *Lately they have been put to work on various tasks in the camp. But they are not treated as cruelly as the Jews; they are not tortured. Just recently, approximately 150 skilled laborers and strong-looking persons were selected from among them and transferred to Compound II, where they were given inmate clothing, allowed to bathe and – apparently – told that they were to become skilled laborers for the camp and receive better rations, but if someone (who?) were to suggest to them that they should travel to Germany to work there, they should refuse, because they were needed in the camp.*

Further transports of Poles began to arrive as of January 18. On the 18th and 19th, two transports arrived from Warsaw, with more following; some involved only 10 to 20 people, mostly such as had been arrested during police raids, as well as inmates from provincial prisons. They filled a total of 6 barracks. So far none of them have been registered; they are treated decently and not forced to work. Aside from the roll calls, their only activity involves the gatherings at which the names of the prisoners to be released are read out. Recently even the roll calls, which had used to take an hour, have been cut short and now take even less than half an hour when it is dark. It seems that initially the Germans had intended to register all these transports (an internal list was drawn up, with a detailed sub-listing of all the skilled manual laborers), but gradually they lost all interest in this. The transports to arrive from Warsaw are made up of very different people: they are former inmates of Pawiak,[461] *inmates who had been held in the detention cells of the criminal police in Koszykowa Street (when they were brought to the camp they*

461 A large prison in Warsaw.

were assured that they would be treated like those who had been arrested during the raids), people who were picked off the streets, some who were taken out of their houses, and even tramps and beggars from the night shelters. In principle, the former Pawiak inmates have separate barracks (No. 14, initially also Nos. 10 and 11), but in practice there is no strict segregation and they can also be found in other barracks. Morale among the inmates is good; there is a general, optimistic assumption that they will be released soon, or sent out to work. It is typical that there is no antagonism to be found between the criminals and the political prisoners, just as there is none between the intelligentsia and the common folk. Instead, there are many signs of solidarity.

The women *stay on Compound III and live under the same conditions as the men. There are many prostitutes and criminals among them.*

Miscellanea. Two Polish barracks (including one for registered inmates) also house some Jews. At first their relationship with the Poles was completely normal, but they are becoming ever more aggressive and beat the Poles (most often during roll call: in Barrack 5, the Jew Feder beat one Polish inmate, knocked out three of his teeth and then beat him bloody with a spade handle[…[462]]. *Recently the Germans began setting up an infirmary in a barrack equipped with plank beds.*

Releases are done by calling out the names; the inmates in question are led aside and their identity is verified; everyone on the list is double-checked to see if he was really arrested during a raid. The released receive no documents or travel funds, but they are warned not to drop out on the way, especially in Deblin. At first only people who worked in German institutions were released, but lately releases have been granted generously, so that employees from the municipal administration, the RGO [?] *and even private companies have benefited.*

Conclusions. *The lack of interest on the part of the German authorities shows that the situation in the camp Majdanek is temporary. According to rumors originating with the camp commandant, Majdanek is a 'distribution camp': the approximately 70% who were arrested during raids are to be set free, the others – many of them long-term inmates – shall be sent to Germany or the east to work, and anyone who is still left will be transferred to other camps. According to other rumors circulating in the camp, Majdanek is to be expanded further, until it can hold 50,000 people, and will become another Auschwitz. This second version does not seem likely, as no preparations for such an expansion are evident. Rather, the overall picture indicates that originally the Gestapo had actually planned to set up a new Auschwitz, but that a different solution was eventually chosen, which resulted in a certain confusion, even ambivalence, in the organization of the camp."*

We would like to correct a few errors in the text: in January 1943 there were already 5 Compounds, not 3; the given number of barracks corresponded to the state of affairs in summer 1942 and by January 1943 had grown to 24 barracks per Compound, in double rows; in January 1943 the women were quartered on Compound 5.

However, such minor points do not change the fact that this article discusses in great detail all the important issues regarding the conditions in the

[462] In the original text, a linguistically incomprehensible half-sentence follows here.

camp, and it is obvious that the text originated with an exceedingly well-informed source.

It is overwhelmingly significant that this long and knowledgeable account of the conditions and events in Majdanek contains not even the slightest suggestion of homicidal gassings. Yet according to official historiography these had already been going on for at least half a year at that time. For reasons already set out, it was impossible to gas people *en masse* in Majdanek without the outside world learning of it in short order; such murders could not have been kept secret for even two weeks, much less for half a year or more.

The only possible conclusion to be drawn from these facts is that between August 1942 and January 1943 no homicidal gassings took place in Majdanek. And with that, the entire tale of the gas chambers already collapses, for the 'evidence' which is offered for gassings between February and October 1943 is no better than that for gassings between August 1942 and January 1943.

The gas chamber rumors must have been started towards the end of 1942 at the latest; the brief and the completely isolated reference to "the gas chamber" in the report of December 15 of that year proves it. The Resistance Movement's propaganda machinery seems to have dropped this again for the time being, probably due to the story's obvious lack of credibility.

Sources quite above suspicion confirm that the *Delegatura* did not report gassings in Majdanek until it was already impossibly late. In 1967 Ireneusz Caban and Zygmunt Mankowski wrote:[463]

> *"Documents from the Delegatura show that this organization knew in early 1943 that the camp Majdanek served not only for depriving people of their freedom but also for extermination. As we have noted above, these Delegatura documents remarked on the phenomenon of mass executions as well as on the activity of the crematorium, which was greater than would have been necessary to cremate the bodies of people who died of natural causes – whether they be malnutrition or poor sanitary conditions. But the efforts of the news service went farther than that. It was important to find out how the liquidations were being done, and to ascertain the numbers and personal data of the victims. In May 1943, the documents record the dissolution of the infirmary and, in this context, the cremation of approximately 80 sick inmates per day. In June it was determined that gas chambers were being used to poison Jews and Poles."*

The date "in June" is imprecise, since the gas chamber stories already began circulating on May 7, 1943. As of that date, the *Delegatura* reports make frequent mention of gassings in Majdanek. One report for that date states that inmates were constantly being poisoned in gas chambers on the camp grounds.[464] And a long, undated report which summarizes the events of

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[463] Ireneusz Caban, Zygmunt Mankowski, "Informacje o Obozie na Majdanku w aktach Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraj," in: *ZM,* II, 1967, p. 113.

[464] Krystyna Marczewska, Władysław Waźniewski, *op. cit.* (note 445), p. 184.

March-May 1943 (and can therefore not have been written before early June 1943) expressly calls the Jews the main victims of gassing; we quote:[465]

> *"Suddenly, in late April, groups of 2,000 to 3,000 Jews began to be brought in: women, children and groups. They were Jews from Warsaw. They were housed on the barbed-wire-enclosed Intermediate Compound between Compounds NN 4 and 5, where piles of coal etc. lay. They were usually left sitting there for 10 to 20 hours after their arrival, for example a whole day or a whole night, with no regard to weather, rain etc. Then they were divided into groups and led to the bath. Not all transports returned from this 'bath'. Some of the men really were bathed, freshly dressed (of course everything they had brought with them was taken away from them) and quartered in their own barracks on separate Compounds. The rest vanished as the transport was taken to the bath. If a transport was led to the bath at night, it either did not return at all or came back sharply reduced in number; if it was taken there during the day, it returned in most cases. The barrack into which the people had been led was locked, and some time later naked corpses were thrown out.*
>
> *The windows of the Polish barracks, from which one could see this barrack, were painted on purpose so that one could not see anything. The corpses were loaded onto trucks, covered with rags, taken to fields three or four km from the camp, and burned. The pyres burned nonstop for days; they could easily be observed from the camp grounds, since they were located lower than the camp.*
>
> *Screams and whimpers came from the barracks into which the Jews had been led, but these sounds were drowned out by the noise of a tractor engine that ran the entire time. Whenever this engine was heard running in the camp, the inmates knew that Jews were being poisoned. Those who observed the goings-on despite the painted windows described Dantesque scenes. People fell to their knees, kissed the Germans' feet and boots and begged for their lives. They were herded into the barracks forcibly, with kicks and blows. Our informant was told – and she has passed this on with reservation – that some sort of tin cans were on the barrack roof while this was happening. No one knows whether these were used to release gas, or perhaps to seal the barrack. Depending on the concentration of gas used, death occurred after one-and-a-half to seven minutes."*

The "tin cans" on the roof may be a first reference to the cans of Zyklon, from which – according to official historiography – lethal granules were poured into the gas chamber. On October 31, 1943, the *Delegatura* reported that shipments "of some kind of new gas" had arrived in the camp.[466] The authors comment that this referred to Zyklon B, 999 kg of which had been shipped to Majdanek only shortly before.

Except that Zyklon B, which was allegedly used in Majdanek since July 1942, was no longer a "new kind of gas."

On the whole, the reports written after May 7, 1943, which mention gassings do not contain any indication of Zyklon B, and the exact sequence of events constituting the murders is never described.

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[465] *Ibid.*, pp. 192f.
[466] *Ibid.*, p. 207.

In this context, a letter smuggled out of the camp on December 14, 1943, by Majdanek inmate Jerzy Henryk Szczęśniewski is significant. The letter states:[467]

> *"L*[ublin] *M*[ajdanek] *December 14, 1943, 3:00 p.m.*
>
> *Dear Babunia! All my loved ones! Unexpected changes. The lights have been turned off, we must already go to bed at 5:00 p.m., sleep until 5:30 a.m., and even dress in the dark before going to work. We do not get light until 7:30 a.m. Here inside there are no changes, but outside the compounds they're reinforcing the camp – bunkers. During the night, Jewesses were gassed – about 100 -; they were among those who had to work in the old clothes on Compound V."*

Note that these gassings of Jewesses allegedly took place at a time when, according to the verdict of the Düsseldorf Majdanek Trial, the murders in gas chambers had already ceased for one and a half months![468] Significantly enough, the Polish literature does not mention when the last gassings allegedly took place.

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Now to the aforementioned two Polish exile newspapers. On May 28, 1943,[469] the *Dziennik Polski* reported:[470]

> *"In the Majdanek camp, which is currently being expanded so that it can hold 80,000 inmates, a large number of prisoners are victims of the mass arrests and street raids which the Germans carried out in the first few months of this year. Recently the Germans officially declared these prisoners as 'prisoners of war who have been imprisoned by the Waffen-SS occupation troops'. This is further evidence that the mass raids and arrests in the large Polish cities, namely Warsaw, Lwów and Cracow, are a preventive measure aimed at arresting and imprisoning in the camps those Poles whom the Germans consider to be the most dangerous and capable of organizing the armed Resistance against the occupation power.*
>
> *The inmates who are considered prisoners-of-war are given especially harsh treatment in Majdanek. Mortality in the camp is increasing alarmingly as a result of the widespread starvation, rampant diseases and the lack of any sanitary facilities. The prisoners are tormented on the flimsiest of pretexts, and even on-the-spot executions are the order of the day. News from Poland confirms that the general mood in the camp is one of desperation. In letters to their kin, inmates confirm that they do not expect to live much longer, and say their good-byes to their families.*
>
> *How the so-called prisoners-of-war are treated is shown most clearly by the fact that there is no water in the camp for the inmates, whereas the Germans recently set up baths for the police dogs who are specially trained to guard the prisoners and to kill any who attempt to escape."*

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[467] Zbigniew Jerzy Hirsz, "Korespondencja z Majdanka Henryka Jerzego Szczęśniewskiego VIII 1943 – IV 1944," in: *ZM,* II, 1967, p. 216.

[468] District Court Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 55), v. I, p. 103. According to the Düsseldorf verdict, no more homicidal gassings took place in Majdanek after the (alleged) massacre of November 3, 1943.

[469] Jolanta Gajowniczek, *op. cit.* (note 446), p. 242.

[470] *Ibid.*, pp. 250f.

What is far more significant than the creative embellishments of the poor conditions in Majdanek, which are of a particularly inspired nature in the last paragraph, is the total absence of any mention of gas chambers – and this fully nine months after the gassing allegedly began.

The first mention of "chambers" used for mass murder comes on July 20, 1943. In Lublin, the relevant article states, large transports arrive every day; approximately 15% of them are sent to Germany, the rest to the infamous camp Majdanek, where massacres were taking place where the Poles were being murdered in "chambers" just as the Jews had been before.[471]

Two days later, on July 22, the paper in question published another report about Majdanek in which no "chambers" were mentioned. But on July 27 it stated that recently more than 3,000 people had been poisoned daily with gas in the course of just a few hours in Majdanek.[472]

One article of interest is a longer one of October 5, 1943, titled "*Ponad 100 obozów koncentracyjnych w Polsce*" ("More Than 100 Concentration Camps in Poland").[473] The article distinguishes between eight types of camps: transit camps, ordinary concentration camps, forced labor camps, camps for clergy, women's camps, camps for Jews, camps for "improving the race," and children's camps.

Among the camps for Jews, the article specifies Bełżec, Sobibór and "Treblinka III near Małkinia," a camp which is unknown to modern historiography. There, the article claims, Jews were murdered with poison gas, electrical current and machine guns. The article does not state whether these camps were still operating at the time of publication.

For the category of forced labor camps, the article mentions Treblinka II, the camp which according to 'Holocaust' literature was the largest extermination camp for Jews, second only to Auschwitz. Both "Majdanek II" and Auschwitz are listed as ordinary concentration camps, while "Majdanek I" is ranked as a transit camp. "Majdanek I" may possibly refer to the airfield camp, whence inmates were taken to the actual Majdanek camp. We invite the reader to draw his own conclusions from the fact that in October 1943, at a time when gassing had allegedly already been going on for one and a half years, this Polish exile newspaper rates Auschwitz, the greatest "extermination camp" according to 'Holocaust' literature, as one of the "ordinary concentration camps."

Of the articles published about the Lublin camp in the *Dziennik Polski i Dziennik Żołnierza* in 1944, only one – dated August 31, shortly after the camp's dissolution – is of any interest. This article stated that "a crematorium and a gas chamber" had been operating in Majdanek and that mass murders

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[471] *Ibid.*, p. 251.
[472] *Ibid.*, p. 252.
[473] *Ibid.*, pp. 252-254.

had been taking place there since spring 1943. There is no mention of any earlier gassings, and not so much as one word about the mass execution of November 3, 1943, which after all did allegedly claim 18,000 lives. We read:[474]

> *"In the first days of March 1944* […] *the local authorities decided that the best solution would be to gradually kill off the inmates. First and foremost the Jews, of course, but then the remaining Poles as well."*

According to the current version about Majdanek, there were virtually no Jews left in Majdanek in March 1944, since almost all had been murdered in November of the previous year. So, once again, a contemporaneous account of events in that camp does not in any way agree with the account that has been received modern historiography's retrospective blessing. And again we shall leave it to the reader to decide why this is so.

* * *

The reports of Poles who had fled to allied or neutral countries abroad were another source of information. A report published in Geneva on November 1, 1943, by a young Polish doctor deserves mention here. About Majdanek, this report states:[475]

> *"The camp Majdanek, guarded by the Gestapo and uniformed Ukrainians and Lithuanians, is located in the vicinity of Lublin. Since early 1941, all Jews who were rooted out of the various towns of Lublin District were sent to the Majdanek camp, where the Lithuanians and the Ukrainians learned the hangman's trade on the Jews. The German masters taught their students various methods of hanging, roasting alive, or otherwise torturing people. The technique of extorting 'confessions' with needles shoved under the fingernails – this technique, which later was used throughout Poland, was invented in the Majdanek camp!*
>
> *Camp Majdanek had its attractions: in the depths of winter the Jews were dressed in paper clothing; then they were soaked in cold water and left to stand outside until they were frozen all over!*
>
> *Then the character of the Majdanek camp changed, and presently it is a concentration camp for political prisoners, the second after Oświęcim* [Auschwitz]. *Of those who are taken there, 100% die.*
>
> *Lublin was a 'reservoir' for the German, Austrian, Czech etc. Jews. In late 1941*[476] *primarily Jews from Slovakia were there.*
>
> *Foreign Jews considered themselves superior to the Polish Jews, and even the Germans granted them better quarters and lighter work. Yes, the Germans even knew to exploit the differences between these two kinds of Jews and to place foreign Jews into 'guard' positions over the Polish ones."*

As we can see, this report is rife with imaginative accounts of German atrocities – but its author knows nothing of gassings, even though these are

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474 *Ibid.*, p. 258.
475 A. Silberschein, *Die Judenausrottung in Polen*, fifth series, Geneva, 1944, pp. 17f.
476 Read: 1942.

said to have already been going on there for more than a year at the time of this article's publication.

2. The Story Begins to Take Shape

In the sources we examined above, the tale of homicidal gassings begins in a random, superficial manner.

The first detailed eyewitness account of gassings was published in 1944 by Abraham Silberschein; he wrote:[477]

> *"A witness who was arrested by the Germans in 1939 and was sent first to a camp in Berlin reports about the Lublin concentration camp. In February 1941, this witness was taken back to Lublin with 2,500 prisoners and put into a special camp guarded by the SS. He remained in this camp from February 1941 until 1943, i.e., until his escape. He writes that he was a witness to the entire tragedy that played out in Lublin during this time. He witnessed the events in the ghetto as well as the destruction of the ghetto. He also witnessed how the remaining Jews were quartered in Majdan Tatarski and how this ghetto of barracks was liquidated. He guarded the camp on several occasions and came into contact with various people from the service branches and from the camp."*

We shall quote the most significant excerpts of the report supplied by this witness; they are immensely revealing where our current subject is concerned:[478]

> *"The Camp.*
>
> *The camp was called a K.Z., an abbreviation of 'Konzentrationslager'* [concentration camp]. *It was more of an extermination camp, for no one who ended up there ever left it again.*
>
> *The camp is located along the road leading from Lublin to the town of Piaski. It was set up on an open field, at 100 m distance from the main road, in summer 1941. 20,000 Russian prisoners and 800 Jews from the ghetto of Lublin served as construction crew.*
>
> *The man in charge of the camp was SS-Sturmbannführer Dollf, one of the founding fathers of the National Socialist Party. He was a drunkard, rather short, with a face like an ape, a sadist who had trained his dog to tear anyone to pieces who was said to be a Jew.*
>
> *Right after the camp was finished, its construction crew all died; for Dollf ordered that they should not receive any food.*
>
> *The place intended for ten barracks was surrounded by two rows of barbed wire, and a net of especially dense barbed wire was strung between these. Then German military barracks were set up in this area, in five rows. Close to one corner, outside the barbed wire, towers of reinforced concrete were built, each 12 m*

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[477] *Ibid.*, "Das K.Z. Lager Lublin," p. 11.
[478] *Ibid.*, pp. 12-17, 20.

tall (see plan).[479] *SS men were posted on these towers as guards. There were also very bright spotlights that were trained on the barracks, and beside each spotlight were a machine gun and a cannon, aimed at the camp. The soldiers from the towers walked up and down at barrack-level.*

10 m distant from the first Compound (Plan Camp 1) a second 'Compound' was built, identical to the first. (See Plan Camp 2.) Half a meter from the second, the third and then the fourth and fifth were built. All these barracks in turn were fenced in with barbed wire. On the street side there was an entrance gate.

Across from the barracks, about 20 m distant, were the various facilities, first of all the Bath. It consisted of an undressing room and a shoe depot. From the shoe depot one entered the Bath, and from the Bath, the clothing distribution center. The clothing depot was between the dressing room and the clothing distribution center. On the same side of the camp there were also the SS stables and the camp workshop. (See Plan.)

In the space between the compounds and these facilities there were posts from which delinquents were hanged.

The Furnace Barrack was located in the 10-m space between the first and second barrack. (See Plan.) From the outside this barrack resembled the others, except that it had two mighty chimneys, in the style of factory smokestacks. This barrack was divided into three parts, each of which was almost separate. The first part was the undressing room (Wardrobe, on the Plan), the second part was closed off and air-tight. That's where the gas experiments were done (Gassing Room, on the Plan). The third part held two enormous furnaces. – This barrack was between Compounds I and II.

Arrival and Induction.

From the train station, the Jews were taken under SS guard to their 'state'. They were given a pep talk; then they went to the Bath to wash up. In the Bath, their clothing, underwear and any leather objects they may have had were taken from them. The bundles of clothing were sent through the window into another room (Clothing Depot, on the Plan). They were sent into the Bath in groups of a hundred, old men separately, then the sick, and then the women and children.

Those who had money had hidden it in their shoes or in leather pouches. But everything had to be left behind in the foyer before they entered the Bath. The clothing and shoes were then immediately searched by the guards and Gestapo, who simply stole the money and all the valuables.

After the bath the new arrivals were led through another room into a hall where everyone received clothing and shoes. Everyone was given a sort of boiler suit with white and blue stripes. A Star of David was fixed to the chest, with alternating yellow and red triangles. On the back and knees was a number – the inmate number. The prisoners also received wooden shoes. This outfit was worn in summer and winter alike.

Distribution.

Young people with special skills were sent to work the very same day. The old and sick were also dispatched right away – to the barrack that contained the furnaces. In the first room they were instructed to undress; in the second, they died of

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479 See Document 37.

asphyxiation within two minutes. From the second room they were transported to the furnaces. There was a fire under the ground; the furnace itself did not burn, but it collected hot air of 2,000°. The dead bodies were thrown in, and the enormous heat dried them out completely. In this way, each was reduced to just a few bubbles that were so dry they crackled. Special trucks then drove the remains out of the city to prepared ditches.

Throughout the entire year 1942, thousands of Jews were killed in the gassing chamber every day. New crowds were brought in weekly, and this has been going on to this day.

The children were taken to hospitals for blood transfusions.

Work in the Camp.

Once someone had entered the barrack, they could not leave it again except under guard. The strong and healthy men were assigned to work. At first they considered themselves lucky. No one suspected that the end might be near; for they had been promised food and shelter – provided they did good work. Nevertheless, reasons were found to send thousands of working Jews into the ovens every day. The walk to work was already difficult. Whoever among the Jews did not march neatly in a row was sent between the barbed wire, and from there, into the oven.

Marching was hard; going barefoot was forbidden, and the wooden shoes were very painful. Since all the old and sick were liquidated, no one dared report sick. Every day, those who did not work as desired were culled for the oven.

There was no work on Sundays; but there were gymnastics exercises. If anyone fell, he was not allowed to get up: he was doomed to feed the oven.

Several people died of the hellish pain the wooden shoes caused them; their feet were all bloody. Several Jews got sick from wearing the wooden shoes, which made their feet swell up to the point where they could no longer go to work. […]

This was the fate of the central European Jews. Some two million of them went through the camp to their deaths. And the miserable death the Germans gave them, they dreamed up just to conserve their bullets." (Emphasis added)

The account of this witness is illustrated with a sketch of Majdanek that allows us, on the basis of our knowledge of the camp's construction history, to penetrate to the roots of the rumors of the execution gassings.

The sketch[479] shows a fairly accurate depiction of "Bath and Disinfection II," Barrack 42, with "Undressing Room," "Clothing Depot" (Clothing Drop-Off), "Baths" (Showers), and "Distribution of Prison Clothing" (Clothing Distribution).

According to the witness, all the Jews to arrive in the camp, including the old people, the sick, the women and the children, were sent to the showers, where they undressed, showered, and were issued prison clothes; then the young ones were promptly sent off to work, while the old and sick were gassed. We do not quite understand the purpose behind letting those who were judged unfit to work take showers first rather than sending them straight to the "gassing room."

But what is even more surprising is this: even though the report dates from 1943, it makes no mention at all of "Bath and Disinfection I" – that is, Barrack

41, the alleged main murder site, where according to Polish historiography the homicidal gassings had already been taking place since October 1942!

Where the extermination facilities are concerned, the witness has created a sort of collage of elements which did in fact exist, but neither at the same time nor in the same place. The "gassing room" is nothing other than that part of Barrack 28 that was approximately 110 m distant from the furnaces, and the Laundry, located between the barracks and the furnaces. If Barrack 28, which merely contained a drying facility in July 1944, had previously been equipped as a delousing facility, this could not have been done until after the alleged main extermination facility in Barrack 41 had been brought into service but which the witness does not even deem worthy of mention.

The witness description of the cremation furnaces seems odd at first:

> *"There was a fire under the ground; the furnace itself did not burn, but it collected hot air of 2,000 degrees."*

In actual fact, this description is not one of the cremation furnaces at all, but of the air heater. As we have already shown in Chapter VI, these devices were coke-fueled, with the stoking mechanism being installed beneath the floor, so that there actually was "a fire under the ground"; no combustion took place in the upper part ("the furnace itself did not burn"), but air heating did ("it collected hot air"). The temperature cited by the witness – 2,000°C – is a gross exaggeration, not only for a hot-air chamber but even for a cremation furnace.[480]

It goes without saying that the victim count touted by the witness (thousands every day, two million by the end of 1943) is nothing more than the crudest kind of atrocity propaganda.

The account by Simonov which we have already mentioned in Chapter VI is of overwhelming significance since the author, who visited Majdanek right after its capture and spent several days there, was able to talk with former inmates, who told him the history of the camp and explained its various facilities to him; accordingly, Simonov's account is based on eyewitness testimony and, from that perspective, represents the 'official' version that circulated among the just-liberated inmates in July and August 1944. This version differs from that examined above in several decisive aspects: it introduces a new extermination facility, knows nothing of the "gassing room" in the old crematorium, and transfers the execution gassings into the delousing facility at Barrack 41, describing a very strange technique indeed:[481]

> *"The first place where mass exterminations took place was a wooden barrack which had been built between two wire barriers when the camp was set up. This barrack had a long beam across the top, from which eight nooses always hung down – for hanging anyone who showed signs of weakness.* […]

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[480] See Carlo Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 303), pp. 395.
[481] C. Simonov, *op. cit.* (note 310), pp. 13f.

Soon the primitive crematorium, consisting of two furnaces, was set up; we have already mentioned it above. Construction of the gas chamber dragged on; it was still not finished. During this time, the main method for exterminating the sick and exhausted inmates was the following: a room with a very narrow and low entranceway was set up in the crematorium – the entrance was so low that anyone who passed through it had to duck. Two SS-men with heavy, short iron bars stood to either side of the door. As the victim walked through the door with his head ducked down, one of the SS-men aimed a blow at his neck vertebrae with his iron bar. If the one SS-man missed, the other took a crack at the victim. It didn't matter if the victim failed to die right away and just passed out. Anyone who fell was considered dead, and was thrown into the cremation furnace."

Thus it follows that there was no execution gas chamber in the old crematorium. Naturally, the account of this homespun murder method was intended to give a reader extra goosebumps since it suggested that some of the victims were still alive when they were burned.

Simonov gives an exact description of the alleged execution gas chambers in the Delousing Facility in Barrack 41, but he knows nothing of Chamber IV, which the inmates obviously did not yet at that time consider a homicidal gas chamber. We have already quoted the beginning of this description in Chapter VI; let us now continue it:

"Where does the window lead to? To answer this question, we open the door and leave the room. Next to it there is another small chamber of concrete; that's where the window leads to. Here there is electric light as well as a power outlet. From here, looking through the window, one can observe anything that happens in the first room. On the floor there are a few round, air-tight, sealed cans labeled 'Zyklon'; 'for special use in the eastern regions' is added in smaller letters. The contents of the cans were introduced through the pipes *into the adjoining room when it was full of people.*

The naked, tightly crowded people did not take up much room. More than 250 people were packed into the 40m² room. They were forced in and then the steel door was closed; the cracks were sealed with clay to make it even more air-tight, and a special unit wearing gas masks introduced the 'Zyklon' from the cans through the pipes *from the adjoining room. The 'Zyklon' consisted of small* blue *crystals that looked perfectly innocent but, once exposed to oxygen, gave off poisonous gases that simultaneously affect all the body's vital functions. The 'Zyklon' was introduced* through the pipes*; the SS-man leading the operation supervised the asphyxiation process which, according to different eyewitness accounts, took between two and ten minutes. He could safely observe everything through the window; the horrible faces of the dying people and the gradual effect of the gas; the peephole was just at eye level. When the people died the observer did not need to look down; they did not fall down as they died – the gas chamber was so crowded that the dead remained standing.*

It must be pointed out that the 'Zyklon' really was a disinfestant and really was used in the neighboring rooms[482] *to disinfest clothing. Quite properly and as per*

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482 In Barrack 42.

regulations! The difference was merely to know which dosage of the 'Zyklon' to introduce into the chamber." (Emphasis added)

This tale, which describes a technically utterly impossible murder method, proves that the former inmates of Majdanek had never attended or observed any homicidal gassings at all. None of the witnesses told Simonov that he had seen an SS-man wearing a gas mask or holding a can of Zyklon B on the roof of the alleged execution gas chamber; none told him that in the areas where the pipes are installed, the victims were gassed with bottled CO. As Pressac has emphasized, the Zyklon B cans which Simonov observed had been planted in the small room outside Chambers I and III to create the impression that their contents might have been poured into the pipes. This little stage production that was no doubt the doing of the former inmates proves *a fortiori* that these had never seen people being gassed. There can be no doubt that *rumors* of homicidal gassings were circulating in the camp, and the ex-inmates tried to make these seem credible by means of the stage production described. But these rumors were devoid of all factual basis.

There were all sorts of other rumors as well. Just as in any other concentration camp, their power of suggestion fired up the prisoners' weakened psyche and prompted the most outlandish speculations on their fate. Dionys Lenard, a former inmate of Majdanek, can tell us a thing or two about it:[483]

"I remember learning from the newspaper that the British had landed in Bologna. We had great expectations of this event. Everyone hoped for a coup. But these hopes were disappointed. Usually we did not believe the rumors. It was impossible to verify all these unrealistic reports, but for many they served as a basis for seemingly even more unrealistic conclusions. The temptation to blend imagination and reality was very great. It helped many get through difficult times.

'Turkey has declared war.' This rumor also did not turn out to be true. Once the story was that the Russians were already in Lvov. It was said that one could already hear the booming of the guns. Another time they said that the German front in the north had collapsed and the Russians were already outside Königsberg. They also said that the Hungarians had laid down their weapons and the Italians had joined them. For a while the Czechs and Serbs were in fashion. It was said that they had staged such a huge uprising that the Germans were forced to deploy 40 divisions against them. The Japanese, on the other hand, had allegedly signed a peace treaty with the United States and Great Britain. Japan was to hold back in China at the line where it was at that time (May 1942). In return, Japan was to surrender Hong Kong to the British and to declare war on Germany […]*."*

This sort of rumor was prompted not only by the inmates' hopes and expectations, but also by their fears, which is perfectly understandable. Other rumors in turn were deliberately started and put about for purely political motives; false witness statements and deceptive 'evidence' was used to help the process along. We shall give two particularly revealing examples.

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[483] Dionys Lenard, "Juden aus der Slowakei," in: Tomasz Kranz, *op. cit.* (note 138), p. 65.

Simonov writes:[484]

"Pietro Mikhailovic Denissov, a Russian, and Claudio Elinski, a Pole, two engineers from Lublin who were paid civilian workers involved in the construction of the camp – in constructing the sewer system, among other things – told me that in late April or early May 1943, while in the camp's building materials depot, they ran into a Lublin Jew whom they had already known in peacetime. The inmate was carrying axes into the camp. He spoke to them, pointed at a frail old man who was also carrying axes, and said: 'Do you know who that old man is? That's Léon Blum.' Since they saw that there were no SS-men nearby, the two engineers came closer. The following conversation then took place: 'You are Léon Blum?' Denissov asked. – 'Yes, I'm Léon Blum.' – 'The Prime Minister of France?' – 'Yes, the Prime Minister of France.' – 'And how did you come to be here?' – 'I arrived with the last group of French prisoners.' – 'Why didn't you try to escape in your country? Can it be possible that there was no way for you to save yourself?' Denissov persisted. – 'I don't know, maybe I could have,' said Léon Blum, 'but I decided to share my people's fate,' and his eyes filled with tears. At that moment several SS-men appeared on the scene, and Blum, just like the other man, hastily laid a heavy axe of several cm diameter on his shoulder and carried it away. He took a few steps, then stumbled and fell. One of the prisoners standing nearby helped him get up. He stood up, put the axe back on his shoulder, and walked away. A week later Denissov and Elinski again had things to do in this depot. Again they encountered the man who had pointed Léon Blum out to them, and they asked him where Blum was. He replied laconically, 'Where I'll also be soon,' and pointed up at the sky. This is just one event from the history of this death camp. Both witnesses, who are living in Lublin today, confirm each and every detail."

This event, confirmed in "each and every detail" by the two witnesses, is pure fiction: Léon Blum was deported to Buchenwald on March 31, 1943, and later transferred to Dachau, where he was freed on May 4, 1945.[485]

Of course this did not hinder the Soviets from officially sanctioning the rumor of Blum's death in Majdanek. In its issue 26 of August 1944 the French Communist paper *Fraternité* wrote:[486]

"Radio Moscow reports the death in Majdanek of former President of the Council Léon Blum, a 70-year-old man who like so many of his brethren fell victim to racist barbarism."

The false news of Blum's internment in Majdanek had been put about in May 1943 by the *Dziennik Polski*, the organ of the Polish government-in-exile.[487]

The second example we shall give specifically concerns one of the Soviets' propaganda techniques. The Norwegian ex-inmate Erling Bauck, who was

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[484] C. Simonov, *op. cit.* (note 310), p. 7.
[485] *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust, op. cit.* (note 7), v. I, p. 223.
[486] Stéphan Courtois, Adam Rayski, *Qui savait quoi? L'extermination des juifs 1941-1945*, Paris: Editions La Découverte, 1987, p. 225.
[487] Jolanta Gajowniczek, *op. cit.* (note 446), p. 250.

transferred from Sachsenhausen to Majdanek in 1944 together with 13 compatriots, as skilled laborers,[488] reports:[489]

> *"In autumn 1944 we read in American and illegal Norwegian newspapers that 14 Norwegians had been executed in Lublin, on orders from Berlin. The fact that we were allegedly 14 Norwegian executees proves that the order must have come at least four months earlier, when there were still 14 of us.*[490] *We were all listed by name and inmate number. In November the priest in Notodden received a letter signed by Ilya Ehrenburg, asking him to notify the father of the Brattli brothers that his sons were among those executed. The papers which the Russians found in the main camp stated that we had been murdered with Zyklon gas and then thrown into an acid bath so that no mortal remains were left to be found."*

The "papers which the Russians found" were simply the inmates' personal papers – identification, labor passes, school report cards, etc. – which Simonov had already found in a room in the camp office. These also included some papers belonging to Norwegians. Propaganda quickly turned these into evidence that their owners had been murdered, even though these owners were actually still very much alive.

Obviously, fanning the flames of gas chamber rumors belonged to the repertoire of political propaganda: the tremendously detailed Silberschein Report could not possibly have been the report of an honest witness. Of course this does not mean that *all* witnesses who spoke of homicidal gassings were liars. In most cases they no doubt simply misinterpreted events they witnessed without intending any deception. In this regard, the Düsseldorf court presiding at the Majdanek Trial stressed:[491]

> *"The mass selections of people to be killed by gassing was general knowledge in the Majdanek concentration camp at least as of early 1943. This resulted in the fact that screenings carried out under similar conditions as selections but actually intended for other purposes, primarily transfers to other camps, were misunderstood by a number of inmates as being selections for gassing. This goes primarily for the screenings of female inmates for the aforementioned transports, from late June to late August 1943, to the concentration camps Auschwitz and Ravensbrück and to the forced labor camp Skarcysko-Kamienna; these screenings required that the female inmates being considered had to undress for an 'assessment' by one of the camp doctors, in the presence of female SS guards, in the Washing Barrack of the Women's Compound. However, unlike the 'selections for death' which were performed under similar conditions, these screenings were not intended to cull*

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[488] Erling Bauck (misspelled as Bank) is recorded with registration number 6508 on an undated list of 13 Norwegian inmates sent from Sachsenhausen to the DAW of Lublin. S. Duszak (ed.), *Majdanek,* Lublin: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1985, Document 46.

[489] Erling Bauck, *op. cit.* (note 138), p. 197.

[490] One of the Norwegians had meanwhile died of an inner ear infection. A second, suffering from tuberculosis, had been admitted to the main camp's infirmary, where he survived. A third had been sent back to Sachsenhausen.

[491] District Court Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 55), v. I, pp. 88f.

those who were unfit to work, but rather to cull those who appeared 'particularly fit to work'."

In fact, matters were the reverse of what the court assumed: since the selected inmates who were transferred elsewhere did actually disappear from the camp, those who remained behind became convinced that their departed comrades had been murdered. This conviction was strengthened by the fact that before leaving the camp, the selected inmates went through the showers and delousing, *i.e.*, through Barracks 41 and 42 where delousing gas chambers were known to exist. This procedure left the remaining inmates with one powerful impression: their fellow prisoners had been sent to where the gas chambers were; they had not returned; *consequently*, they had been gassed.

The inmate transfer of July 1943 demonstrated clearly just how easy it was to fall for this misunderstanding. On June 24 of that year, an SS-*Untersturmführer* from Division IIIa (Labor) of the concentration camp Auschwitz came to Majdanek to negotiate the transfer of 5,500 inmates for the labor camp Monowitz (east of Auschwitz I). On July 6 he drew up the following report:[492]

"Immediately upon my arrival in the Lublin concentration camp on June 24, 1943, I was told that, of the 5,500 male and female inmates available, 1,700 had already been selected for the labor camp in Radom. Therefore only 3,800 were left for us. 1,000 inmates were ready to be transferred; they were said to have been chosen by the garrison physician SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Blanck. In a brief inspection together with our camp physician, SS-Obersturmführer Dr. Kitt, we determined that only about 30% were in any condition to work in our labor camps Buna and Neu-Dachs. And the final results confirmed our expectations. The garrison physician, SS-Hstuf. Dr. Blanck, then informed us that it had not been he, but rather the camp physician SS-Untersturmführer Dr. Rindfleisch, who had selected them. However, the latter declared that he had not selected them either. Over the next few days, those of the available male and female inmates were selected that could with a clear conscience be considered fit to work, and that were reasonable and justifiable for our purposes. Of the remaining inmates, some might have been fit for light work. But since there is no more such light work in this camp, and since the inmates had been intended for work in Buna and Neu-Dachs, on orders from Oranienburg, they could not be included. The camp physician, SS-Ustuf. Dr. Rindfleisch, also admitted that the remaining inmates really could not be considered fit to work. In the course of the inspection, I asked why these inmates had even been reported fit to work in the first place, and was told that the local labor office had reported them fit. I could not justify taking the rest of the inmates just to oblige, since a great many of them would have had to be put straight into the recovery block or the infirmary on their arrival. SS-Obersturmführer Dr. Kitt will report on their fitness for work from the medical perspective."

On July 8 a transport of 1,500 inmates could finally be put together for Auschwitz. The very same day SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Krebsbach, deputy to

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[492] N. Blumental (ed.), *Dokumenty i Materiały*, Lodz, 1946, Tom I, pp. 138f.

SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Eduard Wirths, drew up this report on the inmates' state of health:[493]

> *"Of the 1,500 inmates (750 men and 750 women) to be transferred from Lublin on July 8, 1943, a very high percentage was not fit to work.*
>
> *49 of the male inmates had to be admitted to the Inmates' Infirmary or the recovery blocks immediately upon their arrival, for great physical weakness, bacterial tissue inflammation, or severe hernias. Another 277 inmates had to remain in Camp AI for lesser physical weakness, so that only 424 inmates remained available for their actual purpose, namely to work in the labor camp Buna. These too will not be fit for the hard physical labor there until after the mandatory four weeks' quarantine.*
>
> *Of the female inmates, 5 were already dead on arrival, 2 others were suffering from bullet wounds. 80 other inmates cannot be considered fit to work. These are broken down as follows:*
>
> *28 inmates physically extremely weak; these include inmates aged 15-17*
>
> *2 with edema*
>
> *44 with more or less severe injuries of the lower extremities*
>
> *5 with ulcers on the lower legs*
>
> *1 with inflammation of cell tissue.*
>
> *Beyond that, a high percentage of the female inmates suffers from scabies. In other respects as well, the overall and nutritional state of the inmates is such that they cannot yet be expected to handle the full work load demanded in Auschwitz."*

It is clear that sick inmates in the infirmary barracks of Majdanek underwent a selection process. It is no less clear that they also underwent this procedure before being transferred to Auschwitz; and all that the inmates who remained behind recalled of these events is that sick inmates had been sent off in the direction of the gas chambers, from where they had not returned.

For other types of transports, sick inmates were the only ones to be selected;[494] in other cases, only children were chosen. In this context, Zofia Murawska cites a classic example of a misunderstanding on the part of the Majdanek inmates:[495]

> *"In the fall of 1943 (September or October) trucks arrived on Compound V, and the SS-men began to load the children onto these; they tore them from the arms of their unsuspecting mothers. Even though the SS assured the mothers that the children would be placed in homes under the care of the Polish Red Cross, the mothers became terribly upset, for they thought that the children's destination was really the gas chamber. In fact, the young inmates were sent to the Children's Camp in Lodz."*

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the fears of the prisoners remaining in the camp turned into certainty in their subsequent testimony.

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[493] *Ibid.*, p. 141.

[494] See Chapter IV.

[495] Zofia Murawska, *op. cit.* (note 242), p. 146. The Security Police's Polish youth detention camp was located in Przemysłowa Street in Lodz. *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939-1945*, *op. cit.* (note 208), p. 297.

The fact that the rumors about homicidal gassings were unfounded and misleading follows clearly not only from the above account by Simonov, but also, and all the more so, from the investigation conducted by the Polish-Soviet Commission. This Commission consisted of engineers who were familiar with the properties and practical application of Zyklon B as well as of CO. The Commission questioned ex-inmates, who incidentally were already aware of the conclusions drawn by the former. Regarding the homicidal gassings, the protocol states:[496]

"VI. Gassings

One of the most commonly used methods for exterminating human beings in the Lublin camp was gassing.

According to the findings of the technical expert report, six gas chambers were set up on the grounds of the camp. These chambers are equipped with special facilities: the presence of a gas pipe, the presence of a special room with fixtures for connecting the gas bottles [to the gas pipe] *and to introduce the gas into the chamber, etc. People were gassed in these chambers with hydrogen cyanide (substance 'Zyklon') as well as with CO (carbon monoxide).*

A considerable quantity of hydrogen cyanide (substance 'Zyklon') in special cans as well as a few bottles of CO were found on the area of the camp (see file about the inspection – l.d.[497] *575).*

The technical expert report concluded:

'All these chambers, and especially Nos. I, II and IV, were designed and used as sites for the systematic mass extermination of human beings by means of poisoning with poison gases such as hydrocyanic acid (the substance 'Zyklon') and carbon monoxide. If Chambers V and VI were also used for disinfestation purposes, then only for the treatment of the clothing of exterminated victims.' (l.d. 585).

Numerous witnesses who were questioned on this topic reported a considerable number of cases of mass poisoning of human beings in these gas chambers. Men, women and children were asphyxiated here. All the weak inmates, those unfit for physical labor, those suffering from typhus – all those whom the Germans deemed it necessary to kill – were taken here.

The witness Stanisławski reports:

In March 1943, 300 Poles were gassed in the gas chamber; on May 16 or 17, 1943, 157 children of Jewish nationality were murdered in the same chamber. I witnessed these horrors myself, since I was on duty as courier at the gate to the third camp Compound. First, the children were led to the Bath, where they undressed; then they were chased into the gas chamber; any that resisted were gunned down. Obersturmführer THUMANN did it himself. Afterwards, all the shot and gassed children were thrown onto a lorry and taken to the camp crematorium to be burned. Fourteen Russian POWs operated the gas chamber and the bath. They were ordered to go into the gas chamber and to squeeze the children more

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496 *GARF*, 7021-107-9, pp. 311a-313a.

497 *List doprosa* = Interrogation Sheet.

tightly together. As soon as they had entered, the chamber door closed behind them, and all 14 of them were poisoned together with the children.

On June 20, 1943, 350 Jews were undressed on the first camp Compound and led into the Bath, where they were killed in the gas chamber.

On October 14, 1943, 250 or 270 Jews were gassed in the same place (l.d. 7).

Eyewitness Solowjew reports, 'I myself saw how the bodies of men, women and children of various ages who had been asphyxiated in the gas chamber were laid on lorries and taken to the crematorium to be burned' (l.d. 76).

Prisoner-of-war Dr. Konajko recounts:

'After that I had several opportunities to see for myself that this chamber served to gas people, and I observed that dead bodies were taken from there to the crematorium, by truck and trailer. Particularly in April and May [year is not stated] *bodies were taken from this gas chamber, and I later learned that 50 prisoners had been gassed' (l.d. 222a).*

OKUPJAK, a resident of the city of Lublin who worked in the camp barracks as water-pipe fitter, reports:

'I myself saw how dead people were dragged out of this gas chamber. The bodies were placed on two platforms (?)*… When these were loaded with dead bodies, a tractor came to take the bodies to the crematorium, that is, where the bodies were burned.' He continues: 'The vehicles loaded in this way with children drove up to the gas chamber. The next day I saw how people who worked there carried the dead bodies of children out of the gas chamber' (l.d. 301).*

The witness SELENT reports on the gassing of 87 Poles on March 15, 1944:

'I already learned of the existence and workings of the gas chamber in the very first days of my stay in the camp. On March 15, I made first-hand acquaintance with it when 87 people from a transport that had arrived together with me were simply led off from our Compound. All of them were Poles who were unable to work due to weakness, physical ailments or occasional illness. All these 87 people were herded together in our Block 15, at seven o'clock in the evening; they had to undress, even take off their shoes, and then they were driven, on cars, to the gas chamber, where they were all exterminated. I myself saw how they were crowded naked onto the car and taken out of the Compound; I knew some of them personally. From people who worked in the camp office, I learned that the following morning these 87 people were deleted from the list of the living and entered into the list of the deceased' (l.d. 358).

The eyewitness and former camp inmate Jan Wolski provided an immensely detailed account of the mass murder of people in the gas chambers:

'In October of 1942 a large number of women and children were brought into the camp. The healthy ones were led off to forced labor, but all the sick, weak and children were taken to the Bath, where they were ordered to undress, and then they were all asphyxiated in the gas chamber. The bodies of the victims were driven to the ovens, where they were burned. One must assume that the gassing victims suffered greatly before they died; the distorted expressions of the dead people's faces and eyes, which I saw myself, showed that.

In March of 1943, another 250 women and children were gassed in the same chamber, and another 300 people of various nationalities just a few days later.

On May 16 or 17, 1943, cars brought 157 children aged 2 to 10 years to the camp; all of them were murdered in the gas chamber. The witnesses to this deed, 14 Russian POWs who operated the chambers and the bath, were killed together with the children.

In June 1943, on Compound I, 300 to 350 inmates were ordered to strip naked, and despite the heavy rain they were then herded naked into the Bath, from where they did not return. After they were murdered in the gas chamber, they were driven in cars to the ovens to be burned.

In July 1943 the camp administration gathered up all the sick POWs and inmates, approximately 600 people altogether, and killed them all in the gas chamber. The bodies were transported to the ovens by various means, and burned.

That same month, another 200 people were exterminated the same way, and cremated in the ovens' (l.d. 199).

The witness and former inmate BENEN recounts:

'Right after my arrival in April 1943, I saw how approximately 200 people were gassed. They were taken from the third Compound to the gas chamber, after they had been told that they would take a bath and get a change of clothing there. They were stripped naked and led into the Bath. A short time later, bodies were carried out of the room and laid on a bus driven right up to the door. I was doing field work near the Bath and saw this with my own eyes' (l.d. 510).

The Germans doing duty in the camp themselves reported about mass murder with gas.

'On September 15, 1942,' says SS-Rottenführer GENSCHE (or Hensche), who was stationed at the camp from July 15, 1942, on, '350 people, including women and children, were killed in the gas chamber. Their bodies were burned. I was informed of this by Obersturmführer GERSCHON [spelling in original; this may be a reference to SS-Rottenführer PERSCHON] *personally, who was in charge of the Baths and the gas chambers' (l.d. 471).*

SS-man Wilhelm GERSTMEIER [actually: Gerstenmeier] *reports abut the homicidal gassings:*

'From accounts by the camp orderlies – SS-Rottenführer ENDRESS and SS-Rottenführer PERSCHON – I know that inmates, including many women, old people and children, were systematically killed in the gas chambers with the gas 'Zyklon'. Camp doctors – Hauptsturmführer BLANKE and Obersturmführer RINDFLEISCH – were present when the people were taken to the gas chamber.

Very often, THUMANN also attended these exterminations. The bodies of the asphyxiated victims were burned in the crematorium. Many hundreds of people were murdered in the gas chambers in September and October 1943 alone. Endress and Perschon told me that 150 children 10 to 12 years of age had been asphyxiated in the gas chamber on one single day. While on duty, Endress and Perschon often visited the Bath and the gas chamber, and were present at these exterminations' (l.d. 463).

SS-officer THERNES recounts:

'On October 16, 1943, an inmate transport 5,000 strong arrived from Warsaw. Under the leadership of camp physician Hauptsturmführer BLANKE, all the new arrivals were given a medical exam, and everyone who was unfit to work – there were 500 of them – was separated. This group included many women and children.

They were led to the Bath, where they were killed in the gas chambers. That evening I personally saw bodies being transported on large lorries from the gas chamber to the crematorium. My co-workers' reports indicate that the bodies were burned on pyres beside the crematorium…'

Further:

'In the evening of October 21, 1943, the camp physician SS-Untersturmführer RINDFLEISCH told me that 300 children 3 to 10 years of age had been killed in the gas chamber with the gas 'Zyklon' today' (l.d. 525).

SS-Rottenführer Theo SCHÖLEN, a member of the Fascist party since 1937, attested with regard to the mass gassings of human beings in the Lublin camp:

'I know that people were systematically murdered with gas in the gas chamber here. Inmates under my charge told me that they had personally witnessed more than 150 children being asphyxiated in the gas chamber. That was in July 1943. I myself saw the bodies of the victims being taken out of the gas chamber the next morning. A truck with a trailer was loaded with the bodies; altogether more than 100 bodies were loaded up. I often saw this truck and trailer driving back and forth between the gas chamber and the crematorium, leaving the gas chamber loaded with corpses and returning again empty' (l.d. 417).

The German STALP also confirms the mass extermination of men, women and children in the gas chambers (l.d. 474).

Later it was found that the Germans made equally extensive use of gas vans[498] *for killing people. The witness ATROCHOW saw this 'gas van' himself and describes it as follows:*

'This gas van was a hermetically sealable bus, earthy gray in color; it could hold 60 people, who were poisoned in it with exhaust gas. The people were poisoned on the drive from the city to the crematorium, and they were always already dead on arrival at the crematorium. Obersturmführer Gotschik has provided me with detailed witness testimony about the gas van' (l.d. 93).

Stetdiner, a soldier in the Polish army who had fallen into German captivity in 1939 and who was questioned on this subject, also gives a detailed description of this gas van. He says:

'More than once, gas vans came and brought fresh corpses. There could be no doubt that these victims had only just been asphyxiated, for the bodies were still warm… There were cases where these gas vans arrived three times daily. Externally, it was a truck with a massive metal box and metal floor; the door could be closed airtight. A hose ran from the engine under the box, connecting the engine with the box floor; there were numerous small openings in the floor, like a grid' (l.d. 438a).

Therefore, the Germans used not only [stationary] *gas chambers to asphyxiate people in Lublin, but also mobile gas chambers – gas vans, the so-called 'Duschegubki'* [soul-killers] *in which people were poisoned with exhaust gases.*

Thus, the mass murder of people in gas chambers is substantiated as follows:

First, by the testimonies of a considerable number of eyewitnesses;

Second, by the construction system of the gas chambers and the gas pipes contained therein;

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498 *Duschegubka* in Russian.

Third, by the hydrogen cyanide gas (substance 'Zyklon') in special cans, found in great numbers at the murder site, and by 'CO' gas in bottles."

In numerical respects alone, this report surprises the reader with its grotesque preponderance of charges and evidence. On the one hand, it cites all of 9 witnesses (13 if one counts the SS-men), even though fully 1,500 inmates had remained in the camp. On the other hand, the report describes gassing as having been one of the most-used methods of extermination, which means that it must have claimed the lives of many hundreds of thousands of inmates if the total victim count of 1.5 million[499] postulated by the Commission were correct. The thirteen witnesses quoted tell of a total of 19 gassings; the victim counts they cite total 4,414 dead (plus a few hundred).

Surely the Commission questioned not only the 13 witnesses mentioned in this report. It is no less certain that it chose the most important witness statements to support its conclusions. This is where the Commission's dishonesty becomes especially clear: it supports its allegation that hundreds of thousands of people were gassed with eyewitness testimony according to which a maximum of just over 5,000 people died in the gas chambers.

From a qualitative perspective, the report suffers from a further, obvious discrepancy. The Polish-Soviet Commission was composed of engineers who were thoroughly familiar with the properties and use of Zyklon B and CO. Accordingly, their conclusions could not agree with the untrammeled imaginings with which the inmates attempted to flesh out the *rumors* of homicidal gassings. For this reason the report perforce had to dispense with the witnesses quoted by Simonov – which results in the strange phenomenon that those inmates who were 'in the know' could not be heard while those who knew nothing became witnesses for the prosecution!

The statements cited in the report reveal the discomfiture of 'witnesses' who knew nothing but had to incriminate anyway: while these ex-inmates do speak of murders in the gas chamber (always in the singular, with one exception), they fail to specify just where exactly this gas chamber was located and how the gassing actually took place, and they never even mention Zyklon B or CO. Their accounts clearly show that they were witnesses to the aforementioned selections and falsely concluded that they had observed the preamble to homicidal gassings. This follows most obviously from the statements of the witness Benen, who has an entire gassing take place right in the Shower (without specifying whether this Shower was in Barrack 41 or 42), and from the statement of the witness Selent, who speaks of 300 to 350 inmates being sent naked into the Bath, "from where they did not return." The witnesses did not know what really took place, and therefore they gave free rein to their imagination. In the process they produced the most flagrant contradictions, such as inmate Stanisławski, who claims to have witnessed the gassing of 157 chil-

[499] See Chapter IV.

dren at the entrance to Compound III, approximately 350 m distant from Barrack 41, but then proceeds to describe the alleged events as though he had been inside the barrack.

These witnesses also provide but an incredibly vague description of the gassings themselves.

Whenever there is an opportunity to compare the eyewitness testimony with documented facts, the former proves to be false. For example, the inmate Selent speaks of the March 15, 1944, gassing of 87 Poles who "were deleted from the list of the living the following morning and entered into the list of the deceased," whereas in fact only 34 deaths were recorded on March 16 of that year, of which only three were Poles; the proportion of Poles among the total casualties also remained relatively low in the days to follow.[500]

The ignorance of these witnesses also becomes apparent with regard to the number of alleged execution gassings and of their victims; as we have already pointed out, the figures they cite stand in glaring contradiction to those the Commission alleges. For example, the witness to give the most details – Jan Wolski – speaks of only seven gassings totaling some 2,000 victims for a period of fully nine months, October 1942 to July 1943.

Time and again the witness statements claim that inmates were not only sent into the Bath but that bodies were also carried out and to the crematorium. If this claim were based on fact, another misunderstanding is no doubt at work here. As we have seen in Chapter VI, Chambers I and III had most likely been converted to temporary morgues in which a CO_2 cooling system was installed. If this hypothesis is correct, then clearly the witnesses simply misinterpreted what they saw by taking two real but unrelated events – the movement into Barracks 41 and 42 of inmates to be transferred to other camps, and the removal of dead bodies from the mortuaries of Barrack 41 to the crematorium – and construing them to indicate murder.

Two witnesses, Stetdiner and Atrochow, speak of the use of gas vans in Majdanek. This is news even to official historiography, according to which homicidal gas vans were allegedly used in the Chełmno camp, on the eastern front, and in Serbia, but not in Majdanek. However, here, too, there is a potential explanation. In Chapter VI we pointed out that the Central Construction Office of Majdanek had a working relationship with the Bernhard J. Goedecker company of Munich, which had worked with the Sanitation Institute of the Waffen-SS to design mobile disinfestation facilities. These worked along the lines of a hot air-steam-hot air process; disinfestation took place "in a closed chamber mounted on a vehicle."[501] It is certainly possible that such a

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[500] Of 35 inmates to die on the 17th, 7 were Poles, 6 of 46 on the 18th, 19 of 69 on the 19th, and 4 of 31 on the 20th. *GARF*, 7021-107-9, pp. 177-187.

[501] Walter Dötzer, *op. cit.* (note 326), p. 29.

facility was sent to the Lublin camp, where an inmate thought it was a mobile gas chamber for killing people.

The four SS-men who were interrogated by the Polish-Soviet Commission and who realized that the noose was pulling tighter and tighter around their necks showed a quite servile willingness to collaborate (for which one can hardly blame them), but their obvious good intentions to 'confess' everything could not hide the fact that they knew nothing of homicidal gassings. SS-*Rottenführer* Gensche (or Hensche) had spent two years in the camp but could tell of only one gassing operation, with 350 victims – and not even as first-hand witness, since his information had come from SS-*Oberscharführer* Perschon. SS-*Hauptscharführer* Gerstenmeier also had only second-hand knowledge of gassings; his sources were SS-*Oberscharführer* Endress and, again, Perschon. And, in a truly amazing twist, SS-*Rottenführer* Schölen was actually alerted to the gassing of 150 children *by the inmates under his command!* Obviously the prisoners were far better informed about the events in the camp than the SS were… Only SS-*Rottenführer* Thernes seconded the statements of the aforementioned witnesses and reported that on October 16, 1943, a transport of 5,000 new arrivals from Warsaw was screened and that 500 people deemed unfit to work had been selected for the gas chambers. However, the large transports from Warsaw to Majdanek took place between May and August 1943;[502] beyond that, we must note that the percentage of prisoners allegedly fit to work (90%) is too high to be credible.[503] Thernes was also aware of a second gassing, but he had only heard of it from SS-*Untersturmführer* Rindfleisch.

In light of these plain and unambiguous facts it is hardly necessary to spend more time on the post-war eyewitness testimony about homicidal gassings in Majdanek. It speaks volumes that Marszałek, the official historian of the Majdanek camp, devoted all of *two pages* to the gassings there, and supports these by quoting, not a former inmate of Majdanek or an SS-man who had been stationed there, but SS-*Rottenführer* Pery Broad, who had been stationed in Auschwitz. Marszałek writes:[504]

> *"The technique of killing with the gas is presented below by Perry* [sic] *Broad, an employee of the Political Division of the Auschwitz camp. A similar technique was applied in Majdanek."*

It would be hard to imagine how the total bankruptcy of the official Majdanek historiography could be exposed more clearly!

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[502] See Chapter II.

[503] At that time, according to a May 26, 1944 report (NG-2190) by E. von Thadden, only one-third of the deported Hungarian Jews were fit to work.

[504] Marszałek, *op. cit.* (note 209), p. 141.

Chapter VIII: Zyklon B Deliveries to the Majdanek Concentration Camp

1. Zyklon B: Manufacturers and Distributors

In Germany, Zyklon B was manufactured by two companies: the Dessau Plant for Sugar and Chemical Industry A.G. in Dessau and the Kali Works A.G. in Kolin.[505] Both firms produced this insecticide for DEGESCH (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Schädlingsbekämpfung*, German Company for Pest Control), which owned the patent and the manufacturing license and was thus the legal producer of the substance.

DEGESCH did not sell Zyklon B directly but via two main distributors: the Frankfurt-based company Heerdt und Lingler GmbH ("Heli") and the Hamburg-based company Tesch und Stabenow International Company for Pest Control ("Testa"), which had split the market between them. Heli operated in the territories west of the Elbe river, Testa in those east thereof, including the Sudeten Gau, the General Government and the Reich Commissioner's Department East; it also sold the insecticide in Denmark, Norway and Finland. Accordingly, the Majdanek concentration camp , being on the territory of the General Government, obtained its Zyklon B from the Testa company.

An extensive correspondence on this subject between the camp administration, Testa, and the SS institutions also involved in the Zyklon B deliveries has survived to present times. This correspondence[506] was examined by the Polish historian Adela Toniak, whose study reproduces 37 of the 60 total documents involved.[507] According to the author, the correspondence in question was found, together with other documents, in July 1944 in a German truck parked on the camp grounds.[508] The extant documentation allows us to reconstruct this aspect of the camp's history almost completely. However, to make all this easier to understand, we shall first outline the bureaucratic procedures involved in obtaining supplies of this insecticide.

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[505] The firm I.G. Farbenindustrie AG only manufactured the warning substance bromoacetic-methylester and the stabilizer chlorocarbonic-methlyester.
[506] *APMM*, sygn. I.d.2, v. 1.
[507] Adela Toniak, *op. cit.* (note 376), pp. 129-170.
[508] *Ibid.*, p. 132.

2. The Bureaucratic Procedure for Obtaining Zyklon B

A shipment of Zyklon B to the Majdanek concentration camp (and to any other German camp as well) required three separate approvals from higher SS authorities: one sanitation-medical, one financial and one budgetary approval. The path taken by an order was as follows:

The first camp physician requisitioned a certain quantity of Zyklon B from the Administration, specifying its intended use. The Administration passed this request on to *Amt DIII* (Sanitation and Camp Hygiene) of the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office, which approved the order if it was justified from a sanitation and medical perspective. Next, the Administration of camp Majdanek turned to *Amt DIV* (Concentration Camp Administration), whose Section DIV/5 (Legal, Taxation and Contract Matters) saw to the required financing and approved the necessary funds. Payment was then made via Section DIV/1 (Budget, Funds and Salaries).

Since all materials, especially metals, were rationed under the conditions imposed by the war economy, the Tesch und Stabenow company could only sell the Zyklon B to a state authority, if it was granted a sufficient quantity of steel to manufacture the cans in which the Zyklon B was packaged. This requisition (called *Kennziffer,* or Reference Number) was sent by Tesch und Stabenow to the Zyklon B manufacturer Dessau Plant, which then received the steel needed for the cans from the appropriate state authority. 776 g of steel were required for each can intended to hold 1.5 of kg Zyklon B.[509] This follows from two requisitions, dated June 3 and 21, 1943, pertaining to the supply of 1,144 kg steel for 1,474 cans[510] and 2,328 kg for 3,000 cans.[511]

To receive a Reference Number, the Tesch und Stabenow company had to comply with two bureaucratic formalities. First, it had to send a "Metal Allocation Voucher," in triplicate, to the SS Raw Materials Office in Berlin-Halensee. This document, called "Allocation Voucher" for short, was a list of the requested metals (steel, copper, zinc etc.), their quantities and intended use. Second, it had to inform the camp administration of the "Steel Requisition," *i.e.*, the quantity of steel needed to manufacture the cans.

On the request of the concentration camp Administration, the Reference Number was issued by the Steel Distribution Office of the Construction Inspectorate of the Waffen-SS and Police in the General Government, located at Außenring no. 118, Cracow, and subordinate to the Higher SS and Police Chief in the General Government. SS-Economist. Construction Section. This latter authority was headquartered at the same place as the Construction In-

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[509] The weight is that of the HCN. As we have seen in Chapter VI, a can containing 1,500g Zyklon B weighed 3,750g in total. Aside from the 1,500g HCN it also contained 1,650g kieselguhr or a similar carrier substance. The empty can weighed 600g.

[510] 1,144 / 1,474 = 0.776.

[511] 2,328 / 3,000 = 0.776.

spectorate and was in turn subordinate to the Raw Materials Office of the *Reichsführer*-SS, headquartered at Kurfürstendamm no. 143/6, Berlin-Halensee. The aforementioned Steel Distribution Office also issued a special mark, the "Eastern Control Number," which had to be noted on the Metal Allocation Voucher. After approval had been granted by the sanitation-medical and financial authorities in the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office (and sometimes even before, if there was no doubt that these approvals would in fact be granted), the Administration proceeded to order a given quantity of Zyklon B from Tesch und Stabenow. That company then forwarded the supply requisition, with a listing of the required number and size of the cans, to the office in question via the aforementioned bureaucratic channels.

If the Zyklon B was to be delivered by rail, the Administration first had to send Tesch und Stabenow a Wehrmacht Freight Waybill. It could also choose to pick the product up directly from the manufacturer in Dessau, per truck. 'Spent Zyklon' (*i.e.* the inert carrier substance) was collected and returned to the Dessau Plant, where it was recycled. In all likelihood, empty cans were also reused.

As of July 1943, the distributor companies were no longer permitted to supply Zyklon B directly to the camps; the latter had to direct their requests to the Main Sanitation Office in Berlin-Lichtenberg. The basis for this change in supply procedure was the Reich Minister of Commerce's Edict II L 120151/43, as well as Edict Rü A Rü I Nr. 15325/43, issued on July 22, 1943, by the Reich Minister of Arms and Ammunition about the expansion of central procurement of supplies for sanitation purposes.

3. The Correspondence between the Administration and the Tesch und Stabenow Company

In December 1941 typhus broke out among the Soviet POWs interned in Majdanek. On the 23rd of that month, the camp administration contacted Tesch und Stabenow to find out whether they had a branch office in the General Government; there was a possibility, the Administration stated, that "a gassing"[512] would need to be performed in the camp. On the 27th Tesch und Stabenow replied in the negative, but enclosed a "Questionnaire for a Cost Estimate" containing all the information needed for the optimal performance of a gassing.[513] However, this correspondence brought no practical results. On July

[512] *APMM*, sygn. I.d.2, v. 1, p. 113. Letter from the Administration to Tesch und Stabenow, dated Nov. 23, 1941. Re.: gassing with Zyklon B.

[513] *Ibid.*, p. 115. Letter from the Tesch und Stabenow company to the Administration of the POW Camp Lublin, dated Dec. 27, 1941.

29, 1942, SS-*Oberscharführer* Hans Perschon, a member of the Camp Sanitation Service, personally traveled to Hamburg and visited the headquarters of Tesch und Stabenow, where he dropped off two order forms: Form 200, for 3 gas-can openers, 5 spare blades, 10 gas masks, 200 inserts, 1 gas residue detector and 20 rubber caps, as well as Form 251 for 6,000 cans of Zyklon B at 1.5 kg, *i.e.*, a total of 9 tons. Perschon took some of the accessory equipment with him right then and there. Tesch und Stabenow instructed the Dessau Plant to furnish Perschon with 20 crates of 12 cans of Zyklon B at 1,500 grams, a total of 240 cans containing 360 kg altogether. The remainder of the Zyklon ordered could not be supplied without the requisite Reference Number.[514]

On August 3, 1942, SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Heinrich Worster, Chief of Administration, applied to the Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police in the General Government for the allocation of 6,516 kg hot-rolled steel and 98 kg high-grade zinc, explaining his request as follows:[515]

> *"These Reference Numbers are required in order to obtain the disinfestation equipment and materials needed for this camp, so that the hazards posed by incipient epidemics and contaminated barracks, some of which are already badly louse-infested, can be effectively brought under control."*

On August 22, Worster notified the firm Tesch und Stabenow that the previous order had been based on incorrect assumptions: the actual requirement was 1,474 cans at 1,500 g, at a value of RM 13,995.63, of which 360 cans had already been delivered together with invoice no. 1,738 of August 6. Depending on circumstances, another order would be placed, this time for 1,114 cans at a total value of RM 10,577.43.[516] The same day the Chief of Administration sent the following requisition to *Amt DIV* of the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office:[517]

> *"To eliminate the danger of epidemics in this camp, a larger quantity of the disinfestation agent Zyklon CN, supplied by the firm Tesch und Stabenow of Hamburg 1, is required. For the time being, a shipment of 1,474 cans of Zyklon CN, at RM 13,995.63, is needed. Permission for purchase, as well as the transfer of the abovementioned funds, is hereby requested."*

Five days later, *Amt DIV* approved the purchase.[518]

On August 26 the Tesch und Stabenow company announced that the order for 6,000 cans had been cancelled. The cans already delivered would be treat-

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[514] *Ibid.*, pp. 107-109. Letter from the Tesch und Stabenow company to the Administration of the POW Camp Lublin, dated July 29, 1942.

[515] *Ibid.*, p. 103. Letter from the Chief of Administration to the Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police in the General Government, dated Aug. 3, 1942.

[516] *Ibid.*, p. 99. Letter from the Chief of Administration to Tesch und Stabenow, dated Aug. 22, 1942.

[517] *Ibid.*, p. 97. Letter from the Chief of Administration to the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office, *Amt D IV*, dated Aug. 22, 1942. Re.: obtaining a disinfestant.

[518] *Ibid.*, p. 95. Letter from *Amt D IV* of the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office to the Administration of the POW Camp Lublin, dated Aug. 27, 1942. Re.: obtaining hydrogen cyanide Zyklon.

ed as part of the following order for 1,474 cans. 360 cans had been delivered on July 30 and on August 20, so that 754 cans still remained to be supplied. The entire order required a steel allocation of 1,601 kg, for which reason the company requested the prompt issuance of the appropriate Reference Number.[519] On September 4 Tesch und Stabenow inquired with the Administration whether they should ship the remaining 754 cans by rail, or whether the Administration intended to pick them up.[520] On September 7 Worster responded by sending a waybill for rail delivery, noting that the Zyklon already supplied would last until October 1, 1942.[521]

That same day, acting on Worster's request of September 1,[522] Tesch und Stabenow sent the Administration the "Allocation Voucher for Iron and Steel with Control Number East 94584/1942/6,516kg,"[523] which was no longer valid; the Construction Inspectorate of the Waffen-SS and Police in the General Government had to issue a new one so that the Reference Number could be replaced with one required for the shipment of 1,601 kg of steel. Worster did so on September 14.[524] But the request for allocation of 6,516 kg of steel was not cancelled, as Worster had wanted: according to a message from the Head of the Building Group with the Higher SS and Police Chief in the General Government, SS-*Obersturmführer* Norbert Grosch (who seems not to have been fully informed of the matter), the request could not be filled because the allotment previously granted the Construction Office had been cancelled on the orders of the Reich Economic Ministry.[525]

On February 2, 1943, the Chief of Administration sent the Dessau Plant a rail shipment of 1,163 kg "Empties (spent Zyklon)," *i.e.*, the inert carrier substance, together with the appropriate Wehrmacht waybill.[526]

On May 22, Worster inquired with Tesch und Stabenow whether he could expect the "speedy delivery of another 1,474 cans of Zyklon CN" and asked that in that case he be given the appropriate Reference Number.[527] In their re-

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[519] *Ibid.*, p. 93. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the POW Camp Lublin, dated Aug. 26, 1942.
[520] *Ibid.*, p. 89. Telex from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the POW Camp Lublin, dated Sept. 4, 1942.
[521] *Ibid.*, p. 87. Letter from the Chief of Administration to the Tesch und Stabenow company, dated Sept. 7, 1942. Re.: shipment of Zyklon B.
[522] *Ibid.*, p. 87. Letter from the Chief of Administration to the Tesch und Stabenow company, dated Sept. 1, 1942.
[523] *Ibid.*, p. 85. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the POW Camp Lublin, dated Sept. 7, 1942.
[524] *Ibid.*, p. 83. Letter from the Chief of Administration to the Construction Inspectorate of the Waffen-SS and Police in the General Government, dated Sept. 14, 1942.
[525] *Ibid.*, p. 79. Letter from the Chief of the Building Group of the SS-Economist at the Higher SS and Police Chief in the General Government to the POW Camp Lublin, Sept. 21, 1942.
[526] *Ibid.*, p. 77. Administration of the POW Camp Lublin, Wehrmacht waybill of Feb. 2, 1943.
[527] *Ibid.*, p. 75. Letter from the Chief of Administration to Tesch und Stabenow, dated May 22, 1943. Re.: obtaining Zyklon CN.

ply of May 28, the company stated that they would be able to fill the order, and asked which size of can (1,000, 1,200 or 1,500 g) was desired.[528] On June 3, Worster replied by telegraph that cans containing 1,500 g were needed, and asked for prompt notification regarding the Reference Number.[529] Tesch und Stabenow complied the very same day: 1,144 kg steel would be needed to manufacture 1,474 cans of the requested size.[530] Still on June 3,[531] Worster sent the firm an additional order for "200 respirator inserts 'J'".[532] On June 7 Tesch und Stabenow replied that the order had already been forwarded to their supplier, and that delivery would take 8 to 10 weeks.[533]

On June 8 the Chief of Administration sent the company Order Form 23 for 3,000 cans of Zyklon at 1,500 g, superseding the previous order for 1,474 cans.[534] On June 12, Worster sent Tesch und Stabenow a Wehrmacht waybill for shipping 200 respirator inserts of type "J,"[535] and on the 21st of the same month he asked the SS-Economist of the Higher SS and Police Chief in the General Government for allocation of 2,328 kg steel for the 3,000 cans of Zyklon ordered, adding the following explanation for his request:[536]

> *"These Reference Numbers are needed for the purchase of the required quantities of hydrocyanic acid (Zyklon) so that disinfestation of inmate quarters and clothing can proceed without delay, to forestall the danger of epidemics."*

The following day the Administration issued Tesch und Stabenow a Wehrmacht waybill for 1,500 cans of Zyklon B, and inquired whether it could pick up part of the remaining 1,500 cans directly in Dessau.[537] On July 2 the company replied that they had forwarded the inquiry to the Dessau Plant but could not as yet give a definite answer.[538]

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[528] *Ibid.*, p. 73. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the Concentration Camp Lublin, dated May 28, 1943.

[529] *Ibid.*, p. 71. Telephone message from the Chief of Administration to Tesch und Stabenow, of June 3, 1943. Re.: obtaining Zyklon CN.

[530] *Ibid.*, p. 65. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the Concentration Camp Lublin, dated June 3, 1943.

[531] *Ibid.*, p. 69. Letter from the Chief of Administration to Tesch und Stabenow, dated June 3, 1943. Re.: respirator inserts.

[532] The German filter inserts were of the following kinds: A, B, D, E, F, G, J, K, L, M, O, R and U. Each letter corresponded to a specific color and a specific use. Filter G (blue) was for hydrogen cyanide, Filter J (blue-brown) for Zyklon B. F. Flury and F. Zernik, *op. cit.* (note 395), p. 611.

[533] *APMM*, sygn. I.d.2, v. 1, p. 59. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the Concentration Camp Lublin, dated June 7, 1943.

[534] *Ibid.*, p. 63. Letter from the Chief of Administration to Tesch und Stabenow, dated June 8, 1942. Re.: shipment of Zyklon.

[535] *Ibid.*, p. 57. Letter from the Chief of Administration, dated June 12, 1943. Re.: respirator inserts "J."

[536] *Ibid.*, p. 43. Letter from the Chief of Administration to the Higher SS and Police Chief in the General Government, dated June 21, 1943.

[537] *Ibid.*, p. 39. Letter from the Chief of Administration to Tesch und Stabenow, dated June 22, 1943.

[538] *Ibid.*, p. 67. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the Concentration

On July 10 the Chief of Administration contacted the Dessau Plant directly to find out when he could pick up the Zyklon B ordered; he stressed that the matter was very urgent.[539] He did not need to wait long for an answer: only two days later the Administration received a telegram from Tesch und Stabenow, stating: "500 kg Zyklon ready for pick-up in Dessau – Testa."[540] The Dessau Plant itself also sent the same message, first per telephone and then by telegram personally to SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Worster: "500 kg Zyklon ready for pick-up on Thursday – Refinery."[541] In the accompanying letter, Tesch und Stabenow rebuked the Administration for having gone behind their backs directly to the Dessau Plant; they informed the Administration that 500 kg Zyklon were ready for them in Dessau, but "as a result of repairs that cannot be postponed," no further deliveries could be made until August.[542]

The Reference Number for 3,000 cans of Zyklon B ordered on June 8 had been sent to Tesch und Stabenow on June 17,[543] but on August 26 it had not yet been received.[544] Worster now explained the matter to the SS Economist for the Higher SS and Police Chief,[545] who turned to the Raw Materials Office in Berlin-Halensee with the request that they make inquiries with the mail system regarding the lost Reference Number, and approve a new one if need be.[546] As of October 12 Tesch und Stabenow were still waiting for something concrete.[547] It was not until October 20 that the matter was finally resolved: Tesch und Stabenow received a new allocation of 2,328 kg of steel.[548]

In August 1943 the sanitary conditions in the camp called for a general disinfection. On the 11th of that month the First Camp Physician sent the following letter to the Administration:[549]

Camp Lublin, dated July 2, 1943.

[539] *Ibid.*, p. 61. Telephone message from the Chief of Administration to the Dessau Plant, July 10, 1943.

[540] *Ibid.*, p. 51. Telegram from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the Concentration Camp Lublin, dated July 12, 1943.

[541] *Ibid.*, pp. 53 and 55. Telephone message and telegram from the Dessau Plant to SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Worster, dated July 12, 1943.

[542] *Ibid.*, p. 49. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the Concentration Camp Lublin, dated July 12, 1943.

[543] *Ibid.*, p. 35. Letter from the Chief of Administration to Tesch und Stabenow, dated July 30, 1943.

[544] *Ibid.*, p. 25. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the Concentration Camp Lublin, dated Aug. 26, 1943.

[545] *Ibid.*, p. 21. Letter from the Chief of Administration to the Higher SS and Police Chief in the General Government. The SS-Economist, dated Sept. 1, 1943.

[546] *Ibid.*, p. 17. Letter from the Chief of Group C – Buildings to the Raw Materials Office in Berlin-Halensee, dated Sept. 7, 1943.

[547] *Ibid.*, p. 11. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the Concentration Camp Lublin, dated Oct. 12, 1943.

[548] *Ibid.*, p. 7. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the Concentration Camp Lublin, dated Oct. 20, 1943.

[549] *Ibid.*, p. 37. Letter from the First Camp Physician of the Concentration Camp Lublin to the

"Since another thorough disinfection is to be performed in the Men's Concentration Camp, a larger quantity of Cyklon gas will be required. I hereby request that a supply of this gas be ordered so that efforts at disinfection can proceed without interruption."

On August 12 the Administration replied that they had already ordered large quantities of Zyklon B from Tesch und Stabenow, but that only a small part of the order had been received to date. Further, "as a consequence of the terror attacks on Hamburg" no further deliveries could be expected for the time being; the Administration requested that "disinfection should not begin just yet."[550]

That same day the Administration sent Tesch und Stabenow a letter pointing out that of the 3,000 cans of Zyklon ordered on June 8, only 342 cans, at 1,500 grams, a total of 513 kg, had been delivered on July 16, with invoice dated July 19. The Administration requested the immediate delivery of at least 1,500 cans and inquired when it might expect the remaining 2,658 cans.[551] In its reply the company stated that it had forwarded the inquiry to their supplier, and asked whether the Administration had picked up the 500 kg Zyklon that had been set aside in Dessau on July 12.[552] Since the Administration had received only 342 cans, for which the invoice was issued by Tesch und Stabenow, it is clear that these 500 kg had not been picked up. On August 31 the Chief of Administration sent a protest to the company because no further deliveries had taken place beyond the aforementioned 342 cans; he concluded his letter with the words:[553]

"Disinfection of the camp is urgently necessary and cannot tolerate further delays in supply."

The same day Worster also wrote to the Dessau Plant and requested shipment of the remaining Zyklon B order, which was most urgently needed "for disinfecting the camp."[554]

On September 11 the First Camp Physician again sent an urgent request to the Administration:[555]

Administration, dated Aug. 11, 1943.

[550] *Ibid.*, p. 33. Letter from the Chief of Administration to the First Camp Physician, dated Aug. 12, 1943. Re.: disinfection with Zyklon gas.

[551] *Ibid.*, p. 31. Letter from the Chief of Administration to Tesch und Stabenow, dated Aug. 12, 1943.

[552] *Ibid.*, p. 23. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the Concentration Camp Lublin, dated Aug. 25, 1943.

[553] *Ibid.*, p. 27. Letter from the Chief of Administration to Tesch und Stabenow, dated Aug. 31, 1943.

[554] *Ibid.*, p. 29. Letter from the Chief of Administration to the Dessau Plant, dated Aug. 31, 1943. Re.: shipment of Zyklon.

[555] *Ibid.*, p. 19. Letter from the First Camp Physician to the Administration, dated Sept. 11, 1943.

"I hereby request that larger quantities of disinfection gas be ordered, for purposes of disinfecting the camp. Reason: the supply of disinfectant gas is almost exhausted and an undesirable interruption of efforts at disinfection may result."

On September 13, the Administration replied that the manufacturer was "extremely overtaxed" and that they did not know when and in what quantities "disinfectant gas" would become available to the camp. Worster advised the camp doctor

"[…] *to use the remaining supply of disinfectant gas as sparingly as possible and, accordingly, to restrict disinfection to only the most absolutely necessary."*[556]

On the 21st of that same month, the Chief of Administration wrote the First Camp Physician a letter again dealing with "disinfectant gas"; with reference to the earlier letter, he stated that a delivery of 666 cans of Zyklon (corresponding to 999 kg) was expected to arrive at the camp in the next few days, and requested that "in light of this, please proceed with disinfection."[557]

On June 19, 1944, Worster had sent an inquiry to Tesch und Stabenow, asking whether the company could manage the speedy delivery of another 1,500 cans of the insecticide.[558] Their answer was as follows:[559]

"In reply to your abovementioned letter, we must inform you that due to the Edict of the Reich Minister of Commerce, II L 1/20151/43, and the Reich Minister of Arms and Ammunition, Rü A Rü I Nr. 15325/43 of July 22, 1943, regarding the expansion of central procurement of supplies for sanitation purposes, this kind of order is no longer to be filled directly.

Therefore we regret that we cannot accept orders from you directly. Rather, we would ask that you requisition further supplies either directly from the Main Sanitation Office in Berlin-Lichtenberg, or via the Sanitation Office in charge of your area."

The Administration attempted to negotiate this obstacle by turning to the garrison physician of the SS and Police Lublin, who placed a "special order for 500 cans of Cyclon B" with *Amt DIII* on July 3, 1944, stating that there was a pressing need for this substance:[560]

"Due to the numerous cases of typhus presently occurring in the field hospital for Soviet Russian war-disabled, as well as due to the increase in inmate population resulting from transferred and newly committed inmates, the camp cannot do without Cyclon B."

This is the last document in this correspondence. Twenty days after this letter was written, the Red Army moved into Majdanek.

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[556] *Ibid.*, p. 13. Letter from the Chief of Administration to the First Camp Physician, dated Sept. 13, 1943. Re.: disinfectant gas.

[557] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[558] *Ibid.*, p. 5. Letter from the Chief of Administration to Tesch und Stabenow, dated June 19, 1944. Re.: obtaining Zyklon CN.

[559] *Ibid.*, p. 3. Letter from Tesch und Stabenow to the Administration of the Concentration Camp Lublin, dated June 26, 1944.

[560] *Ibid.*, p. 1. Letter from the garrison physician of the SS and Police Lublin to the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office, *Amt D III*. Re.: special order of Zyklon B.

4. The Quantity of Zyklon B Supplied to the Majdanek Concentration Camp

In her aforementioned article, Adela Toniak points out gaps in the surviving documentation, and writes:[561]

> *"For the reasons mentioned, any attempt at calculating the exact quantities of Zyklon supplied to Majdanek encounters a serious obstacle. Of the first order for 6,000 cans at 1,500 g, 300 cans were delivered on July 30, 1942, and 764 on September 4. A gap in the correspondence extends from September 22, 1942, to July 1, 1943, after which this order is not mentioned again, therefore one must assume that shipment was made and that the camp received 2,211 kg Zyklon B.*
>
> *The first document from after this gap states that 500 kg Zyklon were ready for the camp, to be picked up in Dessau. This shows that the administration had ordered more of the gas in the meantime.*
>
> *After another gap, this time of two months, it again ordered 1,474 cans of Zyklon B, and a few days later, 3,000 more cans = 4,500 kg, identifying this last letter as Order No. 23. The following correspondence refers to the second order, and it is the only one to be invoiced. Later letters indicate that the camp authorities received 342 cans = 513 kg* [Zyklon B] *and 666 cans = 999 kg, a total of 2,012 kg.*
>
> *The subsequent eight-month gap in the documentation – after which another order was placed for 1,500 cans of Zyklon B at 1,500 g, which was changed on July 3, 1944, to an order for 500 cans – gives cause to assume that the 4,500 kg of the substance in question had been delivered in full. A simple calculation shows that in 1943 the camp received 5,000 kg Zyklon B from the manufacturer."*

The correspondence ends with the July 3, 1944, order for 500 cans of Zyklon B. In fact, the camp office files contain no record of this order, but 1,000 cans of gas were found in Majdanek immediately after capture, proving that the order placed with this letter actually was filled.

Summing up the calculations based on the surviving letters, we conclude that between July 29, 1942, and July 3, 1944, the camp administration of Majdanek received shipments of Zyklon B totaling 7,711 kg.

The following is a table summary of Adela Toniak's calculations:

YEAR	# OF CANS	QUANTITY
1942	1,474	2,211 kg
1943	(333)	500 kg
1944	3,000	4,500 kg
	500	500 kg
	Total:	**7,711 kg**

This calculation contains two glaring errors. The first relates to the 500 kg of Zyklon B mentioned in the two telegrams of July 12, 1943; as we have seen above, these not only comprised part of the order of June 8, 1943, for 3,000

[561] Adela Toniak, *op. cit.* (note 376), pp. 136f.

cans at 1,500 grams, but what is more, the camp administration did not even pick them up. That means that Adela Toniak counted these 500 kg twice.

The second error relates to the 500 cans from the special order of July 3, 1944. According to the Polish-Soviet Commission, 535 cans of Zyklon B were found in Majdanek,[562] 135 for 500 g and the remaining 400 for 1,500 g of the insecticide.[563] Adela Toniak attributed a content of 1,000 g Zyklon B to each of the mentioned 500 cans, but cans of this weight were neither mentioned in the documents nor ever found. If the 500 cans in question were actually supplied, they either contained 1,500 g each of the insecticide – and in that case the shipment's total weight was 750 kg – or else they contained 500 g each, in which case their contents totaled 250 kg. The latter is probably most likely, since all previous orders had been for cans containing 1,500 g, meaning that the 135 cans of differing size (500 g) can only have been part of the last shipment to the camp. Other considerations also support this hypothesis.

Of the 3,000 cans = 4,500 kg of Zyklon B ordered on June 8, 1943, the administration received 1,008 cans by the end of September of that year: 342 cans (=513 kg) on July 16 and 666 cans (=999 kg) in late September. Therefore, the remaining 1,992 cans were delivered in the following months, and this supply lasted until the day – June 19, 1944 – when the Administration inquired whether Tesch und Stabenow could manage the "speedy delivery" of an additional 1,500 cans at 1,500 g. Therefore, the 400 cans at 1,500 g mentioned by the Polish-Soviet Commission no doubt were part of this total of 1,992 cans. The remaining 135 cans at 500 g, which made for a rather insignificant quantity of Zyklon (67.5 kg), could hardly have comprised an entire delivery, so that it is extremely likely that these were the remainder of the shipment of 500 cans of this size.

All this indicates that the order of July 3, 1944, resulted in the camp receiving 500 cans at 500 g of Zyklon B, a total of 250 kg.

We can now tabulate how much Zyklon B was supplied to the Majdanek camp in total:

YEAR	# OF CANS	QUANTITY
1942	1,474	2,211 kg
1943	3,000	4,500 kg
1944	500	250 kg
Total	**4,974**	**6,961 kg**

What remains to be determined is whether there were other shipments not noted in the surviving documentation. The following table summarizes the orders and deliveries as indicated in the documents:

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[562] The 1,000 cans mentioned by A. Toniak are not supported by any documentation.
[563] cf. Chapter VI.

ZYKLON B SHIPMENTS TO THE LUBLIN-MAJDANEK CAMP

Orders			Deliveries		
Date	# of cans	mass [kg]	Time span	# of cans	mass [kg]
07/25/1942 08/22/1942	1,474	2,211	July 30, 1942	360	540
			Aug. 20, 1942	360	540
			Sept. 1942	754	1,131
			Subtotal	*1,474*	*2,211*
05/22/1943 06/08/1943	3,000	4,500	July 16, 1943	342	513
			Sept. 1943	666	999
			Oct. 1943 to June 1944	1,992	2,988
			Subtotal	*3,000*	*4,500*
06/19/1944 07/03/1944	(500)	(250)	July 1944	(500)	(250)
Total:	**4,974**	**6,961**		**4,974**	**6,961**

As we can see, there are two long intervals between the orders – one of nine months (August 22, 1942, to May 22, 1943) and one of an entire year (June 8, 1943, to June 19, 1944). The few documents from these time periods contain no mention of additional Zyklon shipments. Where the second interval is concerned, any such additional shipments can be definitely ruled out, because when the camp Administration ordered 1,500 cans of Zyklon from Tesch und Stabenow on June 19, 1944, the latter refused the order, making reference to an edict by the Reich Minister of Commerce and the Reich Minister of Arms and Ammunition from July 22, 1943. Clearly, therefore, the administration was not yet aware of this edict, issued a year earlier, which proves that no further orders had been placed after that of June 8, 1943.

Regarding the first interval, we note that during the time from September 22, 1942, to May 22, 1943, only one single relevant document is known to exist – namely, the Wehrmacht waybill of February 2, 1943, with which the Administration returned 1,163 kg "spent Zyklon" to the Dessau Plant. Since the inert carrier substance in one can of Zyklon B weighed 1,650 g, this quantity theoretically corresponded to (1,163/1.65=) 705 cans. In practice, of course, one had to expect that some of the carrier would be lost, so that this quantity may have come from the 720 cans delivered on July 30 and August 20, 1942,[564] or from the 754 cans delivered in September 1942.[565] In the first case, the Administration would have had a remaining supply of 754 cans in early February 1943, and an order prior to the inquiry of May 22 of that year would have been superfluous; in the second case, the administration would have used up the entire supply from 1942. As pointed out before, the letter of May 22,

[564] In this case the loss would amount to approx. 2%.
[565] In this case the loss would amount to approx. 6.5%.

1943, was not an actual order, but merely an inquiry: the Administration wanted to know if a delivery of "another 1,474 cans of Zyklon CN" would be possible. The wording indicates that exactly this number of cans had been ordered before – but was the order in question that of 1942 or another, later one?

To answer this question, let us briefly recap what we have found so far:

1) As we have shown with regard to the second undocumented interval, an absence of documents need not mean that any documents are actually missing;
2) The Wehrmacht waybill of February 2, 1943 (for 754 cans) agrees perfectly with the hypothesis that at that time 720 of the 1,474 cans of Zyklon B ordered in 1942 had already been delivered;
3) There is no indication of Zyklon deliveries having taken place in the interval in question.

The logical conclusion can only be that no undocumented orders were placed.

One last point needs to be cleared up. The time from December 27, 1941, to July 29, 1942, is another long period for which we know of no orders or shipments of Zyklon. Could there have been some anyway?

This last question also can be unequivocally denied. The July 29, 1942, letter from Tesch und Stabenow states:

> *"Delivery will be made based on our current list prices and our enclosed terms of sale and delivery. We would ask you to return one copy of these terms,*[566] *signed and with your official stamp."*

This shows that Tesch und Stabenow had not supplied the Administration with Zyklon before, since otherwise the latter would already have been familiar with the terms of sale and delivery and the manufacturer would not have needed to explain anything.

5. Purpose of the Zyklon B Shipments

Even though the documents do not give cause for even the slightest doubt that the Zyklon B ordered by the Administration of the Majdanek concentration camp was used for disinfestation and nothing else, Adela Toniak prefers to believe in its homicidal purpose. She writes:[567]

> *"Based on the surviving correspondence regarding the shipments of Zyklon B gas to Majdanek, one finds that this substance was received in enormous quantities but was nonetheless constantly in short supply, and that the camp authorities sent numerous reminders in this regard.*

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[566] This was a Statement of Terms titled "Verkaufs- und Lieferbedingungen für Zyklon, Calcid, Aethylenoxyd oder T-Gas, Tritox und Cartox." *APMM*, sygn. I.d.2, v. 1, p. 121.

[567] Adela Toniak, *op. cit.* (note 376), p. 137.

One must keep in mind that the mass extermination was kept strictly secret, so that the letters ordering the Zyklon B did not reveal its purpose. This purpose only becomes apparent in the last letter, where we encounter a sort of code word ('special order') which the Germans often used to hint at the liquidation of the inmates.

The reason given in the letters ordering the gas was the need to disinfect the camp due to the epidemics raging there. Originally, this poison had in fact been developed as an insecticide. However, disinfestations of such frequency and extent as would correspond to the quantities of the chemical product that were actually ordered would have been not at all commensurate with the purpose and principles of the camp.

Moreover, the witness statements and recollections of the former inmates indicate that disinfestation of the inmates' quarters in the camp was done only sporadically. Besides, as I have already pointed out, steam delousing chambers for disinfecting the clothing were located in the immediate vicinity of the gas chambers.

After all, the placement of an order for gas just prior to the camp's liberation proves nothing other than the intent to use it to murder sick and exhausted inmates whose evacuation would have been a problem. The piles of corpses of gassed people [zagazowanych ludzi] *that were found in the camp after the Germans had fled confirm this.*

When placed into context with other documents, the correspondence about the Zyklon B supplied to the Majdanek camp reveals one fragment of the mechanism by which the system of concentration camps functioned. It sheds light on a little-known matter which the authorities of the Reich kept a closely guarded secret."

From a historical perspective this argument is utterly unfounded. Since devastating typhus epidemics raged in Majdanek time and again (which even Polish historiography cannot deny), and since Zyklon B was the most effective means with which to combat them (which even Adela Toniak concedes), there is no good reason to assume that the shipments of Zyklon served any purpose other than the extermination of lice. Regarding the "code word 'special order,'" this kind of decipherment is part of a discredited system of interpretation that flourished in earlier decades but has been thoroughly disqualified by Jean-Claude Pressac. Pressac states that 97 to 98% of the Zyklon B supplied to Auschwitz was used for delousing and only 2 to 3% for homicidal gassings.[568] If homicidal gassings had in fact taken place in that camp, those 2 to 3% would have sufficed to accomplish the alleged number of gas chamber murders, so that Pressac's calculation is theoretically correct.

This goes even more so for Majdanek, where a mere 1% of the Zyklon delivered there would have sufficed for the alleged number of homicidal gassings.

The proof of this is as follows:

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[568] Jean-Claude Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers,* New York: The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1989, p. 188; also Jean-Claude Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz. Die Technik des Massenmordes,* Munich: Piper, 1994, p. 58.

In Chamber III, one can of Zyklon B (1,500 g) would have been enough to kill 1,900 people with a concentration of HCN exceeding by a factor of ten the concentration of 3g/m³ which produces lethal effects in a very short time.[569] Even if we accept Łukaszkiewicz's victim count, according to which one-quarter of the alleged 360,000 victims of Majdanek were gassed and which today's Polish historiography acknowledges to be an exaggeration, these 90,000 people could have been killed with approximately 70 kg of the poison, *i.e.*, with about 1% of the actual quantity supplied.

The room in question covers a surface area of approximately 35m² and has a volume of about 70m³. Presupposing a maximum number of 218 victims per gassing, and subtracting the volume these victims take up from the total room volume,[570] one is left with a remaining volume of roughly 57m³. Under these conditions, (3 × 57 =) approximately 170 g of Zyklon B would have been quite enough to kill the 218 victims, and a single 1,500 g can of the poison would have sufficed to gas 1,900 people.

Where the term "special order" is concerned, which Adela Toniak interprets as a "code word," this term clearly has to do with the edict issued on July 22, 1943, by the Reich Minister of Commerce and the Reich Minister of Arms and Ammunition, which the Tesch und Stabenow company referred to in their letter of June 19, 1944; as the reader will recall, the company wrote that due to the new regulations they could no longer supply Zyklon B directly to the individual camps. The letter in which the term "special order" was used was from the garrison physician of the SS and Police Lublin. Enclosed with this letter was a copy of the June 26, 1944, letter from Tesch und Stabenow, in which the company had responded to the inquiry it had received from the camp Administration one week before. Clearly, by turning to the garrison physician of the SS and Police Lublin instead of the Main Sanitation Office in Berlin-Lichtenberg, the Administration hoped to go through the earlier bureaucratic channels in which *Amt DIII* of the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office was involved – but this channel was no longer the proper one and was to be used only under exceptional circumstances. It is precisely such an exceptional case to which the term "special order" refers.

In plain English, the argument that well-organized disinfestations "would have been not at all commensurate with the purpose and principles of the camp" means that such disinfestations, whose purpose was to keep the inmates from dying in an epidemic, would have run counter to the purpose of an extermination camp. In other words: if Majdanek was an extermination camp,

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[569] The concentration of HCN that is "immediately fatal" to human beings is 0.3 ml/m³. F. Flury, F. Zernik, *op. cit.* (note 395), p. 453.

[570] The postulated maximum capacity of this chamber in a hypothetical execution gassing (218 victims per gassing) corresponds to that specified by the Polish-Soviet Commission (cf. Chapter VI). These 218 victims would have taken up a volume of approx. 13m³, so that the effective volume of the air in the chamber would have decreased to 57 m³.

the Zyklon shipment *had to be* for killing the inmates and *could not be* for their protection from epidemic-related death.

What we have here is classic "circular reasoning": that Majdanek was an extermination camp is proven by the Zyklon B shipments, and that these shipments could only have been for criminal purposes is proven by Majdanek's having been an extermination camp!

As an aside: by resorting to witness testimony to assess the meaning of documents, Adela Toniak commits a grave methodological error. A serious scientific and academic historian judges eyewitness testimony on the basis of documents, not vice versa.[571]

The possible existence of steam delousing chambers in Barrack 42 (for which Toniak fails to give any evidence) does not prove anything at all, since the Zyklon B ordered was used to delouse both the camp barracks and the clothing. Accordingly, the Administration's June 21, 1943, letter speaks of the "disinfestation of inmate quarters and clothing." The clothing was deloused in the gas chamber of Barrack 41 and in that (Chamber III) of the adjoining building (Building XII^{A}).

And finally, Adela Toniak claims even the ability to mind-read mere intent: the July 3, 1944, special order of 500 cans of Zyklon B, she says, "proves nothing other than the intent to use it to murder sick and exhausted inmates." This interpretation is based on two completely unfounded premises, namely that "special order" was a code word of criminal significance and that the bodies of gassing victims were found in the camp. We have already established the invalidity of the first premise; regarding the second, we note that not a single one of the autopsies carried out by the Polish-Soviet Commission on the bodies discovered in Majdanek found gassing to have been the cause of death. Thus, Adela Toniak's claim is devoid of any factual foundations. What is more, her completely arbitrary interpretation is refuted further by the fact that the sick inmates who could be moved were transferred *en masse* to other camps before the Red Army arrived, while those who were not fit to be moved were left behind unharmed.[572]

To conclude: the Zyklon B shipments to the Majdanek concentration camp served the purpose of disinfestation, and nothing else!

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[571] Cf. Chapter VII.
[572] Cf. Chapter III.

Chapter IX: Operation "Harvest Festival"

1. Origin of the Name

In its entry for "Harvest Festival" the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* writes:[573]

> *"Code word for the murder of most of the Jews in the Lublin District of the General Government on November 3-4, 1943* […]. *In total, 42,000 to 43,000 Jews were murdered during 'Operation Harvest Festival,' including those in smaller forced labor camps such as Chełm."*

Several authors have touched on this gigantic massacre that is alleged by official historiography, but not one of these authors has approached the matter from an historical and technical perspective. We shall attempt to do this in the present chapter.

Let us begin by noting that while the "code word" Operation Harvest Festival appears in every work discussing the alleged massacre, the origin of this name is not explained in any of them. Who coined the phrase? Who used it? In which documents does it appear? The historians maintain a deafening silence on these fundamental questions – which is not really surprising, since there is not a single document dealing with this alleged mass execution. The only documented use of the term "harvest festival" falling approximately into the time in question occurs in the diary of Hans Frank. In his summary of an October 23 discussion with Secretary of State Josef Bühler, President Ohlenbusch, Press Chief Gassner and Senior Provincial Administrative Councillor Weirauch, Frank used this term, but strictly in the literal sense: Count A. Ronikier, Chairman of the Polish Chief Committee, had sent the Governor General a letter in which he stated that his participation in the harvest festival scheduled for the following day would depend on whether or not the Germans would guarantee that no Poles would be executed.[574]

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[573] *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust. op. cit.* (note 7), v. I, pp. 418f.

[574] PS-2233. In: *IMT*, vol. XXIX, pp. 614f. Frank replied that if Count Ronikier was outraged by the execution of Polish partisans by the Germans, then he, Frank, was even more outraged by the murder of almost 1,000 Germans by the Poles. *Ibid.*

2. Past History and Reasons for the Alleged Massacre According to Official Historiography

In a long article about "Operation Harvest Festival," Adam Rutkowski writes:[575]

> *"The prisoners' revolt in the extermination camp Sobibór* [on October 14, 1943] *took the German occupation authorities completely by surprise and triggered a panic. They began to regard the Nazi camps for Jews in the surrounding area as 'highly dangerous hotbeds of resistance' and as autonomous breeding grounds for unrest and chaos. This revolt attracted the attention not only of the police, military and administrative authorities in the District but also that of Hans Frank himself, the Governor General of occupied Poland. On October 19, 1943, just five days after this unusual event, Frank convened an extraordinary meeting of the 'government' in Cracow to discuss the matter of security. All experts and persons responsible for 'order' in the General Government (G.G.) attended, namely Police General Walther Bierkamp, Commandant of the Orpo* [=*Ordnungspolizei*, Order Police]*, General Haseldorff as representative of the Wehrmacht, General Sommé as representative of the Luftwaffe, Secretary of State Josef Bühler, General Schindler, the Chief of Army Inspection in the G.G., etc. Referring to the recent events in Sobibór, all participants stressed the great danger which the 'Jew camps' in the Lublin District posed for the Germans."*

There is no question that approximately 300 inmates broke out of the Sobibór camp on October 14, 1943. Among other units, the three squadrons of the Pol. Cavalry Unit III, stationed in Chełm, were detailed for hunting the fugitives down. Regarding the deployment of the first squadron, their "Situation Reports" for the time from September 26 to October 25, 1943, state:[576]

> *"From October 14 to October 18, 1943, the squadron participated in the Jew-related operations of the SS Special Unit Sobibór (40 km northeast of Cholm). In cooperation with the Wehrmacht and the Border Patrol* [sic]*, about 100 of the 300 escaped Jews could be eliminated."*

Regarding the second squadron, the reports state:[577]

> *"The second squadron participated in the following major operations: on October 14, 1943, together with the SS.-Pol. Cavalry Unit III, in the forested area north of Kaplonosy. On October 16 to 18, 1943, together with the SS-Pol. Cavalry Unit III, at Sobibór."*

However, these brief reports would not seem to indicate that the German authorities were all that worried about security in the Lublin area. While it is true that Hans Frank convened a session on October 19 to discuss this matter,

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[575] Adam Rutkowski, "L'opération 'Erntefest' (Fête de moisson) ou le massacre de 43.000 juifs les 3-5 novembre 1943 dans les camps de Majdanek, de Poniatowa et de Trawniki," in: *Le Monde Juif,* octobre-décembre 1973, no. 72, pp. 13ff.

[576] Wojciech Zysko, "Eksterminacyjna działalność Truppenpolizei w dystrykcie lubelskim w latach 1943-1944" (The Extermination Activity of the Troop Police in the Lublin District in 1943-1944), in: *ZM,* VI, 1972, p. 186.

[577] *Ibid.*, p. 187.

the discussions focused primarily on the results of the decree regarding combating attacks on the German reconstruction efforts in the General Government which had already been proposed by Assistant Secretary Wehr on October 2, 1943,[578] and which had taken effect on October 10, four days before the mass escapes from Sobibór. This decree, intended particularly as a countermeasure to the Polish Resistance movement, provided for an expansion of the areas of jurisdiction of all security organs as well as for reprisals against local populaces for the murder of Germans by partisans.[579] Any danger posed to security in the Lublin district by Jewish camps was so purely hypothetical that it is not even mentioned in the excerpts of the October 19 session protocol which were submitted at the Nuremberg Tribunal,[579] even though the authors of Nuremberg Document PS-2233 scoured Hans Frank's diary thoroughly for anything which might have served to fashion a noose for him and the members of his Administration.

3. The Chain of Command

Rutkowski reconstructs the relevant chain of command as follows:[580]

> *"After Himmler had been informed of the revolt in Sobibór and about the mass escape of the rebels, he ordered Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, the Higher SS and Police Chief of the General Government, to liquidate all Jewish camps in the Lublin District as quickly as possible. Krüger then called Jakob Sporrenberg, the SS and Police Chief of the same District, to Cracow to inform him of Himmler's order and to put him in charge of carrying it out* […]. *After a brief stay in Cracow, Sporrenberg returns to Lublin, where a telegraph message awaits him: SS and Police units will arrive in Lublin to launch the operation against the Jews* […].
>
> *During that time,*[581] *special SS units and commandos arrived in Majdanek, just as General Krüger had announced. They came from various locations, including from the concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. Erich Muhsfeldt, then Chief of the Majdanek crematorium, testified that ten SS-men commanded by Otto Moll and Franz Hössler arrived from Auschwitz. The remaining commandos came from Cracow, Warsaw, Radom, Lwów, Lublin and Debica."*

The verdict at the Düsseldorf Majdanek Trial describes the last phase of the chain of command as follows:[582]

> *"Late in the evening of November 2, 1943, Sporrenberg called together the leaders of the units intended to participate in this operation – the leaders of units of the Commander of the Security Police (KdS) in Lublin, of the Waffen-SS, and of*

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[578] *IMT*, vol. XXIX, p. 612.
[579] *Ibid.*, pp. 612f.
[580] Adam Rutkowski, *op. cit.* (note 575), p. 14.
[581] Between October 30 and November 1.
[582] District Court Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 55), v. II, pp. 459f.

Police Regiments 22 and 25 – as well as the commandants of the camps Majdanek, Poniatowo [actually: Poniatowa] *and Trawniki. Representing the concentration camp in these discussions was either the deputy camp commandant Florstedt, who had been arrested shortly before* […] *or the newly appointed camp commandant Weiss. During these discussions Sporrenberg advised those present of the impending measures, justifying them by pointing out that the Jews remaining in the Lublin district were to be liquidated 'as per the highest orders'."*

Before we continue we must explain how the police force in the General Government, and specifically in Lublin District, was structured in early November 1943. The Higher SS and Police Chief (HSSPF), SS-*Obergruppenführer* Krüger, reported directly to Himmler; Krüger himself was the superior of the Commander of the Order Police (BdO), Major General of the Police Grünwald, and of the Commander of the Security Police and the Security Service (BdS), SS-*Oberführer* Bierkamp. Also subordinate to the HSSPF was the SS and Police Chief (SSPF) of Lublin District, SS-*Gruppenführer* Sporrenberg. Himmler was the Supreme Chief of the police force, but Governor General Frank, who reported directly to Adolf Hitler, attached great importance not only to his complete independence of Himmler but also to his command over all police formations in the General Government, and he made no secret of this. The following is one example from the time period here at issue:

On October 23, 1943, on the occasion of the beginning of the winter semester at the new University of Cracow's Academy of Administration, Frank gave a lecture on the topic of "The Leadership Principle in Administration" in which he said, *inter alia*:[583]

"We are subordinate exclusively and directly to the Führer. In the General Government the Administration has the same functions as the Reich government and the other Reich offices have in the Reich proper. We have legislative authority for this region. Police and security forces are subordinate to the Governor General."

Three days later, during the government session of October 26, 1943, Frank took the same line:[584]

"The policy which I was determined from the start to maintain in this region is sanctioned by the Führer; he is the only one to whom we are answerable. No one else has the right to give us orders in any way, shape or form."

This was no vain bragging, for the HSSPF of the General Government, Krüger, was also Secretary of State for Security Matters and as such was also subordinate to Frank.

In practice, any order issued by Himmler for the execution of more than 40,000 Jews in the camps of Lublin District could under no circumstances have been carried out without Frank's approval. If Himmler had actually planned such a massacre, there would unquestionably have been some perti-

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583 PS-2233. *IMT*, vol. XXIX, p. 614.
584 *Ibid.*, p. 630.

nent comments to be found in Frank's diary, regardless whether the Governor General had approved or rejected the plan. But Frank's diary contains not even the slightest suggestion of any such enormous mass murder – neither about its order nor about preparations for it, nor about its implementation, beginning with the aforementioned session of October 19, 1943.

Another strange circumstance is the following:

On November 18, two weeks after the alleged slaughter, Himmler was in Cracow as the Governor General's guest. If the butchery had really taken place, then only with Frank's permission, what better opportunity could the latter have found to praise the executor of the bloody order? In the presence of Himmler and "leading members of the General Government's Administration and numerous SS and Police Chiefs" (in other words, men with whom he could have been perfectly open), Frank gave an address in which he praised the police and thanked Krüger for having crushed a partisan group. He said:[585]

> *"What the police from all units have achieved here need not be spelled out; their achievements make up one of the proudest chapters in German police history. The fact that you, my dear General Krüger, did such exceptionally good work this summer in combating the so-called Kolbak Gang, which like a bolt out of the blue suddenly struck the Galicia District which we had thought was almost pacified, is a particularly glorious chapter of your achievements. I would like to express my especial gratitude, and thank you in the name of all Germans and all members of the Administration."*

Regarding an "Operation Harvest Festival," on the other hand, Himmler said nothing at all, even though if it had taken place he would have had even more reasons to thank Krüger, even if only in veiled form, for example with a covert reference to the Jews in the General Government whose numbers had declined because they had "emigrated or been shipped east."[586]

But what is even more strange is the way in which Odilo Globocnik described the events of that November 3:[587]

> *"On November 3, 1943, the labor forces were taken from the labor camps and the plants were shut down. The camp commandants had not been informed of this, even though the responsibility rested with them; thus, I was hindered in the performance of my supervisory duties. I instructed the camp commandants to carry out the closures and to continue acknowledging orders and transfers.*
>
> *The day before the camp was evacuated, Arms Inspector/Cracow General Schindler, acting on the basis of SS-Obergruppenführer Krüger's promise, came to an agreement with the camp leaders that*
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> *a) henceforth only armament orders will be sent to the camps;*
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> *b) on November 2 he had been assured that another 10,000 Jews would be detailed to armaments work. This agreement could not be met."*

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[585] *Ibid.*, p. 618.
[586] *Ibid.*, pp. 619-621.
[587] *Wirtschaftlicher Teil der Aktion Reinhardt.* Undated document by Odilo Globocnik. NO-057.

So just one day prior to the alleged mass murder, Schindler and Krüger were intending to expand the camps in Lublin District and to assign another 10,000 Jewish forced laborers. But if Krüger had received Himmler's order a few weeks earlier, decreeing that the Jews in the SS labor camps were to be shot, then how can one explain his above "promise" to the commandants of these selfsame camps… and on the day before the mass execution, no less?

The fact that these commandants had not been informed of the evacuation of the Jews from the camps, set for November 3, is admittedly very odd, regardless whether one presumes the murder or the transfer of these Jewish workers.

We are indeed left with an unsolved riddle here.

4. Carrying out the Order

In essence, all descriptions of the alleged massacre are based on the account of SS-*Oberscharführer* Erich Mußfeldt, who testified that he had had to attend the mass execution at the new Crematorium and afterwards had supervised the cremation of the corpses. It is therefore worth repeating in detail what Mußfeldt stated on August 16, 1947, in Polish captivity:[588]

> *"One day in late October 1943 excavation of pits was begun behind Compounds V and VI, approximately 50 meters behind the structure of the new Crematorium. 300 inmates were put to this work; they dug without interruption for three days and nights, in two shifts of 150 each. In the course of these three days, three pits were excavated; they were more than two meters deep, zigzag-shaped, and each about 100 m long.*
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> *During these three days, special commandos from the Auschwitz concentration camp as well as SS and Police commandos from Cracow, Warsaw, Radom, Lwów and Lublin gathered in Majdanek. Otto Moll and Franz Hössler came from Auschwitz with 10 SS men. Altogether, some 100 SS men arrived from the cities I mentioned, and these SS men made up the Special Commando. On the fourth day – it may have been November 3 – reveille was sounded at 5:00 a.m. Therefore I went to that part of the camp where I usually stayed. The entire camp was surrounded by the police; I would estimate that there were about 500 policemen. They stood guard with their weapons at the ready. They were armed with heavy and light submachine guns as well as with other automatic weapons.*
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> *A truck mounted with a radio transmitter was parked near the new Crematorium; a second such truck stood near the camp entrance, not far from the Construction Office. When I arrived at the camp grounds, both transmitters were already operating. They broadcast German marches and songs as well as dance music from records. The two trucks had been provided by the Propaganda Office* [of the NSDAP] *in Lublin.*

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[588] Anna Zmijewska-Wiśniewska, *op. cit.* (note 164), pp. 142-146.

I want to stress that up to that day I had no idea of the storm that was gathering. While the pits were being dug I had thought that they were air-raid trenches, since an anti-aircraft battery was stationed nearby. I asked an SS-man what they were for but I received no answer, and I got the impression that he himself didn't know what it was all about. The Jews who had been put to digging the pits replied to my questions that these pits were surely intended for them. I wouldn't believe that; I laughed at them and said that no doubt they were air-raid trenches. It was an honest remark, for at that time I really thought that.

Around 6:00 a.m. – or maybe it was already near 7:00 a.m. – the operation began. Some of the Jews who were gathered on Compound V were herded into a barrack, where they had to strip naked. Then Commander Thumann cut the wires of the fence separating Compound V from those pits, making a passageway. Armed policemen formed a human chain from this passageway to the pit. The naked Jews were led past this line-up to the pits, where an SS-man from the Special Commando chased them into one of the pits, in groups of ten. When they were in one, they were chased to the other end of the pit, where they had to lie down, and then an SS-man from the Special Commando shot them from the edge of the pit. The next group was likewise driven to the same end of the pit, where they had to lie down on the bodies already there, so that the pit gradually filled with layers of corpses lying crosswise almost up to the edge. Men and women were shot separately, in separate groups.

This operation went on without a pause until 5:00 p.m. The SS-men in charge of overseeing the execution took turns; after their replacements arrived they went to the local SS barrack to eat, and the execution continued without respite. Music was blaring from the two radio transmitters the entire time. I observed these events from the new Crematorium, where I had my own room for myself and the inmates assigned to my unit.

That day all the Jews in the Majdanek camp were shot, also those who were quartered with various enterprises such as DAW and the Clothing Works as well as all those in the units working outside the camp. Jews who had been brought in from the [Lublin] *Castle were also shot.*[589] *The entire operation was organized along military lines: a radio transmitter was used to keep in contact with the Chief of the SS and Police in Lublin and with other higher officers. The SD officer supervising the operation on-site (I don't recall his name) used this transmitter to give updates on the progress of the operation by periodically announcing the number killed. I heard that a total of more than 17,000 Jews of both sexes were shot that day. This also included all the Jews from my own commando. In the morning, after I had arrived in the camp, I had made inquiries as to what was going on, and I had asked Commander Thumann to please leave me my commando. He told me that was impossible; the operation, he said, was being conducted by Globocnik and the SD, and all the Jews of Lublin were to be killed, on the order of Governor General Frank. He added that instead of the Jews I would be assigned a unit of Russians.*

However, 300 Jewesses were left alive that day; they were needed to sort the things that had been piled up in the barrack where the unfortunate victims had un-

589 The Germans had confined political prisoners in the Lublin Castle.

dressed before being led to the slaughter. Another 300 Jews were kept in the camp, at the disposal of the so-called Special Commando 1005. They were all quartered on Compound V. The women from this group had arrived in Majdanek in March and April 1943.[590] *A couple dozen days later the men were gradually incorporated into the Special Commando* […].

After all the Jews had been shot on November 3, the pits were covered over with a thin layer of soil.

On the day this operation was carried out, the camp received a new commandant. SS-Sturmbannführer Florstedt was recalled, and SS-Sturmbannführer Weiss of Amtsgruppe D took over his post. Florstedt was relieved of duty because he had appropriated Jewish possessions. The matter was investigated by a Special Unit of the Reich Criminal Police led by SS-Sturmbannführer Morgen. To try and save his neck, Florstedt pretended to be insane. Even before he was relieved of office he had ordered me to remove the bodies of those murdered on November 3. Commandant Weiss later repeated this order. I was assigned 20 Russians for this purpose. The fourth day I gathered wood and boards, and on November 5, 1943, I began to burn the corpses.

Since a section of the pits (that end at which the victims had climbed down into them) was not filled with bodies, I piled a bit of soil there so that a small incline was formed, making it easier to climb down. The following day I set up a sort of wooden grate in the pit; that's where the inmates placed those bodies that were in the farthest part of the pit. When the pyre was ready I poured methanol over it and set it on fire. I set up the next pyres closer towards the far end of the pits, on those spots where the bodies had lain that were already cremated. Once the ashes cooled off after the pyre burned down, the inmates from my unit brought it up, and then the bones were pulverized in a special, gasoline-powered mill. This powder was then put into paper bags and taken on cars to an SS-factory near the camp, where this bone meal was later used to fertilize the soil. My work was supervised by an SD functionary from Lublin who saw to it that all the bodies were cremated, that no unburned bodies remained in the pits, that any gold teeth were pulled from the bodies prior to cremation, and that all jewels they wore were removed […].

By Christmas 1943 I had finished cremating the bodies of the more than 17,000 Jews murdered on November 3. After cremation was concluded, the pits were filled with earth and leveled off […].

Construction of the [new] *Crematorium was completed after New Year 1944. I cremated the bodies of those who had died in the camp up to that time, together with those of the victims of November 3, 1943."*

Let us now examine the salient points of this statement.

a) The Pits

First, a very important point: an air photo dating from September 18, 1944, does in fact show three pits approximately 50 m from the new Crematorium; the longest of these measures some 55 m.[591] But the official plan[592] drawn up

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[590] The Polish text has 1944 as the date, but this is obviously a misprint.
[591] Cf. Photograph V.

in August 1944 by the Polish-Soviet Investigative Commission does not show these pits, even though this plan is very detailed and shows, among other things, a depression approximately 40 m × 30 m in size, about 250 m northeast of Barrack 42.[593] Why did the Polish-Soviet experts not indicate the pits near the crematorium on their plan?

In his account of the alleged execution of November 3, 1943, Simonov speaks of "several pits, two meters deep and several hundred meters long,"[594] but even though he personally inspected the camp he does not mention the pits in his description thereof. Simonov writes at length about the new Crematorium, and continues:[595]

> *"That it was necessary to build the crematorium became particularly apparent after the Katyn affair. Since the Germans feared that they might once again be exposed by an exhumation of the graves where they had buried their victims, they began extensive excavations near the Lublin camp in early fall 1943. They removed the semi-decomposed bodies from the numerous pits in the vicinity of the camp, and burned them in the crematorium to wipe out the evidence of their heinous deeds. The ashes and charred bones from the cremation oven were thrown back into the same pits where the bodies had been dug up. One of these pits had already been opened. In it, a layer of ashes almost a meter thick was found."*

Thus it is clear that the three pits appearing on the air photo of September 18, 1944, did not yet exist at the time the camp was overrun. After all, Simonov was escorted by former inmates who showed him the horrors of the camp, and after visiting the ruins of the new crematorium he would not under any circumstances have forgone the opportunity to linger over those pits and to report that the most bestial atrocity in the camp's history had been committed there. A photograph taken in August at the earliest, but probably in September or October 1944, which was then submitted as evidence at the Lublin Trial, shows the cross-section of one of the three pits visible on the air photo: the stack of the new crematorium rises up in the background; in the foreground approximately 50 skulls can be seen, lined up neatly in five rows, and beside them is a pile of long human bones. Farther in the background is a small group of people, two of whom are standing in another pit, up to chest level, while the others are standing at the pit's edge. It is also clear that the pits were opened by the Soviets and the Poles, and in any case this photo shows the most horrific of their finds.

Today there are two pits near the new crematorium. The first, which is closer to the camp fence, looks much like that in the aforementioned photo, both in terms of its length and of the location of its three component parts. It consists of three segments. The first is approximately 4 m long and runs south-

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[592] See Document 5.
[593] On the map this ditch is numbered 5.
[594] C. Simonov, *op. cit.* (note 310), p. 16.
[595] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

southwest (about 200 degrees), the second is roughly 25 m in length and runs south-southeast (approximately 145 degrees), while the third is some 27 m long and runs east (approximately 85 degrees). The pit is funnel-shaped; the distance between its edges varies from 4 to 7 m, while the average width at its bottom is 1 m. The depth ranges from 1.50 to 3.20 m. The third segment branches off into another ditch approximately 11 m long and running north (roughly 15 degrees). It extends all the way to the Mausoleum that was built beside the crematorium. Incidentally, this third branch is not visible in the air photo.

The second pit, or ditch, runs parallel to the first in parts and consists of two segments, one 9 m in length running south-southwest (approximately 220 degrees) and one fully 11 m long running south-southeast (about 145 degrees).

This ditch is funnel-shaped as well. Like the first, its ground-level width from edge to edge is 4 to 7 m, and its bottom width is also approximately 1 m. It varies in depth from 1.60 to 2.60 m. On the air photo this second segment is roughly 21 m long. The present-day funnel shape of the two ditches is no doubt due to the gradual crumbling of their edges.

Thus, the present shape and form of these two ditches does not permit any conclusions with regard to what took place there more than half a century ago.

Insofar as the situation of November 3, 1943, is concerned, there is no material or documentary proof that the three ditches visible on the air photo already existed at that time or, if they did already exist, that they were of the dimensions apparent on the air photo. According to Erich Mußfeldt the execution pits were zigzag-shaped, which holds true – partly – for only the first ditch on the air photo. On the other hand, this air photo reveals numerous zigzag-shaped ditches, including at least 10 W-shaped ones approximately 30 m long in the area of the construction yard northeast of Compound I, as well as one more than 50 m in length beside the camp fence close by the camp headquarters. Some 500 m west of the camp there is a zigzag-shaped, almost circular ditch about 300 m in length; it is connected to two other pits, also zigzag-shaped. The first of these extends eastward for several hundred meters all the way to the camp grounds. The other runs in the opposite direction for approximately 60 m. Furthermore, some 400 m distant from the three pits near the crematorium there are two additional, sizeable ditches, similarly zigzag-shaped and approximately 100 m long. And finally, a zigzag-shaped ditch of the same length appears at the southern edge of Compound VI.[596] The origin and purpose of these ditches are unknown.

At the Majdanek Trial in Düsseldorf, however, the Court, drawing exclusively on eyewitness testimony, claimed the following with regard to the alleged execution ditches:[597]

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[596] See Photograph V.

[597] District Court Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 55), v. II, p. 459.

> *"In late October 1943, probably on Sporrenberg's initiative, excavations were begun behind the eastern corners of the Protective Detention Camp behind Compound V, near the so-called Crematorium and approximately 100 m distant from the so-called L-Barrack located on this side of Compound V. Here, a 6 to 7 m wide pit was dug, as were at least three zigzag-shaped ditches extending from the pit diagonally into the surrounding land. The ditches were up to 100 m long, between 1.5 and 3 m deep, and approximately 3 m wide at the bottom. They were to serve as execution site for the victims; the pit was intended for 'distributing' the victims among the ditches."*

Let us note right away that the air photo of September 18, 1944, shows no trace of this pit. Where the three ditches are concerned, they beg two questions:

First, the shape of these ditches is inexplicable. Why did they have to be zigzag-shaped? Normal, straight ditches would have been much easier and faster to excavate. The zigzag-shape is all the more mysterious since Mußfeldt claimed that the three ditches were dug in three days' uninterrupted shift work, which means that the matter must have been very urgent.

Second, the location of the pits was such that there would have been no hope of covering up the mass murder. The aforementioned air photo shows that the town of Dziesiata was only approximately 400 to 500 m distant from the ditches, meaning that the townspeople could have watched the massacre comfortably from the windows of their homes. Under these conditions, playing loud music would have been completely pointless, for even if the townspeople had not heard anything, they could still have seen it all.

b) The Execution Process

According to Mußfeldt the killing began at 6 or 7 o'clock in the morning and ended around 5:00 p.m., so that it could not have taken more than 11 hours. The Jews were liquidated in groups of ten. Assuming that the executions took place in all three ditches concurrently, this would indicate (17,000÷30=) 567 separate executions. Therefore, each execution took (11×3,600÷567=) approximately 70 seconds at each ditch. In this short time, the ten people making up each of the three groups had to climb down into their ditch, cover a distance of 50 m on average and lie down on the bodies of their predecessors, to be shot in their turn. After the first few executions, the victims would literally have had to climb onto the corpses of the earlier victims. Perhaps all this might theoretically have been possible in 70 seconds, but only if everything went absolutely smoothly, that is, if there was never any resistance or any attempts at escape – which is impossible. The victims would have known that they had nothing left to lose, and at least some of them would have put up desperate resistance.

The execution commando is said to have comprised 100 SS-men, meaning that 33 or 34 would have been available per execution ditch. If these took

turns and alternated regularly, each executioner would have carried out 17 of the group executions and been "on duty" for about 20 minutes, *i.e.*, for barely 3% of the total time which the entire operation took. Therefore no doubt several SS-men would have been involved per execution. If they used automatic weapons, each execution group would have used many times more than 10 bullets, for the automatic weapons of that time fired some 600 shots per minute, the MG 42 as many as 1,200 shots.[598] For example, if four of the killer marksmen had fired for even two seconds, they would have expended 80 to 160 bullets to kill 10 victims. Thus, the amount of ammunition used would have been enormous. But Mußfeldt wisely remains silent on this point and also makes no mention of the numerous ammunition crates that would have to have been stacked up along the execution pits or on trucks standing nearby.

Where were the men from the Special Commando posted? Mußfeldt makes do with the laconic comment that they stood by "the edge of the pit." Consider:

- Each ditch was approximately 100 m long, 3 m wide and 2.25 m deep on average, making for a volume of about 675m³;
- The excavated material took up a volume greater by 10 to 25%;[599]
- Mußfeldt testified that on the very day of the massacre he was ordered to begin cremating the bodies, and that the ditches were filled in again and leveled so as to destroy the evidence.

This means that on November 3, 1943, an enormous pile of earth some 800m³ in volume lay beside each ditch. Oddly enough, Mußfeldt also does not mention this, even though these mountains of excavated material must have made it difficult for him to see what was going on.

That Otto Moll, Franz Hössler and 10 other SS-men were sent to Majdanek shortly before the mass murder is not mentioned anywhere in Danuta Czech's *Auschwitz Kalendarium*.[122] There is also no other documentary evidence for the dispatch of the other SS-men.

c) Body Cremation

As we have just pointed out, Mußfeldt claims to have received the order to cremate the bodies on the very day of the mass murder. In light of this it is difficult to understand why the bodies would then first need to be covered up with soil at all.

Still according to Mußfeldt's own statements, made in Polish Communist captivity, Mußfeldt proceeded to obtain the required firewood on November 4,

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[598] *Meyers Handbuch über die Technik,* Mannheim: Bibliographisches Institut, 1964, p. 500. However, the MG 42 could not have been used for this purpose, since its powerful recoil and heavier weight required that it be supported *i.e.* mounted for use. What is more, on average the barrel of this machine gun had to be changed after every expended ammunition belt, since it was prone to overheating.

[599] G. Colombo, *Manuale dell'ingegnere,* Milan: Hoepli, 1916, p. 190.

and began cremating the bodies the following day. He does not touch on the matter of the firewood again in the rest of his statement, but the quantities required would have been enormous. Since we[600] have performed experiments in the burning of animal flesh, we know that 3.1 kg wood are required to burn 1 kg of flesh in an oven that is open at the front and top and equipped with a grate. If the flesh is cremated in a pit, the firewood requirement increases to 3.5 kg. In a mass cremation situation in a large ditch it is safe to postulate a minimum of 3 kg firewood per kg of flesh to be cremated, which means that 200 kg firewood are needed to cremate one body. This means that some 3,400 tons of firewood would have been required for the cremation of 17,000 bodies. That is approximately equal to 120 freight cars, fully loaded! Where did such a gargantuan amount of firewood come from, and how was it transported to Majdanek? Where was it stacked to protect it from the autumn rains and frost? Not only does Mußfeldt fail to answer these essential questions – he does not even acknowledge them.

Since according to Mußfeldt cremation was finished by Christmas, it cannot have taken more than 50 days at most (from November 5 to December 24).

In his statement of August 15, 1947, Mußfeldt testified that in February 1943 Florstedt, then commandant of Majdanek, had sent him to Auschwitz where he was to familiarize himself with the technique of cremation. He continues:[601]

> *"After I had looked at everything, I returned to Lublin the following day. On Florstedt's orders, I and the unit assigned to me began to cremate the bodies that had been buried in the forest towards Lwów. At first I excavated a pit, but because cremation did not proceed quickly enough in this pit I devised the following set-up for cremation: I spread old truck tarps over rocks piled to a considerable height, ordered the bodies placed on these, and poured methanol over them. I had wood stacked beneath the tarps and set on fire. In this way about 100 bodies could be burned at one time. Some of them had been dug up, some were fresh, just brought in from the camp. After such a load had been reduced to ashes, these were pounded to powder and dumped into the pit whence we had removed the bodies in the first place. To pound the ashes we used iron sheets and pounders. These tools were supplied by an SD functionary from the so-called Commando 1005 who supervised my work. In this way I managed by the end of October to cremate all the bodies buried in the forest and in the region behind Compound V. According to the pertinent calculations I cremated approximately 6,000 bodies in the forest and approximately 3,000 behind Compound V. These figures also include the fresh corpses of inmates who died in the camp during this time."*

To summarize: Mußfeldt dispensed with cremations in pits because this method was inefficient, and he needed more than eight months to cremate 9,000 bodies! But in November and December, he claims, he chose precisely

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[600] *I.e.* Carlo Mattogno, who performed these experiments in fall 1994 and winter 1995.
[601] Anna Zmijewska-Wiśniewska, *op. cit.* (note 164), pp. 141f.

this inefficient method of cremation in pits, and managed more than 17,000 bodies in at most 50 days!

Judging from a photograph taken in Krepiecki Forest in 1943, cremation proceeded very slowly even with the set-up described by Mußfeldt. The photo shows about 20 charred bodies lying on a metal grate, which rests on some stones and has warped from the heat.[602] In light of this it is not surprising that the cremation of each of the 90 pyres holding 100 bodies took an average of four days.

But if it took more than four months to cremate 9,000 bodies, then why did it only take 50 days, or even less, to manage more than 17,000, especially considering that all of 20 people were available for this job?

One of the aforementioned experiments in cremating animal flesh in a pit showed that the temperature of the embers was still fully 280°C even 24 hours after the wood had been set on fire! After 31 hours it was still 160°C, even though the quantity of firewood that had been burned only weighed 52.5 kg. How long would it have taken the embers from several dozen tons of firewood to cool off? Even if one presumes a minimum time of 48 hours for a pyre to burn down, a cremation would *theoretically* still have taken two days, so that 700 bodies would have been cremated in that time.[603] In *practical* terms, however, the time between individual cremations would have been longer, since the 20 men at Mußfeldt's disposal would have had to perform a whole series of tasks. To give an idea of the difficulties involved in such an operation, we shall base the following data on 700 bodies:[604]

1. Approximately 140 tons of wood had to be carried into a pit and stacked there;
2. 700 bodies had to be carried out. After the firewood was stacked, these bodies had to be placed on the wood;
3. After the pyre had burned down, approximately 3.7 tons of human ashes[605] and roughly 11.2 tons of wood ashes[606] had to be removed from the pit;

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[602] *Op. cit.* (note 23), Photographs 1 and 2 (photos on unnumbered pages).

[603] One would have to add to the 17,000 execution victims another approx. 500 inmates who died in the camp in November and December 1943.

[604] We assume three pyres, *i.e.*, one per pit.

[605] We proceed from the assumption that the average weight of a body was 67 kg and that a quantity of ash weighing 8% of the body remains after a cremation. The latter figure is slightly greater than the percentage remaining after incineration in a crematorium, since organic tissue is never completely incinerated in an open-air cremation. The calculation is as follows: (67×700×0.08=) approx. 3.75 tons. – In the cremation experiment which we (C.M.) performed, the weight of the ashes was 4% of the flesh, even though the beef that was used was practically boneless. Cf. "Combustion Experiments with Flesh and Animal Fat," *The Revisionist*, 2(1) (2004), pp. 64-72.

[606] We proceed from the experimental findings of 8% ashes and arrive at (140 × 0.08=) 11.2 tons.

4. The ash had to be sieved, and about 3.7 tons of it had to be transported to the "mill."
5. About 3.7 tons of bone meal had to be put in paper bags (74 bags at 50 kg each).

Even if one accepts the unrealistic assumption that 20 men could have done all this in a single day, a cremation would have taken three days. This means that the cremation of approximately 17,500 bodies would only have been possible if more than 1,000 bodies were burned together each time,[607] in other words at least ten times as many as Mußfeldt had managed in the previous months.

In light of these bare facts, it is no longer difficult to assess Mußfeldt's statements. They are unbelievable through and through, which means that his confession was forced from him, or offered in hopes of leniency.

5. Reports of the Polish Resistance Movement

The first account of the alleged massacre is contained in a secret message[608] which Majdanek inmate Henryk Jerzy Szczęśniewski is said to have written on the very day of the crime itself, on November 3, 1943.[609] However, several internal inconsistencies in this note show that it must have been written later. For example, November 2 is not called "yesterday," but "the day before" (*na dzien przedtem*).[610] What is even more revealing is that the author mentions an event that took place three days after the alleged mass execution (*na trzeci dzien*),[610] *i.e.*, he refers to November 6. The letter seems rather incoherent and disjointed. The author devotes only a few lines to the mass murder itself, and supplements these with a sketch;[611] the text reads as follows:[610]

> *"The operation proceeded this way: on Compound V, in front of the Crematorium, they* [*i.e.*, the guards] *set up a fence around the Laundry – in front of the Laundry on Compound V they* [*i.e.,* the Jews] *stripped naked* [in] *A and went through the fence* [in] *C* [into] *B, where they were shot with carbines and submachine guns, and there they were buried* [in] *D."*

Regarding the number of victims, the author cites 17,000 and 22,000 dead, "as per conversations with the SS-men."[610]

The entire letter is written in a sober, downright objective tone: there is no sense of the horror that the writer should have felt at the sight of a blood bath of such an extent, and the massacre is reported more like a mundane detail of

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[607] In that case Mußfeldt's team would have had even more work to do.
[608] The Polish term is "gryps."
[609] Zbigniew Jerzy Hirsz, *op. cit.* (note 467), pp. 212-214.
[610] *Ibid.*, p. 214.
[611] See Document 38.

a camp chronicle. No less surprising is the fact that the letter contains no request to its recipient, one Kazimiera Jarosinska, whom her inmates regarded as a sort of mother figure (*"mateczka"*)[612], to inform the illegal Resistance Movement and the Polish government-in-exile in London of this atrocity.

So there is no doubt at all that this letter was dated retrospectively. We do not know by whom, since Szczęśniewski's correspondence was not found until 1966.[612] Regarding the mass execution, the writer claims that it actually took place not in the ditches themselves, but in front of these (Zone C on his sketch); not until afterwards were the bodies buried in the ditches (Zone C). This is certainly not an insignificant detail. It is also anything but likely that the author found out in "conversations with the SS-men" how many Jews had been shot.

The *Delegatura* learned of the alleged massacre only after an inexplicable delay, and the first reports differ from today's official version in some important aspects. We shall reproduce the relevant reports in chronological order.

On November 15 the *Delegatura* reported:[613]

> *"On Friday, November 5, a massacre was committed in Lublin. The Jews from all Lublin camps were brought together in Majdanek, and shot."*

On November 18:[613]

> *"Reliable sources state that all camps in Lublin have been entirely liquidated. (Altogether about 10,000 people.) The inmates from all camps were brought together in Majdanek and shot. Among the camps to be liquidated was that on the Lublin airfield which (a unique case on Polish territory) had previously held selected Jews – social activists, politicians, the foremost representatives of science, art etc. For a long time they had lived there under the illusion that since they had been specially selected and, in so many cases, transferred to the air field from other camps, the fate in store for them must be a better one. The liquidation of these camps has inflicted the last painful losses on the Jews' social fabric."*

On November 24 the *Delegatura* reported:[614]

> *"Lublin. In Majdanek a massacre was committed of Jews who had been brought together there from all Lublin-area camps. A few days before, the Jews had been ordered to excavate pits outside the camp grounds – pits several hundred (kilkuset) meters long, three meters deep and five meters wide. On November 4 an SS unit arrived at the camp. The day after (November 5) the Jews were divided into groups, which were led to be executed one after the other. They were ordered to strip naked and were then mowed down with submachine guns. Loud dance music broadcast over megaphones drowned out the shots. The SS-men had been told that the execution victims were all Soviet Commissars and spies. The last group was taken to Trawniki to cremate the bodies, and then murdered."*

And finally, the *Delegatura* report of November 30:[615]

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[612] *Ibid.*, p. 205.
[613] Krystyna Marczewska, Władysław Ważniewski, *op. cit.* (note 445), p. 207.
[614] *Ibid.*, p. 218.
[615] *Ibid.*, pp. 218f.

"Majdanek. Preparing to evacuate Lublin, the Germans have begun the liquidation of Majdanek. The inmates were divided into three groups. The first, composed of a few hundred persons, includes political prisoners charged with grave crimes, and sick, invalid, and elderly inmates. This group was separated from the rest. There were worries that they might be marked for execution. The others were divided into two groups. One group was to be released, the other abducted to the Reich to work.

Majdanek. The Jews from all the camps in Lublin were brought together there, some 13,000 people in total. A few days before the liquidation the Jews were ordered to dig some ditches outside the camp grounds, ditches several hundred meters long, five meters wide and three meters deep. On November 4 a unit of the Waffen-SS arrived at the camp; on November 5 the Jews were separated and had to strip naked, whereupon they were led off one by one to be executed. The execution was carried out by submachine guns. Loud dance music from megaphones drowned out the noise of the shots.

Trawniki. Before the liquidation, conditions in the camp had improved markedly, so that the shock was all the greater. On November 3 all the men were led away to dig 'air-raid ditches'. During this work they were suddenly surrounded and shot. The women and children were loaded onto 60 trucks, taken to the execution site, and shot, naked. Finally, a group of POWs (Jewish-Polish soldiers) were shot. During the execution loud dance music from megaphones drowned out the sounds of the shots. There was no resistance. The Ukrainians did not participate in the execution. SS-men surrounded and isolated them. 150 Jews who had been brought in from Majdanek were put to work burning the dead bodies, and after they finished they too were shot. Then some 3,000 Italian Jews were brought into the camp."

As we can see, the first report about the bloodbath of such incredible extent took up all of two lines! Subsequent reports tried to lend the story credibility by adding details – which, however, stand in noticeable contradiction to today's version. The two most important are: the number of victims (10,000 to 13,000 instead of 18,000) and the date (November 5 instead of 3). While the first 'mistake' may be understandable, it is absolutely incomprehensible how one could be unsure about the date weeks after the alleged event.

As we have shown in Chapter VII, the *Delegatura* had excellent sources of information about the events in the Majdanek camp at its disposal. Whenever these sources reported verifiable facts, their distinguishing feature was accuracy. We shall give two more examples of this from the time of particular interest in this context:

On October 1, 1943, the *Delegatura* had a list of 35 SS-men, with first and last names, rank, previous posting, address and birth date![616] And on November 22, 1943, the *Delegatura* had an alphabetical listing of 369 inmates, drawn up by the Resistance cell operating in the camp.[617]

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[616] *Ibid.*, pp. 203f.
[617] *Ibid.*, pp. 208-217.

As already mentioned, the alleged execution site was clearly visible from the houses in the town Dziesiata, so that the townspeople could readily have provided reliable first-hand information. In short: there is no reasonable explanation for why the *Delegatura*, with its excellent sources of information both inside and outside the camp, should have been so poorly informed of an event with such enormous consequences as this alleged gigantic massacre. What is no less baffling is that it learned absolutely nothing about the cremation of the bodies. Just imagine:

After the execution of 17,000 to 18,400 Jews, the camp must perforce have drawn the attention of informants even more than before. On November 5 Mußfeldt begins to cremate the bodies. For about 50 days, the inmates remaining in the camp, the townspeople of Dziesiata, and everyone else in the area are constantly exposed to the sight of hellish flames and smoke from the pyres, and to the stench of the burning flesh. But not a single informant considers all this worth mentioning, and not one writes even one line about it!

That also goes for the inmate Henryk Jerzy Szczęśniewski, who supplied a wealth of news about the camp in his secret messages of November 25 and December 14, 1943 – when the cremation is said to have been in full swing – but wasted not so much as a word on these cremations.[618]

And meanwhile, on November 17, the camp authorities calmly release 300 inmates[619] – no doubt so that these could report far and wide all the horrors they had just witnessed and give the *Delegatura* as precise an account of the massacre as possible!

6. The Alleged Mass Executions Make No Sense Economically

Rutkowski points out the economically nonsensical nature of the alleged mass executions with the following question:[620]

> *"Why would the central authorities of the Third Reich decide in late 1943 to wipe out some 40,000 qualified workers, in complete disregard of the great shortage of manpower?"*

The matter is even more important and more complex than this question would indicate.

According to official historiography the massacre allegedly committed in Majdanek on November 3, 1943, was only one part of a much more compre-

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[618] Zbigniew Jerzy Hirsz, *op. cit.* (note 467), pp. 215-217.
[619] Krystyna Marczewska, Władisław Waźniewski, *op. cit.* (note 445), p. 219.
[620] Rutkowski, *op. cit.* (note 575), p. 28.

hensive operation affecting all the camps of the Eastern Industries Ltd. ("Osti") in the General Government.

Osti was founded by the SS on March 12, 1943. Oswald Pohl, the Chief of the Economic-Administrative Main Office, as well as *Gruppenführer* Lörner, the Chief of *Amtsgruppe* B of the Economic-Administrative Main Office, were members of its Executive. Pohl, Krüger, Lörner and Sammern-Frankenegg, the Higher SS and Police Chief of Warsaw, made up its board. The firm's directors were Globocnik and Max Horn, the Economic-Administrative Main Office's chief accountant.[621] Globocnik was also the head of the *Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke* (DAW, German Equipment Works) that employed some 8,000 Jews in Lublin and Lemberg (Lwów).[622]

The purpose of Eastern Industries was to establish a group of SS labor camps in order to make use of the manpower of drafted Jews. In June 1943 Osti already controlled five camps with a total of 45,000 Jewish workers: the Poniatowa and Trawniki SS labor camps, the Budzyn SS camp, DAW in Lublin, and the Clothing Manufacturing Plant in Lublin, in addition to the Lublin concentration camp, *i.e.* Majdanek.[623]

On September 7, 1943, Pohl decided to incorporate ten SS labor camps in Lublin District into the Majdanek camp as branches thereof; this was already done on the 14th of that month.

On October 22, 1943, Pohl put the following camps under the charge of *Amtsgruppe* D of the Economic-Administrative Main Office:

- the old airfield Lublin;
- SS labor camp Trawniki;
- SS labor camp Poniatowa;
- forced labor camp and SS workshops in Radom;
- forced labor camp and SS workshops in Budzyn;
- Cracow-Płaszów main camp (Płaszów);
- *Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke*, Lublin;
- arms production camp in Lemberg.

The same day, Globocnik was relieved of his office as Director of Osti, and replaced by the Vice-Director.[624]

On October 26, Pohl sent the commandants of 19 concentration camps, including Lublin (Majdanek), a directive regarding an increase in the camp inmates' productivity. He noted:[625]

> *"Thanks to the expansion and consolidation of the past 2 years, the concentration camps have become a factor of vital importance in German arms production.*

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621 Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction…*, *op. cit.* (note 232), p. 340.
622 Joseph Billig, *Les camps de concentration dans l'économie du Reich hitlérien,* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1973, p. 187.
623 Letter from Globocnik to SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Brandt, dated June 21, 1943. NO-485.
624 NO-057.
625 Archiwum Muzeum Stutthof, I-IB 8, p. 53.

From nothing at all, we have created armaments production sites that are unparalleled anywhere.

We must now do everything to ensure that our achievements to date are not only maintained but constantly increased.

Since the plants and factories are the vital aspect of this, this can only be achieved by maintaining and increasing the inmates' capacity to work.

In years past, given the scope of the educational efforts at that time, it did not matter whether an inmate could do useful work or not. Now, however, the inmates' ability to work is important, and all measures taken by the Commanders, Leaders of the V Service, and physicians must work towards keeping the inmates healthy and fit.

Not out of a false sense of sentimentality, but because we need them with their physical abilities intact – because they must contribute to the German people winning a great victory – we must take good care of their health and well-being.

I propose as our first goal: no more than 10% of all inmates at a time may be unable to work due to illness. By everyone responsible working together, this goal must be attained.

This requires:

1) proper and practical diet,
2) proper and practical clothing,
3) making full use of all natural means for preserving health,
4) avoiding all unnecessary strain and expenditure of energy not directly required for work,
5) productivity bonuses."

Rutkowski answers his own question – quoted at the start of this section – by saying that the reasons for the mass execution were political in nature, and adds that where the Jewish Question was concerned Himmler did not care about economic considerations.[626]

Even though on the whole this assessment is not entirely untrue, it is incorrect where the matter at hand is concerned. First of all, even before the time of interest here, Himmler's efforts to evacuate even those Jews working in the armaments industry had met with opposition from Hans Frank. On March 31, 1943, at a session in the government seat in Cracow where the state of security in the General Government was being discussed, Krüger gave an address in his capacity as Secretary of State; the session stenographer recorded his words as follows:[627]

"There can be no doubt that the removal of the Jews has also contributed to bringing calm to the region. It was one of the most difficult and unpleasant tasks for the Police, but had to be carried out on the Führer's order because it was necessary in the greater European interest […] *Only recently he* [Krüger] *again received the order to achieve the removal of the Jews within a very short time. It had become necessary to also remove the Jews from the armaments industry and those enterprises involved in the war industry, unless they were working exclusively for*

[626] Rutkowski, *op. cit.* (note 575), pp. 31f.
[627] *IMT*, vol. XXIX, p. 670.

interests vital to the war effort. The Jews were then gathered together in large camps, from where they are dispatched to day labor in these armaments enterprises. However, the Reichsführer-SS would like to see this employment of the Jews ended as well. He [Krüger] *had discussed this matter in detail with Lt.-Gen. Schindler and believes that in the end it will not be possible to fulfill this wish of the Reichsführer-SS. Among the Jewish workers there are some with special qualifications, precision engineers and other qualified tradesmen which one cannot simply replace with Poles nowadays."*

Secondly, in early November the SS labor camps were already part of the Economic-Administrative Main Office's jurisdiction and were considered branches of Majdanek, whose commandant was one of the recipients of Pohl's letter previously quoted.

In view of these facts, the destruction of more than 40,000 workers who were of great importance and use to the German war industry would have been, in economic terms, sheer idiocy

7. What Really Happened on November 3, 1943?

Considering the almost complete lack of documents, it is impossible to answer this question precisely. The only thing we may be certain of is that on November 2, 3 and 4, 1943, various police units participated in a major operation in Lublin which the three squadrons of the Pol. Cavalry Unit III mention, albeit only briefly. The first squadron reported:[628]

"From November 2 – November 4, 1943, the squadron, strength 1:25, participated in a major operation of the SS-Pol. Unit 25 in the area of Lublin and Pulawy."

The second squadron noted:[629]

"The second squadron took part in the major operation of November 2 – November 4, 1943, in the Lublin area."

The third squadron reported:[630]

"A section, strength 1/40, was deployed as part of the unit's responsibilities, on a special mission in Lublin from November 2 to November 4."

Battalion 101, about which Christopher R. Browning has written a book,[631] was part of the 25th Regiment. Browning's book also includes a chapter about

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[628] W. Zysko, *op. cit.* (note 576), pp. 188f.
[629] *Ibid.*, p. 189.
[630] *Ibid.*, p. 190.
[631] Christopher Browning, *Ganz gewöhnliche Männer. Das Reserve-Polizeibataillon 101 und die 'Endlösung' in Polen,* Reinbek: Rowohlt 1997. The book is based almost exclusively on the statements made by 125 former members of Battalion 101 in the course of court investigations conducted twenty years after the fact (p. 13 and 193) and contains a number of anecdotes collected and assiduously commented on by the author. It is much more of a historical novel than a serious study of history.

the "Harvest Festival,"[632] but it contributes absolutely nothing to our understanding of the matter; most importantly, it cites not so much as a single document in support of the actuality of the alleged massacre.

So what did these numerous units, dispatched to take part in a special operation, actually do? The most likely thing is that it was a major transfer to other camps.

One item of circumstantial evidence for this was provided by the November 20, 1943, issue of the Polish newspaper-in-exile *Dziennik Polski*, printed in England. The paper reported the murder of "15,000 Jews" and added:[633]

> *"25,000 Jews were transferred from Majdanek to Cracow, where they were quartered in hundreds of recently constructed barracks. Probably these Jews will have to work in the German factories which have recently been transferred to the Cracow district."*

The following also supports the hypothesis of a mass transfer of Jewish inmates to the west:

As Raul Hilberg notes in his standard work on the 'Holocaust,' a total of 22,444 Jews worked in the armaments industries of the General Government in October 1943. In January 1944, however, two months after the alleged mass murder, the number of Jews working for the armaments industry in the General Government had not decreased; quite the contrary – it had increased to 26,296![634]

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[632] *Ibid.*, chapter 15, pp. 179-189.
[633] Jolanta Gajowniczek, *op. cit.* (note 446), p. 256.
[634] R. Hilberg, *The Destruction…*, *op. cit.* (note 232), p. 341.

Chapter X:
The Trials

From 1944 to 1981, Polish, Allied, and West German courts brought legal actions against former members of the Majdanek guard staff.[635] Only two of them are of interest historically: the trial of six members of the camp guards, conducted very hurriedly before a Special Court in Lublin between November 27 and December 2, 1944, and the Majdanek Trial in Düsseldorf (1975-1981). We shall take a closer look at these two court cases.

1. The Lublin Trial of the End of 1944

On October 26, 1944, in a Special Court in Lublin, charges of murder and abuse of prisoners were brought against four SS-men and two *Kapos* who had served in Majdanek. The trial was held from November 27 to December 2 of that year and ended in death sentences for the SS-men Hermann Vogel, Wilhelm Gerstenmeier, Anton Thernes and Theo Schölen as well as the *Kapo* Heinz Stalp. The sixth defendant, the *Kapo* Edmund Pohlmann, had allegedly committed suicide in pre-trial detention. The sentences to death by hanging were carried out without delay on December 3.

Under the conditions prevailing at that time, a trial under the rule of law was impossible: after all, the withdrawal of the occupation forces and the end of German occupation was only four months past, and the war continued to rage in a large part of Poland. Many residents of Lublin and its environs had lost family members in the camp, or had spent some time there themselves. Furthermore, right after Majdanek was captured, reports of 1½ million murder victims were spread about with all possible hype, and the photos of the crematorium, the "gas chambers" and the bodies that had been found were exploited to the fullest by strategic propaganda.

The people screamed for revenge. In this atmosphere of public incitement the defendants never had a chance. Of course it is too late now to find out if they had really committed crimes during their time of service; there can be no doubt that the same punishment would have been imposed on any other SS-man or *Kapo* unfortunate enough to come into the same situation as these men. Whether they were guilty or innocent – finding "witnesses" for the prosecution was an easy matter in any case, and it was also not difficult to obtain the desired confessions.

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[635] Regarding these trials, see Czesław Pilichowski, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 423-436.

The Reasons for Sentence made it very clear that these defendants were in the prisoners' dock as proxies for all of Germany, and not only National Socialist Germany:[636]

> *"This trial revealed all the sordid details of the monstrous nature of that system consolidated, perfected, modernized and mechanized by Adolf Hitler as worthy successor to the imperialist methods of the Crusaders, the methods of the Brandenburg electoral princes, Frederick the Great, Bismarck's imperialism and Treitschke's ideology. The absurd racial theory, the doctrine of the 'Master Race,' the catchword of gaining 'living space' at the expense of other peoples were made a reality after the war was set off, by the Hitlerites proceeding step by step in all occupied countries to exterminate the local populations, to an extent and with methods unparalleled in history. The number of victims who were executed or harassed for alleged crimes against the occupation power turns out to be small in comparison to the scope and extent of the extermination that took place in the so-called death camps. In Majdanek alone, 1,700,000 people were murdered. What monstrous total must we arrive at when we add to this figure the number of those martyred to death in the other eleven death camps, not to mention the ordinary so-called labor camps, concentration camps and forced labor camps!"*

The following transcript of the pre-trial questioning of a witness shows how summarily 'evidence was taken' for this trial:[637]

"1. Your name? – Benen Anton.
2. Your nationality? – Dutch.
3. How long in the camp? – One year.
4. What can you say about the beatings and murders in the camp? – I was beaten several times. I was hung up in a special way to be beaten. Half an hour later they threw me into the water and beat me again.
5. What can you say about the ordeal of the Soviet POWs? – The people were suffocated in gas chambers and shot.
6. What can you tell us? – Everything was done in such a way that no one saw or heard anything. However, I did see a queue of 600 people being led to death.
7. What nationalities did you see in Majdanek? – I saw Russians, Poles and Jews, but I can't say anything.
8. What do you know about the murders in the gas chambers? – I know that people were suffocated in the gas chambers, and then the bodies were dragged out.
9. Were you sick in the camp? You don't look well, and your throat is bandaged. – I spent four years in concentration camps and got sick because there was not enough to eat.
10. Were there other Dutch inmates? – Yes. There were mostly Jews and they were brought here later.
11. In which concentration camps were you? – In Ostburg, Dachau and then Lublin. But Lublin was the worst.
12. Why were you transferred from Dachau to Lublin? – I was drafted into the army, but I didn't want to go and that's why they locked me up.

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[636] *Sentencja wyroku*, *op. cit.*, (note 198) pp. 99f.
[637] *Indictment of Hermann Vogel et al.*, *op. cit.* (note 3), p. 51.

13. *Who's taking care of you today? – The Polish Red Cross is looking after me, but there is still not enough to eat."*

That concluded the questioning, and another example of 'evidence' for the mass murders in Majdanek had been obtained. – The interrogation of the defendants in pre-trial detention was also accomplished at top speed, for example the interrogation of SS-*Rottenführer* Theo Schölen:[638]

"1. Were you in Majdanek? – Yes, I was there.
2. *Do you know about everything that took place in the concentration camp? – I saw a few things, and heard about others.*
3. *Do you know anything about people being gassed? – I know that gassing was mostly done in the evening, and the bodies were later burned in the cremation furnaces.*
4. *How was that done? – I only saw bodies, I didn't personally attend the killing.*
5. *Is it true that people went through the shower beside the gas chamber? – Yes, they were in the bath, and then they went into the chamber.*
6. *What was the Majdanek camp generally called by the Germans? – 'Extermination camp'; this term was used from the time of the mass murder of inmates onward.*
7. *Do you know what different nationalities were in Majdanek? – I don't know exactly.*
8. *What nationalities were most strongly represented? – Jews, Russian POWs, Poles, French, Italians and others.*
9. *What methods were used in dealing with the Soviet prisoners of war? – I don't know exactly about the Russians. But I know that about 18,000 to 20,000 Jews were killed on November 3, 1943.*
10. *Are you a member of the National Socialist Party? – Yes, since 1937; I have been in the SS only since 1942.*
11. *Who treated the prisoners especially badly, and who was to blame for the mass murder? – There were many of them, but I don't know all the names. But I recall that the SS-man Foschted* [possibly a reference to the third camp commandant, Florstedt]*, Obersturmführer Thumann and Obersturmführer Mußfeldt played a major part in the administration and in torturing the inmates.*
12. *What did you do in Majdanek? – I was manager of a supply depot.*
13. *Where did the shoes and the children's and women's clothing come from that were found in great numbers in the camp? – These things belonged to murdered people, primarily Jews.*
14. *What was done with the bodies? – I heard that they were burned in the crematorium.*
15. *Did you participate in the murder of people? – No. I was far away from it all and just looked after the supply depot.*
16. *Who told you about the murders? – I don't know the names exactly; I just heard that Mußfeldt and Thumann did it."*

The trial itself was conducted as per the classical pattern of a Stalinist show trial in which the defense attorneys served as secondary prosecutors. Accor-

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638 *Ibid.*, pp. 50f.

dingly, Jaroslawski, the court-appointed defense counsel for the defendants Gerstenmeier and Vogel, requested on the very first day of the trial to be released from his duties, because[639]

> *"*[…] *in the course of a thousand years Germany has systematically committed crimes against all its neighbors, including the Slavic people; because Germany has completely exterminated the Slavic peoples between the Elbe and the Oder and has shown that she wants to completely eradicate the Slavic nations; because Germany, obeying its Führer Adolf Hitler, attacked the Polish state in September 1939 and brought about a horrible world war* […]*."*

Kazimierz Krzymanski, the court-appointed defense counsel for the defendant Thernes, also begged to be excused from his duties, because[639]

> *"*[…] *the misdeeds that are to be judged here in this court room are so absolutely gruesome and were planned and committed in such a satanic way that we, who have lost our loved ones in Majdanek* […]*, cannot be expected to defend those who are accused of having committed these atrocities."*

Naturally, the lawyers' requests were refused, and they had to continue to 'defend' their 'clients'.

The atmosphere of hysteria that must have reigned at this trial can be inferred, for example, from the public prosecutor Jerzy Sawiecki's insane allegation that at least half a million Germans had been involved in organizing the extermination at Majdanek:[640]

> *"At least 500,000 Germans – accountants, financiers, clerks, supply personnel, railway men, postal workers, telephone operators, engineers, physicians, jurists, agronomists, chemists, pharmacists – it takes one's breath away, try to imagine it, half a million Germans in total were involved in the well-organized machinery for killing defenseless people. Who can really grasp the horror of this fact? Half a million people, all of them driven by one single thought, namely, how to destroy other people as quickly, cheaply and efficiently as possible. That's Majdanek!"*

We would love to know if this public prosecutor actually believed what he was saying. – The evidence, aside from 'material evidence' such as empty cans of Zyklon, consisted of the testimony of a total of 13 eyewitnesses. We shall restrict ourselves to just one sample, an excerpt from the questioning of the witness Jan Wolski:[641]

> *"Public prosecutor: What do you know, in general, about the extermination of the Slavic peoples in Majdanek?*
>
> *Wolski: When the Governor General came from Berlin to carry out an inspection, and I was setting the table in the casino, I overheard his discussion with our Commandant Weiss (and Gerstenmeier was there too) about how one could exterminate the Slavic peoples in Majdanek.*
>
> *Public prosecutor: Do you know that Gerstenmeier ordered additional cans of Zyklon?*

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[639] *Majdanek. Rozprawa przed specyalnym sądem karnym w Lublinie* (Majdanek. Proceedings of the Special Court in Lublin), Cracow: Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza 'Czytelnik,' 1945, p. 6.
[640] *Ibid.*, pp. 79f.
[641] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

Wolski: Yes, I heard about it, because he wanted to stockpile some Zyklon for the future. He put it like this: 'These are uncertain times, we must be prepared to wipe out all the prisoners.'"

The defendants as well had been thoroughly drilled in their role in this staged spectacle and obediently recited their scripted admissions of guilt. The following is an excerpt from the *Kapo* Heinz Stalp's interrogation:[642]

"Public prosecutor: I asked you about the children. How were these children exterminated in the gas chamber?

Stalp: I know of one case. When I was in the 'Clothing Plant' in Pohlmann Street, two trucks drove up in the morning and the children of parents working in Majdanek were loaded up. The parents had been told that the children were being taken away for educational purposes.

Public prosecutor: Was the children's clothing taken away too?

Stalp: Yes.

Public prosecutor: How many children were there, and how old were they?

Stalp: There were little ones, one year old, and there were thirteen to fourteen-year-olds.

Public prosecutor: How were they taken to the gas chamber?

Stalp: The truck drove right up to the gas chamber. Personnel from the SD [Security Service] *were present, the children were led onto the Women's Compound (Compound No. I) and ten women were brought from there who had to undress the children. Then the children were ordered to go into the chamber, they were told stories about how nice it was there; some children cried, but they didn't know that they were going to their deaths. Once they were in the chamber, an SD-man closed the door, and then gases were piped in through the square opening.*

Public prosecutor: Did you see these children who had been asphyxiated in the gas chamber, and how did they look?

Stalp: Yes, I often saw inmates being brought out of the gas chamber. Their lungs had obviously burst, and there was blood coming out, but not in every case. After two days their dead bodies turned a greenish color."

Note that neither of the poisons allegedly used – carbon monoxide or hydrogen cyanide – causes the lungs to burst! Clearly the *Kapo* Heinz Stalp had said exactly what he was forced to say.

2. The Düsseldorf Majdanek Trial

After many years of investigation, in the course of which more than 200 people were questioned, the sordid spectacle that has gone down in history as the "Majdanek Trial" began in Düsseldorf on November 26, 1975. The proceedings dragged on for six years and ended with a verdict on June 30, 1981. Initially, 15 former members of the camp guard staff had been charged, in-

642 *Ibid.*, pp. 27f.

cluding six women. One of the defendants, Alice Orlowski, then 73 years old, died in 1976 during the trial; another defendant, Wilhelm Reinartz, was released in 1978, not being fit to be held in prison; the three former guards Rosy Süss, Charlotte Mayer and Hermine Böttcher, as well as the camp physician Heinrich Schmidt, were acquitted early, in 1979, since their innocence had been established. Of the remaining nine defendants, one – Heinrich Groffmann – was acquitted in 1981.[643] In the other eight cases, the sentences were as follows:[644]

- life imprisonment on two counts of joint murder of a total of at least 100 people, for the defendant Hermine Braunsteiner-Ryan;
- 12 years imprisonment on two counts of serving as joint accessory to murder of a total of at least 100 people, for the defendant Hildegard Lächert;
- 10 years imprisonment on two counts of serving as joint accessory to murder of a total of at least 141 people, for the defendant Hermann Heinrich Hackmann;
- 8 years imprisonment on five counts of serving as joint accessory to murder of a total of at least 195 people, for the defendant Emil Laurich;
- 6 years imprisonment on two counts of serving as joint accessory to murder of a total of at least 17,002 people, for the defendant Heinz Villain;
- 4 years imprisonment for serving as joint accessory to murder of 41 people, for the defendant Heinrich Petrick;
- 3 years and 6 months imprisonment for serving as joint accessory to murder of 41 people, for the defendant Arnold Strippel;
- 3 years imprisonment for serving as joint accessory to murder of at least 100 people, for the defendant Thomas Ellwanger.

The two defendants who were given the severest sentences, Hermine Braunsteiner-Ryan and Hildegard Lächert, had been accused of participating in the selection of Jewish women and children for the gas chambers; the other six were charged with participating in the execution of prisoners, particularly within the scope of the alleged mass murder of November 3, 1943.

In the following we shall quote at some length from the Düsseldorf verdict, which discussed the gassing of inmates and the number of victims of the Majdanek camp:[645]

> *"The most terrible burden on the inmates, especially the Jewish people, was the selections for death by gassing. These selections had begun in late autumn 1942 and were carried out predominantly in spring and summer 1943.*
>
> *From the start, the crematorium and so-called delousing facilities had been planned for the Majdanek concentration camp , but their completion was delayed considerably, as was the entire construction project. Just as the camp had initially*

[643] C. Pilichowski, *op. cit.* (note 61), pp. 432-434.
[644] District Court Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 55). The sentences and Reasons for Sentence are given on pages 778-795.
[645] *Ibid.*, pp. 86-90.

been described as a 'prisoner-of-war camp,' even though it was actually designed as a concentration camp, the term 'delousing facility' also served as code word. Himmler's aforementioned order of July 19, 1942, [that all Jews living in the General Government were to be concentrated in a few set zones by the end of that year] *resulted in the circumstance that the camp, aside from its initial purpose of forced labor and transit camp, at times also had to function as an extermination camp, which it did with its gassing facilities.*

[…] *The gassing victims were Jews of all ages and various nationalities, especially mothers with children, elderly, ill and injured, as well as people appearing to be unfit or not entirely fit to work. For the most part, the camp personnel used its own judgement to decide which of the people preordained for the 'Final Solution' belonged to this group and which were to contribute their manpower to the National Socialist regime for some time yet.* […] *It has not been possible to determine whether there were also isolated cases where non-Jewish inmates were included in the gassings, for example who were considered to be so-called Muslims or decrepits for reasons of their age or ill health; but it is likely that this happened, at least sometimes.*

[…] *The 'initial selections' – the culling of Jewish people who were considered no longer useful as 'manpower' – continued in further selections for the same purpose, carried out on the various Compounds of the Protective Detention Camp; the SS camp jargon cynically described these selections as 'the unit bound for Heaven'. These selections were done most frequently in spring and summer 1943, at irregular intervals and in various ways. Some were carried out by a sort of 'commission' usually made up of one of the SS camp doctors and a group of other male or female members of the SS, and some by the guards of the individual compounds. The victims were Jewish people who were ill, sickly, exhausted, injured or deemed 'unfit to live' for other reasons.*

The gassing always proceeded in the same way. The inmates marked for death were taken to the barrack, made to undress and then herded into one of the gas chambers. As soon as the door was closed air-tight behind them, the carbon monoxide or Zyklon B was introduced into the chamber. Both poisons caused paralysis of the respiratory organs and thus a painful death by suffocation. With carbon monoxide, which was only used in the initial phase of the gassings, death generally took a little longer than with Zyklon B. That poison, however, also did not 'take effect' immediately, only after a certain time, because the effect was dependent on the extent to which the cyanide salt broke down into its gaseous form due to the slowly rising room temperature. As soon as the SS-man in charge of supervising the gassing determined that all the victims had died, the steel doors were thrown open so that the gas could escape. Then the bodies were brought out by a special unit of inmates, loaded onto hand carts or vehicles and either taken to the old or new crematorium to be burned, or to pits or pyres prepared outside the camp in the surrounding forest.

By early 1943 at the latest, the mass selections of people to be killed by gassing were common knowledge in the Majdanek concentration camp. This resulted in the fact that instances where inmates were culled under circumstances resembling selections, but actually for other purposes – primarily for transfers to other camps – were misunderstood by many inmates as selections for the gas chambers. This

goes primarily for the culling of female inmates for the aforementioned transports, between late June and late August 1943, to the Auschwitz and Ravensbrück concentration camps and to the Skarcysko-Kamienna forced labor camp. The women who were considered for these transports had to undress and submit to an 'examination' by one of the camp doctors in the presence of female SS guards in the Washing Barrack of the Women's Camp. However, unlike for 'selections for killing,' which were carried out in a similar manner, the purpose here was to cull people appearing to be 'particularly fit to work,' not such as were unable to work.

The evidence heard by this court has not been able to determine precisely how many people lost their lives in the Majdanek concentration camp as a result of gassing, execution and other violent means, epidemics and malnutrition, abuse and privation, and other reasons, However, this court considers a minimum of 200,000 victims, among them at least 60,000 Jewish people, to be a certainty."

The Court then went on to substantiate how it had arrived at its "findings" about homicidal gassings, selections for the gas chambers, and the number of victims. Eyewitness testimony was the only basis for these findings, and the witnesses fell into the following categories:

a) The defendants themselves, as well as the four co-defendants who had already been acquitted, "insofar as they gave relevant information."
b) 75 former inmates of the camp, most of them Jews, who testified at the Düsseldorf Trial.
c) 11 members of the SS who were suspected of participation in the crimes under investigation but who were not charged.
d) 6 female witnesses who were not fit to travel and were instead questioned in the United States, Canada and Australia by members of the Court.
e) 37 former inmates of Majdanek, most of them Jews, who were not fit or not willing to travel and were instead questioned in Israel, Poland, the Soviet Union and Austria by means of International Assistance in Law Enforcement, in the presence of members of the Court.
f) 23 inmates who made their testimony in the form of written depositions, and who had since died or become unfit to be questioned.
g) 18 former members of the SS or female SS guards who were not suspected of or charged with any crimes.
h) 3 German witnesses who were unfit to travel and were instead questioned in their homes.

To provide a token of learned sophistication, the evidence of these witnesses was supplemented with an "expert report" by the "expert on contemporary history" Dr. Wolfgang Scheffler, and with the contents of "other documents, papers and photographs discussed in the Main Hearing, insofar as they were made part of the trial by reading or visual examination." The Court continued:[646]

[646] *Ibid.*, pp. 97-101.

"The Court has relied primarily on the report by the expert on contemporary history for its determinations with respect to the design and construction of the camp, the purposes it was used for, the development of the inmate population and the total number of victims. The subject expert has also argued this part of his expositions and conclusions convincingly, and supported it with extensive documentary source materials; further, they are largely congruent with what other evidence has shown in this regard […]. *Where the findings respecting the physical location of the gas chambers and their technical facilities are concerned, this Court has based them on the compelling expositions of the subject expert, on the contents of the protocol of the on-site inspection of the camp conducted by means of International Assistance in Law Enforcement, and primarily on the testimonies of the witnesses Heinz Müller, Cesarski* [eight more names follow].

The witness Müller is one of the few members of the SS who have not sought to hide their knowledge behind alleged ignorance, inability to remember, disinterest in camp events at the time in question, or other excuses. According to his own statements, he was initially with the Wachsturmbann from late 1941 on, and with the command staff from late 1942 to spring 1943, and has admitted that as part of his training as SDG [sanitation services assistant] *he was present when a group of naked people were killed in one of the small gas chambers by piping carbon monoxide into it, and that he observed the deaths of the victims through the small window. The witnesses Cesarski, Stanisławski, Skibinska and Ostrowski unanimously confirmed the use of Zyklon B; this also follows from the protocols of the questioning of the witnesses Benden, Gröner and Rockinger, which were read into evidence."*

So the verdict was based almost exclusively on eyewitness testimony. What should one make of that?

Generally speaking, we note that witness evidence is considered to be the most uncertain form of evidence, since human memory is very unreliable and easy to manipulate. In science as well as in justice under the rule of law there is a hierarchy of evidence with regard to evidential value, according to which any form of material or documentary evidence is superior to eyewitness testimony in terms of evidential value.[647]

The French historian Jacques Baynac has aptly described the value of eyewitness testimony for historians:[648]

"For the academic historian, an eyewitness statement does not represent real history. It is an object of history. Eyewitness testimony is not weighty evidence; and numerous witness testimonies are not much weightier than a single one, if there is no solid documentation to support them. It would not be much of an exaggeration to say that the postulate of academic historiography is: no paper(s), no established facts."

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[647] E. Schneider, *Beweis und Beweiswürdigung,* Munich: F. Vahlen, 1987, pp. 188, 304; quoted as per M. Köhler, "The Value of Testimony and Confessions Concerning the Holocaust," in: Germar Rudolf (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 142), pp. 85-132.

[648] *Le nouveau quotidien,* Lausanne, Sept. 3, 1997.

In the case of the Düsseldorf Majdanek Trial, there are additional reasons for treating the eyewitness testimony with utmost suspicion:

- The events that were the subject of the trial had happened more than thirty years earlier. Under these circumstances eyewitness testimony must be considered almost worthless, since human powers of recollection tend not to improve as time passes after the recalled event.
- There was probably not one of the witnesses that had not spent the years since his liberation constantly exposed to stories, both heard and read, of gas chambers and mass murders in the National Socialist concentration camps. Under these conditions one has to expect that the witnesses would begin to confuse what they themselves had experienced with what they had merely heard or read.
- Former inmates of Majdanek inevitably and understandably felt anger and hatred for their former oppressors. No one enjoys being deprived of his freedom, and the conditions in the Lublin camp were beneath all human dignity, which the extremely high mortality already shows. Further, it is certainly conceivable that at least some of the defendants had in fact tormented and harassed the inmates. Under these circumstances, the temptation would have been irresistible for most of the witnesses to expose not only any real misdeeds the SS-men or others like them might have committed, but also to impute to them other, far worse crimes, especially since they had nothing whatsoever to fear even if their testimony was disproved.
- At the time of the Düsseldorf Majdanek Trial, it had already become well-known that some other German atrocities that had also been 'proven' by eyewitness testimony were in fact fabrications of Allied atrocity propaganda. One example of this is the allegation that the Germans had committed the mass murder of Katyn, which the Soviet perpetrators had blamed on the vanquished Germans.[649] Even though the Soviet Union did not admit its guilt until Gorbachev's time, the west, and thus the Federal Republic of Germany, knew from the start that the Soviets were responsible for that massacre of Polish officers and that therefore the witnesses drummed up by the Soviet justice system had been lying.

It was equally well known at that time that there had never been any homicidal gassings in Dachau and other western concentration camps, even though 'proof' of such gassings had been adduced right after the war in the form of eyewitness testimony. For example, the Dachau camp physician Dr. Franz Blaha testified under oath at the Nuremberg Tribunal that he had performed autopsies on the bodies of gassing victims in that camp.[650] But ever since Martin Broszat, then a staff member and later the Chief of the Munich Institute for Contemporary History, had determined in 1960 that no Jews or other inmates

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[649] *IMT*, vol. VII, p. 425.
[650] *IMT*, vol. V, p. 172.

had been gassed in Dachau (or in other western camps),[651] even the orthodox historians, *i.e.*, those supporting the theory of extermination, considered the gas chambers of Dachau, Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen etc. as finished. Thus, the witnesses had also lied in these cases. The Düsseldorf court should have borne all this in mind rather than putting blind faith in its witness testimony, for why should eyewitness testimony about gassings in Majdanek be more credible, *a priori*, than eyewitness testimony about gassings in Dachau?

Now the reader may object that even SS-men corroborated the gas chamber murders to the Court – namely, the four acquitted co-defendants, members of the SS who were first suspected but ultimately not charged, and finally, some who had never even been suspected.

We would point out first of all that an outsider has no way of checking the court's claims; we do not know what exactly the SS guards in question said in their testimony, since the trial transcripts are not available to the public. If the members of the SS should actually have testified to the reality of the homicidal gassings, one cannot help but suspect that they bought their early acquittals or their dispensation from criminal charges with this testimony that was so desirable to the Federal German justice system. After all, it was the one with the power to decide which former Majdanek guards would end up in the prisoner's dock and which would not. If the judiciary had been determined to charge and imprison this or that former guard, it was surely not difficult to obtain the desired incriminating eyewitness testimony. The judiciary was not short of means for exerting pressure, as it were, to produce the desired statements.

In this context, the case of SS-man Heinz Müller is quite revealing; as the reader will recall, the court had praised him for being "one of the few members of the SS who have not sought to hide their knowledge behind alleged ignorance, inability to remember, disinterest in camp events at the time in question, or other excuses." He confessed having attended the gassings with carbon monoxide, thus finally furnishing some evidence for murders committed with this poison: even though the official subject literature unanimously alleges this killing method, we have failed to find even one other witness statement to this effect.

Heinz Müller was well rewarded for his cooperation: he never made personal acquaintance with the prisoner's dock.

The court itself involuntarily furnished a striking proof of the unreliable nature of eyewitness testimony by stating that "many inmates" had misinterpreted "instances where inmates were culled under circumstances resembling selections […] but actually for other purposes, primarily for transfers to other camps." It obviously never occurred to the Court that with this comment it was declaring all eyewitness testimony about "selections for the gas cham-

[651] *Die Zeit,* Aug. 19, 1960.

bers" to be worthless, since every culling "under circumstances resembling selections" could actually have been done for purposes of transfers to other camps (or assignment to a labor unit) and been misconstrued by witnesses as a selection for the gas chambers.

Obviously the Federal German justice system did not try for even a second to obtain documentary or material evidence for the alleged homicidal gassings at issue in the Majdanek Trial (not unlike National Socialist trials of similar nature). One example of its utter ignorance of documentary evidence is its claim that the term "delousing facility" was only a code word with which the homicidal facilities were disguised. If the court had taken the trouble to study the surviving German documents, it would have found the descriptions of the plague of lice in the camp, as well as the construction plans for the delousing facilities. And the delousing operations are also mentioned in the eyewitness reports which the court set such great store by in other respects.

The picture of Majdanek as a site of planned extermination of human beings which the Düsseldorf court painted is not supported by so much as one documentary proof. It is something that could not be disguised even with numerous references to the "expert on contemporary history," Scheffler, who was said to have supported his findings about the camp's purpose and the total number of victims "with extensive documentary source materials." The court wisely kept silent about what materials these might have been. And since these "extensive documentary source materials" simply do not exist, even Herr Scheffler could not use them to prove either the mass extermination or the alleged minimum of 200,000 victims.

The Court did not even try to come up with a basis for this completely fictional figure. The reference to the eyewitnesses was a particularly pathetic argument here, for even if the gassings had actually taken place, the witnesses could have been present only at individual murder operations at best, and could not possibly have known the total number of the camps' victims. To determine this number, the first requirement would have been to find out the total number of inmates deported to Majdanek; so the court would first of all have had to try to locate the transport lists. But nothing of the sort was done.

The Court even depended on the "compelling expositions of the subject expert" with regard to the "physical location of the gas chambers" and their "technical facilities." While it is alleged that an "on-site inspection of the camp" was done with "International Assistance in Law Enforcement," this inspection cannot have been very thorough. Otherwise the inspectors would at least have noticed that one of the "homicidal gas chambers" has a window, which the victims would immediately have smashed.

One thing that is a standard procedure in any nonpolitical murder trial, namely, an expert report on the murder weapon, was obviously deemed superfluous by the Düsseldorf court in a case prosecuting such a spectacular and horrific crime as the alleged mass gassings.

An expert report on the "murder weapon" (meaning, in this case, the rooms described as "gas chambers" as well as the two poisons allegedly used) would have refuted the credibility of the eyewitness accounts about gassings. That, however, was not the purpose of the trial, and therefore such an expert report was omitted and the "expert on contemporary history" Scheffler was consulted instead of a chemist or a toxicologist.

Unfortunately the defense missed its opportunity to take up this point and insist on an expert report about the "murder weapon." Obviously, just as in similar National Socialist trials, the defense attorneys chose to bow to opportunistic considerations and preferred not to question the image of the "extermination camp," insisting instead merely on their clients' personal innocence.

Just as for the alleged gassings, the Court was also satisfied with eyewitness testimony where the alleged mass execution of November 3, 1943, was concerned, and it accepted these testimonies without question.

Aside from the decorative "expert on contemporary history," Scheffler, the following witnesses are cited in the Court's verdict to prove the massacre of November 3, 1943:

- 24 former inmates of Majdanek;
- the defendants Groffmann and Villain (of whom the former was then acquitted and the latter got off with a sentence that was mild relative to the charge);
- 13 members of the SS who were suspected of complicity but never charged;
- former co-defendant Hermine Böttcher, who had been acquitted;
- 4 German witnesses who were unable to travel and made written depositions instead;
- 5 Polish and Soviet witnesses who were unable or unwilling to travel and made written depositions instead;
- 13 witnesses who had since died – including Erich Mußfeldt(!).

One of the witnesses for the prosecution who was suspected but not charged was the SS-man Georg Werk. With reference to him, the verdict states:[652]

> *"According to his statements, the witness Werk was posted to the office in Lublin at that time, and had been detailed to the execution squad, but claims that he did not participate in the shooting but only 'watched' because – (in his own words) 'luckily' his submachine gun malfunctioned. The latter is anything but believable; but the Court has absolutely no doubt that the rest of his testimony is truthful, especially with regard to how the witnesses had to lie down on top of each other like roofing tiles, to be killed with shots to the back of the head or in the neck."*

[652] District Court Düsseldorf, *op. cit.* (note 55), v. II, p. 486.

It doesn't take much of an imagination to picture how the Court probably bought this witness's incriminating statement: in return for the desired description of the mass murder, Georg Werk was exempted from criminal charges, even though the Court proclaimed his excuse, the malfunctioning submachine gun, to be unbelievable and he would therefore logically have to have been charged as accessory to murder, and convicted. SS-man Erich Laurich, on the other hand, who categorically denied any involvement in the executions,[653] was "exposed" by the testimony of the witness Zacheusz Pawlak and sentenced to eight years in prison.

One of the most revealing sections of the verdict is that about the witness Stanisław Chwiejczak. He incriminated the defendant Heinz Villain (who was charged with participation in the alleged mass execution of November 3, 1943) by testifying that on that day, Villain and another SS-man had received some object of value from a Jew destined to be shot; the latter had retrieved his valuable from a hiding place to try to buy his life with it, but then Villain had led the Jew off to the execution ditch after all. The Court considered Chwiejczak's statement to be unbelievable, for the following reason:[654]

> *"Where* […] *the witness Chwiejczak is concerned, under questioning in the Main Hearing on September 17-18, 1980, he identified the defendant Villain as one of the two SS-men who had accompanied the Jewish inmate to his hiding place; the witness Pych had stated the same. However, as the witness Chwiejczak admitted, this claim is exactly the opposite of that which he stated in this context some 10 months earlier, at his hearing on November 6, 1979, in Warsaw in the presence of members of the Court, where he had stated that the defendant Villain was not involved in this incident. The reason which the witness gave for this contradiction – namely, that after his questioning in Warsaw he had thought about it and remembered that the defendant Villain had been present – may be true; however, the Court is not convinced of this, since there are several indications to suggest that in the time between his questioning in Warsaw and his appearance at the Main Hearing the witness has attempted to 'refresh' his memory not only by 'thinking' but also by obtaining information from outside sources."*

Evidently it did not occur to the Court that Chwiejczak may not have been the only witness to make use of their time and opportunity to "'refresh'" their "memory […] by obtaining information from outside sources."

The possibility that one or the other of those accused in Düsseldorf may have been guilty of abusing inmates, or even of murder, cannot be ruled out. More than three decades after the war's end, it was impossible to bring evidence and to conduct an inquiry perfectly and in complete accordance with the principles of a state under rule of law. And in any case, such individual crimes would not have contributed anything decisive to the three central issues: whether there were homicidal gas chambers in Majdanek; whether a minimum

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[653] *Ibid.*, v. II, p. 510.
[654] *Ibid.*, v. II, p. 492.

of 17,000 Jews were shot there on November 3, 1943; and whether at least 200,000 people really died in the Lublin camp.

The irrefutable conclusion can only be that the Majdanek Trial was a political show trial in which the guilt or innocence of the defendants was really irrelevant and which actually only served to cement the image of the "extermination camp" with a court verdict, a valuable contribution to the reeducation of the German people.

That the Poles, four months after the liberation of Majdanek, would stage a show trial of members of an enemy nation that still occupied part of their country is something one can understand. But that the Federal Republic of Germany, more than three decades after the end of the war, carried out a trial that disregarded such elementary juridical norms as the subordination of witness testimony to material and documentary evidence is something that cannot be justified. At best there may be mitigating circumstances.

One of the mitigating circumstances one must probably grant the Düsseldorf judges is that they were under extreme pressure from domestic and foreign media, anti-fascist organizations, foreign governments, particularly the Israeli and the Polish, and most likely also from the Federal German government. Even the early acquittal of some of the defendants had prompted a flood of protests. The Court pronounced some of the defendants guilty because it *had to* pronounce them guilty, and convicted them because it *had to* convict them. The sentences were then promptly criticized as being too lenient, both at home and abroad.[655] Under such conditions justice was hardly possible.

While the state of evidence for the alleged 200,000+ victims of Majdanek, the homicidal gassings in Majdanek, and the massacre of November 1943 has not improved even with the Düsseldorf Trial, those with a vested interest in preserving and maintaining the official version of history can claim, ever since this trial, that these mass crimes have been "judicially noted" as fact and therefore no longer need to be proved. As per their self-perception, German historians, beginning with the fantastic "expert on contemporary history" Wolfgang Scheffler, will probably continue to take this as a dispensation from responsibility to conduct serious academic and scientific research about this camp.

As a mere footnote, it should be noted that the verdict of the Düsseldorf court contradicts a statement found in the verdict of another German court passed in 1950 in Berlin. During this trial, several defendants were accused of having committed atrocities and mass murder in the Sobibor camp. Regarding Majdanek the verdict says:[656]

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[655] C. Pilichowski, *op. cit.* (note 61), p. 435.

[656] District Court Berlin, Verdict of May 8, 1950, Ref. PKs 3/50; Chamber Court Berlin, Verdict of Nov. 11, 1950, Ref. 1 Ss 201/50; reproduced in: Fritz Bauer, Karl Dietrich Bracher, Ch. J. Enschedé *et al*. (eds.), *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen. Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945-1966*, vol. 7, Amsterdam: University

> *"Transport from Maidanek* [sic]. *For the purpose of being gassed, a transport of Jewish inmates of about 15,000 men arrived at one time from the Maidanek camp, which did not posses gassing facilities. Because the gassing facility in the Sobibor camp was out of order at that time* […]*"*

Thus, there were *no* homicidal gas chambers in Majdanek according to this verdict!

Press Amsterdam, 1971, p. 547.

Conclusion

The Majdanek concentration camp was a place of suffering.

The people imprisoned there suffered under catastrophically unsanitary conditions, epidemics, at times completely insufficient rations, back-breaking heavy labor, harassment. More than 40,000 Majdanek inmates died, primarily from disease, debilitation and malnutrition; an unknown number was executed.

The real victims of Majdanek deserve our respect, just as all victims of war and oppression deserve our respect, regardless what nation they belong to. But we are not doing the dead any service by inflating their number for political and propagandistic reasons and by making utterly unfounded claims about the way they died.

The longer the time that separates our present from World War Two, the less justification there is for supplementing the real suffering and the real deaths in the Lublin camp with inventions of gargantuan-scale slaughter committed in gas chambers and with mass executions – a slaughter for which there is no trace of proof and which numerous compelling arguments of a historical as well as technical nature speak against.

The reduction in Majdanek's victim count which was introduced in Poland in the early 1990s was justified by saying that the unscientific considerations which in the past had required an inflation of the real numbers were now no longer in force. If that is truly so, then we may expect that the Polish historians – who, unlike their western counterparts, have at least tried to research the events in Majdanek – will throw off the dead weight of Stalinist historiography completely and not only in small parts, and that they will be open and honest about the consequences that will ineluctably follow from the state of documentation and from the physical nature of certain facilities on the grounds of the former camp Majdanek.

A real and lasting reconciliation between the German and the Polish peoples, which is exactly the hope of this book's two authors, who have ties of friendship to both peoples, can only flourish on a foundation of the whole truth!

Supplements

1. Barbara Schwindt's "Research" on Majdanek

By Carlo Mattogno

The most important book on the Lublin camp which has appeared after the publication of the first edition of the present study is undoubtedly *Das Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager Majdanek. Funktionswandel im Kontext der "Endlösung"* (*The Concentration and Extermination Camp Majdanek. Functional Changes in the Context of the "Final Solution"*), by Barbara Schwindt.[657] The author's stated purpose is "the reconstruction and analysis of the development of the concentration and extermination camp Majdanek" (p. 18), but this reconstruction of the camp's history is almost always in the background, submersed by a flood of data which are only indirectly related to the topic, except for the section on gas chambers, which will be discussed now.

At the outset, the author emphasizes the "general lack of knowledge" and "lack of interest" in this camp's history by western historiography, including that of the U.S., lamenting that it has not taken into account the research of historians from Poland, such as she claims to have performed.

In this context she clearly appropriates the Polish sources we cited in our present study, with some updates after its first publication. She is clearly informed by it even regarding the reconstruction of the camp's disinfestation facility. Even her eight references to the Polish-Soviet Expert Report of 4 to 23 August 1944 are taken from our study, which is proven undoubtedly from three facts: the archive in which this document is held, the *Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, is mentioned for this source alone; Schwindt transliterates the Russian name of this archive in precisely the same way, and for any specific reference she never indicates the actual page, but merely gives the page range of the entire document, namely pp. 229-243, because in the first edition of our present study we included a translation of the entire report (chapter VI.1.) while giving merely the page range where it can be found, *i.e.* pp. 229-243. Finally, she adopted the numbering of the gas chambers from our discussion of said expert report, a distinctive numbering not used by any Polish historian.

Although it is therefore obvious that Schwindt knew this present study, she does not mention it even once, which betrays a plagiaristic intent. From our point of view this means also that the author has not even tried to refute at

[657] Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2005.

least the essentials of our study, although she had plenty of time to do it. Apparently she was unable to refute anything.

In Schwindt's opinion the Majdanek camp was built "as a labor reservoir for the implementation of the settlement plans [for the] GG [*Generalgouvernement*] and in the occupied Soviet territories" within the *Generalplan Ost* (p. 59, 26), which aimed not only at the Germanization of the Lublin district, but of the whole General Government.

From autumn 1941 to summer 1942, according Schwindt, Majdanek served for "extermination by labor," a claim based on the fact that "most of the Jews deployed for the construction of the camp died within a short period of time owing to the hard labor and catastrophic living conditions" (p. 73), but this was not the result of a specifically homicidal intention, which in fact would also have been in conflict with the primary purpose of the SS to create a Jewish labor reserve; in fact, during this period of time "Majdanek served as a labor camp. Jewish men considered fit for work were deployed for the construction of the camp" (p. 76), according to the principle: "each healthy inmate a skilled worker" (p. 71). In parallel, in order to keep the typhus epidemic under control which raged in the camp, sick prisoners, both Jews and Gentiles, were allegedly shot in the Krepiecki woods, so that – following Schwindt – "Majdanek was included in the extermination program already at the beginning of the 'Aktion Reinhardt' by Globocnik – although only marginally" (p. 73). In support of the reality of these alleged shootings, however, the author does not present even the slightest evidence, not even witnesses. These shootings are said to have occurred within the framework of the "Aktion 14 f 13," a claim which she tries to substantiate with completely inconsistent interpretations. It is worthwhile to examine this issue more closely. Schwindt writes (p. 84):

> *"Due to the typhus epidemic*[658] *which had spread throughout the camp Koch turned to the company Tesch & Stabenow, International Company for Pest Control, on 23 December 1941 with the question 'whether there is a branch of your company in the General Government which could carry out the gassing.' The meaning of the term 'gassing' used by Koch here is unclear. It is a synonym for 'disinfection,' 'disinfestation' or 'delousing.' All three terms were used since spring 1942 to disguise the killing of Jewesses and Jews with Zyklon B. But hydrogen cyanide also served for the struggle against epidemics. For this purpose a delousing facility was to be built in Majdanek following an order by Kammler of 8 December. It is not certain whether Koch intended to fight the typhus epidemic by killing the sick or by disinfection, for example of the inmates' clothes. Yet it is quite possible that Koch, who due to his earlier function as camp commander in Buchenwald was acquainted with the 'Aktion 14 f 13,' intended to use the Zyklon B for homicides."*

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658 Schwindt's German text here reads "Typhusepidemie," although the German proper term for typhus is "Fleckfieber." The German edition of our present work (first published in 1998) still conflated both terms, which may be the source of Schwindt's lack of accuracy in this regard.

Here I must state immediately that the alleged use of words like disinfection, disinfestation or delousing "to disguise the killing of Jewesses and Jews with Zyklon B" is simply a gratuitous conjecture of the author without any documentary basis.

The Koch letter referred to above, which has as its subject "Gassing with Zyklon B," begins with these words:[659]

> *"The administration of the PoW camp Lublin was made aware of your company by referral of SS-Oberscharführer Dietz that the possibility exists to conduct a gassing of the local PoW."*

The response by Tesch & Stabenow, dated 27 December 1941, shows unequivocally that "gassing" (*Vergasung*) was a mere synonym for "gassing through" (*Durchgasung*), a term that recurs several times; hence this term could only refer to a disinfestation gassing, not to a homicidal one:

> *"From your letter we perceive, however, that you intend to conduct a gassing* [*Durchgasung*] *of the local PoW camp."*

The specialized personnel for disinfestation gassings were sent directly from the company's Hamburg office.

The company attached to the letter a "questionnaire," in which the administration of the Lublin camp was to enter "the necessary data of the facilities which are to be gassed [*durchgast*]" (p. 115). If we also consider that on 23 December 1941 the only disinfestation plant planned for Majdanek (with plan of 23 October 1941 according to blueprint no. 9082) was not designed for Zyklon B but for hot air, Schwindt's homicidal hypothesis collapses completely. This is confirmed by the fact that, as Schwindt states herself, no document connects the Lublin camp to "Aktion 14 f 13," nor is it known "that a commission of 'T4' physicians ever showed up at Majdanek" (pp. 84f.), so that the claimed instigation for the alleged killings collapses as well. Nevertheless and against all evidence, she stubbornly holds on to her unfounded hypothesis, and she even reverses her initial reasoning:

> *"Since the killings within the framework of the 'Aktion 14 f 13' were conducted multiple times, it is likely that Koch ordered the Zyklon B for this purpose."* (p. 85)

She did not address the question how and where Koch could have implemented this alleged extermination plan by means of Zyklon B.

In this phase of the camp's history, from autumn 1941 to summer 1942, there was also another major event according to the author:

> *"On 20 and 21 April 1942 Majdanek was included in the extermination program of 'Aktion Reinhardt' for the first time."* (p. 103)

– although merely "marginally." In fact, during these days a few hundred or a few thousand Jews of the ghetto Majdan Tatarski were allegedly shot in the Krepiecki woods (pp. 101f.), but this claim remains unsubstantiated. This stands even in contradiction to what the author herself says, "The first large extermination operation was probably conducted in the summer [1942]," *i.e.*

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[659] *APMM*, sygn. I, d. 2, p. 113.

the execution of about 300 sick prisoners in the Krepiecki woods (p. 120), a fact allegedly made "certain" by a court verdict of 1981!

During the summer of 1942 the *Generalplan Ost* passed progressively into the background. On 19 July 1942 Himmler issued the order "on the acceleration of the 'Final Solution'" (p. 122). This alleged extermination order is actually a letter from Himmler to the SS- and Higher Police Leader in the General Government Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, according to which "as of 31 December no persons of Jewish descent are allowed to be present in the General Government" (p. 127). This is perfectly consistent with the SS project "to deport the European Jewesses and Jews further to the East, that is: into the occupied Soviet territories" (p. 27), as Schwindt recognizes herself, although it contradicts the assumption that Belzec was established as a regional extermination center already on 13 October 1941,[660] which for her thesis ought to imply apodictically the termination of any deportation to the East already at that point in time. Hence she argues not in a positive way based on documents, but in a negative way based on an assumption not supported by anything. As a result of the alleged extermination order, Majdanek was allegedly included in "Aktion Reinhardt":

> *"As of the 19th of July Majdanek assumed a dual function within the framework of 'Aktion Reinhardt.' Accordingly Jewish workers – even beyond 31 December 1942 – were to perform forced labor in armaments factories. At the same time the SS leadership intended to systematically murder those in gas chambers who to them appeared no longer fit for work. In summer 1942 the function as a labor and extermination camp for Jewesses and Jews was assigned to the Majdanek concentration camp."* (p. 129)

At this point the alleged homicidal gas chambers enter the picture. From her first reference to them, Schwindt exposes herself as uncritical and superficial:

> *"That already at that time the gas chambers were intended for the killing of humans results from a report written after the end of the war by the former head of the disinfection department of the Waffen-SS, Kurt Gerstein."* (p. 125)

Even leaving aside the fact that even an orthodox Holocaust specialist on the Bełzec camp, Michael Tregenza, considers this witness to be unreliable,[661] the source cited by Schwindt does not in any way support her assertion. In the "Gerstein Report" it is claimed that on 17 August 1942 Majdanek "was at that time still under construction" ("*war damals noch im Aufbau*";[662] in the French version, "*en préparation*"[663]). It contains no reference regarding any intention to use homicidal gas chambers in Majdanek.

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[660] *Ibid*., p. 38.
[661] See in this respect my study *Bełżec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research, and History*. reprint, The Barnes Review, Washington, DC, 2011, pp. 51f.
[662] PS-2170, p. 3.
[663] PS-1553, p. 5 of the report.

Schwindt elaborates on this issue in her chapter 2.4. entitled "The Startup on Completion of the Gas Chambers," in which she perpetrates a systematic distortion of the true meaning of the adduced documents.

In defiance of all the evidence we have adduced in Chapter VI of this present study, the author asserts that

> *"therefore after the 1st of July the decision must have been made to install a 'delousing facility' operating with Zyklon B in the second bathing barrack* [Barrack 41]. *This was the gas chamber in which Jewesses and Jews were to be killed in the framework of the 'Final Solution.'"* (p. 156)

This refers to the disinfestation facility (*Entwesungsanlage*) with two delousing chambers (*Entlausungskammern*) of Building BW XII^{A}, adjacent to Barrack 41, although Schwindt purports to know that three gas chambers were planned and built right from the start – instead of the two originally projected. This would of course mean that this modification was implemented after the fact for a situation she claims to have been factual from the start. But what evidence is there that Building BW XII^{A} was built for homicidal purposes? In this regard the author puts forward mere foggy ruminations, such as the fact that the disinfestation facility was originally intended for the airport camp, where the Fur and Clothing Works were located, and the supposed decision to accelerate the extermination of the Jews which is claimed to have been taken in June 1942 at the latest (p. 157). On the first point she states that in May 1942 the two gas chambers were still equipped for disinfestation, but

> *"at the latest when it was decided to erect the gas chambers in Majdanek instead of in the airport camp, they were planned for the killing of humans."* (p. 208)

In spite of this she is forced to admit that

> *"maybe the gas chambers were initially intended to be used by the clothing workshops as well."*

In this context she quotes the "*Erläuterungsbericht*" (explanatory report) of 10 July 1942, in which a "*Flugdach*" (post-supported roof) of 60 m × 18 m is mentioned (p. 158), whose function we explained. The very beginning of the *Erläuterungsbericht* categorically refutes Schwindt's historical confabulations (see p. 130 of the present work):

> *"For purposes of disinfesting the arriving items of fur and clothing, a disinfestation facility as per the diagram provided by the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office is to be built on the grounds of the Fur and Clothing Works of Lublin."*

This understanding arises already from its full subject stating:[664]

> *"Explanatory Report for the Construction of a Disinfestation Facility for the Fur and Clothing Works of Lublin."*

Hence the author truncates this heading to "*Erläuterungsbericht.*"

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[664] *WAPL*, Central Construction Office, 141, p. 59.

This document demonstrates also that this disinfestation facility had been planned for the Majdanek camp right from the start, yet never for the airport camp, for which there is no documentary support.

All this therefore proves that the two gas chambers of Building BW XII^{A} were designed and built exclusively as disinfestation plants. The claimed homicidal purpose is thus an arbitrary and unfounded conjecture.

In addition to the Polish-Soviet Report of August 1944, the author has appropriated from our study also references to Konstantin Simonov, a special correspondent of the Soviet newspaper *Red Star* who had visited the camp shortly after its capture, and to Jean-Claude Pressac. Regarding the first, Schwindt blames him for his erroneous assertion that Zyklon B was poured into the pipes of alleged homicidal carbon monoxide gas chamber, while forgetting that the Soviet journalist merely wrote what he had been told by Majdanek inmates.

With regard to the alleged gassing technique, Schwindt is cursory and superficial. The same applies to her description of the plants (pp. 158f.):

> *"There is an opening in the ceiling of Chamber I which can be sealed hermetically and through which the Zyklon B was thrown. Chamber II also has an opening in the ceiling, but in contrast to Chamber I no gas pipe. Only in Chamber III two – opposing – doors had been built."*

Shortly afterwards Schwindt adds (p. 159):

> *"The Polish-Soviet Commission concluded that humans were killed in Chamber I both by carbon monoxide and by Zyklon B. In contrast to this only Zyklon B was used in Chamber II, and only carbon monoxide in Chamber III. The Düsseldorf District Court determined, however, that it was possible to pour Zyklon B into the air heater and thereby to pipe it into Chamber III, which has no opening in the ceiling."*

In reality, however, as we explained in chapter VI, the openings in Chambers I and II are quite rough – not finished in the least. This is especially true for the ceiling hole of Chamber II which does not even have a wooden frame and gives the impression of having been chopped out hastily by or for the Polish-Soviet Commission of Inquiry. The iron reinforcement rods have not even been trimmed! As to their being "hermetically" sealable: they are simply covered by rough wooden boards as shown in photographs XI and XII of this study.

Schwindt also fails to explain why the SS would have resorted to the use of carbon monoxide in Majdanek, even though they had two Zyklon B gas chambers right from the start, which were – according to Schwindt – designed and built for homicidal purposes. She argues (pp. 159f.):

> *"It is less surprising that both carbon monoxide and Zyklon B were used in the gas chambers of Majdanek if considering that the camp was subordinate not only to the WVHA but also to Globocnik as the head of 'Aktion Reinhardt.' In Auschwitz humans were killed exclusively with Zyklon B, yet in the 'Reinhardt' camps exclusively with carbon monoxide. While in Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka carbon mon-*

oxide from engine exhaust gases was used to gas the Jewesses and Jews, liquid carbon monoxide from steel bottles was used in Majdanek."

She in fact does not only fail to clarify why two Zyklon B gas chambers would have been retrofitted for the exclusive or additional use as carbon monoxide gas chambers, but she introduces another problem: why (and how) was "liquid carbon monoxide from steel bottles"[665] used in Majdanek, if the "Aktion Reinhardt" camps used "carbon monoxide from engine exhaust gases"?

In her footnote 208 on page 160 Schwindt refers back to the "Gerstein report" in order to "prove" that the gas chambers at Majdanek "were planned for the killing of humans." But this reference completely demolishes her unfounded conjecture. Orthodox historiography agrees that Gerstein's "mission" in the eastern camps is said to have been the transformation of the local gas chambers' *modus operandi*, as Gerstein himself explicitly stated that Globocnik had told him:[666]

"Your other – even far more important – mission is the conversion of our gas chambers, which are now working with diesel exhaust, to a better and quicker way. I am mainly thinking of prussic acid."

The order came from the RSHA, which ordered Gerstein exactly for this purpose to pick up hydrogen cyanide in Kolin for the respective experiments.

However, if we follow Schwindt, then it follows that, contrary to the RSHA's and Globocnik's directives to replace the alleged killing system of carbon monoxide with Zyklon B, Zyklon B would have been replaced by carbon monoxide at Majdanek!

Regarding the alleged carbon monoxide plant, Schwindt remains silent about the facts we had put forward, namely:

- That the five cylinders of carbon monoxide allegedly found at the camp by the Soviets have vanished without a trace.
- That the two cylinders that are currently in the room in front of the gas chambers in the building behind barrack 41 bear the inscription "*Kohlensäure CO_2 ...*", *i.e.*, carbon **di**oxide, not carbon **mon**oxide.
- That there are no documents and no testimony about the alleged gassings with "liquid carbon monoxide from steel bottles."

As for the possibility of introducing Zyklon B through "the air heater" in order to turn even chamber III into a homicidal gas chamber, it has no meaning without an objective. The fact is, however, that such a finding does not exist. Upon arrival of the Soviets, the air heater was still in place, as shown by a photograph of the time.[667] It was carefully described in 1968 in the "*Ek-*

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[665] Bottled carbon monoxide is merely pressurized gas, not liquid.

[666] T-1310, p. 9. On this issue see C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?* 2nd ed., The Barnes Review, Washington, DC, 2010, chapter IV.5. "The 'Mission' of Kurt Gerstein," pp. 126-132.

[667] Stanisław Duszak (ed.), *Majdanek*, Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, Lublin 1985, photo 67. Currently (2010) the dismantled and partially damaged *Lufterhitzer* (air heater) is located in

spertyza dotycząca konstrukcji i przeznaczenia pieców zainstalowanych przy komorach gazowych w obozie na Majdanku w Lublinie" ("Expert Report on the Structure and Function of the Stoves Installed in the Gas Chambers in Majdanek Camp in Lublin"),[668] but without any indication of a possible adaptation for the introduction of Zyklon B.

Despite all evidence to the contrary, Schwindt incredibly concludes (p. 161):

> *"That people were murdered at Majdanek with poison gas is beyond question."*

But to support this claim she simply cites testimonies given many years after the fact and which are so unspecific that it is impossible to know which alleged gas chamber they refer to. The few statements which are more specific and which describe for instance "how an SS man is said to have climbed onto the roof with a ladder and to have thrown Zyklon B through a hatch into the gas chamber, after humans had been driven into it," date back to the years 1965-1973 (p. 161) and are clearly inspired by the stories about Auschwitz. This is demonstrated by the fact that no detainee with a fresh memory spoke to Simonov and that no witness was referred to during the Lublin trial in 1945.[669]

Furthermore, none of the testimony mentioned by her attests to any alleged gassings with carbon monoxide.

Schwindt's certainties are such that she is not even remotely able to compile a gassing history similar to the *Kalendarium* of Auschwitz, and she almost never refers to specific dates, but only to periods of times, such as the following conjecture (p. 178):

> *"In the fall of 1942* [!] *Jewesses and Jews 'unfit for work' selected from the airport camp and the Majdan Tatarski ghetto were killed in the gas chambers of Majdanek. As of this point in time the concentration camp served as an extermination camp of 'Aktion Reinhardt.'"*

Even when she mentions a specific date, it is never certain but only "probable" (p. 177):

> *"Probably on 9 November* [1942] *an acceptance selection was performed for the first time in Majdanek."*

Her sources consist of three witnesses who testified in 1962, 1972, and 1978, respectively!

She also does not provide any number of those allegedly gassed, which further confirms the character of her statements as purely conjectural.

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the small hut adjecent to the wall of room III.

[668] Drafted in Łodż in 1968 by the Institute for Heat Technology. *APMM*.

[669] *Majdanek. Rozprawa przed Specjalnym Sądem karnym w Lublinie* (Majdanek. Hearing before the Special Criminal Court in Lublin). Spółdzielnia wydawnicza "Czytelnik". Lublin 1945. The least evanescent testimony, that of Tadeusz Budzyn, is as follows: "In the gas chamber [which?] Zyklon was introduced through sealed openings [where?]." *Ibid*., p. 51.

As for Chamber IV, the only one labeled as a "gas chamber," Schwindt excludes any homicidal use of it on the basis of arguments already made by us in the present study. Shortly afterwards, however, she reconsiders this, but only to reject it again: an amazing clarity of thought (pp. 166f.):

> *"Yet it cannot be excluded completely that humans were gassed for a period of time in Chamber IV. The window may not have existed initially or could have been protected by a grate, for instance. It is moreover possible that the gassings were performed at night in order to solve the problem of ventilation. Yet still, it is unlikely that Chamber IV was used for the killing of humans, since the camp had three gas chambers at its disposal in a separate building. Another indication for the use of Chamber IV for the disinfection of clothing is the doors, which do not open outward but rather inward and which moreover could not be locked."*

Schwindt's conclusion on the gas chambers at Majdanek is this (p. 169):

> *"One can assume that three gas chambers existed in Majdanek, in which humans were murdered."*

But besides the claim that they supposedly went into operation in October 1942 (p. 170), she doesn't know anything about them, not even when they ceased their activities!

Schwindt shows an incredible technical ignorance even about the alleged use of Zyklon B for homicidal purposes. Misunderstanding a hypothesis of Jean-Claude Pressac, she writes the following (p. 165):

> *"Only minute amounts of Zyklon B would have been required for the killing of human beings. A mere four grams of the gas would have caused a person's death."*

In her footnote 237 she explains (p. 165):

> *"Thus, for example, on the night of 13 to 14 March 1943, six kilograms of Zyklon B were used in Auschwitz for the gassing of 1,492 Jews 'unfit for labor.'"*

Hence Schwindt reasons: 6,000÷1,492 ≈ 4 grams of Zyklon B per person! This is a nonsensical statement that even confuses the mass of Zyklon B (the commercial product, including the gypsum carrier) with that of hydrogen cyanide (the "active ingredient," or the lethal gas emitted by the product). From these data we could possibly infer that in the gas chamber mentioned (Morgue 1 of Crematory II in Birkenau, which had an effective volume of about 410 cubic meters, when subtracting the volume of the beams and columns and of the 1,492 bodies), 6,000 grams of hydrogen cyanide would have produced a theoretical maximum concentration of (6,000÷410) 14.6 grams of toxic HCN vapors per cubic meter. But the alleged gassing is purely hypothetical, as it is not confirmed by any documentary evidence.

Elsewhere Schwindt exhibits a credulity which is even worse than her ignorance (p. 143):

> *"On 4 September* [1942] *Globocnik complained to Himmler's military aide, Werner Grothmann, that his fuel allowance had been cut and that he therefore had difficulties to implement 'Aktion Reinhardt,' that is to say, to kill Jewesses and Jews with engine exhaust gases, all the more so since 'currently large foreign deliveries are commencing.'"*

How can anyone seriously believe that Globocnik was referring to the alleged gas chambers? According to the "findings" of the various trials, a gassing at Belzec lasted 15-30 minutes, 20-30 minutes at Sobibor and 30-40 minutes at Treblinka.[670] Hence, even if we assume three daily gassings in each camp due to the "foreign deliveries," the three engines taken together would not have worked for more than five hours a day. But these three camps were equipped with power generators driven by diesel engines which ran 24 hours a day! Not to mention the various branches of the "Aktion Reinhardt," which Globocnik described as follows:[671]

"The entire Aktion Reinhardt is divided into 4 areas:
A) the resettlement itself
B) the exploitation of labor
C) the exploitation of goods
D) the requisitioning of hidden assets and real estate"

And of course each area required vehicles and fuel.

After the establishment of the SS-owned company *SS Ostindustrie GmbH*, known in abbreviated form as *Osti*, of which Globocnik was the CEO, the function of Majdanek changed again (p. 195):

"In March [1943]*, Globocnik and Wirth, the inspector of the 'Reinhardt' camps, ordered selections to be performed on transports arriving in Sobibor and Treblinka, because Globocnik intended to recruit Jewish laborers for deployment in the Osti units in Majdanek. The Jewesses and Jews classified as 'fit for labor' were initially admitted into the Majdanek camp."*

Schwindt adds (p. 196):

"Already in February [1943] *Jews 'fit for labor' were selected in Treblinka for a transfer to Majdanek."*

This also applies to three transports of Jews from France out of four which came to Sobibor in March 1943: "Jews and possibly Jewesses 'fit for labor' were transferred to Majdanek" (p. 200). Therefore two alleged extermination camps have become instead reservoirs of Jewish labor for Majdanek!

Meanwhile, in the winter of 1942-1943, the SS allegedly performed gassing of prisoners suffering from typhus (p. 201):

"The main measure taken by the camp SS to fight the typhus epidemic was the killing of sick inmates in the gas chambers."

As usual, this statement is totally unfounded, notwithstanding the testimonies of the 1960s and 1970 invoked by Schwindt, which I have so far been unable to scrutinize.

Between spring and summer of 1943 a "mass extermination" is even said to have been perpetrated at Majdanek. Schwindt introduces the relevant paragraph as follows (p. 205):

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[670] Adalbert Rückerl (ed.), *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse*, DTV, Munich 1979, pp. 135, 165 & 224.
[671] NO-057.

"The spring of 1943 marks the beginning of the mass exterminations in Majdanek. With the arrival of survivors of the clearing of the Warsaw Ghetto at the end of April, the so-called acceptance selections as well as the selections on the inmate courts were conducted no longer sporadically as before but routinely. Old and sick people as well as children, whom the camp SS considered unfit for labor, were systematically murdered in the gas chambers."

Of the 41,000 Jews deported from Warsaw into the Lublin district, 16,000 were sent to Majdanek (pp. 219f.):

"Here the vast majority was murdered in the gas chambers right after their arrival or several days or weeks later."

But even here the author indulges in purely conjectural statements without any documentary proof.

Another alleged mass extermination of Jews is said to have concerned the Białystok ghetto. According to Schwindt, 16,800 of them were deported to Lublin. And here is her comment (p. 259):

"The majority of the Jewesses and Jews from Białystok who had been brought to Majdanek on the 20th of August and in the subsequent days, among them many children, were killed in the gas chambers right after their arrival or after several weeks."

This is yet another arbitrary assertion without the slightest documentary evidence.

In the section on "Operation Harvest Festival" Schwindt does not bring up anything new. In the second half of October 1943 Himmler, allegedly worried that the Sobibor uprising of 14 October could spread to the whole Lublin district, is said to have ordered the killing of all Jews who were there (p. 270). Such an order is not only unsupported by any documentary evidence, but is also absurd. To support her claim, Schwindt quotes the following statement by Globocnik from early January 1944 that denies such a danger (p. 268, note 377):

"By transferring the camps into the concentration camp leadership of the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office, the prerequisite has been created for an impeccable security situation."

This document states that on the 22nd of October, eight days after the revolt at Sobibor, SS-*Obergruppenführer* Pohl had taken over the following camps into the jurisdiction of Office Group D (*Amtsgruppe D*): Lublin Old Airport, Trawniki SS labor camp, Poniatowa SS labor camp, forced labor camp and SS workshops in Radom and Budzyn, Krakow-Placzow main camp, German Equipment Works (*Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke*) Lublin and the armament camps in Lemberg.[671]

The alleged decision of Himmler thus seems unreasonable and senseless. Throughout her work Schwindt emphasizes the importance of Jewish labor in the Lublin district. It had such a value for the SS that Jews fit for labor were selected even in the purported extermination camps of Sobibor and Treblinka. Hence to what purpose would the SS have killed 42,000 prisoners, if the more

sensible alternative would have been to transfer them to other labor camps or industries in the West?

The alleged shooting of 18,000 Jews at Majdanek is described by Schwindt on the basis of sketchy testimonies dating mostly from the 1970s, yet strictly without any confirming documentary or material evidence. Hence her conjectures are absolutely irrelevant to any sort of fact or truth.

The problem posed by the cremation of the claimed amount of corpses is treated by her with her usual superficiality (p. 282):

> *"The incineration of the corpses started on 5 November under the supervision of head of the crematory Muhsfeldt. In this way the traces of the crimes were meant to be removed. A group of Soviet PoWs first had to remove gold teeth and pile the corpses onto grates. Then they were doused with methanol and set ablaze. This work lasted some two months."*

This is obviously a description of a purely fictitious event which states neither where the cremations took place nor how many grates of which size(s) existed. Schwindt even forgets the exhumation of the corpses from the four execution pits. I may note in passing that dousing heaps of corpses with methanol would not set them ablaze, as the heat developed by burning methanol is minimal and suffices merely to ignite paper or kindling.

One of the most striking aspects of Schwindt's book is that it undermines the orthodox interpretation of the intercepted message by SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Hermann Höfle of 11 January 1943. As is well known, this message mentions the following "arrivals" of the "*Einsatz Reinhardt*":

	To 31 December 1942	Between 18-31 December 1942
Lublin:	24,733	12,761
Belzec:	434,508	0
Sobibor:	101,370	515
Treblinka:	713,555	10,335[672]

The total of 1,274,166 is identical to that shown in the Korherr Report of 28 April 28 1943 under the heading "Processed through the Camps in the General Government area."[673]

Orthodox Holocaust historiography asserts that these numbers of Jews were killed in the alleged gas chambers of the above camps. In the case of Lublin-Majdanek, however, Schwindt disagrees (pp. 183f.):

> *"In contrast to the 'Reinhardt' camps, the number of the Majdanek deportees is not identical with the number of those murdered."*

In particular she considers it "unlikely" that the 12,761 Jews sent to Majdanek during the last two weeks of 1942 were gassed (p. 186). In doing so she reveals an irreparable flaw of the orthodox Holocaust interpretation. If we

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[672] See in this regard J. Graf, T. Kues, C. Mattogno, *Sobibór. Holocaust Propaganda and Reality*. The Barnes Review, Washington, DC, 2010, pp. 311-330.

[673] NO-5194.

admit that a part, albeit a very small one, of the total of 1,274,166 Jews mentioned by Höfle and Korherr were *not* killed, it is accepted in principle that the possibility exists that *none* of them was killed, because they all fall into the same category. Hence they were either *all* killed, or *not a single one* of them. In fact, from the statistical point of view such data make sense only if they are homogeneous. In this sense, the simplest explanation is that these numbers of Jews were simply deported. Hence it is a prejudicial and unfounded interpretation to consider all or even most of them murdered.

Schwindt seeks to exhibit a critical mind by lambasting the "spreading of errors" like the following ones (p. 13):

> *"Thus, for instance, the shower room in the bathing barrack in Majdanek is said to have served as a gas chamber, into which shower heads and pipes had been installed in order to fool the victims. Elsewhere the deployment of a gas van on the camp grounds is mentioned."*

But regarding the alleged extermination she proves her own disconcerting credulity. In fact, her speculations about gassings and shootings are based almost exclusively on the files of the Düsseldorf Majdanek trials (1975-1981), in particular on the testimonies collected there, as if simple offhand declarations made decades after the fact and without any documentary or material confirmation had any historical validity.

This conflation of juridical testimony and historical truth is characteristic of almost all orthodox historians and indicts their technique most utterly.

2. Official Reductions of the Majdanek Death Toll[674]

By Jürgen Graf

At the end of 2005, Tomasz Kranz, chief of the research department at the Majdanek Memorial, published an article in no. 23 of *Zeszyty Majdanka* (*Majdanek Journal*) on "The Recording of Deaths and Mortality among the Inmates of Concentration Camp Lublin," in which he assessed the number of those who perished in the Lublin/Majdanek camp at approximately 78,000.[675] That amounts to a drastic downward revision of the number of victims; to appreciate its extent, we must first review the victim number of the Majdanek concentration camp alleged by Polish historians in the past.

The allegations of the Polish-Soviet Commission (August 1944) and of the Lublin Special Tribunal (December 1944)

On July 23, 1944, Lublin concentration camp (which was the official name of the Majdanek camp) was taken over by the Red Army. Soon thereafter, on August 4, a "Polish-Soviet Extraordinary Commission for Investigating the Crimes Committed by the Germans in the Majdanek Extermination Camp at Lublin" was launched. On August 23 the commission submitted its final report, which stated that 1.5 million people had met their death at Majdanek. Of the one and a half million implied corpses, 1,380,000 had allegedly been burned at the following sites:

- 80,000 in the old crematory (which consisted of two mobile oil-fueled furnaces set up toward mid-1942; we do not know how long they were used);
- 600,000 in the new crematory (which became operational in January 1944, six months prior to the end of the camp, and which had five coke-fueled ovens);
- 300,000 in the Krepiecki woods not far from Majdanek;
- 400,000 on pyres in the vicinity of the new crematory.[676]

The commission does not specify where the remaining 120,000 corpses went. It was most likely assumed that they had been buried.

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[674] First published as "Révision du nombre des victimes à Majdanek," in: *Sans Concession*, n° 42-45, September-December 2008, pp. 27-44.

[675] Tomasz Kranz, "Ewidencja zgonów i smiertelnosc wiezniów KL Lublin," *Zeszyty Majdanka* no. XXIII (2005), pp. 7-53.

[676] *Communiqué of the Polish-Soviet Extraordinary Commission for Investigating the Crimes Committed by the Germans in the Majdanek Extermination Camp in Lublin*, Foreign Language Publishing House, Moscow 1944.

The report of the Polish-Soviet Commission was submitted at the Nuremberg Tribunal in 1946 as evidence for the prosecution.[677] How much truth it contained becomes obvious, if we consider, among other things, the following two items:

1. The daily incineration capacity of the new crematory's five ovens was at most 100 corpses. If we assume that this crematory was in constant operation during its six months of existence and that the ovens operated uninterruptedly (both are unrealistic assumptions), then at most 18,000 corpses could have been turned to ashes there (180×5×20=18,000). The 600,000 cremations claimed by the commission for this crematory was thus approximately thirty-three times higher than the theoretical maximum capacity!
2. The commission carried out excavations inside the camp perimeter as well as in the Krepiecki woods, during which they found 467 complete corpses plus 266 human skulls. In addition, they found 4.5 cubic meters of human ashes and bones, corresponding to a maximum of 3,000 corpses cremated in the open air. Thus, on the basis of (467+266=) 733 buried corpses, the commission reported a total of 120,000, and on the basis of the remains of at most 3,000 corpses cremated in the open air, they calculated a total of 700,000 victims!

Four months later, in December 1944, a "Special Tribunal," which had been set up in Lublin and which sentenced six former members of the camp guards to death, asserted an even higher number of victims than that of the commission. In its justification for the verdict we read:[678]

> *"It has been proven that 1,700,000 people were murdered at Majdanek and that Majdanek was an extermination camp in the truest sense of the word."*

The first revision: Zdzislaw Łukaszkiewicz (1948)

The number of victims alleged by the Polish-Soviet Commission in August 1944 as well as by the Lublin Special Tribunal in December 1944 were so incredible that, as early as three years after the end of the war, the Polish communists commissioned a study whose purpose it was to "calculate" the number of camp victims, rather than to simply invent it. In an article entitled "The Majdanek Concentration and Extermination Camp," Judge Zdzislaw Łukaszkiewicz cited the figure of 360,000 victims,[679] which he arrived at by grossly distorting the contents of the few documents used in the study and also by being fully satisfied with the mere statements of eyewitnesses. According to Łukaszkiewicz, 60% of the alleged 360,000 victims had died of "camp death"

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[677] IMT, vol. VII, p. 590.

[678] *Sentenca wyroku. Specialny sąd karny w Lublinie*. Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum na Majdanku, sygn. XX-1, p. 100.

[679] Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz, "Obóz koncentracyjny i zagłady Majdanek," in: *Biuletyn Glównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, vol. 4 (1948), pp. 63-105.

(*i.e.* death resulting from illness, fatigue or starvation), while 25% were gassed and 15% killed by other means.

Józef Marszałek confirms the number of 360,000 victims (1981)

Józef Marszałek, who had been the director of the Majdanek Memorial for many years, wrote a book in 1981 about the history of the camp, which appeared in English translation five years later.[680] Marszałek adopted the by then sacrosanct number of 360,000 victims, but chose to prop up the "extermination camp" thesis by redistributing the "natural" deaths and deaths by "extermination," citing the number of 160,000 for the first and the number of 200,000 for the latter. From the following example it can be seen how downright disingenuous the methods were with which this Polish historian worked: Marszałek quotes a report dating from September 30, 1943, by Oswald Pohl, Chief of the SS Economic-Administrative Main Office (WVHA), to Heinrich Himmler,[681] from which it can be gathered that Majdanek had the highest inmate mortality among all German concentration camps, while omitting to relate that the same report indicates a total of 53,309 inmate deaths in all (seventeen) German concentration camps during the period from January to June 1943. According to Marszałek's own "calculations," 54,000 prisoners died in Majdanek alone during those six months! A historian whose findings are prescribed *a priori* by the ruling powers for ideological reasons has to resort to such crude tricks.

The revision of Czesław Rajca: 235,000 victims (1992)

Only after the collapse of the communist regime in Poland did that nation's historians dare to question the number of 360,000 victims at Majdanek, whose acceptance had been officially mandated since 1948. Czesław Rajca, a member of the Majdanek Memorial staff, published an article in 1992 in which he gave the Majdanek death toll as 235,000. Rajca wrote:[682]

> *"Given the dearth of documentary material dealing directly with the crimes committed at Majdanek, the only reasonable way of calculating the number of victims is by subtracting the number of inmates transferred to other camps, the number of inmates released, and the number of those who escaped, from the total number of prisoners deported to the camp."*

This method would in fact be unimpeachable, if we had access to trustworthy statistics for each of those categories. But how do things stand in reality?

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[680] Józef Marszałek, *Majdanek. Obóz koncentracyjny w Lublinie*, Lublin 1981. English translation: *Majdanek: The Concentration Camp in Lublin*, Interpress, Warsaw 1986.

[681] PS-1469.

[682] Czesław Rajca, "Problem liczby ofiar w obozie na Majdanku," in: *Zeszyty Majdanka* no. XIV, 1992, p. 129.

According to the Polish historians, 45,000 prisoners were transferred from Majdanek to other camps, 20,000 were released, a few hundred managed to escape, and 1,500 were liberated by the Red Army on July 23, 1944. The number of transferred prisoners verifiable through contemporary camp documentation is only slightly higher than 35,000,[683] but since that documentation is incomplete, the real figure might very well be 10,000 higher than that. The – astonishingly high – number of 20,000 released prisoners is never substantiated through documentary sources in the Polish literature on the subject; we accept it, however, because especially in this case there is no reason why it should have been deliberately exaggerated. On the contrary, that number effectively undermines the assumption that Majdanek was an "extermination camp," since the released inmates would have spread their news of the mass murders immediately all over Poland, and the alleged subsequent attempts of the Germans at "covering up their deeds" would have become futile.

Rajca's postulated number of 300,000 persons deported to Majdanek, on the other hand, lacks any historical basis. This is the number from which he subtracts the 45,000 transferred and the 20,000 released persons (the ones who escaped and the liberated ones, amounting to approximately 2,000 persons, are not taken into account) to arrive at the figure of 235,000 victims. Rajca's source consists of a 1969 article by Zofia Leszczyńska on the transports of prisoners to the Majdanek camp.[684] In order to reach as high a number of deportees as possible, the author of the article resorts to a favorite trick of all orthodox "Holocaust" historians: she grants the same evidentiary value to eyewitness accounts as to documentary sources. Based on accounts originating from the resistance movement, whose vested interest naturally tended to inflate the number of deportees as a proof of the German reign of terror, Leszczyńska exaggerated the number of deportees enormously. Yet despite all her efforts she arrived at a figure of "only" 246,000 deportees. Since she was not allowed to touch the at that time hallowed number of 360,000 victims, she had to adjust her figures somehow. Hence, if 360,000 died, 45,000 were transferred, 20,000 were released by the Germans, and 1,500 were released by the Soviets, a total of 426,500 persons *must* have been deported to Majdanek. Period. The Polish historian simply provided for the missing 179,600 by declaring her statistical sources incomplete, as many of the transports, says she, had not been documented! Twenty-three years later, Rajca arbitrarily added 54,000 to Leszczyńska's 246,000 "calculated" deportees to get 300,000, from which he then subtracted the transferred ones and the released ones in order to arrive at his bogus figure of 235,000 victims.

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683 Tadeusz Mencel (ed.), *Majdanek 1941-1944*, Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, Lublin 1991, p. 455.
684 Zofia Leszczyńska, "Transporty więzniów do obozu na Majdanku," in: *Zeszyty Majdanka* no. IV, 1969, pp. 174-232.

The number of revisionist Carlo Mattogno: 42,200 victims (1998)

In summer 1997 Italian scholar Carlo Mattogno and I made a research trip through eastern Europe, starting in Lublin. Based on documents discovered in the archives of the Majdanek Memorial and of the Lublin Voivodship, on official Polish literature on Majdanek, and on other sources, we later published a book in German in 1998 and in English five years later. The ambitious claim of our tome is that it has been the first work ever written about the Lublin Camp meeting scholarly standards.[685] In the book's fourth chapter the number of victims is calculated by Mattogno. Considering the incomplete nature of the documentation, Mattogno can of course not claim absolutely exact figures. His numbers are given below, broken down by years:

1941 (October – December):	about 700
1942:	17,244
1943:	22,339
1944 (January – July):	about 1,900
Total:	about 42,200

Mattogno made no attempt to determine the percentage of Jewish prisoners among his calculated 42,200 deaths; however, the following is relevant to that issue:

Majdanek opened in October 1941. During the first three months of its existence, primarily Soviet prisoners of war were sent to the camp, then a group of Jews from the city of Lublin. It is not known how many Jews were among the approximately 700 persons who died in 1941 according to Mattogno, but it could only have been a small number, which was included – as we will soon see – in the statistics for 1942.

During 1942 the vast majority of new arrivals consisted of Jews of various nationalities. In this case, Mattogno could rely upon one key document, the 1943 report of SS statistician Richard Korherr, which gives the numbers of Jews deported to various concentration camps as well as the number of those who perished in the camps up to the end of 1942. According to Korherr, up to that time a total of 26,258 Jewish prisoners, of whom 23,409 were males and 2,849 females, had been deported to the Lublin camp, of whom 4,568 had been released, 7,342 were still in the camp at the end of December 1942, and the remaining 14,348 (14,217 men and 131 women) had died. (The main reason for the extremely high mortality at Majdanek was the catastrophic hygienic conditions, which promoted the spreading of disease; I do not know why the mortality was many times lower among the women than among the men). For the Auschwitz camp Korherr reported 3,716 deaths among Jewish male

[685] Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *KL Majdanek. Eine historische und technische Studie*, Castle Hill Publisher, Hastings 1998. English translation: *Concentration Camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study*, Theses & Dissertation Press, Chicago 2003.

inmates and 720 deaths among Jewish women until the end of 1942. Korherr concludes his statistics with the following note:[686]

> *"The Jews who were housed in the concentration camps Auschwitz and Lublin during the evacuation proceedings are not included."*

Since Mattogno had no access to information about the number of "the Jews who were housed in the concentration camps Auschwitz and Lublin during the evacuation proceedings" and their mortality, he naturally could not include them in his statistics.

In 1943 the number of non-Jewish inmates grew considerably, owing to incoming transports of numerous Poles suspected of resistance against the occupying power. However, the – unfortunately only partially preserved – camp registration books confirm that Jews made up the clear majority of the camp inmates until the end of October 1943; thus on 16 June 1943 10,050 of the total of 14,533 inmates were Jewish, and on 22 August 5,905 of the total of 10,506 male prisoners were Jewish; in the women's camp, 5,371 of the total of 7,821 inmates were Jewish as of 16 June 16, and on 20 August 1943 3,200 of the total of 5,690 detainees were Jewish.[687] At the beginning of November 1943 all Jews disappeared from the camp – according to orthodox historians because they were shot, according to revisionists because they were transferred. But already in December 1943 newly-arrived Jewish prisoners turned up in the camp registers. At any rate, their number remained small compared to the total number of inmates; thus, on 15 March 1944, only 358 of the 6,476 prisoners in the men's camp and only 476 of the 2,690 prisoners in the women's camp were Jewish.

In the light of those statistics, the hypothesis seems plausible that, based on the number of victims calculated by Mattogno, approximately 60% of the 22,339 inmates who died in 1943 were Jews and around 90% of the 1,900 who died in 1944 were non-Jews. That would mean that approximately 13,404 Jews died during 1943 and about 190 Jews died in 1944, resulting in a total number of 27,938 Jewish victims at Majdanek (14,348 [including the Jews who died in 1941 reported by Korherr] + 13,400 + 190 = 27,938). The number of non-Jewish victims would thus be brought to about 14,262 (42,200 – 27,938 = 14,262), which amounts to a good third of the total number of victims.

The revision of Tomasz Kranz: 78,000 victims (2005)

In his above-cited article, Tomasz Kranz unreservedly criticizes his predecessors, saying that the 1.5 million victims claimed by the Polish-Soviet commission is based "on political and propagandistic considerations, not on historical ones"; as for the Lublin Special Tribunal that had promulgated the

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[686] NO-5194, p. 11.
[687] Tomasz Kranz, *op. cit.* (note 675), pp. 14f.

number of 1.7 million victims, "accuracy did not play any part in the calculations here either"; Łukaszkiewicz "arbitrarily assumed for the period July 1943 to April 1944 a daily mortality of 12 per thousand," and his figure of 360,000 dead was "disseminated for many years without criticism"; Rajca's article of 1992 "calls for reservations" since in his calculations he "has completely ignored the camp documents" (cf. Kranz pp. 35f.). The present work's German edition is correctly reviewed by Kranz as follows:

> *"Speaking of statistical studies of the Majdanek camp, a book of the revisionist school should be mentioned, in which matters of deportations and mortality rates are thoroughly discussed, among other things. The authors of the book dispute the gassings and the mass shootings of prisoners, acknowledging however a high mortality due to the* [bad] *living conditions and typhus epidemics. Based on an analysis of the death registers that were preserved, they reach the conclusion that a total of 42,200 prisoners died at Majdanek"* (p. 40)

According to Kranz, approximately 78,000 people lost their lives at Majdanek (about 59,000 Jews and about 19,000 non-Jews). The new official number of victims of the Majdanek Memorial is thus higher by 35,800 than the number proposed by the revisionists, while on the other hand it is lower by 1.622 million than that of the Lublin Special Tribunal, lower by 1.422 million than that of the Polish-Soviet Commission, 282,000 below that of Łukaszkiewicz and Marszałek, and 157,000 lower than Rajca's! The utter bankruptcy of the official history of the Lublin concentration camp can hardly be more manifestly obvious.

It should be mentioned in relation to the above that the verdict of the Düsseldorf Majdanek Trial (1975-1981) claimed a total number of victims of "at least 200,000" of whom "at least 60,000 were Jews";[688] the court had admittedly made no inquiry of its own, but relied exclusively on the statements made by the well-known "expert on contemporary history" Wolfgang Scheffler. While the number of Jewish victims mentioned by the Düsseldorf judges is almost identical to that given by Kranz, their alleged number of non-Jewish victims is higher by 121,000 than the one calculated by Kranz!

Kranz examines the mortalities for the Jewish and non-Jewish prisoners separately. Here are his figures, broken down by year:

Non-Jewish victims		**Jewish victims**	
1941:	no data	1941/1942:	24,733
1942:	2,001		
1943/1944:	16,835	1943/1944:	34,267[689]
Total:	18,836 – rounded to 19,000	Total:	59,000

[688] Bezirksgericht Düsseldorf, *Urteil Hackmann u.a., XVII 1/75.*

[689] This figure is never explicitly mentioned by Kranz; we have obtained it by subtracting from the total of 59,000 Jewish victims the number of Jewish victims postulated by Kranz for the period 1941/1942.

Let us now consider on what grounds the Polish historian made his calculations.

The number of non-Jewish victims according to Tomasz Kranz

Based on documents of the camp administration, Kranz calculates a total of 16,218 Jewish and non-Jewish dead for 1942 (p. 42), that is, 1,028 fewer than Mattogno. From those 16,218 he subtracts the 14,217 mentioned in the Korherr report as the number of Jews dead in the Lublin concentration camp until the end of 1942, reaching the conclusion that the number of non-Jewish dead amounted to 2,001 in the year 1942. Since the Korherr report in fact refers to 14,217 dead Jewish male prisoners, and mentions besides 131 dead Jewesses, it follows that Kranz has set the total of Jewish deaths for 1942 too low by 131, and the total of non-Jewish victims for the same year too high by 131.

On pages 42-45 Kranz examines the mortality among the non-Jewish inmates during the years 1943 and 1944. According to him, 9,811 non-Jews died between 1 January 1943 and 6 April 1944. Adding those to the 2,001 (actually 1,870) deaths for 1942, this amounts to 10,912 dead. Kranz claims that the following additional non-Jewish victim groups must be added to this:

– about 2,000 dead Soviet prisoners of war in 1940-1941 who had not been assigned prisoner numbers;
– 1,055 Soviet war invalids who died between 1942 and 1944;
– about 500 unregistered Poles who died in early 1942;
– about 500 dead between 7 April 7 23 July 1944;
– 369 separately registered deportees from the Zamosc district, approximately half of whom died in Majdanek and the rest in various hospitals after the liberation of the camp.

Added together, those numbers yield a total of 15,336 deaths of non-Jews at the Majdanek camp, to which Kranz adds two more categories of victims: an estimated 500 who died during the evacuation of the camp (of whom perhaps around 10% must have been Jews, a fact that Kranz does not consider, however), as well as Poles executed by firing squad in the prison of Lublin Castle. Kranz states that there are no reliably documented figures for the latter category. He quotes various estimates ranging from 2,762 to 12,000, all of which are apparently based on witness accounts, and decides on a "maximum of 3,000." However, this number is not only undocumented, but Kranz admits in addition that only some of those executed had previously been interned at Majdanek, so that the remaining part of those executed may be classified as "victims of the German occupation" but hardly as "Majdanek victims." Kranz does not mention executed Jews, even though they most certainly existed as well. According to Kranz the total number of non-Jewish victims adds up to 18,836, rounded up to 19,000.

The number of Jewish victims according to Tomasz Kranz

Referring to an article he wrote in 2003 on the topic, "The Extermination of Jews in Majdanek and the Part Played by that Camp in the Implementation of 'Operation Reinhardt,'"[690] Kranz estimates the total number of Jews who perished at Majdanek at 59,000. 24,733 of them died in the year 1942 according to Kranz. In support of that number he cites a document published only in 2001, of which neither I nor Mattogno could have had any knowledge when we wrote our book. It is a telegram from SS-*Sturmbannführer* Höfle to SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Heim of 28 April 1943, from which it can be seen that a total of 1,274,166 Jews had been deported to the camps Lublin, Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka up to 31 December 1942. 24,733 of them had been deported to Lublin. The number of 1,274,166 matches exactly the number of Jews who according to the Korherr report had been funneled through the camps of the territories under German control up to the end of 1942, and Lublin, Belzec, Sobibor as well as Treblinka were in fact in territories under German control at that time. Höfle's message was decoded by the British within just a few days; however, for reasons unknown to me, it was published only as late as 2001.[691]

Kranz distorts the import of that radiogram. This is what he writes:

> *"From a radiogram from H. Höfle, the superior officer of Odilo Globocnik, it transpires that in the course of 'Operation Reinhardt' 24,733 Jews died in the concentration camp at Majdanek, a fact which, taken together with the data given in the Korherr report, permits us to draw the conclusion that this number comprises the registered inmates and also those who had not been included in the camp's statistics."* (p. 33)

However, this telegram refers to an "increase" of the number of Jews in the above-mentioned four camps, not that they died there. Even though Kranz does not state this specifically, his statement leads unequivocally to the conclusion that the Jews who "were not included in the camp's statistics" were murdered.

Let me first clarify the following questions: Are the 26,258 Jews who reached Majdanek up to the end of 1942 according to Korherr, and the 24,733 Jews deported to the Lublin concentration camp up to the same point in time according to Höfle, the very same deportees? And does the difference of 1,525 persons simply result from an inaccuracy in the records which can be understood in view of the circumstances prevailing at that time?

The answer must be "no," both from the point of view of the orthodox "Holocaust" historians and also from the point of view of the revisionists. Lu-

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690 Tomasz Kranz, "Exterminacja Żydów na Majdanku i rola obozu w realizacji 'Akcji Reinhardt,'" in: *Zeszyty Majdanka*, no. XXII (2003), pp. 7-55.

691 Peter Witte, Stephen Tyas, "A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of the Jews during 'Einsatz Reinhardt' 1942," in: *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, no. 3, Winter 2001, pp. 469 ff.

blin is cited by Höfle together with Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka, which points to the fact that the Jews deported to all those four concentration camps belonged to the same category. Hence there could have been no reason to treat them differently in Lublin than in Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. According to official historiography, all Jews deported to the last-mentioned three camps were murdered in the gas chambers immediately upon their arrival without being registered, regardless of age, physical condition and ability to labor. Only a small number of "Worker Jews" were spared, who had to assist in running the camps.

According to that and when applying the logic of orthodox "Holocaust" historians, the 24,733 who were deported to Lublin according to Höfle must have been gassed there without being registered; the reason for sending them to Lublin rather than to one of the other three concentration camps could, for instance, have been the fact that the gas chambers were overloaded in the other three camps. In that case Majdanek would in fact have functioned as a "temporary auxiliary extermination camp" to Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka, in the same manner in which Polish historians claim that the Stutthof concentration camp had become a "temporary auxiliary extermination camp" for Auschwitz in the summer of 1944.[692]

For the revisionists, Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka were transit camps, through which the majority of the deported Jews were moved to the occupied eastern territories, while a smaller number were sent to labor camps in the occupied territories.[693] The reason why "Lublin" (*i.e.*, Majdanek) is mentioned together with those three camps in Höfle's telegram must be, according to the revisionist way of understanding evidence, because that camp, on top of its other tasks, also functioned temporarily as a transit camp, as was also the case with Auschwitz. Consequently, the Jews "who were housed in the Lublin concentration camp in the course of the evacuation proceedings," who, according to Korherr's explanation, were not included in his statistics, must have been Jewish prisoners who stayed for a short while unregistered in Majdanek and were transported further on to the eastern regions or to the numerous labor camps in the Lublin District. In that case it follows that a special section existed in the Majdanek camp – as was the case in Auschwitz – where these transiting prisoners were housed temporarily. There is need for more research in this regard.

Both according to the orthodox and the revisionist versions of events, the conclusion thus arises that the 24,733 Jews mentioned in Höfle's telegram and

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[692] Regarding this, see J. Graf & C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 685).

[693] Cf. Carlo Mattogno, Jürgen Graf, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004; Carlo Mattogno, *Belzec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research, and History*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004; Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues, Carlo Mattogno, *Sobibór – Holocaust Propaganda and Reality*, The Barnes Review, Washington 2010.

the 26,258 Jews mentioned in the Korherr report were *different* groups of prisoners, and the former are actually the same as the Jews who were "housed in the Lublin concentration camp during the evacuation proceedings" and were "not included" in his statistics.

When Kranz sets out from the assumption that the 14,348 Jews who died in Majdanek up to the end of 1942 according to Korherr, whose demise was *registered*, belonged to the 24,733 who were deported in that year to the Lublin camp according to Höfle and who all found their death there, then his number of *unregistered* deaths – *i.e.*, according to Kranz, those murdered – must have amounted to 10,385 (24,733 – 14,348 = 10,385). Thus Kranz asserts the following:

A total of 36,643 Jews arrived at Majdanek in 1942; of those 10,385 were murdered unregistered, 14,348 died "natural" deaths, 4,568 were set free, and 7,342 were at the end of the year still in the camp. We know that fact, says he, owing to two German documents, the Höfle telegram and the Korherr report. While only the first two categories are encompassed in the Höfle account, but not the third and the fourth categories, the Korherr report takes into consideration the second, third and fourth categories, but not the first one.

Hence Kranz's hypothesis appears irredeemably illogical and confused!

As no method of mass extermination other than gassing has ever been asserted for Majdanek for the year 1942, the 10,385 unregistered Jews who, according to Kranz, were murdered must have been gassed. Mattogno and I have brought a plethora of technical and historical arguments against the existence of gas chambers for the killing of humans at Majdanek in chapters VI and VII of the present study, and I do not think it necessary to repeat here what we said there. The fact that Kranz, who cites our book, summarizes it correctly, and hence must have read it, does not mention our arguments even with a single word, leads to the only conclusion that our arguments are irrefutable. Thus we may consider with good reason that those 10,385 allegedly gassed persons who were not adduced but rather inferred by him were indeed *non-existing persons* (cf. George Orwell).

For the years 1943/1944 Kranz mentions 18,000 Jews who were allegedly shot on 3 November 1943 as part of the so-called "Operation Harvest Festival," but he offers no computations regarding the number of the Jewish inmates who died "natural" deaths in that time interval, doubtless because he had done that already in his above-mentioned article published in 2003. If we deduct from his total number of 59,000 Jewish victims the 24,733 Jewish victims asserted by Kranz for the years 1941/1942 as well as the alleged 18,000 murdered on 3 November 1943, we end up with the number of 16,267 for the period from January 1943 up to July 1944.

As regards "Operation Harvest Festival," it may be asserted with absolute certainty that this claimed mass shooting is to be relegated to the realm of myth. Mattogno has provided the proof for this in chapter IX of the present

study, and in this case as well I do not consider it necessary to summarize here what has been stated there, since Kranz does not devote as much as a single word to Mattogno's arguments either, as in the case of the gas chambers. Those 18,000 who were shot are also *non-existing persons*.

A Comparison between the Statistics of Carlo Mattogno and Those of Thomasz Kranz

Let us recapitulate: according to Tomasz Kranz, approximately 78,000 inmates died in Majdanek, of whom 59,000 were Jews and 19,000 were non-Jews; according to Carlo Mattogno, Majdanek exacted approximately 42,200 victims. Apart from the years 1941/1942, for which the number of Jewish deaths are precisely known thanks to the Korherr report, Mattogno does not attempt to calculate the proportion of Jewish and non-Jewish victims in his total number. Based on the numbers of camp inmates recorded for the various periods, however, it may be computed that 27,938 Jews and 14,262 non-Jews must have died in Majdanek, provided that his statistics are correct.

Hence the difference between the two statistical accounts amounts to 35,800, which according to Kranz consisted of 31,062 Jewish and 4,738 non-Jewish victims.

The difference regarding the non-Jewish dead is caused first and foremost by the fact that Mattogno did not take into consideration two of the victim categories mentioned by Kranz, because there was no documentary basis available to him for that. They are the 500 who, according to Kranz, perished during the evacuation and the 3,000 who were shot at Lublin Castle, again if we follow Kranz. While the number of victims who died during the evacuation appears altogether credible, that of the executed victims may have been estimated too high, first because it is based on witness accounts and hence there is *a priori* the suspicion of exaggeration, and second because only a part of those executed had been inmates of the Majdanek camp, so that the remainder cannot be counted among the "victims of Majdanek." Under those circumstances the conclusion emerges that the number of non-Jewish dead was higher than Mattogno's 14,262 but lower than Kranz's 19,000.

What then about the Jewish victims? In Kranz's case we have to subtract the invented 10,385 gassed people of the year 1942 and the invented 18,000 people shot on 3 November 1943, from his total of 59,000, thus leaving only 30,625, just 2,687 more than Mattogno's number, and that difference is entirely due to figures for the years 1943/1944. Based on the evidence that lies within my reach, I am not in a position to judge which of the two numbers comes closer to reality, but one thing is sure: there is certainly no need to assume the gassing of people in order to explain the existing difference! According to orthodox historiography, the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Majdanek operated from August 1942 until October 1943. If we explain Kranz's increased

Jewish victim count of 2,687 for 1943/1944 by assuming that these Jews were gassed, then this means that from January to October 1943 on average some 250 Jews died in the gas chambers each month – a number which is low indeed for an "extermination camp." Since Kranz implicitly assumes 10,385 gassed Jews for 1942, as we have seen, this results in a total number of gassing victims of not more than roughly 13,000 for the Majdanek camp.

According to orthodox historiography more than 7,000 Jews were allegedly gassed *daily* in the Treblinka camp during the first months of that camp's existence, and in Belzec, during the nine and a half months of its existence, 600,000 Jews are said to have been murdered in the gas chambers, *i.e.*, over 2,000 daily. Consequently the alleged 13,000 victims of the gas chambers of Majdanek could have been gassed at Treblinka within a mere two days and at Belzec within a mere week; under those circumstances not the least reason existed for setting up homicidal gas chambers at the Majdanek camp for the extermination of human beings, and the hypothesis of the "temporary auxiliary extermination camp" collapses. As is often the case, here too the argumentation of orthodox "Holocaust" historians reaches into the realm of the absurd.

Finally I wish to point out that the "transiting Jews" who were not registered at Majdanek and who died before they were deported further east into the occupied Soviet territories or to the labor camps of the Lublin District were not taken into consideration either by Mattogno or by Kranz. Mattogno did not deal with them, because there is no documentary evidence in that respect, and Kranz ignored them, because according to the architecture of his argumentation those "transiting Jews" could not have existed. Since these Jews – we are convinced that they numbered 24,733, the figure of the Höfle telegram – were most likely housed in Majdanek only for a short time. The number of those among them who died there could barely have exceeded a few hundred.

In view of all those facts it appears to be a valid assumption that the true number of deaths at Majdanek could lie somewhere between the number of 42,200 calculated by Mattogno and the number of 49,625 which remains if the invented gassing and shooting victims are subtracted from the figures given by Kranz.

Conclusion

In 1998 I wrote in the conclusion of the German edition of the present study (see here on page 245):

> *"The reduction in Majdanek's victim count which was introduced in Poland in the early 1990s was justified by saying that the unscientific considerations which in the past had required an inflation of the real numbers were now no longer valid. If that is truly so, then we may expect that the Polish historians – who, unlike their western counterparts, have at least tried to research the events in Majdanek – will*

throw off the dead weight of Stalinist historiography completely and not only in small parts […].

A real and lasting reconciliation between the German and the Polish peoples, which is exactly the hope of this book's two authors, who have ties of friendship to both peoples, can only flourish on a foundation of the whole truth!"

The "whole truth" has not been revealed by Tomasz Kranz in his article, nor did he attempt to do so; however, I readily admit that he has shed an enormous amount of baggage, for he has at least reduced the number of victims asserted by his predecessor Rajca between 1992 and 2005 from 235,000 to 78,000, that is, to roughly one third.

Let us now recall the verdict of the Majdanek trial of 1981 in Düsseldorf. The following was stated there:

- At least 200,000 people had died in Majdanek.
- Among the victims were at least 60,000 Jews.
- Some of the Jewish victims were gassed.
- 18,000 Jews were shot on 3 November 1943, as a part of "Operation Harvest Festival."

If we compare the above statements with the statistics of Kranz, we find that the latter differ only as regards the first assertion: of the "at least 140,000 non-Jewish victims of the camp" implied by the Düsseldorf judges, only 19,000 remain according to Kranz, a number which may be only slightly exaggerated. His other conclusions are consistent with those of the Düsseldorf tribunal: there were 59,000 Jewish victims (the difference of 1,000 is of no importance); the statement about the gassing of Jews (the Düsseldorf verdict provided no figure for the number of gassed Jews, so that any arbitrary figure below 60,000 can be reconciled with that verdict); the 18,000 shot on 3 November 1943.

In view of the above facts, Tomasz Kranz's article gives the impression of a work commissioned with the purpose of discarding all unnecessary baggage (*i.e.* the invented *non-Jewish* Majdanek victims) while corroborating the findings of the Düsseldorf tribunal with regard to the Jewish victims.

As outrageous as it may appear to an impartial person, it is a fact that in the mainstream debate about Majdanek (as is the case with that about Auschwitz) basically only the Jewish victims are of importance, whereas nobody outside Poland and Russia is seriously interested in the Poles and Russians who died in the concentration camps.

The disgraceful farce of the Majdanek trial carried on in Düsseldorf for more than six years, during which countless classes of schoolchildren were dragged through the courtroom, was not performed in order to enlighten Germany and the world about the sufferings and death of Polish or Russian inmates in the Lublin concentration camp, but to bring before everybody's eyes the terrible fate of the Jews during the "Holocaust" – that silly term became fashionable precisely during those years. The eight defendants sentenced to

prison terms between three years and life were condemned on all accounts for their alleged participation in the gassing of Jews and in "Operation Harvest Festival"; not one of them was accused of crimes against Poles or Russians. That tradition continues, with Kranz sticking to the gassings of Jews and to the mass shootings of 3 November 1943, against all evidence, without ever mentioning even with a single word the arguments to the contrary which are well known to him.

Here the following question may be raised: taken together, the alleged 18,000 victims shot during "Operation Harvest Festival" and the alleged at most 13,000 gassed Jews amount only to one half of one percent of the famous six million victims of the "Holocaust," and therefore are absolutely not necessary for the propping up of the tale of the "Holocaust." Under the circumstances, why do the Poles not set the record straight with regard to Majdanek, and why do they not exert themselves on behalf of "the whole truth" by discarding the contrived Jewish "victims," as Kranz has discarded the invented non-Jewish victims?

The answer to that question is as follows: If "Operation Harvest Festival" and also the gassing of Jews at Majdanek were exposed as myths, then it would be acknowledged that all pertinent eyewitness accounts were untruthful and that the Düsseldorf tribunal has pronounced a revoltingly unjust sentence. All thinking persons would then have to ask themselves: why should the eyewitness accounts about Auschwitz, Treblinka, etc., be in fact more credible than those about Majdanek? And could the German tribunals possibly have pronounced equally revoltingly unjust sentences in other trials of "Nazi criminals"? This type of questions could derail the entire tale of the "Holocaust." That is the reason why it is not permitted to chip away at the gas chambers of Majdanek and at the "Operation Harvest Festival."

Thomasz Kranz deserves recognition and our thanks for his honest efforts to establish the truth regarding the non-Jewish victims at the Lublin camp, for his drastic downward revision of the number of victims and – if we overlook the special case of the persons shot at Lublin Castle – for not resorting to exaggerations. However, we can grant him neither recognition nor thanks for his efforts to save as much as can still be saved of the tale of the "Holocaust," a tale that is putrid and rotten to the core.

3. The Keepers of the Holy Grail and Their Lies
Thomasz Kranz and the "Mass Killings by Means of Toxic Gases in the Majdanek Concentration Camp"

By Jürgen Graf

In 2008, the Keepers of the Holy Grail of Holocaust Orthodoxy once again failed in an effort to square the circle. At that time, they held a meeting at Oranienburg near Berlin, the aim of which was to furnish "new evidence" for the ephemeral genocide using gas chambers on a massive scale, a phantom which has left no documentary or material traces. A collection of articles edited by Günter Morsch and Bertrand Perz, two third-rate "Holocaust Scholars," appeared three years later under the title *Neue Studien zu Nationalsozialistischen Massentötungen durch Giftgas*;[694] it contained the texts of the papers presented at the meeting, presumably edited and extended, as is normally the case for such works.

As I write these lines (April 2011), Carlo Mattogno is working on a comprehensive reply to the theses of this collection; in time, his book will be published in Italian, English and German. Since we are in the process of preparing a new edition of *Majdanek Concentration Camp . A Historical and Technical Study*, I will use this opportunity to analyze, independently from Mattogno's future book, the eight-page section of the collection mentioned, written by Tomasz Kranz and entitled, "*Massentötungen durch Giftgase im Konzentrationslager Majdanek*"[695] ("Mass Killings by Means of Toxic Gases in the Majdanek Concentration Camp").

Kranz, who is the head of the research department of the Majdanek Memorial institution, had caused a minor sensation in late 2005 when he set the number of victims of the camp at 78,000[696] – something that amounted to a major downward revision of previous figures. Shortly after the Soviet capture of the Majdanek camp, a Polish-Soviet commission had spoken of 1.5 million people having allegedly died there; later on, official Polish historiography had brought this figure down to 360,000 in 1948 and to 235,000 in 1992. As I have

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[694] Günter Morsch, Bertrand Perz (eds.), *Neue Studien zu Nationalsozialistischen Massentötungen durch Giftgas. Historische Bedeutung, technische Entwicklung, revisionistische Leugnung*, Metropol Verlag, Berlin 2011.

[695] Tomasz Kranz, "Massentötungen durch Giftgase im Konzentrationslager Majdanek," in: *ibid.*, pp. 219-227.

[696] T. Kranz, "Ewidencja zgonów i śmiertelność więźniów KL Lublin" ("Records on deaths and mortality of prisoners of the Lublin Concentration Camp") *Zeszyty Majdanka*, 25 (2005), p. 7-53.

shown in an article published in 2008, Kranz's figure is still too high by some 28,000 deaths (see Appendix 2 to this book).

Kranz's revised numbers were basically nothing but an attempt at controlling the damage done by revisionist revelations, that is to say: mainly by the first editions of the present book. Kranz tried to free Majdanek historiography from all its useless and immensely exaggerated padding of *non-Jewish* victims while at the same time saving the fundamental lie that it was an "extermination camp" based on alleged homicidal gassings of Jews and a purported mass shooting on 3 November 1943.

Relative to Kranz's study of 2005, which by and large testifies to a critical spirit in spite of its numerous lapses, his contribution to the collection *Neue Studien zu Nationalsozialistischen Tötungen durch Giftgas* constitutes an intellectual and moral step backwards. Whereas he did present, in his 2005 study, a somewhat reluctant but correct résumé of the present work's German edition, he here no longer mentions it in any way. Because passing over known counter-arguments in total silence is unambiguous proof of an unsound scholarship, Kranz thus demonstrates that he does not aim for new scientific inference but for the perpetuation of a historical mirage based on ideology and propaganda.

Kranz does not abjure shabby tricks, for example when he states that Heinrich Himmler "on 19 July 1942 ordered an acceleration of the extermination of the Jews in the Government General" (p. 220). He does not provide his readers with any kind of proof for such an order. The source cited in his respective footnote 6 merely concerns the creation of a concentration camp for women in Lublin and the transfer of female detainees to the Lublin airfield, but this source has no connection whatsoever with the assertion that it is said to corroborate!

Let us take a look at Kranz's evidence for the existence of homicidal gas chambers at Majdanek. Early in his article, he writes (p. 219):

> *"As far as the use of toxic gases for homicidal purposes is concerned, Majdanek concentration camp constitutes a special case in that not only two toxic gases were used here as killing agents in gas chambers – the disinfestation agent Zyklon B (HCN) and carbon monoxide (CO) – but that there was also a gas-van in operation."*

Anyone familiar with the official presentation of Majdanek will be surprised to read this claim about the deployment of "gas vans." While it is true that the Polish-Soviet Commission, in its report of August 1944, spoke of "gas vans" operating at Majdanek,[697] this allegation was subsequently dropped by orthodox historians. The official literature on the camp speaks only of the homicidal use of Zyklon-B and carbon monoxide. The extent of the evidence concerning the use of "gas vans" at the Lublin camp is given by Kranz six pages further on (p. 225, my emphasis):

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[697] See chapter chapter VII.2 of the present book.

> *"There is* circumstantial evidence *to the effect that a portion of the victims of the Majdanek concentration camp were killed by suffocation in a specially converted van. It is* assumed *that these murders were committed in a disinfection van which belonged to the camp* or *in a gas van belonging to the commander of the security police and security service at Lublin.* Some detainees claimed *that it operated between the city and the camp."*

Thus Kranz, who had asserted at the beginning of his article that "there was also a gas van in operation," now concedes that there is only "circumstantial evidence" in the form of rumors to substantiate his claim!

Let us now move on to the "stationary gas chambers" in which Jewish detainees were allegedly killed by means of Zyklon-B and/or carbon monoxide. According to the report of the Polish-Soviet Commission of August 1944, there were six such chambers:[698]

> *"Three gas chambers (Nos. I, II and III), located at the northeastern front of the bath; one gas chamber (No. IV) immediately adjoining the bath and forming an entire building unit, as seen from the exterior.* […] *Two gas chambers (Nos. V and VI), located on the area between compounds 1 and 2."*

In addition to the six gas chambers referred to above, the orthodox version about Majdanek had so far claimed yet another one, not mentioned by the Polish-Soviet Commission. It is said to have been a room in the new crematorium.

As opposed to these elements, Kranz is satisfied with merely two gas chambers (Chambers I and III of those mentioned by the Polish-Soviet Commission). He writes (pp. 221f):

> *"The gas chambers for the murder of the detainees were set up in a stone building, the so-called bunker, located behind the bath for men near the camp of the detainees.* […] *According to the plan, two chambers were to be built originally. The chamber in the eastern part (towards the camp of the detainees), however, was split up into two smaller ones, one of which was adapted for the use of both Zyklon-B and carbon monoxide, while the other chamber was apparently not used.* […] *The large gas chamber next to the two smaller ones, on the other hand, was adapted solely for the use of carbon monoxide."*

Kranz does not tell his readers why it would have been a good thing to split the eastward chamber into two smaller ones and then not use one of them, thus reducing the available space. The reason why he throws out Chambers IV through VII is easy to understand:

- Chamber IV has a window which the victims would have smashed immediately (the blue stains prove that this window existed at the time in question when the room served as a Zyklon B delousing chamber).
- The barrack in which the Chambers V and VI are said to have been installed has vanished without a trace – if it ever existed. The Polish Majdanek historians are not even able to show its precise location.[699]

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[698] See chapter chapter VI.1 of the present book.

[699] Majdanek historian Czesław Rajca writes that the building housing these chambers was

- Chamber VII in the new crematorium, claimed to have been used for killings by means of Zyklon B, does not show any blue stains on its walls which renders the use of hydrogen cyanide at this site highly improbable.[700]

Facing this unambiguous situation, Kranz undertook to rid orthodox historiography of untenable assertions and to cast these disprovable "gas chambers" aside, even though their existence continues to be asserted in the orthodox literature on Majdanek. Obviously, this opportunistic procedure has nothing to do with scientific historiography.

On the subject of the genesis of the alleged homicidal gas chambers, Kranz writes (p. 220):

> *"Little is known about the installation of the gas chambers at the Majdanek concentration camp, as there are practically no documents dealing with their construction and their operation. All we can say is that the gas chambers were based on the necessary modifications of the technology of disinfestation plants using hydrocyanic acid (hydrocanic acid is the active ingredient of Zyklon B)."*

Kranz's assertion that there are "practically no documents" concerning the construction and operation of the Majdanek gas chambers is misleading, as there are no documents at all dealing with homicidal gas chambers as such. There is, however, a considerable amount of documents dealing with the rooms in question, yet *not* as homicidal gas chambers. Using this evidence, Carlo Mattogno has outlined the construction of these rooms in chapter VI,2 of our present book on Majdanek. These documents clearly show that these rooms were hygienic installations for the destruction of vermin, *i.e.* the very "disinfestation plants using hydrocyanic acid" Kranz speaks about. The fact that hydrocyanic acid was used here can be seen immediately when looking at the quantity of blue stains on all of its walls.

It is obvious that not even the shadow of any documentary evidence exists for the "conversion" of this disinfestation plant into a homicidal facility as claimed by Kranz. Although it is conceivable that a disinfestation chamber could have been used for homicidal purposes, Mattogno has provided a very detailed demonstration of the fact that this was *not* done at Majdanek, because these rooms could not have been used for homicidal purposes for structural reasons. Since Kranz does not even mention, let alone attempt to refute Mattogno's arguments, even though he summarized our book correctly in his article of 2005, this can only mean that at least for these purposes Mattogno's findings cannot be refuted.

In view of the complete lack of any documentary evidence for homicidal gassings at Majdanek, the proponents of orthodox historiography must resort to witness statements. But this leads directly to yet another problem: there is not a single witness who provided any kind of precise account of the alleged

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"probably" located on the intermediate field no. 1. Rajca, "Exterminacja bespośrednia," in: Tadeusz Mencel (ed.), *Majdanek 1941-1944*, Lublin 1991, p. 270.

[700] See chapter VI.3 of the present book.

gassings at Majdanek. This created obvious problems for Józef Marszałek, the former head of the Majdanek Memorial Institution, when he wrote his book on the camp in 1981: As a result, he included an excerpt of Pery Broad's report on *Auschwitz* instead, and he claimed peremptorily that the gassings at Majdanek were carried out in an "analogous" manner![701] In the absence of any eyewitness of such gassings, Kranz makes use of someone who claims to have at least seen the result, that is to say: the corpses. By so doing, however, Kranz promptly refutes his own allegations, as the witness in question, a former detainee by the name of Franz A., who was questioned in 1965 during the preparations of the Düsseldorf Majdanek trial, in fact made the following statement (Kranz, p. 225):

> *"In two cases I saw how other detainees had to remove the gassed and dead detainees from the gas chamber. The dead were really blue, and some of them had to be torn from one another by the detainee commando, as many detainees were intertwined with one another."*

It is, however, a fact that victims of a poisoning by hydrocyanic acid do not show a blue but a red discoloration of their skin.[702] Hence, witness Franz A. stated something that he could not possibly have seen and therefore did not see to begin with.

Such statements by former detainees, made to incriminate their former oppressors, are not worth the paper they are written on. This also goes for the statement made by Georg G., a former inmate functionary (*Kapo*) who, also in 1965, claimed to have seen how "the detainees were herded into the gas chamber made of stone and were gassed there."

The confessions made by former members of the SS during later trials in Germany are just as worthless. Kranz quotes one of them on p. 225:

> *"I once looked into the gas chamber when there were people inside.* […] *The people were lying there on the floor. They lay irregularly on top of one another. I think they were naked.* […] *I was to take a look to see how the gas works. Perschon had asked me to attend the gassing."*

In this case Kranz's source is a book by Dieter Ambach and Thomas Köhler which appeared in 2003 under the title *Lublin-Majdanek. Das Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager im Spiegel von Zeugenaussagen* (*Lublin-Majdanek. The Concentration and Extermination Camp in the Light of Witness Statements*). The book does not give the name of the SS man in question, which probably means that he was not one of the 15 persons initially indicted during the Düsseldorf Majdanek trial. It is highly likely that his confession was the result of a deal with the prosecution whereby the man would be spared any further legal problems, if only he acknowledged the existence of gas chambers and thus supported the prosecution's case.

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[701] Józef Marszałek, *Majdanek, The Concentration Camp in Lublin*, Warsaw 1986, p. 141.
[702] Germar Rudolf, *The Rudolf Report*, Chicago 2003, chapter 7.1.

If the confessions during the later trials in Germany lack any credibility, this is all the more true for confessions made during trials before Polish, Soviet or western courts in the immediate post-war years filled with anti-German hysteria. It is clear that, at that time, the Poles, the Soviets or the Anglo-Americans were able to extract any kind of confession from any kind of German – be it by direct torture or by other, more subtle means.

This also applies to the head of the Majdanek technical department, a man by the name of Friedrich W. Ruppert, who asserted that the "selections of the Warsaw Jews for extermination" were based on orders issued by Globocnik who "inspected the camp on a number of occasions and who was particularly interested in the gas chambers." The fact that Kranz has to take recourse to such dubious confessions, probably extracted under duress, shows the exasperating scarcity of evidence he was facing.

On the subject of Zyklon B supplies to the Majdanek camp he states (p. 223):

> *"Numerous documents dealing with the supply of Zyklon B have come down to us. The camp administration ordered the gas from Tesch & Stabenow, International Company for Pest Control, in Hamburg. It was produced by Dessauer Werke für Zucker und Chemische Industrie. The first order for Zyklon B dates from 25 July 1943.* […] *The last surviving letter concerning orders for Zyklon B was posted on 3 July 1944, three weeks before the final dissolution of the camp."*

On the preceding page Kranz admits that "the Zyklon supplied to Majdanek was used, as in other concentration camps, for the disinfestation of barracks and clothing" (p. 222). In fact, the copious documentation on the supply of Zyklon B allows us to state beyond any doubt that the product was used for disinfestations and nothing else.[703] So what is Kranz trying to prove with the paragraph quoted above?

At the end of his article, Kranz deals with the question of how many persons were gassed at Majdanek and says (p. 227):

> *"The sources do not allow us to determine how many of the nearly 80,000 victims of the camp were murdered in gas chambers. An indication is contained only in the statement by Ruppert, who estimated the number of gassed to have been 500 to 600 detainees per week in the last quarter of 1942 and the number of Warsaw Jews murdered in the gas chamber in the spring of 1943 to have amounted to some 4,000 or 5,000 persons."*

This would mean that between early October of 1942 (which is said to have been the start of the gassings) until the end of spring of 1943, some 10,000 to 12,000 Jews were gassed at Majdanek.

Orthodox historiography maintains that there were three "pure extermination camps" in operation during that period: Treblinka, Sobibor and (up to November of 1942) Belzec. If we go along with the orthodox historians, the "gas chanbers" of Treblinka alone would have allowed the murder of 7,000

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[703] See chapter VIII of the present book.

people per day,[704] which means that the SS could have gassed in the Treblinka "gas chambers" within a day and a half all the Jews allegedly killed at Majdanek over a period of eight months. Hence there would have been absolutely no need to build and operate any homicidal gas chambers at Majdanek at all, and this not just because operating such a facility was challenging and would have posed many dangers. In addition to that, the bath which allegedly housed the "gas chambers" could be seen by the detainees, and thus no gassings could have taken place secretly. In fact, the whole camp would have panicked, and the Germans would have had to face a revolt or a mass escape.

As detainees were continually released from Majdanek – the total number of releases amounted to 20,000[705] – any such information would have spread like wildfire through all of Poland and beyond its borders, something that the Germans clearly would have wanted to avoid.

From whichever point of view one looks at the story of homicidal gassings at Majdanek – whether from a historical, a technical or a logical one – it always turns out to be absurd. Only two types of readers will thus be impressed by Thomasz Kranz's kind of deceptive "evidence": the uninformed ones, who naïvely believe themselves to be reading the study of a serious historian, and the fanatical believers in the Holocaust, who exclaim:

"My mind is made up, so don't confuse me with facts!"

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[704] In his standard treatise about the camps of Aktion Reinhardt, Yitzak Arad writes that a total of 491,000 Jews were gassed at Treblinka between 23 July and the end of September of 1942, *i.e.* 7,014 or roughly 7,000 per day. Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1987, pp. 392-395.

[705] Anna Wiśniewska, Czesław Rajca, *Majdanek, Lubelski obóz koncentracyjny*, Lublin 1996, p. 32.

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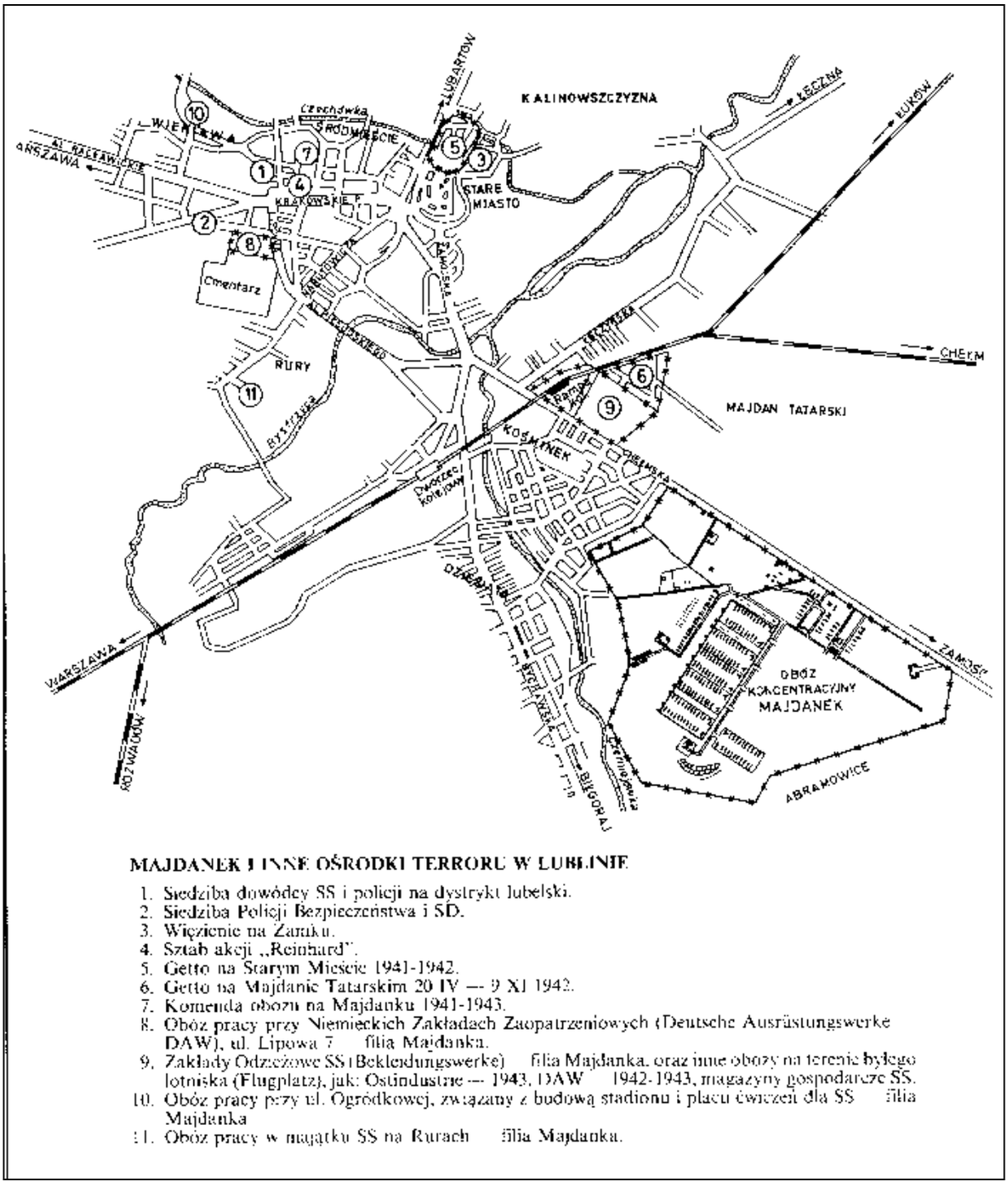
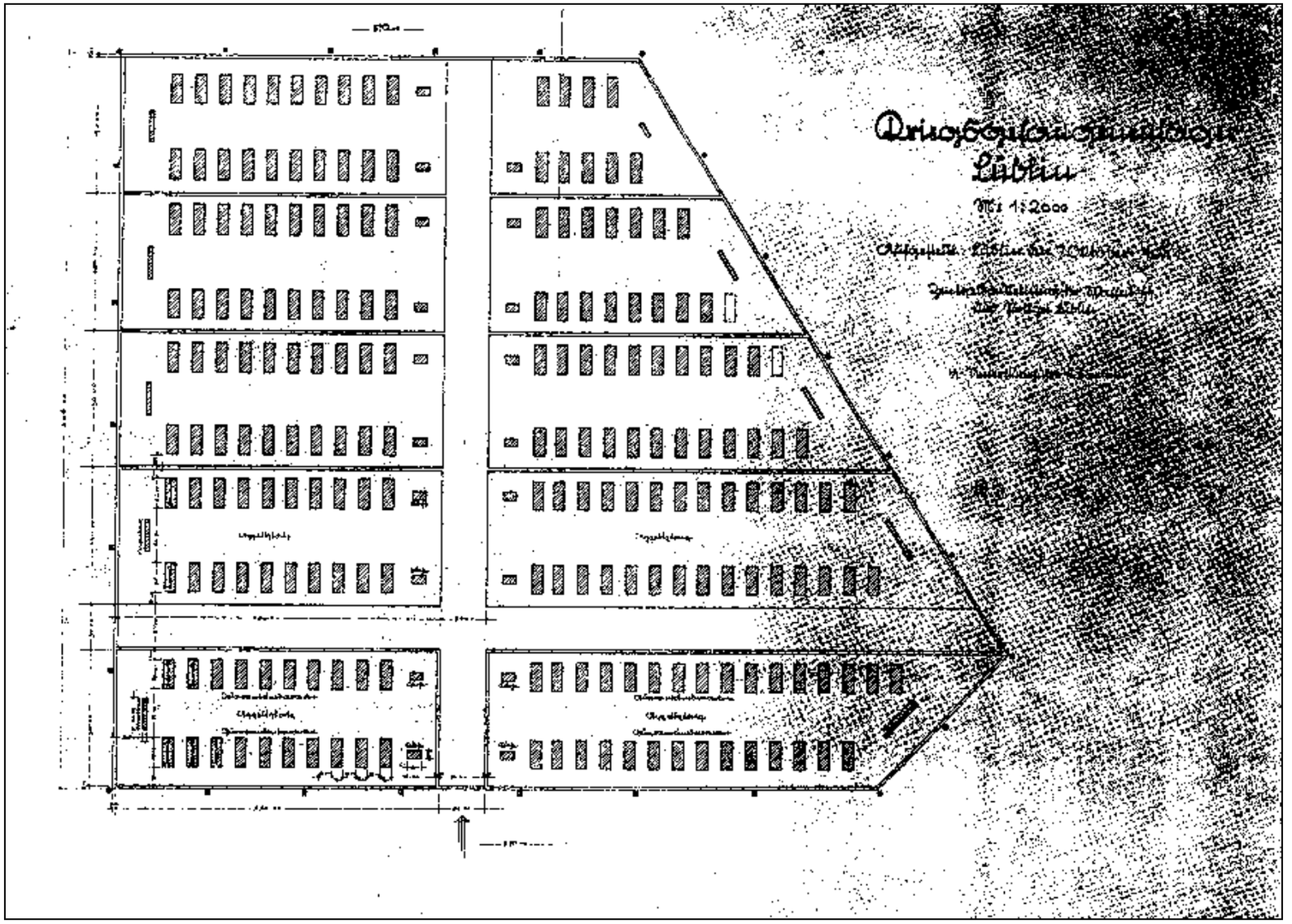
Documents



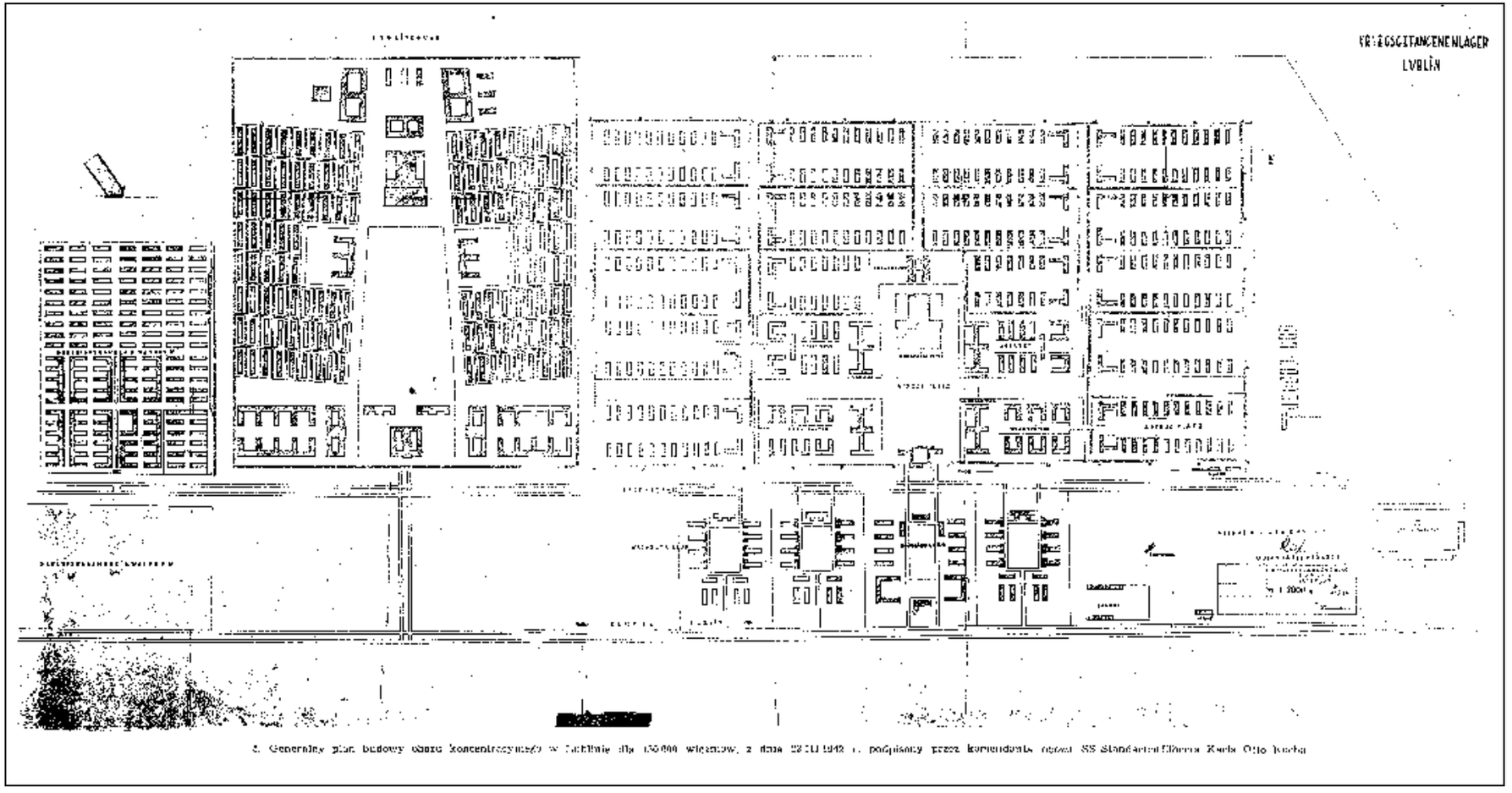
MAJDANEK I INNE OŚRODKI TERRORU W LUBLINIE

1. Siedziba dowódcy SS i policji na dystrykt lubelski.
2. Siedziba Policji Bezpieczeństwa i SD.
3. Więzienie na Zamku.
4. Sztab akcji „Reinhard".
5. Getto na Starym Mieście 1941-1942.
6. Getto na Majdanie Tatarskim 20 IV — 9 XI 1942.
7. Komenda obozu na Majdanku 1941-1943.
8. Obóz pracy przy Niemieckich Zakładach Zaopatrzeniowych (Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke DAW), ul. Lipowa 7 — filia Majdanka.
9. Zakłady Odzieżowe SS (Bekleidungswerke) — filia Majdanka, oraz inne obozy na terenie byłego lotniska (Flugplatz), jak: Ostindustrie — 1943, DAW — 1942-1943, magazyny gospodarcze SS.
10. Obóz pracy przy ul. Ogródkowej, związany z budową stadionu i placu ćwiczeń dla SS — filia Majdanka
11. Obóz pracy w majątku SS na Rurach — filia Majdanka.

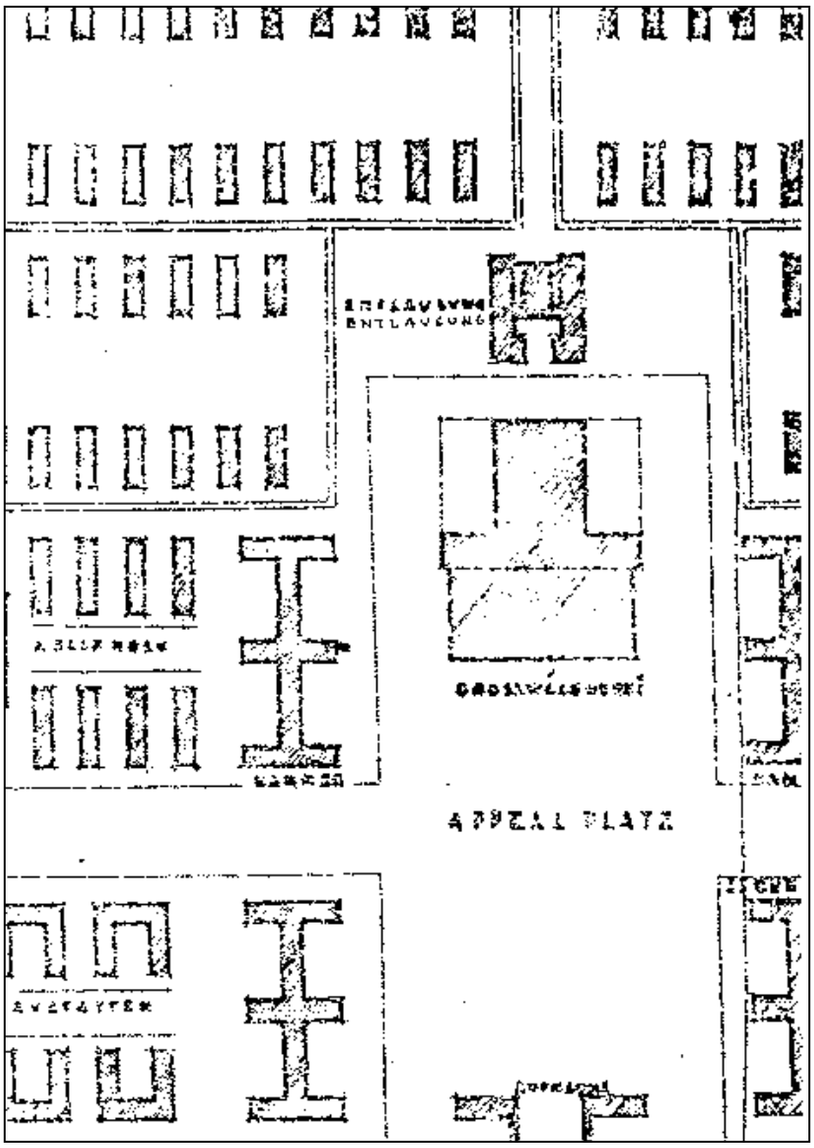
Document 1: Lublin and the Lublin camp (Majdanek). Source: T. Mencel (ed.), *Majdanek 1941-1944,* Lublin: Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1991, unnumbered page.



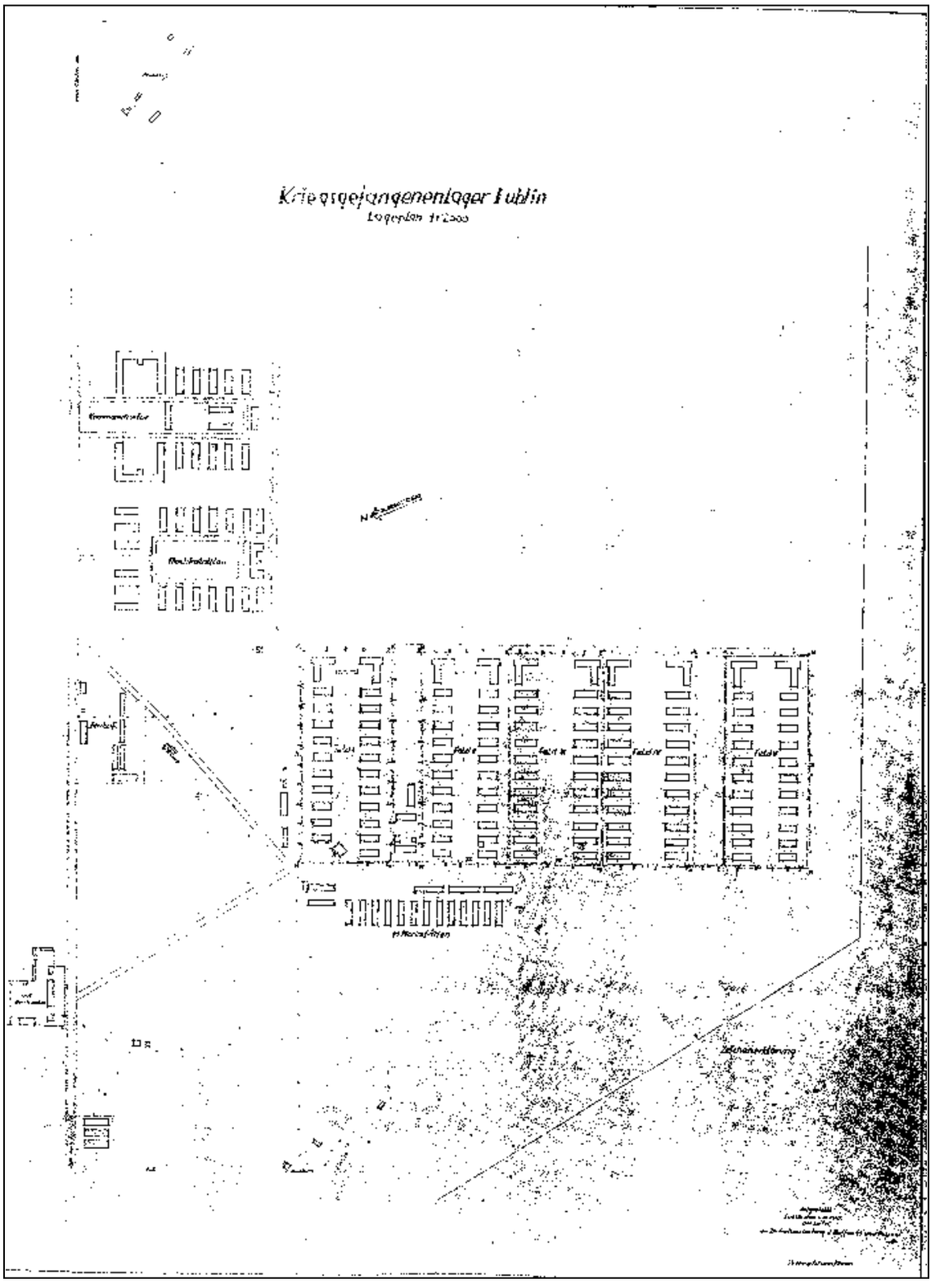
Document 2: Plan of the POW camp Lublin from October 7, 1941. Source: Marszałek, *"Geneza i początki budowy obozu koncentracyjnego na Majdanku* (Genesis and Beginnings of the Construction of the Majdanek Concentration Camp), in: *ZM*, I, 1965, unnumbered page.



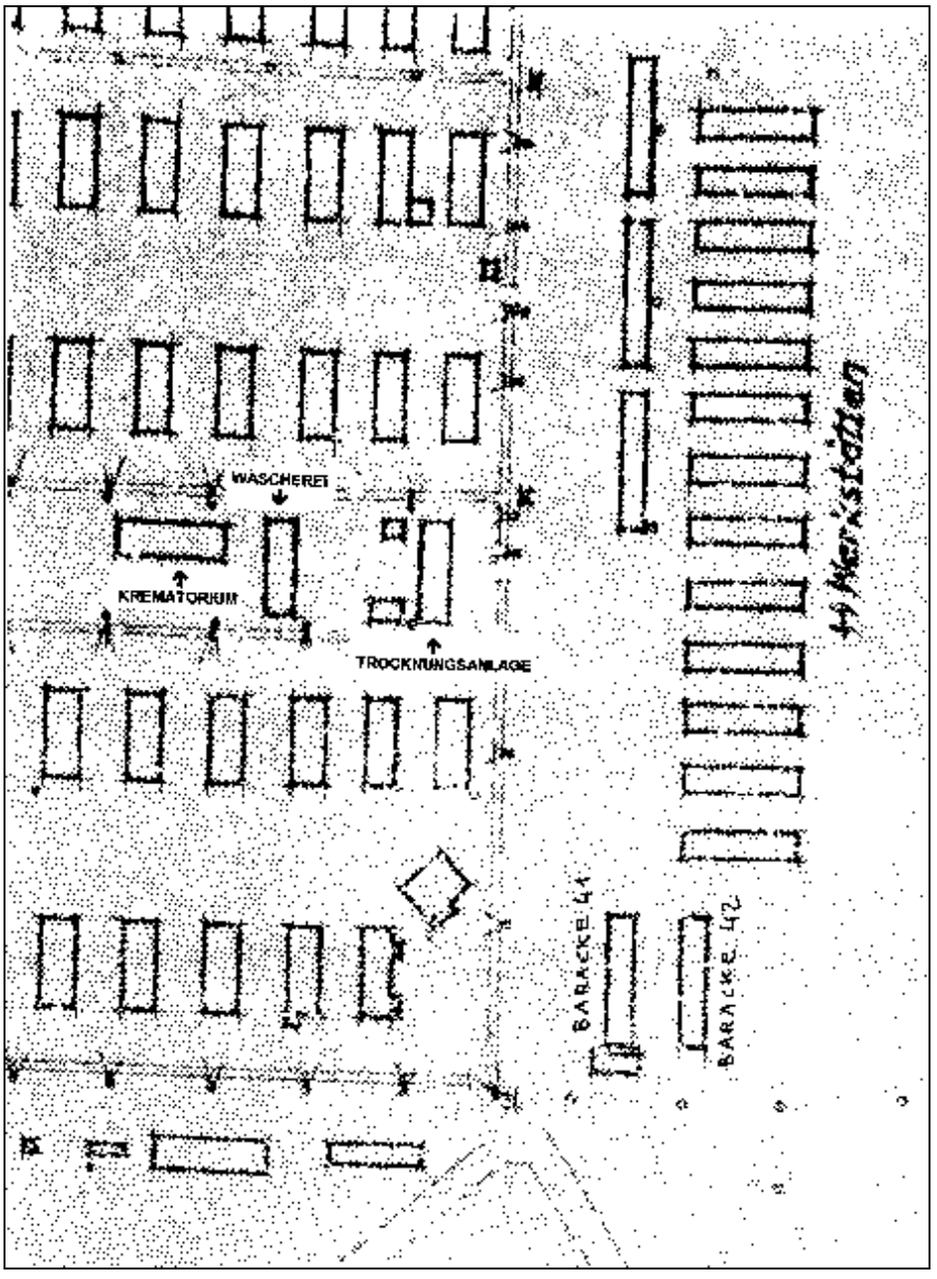
Document 3: Plan of the Lublin concentration camp from March 23, 1942. Source: Marszałek, *"Geneza i początki budowy obozu koncentracyjnego na Majdanku*, in: *ZM*, I, 1965, unnumbered page.



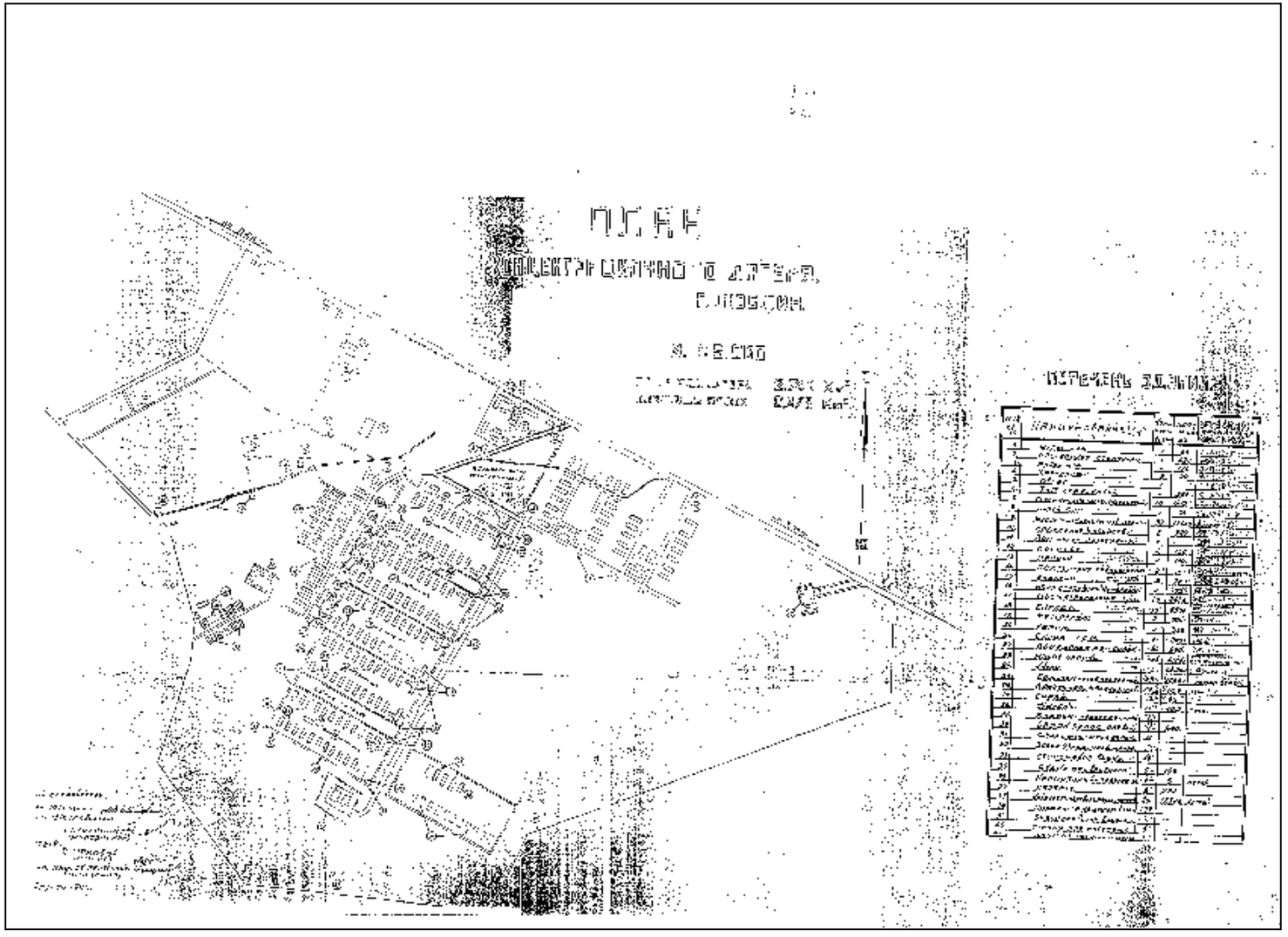
Document 3a: Enlargement from Document 3: location of the delousing facility.



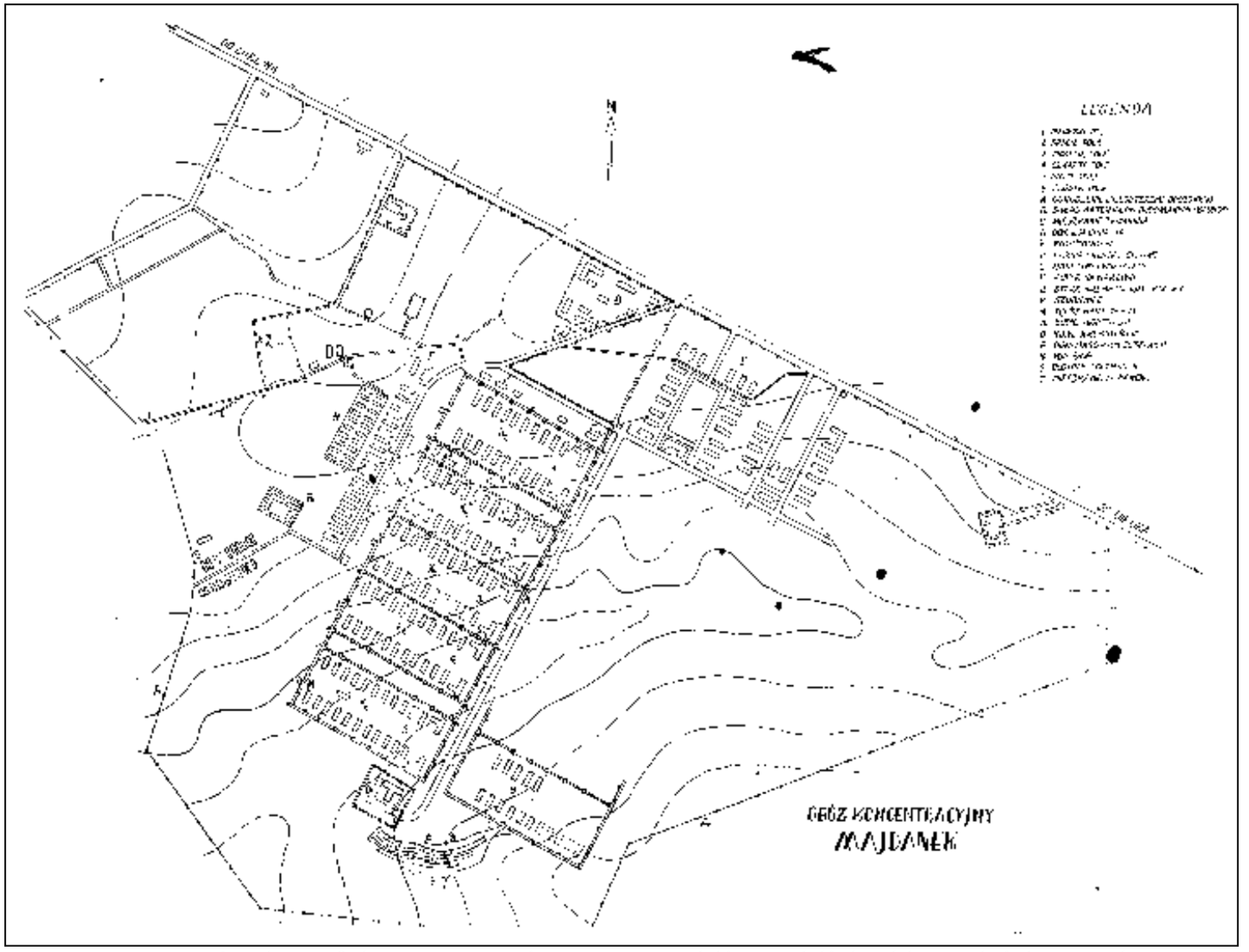
Document 4: Plan of the POW camp Lublin from December 5, 1942. Source: Z. Murawska, *System strzezenia i sposoby isolacji wiezniow w obozie koncentracyjnym na Majdanku* (System of guarding and methods of isolating the inmates in the Majdanek concentration camp), in: *ZM,* I, 1965, unnumbered page.



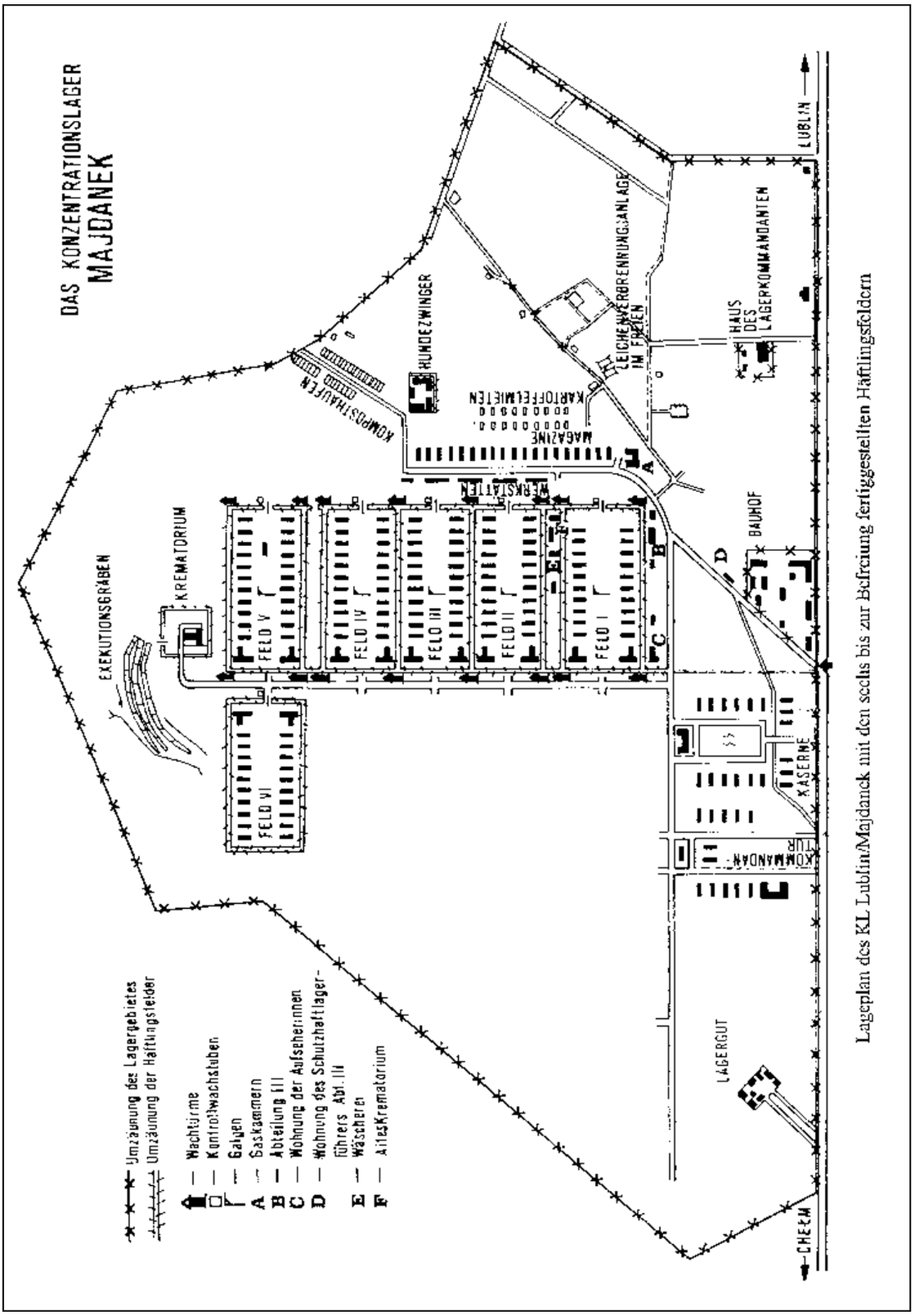
Document 4a: Detail from Document 4. Labels added.



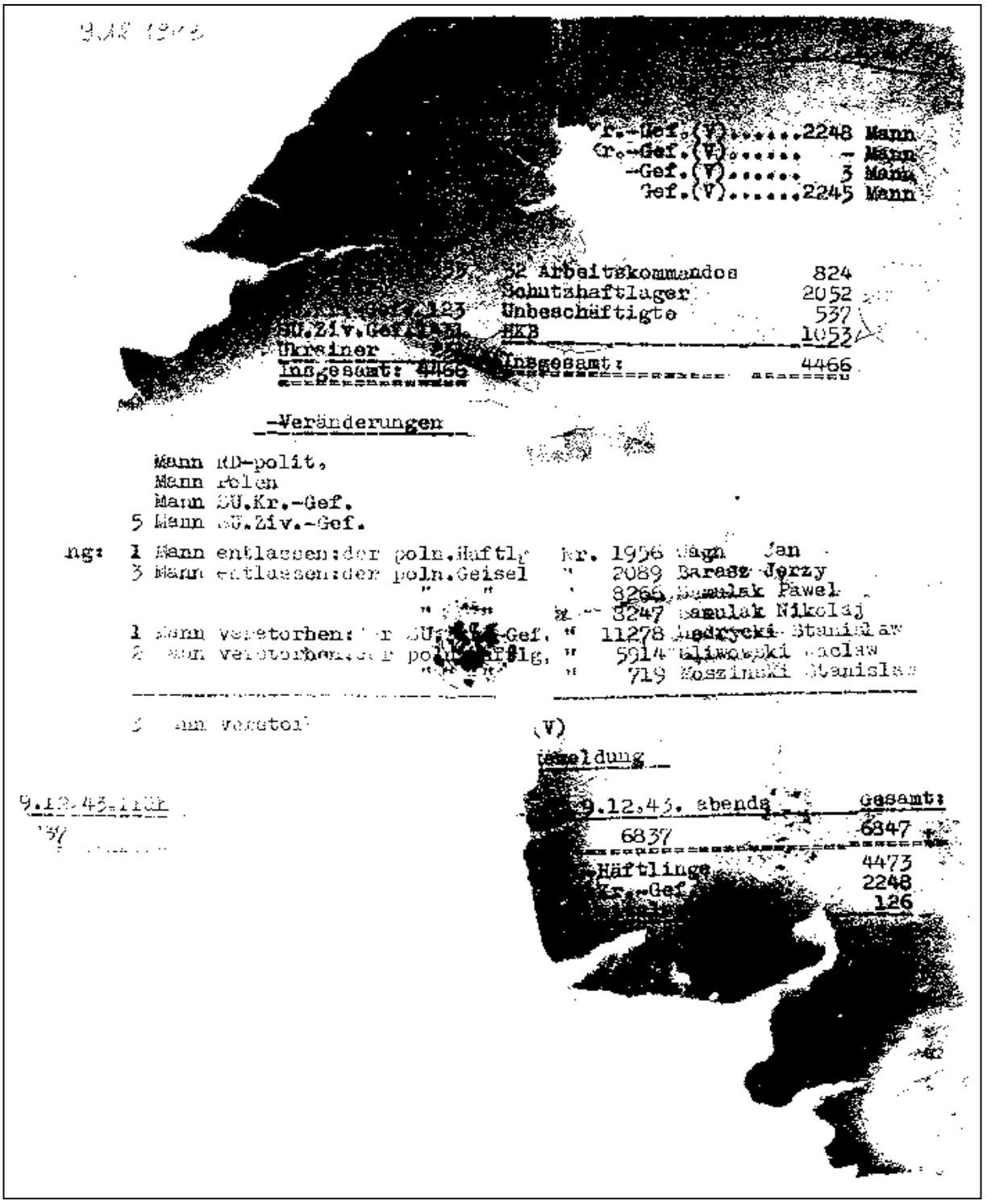
Document 5: Plan of the Lublin concentration camp, drawn by the Polish-Soviet Investigative Commission. Source: GARF, 7021-107-9, 5.



Document 6: Plan of the concentrtion camp Lublin, published by Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz in *"Obóz koncentracyjni i zagłady Majdanek"* (The Concentration and Extermination Camp Majdanek), in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Nimieckich w Polsce* (Bulletin of the Commission to Investigate the German Crimes in Poland), v. 4, 1948, unnumbered page.



Document 7: Plan of the Lublin concentration camp. Source: T. Kranz (ed.), *Unser Schicksal – eine Mahnung für Euch… Berichte und Erinnerungen der Häftlinge von Majdanek.* Lublin: Panstwowe Museum na Majdanku, 1994, unnumbered page.



r.-Gef.(V).....2248 Mann
Gr.-Gef.(V)..... - Mann
-Gef.(V)..... 3 Mann
Gef.(V).....2245 Mann

52 Arbeitskommandos 824
Schutzhaftlager 2052
Unbeschäftigte 537
HKB 1053
Insgesamt: 4466

-Veränderungen

Mann KD-polit.
Mann Polen
Mann SÜ.Kr.-Gef.
5 Mann SÜ.Ziv.-Gef.

ng: 1 Mann entlassen:der poln.Haftl[illegible] Nr. 1956 Wagn Jan
3 Mann entlassen:der poln.Geisel " 2089 Baresz Jerzy
" " " 8265 Samulak Pawel
" " " 8247 Samulak Nikolaj
1 Mann verstorben: [illegible]-Gef. " 11278 Jedrycki Stanislaw
2 Mann verstorben:der pol[illegible]ftlg. " 5914 Gliwowski Waclaw
" 719 Koszinski Stanislaw

3 Mann verstor[illegible]

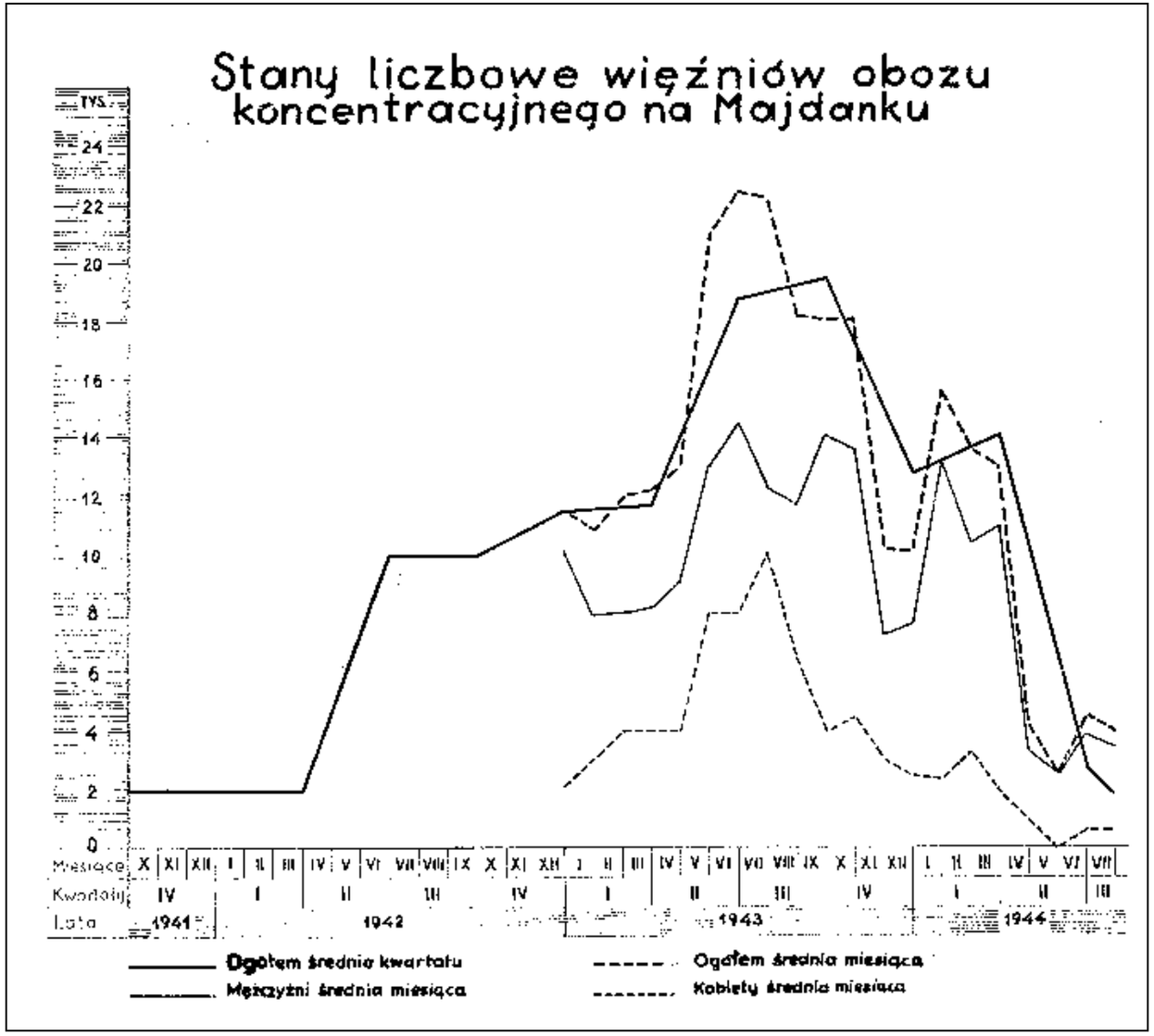
(V)

Meldung

9.12.43. abends Gesamt:
6837 6847
4473
Häftlinge 2248
Gr.-Gef 126

9.12.43.-11Uhr

Document 8: Camp population report of December 9, 1943. Source: APMM, sygn. I-c-2, vol. 1.



Document 9: Diagrammatic representation of the camp population. Source: Leszczyńska, *"Stany liczbowe wiezniów obozu koncentracjynego na Majdanku,"* in: *ZM,* VII, 1973, unnumbered page.

Camp Population

1941

IV	Quarter	2,000

1942

I	Quarter	2,000
II	Quarter	10,000
III	Quarter	10,000
IV	Quarter	11,500

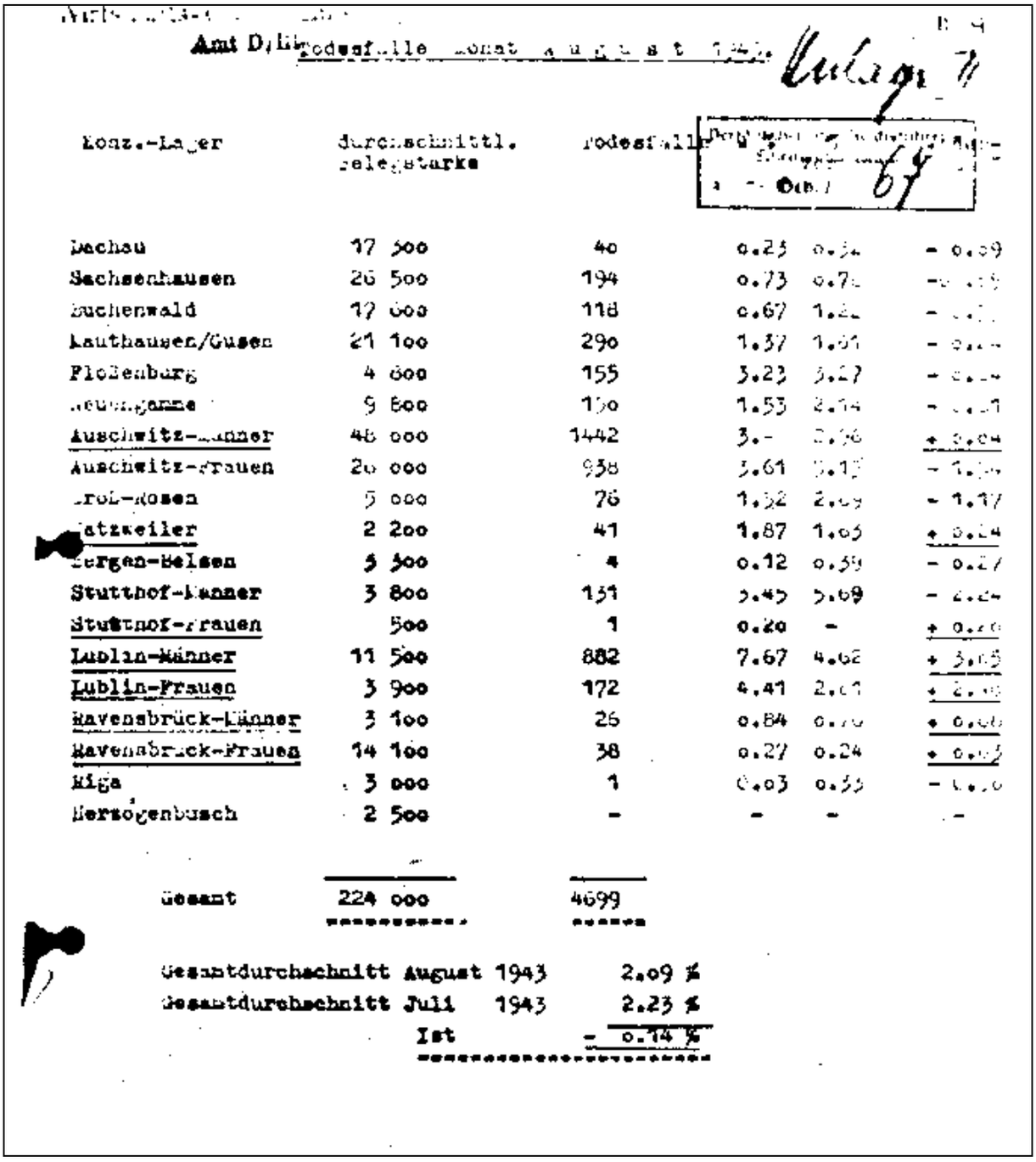
1943

Month	Men	Women	total
January	7,900	3,000	10,900
February	8,000	4,000	12,000
March	8,200	4,000	12,200
April	9,000	4,000	13,000
May	13,000	8,000	21,000
June	14,500	8,000	22,500
July	12,300	10,000	22,300
August	11,700	6,500	18,200
September	14,100	4,000	18,100
October	13,600	4,500	18,100
November	7,260	3,000	10,260
December	7,640	2,500	10,140

1944

Month	Men	Women	total
January	13,240	2,400	15,640
February	10,460	3,200	13,660
March	11,000	2,000	13,000

Document 10: Population of the Majdanek concentration camp . From: Leszczyńska, *"Stany liczbowe wiezniów obozu koncentracjynego na Majdanku,"* in: *ZM,* VII, 1973.



Amt D/III Todesfälle Monat August 1943

Anlage 11

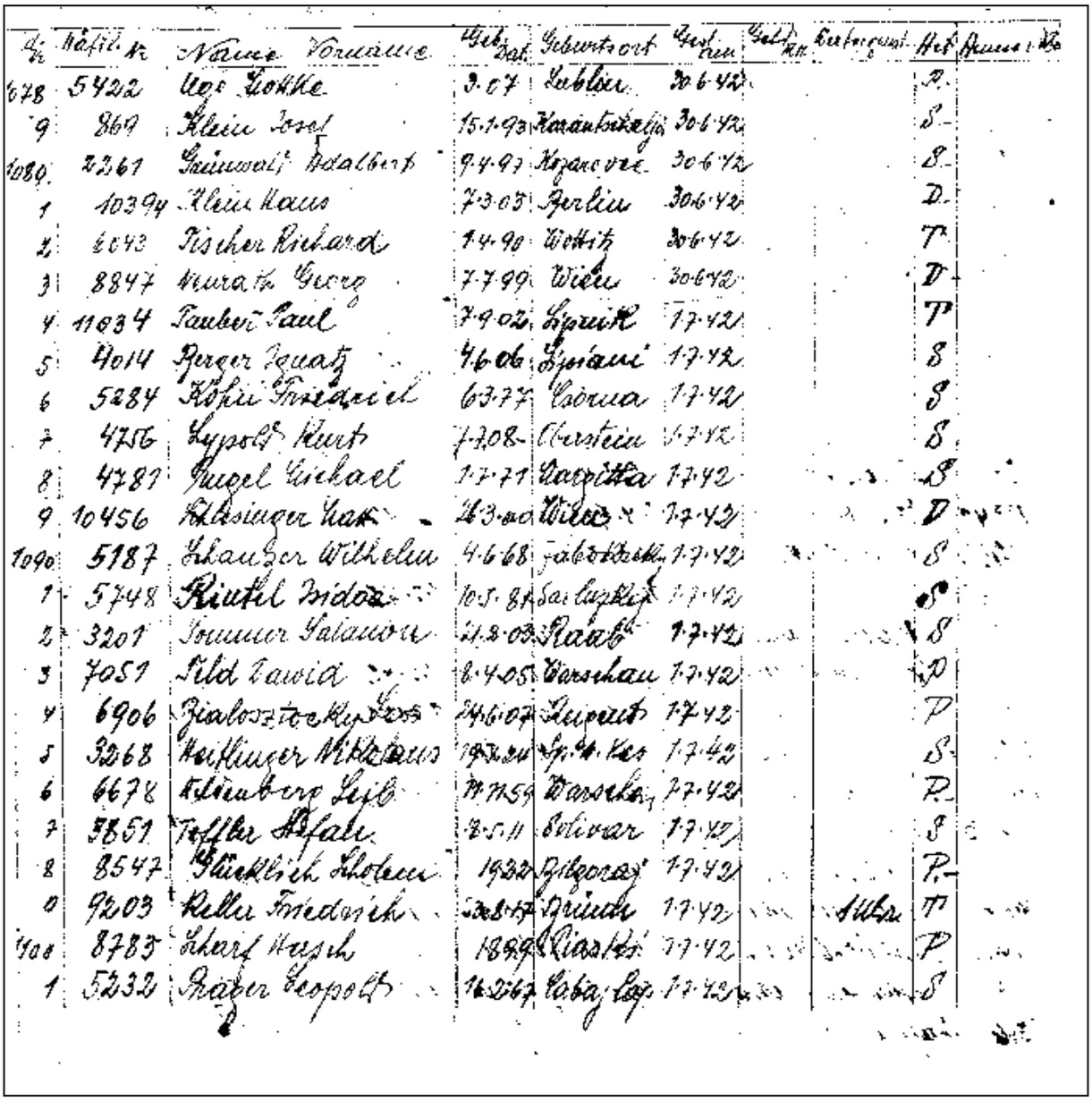
Konz.-Lager	durchschnittl. Belegstärke	Todesfälle			
Dachau	17 500	40	0.23	0.34	- 0.09
Sachsenhausen	26 500	194	0.73	0.76	- 0.03
Buchenwald	17 000	118	0.67	1.22	- 0.55
Mauthausen/Gusen	21 100	290	1.37	1.01	+ 0.36
Flossenburg	4 000	155	3.23	3.27	- 0.04
Neuengamme	9 800	150	1.53	2.14	- 0.61
Auschwitz-Männer	48 000	1442	3.-	2.96	+ 0.04
Auschwitz-Frauen	20 000	938	3.61	5.15	- 1.54
Groß-Rosen	5 000	76	1.52	2.69	- 1.17
Natzweiler	2 200	41	1.87	1.63	+ 0.24
Bergen-Belsen	5 500	4	0.12	0.39	- 0.27
Stutthof-Männer	3 800	151	3.45	3.69	- 0.24
Stutthof-Frauen	500	1	0.20	-	+ 0.20
Lublin-Männer	11 500	882	7.67	4.62	+ 3.05
Lublin-Frauen	3 900	172	4.41	2.01	+ 2.40
Ravensbrück-Männer	3 100	26	0.84	0.70	+ 0.14
Ravensbrück-Frauen	14 100	38	0.27	0.24	+ 0.03
Riga	3 000	1	0.03	0.33	- 0.30
Herzogenbusch	2 500	-	-	-	-
Gesamt	224 000	4699			

Gesamtdurchschnitt August 1943 2.09 %

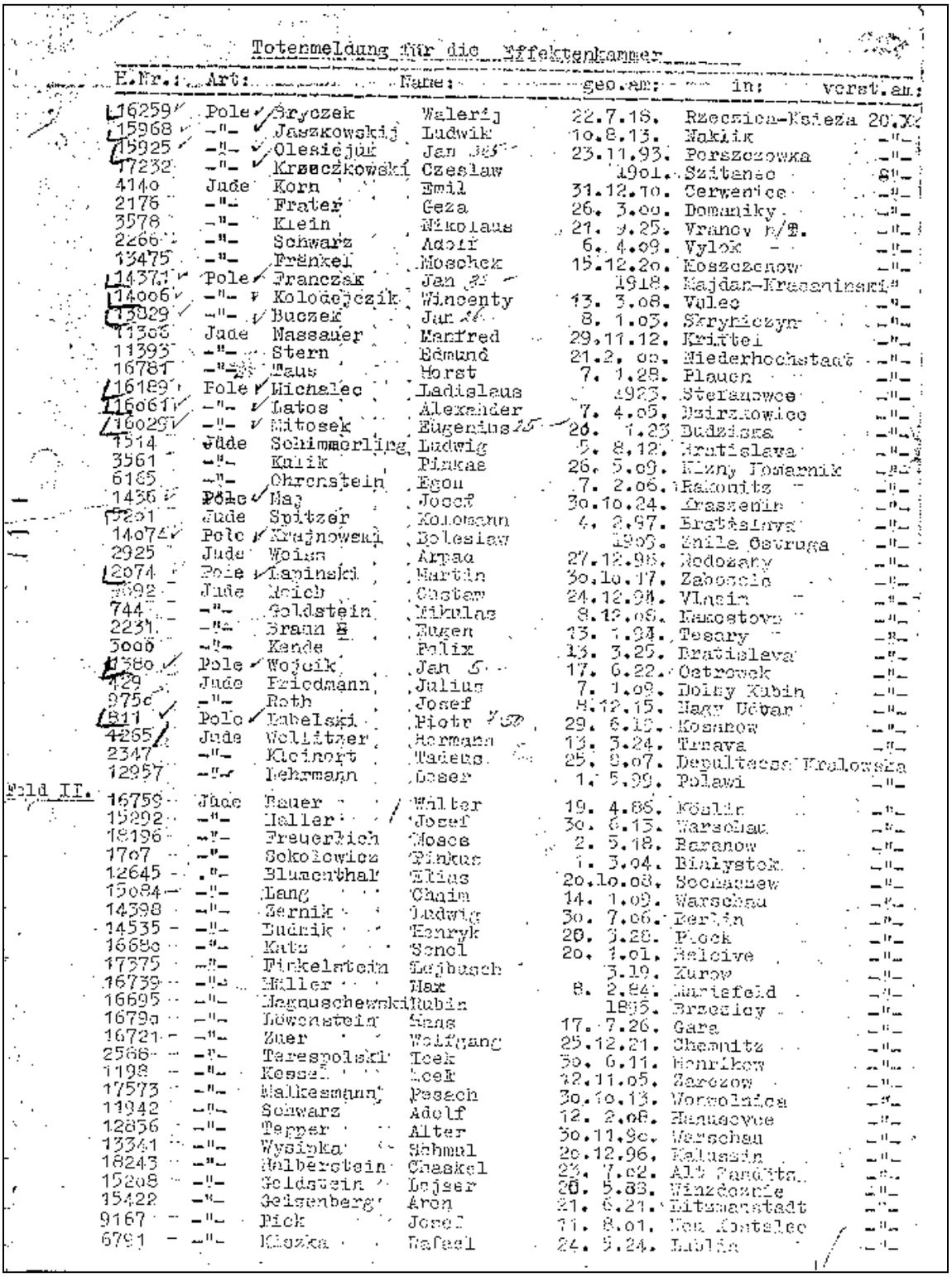
Gesamtdurchschnitt Juli 1943 2.23 %

Ist - 0.14 %

Document 11: PS-1469, p. 4.



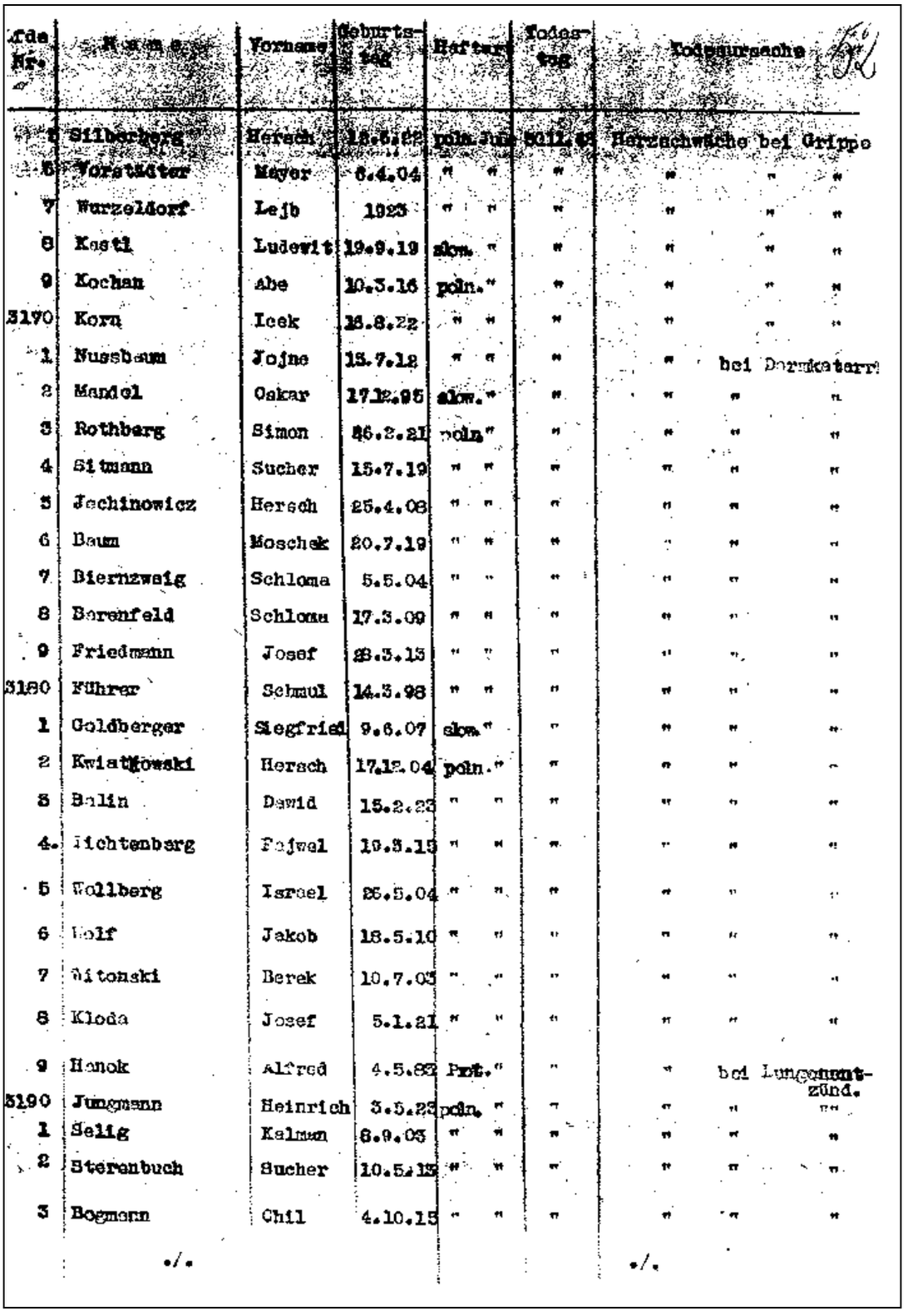
Document 12: Death Book, June 30 to July 1, 1942. Source: APMM, sygn. I.d.19, p. 37.



Totenmeldung für die Effektenkammer

E.Nr.:	Art:	Name:		geo.am:	in:	verst.am:
16259	Pole	Bryczek	Walerij	22.7.16.	Rzeczica-Ksieza	20.X
15968	-"-	Jaszkowskij	Ludwik	10.8.13.	Nakiik	-"-
15925	-"-	Olesiejuk	Jan	23.11.93.	Porszczowka	-"-
17232	-"-	Krzeczkowski	Czesław	1901.	Szitanec	-"-
4140	Jude	Korn	Emil	31.12.10.	Cerwenice	-"-
2176	-"-	Frater	Geza	26. 3.00.	Domaniky	-"-
3578	-"-	Klein	Nikolaus	21. 9.25.	Vranov n/T.	-"-
2266	-"-	Schwarz	Adolf	6. 4.09.	Vylok	-"-
13475	-"-	Fränkel	Moschek	15.12.20.	Koszczenow	-"-
14371	Pole	Franczak	Jan	1918.	Majdan-Krasenisnki	"
14006	-"-	Kolodejczik	Wincenty	13. 3.08.	Vulec	-"-
13029	-"-	Buczek	Jan	8. 1.03.	Skryhiczyn	-"-
11308	Jude	Massauer	Manfred	29.11.12.	Krittel	-"-
11393	-"-	Stern	Edmund	21.2. 00.	Niederhochstadt	-"-
16781	-"-	Maus	Horst	7. 1.28.	Plauen	-"-
16189	Pole	Michalec	Ladislaus	4923.	Steranowce	-"-
16061	-"-	Datos	Alexander	7. 4.05.	Dzirzkowice	-"-
16029	-"-	Mitosek	Eugenius	26. 1.23	Budziska	-"-
1514	Jude	Schimmerling	Ludwig	5. 8.12.	Bratislava	-"-
3561	-"-	Kalik	Pinkas	26. 5.09.	Nizny Tovarnik	-"-
6185	-"-	Ohrenstein	Egon	7. 2.06.	Ratonitz	-"-
1436	Pole	May	Josef	30.10.24.	Krassenin	-"-
15291	Jude	Spitzer	Koloomann	4. 2.97.	Bratislava	-"-
14074	Pole	Krajnowski	Boleslaw	1905.	Znile Ostruga	-"-
2925	Jude	Weiss	Arpad	27.12.98.	Nedozery	-"-
12074	Pole	Lapinski	Martin	30.10.17.	Zaboscie	-"-
9092	Jude	Reich	Gustav	24.12.94.	Vlasim	-"-
744	-"-	Goldstein	Mikulas	8.12.06.	Kamostovo	-"-
2231	-"-	Braun E.	Eugen	13. 1.94.	Tesary	-"-
5006	-"-	Kende	Felix	13. 3.25.	Bratislava	-"-
1380	Pole	Wojcik	Jan	17. 6.22.	Ostrowek	-"-
429	Jude	Friedmann	Julius	7. 1.09.	Dolny Kubin	-"-
975c	-"-	Roth	Josef	8.12.15.	Nagy Ucvar	-"-
1811	Pole	Kabelski	Piotr	29. 6.10.	Kosmow	-"-
4265	Jude	Wollitzer	Hermann	13. 3.24.	Trnava	-"-
2347	-"-	Kleinert	Tadeus	25. 8.07.	Depultacas Krolowska	
12957	-"-	Lehrmann	Leser	1. 5.99.	Polawi	-"-
Feld II.						
16759	Jude	Bauer	Walter	19. 4.86.	Köslin	-"-
15292	-"-	Haller	Josef	30. 6.13.	Warschau	-"-
16196	-"-	Freuerlich	Moses	2. 5.18.	Rawanow	-"-
1707	-"-	Sokolowicz	Pinkus	1. 3.04.	Bialystok	-"-
12645	-"-	Blumenthal	Elias	20.10.03.	Sochaczew	-"-
15084	-"-	Lang	Chaim	14. 1.09.	Warschau	-"-
14398	-"-	Zernik	Ludwig	30. 7.06.	Berlin	-"-
14535	-"-	Dudnik	Henryk	20. 9.28.	Plock	-"-
16680	-"-	Katz	Senel	20. 1.01.	Selcive	-"-
17375	-"-	Finkelstein	Lejbusch	3.19.	Kurow	-"-
16739	-"-	Müller	Max	8. 2.84.	Lariafeld	-"-
16695	-"-	Jagnuschewski	Rubin	1895.	Brzesicy	-"-
16790	-"-	Löwenstein	Hans	17. 7.26.	Gara	-"-
16721	-"-	Zuer	Wolfgang	25.12.21.	Chemnitz	-"-
2566	-"-	Terespolski	Icek	30. 6.11.	Henrikow	-"-
1198	-"-	Kessel	Icek	22.11.05.	Zarozow	-"-
17573	-"-	Mallkesmann	Pesach	30.10.13.	Wormolnica	-"-
11942	-"-	Schwarz	Adolf	12. 2.08.	Hannoevue	-"-
12856	-"-	Tepper	Alter	30.11.9c.	Warschau	-"-
13341	-"-	Wysipka	Schmul	2c.12.96.	Kalussin	-"-
18243	-"-	Halberstein	Chaskel	23. 7.c2.	Alt Pandita	-"-
15208	-"-	Goldstein	Lajser	20. 5.83.	Winzdownie	-"-
15422	-"-	Geisenberg	Aron	21. 6.21.	Litmannstadt	-"-
9167	-"-	Pick	Josef	11. 8.01.	Von Kostelec	-"-
6791	-"-	Klezka	Rafael	24. 9.24.	Lublin	-"-

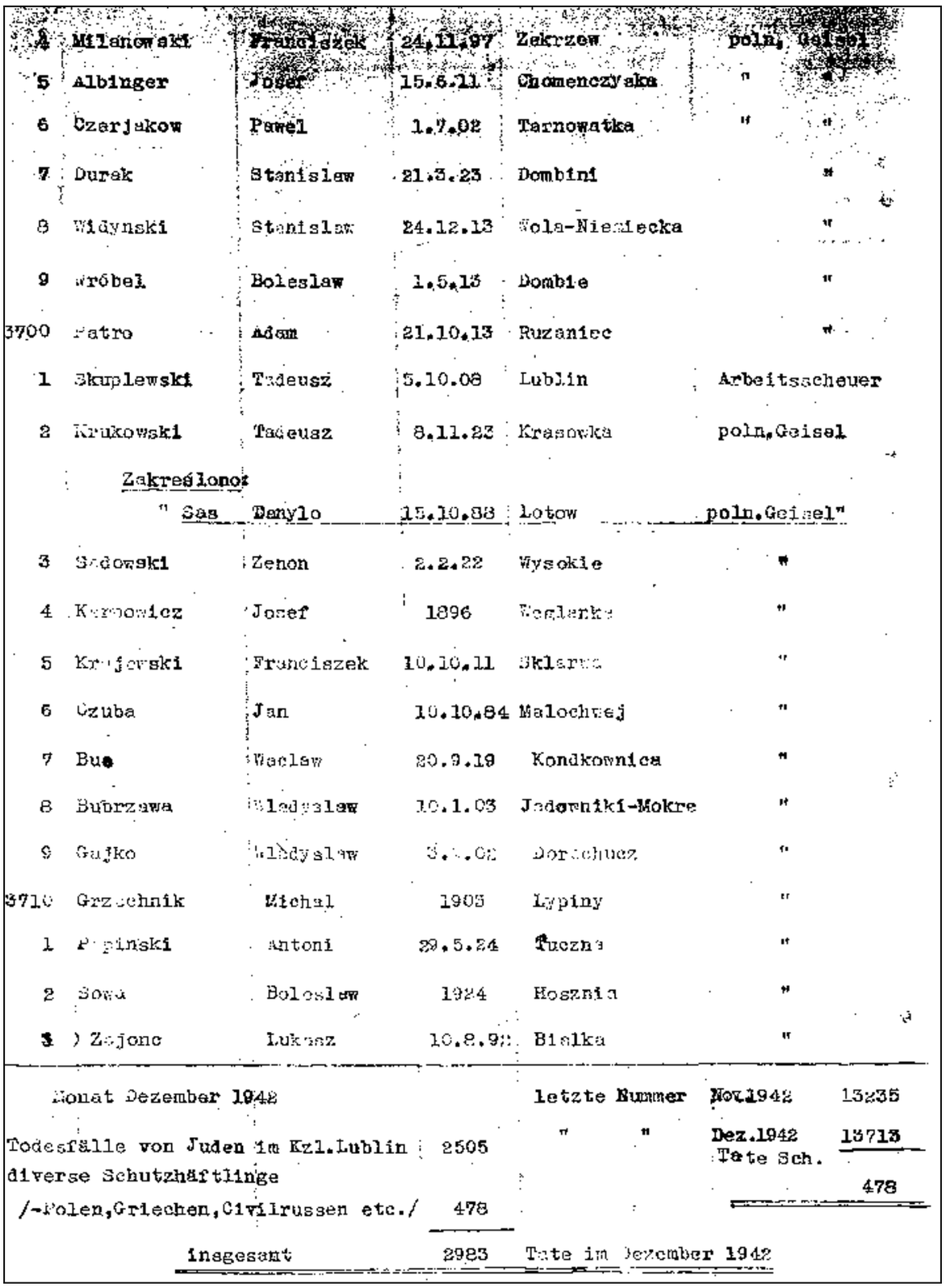
Document 13: Death Report for the Personal Effects Depot, dated October 23, 1942, refers to October 20. Source: GARF, 7021-107-3, p. 227.



Lfde Nr.	Name	Vorname	Geburts-tag	Haftart	Todes-tag	Todesursache
4	Silberberg	Herach	15.6.[illegible]	poln.Jude	30.11.42	Herzschwäche bei Grippe
5	Vorsteher	Mayer	6.4.04	" "	"	" " "
7	Wurzeldorf	Lejb	1923	" "	"	" " "
8	Kastl	Ludewit	19.9.19	slow. "	"	" " "
9	Kochan	Abe	10.3.16	poln."	"	" " "
3170	Korn	Icek	16.8.22	" "	"	" " "
1	Nussbaum	Jojne	15.7.18	" "	"	" bei Darmkatarrh
2	Mandel	Oskar	17.12.95	slow."	"	" " "
3	Rothberg	Simon	16.2.21	poln."	"	" " "
4	Sitmann	Sucher	15.7.19	" "	"	" " "
5	Jechinowicz	Hersch	25.4.08	" "	"	" " "
6	Baum	Moschek	20.7.19	" "	"	" " "
7	Biernzweig	Schloma	5.5.04	" "	"	" " "
8	Berenfeld	Schloma	17.3.09	" "	"	" " "
9	Friedmann	Josef	23.3.15	" "	"	" " "
3180	Führer	Schmul	14.3.98	" "	"	" " "
1	Goldberger	Siegfried	9.6.07	slow."	"	" " "
2	Kwiatkowski	Herach	17.12.04	poln."	"	" " "
3	Balin	Dawid	15.2.23	" "	"	" " "
4	Lichtenberg	Fajwel	19.3.15	" "	"	" " "
5	Wollberg	Israel	26.5.04	" "	"	" " "
6	Wolf	Jakob	18.5.10	" "	"	" " "
7	Witonski	Berek	10.7.03	" "	"	" " "
8	Kloda	Josef	5.1.21	" "	"	" " "
9	Honok	Alfred	4.5.82	Prot."	"	" bei Lungenentzünd.
3190	Jungmann	Heinrich	3.5.23	poln. "	"	" " "
1	Selig	Kalman	8.9.03	" "	"	" " "
2	Sterenbuch	Sucher	10.5.15	" "	"	" " "
3	Bogmann	Chil	4.10.15	" "	"	" " "

./. ./.

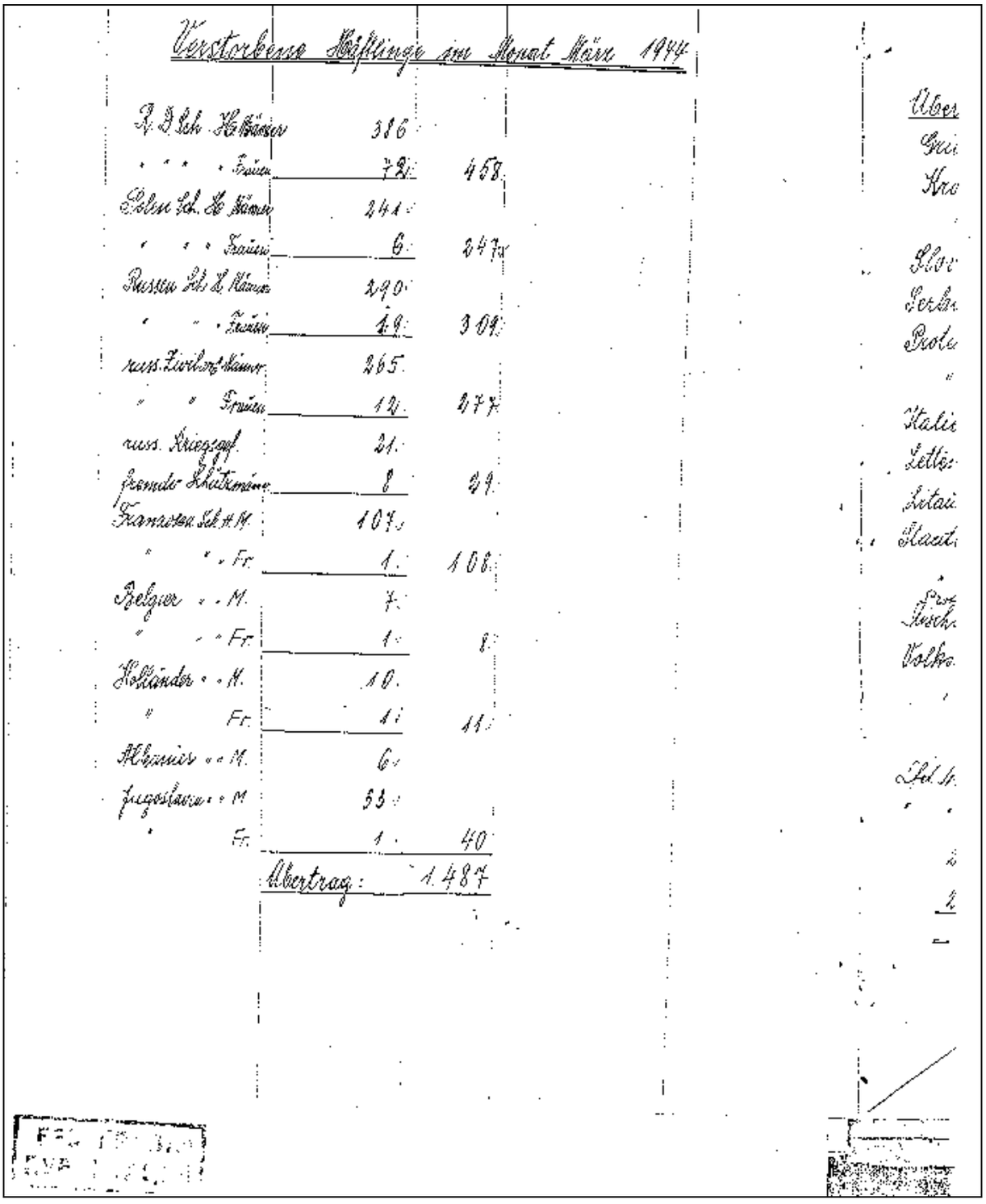
Document 14: *List of the Deceased for the Majdanek Camp,* Nov. 30, 1942. Source: Archive of the Glowna Komisja Bdania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, 626, z/OL 3, p. 52.



A	Milanowski	Franciszek	24.11.97	Zakrzew	poln. Geisel
5	Albinger	Josef	15.6.11	Chomenczyska	" "
6	Czerjakow	Pawel	1.7.02	Tarnowatka	" "
7	Durak	Stanislaw	21.3.23	Dombini	"
8	Widynski	Stanislaw	24.12.13	Wola-Niemiecka	"
9	Wróbel	Boleslaw	1.5.13	Dombie	"
3700	Patro	Adam	21.10.13	Ruzaniec	"
1	Skuplewski	Tadeusz	5.10.08	Lublin	Arbeitsscheuer
2	Krukowski	Tadeusz	8.11.23	Krasowka	poln. Geisel
	Zakreślono:				
	" Sas	Danylo	15.10.88	Lotow	poln. Geisel"
3	Sadowski	Zenon	2.2.22	Wysokie	"
4	Kornowicz	Josef	1896	Weglenka	"
5	Krajewski	Franciszek	10.10.11	Sklarnia	"
6	Czuba	Jan	10.10.84	Malochwej	"
7	Bua	Waclaw	20.9.19	Kondkownica	"
8	Bubrzawa	Wladyslaw	10.1.03	Jadowniki-Mokre	"
9	Gajko	Wladyslaw	[illegible]	Dorohucz	"
3710	Grzechnik	Michal	1905	Lypiny	"
1	Pupinski	Antoni	29.5.24	Tuczna	"
2	Sowa	Boleslaw	1924	Hoszcia	"
3	) Zajonc	Lukasz	10.8.9[illegible]	Bialka	"

Monat Dezember 1942		letzte Nummer Nov.1942	13235
Todesfälle von Juden im Kzl.Lublin	2505	" " Dez.1942	13713
diverse Schutzhäftlinge		Tote Sch.	478
/-Polen,Griechen,Civilrussen etc./	478		
insgesamt	2983	Tote im Dezember 1942	

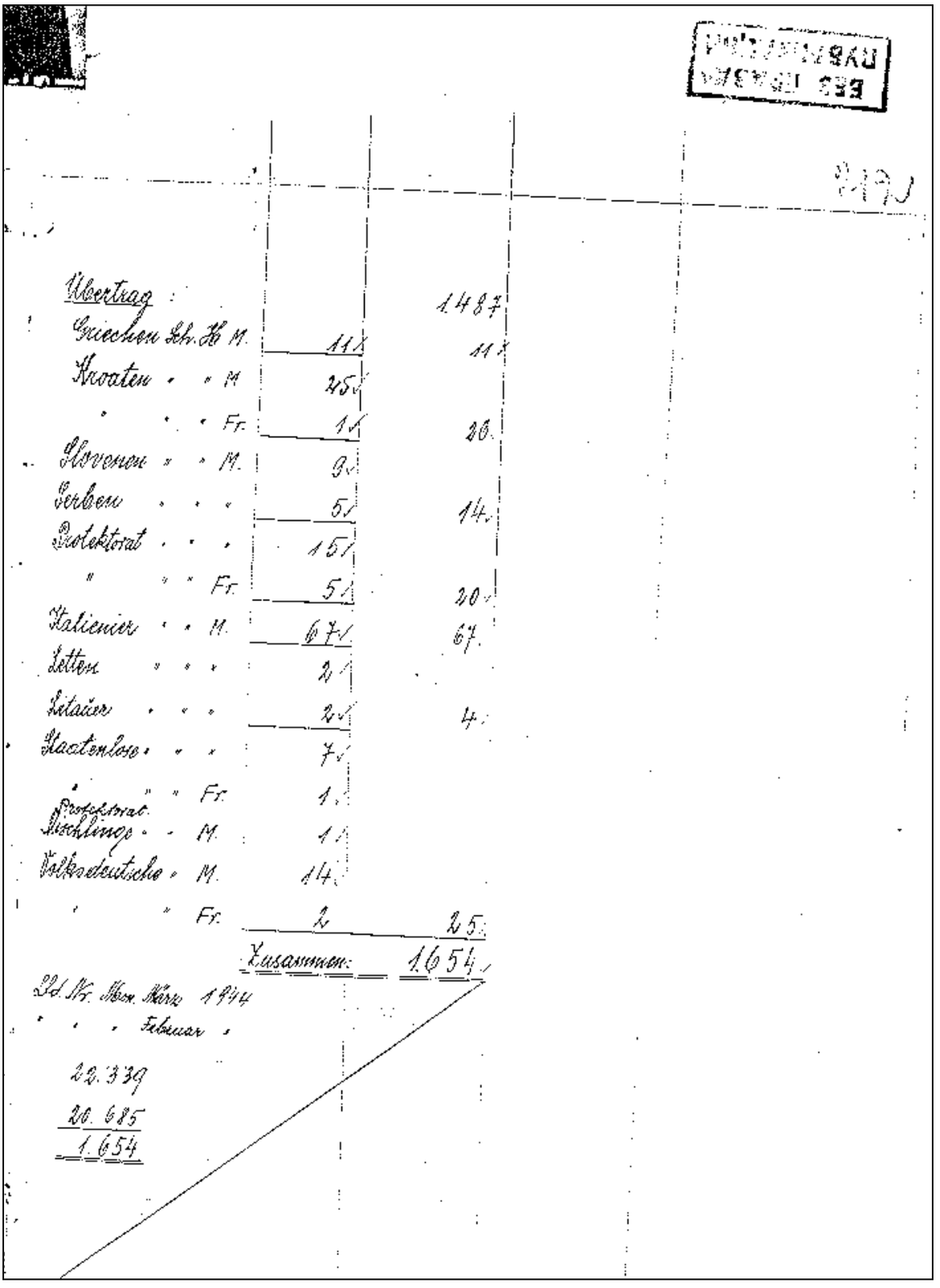
Document 15: Deaths in the Lublin concentration camp in December 1942. Source: as for Document 14, p. 59.



Verstorbene Häftlinge im Monat März 1944

P. d. Sch. H. Männer	316	
" " " Frauen	72	468
Polen Sch. H. Männer	241	
" " " Frauen	6	247
Russen Sch. H. Männer	290	
" " " Frauen	19	309
russ. Zivilarb. Männer	265	
" " Frauen	12	277
russ. Kriegsgef.	21	
fremde Häftlinge	8	29
Tschechen Sch. H. M.	107	
" " " Fr.	1	108
Belgier " " M.	7	
" " " Fr.	1	8
Holländer " " M.	10	
" Fr.	1	11
Albanier " " M.	6	
Jugoslawen " " M	33	
" Fr.	1	40
Übertrag:		1487

Document 16: Deaths in the Lublin concentration camp in March 1944. Source: GARF, 7021-107-9, pp. 211a-212.

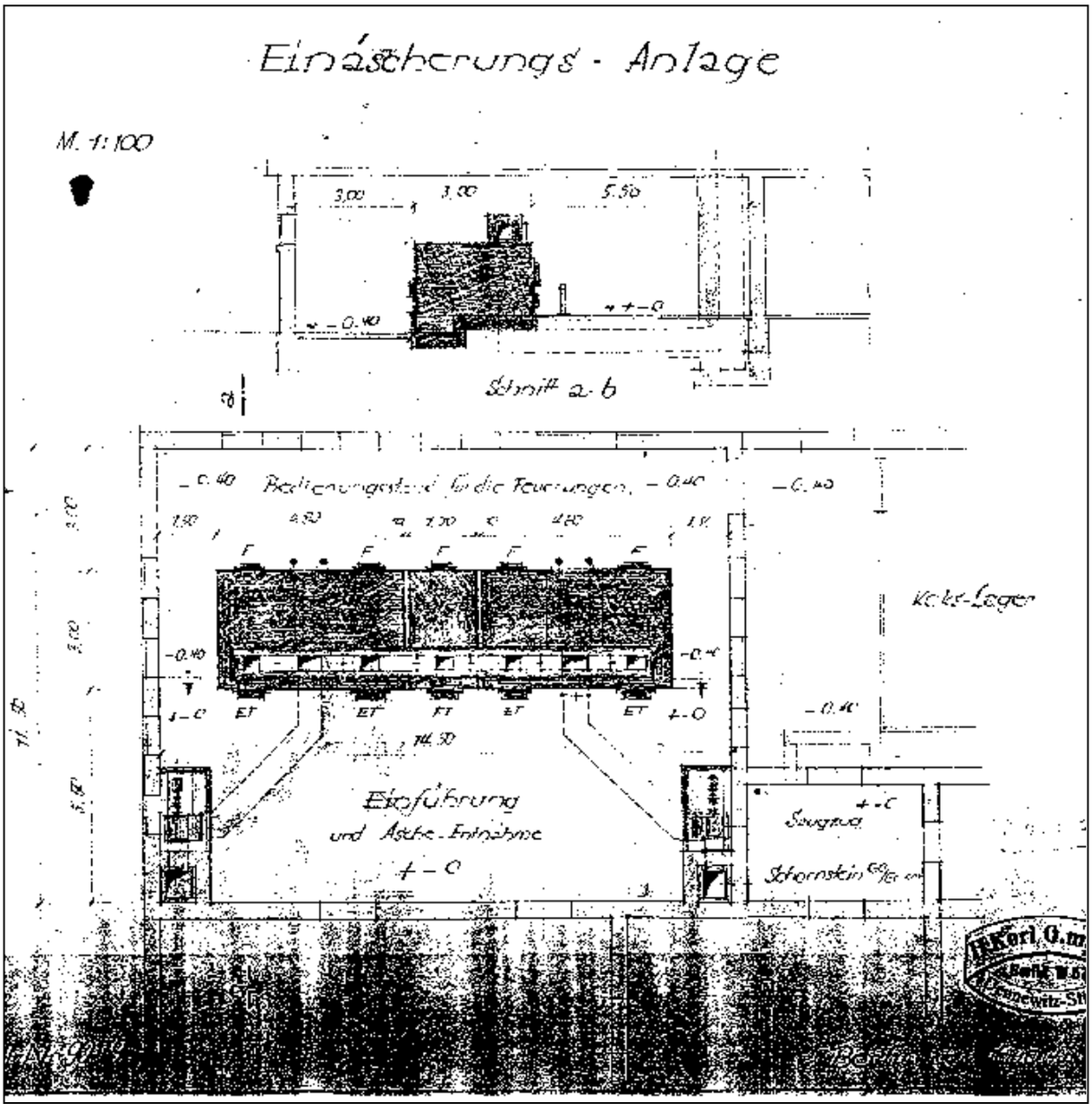


Übertrag:		1487
Griechen Lb. Kb. M.	11	11
Kroaten " " M.	25	
" " " Fr.	14	20.
Slovenen " " M.	3	
Serben " " "	5	14.
Protektorat " " "	15	
" " " " Fr.	5	20.
Italiener " " M.	67	67.
Letten " " "	2	
Litauer " " "	2	4.
Staatenlose " " "	7	
" " " " Fr.	1.	
Protektorat Böhmen " " M.	11	
Volksdeutsche " M.	14.	
" " Fr.	2	25.
	Zusammen:	1654

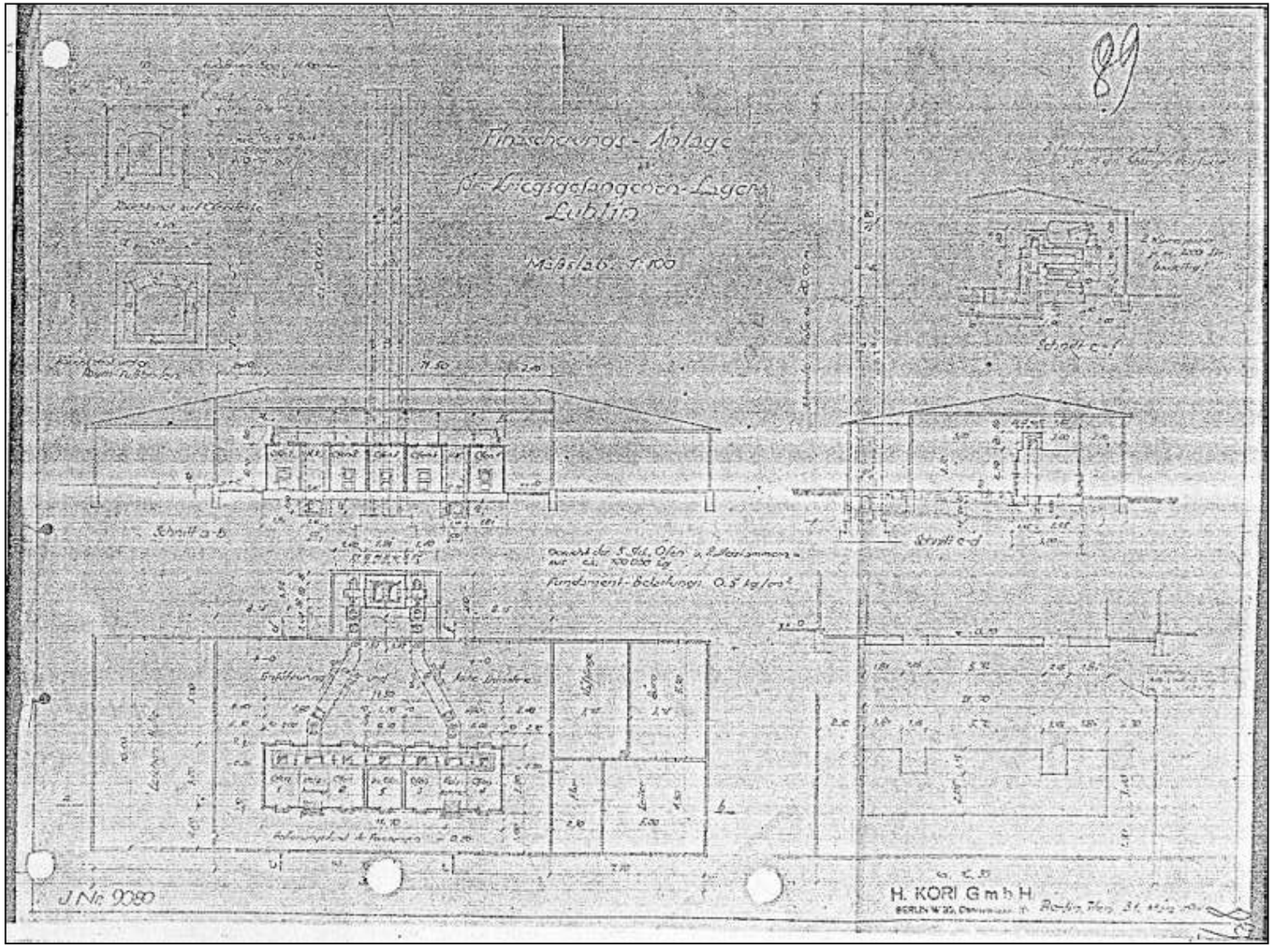
Bd. Nr. Men. März 1944
" " Februar "

22.339
20.685
1.654

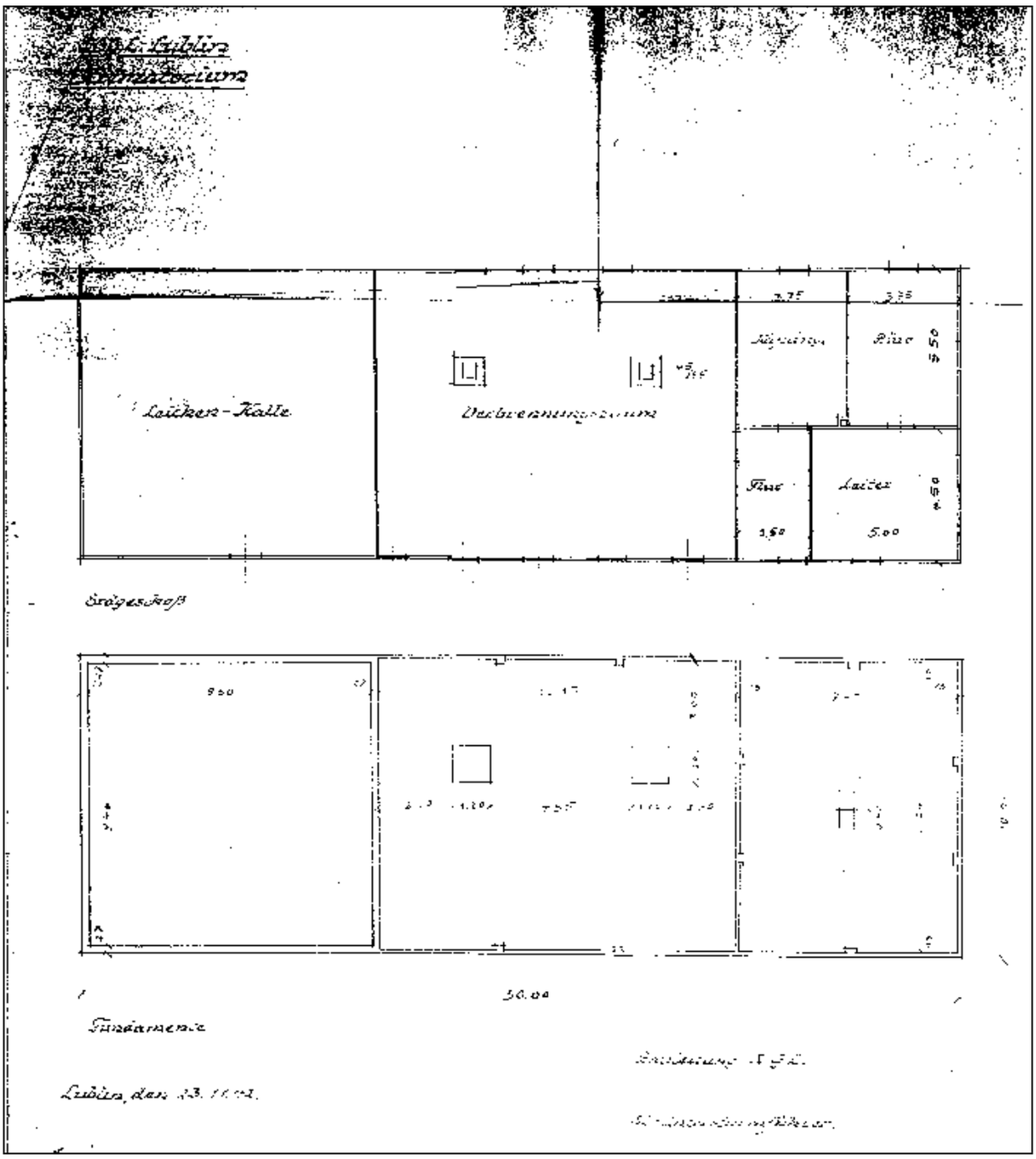
Document 16, cont'd.



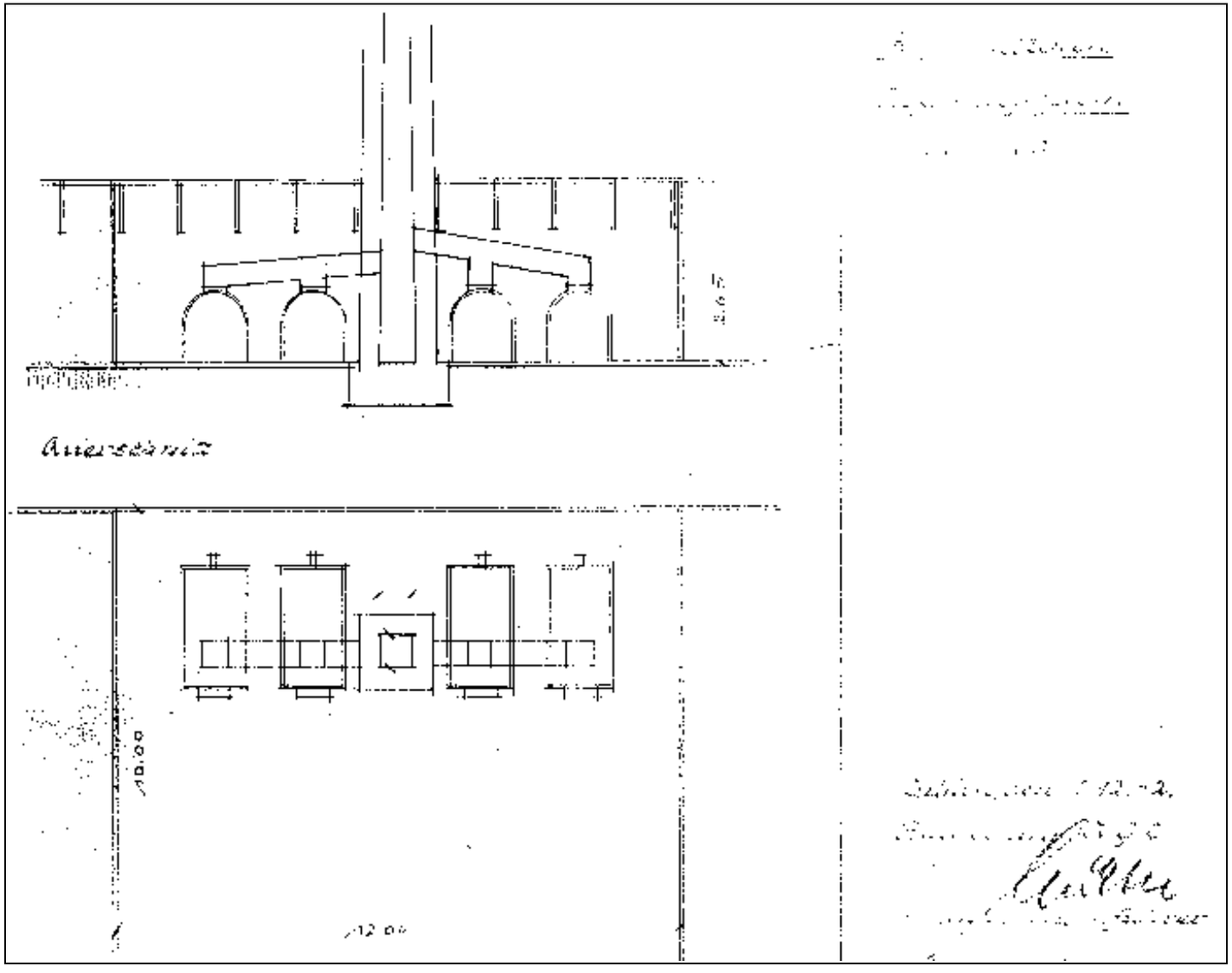
Document 17: Kori Diagram J.-No. 9079 from Oct. 16, 1941: *Cremation facility.* Source: APMM, sygn. VI-9a, v. 1, p. 11.



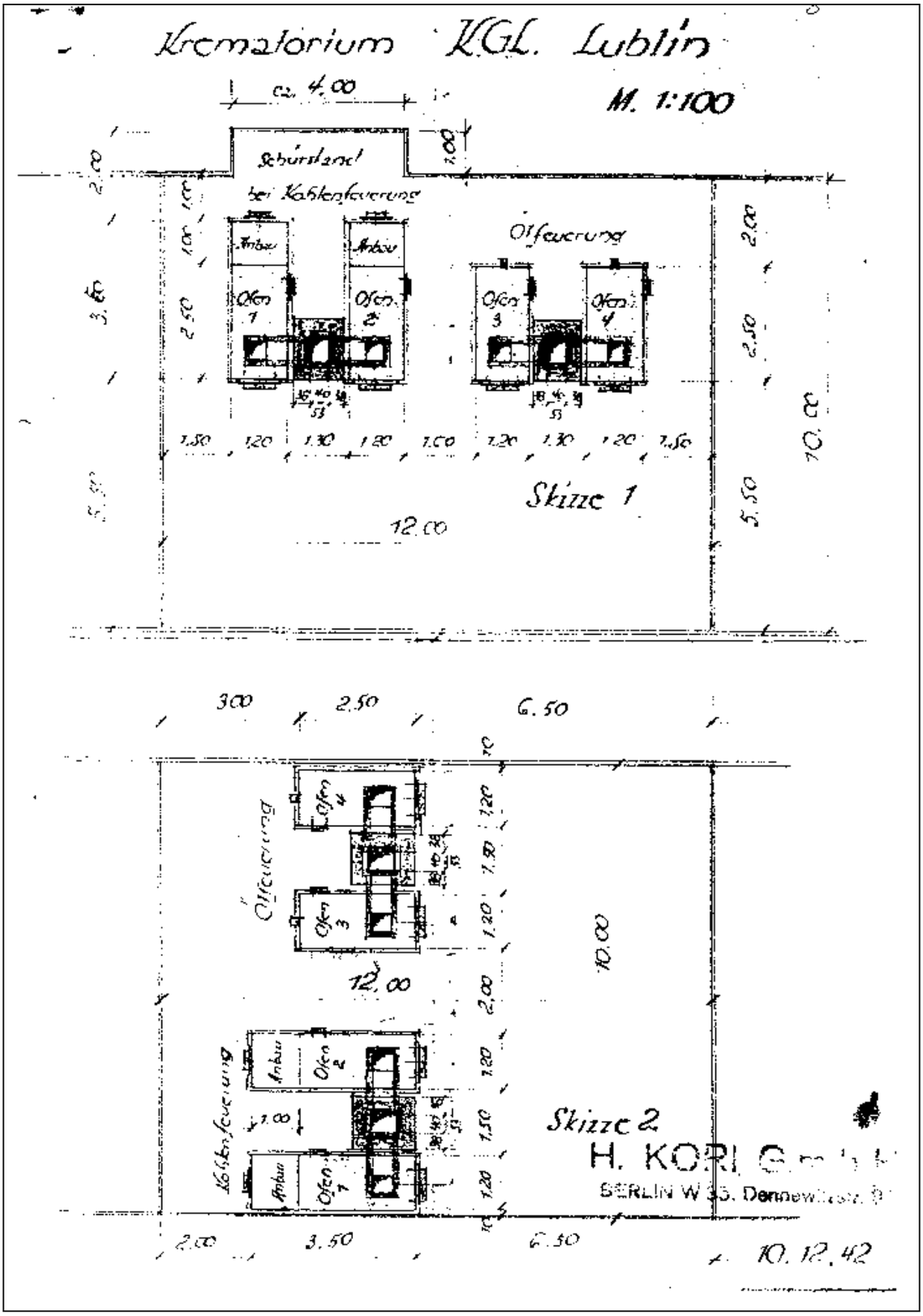
Document 18: Kori Diagram J.-No. 9080 from March 31, 1942: *Cremation facility for the POW Camp Lublin.* Source: GARF, 7445-2-125, p. 89a.



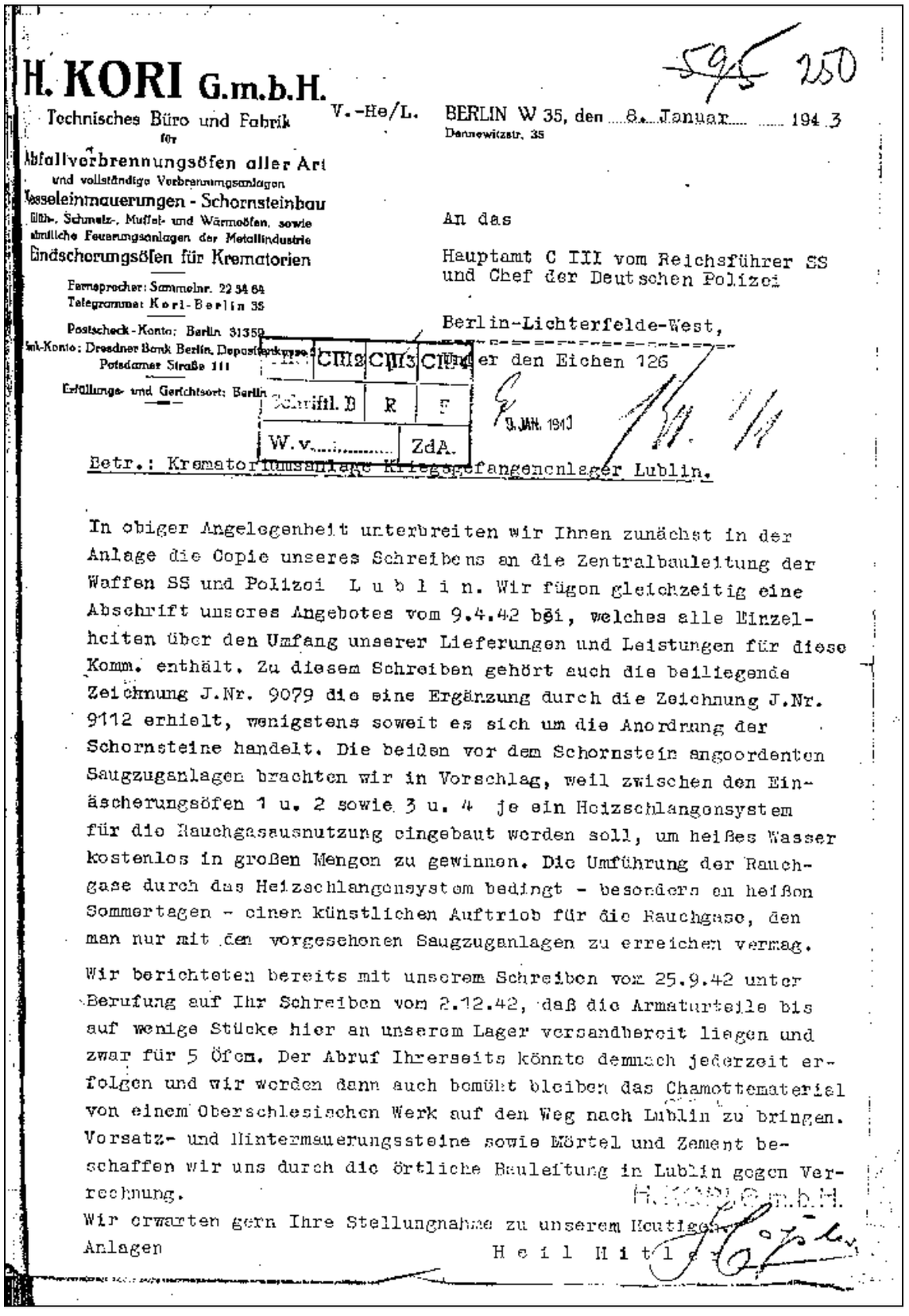
Document 19: Diagram by the Construction Office of the POW Camp Lublin, Nov. 23, 1942, *POW Camp Lublin Crematorium*. Source: APMM, sygn. VI-9a, v. 2.



Document 20: Diagram by the Central Building Office of the POW Camp Lublin, Dec. 1, 1942, *POW Camp Lublin Crematorium*. Source: APMM, sygn. VI-9a, v. 2.



Document 21: Kori Diagram from Dec. 10, 1942: *POW Camp Lublin Crematorium.* Source: APMM, sygn. VI-9a, v. 2, p. 8.



H. KORI G.m.b.H.

Technisches Büro und Fabrik
für
Abfallverbrennungsöfen aller Art
und vollständige Verbrennungsanlagen
Kesseleinmauerungen - Schornsteinbau
Glüh-, Schmelz-, Muffel- und Wärmeöfen, sowie
ähnliche Feuerungsanlagen der Metallindustrie
Einäscherungsöfen für Krematorien

Fernsprecher: Sammelnr. 22 34 64
Telegramme: Kori-Berlin SS
Postscheck-Konto: Berlin 31359
Bank-Konto: Dresdner Bank Berlin, Depositenkasse
Potsdamer Straße 111
Erfüllungs- und Gerichtsort: Berlin

V.-He/L.

BERLIN W 35, den 8. Januar 194 3
Dennewitzstr. 35

An das

Hauptamt C III vom Reichsführer SS
und Chef der Deutschen Polizei

Berlin-Lichterfelde-West,
Unter den Eichen 126

	CIII2	CIII3	CIII4
Schriftl. B	R	F	
W. v.		ZdA.	

9. JAN. 1943

Betr.: Krematoriumsanlage Kriegsgefangenenlager Lublin.

In obiger Angelegenheit unterbreiten wir Ihnen zunächst in der Anlage die Copie unseres Schreibens an die Zentralbauleitung der Waffen SS und Polizei L u b l i n. Wir fügen gleichzeitig eine Abschrift unseres Angebotes vom 9.4.42 bei, welches alle Einzelheiten über den Umfang unserer Lieferungen und Leistungen für diese Komm. enthält. Zu diesem Schreiben gehört auch die beiliegende Zeichnung J.Nr. 9079 die eine Ergänzung durch die Zeichnung J.Nr. 9112 erhielt, wenigstens soweit es sich um die Anordnung der Schornsteine handelt. Die beiden vor dem Schornstein angeordneten Saugzuganlagen brachten wir in Vorschlag, weil zwischen den Einäscherungsöfen 1 u. 2 sowie 3 u. 4 je ein Heizschlangensystem für die Rauchgasausnutzung eingebaut werden soll, um heißes Wasser kostenlos in großen Mengen zu gewinnen. Die Umführung der Rauchgase durch das Heizschlangensystem bedingt - besonders an heißen Sommertagen - einen künstlichen Auftrieb für die Rauchgase, den man nur mit den vorgesehenen Saugzuganlagen zu erreichen vermag.

Wir berichteten bereits mit unserem Schreiben vom 25.9.42 unter Berufung auf Ihr Schreiben vom 2.12.42, daß die Armaturteile bis auf wenige Stücke hier an unserem Lager versandbereit liegen und zwar für 5 Öfen. Der Abruf Ihrerseits könnte demnach jederzeit erfolgen und wir werden dann auch bemüht bleiben das Chamottematerial von einem Oberschlesischen Werk auf den Weg nach Lublin zu bringen. Vorsatz- und Hintermauerungssteine sowie Mörtel und Zement beschaffen wir uns durch die örtliche Bauleitung in Lublin gegen Verrechnung.

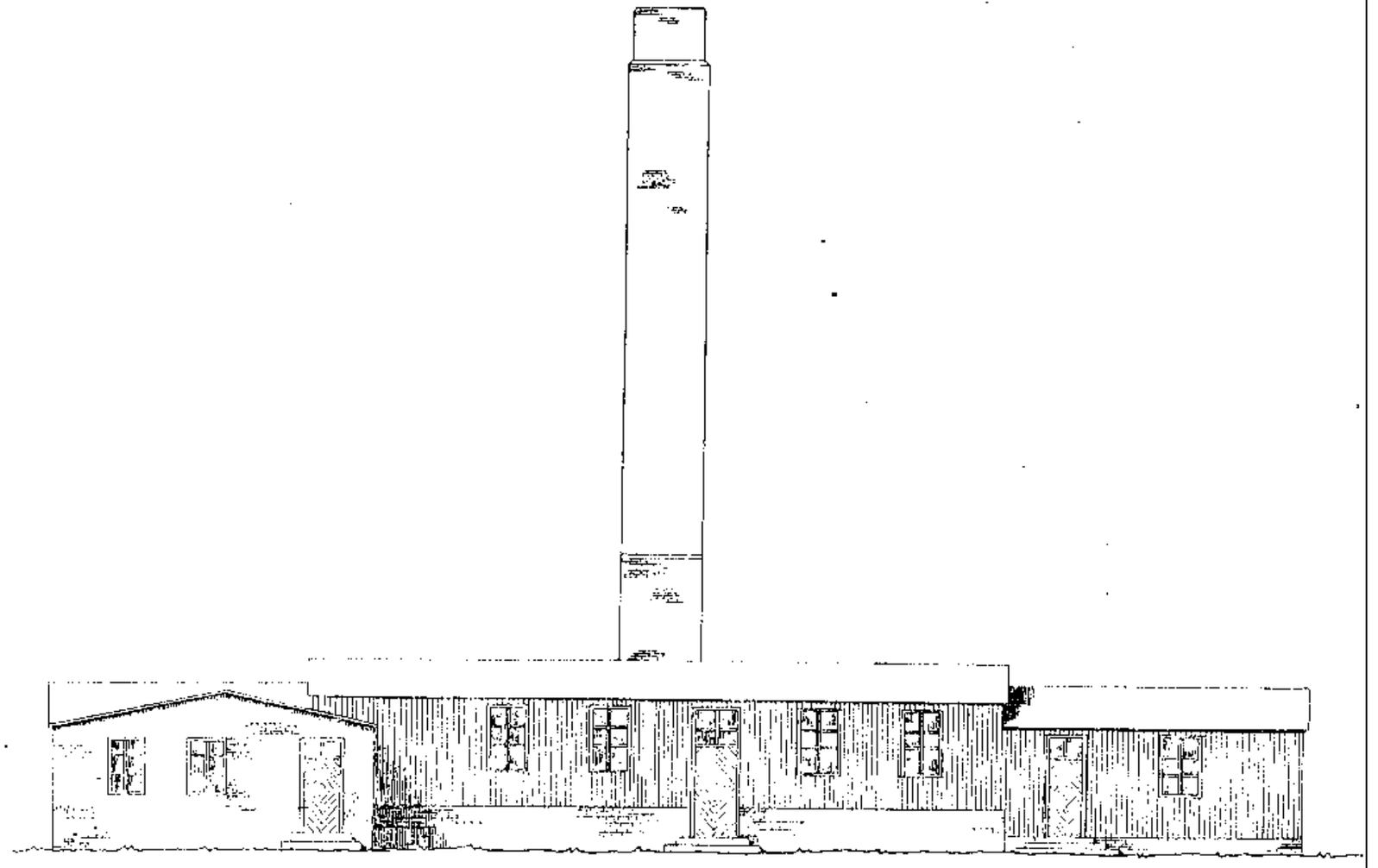
H. KORI G.m.b.H.

Wir erwarten gern Ihre Stellungnahme zu unserem Heutigen.

Anlagen

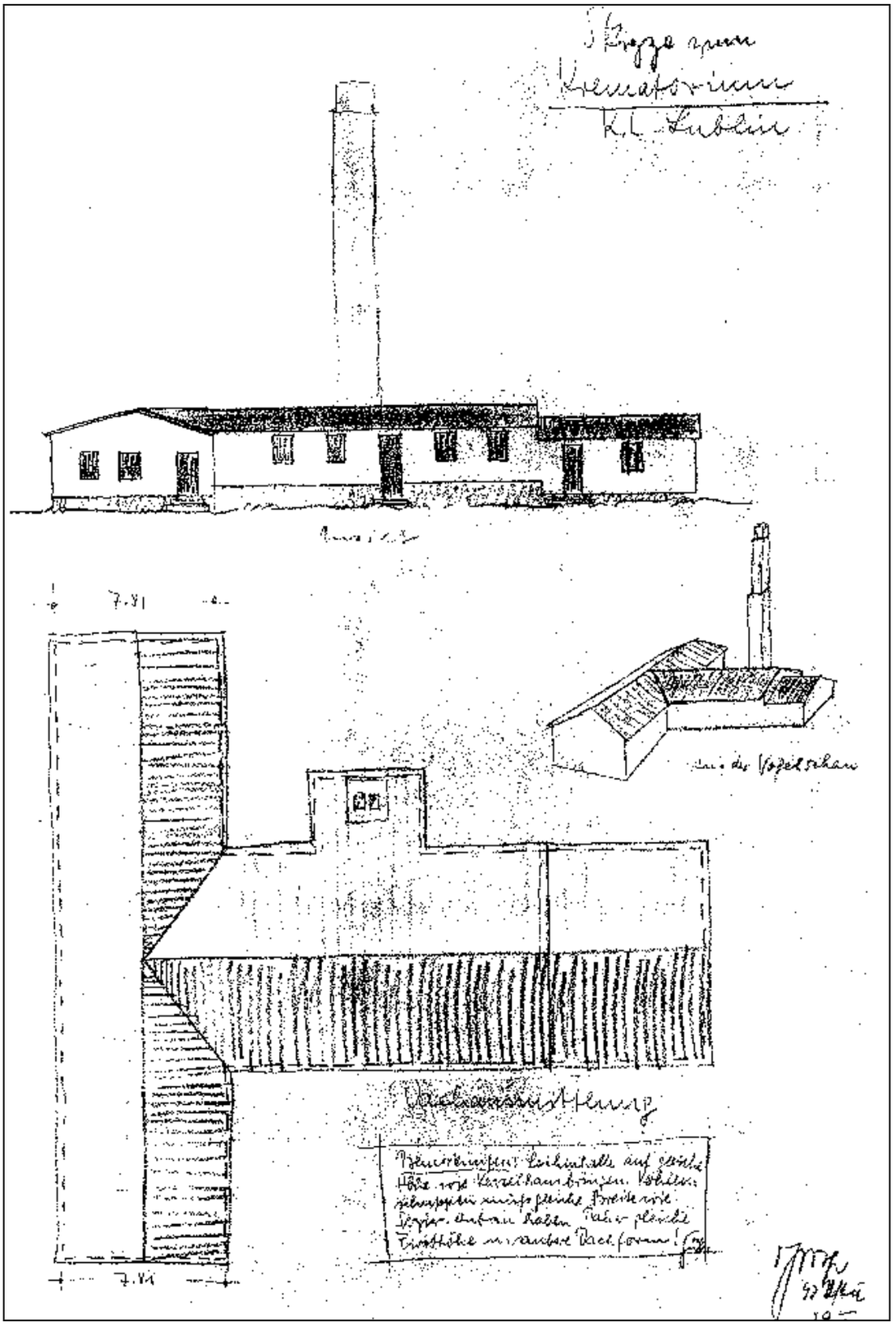
H e i l H i t l e r

Document 22: Letter from the Kori company to *Hauptamt CIII* of the Economic-Administrative Main Office, dated January 8, 1943. Source: GARF, 7021-107-9, p. 250.

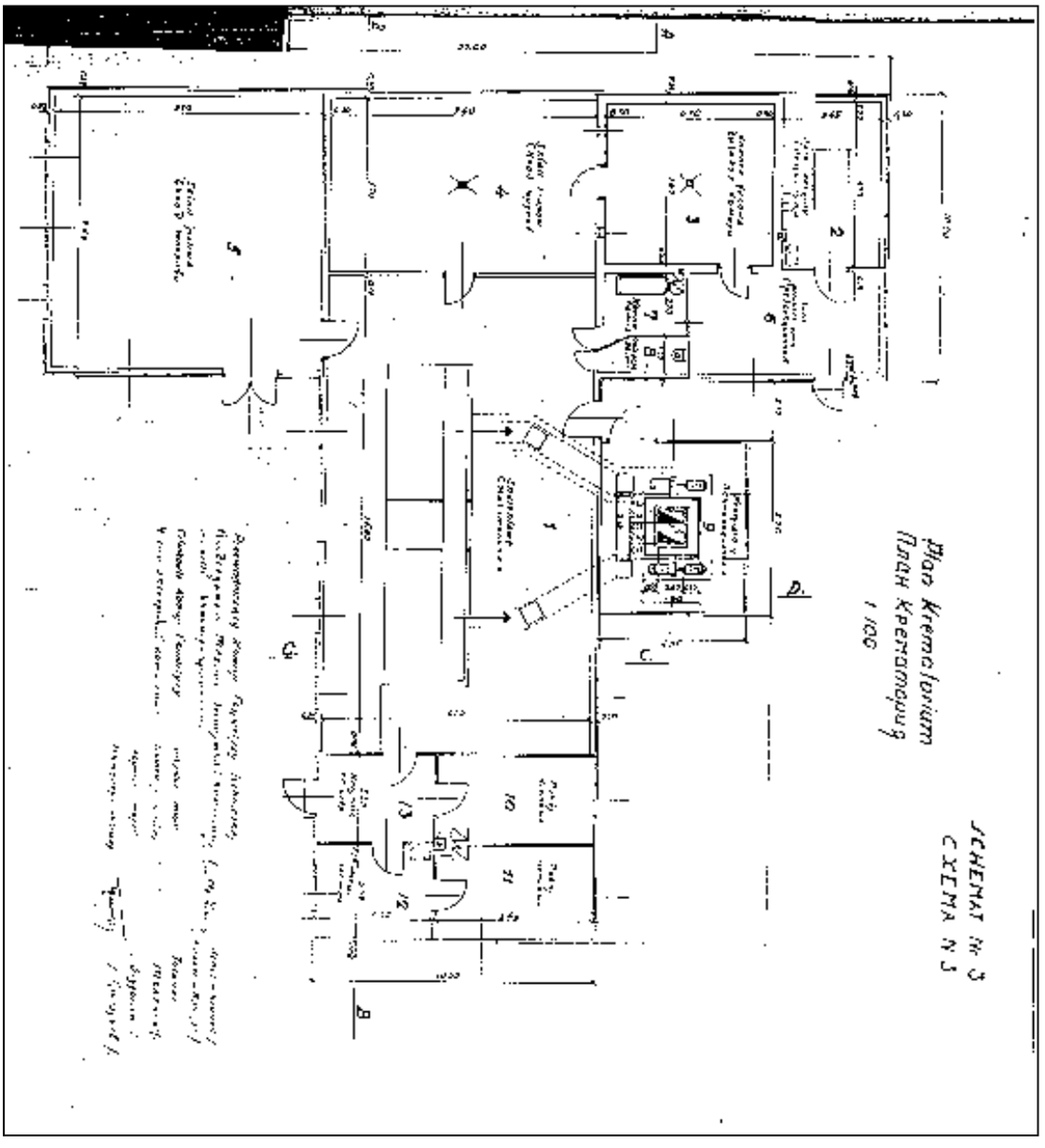


Widok ogólny krematorium (według planu niemieckiego sporządzonego przez Bauleitung K. L. Lublin i zatwierdzonego 24. VI. 1943)

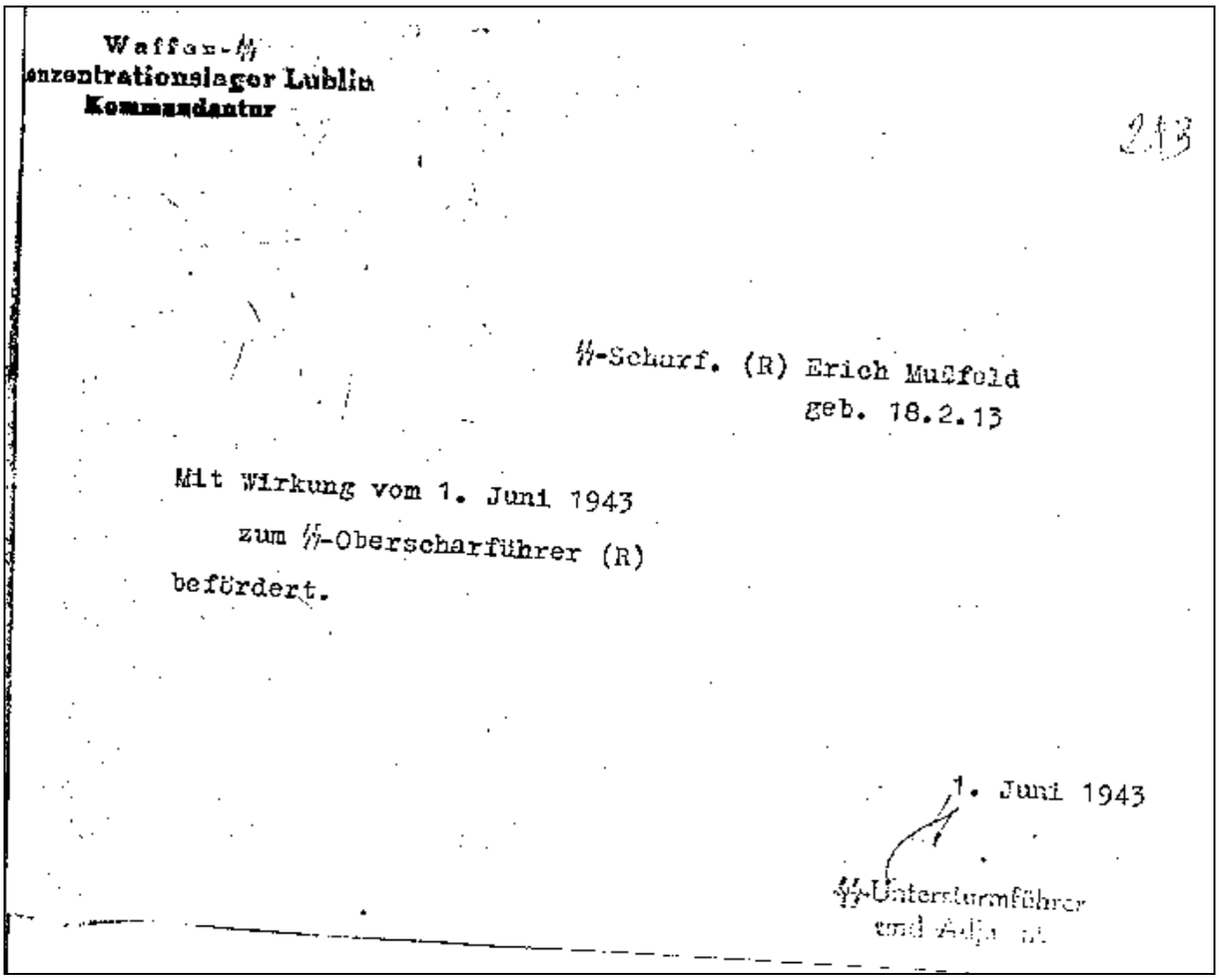
Document 23: Diagram of the new crematorium, by the Construction Office of the Lublin concentration camp, dated June 24, 1943. Source: Z. Łukaszkiewicz, *"Obóz koncentracyjni i zagłady Majdanek"* (see Document 6), unnumbered page.



Document 24: Diagram of the new Crematorium, by the Central Building Office of the Lublin concentration camp, dated June 29, 1943. Source: WAPL, sygn. Central Construction Office, 70, p. 1.



Document 25: Plan of the new Crematorium, drawn by the Polish-Soviet Investigative Commission. GARF, 7021-107-9, p. 115.



Waffen-SS
Konzentrationslager Lublin
Kommandantur

283

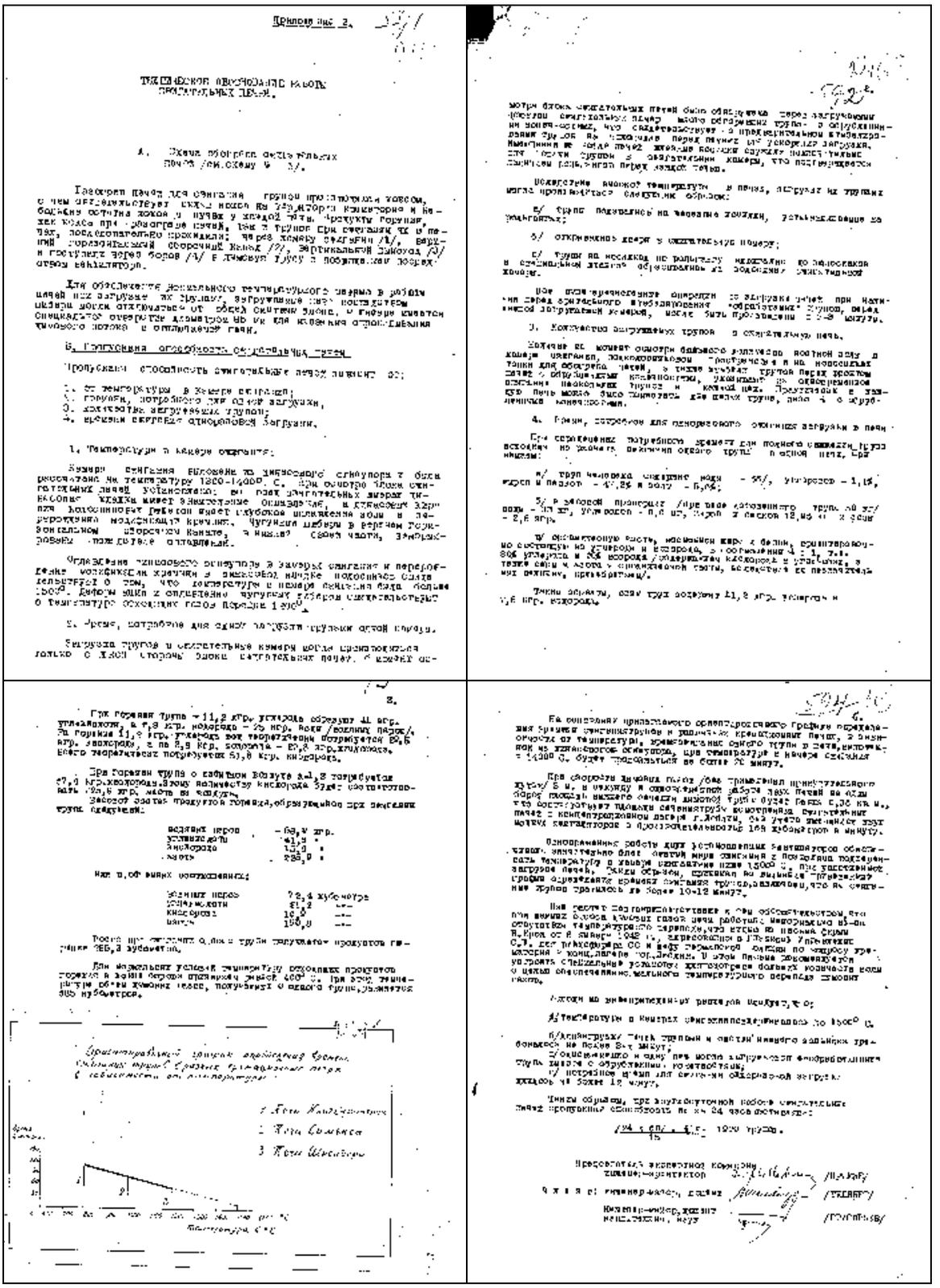
SS-Scharf. (R) Erich Mußfeld
geb. 18.2.13

Mit Wirkung vom 1. Juni 1943
zum SS-Oberscharführer (R)
befördert.

1. Juni 1943

SS-Untersturmführer
und Adj.

Document 26: Erich Mußfeldt's promotion from SS-*Scharführer* to SS-*Oberscharführer*, June 1, 1943. Source: GARF, 7021-107-5, p. 283.



Приложение 3.

ТЕХНИЧЕСКОЕ ОПИСАНИЕ РАБОТЫ КРЕМАЦИОННЫХ ПЕЧЕЙ.

А. Схема обогрева крематорных печей /см.схему № 1/.

Газогенер печей для сжигания трупов представляет собой, как это видно из чертежей, стальной цилиндр с коническим дном. Внутренняя часть газогенер печей, так и трупов при сжигании их имеет, последовательно проходит: через колосниковую решетку /1/, внутренний горизонтальный сборочный канал /2/, вертикальный дымоход /3/ и поступает через боров /4/ в дымовую трубу с помощью дымососа вентилятора.

Для обеспечения нормального температурного режима в рабочих печей при загрузке их трупами, загружаемые через люки-загрузчики, должны отключаться от общей системы дымо, и вместо клапанов специальное отверстие дымовой шибер или клапан отключения дымового потока в атмосферный газ.

Б. Загружение способность крематорных печей.

Производительность крематорных печей зависит от:

1. от температуры в камере сжигания;
2. горючих, потребного для одной загрузки,
3. количества загружаемых трупов;
4. времени перерыва между загрузки.

1. Температура в камере сжигания:

Камеры сжигания выложены из динасового кирпича и были рассчитаны на температуру 1800-1400° С. При осмотре были обнаружены трещины, установлено, что ряд отдельных кирпичей в основном кладки имеет значительное оплавление, а отдельные кирпичи имеют глубокое оплавление зоны и деформацию подсводящих кирпичей. Чугунная шибер в верхнем горизонтальном сборочном канале, а также сама часть, вмурованная в кладку печей оплавлены.

Отделение топливного огнеупора в замерах сжигание и переделение металлических крючков в смежной камере показывает достаточно о том, что температура в камере сжигания была больше 1500°. Данные опыт с отделением чугунных дверок свидетельствует о температуре отходящих газов порядка 1 тыс°.

2. Время, потребное для одной загрузки трупами одной печи.

Загрузка трупов в отдельные камеры могла производиться только с одной стороны люки загрузочных печей. В каждой камере печей было загружено 3 трупа. Загрузка производилась последовательно, сначала в первую камеру, затем во вторую и в третью. Загрузка трупов производилась при открытых дверях в смежную камеру.

Для ускорения загрузки трупов в камеры печей, загружаемых трупами, должны быть:

а/ трупы подготовлены на носилках, удобных для переноски;

б/ открыты двери в смежную камеру;

в/ трупы на носилках по рельсовому направлению до загрузочных люков.

При вышеуказанных операциях по загрузке печей при наличии перед крематорного отделения "обработанных" трупов, смежной загруженной камеры, могло быть произведено 2-3-4 загрузки.

3. Количество загружаемых трупов в отдельную печь.

Осмотр из камеры сжигания показал, что в каждую камеру помещается, одновременно трупов, общая тяга для сжигания печей, а также загрузка трупов через люки в обе смежные камеры, указывает на одновременное загружение нескольких трупов в каждой печи. Практически в указанных камерах могло быть помещено для одной трупа, либо 4 - 5 обугленных конечностей.

4. Время, потребное для одновременной загрузки в печь.

При нормальных потребностях времени для полного сжигания трупа исходили из расчета загрузки одного трупа в одной печи, при весе:

а/ труп человека среднего веса - 55% угорьков - 1,1%, жиров и пазов - 47,2% и золы - 6,6%;

б/ в живой организме /при том же соотношении/ труп 50 кг, воды - 30 кг, углерода - 8,8 кг, жиров и смесей 12,65 кг и золы - 2,6 кг.

в/ органическую часть, насыщенн кар. с белк, приблизительно состоящую из углерода и кислорода, с соотношением 4 : 1, т.е. 80% углерода и 20% кислорода /содержащего кислорода в углеводах, а также серы и азота/ с одинаковой массы, составляет 45 первоначальных веществ, превратимых.

Таким образом, один труп содержит 11,2 кгр. углерода и 2,8 кгр. кислорода.

Для горения трупа = 11,2 кгр. углерода обязуют 31 кгр. углекислоты, а 2,8 кгр. кислорода - 5,6 кгр. воды /водяных паров/. Из горения 11,2 кгр. углерода вом теоретически потребуется 80,6 кгр. кислорода, а на 2,8 кгр. водорода - 20,8 кгр./кислорода. Всего теоретически потребуется 51,8 кгр. кислорода.

При горении трупа с избытком воздуха 2,1,2 потребуется 87,0 кгр.кислорода.Этому количеству кислорода будет соответствовать 422,6 кгр. масса во воздуха. Газовой состав продуктов горения,образующихся при сжигании трупа следующий:

водяных паров	- 68,4 кгр.
углекислоты	- 41,8 "
кислорода	- 14,0 "
азота	- 298,0 "

или в объемных соотношениях:

водяных паров	12,4 кубометра
углекислоты	21,2 "
кислорода	10,5 "
азота	150,0 "

Всего при сжигании одного трупа получается продуктов горения 285,3 кубометра.

Для нормальных условий температуру отходящих продуктов горения в зоне сжигания принимаем равной 600° С. При этом температуре объем дымовых газов, получаемых с одного трупа, составляет 895 кубометров.

Мотор блока смежных печей было обнаружено через загрузочные люки смежных камер около вертикальных трупов. В обследованном из печей-близнецов, что свидетельствует о предварительном штабелировании трупов на носилках перед печами до момента загрузки. Наблюдения не всегда почей жировые корочки сгоревшие. Эти остатки трупов в загрузочных камерах, что подтверждается снимками сделанными перед каждой печью.

Искусственно высокой температуры в печах, загружая их трупами могла производиться следующим образом:

а/ трупы подготовлены на носилках, удобных для переноски;

б/ открыты двери в смежную камеру;

в/ трупы на носилках по рельсовому направлению до загрузочных люков.

При вышеуказанных операциях по загрузке печей при наличии перед крематорного отделения "обработанных" трупов, смежной загруженной камеры, могло быть произведено 2-3-4 загрузки.

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При ограниченных потребностях времени для полного сжигания трупа исходили из расчета загрузки одного трупа в одной печи, при весе:

а/ труп человека среднего веса - 55% угорьков - 1,1%, жиров и пазов - 47,2% и золы - 6,6%;

б/ в живой организме /при том же соотношении/ труп 50 кг, воды - 30 кг, углерода - 8,8 кг, жиров и смесей 12,65 кг и золы - 2,6 кгр.

в/ органическую часть, насыщенн кар. с белк, приблизительно состоящую из углерода и кислорода, с соотношением 4 : 1, т.е. 80% углерода и 20% кислорода /содержащего кислорода в углеводах, а также серы и азота/ с одинаковой массы, составляет 45 первоначальных веществ, превратимых.

Таким образом, один труп содержит 11,2 кгр. углерода и 2,8 кгр. кислорода.

На основании приведенного ориентировочного графика перегревания зависимости температуры и различное количество печей, в зависимости от температуры, времени(нас одного трупа в печи,количество из кислородов остающихся, при температуре в начале сжигания = 1400° С, будет продолжаться не более 20 минут.

При скорости движения газов /обе применили принудительную тягу/ 8 м, в секунду и одновременной работе всех печей на один сборг площадь высшего сечения дымовой трубы будет равна 0,36 кв.м., что соответствует площади сегментарную конструкцию дымовой печей с концентрированной тяги г.Майдан, без учета имеющихся здесь котельных с производительностью 168 кубометров в минуту.

Одновременная работа двух необходимых санитарных объектов: единственно близ печей мира сжигания с поддержан постоянной температурой в камере сжигания печи 1500 С, при условиях загрузки печей. Эжекц обратны, сделали на выдвиже "Прометей" трубы определяется временем сжигания трупов,составляющ,что на сжигание трупов требовалось не более 10-12 минут.

На основе экспериментальных и чем обеспечивается, что при выше данных газов цены работы, непрерывно возможно отсутствие температурного перепада, что весьма важно для печных стен Н.Ерок от 8 января 1942 г., переоборудован в Треблинский Управление С.Т. дал предварительно СС и фирм промышленной фирмы по вопросу уничтожения с концентрационных сооружениях. В этом письме рекомендуется устроить специальные установки для уничтожения больших количеств мяса с целью обеспечения максимального температурного перепада должно быть.

Исходя из вышеприведенных расчетов можно сделать, что:

а/ температура в камерах сжигания должна не ниже 1400° С;

б/ конструкция печей трупами и систем нижнего давления должна не менее 8-ми минут;

в/ отношение одного к одну печь могло загружаться конструкцию печей с обеспечением нормального;

г/ потребное время для окончания обеспеченной загрузки составляет не более 15 минут.

Таким образом, при вышеуказанном работе крематорных печей пропускная способность их за 24 часов составляет:

$$\frac{24 \times 60}{15} \times 3 = 1920 \text{ трупов.}$$

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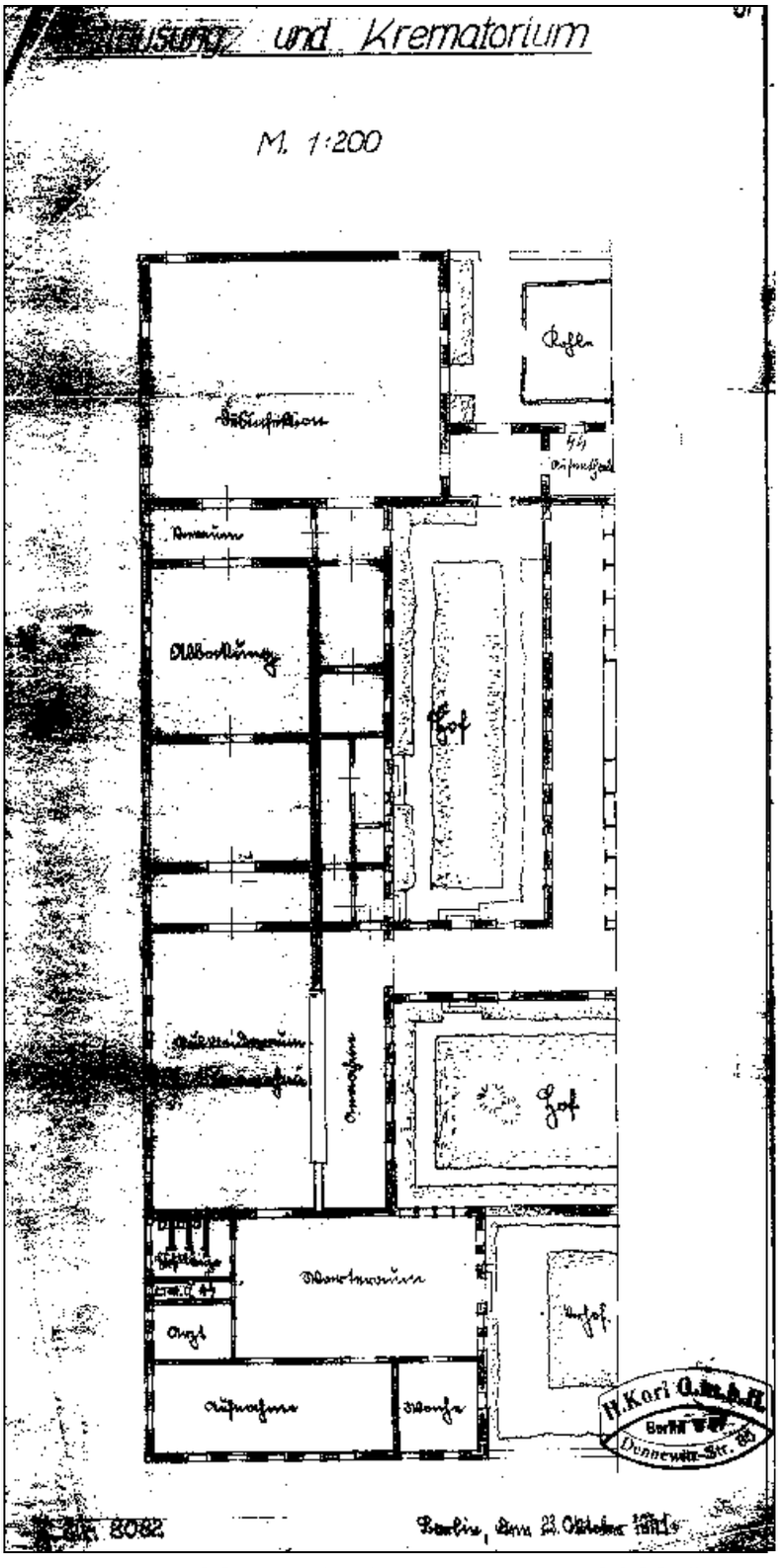
главный инженер-технолог /ШАЛЬКЕР/

Члены: инженер-капитан /ГЕЛЬБЕР/

Инженер-инженер /ГОЛОВНЯ/

Document 27: Technical expert report about the function of the Lublin concentration camp's cremation furnaces, drawn up by a subcommittee of the Polish-Soviet Investigative Commission. Source: GARF, 7021-107-9, pp. 245-249.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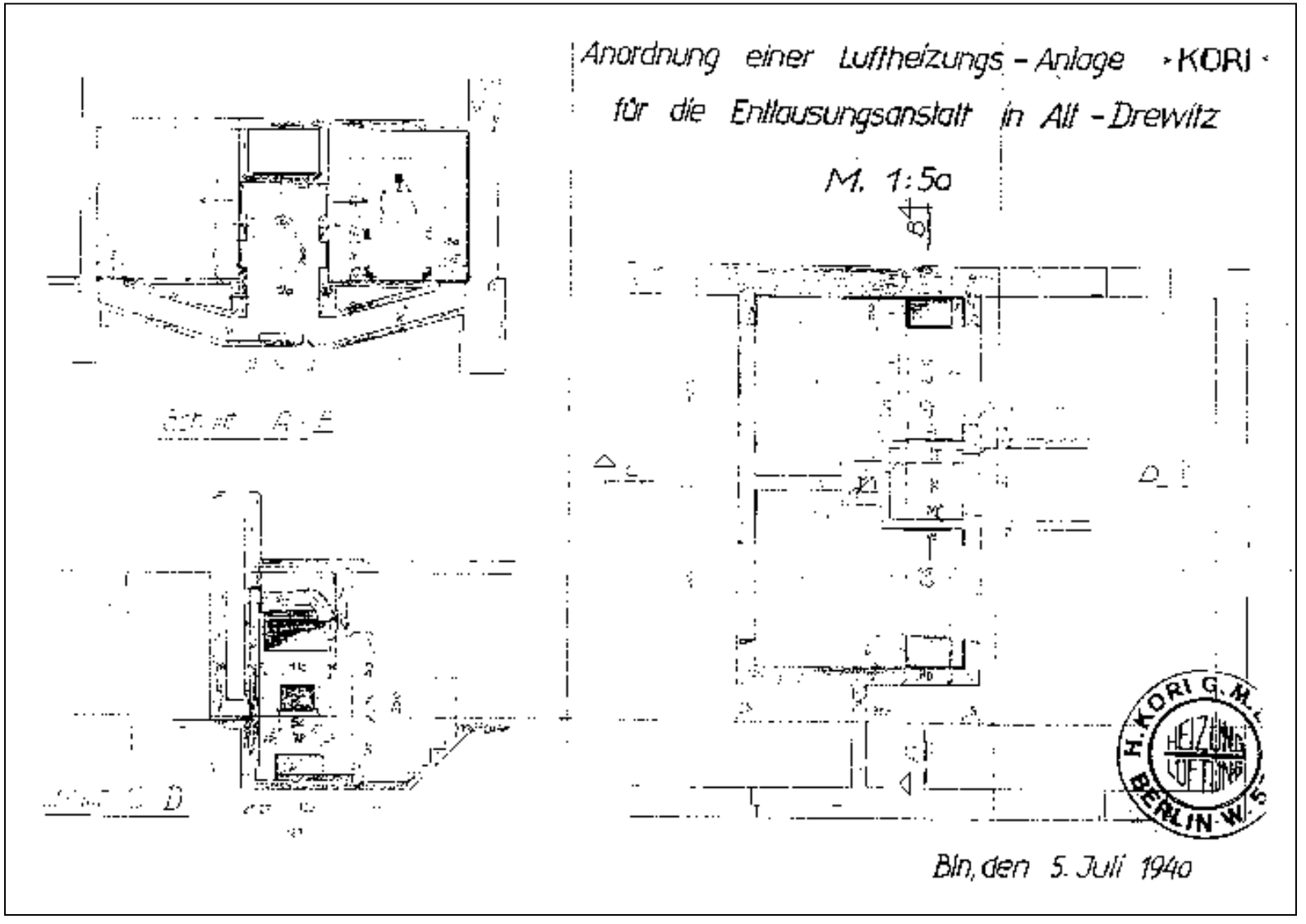
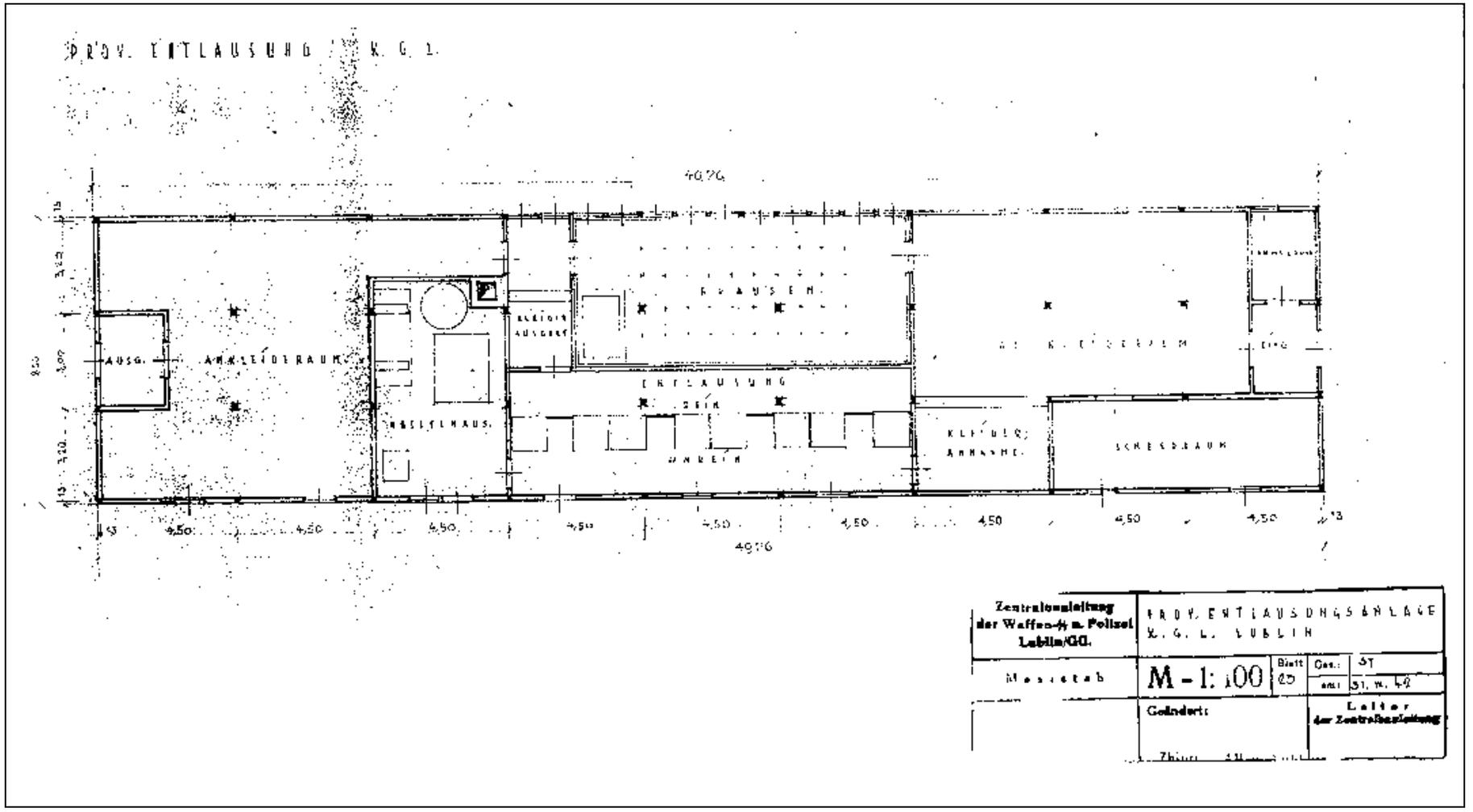
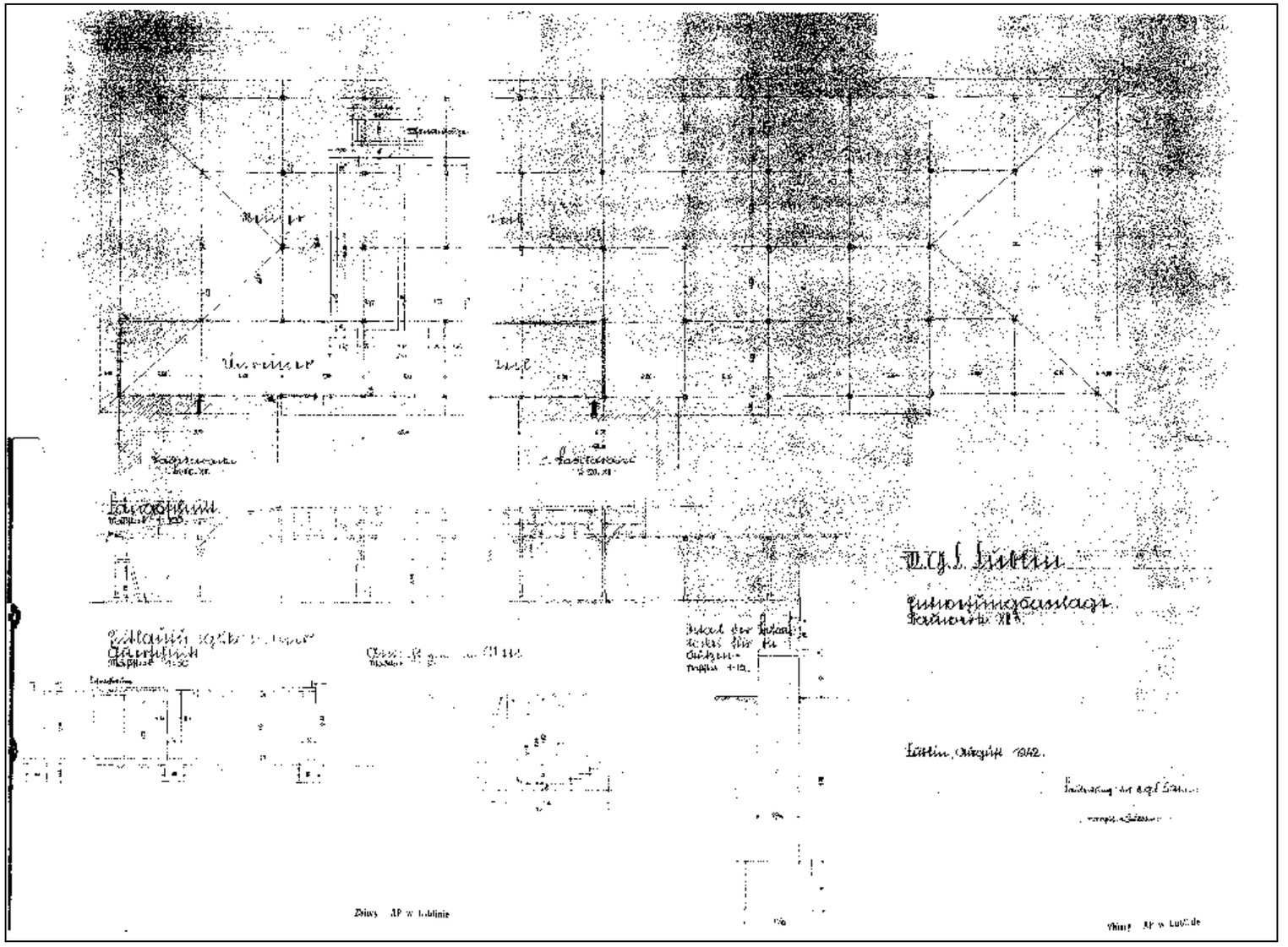


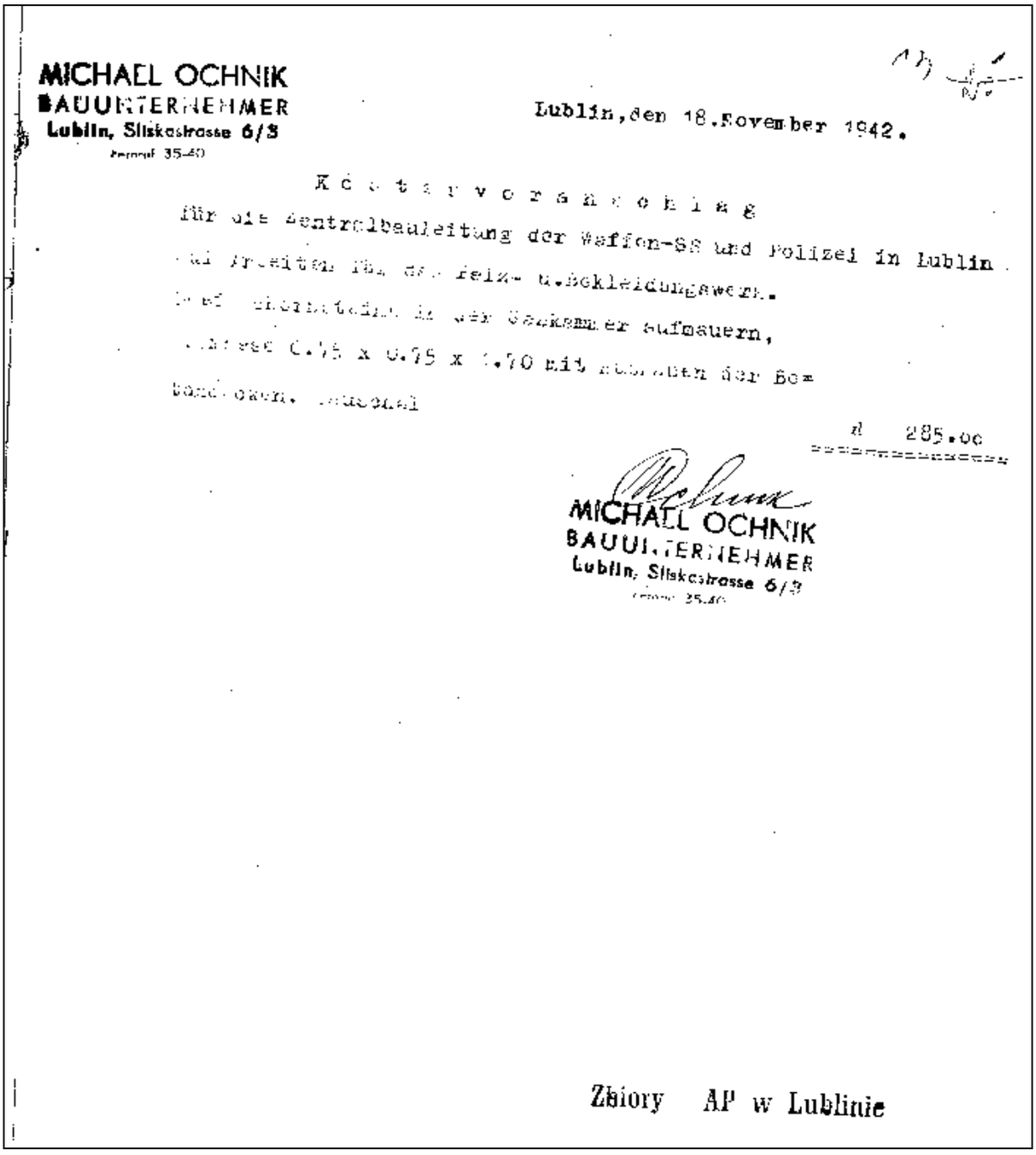
Document 29: Kori Diagram J.-No. 9081 from June 5, 1940: *Layout of a 'Kori' Air-Heating Facility for the Delousing Facility in Alt-Drewitz.* Source: APMM, sygn. VI-9a, v. 1.



Document 30: Diagram by the POW Camp Lublin's Central Construction Office, March 31, 1942, *Temp. Delousing POW Camp.* Source: WAPL, sygn. Central Construction Office, 41, p. 5.



Document 31: Diagram of the POW Camp Lublin, drawn by the Central Building Office in August 1942, *POW Camp Lublin. Disinfestation Facility. Building XII*^{A}. Source: WAPL, sygn. Central Construction Office, 41, p. 4.



MICHAEL OCHNIK
BAUUNTERNEHMER
Lublin, Sliskastrasse 6/3
Fernruf 35-40

Lublin, den 18. November 1942.

K o s t e n v o r a n s c h l a g

für die Zentralbauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei in Lublin

[illegible] Arbeiten [illegible] Heiz- u. Sekleidungswerk.

[illegible] Maurerarbeiten [illegible] der Gaskammer aufmauern,

[illegible] Masse 0.75 x 0.75 x 1.70 mit [illegible] aus Ba=

[illegible] steinen. [illegible]

zł 285.oo

MICHAEL OCHNIK
BAUUNTERNEHMER
Lublin, Sliskastrasse 6/3
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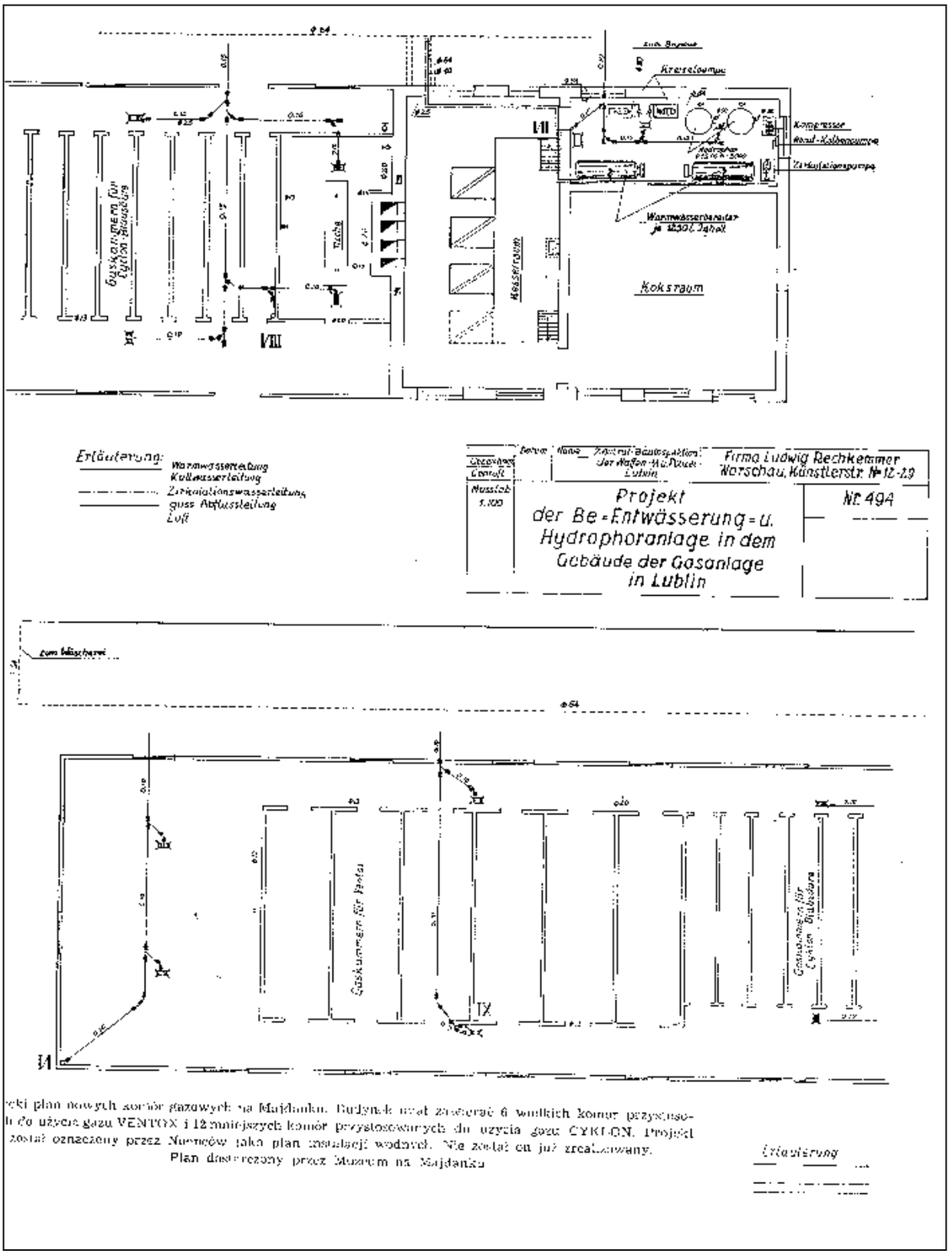
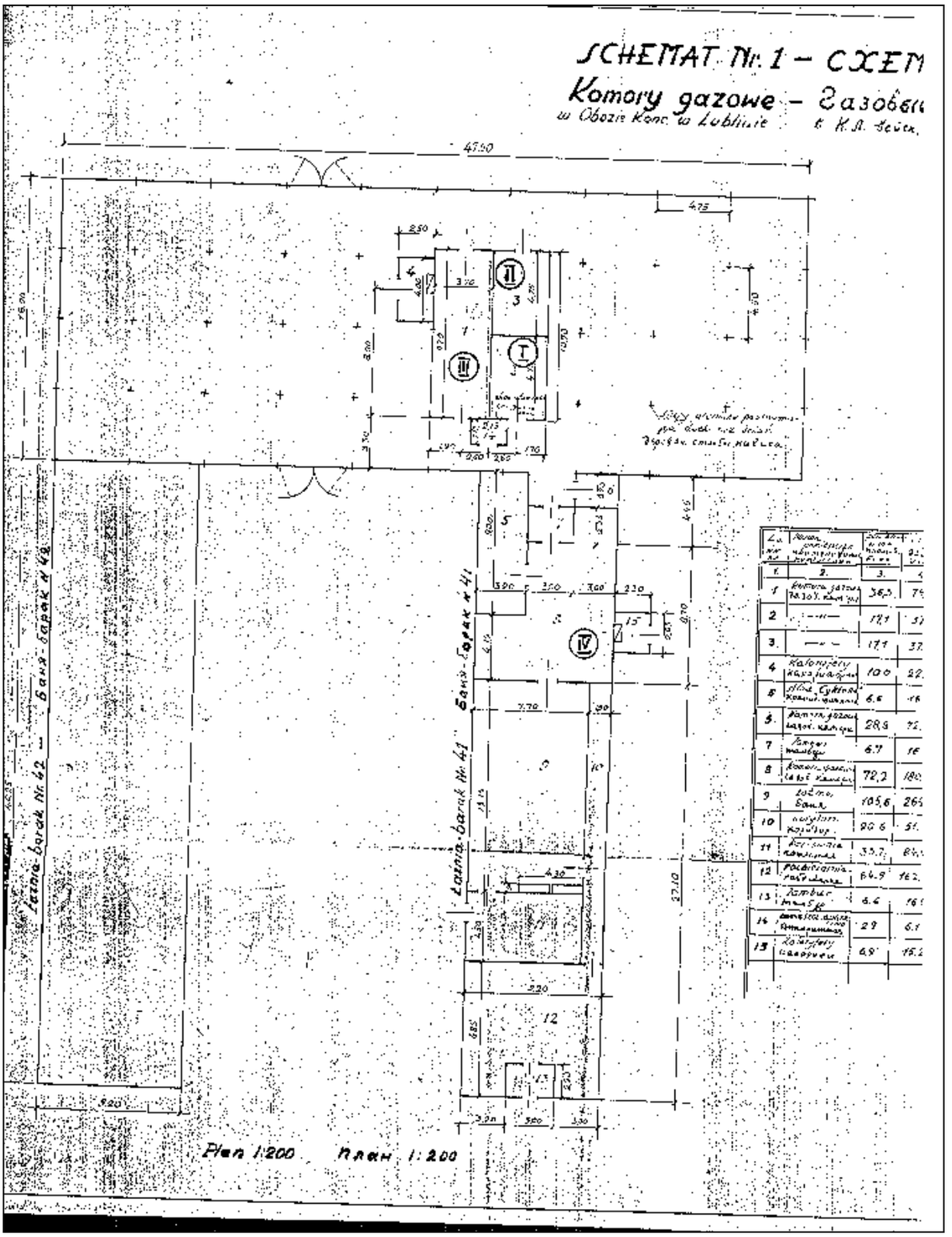
Zbiory AP w Lublinie

Document 32: Cost estimate from the Ochnik company , Nov. 18, 1942. Source: WAPL, sygn. Central Construction Office, 145, p. 13.

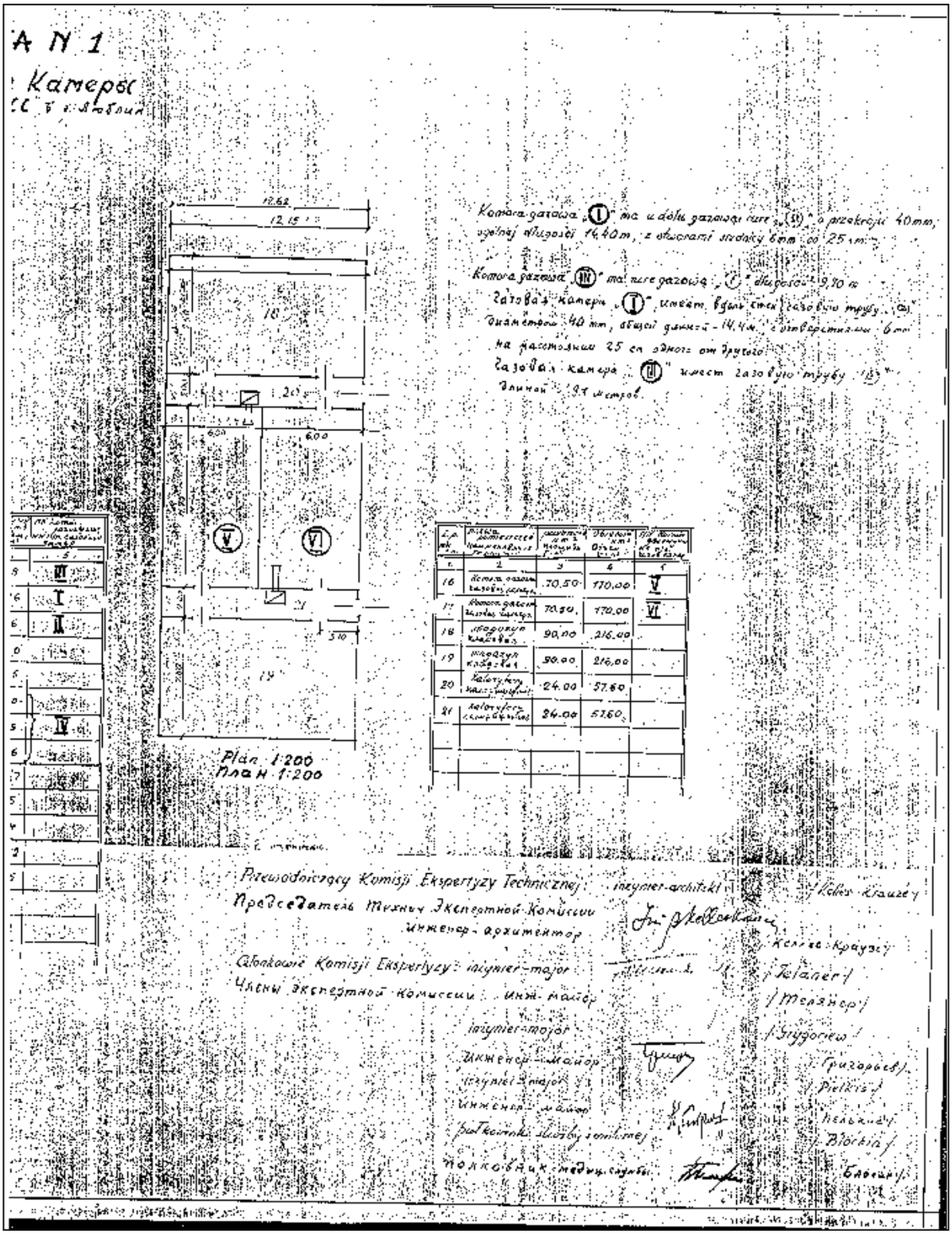


...cki plan nowych komór gazowych na Majdanku. Budynek miał zawierać 6 wielkich komór przystoso-
...ch do użycia gazu VENTOX i 12 mniejszych komór przystosowanych do użycia gazu CYKLON. Projekt
...został oznaczony przez Niemców jako plan instalacji wodnych. Nie został on już zrealizowany.
Plan dostarczony przez Muzeum na Majdanku

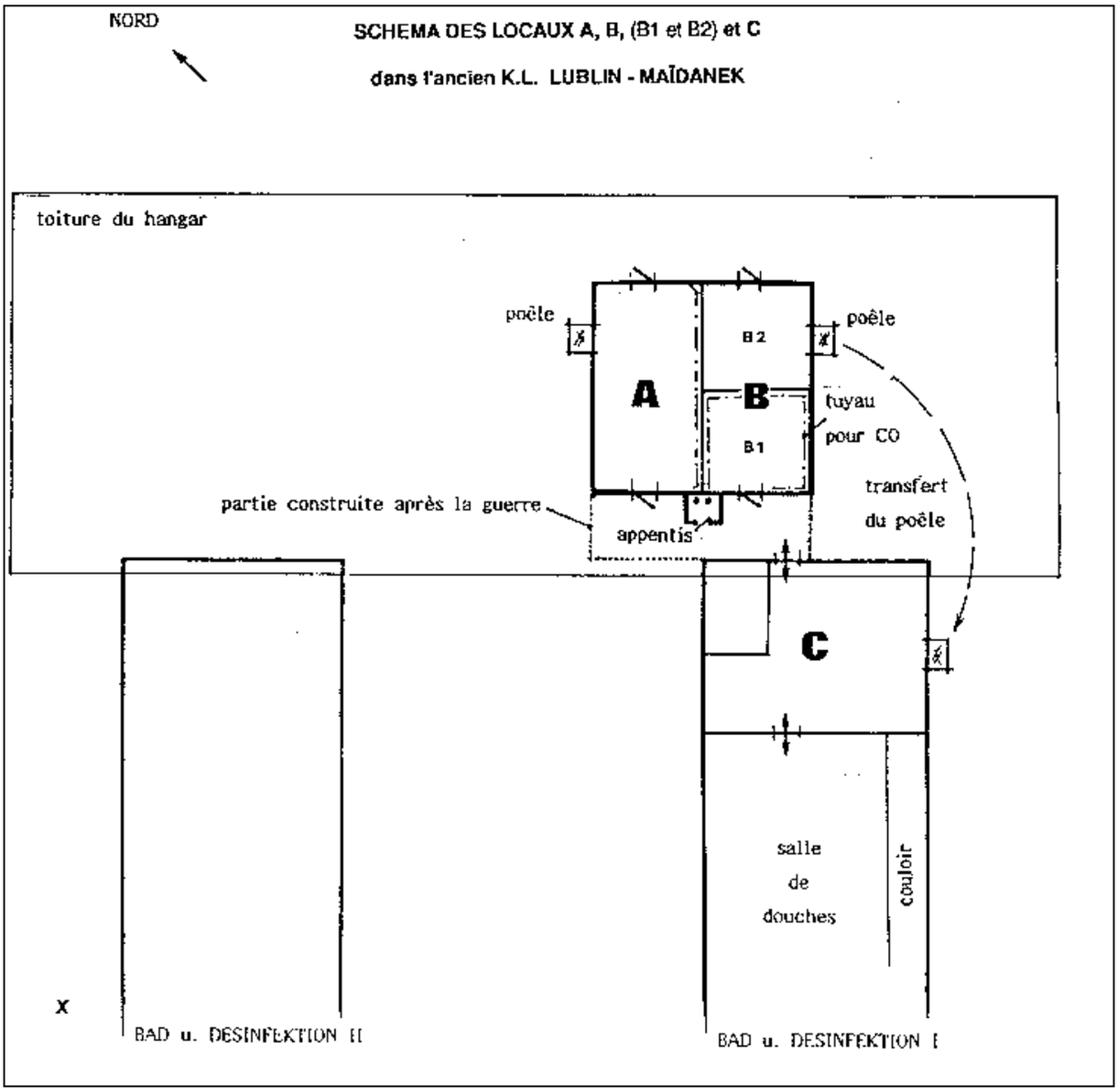
Document 33: "Project for the Irrigation, Drainage and Water Supply Installation in the Building of the Gas Facility in Lublin." Undated diagram by the Ludwig Rechkemmer company . Source: Z. Łukaszkiewicz, "Obóz koncentracyjni i zagłady Majdanek" (see Document 6), unnumbered page.



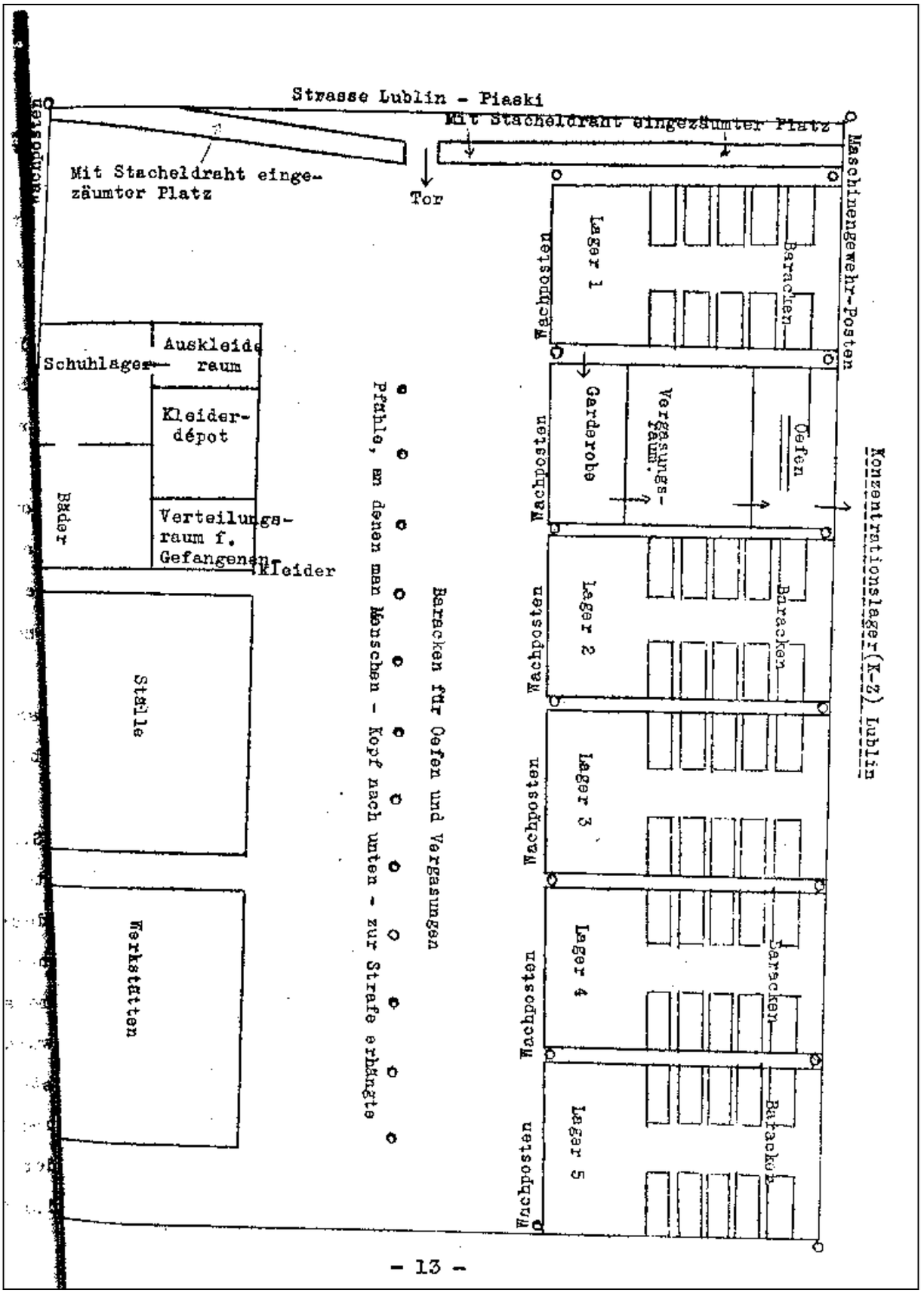
Document 34: Schematic of "gas chambers" I-IV, drawn by the Polish-Soviet Investigative Commission. Source: GARF, 7021-107-9, p. 251.



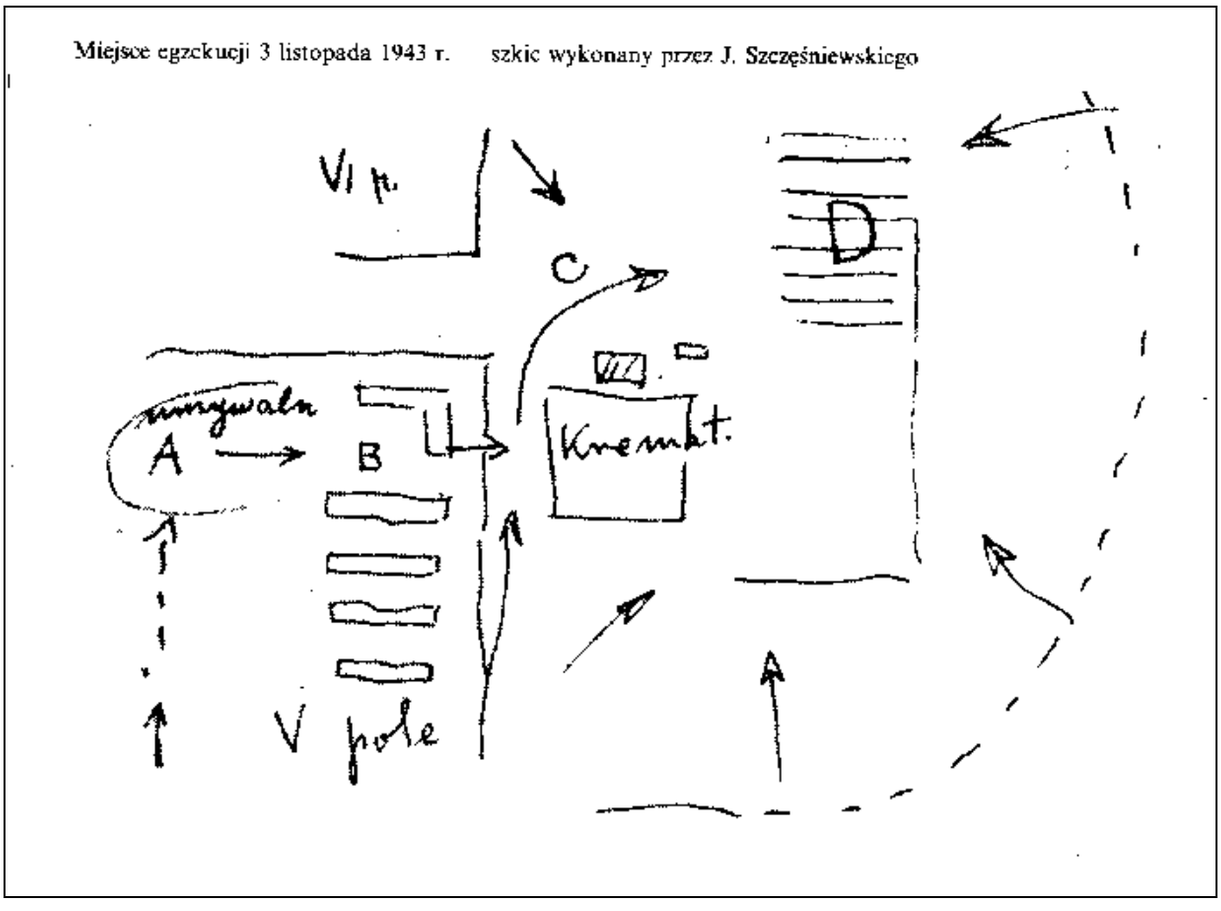
Document 35: Plan of "gas chambers" V-VI, drawn by the Polish-Soviet Investigative Commission. Source: GARF, 7021-107-9, p. 251.



Document 36: Schematic of "gas chambers" I-IV, drawn by Pressac. Source: Jean-Claude Pressac, "Les carences et incohérences du rapport Leuchter," in: *Jour J*, December 12, 1988, p. X.

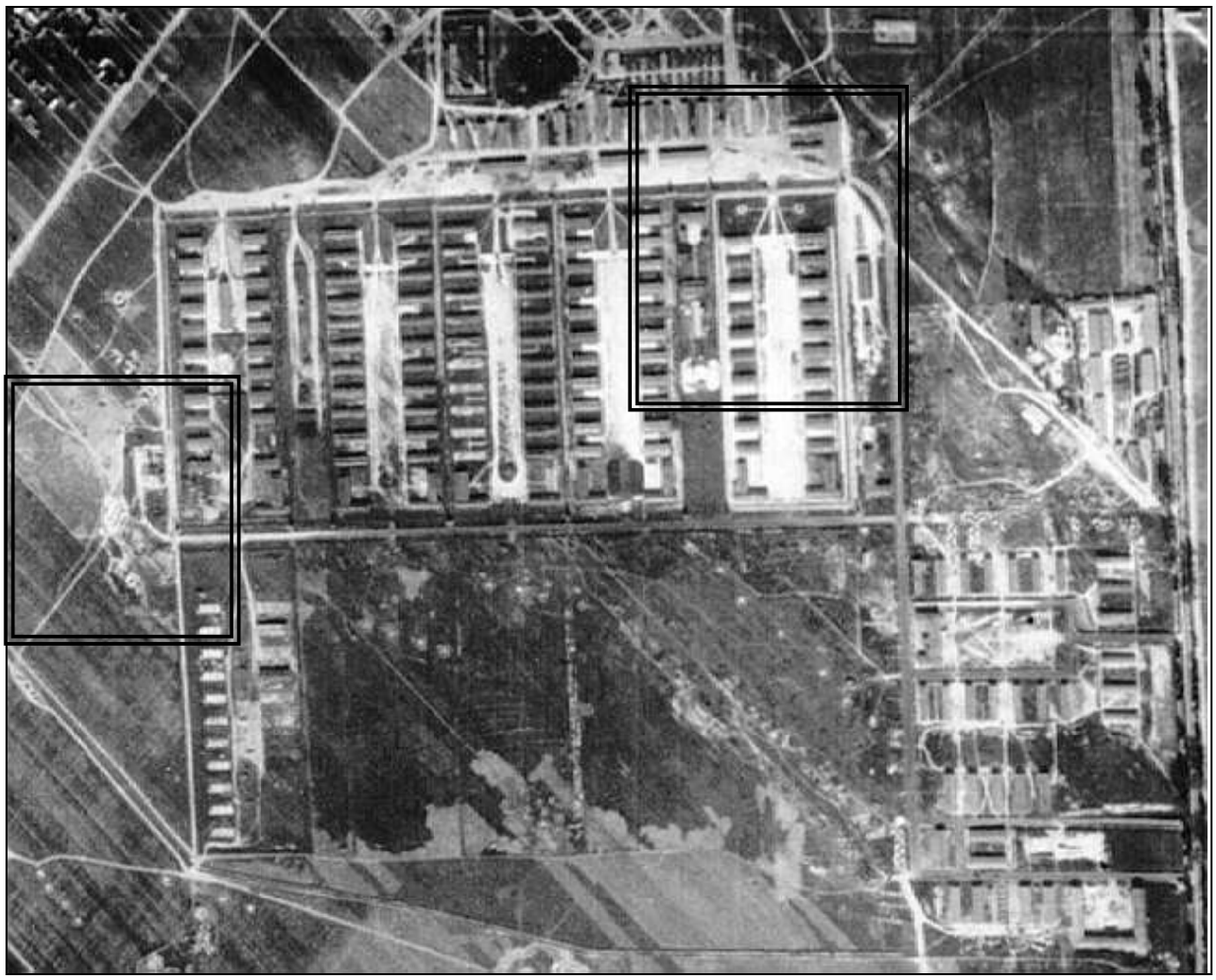


Document 37: Plan of the Lublin concentration camp. Source: Abraham Silberschein, *Die Judenausrottung in Polen,* fifth series, Geneva, 1944, p. 13.

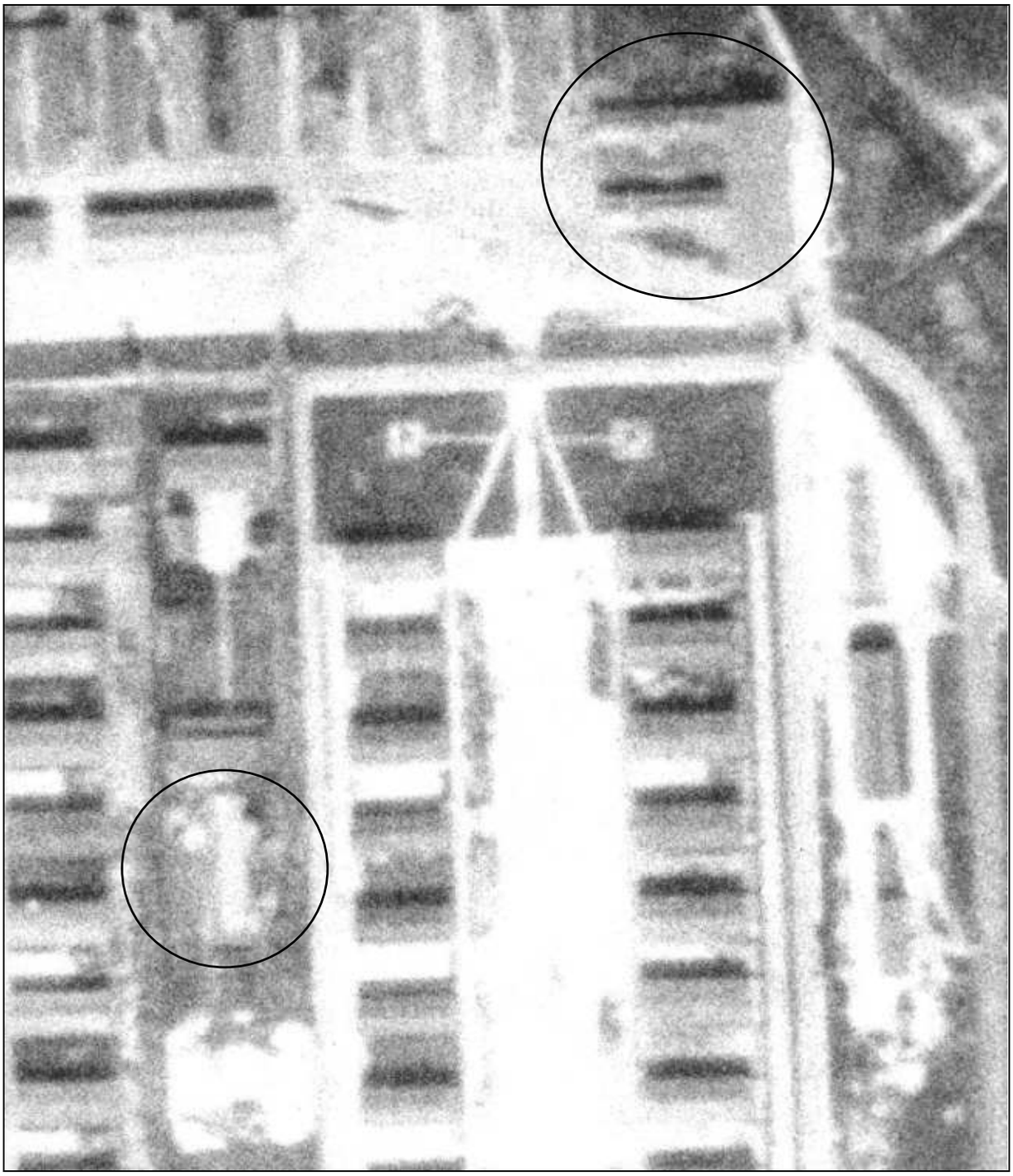


Document 38: Sketch by H. J. Szczesniewski, showing the sequence of the alleged mass execution of November 3, 1943. Source: T. Mencel (ed.), *Majdanek 1941-1944,* Lublin: Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1991, unnumbered page.

Photograph I: Lublin suburbs and the Majdanek concentration camp (which was no longer in operation at that time). Air photo taken by the Luftwaffe on September 18, 1944. Source: National Archives, Washington D.C., Record Group no. 373, Gx 12375 SD, exp. 69.

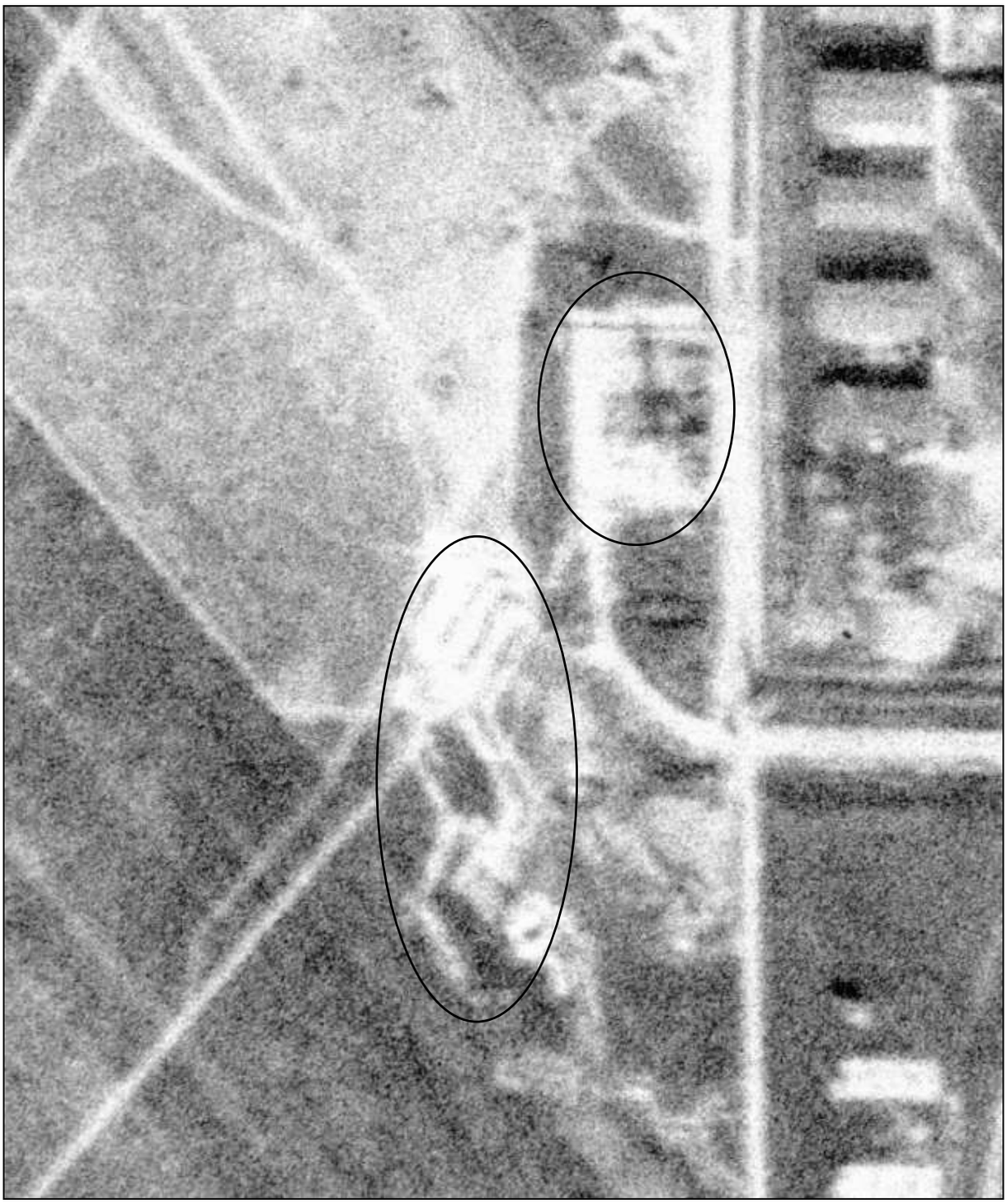


Photograph II: Concentration camp Lublin. Enlargement from Photograph I. Top right: detail shown enlarged on Photograph III; left: detail shown enlarged on Photograph V.

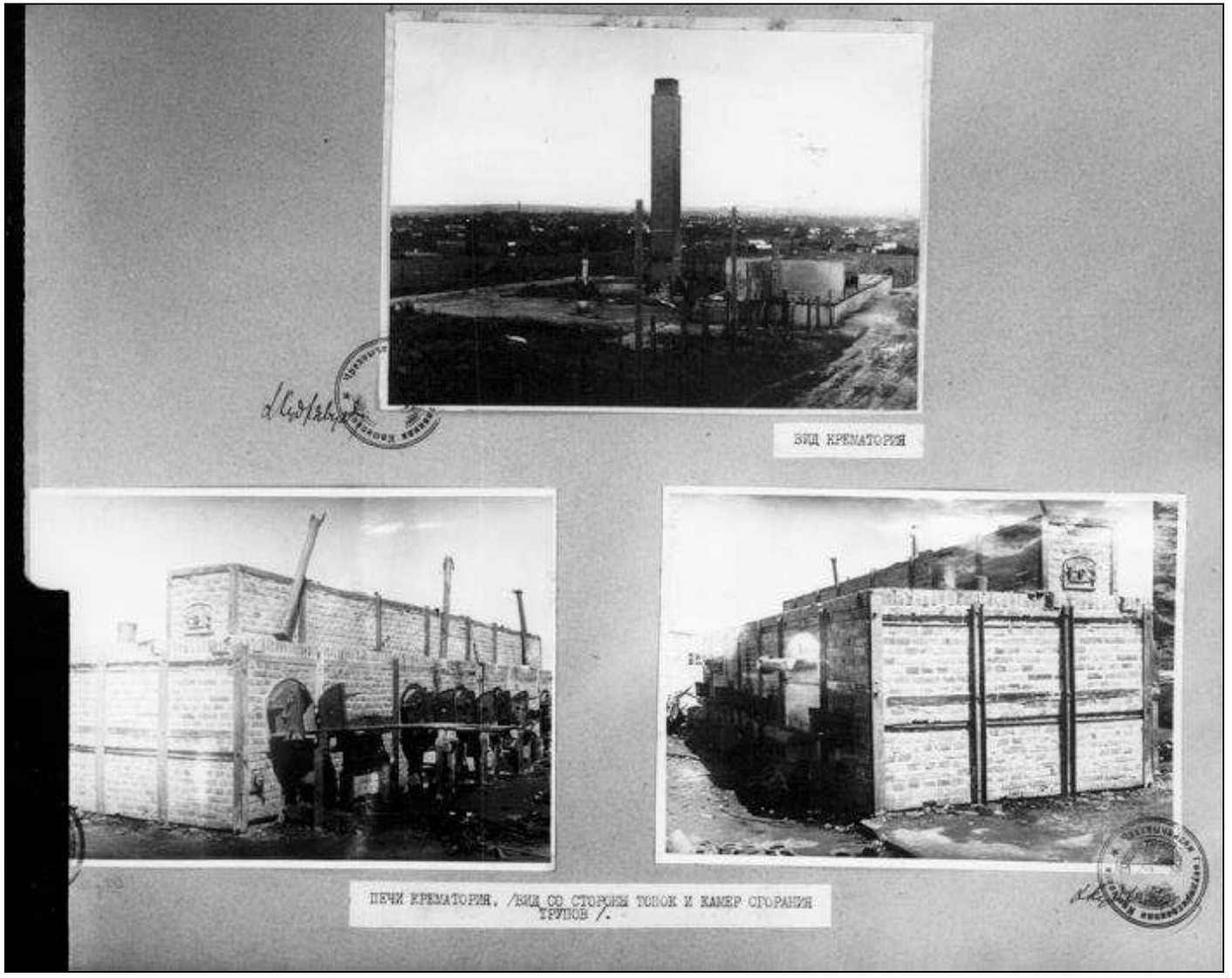


Photograph III: Concentration camp Lublin. Location of the old Crematorium (circle, bottom left) and of the Disinfestation Barracks 41 and 42 (circle, top right). Enlargement from Photograph I.

Photograph IV: Concentration camp Lublin. Location of the old Crematorium (ellipse). Source: T. Mencel (ed.), *Majdanek 1941-1944,* Lublin: Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1991, unnumbered page.



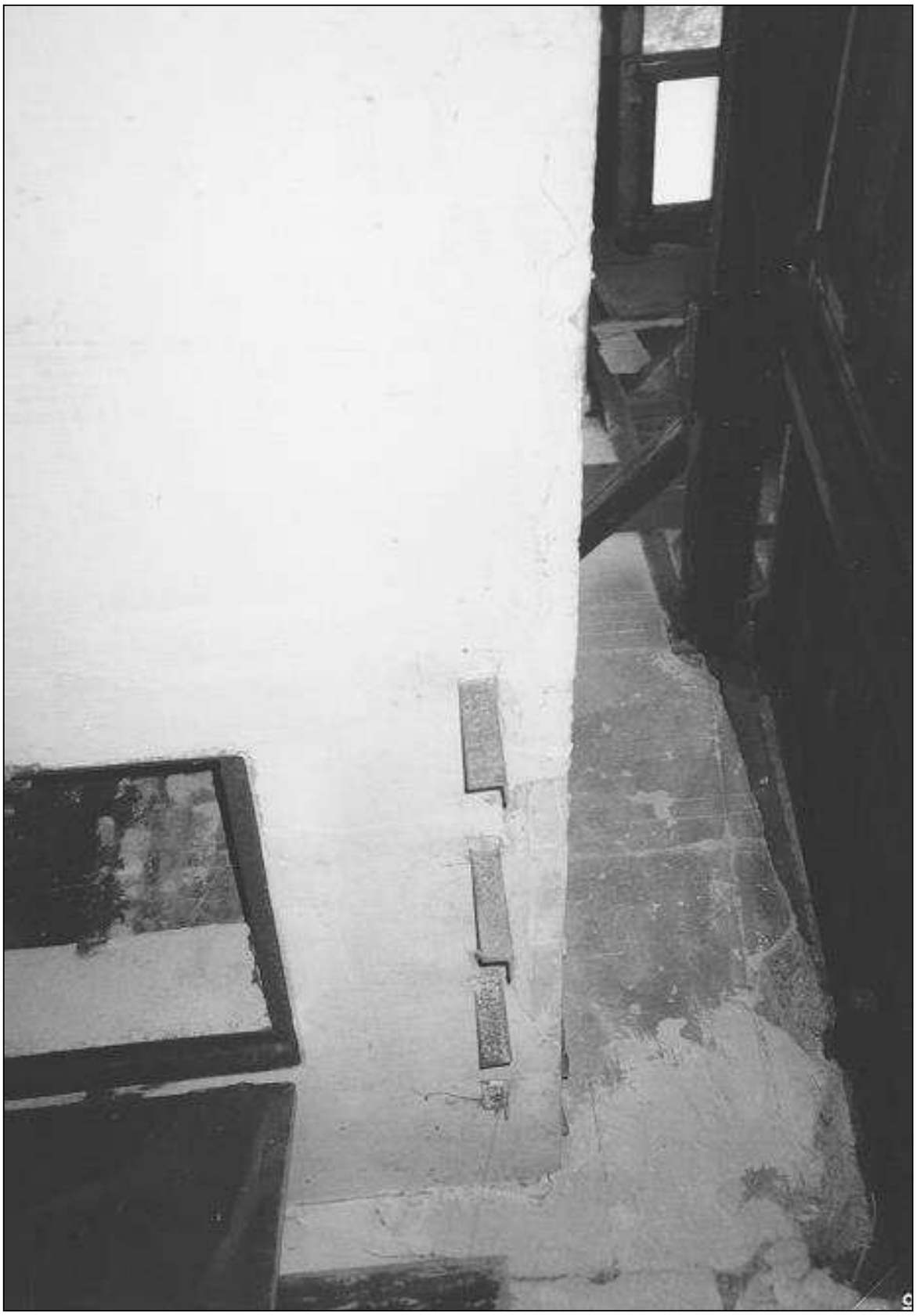
Photograph V: Concentration camp Lublin. Location of the new Crematorium (circle, top right) and of the "execution ditches" (circle, below left). Enlargement from Photograph I.



Photograph VI: Ruins of the new Crematorium and coke-fueled Kori five-muffle furnace in August 1945. Source: GARF, 7021-128-243.

Photograph VII: Mobile oil-fueled Kori cremation furnace. (© C. Mattogno.)

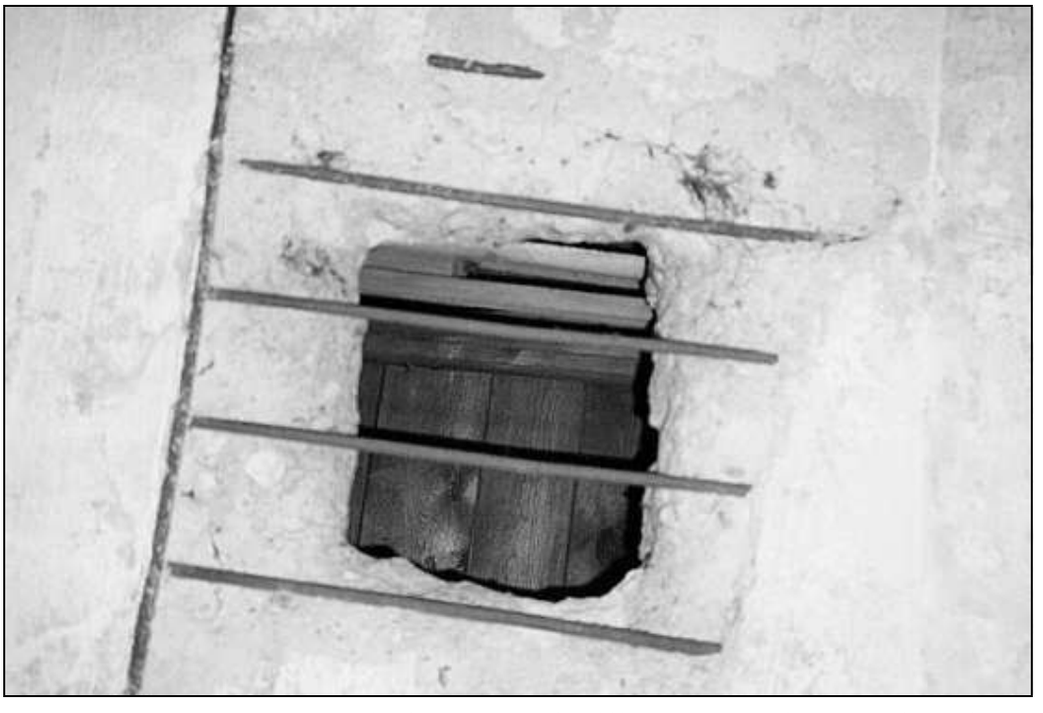
Photograph VIII: Barrack 42: Boiler house. (© C. Mattogno.)



Photograph IX: Barrack 42: Disinfestation chamber. (© C. Mattogno.)

Photograph X: Soviet soldier on the roof of the Drying Facility. The caption at the bottom of the photo states: "Opening through which the substance 'Zyklon' was poured into the gas chamber." In fact it was one of the two ventilation shafts of the "Drying Facility." Source: GARF, 7021-128-243, p. 7.

Photograph XI: Disinfestation facility, Barrack 41, Chamber I, opening in the ceiling. (© C. Mattogno.)



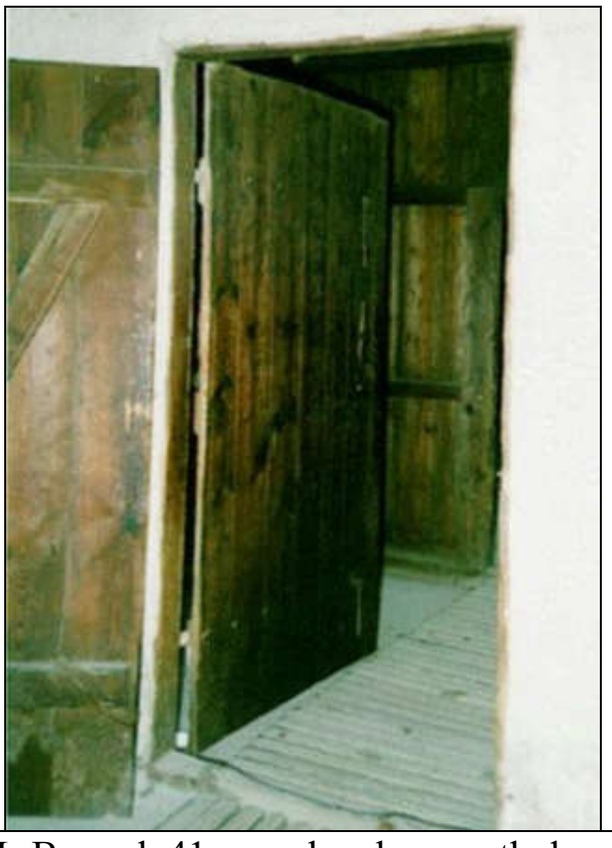
Photograph XII: Disinfestation facility, Barrack 41, Chamber II, opening in the ceiling. (© C. Mattogno)

Photograph XIII: Disinfestation facility, Barrack 41, Chamber III, east wall. (© Carlo Mattogno.)

Photograph XIV: Disinfestation facility, Barrack 41, Chamber II, west wall. (© Carlo Mattogno)

Photograph XV: Disinfestation facility, Barrack 41, small window in wall of Chamber I. (© Carlo Mattogno)

Photograph XVI, XVIa: Barrack 41, gas chamber, south door. In the left part of the door there are three latches which are inserted into the three corresponding hooks on the door frame via handles operated from the other side of the door (Photograph XVIa). (© Carlo Mattogno)



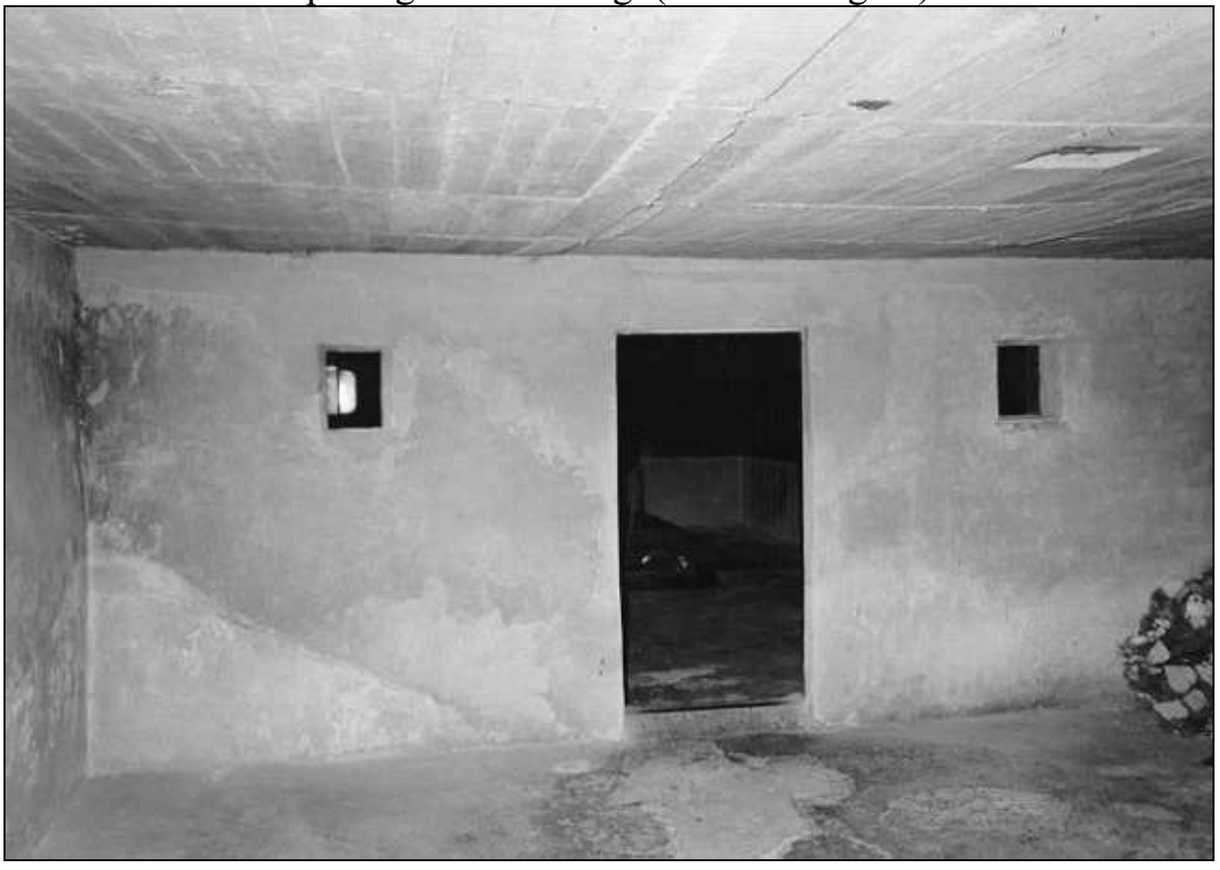
Photograph XVII: Barrack 41, gas chamber, north door. The inside of the door is marked by the typical discolorations that are also visible on the outside of the south door (Photograph XVIa); hooks for the latches are missing from the door frame, unlike on the frame of the south door (Photograph XVI). (© Carlo Mattogno)

Photograph XVIII: Barrack 41, gas chamber, western opening in the ceiling. (© C. Mattogno)

Photograph XIX: Barrack 41, gas chamber, eastern opening in the ceiling.
(© C. Mattogno)

Photograph XX: Barrack 41, gas chamber, window in the east wall.
(© C. Mattogno)

Photograph XXI: New Crematorium, alleged execution gas chamber, opening in the ceiling. (© C. Mattogno.)



Photograph XXII: New Crematorium, alleged execution gas chamber. Door and window leading to the mortuary. (© C. Mattogno.)

Abbreviations

APMM *Archiwum Panstwowego Muzeum na Majdanku* (Archive of the State Museum in Majdanek)

APMO *Archiwum Panstwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu* (Archive of the Auschwitz State Museum)

GARF *Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (State Archive of the Russian Federation, Moscow)

IMT *International Military Tribunal* (Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal: Nuremberg 14 November 1945 – 1 October 1946)

TCIDK *Tsentr Chranenija Istoriko-dokumental'nich Kollektsii* (Storage Center, Historical-Documentary Collection, Moscow)

WAPL *Wojewódzkie Archiwum Panstwowe w Lublinie* (State Archive of the Vojvodship in Lublin)

ZM *Zeszyty Majdanka* (Majdanek Periodical)

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THE NEUENGAMME AND SACHSENHAUSEN GAS CHAMBERS

With a Focus on British Investigations for the Tesch Trial

CARLO MATTOGNO & FRIEDRICH JANSSON

THE NEUENGAMME AND SACHSENHAUSEN GAS CHAMBERS

The Neuengamme and Sachsenhausen Gas Chambers

With a Focus on British Investigations for the Tesch Trial

Carlo Mattogno and Friedrich Jansson

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Part One:
The "Gassing" of Soviet Prisoners of War at the Neuengamme Camp

By Carlo Mattogno

1. The First Testimonies (1945)

Right from the start, Auschwitz-Birkenau was the main focus of Jewish-Polish black propaganda about homicidal gassings and gas chambers. This propaganda started in late 1941 and intensified during the successive years (see Mattogno 2021). At the same time, Auschwitz-Birkenau was also the camp which so the largest number of transferred inmates. In 1944 and 1945, an enormous number of inmates originating from this camp was sent to camps inside the Reich (see Mattogno 2004, 2005), taking with them phantasmagorical stories. Some of the inmates in the other camps did not want to stay behind with their tales in comparison to their colleagues from Auschwitz, hence they themselves conjured up improbable gassing tales presumably perpetrated at their own camps. There, by the spring of 1945, almost every camp in the central and western parts of Germany had their own attested-to "gas chamber," which, when U.S. and British troops reached these camps, were instantly transmogrified into an indisputable "truth," because the victorious powers attributed to any incriminating testimony the ontological quality of veracity. In this climate of collective insanity, which I have described in another study – where I demonstrated how a testimonial "truth" (black propaganda) was first promoted to a judicial "truth" and then to a historical "truth" (see Mattogno/Kues/Graf, pp. 74-83) – the only defense strategy left to the indicted SS officials during the British and U.S. trials were "confessions," with the inevitable recourse of claiming inescapable orders from higher up.

The first instance of this judicial travesty based on black propaganda was the Belsen Trial staged by the British at Lüneburg from 17 September until 17 November 1945 (Trial of Josef Kramer and 44 others). This court saw among the main witnesses for the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz Charles Sigismund Bendel, Roman Sompolinski and Ada Bimko (but also the minor witnesses Hermine Kranz, Regina Bialek, Sofia Litwinska, Regina Plucer and Jeannette Kaufmann; see my analysis in Mattogno 2021, Part 3).

During the following decades, historians writing the history of former camps in Germany and Austria evidently suffered from an inferiority complex *vis à vis* their colleagues of the eastern camps, foremost those in Poland, which were dealing with "extermination camps" and could brag with

purported homicidal gas chambers (at Majdanek) and immense massacres (at Auschwitz, Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka) – the one as imaginary as the other. Hence, Western historians latched onto the pertinent tales told about "their" camps and tried tediously to transform them into historical "facts."

The most striking example of this is the Neuengamme Camp, to which two homicidal gassings with Zyklon B are attributed. These alleged events are basically unknown, hence it is pertinent to clarify right away what we are dealing with here. An important orthodox source describes them as follows:[1]

> *"The concentration camp at Neuengamme, near Hamburg, was the site of at least two large-scale gassings in 1942 with 193 victims in the first and 291 in the second. The operation took place in a bunker that had been used as a lockup. It had been refitted with gas-impervious doors and a set of heating ducts through which gas was injected and the chamber was ventilated. Only Zyklon B was used. The SS officers in charge of the gassings was Willi Bahr. Pursuant to the standard operating procedure, a physician (one Hans Bothmann) attended every gassing, as did the camp commander and other officials. All staff in attendance were required to wear gas masks."*

The obligatory point of departure of any study about this topic is the origin of this story: what are its historical sources?

This story started right after the end of the Second World War. On 21 May 1945, a captured German soldier, a certain Hans Christian Witt, made the following deposition to the British about the tales told at that time with regard to this camp:[2]

> *"In the year 1940/41/42/43 uninterruptedly Polish and Russian Prisoners as well as political prisoners were shot, hung, poisoned with gas or pushed alive, in threes, into burning ovens. This wave of extermination cost the lives of thousands of prisoners. In 1942 in one night for instance in the cell building of the Concentration Camp Neuengamme, 55 prisoners of unknown nationality were killed through shots in the neck. Since this period practice of shooting in the neck continued incessantly. The bodies were thrown naked on to the road and burned afterwards. In the year 1943 approximately 500 wounded Russian prisoners were led to the baths misleadingly. The cell building in which they were sent was shut, doors and windows pasted with paper, and then after that the whole building was poi-*

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1 Laqueur, entries "Gas Chambers" pp. 227-241; "Neuengamme," p. 238.

2 TNA, WO 309-493 Statement P.O.W. Soldat 906880 Hanns [sic] Christian W i t t , born on 22.1.1916 captured 5 May 1945, p. 11.

> *soned with potassium cyanide gas. The fate of every 5th or 6th prisoner was to be buried or burned alive, to be drowned in mud puddles, beaten to death or hung.*
>
> *Especially barbaric was the treatment of the Polish, Russian, Jewish and political prisoners who had offended against paragraph 175. Suspicion alone could lead to cruel death. 95% of all prisoners regardless of nationality who had been deposited in the Concentration Camp on grounds of paragraph 175 (Homosexuality), died within an alarmingly short time without trial or justice because of the sadistic and bestial lust of the SS-Gangsters who indulged in (literally 'INTOXICATED') satisfying their sadistic desire by watching the slow death agonies of their victims."*

Already back then, the core of the future narrative was evolving, as results from the deposition dated 18 May 1945 by a former Polish inmate whose name is not indicated, but he had been transferred from Sachsenhausen to Neuengamme on 1 March 1940:[3]

> *"In January of 1943, we received a transport with 156 Soviet PoWs, officers, political commissars and soldiers. They were all poisoned with poison."*

The British started their official investigation into the Neuengamme Camp on 19 June 1945[4] with numerous interrogations – of both former inmates and SS men. The statements of four former inmates, which I will examine later, are said to have "ascertained" the crime of "execution by gassing."[5]

In fact, every single incriminating testimony became "proof" for the reality of the imputed fact, exactly because the testimonies of prosecution witnesses had the privilege of being considered *ab initio* unconditionally true. This becomes very evident in a long undated list titled "Persons accused of offences at Neuengamme. Not known to be in custody," in which 28 "Accused" German are listed with "Rank," "Witness Reference (Exhibit)," "Crime and Remarks."[6] In practice, the accusation by a prosecution witness was equal to a certain guilty verdict, and this had a powerful impact on the defense strategy of the defendants.

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3 Staatsarchiv Hamburg, 213-12 Staatsanwaltschaft am Landgericht – NSG-Nr. 0429, Bd. 001, Übersetzung, pp. 123-128 (p. 125/3 [= p. 3 of the document]).

4 TNA, WO 309-863. "Report on investigations by Major N.C. TILL Investigating Officer, No. 2 War Crimes Investigation Team Headquarters, British Army of the Rhine on (a) NEUENGAMME Concentration Camp" (and three other sites linked to the camp: "Disaster at Neustadt Bay – Mass Murder at Neustadt – Prison Ship SS Rheinfels," p. 5.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 16. The inmates were: Albin Lüdke, Exhibit No. 16; Karl Roehl, Exhibit No. 46, Emil Hoffmann, Exhibit No. 55, and Ernst Saalwächter, Exhibit No. 56. Roehl and Hoffmann did not testify during the Neuengamme Trial. See Chapter 3.

6 TNA, WO 309-863, p. 27, Appendix 11.

In early June of 1945, the core of the tale of homicidal gassings at Neuengamme Camp had already evolved, although there was still some uncertainty about the date and the number of claimed victims.

On 9 June 1945, two former inmates of the Neuengamme Camp, Eduard Zuleger and Günther Wackernagel, signed a declaration, in which they asserted:[7]

> *"In July 1942 251 Russian prisoners of war were transferred in 2 batches from prisoner of war camp Lueneburg to the concentration camp Neuengamme. They were 'liquidated' as following:*
> *The a/m* [sic] *prisoners were requested to take their clothing off. As reason was given to get ready for a bath. After the prisoners have complied with that order they were led into 5 prison-cells which were connected by one corridor. A few days before their arrival 4 pipes were laid on the roof, and just below the ceiling, and* [sic] *electrical heating installed. After these prisoners of war had undressed, and been put into these cells, the doors, and windows were closed, which were specially made airtight. The S.D.G.s SS Unterscharfuhrer Bahr, and SS Unterscharfuhrer August Buenning climbed on the roof on a ladder prepared for that purpose, equipped with gasmasks, and a considerable quantity of 'Zyklon-B' (in tins), and carried out that disgusting job. The electric heating was turned on by the S.D.G.s. Then they poured the full quantity of 'Zyklon B' into the pipes. The result was that everyone of the PoWs tried to get oxygen through the doors or windows. After nearly an hour the SS opened the place. The picture was terrifying. The corpses were stapled* [piled] *up to the height of the windows and the top of the doors. Everyone stepped on top of the other in order to get oxygen. After the execution was carried out 15 prisoners were detailed to cart the corpses away. Covered with sacking, and baskets the 'load' was taken to the crematory near by. The following were present during the executions: SS Standortarzt, Lagerarzt, Lagerkommandant, and most of the Blockfuehrer. At the same time the prisoners who were on parade on the camp-parade-ground had to sing by order of the camp authorities the song 'Welcome happy singer'."*

A French "Report on the special investigation regarding the Neuengamme Camp near Hamburg,"[8] dated 3 July 1945, gives under Point 4 a narrative which echoes the one just quoted:[9]

> *"The asphyxiation by gas of Russian inmates in July of 1942.*

---

7 TNA, WO 309-863. "Description on the camp-medical officer, the SS Standortaerzte, and the SDG (medical officers' ranks) of the concentration camp Hmb. Neuengamme, and their activities." Exhibit 62, p. 3.

8 YVA, O.51-191, File 2, pp. 1-24

9 *Ibid.*, p. 22.

> *In July of 1942, 251 Russian PoWs coming from Lueneburg were brought to the Neuengamme Camp. At their arrival, the received the order to undress completely, allegedly in order to enter a bath. Instead of that, they were led to a shelter and were locked up in 5 small prison cells, whose walls had been shut and sealed hermetically in advance.*
> *Pipes were arranged on the roof, which went through the ceiling and opened into the small cells. Unterscharführer BAHR Willy and Unterscharführer BUNNING clambered onto the roof of the cells and each put on a gas mask, a dropped into the interior through the pipes a gaseous mixture, the Cyclone B. A special electric device increased the temperature inside the cells where everyone was already crammed together, one against the other.*
> *Inside these cells, an inhuman and dramatic struggled occurred in order to reach at a little of oxygen. When the cell doors were opened after an hour, one found there all the piled-up corpses, one on top of the other, in the hope of getting to have a little air. The position of the bodies indicated a terrible agony. Then, 15 inmates were ordered to load the corpses onto wagons and to cover them with bags and baskets. Then they were transported to the crematory, but first they were dragged across the roll-call yard, where the camp inmates were assembled, the commandant, the camp's boss, and all SS guard personnel. The inmates were forced to sing the song 'Willkommen frohe Singer'* [Welcome, happy singers]*, while the wagons passed by with the corpses."*

Another report of 1945 (the exact date is illegible) by a French organization for the repatriation of deportees, dealing with the "Cruelties committed at Neuengamme," mentions the following version:[10]

> *"They killed 251 Russian PoWs and officers with gas in the fall of 1942, 193 Russian commissars and officers in October 1942. The executions took place in the air-raid shelter mentioned above."*

Albin Lüdke, one of the key witnesses for the alleged gassings, was interrogated already on 2 July 1945. I quote here the relevant passages of this very long protocol (31 pages in total):[11]

> *"Q. Who comes next?*
> *A. Unterscharfuhrer HOFFMANN.*
> *Q. What can you say about him?*
> *A. I am trying to think in which mass beatings and executions he was with us. HOFFMANN was one of the leaders of the gassing of Russian prisoners of war in 1943* [sic].

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[10] *Ibid.*, 69.
[11] TNA, WO 309-863. Record of the Evidence. Exhibit No. 16, pp. 15-16.

Q. Can you tell us anything more about that gassing?
A. In autumn 1942 roughly 200 and on another occasion more than 100 Russian prisoners of war arrived by car. They were taken to the furnace room of the showers. They were stripped there and told that they were going to have a bath. They were taken to the prison. In the prison was an arrangement by which a room was electrically heated. In every cell and in the corridor of the prison was a pipe of 15-inch diameter let into the roof leading to the open. The windows had iron shutters which shut airtight. The doors could be belted. As I stated before, the prisoners were taken to these rooms with the remark that they were going there to have a bath. After they had been brought to the cells the doors were locked. The block leaders then went on the roof of the prison and a gas known as Blausaure Cyklon B, which is in powder form, was then put into the cells through these pipes. Within one hour everybody was dead.
Q. Now what could you say about that personally; have you seen this building?
A. Yes, I saw the building from inside and outside.
Q. And how do you know that these Russians and others went into that building?
A. I have seen that myself.
Q. Did you see their dead bodies?
A. Yes. I saw the doors were opened. All the prisoners in the camp had to line up on the barrack square. They had then to help to load up these bodies on to trucks and had to bring them to the crematorium. They were forced to sing the song: 'Welcome, happy singers'."

On 13 September, the British interrogated Karl Roehl, who stated:[12]

"Q. What can you say about these mass murders?
A. They have gassed people.
Q. How do you knew that?
A. Because I have seen it. It was done during the day.
Q. Will you say what you saw?
A. Always 200 to 250 people were put into one cell, then they closed the doors and boarded the window up and poured gas from the roof. That took about 20 minutes. Then the door was opened and the corpses fell outside.
Q. Now what had KUEMMEL to do with these gassings?
A. All three of them – KUEMMEL, DREIMANN and TUMANN – did that.
Q. You mean they were present when these things were being done?
A. TUMANN was the camp leader, DREIMANN was the rapportfuhrer and his assistant. They were always there.

[12] TNA, WO 309-863. Exhibit No. 46. Record of evidence of Karl Roehl, pp. 4-5.

Q. When did these gassings take place?
A. In 1943.
Q. Who was the leader of the camp at the time?
A. Hauptsturmfuehrer LUTCHEMEYER.
Q. Where did these gassing take place?
A. In NEUENGAMME, in the bunker or cells.
Q. Do you mean the cells next to the delousing station?
A. It is just in front of the delousing station.
Q. But surely they could not get 200 to 250 people in that little place?
A. Yes. They pressed them into that room, up to 180 during the day. It was during the day.
Q. Do you mean that it was 200 to 250 who were killed in the course of one day?
A. It was in one day, but at one time. All that number were gassed at one time.
Q. Can you describe this bunker?
A. Yes. One building was burned down, in front of the delousing station. There is only part of the building standing. There are five cells now. The part that was burned was a wooden barrack.
Q. And were these people who were gassed in the five cells still standing or were they in the wooden barrack?
A. There is a long corridor and they were in the cells and in that corridor.
Q. Did you mean the corridor that still stands now?
A. Yes. That part was still standing when I left the camp on the 19th.
Q. What took place in the other part of the building?
A. The burned down part was the cobbler's shop and the tailors' shop.
Q. How do you know that there was gas in that building; have you ever smelt it?
A. It had a terrible smelt and it gave me a choking feeling.
Q. And you yourself have smelt it?
A. Yes. We were only about 20 metres away when they opened the door.
Q. Do you mean on one occasion?
A. Yes.
Q. And have you seen the bodies being removed?
A. We had a cart there and the bodies were loaded on to that cart.
Q. Were you anything to do with the cart?
A. No, nothing to do with it."

On that same day, Ewald Gondzik wrote a "Report on various SS men from the Neuengamme Camp. Hamburg, 13 September 1945," in which he asserted:[13]

> *"Bahr Unterscharfuehrer from Eutin near Lübeck, was active as a paramedic at the Neuengamme Camp from roughly the middle of 1943.* […] *He also participated at all executions. He made special efforts during the gassing of the 197 Russian PoWs in Sept. 42 and of 251 Russian PoWs in November 42."*

On 14 September 1945, Major Till went to the "No. 1 Civilian Internment Camp" at Neumünster and interviewed several individuals, among them Emil Hoffmann, who told him:[14]

> *"I estimate the number of Russian prisoners who were gassed in 1942 and 1943 to be between 1,400 and 1,500. It was my job as clerk to take their cards out of the register of living prisoners and put these cards into the register of those dead. On the bottom of the card was a place for putting whether they had died from natural causes or not. In this case the cards were marked with a 'V' which I was told stood for 'VERGASST'* [sic] *(gassed)."*

A few days later, on 22 September, Ernst Saalwächter made a deposition, in which he asserted:[15]

> *"In October 1942 lorries arrived in the camp with Russian POWs including officers and commissars; 251 came in one party and 193 in another. These people were gassed in the bunker used as an execution shed. 'Bunker' is a camp expression meaning really a small room – it does* [not] *necessarily mean an air raid shelter. I have myself seen work carried out for these occasions to make the windows and doorways airtight. I saw an SS Blockfuehrer and SDG (SS medical orderly) get up on the roof of the bunker – there were pipes leading through the roof into the bunker – and they poured tins of Cyklon B through these pipes. Cyklon B is a substance used for delousing. In the corridor of the bunker electric heating apparats had been installed. The effect of the Cyklon B being put into this hot atmosphere would be that it gave off a gas. I myself saw the bodies being removed. The occasion which I saw myself was when the 193 Russian were gassed. I am only saying what was common knowledge in the camp as far as the 251 are concerned."*

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13 TNA, WO 309-863. "Bericht ueber verschiedene SS-Leute aus dem K.Z. Neuengamme. Hamburg, den 13. September 1945," p. 1.

14 TNA, WO 309-863. Exhibit No. 55. Deposition of Noel Oughtred TILL, p. 3.

15 TNA, WO 309-863. Exhibit No. 56. Deposition of Ernst SAALWAECHTER, pp. 4-5.

2. The Tesch Trial

The Neuengamme Case – and even more the Sachsenhausen Case, which I will examined in Part Two – would remain incomprehensible, if they were not dealt with in their general context: the Tesch Trial, which the British staged at Hamburg from the 1st until the 8th of March, 1946, plus the preliminary investigations leading up to it. This resulted in investigations on the use of Zyklon B in German concentration camps, which was aided by the fact that the company Tesch & Stabenow, which distributed Zyklon B on behalf of the DEGESCH[16] Company in the territories east of the River Elbe, had its headquarters in Hamburg, a city occupied after the war by the British.

Two important revisionist articles have been written on this trial: "Zyklon B, Auschwitz, and the Trial of Dr. Bruno Tesch," by William Lindsey, and "Aspects of the Tesch Trial," by Friedrich Jansson, which deals exhaustively also with the pre-trial investigations, although from a purely procedural point of view, and it documents "the incompetence and dishonesty, the manipulation of documents, the intimidation of witnesses, the suppression of contradictions" of the British investigators. Jansson's article is reproduced as Part 3 of the present book. In this study, I will repeat and expand on some of Jansson's considerations, but from a historical point of view.

An undated report on the evidential material which was to be submitted during the Tesch Trial explains primarily the method with which evidence was to be looked for:[17]

> *"II. IT IS REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH: –*
> *(1) That gas and/or equipment was delivered to KZ by TESTA*[18] *and that human beings were gassed at those camps.*
> *(2) (a) That the accused* [Tesch, Weinbacher and Drosihn] *had knowledge of the use to which the gas supplied by their firm to the SS. and to concentration camps, was put.*
> *(b) That the accused were aware of the purpose of the courses of instruction on the method of using the gas given by the firm to members of the SS. (There is documentary evidence that the first accused, Dr. TESCH, con-*

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16 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Schädlingsbekämpfung, German Association for Pest Control, Frankfurt

17 TNA, WO 311-423, "The Giftgas Case."

18 Acronym consisting of the first letters of the company's founders' last names: TEsch & STAbenow.

ducted such a course at ORANIENBERG [sic] *in January 1941 to 16 named members of the SS.).*
(c) To what extent the accused may be held individually responsible if they had knowledge of (2) (a) and (b).
III. EVIDENCE ESTABLISHED:-
As regards (1) above:-
It is established that ZYKLON 'B' (Prussic acid gas) was the gas used in concentration camps AUSCHWITZ, SACHSENHAUSEN/ORANIENBURG, and some smaller ones. That the firm of TESTA had the exclusive right to distribute this gas East of the river ELBE. That ZYKLON 'B' was delivered to the above concentrations camps by TESTA. That human beings were gassed at AUSCHWITZ, NEUENGAMME and SACHSENHAUSEN/ ORANIENBURG."

Another report, probably written subsequently, lists what the British considered "Facts established"; the most important "fact" was put this way:[19]

"Indirect evidence
(1) Common knowledge that gas was used for killing human beings at KL camps."

Two pages later, this "Indirect evidence" was explained with the following words:[20]

"Evidence of the fact that it was general knowledge that gas was used for the killing of human beings as early as 1942 is provided by Dr DIELS and Dr BENDEL."

More specifically, the British ascertained from documents of the Tesch Company that Zyklon B had been delivered to the camps at Auschwitz, Neuengamme, Sachsenhausen/Oranienburg, Gross-Rosen, Lublin, Ravensbrück, Riga and Stutthof, and they then declared:[21]

"ZYKLON 'B' was used to kill prisoners at the following camps":

– Auschwitz (proof: "Film shown at BELSEN Trial. Perry [sic] BROAD, Dr BENDEL");
– Neuengamme (proof: Albin LUDKE)
– Sachsenhausen/Oranienburg (proof: Dr Henry MEYER, Morgens CHRISTANSEN [sic], Wilhelm SORENSEN, with the disclaimer:

"Refers to gassings of human beings but not specifically to ZYKLON B."

The pretrial interrogations were conducted by Captain Anton Walter Freud, one of the principal Investigating Officers of War Crimes Investigation No.

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19 TNA, WO 309-1602. "Report and Copies of Productions concerning Dr. Bruno Tesch and the 'Giftgas' Case," p. 14.
20 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
21 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

2, a Jew, "grandson of Sigmund Freud," who had "escaped from Vienna with his father (Martin Freud) on May 15, 1938, via Paris to London" and had made a career in the British Army (Wimmer. p. 23).

Leaving aside Sachsenhausen, all of the British's knowledge of the use of Zyklon B for homicidal purposes was therefore primarily based on the statements of an opportunistic liar, Broad,[22] and a notorious impostor, Bendel.[23]

As for Dr. Diels, who had been First Head of the "Secret State Police Office" established by Göring in Berlin in April 1933, the Britons' firm certainties were based on a witness statement dated 5 October 1945. Diels presented himself as follows in it:[24]

> *"I have held the appointments of Government President of COLOGNE, Government President of HANOVER* [sic] *and Chief of the Shipping Division of the Hermann GOERING Works. I held this latter appointment, when I was arrested by the Gestapo on 1 Mar 1944. I was subsequently released, but arrested again in Aug 1944."*

The incriminating points of his statement are worded as follows:

> *"6. It was common knowledge in 1943 what was being done with this gas* [Zyklon B]. *I had a conversation about it with War Economic Leader HEINDRICH, who was the Reich Official for Immediate Action. HEINDRICH is now at No. 5 Civilian Internment Camp. It was quite openly said that this gas was being used on human beings.*
>
> *7. In my opinion the gassing operation were being talked about practically everywhere in GERMANY. The bosses of I.G. Farben must have known what this gas was being used for.*
>
> *8. It was common knowledge that this gas was being used for killing people and I am utterly shattered when my compatriots now say that they never knew anything about it. When I was Chief of the Shipping Division in Hamburg I kept hearing about it; in fact a lot of dirty jokes were told principally about the killing of the Jews. It was quite a common saying in GERMANY: Of course such jokes were not written down but I have written a number of books which referred to the matter. They have been deposited in SWITZERLAND.*
>
> *9. The general talk was that the gas was being used on human beings. To the best of my knowledge it was first used for gassing of insane people in*

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[22] I have analyzed P. Broad's testimony foremost relating to his claims about Crematorium I at Auschwitz and the claimed "Bunkers" of Birkenau in Mattogno 2016, pp. 57-63; 2016a, pp. 145-147.

[23] See Nyiszli/Mattogno 2020, pp. 304-333. On p. 336, I quote Broad's insane statements about the alleged extermination of Jews at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

[24] TNA, WO 309-625. Affidavit by R. Diels dated 5 October 1945. Production No. 3.

> *1940, and in 1943 for people other than those who where insane. The gassing of insane persons was very well camouflaged. This was carried out under the official heading of 'Beds Saving Campaign'. Lunatics were taken away from asylum to well concealed places. One of them was supposed to be at WURTEMBURG."*

Here it should be noted that, in the context of Holocaust historiography, Lothar Heindrich[25] is an insignificant character, rightly ignored by Hilberg because, according to the logic of Diels' testimony, Zyklon B was employed in the euthanasia centers! Not to mention the "Beds Saving Campaign," foolishly invented by the witness.

This example highlights the lack of soundness of the "Facts established" by the British.

Another element that played an important role in the Zyklon-B case was an instruction course for SS exterminators that was given by Bruno Tesch at Sachsenhausen between January 8 and 10, 1941. The British found the certificate issued by Bruno Tesch to each participant, which stated that he had taken the course "on the use of Zyklon (blue acid) for delousing in chambers and T-gas (Aethylenoxyd) and TRITOX (Trichloracetonitril) for delousing single rooms." They specified that "the above certificate made out in respect to the following SS personnel."

This was followed by a list of 16 SS men, whose rank was given, but for some the name was incomplete or absent.[26] Later they completed the list, also indicating the concentration camp where each SS man was deployed. The participants coming from Neuengamme Camp were SS-Scharführer Hans Perschon and "SS-Rottenfuehrer Willi BAHR,"[27] the alleged main perpetrator of an alleged homicidal gassing in that camp.

For the British, this course was of particular importance, because they interpreted it in accordance with the rambling statements of a certain Emil Sehm, a former employee of the Tesch Company. A summary of these statements even appears at the beginning of the "Report" mentioned earlier, as Point 2 of the "Preamble."[28]

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[25] A brief note from Captain R.W. Evans, a member of the War Crimes Section, addressed to War Criminal Investigation Unity and dated November 8, 1946, has as Subject "Dr. Lothar HEINDRICH." The text reads: "In so far as the HEINDRICH already interviewed is concerned, you are NOT required to take any further action." TNA, WO 109-1603.

[26] TNA, WO 309-625. "Exhibit MA Translation."

[27] TNA, WO 309-1602. "Report and Copies of Productions concerning Dr. Bruno Tesch and the "Giftgas" Case," pp. 11-12.

[28] *Ibid.* p. 1.

> *"Emil SEHM had previously been employed by Messrs TESCH and STABENOW from May 1942 to 24 July 1943 in the Accounts Department. The gist of his accusation was that in autumn 1942 he had discovered in the course of his employment in the office a certain Travel Report dictated by Dr TESCH which stated that Dr TESCH had attended a conference with the OKW in BERLIN regarding the use of gas for the extermination of human beings. It had been observed that the shooting of Jews had developed to such large proportions that it had become unhygienic. Dr TESCH advocated that the extermination of Jews could be carried out by normal BLAUSAURE (prussic acid) gassing after the barracks had been rendered airtight. Dr TESCH further accepted the commission to train SS personnel nominated by the Wehrmacht in the use of BLAUSAURE Gas."*

Sehm had already addressed the British on June 29, 1945 with the following writing:[29]

> *"To the 5th Btl with the request of conveyance to the English authorities. According to my estimation I am able to supply very important information that means fresh evidence to commit war criminals for trial. The war crime I am referring to concerns an official discussion which took place between a businessman of an IG Farben sister concern with leading men of the OKW, about the application of the hydrocyanic acid process to kill human beings. Further the training of SS men to apply this process. My profession gave me the opportunity to see top secret files and that is where my knowledge results from."*

On August 24, 1945, he wrote another letter to the British, in which he complained that he had not received a response to the previous one and reiterated his offer to assist:[30]

> *"In my capacity as accountant and later in special cases dealing with the correspondence I got acquainted with a few top secret documents. When dealing with a particular file, I was instructed by Dr TESCH about the secrecy which had to be kept about this particular file. The contents of this file was a report and I can very well remember it. It had the meaning as follows:*
>
> *Dr TESCH reported about an invitation he received to a conference at the OKW BERLIN. He stated to which members he was introduced and in which way and form. About the subject of the conference he wrote that the speaker explained that the execution of the Jews by shooting has developed in a mass execution and furthermore it is very unhygienic. Dr TESCH was asked to submit any suggestion, whether and how Jews could be extermi-*

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[29] *Ibid.*, without page number. The headline is "MEISCHENSTORF 29 Jun 45."

[30] *Ibid.*, without page number. The headline is "COPY REPORT"; at the end: "Sehmsdorf, 24th August 1945."

nated by using hydrocyanic acid. Afterwards technical points about the application of hydrocyanic acid were discussed and amongst other suggestions one way was suggested that all Jews detailed for extermination should be taken into a barrack previously prepared (gas-tight). During the night a trained man (using a respirator) should enter the barracks and place hydrocyanic acid plates in the rooms. In future, instead of getting buried, dead bodies will be cremated. Dr TESCH offered himself to SS men who will be selected by the OKW and put at his disposal to train on courses for this purpose (using of hydrocyanic acid). In fact there were some SS men trained by him and his fellow worker."

Finally, on October 10, 1945, Sehm made a statement in German, later translated into English, which he swore before Captain R.A. Nightingale of the War Crimes Investigation Team. He stated that he was shocked about the contents of Dr. Tesch's report. He claims to have jotted down a brief summary of the report's essentials on a piece of paper, the text of which he paraphrased as follows:[31]

"Mr. ... (Name of the Wehrmacht representative missing) explained to me that the shooting of Jews became a Mass Shooting and it proved to be unhygienic. He thought this could be improved by gassing the Jews with BLAUSÄUREGAS and burn the corpses afterwards. He asked me to supply him with suitable propositions. I suggested to carry out the extermination of the Jews by the usual method of gassing. After they have been put into the Barracks (the Jews) which were made airtight, a BLAUSÄUREGAS expert proceeds to the rooms at night for the purpose of laying BLAUSÄUREGAS tablets. The corpses could be disposed of in the morning."

These statements were not only indemonstrable, as they were not supported by the alleged document (the witness claimed to have made a copy of it, which he later destroyed), but patently false,[32] because Sehm attributed to the *Wehrmacht* what in the perspective of the Holocaust narrative would have been the responsibility of the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* or, possibly, the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt*, yet in his deposition he reiterated that "the mentioned document I found in a file marked 'WEHRMACHT'." Moreover, in the letter dated June 29, 1945, he had not mentioned Bruno Tesch, but "a businessman of an IG Farben sister concern," meaning DEGESCH, not TESTA. Finally, the witness did not give the date

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[31] TNA, WO 309-1603, "Production No. 1." Emil Sehm, Bad Oldesloe, den 10. Oktober 1945, without page numbers. The statement is also contained in WO 309-625, however, here as "Production No 1. Summary of examination of Friedrich LANKENAU."

[32] But also nonsensical: why should a mass shooting be "unhygienic"?

of Tesch's alleged trip to Berlin, not even the year. Hence, for the British investigators, it could have predated the Sachsenhausen exterminator course mentioned above, which could have been the implementation of Tesch's alleged suggestion of training some SS men in the use of Zyklon B for homicidal gassings.

The Sehm affair has been set out in detail by F. Jansson (esp. his pp. 148-156 in Part Three). Here I add another example of Captain Freud's dishonesty: he tried to intimidate some witnesses into believing that the phantom travel report invented by Sehm really existed and had been found by the British. Here are three significant cases (emphases added).

Witness Alfred Zaun:[33]

"Q. We have found a report in your office, hidden among writing papers, in which it says that Dr. Tesch had a conference in 1941 in Berlin with the highest officers and SS people, in which it literally says that it is an unhygienic thing to shoot Jews and it is much more hygienic to eliminate them with hydrogen cyanide gas.[34] *Where were such files kept?*
A, For the life of me I cannot tell you.
Q. You are familiar with these files, aren't you?
A. No."

Witness Erica Rathke:[35]

"A travel report of 1941 has been found. T says in this report that Dr. Tesch had negotiated with high-ranking officers of the Wehrmacht and of the SS about the delivery of gas for the Jews. It states literally that it was an unhygienic affair to shoot the Jews, and that it would be is much better and more hygienic to use hydrogen cyanide. Have you seen this report? Was this report circulated?"

Witness Elisa Biagini (according to other documents, her first name is Erna):[36]

"Q. We found a document in the office where it states: Dr. Tesch has had negotiations with the highest offices of the Wehrmacht and the SS in Berlin about the requests for gas by the SS. And we read there literally: 'It is an

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33 TNA, WO 309-1603. "Production No. 9." Interrogation of Alfred Zaun, October 16, 1945.

34 This sentence shows that the adjectives "unhygienisch" and "hygienisch" were not referring to the disposal of corpses, but to the killing process itself. In the former case, the "Wehrmacht" should have turned to a firm specializing in cremation, e.g. J.A.Topf & Söhne in Erfurt, not the firm Test & Stabenow.

35 TNA, WO 309-1603. "Production No. 6." Interrogation of Erika Rathke, 15 October 1946.

36 TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Fr. Biagini im Altonaer Gesundheitsamt, Allee 176, am 17.10.1945, Nachmittags 3 Uhr.

unhygienic thing to shoot the Jews, it would be better to gas them with hydrogen cyanide, and can you supply this gas?' Have you typed this report?
A. No, most certainly not.
Q. Have you read it?
A. No."

Of course, Dr. Tesch also denied Sehm's statements, in spite of Captain Freud's pressure:[37]

"A. The only invitation received was to a conference with the Army and SS, the Reichs Ministry of food and the Reichs-Ministry of Interior.
Q. It is useless for you to say that is not so, as Sehm has seen the file. […]
Q. W*hat puzzles me, Tesch, is that this fellow Sehm should have made up lies about you.*
A. The only explanation is that he might have read something somewhere, misconstrued it and did not understand what it meant. […]
Q. I*f other people besides Sehm have seen this file of yours, do you not think there must be something in it?*
A. I cannot say that unless I know the contents of this travelling report.
Q. We have told you what it is.
A. That is incorrect. It does not exist.
Q. If Sehm had enough spite against you to get you hanged, he could have invented that story?
A. Sehm has always been a book with seven seals to me. He used to work for some finance department in East Prussia before working for me, and knew a lot about book-keeping etc. As far as hatred goes, one sometimes finds oneself hated by the least suspected. […]
Q. I*f Sehm is telling the truth, do you consider yourself in any way guilty?*
A. If any discussion as indicated by Sehm had ever taken place, – and I repeat this for the purpose of discussion – they certainly would only have concerned genuine criminals and their killing. If in that connection I had been called upon as an expert to make any suggestions, I would only have made them in complete ignorance of the full facts. I further point out that it must be remembered that any guilt must be considered from the point of view of the time of the perpetration of the crime."

And furthermore:[38]

"I was never told in Berlin at a conference or in another context that Zyklon-B gas was to be used against people. I have not mentioned this fact in any of my travel reports, I also have neither spread nor heard such a rumor in my office."

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37 TNA, WO 309-1603. Interrogation of Dr. Bruno Tesch at Bad Oeynhausen 26/9/45.
38 TNA, WO 309-1603. "Production No. 31 Hamburg, den 31. 10. 1945. Eidesstattliche Erklärung" by Dr. Bruno Tesch.

Incredibly, Emil Sehm played a key role in the preliminary investigation and Tesch Trial. The report "The Giftgas Case" mentioned earlier states this explicitly:

> *"1. There is direct evidence against the first accused, Dr. TESCH, only, which consists of:-*
> *(i) The testimony of Emil SEHM, an employee of TESTA, who states that in August 1942 he read a Travelling Report dictated by the first accused. This report mentioned that a Wehrmacht representative, whose name is missing, had complained to the first accused that the mass shooting of Jews had become unhygienic. That the first accused had suggested that they could be exterminated by gassing, using 'Blausäuregas' (Prussic Acid). It also mentioned that the accused accepted a commission from the O.K.W. to train selected S.S. personnel in the use of 'Blausäuregas'.*
> *SEHM states that he was shocked on reading this report, and that he took a note of it on a piece of paper. About a day later he showed this piece of paper to an old friend, Wilhelm POOK, who advised SEHM to burn it, which was done."*

Item (ii) concerned Bernhard Frahm, another former Tesch & Stabenow employee to whom Sehm allegedly showed the "piece of paper" in question.[39]

During the first hearing of the Tesch Trial, the prosecutor, Major Gerald Draper, stated in his prosecution summary:[40]

> *"The contention of the prosecution will be that from 1941 to 1945 this Zyklon B was being supplied by the direct results of the orders accepted by the accused's firm, Tesch & Stabenow. On that basis, this Zyklon was going in vast quantities to the largest concentration camps in Germany east of the Elbe, and in those same concentration camps the SS Totenkopfverbanden were systematically exterminating human beings from 1942 to 1945 in an estimated total of six million human beings, of which four and a half million human beings were exterminated by the use of Zyklon B in one camp alone known as Auschwitz/Birkenau."*

In this context, he mentioned precisely Sehm:[40]

> *"A former employee, Emil Sehm, will give evidence to the effect that he saw in the files in the firm's registry a dictated travel report by the accused Tesch himself."*

Sehm was also the first witness to be questioned.[41]

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39 TNA, WO 311-423.

40 Trial by a Military Court of Bruno Tesch, Joachim Drosihn and Karl Weinbacher [Tesch-Trial] on Saturday, 2nd March, 1946, Second Day, p. 5. United Nations Archives security microfilm Programme 1988. Reel No. 52.

41 *Ibid.*, pp. 8-20.

Drosihn was acquitted, Tesch and Weinbacher were found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging. The sentence was carried out on May 16, 1946.

After being instrumental in having two innocent men sentenced to death, Emil Sehm disappeared from the judicial scene and never appeared on the scene of historiography. No Holocaust historian subsequently recalled the two statements, and his name then appeared only in accounts of the Tesch Trial, which is further evidence that he uttered shameless lies.

The only exception to this is a book by Jürgen Kalthoff and Martin Werner, where the authors dared to write (Kalthoff/Werner, p. 149):

> *"The details of what Sehm reported here were not generally known at the time and probably also new to the court. To this day, Sehm's testimony is the only known document which traces back the murder of people with Zyklon B to a suggestion by Dr. Tesch."*

There is no evidence that any historian, even a mediocre one, has subsequently taken up such nonsense.

Therefore, leaving aside the blatantly false testimonies by Bendel and Broad, the historiographical legacy of the Tesch Trial, as far as any support for the prosecution's case is concerned, is almost nonexistent.

It all boils down to the stolid accusations of Captain Freud – a veritable predecessor and role model of later orthodox Holocaust historians – which were later adopted by the court. They concerned the mere supply of Zyklon B to concentration camps, especially to Auschwitz. This "argument" was later resuscitated especially by Robert Jan van Pelt. Captain Freud also insinuated that Jews were exterminated with Zyklon B as vermin, and also tried the "code-language" sleight of hand. These are low-level arguments picked up only by the most obtuse historians.

The accusation concerning Zyklon-B supplies to Auschwitz was based on three assumptions, all of which were patently false: that 7/8 of the Zyklon-B supply had been used to gas human beings;[42] that 4.5 or 5 million people had been gassed; and that the camp was much smaller than it actually was, thus downplaying its needs for disinfestation material

When questioning Bruno Tesch on September 26, 1945, Captain Freud asked:[43]

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[42] Jean-Claude Pressac inverted that claim by writing that "97 to 98% of the case could have been used for delousing purposes." (1993, p. 47). The percentage corresponding to 7/8 is 87.5.

[43] TNA, WO 309-1603. Interrogation of Dr. Bruno Tesch at Bad Oeynhausen 26/9/45.

"Q. So if 5 millions were liquidated at Auschwitz, the gas came from your business?

A. Prussic acid, which was supplied to Auschwitz, came from us in its entirety.

Q. I am going to tell you something instead of asking the questions. 5 Million people died from gassing in Auschwitz. What do you understand from that?

A. It is news to me."

He continued along these lines in the interrogations of other defendants or witnesses as well:

Joachim Dronsin, October 17, 1945:[44]

"Q. You know exactly that 7/8 of the gases were used for people.

A. No, I don't know that."

Gustav Kock, fumigation expert (*Durchgasungsmeister*), 20 October 1945:[45]

"Q. Do you know how many people were murdered at Auschwitz?

A. No.

Q. Some 5.000.000 men. Meaning one [of Zyklon B] *ton per month for two years straight."*

Once more Bruno Tesch, 24 October 1945:[46]

"Q. Do you know what the people have said about you? If a camp orders 1 ton of gas per month, for 2 years straight, and you don't notice this, then you are either feebleminded or you don't want to know it. You know that the entire Auschwitz Camp can be fumigated with 120 kg.

A. One barracks?

Q. No, the entire Auschwitz Camp. But for two years straight, 1 ton per month was order, what were you thinking about this?

A. No, I wasn't thinking anything about it.

Q. You didn't know that 300,000 people were gassed with this per month?

A. No.

Q. When have they told you this for the first time?

A. After the occupation through the newspaper. […]

A. N*o, we never ever gassed people.*

Q. No, so the 4 1/2 million of Auschwitz don't count? […]

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[44] TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Dr. Drosihn im Altonaer Gefängnis am 17.10.1945 um 11 1/2 Uhr.

[45] TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Herrn Gustav Kock im Altonaer Gefängnis am 20.10.1945 um 10 1/2 Uhr.

[46] TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Dr. Tesch am 24.10.1945 Production 16. Fragen von Capt. Freud.

Q. So, killing 1/2 million people is nothing. Well, first we will torment you a little for this, pulling out the fingernails and so on. Not we, but the Russians. It is a new notion to you to have murdered 4 l/2 million people? […].
Q. You are an utterly abject liar! So, everyone else is lying, and only you are telling the truth.
There aren't that many pests in the whole of Germany that would require 1 ton of Zyklon per month. If a camp orders that much, however, you must have known that it wasn't used against vermin. Do you know what your people have said about it, that you are an idiot or don't want to know what the gas was used for."

Even regarding Auschwitz, Captain Freud intimidated his interrogatees with grotesque lies.

Johann Holst, head fumigation expert (*Durchgasungsobermeister*) of the Tesch Company, October 19, 1945:[47]

"Q. Do you know Auschwitz?
A. No.
Q. It is a normal camp, smaller than Sachsenhausen."

Gustav Kock, fumigation expert (*Durchgasungsmeister*) of the Tesch Company:[48]

"Q. How big is Auschwitz, roughly?
A. I have not been there, I don't know that.
Q. A camp that was roughly exactly as big as Grossrosen. […]
Q. W*hat would you say if a camp as big as Neuengamme orders a ton* [of Zyklon B] *for two years straight?*
A. 1000 kg monthly? These are unusually large quantities.
Q. Would you say that there can't exist that many pests at all?
A. No.
Q. Had you learned about these figures, would you maybe have wondered about it?
A. Yes.
Q. Dr. T. knew exactly how many people could be gassed with this. If not, then he is either feebleminded or he didn't want to know it.
A. Yes, so it must have been."

The perfidy with which Captain Freud shoved his lies in the faces of the technicians of the Tesch & Stabenow Company, and then used their answers against Bruno Tesch, is an aspect of the preliminary investigation

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47 TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Herrn Johann Holst im Altonaer Gefangnis, am 19.10.1945 tun 11[45] Uhr.

48 TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Herrn Gustav Kock im Altonaer Gefängnis am 20.10.1945 um 10 1/2 Uhr.

that would require a separate chapter. Here I can provide only a few significant examples.

In this context, it is important to show that Freud was a liar who knew he was lying, at least as far as Auschwitz was concerned. As an investigating officer who also had a prominent position in the investigation of the Tesch Company, a case that also involved Auschwitz, Captain Freud could not be ignorant of the information provided in this regard by the Soviets as early as May 7, 1945, and duly received by the Foreign Office:[49]

> *"The camp is located on a vast territory around the town of Oswiecim, and represented an entire system of camps: Auschwitz, Birkenau, Monowice, Goleschau* [sic]*, Jawiszowic* [sic]*, Neudachs, Blechamer* [sic]*, etc. The chief of them – Auschwitz and Birkenau – were located on a territory of 467.5 hectares and contained over 620 living barracks and administrative buildings. There were always from 180,000 to 250,000 prisoners in the Oswiecim camps."*

Therefore, Freud knew about 620 barracks. To make matters worse, the claim made against Bruno Tesch that the Auschwitz Camp could be disinfested with just 120 kilograms of Zyklon B was a misrepresentation of what he had been told by another Tesch employee, fumigation worker (*Vergasungsarbeiter*) August Marcinkowki:[50]

> *"I fumigated Auschwitz in March of 1940. That was just before it was about to be turned into a concentration camp. At that time, Auschwitz consisted of 7-8 single-level brick houses, and we needed roughly 120 kg Zyklon gas to fumigate it."*

Doing a rough estimate, Captain Freud would have found out that 9,300 kilograms of Zyklon B would have been needed to disinfest 620 barracks.

This introduces Robert Jan van Pelt's paralogisms about the significance of Zyklon-B supplies at Auschwitz (van Pelt, p. 428), which I have already refuted in another study (Mattogno 2010, Chapter 14.2., pp. 503-509). Suffice it to say that in 1944 the total volume of all premises at Auschwitz-Birkenau and Monowitz (without considering the other numerous satellite camps) was over 500,000 m³, and a single disinfestation of them would have required 4,000 to 5,000 kg of Zyklon B (without considering the disinfestation gas chambers, which used additional quantities on a daily basis).

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[49] Soviet Monitor. Radio Bulletins from the U.S.S.R. Issued by TASS Agency. Foreign Office New Division. Monday, May 7th, 1945. Special Bulletin. The Oswiecim Murder Camp, p. 2. TNA, FO 371-51185.

[50] TNA, WO 309-1603. Hamburg, den 24. Oktober 1945. Eidesstattliche Erklärung von August Marcinkowki,

On the other hand, the Foreign Office knew the "official" figure of the alleged gassings as early as April 27, 1945, when a British official in Moscow, Mr. Roberts, sent it the following telegram:[51]

"War Cabinet Distribution from Moscow to Foreign Office.
M. Vyshinski now writes that it has been found from investigation from Oswiecim group of concentration that more that 4,000,000 citizens of various European countries were destroyed by the Germans."

Ada Bimko had also mentioned the mythical figure of 4 million.[52]

Captain Freud wanted to further increase this insane figure and spoke of 4.5 and 5 million.

After tricking Gustav Kock with his mendacity into admitting that the supply of 1,000 kilograms of Zyklon B per month to a camp (Auschwitz) as large as Neuengamme was disproportionate and that, if Dr. Tesch did not admit it, he would be either "feebleminded" or a person who did not want to know, Freud used Kock's admission against Tesch in the already-quoted interrogation of October 24, 1945:[46]

"Do you know what your people have said about it, that you are an idiot or don't want to know what the gas was used for."

But Captain Freud's mystifications do not end there. He misrepresented facts and fabricated testimonies, as is evident from the next example. Prior to his arrest, Dr. Tesch had handed over RM 3,700 to his accountant Alfred Zaun to give to his own wife. During the same interrogation, the British investigator objected against this in Zaun's name:[46]

"Q. Herr Zaun apologizes sincerely that he could not bring your things to your wife, but he also concluded that RM 4,000.- are not enough as a bribe.
A. This is not a bribe."

With an idiotic syllogism, he deduced that, since Zyklon B was destinated to destroy parasites and since (according to him) it had been employed to destroy Jews, it followed that Jews were equated with parasites, a term which therefore acquired a double meaning. He tried in vain to entangle Dr. Tesch in these silly sophistries:[53]

"Q. Had they discussions with you as to its efficiency for killing vermin?
A. Yes, they had.

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51 TNA, FO 371-51185.

52 Proceedings of a Military Court for the Trial of War Criminals held at Luneburg, Germany, on Friday, 21 September 1945, upon the trial of Josef Kramer and 44 Others. Fifth Day. Transcript of the Official Shorthand Notes, pp. 5-7. *United Nations Archives. Security Microfilm Programm*, 1988, Reel No. 51, p. 7.

53 TNA, WO 309-1603. Interrogation of Dr. Bruno Tesch at Bad Oeynhausen 26/9/45.

Q. Your neck, your life, hangs on the thread of your interpretation of 'vermin'. Now if vermin is interpreted in the way the SS did, that is 'Jews', you have had it. It would have been a good thing had the SS been interpreted vermin one way and you another. Is it possible they interpreted vermin in a different way from the way you did?

A. The thought that vermin could mean two different things had never occurred to me."

He also ventured a similar argument against Dr. Drosihn:[54]

"Q. Tell me, the reports constantly mention 'pelts." 10.000 to 100.000 pelts were gassed.

A. Maybe furs.

Q. We have reason to assume that the term 'pelts' referred to people.

A. No, the furs, coats and uniforms of the Wehrmacht always came back for delousing."

Captain Freud was a self-aware mythomaniac who created his own imaginary "truth," and insisted on imposing it on the suspects he interrogated, as is illustrated by this dialogue with Dr. Drosihn:[55]

"Q. Do you know why you are here?

A. Yes, I know that it is assumed that the Zyklon gas was used against people.

Q. You are wrong, I know that the Zyklon gas was used against people. We want to know to what degree the company Tesch & Stabenow was involved in this affair."

If the interviewees did not comply, they were treated by him as liars and worse. Here are two examples from the interrogation of Dr. Tesch mentioned earlier:[46]

"You are lying. You are an imbecile, an idiot, you haven't had anything at all and don't want to know anything. […]

Q. Y*ou are an utterly abject liar! So, everyone else is lying, and only you are telling the truth."*

The employees of the Tesch & Stabenow firm, if they did not accept Freud's visionary "truth," were also liars, but with them he used threats. I exhibit a couple of examples for this case as well.

Interrogation of the Tesch secretary Erika Rathke:[56]

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54 TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Drosihn im Altonaer Gefängnis am 17.10.1945 um 11 1/2 Uhr.

55 TNA, WO 309-1603. *Ibid.* The verb "weiss" ("know") is underlined in the original for emphasis, showing Captain Freud's arrogance.

56 TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Frl. Rathke im Frauengefängnis, Holstenglacis, am 13.10.1945 um 14 1/2 Uhr.

"Q. We have to have a serious talk with each other. For all I care, you can spend your entire life in prison, it doesn't matter to me. You have lied to us a lot again.

A. But you can't say this.

Q. Oh yes, I can say that. Do you want to sit here for a very long time?"

Interrogation of Johann Holst:[57]

"My dear Herr Holst, if you believe to somehow get a better treatment by not talking, you have been misled. But if you tell us what you know, this is grounds for a milder treatment."

This procedure of extracting "confessions" is sufficient to understand why the British were persuaded – or pretended to be persuaded – that homicidal gas chambers existed in the camps listed above or that homicidal gassings were carried out, and also what their working methods were.

Specifically, with regard to Neuengamme, they did not dare to claim that this camp possessed a real homicidal gas chamber, nor that the Zyklon B supplied to this camp proved the reality of homicidal gassings, but, as I will illustrate later, they merely had the alleged main perpetrator of the two claimed gassings, Wilhelm (Willi) Bahr take the stand during the at Tesch Trial. He testified against Bruno Tesch, thus providing "proof" that Zyklon B supplied by Tesch & Stabenow had been used for homicidal purposes in Neuengamme as well, evidently with the claimed knowledge of Bruno Tesch. Bahr was the only witness who was used to link Neuengamme and Zyklon B to the Tesch Company. The other two witnesses merely testified about Auschwitz on March 2, 1946: Pery Broad[58] and Charles Sigismund Bendel,[59] who had already testified at the Belsen Trial. The prosecutor, Major Gerald Draper, would also have liked another storyteller to testify at he Tesch Trial, who had recounted her fantasies already during the Belsen Trial: Ada Bimko. However, at the time she was suffering from angina pectoris, so the court had to settle for an affidavit dated May 5, 1945.[60] Here she reiterated her grotesque lie about Auschwitz:[61]

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57 TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Herrn Johann Holst im Altonaer Gefangnis, am 19.10.1945 tun 11^{45} Uhr.

58 Trial by a Military Court of Bruno Tesch, Joachim Drosihn and Karl Weinbacher [Tesch Trial] on Saturday, 2nd March, 1946, Second Day, pp. 22-27. United Nations Archives security microfilm Programme 1988. Reel No. 52.

59 *Ibid.*, pp. 28-31.

60 Trial by a Military Court of Bruno Tesch, Joachim Drosihn and Karl Weinbacher [Tesch Trial] on Saturday, 2nd March, 1946, Second Day, p. 34. United Nations Archives security microfilm Programme 1988. Reel No. 52.

61 TNA, WO 309-625 and WO 311-423, "DEPOSITION OF ADA BIMKO,"

> *"I have examined the records of the numbers cremated and I say that the record show that about 4,000,000 persons were cremated at that camp."*

The connections between the Tesch Trial and the Sachsenhausen case are more complex and require a separate discussion, which I will set out later.

As far as Neuengamme is concerned, the evidence that Zyklon B "was used to kill prisoners" was based on Albin Lüdke's statement of July 2, 1945, a brief excerpt of which was given.[62]

A letter dated January 3, 1946 from the "Group Captain, Legal Staff," belonging to "JAG's Branch (War Crimes Section), HQ, British Army of the Rhine," confirms that Lüdke's statement, whose "original deposition, together with 4 copies of the English translation" was requested, was considered indisputable "evidence."[63]

> *"As evidence is already available to prove that gassings were carried out on human beings with Zyklon B at Concentration Camp NEUENGAMME and AUSCHWITZ, it is not considered that they* [two testimonies on the "gas chamber" at Sachsenhausen] *are essential witnesses."*

This "evidence" was considered conclusively acquired by the British as early as the beginning of the investigation of Neuengamme Camp, and Max Pauly, SS-Sturmbannführer and last camp commandant, had to defend himself against it in a statement he made on October 11, 1945 as part of the Tesch Trial:[64]

> *"Production No. 22*
> *Summary of examination of PAULY, Max, dealer in household hardware of WESSELBUREN, Ekenesch 3, duly sworn states:*
> *I am 38 years of age, of German nationality, born in WESSELBUREN. I am at present living at No. 1 Civil Internment Camp.*
> *I was Camp Commandant at NEUENGAMME Concentration Camp from November 1942 to April 1945.*
> *The Durchgasungsanlage* [fumigation facility] *was in the camp when I arrived. It was used for delousing and disinfesting clothing and bed clothes. The name of the chemical for delousing was something like LAUESOTO*[65] *which we obtained from the Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt in their branch Inspektion, ORANIENBURG, where it was allotted to us. We either fetched it from here or it was delivered by rail. Some of our medical personnel went sometimes to AUSCHWITZ presumably to collect this stuff.*

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62 *Ibid*. "Re: ZYKLON GAS."

63 TNA WO 309-625. "RESTRICTED BAOR/15228/2/C.1386/JAG SUBJECT: Giftgas case -- Dr TESCH."

64 TNA, WO 309-1603. Max Pauly's statement of Oct. 11, 1945 for the Tesch Trial.

65 Recte: Lauseto (from "Läuse" and "Tod"), which was DDT.

The doctors in NEUENGAMME Camp were in reversed chronological order:-
Dr KITT. Last seen by me in NEUENGAMME, but I heard he went to FLENSBURG at the end of April.
Dr JAEGER. I think he went to N. ITALY about the beginning of 1944.
Dr BODMANN was in a camp in RIGA, 1944.
Dr ADOLF I saw last in 1944. I heard he went to GIESSEN, 1944.
Hauptsturmführer Dr TROMMER was in NEUENGAMME in 1943 and went to RAVENSBRÜCK, 1943.
Dr WALDMANN? I think that was his name but I don't know where he went to.
The Admin leaders were:-
Sturmbannführer GEHRING
Obersturmführer SCHMITZ, Karl
Hauptsturmführer WETZEL
When I was at NEUENGAMME there were no gas chambers used for gassing the inmates.
The size of the disinfestation cublicles was about 1.70 x 2 x 2-3 m.[66] *It would be impossible for people to get into them. There were two large air raid shelters (bunker) in the SS Camp and two in the main camp. The latter contained showers and washrooms.*
Previous commandants to me at NEUENGAMME were Obersturmbannführer WEISS and Hauptsturmführer BEER.
I have heard of TESCH and STABENOW. They either delivered stuff to us, I do not remember what, or they did some construction for us. I think they were attached to the Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt in BERLIN.
There were no epidemics of spotted fever in my time at the camp but in 1942 (it could have been earlier) between April – July there was an epidemic caused by Russians. The camp was completely closed for 2-3 months.
I have heard of ZYKLON. I think it is a disinfectant.
There were no disinfestation squads in the camp but there were three medical personnel from the inmates who supervised the inmates who alone carried out all the disinfestation."

Wilhelm Bahr, as mentioned earlier, had been implicated as the main perpetrator of the Neuengamme gassings by the witnesses Eduard Zuleger and Günther Wackernagel (June 9, 1945), by the French July 3 "Rapport," and by Ewald Gondzik (Sept. 13). It is likely that his involvement in the alleged gassings, in the British perspective, was corroborated by his partici-

66 Recte: 1.35 m × 1.90 m × 40 m. See Chapter 7.

pation in the disinfestation course at Sachsenhausen, at which, so the British claimed, he had been instructed in the use of Zyklon B for the killing of human beings. For the witnesses (at least for those who named him), his involvement must have been a consequence of the fact that he was a fumigation expert, who therefore had to deal with Zyklon B.

Bahr was thus confronted with various incriminating testimonies that were considered to be incontrovertible "evidence" of his guilt, so he chose the strategy of "confession."

On November 30, 1945 he signed an affidavit,[67] of which I quote here the official English translation:[68]

"STATEMENT ON OATH
by Wilhelm Bahr, born the 25th April 1907.
Occupation: Cartwright,
who, having been duly sworn, states:-
In January 1942 I was selected for a disinfection-course in Berlin. After this course I came to Oranienburg and took part in a 3-days-course for Zyklon B given by Dr. TESCH of Hamburg. Dr. Tesch emphasized the danger of this gas for human beings. Shortly afterwards when I was again at Neuengamme, a batch of about 200 Russians came into the camp. After a stay of about 1-2-days in the camp, these Russians were led into the bathhouse of the camp. There they had to undress. They went naked into the prison cells. The outside-doors were locked, the doors of the separate cells, however, remained open. A ladder was put against the roof and I climbed onto the roof of the cells. There were 6 pipes leading into the cells. I was wearing a gas-mask and poured into each of these pipes about ½ a tin of Zyklon B. A few days before a radiator had been fixed in the cells at the ceiling of the gangway. This was connected to the electric light. After I had emptied the gas, I climbed down, and as it was lunchtime, I went for my meal. After lunch I returned and the doors were opened. The bodies were loaded onto the trailer of a lorry. At first, I helped with this, but later Dr. von BOTHMANN arrived and ordered some prisoners to load the bodies. The bodies were taken to the crematorium and were burned there. Orders for this action I received from Dr. von Bothmann, who also proposed the use of Zyklon B.
When a second batch of Poles arrived a few weeks later, to be gassed, I was not present, because I was at an outside detachment. During the first gassing I was aided by SDG August BUEHNING, who was also with me on the roof of the cells.

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67 TNA, WO 235-167, p. 91.
68 TNA, WO 311-423, "Production No 55."

In the same year some people were injected, who were either too weak to work or incurably ill. This was done by Buehning and myself on instruction from Dr. JAEGER. I cannot remember exactly the number, but I estimate that I have injected 100-200 prisoners. The process of injecting was as follows:

The people were led naked into a certain room. There they received the order to lie face downwards a table. They were then injected by Buehning or myself with approximately 5 ccm PHENOL into the hole at the back of the head. The people lost consciousness immediately and died 1-2 minutes afterwards. They were then carried by Buehning and me into the morgue, which was next door and were later transported by prisoners to the crematorium.

Signed WILHEM BAHR."

As mentioned earlier, Bahr testified during the second hearing of the Tesch Trial on March 2, 1946:[69]

"MAJOR DRAPER: Are your names Wilhelm Bahr?

A. Wilhelm Friedrich Bahr.

Q. Were you employed as Oberscharführer in the concentration camp Neuengamme?

A. I was Unterscharfuhrer.

Q. In which camp?

A. From 1941 to 1943 in Neuengamme.

Q. Were you a member of the SS Totenkopfverbande?

A. No.

Q. What was your particular job on Neuengamme?

A. I was medical orderly.

Q. Do you remember in 1942 being sent on a course in Oranienburg?

A. Yes.

Q. What sort of course?

A. That was a prussic acid course.

Q. Who gave the course?

A. From Dr Tesch.

Q. Is Dr Tesch in court today?

A. The men on the left is Dr Tesch.

Q. Whereabouts in Oranienburg was the course given, in the concentration camp or in the SS buildings?

A. In the SS hospital.

Q. Inside the camp?

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[69] Trial by a Military Court of Bruno Tesch, Joachim Drosihn and Karl Weinbacher [Tesch Trial] on Saturday, 2nd March, 1946, Second Day, pp. 18-21. United Nations Archives security microfilm Programme 1988. Reel No. 52.

A. No, it was outside the camp where the barracks were situated.
Q. How many days did the course last?
A. Three days.
Q. What were you told about Blausäuregas?
A. I cannot say much about it, because it is a long time ago and it all happened very quick, all in three days.
Q. What was the name of the Blausäuregas?
A. Zyklon B.
Q. Were you told it was dangerous to human beings or not?
A. Yes, he told us that it was very dangerous and some workmen who had worked with it with him had already got killed by it.
Q. Who told you that?
A. Dr Tesch, who was holding the course.
Q. When the course was over did you get any document to say that you had attended it?
A. Yes, it was a small certificate signed by Tesch himself.
Q. By whom?
A. By Dr Tesch.
Q. What did it say?
A. It said that I had attended the three days course.
Q. How many were there on this course?
A. About 20 men.
Q. Were they SS [illegible]*?*
A. Yes.
Q. Do you know where they came from, any of them?
A. They came from different parts.
Q. Did any of them come from concentration camp?
A. I do not know.
Q. Is it correct that you have gassed 200 Russian prisoners of war with Blausäuregas?
A. Yes, on orders.
Q. Where did you do that?
A. In Neuengamme.
Q. On whose orders?
A. The local doctor, Dr Von Bergmann.
Q. With what gas?
A. With prussic acid.
Q. Have you seen either of those tins before? (Same handed).
A. Yes, Exhibit 2.
Q. What sort did you use to gas the 200 Russian prisoners of war?
A. The small one.

Q. How many did you use to gas those people?
A. I do not remember any more – perhaps 5 or 6, about that.
Q. 5 or 6 of these little tins were used, were they?
A. Yes.
Q. How long did the Russians take to die?
A. I do not know; I obeyed only orders.
Q. How long did it take to gas the Russians?
A. I returned after two hours and they were all dead.
Q. For what purpose did you go away?
A. That was during lunch hour.
Q. You left for lunch and came back afterwards?
A. Yes.
Q. Were they dead when you came back?
A. Yes.
Q. Did you look at their bodies?
A. Yes, because I had to load them.
Q. Why did you apply the gas to the Russians?
A. I only had orders to pour the gas in and I do not know anything more about it.
Q. From where did you pour it?
A. From the roof.
Q. How did you stop the gas coming out?
A. It was a barrack, gas was poured and then a brick was put on the entrance.
Q. Do you know if they screamed?
A. I do not know. I have not heard it.
Cross-examined by Dr. Zippel.
Q. Do you know the name of the firma Tesch & Stabenow?
A. Yes.
Q. Have you seen on the labels of those tins which you used the name of the firm?
A. Yes.
Q. Have you used those tins also for other purposes?
A. Yes, for delousing.
Q. Where was this delousing made?
A. In Neuengamme, in two delousing chambers.
Q. Where those delousing chambers also used for the killing of human beings?
A. As far an I know it was not.
Q. How much gas did you use to fill a gas chamber once?
A. One tin.

Q. How often was gas in these gas chambers?
A. I do not know. I only supervise it; there were inmates who were doing it, the prisoners.
Q. Have you any idea how much clothing was deloused at one occasion?
A. 40 to 50 pieces.
Q. Was that the regular procedure, the delousing?
A. Yes every day.
Q. I understand it that the clothing of each prisoner was deloused every day?
A. No, if there was not enough gas available, of course, we had to stop delousing proceedings.
Q. But when gas was available was it always used in these gas chambers?
A. Yes, even the paliasses [= paillasse + straw-filled mattress] *we found were dirty and we deloused them.*
Q. How many inmates were in Neuengamme?
A. At the time I was there about 4,000 or 5,000.
Q. Did they change very often; I mean did some arrive and some go?
A. I do not know.
Q. When you gassed the Russian prisoners how did you open the tins?
A. The tins were opened by the prisoners.
Q. How did you get the open tin from below up to the roof?
A. There was another prisoner who was standing on a ladder and the open tin was covered in the meantime with rubber.
Q. Did you see the contents of the tin?
A. It gave me the impression like carbide.
Q. Blue or white?
A. Light blue.
Q. When you poured the contents of the tin through this pipe did it go through?
A. Yes.
Q. When did this gassing of the Russians take place?
A. I do not remember.
Q. Do you remember the year?
A. 1942 it was.
Q. Was it spring or summer?
A. It might have been in the summer. I cannot remember exactly.
Q. Can you remember whether it was warm or cold outside?
A. It was warm. It must have been summer, but whether it was a warm spring I do not know.
Q. When you attended this course we are talking about, were you then a medical orderly?

A. Yes, we were all medical orderlies.
Q. Was the purpose mentioned for which this gas ought to be used?
A. For extermination of vermin.
Q. Was it told to you whether you had to use this gas only in these gas chambers or whether whole buildings could be gassed as well?
A. We were told that whole buildings, even ships, could be gassed like that.
Q. The document which you received after the course was finished, did it give you the right to use gas also in the gassing of whole buildings or had you to content yourself with gas chambers?
A. Only gas chambers.
Q. Did they warn you at that course about the danger of that gas?
A. Yes.
Q. Have they trained you at the SS particularly in the killing of human beings?
A. No.
Q. Was it mentioned during that course that this Zyklon could be used also for the killing of human beings?
A. I cannot say. I do not remember. I do not know. I cannot say.
MAJOR DRAPER: No re-examination.
THE PRESIDENT: Who taught you the procedure by which the Russian were killed on this particular occasion; was it Dr Tesch?
A. No, it was a doctor who was stationed there.
THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Did you wear a gas mask when you were pouring in this gas into the chamber?
A. Yes, I did.
Q. How many delousing machines were there in Neuengamme?
A. Two.
Q. Were you supposed to operate them?
A. Only supervise.
Q. Was it your job to supervise those machines when they were being used?
A. That was one of my jobs, but I was a medical orderly as well.
Q. Was there any other medical orderly who had to supervise these delousing machines?
A. Yes; and when the Russian were gassed the chief medical orderly was there as well.
Q. Was the only time you used this gas when you were using gassing machines or when you were gassing human beings?
A. That was the only time.
Q. Where was this gas kept when it was not being used?
A. There was a room in the neighbourhood of the CRS where the gas was kept.

Q. Did you keep a stock in hand?
A. A small stock. Sometimes we had none, then again we had a small stock."

3. The Neuengamme Trial

The Tesch Trial ended on March 8, 1946, and already on the 18th the British began a trial in Hamburg against Max Pauly, former commandant of the Neuengamme Camp, and 13 other SS men from the camp, the so-called "*Erster Curio-Haus-Prozess*," which lasted until May 3, 1946.[70]

The defendants were, according to the number assigned to them in the dock:

1. SS *Obersturmbannführer* Max Pauly, *Lagerkommandant*
2. SS *Obersturmführer* Karl Totzauer, *Adjudant*
3. SS *Obersturmführer* Anton Thumann, *Lagerführer*
4. SS *Hauptsturmführer* Dr. Bruno Kitt, *Lagerarzt*
5. SS *Unterscharführer* Willy Dreimann, *Rapportführer*
6. SS *Unterscharführer* Heinrich Ruge
7. SS *Unterscharführer* Willi Warncke
8. SS *Oberscharführer* Johann Reese
9. SS *Oberscharführer* Anton Speck
10. SS *Rottenführer* Andreas Brehms
11. SS *Unterscharführer* Walter Kummel
12. SDG *Unterscharführer* Willi Bahr
13. SS *Hauptsturmführer* Wiedemann
14. SS *Hauptsturmführer* Dr. Alfred Trzebinski, *SS Standortarzt*.

Three former prisoners testified against Wilhelm Bahr regarding the alleged homicidal gassing.

Albin Lüdke gave a lengthy deposition at the 1st and 2nd hearings on March 18 and 19, 1946.[71] Here a pertinent extract (p. 89):

"Q. The next Accused you recognised was No. 12. What can you tell us about him?

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[70] This was the main trial. Subsequently, the British held several other trials in Hamburg against other personnel from Neuengamme and the auxiliary camps. One of these will be mentioned below.

[71] TNA, WO 235-162, pp. 76-106. Page numbers in the text from there, unless stated otherwise.

A. Bahr arrived in 1942 as an ordinary SS man and medical orderly to the prisoners' hospital. He was specially brutal, stupid and cruel. He ill-treated all those people severely ill and sick in the hospital and people who went there to ask for his help.

Q. Did he have any qualifications for the job of medical orderly?

A. No. He was leading in the liquidation of 1100 prisoners by injecting phenol and petrol. Further, in the autumn of 1942 he exterminated 250 Russian prisoners of war in the 'arrest' cells by using gas, Zyklon B. […]

Q. In regard to the gassings, did you see the Accused Bahr perform this or is it hearsay?

A. I did not see it myself.

Q. How is it that you know?

A. I heard of that from comrades of mine; but what I can say about my own experience is the following: In September or perhaps October 1942 I returned from the SS camp to the workshop where I was working. The part of the hut where I was working was on one side, and the other side of the same hut contained the cells where the prisoners were kept. When I passed the door I saw the door was open and a mountain of corpses in a cramped position and the height of one metre 70 to one metre 80 was visible. In front of this mountain of corpses the Commandant, Pauly, was standing, and also the then Lagerfuehrer Luetgenmeyer. These corpses were loaded on trucks. In front of these trucks inmates were detailed to pull these trucks, and whereas in the beginning the blockfuhrers themselves loaded the corpses on to these trucks, later on the inmates who were pulling the trucks did the job. At the same time, as it was time for roll call, the whole camp was standing on the parade ground. During this time the inmates of the camp who were parading had to sing the very well-known song: 'Welcome, sweet troubadour, let us be frolicsome and joyful'. Then these carts went past the prisoners on the main camp road into the crematorium."

Michael Müller was questioned during the 9th hearing, March 27, 1946 (pp. 270-280). Here some relevant passages (pp. 270-272):

"Q. What function did you hold there? [at Neuengamme]

A. First I was at the quarries, after that I was at the hospital as a laundry man and after that I was a kapo in the delousing station.

Q. How far was the delousing station from the bunker?

A. Two metres.

Q. Could you tell the court whether in October 1942 when you were at the delousing station you noticed anything extraordinary going on in the bunker?

A. In October 1942 I came to the delousing station and people were hanged there frequently, particularly Allied officers.

Q. I was not referring to that. What I want to ask you was whether in the structure of the bunker you noticed any changes made at this particular period in 1942.
A. Yes, I noticed in October 1942 that the wooden shutters outside the windows were being replaced by steel plates and bolts with iron bars were fitted to the cell doors and an electric cable was laid into the bunker from the telegraph pole. One morning Unterscharfuhrer Bahr, who was my superior, came and asked me how much gas I had left.
Q. Can you recognize the person whom you mentioned in this court?
A. No. 12.
Q. Will you continue with what you were telling us?
A. I then unlocked the cupboard and I showed to Bahr what Zyklon B I had left there.
Q. Will you tell the court what Zyklon B was used for?
A. Zyklon B was used up until then for delousing and for generally cleaning the camp and the S.S. Camp.
Q. When you as a reply showed him how much gas there was what did Bahr say to you then?
A. He went away and soon after Bahr returned and said that he required six tins of this gas and went away again. Then Bahr returned after a short while together with Untersturmfuhrer Buehning and they were trying to open those tins.
Q. When did you get the first intimation as to what this gas was to be used for?
A. I had noticed it first at the time when the 197 Russian officers were gassed.
Q. When was that in relation to the conversation with Bahr which you have just described?
A. The conversation with Bahr took place at approximately 11 o'clock in the morning and the execution through gassing took place at midday the same day.
Q. Will you describe to the court the arrival of those Russian prisoners?
A. The Russian arrived at the gate marching in ranks of five; there were sick man amongst them who were leaning on sticks and crutches.
Q. How did you know they were Russians? Were they wearing civilian clothes or uniform?
A. They were wearing uniform.
Q. Do I take you to say then that you recognised the uniform of the Red Army?
A. I spoke to one of those Russians who spoke German very well. The Russians were then marched to No. 7 Block which was the arrival block. They

were then paraded in rows of five, were counted and then they had to hand in their eating utensils, personal documents and photographs. Then Bahr called me over and evidently they did not know yet where these people were to undress. At this time I had an opportunity to speak to an officer, a Russian Major of the engineers. […]
Q. Did you tell us roughly how many Russian prisoners of war there were in that party?
A. 197.
Q. Did you count them or did anybody else count them?
A. When they were led over to the cellar where they were to undress they were counted and before that when they stood in ranks of five they were counted. Then they were marched to the cellar to undress. Then the lagerfuhrer, Luetkemeyer called me over to him and told me to collect these people's clothing as soon as they had gone and to have it deloused.
Q. When you saw the Russians again after they had left their clothing where were they marched to then?
A. I stood at the corner of my delousing station and I saw these prisoners running one by one from the cellar to the bunker between two rows of S.S. Guards.
Q. What happened when they left the bunker?
A. When the last Russian had got into the bunker an S.S. man reported 197 present. Then they were all inside the bunker and the bunker was locked from outside.
Q. What happened next?
A. Bahr went onto the roof and he poured the Zyklon B gas through six pipes into the bunker.
Q. How long did they wait until eventually the bunker was open again?
A. The bunker was open in the late afternoon.
Q. Can you indicate the time that elapsed?
A. Round about four or five o'clock.
Q. What happened when the door of the bunker was opened?
A. As soon as the door was opened some 50 to 100 corpses just fell into the open. Then some S.S. were detailed to take those bodies on the carts.
Q. Where did they cart them on these trolleys?
A. The S.S. only loaded a few bodies and then prisoners were called to do it. They were loaded onto four trolleys and the whole camp was at that time on parade on the big square and the four trolleys were pushed along the parade in front of everybody who was standing on the parade ground.
Q. Where to?
A. Through the gate to the crematorium. As the trolleys passed us we had on the command to sing the song, 'Welcome, you happy singers'.

Q. Going back for a moment to the time when you were at your delousing station and the Russians were filed into the bunker, can you tell the court who and how many of the S.S. staff were present?
A. The whole S.S. staff was present.
Q. Do I understand you to mean, when you say, 'the whole S.S. staff', from the camp commandant downwards?
A. There were five or six officers present apart from the medical officers, and all the blockfuhrers were present.
Q. This being in 1942, can you say whether any of the accused in the dock here were present at that time?
A. No.1, Pauly, the commandant; No.5, Dreimann; No.12, Bahr; No.9, Speck; that is all.
THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Is he saying that these people were in the camp at that time or present at this incident?
MAJOR STEWART: When he said that the whole staff was present, this being in 1942 I asked him could he say which of the accused in the dock were there at that time.
THE JUDGES ADVOCATE: Do you mean in the camp or present at the time of the gassing?
MAJOR STEWART: I mean at the gassing of the Russians.
THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: You had better get it clear which of the accused he is prepared to swear had anything to do with this gassing of the Russians.
MAJOR STEWART: Did I understand you to say, or did you not mean that, that these four accused whom you pointed out just now were present at the camp or present on that parade when you say the whole staff was there?
A. No, they were present when the door of the bunker was opened."

In the cross-examination, Dr. Wessing (Pauly's defense counsel) asked the witness (pp. 275f.):

"I want to ask you about the gassing of the Russian officers. You said that during the gassing of these officers the commandant, Pauly, was at the door of the bunker; is that correct?
A. Yes."

To which he objected:

"I wish to read to you a part of your statement which you made in December, 1945: 'Commandant Weiss, the adjutant, Bruening, the standortarzt and the lagerarzt and the whole staff of blockfuhrers were all assembled in front of the bunker door'.
A. This phrase is not correct. Weiss for instance came in May 1942 to Dachau and from him commandant Pauly took over."

The questioner then replied:

"In this statement which you made in December 1945 you gave exactly the same details of the gassing of those 197 Russians as you did today; […]. *The only difference is that in your statement you say the commandant was Weiss, the adjutant was Bruening and then you quote the two S.S. doctors and so on. How do you account for this discrepancy?*

A. That must be a mistake because when Weiss was commandant of the camp those 59 Russians were shot through the back of their heads; that is the incident I referred to today and that was under the command of Weiss."

In the cross-examination by Dr. Halben (defense counsel for Kitt and Dreimann), the witness specified the date of the alleged gassing by asserting that "it was the end of October or the beginning of November, 1942 as I did not enter the delousing station until the 1st October" (p. 277).

Dr. Kroll (defense counsel for Brems, Kummel and Bahr) then asked the witness (*ibid.*):

"You spoke of structural alterations to the bunker. Do you know by whose orders this bunker was altered in that way?

A. Yes, by order of the lagerfuhrer or the commandant, and I do know that during the day when these alterations were made Bahr visited the bunker several times and took great interest in the progress."

During re-examination, Major Stewart returned to the issue of Commandant Weiss (p. 279):

"Q. You said that during the gassing of the Russians the entire camp staff was present when eventually the door of the bunker was opened; is that right?

A. That is correct.

Q. You said that the date when this occurrence took place was in October 1942; is that right?

A. That is correct.

Q. Do you say that you saw and recognised Pauly there or did you merely draw the conclusion that he was there from the fact that it was in October 1942 and at that time Pauly was, or you thought he was, camp commandant? In other words was it an observation or was it a conclusion you drew when you said that Pauly was there?

A. I say it because I have seen Pauly there on that occasion.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Was not the statement you made to the officer in which you said that the commandant who was present when the Russians were gassed was Weiss read over to you?

A. It was read over.

Q. Was it not read over to you that you had said that the commandant was Weiss and that you had not mentioned anything about Pauly?

A. I really cannot explain how this mistake happened."

Ernst Saalwächter was questioned at the 11th and 12th hearings, March 29 and 30, 1946 (pp. 349-381). During the 11th hearing, he was also asked about the alleged gassing (p. 358):

"Q. Do you recollect any special happening at the bunker in 1942?
A. In 1942 197 Russian prisoners of war were gassed in that bunker.
MAJOR STEWART: Were you present when that gassing of the Russian prisoners of war happened?
A. I was present only indirectly, as I observed this incident from a work-shop window.
Q. How far was that workshop from the bunker?
A. About one hundred metres.
Q. Could you see the various people who went in and out of the bunker from your window?
A. Do you mean the prisoners who were executed?
Q No, I mean the SS personnel who were present, if any?
A. I observed SGT Bahr and SGT Buening on the roof of the bunker in the process of emptying tins of something into the bunker through pipes.
Q. Did you see any other members of the SS staff, apart from the two you have mentioned, either during or after the gassing at the bunker?
A. When the doors of the bunker were opened after the gassing had taken place I saw Pauly, the Commandant, and the Lagerfuhrer, Luetkemeyer,- nearby.
Q. What did they do?
A. They stood there watching the doors of the bunker being opened and the corpses taken out, and then they went to the camp grounds where a parade was in progress."

In the 12th hearing the witness, cross-examined by Dr. Wessig, provided further clarification (p. 369):

"Q. When did the gassing of the Russians take place?
A. It was at the end of September or the beginning of October 1942. […]
Q. Y*ou said yesterday that you were approximately one hundred metres away from the bunker when you saw Pauly?*
A. Yes.
Q. Where were you standing at the time?
A. I was standing by the window of my workshop.
Q. Did you look through the window or was the window open?
A. The window was open and I was leaning out."

Wilhelm Bahr was questioned at the 28th and 29th hearings, which took place on April 18 and 22, 1946.[72]

In the 28th hearing he was asked only about personal data; at the beginning of the 29th the interrogation expanded on the killings of Russian POWs unfit for work by phenol injections, which Bahr admitted to having carried out. The first victims arrived in Neuengamme in late 1941 with a transport of about 1,000 prisoners, from which those unfit for work were selected (pp. 96-101). Then the alleged gassing was discussed (pp. 101-104):

"Q. Now we come to the gassing. When did this gassing take place?
A. In autumn 1942.
Q. What is the number of victims?
A. There were about 180 to 200.
Q. Were there any alterations made to the bunker in the Autumn of 1942?
A. I have seen some of these alterations but I know nothing about it. They were ordered by the kommandantur and the kommandofuhrer.
Q. What were these alterations as far as you know?
A. As far as I could see it consisted mainly of a pipe being fixed to the roof of each cell and further ceiling installations of electric cables. I wondered what these alterations were for as I did not know what was going to happen then.
Q. Then a convoy arrived?
A. Yes.
Q. What convoy was this?
A. They were Russians.
Q. Were they chiefly officers?
A. I cannot say.
Q. Did you see these Russians when they were led into the camp?
A. No, I saw them later on when they were led into the bunker.
Q. What was your part; what did you have to do with these people?
A. On the morning of their arrival Buehning and myself were ordered to report to the office of the lagerfuhrer.
Q. Who was the standortarzt?
A. Dr. Von Boetmann.
Q. What did Dr. Von Boetmann tell you?
A. He gave us a talk and said that within the course of the day we would have to gas this convoy of Russians.
Q. What did you say to him? Did you say yes?

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[72] TNA, WO 235-165, pp. 90-112. Page numbers in the text from there, unless stated otherwise.

A. He gave us the order to carry this out whereupon I told him I could not do that, that it was against my heart.
Q. What happened then?
A. Then I was threatened for a second time with the SS police court. I executed this order so as not to make my family too unhappy.
Q. Why is it that you were chosen for this task?
A. Because I had attended the sanitary course in Berlin and as I happened to be in the hospital; one of the medical orderlies of the hospital had to do it.
Q. But you have stated that during your three days sanitary course you learned about the gas Zyklon B being an anti-vermin device.
A. Yes.
Q. But not to use as a deadly gas?
A. That had already been talked about by the standortarzt and the lagerfuhrer.
MAJOR STEWART: I understand him to say more than 'lagerfuhrer'.
THE INTERPRETER: 'I took it that the standortarzt, the lagerfuhrer and the camp commandant had talked about it as I did not know anything about it'.
Dr. KROLL: Did not you get any detailed orders exactly as to what you were supposed to do?
A. The standortarzt told me – and all the staff were standing around at the time – that everything was prepared and all I had to do was to pour the gas into the block.
Q. Where did you get hold this gas Zyklon B; were you keeping it?
A. No, it was being kept in the post-mortem room.
Q. Who was supposed to look after it?
A. The kapo in charge of the station had some under his charge as well.
Q. Was his name Muller?
A. Yes.
Q. Who supplied you with it then?
A. I may have asked Muller for some.
Q. Did he have sufficient?
A. Yes, only five tins were required.
Q. Did you know that this quantity would be sufficient?
A. The standortarzt had ordered me to pour half a canister into each of the openings in the roof.
Q. Did you take the tins to the bunker?
A. No, they were brought there by the prisoner, Muller.
Q. You had been to the bunker before then?
A. Yes.

Q. Had you seen how the Russians had been taken to the bunker?
A. Yes.
Q. Were these Russians fully undressed?
A. Yes, they, were fully undressed and they were conducted from the bathhouse to the bunker.
Q. Do you know whether the Russians were aware as to what was going to happen to them?
A. I cannot say anything about that because I did not talk to them.
Q. Did the Russians allow themselves to be led just like that or did they offer any resistance?
A. I did not notice any.
Q. During the inspection of the camp and the bunker it was noticed that the cells of the bunker were extremely small and narrow and if 200 people had been crowded into these cells the bunker must have been more than overcrowded; is that the case?
A. I could not say because I did not participate in the conducting of the prisoners to the bunker. That was done by the blockfuhrers.
Q. When did your job start?
A. My job started in so far as I was told to get the zyklon B ready and later on pour it in through the pipes, otherwise I had nothing to do with it.
Q. Were there many SS present on this occasion?
A. Although I cannot name them I know that the standortarzt, the lagerarzt, the lagerfuhrer, the rapportfuhrer and the labour distribution officer and many others were present.
Q. Was the standortarzt Von Boetmann in charge of the whole affair?
A. Yes.
Q. So Muller came to the bunker with the zyklon B?
A. Yes.
Q. What did you do then?
A. I had in the meantime climbed on the roof of the bunker together with Buehning.
Q. From the outside?
A. Yes.
Q. How did you get up there?
A. There was a ladder provided.
Q. Did you take the zyklon B with you as you went up the ladder?
A. No, the tins were opened on the ground by Muller, and another prisoner who was standing on the ladder passed them up to me.
Q. Were any special precautions necessary at the opening of the tins?
A. As the tins were opened a rubber cap was placed over the opening immediately.

Q. I mean any precautions taken by the people standing there; the gas could evaporate if sufficient heat was being generated; in other words did they wear gas-masks?
A. Yes, all those standing around there did.
Q. I take it that this zyklon B looked like piece of crystal?
A. Yes, it looked just like a carbide lamp.
Q. So you were standing on the roof and you received these open tins. What did you do then?
A. We poured half a tin through each of the pipes.
Q.You said 'we'. Was Buehning there as well?
A. Yes.
Q. After you had carried this out what orders did you get?
A. Dr. Von Boetmann told us that we could go away for two hours and then come back as the bunker would not be opened for two hours.
Q. Was the bunker guarded during that time?
A. I could not say for certain but I take it that blockfuhrers or lageralte-sters were standing there.
Q. What time of the day was it when, all this started; noon?
A. I cannot say whether it was in the forenoon or afternoon.
Q. Did you return after two hours had elapsed?
A. Yes, Buehning and I returned to the bunker.
Q. What happened as you returned?
A. When we got there we found the door had already been opened by the rapportfuhrer.
Q. Were the doors of the cells open as well?
A. Yes, they had never been closed; they had been closed right from the be-ginning until the main bunker door had been closed.
Q. What kind of picture did you find when you got there?
A. Some of the prisoners had already fallen through the door of the bunker and it was a horrible sight indeed.
Q. Do you mean some of the corpses?
A. Yes.
Q. Where were those bodies taken to?
A. Buehning and I had to load up the first carts ourselves.
Q. Where were they taken?
A. To the crematorium. Whilst we were loading the first cart the standortarzt came and told us that we need not do that and we could go away.
Q. Thereupon the thing was finished for you?
A. Yes."

The witness was then cross-examined by Dr. Wessig (p. 104):

"When did this gassing take place, which month?
A. I could not say, but I take it that the commandant Pauly was there at the time.
Q. You said the whole of the staff were present at the gassing?
A. Yes.
Q. You said that you took it that Pauly was there at the time. Did you actually see him yourself?
A. I could not say.
Q. Why then do you say that you take it that Pauly was there and commandant at the time?
A. Because from that we have heard from witnesses this is supposed to have taken place early in October.
Q. Do you assume this from what you have heard from proceedings in this court or what you can remember yourself?
A. No, I take it from what Pauly has stated himself, namely that came in August 1942.
Q. Then that is a conclusion, not something which you remember?
(No answer)."

In his cross-examination, Major Steward returned to the alleged gassing. After several questions, he asked Bahr (p. 109):

"One thing that puzzles me and that is how did you get 200 people in the bunker which we have seen and which contained five very small cells only?
A. I really do not know, I did not push them in myself, I only saw them march past the bunker. How they got in I did not know.
Q. Do not you think it was difficult to get 200 people in that small bunker?
A. It must have been difficult but how they did it I do not know.
Q. Did you hear somebody reported 'All present' and then give the number when they were all inside?
A. I cannot remember.
Q. Then when you had put the gas inside and came down again, where did you go; you said you went away for two hours?
A. To the hospital.
Q. What time of the day was it?
A. It might have been morning as I said before or it might have been in the afternoon.
Q. Was it before or after lunch when you came?
A. I do not know it any more.
Q. Cannot you remember whether you had your lunch after you put the gas in and walked away or cannot you remember which way it was?
A. I cannot remember whether it was before or after lunch. […]"

"Q. *Surely for the first time in your life you had gassed 200 people and you had seen the horrible sight of all these corpses coming out of the bunker and yet you never made any remark, not even to the people who knew as well.*
A. I do not know, I cannot remember whether there was any talk about it.
[…]
Q. W*hen you went away did you see the prisoners being paraded on the square?*
A. No.
Q. We were told by witnesses, and you were there when they told it, that the prisoners were being paraded and had to sing 'Welcome Happy Singers'. Now when you went away surely you must have seen them?
A. As far as I know and remember there was no parade and no singing.
Q. So the witnesses who said that are telling an untruth, are they?
A. That I cannot say, but I heard no singing and I saw no parade. I spoke the truth about everything else I have seen and there is no reason why I should not speak the truth about this." (p. 110)

Former commander Max Pauly, who, according to logic and hierarchy, should have given the order for the alleged gassing, knew nothing about it. When questioned about it, he stated that he was not at the camp when it purportedly took place.[73]

In a deposition under oath dated January 9, 1946 Pauly stated:[74]

"The gassings in the Neuengamme Camp did not take place during my time as the local commandant; I also know nothing about the lethal injections that were performed before I came to Neuengamme."

On July 3, 1946, Pauly drafted another deposition on oath, in which he stated:[75]

"Frequently I received orders from BERLIN, Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA) to proceed to executions of prisoners. The prisoners were hanged. The sentence had to be executed by the commandant of the concentration camp.
The execution order came either from the RSHA directly, or from the RSHA through the local Gestapo Office, or from the RSHA through the Amtsgruppe D. RSHA just like Amtsgruppe D was authorized to order the executions of prisoners, in other words I could receive execution orders from three different authorities. The orders for the gassing and for giving injections to the Russian PW's too came from the Amtsgruppe D.

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73 TNA, WO 235-163, pp. 26, 53 (13th and 14th hearing, 1 and 2 April 1946).
74 TNA, WO 235-167, "Production No. 45," p. 56.
75 NO-1201.

During my office as commandant about 250 executions took place. Frequently I did not know the reason for them; I just received the order signed by MUELLER of the RSHA or by HOESS.
On the 10 or 15 April 1945 Obergruppenfuehrer POHL ordered the execution of 20 children and 4 nurses. The 20 children were executed because they had been experimented on, and the nurses, because they had watched the experiments. That order was signed by Obersturmbannfuehrer HOESS of Amt D 1 according to Dr. TRZEBINSKY.
Dr. TRZEBINSKY received the execution order, arranged for it, and the 24 people were hanged."

I close this chapter by adducing other sources that are not directly related to the Neuengamme Trial.

Former SS-Oberscharführer Albert Lütkemeyer, who had served as leader of the Protective Custody Camp at Neuengamme from October 1942 to February 1944, was not among the 14 defendants in the main trial, but was tried together with former Rapportfürer Wilhelm Keuss in "Case No. 8," which took place in Hamburg in late February and early March 1947.[76] Both were sentenced to death on March 7, 1947, and executed on June 26.

On November 4, 1946, Lütkemeyer gave a deposition in which he stated:[77]

"On the case of the gassing of Russian PoWs, I can state the following. During the winter of 1942/43, I was ordered by Sturmbannfuehrer PAULY to make the detention bunker airtight. At that time, the purpose for this change of the detention bunker was unknown to me. Also on orders of PAULY, I installed 6 ventilation pipes in the roof. When I came to the gas bunker, the Russian PoWs had already been locked up in the bunker, and I merely heard the screams of the dying men. I know that the Russians were locked up in the bunker by the medical orderlies, and that PAULY, the camp physician on duty back then and the medical orderly BAHR participated in this. When the bunker's door was opened, I was close to the bunker. After the inmates had brought carts, the corpses were loaded onto them by the inmates under the supervision of infirmary staff, and brought to the crematorium. Every evening during nice weather, the inmates sang a song, and it is possible that they sang 'Welcome, happy singers' that evening, but it was not sung on occasion of the gassing. I asked PAULY for the legal justification for these murders, and he told me that Russia is not part of the Geneva Convention, hence in his eyes they were justified."

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[76] TNA, WO 235-301. "Military Court (War Crimes) Trial. Neuengamme VIII," against Albert Lütkemeyer and Wilhelm Keus.

[77] TNA, WO 235-301. "Production No. 10, DEPOSITION of Albert LUETKEMEYER," pp. 186f. (pp. 2-3 of the deposition).

In the course of the trial, Lütkemeyer returned to the issue of the alleged gassing. His account is rather fragmented:[78]

> *"It did not strike me as peculiar to be told to make the bunker airtight and get put together in this way. I thought it was an extra delousing station. At that time I did not know the object of it all. I did not think of a gas chamber. All I knew at that time was that gas crystals were used for delousing. I did not know the bunker was to be a gas chamber. I drew the conclusion that this place was to be used for delousing by gas. Therefore a gas chamber. The Commandant did not take me into his confidence. When I got to the Bunker the Russians were already in it. The new in* [new arrivals] *later were taken straight to a bath, especially Eastlanders. These Russians were not camp inmates. That is why neither the Doctor nor I selected them."*

Lütkemeyer "was near the bunker for about 5 minutes before the door was opened", saw Bahr wearing a gas mask but clarified:

> *"I could not have seen what was put down the tubes. I could not see what sort was put down the tubes. I could not have seen I must have made a mistake, I did not know what was used for the gassing."*

In practice, the defendant did not provide any useful information. His assumption that the bunker had been turned into an "extra delousing station" is suggestive but unfounded. Such a task would possibly have been entrusted to Tesch & Stabenow; on the other hand, the structure of the bunker, with only one access through the corridor, did not lend itself at all to this use, which would have required two doors for each cell, one on the "unclean" side for the introduction of contaminated clothes, the other on the "clean" side for the extraction of disinfected clothes.

By the time Lütkemeyer went on trial, the judicial dogma about the alleged gassing of Soviet PoWs created at the Neuengamme Trial was well established, and was also enforced against the defendant: "Exhibit 2" was nothing more than a "Certified extract of the evidence given by the accused Willi Bahr during the 29th and 30th days (22nd and 23nd April, 1946) at the trial of Max Pauly and 13 others Neuengamme Main Trial."[79]

Lütkemeyer could therefore not dispute the alleged event, about which he clearly knew nothing.

On October 26, 1946, former Polish inmate Zygmunt Szafrański, who was interned at Neuengamme Camp on November 20, 1943, gave the in-

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[78] *Ibid.*, deposition by Albert Luetkemeyer, pp. 101-104. The text is handwritten.
[79] *Ibid.*, p. 161.

vestigating judge at the District Court in Radom, Kazimierz Borys, a lengthy deposition in which he stated about the alleged gassings:[80]

> *"From the mouths of trustworthy people from the earlier period of the camp I know concretely:*
> *1/ at the turn of 1941 and 1942, the 'gassing'* [*'wygazowanie'*] *once of 80, another time of more than 150 Russians – PoWs in the 'Death Bunker' at the bathhouse, after sealing it hermetically beforehand."*

On October 7, 1947, a very detailed 16-page "Report on the Neuengamme Concentration Camp" was written in Hamburg.[81] On p. 3, in the list of the various "Death Methods at the Neuengamme Camp" appears the entry "Gassing" (Point b);[82] the following information appears on p. 4:[83]

> *"In the fall of 1942, 251 Soviet-Russian PoWs and officers were gassed; in October 1942, another 193 Soviet-Russian commissars and officers."*

Page 11 contains a report by Josef Händler, who stated on the issue of gassings:[84]

> *"In the fall of 1942, the order was suddenly issued regarding various refitting measures of the bunker. In each cell, closable, iron traps of 15 cm diameter were installed in the ceiling and the roof, wiring of an electric heating and installation of double iron latches above the door.*
> *Some 190 Russian PoWs were brought on trucks up to the camp. Then they were brought over to the heating basement of the bath behind the clothing chamber and the infirmary. After having been ordered to get undressed in order to take a bath, they had to walk some 50 m across the yard to the bunker. The area had been cordoned off by the block leaders. After they all were in the bunker, the door was closed, the latches fastened. After that had been done, 2 medical orderlies climbed on a ladder onto the roof and poured through the pipes blue-cross gas.*[85] *When the door was opened, the corpses piled up to a height of 1.70 m. They were then loaded onto a truck trailer and brought to the crematorium, were they were burned. During*

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80 Protokół przesłuchania świadka (Kazimierz Szafrański). AGK, Ipn gk 182/152, p. 89 (p. 7 of the deposition).

81 YVA, O.51-191, File 1, pp. 37-53. "Bericht über das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme. Zusammengestellt durch das Komitee ehemaliger politischer Gefangener Hamburg. Als Quellenmaterial wurden Berichte von ehemaligen politischen Gefangenen benutzt, insbesondere von Hans Schwarz, Albin Lüdke, Josef Händler, und weiteren."

82 *Ibid.*, p. 39.

83 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

84 YVA, O.51-191, File 1, p. 48.

85 "Blaukreuz" was the name of gas bombs used by the German during WWI which contained nose-, throat- and lung-irritating substances. *Gasschutz und Luftschutz*, Vol. 14, No. 7/8, July-August 1944, p. 141.

this event, the inmates had lined up for a roll-call and had to sing: Welcome, happy singers, with the refrain: Hence, let us sing and be merry. The same occurred three weeks later with 95 Russian PoW."

4. German Criminal Investigations

In the 1960s, the chief prosecutor at the Hamburg District Court initiated a criminal investigation (Az. 147 Js 32/65 U) "for the suspicion of murder" against Hermann Erdmann and Walter Filsinger, who had served in the Neuengamme Camp, both with the rank of SS *Rottenführer*.

Among the charges was participation in the two alleged gassings of Soviet PoWs. At the time, the problem of contradictory witness statements on dates and numbers of the alleged events had been resolved arbitrarily by establishing as dates the months of September and November 1942, as numbers of the alleged victims 197 and 251, respectively.

Consequently, the witnesses (and defendants) who were questioned as part of this investigation were regularly asked what they knew about the gassing of 197 Russians in September and 251 in November 1942.

When quoting the testimonies, I follow the order in which they are found in the records.

On March 7, 1967, Ernst Edler was interviewed. He stated:[86]

"On the gassing event I can state that I was lodged in Block 5 at that time. Opposite across my block was another barracks labelled as a tool barracks. In this barracks, gassings, shootings and hangings were carried out. I have seen myself how inmates were driven not the barracks, because the presumably had to take a bath. Then the doors and window shutters were sealed. An SS man next climbed onto the roof and poured Zyklon B through an opening. Outside the barracks stood the camp physician, Lütgemeyer, Dreimann, Bahr und Speck.

If I remember correctly, then Bahr poured the gas into the barracks. After some 2 hours, the corpses were transported away on so-called rolling carts."

Hans Groß was questioned on March 9, 1967. Here are his related statements:[87]

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[86] Staatsarchiv Hamburg, 213-12 Staatsanwaltschaft am Landgericht – NSG – Nr. 0135, Bd. 001. "- 8. KK. – Braunschweig, 7.3.67. Zeugenvernehmung" of Ernst Edler, pp. 143-146 (quote on p. 145/ p. 3).

"In September 1942, the bunker was subject to refitting. Electric devices were installed on the ceiling and the walls, respectively, which allowed for a rapid heating of the rooms. Several pipes closed with shutters were built into the roof. Thick iron latches were attached to the top and the bottom of bunker door. These refitting measures were talked about a lot in the camp. Then one day the word went around that a large number of people was gassed in the bunker. In the afternoon, during the roll call, the door of the bunkers was opened, and we could see how the corpses fell out. A cart stood in front of the bunker. The inmates were ordered to load the corpses onto the cart. The carts loaded with corpses were then pulled past the lined-up inmate to the crematorium. To this, we had to sing the singers' greeting 'to honor today's day…'

I know for sure that I have seen there Ostuf. LÜTGEMEYER, UschaF DREIMANN, UschaF REESE, UschaF BAHR and several other block leaders. LÜTGEMEYER opened the latches of the door."

Josef Händler's interrogation protocol dated March 20, 1967, reads:[88]

"Of the gassing that occurred in September and November 1942, I have witnesses only the first in more detail. At that time, I was still deployed at the clay-pit labor unit. In the evening when marching back into the camp, we had to line up at the roll-call square, whereas otherwise we could first into the blocks and put down our bowls and other stuff. I then saw how Uschaf. Bahr climbed from the back onto the roof of the bunker with a ladder, and poured Zyklon B from cans into the pipes inserted into the roof. Then, from inside the bunker, we also heard the moaning and screaming of those locked up. After some half an hour, the door of the bunker was opened, which back then pointed to the roll-call square. The corpses were lying on a big mountain in front of the door. The first corpses were loaded by the SS men onto carts standing by. Then the corpse-recovery unit was called, who had to do the loading of the corpses. The carts loaded with the corpses were then pulled past the inmates lined up on the roll-call square. We had to sing to this. The corpses were then brought to the crematorium."

Karl Hottenbacher, who was questioned on March 15, 1967, stated:[89]

"I still remember the gassing of the Russian PoWs in September and November 1942. I have seen myself how the Russians climbed from the trucks that had stopped at the camp gate, and marched into the camp. They were

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87 *Ibid.* "Sonderkommission. Hamburg, den 9.3.1967." Interrogation of Hans Groß, pp. 147-151 (quote on p. 149/ p. 3).

88 *Ibid.* "Sonderkommission. Hamburg, den 20. März 1967." Interrogation of Josef Händler, pp. 152-157 (quote on p. 155 /p. 4).

89 *Ibid.* "Sonderkommission. Hamburg, den 15.3.1967." Interrogation of Karl Hottenbacher, pp. 158-161 (quote on p. 160/p. 3).

upbeat and sang, evidently unaware of the fate awaiting them. They had to undress behind the bunker, and were all at once rammed into the bunker."

Franz Gustav Paul Krause, heard, on March 1, 1967, reported:[90]

"I know the following about the gassing of Russian PoWs in September 1942: One day, in the bunker already mentioned by me, heating coils were mounted on the walls, which were intended for the excessive heating of the bunker. Furthermore, the carpenters installed pies through the roof – more accurately something like wooden funnels. Lütgemeyer told the Russian inmates to get undressed and to enter the bunker. He told them they should warm up and take a shower. That was right after the arrival of the Transport with PoWs.

I myself together with several inmates have observed from the kitchen window how the inmates – completely undressed – went into the bunker, which was then locked and barricaded on the outside with iron girders. Then, through the funnel, a dry gas was poured, I believe it was Zyklon, which, as was said later, develops especially well when heated strongly.

I then head myself how the inmates called out: 'More air, more air!' These calls slowly grew weaker, however, because the inmates had suffocated in the meantime.

The naked corpses were later – during the evening roll call – brought on an open tarp cart to the crematorium located outside the camp. All inmates lined up for the roll call could see that.

Apart from Lütgemeyer, in any case Dreimann and Speck also participated in that gassing. Bahr and Filsinger may have been there, too. But I cannot remember that exactly.

Dreimann, Lütgemeyer and Speck and also other SS guards whose names I cannot remember, however, were in front of the bunker door during the gassing, while other guards were busy filling in the dry gas on the bunker roof.

Of the second gassing I know only that it happened.

Further gassings were not carried out, because the population of Hamburg had become aware of what had happened at Neuengamme."

In the course of the investigation, on March 10, 1967, Albin Lüdke, who had been one of the main witnesses at the Neuengamme Trial regarding the first alleged gassing, was also questioned. On this occasion the witness stated:[91]

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[90] *Ibid.* "Amtsgericht Tiergarten 348 Gs 52/67 Berlin 21, den 1. März 1967." Interrogation of Franz Gustav Paul Krause, pp. 162-169 (quote on pp. 164-166/ pp. 3-4).

[91] *Ibid.* "Sonderkommission. Kamburg, den 10. März 1967. Vernehmungsniederschrift" of Albin Lüdke, pp. 170-176 (quote on pp. 174-175/ pp. 5-6).

"Gassing of Russian PoWs 1942:
In Sept. 1942, the bunker was refitted. The windows were equipped with closable iron shutters, the entry door secured with double latches, and pipes were set into the bunker's roof.
Furthermore, heating coils were installed right beneath the ceiling. On the day of the gassing, I myself was outside the camp in order to inspect a work site. When I came back, I saw a group of SS men standing in front of the entry to the bunker. I remember the following SS men being part of this group: Lütgemeyer, Pauly, Totzauer, Dreimann, Filsinger, Erdmann, and I think Griem as well. There were also other SS men, whose names I cannot remember.
I want to state that all block leaders, including the commandant and the adjutant and the camp leader stood there. Only those SS men doing duty at the gate were not there.
Then the bunker door was opened. I remember exactly that the corpses lay in front of the door up to a height of 1.60 to 1.70 m, and entangled with one another. After the gas had been vented, the corpses were loaded, first by the block leaders, onto a car trailer standing there. The rolling cart was brought only later, and also loaded with corpses. The first 1 or 2 car trailers were loaded with corpses by the block leaders, only then were inmates brought, who had to load the remaining corpses onto the cart.
In the meantime, the inmates had lined up at the roll-call square for the evening roll call. The car trailer and the cat were then pulled past the inmates to the crematorium. To this, all inmates had to sing the singers" greeting: 'Welcome, happy singers.'"

Hermann Struck was questioned on March 2, 1967 and reported:[92]

"I have also heard of the gassing of Russian PoWs. During one such gassing – according to my memory in 1942 – I myself have observed the following. The Russians had to undress naked outside in the open air. Back then, Sturmführer or Untersturmführer Lütkemeyer revealed to the Russians that the ought to take a bath. After getting undressed, the Russians were led into a bunker. I then observed furthermore that the contents of large cans were poured into pipes mounted above on the bunker roof. There were altogether five such pipes. I also knew that hydrogen cyanide was in these cans, because such cans or their contents had also been used for the disinfection of barracks. I am sure that, during the pouring in of this hydrogen cyanide into the pipes mentioned, Unterscharführer Dreimann was present as well as two or three SS members whose names I do not know anymore today. This I have also seen with my own eyes. On the out-

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92 *Ibid.* "LKP-Nebenstelle Holzminden z. Zt. Hohenbüchen, den 2.3.1967." Interrogation of Hermann Struck, pp. 182-184 (quote on p. 183/p. 2).

side, you could even here the creams of those gassed as described. I then also saw with my own eyes how the bunker door was opened, and the corpses basically fell out of this door. I had nothing to do with removing the corpses, though.

At this gassing, I am certain that Unterscharführer Bahr and Speck were also present, as well as Rottenführer Filsinger and the already mentioned Lütgemeyer. There certainly were more SS members present, but today I cannot remember their names anymore."

On July 27, 1967, the chief prosecutor at the Hamburg District Court requested that the Holzminden field office of the District Criminal Police asks the witness Struck a series of specific questions about Rottenführer Filsinger's participation in the alleged gassing.[93] On August 17, 1967, Struck declared that he had been mistaken, and that in the previous interrogation he "had thought of a different SS man." He also provided further clarification:[94]

"I stood at the height of the bunker during the gassing, but outside the wire fence. I still remember that back then, on that day – as on every day – I took the commandant's dog for a walk. It was an afternoon. I observed the incident some 15 minute long, from a distance of barely 10 meters. I observed the entire incident, hence from the moment when the Russians were led into the bunker to the moment when the doors were opened again. After leading them inside, several SS members, I think three men, jumped onto the bunker roof and poured the contents of cans into the pipes sitting on the bunker. Among these SS members was certainly Dreimann; I can no longer remember the others by name. Filsinger was certainly not among them, meaning he was certainly not on the bunker roof. According to my memory, these were older SS members.

Already some 10 minutes after the contents of the cans had been poured in, the bunker doors were opened, and the corpses fell out, as I have already stated."

When questioned on March 29, 1967, Friedrich Christian Eberhard Tamsen stated:[95]

"I can make the following statement about the gassing of 197 Russian PoWs in September 1942:

We in the metal workshop received the order to hammer iron pipes with a diameter of 80 mm and a length of about half a meter through the roof into

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93 *Ibid.*, p. 193.

94 *Ibid.* "LKP-Nebenstelle Holzminden z. Zt. Hohenbüchen, den 17.8.1967." Interrogation of Hermann Struck, pp. 194-195 (quote on p. 194/p.1).

95 *Ibid.* "LKA/SK Tgb.-Nr. 500/67 Bremen, den 29. März 1967." Interrogation of Friedrich Christian Eberhard Tamsen, pp. 185-191 (quote on pp. 188-189/pp. 4-5).

the hallway of the cell building and to mount them. Furthermore, we had to attach iron clamps to the entry door. During the evening roll call, the inmates were then driven in there, and the cell door was locked with the mounted iron clamps. USchaF Bahr was on the cell's roof and threw the contents of several cans of Zyklon through the iron pipes installed by us. In this, he was supported by USchaF Dreimann. Also present were HStF Lütgemeyer, USchaF Speck. He inmates inside the cell screamed terribly. In order to drown out the screams, we on the roll-call square had to sing the song 'Singers' Greeting.' The screaming of the inmates lasted some 20 minutes. After roughly half an hour, most of the inmates had to leave the roll-call square, and those killed with the Zyklongas were removed and brought to the crematorium by the Kapo of the roll commando Heinrichs.
During this gassing, I was some 8 to 10 m away from the cell and for this reason could observe everything well.
I cannot say anything about the gassing of further 251 inmates in November 1942, since I have not learned anything about it."

Walter Filsinger was also questioned on September 9, 1967, and stated:[96]

"Regarding the 'gassings of Russian PoWs' held against me:
During my stay in the Neuengamme Concentration Camp, I heard that Russian PoWs were killed there by gas. However, I was in no way involved in these killings. […]
How the 'gassings' took place in detail, I learn today for the first time in all details."

The other defendant, Hermann Erdmann, made a statement on November 23, 1967. On the alleged gassing, he reported:[97]

"I remember that once Russian PoWs – they were all somehow cripples – were locked up in a bunker. I don't know if this was in Sept. or Nov. 1942. I was not present when they were taken into the bunker, and I was not present when the bunker was opened and the bodies fell out. I became aware of this action because I was able to observe from the camp's inmate kitchen how the PoWs were brought into the bunker. I correct myself, they went in by themselves. The people were brought in by trucks. But it is unknown to me that these people were killed by poison gas (Zyklon-B).
When today the talk came to this gassing, I rather believed that the people could have been killed by exhaust gases of an engine. I remember that even

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[96] *Ibid.* "Staatsanwaltschaft bei dem Landgericht Hambug. 147 Js 32/65. Hamburg, den 7.9.1967." Interrogation of Walter Filsingen, pp. 206-210 (quote on pp. 208-209/ pp. 3-4).

[97] LPK-Stelle Osnabrück 1. Kommissariat. Z.Z. Glansdorf, den 23.11.1967. Verantwortliche Vernehmung" of Adolf [sic] Erdmann, pp. 220-220a (quote on pp. 222-222a/pp. 3-3a).

before this action I saw an engine (gasoline) near the bunker from the inmate kitchen, from which a hose led into the bunker.
It is therefore incorrect for the two witnesses [Händler and Lüdke] *to claim that I was present at this gassing operation, or that I participated in it."*

On March 6, 1967, Hamburg police authorities interrogated former KL Neuengamme inmate Walter Christensen,[98] who expounded a detailed account of the two alleged gassings:[99]

"I still remember exactly the gassing of the Russian PoWs.
Around the late summer of 1943 [typo for 1942]*, refitting work suddenly began on the camp's bunker. Electric heating wires were installed in the bunker hallway just below the ceiling. 1 pipe was installed in the ceiling of the bunker in each of the 5 cells, and 2 pipes in the corridor. The pipes had a diameter of about 10-15 cm and were closed with a flap at the top. The door of the bunker, which at that time still faced the roll-call area, was reinforced and fitted with a special lock. Whether the windows of the bunker cells were also provided with tightly closing shutters at the same time, or whether these were already present, I do not know with certainty. One day in the fall of 1942, Russian PoWs were brought to the camp in locked trucks (I think there were 3 trucks covered with tarpaulins). I observed this transport myself. The trucks stopped near the new inmate bath, and the Russian PoWs were herded into the not yet completed boiler room of the new inmate bath. There they had to undress and then run on the double.*
All the Russian PoWs that comprised the transport (197) were crammed into the bunker at once. There were many SS men present, who pushed the Russian prisoners into the bunker. PoWs into the bunker. Today, however, I am no longer in a position to give names with certainty, with the exception of Rapportführer Döhring, about whose participation in the gassing I testified before the Hamburg District Court in 1952.
Medial orderly Bahr then climbed a ladder to the roof of the bunker and poured a can of Zyklon B into each of the aforementioned pipes. I still remember with certainty that this was between 10:00 and 11:00. At about 2:00 p.m., the bunker was opened by SS men. The naked corpses immediately fell to the SS men. The first corpses were also loaded onto transport carts by SS men. Later prisoners were brought in to do this work. A total of 3 of these transport carts were loaded with the corpses, which were then covered with old cement sacks or paper tarpaulins. At the evening roll call around 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., all prisoners had to sing. I seem to remember that they had to sing the singer's greeting 'Welcome, happy singers.' Then

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98 Staatsarchiv Hamburg, 213-12 Staatsanwaltschaft am Landgericht – NSG – Nr. 0135, Bd. 001, pp. 110-114.
99 *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.

the 3 transport carts loaded with the corpses were pulled by prisoners along the camp road and across the roll-call square. The wagons then left the camp through the gate and were taken to the crematorium via the industrial yard.

Then, in the same year (Nov. 1942), another transport with Russian PoWs came to the camp, and was gassed in the bunker in the same way. I can no longer give the number of prisoners. But it is possible that there were about 250. I only remember with certainty that they were all crammed into the bunker at once and gassed. I also remember that in one of the transports there were prisoners suffering from tbc, and also higher officers as well as war invalids (leg amputees). During the second gassing, Zyklon B was also poured into the pipes by medical orderly Bahr. I cannot say which SS men assisted in this gassing. The corpses were then also taken out of the bunker by inmates and brought to the crematorium in the transport carts. This, however, was not done during roll call and also not with singing, as on the first occasion.

Apart from these two gassings, no further gassings were carried out in the bunker until I was called up (Nov. 1944).”

A few days later, on March 9, 1967, former inmate Ernst Bösch, who had been Kapo am for the rolling cart at Neuengamme Camp, was interrogated. He too gave an extensive account of the alleged gassing:[100]

“I witnessed the gassing of Russian PoWs in 1942. It was still summertime, I can’t remember the month, when a transport of Russian PoWs from Fallingbostel was brought to the camp by truck. They were housed in the fenced-in quarantine section and, according to my recollection, stayed there for 2-3 days.

I then saw myself how they had to walk undressed across the roll-call square to the bunker. There were also seriously injured and sick people who were carried on stretchers. On the roll-call area or near the bunker, there were about 6 SS men who drove the prisoners into the bunker.

On the roof of the bunker stood 2 SS men, namely the medical orderly Bahr and a 2nd SS man, whom I can no longer identify by name. In any case, he was taller than Bahr. After all prisoners had been crammed into the bunker, the inmates Willi Leers and Reichelt had to hand cans of Zyklon B onto the roof.

Bahr and other SS men poured the Zyklon B into the pipes protruding from the roof. The SS men standing by the bunker observed the effect of the gas through a peephole in the door. After about 1-1½ hours, the door of the bunker was opened, and the lifeless bodies fell out.

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[100] *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.

I also saw this myself. In front of the bunker there were already 2 or 3 carts. My cart was not needed for this action. Inmates were called in to load the bodies. All inmates of the camp then had to line up, and the carts loaded with the corpses were pulled past them across the roll-call square out of the camp and across the industrial yard to the crematorium.

I do not remember a second gassing.

I know for certain that the SS men Reese, Speck, Kettenbeidel, Dreimann and the camp leader Lütgemeyer took part in this gassing."

In April 1967, the chief prosecutor at the Hamburg District Court initiated a criminal investigation against Michael Müller "for aiding and abetting in homicide." The accusation came from another former Neuengamme inmate, Günther Hoffmann, who had stated on December 7, 1966:[101]

"2) Gassings of Russians or other prisoners did not take place in the bunker, at least nothing is known to me about it. I do know, however, that the prisoner MÜLLER, Michael, who was responsible for delousing, repeatedly gassed prisoners illegally in the delousing chamber, whereby his actions (as a so-called 'political') were covered up by the camp's typing room office."

In a later statement, dated March 3, 1967, Hoffmann reiterated his accusation:[102]

"Michael Müller, who was in charge of delousing, was not popular with the inmates in the camp. This was mainly due to the whole manner of his appearance and his character, but also had to do with his activities. It was well known in the camp that inmates were repeatedly gassed during delousing without an official order from the SS camp leadership. It mainly punished inmates whose existence was for some reason undesirable for the camp leadership or the 'inmate hierarchy'. The 'inmate hierarchy' in this case did not only mean those inmates who normally had any posts, but mainly those who were running their terror regiment in the background as 'bosses' of illegal communist groups. These groups tried to exert their influence in the camps by all means at their disposal. […]

The consumption of Zyklon B had to be reported regularly to the RSHA via our accommodation department. We were not allowed to order Zyklon B independently from the company, but had to wait for the release by the RSHA.

If people were gassed in the delousing [chamber] *for which a larger quantity of Zyklon B was necessary, I was the first to know about it. Ocha.* [sic] *Harder was always very agitated and wanted to have nothing to do with it,*

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[101] Staatsarchiv Hamburg, 213-12 Staatsanwaltschaft am Landgericht – NSG – Nr. 0192, Bd. 001, p. 6.

[102] *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

but on the other hand, he was obliged to hand out Zyklon B for these cases as well.

So, it was obvious that, when I came to the camp in the evening, I would ask what, who and how much had been gassed again, although Müller, when he collected the Zyklon B from us, never made a secret of the purpose for which it was used."

On September 15, 1967, the chief prosecutor cleared Müller of all charges, because it found Hoffmann's statements unreliable and unsupported by any other testimony.[103]

Notwithstanding the absurdity of the accusation, the general context of these statements should nevertheless have offered more than a little food for thought.

It will be recalled that Wilhelm Bahr had stated at the Neuengamme Trial that the cans of Zyklon B for the alleged gassing had been brought to the bunker and opened by Müller, which, given his position as Kapo of the delousing unit, would have been quite normal, indeed obvious. In any case, he should at least have been suspected of "aiding and abetting in homicide" for the alleged gassing of Russian PoWs.

However, there would not have been enough time, because Müller died on December 31, 1967.[104] Otto Harder had died long before him, on November 25, 1956,[105] so he would have been no longer able to testify.

The question of the influence of the Communist "bosses" would also have to be considered, a question I will take up in Chapter 8.

Also in the criminal investigation against Werner Kahn, Hans Griem and others for murder committed in the Neuengamme Concentration Camp and its subcamps, conducted by the Hamburg Prosecutor's Office (Ref. 147 Js 14/65) between 1965 and 1970, although it concerned events that took place in the years 1943-1945, hence after the claimed gassings, some witnesses mentioned the alleged gassing anyway, sometimes unasked-for. Among them were also self-proclaimed eyewitnesses.

I reproduce the most significant parts of their testimonies.

– Eugeniusz Motz, questioned in Warsaw by a Polish judge on May 5, 1965 (minutes in Polish with German translation):[106]

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[103] *Ibid.*, pp. 30-32.
[104] *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[105] *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[106] Staatsarchiv Hamburg, 213-12 Staatsanwaltschaft am Landgericht – NSG – Nr. 0128, Bd. 001, pp. 1-2. Ing. Eugeniusz Motz. Warszawa, dnia 5:V.1965r.

"I myself saw how Kahn, in the middle of 1943 [*w połowie 1943 r.*] *and with the help of SS, carried out a selection of the Klinkerwerke workforce* [*selekcji komanda Klinkewerke*]*, during which he took out those unfit for work. For this purpose, he used the pistol's pommel and struck it to the right and left. The SS then drove those who had been selected into the gas chambers.* [*do komory gazowej*: to the gas chamber, singular]*."*

– Otto Kilbinger, questioned on April 3, 1967:[107]

"I was in the Neuengamme Stalag Concentration Camp from 1942 to the end of 1945. […] *I know nothing about the gassing of Russian PoWs in Sept.-Nov. 1942, in which Lüttgemeier, whom I mentioned, is supposed to have participated. In my time, no people were gassed in Neuengamme. So that must have been when I was in Fallersleben. From Fallersleben I returned to Sachsenhausen. According to my memory, that must have been in 1943."*

– Anton Winter, questioned on March 21, 1967:[108]

"From 1940 to 1943 (Sept.) I was housed only in the Neuengamme Main Camp and in the SS camp. […] *I also know nothing about gassings of Russian PoWs from my own experience."*

– Ernst Cäsar, questioned on February 27, 1967:[109]

"I came to the Neuengamme Camp in May or June 1942, and in June 1943 I came to the Buchenwald Camp through voluntary registration. During this time in Neuengamme, I know nothing about prisoners being shot or gassed."

– Friedrich Heinrich Schultz, questioned on March 16, 1967:[110]

"I know from hearsay that a large number of Russian PoWs – there may have been about 250 – were gassed in Neuengamme at the end of 1942."

– Georg Merten, questioned on April 4, 1967:[111]

"I know nothing about the shooting of 45 Russian officers and commissars. However, I do know that 45 Russian officers and commissars were gassed in the Neuengamme Main Camp in the fall of 1941. The camp commandant or his representative and almost all block leaders were present. Today, I

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[107] *Ibid.* Amtsgericht Koblenz. Zeugen-Vernehmung von Otto Kilbinger. Koblenz, den 3.4.1967, pp. 31-33 (quote on p. 32 and 33).

[108] *Ibid.* Stadt Straubing. Polizeiamt. Kriminalpolizei. Straubing, 21.3.67. Vernehmungsniederschrift of Anton Winter, pp. 34-35 (quote on p. 34).

[109] *Ibid.* Bayerische Landpolizei Landpolizeistation Holzkirchen. Holzkirchen, 27. Febr. 1967. Witness interrogation of Ernst Cäsar, pp. 36-37 (quote on p. 36)

[110] *Ibid.* LKA/SK Bremen, den 16. März 1967, pp. 37-42 (quote on p. 39).

[111] *Ibid.* StKK Eschwege. Eschwege, den 4. April 1967. Vernehmung von Zeugen in Ermittlungssachen, pp. 50-51 (quote on p. 51).

can only mention USchaF Dreimann and HStuF Lütgemeyer by name. I also know that in the fall of 1942 two transports, each with about 200 Russian PoWs, were gassed in Neuengamme."

– August Bruns, questioned on March 14, 1967:[112]

"I remember an execution in 1942 or 1943, where about 200 people, mainly Russians and Poles, were gassed. If the execution was carried out in 1942, Thumann's predecessor, Lütgemeier, (? or similar) was present. However, if it took place in 1943, the camp leader Thumann was present. During this execution, all members of the camp stood lined up on the roll-call square. While the corpses were loaded in shifts onto a plate cart and taken out of the camp, we had to sing: 'Welcome happy singers'."

– Ernst Dingeldein, questioned on March 17, 1967:[113]

"The gassing of 197 Russian PoWs and another 251 in November 1942 are true. I saw the transport coming, got the list of prisoners to enter them into a card index. They had to hand in their clothes, and came naked to the gassing cells. What Bahr, Dreimann, Fielsinger, Lütgemeyer and Speck did in detail is not known to me. According to other prisoners, who are unknown to me, Bahr is said to have poured in the gas."

– Wilhelm Mueller, questioned on March 8, 1967:[114]

"From the kitchen I could only once observe that prisoners marched into the bunker in single file, completely undressed, and then later, when the door was opened again, some of the corpses fell out. How many prisoners were gassed, I could not determine. It was said at that time about 200 prisoners. Whether they were German prisoners or other prisoners, I do not know. I also can't say when the gassing took place. But it must have been in 1942 or 1943."

– Willy Zwinscher, questioned on March 6, 1967:[115]

"I am aware of the gassings. I cannot say who was responsible for them. The persons named brought the people to the gassing bunker, and later helped to supervise the transport of corpses."

– Werner Roding, Questioned on March 2, 1967:[116]

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[112] *Ibid.* Kriminalpolizei – 1. K. – Göttingen, den 14. März 1967. Auf Vorladung erscheint der Rentner August Bruns, pp. 53-55 (quote on p. 54).

[113] *Ibid.* 9. Kommissariat. Wolfenbüttel, d. 17.3.67. Witness interrogation of Ernst Dingeldein, pp. 56-57 (quote on p. 57).

[114] *Ibid.* 8. KK Dienststelle. Braunschweig, den 8.3.1967. Witness interrogation of Wilhelm Mueller, pp. 64-65 (quote on p. 65).

[115] *Ibid.* 1.K. Wilhelmshaven, den 6. März 1967. Es erscheint der Kantinenhelfer Willy Zwinscher, pp. 73-74 (quote on p. 74)

[116] *Ibid.* – 1.K. – Flensburg, den 2.3.1967. Vorgeladen erschein der kfm. Angestellte Werner Roding, pp. 92-94 (quote on p. 93).

"Details about the executions of Russian officers and commissars in September 1941, September 1942 and November 1942 in the Neuengamme Camp, I have probably heard something, but cannot give details. […]
In no case did gassings occur in Neuengamme, because such facilities did not exist in the camp. Prisoners destined for gassing – there were many Russians among them – were sent to Sachsenhausen, as far as I know."

– Heinrich Schwerger, questioned on April 26, 1967:[117]

"Of the incidents mentioned later, I only remember that at a point in time I no longer know, a large number of Russian prisoners were brought into the camp; according to my recollection, they came from the Göring factories, and are said to have gone on strike there. They had to line up on the roll-call square in a square, and get undressed completely. They were then led into the bath. I then saw how the doors were locked, and SS men climbed onto the roof and emptied cans from above through flaps, which are said to have contained blue gas. After about 1/4 hour, the doors were opened again, the Russians were all dead, and were driven away on a cart. I can give no pertinent information about the SS men involved. This is all I know of the events referred to."

– Otto Brandenburger, questioned on May 8, 1967:[118]

"The witness is aware that 'executions' took place in the bunker, usually attended by the block leader and the Rapportführer and an official of the Gestapo. He is also aware that there was a separate barracks for Russian PoWs within Neuengamme Camp. After a few weeks, barely half of the 500 prisoners were still alive. He claims to have no knowledge of the shooting of Russian officers and commissars or of the gassing of Russian prisoners."

– Once more Otto Brandenburger, questioned on March 30, 1967:[119]

"I also cannot say anything about the gassing of Russian PoWs in Sept. and Nov. 1942, because gassings took place continuously."

– Bruno Ludwig, questioned on May 3, 1967:[120]

"I know that gassings took place in Neuengamme Camp. I was assigned several times to remove the corpses from the gassing room. This gassing room was inside the camp; the crematorium, to which the dead were taken,

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[117] *Ibid.* Das Amtsgericht. Köln, den 26. April 1967, pp. 105-106 (quote on p. 106).
[118] *Ibid.* Landeskriminalamt Baden-Württemberg. Ludwigsburg, den 8.5.1967, pp. 106-107 (quote on p. 107).
[119] *Ibid.* Landeskriminalamt Baden-Württemberg, z.Zt. Beuron, den 30.3.1967. Vernehmungsniederschrift of Otto Brandenburger, pp. 110-117 (quote on p. 114).
[120] *Ibid.* Landeskriminalamt Baden-Württemberg. Z.Zt. Stuttgart, den 3.5.1967. Vernehmungsniederschrift of Bruno Ludwig, pp. 118-126 (quote on pp. 124-125).

was in the immediate vicinity of the camp. We had to carry the corpses out of the gassing room, and load them onto a rubber-tired cart that could hold about 50 corpses. According to my estimate, the gassing room had a size of 30 to 50 square meters, and was equipped with about 30 to 50 shower heads from which the poison came. This room held about 50 people. When we arrived, the victims lay undressed in a mess. I was present at about 4 or 5 of the transports. In my opinion, the victims were Russians. The transport squad was led by a Kapo – criminal – and supervised by an SS post I no longer know. I do not know who was involved in the gassing."

– Theodor Poot, questioned on April 10, 1967:[121]

"He could not remember the shootings of the 45 Russian officers and commissars in September 1941 and the gassings of the Russian PoWs in September and November 1942."

– Steffan Bagrowsky, questioned on August 1, 1967:[122]

"I know that Russian PoWs were gassed. The gassing took place at 5 o'clock in the morning. I did not see who took part in it. There was hardly any talk about the whole thing afterwards, so I didn't find out anything later either."

– Karl Witt, questioned on September 11, 1967:[123]

"In 1942, I was a block elder, and had some insight into the details. I know that in the fall of 1942 a large number of Russian PoWs were gassed. I know that Lütgemeyer and Dreimann were involved in this gassing. On the other hand, I know nothing about whether the USchaF BAHR and Speck were also involved; the same applies to the RoF Fielsinger."

– Eugeniusz Kazmierz Motz, questioned on November 16, 1967:[124]

"As already mentioned above, I arrived at Neuengamme Concentration Camp at the end of March 1943. I went through quarantine, and then came to the camp hospital in Neuengamme. […]
In the military hospital, I was cared for by Dr. Tadaeusz Kowalski […].
I was given a clean bill of health by Dr. Kowalski, although I still needed further treatment. Dr. Kowalski wrote me up as healthy because we had learned that SS men would soon be taking away seriously ill inmates from

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[121] *Ibid.* Sonderkommission. Hamburg, den 10.4.1967. Summary of the interrogation, pp. 184-185 (quote on p. 185).

[122] *Ibid.* Amtsgericht Hbg.-Bergedorf. Hamburg 80, den 1.8.1967, pp. 245-247 (quote on p. 246).

[123] *Ibid.*, Amtsgericht Hamburg-Altona. 2 Hamburg 50, den 5. Sept. 1967, pp. 249-252 (quote on p. 250).

[124] *Ibid.*, Az. II Ds 245/65. Protokoll über Vernehmung eines Zeugen. Warschau, den 16.11.1967, pp. 284-287 (quote on p. 284-285).

the Neuengamme Camp in order to kill them. This was confirmed. I think that about 100 sick inmates were gassed at that time, but I do not remember the number exactly."

Here are some comments by the German investigating judge:[125]

"d) Finally, the engineer Motz stated in his report that in mid-1943 the defendant had removed those prisoners who were unfit for work from the prisoners employed in the clinker works, and that the SS had then driven them into the gas chambers (file, p. 2 [interrogation of May 5, 1965]*). He did not repeat this statement during his interrogation by the Polish prosecution (pp. 284-292 of the files)."*

"20 The Polish witness Motz claims that about 100 sick prisoners were taken away from the Neuengamme Concentration Camp and killed by poison gas. He did not know who was responsible for this act (sheet 853 [interrogation of 16 November 1967]*). In no investigation concerning National-Socialist violent crimes at Neuengamme Concentration Camp has any witness reported on the removal of 100 prisoners to be killed by poison gas. Therefore, there are also no clues as to who could be considered as the perpetrator, if such a crime should actually have occurred. The proceedings must therefore be discontinued because possible perpetrators cannot be identified without more detailed information."*[126]

– Walter Bernhard Christensen, questioned on October 4, 1965:[127]

"In conclusion, I can only say that the acts under discussion here were those that occurred almost daily in the camp. It is therefore not possible to recall exact details. Other events, however, which stood out from this daily occurrence, such as the first gassing of about 70 Russian PoWs in the bunker in 1943 (or perhaps already in 1942), and the killing of a German submarine crew in the bunker, also in 1943, I can still remember quite clearly."

– Eduard Zuleger deserves special attention. He was questioned on March 14, 1967 and stated:[128]

"That gassings of Russian PoWs took place in the Neuengamme Camp is known to me. I have repeatedly observed that whole groups of men who were in good physical condition were herded naked into the barracks where the gassing rooms were located. These men wore towels because

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[125] *Ibid.*, Az. 147 Js 14/65. Vermerk: Gegenstand dieses Verfahrens sind die Vorwürfe, die gegen Werner Kahn von ehemaligen Häftlingen des KL Neuengamme erhoben werden, pp. 296-305 (quotes on pp. 247 and 304).

[126] *Ibid.*, Az. 147 Js 39/66. Vermerk, 8 March 1982, pp. 1166-1200 (quote on p. 1194).

[127] Sonderkommission. Hamburg, den 4.10.65, pp. 74-76 (quote on p. 76).

[128] *Ibid.* Stadt Nürnberg Polizeipräsidium – Kiminalpolizei – Nürnberg, den 14. März 1967. Zeugenvernehmung, pp. 129-132 (quote on p. 131).

they had presumably been told to bathe. When the men were in the barracks, I saw how the doors of this barracks were sealed with adhesive tape from the outside, and how Unterscharführer Bahr, whom I knew, climbed onto the roof of the barracks and poured or let flow into the barracks through the roof of the barracks the contents of several cans. These cans contained the gas 'Zyklon B' and were stored in the disinfection room. I saw these cans myself, and Bahr also told us that this gas was used for gassing. I cannot say who else was involved in the gassings."

This statement is much more vague than the one he made on June 9, 1945, together with Wackernagel, but it still contains – invented – details that do not appear in his 1945 deposition: he had "repeatedly observed" the arrival of "whole groups of men" (no longer Russian PoWs), who were "in good physical condition"; they had "towels" with them (reminiscent of the fairy tale about Auschwitz); and the doors of the bunker were "sealed with adhesive tape," as is common during building disinfestation.

The singular fact is that at the Neuengamme Trial he said nothing about it, although he had mentioned Bahr several times:[129]

"Prisoners who had been sick for more three months were simply put away, they were liquidated. We had a number of patients suffering from TB whose cure would have taken a long time. Dr Jaeger in conjunction with Bahr made the selections of these victims.

Q. Did this order by Reichsfuhrer SS Himmler say in which way the sick should be liquidated?

A. From observation of how it was done, it was clear what the order meant.

Q. It was a secret order, was it not?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you know the contents of this order?

A. No, but Bahr told me one or two things about it. I myself saw several secret orders in the CRS but I have not seen this special order referred to.

Q. How do you think that Bahr should have known the contents of this secret order?

A. Probably the then Standortarzt or the camp doctor must have told Bahr about it. […]

Q. Do you think that this order concerned also the action against the who were gassed with Zyklon B?

A. I have to assume this."

I finally note the fact that the witness Christensen stated in 1965:

"Other events, however, which stood out from this daily occurrence, such as the first gassing of about 70 Russian PoWs in the bunker in 1943 (or

[129] WO 235-162, pp. 203-204, hearing of March 25, 1946.

perhaps already in 1942), and the killing of a German submarine crew in the bunker, also in 1943, I can still remember quite clearly."

So "clearly," in fact, that he remembered neither the number of the alleged gassing victims, nor the date of the alleged gassing, and in fact in this regard he gave no details. Only in 1967 did he give a detailed description of the alleged event and, among other things, "still remember exactly" the date (late summer 1942) and the number (197).

5. Critical Analysis of Testimonies

5.1. Preliminary Considerations

From a methodical point of view, in terms of the evidentiary value of testimonies, witnesses should be divided into two categories: those who deposed in the immediacy of the alleged events (3-4 years) and those who spoke 25 years later. It is obvious that, due to the freshness of memories, the former should be privileged over the latter – those questioned by the German judiciary in 1967. This, however, is certainly no guarantee of reliability. Indeed, it can be stated as of now that two witnesses are blatantly unreliable. The first is Emil Hoffmann, according to whom between 1,400 and 1,500 Soviet PoWs were gassed in 1942 and 1943. The other is Karl Roehl, who uttered two glaring absurdities:

"A. Always 200 to 250 people were put into one cell, then they closed the doors and boarded the window up and poured gas from the roof. That took about 20 minutes. Then the door was opened and the corpses fell outside.
[…]
Q. But surely they could not get 200 to 250 people in that little place?
A. Yes. They pressed them into that room, up to 180 during the day."

At the Neuengamme Trial, Dr. Kroll asked Bahr:

"Q. During the inspection of the camp and the bunker it was noticed that the cells of the bunker were extremely small and narrow and if 200 people had been crowded into these cells the bunker must have been more than over-crowded; is that the case?
A. I could not say because I did not participate in the conducting of the prisoners to the bunker. That was done by the blockfuhrers."

Major Steward also expressed some doubts about this:

"One thing that puzzles me and that is how did you get 200 people in the bunker which we have seen and which contained five very small cells only?

A. I really do not know, I did not push them in myself, I only saw them march past the bunker. How they got in I did not know.
Q. Do not you think it was difficult to get 200 people in that small bunker?
A. It must have been difficult but how they did it I do not know.
Q. Did you hear somebody reported 'All present' and then give the number when they were all inside?
A. I cannot remember."

Witness Lüdke stated in this regard:[130]

"These cells, where sometimes 10 to 12 internees were housed in solitary confinement during the night, had the size of 1 metre 40 centimetres width and 3 metres 50 centimetres length; sometimes 10 to 12 inmates."

In fact, the cells measured 1.25 m × 3.10 m = about 3.9 m² (see Chapter 7), but according to Roehl 200-250 "were put into one cell," which is evidently impossible.

The witness further stated:

"Q. How do you know that there was gas in that building; have you ever smelt it?
A. It had a terrible smelt and it gave me a choking feeling.
Q. And you yourself have smelt it?
A. Yes. We were only about 20 metres away when they opened the door.
Q. Do you mean on one occasion?
A. Yes."

Therefore, from a distance of 20 meters he had felt the "terrible smelt" of Zyklon B. Here it is conducive to recall the Special Order of the Auschwitz Camp's Headquarters of August 12, 1942 concerning an incident during a disinfestation with Zyklon B:[131]

"A case of illness which occurred today with slight symptoms of poisoning by prussic acid gives reason to announce to all those involved in gassings and to all other SS members that, in particular when opening the gassed rooms, SS members without masks must maintain a distance of 15 meters from the chamber for at least 5 hours.
Special attention must be paid to the direction of the wind. The gas now used contains fewer odorous substances and is therefore particularly dangerous."

Müller's "mistake" concerning the fact that in his earlier statement he had "seen" Camp Commandant Weiss at the crime scene, while at the Neuengamme Trial he had "seen" camp commandant Pauly, remained completely unexplained and discredits his testimony. In fact, his story was

[130] TNA, WO 235-162, p. 83.
[131] RGVA, 502-1-32, p. 300.

simply a blatant lie. It is clear that initially he did not yet know exactly against whom he should direct his accusations.

5.2. The Data of the "Gassings"

In the following table I summarize the relevant testimonies (and reports) in chronological order:

Witness/ Report	Statement/ Report Date [d/m/yy]	First gassing		Second gassing	
		VICTIMS	DATE [M.YY]	VICTIMS	DATE
Anonymous	18.5.1945	156*	1.1943??	?*	?
Zuleger/ Wackernagel	9.6.1945	251*	7.1942??	?*	?
Lüdke	2.7.1945	~200	Fall 1942	> 100	?
"Rapport"	3.7.1945	251*	7.1942??	251*	?
Report "Cruautés"	1945	193	Fall 1942	251	Fall 1942
Roehl	3.9.1945	200-250*	1943??	*	?
Gondzik	13.9.1945	197	9.1942	251	Nov. 1942
E. Hoffmann	14.9.1945	1.400-1.500 in 1942-1943			
Saalwächter	22.9.1945	193	10.1942	251	?
Bahr	30.11.1945	200	1942	?	?
Bahr	2.3.1946	200	Spring or Fall 1942	?	?
Lüdke	19.3.1946	250	9/10.1942	?	?
Müller	27.3.1946	197	End 10/early 11.1942	?	?
Saalwächter	30.3.1946	197	End 9/early 10.1942	?	?
Bahr	22.4.1946	180-200	Fall 1942	?	?
Szafrański	26.10.1946	80	End 1941-early 1942	150	End 1941-early 1942
Lütkemeyer	4.11.1946	?*	Winter 1942-1943	?	?
"Bericht"	7.10.1947	193	10.1942	251	Fall 1942
Händler (in "Bericht")	1946/1947	190	Fall 1942	95	3 weeks later

The first fact that becomes apparent is the contradictory nature of the figures and dates of the "first gassing." The number of alleged victims varies widely (80, 156, 180-200, 190, 193, 197, 200, 200-250, 250, 251), the date even more so (late 1941 to early 1942, spring or summer 1942, July 1942, September 1942, late September to early October 1942, October 1942, late October to early November 1942, fall 1942, winter 1942-1943, January 1943).

On July 2, 1945, Witness Lüdke "knew" of about 200 prisoners gassed in the fall of 1942; by March 19, 1946, the victims had become 250 and the date September or October 1942. Saalwächter also corrected the initial in-

dications (September 22, 1945): the 193 victims gassed in October 1942 became 197 gassed in late September to early October 1942.

Wilhelm Bahr, as the alleged main perpetrator of the gassing, should have been the best-informed person, much better than the witnesses who were only self-proclaimed observers. In fact, he knew practically nothing about it, and in the course of the interrogations, he improvised as best he could along the lines of the other testimonies known to him.

In the affidavit of November 30, 1945, he gave a rather vague chronological indication:

> *"In January 1942 I was selected for a disinfection-course in Berlin. After this course I came to Oranienburg and took part in a 3-days-course for Zyklon B given by Dr. TESCH of Hamburg. Dr. Tesch emphasized the danger of this gas for human beings. Shortly afterwards when I was again at Neuengamme, a batch of about 200 Russians came into the camp."*

But the disinfection-course in Oranienburg (Sachsenhausen) had been held between January 8 and 10, 1941, and according to his statement, the 200 Russians arrived "shortly afterwards." Even if one takes January 1942 as a reference point, it is chronologically impossible that the alleged gassing took place in September or later.

In his deposition at the Tesch Trial, Bahr showed even greater uncertainty:

> *"Q. When did this gassing of the Russians take place?*
> *A. I do not remember.*
> *Q. Do you remember the year?*
> *A. 1942 it was.*
> *Q. Was it spring or summer?*
> *A. It might have been in the summer. I cannot remember exactly.*
> *Q. Can you remember whether it was warm or cold outside?*
> *A. It was warm. It must have been summer, but whether it was a warm spring I do not know."*

At the Neuengamme Trial, Bahr changed his story:

> *"Q. Now we come to the gassing. When did this gassing take place?*
> *A. In autumn 1942.* […]
> *A. <u>Because from that we have heard from witnesses</u> this is supposed to have taken place early in October."* (Emphasis added)

As for the "second gassing," there is no direct testimony. Five sources (whose victim numbers are marked with an asterisk) give only one indication, without specifying which "gassing" they are referring to, but it should be the first one, the one best known to former prisoners. The sources that explicitly mention the second "gassing" are extremely general and merely

report the number of victims (95, over 100, 150, 251) and the date (late 1941 to early 1942, November 1942, fall 1942).

Bahr, the purported main perpetrator also of this alleged gassing, knew absolutely nothing about it, not even that the victims are supposed to have been Russians in this case as well. In his affidavit of November 30, 1945, he stated in this regard:

> *"When a second batch of Poles arrived a few weeks later, to be gassed, I was not present, because I was at an outside detachment."*

This alleged event is even more phantom-like than the first. Ernst Saalwächter explicitly referred in this regard to "common knowledge in the camp",[132] that is, to the rumors of black propaganda, but this also applies to the first gassing.

In the end and as I noted earlier, with a strange mixture of Gondzil's witness statement and the "Report" of October 7, 1947, the German judiciary imposed as official "truth" the gassing of 197 prisoners in September, and 251 in November 1942, both purely arbitrary dates.

Just as arbitrarily, historians later corrected the month of the first gassing: October, not September.

5.3. Russian Prisoners of War

Since no witness knew anything about the second transport, the examination can only focus on the first. It must be premised that there is no document attesting to the reality of the two transports purportedly intended for gassing at Neuengamme Camp. Everything is left to testimonies, and this explains the chronological contradictions I set out in the previous subchapter, and the uncertainty concerning the origin of the transport: Lüneburg (Zuleger and Wackernagel) or Fallingbostel (Ernst Bösch, Fritz Bringmann; see Chapter 6) or Göring Factories (Schwerger).

Bahr knew little or nothing about this. In his affidavit of November 30, 1945, he stated:

> *"Shortly afterwards when I was again at Neuengamme, a batch of about 200 Russians came into the camp. After a stay of about 1-2-days in the camp, these Russians were led into the bathhouse of the camp. There they had to undress. They went naked into the prison cells."*

In the deposition of the Neuengamme Trial Bahr said:

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[132] This "knowledge" was not even al that "common": Friedrich Christian Eberhard Tamsen knew nothing about the alleged event: "I cannot give any information about the gassing of another 251 prisoners in November 1942, since I have no knowledge of this."

"Q. Then a convoy arrived?
A. Yes.
Q. What convoy was this?
A. They were Russians.
Q. Were they chiefly officers?
A. I cannot say.
Q. Did you see these Russians when they were led into the camp?
A. No, I saw them later on when they were led into the bunker."
"Q. Had you seen how the Russians had been taken to the bunker?
A. Yes.
Q. Were these Russians fully undressed?
A. Yes, they, were fully undressed and they were conducted from the bath-house to the bunker."

Although the alleged gassing of the Russians had taken place after staying in the camp for "about 1-2 days," he had seen them only on the day of the gassing; thus, he aligned himself with the testimony that the gassing had taken place on the day the transport arrived.

This had already been stated by Müller at the Neuengamme Trial:

"A. The Russian arrived at the gate marching in ranks of five; there were sick man amongst them who were leaning on sticks and crutches.
Q. How did you know they were Russians? Were they wearing civilian clothes or uniform?
A. They were wearing uniform. […]
A. I stood at the corner of my delousing station and I saw these prisoners running one by one from the cellar to the bunker between two rows of S.S. Guards."

Krause explicitly confirmed:

"That was right after the arrival of the transport with PoWs."

However, Ernst Bösch took up Bahr's version: the PoWs "were housed in the fenced-in quarantine section and, according to my recollection, stayed there for 2-3 days."

Who were these Russians? Officers? Commissars? Were they sick? Crippled? Bahr only knew that they were Russians. Müller recounted that "there were sick man amongst them who were leaning on sticks and crutches," But, nevertheless, he saw them "running" to the bunker.

In 1967, Erdmann said that the PoWs "were all somehow cripples," but Christensen stated:

"There they had to undress and then run on the double."

Bösch said peremptorily:

"There were also seriously injured and sick people who were carried on stretchers."

And where did these Russians undress before being led naked to the bunker? In the affidavit of November 30, 1945, Bahr said that this took place in "the bathhouse of the camp"; Lüdke on July 2, 1945 stated:

"They were taken to the furnace room of the showers. They were stripped there and told that they were going to have a bath."

But for Hottenbacher, the undressing took place "behind the bunker," while Struck stated that he had personally "*observed* the following. The Russians had to *undress naked outside* in the open air."

5.4. The Reason for the Gassing

The preceding problem is closely related to that of the reason for the alleged gassing: Why were the POWs gassed?

Bahr was evasive on this point as well. In his affidavit of November 30, 1945, he said:

"Orders for this action I received from Dr. von Bothmann, who also proposed the use of Zyklon B."

At the Tesch Trial, Major Draper sought to shed light on the issue:

"Q. Is it correct that you have gassed 200 Russian prisoners of war with Blausäuregas?
A. Yes, on orders.
Q. Where did you do that?
A. In Neuengamme.
Q. On whose orders?
A. The local doctor, Dr Von Bergmann [sic]*."*

Draper asked Bahr a more direct question:

"Q. Why did you apply the gas to the Russians?
A. I only had orders to pour the gas in and I do not know anything more about it."

But from whom had the defendant learned the procedure of gassing people? Bahr's answer was again evanescent.

"Q. Have they trained you at the SS particularly in the killing of human beings?
A. No.
Q. Was it mentioned during that course that this Zyklon could be used also for the killing of human beings?
A. I cannot say. I do not remember. I do not know. I cannot say. […]

THE PRESIDENT: Who taught you the procedure by which the Russian were killed on this particular occasion; was it Dr Tesch?

A. No, it was a doctor who was stationed there."

In Bahr's narrative, the alleged gassing was a local affair, ordered by Commandant Pauly for unknown reasons, although he did not say so explicitly. At the Neuengamme Trial, he evoked his subordinates:

"Q. What was your part; what did you have to do with these people?

A. On the morning of their arrival, Buehning and myself were ordered to report to the office of the lagerfuhrer.

Q. Who was the standortarzt?

A. Dr. Von Boetmann.

Q. What did Dr. Von Boetmann tell you?

A. He gave us a talk and said that within the course of the day we would have to gas this convoy of Russians."

Therefore, Bahr received orders from the SS garrison physician one day to gas a transport of Russian PoWs, and that was it.

Two problems remain open: 1) Why did these prisoners have to be killed? 2) Why did they have to be gassed at all?

There is no answer to the first question. Orthodox historians vacillate between two interpretations.

(a) The POWs were invalids and had to be eliminated as "useless eaters" (Bringmann); (b) they were "irredeemable communists" (Pressac 1993; see Chapter 7), meaning that they belonged into Group A of the November 1941 Mildner Commission: "politically unacceptable" with the subcategory "fanatical communist" (I will return to this question in Chapter 7).

However, the testimonies do not support either interpretation. Müller stated that "there were sick man amongst them who were leaning on sticks and crutches," meaning that only some of them were invalids. Therefore, the reason for the alleged killing could not have been disability or inability to work. On the other hand, Zuleger (1967) stated that they "were in good physical condition." The anonymous witness who made a statement on May 18, 1945 specified that the POWs were generically "officers, political commissars and soldiers"; Saalwächter said on September 22, 1945 that "lorries arrived in the camp with Russian POWs including officers and commissars," but even this was not a reason to kill them all; eventually political commissars would be selected.

As for why they had to be gassed rather than executed some other way, this is all the more inexplicable since Bahr had been accused by Lüdke at

the Neuengamme Trial that "he was leading in the liquidation of 1100 prisoners by injecting phenol and petrol" and he himself had "confessed": "I cannot remember exactly the number, but I estimate that I have injected 100-200 prisoners." According to the charges, these were mainly Russian PoWs. Bahr explained that the victims "lost consciousness immediately and died 1-2 minutes afterwards." Lüdke added that "the number of victims was every day 30 to 40"[133] and that "this phenol poisoning of the Russians" took place from "May 1942 until the end of 1942."[134] The alleged 197 Russian prisoners could have been killed with lethal injections within five days, in 2½ if the other "syringer," Bühning, had also been associated with the crime. Why then would the camp administration have orchestrated a complicated refitting of the bunker for sporadic gassings of prisoners who could have been killed in other ways? Why would gassing have been chosen?

5.5. The Refitting of the Bunker

It should be premised that the detention bunker no longer exists. The associated wooden barracks burned down in the spring of 1945. On the bunker's subsequent history, the Neuengamme Memorial informs:

> *"On 2 May 1945, the Neuengamme Concentration Camp, which had been abandoned by the SS, was taken over by the British Armed Forces. After the British Military Administration had used the Camp for a short while as a camp for displaced persons (DP-Camp) and as a camp for German PoWs, the 'Civil Internment Camp No. 6' (CIC 6) was established in November 1945. The detention bunker, which was continued to be used as a 'detention barracks,' was enlarged by a wing with some 10 to 12 additional cells and equipped with a central heating system. On 6 September 1948, the camp's grounds were handed over to the Hamburg penitentiary authorities, which kept using it as 'Men's Prison Neuengamme.'"*

The building was demolished between December 1949 and early October 1950,[135] and now only the ruins of the foundations remain (see Chapter 7). There are also no records of the inmate metal workshop that allegedly carried out the refitting work, so that here too everything is left to testimony.

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[133] TNA, WO 235-162, p. 99.
[134] *Ibid.*, p. 100.
[135] "Baugeschichte des KZ Neuengamme. Arrestbunker (Lagergefängnis)", from the website: http://neuengamme-ausstellungen.info/content/lagermodell/objekt45.html.

On this refitting work, as on many other essential aspects of the affair, Bahr was the least informed. In his affidavit of 30 November 1945 he stated:

> *"A ladder was put against the roof and I climbed onto the roof of the cells. There were 6 pipes leading into the cells.* […] *A few days before a radiator had been fixed in the cells at the ceiling of the gangway. This was connected to the electric light."*

The description he provided at the Neuengamme Trial is even more meager:

> *"Q. What were these alterations as far as you know?*
> *A. As far as I could see it consisted mainly of a pipe being fixed to the roof of each cell and further ceiling installations of electric cables. I wondered what these alterations were for as I did not know what was going to happen then."*

Zuleger and Wackernagel knew about "4 pipes" installed on the roof and "electrical heating" below the ceiling.

Lüdke on July 2, 1945 recounted:

> *"In the prison was an arrangement by which a room was electrically heated. In every cell and in the corridor of the prison was a pipe of 15-inch* [ca. 38 cm] *diameter let into the roof leading to the open."*

On March 10, 1967, the witness specified:

> *"Furthermore, heating coils were installed right beneath the ceiling."*

Since there were five cells and only one corridor, there were six pipes. At the Neuengamme Trial, the witness confirmed this number:

> *"Bahr went onto the roof and he poured the Zyklon B gas through six pipes into the bunker."*

Lütkemeyer also spoke of "6 ventilation pipes." Händler reported in 1946 or 1947:

> *"In each cell, closable, iron traps of 15 cm diameter were installed in the ceiling and the roof, wiring of an electric heating and installation of double iron latches above the door."*

Hans Groß provided a more or less similar version:

> *"Electric devices were installed on the ceiling or on the walls, which allowed for a rapid heating of the rooms. Several pipes closed with shutters were built into the roof."*

Closing the tubes with shutters would have been logical, but when Bahr was asked during the Tesch Trial, "How did you stop the gas coming out?" he answered, "It was a barrack, gas was poured and then a brick was put on the entrance," evidently meaning that, after the Zyklon B had been poured, the tubes were closed by putting a brick on them!

From the orthodox Holocaust perspective, the most important witness should be Friedrich Tamsen as the self-proclaimed architect of the refitting works. We need to keep in mind, however, that he testified very late, on March 29, 1967. He stated:

> *"We in the metal workshop received the order to hammer iron pipes with a diameter of 80 mm and a length of about half a meter through the roof into the hallway of the cell building and to mount them. Furthermore, we had to attach iron clamps to the entry door."*

Christensen also provided details about the work:

> *"Electric heating wires were installed in the bunker hallway just below the ceiling. 1 pipe was installed in the ceiling of the bunker in each of the 5 cells, and 2 pipes in the corridor. The pipes had a diameter of about 10-15 cm and were closed with a flap at the top."*

Here, there were therefore seven Zyklon-B introduction pipes.

Krause provided the following version:

> *"One day, in the bunker already mentioned by me, heating coils were mounted on the walls, which were intended for the excessive heating of the bunker. Furthermore, the carpenters installed pies through the roof – more accurately something like wooden funnels."*

I will elaborate in Chapter 7 on the gassing technique. Here, however, it can be taken as testimonial data that there were six or seven pipes for pouring in Zyklon B, one in each of the five cells, and one or two in the corridor. As for their diameter, the statements are completely divergent: 8, 10-15, 15 and 38 cm. Heating was provided by a "radiator" or "heating coils" or "[e]lectric heating wires," which were located "beneath the ceiling" or "on the walls."

In contrast to all other witnesses, Tamsen asserted that the introduction pipes, of an indeterminate number, were installed "through the roof into the hallway of the cell building."

Witness Schwerger no longer remembered the gassing fairy tale in 1967, and set it in the "bath," i.e., in the barracks that stood in front of the bunker:

> *"They were then led into the bath. I then saw how the doors were locked, and SS men climbed onto the roof and emptied cans from above through flaps, which are said to have contained blue gas."*[136]

[136] Short for Blau*säure*gas.

5.6. The Time and Duration of the Gassing

Bahr stated in the affidavit of November 10, 1945:

> *"After I had emptied the gas, I climbed down, and as it was lunchtime, I went for my meal. After lunch I returned and the doors were opened."*

He confirmed this version during the Tesch Trial:

> *"Q. How long did it take to gas the Russians?*
> *A. I returned after two hours and they were all dead.*
> *Q. For what purpose did you go away?*
> *A. That was during lunch hour.*
> *Q. You left for lunch and came back afterwards?*
> *A. Yes.*
> *Q. Were they dead when you came back?*
> *A. Yes."*

At the Neuengamme Trial, Bahr made contradictory and unclear statements:

> *"Q. What time of the day was it when all this started; noon?*
> *A. I cannot say whether it was in the forenoon or afternoon.*
> *Q. Did you return after two hours had elapsed?*
> *A. Yes, Buehning and I returned to the bunker.*
> *Q. What happened as you returned?*
> *A. When we got there we found the door had already been opened by the rapportfuhrer."*
> *"Q. Then when you had put the gas inside and came down again, where did you go; you said you went away for two hours?*
> *A. To the hospital.*
> *Q. What time of the day was it?*
> *A. It might have been morning as I said before or it might have been in the afternoon.*
> *Q. Was it before or after lunch when you came?*
> *A. I do not know it any more.*
> *Q. Cannot you remember whether you had your lunch after you put the gas in and walked may or cannot you remember which way it was?*
> *A. I cannot remember whether it was before or after lunch."*

At first Bahr "knew" that the alleged gassing took place in the morning and that, after performing his task, "as it was lunchtime," he went "for my meal," evidently to the canteen, and "after lunch" returned to the bunker. In the deposition at the Tesch Trial, he still remembered this version, but at the Neuengamme Trial, he had already forgotten it. On this occasion, he in fact no longer knew whether the alleged gassing took place "in the fore-

noon or afternoon"; he left the bunker for two hours, but he did not go for his lunch, but rather "to the hospital."

However, it appears from Bahr's early statements that the gassing began in the morning and ended around 2 p.m.

At the Neuengamme Trial, Müller said:

> *"The conversation with Bahr took place at approximately 11 o'clock in the morning and the execution through gassing took place at midday the same day."*

Händler stated in 1967 that the event took place in "the evening when marching back into the camp." This was confirmed by Tamsen, who reported:

> *"During the evening roll call, the inmates were then driven in there, and the cell door was locked with the mounted iron clamps."*

Struck instead declared:

> *"It was an afternoon. I observed the incident some 15 minute long, from a distance of barely 10 meters. I observed the entire incident, hence from the moment when the Russians were led into the bunker to the moment when the doors were opened again.* […]
>
> *Already some 10 minutes after the contents of the cans had been poured in, the bunker doors were opened, and the corpses fell out, as I have already stated."*

According to the witness, the entire procedure lasted 15 minutes; the bunker door was reopened 10 minutes after the Zyklon B had been poured in, so 197 men were ushered into the bunker within five minutes!

Schwerger also claimed a similar duration:

> *"After about 1/4 hour, the doors were opened again,* […]*"*

Last but not least, Bagrowsky stated that the "gassing took place at 5 o'clock in the morning."

The alleged gassing thus took place either early in the morning, late in the morning, in the afternoon, or in the evening. Only the night is missing to complete the gamut of possibilities.

Regarding the duration of the alleged gassing, it is inferred from Bahr's statements that the door to the bunker had been opened recently, so from the introduction of Zyklon B to the opening of the door elapsed about two hours.

Zuleger and Wackernagel reported that "after nearly an hour the SS opened the place."

According to Roehl, for whatever his testimony may be worth, "that took about 20 minutes. Then the door was opened and the corpses fell outside."

Müller testified at the Neuengamme Trial only about the reopening of the bunker door:

"Q. How long did they wait until eventually the bunker was open again?
A. The bunker was open in the late afternoon.
Q. Can you indicate the time that elapsed?
A. Round about four or five o'clock."

Since Müller stated that "the execution through gassing took place at midday," the procedure lasted at least four hours.

Edler said:

"After some 2 hours, the corpses were transported away on so-called rolling carts."

And finally, Händler recounted in 1967:

"After some half an hour, the door of the bunker was opened, which back then pointed to the roll-call square."

According to testimonies, the gassing lasted 10 minutes, or 20 minutes, or 30 minutes, or an hour or two hours or at least four hours.

5.7. The Removal of Victims' Bodies

Bahr reported in his affidavit of November 30, 1945:

"The bodies were loaded onto the trailer of a lorry. At first, I helped with this, but later Dr. von BOTHMANN arrived and ordered some prisoners to load the bodies. The bodies were taken to the crematorium and were burned there."

This is at least reasonable. At the Neuengamme Trial, however, he changed his story:

"Q. Where were those bodies taken to?
A. Buehning and I had to load up the first carts ourselves.
Q. Where were they taken?
A. To the crematorium. Whilst we were loading the first cart the standortarzt came and told us that we need not do that and we could go away.
Q. Thereupon the thing was finished for you?
A. Yes."

The "cart" is supposed to be the equivalent of the German "*Rollwagen*," a wooden cart pulled by inmates, which is thus different from an "trailer of a lorry." It is difficult to believe that the "executioners" had also set out to load the corpses onto a "cart."

Zuleger and Wackernagel said that "15 prisoners were detailed to cart the corpses away."

At the Neuengamme Trial, Lüdke stated that "these corpses were loaded on trucks." A "truck" is an "*LKW*" (*Lastkraftwagen*). In the 1967 interrogation, the witness put together all the versions he had learned in the meantime:

> *"After the gas had been vented, the corpses were loaded, first by the block leaders, onto a car trailer standing there. The rolling cart was brought only later, and also loaded with corpses. The first 1 or 2 car trailers were loaded with corpses by the block leaders, only then were inmates brought, who had to load the remaining corpses onto the cart."*

Müller described the alleged event at the Neuengamme Trial as follows:

> *"The S.S. only loaded a few bodies and then prisoners were called to do it. They were loaded onto four trolleys and the whole camp was at that time on parade on the big square and the four trolleys were pushed along the parade in front of everybody who was standing on the parade ground."*

The first sentence was clearly the source of Bahr's respective trial statement. It is unclear whether the "trolley" was a "cart," therefore also a "*Rollwagen*," however, four of them were filled. Lütkemeyer also spoke of "*Rollwagen*," but without specifying the number:

> *"After the inmates had brought carts, the corpses were loaded onto them by the inmates under the supervision of infirmary staff, and brought to the crematorium."*

So did Edler:

> *"After some 2 hours, the corpses were transported away on so-called rolling carts."*

In 1967, Händler took up the claims of Lüdke and Bahr, and added the presence of a rather unusual "corpse-recovery unit":

> *"The first corpses were loaded by the SS men onto carts standing by. Then the corpse-recovery unit was called, who had to do the loading of the corpses."*

However, in the previous report of 1946 or 1947 the witness had written:

> *"They were then loaded onto a truck trailer and brought to the crematorium, were they were burned."*

Krause introduced a new element:

> *"The naked corpses were later – during the evening roll call – brought on an open tarp cart to the crematorium located outside the camp. All inmates lined up for the roll call could see that."*

Tamsen stated the following:

> *"After roughly half an hour, most of the inmates had to leave the roll-call square, and those killed with the Zyklongas were removed and brought to the crematorium by the Kapo of the roll commando Heinrichs."*

Christensen enriched the terminology of the case:

> *"Then the 3 transport carts loaded with the corpses were pulled by prisoners along the camp road and across the roll-call square. The wagons then left the camp through the gate and were taken to the crematorium via the industrial yard."*

Finally, here is Bösch's version:

> *"In front of the bunker there were already 2 or 3 carts. My cart was not needed for this action. Inmates were called in to load the bodies. All inmates of the camp then had to line up, and the carts loaded with the corpses were pulled past them across the roll-call square out of the camp and across the industrial yard to the crematorium."*

Therefore, the corpses were loaded onto an "trailer of a lorry," also called "car trailer" and "truck trailer," or "on an open tarp cart," or onto 3 "transport carts," or onto "2 or 3 carts," or onto "four trolleys," or onto "car trailer" and "carts" together; the work was carried out by the "corpse-recovery unit" or the "roll commando."

In the witnesses' narrative, the claim that the lined-up inmates had to chant during the evening roll call is evidently meant to attest to the cynicism of the SS, but such an explanation is puerile and nonsensical. Tamsen's is at least more reasonable:

> *"In order to drown out the screams, we on the roll-call square had to sing the song 'Singers' Greeting.'"*

Lütkemeyer in this regard said:

> *"Every evening during nice weather, the inmates sang a song, and it is possible that they sang 'Welcome, happy singers' that evening, but it was not sung on occasion of the gassing."*

What is more likely is that the story of the alleged gassing was embedded by witnesses in that "daily event" to enhance its credibility.

It is virtually impossible to draw a coherent historical reconstruction of the alleged gassing from this conglomerate of contradictions on all the essential points of the story. But never mind this inconvenient fact, it has been attempted many times by local historians anyway. The results will be discussed in the following chapter.

6. The "Historical Reconstruction" of the Alleged Gassings

Although Holocaust historians such as Gerald Reitlinger or Raul Hilberg had given no weight to the alleged gassings in KL Neuengamme, they remained buried in local publications and in the writings of former prisoners' associations, and resurfaced in the early 1980s.

In this section I examine only the basic literary sources that attempted a historical reconstruction of the alleged gassings: I therefore leave aside important monographs, such as *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938-1945*, which devotes only half a page to the issue in which excerpts from Michael Müller's deposition at the Neuengamme Trial are presented, but with an initial "correction."[137]

The starting point of the "historical reconstruction" is undoubtedly Fritz Bringmann's 1981 book *KZ Neuengamme: Berichte, Erinnerungen, Dokumente*, which provides an accurate description of the claimed gassings (Bringmann, pp. 65f.):

> *"The Neuengamme Camp was a so-called level II labor camp, and not an extermination camp like Auschwitz, Majdanek, Sobibor or Treblinka. Nevertheless, Soviet prisoners of war were gassed there twice in 1942.*
>
> *At the beginning of September 1942, several pipes were laid through the roof into the bunker, into which fans with heating coils had to be installed by the inmate electrician Grigutsch. At first, the prisoners found no explanation for this. Only a few days later, however, it became clear to them what criminal purpose this installation was intended to serve. Late one afternoon in September 1942, a transport of 197 Soviet prisoners arrived at Neuengamme from the PoW camp in Fallingbostel. They were said to be commissars. All prisoners were lined up in rows of five on the roll-call square, and had to watch everything. The PoWs were told through interpreters that there was a risk of epidemics in the camp, that there were vermin, and that for this reason they had to be bathed and disinfected. Therefore, they had to strip naked on the roll-call square and were told: Remember exactly where you put your bundles of clothes, so that you can quickly find them again later.*

[137] Bauche *et al*., p. 156, "Vergasung sowjetische Kriegsgefangener." The quote begins with these words, "At the end of September 1942, I noticed that…," but the trial record says, "I noticed in October 1942 that..." By that time the date of the first alleged gassing had become fixed at September 1942, so the Authors "corrected" the testimony.

This deception was used everywhere during gassings to lull the victims into a sense of security. When they realized that there were no showers in the bunker, it was too late. The door was locked, and SS Medical Orderly Bahr went onto the roof and poured Zyklon B into the pipes, which in combination with oxygen turns into a deadly gas. The heating coil and fan were turned on, and the poison gas quickly spread throughout the bunker. The prisoners on the roll-call square could clearly hear the screaming of the prisoners in the bunker, although the doors and also the iron flaps in front of the windows of the holding cells were tightly closed. It took ten minutes for the screaming to cease. Then the doors were opened, and a number of corpses fell out. After the gas had dissipated from the bunker, prisoners had to transport the dead on carts through the inmate camp to the crematorium. It was not even possible to get the corpses out of the bunker one by one. During their death throes, they had climbed on top of each other and were completely tangled up in each other. In a desperate attempt to get out of the bunker, they had torn off their fingernails. So the dead had to be taken out of the bunker in batches of two or three by breaking their arms or legs, and placed on the carts.

After all the corpses had been removed and the evening roll call had ended, the prisoners were not allowed to return to the barracks, but had to sing the song 'Welcome, happy singer' on the orders of the SS protective custody leader.

The second gassing took place in November of the same year. This time, it involved 251 Soviet prisoners of war, also from the Fallingbostel Camp. They were all invalids, cripples with prostheses, crutches and the like, who fell under the SS term 'useless eaters', i.e. those who could not work did not get to eat, and for this reason they were murdered. The process itself was the same, only the entrance door to the bunker had been moved from facing the roll-call square to the other side, towards the bath. Thus, only the inmates who were working in the bath or in Infirmary I could observe this process. The victims had to take off all their prostheses, their crutches and bandages, etc. on the roll-call square beforehand, strip naked, and some of them were even carried into the bunker by their comrades because they could not move themselves. The crutches and prostheses were still kept in the inmate bath in a special section.

The prisoners had to strip naked before gassing for the following reason: During the gassing, the intestines and bladder empty; an automatic reaction of the body during gassing and hanging. Since the clothing would not have been usable afterwards, one always urged complete undressing.

Both gassings were carried out in the presence of the camp leadership. At the trial of the SS camp leadership in 1946 in the Curiohaus in Hamburg,

> *they were also the subject of the indictment. SS Medical Orderly Bahr made detailed statements about them, which are available in the minutes. It is therefore completely untrue when neo-Nazis repeatedly claim that there were no gassings of any kind in German Concentration Camps. There are official documents about this, and it would make no sense whatsoever for a former SS member to incriminate himself with such crimes for no reason."*

This is followed by the text of Wilhelm Bahr's deposition at the April 22, 1946 hearing of the Neuengamme Trial (*ibid.*, pp. 66-76).

Bringmann was asked to contribute a short article on Neuengamme, which was published in 1983 in the German book *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas*, and in 1993 in an English translation in the equivalent book *Nazi Mass Murder*. Both books claim to provide a comprehensive picture of the alleged homicidal gassings in alleged death camps, but also in concentration camps. Indeed, it also included essays on Mauthausen, Stutthof, Natzweiler, Dachau, Ravensbrück and also on Neuengamme. Regarding the claimed first gassing, Bringmann merely quoted an excerpt from the above-mentioned Bahr deposition in his brief article devoted to Neuengamme covering little-more than four pages. On the second gassing, he wrote (Kogon *et al*. 1993, pp. 193-196, here p. 196):

> *"A very large majority of the second convoy of Soviet captives brought from Fallingbostel to Neuengamme was made up of men who had been mutilated in the war. Prisoners in the Neuengamme camp saw how they had to take off their prostheses first and how, after having done so, they were pushed naked into the bunker."* (Emphasis added)

The relevant footnote 71, on p. 271, says: "Affidavit by former prisoner Josef Händler, 3 Nov. 1982." However, in the interrogation of March 20, 1967 quoted earlier, Josef Händler stated resolutely:

> *"Of the gassing that occurred in September and November 1942, I have witnesses only the first in more detail."*

So, either the witness was a liar, or in the statement of November 3, 1982, he did not state that he observed the second alleged gassing.

Like Hermann Langbein, Georges Wellers, Jules Schelvis and others, Bringmann is a typical example of a former inmate who later became a historian of the camp in which he had been interned. As a former inmate, he testified during the 9th hearing of the Neuengamme Trial, which took place on March 27, 1946.[138] His testimony focused on the crimes of Wil-

[138] TNA, WO 235-162, pp. 291-295.

helm Bahr. I reproduce the significant passages from the interrogation transcript:[139]

"Q. How long were you there?
A. I was there until the middle of October 1942 when I was sent to Osterort-Bremen.
Q. What was your job in the camp?
A. I was a medical orderly. […]
Q. During these two years when you were a medical orderly, in what ward were you?
A. In the ward where Russian prisoners of war were. […]
Q. W*ho was your immediate superior whilst you were acting as an orderly in that Russian ward?*
A. Unterscharfuhrer Bahr.
Q. Can you recognise the man you mentioned in this Court?
A. No.
Q. Whilst that typhus epidemic was on can you recall any particular incident in connection with Bahr?
A. In the middle of February 1942 Bahr came to me and gave me the order to give these Russians injections and through these injections to liquidate them, to finish them off. […]
Q. I *understood you to say they were no longer fit for work; is that right?*
A. The Soviet Russian prisoners of war had to be liquidated because they were not fit to work. I refused to obey this order. […]
Q. W*hy did you refuse the order?*
A. I refused it because we political prisoners had some character and we would not carry out just any order, particularly if it was one of liquidating another human being."

Bringmann stated that he had seen Bahr giving lethal injections to some Russian PoWs, and his entire interrogation ended with this theme. He made no mention of the alleged gassing carried out by Bahr, and this is inexplicable: first, because he later claimed that it took place in September 1942, when he was still at the camp; second, because it said to have been known to all the inmates lined up on the roll-call square. As Bahr's accuser, Bringmann would therefore logically have had to impute this alleged crime to him even more seriously, had he known about it in 1946.

In witness logic, since Bahr had been portrayed as "cruel, brutal and a sadist,"[140] or "brutal, stupid and cruel" (Lüdke), one cannot believe that he would not have immediately killed the detainee who stubbornly disobeyed

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[139] *Ibid.*, pp. 291-293.
[140] TNA , WO 235-165, p. 111.

one of his orders. Therefore, Bahr's version in the March 30, 1946 hearing of the Neuengamme Trial is much more likely:[141]

> *"Q. Do you remember when you gave the prisoner Bringmann who was an orderly the order to inject people and he refused?*
> *A. I have given him no orders to carry out injections."*

More than two decades later, on March 11, 1967, Fritz Bringmann was questioned as part of the criminal investigation against former SS *Rottenführer* Walter Filsinger and former SS *Rottenführer* Hermann Erdmann for executions of inmates of the Neuengamme Concentration Camp (Ref. 147 Js 32/65), which was conducted by the chief prosecutor at the Hamburg District Court. He declared on this occasion:[142]

> *"I can remember one gassing operation. There was no fixed gassing facility in the camp. However, pipes were let into the roof of the cell block, and the windows and outside doors were sealed. A fellow inmate who was employed as an electrician, his name is no longer known to me, had the task of installing a heating coil in the pipes.*
> *I would like to mention in advance that in Oct. 1941 we received about 1000 Russian PoWs at Neuengamme. They were housed in 2 barracks completely surrounded by barbed wire. A German inmate was designated as camp elder for these Russians, and two or three German fellow inmates were assigned to him as block elders or kapos. In May/June 1942, the surviving Russian PoWs were transferred to Sachsenhausen. Since that time, there had been no actual Russian PoWs in the camp anymore.*
> *However, former Russian PoWs constantly arrived who no longer had the status of PoWs, as they were declared as ordinary Russians.*
> *In the case of the 197 Russian PoWs who were gassed, these were not camp inmates of Neuengamme. Obviously, they were brought to the camp only for the purpose of gassing.*
> *It was after the lockdown in Sept. 1942, I was lying in Block 5 and could observe how Uscha. Bahr and possibly Uscha. Dreimann and Jauch were tampering with cans on the roof of the cell block.*
> *I did not see any people being herded into the cell block. However, I heard from members of the 'roll command,' as it was officially called, that they took out the gassed corpses the next day, after the cell block had been thoroughly aired. Members of this 'roll command' are no longer known to me today.*

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[141] *Ibid.*, p. 110.

[142] Staatsarchiv Hamburg, 213-12 Staatsanwaltschaft am Landgericht – NSG – Nr. 0135, Bd. 001. "LKFA Kiel – SK/NS – z. Zt. Böken, den 11. März 1967." Interrogation of Fritz Bringmann, pp. 139-142 (quoted: pp. 140-141, pp. 2-3 of the interrogation).

> *I know positively, however, that the prisoners serving their sentences in the cell block were taken out before this gassing action.*
> *Rumors were bandied about that this gassing action was about Russian PoWs, there were not quite 200 men. The corpses are said to have made a very emaciated impression.*
> *I cannot give any information about further gassing actions mentioned here, because I left shortly afterwards; the same applies to the executions which are said to have been carried out later."*

So Bringmann, who in 1946 knew nothing about the alleged gassing, had become an "eyewitness" to it in 1967!

Bringmann's 1981 account later became the "historical truth" of the Neuengamme Memorial; in fact, it was taken up in Hermann Kaienburg's official camp history *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme*.

Bringmann's account is a mere mishmash of data drawn from conflicting accounts, with the addition of completely invented elements and platitudes traced back to Auschwitz fables, which serve mainly to plump up a narrative that would otherwise be too skimpy. The description of the bunker is fanciful, confusing and incoherent.

That the refitting of the bunker was carried out at "the beginning of September 1942"; that the inmate electrician's name was Grigutsch, and that he installed "fans with heating coils" is fabricated information; "several pipes" were arranged on the roof – Bringmann therefore did not know precisely how many. Also, "fans with heating coils had to be installed," but "heating coil and fan were turned on"; likewise "the door was locked" – singular – but "the doors were opened" – plural.

That the PoW transport came from Fallingbostel and arrived at the camp "late one afternoon" is at odds with the testimonies, especially Bahr's. Also purely imaginary is the account of the removal of the corpses of the alleged gassings:

> *"It was not even possible to get the corpses out of the bunker one by one. During their death throes, they had climbed on top of each other and were completely tangled up in each other. In a desperate attempt to get out of the bunker, they had torn off their fingernails. So the dead had to be taken out of the bunker in batches of two or three by breaking their arms or legs, and placed on the carts."*

Here we hear echoes of Auschwitz fairy tales, especially the ravings of Miklós Nyiszli, who probably inspired Bringmann with his other nonsense, that Zyklon B "in combination with oxygen turns into a deadly gas " (see Nyiszli/Mattogno, pp. 155, 210).

The claim that the alleged gassing lasted "ten minutes" (until the screaming ceased) finds testimonial corroboration only in Struck's 1967 statement, but as noted earlier, other witnesses spoke of 20 minutes, or 30 minutes, or an hour, or two hours, or four hours.

With regard to the second gassing, Bringmann states that "only the inmates who were working in the bath or in Infirmary I could *observe this process*," but no witnesses claimed to have "observed" the alleged event, so that the relevant description is completely fabricated.

The final explanation of why the victims were allegedly gassed naked is mere filler to gain a few more lines.

The most-recent reference text on the alleged gassings is a 2011 contribution by Reimer Möller, whose title translates to "The two 'Zyklon-B' murder actions at Neuengamme Concentration Camp in 1942." Of the nearly six pages he presents, one is entirely devoted to "sources and literature." The author reviews there the British and German trials that dealt with the alleged gassings; as for "literature," he mentions Heinrich Christian Meier's 1946 pamphlet *So war es. Das Leben im KZ Neuengamme*, citing its pages 54-56. On p. 55, however, the alleged event is reported "as described by a comrade," hence from hearsay, and it contains a completely different version:

> *"Members of the penal squad, who were deployed near a bunker, saw how about 100 comrades, completely undressed, were led into this bunker. Two block leaders (SS.) then climbed onto the roof and threw gas granules into the chimney. After some time, the doors were opened again, and the bodies of the gassed comrades were taken out and loaded onto a cart."*

This is a clearly imaginative third-hand description.

Möller then jumps to Hermann Kaienburg's book *Vernichtung durch Arbeit* (*Extermination by Labor*), which contains a "brief mention" of the alleged gassings in FN 3 on p. 342 and a "description" on p, 371; here, however, Möller points out that this book "deals with the gas murders on half a page." At the end, he appeals to Bringmann's article on Neuengamme in *Nazi Mass Murder*, which is supposed to have "a lager scope than the publications listed," which only shows the tragic poverty of the "literature" on this subject.

Möller's contribution is mainly based on the witness statements made in 1967, with some fleeting mention of those by Bahr, Müller, Saalwächter and Lütkemeyer. I examine only the main points of his "historical reconstruction," to show how he used the sources (Möller, p. 288):

> *"In October 1942, skilled prisoners were given the task of making structural changes to the detention bunker at Neuengamme Concentration Camp: They replaced wooden plates from the windows with steel plates and attached iron crossbars with bolts to the access door to the bunker. Inside the bunker, they installed an electric line*[143] *to which a heating coil and a fan were connected. In the roof, they let in six pipes, each half a meter long and 80 mm in diameter, and placed a bearing surface at their lower openings [1]. The instructions for the refitting measures had been given by Protective Custody Leader Albert Lütkemeyer [2]."* (Emphases aded)

Footnote [1] refers to Tamsen's interrogation of March 29, 1967, which stated:

> *"I can make the following statement about the gassing of 197 Russian PoWs in September 1942:* […]*"*

In his Note 1, Möller specifies: "The heating coil was installed on the wall."

The alleged work on the bunker was therefore carried out in September, not October. Since the witness claimed that he was one the inmate craftsmen refitting the bunker ("We in the metal-working shop received the order"), he was certain of this dating, otherwise he would have corrected the dating by the investigators, specifying that he had carried out the work, precisely, in October.

No witnesses mentioned the installation of a "fan"; this was Bringmann's invention, which he introduced in the 1981 description reviewed earlier, where he spoke of "fans with heating coils." Only Lüdke mentioned something similar in 1967: "Furthermore, heating coils were installed right beneath the ceiling."

The heating devices were therefore presumably more than one ("heating coils," plural) and were placed "beneath the ceiling," not "on the wall."

No witnesses state that at the "lower openings" of the pipes was installed "bearing surface," which is another invented detail, evidently to make up for the technical nonsense that Zyklon B would have fallen directly on the victims' heads.

In the same footnote, Möller also writes that he drew "the indication that there were six pipes" from Lütkemeyer's deposition of November 4, 1946, but here, as is clear from the text I quoted earlier, he stated that he had received orders to refit the bunker in "the winter of 1942/43," not in

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[143] This information, taken from M. Müller's deposition at the Neuengamme Trial ("an electric cable was laid into the bunker from the telegraph pole"), assumes that until then the detention bunker was without an electric line!

October 1942, and spoke of 6 "ventilation pipes," a strange designation at least for pipes presumably used to introduce Zyklon B.

On the same page Möller explained that "the instructions for the refitting measures had been issued by Protective Custody Leader Albert Lütkemeyer," and referred in footnote to the depositions of Bahr and Müller at the Neuengamme Trial. But the former stated:

> *"I have seen some of these alterations but I know nothing about it. They were ordered by the kommandantur and the kommandofuhrer."*

The second, Müller, mentioned it in this context:

> *"Then the lagerfuhrer, Luetkemeyer called me over to him and told me to collect these people's clothing as soon as they had gone and to have it deloused."*

Lütkemeyer was "camp leader," meaning "protective custody leader," but not "*Kommandoführer*" (squad leader), which was a hierarchically much lower position; for example, among the defendants in the Neuengamme Trial, Adolf [Adolf] Speck was a "*Kommandoführer*."[144]

Möller then believes he knows that "the work lasted two days," but even this detail is invented: no witness claimed such a thing.

He then introduces another fictional chronological element (Möller, p. 289):

> *"Presumably in October 1942, ten days after completion of the structural arrangements at the bunker, the first gassing took place."*

Equally invented is that Bahr and Bühning were "equipped with protective gloves" (*ibid.*, pp. 290f.). The description of the gassing technique is also imaginary:

> *"The two SS men poured the 'Zyklon B' crystals into the pipes. At the base of the tubes, the crystals met the metal plates heated by the heating coil. The heat accelerated the release of the hydrogen cyanide gas, which was rapidly distributed in the room by the fan."*

The "metal plates" are the "bearing surface," literary devices invented to rationalize the alleged gassing technique.

Based on what almost all witnesses claimed, Möller repeats that the alleged gassing was public: the corpses were taken away in front of the inmates lined up for the evening roll call, who also had to sing a song. He then notes:

> *"The mass shooting of 59 Soviet officers and commissars in 1941 had still taken place in secret. While this crime was taking place, the prisoners were*

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[144] Neuengamme Trial, deposition of A. Speck at the hearing of April 17, 1946. TNA, WO 235-165, p. 23.

locked in their quarters and any entry onto the roll-call square was forbidden."

Secrecy is precisely one of the main requirements that the orthodox "literature" ascribes to the alleged gassings in all the camps where they are said to have occurred; why then would the 197 Russian PoWs have been killed practically in front of everyone? Möller's answer is insulting and pathetic at the same time: in this way, the SS were demonstrating to the prisoners "an inhuman cynicism and their defenselessness"! In doing so, however, they would have created thousands of eyewitnesses to their crime, which fits into the orthodoxy's habit of attributing the stupidity of the "eyewitnesses" to the SS.

Möller devotes less than three lines to the alleged second gassing (*ibid.*, p. 291):

"Four weeks after the first, a second gassing took place. This time, 251 Soviet prisoners of war were the victims, among whom there were significantly more handicapped personen than in the first group."

Noting that the claim "four weeks after" is purely imaginary, one may ask: If this alleged gassing was also as public as the first one, why are there no "eyewitnesses" to it? (If it was not public, one may ask why was the first gassing public).

From a historiographical point of view, Möller's article is deficient also because he limits himself to being an uncritical chronicler: he introduces an alleged fact without explaining its antecedents and motivations: why were the 197 Russian PoWs killed? Why exactly were they gassed?

The "Decree to Implement Executions" issued by Himmler on Jan. 6, 1943 setting forth the entire casuistry of executions – which, by the way, are quoted in excerpts by Kaienburg (Kaienburg 1997, pp. 257f.) – should have offered food for thought to Möller. The bureaucratic procedure was indeed rigidly established:

"The order of execution shall be issued by means of an express letter or telegram to the competent State Police Headquarters or to the commander of the Security Police and the SD. This office has to inform of the order:
1. the higher SS and police leader,
2. the commander or the inspector of the Security Police and the SD.
The order shall be signed by the chief of Office IV of the RSHA or by a specially authorized person."

Executions were to take place through "shooting" or "hanging."[145] Final provisions follow (PS-1751):

> *"After the execution, the camp physician confirms in writing that death has occurred (including the time of death). The Reichssicherheitshauptamt – Office IV – is to be notified immediately by telex of the execution. In the future, it will no longer be necessary to transmit the execution protocol or the death certificate. These are to be kept at the executing office."*

It is true that these directives post-date the alleged gassing, but a more or less similar bureaucratic practice must have been in place even earlier: in a concentration camp, an arbitrary mass execution was impossible, but the alleged gassing at Neuengamme appears precisely to be an arbitrary mass execution.

7. The Gassing Technique

Before proceeding to examine the technical details of the alleged gassing, it is necessary to summarize the solid points established earlier:

1) There is no record of the arrival at Neuengamme of the alleged transport of Russian PoWs. This is explained by the fact that they were not registered ("no numbers," Bauche *et al*., p. 118), but the witness Dingeldein stated:

> *"I saw the transport coming, got the list of prisoners to enter them into a card index."*

2) The dating of this transport is uncertain; witnesses' statements about it are conflicting.

3) There is no historical frame of the alleged gassing, no assumption that make it understandable. In this regard, comparison with the orthodox Holocaust narrative of the "first gassing" at Auschwitz is obligatory, which I will do now.

I start with the "Guidelines for the Commandos of the Chief of the Security Police and the SD to be Seconded to the Stalags" of July 17, 1941, which ordered the aforementioned commandos to screen Soviet PoWs held in German camps and to separate

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[145] This made any gassing illegal because it did not fall within the two permissible methods of execution. See Chapter 9. This illegality was not a purely formal matter, but would have resulted in specific liability of the camp commandant in the event of accidents, for example, the accidental death of an SS man during gassing.

> *"a) the politically, criminally or otherwise unacceptable elements among them,*
> *b) those persons who can be used for the reconstruction of the occupied territories."*

They in particular were to track

> *"Professional revolutionaries, the functionaries of the Comintern, all authoritative party functionaries of the CPSU. and its subsidiary organizations in the Central Committees, district and regional committees, all People's Commissars and their deputies, all former political commissars in the Red Army, the leading personalities of the central and intermediate levels in the state authorities, the leading personalities of economic life, the Soviet Russian intelligentsia, all Jews, all persons found to be agitators or fanatical communists."*

Every week, the heads of the *Einsatzkommandos* had to send a report to the RSHA, which communicated the measures to be taken based on the reports, including execution (PS-502).

This brings up the "Special Commission Mildner" of State Police Headquarters Kattowitz, which arrived at Auschwitz in November 1941, interrogated the more than 9,000 Soviet PoWs there, and divided them into four categories: A) "politically unacceptable" with the subcategory "fanatical communist"; B) "politically unsuspicious"; c) "useful for reconstruction."[146]

Prisoners in the first category were destined for death. As camp commandant, Rudolf Höss was responsible for their execution. During one of his absences, *Hauptsturmführer* Fritzsch is said to have employed Zyklon B on his own initiative to kill these Soviet POWs, after locking them up in the "bunker" of Block 11, meaning in the basement detention cells.

This fictional event is at least framed in a historical context that provides a logical explanation for it, although the chronological contradiction remains that the alleged gassing is said to have taken place in September 1941, before the arrival of the "Special Commission Mildner" (and the first Soviet PoWs, who arrived at Auschwitz in early October[147]), and although it remains unexplained why Category-A prisoners were to be gassed, rather than shot.

In the case of Neuengamme, however, there is total darkness.

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[146] NO-5849. Affidavit by Kazimierz Smoleń, 15 December 1947. On the issue, see Mattogno 2022.

[147] "The first transports with Russians arrived at Auschwitz in early October 1941." NO-5849.

4) There is no record of any work on refitting the bunker. It appears from the minutes of the Neuengamme Trial that the British made an inspection of the bunker, but there is neither a survey nor a report on it. If they found the Zyklon-B introduction pipes, these would have been an important piece of evidence; if they were removed by the SS before the arrival of the British, there would have remained the obvious traces of their removal, a less convincing piece of evidence, but still important. The fact that none of this appears in the trial records suggests that the British found neither the pipes nor the traces of their removal, meaning that no pipes had ever been installed there. This seems the only plausible explanation: an expert report on the ceiling of the bunker would have resoundingly refuted all testimony, starting with Bahr's, hence it was never produced!

As I mentioned earlier, the building containing the detention cells had been demolished by early October 1950 at the latest, but the Neuengamme Memorial gives the following description:[148]

> *"The cell building of the camp prison, known in camp jargon as the detention bunker, was built in the winter of 1940 as a massive 7.70 m × 5.30 m and 3.30 m high clinker building (roof height 4.50 m) into an existing barrack, which until then had housed workshops and a coal store. The walls were founded on the existing footings of the barracks. The partition walls of the cells and the corridor were set on additionally foundations.*
>
> *The workshops and the coal store continued to be used. At an unknown date, the part of the barracks not used as a detention bunker was demolished. The cell building remained standing with the surrounding barrack walls as a shell, as a now independent building, and was separated from the 'protective custody camp' (prisoner camp) by a fence. The detention bunker had five individual cells of 1.25 m × 3.10 m floor area, each with a small, barred window facing the eastern side of the 'protective custody camp.' Access was via a 1.30 m wide corridor in front."*

A photograph depicting the bunker corridor (Document 1) reveals that it was a masonry structure around which a wooden barrack had been built. It can be reasonably assumed that the measurements of the cells and corridor shown above were internal, so one cell measured 1.25 m × 3.10 m = about 3.9 m²; five such cells together measured (1.25 m × 5=) 6.25 m in combined width, with a total floor area of about 19.5 m². If the measurements of 7.70 m × 5.30 m were external, the length exceeded the internal measurement by (7.70 m – 6.25 m =) 1.45 m, the width by (5.30 m – [3.10 m +

[148] Baugeschichte des KZ Neuengamme. Arrestbunker (Lagergefängnis), from the website: http://neuengamme-ausstellungen.info/content/lagermodell/objekt45.html.

1.30 m] =) 0.90 m. In the latter case, the distribution of the surplus was likely 0.35 m + 0.20 m + 0.35 m, that is, the outer walls measured 35 cm thick, the inner corridor partition 20 cm.

Applying this data to the length results in two outer walls of 35 cm and four partitions of 20 cm, a total of 150 cm, which represents a very good approximation of the value calculated above: 145 cm.

Thus, the length of the corridor was 7.70 meters minus the thickness of the outer walls (0.35 m + 0.35 m), i.e., 7 meters; its area was therefore (1.30 m × 7 m =) 9.1 m², and the total useable area of the bunker was (19.5 m² + 9.1 m² =) 28.6 m².

For the claimed first gassing, this corresponds to a density of (197 ÷ 28.6 m² =) about seven persons per square meter, certainly not impossible, but so high as to permit hardly any movement of the people locked up in there. Therefore, Zuleger and Wackernagel's statement that

> *"the picture was terrifying. The corpses were stapled* [piled] *up to the height of the windows and the top of the doors. Everyone stepped on top of the other in order to get oxygen,"*

which was later also used by A. Lüdke:

> *"When I passed the door I saw the door was open and a mountain of corpses in a cramped position and the height of one metre 70 to one metre 80 was visible,"*

– is a mere literary fiction. No less absurd is M. Müller's claim that "as soon as the door was opened *some 50 to 100 corpses just fell into the open*."

5) On October 18, 1945, the "Committee of Former Political Prisoners" compiled a "List of Executed Inmates at the Neuengamme Concentration Camp (from the Death Books)," in which are recorded with "Serial No.," "Detention Type," "First and Last Name," "Age," "Day of Death," "Hour" and "Type of Death," 186 inmates who were executed from November 11, 1940 to February 12, 1945.

In an accompanying letter, dated October 20, with which the above documentation was forwarded to "Mr. Capitaine de Saisset, Hamburg, 'Curio-Haus,'" the Committee specified:

> *"Enclosed we send you an excerpt from the death books of the Neuengamme Concentration Camp, showing those executed and the signatures of the SS men involved."*

The list includes 47 inmates executed in 1942, almost all of them hanged.[149] Therefore, the 197 allegedly gassed persons were not included

[149] TNA, WO 309-863.

in this documentation, but if they had actually been killed, they would also have fallen under the category "executed."

Regarding the Zyklon B supplies in connection with the alleged gassing, nothing can be said, either for or against.

According to the administrative records of the Tesch Company, 180 kg of Zyklon B were supplied to Neuengamme Camp in 1942, namely: on March 3: 24 kg; on June 9: 12 kg; on August 14: 12 kg; on September 9: 36 kg; on October 9: 36 kg; and on December 18: 60 kg.[150] There were two disinfestation plants in Neuengamme, most likely of the Degesch circulation type, which, according to Bahr's statements, operated basically "every day" and required a can of Zyklon B for each gassing of 40 to 50 pieces of clothing.

The Degesch circulation chambers measured 1.35 m × 4 m × 1.90 m, so they had an area of 5.4 m² and a volume of 10.26 m³. Normally, a 200 g can of Zyklon B was used, which produced the required hydrogen-cyanide concentration of 20 g/m³. The duration of a gassing depended on the chamber load. On July 4, 1944, the Head of the Central Construction Office in Weimar, wrote in response to a request for information from the Head of the Central Construction Office in Auschwitz, SS *Obersturmführer* Werner Jothann:[151]

> *"The disinfestation is radical and absolutely effective. The following tenet applies: small and well-loosened batches – short exposure time; dense packing – long duration of gassing. Thus, the times vary between 1 and 12 hours when using the 200 gr can. One calculates for 100 sets of clothes plus all accessories (shoes etc.) per chamber about 3 hours, ventilation 1/2 hour. The chamber packed full of suitcases and bags (without using the carts) is left under gas for one night."*

At Neuengamme, the gassing of 40 to 50 pieces of clothing therefore lasted in round figures four hours, so two gassings per day (= 2,400-3,000 pieces per month) could easily be carried out, enough for a good half of the inmates.[152]

Monthly consumption of Zyklon B was therefore [(200 gr + 200 gr) × 30 =] 12,000 g or 12 kg. The deliveries were 12 kg or a multiple of 12 (24, 36, 60), which suggests that they were made in relation to the standard

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[150] TNA, WO 309-1602, "Production No. 10, Summary 602 of ZYKLON B to Concentration Camps during 1942 and 1943, extracted from Exhibit HG and HH."

[151] RGVA, 502-1-333, pp. 17-17a.

[152] Camp strength (Stammlager) was 3,500 inmates in 1940 and 9,800 in 1943 (intermediate figures are missing). Bauche *et al.*, p. 129. For Bahr, the 1942 strength was 4,000-5,000 inmates.

consumption of 12 kg, but nothing certain can be said about this. This led the British *not* to raise the issue, unlike what they did about Auschwitz and Sachsenhausen.

Jean-Claude Pressac was the first and only orthodox Holocaust scholar to have sketched out a critical assessment of the alleged gassings. In an unpublished paper on the "gas chambers" of German concentration camps dated November 9, 1994, he wrote about Neuengamme:[153]

> *"The Neuengamme Camp in the Hamburg region, created in 1938 as a subcamp of the Sachsenhausen Camp, became autonomous in 1940. The homicidal gassing of two groups of 180 to 200 Russian prisoners is reported, one for September and the other for November 1942. The data of this liquidation by gas resemble those of the first one in Auschwitz: the victims were probably Soviets labeled as 'irredeemable communists',*[154] *the place chosen was a prison, and the poison used was Zyklon-B.*
>
> *The role of the executioner was played by a medical orderly from the health service, SS Sergeant Willi Bahr, who was trained in the handling of Zyklon B, which was regularly used in the delousing station of the camp. He was appointed to this position because of his specialty, but he felt obliged to obey for fear of reprisals against his family, as many people thought at the time. When questioned by the British military justice, Bahr's answers appear as the account of an 'outside' spectator. He participated but was not interested in his own actions, nor did he try to understand them. If a global technical coherence is absent from his statements, the English judges do not seem to have looked for one either, their questions being mainly about the victims and the respective responsibilities of the SS.*
>
> *The gassing took place in a 'bunker' with detention cells. Bahr says that he laid out five cans of Zyklon-B, climbed onto the roof of the bunker with a ladder, and poured the contents of half a can into each of the pipes, leading directly into the cells. He reports that there was also a pipe and a hot-air device with an electric coil on the roof. After two hours, the doors of the bunker were opened, and the bodies removed.*
>
> *From the number of cans and the quantity used per cell, we can deduce that the prison consisted of ten detention cells, either placed by five on either side of a central corridor, or arranged side by side and served by a lateral corridor. For the delousing of the effects, cans of 200 g of hydrogen cyanide were used. The five cans totaled one kg of product, of which Bahr poured 100 g per pipe. Given the number of gassed Soviets and the rate of 10 g/m³ of HCN* [hydrogen cyanide] *necessary for rapid death, each cell*

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[153] Dachau Museum Archives, File *Krematorium Baracke* X.

[154] As noted earlier, this information is inaccurate.

had to have a surface of 4 to 5 m² and a volume of 10 to 15 m³. It seems that the two gassings took place in an old prison where each cell was or had been equipped with a small heating stove. A hole in the ceiling ensured the passage of the gas-outlet pipe. These holes, which had been broken through beforehand, would have been used to introduce the toxic substance.[155] *In such a place, the evacuation of the gas required at least ten hours of natural ventilation rather than two as the report by the SS. As for the hot-air device with an electric coil, it is incomprehensible and does not correspond to any of the hand-made or industrial installations installed in the concentration camps.*

Since the Neuengamme Concentration Camp was dismantled after the war and its buildings returned to their original function as a prison,[156] *it is possible that the 'bunker' still exists,*[157] *and that an investigation could be carried out. Unfortunately, this would be very difficult, as access to the bunker and the taking of photographs are forbidden in detention facilities."*

(Emphases added)

Pressac had meager data, but at least it was used to create a coherent narrative; despite this, he expressed strong misgivings about the alleged gassing.

The availability of more extensive data makes the analysis of the alleged event even more difficult, because a coherent narrative is lacking.

The first to create confusion was Bahr himself. In his affidavit of November 30, 1945, he said:

"A ladder was put against the roof and I climbed onto the roof of the cells. There were 6 pipes leading into the cells. I was wearing a gas-mask and poured into each of these pipes about ½ a tin of Zyklon B."

Hence, he used 3 cans. At the Tesch Trial, he was already confused:

"Q. Have you seen either of those tins before? (Some handed).

A. Yes, Exhibit 2.

Q. What sort did you use to gas the 200 Russian prisoners of war?

A. The small one.

Q. How many did you use to gas those people?

A. I do not remember any more – perhaps 5 or 6, about that.

Q. 5 or 6 of these little tins were used, were they?

A. Yes."

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155 This is not attested by any testimony.

156 The former KL Neuengamme was converted into a prison (Justizvollzugsanstalt Vierlande), which went into operation on September 6, 1948 and remained operational until June 30, 2003 (Schawe, pp. 49, 56.

157 In fact, the shack with the Arrestzellen, at the time Pressac was writing, no longer existed.

However, this presupposes 10-12 pourings of Zyklon B, and thus 10-12 pipes.

At the Neuengamme Trial, Bahr had regained his memory:

"A. Yes, only five tins were required.

Q. Did you know that this quantity would be sufficient?

A. The standortarzt had ordered me to pour half a canister into each of the openings in the roof."

"A. We poured half a tin through each of the pipes."

If therefore Bahr poured "half a tin through each of the pipes" and there were five cans, there were necessarily ten pipes. These claims also deceived Pressac, who deduced, precisely, that there must have been ten cells.

The other testimonies mention six or seven introduction pipes; if there were six, they were five above each cell, and one above the corridor; if there were seven, there were two pipes above the corridor. In both cases, it is nonsensical that five or six cans of Zyklon B were used, and that Bahr poured half a can into each pipe: six pipes = three cans; seven pipes = 3.5 cans.

I have already noted that the most-reliable testimony in this regard should be that of Tamsen, because he claimed to have participated in the manufacture and installation of the pipes. I quote once more his related statement:

"We in the metal workshop received the order to hammer iron pipes with a diameter of 80 mm and a length of about half a meter through the roof into the hallway of the cell building and to mount them."

Strangely, he did not indicate the number of pipes; moreover, in contrast to other testimony, he stated that they were placed above the hallway, not the cells.

The diameters of these tubes adduced by the witnesses were 8, 10-15 or 38 cm. The 8 cm measurement given by Tamsen and adopted by Möller is the least appropriate. The 200-gram cans of Zyklon B had a diameter of 9.9 cm,[158] so it would have been easier to adopt the larger diameters or to make use of a large funnel, but this was not mentioned by any direct witnesses from 1945-1946; it was not until 1967 that Krause stated that the tubes were "something like wooden funnels."

These pipes moreover present additional problems. A period photograph (Document 2) suggests that the small windows, which measured ap-

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[158] This is explicitly stated in the manual "*Die kleine Testa-Fibel über Normal-Gaskammern*," p. 10. TNA, WO 309-1603.

proximately 80 cm × 40 cm, were equidistant from each other, so they were located in the center of each cell, as indeed also appears in the drawing of the bunker floor plan of the Neuengamme Memorial (Document 3). The design of a rational arrangement of the pipes would have provided for a pipe in the center of each cell, in order to achieve an even distribution of the hydrogen-cyanide vapors, as in my related drawing (Document 2a), from which it is clear that an equal "length of about half a meter" of the pipes does not make sense for a slanted roof. In fact, Tamsen believed that the pipes were located "through the roof into the hallway," but such an arrangement would have created unnecessary difficulties for gassing: the Zyklon B would have fallen, precisely, into the hallway, and the hydrogen-cyanide vapors would have taken longer to penetrate each cell, crammed with people, even if the cell doors were open. In addition, as shown in the photograph of the bunker interior (Document 1), above the corridor was the wooden truss visible on the outside; above the cells the truss formed an open room, which would have filled unnecessarily with hydrogen-cyanide vapors.

Moreover, wherever the pipes were located, Zyklon B would have fallen on the heads and bodies of the victims, making it impossible to recover the carrier material (gypsum pellets) soaked with hydrogen-cyanide after the end of the execution. It is known from experiments carried out in 1942 that within two hours (roughly the duration of the gassing given by Bahr) some 96.4% of the entire hydrogen-cyanide content in Zyklon B (gypsum type) evaporated at a temperature of 15°C with low relative humidity and fine distribution.[159] Considering the toxicity of hydrogen cyanide even through mere skin contact,[160] such a procedure would have been very dangerous for those who would have had to remove the corpses from the bunker, even if they had been wearing gas masks.[161]

Pressac was perfectly correct that two hours of ventilation of the cells would have been totally insufficient, given their conformation: five cells with a small window of about 80 cm × 40 cm in each. Therefore, one had to rely on the air current flowing from the main door to the individual small windows. Since the cell doors were left open, the hydrogen-cyanide vapors would also have spread to the attic of the bunker, as I mentioned

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[159] Irmscher, p. 36. See the related discussion in Rudolf 2020, pp. 236-240.

[160] This danger was known already well before the war. On August 5, 1931, a Desinfektor performed a fumigation of living quarters with Zyklon B; the following night he died of poisoning through the skin. See Betke.

[161] This was reported explicitly only by Bahr and Bühning.

earlier (especially since there must have been at least one introduction pipe for Zyklon B in the corridor), so, for a successful ventilation, it would also have been necessary to open the attic door seen in the relevant photograph (Document 2), but this essential fact is not mentioned by any witness.

Installing the pipes would have required breaking holes through the wooden roof and ceiling slab. This modification would have made sense for permanent use of the bunker rooms as gas chambers, but the alleged gassing was entirely impromptu (Camp Commandant Pauly had not been ordered to gas multiple transports of Soviet POW). For an occasional gassing, Zyklon could have been poured from the outside through the small cell windows, by means of a large funnel, closing the shutters immediately afterwards. Nor would it have been necessary to make the door and shutters airtight, because the escape of hydrogen-cyanide vapors would have been irrelevant to the gassing, less dangerous to bystanders than opening the door and shutters after the gassing.

The alleged heating system presents other problems. First, it is not known whether it consisted of "radiators" or "heating coils" or "electric heating wires," and whether they were located "beneath the ceiling" or "on the walls."

Second, what was the purpose of a heating system for an occasional gassing?

As I noted in an earlier study (Mattogno 2016b, pp. 197-199), the heating device would have been complicated and unnecessary. From a homicidal point of view, it is unclear why it is said to have been indispensable in mini-gas chambers intended for mini-exterminations, while on the other hand it is said to have been superfluous in the claimed huge Auschwitz gas chambers employed for massive exterminations. As Achim Trunk has pointed out (with reference to the alleged Auschwitz gas chambers), the heat emitted by the victims' bodies would have quickly produced the energy necessary to evaporate hydrogen cyanide (Trunk, Note 85, p. 46). But if that is so, what need was there for this complicated device for just two gassings?

The installation of a heating system is even more implausible since, according to Bahr during the Neuengamme Trial, the organizer of the alleged gassing was SS Garrison Physician Dr. Bodmann, whom he misspelled as Bothmann or Boetmann:

> *"Orders for this action I received from Dr. von Bothmann, who also proposed the use of Zyklon B."* (Affidavit of 30 Nov. 1945)
>
> *"Q. Who was the standortarzt?*

A. Dr. Von Boetmann.
Q. What did Dr. Von Boetmann tell you?
A. He gave us a talk and said that within the course of the day we would have to gas this convoy of Russians. […]
Q. W*as the standortarzt Von Boetmann in charge of the whole affair?*
A. Yes."

Before being transferred to Neuengamme, Dr. Franz von Bodmann, had been SS Garrison Physician at Auschwitz from May to August 16, 1942.[162] Therefore, seen from the orthodox perspective, he must have been fully aware of the alleged gassings of Jews in the phantom-like "Bunkers" at Birkenau, which, as is well known, were literally very crude structures, with no heating systems, no fans, no inlet introduction pipes: Zyklon B was simply poured into the rooms through small hatches in the outer walls (see Mattogno 2016a.). Nevertheless, they are said to have been highly efficient, being able to gas 800 and 1,200 people at a time without difficulty (so Piper, p. 162).

Why then for an occasional gassing of less than 200 people would von Bodmann have organized such a cumbersome system?

6) I have already mentioned earlier the incredible anomaly that the gassing is said to have taken place practically in public: some inmates observed it while standing comfortably at the window of their barracks or workplace:

– Saalwächter: "I observed this incident from a workshop window."
– Krause: "I myself together with several inmates have observed from the kitchen window […]"
– Wilhelm Mueller: "From the kitchen I could only once observe […]"

Another witness wants to have observed it while he "took the commandant's dog for a walk," stopped for 15 minutes and quietly observed the gassing "from a distance of barely 10 meters" (Struck). Another witness claims to have stood "some 8 to 10 m away from the cell" (Tamsen), yet another, less fortunate, was "about 20 meters away" (Roehl), not to mention the bulk of the detainees lined up on the roll-call square.

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[162] Lasik, p. 316. The author states that von Bodmann served in Auschwitz until August 16, 1942, then "he served as First Camp Physician at the Lublin/Majdanek Camp until 10. April 1943", and finally, "er war ebenfalls im KL Neuengamme." "he was also at the Neuengamme Camp." Zofia Leszczyńska writes that von Bodmann arrived in Majdanek in late 1942 from Auschwitz (Leszczyńska, p. 67), but this is a mistake, because he was transferred there from Neuengamme, where he remained from the second half of August to the end of 1942.

Another period photograph (Document 4) shows part of the bunker facade with the small cell windows (B). On the left is the facade of the barracks that contained the delousing, inmate bath and mortuary (E), on the right the facade of the kitchen (K), behind Infirmary II (R).

During a disinfestation fumigation of the bunker, the SS garrison physician would have ordered a *Blocksperre* of the delousing and kitchen barracks, prohibiting any access to these facilities for security reasons. During any homicide gassing, this would have been imposed as well, also for reasons of secrecy.

The stories told by witnesses are unreliable and implausible in this respect as well.

8. The Testimonies of Former Inmates

The account of the alleged gassing is blatantly inspired by that of the "first gassing" at Auschwitz: in both cases, Soviet PoWs were allegedly gassed by means of Zyklon B in detention cells, and the facility was referred to as "bunker." The introduction of Zyklon B from the roof, on the other hand, comes from accounts of alleged gassings in the morgue of Crematorium I.

These essentials of the story was brought to Neuengamme by the many inmates who were transferred there from Auschwitz; we know of at least the following transports arriving at the Neuengamme Camp (excluding transports sent directly to the Neuengamme satellite camps; Bauche *et al*., p. 118):

– 10 March 1943: 1001 inmates
– 25 August 1943: 500 inmates
– 19 November 1943: 1000 inmates
– 30 March 1944: 106 inmates
– 25 August 1944: 750 inmates

This transplantation of black propaganda took root only in a limited way, though. In contrast to Auschwitz, the alleged Neuengamme event is said to have taken place practically in public, in the presence of the entire SS staff SS, who were "eight to ten men" (Bahr),[163] and several inmates who claimed to have been able to observe the gassing undisturbed. After the murder, the corpses are said to have been exhibited to all the inmates as-

[163] TNA, WO 230-165, p. 109.

sembled for the evening roll call. If this were true, there would have been dozens, if not hundreds of witnesses. In fact, however, there were only three self-proclaimed eyewitnesses in 1945-1946: Lüdke, Müller and Saalwächter.

Among the witnesses questioned by German judiciary, some even ruled out the alleged gassings.

Kilbinger: "*I know nothing* about the gassing of Russian PoWs in Sept.-Nov. 1942, in which Lüttgemeier, whom I mentioned, is supposed to have participated. *In my time, no people were gassed in Neuengamme*."

Roding: "Details about the executions of Russian officers and commissars in September 1941, September 1942 and November 1942 in the Neuengamme Camp, *I have probably heard something, but cannot give details*. […] *In no case did gassings occur in Neuengamme, because such facilities did not exist in the camp. Prisoners destined for gassing – there were many Russians among them – were sent to Sachsenhausen, as far as I know.*"

Other inmates were unaware of any gassings:

Winter: "*I also know nothing* about gassings of Russian PoWs from my own experience."

Cäsar: "During this time in Neuengamme, *I know nothing about prisoners being* shot or *gassed*."

Other witnesses did not remember, or remembered grotesque nonsense:

Poot: "*He could not remember* the shootings of the 45 Russian officers and commissars in September 1941 and *the gassings* of the Russian PoWs in September and November 1942."

Christiansen: "Other events, however, which stood out from this daily occurrence, *such as the first gassing of about 70 Russian PoWs* in the bunker *in 1943* (or perhaps already in 1942), and the *killing of a German submarine crew* in the bunker, also in 1943, *I can still remember quite clearly*."

Brandenburger shamelessly attributed his ignorance to the fact that gassings were frequent: "I also cannot say anything about the gassing of Russian PoWs in Sept. and Nov. 1942, because gassings took place continuously."

Still others reported only rumors, but only one of them explicitly stated this.

Schultz: "*I know from hearsay* that a large number of Russian PoWs – there may have been about 250 – were gassed in Neuengamme at the end of 1942."

Witt: "I know that in the fall of 1942 a large number of Russian PoWs were gassed. I know that Lütgemeyer and Dreimann were involved in this gassing. *On the other hand, I know nothing about whether the USchaF BAHR* and Speck were also involved; the same applies to the RoF Fielsinger."

Yet Bahr is said to have been the main perpetrator of the alleged gassing!

Bruns: "I remember an execution in 1942 or 1943, where about 200 people, mainly Russians *and Poles*, were gassed."

Merten: "However, I do know that 45 Russian officers and commissars *were gassed* in the Neuengamme Main Camp *in the fall of 1941.* […] I also know that *in the fall of 1942 two transports, each with about 200* Russian PoWs, were gassed in Neuengamme."

Mueller: "Whether they were German prisoners or other prisoners, I do not know. I also can't say when the gassing took place. But it must have been in 1942 or 1943."

Dingeldein: "What Bahr, Dreimann, Fielsinger, Lütgemeyer and Speck did in detail *is not known to me*. *According to other prisoners, who are unknown to me*, Bahr is said to have poured in the gas."

There was also no shortage of mythomaniacs, such as Ludwig, who attributed to Neuengamme elements blatantly drawn from fairy tales originating from the Auschwitz rumor mill:

> *"I know that gassings took place in Neuengamme Camp. I was assigned several times to remove the corpses from the gassing room. This gassing room was inside the camp; the crematorium, to which the dead were taken, was in the immediate vicinity of the camp. We had to carry the corpses out of the gassing room, and load them onto a rubber-tired cart that could hold about 50 corpses. According to my estimate, the gassing room had a size of 30 to 50 square meters, and was equipped with about 30 to 50 shower heads from which the poison came. This room held about 50 people. When we arrived, the victims lay undressed in a mess. I was present at about 4 or 5 of the transports."*

Motz spoke instead of a gassing of 100 inmates in the "gas chamber" of Neuengamme Camp "in the middle of 1943."

At the Neuengamme Trial, during which 23 former detainees testified as witnesses, only the three mentioned earlier gave statements about the alleged gassing. One wonders why only they embraced the fable of gassing so fervently. The answer probably lies in G. Hoffmann's explanations in his charges against Müller:

"The 'inmate hierarchy' in this case did not only mean those inmates who normally had any posts, but mainly those who were running their terror regiment in the background as 'bosses' of illegal communist groups. These groups tried to exert their influence in the camps by all means at their disposal."

The three aforementioned detainees, who were "political" (communist) prisoners, were all part of this "inmate hierarchy," as they themselves declared.

– Lüdke:[164]

"Q. What was your position in the camp when you first arrived?
A. I was a painter and I started immediately to work as a painter.
Q. How long did you work as a painter?
A. Eight weeks.
Q. What happened then?
A. Then I became foreman for the painters.
Q. Will you tell the Court the camp expression for a foreman; what were you called?
A. Kapo or foreman.
Q. How long were you a foreman or a kapo as a painter?
A. Until January 1943.
Q And then?
A. Then I became a kapo for several working parties."

– Müller:[165]

"Q. What function did you hold there?
A. First I was at the quarries, after that I was at the hospital as a laundry man and after that I was a kapo in the delousing station."

– Saalwächter:[166]

"I arrived at Neuengamme as a carpenter and worked in the carpenters' shop. I then became a foreman and kapo and in October 1943 I became a blockaeltester of the punishment block."

As Kapos, they had collaborated with the camp SS in keeping the camp inmates in check, while at the same time abusing their positions to oppress their fellow inmates. These former SS protegees must have felt that their best defense was to attack the SS with this extraordinary and tremendous charge.

As early as August 1945, French police had been in possession of a statement by former inmate Gustav Houver listing the Neuengamme Camp

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[164] TNA, WO 235-162, p. 79.
[165] *Ibid.*, p. 270.
[166] *Ibid.*, p. 350.

staff members, indicating their assignment and physical description. After reporting the names of the SS, the witness stated:[167]

> *"Second, of the German political and Common Law prisoners who had subsequent become SS, among whom I can cite the most cruel, who were:"*

The names of ten inmates follow, including:

> *"SAALWAECHTER: height 1.80 m, very stout, 48 years, Senior of the camp after the departure of Fetz.* […]
> *LUDKE, Alvi* [sic]*: 52 years, height 1.73 m, stoutness less than average, highly coloured face, brown hair, partly bald, Chief of Labour Service."*

9. The Testimonies of Former SS Members

I have repeatedly pointed out earlier the contradictory and vague nature of Bahr's statements, who improvised his answers based on the testimonies that were opposed to him, without recalling what he had previously stated. His "confession" fits into, and is explained by, the judicial propaganda framework as outlined in Chapter 1.

The confusion and vagueness of his answers was noted even by Major Steward, who told him during his questioning at the Neuengamme Trial:

> *"Surely for the first time in your life you had gassed 200 people and you had seen the horrible sight of all these corpses coming out of the bunker and yet you never made any remark, not even to the people who knew as well."*

An event so unique, so terrible, how could it not have been indelibly carved into the perpetrator's memory?

At the April 6, 1946 hearing of the Neuengamme Trial, Pauly's defense counsel called Hans Wendt into the witness stand, who had been presiding judge of the SS and Police Court Hamburg. During cross-examination, Major Stewart also touched on the subject of the alleged gassing:[168]

> *"Q. Did you hear or did you know that at Neuengamme prisoners had been murdered by injections of phenol or gassed by using Zyklon B?*
> *A. I have only recently learned about it when reading in the paper.*
> *Q. Would you say as a German lawyer that to gas a couple of hundred people was manifestly illegal?*

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[167] Translation. Ministry of the Interior. Central Directorate of the National Police. French State 1 Oct 1945. Deposition of Witness. TNA, WO 309-863.

[168] TNA, WO 235-163, p. 203, 204.

A. How the orders to kill people were carried out is in the result the same.
Q. Do you want to say that according to German law to gas 200 people is not manifestly illegal?
A. Yes.
Q. What does 'Yes' mean?
A. I mean the little man, the man in the street, could not see the wider implications.
Q. According to your conception of the law, which I take it is a Nazi conception of the law, is it manifestly illegal to gas 200 people or is it not?
A. Yes, because I only know of lawful executions through shooting and hanging.
Q. Is it then manifestly illegal to gas 200 people or to inject them with phenol or not?
A. I think yes because there is no legal basis for such things."

Bahr could not judge whether the alleged order he received was legal or illegal. This was the defense strategy of his lawyer, who, in his "Closing speech in the defense of Wilhelm BAHR" on April 28, 1946, referred to Wendt's testimony, commenting, "BAHR was without question a 'little man' in the sense of this remark."[169]

Also playing in Bahr's favor was the precedent of SS *Hauptsturmführer* Breuning, who in early April 1945 had disobeyed an order to evacuate prisoners and was referred by Pauly to the SS and Police Court Hamburg, which sentenced him to death. He was shot after a few days in Neuengamme.[170]

Bahr's defense strategy of "not guilty" due to orders from higher up did not bear fruit, however, as he was declared "guilty of the charge" and sentenced "to suffer death by being hanged."[171] The execution took place on October 8, 1946.

In the hysterical pre-trial climate, in which the incriminating witnesses, considered by the British as indubitable fountains of truth, accused him of being the main perpetrator of the alleged gassing, a declaration of "not guilty" because the event never happened or because he had not participated in it would have been hopeless from the outset.

Given Captain Freud's interrogation methods that I have sketched out earlier and which were undoubtedly common among the entire group of

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[169] TNA , WO 235-167, p. 208. In addition to superior orders, the defense attorney appealed to Bahr's psychiatric report that he had "a considerable psychic defect with hysterical symptoms" that confirmed his status as a "little man" (p. 208).
[170] *Ibid.*, p. 29. See in this regard Jacobs, p. 104.
[171] TNA, WO 235-166, p. 160 and 169.

British investigating officers, it is possible that Bahr's defense strategy was the consequence of a good cop/bad cop treatment flip-flopping between threats and promises of mercy, if only he "confessed," by considering this as "grounds for a milder treatment." The fact that Bahr's interrogations prior to his November 30, 1945 affidavit are not known compounds this suspicion.

Dr. Tesch (like his collaborators and employees, except, of course, the storyteller Sehm) had the strength to oppose Captain Freud's lies:[172]

> *"Q. Are you yet convinced that people died from the gas in concentration camps?*
> *A. No, I am not convinced."*

Wilhelm Bahr, on the other hand, who had a weak and disturbed personality, could not have done so.

Albert Lütkemeyer, who was tried in early 1947 in Neuengamme Trial No. 8, surrounded by the same judicial propaganda climate, basically chose a similar defensive strategy as Bahr, of "not guilty on orders," and given his rank, the alleged order could only have come from the camp commandant, who could no longer contradict, because he had already been executed on October 8, 1946. Lütkemeyer had no option of contesting the "testimonial truth" either that portrayed him as an active participant in the alleged gassing, even more so since this had by then become "self-evident" to the court trying him. On the other hand, he did not even remember precisely this "truth," because he placed the alleged event "during the winter of 1942/43," and he invented the term "*Gasbunker*."

The two other suspects who were questioned in 1967 by German investigators also knew little or nothing about the alleged gassing:

Walter Filsinger declared:

> *"During my stay in the Neuengamme Concentration Camp, I heard that Russian PoWs were killed there by gas. However, I was in no way involved in these killings.* […]
> *How the 'gassings' took place in detail, I learn today for the first time in all details."*

Hermann Erdmann claimed that he saw PoWs entering the bunker, but specified:

> *"But it is unknown to me that these people were killed by poison gas (Zyklon-B). When today the talk came to this gassing, I rather believed that the people could have been killed by exhaust gases of an engine. I remem-*

[172] TNA, WO 309-1603. Interrogation of Dr. Bruno Tesch at Bad Oeynhausen 26/9/45.

ber that even before this action I saw an engine (gasoline) near the bunker from the inmate kitchen, from which a hose led into the bunker."

The hypothetical killing with engine-exhaust gas was an obvious reminiscence of the alleged killing system of the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps.

Max Pauly, as a former camp commandant, was the main defendant, also for the alleged gassing. To evade prosecution, he declared that he had arrived in Neuengamme in November 1942, after the alleged gassing. In fact, he assumed the post of camp commandant of Neuengamme Camp already on September 1.[173] In his statement of October 11, 1945, he said:

"When I was at NEUENGAMME there were no gas chambers used for gassing the inmates."

In the deposition on oath on January 9, 1946, Pauly stated:

"The gassings in the Neuengamme Camp did not take place during my time as the local commandant; I also know nothing about the lethal injections that were performed before I came to Neuengamme."

In the other deposition on oath on July 3, 1946, he stated:

"The orders for the gassing and for giving injections to the Russian PW's too came from the Amtsgruppe D."

It is evident that Pauly knew nothing first hand about the alleged gassing, only rumors.

On November 1, 1945, former inmate Peter Ernst emphasized:[174]

"I remember hearing about a lot of Russians being put in the gas chambers, but do not know any details."

Rumors, indeed.

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[173] NO-1994. Letter from Pohl to Himmler dated July 28, 1942. Date of transfer and assumption of new assignment of eight concentration-camp commandants.

[174] TNA, WO 309-863. "STATEMENT of Peter ERNST, who havening been duly sworn, states: […]"

Part Two:
The Judicial Origin and Development of the Black Propaganda about the Alleged Gas Chamber at the Sachsenhausen Camp

By Carlo Mattogno

1. The Testimonial Genesis of the Sachsenhausen "Gas Chamber"

In another study, I have already examined at length the "evidence" presented for the existence of a homicidal gas chamber at KL Sachsenhausen, which boils down to a "confession" of the former camp commandant, SS-Standartenführer Anton Kaindl, made while interrogated by the Soviets, and a the report of a Soviet commission of expert witnesses consisting of Colonel Vlochin and the two engineers Teljaner and Grigorev, compiled after the inspection of the Sachsenhausen crematorium with the claimed adjoining execution rooms (gas chamber and shooting room). This inspection was carried out between June 10 and 22, 1945. Further "evidence" was adduced during the Sachsenhausen Trial, which was staged by the Soviets in Berlin from October 23 to November 1, 1947, with its accompanying "confessions" of former SS men in charge of the camp (see Mattogno 2016b, pp. 150-180).

Here I expound on the testimonial genesis of the gas-chamber tale that led to the aforementioned "evidence," and the British attempts to entangle the Topf & Stabenow Company in that trial.

It should be noted at the outset that, with regard to Sachsenhausen, black Jewish-Polish propaganda from Auschwitz appeared in written form even before it appeared on Neuengamme.

On April 15, 1945, Willi Feiler, a former Sachsenhausen inmate, wrote a general report on the camp (and from April 15 to April 22 other reports on specific aspects of it) containing a detailed description of the alleged gas chamber:[175]

> *"The problem of destroying human life on a vast scale was solved with the constructions of the gas chamber during the period from Sept. 25 to Oct. 10, 1943. It was a stone house and was built next to the Genickschuss-baracke* [neck-shooting barracks]. *Here 500 persons were put to death simultaneously. The place had 3 rooms and was faked to appear to be a bath-house, so that the people to be liquidated could be herded inside without trouble. In the first small room, the prisoners undressed. Each got*

[175] TNA, WO 309-2040, "REPORT ON SACHSENHAUSEN-ORANIENBURG CONCENTRATION CAMP BY WILLI FEILER," p. 3 of the Report.

> *a piece of soap and a towel, and proceeded into the next room, which had 500 shower fixtures fixed on the walls. After the last prisoner entered, the room was hermetically closed, and Cy*[k]*lo*[n]*gas was turned on through the shower fixtures. So far as source could discover, this gas was immediately fatal, so that this method of murder must be regarded as the most humane. The entire floor of the death chamber was hinged on one side and could be let down mechanically on the other side, so that all the bodies slid down into the four transportable crematory-furnaces beside the gas room. With this invention mass-murder in Sachsenhausen as well as in other camps was rationalized"* (Emphasis added)

This account picks up on the black propaganda fable created by the Auschwitz resisters, whose genesis and development I outlined in another study. Here it will suffice to report a few significant examples, beginning on November 1, 1942 (Mattogno 2021, p. 124):

> *"The most terrible are the mass executions using gas in chambers especially built for the purpose. There are two of them, and they can contain 1,200 persons. They contain baths with showers, which unfortunately produce gas instead of water."*
>
> *"The inside of the chambers was laid out so as to resemble a shower bath. They only differed from real shower baths in that poison gas came out of the shower heads instead of water. A railroad track comes right inside* [the gas chamber] *and removes the bodies."* (*ibid*., p. 143)
>
> *"Inside the barracks, all the people must undress immediately, because they must go and take a shower. They are even given hand towels and soap. After the shower, they are supposed to receive* [clean] *underwear and clothes. When the chamber is full, the doors are closed, and the gas is released through apertures in the form of shower heads."* (*ibid*.)

The fable of the tilting floor was also current at Auschwitz, as reflected in the deposition given on June 30, 1945, by a former Hungarian Jewish inmate, whose initials were given only, R.B:

> *"It* [the Crematorium] *looked the following way: victims first entered a lobby. It was a nice clean room with painted country sceneries and other pictures on the walls. The door of the changing room opened from here. Notes warned the entering people to keep the place clean. All around the wall there were numbered cloth*[e]*s hangers. There was a big note on the wall saying that everyone should remember the number of the hanger where they hanged* [sic] *their clothes, because numerous people wanted to have a bath. The next room was the bath with 600 places.*
>
> *There were four lines of showers. Instead of water gas flew* [flowed] *of the taps* [*a csapokból viz helyett gáz ömlött*]. *If they had sufficient time, people got first gassed but if there were many transports and they had to burn a*

> *lot of people at the same time and had no time for gassing them the floor simply turned and people fell in the fire alive. The floor had an invisible metal axis* [in the middle]*, which was made to function by electricity. The switch was pushed by an SS man who stayed close in a cabin. If he pushed one of the switches the floor turned in an upright position and the victims slid on a conveyor belt that was invisible before, which carried them into the crematorium."* (*ibid*., p. 338)[176]

Sachsenhausen was also the destination of several prisoner transports from Auschwitz, the last three in the first half of January 1945: 502 on January 5, 3,060 on January 8 and 251 on January 9.[177]

On April 29, 1945, former inmate Ludwig Schmidt prepared a report on Sachsenhausen titled "Regarding Murder of PoWs of Russian Nationality, Continuous Shootings and Gassings," in which he reported:[178]

> *"The gassing was carried out in a vehicle specially prepared for this purpose during the transport from the barracks to the Kremo.* [sic] *Although I cleaned the vehicle several times, I could not determine what kind of gas it was and where the gas supply was located, probably a connecting channel to the engine which was suitable for sucking off oxygen. No inmates were present as witnesses of the crime as such, but moving away the corpse spoke a clear language. As a nurse in the infirmary, I had a foreman from the crematorium as a patient who, a few days before his death, told me everything that happened in the crematorium; moreover, the above will be confirmed by many such statements."*

This is surely the first written outcropping of the Sachsenhausen "gas van" legend, which later developed into the fable of tests conducted with the first "gas van" in this camp, about which no one knew anything during the Sachsenhausen Trial, however.[179]

2. British Investigations

As in the case of Neuengamme, the British became interested in Sachsenhausen as part of the investigation leading up to the Tesch Trial. They had discovered that Tesch & Stabenow had made a number of deliveries of

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[176] In the quotations I have minimized the multiple expressions in the original language.
[177] K.L. Sachsenhausen. Zugänge Monat Januar 1945. GARF, 7021-104-4, p. 144.
[178] TNA, 309-953. "Betrifft Mord an Kriegsgefangenen russischer Nationalität Erschiessung und Vergasung am laufend Band"
[179] See Mattogno 2016b and the chapter on "gas vans" in Mattogno 2022a.

Zyklon B to Sachsenhausen Camp in 1942 and 1943 – which I list in the table below.[180] Therefore, the British suspected that much of it had been used to kill inmates, since they had "testimonial certainty" that homicidal gas chambers had been set up in that camp.

Zyklon B Supplies to Sachsenhausen Camp

1942			1943		
DATE	KG	RM	DATA	KG	RM
10 February	72	456	22 January	192	1,152
25 March	96	608	5 February	192	1,152
24 April	96	608	26 February	288	1,728
15 June	96	608	8 March	288	1,728
18 July	96	608	17 February	192	1,152
13 August	96	608	18 March	288	1,728
31 August	96	608	8 April	288	1,728
28 September	96	608	6 July	288	1,641
28 October	96	608	31 August	288	1,641
6 November	96	576	28 September	288	1,641
26 November	192	1,152	17 December	288	1,641
15 December	192	1,152	31 December	33.6	201
23 May	118	683			
Total	1,438	8,883		2,913.6	17,133

Such certainty was based on self-proclaimed eyewitnesses. One of the main ones was a certain Wilhelm Soerensen, who was questioned on January 14, 1946. In a letter dated January 25, sent to No. 3 War Crimes Investigation Team by the Major commanding No. 2 War Crimes Investigation Team, and with Subject "Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp," summarized the contents of the interrogation, explicitly explaining its purpose:[181]

> *"Ref telephone conversation to-day (WITCHELL – NIGHTINGALE).*
> *1. On 14 Jan 46 Wilhelm SOERENSEN of FLENSBURG was interrogated with a view to establishing the type of gas used in the gas chambers at SACHSENHAUSEN camp. As a result of the interrogation the following points emerged which may be of interest to you.*
> *2. Wilhelm SOERENSEN, aged 51, of Terassenstrasse 11, FLENSBURG, first went to SACHSENHAUSEN camp in Jan 43 as a prisoner. At the time he arrived in the camp there already existed two gas chambers, and he describes the chambers and the method of gassing which he witnessed from a distance. The procedure in the case of these two chambers was for 60 to 70 prisoners to be put into a chamber (which was made gas-tight by having*

[180] TNA, WO 309-1602, "SUMMARY of Sales of ZYKLON B to Concentration Camps during 1942 and 1943, extracted from Exhibits HG and HH. Production No. 10."
[181] TNA, WO 309-1602.

double walls filled with sand and gas-tight windows) and for an SS man to shoot over their heads into the chamber with a type of Verey light pistol, the projectile of which burst with a slight report over the prisoners' heads. The door was then closed, and after some 2 to 3 minutes opened again and the corpses removed.

3. In about March or April 43 a third gas chamber was erected adjoining the crematorium. This chamber, which SOERENSEN helped to construct, was fitted up as a bath-house with shower baths, wash basins etc. the gas according to what SOERENSEN had heard being introduced through the shower baths.

4. As SOERENSEN knew nothing about the type of gas used, he was not pressed for information about the construction of the chambers nor descriptions of gassings he witnessed; but he should be able to give useful information on these points.

5. When asked about other witnesses who would be useful in describing the gas chambers and their workings, SOERENSEN gave the following names and information as to present whereabouts: –

(a) Hans GAERTNER. Camp No. 7676. Born in SAXONY. Believed to be in S. GERMANY.

(b) Hans WOLF. Camp No. 39053, Lives in HAMBURG. Believed to be in S. GERMANY.

(c) Scharfuehrer Karl HORST. Member of the camp SS staff. Reported to be the man who worked the gassing installation in the third chamber. HORST's wife lives in NEUMUENSTER, previously at Theodor Sturmstrasse 15, but has now moved to another house in NEUMUENSTER. The present residents of Theodor Sturmstrasse 15 know where she can be found. The NEUMUENSTER police will probably know of HORST's whereabouts. SOERENSEN is of the opinion that he is in an SS camp somewhere in MECKLENBURG" (Emphasis added)

During the interrogation in question, the witness stated:[182]

"DEPOSITION on oath of Wilhelm SOERENSEN, male, of Terrassenstrasse 11, FLENSBURG, before me, Robert Alan NIGHTINGALE, Captain, Intelligence Corps, in FLENSBURG on 14 Jan 46.

I am a German national and 51 years of age. I was first arrested by the Germans in January 1935 and in January 1943 I went to SACHSENHAUSEN concentration camp. There were already two gas chambers in SACHSENHAUSEN camp when I arrived there. The first chamber was in a wooden barrack building which was divided into two portions, one half serving as a clothing store and the other as the gas chamber, in size about

[182] TNA, WO 309-1602. "Deposition of Wilhelm SOERENSEN.

8 x 8 metres by 3½ metres high. All walls were insulated with pasteboard and the space formed by this double wall was filled with sand. The inner wall was also covered with pasteboard. There were two windows which were similarly covered with flaps. This first room was bare.
Gassing of human beings was carried out as follows:
About 60-70 people were put into the room, and directly they were in, an SS man from outside shot over the heads of the prisoners into the room with a kind of Verey light pistol. The projectile, which was about 8 cms long and 3 cms in diameter, burst over the heads of the prisoners with a slight report. The SS man then shut the door and after a short interval (2 to 3 minutes) opened it again and brought out the corpses.
The second chamber was of the same type but was situated about 80 meters from the other and was insulated in a similar manner. In about March or April 1943 a third gas chamber was fitted out in the crematorium building. This chamber was equipped with a modern bath-house with wash basins, shower baths, clothes pegs and benches around the walls, and was about 7 by 8 metres by 3½ metres high. I do not know how the gas was introduced into the room; I was told that it was pumped in through the shower-bath pipes. I do not know what gas was used for this. (Signed) Wilhelm Soerensen, FLENSBURG, 16.1.46."

In the letter by which Major commanding No. 2 War Crimes Investigation Team forwarded the deposition in question to "DJAG (War Crimes Section)," which refers to the Tesch Case and is dated Jan. 22, 1946, the matter of interest to the British is summarized as follows:[183]

"1. Attached is a deposition by Wilhelm SOERENSEN on the use of gas in SACHSENHAUSEN concentration camp.
2. The statement is very brief as the main object of the inquiry was to establish the fact that Zyklon 'B' gas was used in SACHSENHAUSEN. As SOERENSEN knew nothing about the type of gas used no attempt was made to obtain a detailed statement about the method of gassing or the gas chambers, on the advice of Lt.Col BENTHAM -GREEN.
3. The other witness whom it was planned to interview, Dr. MEYER of AABENRAA. Hospital, had since moved to the hospital at HAMMERFEST in NORWAY."

It should be pointed out that orthodox Holocaust historiography knows of only one gas chamber. For example, the 1993 *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* put it this way:[184]

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[183] TNA, WO 309-1602. "Subject: Dr. Bruno TESCH 2WCIT/C/18 22 JAN 46."
[184] Gutman *et al*., entry "Sachsenhausen," Vol. III, p. 1270.

"It is not possible to date with certainty the construction of a gas chamber within the crematorium complex; it was probably built in 1943."

And even the most-recent orthodox contribution to this topic admits only one gas chamber (see Morsch). This fact alone makes Soerensen's testimony about three gas chambers entirely fanciful; suffice it to mention that, according to him, the gas was fired into the first two gas chambers "with a kind of Verey light pistol" (!), and the death of the victims occurred after just "2 to 3 minutes"!

This witness was questioned again, under the name "Sorensen," on an unspecified date. Here he knew practically nothing about the "gas chambers":[185]

"Q. Will you tell us about any incidents of special note which happened to you during your stay at SACHSENHAUSEN, more especially choosing incidents where you know the names of the persons responsible?

A. There was a Jewish affair. From LIEBEROSE came 3,000 Jews. 1,700 came from SCHWARZHEIDE. The moment they arrived they were taken to the crematorium in batches of 50 and 60 and liquidated there.

Q. How do you know these numbers; is it just what you have heard or did you at any time see any records?

A. Whenever a transport arrived the people were checked in at the gate. There were always some people standing near who overheard the figures as they were counted out.

Q. Can you say approximately when it was that these people arrived?

A. This was in 1945. I do not remember the exact date, but it was shortly before the evacuation.

Q. Were they all men or were they also women or children?

A. They were all men.

Q. You say they were liquidated. How do you know that that happened?

A. They were from the blocks taken directly to the gas chambers.

Q. Did you see them yourself go to the gas chambers or is that what you heard?

A. We saw how open lorries came along loaded up with 50 or 60. They were taken in the direction of the crematorium. It was common knowledge in the camp that anybody taken by lorry that way would be exterminated or gassed.

Q. Did you ever see, for instance, piles of shoos or piles of clothing after such incidents?

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[185] TNA, WO 309-1603, "re: ZYKLON GAS Wilhelm SORENSEN (SACHSENHAUSEN Report, Exhibit No. 9, p. 12."

A. Yes, I have seen that repeatedly. These clothes were then taken to the delousing station for cleaning.
Q. Do you know what happened to the remains that would be left behind in the ovens at the crematorium?
A. Yes. Particularly during the last times and this particular incident I am talking of, the pressure was so great that the bones were not entirely incinerated. The Jews themselves had to crush these bones and then take the ashes out into the adjoining meadows, spreading the ashes as a fertiliser."

According to this, therefore, the presence of "gas chambers" in the crematorium was simply "common knowledge in the camp."

The gassing of 4,700 Jews in 1945, "shortly before the evacuation," is another fanciful fairy tale. The witness was evidently not even aware of Himmler's alleged order of late 1944 forbidding the gassing of Jews. He also regurgitated of the grotesque black propaganda concerning the use of human ashes as fertilizers.

An August 8, 1945, a "Notice" drawn up by the 13th Investigation Section of the Danish Government Police, which ran Aabenraa Prison, reported that former inmate Henry Meyer had told Knud Larsen, a defendant in a local case, stories of crimes related to Sachsenhausen Camp:[186]

"Furthermore MEYER informs that in 1940 till 1944 about 40,000 people were murdered in the camp and in February 1945 500 prisoners were gassed because they suffered from tuberculosis. Further 2,500 Hungarian Jews completely vanished from SACHSENHAUSEN. Finally MEYER informs that STRICKLER, who previously was leader of LIEBERROSE camp, caused 700 Jews to be shot and thereafter together with 650 other Jews killed in gas chambers."

Based on this information, police constable Emil Godt interviewed Henry MEYER on August 31, 1945, and wrote a summary of his statements:[187]

"Shortly after, Dr MEYER together with other prisoners were moved to concentration camp SACHSENHAUSEN, at the arrival at this camp about 50 German prisoners were taken to the gas chambers and killed. Dr MEYER thinks that these manslaughters were exercises of the gas chambers, but he has no proof. In this case it was the prisoners who suffered from tuberculosis which they caught in the different German concentration-camps. MEYER has never had opportunity to see the installation of the gas-chambers at close hand.

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[186] TNA, 309-2040, "NOTICE."
[187] TNA, WO 309-2040, "REPORT Friday 31/3-45." The date contains a typo; it needs to read 31.8.45.

Few days after arrival to the camp, among 2,500 prisoners were taken to the gas chambers and killed. MEYER says that the recent arrived Russian P.W. came from the eastern front. During transportation from Lieberrose-camp to Sachsenhausen, MEYER says that 1,200 Hungarian Jews were killed, but in which way is unknown to him."

In 1946, Meyer was questioned about Sachsenhausen during investigation for the Tesch Trial. I quote the essential part of the brief transcript, which is undated:[188]

"Q. Were there any such things as gas chambers, injections or experiments?

A. There were two gas chambers in SACHSENHAUSEN and they started to pull them down when the Russians arrived.

Q. Do you know if they used these gas chambers at all whilst you were there?

A. In February 1945 they used to take all the prisoners who were not Germans or Scandinavians and who had tuberculosis or were sick. They used to take them out and gas them.

Q. Can you give as personal evidence of what you have seen about that?

A. The car came and fetched 25 people and they drove out of the gate with only their ordinary clothes. The car came back 10 minutes after and we knew they had been gassed because they could not have done anything else to them. The car came down 10 minutes later and fetched another 25. They were put in the papers as: 'Died during transport'.

Q. Do you know the building which they used as the gas chamber?

A. I have seen it from outside. It was lying in the Industriehof.

Q. Did you ever see any of these people being taken in there?

A. No, I myself have never seen it, but I know a lot of people who worked at the DAW, a factory there. There was a special window from which they could see the prisoners go in and never come out. They saw all the clothes coming out."

On October 5, 1945, another former deportee, Leopold Gordon, drafted a CV in which he wrote:[189]

"In March of this year [1945] *I saw the following in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp: 700 prisoners suffering from lung disease and other serious ailments were gassed in the following manner – the sick prisoners, as far as they were able to walk, had to go to the crematorium themselves, those who were no longer able to walk were loaded onto wooden carts and*

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[188] TNA, WO 309-1603, "re: ZYKLON Gas Dr Henry MEYER (Sachsenhausen Report, Exhibit No. 2, p. 18)."

[189] TNA, 309-853.

brought to the camp gate by the infirmary orderly. The next day the clothes were taken to be boiled."

The same witness provided another version of the alleged event in a brief undated handwritten statement:[190]

"[…] *in Sachsenhausen I saw how in March 1945 800 sick prisoners were brought from the infirmary in the crematorium, and were gassed there."*

Morgens Christiansen made a statement at an unspecified date concerning an Oberscharführer Bohm in which, as an example of his cruelty, he mentioned "gas chambers" or a "gas chamber," singular and plural:[191]

"During the morning a cartload of Jews was taken to the gas chambers. He stood there and beat them into the carts, and on many occasions I have seen him beat prisoners.

Q. Did you see him beat these Jews yourself?

A. Yes.

Q. How did you know they were going to the gas chamber?

A. I saw a motor car arrive in the camp. 50 Jews were loaded on to it. The car left then and after five minutes that car came back again. I myself left the camp at this time and while I was walking towards the DAW I saw the car going to the Industriehof towards the crematorium.

Q. Was the building which you believed to be a gas chamber near the crematorium?

A. It was in the same building as the crematorium.

Q. Have you any reason to know that that was a gas chamber or was it just common talk in the camp?

A. Everybody in the camp, particularly the older prisoners, spoke about the gas chamber in the crematorium."

I already mentioned Kaindl's Soviet "confession," which is dated December 20, 1946. Günther Morsch reports a significant excerpt from it (Morsch, p. 265):

"In 1942, by order of the Inspector of the SS concentration camps, Glücks, so-called 'gas chambers' were widely used in the German camps to kill people. Before I became commandant, this method of exterminating people was not used in Sachsenhausen. In 1943, I decided to build a gas chamber for the mass killing of prisoners.

Question: Consequently, the initiative to use poison gas for gassing prisoners in Sachsenhausen belonged to you?

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[190] TNA, 309-853. "Gordon Leopold Kz Sachsenhausen."

[191] TNA, WO 309-1603, "re: ZYKLON GAS Morgens CHRISTIANSEN (SACHSENHAUSEN Report, Exhibit No. 4, p. 4) refers to an Oberscharfuehrer BOHM."

Answer: In Sachsenhausen, yes. I decided to ease the agony of the death candidates, knowing that in the gas chamber death was instantaneous."

Kaindl's claim that Glücks had ordered the use of "gas chambers" "to kill people" – in 1942 or any other date – is grotesquely false. His claim that he had a "gas chamber" built "for the mass killing of prisoners" is ludicrous, because, according to the Soviet expert report mentioned earlier, the "gas chamber" was "a rectangular room with dimensions of 2.75 m x 3 m,"[192] so it had an area of 8.2 square meters!

That this "confession" was extracted by force from Kaindl by the Soviets is shown by the fact that in his earlier interrogations, when he was still in the hands of the British, he never even mentioned in passing the alleged "gas chamber." In 1946, he was interrogated on March 8 (D-745-A and D-745-B), June 22 (Scheide-12) and July 22 (NI-280). In particular, the lengthy affidavit of June 22 contains, among other things, a "Section II – Details of the Concentration Camp at Sachsenhausen" and a "Section III – Treatment of various questions pertaining to concentration camp," in which, among other things, Kaindl responded to various allegations of mistreatment at Dachau and Mauthausen, and told the following anecdote about Sachsenhausen:

"In my opinion there were rumors afoot among population near the concentration camps which in most cases did in no way correspond to the actual facts and which therefore probably were not taken seriously by most people. It is also possible that rumors sprang up as a result of the smoke of the crematory. The crematory of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp for instance was situated only 200 yards away from the rag and salvage utilization installation of the SS, where shreds of leather and material were burnt in the central heating plan. The chimney of this heating plant was not more than approx. 5 meters high, therefore, when the weather was bad or when there was a north easterly wind the smoke drifted in dense clouds over the concentration camp as far as the northern part of the city of Oranienburg. As a result the rumor probably sprang up among the population that this was smoke from the crematory. Since I myself disliked this smoke from the rag and salvage utilization and since a chemist who lived near the camp made representations to me on the subject I had this chimney built a few meters higher by the SS building office. However, this remedy was not completely successful."

[192] GARF, 7021-104-3, p. 2.

It is hard to believe that those who were concerned about the nuisance smoke and did not want it attributed to the crematorium had a gas chamber built in the crematorium itself.

In his first interrogation by the British on October 14, 1945, Kaindl in fact rejected the accusation of inmate gassings. The contents of the interrogation were summarized two days later in a "Telephone Message" from Major Draper to Lt Col Ashton Hill in connection with the Tesch & Stabenow Case: [193]

> *"In the course of interrogation Anton KAINDL, commandant of SACHSENHAUSEN/ORANIENBURG, on Sunday last, told me that poison gas was used in his camp for the purpose of exterminating bugs in the prisoners' barracks, and also in the SS barracks.*
> *Originally the gassing was done by civilians from a firm which he thinks came from HAMBURG, and which he thinks might well be TESCH & STABENOW. The gas was not stored inside the camp but in the disinfecting school of the SS under a Dr. GUNDLETH, commandant of the school which worked in the SS barracks just outside the entrance to the concentration camp.*
> *KAINDL denies that gas was used to exterminate human beings in his camp.*
> *The doctor in the camp in charge of gassing for disinfestation was a Dr. BAUMKUTTNER, SS Arzt, who made all the arrangements direct with the gassing school.*
> *At this gassing school SS men from all over GERMANY came for courses and different SS men would come to the camp to delouse the barracks on various occasions, i.e. after the civilians had shown them how to do it."*

Located near the Sachsenhausen Camp was precisely the disinfector school of the Waffen SS, where SS personnel were also trained in the use of Zyklon B, and where experiments with gas-mask filters and disinfestation gassings were carried out. Some results were published in the journal *Zeitschrift für Hygienische Zoologie und Schädlingsbekämpfung* (*Journal of Hygienic Zoology and Pest Control*): one 1943 paper's title translates to "Experience with filter cartridges and gas masks for highly toxic pest-control gas" by Ludwig Queisner, an expert "From the disinfector school of the Waffen-SS Oranienburg (Head: SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. H. Gundlach)"; a 1944 article's title translates to "Experience with hydrogen cyanide in large-scale fumigations" also by Queisner, which opens as follows:

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[193] TNA, WO 309-1602.

> *"The disinfection school of the Waffen-SS, Oranienburg, carries out large-scale disinfestations with Zyklon B in the context of operational exercises of the course participants and disinfestation squads of the school."*

DEGESCH, which produced the technical equipment for the standard disinfestation chambers "Degesch circulation device," also carried out experiments with Zyklon B. The most significant ones were described in articles published in the above-mentioned journal: "Evaporation as an Indispensable Means of Pest Control with Gases," by Gerhard Peters (CEO of DEGESCH; 1940); "The Operability of Hydrogen-Cyanide Gassing at Low Temperatures (Practical Experiences of the 1940/41 Winter War and Their Exact Verification)" (1941, again by G. Peters); "Again, 'The Operability of Hydrogen-Cyanide Gassing at Low Temperatures.'" (1942), by R. Irmscher.

The presence of this disinfector school in close proximity to Sachsenhausen Camp, which had contacts with Tesch & Stabenow[194] and had the most accurate knowledge and the best technology for the use of Zyklon B, renders the Holocaust narrative regarding the alleged Sachsenhausen gas chamber completely untenable.

Premised on the fact that the small area of the room – 8.2 square meters – would have allowed for the gassing of an insignificant number of inmates, the technical gassing device described and drawn by the Soviet experts appears to be a homemade reproduction of the apparatus employed in the "Degesch circulation" disinfestation chambers, whose operation I summarize briefly:

The can of Zyklon B was opened from the outside by means of a special device (*Vierwegschalter*: four-way control) equipped with an opening device (*Dosenöffner*, can opener). This device could be set to two positions, "*Lüftung*" (ventilation), in which outside air entered the disinfestation chamber, and "*Kreislauf*" (circulation), in which air circulated inside the chamber. The can of Zyklon B was opened from the outside, and its contents fell onto the underlying sheet metal plate (*Auffangblech für das Zyklon*) placed in front of the heating device (*Heizaggregat*). There, the Zyklon pellets were struck by a cyclic current of warm air that was drawn in by the fan (providing for 72 air changes per hour) through the suction tube (*Saugleitung*) from the opposite end of the chamber, thus causing the

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[194] I remind the reader that Bruno Tesch held a course for SS exterminators in Sachsenhausen between January 8 and 10, 1941. In addition, the Tesch & Stabenow Company also supplied the disinfector school with Zyklon B for its "instruction gassings"; Kalthoff/Werner, pp. 152f.

circulation of the warm fumes. When the disinfestation was over, the gas mixture was expelled from the fan through the deaeration tube (*Lüftungsleitung*).

The essential difference between the two devices lies in the alleged fact that in the one described by the Soviet experts, "a flask (skljanka) with Zyklon 'A' was inserted" in the can opener. They specified:[195]

> *"Note: Seven flasks with hydrogen cyanide – the preparation Zyklon 'A' – were found within the confines of the crematorium in a recess in the morgue, next to the shooting installation. At the same spot, a large number of broken Zyklon 'A' flasks was also found.*
> *The flask would be broken by a pressure screw* [the equivalent of the can opener]*, and by heating the air in the electric device, the vapors of hydrogen cyanide were blown into the gas chamber through a wire-mesh basket'."*

Zyklon A was a mixture of cyano formic-acid methyl and ethyl esters with some 10% of chloro-formic-acid ester devised after 1917 by Prof. Fritz Haber, Director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physical Chemistry and Electrochemistry, but was used only for a few years (Flury/Zernik, p. 412),

> *"however, since cyano-formic-acid ester had been used as a combat agent during the World War, the Treaty of Versailles stipulated that further production of this agent, which was very effective against vermin, had to cease in Germany."*

Its production ceased completely with the introduction of Zyklon B in 1923. Furthermore, with the device described by the Soviet experts, gassings with Zyklon A could not be carried out. G. Peters summarized its way of being deployed as follows (Peters 1933, p. 57):

> *"it only needed to be injected and finely vaporized under 5-10 atmospheres of pressure by means of a metallic or other conduit (such as through the keyhole) into the space to be disinfested, using an apparatus similar to a plant sprayer."*

Therefore, "heating the air in the electric device" was of no use with Zyklon A. In my previously quoted book *Inside the Gas Chambers*, I documented the senseless arrogance with which orthodox Holocaust historians stoop to defend such nonsense (Mattogno 2016b, pp. 150-180).

Here I add that the top-literary specialists on Zyklon B, Jürgen Kalthoff and Martin Werner, mention Zyklon A in their well-documented work in connection with the alleged Sachsenhausen gas chamber (Kalthoff/Werner, pp. 188f.):

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[195] Soviet report on Sachsenhausen Camp, June 10-22, 1945. GARF, 7021-104-3, p. 4.

> *"In the Soviet military court proceedings of 1947, an expert report was also cited which spoke of 'Zyklon A' found in the camp. It is the only reference to the use of Zyklon A for the murder of people known to us so far."*

In their book, Zyklon A is mentioned in a quote from an article from the early 1920s, where it is explained (*ibid.*, p. 28):

> *"The effects of the Treaty of Versailles initially inhibited its use for pest control, as it was thought to be a new or former war gas."*

How could the Soviets seriously believe that Zyklon A was still in production in 1943?

The British strategy was more refined than that of the Soviets, but no less fallacious. They had the testimonial "certainties" that a homicidal gas chamber had existed at Sachsenhausen, that it was set up as shower baths, and that the gas was "introduced there through the shower baths." The blatant chronological contradiction about its construction ("in about March or April 1943" and "during the period from Sept. 25 to Oct. 10, 1943") was of no importance to them. And although the British were, by their own admission, ignorant of the type of gas purportedly used for murderous purposes, they tried to charge the owners of the Tesch & Stabenow Company for having set up the technical devices of the alleged Sachsenhausen gas chamber, which – as I noted earlier – would have been obvious if such a gas chamber had really existed, but the gas chamber *claimed by witnesses* was abysmally far removed from such technology, and the one described in the Soviet expert report was only a make-shift version.

In fact, such a strategy for ascertaining the truth proved to be utterly futile, because the British investigators were starting from completely fallacious assumptions:

1. that the fantasies told by Emil Sehm were the pure truth;
2. that the Tesch Company had built in some concentration camps homicidal gas chambers of 50, 60, 75 or even 200 cubic meters;
3. that it had turned ordinary shower rooms there into gas chambers;
4. that the supplies of Zyklon B to these camps – as already explained – were abnormal, and consequently proved that they were intended for the extermination of human beings.

Captain Freud vainly attempted to make his interviewees "confess" to these charges. Here I deal with those marked 2) and 3), since I have already dealt with the other two.

Imputation 2 was based on partially burned Tesch-Company documents; the numerous gaps do not allow one to understand the actual meaning of the contents.

One of the most important among them is a letter dated May 28, 1942 with the subject line "Waffen SS Clothing Works, DACHAU-LUBLIN Supply of equipment / Gas chambers order No. A/165," which begins as follows:[196]

> *"We have unfortunately learned that the clothing works have withdrawn the order for the supplies of apparatus for 25 cbm chambers, and now still larger chambers must be installed. As remands the capacity of 200 cbm proposed by the Dienststelle placing the order, as before said, we would like to ask you not to go beyond the size of 75 cbm."*

Another letter, which has as its subject "Delousing installations, LUBLIN" and is dated June 11, 1942, says:[196]

> *"We are sending you under cover our quotation No. 42240 for the erection of 75 cbm delousing chambers for LUBLIN."*

The British also found correspondence between the Tesch Company and the *Generalkommissar* in Riga, which became the collection marked "Exhibit J." One letter, written on December 18, 1942 or a few days later, contains the following, among other things:[197]

> *"The installation in RIGA is for a frequency of 1,200 per day; the one in DUENABURG for a frequency of 1,000 persons. In both places central heating can be installed, which with steam… It is intended to undertake in both places, simultaneously with the delousing of clothes, a thorough cleansing of personnel (?) in the showers-rooms."*

The other letters explicitly allude to pest control and pest-control rooms.[198]

No one knows how or why Captain Freud became convinced that the camp had requested gas chambers with volumes greater than the "normal" 10 m³ from the Tesch Company for homicidal purposes, and in particular that such gas chambers had been supplied by the Tesch Company to Sachsenhausen and Riga.

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[196] TNA, WO 309-1603, Exhibit KD. Only the English translation of this letter is presented.

[197] TNA, WO 309-1603, Exhibit JC.

[198] A telegram dated November 16, 1942 and addressed by the Tesch Company to the Generalkommissar in Riga mentions a "delousing apparatus" and a "gassing apparatus" as part of a "training of personnel." TNA, WO 309-1603, Exhibit JA. F. Jansson notes that "'gassing apparatus' is almost certainly a translation of 'Vergasungsapparat,' which recalls the well-known use of that term's plural in Nuremberg Document NO-365" (see Part Three, p. 189). Given the context, it is much more likely that "delousing apparatus" corresponds to "Entlausungsanlage," as "Entlausungskammer" proper, "gassing apparatus" to "Vergaser-Gerät," the main apparatus of the "Kreislaufanordnung." Peters 1942, p. 40.

He consequently attempted to make the suspects he interrogated "confess" to these absurdities. In an "Interrogation of Dr. Drosihn in Altona Prison on 10/17/1945 at 11 1/2 a.m.," he pressed the interviewee:[199]

"Q. You do not know that 60 cbm chambers were delivered? And if you see letters signed by you, you would say that you suffer from amnesia?
A. No, that is not possible. I only saw delousing chambers of 10 cbm.
Q. The concentration camps wanted larger chambers?
A. I don't know anything about that.
Q. Which concentration camps did you have to deal with?
A. With Sachsenhausen, Neuengamme (there are 2 delousing chambers, each 10 cbm in size), Fürstenberg, Ravensbrück women's camp, but we did not deliver any chambers to them, hot air chambers were used."

Captain Freud also made the same attempt with Karl Weinbacher in the October 1, 1945 interrogation:[200]

"Q. When were the [gas chambers of] *50 cbm built?*
A. We did not build those. We didn't build any at all, we only supplied the circulation system. Gas chambers were made by the German Society for Pest Control. I do not know that chambers of 50 cbm were made, I am not aware of that.
Q. When did Dr. Tesch first say that people were also killed by the gas?
A. Never.
Q. When did you learn that for the first time?
A. I heard about it from the reports in the newspapers.
Q. That people were being killed with your gas?
A. The name Tesch did not come up. I only read that people were supposed to have been killed with gas in the concentration camps. That's where I heard that for the first time.
Q. When did you hear that the gas came from your company?
A. I didn't hear that directly. When the thing with Dr.Tesch came, when he was arrested, there was talk about it. […]
Q. You don't know anything about the 50 cbm gas chambers?
A. No, I do not know. No chambers specifically of this size were supplied. We had the standard chambers of 10 cbm. We also did not do anything more to it than just supplied the circulation equipment.
Q. Did you never see drawings of 50 cbm gas chambers for Sachsenhausen?
A. No, did not deliver 50 cbm either. Supplied a single chamber to Sachsenhausen.

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[199] TNA, WO 309-1603.
[200] TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Herrn Karl Weinbacher im Altonaer Gefängnis am 16.10.1945.

Q. 50 cbm?
A. No, 10 cbm. And not through us directly either.
Q. You know nothing about 50 cbm gas chambers? Nothing?
A. No, I know nothing about it. Chambers of this size were never delivered by us. We did not deliver any to Sachsenhausen. One chamber was delivered by Boss, Cologne, but not 50 cbm, but 10 cbm. […]
Q. Did your company ever convert shower rooms and the like into gas chambers?
A. No.
Q. Did not forward the orders either?
A. No, not forwarded either. […]
Q. Organizing to kill people?
A. That has not been known to me that lice were gassed. Even today I do not know whether that is true, that people were gassed. I would like to doubt that even today.
Q. You don't believe that?
A. No, I don't believe that."

Captain Freud also tried to deceive the victims of his interrogations with a crude lie: either a homicidal gas chamber had been found in Riga, or a project for it (the statement was deliberately ambiguous). He began his head game with Dr. Drosihn in the interrogation of October 17, 1945:[201]

"Q. You did not build 60 and 75 cbm chambers in Riga?
A. I have already said in an interrogation that took place in our office that the gas chamber room was planned in Riga, but this construction was not completed.
Q. How many shower rooms did you convert into gas chambers?
A. None, I never had anything to do with shower rooms. The delousing stations also had a shower room, but they were not converted.
Q. We want to show you how we [have] *discovered the gas rooms. (Capt. Frend* [sic] *makes a sketch.) I'll show you the chambers in Riga. These rooms had once been shower rooms. On the roof, the SS stood armed, people were herded into the courtyard, then the doors were locked, the SS herded people into the rooms, supposedly to shower – they were told – then the doors were locked, and Zyklon-B gas was sprinkled on the air flaps in*

[201] TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör [von J. Drosihn] im Gefängnis Altona am 17.10.1945 um 11 1/2 Uhr. In another transcript of this interrogation, the paragraph concerning the sketch of the alleged Riga gas chambers-which is crossed out with a pen stroke in the quoted text-is not quoted at all. Ibid., Verhör von Dr. Drosihn im Altonaer Gefängnis am 17.10.1945 um 11 1/2 Uhr. In his paper, Jansson has examined in detail the British practice of expunging entire passages from interrogations for reasons of opportunism.

the ceilings. After 10 minutes, the people could be taken to get burned. How many of these installations had you seen?

A. Not a single one. I saw only one normal plant in Riga.

Q. We don't want to speak only of Riga. Did you perhaps see these installations in other camps?

A. No. I never saw them."

Immediately afterwards, Captain Freud questioned Elisa Biagini, repeating the same lie to her:[202]

"Q. We have found papers where there is talk of chambers up to 200 cbm?

A. No, I cannot say that with certainty.

Q. Do you know anything about shower rooms?

A. Yes.

Q. How were those set up?

A. I don't know that.

Q. Let me refresh your memory. (Capt. Freud shows a sketch of how the gassing rooms for the Jews were found). People had to go into the individual shower rooms, maybe 10 or 5 people. In these shower rooms, the doors were then locked, there were ventilation holes above in the ceiling, the gas was put in there. After 1/2 hour, the doors were opened again, and the corpses were taken to the crematoria and burned. Did you ever hear of such things?

A. Nothing at all, I never heard anything about it.

Q. What else do you know about shower rooms?

A. No, I haven't heard anything about it in that context.

Q. I know that your company supplied these fans for these shower rooms.[203] *Are you aware of that?*

A. No, not officially, these shower rooms have not been supplied by us at all.

Q. What do you know about the shower rooms?

A. Nothing about that. Only about the disinfestation chambers, the facilities for them have been supplied."

After two days Captain Freud tried to entice with his fable Johann Holst, who was, I repeat, head fumigation expert of the Tesch Company:[204]

"Q. I'll make you a little sketch. This is how we found things in the camps (Capt. Freud draws a sketch). This is a large barracks divided into 2 parts by a corridor in the middle. One half is divided by shower rooms. On the

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[202] TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Fr. Biagini im Altonaer Gesundheitsamt, Allee 176, am 17.10.1945, Nachmittags 3 Uhr.

[203] This was another lie from Captain Freud.

[204] TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Herrn Johann Holst im Altonaer Gefängnis, am 19.10.1945 tun 11^{45} Uhr.

other side of the corridor is the crematorium for burning the bodies. In front of it is a front yard. The people were herded in here, the door was closed. Then they were herded into this corridor by the SS guard, who stood armed on the roof, and then into these shower rooms. The doors were locked. Then the gas was poured into the air flaps at the top of the ceiling, and the flaps were closed. After about l/2 hrs. the rooms were aired, and the corpses were taken directly from the rooms down the corridor to the crematorium and burned. How much of this equipment did you see?

A. Never, I never saw any concentration camp. That it was done that way at all, I don't even know. I read it differently in the newspaper, where the gas taps were turned on. If you tell me that it is poured in here, then it is possible with our gas. Our gas cannot be blown in. We have always poured our gas onto the ground, where it evaporated.

Q. But you can also do it this way. You have a tube, you pour the powder into this tube, then you blow warm air over it, and the gas is drawn into the room.

A. That might be possible, too, if you let it evaporate first and then blow it in through a blower.

Q. But here you have the gas thrown in through a flap.

A. That is possible. But the newspaper only mentioned that the gas was blown in through a gas tap, that's why I thought of T-gas.

Q. But that doesn't kill people, does it?

A. It does, but it's a very long process.

Q. No, this one only lasted a few seconds [sic!]. *You have never seen anything of this kind of equipment?*

A. No, never."

The fantasies invented by Captain Freud were also silly, because the system he described was rudimentary and completely disregarded the circulation devices provided by the Tesch Company: how, then, could he possible hope to get larger-than-normal fumigation chambers *with* circulation systems implicated in the alleged extermination of the Jews?

In his pathetic ignorance, Freud believed that the Tesch Company had turned "shower rooms" into homicidal gas chambers, hence his persistence on this point. For example, he asked Karl Johannes Heinrich Rudolph Ruehmling, who had been "an emergency gassing expert" of the Tesch Company, the following questions:[205]

"Q. Did you ever hear of showers being converted into gas chambers?

[205] TNA, WO 309-1603. RECORD of the EVIDENCE of Karl Johannes Heinrich Rudolph RUEHMLING. Production No. 11.

A. No; I have not. Showers are expected to be in gas chambers because the people have to strip and have a shower and hand over their clothing for delousing so that they are clean afterwards.
Q. But have you ever heard of showers themselves being converted into gas chambers?
A. No; never."

But even this fantasy was inane, because the eventual transformation of shower rooms into homicidal gas chambers did not necessarily imply the use of circulation devices: the chambers Captain Freud had dreamed up merely required some "air flaps" to be set into the ceiling and to pour Zyklon B through them. During his interrogations, he blatantly proceeded by trial and error, with one ruse used after another, in the naive hope that some of his interviewees might fall into his insulting traps. Thus, he imagined that the aforementioned alleged shower transformation had been carried out with a circulation device. Captain Freud attempted this approach with Gustav Kock:[206]

"Q. What do you know about shower rooms?
A. Nothing either, no.
Q. Have you never equipped shower rooms with circulation, etc.?
A. No, that was not our job.
Q. Did you never see shower rooms?
A, Yes.
Q. With motors in them?
A. Yes, in Neuengamme. It was a small gas chamber with an engine, about 2 cbm. in size. I know nothing about shower rooms with circulation systems.
Q, You told me just now that you saw a shower room?
A. It was an ordinary shower room, but not with a circulation system.
Q. What was unusual about this shower room, what was strange about this shower room? Was there no water in it?
A. I don't know, I didn't try it.
Q. Why did you come up with this shower room in the first place?
A. I didn't notice anything, it was the shower upstairs.
Q. You didn't see any ventilation flaps?
A. No.
Q. The more you sit here, the more I suspect you."

[206] TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Herrn Gustav Kock im Altonaer Gefängnis am 20.10.1945 um 10 1/2 Uhr.

Captain Freud, evidently impressed by the nonsense reported by some witnesses of showers from which gas came out instead of water, also tried this route with Dr. Tesch:[207]

> *"Q. Could prussic acid gas be used instead of water in a shower bath?*
> *A. That I do not know; experiments would have to be made.*
> *Q. Could you not place the canisters of prussic acid above a shower bath room, in such a way that the gas would go down through the shower bath vents into the bath-room?*
> *A. Yes, through the vents you could do it, but you could not run it through the shower jets.*
> *Q. But you could do it through ordinary holes?*
> *A. If two rooms are connected with vent holes or shafts, you could join the two rooms together.*
> *Q. Could you have it connected from the room above into the room below?*
> *A. Yes, if the ventilating shafts were connected.*
> *Q. Have you ever heard of that practice being tried?*
> *A. No.*
> *Q. Has your firm ever dealt with gas in the form of crystals?*
> *A. No."*

The first question had already been answered sharply by Johann Holst:

> *"If you tell me that it is poured in here, then it is possible with our gas. Our gas cannot be blown in. We have always poured our gas onto the ground, where it evaporated."*

The possibility admitted by Dr. Tesch was the one invented by Captain Freud in his "sketch," with two overlapping rooms connected by "ventilating shafts" for pouring in Zyklon B, but this had nothing to do with the showers from which the gas flowed.

As for Sachsenhausen, as noted earlier, Captain Freud tried in every way to connect the alleged gas chamber to the Tesch Company, knowing full well that the Britons' chief witness, Soerensen, had stated that the room measured 7 m × 8 m × 3.5 m (= 196 m³), that the gas flowed out of the showers, and that he was unaware of the type of gas.

The volume of the gas chamber claimed by this witness – 196 m³ (but only 22.6 m³ for the Soviet experts!) – was close to 200 cubic meters, a volume mentioned in Tesch's letter of May 28, 1942, which I quoted earlier. But Captain Freud inexplicably claimed that this company had supplied Sachsenhausen with a Zyklon-B gas chamber of 50 cubic meters. He tried

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[207] TNA, WO 309-1603. Interrogation of Dr. Bruno Tesch at Bad Oeynhausen 26/9/45.

to get Karl Weinbacher to "confess" to this fantasy, but he also tried with typist Erika Rathke:[208]

> *"You know that your firm supplied SACHSENHAUSEN with gas chambers of 50 cubic metres capacity?"*

Captain Freud also resorted to the argument of Zyklon B supplies, but put forth a blatant lie here as well, with which he tried to trick Elisa Biagini:[209]

> *"Q. We have found a few excerpts from the correspondence in January, according to which an order for RM 25,000 was received from Sachsenhausen and for RM 20,000 in February. What was Dr. T. thinking when such a huge order came in every month? Surely, he must have seen that this is far too much for vermin extermination?*
>
> *A. I only know that Sachsenhausen was a huge complex. I don't know the amount that was needed. In and of itself, a lot was needed for the fumigation of the houses, and the technicians were busy for a long time. I don't think that the technical staff did such work themselves."*

Captain Freud also asked Joachim Drosihn a similar question:[210]

> *"Q. You don't know that in 1942/43 the company was doing well?*
>
> *A. No, I don't know that.*
>
> *Q. But the company received an order from Sachsenhausen in January 1943 for RM 25,000, and in February 1943 an order for RM 20,000.*
>
> *A. I have never seen those."*

Since the price of Zyklon B was RM 6 per kg, Sachsenhausen Camp would have purchased 7,500 kg of it in January and February 1943 at an expense of RM 46,000. But the supply summary drawn up by the British based on the Tesch Company's documents, which I have set out earlier, lists only four supplies of Zyklon B for 863 kg and RM 5,184.

Definitely, the "imbecil", the "idiot," the "utterly abject liar" was not Bruno Tesch, it was Captain Freud.

As for Neuengamme and Sachsenhausen, the stubbornness with which local historians and others still cling to untenable fables of gas chambers and homicidal gassings founded on nothing, makes them worthy emulators of Captain Freud.

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[208] TNA, WO 309-1603. Fräulein RATHCKE was interrogated for a second time by Captain A.W. FREUD at ALTOM Gaol, HAMBURG, on 16 October 1945.

[209] TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Fr. Biagini im Altonaer Gesundheitsamt, Allee 176, am 17.10.1945, Nachmittags 3 Uhr.

[210] TNA, WO 309-1603. Verhör von Dr. Drosihn im Altonaer Gefängnis am 17.10.1945 um 11 1/2 Uhr.

Part Three:
Aspects of the Tesch Trial

By Friedrich Jansson

> *"I do not feel guilty. I did my duty working from morning 'til night for my country, just as the English would work for their country."*
> *"It is an official duty of humanity to exterminate vermin."*
> —Bruno Tesch, interrogation of September 26, 1945

In March 1946, Bruno Tesch, the head of the firm Tesch & Stabenow (often abbreviated as TESTA), was put on trial along with his *Prokurist* Karl Weinbacher and the gassing (i.e. fumigation) technician Joachim Drosihn, on the charge that they "did supply poison gas used for the extermination of allied nationals interned in concentration camps well knowing that the said gas was to be so used."[1] Tesch had been brought to the attention of British authorities by former employee Emil Sehm, who had claimed that while working at the company he had seen a travel report in which Tesch had agreed to provide technical assistance with exterminating the Jews with poison gas. After seven days of proceedings, Tesch and Weinbacher were convicted and sentenced to death, while Drosihn was acquitted.

The trial received early revisionist attention from chemist William Lindsey, who wrote a substantial (if somewhat intemperate) 1983 article outlining its course, and has also been criticized from the orthodox side, notably by Jean-Claude Pressac, who wrote (Pressac 1989, p. 17):

> *"In 1946, simple malicious gossip could easily lead to someone being hung. I do not know whether the 'trip report' was produced before the Tribunal* [it was not; FJ]*, but if it was not then, this trial was a masquerade."*

In the only significant orthodox account of the trial, Angelika Ebbinghaus focuses on background information, offering little on the details of the trial (Ebbinghaus 1998). Some aspects of the trial have also been covered in a history of Tesch & Stabenow (Kalthoff/Werner 1999).

For their information on the Tesch case, the works cited above relied almost exclusively on the trial transcript. This paper aims to deepen understanding of the trial through the materials available in the investigation files. These files offer insight into both the specific case against Tesch, as well as the conduct of postwar investigations in general. An additional benefit is that the investigation files contain a number of sources of independent interest. This paper will not address the witnesses concerning homicidal gassings who appeared at the trial (notably C.S. Bendel and Pery

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[1] PRO WO 235/641

Broad), first, because they are better considered in a broader context, and second, because their statements have already been discussed in the revisionist literature. We are not aiming at a treatment of all aspects of the trial, and will be content to pass over topics we consider unenlightening or which have already been adequately covered by other authors. Though in principle self-contained, this paper is not structured as an introduction to the Tesch Trial, and the reader may find it useful to first familiarize himself with the case by reading Lindsey's article. The published summary of the case may also serve as a useful introduction (United Nations 1947, pp. 93-103). When quoting from the investigation materials, we have always used the original English translation when one was available, while sometimes noting discrepancies from the original German. Where there was no original English version, the translation is the author's.

1. The Investigation

The investigation of Bruno Tesch and TESTA began with a letter from the former TESTA bookkeeper Emil Sehm to British authorities on June 29, 1945. Sehm wrote:[2]

> *"According to my estimation I am able to supply very important information that means fresh evidence to commit war criminals for trial. The war crime I am referring to concerns an official discussion which took place between a businessman of an IG Farben sister concern with leading men of the OKW* [High Command of Armed Forces]*, about the application of the hydrocyanic acid process to kill human beings. Further the training of SS men to apply this process.*
> *My profession gave me the opportunity to see top secret files and that is where my knowledge results from."*

As his first letter received no response, Sehm sent another letter on August 24. He wrote:[3]

> *"In my capacity as accountant and later in special cases dealing with the correspondence, I got acquainted with a few top secret documents. When dealing with a particular file, I was instructed by Dr. TESCH about the secrecy which had to be kept about this particular file. The content of this file*

[2] Sehm letter, 29 June 1945, PRO WO 309/1602.
[3] Sehm letter, 24 Aug. 1945, *ibid*.

was a report and I can very well remember it. It had the meaning as follows:

Dr. TESCH reported about an invitation he received to a conference at the OKW BERLIN. He stated to which members he was introduced and in which way and form. About the subject of the conference, he wrote that the speaker explained that the execution of the Jews by shooting has developed in a mass execution and furthermore it is very unhygienic. Dr. TESCH was asked to submit any suggestion, whether and how Jews could be exterminated by using hydrocyanic acid. Afterwards technical points about the application of hydrocyanic acid were discussed and amongst other suggestions one way was suggested that all Jews detailed for extermination should be taken into a barracks previously prepared (gas-tight). During the night a trained man (using a respirator) should enter the barracks and place hydrocyanic acid plates in the rooms. In future, instead of getting buried, dead bodies will be cremated. Dr. TESCH offered himself to SS men who will be selected by the OKW and put at his disposal to train on courses for this purpose (using hydrocyanic acid).

In fact, there were some SS men trained by him and his fellow worker. The book-keeping disclosed further that the firm has supplied hydrocyanic acid called 'T' Gas[4] *to the OKW and SS offices (Dienststellen).*

I copied this report and showed it to one of my reliable friends. Later I told it as well to Herr Frahm, Lorenzenstrasse 10. This copy was burnt immediately as I realized that it would have been useless to take any further steps for the time being to stop the crime. […]

On this conference according to the report of Dr. TESCH no high-ranking SS were present, but the highest authorities of the OKW were leading this discussion. […]

As an economic adviser, I was convinced from the beginning that NSDAP means only war and destruction of the economy and it gives me a satisfaction to write this statement.

Through the knowledge of all these happenings my eyes were opened, and I was fully convinced that the German nation has criminals as leaders, and it will be the tragedy of the German people to be made responsible for the crimes inflicted on the human race."

To recapitulate: Sehm claimed to have seen one of Tesch's travel reports in which it was specified that (1) the method of killing Jews and disposing of their corpses was to be switched from shooting and burial to HCN and cremation, (2) the reason for this transition was hygiene, (3) the planning for gassing Jews was handled by the OKW, and (4) the killing with HCN

4 This is, of course, incorrect. Sehm had confused T-gas with Zyklon-B.

was to take place by having a gassing technician enter the barracks in which Jews resided during the night, when the Jews would presumably be asleep, and carry out a disinfestation. This gassing method is so absurd that it is difficult to believe that Sehm was taken seriously – but he was. That September, British investigators visited TESTA with Sehm in tow and arrested Tesch. The date of the visit is a little uncertain. The investigative team's report on the case says that it took place "on or about the 18th September 1945."[5] Authors relying on the trial transcript have stated that Tesch was arrested on September 3 (Lindsey; Kalthoff/Werner, p. 144), as the prosecutor Gerald Draper stated in his introductory speech.[6] However, the dates of September 19 and September 12 were also given during the trial (TTD 1, pp. 170, 176). As the arrest is described in a statement dated September 18, the date of the 19th would at least seem to be excluded. In the aforementioned statement, Sehm wrote that "the filing room in which I believed the file which would incriminate Dr. Tesch to be, was burned out […] during Mar 1944, after an air attack." He detailed his confrontation with Dr. Tesch:[7]

> *"I stated to him: I have knowledge of a Traveling Report compiled by you. According to this you have negotiated with leading persons of the OKW. It was submitted to you that the shooting of Jews had increased to such an extent that this could no longer be justified from the hygienic point of view. It was proposed to employ the prussic acid process for the "liquidation" of the Jews. You were asked for your opinion in the matter. Furthermore, the single phases of the operation were explained in the report.*
> *Interrupting my statement, Dr. Tesch said that I*[8] *knew perfectly well that the firm was only carrying out gassing of vermin, etc; only after being repeatedly questioned did he deny to know of such a Travel Report. The female stenographers, Miss Radtke and Miss Knickrehm were also questioned as to whether they could remember that this Travel Report was dictated to them by Dr. Tesch. Both denied it."*

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5 Dr. Bruno TESCH and The "GIFTGAS" Case, section 1, PRO WO 309/1602. This report, which will be referenced frequently, is not dated. However, it mentions Tesch's statements (Productions 31 and 32), which were drawn up on October 31, and it was sent to "DJAG (War Crimes Section) HQ British Army of the Rhine" on November 4.

6 Tesch Trial, Day 1, PRO WO 235/83, p. 165. From here on cited as TTD with page number, all from that archival source.

7 Sehm statement, 18 Sept. 1945, PRO WO 309/1602, 1603.

8 The English translation reads "he" here, but the German original clearly shows that "I" is correct. The translation problem was fixed when the same material was rehashed in Sehm's October 10 statement.

In his statement of October 10, Sehm stated that these events took place on September 18.[9]

Tesch was interrogated by Captain Gerald Draper and Captain Frank on September 26. The interrogation is available only in English. He was told that five million people had been gassed at Auschwitz, and replied that this was news to him – he had first heard of homicidal gassings in the press and radio. He did not believe that the gas he had supplied had been used for mass killing. He saw little sense in the description he was given of fake showers being used as gas chambers, and absolutely denied Sehm's story about the travel report. While in many cases he was deferential to the interrogators on matters outside his direct experience ("If you say so, gentlemen, perhaps it is true; you may have better evidence"), he was very definite about the travel report ("It does not exist"). Sehm, he said, had always been a "book of seven seals" to him, and may have borne a grudge against him because of their past differences regarding pay and because of Sehm's dismissal from the firm.[10] The interrogators, however, told him that Sehm's statement could be confirmed, because Sehm's friend Frahm (mentioned in Sehm's letter of August 24) had also seen the travel report:[11]

> *"Q. In a secret file there was a report about an invitation to a conference in Berlin, was there not?*
> *A. The only invitation received was to a conference with the Army and SS, the Reichs Ministry of Food and the Reichs Ministry of Interior.*
> *Q. It is useless for you to say that is not so, as Sehm has seen the file. Is it possible there were files in the offices which were so secret that they could be seen by Sehm and not by you?*
> *A. It is possible.*
> *Q. And you are the head of the business?*
> *A. I was away for more than half the year. I was away often, and whilst I was away secret papers arrived.*
> *Q. Do you remember going to a very big conference in Berlin, with many high-ups?*

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9 Sehm statement, Prosecution 1, PRO WO 309/1602, 1603; original signed German copy in PRO WO 309/1603.

10 Tesch interrogation, 26 Sept. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603. While the available text of the interrogation is plainly based on a real Tesch interrogation, it is no original, and contains some eyebrow-raising passages that suggest that it has undergone a certain amount of petty alteration. When plans of what to do with Tesch were being considered, prior to Tesch's second arrest, copies of the interrogation were sent to various recipients. It may be hoped that some of these are closer to the original, and have survived in files unrelated to the Tesch Trial.

11 Tesch interrogation, 26 Sept. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

A. No, I cannot recollect.
Q. Is it possible?
A. No, I do not think so. I did participate in conferences with the Reichs Ministry of Food and representatives from the three Services were present, but not high-ups.
Q. What were the ranks of the senior members?
A. Senior Staff Medical Officers.
Q. Do you remember a conference at which they talked about methods of doing away with the Jews?
A. No.
Q. Is it not unfortunate that Sehm read about it in one of your files?
A. I cannot imagine what he read.
Q. But someone else also saw the file – Frahm?
A. I have not met him.
Q. He is a friend of Sehm, and he also saw the file?
A. I do not understand, I cannot understand how a stranger could see a business file.
Q. Because Sehm showed him it.
A. I cannot credit Sehm with such a breach of confidence. He was not entitled to show such things to strangers, but if he did so he must have known what he was doing. I have absolutely no recollections of what Sehm could be thinking about.
Q. Sehm extracted the report from the file and showed the report from the file to his friend Frahm. It is easy to find out whether Sehm is lying, because we can ask Frahm."

Indeed, one could and did ask Frahm. Two weeks later, Frahm gave a statement. Unfortunately for the investigators, Frahm did not confirm that Sehm had shown him such a document. Rather, Frahm stated that Sehm had shown him the letter he had written to the British in the summer of 1945:[12]

"I have not worked for the firm of TESCH and STABENOW but a friend of mine, Herr Emil SEHM, worked for this firm as bookkeeper. He told me one night that he did not want to work for TESCH and STABENOW any more but he did not tell me why.
One day in July or August 1945 Emil SEHM told me the following: 'Now I can tell you why I wanted to leave the firm of TESCH and STABENOW'. He showed me a letter that he had written to the British Military Authorities. It said that Dr TESCH had been in BERLIN with the Commander of the Wehrmacht and Dr TESCH had been told by the Commander of the

[12] Frahm statement, 10 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

> *WEHRMACHT that he or a member of his firm would have to instruct 30 SS men in how to use BLAUSAUERE-GAS* [sic]. *These SS men, when they had been instructed in the use of this gas, had to wear gas masks and go into the barrack rooms in the concentration camps and put tablets of the gas in the corners of the room and go out and shut the door.*
> *Emil SEHM also told me that he had seen in a file in Dr TESCH's office that the Ober-Commander of the Wehrmacht told Dr TESCH to instruct the 30 SS men in the use of BLAUSAUERE-GAS* [sic].*"*

Frank and Draper's seeming belief that Frahm had seen the file is inexplicable in terms of the available documents. The reader may verify that, in the passages quoted above, Sehm did not make this claim. There are several possibilities for explaining this: Frank and Draper may have been lying in order to intimidate Tesch, they may have misunderstood the documents, Sehm may have verbally told them something along these lines which was not put down in writing, or the available versions of Sehm's early statements may have been altered in order to remove contradictions from the prosecution's narrative. In light of the numerous cases of dishonesty on the part of the investigative team which will be proved below, the last possibility cannot be dismissed out of hand, given that the available versions are not originals, but copies in English translation. That said, there is nothing to prove that this was the case.

Emil Sehm also gave a statement on October 10. He explained that he had found the alleged travel report filed under "Wehrmacht", and that it was not marked as secret or confidential. He then quoted from the alleged travel report as follows:[13]

> *"Mr. ..... (Name of the Wehrmacht representative missing) explained to me that the shooting of Jews became a Mass Shooting and it proved to be unhygienic. He thought this could be improved by gassing the Jews with BLAUSÄUREGAS and burn the corpses afterwards. He asked me to supply him with suitable propositions. I suggested to carry out the extermination of the Jews by the usual method of gassing. After they have been put into the Barracks (the Jews) which were made airtight, a BLAUSÄURE expert proceeds to the rooms at night for the purpose of laying BLAUSÄUREGAS tablets. The corpses could be disposed of in the morning."*

In case his previous statements had left any doubt in the matter, he reiterated that "With regard to the travel report I want to mention again that ac-

[13] Sehm statement, Prosecution 1, PRO WO 309/1602; original signed German copy in PRO WO 309/1603.

cording to the report the negotiations were not carried out by the higher SS leaders but with the leading personalities of the Army High Command."

While Sehm's statement did not say that he showed the documents to Frahm, as the British interrogators claimed, it did state that he had told Frahm about his reason for leaving TESTA. In denying that Sehm had told him this ("he did not tell me why"), and claiming that Sehm had said after the war that he was finally able to inform him of this reason ("Emil SEHM told me the following: 'Now I can tell you why I wanted to leave the firm'"), Frahm directly contradicted Sehm's assertions.

Had Frahm's statement been taken earlier, and had the investigators been more clearheaded, that might have been the end of the case. But by October 10, the case could no longer be easily stopped. On September 28, the firm had been visited again. The report on this visit written by Sergeant D. Ellwood complained that Weinbacher "could not or would not give all the information sought." Ellwood spoke to two gassing technicians, Marczinkowski (elsewhere spelled Marcinkowski) and Pietsch (occasionally spelled Peitsch):[14]

> *"Both stated that they knew nothing about Gas Chambers, but had been engaged in 'delousing' only. It is practically certain that they had been 'briefed' in what they should say when questioned, as they both professed ignorance of the simplest things. It was only after having been spoken to sharply that the above was wormed out of them."*

Ellwood's report was forwarded along with a note that underscored how the investigators sought to interpret normal delousing facilities as homicidal:[15]

> *"It will be noticed that the "delousing" apparatus referred to is in fact a Gas Chamber installation as pictured in the pamphlet herewith entitled 'Die kleine TESTA-FIBEL über Normal-gaskammern'. These chambers* [10 cubic meter delousing chambers. –FJ] *are certainly large enough to have been used for the purpose of annihilation of human beings.* […]
> *The firm has asked if they can have the enclosed file back!"*

On October 2nd, after reading Ellwood's report, Tesch's interrogation, and a report (presumably Sehm's) on the confrontation between Sehm and Tesch,[16] Group Captain A.G. Somerhough wrote that he was "by no means satisfied that [Tesch] was not well aware of the purposes for which he was

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[14] Sgt. D. Ellwood, Report on Firma Tesch & Stabenow, Hamburg, 28 Sept. 1945, PRO WO 309/1602; copy in PRO WO 309/2040, p. 23.

[15] 39 Field Security Section to War Crimes Investigation Team, 29 Sept. 1945, PRO WO 309/1602. A copy of the pamphlet in question can be found in PRO WO 309/1603.

[16] PRO WO 309/2040, p. 24. Next two citations in text from there.

supplying this cyanide and that he did not only act as a technical advisor on the question of its use for the purpose of exterminating human beings." Because of Tesch's connection to Sachsenhausen, Somerhough suggested handing him over to the Russians for interrogation, "if they think they can get any more out of him, bearing in mind that they are in possession of some actual lethal chamber apparatus" – the assumption that the Soviets must be in possession of conclusive physical evidence is telling, and was false –; he proposed "to turn a War Crimes Investigation Team on to this case" (all on p. 25) and suggested that Tesch, Weinbacher, Drosihn and twelve TESTA gassing technicians be arrested (pp. 23, 25).

In the meantime, Tesch had been released. Like so many things about the investigation, the date of his release is uncertain. The investigative team stated that it took place on October 1st,[17] a claim which was repeated at the trial (TTD 1, p. 165). The same date was also claimed by A.W. Freud[18] during his interrogation of Drosihn, but the latter remembered that Tesch returned on a Saturday,[19] which would necessarily have been Saturday September 29.

Once on the case, War Crimes Investigation Team [WCIT] Number 2 carried out arrests on a scale even broader than intended by Somerhough, rounding up and arresting all available employees of TESTA, secretaries and accountants along with gassing technicians. Weinbacher was arrested on October 6th, and Tesch and Drosihn the next day.[20] According to the investigative team's report, nine employees were arrested on the 6th, three on the 7th, three on the 8th, one on the 9th, two on the 19th, and two on the 20th.[21]

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17 Dr. Bruno TESCH and The "GIFTGAS" Case, sections 4-5, PRO WO 309/1602.

18 Captain Anton Walter Freud, a grandson of Sigmund Freud, was a leading figure in the investigation, and carried out many of the interrogations. In a 2003 interview he took exclusive credit for getting Tesch hanged: Lesley Chamberlain, 'Freud squad', *Financial Times*, 28 June 2003.

19 Drosihn interrogation, 17 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603. That the investigative team should have been wrong about this date is not so surprising, as it had not yet been assigned to the case when Tesch was released. Drosihn, on the other hand, remembered Tesch's return in some detail.

20 War Criminal Arrest Reports, PRO WO 309/1602.

21 Dr. Bruno TESCH and The "GIFTGAS" Case, section 27, PRO WO 309/1602. This report, however, claims that Tesch was arrested on the 6th, while his arrest report demonstrates that the arrest took place on the 7th. The release dates given by the report also seem somewhat unreliable, as they show the TESTA secretary Wilma Nachtweh as having been released upon completion of her interrogation on October 8th, when in fact she was interrogated on the 25th, with a supplementary statement the next day. There were also a number of individuals who were interrogated but who do not appear on the

Thus, by the time Frahm gave his statement of the 10th of October, the authorities had already committed to the Tesch case by ordering and carrying out the mass arrest of TESTA personnel. Given this commitment, the case could not be given up lightly. Although Sehm was the only witness against Tesch, and his statements had been directly contradicted by his friend Frahm, the case had to go ahead. On October 22, another version of Frahm's statement was made, which attempted to remove these contradictions. The text now read:[22]

> *"I have not worked for the firm of TESCH and STABENOW but a friend of mine, Herr Emil SEHM, worked for this firm as a bookkeeper. He told me one night in the early part of 1943 that he did not want to work any more for the firm of TESCH and STABENOW because his principles did not agree with those of Dr TESCH, and he might also have told me of the gassing operations of TESCH and STABENOW at concentration camps, but I am not certain now.*
>
> *In August or July 1945 Emil Sehm showed me a letter that he had written to the British Military Authorities. It said that Dr TESCH had been in BERLIN with the Commander of the Wehrmacht and Dr TESCH had been told* […]" [The remainder of letter follows the version of October 10]

The reader should compare this to Frahm's statement of October 10th, and will readily see that the changes were *exactly* the removal of the two contradictions between Sehm's story and Frahm's.

1.1. The Interrogations of Drosihn and Weinbacher

The interrogation transcripts for Drosihn and Weinbacher, unlike those of Tesch, exist in full in both German and English. Neither knew anything about Sehm's travel report, or about the gassing of humans. Their interrogations are particularly interesting, however, in that they give us a look into the operating procedures and ethical standards of the British War Crimes Investigation Team. The interrogations, in fact, exist in two different versions each in both German and English: an original transcript of the interrogations, which took place on October 17 in Drosihn's case and October 16 in Weinbacher's, and a doctored version.[23] The doctored versions

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arrest lists; in some cases these were former employees, who seem to have been considered separately.

[22] Frahm statement, 22 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1602. It should be noted that both versions of Frahm's statement exist only in English, and that neither is signed – they are simply drawn up, ready to be signed.

[23] All versions in PRO WO 309/1603.

have had certain passages embarrassing to the prosecution removed, *but are still signed and certified as accurate transcripts* by Captain Freud and the stenotypist. Altogether, then, there exist (1) a German original, with the passages to be removed indicated in pen, (2) an English translation of the German original, (3) a sanitized German copy with the offending passages removed, and (4) an English translation of the sanitized German copy.

What kinds of passages were thought worth removing? To start, the very beginning of Weinbacher's interview was removed:

> *"Q. Take your hands out of your pockets if you come in here.*
> *A. Yes, I have done it already.*
> *(Owing to the obstinate behaviour of the prisoner Captain FREUD ordered the presence of an armed guard)."*

What was this obstinate behavior? In the report on the case, it is stated that Weinbacher was "so insolent" during his interrogation that "special steps" had to be taken.[24] Another excised passage from the interrogation gives a sample of this "insolence". After having first claimed that Dr. Tesch had bribed Weinbacher, something Weinbacher indignantly denied (the entire exchange being later excised from the transcripts), Capt. Freud then claimed that Dr. Tesch had given the members of the firm instructions about what to tell investigators. Weinbacher denied this, and in the exchange that followed (which was cut from the transcript) showed more of his "insolence":

> *"Q. Don't lie.*
> *A. No. As sure as I am standing here, there was no question about it. You are under a misconception.*
> *Q. Don't shout at me.*
> *A. I am speaking in the same voice as you are talking to me.*
> *Q. Don't become insolent. What did you get from Dr TESCH?*
> *Q. I didn't get anything. I can only say that you do not appreciate Dr TESCH."* [German original reads "*daß Sie Dr. Tesch falsch beurteilen.*"]

When Weinbacher denied that TESTA had specially secured files,[25] he was threatened by the interrogator, but the exchange was later removed from the transcript:

> *"Q. How do you like the prison? Apparently too well. We shall send you to a working camp* [*Arbeitslager*] *if you don't want to speak the truth.*
> *A. I can only tell the truth and nothing more. I can't say anything but the truth."*

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[24] Dr. Bruno TESCH and the "GIFTGAS" Case, section 41(b), PRO WO 309/1602.
[25] The prosecution was trying to show that Dr. Tesch had had key documents destroyed.

Dr. Drosihn's October 17 interrogation experienced similar expurgations. As in Weinbacher's interrogation, a passage to do with the disparagement of Tesch's character was removed. (The first two lines of the following quotation were not removed; they are included here to provide the proper context.)

"Q. What did Dr. Tesch say when such an enormous order came?
A. 'Good; that is a beautiful order'.
Q. He did not say: 'Good, another 100,000 Poles or Russians dead'?
A. No, he never did say that. In my opinion he would always have been against that.
Q. I am very much disappointed with you. I thought you would speak more openly.
A. I did so.
Q. No you did not. You did not say anything about the gassing of men.
A. I don't know anything about it."

In another removed passage Captain Freud expounded on the converted shower theory that dominated thinking about gas chambers at the time.[26] (He also made such a sketch and description of gassing showers during the interrogation of TESTA employee Johann Holst.[27])

"Q. We will show you how we found the gas chambers. (Captain FREUD makes a sketch). I show you the chambers of RIGA. These rooms had once been shower baths. The SS was standing armed on the roof, the people were driven into the yard, then the doors were locked and the SS pushed the people into the rooms, allegedly to take a shower bath. They were told that, then the doors were locked and the ZYKLON gas was sprinkled through the holes in the ceiling. After ten minutes the people could be brought to the incinerator, How many of these installations did you see?
A. Not a single one. In RIGA I only saw the normal installation."

The questioning of Drosihn on Sehm's travel report story was also cut, with the following text being removed:

"Q. I will tell you what records we have found. At the end of 1941 Dr Tesch was in BERLIN and had conferences with the highest officials of the Wehrmacht and the SS. And in the course of these conferences it was said literally: 'Because the shooting of Jews is unhygienic it is suggested that BLAUSAEURE GAS should be used.' That is to be read in black and white in a letter from the High Command. I am rather sure that you, too, took

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[26] The shower idea dominated even at the trial. A document concerning Riga, discussing a delousing facility which would simultaneously delouse personnel and their clothing, was regarded with particular suspicion at the trial, due to its mention of (real) showers. TTD 4, pp. 295f.

[27] Interrogation of Johann Holst, 19 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

some part in this. What do you know about the destruction of men? But this time I don't want to hear the same lies, but the truth.

A. I state once again that I heard of it only after the occupation.

Q. That is impossible for the shower baths were only camouflaged; there was no water there.

A. I assume that they were perhaps hot air chambers, but it is not allowed to build them like that, for that is not permitted by the law, that chambers must stand quite apart.

Q. It was a barrack standing alone. Didn't you supply anything for it?

A. No, nothing. That is not the expert way and cannot be brought in accordance with the laws relating to BLAUSAEURE."

As in Weinbacher's interrogation, threats were removed from the edited version of Drosihn's interrogation. First to go was a threat to hand him over to the Russians to be tortured:

"Q. I see, Dr DROSIHN. We won't get anywhere like that. I had thought you would like to speak, but as you are not doing that, we must proceed differently with you; for we want to know what the firm had to do with the gassing of men. You know the firm's position today, as well as yours, and that of the other gentlemen, Dr TESCH and WEINBACHER? Your sphere of activity was mostly in the East, such as AUSCHWITZ, RIGA, LUBLIN, ORANIENBURG, and all those places are now under Russian authority. We shall be forced to pass you on to the Russians who now deal with such cases and probably employ other methods to make you speak.

A. I cannot make any other statements. I can only assure you that my tongue has been loosened and that I will tell you everything.

Q. Until now you have not told us anything.

A. I must adhere to my statement that only after your victory did I hear that men had been gassed in the concentration camps."

Also removed was a veiled threat against Drosihn's wife:

"Shall we first hear [*verhören*, translation should be 'interrogate'] *your wife about* [what Drosihn had heard about Auschwitz]*? We want to spare her this."*

Figures 1 and 2 [at the end of this article] show pages from the original German transcripts of the interrogations, with the passages to be excised marked in pen.

The revelation of this procedure of sanitizing interrogation transcripts has significant implications, and raises the question of how far this practice extended to other similar cases of the time. Certainly, one must suspect similar alterations to Tesch's interrogations, neither of which exists in a true original (meaning the copy actually taken down during the interroga-

tion). However, there is also a strong possibility that similar acts took place in other British and American interrogations. In one similar case, there was testimony in the Congressional investigation of the Malmedy Trial that the investigators engaged in extensive rewriting of interrogation-derived statements.[28] Interrogation materials are often not available in the original typed version, as seen in Figures 1 and 2 (with characteristic lack of formatting), but only in better-formatted, retyped versions. In light of the modifications demonstrated here, scholars cannot deny the very real possibility that they are dealing with doctored materials – "the interrogation as it should have been". Though this is not the time to treat the subject thoroughly, one must remark that when using interrogation and trial materials, holocaust scholars have not shown adequate sensitivity towards the type of evidence with which they were dealing. It is no surprise that reading the prosecution's file makes the accused look guilty: the prosecution was aiming for that effect, and often was not being particularly honest in the process. On the theme of caution with interrogation-derived statements, one should also note the penchant of prosecutors to use their own statements in the deposition of a witness. In simplified and somewhat caricatured form, the process looks like this: one begins with an interrogation as follows:

INTERROGATOR: Statement 1 is true, right?
WITNESS: Yes.
INTERROGATOR: Statement 2 is true, right?
WITNESS: I guess so.
INTERROGATOR: Statement 3 is true, right?
WITNESS: No, definitely not.
INTERROGATOR: Statement 4 is true, right?
WITNESS: I don't think so.
INTERROGATOR: Is it impossible?
WITNESS: Well, I guess I can't prove it didn't happen.

Through the magic of the prosecution's rewriting, this becomes

DEPOSITION OF WITNESS: Statement 1. Statement 2. It is quite possible that Statement 4.

In this way, the witness simply becomes the mouthpiece for as much of the prosecution's case as he will assent to, or at least not explicitly deny. The appearance of voluntary or spontaneous admissions in the resulting statements makes them much more convincing evidence than the interrogation

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[28] Letter of James J. Bailey, Malmedy Massacre investigation. Hearings before a subcommittee on the Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1949, pp. 53-54; Testimony of James J. Bailey, Malmedy Massacre investigation, pp. 154-190.

transcript itself would have been. This, of course, was intentional on the prosecution's part. To give a simple example from the Tesch case, consider the following exchange during Drosihn's interrogation:[29]

"Q. What was your impression of Dr TESCH as a man?
A. Dr TESCH could be very inconsiderate.
Q. He would step over corpses if it helped his business?
A. I don't know whether I can express it that way. It is true he neglected my salary.
Q. It astonishes me that you still protect him thus, for now he will not have an opportunity to employ people. I want to know your real opinion of him.
A. I have already stated at the beginning that I had several quarrels with Dr TESCH. Besides, he was very correct and tried not to come into conflict with the law.
Q. Did Dr TESCH tell you about the conference in BERLIN?
A. No.
Q. Where did he keep secret records?
A. I don't know. I only know that he wrote a secret letter about me. I don't know what was in it. He put it into a blue, closed envelope and laid it in the upper shelf of the cupboard.
Q. Perhaps he wanted to bring you to a concentration camp?
A. That is possible. [*Das kann sein.*]
Q. Then you would perhaps have been gassed and experienced the matter from the other side?
A. Yes; possible. [*Ja, möglich.*]*"*

In his statement, this became:[30]

"I also know that Dr TESCH kept a sealed envelope which probably contained my criticisms of the State in order to be able to blackmail me."

1.2. Tesch's Second Interrogation

On October 24, Tesch was interrogated by Anton Freud. This second interrogation does exist in German, but in a fragmentary form, severed into 31 numbered chunks. While the interrogation contains some particulars that are of interest in connection with specific points, some of which are cited elsewhere in this paper, the interrogation as a whole offered little new. Mainly, Freud took the opportunity to vent his anger and frustration over the weakness of the evidence the WCIT had gathered, accusing Tesch of engineering a coverup with his employees, and of burning key documents.

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[29] Drosihn interrogation, 17 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.
[30] Drosihn statement, 26 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1602.

At the time, there was still a realistic possibility that Tesch would be turned over to the Russians,[31] and Freud took the opportunity to threaten that because of the 4.5 million people he had killed, the Russians would rip out Tesch's [finger and toe] nails.[32] Faced with Freud's threats and name-calling, Tesch mostly confined himself to repeating his previous statements.

2. The Trial

The Tesch Trial lasted from March 1 to 8, 1946. The Judge Advocate was C.L. Stirling, who had also presided at the Belsen Trial. Major Gerald Draper started things off, reminding everyone what the trial concerned (TTD 1, p. 164):

> *"Zyklon B was going in vast quantities to the largest concentration camps in Germany east of the Elbe, and in those same concentration camps the SS Totenkopfverbunden were systematically exterminating human beings from 1942 to 1945 in an estimated total of six million human beings, of which four and a half million human beings were exterminated by the use of Zyklon B in one camp alone known as Auschwitz/Birkenau."*

The trial was conducted in English, and its transcript records only the English language versions of statements. The quality of the translation varied. A letter from Major Peter E. Forest, sent the day after the trial concluded, described the four interpreters. Captain Sempel received top marks, with Sergeant Rees a step behind. Sergeant Cunningham's English was inadequate for the job, his translations incorrect, his manners poor. ("The Court was most displeased with his remark 'Shut up' to the Defending Counsel.") Corporal Jacobson was too nervous and distracted to perform up to standard.[33] Certain problems of translation are evident in the transcript, for instance when the gassing of "mules" is mentioned (a mistranslation of *Mühlen*, the German word for "mills"; TTD 2, p. 205).

The main fact which the prosecution attempted to prove was that the defendants had known that the gas they provided was used for extermination. While witnesses for the gassings did appear, they were not the focus of the trial, and the "fact" of mass extermination with gas in concentration camps was largely taken as known, having already been "proven" at the Belsen

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[31] See, for instance the October 22 recommendation that, if the Russians requested Tesch, he should be given to them. Copies in PRO WO 309/625, p. 1, and PRO WO 309/2040, p. 41.

[32] Tesch interrogation, 24 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

[33] PRO WO 309/626, p. 141.

Trial. In establishing the defendant's "guilty knowledge", the vital witnesses were the trio Sehm-Frahm-Pook, as well as the TESTA secretaries Biagini and Uenzelmann. We will focus on the evidence which these witnesses presented at the trial, how it compares to their previous statements, and the pretrial machinations concerning how the case would be presented.

2.1. Sehm, Frahm, Pook

Sehm was the first witness to appear. He made a number of mistakes that damaged his credibility, such as alleging that TESTA had delivered gas to Dachau and Belsen (TTD 1, pp. 171, 176), although TESTA delivered only east of the Elbe, while Dachau and Belsen lie west of the Elbe. He also stated that "it was well known in the firm that Dr. Tesch was not a chemist, but a Doctor of Philosophy and interest[ed] only privately in the chemical science [sic]" (*ibid*., p. 177). Tesch was in fact a degreed chemist who had enjoyed a fairly illustrious career. The idea that Tesch was not actually a chemist was also expressed by Anton Freud in Tesch's October 24 interrogation; presumably he was told this by Sehm.

Sehm's presentation of his story concerning the crucial travel report was consistent with his pretrial statements. With respect to the contentious question of what he had told Frahm, he stated that in the Spring of 1943 he had told Frahm all about the travel report, and Frahm, a "very temperamental person", had "behaved in a rather violently anti-national socialist way" (*ibid.*, p. 169). With respect to Wilhelm Pook, he stated that the latter "came back to Hamburg in October or November 1945 and we have been having discussions since" (*ibid.*, p. 170).

Frahm was the next witness to appear, and contradicted Sehm's account (*ibid.*, p. 181):

> *"Q. Did* [Sehm] *tell you why he wanted to leave [TESTA]?*
> *A. He indicated that things were going on at that firm with which his conscience could not agree.*
> *Q. Did he particularise what those things were?*
> *A. No. He did not give me any particular details because at that time to talk about such things was quite impossible."*

Wilhelm Pook and his wife Kate Pook did not appear until Day 3 of the trial. On direct examination, Wilhelm Pook was not asked about the Sehm travel report, but did give an account of what Sehm had told him during the war (TTD 3, p. 243):

> *"Sehm told me that he was working at Tesch & Stabenow and that that firm supplied prussic acid for the territories in the east and that it was mainly a*

question of the killing of Jews and that Dr. Tesch undertook journeys there to give instruction about the manner of using that poison, and I know that Tesch & Stabenow furnished themselves this poison gas."

Only on cross examination was he asked about the travel report. He confirmed Sehm's story insofar as he stated that Sehm had told him about finding the travel report, read notes he had taken from it, and that he, Pook, had advised Sehm that it was dangerous to carry such a paper (*ibid.*, pp. 243f.). He did not, however, remember Sehm's story about burning the note in an ashtray on the table (*ibid.*, p. 244):

"Q. Did anything happen with this copy made by Sehm in your presence?
A. I cannot remember any more if he put it again in his pocket or what happened."

Far more important than whether Pook could confirm Sehm's bizarre tale of the travel report outlining the OKW's plan to gas Jews at night in their barracks, however, was a fact revealed by Tesch's lawyer Zippel. The reader may have noticed that Pook's pretrial statements have not been mentioned. This is for good reason: they are not present in the files. While cross examining Pook, Zippel revealed that pretrial statements were taken from both of the Pooks. He pressed Pook on the discrepancy between his earlier statement and his trial testimony (*ibid.*):

"Q. Why did you not mention [the travel report] *whilst you have been interrogated by Captain Lee, the British Interrogation Officer?*
A. In the meantime I could think about it.
Q. Have you in the meantime spoken to Sehm about it?
A. Yes, we did, but we did not gain any new facts.
Q. When did you speak with Sehm about it?
A. Last week.
Q. Have you spoken to Sehm after Sehm appeared as a witness before this court?
A. Last week. [Sehm had testified on a Friday, and Pook the next Monday.]
Q. Did Sehm tell you what was the evidence given before this court?
A. It was only repetitions of what he had said before.
Q. Please answer my question now. Did he tell you what he gave as evidence before this court?
A. Yes he did – what was printed in the newspaper.
[…]
Q. Whilst interrogated by the British Interrogation Officer you could not remember that Sehm did show you a paper and yet now, months later, you can remember what was in this document.

A. We talked over this happening just as I gave the evidence a few moments before."

Wilhelm Pook was followed on the witness stand by his wife, Kate Pook, who delivered similar testimony, with a few notable differences. First, she claimed that she had thought at first that the document Sehm brought with him was an original document but only later realized that it was a copy – a story which clashes with Sehm's claim that it was just his own handwritten and fragmentary notes (*ibid.*, p. 245). Second, unlike her husband, she managed to remember Sehm's story about burning the note in an ashtray, although she was forced to admit that she might have merely been "reminded" of this by Sehm when he visited (*ibid.*, pp. 245f.). Third, in her original statement to the British interrogating officer, she had apparently mentioned something about Sehm showing her one of Tesch's letters (rather than Sehm's notes on a travel report, as she claimed at the trial), and she stated that she only remembered about the document after her initial statement (*ibid.*).

It is not entirely clear how Zippel acquired a copy of the pretrial Pook statements, or why they are not preserved in the records of the investigation and trial. Indeed, the casual reader of the Tesch investigation files could be forgiven for not noticing (either) Pook's existence. From a few traces, however, we can reconstruct the events of the investigation involving Pook.

Sehm had alluded to Pook without mentioning him by name in his August 24, 1945 letter. His September 18 description of his confrontation with Tesch named Pook for the first time, giving a lengthy description. Sehm repeated his description of Pook in his October 10 statement. Pook, however, was located in the American zone, and was consequently not the easiest witness for the Hamburg-based team to get at.

On October 27, Ashton Hill, the commanding officer of the No. 2 WCIT, requested that a statement be taken from Pook:[34]

"It is requested that a statement be obtained from POOK who is now in the American zone, in order to corroborate the evidence of the chief informant Emil SEHM, who has made a statement on the lines set out below." [Hill then quotes four paragraphs from Sehm's statement]

Making mention of this request, the investigative team's report on the case notes:[35]

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[34] L. Ashton Hill to DJAG (War Crimes Section), HQ British Army of the Rhine, PRO WO 309/1602.

[35] Dr. Bruno TESCH and the "GIFTGAS" Case, paragraph 54, PRO WO 309/1602.

> *"In its present form there is very strong indirect evidence against all three accused but only weak direct evidence against Dr TESCH and no direct evidence at all against Herr WEINBACHER and Dr DROSIHN. The direct evidence against Dr TESCH can be strengthened slightly if a corroborative statement is obtained from Wilhelm POOK."*

Referencing the report, a November 9 letter stated that Pook was being searched for.[36] Eventually, No. 2 War Crimes Investigation Team received a message informing them that Pook had arrived in Hamburg on November 23:[37]

> *"RESTRICTED. CONFIRMING TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BENTHAM GREEN/ASHTON HILL RE GIFTGAS CASE AND DOCTOR TESCH. WILHELM POOK NOW REPORTED ARRIVED HAMBURG 23 NOV ADDRESS ALTONA STRESEMANNSTRASSE 71 BEI FAMILY MEYER. PLEASE ARRANGE IMMEDIATELY INVESTIGATION FOR CORROBORATION OF EVIDENCE OF EMIL SEHM AND REPORT ACCORDINGLY"*

This message is dated only "02", as in "the second day of the month", at 1800 hours. The position in the file, however, indicates that the month was January. We will trace through the chronology of the pretrial period to see where Pook came back into the story. The report on the case, dating to early November, mentions only that a statement should be taken from Pook. A November 28 advisory report by Brigadier H. Shapcott recommended charges against Tesch only, suggesting that the cases of Weinbacher and Drosihn be left for a later date.[38] Though it listed all witnesses and other evidence to be brought, the report made no mention of Frahm or Pook. These two were also omitted from a December 12 list of witnesses to be called.[39]

On December 21, however, the charge was altered to include three defendants rather than Tesch alone. At this time, Frahm was added to the list of witnesses, but Pook still went unmentioned (p. 39). On January 3, referencing a telephone conversation between Smithers and Ashton Hill, Pook's arrival was noted (p. 48):

> *"It has been reported that Wilhelm POOK has left the American zone and is at HAMBURG-ALTONA, Stresemannstrasse 71 by Family Mayer. An immediate interrogation has been ordered by this Branch to be conducted*

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36 PRO WO 309/625, p. 11.

37 EXFOR to No. 2 War Crimes Investigation Team, PRO WO 309/1602.

38 Copies in PRO WO 235/83, WO 309/625, WO 309/1602.

39 PRO WO 309/625, p. 19; subsequent page numbers in text from there, unless stated otherwise.

by a member of No. 2 WCIT, and the result will be notified to you accordingly if it is intended to call POOK as a witness."

On January 19 both Pooks were on the witness list, but with a handwritten note that they were "not to be produced" (p. 47).[40] Wilhelm Pook's statement was acknowledged as received by 8 Corps District on January 31 (p. 75), and eight further copies were sent on February 2 (p. 77). On February 7, the originals of both Pook statements were passed on, along with copies (p. 83).

I have narrated these events in such detail to show the compelling evidence that statements from the Pooks were first taken at some point during January. It is important to establish this clearly because there is an intriguing circumstantial argument to the contrary. Here we return to the theme of the manipulation of witness statements by the WCIT. In addition to the Sehm statement of October 10 cited above, a second version of Sehm's statement was prepared and is included in a set of copies of exhibits to be used at trial.[41] This version, which is given the same date, is identical to the normal statement, with one exception: Sehm's discussion of his friend Pook, to whom he showed a copy of the mysterious travel report, is omitted.

The existence of this version of Sehm's statement would appear, on first glance, to be linked with another case of document manipulation, namely that alluded to in the above mentioned November 28 advisory report, which states that Sehm should be presented as a witness "in accordance with Sehm's statement as amended by this office."[42] The question arises whether the Pook-less version of Sehm's statement is that amended version. If so, it would be tempting to suggest that the Pooks' failure to confirm Sehm's story caused the British authorities to create a new, Pook-less statement. This would require the hypothesis of an additional, earlier, undocumented meeting between Pook and War Crimes investigators. The chronology of events related to Pook was given in such detail in order to show that such a hypothesis is untenable. The documentary record is too clear to allow for such speculation.

If the Pook-less Sehm statement is identical with "Sehm's statement as amended by this office", then the amendment was done prior to taking a

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[40] The handwritten day of the month given in the report is very messy and could be interpreted as 4, 9, 14, or 19. Fortunately, another paper in the file (p. 75) refers to this exact report, assigning it the date January 19.

[41] PRO WO 309/625.

[42] Copies in PRO WO 235/83, WO 309/625, WO 309/1602.

statement from Pook, presumably having been performed in order to conceal Pook's existence from the defense, since at the time his evidence remained a wild card. If the Pook-less Sehm statement is not identical with "Sehm's statement as amended by this office", then the latter was either for some reason not preserved in the Tesch Trial files, or is nothing other than the *standard* version of Sehm's statement, the true original not having been preserved. Whichever of these options one prefers, it's clear that a great deal of document manipulation went on in the preparation for the Tesch Trial.

2.2. Biagini and Uenzelmann

Aside from the trio Sehm-Frahm-Pook, the only witnesses offering evidence that Tesch and his fellow defendants had known that their gas was used to kill humans were two secretaries, Erna Elisa [or Eilza] Biagini and Anna Uenzelmann (sometimes spelled Unzelmann). Neither of these witnesses told such a spectacular tale as Sehm, but they were seen at the trial as providing confirmation. Of the two, Biagini is the more interesting, in that she completely changed her story between her pretrial and trial statements.

In her interrogation, Biagini stated that she had not seen written materials concerning homicidal gassing, but mentioned that rumors on this subject had circulated at TESTA. These rumors, which she first heard in winter 1942, were not given any credence.[43] The same story is given in her statement,[44] and in the report on the case.[45] Her statements to this effect may well be true. Rumors concerning the gassing of humans did circulate in Germany during the war. It would not be surprising if some typists at a gassing firm gossiped about them. That said, Biagini claimed that she had heard the rumors from her fellow typist Erika Rathcke, which Rathcke denied in her interrogation, asking to be confronted with the witness who claimed this. She maintained this denial in the face of a threatening interrogation ("I tell you that you don't speak the truth. That rumor was circulated in the office and you must know. I shall let you sit here for years if

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[43] Biagini interrogation, 17 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603. She stated that these rumors circulated among members of office staff, who were separate from the technical staff. The WCIT endeavored diligently to obtain statements from the numerous members of the technical (gassing) staff to the effect that they had heard rumors about gassing of humans during the war, but met with no success.

[44] Biagini statement, 24 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/625.

[45] Dr. Bruno TESCH and the "GIFTGAS" Case, section 46(b), PRO WO 309/1602.

you don't speak up."). She had heard rumors about "idiots" being put to sleep (the euthanasia program), and knew of an institutionalized family member who had died shortly after a transfer, causing suspicion. She had not, however, heard anything about the use of gas for this purpose.[46]

At the trial, however, Biagini's testimony was completely different. She first denied having heard rumors, but then told a new story about seeing a travel report (TTD 1, pp. 184f.):

"Q. Did you ever hear any rumours about Zyklon B whilst you were with Tesch & Stabenow?
A. No rumours. What sort of rumours?
Q. Were there rumours about Zyklon B whilst you were with Tesch & Stabenow?
A. No rumours.
THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: When you were working with the firm, were there any rumours going about as to what Zyklon B was being used for?
A. I do not know for certain.
Q. Have you understood the question?
A. Yes.
Q. Let the court have an answer. It is a very simple question.
A. That the gas was used in concentration camps for disinfection.
MAJOR DRAPER: Did you ever hear that they were using the gas for any other purpose than for disinfecting vermin?
A. Yes.
Q. Will you tell us the circumstances and what you heard?
A. I was working at a document; I have read it – that it might be used for human beings as well.
Q. Do you say you read that yourself?
A. Yes.
Q. Having read that, did you mention it to any of your co-employees?
A. Yes.
Q. To whom and in what circumstances?
A. To Fraulein Rathcke. […]
Q. Did you learn anything else about Zyklon B being used for exterminating human beings whilst you were in that firm?
A. No, nothing else."

Under cross examination, she stated that this report was one of Dr. Tesch's travel reports, but did not remember anything about the context of the document. She could testify only to having read in a travel report something concerning the possibility that Zyklon could be used against humans (*ibid.*,

[46] Rathcke interrogation, 18 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

pp. 185-187). When questioned about the matter, Tesch thought that Biagini's new story might be based in fact, and offered the hypothesis that a student in one of his courses might have asked him about the effect of Zyklon on humans, and he might have taken note of this in a travel report. When challenged on this he emphasized that he indeed did frequently write down students' questions in the travel reports from his courses, that he could prove this, and that students did indeed ask such questions at his courses (TTD 3, pp. 275f.). Rathcke, for her part, denied that Biagini had told her about this document (TTD 5, p. 348).

The prosecution clearly did not know Biagini's new story before the case went to trial, as can be seen from the fact that Major Draper mentioned her old story in his opening speech (TTD 1, p. 165). Her reasons for changing her story are not apparent. Like her old story, her new story is perfectly plausible and not at all incriminating, despite the prosecution's insinuations. Her new story certainly *cannot* be interpreted as confirmation of Sehm's travel-report story.[47] While both stories involve a travel report, the two descriptions of that travel report are quite different, as Tesch himself noted at the trial (TTD 3, pp. 275f., 291.).

The other TESTA secretary to offer evidence that Tesch had known of gassings was Anna Uenzelmann. Unlike Biagini, she stuck to her pretrial statements: at some point in 1942, after returning from Berlin, Dr. Tesch had said something to the effect that he had heard that there were plans to use Zyklon to kill humans, but had not given any details whatsoever.[48] Tesch denied that there was any truth to Uenzelmann's story, and noted that "Frau Unzelmann is well known in the business as a very confused person", and suggested she may have become confused during the years since the event and made a mistake.[49]

2.3. Excess Zyklon Supply?

It would be difficult to overstate how much emphasis was placed on the size of the Zyklon supply to Auschwitz during the Tesch investigation and trial. According to the prosecution, the supply was so large that Tesch must have known that the gas was used for extermination. TESTA's employees,

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47 This interpretation is given in Kalthoff/Werner, p. 150.

48 TTD 1, pp. 189f.; Uenzelmann interrogation, 22 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603; Uenzelmann statement, 23 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603; Dr. Bruno TESCH and the "GIFTGAS" Case, section 46(a), PRO WO 309/1602.

49 TTD 3, p. 274. Tesch contrasted Uenzelmann, who was a highly confused person, and Biagini, who was not. He did not simply disparage all witnesses against him.

under arrest at the time, were pressured to provide support for this argument. Meanwhile, in his first interrogation, Tesch had indicated skepticism towards this line of argument:[50]

> *"Q. I am going to tell you something instead of asking the questions. 5 Million people died from gassing in Auschwitz. What do you understand from that?*
>
> *A. It is news to me.*
>
> *Q. Tonight you are learning something, are you not? You are astounded, are you not? So some of the gas which went in did not kill merely bugs, did it?*
>
> *A. I do not know; there were a lot of bugs in Auschwitz."*

In one case, the investigation team managed to secure a sort of endorsement for the excess Zyklon supply [hereafter EZS] argument, but only based on the assumption that Auschwitz was much smaller than it in fact was: a statement taken from the gassing technician Gustav Kock (sometimes spelled Koch) stated that he would be "astonished" at Zyklon orders of one ton monthly for two years from a camp the size of Neuengamme.[51] He repeated this statement at the trial (TTD 2, p. 217). Auschwitz, which had ordered 19 tons in two years, was meant, and the interrogator had suggested to Kock that Auschwitz was the size of Neuengamme or Gross Rosen. In another case, the British interrogating agent explicitly stated that Auschwitz was a normal-sized camp, and was smaller than Sachsenhausen.[52] The confusion about the size of Auschwitz was compounded by the statements of the gassing technician August Marcinkowski, who recounted an early trip to the camp:[53]

> *"In March 1940 I carried out a gassing in AUSCHWITZ. This was just before it was due to become a concentration camp. At this time AUSCHWITZ consisted of seven to eight one-storeyed [einstöckigen] stone houses and we used about 120 kilograms of ZYKLON gas to gas it."*

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50 Tesch interrogation, 26 Sept. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

51 Summary of examination of Gustav Kock, 24 Oct. 1945, copies in PRO WO 309/1602, 1603. Kock's statement adds an expression of incredulity that anyone would not see that this was an excess supply, which was directed against Tesch – in fact, the interrogators even quoted it to Tesch during an interrogation. The statement, however, falls flat, not only for the obvious reason that Auschwitz was not in fact the same size as Neuengamme, but also because a transcript of Kock's interrogation survives, and reveals the extent of the interrogator's influence on Kock's statements, as well as Kock's desire to please the interrogator (the interrogation ends with Kock begging for approval by mentioning that his wife is a foreigner).

52 Interrogation of Johann Holst, 19 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

53 Summary of examination of August Marcinkowski, 24 Oct. 1945, copies in PRO WO 309/1602, 1603.

Marcinkowski was called at the trial and repeated the story, stating this time that 120 to 130 kg of Zyklon had been used (TTD 2, p. 215). Captain Anton Freud, in turn, repeated this claim while interrogating Tesch, in order to prove that the Zyklon supply to Auschwitz was excessive:[54]

> *"Q Not conspicuous! Do you know what people have said about you? If a camp ordered 1 ton of gas a month, throughout 2 years, and you didn't notice it, then you are either moronic or you don't want to know it. You know that the entire Auschwitz camp can be gassed with 120 kg.*
> *A. One barrack?*
> *Q. No, the entire Auschwitz camp."*

The possibility that the Auschwitz for which Tesch supplied gas might have been somewhat larger than the Auschwitz which Marcinkowski gassed in early 1940 seems not to have occurred to Freud. Indeed, it was taken for granted by the investigating team that the quantity of Zyklon supplied to Auschwitz was so immense as to be sufficient to prove that large scale extermination of humans occurred at the camp. An entire segment of Tesch's October 24 interrogation is devoted to Anton Freud's rant against Tesch's claim that the quantity supplied was not surprisingly large (*ibid.*):

> *"Q. There aren't enough insects in all of Germany that one needs 1 ton Zyklon per month. If a camp ordered that much, you must have been aware that it wasn't only used against insects. Do you know what your people have said about that? That you are an idiot or you didn't want to know what the gas was used for."*

Here Freud was alluding to Gustav Kock's statements mentioned above, originally made during his interrogation of October 20.[55]

At the trial, the prosecution strenuously objected to Tesch's statement that Auschwitz's demand for a larger supply of Zyklon was unsurprising due to the fact that Auschwitz was a larger camp.[56] Their plan for the EZS argument was to claim, based on inaccurate statements from Drosihn, that the SS could not carry out disinfection of barracks without the help of TESTA technicians, but could only perform gassings in gas chambers. Therefore all Zyklon sent to Auschwitz had to be used in (delousing) gas chambers or for homicidal purposes. As the quantities ordered were in ex-

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54 Tesch interrogation, 24 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

55 Kock interrogation, 20 Oct. 1945, *ibid*.

56 TTD 3, p. 277. In the entire following discussion, "Auschwitz" must be taken to mean the entire Auschwitz complex, not merely the Main Camp (*Stammlager*). It was on this basis that the calculations of Zyklon supply were calculated, and in this fashion that the matter was discussed in the investigation and at the trial.

cess of those needed by delousing chambers, therefore Tesch had to know that Zyklon was being used for mass extermination of humans at Auschwitz. Tesch rejected these arguments as well (TTD 4, p. 295):

> *"Q. Do you know how many delousing chambers there were in Auschwitz in 1942?*
> *A. I do not.*
> *Q. Do you know how many you supplied to this concentration camp.*
> *A. Yes*
> *Q. How many, roughly?*
> *A. As far as I know we did not supply any.*
> *Q. You would agree, would you not, that seven thousand kilograms of Zyklon B gas is unlikely to have been used for the purposes of delousing chambers?*
> *A. On the contrary, I even now today am of the opinion that even a bigger amount could have been used.*
> *Q. And you say the same about twelve thousand kilograms in 1943?*
> *A. Yes, that means 1,000 kilograms a month and that is not exaggerated for a big camp."*

Despite the prosecution's best efforts, the EZS argument consistently failed to persuade competent observers. The gassing technicians to whom it was put invariably rejected it, the only exceptions being in those cases where the technicians were given erroneous information concerning the size of Auschwitz.[57] Tesch rejected it, as did Weinbacher (TTD 5, p. 329) and Drosihn, the latter even under the assumption that the Zyklon sent to

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[57] Mention should perhaps be made of Karl Ruehmling, who provided a very weak kind of support for the EZS argument. Ruehmling was mainly employed as an accountant, but also worked as an assistant gassing technician at times of high demand for gassing, until December 1943, when he entered military service. When the EZS argument was first suggested to him during his October 13 interrogation with reference to the size of individual orders from Auschwitz and Sachsenhausen, he rejected it, noting that these camps were very large, although when pressed he did express a general sort of surprise at the size of camp that would need such quantities of Zyklon. When the interrogation was continued the next day, after receiving further threats from the interrogator, he managed to express a generalized kind of surprise at the size of individual orders of Zyklon, but stated that he had never heard such an expression of surprise from any of the three defendants. While the interrogations of the other interrogated (current and former) TESTA employees were promptly converted into deposition form, Ruehmling's was left to linger before finally being put into the form of a deposition and signed on December 30. The deposition mentions large orders of Zyklon but expresses no surprise at their extent, and mentions that none of the other employees expressed such surprise. At the trial (Day 1, pp. 194-199) Ruehmling was not questioned about surprise at the size of Zyklon orders. The Ruehmling statement is in PRO WO 309/1602, while copies of the interrogations can be found in PRO WO 309/1602, 1603.

Auschwitz cannot have been used for disinfecting barracks, but only in gas chambers or homicidally (TTD 4, p. 304):

> *"Q. If it is so from the books of the firm that 7000 kgs.* [of Zyklon B] *went to Auschwitz alone* [in 1942]*, would that strike you as the proper quantity for disinfecting only in gas chambers?*
> *A. I do not know the conditions in Auschwitz, but I think it may be possible.*
> […]
> *Q. Auschwitz took in 1943 12000 kgs. of the gas. Would you have been surprised if you had heard that?*
> *A. I knew that Auschwitz was a very big camp."*

The prosecution also put the argument before Karl Schwarz, Professor emeritus at the (Hamburg?) Institute of Hygiene, who declined to endorse it (TTD 5, pp. 339f.).

Despite its consistent rejection by everyone with expertise in gassing, the EZS argument remained the prosecution's favorite, and went on make the rounds with holocaust historians. For example, in a well-known anthology on the alleged National Socialist gassings, the size of the Zyklon deliveries to Majdanek was held to be proof that they were intended for homicidal use.[58] While the EZS argument was repudiated by Jean-Claude Pressac (1993, p. 47), it was resurrected by Robert Jan van Pelt in connection with the Irving-Lipstadt trial.[59] Van Pelt's shoddy arguments need not concern us beyond a few brief remarks.[60]

Van Pelt uses Zyklon delivery quantities from Tesch Trial documents, but these numbers are not complete and hence not suitable for comparisons of the sort van Pelt wants to draw.[61] The quantities van Pelt quotes do not include the gassings that TESTA carried out themselves in the camps,[62] notably in Sachsenhausen and Neuengamme, where these quantities are large enough to dramatically alter the results of van Pelt's calculations for

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[58] Kogon *et al*. 1993, p. 175. In support of this claim, correspondence between TESTA and the Majdanek administration is cited. It is sourced from the documents left at Majdanek rather than from those gathered from TESTA's files by WCIT No. 2. The Tesch Trial documents do contain a number of documents relating to the planning of the Majdanek (sanitary) gas chambers, which establish quite clearly that they were planned for hygienic purposes. This fact, however, has been largely conceded by orthodox Majdanek historians, and consequently will not be further developed here.

[59] Online: https://www.hdot.org/day10, starting at Section 128.9.

[60] For a critique of van Pelt's arguments see Mattogno 2019, pp. 444-449.

[61] This can be seen in the example of Majdanek by comparing van Pelt's numbers with those given in Graf/Mattogno, pp. 200-203.

[62] This fact is explicitly explained in Zaun's statement of October 24 (signature dated October 26), whose original is in PRO WO 309/1603.

1942.[63] TESTA's books record that in that year it gassed a total of 334,720 cubic meters at Sachsenhausen and 112,260 cubic meters at Neuengamme. At 15 grams per cubic meter, the standard concentration for gassing barracks,[64] this means the use of 5,020.8 and 1,683.9 kg of Zyklon, respectively. These quantities dwarf van Pelt's annual totals of 1,438 and 180 kg for these two camps. When the two sets of figures are added together, it appears that the quantities of Zyklon going to Sachsenhausen and Neuengamme in 1942 were, if anything, excessive in comparison with the quantity going to Auschwitz, perhaps as a result of German fear that epidemics in these camps might spread and affect the nearby urban areas.

Further, van Pelt assumes that the Zyklon supply to camps other than Auschwitz, Neuengamme for example, was adequate on a per-prisoner basis, while in reality Neuengamme prisoners complained that delousing was scarcely ever done, and blamed the camp administration for this omission, which was the result of a shortage of Zyklon.[65] Moreover, citing the Nuremberg document NI-9912 (of little direct relevance to Auschwitz), van Pelt assumes that the Auschwitz delousing chambers would have used a concentration of 8 grams per cubic meter. The concentration normally recommended by TESTA, however, was 10 grams per cubic meter (Type 'D'). Even worse, van Pelt assumes a concentration of 5-8 grams per cubic meter for the delousing of barracks. TESTA's recommendation for the gassing of barracks was 15 grams per cubic meter (Type 'E').[66] Correcting this last figure alone suffices to overturn van Pelt's analysis.

Van Pelt compounds his errors by assuming that all camps require the same amount of Zyklon per prisoner, without considering regional differences in hygienic conditions. This allows us to return to the arguments made at the Tesch Trial. In his first interrogation, Tesch remarked on the regional difference in the need for disinfestation, stating that "Eastern terri-

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63 These additional quantities are given in Dr. Bruno TESCH and The "GIFTGAS" Case, section 45(6)(e), PRO WO 309/1602.

64 The assumption that this concentration was used is also supported by the size of the bills. For instance, in one Sachsenhausen gassing operation encompassing 196,800 cubic meters, the bill for Zyklon was RM 21,622.19. The other bills were on a similar scale relative to the volume gassed. The price of Zyklon varied but was usually around 6 RM per kg.

65 PRO WO 309/872

66 Dr. Bruno TESCH and the "GIFTGAS" Case, section 24, PRO WO 309/1602; Ruehmling interrogation and deposition, PRO WO 309/1602. The latter fact was also mentioned by Weinbacher in his interrogation. The concentration of 10 grams per cubic meter may well understate what was used for delousing; Drosihn mentioned at the trial (Day 4, p. 304) that delousing employed triple the concentration used in general gassing.

tories were particularly in danger of spotted fever", although this was not said in the context of the EZS argument.[67] In his second surviving interrogation he made this point as well, this time in the EZS context, responding to the suggestion that the deliveries to the concentration camps were "a little strange" with a reference to the great danger of louse infestation in the east.[68]

Tesch elaborated on this point at his trial, noting that there was a greater infestation problem in the east than in the west (TTD 3, p. 266), and stating that among the reasons he was not astonished by the quantity of Zyklon supplied to Auschwitz was that "Upper Silesia was a much infested province of Germany, and because I experienced in Poland a sort of infestation with insects and vermin as I had not thought possible" (*ibid.*, p. 277). When the prosecution expressed incredulity that Tesch should not have thought it strange to see Auschwitz order four times as much gas as Sachsenhausen over a certain period,[69] Tesch observed yet again that "one is a territory which is infected by vermin". He explained that this was both general knowledge ("We knew that the whole of Poland and Upper Silesia were territories which were very badly infested") and something he knew on the basis of his own experience (TTD 4, p. 288).

The prosecution also knew Tesch's statement to be true. Their own trial Exhibit DB, a travel report dated March 20, 1941, reporting on Tesch's experiences in Upper Silesia from 7-11 March, contained a discussion of the poor sanitary situation in Upper Silesia, including the remark that while the disinfestation plan was not yet definite, all were agreed that "something radical must take place."[70]

Finally, in his attempt to obtain an upper bound for the amount of Zyklon that could have been put to "ordinary" use, van Pelt assumes that the entire supply of that product delivered to the Auschwitz complex had to be used in either the *Stammlager* or in Birkenau. He gives no justification for the assumption that the other Auschwitz subcamps never required Zyklon. The need to supply subcamps was repeatedly mentioned at the Tesch Trial (TTD 3, pp. 267, 277, 288). As van Pelt cites the trial tran-

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67 Tesch interrogation, 26 Sept. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603. The term "spotted fever" is doubtless a translation of the German *Fleckfieber* (*Fleck*= spot, *Fieber* = fever), which means typhus. As this term was used throughout the investigation and at the trial, it will not be corrected; the reader should understand that typhus is meant.

68 Tesch interrogation, 24 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

69 The prosecution attacked the idea that Auschwitz was a larger camp complex than Sachsenhausen.

70 Exhibit DB, PRO WO 309/1603.

script, it is unclear how he remained ignorant of this fact; the most charitable interpretation is that while he found it a fine thing to cite the trial transcript in support of his arguments, he did not feel obligated to go the trouble of *reading* it.

2.4. Sentence, Appeal, and Execution

Tesch and Weinbacher were found guilty and sentenced to death (TTD 7, pp. 407f.), while Drosihn's groveling earned him an acquittal. On March 19, Tesch submitted a petition against the judgment, as did Weinbacher the next day. Both men referred to the written appeals of their lawyers.[71] Tesch's lawyer Dr. Zippel wrote a lengthy appeal which addressed a number of issues which had looked bad for Tesch during the trial. Chief among these was the issue of large gas chambers. Tesch had made various denials concerning his ignorance of large size gas chambers. At the trial, the prosecution sought to destroy his credibility by showing that these were lies. Drosihn wrote a statement on appeal concerning these large gassing facilities:[72]

> *"I hereby declare under oath that the small 10 cbm. normal gas-chambers, which were used for quick delousing of clothing and simultaneous bodily delousing of the wearers of this clothing, f.i.*[73] *in barracks, are unsuitable for the delousing of winter clothing for the troops, which is returned from the front in large quantities during the spring and summer months by car, lorry, or truck loads for repair, because this material was continually brought to the collecting stations of the Army Clothing Departments, and had then to be taken in hand. For this purpose I therefore considered the employment of large gassing rooms more practical than the corresponding number of small chambers. The places known to me indeed all only used large rooms for gassing, but did not install typical gas chambers. As instances I would enumerate the clothing department of the Heeresgruppe Nord*
>
> *1) in Riga – Mühlgraben*
> *1 gassing room of 1500 cbm.*
> *2) in Pleskau*
> *1 gassing room of abt. 150 cbm.*

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71 Petitions in WO 235/83.

72 Drosihn Affidavit, 19 March 1946, PRO WO 235/83.

73 Short for "for instance". The affidavit is present only in English, but presumably there was a German original in which Drosihn used the common German abbreviation z.B. for "zum Beispiel."

furthermore the Field Clothing Department of the air force Riga
3) in Riga – Ilgeziem
1 gassing room of abt. 180 cbm.
Big rooms have the advantage of a considerable saving in building material for the construction of inner walls, and that instead of many equipments only one is required and the handling of the clothes (taking and handing out) is quicker and simpler. By extending the time to 8 – 24 hours for the gas to take effect in comparison to the gassing duration of not quite one hour with simultaneous personal (bodily) de-lousing, the gyratory equipment could be dispensed with altogether.
In the repair workshop of the Reichsbahn in Posen finally whole trains with military winter-clothing were regularly deloused by means of Zyklon in truck loads with afore-mentioned Pintsch Tunnel. This disinfecting establishment of abt. 500 cbm. was not only arranged to be operated with heat but also for the production of sub-pressure, so that quick time for the gas to take its effect and high outputs could be attained. The tunnel in Posen is illustrated on the page before last of the Testa-Fibel regarding Zyklon."

This confusion appears to have resulted in part from the prosecution's use of the term *Gaskammer* to designate all kinds of gassing spaces, even the kind that gassing professionals would call generally a *Gasraum*, and in part from the prosecutors' failure to consistently distinguish between equipment that TESTA themselves supplied and equipment that they had merely heard of. Thus in his interrogation, Drosihn says that he has never heard of large *Gaskammern* one minute, and immediately afterwards discusses an immense gassing facility in Riga.[74] This is clearly not an attempt to deceive, but rather proof that he did not classify the Riga facility as a *Gaskammer*. The fact that the term *Gaskammer* was assumed to have a somewhat restricted usage is also supported by the interrogation of Gustav Kock, who distinguished an improvised *Gasraum* from a *Gaskammer*.[75] Thus, the prosecution's belief that Tesch was lying in his statements concerning large gas chambers is simply the result of their failure to understand the usage of the relevant specialized vocabulary.

Tesch's lawyer also sought to call for the testimony of additional scientists as character witnesses, including the Nobel laureate Otto Hahn.[76] Such gambits were tried by any number of accused Germans, and rarely did much good. A highly favorable personal letter from Léon Blum did nothing to prevent Dr. Schiedlausky from being sentenced to death at the Brit-

[74] Drosihn interrogation, 17 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.
[75] Kock interrogation, 20 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.
[76] Appeal on behalf of Tesch, PRO WO 235/83.

ish Ravensbrück trial.[77] British agent Sigismund Payne Best's highly sympathetic account of Sachsenhausen commandant Anton Kaindl[78] did nothing to prevent the British from transferring Kaindl to Russian hands and to his death in imprisonment. Even more futile was Kurt Eccarius's wife's attempt to aid her husband by providing his former prisoner Martin Niemöller as a witness to his character: by the time she wrote, he had already been turned over to the Russians.[79]

Attempted help came from outside as well, as Fritz Kiessig, who had worked with Tesch's company on disinfestation in the east, wrote to offer his services in their defense. His letter reads

> *Dear Sirs,*
> *On the evening of 2nd. March I heard from a British wireless station that three gentlemen of your firm had been arrested for having participated in gassing operations in the East.*
> *Whilst I was in the O.K.H.B of the Adm.Amt V2 during 1942/43 I also had to do among other matters with the entire de-contamination problem and collaborated a great deal with your good firm or respectively with one of your directors in this question. This matter is therefore not unknown to me and as far as it concerns the section "Army" of our forces the happenings in "gassings" as indicated in the British radio are entirely new to me.*
> *If you should have any interest in my evidence I will gladly hold myself at your disposal, as the practices of the firms occupying themselves in the east with de-contamination are known to me from personal experience.*
> *Yours faithfully*
> *(signed) Fritz Kiessig*
> *Oberfeldintendant a.D.*[80]

The letter was received only after the trial had finished. In his appeal, Zippel informed the authorities of the letter, and requested "that arrangements be made to cross-examine this witness" in order to confirm or refute Sehm's claims.[81] This was not done. In a memorandum recommending confirmation of the sentences, Brigadier H. Scott-Barrett claimed that the appeals "do not disclose any substantially new matter."[82] The sentences were duly confirmed. The death warrants were signed on April 26 and executed on May 16.[83]

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77 Blum letter, 14 Nov. 1946, PRO WO 235/310.
78 PRO FO 1093/339.
79 PRO WO 309/2041.
80 Kiessig letter, 4 March 1946, PRO WO 235/83.
81 Appeal on behalf of Tesch, p. 6, PRO WO 235/83.
82 Summary of the case by M. Scott-Barrett, 5 April 1946, 1946, PRO WO 235/83.
83 Death Warrants, PRO WO 235/83.

Several weeks later, Tesch and Weinbacher's lawyers filed a protest, noting that neither they nor the families of the victims had been informed that the execution had been scheduled or even that it had taken place. Their complaint was forwarded to the headquarters of the British Army of the Rhine, with the observation that "It would appear unnatural that the nearest relatives of a man about to be executed are not advised of the forthcoming execution," and the question, "Are relatives entitled to receive the body for interment?"[84] The reply was negative, and read:[85]

> *"Accused sentenced to death are not notified that their sentences have been confirmed until the evening before execution. It is undesirable that there should be any demonstrations in connection with executions and it is therefore necessary to withold any information relating to the dates of execution until they have been carried out. In this latter connection, the question of notifying next of Kin that death sentences have been carried out and giving notice of confirmation of prison sentences, is at present being considered* […] *It has been decided that bodies of executed persons will not be handed over to next of kin, or their place of burial made known."*

2.5. The Theft of Tesch's Property

In the absence of substantial direct proof of Tesch's guilt, a large portion of the prosecution's strategy fixed on portraying him as a liar. The report on the case gave a list of his alleged lies, and those of his co-defendants.[86] One of Tesch's alleged lies was the claim that when a British agent left the room on October 23, he had not exchanged whispers with head bookkeeper Zaun. The prosecution laid out their view of the incident:

> *Arrangements were made for the firm to be allowed to continue business after the release from prison of all its members except Dr TESCH, Dr DROSIHN and Herr WEINBACHER. Military Government appointed Alfred ZAUN, the former Chief of Accounts, to act as manager in the absence of Dr TESCH. In order to obtain the necessary written authorities, Herr ZAUN applied for a personal interview with Dr TESCH, which was granted and arranged for 23rd October. The opportunity was taken to lay a trap in the form of a microphone in the office in which the interview was conducted, and a German stenographer was detailed to record the conversation.*

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84 PRO WO 309/626, p. 183.
85 *Ibid.*, p. 184.
86 Dr. Bruno TESCH and The "GIFTGAS" Case, sections 51-53, PRO WO 309/1602.

> *As a cover, in order not to rouse the suspicions of either Dr TESCH or Herr ZAUN, an interpreter of this Team was initially ordered to remain in the room, being summoned out by a bogus telephone call. Immediately he had left the room Dr TESCH and Herr ZAUN's conversation dropped to a whisper which could not be understood; but certain passages were recorded which revealed that Dr TESCH had handed over to ZAUN his wallet containing RM 3,700 and certain personal possessions to be given to Frau TESCH. The failure of this ruse to obtain any concrete evidence, owing to the fact that the microphone apparatus was not sufficiently tuned for whispers, was unfortunate. However, there is little doubt that quite a considerable amount of whispering was interspersed between normal conversation, and great suspicion fell upon both these persons. At the subsequent interrogation of both of them, done independently, they both strongly denied that any whispering took place. The possibility of ZAUN being re-imprisoned was seriously considered, but it was felt that he still was blameless as regards the main crime that was being investigated; further, he would be of less value to the Team in the conduct of the investigation if in prison than he would be at large.*[87]

During that period, Tesch had given Zaun valuables to pass on to Tesch's wife. Resentful at the failure of their ploy, the British confronted Tesch during his October 24 interrogation, claiming that he had tried to bribe Zaun:

> *Q. Herr Zaun is very sorry that he could not bring your things to your wife, but he found that RM 4,000 was too small a bribe.*
> *A. That was not a bribe.*
> *Q. You want to deny that you gave Herr Zaun money?*
> *A. No, I gave Herr Zaun RM 3,700, which was not supposed to be a bribe; he was supposed to deliver it to my wife.*
> *Q. Did you have permission for that? Herr Zaun told us all the secrets that you shared with him there, and as a bribe you gave him money.*
> *A. I can only say that we shared no secrets, and he was supposed to give the money to my wife.*
> *Q. What else was he supposed to give your wife?*
> *A. My fountain pen, my watch, my rings.*
> *Q. What else?*
> *A. I don't know.*
> *Q. What else? Penholder, perhaps a tie pin?*
> *A. Yes, that also.*
> *Q. And letters to your wife?*

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87 *Ibid.*, section 44(3).

A. No.
Q. Tasks for your wife?
A. No, I did not say that to Herr Zaun. I only said that he should give the money to my wife.
Q. No tasks for your wife? Herr Zaun has informed us otherwise.
A. I only said that he should bring the gold securely to my wife.[88]

It should be mentioned that the investigation team was already accusing Zaun of being bribed a week before the meeting,[89] and that they made such accusations very freely. The questioning of Tesch continued to address alleged whispering:

Q. What did you whisper yesterday with Herr Zaun?
A. Nothing, we did not whisper anything. I spoke to him only on points due to business affairs.
Q. What did you whisper?
A. No, we did not...
Q. You did not whisper. It did not occur to you at all to lower your voice. You continued to speak normally when we were outside?
A. Yes, I did not whisper.[90]

Tesch reiterated this version of events in his statement.[91] According to the description of the incident quoted above, Zaun was also interrogated about the alleged whispering on October 24th, but the statement taken from Zaun on that same day contains no mention of the meeting with Tesch, or of whispers, or of bribes,[92] and the transcript of the interrogation is not present in the case files.

As for the property which Tesch had tried to pass on to his wife, it was confiscated by the British. On January 23, 1946 – three months after this incident – WCIT No. 2 transferred the property of Tesch, Weinbacher, and Drosihn to Property Control. The receipt included some of the items taken from Zaun (fountain pen, pocket watch, tie pin) along with other items, but not Tesch's rings, and it included only 3,500 marks, rather than the 3,700 Tesch had given to Zaun.[93] More precisely, they *claimed* to have handed

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88 Tesch interrogation, 24 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.
89 Zaun Interrogation, 16 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603. (Only the English copy is dated, not the original.)
90 Tesch interrogation, 24 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.
91 Tesch statement 31 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.
92 Zaun statement, 24 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603. Zaun's signature on the German original, however, is dated October 26. In the English translation the latter date is retained, while the date of the 24th, which appears at the head of the original statement, is omitted.
93 Receipt, 23 Jan. 1946, PRO WO 309/1602.

over the property. The property was not returned (just as the families were not informed of the executions). Eventually, a custodian was appointed by the British military government to look for the property. He wrote to the war crimes investigation section of the military government

> *According to information received from Mr. Alfred Zaun, a bookkeeper in the firm of the deceased, the following objects were taken from Dr. Tesch on 23 October 1945 in the course of an interrogation held after his arrest in the War Crimes Enclosure in Hamburg* […][94]

Lt. Col. R.A. Nightingale's reply noted that the gold wedding ring and gold diamond ring were not contained on the receipt.[95] Property Control Section, however, reported that "No trace of this property could be found in Hamburg nor is the name of Capt. H.B. Bursar, S.O. III P.C., who is supposed to have signed the receipt, known at this HQ."[96] While there is no certainty here, it appears that someone in the war crimes investigation team invented H.B. Bursar (note the name!) and forged the receipt in order to cover up the theft of Tesch's property.

It wasn't only the investigative team that had financial motivations. Emil Sehm, who had been so keen to stress his "top secret" knowledge in his initial letters, hoped for some gain from the case, and claimed compensation as an expert witness for the period in September 1945 during which he worked on the case, but after a series of correspondence it was found that he was completely ineligible for such wages,[97] which were up to 3 RM per hour, or 6 in exceptional cases, in comparison with ordinary witnesses' wages of 20 Pf. to 1.50 RM.[98]

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94 T.A. Lohmann to War Crimes Investigation Section, Hamburg, 15 April 1948, PRO WO 309/1602.

95 Lt. Col R.A. Nightingale to T.A. Lohmann, 6 May 1948, PRO WO 309/1602.

96 Property Control Section to War Crimes Group (North West Europe), 31 Aug. 1948, PRO WO 309/1602.

97 Memos of 29 March 1946, 2 April 1946, ? April 1946, and 5 April 1946, PRO WO 309/1602.

98 Appendix "G" to Headquarters, British Army of the Rhine Administrative Instruction No. 104, Part I, PRO 309/626.

3. Miscellaneous Elements

We will take the opportunity to gather a number of pieces of information of interest which are contained in the files of the Tesch Trial. The collection is by no means comprehensive.

3.1. The Witness Pery Broad

Despite Jean-Claude Pressac's dismissal of his "report" (Pressac 1989, p. 162), the Auschwitz witness Pery Broad has returned to the prominent position in the pantheon of Auschwitz witnesses which he obtained during the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, being relied on in an important recent collection of articles concerning claimed National-Socialist gassings.[99] According to Michael Shermer, "Broad was never tortured, and he had nothing to gain and everything to lose by confessing" (Shermer/Grobman, p. 138). The files of the Tesch Trial demonstrate that this was not the case. When Broad was transferred from one prison to another in preparation for the Tesch Trial, he was accompanied by a note requesting that he receive preferential treatment: "Perry Broad has recently given much useful information. He should therefore receive as good treatment as is possible within ALTONA Prison."[100] While this dynamic was not responsible for all German testimony on homicidal gassings, it was, as revisionists have contended and this note confirms, a structural factor.

3.2. The Witness Rudolf Diels

One witness managed to influence the Tesch Trial greatly without having to make an appearance. This was Rudolf Diels, whose statement was used by the prosecution to support their contention that the extermination of the Jews by gas was general knowledge in Germany during the war. Somewhat surprisingly, the previous studies of the Tesch Trial that have discussed Diels do not seem to have realized just who he was. Rudolf Diels, in fact, was the first head of the Gestapo, Heydrich's predecessor in that role. Diels was a political opportunist who sought to make himself useful to the Allies. He presented himself as a victim of National Socialist persecution, claim-

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[99] Robert Jan van Pelt, "Auschwitz", in Morsch/Perz, pp. 196-218.
[100] Memo dated 22 Feb. 1946, PRO WO 309/626.

ing that he had been sentenced to death,[101] and giving statements damaging to former colleagues and rivals.

As one observer wrote, "The case of Dr. DIELS is rather peculiar, if not unique."[102] Opinion among Allied authorities on Diels was divided. Some British officials supported him. Major Draper recommended his release, noting that ""he has proved of considerable assistance in rendering specialized information to British War Crimes Executive and also to this office."[103] Others did not, stating that Diels should not be given any liberty, as he was a "dangerous conspirator and professional revolutionary."[104]

Diels was later kept in the Allied prosecution's "Guest House" in Nuremberg (Taylor, p. 231; Kalnoky/Herisko 1974), and among other things provided key testimony supporting the prosecution's attempt to blame the National-Socialist leadership for the Reichstag fire.[105]

On February 13, Thomas Dodd wrote to Colonel Phillimore, noting that Rudolf Diels had been called as a Nuremberg defense witness for Schacht. He asked to be sent all pertinent information derived from the British interrogations of Diels as soon as possible.[106] The next day, it was noted that Diels might not be available at the Tesch Trial because he might be required as a defense witness at Nuremberg.[107] At the trial Draper explained that Diels could not come (TTD 1, p. 182):

> *"He is at present undergoing interrogation by the military authorities. He cannot be released.* […] *he is undergoing interrogation on security matters. Application was made through the proper channels, but it was said that he could not come.* […] *It is also within the knowledge of the convening authority that the witness is being held at the disposition of the Nuremberg International Tribunal."*

Diels's evidence exists in two forms: his statement[108] and the interrogator's notes.[109] The two are compatible, and the latter was probably used to compose the former. Most of the former was read into the record during the Tesch Trial (TTD 1, pp. 182-184).

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[101] Diels interrogation, 22 Oct. 1945, microfilm publication M1270, roll 3.
[102] 17 Dec. 1945, PRO WO 309/294.
[103] Draper memo, 15 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/768.
[104] Major A. Gordon Hewson to Colonel Phillimore, 30 Nov. 1945, PRO WO 309/768.
[105] Kempner, 1963. Diels and Kempner had known each another long before the war.
[106] FO 1019/94, p. 36.
[107] PRO 309/626, pp. 105f.
[108] Diels statement, 5 Oct. 1945, copies in PRO WO 309/625, PRO WO 309/1602.
[109] Notes on a conversation between Lt. Col. N. Ashton Hill, Captain Frank and Dr R. Diels, 5 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1602.

There are a few points of interest in Diels's statements. The prosecution set great stock in his statement that there was general knowledge of gassing in Germany during the war. Diels, who made similar statements concerning the general knowledge of gassing a year later as well (Wallbaum, p. 244), focused on stories of euthanasia gassings. He claimed that it was general knowledge that Zyklon-B was used to gas insane people, mentioning a euthanasia center for killing with Zyklon-B located in Württemberg. Interestingly, there is a 1941 document mentioning the rumor of euthanasia gassings with hydrogen cyanide (NO-844), and rumors concerning gassings in Württemberg circulated in the press.[110]

Because of his opportunism and eagerness to please those in power, Diels's statements offer insight into the thinking of the War Crimes investigators. For instance, his statement notes that "It might well be that 'spotted fever' was also a term used as camouflage for gassing operations."[111] This was exactly the kind of simple-minded argument that War Crimes investigators were eager to put forward. Indeed, at the Tesch Trial the prosecution argued that the evidence of Broad and Bendel "put it beyond doubt" that the story of disinfestation was only "a cover and facade – a facade peculiarly dear to the mind of the SS" (TTD 7, p. 395). The prosecution applied this notion of a facade across the board, stating that "throughout that correspondence there is a duplicity to each word used. Either it is a genuine disinfection that the SS require, or it is the cover for the biggest murder one can imagine" (*ibid.*). While it is beyond the scope of this paper to examine each one of the trial documents in detail, it is clear that all of them concern disinfestation. Diels's statements relating Tesch to the euthanasia program also reflect the investigation's thinking: on the basis of some details in a May 1945 report on euthanasia,[112] they seem to have convinced themselves that Tesch had delivered Zyklon for the purpose of euthanasia gassings.[113]

Meanwhile at Nuremberg, the defense wanted Diels to testify, but the prosecution insisted that he could not appear (4 March 1946, *IMT*, Vol. 8, pp. 527f.):

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[110] "Amerikanischer Beamter bestätigt Mauthausen-Verbrechen", *Aufbau* 12 June 1942; "Nazis Use Jewish War Prisoners as Guinea Pigs for Poison Gas Experiments", *JTA* 18 June 1942.

[111] Diels statement, 5 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1602.

[112] UN War Crimes Commission, Summary of Information No. 24: The Instructional Staff of the Death Camps, copy in PRO WO 309/1603.

[113] Dr. Bruno TESCH and The "GIFTGAS" Case, section 44, PRO WO 309/1602.

"DR. PANNENBECKER: As witness Number 4 I have named Dr. Diels, who is now in an internment camp in the Hanover district. The witness was chief of the Gestapo in Prussia in 1933-1934. He is acquainted with the measures which the Defendant Frick, as Reich Minister of the Interior, decreed for the supervision of the provinces by the Reich, as well as about the concentration camps, and also, in particular, about measures taken in individual cases and about conditions in the camps.
SIR DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE: I submit that this witness' evidence should be taken in writing. With regard to the earlier part, the Tribunal will have the advantage of the Defendant Goring who was concerned especially with the practices of the police in Prussia in 1933 and 1934, and with regard to the other points, as to the measures of the Defendant Frick, these are either laws or orders or administrative measures, which could be included, in the submission of the Prosecution, as being dealt with by written testimony supplemented by testimony of the Defendant Frick, himself.
Dr. PANNENBECKER: I should like to say something to that. I believe that it would be more practical to hear the witness here before the Court. We can then have a talk with him beforehand and find out the points on which he has detailed information, whereas in an interrogatory these things could not be discussed in detail.
THE PRESIDENT: We will consider that."

They may have considered, but Diels never appeared before the court. It is evident that the authorities had no intention to allow him to testify, whether at the Tesch Trial, at Nuremberg, or anywhere else. They preferred to use him as an aid for their own preparations, while presenting his statements in affidavit form so that they could not be effectively challenged.

Meanwhile, Allied opinion on Diels remained split. One side held that Diels was "a useful asset and mine of information in which capacity we should prefer to have him as a free man."[114] The other thought that "It has become increasingly apparent that Dr Rudolf DIELS is a man whose liberty should in no circumstances be granted to him" and "it cannot be urged too strongly that his liberty would be a menace to the security of the occupation".[115] Ultimately, Diels was cleared of all potential charges and released. He had provided such "considerable assistance to the prosecuting authorities" at Nuremberg that Telford Taylor informed the British of Diels's impending return to their zone, and urged his favorable treatment.[116]

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[114] Letter of Major A.E.E. Reade, 15 April 1946, PRO WO 309/768.
[115] 4 May 1946 memo, PRO WO 309/294.
[116] 26 June 1947 memo, PRO WO 309/294.

3.3. The Hungarian Aktion and the Zyklon-B Supply to Auschwitz

In a December 1945 deposition, former DEGESCH managing director Gerhard Peters stated:[117]

> *"Sometime in 1944 a member of the SS from AUSCHWITZ concentration camp came to visit DEGESCH at FRANKFURT-on-MAIN FRIEDBERG and asked if we would supply some ZYKLON B direct to AUSCHWITZ as a transport of 250,000 Hungarian Jews was expected and they required material for disinfection owing to the danger of typhus breaking out. This request was refused as an agreement had already been reached that all orders for the Wehrmacht, including the SS, with effect from the end of 1943 or the beginning of 1944, would be made through HSP BERLIN."*

Peters repeated the story in a later affidavit,[118] adding that he had no suspicion that the requested delivery was for any purpose other than delousing. Peters's testimony demonstrates that the description of Zyklon as "material for the resettlement of Jews", is not at all suspicious or incriminating, but was commonplace and was correctly taken at face value.

3.4. Riga

Tesch and Stabenow was quite active in the Riga area. Tesch and Drosihn both taught courses in that locale, and gassing technician Johann Holst was employed there as well. That Tesch taught a course on (sanitary) gassing in late 1941 in Riga is now well known, and was mentioned repeatedly in pretrial interrogations and at the trial. However, Richard Breitman's discovery of intercepts[119] mentioning Tesch and Zyklon in this connection caused the historian to speculate wildly about plans for exterminating Jews with Zyklon in the eastern territories (Breitman, pp. 75-77). Responding to Breitman, Christian Gerlach to his credit recognized that the context is clearly that of sanitary rather than homicidal gassing (Gerlach, p. 651). Making arguments similar to Breitman's, Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein have argued that the plans to gas the eastern Jews were thwarted by the regulations concerning approval for the use of Zyklon-B.[120] In fact, Tesch

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[117] Deposition of Dr. Gerhard Peters, 11 Dec. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

[118] Peters 27 Oct. 1947, NI-12111, in microfilm publication M892 (IG Farben Trial), roll 33, pp. 1123ff.

[119] Intercepts 10 and 52 of 13 Nov. 1941, PRO HW 16/32.

[120] Angrick/Klein, p. 190. In the relevant footnote (n. 63) the authors also wrongly assert that the first name of TESTA gassing technician Johann Holst is unknown.

stated that from Riga he "went on towards the front for gassing",[121] and had there been the intention to gas Jews with Zyklon at that time and place, there would have been nothing to prevent the diversion of adequate quantities of Zyklon for that purpose, with or without the permission of the quartermaster.

Owing to TESTA's activities in the Riga area, there are a number of trial documents pertaining to that region. One of these is useful with respect to another more broadly referenced and much disputed document:[122]

> *"To: The General Kommissar, RIGA*
> *For the attention of Herr Dr. BOSSE,*
> *RIGA.*
> *Training of personnel only after delousing apparatus made ready and on availability of Zyklon and gassing apparatus …… possible(.) letter follows(.)"*

Unfortunately, the document exists only in English translation, at least as far as the files of the Tesch Trial are concerned. However, the phrase "gassing apparatus" is almost certainly a translation of "Vergasungsapparat", which recalls the well-known use of that term's plural in Nuremberg Document NO-365. The reference in that document has been variously interpreted by orthodox holocaust historians as a reference to stationary gas chambers (Longerich, pp. 279f.) or as a reference to the use of gas vans (Browning, pp. 367f.). The fact that the term *Vergasungsapparat* was indeed used in Riga in the context of delousing sheds light on the proper interpretation of this document. This applies regardless of the authenticity of the document, as an inauthentic document is likely to have been constructed from modified authentic materials, from which the term *Vergasungsapparat* would have been obtained.

Another Riga-related Tesch Trial document mentions that "The large chamber of 120 cbm and the small one of 30 cbm should be kept out of the two chambers provided for mobile disinfestations etc."[123] Again we are lacking a German original, and the translation is quite puzzling and perhaps incorrect, but one important aspect emerges, namely that chambers for mobile disinfestation, presumably vehicular, were in use in the Riga

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[121] Tesch interrogation, 26 Sept. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

[122] Exhibit JA, telegram sent 16 Nov. 1942, PRO WO 309/1603. The omissions indicate portions of the document which were illegible due to charring. TESTA suffered heavily under the air raids on Hamburg, and many of the surviving documents had been partially burned. Some of these original charred documents are still available in the files, but many have gone missing.

[123] Exhibit JD, April 1942 letter to DEGESCH, PRO WO 309/1603.

area. The existence of such devices likely contributed to reports of homicidal gas vans in this region.

3.5. Gassing Technicians as Witnesses

The TESTA gassing technicians offer an interesting, if marginal, class of witness. A number of them had visited concentration camps. However, most of the visits were early in the war, before the alleged homicidal gassings had begun, and before the SS had trained enough of its own personnel to carry out their own gassing operations. Thus, for example, we have the account of Hans Willy Max Rieck, who visited Auschwitz in early summer 1941 to carry out a gassing, as there was a typhus epidemic underway in the camp at the time. Naturally, he reported that there were no gas chambers in the camp, although he had heard that Berlin had approved the construction of gas chambers in Auschwitz (obviously delousing chambers were meant). He had not heard of homicidal gassings until the occupation.[124] His fellow gassing technician Johannes Mueller, who accompanied him on the visit to Auschwitz, confirmed his story.[125]

A notable exception is the gassing technician Edmund Josef Marso who visited Stutthof in November 1944, at a time when homicidal gassings were supposedly going on.[126] Marso, however, stated that he had not heard anything about homicidal gassing in Stutthof, and indeed that he had first heard about homicidal gassings in concentration camps through the English radio. He also mentioned that there was an epidemic of spotted fever when he was in the camp, and that he had seen some 20 bodies lying near the crematorium, which the SS sergeant accompanying him had told him were victims of the typhus epidemic, and were to be cremated.[127] Marso's account also confirms that the Stutthof gas chamber was still being used for delousing during the period in which it was supposedly used for homicidal gassing.

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[124] Summary of evidence of Hans Willy Max Rieck, 22 Oct. 1945, copies in PRO WO 309/1602, 1603.

[125] Summary of evidence of Johannes Mueller, 24 Oct. 1945, copies in PRO WO 309/1602, 1603.

[126] For a discussion of the alleged homicidal gassings at Stutthof, see Mattogno/Graf 2016.

[127] Summary of examination of Edmund Josef Marso, 22 Oct. 1945, copies in PRO WO 309/1602, 1603. The topic of the bodies which Marso saw was probably brought up by the interrogator on the basis of a what had been heard in the interrogations of Holst and Kock, see Holst interrogation, 19 Oct. 1945, p. 3; Kock interrogation, 20 Oct. 1945, p. 2, both interrogations in PRO WO 309/1603.

3.6. Fred Pelican's Memoirs

In 1993, Fred Pelican published his memoirs, titled *From Dachau to Dunkirk,* with a dedication "to the six million who perished in the gas chambers." A Jewish refugee in Great Britain, he had been assigned to work as a war-crime investigator, and had participated in the preparations for the Tesch Trial. The account which he gave in his memoirs, however, is a pack of lies.

According to Pelican, a man whom he calls "Schneider" came forward to denounce Tesch.[128] In Pelican's portrayal, "Schneider" is a composite of Sehm and Zaun. Like Sehm, he denounced Tesch. Like Zaun, he remained with the firm throughout the war, and was to be put in charge of TESTA (Pelican calls it "Chemical Industries", p. 174) by the British after Tesch and Weinbacher's arrest. Pelican relates how "Schneider" informed the war crimes investigators of the progress from the first gases "developed for extermination purposes," which "made the victims scream to heaven." One of these techniques was a sort of gas van which operated (somehow) by throwing a gas canister inside. The drive for efficiency led to the creation of stationary gas chambers in the camp showers. The Jews, eager for a shower, would crowd inside by the hundreds, although there were actually only a dozen or so showers. Gas canisters thrown in through a hole in the roof would finish the job (pp. 172f.).

Pelican's unreliability extends beyond his invention of the Sehm-Zaun composite "Schneider". He states that "Captain Freud understood a certain amount of German" and that he, Pelican, gave Freud English translations of Schneider's words (p. 173). Freud, who grew up in Austria and was capable of carrying out interrogations in German, was certainly not in need of such translations. Likewise, Pelican's assertion that Tesch was given an honorary rank of *SS-Gruppenführer* (p. 179) is pure invention. Given his penchant for conflation, it is conceivable that Pelican associated Tesch with Rudolf Diels, who did receive an honorary rank of *SS-Standartenführer.*

Nevertheless, Pelican accurately relates some details of "Schneider's" (really Sehm's) story, noting (p. 173):

> *"He* ["Schneider"] *carried on to give us another detail of extermination methods. The gas was manufactured in tablet form. While the prisoners were asleep, a number of tablets would be placed in the corner of each*

[128] Pelican, p. 171; subsequent page number in text from there.

quarter, which ejected a vapour of gas. Windows and doors were sealed, and in a comparatively short time not a single person would be left alive."

Intriguingly, Pelican states that the British Military Authorities were most unhappy that Tesch and Stabenow had been shut down, as they were in need of the company's continued services.[129] Accordingly, he states, Anton Freud suggested that Herr Schneider be put in charge of the company (p. 176). This is at least partially based on fact: Zaun was indeed made TESTA's acting manager.[130]

Pelican proceeds to narrate a meeting between "Schneider" and Tesch, which he says took place in connection with the transfer of the company to Schneider's control. This meeting, between Zaun and Tesch, did indeed take place. It is the meeting which the investigative team attempted unsuccessfully to bug, as discussed in the section "The Theft of Tesch's Property". That Pelican was present can be confirmed from a letter written by the custodian attempting to recover Tesch's property, which states that "[Tesch's property was] taken from Dr. Tesch and Mr. Zaun upon orders and in the presence of Col Ashton-Hill, Capt. Freud and Staff-Sergeant Pelican of the War Crimes Investigation Team".[131] The account which Pelican gives of this meeting, however, is at the very least heavily embellished with fantasy, if not completely fraudulent. Pelican accurately narrates the plan, involving him being called out of the room on the pretense of a phone call, allowing Tesch and Zaun to talk in imagined privacy. According to Pelican, however, the bugging of the conversation was successful. His account is worth quoting at length so as to demonstrate the extent of his mendacity. He writes:[132]

"I went into the interviewing office, and sat on the chair as the two men walked in, facing each other. Dr Tesch for a moment appeared stunned to see his ex-employee looking at him. 'Dr Tesch,' I said, 'in view of your being detained, we have authorized Herr Schneider to run your business until such time as you will be able to return and carry on yourself. He requires

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[129] *Ibid.*, p. 175. This may be true. Certainly, the German authorities testified to the critical importance of TESTA's hygienic services right up to shortly before the German surrender, and such activities would have remained essential under the British occupation. If true, this fact would have a bitter irony: at the Tesch Trial, the urgent German calls for the support of TESTA's hygienic work were used, under a "coded language" theory ("sanitation" is code for "extermination of the Jews"), as proof of TESTA's participation in a program of mass homicidal gassing.

[130] Certificate signed by Zaun as acting manager, 30 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1602.

[131] T.A. Lohmann to War Crimes Investigation Section, Hamburg, 15 April 1948, PRO WO 309/1602.

[132] Pelican, pp. 183-188. Bracketed translations of German text in original.

certain powers which only you can grant. I must ask you both to confine your conversation solely to business matters, any other discussion will not be tolerated. I would like you to discuss your business on a basis of understanding and without animosity. Please commence.'

Schneider began by informing Dr Tesch that he had been approached by the authorities to run the establishment. However, obstacles had made it difficult, particularly the financial aspect, paying wages, rent, rates, etc. Unless powers of attorney were granted to him, he was sorry to say the business would fold.

At that precise moment, there was a knock at the door. 'Yes, come in,' I called.

'Staff Sergeant Pelican, you are wanted on the telephone.'

I got up and left the room. Casually, I walked down the corridor and entered the room where the rest of our staff were present. The moment I entered, they signalled for me to be quiet. I heard the voices of Dr Tesch and Schneider coming over the loudspeaker, loud and clear. The conversation between the two of them gave me one of the biggest shocks of my life. I just could not believe what I was hearing. Everyone around me was just as shocked as I was, with the exception of Colonel Nightingale. For a moment, I had to pinch myself to make sure my senses were in working order.

The moment I left the room, Dr. Tesch started appealing to Schneider to keep his mouth shut. 'Have you signed anything?' he enquired. 'I'll make sure, Schneider, that you will be fixed up for the rest of your life, you'll never be short of anything. Of course, I'll sign the power of attorney and grant you full control without question. I will only emphasise once again, keep your mouth shut, you don't know anything, you hear me, Schneider? I ask you again, have you signed any form of statement?'

We sat or stood around absolutely motionless, one could hear a pin drop, the unthinkable was yet to come. Schneider suddenly burst out, 'Who the hell do you take me for? I expected you to know me better, having known me for many years. Do you really believe I would disclose anything to those British bastards, englische Schweinehunde, look what they have done to our beautiful city, murdered hundreds of thousands of our people, die viele Frauen und Kinder [the many women and children]. Dr. Tesch, whatever bullshit I may have disclosed, I have signed nothing, absolutely nothing, I swear, Dr. Tesch.'

'Go back, Staff Sergeant,' the CO ordered.

I walked back to the room, and the moment I entered, the conversation reverted to the discussion of financial arrangements, powers of attorney, rent, rates, wages and lots of other details of that nature. They acted quite calmly, the only one not at all calm was me, my head was buzzing, I hardly

took any notice of the two archangels. A good five minutes passed, then came another knock at the door. 'Come in,' I called out.
'You are wanted.'
I got up, however this time I didn't just walk down the corridor, I literally flew down in order not to miss a single word.
The conversation between them continued along the same lines as before, growing in ferocity. Schneider pointed that one of the 'Geheimdienst Offiziere ist ein Judenjunge [one of the secret service officers is a Jewboy].' Of course he meant Captain Freud. Apparently, Dr Tesch wrote a brief note for his wife who lived in a villa somewhere in the suburbs. 'Schneider,' he said, 'give this note to my wife, not tomorrow, tonight at whatever time, however late it may be. This is for yourself, put it away and this you can keep as a memento. I beg you, Schneider, keep your mouth shut and don't sign anything,' Dr Tesch said again.
'Herr Doctor, disclosing anything to those devious British murderers would be like stabbing my brother. Ich schwöre hoch und heilig [I swear high and holy] those British bastards get nothing, absolutely nothing out of me, I'll see them in hell first, they are not human beings, Schweine, Schweine, Herr Doktor.'
The CO ordered me to go back and break up the meeting, ensuring Schneider had obtained power of attorney. The officers arranged for Dr Tesch to be taken back to prison. The typists feverishly typed every word taken down in shorthand in German and English. When they had finished, I checked it word for word, ensuring nothing had escaped them. I was told to tell Schneider that the CO wanted to see him regarding the power of attorney.
[…] *Schneider was waiting outside in the lonely atmosphere of a long corridor. I went to the door, and called him in. He hardly looked ruffled or disturbed.*
'Come in, please, and take a seat, Mr Schneider,' the colonel said. 'How did you get on with Dr Tesch?'
'First class, Sir.' He took from his breast pocket some papers and waved them in the air. 'I have got everything I required, the military authorities can now rest assured, all problems are solved, the firm will run properly to their full satisfaction.'
'Well done, Mr Schneider,' the colonel exclaimed, 'I am delighted, may I on behalf of myself and the British authorities thank you most profoundly for a job well done, you have managed to overcome a great dilemma most efficiently.'
Schneider was beaming with satisfaction, courteous and friendly, his usual persona. 'Tell me,' the colonel continued, 'did Dr Tesch mention anything as to his detention?'

'Sir,' Schneider replied, 'I made absolutely sure that in accordance with the preliminary instructions by Staff Sergeant Pelican, our conversation was strictly confined to business matters only.'

Since the interview was conducted in English, I stood next to the colonel, here and there helping out with the odd word Schneider had difficulties with.

'Schneider,' the colonel continued, 'I find it hard to comprehend that not a single word was mentioned as to him being held in prison, are you absolutely sure nothing whatsoever was mentioned?'

'Sir,' he replied, 'first of all, the Staff Sergeant was present during our conversation, you can ask him, and during short breaks when he was out, I can assure you, had he mentioned a single word other than business, I would have broken up the meeting immediately.'

To Schneider, the colonel gave the appearance of being satisfied with his assurances. 'Did Dr Tesch give you anything?' the colonel asked.

'Sir,' Schneider replied, 'I beg of you, do you actually believe I would accept anything from such a person, a monster, who was instrumental in the killings of masses of innocent people, his hands soaked in blood?'

'Is our driver still about?' the colonel enquired.

'Yes, Sir, I believe he is downstairs,' I replied.

'Call him,' the colonel ordered. Within minutes, the driver came up. 'Herr Schneider, would you kindly wait outside? Don't worry, we'll take you home later.'

As Schneider went outside, the colonel instructed our driver to keep an eye on him. Back in the office, the colonel asked what I had to say of the affair so far. 'Sir,' I said, 'I am absolutely flabbergasted, I can hardly believe what I have heard.'

'He is a two-faced bastard,' the colonel exclaimed. 'I'll make sure he will not leave this building until we get a word-by-word admission that corresponds with the wording in front of us, otherwise it may give an impression of us having fabricated the entire episode, in other words a put-up job.'

Looking at the colonel, I asked him whether he would allow me to make a suggestion. 'Sir, you conducted the interrogation in English because Schneider is quite good at the language,' I said. 'In order to eliminate any misunderstanding and to make absolutely sure no excuse can arise in one form or another, would you mind if I asked him very briefly the very same questions, this time in unmistakable German.'

'Go right ahead, Freddie.' (This was another of the rare occasions when he called me by my first name.)

I went to the door, calling out loud and clear, 'Come in, Schneider.' I walked towards him, stopping half-way from the colonel's desk. I got as

close to him as possible, the distance between our faces being no more than perhaps six inches. I started by telling him that I requested a big favour.
'What is it?' Schneider asked.
'My Colonel is a person of high repute, he, as well as the other officers and myself, have treated you most kindly, above all grateful to you for passing on to us unsolicited information regarding Dr Tesch. You wrote to us, we didn't write to you. The favour I ask of you is, don't keep on telling the colonel a pack of bloody lies.' All this I put to him in a subdued voice.
'Sir, what the heck is he talking about?' he almost shouted out.
I grabbed him by the arm a bit forcefully. 'You are now talking to me, you hear,' I screamed. 'I ask you once and once only, what did Dr Tesch give you?' I put more pressure on his arm.
'Nothing,' he said in a loud voice.
The split second he said nothing, I started tearing the clothes from his body, ripping off his jacket, trousers and underwear. He stood there almost naked, shaking like a leaf, red-faced, glaring at me. The colonel watched, not a single word coming from him, as cool as I had ever seen him. I placed the jacket and trousers on the table and I pushed Schneider towards the table. Going through his pockets, I found a note, a reasonable amount of cash money and a gent's diamond ring with the initials BT (Bruno Tesch).
'Let him get dressed,' the colonel ordered. He got into his trousers and jacket, somewhat shattered.
'Now look here, Herr Schneider, I don't really know what you take us for. I asked you several times loud and clear whether Dr Tesch passed anything on to you, you were lying, why should you tell me lies?'
'Sir, I assure you it was a misunderstanding,' he pleaded.
'OK, Schneider,' the colonel replied, 'we must have both misunderstood you. I am prepared to accept it. Now, I want you to tell me what conversation took place apart from business matters.'
'No other conversation took place, Sir,' he replied.
'Are you sure?'
'Absolutely, Sir.'
At that precise moment, the colonel put the voice-recording machine into operation. When Schneider heard his own voice, suddenly his body stiffened, he fainted and fell backwards before I had time to grab him. He hit the floor with the back of his head, bleeding profusely. I called out to the driver, we picked him up and washed the blood away and revived him.
He then made a full confession which he duly signed."

Aspects of this story, though misrepresented, are based on actual events, such as the turning-over of property to Zaun. Viewed as a whole, however,

Pelican's story is an enormous fabrication. The bugging was unsuccessful, so the claims concerning the overheard conversation are inventions. Zaun did not sign a "full confession", and naturally all the details predicated on the identification of Sehm with Zaun are untrue. False as well is the claim that Tesch gave his blessing to Zaun's leadership of the firm. In his interrogation the next day, Tesch was asked why he opposed Zaun taking over the company, and gave the answer that Zaun lacked technical expertise with gassing.[133]

Pelican proceeds to claim that Tesch gave "Schneider" instructions to his wife to destroy incriminating materials (p. 188):

> *"We examined the piece of paper which gave Dr Tesch's wife instructions what to burn or destroy immediately. It listed a large number of incriminating documents, a paperweight made from a Cyclon 'B' container prominently displayed on his desk at home, various other articles, books of a particularly unpleasant nature in the sphere of Nordic puritanism and Aryan philosophy, outrageous publications on subjects like the sterilisation of the mentally ill, racial hygiene, the euthanasia programme and many other pieces of Nazi literature."*

As we have already seen, Tesch was interrogated the day after the meeting with Zaun about whether he gave any such instructions to his wife, and he denied it. The total silence of the trial documents concerning the interception of such a piece of paper clearly indicates that Pelican is fantasizing again, turning the investigative team's suspicions into reality.

According to Pelican's narrative, the investigators then proceeded to the Tesch residence and, finding it locked and unoccupied, entered with the help of a locksmith. It was full of luxury items, he reports, and he found "a diary belonging to Dr Tesch and an undeveloped film" (p. 189).

The receipt of Tesch's property does record a 1945 diary of Tesch's, so it is possible that such was confiscated from his house.[134] On the other hand, in Pelican's account the diary was a record of Tesch's amorous affairs, including diary entries recording Tesch's encounters with various women (Ruth, Gertrud, Paula, Hilde), and recording Tesch's measurement of the precise angle (in degrees) of his erection, which varied from woman to woman (p. 189). The film, he claims, proved to contain naked pictures of Tesch and his wife (pp. 190f.). All of this is evidently another case of conflation, and probably fantasy as well. Drosihn admitted at the trial to

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[133] Tesch interrogation, 24 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1603.

[134] Receipt, 23 Jan. 1946, PRO WO 309/1602. As discussed above, the authenticity of this document is questionable.

keeping naked pictures of himself and his wife, and to having kept a diary which was, in Major Draper's words, "full of revolting details."[135]

For the sake of completeness, we should mention that there is another roll of film mentioned in trial documents that may be confused here. It is recorded that nine photos were confiscated from the house of Joachim Drosihn on the occasion of his arrest.[136] Some film was preserved in the trial files (Figure 3), which contains nine gas-related photos, setting aside the baby pictures and the photo of a ship. Presumably these are identical to those taken from Drosihn's house. It's hard to see how these could be seen as evidence of anything, aside from the fact that the investigation team was somewhat gas-mad.

Pelican also proudly recounts that he stole a good deal of Tesch's property and sent it to a nearby DP camp, and stole some books for himself (p. 189). This may not have been all that he stole. Earlier in his book he reports having become quite wealthy while working for the occupying British forces, to the point of occasioning comment (pp. 122f.). Given the none-too-ample British pay scale for lower-ranking men, his wealth was likely the result of looting. It would be no surprise if it were he who stole Tesch's property. As was already shown, he was the only lower-ranking (hence poorer) man involved in confiscation of Tesch's property. If "H.B. Bursar" is indeed an invention, as seems likely, then Pelican is certainly the leading suspect in the theft.

Pelican's biography ends on a melancholy note. After commemorating the six million gassed Jews (p. 195), and lamenting the too-early shutdown of the war-crimes trials, he notes mournfully that the accused have a right to legal defense, with the result that witnesses face an "ordeal" and the case may end in an "abyss". Accordingly, he objects to modern war-crimes trials as bad-for-the-Jews (p. 198):

> *"Personally, I would not be in favour of any trial taking place in this country. It would not be in the best interests of the Jewish population. Do we really need show trials playing into the hands of neo-Nazis and many other elements not particularly well disposed to us?"*

He does, however, recommend criminalization of Holocaust revisionism: "I would also most strongly recommend all Western countries and others to strengthen legislation to combat the resurgence of neo-Nazism, making the denial of the Holocaust a crime in distortion of history" (*ibid.*). It's no

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[135] TTD 4, p. 307. Draper used this material, which was mentioned as early as Tesch's October 24 interrogation, in order to impeach Drosihn's moral character and Christian faith.

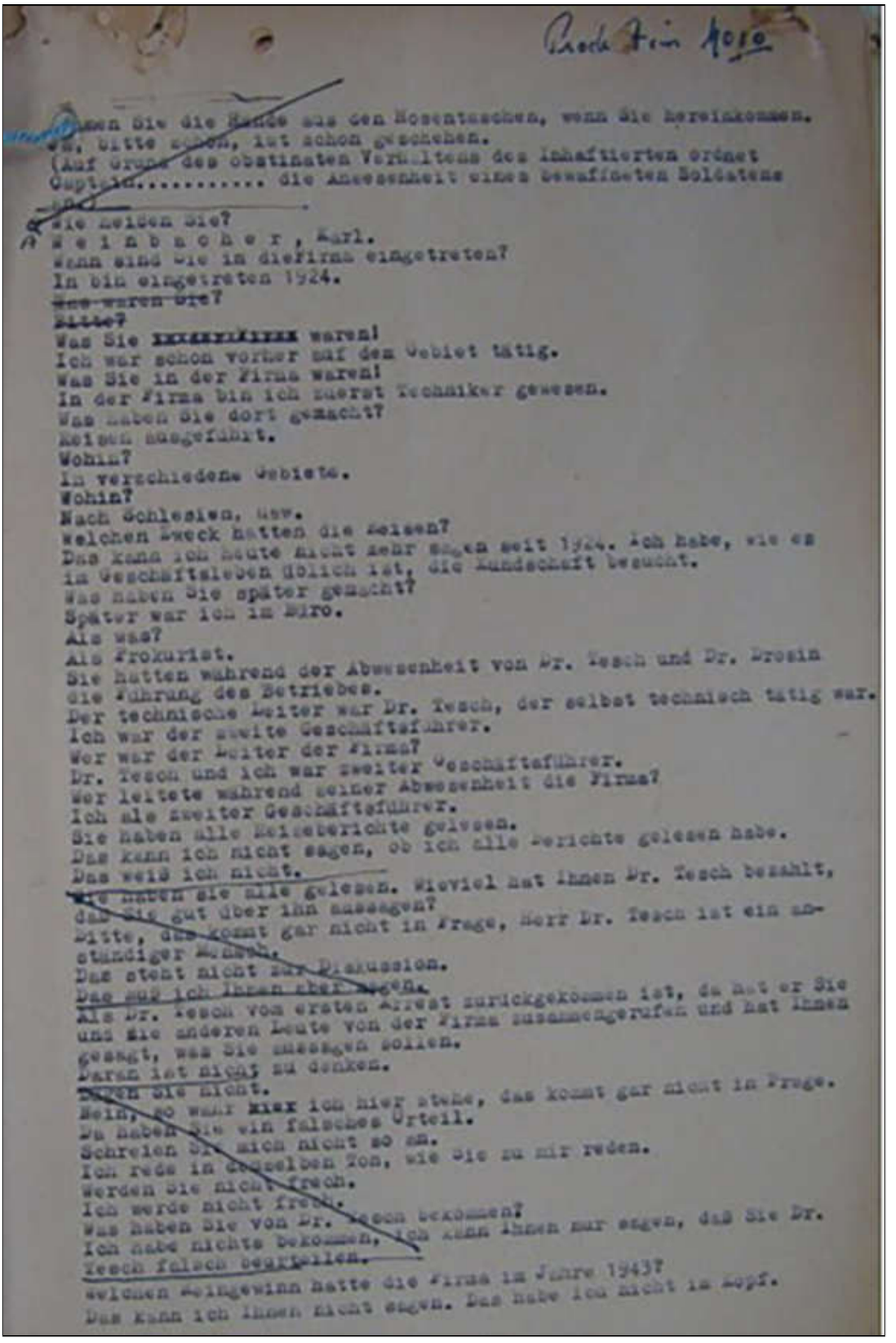
[136] Production 25, 27 Oct. 1945, PRO WO 309/1602.

wonder that a liar like Pelican would not want people to be able to question statements such as "In my family alone, more than forty perished in the gas ovens of Auschwitz and Treblinka" (*ibid.*), a figure which does not include his mother, who "escaped" from Auschwitz (pp. 155ff.).

4. Conclusion

What are the lessons of the Tesch Trial? The defendants' innocence of the charge brought against them is obvious, as is the absurdity of Emil Sehm's story which drove the entire investigation and trial. The trial is more enlightening as a window into how War Crimes investigations operated: into the incompetence and dishonesty, the manipulation of documents, the intimidation of witnesses, the suppression of contradictions. Only with this awareness will it be possible to adequately assess the evidence gathered in post-war trials, rather than using it as ammunition to bolster a set of predetermined conclusions.

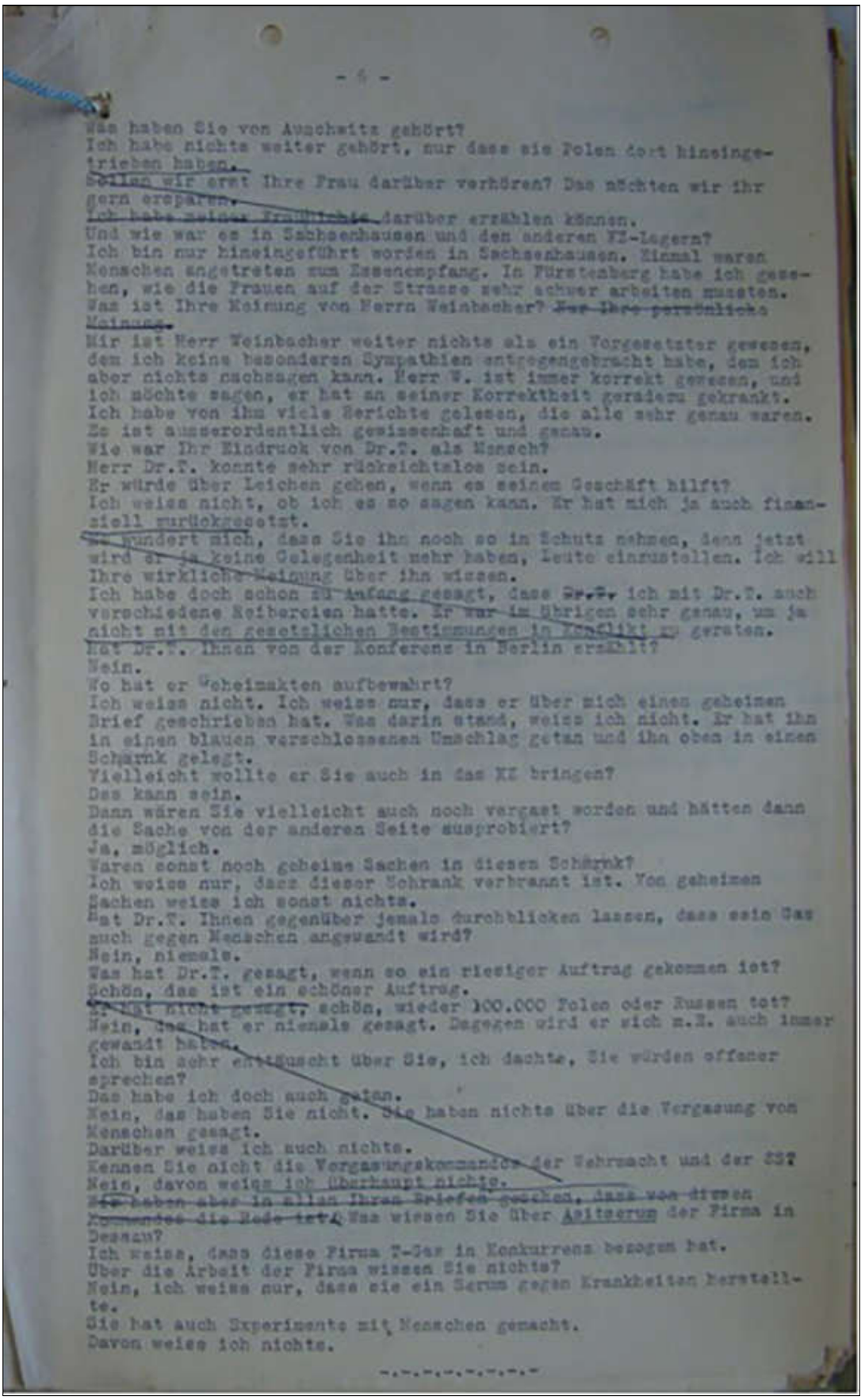
5. Figures



Rede Fein 4010

...men Sie die Hände aus den Rocktaschen, wenn Sie hereinkommen.
...n, bitte schön, ist schon geschehen.
(Auf Grund des obstinaten Verhaltens des Inhaftierten ordnet
Hauptm..... die Anwesenheit eines bewaffneten Soldaten
an.)
Wie heißen Sie?
W e i n b a c h e r , Karl.
Wann sind Sie in die Firma eingetreten?
Ich bin eingetreten 1924.
Wie waren ore?
Bitte?
Was Sie xxxxxxxxxx waren!
Ich war schon vorher auf dem Gebiet tätig.
Was Sie in der Firma waren!
In der Firma bin ich zuerst Techniker gewesen.
Was haben Sie dort gemacht?
Reisen ausgeführt.
Wohin?
In verschiedene Gebiete.
Wohin?
Nach Schlesien, usw.
Welchen Zweck hatten die Reisen?
Das kann ich heute nicht mehr sagen seit 1924. Ich habe, wie es
im Geschäftsleben üblich ist, die Kundschaft besucht.
Was haben Sie später gemacht?
Später war ich im Büro.
Als was?
Als Prokurist.
Sie hatten während der Abwesenheit von Dr. Tesch und Dr. Drosin
die Führung des Betriebes.
Der technische Leiter war Dr. Tesch, der selbst technisch tätig war.
Ich war der zweite Geschäftsführer.
Wer war der Leiter der Firma?
Dr. Tesch und ich war zweiter Geschäftsführer.
Wer leitete während seiner Abwesenheit die Firma?
Ich als zweiter Geschäftsführer.
Sie haben alle Reiseberichte gelesen.
Das kann ich nicht sagen, ob ich alle Berichte gelesen habe.
Das weiß ich nicht.
Sie haben sie alle gelesen. Wieviel hat Ihnen Dr. Tesch bezahlt,
daß Sie gut über ihn aussagen?
Bitte, das kommt gar nicht in Frage, Herr Dr. Tesch ist ein an-
ständiger Mensch.
Das steht nicht zur Diskussion.
Das sage ich Ihnen aber sagen.
Als Dr. Tesch vom ersten Arrest zurückgekommen ist, da hat er Sie
und die anderen Leute von der Firma zusammengerufen und hat Ihnen
gesagt, was Sie aussagen sollen.
Daran ist nicht zu denken.
Lügen Sie nicht.
Nein, so wahr xiex ich hier stehe, das kommt gar nicht in Frage.
Da haben Sie ein falsches Urteil.
Schreien Sie mich nicht so an.
Ich rede in demselben Ton, wie Sie zu mir reden.
Werden Sie nicht frech.
Ich werde nicht frech.
Was haben Sie von Dr. Tesch bekommen?
Ich habe nichts bekommen, ich kann Ihnen nur sagen, daß Sie Dr.
Tesch falsch begreifen.
Welchen Reingewinn hatte die Firma im Jahre 1943?
Das kann ich Ihnen nicht sagen. Das habe ich nicht im Kopf.

Figure 1: A page from the original transcript of Weinbacher's interrogation, showing passages to be excised.



- 6 -

Was haben Sie von Auschwitz gehört?
Ich habe nichts weiter gehört, nur dass sie Polen dort hineingetrieben haben.
Sollen wir erst Ihre Frau darüber verhören? Das möchten wir ihr gern ersparen.
Ich habe meine Frau nicht darüber erzählen können.
Und wie war es in Sachsenhausen und den anderen KZ-Lagern?
Ich bin nur hineingeführt worden in Sachsenhausen. Einmal waren Menschen angetreten zum Essenempfang. In Fürstenberg habe ich gesehen, wie die Frauen auf der Strasse sehr schwer arbeiten mussten.
Was ist Ihre Meinung von Herrn Weinbacher? Nur Ihre persönliche Meinung.
Mir ist Herr Weinbacher weiter nichts als ein Vorgesetzter gewesen, dem ich keine besonderen Sympathien entgegengebracht habe, den ich aber nichts nachsagen kann. Herr W. ist immer korrekt gewesen, und ich möchte sagen, er hat an seiner Korrektheit geradezu gekrankt.
Ich habe von ihm viele Berichte gelesen, die alle sehr genau waren.
Es ist ausserordentlich gewissenhaft und genau.
Wie war Ihr Eindruck von Dr.T. als Mensch?
Herr Dr.T. konnte sehr rücksichtslos sein.
Er würde über Leichen gehen, wenn es seinem Geschäft hilft?
Ich weiss nicht, ob ich es so sagen kann. Er hat mich ja auch finanziell zurückgesetzt.
Es wundert mich, dass Sie ihn noch so in Schutz nehmen, denn jetzt wird er ja keine Gelegenheit mehr haben, Leute einzustellen. Ich will Ihre wirkliche Meinung über ihn wissen.
Ich habe doch schon zu Anfang gesagt, dass Dr.T. ich mit Dr.T. auch verschiedene Reibereien hatte. Er war im übrigen sehr genau, um ja nicht mit den gesetzlichen Bestimmungen in Konflikt zu geraten.
Hat Dr.T. Ihnen von der Konferenz in Berlin erzählt?
Nein.
Wo hat er Geheimakten aufbewahrt?
Ich weiss nicht. Ich weiss nur, dass er über mich einen geheimen Brief geschrieben hat. Was darin stand, weiss ich nicht. Er hat ihn in einen blauen verschlossenen Umschlag getan und ihn oben in einen Schrank gelegt.
Vielleicht wollte er Sie auch in das KZ bringen?
Das kann sein.
Dann wären Sie vielleicht auch noch vergast worden und hätten dann die Sache von der anderen Seite ausprobiert?
Ja, möglich.
Waren sonst noch geheime Sachen in diesem Schrank?
Ich weiss nur, dass dieser Schrank verbrannt ist. Von geheimen Sachen weiss ich sonst nichts.
Hat Dr.T. Ihnen gegenüber jemals durchblicken lassen, dass sein Gas auch gegen Menschen angewandt wird?
Nein, niemals.
Was hat Dr.T. gesagt, wenn so ein riesiger Auftrag gekommen ist?
Schön, das ist ein schöner Auftrag.
Er hat nicht gesagt, schön, wieder 300.000 Polen oder Russen tot?
Nein, das hat er niemals gesagt. Dagegen wird er sich m.E. auch immer gewandt haben.
Ich bin sehr enttäuscht über Sie, ich dachte, Sie würden offener sprechen?
Das habe ich doch auch getan.
Nein, das haben Sie nicht. Sie haben nichts über die Vergasung von Menschen gesagt.
Darüber weiss ich auch nichts.
Kennen Sie nicht die Vergasungskommandos der Wehrmacht und der SS?
Nein, davon weiss ich überhaupt nichts.
Sie haben aber in allen Ihren Briefen gesehen, dass von diesen Kommandos die Rede ist?
Was wissen Sie über Ableserum der Firma in Dessau?
Ich weiss, dass diese Firma T-Gas in Konkurrenz bezogen hat.
Über die Arbeit der Firma wissen Sie nichts?
Nein, ich weiss nur, dass sie ein Serum gegen Krankheiten herstellte.
Sie hat auch Experimente mit Menschen gemacht.
Davon weiss ich nichts.

-.-.-.-.-.-.-.-

Figure 2: A page from the original transcript of Drosihn's interrogation, showing passages to be excised.

Figure 3: The Roll of Film

Appendices

The "*Gasstärke*" of Zyklon B

The documents collected in folder WO 309-1602 also provide definitive clarification of the issue of the "*Gasstärke*" ("gas strength," meaning concentration) of Zyklon B raised and misrepresented by Raul Hilberg in the pertinent passage of his *opus magnum* (Hilberg, Vol. III, p. 955):

> *"TESTA sold Zyklon in different concentrations. Invoices presented to municipal or industrial clients for fumigations of buildings were printed with columns headed C, D, E, and F, each denoting a category of potency and price. As explained in a letter to the Ostland, strength E was required for the eradication of specially resistant vermin, such as cockroaches, or for gassings in wooden barracks. The 'normal' preparation, D, was used to exterminate lice, mice, or rats in large, well-built structures containing furniture. Human organisms in gas chambers were killed with Zyklon B."*

In my critique of Hilberg's *opus magnum*, I provided adequate but incomplete answers (Mattogno 2021a, pp. 134f.), because at the time I did not have the documentation in the above-mentioned folder.

A British report summarizing the findings based on the documents seized from the Tesch & Stabenow Company explains the matter in the following terms:[347]

> *"The scale of strengths of Zyklon 'B' and the normal purpose for which these strengths were used are as follows:–*
> *Type 'A' – 1½ kilogrammes per 1,000 cbm*
> *Type 'B' – 2.4 kilogrammes per 1,000 cbm; for rats on ships*
> *Type 'C' – 4.8 kilogrammes per 1,000 cbm*
> *Type 'D' – 10 kilogrammes per 1,000 cbm; for gas* [fumigation] *chambers*
> *Type 'E' – 15 kilogrammes per 1,000 cbm; for barracks*

[347] TNA, WO309/1602, Report and Copies of Productions concerning Dr. Bruno Tesch and the "Giftgas" Case, p. 7.

Type 'F' – 20 kilogrammes per 1,000 cbm; for very windy places where no steps can be taken to make the room or building airtight.
It should be noted that Zyklon 'B' as such was of the same strength but the above scales were referred to when gassing operations were carried out."

The questioning of Karl Ruehmling, an "emergency-gassing expert" from the Tesch Company, provides further clarification in this regard:[348]

"Q. When you say 'Zyklon B', was there such a thing as Zyklon 'D', 'S', 'E'?
A. Zyklon 'B' was the gas, and the other letters mean the concentration power.
Q. The concentration power, how is that in respect of the other letters of alphabet? Is there less concentration as you go down the alphabet or vice versa?
A. 'D' is the ordinary gas, 1000 cubic millimetres used for 10 kilos. Gas 'E' is for 15 kilos.
Q. And what about 'F'?
A. That was twice as much as 'D', I think. 'G' was three times as much.
Q. As much as 'D'?
A. Yes.
Q. 'D' was the strongest?
A. No, the weakest.
Q. You have given me 15 for 'E'. You mean 5 don't you?
A. No; 'E' was 50% more than 'D'.
Q. Was anything else produced beyond 'G'?
A. No; that was the strongest.
Q. And what was the particular purpose in producing them in different strengths?
A. 'D' was used for those things which are killed easily, like rats and mice. 'E' was used in barrack rooms because they were not air-tight. 'F' was used in flour mills because the vermin are difficult to kill.
Q. And 'G'?
A. In between the floor where it is difficult to get.
Q. But 'E' was produced for barracks? Why do you have 'G' as well; would not 'E' suit the purpose?
A. Sometimes, if they were not particularly air-tight, with big air-holes, we used very concentrated gases.
Q. What then was the purpose of 'E'?
A. That gas has great penetration power, and with thin walls it penetrated fast, so therefore we had strong gases.

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[348] TNA, WO 309-1603. RECORD of the EVIDENCE of Karl Johannes Heinrich Rudolph RUEHMLING, 13 October 1945.

Q. Yes; but 'E' was used for barracks?
A. Yes.
Q. And in barracks they have cracks on the floor all the way down?
A. Yes.
Q. So 'E' was quite capable of clearing the floor?
A. Yes. Around the huts we put sand so the gas could not escape from underneath.
Q. And on what sort of occasions did you use 'G' in barracks as opposed to 'E'?
A. That occurred very seldom. We used 'G' only in the very worst cases.
Q. During the whole of your firm's gassing operations 'G' was very seldom used?
A. Very, very rarely.
Q. And normally for all concentration camps and barracks which you went to 'E' was used for clearing purposes: is that correct?
A. Yes; almost always 'E'.
Q. But although you say that 'E' was normally used in barracks – being second strength – if 'E' was used in an air-tight room, presumably it would be very powerful?
A. The result of disinfecting is very great in an air-tight room."

In order to plan a disinfestation gassing with Zyklon B and draw up the corresponding cost estimate, the Tesch Company adopted three determining criteria: calculating the volume of the rooms, their degree of airtightness (to what extent they could be made airtight), and the type of pest to be destroyed. On the basis of these, they determined the concentration of gas to be used (amount per cubic meter), and thus the amount of Zyklon B needed, which affected the price.

After each gassing, the Tesch Company filled out a "Fumigation Report," which was a pre-printed form containing the following entries:

1) Fumigation by means of:
2) vermin species:
3) Weather:
   Temperature: inside / outside
4) Execution a) Feeding by:
   b) Ventilation by:
5) Official inspection:
6) Total room size fumigated:
   a) with gas strength A: ..... cmb
   b) ″ ″ B: ..... cbm
   c) ″ ″ C: ..... cbm
   d) ″ ″ D: ..... cbm
   Total size: ..... cbm
7) Applied chemicals:
   Zyklon kg CN
   T-gas kg
   Aethylene oxide kg
   Tritox kg
8) Release:
   tentative:
   final:
9) Special remarks:

The form was accompanied by an "List of fumigated rooms," which was structured as follows (table split into two due to width):

#	Room Name	Room Size			
		cbm Gas Str. A	cbm Gas Str. B	cbm Gas Str. C	cbm Gas Str. D

Chemicals Used [kg]				Exposure Time	
Zyklon-CN	T-Gas	Aethylenoxyd	Tritox/Ventox	From	To

The documentation (WO 309-1602) contains an example of such a form relating to the disinfestation against "rats, roaches, bugs, lice" of a ship ("M. Sch. 'Oberhausen' des Sea-Transport-Officer, Hamburg") with "*Gas-stärke D*," for a total volume of 4,533 cubic meters, equivalent to 36 kg of Zyklon B (CN).

A cost estimate sent on February 16, 1945 by the Tesch Company "to the Stutthof Concentration Camp" expected the use of "*Gasstärke D*" for

13 Baracken (37,877 m³) and "*Gasstärke E*" for four barracks and one "chamber" (6,332 m³).[348]

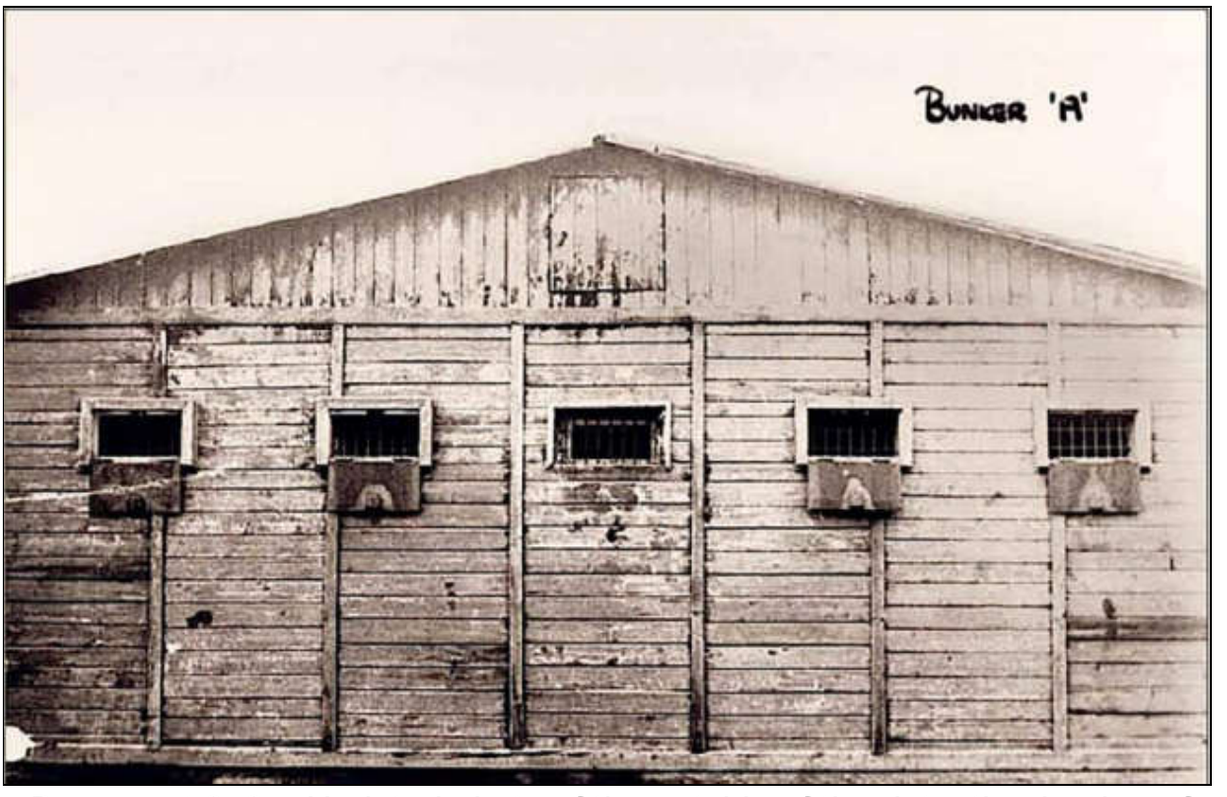
Other documents show that the "*Gasstärke*" also applied to the other types of gas distributed by the Tesch Company: T-GAS (ethylene oxide), TRITOX (tri-chloro-acetonitrile) and VENTOX (acryl nitrile). For example, another "fumigation report" dated September 22, 1945, concerns the disinfestation of living quarters and a rowing-club house with "Ventox," "*Gasstärke D*," totaling 71 kg.[349] A "fumigation certificate" concerning the "TRITOX fumigation" of a storage room records the use of "60 m³ with gas strength 'G' (3-fold)."[350]

[349] TNA, WO 309-1602. "Durchgasungs-Bericht über M. Sch. "Johann Hermann" des Schiffseigners H. Gerdesman, Haren/Ems, Nordstr. 68."

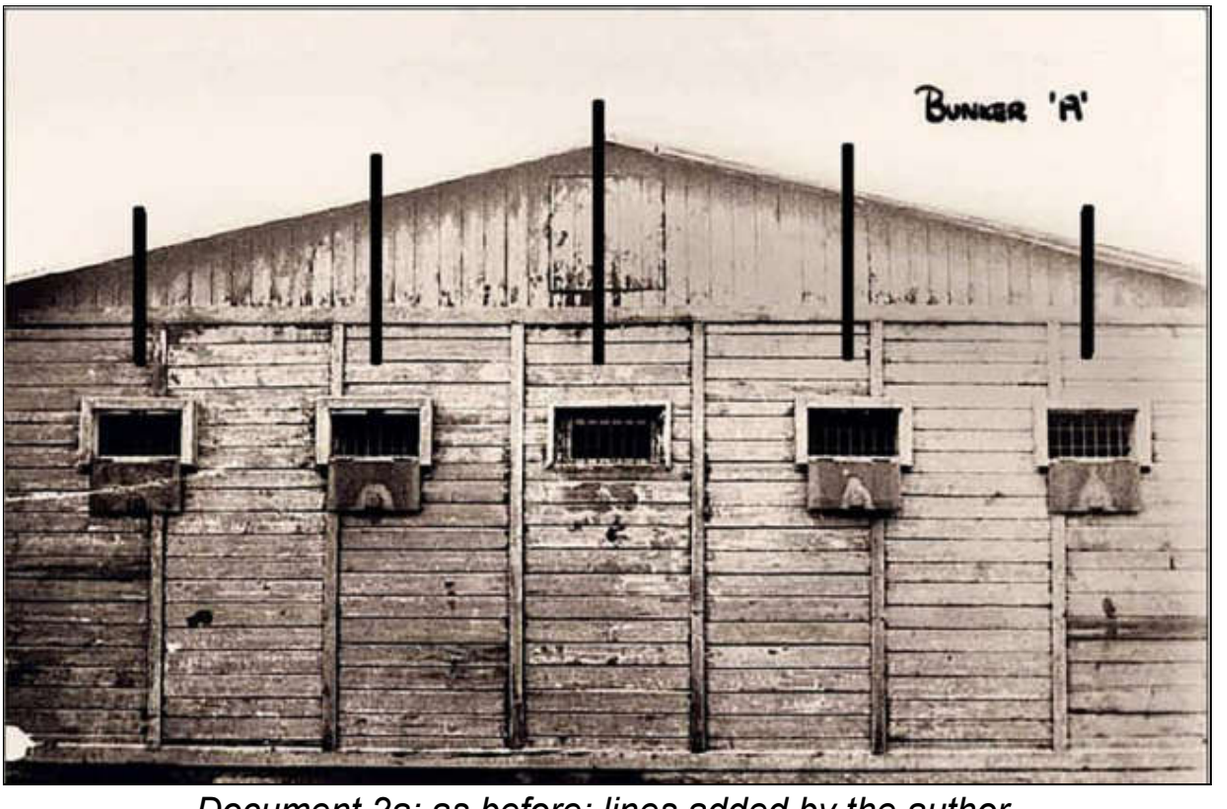
[350] TNA, WO 309-1602. Letter to "Firma Ohlen & Cons. (24) Hamburg 11 Catharinenstr. 50."

Documents

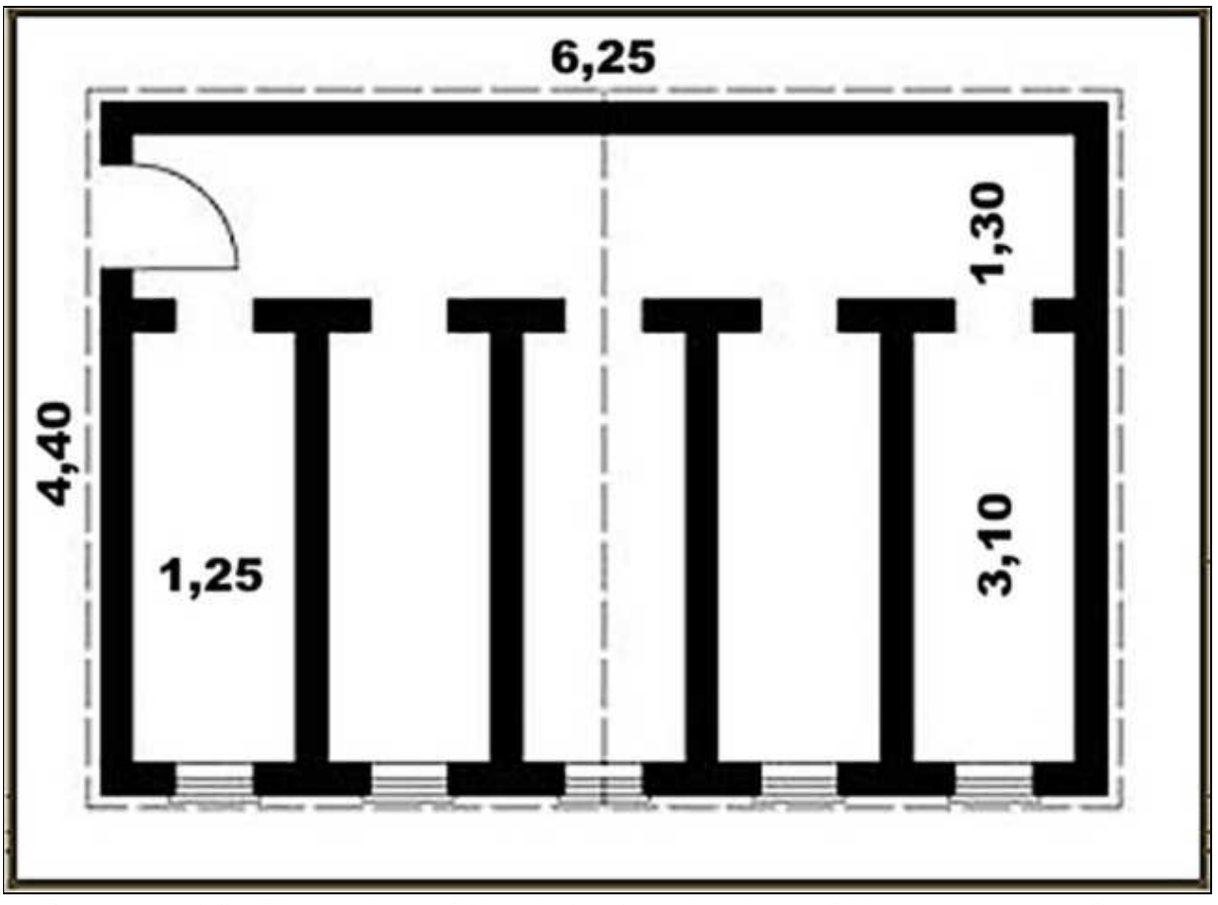
Document 1: Undated photo of the inside of the detention bunker of Neuengamme Camp. Source: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme*, PDF, online at http://neuengamme-ausstellungen.info/content/lagermodell/objekt45.html.*



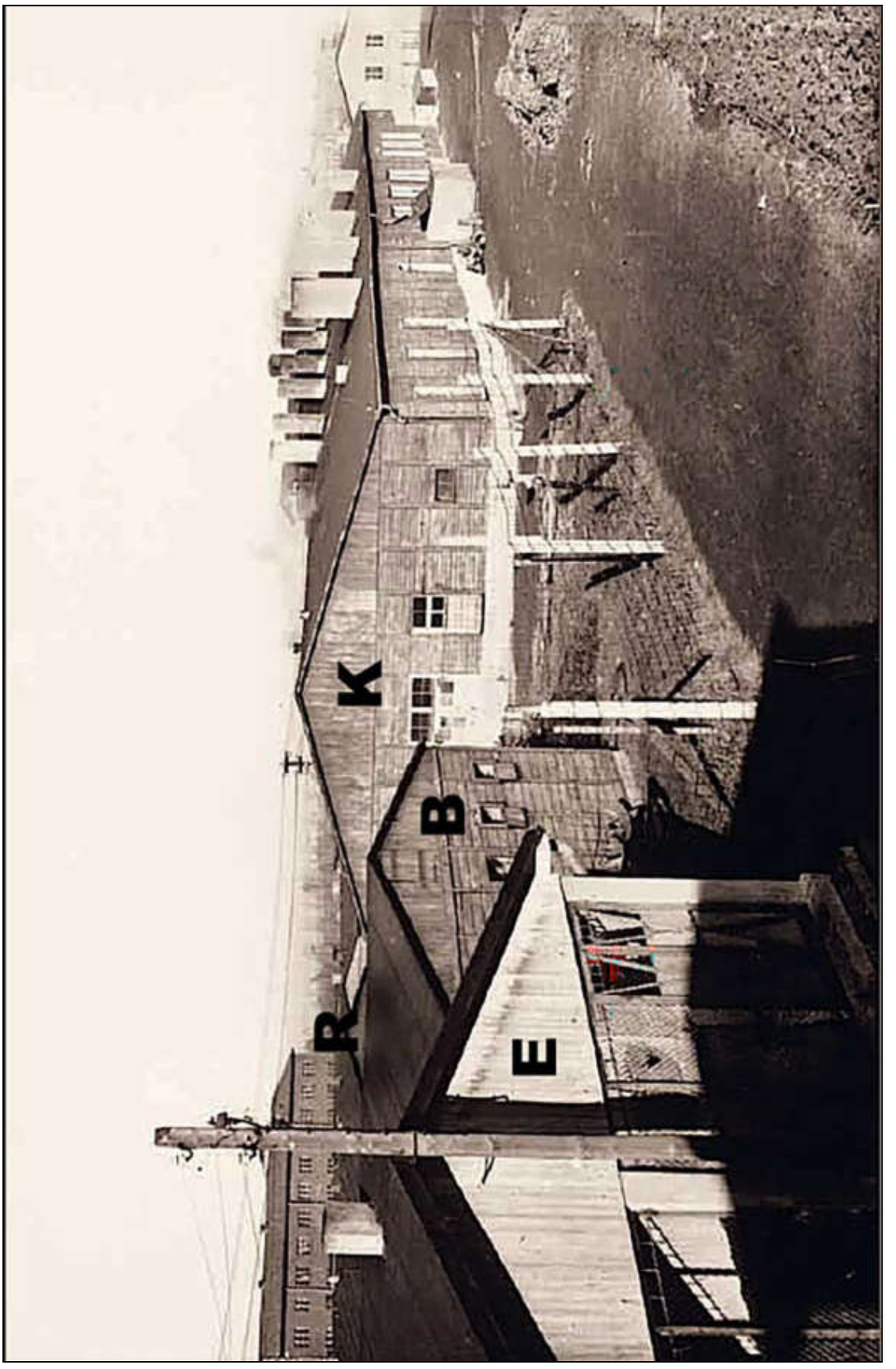
Document 2, 2a: Undated photo of the outside of the detention bunker of Neuengamme Camp, lateral view. Source: Die Zeugen der Anklage*. KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme, undated, p. 9.*



Document 2a: as before; lines added by the author.



Document 3: Floor plan of the detention bunker of Neuengamme Camp drawn by the Neuengamme Memorial. Measurements [in m] added by the author. Source: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme*, PDF, online at* [*http://neuengamme-ausstellungen.info/content/lagermodell/objekt45.html*](http://neuengamme-ausstellungen.info/content/lagermodell/objekt45.html)



Document 4: Undated photo showing a section of the bunker's front façade with cell windows (B), the front façade of the building containing the delousing chamber, the inmate bath and the mortuary (E), the façade of the kitchen (K) and the infirmary II (R). Source: Die Zeugen der Anklage*. KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme, undated, p. 9.*

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HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS · VOLUME 4

CONCENTRATION CAMP STUTTHOF

ITS HISTORY AND FUNCTION IN NATIONAL SOCIALIST JEWISH POLICY

BY JÜRGEN GRAF AND CARLO MATTOGNO

CONCENTRATION CAMP STUTTHOF

Concentration Camp

Stutthof

Its History & Function in National Socialist Jewish Policy

Jürgen Graf and Carlo Mattogno

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Cover Illustrations: Front: top: the Stutthof crematorium, rebuilt after the war; right: on the roof of the delousing chamber at Stutthof; Soviet photograph taken in 1945 (see Photo 12 in the Appendix); bottom: inside view of the Stutthof Zyklon B delousing chamber; left: detail of the blue discoloration on the outside wall of the Stutthof delousing chamber. Background: the Stutthof Memorial.

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Introduction

1. Stutthof Concentration Camp

On 2 September 1939 – the day after the beginning of the German military campaign against Poland – an internment camp for Polish detainees was opened in the village of Stutthof, 36 km east of the old German city Danzig in West Prussia (see map). Early in 1942, the status of the camp was changed from that of an internment camp to "Stutthof Concentration Camp." Prisoners were sent to Stutthof from many different countries throughout the sixty-eight months of its existence; these prisoners included a number of Soviet prisoners of war.

Dark gray: German territory after WWI.
Light gray: German territory annexed by Poland after WWI.
The area of Danzig (dashed line) was formally ruled by the League of Nations.

*The village Stutthof (West Prussia) is located on the "*Frisches Haff*," a freshwater lake separated from the Baltic Sea by a slender peninsula ("*Frische Nehrung*"). The entire German territory shown here was annexed by Poland after WWII – except for northern East Prussia, which was occupied by the Soviet Union. The almost-entirely German population of these areas was either killed or expelled, or they fled toward the end of the war.*

In 1944, what had previously been a relatively small camp population suddenly exploded, largely due to mass transports of Jewish inmates from the Baltic countries, Hungary, and Poland by way of Auschwitz. Prior to that time, there had been relatively few Jews in the camp. Stutthof was evacuated in January 1945, and was captured by the Soviet Army on 9 May 1945 as the last remaining National Socialist concentration camp. The camp held only about 150 inmates at that time, all the others having been evacuated

2. Stutthof in Polish and Western European Historiography

Literature on Stutthof that is of any scientific value exists only in Poland, where a larger number of books and articles have appeared on that topic. We will return to this Polish literature repeatedly in the present text, but, at this point, we draw the attention of the reader to the fact that this literature is heavily influenced by propaganda and is quite unreliable on decisive points.

The anthology *Stutthof – hitlerowksi obóz koncentracyjny*[1] was published in 1988, and is considered the official history of the camp; it has also been available in German translation since 1996.[2] The Stutthof Memorial Site also publishes a periodical bearing the title *Stutthof. Zeszyty Muzeum* (*Stutthof. Paper of the Museum*, hereafter referred to as *SZM*), although it is concerned only partially with events in the camp.

Polish historiography maintains that Stutthof became an ad hoc extermination camp for Jews in 1944. A summary of the orthodox version was published in 1967 in the periodical of the Jewish Historical Institute located in Warsaw:[3]

> *"In the spring and summer of 1944, the character of Stutthof changed fundamentally; it was no longer simply a concentration camp, but simultaneously an extermination camp for tens of thousands of Jews, especially Jewish women.* […] *The victorious offensive of the Soviet Army forced the Hitlerites to evacuate the concentration camp and prisons in the territory of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. In connection with this,*

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1 Interpress, Warsaw.

2 *Stutthof. Das Konzentrationslager*, Wydawnictwo Marpress, Danzig 1996. All quotations from the official camp report are taken from the above-mentioned German translation, not the Polish original.

3 Krysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, "Żydowscy Więźniowie KL Stutthof," in: *Biułetyn Zydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 1967, no. 63, p. 10.

> *various concentration camps such as Riga-Kaiserwald, Kaunas-Prosidniszki, and a few others, were dissolved in 1944. This led to a massive transfer of prisoners of Russian, Belo-Russians, Latvian, and Lithuanian nationality, as well as many thousands of Latvian, and Lithuanian Jews, to Stutthof. Furthermore, the liquidation of Hungarian Jews that was occurring at Auschwitz at that time exceeded the capacity of Auschwitz Camp. Thousands of Hungarian Jews were now sent to Stutthof and its subsidiary camps."*

According to the Polish historical literature, many – mostly Jewish – Stutthof inmates were murdered with poison gas beginning in June or July of 1944. This allegation is also contained in several works of western Holocaust literature; namely, the anthology *Nazi Mass Murder*[4] published by E. Kogon, H. Langbein, A. Rückerl among others, as well as the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*.[5]

And yet there are other historians – even among those who maintain the reality of a systematic extermination of Jews in the Third Reich – who make no claim of any extermination of human beings at Stutthof Concentration Camp. Raul Hilberg's 1300-page standard work on the Holocaust[6] mentions Stutthof briefly only four times, and makes no mention of any gas chamber for the extermination of human beings in that camp. Nor does Gerald Reitlinger, the author

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4 Yale University Press, New Haven 1993; all subsequent quotes from this work are from the German original *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas*, Fischer, Frankfurt/Main 1983.

5 Eberhard Jäckel, Peter Longerich, Julius H. Schoeps *et al.*, *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust. Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden.* 3 volumes, Argon Verlag, Berlin 1993; the 4-volume English original of this encyclopedia is way inferior to the better edited German edition, which is why we do not quote it here (Israel Gutman (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, Macmillan, New York 1990).

6 Raul Hilberg, *Die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden*, 3 volumes, Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1997; Engl.: *The Destruction of the European Jews*, 3 vols., Holmes and Meier, New York 1985. Hilberg distinguishes between three different types of National Socialist Concentration Camps: "Death camps" (Auschwitz, Treblinka, Belzec, Sobibor, Kulmhof and Lublin), "Camps with killing operations" (Poniatowa, Trawniki, Semlin), and "camps with numbers of victims in the area of a few tens of thousands or less." The third category, in his view, included Stutthof in addition to Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, Mauthausen, and Dachau (*ibid.*, p. 1,299). Hilberg thus expressly excludes Stutthof from the category of extermination camp – even an "ad hoc" one. See Jürgen Graf's critique of Hilberg's work: *The Giant with Feet of Clay*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2015; also C. Mattogno, *Raul Hilberg e i "centri di sterminio" nazionalsocialisti. Fonti e metodologia*, Rome 2008, www.vho.org/aaargh/fran/livres8/CMhilberg.pdf

of another Holocaust classic,[7] make any claim of homicidal gassings at Stutthof.

In this context, it is worth mentioning that Stutthof Concentration Camp was never even mentioned during the Nuremberg Trial.

The most-prolific Polish author on the Stutthof camp in Western literature is Marek Orski, who contributed the article about the Stutthof camp in the 1998 anthology *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*[8] and who ten years later elaborated on the same topic during the 2008 historical conference in Oranienburg, Germany,[9] although he did not add anything new of significance to the issue.[10]

The claims made in the orthodox western Holocaust literature on gassings at Stutthof are based on two kinds of sources: the relevant Polish historical literature, and court judgments in West German trials, based exclusively upon eyewitness reports. No western Holocaust scholar has ever made a serious study of Stutthof. This may be due, at least in part, to the fact that the camp is only alleged to have played a part in the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question" after mid-1944.

Among the revisionists, until now, only the American historian Mark Weber has made any effort to study Stutthof. Although his paper on the subject, which appeared in the *Journal of Historical Review* in 1997, is not based upon original documents, but rather upon the sparse literature available in western languages only, it is nevertheless of high quality. Weber mentions the extensive deportation of Baltic, Polish, and Hungarian Jews to Stutthof in 1944, and remarks:[11]

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7 Gerald Reitlinger, *Die Endlösung*, Colloquium Verlag, Berlin 1983; Engl.: *The Final Solution*, 2nd ed., Sphere Books, London 1971.

8 M. Orski, "Organisation und Ordnungsprinzipien des Lagers Stutthof", in: Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, Christoph Dieckmann (eds.), *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager. Entwicklung und Struktur*, Wallstein Verlag, Göttingen, 1998, vol. I., pp. 285-308.

9 M. Orski, "Die Vernichtung von Häftlingen des Konzentrationslagers Stutthof durch das Giftgas Zyklon B," in: Günter Morsch, Betrand Perz, Astrid Ley (eds.), *Neue Studien zu nationalsozialistischen Massentötungen durch Giftgas. Historische Bedeutung, technische Entwicklung, revisionistische Leugnung*, Metropol, Berlin 2011, pp. 294-303.

10 See the analysis by Carlo Mattogno, *Inside the Gas Chambers*, The Barnes Review, Washington, D.C., 2014, pp. 201-206.

11 Mark Weber, "An Important but Little-known Wartime Camp: Stutthof" in: *Journal of Historical Review*, volume 16, no. 5, September/October 1997, p. 2.

"These transfers to Stutthof are difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile with a German policy to annihilate Europe's Jews. If there had been such an extermination policy, it is particularly difficult to understand why Jews from the Baltic region – all of whom were supposedly doomed – were evacuated on Germany's overtaxed transportation system instead of being killed on the spot. The fact that many of the Jews evacuated by the Germans from the Baltic area to Stutthof were unemployable children is particularly difficult to reconcile with a general extermination policy."

3. The Objective of the Present Study

The point of departure for our study consisted of a visit to Stutthof in very late June and early July 1997; as well as visiting the camp itself, we viewed a considerable quantity of documentation in the archives. We acquired additional important material on Stutthof Camp during a trip to Poland in March 1999. Since the history of the camp is largely undisputed up to 1944 – the time of the large-scale Jewish deportations – the principal focus of our investigation revolved around three points:

- the alleged gassings of inmates (primarily Jewish);
- the total number of persons who died in the camp;
- the conclusions to be drawn regarding wartime National Socialist Jewish policy from the mass deportations of Jews which occurred in 1944.

The clarification of these three questions – which are closely related – formed the real object of our study. That it also provides a survey of the history of a camp known in the West almost by name only may be viewed as an additional result of the present study.

April 28, 1999
Jürgen Graf
Carlo Mattogno

Since the publication of this work, the historiographic landscape of the Stutthof camp has remained virtually unchanged. None of the new contributions, which are rather poor in quality, has significantly increased our understanding of fundamental issues that we investigated for the first edition of the present book. Apart from some obviously needed minor revisions and corrections, we have therefore found it unnecessary to make major changes in this new edition, alt-

hough we did enhance and expand the documentation in the Appendix.

May 9, 2012
Jürgen Graf
Carlo Mattogno

CHAPTER I:
An Overview of the History of Stutthof Camp

1. The Period from September 1939 to February 1942

As described in an earlier book,[12] wartime National Socialist concentration camps served primarily two purposes: they performed an internal security function through the internment of actual or potential opponents of National Socialism, and they acquired increasing significance for the war effort at a time when increasing numbers of Germans were being called up for military service, causing a serious manpower shortage in the Reich.

Stutthof Camp was created, at least initially, for the first of the two factors mentioned. The present study intends to provide a brief description of the camp. It is based, in particular, on a paper by Polish historian Miroslaw Gliński, which was published in the book on the official history of the camp.[13]

On July 3, 1939, SS *Brigadeführer* Johannes Schäfer, the plenipotentiary of the Free City of Danzig for political affairs, founded the so-called SS *Wachmannsturmbann* under the leadership of SS *Obersturmbannführer* Kurt Eimann. Its duties included the creation of temporary internment camps for all Poles known to be actively anti-German, who were to be arrested immediately in the event of the outbreak of war.

Construction of the camp – northwest of the village of Stutthof (in Polish, Sztutowo) – began in the same month, using prisoners

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[12] Jürgen Graf, Carlo Mattogno, *KL Majdanek. Eine historische und technische Studie*, Castle Hill Publisher, Hastings 1998; Engl.: *Concentration Camp Majdanek*, 3rd ed., The Barnes Review, Washington, D.C., 2012.

[13] Mirosław Gliński, "Organisation und Struktur des Lagers Stutthof," in: *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp. 76-98.

from Danzig Prison under the command of SS *Obersturmführer* Erich Gust.

On the afternoon of September 2, *i.e.*, the day after the outbreak of war, a contingent of approximately 200 Poles arrived at Stutthof after having been arrested in the area of Danzig.

All the internment camps in the region were under the command of SS *Sturmbannführer* Max Pauly. The central command post was initially located in the Neufahrwasser camp, which became a subsidiary camp of Stutthof in April 1940. This subsidiary camp was first officially referred to as a "Civilian Prison Camp," but was also referred to in correspondence as a "Prisoner Camp" and "Prisoner Assembly Camp." The population of the adjacent area usually referred to it as the "*Waldlager*" (Forest Camp).

Following the visit of SS *Sturmbannführer* Arthur Liebehenschel to Stutthof, Neufahrwasser, and a third internment camp, Grenzdorf, on behalf of the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps in January 1940, he drew up a report of his impressions for the head of the Inspectorate Richard Glücks. Glücks then proposed to *Reichsführer* SS Heinrich Himmler that the status of Stutthof be officially changed to that of a concentration camp, as it was favorably situated and offered good possibilities for the use of inmate labor. Himmler, however, initially rejected this proposal.[14]

Stutthof had approximately 4,500 inmates at the end of January 1940.[15] These inmates consisted almost entirely of Polish men, including numerous priests, teachers, and other members of the intelligentsia considered politically unreliable. A small number of female detainees also arrived at Stutthof after the middle of the same year. They were housed in Barracks I, which received the designation "Women's Block."

At this point, a few remarks on the expansion of the camp are in order; our source of information in this regard is a contribution by the Polish historian Ewa Ferenc.[16]

When the first prisoners entered the camp in the beginning of September 1939, there were already a number of tents, a kitchen, a washroom and a latrine. The prisoners were first set to work exclu-

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[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 76ff.

[15] Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939-1945*, Państwowe Wydawnictowo Naukowe, Warsaw 1979, p. 493.

[16] Ewa Ferenc, "Bau und Erweiterung des Konzentrationslagers Stutthof (2. September 1939 – 31. December 1944)" in: *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp. 99-108.

sively on the construction of the internment camp: clearing the forest, leveling the site, etc. As in other camps, the construction phase was particularly arduous for the detainees – the forest commando, occupied with the felling of trees, was considered the hardest job.

The Construction Office, referred to as the *SS Neubauleitung Stutthof* in early 1942 – later referred to merely as the *Bauleitung* – was responsible for the construction of the buildings. The first head of the Construction Office was SS *Untersturmführer* Otto Neubauer. The Construction Office was subordinate to the Central Construction Office of the *Waffen*-SS and Police in Danzig, which in turn was subordinate to the *Bauinspektion Reich Ost* (Construction Inspectorate of the Reich East), with headquarters in Posen. The latter was in turn subordinate to the chief of Office C (*Amtsgruppe Haushalt und Bauten*; Office Group Budget and Construction) of the *Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt* (Economic and Administrative Main Office, *WVHA*) under SS *Gruppenführer* Hans Kammler.[17]

Until October 1941, there were only three inmate barracks in Stutthof. At approximately the same time, the sewer installations were completed, and washrooms were installed in the barracks. Prior to that, the inmates had washed themselves in troughs in the open air.

Another barracks was used as an inmate infirmary, containing, among other things, a surgical division, a first-aid room, and a pharmacy. There was also a kitchen barracks and a laundry. A former retirement home on the camp's property was used as the headquarters building.

Barracks for camp workshops were built after the beginning of 1940; when completed, there was a paint shop, a furniture workshop, a joinery, an electrotechnical workshop, and a smithy. Outside the camp, the inmates built stables for livestock and a slaughterhouse.[18]

Between the beginning of April and the end of September 1941, for reasons which are not readily apparent, Stutthof was referred to in the concentration-camp nomenclature as a "transit camp," although its function had not changed as against the preceding period.[19] Very few documents from this period have survived.

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[17] M. Gliński, "Organisation…," *op. cit.* (note 13), p. 98. On the organization of the SS Construction Administrations, see also Carlo Mattogno, *The Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Auschwitz*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2005.

[18] E. Ferenc, "Bau und Erweiterung…," *op. cit.* (note 16), pp. 99-102.

[19] M. Gliński, "Organisation…," *op. cit.* (note 13), p. 79.

In addition to the inmates from 1941 were the so-called *Erziehungshäftlinge* (rehabilitation inmates). These were nationals of occupied territories – and, to a lesser extent, Germans – who had violated their labor contracts or neglected to comply with the call-up to the labor service. On May 28, 1941, Himmler, in a circular letter to all offices of the *Sipo* (Security Police), ordered the construction of labor rehabilitation camps. He explained the reasons for this decision as follows:[20]

> *"With the increasing use of foreign labor and other manpower in companies important to the national and the war economy, the cases of reluctance to work* [also] *increase, which, in the interest of the war effort of the German people, must be countered by all means. Workers who refuse to work or who endanger the morale of the workers otherwise and who thus have to be arrested by the police to maintain order and security, should be interned in special labor re-education camps and be given regular work. The labor re-education camps are intended exclusively to accommodate the work shirkers and idlers. Internment will occur for the purpose of re-education, nothing else."*

The *Sipo* chief of Danzig, Heinrich Willich, who had received Himmler's above order to establish a labor re-education camp at Stutthof, sent a request about the camp's status change and about the increase of the camp guards to Reinhardt Heydrich, Chief of *RSHA* (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*, Imperial Security Main Office), who approved it the following day.[21]

At that time the camp was very small and, as indicated by Willich, contained about 2,000 inmates. An undated "List of the necessary manpower for the permanent staff and for the guards of the labor re-education camp Stutthof" stemming from this period included a total of just 291 staff members.[22]

Compared to the political inmates, the "rehabilitation inmates" had an easy time and were usually freed after 56 days and assigned to a job. Their internment was not considered a punishment and did not affect the criminal record of the inmates. Furthermore, unlike other prisoners, the Polish and Jewish rehabilitation inmates were entitled to compensation for work done during the internment of 2 *Reichsmark* per day for married prisoners and 0.50 *Reichsmark* for unmarried inmates.[23]

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[20] Circular by Himmler of May 28, 1941, re. "Errichtung von Arbeitserziehungslagern," RGVA, 1323-2-140, pp. 1f.

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 21-21a.

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 10-10a.

[23] Letter to the *Gestapo* at Danzig by the head of the *Arbeitserziehungslager* at

With the conversion of the camp, non-Polish detainees entered Stutthof for the first time in bigger numbers. French citizens arrived after September 1941; the first of these was a certain Jean Maurisse, who had been a foreign worker in Elbing (Polish Elblag) for the E. Schichau company, and who returned there after his release from Stutthof.[24] There is also evidence of the presence of Italian rehabilitative inmates, but only in 1943 at the earliest.[25]

Of the Polish political prisoners interned after the outbreak of the war in 1939, approximately 2,000 were released in 1940 and 1941.[26] The considerable reduction in the camp manpower starting in the spring of 1940 must be attributed partly to these releases and partly to transfers. In this regard, two large transports which left for Sachsenhausen as early as April 1940 are of considerable significance: 1,000 Stutthof inmates were transferred to Sachsenhausen on April 9, 1940, and another 800 inmates on April 19, 1940.[27] In contrast, however, there were no transports from officially recognized concentration camps to internment camps, transit camps, or work camps. On December 10, 1940, Stutthof, therefore, had only 1,024 inmates (including 100 women) over a third of whom were inmates of the subsidiary camps of Elbing and Grenzdorf.[28]

Stutthof became a labor re-education camp officially on October 1, 1941. On that day the administration of the former civil internment camp was also transferred to the *Gestapo*. At that time it consisted of three residential barracks, one of them for female inmates, one infirmary building, a kitchen building, a disinfestation building as well as four watchtowers.[29] From the transfer protocol it can be gleaned that the disinfestation building contained a room with an autoclave and a disinfestation boiler, a vestibule, a bathroom, a room for changing clothes, and a laundry facility.[30]

Stutthof, Oct. 25, 1941. RGVA, 1323-2-140, p. 71; see Document 1 in the Appendix.

24 Marek Orski, *Des français a Stutthof,* Muzeum Stutthof w Sztutowie, Danzig 1995, pp. 9f.

25 Marek Orski, *Gli Italiani a Stutthof*, Muzeum Stutthof w Sztutowie, Danzig 1996, p. 8.

26 Główna Komisja…, *op. cit.* (note 15), p. 498.

27 Danuta Drywa, "Ruch transportów między KL Stutthof a innymi obozami," *SZM*, no. 9, 1990, p. 27.

28 Główna Komisja…, *op. cit.* (note 15), pp. 498, 504.

29 Transfer protocol of Oct. 28, 1941. RGVA, 1323-2-140, pp. 38-38a; see Document 2 in the Appendix.

30 *Gerätebestand der Entlausungsbaracke* dated Stutthof, Oct. 1, 1941. RGVA, 1323-2-140, p. 71; see Document 3 in the Appendix.

Himmler visited Stutthof on November 23, 1941[31] and finally decided to change the status of the camp to that of a regular concentration camp. The decisive factor in this decision was economic; this is proven by the following letter sent by Heinrich Himmler to the chief of the SS *Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt* Oswald Pohl on December 19, 1941:[32]

"Dear Pohl!
I recently visited Stutthof Camp during my visit to the district of Danzig-West Prussia. I have become convinced that Stutthof is of great significance to the subsequent settlement of the district of Danzig-West Prussia. Stutthof has all the possibilities for workshops, joineries, metal-working shops, etc. I believe that we must further expand and utilize Stutthof. In my opinion, the expansion must strive at the following:
1) The installation of building joineries and metal workshops for settlement activity in West Prussia.
2) The fullest use of the tailor shop, joinery, and other workshops for us. A great quantity of orders for the armed forces is being fulfilled.
3) Installation of an auto repair workshop for the local SS headquarters.
4) Purchase of a brickyard on the bay, which is very favorable and which has a narrow-gauge railway and canal, and which is being offered to us there now.
5) Stutthof must also be expanded to accept 20,000 Russian prisoners of war at a later time, who can be used to build a settlement in the district of Danzig-West Prussia.
I enclose a statement on the preparation of the site, drawn up in Danzig. Some of the sludge could be of interest for the fertilization of the meadows if it is worth mining it at a depth of 10-12 m, as well as the white, soft, medium-hard and hard limestone lying at a depth of 100 meters on the other hand. If I am not mistaken, there is a great lack of cement and limestone in the district of Danzig-West Prussia. Both can be derived from limestone.
Stutthof is now to be taken over by yourself and SS Brigadeführer *Glücks as a recognized concentration camp with industrial function.*
Heil Hitler!
Your H. Himmler"

Inspector of Concentration Camps Richard Glücks announced on January 7, 1942, that Stutthof would now be considered a state concentration camp. The respective cable stated:[33]

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[31] A photo album of the Himmler visit has survived and is stored in the archive.
[32] Archivum Muzeum Stutthof (hereinafter briefly referred to as AMS), I-IA-2; see Document 4 in the Appendix.
[33] RGVA, 1323-2-140, p. 95; see Document 5 in the Appendix.

> *"The Reich Leader SS and Head of the German Police has ordered that the internment camp Stutthof, including* [its] *industrial enterprises, is taken over by the Head of the SS Main Office Economics and Buildings and the Insp.*[ectorate] *of the Concentration Camps. The necessary preparations have to be implemented immediately."*

This decision was reflected in a circular letter of February 20, 1942 from the Chief of the Security Police and the *SD*:[34]

> *"Former SS special camp Stutthof, by order of the Reichsführer SS and Chief of the German Police, effective immediately, is to be taken over as a state concentration camp with the designation 'Concentration Camp Stutthof'. Former commander of Special Camp Stutthof, SS* Hauptsturmführer *of the* Waffen-*SS Pauly, is to be assigned camp commander by the Inspector of Concentration Camps."*

With its promotion to the rank of "state concentration camp," Stutthof became subordinate to the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps in Oranienburg.

At that time the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps, directed by SS-*Brigadeführer* Richard Glücks, was still subordinate to the SS *Führungshauptamt* (Central Office of the SS Leader). When this office was merged with the *Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten* (Central Office Budget and Construction) to the new SS-*WVHA*, the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps was incorporated into *Amtsgruppe* D – *Konzentrationslager* (Office Group D – Concentration Camps), to which the Stutthof Camp was also subordinate.[35]

Max Pauly remained the commandant of the Stutthof Camp, as mentioned in the above document. At the end of August 1942, he was recalled from Stutthof to Neuengamme Concentration Camp, which he commanded until the end of the war. For his activities in this latter camp, he was sentenced to death and hanged after trial by the British occupation government in Hamburg.[36]

Pauly's successor in Stutthof was SS *Sturmbannführer* Paul Werner Hoppe. Hoppe was no longer fit for active service due to an inju-

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[34] AMS, I-A-7; see Document 6 in the Appendix.

[35] The Inspectorate of Concentration Camps under Richard Glücks consisted of four departments, which, as *Amtsgruppe* D, were subordinate to the Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt (*WVHA*) of the SS in Berlin. Department D I (Concentration camps), which governed the administration of concentration camps; Department D II (Inmate labor), which coordinated inmate labor and ordered transfers; Department D III (camp hygiene and sanitary personnel); and Department D IV (Administration), which was responsible for the financing and equipping of the concentration camps.

[36] Janina Grabowska, "Die Verantwortung für die im KL Stutthof begangenen Verbrechen. Die Prozesse," in: *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 294.

ry suffered on the eastern front, and was therefore recalled into the concentration-camp service, to which he had already belonged as a member of the Dachau camp staff from 1937 to 1941. He commanded Stutthof until the end of the war, but left the camp at the beginning of April 1945, whereupon it was unofficially commanded by SS *Hauptsturmführer* Paul Ehle. Hoppe was sentenced to nine years imprisonment after a trial in Bochum in 1957. He was released after serving seven and half years.[36] We have no information as to Ehle's fate in the post-war period.

Stutthof was organized as follows:[37]

Camp Commandant – Division I-VI – SS Death's-Head *Sturmbann*

The six departments were as follows:

Department I – Command Post: This consisted of the camp commandant's staff, and was subordinate to the adjutant of the latter. The following services were part of Department I: **The Security Service** supervised order in the camp; the **Information Service** was responsible for relations between the camp and the higher offices; **Motor Pool** in charge of transportation; the **Armory, Canteens** (there were two, one for the camp personnel and one for the inmates); the **SS Court** adjudicated minor violations of camp regulations (serious cases were referred to the SS Court in Danzig).

Department II – Political Department: This compiled the inmate's personal files based on transport lists, including the inmate's category (political prisoner, protective custody prisoner, criminal, etc.). In the event of death, it informed the relatives of the deceased person as well as the office that had ordered the transfer of the deceased person to the Stuffhof camp. The Political Department also performed interrogations of inmates.

Department III – Protective-Custody Camp: The various departments of the camp were subordinate to the leader of the protective-custody camp: the men's camp, women's camp, and the camp complexes set up later (special camp, Germanic camp, and Jewish camp, which will be discussed in detail below). The leader of the protective-custody camp was accompanied by an officer responsible for determining the camp's manpower by carrying out roll calls twice a day. The **Labor Service**, which was subordinate to the Labor Service Leader, was a sub-department. The Labor Service Leader com-

[37] M. Gliński, "Organisation…," *op. cit.* (note 13), pp. 88ff.

piled an inmate card file based on vocation in order to ensure the most efficient employment of camp inmates.

Department IV – Economy and Administration: This department was responsible for financial issues, paying out wages to camp personnel, purchasing necessary food and clothing, etc.

Department V – Camp Doctor: The head camp doctor was responsible for medical care. The inmate and staff infirmary, the pharmacy, and the crematorium were under his care. The head camp doctor had to be present at executions as well as during the infliction of corporal punishment.

Department VI – Training: This department was responsible for the political and vocational training of camp personnel as well as for cultural events.[38]

The **SS Death's Head *Sturmbann* CC Stutthof** consisted of camp guard personnel. In addition to Reich Germans, the guards consisted of a large percentage of ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe, as well as non-Germans (Ukrainians, Latvians, Lithuanians). Approximately 2,500 guards, including a number of women, did service during the sixty-eight months of the camp's existence.[39]

2. The Period from March 1942 to June 1944

On December 19, 1941, after his visit to the camp, Heinrich Himmler ordered the expansion of the Stutthof Camp within the framework of the "*Generalplan Ost*".[40] Pursuant thereto, 20,000 Soviet PoWs were to be admitted into the camp in order to contribute to "settlement expansion in the district of Danzig/West Prussia."[32]

As a result of this decision, SS *Unterscharführer* Johann Pauls delivered a plan for the camp expansion to the *Reichsführer* SS, which was approved by Himmler on March 3, 1942. Among other

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[38] These included, among other things, theatrical performances. For example, the Regional Theatre of Danzig-West Prussia presented a comedy on February 16, 1944 in the Comradeship Home of the camp. AMS, 1-1B-3.

[39] In 1944, when the large Jewish transports arrived, the camp administration organized a crash course for women supervisors, the graduates of which then did service in the Jewish camp as well as in the exterior offices. M. Gliński, "Organisation…," *op. cit.* (note 13) p. 92.

[40] Jan Erik Schulte, "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42," in: *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 50, 2002, no. 1, p. 53.

things, it provided for the construction of housing for 20,000 inmates west and north of the already existing structures, now known as the "old camp." To enable the planned expansion, the brickyard that was mentioned in Himmler's letter of April 1942, as well as the Werdershof estate (also located south-east of the camp), were leased by Department II of the SS-*WVHA* (Budget and Construction),[41] where the "Germanic camp"[42] was to be built the following year.

North of the old camp 30 barracks were now built as the first part of the "new camp"; of these, 20 (labeled with numbers I to XX) were intended for inmates, including the camp canteen, the kitchen, and the quarantine barracks for inmates suffering from contagious diseases. The DAW (*Deutsche Ausrüstungs-Werke*) factories were housed in the remaining barracks, including a furrier's workshop, tailor's workshop, weaving workshop, shoemaker's workshop, and a bicycle-repair workshop (see Document 7 in the Appendix for a Polish post-war camp map).

The first inmates were transferred to the new camp in July 1943. The women remained in the old camp.

Following completion of the barracks, construction began on the streets, sewerage, and water mains for the new camp. At the same time, construction began on a barracks for guard personnel west of the old camp; the guard personnel in question moved in on March 28, 1943.

Northeast of the new camp, work began in October 1943 on the construction of two factory hangars for the DAW. These were put into operation one year later. The Focke-Wulf Company manufactured airplane parts in the first factory hangar, while motors and machine parts were repaired in the second, the "*DAW Maschinenhalle*."

Inmate labor was basically divided into two categories: the construction and maintenance of the camp itself, and labor for industrial enterprises. Inmates were made available to the latter against payment. As stated above, a few companies, such as the DAW or Focke-Wulf, established operations in the camp itself. Otherwise, inmates assigned to companies were put to work in "subsidiary camps" or "exterior commandos," in which case there was a gradual transition between both types. Polish historiography assumes a total of 60 subsidiary camps and exterior commandos.[43] These included, for exam-

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41 E. Ferenc, "Bau und Erweiterung…," *op. cit. (*note 16), pp. 103f.

42 Camp for inmates of Germanic origin (mainly Norwegians and Danes).

43 Główna Komisja…, *op. cit.* (note 15), pp. 502-506.

ple, the "Elbing exterior office," where between 200 and 500 inmates were active for various undertakings "including work done for the Holzmann company in building the wharf, in the plywood factory, in cleaning the city, in the sewers of the city, and in some smaller enterprises," as well as in building houses.[44]

Other inmates were rented out to farmers working in the vicinity of Stutthof.[45]

The leader of the Stutthof protective-custody camp, SS *Hauptsturmführer* Theodor Traugott Meyer, in his notes written in August 1947 while in a Polish prison, explains that 3,000 Jewish women were transferred to help during the harvest upon the personal intervention of Camp Commandant Hoppe.[46]

All the above-mentioned factors prove the great significance of Stutthof Camp from an economic point of view (cf. Section IV.1).

Many inmates were released from the camp. According to the official history of the camp, the total number of released inmates amounted to 5,000.[47] Special lists of released inmates were compiled every day by the camp's "Political Section." Hundreds of such lists are preserved by the Stutthof Museum, which cover almost the entire history of the camp. Here are some examples:

June 13, 1942:	44 releases[48]
August 28, 1942:	58 releases[49]
December 18 1942:	51 releases[50]
May 06, 1943:	30 releases[51]
July 12, 1943:	46 releases[52]
January 21, 1944:	55 releases[53]
February 10, 1944:	32 releases[54]
July 13, 1944:	24 releases[55]
August 29, 1944:	ca. 40 releases[56]

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44 Marek Orski, "Die Arbeit" in: *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp. 207ff.

45 In this regard, see the report by Gerda Gottschalk in: Hermann Kuhn (ed.), *Stutthof. Ein Konzentrationslager vor den Toren Danzigs*. Edition Temmen, Bremen 1995, pp. 138ff.

46 *Ibid.*, p. 190.

47 Janina Grabowska, "Die Häftlinge" in: *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 120.

48 AMS, 1-11C-6, p. 5.

49 *Ibid.*, p. 27.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 69.

51 AMS, 1-11C-7, p. 37.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 43.

53 AMS, 1-11C-8, p. 5.

54 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

55 *Ibid.*, p. 37; see Document 8 in the Appendix.

Many of the inmates released on a given day were "rehabilitation inmates." The list of May 6, 1943, provides an example of this: 30 rehabilitation inmates were released, in addition to two inmates to be transferred to Auschwitz or Sachsenhausen (one stateless "asocial" and one Polish protective-custody inmate).[57] On the other hand, the 58 inmates released on August 28, 1942, consisted of 23 "shirkers" (which was certainly a synonym for "rehabilitation inmates") as well as 21 protective-custody inmates, *i.e.*, political prisoners. The majority of released inmates were Poles.

The releases from Stutthof are totaled at least until October 1944 in the "Lists of departures" (*Abgangslisten*), some pages of which have been preserved. For example, on October 19, 1944, at least 51 prisoners were released (indicated by the abbreviation A = 1), 15 women and 36 men.[58]

It should be noted that some of these releases took place at a time when, according to the orthodox version of history, large numbers of inmates were being murdered in the gas chamber. According to the orthodox version of history, therefore, the Germans released witnesses to their alleged mass-extermination program, enabling them to report about what they had seen! Since the alleged gas chamber was located immediately at the edge of the old camp and was easily visible from the old camp (see Document 7 in the Appendix), there would have been no way to conceal any homicidal mass gassings.

The increase in camp manpower after the decision to expand the camp is revealed in the following statistics:

31 July 1942:	2,283 inmates, including 163 women;
31 July 1942:	1,855 inmates, including 332 women;
31 March 1943:	3,590 inmates, including 285 women;
End of 1943:	approximately 6,000 inmates.[59]

With the designation of Stutthof as a regular concentration camp, transports not only departed for other concentration camps, but transports from other concentration camps entered the camp as well. A Polish study written in 1990 estimated the total number of persons

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[56] Page number missing in our copy. The original has the lower part of the page torn; see Document 9 in the Appendix.

[57] See Document 10 in the Appendix.

[58] *Abgangsliste Nr. 8*. RGVA, 1367-1-195, pp. 206-206a. See Document 11 in the Appendix.

[59] Główna Komisja…, *op. cit.* (note 15), p. 498.

transferred from Stutthof at 24,624.[60] We will discuss the extent of transports from other camps to Stutthof in another chapter.

The transports to Stutthof beginning in 1942 – the first, with 114 inmates from Buchenwald, arrived on April 14, 1942[60] – resulted in an internationalization of Stutthof Camp. Of course, Poles remained the most numerous group of camp inmates until mid-1944, but the numbers of inmates from other countries, especially the Soviet Union and Germany, were constantly increasing. Resistance fighters or persons suspected of supporting the resistance, in addition to prisoners of war, also arrived from the USSR.

German new arrivals included significantly more criminals than political prisoners. Many such criminals arrived from Mauthausen, a camp designated for incorrigible serious criminals. This bad habit, stubbornly indulged in by the SS, of assigning career criminals to positions as *Kapos*, and therefore in a position of authority over other inmates, may have been the main reason for the brutality and mistreatment described at great length – as well as indubitably with dramatic embellishment – in the testimonies of former Stutthof inmates.[61]

Two smaller groups of prisoners also received privileged treatment in Stutthof. The first group consisted of the so-called "honorary prisoners," which was understood to mean intellectuals interned for their political unreliability, or diplomats from the Baltic States of Latvia and Lithuania. These inmates lived separately from the other prisoners and did not have to work.[62] The same was true of a group of 282 (or, according to other sources, 273) Norwegian policemen transferred to Stutthof in December 1943 or January 1944 for refusing to sign a loyalty oath to Vidkun Quisling's National Socialist government. In 1943, these Norwegians were quartered in the so-called Germanic camp south-east of the old camp, which was originally intended for SS men liable to punishment.[63] Some of them voluntarily performed light work as gardeners or postmen. The approx-

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60 Danuta Drywa, "Ruch transportów…," *op. cit.* (note 27), p. 31.

61 The terrorization of the political prisoners by the criminal inmates was a phenomenon observable in many camps. It is described in detail in serious works of concentration camp memoirs, such as, for example, Paul Rassinier's *Le Mensonge de Ulysse* (reprint: La Vieille Taupe, Paris 1980), or Benedikt Kautsky's *Teufel und Verdammte* (Büchergilde Gutenberg, Zürich 1946).

62 M. Orski, "Stutthof als internationales Lager," in: *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2) p. 145.

63 *Ibid.*, p. 148; M. Gliński, "Organisation…," *op. cit.* (note 13), p. 93.

imately 150 Danish communists, having previously entered the camp in October 1943, were required to work on a regular basis, but they also appear to have received preferential treatment on the basis of their Nordic descent.[64]

As in other camps, disease was the principal danger and chief cause of the high mortality. Typhus – which broke out in the spring of 1942 for the first time – was especially devastating. Another epidemic broke out in April 1943, and lasted until June.[65] Of the more than 1,100 inmates who died in that period, the majority doubtlessly died of typhus.[66]

3. The Period from June 1944 to January 1945

Conditions in Stutthof changed drastically starting in mid-1944. In addition to a few transports of non-Jews, numerous mass transports of Jews – the vast majority of whom were women – arrived between 29 June and 28 October. I will return to this in Chapter IV.

The manner in which the camp administration reacted to the continuous arrival of mass transports is described by SS *Hauptsturmbannführer* Theodor Meyer, protective-custody camp commander in Stutthof, in his notes written in a Polish prison while awaiting execution:[67]

> *"When the Lublin and Riga camps and outer camps in the East were evacuated, Stutthof was designated a reception camp. Transports with thousands of Jewish women arrived, even from Auschwitz. These trans-*

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64 M. Orski, *op. cit.* (note 62), p. 145.

65 On the typhus epidemics, see Elżbieta Grot, "Indirekte Extermination," in: *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp. 195f. The German term for typhus is *Fleckfieber*. Unfortunately the Polish literature does not distinguish between *Typhus* (typhoid fever) and *Fleckfieber* (typhus). These are two distinct diseases with merely partially similar symptoms. He could therefore not determine which one is meant.

66 On the mortality, see Chapter III, Section 5. E. Grot mentions only 849 deaths between 1 April and 12 June, which may possibly be attributed to the fact that they do not take account of the exterior stations and auxiliary camps. In the death register, "Typhus" is listed as the cause of death in only 12 cases, leading E. Grot to assume a falsification of mortality statistics by the camp authorities. It is, however, impossible to understand why the camp authorities would have attempted to hide the typhus epidemic – which everyone knew about – through false statistics. Presumably "heart failure" was entered as the immediate cause of death for most victims of typhus, "heart failure," "general exhaustion" and the like, being in fact results of the epidemic.

67 Copy in the Archives of the Stutthof Museum, quoted according to H. Kuhn (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 45), pp. 189f.

ports were mostly in a condition that exceeded anything ever seen before. They were sent on the transports without sufficient clothing and food. Now they were supposed to be accepted in a camp that was itself on subsistence level. Telexes, radio messages, went back and forth between Berlin and Stutthof to make the gentlemen in Berlin realize that this was impossible; that Stutthof could no longer accept any more inmates. The camp commandant himself traveled to Berlin for a conference intended to prevent any more inmates from being sent to Stutthof, but without success. Berlin only promised to ensure that the inmates would be detailed off in workers.[68] *A representative appeared and made contacts with industry. Commandos were detailed off to Königsberg, Elbing, Danzig, Gotenhafen, Stolp, Bromberg, Stettin, and to the nearer or more distant surroundings. New masses arrived. The various offices of the Gestapo emptied their camps and ghettos and sent the inmates to Stutthof without making any inquiry at any time. Typhus-infected inmates spread the disease in the camp, and this epidemic caused many victims among the masses tightly packed together in the camp. Where, and how, could an improvement be made? More and more transports arrived. Could one refuse to accept them? No! When the transports arrived with their inmates, they had to be accepted."*

We see not the slightest grounds for doubting the truthfulness of the content of this testimony.[69]

In order to provide at least some housing for the many new arrivals, a "Special Camp" was created from scratch in the western part of the camp in July 1944; this camp consisted of a kitchen barracks in addition to several inmate barracks. This camp was used, for example, to quarter Germans who had been taken hostage because relatives of theirs belonged to anti-National Socialist resistance movements; one of them was Fey von Hassell, daughter of diplomat Ulrich von Hassell.[70] Parallel to this area, 10 barracks numbered XXI

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68 Error in original.

69 Theodore Traugott Meyer, in his report written during Polish imprisonment, expressly disputed the accusation of tormenting the inmates and insisted that he helped them as much as he could. He said he had taken care to ensure that as many inmates as possible would receive hard work bonuses, even when many prisoners were not entitled to them. He continues:

"*The incorporation of the bath installations was approved for every housing block. The sanitary installations were good. The camp orchestra played Sundays. Entertainment was provided. And I am supposed to have approved all this because I wanted to torment the inmates?* […] *Were the inmates mistreated at their arrival? No. When the big transports arrived, I made frequent inspections and saw no act of mistreatment*."

We reproduce these remarks by Meyer because we are of the opinion that both parties have the right to be heard.

70 Fey von Hassell's report regarding her stay in Stutthof was reproduced in extract

and XXX were built north of the new camp and designated, as a whole, the "Jewish camp," although only six of the ten barracks were intended for Jews; another two were used to house women deported to Stutthof after the crushing of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, and the other two were used as warehouses for personal effects.[71]

At the end of August 1944, the camp census, including the outer camps, was approximately 60,000;[72] it had therefore multiplied tenfold in eight months! The last large transport arrived from Auschwitz on October 29. In the following month, only individual groups of inmates arrived at Stutthof; the last inmate, the Pole Jan Zielina, no. 105,302, arrived from Auschwitz on January 17, 1945.[73] The fact that transports from Stutthof departed after October 1944 was one reason for the renewed decline in the camp census. A second reason was the typhus epidemic that broke out in late summer 1944 for the second time and took on devastating proportions by the end of the year. The poor hygienic conditions in the further-overcrowded housing naturally contributed to propagation of the lethal epidemic. The deficiency of the disinfestation facilities is shown, among other things, by the certification of a transfer to Flossenbürg dated November 24, 1944:[74]

> *"The following inmates are to be transferred from Stutthof Concentration Camp to Flossenbürg Concentration Camp on 11.24.1944:*
> *216 men (Jews)*
> *284 women (Jews).*
> *It should be noted that these inmates come from a camp in which typhus, paratyphus, diphtheria, and scarlet fever are rampant at the present time. Quarantine is therefore to be imposed, and these inmates are to be put to work in closed groups.*
> *These inmates were bathed and deloused prior to departure on the transport. Due to insufficient delousing facilities at this camp, we cannot guarantee that these prisoners are free from lice.*
> *The SS garrison doctor."*

On December 29, 1944, Hoppe found himself compelled to decree a partial camp quarantine by special order:[75]

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by H. Kuhn (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 45), pp. 176ff.

71 M. Gliński, "Organisation…," *op. cit.* (note 13), p. 93; E. Ferenc, "Bau und Erweiterung…," *op. cit.* (note 16), p. 107.

72 Główna Komisja…, *op. cit.* (note 15), p. 499.

73 Elżbieta Grot, *Rejs Śmierci, Evakuacja morska Więźniów KL Stutthof*, Muzeum Stutthof w Sztutowie, Danzig 1993, p. 13.

74 AMS, I-IIC-4, p. 159; see Document 12 in the Appendix.

75 AMS, I-IB-3, p. 275.

> *"In the course of the struggle against typhus, entry and leaving of the new women's camps I, II, and III is blocked, effective immediately, due to danger of contagion by typhus."*

The raging epidemic and the generally deteriorating conditions against the background of the German military collapse led to the final, and worst, phase in the existence of Stutthof Camp – just as in Bergen-Belsen, Dachau, and other camps.

As of January 24, 1945, the day before the first waves of evacuation, the camp census report indicated a census of 28,390 female and 18,115 male inmates (including the subsidiary camps). This number included 25,775 Jewish women and 2,898 Jewish men.[76]

4. Evacuation and the End

Documentation on the tragic last months of Stutthof Camp is very fragmentary. In Polish literature on the subject, commonplace facts and atrocity propaganda are intermixed in a veritable stew.[77] For this reason, it seems to us impossible to offer even an approximate estimate of the number of victims caused by the evacuation of the camp, and we will refrain from putting forth any estimates.

What has survived, though, are daily records on the camp strength from a series consisting mainly of *Morgenappell* (morning roll call) documents ranging from January 24 to April 22, 1945. They show the numbers given in Table 1 (next page).[78]

The fate of Stutthof inmates at that time was very little different from – or even identical to – the fate of the millions of German civilians who fled before the advancing Red Army during that harshest winter of the war, under almost inconceivable circumstances and

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[76] Camp strength report of 24 January 1945, GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 1.

[77] For example, J. Grabowska reports that women who were unable to march were burnt alive in their barracks by the SS ("Die Letzten Tage des Lagerbestehens. Die Befreiung," in: *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 292). As a source, the reader is referred to the testimony of Kapo Alfred Nicolaysen before the Soviet Committee for the Investigation of War Crimes. As the author informs us on the following page of the same book, Nicolaysen was sentenced to death following trial in Danzig of 25 members of the camp guard personnel; Nicolaysen was then the only person pardoned out of the 14 persons sentenced to death, presumably in consideration for services rendered in shoring up the traditional atrocity story of Jews burnt alive by the SS.

[78] GARF, 7021-106-3, pp. 1-182.

Table 1: Inmates in the Stutthof Camp in early 1945[80]

DATE	MALE INMATES	FEMALE INMATES	TOTAL
January 24	18,115	28,390	46,505[81]
January 30	10,544	23,404	33,948
February 1	10,317	22,274	32,591
February 5	10,229	22,165	32,394
February 10	10,050	21,803	31,853
February 15	15,900[82]	10,209	26,109
February 20	15,662	9,381	25,043
February 25	15,469	9,075	24,544
March 1	15,270	8,744	24,022
March 5	15,158	8,434	23,592
March 10	15,020	8,188	23,208
March 15	14,904	8,000	22,904
March 20	6,287	3,170	9,457
March 25	6,603	3,236	9,839
April 1	4,866	2,239	7,105
April 5	4,843	2,159	7,002
April 10	4,773	2,093	6,866
April 15	4,692	2,043	6,735
April 20	4,629	2,004	6,633
April 22	4,614	1,985	6,599

who therefore suffered horribly high losses. The U.S. historian Mark Weber hit the nail on the head when he wrote:[79]

> *"Stutthof's prisoners were not the only ones to endure this terrible calamity. During this same period, hundreds of thousands of German civilians, most of them women and children, as well* [as] *civilians of other nationalities, were slowly making their way westward in the snow and freezing weather. Many of these people also died during the winter trek."*

In her interesting book *Rejs Śmierci* (*Voyage of Death*) the Polish historian Elżbieta Grot quotes a Norwegian inmate, not mentioned by name, who gives us the following general atmosphere of the conditions prevailing in West Prussia at that time:[83]

> *"A line of refugees from East Prussia, several miles long, consisting of terror-stricken families who had abandoned their homeland and their property in panic was, to us, the visible image of a people in a state of*

[79] Mark Weber, *op. cit.* (note 11), pp. 3ff.

[80] See Documents 23-34 in the Appendix.

[81] GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 1. According to the *Stärkemeldung* and the *Stärke-Nachweis* for the same day, the number of inmates was 46,331 (GARF, 7021-106-3, pp. 2f.). The difference is explained by the changes occurring during the day.

[82] It is unknown where these approximately 5,900 prisoners came from who were admitted into the camp between February 11 and 15.

[83] E. Grot, *Rejs Śmierci*…, *op. cit.* (note 73), p. 15.

> *complete dissolution. Dead horses lying by the edge of the road, desperation-filled old people, weeping women, and – the worst experience for us – starving infants, often running barefoot through the snow looking for mothers or fathers who had attempted to break through to the other side of the Weichsel* […] *By midday, a sexton approached requesting us to help him bury the bodies of the dead, excusing himself by saying that no auxiliary labor was available to him."*

The tragedy of the Stutthof refugees who died during the evacuation must be viewed in the context of this tragedy extending over an immense territory. The decision to evacuate the camp appears to have been made by Fritz Katzmann, the Higher SS and Police Chief of Danzig, after the onset of the large-scale winter offensive of the Red Army on January 12, 1945. After January 20, all work in the camp was directed at the forthcoming evacuation, and approximately 11,000 inmates were led out of Stutthof on January 25 and 26. They were supposed to march on foot to Lauenberg, 140 km further west, for internment in a non-commissioned officers' school for the *Waffen*-SS. The distance was to be covered in seven days, exclusively on backroads, because the main roads were filled with German refugee columns and German troops. At night, the inmates were supposed to be lodged in villages.

The evacuation did not run according to plan, particularly because of the heavy snowdrifts and poor road conditions. Many inmates died on the road, others escaped, and considerable numbers were overtaken by the advancing Soviet troops and liberated. The majority of the evacuees were halted by the *Wehrmacht* before they reached Lauenberg, and put to work building anti-tank ditches. In early March, following the onset of another Soviet offensive, those who were able to march were led in the direction of Gotenhafen and Putzig, where they were supposed to be transported to Germany by ship. They did not get there, because the columns were captured on the way by the Soviets.[84] According to Polish sources based on estimates that cannot be verified, approximately 5,000 died out of the 11,500 evacuated on January 25 and 26.[85]

Stutthof still had 33,948 inmates on January 30, approximately one third of them in the main camp.[86] At approximately the same

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[84] M. Orski, *Ostatnie dni Obozu Stutthof*, Wydawnictwo Marpress, Danzig 1995, pp. 8ff.; J. Grabowska, "Die Evakuierung des Stammlagers zu Lande" in: *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp. 267ff.

[85] J. Grabowska, *op. cit.* (note 84), p. 275.

[86] M. Orski, *op. cit.* (note 84), p. 14.

time, the camp began to fill with German refugees who took up temporary lodgings there, taking over the new camp and part of the old camp. Many of these German civilians were later evacuated to the west by sea. The camp was attacked by Soviet bombers on March 25 and on several occasions afterwards; several of the women's barracks in the old camp burnt down.[87]

At this time, a large proportion of the inmates in Danzig and Gotenhafen – the name for Gdingen at that time – were put to work in the shipyard or in various factories. Beginning in March, these cities were severely bombed by the Soviet air force, killing many inmates and German civilians.[88]

Instead of simply leaving the remaining inmates behind for the Soviets, as reason would have indicated, since the Soviet arrival was now only a question of time, even more panicked evacuation actions were carried out by sea during the last weeks of the war, ending tragically for a great many of the persons involved. On March 25, a ship transport with over 600 refugees from the Gotenhafen subsidiary camp sailed for Kiel, where the inmates were interned in subsidiary camps of Neuengamme Concentration Camp. Two large sea transports with a total of approximately 4,400 inmates departed on April 25 and 27. The first traveled by way of Hela to Neustadt, where the inmates were lodged in a hospital following the arrival of British troops. A few were later transferred to Sweden by the Swedish Red Cross for medical care. The second transport arrived at Flensburg after a long period of wandering. There, the inmates were embarked onto the ship *Rheinfels*. On May 9, the ship was boarded by representatives of the Swedish Red Cross, who decided to take the totally exhausted inmates to Sweden for treatment. A large number of the persons evacuated by sea died from hunger, exhaustion, or disease before the end of the war. An unknown number were killed during British aerial attacks on the evacuation ships.[89]

The Red Army entered Stutthof on May 9, 1945, but found only approximately 150 inmates – most of whom were sick – in addition to approximately 20,000 German civilians. Paul Ehle, acting unofficially as the last concentration-camp commander, had fled a few

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87 *Ibid.*, p. 19. Many of the Jewish women later reported by the Soviet Commission to have been burnt alive by the SS presumably died during these bombing attacks. See note 77.

88 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

89 A detailed description of the evacuation by sea can be found in E. Grot, *op. cit.* (note 73).

days before. The existence of Stutthof Concentration Camp coincided almost precisely with the duration of war: it opened the day after the war began, and was captured by Soviet troops the day after it ended.

In 1946 and 1947, four trials were held in Poland against a total of 80 members of Stutthof Camp guard personnel. After trial, 21 death sentences were handed down and carried out, with one exception. Another five camp functionaries, including the second commander, P.W. Hoppe, were brought to court in three trials in the Federal Republic of Germany (1955, 1957, and 1964); four of them received sentences of imprisonment of up to nine years.[90]

The joy of liberation was of short duration for many inmates captured by the Red Army. Accused of collaboration with the Germans or of membership in Polish nationalist movements such as the Armija Krajowa (Homeland Army), or the Boy Scout-type organization Szare Szeregi (Gray Ranks), they were promptly arrested again and disappeared into Soviet concentration camps, some of them for many years. Three examples were Marian Pawlaczyk, Jan Będziński and Mieczysław Goncarzewski, who were only released from the Gulag archipelago after Stalin's death in 1953. Their crime: During interrogations held after their liberation by the Soviet secret service NKVD, they were found to be too well-informed about the structure of the camp. This sealed their fate: in the eyes of the NKVD, this proved that they had collaborated with the Germans.[91]

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[90] J. Grabowska, *op. cit.* (note 36), pp. 293f.
[91] M. Orski, *op. cit.* (note 84), pp. 36ff.

CHAPTER II:
Stutthof as "Extermination Camp": The Orthodox Version

We mentioned in the introduction that, according to the orthodox version of history, Stutthof performed the temporary function of "ad hoc" extermination camp. This chapter reproduces the statements of the principal texts in connection with the alleged mass killings and, in particular, the mass gassings of human beings at Stutthof, in chronological order.

The first testimony to be mentioned is the Soviet expert report, drawn up only five days after the capture of the camp, on 14 May 1945, which we quote in full:[92]

> *"Protocol of the technical expert report on the SS concentration camp Stutthof, May 14, 1945.*
> *The undersigned, the engineer Major Ivan Alexandrowitsch Fjodorow, deputy chief of staff of the 57th Red Banner Brigade of Engineers and Pioneers of Gomelsk, and Lieutenant Georgi Sergejewitsch Kapustin, Adjutant of the Commander of the First Department of the Brigade Staff, on behalf of the Council of War of the 48th Army, conducted an examination of the SS camp Stutthof, which established the following:*
> *The Germans began construction of Stutthof Concentration Camp in 1939. Until 1941, there was a total of approximately 15 standard-type wooden barracks, as well as the necessary small buildings for guard personnel.*
> *Initially, the above-mentioned camp was intended for political prisoners. In mid-1942, the camp began to expand rapidly, and by the end of 1944, it consisted of the following buildings:*
> *Wooden barracks: 60 units*
> *Brick barracks: 12 units*
> *Barracks for guard and service personnel: 17 units*

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92 "Protocol of the technical investigation of the SS concentration camp at Stutthof," May 14, 1945. GARF, 7021-106-216, pp. 5f.

Warehouses: 11 units
Workshops: 5 units
Factory buildings: 7 units.
Every standard-type living barracks has a normal capacity of 450 people, which means that, with normal occupancy, the inmate barracks could house 450 x 72 = 32,400 people. In reality, according to the data of former inmate Woźniak, a Pole, 800 to 1000 people were crammed together in the barracks in each case. Consequently, the huge numbers of persons interned in the camp amounted to approximately 60 + 12 x 800 = 62,000 to 72,000.[93]
In the living barracks, triple bunkbeds made of wood had been erected; there were separate rooms for the guards, and common washrooms and toilets. The washrooms and toilets in the barracks did not work, since construction of the sewerage network was not yet completed.
From a model found in the office of the SS camp Stutthof, it may be concluded that the camp was, to some considerable extent, still uncompleted; in particular, it was intended to increase the number of living barracks to 180, in which event the new part of the camp would have been built of brick, in contrast to the old part.
The construction and expansion of the camp, as well as the construction of the factories, was performed by inmates.
Two factory buildings were erected and put into operation on the grounds of the old camp, while three others were unfinished; two factory buildings were finished on the grounds of the new camp, but not yet put in operation.
At the time of our inspection visit, there was no production machinery in the factory buildings. According to the testimony of former Polish camp inmate Woźniak, the installation was disassembled and removed in January 1945.
A barbed-wire fence surrounded the entire camp terrain. Around the living area of the camp was a separate barbed-wire barrier, mounted on porcelain insulators. The wire was charged with high voltage. On the side of the barracks, in front of the above-mentioned wire barrier, was another barbed-wire fence three meters high.
While planning and constructing the camp, especially the living quarters, no provisions were made at all for fire protection installations and for sanitary installations, which are otherwise obligatory in all buildings. Open latrines without walls and roof, all of them only two to three meters away from the barracks, spread a penetrating stench all over the camp site. The distance between the barracks was 10 to 15 meters.
At the time of our inspection of the camp, 30 of the 72 existing living barracks had burnt down.

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93 Meaning (60+12)×(900 ±100) = 64,800 ±7,200.

The concentration camp contained one gas chamber[94] *of 8.5 x 3.5 x 2.5 meters in size, in the form of a simple box, built of bricks, with two hermetically sealed doors, and a ceiling of reinforced concrete; in the ceiling, there was an opening 20 cm in diameter which was used for throwing in the 'Zyklon' poisonous material. Outside the gas chamber, a small, primitive stove, built of brick and measuring 1.5 x 1.2 x 0.8 m, had been added; this was heated with coal. A metal pipe 20 cm in diameter led from this stove to the interior of the gas chamber, and ran along the walls of the chamber. The pipe was embedded in a wall clad in cement mortar, with perforations measuring 2.5 cm. CO was able to exit through a brick chimney, especially built on the outside of the gas chamber, next to the entrance door. Thus, death by asphyxiation of the people in the above-described gas chamber was due, not to CO, but to another poisonous substance, a 'Gasgift'* [gas poison[95]] *by the name of Zyklon, which was found near the west side of the gas chamber.*

The gas chamber functioned as follows:

The people were led into the gas chamber, after which the doors were hermetically sealed. The poisonous substance 'Zyklon', in the form of irregular quadrilaterals of white color, was poured through the round opening in the ceiling, and, under the influence of the atmosphere as well as the increased air temperature achieved by means of the stove described above, as well as because of the tightly packed mass of people, was transformed into a gaseous poisonous substance.

The gassing procedure was primitive, and apparently was to be perfected later.

In view of the surface area of the gas chamber, which amounted to 8 x 3 = 24 m², as well as the tight packing of the people doomed to destruction, it was possible to force 4 to 5 persons together in one square meter. In this manner, the gas chambers could contain 24 x 4 = 96 people standing up.

The testimony of a former Polish camp inmate, Zbignew Krawczyk, who was put to work for a longer time in the crematorium in order to cremate the corpses, according to whom the gas chamber could contain 90 persons standing up, corresponds to reality.

According to the testimony of this same Krawczyk, the asphyxiation procedure lasted 45 minutes.

In visiting the camp, we discovered two cremation furnaces built in 1943, which were operated with coke, as well as third furnace heated with a flammable liquid fuel, that is, a total of three furnaces. We did not find a fourth furnace, but something resembling a furnace foundation remained. There are grounds for assuming that the Germans blew up the fourth furnace.

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94 See Document 13 in the Appendix.

95 In German in the original.

The most important technical data relating to these furnaces are to be taken from the attached diagrams.[96]
The furnace consists of fireproof brickwork, with an opening for the introduction of the bodies on the front side; further down, also on the front side, is an opening for the removal of the ashes, the ash chamber. On the left side, two heating systems had been installed. On the front, there was also a small round opening 20 cm in diameter, which could be sealed with a small door; this was used to regulate the air supply. All openings had iron doors 7 to 9 mm thick.[97]
The interior volume of each cremation furnace amounts to 0.5 x 0.6 x 3.2 = 0.96 m^3. If one considers the extreme emaciation of the corpses, which means that a corpse, on average, occupied a volume of 0.25 x 0.2 x 1.56 = 0.08 m^3, this means that the furnace was able to contain 0.96 ÷ 0.08 = 12 corpses. During use at full capacity, therefore, twelve corpses could be introduced lengthwise into the furnace in two layers.
The design of the furnace, intensively heated with coke, allowed attainment of temperatures of 900 to 1000 degrees Celsius. At this temperature, the cremation process lasted 50 to 60 minutes.
The furnaces were installed together with a room used for executions by shooting and hanging, and measuring 18 x 10 x 2 meters, including the surface area of the furnace room area.
Conclusions:
1. The normal capacity of the camp, assuming 2.7 persons per square meter, was 32,400 persons, but it was in fact inhabited by 62,000 to 70,000 persons, which meant that the inmates were subject to extraordinary overcrowding. The unbearably unhygienic conditions to which they were exposed; the absence of heating in the barracks during the cold seasons; the quite insufficient, miserable nourishment; the exhausting heavy work, which lasted up to 16 or 17 hours a day;[98] *the lack of suitable clothing and suitable shoes, especially in winter; all this led to a total exhaustion of the inmates and to the rapid propagation of various contagious diseases, i.e., created the precondition for massive mortality by means of the above-described methods.*
2. The average capacity of the gas chamber, in operation twenty four hours a day at normal load, and assuming 40 minutes to fill the chamber, 45 minutes for the gassings as indicated by Krawczyk,, as well as one and a half hours to empty the chamber, amounted to the following:

$$\frac{24}{3} \times 96 = 768 \text{ persons in a time period of 24 hours}$$

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96 This document has been published in Carlo Mattogno, Franco Deana, *The Cremation Furnaces of Auschwitz.* Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield 2015, Part 2, Documents 276a&b, p. 440

97 This is a typographical error. The meaning is no doubt 7 to 9 cm; the doors of the Topf crematory furnaces of Auschwitz, for example, were 10 cm thick, and consisted of 8 cm of monolithic lining material and 2 cm of cast iron.

98 For the actual working times see Section IV.2., particularly Note 234.

3. The concentration camp had three cremation furnaces. Assuming, as stated above, that twelve corpses could be introduced into one furnace at a time, that the cremation procedure took 50 minutes, and that 10 minutes were required to fill the furnaces, then the total capacity over a 24-hour period was:

$$\frac{24}{1} \times 12 \times 3 = 864 \text{ corpses.}$$

At lower temperatures, i.e., 450-500 degrees Celsius, the cremation procedure naturally took twice as long, i.e., one hour and forty minutes; this means a capacity of:

$$\frac{24}{2} \times 12 \times 3 = 432$$

4. That the concentration camp had one gas chamber, three cremation furnaces, and one special room for shooting and hanging, is multiple proof of the fact that the people imprisoned in Stutthof were intended for extermination.

Major Fjodorow, Engineer (signature)
Lieutenant Kapustin (signature)"

In 1947, Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz published an article entitled "*Obóz koncentracyjny Stutthof*" (The Stutthof Concentration Camp), which appeared in the Bulletin of the "Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland."[99] With regard to mass killings, he remarked:[100]

"Executions were only one additional means of liquidation. There were four different methods: gassing, shooting, lethal injection, and hanging. The building containing the gas chamber was, at the time of the investigation, still intact, so that it could be thoroughly examined. It was a masonry building. The gas chamber measured 8.5 x 3.5 x 3 m. There were two entrances, which could be tightly closed by means of hooks. On the exterior, a fireplace for the gas chamber had been built; a pipe led from the fireplace, which was used to heat the interior of the chamber to approximately 25 degrees Celsius before they led the victims inside. The floor was of cement, the walls were plastered. In the ceiling was a round opening of 15 cm diameter, with a shaft through which the gas-forming substance was poured in. Under this opening, on the floor, was a second, square-shaped opening measuring 30 x 30 cm, covered with a wooden lid. Eyewitnesses have reported how the SS men poured a granular, yellow-brownish substance out of tin cans through the opening in the ceiling. At the time of the investigation, several such cans were found in the vicinity of the gas chamber. The chamber was used to kill a group of over one hundred persons at one time. Death occurred after the lapse of approximately one half-hour. Although the chamber

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[99] Z. Łukaszkiewicz, "Obóz koncentracyjny Stutthof" in: *Biułetyn Głównej Komisji badania zbrodni niemieckich w Polsce*, Warsaw, 1947, III, pp. 59-90.

[100] *Ibid.*, p. 77.

> *was usually opened after an even longer period in order to remove the bodies, it happened that individual victims still showed signs of life. The murders in the gas chamber lasted from the summer of 1944 until approximately December of the same year."*

Łukaszkiewicz claims that the gas chamber was built in the fall of 1943,[101] and adds:[102]

> *"It is obvious to all witnesses that the German authorities intended to exterminate as many Jews as possible; this was fully and entirely accomplished."*

On the number of victims in the camp, the author states:

> *"Assuming a maximum number of 110,000 inmates, a number of inmates still living at the beginning of the evacuation of 50,000, and, finally, if one considers the approximately 3,000 inmate releases according to the estimates of witnesses, as well as the more or less equal number of transfers to other camps – not including Stutthof subsidiary camps – one must conclude that approximately 50,000 persons had died by the time of the evacuation."*

Taking into consideration the approximately 15,000 victims of the evacuation (according to his own testimony), Z. Łukaszkiewicz concludes that a total number of 65,000 inmates died in Stutthof Camp and its subsidiary camps.[103] He adds:[104]

> *"The gas chamber was in operation mainly during the period from August until December 1944. The witnesses report that approximately 3,000 Jews were gassed during this time. Since the chamber was also used before this time, that is, from the moment of its construction onwards, the actual number of victims may be higher by at least one thousand. Thus, a total of 4,000 people were murdered in the gas chamber."*

In 1967, Krysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, former inmate and one of the leading Polish experts on this camp, discussed the thesis of a "ad hoc" extermination camp in an article, an excerpt of which has already been quoted.[105]

Three years later, in 1970, Dunin-Wąsowicz published a book on Stutthof, in which he wrote the following in relation to the extermination of Jews in the camp:[106]

> *"The Jews in Stutthof, quite apart from the severe living and working conditions in the camp, were decimated by two catastrophes, namely*

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[101] *Ibid.*, p. 62.
[102] *Ibid.*, p. 79.
[103] *Ibid.*, p. 82.
[104] *Ibid.*, p. 83.
[105] See Introduction, note 3.
[106] K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Obóz koncentracyjny Stutthof*, Warsaw, 1970, pp. 83f.

the so-called S.B. *Action – Special Treatment – and the typhus epidemic.*

The Special Treatment Action was basically a manifestation of the mass murder directed in particular against Jews in the concentration camps. In other camps, it took the form of a selection. In Stutthof, Special Treatment began in August 1944, and lasted until the beginning of November of the same year. The first victims were 70 Russian prisoners of war, most of whom were disabled, and who had just arrived from the prisoner-of-war camp at Czarny. Before their deaths, they spent three days in the open and received no food. They were utterly exhausted. The remains of their clothing, consisting solely of rags, were simply falling off their bodies. Finally, the SS men deceived them by making them believe that they were being taken to a sanatorium for the disabled, which made the poor wretches very happy. They attempted to clean up and bring order into their outward appearance. Near the gas chamber stood two third-class railway wagons. The SS made the Soviet prisoners of war climb into them. They were told that they were only waiting for the locomotive to be hooked on. The victims entered the waiting room without resistance in order to have dinner. The 'waiting room' turned out to be a gas chamber. The iron doors were slammed shut and the Zyklon was thrown in.

The later Special Treatment action applied exclusively to Jews, particularly women. In August, a total of over 300 women and over 100 men died in this way; in September, over 300 women; in October, over 600 women and a few dozen men, and, in the first days of November, between two and three hundred women.

The death sentences were arbitrarily handed down by the Oberscharführer [Ewald] *Foth. He was head of the Jewish camp, and a notorious drunkard. This man felt sick if he had not killed at least one inmate during the course of a day's work. The female overseers were not inferior to him in their zeal, but in the Jewish killing actions, Foth was without doubt the most bestial and ruthless torturer. One time, when the gas chamber didn't work, this bloodthirsty sadist beat the doomed women to death with his own hands. There was no appeal against his decision. Every day, he ordered a roll call lasting several hours, at which he took out the sick and weak women. He judged their state of health according to their legs, forcing the Jewish women to run races against each other. Those who could not run fast enough went to their deaths. There were frightful scenes during the separation of families. In particular, Foth sought out pregnant women who were unable to work. Once it happened that one of the young Jewish women who was pregnant fled from a group of death candidates, and was able to hide in the attic of a barracks. Foth started a search action, found her, and brought her triumphantly back to the group of death candidates.*

Initially the Jewish women did not know the purpose of the selection, but they soon realized and began passive resistance. They refused to go

> *to the place of execution, which was located approximately 800 meters from the* [Jewish] *camp. They fought back before they entered the gas chamber. The Hitlerites then staged a black comedy, setting up a doctor's consultation office in the enlarged gas chamber, and led the women in on the pretext that they were about to receive a medical examination. After the deluded women had entered without resistance, they closed the doors and let the gas in.*
> *The Poles quickly discovered this new method of murder, and informed the Jewish women. This again led to resistance. Then SS men,* Hauptscharführer [Arno] *Chemnitz and* Oberscharführer *Foth, invented a new comedy – a transport. Transfer to a subsidiary camp was considered by the Jews to be equivalent to a temporary extension of life. In particular, they believed that it would be easier to survive in the subsidiary camps, where there was a greater need for labor. This new action was called the 'sock-mending commando'."*

We will return to this "sock-mending commando" later.

A reference work published in Warsaw in 1979 by the "Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite Crimes in Poland"[107] contains a very detailed discussion of Stutthof, stating:[108]

> *"The high mortality rate was due not just to the living conditions, but to direct extermination as well. Many inmates died as the result of blows with a stick or rifle butts, either at work or in the blocks. Others were shot after having escaped, or hanged or shot after failure to escape. During mass executions in 1939/40, many Polish activists and Jews from Danzig also died.*
> *From the middle of 1944, mass killings were carried out in the gas chamber. It had been built in the fall of 1943, was located 20 meters from the crematorium, and was initially used for the delousing of clothing. At the end of June 1944, people were killed in it for the first time, using a gas (Zyklon B). The first group of gassing victims consisted of disabled Russian prisoners of war brought from a camp in Czarny. Subsequently, a few groups of Polish resistance fighters from Warsaw, Plock and Pomerania were gassed, as well as some 4,000 Jewish women, in particular sick women who could not be used for work.*
> *In the infirmary, patients were often drowned in the bathtubs or murdered by means of phenol injections into the heart.*
> *Partisans or Soviet spies were also brought to Stutthof for the execution of death sentences. The last group of Soviet spies was shot in the crematorium in March 1945* […].

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[107] With one eye on the German Democratic Republic – the Communist Central German State of 1949-1990 – the original name of the "Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland" was changed accordingly. After the end of Communist rule, when their crimes were also investigated, it was called the "Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish People."

[108] Główna Komisja…, *op. cit.* (note 15), pp. 500ff.

Approximately 85,000 people died in Stutthof Camp, its subsidiary camps, and during the evacuation."

The well-known 1983 anthology *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas* contains an article on Stutthof by K. Dunin-Wąsowicz.[109] The article deals specifically with the question of the alleged mass gassings of human beings in the camp. The article is especially significant for two reasons: first, it was written by one of the most important of all Polish Stutthof experts, and second, it appeared in a book that is considered a classic of orthodox historiography. Dunin-Wąsowicz writes:

"Just when work was begun on the gas chamber in Stutthof Concentration Camp can no longer be established; the inmates who participated in the construction work cannot remember the exact point in time. The gas chamber was constructed according to the pattern in other camps: 8 ½ meters long, 3 ½ meters wide, and 3 meters high. The poison gas Zyklon B was thrown in through a round opening in the roof, measuring 15 cm in diameter.

The first verifiable gassing in Stutthof took place on June 22, 1944. Approximately 100 persons were killed – mostly Poles and Belo-Russians who had been sentenced to death by the Reich Security Main Office. There were incidents with regard to the second group […].

The next known gassing took place on 26 July 1944. 12 members of a Polish resistance movement were killed.

The next victims were approximately 70 disabled prisoners transferred to Stutthof from a camp for Soviet prisoners of war. […]

Camp commandant SS Sturmbannführer *Paul Werner Hoppe subsequently received the order to kill the Jews who had been admitted in great numbers to his camp."*

According to the verdict of a West German court, handed down in Bochum against former camp commandant Paul Werner Hoppe and others in Bochum on December 16, 1955, "initially the old, sick, and unfit Jews and Jewish women were to be exterminated." The author Dunin-Wąsowicz continues:

"To maintain the pretense and to forestall attempts at resistance, a passenger carriage from a narrow-gauge railway leading into the camp was temporarily used as a gas chamber. […]

It is estimated that in August and September 1944, 300 Hungarian Jewish women were killed by poison gas in each case. In October, more than 600 had probably been killed, in addition to a group of men. Another 250 more women were killed in this manner before the gassing was stopped in the beginning of November 1944."

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[109] E. Kogon *et al.*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 263-266.

In his monumental book, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, Jean-Claude Pressac also discusses the gas chamber of Stutthof. In this regard, Pressac writes as follows:[110]

> *"It is not known when the gas chamber for delousing prisoner's effects was installed. Its dimensions (8 meters long, 3 wide and 2.30 high, giving a volume of approximately 55 m3) are close to the standard dimensions of those erected by BOOS*[111] *or DEGESCH. There are two gastight doors, one at the southern end and the other at the northern end. The doors do not seem to be original, since they were missing at the Liberation and there has been modification of the brickwork to adjust to the curved top of the frame, as can be seen by comparison with a photograph of this chamber published on pages 108 and 109 of* ***'1939-45. We have not forgotten'****, Polonia, Warsaw 1962. The agent used for delousing is not known precisely, but given the presence of the external stove (to the left of the door, see Photo 6), it must have been either dry heat or hydrogen cyanide (Zyklon B) used in a heated room. In this case, it was not essential to pour the product in through an external opening, as an operator wearing a gas mask could distribute the pellets or porous discs on the floor, then go out and close the door. At the end of the cycle, opening the two doors allowed efficient natural ventilation. From June 22nd to the beginning of November 1944, it was used as a* ***homicidal*** *gas chamber for groups of about 100 people, Zyklon B being poured in through a small opening of 15 cm in the roof, a system apparently introduced on the advice of SS Lieutenant Colonel Rudolf Höß, former commandant of Auschwitz-Birkenau and at that time head of Department D1 of the WVHA of the SS (SS Economic Administrative Main Office). While the history of this gas chamber is known from testimonies by Father Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, there has been no scientific examination of the 'murder weapon' since 1945, which means that we do not know how the chamber functioned as a delousing installation and are unable to provide material proof of its criminal use. The number of victims is estimated at one to two thousand."* (Emphasis by Pressac.)

In a text first published in Polish and then included as part of an anthology in German translation five years later,[112] Janina Grabowska deals at length with the "immediate extermination" of inmates. She remarks:[113]

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[110] Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York 1989, pp. 539f.

[111] The Cologne-based company Friedrich Boos, specializing in heating, ventilation and sanitation, performed numerous constructions projects at Auschwitz as well.

[112] Janina Grabowska, *Stutthof. Informator historyczny*, Danzig, 1990. The German translation is the first part of the anthology edited by H. Kuhn, *op. cit.* (note 45).

[113] H. Kuhn, *ibid.*, pp. 62-64.

> *"In the second half of 1944, the importance of Stutthof in the extermination machinery increased mightily, since the camp was integrated into the system of the 'Final Solution' of the Jewish question. At this time, over 47,000 Jewish men, women and children were sent to Stutthof Camp. The first selections of those unfit for work were undertaken immediately after the arrival of the transports from Eastern Europe. At that point, Stutthof was not yet equipped to liquidate that many people. The decision was made to transfer them to Auschwitz-Birkenau. A transport of 1,423 persons, including mothers with children, departed Stutthof on June 26, 1944. Another transport with 603 persons – including, again, mothers with children, pregnant women, sick and disabled inmates – left Stutthof on September 10, 1944. These people were killed in the gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau."*

The official camp guide states:[114]

> *"The smallest building is the gas chamber, the construction of which dates back to the fall of 1943. It was initially used for the delousing of clothing. But in June 1944, one began to kill inmates by means of gas – Zyklon B – in the chamber. In the period from July to November 1944, Jews, mostly women, from the transports entering Stutthof at that time, were killed (more than 47,000 inmates, most of them women, entered Stutthof from July 29 to October 14). Two specially modified carriages of the narrow-gauge railway were also used in gassing the prisoners."*

The short entry on Stutthof Camp in the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*, published in 1993, consists simply of a summary of articles by K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, which the author of the article, however, obviously failed to understand correctly. In particular, he states:[115]

> *"Starting in June 1944, some of the new arrivals were immediately murdered in the gas chambers*[116] *of the camp. Of the 50,000 Jews brought to Stutthof, almost all perished."*

In the official camp history – prepared with the participation of eleven Polish historians – the chapter "Direkte Extermination," taken from Danuta Drywa, states as follows:[117]

> *"In the second half of 1944, a new period began in the history of Stutthof. Starting in July, the camp was included in camps carrying out the 'Final Solution' of the Jewish question. Beginning on June 29, 1944, mass transports of Jews from the eastern territories entered Stutthof, as well as of other Jews transferred from Auschwitz Concentration Camp.* […]

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[114] Romuald Drynko, *Informator wystaw stałych Muzeum Stutthof w Stutowie*, Gdingen/Stutthof, 1991, p. 27.

[115] E. Jäckel *et al.*, *op. cit.* (note 5), volume III, p. 1382.

[116] Note the plural!

[117] *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp. 250, 251f.; the original German is clumsy in parts, which is the fault of the Polish publisher.

The Jews were subjected to selection. The first selections were performed immediately upon arrival of the transport into the camp. As a result, a transport with 1,893 persons left Stutthof for Auschwitz on August 26, 1944. The transport consisted of women, including mothers with children unable to work. Another transport of mothers and children, as well as of the sick and unfit, was sent on September 10. These transports were for the purpose of extermination. Upon arrival at the destination, the Jews were sent directly into the gas chamber. Further selections in the camp were intended to select the inmates for gassing in Stutthof itself.

The gas chamber in Stutthof Concentration Camp, built in 1943, was initially used for the disinfection of clothing. It is difficult to establish exactly when it was put to work for extermination. The earlier literature on Stutthof assumes that the first group of gassed persons consisted of Russian invalids from the prisoner of war camp at Czarne; this occurred at the end of July 1944, after receipt of the Inspectorate's approval. Based on recent research, Maria Jezierska was able to establish that this gassing took place on August 22, 1944. The Soviet prisoners of war arrived in Stutthof Concentration Camp with a large transport from the Security Police Riga on August 15, and received the numbers 63224-63806. Of this group, 77 invalids were given the same date of death, that is, August 22. On the date, neither the number of the death certificate appears in the death register nor the letter 'E', which would indicate execution. This data is also missing from the personal identification sheet for these prisoners of war.

As physically unfit, they represented no economic value for the camp management, and were doomed for extermination by gas from the outset, according to guideline '14 f 13'. In the concentration camp regulations, '14 f' stood for the death of an inmate, and the number '13' with Action 'T4' meant gassing as a form of euthanasia. An approximate date of the gassing of war invalids, also from August, is given by Aldo Coradello, in which he adds a suggestive description of their attitude upon entering the gas chamber. He learned of this from crematorium Kapo Wilhelm Patsch and his assistant, Franciszek Knitter. The gassing of another group of Soviet invalids at an earlier date cannot, however, be entirely excluded, because executions of unregistered groups also took place, as already mentioned.

Since the documents for the first half of the year 1944 are missing, we can neither find confirmation nor denial of this fact in the camp records. For this reason, it is equally difficult to establish the date of the gassing of two groups of Poles, partisans from the Bialystok region and from the Warsaw ghetto uprising, often described by former inmates in their memoirs. These memoirs indicate that the gassing of approximately 100 partisans was carried out at the end of July, while the Warsaw group was murdered between September and November. There are discrepancies in the reports relating to the date and procedure of the ac-

tion, but most of these reports repeat that both groups were taken to the crematorium, and attempted to hide in the camp because they had been warned of their fate. The SS escorts began to shoot; some of the inmates fell, and the others were taken to the gas chamber.

The killings by gas acquired greater proportions when the Jewish inmates arrived in 1944. According to the testimony of the former SS man Hans Rach, the gassing of the Jewish women lasted from July to November 1944; on some days, during this time, ten or even tens of people were killed. The date was marked with the date stamp in the record books, and, as in the case of the Soviet prisoners of war, the numbers are missing from the death book. The death of the first larger group of female inmates was noted on July 24, 1944; the other mortalities were registered throughout August, September and October.

The Jewish women were selected for gassing during roll calls that lasted hours. The selections were carried out by the block elder with SS men, usually Ewald Foth, Otto Knoth and Otto Haupt; sometimes the camp doctor Otto Heidl participated, in addition to Theodor Meyer and Arno Chemnitz. Particularly pregnant women, mothers with children, and the sick and elderly were slated for extermination. Their state of health was judged by the condition of their legs; foot races were therefore held between Jewish women. Anyone who could not run was loaded onto a wagon and taken to the gas chamber. When the gas chamber was full, the door was shut, and Otto Knott, who had undergone special training in Oranienburg and in Lublin Concentration Camp (Majdanek), climbed onto the roof and poured Zyklon B through a special opening into the chamber. In addition to Knott, SS Unterscharführer *Hans Rach and Ewald Foth also did this.*

Initially, the women, children, and old people went unsuspectingly and quietly into the gas chamber. Later, when, thanks to the quick circulation of rumors in the camp, they knew what was in store for them, the groups of 25-30 persons being led to the gas chamber put up resistance; but they were violently forced inside. Since the situation became difficult at the end of October or beginning of November, extermination in the gas chamber was stopped. To fool the victims, two of the narrow-gauge railway carriages were equipped for the gassing. In the Jewish camp, it was announced that there was a need for women who could knit and darn stockings. The selected persons, mostly older Jewish women, were given sewing and knitting needles (this is the origin of the so-called sock-mending commando), and taken away, since they allegedly were supposedly being taken to the workplace by train. The women saw SS men in railway uniforms and were convinced that they were being taken to work, and willingly climbed onto the trains. The narrow-gauge railway made a round trip around the camp and stopped in front of the crematorium with the gassed Jewish women.

In November 1944, the extermination action was stopped. But this did not reduce the mortality in the camp, since a typhus epidemic broke out,

> *which affected mostly the Jewish camp, exhausted by work and illness. It is highly likely that the epidemic was provoked by the camp administration, since nothing in particular was done to combat it."*

In the following chapter, we will examine the historical basis for the allegations made in the orthodox version of history.

CHAPTER III:
Stutthof as an "Extermination Camp": Critical Investigation of the Sources

1. Preliminary Remarks

Polish historians who directed their attention to Stutthof were even more influenced by the crude propaganda of the immediate post-war period than Polish Majdanek specialists were, for example. They make exhaustive use of the most dubious eyewitnesses who are, for the most part, refuted by the available documents. This practice is reflected, in particular, in the claim that the reason for building the Stutthof Camp was to bring about the "direct" and "indirect" extermination of the inmates. So-called "indirect extermination" is alleged to have consisted of creating intolerable living conditions in the camp,[118] while "direct extermination" is said to have consisted of murdering the inmates. In this regard, D. Drywa remarks as follows in the official camp history:[119]

> *"In addition to indirect extermination, the concentration camps, not excepting Stutthof, also performed direct extermination, the purpose of which was to kill as many people as possible in a short time. The methods used for this purpose were: shooting, hanging, killing by phenol injection or in the gas chamber."*

We will now examine the basis of these claims.

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[118] Compare in this regard the chapter "Indirekte Extermination" by E. Grot, in: *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp. 167-199.

[119] D. Drywa, "Direkte Extermination," in: *ibid.*, p. 234.

2. "Indirect Extermination:" Mistreatment, Torture, and Deliberate Propagation of Disease

Although the camp regulations prohibited the mistreatment of inmates, there is no doubt that the inmates in Stutthof, as in other concentration camps, suffered not only from hard work, malnutrition, intolerable hygienic conditions, and epidemics spread by these intolerable hygienic conditions, but also from cruelties and mistreatment by the *Kapos* and guards.

The *Merkblätter für den Unterricht. An die SS Führer im K.L. Dienst* (Instruction sheets for SS officers on duty in concentration camps) stated unequivocally:[120]

> *"Guards are prohibited from inflicting corporal punishment upon inmates unless authorized."*

The punishments were meted out against any individual by an official regulation reflected in a document that has been preserved – a *Strafbuch* (Register of punishments) starting on October 1, 1941. The first inmate punished was Franz Hempel, ID 10572, who had been caught smoking in his room at 5.10 a.m. (he was *Stubenältester* – barrack eldest).[121]

On July 11, 1944, the Stutthof Camp commandant, Paul Werner Hoppe, promulgated the *Kommandanturbefehl* (Headquarters Order) No. 46, which reads:[122]

> *"Subordinates and men must again be continuously instructed that they, insofar as they are assigned as commando leaders or chain of sentry posts, are responsible for seeing that sufficient work is performed by the inmate commandos. It is a matter of course that the inmates must not be beaten, pushed, or touched in so doing. Reprimands may only be given verbally. It does not matter whether the guard gives his instructions in German or in a foreign language, for the inmate knows well what he is supposed to do."*

It would, of course, be naïve to assume that no mistreatment took place in practice, since regulations often exist only on paper. Orthodox Polish historiography, however, goes to the other extreme, and inundates the reader with "eyewitness testimony" which quite obviously falls into the category of atrocity propaganda, yet still are being taken seriously by Polish historians. The following are a few examples.

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[120] AMS, I-IIB-6; see Document 14 in the Appendix.
[121] AMS, I-IIC-1; see Document 15 in the Appendix.
[122] AMS, I-IB-3. See Document 16 in the Appendix.

In discussing the eyewitness account by an Ester Szlamowitz, D. Drywa writes:[123]

> *"One day the commander of the women's camp came and explained to the block eldest that they wanted 150 corpses on a certain day. Since it was difficult to gather so many deaths on the first call, the soup kettles for us inmates were emptied out into the latrine. The starved inmates began to scoop up the remains of food from the latrine; this immediately helped: the Germans reached their quota easily."*

A certain Teodor Kluka tells of the block elder Josef Pabst:[124]

> *"*[…] *Pabst, who was characterized by particular cruelty to the inmates, killed an inmate for waking him up at night while walking by his bunk on his way to the latrine, and there were days on which he killed approximately ten men."*

According to Father K. Dunin-Wąsowicz – himself a former Stutthof inmate – Pabst, who according to the witness Kluka is supposed to have killed approximately 10 men on some days, was publicly executed by the Germans at Stutthof at the end of 1944 for *one* murder – breaking the ribs of a Pole and then strangling him – after confirmation of the death sentence by Berlin.[125]

E. Grot goes one better based on the testimony of Olga M. Pickholz:[126]

> *"In the summer of 1944, when the camp could no longer house all inmates in the barracks, the camp administration stopped the water supply to the Jewish section. The women were forced to drink their own urine."*

It is hard to believe, but this historian's gullibility even goes so far as to repeat the old atrocity story of soap from human fat:[127]

> *"In 1944, the Institute for Hygiene and pathological anatomy in Danzig, administered by Prof. Rudolf Spanner, undertook the experiment of manufacturing soap from human fat. The bodies were collected chiefly from Stutthof, as well as the camps in Königsberg and Elbing. The first trial experiment in the manufacture of soap was carried out in February 1944. Until the end of the war, soap production did not extend beyond mere experimentation. The institute was visited, among others, by* [Reichsstatthalter of Danzig-West Prussia] *Albert Forster, the Minister for Education Bernhard Rust, and Reich Health Minister Leonardo Conti. This enhanced the institute's official character. In the statement of the Commission which investigated the laboratory on May 4, 1945, it*

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[123] D. Drywa, *op. cit*. (note 119) pp. 250f.
[124] *Ibid.*, p. 239.
[125] K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *op. cit.* (note 106), p. 90.
[126] E. Grot, *op. cit.* (note 65), p. 182.
[127] *Ibid.*, p. 199.

> *was stated that 'in Danzig, German scientists committed the crime of soap production from the human fat of inmates and prisoners of war, chiefly of Polish and Russian origin, as well as the crime of preparing human skin for utilitarian purposes* […]. *In the light of the indictment of the State Prosecutor of the USSR in Nuremberg and the Decision of the Reich Court of March 7, 1912, any disposition of the human body after death was impermissible and punishable from a legal point of view.'"*

It is well known that orthodox Western historiography has long since abandoned the fairy tale of soap from human fat. As remarked by Raul Hilberg:[128]

> *"Even the soap rumor appears to have stubbornly clung to life. According to Friedmann,*[129] *soap was actually boycotted by the Polish population because they assumed that human body parts were used in the manufacture. A document from Prof. Spanner, the Director of the Anatomical Institute of the Medical Academy of Danzig, dated February 15, 1944 (USSR-196), contains a recipe for the manufacture of soap from fat residues, with recommendations for the removal of unpleasant odors. The document does not, however, specifically mention human fat.* […] *On May 5, 1945, however, the new (Polish) mayor of Gdansk, Kotus-Jankowski, testified before a session of the National Council: 'At the Hygiene Institute in Danzig we discovered a soap factory in which human bodies were used coming from the Stutthof Camp near Danzig. We found 350 corpses of Polish and Soviet prisoners. We found the remains of a boiler which contained boiled human flesh, a box of processed human bones* [sic]*, and baskets with human hands, feet, and skin, from which the fat had been removed.'*[129] *The rumor of soap manufacture even survived the war. Pieces of soap allegedly made from the fat of murdered Jews were stored in Israel and in the YIVO Institute in New York."*

To be fair, we must add that such silly credulity is not the exclusive province of Polish historiography. The story of the human-soap factory in Danzig had already been proffered by the Jewish historian Konnilyn G. Feig in a quick guide to the Stutthof Camp. Although he knew about the "enormous controversy" which human-soap claims had caused among orthodox historians, he had come to this surprising conclusion:[130]

> *"I accept without further question that the Nazis did use every part of the human body, for the evidence now is irrefutable."*

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[128] Raul Hilberg, *op. cit.* (note 6), vol. II, p. 1,034.

[129] This is a reference to Filip Friedman, *This Was Oswiecim,* London 1946, p. 64.

[130] Konnilyn G. Feig, *Hitler's Death Camps. The Sanity of Madness*. Holmes & Meier, New York/London 1981, pp. 201f. & 479, note 19; the book's pp. 191-203 are dedicated to Stutthof.

Just as unfounded is Danuta Drywa's claim that the terrible typhus epidemic which struck Stutthof starting in the fall of 1944 was "very probably" caused by the camp administration.[131] Perhaps the German camp administration had a manic death wish? Even their own people suffered during the first epidemic, which broke out in spring of 1942:[132]

> *"The first cases of sickness from abdominal typhus appeared in the spring of 1942. On April 24, Dr. Stefan Mirau, inmate doctor since 1939, died in the infirmary from typhus; a few SS men also fell ill, one of them died."*

In the very same book the attentive reader even finds that Drywa refutes her own claim:[133]

> *"Before the washroom and delousing installations were finished in the camp, the inmates were taken to Danzig for this purpose. The camp clothing was disinfested upon mass outbreaks of contagious diseases."*

3. "Direct Extermination" by Means Other than Gassing

a) Executions

As in other camps, there was a significant number of executions at the Stutthof Camp as well. The Polish historian Maria Elżbieta Jezierska has done extensive research on this topic.[134] She has based it both on testimonies and on German documents, and in two cases even on physical evidence (exhumations). We are interested only in the documents and physical evidence.

According to this Polish research, two sets of executions for resistance against the occupational troops are documented for the camp's first phase (from 1939 to January 1942, when it became a concentration camp): 22 persons were shot on January 20, and 67 persons on March 22, 1940.[135] The shootings were described by witnesses and confirmed by an exhumation carried out in 1946. The corpses were buried in the woods between Stegna and Stutthof.[135]

Based on the extant original documentation (registration records and personal records of prisoners), 263 executions occurred during the camp's second phase (January 1942 to 1945). Most death sen-

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[131] D. Drywa, *op. cit.* (note 119), p. 253.
[132] E. Grot, *op. cit.* (note 65), p. 188.
[133] *Ibid.*, p. 177.
[134] M. E. Jezierska, "Straceni w Obozie Stutthof," in: *SZM*, no. 7, 1987, pp. 79-199.
[135] *Ibid.*, pp. 114f.

tences were imposed for politically motivated acts (partisan activity, support for armed resistance, communist propaganda, sabotage, etc.; in some cases even for attempting to escape from the camp). A small proportion of those executed had received capital punishment for ordinary crimes (murder, rape, theft, etc.; in one case even for cruelty to animals).

Among those executed in this phase were 126 Soviet citizens, 122 Poles, 12 Jews, 2 Germans, and 1 Latvian; 19 were women. The death sentences were executed by hanging in 50 cases and by firing squad in 36 cases; for the remaining 177 cases only the execution was recorded without indicating the method.[136]

b) Euthanasia by Injection

As for other camps, the claim is also made for Stutthof that some inmates were killed by SS doctors or health auxiliaries by means of injections. "Heart failure" and the like are then alleged to have been entered mendaciously onto the records as the cause of death. The Polish historian Maria Elżbieta Jezierska cites several cases of "lethal injection" ("*spilowanie*"). An example, according to the testimony of three witnesses, was Taissa Lyssenko, a Russian woman who, in a fit of mental derangement, threw herself naked onto the barbed wire and suffered such frightful injuries that she was killed by deadly injection. The relevant personal file (no. 22967) is said to have indicated "heart – general physical exhaustion. Serious psychosis."[137] Jezierska considers three cases of euthanasia as proven with certainty, and eight others as probably "similar to the first."[138]

Although such killings are not documented, we do not doubt that they may have happened. The number of such cases may have amounted to a few dozen. A special case of euthanasia will be discussed later.

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[136] *Idid.*, pp. 127-142. The documents don't indicate what criteria were applied to determine the methods of execution – firing squad or hanging. Both were used for political and for common crimes.

[137] *Ibid.* p. 151.

[138] *Ibid.*, pp. 151f.

c) The Infirmary as "Extermination Factory"

What cannot be taken seriously – in contrast to the data on individual examples of euthanasia – is the claim of Polish historians that the camp infirmary was a sinister murder factory. D. Drywa writes:[139]

> *"One of the locations where the inmates of Stutthof Concentration Camp were deliberately and systematically exterminated was the camp infirmary."*

In the same vein, J. Grabowska writes:[140]

> *"Inmates who lay sick too long in the infirmary were killed by the SS doctors by phenol injections or in the gas chamber. All these actions caused the inmates to consider the infirmary an extermination factory."*

She undermines her own statement, though, when informing us about thousands of releases from the camp hospital:[141]

> *"The fundamental sources for investigation of the governmental structure consisted of the record books, transport lists, and the register of releases from the camp infirmary (18,000) and the inmate personal files."* (Emphasis added.)

Considering these 18,000 releases of recuperated inmates, it is easy to see that Stutthof inmates, when they fell ill, had no reason to be overly afraid of this "extermination factory"!

The value of the claim that sick inmates were "deliberately and systematically exterminated" is apparent from the fact that, before completion of the camp infirmary, seriously ill inmates were treated in a civilian hospital. E. Grot remarks:[142]

> *"The other patients (i.e., those not treated on the spot), were transported to the infirmary at Neufahrwasser; especially serious cases (for example, amputations of the extremities) were treated in Danzig State Hospital (the Stutthof inmates were confined to a barrack guarded by the police).* […] *After April (1940), amputations of the legs or hands were already performed in the camp infirmary."*

Why did the Germans perform amputations if the unfit were to be immediately liquidated?

That the camp hospital was indeed a real hospital results also from a list of medical supplies – 219 products with a collective weight of more than 80 kg – which was supplied to the camp by the Danzig *Gestapo* on 31 January 1942.[143]

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[139] D. Drywa, *op. cit.* (note 119), p. 248.
[140] J. Grabowska, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 24.
[141] J. Grabowska, *op. cit.* (note 47), p. 142.
[142] E. Grot, *op. cit.* (note 65), p. 191.
[143] *Geheime Staatspolizei. Rechnung über die an die Inspektion der KZ.-Lager, KZ.-*

Despite its sinister context, the story of the three murderous healthcare workers appears involuntarily comical, if only the issue itself weren't so tragic. This story as dished out by D. Drywa runs as follows:[144]

> *"The transport with ten inmate healthcare workers which arrived from Dachau Concentration Camp on April 22, 1942 had another intention* [other than the transfer of inmates for labor reasons]. *They had been especially trained to kill the inmates in the camp infirmary with intravenous injections of phenol.* […] *Another ten healthcare workers were transferred from Dachau Concentration Camp in September 1944 to kill Jewish women with injections of phenol."*

In a different paper, the same author states:[145]

> *"On August 23, 1944* [correct date: September 23, 1944[146]] *another 10 trained healthcare workers (including the Frenchmen Alphonse Kienzler and Paul Weil), arrived at Stutthof from Dachau in connection with implementation of action on the 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question' underway at Stutthof at that time."*

The two "murderous healthcare workers" from France, Alphonse Kienzler and Paul Weil, are supposed to be star eyewitnesses to the reported mass crimes in Stutthof, and are referred to as such in the official history of the camp![146] The claim by D. Drywa appears even more distorted in view of the fact that at least one of the two healthcare workers alleged to have been transferred from Alsace to West Prussia for the purpose of participation in the mass murder of Jews by injection, P. Weil, was himself Jewish. Polish historians are so hypnotized by the preconceived notion that everything that happened at Stutthof was intended to bring about the *extermination* of human beings that they can simply no longer conceive of the idea that healthcare workers could ever be sent anywhere *to heal human beings*. At the same time, however, these same historians inform us that in April 1942 – when the first contingent of healthcare workers arrived from Dachau – typhus had just broken out at Stutthof![142] The second group of healthcare workers was therefore almost certainly

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Lager Stutthof, am 31.1.1942 übergebenen Medikamente und Verbandsmittel. Dated 14 April 1942. RGVA, 1323-2-140, pp. 115-118, see Document 17 in the Appendix.

144 D. Drywa, *op. cit.* (note 119), pp. 162, 165.

145 D. Drywa, *op. cit.* (note 27), p. 19. The date of this transfer was 23 September 1944; this harmonizes with the inmate numbers assigned to the two healthcare workers; compare the table of transports on p. 30 of the article.

146 J. Grabowska, *op. cit.* (note 47), p. 155. The most important excerpt from the eyewitness statements of Kienzler and Weil will be given later (compare Chapter III, Section 4, d) ii.).

sent to Stutthof in connection with an epidemic as well, since, according to E. Grot:[147]

> *"The next epidemic – typhus this time – broke out at the end of the summer of 1944, when there were approximately 33,000 inmates in the main camp."*

The indication of the point in time – "the end of the summer" – coincides perfectly with the date of the transfer of the second group of healthcare workers – September 23!

d) Conclusion

There is no doubt that life in Stutthof was extremely hard, and that camp discipline was very harsh. But this in no way implies a policy of extermination. Death sentences were passed for absurdly minor offences – such as attempted escape – but they always involved an *individual* punitive procedure, and had to be confirmed by Berlin.[148] Cases of euthanasia were restricted to a small number of seriously ill and seriously injured persons, while the legends of the murderous functions of the camp infirmary are refuted simply by the 18,000 inmates who received medical treatment there and left the building alive.

That efforts were made in Berlin to ensure improved living conditions in the camp is shown by the following statement by E. Grot:[149]

> *"The lack of food, in addition to the physically exhausting hard work, became one of the factors of indirect extermination. Himmler's circular directive of 5 December 1941 on the introduction of additional food rations and clothing had no influence on the improved living conditions in Stutthof. Himmler's regulation of October 29, 1942 on the admission of food packages into the camps, as well as Pohl's order of mid-May 1943 on the recognition of cash bonuses for hard-working inmates, were both carried out and gave the inmates a chance to receive additional rations in addition to the official rations."*

The above must certainly be considered evidence against a policy of extermination.

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[147] E. Grot, "Indirekte Extermination," *op. cit.* (note 65), p. 188.
[148] M. E. Jezierska, *op. cit.* (note 137), pp. 112ff.
[149] E. Grot, "Indirekte Extermination," *op. cit.* (note 65), pp. 182f.

4. The Gassing of Human Beings

a) Stutthof as Auxiliary "Extermination Camp" of Auschwitz

As described in the previous chapter, Polish historiography considers the Stutthof Camp to have been some kind of auxiliary extermination camp of Auschwitz. This thesis is explicitly expounded several times in the camp's orthodox historiography.

In this regard Janina Grabowska writes that, with the massive influx of Jewish prisoners in the second half of 1944, Stutthof[150]

> *"changed its character; it was no longer just a large concentration camp, but also an extermination site for thousands of Jews."*

She then explains her thesis as follows:[151]

> *"The extermination of Hungarian Jews, which was implemented in Auschwitz until the middle of 1944, exceeded the camp's capacity. A part of them, especially Jewish women, was transferred to Stutthof. In the summer of that year the Litzmannstadt (Łódź) ghetto was also cleared, so that many transports, after a short stay at Auschwitz, were directed to Stutthof."*

What is important to note is the claim that Stutthof's presumed extermination role is not said to have been the consequence of a local initiative, but was allegedly based on a specific order from Berlin. Grabowska expounds this argument by using the terminology sanctioned by orthodox historiography:[152]

> *"In the second half of 1944, Stutthof was included in the 'Final Solution' of the Jewish question.* [...] *They* [the Jewish inmates] *were subject to direct extermination within the framework of special treatment (*Sonderbehandlung – SB*). At Stutthof this activity began in July 1944 and lasted until November."*

Marek Orski goes even further by averring the following thesis:[153]

> *"Within the camp's social structure the Jews occupied the lowest rank. With a few exceptions they were slated for direct extermination within the framework of special treatment. Upon arrival at the camp, the Jews were housed in the so-called Jewish camp* [Judenlager] *(a separate part of the new camp) and subject to selection. Then the sick and those unable to work were systematically murdered, or – as the court that tried von Hoppe and Knott in Bochum* [Germany] *has ascertained in its verdict – 'those from which the masters of that time thought they could no*

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[150] J. Grabowska, *op. cit.* (note 47), p. 119.

[151] *Ibid.*, p. 123. On the deportation of the residents of the Łódź ghetto see Section IV.3.

[152] *Ibid.*, pp. 132 & 134.

[153] M. Orski, *op. cit.* (note 62), pp. 154f.

longer reap any profit, neither in the form of labor nor as a barter token in negotiations with neutral or enemy states, which could be important for the conduct of the war.' From August 1944 they were killed in the gas chamber and in an especially equipped gassing train."

b) The Stutthof Gas Chamber: Structure and Method of Functioning

Before examining the question of the mass gassing of human beings, the structure and functioning of the reported killing installation must first be examined.

There are no surviving documents relating to the Stutthof gas chamber, located approximately 10 meters north of the crematorium (see Photos 1-18 in the Appendix). According to orthodox historiography, it was built in 1943 for disinfestation purposes. The following description is based on a personal inspection by the authors during their visit to Stutthof in the early summer of 1997.

The gas chamber (Photo 1) is a small, rectangular structure 8.5 meters in length, 3.5 meters in width, and 2.55 meters in height (exterior measurements). The walls are of ordinary brick masonry, while the ceiling is of reinforced concrete. The chamber had two gas-tight steel doors, located opposite each other. The steel doors were removed before the arrival of the Soviet troops, probably upon instructions from the camp authorities, as can be seen from a Soviet photograph taken in 1945 (Photo 2). The doors in existence today, of light sheet steel (Photos 3 and 4), were installed after the war. To the left of the south door, on the exterior wall, is a small brick stove (Photos 5 and 6); the front side of the stove contains two small metal doors. The upper door is the hearth door; the lower one is the ash chamber door. The first was used to close the coke-fired combustion chamber, containing a grid of diagonal rods. An opening pierced in the rear wall links the combustion chamber to a cast-iron pipe (Photo 7) running alongside the gas chamber's inside wall. The stove doors bear the inscription "*Patent Bzrajber*."

The interior volume of the chamber is 8 m × 3 m × 2.50 m. The floor is of perforated brick.[154] The brick's holes are filled with cement. The walls are whitewashed; the ceiling is of rough cement. At stove height, the above-mentioned cast-iron pipe, approximately 25 cm in diameter, runs along the west wall;[155] the pipe then bends at a

[154] Brick with three round perforations.
[155] It is 78 cm in circumference.

right angle, rising perpendicularly up the north wall (Photo 8) and leading out of the roof of the chamber into a brick chimney (Photo 9). Today, this pipe is almost entirely walled in, forming a rectangular solid 65 cm high and 50 cm wide. It is uncovered only for the short section visible in Photo 7. As may be seen in a Soviet photograph taken after the capture of the camp (Photo 10), the first half of the pipe was originally surrounded by a wall of perforated brick of the type used in construction of the floor; the other half was uncovered.

A circular opening 15 cm in diameter was pierced in the middle of the ceiling (Photo 11). Above is a metal shaft with a lid (Photo 12). Directly beneath the opening in the floor mentioned above is a small drain (Photo 13) formerly equipped with a protective grate. Enormous stains of Iron Blue (or Prussian Blue) formed by iron cyanides which had migrated over the years to the surface[156] are visible on all four inside walls of the chamber, clearly proving the use of hydrogen cyanide gas in this building (Photo 14). Blue pigmentation has also formed around the circular opening in the ceiling. Finally, enormous blue stains are visible on the exterior walls of the chamber, particularly on the east (Photos 15 & 16) and west walls (Photos 17 & 18), and, to a lesser extent, near the doors on the north and south walls as well (Photos 5 and 9).

This gas chamber may appear to have been rather crudely constructed in comparison with the DEGESCH circulation devices designed for disinfestation with Zyklon B, but it was quite capable of functioning effectively. The relatively low temperature required for the rapid evaporation of hydrogen cyanide out of the granular carrier was ensured by the output of the stove. The combustion products heated the cast-iron pipe, as well as the walls of perforated brickwork partially surrounding the pipe, and then rose through the chimney into the open air. The small shaft in the ceiling made it possible to shake out the Zyklon B with the doors closed, after covering the opening of the floor drain with paper.

Simultaneously opening the two doors along the north-southwest axis achieved rather rapid and efficient ventilation. This was accelerated by the heat which continued to radiate all along the pipe. If the fire was kept burning during ventilation as well, the result was an air

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[156] This was also confirmed by qualitative chemical analysis carried out by the Soviets. The document is mentioned in: AMS, 2-V-24, p. 3.

flow inside the chamber which would have been sufficient to ensure an almost complete air exchange in a short time.

Contrary to J.-C. Pressac's impression, the opening in the ceiling was quite necessary to the functioning of the installation. Simply sprinkling Zyklon B granulate on the floor would have been prevented by the metal racks upon which the articles of clothing were to be hung and then disinfested, occupying the entire surface area of the gas chamber right up to the doors.[157] That this opening was installed on the murderous instructions of Rudolf Höß was simply invented by Pressac.

Nevertheless, in our view, use of these delousing chambers in their original condition for the killing of human beings would have been possible *in a purely technical sense*. The time periods mentioned in the Soviet Expert Commission's report, as well as the procedure described in the report, lie within the realm of the possible, at least theoretically.[158] We must now examine whether or not the chamber was *actually* used for this purpose. The following, therefore, is intended to approach the question from the *historical* point of view.

c) The Crematorium

First a few remarks on the camp crematorium are in order. The crematorium, of course, plays quite a secondary role in connection with the reported extermination of human beings, but the claims made by eyewitnesses with relation to its function and capacity are a solid criterion for an evaluation of their general credibility.

In Stutthof, two coke-fueled furnaces by the H. Kori Company were installed (Photo 19). The same firm also installed one oil-fired furnace. These three furnaces are exhibited in the crematorium reconstructed by the Poles after the war.[159]

No documents relating to the crematorium have been found. All statements contained in the literature on this installation are based on eyewitness testimonies. The most detailed information is found in Ewa Ferenc; we quote:[160]

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[157] This rack is similar to the one shown by Pressac, *op. cit.* (note 110), pp. 83ff.

[158] Although it is unlikely that it took 40 minutes to fill the chamber with victims, as the report claims.

[159] A description of them can be found in Mattogno, F. Deana, *op. cit.* (note 96), vol. I, 2nd part, Chapter 11.

[160] Ewa Ferenc, "Bau und Erweiterung…," *op. cit.* (note 16), pp. 105f.

> *"The plans of the camp crematorium arrived together with the plans of the new camp. The camp was to have had eight double furnaces and one morgue, to be linked to the furnaces by a lift. A gold workshop with a safe and 4 rooms measuring 20 m² in surface area were to be connected to the crematorium. On the plan, the rooms were designated with the letters* z.b.V. *(*zur besonderen Verfügung = *for special duty). The furnaces were to cremate approximately 100 corpses in one hour. According to the plans, the whole crematorium was to be surrounded by a high wall. The plan, however, was not carried out."*

As a source, the Polish historian refers to the testimony of the former inmate Wacław Lewandowski. The latter, however, provided a distorted description of the original crematorium project. A document from the Central Construction Office of Auschwitz offers a background explanation: on June 15, 1942, the Construction Office of Stutthof Concentration Camp asked the Central Construction Office of Auschwitz for information on the installation of a crematorium. The head of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office, SS *Hauptsturmführer* Karl Bischoff, replied on July 10, enclosing the plans for the future Crematorium II of Birkenau, providing for the construction of "5 three-muffle cremation furnaces." Bischoff also reported that, according to the furnace manufacturer, Topf, the period of time required for the cremation of one corpse amounted to one half hour.[161] This information was not in accordance with reality, however, but was rather the reflection of wishful thinking. In actual fact, the average cremation time for a corpse amounted to one hour.[162]

Hence, the witness Lewandowski not only got the number of furnaces wrong, but mentioned the wrong model as well ("eight double furnaces" instead of five triple-muffle furnaces); he also exaggerated the crematory capacity by a factor of three in comparison to the capacity reported by Topf (six corpses instead of two).

E. Ferenc continues:[163]

> *"In the summer of 1942, an oil-fueled cremation furnace was delivered. It was installed on the east side of the infirmary, with a wooden roof built over it; the crematorium was set apart from the camp. The furnace was in operation approximately one half year. It burnt 5-6 corpses in 45 minutes, using approximately 5 liters of oil to do so. The first cremation took place on September 1, 1942* […]

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[161] RGVA, 502-1-272, p. 168. The document is reproduced in: C. Mattogno, F. Deana, *op. cit.*, (note 96), vol. II; doc. 263, p. 424.

[162] Cremation times are discussed in detail in Mattogno, F. Deana, *op. cit.* (note 96).

[163] Ewa Ferenc, "Bau und Erweiterung…," *op. cit.* (note 16), p. 106.

> *At the end of 1942, the Kori Corporation in Berlin built two walled cremation furnaces and one chimney 18 meters long. One furnace burnt 7-8 corpses in 45 minutes. Around the furnace, a wooden barrack was constructed; this burnt down in the night of December 3-4. For this reason, the wooden barrack was replaced by a stone barrack, with a room for the heater, toilets, and two small rooms 'z.b.V.' (for special duty). After reconstruction, the crematorium began to 'work' again on December 26, 1944. Until then, the corpses of inmates were burnt in a field crematorium."*

This information, again exclusively based on eyewitness reports, is on a weak footing as well, both historically and technically.

As regards the historical aspects, the only known original plan of the camp, which dates back to January 25, 1943,[164] contains no designation of a crematorium – which means that at that time construction had not even begun. The story of the burnt-down barrack therefore presumably relates to the oil-fueled furnace. That this was put out of operation after only six months of use – even before the stationary furnaces were built – is highly improbable. That not one single furnace was in operation for fully three years – until December 26, 1944 – is refuted by several documents. There is, first of all, the death registry. One section of it relating to the time period between January and April 1944 has survived and contains cremation dates of deceased inmates.[165]

Technically speaking, it is impossible to burn five to six corpses in 45 minutes in an oil-fueled Kori furnace. Our book on Majdanek discusses a German report attributing a capacity of 50 corpses in 12 hours to this type of furnace. Our hypothesis at that time – that such a high capacity was actually within the realm of possibility under ordinary circumstances[166] – is refuted by the documentation relating to the oil-fueled furnaces of the crematorium at Theresienstadt,[167] which was still unknown to us at that time. These furnaces were much bigger than the Kori furnaces, but could only cremate two corpses per hour.[168] The capacity of the oil-fueled Kori furnaces could under no circumstances have been higher.

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[164] *Stutthof...*, *op. cit.* (note 2), photo 96 outside of text.

[165] See Chapter III, Paragraph 5.a).

[166] J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 12), German ed., pp. 114f.; Engl. ed. pp. 113f.

[167] We learned about the existence of this crematorium only after the publication of the book mentioned in the previous note.

[168] This is due to the peculiar structure of these furnaces, as described in more detail by C. Mattogno, F. Deana in their book on the crematoria (see note 96), vol. I,

The claim that seven to eight corpses could be cremated in one oil-fueled Kori furnace in 45 minutes is quite absurd. The documentation on the coke-fueled Kori furnaces at the Dutch Westerbork transit camp proves that a cremation took an average of 50 minutes.[169]

All this shows that both the claims by orthodox Polish historiography and by the Soviet expert report quoted in the Chapter II relating to the capacity of the cremation furnaces at Stutthof are devoid of all scientific basis. In particular, the statement contained in the Soviet report that 12 corpses could normally be introduced into one combustion chamber, and that they could be cremated within only 50 minutes, is pure nonsense:

- First, the calculations of the Soviet "experts" are based upon the theoretical volume of the combustion chamber and corpses, as if the first were a container and the second a liquid, a certain quantity of which could simply be poured into the container.
- Second, cramming the combustion chamber with 12 corpses – which would been impossible in any case – would have interrupted the combustion process in the coke furnaces due to lack of draft.170 Even in the oil-fueled furnaces, combustion would have been impossible, because the flame would have been extinguished by the corpses stacked up near the combustion nozzle.
- Third, even if combustion had been possible – and it was not – it would have taken ten to twelve times as long as the time indicated. Precisely this was true, in particular, of the animal-corpse incineration installations built by the Kori Corporation – the only existing furnace in which organic substance of such quantity was incinerated as was claimed for the furnaces at Stutthof.[171]

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pp. 448-453.

[169] The above-mentioned data relates to the cremation of adult corpses. This point has also been discussed by C. Mattogno, F. Deana, *ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 357-363.

[170] The combustion of the coke in the gas generator of a coke furnace is directly dependent upon the suction draft of the chimney, which must be sufficiently large to overcome the resistance of the layer of coke against the passage of combustion air through the layer of coke. Cramming the combustion chamber with 12 corpses would have blocked the connection opening between the gas generator and the combustion chamber as well as the combustion-gas outlet, which was located behind the introduction door on the vault of the combustion chamber. For this reason, the cremation process would have immediately come to a full stop!

[171] See in this regard the thorough treatment of cremation capacities in: Mattogno, F. Deana, *op. cit.* (note 96), vol. I, pp. 369-378.

Let us now turn from the above discussion of the crematorium to the allegations of mass gassings in the Stutthof Camp.

d) The Time and Number of Victims of the Alleged Mass Gassings According to Various Sources

In the previous chapter, we reproduced the reports of orthodox historiography alleging the murder of human beings in the gas chamber of Stutthof. These statements, for the most part, are very vague as regards the decisive questions of the date and number of victims of the gassings, and to some extent they contradict each other. The following table makes this point very clear:

Table 2: Reported Mass Gassings in Stutthof (1944)

Author / Month(s)	Łukaszkiewicz 1947	D.-Wąsowicz 1970	G. Komisja 1979	D.-Wąsowicz 1983	D. Drywa 1988
June				22.6.: 100	
July				26.7.: 12, ?:70, ?:300	24.7.: ?
August		70, 300, 100		300	22.8.: 77
September		300		600 ?	
October		600 ?			
November		200-250		250	
June and later			4,000		
pre-August	1,000				
Aug.-Dec.	3,000				

The above table gives the following overall picture of reported homicidal mass gassings:

22 June: 100 Poles and Belo-Russians
24 July: ? Jews
26 July: 12 Polish resistance fighters
22 August: 77 disabled Soviet prisoners of war
August: 300 Jews; 100 men
September: 300 Jewish women
October: 600 Jewish women; a few dozen men
November: 250 women

Adding up the above figures, we arrive at a total of 1,739, which is less than half the official figure of 4,000. With regard to eight gassings, with a total of 1,550 victims, only the month is indicated. In one case, of course, the exact date is given, but not the number of victims; in another case, we are left in the dark as to the date as well as the number of victims.

The vagueness of these data is of course explained by the fact that there are no documents on the alleged homicidal mass gassings.

Marek Orski has put forward the figure of 1,150 victims,[172] which confirms that the numbers of the alleged gassing victims are utterly arbitrary.

e) Sources for Alleged Homicidal Mass Gassings

i) The Gas Chamber

With relation to the sources, J. Grabowska remarks:[173]

> *"The gas chamber was used several times between June and October 1944 to kill Polish political prisoners and resistance fighters. For example, a group of Polish partisans from the region of Bialystok were killed in this manner (in June 1944), as well as a group of men delivered after the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto (September/October 1944). The date and the number of the last-mentioned executions as well as the number of executed persons cannot be established with exactitude, since the related documents have not survived (if they were ever prepared). The reports of former inmates are inexact; for the most part, they repeat that both these groups were warned of the fate awaiting them on their way to the gas chamber; they are said to have attempted to escape inside the camp. The SS men began to shoot, and killed a few inmates; the others were recaptured and gassed."* (Emphasis added.)

D. Drywa also admits that just when the gas chamber "was used for the killing of human beings" could "only be established with difficulty." In connection with the "gassing of two groups of Poles," she speaks of "difficulties" and "discrepancies in relation to the date and procedure of the action" in the eyewitness statements. This is anything but of minor importance when one considers that it is precisely these eyewitness statements which are the only sources for the alleged mass gassings; these statements are furthermore extremely scarce.

The most important purveyors of these reports are the former Polish Stutthof inmate Zbignew Krawczyk – mentioned only in the Soviet expert report – and, in particular, the Italian Aldo Coradello, a former camp inmate and star witness to the gas chamber at Stutthof.

First, with regard to Krawczyk, the Soviet expert report permits one to conclude that this person described the mass-gassing procedure, but without any exact reference to the date or the number of

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[172] M. Orski, *op. cit.* (note 9), p. 301.
[173] H. Kuhn (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 45), p. 62.

victims. On these grounds alone, the testimony is much is too indefinite to possess any value as an historical source.

As soon as Krawczyk goes into any detail, he becomes totally untrustworthy, as in the following:[174]

> *"Thanks to the testimony of Krawczyk, it was possible to determine that the furnaces were in operation day and night. The service crews worked in shifts. Up to 30 corpses were introduced into two furnaces at the same time. The cremation process lasted two hours. Coke was used as fuel."*

The simultaneous cremation of 15 corpses in one coke-fueled Kori furnace, and in two hours to boot, is quite simply a technical absurdity; please see our above remarks on the topic.

In 1946, A. Coradello prepared a longer report for the Criminal Court in Danzig, expounding at length upon the homicidal mass gassings (the linguistic unclarity is due to the fact that German was a foreign language to Coradello):[175]

> *"By far the greatest number of death victims was due to the gas chambers in Stutthof – as in the other concentration camps. It is hard to say, to indicate, an exact number of these victims. But one is not far off when one reports that there were many thousands. Over the years, the SS elevated this type of butchery into a pure science.*
>
> *There were several different types of these infamous gas chambers, which were constructed according to the taste of the SS, on which dedicated technicians must have worked. From simple dark chambers, without any comfort, only the inscription 'Caution. Mortal Danger. Close doors well during use,' up to well-built railway cars accompanied by all kinds of chicanery and supplied by the German railways, and even some built especially for the narrow-gauge Danzig-Stutthof railway.*
>
> *Those exterminated in the gas chamber at Stutthof were mostly Jews, Poles, and Russian patriots. In addition to the separately described case of the gassing of 50-60 Russian disabled prisoners of war in August 1944, a few more details are known to me. This took place in the fall of 1944.*
>
> *After the evacuation of the eastern territory, the Germans transported a large number of Jews of all nationalities to Stutthof from the camps from Estonia, Riga, Kaiserwald, and the ghetto of Kaunas. In particular, I remember, for example, the Jew Lulie and his son Asjas from Riga.*

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[174] "Note on the investigation about the mortality reasons at Stutthof" (17 May to 13 June 1945). GARF, 7021-106-2, p. 16.

[175] "*Ausschnitt aus dem Zeugenbericht des früheren Mitglieds des Kgl. Ital. Generalkonsulates Aldo Coradello in Danzig, vom Sonderstrafgericht Danzig angefertigt*." ROD, 250I, Box 32a.

These Jews were in the worst imaginable physical and moral condition; after they had hardly spent a month in Stutthof, they had lost weight until they were starved skeletons. They were the only survivors of the extermination policy of the Germans in this camp. […]
In the fall of 1944, the butchers raged unmercifully, especially in women's camp no. 3 in S[tutthof]. *Of the women lodged there, approximately 14,000 were no longer able to work due to general physical exhaustion and malnutrition. They were even indicated as such in the daily reports of the work service. A few thousand more women were only fit to work in a restricted capacity. The number of the unfit increased by the day. Due to the injustice of camp life and insufficient food, the women lost more and more weight and got sicker every day.*
The appropriate methods were devised in Stutthof, since no one doubted that the proposed numbers were not approved in Berlin. Up to 3 prisoners had worked in the crematorium until now. One more prisoner was therefore detailed there. The commando was further reinforced by a night shift of 3 inmates, and the brutal SS overseer Peters, who was said to have been a former beer-truck driver from the Fischer brewery in Danzig, and the right man for this job. […]
Even in Berlin they immediately recognized the possibility of doing something to save German food by provisionally approving the gassing of 4,000 women as the first contingent. Work began thus immediately. Foth, the SS women's guards and the 'B.Ver.'[176] *block elders, sometimes also supported by SS Doctor Heidl, now picked out the victims."*

The "separately described case of the gassing of 50-60 Russian disabled prisoners of war in August 1944," is described by Coradello as follows:[177]

"In Stutthof mostly Jews, Poles and Russians were murdered in the gas chamber. Apart from the gassing of 50-60 disabled Russian prisoners of war in August 1944, several other murders are known to me, which were committed in the fall of 1944 […]
In order to get rid of the Jews, who were dying too slowly, they were selected every day by the block elders; above all those who felt especially weak or simply wanted to sleep in. After the evening meal, groups of 30 inmates were chased out in front of the canteen, where they were loaded onto simple wooden wagons. It often happened that a father stood by and could not rescue his son, or a man could not rescue his brother. The victims being loaded onto the wagons were mostly so weak they let themselves be taken away without protest. In case of refusal, however, they laid him low with a blow by one of the professional criminals, and threw him on the wagon. Everyone in the camp then knew that there would be a gassing that evening. On the same day, the Jews cleared out

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[176] *Berufsverbrecher* = professional criminal.

[177] Report by Aldo Coradello "written in 1946 as testimony in the Stutthof Trials instead of oral testimony," in: H. Kuhn (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 45), pp. 124-128.

of my block were reported as 'ordered away' during the roll call. The Kapo *of the Crematorium, the 'professional criminal' (*B.Ver.*) Willy Patsch, told me that they were gassed.* […]

In the fall of 1944 the SS raged especially in the women's camp no. 2. 14,000 of the women there were separated as completely unable to work due to general weakness. They were thus characterized in the reports of the labor service. Many others could only work in a limited way. The number of 'unfit' increased by the day. In Stutthof, they thought up a corresponding solution. In order to get rid of these 'useless eaters,' they sent a proposal to Berlin. A fourth inmate was detailed in addition to the three inmates working in the crematorium. An additional reinforcement of this commando took place through a night shift under the command of SS Scharführer *Peters, who had been previously active in the Fischer brewery in Danzig. He did not complain about this work, since, as he himself said, by searching carefully, it was possible to rob many gold teeth before the cremation. That was enough for brandy and a little savings.*

In Berlin, it was quickly recognized that they could save food for the 'heroes at the front': 4,000 women were designated for the first gassing. They immediately set to work. The victims were selected by the SS man Foth, the overseer and the block elder, sometimes by the SS doctor Dr. Heidl. Then a first group of 60 to 70 women left the camp. <u>These were extremely weak, starved beings, for whom death no longer had any meaning. They were ready to die at any time. None of the women had the strength to protest, even if they knew that they were going to be gassed.</u> The SS men, however, turned a human tragedy into a show; that's how it was this time too. They told the women that they had succeeded in obtaining a free school building in order to set up a sanatorium for the Stutthof inmates. Nobody believed it, but the poor women wished in their hearts that it might be true. Strengthened by this illusory hope, they went voluntarily out of the interior part of the camp. They were unceremoniously packed into the gas chamber.

Often the quantity of gas was too small, that meant longer sufferings – but the result was the same.

Sometimes it happened that the criminals had too little time, because they wanted to participate in yet another evening feast. In order not to arrive too late, they rushed; so it happened that, apart from the dead women, women who were merely unconscious were taken out of the gas chamber and dragged into [sic] *the furnaces. The political inmate Erich Rössler told me that the German 'professional criminals,' when they were drunk, smashed in the skulls of the only half-dead victims with an axe. Then they returned to the block all smeared with blood, because they had no time to wash. They received the brandy from their 'protector' Chemnitz.*

The gassing action in mid-November 1944 lasted four days and required the deaths of over 400 women. Then they were suddenly stopped.

Among the inmates the rumor went around that the higher authorities in Berlin had interrupted the action. […]
On August 26 [1944] *I was transferred to Stutthof once again.* […] *Then I saw a group of 50-60 disabled Russian prisoners of war on the square in front of the delousing installation. Most of them had had a leg amputated, some even both legs, and they could only move with the greatest effort with the help of crutches. Others had no arms or were blind. In one regard they were all the same: they were starved to the highest degree and in rags. None had shoes; their heel bones were swollen and full of wounds. They were so weak that they looked like skeletons of death, even worse than the so-called camp 'cripples.' The long-time inmates, who were busy with the delousing and in the 'reception' of the arrivals, told me that most of these invalids came from the prisoner-of-war camp at Hammerstein. They had already spent three days under the open sky, without any food, on the road. The only thing they could get was some water and food given to them by other inmates. The camp headquarters had come to the conclusion that these unfit disabled persons were no longer worth the food.*
We newly arrived inmates had to wait for our acceptance formalities for 10 to 18 hours in the searing sun. The Camp Commandant Hoppe, the Protective Custody Leader Meyer, and Reporter Leader Obersturmbannführer *Chemnitz walked around us in circles. From their conversation, I was able to understand that they were concerned with the problem of the Russian invalids. Chemnitz thought that this 'Russian scum' should be gotten rid of; at the same time, he looked at the crematorium.* […] *In the afternoon, Chemnitz and Lüdtke went to the Soviet war invalids and told them that they were to be sent to a sanatorium for invalids, where they would certainly feel better. I saw how the wretches showed their joy at finally being treated humanely, as they were entitled to be as prisoners of war and invalids to boot. With the rest of the water that was left over, they attempted to wash themselves to look more decent. I will never forget how one prisoner made an effort to shave another who had no hands, using a piece of glass. They had neither soap nor brushes or razor blades. In painful excitement, I watched how they hurried in order to be ready for the transfer to the sanatorium. They were really transferred, not through the main gate, though, but through a side gate to the right of the SS shoemaker shop, through which the bodies were taken out of the camp and the infirmary toward the crematorium. For us experienced inmates, it was clear that the transferees would be cruelly murdered in a few hours.*
On the evening, all the formalities for our transport were completed. The barber had cut off our hair to the skin. Everyone received his number that he had to sew onto the left breast pocket and on the trousers. […]
When we sat together with our comrades, the inmates Wilhelm Patsch and Franz Knitter appeared suddenly, both German 'professional crim-

> *inals' with a green triangle. They had high positions in Stutthof. Patsch was a* Kapo *in the crematorium and Knitter was his right hand. On this evening, they were both drunk. From one of them I learned that the Russian invalids had been murdered around 6 o'clock in the gas chamber. In order to prevent any possible resistance, the SS men had organized a special event. Next to the crematorium ran the Danzig-Stutthof narrow-gauge railway. On this day, two additional third-class carriages stood in the vicinity of the crematorium. The Soviet invalids had to take their places in it. They were convinced that the Germans meant well for them. After a half hour came Chemnitz, Lüdtke and Meyer, who were swearing at the locomotive driver for being late. Then they told the invalids that the locomotive would only be there in an hour, so they would have time for an evening meal. They all got out and went into the 'waiting room.' As soon as they were all inside the room indicated by Chemnitz, the steel doors shut behind them, and gas streamed into the room from the opening in the ceiling. The camp's entire headquarters staff was present at the gassing. After a good hour, the doors were opened, the bodies were dragged out and laid down by the crematorium. Every corpse was stripped naked; the clothing was piled up for further use. Every dead person was searched for jewels and gold teeth. The gold teeth were removed, together with the jaws, using a special device, and the bodies were labeled: 'Checked by a dentist'.*[…]
> *Patsch and Knitter reported that the cremation of the bodies of the Soviet invalids proceeded very quickly, because they wanted to hide the murders. They had poured oil and gasoline over the bodies. The furnaces normally held 13 bodies, and the cremation lasted 80 to 100 minutes. The bodies of the invalids were especially emaciated, and they could load 15 bodies in the furnaces. Around midnight, the furnaces were filled with the last bodies. Already the next days, newly arrived inmates were walking around in the clothing of the gassed Soviet war invalids; they had no idea of the martyrdom of the prior owners of these articles of clothing."* (Emphasis added.)

Let us now test this report for its credibility. First, one must stress the obvious fact that Coradello was *not an eyewitness,* since everything he relates about the homicidal gassings is from hearsay. This fact alone decisively diminishes the value of this testimony. His testimony is furthermore very unspecific, except in the case of the Russian invalids, which will be discussed separately.

As for the date of the gassing of the Jewish women, Coradello is unable to specify even the month, and is content to say that it happened in the "fall of 1944"!

On the number of the gassed Jewish women, Coradello first writes that it is difficult to provide "an exact number," but then establishes the number of Jewish victims at 4,000, which is not even

based on eyewitness testimony – much less a document – *i.e.*, he did not even hear this figure from someone else.

In addition, he states that the camp authorities at Stutthof had implemented a policy of exterminating the "useless eaters." On orders from Berlin, or at least with Berlin's approval, according to him, only 4,000 of the 14,000 unfit were murdered. We fail to see why 10,000 more "useless eaters" should have been spared.

The only time Coradello provides a less-generic date – when he speaks of the gassing of 400 women "in the middle of November 1944" – it contradicts one of the cornerstones of orthodox historiography, the cessation of homicidal gassings on November 2, 1944.[178]

The best that Coradello can offer as to the preparations for the extermination of the "useless eaters" can only arouse laughter: the number of inmates assigned to operate the crematorium was increased from *three* to *four*!

Coradello describes the doomed Jewish women as "extremely weak, starved beings," and adds that none of them had the strength to protest, "even if they knew that they were to be gassed"; he nevertheless considers it necessary for the SS men to trick them by luring them into the gas chamber by acting out the farce of a "sanitarium."

The allegation of the "insufficient quantities of gas,"[179] as well as that of the women burnt alive in the furnaces, belongs to the standard litany of atrocity propaganda which always ascribes every conceivable type of crime to the SS.

In his description of the alleged gassing of 50 to 60 disabled Soviet prisoners of war, Coradello provides all kinds of detail with great exactitude, but, upon closer examination of his testimony, the fact remains that Coradello saw these poor wretches *alive*: everything he says about the gassing and cremation is based on hearsay:

> *"From one of them I learned that the Russian invalids had been murdered around 6 o'clock in the gas chamber"*

The "one" from whom Coradello heard this can only have been one of the German professional criminals – Patsch and Knitter – who worked in the crematorium and must have participated in the crema-

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[178] Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, Rowohlt, Reinbek bei Hamburg 1989, p. 921.

[179] In the storage room for toxic substances located near the Stutthof camp, the Soviets found more than 450 cans of Zyklon B, 368 of them unopened (AMS, 2-V-24, pp. 46f., Soviet "Protocol on securing poisonous substances at the Stutthof camp" dated July 11, 1945).

tion if not the gassing; yet the description of the procedures involved contains the following impossibilities:

1) The description of the gassing is very short and nebulous; Coradello takes a total of four sentences to deal with the entire tragic event. What is decisive, however, is that he knew nothing whatsoever about Zyklon, which consisted of granules poured out of a can through an opening in the ceiling – Coradello claims that the "gas streamed out of the opening in the ceiling"! He doesn't mention Zyklon B at all. Even if he knew the name, he obviously had no idea what Zyklon insecticide looked like, or its method of utilization.
2) The statements relating to cremation are simply madcap nonsense. According to Coradello, one furnace normally burnt 13 corpses simultaneously, but in this case, even 15!

Unless he simply invented the whole story, Coradello can only have been gullibly repeating mere rumors making the rounds in the camp, without attempting to make sense of them. As in the example of the alleged gassing of the 4,000 Jewish women, his description of the perfidious SS camouflage maneuver is pure nonsense. With regard to the doomed disabled prisoners of war, he says, "Most of them had had a leg amputated, some even both legs, and they could only move with the greatest effort with the help of crutches. Others had no arms or were blind." The SS were nevertheless compelled to invent the comedy about the sanatorium to avoid "any possible resistance"!

ii) The Alleged Use of Railway Carriages for Homicidal Gassings

The claim that inmates, mostly Jewish women, were gassed "in two small narrow-gauge railway carriages" is without any documentary basis. Even the method of selection described is quite incredible. The new killing system is supposed to have been introduced in early November 1944 "in order to fool the victims" and to prevent groups of "25 or 30" doomed persons from resisting the process. When one recalls that the alleged victims in each case consisted of approximately two dozen unfit persons – cripples, sick inmates, pregnant women, etc. – and that, according to Coradello, "most of them were so weak that they let themselves be taken away without resistance," one wonders how much resistance could have been feared from these poor wretches. It might be recalled that Coradello has already regaled us with this same nonsense with regard to the gas chamber.

The credibility of the allegation that news of the mass gassings circulated all over the camp, and that, as a result, the SS men were

compelled to invent the diabolical subterfuge of gassing the victims in railway carriages, is apparent from the fact that many witnesses, *in a trial against members of the Stutthof Camp personnel in 1946,* knew nothing in particular about any gassings at all. For example, former inmate Paul Wiechern, who was assigned to the crematorium crew on January 3, 1945, never even mentions them – not even with a single word.[180] Another former camp inmate, Alfred Lehmann, limited himself by saying one sentence about it:[181]

> *"Executions were carried out by shooting, hanging, or gassing, as well as through the use of inmates for experiments."*

This is the only fleeting reference to mass gassings in his entire testimony.

That the story of the camouflage maneuver was totally made up, is clearly revealed by the allegations of K. Dunin-Wąsowicz – who conjures up constantly new variants – relating to the "doctor's consultation office" installed in the "enlarged gas chamber." No architectural proof exists for this alleged "enlargement."

The claimed tragic end of the "sock-mending commando" must be relegated to the realm of fairy tales as well. In the absence of documentary proof, this tale as well is supported merely by Aldo Coradello's testimony, who reports as follows:[182]

> *"Another method very commonly utilized – the 'sock-mending commando' – was mentioned. This type of killing was intended for older women. At morning roll call, women were sought out who could darn and sew well. They were given sewing and knitting needles and marched out of the camp. Somewhere in the vicinity of Stutthof, stockings were to be darned… at the same time, it was not forgotten to promise the women good food. As an exception, a railway carriage was provided for them by the Army, so that they would arrive at their destination more quickly. A brigade consisted of 60 to 70 women, most of them Jewish. The above-mentioned carriage was coupled onto a locomotive, or sometimes even onto a freight car, and actually departed with its tragic freight. Its destination lay in the vicinity of the crematorium, which had an access spur. After the death train had traveled past one or two stations, it turned around and traveled straight to the crematorium. There, the corpses of these unfortunate women were removed from this specially equipped gas carriage. During the journey, the carriage –*

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[180] Undated statement by Paul Wiechern, with the title "*Einzelheiten aus KZ-Stutthof-Danzig*." ROD, 250v, Box 32a.

[181] "*Bericht über das KZ-Lager Stutthof bei Danzig vom ehemaligen politischen Gefangenen Lehmann*," ROD, 250v, Box 32a.

[182] AMS, *Berichte und Erinnerungen*, vol. I, pp. 47ff. (no reference number).

> *locked with a double door – had been filled with blue gas, and the unsuspecting women traveled to their death.*
> *In the camp, these victims left their daughters or other relatives behind, who waited in vain for their return and hoped at the same time to obtain something to eat, even if only raw potatoes. And if the waiting persons asked the SS men why their mothers and daughters were taking such a long time, they were cynically told that, if their relatives had not yet returned, then they must certainly have been released.*
> *Sometimes the departure and return of the 'sock-mending commando' took place twice daily. The gas carriage used for this purpose finally proved not modern enough, or else it did not travel quickly enough; in any case, it is a fact that in December 1944 or January 1945 two entirely newly built gas carriages arrived at Stutthof. They were painted dark yellow, like army vehicles. These were not, of course, put into service anymore; that it was, however, the intent of the Germans to put these carriages into service as well, cannot be doubted. After all, they had been built for something at a time when all German industry was working exclusively on war material. Perhaps the SS men considered these satanic railway carriages to be war material as well? Finally, one can say that the SS considered every concentration camp a huge battlefield, and, of course, a victorious battlefield, since thousands and thousands of people were overwhelmed and finally murdered there."* (Emphasis added.)

It is obvious that Coradello was uncritically repeating rumors circulating in the camp in this case as well. As late as 1947, two otherwise well-informed former Stutthof inmates, the Frenchmen Alphonse Kienzler and Paul Weil, told the following version of the murders in the railway carriages:[183]

> *"Shooting was not the only method of exterminating the 'enemies of the great Reich.' Several times, particularly on Sundays, women were sent to fictitious commandos; they were crammed into hermetically sealed carriages, and then an SS man threw a bomb with asphyxiating gas in their midst."*

Let us return to Coradello. His story contains no tangible facts at all – with one exception. He reports that "two entirely newly built gas carriages" arrived in "December 1944 or January 1945." There is no trace of these two "gas carriages"; nor is there any trace of the carriages allegedly fitted out for homicidal mass gassings at an earlier date. The two railway carriages standing behind the crematorium today are quite ordinary freight cars. The first one – which doesn't

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[183] Alphonse Kienzler, Paul Weil, "À Stutthof. Document sur le Service Sanitaire d'un Camp d'Extermination," in: *De l'université aux camps de concentrations. Témoignages Strassbourgeois*, Paris 1947, p. 336.

even have a roof – is 9.5 m long, 2 m wide, and 1.20 m high. The second – which does at least have a roof – measures 9.5 m × 2 m × 2.12 m, has a little window, and many cracks in the floorboards (see Photos 1 and 17).

The rumor of the murderous railway gas carriages no doubt has its origins in a distortion of an actual event lacking any sinister connotations. E. Grot writes:[184]

> *"Since 1942, transports arrived at the camp by railway. The freight trains with the inmates stopped at the standard-gauge railway station at Tiegenhof, which also had a narrow-gauge railway spur to Stutthof. There the inmates were loaded into open carriages. The train stopped at the Waldlager station, not far from the commandant's villa. The station was built in 1940-41."*

In 1944, large transports with predominantly Jewish prisoners left from this station to other camps. This is proven by the *Kommandanturbefehle* (headquarters orders) headed "Inmate Transfers," often expressly containing the statement that the transport in question was departing from Waldlager. The following is an example. *Kommandanturbefehl* no. 64 of September 28, 1944 states as follows regarding a transfer of "550 female Jewish inmates" to Neuengamme Concentration Camp:[185]

> *"The inmate transport will depart on 29.9.1944 at approximately 14:30 from Stutthof Waldlager. Exact departure time is still pending. Further transport from Tiegenhof by the Reichsbahn will take place in 8 G- and 1 C-carriages at 18:35 o'clock."*

Other documents mention the "narrow-gauge railway," but not the Waldlager. For example, *Kommandanturbefehl* No. 55 of August 16, 1944 states:[186]

> *"The narrow-gauge railway will provide a transport train with 22 carriages which will at the same time bring to Tiegenhof the 500 female inmates to be transferred to Buchenwald according to number 3 paragraph c."*

The narrow-gauge railway passed directly behind the crematorium and the fumigation chamber, then traveled to the Jewish barracks.[187] It is quite probable that several groups of Jewish women being transferred to another concentration camp or a Stutthof subsidiary camp boarded the train at this section of the track. Since the train departed

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[184] E. Grot, *op. cit.* (note 65), p. 167.
[185] AMS, I-IB-3, p. 197.
[186] AMS, I-IB-3, p. 150.
[187] See the camp map, Document 7 in the Appendix.

from where both the fumigation chamber and the crematorium were located, and because it then returned empty to the camp, it is hardly difficult to imagine that the inmates – who were only imperfectly informed about what was going on in the camp – wrongly believed the departing detainees to have been gassed. It is very difficult to plausibly explain the story of the "gassing carriages" in any other way.

The rumor about "selections"[188] for gassings is also the result of a distortion of actual events connected with inmate transports departing the camp. Each transfer always required a previous "selection" by the SS: the *Kommandanturbefehle* prove this. For example, *Kommandanturbefehl* no. 64 of September 28, 1944 states:[189]

> *"According to* FT [Funketelegramm = radio telegram] *of Sept. 15, 1944 from the Head of Office Group D in the SS Economic Administrative Main Office, 1000 male and 1500 female Aryan inmates are to be transferred from Stutthof Concentration Camp to railway station Schömberg, to be made available to Natzweiler Concentration Camp. The selection of these inmates is to take place after oral consultation with the 1st Leader of the Protective-Custody Camp, the SS Garrison Doctor and Labor Service Leader.* […] *According to FT no. 9485 of Sept. 8, 1944 from the Head of Office Group D in the SS Economic Administrative Main Office, 500 female inmates are to be transferred to railway station Hannover-Vinnhorst, connection platform 2, and are to be made available to Neuengamme Concentration Camp for the Brinkenwerke Hannover on Sept. 29, 1944. The inmates to be transferred are to be selected after verbal consultation with the 1st Leader of the Protective-Custody Camp, the SS Garrison Doctor and the Labor Service Leader."*

Selections were also performed before sending commandos to the Stutthof subsidiary camps. For example, *Kommandanturbefehl* no. 73 of October 30, 1944 states:[190]

> *"According to* FT [radio telegram] *no. 11348 of Oct. 11, 1944 and* FS [Fernschreiben = teletype message] *no. 11701 of Oct. 17, 1944, 200 female Jewish inmates will be transferred to the subsidiary camp Front Repair Workshop in Thorn on Oct. 30, 1944. Selection of the inmates will take place after oral consultation with the 1st Leader of the Protective Custody Camp, the SS Garrison Doctor and the Labor Service Leader."*

That there might have been a sock-mending commando at a "Front Repair Workshop" is quite possible. However, such a commando would require living women, not gassed ones.

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[188] The concept "*Selektion*" was invented after the war. The term used at the time was "*Auswahl*," as shown by all the documents quoted here.

[189] AMS, I-IB-3, pp. 196f.

[190] AMS, I-IB-3, p. 234.

f) The Alleged Mass Gassing of Disabled Soviet Prisoners of War: Analysis of a Particular Case

In view of the absence of any document on the gassing of human beings, and in view of the uncertainty and contradictory nature of the eyewitness testimonies, orthodox historians have had a hard time lending the gassing stories a minimum of credibility.

As seen in Chapter II, Z. Łukaszkiewicz was content, in 1947, simply to repeat the number of 4,000 gassings as invented by A. Coradello. He neither attempted to shore it up with documentary proof, nor did he make any effort to establish the dates on which the murders were allegedly committed. In 1970, K. Dunin-Wąsowicz drew up a tentative chronology of the gassings accompanied by an approximate indication of the number of victims, but only arrived at approximately 1,600 gassing victims instead of Coradello's 4,000. 13 years later, in 1983, he provided an exact date in two cases, accompanied by an exact number of victims in one case. But since he failed to inform us of the source of his new knowledge, this information is historically worthless.

The efforts of orthodox historians to shore up the gassing story with documentary evidence – at least in one case – remained unsuccessful until 1987. In that year, Maria Elżbieta Jezierska published an interesting and well-researched essay, the title of which, in English translation, is "The Executees of the Stutthof Camp."[191] The section relating to the alleged mass gassing of disabled Soviet prisoners of war reads as follows:[192]

> *"Anyone who looks at the arrival records bearing the numbers 60703-65672 (August 1944) will realize that, in the case of one transport sent off on August 15, 1944 by the Security Police at Riga, the entry 'death' appears on the same date, i.e., August 22 in many cases.* […] *This date appears next to 77 inmate names. They arrived on the same day, and they died on the same day. These were all Russian men who were all quite young, with one exception (Piotr Kalinin, who was born in 1860 and was therefore 84 years old!), as well as one 38-year-old Latvian. The assumption immediately arises that they could not possibly have died natural deaths.*
>
> *It is indicative that similar remarks on members of one and the same transport, many of whom died on the same day, relate to the Jewish transports of 1944. These are known to have been subject to a selection – older and sick people, mothers with small children, and pregnant*

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[191] *Op. cit.* (note 134), pp. 79-167.
[192] *Ibid.*, pp. 146-149.

women were immediately killed. Only Jews fit for work were admitted into the camp. […]
I turn to the question of the Russian transport. The registration book nowhere contains the letter 'E' [[193]…]
The following notes appearing under the heading 'Special characteristics' (height and weight, hair color, eye color, etc.) merit attention. […]
Among 47 inmates whose cards have survived, there are no indications in four cases. The following remarks appear for the others:
– 'very weak' (1 case)
– shot in the leg – scar (3 cases)
– shot in the knee – scar (3 cases)
– lost one leg (8 cases)
– shot in head and leg (8 cases)
– shot in leg, walks with limp (3 cases)
– shot in thigh, scar – (1 scar)
– shot in leg and lungs – (1 case)
– penetrating gunshot wound in leg – (12 cases)
– penetrating gunshot wound in knee – (2 cases)
– penetrating gunshot wound in hip – (2 cases)
– penetrating gunshot wound in leg and arm (1 case)
– 'limps' – (1 case)
– shot in face (1 case)
– shot in head, foot, and arm – (1 case)
– three bullet wounds – 1 case)
– shot in pelvis (1 case)
All the persons mentioned appear on the card with the notation 'former POW'. Other reasons for assignment to a concentration camp are not indicated.
I have probably succeeded, by way of deduction, in finding the tragic transport of Russian invalids remembered by former camp inmates, a transport of prisoners of war of whom it was said they were only sent into the camp and killed there because they were unsuitable for the labor service as disabled. I point out that there were other Russians in this transport for whom the personal card shows that they were wounded, but they were obviously in a better state of health since they were not liquidated, and some of them were later transferred to Natzweiler camp. I found 41 personal cards with references to the following wounds:
– arm, shoulder, hand, and elbow bullet wounds and penetration wounds (17 cases)
– bullet wound in leg and penetration wound in leg (7 cases)
– bullet wound in knee and penetration wound in knee (3 cases)
– amputation of frozen toes on both feet (1 case)

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[193] According to M.E. Jezierska "*E*" stands for "*exekutiert*," "*erschossen*" (shot), or "*erhängt*" (hanged). But she admits that "*E*" in many cases could also mean "*entlassen*" (released), *ibid.*

– shot in breast (3 cases)
– shot in head, including one shot in area of eye (4)
– several bullet wounds (7).
I stress that I was not successful in finding all the personal cards of the Russians on this transport, and we do not know how many of the others were also disabled."

M. E. Jezierska's discovery appears to be important at first glance, but in fact it is rather imprecise with regard to the circumstances and downright foolish as to the claimed reasons.

The most suspicious fact of this affair is the incredibly late date of this discovery, which was neither accidental nor the result of painstaking research taking decades of study. To make such a discovery, it was in fact enough to simply browse with a minimum of attention the list of registrations containing the serial numbers 60703-64672 (9-14 August 1944; see Document 18 in the Appendix), something which, we presume, the historians of the Stutthof Museum have done dozens of times in the more than forty years following the end of WWII. But if that is so, why has no one ever noticed that these 77 detainees had been registered with the same date of registration and the same date of death? Since 1947 they knew about the alleged gassing of Soviet invalids and about its claimed date (end of August 1944) due to Aldo Coradello's declarations. So are we to believe that none of these historians has had at least the curiosity to look for some proof in the documentary record about this alleged gassing of the above registrations?

On the other hand, it cannot be doubted that the date of death (22 Aug 1944) is stamped into the entries of these 77 cases mentioned above. But who added these stamps, and when?

The hypothesis of the murder of these PoWs because they were unable to work is also unreasonable and contrary to all the facts. The Soviet PoWs who had suffered amputations and had several scars had evidently been treated by the Germans. What would have been the point of this, if they were to be killed later on as unfit for labor? These detainees had come from the PoW camp Czarne[194] and had therefore been duly registered; but what would have been the point of doing this, if they were to be killed shortly thereafter?

They were taken over by the Security Police of Riga and transferred to Stutthof on August 15, 1944. However, according to orthodox historiography, the Security Police of Riga had massacred thou-

[194] Główna Komisja…, *op. cit.* (note 15), p. 142.

sands of prisoners on the spot for being unable to work *before these transfers to Stutthof occurred* (see Section IV.4.). But if that was so, why not also massacre these unfit Soviet PoWs on the spot?

Furthermore, the Stutthof Camp regularly registered *all* incoming invalid Soviets. What was the point of this, if they were to be killed as unable to work anyhow? In order to create documentary evidence in the camp's records?

Although these considerations invalidate the value of Jezierska's discovery already by themselves, we will complete the discussion by investigating the historical problems it entails:

1) Were the Soviet invalids really killed?
2) If so, why were they killed?
3) Who gave the order to have them killed?
4) How were they killed?

We will now attempt to answer these four questions.

Let us consider the first point, *i.e.*, that, without exception, 77 of the persons delivered one week previously (on August 15, 1944) all died on the same day (August 22, 1944); their deaths were registered in alphabetical order and almost exactly in the same order as their inmate numbers,[195] and this at a time when there were *no* epidemics raging in the camp – it is possible to conclude with a high degree of probability that they were killed. The only possibly imaginable alternative would be the following:

These prisoners, who had all been very seriously injured, all died within a week, but their deaths were all registered on the same day. That such cases actually happened can be proven from the heading "Deaths": for example, the report of November 29, 1944 mentions five inmates having died between November 21 and 24.[196] A similar case can be proven for a transport having arrived at Auschwitz from Buchenwald; the transport included 163 inmates, who were properly registered. When the camp doctor made a medical examination of the new arrivals on December 4, he noted that 18 had died in the meantime.[197]

Although the date of death of the Soviet prisoners of war is not apparent from the death certificates, but rather from the registration book as well as from the "Inmate Personal Cards," the hypothesis of

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[195] In this regard, see the list of Soviet inmates published by M.E. Jezierska on pp. 189-199 of her article.

[196] This document is reproduced in the appendix to Główna Komisja…, *op. cit.* (note 15), without page number.

[197] RGVA, 502-1-65, pp. 100-103.

deliberate killing appears considerably more probable. The following remarks are all based upon this assumption.

We now come to the second of the four questions raised above: If the invalids were killed as we assume, then what was the reason for it? M.E. Jezierska's explanation ("because they were not suitable for the labor service") cannot be correct because, as the author herself admits, at least 41 other Soviet invalids arrived on the same transport and were *not* killed; some of them were later transferred to Natzweiler. That these 41 were *not* killed is sufficient in itself to prove that there was no general order from the Reich government to liquidate all the unfit. As for the specific case of prisoners of war, there is even a contrary directive, as proven by the existence of a "field hospital for war-disabled Soviet Russian ex-servicemen" at Majdanek camp.[198] In Auschwitz as well, the "disabled" were regularly listed under the heading "Inmates fit and unfit to work" in the daily reports titled "Labor deployment" drawn up by Section IIIa. For example, there were 135 invalids in Sector BII/d of the men's camp at Birkenau on August 7, 1944.[199]

The picture is completed by the fact there was even a "cripple's company" at Stutthof, which

> *"consisted of men who were so emaciated that they were no longer fit to work. If someone voluntarily reported from this company, then he was assigned to a job. The barracks could hold 50 to 60 persons, perhaps even more. Those who still wanted to do something were busied with fetching water, cleaning up, and collecting twigs. These were easy jobs. Anyone who could not work was allowed to lie around. The cripples were not bullied."*[200]

Finally, it should be mentioned that two transports, carrying 298 and 172 weak or disabled inmates, departed for Dachau on November 14 and 20, 1942 respectively.[201]

So the only reason for killing these men would have been euthanasia: in contrast to the other invalids who remained alive, these 77 invalids must have been in such an obvious state of hopeless misery that it was decided to grant them a 'merciful death.' By whom was it decided? In view of the above, the answer to the third question is also obvious. The decision for the killing must have been made by the camp authorities.

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[198] J. Graf, C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 12), Engl. ed., pp. 38, 90, 199.
[199] *Auschwitz II/ Arbeitseinsatz für 7 August 1944*, APMO, D-AuII/3a16, p. 46.
[200] M. Orski, *op. cit.* (note 44), p. 214.
[201] D. Drywa, *op. cit.* (note 27), pp. 21f.

There still remains the question as to the method of killing. As may be seen, the statement that the invalids were gassed is based solely upon the testimony of A. Coradello, who was, however, merely repeating hearsay, and moreover made quite nonsensical statements about cremation which ruin his credibility. In addition, a mass killing in the gas chamber, due to the fear of death which would have been experienced by the victims during their last moments, would have been barbaric and incompatible with the notion of 'merciful death' – quite apart from the fact that their cries could have been heard in the old camp, which was in close proximity, so that the news would have been all over the camp in an instant, triggering a panic, which was certainly not in the interests of the camp authorities.

The most probable hypothesis appears to us that the Soviet invalids were killed by injection in the camp infirmary.

D. Drywa bases the gassing hypothesis on the following[202]

> *"The date (in the registration book) indicates neither the number of the death certificate from the death registry, nor the letter 'E', which would have indicated an execution."*

First, as regards the missing "E": this letter, in the view of Polish historians – which is probably correct – stood for "*exekutiert*" (executed), "*erschossen*" (shot), or "*erhängt*" (hanged). If it is missing on the death certificates of the Soviet invalids, this simply means that the killings were not an execution, because they did not involve a punishment, which required prior trial and sentence in all cases.

More important than the missing "E," however, is the first of the two points mentioned by D. Drywa, *i.e.*, the missing death certificate numbers in the registration book, since this is also interpreted as proof of the gassing of the Jewish women. In relation to the latter, D. Drywa writes:[203]

> *"The date was marked in the evidence books with the date stamp, and the numbers are missing from the death book, as with the Soviet prisoners of war. The death of the first larger group of female inmates was noted on July 24, 1944, while the other mortalities were registered throughout August, September, and October."*

Thus the *hypothesis* of the gassing of the Soviet prisoners of war becomes *proof* for the gassing of thousands of Jewish women! Let us examine this argument more closely.

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[202] *Idem*., *op. cit.* (note 119), p. 251.
[203] *Ibid.*, p. 252.

First, the absence of the number of the death certificate in the registration book does not prove that the deceased inmates were not entered in the death registry. From the moment of their arrival at the camp, the inmates acquired a bureaucratic status that could not dissolve into nothingness. The documents on an individual inmate might occasionally contain *falsified* information, but such documents could under no circumstances be *destroyed*, so that, in the event of death, a notation *had* to be made in the death books, even if a false death date and/or fictitious cause of death may have been entered under certain circumstances. The case of the 77 war invalids is clear proof of this.

That the missing death-certificate number is without particular significance is shown by the fact that this was unrecorded in many cases where there is no suspicion whatsoever. The official camp history, for example, reproduces a page from the registration book from the year 1943 indicating the deaths of two Poles having died on March 3 or 7, 1943 (inmate numbers 19383 and 19385), without any indication of the number of the death certificate. Two other deaths, on the same page, however, are accompanied by the number (two Poles having died on April 21 and March 15, with inmate numbers 19381 and 19387 respectively).[204] Quite obviously, in the first case, the responsible camp official simply neglected to make the entry.

From a statistical analysis performed on a sample of 1,850 names of Jewish prisoners from Riga registered between July 19 and August 15, 1944 (most of them on August 9),[205] a total of 273 death cases exist (last date: 19 January 1945). 236 cases show the number of the death certificate, whereas the number is missing in 37 cases. The following table is a breakdown of deaths by month and denotes cases where the number of the death certificate is missing:

[204] *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), Document 28 (without page number).
[205] AMS, I-II-11.

Table 3: Stutthof Death Cases from mid-1944 to 1945

Month	Death Cases	Cases w/o Death Certificate Number
July 1944	3	/
August 1944	6	5
September 1944	4	/
October 1944	42	32
November 1944	44	/
December 1944	104	/
January 1945	70	/
Total:	*273*	*37*

The 37 cases of deaths with no indication of the death certificate number are divided chronologically as follows:

– August 1944: 5 cases (18th: 1; 25th: 4)
– October 1944: 32 cases (1st: 10; 14th: 2; 17th: 2; 18th: 1; 21st: 5; 22nd: 5; 30th: 1; 31st: 6)

If the number of deaths without a death certificate really indicates the number of victims of homicidal gassings, then in this case merely 37 out of the 273 total death cases would have been gassed, *i.e.* 13.5%. And then consider the dates when they were allegedly gassed: one on Aug. 18, four on Aug. 25, two on Oct 14 and 17, one on Oct 18 and 30… That would be a rather surprising low rate for an auxiliary extermination camp.

This is so true that even M.E. Jezierska was unable to find any trace of mass extermination in the documents, or even another case comparable to that of the 77 disabled Soviet prisoners of war, although she carefully studied the registration books for the period from July 19 to October 1, 1944, containing approximately 17,000 names of inmates, including 14,400 Jewish inmates, and combed them for proofs of mass killing.[206] So the 77 invalids remain quite obviously an isolated case.

All the above considerations lead us to form the following hypothesis as to the origins of the story of mass gassings at Stutthof: it is difficult to go wrong in the assumption that the rumors of mass gassings were first spread by Jews having just arrived from Auschwitz, since such rumors had been busily stirred up in that camp by the resistance movement for years. That there was a fumigation gas

[206] These are listed in the article by Mrs. Jezierska, *op. cit.* (note 134), p. 99.

chamber at Stutthof, which was, in addition, easily visible from the old camp, must have given wings to inmate fantasies.

The gas chamber was located immediately opposite the crematorium that received the corpses of the Soviet invalids. This must have necessarily been interpreted by the prisoners – who were only imperfectly informed as to events in the camp – as confirmation of the rumors that the predestined victims of homicidal gassings were those unable to work. If then the invalid Soviets were gassed as disabled persons, Jews would be gassed as well. Thus, in inmate fantasies, Jewish women transferred to outer camps, or other camps, became gassing victims as well.

5. The Death Rate in Stutthof from 1939 to 1945

a) The Documents

The available documentation on the death rate of Stutthof inmates is nearly complete and permits a calculation of the total number of deceased with great exactitude. The following statistics do not, of course, include the victims of the evacuation by land and sea that began on January 25, 1945, since there are no extant documents in this regard.

Our calculations are based, first of all, on the death books; these contain pre-printed death certificates similar to those used at Auschwitz (see Document 19 in the Appendix).

For a better understanding of the following statements, we first present the available sources in their chronological order.

1) **Death Register (Second book)**[207] covers the period from January 18, 1939 to August 17, 1940, and contains 584 death certificates, broken down as follows:

– 47 up to December 30, 1939 (consecutive numbers 1-47)
– 537 up to August 17, 1940 (consecutive numbers 48-584).

This death book also contains a few deaths of inhabitants of the village of Stutthof. This explains why it begins with January 18, 1939, and not September 2, the date of arrival of the first inmates.

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[207] *Zweitbuch*, AMS, Z-V-2. The *Zweitbuch* (second book) was a copy for the camp files. The *Erstbuch* (first book) was sent to the district's civil office. All subsequent archival numbers # given in {braces} refer to AMS, Z-V-#.

There is also a **Death Register – First book**{3}, which covers part of the period covered by the second book – *i.e.*, the period from April 12 to May 23, 1940 – and which contains 200 death certificates.

2) **Death Register (Second book)**{4} covers the period from January 2 to December 31, 1941, and contains 268 death certificates, numbered from 1 to 268.

3) **Death Register (Third book)**{5} covers the period from January 6 to July 7, 1942, and contains 430 death certificates, numbered from 1 to 430.

4) **Death Register (Second book)**{6} covers the period from July 7 to September 9, 1942, and contains 538 death certificates, numbered from 431 to 968.

5) **Death Register (Second book)**{7} covers the period from October 7 to November 19, 1942, and contains 558 death certificates, numbered from 1,325 to 1,882.

Thus, it is clear that the lost death register mentioned above must have covered the period from September 10 to October 6, 1942, and contained 356 death certificates, numbered from 969 to 1,324.

6) **Death Register**{8} covers the period from November 19 to December 31, 1942, and contains 394 death certificates, numbered from 1,883 to 2,276.

7) **Death Register Volume 1**{10} covers the period from January 2 to February 17, 1943, and contains 383 death certificates numbered from 1 to 383.

A comparison with Death Register Volume 3 shows that Volume 2, which has not survived, covered the period from January 18 to March 29, 1943, and contained 798 death certificates, numbered from 384 to 1,181.

8) **Death Register Volume 3**{12} covers the period from March 30 to May 1, 1943, and contains 819 death certificates, numbered from 1,182 to 2,000.

9) **Death Register Volume 4**{14} covers the period from May 7 to June 1, 1943, and contains 376 death certificates, numbered from 2,001 to 2,376.

10) **Death Register Volume 6**{15} covers the period from August 20 to November 22, 1943. From the beginning of June 1943, the system of numbering the deaths in the death registers was altered. Whereas they had previously been numbered consecutively, from the beginning of the year onwards throughout, all deaths were now registered in sections of 185 death certificates each, each section being designated with Roman numerals.

Volume 6 contains 555 death certificates, broken down as follows:

– section V: 185 certificates
– section VI: 185 certificates
– section VII: 185 certificates

This allows the inference that volume 5 must have covered the period from June 2 to August 19, and contained 740 death certificates, broken down as follows:

– section I: 185 certificates
– section II: 185 certificates
– section III: 185 certificates
– section IV: 185 certificates

11) **Death Register Volume** 7{16} covers the period from November 22 to December 31, 1943, and contains 309 death certificates, broken down as follows:

– section VIII: 185 certificates
– section IX: 124 certificates

12) **Death Register**{11} covers the period from January 25 to December 16, 1943, and contains 54 death certificates – not of camp inmates, but of residents of Stutthof village.

13) **Death Register**[208] covers the period from January 5 to April 7, 1944, and contains 987 death certificates, broken down as follows:

– January: 259, numbered from 38 to 296
– February: 293, numbered from 1 to 293
– March: 363, numbered from 1 to 363

[208] AMS, 1-2C-9.

– April 1 to 7: 72, numbered from 1 to 72.

Taking into account the 37 deaths registered on the missing pages covering the period from January 1 to 4, this register shows a number of 987 deaths for the period from January 1 to April 7, 1944.

14) **Daily Reports on Mortalities** for the year 1944, as well as a few months in the year 1945.[209] These reports have only survived in part, except for the month of May. The following table reproduces the data contained in these reports:

– April 8 to 30: 141
– May: 180
– June: 45 (10 of 30 days)
– July: 52 (19 of 31 days)
– August: 9 (4 of 31 days)
– September: 34 (6 of 30 days)
– October: 33 (4 of 31 days)
– November: 752 (13 of 30 days)
– December: 158 in 2 days

15) **List of deceased in Stutthof Camp corresponding to documents found for the period from January to April 1945**.[210] This is a register drawn up by the Soviets, based on German documents, very probably daily manpower reports. The register covers the period from January 30 to April 23, 1945 and covers 6,550 deaths, broken down as follows:

– January 30/31: 389
– February: 3,804
– March: 1,789
– April: 568

b) The Death Tally

In view of the above, the following is an attempt to establish the number of deaths for each individual year.

1939: 47 deaths (last figure mentioned up to December 31, 1939 in the death register mentioned under Point 1)

1940: approximately 860 deaths: the Death Register/Second Book for 1939/1940 covers the period up to August 17, 1940. Based on the

[209] AMS, I-VB-7; see Document 20 in the Appendix.
[210] GARF, 7021-106-3, pp. 183-185; see Document 21 in the Appendix.

average death rate for these seven and a half months, we arrive at approximately (537 ÷ 7.5 × 12=) 860 deaths.

1941: 268 deaths (last figure mentioned in the death register mentioned under Point 2)

1942: 2,276 deaths (last figure mentioned in the death register mentioned under Point 6)

According to statistics compiled by the Soviets on the basis of discovered death certificates,[211] from February 17 to September 2, 1942, a total of 817 deaths occurred as follows:[212]

– February 17 to 28:	15	– June:	199
– March:	48	– July:	192
– April:	52	– August:	292
– May:	65	– September 1 to 2:	34

1943: 3,980 deaths. This results from the addition of the individual figures mentioned under Points 7 through 11.

– volume 1-4:	2,376	– volume 6:	555
– volume 5:	740	– volume 7:	309

We have not included the 54 deaths in the death book mentioned under point 12, because these refer to civilians rather than concentration-camp inmates.

1944: Approximately 7,500 deaths. The exact figures relating to deaths are available for the first five months only:

– January:	296	– April:	213[213]
– February:	293	– May:	180
– March:	363		

For the other months, our conclusions are based upon the figures in the death registers, which almost always appear in the registration books under the heading "Deceased," and are consistent with those contained in the death registers. The number of deaths can therefore be estimated as follows:[214]

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[211] It is unknown where these documents are stored.

[212] GARF, 7021-106-2, p. 28.

[213] 72 up to April 7, according to the death register, 141 from April 8 to 30, according to the heading "Deaths" in the daily reports.

[214] The data is based upon an analysis of the names of 1,850 inmates who arrived between July 19 and August 15 1944. AMS, I-II-11.

– June: ca. 135 (45 deaths in 10 days = 45 divided by 10 × 30 = 135)
– July: ca. 120 (the number 95 was entered on July 24; 11 deaths from July 25 to 28, and then 106 in 28 days = approximately 120 in 31 days)
– August: ca. 150 (the number 135 was entered on Aug. 29 = approximately 150 in 31 days)
– September: ca. 250 (the number 219 was entered on Sept. 26, *i.e.*, approximately 250 in 30 days)
– October: ca. 380 (the number 365 was entered on Oct. 30, *i.e.*, approximately 380 in 31 days).
– November: ca. 1,450 (the number 1,444 was registered on Nov. 30)
– December: ca. 3,560 (the number 3,553 was registered on Dec. 31)

1945: Approximately 11,200

For January, we have only the following incomplete documentation taken from the heading "Deaths":

– January 5: 38
– January 7: 99
– January 8: 68
– January 30: 389 (according to the Soviet list)
– January 31: 296 (ditto)

For this month, Polish historians assume 5,000 deaths.[215] This figure does not appear exaggerated when one considers that 4,489 inmates died between January 30 and February 28, *i.e.*, at a rate of 160 per day. This enormously high mortality rate was mainly due to typhus, which was raging in the camp at that time.

According to the Soviet list, 6,161 deaths were registered between February 1 and April 23. If one accepts the figure of approximately 5,000 deaths for January cited by Polish historians – as we do – the result for the year 1945 is a figure of approximately 11,161 or, rounded off, 11,200 deaths.

The above-established figures result in a total of approximately 26,100 deaths; the following is an overview of the individual years:

[215] Janina Grabowska, *op. cit.* (note 47), p. 136.

YEAR	FATALITIES	YEAR	FATALITIES
1939	47	1943	3,980
1940	approx. 860	1944	approx. 7,600
1941	268	1945	approx. 11,200
1942	2,276	**Total**	**approx. 26,100**

In light of these documented data, the statements of Orski on the number of Stutthof victims must be considered propaganda imposed by the hypothesis of the "auxiliary extermination camp." He wrote:[216]

> *"Of the ca. 111,000 individuals ever to have been imprisoned in the Stutthof Camp, almost 65,000 have died. They were victims of the direct extermination by shootings, hangings, killings by intravenous injections of phenol or other toxic substances, and by gassings in the camp's own gas chamber, as well as victims of the indirect extermination as a result of insufficient provisions. In addition, numerous individuals died during the evacuation of the camp complex in early 1945."*

c) The Number of Jews Who Died at Stutthof between July 1944 and January 1945

According to the estimates of K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, approximately 1,500 Jews were deported to Stutthof by the beginning of 1944.[217] The deportations involved took place, in his view, from Danzig (1939 and 1940), Pomerania (1940), Warsaw (May 22, 1940), Germany, and Bohemia-Moravia, as well as the eastern regions of Poland, in particular Bialystok.[217] Dunin-Wąsowicz, however, provides no figures for these deportations of Jews except in one case – a transport of 150 Jews from Bialystok at the end of November 1943. On December 17, 1943 and January 12, two transports left for Auschwitz with a total of 661 inmates, including almost all of the Jews in Stutthof at that time. [218]

According to the Korherr Report, only 31 Jews had been sent to Stutthof by the end of 1942, 18 of whom died in the camp.[219] Presumably, therefore, the estimate arrived at by Dunin-Wąsowicz is too high. The number of Jews who arrived at Stutthof before 1944 should not have exceeded a few hundred. The following statistics therefore do not include the few Jews presumably remaining in the camp prior to the arrival of the large transports.

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[216] M. Orski, *op. cit.* (note 8), p. 304.
[217] K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *op. cit.* (note 3), p. 9.
[218] *Ibid.*; D. Drywa, *op. cit.* (note 27), p. 29.
[219] NO-5194.

As we will see in detail in the next chapter, a total of 48,609 mostly female Jewish inmates were deported to Stutthof between June 29 and October 28, 1944. 28,673 Jews (2,898 men and 25,775 women) were still in Stutthof on January 24, 1945.[76] 12,548 Jewish inmates from Stutthof were transferred to other camps between July 21 and December 12, 1944.[220] Consequently (48,609 – 12,548 – 28,673 =) 7,388 Jews died in Stutthof between June 29, 1944 and January 24, 1945.

The following is a summary of the overall mortality at Stutthof for the same period of time:

July to December 1944: approximately 5,900; January 1 to 23, 1945: approximately 3,700 (assuming a daily figure of 161 deaths); a total therefore of approximately 9,600.

The percentage of Jews among the victims during this period is approximately (7,388 ÷ 9,600 × 100) ≈ 77%.

d) The Orthodox Image of Stutthof in View of the Mortality Statistics

The statistics set forth above give us a reliable historical criterion for an evaluation of the claim that Stutthof was an extermination camp, even if only an ad hoc one. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that no claim is made that inmates were exterminated without being registered; this is in contrast to other camps, such as, for example, Auschwitz.

The mortality statistics give the following picture for the period during which inmates regularly accepted and registered in the camp are supposed to have been exterminated, *i.e.*, from July to the beginning of November 1944:

July:	some 120
August:	some 150
September:	some 250
October:	some 380
November 1 to 8:	some 180[221]
Total:	**some 1,080**

[220] See Chapter IV, Section 1.

[221] According to Dunin-Wąsowicz, the gassing was stopped "at the beginning of November" (E. Kogon *et al.*, *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen*…, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 266, see Chapter II). We have begun with Nov. 8, since that is the first day of that month for which reliable data is available.

These mortality statistics include all inmates, both Jewish and non-Jewish. As established above, the proportion of Jews among the total number of victims during this period amounts to approximately 77%. This means a number of approximately (1,080 × 0.77 =) 830 Jewish-inmate deaths for the period in question.

In Chapter III, Section 4.c, we reproduced the official statistics relating to alleged gassing victims. To test the historical basis for these statistics, we now need only compare these statistics with the mortality figures proven on the basis of documents for the period from August 1 to November 8 (July has not been taken into account due to the small number of alleged gassing victims):

Table 4: Claimed Gassing Victims

MONTH	ALLEGED GASSING VICTIMS	DEATHS
August:	477[222]	150
September:	300 Jewish women	250
October:	600 Jewish women[223]	380
November 1 to 8	250 "women"	180
Total:	**1,627**	**960**

Thus, the number of *alleged* gassing victims far exceeds the number of Jews who *actually* died in the camp during that time! In view of the above – in particular the fact that all Jews deported to Stutthof were already under the control of the *WVHA* and, as registered inmates, could therefore not simply disappear[224] – this amounts to conclusive proof that the claims of mass gassings at Stutthof Concentration Camp contained in the official camp history are merely rooted in the murky morass a legends.

We stress once again that these 960 deaths also include non-Jews. Assuming the percentage of 77% Jewish victims as established above, this means that approximately 740 Jews died during the relevant time period. The number of *allegedly* gassed Jews, therefore, also exceeds the number of Jews who *actually* died during that time!

The *coup de grace* for the orthodox narrative is given by the following fact: during the time period of the alleged extermination of Jews, the number of Jews who *actually* died in the camp was quite

[222] These are supposed to have included 300 Jewish women, 77 Soviet prisoners of war, and 100 "men."

[223] Plus "a few dozen men."

[224] With regard to Stutthof, and unlike the claims made for Auschwitz-Birkenau, no claim is made that Jews were sent there and killed without being registered; see Chapter I.3. and p. 84.

low; but as soon as the extermination program allegedly stopped, the death rate rose dramatically:

– About 830 deaths occurred during the alleged extermination period, from early July to November 8, 1944. For these 131 days, this is an average of 6.7 deaths per day.
– From November 9, 1944 to January 23, 1945, however approximately (8470[225] – [8470 × 0.77] =) 6,470 deaths occurred – after the claimed end of extermination! For these 45 days, this is an average of some 144 per day!

The claim made by Marek Orski – as a typical representative of orthodox historians – that the Jews in Stutthof formed a group which "were slated for direct extermination within the framework of special treatment,"[153] is, therefore, in crass contradiction to the above statistics, which stand on a solidly proven documentary basis: the Jews who died during the period of alleged extermination represented only (740 ÷ 48,609 × 100 ≈) 1.5% of all the Jews who arrived at the camp allegedly for the purposes of extermination! In the case of Stutthof, we need not concern ourselves with those who were "exterminated without registration," since, as stated above, orthodox historiography does not claim the killing of unregistered inmates.

In view of the above, it is entirely clear that the deportation of Jews to Stutthof in 1944 had absolutely nothing to do with the so-called "Final Solution of the Jewish question," which is understood by orthodox historiography to mean a systematic extermination of Jews.

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[225] For the first nine days of November 1944, the death cases are known for three days (87); assuming an average of 30 cases per day, this results in (30 × 8 =) 240 at the end of Nov. 8, hence (1,450 – 240 =) 1,210 from Nov. 9 to 30. For December 1944: 3,560. For Jan. 1 to 23, 1945: 3,700. Total: 1,210 + 3,560 + 3,700 = 8,470 victims.

CHAPTER IV:
Stutthof's New Role as of 1944

1. Deportations of Jews to Stutthof in 1944

From June 29 to October 14, 1944, a massive influx of Jews, mostly women, poured into Stutthof from other concentration camp. The extant documents permit to accurately reconstruct the complete picture of these transports as shown in the following table:[226]

Table 5: Deportations to Stutthof in Late 1944

Date	Origin	Number
29 June 1944	CC Auschwitz	2,502
12 July 1944	*Sipo* Kowno (Kaunas)	282
13 July 1944	*Sipo* Kowno	3,098
13 July 1944	*Sipo* Kowno	233
16 July 1944	*Sipo* Kowno	1,172
17 July 1944	*Sipo* Kowno	1,208
19 July 1944	*Sipo* Kowno	1,097
19 July 1944	*Sipo* Kowno	1,072
20 July 1944	CC Auschwitz	2,500
25 July 1944	*Sipo* Kowno	182
25 July 1944	*Sipo* Kowno	1,321
04 Aug. 1944	*Sipo* Kowno	793
09 Aug. 1944	*Sipo* Riga	6,382
09 Aug. 1944	*Sipo* Riga	450
14 Aug. 1944	CC Auschwitz	2,800
16 Aug. 1944	CC Auschwitz	2,800
23 Aug. 1944	*Sipo* Riga	2,079
23 Aug. 1944	*Sipo* Riga	2,329
28 Aug. 1944	CC Auschwitz	2,800
31 Aug. 1944	CC Auschwitz	8
03 Sept. 1944	CC Auschwitz	2,405
10 Sept. 1944	CC Auschwitz	668
10 Sept. 1944	CC Auschwitz	1,082
27 Sept. 1944	CC Auschwitz	4,501
01 Oct. 1944	*Sipo* Riga	3,155
14 Oct. 1944	*Sipo* Riga	190
28 Oct. 1944	CC Auschwitz	1,500
	Total:	*48,609*

[226] AMS, I-IIB-8, p. 1. With the exception of the transport dated 28 Oct. 1944, this table was published in 1967 by K. Dunin-Wąsowicz (note 3, pp. 11f.).

Summing up by their place of departure, this yields:

23,566 Jews from Auschwitz
10,458 Jews sent by the *Sipo* Kowno
14,585 Jews sent by the *Sipo* Riga

The accumulated monthly influx was as follows:

June:	2,502	August:	20,441	October:	4,845
July:	12,165	September:	8,656		

The transports from Riga in Latvia, as well as Kaunas in Lithuania – Kowno is the Polish name for Kaunas – were the results of the evacuation of the Baltic camps due to the advance of the Red Army.

Some of the Jewish inmates sent to Stutthof were subsequently transferred to other camps. The following table lists the documented transports of inmates away from Stutthof:[227]

Table 6: Deportations from Stutthof in Late 1944

DATE	DESTINATION	NO. OF INMATES
21 July 1944	CC Dachau	2,000
25 July 1944	CC Auschwitz	1,423
13 Aug. 1944	CC Dachau	950
16 Aug. 1944	CC Buchenwald	1,350
17 Aug. 1944	CC Sachsenhausen	500
17 Aug. 1944	CC Buchenwald	500
10 Sept. 1944	CC Auschwitz	575
12 Sept. 1944	CC Neuengamme	500
29 Sept. 1944	CC Neuengamme	500
29 Sept. 1944	CC Natzweiler	1,000
18 Oct. 1944	CC Neuengamme	150
3 Nov. 1944	CC Buchenwald	800
24 Nov. 1944	CC Flossenbürg	500
26 Nov. 1944	CC Buchenwald	1,000
12 Dec. 1944	CC Buchenwald	800
	Total:	*12,548*

Many Jewish prisoners were also transferred to the grid of subsidiary camps and locations outside the main camp.

Among the inmates transferred from the Baltic to Stutthof were also German Jews who had been deported to Riga in 1941 and 1942.[228]

[227] K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *ibid.*, p. 17. All transports listed in the table – except for that of September 10, 1944 – are confirmed by the series of *Kommandanturbefehl* documents (AMS, I.IB-3). The transport of September 10, 1944 can partly be reconstructed on the basis of the registration records (AMS, *Transportliste*, Microfilm 262). See Section IV.4.

The fragmentarily preserved manifests of the transports from Kaunas and Riga to Stutthof during the second half of 1944 contains at least 959 names of German Jews. One of them, Berthold Neufeldt, born June 17, 1936,[229] had been deported at the age of 5 or 6 years. The already-quoted anthology by Kuhn containing numerous reports by former inmates[45] features statements by the following German-Jewish men and women transferred from the Baltic to Stutthof:

- Trudi Birger, who emigrated to the Memelland in 1933, emigrated from the Memelland to Lithuania in 1939, spent 1941 to 1944 in Kaunas, and was transferred to Stutthof from Kaunas (pp. 129-133);[230]
- Jeannette Wolf, an active Socialist who was deported to Riga in 1942, was interned in the local ghetto or camp, and was transferred to Stutthof in the summer of 1944, along with her daughter (who survived the war; pp. 133-137);
- Gerda Gottschalk, sent to Riga in January 1942, and remained there until the summer of 1944 (pp. 138-141);
- Gertrude Schneider, deported to Riga from Vienna along with her mother and her sister (who, like her, survived the war) at an unstated point in time, and arrived in Stutthof in August 1944 (pp. 146-149);
- Erna Valk, deported to Riga on December 10, 1941, along with her husband (who survived the war with her), was lodged in various camps, and arrived in Stutthof on August 6, 1944 (pp. 149-151);
- Josef Katz, sent to Riga from Lübeck on December 4, 1941, interned in the local ghetto and in various camps until October 1944, and was then transferred to Stutthof (pp. 159-162);
- Max Kaufmann, deported to Riga in 1941, was interned in the local ghettos and camps, and arrived in Stutthof on October 1, 1944 (pp. 163-166);
- Polly Schoeps, sent to Riga on December 13, 1941 and arrived in Stutthof in the summer of 1944 (pp. 166-168).

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[228] From November 17, 1941, to February 6, 1942, 25,103 Jews form the Old Reich were deported to Riga in 25 transports. (*Anlage zu den Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten, Nr. 10 vom 3.7.1942*. RGVA, 500-1-775, p. 233).

[229] AMS, I-IIB-10, p. 176.

[230] 45 years after her liberation from Stutthof, Trudi Birger published a disgraceful collection of atrocity stories under the title of *Im Angesicht des Feuers* (Piper Verlag, Munich/Zürich 1990), which is among the worst works in concentration camp sub-literature, a veritable literary growth industry.

But the known cases such as these are very rare. Many other German Jews who arrived at Stutthof in the second half of 1944 from the Baltic countries are officially considered dead in Riga, victims of alleged massacres.

2. The Reasons for the Deportations

After examining and refuting the orthodox claim that Stutthof became an ad hoc extermination camp for Jews in 1944 due to an alleged shortage of extermination capacity at Auschwitz, we must determine the purpose *actually* performed by the camp at that time. The surviving documents provide an unequivocal answer to this question.

As the war continued, the labor shortage in the Reich took on desperate proportions, and the economic significance of inmate labor increased constantly. By the end of May 1943, Himmler himself ordered that concentration camps inmates ought to be granted productivity awards in order to increase their labor efficiency. At Auschwitz this directive was introduced on June 4, 1943.[231] On October 26, 1943, Oswald Pohl sent a directive to all camp commandants demanding increased inmate productivity, stating:[232]

> *"In earlier years, it might have been regarded with indifference, within the framework of the rehabilitative tasks at that time, whether or not an inmate performed useful work. But at the present time, inmate manpower is of significance, and all measures of the commandants, leaders of the V section*[233] *and doctors, must be aimed at maintaining inmate health and ability to work. Not from false sloppy sentimentality, but rather because they must contribute to the achievement of a great victory by the German people; we must therefore be alert to the well-being of the inmates."*

To increase labor productivity even more, the Stutthof Camp commandant ordered an increase in the daily working times to 8½ hours; on Sundays, inmates had to work in the morning only, as before.[234]

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[231] RGVA, 502-1-60, p. 18; see C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 17), p. 44.

[232] AMS, I-IB-8, p. 53.

[233] "*Abteilung V – Standortarzt*" (Section V – garrison physician).

[234] M. Orski, "Die Arbeit," in *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 44), p. 215. Starting on Feb. 2, 1944, the following working schedule for inmates came into effect at Stutthof: Weekdays (incl. Saturdays) from 7 am to 12 pm and from 1 pm to 4:30 pm; Sundays from 7.00 am to 12.00 pm. *Kommandanturbefehl* No. 10 of February 2, 1944. AMS I-IB-3, p. 29

To optimize the deployment of inmate labor and thus compensate somewhat for the lack of manpower in all concentration and PoW camps, the so-called "Hollerith Kartothek" was introduced, which was a system of punch cards for machines processing statistical data as invented by the American Herman Hollerith in 1890. This system was introduced at Stutthof by the end of 1944, coinciding with the beginning of the arrival of the large Jewish transports. The file was maintained by four Polish inmates, including the later camp historian K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, and included approximately 80,000 inmate names by the end of the war, with an indication of identity and profession. Parts of this card-file system have survived.

The "Hollerith Kartothek" was particularly useful when, in early October 1944, a central distribution of manpower to industrial undertakings of particular importance to the war effort was initiated in all concentration camps. The companies wishing to obtain inmate workers sent an application for the allocation of inmates to the Reich Ministry for Armaments and War Production of Albert Speer. After examining it and after evaluating the importance of the planned work and employment, the ministry forwarded the application to Office D II of the SS-*WVHA* ("Employment of Prisoners"), which was subordinate to SS *Standartenführer* Gerhard Maurer. The camp commander and the inmate *Kapo* overseeing the employment of prisoners also examined the request in accordance with the needs of their camp, then sent a report to the Head Office D II, and finally Oswald Pohl himself decided the acceptance or rejection of the request.[235]

If the required inmate workers were not available locally, the prisoners were requested to be sent from other concentration camps. The above-mentioned transfers of Jews to Stutthof happened within the framework of the general project of employing detainees for war production.

Polish historian Miroslaw Gliński describes in detail Stutthof's role in this program of the exploitation of forced workers as supplied by the concentration camps:[236]

> *"A relatively significant increase in terms of the numbers of subsidiary camps took place during the summer and fall of 1944. Stutthof Camp could not house and employ all the inmates assigned to it. In particular, it lacked jobs for the nearly 43,000 Jewish women from Lithuania, Latvia and Hungary. The problem was solved by sending over 22,000 per-*

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[235] *Ibid.*, pp. 214f.

[236] M. Gliński, "Nebenlager und grössere Aussenkommandos des KZ Stutthof (1939-1945)," in: *Stutthof*, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp. 226f.

> *sons to other concentration camps, and the remaining 21,000 persons into newly formed subsidiary camps or by assigning them to farmers in Zulawy. Of the Jewish women, 10,500 were transferred to the Organization Todt, which was building field fortifications in the vicinity of Thorn and Elbing; over 5,000 women were set to work in the maintenance of military airports in East Prussia. Jewish women worked in the maintenance of railway tracks in Bromberg, Stolp, and in the area of Praust, in addition to the gunpowder factory in Bromberg, the electrical works in Thorn, and the Schichau wharves in Danzig. In addition to the subsidiary camps for Jews, there were also 'Aryan' subsidiary camps. Mainly skilled workers, chiefly Poles, were sent there.* […] *A total of nearly 30,000 inmates were sent to the newly built camps in the summer and fall of 1944."*

Thus, the question of the *real* function of Stutthof in the summer and fall of 1944 is answered very clearly: the camp was in no way intended for the extermination of human beings; on the contrary, it represented a large labor resource for the German war effort.

3. The Deportation of Hungarian Jews to Stutthof in 1944

In a 1983 paper by Georges Wellers,[237] which he prepared on the basis of the first German edition of Danuta Czech's *Kalendarium*,[238] he claimed that, of the 437,402 Hungarian Jews who were deported to Auschwitz between May and July 1944, 409,640 were gassed immediately upon arrival and only 27,760 managed to escape temporarily from the first "selection" in that camp. Wellers merely proclaimed explicitly what Czech had suggested implicitly in her work, namely that all Hungarian Jewish inmates who were not registered immediately, were gassed upon arrival in Birkenau.

In the second German edition of her work, Czech was forced to admit that a number of Hungarian Jews, despite not having been registered on arrival at Birkenau, had not been gassed but had been admitted to the transit camp, from where most of them were transferred to other concentration camps. She tries to trivialize this concession, though, by failing to mention that in the summer of 1944 many Jewish transports departed from Birkenau to other camps. In this specific

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[237] G. Wellers, "Essai de détermination du nombre de morts au camp d'Auschwitz," in: *Le Monde Juif*, Oct.-Dec. 1983, no. 112, pp. 127-159.

[238] D. Czech, "Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau," in: *Hefte von Auschwitz* (Wydawnictwo Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu), Nos. 2-4, 6-8, 1959-1964.

case, Czech mentions only three of the ten transports of Jews transferred from Auschwitz to Stutthof in the second half of 1944 – and moreover with faulty chronological and numerical references:

– one of 2,000 inmates on 14 July 1944,[239]
– one on September 21, 1944, without numbers given,[240]
– one of 1,500 inmates on October 27, 1994.[241]

This selective silence is all the more reprehensible as the list of Jewish transports to Stutthof had been published in 1967 by K. Dunin-Wąsowicz in the prestigious bulletin of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, which could not have remained unknown to Danuta Czech and her colleagues at the Auschwitz museum.

According to Danuta Drywa, there were 10,602 Hungarian Jews and 11,464 Jewish from Łódź among the 23,566 Jews transferred from Auschwitz to Stutthof,[242] but according to our count, there were about 12,100 Hungarian Jews.[243] A more-thorough study of this question revealed that the number of Hungarian Jews sent from Auschwitz to various concentration camps for labor assignments amounted to at least 106,700, of whom 79,200 passed through the "transit camp" in Birkenau without being registered.[244]

A number of Hungarian Jews arriving at Stutthof came from Baltic countries according to the few extant transport lists:

From Kaunas:[245]

– 54 (serial numbers 48947-49000) on July 19 in a transport of 1,097 Jews;
– 588 on Aug. 4 in a transport of 793 Jews, 743 among them with known name.

From Riga:

– 484 on August 9, in a transport of 6,382 Jewish women, 1,858 among them with known name;[246]
– 15 on October, in a transport of 1,777 Jews, 817 among them with known name.[247]

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[239] D. Czech, *Kalendarium*…, *op. cit.* (note 178), p. 822
[240] *Ibid.*, p. 885.
[241] *Ibid.*, p. 917.
[242] D. Drywa, *op. cit.* (note 27), p. 17.
[243] This number includes the Jews transferred to Stutthof from Kaunas and Riga. See below.
[244] See C. Mattogno, "Die Deportation ungarischer Juden von Mai bis Juli 1944. Eine provisorische Bilanz," in: *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, vol. 5, no. 4, Dec. 2001, pp. 381-395, esp. p. 395.
[245] AMS, I-IIB-10.
[246] AMS-I-IIE-12.

In total, the extant documents prove that a minimum of 1,141 Hungarian Jews arriving at Stutthof came from Kaunas and Riga. The actual number of prisoners transferred to Stutthof was certainly higher, and consequently the number of inmates initially transferred to the Baltic camps must have been even higher than that. Whence came these Hungarian Jews? Most likely directly from Hungary via Auschwitz, according to the original plan to send a large number of Hungarian Jews to the eastern territories for labor assignments.[248] However, according to orthodox historiography, these Jews found alive in Riga and Kaunas were part of those allegedly "gassed" in Auschwitz upon arrival!

Another case of prisoners transferred to Stutthof and considered "gassed" by Danuta Czech is that of the Jews from Łódź, some 70,000 of whom were deported to Auschwitz between August 15 and September 2, 1944, and who are said to have been "gassed" *en masse* except for a small contingent of 2,318 registered inmates.[249] This is inescapably false, since at least 11,464 of these Jews from Łódź were transferred from Auschwitz to Stutthof.[250]

4. The Transfer of Unfit Jews from Stutthof to Auschwitz

As stated above, Stutthof acted as a labor reservoir beginning in mid-1944. This provides a natural explanation for the two transfers of Jews "unfit for labor" to Auschwitz that occurred on August 26 and September 10, 1944, which, according to orthodox historiography, were allegedly "for the purpose of extermination." Apart from Danuta Drywa (see p. 45), these two transports are also mentioned by Grabowska, who remarks:[251]

> *"The transports of July 1944 from Kowno and Riga contained mothers with small children* […] *After a stay of several days in Stutthof, some of these children were transported to Auschwitz. On July 26, 1944, a transport left with 1,423 persons, including 524 women, 416 girls, and 483 boys. The others were transferred on the next transport on Septem-*

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[247] AMS-I-IIB-12.

[248] C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 244), pp. 387f.

[249] D. Czech, "Les événements les plus importants dans le camp de concentration Auschwitz-Birkenau," in: AAVV, *Contribution à l'histoire du KL Auschwitz*. Edition du Musée d'Etat à Oświęcim, undated, p. 209.

[250] See C. Mattogno, "Das Ghetto von Łódź in der Holocaust-Propaganda," in: *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, vol. 7, no. 1, April 2003, pp. 30-36.

[251] J. Grabowska, *op. cit.* (note 47), p. 138.

ber 10, 1944. This transport contained 575 Jewish women and children, as well as 8 mothers with 8 children, and 9 pregnant women of other nationalities. Both transports were sent to Auschwitz II (Birkenau), that is, to direct extermination."

The purpose of the transfer of unfit Jewish inmates was quite obviously to make room for Jews who could work, and who were arriving at Stutthof in great numbers at this time. That the unfit Jews were sent to Auschwitz, and that D. Czech's *Kalendarium* only mentions two registered new inmates from Stutthof on September 11,[252] in no way proves that the purpose of these transports was to exterminate the transferees. In 1944, the percentage of unfit inmates at Birkenau was very high over this entire period. For example, on February 15, 1944, of the 19,072 prisoners in the women's camp, 8,094, or 42.4%, were "unfit for labor and not employable."[253] In the men's camp, on August 8, 1944, 3,167 out of 19,115 inmates (16.6%) were "unfit for labor and not employable."[254] D. Czech herself informs us that 7,150 – *i.e.*, 27.2% – of the 26,230 inmates of the women's camp at Birkenau on October 2 of that year were sick and unable to work.[255]

Moreover, at least 79,200 Hungarian Jews and at least several thousand Jews from Łódź passed through the "transit camp" in Birkenau without being registered. Even D. Czech admits that in the summer of 1944, very large numbers of Jews were housed in the transit camp without being registered. According to her, this same transit camp contained 30,000 unregistered Hungarian Jewish women on August 22, 1944, alone.[256]

Finally, when the Birkenau camp was occupied by the Red Army, there were still 180 children and teenagers from a few months to 15 years of age, 123 of whom were under 12 years.[257]

That the children were sent to Auschwitz from Stutthof without any intention to murder them is also confirmed by Polish historiography. D. Drywa writes:[258]

"The next group of minor children was sent on June 19, 1944 to Mauthausen. A few weeks prior to departure of this transport, all Polish and

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[252] D. Czech, *Kalendarium*, *op. cit.* (note 178), p. 874. The transport of July 27, 1944, is not even mentioned!
[253] GARF, 7021-108-33, p. 130
[254] APMO, D-AuII-3a, p. 46.
[255] D. Czech, *Kalendarium*, *op. cit.* (note 178), p. 893.
[256] *Ibid.*, p. 860; on the transit camp see also pp. 699f.
[257] GARF, 7021-108-23, p. 198a
[258] D. Drywa, "Ruch transportów…," *op. cit.* (note 27), p. 21.

> *Russian boys under 18 years of age were taken away from the work groups and housed in block 20. Of this number, 239 able-bodied individuals were selected, as determined by the camp doctor.*
> *When one considers that, in particular, another transport had already left for the eastern youth protective-custody camp of Tuschingen (in the vicinity of Łódź) on an even earlier date, on March 28, 1944, and included 29 children and one adult female, and when one considers the later transports of mothers with children to Auschwitz, then the characteristic desire of the Stutthof Camp authorities to rid themselves of the inmates is apparent."*

The transfer of the mothers – some of whom were quite able to work – together with their children, was doubtlessly ordered because the authorities were unwilling to separate the mothers and children, *i.e.*, on *humanitarian* grounds.

That the two transports from Stutthof to Auschwitz mentioned above were doomed for extermination is, of course, in stark contradiction to the claim that Stutthof was an auxiliary extermination camp. As we have seen (pp. 9, 58), it is claimed that the "extermination of Hungarian Jews, which was implemented in Auschwitz until the middle of 1944, exceeded the camp's capacity," and that a "part of them, especially Jewish women, was transferred to Stutthof." But then why in the world would Jews from Stutthof be sent to Auschwitz to be gassed? The whole story is rendered even more absurd by the fact that, according to the calculations of the Soviet Commission relating to the gas chamber at Stutthof – calculations which can be theoretically reconstructed – if the chamber had been misused for criminal purposes, it could have killed 768 persons in 24 hours. Even if assuming a "duty cycle" of only twelve hours a day, all of the 2,023 unfit inmates could have been liquidated in less than a week!

The nonsensical allegations purveyed by orthodox historiography with regard to the reciprocal death transports back and forth between the "main extermination camp" and the "auxiliary extermination camp" now continue with even more nonsense:

Of the 48,609 Jews who arrived at Stutthof between June 29 and October 14, 1944, more than half, *i.e.*, 25,043, had been transferred from the Baltic camps; 10,458 were from Kaunas (Kowno), while another 14,585 were transferred from Riga. Orthodox historiography has drastically reduced these numbers in order to prove that the "missing" Jews were murdered. Raul Hilberg, for instance, makes

the following statement with reference to the dissolution of the Baltic camps:[259]

> *"Only a few months later* [after May 1944] *the Baltic camps were definitively evacuated. Between August 1944 and January 1945, a few thousand Jews were allocated to concentration camps in the Reich territory. Thousands of Baltic camp inmates were, however, shot immediately before the arrival of the Red Army."* (Emphasis added.)

Hilberg thus turns 25,000 into "a few thousand"! The *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* reduces these numbers in a manner that is almost as deceptive:[260]

> *"Approximately 4,000 Jews from Kowno were transferred to Germany, most of them to the concentration camps at Kaufering*[261] *or Stutthof. In October, Jews also arrived from Kowno after having been interned in camps in Estonia."*

If Stutthof alone accepted more than 10,000 Jews from Kaunas, and then sent a number of them – the number is unknown to us – to the Dachau subsidiary camp at Kaufering, then the total number of Jews accepted from Kaunas cannot possibly have been "approximately 4,000."

In addition, *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* repeats the unfounded story of the massacres of prisoners unfit for labor in Riga immediately before the dissolution of the camp at war's end:[262]

> *"As the Red Army approached the Latvian border in July 1944, the evacuation of the camp began. Before the evacuation, thousands of unfit Jews – the sick, weak, and children – were killed."*

Yet the transports of Jews from Kaunas and Riga to Stutthof clearly refute these allegations. The transferred inmates included, in particular, hundreds of minor children who were sent to Stutthof with the notation "boy" or "girl." The lists of names of deportees from Kaunas – which have only survived in part – use these expressions for persons born in 1929 or later, *i.e.*, 15 years of age or less.

For example, in the transport list of July 12, 1944 – which has survived in part, and which originally consisted of a total of 3,098 names – 80 out of 510 of the surviving names fall into this category. The nearly complete list of 19 July with 1,097 deportees – for 1,095 of whom the names are known – contains the notation "boy" or

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[259] R. Hilberg, *Die Vernichtung*…, *op. cit.* (note 6), vol. II, p. 408.
[260] E. Jäckel *et al.*, *op. cit.* (note 5), vol. II, p. 806.
[261] An auxiliary camp of Dachau Concentration Camp.
[262] *Op. cit.* (note 5), vol. II, p. 728.

"girl" in 88 cases.[263] The following table gives the number of children per age group:

Table 7: Children transferred from the Baltics to Stutthof in 1944

	TRANSPORT OF JULY			TRANSPORT OF JULY	
AGE	12TH	19TH	AGE	12TH	19TH
15	3	-	8	4	6
14	7	4	7	5	7
13	4	28	6	9	8
12	8	13	5	7	-
11	2	6	4	8	3
10	4	9	3	8	2
9	10	2	2	1	-
			Total:	*80*	*88*

On July 26, 1944, 1,893 inmates were transferred from Stutthof to Auschwitz, mostly Lithuanian Jews, including 546 girls, just as many boys, and 801 women, who were the children's mothers.[264] The major part of this transport's manifest has been preserved. Among the 1,488 inmates for whom biographic information has been preserved, 850 were children, divided into the following age groups:[265]

Table 8: Children Transferred from Stutthof to Auschwitz on July 26, 1944

YEAR OF BIRTH	AGE	#	YEAR OF BIRTH	AGE	#
1929	15	31	1937	7	44
1930	14	117	1938	6	61
1931	13	146	1939	5	54
1932	12	94	1940	4	60
1933	11	36	1941	3	52
1934	10	61	1942	2	8
1935	9	26	1943	1	2
1936	8	58		*Total:*	*850*

This list comprises 24 of the 80 children who had been present in the above-listed transport to Stutthof of July 12, and 84 who had been

[263] AMS, I-IIB-10, transport lists.

[264] Radio message of the Stutthof camp commander, *SS-Sturmbannführer* Hoppe, to the Auschwitz camp commander, July 26, 1944. AMS, I-IIC-4, p. 94. "*Übernahmeverhandlung*," of the transport of July 26 & 27, 1944. AMS, I-IIC-3, p. 43.

[265] AMS, I-IIC-3, manifest of the transport of July 26, 1944; see Document 22 in the Appendix.

present among the 88 children in the above-listed transport to Stutthof of July 19.

The transport sent on September 10 from Stutthof to Auschwitz, whose manifest has been partly rebuilt from its registration file,[266] comprised at least 345 children and adolescents, mostly between 12 and 17 years of age, divided as follows:

Table 9: Children Transferred from Stutthof to Auschwitz on September 10, 1944

YEAR OF BIRTH	AGE	#	YEAR OF BIRTH	AGE	#
1927	17[267]	56	1930	14	26
1928	16	136	1931	13	6
1929	15	119	1932	12	2
				Total:	*345*

Since the transport lists are fragmentary, the number of boys and girls transferred from Kaunas and Riga in 1944 was undoubtedly larger than these 1,250 documented cases.

To sum up: according to orthodox historiography, these Baltic Jewish children miraculously survived the SS mass shootings of the unfit in Riga and Kaunas, then escaped the gas chamber of the "auxiliary extermination camp" at Stutthof by another miracle, only to be sent to Auschwitz in order to allegedly be gassed there; and all this at a time when over 20,000 Jews were being transferred from Auschwitz to Stutthof, because the "extermination of Hungarian Jews" allegedly "exceeded the camp's capacity"!

With this we return to the initial question of the two transports of prisoners – mostly children – sent from Stutthof to Auschwitz. The "extermination character" of these transfers is definitively refuted by another fact ignored by orthodox historiography: The transport of Polish Jews originally from Łódź which arrived at Stutthof via Auschwitz on September 3, 1944, included at least 41 children who were accompanied by their mothers. The smallest was Trunseb Potok, born on February 24, 1944 (hence less than seven months old) with the Stutthof registration number 83604, who was traveling with his mother Manka Potok, born October 2, 1905, with registra-

[266] AMS, *Transportliste*, microfilm 262. See the name list in: C. Mattogno, *op. cit*, (note 250), p. 34.

[267] When *Einsatzgruppe A* entered Lithuania in summer 1941, where it is said to have perpetrated huge massacres among the local Jews, these boys were 14 years old.

tion number 83603.[268] The extant documents preserved in the archives of the Stutthof Museum reveal the following information about these 41 children:[269]

Table 10: Children from Łódź Ghetto Transferred via Auschwitz Who Arrived at Stutthof on September 3, 1944

#	Last Name	First Name	Birthdate	Reg. No.
1588	Baude	Golda	12 Sep. 1937	83555
1590	Brin	Hala	23 Apr. 1937	83557
1592	Darl	Dina Sissel	30 June 1938	83559
1594	Borenstein	Lotte	14 June 1934	83561
1595	Borenstein	Eva	14 Nov. 1939	83562
1597	Brijmann	Lilianna	14 July 1938	83564
1599	Chimonovits	Josef	22 Nov. 1935	83566
1600	Chimonovits	Mejer	2 Nov. 1936	83567
1601	Chimonovits	Izak	19 Oct. 1943	83568
1603	Chimowicz	Eugenia	6 Nov. 1935	83570
1604	Chirug	Zila	9 Sep. 1941	83571
1606	Chirug	Ruth	21 Apr. 1937	83573
1608	Czariska	Sara	30 June 1932	83575
1610	Danziger	Arjela	19 Mar. 1937	83577
1811	Feinsilber	Eva	4 Jan. 1940	83578
1614	Fürstenberg	Abram Meier	9 Feb. 1932	83581
1616	Gutmann	Dora	17 Jan. 1937	83583
1618	Glückmann	Schmul	24 Mar. 1935	83585
1619	Glückmann	Chaja	12 Aug. 1930	83586
1621	Jacob	Gittel	6 Mar. 1944	83588
1623	Jalanowicz	Felga	10 Jan. 1940	83590
1627	Kupferschmidt	Abraham	29 Oct. 1938	83594
1629	Kasz	Bronia	21 Feb. 1930	83596
1631	Frantz	Noemi	2 Nov. 1937	83598
1633	Lachmann	Kazimierz	1 Mar. 1937	83600
1635	Neuberg	Lila	10 Oct. 1936	83602
1637	Potok	Trunseb	24 Feb. 1944	83604
1638	Rosenblum	Bronka	27 Dec. 1931	83605
1641	Rotstein	Regina	12 Aug. 1932	83608
1942	Rotstein	Sala	3 Oct. 1938	83609
1643	Richer	Tela	14 June 1932	83610
1645	Reingold	Elchanan	12 Dec. 1937	83612
1646	Steier	Frema	25 July 1942	83613
1648	Stelowicka	Ruchla	1 Apr. 1936	83615
1650	Szyper	Adam	6 Dec. 1939	83617
1653	Salomonowicz	Michael	6 Oct. 1933	83620
1654	Salomonowicz	Josef	1 July 1938	83621
1656	Skura	Estera	27 Dec. 1933	83623
1657	Tabackschmeker	Jochwet	25 Mar. 1930	83624
1660	Wolman	Kristina	25 Sep. 1930	83627
1735	Wolf	Helga	2 July 1935	83702

[268] AMS-I-IIB-12, p. 49.
[269] AMS, I-IIB-12; see Document 22 in the Appendix.

Conclusion

The orthodox history of events at Stutthof Concentration Camp is a gross demonstration of the fact that the victors' official version of history has reached a dead end.

In 1947, the Communist "Commission for the Investigation of the German Crimes in Poland" alleged that Stutthof had been used as an "ad hoc" extermination camp. The number of victims was summarily established at 65,000, and it was alleged that many inmates had been murdered in the Stutthof delousing chamber.

This official version of the camp history was not even revised after the end of Communist domination in Poland. This is in contrast to Auschwitz and Majdanek, where the numbers of victims – although incomparably more-grossly exaggerated than was the case at Stutthof – were at least massively reduced.

Western historians have never made any attempt to obtain knowledge about Stutthof through their own efforts. Insofar as they have expressed any views on the subject at all, they have been content to parrot the official Polish version.[270]

Today, more than half a century after the end of WWII, it is high time to approach the topic in a correct manner, and revise the distorted propaganda image of the camp. To do so does in no way trivialize the actual sufferings of Stutthof inmates. Our research in no way denigrates the memory of the 26,000 human beings who *actually* died in the camp, or of the casualties of the evacuation. Quite the contrary. Orthodox historiography of National Socialist concentra-

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[270] German literature on Stutthof uncritically regurgitates even the crudest atrocity stories from Polish or Jewish sources. H. Kuhn, for example, in the anthology published by him *Stutthof*, *op. cit*. (note 45), repeats the absurd claims of J. Grabowska that the camp "was to become a center for the extermination of the peoples of Northern[sic!] Europe" (p. 32). H. Kuhn even has the audacity to repeat the horror stories of Trudi Birger, who claimed that hundreds of naked women were "thrown" alive into the "gigantic furnaces" of the crematorium on one single day, that not a single one of them defended herself in the slightest – not even Birger herself, who miraculously survived fiery death, and who then escaped a watery death by another miracle (p. 129-133).

tion camps contains endless discussion of *imaginary* victims, but very little discussion of the *real* victims of these camps; yet only the latter are worthy of our sympathy.

Appendix

Photos

Note: to view the blue staining depicted in some of the photos, see the online version at www.HolocaustHandbooks.com.

Photo 1: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, in its present condition (1997), viewed from the southwest. To the right: one of the two railway carriages standing on the narrow-gauge railway track. © Carlo Mattogno

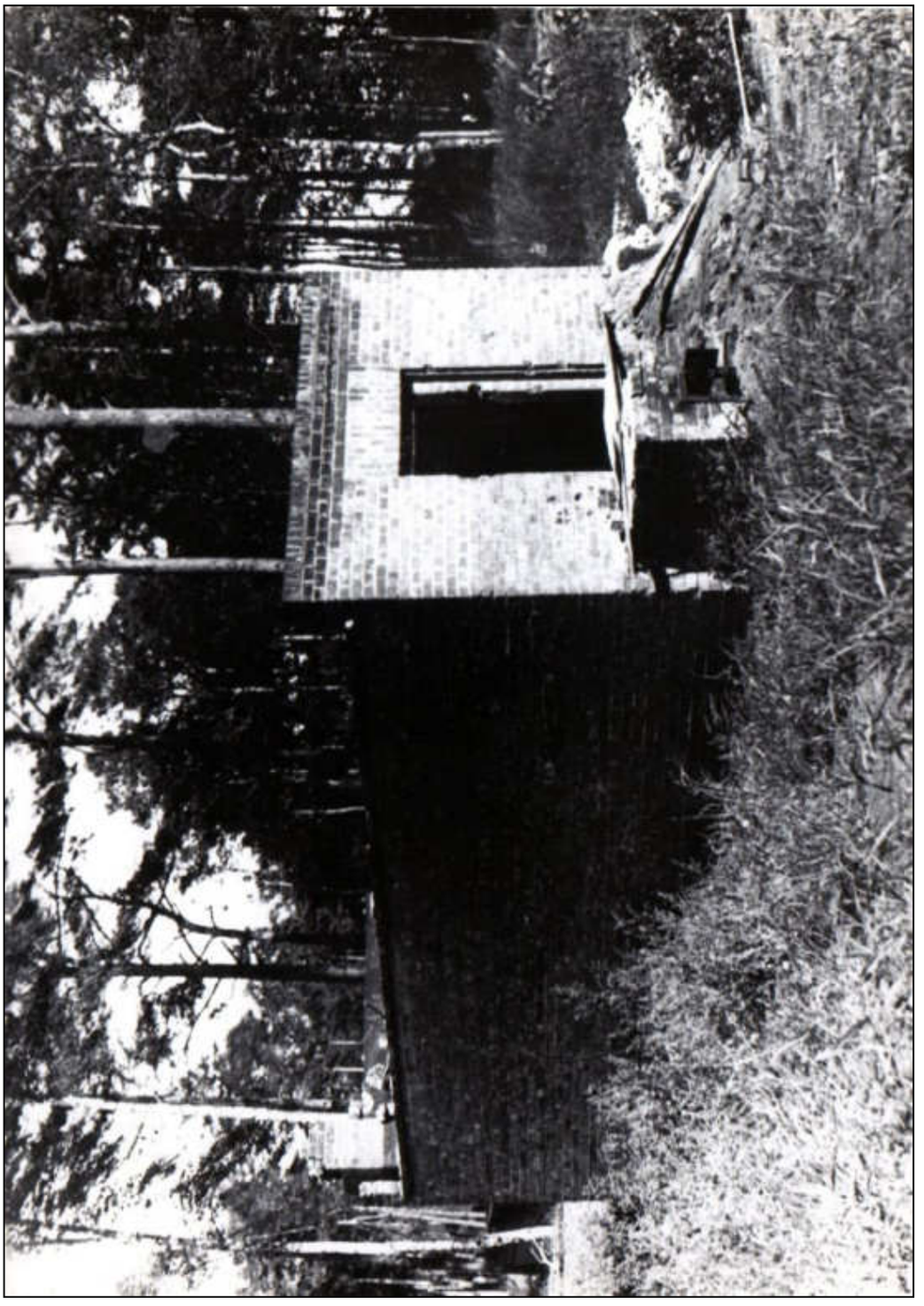


Photo 2: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, viewed from the southwest. Soviet photo taken in 1945. The rectangular frame of the gas-tight door is visible on the south side. AMS, shelf mark 3001.

Photo 3: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, viewed from the south. The door today is of lightweight sheet metal, to protect the museum-like interior. © C. Mattogno

Photo 4: Delousing chamber in Stutthof, viewed from the south. The door today. It is not alleged that this door is original.
© Carlo Mattogno

Photo 5: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, viewed from the south. The stove was used to heat the air inside the delousing chamber.
© Carlo Mattogno

Photo 6: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, viewed from the south. The stove was used to heat the air inside the delousing chamber. Above: the fire door. Below: the ash door. © Carlo Mattogno

Photo 7: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, viewed from the south. The stove was used to heat the air inside the delousing chamber. Interior view of the combustion chamber. Beneath: the plane grid; above: the circular opening of the connection to the cast-iron pipe located inside the delousing chamber. © Carlo Mattogno

Photo 8: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, interior view, west wall; cast-iron connection pipe to the stove located outside the delousing chamber and used to heat the air inside the chamber. The pipe was originally surrounded by masonry similar to that visible in the photograph, but of perforated brick. One of these bricks is still visible today, underneath and behind the pipe (circle). © Carlo Mattogno

Photo 9: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, viewed from the north. Upper right: the stove chimney, at the foot of which is a small peephole (below, to the right of the door). Between this peephole and the chimney, the brick exhibits the typical blue pigmentation caused by iron cyanide. © Carlo Mattogno

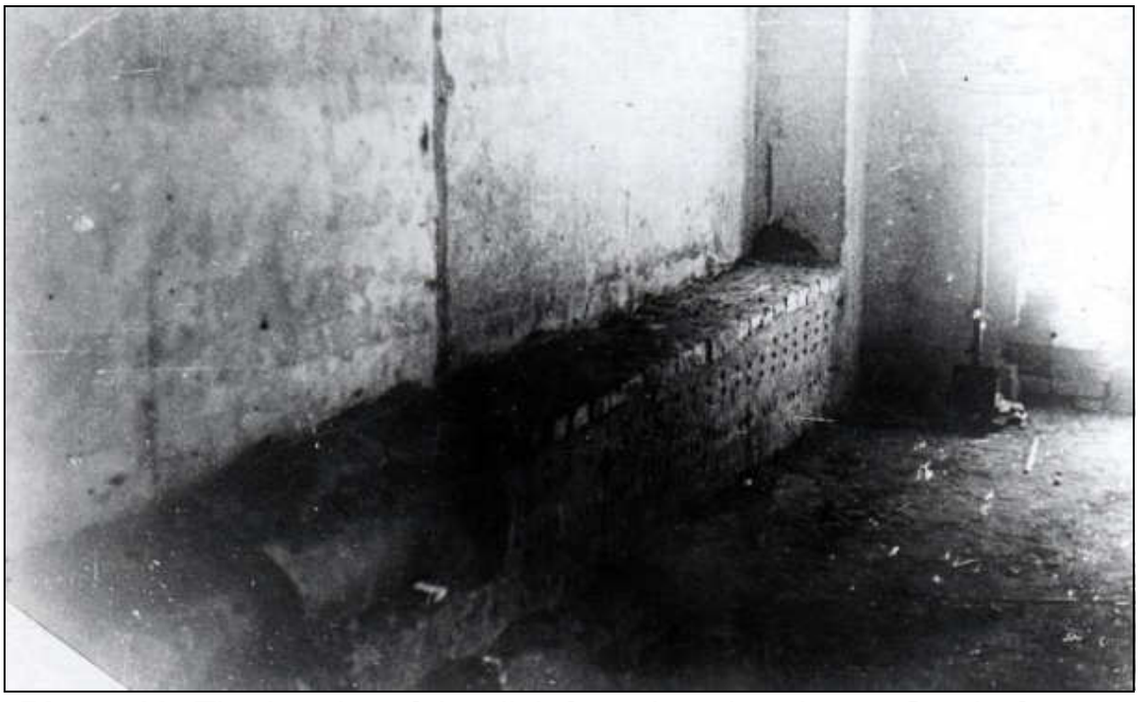


Photo 10: The interior of the disinfestation chamber at Stutthof, west wall: cast-iron connection pipe to the stove located outside the delousing chamber and used to heat the air inside the chamber. Half of it is covered by perforated bricks.
Original state. Soviet photograph of May/June 1945. GARF, 7021-128-252.

Photo 11: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, interior. Circular opening in the middle of the reinforced concrete roof. Note the typical blue pigmentation caused by iron cyanide. This opening was used for the introduction of Zyklon B into the delousing chamber. © Carlo Mattogno

Photo 12: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, roof. Metallic pipe with lid, leading to the introduction hatch. Soviet photograph taken in 1945. Next to the pipe stands a can of Zyklon B. AMS, shelf mark 6816.

Photo 13: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, interior. Drainage shaft in the middle of the brick floor underneath the Zyklon B introduction hatch. © Carlo Mattogno

Photo 14: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, interior view from the south door. All the walls exhibit the typical blue pigmentation caused by iron cyanide. © Carlo Mattogno

Photo 15: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, viewed from the east. The wall exhibits two large blue stained areas unequivocally indicating the use of Zyklon B. © Carlo Mattogno

Photo 16: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, east side, exterior. The brick exhibits the typical blue pigmentation caused by iron cyanide.
© Carlo Mattogno

Photo 17: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, east side. Right: the second of two narrow-gauge railway carriages is visible behind the cross. To the right: the crematorium, rebuilt after the war.
© Carlo Mattogno

Photo 18: Delousing chamber at Stutthof, east side. Blue stains on the wall prove the use of Zyklon B.
© Carlo Mattogno

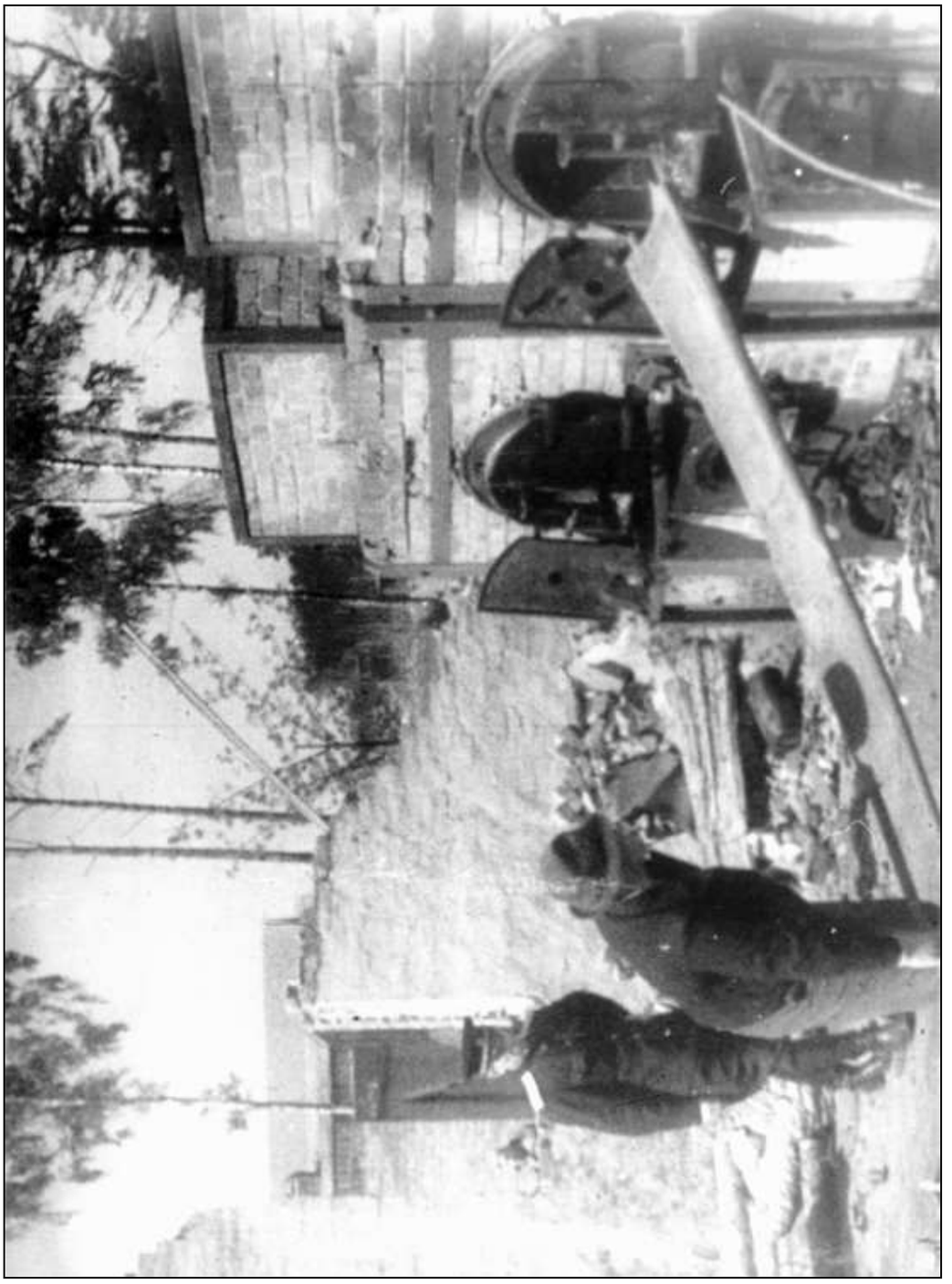
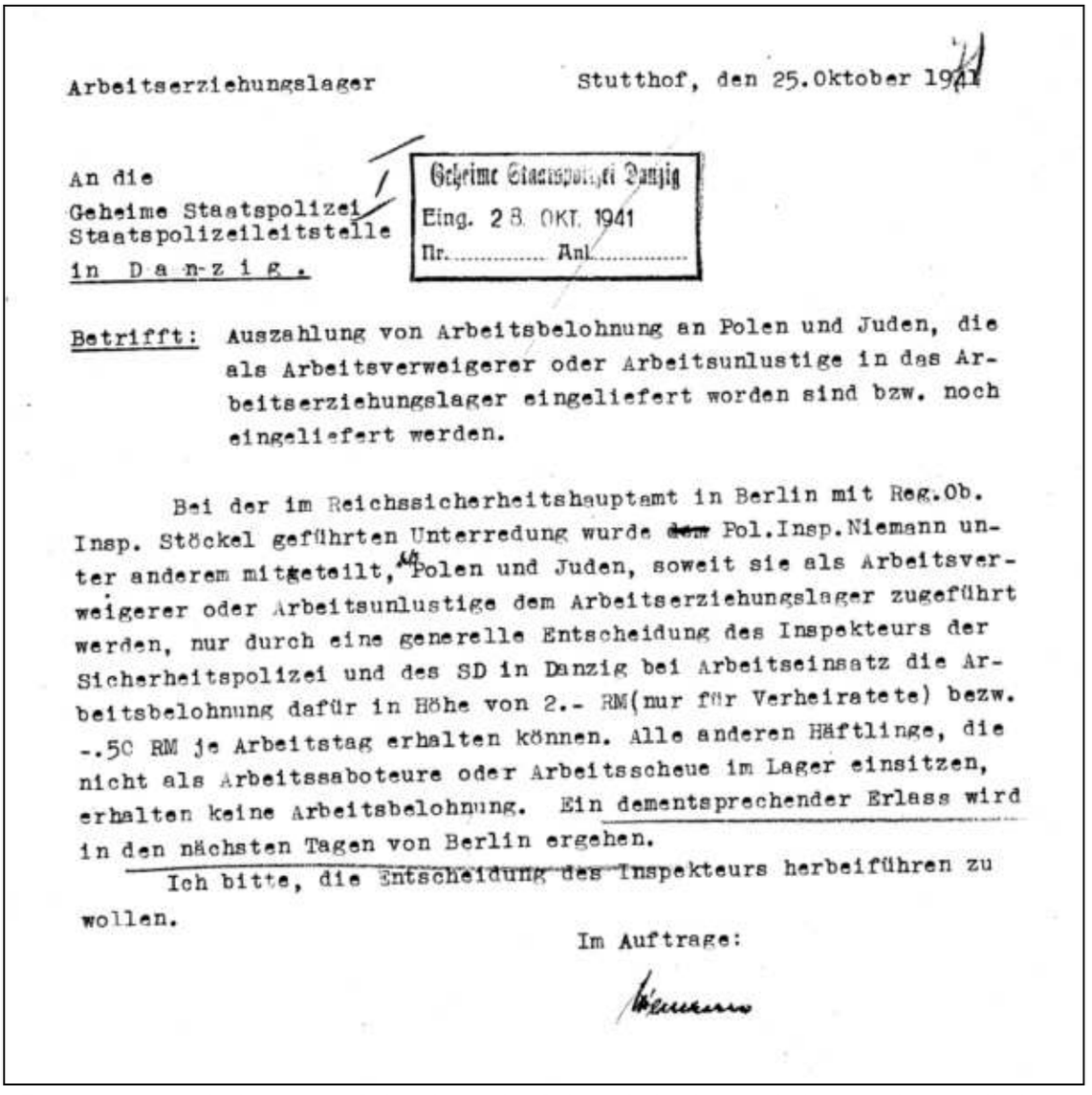


Photo 19: The two coke-fueled cremation furnaces built by H. Kori, viewed after the capture of the camp (1945). AMS, shelf mark 6804.

Documents



Arbeitserziehungslager Stutthof, den 25.Oktober 1941

An die
Geheime Staatspolizei
Staatspolizeileitstelle
in D a n z i g .

Geheime Staatspolizei Danzig
Eing. 28. OKT. 1941
Nr. ..... Anl. .....

Betrifft: Auszahlung von Arbeitsbelohnung an Polen und Juden, die als Arbeitsverweigerer oder Arbeitsunlustige in das Arbeitserziehungslager eingeliefert worden sind bzw. noch eingeliefert werden.

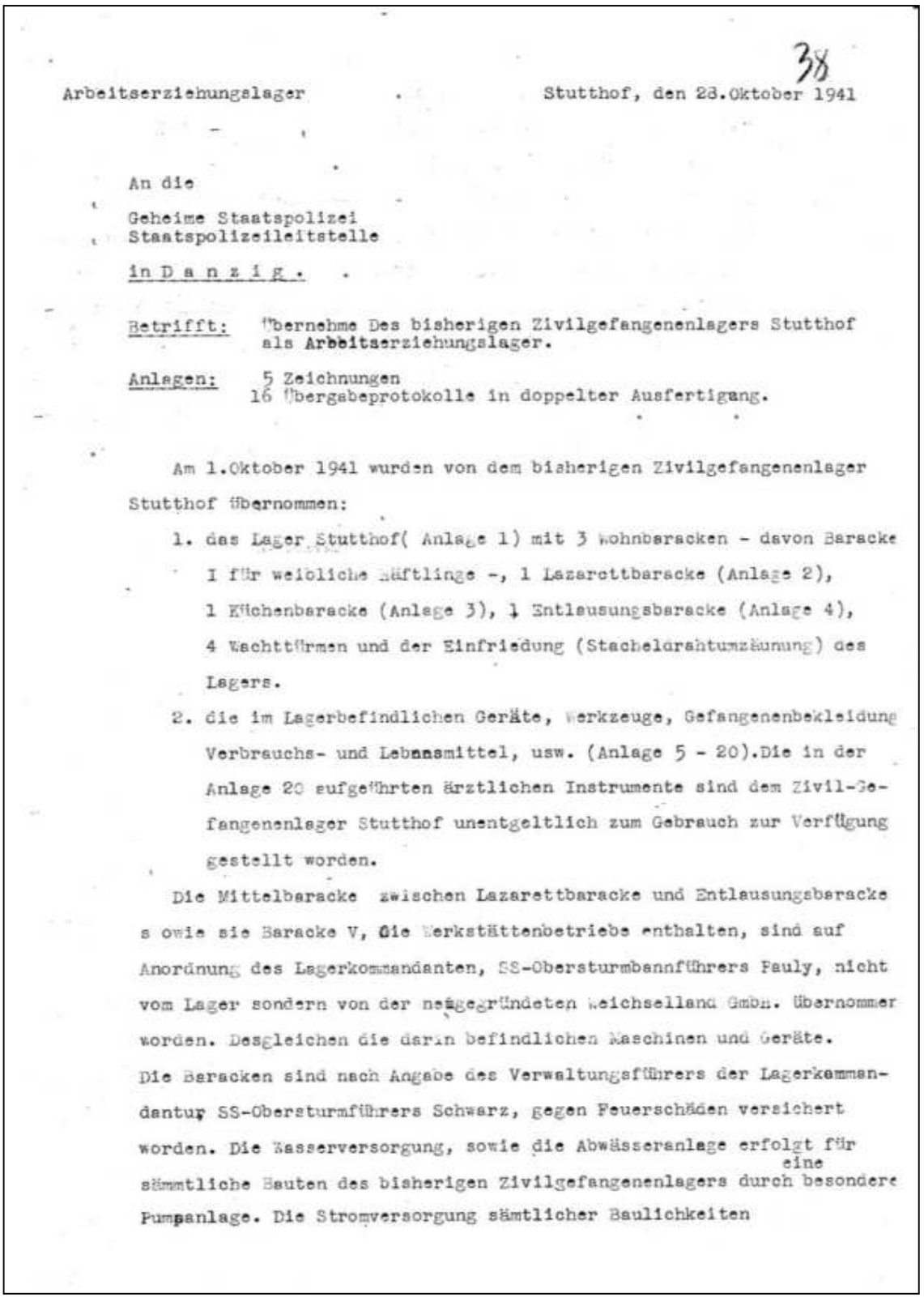
Bei der im Reichssicherheitshauptamt in Berlin mit Reg.Ob. Insp. Stöckel geführten Unterredung wurde dem Pol.Insp.Niemann unter anderem mitgeteilt, daß Polen und Juden, soweit sie als Arbeitsverweigerer oder Arbeitsunlustige dem Arbeitserziehungslager zugeführt werden, nur durch eine generelle Entscheidung des Inspekteurs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD in Danzig bei Arbeitseinsatz die Arbeitsbelohnung dafür in Höhe von 2.- RM(nur für Verheiratete) bezw. -.50 RM je Arbeitstag erhalten können. Alle anderen Häftlinge, die nicht als Arbeitssaboteure oder Arbeitsscheue im Lager einsitzen, erhalten keine Arbeitsbelohnung. Ein dementsprechender Erlass wird in den nächsten Tagen von Berlin ergehen.

Ich bitte, die Entscheidung des Inspekteurs herbeiführen zu wollen.

Im Auftrage:

Niemann

Document 1: Letter of the head of the *Arbeitserziehungslager* (labor rehabilitation camp) Stutthof to the *Gestapo* of Danzig, 25 October 1941. RGVA, 1323-2-140, pp. 10-10a



38

Arbeitserziehungslager . Stutthof, den 28.Oktober 1941

An die

Geheime Staatspolizei
Staatspolizeileitstelle

in D a n z i g .

Betrifft: Übernahme Des bisherigen Zivilgefangenenlagers Stutthof als Arbeitserziehungslager.

Anlagen: 5 Zeichnungen
16 Übergabeprotokolle in doppelter Ausfertigung.

Am 1.Oktober 1941 wurden von dem bisherigen Zivilgefangenenlager Stutthof übernommen:

1. das Lager Stutthof(Anlage 1) mit 3 Wohnbaracken - davon Baracke I für weibliche Häftlinge -, 1 Lazarettbaracke (Anlage 2), 1 Küchenbaracke (Anlage 3), 1 Entlausungsbaracke (Anlage 4), 4 Wachttürmen und der Einfriedung (Stacheldrahtumzäunung) des Lagers.
2. die im Lagerbefindlichen Geräte, Werkzeuge, Gefangenenbekleidung Verbrauchs- und Lebensmittel, usw. (Anlage 5 - 20).Die in der Anlage 20 aufgeführten ärztlichen Instrumente sind dem Zivil-Gefangenenlager Stutthof unentgeltlich zum Gebrauch zur Verfügung gestellt worden.

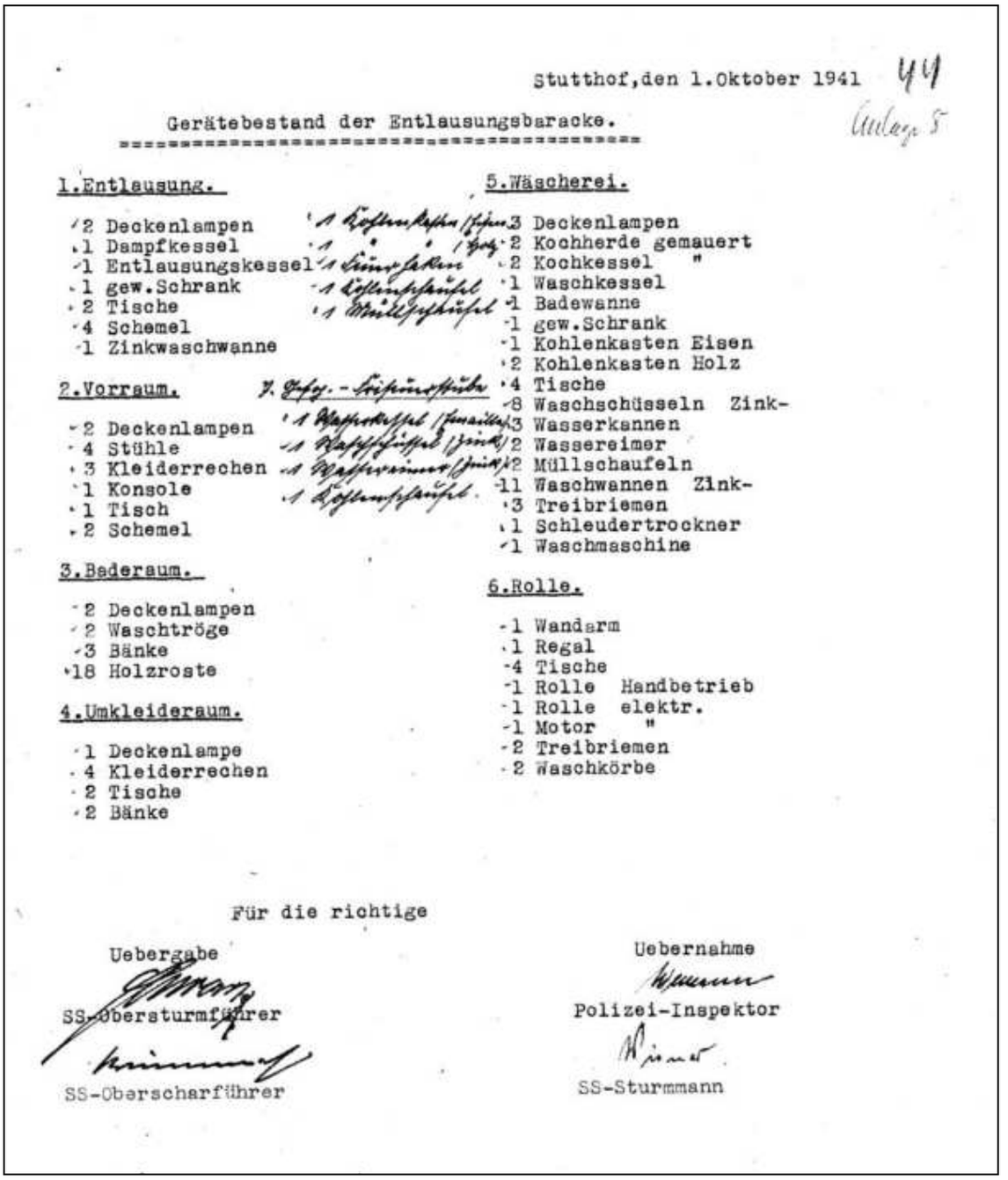
Die Mittelbaracke zwischen Lazarettbaracke und Entlausungsbaracke s owie die Baracke V, die Werkstättenbetriebe enthalten, sind auf Anordnung des Lagerkommandanten, SS-Obersturmbannführers Pauly, nicht vom Lager sondern von der neugegründeten Weichselland Gmbh. übernommen worden. Desgleichen die darin befindlichen Maschinen und Geräte. Die Baracken sind nach Angabe des Verwaltungsführers der Lagerkommandantur SS-Obersturmführers Schwarz, gegen Feuerschäden versichert worden. Die Wasserversorgung, sowie die Abwässeranlage erfolgt für sämmtliche Bauten des bisherigen Zivilgefangenenlagers durch besondere eine Pumpanlage. Die Stromversorgung sämtlicher Baulichkeiten

Document 2a: Protocol of the transfer of the *Zivilgefangenenlager* (prison camp for civilians) Stutthof to an *Arbeitserziehungslager* (labor rehabilitation camp). RGVA, 1323-2-140, pp. 38-38a.

erfolgt durch die Überlandleitung. Es bestehtnur ein Z ähler
für das gesamte La ger mit de n Stallungen, der SS-Schule und
der Baracken für die Weichselland GmbH.
Die Entlausungsanlage ist in eine-m de-rat schlechten Zustand,
dass dauernd grössere Instandsetzungsarbeiten notwendig sind, die
d en La-gerbetrieb empfindlich störe-n.
Die Bür-oräume für die Lagerverwaltung sind im Nord flügel der SS-
Schule untergebracht (s.Anlage 2 1).
Das Nebenlager Elbing in der Bölckestr.(Lager 6) ist Eigentum der
Fa.Schichau. Irgendwelche Abgaben für das Lager sind von der Lager-
kommandantur des Zivilgefangenenlagers nicht geleistet worden.

Im Auftrage:

Document 2b: continued.



Stutthof, den 1.Oktober 1941 44

Anlage 5

Gerätebestand der Entlausungsbaracke.

1.Entlausung.

2 Deckenlampen
1 Dampfkessel
1 Entlausungskessel
1 gew.Schrank
2 Tische
4 Schemel
1 Zinkwaschwanne

2.Vorraum.

2 Deckenlampen
4 Stühle
3 Kleiderrechen
1 Konsole
1 Tisch
2 Schemel

3.Baderaum.

2 Deckenlampen
2 Waschtröge
3 Bänke
18 Holzroste

4.Umkleideraum.

1 Deckenlampe
4 Kleiderrechen
2 Tische
2 Bänke

5.Wäscherei.

3 Deckenlampen
2 Kochherde gemauert
2 Kochkessel "
1 Waschkessel
1 Badewanne
1 gew.Schrank
1 Kohlenkasten Eisen
2 Kohlenkasten Holz
4 Tische
8 Waschschüsseln Zink-
3 Wasserkannen
2 Wassereimer
2 Müllschaufeln
11 Waschwannen Zink-
3 Treibriemen
1 Schleudertrockner
1 Waschmaschine

6.Rolle.

1 Wandarm
1 Regal
4 Tische
1 Rolle Handbetrieb
1 Rolle elektr.
1 Motor "
2 Treibriemen
2 Waschkörbe

Für die richtige

Uebergabe
SS-Obersturmführer
SS-Oberscharführer

Uebernahme
Polizei-Inspektor
SS-Sturmmann

Document 3: Protocol of the equipment (*Gerätebestand*) of the delousing building at the Stutthof Camp of October 1941. RGVA, 1323-2-140, p. 71.

Der Reichsführer-SS

Führer-Hauptquartier
19. 12.1941

Tgb.Nr.A/29/91/41
RF/V.

Mein lieber Pohl !

Ich war kürzlich gelegentlich meines Besuches im Gau Danzig-Westpreußen im Lager S t u t t h o f .

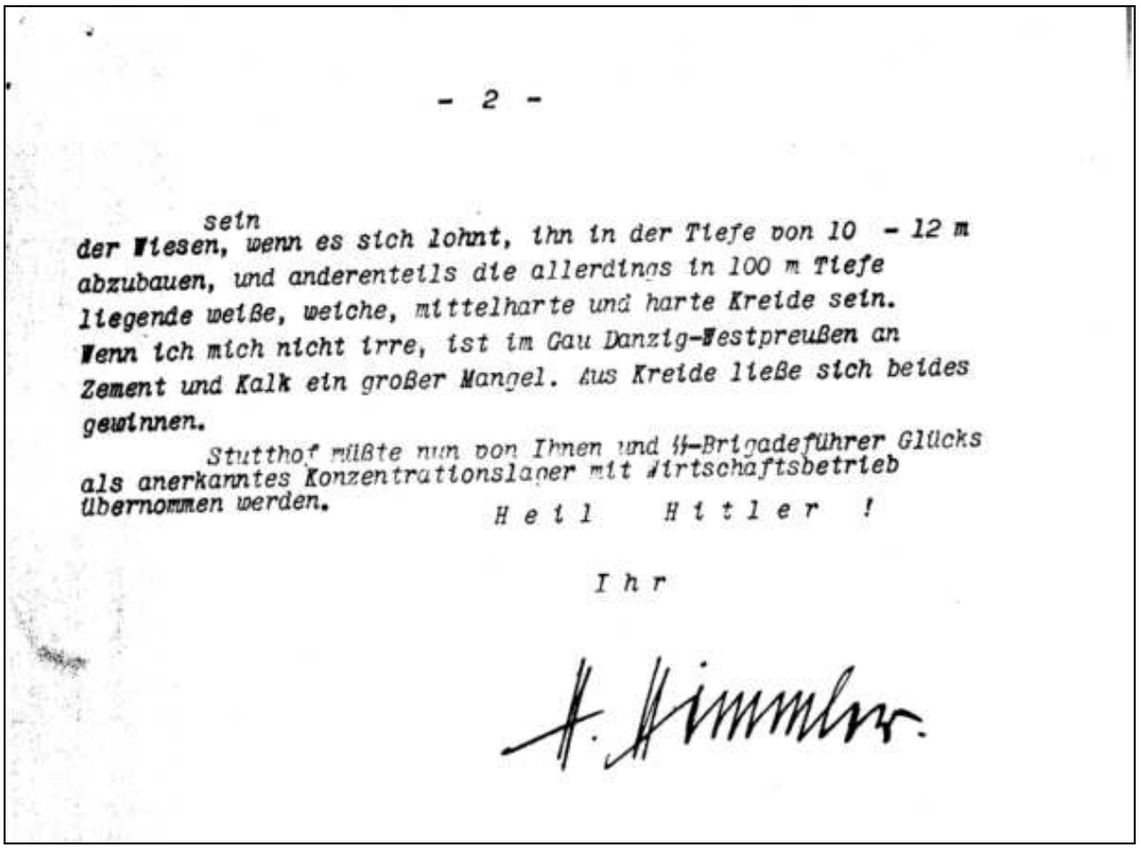
Ich bin zu der Überzeugung gekommen, daß S t u t t h o f von größter Bedeutung für die spätere Besiedlung des Gaues Danzig-Westpreußen ist. Stutthof hat alle Möglichkeiten für Werkstätten, Schreinerei, Schlosserei, usw. Ich glaube, daß wir Stutthof doch ausbauen und verwenden müssen. Der Ausbau müßte meines Erachtens folgende Dinge berücksichtigen:

1. Die Einrichtung von Bauschreinerei und Bauschlosserei für die Siedlungstätigkeit in Westpreußen,
2. vollste Ausnutzung der Schneider-, Schuster- und sonstigen Werkstätten für uns. Es werden dort eine große Menge von Aufträgen für die Wehrmacht ausgeführt.
3. Einrichtung einer Autoreparatur-Werkstatt für den dortigen SS-Oberabschnitt.
4. Kauf einer Ziegelei am Haff, die sehr günstig liegt, die Kleinbahn und Kanal hat und die uns zurzeit dort angeboten wird.
5. Stutthof muß außerdem in der Richtung ausgebaut werden, daß es in einem Lager später 20 000 Russen aufnehmen kann, mit denen wir dann den Siedlungsaufbau des Gaues Danzig-Westpreußen vollziehen können.

Ich übersende anliegend eine Aufstellung über die Bodenbeschaffenheit, die in Stutthof gemacht wurde. Von Interesse könnte sein einesteils der Faulschlamm zur Düngung

- 2 -

Document 4a&b: Letter by Heinrich Himmler to Oswald Pohl of 19 December 1941. AMS, 1-1A-2.



- 2 -

sein
der Wiesen, wenn es sich lohnt, ihn in der Tiefe von 10 - 12 m abzubauen, und anderenteils die allerdings in 100 m Tiefe liegende weiße, weiche, mittelharte und harte Kreide sein. Wenn ich mich nicht irre, ist im Gau Danzig-Westpreußen an Zement und Kalk ein großer Mangel. Aus Kreide ließe sich beides gewinnen.

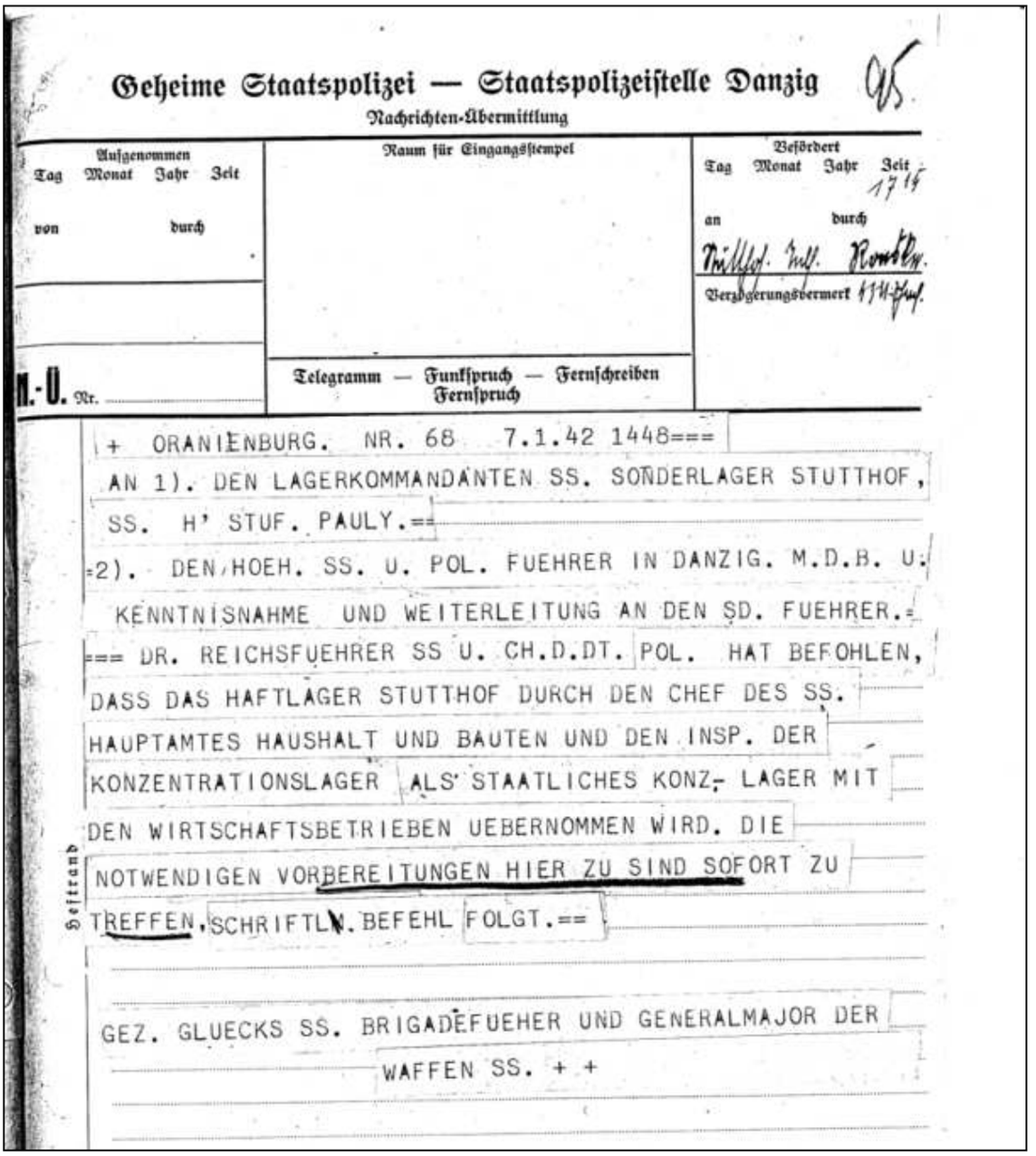
Stutthof müßte nun von Ihnen und SS-Brigadeführer Glücks als anerkanntes Konzentrationslager mit Wirtschaftsbetrieb übernommen werden.

Heil Hitler !

Ihr

H. Himmler.

Document 4b: continued.



Geheime Staatspolizei — Staatspolizeistelle Danzig

Nachrichten-Übermittlung

Aufgenommen Tag Monat Jahr Zeit

von durch

Raum für Eingangsstempel

Befördert Tag Monat Jahr Zeit 17 15

an durch

Verzögerungsvermerk

Dringend

Telegramm — Funkspruch — Fernschreiben Fernspruch

+ ORANIENBURG. NR. 68 7.1.42 1448===

AN 1). DEN LAGERKOMMANDANTEN SS. SONDERLAGER STUTTHOF, SS. H' STUF. PAULY.==

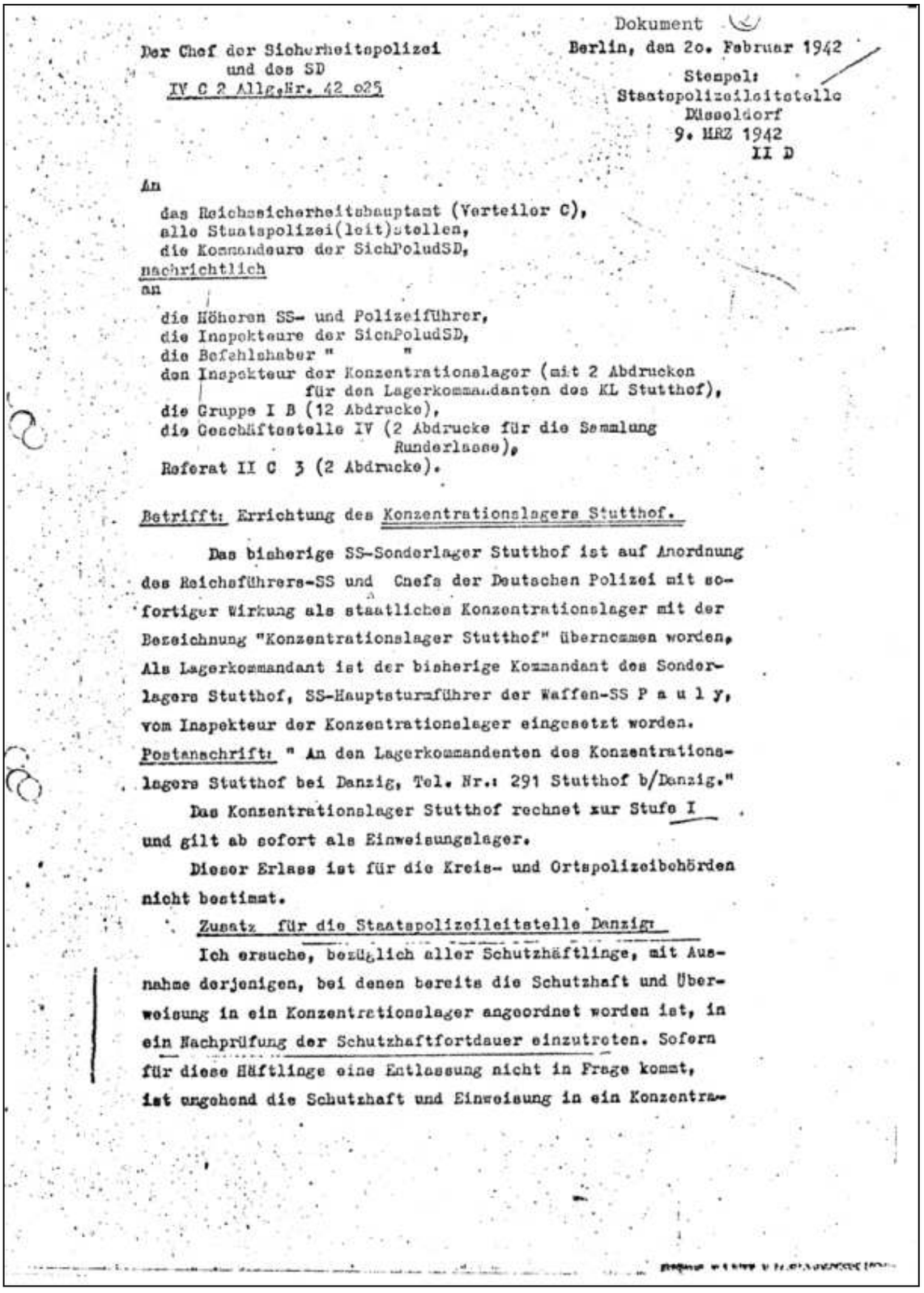
=2). DEN HOEH. SS. U. POL. FUEHRER IN DANZIG. M.D.B. U. KENNTNISNAHME UND WEITERLEITUNG AN DEN SD. FUEHRER.=

=== DR. REICHSFUEHRER SS U. CH.D.DT. POL. HAT BEFOHLEN, DASS DAS HAFTLAGER STUTTHOF DURCH DEN CHEF DES SS. HAUPTAMTES HAUSHALT UND BAUTEN UND DEN INSP. DER KONZENTRATIONSLAGER ALS STAATLICHES KONZ.- LAGER MIT DEN WIRTSCHAFTSBETRIEBEN UEBERNOMMEN WIRD. DIE NOTWENDIGEN VORBEREITUNGEN HIER ZU SIND SOFORT ZU TREFFEN, SCHRIFTL. BEFEHL FOLGT.==

Heftrand

GEZ. GLUECKS SS. BRIGADEFUEHER UND GENERALMAJOR DER WAFFEN SS. + +

Document 5: Telegram by Richard Glücks to the commander of the Stutthof Camp, 7 January 1942. RGVA, 1323-2-140, p. 95.



Dokument

Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei
und des SD
IV C 2 Allg.Nr. 42 o25

Berlin, den 2o. Februar 1942

Stempel:
Staatspolizeileitstelle
Düsseldorf
9. MRZ 1942
II D

An

das Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Verteiler C),
alle Staatspolizei(leit)stellen,
die Kommandeure der SichPoludSD,

nachrichtlich
an

die Höheren SS- und Polizeiführer,
die Inspekteure der SichPoludSD,
die Befehlshaber " "
den Inspekteur der Konzentrationslager (mit 2 Abdrucken
für den Lagerkommandanten des KL Stutthof),
die Gruppe I B (12 Abdrucke),
die Geschäftsstelle IV (2 Abdrucke für die Sammlung
Runderlasse),
Referat II C 3 (2 Abdrucke).

Betrifft: Errichtung des Konzentrationslagers Stutthof.

Das bisherige SS-Sonderlager Stutthof ist auf Anordnung des Reichsführers-SS und Chefs der Deutschen Polizei mit sofortiger Wirkung als staatliches Konzentrationslager mit der Bezeichnung "Konzentrationslager Stutthof" übernommen worden. Als Lagerkommandant ist der bisherige Kommandant des Sonderlagers Stutthof, SS-Hauptsturmführer der Waffen-SS P a u l y, vom Inspekteur der Konzentrationslager eingesetzt worden.

Postanschrift: " An den Lagerkommandanten des Konzentrationslagers Stutthof bei Danzig, Tel. Nr.: 291 Stutthof b/Danzig."

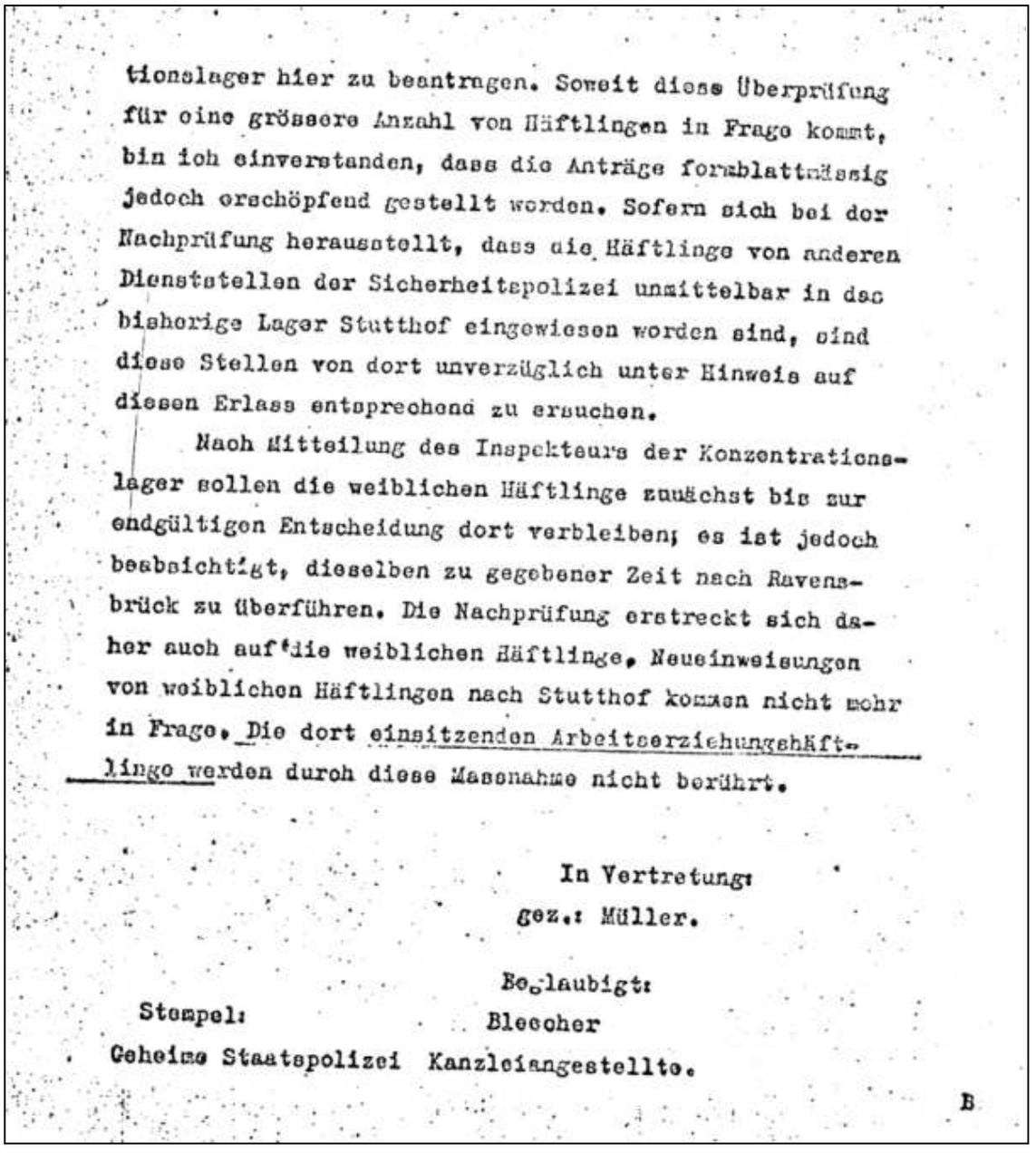
Das Konzentrationslager Stutthof rechnet zur Stufe I und gilt ab sofort als Einweisungslager.

Dieser Erlass ist für die Kreis- und Ortspolizeibehörden nicht bestimmt.

Zusatz für die Staatspolizeileitstelle Danzig

Ich ersuche, bezüglich aller Schutzhäftlinge, mit Ausnahme derjenigen, bei denen bereits die Schutzhaft und Überweisung in ein Konzentrationslager angeordnet worden ist, in ein Nachprüfung der Schutzhaftfortdauer einzutreten. Sofern für diese Häftlinge eine Entlassung nicht in Frage kommt, ist umgehend die Schutzhaft und Einweisung in ein Konzentra-

Document 6a&b: Letter by Reinhard Heydrich, 20 February 1942. AMS, 1-1A-7.



tionslager hier zu beantragen. Soweit diese Überprüfung für eine grössere Anzahl von Häftlingen in Frage kommt, bin ich einverstanden, dass die Anträge formblattmässig jedoch erschöpfend gestellt werden. Sofern sich bei der Nachprüfung herausstellt, dass die Häftlinge von anderen Dienststellen der Sicherheitspolizei unmittelbar in das bisherige Lager Stutthof eingewiesen worden sind, sind diese Stellen von dort unverzüglich unter Hinweis auf diesen Erlass entsprechend zu ersuchen.

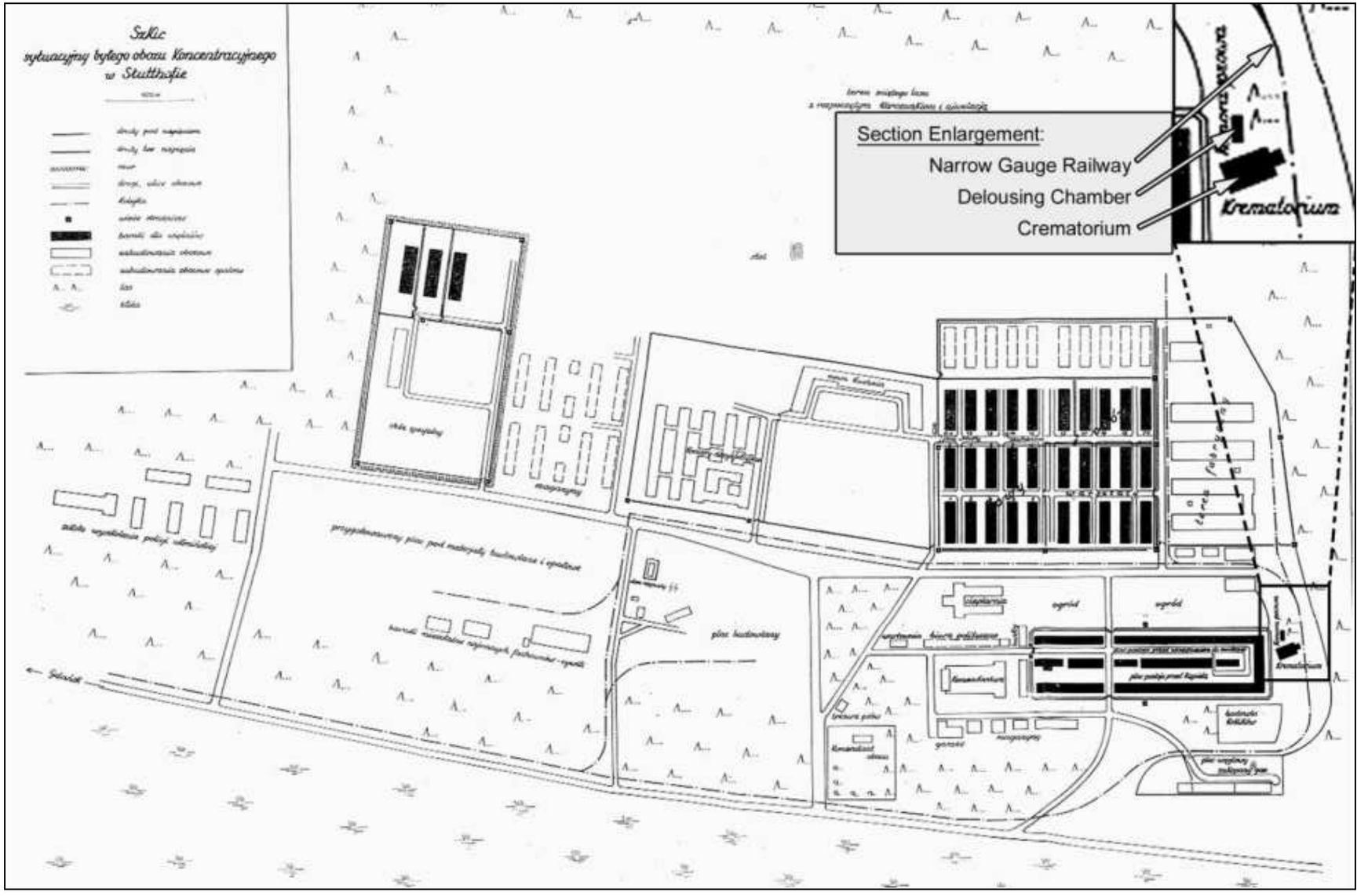
Nach Mitteilung des Inspekteurs der Konzentrationslager sollen die weiblichen Häftlinge zunächst bis zur endgültigen Entscheidung dort verbleiben; es ist jedoch beabsichtigt, dieselben zu gegebener Zeit nach Ravensbrück zu überführen. Die Nachprüfung erstreckt sich daher auch auf die weiblichen Häftlinge. Neueinweisungen von weiblichen Häftlingen nach Stutthof kommen nicht mehr in Frage. Die dort einsitzenden Arbeitserziehungshäftlinge werden durch diese Massnahme nicht berührt.

In Vertretung:
gez.: Müller.

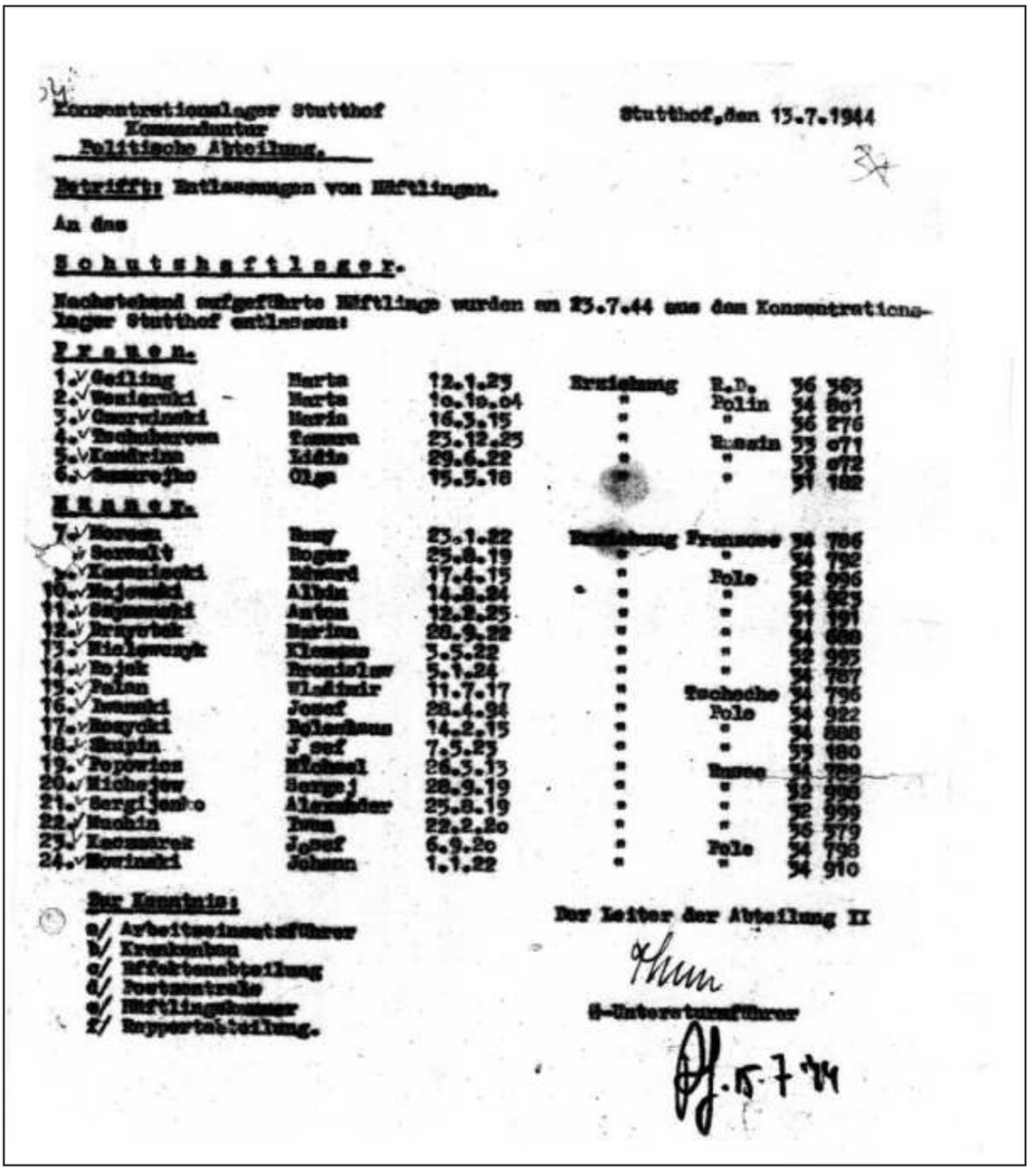
Beglaubigt:
Stempel: Blecher
Geheime Staatspolizei Kanzleiangestellte.

B

Document 6b: continued.



Document 7: Map of Stutthof Camp. From Z. Łukaszkiewicz, "Obóz koncentracyjny Stutthof," in: *Biułetyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni niemieckich w Polsce*, III, 1947, unnumbered page.



Konzentrationslager Stutthof
Kommandantur
Politische Abteilung.

Stutthof, den 13.7.1944

Betrifft: Entlassungen von Häftlingen.

An das

Schutzhaftlager.

Nachstehend aufgeführte Häftlinge wurden am 13.7.44 aus dem Konzentrationslager Stutthof entlassen:

Frauen.

1.	Gesling	Herta	12.1.23	Erziehung	R.D.	36 363
2.	Wenierski	Herta	10.10.04	"	Polin	34 801
3.	Gmerwinski	Marin	16.3.15	"	"	36 276
4.	Tschuberowa	Tamara	23.12.23	"	Russin	33 071
5.	Kondrina	Lidia	29.6.22	"	"	33 072
6.	Semerejko	Olga	15.5.18	"	"	31 182

Männer.

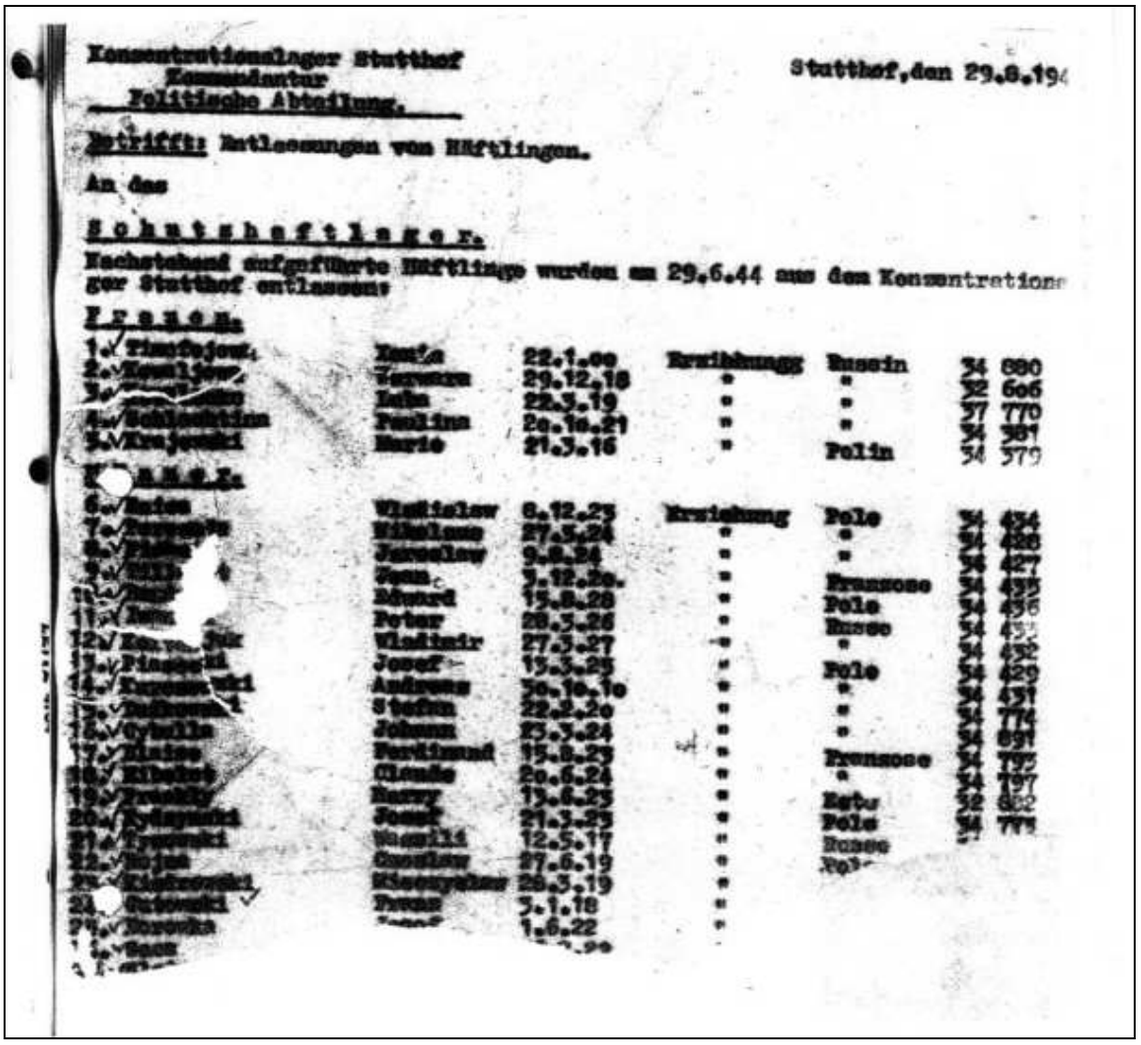
7.	Moreau	Rémy	23.1.22	Erziehung	Franzose	34 786
8.	Serault	Roger	25.8.19	"	"	34 792
9.	Kaczmiecki	Edward	17.4.15	"	Pole	32 996
10.	Majewski	Albin	14.8.24	"	"	34 823
11.	Szymanski	Anton	12.2.25	"	"	31 191
12.	Draperek	Marian	28.9.22	"	"	34 888
13.	Mielewczyk	Klemens	3.5.22	"	"	32 995
14.	Rojek	Kronislaw	5.1.24	"	"	34 787
15.	Polan	Wladimir	11.7.17	"	Tschesche	34 796
16.	Iwanski	Josef	28.4.94	"	Pole	34 922
17.	Rosycki	Bglesbaus	14.2.15	"	"	34 888
18.	Skupin	Josef	7.5.23	"	"	33 180
19.	Popowics	Michael	26.3.13	"	Russe	34 789
20.	Michejew	Sergej	28.9.19	"	"	32 998
21.	Sergijenko	Alexander	25.8.19	"	"	32 999
22.	Buchin	Iwan	22.2.20	"	"	36 979
23.	Kaczmarek	Josef	6.9.20	"	Pole	34 798
24.	Mowinski	Johann	1.1.22	"	"	34 910

Der Leiter der Abteilung II

SS-Untersturmführer

Zur Kenntnis:
a/ Arbeitseinsatzführer
b/ Krankenbau
c/ Effektenabteilung
d/ Pfortenstreife
e/ Häftlingskammer
f/ Rapportabteilung.

Document 8: List of inmates released from the Stutthof Camp on 13 July 1944. AMS, 1-11C-8, p. 5.



Konzentrationslager Stutthof
Kommandantur
Politische Abteilung.

Stutthof, den 29.8.19

Betrifft: Entlassungen von Häftlingen.

An das

Schutzhaftlager.

Nachstehend aufgeführte Häftlinge wurden am 29.6.44 aus dem Konzentrationslager Stutthof entlassen:

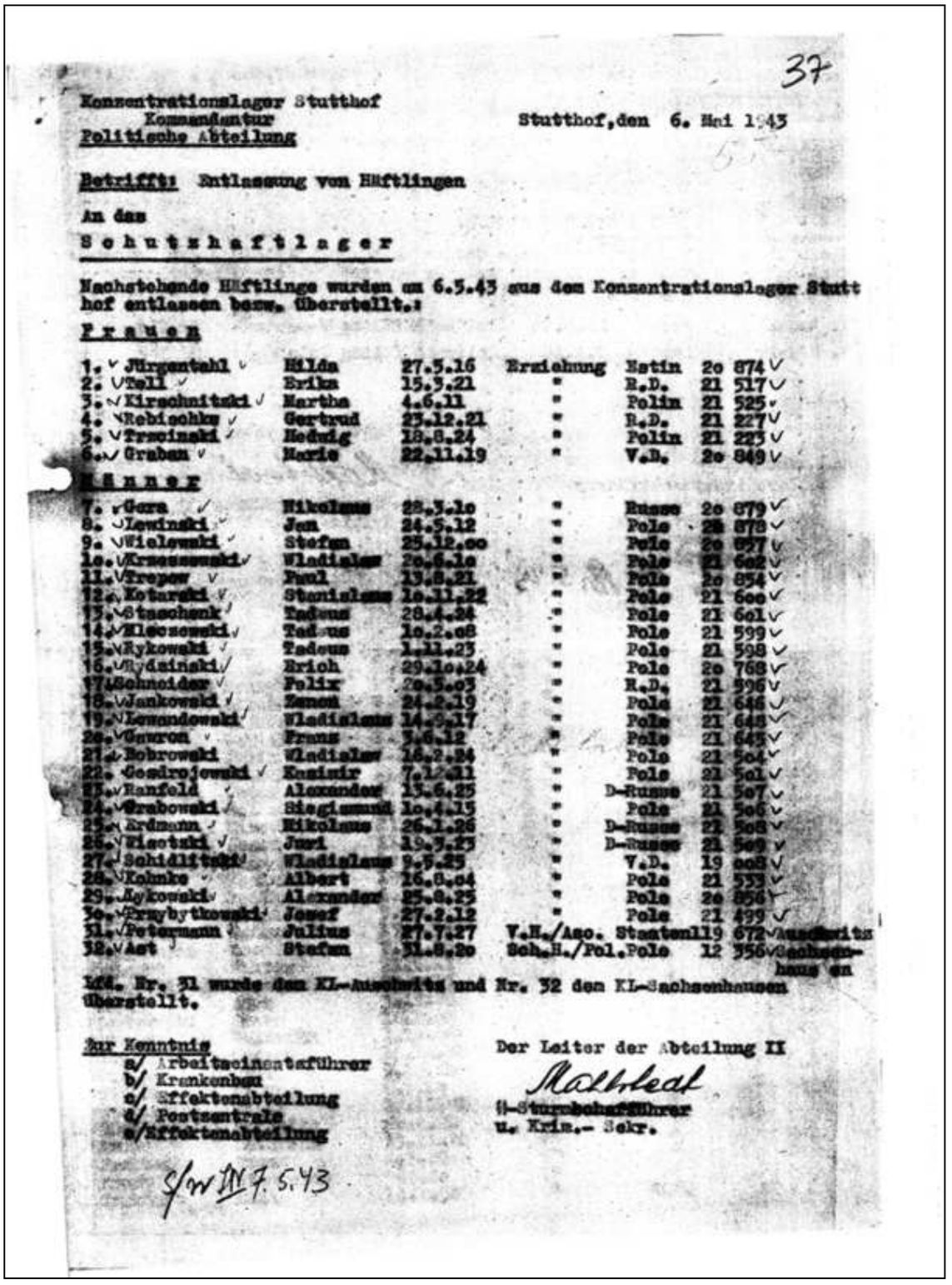
Frauen.

1.	[illegible]	[illegible]	22.1.00	Erziehungsg	Russin	34 880
2.	[illegible]	Tatjana	29.12.18	"	"	32 606
3.	[illegible]	Luba	22.3.19	"	"	27 770
4.	[illegible]	Paulina	20.10.21	"	"	34 387
5.	Krajewski	Marie	21.3.16	"	Polin	34 379

Männer.

6.	[illegible]	Wladislaw	8.12.23	Erziehung	Pole	34 434
7.	[illegible]	Nikolaus	27.5.24	"	"	34 [illegible]
8.	[illegible]	Jaroslaw	9.8.24	"	"	34 427
9.	[illegible]	Jean	3.12.20.	"	Franzose	34 435
10.	[illegible]	Eduard	15.8.28	"	Pole	34 436
11.	[illegible]	Peter	28.5.26	"	Russe	34 [illegible]
12.	[illegible]	Wladimir	27.3.27	"	"	34 [illegible]
13.	[illegible]	Josef	15.3.25	"	Pole	34 429
14.	[illegible]	Andreas	30.10.10	"	"	34 431
15.	[illegible]	Stefan	22.2.20	"	"	34 774
16.	[illegible]	Johann	25.3.24	"	"	34 891
17.	[illegible]	Ferdinand	15.8.23	"	Franzose	34 795
18.	[illegible]	Claude	20.6.24	"	"	34 797
19.	[illegible]	Barry	13.6.25	"	Russe	32 [illegible]
20.	[illegible]	Josef	21.3.25	"	Pole	34 775
21.	[illegible]	Wasilij	12.5.17	"	Russe	
22.	[illegible]	Czeslaw	27.6.19	"	Pole	
23.	[illegible]	Mieczyslaw	28.3.19	"	"	
24.	[illegible]	Iwan	5.1.18	"	"	
25.	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.6.22	"	"	

Document 9: List of inmates released from the Stutthof Camp on 29 August 1944. AMS, 1-11C-8, page number missing.



37

Konzentrationslager Stutthof
Kommandantur
Politische Abteilung

Stutthof, den 6. Mai 1943

Betrifft: Entlassung von Häftlingen

An das
Schutzhaftlager

Nachstehende Häftlinge wurden am 6.5.43 aus dem Konzentrationslager Stutthof entlassen bezw. überstellt.:

Frauen

1.	Jürgentahl	Hilda	27.5.16	Erziehung	Estin	2o	874
2.	Tell	Erika	15.3.21	"	R.D.	21	517
3.	Kirschnitzki	Martha	4.6.11	"	Polin	21	525
4.	Rebischke	Gertrud	23.12.21	"	R.D.	21	227
5.	Trzcinski	Hedwig	18.8.24	"	Polin	21	223
6.	Graban	Marie	22.11.19	"	V.D.	2o	849

Männer

7.	Gera	Nikolaus	28.3.1o	"	Russe	2o	879
8.	Lewinski	Jan	24.5.12	"	Pole	2o	878
9.	Wielewski	Stefan	25.12.oo	"	Pole	2o	897
1o.	Krnasewski	Wladislaw	2o.6.1o	"	Pole	21	6o2
11.	Trepow	Paul	13.8.21	"	Pole	2o	854
12.	Kotarski	Stanislaus	1o.11.22	"	Pole	21	6oo
13.	Staschenk	Tadeus	28.4.24	"	Pole	21	6o1
14.	Klecsewski	Tadeus	1o.2.o8	"	Pole	21	599
15.	Rykowski	Tadeus	1.11.23	"	Pole	21	598
16.	Rydzinski	Erich	29.1o.24	"	Pole	2o	768
17.	Schneider	Felix	2o.5.o3	"	R.D.	21	596
18.	Jankowski	Zenon	24.2.19	"	Pole	21	646
19.	Lewandowski	Wladislaus	14.9.17	"	Pole	21	648
2o.	Gawron	Franz	3.6.12	"	Pole	21	645
21.	Bobrowski	Wladislaw	16.2.24	"	Pole	21	5o4
22.	Gosdrojewski	Kasimir	7.12.11	"	Pole	21	5o1
23.	Ranfeld	Alexander	13.6.25	"	D-Russe	21	5o7
24.	Grabowski	Siegismund	1o.4.13	"	Pole	21	5o6
25.	Erdmann	Nikolaus	26.1.26	"	D-Russe	21	5o8
26.	Wisotzki	Juri	19.7.23	"	D-Russe	21	5o9
27.	Schidlitzki	Wladislaus	9.9.25	"	V.D.	19	oo8
28.	Kohnke	Albert	16.8.o4	"	Pole	21	553
29.	Jaykowski	Alexander	25.8.25	"	Pole	2o	856
3o.	Przybytkowski	Josef	27.2.12	"	Pole	21	499
31.	Petermann	Julius	27.7.27	V.M./Asoz.	Staatenl.	19	672 Auschwitz
32.	Aet	Stefan	31.8.2o	Sch.H./Pol.	Pole	12	356 Sachsenhausen

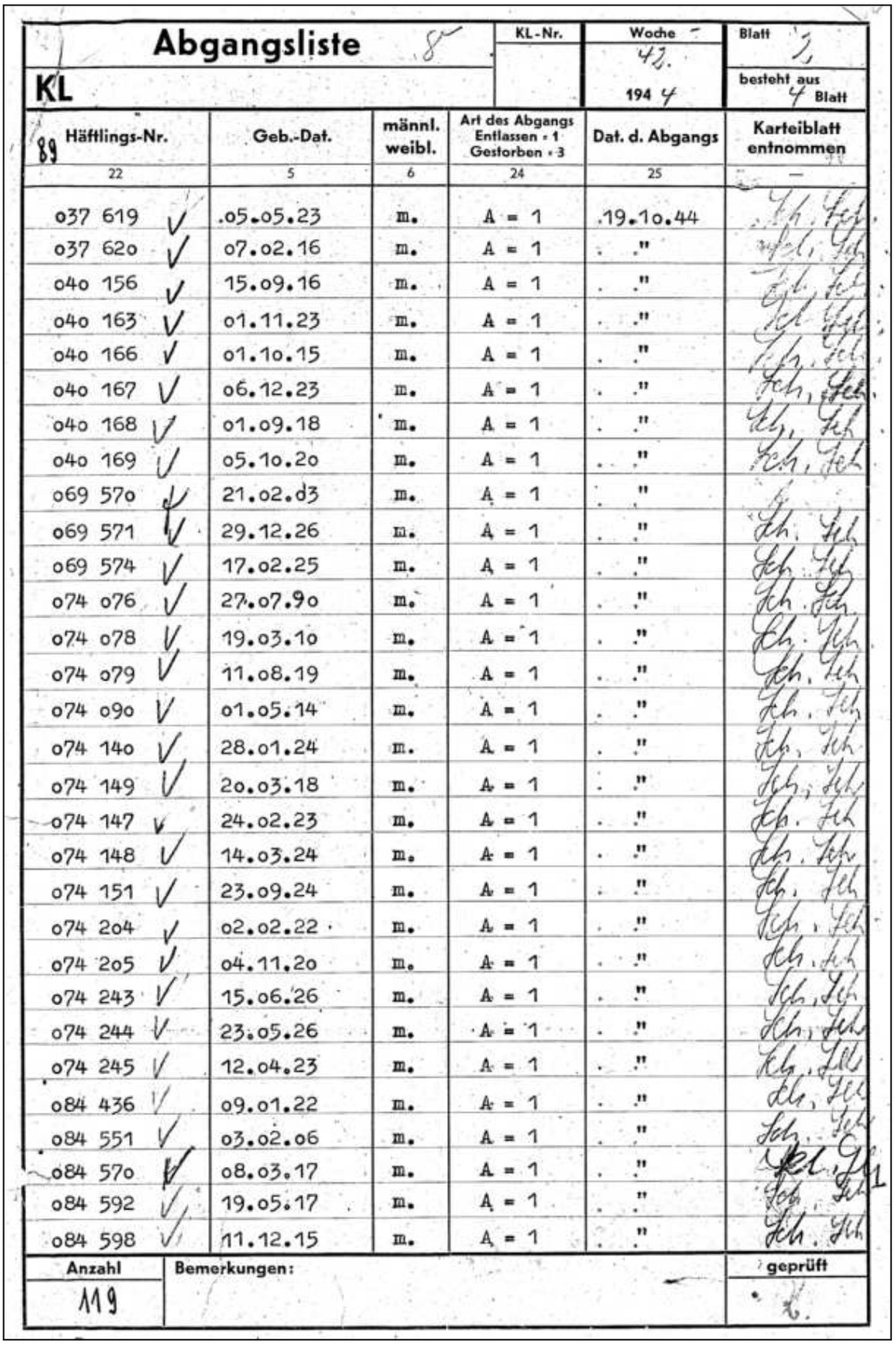
Lfd. Nr. 31 wurde dem KL-Auschwitz und Nr. 32 dem KL-Sachsenhausen überstellt.

Zur Kenntnis
a/ Arbeitseinsatzführer
b/ Krankenbau
c/ Effektenabteilung
d/ Postzentrale
e/ Effektenabteilung

S/w III 7.5.43

Der Leiter der Abteilung II
Hauptsturmführer
u. Krim.- Sekr.

Document 10: List of prisoners released and transferred from the Stutthof Camp on 6 May 1943. AMS, I-IIC-7, p. 37.



Abgangsliste 8

KL

KL-Nr.

Woche 42.

194 4

Blatt 1,

besteht aus 4 Blatt

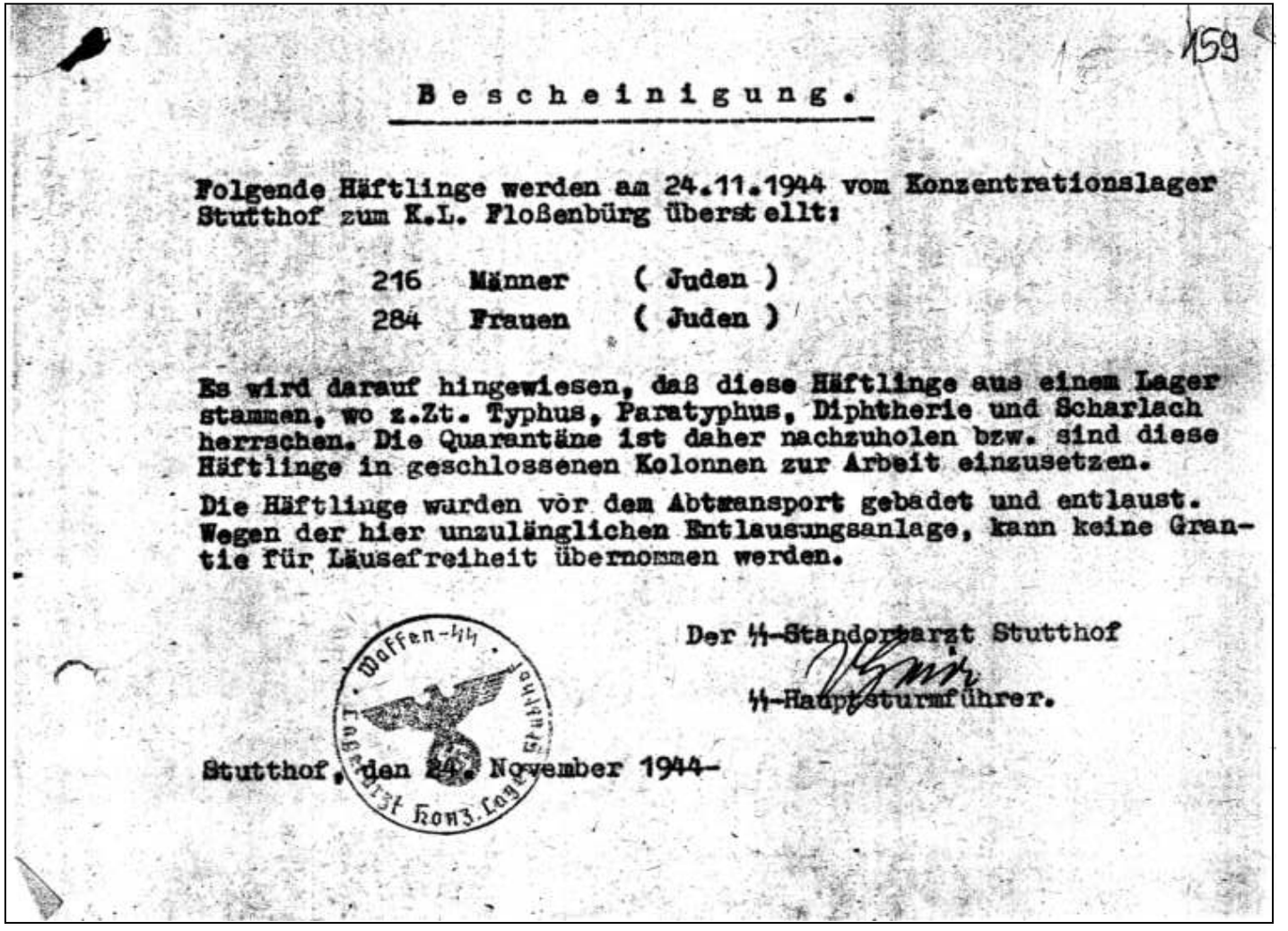
89 Häftlings-Nr.	Geb.-Dat.	männl. weibl.	Art des Abgangs Entlassen = 1 Gestorben = 3	Dat. d. Abgangs	Karteiblatt entnommen
22	5	6	24	25	—
037 619	.05.05.23	m.	A = 1	.19.10.44	
037 620	07.02.16	m.	A = 1	. ."	
040 156	15.09.16	m.	A = 1	. ."	
040 163	01.11.23	m.	A = 1	. ."	
040 166	01.10.15	m.	A = 1	. ."	
040 167	06.12.23	m.	A = 1	. ."	
040 168	01.09.18	m.	A = 1	. ."	
040 169	05.10.20	m.	A = 1	. ."	
069 570	21.02.03	m.	A = 1	. ."	
069 571	29.12.26	m.	A = 1	. ."	
069 574	17.02.25	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 076	27.07.90	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 078	19.03.10	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 079	11.08.19	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 090	01.05.14	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 140	28.01.24	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 149	20.03.18	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 147	24.02.23	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 148	14.03.24	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 151	23.09.24	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 204	02.02.22	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 205	04.11.20	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 243	15.06.26	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 244	23.05.26	m.	A = 1	. ."	
074 245	12.04.23	m.	A = 1	. ."	
084 436	09.01.22	m.	A = 1	. ."	
084 551	03.02.06	m.	A = 1	. ."	
084 570	08.03.17	m.	A = 1	. ."	
084 592	19.05.17	m.	A = 1	. ."	
084 598	11.12.15	m.	A = 1	. ."	

Anzahl 119

Bemerkungen:

geprüft

Document 11: List of departure (*Abgangsliste*) of 19 October 1944. Detainees marked A = 1 (*entlassen*) were released.



159

Bescheinigung.

Folgende Häftlinge werden am 24.11.1944 vom Konzentrationslager Stutthof zum K.L. Floßenbürg überstellt:

216 Männer (Juden)
284 Frauen (Juden)

Es wird darauf hingewiesen, daß diese Häftlinge aus einem Lager stammen, wo z.Zt. Typhus, Paratyphus, Diphtherie und Scharlach herrschen. Die Quarantäne ist daher nachzuholen bzw. sind diese Häftlinge in geschlossenen Kolonnen zur Arbeit einzusetzen.

Die Häftlinge wurden vor dem Abtransport gebadet und entlaust. Wegen der hier unzulänglichen Entlausungsanlage, kann keine Garantie für Läusefreiheit übernommen werden.

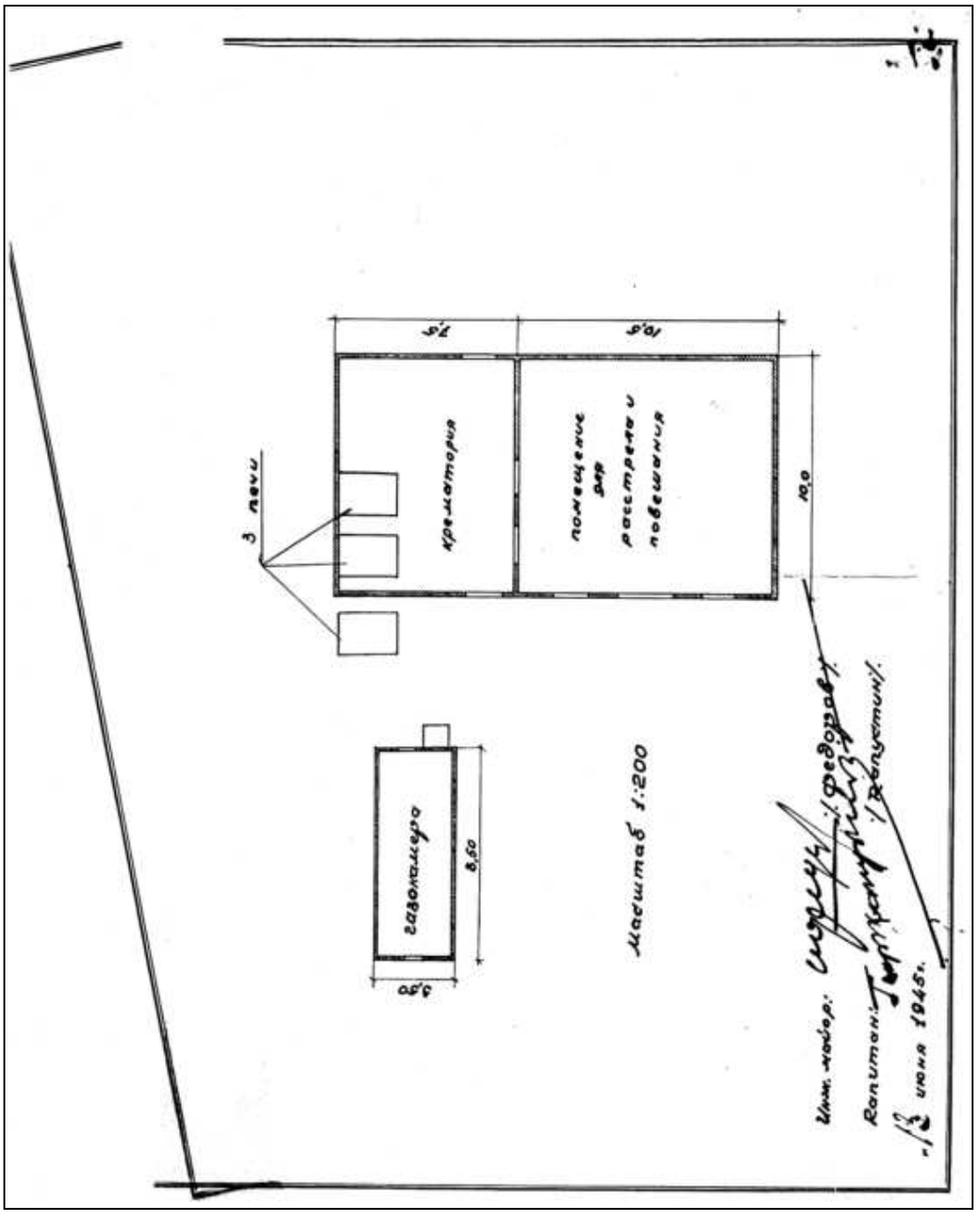
Waffen-SS · Standortarzt Konz. Lager

Der SS-Standortarzt Stutthof

SS-Hauptsturmführer.

Stutthof, den 24. November 1944-

Document 12: *Bescheinigung* (attestation) regarding the transfer of inmates from the Stutthof to Flossenbürg camp on 24 November 1944. AMS, 1-11C-4, p. 159.



Document 13: Soviet drawing of the Stutthof disinfestation chamber and the crematory, dated 13 June 1945. GARF, 7021-106-4, p. 27.

Merkblätter

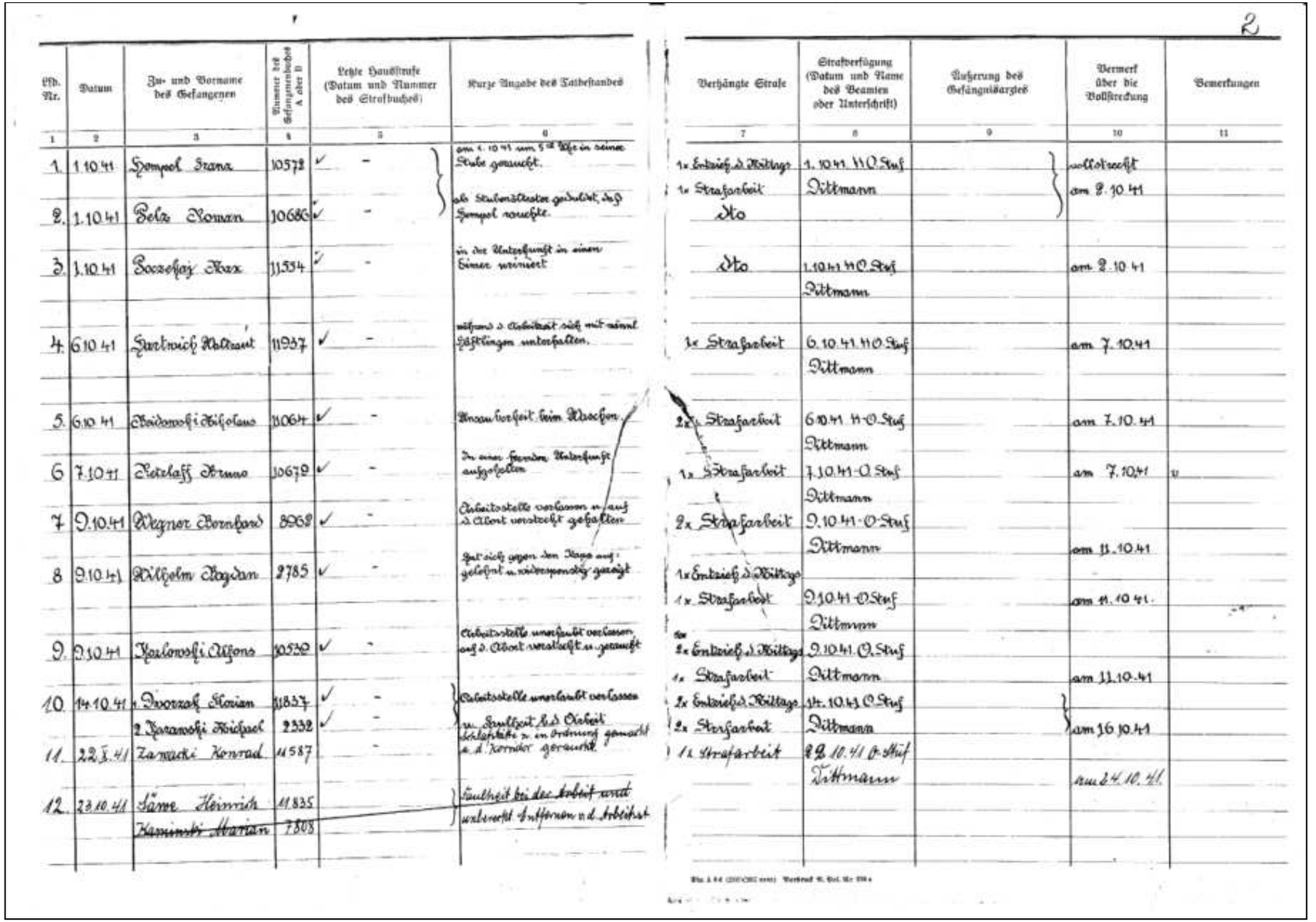
für den Unterricht

an die SS-Führer im K.L.-Dienst

Pflicht jedes Postens ist es ferner, Häftlinge zur Arbeit anzuhalten und sie bei Faulheit, Nachlässigkeit usw. unter Angabe der Nummer zur Meldung zu bringen.

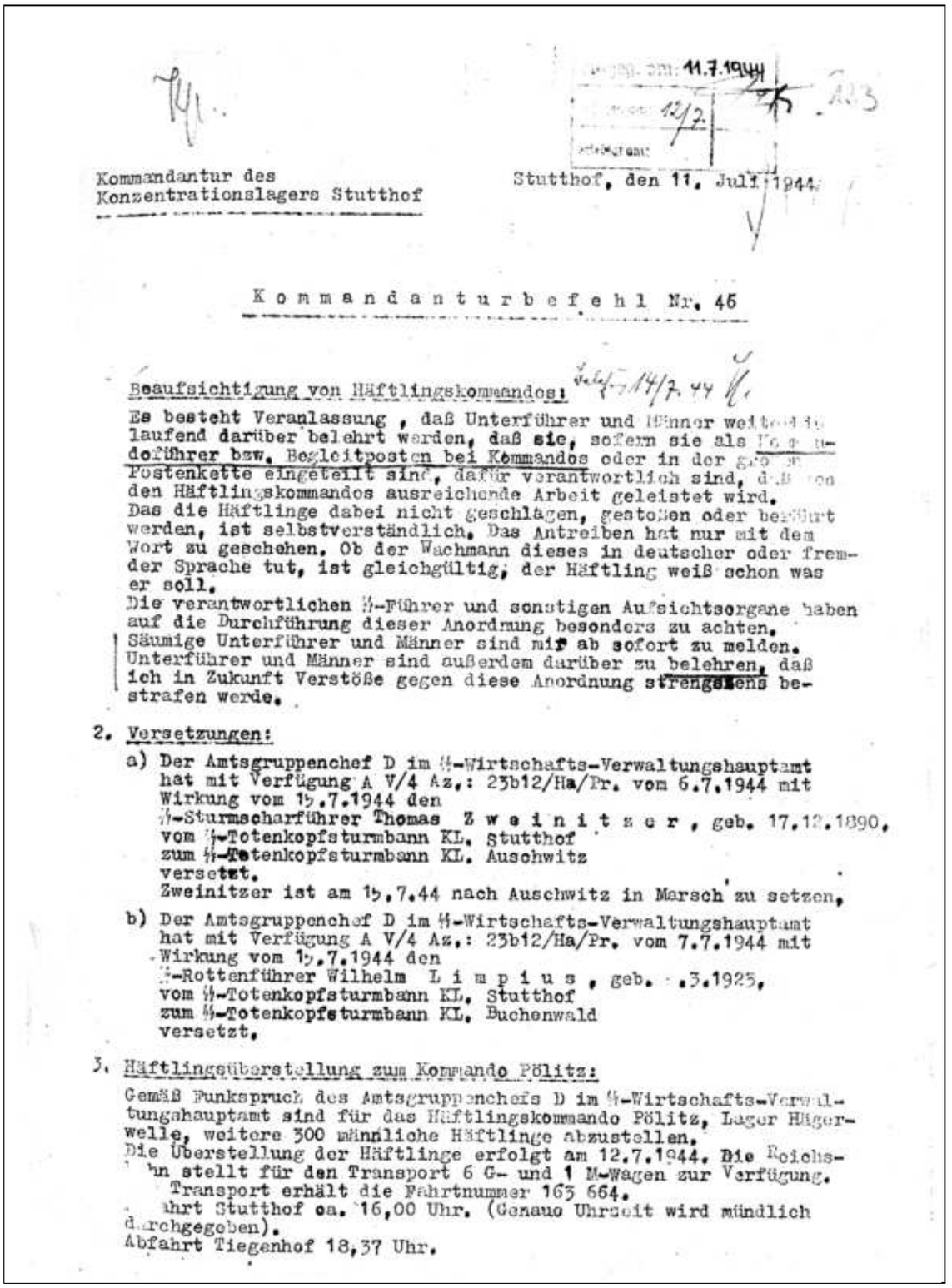
Jede eigenmächtige Züchtigung von Häftlingen ist den Posten verboten.

Document 14 a&b: Leaflets for teaching to the SS leaders in the KL (concentration camp) service: Any unauthorized castigation of inmates is prohibited for the guards. AMS.



Lfd. Nr.	Datum	Zu- und Vorname des Gefangenen	Nummer des Gefangenenbuches A oder B	Letzte Hausstrafe (Datum und Nummer des Strafbuches)	Kurze Angabe des Tatbestandes	Verhängte Strafe	Strafverfügung (Datum und Name des Beamten oder Unterschrift)	Äußerung des Gefängnisarztes	Vermerk über die Vollstreckung	Bemerkungen
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1.	1.10.41	Sempel Franz	10578	✓ –	am 1.10.41 um 5 Uhr in seiner Stube geraucht.	1x Entzieh. d. Mittags	1.10.41 HO Stuf		vollstreckt	
2.	1.10.41	Belz Roman	10686	✓ –	als Stubenältester gebucht, da Sempel rauchte.	1x Strafarbeit	Dittmann		am 2.10.41	
3.	1.10.41	Soczeßaj Max	11534	✓ –	in der Unterkunft in einem Diener verweist	do	1.10.41 HO Stuf Dittmann		am 2.10.41	
4.	6.10.41	Jurkowski Waldemar	11937	✓ –	während d. Arbeitszeit sich mit seinen Gefängen unterhalten.	1x Strafarbeit	6.10.41 HO Stuf Dittmann		am 7.10.41	
5.	6.10.41	Kwidzinski Nikolaus	11064	✓ –	Unaufmerksamkeit beim Abschen	2x Strafarbeit	6.10.41 H-O Stuf Dittmann		am 7.10.41	
6	7.10.41	Petelaff Bruno	10679	✓ –	In einer fremden Unterkunft aufgefallen	1x Strafarbeit	7.10.41-O Stuf Dittmann		am 7.10.41	U
7	9.10.41	Wegner Bernhard	8968	✓ –	Arbeitsstelle verlassen u. auf d. Abort verdächtig gefallen	2x Strafarbeit	9.10.41-O Stuf Dittmann		am 11.10.41	
8	9.10.41	Wilhelm Bogdan	2785	✓ –	Hat sich gegen den Kapo aufgelehnt u. widerspenstig gezeigt	1x Entzieh. d. Mittags 1x Strafarbeit	9.10.41 O Stuf Dittmann		am 11.10.41.	
9.	9.10.41	Yaslowski Alfons	10530	✓ –	Arbeitsstelle unerlaubt verlassen auf d. Abort verdächtig u. gemacht	2x Entzieh. d. Mittags 1x Strafarbeit	9.10.41 O Stuf Dittmann		am 11.10.41	
10	14.10.41	1. Dworzak Florian	11857	✓ –	Arbeitsstelle unerlaubt verlassen u. Faulheit bei d. Arbeit Schlafstelle z. in Ordnung gemacht u. d. Korridor gereinigt	2x Entzieh. d. Mittags 2x Strafarbeit	14.10.41 O Stuf Dittmann		am 16.10.41	
		2. Jaranowski Michael	2332	✓ –						
11.	22.8.41	Zawacki Konrad	11587	–		1x Strafarbeit	22.10.41 O Stuf Dittmann		am 24.10.41	
12.	23.10.41	Jäne Heinrich	11835		Faulheit bei der Arbeit arbeitet unaufmerksam Hoffnungen d. Arbeitsst					
		~~Kaminski Marian~~	7303							

Document 15: *Straf-Buch*, p. 2. AMS, I-IIC-1.



Kommandantur des
Konzentrationslagers Stutthof

Stutthof, den 11. Juli 1944

K o m m a n d a n t u r b e f e h l Nr. 46

Beaufsichtigung von Häftlingskommandos:

Es besteht Veranlassung, daß Unterführer und Männer weiterhin laufend darüber belehrt werden, daß sie, sofern sie als Kommandoführer bzw. Begleitposten bei Kommandos oder in der Postenkette eingeteilt sind, dafür verantwortlich sind, daß von den Häftlingskommandos ausreichende Arbeit geleistet wird. Das die Häftlinge dabei nicht geschlagen, gestoßen oder beraubt werden, ist selbstverständlich. Das Antreiben hat nur mit dem Wort zu geschehen. Ob der Wachmann dieses in deutscher oder fremder Sprache tut, ist gleichgültig, der Häftling weiß schon was er soll.
Die verantwortlichen SS-Führer und sonstigen Aufsichtsorgane haben auf die Durchführung dieser Anordnung besonders zu achten. Säumige Unterführer und Männer sind mir ab sofort zu melden. Unterführer und Männer sind außerdem darüber zu belehren, daß ich in Zukunft Verstöße gegen diese Anordnung strengstens bestrafen werde.

2. Versetzungen:

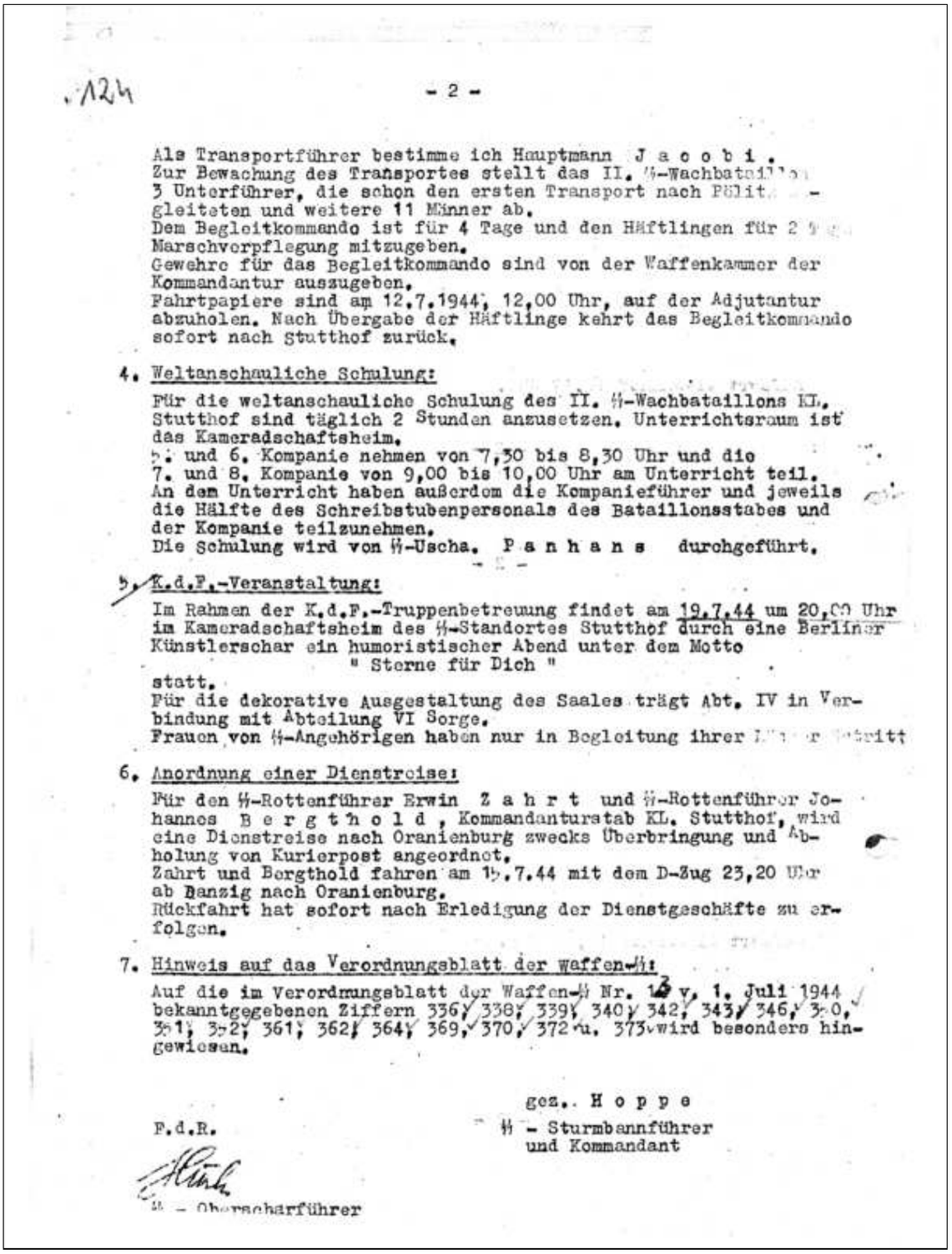
a) Der Amtsgruppenchef D im SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt hat mit Verfügung A V/4 Az.: 23b12/Ha/Pr. vom 6.7.1944 mit Wirkung vom 15.7.1944 den
SS-Sturmscharführer Thomas Z w e i n i t z e r, geb. 17.12.1890,
vom SS-Totenkopfsturmbann KL. Stutthof
zum SS-Totenkopfsturmbann KL. Auschwitz
versetzt.
Zweinitzer ist am 15.7.44 nach Auschwitz in Marsch zu setzen.

b) Der Amtsgruppenchef D im SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt hat mit Verfügung A V/4 Az.: 23b12/Ha/Pr. vom 7.7.1944 mit Wirkung vom 15.7.1944 den
SS-Rottenführer Wilhelm L i m p i u s, geb. .3.1925,
vom SS-Totenkopfsturmbann KL. Stutthof
zum SS-Totenkopfsturmbann KL. Buchenwald
versetzt.

3. Häftlingsüberstellung zum Kommando Pölitz:

Gemäß Funkspruch des Amtsgruppenchefs D im SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt sind für das Häftlingskommando Pölitz, Lager Hägerwelle, weitere 300 männliche Häftlinge abzustellen.
Die Überstellung der Häftlinge erfolgt am 12.7.1944. Die Reichsbahn stellt für den Transport 6 G- und 1 M-Wagen zur Verfügung.
Transport erhält die Fahrtnummer 163 664.
Fahrt Stutthof ca. 16,00 Uhr. (Genaue Uhrzeit wird mündlich durchgegeben).
Abfahrt Tiegenhof 18,37 Uhr.

Document 16a & b: *Kommandanturbefehl* (headquarters order) no. 46 of July 1944. AMS, I-IB-3, pp. 123f.



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Als Transportführer bestimme ich Hauptmann J a c o b i .
Zur Bewachung des Transportes stellt das II. ᛋᛋ-Wachbataillon
3 Unterführer, die schon den ersten Transport nach Pölitz -
gleiteten und weitere 11 Männer ab.
Dem Begleitkommando ist für 4 Tage und den Häftlingen für 2 T
Marschverpflegung mitzugeben.
Gewehre für das Begleitkommando sind von der Waffenkammer der
Kommandantur auszugeben.
Fahrtpapiere sind am 12.7.1944, 12,00 Uhr, auf der Adjutantur
abzuholen. Nach Übergabe der Häftlinge kehrt das Begleitkommando
sofort nach Stutthof zurück.

4. Weltanschauliche Schulung:

Für die weltanschauliche Schulung des II. ᛋᛋ-Wachbataillons KL.
Stutthof sind täglich 2 Stunden anzusetzen. Unterrichtsraum ist
das Kameradschaftsheim.
5. und 6. Kompanie nehmen von 7,30 bis 8,30 Uhr und die
7. und 8. Kompanie von 9,00 bis 10,00 Uhr am Unterricht teil.
An dem Unterricht haben außerdem die Kompanieführer und jeweils
die Hälfte des Schreibstubenpersonals des Bataillonsstabes und
der Kompanie teilzunehmen.
Die Schulung wird von ᛋᛋ-Uscha. P a n h a n s durchgeführt.

5. K.d.F.-Veranstaltung:

Im Rahmen der K.d.F.-Truppenbetreuung findet am 19.7.44 um 20,00 Uhr
im Kameradschaftsheim des ᛋᛋ-Standortes Stutthof durch eine Berliner
Künstlerschar ein humoristischer Abend unter dem Motto
" Sterne für Dich "
statt.
Für die dekorative Ausgestaltung des Saales trägt Abt. IV in Ver-
bindung mit Abteilung VI Sorge.
Frauen von ᛋᛋ-Angehörigen haben nur in Begleitung ihrer [illegible] Zutritt

6. Anordnung einer Dienstreise:

Für den ᛋᛋ-Rottenführer Erwin Z a h r t und ᛋᛋ-Rottenführer Jo-
hannes B e r g t h o l d , Kommandanturstab KL. Stutthof, wird
eine Dienstreise nach Oranienburg zwecks Überbringung und Ab-
holung von Kurierpost angeordnet.
Zahrt und Bergthold fahren am 15.7.44 mit dem D-Zug 23,20 Uhr
ab Danzig nach Oranienburg.
Rückfahrt hat sofort nach Erledigung der Dienstgeschäfte zu er-
folgen.

7. Hinweis auf das Verordnungsblatt der Waffen-ᛋᛋ:

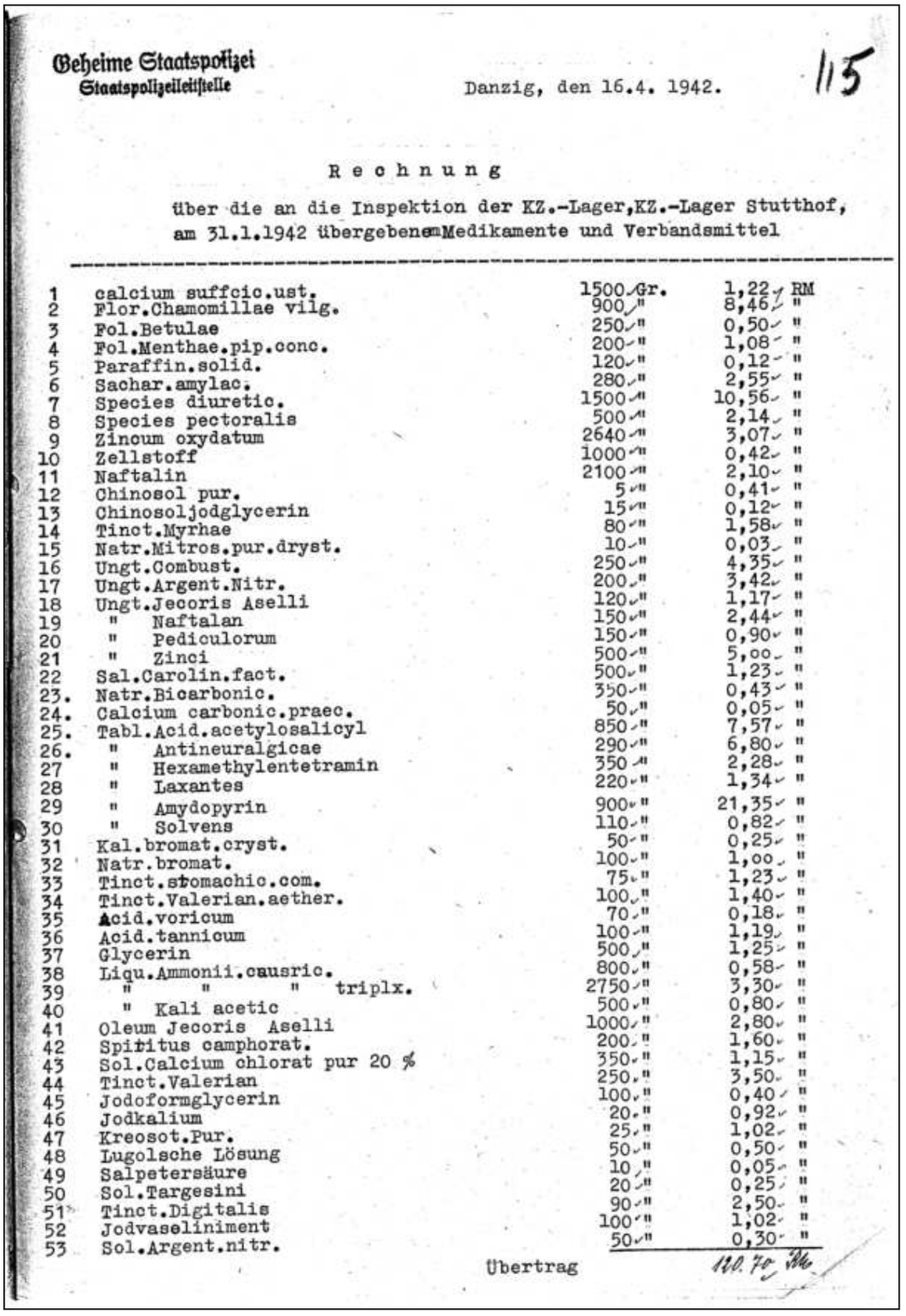
Auf die im Verordnungsblatt der Waffen-ᛋᛋ Nr. 13 v. 1. Juli 1944
bekanntgegebenen Ziffern 336, 338, 339, 340, 342, 343, 346, 350,
351, 352, 361, 362, 364, 369, 370, 372 u. 373 wird besonders hin-
gewiesen.

gez.. H o p p e
ᛋᛋ - Sturmbannführer
und Kommandant

F.d.R.

ᛋᛋ - Obersturmführer

Document 16b: as before.



Geheime Staatspolizei
Staatspolizeileitstelle

Danzig, den 16.4. 1942.

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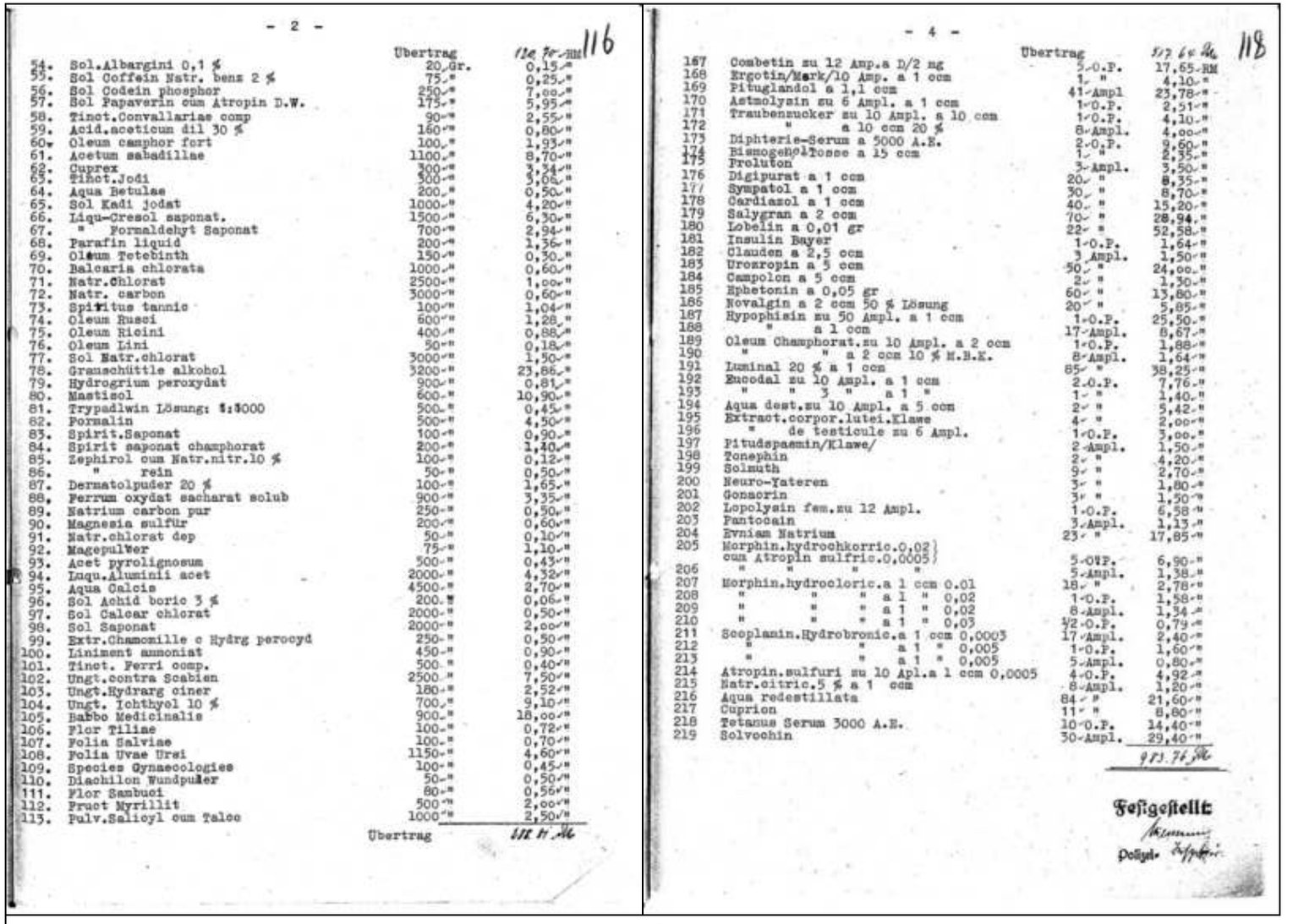
R e c h n u n g

über die an die Inspektion der KZ.-Lager,KZ.-Lager Stutthof, am 31.1.1942 übergebenen Medikamente und Verbandsmittel

1	calcium suffcic.ust.	1500	Gr.	1,22 RM
2	Flor.Chamomillae vilg.	900	"	8,46 "
3	Fol.Betulae	250	"	0,50 "
4	Fol.Menthae.pip.conc.	200	"	1,08 "
5	Paraffin.solid.	120	"	0,12 "
6	Sachar.amylac.	280	"	2,55 "
7	Species diuretic.	1500	"	10,56 "
8	Species pectoralis	500	"	2,14 "
9	Zincum oxydatum	2640	"	3,07 "
10	Zellstoff	1000	"	0,42 "
11	Naftalin	2100	"	2,10 "
12	Chinosol pur.	5	"	0,41 "
13	Chinosoljodglycerin	15	"	0,12 "
14	Tinct.Myrhae	80	"	1,58 "
15	Natr.Mitros.pur.dryst.	10	"	0,03 "
16	Ungt.Combust.	250	"	4,35 "
17	Ungt.Argent.Nitr.	200	"	3,42 "
18	Ungt.Jecoris Aselli	120	"	1,17 "
19	" Naftalan	150	"	2,44 "
20	" Pediculorum	150	"	0,90 "
21	" Zinci	500	"	5,00 "
22	Sal.Carolin.fact.	500	"	1,23 "
23.	Natr.Bicarbonic.	350	"	0,43 "
24.	Calcium carbonic.praec.	50	"	0,05 "
25.	Tabl.Acid.acetylosalicyl	850	"	7,57 "
26.	" Antineuralgicae	290	"	6,80 "
27	" Hexamethylentetramin	350	"	2,28 "
28	" Laxantes	220	"	1,34 "
29	" Amydopyrin	900	"	21,35 "
30	" Solvens	110	"	0,82 "
31	Kal.bromat.cryst.	50	"	0,25 "
32	Natr.bromat.	100	"	1,00 "
33	Tinct.stomachic.com.	75	"	1,23 "
34	Tinct.Valerian.aether.	100	"	1,40 "
35	Acid.voricum	70	"	0,18 "
36	Acid.tannicum	100	"	1,19 "
37	Glycerin	500	"	1,25 "
38	Liqu.Ammonii.causric.	800	"	0,58 "
39	" " " triplx.	2750	"	3,30 "
40	" Kali acetic	500	"	0,80 "
41	Oleum Jecoris Aselli	1000	"	2,80 "
42	Spiritus camphorat.	200	"	1,60 "
43	Sol.Calcium chlorat pur 20 %	350	"	1,15 "
44	Tinct.Valerian	250	"	3,50 "
45	Jodoformglycerin	100	"	0,40 "
46	Jodkalium	20	"	0,92 "
47	Kreosot.Pur.	25	"	1,02 "
48	Lugolsche Lösung	50	"	0,50 "
49	Salpetersäure	10	"	0,05 "
50	Sol.Targesini	20	"	0,25 "
51	Tinct.Digitalis	90	"	2,50 "
52	Jodvaseliniment	100	"	1,02 "
53	Sol.Argent.nitr.	50	"	0,30 "
	Übertrag			110.70 RM

Document 17a: *Gestapo*-Invoice for medication and dressing material handed over to the Stutthof Camp authorities, dated 14 April 1942. RGVA, 1323-2-140, pp. 115-118.



- 2 -

			Übertrag	116
54.	Sol.Albargini 0,1 %	20 Gr.		0,15 RM
55.	Sol Coffein Natr. benz 2 %	75 "		0,25 "
56.	Sol Codein phosphor	250 "		7,00 "
57.	Sol Papaverin cum Atropin D.W.	175 "		5,95 "
58.	Tinct.Convallariae comp	90 "		2,55 "
59.	Acid.aceticum dil 30 %	160 "		0,80 "
60.	Oleum camphor fort	100 "		1,93 "
61.	Acetum sabadillae	1100 "		8,70 "
62.	Cuprex	300 "		3,34 "
63.	Tinct.Jodi	500 "		3,06 "
64.	Aqua Betulae	200 "		0,50 "
65.	Sol Kadi jodat	1000 "		4,20 "
66.	Liqu-Cresol saponat.	1500 "		6,30 "
67.	" Formaldehyt Saponat	700 "		2,94 "
68.	Parafin liquid	200 "		1,36 "
69.	Oleum Tetebinth	150 "		0,30 "
70.	Balcaria chlorata	1000 "		0,60 "
71.	Natr.Chlorat	2500 "		1,00 "
72.	Natr. carbon	3000 "		0,60 "
73.	Spiritus tannic	100 "		1,04 "
74.	Oleum Rusci	600 "		1,28 "
75.	Oleum Ricini	400 "		0,88 "
76.	Oleum Lini	50 "		0,18 "
77.	Sol Natr.chlorat	3000 "		1,50 "
78.	Grauschüttle alkohol	3200 "		23,86 "
79.	Hydrogrium peroxydat	900 "		0,81 "
80.	Mastisol	600 "		10,90 "
81.	Trypadlwin Lösung: 1:1000	500 "		0,45 "
82.	Formalin	500 "		4,50 "
83.	Spirit.Saponat	100 "		0,90 "
84.	Spirit saponat champhorat	200 "		1,40 "
85.	Zephirol cum Natr.nitr.10 %	100 "		0,12 "
86.	" rein	50 "		0,30 "
87.	Dermatolpuder 20 %	100 "		1,65 "
88.	Ferrum oxydat sacharat solub	900 "		3,35 "
89.	Natrium carbon pur	250 "		0,50 "
90.	Magnesia sulfür	200 "		0,60 "
91.	Natr.chlorat dep	50 "		0,10 "
92.	Magepulver	75 "		1,10 "
93.	Acet pyrolignosum	500 "		0,43 "
94.	Luqu.Aluminii acet	2000 "		4,32 "
95.	Aqua Calcis	4500 "		2,70 "
96.	Sol Achid boric 3 %	200 "		0,06 "
97.	Sol Calcar chlorat	2000 "		0,50 "
98.	Sol Saponat	2000 "		2,00 "
99.	Extr.Chamomille c Hydrg perocyd	250 "		0,50 "
100.	Liniment ammoniat	450 "		0,90 "
101.	Tinct. Ferri comp.	500 "		0,40 "
102.	Ungt.contra Scabien	2500 "		7,50 "
103.	Ungt.Hydrarg ciner	180 "		2,52 "
104.	Ungt. Ichthyol 10 %	700 "		9,10 "
105.	Babbo Medicinalis	900 "		18,00 "
106.	Flor Tiliae	100 "		0,72 "
107.	Folia Salviae	100 "		0,70 "
108.	Folia Uvae Ursi	1150 "		4,60 "
109.	Species Gynaecologies	100 "		0,45 "
110.	Diachilon Wundpuder	50 "		0,50 "
111.	Flor Sambuci	80 "		0,56 "
112.	Fruct Myrillit	500 "		2,00 "
113.	Pulv.Salicyl cum Talco	1000 "		2,50 "
			Übertrag	111 11 RM

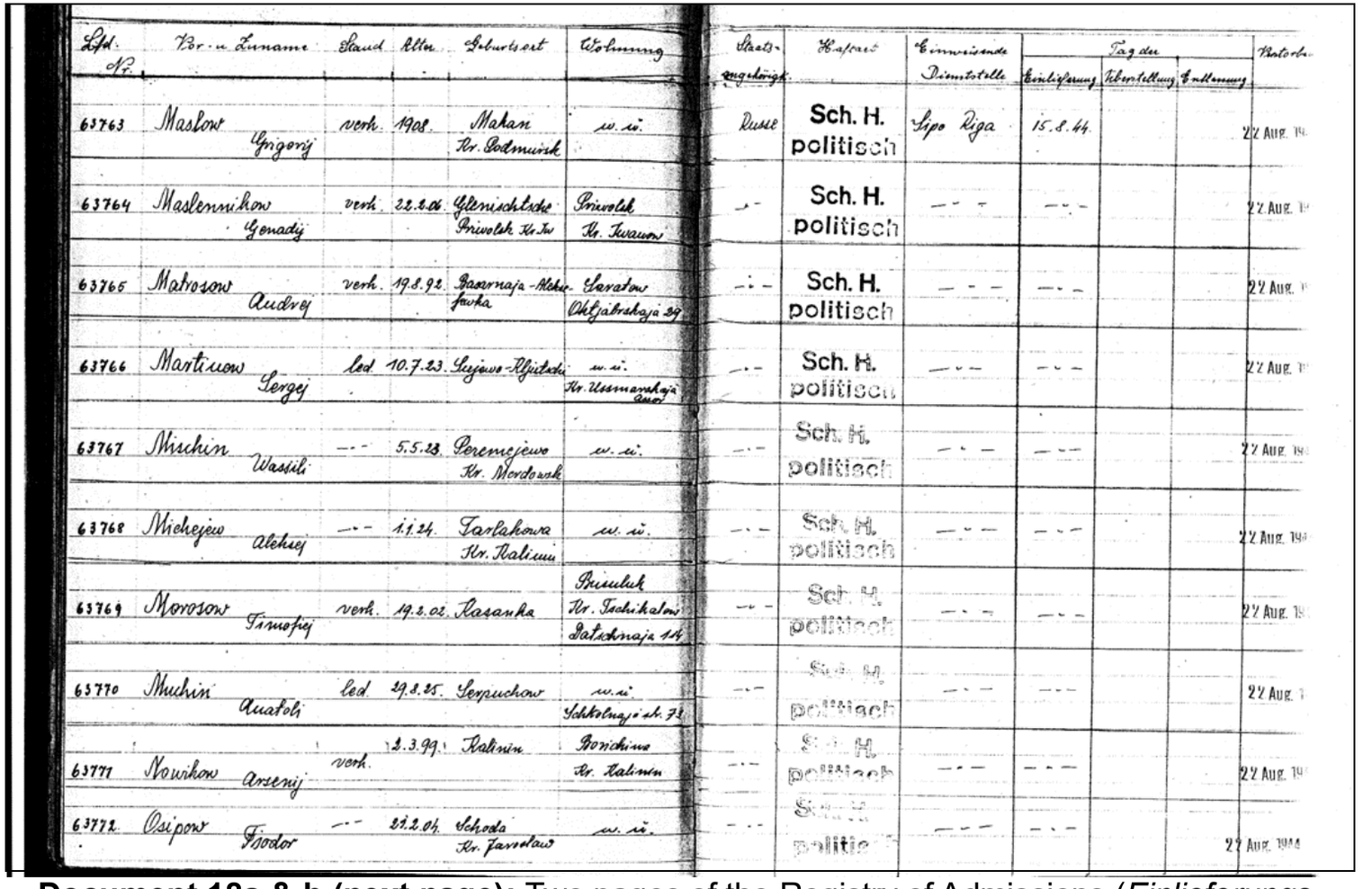
- 4 -

			Übertrag	118
167	Combetin zu 12 Amp.a D/2 mg	5-O.P.		17,65 RM
168	Ergotin/Merk/10 Amp. a 1 ccm	1- "		4,10 "
169	Pituglandol a 1,1 ccm	41-Ampl		23,78 "
170	Astmolysin zu 6 Ampl. a 1 ccm	1-O.P.		2,51 "
171	Traubenzucker zu 10 Ampl. a 10 ccm	1-O.P.		4,10 "
172	" a 10 ccm 20 %	8-Ampl.		4,00 "
173	Diphterie-Serum a 5000 A.E.	2-O.P.		9,60 "
174	Bismogenol Tosse a 15 ccm	1- "		2,35 "
175	Proluton	3-Ampl.		3,50 "
176	Digipurat a 1 ccm	20- "		8,35 "
177	Sympatol a 1 ccm	30- "		8,70 "
178	Cardiazol a 1 ccm	40- "		15,20 "
179	Salygran a 2 ccm	70- "		28,94 "
180	Lobelin a 0,01 gr	22- "		52,58 "
181	Insulin Bayer	1-O.P.		1,64 "
182	Clauden a 2,5 ccm	3 Ampl.		1,50 "
183	Uroxropin a 5 ccm	50- "		24,00 "
184	Campolon a 5 ccm	2- "		1,30 "
185	Ephetonin a 0,05 gr	60- "		13,80 "
186	Novalgin a 2 ccm 50 % Lösung	20- "		5,85 "
187	Hypophisin zu 50 Ampl. a 1 ccm	1-O.P.		25,50 "
188	" a 1 ccm	17-Ampl.		8,67 "
189	Oleum Champhorat.zu 10 Ampl. a 2 ccm	1-O.P.		1,88 "
190	" a 2 ccm 10 % M.B.K.	8-Ampl.		1,64 "
191	Luminal 20 % a 1 ccm	85- "		38,25 "
192	Eucodal zu 10 Ampl. a 1 ccm	2-O.P.		7,76 "
193	" " 3 " a 1 "	1- "		1,40 "
194	Aqua dest.zu 10 Ampl. a 5 ccm	2- "		5,42 "
195	Extract.corpor.lutei.Klawe	4- "		2,00 "
196	" de testicule zu 6 Ampl.	1-O.P.		3,00 "
197	Pitudspaesmin/Klawe/	2-Ampl.		1,50 "
198	Tonephin	2- "		4,20 "
199	Solmuth	9- "		2,70 "
200	Neuro-Yateren	3- "		1,80 "
201	Gonacrin	3- "		1,50 "
202	Lopolysin fem.zu 12 Ampl.	1-O.P.		6,58 "
203	Pantocain	3-Ampl.		1,13 "
204	Evniam Natrium	23- "		17,85 "
205	Morphin.hydrochkorric.0,02 cum Atropin sulfric.0,0005	5-O.P.		6,90 "
206	" " " "	5-Ampl.		1,38 "
207	Morphin.hydrocloric.a 1 ccm 0.01	18- "		2,78 "
208	" " " a 1 " 0,02	1-O.P.		1,58 "
209	" " " a 1 " 0,02	8-Ampl.		1,34 "
210	" " " a 1 " 0,03	½-O.P.		0,79 "
211	Scoplamin.Hydrobronic.a 1 ccm 0,0003	17-Ampl.		2,40 "
212	" " a 1 " 0,005	1-O.P.		1,60 "
213	" " a 1 " 0,005	5-Ampl.		0,80 "
214	Atropin.sulfuri zu 10 Apl.a 1 ccm 0,0005	4-O.P.		4,92 "
215	Natr.citric.5 % a 1 ccm	8-Ampl.		1,20 "
216	Aqua redestillata	84- "		21,60 "
217	Cuprion	11- "		8,80 "
218	Tetanus Serum 3000 A.E.	10-O.P.		14,40 "
219	Solvochin	30-Ampl.		29,40 "
				973,76 RM

Festgestellt

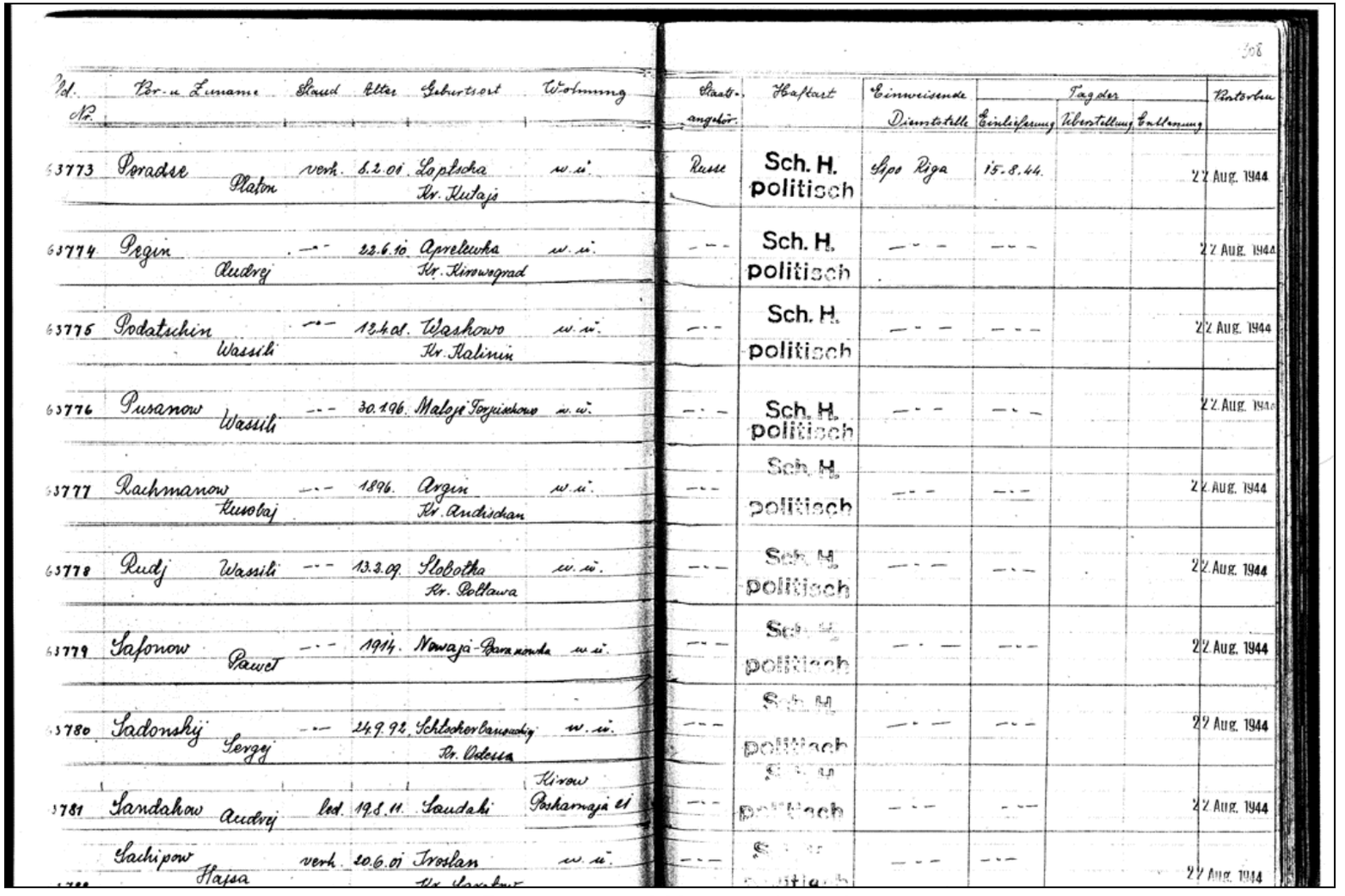
Polizei-

Document 17b & c: continued.



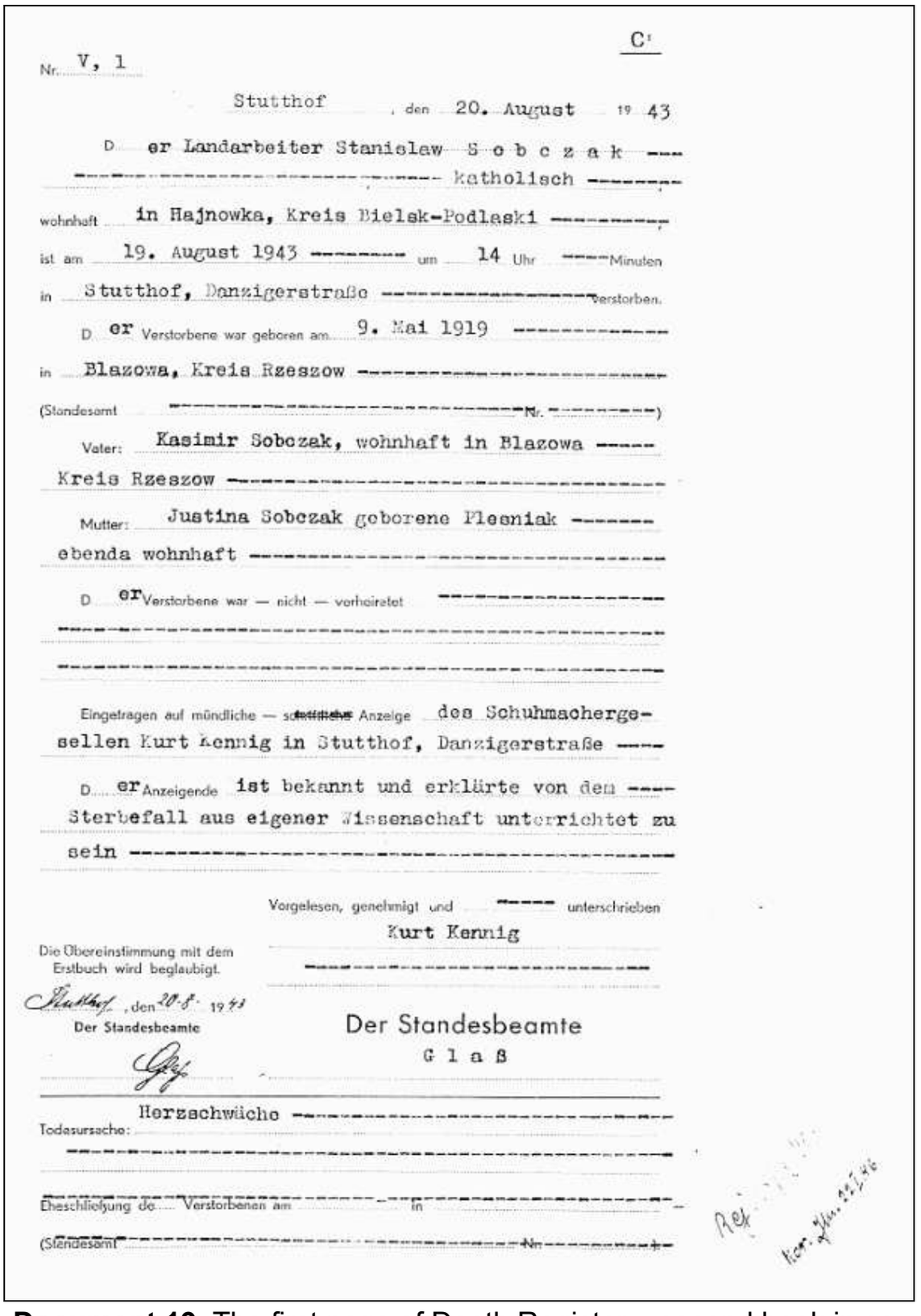
Lfd. Nr.	Vor- u. Zuname	Stand	Alter	Geburtsort	Wohnung	Staats-angehörigk.	Haftart	Einweisende Dienststelle	Tag der Einlieferung	Tag der Übernahme	Tag der Entlassung	Todestag
63763	Maslow Grigorij	verh.	1908	Mahan Kr. Podmorsk	w. ü.	Russe	Sch. H. politisch	Sipo Riga	15.8.44			22 Aug. 19
63764	Maslennikow Genadij	verh.	22.2.04	Gljenischtsche Priwolsk Kr. Iw	Priwolsk Kr. Iwanow	-.-	Sch. H. politisch	-.-.-	-.-.-			22 Aug. 19
63765	Matrosow Andrej	verh.	19.8.92	Gasernaja-Akke fawka	Gorodow Oktjabrskaja 39	-.-.-	Sch. H. politisch	-.-.-	-.-.-			22 Aug. 19
63766	Martinow Sergej	led	10.7.23	Sejewo-Kljutschi	w. ü. Kr. Ussmanskaja Gau	-.-	Sch. H. politisch	-.-.-	-.-.-			22 Aug. 19
63767	Mischin Wassili	-.-	5.5.23	Peremejewo Kr. Mordowsk	w. ü.	-.-	Sch. H. politisch	-.-.-	-.-.-			22 Aug. 19
63768	Michejew Alexej	-.-	1.1.24	Tarlakowa Kr. Kalinin	w. ü.	-.-	Sch. H. politisch	-.-.-	-.-.-			22 Aug. 19
63769	Morosow Timofej	verh.	19.2.02	Kasanka	Priwolsk Kr. Tschikalow Gatschnaja 14	-.-	Sch. H. politisch	-.-.-	-.-.-			22 Aug. 19
63770	Mischin Anatoli	led	29.8.25	Serpuchow	w. ü. Schkolnaja str. 73	-.-	Sch. H. politisch	-.-.-	-.-.-			22 Aug. 1
63771	Nowikow Arsenij	verh.	2.3.99	Kalinin	Borschinow Kr. Kalinin	-.-	Sch. H. politisch	-.-.-	-.-.-			22 Aug. 19
63772	Osipow Fjodor	-.-	23.2.04	Schoda Kr. Jaroslaw	w. ü.	-.-	Sch. H. politisch	-.-.-	-.-.-			22 Aug. 1944

Document 18a & b (next page): Two pages of the Registry of Admissions (*Einlieferungs-buch*) for the time period from 9 to14 August 1944 (registration numbers 60703-64672). It contains the names of 20 Soviet PoWs with the date of death given as 22 August 1944. AMS, I-IIE-12, pp. 307-308.



Nr.	Vor- u. Zuname	Stand	Alter	Geburtsort	Wohnung	Staats-angehör.	Haftart	Einweisende Dienststelle	Tag der Einlieferung	Tag der Überstellung	Tag der Entlassung	Verstorben
63773	Poradse Platon	verh.	8.2.01	Lapticha Kr. Klutaj	w. ü.	Russe	Sch. H. politisch	Sipo Riga	15.8.44.			22 Aug. 1944
63774	Pegin Andrej	—	22.6.16	Apreleuka Kr. Kirowograd	w. ü.	—	Sch. H. politisch	—	—			22 Aug. 1944
63775	Podatschin Wassili	—	1.4.01	Washowo Kr. Kalinin	w. ü.	—	Sch. H. politisch	—	—			22 Aug. 1944
63776	Pusanow Wassili	—	30.196	Maloje Torjuschowo	w. ü.	—	Sch. H. politisch	—	—			22 Aug. 1944
63777	Rachmanow Russobaj	—	1896.	Argun Kr. Andischan	w. ü.	—	Sch. H. politisch	—	—			22 Aug. 1944
63778	Rudj Wassili	—	13.3.09	Slobotka Kr. Poltawa	w. ü.	—	Sch. H. politisch	—	—			22 Aug. 1944
63779	Safonow Pawel	—	1914.	Nowaja-Baranowka	w. ü.	—	Sch. H. politisch	—	—			22 Aug. 1944
63780	Sadonshij Sergej	—	24.9.92	Schtscherbanowskij Kr. Odessa	w. ü.	—	Sch. H. politisch	—	—			22 Aug. 1944
63781	Sandahow Andrej	led.	19.8.11.	Saudahi	Kirow Pocharnaja 21	—	Sch. H. politisch	—	—			22 Aug. 1944
	Sachipow Hajsa	verh.	20.6.01	Irwlan Kr. Saratow	w. ü.	—	Sch. H. politisch	—	—			22 Aug. 1944

Document 18b: continued.



C¹

Nr. V, 1

Stutthof , den 20. August 19 43

Der Landarbeiter Stanislaw S o b c z a k ---

katholisch

wohnhaft in Hajnowka, Kreis Bielsk-Podlaski

ist am 19. August 1943 um 14 Uhr Minuten

in Stutthof, Danzigerstraße verstorben.

Der Verstorbene war geboren am 9. Mai 1919

in Blazowa, Kreis Rzeszow

(Standesamt Nr.)

Vater: Kasimir Sobczak, wohnhaft in Blazowa

Kreis Rzeszow

Mutter: Justina Sobczak geborene Pleśniak

ebenda wohnhaft

Der Verstorbene war — nicht — verheiratet

Eingetragen auf mündliche — ~~schriftliche~~ Anzeige des Schuhmachergesellen Kurt Kennig in Stutthof, Danzigerstraße

Der Anzeigende ist bekannt und erklärte von dem Sterbefall aus eigener Wissenschaft unterrichtet zu sein

Vorgelesen, genehmigt und unterschrieben

Kurt Kennig

Die Übereinstimmung mit dem Erstbuch wird beglaubigt.

Stutthof, den 20.8. 1943

Der Standesbeamte

Der Standesbeamte

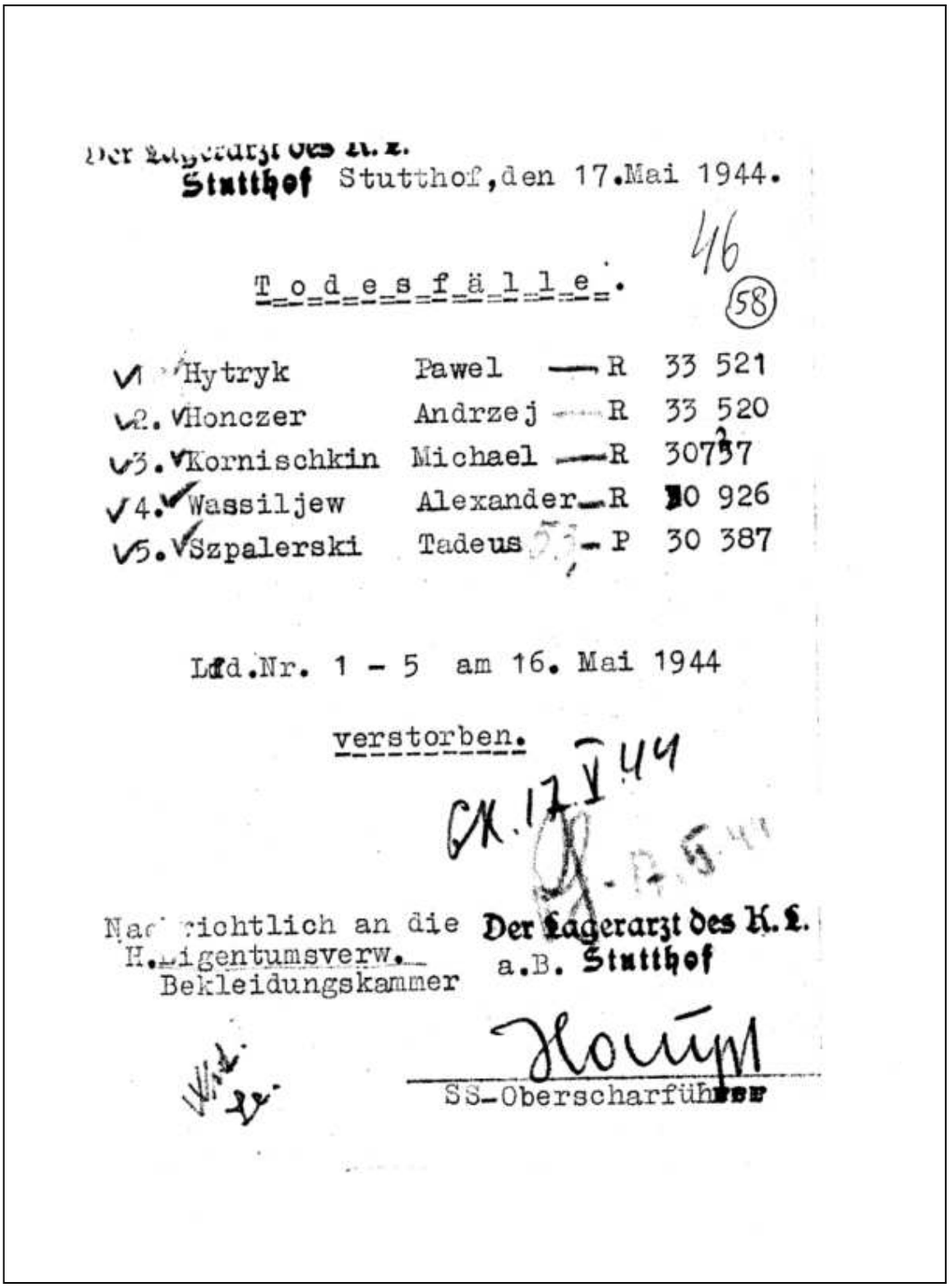
G l a ß

Todesursache: Herzschwäche

Eheschließung des Verstorbenen am in

(Standesamt Nr.)

Document 19: The first page of Death Register – second book in series V/1943. AMS, 2-V-15.



Der Lagerarzt des K.L.
Stutthof Stutthof, den 17. Mai 1944.

46
(58)

T o d e s f ä l l e .

1.	Hytryk	Pawel	R	33 521
2.	Honczer	Andrzej	R	33 520
3.	Kornischkin	Michael	R	30737
4.	Wassiljew	Alexander	R	30 926
5.	Szpalerski	Tadeus	P	30 387

Lfd.Nr. 1 - 5 am 16. Mai 1944

verstorben.

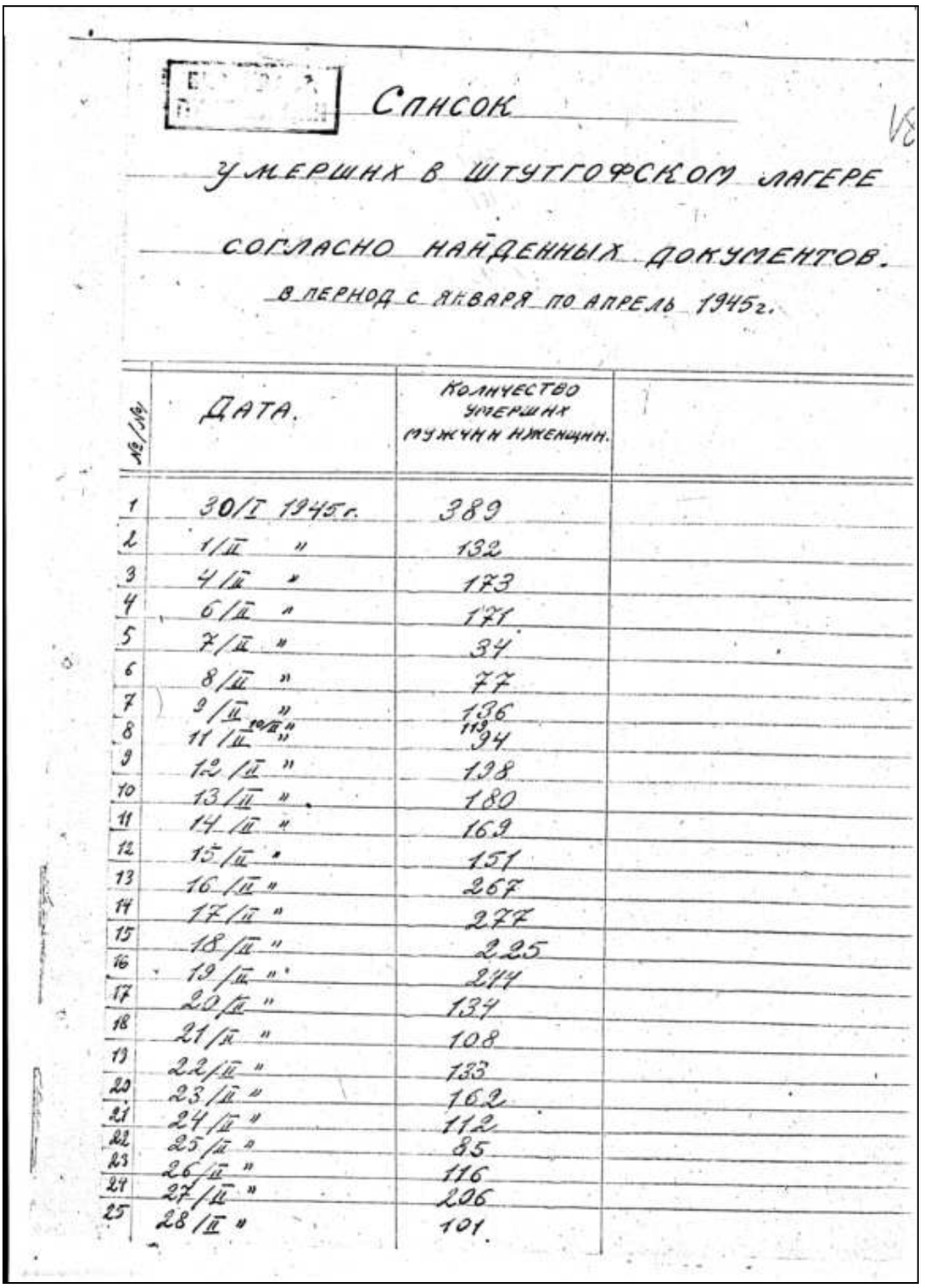
17.V.44

Nachrichtlich an die
H. Eigentumsverw.
Bekleidungskammer

Der Lagerarzt des K.L.
a.B. Stutthof

SS-Obersturmführer

Document 20: List of deaths compiled by the camp physician on 17 May 1944. AMS, I-VB-7, p. 46.



Список

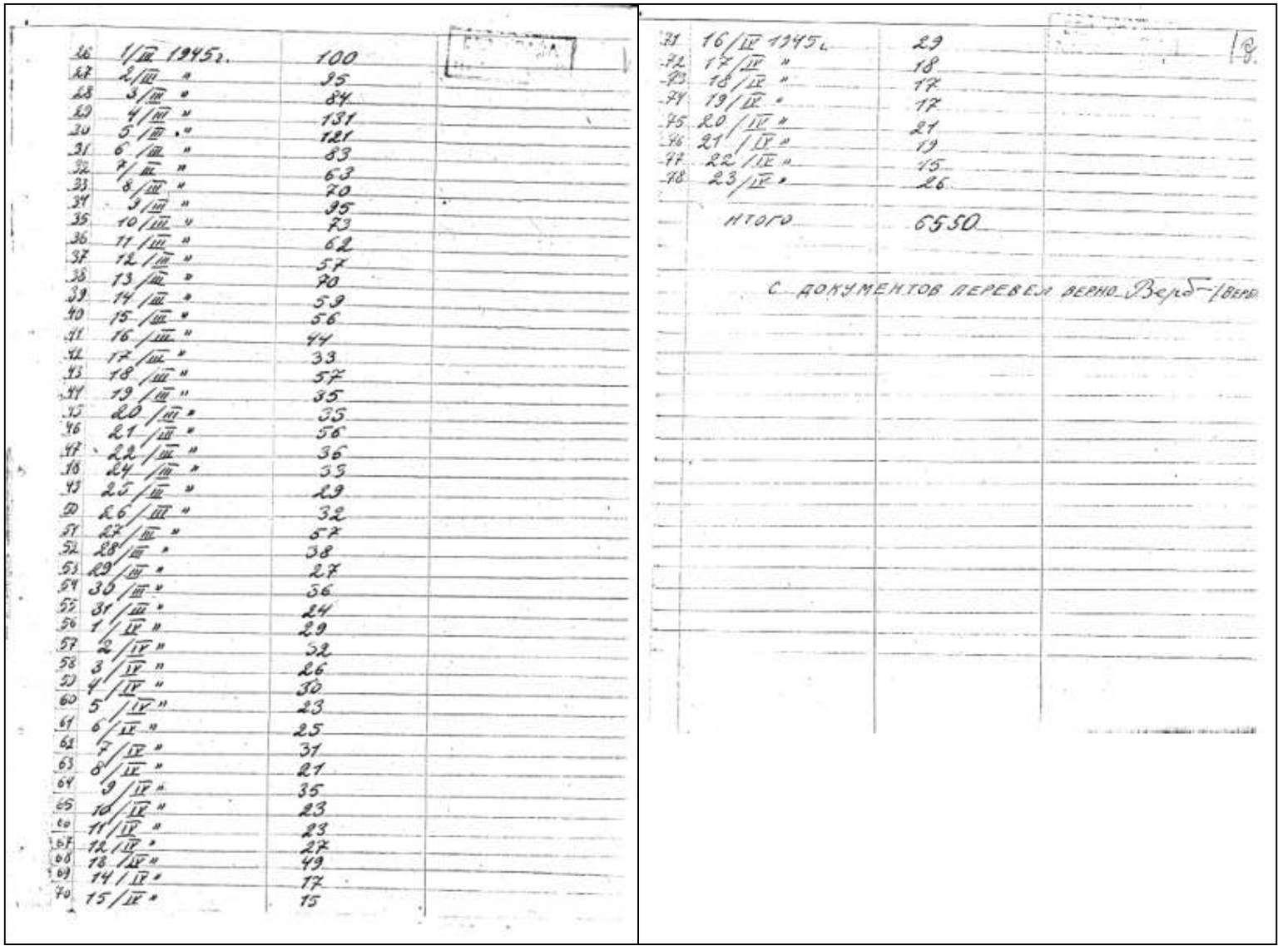
умерших в Штутгофском лагере

согласно найденных документов.

в период с января по апрель 1945г.

№/№	Дата.	Количество умерших мужчин женщин.	
1	30/I 1945г.	389	
2	1/II "	132	
3	4/II "	173	
4	6/II "	171	
5	7/II "	34	
6	8/II "	77	
7	9/II "	136	
8	11/II "	94	
9	12/II "	138	
10	13/II "	180	
11	14/II "	169	
12	15/II "	151	
13	16/II "	267	
14	17/II "	277	
15	18/II "	225	
16	19/II "	244	
17	20/II "	134	
18	21/II "	108	
19	22/II "	133	
20	23/II "	162	
21	24/II "	112	
22	25/II "	85	
23	26/II "	116	
24	27/II "	206	
25	28/II "	101	

Document 21 (a-c): List of deaths from 30 January to 23 April 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, pp. 183-185 (continued on next page).

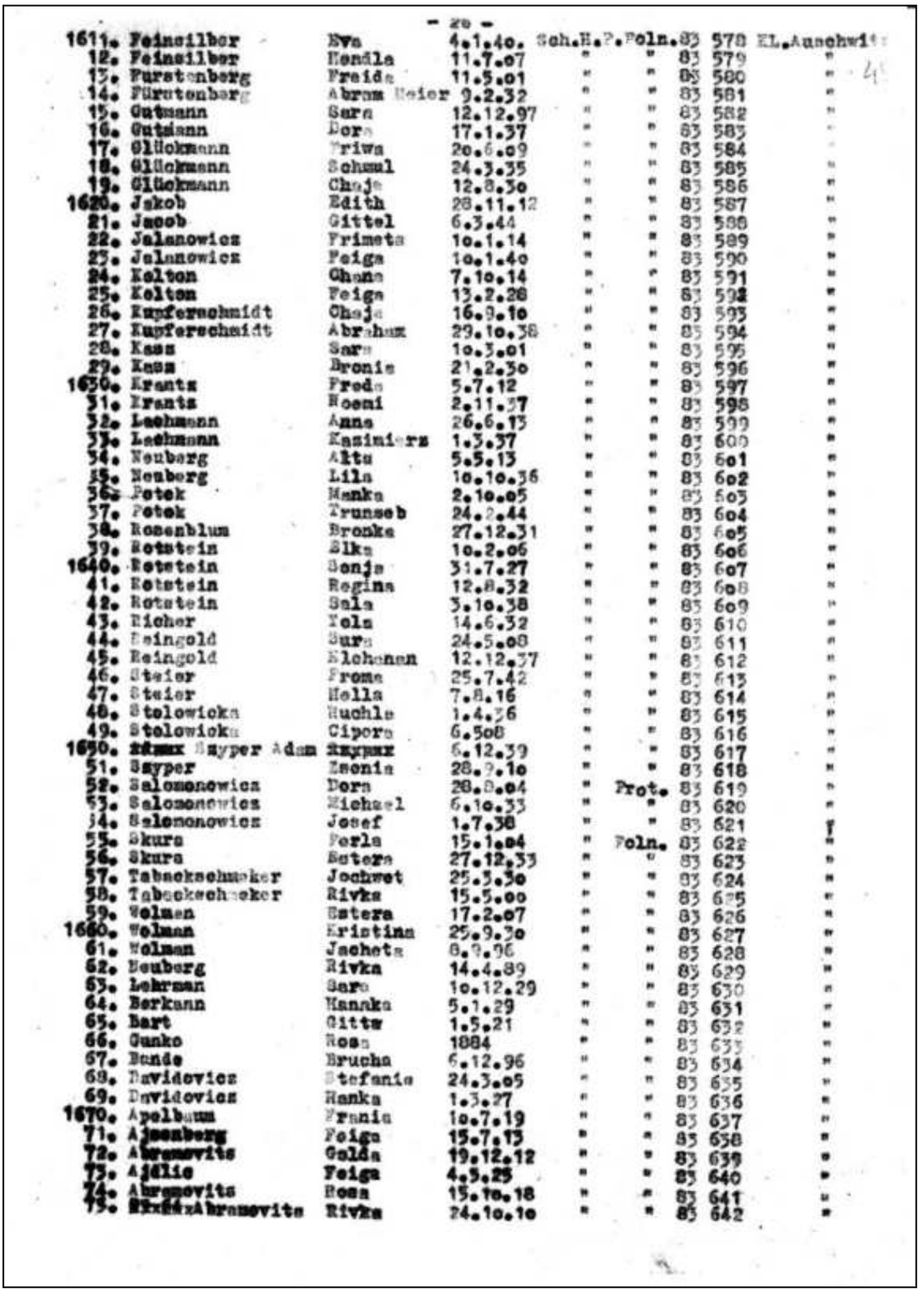


46	1/III 1945 г.	100
47	2/III "	95
48	3/III "	84
49	4/III "	131
50	5/III "	121
51	6/III "	83
52	7/III "	63
53	8/III "	70
54	9/III "	95
55	10/III "	73
56	11/III "	62
57	12/III "	57
58	13/III "	70
59	14/III "	59
60	15/III "	56
61	16/III "	44
62	17/III "	33
63	18/III "	57
64	19/III "	35
65	20/III "	35
66	21/III "	56
67	22/III "	36
68	24/III "	33
69	25/III "	29
70	26/III "	32
71	27/III "	57
72	28/III "	38
73	29/III "	27
74	30/III "	56
75	31/III "	24
76	1/IV "	29
77	2/IV "	32
78	3/IV "	26
79	4/IV "	30
80	5/IV "	23
81	6/IV "	25
82	7/IV "	31
83	8/IV "	21
84	9/IV "	35
85	10/IV "	23
86	11/IV "	23
87	12/IV "	27
88	13/IV "	49
89	14/IV "	17
90	15/IV "	15

91	16/IV 1945 г.	29
92	17/IV "	18
93	18/IV "	17
94	19/IV "	17
95	20/IV "	21
96	21/IV "	19
97	22/IV "	15
98	23/IV "	26
	ИТОГО	6550

С ДОКУМЕНТОВ ПЕРЕВЕЛ ВЕРНО Верно-Верно

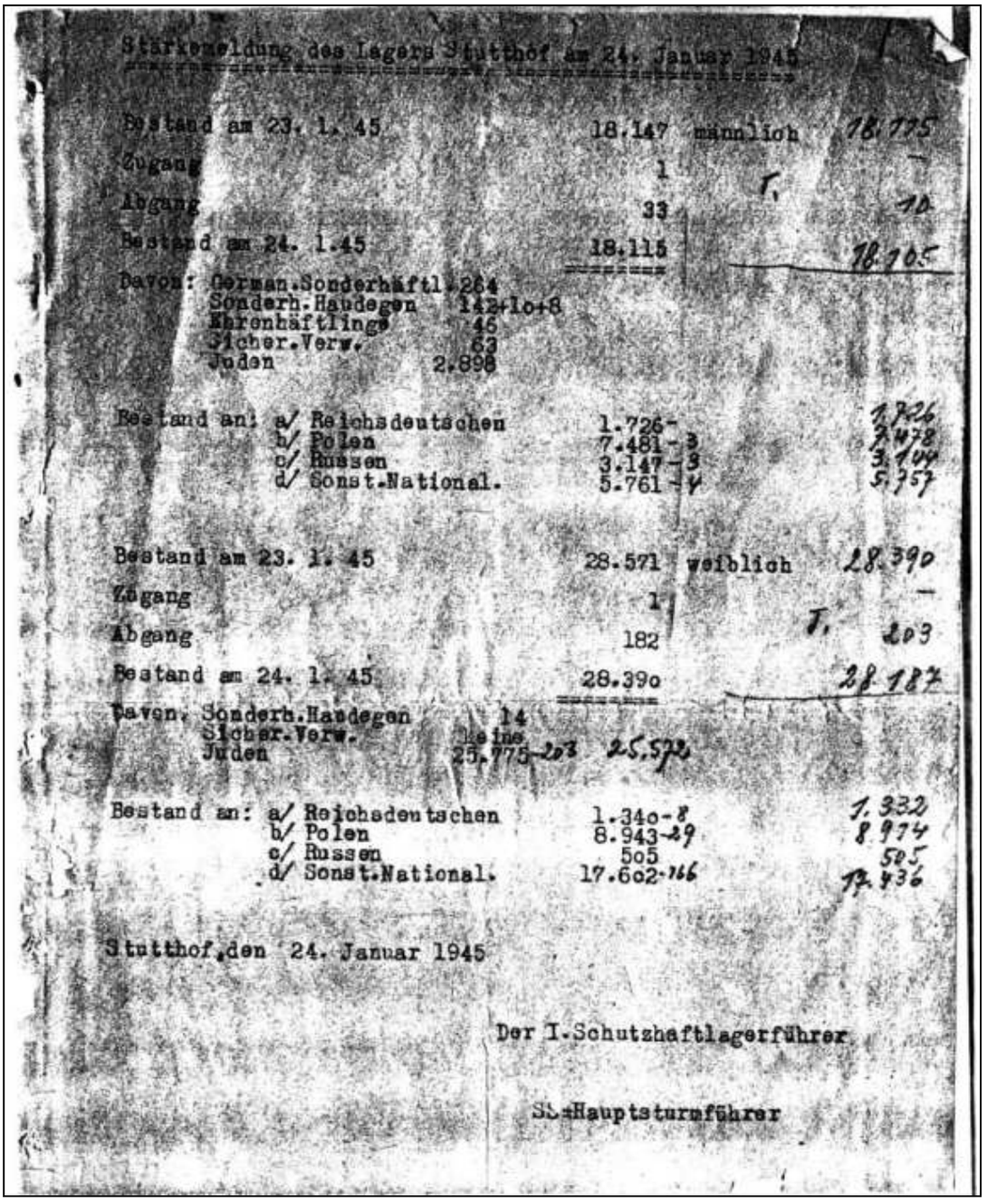
Document 21 b & c: Continued (pp. 2 and 3)



- 26 -

1611.	Feinsilber	Eva	4.1.40.	Sch.H.	P.	Poln.	83 578	KL.Auschwitz
12.	Feinsilber	Mendla	11.7.07	"	"	"	83 579	"
13.	Furstenberg	Freida	11.5.01	"	"	"	83 580	"
14.	Fürstenberg	Abram Meier	9.2.32	"	"	"	83 581	"
15.	Gutmann	Sara	12.12.97	"	"	"	83 582	"
16.	Gutmann	Dora	17.1.37	"	"	"	83 583	"
17.	Glückmann	Priwa	20.6.09	"	"	"	83 584	"
18.	Glückmann	Schmul	24.3.35	"	"	"	83 585	"
19.	Glückmann	Chaja	12.8.30	"	"	"	83 586	"
1620.	Jakob	Edith	28.11.12	"	"	"	83 587	"
21.	Jacob	Gittel	6.3.44	"	"	"	83 588	"
22.	Jalanowicz	Frimeta	10.1.14	"	"	"	83 589	"
23.	Jalanowicz	Feiga	10.1.40	"	"	"	83 590	"
24.	Kelton	Chana	7.10.14	"	"	"	83 591	"
25.	Kelton	Feiga	13.2.28	"	"	"	83 592	"
26.	Kupferschmidt	Chaja	16.9.10	"	"	"	83 593	"
27.	Kupferschmidt	Abraham	29.10.38	"	"	"	83 594	"
28.	Kasa	Sara	10.3.01	"	"	"	83 595	"
29.	Kasa	Bronia	21.2.30	"	"	"	83 596	"
1630.	Krantz	Freda	5.7.12	"	"	"	83 597	"
31.	Krantz	Noemi	2.11.37	"	"	"	83 598	"
32.	Lachmann	Anna	26.6.13	"	"	"	83 599	"
33.	Lachmann	Kazimierz	1.3.37	"	"	"	83 600	"
34.	Neuberg	Alta	5.5.13	"	"	"	83 601	"
35.	Neuberg	Lila	10.10.36	"	"	"	83 602	"
36.	Potek	Manka	2.10.05	"	"	"	83 603	"
37.	Potek	Trunseb	24.2.44	"	"	"	83 604	"
38.	Rosenblum	Bronka	27.12.31	"	"	"	83 605	"
39.	Rotstein	Silka	10.2.06	"	"	"	83 606	"
1640.	Rotstein	Senja	31.7.27	"	"	"	83 607	"
41.	Rotstein	Regina	12.8.32	"	"	"	83 608	"
42.	Rotstein	Sala	3.10.38	"	"	"	83 609	"
43.	Richer	Fela	14.6.32	"	"	"	83 610	"
44.	Reingold	Sura	24.5.08	"	"	"	83 611	"
45.	Reingold	Michanan	12.12.37	"	"	"	83 612	"
46.	Steier	Froma	25.7.42	"	"	"	83 613	"
47.	Steier	Hella	7.8.16	"	"	"	83 614	"
48.	Stolowicka	Ruchla	1.4.36	"	"	"	83 615	"
49.	Stolowicka	Cipora	6.508	"	"	"	83 616	"
1650.	Szyper Adam	Szyper	6.12.39	"	"	"	83 617	"
51.	Szyper	Zsenia	28.9.10	"	"	"	83 618	"
52.	Salomonowicz	Dora	28.8.04	"	Prot.		83 619	"
53.	Salomonowicz	Michael	6.10.33	"	"		83 620	"
54.	Salomonowicz	Josef	1.7.38	"	"		83 621	"
55.	Skura	Perla	15.1.04	"	Poln.		83 622	"
56.	Skura	Estera	27.12.33	"	"		83 623	"
57.	Tabacksehneker	Jochwet	25.3.30	"	"		83 624	"
58.	Tabacksehneker	Rivka	15.5.00	"	"		83 625	"
59.	Welman	Estera	17.2.07	"	"		83 626	"
1660.	Welman	Kristina	25.9.30	"	"		83 627	"
61.	Welman	Jachets	8.9.96	"	"		83 628	"
62.	Neuberg	Rivka	14.4.89	"	"		83 629	"
63.	Lehrman	Sara	10.12.29	"	"		83 630	"
64.	Berkann	Hanuka	5.1.29	"	"		83 631	"
65.	Bart	Gittw	1.5.21	"	"		83 632	"
66.	Gunko	Rosa	1884	"	"		83 633	"
67.	Bunde	Brucha	6.12.96	"	"		83 634	"
68.	Davidovicz	Stefania	24.3.05	"	"		83 635	"
69.	Davidovicz	Hanka	1.3.27	"	"		83 636	"
1670.	Apelbaum	Frania	10.7.19	"	"		83 637	"
71.	Ajsenberg	Feiga	15.7.13	"	"		83 638	"
72.	Abramovits	Golda	19.12.12	"	"		83 639	"
73.	Ajdlis	Feiga	4.5.25	"	"		83 640	"
74.	Abramovits	Rosa	15.10.18	"	"		83 641	"
75.	[illegible]Abramovits	Rivka	24.10.10	"	"		83 642	"

Document 22: One page of the names list of the transport of Jews on 3 September 3 1944 from the Auschwitz to the Stutthof Camp. AMS, I-IIb-12, p. 26.



Stärkemeldung des Lagers Stutthof am 24. Januar 1945

Bestand am 23. 1. 45		18.147	männlich	18.775
Zugang		1		—
Abgang		33		10
Bestand am 24. 1.45		18.115		18.765
Davon: German.Sonderhäftl.	284			
Sonderh.Haudegen	142+10+8			
Ehrenhäftlinge	46			
Sicher.Verw.	63			
Juden	2.898			
Bestand an: a/ Reichsdeutschen		1.726-3		1.726
b/ Polen		7.481-3		7.478
c/ Russen		3.147-3		3.144
d/ Sonst.National.		5.761-4		5.757
Bestand am 23. 1. 45		28.571	weiblich	28.390
Zugang		1		—
Abgang		182		203
Bestand am 24. 1. 45		28.390		28 187
Davon: Sonderh.Haudegen	14			
Sicher.Verw.	keine			
Juden	25.775-203	25.572		
Bestand an: a/ Reichsdeutschen		1.340-8		1.332
b/ Polen		8.943-29		8.914
c/ Russen		505		505
d/ Sonst.National.		17.602-166		17.436

Stutthof,den 24. Januar 1945

Der I.Schutzhaftlagerführer

SS-Hauptsturmführer

Document 23: Stutthof Camp strength report, 24 January 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 1.

Konz.Lager Stutthof
Schutzhaftlager

Stutthof, den 24. Januar 1945

S t ä r k e m e l d u n g

Bestand am 24. Januar 1945 (Morgenappell) 46.321
Häftl.Krankenbau - 1.2o1 , Revier - 63 ..... 1.264

A u s s e n k o m m a n d o s

Pölitz	2.19o	OT.Elbing	5.o36
Königsberg	462	OT.Thorn	3.225
Danziger Werft	789	Bromberg Dyn.	995
S t o l p	64o	Bromberg Reichsbahn	295
Heiligenbeil	1.157	Thorn A.B.G.	51o
Serappen	1.oo9	B r u s s	493
Gerdauen	24	Praust Reichsbahn	289
Schippenbeil	947	Danzig Holm	1oo
Jesau	1.o66	Elbing Brückenkopf	341
Gotenhafen	73o	Libau Heeresgr,Nord	227
Schichau Danzig	991	Praust Flugpl.	8oo
Lauenburg	53	E p p - Stutthof	122
Rosenberg	1o		

Der I.Schutzhaftlagerführer

SS-Hauptsturmführer

Document 24: Stutthof Camp strength report, 24 January 1945 ; morning roll call. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 2.

Konzentrationslager Stutthof
Schutzhaftlager

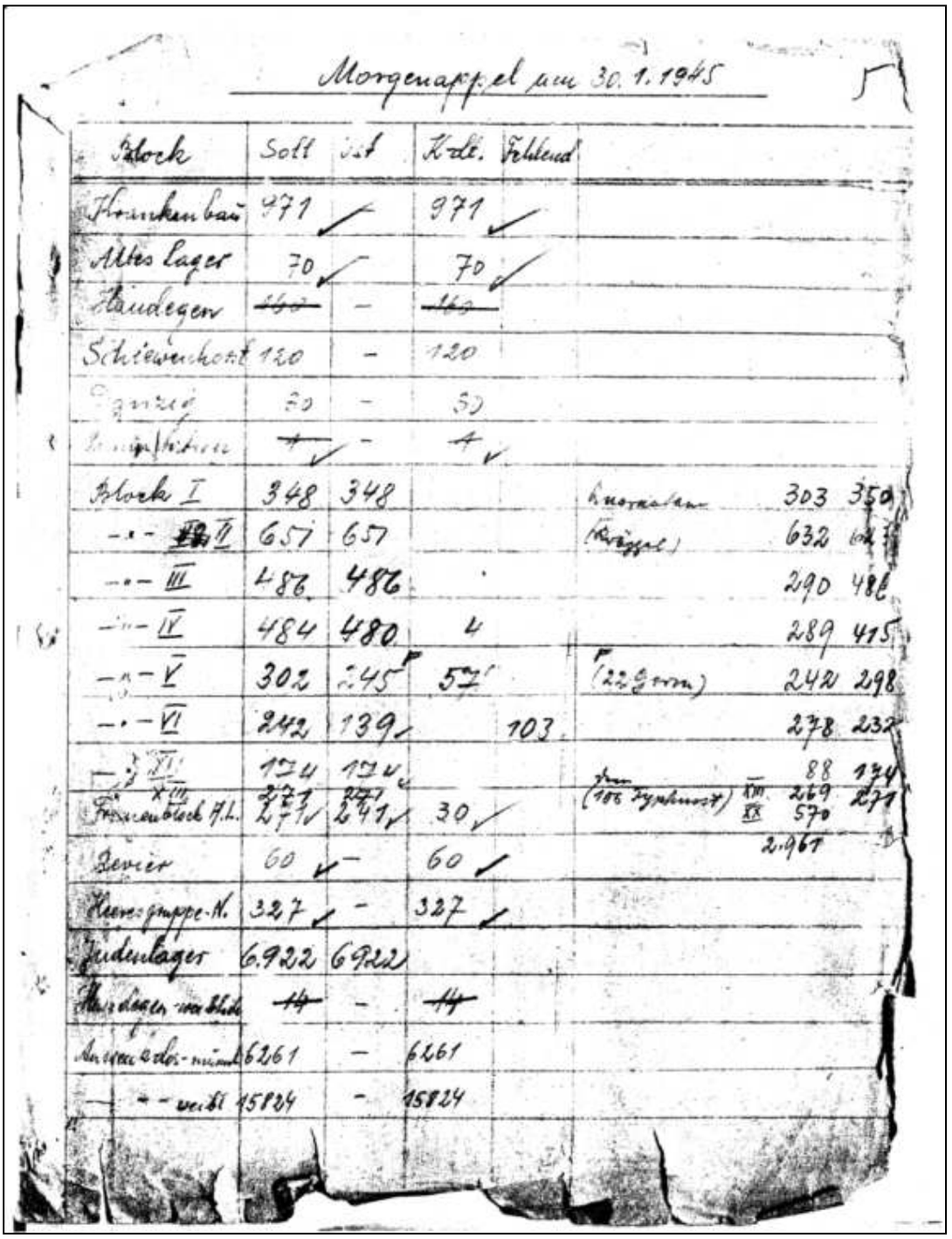
Datum 24. Januar 1945

Stärke-Nachweis
vom Schutzhaftlager

Stärke am 23.1.45	Zugang	Abgang	Verpflegsstärke	Bemerkungen
46.546	keine	215	46.331	siehe Rückseite

Der I. Schutzhaftlagerführer:
Hauptsturmführer

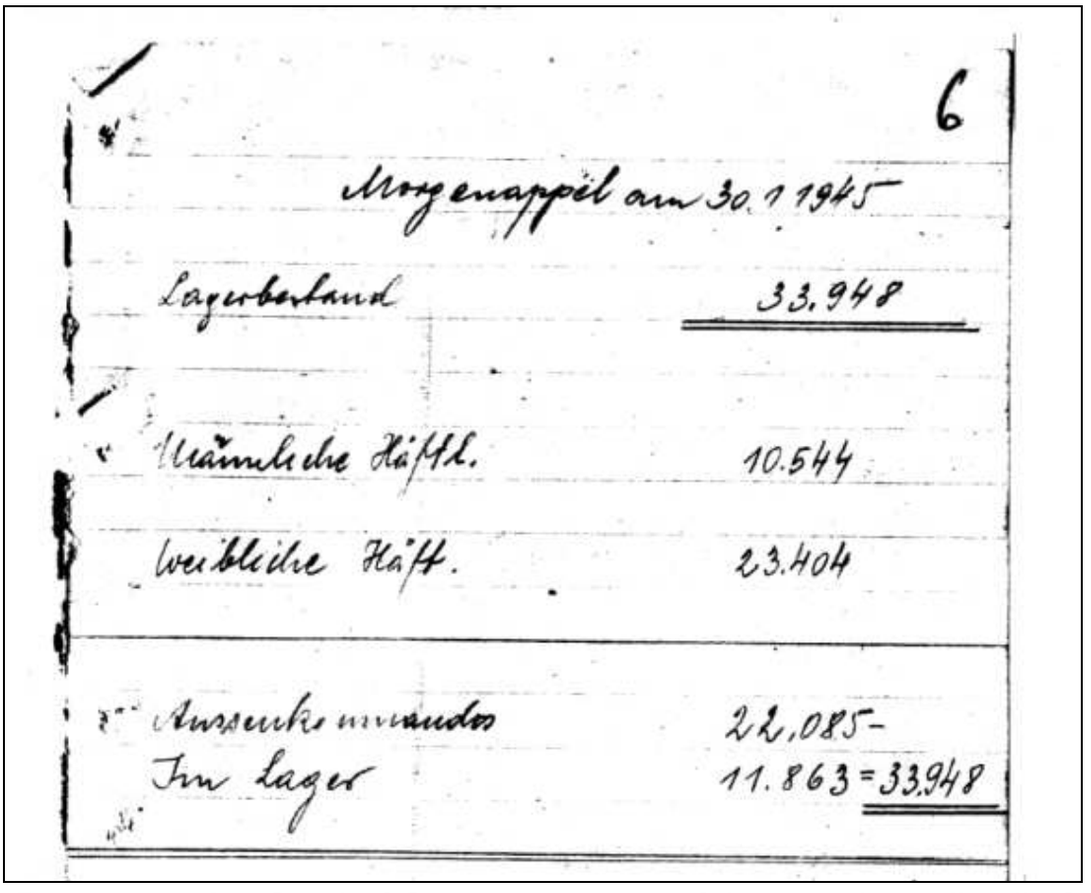
Document 25: Stutthof Camp strength report, 24 January 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 3.



Morgenappell am 30.1.1945

Block	Soll	Ist	Kdo.	Fehlend			
Krankenbau	971	✓	971	✓			
Altes Lager	70	✓	70	✓			
Handegen	~~160~~	–	~~160~~				
Schießanlage	120	–	120				
[illegible]	50	–	50				
[illegible]	~~4~~ ✓	–	~~4~~ ✓				
Block I	348	348			Quarantäne	303	350
-"- ~~II~~ II	657	657			(Bügel)	632	647
-"- III	486	486				290	486
-"- IV	484	480	4			289	415
-"- V	302	245	57		(22 Frau)	242	298
-"- VI	242	139 ✓		103		278	232
-"- VII	134	134 ✓				88	134
Frauenblock H.L.	~~271~~ 271 ✓	~~271~~ 241 ✓	30 ✓		(106 Typhus+7)	VIII 269 XX 570	271
						2.961	
Revier	60 ✓	–	60 ✓				
Kurzgruppe N.	327 ✓	–	327 ✓				
Judenlager	6922	6922					
Handlager [illegible]	~~44~~	–	~~44~~				
[illegible]	6261	–	6261				
-"- [illegible]	15824	–	15824				

Document 26: Stutthof Camp, morning roll call, 30 January 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 5.

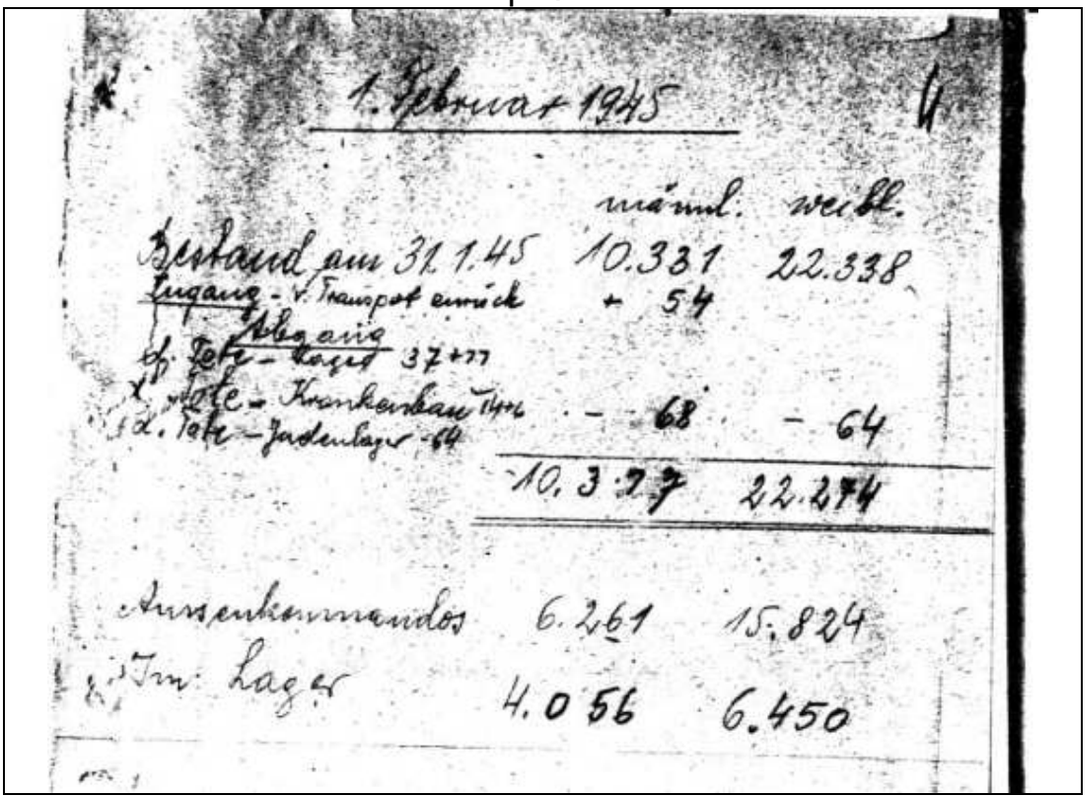


6

Morgenappell am 30.1.1945

Lagerbestand	33.948
männliche Häftl.	10.544
weibliche Häft.	23.404
Aussenkommandos	22.085 -
Im Lager	11.863 = 33.948

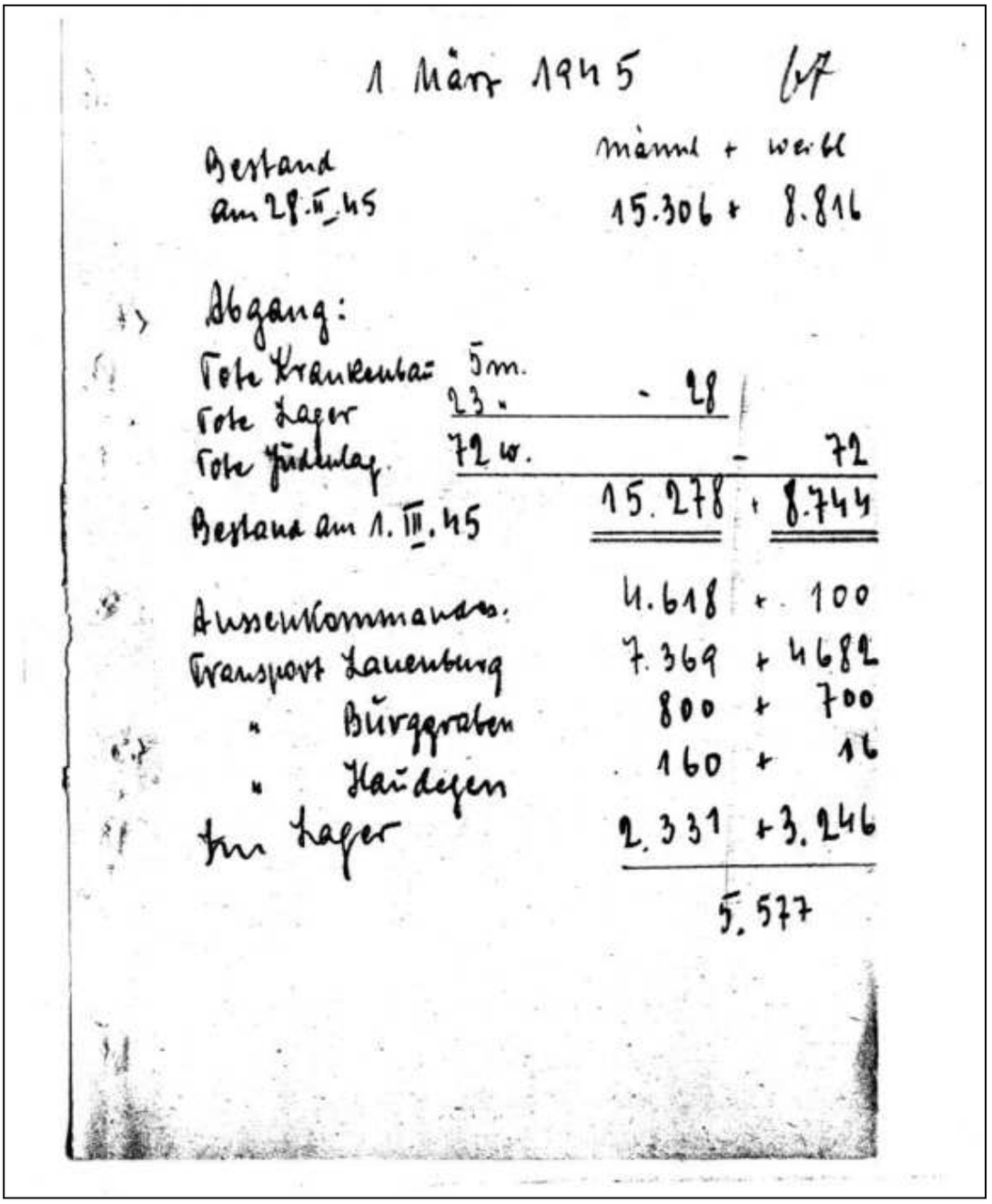
Document 27: Stutthof Camp, summary of the morning roll call of male and female inmates, 30 January 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 6.



1. Februar 1945 4.

	männl.	weibl.
Bestand am 31.1.45	10.331	22.338
Zugang - v. Transport zurück	+ 54	
Abgang		
1. Tote - Lager 37+77		
2. Tote - Krankenbau 17+6	- 68	- 64
3. Tote - Judenlager 14		
	10.317	22.274
Aussenkommandos	6.261	15.824
Im Lager	4.056	6.450

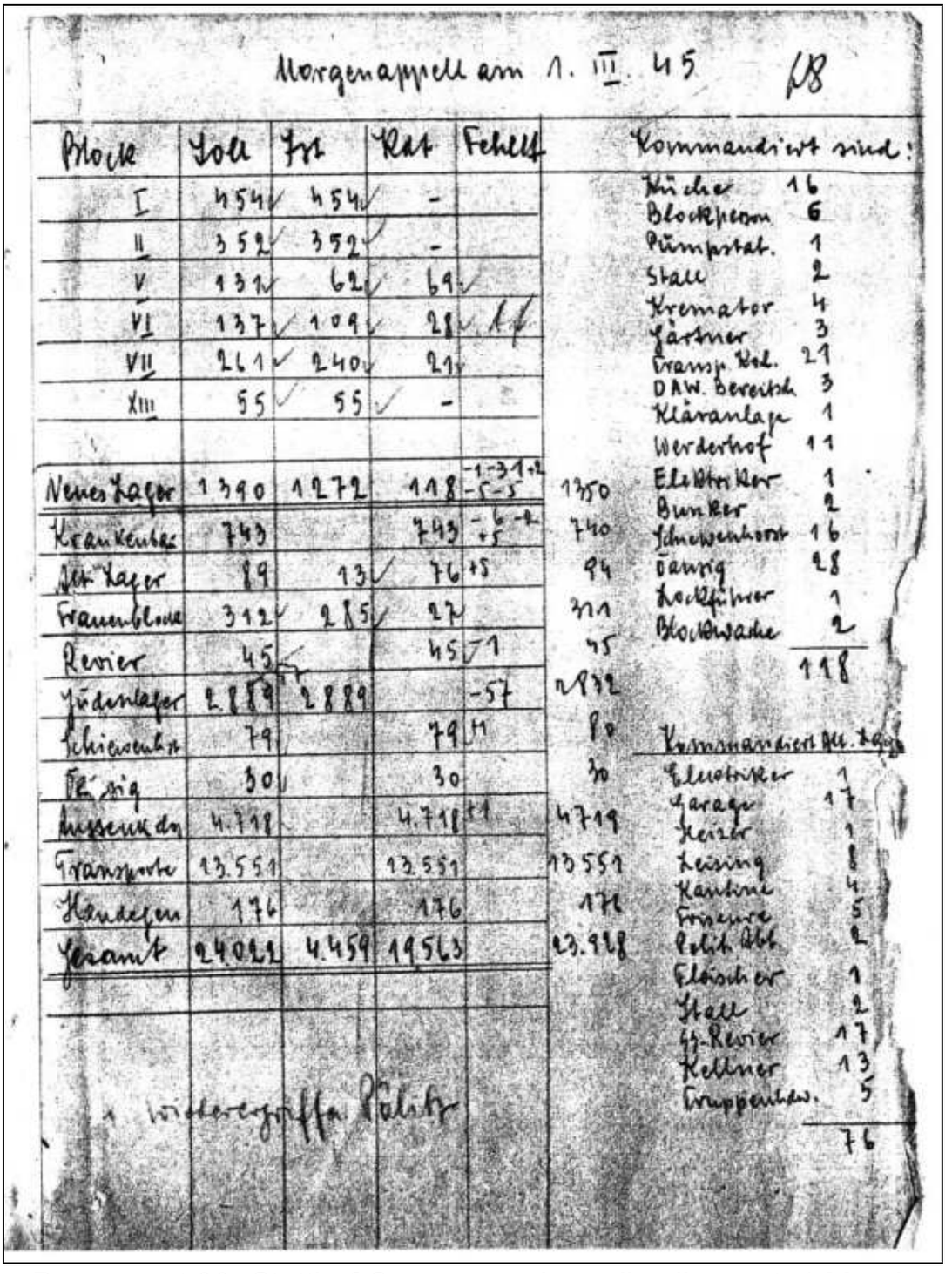
Document 28: Stutthof Camp, camp strength on 1 February 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 11.



1 März 1945

	männl.	weibl.
Bestand am 28.II.45	15.306	+ 8.816
Abgang:		
Tote Krankenbau 5m.		
23.	- 28	
Tote Lager		
72 w.	-	72
Tote Judenlag.		
Bestand am 1.III.45	15.278	+ 8.744
Aussenkommando	4.618	+ 100
Transport Lauenburg	7.369	+ 4682
" Bürggraben	800	+ 700
" Haidegen	160	+ 16
im Lager	2.331	+ 3.246
	5.577	

Document 29: Stutthof Camp, camp strength on 1 March 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 67.



Morgenappell am 1. III. 45

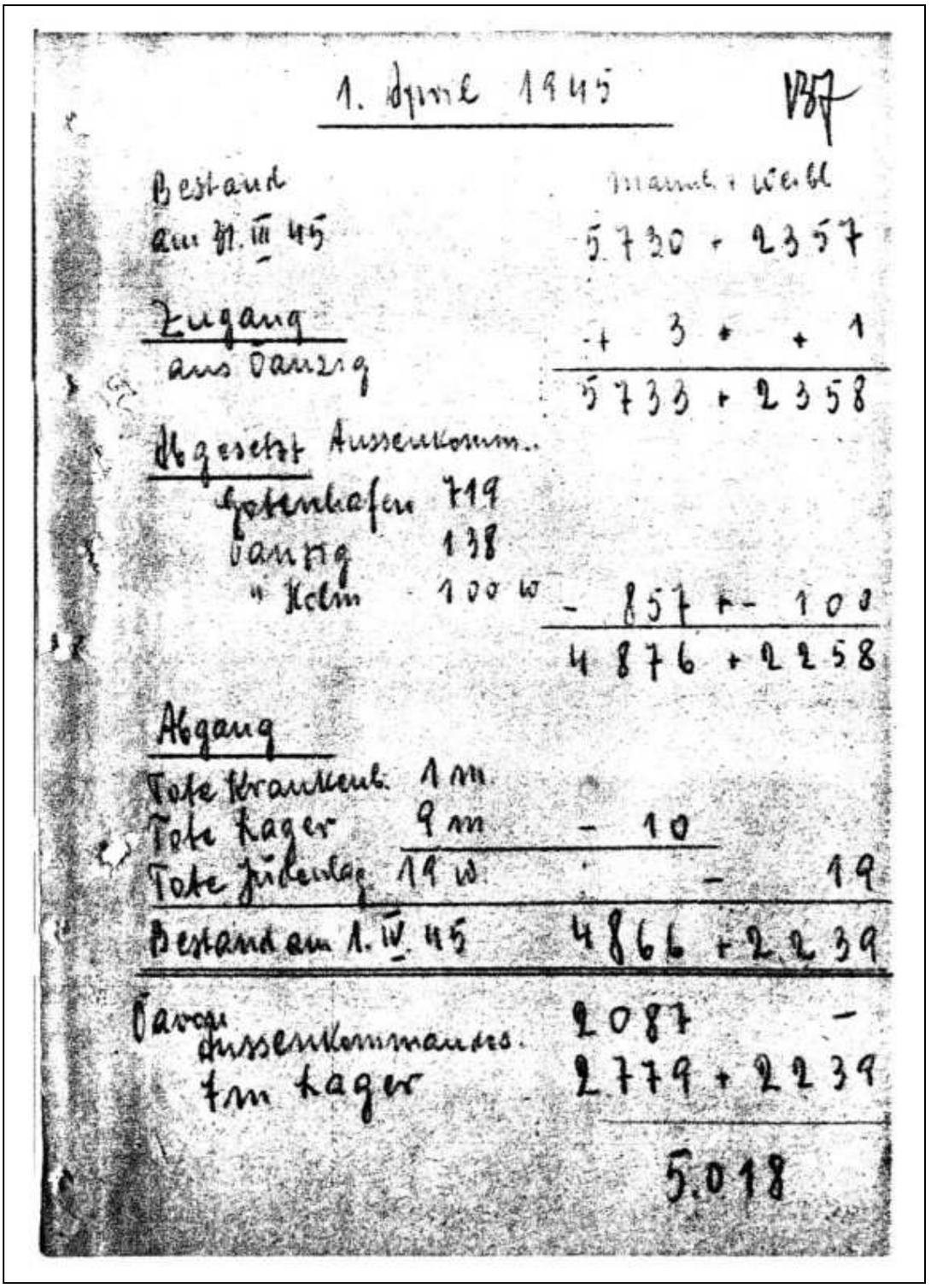
Blocke	Soll	Ist	Rst	Fehlt
I	454	454	-	
II	352	352	-	
V	131	62	69	
VI	137	109	28	1 f
VII	261	240	21	
XIII	55	55	-	
Neues Lager	1390	1272	118	-1-31+2 -5-5
Krankenbau	743		743	-6-2 +5
Alt. Lager	89	13	76	+5
Frauenblock	312	285	27	
Revier	45		45	1
Judenlager	2889	2889		-57
Schiessbahn	79		79	11
Penig	30		30	
Aussenkdo	4.719		4.719	11
Transporte	13.551		13.551	
Handegen	176		176	
Gesamt	24022	4.459	19563	

1 Wiederergriffa Polak

Kommandiert sind:

1350	Küche	16
	Blockpersonal	6
	Pumpstat.	1
	Stall	2
	Krematorium	4
	Gärtner	3
	Transp. Kol.	21
	DAW. Bereitsch.	3
	Kläranlage	1
	Werderhof	11
	Elektriker	1
740	Bunker	2
94	Schwesternhaus	16
311	Danzig	28
45	Lockführer	1
2432	Blockwache	2
80		118
30	Kommandiert Alt. Lag.	
4719	Elektriker	1
13551	Garage	17
171	Heizer	1
23.928	Leining	8
	Kantine	4
	Friseure	5
	Polit. Abt.	2
	Fleischer	1
	Stall	2
	SS-Revier	17
	Kellner	13
	Gruppenführ.	5
		76

Document 30: Stutthof Camp, morning roll call report, 1 March 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 68.



1. April 1945 137

Bestand am 31. III. 45 — Mann + Weib: 5730 + 2357

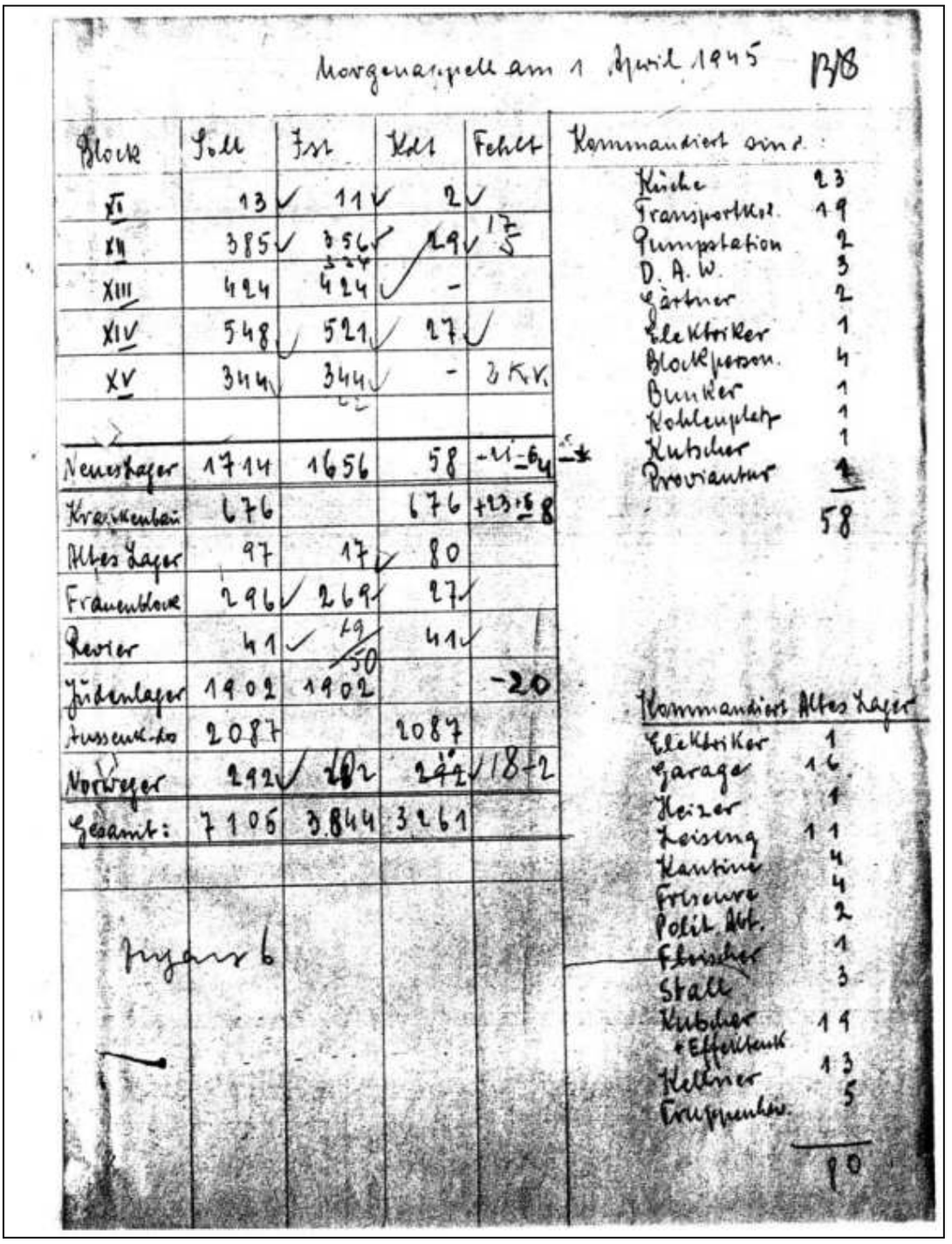
Zugang
aus Danzig: + 3 + + 1
5733 + 2358

Abgesetzt Aussenkomm.
Gotenhafen 719
Danzig 138
" Kolm 1000 w — 857 + — 100
4876 + 2258

Abgang
Tote Krankenb. 1 m.
Tote Lager 9 m — 10
Tote Jüdenlag. 19 w. — 19
Bestand am 1. IV. 45: 4866 + 2239

Davon Aussenkommandos: 2087 —
im Lager: 2779 + 2239
5018

Document 31: Stutthof Camp, camp strength on 1 April 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 137.



Morgenappell am 1. April 1945 B/B

Block	Soll	Ist	Kdt	Fehlt
VI	13	11	2	
XI	385	356	29	17/5
XIII	424	424	-	
XIV	548	521	27	
XV	344	344	-	3 K.V.
Neues Lager	1714	1656	58	-11-6
Krankenbau	676		676	+23-8
Altes Lager	97	17	80	
Frauenblock	296	269	27	
Revier	41	49/50	41	
Judenlager	1902	1902		-20
Russenlager	2087		2087	
Norweger	292	282	242	18-2
Gesamt:	7106	3844	3261	

Kommandiert sind:

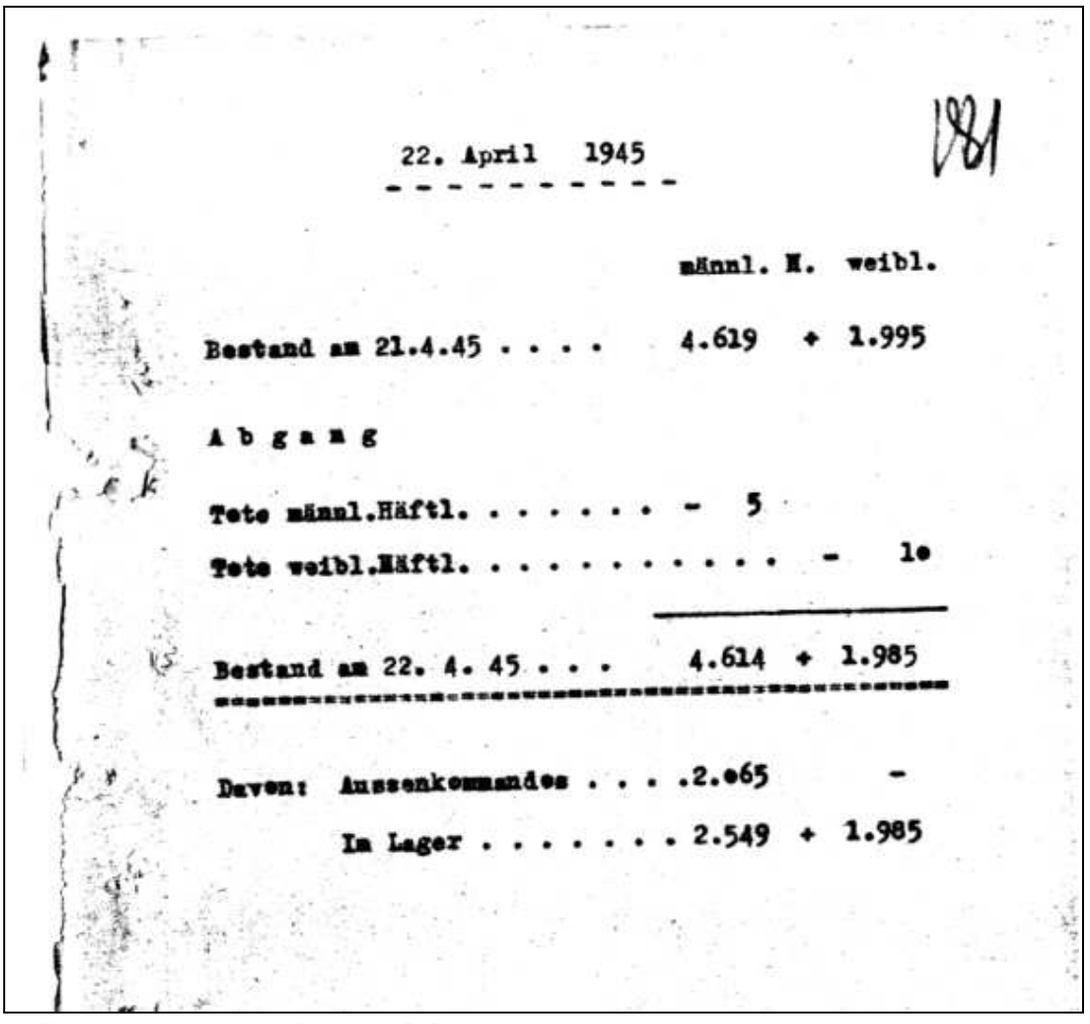
Küche	23
Transportkol.	19
Quarantäne	2
D. A. W.	3
Gärtner	2
Elektriker	1
Blockpersonal	4
Bunker	1
Kohlenplatz	1
Kutscher	1
Proviantur	1
	58

Kommandiert Altes Lager

Elektriker	1
Garage	16
Heizer	1
Leisenz	11
Kantine	4
Friseure	4
Polit. Abt.	2
Fleischer	1
Stall	3
Kübler + Effektenk	14
Kellner	13
Truppenlag.	5
	80

Zugang 6

Document 32: Stutthof Camp, morning roll call report, 1 April 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 138.

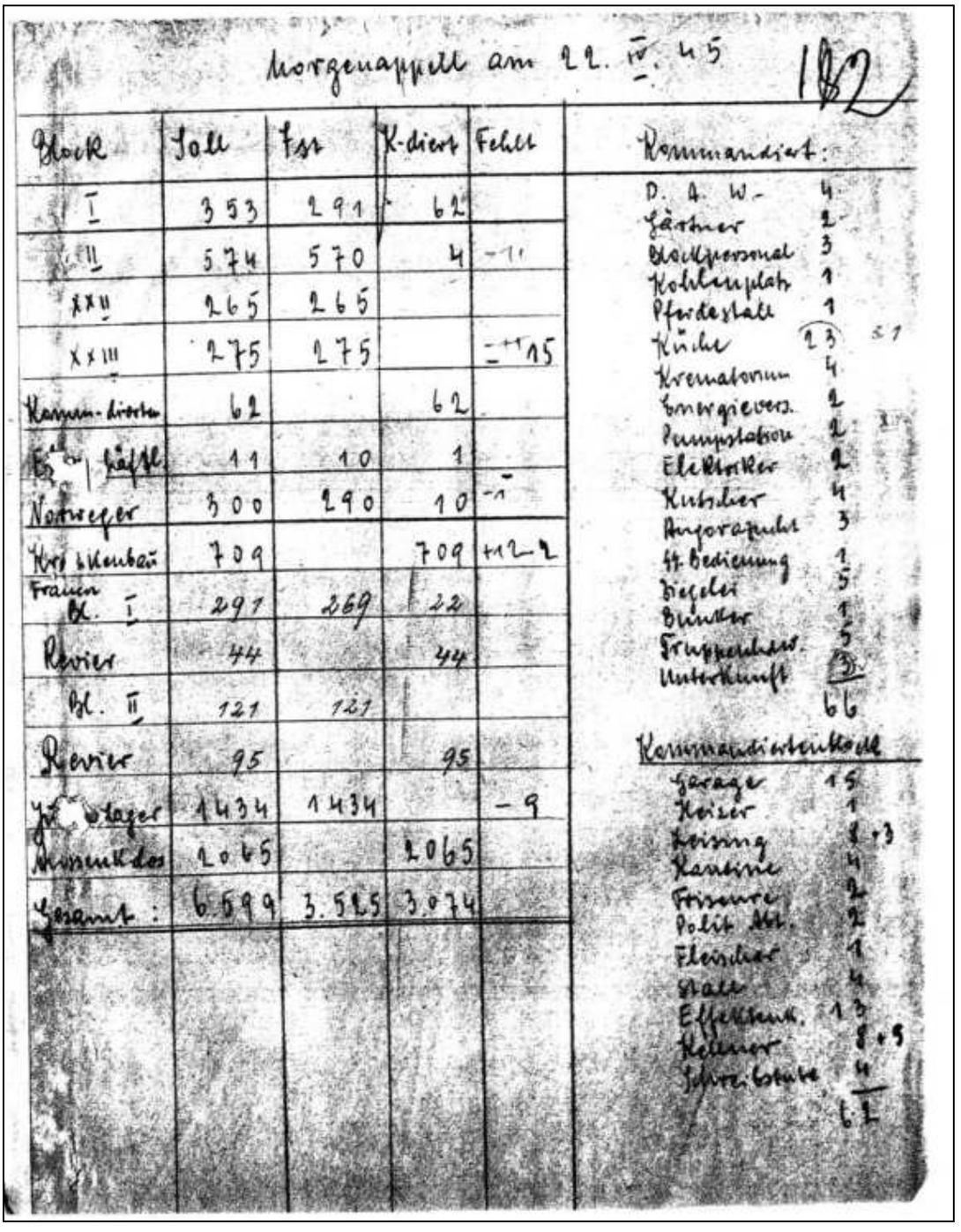


22. April 1945

181

	männl. H.	weibl.
Bestand am 21.4.45	4.619	+ 1.995
A b g a n g		
Tote männl.Häftl.	- 5	
Tote weibl.Häftl.		- 1o
Bestand am 22. 4. 45 . . .	4.614	+ 1.985
Davon: Aussenkommandos 2.o65		-
Im Lager 2.549		+ 1.985

Document 33: Stutthof Camp, camp strength on 22 April 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 181.



Morgenappell am 22. IV. 45 182

Block	Soll	Ist	K-dient	Fehlt
I	353	291	62	
II	574	570	4	-1
XXII	265	265		
XXIII	275	275		+15
Kommandantur	62		62	
Essen/Küche	11	10	1	
Norweger	300	290	10	-1
Krankenbau	709		709	+2-2
Frauen Bl. I	291	269	22	
Revier	44		44	
Bl. II	121	121		
Revier	95		95	
Ukr. Lager	1434	1434		-9
Kommando	2065		2065	
Gesamt:	6599	3525	3074	

Kommandantur:

D. A. W.	4
Gärtner	2
Stallpersonal	3
Kohlenplatz	1
Pferdestall	1
Küche	23
Krematorium	4
Energieversorg.	2
Pumpstation	2
Elektriker	2
Kutscher	4
Angorazucht	3
SS-Bedienung	1
Ziegeler	5
Bäcker	1
Truppenkdtr.	5
Unterkunft	3
	66

Kommandanturkolonne

Garage	15
Heizer	1
Heizung	8+3
Kantine	4
Friseure	2
Polit Abt.	2
Fleischer	1
Stall	4
Effektenk.	13
Keller	8+3
Fahrschule	4
	62

Document 34: Stutthof Camp, morning roll call report, 22 April 1945. GARF, 7021-106-3, p. 182.

Abbreviations

AGK: Archiwum Głównej Komisji Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu Instytutu Pamieci Narodowej, Warsaw (Archives of the Central Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish People – National Memorial)

AMS: Archiwum Muzeum Stutthof (Archives of the Stutthof Museum)

APMO: Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu (Museum State Archives at Auschwitz)

GARF: Gosudarstwenny Archiv Rossiskoy Federatsii, Moscow (State Archives of the Russian Federation)

RGVA: Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv, Moscow (Russian State Archives of the War, formerly TCIDK, Tsentr Chranenija Istoriko-dokumental'nich Kollektsii, Moscow).

ROD: Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdokumentatie, Amsterdam (Imperial Institute for War Documentation)

***SZM*:** Stutthof. Zeszyty Muzeum (Museum Journal)

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